

Book of Mormon Study – Mosiah 18-24

Online zoom Sunday School, 17 May 2020

Filled with Spirit

Mosiah 18:10-16

Note the number of times reference to "pour out his Spirit", "Spirit was upon him", and "filled with Spirit" etc.

Compare baptisms of Alma and Helam with Joseph and Oliver's (JSH 1:68-74) and Adam's (Moses 6:52-68)

Mosiah 18:13 (quoting from Stick of Joseph)

And when he had said these words, the spirit of YHWH was upon him, and he said, Helam, I immerse you, having s'mikhah from El Shaddai, as a testimony that you have entered into a covenant to serve him until you are dead as to the mortal body; and may the spirit of YHWH be poured out upon you, and may he grant unto you Eternal life through the redemption of Mashiach, whom he has prepared from the foundation of the world.

Stick of Joseph footnote Mosiah 18:13

s'mikhah - "Authority, ordination." From a word meaning "laying on of hands."

El Shaddai - God Almighty, literally "God, the double breasted." Identified in the Zohar with the Shekinah (Zohar 1 95a), the feminine aspect of Elohim.

Some notes about Heavenly Mother

Our scriptures speak carefully about the existence and importance of a Heavenly Mother: a Divine Female whose greatest attribute is to bestow wisdom upon the whole of this creation. It is possible to miss Her presence. That cultural and theological blindness is not because of Her absence from the scriptures. It is not hard to detect Her, if you know what to look for. WE just don't yet understand how to look.

The Old Testament was preserved and transmitted in the Hebrew language for generations. Some characteristics of that language are important to understand as part of this discussion. First, Hebrew has no neuter, only masculine and feminine. Furthermore, when there are multiple persons involved, even if only one member of a group is male, Hebrew uses only the masculine to refer to the group. Women and men collectively are referred to using a masculine noun or pronoun.

When a masculine noun or pronoun from the Hebrew language is translated into English, English language readers assume it means "man" or "men" and excludes "women." In English we can use neuter pronouns like "they" or "them" to refer to a group of both men and women. Hebrew would use "men" or "he" if the group included even a single male in the group.

We all know that the Hebrew word “Elohim” is used to refer to God and that it is plural. In English it should be translated as “Gods,” but because we allow theology to control translating the text, the term “Elohim” in Hebrew is therefore rendered in English as a singular “God.” It should be plural; and if plural, rendered masculine in English. But that is Hebrew to English, and does not mean, as we shall see, there is no female among the Elohim.

The story of creation starts by identifying Heavenly Parents, a couple clearly described as the true and living “God.” In the King James Version, the creation of mankind is told in these words: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

The context of the words “created he (God) him (man)” is immediately clarified to refer to both the male and female and not just the male: “created he him; male and female created he them.” The English translation follows the masculine pronoun implied in Hebrew. Therefore, looking at it in the Hebrew language, there were two persons described and only one of them was male. It could be translated: “created they (Gods) them (man and woman); male and female.” In the King James Version the Gods are described using a masculine pronoun taken from the Hebrew. Moving from Hebrew into English, the translation stayed true to the Hebrew and the human couple is likewise described using a masculine pronoun. They are called “him” in English because of this.

The words “So God created man in his (God’s) own image,” affirm two points:

First, the plurality of God.

Second, that plurality is a couple that includes both a male and a female. Man is created in God’s image, and that image is a couple: a man and a woman. This is not figurative language. It is literally describing mankind having two sexes and that is godlike, or what God’s own “image” is.

Mosiah 18:17

“And they were called the church of God, or the church of Christ”

What is “the church”?

Is it an organization or club that people join?

Is it the hierarchy, the officials, or the leaders? (As when people ask “What is the church’s stand on this issue?”)

Is it the building we meet in or the meetings we attend? (As in “Let’s clean the church” or “I’m attending church”)

Is it “the kingdom of God on earth?”

What is the scriptural definition of “church”?

In our bibles “church” is translated from the Greek word “Ecclesia” which loosely meant “the called out ones” or “assembly”. The word ecclesia didn’t even have a religious connotation in the beginning. It was a military term, as when soldiers are called out to assemble. It later came to describe any assembly of people who shared a common interest, such as a town council or guild. So when translating the New Testament from Greek to English, the King James translators simply took every instance where “assembly” appeared in Greek and substituted the work “church”. The term can also be synonymously replaced with “congregation” or “community” and it will fit.

Behold, this is my doctrine—whosoever repenteth and cometh unto me, the same is my church. Whosoever declareth more or less than this, the same is not of me, but is against me; therefore he is not of my church. (D&C 10:67-68)

Mosiah 19:2-3

There is a division among the people. We read that "the forces of the king were small, having been reduced." It appears the division and contention that followed were related to this reduction in the king's forces. This after Alma had fled with about 450 (Alma's group started out with 204 souls, 18:16, but by the time they fled there were about 450 18:35). As it relates to last week's discussion on numbers of people that made up the kingdom, were Alma's group's numbers significant enough to have an effect on the king's forces? Whatever the details may be, these things seem to play a role in the division and contention that followed. Note also it was a minority who started to make an impact on the changes that were starting to take place in the kingdom.

Mosiah 19:15

What did Lamanites want with precious metals? Or the Nephites for that matter? Was this used as a medium of exchange (money)? (see 24:7) We know Satan uses money to control and buy up armies and navies and reign with blood and horror on the earth. (Hugh Nibley has written quite a bit on this topic)

Mosiah 19:20-21

King put to death by fire. Wicked priests flee.

Stick of Joseph footnote for Mosiah 20:2 ("one day")

The underlying Hebrew may have been *yom echad* יוֹם אֶחָד, which can be used idiomatically to mean "a certain day." The context here is that the "certain day" was Tu B'av (the 15th of Av), an ancient, minor Jewish festival that marks the beginning of the grape harvest. It is similar in romantic character with Valentine's Day and is traditionally celebrated with maidens dancing. This event parallels that of Judg. 21:16-23, which also occurred at a "feast of" (Judg. 21:19). According to the Talmud, this "feast of" was the 15th of Av: "Rabbi Simeon ben Gamliel said, 'There never were in Israel greater days of joy than the Fifteenth of Av and the Day of Atonement'... what happened on the fifteenth of Av?... Rabbi Joseph said in the name of Rabbi Nahman: 'It is the day on which the Tribe of Benjamin was permitted to re-enter the congregation [of Israel], as it is said, now the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpah, saying: There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife (Judg. 21:1). From what was their exposition?' Rab said: From the phrase 'any of us' which was interpreted to mean, 'but not from any of our children'" (b.Ta'anit 30b).

Stick of Joseph footnote for Mosiah 20:5

See Judg. 21:16–23, where the men of Benjamin, who could not otherwise obtain wives, were permitted to kidnap the maidens who danced at Tu B'av.

Mosiah 21:6-12

In light of our earlier discussion about numbers that comprise the kingdom, how great affect did these losses have on them?

Mosiah 21:21

Wicked priests had come into the city by night and carried off grain and other precious things. Yet in 23:35-36, Amulon is with the lost Lamanites when they ask Alma to escort them back (about 8 days journey, 23:3) to the city of Nephi. Why does Alma remember the way back, but not Amulon?

Stick of Joseph footnote Mosiah 21:26

Note that the discovery of Coriantumr shortly after the final destruction of the Yeredite nation may have taken place much earlier (perhaps around ~ 550), with only the report of that discovery being made during the days of Moshiah the 1st. (cf Omni 1:19-21)

Mosiah 21:31

Yea, they did mourn for their departure, for they knew not whither they had fled. Now they would have gladly joined with them, for they themselves had entered into a covenant with God to serve him and keep his commandments.

Were these among the same people who earlier (in 18:32. See also 12:9,16), when Alma's group were gathering and meeting by the waters of Mormon, were calling the hotline number to turn in their neighbors?

Mosiah 21:31-32

Limhi and his people had entered into a covenant.

Covenants. Look up my study I did relating covenants taken in Boise and my presentation including Dead Sea Scrolls.

Mosiah 21:33

Did Ammon decline because he felt unworthy despite having authority, or was it because he considered himself an unworthy servant he felt he did not have authority?

Is immersion part of the law of Moses? The people are aware of this practice at time of Ammon with Limhi - and if they could just unite with Alma's people we'd be glad to receive this immersion. King

Benjamin doesn't mention it. Ammon seems to be aware of the practice but doesn't feel worthy to perform it. The people are aware that Alma practiced it. Did Abinadi teach something about it, or were there those familiar with Alma having practiced it even though they did not join the group that left with them?

Mosiah 21:34

They did not at this time form themselves into a church (or assembly). See earlier discussion on church/assembly.

Mosiah 22:15-16

How large of a group is it that left with Ammon up to Zarahemla. They didn't leave tracks with all their animals and gold etc. that Lamanites lost their tracks after 2 days? Was this because the number of the people was small enough that the tracks they left could become easily hidden, or did this have more to do with the Lord's intervention on their behalf?

Mosiah 23:12-13

Rule under a wicked king is considered "bondage". Limhi's people being taxed by Lamanites was considered "bondage" (see 21:15). King Noah introduced a tax on his people (11:3). Was it because they are taxed that makes it "bondage"?

Alma considers being brought into iniquity under a wicked king constitutes "bondage" or "bonds of iniquity".

Mosiah 23:20

Numbers again. Alma's people "multiply". The 450 plus people want to make Alma a king. It doesn't have to be a very big group of people to make a kingdom.

Mosiah 23:21

Will the Lord chasten even a righteous people? Why must our faith be tried? (see LoF 6, particularly para 4-8)

Life is an open book test. We only need to realize the test is underway to be able to pass it. (T&C 159:18)

Mosiah 24:4-6

King Laman has Amulon teach the Lamanites the language of the Nephites. How different would their language be at this time? Could it mean teach them writing?

Mosiah 24:8

We don't read anything about Alma's wife, but here it tells us about his children. If Alma the younger was a young man at the time he was "stealing away the hearts of the people" (Mosiah 27:8-9, between around 18-26 years later), then how old would he have been at this time? Would he have remembered being persecuted by Amulon's children?

[Limhi, Alma, and Passover Patterns](#)

By Ronald P. Millett, Eldon G. Lytle, and John P. Pratt · October 12, 2005

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