
Mosiah 28 — The Sons of Mosiah Depart for the Lamanites — They Could Not Bear That Any Soul Should Perish, Mosiah Translates the Jaredite Plates by the Interpreters, the Office of the Seer Defined

Mosiah 28: The four sons of Mosiah refuse the throne and plead to declare the gospel to their Lamanite brethren; they cannot bear to think that any human soul should perish; Mosiah inquires of the Lord and is promised they will be delivered; they depart for the land of Nephi; Mosiah-II translates the twenty-four Jaredite plates by means of the interpreters that were prepared from the beginning; the office of the seer is defined — a seer is greater than a prophet, a revelator, a translator; Mosiah delivers all the records and the interpreters to Alma the Younger; c. 92 BC.

Mosiah 28 is the BoM's-master-chapter-of-the-sons-of-Mosiah-depart-on-mission-and-the-doctrine-of-the-seer-and-the-translation-of-the-twenty-four-Jaredite-plates. The chapter is one of the most-doctrinally-rich-shorter-chapters in-the-BoM. The chapter has the four-sons-of-Mosiah refusing-the-throne-and-pleading-with-their-father to-allow-them to-go-as-missionaries to-the-Lamanites; their-stated-reason — they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble; Mosiah-II inquiring-of-the-Lord and-receiving-the-promise that-his-sons-will-be-delivered; the sons-departing for-the-land-of-Nephi; Mosiah-II translating-the-twenty-four-plates of-the-Jaredite-record by-means-of-the-interpreters that-were-prepared-from-the-beginning; the chapter then defining the office-of-the-seer — a seer is-greater-than-a-prophet, a seer is-a-revelator-and-a-translator, by-these-things shall-secret-things-be-made-manifest; Mosiah-II delivering all-the-records and-the-interpreters and-the-Liahona to-Alma-the-Younger, his-trusted-prophet-companion. The chapter is therefore the BoM's-clearest-text-on-the-missionary-impulse, the doctrine-of-the-seer, and-the-translation-of-the-Jaredite-record.

Load-Bearing Texts

1. v. 3. *now they were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment did cause them to quake and tremble — the chapter's-master could-not-bear-that-any-soul-should-perish statement*
2. v. 4. *and thus did the Spirit of the Lord work upon them, for they were the very vilest of sinners. And the Lord saw fit in his infinite mercy to spare them; nevertheless they suffered much anguish of soul because of their iniquities, suffering much and fearing that they should be cast off forever — the chapter's-master vilest-of-sinners statement*
3. v. 7. *and it came to pass that the Lord said unto Mosiah: Let them go up, for many shall believe on their words, and they shall have eternal life; and I will deliver thy sons out of the hands of the Lamanites — the chapter's-master Lord-grants-the-mission statement*
4. v. 13. *and now he translated them by the means of those two stones which were fastened into the two rims of a bow — the chapter's-master interpreters-and-bow statement*
5. v. 16. *and whosoever has these things is called seer, after the manner of old times — the chapter's-master definition-of-seer statement*

Hebrew Word Studies

urim-thummim / chazon / ro'eh (אֲרֻמִּים / תְּמִימִים / רֹא'ה) — 'lights and perfections' (used together as the high-priestly oracular instrument) / vision, revelation / seer (literally 'one who sees') vv. 13–16. The chapter's seer-instrument triad. *Urim* — lights, the noun in plural form, paired with *Thummim* (perfections) as the high-priestly oracular instrument in Ex. 28:30, Lev. 8:8, Num. 27:21, Deut. 33:8, 1 Sam. 28:6, Ezra 2:63, Neh. 7:65. *Chazon* — vision, revelation — the noun behind every Hebrew-Bible-prophetic-vision text; 1 Sam. 3:1 — the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision (*chazon*). *Ro'eh* — seer (literally 'one who sees') — the old name for the prophet preserved-in 1 Sam. 9:9 — beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer (*ro'eh*); for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a Seer (*ro'eh*). The chapter's-precise vv. 13–16 sequence — translates-by-stones (*urim-thummim*), called-seer (*ro'eh*), gift-of-revelation (*chazon*) — recreates-the-OT-high-priestly-prophetic vocabulary with-precision. The chapter is the BoM's-clearest-text-on the seer-as-the-revival of-the-OT-ro'eh-with-Urim-and-Thummim office. Same *urim-thummim-chazon-ro'eh* combination as Ex. 28:30 + 1 Sam. 9:9 + Num. 27:21 + 1 Sam. 28:6. The chapter is one of the BoM's clearest articulations of the OT-seer-office reactivated providence.

From the Chapter's Architecture

The chapter is also the BoM's-clearest-text-on the missionary-heart doctrine. The could-not-bear-that-any-soul-should-perish disposition is-the-foundational-affective-state of-the-LDS-missionary-program; the doctrine has-its-textual-anchor here. The chapter is therefore-one-of-the-BoM's-most-pastoral-texts for-every-missionary-call and-every-missionary-discouragement — the missionary-heart is-the-disposition that-the-Lord-honors with-the-deliverance-promise.