

Comments on Mosiah 15

In this chapter Abinadi is using the term "God" pretty loosely. Generally, when LDS persons speak they use "God" to refer to the "Father" and "Lord" to refer to the "Son" so as to avoid confusion. This is carried even further when "Eloheim" is applied to the Father and Jehovah is applied to the "Son" as though they were proper nouns.

In the Scriptures, the names are not proper nouns and are used ambiguously as name-titles instead. The same goes with "God" here. Abinadi is speaking most often of "God the Son", in making reference to the ante-mortal Lord condescending to mortality to perform the atonement.

1 AND now Abinadi said unto them: I would that ye should understand that God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people. 2 And because he dwelleth in flesh he shall be called the Son of God, and having subjected the flesh to the will of the Father, being the Father and the Son-- 3 The Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the Son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and Son-- 4 And they are one God, yea, the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth. 5 And thus the flesh becoming subject to the Spirit, or the Son to the Father, being one God, suffereth temptation, and yieldeth not to the temptation, but suffereth himself to be mocked, and scourged, and cast out, and disowned by his people.

v1-5 The Lord God of the Torah, Israel's God, will become a mortal (v. 1). Because of the mortal flesh, he will be called the Son of God, but because he submits his flesh to the will of his Father, he becomes both the Father and the Son (v. 2-3). The Lord God of the Torah is the Creator of the earth, and comes down to the earth in flesh (v. 4). The Lord God submitting his flesh to the will of the Father unites Him with His Father, but also makes Him the One True God to Israel, even though they will reject Him as messiah (v. 5).

Abinadi's statements are somewhat confusing. For a straightforward distillation, cf. 7:27.

v1 Noah's priests accuse Abinadi of blasphemy, but the Law of Moses says the exact same thing, cf. Exod. 19:11. Clearly, Noah's priests are ignorant of any spiritual meaning when it comes to the Law.

v2-3 God the Son becomes both the Father and Son because of his mixed divine and mortal parentage. He inherits his divinity from this Father and his mortality from his mother. Thus, he has the power of the Father, but is inferior to the Father

because of his mortal aspect, hence the Son. But, ultimately, the Son grows up and becomes like His Father.

v4 "they are one God", I would assume Abinadi is saying that the Father and Son are "one", both in unity and numerically, in the person of Christ. I don't see this as a unity statement of the God the Father and God the Son being at unity as the preceding v. 1-3 are all referring to God the Son and how God the Son personifies both the Father and the Son.

v5 "And thus the flesh becoming subject to the Spirit", given license I would change the capital "S" in "Spirit" to a lowercase "s" just as the "f" in "flesh" is lowercase. The capital "S" leads one to automatically assume the Holy Ghost is being referenced, when the subject is Jesus' flesh body being subject to his spirit body.

Yes, Jesus' spirit was completely in accord to the Holy Spirit, but that is not the subject here. The subject is the uniqueness of Christ in that he mastered his flesh such that it was always in complete subjection to his own spirit. No other mortal did this. And in doing this, Jesus unifies himself with his Father's will, and ultimately becomes just like his Father.

6 And after all this, after working many mighty miracles among the children of men, he shall be led, yea, even as Isaiah said, as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. 7 Yea, even so he shall be led, crucified, and slain, the flesh becoming subject even unto death, the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father. 8 And thus God breaketh the bands of death, having gained the victory over death; giving the Son power to make intercession for the children of men-- 9 Having ascended into heaven, having the bowels of mercy; being filled with compassion towards the children of men; standing betwixt them and justice; having broken the bands of death, taken upon himself their iniquity and their transgressions, having redeemed them, and satisfied the demands of justice.

v6-9 Abinadi explains how the Messiah will accomplish the resurrection and expiation of sins.

As predicted by Isaiah, the Messiah will submit (v. 6) and allow himself to be executed by his people to fulfil the will of the Father (v. 7, cp. Isa. 53:10). By doing so, the Messiah makes victory over physical and spiritual death possible (v. 8), because He then ascends into heaven and acts as advocate and intercessor for His people before His Father (v. 9).

Abinadi condenses a massive amount of redemption theology into a very succinct paragraph. This is something Noah's priests should know, given their alleged familiarity with the Law of Moses.

10 And now I say unto you, who shall declare his generation? Behold, I say unto you, that when his soul has been made an offering for sin he shall see his seed. And now what say ye? And who shall be his seed?

11 Behold I say unto you, that whosoever has heard the words of the prophets, yea, all the holy prophets who have prophesied concerning the coming of the Lord--I say unto you, that all those who have hearkened unto their words, and believed that the Lord would redeem his people, and have looked forward to that day for a remission of their sins, I say unto you, that these are his seed, or they are the heirs of the kingdom of God. 12 For these are they whose sins he has borne; these are they for whom he has died, to redeem them from their transgressions. And now, are they not his seed? 13 Yea, and are not the prophets, every one that has opened his mouth to prophesy, that has not fallen into transgression, I mean all the holy prophets ever since the world began? I say unto you that they are his seed. 14 And these are they who have published peace, who have brought good tidings of good, who have published salvation; and said unto Zion: Thy God reigneth!

15 And O how beautiful upon the mountains were their feet! 16 And again, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that are still publishing peace! 17 And again, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who shall hereafter publish peace, yea, from this time henceforth and forever! 18 And behold, I say unto you, this is not all. For O how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that is the founder of peace, yea, even the Lord, who has redeemed his people; yea, him who has granted salvation unto his people; 19 For were it not for the redemption which he hath made for his people, which was prepared from the foundation of the world, I say unto you, were it not for this, all mankind must have perished.

20 But behold, the bands of death shall be broken, and the Son reigneth, and hath power over the dead; therefore, he bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead. 21 And there cometh a resurrection, even a first resurrection; yea, even a resurrection of those that have been, and who are, and who shall be, even until the resurrection of Christ--for so shall he be called. 22 And now, the resurrection of all the prophets, and all those that have believed in their words, or all those that have kept the commandments of God, shall come forth in the first resurrection; therefore, they are the first resurrection. 23 They are raised to dwell with God who has redeemed them; thus they have eternal life through Christ, who has broken the bands of death. 24 And these are those who have part in the first resurrection; and these are they that have died before Christ came, in their ignorance, not having salvation declared unto them. And thus the Lord bringeth about the restoration of these; and they have a part in the first resurrection, or have eternal life, being redeemed by the Lord. 25 And little children also have eternal life.

26 But behold, and fear, and tremble before God, for ye ought to tremble; for the Lord redeemeth none such that rebel against him and die in their sins; yea, even all those that have perished in their sins ever since the world began, that have wilfully rebelled against God, that have known the commandments of God, and would not keep them; these are they that have no part in the first resurrection. 27 Therefore ought ye not to tremble? For salvation cometh to none such; for the Lord hath redeemed none such; yea, neither can the Lord redeem such; for he cannot deny himself; for he cannot deny justice when it has its claim.

v10-25 As Abinadi has finished what he was supposed to tell them (cf. 13:3), he now answers their question concerning the Isaiah quote originally posed in 12:20-24.

Those who are born again to be the spiritual children of Christ (v. 10-12), including the prophets (v. 13), are those who publish peace and say to Zion "Thy God reigneth!" (v. 14). Abinadi then praises the past (v. 15), present (v. 16), future (v. 17), and even eternal persons (v. 17) who publish peace and herald Zion (v. 18). He then discusses the physical salvation brought about by the Resurrection (v. 19-25), and casts woe on those who rebel against the Lord (v. 26-28).

As noted in the comments on 12:20, Abinadi's intent is to counter the priest's quotation of that Isaiah passage at him.

v15-17 On the reference to the feet contrast 1 Ne. 13:37 which omits "feet" from a similar statement. For a more thorough discussion of the feet and the passage in general, see my comments on Isa. 52.

28 And now I say unto you that the time shall come that the salvation of the Lord shall be declared to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. 29 Yea, Lord, thy watchmen shall lift up their voice; with the voice together shall they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. 30 Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. 31 The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

v28-31 deal with the rest of the Isaiah quote in 12:22-24 and place the fulfilment in a Millennial setting.

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