

IS THIS BOOK FROM YOU?

I had just turned 21 and was working as a server in a local ski resort's restaurant. One afternoon as I finished cleaning the dining room, another server handed me a book and said he wanted me to have it. I thanked him and accepted it.

I looked at the cover: the Book of Mormon. My curiosity was sparked, so I decided to go into the kitchen to check it out. Inside the cover I found a note that the server had written to me. In it he said the Book of Mormon was a true book of Jesus Christ's gospel and that he knew it would touch my heart. I decided to start reading it right then.

As I read, a strange, peaceful feeling enveloped me. I hadn't felt that feeling while reading any book other than the Bible. My initial intent to read a few pages quickly turned into a few chapters. I couldn't put the book down. Then I came to 1 Nephi 15:11: "Do ye not remember the things which the Lord hath said?—If ye will not harden your hearts, and ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive, with diligence in keeping my commandments, surely these things shall be made known unto you."

I had to know if this book was true. I didn't know how to address God in prayer, so I simply looked up at the kitchen ceiling and asked, "Is this book from You?" Immediately I felt a firm reply: "Yes." I remember thinking, "Wow. I guess I'll finish the book!"

Three months later, having finished



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the Book of Mormon, I drove to visit my father in California. Not far from his house I passed a building with a mosaic on its front that I recognized. I quickly turned into the parking lot and found a man outside.

“What is Lehi’s vision of the tree of life doing on your building?” I asked. He then introduced me to his church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I retrieved my Book of Mormon from the car and began asking him questions about all the passages I had circled as I read. He slowed me down and explained that the Church had missionaries who devoted two years of their lives to answering questions like mine.

I gave him my father’s address, and later two elders came to visit me. I was impressed that they were eager to answer all of my questions. I was even more impressed that the new concepts they taught me felt like familiar things I was remembering again. Five weeks later I was baptized a member of the Church.

Thirty-two years have passed since then, and I still read the Book of Mormon daily. It has been a continuous source of light and direction for my family and me. How grateful I am to the ancient prophets who etched the words of God onto the golden plates, to Joseph Smith for enduring persecution and trials in order to translate and publish its truths, and to a server who had the courage to give me a Book of Mormon that day. ■

Cynthia Ann Lee, Nevada, USA

THE GOSPEL GAVE ME PEACE

My family joined the Church when I was six years old, and we were sealed in the temple when I was eight. My parents diligently taught me the doctrines of our newfound faith, so I grew up knowing that prayer, personal scripture study, and other aspects of the gospel could bring great peace.

It wasn’t until my mission, however, that I truly came to appreciate the plan of salvation. While I was serving in Australia, my father passed away. When my mission president came to tell me what had happened, he gave me a priesthood blessing that focused a great deal on the plan of salvation. That blessing, along with my personal study in the following days, weeks, and months, helped me learn and appreciate this great doctrine more

than I ever had before. I was able to view my circumstances through the light of the plan of salvation, and I was able to understand how truly wonderful it is. The plan of salvation has come to mean so much to me since then.

As I have continued to study the scriptures since my mission, I have discovered that much of the word of God testifies of His “great plan of happiness” (Alma 42:8). I know that there is life after death and that we can be with our loved ones again after this life. Knowing that my mum, dad, and siblings and I are sealed brings me great comfort.

This life does have painful experiences, but life need not be hard. The gospel of Jesus Christ makes things a lot easier. Because of it, I know I can feel a sense of peace and comfort at all times, no matter what is happening in my life. ■

Sina Rogers, New Zealand



When my mission president came to tell me what had happened, he gave me a priesthood blessing that focused a great deal on the plan of salvation.

YOUR CROP WILL FREEZE!

As our family prepared to be sealed in the Logan Utah Temple, we recommitted ourselves to living the gospel of Jesus Christ. In particular, we made a commitment to the Lord that we would always pay tithing. Shortly after our sealing, we moved to Wyoming, USA, to try our hand at farming.

It was late April when we started

preparing our 300 acres (121 ha) of land. We burned the sagebrush, leveled the land, and dug ditches. When we finally started to plant, it was late in the planting season. I decided to plant barley, which has a short growing season.

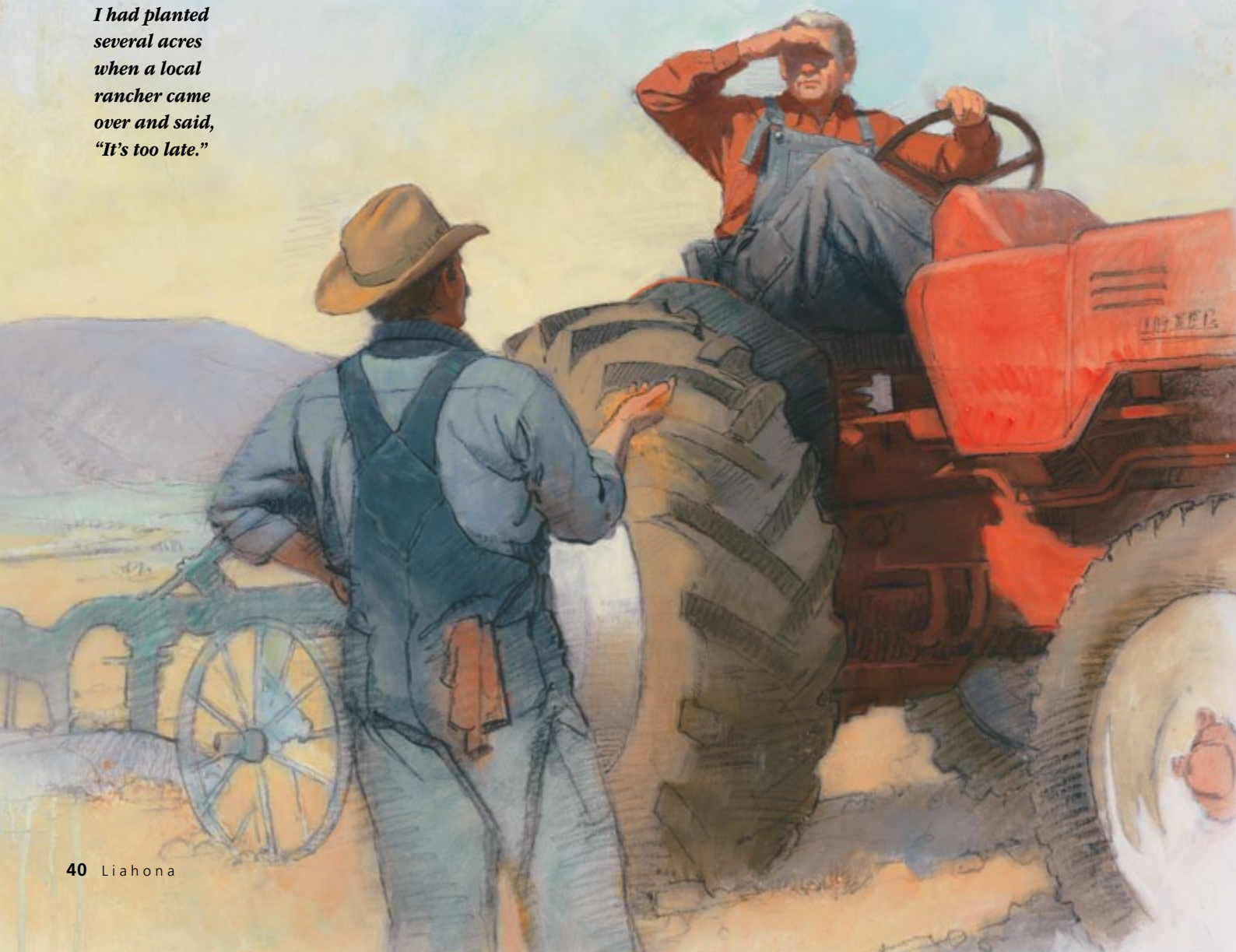
I had planted several acres when a local rancher came over and said, “You are wasting your time, energy, and money in this endeavor. It’s too late.

Your crop will freeze by August 21!”

He scooped up a handful of soil and continued, “You have dried out the ground with all your raking, burning, and leveling. Your seeds will not germinate without moisture.”

I knew the soil was too dry, but we had already invested much of our money in the crop, so I decided to keep planting. I had faith that because we had done our best to prepare the land and because we

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were full-tithe payers, Heavenly Father would assist us. After planting everything, I knelt in prayer with my family, asking for His help.

The next day it began to rain, a perfect rain that was gentle enough that it did not wash away our seeds or the soft soil on the hills. Our fervent prayers and long, hard days of work had not been in vain.

Throughout the spring and summer, we worked 12 to 14 hours a day, six days a week, irrigating, fencing, and preparing for the harvest. We also kept our promises to the Lord by paying tithing and serving diligently in our ward callings. The grain grew beautifully and bountifully; the barley plants seemed to jump out of the ground. As the end of the season drew near, however, we worried that it would become too cold for our crops to survive. We prayed that God would preserve our crops, and we had faith that He would fulfill His promise to those who pay tithing: “I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground” (Malachi 3:11).

The dreaded day, August 21, came, and so did the frost. But as I went into the fields the next day, I saw that our crops had been preserved. Several weeks later our barley harvest filled many truckloads, which we were able to sell for a considerable profit.

The following summer our acres of alfalfa and barley were a bright green in the middle of that dusty sagebrush landscape. One day in late August, I was irrigating when I saw

a powerful dark storm coming. “Oh, no,” I thought, “hail!” I knelt in the field to pray, knowing that our crops could be destroyed. The storm came fast. I could see hail coming down to the north and south of my fields. I walked to our fence line on the north. Hail had fallen just inside the fence line but no farther. I quickly went to our south fence line. There hail had fallen just outside our fence line. Our crops were untouched!

Our neighbors were impressed with how fortunate we had been, and I recalled the words of Malachi that “all nations shall call you blessed” (Malachi 3:12). Truly we had been blessed. I am grateful that as we do our best to obey God’s commands, He keeps His promises. ■

Ben E. Fowler, Utah, USA

YOU ARE WELCOME IN MY HOUSE

In November 1997 I was called to serve in the Chile Concepción Mission and would soon be able to realize my desire to attend the temple and receive more light and knowledge. But then doubts began to trouble me. As weak and imperfect as I was, was I really worthy to enter? Would the Lord really welcome me with open arms after all the times I had offended Him?

I shared my doubts with my stake president, and he helped me understand that if my life was in order and I

was really trying to do all the things I had been taught, I was worthy to enter the house of the Lord. Feeling better, I left for the missionary training center in Santiago, Chile. A few hours before it was time to go to the temple, however, my doubts returned.

The beauty and peace inside the temple were so great that the longer I was there, the more I wondered if I deserved to be there. Afterward in the celestial room, everyone but me seemed happy and radiant. As I touched the door handle to leave, however, a strange sensation came over me, and I felt that I should stay. I also felt as if someone were behind me, putting a hand on my left shoulder to turn me around. Slowly I turned.

On the wall I saw a large painting of Jesus Christ at His Second Coming with His arms opened wide. I could not move. Then I clearly heard the following words inside my mind: “You are welcome in my house.”

A warm feeling coursed through my whole body, and tears began to spill from my eyes. The only thing I could think of was “Thank You.”

For some minutes I cried without stopping. My heart was overflowing with gratitude to my Savior. I still felt weak and imperfect, but I knew that He loved me and would strengthen me.

Many years have passed since that experience, but every time I go to the temple, the joy of that day returns, as do these comforting words: “You are welcome in my house.” ■

Carina Daniela Paz, Salta, Argentina