

Mosiah 11 — King Noah and the First Cry of Abinadi — A King Whose Heart Is Set on Riches, a Prophet Who Comes Among the People to Say Repent or Be Brought Into Bondage

Mosiah 11: Noah, son of Zeniff, sets aside his father's righteousness; takes many wives and concubines; lays a tax of one-fifth; builds palaces, a throne, a tower, and a vineyard for wine; consecrates priests in his own image; goes to war; and into this kingdom the prophet Abinadi appears for the first time, prophesying bondage unless they repent; c. 160 BC.

Mosiah 11 is the BoM's-master-portrait of a wicked-king and the first-prophetic-confrontation of the Abinadi-cycle. Zeniff conferred-the-kingdom on Noah at the close of Mosiah 10:22; Mosiah 11 opens with the chilling-line *And now it came to pass that Zeniff conferred the kingdom upon Mosiah, his son... No, it was upon Noah... and he did not walk in the ways of his father* (the chapter's-first-verse is the inversion-of-the-grandfather's-blessing). The chapter then-catalogues the wickednesses-of-Noah-and-his-priests with the precision-of-a-prosecutor's-brief, and concludes by sending-Abinadi into-the-midst of-the-court to deliver the first-prophetic-warning that-the-Abinadi-cycle will spend-six-chapters elaborating.

Load-Bearing Texts

1. v. 1. *he did not walk in the ways of his father* — the chapter's-master-statement of broken-inheritance
2. v. 2. *he had many wives and concubines* — the chapter's-precise echo of Jacob 2:23–28's-warning against-this-very-thing
3. v. 6. *he did cause his people to commit sin, and do that which was abominable in the sight of the Lord; yea, and they did commit whoredoms and all manner of wickedness* — the chapter's-master-articulation of the king-corrupts-the-people doctrine
4. v. 14. *he placed his heart upon his riches, and he spent his time in riotous living with his wives and his concubines* — the chapter's-master-statement of riches-becomes-the-heart
5. v. 20. *thus saith the Lord, and thus hath he commanded me, saying, Go forth, and say unto this people, thus saith the Lord—Wo be unto this people, for I have seen their abominations, and their wickedness, and their whoredoms* — the chapter's-master-first-prophetic-formula of Abinadi
6. v. 25. *except this people repent and turn unto the Lord their God, behold, I will deliver them into the hands of their enemies; yea, and they shall be brought into bondage* — the chapter's-master-prophecy of the colony's-bondage that Mosiah-7's-Limhi will-name as already-fulfilled

Hebrew Word Studies

avi-nadav / kakh amar adonai / pakad (אָבִי־נָדָב / יְהוָה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי / פָּקַד) — "my-father-is-noble" or "father of nobility" / "thus saith the Lord" / "to visit, to muster, to attend to" vv. 20, 25. The chapter's Abinadi-introduction triad. *Avi-nadav* — literally my-father-is-noble or noble-father — the Hebrew-name behind English Abinadab, attested in 1 Sam. 7:1's Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the Lord and 1 Sam. 16:8's-Abinadab one of Jesse's-sons; *kakh amar adonai* — thus saith the Lord — the canonical Hebrew-Bible prophetic-formula, occurring 425 times in the OT; *pakad* — to visit, to muster, to attend to — the verb that is both blessing (Gen. 21:1's the Lord visited Sarah) and curse (Ex. 20:5's visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children). The doctrine: Abinadi (*avi-nadav*) begins his ministry with the canonical *kakh-amar-adonai* formula, and the threat is divine-pakad — visit them in mine anger. The same Hebrew-Bible prophet-pattern (Amos 1:3's-thus-saith-the-Lord for three transgressions, even for four) is operating-without-modification in the Mosiah-11 court. Same *kakh-amar-adonai* grammar as every Major and Minor Prophet; same *pakad-as-visitation* grammar as Ex. 32:34 — in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. The Restoration's D&C 1:14 — and the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord... shall be cut off from among the people — operates by the same logic. The chapter is the BoM's clearest articulation of Abinadi-as-classical-prophet-in-Hebrew-Bible-grammar — and one of the BoM's-clearest cross-cultural-witnesses that the prophetic-office speaks-the-same-formula in any time.

From the Chapter's Architecture

The chapter is also the first-chapter of the Abinadi-cycle (Mosiah 11–17). The cycle will-run: warning (ch. 11) → return-in-disguise (ch. 12) → trial-before-priests (ch. 12–13) → reading-of-the-Decalogue (ch. 13) → Isaiah-53-recital (ch. 14) → father-Son-Christology (ch. 15) → resurrection-and-death (ch. 16–17). The chapter is the cycle's-opening, and the cycle's-conclusion (Abinadi's-burning-in-Mosiah-17) is the visible-fulfillment of-the-chapter's-first-prophecy.