

THE BOOK OF MOSIAH

Chapter 1

{Original 1830 Chapter I}

[*Note: In the Printer's Manuscript immediately following the insertion of the title "Book of Mosiah," the word "Chapter" appears, followed by a Roman numeral (II or III) that has been partially crossed out. There is also no subscript summary as is written in the subsequent book of Alma and the book of Helaman. Concerning this situation, Royal Skousen writes:*

Based on the misnumbering of the chapters near the beginning of Mosiah, I would argue for the following relationship between the Large and Small plates:

Large Plates

Small Plates

Lehi

Nephi (I)

Nephi (II)

Jacob

Enos

Jarom

Omni

Amaron, Chemish, Abinadom

Mosiah "Chapter I" (Amaleki)

[the reign of king Mosiah]

[ascension of king Benjamin]

Mosiah "Chapter II" The Words of Mormon

[the reign of king Benjamin]

Mosiah "Chapter III" *[beginning of our present Mosiah]*

Thus the beginning of our current book of Mosiah corresponds originally with the beginning of the third chapter of Mosiah. This explains not only the inserted title and missing summary, but also the abrupt beginning of our present book of Mosiah ('And now there was no more contention in all the land of Zarahemla'). (Royal Skousen, "Critical Methodology and the Text of the Book of Mormon," in Review of Books on the Book of Mormon 6/1, F.A.R.M.S., p. 135-139.)]

[Mosiah 1]

The King's (Benjamin's) Sons Are Taught the Scriptures
Fulfilling the Covenant Command of the Lord

1 And **now** there was _____ NO more contention
in **ALL the land of Zarahemla**
[there was _____ NO more contention]
among **ALL the people** who belonged to king Benjamin
so that [he] **king Benjamin** had **continual peace ALL the remainder of his days**

2 And **it came to pass**
that he [**king Benjamin**] had three sons
and he [**king Benjamin**] called their names **Mosiah₂** aa
and **Helorum**
and **Helaman**

And he [**king Benjamin**] **caused** 01
that they should be **taught** in ALL **the language** of **his fathers** [see 1 Ne. 1:1-4]
that thereby
they might become **men of understanding** [covenant language]
and **that** they might **know** concerning the **prophecies**
which had been **spoken**
by the **mouths** of **their fathers**
which **were delivered** them [“was” – P] {AG}
by the **hand** of **the Lord**

[Note: The words are reminiscent of the Small plates (1 Ne. 1:1-4) which Benjamin had just received—Omni 1:25]

3 And he [**king Benjamin**] also **taught** them concerning the **records** [see 1 Ne. 1:1-3]
which were **engraved** on the **plates of brass**
saying [Quotation from 1^o source - Mosiah 1:3-7]
My sons bb
I _____ **would**
that ye should REMEMBER [see v.6] [covenant language]
that were it NOT _____ for these **plates of brass**
which contain these **records**
and [**were it** NOT for] these **commandments**
we MUST have suffered in ignorance
even at this present time
NOT **knowing** the **mysteries** of **God**

[Par. aa – Detailing]

[Par. bb – Like paragraph beginnings]

[Heb. 01 – Use of “caused that”]

4 **A** For **it were** NOT possible that **our father Lehi** cc
 could have **remembered**
 ALL these **things**
 to have **taught** them to his **children**
EXCEPT it were for the help of these **plates [of brass]**
B for he having been **taught** in the **language** of the Egyptians [see 1 Ne. 1:2]
C therefore he could **read** these **engravings** [on the **plates of brass**]
 and **teach** them to his **children**
D that thereby
 they could **teach** them to their **children**
E and so **fulfilling** the **commandments** of **God**
even down to this present time

5 **I [Benjamin]** say unto **you**
My sons

A **were it** NOT for these **things** dd
 which [**things**] have been **kept**
 and **preserved** by the **hand** of **God**
that we might **read**
 and **understand**
 of **His** _____ **mysteries** [see 1 Ne. 1:1]
and [that we might] have **His commandments**
always before our eyes 02

B that even **our fathers**
would have dwindled in unbelief
C and we **should** have been **like** unto **our brethren** 03
the Lamanites

D who **know** **NOthing**
 concerning these **things**
or even **do NOT believe them** ee
when they are taught them
 because of the **traditions of their fathers**
 which [**traditions of their fathers**]
 are NOT correct

[Par. cc – Upward gradation]

[Par. dd – Downward gradation]

[Heb. 02 – Metaphor]

[Heb. 03 – Simile “like”]

[Par. ee – Clarification]

[Mosiah 1]

6 O My sons
I would
that ye should REMEMBER
that these sayings are true
and also that these records are true

And behold

also the plates of Nephi
which [plates of Nephi] contain the records
[of our fathers]
and the sayings
of our fathers
from the time they left Jerusalem
until now

and _____ they _____ are true [see 1 Ne. 1:3]
and we can know _____ of their _____ surety
because
we have _____ them before our eyes

7 And now My sons

[A] I would
[B] that ye should remember to search them diligently [covenant language]
[C] that ye may _____ profit thereby

[A] and I would [Prophetic Promise] PP
[B] that ye should [remember to] keep the commandments of God
[C] that ye may _____ prosper _____ in the land
according to the promises which _____ the Lord
made unto our fathers

[Mormon comments on omission]

8 And MANY MORE things
did king Benjamin teach his sons
which [things] are NOT written
in this book

[Heb. 04 – Two nouns connected by “of” = adjective]
[Heb. 05 – Metaphor]

[Par. ff – Extended alternating parallelism]

The People a New Name and a New King

9 And **it came to pass**

that **after** [he] **king Benjamin** had **made an end**
of **teaching his sons**

gg

that he **king Benjamin** **waxed old**

and he **king Benjamin** **saw**

that he **king Benjamin** MUST **very soon go the way of ALL the earth**

06

Therefore he **king Benjamin** thought it expedient

that he **king Benjamin** should confer the kingdom
upon one of **his sons**

10 **Therefore** he **king Benjamin** had **Mosiah** brought before **him**

and these are the **words**

which he **king Benjamin** **spake** unto **him**
saying

[Quotation from 1^o source - Mosiah 1:10-14]

My son

I would

that **ye should** make a **proclamation** *throughout ALL this land*
among **ALL this people**

>or **the people** of **Zarahemla**

hh

and **the people** of **Mosiah**

who dwell *in the land*

that thereby they may be gathered together

for **on the morrow**

I shall proclaim unto **this**
my people

[and] **I shall proclaim** out of **mine** own mouth

that **thou** art a **king**

and a **ruler** over **this people**

[a **king**] whom **the Lord our God** hath given us

[Par. gg – Like beginnings]

[Heb. 06 – Euphemism]

[Par. hh – Clarification]

11 And moreover

I shall give this people a name [covenant language]
 [a name]
 that thereby they may be distinguished
 above ALL the people 07
 which the Lord God hath brought *out of the land of Jerusalem*

and this

I do
 because they have been a diligent people
 in keeping the commandments
 of the Lord

12 And I give unto them a name
 that NEVER shall be blotted out
 except it be through transgression

13 **Yea**
and moreover

I say unto you [Prophetic Promise] PP
 that if this highly favored people of the Lord
 should fall into transgression
 and become a wicked
 and an adulterous people
 that [He] the Lord will deliver them up
 that thereby they become weak like unto their brethren 08
 [the Lamanites]

and He [the Lord] will NO MORE preserve them
 by His matchless and marvelous power
 as He [the Lord] has hitherto [up to this time] preserved our fathers

14 For I say unto you
 that if He [the Lord] had NOT extended His arm in the preservation of our fathers
 they MUST have fallen
 into the hands of the Lamanites
 and become victims to their hatred

[Heb. 07 – Use of “above ALL”]

[Heb. 08 – Simile “like unto”]

The Future King (Mosiah) Covenants
To Preserve the Sacred Symbols of Kingship

15 And **it came to pass**

that **after** [he] **king Benjamin** had **made an end** of these **sayings**

09

to **his son**

that he [**king Benjamin**] gave **him** charge

concerning ALL the affairs of the kingdom

16 And **moreover**

he [**king Benjamin**] also gave **him** charge

concerning [ALL] the **records**

which were engraven

on the **plates of brass**

and also [on] the **plates of Nephi**

and also the **sword of Laban**

and [also] the **ball or director**

which [ball] **led** **our fathers** through the wilderness

which [ball] was prepared by **the hand** of **the Lord**

that thereby **they** might **be led**

every one

according to the **heed**

and [the] **diligence**

which **they** gave unto **Him**

17 **Therefore** as

they [**our fathers**] were **unfaithful**

ii

they [**our fathers**] **did** NOT prosper

NOR

[**did**

they [**our fathers**] _____ progress in their journey

but [they [**our fathers**] were _____ **driven back**

and [they [**our fathers**] incurred the **displeasure** of **God** upon them

and therefore

they [**our fathers**] were _____ **smitten**

with **famine**

and [with] **sore afflictions**

to stir them **up**

in REMEMBRANCE of their **duty**

10

[Heb. 09 – Use of “made an end”]

[Heb. 10 – Compound preposition]

[Par. ii – Like beginnings they our fathers”]

The King (Benjamin) Teaches His People at the Temple

18 And **now**

it came to pass

[see Mosiah chapter 2 for the matching last half of this parallelism below]

jj

[A] that **Mosiah went** and **did as his father had commanded him**

[B] and [Mosiah] **proclaimed** unto **ALL the people**

[Epistle] E

who were in [ALL] **the land of Zarahemla**

[C] that thereby they might **gather themselves together**

[D] to **go up** to the **temple**

[E] to **hear the words**

[F] which **his father** should **speak** unto **them**

[Par. jj – Extended alternating parallelism]

[Note: According to John Welch and Daryle Hague ("Benjamin's Speech: A Classic Ancient Farewell Address," in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, p. 120-121), William S. Kurz has published a detailed study comparing twenty-two farewell addresses from the classical and biblical traditions. Kurz has identified twenty elements common to the farewell addresses in general. Although Kurz knows no single speech that contains all of these elements, some contain more than others. Moses' farewell speech contains sixteen elements (see Deuteronomy 31-34); Paul's, fourteen (see Acts 20). It is remarkable that King Benjamin's farewell oration contains as many or more elements of the ancient farewell address than any of Kurz's examples. In fact, recent research finds Benjamin's speech to be the most complete example of this speech typology yet found anywhere in world literature.

Kurz's Twenty Elements \ (Same Elements in Benjamin's Speech)

1. The speaker summons his successors. (Mosiah 1:9-10; 2:1,9)
2. He cites his own mission as an example. (Mosiah 2:12-14,18)
3. He states his innocence/ his duty fulfilled. (Mosiah 2:15,27-31)
4. He refers to his impending death. (Mosiah 1:9, 2:26,28)
5. He exhorts his audience. (Mosiah 2:9,40-41; 4:9-10; 5:12)
6. He issues warnings & final injunctions. (Mosiah 2:31-32,36-39; 3:12,25; 4:14-30; 5:10-11)
7. He blesses his audience. (Not clearly found but see "blessed" in Mosiah 2:41)
8. He makes farewell gestures. (Possibly implied in Mosiah 2:28; see 2 Nephi 9:44)
9. He names tasks for his successors. (Mosiah 1:15-16; 2:31; 6:3)
10. He gives a theological review of history. (Mosiah 2:34-35; 3:13-15)
11. The speaker reveals future events. (Mosiah 3:1,5-10)
12. Promises are given. (Mosiah 2:22,31; 4:12; 5:9)
13. He appoints/refers to successor. (Mosiah 1:15-16; 2:31, 6:3)
14. Rest of people bewail loss of leader. (Not found)
15. Future generation addressed. (Mosiah 3:23-27; 4:14-15)
16. Sacrifices and covenants are renewed. (Mosiah 2:3; 5:1-7)
17. Care is given for those left. (Mosiah 4:14-26; 6:3)
18. Consolation is given to inner circle. (Mosiah 5:15)
19. Didactic speech is made. (Mosiah 3:16-21)
20. *Ars moriendi* ["the art of dying" – implies a spiritual discussion designed to prepare Christians to die] (Possibly in Mosiah 2:28)

[Note: The variability of use of the phrase “**insomuch that**” in the Book of Mormon is intriguing. This phrase is used 175 times in the Book of Mormon, while in the Old Testament it is used only 2 times, and in the New Testament it is used only 18 times. In 1 Nephi it is used 23 times in 22 chapters. However, in 2 Nephi it is only used 2 times in 33 chapters. Even more intriguing, the phrase “insomuch that” does NOT appear even 1 time in the entire 29 chapters of the Book of Mosiah, or in the 10 chapters of the Book of Moroni, or in the Book of Enos, or the Book of Jarom or the Words of Mormon.]

[Note: According to Clay Gorton (1997:69), **Mosiah 1:3-5** can be seen as an example of a **complex chiasmic parallelism**. The following is a basic outline (which I have slightly adapted):

3. And he also taught them concerning the records which were engraven on the plates of brass, saying:

- A 1 My sons, . . .
- 2 were it not for these plates
- 3 which contain these records and these commandments,
- 4 we must have suffered in ignorance

B even at this present time

C NOT knowing the mysteries of God [opposites]

- 4.
- D 1 For it were NOT possible that our father, Lehi, could have remembered all these things,
 - 2 to have taught them to his children
 - 3 except it were for the help of these plates

- D 1 For he having been taught in the language of the Egyptians,
- 3 he could read these engravings
- 2 and teach them to his children

C and so fulfilling the commandments of God [opposites]

B even down to this present time

- 5.
- A 1 my sons,
 - 2 were it not for these things . . .
 - 3 that we might have his commandments
 - 4 even our fathers would have dwindled in unbelief

