

Ir-BoM-17
A Seer Becometh a Great Benefit to His Fellow Beings
(Mosiah 7-11)
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(Here is inspirational background regarding seership)

I. The Book of Mormon becomes very complex as it introduces two new groups.

A. I have read the Book of Mormon many times, and still have to work to keep straight all the complex changes in places and in times given here.

1. Joseph Smith would have had no motivation to make the book so complex. It has to be real.

2. Furthermore, here the book introduces two other civilizations whose existence was not known in **Joseph's** time, but which have since been identified by archaeologists of the world.

3. **We find these several groups, all once forewarned by seers, being destroyed or coming into bondage due to their rejection of seers.**

II. The Book of Mormon gives keen insights into seership, a gift exceeding all others.

A. The gift of seership encompasses but also exceeds the gift of prophecy.

1. "a seer is greater than a prophet... a seer is a revelator and a prophet also; and a gift which is greater can no man have, except he should possess the power of God, which no man can; ... a seer can know of things which are past, and also of things which are to come, and by them shall all things be revealed, or rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be made known by them, and also things shall be made known by them which otherwise could not be known" (Mosiah 8:15-17).

B. The *BD* adds that a "prophet" means someone who acts as God's messenger and makes known God's will. Prophets call people to repentance and preach righteousness. As a rule a "prophet is a forthteller rather than a foreteller" (p. 754). There have not been as many seers as there have been prophets.

III. Many of God's prophets were also seers, **understanding the deeper meaning of God's works.**

A. They realized the freeing from Egyptian bondage was a similitude of how Christ would free men from sin (Mosiah 7:33; 9:17; 10:11).

B. All **Book of Mormon seers taught the deliverances they experienced occurred to help comprehend the far greater deliverance through Jesus Christ.**

C. Because Mosiah was a seer, he could also translate the Jaredite plates from ancient languages, giving an additional witness of how God delivered, then let perish the Jaredites.

IV. The purpose of seers being shown the unseen is to bless or warn the people.

A. Abinadi, because *he* was a seer, correctly interpreted the Brass Plates.

1. First he saw what would happen to those who were wicked in his day.

"Behold, thus saith the Lord, and thus hath he commanded me, saying, Go forth, and say unto this people, thus saith the Lord --- Woe be unto this people, for I have seen their abominations, and their wickedness, and their whoredoms: and except they repent I will visit them in mine anger, And except they repent and turn to the Lord their God, behold, I will deliver them into the hands of their enemies, yea, and they shall be brought into bondage; and they shall

be afflicted by the hand of their enemies.... And except this people repent and turn unto the Lord their God, they shall be brought into bondage; and none shall deliver them, except it be the Lord the Almighty God....And when they shall cry unto me I will be slow to hear their cries." (Mosiah 11:20-24).

B. People are fully blessed if they receive the seer's warnings. Noah's people did not repent and Abinadi's prophecies were later fulfilled.

C. Also, because he was a seer, Abinadi understood the writings of Isaiah which were not understood by Noah's priests. Prophecies are truly only understood by the spirit (Mosiah 12:20-30).

V. Our modern day seers have greatly blessed and protected us through forewarnings.

A. Long before it was known nicotine was actually a poison, Joseph Smith taught, "Tobacco is not for the body... and is not good for man" (Doctrine and Covenants 89:8). In the long run, those who believed Joseph and obeyed have been saved terrible suffering and death from cancers, etc. They have also been spared the struggles to overcome what others learned, too late, was not just a bad habit but a powerfully addicting drug.

B. **Joseph saw not only the motivation behind those who pushed tobacco, but into the future when even more evil men would push ever greater and more terrible substances.**

1. "In consequence of evils and designs which **do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days**, I have warned you, and forewarn you..." (D&C 89:4).

C. Those Latter-day Saints who believed their seers and followed the Word of Wisdom understood the basic warning, and have shunned other substances not yet then foreseen. Watching for the "evils and designs of conspiring men," most have avoided the terrible drugs now plaguing the world, fostered by crime and drug cartels everywhere.

VI. Our seers have protected us with warnings regarding immorality.

A. While evidence confirms Joseph Smith was a seer, many of his followers were also so blessed. Here is one example, pertinent to our days.

B. In 1859 Charles W. Penrose, who became an apostle in 1904, published a sermon identifying many of the disasters and disturbances that would accompany the last days. **He saw into the future and prophesied "the passions of human nature will be put to the vilest uses [and] new diseases will silently eat their ghastly way through the ranks of the wicked."** (*Millennial Star*, 21:582). (Hoyt W. Brewster Jr. *Behold, I Come Quickly*, p. 43)

1. Thus faithful Latter-day Saints were protected by forewarnings from terrible plagues.

2. Protection also has come from the warnings against alcohol. Many people argue we are too straight, and that a little alcohol is not harmful. But the shattering truth is that great numbers of young people are **engaging in immoral conduct because they let themselves come under the influence of "a little alcohol."**

C. The blessings of seers are shown by warnings given in the "Proclamation on the Family."

1. "We warn that individuals who violate covenants of chastity, who abuse spouse or offspring, or who fail to fulfill family responsibilities will one day stand accountable before God. **Further, we warn that the disintegration of the family will bring upon individuals, communities, and nations the calamities foretold by ancient and modern prophets."**

2. The sureness of this prophecy comes from fulfillments seen in the Book of Mormon.

VII. As with Abinadi, seers usually suffer due to rejection.

A. Abinadi was slain for his prophecies.

1. "And a prophet of the Lord have they slain; ... who told them of their wickedness and abominations, and prophesied of many things which are to come, yea, even the coming of Christ. And because he said ... God should come down among the children of men, and take upon him flesh and blood ... they did put him to death;" (Mosiah 7:26-28).

B. This pattern was true with seers from both the Old and New Testaments.

1. Clement, a bishop of Rome wrote this of the seers of his day, "Through jealousy and envy the greatest and most righteous pillars of the Church were persecuted and contended unto death. Let us set before our eyes the good apostles: Peter, who because of unrighteous jealousy suffered not one or two but many trials and having thus given his testimony, went to the glorious place which was his due. Through jealousy and strife Paul showed the way to the prize of endurance; seven times he was in bonds, he was exiled, he was stoned, he was a herald both in the East and in the West, he gained the noble fame of his faith. He taught righteousness to all the world, and when he had reached the limits of the West he gave his testimony before the rulers, and thus passed from the world and was taken up into the Holy Place, --- the greatest example of endurance" (I Clement. *The Apostolic Fathers*, translated by Kirsopp Lake, p. 17).

C. **Going on daily at this time are mockeries of our prophet in a highly popular musical.**

D. But such an outrage just fits ancient patterns for seers.

VIII. So incomprehensible are prophecies that seers are often greatly tried in giving them.

A. This was shown by Heber C. Kimball.

"It was during ... famine [in the Salt Lake Valley], when the half-starved, half-clad settlers scarcely knew where to look for the next crust of bread or for rags to hide their nakedness --- for clothing had become almost as scarce with them as bread-stuffs --- that Heber C. Kimball, filled with the spirit of prophecy, in a public meeting declared to the astonished congregation that, within a short time, 'States good' would be sold in the streets of Great Salt Lake City cheaper than in New York and that the people should be abundantly supplied with food and clothing."

His fellow apostles did not believe him. "Heber himself was startled at his own words, as soon as the Spirit's force had abated and the 'natural man' had reasserted himself. On resuming his seat, he remarked to the brethren that he was 'afraid he had missed it this time.' But they were not his own words, and He who had inspired them knew how to fulfill."

This prophecy was soon fulfilled when gold seekers pouring west toward California came through the Salt Lake valley, the last stopping place available. Because they felt their heavy loads of goods were slowing them down, with mountains and wide deserts to cross ahead of them, they either threw away goods, or sold them cheaply or bartered them. Often they traded high quality but weary oxen, horses, etc., for fresh though inferior ones. So as the Spirit had prophesied through Elder Kimball, abundant and high quality goods were suddenly available to the Saints, and for less cost than in New York City.

Elder Kimball later said, "The Spirit of prophecy foresees future events. God does not bring to pass a thing because you say it shall be so, but because He designed it should be so, and it is the future purposes of the Almighty that the Prophet foresees."

Elder Kimball also revealed Joseph Smith had similar struggles. **"I have heard Joseph say many times, that he was much tempted about the revelations the Lord gave through him --- it seemed to be impossible for them to be fulfilled."** (Orson F. Whitney, *Life of Heber C. Kimball* (Bookcraft, pp. 388-92). (Emphasis added).