
Mosiah 5 — The Covenant Response — One Voice, No More Disposition to Evil, Spiritually Begotten Sons and Daughters, the Name in the Heart

Mosiah 5: The people respond with one voice — they have no more disposition to do evil; their hearts are changed through faith on Christ's name; Benjamin declares them spiritually begotten of Christ and instructs them to take upon them the name of Christ; c. 124 BC.

This is the chapter where the covenant actually gets made. Benjamin has preached the doctrine (Mosiah 3), the people have collapsed and cried and been forgiven and been told how to hold onto that forgiveness (Mosiah 4). Now Benjamin pauses and asks the simplest possible question: do you believe what I've said? And the whole crowd answers at once, with one voice — and what follows is the most unified covenant confession in the Book of Mormon. If you're looking for the chapter that defines what it means to be born again before John ever wrote the words, this is it.

Hebrew Word Studies

lev chadash / shanu / aboteinu (לֵב חָדָשׁ / שָׁנָה / אֲבוֹתֵינוּ) — **new heart / they changed / our fathers vv. 2, 7.** Three words sit underneath this covenant scene. *Lev chadash* is the new heart itself — the same phrase that stands behind Ezekiel's promise, *a new heart also will I give you* (Ezek. 36:26). *Shanu* is the verb of change, "they were altered" — and it's worth knowing that this is the same root behind Malachi's *I am the Lord, I change not* (*shaniti*, Mal. 3:6). God doesn't change; his people do, and that's the whole point of the verse. And *aboteinu*, "our fathers," is the quiet reminder that this covenant doesn't start with them — they're stepping into something inherited. Put the three together and you get the doctrine in miniature: the *lev chadash* isn't something the people build for themselves. It's the fruit of a mighty change the Spirit works in them, the same logic behind David's plea, *create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me* (Ps. 51:10), and Jeremiah's promise that God will *put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts* (Jer. 31:33). The Restoration keeps the same grammar in D&C 64:34 — *the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind*. The new heart is always the result of the change, never the precondition for it.

ben Mashiach / yalad / shem (בֶּן מָשִׁיחַ / יָלַד / שֵׁם) — **son of the Messiah / begot, gave birth / name vv. 7–8.** Three words carry this whole scene. *Ben Mashiach*, "son of the Messiah," is what the newly covenanted people become — not adopted followers, but literal children in the family sense. *Yalad* is the verb of birth itself, the act of begetting, and it's the word doing the real work in v. 7 — Christ doesn't merely receive them, he *begets* them. And *shem*, "name," is what they take on in v. 8 — the name that marks the new family they've been born into. Paul will use the same adoption language: *for ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus* (Gal. 3:26), and *having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself* (Eph. 1:5). And the Restoration keeps the same grammar in D&C 25:1 — *all those who receive my gospel are sons and daughters in my kingdom*. The doctrine here is bigger than membership. The covenant people don't just follow Christ. They become his, by birth.

From the Chapter's Architecture

And there's one more thing worth noticing, something every Latter-day Saint reader will recognize instantly. Take upon you the name of Christ (v. 8) is the exact phrase that survives into the sacramental prayer — willing to take upon them the name of thy Son (D&C 20:77; Moro. 4:3). What Benjamin's people did once, as a nation, standing together at the temple, every disciple since has renewed quietly, one week at a time, at the sacrament table.