

# The Witness

Published Quarterly  
by The Book of  
Mormon Foundation  
Number 111 • Summer 2004

## Proclaim the good news of the kingdom

by Chet Reynolds

*“And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost; And if they endure unto the end, they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb;”*

*And whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.”*

1 Nephi 3:187-189 RLDS, 1 Nephi 13:37 LDS

**T**he last thing Jesus said to His disciples in Jerusalem was that they were to go into all the world and preach the gospel. **“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world. Amen.”** Matthew 28:17-19 IV, Matthew 28:18-20 KJV. Also read Mark 16:14-19 IV, Mark 16:15-18 KJV.

If gospel means good news, what did Jesus mean when He used the word gospel? Jesus often taught in parables to represent spiritual truths through physical stories. In the New Testament, He used parables so only those spiritually in tune with Him would understand the significance of His teachings. Read Matthew 13:8-15 IV, Matthew 13:10-16 KJV: **“Then the disciples came and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of**

*Continued on page 2*

## Awake, arise, shake off and put on

by Gary R. Whiting

**“Awake, my sons!  
Put on the armor of righteousness;**

**Shake off the chains with which ye  
are bound and come forth out of  
obscurity and arise from the dust”**

2 Nephi 1:38-39 RLDS, 2 Nephi 1:23 LDS

**L**ehi's love for his sons was demonstrated by his response to their rebellion. Even in the midst of their disobedience, Lehi maintained hope for their repentance and salvation. Soon after the travelers arrived in the Land of Promise, Lehi gathered the group around him to give his last formal instructions to them and offer fatherly or patriarchal blessings. This series of instructions to his children and their families is included in the opening chapter of 2 Nephi. His words to Laman and Lemuel contain important guidance to us all on the spiritual journey out of sin and into the paths of righteousness.

Lehi then addressed his eldest sons and, speaking directly and plainly, pointed out their rebellion and sin during the journey. He prefaced his remarks to them with a tender, earnest plea to repent and enter the way of the Lord. This, he said, was necessary to avoid the judgment of God and their ultimate destruction. Lehi's plea to his sons is found in 2 Nephi 1:26-54 RLDS, 2 Nephi 1:12-29 LDS. In these verses, Lehi used four key words to describe the path to obtain the blessings of God. These words are **awake, arise, shake off and put on.**

## Awake

Paul wrote, **“Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God”** (Romans 10:16 IV, Romans 10:17 KJV). Lehi pled with his sons to give heed to his words. Later, Alma asked the Zoramites to give place to the word of God (Alma 16:152, 153 RLDS, Alma 32:28 LDS). This is the process of awakening.

Laman and Lemuel were asleep in their sins. They were shutting them-

*Continued on page 3*

### Inside:

**The Book  
of Ether:  
Nephites'  
Book of Mormon**  
page 5

**Book of Mormon  
Day for Kids**  
page 6

**Remembrances  
of Florida Retreat  
2004**  
page 7

**2004 Interns**  
page 8



## The good news of the kingdom

*Continued from page 1*

heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever receiveth, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; But whosoever continueth not to receive, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they, seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; nei-

stand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. And blessed are you because these things are come unto you, that you might understand them.” See also Matthew 21:34 IV. Most of the parables start with “the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto.” When Jesus talked about the gospel, He meant the “good news” of the kingdom.

After Jesus was driven out of Nazareth, He went down to

Luke 4:28-31 IV. He preached and did many great miracles insomuch that the people wanted Him to stay with them as recorded in Luke 4:42 IV. “And when it was day, he departed and went into a solitary place; and the people sought him, and came unto him, and desired him that he should not depart from them.” His response is stated in Luke 4:43 IV. “But he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent.” Jesus’ reply to Phillip in John 14:11 IV shows the emphasis that He placed on this work. “Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works’ sake.”

The kingdom has been emphasized from the beginning of the Restoration. There are well over 100 references to the kingdom in the Doctrine and Covenants. The Church of Jesus Christ has been called forth in these latter days to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom and its King. The question is, how do we go about fulfilling that call?

Enos, in describing his conversion experience while hunting beasts in the forest, gives a simple, yet powerful, three-phase process for the Saints to follow (Enos 1:1-18 RLDS, Enos 1:1-12 LDS).

### Phase 1

**Repent and come unto Christ with fullness of faith. Enos 1:1-11 RLDS, Enos 1:1-8 LDS**

Enos approached God in mighty prayer and supplication for his soul. He received forgiveness for his sins because of his faith in Christ. “And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication, for mine own soul; And all the day long did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came, I did still raise my voice high, that it reached the heavens. And there came a voice unto me saying, Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed. And I, Enos, knew that God could not lie; wherefore, my guilt was swept away. And I said, Lord, how is it done? And he said unto me, because

### Book of Mormon scriptures referring to the kingdom of God

1 Nephi 3:187-189 RLDS, 1 Nephi 13:37 LDS  
1 Nephi 4:52-63 RLDS, 1 Nephi 15:32-36 LDS  
2 Nephi 6:41-48 RLDS, 2 Nephi 9:17-23 LDS  
2 Nephi 13:29-32 RLDS, 2 Nephi 31:20-21 LDS  
Jacob 1:5-7 RLDS, Jacob 1:5-7 LDS  
Jacob 2:14-24 RLDS, Jacob 2:12-19 LDS  
Mosiah 8:40-44 RLDS, Mosiah 15:10-12 LDS  
Mosiah 9:33-67 RLDS, Mosiah 18:5-30 LDS  
Mosiah 11:178-188 RLDS, Mosiah 27:18-26 LDS  
Alma 5:17-43 RLDS, Alma 7:9-26 LDS  
Helaman 2:21-26 RLDS, Helaman 3:23-29 LDS  
3 Nephi 4:26-53 RLDS, 3 Nephi 9:2-10:1  
3 Nephi 5:29-91 RLDS, 3 Nephi 11:28-12:46 LDS  
3 Nephi 6:1-37 RLDS, 3 Nephi 13:25-14:26 LDS  
3 Nephi 12:29-35 RLDS, 3 Nephi 27:16-21 LDS  
4 Nephi 1:17-21 RLDS, 4 Nephi 1:15-18 LDS  
Mormon 3:24-30 RLDS, Mormon 7:1-8 LDS  
Ether 1:115?2:5 RLDS, Ether 4:18-5:6 LDS  
Moroni 9:6 RLDS, Moroni 9:6 LDS  
Moroni 10:13-31 RLDS, Moroni 10:18-34 LDS

ther do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias concerning them, which saith, By hearing, ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see and shall not perceive. For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should under-

Capernaum. “And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way, And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath days.”



of thy faith in Christ, whom thou hast never before heard nor seen.” Enos 1:5-10 RLDS, Enos 1:4-8 LDS.

See Moroni 10:27-30 RLDS, Moroni 10:30-34 LDS and Alma 3:27-31 RLDS, Alma 5:14-15 LDS.

## Phase 2

### Shift focus from self to concern for and strengthening of those in the fellowship.

Immediately after Enos had the assurance that he was forgiven, his concern shifted from himself to his brethren, the Nephites, “Now, it came to pass that when I had heard these words, I began to feel a desire for the welfare of my brethren, the Nephites; wherefore, I did pour out my whole soul unto God for them.” Enos 1:12 RLDS, Enos 1:9 LDS.

At the waters of Mormon, Alma, in some of the most beautiful language of the scriptures, describes the lifestyle of those who desire to be citizens of the kingdom of God (Mosiah 9:33-55 RLDS, Mosiah 18:5-22 LDS). Also See Jacob 2:14-29 RLDS, Jacob 2:12-22 LDS.

## Phase 3

### Take the gospel to those who do not know Jesus Christ and His kingdom.

After God spoke to Enos concerning the Nephites, he directed his concern to the Lamanites, “And while I was thus struggling in the spirit, behold, the voice of the Lord came unto my mind again, saying, I will visit thy brethren, according to their diligence in keeping my commandments. I have given unto them this land; and it is a holy land; and I curse it not, save it be for the cause of iniquity; Wherefore, I will visit thy brethren; according as I have said; and their transgressions will I bring down with sorrow upon their own heads. And after I, Enos, had heard these words, my faith began to be unshaken in the Lord; and I prayed unto him with many long strugglings for my brethren, the Lamanites.” Enos 1:13-17 RLDS, Enos 1:10-11 LDS.

See Alma 7, 8, and 16 RLDS, Alma 9, 10, and 30 LDS; Helaman 2:21-26 RLDS, Helaman 3:23-29 LDS.

Also see the conversion of Alma’s son and the sons of Mosiah to see the entire process in action (Mosiah 11:97-207 RLDS, Mosiah 25:19 through Mosiah 27:37 LDS).

This process is not all-inclusive. Neither is one phase independent of the other phases — they are inseparably connected. For example, we cannot repent and come unto Christ unless we are concerned for and desire to serve our brothers and sisters. “And it came to pass that he said unto them, Behold, here are the waters of Mormon; for thus were they called. And now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light; Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times, and in all things, and in all

places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life: Now I say unto you, If this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you? And now when the people had heard these words, they clapped their hands for joy, and exclaimed, This is the desire of our hearts.” Mosiah 9:38-42 RLDS, Mosiah 18:8-11 LDS. However, we cannot focus on the fellowship of the saints without desiring to share the gospel with those who are lost without the testimony of Jesus and His kingdom (Genesis 7:35-48 IV). As we share the good news, many will repent and come unto Christ and become a part of the process of kingdom building.

There are numerous references to the kingdom in the scriptures. I have referenced a small number to emphasize the great work in which we are engaged and the enormous task which God calls us to accomplish.

As those of us in the Restoration respond more fully to the call of Jesus Christ, we will strengthen our brothers and sisters so others will want to “come and see” the marvelous work and wonder that is taking place. Then, and only then, will we be endowed with a fullness of the Holy Spirit and sanctified unto the “high calling of God in Jesus Christ.” †

---

## Awake, Arise

*Continued from page 1*

selves off from the word of God. It is much like a person who is very tired and in a deep sleep. To awaken, such a person may require a loud voice and a little shaking. Lehi told his sons they must awaken to the reality of their situation. They were in danger, and they must wake up.

Moroni issued a similar warning to the Gentiles of the latter days regarding secret combinations (Ether 3:98 RLDS, Ether 8:24 LDS).

The first stage of life-changing repentance is initiated in us by the effects of the word of God. The word of God is the voice of warning. God so loved the world that he gave his Son. Jesus is the word of God, so John 3:16 can also be written that God so loved the world that he gave his word. The Holy Spirit is the witness of truth. Hence he testifies of the Father and the Son. The Father speaks truth, and the Son is that truth. Truth is defined in Section 90 of the Doctrine and Covenants (RLDS, Section 93 LDS) as “**truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come; and whatsoever is more or less than this, is the spirit of that wicked one, who was a liar from the beginning**” (Section 90:4b RLDS, Section 93:24-25 LDS).

To awaken is to believe the word of God which testifies that every person is in danger of destruction unless he or she comes to Christ. Jesus Christ is the salvation for all who come to him. Sin dulls the ears, blinds the eyes and induces the sleep of death in us. The word of God has come into the world to awaken us to the realities of sin and call us to life eternal.



## Arise

As a parent, I often had to wake up my children in the morning so they would be ready for school or church. Very often, it would take several efforts to get them up. It was relatively easy to awaken them, but unless they got out of bed, they easily fell back asleep.

So it was with Lehi and his sons. Laman and Lemuel had many awakenings to the power and utility of the word of God. They saw angels, miracles and judgments from the hand of God, yet they would not change their lives. Thus far, they refused to arise from the place of sleep. Lehi pled with them to awake and arise.

Sleepwalking can occur spiritually. A true awakening involves a determined mind and heart, actively engaged in the service of God.

## Shake Off

Lehi's counsel to his sons began with counsel to give heed to the word of God and begin the process of renewal by rising up out of the place of death's sleep. Arising is in preparation for activity or work of some kind. Lehi told Laman and Lemuel that there must be a change of allegiance and activity once they had become aroused by the call of Jesus Christ.

Just as it is improper for a worker to show up at the workplace in his or her pajamas, it is not possible for us to enter the kingdom of God dressed in the chains of sin or the garments of our unrighteousness. To put on the armor of righteousness, we must first shake off the corrupt garments of the world and sin. "Save yourselves from this untoward generation, and come forth out of the fire, hating even the garments spotted with the flesh" (Section 35:2b RLDS, Section 36:6 LDS). This process of changing clothes is more than simply cleaning up; it is the very process of entering into the relationship of a covenant with our Savior.

Lehi's instruction to shake off the chains that bound them was a call to continue the process of repentance that begins with awakening and arising. It is also the call to come and follow Jesus. Casting off the chains of sin and the filthy rags of our self-righteousness anticipates the reception of a new garment and depends upon a Savior who is able to deliver us.

It is one thing to desire to change and quite another to have the power to do so. Mormon wrote, "Be wise in the days of your probation; strip yourselves of all uncleanness" (Mormon 4:94 RLDS, Mormon 9:28 LDS). We can begin the process, but it requires One with the strength to finish in order for us to be successful and finally clean. The only way to gain this power is to covenant with our God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

## Put On

Lehi recognized that the effort of any person is not sufficient for salvation and cleansing. Once a soul calls on Christ and seeks to be freed from the chains of death, the filthy rags of self-righteousness and the garments spotted with the flesh, he must recognize that self-will or desire cannot deliver

oneself. Neither can one gain entrance to the kingdom of God, except it be through the intervention of God.

The putting on is the reception of the gifts of God as displayed in the blessings of and fellowship with God. As part of the covenant with God, we exchange our spotted, filthy rags in order to receive the white robe of righteousness of the saints. This garment is also known as the wedding garment (Matthew 22:12 IV).

The shaking off is portrayed in temporal terms through our confession and public acknowledgment of faith in Jesus Christ. Its finality is portrayed in baptism. The water represents the final shaking off, and in the baptism of the Holy Spirit is seen the putting on of the robes of righteousness.

The putting on is variously described in scripture. Paul twice enjoins us to "put on Christ." He also wrote that as Christians, we have "put on the new man" (Colossians 3:10 IV). The new man is a renewed and regenerated man, raised from death through the atonement of Christ and quickened by the life of Christ. As those who have been made new, we are to act new, and all of these new acts are summed up by the Apostle as the putting on of charity (Colossians 3:14 IV).

## Christ's Acts

Jesus Christ's ministry parallels the responses that Lehi desired his sons to perform. Lehi was calling his sons to react to the crisis of sin in their lives. Time was short, and something had to be done if they were to avoid the inevitable death of the sinner. Prepared from the foundation of the world, Jesus saw the crisis of sin that was to doom all mankind. To answer this need, Jesus himself, as the promised word of God's salvation from sin, arose. Isaiah wrote of this, "he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation" (Isaiah 59:16 IV). Jesus arose to activity and laid aside his glory and the trappings of heaven to "put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak" (Isaiah 59:17 IV).

In addition to his garments of righteousness, Christ also put on all the things we cast off. Sin had to be judged and had to be judged in a person. As the intercessor for us, he came not only to break the bands of sin, but to be our scapegoat for sin. Thus, he had to put on our sins and transgressions (Alma 5:20-23 RLDS, Alma 7:11-13 LDS).

## Summary

These efforts are responses to the ministry of God to us through Jesus Christ. They are reactions of righteousness, or rather the work of righteousness in us that we may be delivered. The soul, which desires the salvation which delivers from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, awakens at the sound of God's voice, arises to search for and follow God, shakes off the sleep of death and its chains and puts on the robes of righteousness offered by our Deliverer, Jesus Christ. Jesus modeled these responses in his atonement for our sins. †

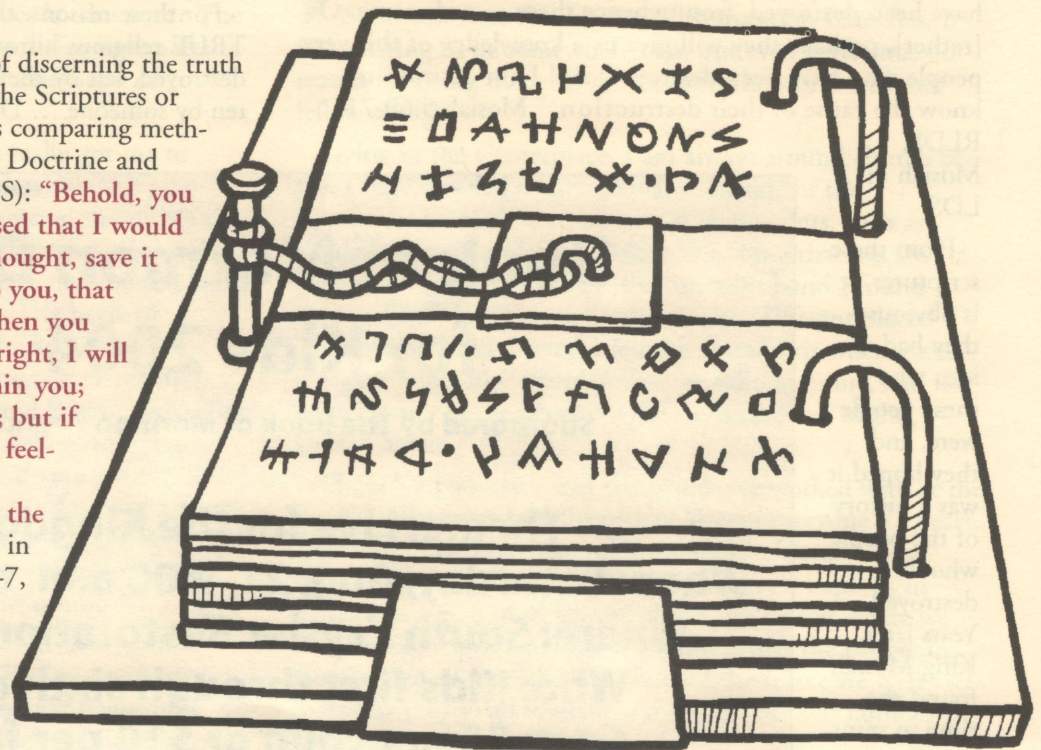


# The Book of Ether: Nephites' Book of Mormon

by Barbara Wilkinson

**W**hile trying to teach methods of discerning the truth of prophetic words, either in the Scriptures or prophecy received today, I was comparing methods given by God to Oliver Cowdrey in Doctrine and Covenants 9:3 (RLDS, Section 9:7 LDS): “Behold, you have not understood; you have supposed that I would give it unto you, when you took no thought, save it was to ask me; but, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right, I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right; but if it be not right, you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought, that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong;” and to Moroni in The Book of Mormon in Moroni 10:3-7, “Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, 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. 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; and by the power of the Holy Ghost, ye may know the truth of all things. And whatsoever thing is good, is just and true; wherefore, nothing that is good denieth the Christ, but acknowledgeth that he is. And ye may know that he is, by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore I would exhort you, that ye deny not the power of God; for he worketh by power, according to the faith of the children of men, the same to-day and to-morrow, and for ever,” I wondered and asked God why Moroni didn’t tell us to expect the burning of the bosom or the stupor of thought? That is, why wasn’t Moroni told the same thing as Oliver?

The Lord answered my request by reminding me that everyone receives a unique, personalized testimony of The Book of Mormon’s divinity. I understood that it may be accompanied by the burning of the bosom, but the burning of the bosom isn’t the main or center point of the testimony received. Each testimony is personalized to the individual’s need. Then the Lord showed me that the Book of Ether was the Nephites’ Book of Mormon! The background of the Book of Ether and The Book of Mormon are amazingly similar!



We are told how the Book of Ether was found in the following scripture.

“And he [Ether] went forth, and beheld that the words of the Lord had all been fulfilled; and he finished his record; (and the hundredth part I [Moroni] have not written;) and he [Ether] hid them in a manner that the people of Limhi did find them.” Ether 6:108 RLDS, Ether 15:33 LDS

The people of Limhi were part of the Nephite group who decided to return to the land of their first inheritance. I say they did this because they were down in the humid, hot jungle with all those snakes, ticks, lizards and spiders. They went UP to the land of their original inheritance which is lovely and cool ... sort of like California.

But, unfortunately, they became a wicked people and the Lord allowed the Lamanites to put them in bondage. When they were sick of being in bondage, King Limhi sent a search party to find Zarahemla. The search party got lost and came upon a land that “... was covered with the bones of men... and... ruins of buildings of every kind” Mosiah 5:62 RLDS, Mosiah 8:8 LDS. They said that this group was as numerous as the hosts of Israel. As a testimony that what they said was true they brought “...twenty-four plates which are filled with engravings, And they are of pure gold.” Mosiah 5:64 RLDS, Mosiah 8:9 LDS.

If we think about what happened in this situation, we realize that they found a book, engraved on gold. They had no



clue as to the content. They made this clear in what they said:

“And I say unto thee again, Knowest thou of any one that can translate? for I am desirous that these records should be translated into our language. For, perhaps they will give us a knowledge of a remnant of the people who have been destroyed, from whence these records came; Or [rather], perhaps they will give us a knowledge of this very people who have been destroyed; and I am desirous to know the cause of their destruction.” Mosiah 5:69-71

RLDS,  
Mosiah 8:12  
LDS

From these scriptures, it is obvious they had no idea who these people were, and they hoped it was a history of the people who were destroyed. Years later, King Mosiah found the time to translate the plates, at the time he retired from being the king.

According to Moroni, his abridgement of Ether wasn't a hundredth part of what was written. That suggest the original Book of Ether would have been about 5000 pages.

- Restored Covenant Edition of The Book of Mormon pages 831 minus 779 = 52 x 100 = 5200
- RLDS 1908 Edition pages 760 minus 714 = 46 x 100 = 4600

The interesting thing is what they received gave them not only the history, but also a religious history, sort of like our Book of Mormon. They received it in even a stranger way than we received The Book of Mormon.

- No angel told them anything about the contents.
- No man was told exactly where to find it and what it contained.

• Ether just left it in a place that someone would obviously find it.

Was it left in the cave Ether had lived in? Was it left under a tree somewhere? Was it placed in the palace on the king's throne? Who knows? All we know is that Ether left it in a very obvious place.

For these reasons, they had no clue as to whether it was a TRUE religious history of the people who had been destroyed, left by the command of God, or just a novel written by someone ... Does this sound sort of familiar? Yes, it is

exactly what people have said about Joseph Smith, Jr. and his “gold Bible” since 1830.

Thus the people of Nephi, like us, had to ask God if it was the word of God, or not. Moroni told us exactly how to determine the truth of *anything*.

“Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, 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. 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; and by the power of the Holy Ghost, ye may know the truth of all things. And whatsoever thing is good, is just and true; wherefore, nothing that is good denieth the Christ, but acknowledgeth that he is.” Moroni 10:3-6. †

## Book of Mormon Day for Kids 2004

Sponsored by The Book of Mormon Foundation

**Theme:** Live for the Kingdom  
**When:** Saturday, Aug. 21, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
**Where:** South Chrysler Restoration Branch  
**Who:** Kids first through sixth grade  
**Cost:** \$5 per child or \$10 per family

Lunch will be provided.  
Please register by Aug. 2  
Registrations will be accepted the day of the event.

Contact Dennis Moe  
at The Book of Mormon Foundation  
816-461-3722 or [bmfoundation@aol.com](mailto:bmfoundation@aol.com)



# Remembrances of Florida Retreat 2004

by Jill Etter

**W**hen I came away from the recent 2004 Florida retreat, I not only had a deeper testimony of The Book of Mormon, but the people who wrote The Book of Mormon were more real to me. I also have a desire to be more courageous in witnessing of The Book of Mormon.

The afternoon with Eldon Anderson really got me to thinking. The question of "How do you witness of The Book of Mormon?" provided some lively and thought-provoking ideas. It gave me new ideas and a new resolve to be a better witness. This was quite a change in me, howbeit small and weak. I've been afraid to witness of The Book of Mormon for eight years since moving to the Bible Belt. One of my first friends here told me, "Oh, don't ever mention that you believe in The Book of Mormon! People here think that's Satan's book, and they will never understand you or want to be your friend if you tell them of your belief." So you see, I am admitting my true feelings of fear and a reluctance to be a witness of The Book of Mormon. Yet the retreat has helped me to get out of my comfort zone and give a positive witness for The Book of Mormon.

This week I've had three opportunities to witness to friends about The Book of Mormon. The first one ended with me not saying a word about The Book of Mormon, because I was too scared. But the next opportunity took me by surprise, because a dear neighbor came right out and asked, "Oh, is your church related to the Mormon church?" I dove right in, fear and all! I told her a little of the differences of the churches, but then excitedly told her of the recent archeological findings that have supported the validity of The Book of Mormon. I also told her about some of the Hebrew ways of writing, which have also been found in hieroglyphs in Central America. As I expounded on all these things, she encouraged me to say more with her exclamations of "Fascinating! Fascinating!"

The third opportunity came late one night, as two friends and I sped down the highway, on our way home from a day in Memphis, Tenn. My friends were talking about being slain in the spirit. I knew this would be a marvelous time to share about Ammon and King Lamoni, but I was again afraid of rejection or misunderstanding. Finally, I got up the nerve to speak, thus sealing my fate. However, the next 45 minutes were spent in animated discussion of Mormon, Assembly of God, Baptist, Restoration, and Methodist beliefs on being slain in the spirit, among

*Continued on page 8*

by Jeff Stilwell

**I** had never been to Florida before the recent Book of Mormon weekend in Apopka for the people of Southeast Area Association of Restoration Branches. It was exciting to be somewhere new, but even better was our reason for being there: to retreat from the world with our fellow saints!

Living in the Centerplace, I am always around church people. I have traveled to several places outside of the Centerplace where there are not so many saints, such as Kansas, Iowa, Florida and Belize. The thing that has always been most amazing to me is the common bond I found among all of these people in these many different places! Thousands of miles away, I felt the same spirit when gathering with saints in Corazol, Belize, as I did at home, and the same is true for the people in the southeast area of the United States.

Though I had never met the people we worked with at the retreat, right away I felt like I had known everyone for years. This bond that I have found is the bond of Jesus Christ. Because we are of one faith, one church, one baptism in Christ, we are all brothers and sisters, no matter where we live. I really appreciated the friendliness that the people in Florida greeted us with that weekend. I felt like we were welcomed as they would welcome members of their families ... and that is what we are, family. †





## 2004 Interns

Brandy Anderson ..... Lamoni, Iowa  
Claire Burford ..... Wichita, Kansas  
Tim Colyer ..... Buckner, Missouri  
Laura Euritt ..... Independence, Missouri  
Roche'e Miller ... Warrensburg, Missouri  
Kelli Pedersen .. Independence, Missouri  
Brian Twombly ..... Troy, Kansas

## Staff:

Jeff Stilwell .... Independence, Missouri  
Brett Smith ..... Higginsville, Missouri

## Co-Directors:

Bonnie Anderson                      Kathy Gilmore

# The Witness

Number 111 • Summer 2004

**Board of Directors**  
*President* Marlin Guin  
*Vice President* Dale Godfrey  
*Treasurer* Gary Lair  
*Secretary* Michelle White  
Barb Capps  
Linda Guin  
Jeff Ballantyne  
Linda Trimble  
Bonnie Anderson

**THE WITNESS Committee**  
Pat Baggette  
Linda Guin  
Kathy Keller  
Dennis Moe  
Cheryl Scofield  
Tara Simmons  
Beth Spencer

*Office Manager* Dennis Moe • *Graphic Designer* Tara Simmons

The Book of Mormon Foundation is a nonprofit corporation composed of individuals who desire to promote The Book of Mormon and its witness of Jesus Christ.

Through research, publications, seminars and related projects, members of The Book of Mormon Foundation seek to assist in bringing forth the light contained in The Book of Mormon.

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

Articles and the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the view of The Book of Mormon Foundation. Unsigned articles are attributable to the Foundation.

Published quarterly by  
The Book of Mormon Foundation  
210 West White Oak  
Independence, MO 64050  
Tel: 816-461-3722 • Fax: 816-461-5850  
bmfoundation@aol.com • www.bomf.org

## Florida Retreat 2004

*Continued from page 7*

other topics. I was again able to witness of God's love, not only for those in Jerusalem, but those in Central America, who had been led away as "sheep who are not of this fold." I was again able to expound on some of the fascinating archeological finds in Central America. Even though I got home at 12:30 a.m., I arose the next morning with energy to go to church.

I hope that I can be equal to the task when opportunities come my way again, along with expounding on the merits of The Book of Mormon. I fear that there will be those who do not know my love for God and Christ, and my dedication to serving them. I fear that my witness of Christ will be twisted by their own aversion to The Book of Mormon.

Thank you one and all, for providing the chance to come to Florida and spend such a wonderful Book of Mormon weekend with such wonderful people! †

The Witness

Address Service Requested

Independence, MO 64050  
210 West White Oak

THE BOOK OF MORMON FOUNDATION

Nonprofit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Independence, MO  
Permit No. 123