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Next Weeks Lesson: Lesson 23 "More Than One Witness" ([Alma 8-12](#))

Today's Lesson: Lesson 22 "Have Ye Received His Image in Your Countenances?" ([Alma 5-7](#))

1. Alma teaches the people how they can experience a "mighty change" of heart. ([Alma 5](#))

Alma was the chief judge in the people's government. As chief judge, he had the authority to enforce the laws of the land. He was also the presiding high priest in the Church. As high priest, he had the responsibility to preach the word of God. When he saw the wickedness of the members of the Church, he resigned as chief judge and "confined himself wholly to the high priesthood ... , to the testimony of the word" ([Alma 4:11-20](#)). President Ezra Taft Benson taught why it became important for Alma to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ rather than serve as chief judge:



"The Lord works from the inside out. The world works from the outside in. ... The world would mold men by changing their environment. Christ changes men, who then change their environment. The world would shape human behavior, but Christ can change human nature" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1985, 5; or [Ensign, Nov. 1985, 6](#)).

A. At the beginning of his address, Alma spoke of the previous generation, who had been delivered from physical and spiritual bondage ([Alma 5:3-9](#)). Why do you think it was important for the people to remember their fathers' captivity and deliverance? ([Alma 5:5-7](#).) How did Alma describe their fathers after the Lord "changed their hearts"? (See [Alma 5:7-9](#).)

B. Let's read the three questions in [Alma 5:10](#). What are the answers to these questions? (See [Alma 5:11-13](#).) What was the message that led to "a mighty change [being] wrought" in the heart of Alma's father? (See [Mosiah 16:13-15](#).) What happened to the people who believed Alma the Elder when he taught them the gospel? (See [Alma 5:13](#); see also [Mosiah 18:1-11](#).) How can others' testimonies of the Savior help us experience a change of heart?

C. Throughout his address to the people in Zarahemla, Alma spoke of experiencing a "mighty change" of heart and being "born of God" ([Alma 5:14](#)). We often use the word *conversion* when we speak of this experience. What does it mean to be converted? (See [Mosiah 5:2](#); [Mosiah 27:24-26](#).) Is conversion a single event or a process?

Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught: “Except in ... unusual circumstances, as with Alma ([Mosiah 27](#)), spiritual rebirth is a process. It does not occur instantaneously. It comes to pass by degrees. Repentant persons become alive to one spiritual reality after another, until they are wholly alive in Christ and are qualified to dwell in his presence forever” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [1966-73], 3:401).



Let's read [Alma 5:45-46](#) with class members. Note that even Alma, who had experienced a miraculous conversion, had “fasted and prayed many days that [he] might know these things.”

Alma preached to the people in Zarahemla, he asked them a series of questions. We can use these questions to examine ourselves as we continue in the conversion process. Let's read verses from [Alma 5:14-21](#), [Alma 5:26-31](#). What are some questions from these verses that are especially meaningful to you.

- D. Alma spoke of having “the image of God engraven upon [our] countenances” ([Alma 5:19](#)). The word *countenance* refers to a person's behavior or to the way a person's face expresses his or her character. Consider how you would answer the following question from Alma: “Have ye received his image in your countenances?”
- E. How can it be helpful to imagine ourselves being judged by the Lord? (See [Alma 5:15-19](#).)
- F. Alma asked, “If ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, ... can ye feel so now?” ([Alma 5:26](#)). How would you answer this question? Once a person has “felt to sing the song of redeeming love,” what might cause that feeling to diminish? What can we do to continue in the process of conversion?
- G. How can we keep ourselves “blameless before God”? (See [Alma 5:27](#), [Alma 5:50-51](#).)
- H. How do pride and envy make us unprepared to meet God? (See [Alma 5:28-29](#).) Why are we unprepared to meet God if we mock or persecute others, as recorded in [verses 30](#) and [31](#)?
- I. After Alma asked these questions, he urged the people to repent of their sins ([Alma 5:31-32](#)). Then he reassured them that they could be forgiven through the Atonement of Jesus Christ ([Alma 5:33-35](#)). What invitation does the Savior extend to us? (See [Alma 5:33-35](#).) How can this invitation give us hope?

- J. To the unrighteous people in Zarahemla, Alma said, “A shepherd hath called after you and is still calling after you, but ye will not hearken unto his voice!” ([Alma 5:37](#)). Who is the shepherd Alma referred to? (See [Alma 5:38](#).) How does the Savior call after us? What can we do to hearken to His voice?
- K. What can we learn from [Alma 5:43-49](#) about the calling of a prophet?
- L. Alma warned the people that they should not persist, or continue, in their wickedness ([Alma 5:53-56](#); note that Alma asked the question “Will ye persist?” four times). Why is forsaking sin a necessary part of repenting? (See [Alma 5:56](#); see also [Mosiah 16:5](#); [D&C 58:42-43](#).)
- M. Alma commanded his people, “Come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate” ([Alma 5:57](#)). How can we separate ourselves from wickedness while living in the world?

**2. Alma and the people establish the order of the Church in Zarahemla. ([Alma 6](#))**

- A. After Alma’s discourse, many people repented of their sins and humbled themselves before God ([Alma 6:1-2](#)). Why were other people unwilling to repent of their sins? (See [Alma 6:3](#). They were “lifted up in the pride of their hearts.”) How does pride prevent people from repenting? How can we overcome pride in our hearts?

President Ezra Taft Benson said: “The antidote for pride is humility—meekness, submissiveness (see [Alma 7:23](#)). ... Let us choose to be humble. We can choose to humble ourselves by conquering enmity toward our brothers and sisters, esteeming them as ourselves, and lifting them as high or higher than we are. ... We can choose to humble ourselves by receiving counsel and chastisement. ... We can choose to humble ourselves by forgiving those who have offended us. ... We can choose to humble ourselves by rendering selfless service. ... We can choose to humble ourselves by going on missions and preaching the word that can humble others. ... We can choose to humble ourselves by getting to the temple more frequently. ... We can choose to humble ourselves by confessing and forsaking our sins and being born of God. ... We can choose to humble ourselves by loving God, submitting our will to His, and putting Him first in our lives” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1989, 6; or [Ensign, May 1989, 6-7](#)).



- B. Alma and the people in Zarahemla “began to establish the order of the church” by ordaining priests and elders, baptizing new converts, and gathering together often in fasting and prayer ([Alma 6:1-6](#)). How does such order in the Church help

us continue in the conversion process?

**3. Alma testifies of Jesus Christ. He encourages the people in Gideon to follow the Savior. ([Alma 7](#))**

- A. After Alma taught in Zarahemla, he went to preach to the people in the valley of Gideon ([Alma 6:8](#)).
- B. Alma told the people in Gideon that there were “many things to come” but that the coming of Jesus Christ was of the greatest importance ([Alma 7:7](#)). What did Alma teach about the Savior’s mission on earth? (See [Alma 7:10-13](#).) Why did the Savior take upon Himself our pains, afflictions, sicknesses, and sins? (See [Alma 7:11-14](#).)
- C. In what ways was Alma’s message to the people in Gideon different from his message in Zarahemla? In what ways were the messages similar? Why did Alma preach repentance to the people in Gideon even though they were striving to live righteously? (See [Alma 7:9](#), [Alma 7:14-16](#), [Alma 7:22](#), [Alma 7:26](#).)

[Alma 7:23-25](#). These verses describe a person who has experienced the change of heart spoken of by Alma and who continues to “sing the song of redeeming love” ([Alma 5:26](#)). As we continue in the conversion process, we will be able to look forward to the day when we are received “in the kingdom of heaven to go no more out” ([Alma 7:25](#)).