



Alma 26.¹⁶— Meditation

Therefore, let us glory, yea, we will glory in the Lord; yea, we will rejoice, for our joy is full; yea, we will praise our God forever. Behold, who can glory too much in the Lord? Yea, who can say too much of his great power, and of his mercy, and of his long-suffering towards the children of men? Behold, I say unto you, I cannot say the smallest part which I feel.

Suppose (səpōz')

v. 1. To think or imagine to oneself as true. 2. To assume. 3. To expect or anticipate.

Today, we would like to talk about one of the great, most precious of human gifts—imagination. To begin, I am going to imagine. I will imagine that I am informed that, after a life time of devoted and joyous scripture study, I will soon lose my memory of everything that I have ever read, thought, felt, or discovered in scripture. However, as an act of grace, I will be allowed to choose one scripture that will remain forever in my memory. I will never forget what it says, what it means, what I learn, and what I feel when I consider its message.

Tall task, huh? You may be wondering right now which you would choose. There are so many to choose from. But, I know, already, almost before the messenger has finished. I know which one I will carry ever with me in my mind.

But, before the big reveal, a little context.

The wicked sons of Mosiah, you will recall, were with Alma at the time of his conversion. Transformed, like Alma, by their encounter with the angel, they renounced all claims to the Nephite throne, choosing, rather, to leave their homeland and evangelize among their nation's feared and hated enemy, the Lamanites.¹ You will also remember that through a fourteen year-long mission they brought "thousands of souls unto repentance," and changed, really, the course of Nephite and Lamanite history. But what, at the outset, did these royal sons and the nation they left behind *suppose* would happen? What did they expect from their ministry?

First, the nation: "They laughed [the sons of Mosiah] to scorn," saying, "Do ye *suppose* that ye can bring the Lamanites to the knowledge of the truth? Do ye *suppose* that ye can convince the Lamanites of the incorrectness of the traditions of their fathers?" Having displayed such a lack of imagination, the Nephite people proposed that they "take up arms against them [the Lamanites], that we destroy them and their iniquity."²

¹ See, for example, Alma 17.⁶

² Alma 26.²³⁻²⁵

What, on the other hand, did these bold sons *suppose*? We'll let one of them, Ammon, be their spokesman. "We *supposed* that our joy would be full if perhaps we could be the means of saving some." If his "some" sounds to you like "few," you would, it seems, be right. They came to the Lamanites "with the intent that perhaps [they] might save some few of their souls." Ammon acknowledges that they had been bold in their purposing, but small in their *supposing*. "Could we have *supposed*... that God would have granted unto us such great blessings?"³ It seems that a big "NO!" is called for in answer to this question.

As you can see, there is a great deal of *supposing* going on in Alma 26, all of it puny in comparison with the reality. But there is yet one more supposition mentioned in the chapter. This one goes a long way in explaining the discrepancy between supposition and reality. Again, Ammon is spokesman.

"Who could have *supposed* that our God would have been so merciful as to have snatched us from our awful, sinful, and polluted state?"⁴

This question, of course, is rhetorical. It assumes but one answer, "No one! No one would have thought God's mercy so expansive!" Well, actually, someone had imagined it. Perhaps Mosiah's sons did not have the advantage of the Psalmist's witness.

"For as the heaven is high above the earth,
so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."⁵

Notwithstanding the many testimonies given of him, I, too, once lacked imagination. I could not suppose that he would accept me. I supposed that I was too dirty. Too sinful. But I discovered that he was not kidding when he invited, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."⁶

"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him,
and saved him out of all his troubles."⁷

What I saw that day when he proved to me his earnestness in inviting and his power in removing the trouble of sin left me speechless then and leaves me speechless still. If I hadn't experienced it myself, I might not believe it even now. There are simply no words to describe the Being I met that afternoon in my "secret closet." Human imagination is not big enough.

"Great is our Lord, and of great power:
His understanding is infinite."⁸

Thus, the one passage I wish to carry always with me, now and into eternity and beyond.

"Therefore, let us glory,
yea, we will glory in the Lord;
yea, we will rejoice, for our joy is full;

³ See Alma 26.^{1, 26, 30}

⁴ Alma 26.¹⁷

⁵ Psalm 103.¹¹⁻¹²

⁶ Matthew 11.²⁸

⁷ Psalm 34.⁶

⁸ Psalm 147.⁵

yea, we will praise our God forever.
Behold, who can glory too much in the Lord?
Yea, who can say too much of his great power, and of his mercy,
and of his long-suffering towards the children of men?
Behold, I say unto you,
I cannot say the smallest part which I feel.”

Let’s not, then, *suppose* too little. In the spirit of true hope—something more than *supposing*—in the spirit of real, lively expectation, let us remember that he is prepared to do more than our meager suppositions *suppose*. He acts in our lives, blessing and using us in ways far beyond our wildest, most imaginative dreams. As the great Apostle to the Gentiles, Paul, bears witness, God “is able [and ready] to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think!”⁹

Yes, He “who alone doeth great wonders,”¹⁰ “His name alone is excellent.”¹¹ In him, there is no end to what we might suppose.

“Even so, come Lord Jesus.”

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⁹ Eph. 3.²⁰

¹⁰ Psalm 136.⁴

¹¹ Psalm 148.¹³