



THE WITNESS

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*“Ho, everyone that thirsteth,
come ye to the waters, and he that hath
no money; come ye, buy, and eat;
yea, come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.”*

The Gift

by Marlin Guin

Perhaps we remember those special moments where the Lord has taught us great things through the everyday experiences of life. As a teenager, one of these defining experiences was the gift of food and financial assistance to our family from the saints.

I was raised in a divorced home, where my father lived in another state and my mother's health would not allow her to work outside the home. Many times, I would hear her pleading with the Lord in prayer for the bare necessities needed for her family. The Lord always heard her prayers and provided for us. One way was through the love and generosity of the saints. Especially during the holidays, they would bring gifts to our home. Sometimes they would visit us and bring boxes of food. Sometimes Mom would find an envelope containing money in the mailbox with no return address. Sometimes she would find an envelope with money in her car after church, with no names listed. These were gifts of love that still remind me of God's greatest gift of love to us—the gift of His son, Jesus Christ.

Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. (Isaiah 55:1 IV/KJV) (2 Nephi 6:99 RLDS) [2 Nephi 9:50 LDS]

Life's experiences often provide us insight into things with far greater value. Each day, and especially this season, let us remember the gift of Jesus Christ as our Savior who came for us without money and without price. He is "the gift."

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23 IV/KJV)

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Zenos and the Parable of the Olive Tree

PART TWO by Verneil Simmons

Zenos's Parable of the Olive Tree

Nephi had made a second set of metal plates with those plain and precious parts of the prophecies used for the instruction of the people from generation to generation. On these Small Plates were recorded the words of the Nephite prophets, as well as prophecies taken from the Brass Plates. Following the death of Nephi, his younger brother Jacob, took charge of the Small Plates and continued to record the things he felt to be important for future generations. He gives us a glimpse of the work involved, when he tells us that he can write but few of the words he had been preaching to the people in the temple, because of the difficulty of engraving these words upon plates. Then he tells us why they considered it so important:

For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory, many hundred years before his coming, and not only we, ourselves, had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us. Behold, they believed in Christ, and worshipped the Father in his name; and also, we worship the Father in his name. (Jacob 3:4-5 RLDS) [Jacob 4:4-5 LDS]

So it is Jacob who labored to record on the Small Plates this most important parable dealing with the House of Israel, as found on the Brass Plates. We have to ask why, when they had the original account. He had access to the Brass Plates. Why did he make a copy of this parable on another record? Did he know the words of Zenos would be lost to the world?

We do know Jacob recognized that the parable dealt with a future time and would not be fulfilled in his day. It had to be on the Small Plates which became the first part of our Book of Mormon, because the culmination of the parable was to treat with our time. The parable is found in the book of Jacob and begins with the words of Zenos:

Hearken, O ye house of Israel, and hear the words of me, a prophet of the Lord: For behold, thus saith the Lord, I will liken thee, O house of Israel, like unto a tame olive tree, which a man took and nourished in his vineyard: and it grew, and waxed old, and began to decay. (Jacob 3:30-31 RLDS) [Jacob 5:1-3 LDS]



Due to the length of the parable, an attempt will be made to summarize the events by sections and to give an interpretation. In verses 32-36 we learn that the top of tree is dying, even though a few small, tender branches remain alive. The master of the vineyard does not wish to lose the tree, so the servant is sent to bring branches to be grafted in from a wild olive tree in place of the main branches which are to be cut out and cast into the fire. The House of Israel (the olive tree) was dying and the main branches were to be destroyed. The captivity of both the northern kingdom (Israel) and the southern kingdom (Judah) fulfilled this part of the parable. Assyria conquered the northern kingdom in 721 B.C. and scattered the people. Judah fell to Babylon in 586 B.C. Some of the people of Judah returned to Jerusalem from the latter captivity and they represent that portion of the tame olive tree in which the wild olive branches were to be grafted.

At this point we quote Apostle Paul. His letter to the Romans not only gives us a timeline for the parable, it also tells us that Paul was acquainted with the parable of Zenos and knew how to interpret it. Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles, but he cherished his heritage in the House of Israel:

For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.
(Romans 11:1 IV/KJV)

Paul identifies the Gentile Romans as the wild olive tree being grafted into the tame tree—the House of Israel:

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wast grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches, for thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. For if thou boast, thou wilt say, The branches were broken off, that we might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou

standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear; For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. For it thou wast cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And then all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
(Romans 11:17-26 IV/KJV)

In the above quotation, Paul identifies his period in history as the time of the grafting in of the wild olive branches. The Gentiles of his day who had accepted the gospel of Christ were grafted into the true olive tree, from which they were to be nourished. When they covenanted with Christ, they were then numbered with the House of Israel. Nephi supports this interpretation:

For behold, I say unto you, That as many of the Gentiles as will repent, are the covenant people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent, shall be cast off; For the Lord covenanteth with none, save it be with them that repent and believe in his Son, who is the Holy One of Israel. (2 Nephi 12:77-78 RLDS) [2 Nephi 30:2 LDS]

The grafting in of the wild branches to the original tree was accomplished when the New Testament church carried the gospel to the Gentile world of Greece, Rome and to the nations beyond.

The Hidden Branches

We return to the parable (Jacob 3) to learn what happened to the small, tender branches which were spared when the Lord of the vineyard decreed that the main branches were to be cut out and cast into the fire. Verses 37-49 refer to the servant who was

attending to the “grafting in” program while the Lord of the vineyard took the tender branches and hid them in various places in the “nethermost parts” of his vineyard. Verses 63-69 describe four of these plantings.

Some five hundred years before Christ’s birth, Nephi confirms the scattering of the House of Israel by the Lord’s design:

And behold there are many who are already lost from the knowledge of those who are at Jerusalem. Yea, the more part of all the tribes have been led away; And they are scattered to and fro upon the isles of the sea; And whither they are, none of us knoweth, save that we know that they have been led away. (1 Nephi 7:7-10 RLDS) [1 Nephi 22:4 LDS]

Nevertheless, we have been driven out of the land of our inheritance; but we have been led to a better land: For the Lord has made the sea our path, and we are upon an isle of the sea. But great are the promises of the Lord unto those who are upon the isles of the sea; Wherefore, as it says isles, there must needs be more than this; and they are inhabited also by our brethren. For behold, the Lord God has led away from time to time from the house of Israel, according to his will and pleasure. (2 Nephi 7:34-38 RLDS) [2 Nephi 10:20-22 LDS]

In the parable, a period of time passes; then the Lord of the vineyard, with his servant, visits the vineyard and finds that the wild branches grafted into the original tame tree have brought forth good fruit. The explanation given is that the strength of the root caused the wild branches to produce tame fruit. The fruit represents the souls of those brought into the covenant with the Lord, thus becoming heirs to the promises made to Abraham. In symbolism, we would see this as representing the early centuries of the New Testament church.

Then the Lord of the vineyard, with this servant, went to the nethermost part of the vineyard to visit those natural branches which had been planted in various places. Verses 58-72 tell of this visit. The servant questions why the Lord had planted two of these in such poor soil, but the Lord points out that both, plus a third planting, have brought forth good fruit. Only the last tree, which was planted in very good soil, had become a divided tree with both tame

and wild fruit. The servant is told to cut off the bad branches and burn them, but he pleads for more time in the hope that with pruning and nourishing it may yet produce good fruit.

Apparently, at least four separate groups taken from the House of Israel had been planted by the Lord in various parts of the world. Some of these could have been taken from the northern kingdom (Israel) at the time of the Assyrian conquest. Lehi’s family was led away just before Jerusalem fell to Babylon. If the divided tree refers to Lehi’s colony, then it could well have been the last planting. Of the two planted in poor ground one might have been located on the desert coast of Peru in South America. If a branch of the House of Israel was planted there, then we can account for the Incan legends of the visit of the “white god.” Christ told the Nephites that he had to go to all of the House of Israel after His resurrection, and that there were others like themselves far from Jerusalem. (3 Nephi 8:4; 7:15-26 RLDS) [3 Nephi 17:4, 15:14-16:3 LDS]

Christ’s personal ministry, by voice and person, was to be given only to the House of Israel. We do not know where all of these other remnants of the House of Israel were planted, but the Lord assured the people of Nephi that they were not lost to the Father. At that time, Christ also made another statement which has tremendous implications for the entire world:

They understood me not that the Gentiles should not at any time hear my voice; that I should not manifest myself unto them, save it were by the Holy Ghost. (3 Nephi 7:22 RLDS) [3 Nephi 15:23 LDS]

The Second Visit to the Vineyard

After a long time, the Lord of the vineyard and his servant came again into the vineyard to gather the fruit. Verses 72-100 describe what was found in the vineyard this time.

The grafted in branches of the wild olive tree no longer held tame fruit but were weighed down (cumbered) with all sorts of different fruit. The Lord of the vineyard tasted each kind and declared none to be good. Though the root of the tree was still alive, the branches had overrun the roots and had produced so much bad fruit that the tree was beginning to die.

If we see this as symbolic of the New Testament church, after the grafting in of the Gentiles, then we would point to the development of the various Catholic movements, followed by further divisions of the Protestant world. The fruit was certainly varied and the Lord of the vineyard called it evil fruit. An explanation was given to the Restoration church as to why the fruit was considered evil:

For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant; they seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, (D&C 1:3d-e RLDS) [D&C 1:15-16 LDS]

Next, the Master and servant go to visit the natural branches planted in the most distant parts of the vineyard. Again, they are disappointed. The fruit of the first, second, and last plantings are said to be corrupt; the third planting is not mentioned. This time there is no doubt about the identity of the last planting being the Nephite-Lamanite nation:

And behold, this last, whose branch hath withered away, I did plant in a good spot of ground; yea, even that which was choice unto me, above all the other parts of the land of my vineyard. And thou beheldest that I also cut down that which cumbered this spot of ground, that I might plant this tree in the stead thereof. (Jacob 3:93-94 RLDS) [Jacob 5:43-44 LDS]

This branch was planted in the choicest part of the vineyard and Lehi wrote that the land promised

to him was “choice above all other lands.” (1 Nephi 1:54 RLDS) [1 Nephi 2:20 LDS] Moreover, the Lord removed others from the land (the Jaredite nation) that this planting might be made in that area. The bad branch (Lamanites) of the tree, because it had not been cut out, had overcome the good branch (Nephite) until it had withered away. Now all the trees of this planting are like the wild olive tree and are of no worth but to be cut down and burned.

The Grafting Program

In verses 109 to 124, we find the solution that is finally proposed to save all the trees of the vineyard. The first suggestion had been to cut down all the trees and put them in the fire in order to clear the vineyard. But the servant asks that they be spared a little longer and the Master grants the servant’s request. Then the Lord of the vineyard suggests an unusual program of grafting that might save all the trees. This part of the parable is the most difficult to interpret because it treats with the end of the timeline (the latter days) and is that part which involves the Restoration church, as the seed of Joseph.

The grafting program is outlined in verses 112-117. The roots of the mother tree, as well as the roots of the natural branches planted in a far place, are alive and healthy. The plan calls for grafting the branches from the scattered trees back into the mother tree and to take branches from the mother tree to graft into the trees in the nethermost parts of the vineyard. All of these branches are now producing wild fruit, but the hope is that the roots will be strong enough to cause the grafted branches to bring forth tame fruit. In the process, the branches with the most bitter fruit are to be pruned out and the grafts put in their places. The hope is expressed that the natural branches, by drawing strength from the mother root of the natural or tame olive tree, will eventually produce good fruit, rather than evil fruit.

If we have a problem understanding the parable, so did Lehi’s sons. Either Lehi was familiar with the parable, or he had discovered it when searching the Brass Plates. He attempted to teach it to his family but the brothers asked Nephi what it meant:

Behold, we can not understand the words which our father hath spoken concerning the natural branches of the olive tree, and also concerning the Gentiles. (1 Nephi 4:8 RLDS) [1 Nephi 15:7 LDS]

Twice Nephi inscribes an explanation on the Small Plates—once the words of his father, and again, his own words. Lehi recognized that his people were one of the small, natural branches that were being broken off from the House of Israel to be planted in a far land. Then he defines the meaning of the final grafting in:

*After the Gentiles had received the fullness of the gospel, the natural branches of the olive tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in, or **come to the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer.** (1 Nephi 3:19 RLDS) [1 Nephi 10:14 LDS] (emphasis added) (see 16-19)*

Nephi's explanation to his brothers is more detailed and he gives a time frame for the grafting in. It will come in the latter days, many generations after Christ's first appearance, and generations after their own seed will have become unbelievers.

The fullness of the gospel will have gone to the Gentiles in that day and they will be held responsible for taking the gospel to these remnant branches of the House of Israel:

*Wherefore, they shall come to the **knowledge of their Redeemer**, and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved. Behold, I say unto you, Yea: they shall be remembered again among the house of Israel; They shall be grafted in, being a natural branch of the olive tree, into the true olive tree. (1 Nephi 4:19, 23-24 RLDS) [1 Nephi 15:14, 16 LDS] (emphasis added) (see 4:14-30)*

The grafting in is a restoration of all the House of Israel to a knowledge of Christ and the fullness of His gospel. The Gentiles, the wild branches producing bitter fruit, must recognize the root into which they are grafted is the House of Israel. The scattered remnants of the House of Israel must be restored to the knowledge of their heritage and recognize Christ as their Savior. In both cases,

the unproductive branches must be removed and destroyed, whether they be Israelite or Gentile. Since all this was reserved for fulfillment in the latter days, it is no wonder that Nephi's brothers had trouble understanding what this parable had to do with them.

The Latter Days

The whole climactic point of the parable is caught up in verses 118-125. The intent of the grafting program is that all of the trees shall eventually produce only tame fruit. The bitter branches shall be removed and destroyed:

And the Lord of the vineyard had preserved unto himself the natural fruit, which was most precious unto him from the beginning. (Jacob 3:144 RLDS) [Jacob 5:74 LDS]

But time is running out. Four times in verses 125-140, we are told that this is the last time He will visit His vineyard:

*Wherefore, let us go to, and labor with our mights, for **this last time**; for behold the end draweth nigh: and this is for the **last time** that I shall prune my vineyard. (Jacob 3:126 RLDS) [Jacob 5:62 LDS] (emphasis added)*

To implement the program, the Lord sent his servant to call other servants to assist but "they were few" (verse 136). The servants are sent out with certain instructions concerning the order of the grafting:

Graft in the branches; begin at the last, that they may be first, and that the first may be last, and dig about the trees, both old and young, the first and the last, and the last and the first, that all may be nourished once again for the last time. (Jacob 3:127 RLDS) [Jacob 5:63 LDS]

Nephi explains this passage to us when he writes of the time when Christ shall come into the world:

*And after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles; then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles, and also unto the Jews, **And the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.** (1 Nephi 3:199-200 RLDS) [1 Nephi 13:42 LDS] (emphasis added)*

Christ's ministry was first to the House of Israel, and then it was taken to the Gentiles. But in the latter days, His gospel is to be made manifest first to the Gentiles. The House of Israel will be the last to receive it. Thus the Jews, who were first, shall be last.

The parable ends with the assurance that all of the House of Israel will be restored. The final verses point to the long time when the Lord will enjoy the fruit of the vineyard (the Millennium), then comes the little season and the final judgment (verses 145-153).

Jacob ends his quotation of Zenos's parable with his own prophecy that all the words of Zenos will come to pass:

*And in the day that he shall set his hand again the second time to recover his people, is the day, yea, even **the last time**, that the servants of the Lord shall go forth in his power, to nourish and prune his vineyard; and after that, the end soon cometh. (Jacob 4:3 RLDS) [Jacob 6:2 LDS] (emphasis added)*

We are living in that time—the latter days when this prophecy is being fulfilled.

As has been shown, times for certain events described in the prophecy can be given. The destruction of the two kingdoms of Israel, the planting of a remnant of Joseph in a far land, the grafting in of the wild olive branches in the early centuries of the Christian era, and the changes in the new Testament church can all be traced on a historical timeline. Zenos, as well as Nephi and other Book of Mormon prophets, has said that the restoration of the House of Israel can only be accomplished in the latter days.

The restoration of the Church and the gospel, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, began the period of the latter days when the words of Zenos can be fulfilled. We have positive evidence that we are now in the period which the Lord of the vineyard designated as the “last time” He would visit His vineyard. The following quotations are from revelations given to Joseph Smith in 1830 and 1831:

*For, behold, the field is white already to harvest; and it is the eleventh hour, and for the **last time** that I shall call laborers into my vineyard. (D&C 32:1d RLDS) [D&C 33:3 LDS] (emphasis added)*

*Wherefore lay to with thy might and call faithful laborers into my vineyard, that it may be pruned for the **last time**. (D&C 39:5a RLDS) [D&C 39:17 LDS] (emphasis added)*

*Wherefore, labor ye, labor ye in my vineyard for **the last time**... and my people shall be redeemed and shall reign with me on earth; (D&C 43:7a, b RLDS) [D&C 43:29 LDS] (emphasis added)*

The grafting in program as prophesied by Zenos, which is designed to bring about the restoration of all the House of Israel, must be accomplished by the Church which was restored in 1830.

Part Three will be continued in The Witness, Spring 2014 #149.

*Zenos and the Parable of the Olive Tree
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Remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation. . . . a foundation whereon if men build, they can not fall.
— Helaman 2:74-75

THE BOOK OF MORMON FOUNDATION



And behold, there shall be a new star arise, such an one as ye never have beheld... Helaman 5:59

I give unto men weakness, that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them.

(Ether 5:28 RLDS)

[Ether 12:27 LDS]

THE SHACK

by Sue Manning

When I was in first grade, I was in line with my class to go to lunch. I was standing toward the front of the line, close to my teacher. She pointed out to me that I needed to tie my shoe. I panicked. I didn't want everyone to know that I didn't know how to tie my shoes, but I knew I had to do something before my teacher said something again. I stepped out of line and realized an answer to my dilemma. I squatted down as if to tie my shoe and waited for the end of the line. As the last few students passed by me, I called out for Cheryl. I knew Cheryl could tie her shoes, and I knew she wouldn't make fun of me for not knowing how to tie my own.

Cheryl rode my bus. She was the last one on in the morning and the first one off in the afternoon. I saw Cheryl's house twice a day on school days. It was a small, unpainted, wooden structure sitting on blocks. The house sat on a small low-lying dirt plot of ground that filled with water when it rained. No grass grew there. There were about three steps going up to the small porch. In the afternoons, Cheryl's younger brothers and sisters would be playing there, waiting for the school bus to come by.

There was never a wreath on the door, no potted plants in pretty containers on the porch, nor colorful

curtains hanging in the windows. It was small and dull. I would watch Cheryl jump and dodge deep puddles on rainy afternoons. Even though I thought a water-filled front yard might be fun, I knew Cheryl's house and yard was a humble place.

Cheryl had about three dresses that she rotated for school. She wore once-white tennis shoes that were worn and frayed. There were no new clothes and shoes for the first day of school. Cheryl wore the same things all year long. She had a thin sweater that she wore on the coolest of days. Her hair was never curled with a nice pink bow for school pictures. She looked the same every day, plain and never fancy.

It was Cheryl, though, who I chose to tie my shoes. I knew Cheryl would not tease me, but would help me. I knew Cheryl would be quick and not make a scene. As I called out for her, she came, quietly tied my shoe, and we went to lunch. It turned out exactly as I expected. I was not the least bit intimidated asking for help from someone who lived in a shack.

Eventually, Cheryl's shack was torn down, and I lost contact with her. I still remember her and her home like it was yesterday. It was very impressionable to a first grader.

In these last days, we see many people who live in shacks, either physical or spiritual. There are many problems and ills in our society. Just when we think it can't get any worse, it does. The Book of Mormon is full of stories of a wicked society who loved their possessions and power more than God. Evil reigned, and prophets forecasted their destruction unless they humbled themselves and repented. One would think that in the meridian of time, God would send Jesus in a flaming chariot to pour out his wrath on the evil-doers and start over. Instead, He sent his son as a babe born to humble parents in the least likely place for a king—a stable; just a shack to keep the rain off the animals. Why would the King of Kings come to us in such a humble place? Would it be because broken people would be hesitant, at best, to approach a fine palace to meet the King; when they, themselves, are in shack condition? People with broken hearts, bruised souls, shameful secrets and disgraceful pasts would feel intimidated by a beautiful palace. A hand-hewn, white marble floor would not be the place we would want to

unload our filthy sins and shameful secrets. It would be more comfortable to enter into a humble place if you are broken and burdened with sin or weighed down with issues from the past, whether it is your fault or not. It would be less overwhelming to enter a shack to get to know someone better. He came to meet us where we are.

In this Christmas season, look past the shiny ornaments, tinsel and lights to a rustic little structure to find a true friend, a baby lying in a manger, who grows up to sacrifice His life for yours. Jesus, who gives us a firm foundation on which to build, that will not collapse under us when the broken world around is collapsing; the One who gives us a safe place when our past tries to defeat us. He invites you to the shack.



And behold, he shall be born of Mary at Jerusalem, which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed, and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God; And he shall go forth, suffering pains, and afflictions, and temptations of every kind; And this that the word might be fulfilled which saith, He will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people; and he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people: And he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities. Now the Spirit knoweth all things; nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh, that he might take upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions, according to the power of his deliverance; and now behold, this is the testimony which is in me. (Alma 5:19-23 RLDS) [Alma 7:10-13 LDS]

Another Witness

The Book of Mormon provides an added witness of the divinity of Jesus Christ and grows together with the Bible in proclaiming that testimony. Recently, there was a program on the History Channel, Bible Secrets Revealed, where “religious scholars” from several famous institutions of higher learning, were speaking of their conclusions concerning the translation of the bible from its original text. Their conclusion was the word “virgin” was translated incorrectly and that Mary was not really a virgin.

The Book of Mormon witness refutes this as false doctrine and clearly supports the Biblical account of the birth of Jesus. It testifies that, in the last days, its added witness will be of great worth in putting down contentions and false doctrine. We are seeing this prophecy fulfilled before our eyes.

Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write;

And that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together, Unto the confounding of false doctrines, and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, And bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter days; And also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord. (2 Nephi 2:19 – 23 RLDS) [2 Nephi 3:12 LDS]

And I beheld the city of Nazareth: and in the city of Nazareth I beheld a virgin, and she was exceedingly fair and white. And I said unto him, A virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other virgins. And he said unto me, Behold, the virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh. And I looked and beheld the virgin again, bearing a child in her arms. (1 Nephi 3:53, 55, 58, 61 RLDS) [1 Nephi 11:13, 15, 18, 20 LDS]

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (2 Nephi 9:27 RLDS) [2 Nephi 17:14 LDS]

And behold, he shall be born of Mary at Jerusalem, which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed, and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God; (Alma 5:19 RLDS) [Alma 7:10 LDS]

SANTA CALI GON 2013

Trust In God and He Will Provide

by Stephen Henson

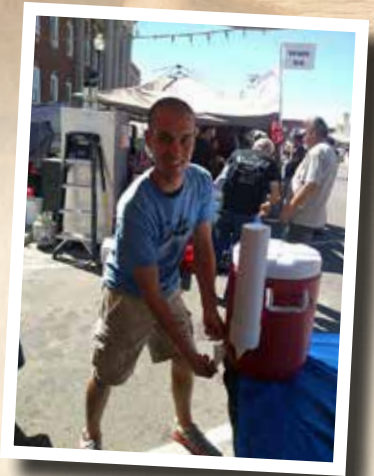
My brother, Kelvin, and I directed the Book of Mormon Foundation booth at Santa Cali Gon Days this past Labor Day weekend. It was an incredible blessing! At first, I wasn't sure I wanted to work more than a shift or two, but then I thought about how God has blessed me so much and answered my prayers so many times. I decided I should give back to my Heavenly Father by helping Kelvin direct the booth. I am glad I made that decision because good things and testimonies came from it.



We had a couple of meetings at the Book of Mormon Foundation, where we were given some details on what we would need to do in preparation to run the booth; such as getting volunteers, setting up, filling time slots, and several other things.

I wasn't really looking forward to all we had to do and wondered how we would take care of everything. Once again, the thoughts came to me about how God has answered my prayers so many times and how I have heard in so many sermons recently to trust in God, and He will provide. He has strengthened my faith through these answered prayers and given me testimonies. I felt that if I just prayed for the Lord's help, trusted in Him, and didn't worry, that everything involved with the booth would work out smoothly. That's exactly what happened! Everything leading up to the booth and the whole weekend itself went very well. We were able to get plenty of volunteers to fill all the time slots for the weekend and everything went smoothly with setting up the night before.

Over the weekend, we gave away many jugs of water, had many edifying conversations about the Book of Mormon and Jesus Christ, and gave away over 125 copies of the Book of Mormon!!



We answered questions people had about Jesus Christ and The Book of Mormon. I talked with a man who is already a Book of Mormon believer. We talked for almost an hour. I had never even met him before! He had many good things to say about the Scriptures.

We received another testimony on Sunday morning. Kelvin and I arrived at The Book of Mormon Foundation that morning and heard some booths had been damaged from a storm the night before. We walked through part of the festival to get to our booth and saw many damaged booths and tents. A couple of them were completely destroyed. Our booth was also damaged. It had been moved about eight feet from where it was originally. Tables and chairs had been moved, and everything was wet. Kelvin and I moved the tent back to where it was supposed to be, and got all the tables, chairs, tracts, and books back in their places. God blessed us and we were able to continue the booth without any problems! We had several volunteers who helped us take it down and pack it away on Monday.

It was a blessing to be able to work at the Book of Mormon booth and witness. I want to thank all the volunteers who helped us in so many ways. I also want to give thanks and praise to our Heavenly Father for helping us through everything involving the booth and to His Son Jesus Christ for being our savior. In everything you do, pray for help from God and trust in Him and He will provide!

A DEEP AND LASTING IMPACT

by Greg Thomas

As I write, our youngest son is excitedly counting down the months until he will apply to be a Book of Mormon Foundation intern. The fourth in a competitive line of siblings, Abram is not about to miss out on this opportunity. He hopes to follow in the footsteps of the others: Ammon (2007), Aaron (2011), and AnaMaría (2013).

This thrills my soul! Few programs make such a deep and lasting impact on the lives of our youth as the Book of Mormon Foundation Internship. I find this especially significant for youth living outside the Kansas City area.

Over the years, the Foundation has forged the perfect mix of isolated Saints' attributes (just happy to see other Book of Mormon believers) with the close-knit fellowship and support of good-sized, active youth groups. This important mix of attributes is not just for the interns. I see it as the total embodiment of how we will approach each other in Zion. Moses recorded God's words concerning this, *And the Lord said unto Enoch, Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there; and we will receive them into our bosom; and they shall see us, and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other. (Genesis 7:71 IV)* Somehow, the overwhelming majority of interns embrace and forge this concept of Zion's love into their very beings. Not surprisingly, they are as anxious to see each other again whether they have been apart a day, a month, or a year.

I grew up being taught, "Family is the basic building block of Zion, followed by branches, districts, stakes, regions, etc." Having watched three sets of interns, I amend that teaching to include the Book of Mormon Foundation Internship as one of the foundational building blocks. Without question, the Internship positively impacts their family unit while they are youth. We are also seeing the positive influence the Foundation is having on the interns, as many are now raising their own families.

Nearly all effective ministry recorded in scripture has some kind of positive influence in common—usually a singular life-changing experience: Enoch walked, talked, and covenanted with God; Moses saw the burning bush; Saul had an experience on the road to Damascus; Alma,

the younger was struck down; Joseph Smith had an experience in the grove.

Although youth accepted into the Internship are already some of our most dedicated, this six-week intensive program provides the backdrop for many such watershed experiences.

While the interns are the primary beneficiaries, the leadership, education, communication, and team building skills they learn are enhancing the missionary efforts and worship of branches around the world.

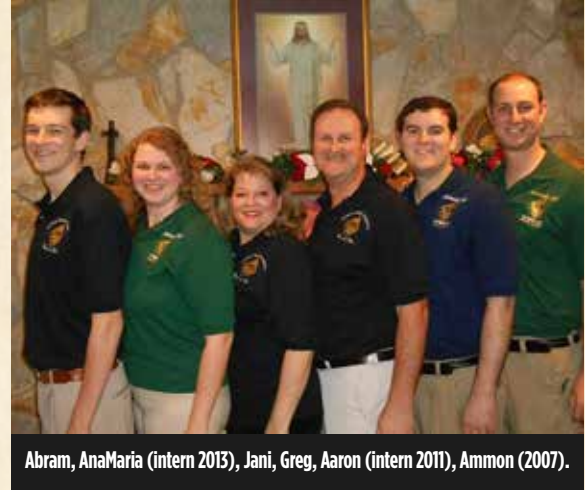
In our family's "world," Ammon and Aaron have both served as branch president and eagerly respond to the needs of those Saints in our surrounding area (about a 350-mile radius). AnaMaría actively serves in the branch and is instrumental in the success of our youth group. Vibrant, testimony-filled youth are critical to bringing others to know Jesus and in growing our branches.

The positive impact extends well beyond the local branch level. The trust, love and desire to serve God side-by-side, fostered by the work of the Book of Mormon Foundation Internship program, is perhaps the best example today of people actively working together on Zion's principles.

The Foundation internship unites youth from different locales, different religious backgrounds, and with varying skill sets into cohesive teams, which provide ministry and make a difference in the world around them.

Enoch similarly laid the groundwork for these same foundational principles as he taught the people God's law and His ways, enabling them to effectively work and live together, despite varying talents, skills, and backgrounds.

We look forward to joining the Book of Mormon Foundation interns, who are on the forefront of living by these principles.



Abram, AnaMaría (intern 2013), Jani, Greg, Aaron (intern 2011), Ammon (2007).

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

2014

The first summer internship program was established in 1992. The goal of the Internship is to provide an environment for older youth to gain a greater understanding of The Book of Mormon, their responsibility to the remnant people, and the central focus that Jesus Christ should have in their lives. They also have an opportunity to develop leadership and witnessing skills.

The Internship is a rigorous six-week program which includes Book of Mormon related classes, worship, prayer and fasting, service, travel, and witnessing to both young and old. Add to this commitment a dose of daily laughter and concern for one another, and what develops is a lifelong bond of friendship.

The intern program includes high school graduates between the ages of 19 and 24 who

have been out of high school for at least one year. The internship requires acceptance through an application and interview process.



APPLICATIONS

- Deadline: February 8, 2014
Available online at www.bmfinternship.org or call the Foundation at 816-461-3722

INTERVIEWS

- February 22, 2014
at the Book of Mormon Foundation

WHO'S ELIGIBLE

- 19-24 years old
(and at least one year out of high school)

BOOK OF MORMON RETREAT JANUARY 24-26, 2014

Arrive 6:30pm Friday / Leave Noon on Sunday – Odessa Hills Campground



The retreat is a great opportunity for those interesting in meeting new people, making friends, and learning about The Book of Mormon. Come get away for a weekend of laughter, learning and fun!

You should bring Scriptures, bedding for twin size bunk,

personal hygiene items, flash light, casual clothing, coat, hat & gloves, and a friend interested in finding out more about The Book of Mormon! Usage of iPods, cell phones and similar items will be limited to the cabins.

Retreat Directors:

Mike and Julie Fleming
(816) 461-3722

bmfinternship@gmail.com

bmfinternship.org

Sponsored by The Book of Mormon Foundation

This retreat is for ages 18-24. Early bird registration is \$35 through January 18th. Late Registration accepted online through January 21st. Walk-in registration is available for \$45.

2013 Interns Continue to Offer Ministry

Stephen Gould

I want to thank all the 2013 interns for visiting last weekend. We were so honored to get to know each of you a little better and to have you in our home/barn (sorry, men). I thought I would pass along some comments that I heard from the Amish families, where you sang at their homes. One lady said that you were such an inspiration to their children. She said she and her children continued to sing late into the night after you left. She told me that some of her children really

hadn't been singing with their whole hearts but, after hearing your example, they really opened up and sang to the Lord with everything they had. I also heard several comments that your voices blended together like you were meant to sing together. Another Amish mother said that the men were an example to her sons who seemed to think that working was for men and singing was for women. I was also told that, if you ever come again, to give them more advanced notice so they can gather all their married children to their home to hear you also. Just thought you would like to know!

Jared Gould

Well, you all were a big hit here in Seymour! We loved having you here and I believe you touched a lot of people's hearts this weekend. I have never seen Sam Graber so close to tears. Thanks so much for taking time from your lives to come, and you are all welcome back any time.



The Book of Mormon Foundation
210 West White Oak
Independence, MO 64050

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OPEN HOUSE



On November 10th, The Book of Mormon Foundation, in partnership with Quetzal Archaeology Center, hosted an open house at the Foundation in Independence. The interest and response was uplifting when around 100 attended this event. There were several interesting and informative displays, including about 30 Books of Mormon, with several in foreign languages, such as

Hawaiian (courtesy of Louise Gregson), Russian, Italian, Chinese, Nepali, and others; exhibits of Bob Farley's artwork, Mesoamerican artifacts and photos of Book of Mormon manuscripts. Shirley Heater shared her testimony of The Book of Mormon and how the Lord led her to study not only archaeology, geography, and manuscripts and editions, but that the most precious and primary message of the book is Jesus Christ.

