

Lesson Highlights

- *King Benjamin teaches his sons and has Mosiah call the people together.*
- *King Benjamin teaches the people their indebtedness to God.*
- *King Benjamin repeats an angel's prophecies about Jesus Christ and His Atonement.*

A study of this lesson will increase our understanding of our indebtedness to God and encourage us to "[put] off the natural man ... through the atonement of Christ the Lord" (Mosiah 3:19).

Next Week:

Lesson 16:

"Ye Shall Be Called the Children of Christ,"

Mosiah 4-6

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Introduction

The picture of Christ with Three Nephite Disciples is on the cover of both the lesson manual and the class member study guide. Consider:

- there are 238 chapters in the Book of Mormon;
- only 50 (about 21 percent) of those chapters contain accounts of events that occurred after Jesus' birth;
- only 18 (about 8 percent) of those chapters contain accounts of Jesus' visit among the Nephite people.

Given these facts, **why do you think this picture was chosen to represent our study of the Book of Mormon?**

- **Mosiah 3:13** emphasizes that Jesus Christ is the central figure in the Book of Mormon. His Atonement applies to people who lived before His mortal ministry, just as it applies to those who lived during His mortal ministry and just as it applies to us today. Today's lesson and next week's lesson focus on the words of King Benjamin, a prophet-leader who helped his people exercise faith in Jesus Christ hundreds of years before His mortal ministry and Atonement.

King Benjamin taught his sons and had Mosiah call the people together.

Mosiah 1:2-8 In the book of Mosiah, the first account of Benjamin is not about his reign as king but about his teachings as a father. He wanted his sons to be men of understanding and to know the prophecies of their fathers. This concern for their education in the importance of spiritual subjects demonstrates that King Benjamin was an excellent example to follow as a father or parent.

Mosiah 1:2-7 King Benjamin taught his sons about the family's religious heritage and the commandments of God. Note that the word mysteries in verses 3 and 5 refers to spiritual truths that are known only by revelation.

Mosiah 1:5 The difference between the Nephites, who studied the scriptures, and the Lamanites, who did not, was that the Lamanites had dwindled in unbelief and accepted false traditions instead of the true revelations from God. This difference is also reflected in our modern society. Parents can help their children develop a love for the scriptures by teaching their children from the

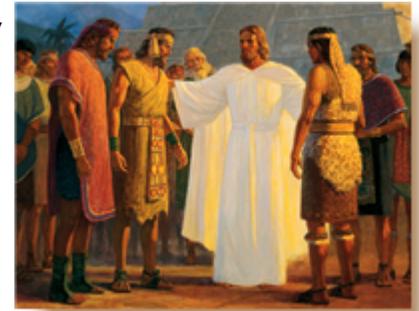
King Benjamin taught the people of their eternal indebtedness to God.

Mosiah 2:5-6 The people organized themselves as families once they arrived at the temple to hear King Benjamin. Note that they faced themselves toward the temple.

Mosiah 2:7-8 King Benjamin constructed a tower when he observed that not all the people could hear his words and when that



King Benjamin Addresses His People
Walter Rane



Christ with Three Nephite Disciples
Gary L. Kapp

scriptures, setting a righteous example by personally studying the scriptures, and using examples from the scriptures to teach principles necessary for successful daily living.

Mosiah 1:16 King Benjamin "gave [Mosiah] charge concerning the records...on the plates of brass". The Lord has commanded today's prophets, seers, and revelators to see that the scriptures are "preserved in safety" (D&C 42:56).

Mosiah 1:3-5 Think about why it is important that the scriptures be "preserved in safety".

Mosiah 1:10-12 King Benjamin asked his son Mosiah to call the people together so that he could proclaim Mosiah as his successor and to give the people a name to distinguish them from others. Note that the name that King Benjamin referred to was the name of Christ. Toward the end of his discourse, King Benjamin taught the people to take the name of Christ upon themselves. More discussion of that teaching will be included as part of lesson 16.

proved insufficient, he had his words transcribed and sent to the ones who could not personally hear his address. This gathering was similar to general conference today--observed in person by many and sent to those outside the immediate area by various forms of communications technology.

Mosiah 2:9 King Benjamin told the people that he had not commanded them to come together to trifle with his words, meaning that he did not want them to treat those words lightly.

Mosiah 2:9 In addition to his previous counsel on the seriousness of his intent, he counseled them to open their ears, hearts, and minds as they listened to his teachings.

Mosiah 3:19

“For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.”

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on King Benjamin and his teachings.

- What have you learned from his example?
- What principles from his teachings can you make part of your life?

To hearken to and understand the teachings of living prophets requires that we pay close attention, be open to accepting the teachings and principles, and ponder the truths being taught as well as how we might apply the teachings in our lives.

Mosiah 2:10-16 Personal characteristics demonstrated in the way Benjamin served as king included humility, devotion to God, integrity, selflessness, love, leadership, service, reverence, and honesty.

Mosiah 1:1; Mosiah 6:7 King Benjamin's leadership had a calming effect on his people so that they came together in peace during his reign.

Mosiah 2:17-19 King Benjamin taught his people about service, proclaiming that serving others was service to God. Ponder that concept and consider how our service to others shows our gratitude to God for the blessings we receive from Him. Ponder what manner of service inspires others to *"thank [their] heavenly King"*. For some examples, see Mosiah 18:8-10; D&C 18:10-16 and think about the service we promise to do as we make our baptismal covenants.

Mosiah 2:20-25 and the quotation below. These verses should cause us to think about what it means to be an unprofitable servant even if we praise and serve God with all our souls.

President Joseph Fielding Smith said: *"Do you think it will ever be possible for any one of us, no matter how hard we labor, ...to pay our Father and Jesus Christ for the blessings we*

have received from them? The great love, with its accompanying blessings, extended to us through the crucifixion, suffering, and resurrection of Jesus Christ is beyond our mortal comprehension. We never could repay" (Improvement Era, June 1966, 538).

As unprofitable servants, we are *"eternally indebted to [our] heavenly Father, to render to him all that [we] have and are"* (Mosiah 2:34).

Mosiah 2:17, 22; Mosiah 4:10 These verses help us understand how we can render all that we are by serving others, keeping the commandments, repenting of our sins, and humbling ourselves before God.

Mosiah 2:22, 41; see also D&C 84:38 Heavenly Father, when we give Him *"all that [we] have and are"*, gives us prosperity in the land, temporal and spiritual blessings, and never-ending happiness in heaven if we endure to the end in righteousness.

Mosiah 2:36-39 The consequences of refusing to obey the commandments after having been taught them include withdrawal of the Spirit of the Lord from us; loss of guidance in the path of wisdom--leaving us in need of blessings and guidance; guilt before God for rebelling against Him; the consequence of being an enemy to God; guilt, pain and anguish; loss of God's mercy; and never-ending torment.

Mosiah 2:38; see also Mosiah 3:23-27 According to King Benjamin, the cause of the torment that is often likened to a lake of fire is our own sense of guilt.

King Benjamin repeated an angel's prophecies about Jesus Christ and His Atonement.

Before his address to the people, King Benjamin had been visited by an angel who came *"to declare glad tidings of great joy"* (Mosiah 3:1-4). Mosiah 3 contains the angel's message.

Mosiah 3:5-10; also Alma 7:11-12. Jesus suffered temptations, pain, hunger, thirst, and fatigue so that salvation might be offered to mankind and that righteous judgment would be rendered to all.

The answers to the following questions are contained in the quotation below by Elder Hales:

Why did He suffer anguish for the wickedness of the people?

Why is it important to know that He was the Son of God and of Mary?

Why did He give His life?

In what ways is this a message of "great joy"? (Mosiah 3:3)

Elder Robert D. Hales said: *"What we must remember about the Savior is that He and He alone had the power to lay down His life and take it up again. He had the ability to die from His mortal mother, Mary, and the ability to overcome death from His immortal Father. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, went willingly and deliberately to His death, having told His followers that this would happen. Why? one might ask. The answer: to give immortality to all mankind and the promise of eternal life to those who believed in Him (see John 3:15), to give His own life for a ransom for others (see Matthew 20:28), to overcome Satan's power, and to make it possible for sins to be forgiven. Without Jesus' Atonement, there would be an impassable barrier between God and mortal men and women. When we comprehend the Atonement, we remember Him with awe and gratitude"* (Ensign, Nov. 1997, 26).

Elder Bruce R. McConkie:

"After the fall of Adam, man became carnal, sensual, and devilish by nature; he became fallen man.... All accountable persons on earth inherit this fallen state, this probationary state, this state in which worldly things seem desirable to the carnal nature. Being in this state, 'the natural man is an enemy to God,' until he conforms to the great plan of redemption and is born again to righteousness. (Mosiah 3:19.) Thus all mankind would remain lost and fallen forever were it not for the atonement of our Lord. (Alma 42:4-14.)"

(Mormon Doctrine, pp267-268)

According to the angel, those who will receive salvation through the Atonement of Jesus Christ are listed below.

- a) People "who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned" (Mosiah 3:11); note that from D&C 137:7-9 we learn that people who die without a knowledge of the gospel but who would have received the gospel with all their hearts will be heirs of the celestial kingdom.
- b) People with a knowledge of the gospel who repent and exercise faith in Jesus Christ (**Mosiah 3:12-13**).
- c) Little children who die in their infancy (**Mosiah 3:16, 18, 21**; see also **D&C 137:10**).

Mosiah 3:10 The promise of salvation for these three groups shows the Atonement's power to ensure "that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men".

Mosiah 3:16, 21; Moroni 8:12; D&C 29:46 These verses teach that little children are "blameless before God". Although "by nature, they fall", they are "blameless before God" because they are "alive in Christ" through the Atonement.

Mosiah 3:19 The angel said that "the natural man is an enemy to God". The meaning of the phrase "natural man" is found in **Alma 42:6-10** and the quotation below.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: *"After the fall of Adam, man became carnal, sensual, and devilish by nature; he became fallen man. ... All accountable persons on earth inherit this fallen state, this probationary state, this state in which worldly things seem desirable to the carnal nature. Being in this state, 'the natural*

Additional Teachings

"Eternally indebted"



Why is the scale unbalanced?

man is an enemy to God,' until he conforms to the great plan of redemption and is born again to righteousness. (Mosiah 3:19.) Thus all mankind would remain lost and fallen forever were it not for the atonement of our Lord. (Alma 42:4-14.)" (Mormon Doctrine, 2nd ed. [1966], 267-68).

Mosiah 3:19 counsels us to "[put] off the natural man". We do so by:

- a) Yielding to "the enticings of the Holy Spirit." This helps us "[put] off the natural man" by following the guidance of the Holy Ghost as taught in 2 Nephi 32:5; Mosiah 5:2; and 3 Nephi 28:11.
- b) Become "a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord." Ponder what it means to be a true saint. The word saint implies sanctification, or holiness. In the Book of Mormon, the word is used to refer to devoted members of the Lord's Church. See, for example, the use of the word saints in 1 Nephi 14:12 and 2 Nephi 9:18. The Atonement helps us become true saints.
- c) Become "as a child." Think about how you can become "alive in Christ," as little children are. See Mosiah 3:17-19, Mosiah 3:21; see also 2 Nephi 25:23-26; Moroni 8:10.

Mosiah 3:20 The angel said that the knowledge of the Savior would spread throughout every nation, kindred, tongue and people. This prophecy is being fulfilled as the Church's missionary service teaches the gospel and as Church broadcasts reach faraway outposts even in lands that are not open to the missionaries at this time. It will continue to be fulfilled as new areas are opened for the proclamation of the gospel.

Mosiah 2:20-25 identifies offerings we can give to the Lord and the blessings He gives us.

GOD'S BLESSINGS	OUR OFFERINGS
Kept and preserved us (v20)	
Caused that we should rejoice (v20)	
Granted that we should live at peace with one another (v20)	Render all thanks and praise (v20)
Created us (v21)	Serve Him (v21)
Preserving us from day to day (v21)	Keep His commandments (v22)
Lending us breath that we may move and do according to our own will (v21)	
Supporting us from one moment to another (v21)	
He doth keep and prosper us (v22)	

Consider that we will always be indebted to God.