

# “The Word Is in Christ unto Salvation”

Lesson  
28  
Summary

*Alma 32–35*

## Scripture Summary:

*Alma teaches the poor whose afflictions had humbled them—Faith is a hope in that which is not seen which is true—Alma testifies that angels minister to men, women, and children—Alma compares the word unto a seed—It must be planted and nourished—Then it grows into a tree from which the fruit of eternal life is picked.*

*Zenos taught that men should pray and worship in all places, and that judgments are turned away because of the Son—Zenock taught that mercy is bestowed because of the Son—Moses had lifted up in the wilderness a type of the Son of God.*

*Amulek testifies that the word is in Christ unto salvation—Unless an atonement is made, all mankind must perish—The whole law of Moses points toward the sacrifice of the Son of God—The eternal plan of redemption is based on faith and repentance—Pray for temporal and spiritual blessings—This life is the time for men to prepare to meet God—Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.*

*The preaching of the word destroys the craft of the Zoramites—They expel the converts, who then join the people of Ammon in Jershon—Alma sorrows because of the wickedness of the people. [About 74 B.C.]*

## Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

**Public Availability of Religious Training:** Alma’s teaching in the streets, homes and synagogues mirrors an openness of religious instruction still typical in Israel. However, the ultimate worship site should be the home. That is where the *Kiddush* (wine and bread ritual) and the ritual of bringing in the Sabbath, *Kabbalat Shabbat* is done. The word Synagogue however, comes from the Greek language. In Hebrew it is called *Bet Knesset*, which means meeting house.

**Synagogue – Reminder of the Temple:** “Throughout the ages, the synagogue has played a major role in the survival of the Jewish nation . . . (in 586 B.C.E.) when, deprived of the Temple in Jerusalem and feeling deserted in a strange land, the Jews would gather to read the Scriptures and pray for salvation. Upon return to Erez Israel, they brought this tradition back with them, and records from the Second Temple period show that there were then numerous synagogues in existence, including one on the Temple Mount itself.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) It should be noted that the ruins of Capernaum’s synagogue have evidence going back to Jesus’ time. It is evident that a major addition or “remodling” was done later which lasted into the fourth century C.E.

**Synagogue – Part of Daily Life:** “During the Middle Ages, the social aspect of the synagogue became increasingly important. There was practically no activity in the daily life of the Jew which was not reflected in the life of the synagogue.” “Any person having a complaint could interrupt the service and petition for redress. Mourners were officially comforted in the synagogue --- a custom which prevails to the present day and the appearance of bridegrooms on the Sabbaths preceding and following their weddings were occasions for congregational rejoicing.” “. . . Its (Synagogue) primary purpose would be not just prayer and study but cultural and social activities as well. Many Jewish centers today have, in addition to the synagogue, libraries, club rooms, classrooms, gymnasias and other facilities.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Clothing and Dress Codes:** Travelers to Israel and densely Jewish populated areas immediately notice the stark black clothing of the very Orthodox Jews. It is often a geographic indicator of their recent forefathers and may indicate what sect of Orthodoxy they belong to. An explanation of the common black clothing extends back hundreds of years. In an effort to remove castes and cliques, the simple black clothing served as a common denominator. Today, the material used, the cut and design seems to denote the opposite. “Wherever Christianity spread through Europe, laws were passed discriminating against the Jews, who were forced to wear distinctive clothing . . . to live in separate areas.” “In many countries medieval rulers ordered Jews to wear certain colors, or special hats, or a Jewish badge. Although Jews wished to appear different from gentiles . . . these orders were often made hatefully, and the Jew wearing his black pointed hat or red badge felt very bitter.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Public Scripture Reading:** Jewish worship practices include reading the Torah (the Law) and Haftorah (the Prophets). In modern times there are three readings each week; Monday, Thursday and Saturdays (Sabbaths). The entire Bible text (Old Testament) is covered in one year. When Jesus lived, apparently the Jews read the “Law and the Prophets” just once a week. “And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.” (*Luke 4:16*) It is a probability that the reason Jesus’ ministry was three years long was so that he could read, review and instruct the Disciples through the entire Law and the Prophets once during those training years.

**Jewish Attitude on “Faith and Works:”** Throughout the years, Jews have weaned themselves away from spiritual experiences. One orthodox religious man stopped and listened to me while I was touring a group through the Old City. Presumptuously, he yanked at my microphone and said, “You don’t understand the Jews, it’s the commandments that count, not the faith.” He continued, “Faith is made of feelings and feeling can be changed, but the commandments are fixed.” It is simply do’s and don’ts.” In a recent meeting of Jewish and non Jewish scholars discussing the “Bible Code,” one prominent rabbi said, “There is no Holy Spirit in Judaism anymore!”

**Diminished Sense of Life After Death:** Jewish thought found more in the Reform and Conservative Jewish movements than the Orthodox includes a diminished sense of life after death. Thus, salvation is an earthly endeavor. “This sociological interpretation . . . should place its belief in salvation in this world, and thus improve the human personality and establish a free, just and cooperative society.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Prayer Modes:** Even in modern times, prayer and worship for the Jews is usually pre written. It includes a mannerism of moving and chanting that shows the worshiper is praying and using language different from that used in daily chatter. “In recent times, many attempts have been made to adapt the traditional prayer texts to the sensibilities of modern readers. For example, all references to sacrifices or to the desire for a return to Zion were completely excised from the (Reform) prayer book. In addition, free translations into the vernacular of many of the prayers were produced, and these were used in place of the traditional Hebrew texts. In similar fashion, the Conservative and Reconstructionist movements have produced prayer books (with full translations into the vernacular) to suit the needs of their prayer rituals.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Spontaneous and Fixed Prayers:** “In general, biblical prayer was spontaneous and personal; the more formal aspect of worship probably consisted of bringing sacrifices at set times and with a fixed ritual. It seems, however, that even during the period of the First Temple there were already some prayers whose wording was set and which were always recited on certain specific occasions. Some scholars, basing themselves on Psalms 55:18 and Daniel 6:11, believe that the practice of worshiping at least three times a day may be traced back to the biblical period.” “Even though there is no specific biblical verse which commands daily prayer services (for exceptions see Grace after Meals and *Shema*), the rabbis of the Mishnah (c. 200 C.E.) and the Talmud assumed that Jews pray at least three times a day, once in the morning (*Shaharit*), once in the afternoon (*Minhab*) and once in the evening (*Ma'ariv*, sometimes called *Arvit*.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**Preventing Prayer from Losing its Vitality:** “Because the times of the services and even the words which were to be recited, were fixed, there was a danger that prayer would lose its vitality . . . to overcome this danger, the rabbis urged the worshiper to meditate before he began to worship, to think of ‘before Whom he was standing’ in prayer, and to create a new prayer every time he worshiped. They placed great emphasis on the emotional aspect of prayer, calling it ‘service of the heart’ and stressing that God appreciates most the pure intentions of the worshiper. Melodic chanting was used as a means of increasing *kavanah* and worshipers were taught to sway as they prayed, thus throwing their entire body into the worship.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

**True Order of Prayer:** The prophets taught a form of worship and prayer that focuses on the Lord instead of concentrating on personal mannerisms. “And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.” (*Matthew 6:5-8*)

**Personal Relationship:** Our place of meeting with our God is personal. It is private. Alma’s concept of planting a seed and observing its growth and fruit is personal and done in solitude with God. It is a natural characteristic of our humanity that most religions do not teach. The purpose of this manner of seeking, meeting and praying with God is so that we can see, hear and feel the words of the Lord unto our salvation.

Daniel Rona, born in Israel and living in Jerusalem has authored Old & New Testament and Book of Mormon Supplement Study Materials to be used in conjunction with the weekly LDS Gospel Doctrine Lesson study. NOTE: Three versions of the supplemental study materials are available *FREE* at [www.HolyLandsRevealed.com](http://www.HolyLandsRevealed.com). (Just click “LDS SUPPLEMENTS”)

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