



**By Elder
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Of the Presidency
of the Seventy

IF YOU
REALLY WANT
TO KNOW,

*I feel everlasting gratitude
for the Book of Mormon. It
changed my life forever, and
I know it can change yours.*

You Will Know

I was 18 years old when I became a member of the Church. The Book of Mormon played a key role in my conversion. At the time, I was searching for new ideas that could explain the world around me. I remember my college professors taking very materialistic approaches in their teaching. I started to lean toward agnostic ideas about the existence of God.

One day I noticed a sky-blue book that a couple of missionaries had left in our home about six years before. It was the Book of Mormon. Along with the book, they had left a pamphlet about the Prophet Joseph Smith and also some instructions about how to pray to God.

I started reading the Book of Mormon. I was only a few verses into the book, in 1 Nephi, when I felt something different. I began to debate between my feelings and my intellect. So I decided to ask God in prayer.

This was the first time in my life that I had prayed on my knees. The experience that followed became one of the most sacred of my

life. A feeling of such overwhelming happiness filled me that I knew in my heart that the Book of Mormon was more than just a book. It was a book of divine origin. It had to be the word of God. I later came to understand that the feeling was the Spirit testifying of its truthfulness.

While some may have similar experiences, there are different ways one can come to know that the Book of Mormon is true.

How Will You Know?

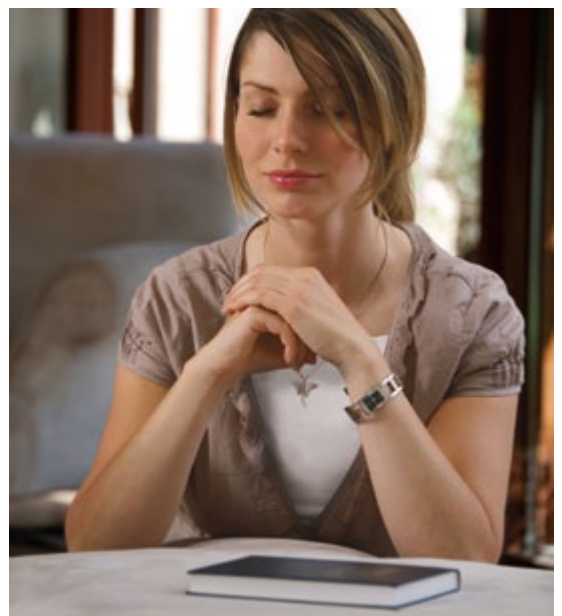
1. Some will know by hearing. You may be among those who will know simply by listening to what the book teaches. The Book of Mormon tells of thousands who heard the sons of Mosiah teach the gospel of Jesus Christ and “were converted unto the Lord” (see Alma 23:5–6). Missionaries today teach that same gospel found in the Book of Mormon. Some will know the Book of Mormon is the word of God simply by hearing others share its teachings.



2. *Some will know by reading.* You may be among those who will know simply by reading the Book of Mormon with a real desire to know the truth. Such was the case with my wife. She was 12 years old when she took to heart the instruction to read the book from cover to cover. As she did this, she knew it was true. The feeling was so strong that, as she read, she decided to follow the Savior forever. She has remained true to what she felt.

3. *Some will know by doing.* You may be among those who will know simply by doing the things the book teaches. Some people gain their testimonies by doing (see John 7:17). Nephi, a prophet in the Book of Mormon, understood this principle well. He wrote that in order to “more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer . . . *I did liken all scriptures unto us*, that it might be for our profit and learning” (1 Nephi 19:23; emphasis added). By likening, or applying, the teachings of the Book of Mormon in your own life, you may also become persuaded of its divine origin.

4. *Some will know by asking God.* You may be among those who will know by reading from the Book of Mormon and then asking Heavenly Father in prayer whether the book is true. This is what I experienced. It is the sublime promise extended by another Book of Mormon prophet, Moroni, to all sincere seekers of truth: “Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things . . . 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 10:3–4). I bear witness that if you read and pray about the Book of Mormon, following the directions of Moroni, you will know that it is true.



MORONI'S PROMISE

At the end of the Book of Mormon, a prophet named Moroni promises that if we will read the Book of Mormon, ponder its message in our hearts, and ask God in prayer if it is true, God will answer us through the power of the Holy Ghost (see Moroni 10:3–5).

Personal revelation is personal. It comes in different ways and at different times to each of us according to the will of the Lord. Understanding the following principles can help you come to know for yourself.

1. Think about It

Before inviting us to pray, Moroni invites us to ponder. Pondering means to think deeply. Ask yourself: How do I feel when I read the Book of Mormon? Why do I feel that way? What have I learned? Is it good?

The Lord taught this principle to Oliver Cowdery: “You took no thought save it was to ask me. But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; *then* you must ask me if it be right” (D&C 9:7–8; emphasis added).

2. Pray Diligently

Focusing our thoughts and concentrating on the Holy Ghost’s quiet answers takes mental effort. Maybe that is partly why Enos in the Book of Mormon talked about his prayer as a “wrestle . . . before God” (Enos 1:2).

When you read, ponder, or pray, find a time and place with as few distractions as possible. Find a position that will help you concentrate. Praying vocally can help focus your thoughts.

3. Ask the Right Questions

The Lord told Oliver Cowdery not just to ask but to ask if the matter he was considering was right. Often, especially when we are inexperienced at receiving answers from our Heavenly Father, it is easier to understand the answer to a simple yes or no question.

“A key to improved prayer is to learn to ask the right questions,” taught Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.¹

4. What Do You Intend?

One of the keys to Moroni’s promise is that we ask with “real intent.” When 14-year-old Joseph Smith went into the woods to pray, “he prayed with the intent not only to listen but to obey,” said President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency. “. . . And because of his faithfulness, in the days and months and years ahead his prayers were answered with a flood of light and truth.”²

5. Don’t Miss It

Not all revelation is spectacular. Some people have dreams, visions, or visitations. But most of us will experience something quiet and subtle, such as a warm, peaceful feeling.

President Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985), 12th President of the Church, taught, “Expecting the spectacular, one may not be fully alerted to the constant flow of revealed communication.”³

NOTES

1. Richard G. Scott, “Using the Supernal Gift of Prayer,” *Liahona* and *Ensign*, May 2007, 8.
2. Henry B. Eyring, “Prayer,” *Liahona*, Jan. 2002, 18; *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 17.
3. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball* (2006), 241.



A PROPHET TESTIFIES

“The Book of Mormon is the word of God. We invite you

to read this wonderful record. It is the most remarkable volume in existence today. Read it carefully and prayerfully, and as you do, God will give you a testimony of its truthfulness as promised by Moroni (see Moroni 10:4).”

President Howard W. Hunter (1907–95), *The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter*, ed. Clyde J. Williams (1997), 54.



A PROPHET TESTIFIES

“I am one that has received from the Lord the strongest

revelation concerning the truth of [the Restoration, including the Book of Mormon]. That manifestation was with me powerfully for hours and hours; and whatever circumstances may occur in my life, as long as my memory lasts this perfect knowledge will remain with me.”

President Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901), in *Conference Report*, Oct. 1900, 61.

God Has Promised You'll Know

If you really want to know, you will come to know the Book of Mormon is true. God has promised to give this knowledge to the honest seekers of truth, and He is “a God of truth, and canst not lie” (Ether 3:12).

Another Book of Mormon prophet, Alma, taught his son that God had promised that He “would preserve [this book] for a wise purpose in him, that he might show forth his power unto future generations. And now behold, one purpose hath he fulfilled, even to the restoration of many thousands . . . to the knowledge of the truth; and he hath shown forth his power in them, and he will also still show forth his power in them unto future generations; therefore [this book] shall be preserved” (Alma 37:18–19).

That same convincing power is found

today in this singular volume of scripture, and the Lord will show it to anyone who sincerely seeks to know. I can say this with certainty as I look back to those days when I was learning about the Church. Today, because of the convincing power of the Book of Mormon, I testify that the Book of Mormon is the word of God, that it teaches that Jesus is the Christ, the Holy Messiah. The book is tangible evidence that the Restoration of His gospel has taken place and that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God.

If you are among those who sincerely seek the truth, the Lord has promised that you will know. You may come to know by listening to the book's teachings, by reading the book, by doing what the book teaches, by praying to know of its truthfulness, or by a combination of these elements. But you will know. ■

HOW I KNOW

Although I was baptized at age nine, my family wasn't active in the Church. But when I was 13, the missionaries invited me to attend church, and I did so. I also attended seminary. The course of study was the Doctrine and Covenants, which seemed confusing to me. I especially struggled with Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. I wanted to find God, but I just wasn't sure how or where.

Over time I thought a lot about conversations with the missionaries. I thought about seminary. I thought about conversations I had had with members of other Christian faiths. Occasionally I prayed to know what was right, but it was more of a passing thought than a sincere question. Then one night I decided to pray with “real intent.”

I told Heavenly Father that I wanted to know Him and to be part of His true Church. I promised: “If

Thou will let me know whether Joseph Smith is a real prophet and whether the Book of Mormon is true, I'll do whatever Thou would have me do. If The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the true Church, I'll follow it and never give it up.”

I had no spectacular manifestation, but I felt at peace and went to bed. Several hours later I awoke with a distinct thought: “Joseph Smith is a true prophet, and the Book of Mormon is true.” The thought was accompanied by indescribable peace. I fell asleep again, only to awake later with the exact same thought and feeling.

Since that time, I have never doubted that Joseph Smith is a true prophet. I know that this is the Savior's work and that Heavenly Father will answer our sincere petitions.

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