

Come Follow Me Podcast  
Elo Viz production  
Week 17  
Mosiah 1-3

For the next several weeks we are going to be studying the words of King Benjamin as he teaches his people. He was an amazing King that reigned in righteousness and fear before God. His message to the Nephites is powerful and all encompassing as he speaks for a long time. The crowd was so large that the temple grounds were full, and people were camped outside the temple walls as families and the doors of their tents were faced towards the temple where King Benjamin was speaking.

I'd like to outline a few teachings in these chapters, then I'd like to point out a general concept about all his teachings that I believe will help us as we go through the next several weeks.

Mosiah 3:19 is a well known scripture in the church: "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."

We have focused on this principle several times over the last six years. It is critical for our salvation that we understand this verse. As a whole the message of King Benjamin is about being humble and meek. These traits are not natural, nor do they come easy to those that seek them. Yet this process of becoming humble is one of the keys to opening up the windows of heaven. In contrast, pride shuts the windows of heaven. King Benjamin explains in 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.”

Once we choose to be humble our reliance turns from ourselves to God. We rely on God more than we know. Whether we acknowledge it or not He is our sustaining breath. We may not feel that God is with us always but that does not change the fact that God angels are sent to be by our side at all times. Last year in General conference Elder Carl Cook told a story about how he relied completely on the Spirit of God in an assignment.:

“More than 20 years ago, I was unexpectedly called as an Area Seventy, and I felt very inadequate. Following my training assignments, I was to preside at my first stake conference. The stake president and I meticulously planned every detail. Shortly before the conference, President Boyd K. Packer, then–Acting President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, called to see if he could accompany me. I was surprised and, of course, agreed. I asked how he would like to proceed since he would preside. He suggested that we undo the plans and prepare to follow the Spirit. Thankfully, I still had 10 days to study, pray, and prepare.

With an open agenda, we were on the stand 20 minutes before the leadership meeting began. I leaned over to the stake president and whispered, “This is a wonderful stake.” President Packer elbowed me gently and said, “No talking.”

I stopped talking, and his general conference talk “Reverence Invites Revelation”<sup>11</sup> came to mind. I observed that President Packer was writing down scripture references. The Spirit confirmed to me that he was receiving impressions for the meeting. My learning experience had just begun.

President Packer spoke for the first 15 minutes and emphasized the importance of conducting all meetings as guided by the Holy Spirit.<sup>12</sup> He then said, “We will now hear from Elder Cook.”

On my way to the pulpit, I asked how long he would like me to take and if there was a topic he would like me to address. He said, “Take 15 minutes and carry on as you feel inspired.” I took about 14 minutes and shared everything I had on my mind.

President Packer stood again and spoke for another 15 minutes. He shared this scripture:

“Speak the thoughts that I shall put into your hearts, and you shall not be confounded before men;

“For it shall be given you ... in the very moment, what ye shall say.”

Then he said, “We will now hear from Elder Cook.”

I was shocked. I had never considered the possibility that I would be asked to speak twice in one meeting. I didn't have anything in mind to say. Praying fervently and relying on the Lord for help, somehow, I was blessed with a thought, a scripture, and I was able to speak for another 15 minutes. I sat down totally exhausted.

President Packer spoke again for 15 minutes about following the Spirit and shared Paul's teachings that we should not speak "words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."<sup>14</sup> As you can imagine, I was overwhelmed when he was impressed to say for the third time, "We will now hear from Elder Cook."

I was empty. I had nothing. I knew it was time to exercise more faith. Slowly, I made my way to the pulpit, pleading to God for help. As I stepped up to the microphone, the Lord miraculously blessed me to somehow give another 15-minute message.

The meeting finally ended, but I quickly realized that the adult session would start in one hour. Oh, no! Like Zoram, I sincerely wanted to run, but just as Nephi caught him, I knew President Packer would catch me. The adult meeting followed the very same pattern. I spoke three more times. The next day during the general session, I spoke once.

After the conference, President Packer said with affection, "Let's do it again sometime." I love President Boyd K. Packer and appreciate all that I learned.

Do you know what I am grateful for? That I didn't give up—or resist. If I had given in to my desperate desire to escape from those meetings, I would have missed an opportunity to increase my faith and receive a rich outpouring of love and support from my Heavenly Father. I learned of His mercy, the miraculous enabling power of Jesus Christ and His Atonement, and the powerful influence of the Holy Ghost. In spite of my weakness, I learned that I can serve; I can contribute when the Lord is by my side if I just keep going—with faith."

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2023/04/13cook?lang=eng>

Elder Cook learned how to rely on God. This is what God wants for all of His children. Could you imagine how heavenly this earthly life would be if everyone was striving to follow, and rely on God in their daily lives? This commitment is what King Benjamin's people covenanted to do after his glorious message, Mosiah 5 starting in verse 2 is says:

"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.

3 And we, ourselves, also, through the infinite [goodness](#) of God, and the manifestations of his Spirit, have great views of that which is to come; and were it expedient, we could prophesy of all things.

4 And it is the faith which we have had on the things which our king has spoken unto us that has brought us to this great knowledge, whereby we do rejoice with such exceedingly great joy.

5 And we are willing to enter into a [covenant](#) with our God to do his will, and to be obedient to his commandments in all things that he shall command us, all the remainder of our days, that we may not bring upon ourselves a [never-ending](#) torment, as has been spoken by the [angel](#), that we may not drink out of the cup of the wrath of God.”

Now, we may be tempted to think that after this might change of heart that these people had become perfected and were no longer faced with sin or the temptation of sin. That trials and troubles ceased to plague their lives. This is of course false doctrine and a tool of the adversary to lead us to believe that some spiritual experience, some great elimination will keep us away from or above the woes of mortality.

John Pontius in his book “Journey to the Vail” said it this way:

“Even when He applies the atonement blood and washes us clean, He does not deliver us from the mortal condition. He forgives us of our sins, but does not silence the temptations or abate the addictions. He counts us worthy and blesses us with great and glorious views, miracles and majestic love. But He does not lift us from the sewer of worldliness. The feathers of prior disobedience remain on the wind, and the mortal condition continues as long as we draw mortal breath. There is a renewing process of rebirth and rejuvenation whereby the feathers on the wind are gathered in, and the consequence as well as the accountability for past sins are wiped away. However, even when that occurs, the pull of mortality never lessens.

Too many people stop themselves in their journey because they judge themselves unworthy to proceed. Their natural man screams profane things too loudly they think, for them to be really clean. The adversary helps them think; If I were really forgiven, or born again, or if I were really a disciple, or if I were really a true latter day saint, a righteous father or mother, daughter of son, then I would not be still tempted by these old sins. Oh wretched man that I am. Let us stop judging ourselves by our mortal condition and rather by our relationship with Christ. Let us believe that His grace is sufficient when we humble ourselves in obedience to His voice, even though the war rages on. The fact that it does can not spoil the spotless white of who we really are through Jesus Christ.”

Book- Journey to the Vail by John Pontius. Chapter seven.

Though we try to overcome this mortality in which we all live, I believe it is important to realize that all the mortal experiences will be for our good. We must learn to become better than the world and seek those things of heaven while accepting the experiences that God wants us to go through in order to become like Him. Might we find joy in the journey, is my prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.