



THE DEAL



By Heather Cullen

When I was 11 years old, I wanted to quit the Church. I was often angry and felt guilty because I couldn't seem to control my temper. Besides that, it seemed the Church had too many rules, and I couldn't see the point of many of them. I told my mom I wasn't going to church anymore, and she told me that if I read the entire Book of Mormon and didn't think it was true, I could quit. I was delighted with this arrangement.

I was very bright and a fast reader. I knew I could finish my reading in less than a week. I planned to zoom through the Book of Mormon in a couple of days, tell my mom I knew it wasn't true, and be free. In anticipation, I cheerfully grabbed the book and began to read. Just as I thought: it was an easy read and as boring as I had imagined. "And it came to pass . . . and it came to pass . . . and it came to pass . . ."

Then I started 2 Nephi 4:15:

"And upon these I write the things of my soul, and many of the scriptures which are engraven upon the plates of brass. For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children."

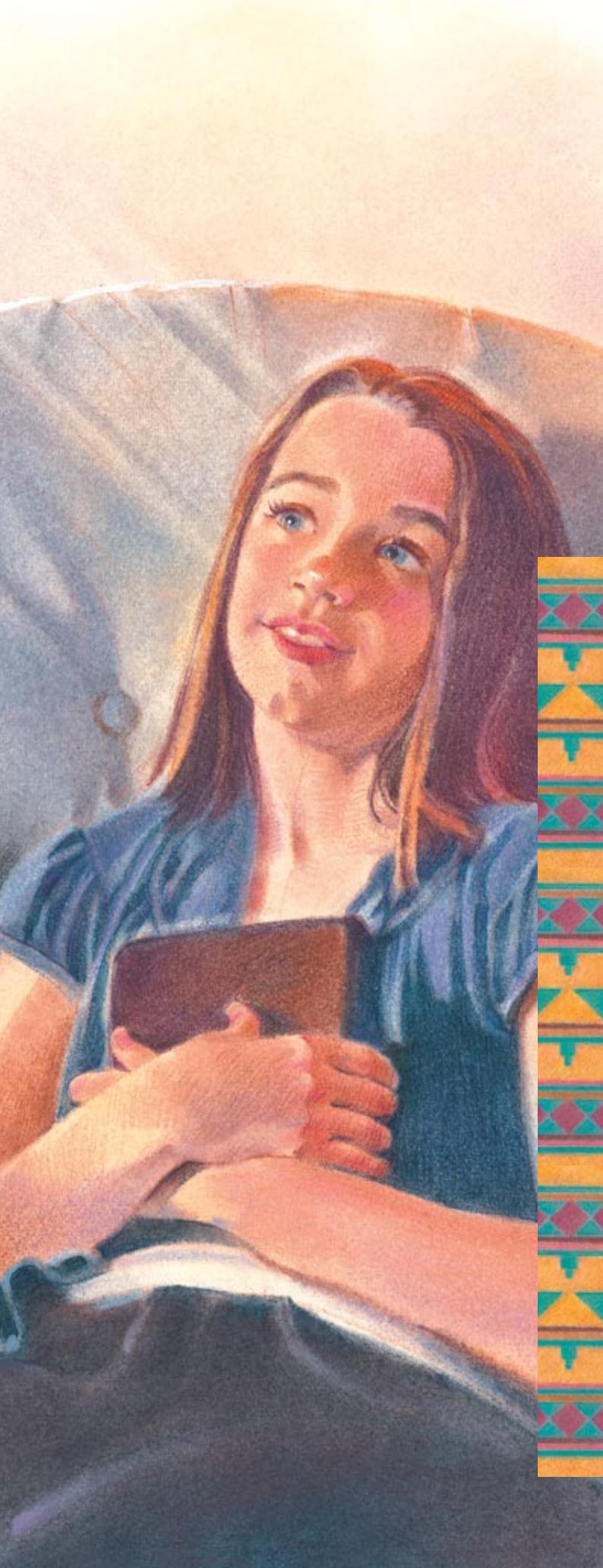
Then to verse 17: "Nevertheless, notwithstanding the great goodness of the Lord, in showing me his great and marvelous works, my heart exclaimeth: O wretched man that I am! Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities."

I became rapt with attention. I was an avid journal keeper and wrote the things of my soul all the time. Why did he delight in the scriptures? I too felt that God was good and I wasn't. This was a prophet speaking.

I read to verse 27: "And why should I yield to sin, because of my flesh? Yea, why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my soul? Why am I angry because of mine enemy?"

I read on through verse 35. A waterfall of warmth and light poured into the top of my head and filled my body with a sensation I had never felt before. A feeling of confident, joyful knowing. I slammed the book shut and yelled, "No!" But it was too late. My plan had failed. There was no escape now. I knew for myself that the Book of Mormon was true and that God loved me enough to tell me in such a wonderful way. With mixed feelings,

I could stop going to church . . . if I read the entire Book of Mormon and decided that is wasn't true.



I surrendered my heart to my Savior, wondering what would become of me now.

I didn't need to worry. I knew God loved me and would help me. I knew He loved me and wanted me to change so I could be happier, not just to fit some rules. I can honestly say that although some years have had their ups and downs, every year has finished more up than the year before as I have studied, pondered, prayed, and delighted in the gospel of Jesus Christ. He is my coach, my friend, my captain, and my Redeemer. All that is wonderful in my life is a gift from Him, and I am thankful that I had a mother who loved me enough to challenge me.

I'm sure that she fell to her knees begging the Lord to save me and send me a blessing that would take me out of her hands and into His. I want that for everyone. I

never let a day pass without reading from the Book of Mormon. **NE**

THE LORD'S MESSAGE TO YOU

"I will make you this promise about reading the Book of Mormon: You will be drawn to it as you understand that the Lord has embedded in it His message to you. Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni knew that, and those who put it together put in messages for you."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, "The Book of Mormon Will Change Your Life," *Ensign*, Feb. 2004, 11.



NEmore

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