



First Book of  
NEPHI

Second Book of  
NEPHI

Book of  
JACOB

Book of  
ENOS

Book of  
MOSIAH

Book of  
ALMA

Book of  
HELAMAN

Third  
NEPHI

Book of  
MORONI



# Bringing the BOOK OF MORMON to Life

NOW SHOWING

*In this new video series, you'll see the Book of Mormon like you never have before.*





By Joshua J. Perkey  
Church Magazines

Imagine Nephi tied up to the mast of the ship he'd built to cross the ocean. Lightning flashes; thunder roars. Salt spray and mountainous waves crash against the ship and over the deck again and again.

Nephi, bound and unable to move, keeps a prayer in his heart. His wife, tears streaming down her face, cries out to Laman to let him go.

Laman refuses. He's had enough of Nephi trying to tell him to stop misbehaving. He'd rather drown than give in. But then she pleads, "Laman, at least let me give him some water!"

Laman finally relents as she goes to her husband to comfort him. Together they ask the Lord to sustain them in their trials as the rain beats upon them and the winds drive them back for four wretched days.

At last, finally overcome by fear, Laman

gives in and releases Nephi. The young prophet picks up the Liahona, prays to the Lord, and "the winds . . . cease, and the storm . . . cease[s], and there [is] a great calm" (1 Nephi 18:21; see also 1 Nephi 18:11–20).

Sound like a movie? It is!

It's one of the many scenes depicted in the new Book of Mormon Videos series. The videos are powerful and beautifully filmed. And they are inspiring!

But the scenes and stories aren't depicted just because they're amazing or extraordinary or even motivating. It's because the messages in the Book of Mormon have power to bring people to Jesus Christ. And because they're stories of real people and real families, they have a way of connecting with us on a personal level. As we watch the videos, we'll have a stronger desire to read and study the Book of Mormon and come unto Christ.





“They’re stories  
of real people and  
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### THE POWER OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

"The Book of  
Mormon is an  
incomparable

treasure and the instrument of conversion that the Lord has designed and provided for our dispensation. I recognize it as the foundation of my own testimony of Jesus Christ, of the prophetic calling of Joseph Smith, and of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. . . . May your lifelong study of the Book of Mormon deepen your conversion and lead you in a direct course to eternal life."

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "How to Study the Book of Mormon," *Ensign or Liahona*, Oct. 2011, 30.



## The Videos Help Us Connect with Their Struggles

The scene where Nephi is tied to the ship was one of the most dramatic scenes to film. For the cast and crew, filming that scene helped them understand so much better what Nephi and his family actually went through on their journey.

Jackson VanDerwerken, 18, who plays Nephi, says, "Nephi spent four days on the boat without food or water, without knowing if he'd be untied from the mast, in the worst conditions you can imagine. While filming, I was tied onto the mast for only a few hours, with breaks and food. But the immense cold—just simulating that experience was almost unbearable. And I knew that I was going to be done at some point. Experiences like that really

bring the stories to life." Jackson's study of the Book of Mormon helped him prepare to be a missionary in Brazil, where he currently serves.

Eighteen-year-old makeup artist Drew Swasey felt similarly. "During the boat scenes, after every take we had to take Jackson down and put blankets on him so he didn't get hypothermia.

"It made me realize that Nephi didn't get a break—he didn't get blankets, he didn't get hot chocolate, he didn't get people helping him out. He was up there for four days, and he probably thought he was going to die. That really strengthened my testimony and faith. I can't stop thinking about it."



"Experiences  
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## The Book of Mormon Is a Story about Families

For many of the actors, filming the videos taught them about how the Book of Mormon is a story of families. Tatum Chiniqui, 19, plays Nephi's wife. For her, that helped the Book of Mormon become more relatable.

"It's been very powerful to know how the Book of Mormon started with a family that had problems—just like many of us have family problems—brothers and sisters who fight. Who doesn't have challenges? And who doesn't have things that are asked of them that they question?"

"It just made it so real. We all relate to it. We all have these same trials. And if we learn from their story, we can overcome them. If we turn to the Lord, we can learn exactly like they did."

For several of the cast, filming one scene was particularly moving. It was

the passage in 2 Nephi 5 where Nephi flees into the wilderness with all those who will follow him to escape Laman and Lemuel, who want to kill him.

Isaac C., 12, who plays Nephi's oldest son, says, "When Nephi's family and his brothers and their families have to say goodbye to the families of Laman and Lemuel, I never thought that they would actually be sad about that. They would be sad about leaving their family."

That same scene was really hard for Aleyna A., 12, who plays Lemuel's daughter. She and another boy named Oliver hug each other in the video as they say goodbye. "We had to cry—I stayed and he left with Nephi. Being in it, living it, brought the tears out."







## It's also a Story about Real People

Another reason the videos are so powerful is that they help us better understand the people in the Book of Mormon.

Blake W., 14, plays Jacob, one of Lehi's sons. "Playing this character really helps me have a better understanding of the Book of Mormon," he says, "especially about Laman and Lemuel. You always just see them murmuring. But really, they were actual people. They were good at one time too. They could have stayed in Jerusalem, but they didn't. They stayed with their father. That helps me see them more as people and less as just the bad guys."





Filming helped Jackson see much deeper into Nephi's life. The psalm of Nephi (2 Nephi 4) "has been the part of the scriptures that I've been the most able to relate to. It shows that Nephi isn't perfect. I can relate to it because it really brings in the humanity of Nephi rather than seeing him as this righteous man who never made any mistakes. He confesses his sins right in the scriptures for our benefit."

Playing Nephi helped Jackson better understand how "the Lord can work through young people to fulfill His purposes. He did it with Joseph Smith; He did it with Captain Moroni; He did it with Mormon."

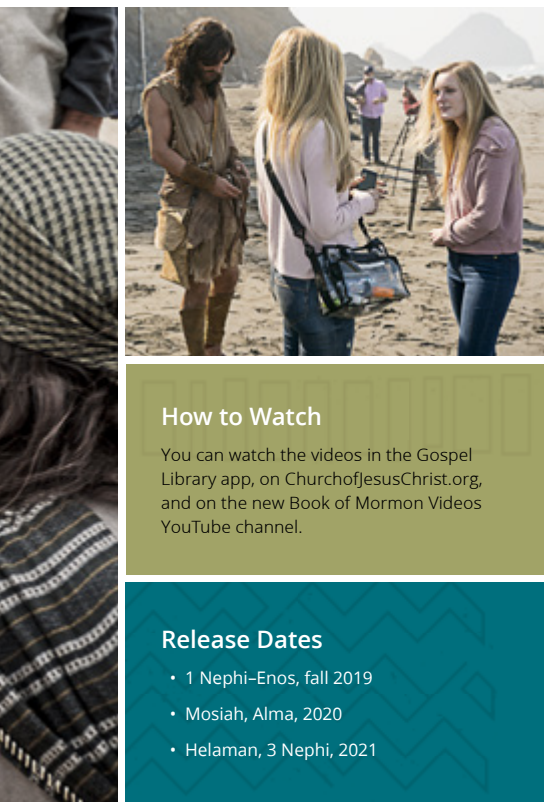
"The Lord can work through young people to fulfill His purposes."



Many of the actors described how filming the videos helped them see how even a single verse can have power and tell a big story in just a few words.

Tatum says, "One of the most powerful scenes was when we filmed Ishmael's death. We literally had to cry for three hours, just mourn over our father. It was exhausting for every one of us, but also very touching.

"I looked up the scene in the scriptures, and it was just one line. It was at this moment where I realized each verse in the scriptures is so powerful and so important—and how sometimes we gloss over the scriptures. But really we could miss so much by just skipping a verse."



### How to Watch

You can watch the videos in the Gospel Library app, on [ChurchofJesusChrist.org](http://ChurchofJesusChrist.org), and on the new Book of Mormon Videos YouTube channel.

### Release Dates

- 1 Nephi–Enos, fall 2019
- Mosiah, Alma, 2020
- Helaman, 3 Nephi, 2021

## The Videos Draw You to the Book and to Christ

Ultimately, the power in both the videos and in the book is that they draw you closer to Jesus Christ. Tatum says, "As you watch this, know that we relate to Nephi, we relate to Sam, we can relate to Laman and Lemuel. But know that Heavenly Father knows each one of us. He does these things for us so we can return to Him. That's what the scriptures are for. That's why it's important to read the scriptures and not just watch—He can speak to our minds through the Spirit. He loves us and He cares for each one of us."

For Drew, the videos are awesome, but "the book is better. We're just showing highlights. The book will always touch your hearts because it was written by prophets who were mouth-pieces of God."

Blake agrees. "Really study it. When you study, you really can feel the message that the prophets are trying to convey."

Watching the videos will inspire you, but reading the Book of Mormon is the key to strengthening your testimony, understanding God's will, and gaining personal revelation.

As Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explains, "These videos, these living representations of the written word, can indeed give a fresh appreciation and added insights, stimulate added thinking, and direct people back to the book so that they say, 'I hadn't thought of that. I need to study this further. I hadn't grasped that concept, but now that I see this, I need to study and read more profoundly, more deeply.'" **NE**