

# Moroni 7–8, 10: Moroni’s Last Words

Monte F. Shelley

## Quotes

- Dear God, Last Christmas I asked you for a baby sister. This Christmas I want you to take her back.
- Don’t cry because it’s over, ... smile because it happened.
- Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don’t matter and those who matter don’t mind.
- Please don’t nag yourself with thoughts of failure. Do not set goals beyond your capacity to achieve. Simply do what you can do, in the best way you know, and the Lord will accept your effort. (Gordon B. Hinckley)

## Lucky “Guesses” in the 1830 Book of Mormon

- “**IF** he saith unto the earth move **AND** it is moved” (Hel. 12:13)
- “**IF** ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, **AND** he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost” (Moro. 10:4)

The 1830 Book of Mormon had 14 examples of “if ... and” instead of “if ... then.” This is bad English, but good Hebrew. These were all removed in the 1837 edition. (Royal)

## 1. Sacrament Prayers (Moro. 4–5)

Bread	Water
O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this (bread/wine) to the souls of all those who (partake/drink) of it; that they may (eat/do it) in remembrance of the (body/blood) of thy Son (.../which was shed for them;)	
(and/that they may) witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they <b>are willing to</b>	that they <b>do</b>
take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments which he hath given them,	always remember him,
that they may (always/...) have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.	

Scout oath: On my honor I will do my best to ...; repeat often!

Broken heart, contrite spirit → take sacrament with real intent

Take name → become a Christian and also related to temple

Hath given them → follow promptings given directly to me

Remember → seek to know and do His will; renew covenants, read/ponder daily

## 2. “Peaceable followers of Christ” (7:3–4)

<sup>3</sup> I would speak unto you ... of the church, that are the peaceable followers of Christ, and that have obtained a sufficient hope by which ye can enter into the rest of the Lord, from this time ... until ye shall rest with him in heaven. ... <sup>4</sup> I judge these things of you because of your peaceable walk with the children of men.

How many? Heart at peace

Perfect love casteth out all fear of death in time of war

## 3. “Real Intent” (7:5–8)

<sup>5</sup> By their works ye shall know them; for if their works be good, then they are good also. <sup>6</sup> For behold,

God hath said a man being evil cannot do that which is good;

for if he offereth a gift, or prayeth unto God,

except he shall do it with real intent

it profiteth him nothing.

For behold, it is not counted unto him for righteousness.

<sup>8</sup> For behold, if a man being evil giveth a gift,

he doeth it grudgingly;

wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had

retained the gift; wherefore he is counted evil before God

<sup>9</sup> And likewise also is it counted evil unto a man,

if he shall pray

and not with real intent of heart;

yea, and it profiteth him nothing, for God receiveth

none such.

The story is told of a man who was pressured for weeks by his wife and bishop to live the law of tithing. Finally, exasperated, the man went into the bishop’s office, slid the envelope across the desk, and said, “Here Bishop, here’s your damn tithing!” The bishop calmly slid the envelope back across the desk, replying, “well if that’s the way you feel about it, then you can keep your money. The Lord doesn’t want it.”

**Brigham Young:** We say to the Saints, do not pay Tithing, unless you want to; do not help to build up this Temple unless you want to. ... If you grudgingly put forth your means to help to gather the Saints, it will be a curse to you. (JD 8:355)

**Mowing lawn grudgingly:** One Saturday one of my sons left without having mowed the lawn. When my wife asked me to mow it, I was not happy. It was my son’s responsibility! While angrily mowing the lawn, the spirit brought a scripture to my remembrance: “if a man being evil giveth a gift, he doeth it grudgingly; wherefore ... he is counted evil before God.” (Moro 7:8) It seemed stupid to do the work and then have it counted for evil! If I was going to give gifts of my time to my family, I might as well do it cheerfully so I could get the points. (MFS)

**I have my agency:** Once as a teenager I told my mother that I did not have to do what she wanted me to do because I had my agency. She said, “You have agency. You can do it willingly or unwillingly.” My happiness depends not only on *what* I do, but on *how* I do it, which includes my attitude. (MFS)

**Spencer J. Condie:** Elder Dallin H. Oaks instructed a group of missionaries in Porto, Portugal, regarding the importance of ‘real intent,’ adding that when we pray with real intent we are willing to accept the consequences of the answer we receive. That is to say, we are willing to assume the responsibility of that confirmation we receive by undergoing a mighty change of heart and, in most cases, undergoing a mighty behavioral and attitudinal change in our lives. (*In Perfect Balance*, 64)

**Pray to know God’s will** → willing to do

**LDS Bible Dictionary:** Prayer is the act by which the will of the Father and the will of the child are brought into correspondence with each other. The object of prayer is not to change the will of God, but to secure for ourselves and for others blessings that God is already willing to grant, but that are made conditional on our asking for them.

**Question Motives:** Am I doing the right thing for the wrong reason?

A missionary was asking 50 golden questions (GQs) a week instead of the 21 requested by our mission president. One day he stopped asking GQs because he might be doing it for wrong reason: to receive honor. I said one of Satan’s methods to stop good people from doing good was to suggest they “might” be doing it for the wrong reason. Perhaps he should focus on HOW he was doing it, not WHY. Alms are to be given secretly. He could go the “second mile” (50 a week), but report only the first mile (21). We need to do what we feel is right regardless of what others might think or what our motives “might be.” (MFS)

#### 4. How to Judge (7:12–17)

<sup>12</sup> The devil ... inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do ... evil continually. <sup>13</sup> But ... God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God. <sup>14</sup> Wherefore, take heed ... that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil. <sup>15</sup> For behold ... it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain. ... <sup>16</sup> For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge;

for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

<sup>17</sup> But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; ...

**Gordon B. Hinckley:** How do we recognize the promptings of the Spirit? I don't think that's too difficult, really. When all is said and done it is a matter of a feeling we have in our hearts. I am going to read to you some words from Moroni that I think answer this question ... (quotes Moroni 7:13, 16-17)

That's the test, when all is said and done. Does it persuade one to do good, to rise, to stand tall, to do the right thing, to be kind, to be generous? Then it is of the Spirit of God. If it is dark, sinister, ugly, not good, then you may know that it is of the adversary.

Now, your question: How do we recognize the promptings of the Spirit? You put it to that test. If it invites to do good, it is of God. If it inviteth to do evil, it is of the devil. The Lord is not going to spell out for you, A, B, C, D, E, F. His influence will be felt. And if you are doing the right thing and if you are living the right way, you will know in your heart what the Spirit is saying to you.

You recognize the promptings of the Spirit by the fruits of the Spirit—that which enlighteneth, that which buildeth up, that which is positive and affirmative and uplifting and leads us to better thoughts and better words and better deeds is of the Spirit of God. That which tears us down, which leads us into forbidden paths—that is of the adversary. I think it is just that plain, just that simple.” (*Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*, “Holy Ghost”)

#### 5. Why judge? (7:18–19)

<sup>18</sup> See that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged. <sup>19</sup> Wherefore, ... search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ.

**Purpose:** We must know good from evil so we as agents can “choose good or evil” and be responsible for our choices.

#### 6. “Lay hold upon every good thing” (7:20–25)

<sup>20</sup> How is it possible that ye can lay hold upon every good thing? ... <sup>22</sup> God knowing all things ... sent angels to minister unto the children of men, to make manifest concerning the coming of Christ; and in Christ there should come every good thing. <sup>23</sup> And God also declared unto prophets, by his own mouth, that Christ should come. ... <sup>25</sup> Wherefore, ... by every word which proceeded forth out of the mouth of God, men began to exercise faith in Christ; and thus by faith, they did lay hold upon every good thing.

Mormon's discourse on faith, hope, and charity was prompted by a question: “How is it possible ...”.

**Joseph:** I have a key by which I understand the scriptures. I enquire, what was the question which drew out the answer? (TPJS 276)

#### 7. Role of angels (7:30–32)

<sup>30</sup> [Angels] are subject unto [Christ], to minister according to the word of his command, showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness. <sup>31</sup> And the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance, and to fulfil and to do the work of the covenants of the Father..., to prepare the way among the children of men, by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him. <sup>32</sup> And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts...; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto ... men.

**Hugh Nibley:** Brigham Young said, “Pray that you never see an angel.” He was talking historically. Almost everybody who saw an angel left the Church. They came back, but they had these terrible problems. It gave them inflated egos, etc. They thought they were somebody special. They were, but they couldn't take it. It would be very dangerous if we were exposed to the other world to any degree. Only people that are very humble can do that. Not us, we can't do that. We are not that humble. (TBM 2, lecture 41: Mosiah 27–29, 19)

#### 8. Faith, power, miracles (7:33, 37)

<sup>33</sup> Christ hath said: If ye will have faith in me ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is expedient in me. ... <sup>37</sup> It is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased wo be unto ... men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain.

	FAITH IN CHRIST	Opposite
<b>Mind</b>	Believe his words	Doubt, unbelief
<b>Heart</b>	Confidence/trust/willingly	Fear/grudgingly/enmity/hard
<b>Body</b>	Obey words/promptings	Disobey
<b>Might</b>	Consecrate/Sacrifice	Not sacrifice/consecrate

I like the following definition of **faith**: “to hear and obey willingly the promptings of the Spirit.” Doing God's will (obedience) is the best indicator of our belief and trust in God. As we learn to recognize and follow our promptings, we are “receiving the Holy Ghost” as we were commanded to do when we were confirmed members. The Spirit will let us know what and when to sacrifice or consecrate. (MFS)

**Kris** (a friend of mine): For the first few days... [or]weeks after we found out about Owen's brain tumor, ... I was not sleeping, and became very sick physically, and sick with worry. I had a scripture come to my mind, ‘Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding’ (Prov. 3:5). The first time it came to me I guess I ignored it, or thought something like, ‘It would be nice if it was that simple.’ That scripture came to my mind over and over, at random times, for several days. Finally I thought, ‘Maybe someone is trying to tell me something.’ I looked up the scripture and thought about it. I decided that I could trust in the Lord, that I knew that He had our best interests at heart, and that whatever He decided, would be what was best for our eternal good. I told the Lord that I trusted in His will and wanted most for His will to be done, because I knew that His will is what would be best for us eternally. From that moment I was given the **priceless gift of peace**, a peace that surpasseth understanding. The

circumstances I was in, where I was consumed with worry, hadn't changed, but by turning it over to the Lord, and having faith in Him, and trusting him completely, I was changed. I was able to feel peace and happiness in the midst of a significant trial. ...

When people asked how I was doing, and I said, 'I'm doing good,' they often didn't believe me and said something like, 'How are you really doing?' Then I shared this experience with some of them and they understood that I really was doing well.

I feel my faith has been strengthened by the experience that Owen and I had with his brain tumor. I have learned what it means to exercise my faith and to trust in the Lord. I have been blessed with peace and happiness because of that.

### 9. Hope (7:40–42)

<sup>40</sup> How is it that you can attain unto *faith*, save ye shall have *hope*?

<sup>41</sup> And what is it that ye shall *hope* for? ... Ye shall have *hope* through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your *faith* in him according to the promise. <sup>42</sup> Wherefore, if a man have *faith* he must needs have *hope*; for without *faith* there cannot be any *hope*.

**Jeffrey R. Holland:** What is the nature of this hope? It is certainly much more than wishful thinking. It is to have 'hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise.' That is the theological meaning of hope in the faith-hope-charity sequence. With an eye to that meaning, Moroni 7:42 then clearly reads, 'If a man have faith [in Christ and his atonement] he must needs [as a consequence] have hope [in the promise of the Resurrection, because the two are inextricably linked]; for without faith [in Christ's atonement] there cannot be any hope [in the Resurrection].' (*Christ and the New Covenant*, 335)

**Neal A. Maxwell:** Thus gospel hope is a very focused and particularized hope that is based upon justified expectations. It is a virtue that is intertwined with faith and charity, which virtues are not to be understood either when they are torn apart from each other or apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, without whom they are all vague virtues. Doubt and despair go together, whereas faith and hope are constant companions. (*Notwithstanding My Weakness*, 41–2)

<sup>22</sup> And if ye have no hope ye must needs be in despair; and despair cometh because of iniquity. (Moro 10:22)

### 10. Charity (7:43–47)

<sup>43</sup> [A man] cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be meek, and lowly of heart. ... <sup>44</sup> If a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; ... <sup>45</sup>

And charity suffereth long,	patient {impatient; not put up with}
and is kind,	kind {unkind}
and envieth not,	jealous, envy (ill-will) {content}
<sup>KJV</sup> vaunteth not itself	<u>boastful</u>
and is not puffed up,	proud {humble}
<sup>KJV</sup> doth not behave itself unseemly (1 Cor. 13)	<u>rude</u>
seeketh not her own,	demand own way {welfare of Zion}
is not easily provoked,	angered, irritable {calm/peaceful}
thinketh no evil,	keeps no record/score of wrongs {hold grudges}

and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

<sup>46</sup> Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail—

"Charity never faileth" is the Relief Society motto.

<sup>47</sup> But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love.

### What does "of" mean?

Phrase	Meaning	Pure love of Christ
House <i>of</i> God	= God's house	Christ's love
Gift <i>of</i> God	= Gift from God	Love from Christ
Fear <i>of</i> God	= Fear God	Love Christ

"The phrase 'love of Christ' might have meaning in three dimensions: ... First, love *for* Christ. This concept proclaims Jesus as the object of our love, and our lives should be an external expression of our gratitude for him. ... A second dimension of the meaning of charity is love *from* Christ. (Ether 12:33-34) The Savior's act of redemption for our sins is of no effect without our willingness to comply with the conditions of his atonement. ... A third perception of charity is to possess a love that is *like* Christ. (2 Ne 33:7-9; Jn 13:34). Charity is not just ... a word to describe actions or attitudes. Rather, it is an internal condition that must be developed and experienced in order to be understood. ... People who have charity have a love for the Savior, have received of his love, and love others as he does." (C. Max Caldwell, *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 29–30)

**Hugh Nibley:** Moroni [Moro 7:44–47] ... gives an ancient definition of charity (the same one Paul gives)—for charity there is no bookkeeping, no *quid pro quo*, no deals, interests, bargaining, or ulterior motives; charity gives to those who do not deserve and expects nothing in return; it is the love God has for us, and the love we have for little children, of whom we expect nothing but for whom we would give everything. (*Since Cumorah*, "Good People ...", ch. 12; <http://mi.byu.edu>)

### 11. Infant Baptism (8:8–9)

<sup>8</sup> Listen to the words of Christ, your Redeemer. ... Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore, little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them; and the law of circumcision is done away in me. <sup>9</sup> And after this manner did the Holy Ghost manifest the word of God unto me; wherefore ... I know that it is solemn mockery before God, that ye should baptize little children.

**Joseph Fielding Smith:** I remember when I was in the mission field in England, there was an American family there. ... One evening as we sat in their home, the man's wife turned to me and said: 'Elder Smith, I want to ask you a question.' Before she could ask her question, she began to cry. I did not know what the matter was. She sobbed, and when she had composed herself enough to ask the question, she told me this story:

When they went over to England, they had the misfortune of losing a little baby. They were attending the Church of England. They went to the minister and wanted to have that baby laid away with a Christian burial, as they had been attending the church. The minister said to her: 'We can't give your child a Christian burial because it was not christened. Your baby is lost.' That was a rather blunt way to put it, but that is the way she told the story; and that woman's heart had been aching and

aching for two or three years. So she asked the question of me: 'Is my baby lost? Will I never see it again?' I turned and read to her from the Book of Mormon the words of Mormon to his son Moroni. I said: 'Your baby is not lost. No baby is lost. Every baby is saved in the kingdom of God when it dies.' (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:52)

## 12. Wickedness of Nephites (Moro 9) no faith, hope, charity Nephites chose evil

<sup>5</sup> So exceedingly do they anger that it seemeth me that they have no fear of death; and they have lost their love, one towards another; and they thirst after blood and revenge continually. (Moro 9:5)

<sup>20</sup> They are without principle, and past feeling; and their wickedness doth exceed that of the Lamanites. (Moro 9:20)

## 13. Moroni's Promise (10:2-4)

<sup>2</sup> I seal up these records. ... <sup>3</sup> I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, ... that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts.

<sup>4</sup> And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

### "Remember how merciful the Lord hath been":

IF he didn't give up on wicked, will he give up on you?

How does this apply to me?

Apply to infant baptism chapter

**Neal A. Maxwell:** Pondering, for most of us, is not something we do easily. It is much more than drifting or daydreaming, for it focuses and stirs us, not lulls us. We must set aside time, circumstances, and attitude in order to achieve it. In Alma's words, we must 'give place' (Alma 32:27). The length of time involved in pondering is not as important as the intensity given to it. Reflection cannot be achieved in the midst of distraction. (*That Ye May Believe*, 184)

**"When ye shall read these things":** As a missionary, I wondered if I had really put Moroni's promise to the test. I had read the Book of Mormon several times but felt I had not done the rest of the test. I read the entire Book of Mormon again and then knelt down to pray. When I received no answer, I repeated the process several times but no answer. Sometime later I was reading a story about Heber J. Grant. He was in the tabernacle preparing to give a talk when Fred came in. Elder Grant prayed that he might speak in a manner that Fred would say "I had spoken beyond my natural ability." After his talk about Joseph Smith, Fred said "you never spoke as you did yesterday. You spoke beyond your natural ability." Elder Grant responded, "Do you expect the Lord to get a club and knock you down? What more testimony do you want ...?" As I read these questions, the Spirit carried them to my heart as if the Lord were speaking directly to me. I remembered many times that I had strong feelings as I was reading. I then realized the "when ye shall read these things" does not mean "after you have read the entire book." It means "each time you read" Moroni invites you to remember and ask with real intent and to notice the feelings you receive "as you read" these things. (MFS)

**"Having faith in Christ":** Briefly share the story of the Agnostic man (below) who said he could not apply the test because he did not have the required "faith in Christ."

### "Real intent" → willing to act if it is true

Lamoni's father said, "I will give up all that I possess ... that I may receive this great joy. ... I will give away all my sins to know thee, and that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day." (Al 22:15, 18)

In contrast, a paid minister might not want to know because he would lose his job.

## 14. Gifts of the Spirit (10:9-18, 30)

<sup>9</sup> Teach the word of wisdom; ... <sup>10</sup> teach the word of knowledge; ... <sup>11</sup> exceedingly great faith; ... the gifts of healing ... <sup>12</sup> work mighty miracles; ... <sup>13</sup> prophesy concerning all things; ... <sup>14</sup> the beholding of angels and ministering spirits; ... <sup>15</sup> all kinds of tongues; ... <sup>16</sup> the interpretation of languages. <sup>17</sup> And all these gifts come by the Spirit of Christ; and they come unto every man severally, according as he will. <sup>18</sup> And I would exhort you, ... that ye remember that every good gift cometh of Christ. ... <sup>30</sup> And ... that ye would come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift, nor the unclean thing.

### "as HE will"

**Boyd K. Packer:** I have thought that the last phrase, 'every man severally, according as he will,' [Moro. 10:17] refers to the man himself. If a man wills that the gift should come to him, and he desires it, the gift shall be his. (*Teach Ye Diligently*, 20)

### (7:12-19) How to judge/know good from evil?

Every good gift → invites and entices to believe in Christ

### (7:20-25) How can ye lay hold on every good thing?

#### (8) Infant baptism

#### (9) Epistle from Mormon about people who chose evil

#### (10) Judge/know good from evil → seek/choose good gifts.

<sup>8</sup> Wherefore, beware lest ye are deceived; and that ye may not be deceived seek ye earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given; (D&C 46:8)

## 15. Perfect in Christ (10:32-33)

<sup>32</sup> Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; ... <sup>33</sup> And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot.

## 16. How do these chapters apply to us?

### Questions

1. Could a 23 year old young man have written this book?
2. How do these things apply to me now in my circumstances?
3. As I read these chapters, how do I feel?
4. Do they invite and entice me to love God, and do good?
5. As I read, do I "remember how merciful the Lord hath been, and ponder it in [my] heart" and ask God if it is true?

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## Conclusion

Leave enough time for conclusion!

Read or refer to the quotes to below  
as prompted and as time allows.

I am grateful that Moroni had about 20 years after the last battle to add his own writings and the book of Ether. I am grateful that he visited and taught Joseph Smith many years later. I am grateful that we have a second witness of what is written in the Bible.

I know that the Book of Mormon “is inspired of God” because it “inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him” (Moro 7:13).

As one protestant minister said,

“One day it occurred to me that I had not read a single word [in the Book of Mormon] which would lead a man into sin or to lose faith in Christ. In fact, it was the most Christ-loving book I ever had read, and if true, the greatest proof of Christ’s divinity the world had ever received. I decided that the simplest and most believable explanation for the book was that it came exactly as Joseph Smith said it did.”

(*Moroni’s Promise*, 10–12; see full story in lesson #1)

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## Quotes

**Neal A. Maxwell:** The Book of Mormon will be with us ‘as long as the earth shall stand.’ We need all that time to explore it, for the book is like a vast mansion with gardens, towers, courtyards, and wings. There are rooms yet to be entered, with flaming fireplaces waiting to warm us. The rooms glimpsed so far contain further furnishings and rich detail yet to be savored, but decor dating from Eden is evident. There are panels inlaid with incredible insights, particularly insights about the great question\*. Yet we as Church members sometimes behave like hurried tourists, scarcely venturing beyond the entry hall.” (*Not My Will, but Thine*, 33) \* “the great question ... is whether the word be in the Son of God, or whether there shall be no Christ. (Al. 34:5-6)

**Ezra Taft Benson:** The Book of Mormon is studied ... every fourth year. This four-year pattern, however, must *not* be followed by Church members in their personal and family study. We need to read daily from the pages of the book that will get a man ‘nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book’ (*HC* 4:461) (*Ensign*, Nov 1988, 4).

**Jeffrey R. Holland:** The Savior said, ‘Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. ... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid’ (John 14:27). I submit to you, that may be one of the Savior’s commandments that is, even in the hearts of otherwise faithful Latter-day Saints, almost universally disobeyed; and yet I wonder whether our resistance to this invitation could be any more grievous to the Lord’s merciful heart. I can tell you this as a parent: as concerned as I would be if somewhere in their lives one of my children were seriously troubled or unhappy or disobedient, nevertheless I would be infinitely more devastated if I felt that at such a time that child could not trust me to help or thought his or her interest was unimportant to me or unsafe in my care. In that same spirit, I am convinced that none of us can appreciate how deeply it wounds the loving heart of the Savior of the world when he finds that his people do not feel confident in his care or secure in his hands or trust in his commandments (“Come unto Me,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 19).

**Boyd K. Packer:** I have thought that the last phrase, ‘every man severally, according as he will,’ [Moro. 10:17] refers to the man himself. If a man wills that the gift should come to him, and he desires it, the gift shall be his. (*Teach Ye Diligently*, 20)

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### **Agnostic** (*Moroni's Promise*, by Glenn Pearson, 43-46)

"Frank graduated in philosophy. He said that after a couple of years in philosophy he had lost his faith in all Christianity. He told me he was an agnostic not an atheist.

Frank, you believe in the scientific method, don't you?

Yes. *I now think it is the only method of discovering truth.*

A fundamental aspect of the scientific method is experimentation, isn't it?

Yes.

If I could show you an experiment you could perform to find out if the Bible is true and that Christ is divine, would you perform it?

*I certainly would; but I find it hard to believe that such an experiment exists.*

I proceeded to explain the coming forth and translation of the Book of Mormon. Frank, kept asking me to explain the experiment he was supposed to perform to restore his faith in the Bible and Christ.

In the last chapter of the Book of Mormon there is a promise....

Will you perform this experiment?

No.

Why not? (alarmed and disappointed)

*Because I cannot live up to the conditions of the experiment. It says here that I must have faith in Christ and I do not have any faith in Christ.*

I had never seen what Frank saw the first time he read it. I started praying to know what to say. Suddenly the Spirit gave me the location of a scripture in Alma about Aaron got the king to pray in the following manner.

"O God, Aaron hath told me that there is a God; and if there is a God, and if thou art God, wilt thou make thyself known unto me, and I will give away all my sins to know thee, and that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day. And now when the king had said these words, he was struck as if he were dead." (Alma 22:18)

After I told Frank the story and read this verse, I said, "Frank, is there any reason why you couldn't pray like that king? Could you get on your knees and say, 'O God, if there is a God; Glenn has told me that there is a God and that thou art God...' And then tell him anything you wish to tell him and ask him anything you wish. Is there any reason you can't pray that way?"

No.

Well, will you do it?;

Yes, I will.

I promise you, Frank, that if you do, you will learn that the Book of Mormon is true, and then you will know that the Bible is true and Christ is the divine Son of God.

Frank was transferred. He wrote and told me that when he prayed, the Lord revealed to him that Christ was divine. He then asked if the Book of Mormon was true and the Lord revealed to him that it was. He said he had found some Mormons in his new camp, that he was attending their meetings, and that they were arranging his baptism.

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### **Heber J. Grant's story of Half Brother**

While Elder Grant was serving in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, his testimony of the Prophet Joseph contributed to the conversion of his half brother Fred, "who had been careless, indifferent, and wayward, and who had evinced no interest in the gospel of Jesus Christ." Elder Grant was in the Salt Lake

Tabernacle one day, preparing to give a talk, when he saw Fred enter the building. He recounted:

"When ... I saw Fred for the first time in the Tabernacle, and realized that he was seeking God for light and knowledge regarding the divinity of this work, I bowed my head and I prayed that if I were requested to address the audience, the Lord would inspire me by the revelation of His Spirit, to speak in such manner that my brother would have to acknowledge to me that I had spoken beyond my natural ability, that I had been inspired of the Lord. I realized that if he made that confession, then I should be able to point out to him that God had given him a testimony of the divinity of this work."

When it was his turn to speak, Elder Grant walked to the pulpit and opened a book to guide him in the address he had prepared to give. He then said to the congregation, "I cannot tell you just why, but never before in all my life have I desired so much the inspiration of the Lord as I desire it today." He "asked the people for their faith and prayers" and continued with his own silent petition for inspiration. After speaking for 30 minutes, he returned to his seat. He later recalled:

"When I sat down after my talk, I remembered that my book was still lying open on the pulpit. President George Q. Cannon [First Counselor in the First Presidency] was sitting just behind me ... , and I heard him say to himself: 'Thank God for the power of that testimony!' When I heard this, I remembered that I had forgotten the sermon I had intended to deliver, and the tears gushed from my eyes like rain, and I rested my elbows on my knees and put my hands over my face, so that the people by me could not see that I was weeping like a child. I knew when I heard those words of George Q. Cannon that God had heard and answered my prayer. I knew that my brother's heart was touched.

"I [had] devoted my thirty minutes almost entirely to a testimony of my knowledge that God lives, that Jesus is the Christ, and to the wonderful and marvelous labors of the Prophet Joseph Smith, bearing witness to the knowledge God had given me that Joseph Smith was in very deed a prophet of the true and living God.

"The next morning, my brother came into my office and said, 'Heber, I was at a meeting yesterday and heard you preach.'

"I said, 'The first time you ever heard your brother preach...?'"

"'Oh, no,' he said, 'I have heard you many times. I generally come in late and go into the gallery. I often go out before the meeting is over. But you never spoke as you did yesterday. You spoke beyond your natural ability. You were inspired of the Lord.' These were the identical words I had uttered the day before, in my prayer to the Lord!

"I said ... , 'Are you still praying for a testimony of the gospel?'"

"He said, 'Yes, and I am going nearly wild.'

"I asked, 'What did I preach about yesterday?'"

"He replied, 'You know what you preached about.'

"I said, 'Well, you tell me.'

"'You preached upon the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith.'

"I answered, 'And I was inspired beyond my natural ability; you have never heard me speak at any time as I spoke yesterday. Do you expect the Lord to get a club and knock you down? What more testimony do you want of the gospel of Jesus Christ than that a man speaks beyond his natural ability and under the inspiration of God, when he testifies of the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith?'"

"The next Sabbath he applied to me for baptism."

(*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant*, 11)

**NOTE:** The yellow shading shows what is NOT on the handout that I use in class. The handout makes it possible to share information while only briefly referring to it in class. The handout and any other supplements for the lesson are at [www.sviewp.com](http://www.sviewp.com).

### Sources:

- Royal = Royal Skousen, "The Original Language of the Book of Mormon: Upstate New York Dialect, King James English, or Hebrew?" <http://mi.byu.edu>
- MFS = Monte F. Shelley

### GENERAL

- BMRC = Dennis Largey, *Book of Mormon Reference Companion*
- TBM = Hugh Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols.
- OM = Original Manuscript
- PM = Printer's Manuscript
- CR = Conference Report
- *LDS View* = This computer program with the scriptures in 11 languages was sold in the Church Distribution Center as *Scriptures on CDM*. It can now be downloaded with the scriptures in up to 30 languages (<http://ldsview.byu.edu>). At <http://WordCruncher.com>, you can download WordCruncher and Webster's 1844 Dictionary (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). If *LDS View* was downloaded first, WordCruncher will let you see the English scriptures and when you click on an English word, you can see Webster's 1844 definition.
- Other Bible Translations are at [www.blueletterbible.org/](http://www.blueletterbible.org/)

### BAJA model

- Baja = [www.achoiceiland.com](http://www.achoiceiland.com)

### MESOAMERICAN model

- Sorenson = John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*.
- *Reexploring* = John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, <http://mi.byu.edu>
- Poulsen = [bomgeography.poulsenll.org/bomdirections.html](http://bomgeography.poulsenll.org/bomdirections.html)

### Hebraisms

- Par-Heb = Donald W. Parry, "Hebraisms and Other Ancient Peculiarities," <http://mi.byu.edu>
- Tved-Heb = John Tvedtnes, "The Hebrew Background of the Book of Mormon," chapter 8 in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*; <http://mi.byu.edu>

### Other sources

- BD = *Bible Dictionary* (in English LDS Scriptures).
- GS = *Guide to the Scriptures* (in electronic LDS Scriptures)
- I-BofM = New Testament Institute manual, *The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles*, [institute.lds.org](http://institute.lds.org)
- KJV King James Version of the Bible.
- NIV = New International Version of the Bible
- *TPJS* = *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*
- *SOED* = Shorter Oxford English Dictionary
- *OED* = Oxford English Dictionary
- *BDB* = *Brown, Driver, Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
- Bauer = Walter Bauer, *Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*
- *EJ* = *Encyclopedia Judaica*
- *Rona* = Daniel Rona, [www.israelrevealed.com/comp-sup-r.htm](http://www.israelrevealed.com/comp-sup-r.htm).
- *MM* = Meridian Magazine, Gospel Doctrine, [www.ldsmag.com](http://www.ldsmag.com)
- [beardall2000.com/gospdoct.shtml](http://beardall2000.com/gospdoct.shtml);