

Lesson 3: Mosiah 1-2

BACKGROUND NOTES: In our last lesson we studied the small plates records made by the descendents of the prophet Jacob, the brother of Nephi. These writings, though brief, give a glimpse of Nephite society, its struggles and strengths. As we switch to the Book of Mosiah, we are moving from the small plates to Mormon's abridgement of the large plates kept by the kings. The first king for whom we have recorded words is King Benjamin. In Words of Mormon we are told that this king faced challenges from within (false prophets) and from without (Lamanite wars). He is a model of a leader willing to sacrifice for the good of his people.

First Reading: Mosiah 1:1-7

1. King Benjamin lived in the land of _____.
2. List the two reasons given for teaching his sons the language of the Egyptians.

3. Do you think children today need to be taught "the language of the scriptures"? Why?

4. What are some ways of teaching the language of scripture to children?

5. Name three consequences that King Benjamin says would have resulted from not having the brass plates—their version of the scriptures.

6. What difference does it make in your life to "keep the commandments continually before your eyes?"

Second Reading: Mosiah 1:8-18

7. What two reasons does Benjamin give for making a special address to the people?

8. CHALLENGE QUESTION: A. Can you think of any instance in the Bible where a person was given a new name?
B. What did this signify?

9. According to King Benjamin, why were the people worthy to receive a new name?

10. How does King Benjamin say the people could forfeit protection from their enemies? Cite verse.

11. Do you have any enemies? How does this affect your life? (If your answer is no, please see 1 Nephi 15:24 or Helaman 5:12)

13. PERSONAL QUESTION: Can you think of a time when the Lord has "extended his arm of preservation" for your life?

14. A. List the four tokens of royalty that King Benjamin passed down to his son Mosiah (the second).
- B. How could each one symbolize something about a king's (leader's) rights and responsibilities?
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
15. List the phrases in verse 17 that tell what happens when people are "unfaithful."

Third Reading: Mosiah 2:1-10

READING NOTES: It helps to know about the Israelite harvest festival of "Sukkot" or "Feast of Tabernacles" to understand this chapter. Sukkot was a fall feast with a thanksgiving theme. The word means "huts" or "booths" in Hebrew and refers to the temporary shelters put up by the Israelites during the Exodus. This was one of three great feasts of obligation in which all males were supposed to appear "before the Lord" at the temple. During this holiday, the people made temporary shelters or tents to live in, which would remind them of the way God had provided for all their needs during the Exodus. This feast comes 10 days after Yom Kippur, the fast day of Atonement in which the people remember all their sins before the Lord and ask for His forgiveness. Look for these elements as you read. Many scholars feel that King Benjamin's speech was given during the feast of Sukkot.

16. A. One of the reasons for the people assembling was to sacrifice burnt offerings and give thanks. What does the record say they had to give thanks for?
- B. What similar things do you have to be thankful for?
17. What were the accommodations the people stayed in while they were at the temple?
18. King Benjamin asks the people to "hearken" by opening their ears, hearts, and minds. How is each of these three divisions an important part of our response to the word of God?
- ears
 - hearts
 - minds

Fourth Reading: Mosiah 2:11-26

19. King Benjamin begins by giving an accounting of himself as king. What are some of the things he lists that he has done?
20. We have heard much lately about purpose statements, or mission statements. From verses 11-16, what would you say was the Life's Purpose that was motivating King Benjamin?
21. What does King Benjamin want his people to learn from the example of his own life?
22. PERSONAL: Can you recall a time someone served you and you felt it was a blessing from God?
23. From the verses of this reading and from your own experience, what are some reasons why we should render praise and thanks to God?

24. What does God require of us?
25. Is it easy or hard to keep the commandments?
26. What kinds of commandments are hardest to keep in the world of the 21st century Latter-day Saint woman? You may answer from your own experience or from observation of current trends.
27. Even when we do try to serve God, why are we still unprofitable servants?
28. King Benjamin does not seem to care about the "self-esteem" of his listeners! His words sound harsh to modern ears that are used to being told how wonderful we are. But do not make the mistake of thinking that King Benjamin is talking here about the worth of the people. He is talking about the reality of the condition of fallen man. Put in your own words what you think he is saying about this.
29. Why is it so critical to always keep in mind our own limitations?
30. From your own experience, what do we need to remember as well, about our worth to God?

Fifth Reading: Mosiah 2:27-33 and Jacob 1:18-19

31. What does it mean to keep someone else's blood from coming upon you?
32. The Nephites are constantly told that if they will keep the commandments, their "enemies shall have no power over them." (v. 31) How is that true for us?
33. The word "list" in verses 32 and 33 is an archaic word meaning "to enlist."
A. How does a person "enlist" to serve "the evil spirit."
B. Do you think they know they are doing this?
C. What are the wages of enlisting in this army?
D. Why do you think King Benjamin particularly warns against "contentions" as a snare in this regard?

Sixth Reading: Mosiah 2:34-41

34. From verses 34 and 35, what are the ways that people are taught the commandments of God?
35. YOUR IDEAS: How can adults help children to grow up with a sense of the reality of God and of their "eternal indebtedness" to Him?