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Chapter XV

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CHAPTER XV.

MOSIAH'S GOOD REIGN—THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS ADVENT—HE ASSEMBLES THE PEOPLE—THE BAPTISM OF LIMHI—CHURCHES ORGANIZED THROUGHOUT THE LAND.

WE MUST now leave the Lamanites in the land of Nephi, and return to king Mosiah in Zarahemla.

It will be remembered that we left the people of Zarahemla at the death of king Benjamin, and the ascent of his son Mosiah to the throne.

Mosiah was born in the land of Zarahemla, 154 or 155 years before the coming of Christ. He was instructed in all the wisdom of the Nephites, and trained up in youth in the fear of the Lord. By the direction of the Almighty he was consecrated by his father to succeed him on the throne, which ceremony was attended to at the time the whole nation had gathered at the temple to listen to the words of their aged and beloved ruler; at the same time they all covenanted with God to be his servants ever after. There, in the presence of his future subjects, under the shadow of the holy house, he was set apart to rule a people whose sins were all forgiven through their abiding faith in the unborn Savior. Could a king come to a throne under more auspicious circumstances? Profound peace with all outside his dominions, and within its borders reigned union, contentment, prosperity, happiness, and what is more, righteousness.

Mosiah was thirty years old when he began to reign, which event happened 476 years after Lehi left Jerusalem.

Mosiah followed in the footsteps of his father, taught his people to be industrious, and set them the example by tilling a portion of the earth to maintain himself and his dependents.

It was in the fourth year of his reign that Mosiah sent out the expedition under Ammon to find the people of Zeniff. Of its success, and the happy advent of Limhi and his people, and of Alma and his people, we have already spoken.

Soon after the arrival of Limhi and Alma, Mosiah gathered all the Nephites to one place that they might hear how God had dealt with both. First he had the records of Zeniff and Alma read in their hearing, at which they were greatly amazed; but when they beheld the new comers they were filled with exceeding great joy, mingled with sadness for the loss of their kindred slain by the inhuman Lamanites, and many tears were shed for those departed ones. Again, when they listened to the marvelous deliverances wrought by heaven in behalf of Alma and his faithful few, the assembled thousands raised their voices on high and gave thanks to God. Still another shade of feeling came across their sympathetic hearts, even of pain and anguish for the sinful and polluted state of their Lamanite brethren, when their condition was explained to them.

Taking advantage of the presence of so many of his subjects, Mosiah addressed them on such matters as he deemed necessary and desirable. At his request Alma also taught them. When assembled in large bodies Alma went from one multitude to another, preaching repentance and faith in the Lord. After hearing his teachings Limhi requested to be baptized,

and so did all his people. Then Alma baptized them in the same manner as he had their brethren. He afterwards, by Mosiah's direction, went through the land, organizing and establishing churches and ordaining priests and teachers over every church. Thus were seven churches established at this time in the land of Zarahemla.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE UNBELIEF OF THE YOUTH OF ZARAHENLA—THE YOUNGER ALMA AND THE SONS OF MOSIAH—THEY ENCOURAGE THE PERSECUTIONS AGAINST THE CHURCH—THEY ARE MET BY AN ANGEL—HIS MESSAGE—ALMA'S AWFUL CONDITION—HIS VISION AND TESTIMONY—THE CHANGED LIFE OF THE YOUNG MEN.

IN THE course of years many of the rising generation gave no heed to the word of God. These were mostly such as were too young to enter into covenant with the Lord at the time that king Benjamin anointed Mosiah to be his successor. Not only did they themselves reject the doctrines of the atonement, the resurrection and other gospel principles, but they led away many of the members of the church into darkness and iniquity, and abused, reviled and persecuted those who remained faithful to the cause of Christ. Neither the fear of the civil nor of the divine law restrained them. Their course, and that of those in the church who gave way to evil doing, gave much trouble, and caused deep