



## Gadianton Robbers Today?

Jason Anderson

When I read about events in the world today, I can't help but think of the Book of Mormon and the Gadianton robbers. Such places

as Colombia, various Latin American countries, Chechnya, Israel and Al Qaeda attacks in the United States and Madrid, plus the recent attacks in London all come to mind. The Gadiantons first appeared around 52 B.C. under the leadership of Gadianton. They began as robbers and murderers, but ultimately desired to rule the nation. Gadianton types, whose secret combinations and oaths are as old as the days of Cain, proved to be the ruin of both the Nephite and Jaredite civilizations.

**Is this relevant to us today?** I believe it is, and following are a few examples.

First and foremost, we've already seen two once-great civilizations in the Americas brought down by these secret combinations.

“And it came to pass that they formed a secret combination, even as they of old; which combination is most abominable and wicked above all, in the sight of God . . . And now I, Moroni, do not write the manner of their oaths and combinations,

for it hath been made known unto me that they are had among all people, and they are had among the Lamanites, and they have caused the destruction of this people of whom I am now speaking, and also the destruction of the people of Nephi.” (Ether 3:92,94 RLDS), (Ether 8:18,20-21 LDS)

Can something like this happen in such an enlightened age and powerful country as the one in which we live? The Lord has promised it will, if we as a nation do not serve Him.

“And he had sworn in his wrath unto the Brother of Jared, that whoso should possess this land of promise, from that time henceforth and forever, should serve him, the true and only God, or they should be swept off when the fullness of his wrath should come upon them. And now we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fullness of his wrath shall come upon them.” (Ether 1:30-31 RLDS), (Ether 2:8-9 LDS)

No matter what the society or religion, if the people in it do not remain righteous and vigilant, Gadianton types will organize and eventually destroy that society. Satan will use whatever openings we give him.

Let's look at the condition of the Nephites at one of

*continued on page 2*

### Inside:

**Fall Classes**  
page 7

**2005 Interns**  
page 8

**Fall Gathering/The Book of Mormon Day for Kids**  
page 11

# Gadianton Robbers Today?

*continued from page 1*

the times the Gadiantons flourished. Was it that much different than we see now?

“Yea, the more part of them had turned out of the way of righteousness, and did trample under their feet the commandments of God, and did turn unto their own ways, and did build up unto themselves idols of their gold and their silver.” (Helaman 2:158 RLDS), (Helaman 6:31 LDS)

If we read before and after this verse, we find what started as a few wicked people spread because the righteous were asleep and had become complacent. They even participated in the acts themselves and most likely believed they were still righteous. This went on until the Gadiantons even ran the government, at which point the people were ripening for destruction. You see, God is slow to act in wrath. He is willing to allow a democratic society to harbor wickedness as long as it is not the prevailing wisdom. He knows Satan will almost always be able to flatter and persuade a few. But once that democratic society chooses wickedness, there is no more patience.

“Now it is not common that the voice of the people desireth anything contrary to that which is right; but it is common for the lesser part of the people to desire that which is not right. Therefore this shall ye observe, and make it your law to do your business by the voice of the people. And if the time comes that the voice of the people doth choose iniquity, then is the time that the judgments of God will come upon you. Yea, then is the time he will visit you with great destruction, even as he has hitherto visited this land.” (Mosiah 13:35-38 RLDS), (Mosiah 29:26-27 LDS)

It is important to realize the Gadiantons never flourished where the people were righteous. They could get no foothold and either moved on or were converted or destroyed.

Finally, if there are similarities between modern-day terrorists and Gadiantons in The Book of Mormon, we should be able to look at The Book of Mormon peoples to see the different ways they dealt with these terrorists and learn which ways work and which ways fail.

What a marvelous opportunity for us to avoid going through the trial and error process our predecessors on this land had to go through!

Before we get to what I believe is the most important part of this study, how to deal with terrorists, let's first establish there are similarities between modern-day terrorists and the Gadiantons. Here are a few examples.

- **They attacked the innocent, even women and children.**

“Yea, for they did visit many parts of the land, and did do great destruction unto them; yea, did kill many, and did carry away others captive into the wilderness; yea, and more especially their women and their children.” (Helaman 4:41 RLDS), (Helaman 11:33 LDS)

We saw this in Russia when the Chechnya terrorists took over the school and threatened to kill and did kill many children.

- **They claim their hate for those they terrorize stems from “the many wrongs” done unto them.**

“And I, knowing of their unconquerable spirit, having proved them in the field of battle, and knowing of their everlasting hatred towards you, because of the many wrongs which ye have done unto them, therefore if they should come down against you, they would visit you with utter destruction.” (3 Nephi 2:5 RLDS), (3 Nephi 3:4 LDS)

On November 24, 2002, Osama Bin Laden asked and then answered his own question, “Why are we fighting and opposing you?” “Because you attacked us and continue to attack us.” He goes on to list a number of alleged grievances including attacks on the Palestinians and attacks in various places around the globe. Then he said, “It is commanded by our religion and intellect that the oppressed have a right to return the aggression. Do not await anything from us but Jihad, resistance, and revenge. Is it in any way rational to expect that after America has attacked us for more than half a century, that we will then leave her to live in security and peace?”



# Gadianton Robbers Today?

*continued from page 2*

- **Their true motivation is not hatred of any particular policies or any supposed wrongs done to them, but power and gain.**

“And moreover, to be held in office, at the head of government, to rule and do according to their wills, that they might get gain and glory of the world; and moreover that they might the more easy commit adultery, and steal, and kill, and do according to their own wills.” (Helaman 3:4 RLDS), (Helaman 7:5 LDS)

- **They send peace proposals, demanding concessions from those they have been attacking.**

“Therefore I write unto you desiring that ye would yield up unto this my people, your cities, your lands, and your possessions, rather than that they should visit you with the sword, and that destruction should come upon you.” (3 Nephi 2:7 RLDS), (3 Nephi 3:6 LDS)

The Palestinians are demanding land for peace from the Israelis, much like Giddianhi from Lachoneus. But Giddianhi, like the Palestinians, had no intention of delivering peace. Giddianhi's goal was the total destruction of the Nephites, as is the Palestinians' goal regarding Israel. A Hamas leader in the Gaza Strip, Dr. Mahmoud al-Zahar, wrote in a letter that the terror group views Ariel Sharon's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip as a capitulation to terror and is planning to continue its “armed struggle” against the Jewish state until “all” territories are in Palestinian hands. He said, among other things, “The withdrawal, if it is implemented, is an important achievement by the Palestinian people, its intifada and armed struggle, its determination and great sacrifice, and confirms the willingness, correctness and usefulness of employing an armed struggle and its ability to attain political objectives.”

- **They intend to intimidate and influence by fear.**

“And behold, I swear unto you, If ye will do this, with an oath, ye shall not be destroyed; but if ye will not do this, I swear unto you, with an oath, that on the morrow month, I will command that my armies shall come down against you, And they shall not stay their hand, and shall spare not, but shall slay you, and shall let fall the sword upon you, yea, even until ye shall become extinct.” (3 Nephi 2:9-10 RLDS), (3 Nephi 3:8 LDS)



We saw the terrorists intimidate the Spaniards and influence their election by bombings three days before the elections were to be held. Also, after the recent London bombings, the terrorists said other nations like Italy and Poland would be next if they did not bring their troops home soon from Iraq.

- **They believe they are not only right in their actions, but believe they have the moral upper hand.**

“And behold, I am Giddianhi; and I am the governor of this the secret society of Gadianton; which society, and the works thereof, I know to be good; and they are of ancient date, and they have been handed down unto us.” (3 Nephi 2:11 RLDS), (3 Nephi 3:9 LDS)

Osama bin Laden, again from his 2002 message to America, speaking of Islam in general and his cause, specifically said, “It is to this religion that we call you; . . . It is the religion of Unification of God, sincerity, the best of manners, righteousness, mercy, honour, purity, and piety. It is the religion of showing kindness to others, establishing justice between them . . . , defending the oppressed and the persecuted.”

# Gadianton Robbers Today?

continued from page 3

- **A few terrorists could defy entire armies.**

“And it came to pass that it was expedient that there should be a stop put to this work of destruction; therefore they sent an army of strong men into the wilderness, and upon the mountains to search out this band of robbers, and to destroy them. But behold, it came to pass that in that same year, they were driven back even into their own lands.” (Helaman 4:35-36 RLDS), (Helaman 11:28-29 LDS)

We still haven't found Bin Laden or wiped out his band hiding in the mountains between Pakistan and Afghanistan. We also have not been able to stop the terrorists from infiltrating Iraq.

- **These groups are founded on secret rites, protected by sworn secrecy or death.**

“And it came to pass that they all swear unto him by the God of heaven, and also by the heavens, and also by the earth, and by their heads, that whoso should vary from the assistance which Akish desired, should lose his head. And whoso should divulge whatsoever thing Akish made known unto them, the same should lose his life. And it came to pass that thus they did agree with Akish.” (Ether 3:87-88 RLDS), (Ether 8:14-15 LDS)

It is widely believed that not even all 19 hijackers knew what the whole plan was on September 11, 2001.

- **A charismatic leader persuades people to follow through flattery and unethical promises of power and riches.**

“For there was one Gadianton who was exceeding expert in many words, and also in his craft, to carry on the secret work of murder and of robbery; therefore he became the leader of the band of Kishkumen. Therefore he did flatter them, and also Kishkumen, that if they would place him in the judgment seat, he would grant unto those who

belonged to his band that they should be placed in power and authority among the people; therefore Kishkumen sought to destroy Helaman.” (Helaman 1:40-41 RLDS), (Helaman 2:4-5 LDS)

Gadianton tactics helped install and keep people in power like Fidel Castro in Cuba, the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, Yassur Arafat in Palestine, Al Sadr in Iraq, and so on.

- **The end goal is to overthrow the thing they hate the most, liberty.**

“Yea, we see that Amalickiah, because he was a man of cunning devices, and a man of many flattering words, that he led away the hearts of many people to do wickedly; Yea, and to seek to destroy the church of God, and to destroy the foundation of liberty which God had granted unto them, or which blessing God had sent upon the face of the land, for the righteous' sake.” (Alma 21:38-39 RLDS), (Alma 46:10 LDS)

Satan, by his nature, hates freedom. He has wanted to take away our freedom to choose for ourselves from the very beginning. He has placed this hatred in the hearts of all Gadianton types throughout history.



**So how do we deal with these modern-day Gadiantons? I see three courses of action (there may be more) taken by the Nephites and Lamanites. We should be able to look at their example to see which actions were effective.**

▶ **A** **Appease, reason with, accept and try to get along.** The Nephites tried it.

“And in the three hundred and fiftieth year, we made a treaty with the Lamanites and the robbers of Gadianton, in which we did get the lands of our inheritance divided.” (Mormon 1:60 RLDS), (Mormon 2:28 LDS)

They gave up lands much like Israel is doing now, but found the ensuing peace to be only temporary.

“And it came to pass that the Lamanites did not come to battle again until ten years more had passed away.” (Mormon 1:63 RLDS), (Mormon 3:1 LDS)

# Gadianton Robbers Today?

*continued from page 4*

This was the first battle in the last war that ultimately destroyed the Nephites. Europe tried appeasement with Hitler in 1938 with the Munich agreement, which gave part of the Czech territory and other land Germany was claiming as its own to Hitler in return for promised peace. Many in this country and around the world want to try it with the terrorists. The results of appeasement and getting along with terrorists are devastating. Fifty million people died in WWII. From the 1979 Iran hostage crisis to the 1983 Marine barracks bombings in Lebanon to the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993 to Somalia in 1993



to the bombing of the USS Cole in 2000, we basically did nothing, even retreating from Lebanon and Somalia. I believe in doing so we gave encouragement to the terrorists, which ultimately led to 3,000 dying on September 11, 2001. Gadianton types ultimately want power and the destruction of freedom. Appeasing them when they are weak only gives them time to gather strength. The Saudis are learning this the hard way. They have, for all intents and purposes, bought off the Gadianton types in their own land, and now they have even turned on the ruling family, issuing death threats and other threats against the government.

**► B Destroy.** President Bush had this to say on November 8, 2001, in a speech to the nation: “Our nation faces a threat to our freedoms, and the stakes could not be higher. We are the target of enemies who boast they want to kill: kill all Americans, kill all Jews, and kill all Christians. We’ve seen that type of hate before, and

the only possible response is to confront it, and to defeat it. We wage a war to save civilization itself. We did not seek it, but we will fight it and we will prevail.”

“And now it came to pass that when the Lamanites found that there were robbers among them, they were exceeding sorrowful; and they did use every means in their power, to destroy them off the face of the earth.” (Helaman 2:144 RLDS), (Helaman 6:20 LDS)

“And it came to pass in the thirteenth year, there began to be wars and contentions throughout all the land; for the Gadianton robbers had become so numerous, and did slay so many of the people, and did lay waste so many cities, and did spread so much death and carnage throughout the land, that it became expedient that all the people, both the Nephites, and the Lamanites, should take up arms against them; Therefore all the Lamanites, who had become converted unto the Lord, did unite with their brethren, the Nephites, and were compelled, for the safety of their lives, and their women and their children, to take up arms against those Gadianton robbers; Yea, and also to maintain their rites, and their privileges of their church, and of their worship, and their freedom, and their liberty.” (3 Nephi 1:48-50 RLDS), (3 Nephi 2:11-12 LDS)

It is interesting to point out destroying the enemy appears to work only when it’s done by a people who are truly righteous. In Helaman 2:144 (RLDS) (Helaman 6:20 LDS), the record goes on to say that the Lamanites grew in righteousness, and they ultimately prevailed. If we keep reading in 3 Nephi 1, we find that when their motives were right, when they were righteous and fighting for a just cause, they prevailed.

“Nevertheless, the people of Nephi did gain some advantage of the robbers, insomuch that they did drive them back out of their lands into the mountains, and into their secret places.” (3 Nephi 1:55 RLDS), (3 Nephi 2:17 LDS)

However, when the people became wicked and tried the same tactics, they were not successful.

“And in the fifteenth year they did come forth again against the people of Nephi; and because of the wickedness of the people of Nephi, and their many contentions and dissensions, the Gadianton robbers did gain many advantages over them. And thus ended the fifteenth year, and thus were the people in a state of many afflictions; and the sword of destruction did hang over them, insomuch that they were about to be smitten down by it, and this because of their iniquity.” (3 Nephi 1:56-57 RLDS), (3 Nephi 2:18-19 LDS)

# Gadianton Robbers Today?

*continued from page 5*

## ► **C** Convert.

“And it came to pass that the Lamanites did hunt the band of robbers of Gadianton; and they did preach the word of God among the more wicked part of them, insomuch that this band of robbers was utterly destroyed from among the Lamanites.” (Helaman 2:164 RLDS), (Helaman 6:37 LDS)

I don't think any of us would disagree that this is the optimal, most preferred method. It should be attempted, but we must realize that there will always be some who will reject Jesus. As long as Satan is not bound, this option will not be 100% effective. Therefore, we can never appease, and must be willing to destroy if necessary. We have examples, in fact, of the Nephites using these dual tactics with great effect.

“And now it came to pass that when they had taken all the robbers prisoners, insomuch that none did escape who were not slain, they did cast their prisoners into prison, and did cause the word of God to be preached unto them; And as many as would repent of their sins and enter into a covenant that they would murder no more, were set at liberty; But as many as there were who did not enter into a covenant, and who did still continue to have those secret murders in their hearts; yea; as many as were found breathing out threatenings against their brethren, were condemned and punished according to the law. And thus they did put an end to all those wicked, and secret, and abominable combinations, in the which there was so much wickedness, and so many murders committed.” (3 Nephi 2:86-89 RLDS), (3 Nephi 5:4-6 LDS)

Ultimately, the only real deliverance we have from terrorism or any enemy is repentance and humility. We are not in a fight between western society and Al Qaeda or Islam and Christianity, but between Satan and our Savior Jesus Christ. When we are repentant, humble, and obedient, we are promised victory. When we are not, we have no promise.

The ultimate cure will come when we Christians finally get dissatisfied with what is and desperately long for what could be. It will come when we step out of our comfort zones and truly live selfless, devoted, whole-hearted lives for God. We do not have the luxury of continuing to sit back and live lives that are not really much different than the world around us. This world, which lies in darkness, needs a people who will stand up in the midst of that darkness and boldly let the light of Christ pierce

and even overcome that darkness. Then, the promises of 2 Chronicles 7:14 can become a reality.

It would be wise for us to follow the admonition of Moroni, who saw first-hand the complete destruction of his people, and thought it so important as to take up some precious space in his record. He said,

“And whatsoever nation shall uphold such secret combinations, to get power and gain, until they shall spread over the nation, behold, they shall be destroyed, for the Lord will not suffer that the blood of his saints, which shall be shed by them, shall always cry unto him from the ground for vengeance upon them, and yet he avenge them not; Wherefore, O ye Gentiles, it is wisdom in God that these things should be shewn unto you, that thereby ye may repent of your sins, and suffer not that these murderous combinations shall get above you, which are built up to get power and gain, and the work, yea, even the work of destruction come upon you; Yea, even the sword of the justice of the eternal God, shall fall upon you, to your overthrow and destruction, if ye shall suffer these things to be; Wherefore the Lord commandeth you, when ye shall see these things come among you, that ye shall awake to a sense of your awful situation, because of this secret combination which shall be among you, or wo be unto it, because of the blood of them who have been slain; for they cry from the dust for vengeance upon it, and also upon those who build it up. For it cometh to pass that whoso buildeth it up, seeketh to overthrow the freedom of all lands, nations and countries; And it bringeth to pass the destruction of all people; for it is built up by the devil, who is the father of all lies; even that same liar who beguiled our first parents; Yea, even that same liar who hath caused man to commit murder from the beginning; who hath hardened the hearts of men, that they have murdered the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out from the beginning. Wherefore I, Moroni, am commanded to write these things, that evil may be done away, and that the time may come that Satan may have no power upon the hearts of the children of men, but that they may be persuaded to do good continually, that they may come unto the fountain of all righteousness and be saved.” (Ether 3:95-102 RLDS), (Ether 8:22-26 LDS)

Reference: Gospel Essentials  
Terrorist brought down . . . Ancient America?  
<http://www.computercontrolsystems.com/GE/Handouts/TerrorismInAncientAmerica.asp>

# Fall Classes

**D**ue to many requests, we are excited to again offer classes at the BMF Learning Center. We are piloting a new schedule to determine which days and times are best for those interested in attending. In November, we will evaluate the results in planning future classes. Please review the schedule and make plans to attend.

Date & Time	Subject
Sunday, October 16 4-5 PM	<b>Gadanton Robbers Today? Part I</b> <i>Jason Anderson</i>
Thursday, October 20 7-8 PM	<b>Gadanton Robbers Today? Part II</b> <i>Jason Anderson</i>
Sunday, October 23 4-5 PM	<b>Are We Living in the Latter Days?</b> <i>Marlin Guin</i>
Thursday October 27 7-8 PM	<b>Prophecies of the Latter Days</b> <i>Marlin Guin</i>
Sunday, October 30 4-5 PM	<b>History of the House of Israel</b> <i>Dale Godfrey</i>
Thursday, November 3 7-8 PM	<b>Parable of the Olive Tree</b> <i>Dale Godfrey</i>
Sunday, November 6 4-5 PM	<b>Effectual Fervent Prayer of the Righteous</b> <i>Eldon Anderson</i>
Thursday, November 10 7-8 PM	<b>The Book of Mormon Apologetics</b> <i>David Gilmore</i>

*We are also excited to announce that new classes are being developed and reviewed for the future. Please watch upcoming newsletters for their availability.*

# The 2005 Interns



As we flew over the Oaxacan Valley, the city of Oaxaca spanned out below us bustling with over 300,000 people. Out the window standing in stark contrast on a mountain overlooking Oaxaca, the ancient ruin of Monte Alban was also visible. Contrasts — a word that not only describes our experiences in Mexico but also the internship program: old – young; male – female; Mexico – U.S.; Restoration – Community of Christ – LDS; teacher – student; individual – team. And yet, as we worked together, studied The Book of Mormon, prayed for one another, worshipped God and shared our testimonies, we became one in our thankfulness for His blessings, in our purpose to serve others and in our desire to proclaim The Book of Mormon to the world.

The 2005 Internship has come to a close, but the experience will live on in the lives of the nine interns, three staff members and those who traveled with us to Mexico. If you, or someone you know, would like to apply for the 2006 Internship, please contact Bonnie Anderson at [bmfinternship@yahoo.com](mailto:bmfinternship@yahoo.com) or Linda Guin at either [bmfoundation@aol.com](mailto:bmfoundation@aol.com) or 816-461-3722. If you would like to financially support this program, please contact Linda at the Foundation.



## **GREG BENDORF**

While the 2005 interns were in Mexico, we had the privilege of being able to put up a fence and construct two cement pillars for a fellow saint. We were able to complete all but a small portion of the fence on Monday and went about constructing the pillars to hold the gate. The only problem we faced was the gravel we used. The gravel ranged in size from about 3½ inches to regular gravel size. When we poured the cement in the forms, we did our best to get all the bubbles and air pockets worked out of the cement. When we returned on Wednesday and removed the forms, we discovered how many pockets of air were in the pillars. It was not an appealing sight to the eye. It was finally decided that four of us should get up early Thursday morning and go back to fix the pillars. When the four of us arrived, we went straight to work without praying for God's help. That proved to be a bad idea. As two of the guys tried to apply the cement to the pillars, it took about an hour to get half way up the first pillar. The cement was not cooperating. As the tension was

rising during that time, the idea to pray kept coming to mind, but I would dismiss it, not wanting to bother the rest of the guys. As we got closer to an hour passing by, the idea to pray became stronger. Also during this time of increasing frustration, the owner of the property, Orlando, came to watch what we were doing. That was another reason for me not wanting to remind the guys that we didn't pray. I did not want to point out a weakness in front of Orlando. Once I made a comment to the rest of the crew about forgetting to pray, I was asked to offer that prayer. I agreed and offered a prayer right there. Once the prayer was finished, we got back to work right away. In watching how the application was going, I noticed how much easier the cement went up. Not only was this a reminder for me, but it also witnessed to Orlando. I am always amazed at how God can use problems to fill us with a greater joy.



## **DO YOU NEED A BREATH OF FRESH AIR? JAMES BULLARD**

I am always in awe of the way our Lord chooses to teach us and bring to remembrance His concern and love for each of us. He has a call for those with a desire to serve. In our lives He places within our paths certain opportunities that, if we choose, will prepare us for this work.

In 2005, I had the great privilege to be accepted into an internship sponsored by The Book of Mormon Foundation. During this journey, we traveled to Oaxaca, Mexico, for a week. It was on this trip the Lord showed me some things in my life; things I should consider as I desire to fulfill this call He asks us all who believe in him to follow. To arrive in Oaxaca, we were scheduled for a flight from Kansas City, Missouri, to Houston, Texas. From Houston, it took only a couple of hours to get to Oaxaca.

I have only flown a couple of times before when I was much younger. I never really paid much attention to what they did except for when they brought the food! On the flight from Houston to Oaxaca, I decided to actually listen to the information the attendant was sharing with us. She explained to the passengers how and what to do in the event of an emergency. If the air masks were released in the event of danger, we were instructed how to put them on. She explained it was very important to make sure we put on our own mask before helping others, even if they were struggling. What! That made no sense, I thought. I have always been taught to help others in need before myself. I asked several of the other interns why we were instructed to be so selfish in taking care of ourselves first. They were quick to point out that it made perfect sense. If you cannot breathe, how do you expect to help others breathe and survive?



I found myself considering this idea of ensuring I could breathe so I could help even more people. I must be able to breathe in order to give breath of life to others. It was made known to me that I was the one gasping for air or the word of God. I have made myself so busy serving others and putting their needs before my own that I was the poor soul that could not breathe! I was gasping for the life-giving breath of God. I enabled myself to share the gospel and love of Jesus Christ with others. How can I be a witness or servant if I do not take in his word? I cannot!

It is important to remember in our lives that we cannot be an adequate tool or servant if we are not sharp and breathing the good word of God. We cannot witness or assist our brothers and sisters if we ourselves are gasping for the life-giving breath of God. We try so hard to put others before ourselves and serve them. We cannot witness nor serve if we are not first breathing this breath of God we try so hard to give to others.



### **ANDY DANICKI**

I had thought about doing the BMF Internship since I started college. It was just a thought then. I was always quick to come up with excuses why I could not do the internship for that particular summer. It was always something. I always had an excuse why I shouldn't or couldn't do it. I was beginning to wonder if I would ever do it. Finally, a summer came up where it would be a possibility for me to do it. This got me thinking about the internship all school year. I knew it was a big commitment and would take a lot of praying and thought before I could make my decision. There were a lot of factors that went into my decision-making process. One important thing to me was whether I was doing the internship for the right reasons. I didn't even want to apply until I had straightened those things out in my mind. This was a real struggle for me, and I continued to pray about it. One thing I did decide was that I was going to read the entire Book of Mormon before I applied. I never really had done a whole lot of scripture reading in my life. I had many

times before attempted to read various books but eventually stopped reading. It was Christmas vacation, and I was home for three weeks. Normally, I would be working all the time and spending all the remaining time with friends. This Christmas break was different. I had no job, and my friends were all busy. I had so much free time at first, I was bored out of my mind. I still had not even thought about reading The Book of Mormon. I was, however, praying for a confirmation that would lead me to a decision about whether or not to apply for the internship. Slowly during the days whenever I would tell myself I had nothing to do, the thought to read my scriptures popped into my head. I started reading whenever I had time. This turned into at least an hour every day. Pretty soon I couldn't stop reading.

This eventually got me most of the way through the entire Book of Mormon. I found myself talking about it to everyone I saw at church. I would simply talk about those things which I had read. This was my answer to apply for the internship. Although I did not quite finish reading it, I decided I wanted to do The Book of Mormon Internship this year. My excuses of never having time to read The Book of Mormon were done away with from the Lord. He provided all the time in the world for me. When I got back to school, I only had a little bit to read. It took me quite a while to finally finish because of all the things I chose to fill my time. I thank the Lord for providing me with time, peace and quietness over Christmas break and confirmation to apply for the internship.



### **MARIAH ELEFSON**

When I was in 7th grade, the BMF Interns visited the junior high camp I was attending. Since that time, I periodically heard about The Book of Mormon Foundation Internship. Last fall, as I visited with a few friends in the Independence area (at the time I was attending school in northern Iowa), I was asked several times if I was going to apply for the internship. I honestly hadn't thought about it, but that got me thinking and praying. However, I knew that I wanted to take summer classes and had been hoping to get a summer job to help pay some of my college expenses. I applied for The Book of Mormon Foundation Internship and began to pray that if the Lord wanted me to do the internship, He would open the way. Things began to fall in place, and I was accepted into the internship. I found out if I took first-session summer courses, they would end the Friday before the internship began on the following Monday. Every time I have needed money, it has been made available to me. The Lord truly blessed me in all of my needs and desires.



### **MIKE FLEMING**

On August 3, 2005, the interns visited South Chrysler Restoration Branch for the Wednesday evening service. This Wednesday was just after we had returned from our one-week trip to Mexico. As the service began, we sang songs and shared our testimonies from the trip with the congregation. Everything went as planned, and we could feel the people were enjoying the service. Toward the end, we sang the song *Ancient Words* accompanied by a slide show. The lights were dimmed, which diminished the nervousness I had felt earlier. While the lights were dimmed and as we sang, I looked out into the congregation. The spirit came over me as we sang the chorus, and I felt like I was singing a testimony of The Book of Mormon to the congregation. I was joyful that the Lord had put me there to sing the song to those people. We closed with a prayer, and I thanked the Lord that He had given me that feeling and experience.



### **JOSH HITCH**

The fourth week of the 2005 Book of Mormon Internship was spent in Oaxaca, Mexico. One of the things I had looked forward to the most was our tour of ancient ruins in that land. I had expected the internship program, the classes, the trip to Mexico, and visiting the ruins would give me a greater understanding of The Book of Mormon. However, I never imagined I would receive such conviction of the truth of The Book of Mormon as I did during the week in Oaxaca.

While we were in Oaxaca after visiting Monte' Alban, Brother Frank Frye taught a class to the interns. In his class, Brother Frye showed symbols that had been used in Meso-America for many years and how they were evidence that the ancient peoples in this land knew about Jesus. He also presented to us many archeological findings which supported The Book of Mormon. After seeing the ruins in person, the class became as real to me as anything I had ever known. I knew that it was impossible for a young man in New England of the early 19th century to know anything

about the symbols and archeology of the land of Mesoamerica, much of which is just being revealed in our day. The only explanation is that Joseph was directed by God to bring forth, as from the dust, a holy and true record of the ancient people of this land. I know because I have seen with my own eyes, and heard the evidence that shows The Book of Mormon is genuine! The words of life therein are simply validated by today's archeological discoveries.



### **JULIE MARSH**

I am an education major at Central Missouri State University (CMSU) in my junior year. From January to July 2005, I lived and studied in Orebro, Sweden, as an exchange student. There were 200 exchange students from around the world, and I quickly formed many close bonds. Through the course of the semester, my friends became family to me. However, I found it a struggle at times because we came from such foreign backgrounds.

I especially found this true with my best friend, Tamara. Growing up in Europe's leading liberal country, The Netherlands, my conservative Christian views were a shock. On several occasions, the opportunity opened up for me to share not only my views but also my relationship with Christ and my belief that God exists. I prayed all semester that somehow God would touch her, and was excited when she started asking hypothetical questions like, "If God really does exist, why does He let bad things happen?" And, "Won't you feel stupid if you find out God doesn't exist?"

However, during our stay, she experienced several trials including injuries, sickness and family distress where God opened the door and allowed me to pray for her and share about His healing power and comforting spirit He has promised to send to those who mourn.

On one occasion, I was blown away by God's power. Tamara had been crying hopelessly for about an hour, and nothing seemed to help. I tried comfort, humor and sympathy, yet she still continued to cry. Then the mood in the room changed, and I began sharing a testimony of how God gave me comfort during my mom's struggle with cancer, and I knew that it was a promise offered to Tamara — despite her disbelief in Him or the fact that she had never been to church or prayed. All she had to do was reach out and tell Him that she was scared and needed Him to hold her. By the time I finished sharing, I noticed that she was completely calm — the uncontrollable sobs and fear had diminished as I shared my testimony. I could feel the peace of God and stillness within the room, and we calmly said goodnight and returned to our beds.

I was amazed by God's power, but still worried she hadn't recognized it. Several months later, after returning home, I was struggling spiritually and worried about beginning The Book of Mormon Internship. I e-mailed her one night expressing this and was shocked by her response. She wrote a long e-mail back about how she was touched during the last six months and especially the night I shared my testimony. She recalled special moments that we both had shared, but I had been unaware of their impact on her. She ended by saying bluntly that she felt weird writing these feelings down and that while she was unsure where these words were coming from, she felt convicted to write them. I was overjoyed as I was able to witness God moving in her heart.

In another e-mail, she referred to God as a real being and acknowledged some of His actions. It has been so neat to see how her e-mails have changed — from if God exists to recognizing something to finally acknowledging God as an active being.

I don't know what God has in store for Tamara, but I am hopeful. She has asked me to tell her more about the BMF Internship and expressed interest in learning more of my church. I praise God for the way He is working in her life.



### **RACHEL PORTER**

It takes about 8-9 hours to drive the 550 miles from my home in Texas to Blue Springs, Missouri. There had been some unexpected expenses before my mother, sister and I left for the internship. We all did not get paid until later in the month and did not have a lot of money for gas. So the night before we left, we prayed that somehow the Lord would get us to Blue Springs. We prayed again that morning before we left. We left Texas with a full tank of gas and reached Blue Springs without having to stop for gas. It only took one tank. When my mother and sister left Blue Springs, they filled up once and did not have to stop for gas the whole way back to Texas. My mother's van usually only gets 250-280 miles on a tank of gas. We drove about 1,100 miles on only two tanks of gas. We did not spend more on gas than we had. The Lord knew our need, heard our prayers and prepared the way for us to get there. He is a God of miracles.



### JENNIFER STEPHENSON

During the internship, we are encouraged to file our tithing statement and keep an accounting of our finances, so I followed their suggestion and took the promise in Malachi 3:10 head on. My financial situation has never been desperate, yet it has never been plentiful. Being in college and living on my own most of the year, I have always been close when it comes to paying bills and staying afloat. However, I decided that it was time to put God first and file my tithing. After I filed my tithing and had been keeping an accounting for about two weeks, an amazing thing happened. While visiting home one weekend, I was informed by my mother I had \$1,400 credit on a student account she and I were not aware existed, and no one knew from where it appeared. I was shocked and thrilled to see God was already blessing me for my efforts to obey God's commandments.

My parents, seeing the blessings I received, decided to file their tithing as well. My father had been lacking a steady, good-paying job for a few years. My mother had been working full-time to make up the difference. It had been stressful at times upon the family and, lately, we had been quite concerned for our financial situation. When my parents figured their tithing, they realized they owed much more tithing than they were able to pay. They were very distraught about the amount but decided to take God at his promises and obey. As soon as they finished their statement, my dad received a phone call from a church member. He wanted to hire my dad for a job which would last as long as he needed the job and would provide the funds which he needed.

I am extremely thankful to God that I was led to get my finances in order through this internship and to witness the blessings which come from that, both mine and my family's blessings.

**If you, or someone you know, would like to apply for the 2006 Internship, please contact Bonnie Anderson at [bmfindernship@yahoo.com](mailto:bmfindernship@yahoo.com) or Linda Guin at either [bmfoundation@aol.com](mailto:bmfoundation@aol.com) or 816-461-3722. If you would like to financially support this program, please contact Linda at the Foundation.**



CLIP AND SAVE

## Fall Gathering

The Gathering will center around remembering  
The Book of Mormon as found in D&C 83:8

The Book of Mormon Foundation has been asked to participate in the **Conference of Restoration Elders Fall Gathering** this year, along with Zarahemla Research Foundation and Pre-Columbian Studies Institute.

**The gathering begins  
Friday, October 28, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM &  
Saturday, October 29, 9:00 AM – 8:30 PM.**

The Fall Gathering will be at Waldo.  
We will also be doing our  
**Book of Mormon Day for Kids**  
that Saturday.

## Book of Mormon Day for Kids

### Living in Covenant

**Who:** 1st through 6th Grades

**When:** Saturday, October 29, 2005  
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM  
(Registration at 8:30 AM)

**Where:** South Chrysler Restoration Branch  
16101 East Salisbury Road

**Cost:** \$5.00 One Child  
\$10.00 Two or More Children  
Lunch will be provided

*If questions, call the Book of Mormon  
Foundation at 816-461-3722.*

## From The Board...

Recent issues of The Witness have included replacement or repair of the roof on the Wish List. It had deteriorated to the point of causing significant water damage to the ceiling and walls inside the building. We did not include the estimated cost on the Wish List because proposed bids and methods of repair were so diverse. Consequently, in May we employed a structural engineer to evaluate the situation. His report stated the original roof was a light-gauge corrugated metal roof that was too light to handle the direct load of a new roof system. A technical drawing with

structural specifications was submitted by the engineer and used to request bids from several different companies. The board, after careful evaluation, chose the bid for \$18,800. The work has been completed, but now the challenge of replenishing the funds is a priority. These funds are needed for the operational needs of BMF and to finance various programs. We are asking you, as our contributors, to give prayerful consideration to help with this special project so there is no adverse effect on existing programs. Thank you, and may the Lord richly bless you in your decision to support His work.

# The Witness

Number 116 • Fall 2005

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

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*President* Marlin Guin  
*Vice President* Dale Godfrey  
*Treasurer* Eldon Anderson  
*Secretary* Kathy Keller  
Jeff Ballantyne  
Michelle Sherer

#### THE WITNESS Committee

Linda Guin, *Chairman*  
Kathy Keller  
Cheryl Scofield  
Beth Spencer  
Marlin Guin  
Dale Godfrey  
Mary Drummond

*Graphic Designer* Brenda Eggert

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.

## Book of Mormon Audio CDs

This beautiful, album-bound, 22-CD set is a reproduction of the original RLDS version read by Harold Whitehead.



**22-CD Set**

**\$79.00 + shipping**

To order, call **816-461-3722** or come by the Foundation office.

# The Witness

**THE BOOK OF MORMON FOUNDATION**  
**210 West White Oak**  
**Independence, MO 64050**

***Address Service Requested***

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

