

**Purpose:** To help us learn Alma’s counsel for remaining faithful in the gospel and to help us parents understand how to teach and counsel both righteous and unrighteous children.

What is the best advice or counsel your parents ever gave you?

Why was this advice or counsel so valuable? †1. President Ezra Taft Benson

### 1. Alma shares his testimony and gives the records to his son Helaman. ([Alma 36-37](#))

• Alma 36:3-5; 26-28 Alma bears his testimony to his son Helaman.

Why is it important for children to hear their parents bear their testimonies?

In what ways have your parents’ testimonies influenced your life?

• Alma 36:6-24 Alma told Helaman the story of his conversion.

Why do you think Alma shared his conversion story with his sons? (He tells Shiblon: Alma 38:7-9)

How have you benefited from hearing about how other people have become converted?

Alma encouraged Helaman to follow his example many times:

a. “Ye should do as I have done” (Alma 36:2).

b. “I beseech of thee that thou wilt hear my words and learn of me” (Alma 36:3).

c. “Ye also ought to retain in remembrance, as I have done” (Alma 36:29).

d. “Ye ought to know as I do know” (Alma 36:30)

Why is it important for parents to set a righteous example for their children?

• Alma 37:1-2, 6-12

What “great things” will the scriptures do for us if we study them diligently? ([Alma 38:8-10](#))

• Alma 37:32-35 What did Alma tell Helaman to teach the people?

• Alma 37:36-37 “Cry unto God for all thy support”. How has your life changed as you tried to do this?

• Alma 37:38-45 Alma compared the Liahona to the word of Christ.

†2. Letter from the First Presidency †3. Ted Gibbons †4. Elder Boyd K. Packer

How are you making the “word of Christ” into your personal Liahona?

### 2. Alma praises and encourages his son Shiblon. ([Alma 38](#))

• Alma 38:2-4 “I have had great joy in thee ... because of thy faithfulness ... diligence, ... patience ... long-suffering”

Why should we recognize and praise our children’s good qualities and their righteous choices?

• Alma 38:5 “as much as ye shall ... trust in God even so much ye shall be delivered” †5. Otten/Caldwell

• Alma 38:10-15 Alma gave specific counsel and warning to Shiblon.

Why is it important for even the righteous to receive counsel and warning?

How can we learn to receive such counsel and warning in humility?

How does pride in our own wisdom or strength lead to greater sins? (v11)

How does Alma teach Shiblon to overcome pride? (v13-14)

What does Alma mean to “bridle all your passions that ye may be filled with love”? (v12)

What does Alma mean to “use boldness, but not overbearance” in teaching the gospel? (v12)

### 3. Alma admonishes his son Corianton to repent. ([Alma 39](#))

• Alma 39:2-6 Alma’s top issue with Corianton: “thou didst go on unto boasting in thy strength and thy wisdom”

†6. Elder Boyd K. Packer †7. President Ezra Taft Benson

What parents can learn from Alma about counseling their children:

a. Alma reminded Corianton of what led to Corianton’s sin (Alma 39:2-4).

b. He explained the consequences of Corianton’s sin (Alma 39:7-9, 11).

c. He taught Corianton how to repent and avoid the sin in the future (Alma 39:9-14).

d. He taught Corianton about God’s love and forgiveness (Alma 39:15-19).

• Alma 39:15-19 What did Alma teach Corianton about Christ?

How can understanding these things help us when we are tempted to sin?

([Book of Mormon Manual – LDS Institute](#) (Religion 121-122). (You can download a free PDF manual.)

Next Week: Lesson 30: “The Great Plan of Happiness”; Alma 40 – 42; D&C 138 † •

†1. **President Ezra Taft Benson:** "The lessons of history should serve as wise counselors. Too frequently, however, we seem to disregard or forget them. It is wisdom for us to sharpen our vision and fortify our courage to face the future by considering carefully the costly, yet priceless, lessons of the past. The man who cannot learn from the past will be a poor steward of the future." (*Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p701 in Beardall's handout)

†2. **Letter from the First Presidency:** We counsel parents and children to give highest priority to family prayer, family home evening, gospel study and instruction, and wholesome family activities. However worthy and appropriate other demands or activities may be, they must not be permitted to displace the divinely appointed duties that only parents and families can adequately perform ("Policies, Announcements, and Appointments," *Ensign*, June 1999, 80).

†3. **Ted Gibbons:** Like the operations of the Liahona, Family Home Evening, family prayer, gospel study, and wholesome family activities "are worked by small means" but they will, if attended to in faith and determination, "show unto [us] marvelous works" (Alma 37:41)...

It becomes for us, as it was for Lehi and Ishmael and Sam, a matter of going where the arrows point. And we know where they point on Monday night. Even if the TV guide shows us an oasis of Monday Night Football with our favorite team and quarterback against the pre-season favorites in a game with implications for the conference championship, we know where the arrows point... If we choose not to follow them, the negative results may not be immediately obvious, but as we stray from the path defined by revelation to the prophets, we will pay a price. We will not progress in our journey; we will tarry in the wilderness, and we will not travel a direct course, and we will be afflicted . . ." (see Alma 37:41,42) ([Ted Gibbons](#): Book of Mormon Lesson 29).

†4. **Ted Gibbons:** One of Alma's first observations about the thing that led to the sin of Corianton what that he boasted in his "own strength and wisdom." (Alma 39:2) ... How many times have you heard someone say (or imply by word or action) "I am strong enough and smart enough to handle this"? It is not difficult to imagine a companion saying to Corianton, "Don't you go talk to Isabel! You know what she does for a living!"

And it is not difficult to imagine the response: "I can handle this! My dad is the prophet, for goodness sake. I'm just going to talk to her. I might even convert her. She needs the gospel as much as any poor Zoramite. Do you think I am so weak and dumb I'll jeopardize my membership for a thing like this?"

I sat in a court in the mission field and watched a dear friend and fellow missionary excommunicated from the church for immorality. He just went for a walk by himself a few times late at night. He left when his companion was asleep and came home pretty soon. I know he was certain that he was strong enough in the Spirit to withstand any temptation he might encounter. But one morning he was not home. He had met a young woman on his walks, a harlot

(to use the word of Alma), and they had gone away together to a hotel in a nearby city.

This is a warning we all need to hear. We are neither as strong nor as smart as we think we are, especially when compared to the diabolical genius of Lucifer. ([Ted Gibbons](#): Book of Mormon Lesson 29)

†5. **Otten/Caldwell:** "We note that the prophet did not make promises in case we have trials, but rather when we do. We need not wonder why the Lord doesn't prevent our troubles from occurring, or whether He actually causes our trials and tribulations. While we bring many afflictions upon ourselves by committing sin, most afflictions are simply hazards of mortality and cannot be avoided. Saints who wonder why the Lord doesn't protect His people from suffering must realize that the **Lord's purpose is to prepare people for problems** instead of preventing those problems. In other words, we would have the Lord remove our burdens instead He increases our capacity to carry them. *Unlocking the Book of Mormon*, 298)

†6. **Elder Boyd K. Packer:** "There was provided in our bodies—and this is sacred—a power of creation, a light, so to speak, that has the power to kindle other lights. This gift was to be used only within the sacred bonds of marriage. Through the exercise of this power of creation, a mortal body may be conceived, a spirit enters into it, and a new soul born into this life.

"This power is good. It can create and sustain family life, and it is in family life that we find the fountains of happiness...

"The power of creation—or may we say procreation—is not just an incidental part of the plan: it is essential to it. Without it the plan could not proceed. The misuse of it may disrupt the plan.

"Much of the happiness that may come to you in this life will depend on how you use this sacred power of creation... If [Satan] can entice you to use this power prematurely, to use it too soon, or to misuse it in any way, you may well lose your opportunities for eternal progression...

"Protect and guard your gift. Your actual happiness is at stake. Eternal family life ... can be achieved because our Heavenly Father has bestowed this choicest gift of all upon you—this power of creation. It is the very key to happiness. Hold this gift as sacred and pure. Use it only as the Lord has directed." ("[Why Stay Morally Clean](#)," *Ensign*, July 1972, 111-13)

†7. **President Ezra Taft Benson:** "There is no lasting happiness in immorality. There is no joy to be found in breaking the law of chastity. Just the opposite is true.... Guilt and shame set in. We become fearful that our sins will be discovered. We must sneak and hide, lie and cheat. Love begins to die. Bitterness, jealousy, anger, and even hate begin to grow." (*Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p285 in Beardall's handout)

### Recommended Reading:

Visit [www.stephenmbird.com/library/gospel-doctrine](http://www.stephenmbird.com/library/gospel-doctrine) †

## Further Enrichment Resources:

### Alma's Repentance:

**President Spencer W. Kimball:** "When a true consciousness of guilt finally settles down upon the one who has sinned and he feels the heaviness of it its throttling force and crushing power only then can the sinner begin to realize how powerless he is on his own to rid himself of his transgressions. Only then can he begin to understand how futile are his unaided efforts to wash away the stains so indelibly stamped on his life and character. In his anguish he must come to lean heavily upon the Lord and trust in him, acknowledging that 'with God all things are possible'." (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p339 in Beardall's handout)

**President Ezra Taft Benson:** "We must be cautious as we discuss these remarkable examples. Though they are real and powerful, they are the exception to the rule. For every Paul, for every Enos, and for every King Lamoni, there are hundreds and thousands of people who find the process of repentance much more subtle, much more imperceptible. Day by day they move closer to the Lord, little realizing they are building a godlike life." ("[A Mighty Change of Heart](#)," *Ensign*, Oct. 1989, 5)

### A Parent's Example:

**Elder Neal A. Maxwell:** "Whereas the natural man vents his anger, the men and women of Christ are 'not easily provoked' (1 Corinthians 13:5). Whereas the natural man is filled with greed, the men and women of Christ 'seeketh not [their] own' (1 Corinthians 13:5). Whereas the natural man seldom denies himself worldly pleasures, the men and women of Christ seek to bridle all their passions (see Alma 38:12)." (*Men and Women of Christ*, p14 in Beardall's handout)

### Shiblon's Trials:

**Elder Neal A. Maxwell:** "The issue for us is trusting God enough to trust also His timing. If we can truly believe He has our welfare at heart, may we not let His plans unfold as He thinks best?" (*Even As I Am*, p93 in Beardall's handout)

**John Taylor:** "There are many things that seem to us trials and difficulties, that perplex, annoy, and harass our spirits; yet these very things, as one justly observed, are blessings in disguise, so many helps to us to develop our weaknesses and infirmities, and lead us to put our trust in God, and rely upon Him to give us a knowledge of ourselves, of our neighbors, and of the work of God; they have a tendency to develop principles of worth to our minds, and thus they serve as schoolmasters, helps, and instructors, and are to us as many blessings in disguise. In fact all things that we have to do with in the world, whether they are adversity or prosperity, whether they relate to ourselves or to others, if rightly appreciated and understood, may teach us a lesson that will be to our joy, probably not only in time, but in all eternity." (*Journal of Discourses*, vol. 1, p. 366)

### Brass Plates (37:1)

**David Whitmer:** "We not only saw the plates of the Book of Mormon but also the brass plates, the plates of the Book of Ether, the plates containing the records of the wickedness and secret combinations of the people of the

world down to the time of their being engraved, and many other plates ... there appeared as it were, a table with many records or plates upon it, besides the plates of the Book of Mormon, also the Sword of Laban, the Directors i.e., the ball which Lehi had-and the Interpreters [Urim and Thummim]. I saw them just as plainly as I see this bed (striking the bed beside him with his hand), and I heard the voice of the Lord, as distinctly as I ever heard anything in my life declaring that the records of the plates of the Book of Mormon were translated by the gift and power of God." (1878 interview between Orson Pratt and David Whitmer, recorded in *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 55-56)

### Moral Cleanliness and Missionary Work:

**Ezra Taft Benson:** "Give me a young man who has kept himself morally clean and has faithfully attended his Church meetings. Give me a young man who has magnified his priesthood and has earned his Duty to God Award and is an Eagle Scout. Give me a young man who is a seminary graduate and has a burning testimony of the Book of Mormon. Give me such a young man and I will give you a young man who can perform miracles for the Lord in the mission field and throughout his life. (*Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, 197)

### The Law of Chastity" (Alma 39)

**For the Strength of Youth:** "Do not have any sexual relations before marriage, and be completely faithful to your spouse after marriage. Satan may tempt you to rationalize that sexual intimacy before marriage is acceptable when two people are in love. That is not true. In God's sight, sexual sins are extremely serious because they defile the power God has given us to create life....

"Before marriage, do not do anything to arouse the powerful emotions that must be expressed only in marriage. Do not participate in passionate kissing, lie on top of another person, or touch the private, sacred parts of another person's body, with or without clothing. Do not allow anyone to do that with you. Do not arouse those emotions in your own body.

"In cultures where dating or courting is acceptable, always treat your date with respect, never as an object to be used for your lustful desires. Stay in areas of safety where you can easily control your physical feelings. Do not participate in talk or activities that arouse sexual feelings.

"Homosexual activity is a serious sin. If you find yourself struggling with same-gender attraction, seek counsel from your parents and bishop. They will help you.

"Victims of rape, incest, or other sexual abuse are not guilty of sin. If you have been a victim of any of these crimes, know that you are innocent and that God loves you. Seek your bishop's counsel immediately so he can help guide you through the process of emotional healing." (*Fulfilling Our Duty to God* [2001], 27-28.

**Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** "*In matters of human intimacy, you must wait!* You must wait until you can give everything, and you cannot give everything until you are legally and lawfully married. To give illicitly that which is not yours to give (remember, 'you are not your own' [1 Corinthians 6:19]) and to give only part of that which cannot be allowed with the gift of your whole self is emotional Russian roulette. If you persist in pursuing physical satisfaction without the sanction of heaven, you run the terrible risk of such spiritual, psychic damage that you may undermine *both* your longing

for physical intimacy *and* your ability to give wholehearted devotion to a later, truer love. You may come to that truer moment of ordained love, of real union, only to discover to your horror that what you should have saved you have spent, and that only God's grace can recover the piecemeal dissipation of the virtue you so casually gave away. On your wedding day the very best gift you can give your eternal companion is your very best self—clean and pure and worthy of such purity in return" ("[Personal Purity](#)," *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 76-77).

**Elder Jeffrey R. Holland:** "In exploiting the body of another—which means exploiting his or her soul—one desecrates the Atonement of Christ, which saved that soul and which makes possible the gift of eternal life. And when one mocks the Son of Righteousness, one steps into a realm of heat hotter and holier than the noonday sun. You cannot do so and not be burned.

"Please, never say: 'Who does it hurt? Why not a little freedom? I can transgress now and repent later.' Please don't be so foolish and so cruel. You cannot with impunity 'crucify Christ afresh' [see Hebrews 6:6]. 'Flee fornication' [1 Corinthians 6:18], Paul cries, and flee '*anything like unto it*' [D&C 59:6; italics added], the Doctrine and Covenants adds. Why? Well, for one reason, because of the incalculable suffering in both body and spirit endured by the Savior of the world so that we *could* flee. We owe him something for that. Indeed, we owe Him everything for that. 'Ye are not your own,' Paul says. 'Ye [have been] bought with a price: therefore *glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's*' [1 Corinthians 6:19-20; italics added]. In sexual transgression the soul is at stake—the body and the spirit" ("[Personal Purity](#)," *Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 76)

#### Alma 39:9 "Go No More after the Lusts of Your Eyes" Pornography

**President Gordon B. Hinckley:** "You live in a world of terrible temptations. Pornography, with its sleazy filth, sweeps over the earth like a horrible, engulfing tide. It is poison. Do not watch it or read it. It will destroy you if you do. . . . Stay away from it. Shun it as you would a foul disease, for it is just as deadly. Be virtuous in thought and in deed. God has planted in you, for a purpose, a divine urge which may be easily subverted to evil and destructive ends. When you are young, do not get involved in steady dating. When you reach an age where you think of marriage, then is the time to become so involved. But you boys who are in high school don't need this, and neither do the girls" ("[Some Thoughts on Temples, Retention of Converts, and Missionary Service](#)," *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 51).

**Elder Dallin H. Oaks:** "Our Savior emphasized the importance of sexual purity when he taught that it was sinful for a man to even look upon a woman to lust after her [see Matthew 5:28]. . . . We are surrounded by the promotional literature of illicit sexual relations, on the printed page and on the screen. For your own good, avoid it. Pornographic or erotic stories and pictures are worse than filthy or polluted food. The body has defenses to rid itself of unwholesome food. With a few fatal exceptions bad food will only make you sick but do no permanent harm. In contrast, a person who feasts upon filthy stories or pornographic or erotic pictures and literature records them

in this marvelous retrieval system we call a brain. The brain won't vomit back filth. Once recorded, it will always remain subject to recall, flashing its perverted images across your mind and drawing you away from the wholesome things in life" ("[Things They're Saying](#)," *New Era*, Feb. 1974, 18).

**President Ezra Taft Benson:** "Consider carefully the words of the prophet Alma to his errant son, Corianton, 'Forsake your sins, and go no more after the lusts of your eyes' (Alma 39:9).

"'The lusts of your eyes.' In our day, what does that expression mean?

"Movies, television programs, and video recordings that are both suggestive and lewd.

"Magazines and books that are obscene and pornographic.

"We counsel you, young men, do not pollute your minds with such degrading matter, for the mind through which this filth passes is never the same afterwards. Don't see R-rated movies or vulgar videos or participate in any entertainment that is immoral, suggestive, or pornographic. Don't listen to music that is degrading" ("[To the "Youth of the Noble Birthright"](#)," *Ensign*, May 1986, 45).