

**Mosiah 23:5**1 *Industrious*

Industrious: Working energetically and devotedly; hard working; diligent.

*Webster's Dictionary*

2 Our primary purpose was to set up...a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift, and self-respect be once more established amongst our people. The aim of the Church is to help the people to help themselves.

Heber J. Grant, *Gospel Standards*, 123-24

**Mosiah 23:9**3 *Caught in a snare*

If you imagine that your prior sins, character flaws, and poor decisions prevent you from receiving all of God's blessings, consider the experience of Alma the Elder. Referring to his younger years as an immoral priest for the wicked King Noah, Alma admitted, "I myself was caught in a snare, and did many things which were abominable in the sight of the Lord, which caused me sore repentance" (Mosiah 23:9). Yet Alma's repentance was so complete and Christ's Atonement so infinite that Alma became a prophet and was promised eternal life (see Mosiah 26:20). As you do your best to be obedient and repentant, you too can receive a place in the celestial kingdom through the Atonement and grace of Jesus Christ (see Titus 3:7; 1 Peter 5:10; 2 Nephi 2:6-8; 10:24-25; 25:23; Enos 1:27; Moroni 7:41; D&C 138:14).

Anthony D. Perkins, *Ensign*, Nov. 2006 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006], 78

**Mosiah 23:9-10**4 *Repentance—suffering*

For those who have strayed, the Savior has provided a way back. But it is not without pain. Repentance is not easy; it takes time—painful time! You deceive yourself if you believe you can break the promises you have made with Heavenly Father and suffer no consequence.

M. Russell Ballard, *Ensign*, May 1993, 7

**Mosiah 23:14**

5 The care we take in the choice of a physician ought be nothing in comparison with the caution we take in the choice of those with whom we trust our eternal well-being. A wise father observed that he would rather trust his sheep to the care of a wolf than his children to a teacher who did not willingly keep the commandments of God. Jesus of Nazareth said it thus: "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6). What then of those who offend the infant in things of faith? the spiritually insecure? or those who believe or trust too readily? It matters little to the harvest if those sowing tares with the wheat do so maliciously or in ignorance. Safety rests with allowing none to be our teachers or our spiritual leaders unless they be men and women of God.

Millet & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on BOM*, Vol 2: p. 280

**Mosiah 23:18**6 *Nourish them with things pertaining to righteousness*

Spiritual strength is inseparably connected with righteousness. Many have attempted to find strength or nourishment for their spirit with some form of positive thinking. It need be remembered that the devil and his legions can both take and teach courses in positive thinking and self-assertiveness. That of which the scriptural writ speaks is a power that can be had only in righteousness.

Ibid p. 282

**Mosiah 23:21****7** *Chasten his people*

As used in this context, to chasten a people is to purify them, to cleanse them, to prepare them for greater blessings (see Webster's 1828 dictionary). Suffering sanctifies. "My people must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them, even the glory of Zion; and he that will not bear chastisement is not worthy of my kingdom" (D&C 136:31). Thus the Lord has said: "Whom I love I also chasten that their sins may be forgiven, for with the chastisement I prepare a way for their deliverance" (D&C 95:1; see also Hebrews 12:6).

The Lord's people must be tried as by fire. It is great challenges that produce great people, and great difficulties that produce great faith. Of the Savior—and, by extension, all who seek society with him—we are told, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:8-9).

Ibid, p. 285

**8** *He trieth their patience and their faith*

We can hardly lay claim to any attribute of godliness unless we have been tried and tested on the matter.

Ibid, 286

**9** *Patience is not indifference. Actually, it is caring very much, but being willing, nevertheless, to submit both to the Lord and to what the scriptures call "process of time."*

Patience is tied very closely to faith in our Heavenly Father. Actually, when we are unduly impatient, we are suggesting that we know what is best—better than does God. Or, at least, we are asserting that our timetable is better than his....

We read in Mosiah about how the Lord simultaneously tries the patience of his people even as he tries their faith (see Mosiah 23:21). One is not only to endure—but to endure well and gracefully those things which the Lord "seeth fit to inflict upon [us]" (Mosiah 3:19), just as did a group of ancient American Saints who were bearing unusual burdens but who submitted "cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord" (Mosiah 24:15)....

Sometimes that which we are doing is correct enough but simply needs to be persisted in—patiently—not for a minute or a moment but sometimes for years....

Patience is a willingness, in a sense, to watch the unfolding purposes of God with a sense of wonder and awe—rather than pacing up and down within the cell of our circumstance.

Too much anxious opening of the oven door and the cake falls instead of rising! So it is with us. If we are always selfishly taking our temperature to see if we are happy, we won't be....

Whereas faith and patience are companions, so are selfishness and impatience....

Patience is, therefore, clearly not fatalistic, shoulder-shrugging resignation; it is accepting a divine rhythm to life; it is obedience prolonged. Patience stoutly resists pulling up the daisies to see how the roots are doing!

Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, Oct. 1980 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1980], 28-30

**10** *When a worthy priesthood bearer is led to pronounce specific blessings, we can be greatly comforted. Yet there is no guarantee of outcome without effort on our part...We must do our part for the blessing to be realized. We must strive to be worthy and to exercise the requisite faith to do what we are able...It is through the combination of our doing what is within our power to accomplish and the power of the Lord that the blessing is realized....*

A relative asked Elder Spencer W. Kimball for a blessing to combat a crippling disease. For some time Elder Kimball prepared himself spiritually; then, fasting, he was prompted to bless her to be healed. Some weeks later she returned, angry and complaining that she was "fed up" with waiting for the Lord to give the promised relief.

He responded: "Now I understand why you have not been blessed. You must be patient, do your part, and express gratitude for the smallest improvement noted."

She repented, followed scrupulously his counsel, and eventually was made well.

Richard G. Scott, in *Conference Report*, Oct. 1991 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1991], 116-117

- 11 Elder Orson F. Whitney (1855-1931) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles taught that everything we experience teaches us valuable lessons: "No pain that we suffer, no trial that we experience is wasted. It ministers to our education, to the development of such qualities as patience, faith, fortitude and humility. All that we suffer and all that we endure, especially when we endure it patiently, builds up our characters, purifies our hearts, expands our souls, and makes us more tender and charitable, more worthy to be called the children of God...and it is through sorrow and suffering, toil and tribulation, that we gain the education that we come here to acquire and which will make us more like our Father and Mother in heaven.

Cited in Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle* [1972], 98

- 12 John Taylor quoted Joseph Smith:

We must be tried and tested even as Abraham and other men of God....And He will feel after you and wrench your very heart strings...and if you cannot stand it, you will not be fit for an inheritance in the Celestial Kingdom of God.

*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 24, p. 197

- 13 President Ezra Taft Benson:

"There are times when you simply have to righteously hang on and outlast the devil until his depressive spirit leaves you....To press on in noble endeavors, even while surrounded by a cloud of depression, will eventually bring you out on top into the sunshine."

*Ensign*, Nov. 1974, p. 67

- 14 The message I bring this evening is a clarion call for you, the young adults of this chosen generation, to lead the world in a return to virtue. What is virtue? Why is it important? And how can each of us join together in this noble and sacred cause?

Let me begin with a simple story of a pioneer girl named Agnes Caldwell. Agnes told of her experience in the Willie Handcart Company in 1856. At the time, she was only nine years of age. She related:

*Although only tender years of age, I can yet close my eyes and see everything in panoramic precision before me—the ceaseless walking, walking, ever to remain in my memory. Many times I would become so tired and, childlike, would hang on the cart, only to be gently pushed away. Then I would throw myself by the side of the road and cry. Then realizing they were all passing me by, I would jump to my feet and make an extra run to catch up.*

She goes on to share:

*Just before we crossed the mountains, relief wagons reached us, and it certainly was a relief. The infirm and aged were allowed to ride, all able-bodied continuing to walk. When the wagons started out, a number of us children decided to see how long we could keep up with the wagons, in hopes of being asked to ride. At least that is what my great hope was. One by one they all fell out, until I was the last one remaining, so determined was I that I should get a ride. After what seemed the longest run I ever made before or since, the driver...called to me, "Say, sissy, would you like a ride?" I answered in my very best manner, "Yes sir." At this he reached over, taking my hand, clucking to his horses to make me run, with legs that seemed to me could run no farther. On we went, to what to me seemed miles. What went through my head at that time was that he was the meanest man that ever lived....Just at what seemed the breaking point, he stopped. Taking a blanket, he wrapped me up and lay me in the bottom of the wagon, warm and comfortable. Here I had time to change my mind, as I surely did, knowing full well by doing this he saved me from freezing when taken into the wagon.*

*Agnes Caldwell and her family arrived safely in the Great Salt Lake Valley November 9, 1856. They settled in Brigham City, Utah, where Agnes met and married Chester Southworth. They became the parents of thirteen children [and] helped settle an LDS colony in Cardston, Alberta, Canada.*

Had the driver of that wagon taken Agnes into the wagon without making her run, she would have surely succumbed to the bitter cold. And had Agnes chosen to give up and fall behind, her story may have ended much differently. However, for Agnes this became her defining moment, and though the decision to run did not make perfect sense at the time, she ran anyway. She ran toward Zion—following in the footsteps of the prophet Brigham Young and heeding the voice of the Lord, who said, “Let them awake, and arise, and come forth, and not tarry, for I, the Lord, command it” (D&C 117:2).

This was the run of her life! It was hard, and she resisted. But by running she was able to generate enough body heat to keep warm and keep her from freezing during her ride in the wagon. Each of you is on a journey to Zion, and, like it did with Agnes, what the Lord has said applies: “Awake, and arise, . . . come forth, and [do] not tarry” (D&C 117:2), for Zion is not only a place—Zion is “the pure in heart” (D&C 97:21). And purity of heart must be your goal in order to reach that final destination! Never before has there been a generation quite like yours. You are better prepared and better equipped. You have what it takes, and now is the time for the run of your life—your run to Zion!

President Thomas S. Monson and those before him have shown us the way. The path is clearly marked, and the pace is steady and strong. You, like Agnes, are being asked to cross the plains. You may not have to give up all your earthly possessions, but the journey to Zion requires that you give up all of your sins so that you may come to know Him—the true and living Christ. You may even be asked to run to the point of exhaustion, but by doing so, the warmth of the Lord’s love will preserve you for the great work yet to come.

What you are being asked to do is the same thing the Lord asked when He named His Church The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In Doctrine and Covenants 115 we read, “Arise and shine forth, that thy light may be a standard for the nations” (verse 50). Little Agnes Caldwell ran toward Zion, and by so doing she and all those like her set forth a standard for the nations and for this generation. Her journey to Zion had everything to do with her faith and testimony. It had everything to do with Joseph Smith and Moroni and Oliver Cowdery and Nephi and Moses and Joshua and even Thomas S. Monson. And it had and has everything to do with you and me. Agnes ran because she had a testimony. Her mother knew the gospel was true and taught it to her daughter. They sacrificed their all in order to come to Zion and there build a temple to our God. They knew that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God and that the Book of Mormon was true. They knew that the blessings to be bestowed in holy temples were necessary for the plan to be accomplished. And they knew, as Moroni repeatedly taught Joseph Smith, that “if it were not so, the whole earth would be utterly wasted at his coming” (JS-H 1:39).

Zion was then, and is now, the goal. It is the cause of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. And now is the time, as Mormon and Moroni exhorted, to “be faithful in Christ” (Moroni 9:25) and to “lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift, nor the unclean thing” (Moroni 10:30). Now is the time to “awake, and arise from the dust, . . . that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled” (Moroni 10:31). Now is the time to return to virtue!

Elaine S. Dalton, BYU Fireside, “Zion is the Pure in Heart,” Sept. 13, 2009

### **Mosiah 23:22**

#### *Trust in Him*

15

I am reminded of the experience in the New Testament when Jesus fed the five thousand with just five loaves and two fishes. (See Matthew 14:17-21.) There is a subtle message within this miracle that speaks to our potential when we work with the Lord in a “thy will” partnership. While it may have been true that the disciples could not have fed five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes, they discovered what could happen when they gave the best they had and then put it into the hands of the Lord.

They could have contended with the Savior by saying, "I'm sorry, but there isn't enough here to feed a multitude. We'll just have to send most of them home hungry."

There is nothing in the text to indicate that this took place. They gave the best they had with faith that the Lord would do the rest. Is this not what the Lord requires of us? It is his work, and he takes our meager best when presented with a consecrated "thy will" heart. And as the New Testament disciples learned, he makes up the difference.

We see this miracle happening every day in places like the Missionary Training Center, where hundreds of missionaries are asked to do things they know are as impossible as feeding five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes. And yet when they leave that boot-camp for missionaries, they know that the Lord has taken their meager best and will use it to feed the multitudes throughout the world.

They come like trembling children on the first day of kindergarten and leave a short time later with a glimpse of what the Savior can do with them if their attitude is right. And if they understand this all the way down to their souls, it becomes a great gift they can take home with them at the conclusion of their missions. Students, married couples, Primary teachers, honest business people—all can see their meager five loaves and two fishes turn into a miracle through totally placing their lives into the Lord's hands.

Jack B. Christianson & K. Douglas Bassett, *Life Lessons from the BOM*, pp. 165-166

### **Mosiah 23:35-38**

16

The question may be asked why Alma's group was put into bondage since they had repented, had made covenants, and had served the Lord for some time. The answer seems to go back to Abinadi's prophecy. When he first came to the Nephites in the land of Nephi, he warned that they would be brought into bondage if they did not repent (see Mosiah 11:21). This warning went unheeded until Abinadi returned two years later. His warning then proclaimed that they *would* be brought into bondage, and if they still refused to repent they would be destroyed (see Mosiah 12:2, 8). It was at this time that Alma was converted and began to teach the words of Abinadi secretly to those Nephites who would listen. Thus, even though Alma and his people had repented, it was still necessary that Abinadi's first prophecy be fulfilled.

A great principle we can learn from this portion of the book of Mosiah (chapters 19-24) is that the longer we wait to repent and forsake our sins, the more serious the consequences will be. Elder Melvin J. Ballard reiterated this principle: "Every man and woman who is putting off until the next life the task of correcting and overcoming the weakness of the flesh are sentencing themselves to years of bondage, for no man or woman will come forth in the resurrection until he has completed his work, until he has overcome, until he has done as much as he can do." (Clyde J. Williams, *Deliverance from Bondage*.)

Papers from 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Sperry Symposium, 1989, edited by Monte S. Nyman & Charles D. Tate, Jr. *The Book of Mormon, Mosiah, Salvation Only Through Jesus Christ*, p. 272