

Mosiah 3 — The Angel's Message — Jesus Christ Named, Blood from Every Pore, and the Natural Man

Mosiah 3: King Benjamin stops speaking in his own words and delivers a message an angel gave him the night before — Christ's coming, his name, his mother, his miracles, the blood of Gethsemane, the crucifixion, the resurrection. This is the Book of Mormon's most explicit naming of Jesus Christ a full six centuries before Bethlehem, and its clearest statement of what has to happen to the natural man. About 124 BC.

In Mosiah 2, Benjamin spoke to his people about service and about how much they owe their Maker. Those were his own words. In Mosiah 3 he does something different. He tells them that an angel came to him in the night, and that most of what follows is not Benjamin talking — it is Benjamin reading back an angel's script. So the register changes. Chapter 2 was ethics. Chapter 3 is Christ.

Hebrew Word Studies

besorah / sameach / nigash (בְּשׂוֹרָה / הֵיטָב / נִגַּשׁ) — **good tidings, gospel / joy, gladness / approached, drew near v. 3.** The three Hebrew words hiding under the angel's greeting. *Besorah* is good tidings, gospel — the very noun in Isaiah 52:7, "the feet of him that bringeth good tidings." *Sameach* is joy, gladness — the word behind verse 4's promise that Benjamin's soul may be "filled with joy." *Nigash* is to draw near, to approach — the verb of a messenger stepping close. Put them together and you have the shape of the moment: the messenger draws near (*nigash*), the good news is spoken (*besorah*), and joy follows (*sameach*). It's the same music as Isaiah 40:9, "O Zion, that bringest good tidings," and Mark 1:1, "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ" — where the Greek euangelion is simply *besorah* in another tongue. The Restoration keeps the pattern in D&C 1:5, "I have sent forth my voice unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear." The gospel is glad news carried by someone sent — and it was glad news a full six centuries before the events it announces.

chatta't / nazah / kapparah (חַטָּאת / נָזַח / כַּפָּרָה) — **sin, sin-offering / to sprinkle, spurt / atonement, covering vv. 7, 11.**

Three words for what is happening in the garden. *Chatta't* is sin, and also the sin-offering — the same word does double duty, because the offering is named for the thing it answers. *Nazah* is the verb for blood sprinkled or spurring, the word in Isaiah 63:3, "their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments." *Kapparah* is atonement, a covering — the noun behind Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Line them up and the doctrine falls out on its own: the blood that spurts (*nazah*) from every pore becomes the covering (*kapparah*) for sin (*chatta't*). It's Leviticus 17:11 made personal — "the life of the flesh is in the blood... I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement" — and Hebrews saying the quiet part out loud, "without shedding of blood is no remission," and then, "by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place." The stunning cross-reference is the Restoration's, where Christ quotes this very verse back about himself: "which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore" (D&C 19:18). Benjamin's angel prophesies it in 124 BC; Christ confirms it in his own voice in 1830. The same detail, the same words, on both sides of the event.

adam ha-rishon / ha-ish he-chadash / qaton (אָדָם הָרִשּׁוֹן / הָאִישׁ הַחֲדָשׁ / קָטוֹן) — **the first Adam / the new man / little one, child v. 19.** Three figures stand behind verse 19. *Adam ha-rishon*, the first Adam — the one Paul names in "the first man Adam" (1 Corinthians 15:45), and the source of the "natural" state the angel calls enmity. *Ha-ish he-chadash*, the new man — Paul's phrase in "put on the new man" (Ephesians 4:24), the saint you become. And *qaton*, little one or child — the disposition you land in. The verse walks you across all three: the first Adam's nature is enmity; the new man is the saint put on through the atonement; the child is the shape that saint takes. Paul maps the same journey in Colossians 3:9–10, "ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man," and in Romans 6:6, "our old man is crucified with him." The Restoration keeps it in D&C 67:10, "strip yourselves from jealousies and fears, and humble yourselves." Here's the thing worth saying plainly: the saint is not a tuned-up version of the natural man. The saint is a different creature — born of the Spirit, made new through the atonement. You don't improve your way across that line. You're carried across it.

From the Chapter's Architecture

What makes the chapter remarkable is how much it packs into so little space. Incarnation, miracles, exorcism, Gethsemane, crucifixion, resurrection, judgment, the reach of the atonement, the one saving name, the innocence of children, the natural man and the saint, the final state of the lost — it's all here, compressed. It reads the way Paul's great Christ-hymns read, the one in Philippians 2 and the one in Colossians 1: the whole gospel folded into a few dense verses. Only this one comes by an angel, in 124 BC, before any of it had happened.