

# Alma 6

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## Alma<sub>2</sub> Reestablishes the Order of the Church

### *Alma 6:1–4*

1 And now it came to pass that after Alma had made an end of speaking unto the people of the church, which was established in the city of Zarahemla, he ordained priests and elders, by laying on his hands according to the order of God, to preside and watch over the church.

2 And it came to pass that whosoever did not belong to the church who repented of their sins were baptized unto repentance, and were received into the church.

3 And it also came to pass that whosoever did belong to the church that did not repent of their wickedness and humble themselves before God—I mean those who were lifted up in the pride of their hearts—the same were rejected, and their names were blotted out, that their names were not numbered among those of the righteous.

4 And thus they began to establish the order of the church in the city of Zarahemla.

### *Comments*

Chapter 4 was a quotation from Alma<sub>2</sub>'s personal record. Other than the introduction, Mormon simply copied what was in the journal. Mormon closed that chapter when he finished copying. Now he needs to finish the basic story and move to the next event. It is typical of Mormon's editing to finish a quotation, and then finish the story at the beginning of the next chapter rather than finish in the same chapter.

Verse 4 simply says that they "began to establish the order of the church in the city of Zarahemla." That is an interesting conclusion because all the elements that Mormon indicated, that led to that statement had already been established prior to the time Alma<sub>2</sub> spoke to the congregation in Zarahemla. The difference was not in the organization, but in the separation of those who would repent and follow Yahweh's laws and those who would not.

The governing aspects of the church didn't change, but there was a change in the people and some of those people did repent. The generic nature of the response suggests that perhaps Alma<sub>2</sub> didn't say anything specific in his personal record, nor in the official record. Mormon may have given such a generic summation based on his assumptions, rather than specific information.

## ***Alma 6:5–6***

5 Now I would that ye should understand that the word of God was liberal unto all, that none were deprived of the privilege of assembling themselves together to hear the word of God.

6 Nevertheless the children of God were commanded that they should gather themselves together oft, and join in fasting and mighty prayer in behalf of the welfare of the souls of those who knew not God.

### *Comments*

Mormon interjects information about how the church should exist in a multi-religious community. There should be the preaching of the word of God, of course, and those who desire to hear the word should be free to assemble together to hear it.

For Mormon, the children of God should exercise, or enact, their faith by praying and fasting for not only those of the church, but for those who did not yet know God.

## **Alma<sub>2</sub> Goes to Preach in Gideon**

### ***Alma 6:7–8***

7 And now it came to pass that when Alma had made these regulations he departed from them, yea, from the church which was in the city of Zarahemla, and went over upon the east of the river Sidon, into the valley of Gideon, there having been a city built, which was called the city of Gideon, which was in the valley that was called Gideon, being called after the man who was slain by the hand of Nehor with the sword.

8 And Alma went and began to declare the word of God unto the church which was established in the valley of Gideon, according to the revelation of the truth of the word which had been spoken by his fathers, and according to the spirit of prophecy which was in him, according to the testimony of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who should come to redeem his people from their sins, and the holy order by which he was called. And thus it is written. Amen.

### *Comments*

The final verses are the linking text that will move both Alma<sub>2</sub> and the events from Zarahemla to the city of Gideon. This information might have been at the beginning of the next chapter, as Mormon often has his linking narrative at the beginning of a chapter with the quoted material ending it. In this case, Mormon picks up on phrases from Alma<sub>2</sub>'s sermon in Zarahemla.

In Alma 5:46 Alma<sub>2</sub> had said: "Behold, I say unto you they are made known unto me by the Holy Spirit of God. Behold, I have fasted and prayed many days that I might know these things of myself. And now I do know of myself that they are true; for the Lord God hath made them manifest unto me by his Holy

Spirit; and this is the spirit of revelation which is in me.” Mormon picked up on the concept of fasting and prayer in verse 6, and now he reprises the source of Alma<sub>2</sub>’s authority through the spirit of prophecy. After reprising those words from the previous sermon, Mormon testifies that they were indeed true. Ending his testimony with *Amen* triggered the close of this chapter, and ensured that even though short, it would be separate from the next rather than be part of it.

