
ABEL

Latter-day scripture reveals much about Abel beyond what is contained in the Bible. He and CAIN had older brothers and sisters (Moses 5:2), and Abel “was a keeper of sheep” (Gen. 4:2; Moses 5:17). To his parents, the Lord had given “commandments, that they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord” (Moses 5:5). ADAM and EVE were obedient to the Lord’s commands (Moses 5:6), and Abel also “hearkened unto the voice of the Lord. . . . And the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering” (Moses 5:17, 20). On the other hand, Cain specifically at Satan’s behest brought an unacceptable offering (Moses 5:18–19, 21; cf. *TPJS*, pp. 58–60).

The book of Moses clarifies the Lord’s differing responses to Abel and Cain, and indicates that Adam and Eve had taught their children about the things of God: “And Adam and Eve . . . made all things [of God] known unto their sons and their daughters” (Moses 5:12). Subsequently, Abel “walked in holiness before the Lord” (Moses 5:26), but Cain “loved Satan more than God” (Moses 5:18). When his offering was not accepted, Cain “rejected the greater counsel which was had from God” and “listened not any more to the voice of the Lord, neither to Abel, his brother” (Moses 5:25–26). When Satan promised Cain that “I will deliver thy brother Abel into thine hands,” Cain exulted “that I may murder and get gain” (Moses 5:29–31; cf. Hel. 6:27). As a result, Cain “rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him” (Gen. 4:8; Moses 5:32), and said, “I am free; surely the flocks of my brother falleth into my hands” (Moses 5:33). The unconscionable nature of Cain’s murder of Abel is underscored by the fact that thereafter “Cain was shut out from the presence of the Lord” (Moses 5:41).

The New Testament affirms Abel’s faithfulness and obedience to God: “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh” (Heb. 11:4). Joseph SMITH taught that “God spoke to [Abel]: indeed it is said that God talked with him; and if He did, would He not, seeing that Abel was righteous, deliver to him the whole plan of the Gospel? . . . How could Abel offer a sacrifice and look forward with faith on the Son of God, for a remission of his sins, and not

understand the Gospel?” (*TPJS*, p. 59; cf. Moses 5:6–12). Latter-day scripture also states that the priesthood among the ancients had been passed down through Abel, who was ordained by Adam (D&C 84:6–17).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ABINADI

Abinadi was a courageous prophet (150 B.C.), and the best known martyr in the Book of Mormon. His ministry and execution recounted at the heart of the Book of Mosiah sharpen the contrast between righteous King BENJAMIN and wicked King Noah. ALMA₁, a converted eyewitness, recorded Abinadi’s main words shortly after they were spoken (Mosiah 17:4).

Abinadi belonged to a small group of reactionary NEPHITES who had returned from Zarahemla a generation earlier to repossess from the LAMANITES the city of Nephi, the traditional Nephite capital, and its temple. When the excesses of the apostate Nephite king and priests grew intolerable, Abinadi was commanded of the Lord to denounce publicly their abominations; he prophesied their coming captivity and affliction. Abinadi was condemned to death by Noah for this, but escaped.

Where he lived in exile is unknown. Similarities between his and Benjamin’s words (cf. Mosiah 16:1; 3:20; 16:5; 2:38; 16:10–11; 3:24–25) could mean that he spent some time in Zarahemla with king Benjamin and his people (W of M 1:16–17), or received similar revelation during this period.

After two years, having been commanded again by the Lord to prophesy, Abinadi reentered the city of Nephi in disguise. Before a crowd, he pronounced a curse in the name of the Lord upon the unrepentant people, their land, and their grain, with forthright predictions of destruction and humiliating bondage, reminiscent of Israel’s suffering in Egypt. In a potent curse, like those used in the ancient Near East to condemn covenant breakers, he testified that Noah’s life would “be valued even as a garment in a hot furnace” (Mosiah 12:3).