

1 Mosiah 12:1-9*Unconditional Prophecy*

1. I will visit them with anger
2. Shall be brought into bondage
3. Smitten on cheek
4. Driven by men
5. Slain and devoured by prey
6. King Noah's life not valued
7. Smite with sore afflictions famine and pestilence
8. Burdens lashed on backs and driven as an ass
9. Hail and east wind, insects
10. Utterly destroyed

2 Mosiah 12:12-16*Self-justification*

1. He [Abinadi] pretendeth the Lord hath spoken....
2. And he saith all this shall come upon thee except thou repent....
3. O king, what great evil hast thou done,
4. Or what great sins have thy people committed,
5. That we should be condemned of God
6. Or judged of this man?
7. We are guiltless,
8. And thou, O king, hast not sinned; ...
9. This man has lied ... and he has prophesied in vain....
10. We are strong, we shall not ... be taken captive....
11. Thou hast prospered in the land, and thou shalt also [continue] to prosper.

3 Mosiah 12:20-24*How beautiful upon the mountains*

One cannot help but wonder as to the motivation behind the question. Did the high priest actually desire understanding of the verses? [21-24] Or, rather, was he essentially saying: "I thought that the prophet Isaiah had said that blessed are those who declare *good* tidings and bring *peaceful* salutations. Why is your message so negative, so pessimistic, and why are you so prone to such gloomy prophecy?"

Abinadi nevertheless treated the questioner with enough respect as to suggest a direct answer; the answer would, however, not be given at the moment (see Mosiah 15:11-18).

Robert L. Millet, *A Symposium on the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1986], 98

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The imagery embodied in the poetry of Isaiah 52:7-10 is that of watchmen on a city wall who witness the approach and arrival of a messenger who travels on foot. Walled cities were commonplace in ancient Israel and throughout the ancient Near East, and watchmen, or lookouts, were regularly posted above city gates. The job security and probably the life of a watchman depended on his ability to remain alert to anyone or anything approaching his city, especially things appearing suspicious in nature....

What is fascinating about Isaiah's use of imagery here is that not only does he mention a messenger or herald, but he also focuses on the messenger's feet with the notation that they are "beautiful." Feet are not generally considered among the more attractive body parts; they are functional, yes, but not beautiful. What did Isaiah intend by this description?

Interestingly, the word rendered “beautiful” in verse 7 is the Hebrew term *na’wu* (from the rarely attested verbal root *N/H*), the word from which Joseph Smith coined the city name “Nauvoo.” This particular form is used only here and in Song of Solomon 1:10, where it is rendered “comely” in the KJV.

Since walking on dirt roads with sandal-shod feet was the major form of transportation for most people in ancient Israel, feet were not only quite visible but required daily washing and attention. The cleansing and care of a guest’s feet was long considered a basic act of hospitality. However, despite the importance of foot care in ancient Israel, when Isaiah described the messenger’s feet on the mountains as “beautiful,” he was probably not suggesting that the arriving herald had remarkably clean and well-manicured feet!

It is not the condition of the feet but their observable activity, their *progress*, that is being emphasized by the description “beautiful.” ...The focus of the passage is on the delivery of the message as well as on the arrival of the messenger.

Dana M. Pike, *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. By Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch [Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1998], 254, 258

5 Abinadi recited and interpreted Isaiah 53 because his accusers, the priests of Noah, had challenged him to explain the meaning of Isaiah 52:7-10. What was the thrust of their challenge? It appears that the priests intended, by their direct examination of Abinadi, to catch him in conflict with that scripture and thereby convict him of false prophecy—a capital offense under the law of Moses (see Deut. 18:20). In essence, they were apparently asking Abinadi why he bore tidings of doom and destruction when Isaiah had declared that the beautiful and true prophet brings good tidings and publishes peace: “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth *good tidings*” (Mosiah 12:20-22, emphasis added). Isaiah gave cause for great joy: “They shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring again Zion; break forth into joy” (Mosiah 12:22-24), and yet Abinadi had brought nothing but bad tidings of destruction.

Abinadi’s rebuttal was an extensive and brilliant explanation of the true essence of redemption and how it brings good tidings to those who accept Christ (see Mosiah 12:29-37 and chapters 13-16).

John W. Welch, *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. By Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch [Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1998], 294

6 The cause to which I speak is of missionary work as couples....There has never been a greater need than now for an army of mature couples to go out into every far corner of this earth and retain the fruit of the harvest....

I think we will not be tested in the way the pioneers were tested. They were called to leave all worldly possessions, homes, even family and loved ones to cross the prairies to dry and desolate, forbidding lands. They buried their babies, children, and companions on the Great Plains in shallow, unmarked graves. Physically, they suffered beyond belief, nor can tongue tell the sad, pitiful story....

There is a need—*not* to leave homes forever, but for a time—then return and reap the rich harvest of the faithful labor. Your children and grandchildren will be blessed.... “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings; that publisheth peace” (Mosiah 12:21).

Vaughn J. Featherstone, *Ensign*, May 1992 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1992], 42

Mosiah 12:31

7 Having quoted this verse, Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “After teaching them some of the great truths of salvation, Abinadi answered his own question: ‘Salvation doth not come by the law alone,’ he said; and were it not for the atonement, which God himself shall make for the sins and iniquities of his people, that they must unavoidably perish, notwithstanding the law of Moses.’ (Mosiah 13:28.) Salvation is not in works—not even in those revealed of God—but in Christ and his atonement.

“Now let us suppose a modern-day case. Suppose we have the scriptures, the gospel, the priesthood, the Church, the ordinances, the organization, even the keys of the kingdom--everything that now is down to the last jot and tittle--

and yet there is no atonement of Christ. What then? Can we be saved? Will all our good works save us? Will we be rewarded for all our righteousness?

"Most assuredly we will not. We are not saved by works alone, no matter how good; we are saved because God sent his Son to shed his blood in Gethsemane and on Calvary that all through him might ransomed be. We are saved by the blood of Christ.

"To paraphrase Abinadi: 'Salvation cloth not come by the Church alone; and were it not for the atonement given by the grace of God as a free gift, all men must unavoidably perish, and this notwithstanding the Church and all that appertains to it.' ("What Think Ye of Salvation by Grace?" p. 48.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 2: 211

Mosiah 12:35

8

No other God before me

Selfishness is self-worship. In its various gradations, it is a violation of the first commandment: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). Such selfishness can smother our chances of keeping the second commandment. The problem is further exacerbated when we act to "please ourselves" or even seek to set ourselves up "for a light" (Romans 15:1; 2 Nephi 26:29).

Neal A. Maxwell, *Whom The Lord Loveth* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003], 70