



The Book of Mormon

THE GREAT PURVEYOR OF THE SAVIOR'S PEACE

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Before the rededication of the São Paulo Brazil Temple in 2004, the temple doors were opened to many notable leaders from government, business, and education. As I accompanied a highly respected, elected leader through the temple, I noticed that his attention was acutely focused. It wasn't until we reached a sealing room at the end of our visit that I fully understood why.

In a solemn tone he said to me: "Mr. Andersen, I want to tell you something about my family. My oldest son passed away five years ago at age 35 of cancer. In his final months he could find no peace. He was nervous, distraught, and concerned about his family, his life, and what was ahead of him. Knowing of my son's situation, a friend of mine who is a member of the Church shared with me a copy of the Book of Mormon and suggested I share it with my son.

"It was a miracle to me to see the effect of that book on my son. He devoured it. He wrote notes and thoughts in the margins. His concerns and anxieties disappeared. In reading the Book of Mormon he found enormous peace. When he died, the book was next to him. I am so

thankful for the peace it brought to him."

We live in that time long prophesied when peace would be taken from the earth: "And in that day shall be heard of wars and rumors of wars, and the whole earth shall be in commotion, and men's hearts shall fail them" (D&C 45:26). We speak not only of the conflict of nations but also of the pace and frenzy of modern cities, the distraction of media and technology, the obsession with material possessions, the uncertainty of economic stability, and the turbulence of shifting values. We thirst for peace.

The words of the Savior are so inviting: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

Do you desire more peace in your life and for your family? Would you change something you are doing in your life if you could have more of the Savior's peace?

The Book of Mormon is a wellspring of peace to the thirsty soul. It is a great purveyor of the Savior's peace. The introduction to the Book of Mormon explains that the book tells us what we must do "to gain *peace* in this life and eternal salvation in the life to come" (emphasis added).



We need only approach the Book of Mormon prayerfully and with faith, and the Savior's peace will permeate our searching.

From the beginning to the end of the Book of Mormon, “we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, . . . that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.”

Counting the ways the Book of Mormon brings peace to the soul is like counting the sand on the seashore. Let me discuss a few of the ways, allowing you to multiply the list by your own experience.

Peace from Faith in Jesus Christ

From the beginning to the end of the Book of Mormon, “we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, . . . that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins” (2 Nephi 25:26). More than half of the

verses in the Book of Mormon refer to or speak of the Savior.¹

Each year, often at Easter and Christmas-time, news magazines across the world ask the

questions: Who was Jesus Christ? Did He live? Are the writings in the Bible authentic?² Yet we know that the Bible is correct. Mormon declared, “This [the Book of Mormon] is written for the intent that ye may believe that [the Bible]” (Mormon 7:9).

When I was a missionary in Europe in the early 1970s, we began much of our teaching with the Apostasy because the divinity of Christ was widely accepted. When I returned as a mission president 20 years later, the emphasis of our teaching changed because belief in Jesus as the Son of God, who gave His life for our sins and rose the third day, had faded significantly. The importance of our testimony of Jesus Christ as the Son of God will continue to grow not only in Europe but also throughout the world.

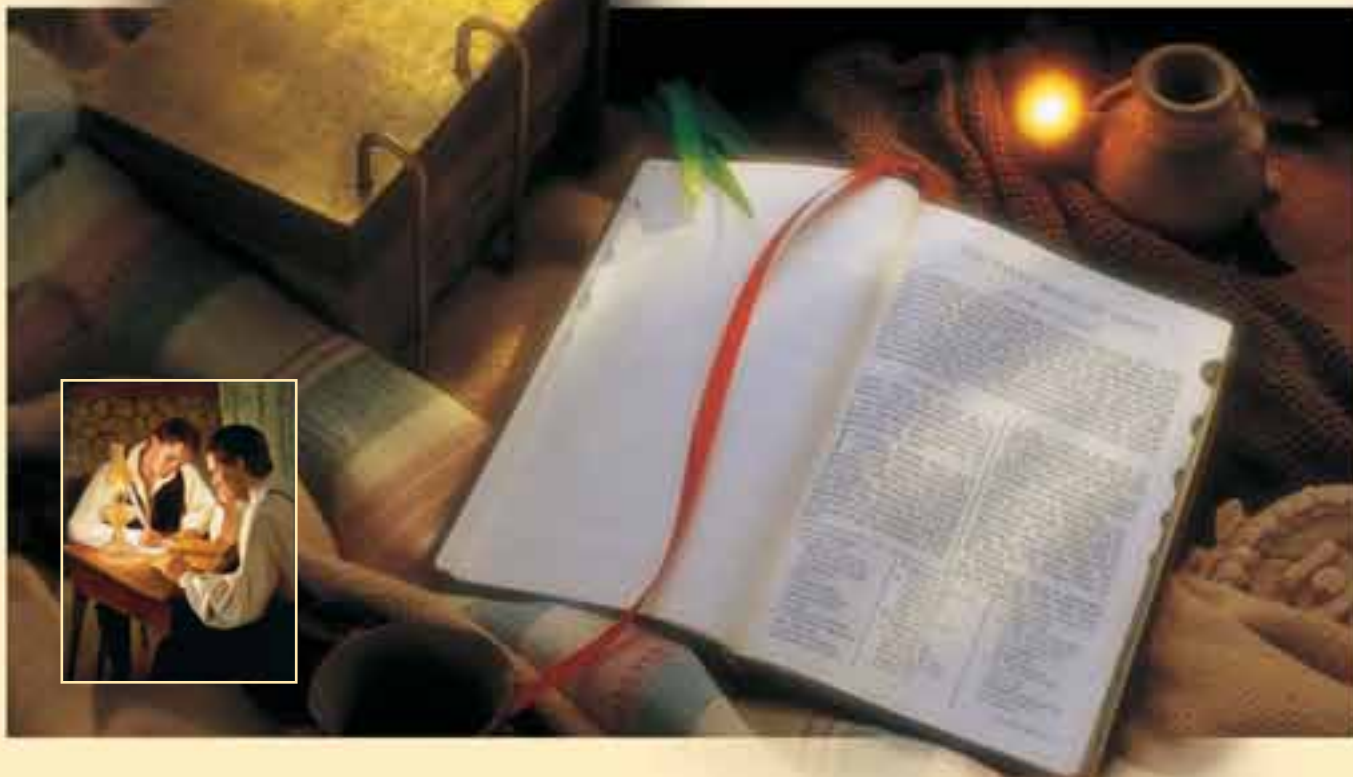
One of the blessings of our day and the coming days is that we are able to take our message to so many who know little about

Jesus Christ and His mission. The assurance of Christ fills the Book of Mormon, bringing in its wake abundant peace to all who embrace it.

In the chapters that anticipate the Messiah, we learn of His purposes, His promises, and His healing power. We learn of the prophecies concerning His life and the miracles in the Americas at the time of His birth.

In His resurrected state He declared, “Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world” (3 Nephi 11:10). We feel His love for us: “I have





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compassion upon you; my bowels are filled with mercy” (3 Nephi 17:7). “Blessed are ye because of your faith. And now behold, my joy is full” (3 Nephi 17:20). We see Him in His majesty as our Redeemer, the King of kings.

From this witness of the Book of Mormon, confirmed by the Spirit, flows an indescribable spiritual peace, assuring us that He is truly “the resurrection, and the life” (John 11:25) and that our eternal peace will be with Him.

The Peace of a Testimony of the Restoration

The Book of Mormon is a physical manifestation of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. The book is in our hands. We can touch it. We can read it.

How could anyone believe that Joseph Smith could write such a book? His wife, Emma, recorded: “Joseph . . . could neither write nor dictate a coherent and well-worded letter; let alone dictating a book like the Book of Mormon. And, though I was an active participant in the scenes that transpired, it is marvelous to me, ‘a marvel and a wonder,’ as much so as to any one else.”³

No explanation about the origin of the Book of Mormon, excepting Joseph Smith’s own account (see Joseph Smith—History 1:29–60), has exhibited any credibility.

Honest men willingly testified of holding the plates and being shown them by an angel of God—a witness they never denied. More important, the Book of Mormon comes with a promise that as we sincerely ask God, with faith in Christ, He will manifest the truth of it unto us by the power of the Holy Ghost (see Moroni 10:3–5).

This witness of the Book of Mormon confirms “that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, that Joseph Smith is his revelator and prophet in these last days, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord’s kingdom once again established on the earth, preparatory to the second coming of the Messiah” (introduction to the Book of Mormon).

I have seen the power of the Book of Mormon in bringing a testimony of the Restoration to thousands across the world. I have heard the experiences in numerous languages, seen the devotion in divergent cultures, and stood amazed at the consistency of the peace the Book of Mormon brings. It truly is “a marvelous work and a wonder” (2 Nephi 25:17).

The first time I experienced the power of the Book of Mormon in the life of a convert, I was serving as a missionary in France. My British companion and I spent much of our time knocking on doors—with few results. One afternoon a distinguished middle-aged lady opened her door. She had little time for us that day, but we left a Book



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of Mormon and made an appointment to return two days later. When we returned to her apartment and the door opened, I felt a powerful spiritual feeling. She was eager to see us. She had been reading the book and had experienced the powerful feelings of the Holy Ghost. She spoke of her joy and peace. She was prepared for whatever course we as the Lord’s servants would invite her to take.

It was in the cold of February. Our city had no chapel, so we installed a portable baptismal font in an old wooden barn. The steam from the warm water filled the air. The humble members of the branch surrounded the portable font as this sister climbed up the stairs and then down into the water to be baptized a member of the Church.

The peace expressed by this wonderful sister echoed the words of Parley P. Pratt (1807–57) as he spoke about his first encounter with the Book of Mormon: “As I read, the spirit of the Lord was upon me, and I knew and comprehended that the book was true, as plainly and manifestly as a man comprehends and knows that he exists.”⁴

With the assurance of this testimony, we enter the Church and take courage in the promises and responsibilities of our covenants. Our testimony of the many principles of the gospel grows throughout our earthly experience, but it is often the Book of Mormon that first brings us the settling peace of knowing that the gospel and the priesthood have been restored. It is a foundation upon which we build.

The Peace of the Pure Doctrine of Christ

With trouble arising among his people, the prophet Alma determined to “try the virtue of the word of God,” which had a “more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else” (Alma 31:5).

The true doctrine of Christ, received with faith, changes our souls and brings us peace.

The Lord Himself said the Book of Mormon contains “the fulness of my everlasting gospel” (D&C 27:5; see also D&C 42:12). The Book of Mormon unveils the plan of salvation and “answers the great questions of the soul.”⁵

The lessons of truth in the Book of Mormon are taught in the difficult circumstances of war and oppression, in the sermons of prophets, in the conversations of fathers to sons, and in the Savior’s own words. There is a central theme: “God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people” (Mosiah 15:1). There are those who are seeking: “And I will tell you of the wrestle which I had before God” (Enos 1:2). There is the constant call to leave our sins behind and step to a higher level: “And it came to pass that I was three days and three nights in the most bitter pain and anguish of soul; and never, until I did cry out unto the Lord Jesus Christ for mercy, did I receive a remission of my sins. But behold, I did cry unto him and I did find *peace* to my soul” (Alma 38:8; emphasis added). And there are the comforting and peace-filled words of the Savior: “Will ye not now return unto me . . . that I may heal you? . . . If ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life. Behold, mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come, him will I receive” (3 Nephi 9:13–14).

The Book of Mormon gently passes its stories and testimonies before us. As we ponder them and pray about them, the Lord reveals to the quiet chambers of our hearts our own need to repent and change. As we covenant with the Lord and make changes in our lives, we feel the power of His Atonement and confirming peace. As our spiritual journey progresses, we feel strengthened by His grace as we confront the difficulties and disappointments of life.

An Apostle has said, “When we want to speak to God, we pray. And when we want Him to speak to us, we search the scriptures.”⁶

This is the peace of the true doctrine of Christ found in the Book of Mormon.

The Peace of Our Family

In the commotion, busyness, and uncertainty of our lives, our families yearn for peace. We need our homes to be places of refuge, places of calm, places of truth.

President Gordon B. Hinckley has given a beautiful promise as we read the Book of Mormon: “Without reservation I promise you . . . there will come into your lives and into your homes an added measure of the Spirit of the Lord, a strengthened resolution to walk in obedience to His commandments, and a stronger testimony of the living reality of the Son of God.”⁷ Surely these are promises of great peace that we need in our families.

The Book of Mormon is a remarkable spiritual history. The words of prophets were passed down through the centuries from father to son, guarded and preserved through difficulty and war, brought together and summarized, and then laid to rest for centuries, finally to come forth in this dispensation of the fulness of times. Is it any wonder that the Spirit of the Lord, transcending all languages and cultures, is found in such abundance in this holy book?

The promise of comfort and peace is nestled in every chapter and verse of the Book of Mormon. We need only approach this book prayerfully and with faith, and the Savior’s peace will permeate our searching. ■

NOTES

1. See Ezra Taft Benson, “Come unto Christ,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 83.
2. See, for example, Laurie Goodstein, “Crypt Held Bodies of Jesus and Family, Film Says,” *New York Times*, Feb. 27, 2007, sec. A, p. 10; Jay Tolson, “The Gospel Truth,” *U.S. News & World Report*, Dec. 18, 2006, 70–79.
3. “Last Testimony of Sister Emma,” *Saints’ Herald*, Oct. 1, 1879, 290; spelling standardized; see also Russell M. Nelson, “A Treasured Testament,” *Ensign*, July 1993, 62–63.
4. *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, ed. Parley P. Pratt Jr. (1938), 37.
5. Ezra Taft Benson, “Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 5.
6. Robert D. Hales, “Holy Scriptures: The Power of God unto Our Salvation,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Nov. 2006, 26–27.
7. “A Testimony Vibrant and True,” *Liabona and Ensign*, Aug. 2005, 6.

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