

3 LIFE LESSONS FROM MORONI

By David Dickson and Chakell Wardleigh Herbert
Church Magazines

From beginning to end, the Book of Mormon is a nonstop ride of powerful eternal truths, amazing promises and lessons, and inspiring examples of faith in Jesus Christ. And the best part is that it's all true!

But when we're nearing the end and reach Moroni's chapters, he sure has some of the most powerful truths and life-changing lessons for us! Moroni finishes off the Book of Mormon with his incredible testimony and his personal invitation to come unto Christ and to seek to know the truth for ourselves. But among those powerful statements, here are three additional life-changing lessons we can learn from his final chapters in this fantastic book.





1. Peek Past the Finish Line

There's a satisfying feeling that comes at the end of a tough but rewarding project: snapping the last piece of a jigsaw puzzle in place or turning in a top-notch project at school.

Moroni thought he was finished with his contributions to the Book of Mormon after recording the downfall of the Jaredite nation as found in the book of Ether. He starts with, "Now I, Moroni, after having made an end of abridging the account of the people of Jared, I had supposed not to have written more, but I have not as yet perished" (Moroni 1:1).

The fact that he was still alive probably came as more of a surprise than you might suspect. After all, he was wandering alone, with enemies swarming on every side.

He had extra time on his hands. And in only 10 chapters, Moroni made the most of it. A few of the truths he included are the method of ordaining teachers and priests; instructions for the sacrament

(including the prayers); teachings on how to conduct Church meetings; a powerful discourse by his father on faith, hope, and charity; and the sacred promise found in Moroni 10:3–5 that teaches each of us how to receive personal revelation about the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. Wow!

In those 10 chapters he hadn't even planned to write, Moroni added critical truths for future readers of the Book of Mormon.

We can all learn from his example. The next time you find yourself with a bit more time on your hands than expected, or when you feel like you've worked hard and most certainly should be done already, is it worth praying and pondering to discover whether there's maybe a bit more you can still contribute?

After all, the whole world was blessed because Moroni did.



2 Remember the Stone Box

If you decided to grow your favorite fruit tree in your backyard, you would have to exercise more than a little patience. Even if it were the right time of year and you had ideal growing conditions, you'd still most likely be a few years out from plucking the first piece of fruit from your efforts.

But that's ultimately doable, right? After all, good things come to those who wait.

And even if you're planting some other type of tree that won't reach full maturity for many decades (like an olive tree), you can at least have the satisfaction of knowing your children and grandchildren will benefit.

None of you have anything on Moroni, however. His father's life's work, which became Moroni's work after his father

died, wouldn't be yielding fruit anytime soon. Not in 10 years. Not in a thousand. Mormon wrote, "These things are written unto the remnant of the house of Jacob . . . and they are to be hid up unto the Lord that they may come forth *in his own due time*" (Mormon 5:12; emphasis added).

Moroni didn't know exactly when this work would come forth, but he probably had a good idea that it was going to be a long way out. He saw a vision of our day and prophesied of certain conditions that would exist (see Mormon 8:35).

This much we know for sure: Moroni wasn't doing this for the good of any of his family or friends or even acquaintances. In some of the most heart-wrenching words

ever written, Moroni said: "I am alone. My father hath been slain in battle, and all my kinsfolk, and I have not friends nor whither to go; and how long the Lord will suffer that I may live I know not" (Mormon 8:5).

He lost *all* his family. *All* his friends. His *entire* civilization! And when he finished his record, he built a stone box to seal up the sacred record that wouldn't see the light of day for many hundreds of years.

Living righteously creates positive changes in the world. Sometimes those ripples take generations to reach full effect. But Moroni teaches us that we can always trust in God's timing. We only need to do our part.

3. Keep an Eternal Perspective

Let's be real: trials come, life is unfair, and sometimes, everything just hurts. Life is especially hard when we think we've finally gotten through a trial, only for another meteor shower of challenges to pummel us back into the ground again.

Whether we're dealing with anxiety or depression, losing a loved one, or some other challenge, sometimes holding on to faith and hope can seem so daunting. In these difficult moments it's easy to think, "How could things possibly get any worse?"

Well, for Moroni, that was a true statement. Things probably couldn't have gotten any worse for him toward the end of his life. During the hard times, when it feels like there is no reason to keep moving forward or holding on to hope, we can look at his example of unshakable faith in the face of so much devastation.

Some would call Moroni's life tragic. Even though he was faithful, he lost *everyone* he loved. He was the last survivor of his entire civilization. He had to finish his father's record because Mormon was killed before he got a chance to finish. And Moroni was being hunted down by the Lamanites and running for his life when he wrote his book of scripture.

Can you imagine how terrifying and hopeless that situation would be? If someone else experienced the trials Moroni did, they might have been tempted to let go

of their faith, to deny Christ, and to blame Heavenly Father for their terrible circumstances. But Moroni didn't.

Instead, Moroni kept holding on until the very end (see Moroni 1:3). He kept an eternal perspective to help him face his challenges. He knew what was true and knew that no matter what happened to him, as long as he had faith in the Savior and trusted Heavenly Father, all of the blessings he was promised would be fulfilled one day, and he would be saved by the power of Jesus Christ and the blessings of His Atonement (see Moroni 10).

Now, *that* is one powerful testimony.

When things seem like they can't possibly get any worse, we can take comfort

in keeping an eternal perspective and cultivating Moroni-like faith. If we do so, we are promised we "can do all things which are expedient unto [Christ]" (Moroni 10:23). We can know that Heavenly Father is with us. We can trust that His plan of happiness will provide a way for us to overcome every single tragedy we will face in mortality. And we can surround ourselves with the light, joy, and blessings of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

With an eternal perspective, we *always* have a reason to hope. And we can trust that one day we will all be able to say, "How could things possibly get any better?" ■

