

“Ye Shall Be Called the Children of Christ”

Lesson

16

Summary

Mosiah 4–6

Scripture Summary:

King Benjamin continues his address—Salvation comes because of the atonement—Believe in God to be saved—Retain a remission of your sins through faithfulness—Impart of your substance to the poor—Do all things in wisdom and order.

The saints become the sons and daughters of Christ through faith—They are then called by the name of Christ—King Benjamin exhorts them to be steadfast and immovable in good works. [About 124 B.C.]

King Benjamin records the names of the people and appoints priests to teach them—Mosiah reigns as a righteous king. [About 124—121 B.C.]

Supplemental Holy Land and Jewish insights:

Attributes of Being Children: The term “Children of Christ” is obviously foreign to a Jew, yet the principles of subservience, humility and searching for more knowledge are characteristics of “being children.” Note the expressions of “continuing life,” “provide,” “proper education” and “preparation for marriage” have a familiar ring to the Savior’s desire for us. “Children are considered a great blessing; they are the hope and the promise of continuing life.” “As the children grow, they must be educated and trained for their future roles in Jewish life. The father’s duty is to provide for his children, to give them a proper education, to teach them a trade, and to prepare them for marriage.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

We Are Dependiant: King Benjamin’s question is not about “begging” particularly, but about a dependency on God. “Are we not all beggars . . . Do we not all depend upon the same Being, even God, for all the substance which we have . . . of every kind?” (*Mosiah 4:19*)

No Biblical Word for Begging: “Although the Bible is concerned with the poor and the needy, there is hardly a reference to begging or to beggars, and there is, in fact, no biblical Hebrew word for it. The needs of the poor were provided by various laws of charity. Everybody is obliged to give charity; even one who himself is dependent on charity should give to those less fortunate than himself.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Giving to the Poor – a Blessing: “For the poor shall never cease out of the land; therefore I command thee saying, Thou shalt open thy hand wide to thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in thy land.” (*Deuteronomy 15:11*) In this sense, it is beautiful to consider that the principle of receiving from the Lord is reflected in what we give others. The giving can be a simple hand of friendship.

Giving a Hand: The term “hand” is used often in the scriptures and the term “right hand” has symbolic meanings. Among the Bedouin, it is improper to eat with the left hand. The right hand is always extended in greeting, the left hand extended as a greeting can be offensive. Among the Arabs and the Jews, a popular amulet or “good luck charm” is a right hand with an all-seeing eye in the palm of the hand.

Hand of God: When the Torah scroll is read in the Synagogue, a pointer molded in the shape of a miniature hand (*yad*) is used to follow the words. It is as if the “finger of God” is pointing the way. Unfortunately, these descriptions of God’s hand or finger are not taken literally among most Jews.

Clean Hands: In mortality, the hands are to be clean, both in personal hygiene and in rituals. “The rabbis made it mandatory to perform a ceremonial washing of the hands on certain occasions. This washing is strictly ritual in nature and should not be confused with washing for the sake of cleanliness. This is evident from the fact that the hands must be clean before the ceremony is performed.” “The hand washing ritual is commonly known as *netilat yadayim*, a term whose source is not entirely clear. In order to establish the practice, the rabbis warned of dire consequences for those who disregarded it, even going so far as to predict premature death. It is said that Rabbi Akiva, who personally disapproved of the ordinance, nevertheless used the limited water allowed him in the Roman prison for this ritual rather than for drinking.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.” (*Psalms 138:7*)

Right Hand – a Symbol: It has been the custom in religion as well as in civil covenant making that the right hand is used in a sign or symbol. “The custom, evidently by divine direction, from the very earliest time, has been to

associate the right hand with the taking of oaths, and in witnessing or acknowledging obligations. The right hand has been used, in preference to the left hand, in officiating in sacred ordinances where only one hand is used.”
(*Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., Doctrines of Salvation, Vol.3, p.107*)

Importance of a Name: One of the purposes of King Benjamin’s instruction is to bind the repentant believers in a covenant that would record their names. In that way they would be identified both in mortality and eternally. The forgiveness they experienced revived and saved them. Being a covenant, it meant that they took upon themselves the name of God and He would be given their names that He might know them. “And now it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall not take upon him the name of Christ must be called by some other name; therefore, he findeth himself on the left hand of God.” (*Mosiah 5:10*)

Variation of Names: Names have always been important and their meanings in the scriptures often tell something about the person. As there are other histories coming forth, some paralleling biblical history, sometimes another name is used for the same person. That may be because in that language or culture the person was known by another name. A modern example is my name. In Hebrew it is Daniel ben Herbert. That means Daniel, son of Herbert. Yet, in Arabic it is Daniel, Abu Dauod. That is Daniel, father of David (my honorable firstborn son). The name Daniel is explained as; Dan - Judge, El - God, or in context, God is my judge, or in another context, a judge for God. Either way, I have taken His name upon myself!

Meanings of Names: “Names are more than just arbitrary labels for people. Each Jewish name tells a story of its own and very often reflects the nature of the time, place and atmosphere in which it was chosen.” “The most important source for Hebrew proper names is the Bible, and biblical names were usually descriptive and meaningful, often incorporating the name of God in praise or gratitude; thus, Nathaniel (God has given), Eleazar (God has helped), Joshua (God the Savior). Other biblical names describe the circumstances surrounding the birth. Thus Abraham called his son Yizhak [Isaac] from the Hebrew word for laughter, because Sarah had laughed at the idea of bearing a child in her old age. And Yizhak named one of his sons Ya'akov [Jacob], a play on the Hebrew word *akev* ('heel'), because he was born grasping the heel of his twin brother Esau.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*)

Identity Theft: “The Talmud attaches great importance to the preservation of Hebrew names, viewing foreign names as a sign of assimilation. According to the Talmud, one reason for the deliverance of the Children of Israel from Egyptian bondage was the fact that they did not change their names. Yet, despite this subtle warning, Jews have tended to adapt their Hebrew names to the language of their neighbors or to take on purely non-Jewish names. This tendency, first noticeable during the Middle Ages, accelerated during the late 18th and 19th centuries. Some governments encouraged the process by passing laws which forced Jews to adopt European names. Napoleon issued such a decree, hoping to assimilate the Jews.”

Use of Names: “Like most peoples of the world, the Jews have evolved certain traditions regarding the use of names. For example, Ashkenazi Jews consider it wrong to name a child after a living father or grandfather, whereas Sephardim consider it an honor to do so for a grandparent. According to the Hasidei Ashkenaz, it is wrong to marry a woman with the same name as the husband's mother. The reason for this seems to be because of respect; the man might tell his wife to do something and the mother might think he meant her.”

Convert Given a New Name: “Jewish boys are officially named at the circumcision ceremony eight days after birth, and a girl's Jewish name is publicly announced when the father is first called to the Torah after her birth. Converts are also given new names --- usually ben Abraham or bat Abraham (son or daughter of Abraham) because conversion is equated with rebirth.” (*Encyclopedia Judaica Jr.*) (Underlines added)

Becoming a Child Again: The term rebirth connotes being a child again. It involves learning a new life, preparing to become an honorable son of the Father. Some know that is possible through the redemption by our “Elder Brother.”

Daniel Rona, born in Israel and living in Jerusalem has authored Old & New Testament and Book of Mormon Supplement Study Materials to be used in conjunction with the weekly LDS Gospel Doctrine Lesson study. NOTE: Three versions of the supplemental study materials are available *FREE* at www.HolyLandsRevealed.com. (Just click “LDS SUPPLEMENTS”)

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