



WHY BELIEVE IN THE BOOK OF MORMON?

A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

What is the Book of Mormon

The Church of Jesus Christ believes that the Holy Bible and the Book of Mormon are the Word of God. The Holy Bible was written by God's direction and chronicles His dealings with the people in the land of Israel and surrounding areas from the creation of the world until after the death of Jesus Christ.

The Book of Mormon, also written by God's direction, contains the history of the people who lived in the Americas between approximately 2200 BC and 401 AD. The prophets in the Book of Mormon recorded God's dealings with people who were directed to a "Promised Land", known today as the Americas. Jesus Christ acknowledged these first Americans in John 10:16 stating to the Apostles, "*And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*" The Holy Bible and the Book of Mormon contain God's guidance as revealed to prophets as well as religious histories of different civilizations.

Before the faithful Christians of the Americas perished, their record was safely hidden away through God's will. In or about the year 421 A.D., Moroni, the last of the Nephite prophet-historians, sealed the sacred record and hid it up unto the Lord, to be brought forth in the latter days, as predicted by the voice of God through His ancient prophets. In 1823 A.D. an angel visited and subsequently delivered the engraved plates to a young man searching for the Gospel's truth in his day, one Joseph Smith. Obtaining these ancient records in 1827A.D., by the gift and power of God, he was able to translate the ancient writings into what we have today. The Book of Mormon, along with the Bible, testifies that Jesus Christ is our divine Redeemer and that by living according to His gospel we can find peace in this life and eternal happiness in the life to come.

The Book of Mormon Today

The record, written on golden plates, was translated from the original language, reformed Egyptian. The record is now published in many languages as an additional witness that Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God and that all who will come unto him and obey the commandments and ordinances of his gospel may be saved.

The Purpose of the Book of Mormon

The title page of the Book of Mormon states that the Book's purpose is to convince all of us "that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting himself unto all nations." It was written to help us develop a true knowledge of Jesus Christ and His mission on earth. The Book of Mormon reaffirms what we learn from the Bible, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came to earth to help us overcome our sins. The people in the Book of Mormon, the Nephites and the Lamanites, recorded their testimonies of Jesus Christ. Many of the prophets who wrote the records that make up the Book of Mormon saw Christ personally, just as happened with the Apostle Paul, which he recorded in the Bible (see Acts 9:3-6).

The Lord clearly reminds us of His unchanging and unforgetting attributes as the Book of Mormon states the need for the Gentile (non-Israel by natural birth) to take the message of salvation and prior relationships and promises established by God to Abraham and his seed as described in 2 Nephi 30:3-4: "And now I would prophesy somewhat more concerning the Jews and the Gentiles (non-Israel by natural birth). For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth (Book of Mormon), and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth to the remnant of our seed (beginning with the Native Americans). And then shall the remnant of our seed know concerning us, how that we came out of Jerusalem, and that they are descendants of the Jews. (This reconversion begins with the Seed of Joseph, the Native American). "

The Holy Bible and the Book of Mormon Testify of Each Other and Christ

Like two eyewitnesses strengthen an argument in court, the Book of Mormon and the Bible both testify of Christ. Within the Old Testament we find the two Books one in God's hand; Ezekiel 37:16-17: *"Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick (Holy Bible), and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick (Book of Mormon), and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thy hand."*

Some people think that because we read the Book of Mormon, we don't read the Bible. That's just not true. It's like saying that we don't eat oranges because we eat apples. Both are good fruit! The Book of Mormon is not a replacement for the Bible. In fact, because the Book of Mormon and the Bible both contain the gospel of Jesus Christ as it was revealed to different civilizations, studying them together can clarify some concepts that are difficult to understand. The Book of Mormon tells us to read the Bible and affirms that its message is true (Mormon 7:8-10). Christ visited these "other sheep" in the Americas after He was resurrected, teaching the same message to the Nephites that He taught to the people of Israel. The Book of Mormon makes it clear that Jesus Christ's message and His atonement are not for one group of people at one time. They are for everyone, everywhere, from the beginning of the earth to the end. Having the Book of Mormon as another testament of Jesus Christ reminds us that He is mindful of every individual created.

The Plan of Salvation is revealed

As we read the Book of Mormon, we learn about the Gospel as taught by Jesus Christ and God's Plan of Salvation. A knowledge of these things puts our questions in an eternal perspective. From the scripture that says this life is *"a time to prepare to meet God,"* (Alma 12:24) we learn that we will continue to exist after we die, and that by keeping the commandments we can reach Heaven. We also learn that faith in God through Christ, repentance, baptism by immersion, and receiving the Holy Ghost are God's will for His creation. Receiving forgiveness of sin and making a life-long covenant to God to serve Him and fellow man are essential to our eternal salvation. Any questions regarding the state of our soul can be answered by applying the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it is written in both the Holy Bible and the Book of Mormon.

The Book of Mormon teaches us God's plan and shows us how those who live according to His counsel are blessed in this life and the next. When we read prayerfully, the Holy Ghost can teach us that the words found in the Book of Mormon are a message from our Heavenly Father, given to help us through this life.

The Book of Mormon Confirms the Truths Found in the Holy Bible

Far from undermining the Bible, the Book of Mormon supports its testimony of Jesus Christ. One passage states that the Book of Mormon shall establish the truth of the Bible *"and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved"* (1 Nephi 13:40).

In its more than 6,000 verses, the Book of Mormon refers to Jesus Christ almost 4,000 times and by 100 different names: "Jehovah," "Immanuel," "Holy Messiah," "Lamb of God," "Redeemer of Israel," and so forth.

Both volumes of scripture are a compilation of teachings as recorded by ancient prophets. While the Bible details events in the eastern hemisphere, the Book of Mormon documents the lives of the inhabitants of the ancient Americas.

The book was written by many ancient prophets by the spirit of prophecy and revelation. Their words, written on golden plates, were quoted and abridged by a prophet-historian named Mormon.

Christ's teaching to the peoples of this continent as recorded in the Book of Mormon represents His personal ministry soon after his resurrection. It puts forth the doctrines of the gospel, outlines the plan of salvation, and tells men what they must do to gain peace in this life and eternal salvation in the life to come. He stated to them, *"Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world"* (3 Nephi 11:14).

How Can We Know the Book of Mormon to be True?

Through honest study and humble prayer, we can each know for ourselves that the Book of Mormon really is the word of God.

Of course it's one thing to read the Book of Mormon and another to believe deep in our hearts that what it says is true. This sincere belief, or testimony, in the truth of the Book of Mormon comes when God sends His Spirit to confirm the truth of what we read. We can feel this confirmation when we study the Book of Mormon with diligence and faith, as we are promised in the following scripture: *"And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost."* (Moroni 10:4)

God's method is simple: we read the Book of Mormon; we pray and ask Him to tell us that what we've read is true; and He answers us through feelings of peace and assurance given by the Holy Ghost. First of all, we have to study the Book of Mormon diligently, applying its principles to our own lives and doing our best to understand the lessons that God wants us to learn. Second, we have to pray "with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ." We need to hope and believe that God will answer us, and we may have to pray more than once. Lastly, we need to be willing to accept the answer when it comes, however it may come. Believing that the Book of Mormon really contains the word of God means that we will be willing to live up to the standards of faith and obedience He describes in it, just as the Holy Bible asks of us. God has promised that He will richly bless us as we endeavor to live up to His high standards!

In the Love of God,

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles

To learn more about *The Church of Jesus Christ*, with Headquarters in Monongahela, PA, please visit our web site. The World Operations Center for world-wide missionary efforts is in Greensburg, PA



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