

# ABISH AND THE QUEEN



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**W**ho can forget Ammon cutting off his attackers' arms as he defended the king's sheep? Or how his preaching led to the conversion of King Lamoni and his people? But a key part of this memorable story hinges on the faith of two women: Abish (a Lamanite servant) and the Lamanite queen (wife of King Lamoni).

Here's a refresher on what happened: Ammon and his brothers—Nephites—went on a mission to the Lamanites. The two groups weren't on great terms, to say the least, so bringing the gospel to the Lamanites was a dangerous task. But Ammon impressed King Lamoni, who asked him to be his son-in-law. Ammon instead offered to be his servant. And he greatly impressed the king by protecting his sheep (remember the cutting-off-arms story?). As King Lamoni began to learn and believe the gospel, he fell to the ground and lay there such a long time that his servants believed he was dead.

However, the queen didn't think he was dead. In fact, she trusted Ammon when he told her that. Later, the queen and everyone who was present also collapsed under the influence of the Spirit—except for Abish. Secretly, she had already been converted to the gospel and now finally saw her chance to share it with the people and invite them to come and see. (See Alma 17–19.)

So what does all this have to do with you?

Abish and the queen used their spiritual gifts to act in faith and bless others—and you can do the same!

## YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE POWERFUL

Spiritual gifts are powerful. The queen and Abish demonstrated three important spiritual gifts: believing the testimony of others, showing courage, and having faith. And exercising those three gifts brought about amazing things.

Abish was “converted unto the Lord on account of a remarkable vision of her father” (Alma 19:16)—she had chosen to have faith. And even though the queen had never heard the gospel before and barely knew Ammon, she immediately believed him. Ammon even said to her, “Blessed art thou because of thy exceeding faith; I say unto thee, woman, there has not been such great faith among all the people of the Nephites” (Alma 19:10). Imagine that!

Sometimes our spiritual gifts are less noticeable (believing doesn't have quite the visibility of healing or working miracles). Does that mean they're less important? No way! Those “quiet” gifts can be just as powerful.

If you ever feel inadequate or unsure of yourself, never fear! Heavenly Father blessed you with certain spiritual gifts and qualities for a reason. Just like Abish and the queen, you can use your gifts in significant ways! Your belief can help you to both stay strong and be an example. And through your faith, you can help lead others to Christ.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANDREA RIVOLA

*Two women  
acted in faith and  
helped bring about  
a great change—  
and so can you.*

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## ACTING ON YOUR FAITH IS KEY

Ammon told the queen that her husband would awake, and he did. As the king shared his conversion with his household, he collapsed again—and this time, his servants, Ammon, and the queen did too. When Abish saw the people on the floor, she recognized it as an “opportunity” to help her people believe in the power of God, so she chose to act in faith and “ran forth from house to house” (Alma 19:17), inviting people to come and see for themselves. Abish demonstrated a principle Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has taught: “The difference between casual social contacts and compassionate, courageous discipleship is—invitation!”<sup>1</sup>

You can follow Abish’s example by inviting others to come unto Christ. That can be scary if those around you aren’t friendly toward your faith. Imagine how Abish must have felt, isolated in her faith for years among a people who hated the Nephites and their beliefs. She probably thought her prospects for sharing the gospel were pretty slim.

You might not have much of a chance to share your beliefs either if others always mock your faith or bully you, for instance. As you follow the Spirit’s direction, you may need to be patient and have faith that someday an opportunity will come. Even if those opportunities are few and far between, Heavenly Father knows your desire to share the gospel, and the Spirit can help you recognize opportunities to invite.

Abish, seeing contention stirring among the onlookers, took the queen’s hand. The queen awoke and immediately began to testify of Jesus Christ to the gathered people. By doing this, she showed her faith. Hers was the first testimony of the gospel those people heard. She shared the joy she felt and then woke her husband by taking his hand. He and Ammon then also testified to the people, and many of them were converted (see Alma 19:30–33).

Acting on your faith can take different forms, just like our spiritual gifts are different. You might act by sharing your feelings about the gospel or by standing up for your beliefs. You might act by inviting others to come to an activity or to learn more about the restored gospel. Sometimes, you might act by patiently waiting and praying for missionary opportunities. But whenever that opportunity comes, take it!

## RIGHTEOUS WOMEN CAN CHANGE THE WORLD

Another thing the story of Abish and the Lamanite queen shows is just how powerful the influence of righteous women can be. In fact, Sister Elaine S. Dalton, former Young Women General President, pointed out



that “the people who heard [Abish] testify became a people who ‘were converted unto the Lord, [and] never did fall away,’ and their sons became the stripling warriors!”<sup>2</sup> Just let that sink in! Because Abish and the Lamanite queen had such great faith, they helped create a ripple effect that was felt for generations.

But that doesn’t mean you have to experience something as dramatic as their story to influence the world. President Russell M. Nelson has taught that when it comes to the ability to “communicate the love of Heavenly Father and the Savior to others, . . . women have a special gift for it—a divine endowment. . . . You have special spiritual gifts and propensities. . . . I urge you, with all the hope of my heart, to pray to understand *your spiritual gifts*—to cultivate, use, and expand them, even more than you ever have. You will change the world as you do so.”<sup>3</sup>

President Spencer W. Kimball also taught that the “female exemplars of the Church will be a significant force in both the numerical and the spiritual growth of the Church in the last days.”<sup>4</sup>

For you young women—that’s you! *You* are the women he spoke about. The qualities Heavenly Father has given you as a beloved daughter are vital to influencing the world for good in these last days.

And for you young men, the examples Abish and the queen set are just as relevant! You can use your own spiritual gifts to believe, act, and bless others.

Heavenly Father needs *all* of you, with your unique personalities and gifts, to help build His kingdom.

## YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

No matter who you are or what your circumstances might be, you can influence others for the better through your gifts, your willingness to act and invite, and your faith in Jesus Christ. It doesn’t matter if you’re a queen or a servant or anything in between—you can always make a difference when you use your gifts for good. So act in faith, invite others to come unto Christ, and believe! With Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ on your side, you can make much more of a difference than you may realize. **NE**

### NOTES

1. Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Oct. 2019 general conference (*Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2019, 88).
2. Elaine S. Dalton, Oct. 2011 general conference (*Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 78).
3. Russell M. Nelson, “Sisters’ Participation in the Gathering of Israel,” Oct. 2018 general conference (*Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2018, 68–69).
4. Spencer W. Kimball, “The Role of Righteous Women,” Oct. 1979 general conference (*Ensign*, Nov. 1979, 104).

