
3 Nephi 29 — Spurn Not the Doings of the Lord — The Coming Forth as a Sign

3 Nephi 29: Mormon addresses the latter-day reader directly. When the Lord sees fit that these sayings come unto the Gentiles, then they may know that the covenant the Father made with Israel — their restoration to the lands of their inheritance — is already beginning to be fulfilled. They may know that all the words of the holy prophets shall be fulfilled, and need not say the Lord delays his coming or imagine that his words are vain, for the Lord will remember his covenant. When they see these sayings coming forth, they need no longer spurn the doings of the Lord, for the sword of his justice is in his right hand, and if they spurn it shall soon overtake them. Wo unto him that spurns the doings of the Lord, that denies the Christ and his works, that denies the revelations of the Lord and says the Lord no longer works by revelation, prophecy, gifts, tongues, healings, or the power of the Holy Ghost. Wo unto him who says, to get gain, that there can be no miracle wrought by Jesus Christ — for he becomes like the son of perdition, for whom there was no mercy. And they need no longer hiss, nor spurn, nor make game of the Jews or any remnant of Israel, for the Lord remembers his covenant unto them; they cannot turn the right hand of the Lord to the left, that he may not execute judgment to the fulfilling of the covenant. The chapter is Mormon's warning across the centuries — that the coming forth of this record is the sign the covenant is being kept, and that to spurn the doings of the Lord, to deny his miracles and revelations, or to mock his covenant people, brings wo and the sword of his justice.

This short chapter is Mormon stepping forward to speak *directly to us* — the latter-day Gentiles who would hold this record — and his message is a warning: *do not spurn the doings of the Lord*. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon, Mormon says, is itself a *sign* that God is keeping his covenant with Israel, that the long-promised restoration is *already beginning to be fulfilled*. And so the appearance of this record is a moment of decision for the reader: it is either received as the work of God — the sign that his covenant is being kept, his prophets vindicated, his power still active — or it is *spurned*, mocked, dismissed. And to *spurn* it, Mormon warns, is to invite *wo*, for it is to deny the living God of revelation and miracle, and to mock the covenant people he has promised to remember. The chapter is Mormon's plea across the centuries: when you see this record come forth, *do not despise it* — recognize it as the doing of the Lord.

Hebrew Word Studies

bazah (בָּזָח) — "to despise, hold in contempt, scorn, treat with disdain" — **bazah**, to despise, to regard as worthless or beneath notice, to treat with contempt; the opposite of honoring or esteeming. To spurn the doings of the Lord is to **bazah** them — to treat the work of God as contemptible, worthless, beneath one's regard vv. 4–5 (**spurn not at the doings of the Lord... wo unto him that spurneth at the doings of the Lord**). Mormon's warning — *spurn not at the doings of the Lord* — turns on the idea carried by the Hebrew *bazah*, "to despise, to hold in contempt." To *bazah* something is to regard it as *worthless*, beneath notice, contemptible — to treat it with *disdain*. And it is one of the gravest spiritual postures in scripture, because to *despise* the things of God is to set oneself *above* them, to judge the work of the Almighty as beneath one's regard. The word appears at some of the most sobering moments in the Old Testament. Esau *despised* (*bazah*) *his birthright* (Gen. 25:34) — treating the sacred inheritance as worthless, trading it for a meal, and *bazah* names the contempt that made the trade possible. David's sin is named as *despising* (*bazah*) *the commandment of the Lord* (2 Sam. 12:9–10) — treating God's word with the contempt that disregards it. And the prophets indict the people for *despising* (*bazah*) the word of the Lord, the name of the Lord, the things of the Lord: *because they have despised the law of the Lord* (Amos 2:4); *ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible* (*bazah*) (Mal. 1:7, 12) — the very book of Malachi that Christ has just quoted indicts the people for *despising* God's altar. To *bazah* is the contempt of the proud heart that looks at the holy and sees nothing worth honoring — and it is deadly, because *contempt closes the soul* to the very thing it despises. You cannot receive what you despise; you cannot believe what you hold in contempt; you cannot be saved by a Savior you regard as beneath your notice. This is exactly why Mormon's warning is so urgent. The coming forth of the record is *the doings of the Lord* — a genuine act of God, the sign of his faithfulness. And the great danger is that the reader will *bazah* it — despise it, mock it, dismiss it as contemptible, beneath serious regard. The forms of this contempt are precisely what Mormon lists: denying Christ, denying revelation, saying the Lord no longer works by gifts and healings, mocking the covenant people. All of these are *bazah* — the treating of God's work and God's people as worthless. And the consequence is the *sword of his justice* (v. 4), for to despise the doings of the Lord is to despise the Lord himself, and *they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed* (1 Sam. 2:30) — the contempt returns upon the head of the one who shows it. There is a terrible reciprocity in *bazah*: the soul that despises God's work places itself under God's judgment, for it has set itself, in its pride, above the Almighty. The opposite of *bazah* is to *honor*, to *esteem*, to receive with reverence — and that is what Mormon pleads for. The coming forth of the record is a holy thing, the sign of God's covenant faithfulness; and the choice before every reader is whether to *honor* it as the doing of the Lord, or to *bazah* it — to despise and spurn and mock it. To honor it is to be drawn into the covenant; to despise it is to invite the sword. *Spurn not the doings of the Lord*: do not let the proud contempt that despised Esau's birthright and David's commandment and Malachi's altar despise also the marvelous work of God in the last days — for the thing despised is the very mercy that would save you.

From the Chapter's Architecture

```cross-references Gen. 25:34 (Esau despised — *bazah* — his birthright — the contempt that spurns the sacred, vv. 4–5); 2 Sam. 12:9–10 (David despised — *bazah* — the commandment of the Lord — despising God's word); Mal. 1:6–7, 12 (ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible — *bazah* — the spurning of God's things, the very Malachi Christ quoted); 1 Sam. 2:30 (they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed — the reciprocity of contempt, vv. 4–5); Morm. 9:7–20 (who shall say that... the day of miracles is ceased?... he is the same God... a God of miracles — Moroni's parallel warning against denying revelation and miracles, v. 6); Acts 2:17–18 (I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh... your sons and your daughters shall prophesy — the continuing revelation and gifts denied in v. 6); 1 Cor. 12:4–11 (the gifts of the Spirit — revelation, prophecy, tongues, healings — that v. 6 says the Lord still works); Heb. 13:8 (Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever — the unchanging God who still works miracles, v. 6); Rom. 11:1–2, 25–29 (hath God cast away his people? God forbid... the gifts and calling of God are without repentance — the covenant with Israel God remembers, v. 8); Zech. 2:8 (he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye — God's defense of his covenant people against contempt, v. 8); Isa. 14:27 (the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? — the right hand that cannot be turned, v. 9); 3 Ne. 16:8–10 (the warning to the Gentiles who would mock and scatter Israel — the parallel of v. 8). ```