



THE WITNESS

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION BY THE BOOK OF MORMON FOUNDATION
Number 137 ■ Spring 2011



As the deer panteth for the water,

So my soul longeth after Thee.

You alone are my heart's desire,

And I long to worship Thee.

The Book of Mormon Foundation Internship Program

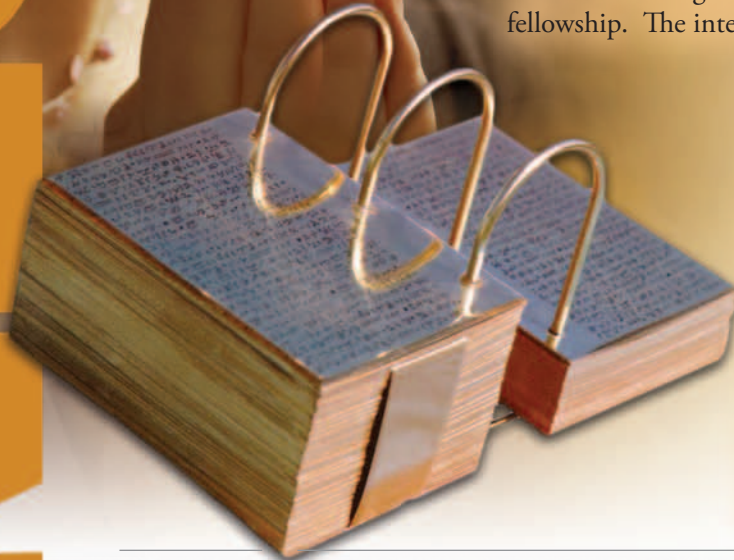
CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

The Book of Mormon Foundation is pleased to announce the participants in the 2011 Internship program. This is the 20th year of the program, which will be highlighted with a trip to Belize, classes, service projects and fellowship. The interns and staff selected for the internship this year are:

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A contribution to The Book of Mormon Foundation is tax deductible. Financial statements are available upon request.

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Published quarterly by
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Cover photo courtesy of Larry Godfrey
Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming
Cover script *The Gift of Song #10 (Martin Nyström, 1956)*

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The Book of Mormon: Answers to Life's Fundamental Questions

by Rich Rowland

"The most beautiful system of the Sun, Planets and Comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent being. All variety of created objects which represent order and Life in the Universe could happen only by the willful reasoning of its original Creator, whom I call the Lord God."

Sir Isaac Newton

For centuries, man has looked into the heavens, viewed the immensity of space and contemplated the marvels of creation. In the midst of such lofty reflection, those thoughts would ultimately turn to self. Perhaps the Psalmist David captured the spirit of their awe and wonder when he asked, "What is man that thou are mindful of him?" From the great philosophers, theologians and kings to the poor and humble shepherds, it seems that mankind has always been searching for the truth about his own existence. "Where did I come from?" "Why am I here?" "Where am I going after this life ends?" These three questions beg for answers that seem to be just beyond the grasp of the human experience. The best of man's reasoning has produced theories of his own making. Humanism, Evolutionism, Atheism and all manner of "isms" have been created in an effort to find the answers to these three fundamental questions, but each human endeavor has come up short in providing adequate answers. You see, the three questions are simple and yet so profound. The trouble is, one question cannot be completely answered without also influencing the other two. For some, the theory of evolution provides an acceptable accounting for the origin of life, but few would be comfortable with its conclusions about the purpose of life or what happens when this life ends. Humanism seeks to explain the purpose of life in purely human terms. For some, the Humanist vision of self-gratification satisfies their desire to understand the purpose in life, but it sheds little light on the other two questions. It seems to me that each of the "isms" that I have encountered fail to provide answers that fully satisfy the longing of my soul.

After all is said and done, the best of man's reasoning cannot give life and breath to concepts such as origin, purpose and eternity. Expecting the reason of man, within the confines of the human experience, to illuminate the origin, purpose and eternity of life would be like asking the same questions to a clay pot. The pot would only know that it was once clay until it was touched by the hands of the potter. It is the potter who has poured out his imagination and will, passion and skill upon the clay. It is the potter who has given life and purpose to the clay. It is the potter alone who knows the beginning and the end and all points in between. And so it is for all mankind.



the breath of life; and man became a living soul;
(Genesis 2:8 IV)[Genesis 2:7 KJV]

From the very beginning, man was to be different than the rest of creation. Man was created in the “image” of God.

And I, God, said unto mine Only Begotten,
which was with me from the beginning, Let us make
man in our image, after our likeness; and it was so.
(Genesis 1:27 IV) [Genesis 1:26 KJV]

The idea of being created in the image of God has confounded mankind from the beginning. What does the “image” of God really mean? Throughout history, it has been most commonly interpreted that man was created in the physical appearance of God. It is interesting to consider that this interpretation of “image” has, in many ways, been used to justify much of man’s inhuman treatment of other men. American slavery and the rise of Nazi Germany were, in part, justified by the understanding that “we” are created in God’s image. If “we” are created in God’s image, then anyone who, does not look like “us” must not be entirely human and must not be a part of God’s perfect creation. Following that logic leads to a place where inhuman treatment of others is perfectly justified. That particular mindset still exists in the world today and is largely responsible for much of the calamity we see around us.

What if our understanding of the “image” of God was different and did not revolve entirely around physical appearance? What if, instead, the “image” of God also included man’s ability to make conscientious moral choices? Consider that no other part of God’s creation has been endowed with the ability to make choices. The planets, stars and all the heavens move in their perfect order, not because they choose to do so, but because that is what they were created to do. The ocean’s tide does not decide for itself when to rise and fall. A seed of corn can not will itself to sprout and grow in the winter season. Likewise, cattle cannot determine for themselves that they would prefer to eat fish rather than hay. The laws of nature, instinct and genetic programming govern most all of creation. Man is somehow different. To man alone it has been given the opportunity and responsibility of moral decision making. We in the Restoration gospel know this morality-based decision making as personal agency.

While the Book of Mormon doesn’t provide a day-by-day creation narrative like the Bible, it does confirm the Biblical account. One such corroborating witness is the testimony of Lehi found in 2 Nephi. Lehi was nearing the end of his earthly days and wanted to pass along words of council to each of his sons. To his son Jacob, Lehi spoke these words:

It is no wonder that modern-day theologians suggest that passionately pursuing the answers to these three questions, “Where have I come from?,” “Why am I here?,” and “Where am I going, when this life ends?,” will invariably lead a person to the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ. No man-made response comes close to answering the questions in a comprehensive way. Sir Isaac Newton came to the same conclusion... *All variety of created objects which represent order and Life in the Universe could happen only by the willful reasoning of its original Creator, whom I call the Lord God.*

For centuries, men and women, like Isaac Newton, have turned to scripture to help them in their search for answers. The Bible provides a solid foundation for this search and has proved to be an excellent guide for those who would diligently study it. Likewise, the Book of Mormon addresses these issues and sheds additional, complementary light and truth on these fundamental questions. In this article, we will highlight just a few of the many insights provided by the Book of Mormon.

Where did I come from?

The Biblical creation narrative begins with the heavenly proclamation, “And I, God, created...” Heavens and earth, light and darkness, plants and animals were spoken into existence. As He surveyed his creation, God saw all things He had made were good. The final, and perhaps the crowning achievement of God’s creation, was man.

And I, the Lord God, formed man from the
dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils

And now, my son, I speak unto you these things, for your profit and learning: For there is a God, and he hath created all things, both the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them is; Both things to act, and things to be acted upon; And to bring about his eternal purposes in the end of man, after he had created our first parents, and the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, and in fine, all things which are created, it must needs be that there was an opposition; Even the forbidden fruit in opposition to the tree of life; the one being sweet and the other bitter; Wherefore, the Lord God gave unto man, that he should act for himself. Wherefore, man could not act for himself, save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other.

(2 Nephi 1:94-100 RLDS)
[2 Nephi 3:29-4:2 LDS]

Notice how closely Lehi related the creation events with the agency of man. All of creation is given the responsibility to act or be acted upon, but it is man alone who is given the ability to “act for himself.” This gift of agency plays an important role in answering the question, “Where did I come from?” The scriptural response to the question confirms that not only was man created by God, but he was also given a gift that was reserved only for him. Agency is the specific gift by which God made man in his own image and empowered him to grow to become like Him. The Psalmist David seemed to be inspired by this understanding when he wrote, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”

Why am I here?

The Nephite prophet Alma, the son of Alma, declared with boldness and simplicity his response to the fundamental question, “Why am I here?”

Therefore this life became a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God; a time to prepare for that endless state, which has been spoken of by us, which is after the resurrection of the dead.

(Alma 9:41 RLDS)
[Alma 12:24 LDS]

Alma’s choice of the words “probationary state” is particularly interesting and important in our discussion. In our world

today, we recognize that the term probation comes from our legal system. Understanding the concept of probation begins with recognizing that there are laws incorporated in every community. These laws are established to provide a framework by which the citizens of the community are encouraged to live together peaceably. When an individual chooses to live outside the law, the mechanisms of the legal system are set in motion against him. Most likely, this path will lead the lawbreaker to a place before the judgment bar. In this courtroom setting, the person who has been accused of breaking the law will stand before a judge, who will hear the evidence. If the accused is found to be guilty of the charges, the judge, using his wisdom and discretion, can decide to grant some form of probation instead of a full sentencing. This probationary period then becomes a time of testing for the accused. It is during this time that the life of the accused, his conduct and character, are monitored closely. The goal of the probationary period is to determine if the accused can live in a responsible way that fits within the confines of the established laws of the land. It is up to the accused, during this period, to choose carefully how he will live. To be successful, the individual must desire to leave his corrupt way of life behind and press forward in a law-abiding fashion. At the end of the probationary period, the individual must return once again to stand before the judge. At this time, the judge will pronounce a final sentencing. If the individual has reformed his ways and chosen to live within the boundaries of the law, his sentence will be commuted, and he will be spared from the consequences his initial actions warranted. On the other hand, if the individual has not reformed his ways in a



manner that satisfies the judge, he will be required to fulfill the punishment dictated by the law. Ultimately, it is the actions of the accused that will demonstrate to the judge, and to those living around him, whether or not he can become a contributing citizen of the community.

The concept of probation in this modern representation actually fits in perfectly with Alma's interpretation. The Kingdom of God is, in many ways, regulated by laws not unlike our earthly communities. The laws of God are intended to encourage the citizens of the kingdom to live peaceably with Him. As we have already discussed, mankind was given personal agency as a part of God's creative genius. This moral decision-making capability allows us to choose for ourselves how we will respond to those laws. Our personal response determines our status in the Kingdom. In reality, each of us has, at one time or another, willfully chosen to disobey the laws of the Kingdom. As in our modern society, disobedience to the law sets the wheels of justice in motion. In our modern legal system, there can be doubt raised as to whether the evidence points to our guilt or innocence. In God's courtroom, there is no doubt. The Bible tells us that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Because that is true, there can be no disputing the righteous judgment of God in handing our sentence. Alma expresses it this way:

How could he sin, if there was no law? How could there be a law, save there was a punishment?
(Alma 19:99 RLDS) [Alma 42:17 LDS]

The punishment prescribed by our current-day legal system most frequently comes in the form of fines or incarceration. In the Kingdom of God, that punishment is never-ending separation from His presence. Again, we can draw from the inspired words of Alma for better understanding.

And thus we see that all mankind were fallen, and they were in the grasp of justice; yea, the justice of God, which consigned them for ever to be cut off from his presence.

(Alma 19:96 RLDS) [Alma 42:4 LDS]

This eternal separation was never the end that God had in mind for his special creation. Just as an earthly judge can use his wisdom and discretion to give the reprobate another opportunity to live within the bounds of the law, so does God.

Therefore as they had been carnal, sensual and devilish, by nature, this probationary state became a state for them to prepare; it became a preparatory state.

(Alma 19:91 RLDS) [Alma 42:10 LDS]

It is important to notice how Alma repeatedly emphasizes that this probationary state is really a time of preparation. It is during our time on earth that we prepare to meet God. Much can be written about how best to prepare to meet God. In fact, all scripture is aimed at helping us do just that. For the purposes of this article, perhaps we should let the simple, yet profound, words of Jesus be our guide and inspiration. In His earthly ministry in the new world, Jesus proclaimed to the people

Behold I am the light; I have set an example for you.

(3 Nephi 8:49 RLDS) [3 Nephi 18:16 LDS]

In its simplest form, that really is the answer to the question, "Why am I here?" We have been given this probationary time to learn of His ways and to choose to follow the example of Jesus. Ultimately, each of us will return to the judgment bar of God at the end of our probationary period. As we stand before Him to answer the ends of the law, it will be our choices during this time of probation that demonstrate if we have followed the example of Christ. How we have exercised our personal agency will establish whether or not we can live peaceably in the Kingdom of God.

Where am I going when this life ends?

No serious discussion of life after death can be complete without recognizing the roles that personal repentance and our Savior Jesus Christ play in what the Book of Mormon writers called the "plan of redemption." To understand the importance of personal

repentance, we can turn to the counsel given by Alma to his young son, Corianton.

But behold, ye can not hide your crimes from God; and except ye repent, they will stand as a testimony against you at the last day. Now, my son, I would that ye should repent, and forsake your sins, and go no more after the lusts of your eyes, but cross yourself in all these things; for except ye do this, ye can in no wise inherit the Kingdom of God.

(Alma 19:12-13 RLDS) [Alma 39:8-9 LDS]

Having lived out this probationary period and done the best we can to repent and to conform our lives to the laws of God and the example of Christ, we find ourselves in a state of continuing repentance. Nonetheless, we are confronted with the reality that we have broken the law. While our behavior and choices may have changed over time, the justice the law demands still has not been completely satisfied. Alma again sheds additional light on the subject.

But there is a law given and a punishment affixed, and repentance granted; which repentance, mercy claimeth; otherwise, justice claimeth the creature, and executeth the law, and the law inflicteth the punishment; if not so, the works of justice would be destroyed, and God would cease to be God.

But God ceaseth not to be God, and mercy claimeth the penitent, and mercy cometh because of the atonement; and the atonement bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead: and the resurrection of the dead bringeth back men into the presence of God;

And thus they are restored into his presence; to be judged according to their works; according to the law and justice; for behold, justice exerciseth all his demands, and also mercy claimeth all which is her own; and thus, none but the truly penitent are saved.

(Alma 19:104-106 RLDS) [Alma 42:22-23 LDS]

The works of justice had to be satisfied, and so Jesus came to accept the punishment that was intended for us. His sacrifice became the atonement for our disobedience. Because He has taken the punishment for our sins, he can also extend to us the arm of mercy. These factors (repentance, atonement and mercy) work together to provide us

with the opportunity to return into the presence of God. In the New Testament record, Jesus declares that no man can come to the Father but by Me. The Book of Mormon confirms that testimony.

Conclusion

From the beginning of time, man has sought answers to questions that seemed beyond his grasp. Looking with awe and wonder into the heavens caused him to reflect upon his own existence. Our lives are no different today. The questions we ask are questions of eternal importance. They are questions that shape and mold the very core of our lives. The Book of Mormon and all of scripture provide for us a marvelous glimpse into the creative process of God. These scriptures allow us to understand not only the mechanics of creation, but perhaps even more importantly, its divine purpose. In this article, we have just scratched the surface in our search for the fundamental truths of creation, life and eternity. My prayer is that the material presented here, while basic in its presentation, will inspire and encourage you to dig deeper.

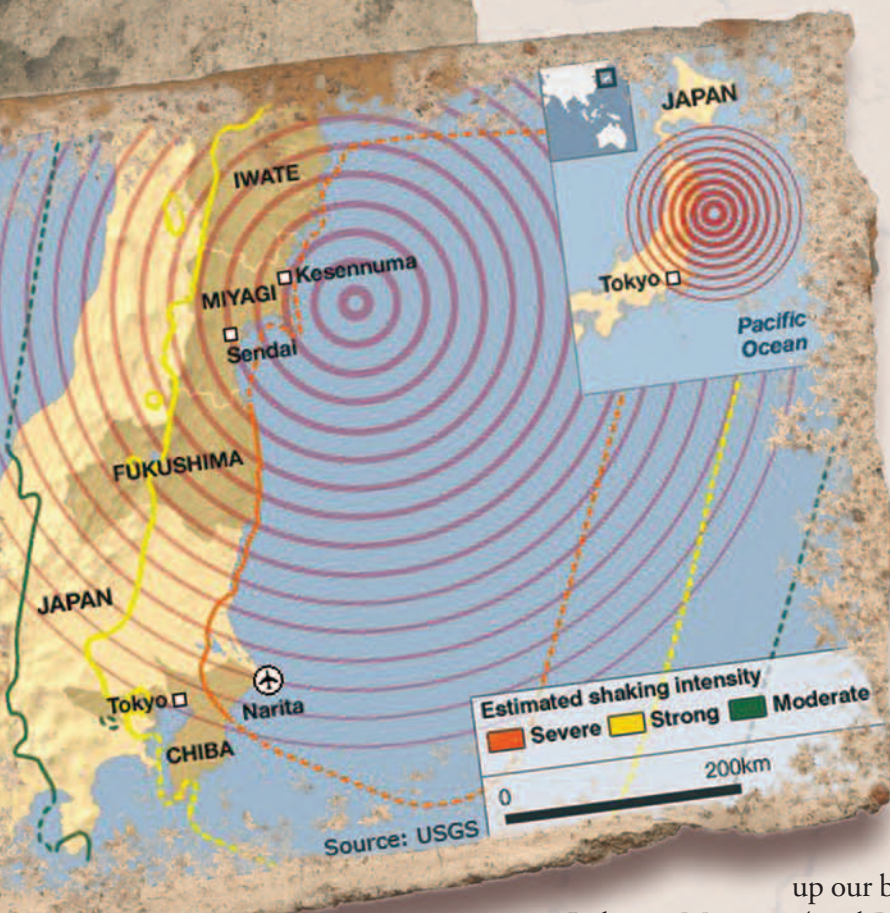
Earthquakes Heard of in Divers Places

by Marlin Guin

Yea, it shall come in a day when there shall be *heard of* fires, and tempests, and vapors of smoke in foreign lands; and there shall also be *heard of* wars and rumors of wars, and *earthquakes in divers places*.

(Mormon 4:37 RLDS)

[Mormon 8:29-30 LDS] (italics added)



Like many of you, the recent 8.9+ magnitude earthquake in Japan continues to rest heavily on my mind. The high death toll, separation of family and friends, immeasurable property damage, devouring fires, powerful tsunamis, major aftershocks and potential nuclear power plant meltdowns brings a keen awareness to the constant presence of earthquakes among us. As we ponder upon the earthquake in Japan and pray for the people, we realize this is just one of many such events in our time. Other recent examples include major earthquakes in Haiti, New Zealand, Chile, Argentina and Pakistan, to name a few. With this brief list, we see the relevance of the word “divers,” which is another version of the word “diverse,” meaning various places.

I’m sure we recall many scriptures which speak of such things. Consequently, we find our thoughts quickly snapped back from the routine of everyday life to focus on the words of the prophets concerning the signs of the times. We may have already picked

up our books and turned to such places as Matthew 24, Mark 13,

Luke 21, Mormon 4 and D&C 43, 45 to refresh our specific understanding of them.

In so doing, we realize how the Lord has given many prophetic signs as a witness that He continually speaks to the nations of the earth.

And again, the Lord shall utter his voice out of heaven, saying: Hearken, O ye nations of the earth, and *hear the words* of that God who made you.

O, ye nations of the earth, how often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not?

How oft have I *called upon you* by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunderings, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of *earthquakes*, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trump, and by the voice of judgment, and

by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor, and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not?

(D&C 43:6a-c RLDS) [D&C 43:23-25 LDS]
(italics added)

Conversely, those who do not believe in these prophetic signs usually give a more secular explanation of their cause such as “Mother Nature,” “global warming” or “earth cycles.” One recent example of this secular explanation is from Barbara Simpson, a WorldNetDaily commentator, who described the earthquake in Japan as:

Sometimes Mother Nature just needs to get our attention, and when that happens, it's like getting the attention of a mule. Hit him in the head with a 2x4 first. Then he'll pay attention.

"Mom" did it again last Friday, when all the plans of human beings got that big smack in the head. This time, she did it with a massive double whammy – a mega, catastrophic earthquake followed by a tsunami of unimaginable force and destruction.¹

The following two examples describe the ongoing conflict between those who see today's earthquakes as signs from God and those who do not agree. Please keep in mind that both of these views, perhaps even others, seem to exist within the church today. It's interesting that both perspectives present contrasting conclusions, even though they are both derived from the same research sources. In this comparison, they are both primarily based on statistics from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS).

Let's first read a published report to support the view that earthquakes are a sign from God. It emphasizes the average time between earthquakes measured in days, based on their intensity.

● From 1 A.D. to 1800 there were approximately 28 major earthquakes recorded in history. This results in an average of one major earthquake approximately every 60 years.

● From 1801-1900 there were approximately 31 earthquakes 7.0 or higher. This results in one major earthquake approximately every 3.2 years.

● From 1901 to 2000 there were 222 major earthquakes 7.0 or higher. This results in an average of one major earthquake every 6 months.

● From 2000 to 2003 there were approximately 59 earthquakes of 7.0 or higher. This results in approximately one major earthquake every 24 days.

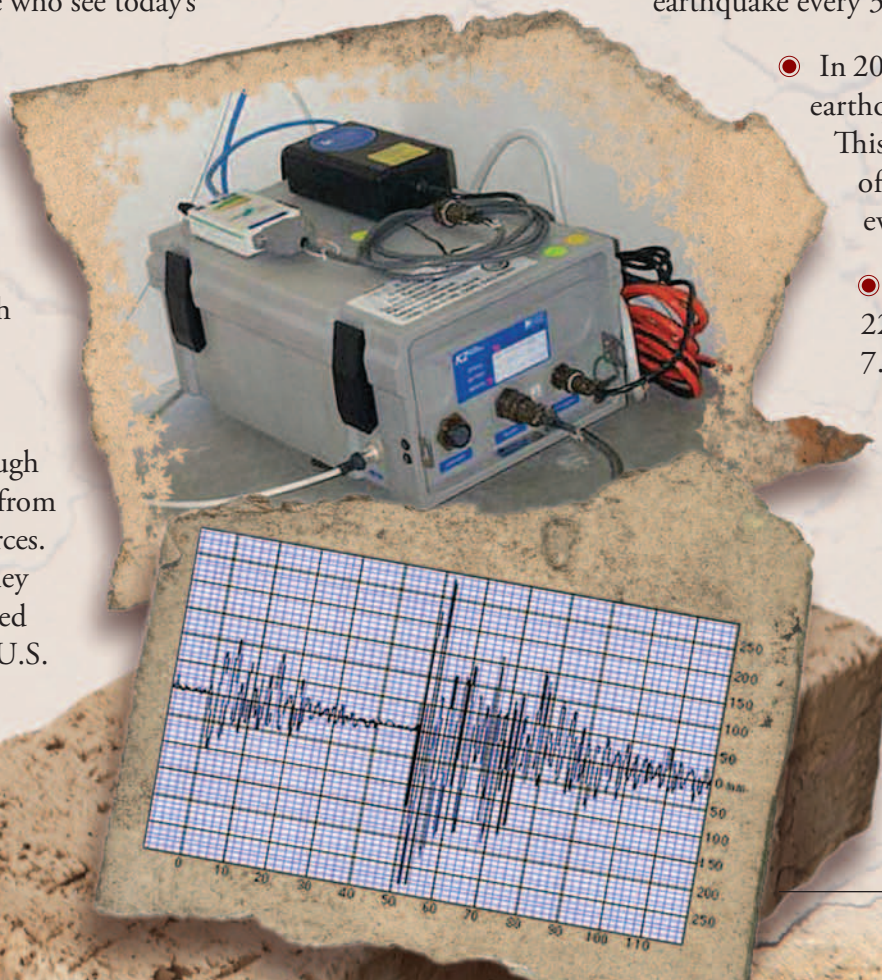
● From 2004 to 2007, there were 56 major earthquakes 7.0 or higher. This results in an average of one major earthquake every 25 days.

● In 2008, there were 12 major earthquakes 7.0 or higher. This results in an average of one major earthquake every 30 days.

● In 2009, there were 17 major earthquakes 7.0 or higher. This results in an average of one major earthquake every 20 days.

● In 2010, there were 22 major earthquakes 7.0 or higher. This results in an average of one major earthquake every 15 days.²

We now read the second published report from those who disagree. It emphasizes the average number of earthquakes per year, based on their intensity.



The USGS estimates that, since 1900, there have been an average of 18 major earthquakes (magnitude 7.0-7.9) and one great earthquake (magnitude 8.0 or greater) per year, and that this average has been relatively stable. In recent years, the number of major earthquakes per year has decreased, though this is probably a statistical fluctuation rather than a systematic trend. More detailed statistics on the size and frequency of earthquakes is available from the USGS.³

What is our personal belief concerning earthquakes as a sign from God? How do we reach the right conclusions? As we seek truth, it's important to know The Book of Mormon sheds amazing light on this subject, as it offers an additional perspective for earthquakes being a sign from God. It brings the sign of earthquakes into an extended arena of thought, reaching beyond conflicting conclusions based only on their frequency and intensity. It does so by simply adding a two-word phrase to describe the instant global awareness received from earthquakes as they actually happen. This descriptive phrase is "heard of." Mormon said "there shall also be *heard of* wars and rumors of wars, and earthquakes in divers places," so we see this phrase applies to other prophetic signs as well.

The prophet Daniel gave us a practical application to the phrase "heard of," when he said that in the last days knowledge would increase (Daniel 12:4 IV/KJV). We have certainly seen this come to pass with the increase of knowledge in technology allowing the signs to be "heard of" almost instantly. Some examples of modern technological advances include seismology, global communications, video and news outlets, where earthquakes are now detected, measured, and communicated instantly from places above and below the surface of the earth and

beneath the depths of the sea. Most of us recall first hearing about the earthquake in Japan almost immediately after it happened. Also, because of the increase in technological knowledge, volumes of real-time information continue to flood the world concerning every aspect of its cause and effect. From this perspective, we see prophetic signs like increased knowledge often identify and clarify other prophetic signs, such as earthquakes. Therefore, an increase in technical knowledge allows other prophetic signs in "divers" places to be instantly "heard of" throughout the world.

Most importantly, when we see and hear of prophetic signs, we must remember they always have purpose and are spiritually discerned. The Lord tells us to spiritually discern events and relate them to His word. He said: "and unto you it shall be given to know the signs of the times, and the signs of the coming of the Son of man" (D&C 68:1h RLDS) [D&C 68:11 LDS]. The promise to know the signs of the times is a gift from God.

Therefore, I believe earthquakes today are signs from God. I believe they are increasing in frequency and intensity. I believe the Lord is speaking to the nations of the earth through them. I believe the Lord has provided a way for His children to be instantly aware of them. I believe the Lord desires for all to hear His voice and respond.

Revelation from God, in whatever form it is given, always moves to open our mind for truth and carry the true conviction of belief into our heart. We then understand that prophetic signs are given so we may have faith on the Lord Jesus Christ and repent of our sins by changing our lives for Him. This conviction inspires us to participate more fully in the great and marvelous work before us. For those who truly believe, the admonition of the Lord calls us to have hope, be fearless, watch, pray always and be ready.

Yea, the prophecies of the holy prophets,
which are written, which leadeth them to *faith*
on the Lord, and unto *repentance*, which *faith and*
repentance bringeth a *change of heart* unto them;
(Helaman 5:96 RLDS)
[Helaman 15:7 LDS] (italics added)

1 <http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGEview&pageId=274689>

2 <http://www.wnd.com/index.php?fa=PAGE.view&pageId=274761>

3 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earthquake>

The Book of Mormon CHALLENGE

A Weekly Study by Chapter

Wherefore, I said unto you, Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do. Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye can not understand them, it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark.

(2 Nephi 14:4-5 RLDS) [2 Nephi 32:3-4 LDS]

We challenge all our readers to read The Book of Mormon each year and provide the following study guide. These scriptures are from the RLDS Book of Mormon. Cross references to other versions are available at The Book of Mormon Foundation Bookstore.

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- 46** 4 Nephi
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- 51** Moroni 1-7
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And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this strait and narrow path, I would ask, if all is done? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far, save it were by the word of Christ, with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save; Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.

(2 Nephi 13:27-30 RLDS) [2 Nephi 31:19-20 LDS]



Winter Retreat 2011

Lauren Smith

The Internship was an outward display of an inward commitment to devote my life to a closer walk with Jesus Christ. The Internship was not the grand finale of my spiritual walk, but rather a checkpoint along the way. I was able to learn plain and precious truths, and I was taught how to effectively answer the call of loving my brethren enough to share the restored gospel of the Book of Mormon with them. My life was completely transformed. Unfortunately, six wonderful weeks of daily classes, praying for others, and fasting with my fellow interns could not last forever. I had the choice to continue in new habits of studying and meeting often with others to fast and





pray for our souls and for other's needs (wonderful things I had practiced during the Internship), or to fall back into a busy life without those essential spiritual exercises taking place in my life daily. I tried to be strong, but I was not proactive in finding youth in my area who were excited enough to dedicate time each week to study. To use the analogy from Matthew, surely the seeds (the word of God) that had been planted in my heart during the Internship would not be choked by the thorns. "He also who received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word and he becometh unfruitful." (Matthew 13:20 IV) [Matthew 13:33 KJV] Would my desire to do well in school and gain riches come before my walk with Christ? Thankfully, these issues had already been taken care of through the training I received as an intern. The Internship program was a brace that showed me how I needed to be living my life. For six weeks, I had to live to a higher standard in the way I dressed, the way I used my time, and the way I sought truth and understanding. Once the Internship was done, I found myself wanting to slouch back into my old posture. I would say to the Lord, "You got to have control over my life for six weeks plus a few months following. That was fun right? Ok, now I want to take back the control over my life!" Each time, the Lord would place someone in my life who would remind me that God truly does know best, and He has asked me to be his bride as a member of His church. The day I was baptized, I accepted that proposal of marriage and become one with Him. This life is no longer about me—it is about being unified and working together with people who I do not agree with on everything. I learned in the Internship how important it is to put little differences aside and focus on what I do have in common with someone. The thing I have in common with every single person on this earth is we are both sinners and need to beg the Lord for mercy and, just as sure as we are sinners, we have a loving savior who gave up everything, so each of us could return to the presence of God. The months that followed the Internship have been some of the happiest and most fulfilled of my life. I still have a long way to go, and the more I try to

do, the greater realization I have that I am still at the beginning of a greater purpose. God continues to take me from where I am and propel me forward to even greater understanding of what I need to be doing in my life of service to Him and to others. As I met with the interns for a renewal at the Book of Mormon Retreat in January 2011, I realized it was through their continued support and prayers that I have been able to keep the Lord's desires at the forefront of my heart and mind. It reminded me of the discipline and dedication that we had exemplified as a group, and I was once again propelled into the race of life, remembering and recommitting my life to complete surrender and service to my Heavenly Father.

Lyndsay Ballantyne

After being a part of The Book of Mormon Foundation Internship, I walked away convinced of two things: (1) If we truly love God and His children, then we, as His saints, must bear our testimony to a world that does not know Him, and (2) When we really seek to share the gospel with those who would hear, the Lord will send His Spirit to be with us to enlighten our minds and give us the words to say.

I started my college courses again this past fall; I went with a great desire to be a better witness of the Lord than I had been in the past. I knew that starting as a new student in the dental hygiene program at UMKC would bring me many opportunities to do so.



I'd be with the same 28 students for two whole years, and I'd also be seeing patients for whom I could seek to bless and show love.

I thought for months after school began that, because I didn't talk with anyone about the Lord or my beliefs, that I must not seem any different from anyone else and therefore wasn't shining bright enough for Him. But, through just a few circumstances, God showed me there were those who did notice something different about me. Through my actions and the things I would or, in some cases, wouldn't say, I was also able to bear quiet witness of Him.

Some of those in my class have made mention of the fact that I don't curse or drink. They even apologize on occasion for using bad language around me. My favorite instance happened one day, when I was singing "Trust and Obey" to myself, and a lady in my class joined in with me when I reached the chorus. I got to learn about how she knows that song, what church she goes to, and I got to share just a little bit with her about my church. (This turned out to be more of a blessing for me, I think, because knowing that she loves the Lord as well, she is a source of strength for me at school.)

Of course, I don't have any way of knowing in what ways God will continue to work in the hearts of my classmates, but I feel He has already opened doors for me to be able to share His love with them. I pray that He might continue to use me as an instrument in His hands that even one may come to know and love Him and receive the joy I have experienced in my life.





Sarah Holmes

Before being a part of the Book of Mormon Internship, I didn't feel very comfortable at all sharing about God. I didn't feel comfortable sharing testimonies at church, and I definitely didn't feel comfortable talking to nonbelievers about Him. I knew this needed to change, and that is part of the reason I applied for the Internship. I knew that Book of Mormon interns are given many opportunities to share with other people, and I knew that it would help me reach out of my comfort zone and help me be a better witness. The Internship worked! Every time I gave a testimony during the Internship, it got easier, and I know God was using the Internship to help me overcome my fears and be able to be used by Him. I noticed this change in me also when I went back to college after the Internship. I joined a nondenominational Christian prayer/discussion group once I got back to school, and I have been able to share many of the experiences God has given me without the fear I once had. God also gave me the opportunity to talk with an atheist teacher about God. It felt really natural to talk with him about God! I am very thankful that God was able to use the Internship to help me become a better witness for Him. I've been so happy to be able to talk to people about Him, and I'm excited for future opportunities to hopefully help bring people closer to Him.



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