

By President Russell M. Nelson

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Study the SAVIOR'S WORDS

Not only do I now have a greater testimony of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, but I also have a reaffirmation of my absolute conviction that the system Joseph Smith had for translating the Book of Mormon was a gift from God.

During the January 2017 worldwide devotional for young adults, I challenged those watching to increase their testimony of the Savior by taking time each week to:

- Study everything Jesus said and did as recorded in the Old Testament.
- Study His laws as recorded in the New Testament.
- Study His doctrine as recorded in the Book of Mormon.
- Study His words as recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants.

I promised those listening that if they would proceed to learn all they can about Jesus Christ, their love for Him and for God's laws would grow beyond what they could currently imagine.

What I didn't mention during this address was that I knew this promise was true because I was in the midst of completing this very same assignment myself for the first time.

On December 1, 2016, I obtained a new set of scriptures and proceeded to begin the same assignment that I would later extend to young adults in January. When I finished the assignment six weeks later, I had looked up and marked more than 2,200 citations from the four books of scripture.¹



After six weeks of study, President Nelson completed his assignment.

“I have devoted much of my 93 years to learning about the Savior, but rare are the occasions when I have been able to learn as much as I did over this six-week study period.”

You can watch or read President Nelson’s January 2017 devotional by clicking on “worldwide devotional” at lds.org/broadcasts.

For me, to be able to accomplish this assignment was just thrilling!

Something I found to be most insightful was that the Savior was telling us about Himself through these various periods of time—Old Testament, New Testament, the Restoration period, and our day. In all books of scripture, the story is the same and the Storyteller is the same.

I have devoted much of my 93 years to learning about the Savior, but rare are the occasions when I have been able to learn as much as I did over this six-week study period. In fact, I learned so much about Him from this study that I am planning to share much of it in other upcoming addresses that I am currently preparing.²

Upon beginning this assignment, I didn’t expect that this study would help me to receive a new testimony of the divinity of the work of Joseph Smith—but it did! The revelations recorded by Joseph Smith and the insights found in the Bible are amazingly consistent. It was so enlightening for me to see this in my study.

Joseph Smith wouldn’t have possibly had time to correlate and cross-reference with the Bible at the rapid rate at which he was translating the Book of Mormon—but it’s all here!

So not only do I now have a greater testimony of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, but I also have a reaffirmation of my absolute conviction that the system Joseph Smith had for translating the Book of Mormon was a gift from God.

Now, I realize some of you are probably thinking to yourselves that you couldn’t possibly have time to complete an assignment like this.

I know how you feel. I thought the same thing of myself—that there’s no way I can have time to do all of this. I needed to remind myself that a comment like this is not a faith-promoted comment. A faith-promoted

comment would be “I know I don’t have time for this, but I’m going to make time for it. And I’ll fulfill it with what time I have.”

Each of us who takes this challenge will finish in our own time frames. For me, much of the joy of this came from getting it all done in just six weeks. This intense study over a relatively short period of time allowed me to appreciate the complementary nature of the learnings to be found in the Old Testament, the Book of Mormon, the New Testament, and the Doctrine and Covenants.

To those of you who feel you don’t have time, if you will make a sacrifice, you will be well rewarded and very, very grateful for the change of perspective, increased knowledge, and improved depth of your conversion. I know this is true because I have seen the same rewards in my own life.

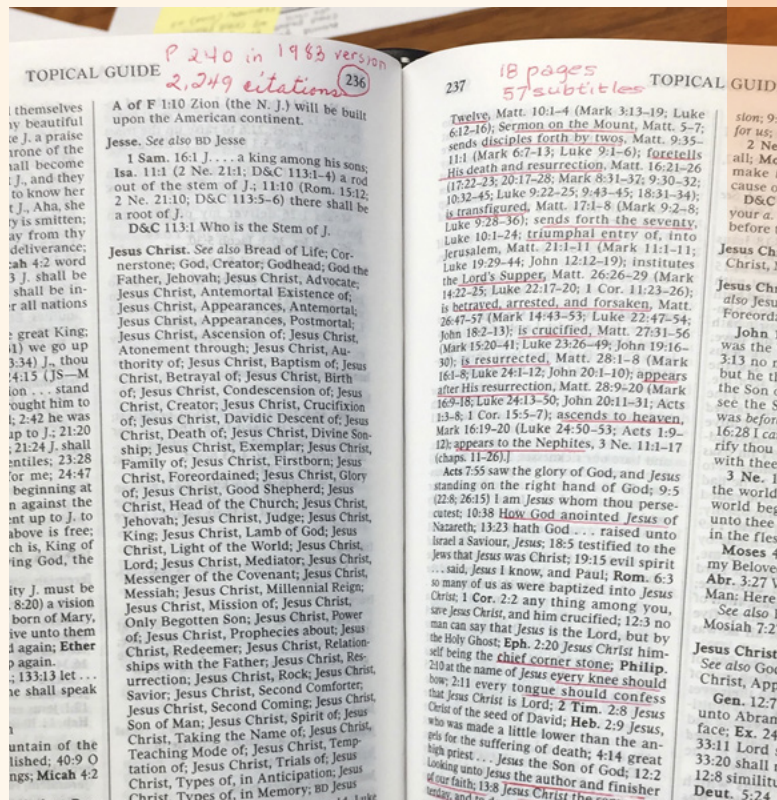
As I mentioned at the devotional, in a coming day, you will present yourself before the Savior. You will be overwhelmed to the point of tears to be in His holy presence. You will struggle to find words to thank Him for paying for your sins, for forgiving you of any unkindness toward others, for healing you from the injuries and injustices of this life.

You will thank Him for strengthening you to do the impossible, for turning your weaknesses into strengths, and for making it possible for you to live with Him and your family forever. His identity, His Atonement, and His attributes will become personal and real to you.

But you don’t have to wait until then. Choose to be one of His true disciples now. Be one who truly loves Him, who truly wants to serve and lead as He did. I promise you that if you will study His words, your ability to be more like Him will increase. I know this is true. ■

From an article on lds.org/blog.

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President Nelson studied over 2,200 scriptures about Jesus Christ and His teachings.

NOTES

1. As President Nelson suggested in his devotional, you can refer to the Guide to the Scriptures for references under the topic “Jesus Christ.”
2. See President Nelson’s April 2017 general conference address, “Drawing the Power of Jesus Christ into Our Lives.”