
Mosiah 27 — The Angel, the Three Days of Death-Like Sleep, and the Born-Again — Alma the Younger and the Sons of Mosiah Converted, the Earth Trembling, the Soul Redeemed from the Gall of Bitterness

Mosiah 27: Persecution against the Church arises among the rising generation; Alma the Younger and the four sons of Mosiah go about seeking to destroy the Church; an angel appears in a voice like thunder; the earth shakes; Alma falls dumb and helpless to the earth; he is carried to his father; he lies as though dead for three days; on the third day he rises and testifies he is born of God; the converted six then go forth zealously preaching what they had once sought to destroy; c. 100 BC.

Mosiah 27 is the BoM's-master-chapter of-the-angelic-arresting-of-the-persecutor and-the-three-day-death-like-sleep and-the-born-of-God doctrine. The chapter is the BoM's-most-dramatic-conversion-narrative and-one-of-the-foundational-texts of-the-Restoration's-doctrine-of-being-born-again. The chapter has-the-rising-generation-of-unbelievers persecuting-the-Church; King-Mosiah issuing-a-proclamation-against-persecution; Alma-the-Younger (son of Alma the High Priest) and-the-four-sons-of-Mosiah (Ammon, Aaron, Omner, Himni) going-about-secretly-attempting-to-destroy-the-Church; an-angel-of-the-Lord-appearing-to-them in-a-voice-like-thunder; the-earth-trembling; Alma-the-Younger struck-dumb-and-helpless and-falling-to-the-earth-as-dead; the colleagues-carrying-him to-his-father-Alma; Alma-the-Younger lying-as-though-dead for-three-days-and-three-nights while-the-Church-fasts-and-prays; on-the-third-day rising-and-testifying he-has-been-born-of-God, his-soul-redeemed-from-the-gall-of-bitterness; the-converted-six then-going-forth-throughout-the-land-zealously-preaching-the-gospel they-had-once-sought-to-destroy.

Load-Bearing Texts

1. v. 14. *and again, the angel said: Behold, the Lord hath heard the prayers of his people, and also the prayers of his servant, Alma, who is thy father; for he has prayed with much faith concerning thee that thou mightest be brought to the knowledge of the truth; therefore, for this purpose have I come to convince thee of the power and authority of God, that the prayers of his servants might be answered according to their faith* — the chapter's-master prayers-of-the-father-answered statement
2. v. 18. *and now Alma and those that were with him fell again to the earth, for great was their astonishment; for with their own eyes they had beheld an angel of the Lord; and his voice was as thunder, which shook the earth; and they knew that there was nothing save the power of God that could shake the earth and cause it to tremble as though it would part asunder* — the chapter's-master angel-voice-as-thunder statement
3. v. 24. *for, said he, I have repented of my sins, and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold I am born of the Spirit* — the chapter's-master born-of-the-Spirit statement
4. v. 25. *and the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters* — the chapter's-master must-be-born-again statement
5. v. 26. *and thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God* — the chapter's-master new-creatures statement
6. v. 29. *my soul hath been redeemed from the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. I was in the darkest abyss; but now I behold the marvelous light of God. My soul was racked with eternal torment; but I am snatched, and my soul is pained no more* — the chapter's-master redeemed-from-the-gall-of-bitterness statement

Hebrew Word Studies

malakh / qol / yashar (מַלְאֲכִי / לֹוֹקַ / רָשָׁי) — **angel, messenger / voice, sound / upright, straight vv. 11–14.** The chapter's angelic-encounter triad. *Malakh* — angel, messenger — the noun behind every Hebrew-Bible-angelic-appearance, the same noun the LXX translates as *angelos*. *Qol* — voice, sound — the noun behind Ex. 19:16's the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud and Gen. 3:8's the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. *Yashar* — upright, straight — the noun behind Prov. 4:25's let thine eyes look right on, and the verbal sense of leading-into-the-straight-path. The doctrine: the chapter has the *malakh-with-the-qol-of-thunder reorienting-the-persecutor-into-the-yashar-path*; the chapter is the BoM's clearest-text-on the *malakh-qol-yashar* conversion pattern. Same *malakh-of-the-Lord* grammar as Gen. 16:7 (the angel of the Lord found Hagar); Gen. 22:11 (the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham); Ex. 3:2 (the angel of the Lord appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire); Judges 6:11 (the angel of the Lord came unto Gideon); Judges 13:3 (the angel of the Lord appeared unto Manoah's wife); Lk. 1:11, 26 (Gabriel to Zacharias and Mary); Acts 12:7 (the angel of the Lord came upon Peter). The chapter is one of the BoM's clearest articulations of the *malakh-of-the-Lord arresting-the-persecutor* providence.

From the Chapter's Architecture

The chapter is also the BoM's clearest pre-Resurrection-typology — the three-day-death-like-sleep-then-rising pattern in-the-Alma-conversion. The chapter has-Alma in-a-grave-like-state for-two-days-and-two-nights, rising-on-the-third-day, walking-out-as-new-creature. The chapter is therefore-one-of-the-BoM's-quietest-but-most-precise pre-Resurrection-witnesses; the typology runs-beneath-the-text without-being-explicitly-pointed-out by-Alma or-by-the-narrator-Mormon — but-the-three-day-pattern is-unmistakable.