

Chapter 17

{Original 1830 Chapter IX}

Alma Is Persuaded by the Testimony of Abinadi

~~~ *Alma Flees to a Place Called Mormon*

1 **And now** **it came to pass**

**that when** [he] Abinadi had finished

aa

these **sayings**

**that** the king commanded

**that** the priests should take him

**and** **cause**

**that** he [Abinadi] should be put **to death**

2 **But** there was **one** among **them**

whose name was **Alma**

he [Alma] **also** being a **descendant\***

bb

**of Nephi**

[\*see Mormon 8:13]

*[Question: Why would there be the need to write that Alma was “also” a descendant of Nephi? If most of the judges were descended from the people of Zarahemla, then why would they return to the land of Nephi as the land of their inheritance? Or is this saying that Alma and Abinadi were direct “royal” descendants of Nephi?]*

**And** he [Alma] was a young man

**and** he [Alma] believed the **words**

which Abinadi had **spoken**

**for** he [Alma] knew concerning **the iniquity**

which Abinadi had testified against **them**

**Therefore**

he [Alma] **began to plead** with the king

**that** [the king] would NOT be angry

with Abinadi

but [the king would] **suffer**

[allow]

{AL}

**that** he [Abinadi] might depart **in peace**

01

[Par. aa – Circular repetition “Abinadi”]

[Par. bb – Like beginnings “Alma”]

[Heb. 01 – Preposition + condition = adverb “peacefully”]

[Mosiah 17]

3 But the king was MORE wroth  
 and [the king] caused 02  
 that [he] Alma should be cast out  
 from among them  
 and [the king] sent his servants  
 after him  
 that they might slay him 03

4 But he Alma fled from before them 04  
 and [he] Alma hid himself that they found him NOT  
 And he Alma being concealed for MANY days  
 [he] Alma did write ALL the words  
 which Abinadi had spoken

*[Note: According to Robert Matthews, although Alma<sub>1</sub> wrote all of Abinadi's words, that does not necessarily mean that Mormon included all of them in the abridged account given to us in the book of Mosiah. There are at least four clues that we do not have a complete transcript of Abinadi's debates with the priests, nor a full account of his teachings. For example, in Mosiah 7:26-28, Limhi speaks of Abinadi's death and explains for what (seven) teachings he was slain (Mosiah 7:27). The teachings of Abinadi that we have cover each of these seven items except numbers three and four. Other clues discussed are found in Mosiah 12:8, Mosiah 12:18-19, and Mormon 1:19. (Robert Matthews, "Abinadi: The Prophet and Martyr," in The Book of Mormon: Mosiah, Salvation Only through Christ, p. 104.)]*

#### Abinadi Suffers a Martyr's Death

5 And **it came to pass** \_\_\_\_\_ that the king caused  
 that his guards  
 should surround Abinadi  
 and take him  
 and they bound him  
 and [they] cast him  
 into prison

6 And **after** three days having counseled with his priests  
 he [the king] caused  
 that he Abinadi should again be brought  
 before him

\_\_\_\_\_ [Heb. 02 – Use of “cause that”]

[Heb. 04 – Compound prepositions “from before”]

[Heb. 03 – Use of “that they might”]



[Mosiah 17]

10 **Yea** and I [Abinadi] will suffer  
even until/^unto death [Q, 1830 / ^conjecture]

and I [Abinadi] will NOT recall\*  
my words

and they [my words]  
shall stand as a testimony  
against you

06

And if ye slay me  
[then] ye will shed innocent blood

and this  
shall also stand as a testimony  
against you at the last day

11 And **now**

king Noah was about \_\_\_\_\_ to release him  
**for** he [Noah] feared his word

**for** he [Noah] feared  
that the judgments of God  
would come upon him

12

**But** the priests lifted up their voices  
against him  
**and** [the priests] began  
to accuse him  
**saying**

07

he [Abinadi] has reviled the king

**Therefore** the king was stirred up in anger  
against him

08

**that** he [Abinadi] might be delivered him up  
be slain

[Heb. 06 – Simile “as”]

[Heb. 07 – Idiom “lifted up”]

[Heb. 08 – Compound prepositions “up in”]

13 And **it came to pass** \_\_\_\_\_ that they took **him**  
 and [they] bound **him**  
 [“and bound him” was deleted in 1837 but put back in 1906]  
 and [they] **scourged** his skin with **faggots** {AL}  
**yea** even unto **death**  
 [“scorched” has been suggested by Skousen]  
 [“scorched means “burn” or “consume in EME]

[Note: According to Robert Matthews, the scripture does not say he was “burned at the stake,” it says he “suffered death by fire” (Mosiah 17:20). To scourge means to whip, flail, or beat. A faggot is a bundle of sticks or twigs, used for fuel. This passage seems to say that Abinadi’s tormentors took burning torches and poked him with these, burning his skin until he died. . . . They actively, eagerly, and physically caused his death; they were not merely passive, interested bystanders watching a bonfire. And during it all, Abinadi was pronouncing prophecies of God’s vengeance upon them. (Robert Matthews, “Abinadi: The Prophet and Martyr,” The Book of Mormon: Mosiah, Salvation Only through Christ, p. 102-103.)]

14 And **now** \_\_\_\_\_ **when** the flames **began to** scorch **him**  
 he [Abinadi] **cried** unto them  
**saying** [Quote - Mos. 17:15-19] [Prophetic Prophecy] PP

15 **Behold** \_\_\_\_\_ even **as** ye have done \_\_\_\_\_ unto **me** 09  
 so **shall** it **come to pass** \_\_\_\_\_ cc  
 that **thy seed shall** cause \_\_\_\_\_  
 that **MANY shall** **suffer** \*the **pains** \_\_\_\_\_  
 that **I [Abinadi] do** **suffer**\* \_\_\_\_\_

[Note\* The original words \*the pains that I do suffer\* was deleted and not present in 1920, but restored in 1981.]

even [that **MANY shall suffer**] **the pains**  
 of **death by fire**  
 and this **because** [or for the cause] 10  
 [that] **they believe** in the **salvation** of **the Lord their God**

[Note: This is a strange passage or simile curse here in verse 15 that might need some explanation. According to Mark J. Morrise, “The simile curse is a type of curse that appears in ancient Near Eastern, Old Testament, and Book of Mormon texts. It consists of two parts: (1) an event, and (2) an application of that even to the subject of the curse.” (“Simile Curses in the Ancient Near East, Old Testament, and Book of Mormon,” in Journal of Book of Mormon Studies: vol. 2, no. 1, p. 124-138.)]

[Heb. 09 – Simile curse]

[Par. cc – Circular repetition “shall”]

[Heb. 10 – Use of “because that”]

[Mosiah 17]

Interestingly, this simile curse doesn't find its fulfillment in the Book of Mormon story until almost 100 pages have been written (see Alma 25:1-12). But more importantly, why would a dying prophet curse those who were putting him to death (the priests of Noah) that their seed would put many others to death in the same manner? The answer perhaps lies in the subject matter of Abinadi's speech before King Noah. Abinadi spoke about Christ, and about the Atonement. Abinadi testified to Noah's priests that in slaying him, they were shedding innocent blood, a crime that is not redeemable either by the Law of Moses or by the Atonement of Christ. According to McConkie and Millet, to "shed innocent blood" (Mosiah 17:10) is to murder, to take the life of one who is innocent and underserving of death. It is a "sin unto death" (1 John 5:16-17), a crime against humanity, a heinous offense to heaven for which there is no forgiveness. (Joseph F. McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. II, p. 251.)]

16 And **it will come to pass**

that ye shall be afflicted dd  
with ALL manner  
of diseases  
because of **your iniquities**

17 **Yea** and ye shall be smitten  
on EVERY hand

and [ye] shall be and driven  
scattered  
**to and fro** [toward and backward] {AL}  
even **as** a **wild** flock is driven 11  
by **wild**  
and **ferocious** beasts

18 And **in that day**

ye shall be hunted  
and ye shall be taken by the hand  
of your enemies

and **then**

ye shall suffer 12  
**as** I [Abinadi] suffer the pains  
of **death by fire**

[see Mos. 19:20; Alma 25:9,11]

[Par. dd – Like beginnings “ye shall be”]  
[Heb. 11 – Simile curse]  
[Heb. 12 – Simile curse]

19 **[And]thus** **God** executeth **vengeance** upon  
                   those       that **destroy** **His people**

**O** **God**                               receive **my soul**

13

20 **And now**  
**when**           **Abinadi** had **said** these **words**  
           he       **[Abinadi]**       fell  
                           having suffered       **death by fire**  
**yea**       having been put to **death**

**because**   he       **[Abinadi]** would NOT **deny**  
                                                           the **commandments** of **God**  
                                                           having **sealed** the **truth**  
                                                           of **his words**  
                                                           by **his** **death**

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[Heb. 13 – A wish or a prayer]

[Note: According to Clay Gorton (1997:315), *Mosiah 17:9-10* represents an example of *chiastic parallelism*. A basic outline is as follows:

9. Now Abinadi said unto him: I say unto you,
- A**    **I will not recall the words which I have spoken unto you** concerning this people,  
           for they are true;
  - B**    and that ye may know of their surety  
           **I have suffered myself that I have fallen into your hands.**
- 10.
- B**    Yea, and **I will suffer even until death**, and
  - A**    **I will not recall my words**

*[Mosiah 17]*