



## Mosiah 15

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## Mosiah 15.<sup>1-4</sup>— meditation

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<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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—<sup>3</sup>the Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the Son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and Son—<sup>4</sup>and they are one God, yea, the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth.

This reading has been a source of much discussion, debate, and confusion. Much of the confusion comes, it seems, from trying to force it to address issues that it was never intended to address. If Abinadi is who the tradition claims him to be—a prophet living in 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC America and speaking to a live audience that sat before him and whose misunderstandings he was attempting to enlighten and to whose needs he ministered—it seems inappropriate to read and handle this reading as if it were some sort of commentary on the triune Godhead. It certainly clarifies nothing about that long-lasting Christian debate. Rather, it muddies things up even more.

It seems best, then, to understand it as addressing another matter. What is that matter? Here, Abinadi is offering insight into the nature of Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament and of the Book of Mormon. His central point—and one that seems to have gone unappreciated by Old Testament prophets—is that Jesus/ the Messiah/ the Son of God and the God, Yahweh, were the same Being.

Think of it. Think of all the glory, and understanding, and power that the Old Testament ascribes to Him. They are infinite. And yet, according to Abinadi's witness, this glorious Being, laid it all aside. Became mortal. Experienced limitations that, at times, caused all sorts of pain, suffering, and humiliation. Perhaps to some degree, powerlessness. Truly it is a marvel. Unfathomable to me. But, I am no less in awe of Him for all my perplexity and confusion.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: October 24, 2024)*

## Mosiah 15.<sup>5-7</sup>— meditation

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<sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>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. <sup>7</sup>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.

After establishing that the disembodied God, Yahweh, and the embodied Jesus, the Messiah and Son of God, were the same Being, Abinadi turns his attention to the sort of life to which the glorious Yahweh willingly submitted himself in entering mortality. He was “mocked, and scourged, and cast out, and disowned by his people.” The Lion of the Tribe of Judah was “led” (notice the passive voice) “as a sheep before the shearer.” Having been sheared, he was then “led” (once more passive) to the slaughter through crucifixion.

Notwithstanding the pain and humiliation of it all, Jesus never wavered but followed the desires, the intents, the plans that he had made as Yahweh and while sitting on his divine throne in heaven. In so doing, he revealed the character of God. He revealed a character that would go to any lengths to touch humans and draw them to Himself. He would go to any lengths to assist in their understanding of the kinds of Beings that lived and endured in the universe. He would go to any length to help them advance in their own character such that they too might live and endure in a very large, very complex, and very diverse universe. Here, tabernacled in clay as He, we learn the elementary lessons that will allow us to live and endure in this very challenging universe.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: October 24, 2024)*

<sup>10</sup>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?

<sup>11</sup>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. <sup>12</sup>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? <sup>13</sup>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.

To live the kind of enduring life that God lives, i.e., to be God's seed, we must adopt the principles of an enduring life by which He and all other enduring beings live. Because these principles are so diametrically opposed to the principles of this world, these principles of endurance can be difficult to grasp and even harder to live and incorporate into our being.

This effort, the labor of sanctification, is a lifetime effort that is universally incomplete at the time of death. But, we must embark of the journey. In order to make progress on this life journey—while not reaching the destination—we will require assistance. Supernatural aid, if you will. We will need God's participation in our lives. But, we will need to believe in that participation and in God's willingness to participate in our messy lives.

The first step in our having faith in God's willing and eager participation in our lives is experiencing His presence and participation through the remission of sins that God so gracefully bestows. This comes, of course, at our most vulnerable and sinful state. When we see His willingness to enter into even this, the worse of our moments, we can easily believe that He will enter into our better, though still imperfect moments as we strive for sanctification—to become an enduring individual, God's seed.

It will not do, then, to put off the day of the remission of sins. We must receive it today. To not do so, is to begin the journey of sanctification without having the key to success—knowledge that God willingly and eagerly is with us and aids us in our imperfect labors to become an enduring being and living with Him and other enduring beings. It is like starting a trip on foot that requires a rocket ship. This experience of receiving a remission of sins and thus knowing of God's willing presence in our lives as we proceed toward becoming an enduring being is what it means to “follow the prophet.” This is the true meaning of being the seed of God, or the children of God.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: October 24, 2024)*

## Mosiah 15.<sup>14-19</sup>— Meditation

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<sup>14</sup>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!

<sup>15</sup>And O how beautiful upon the mountains were their feet!

<sup>16</sup>And again, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those that are still publishing peace!

<sup>17</sup>And again, how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of those who shall hereafter publish peace,  
yea, from this time henceforth and forever!

And behold, I say unto you, this is not all.

<sup>18</sup>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;

<sup>19</sup>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.

We began our Advent/Christmas readings and meditations with Isaiah's promise of comfort so appropriate to the Christmas Season.

“Comfort ye,  
comfort ye my people, saith your God.  
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem,  
and cry unto her,  
that her warfare is accomplished,  
that her iniquity is pardoned...”<sup>1</sup>

In today's reading, the great Book of Mormon prophet, Abinadi, turns to that same Isaiah for a word of comfort and peace. The word of comfort and peace that he finds is, “Thy God reigneth!”

Many speak and promise of this reign, but it is Jesus, himself, who most clearly announces the glad tidings, “Thy God reigneth.” Indeed, it is he who is the “the *founder* of peace” and the founder of God's reign. This message of the reign of God could easily represent the core message and purpose of Jesus' earthly ministry. Mark records that upon leaving his forty-day ordeal in the wilderness, Jesus, as the first public act and statement of his ministry,

“came into Galilee, heralding God's good news, saying that the time has arrived and God's reign has drawn near. Turn your mind to and believe the good news”<sup>2</sup>

So many have reigned on earth. So many kingdoms have come and gone. All of them have been controlled and directed by values, ambitions, and desires that served to discomfort, divide, oppress, and

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<sup>1</sup> Isaiah 40.<sup>1-2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Mark 1.<sup>14-15</sup>; author's translation. Jesus invites his audience to turn away from being ruled by this world and its values to being ruled by God and His values. This will, of course, entail a change in values and behaviors, but this change will come because individuals give entrance to God's instructions and partake of God's power.

even kill. This was the message of John the Revelator's four horsemen of the apocalypse. This was the message of the great and spacious building found in Lehi's dream and the angel's explanatory visions to Nephi. We must turn from these rebelling nations and kingdoms that bellow their pride so loudly. We must follow the humble, the meek, the mild Jesus into his Father's peaceful kingdom.

So, Isaiah's look forward and Jesus' heralding, "Thy God reigneth," is good news indeed. For those in whose personal life God reigns as he does in Zion, every season is a season of peace and comfort. The Christmas Season is a particularly good season to celebrate the peaceful reign of God, for it is in many ways the traditional season during which the peaceful reign of God was founded. "Behold," promised a heavenly angel,

"I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."<sup>3</sup>

Then, "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.'<sup>4</sup>

Where would we be without him? Abinadi has the answer. Were it not for him, we, with "all mankind must have perished." But we do not perish because Jesus initiated the reign or the kingdom of God into our lives so that He might take control. It is not only Jesus' feet that are beautiful, but every inch of him. His beauty is "far beyond, yea, exceeding of all beauty."<sup>5</sup>

What search could possibly compare with and be worthy of our greatest labors more than the search that ends in the discovery and experience of the peaceful reign of the most beautiful of all beings, now and forever.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

*(edition: October 24, 2024)*

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<sup>3</sup> Luke 2.<sup>10-11</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Luke 2.<sup>13-14</sup>

<sup>5</sup> 1 Nephi 11.<sup>8</sup>