
Mormon 8 — I Even Remain Alone — Moroni Takes Up the Record, and Sees Our Day

Mormon 8: c. AD 400–421. Mormon is dead, killed by the Lamanites, and his son Moroni takes up the record to finish it. The Nephites who fled south have all been hunted down; Moroni is the last of his people, hunted himself, with no kin, no friends, and nowhere to go. He writes the loneliest words in scripture — I even remain alone. And then, in the solitude of a vanished nation, the Lord shows him us: Moroni sees the latter day in which his record will come forth, and describes it with devastating precision — a day of polluted churches lifted up in pride, of leaders who envy, of money exchanged for forgiveness, of people who love their fine apparel and their buildings more than the poor and the sick. He addresses the reader directly across sixteen centuries — Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me, and I know your doing — and warns that the record will come out of the earth by the power of God in exactly such a day. It is the chapter where the last man speaks from the dust to the living, and sees them clearly.

Mormon 8 is the chapter of the last man alive, and it is unlike anything before it in the record. Mormon has been killed; his son Moroni takes up the plates to finish what his father began; and Moroni writes from a solitude so complete it has no parallel in scripture. His people are exterminated, the survivors who fled south *all destroyed* (v. 2), his father slain, *all my kinsfolk*, and he himself hunted, with *not friends nor whither to go* (v. 5). Into this absolute aloneness — *I even remain alone* (v. 3) — the Lord pours a vision not of the past but of the future. Moroni, the last Nephite, is shown the day in which his record will come forth, and he describes that day — our day — with a precision so exact that the chapter reads less like ancient history than like a letter addressed to the present. The chapter has two great movements: the solitude and faithfulness of the last man (vv. 1–25), and the prophetic vision of the latter days into which the record will emerge (vv. 26–41). It is the moment the Book of Mormon turns and looks its modern reader full in the face.

Hebrew Word Studies

***badad* / *ga'avah* / *chillel* (בָּדָד / גָּאָוָה / חִלְלֵל) — alone, solitary, in isolation / pride, arrogance, the lifting-up of self / to profane, to pollute, to defile what is holy v. 3, vv. 27–28, vv. 33, 38.** Three Hebrew words frame the chapter. *Badad* — alone, solitary — is the condition Moroni names in *I even remain alone* (v. 3). It is the word for the leper who must dwell *alone* outside the camp (Lev. 13:46), for the city that *sitteth solitary* in Lamentations 1:1 (*eikhah yashvah badad*), for Israel dwelling *alone* among the nations. Moroni's *badad* is the loneliness of the last survivor, the man left solitary on the far side of his people's destruction — and the poignancy is that out of this *badad* comes the least solitary act, a word to all the future. *Ga'avah* — pride, the lifting-up of the self — is the keynote of Moroni's vision of the latter day. Over and over he sees churches and leaders *lifted up in the pride of their hearts* (vv. 27–28, 36). *Ga'avah* is the root sin the whole Book of Mormon traces — the pride that destroyed the Zion of 4 Nephi through costly apparel, the pride of the Rameumptom, the boast that doomed the Nephites — and Moroni sees it again, full-grown, in the latter-day churches. The same *ga'avah* that ended his civilization he sees defiling ours. *Chillel* — to profane, to pollute the holy — stands behind *transfigured the holy word of God* (v. 33) and the *polluted* churches (vv. 36, 38). To *chillel* is to treat the sacred as common, to defile the consecrated; it is the opposite of *qadash*, to make holy. Moroni's gravest charge against the latter day is *chillel* — that the holy word of God is transfigured (perverted) and the churches polluted, the sacred made into merchandise (*for your money you shall be forgiven*, v. 32). The chapter's three Hebrew notes thus trace a single arc: out of his *badad* (solitude), Moroni sees a future of *ga'avah* (pride) that has led to *chillel* (the profaning of the holy) — and he sends the record forward as a witness against exactly that.

From the Chapter's Architecture

```cross-references Lev. 13:46 (the leper dwelling alone — badad — outside the camp, the solitude of v. 3); Deut. 32:12 (the Lord alone did lead him — the badad of the covenant people, inverted in Moroni's aloneness, v. 3); Lam. 1:1 (how doth the city sit solitary / badad — the survivor's solitude of v. 3); Ps. 102:6–7 (I am like a pelican of the wilderness... and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top — the loneliness of v. 3); Job 19:13–19 (Job forsaken by kin and friends, all my inward friends abhorred me — the kinless solitude of v. 5); Isa. 29:4 (thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground... thy speech shall whisper out of the dust — the record speaking from the dust, vv. 23, 26); Isa. 29:13–14 (a people who draw near with their mouths but whose heart is far, and the marvellous work God will do — the polluted churches and the coming-forth, vv. 28, 16); Mal. 3:8–10 (robbing God in tithes and offerings while neglecting true worship — the love of money over the poor, v. 37); Matt. 6:24 (ye cannot serve God and mammon — the disordered love of v. 37); Matt. 23:14, 25–28 (the scribes and Pharisees who devour widows' houses and are full of extortion while appearing clean — the defiled churches and mourning widows, vv. 36–40); Matt. 24:6–12 (wars and rumours of wars... and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold — the latter-day signs of vv. 29–31); Acts 8:18–20 (Simon offering money for the gift of God, thy money perish with thee — the selling of forgiveness, v. 32); Jas. 2:1–9 (the church that honors the rich and despises the poor — vv. 37, 39); Jas. 5:1–6 (go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl... ye have heaped treasure together for the last days — the rich latter-day churches, vv. 36–41); 2 Ne. 26:29–31 (priestcraft defined: preaching to get gain and not for the welfare of Zion — the selling churches of v. 32); 2 Ne. 28:3–15 (the latter-day churches that say all is well... and rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries — the master parallel to vv. 32–39); Morm. 3:15; 8:20 (vengeance is mine... I will repay — the doctrine repeated at v. 20); Moro. 7:6–11 (giving a gift grudgingly or for show counts as evil — the disordered worship of vv. 37–39); D&C 1:30–33 (the only true church, and the warning to the world — the context of Moroni's vision); D&C 10:33, 63 (the adversary's design against the work, which the Lord's purposes overrule — the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, v. 22). ```