

April 22–28: Mosiah 1–3, “Filled With Love Towards God and All Men”

Leadership

One of the ways the Book of Mormon teaches us is by example. With king Benjamin we have an excellent example of leadership

Lets review king Benjamin's works as king over the Nephites. Note how he fulfilled his leadership responsibility by watching over and protecting his people.

WoM 1:12-13,17-18

12 And now, concerning this king Benjamin—he had somewhat of contentions among his own people.

13 And it came to pass also that the armies of the Lamanites came down out of the land of Nephi, to battle against his people. But behold, king Benjamin gathered together his armies, and he did stand against them; and he did fight with the strength of his own arm, with the sword of Laban.

17 For behold, king Benjamin was a holy man, and he did reign over his people in righteousness; and there were many holy men in the land, and they did speak the word of God with power and with authority; and they did use much sharpness because of the stiffneckedness of the people—

18 Wherefore, with the help of these, king Benjamin, by laboring with all the might of his body and the faculty of his whole soul, and also the prophets, did once more establish peace in the land.

What do we learn from these verses about how king Benjamin led his people?

(he did fight with the strength of his own arm
he did reign over his people in righteousness
with the help of these... the prophets
by laboring with all the might of his body and... soul... did once more establish peace)

We are told as we serve in the Church that our first and most important priority is our own families. King Benjamin exemplifies this

Mosiah 1:2-3,7-8

2 And it came to pass that he had three sons; and he called their names Mosiah, and Helorum, and Helaman. And he caused that they should be taught in all the language of his fathers, that thereby they might become men of understanding; and that they might know concerning the prophecies which had been spoken by the mouths of their fathers, which were delivered them by the hand of the Lord.

3 And he also taught them concerning the records which were engraven on the plates of brass, saying: My sons, I would that ye should remember that were it not for these plates, which contain these records and these commandments, we must have suffered in ignorance, even at this present time, not knowing the mysteries of God.

7 And now, my sons, I would that ye should remember to search them diligently, that ye may profit thereby; and I would that ye should keep the commandments of God, that ye may prosper in the land according to the promises which the Lord made unto our fathers.

8 And many more things did king Benjamin teach his sons, which are not written in this book.

What did king Benjamin emphasize that his children should learn and what did he work diligently to teach them?

(the records which were engraven on the plates of brass)

Ezra Taft Benson

"Why did righteous fathers in the Book of Mormon go to so much trouble to teach their sons the word of God? King Benjamin said it was to fulfill the commandments of God. He further stated that were it not for their having the brass plates which contained the commandments, they would have 'suffered in ignorance.' Could the lack of teaching the scriptures in our homes be a source of our suffering in ignorance today?

"As the brass plates blessed Lehi and his descendants, so our scriptures should bless us. 'And now, my sons,' said King Benjamin, 'I would that ye should remember to search them diligently, that ye may profit thereby; and I would that ye should keep the commandments of God.' In other words, first read them, then heed them." (CR, Oct. 1985)

Another characteristic of a good leader is that they are a servant to those whom they lead - as taught by Jesus: "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." (Matt 20:26-27)

Even though he is king he makes it clear to his people that he does not consider himself to be any better than they are.

Mosiah 2:9-11

9 And these are the words which he spake and caused to be written, saying: My brethren, all ye that have assembled yourselves together, you that can hear my words which I shall speak unto you this day; for I have not commanded you to come up hither to trifle with the words which I shall speak, but that you should hearken unto me, and open your ears that ye may hear, and your hearts that ye may understand, and your minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to your view.

10 I have not commanded you to come up hither that ye should fear me, or that ye should think that I of myself am more than a mortal man.

11 But I am like as yourselves, subject to all manner of infirmities in body and mind; yet I have been chosen by this people, and consecrated by my father, and was suffered by the hand of the Lord that I should be a ruler and a king over this people;

and have been kept and preserved by his matchless power, to serve you with all the might, mind and strength which the Lord hath granted unto me.

Despite his hard work and great accomplishments, king Benjamin readily admits that he is as weak and frail as any other man.

Who does he credit for giving him the strength and ability to fulfill his duties?

(was suffered by the hand of the Lord that I should be a ruler and a king... have been kept and preserved by his matchless power, to serve you with all the might, mind and strength which the Lord hath granted unto me)

Ruth B. Wright

"I love to look at the picture of King Benjamin standing on the mighty tower with his loving arms outstretched to all his people. This beloved king, who spent his life in service to others, showed great humility when he willingly admitted his weaknesses and shortcomings and yet stated with conviction that he recognized his calling was from God....

"When I feel inadequate and overwhelmed with my own weaknesses, I think of King Benjamin and try again." (CR, Oct. 1990)

He stated in verse 11 that he has been their servant.

Now he tells them that they should consider this as an example of how they should serve one another.

Mosiah 2:14,17-18

14 And even I, myself, have labored with mine own hands that I might serve you, and that ye should not be laden with taxes, and that there should nothing come upon you which was grievous to be borne—and of all these things which I have spoken, ye yourselves are witnesses this day.

17 And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.

18 Behold, ye have called me your king; and if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to serve you, then ought not ye to labor to serve one another?

What does king Benjamin teach us in these verses about how to serve and why service is essential?

(when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God)

Marion G. Romney

“Service is not something we endure on this earth so we can earn the right to live in the celestial kingdom. Service is the very fiber of which an exalted life in the celestial kingdom is made.” (“The Celestial Nature of Self-

Reliance,” Ensign, March 2009)

How does king Benjamin exemplify that service is an essential characteristic of a good leader?

(if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to serve you, then ought not ye to labor to serve one another)

Peter M. Johnson

“Remember that the first and great commandment is to love God with our heart, might, mind, and strength. All that we do should be motivated by our love for Him and for His Son. As we develop our love for Them by keeping Their commandments, our capacity to love ourselves and to love others will increase. We will begin to serve family, friends, and neighbors because we will see them as the Savior sees them—as sons and daughters of God.” (CR, Oct. 2019)

Receiving Forgiveness

King Benjamin gathers his people together one last time to teach them a great lesson. He lays out the process which allows them to receive the blessing of forgiveness. Elder Featherstone called it the 2nd greatest sermon ever given (CR, April 1975)

He starts by making it clear that all of us are total dependent on Christ.

Mosiah 2:20-21

20 I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created you, and has kept and preserved you, and has caused that ye should rejoice, and has granted that ye should live in peace one with another—

21 I say unto you that if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and is preserving you from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another—I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants.

What is the point that king Benjamin is making by telling us that no matter how diligently we worship and serve we will never be profitable servants?

God has done, and continues to do, more for us than we can ever repay

Dallin H. Oaks

“We have so much for which to give thanks. First and foremost, we are thankful for our Savior Jesus Christ. Under the plan of the Father, He created the world. Through His prophets, He revealed the plan of salvation with its accompanying commandments and ordinances. He came into mortality to teach and show us the way. He suffered and paid the price for

our sins if we would repent. He gave up His life, and He conquered death and rose from the grave that we all will live again. He is the Light and Life of the World. As King Benjamin taught, if we 'should render all the thanks and praise which [our] whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created [us], and has kept and preserved [us], and ... should serve him with all [our] whole souls yet [we] would be unprofitable servants.'" (CR, April 2003)

King Benjamin tells us that everything we have is given from Christ and all he asks in return is that we keep His commandments. Then, when we do that, Christ gives us even more.

Mosiah 2:22-25

22 And behold, all that he requires of you is to keep his commandments; and he has promised you that if ye would keep his commandments ye should prosper in the land; and he never doth vary from that which he hath said; therefore, if ye do keep his commandments he doth bless you and prosper you.

23 And now, in the first place, he hath created you, and granted unto you your lives, for which ye are indebted unto him.

24 And secondly, he doth require that ye should do as he hath commanded you; for which if ye do, he doth immediately bless you; and therefore he hath paid you. And ye are still indebted unto him, and are, and will be, forever and ever; therefore, of what have ye to boast?

25 And now I ask, can ye say aught of yourselves? I answer you, Nay. Ye cannot say that ye are even as much as the dust of the earth; yet ye were created of the dust of the earth; but behold, it belongeth to him who created you.

What does king Benjamin say that makes it very clear that we have no reason to allow pride to be a part of our lives?

(ye are still indebted unto him, and are, and will be, forever and ever; therefore, of what have ye to boast
Ye cannot say that ye are even as much as the dust of the earth)

Eldred G. Smith

"Yes, God is mindful of you and me because we are his children. He has given us this earth and all we have—the very air we breathe, food to eat, life itself. He rewards us for every good deed. Of ourselves we are nothing. Brothers and sisters, let us not be self-sufficient. Let us not forget to be humble and acknowledge the Lord, who is so good to us, [as] King Benjamin told his people....

"My brothers and sisters, be not lifted up in the pride of your hearts that you forget the Giver of all your blessings. Do not let self-righteousness rob you of humility before God. Acknowledge him in all things. Let your faith be simple and childlike." (CR, April 1955)

After explaining that we depend on Christ for our existence and everything we have, he goes on to explain how the demands of the law of justice make us depend on Christ and His mercy

Mosiah 2:38-39

38 Therefore if that man repenteth not, and remaineth and dieth an enemy to God, the demands of divine justice do awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord, and doth fill his breast with guilt, and pain, and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever.

39 And now I say unto you, that mercy hath no claim on that man; therefore his final doom is to endure a never-ending torment.

What will your “immortal soul” realize that your fate will be if you die without receiving justification from Christ?

(the demands of divine justice do awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord)

Joseph Smith

“A man is his own tormentor and his own condemner.... The torment of disappointment in the mind of man is as exquisite as a lake burning with fire and brimstone.” (“King Follet Sermon,” HC, 6:314)

Next, to better explain how Christ made this mercy possible, he tells his people of a visitation from an angel, and what that angel told him about Christ.

Mosiah 3:5-13

5 For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases.

6 And he shall cast out devils, or the evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men.

7 And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people.

8 And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary.

9 And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men even through faith on his name; and even after all this they shall consider him a man, and say that he hath a devil, and shall scourge him, and shall crucify him.

10 And he shall rise the third day from the dead; and behold, he standeth to judge the

world; and behold, all these things are done that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men.

11 For behold, and also his blood atoneth for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam, who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned.

12 But wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God! For salvation cometh to none such except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.

13 And the Lord God hath sent his holy prophets among all the children of men, to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue, that thereby whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same might receive remission of their sins, and rejoice with exceedingly great joy, even as though he had already come among them.

After giving us a very clear, concise description of Christ's earthly ministry, resurrection, and atonement king Benjamin states that, "all these things are done that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men"

Dieter F. Uchtdorf

"The Atonement of Jesus Christ causes each person to be accountable for his or her individual sins. We will overcome the consequences of individual sin by claiming the blessings and benefits of the Atonement.... 'For salvation cometh to none... except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ' (Mosiah 3:12).

"It is not repentance per se that saves man. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that saves us. It is not by our sincere and honest change of behavior alone that we are saved, but 'by grace that we are saved, after all we can do' (2 Nephi 25:23). True repentance, however, is the condition required so that God's forgiveness can come into our lives." (CR, April 2007)

What does king Benjamin say about those who don't have an opportunity in this life to know the will of God?

(his blood atoneth for the sins of those who... died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned
But wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God!)

Having told his people the joyful news, that Christ loves us so much that he will go thru this atoning process for us. He now talks about how to use this gift from Christ to receive a remission of our sins.

Mosiah 3:19

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.

What are some of the characteristics of someone who has put off the natural man?

(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)

How do we become a saint, put off the natural man, and receive these qualities?

(yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit)

Bruce R. McConkie

“If a man 'yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, an putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord' (Mosiah 3:19), then he is born again. His spiritual death ceases. He becomes alive to the things of the Spirit; he returns to the presence of God because he receives the gift of the Holy Ghost; and he is alive to the things of righteousness. He crucifies the old man of sin, becomes a new creature of the Holy Ghost, and walks in a newness of life. This is what is meant by being born again.” (The Promised Messiah, pg. 350)

We will read next week that the people of king Benjamin realized that they were nothing without Christ, understood the great gift Christ had given them through His atonement, exercised this faith to repent of their sins, and they were born again

Mosiah 5:2

And they all cried with one voice, saying: Yea, we believe all the words which thou hast spoken unto us; and also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually.

What had made the change in their hearts?

(the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts)

Ezra Taft Benson

“The Lord works from the inside out. The world works from the outside in. The world would take people out of the slums. Christ takes the slums out of people, and then they take themselves out of the slums. The world would mold men by changing their environment. Christ changes men, who then change their environment. The world would shape human behavior, but Christ

can change human nature.” (“Born of God”, Ensign, July 1989)

King Benjamin gives this great promise to all those who repent of their sins and live the gospel of Christ

Mosiah 2:41

41 And moreover, I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness. O remember, remember that these things are true; for the Lord God hath spoken it.

In what ways do you think that “those that keep the commandments” are blessed “both temporal and spiritual”?

ElRay L. Christiansen

"There is no prize so great and so valuable as the truth. In the Church we are taught the truth. We are taught the proper way to live—the correct, the right, the happy way to live. We could search the world over, and we could find no better way to live than the right way, and of course the Lord's way is the right way.

"We are taught to know the right in all things—how to repent, how to change our ways. We are taught whom and how to serve. We are taught the proper way to enter into the marriage covenant. In fact, the gospel of Jesus Christ is designed to direct us safely through this probationary period, that we 'may dwell... in a state of never-ending happiness' with those we love. I like that statement from the Book of Mormon." (CR, Oct. 1960)

On the other hand he gives a warning to those who reject the words that they have heard and don't repent of their sins

Mosiah 3:23-27

23 And now I have spoken the words which the Lord God hath commanded me.

24 And thus saith the Lord: They shall stand as a bright testimony against this people, at the judgment day; whereof they shall be judged, every man according to his works, whether they be good, or whether they be evil.

25 And if they be evil they are consigned to an awful view of their own guilt and abominations, which doth cause them to shrink from the presence of the Lord into a state of misery and endless torment, from whence they can no more return; therefore they have drunk damnation to their own souls.

26 Therefore, they have drunk out of the cup of the wrath of God, which justice could no more deny unto them than it could deny that Adam should fall because of his partaking of the forbidden fruit; therefore, mercy could have claim on them no more forever.

27 And their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are

unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever. Thus hath the Lord commanded me. Amen.

Once the work of God is presented to us clearly and by the power of the Spirit, what consequences do we face if we turn away from God's gifts?

(judgment day... they are consigned to an awful view of their own guilt
(justice could no more deny unto them... mercy could have claim on them)

Joseph B. Wirthlin

"In our day we face a similar choice. We can foolishly ignore the prophets of God, depend on our own strength, and ultimately reap the consequences. Or we can wisely draw near to the Lord and partake of His blessings.

"King Benjamin described both paths and both consequences. He said that those who forsake the Lord will be 'consigned to an awful view of their own guilt and abominations, which doth cause them to shrink from the presence of the Lord into a state of misery and endless torment.'

"But those who journey to higher ground and keep the commandments of God 'are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness.'" (CR, Oct. 2005)