

lr-BoM-18
God Himself ... Shall Redeem His People
(Mosiah 12-17)
By Lenet Hadley Read

I. The Lord will not allow the wicked to stand forever upon His Promised Land (Mosiah 12:1-8).

A. Remember that the Promised Land is a symbol for Eternal Life (Alma 37:45).

B. Therefore, **those who are swept off the Promised Land witness of those who will not inherit Eternal Life.**

C. The record of the destructions of Book of Mormon people was preserved as a warning with Eternal implications for all other people (Mosiah 12:8).

1. Noah and his priests would suffer such destruction since they are neither teaching correct doctrine nor keeping the commandments (Mosiah 12:25-30).

II. **The most beautiful blessing seers bestow is a deeper understanding of Christ's atonement.**

A. Isaiah taught that even the very hearing of Christ's atonement is beautiful (Mosiah 12:21-24).

B. The Mosaic Law was not given to save men nor to exist forever, but **only to teach of this beautiful salvation which would come through Christ** (Mosiah 13:28-35).

1. All animal sacrifices taught of Christ's sacrifice, each kind revealing different aspects.

2. The Holy Days the Lord commanded **taught of the times when Christ would work His great works of salvation.**

a. (See Lenet H. Read, "Symbols of the Harvest," *The Ensign*, January 1975; or Lenet H. Read, "The Golden Plates and the Feast of Trumpets," *The Ensign*, January 2000)

C. Due to hardness of hearts, many in Israel did not understand the witnesses in the Law that *taught of both how and when Christ would save them* (Mosiah 13:32).

III. Abinadi revealed the awesome manner in which God would save His children.

A. God, (Jehovah) Himself, would come down among men and dwell with them in mortal flesh, would exercise mighty power upon earth, would die and bring to pass the resurrection. And yet all the while He would be grievously afflicted and even crucified (Mosiah 13:33-35; 14:1-12; 15:1).

B. When one really understands what the Lord has done out of His deepest love, one must be overcome with a powerful sense of awe. This is especially so if one reflects upon the selfish, cruel and/or far less effective acts of other supposed gods people believe in.

C. Some feel Jehovah of the Old Testament was Himself cruel. But when we understand the nature of types and shadows (2 Nephi 11:4; Mosiah 3:1; Mosiah 13:30-32), we realize that **many things which appeared cruel were actually powerful witnesses of His future love.** For example, it appeared cruel for Jehovah to command Abraham to offer his son Isaac as sacrifice. But this event **was actually Jehovah's bearing witness that He Himself would come down and offer Himself as Sacrificed Son.**

IV. A major purpose of man's coming to earth was to learn through their own experience Good from Evil.

A. **Through Jesus Christ we come to know the Greatest Good.**

1. In thinking of this purpose, I always focused upon the need to understand the evil part. For I assumed we already knew Good. But I have come to feel strongly that one of the purposes of the whole plan of salvation was that we could come to know the "Power of the Greatest Good," in contrast to "the Greatest Evil." And we could not know that except through our becoming trapped in sin to the Power of Evil [Satan], and then in being rescued through total unselfishness at the greatest possible cost by the Son of God Himself.

B. Only that way could we really come to know the Greatest Good.

C. And of course, the ultimate purpose would be so that we could strive to become, and in time become, like that Greatest Good!

V. God the Eternal Father did ask great and terrible things of His Son, to provide for us an example of the greatest good, but He would also give Him enormous reward.

A. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief;" (Mosiah 14:10). (God the Father did not ask what He did of Jesus because of any lack of love for Him, He did so out of great love for us, His lost and wandering children).

B. And because Jesus offered His body and all things as an offering for sin, He would bring forth spiritual offspring unto Himself. For all the faithful are "reborn," both physically and spiritually, through Jesus Christ. **Thus He became our spiritual Father.** And thus we ought to love Him as a father, for He has given us life.

C. God the Father promised His Son He would "divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong" (Mosiah 14:12) because He allowed Himself to be "numbered with the transgressors; bore the sins of many; made intercession for the transgressors" (Mosiah 14:12).

VI. We are counseled to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. But can we take upon ourselves the sins of others? Are we expected to?

A. **There are ways in which we can follow in Christ's footsteps in taking upon us the transgressions of others. And we are expected to!**

1. Very often, to maintain peace, we should let go the hurts brought upon us by others, and in silence accept offense as a burden we must bear. In doing so we bear their sins or transgressions.

B. Dr. Terry Warner has suggested a way to go one step further - to full forgiveness. For the previous step might not actually be changing our hearts.

C. Dr. Warner suggested those who have been hurt by another's sins write a completely accurate description of that person, including both good and bad qualities. We should strive to write that description from an "unoffended" point of view, however. Experiments with this practice, Dr. Warner found, helped those hurt, in most cases, to see the offense-giving person in new ways, with greater compassion and understanding. Thus their hearts were changed, and they went beyond bearing the offenses in silence, but were able to freely forgive the hurts, and thus free themselves of emotional suffering. While this is particularly challenging when offenses are repeated over and over, it can be accomplished. (This does not mean that in cases of abuse professional help should not be sought for the injurer). (For greater understanding, see C. Terry Warner, *Bonds That Make Us Free*, pp. 161-167. See also *Just Let Go*, the book or movie based on the story of Chris Williams who forgave the drunken young man whose car killed his family).

D. When we fully follow the Savior's example in this regard, we do not only free ourselves from suffering, **but we often actually bless the lives of the offender so they achieve greater spiritual growth and freedom. AND THIS IS THE WAY THE ATONMENT WORKS.**

VII. When anyone comes to understand the atonement and lets it bless their lives, the next great responsibility is to bear witness to others.

A. Understanding the atonement, Abinadi bore powerful witness of it, then sealed his testimony with his life.

B. "Now Abinadi said... I will not recall the words which I have spoken... for they are true; and that ye may know of their **surety I have suffered myself that I have fallen into your hands**. Yea, and I will suffer even until death, and I will not recall my words, and they shall stand as a testimony against you" (Mosiah 17:9-10). (Emphasis added)

C. Because of Abinadi's powerful testimony, Alma comes to believe in salvation through Christ. He too becomes willing to risk his life for that testimony (Mosiah 17:2-4).

D. Similarly, when each of us understands the atonement and feels its powerful influences in our life, we feel indebted to bear testimony of it to those who do not know.

1. When I entered the MTC to serve a mission to Ireland, Isaiah's prophecy of "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who bringeth good tidings" rang in my ears. Here I was in the very tops of those mountains. And here my feet were among those multitudes preparing to go throughout the world and "publish peace." **I was excited to be participating in the fulfillment of this great prophecy**. Yet as I looked upon all of us preparing to go out, most of us did not seem beautiful at all.

Shortly after I arrived in Ireland there was a zone conference. My companion had said that as a new missionary I might have to bear my testimony, but in the process of preparing and helping serve lunch, I had totally forgotten about it --- until I was actually called upon to do so.

Because of my experience in the MTC, the first thing that popped into my mind was Isaiah's prophecy, so I quoted it: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." But while my mouth spoke those words, it was the spirit which carried them forth. And I was personally stunned with the power which the spirit infused into them. Not only was the Spirit bearing witness, but I felt it was teaching me. The lesson for me was that while I was not yet seeing beauty in this missionary force, the Lord was! It was, after all, not about "we missionaries." **THE BEAUTY WAS IN THE MESSAGE THAT WE CARRIED.**

VIII. Elder Holland helps us remember our indebtedness for the Savior's atonement:

A. "Brothers and sisters, one of the great consolations of this Easter season is that because Jesus walked such a long, lonely path utterly alone, we do not have to do so. His solitary journey brought great company for our little version of that path—the merciful care of our Father in Heaven, the unfailing companionship of this Beloved Son, the consummate gift of the Holy Ghost, angels in heaven, family members on both sides of the veil, prophets and apostles, teachers, leaders, friends. **All of these and more have been given as companions for our mortal journey because of the Atonement of Jesus Christ and the Restoration of His gospel.** Trumpeted from the summit of Calvary is the truth that we will never be left alone nor unaided, even if sometimes we may feel that we are. Truly the Redeemer of us all said: "I will not leave you comfortless: [My Father and] I will come to you [and abide with you]...."

[On the other hand, may we also stand by Jesus Christ] "at all times and in all things, and in all places that [we] may be in, even until death, for surely that is how He stood by us when it was unto death and when He had to stand entirely and utterly alone. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen" (Jeffrey R. Holland, April Conference, 2009). (Emphasis added)