



## 27. Lamanite Missions of the Sons of Mosiah<sup>2</sup>

### Alma 17–23

"Ammon at the Waters of Sebus"

" . . . They were men of a sound understanding and they had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God. But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God." (Alma 17:2-3)

## The Sons of Mosiah

- Ammon<sup>2</sup>, and Aaron<sup>3</sup>, and Omner, and Himni (Mosiah 27:34)
- The Start of Their Lamanite Mission
  - " . . . 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--**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 that they might become friendly to one another, and that there should be no more contentions their hatred towards the Nephites . . .** in all the land which the Lord their God had given them." (Mosiah 28:1-2)
  - "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." (Mosiah 28:3)
- Mission Record
  - **Their accounts > records of Alma > abridgment of Mormon**

## The Account of the Lamanite Mission

(17:1–27:30, abridged historical summary with dramatic episodes and speeches)

- *Headnote: “An account of the sons of Mosiah, who rejected their rights to the kingdom for the word of God, and went up to the land of Nephi to preach to the Lamanites; their sufferings and deliverance—according to the record of Alma”*
- The Sons of Mosiah Set Out on Their Mission (17:1–18)
- Ammon in the Land of Ishmael (17:19–19:36)
- Ammon and Lamoni’s Father (20:1–30)
- The Sons of Mosiah Continue Their Missionary Work among the Lamanites (21:1–23)
- Aaron and the Conversion of Lamoni’s Father (22:1–35)
- Broad Success among the Lamanites (22:27–23:18)

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## The Sons of Mosiah Set Out on Their Mission (17:1–18, abridged historical narrative)

- FLASHBACK: As Alma was traveling from Gideon to Manti, he met the sons of Mosiah returning
  - “Alma did rejoice exceedingly to see his brethren; and what added more to his joy, **they were still his brethren in the Lord**; yea, and they had waxed strong in the knowledge of the truth . . .” (Alma 17:2a)
- Qualifications for Successful Missionaries (17:2b–5)
  - “. . . they were **men of a sound understanding** and they **had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God**. But this is not all; they had **given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God.**” (Alma 17:2b-3)
  - Mission report: “And they had been teaching the word of God for the space of fourteen years among the Lamanites, having had much success in bringing many to the knowledge of the truth.” (Alma 17:4)
- Having Traveled to the Lands of the Lamanites, They Separate (17:6–18)
  - Ammon blesses each (17:18)

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## Ammon in the Land of Ishmael

(17:19–19:36, **dramatic episode**)

- Ammon Becomes a Servant of King Lamoni (17:19–25)
- Ammon and the Robbers at the Water of Sebus (17:26–39)
  - Fighting the Robbers and the “Arms” Incident
    - *Note parallels between Ammon and the young David (slings and all!)*
- The Conversion of Lamoni (18:1–43)
  - Ammon’s Faithfulness (18:1–12)
  - Ammon’s Interview with Lamoni (18:13–43)
    - **Ammon Teaches of God and the Plan of Salvation** (18:24–39)
    - Lamoni Converted and Overcome by the Spirit (18:40–43)
- The Queen and Many Lamanites Converted (19:1–36)

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## Ammon Teaches of God and the Plan of Salvation (18:24–39, **part sermon, part summary**)

- The Great Spirit and God
  - Ammon’s teaching according to Lamoni’s understanding
- The Plan of Salvation
  - “Now when Ammon had said these words, **he began at the creation of the world, and also the creation of Adam, and told him all the things concerning the fall of man,** and rehearsed and laid before him the records and the holy scriptures. . . . But this is not all; for **he expounded unto them the plan of redemption, which was prepared from the foundation of the world; and he also made known unto them concerning the coming of Christ, and all the works of the Lord did he make known unto them.**” (Alma 18:36–39)
  - Teaching the Atonement in the Book of Mormon: usually the Creation, Fall, and Atonement together

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## Lamoni, the Queen, and Many Lamanites Converted

- Lamoni Converted and Overcome by the Spirit (18:40–43)
  - “And he began to cry unto the Lord, saying: ‘O Lord, have mercy . . .’ And now, when he had said this, he fell unto the earth, as if he were dead.” (Alma 18:41–42)
  - Symbolism of “falling down as if dead”
- Ammon’s Interview with the Queen (19:1–10)
- Lamoni, the Queen, and Ammon Overcome with the Spirit (19:11–15)
  - Symbolism of being overcome with sins, and later joy . . .
- Abish Gathers the People (19:16–18)
  - The role of Abish: what does this tell us about how the Lord can work with those seeking the truth even *before* missionaries find them?
- The People Murmur (19:19–28)
- The Queen, Lamoni, and Ammon Minister to the People (19:29–36)
  - “And thus we see the work of the Lord did commence among the Lamanites . . .” (19:36, editorial comment)

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## Ammon and Lamoni’s Father (20:1–30, dramatic episode)

- Lamoni and Ammon Meet Lamoni’s Father while Traveling Towards Middoni (20:1–8)
  - Lamoni’s father “king over all the land”
  - Individual cities and their territories have vassal kings, such as Lamoni
- Lamoni’s Father Threatens Ammon (20:9–19)
- Ammon Finds Favor with Lamoni’s Father (20:20–30)
  - Ammon overpowers the king but then shows mercy
  - Lamoni Favored (20:26)
  - Ammon’s Brothers Released (20:27–30)

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## The Sons of Mosiah Continue Their Lamanite Mission (21:1–23, abridged historical narrative)

- Flashback within a flashback!
  - After relating Ammon's encounter with Lamoni's father and his convincing him to release Ammon's brethren in Middoni, Mormon includes **an account of their difficult first missionary experiences**
  - Aaron's Experiences in the Land of Jerusalem Recounted (21:1–10)
  - Imprisonment Ammon's Brothers in Middoni Recounted (21:11–13)
- Why the difference between Ammon and Aaron's missions?
  - Partly the result of **opposition**: Amalekites and Amulonites
    - **Amalekites**: apostate Nephites of unknown background > order of Nehor, helped build Jerusalem
    - **Amulonites**: half-Nephite, descendants of wicked priests of King Noah and the daughters of the Lamanites
- Ammon's Brothers Released and Resume Their Missionary Work (21:14–17)
- Ammon and Lamoni Build the Church in Ishmael (21:18–23)

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## Aaron and Lamoni's Father (22:1–35, dramatic episode)

- Aaron Comes to the King (Lamoni's Father) in the Land of Nephi (22:1–5)
- Aaron Teaches of God and the Plan of Salvation (22:6–14, part sermon, part summary)
  - Compare and contrast the teaching and conversion of Lamoni and Lamoni's father
  - Lamoni's father seemed more theologically aware (e.g., understood who God was), perhaps because of the influence of the Amalekites
- The King Repents and Is Overcome by the Spirit (22:15–18)

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## The Conversion of Lamoni's Father

- “And it came to pass that after Aaron had expounded these things unto him, the king said: ‘**What shall I do that I may have this eternal life of which thou hast spoken? Yea, what shall I do that I may be born of God**, having this wicked spirit rooted out of my breast, and receive his Spirit, that I may be filled with joy, that I may not be cast off at the last day? Behold, said he, **I will give up all that I possess, yea, I will forsake my kingdom, that I may receive this great joy.**” (22:15)
  - He had been willing to give up *half* of his kingdom to save his life, now he is willing to give up *all* to save his soul
- “O God, Aaron hath told me that there is a God; and if there is a God, and if thou art God, wilt thou make thyself known unto me, and **I will give away all my sins to know thee**, and that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day. And now when the king had said these words, he was struck as if he were dead.” (22:18)
  - What is harder, giving away the things of this world or our sins?
- The Queen and the Multitude are Converted (22:19–26)

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## Broad Success among the Lamanites (22:27–23:18, abridged historical narrative)

- The King's Proclamation Regarding Religious Freedom (22:27–23:3)
  - Mormon's **Digression on the Geography** of the Promised Land (22:27b–35)
- The Sons of Mosiah Preach Freely (23:4)
- Characteristics of the Thousands Converted (23:5–7)
- Catalogue of Lamanites Converted (23:8–15)
  - Hardness of the Amalekites and Amulonites (23:14)
  - **The Anti-Nephi-Lehies (23:16–28)**
    - “the instead of Nephites and Lehites” or “count them as Nephites and Lehites”

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