
Mosiah 1 — Benjamin's Father-Discourse — Language, Records, the Mysteries, and the Name That Shall Never Be Blotted Out

Mosiah 1: King Benjamin, near death, gathers his three sons (Mosiah, Helorum, Helaman) to teach them the language of their fathers, the prophecies of the brass plates, and the genealogy of Lehi. He anoints Mosiah as his successor, and commissions him to summon all the people to a great assembly; c. 130–124 BC.

This is the chapter where a dying father sits his sons down and hands them everything that matters. Benjamin has made peace, he has grown old, and now — in one unbroken act of fatherhood — he passes on both the gospel he believes and the throne he holds. Watch the order he teaches in. Language first, then the records, then the prophecies, then the mysteries, and last of all the name that will mark this people as God's own. That order is the whole lesson.

Hebrew Word Studies

***lashon avot / da'at / binah* (לִשׁוֹן אָבוֹת / תְּעֵד / הִנֵּיב) — language of the fathers / knowledge / understanding v. 2.** These three words map Benjamin's whole method. *Lashon avot* is "the language of the fathers," the ancestral tongue carrying theology forward. *Da'at* is "knowledge" — the word behind v. 5's *they could not know*. *Binah* is "understanding" — the word behind *men of understanding*. The flow runs in that order: the language carries the knowledge, and the knowledge ripens into understanding. Proverbs 4:7 puts it the same way — *wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding*. The Restoration says it again in D&C 88:118 — *seek learning, even by study and also by faith*. Lose the language of the fathers and you cannot carry their doctrine; lose the doctrine and the children dwindle.

***shem chadash / machah / segullah* (שֵׁם חָדָשׁ / הַחֵמ / הַלְגָּס) — new name / to blot out / treasured-possession vv. 11–13.** Three words sit under this passage. *Shem chadash* is the "new name" of Isaiah 62:2. *Machah* is the verb "to blot out, to wipe away," used in Exodus 32:33 and Revelation 3:5. *Segullah* is "treasured possession," the word behind Exodus 19:5 — *ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people*. Put them together and you get Benjamin's doctrine: the new name confers treasured-possession status, and only sin can wipe it away. The same picture runs through Deuteronomy 7:6 — *the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself* — and 1 Peter 2:9 — *ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*. The Restoration echoes it in D&C 76:5, where the Lord delights to honor those who serve me in righteousness. The name is permanent unless the one who bears it chooses to lose it.

From the Chapter's Architecture

It is also the clearest picture in the book of the three things that keep a covenant people alive: language (verse 2), records (verses 3–7), and name (verses 11–13). All three together carry a people across the generations. Lose any one of them and you get the dwindling-into-unbelief that Benjamin keeps warning his sons about.