





By Elder
Robert D. Hales

Of the Quorum of
the Twelve Apostles

Holy Scriptures: OUR SPIRITUAL LIFELINE

*When we want God to speak to us,
we search the scriptures.*

The holy scriptures are the word of God given to us for our salvation. The scriptures are essential in receiving a testimony of Jesus Christ and His gospel. The scriptures given to us by God in these latter days are the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. These sacred records bear testimony of the Savior and lead us to Him. That is why great prophets like Enos cried unto the Lord in faith to preserve the scriptures.

Will you open with me the cover of the Book of Mormon? Look on the title page. We read that it is “written by way of commandment, . . . by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation.” It has “come forth by the gift and power of God,” and its interpretation is “by the gift of God”—by the Holy Ghost. It shows “what great things the Lord [has] done” and has given to us “that [we] may know the covenants of the Lord,” that we might not be “cast off forever.” Most importantly, it has been written to convince us “that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God.”

Turn the page again, to the introduction. Here we learn that this prophetic record is “holy scripture comparable to the Bible.” It contains “the



Lehi's sons risked their lives and lost all their worldly possessions to recover the brass plates.

fulness of the everlasting gospel, . . . outlines the plan of salvation, and tells [us] what [we] must do to gain peace in this life and eternal salvation in the life to come.” It promises each of us that “all who will come unto [the Savior] and obey the laws and ordinances of his gospel may be saved.”

What is the vital role of this sacred book in our day? What is its message regarding the purpose of all scripture?

On page one of the book of 1 Nephi—the very first book in the Book of Mormon—we learn that Lehi,

in about 600 B.C., was directed by God to take his family and flee into the wilderness. But Lehi didn’t get very far before the Lord commanded him to send his sons back. Why? To retrieve the scriptures, the brass plates, which were so important that Lehi’s sons risked their lives and lost all their worldly possessions to recover them! Ultimately, it was the Lord’s help and Nephi’s faith that miraculously delivered the plates into his hands. When Nephi and his brothers returned, Lehi, their father, rejoiced. He began to

search the holy scriptures “from the beginning,” and “found that they were desirable; yea, even of great worth . . . insomuch that [Lehi and his posterity] could preserve the commandments of the Lord unto [their] children” (1 Nephi 5:10, 21).

Indeed, the brass plates were a record of Lehi’s fathers, including their language, genealogy, and, more importantly, the gospel taught by God’s holy prophets. As Lehi searched the plates, he learned what all of us learn by studying the scriptures:

- Who we are.
- What we can become.
- Prophecies for us and for our posterity.
- The commandments, laws, ordinances, and covenants we must live by to obtain eternal life.
- And how we must live in order to endure to the end and return to our Heavenly Father with honor.

So essential are these truths that Heavenly Father gave both Lehi and Nephi visions vividly representing the word of God as a rod of iron. Both father and son learned that holding to this strong, unbending, utterly reliable guide is the *only* way to stay on that strait and narrow path that leads to our Savior.

Several chapters of the Book of Mormon are devoted to Lehi and Nephi applying this lesson—searching the scriptures and quoting from them. Clearly they wanted their families



The Lord covenanted with Enos to preserve and bring forth the scriptures “in his . . . due time” (Enos 1:16).

and us to understand the importance of the scriptures, especially Isaiah’s prophecies about the Restoration of the gospel and the coming forth of *their* record—the Book of Mormon—in our day.

The Book of Mormon records how a number of civilizations regarded or *disregarded* the scriptures.

The fate of these civilizations, as recorded in scripture, is a testimony to all the world: if we don’t have the

us on earth today: take hold of the scriptures! Cling to them, walk by them, live by them, rejoice in them, feast on them. Don’t nibble. They are “the power of God unto salvation” (D&C 68:4) that lead us back to our Savior Jesus Christ.

I testify that the scriptures have been “kept and preserved [for us] by the hand of the Lord . . . for a wise purpose in him” (Alma 37:4, 18; see also 1 Nephi 9:5, Words of Mormon

due time” (Enos 1:16). Of the Book of Mormon, the prophet Moroni recorded, it was “written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed” (Book of Mormon title page). The scriptures which we have give prophecies and promises, and they have been fulfilled in *our* day.

What a glorious blessing! For when we want to speak to God, we pray. And when we want Him to speak to us, we search the scriptures; for His words are spoken through His prophets. He will then teach us as we listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

If you have not heard His voice speaking to you lately, return with new eyes and new ears to the scriptures. They are our spiritual lifeline. **NE**
From an October 2006 general conference address.

When we want to speak to God, we pray. And when we want Him to speak to us, we search the scriptures.

word of God or don’t cling to and heed the word of God, we will wander off in strange paths and be lost as individuals, as families, and as nations.

As with voices from the dust, the prophets of the Lord cry out to

1:7). Lehi prophesied, “These plates of brass should never perish; neither should they be dimmed any more by time” (1 Nephi 5:19). The Lord covenanted with Enos to preserve and bring forth the scriptures “in his . . .