



THE WITNESS

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***“Joseph is a fruitful bough,
even a fruitful bough by a well;
whose branches
run over the wall.”***



On a clear night long ago, in a Bethlehem stable, our Savior was born in the simplest of circumstances. The prophets had foretold of this great event, and the signs had been given of His coming. They were witnessed by the humble and meek of the earth, which recognized them as those heavenly signs pointing to the birth of Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, many others also saw them, but did not believe—even the leaders of the church for that day! Later in life, Jesus stood in front of these leaders and called them “hypocrites” because they could easily predict the weather, but could not discern the signs of the times. Therefore, they missed the coming of the Messiah and even participated in His persecution and crucifixion.

The Pharisees also, with the Sadducees, came, and tempting Jesus, desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven. And he answered and said unto them, When it is evening ye say, The weather is fair, for the sky is red; and in the morning ye say, The weather is foul today; for the sky is red and lowering. O hypocrites! ye can discern the face of the sky; but ye cannot tell the signs of the times.

Matthew 16:1-3 IV/KJV

Today, we must learn from this sobering example of unbelief! We again wait for the coming of the Messiah. He is now speaking to the nations of the earth in many ways and preparing for His further participation in this “great and marvelous” work. The prophets have spoken to our day, and the signs are being given more fully. Just as before, they are being seen and acknowledged by those who believe, while many reject them. Our prayer is for this belief to grow and cause us to repent and respond with conviction to the greatest of all gifts.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,
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*Cover photo courtesy of Dale Godfrey
(Genesis 49:22 IV/KJV)*

Fulfillment of Prophecy through the Covenants

by Jon Tandy



The Book of Mormon was written to the house of Israel, “to shew unto the remnant of the house of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and that they may know the covenants of the Lord” (title page of the Book of Mormon). This statement places the Book of Mormon squarely in both the past and the future – looking backward to the covenants which the Lord made with the house of Israel, and forward to the fulfillment of those covenants. This prophetic focus, rooted in historic covenants, is a fundamental part of the message of the book and of the latter-day church. This article highlights an interesting feature of this prophetic message, which is repeated many times over in key passages of the Book of Mormon text.

The other main Book of Mormon purpose is also stated on the title page: “to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations.” It is suggested in this article that the statement “manifesting himself unto all nations” is not only a general characteristic of God, but also refers to the historic manifestations of God and Christ to mankind as represented in the Book of Mormon and biblical narratives. It is also a subtle hint which points toward the prophetic message of the book, concerning that day when Christ will be visibly manifested in power to the nations.

There are many passages in the Book of Mormon that speak of God making good on his promises and fulfilling the covenants to Israel. In 3 Nephi, Jesus Christ spoke to the Nephites in prophecy, telling many things that would happen in the future, including His promise that the covenants will be fulfilled. (3 Nephi 7:28-45; 3 Nephi 9:46-10:8 RLDS) [3 Nephi 16:4-20; 3 Nephi 20:10-21:29 LDS] Some years ago, I read this and other similar passages and noticed that, at several points, the Lord said, “at that day” shall the covenants be fulfilled;” and “and at that day shall the work of the Father commence...”

My thought was, if Jesus were laying out a historical sequence of events for the last days, at which of these points are the covenants actually to be fulfilled, or at which point is the work of the Father supposed to “commence?” Why are there so many verses pointing to a particular “time” when these things are to occur? What is the actual sequence of events being described, and is there more than one event that constitutes the Lord commencing his work and fulfilling the covenants?

In the process of further study, I discovered the answer, which turned out to be an interesting feature of the Book of Mormon text. In the above-mentioned passages in 3 Nephi,

there is a historical sequence of events that is repeated four times in a row. On the first day of Jesus’ visit to the Nephites, he gave a prophecy of last days’ events. (3 Nephi 7:28-45 RLDS) [3 Nephi 16:4-20 LDS] But then, he abruptly broke off with the statement, “I perceive that ye are weak, that ye can not understand all my words which I am commanded of the Father to speak unto you at this time...” (3 Nephi 8:2 RLDS) [3 Nephi 17:2 LDS]

On the following day, Jesus resumed his discussion of the covenants and future prophecy with this introduction, “...Behold, now I finish the commandment which the Father hath commanded me concerning this people who are a remnant of the house of Israel. Ye remember that I spake unto you, and said that when the words of Isaiah should be fulfilled...” (3 Nephi 9:46-47 RLDS) [3 Nephi 20:10-11 LDS] In the verses that follow, he then repeated the same prophecy of last days’ events, not once, but three times in succession. (3 Nephi 9:46-10:8 RLDS) [3 Nephi 20:10-21:29 LDS]

Repetition is used in Hebrew scripture to indicate importance and to give emphasis to the subject being mentioned. Thus, a four-part repetition of these prophecies highlights their significance in the text, indicating to us that it’s very important to understand. Besides this passage from Jesus’ personal ministry to the Nephites, there are at least three other lengthy passages in the Book of Mormon dealing with the same prophetic message of last days’ events. (1 Nephi 3:173-237; 1 Nephi 7:6-64; 2 Nephi 11:80-12:100 RLDS) [1 Nephi 13:29-14:17; 1 Nephi 22:3-28; 2 Nephi 26:14-30:18 LDS]

In each of these seven passages, the exact series of events is not an identical listing of each point in a neat, exact sequential pattern. Particularly in 2 Nephi 11:80-12:100 [2 Nephi 26:14-30:18 LDS], the description of prophetic events is scattered across two chapters of Nephi’s sermon, interspersed with many diversions and admonitions of Nephi to his brethren. It is clear that each of these passages stands on its own and isn’t a direct copy of any of the others. None of them includes every point of the prophecy, and they are given in different order and sometimes with a subtly different context. When all of these passages are considered together, it is clear that they represent a complex theological and prophetic insight.

Below is a table showing the seven passages considered in this study. Following the table, each heading in the table is summarized along with selected quotations, and further comments are given on several items of particular interest.

Seven-Fold Book of Mormon Prophecy

	3Ne 7:28-45 RLDS [3Ne 16:4-20 LDS]	3Ne 9:46-63 RLDS [3Ne 20:10-25 LDS]	3Ne 9:64-85 RLDS [3Ne 20:26-46 LDS]	3Ne 9:86-10:8 RLDS [3Ne 21:1-29 LDS]	1Ne 3:173-237 RLDS [1Ne 13:29-14:17 LDS]	1Ne 7:6-64 RLDS [1Ne 22:3-28 LDS]	2Ne 11:80-12:100 RLDS [2Ne 26:14-30:18 LDS]
Israelites scattered	7:28, 32-33 [16:4, 8-9]	9:49 [20:13]	9:65 [20:27]	9:88 [21:2]	3:150, 176-178 [13:14, 30-31]	7:6-12, 16 [22:3-5, 7]	11:81-83 [26:15]
Gentiles receive blessings	7:30 [16:6]	9:51 [20:15]	9:65 [20:27]	9:89-90 [21:3-4]	3:179-182 [13:32-34]	7:13-15 [22:6-7]	
Book of Mormon comes forth (fullness of the gospel)	7:28, 31 [16:4, 7]		9:66 [20:28]	9:91-92 [21:5-6]	3:183-197 [13:34-41]		11:83-86, 126-131 [26:15-17; 27:7-11]
Gentiles reject the gospel, fullness of the gospel taken from them	7:34-35 [16:10]	9:51 [20:15-16]	9:66 [20:28]		3:213 [14:6]		11:116; 12:38-40 [27:1, 30-32]
Work of the Father commences, covenant with Israel remembered, gospel preached	7:28-29, 36-37 [16:4-5, 11-12]	9:48-49, 58 [20:12-13, 22]	9:65-69, 85 [20:27-30, 46]	9:93; 10:4-7 [21:7, 26-28]	3:185-186, 211, 237 [13:36; 14:5, 17]	7:20-25 [22:9-12]	12:42-43, 80-87 [29:1-2; 30:3-8]
Gathering of Israel	7:29 [16:5]	9:49, 54 [20:13, 18]	9:79-80 [20:41-42]	10:5-8 [21:26-29]	3:18 [10:14]	7:23, 56-59 [22:12, 25]	12:85 [30:7]
If Gentiles repent, numbered with Israel	7:38 [16:13]			10:1 [21:22]	3:198-203, 210 [13:42-14:2, 5]	7:19 [22:9]	12:77-78 [30:2]
Kings shut their mouths, assist in restoring Israel			9:83 [20:45]	9:94-95; 10:1-3 [21:8-9, 22-24]		7:13-18 [22:6-8]	
Prophet will lead Israel		9:60-61 [20:23]	9:81-83 [20:43-45]	9:96-97 [21:10]		7:43-46 [22:20-21]	
Great and marvelous latter day work				9:95 [21:9]	3:214-216 [14:7]	7:17 [22:8]	11:29, 146; 12:42 [25:17; 27:26; 29:1]
God's judgement on the Gentiles	7:39-41 [16:14-15]	9:51-56 [20:16-20]		9:98-106 [21:11-21]	3:232-236 [14:15-17]	7:26-35 [22:13-16]	11:117; 12:88-90 [27:2; 30:9-10]
Watchmen lift up voice	7:43 [16:18]		9:70, 78-79 [20:32, 40-41]				
Land given for inheritance	7:42 [16:16]	9:50, 57-58 [20:14, 21-22]	9:68, 71-72 [20:29, 33-34]	10:1 [21:22]	3:203 [14:2]	7:23 [22:12]	12:73 [29:14]
Lord makes bare His arm	7:45 [16:20]		9:73 [20:35]			7:21-22 [22:10-11]	12:42 [29:1]
Zion, New Jerusalem	7:43-44 [16:18-19]	9:58 [20:22]	9:85 [20:46]	10:2-3 [21:23-24]		7:30 [22:14]	12:92-95 [30:12-15]
Power of heaven (endowment)		9:59 [20:22]		10:4 [21:25]	3:187, 230-231 [13:37; 14:14]	7:36 [22:17]	11:131 [27:11]

Israelites scattered

It was prophesied by Jesus and other Book of Mormon prophets that in future days, the house of Israel, including the remnant of the Nephites and Lamanites, would be scattered by the Gentiles. This has certainly happened to the Nephite/Lamanite remnant on the American continent, through the Gentile discovery of the American continents and the westward expansion of the United States, as well as a general persecution of the Jewish people around the world through the centuries.

Gentiles receive blessings

Through the Gentiles' belief in Jesus Christ and the unbelief of the house of Israel, the Gentiles would become a mighty nation and be blessed through the Holy Ghost.

Book of Mormon comes forth

The Gentiles would be the instruments in the hands of God by bringing about a blessing to the house of Israel, primarily through the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon would bear testimony of Jesus Christ to the house of Israel and bring them, including the Nephite/

Lamanite remnant, to a knowledge of the faith of their ancestors and the Lord's covenants.

Gentiles reject the gospel, fullness of the gospel taken from them

However, after the blessing of the Lord to the Gentiles, they will reject the fullness of the gospel and be lifted up in pride and wickedness.

Several of the above-referenced verses say the gospel will be given back to the Israelites "if" the Gentiles reject the gospel (3 Nephi 9:66-67; 1 Nephi 3:213 RLDS) [3 Nephi 20:28-29; 1 Nephi 14:6 LDS] as if there is a possibility that it might not happen in this way. Yet, we know the Lord is faithful to his word, and he has certainly promised to fulfill his covenants with the house of Israel. Because the rejection of the gospel by the Gentiles is prophetically given as a precondition to Israel being restored, it is a near certainty that the Gentiles will fulfill this prophecy of rejecting.

Further, several of the verses confirm this supposition as a certainty. "At that day **when** the Gentiles shall sin against ... and **shall reject** the fullness of my gospel..." (3 Nephi 7:34 RLDS) [3 Nephi 16:10 LDS]; and "**they will be drunken**

with iniquity” (2 Nephi 11:116 RLDS) [2 Nephi 27:1 LDS]; and “they will deny me”. (2 Nephi 12:40 RLDS) [2 Nephi 27:32 LDS] Thus, it is virtually certain from the prophecy that the Gentiles will sin against the gospel and reject the fullness, and thus deny the Lord who was merciful in bringing it unto them.

Although the latter-day revelations beyond the Book of Mormon are not the focus of this article, yet this same truth is confirmed in several sections of the Doctrine and Covenants. (D&C 100:3c; 64:7; 105:10; 45:3f-4d RLDS) [D&C 103:14; 64:35-39; 112:25-26; 45:24-31 LDS] When the Gentiles reject the fullness of the gospel, it is time that the “fullness of the times of the Gentiles” will be fulfilled. More will be said about this below.

Work of Father commences, God remembers covenant, gospel preached to Israel

After the Gentiles have rejected the fullness of the gospel, it will be taken from them. It is at this point that the text says God will remember and fulfill His covenant with Israel. The fulfilling of the covenants consists in bringing about the regathering of Israel and bringing them to a knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In three of these prophetic sequences, the statement is made, “at that day the work of the Father shall commence.” Book of Mormon believers may be tempted to think that the work “commenced” in the 1820s and 1830s with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and Restoration movement. However, in this context, the “work of the Father” seems to be specifically referring to the complete work of fulfilling the covenants, in the gathering of Israel and the establishment of Zion and Jerusalem. This theme of the “commencement of the work of the Father” appears in other scriptures (2 Nephi 2:24; Mormon 1:82; Ether 1:114 RLDS) [2 Nephi 3:13; Mormon 3:17; Ether 4:17 LDS], where it is also associated with the work of a latter-day prophet, and the gathering and actual restoration of the house of Israel to their lands – just the same as in the prophetic verses we are considering in this article.

Gathering of Israel

Though the house of Israel were scattered, they will be gathered again in fulfillment of the covenants made by God to Abraham, as they are brought to a knowledge of redemption through Jesus Christ. (3 Nephi 7:29, 9:49 & 54, 9:79-80, 10:5-8, 1 Nephi 3:18, 1 Nephi 7:23, 56-59, 2 Nephi 12:85 RLDS) [3 Nephi 16:5, 20:13 & 18, 20:41-42, 21:26-29, 1 Nephi 10:14, 1 Nephi 22:12 & 25, 2 Nephi 30:7 LDS]

And then will I gather them in from the four quarters of the earth; and then will I fulfill the covenant which the Father hath made unto all the people of the house of Israel.

(3 Nephi 7:29 RLDS) [3 Nephi 16:5 LDS]

And they shall go out from all nations...

(3 Nephi 10:8 RLDS) [3 Nephi 21:29 LDS]

Wherefore, he will bring them again out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance.

(1 Nephi 7:23 RLDS) [1 Nephi 22:12 LDS]

And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered, also shall begin to believe in Christ: and they shall begin to gather in upon the face of the land.

(2 Nephi 12:85 RLDS) [2 Nephi 30:7 LDS]

Along with the general promise of a gathering, the Lord specifically foretold that the Jews would come into possession of Jerusalem—for the first time since Jerusalem was conquered by the Romans in 70 A.D.

That I would give unto them again the land of their fathers, for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them for ever, saith the Father.

(3 Nephi 9:68 RLDS) [3 Nephi 20:29 LDS]

Then shall this covenant which the Father hath covenanted with his people, be fulfilled; and then shall Jerusalem be inhabited again with my people, and it shall be the land of their inheritance.

(3 Nephi 9:85 RLDS) [3 Nephi 20:46 LDS]

And [the Jews] shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

(Luke 21:23 IV) [Luke 21:24 KJV]

And this I have told you concerning Jerusalem; and when that day shall come, shall a remnant be scattered among all nations, but they shall be gathered again; but they shall remain until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

(D&C 45:3f RLDS) [D&C 45:24-25 LDS]

The beginning of the restoration of the house of Israel has been occurring for many decades. In 1830, the French Parliament granted the Jews certain civic rights, the first such act by any modern nation. By 1887, all nations except Russia and Romania had granted civil rights to the Jews (Roy E. Weldon, *Book of Mormon Deeps*, 2:301). In 1841, Apostle Orson Hyde went to the Holy Land at the direction of



the prophet Joseph Smith and prayed on the Mount of Olives for a restoration of the land of Israel and for the return of the Jews. The following year, the rains returned to Palestine, in fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 29 that “Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field.” (Henry Schaefer, *I Will Be With You Always*, p. 53)

In 1917, the British “Balfour Declaration” promised that Israel would be given to the Jews for “establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.” The nation of Israel declared its independence on May 15, 1948. During the 1948 War of Independence, though vastly outnumbered at first, Israel miraculously defended itself against the invasion of combined armies from Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Trans-Jordan. But, during this time, the Israeli armies were not able to capture Jerusalem. The time for the fulfillment of the above prophecies was not yet to be.

In June of 1967, eight Arab nations amassed their armies in the Middle East in an attempt to exterminate the small nation of Israel, whose population numbered under three million. During the Six-Day War, the Israelis succeeded miraculously in capturing the city of Jerusalem, destroying the Egyptian air defenses, and defeating an army several times larger than itself. Jerusalem was now in their possession after almost 1900 years of captivity and dispersal. It seems clear that this pivotal event must be the fulfillment of the prophecies that Jerusalem would be returned to the Jews, which also coincides with the fulfillment of the “times of the Gentiles.”

Gentiles numbered with Israel

God will bring about judgment on the Gentiles because of their pride and wickedness. However, if the Gentiles repent, they will be numbered with the house of Israel, which is a blessing to them.

Kings shut their mouths, assist in restoring Israel

The work of restoring the house of Israel will be such a dramatic and public occurrence that even kings (in our day, presumably referring to world leaders in general) will “shut their mouths” in amazement at what the Lord does for Israel. This must necessarily involve a public demonstration of the Lord’s power in order to bring this about.

These Gentile kings will marvel at the developments the Lord does among the house of Israel. However, there is also an indication that they may provide substantial aid in physically facilitating the restoration of the Israelites back to the lands of their inheritance.

Nephi uses a prophecy of Isaiah to elaborate this point. The Gentiles will carry the house of Israel “upon their shoulders”. (1 Nephi 7:13-18 RLDS) [1 Nephi 22:6-8 LDS] One could

imagine that believing Gentiles might be involved not only in spreading the gospel throughout the world and the remnants of Israel, but perhaps there will be world leaders who actually assist in providing transportation and safe passage so that the gathering can come about.

Latter-day prophet will lead Israel

In the midst of these prophecies of the latter day restoration of the house of Israel, there is a promise that a latter-day prophet will lead Israel out of bondage. There is disagreement among Restoration believers whether these verses refer to a future human prophet who will come in great power to lead the people, or whether it refers to Jesus Christ himself, or it possibly referred to the work performed through Joseph Smith Jr. in his earthly ministry.

I believe it must be understood as a future human prophet, because in 3 Nephi 9:96-97 [3 Nephi 21:10 LDS], Jesus declares to the Nephites, “But behold, the life of my servant shall be in my hand; therefore they shall not hurt him, although he shall be marred because of them. Yet I will heal him, for I will shew unto them that my wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.” This clearly seems to be referring to a human prophet who is acting as Jesus’ servant.

Also in Jesus’ quotation of Isaiah (3 Nephi 9:81-83 RLDS) [3 Nephi 20:43-45 LDS] (Isaiah 52:13-15), the prophet is referred to as “my servant” who shall have his “visage ... marred more than any man.” The Doctrine and Covenants also indicates the same thing regarding a “man,” a prophet who will “lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel...out of bondage.” (D&C 100:3d-e RLDS) [D&C 103:15-18 LDS]

It appears that this prophet will be wounded through opposition of the enemies of God, but he will be healed. Could this be similar to Revelation 11, where two prophetic witnesses are killed by the beast, but are resurrected after three days?

However, parallel passages (3 Nephi 9:60-61; 1 Nephi 7:43-46 RLDS) [3 Nephi 20:23; 1 Nephi 22:20-21 LDS] don’t mention a latter-day prophet, but instead refer to Moses’ prophecy about a prophet who would come and associates him with Jesus Christ. For those who believe the latter-day “Moses-like” prophet who will lead the people is none other than Jesus Christ himself, the parallel nature of these prophecies might be worthy of consideration in this context.

Great and marvelous work

In the context of this latter-day restoration of the house of Israel, the Lord will proceed to do a “great and marvelous work.” While believers in the Restoration Movement have always considered the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the latter-day church to be part of this great and marvelous work,

these scriptures specifically refer to that “great and marvelous work” to be the actual restoration of the house of Israel to their inheritances, which will be so dramatic and unexpected that “kings will shut their mouths,” as referred to above. The latter-day restoration of the gospel laid the foundation for this work and predicted its fulfillment, but the real “great and marvelous work” is a future event yet to be fulfilled.

God’s judgment on the Gentiles

If the Gentiles do not repent of their wickedness, they are under the judgment of God and will be cut off. The prophecies state that the house of Israel will be at least part of God’s instrument in bringing about this judgment. (3 Nephi 7:39-41, 9:51-56, 9:98-106, 1 Nephi 3:232-236, 1 Nephi 7:26-35, 2 Nephi 11:117; 12:88-90 RLDS) [3 Nephi 16:14-15, 20:16-20, 21:11-21, 1 Nephi 14:15-17, 1 Nephi 22:13-16, 2 Nephi 27:2; 30:9-10 LDS].

And I say unto you, that if the Gentiles do not repent, after the blessing which they shall receive, after they have scattered my people, then shall ye who are a remnant of the house of Jacob, go forth among them; And ye shall be in the midst of them, who shall be many; and ye shall be among them, as a lion among the beasts of the forests, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he goeth through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thy hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off. And I will gather my people together, as a man gathereth his sheaves into the floor, for I will make my people with whom the Father hath covenanted, yea, I will make thy horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs brass. And thou shalt beat in pieces many people; and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord, and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. And behold, I am he who doeth it. And it shall come to pass, saith the Father, that the sword of my justice shall hang over them at that day; and except they repent, it shall fall upon them, saith the Father, yea, even upon all the nations of the Gentiles.

(3 Nephi 9:51-56 RLDS) [3 Nephi 20:16-20 LDS]

In the above scripture, there is an interesting use of imagery which was pointed out to me years ago by brother Neil Simmons. There are three images the Lord uses to depict the judgment being brought about upon the Gentiles. The first depicts the house of Jacob like a lion, which tears in pieces. And the second is a bull, with horns and hoofs, which will

tread down and beat in pieces. The question was then asked, “which of the tribes of Israel are represented by a lion and a bull?” The answer comes from the Lord’s blessings to the tribes of Israel given in the Old Testament.

Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up; he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion, who shall rouse him up?
(Genesis 49:9 IV/KJV)

let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph... His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns; with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.
(Deuteronomy 33:16-17 IV/KJV)

Judah and Joseph are represented among the tribes of Israel as a lion and a bullock. This seems to resonate with other scriptures, which place the tribes of Judah and Joseph (particularly the tribe of Ephraim) as being the two prominent tribes of leadership among the house of Israel in the last days. Judah was the line through which the kings of Israel were to come (Genesis 49:10 IV/KJV), but to Joseph was given the birthright (1 Chronicles 5:1-2 IV/KJV)

Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.
(Ezekiel 37:19 IV/KJV)

Let them, therefore, who are among the Gentiles, flee unto Zion. And let them who be of Judah, flee unto Jerusalem, unto the mountains of the Lord's house... and he shall utter his voice out of Zion, and he shall speak from Jerusalem...
(D&C 108:4,5e RLDS) [D&C 133:12-13, 21 LDS]

And then shall they fall down and be crowned with glory, even in Zion, by the hands of the servants of the Lord, even the children of Ephraim; and they shall be filled with songs of everlasting joy. Behold, this is the blessing of the everlasting God upon the tribes of Israel, and the richer blessing upon the head of Ephraim and his fellows. And they also of the tribe of Judah, after their pain, shall be sanctified in holiness before the Lord to dwell in his presence day and night for ever and ever
(D&C 108:6d-f RLDS) [D&C 133:32-35 LDS]

Yet, there is a third image that the Lord uses to describe the judgment – a sword. The Lord will perform his own judgment upon the Gentile nations, as well as upon all those who refuse to believe and repent of their iniquities. The image of the Lord’s judgment as a sword is used later in 3 Nephi, when the Lord says he will “cut off” all those things of wickedness and the wicked themselves, “whosoever will not repent and come unto my beloved Son.” (3 Nephi 9:101-106 RLDS) [3 Nephi 21:14-21 LDS]; see also (Micah 5:8-15 IV/KJV)

Watchmen lift up their voice

In 3 Nephi 7:43 [3 Nephi 16:18 LDS] and again in 3 Nephi 9:70, 78-79 [3 Nephi 20:32, 40-41 LDS], Jesus quotes from the prophecy in Isaiah 52:7-11, which says in part, “Thy watchmen shall lift up their voice; with the voice together shall they sing...” This is an indication that there will be a dramatic and open proclamation of the gospel in the last days, in which the works and the gospel of the Lord will be made known openly among all nations.

Lord makes bare his arm

Included in this prophecy from Isaiah is the statement that the Lord will “make bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations.” (Isa. 52:10) This will be a visible manifestation of the power of God. God is “taking off the gloves” and “rolling up his sleeves,” to use a few modern expressions. He is going to come out of hiding and show himself in a marvelous way, so that all will witness his faithfulness to his covenants.

It may be particularly enlightening to consider the phrase from the title page of the Book of Mormon, “manifesting himself unto all nations,” in view of this last-days prophecy described in this section: “the Lord shall make bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations.” This will be a public and visible manifestation of the work of God. “I will shew unto the children of men, that I am able to do mine own work.” (2 Nephi 11:143 RLDS) [2 Nephi 27:21 LDS]

Land given for inheritance

The promise of the Lord to the house of Israel is that they would receive a promised land for their inheritance. This is a fulfillment of the covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that their descendants would be given land for an inheritance.

Zion, New Jerusalem

The land of promise will actually be “lands” of promise, as Jerusalem in Israel will be redeemed, but also Zion (New Jerusalem) will be established on the American continent. The covenant people will receive their inheritance according to the promise, and the Lord will set up Zion in the latter days as a place of refuge. This promise of both an old Jerusalem and a new Jerusalem being established is mentioned in many

scriptures, but is perhaps best summarized in (Ether 6:4-6) [Ether 13:4-7 LDS].

Power of heaven (endowment)

In order to accomplish this great work of gathering and the restoration of Israel, the power of heaven must be employed. Jesus promised that he would personally be in the midst of the remnant of Israel, to arm the covenant people with an endowment of power and glory of God in order to accomplish the work.

Conclusion

Throughout the Book of Mormon, there are many references to the latter day work of the Restoration of the gospel, of God’s covenants to the house of Israel, and prophecies of the last days. In particular, at least seven passages provide an extended sequence of prophetic events centering on these themes. Four of these passages appear back-to-back within Jesus’ message to the Nephites during His two days of ministry, as recorded in 3 Nephi.

This prophecy foretold that the Gentiles would be blessed with the fullness of the gospel, but that they would reject the gospel, and thus have the fullness taken away from them. When that happens, the work of the Father is said to commence among the covenant people of the house of Israel, as the Lord remembers His covenants to them and gathers them in. Kings of the earth will be amazed as the Lord makes bare His arm in power, and a prophet will lead the Lord’s people through the accomplishment of this work, even in the face of strong persecution. In the midst of these blessings to the covenant people, judgment is predicted on the nations of the Gentiles who will not repent and come unto Christ. The Lord’s watchmen will lift up their unified voices, and the Lord will bring His people to Zion and the New Jerusalem.

This prophecy is at the heart of the angel message brought forth by the prophet Joseph Smith. Our Heavenly Father works through covenants, and He will show Himself faithful to the promises He has made in bringing about the fulfillment of these prophecies. Let us renew our diligence and faithfulness, so that we may be able to assist in the Lord’s work in these latter days.

“Behold, I speak unto you, and also to all those who have desires to bring forth and establish this work; and no one can assist in this work, except he shall be humble and full of love, having faith, hope, and charity, being temperate in all things whatsoever shall be intrusted to his care.” (D&C 11:4a&b RLDS) [D&C 12: 7-8 LDS]

*The complete article can be found
on our website: www.bomf.org.*

SANTA-CALI-GON 2011

Having the opportunity to serve in the Book of Mormon booth during Santa Cali Gon is such an amazing experience. I look forward to it every year because it is an opportunity to get outside of my comfort zone. My husband Nathan and I have been blessed with the chance to witness of Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon for several years. The first year we were asked, although I'd been involved in the Book of Mormon Internship as intern and staff, I was extremely nervous. Having taught at a local public school, I knew that there were former students and parents that I would run into. I was afraid I wouldn't have the answers to their questions and that some would mock and taunt us. The Lord has blessed me with such a peace each year and although I don't have all the answers to everyone's questions, my prayers are that the words I do share with them prick their heart and cause them to search.

This year, we were able to speak with many people that were lonely and searching for answers. One woman I spoke to in particular, came to the tent three times in a single evening and each time she simply seemed to need someone to talk to. Being a single mom of two girls, she told me she wished she had the support and love of a church family where she could bring her daughters up with Christian ideals. We shared testimonies back and forth of the times, both good and bad, when the Lord had blessed us with a peace and strength that allowed us to persevere. Not only was I given an opportunity to witness to her, but she was a witness to me of the need for people to find Jesus Christ and understand the message and hope in the Gospel.

There is such a need, abroad and in our own backyard, for the message of hope that is written upon the pages of the Book of Mormon. The city of Independence, as many cities, is in need of the message of Christ and the gospel of the Kingdom. If we don't stand up and share with them, in spite of any comfort zones we may be asked to walk out of, who will?

~ Michelle Scherer

OVER 160 COPIES OF THE BOOK OF MORMON WERE GIVEN OUT.

VOLUNTEERS AGREED THIS WAS A GREAT MINISTRY AND WELL WORTH THE EFFORT.

Photos courtesy of Maeanna Stahlman



Insights From The Book of Mormon Manuscripts

By Shirley R Heater

I'd like to share some of the amazing things I learned as I was privileged to work with both the original and printer's manuscripts of The Book of Mormon while on staff at Zarahemla Research Foundation (ZRF). As I compared these two valued treasures, among my discoveries were several instances that were a blessing to me personally. There are parts of this story I've never shared before, and they were not included in my articles in *The Zarahemla Record*.

As part of the Study Book of Mormon¹ (SBM) project begun by ZRF in the mid-1980s, I was assigned to research the two Book of Mormon manuscripts known as the original and the printer. During my 14 years that culminated in the publication of The Book of Mormon: Restored Covenant Edition (RCE), I learned so many things that I didn't know before!

From the outset, I was nearly totally ignorant of these two treasures.

I first learned that there actually *were* TWO manuscripts, although I found that some sources didn't know which was which² (neither did I!).

I learned that the original manuscript supports the idea that the original "translation" was not a normal process (where the translator knows both languages), but was revealed to Joseph Smith word-for-word miraculously by "the gift and power of God."

I learned that the scribes wrote the words continuously as Joseph dictated—not taking the time for correct spelling (except new words or names), capitalization or punctuation.

I learned that Joseph spelled out letter-by-letter at least the first reference to new words or names for his scribes.

I learned that Moroni wrote the title page (commonly referred to as the "preface"). Joseph himself described it as "taken from the very last leaf, . . . a genuine and *literal* translation of the title page of the original Book of Mormon, as recorded on the plates." [*emphasis added here and throughout*] (*Times & Seasons* 1842:943) I also learned that he wrote

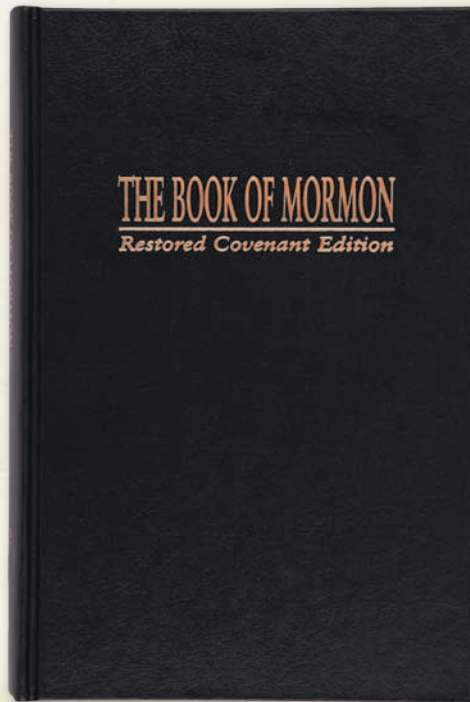
out the entire text on the copyright application where it said "Title"! Since I learned this, I no longer can refer to this important page as the "preface."

There were times I felt as if "I were there" when these miraculous manuscripts were made. Most important of all, I realized how blessed we are to have them—which *are* The Book of Mormon—and what a blessing it was for me, personally, to have this experience with the manuscripts. Nothing compares in Biblical history—not even the Dead Sea Scrolls!

My First "Missing" Word!

One day I was looking at a photocopy from an article of a page from the original manuscript that was clear enough to read (although it had been greatly reduced in size). I decided it would be an interesting exercise to compare, side-by-side, this original manuscript page, *The Critical Text*³ and my 1908 Book of Mormon for the verses covered, from 1 Nephi 2:28-50 [1 Nephi 7:17-8:11 LDS]. It wasn't easy, not only because the handwriting was so small, but the style of some letters was unfamiliar to me. One of the most common differences is a handwritten "s" which looks almost

like a cursive "f" with a "backwards tail" below the line. I was slowly moving through the text, one word at a time, until one word was difficult to make out. It was dark, almost like an ink blob, and two "backwards fs" were also throwing me. In checking my 1908, I saw the word was "sacrifice" but it looked like *sacrifice*. I continued on, word by word, but something caught my eye. In the midst of this verse, at the end of the line and at the beginning of the next, were letters that were not in my 1908, nor in *The Critical Text*. I examined this closely using a magnifying glass. Sure enough, I made out the letters at the end of the line as "of" and at the beginning of the next line, "-fer." It appeared to be a hyphenated word, with the hyphen at the



beginning of the line in front of the last syllable rather than following the first syllable as we are accustomed.

Here's the way the verse reads with this word included: "And they did offer sacrifice and *offer* burnt offerings unto him" (1 Nephi 2:39 RLDS) [1 Nephi 7:22 LDS].

Reading these words as they had originally been translated by Joseph Smith, I was astounded by several realizations that dawned on me. First, this word was NOT noted in *The Critical Text*. Secondly, it was not noted in Richard Howard's book⁴. It was not in my 1908. Here was a word that apparently no one had even noticed before! (Later research of other published editions, as well as articles on textual comparisons mentioning this portion of the original manuscript, would confirm this omission.)

And finally, I realized that the original wording on the manuscript was a Hebraism! Angela Crowell had identified a particular type of Hebraism as a "cognate accusative" in which the verb and its object are from the same root. It had stuck with me because it is so frequently found in The Book of Mormon. She gave examples such as "dreamed a dream," "vowed a vow," etc. I had even made a list in the back of my Book of Mormon as I found new variations that ultimately tallied over 30 different examples. The significance of the numerous Hebrew patterns in The Book of Mormon is evidence of a word-for-word translation.

When I realized the correct reading of 1 Nephi 2:39 [1 Nephi 7:22 LDS] as "*offer* burnt offerings" was a missing Hebraism, I became excited. When Ray Treat arrived at the office a short time later, I couldn't wait to tell him about this discovery and let him see for himself. I actually managed to contain my enthusiasm to see what his reaction would be. He also became excited about the significance of this discovery, and he shared this discovery with everyone who came into the office that day.

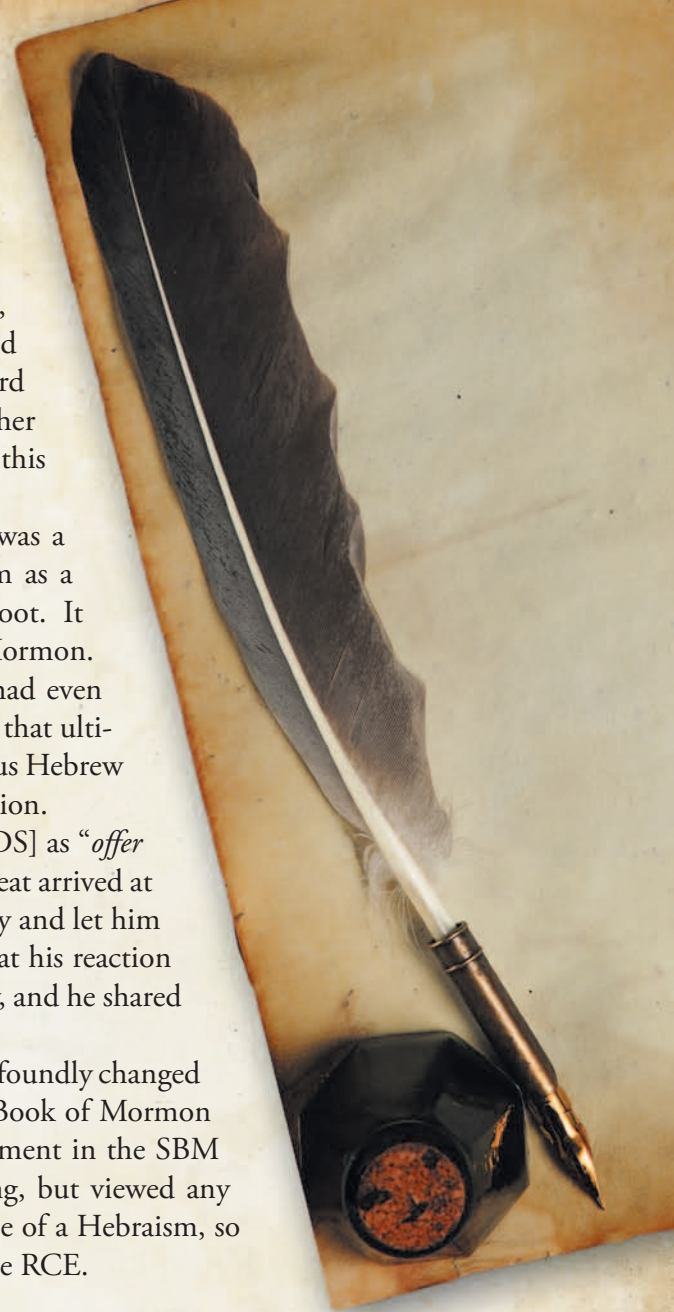
In retrospect, the results of the discovery of this tiny five-letter word profoundly changed the SBM project. Up to that point, restoring words to the text of The Book of Mormon had not even been considered. We were planning to make a verse comment in the SBM where some historical change (in previous editions) might be interesting, but viewed any variances from the manuscripts as insignificant. But here was an example of a Hebraism, so this discovery greatly changed our focus and ultimately contributed to the RCE.

Weakness Turned to Blessing

When it became apparent that I would need to check the manuscripts in addition to consulting *The Critical Text*, I began to view microfilm at the RLDS Auditorium Library, where they had both the original and printer's manuscripts. However, I soon found that my weakness toward motion sickness made it nearly impossible to work more than a few minutes at a time. The library also had a large book with a photo copy of the printer's manuscript, but it was very heavy and difficult to use. ZRF, therefore, requested permission to use a photo copy of the printer's manuscript in our office, which was generously granted. I would pick up 50 pages at a time and then, when finished, return them for the next 50 pages. This not only eliminated my episodes of motion sickness, but the greater blessing was the ease of use on our large study table where I could lay out my Book of Mormon, *The Critical Text*, the printer's manuscript pages and my accumulating notes. There was no workspace at all at the microfilm readers in the old Auditorium library, and I juggled books and papers on my lap with piles on the floor! It was also a small space and, although generally quiet as most libraries, there were often distracting noises or people entering or leaving, etc. I still had to use the microfilm reader for the original manuscript.

Insights From the Manuscripts

As I became more absorbed in the manuscripts and *Critical Text* notations, I found examples that caused me to ponder their meaning and understanding of the related passages. One such word is in Lehi's vision of multitudes of people "pressing forward"; (1 Nephi 2:65, 68, 78 RLDS) [1 Nephi 8:21, 24, 30 LDS] both manuscripts are in agreement for three



occurrences. However, the fourth group in verse 79 [verse 31 LDS] is described on the original manuscript as “*pressing* their way toward that great and spacious building,” while the printer’s manuscript reads “*feeling*.” This is evidently a copy error by the scribe misreading *pressing* for *feeling*, and appearing in all editions until corrected in First Nephi Study Book of Mormon. As I pondered Lehi’s overall vision and this specific original word, it led me to a new understanding of the original meaning. I saw that the meaning of “*pressing*” is “to crowd or push ahead with eagerness or haste,” while “*feeling*” meant “groping” or “trying to find or make one’s way by touch.” With “*pressing*” restored for the fourth group, I now saw that this last group moving toward the great and spacious building were not just “groping” or fumbling around, but were actually moving in a determined and expectant way! This was a totally new perspective to me and helped me understand the significance of each person’s agency to choose their path.

Two additional insights are especially meaningful to me. Both are examples of numerous places a word or phrases were removed or changed in the 1837 second edition—changes made either directly to the printer’s manuscript or when the type was set.

I walked at Independence Center most mornings before going to work, using that time to listen to The Book of Mormon on tape. One particular day, I was walking and listening to the book of Jacob. When I heard the words of Jacob 2:8 [Jacob 2:8 LDS], I stopped in my tracks. This verse says, “...they have come up hither to hear the pleasing word of God, yea, the word that healeth the *wounded* soul.” I immediately recalled the change made to 1 Nephi 3:179 [1 Nephi 13:32 LDS] from “state of awful woundedness” to “awful state of blindness.”⁵ In these words of an angel to Nephi, it is the Gentiles which are in this state because of the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back. As Jacob preaches to the Nephites, he provides the answer for those suffering woundedness—the answer is the healing word of God! I saw that the original wording gives greater understanding of the state of the Gentiles with the solution in Jacob—the word of God. This insight has given clarity to me of the importance of The Book of Mormon to the Gentiles.

One other place that has blessed me is found in 2 Nephi 3:11 [2 Nephi 4:5 LDS]. Lehi is speaking to his sons and daughters before he goes down to the grave and says, “I know that if ye are brought up in the *right* way ye should go, ye will not depart from it.” The word “right” appears on the printer’s manuscript and in the 1830 first edition⁶. But before the 1837 edition was published, the word was struck out on the manuscript and does not appear in the 1837 edition nor any subsequent and current editions (it

is restored in the RCE). I knew the phrase “right way” was found elsewhere in The Book of Mormon: “For the *right way is to believe in Christ* and deny him not; for by denying him, ye also deny the prophets and the law.” (2 Nephi 11:54 RLDS) [2 Nephi 25:28 LDS]

Here was not only a second witness to the “right way”, but a key to the meaning in 2 Nephi 3:11 [2 Nephi 4:5 LDS]. In 2 Nephi 3:11 [2 Nephi 4:5 LDS], the passage was weakened when the word was removed. As I pondered that “the right way is to believe in Christ,” I remembered one of the most well-known verses in the Old Testament: “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6). The one little word restored in The Book of Mormon passage adds a deeper, true understanding that the *right way* to train up a child is to *believe in Christ*! How thrilling to realize that this understanding can richly bless parents as they train up their children in the *right way*.

It is truly a privilege to share with you the blessings I have received by what at times seemed like a daunting and arduous task—blessings and insights which endure for me today. It was a profound experience to work with these treasured manuscripts—one that I never would have thought could or would happen to me! These and other insights have given me clarity of the importance of The Book of Mormon. They have also motivated me to start Quetzal Archaeology Center and resume The Study Book of Mormon project, to assist in conveying to all—Lamanites, Jews and Gentiles—its precious message.

¹ First Nephi Study Book of Mormon, Vol, 1, published by Zarahemla Research Foundation in 1988.

² The original manuscript is owned by the Utah LDS; the printer manuscript is owned by Community of Christ in Independence (formerly RLDS).

³ *The Critical Text of the Book of Mormon*, volume 1, 1984, by Foundation for Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.). This work compared the manuscripts of The Book of Mormon, the result of a ten-year project (four volumes were published 1984-1988).

⁴ *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* by Richard P Howard, 1969, Herald Publishing House, Independence.

⁵ 1 Nephi 3:179 [1 Nephi 13:32 LDS] has read since 1837: “Neither will the Lord God suffer that the Gentiles shall for ever remain in that *awful state of blindness*.” The original wording describes it as “that *state of awful woundedness*” (both manuscripts and 1830 First Edition).

⁶ No original manuscript is extant for this passage.

Shirley Heater works with the publication of a new magazine,



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BOOK OF MORMON

BOOK OF MORMON DAY for Kids 2011

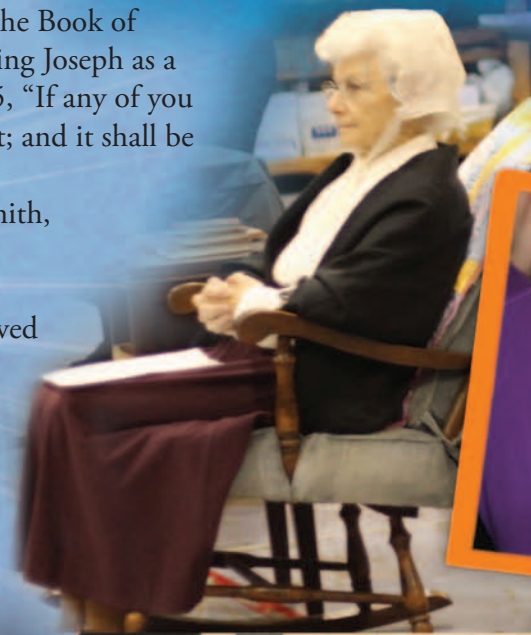


“From the GROVE to the PRESS”

This year’s Book of Mormon Day for Kids allowed us the chance to explore how the Book of Mormon came to us in the latter days. The program started with a video clip depicting Joseph as a young boy asking, “Which church should I join?” He found the scripture, James 1:5, “If any of you lack **wisdom**, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” He then went to the grove to pray for direction.

We then proceeded to our stations, as we enjoyed storytelling with Lucy Mack Smith, making candles, learning about the printing press of the 1800s, writing with a quill pen, and learning about translating and making a miniature replica of the Urim and Thummim. Later in the day, we started our afternoon session of activities that involved singing old-time hymns, playing old-fashioned games, learning about cooking in the 1800s and making butter, and sewing our initials on burlap saddle bags. It was a blessed day, and our children learned about a subject so near and dear to us all.

Our children are a precious gift to us, and their excitement in learning about the scriptures is treasured as we look forward to Book of Mormon Day for Kids next year!





I really enjoyed Book of Mormon Day for Kids. Everyone was so happy. We were blessed with a beautiful day. My favorite morning stations were Quill Pen and Making Candles. God really blessed us with a wonderful time learning about the Book of Mormon with other kids.
by Lucy Look

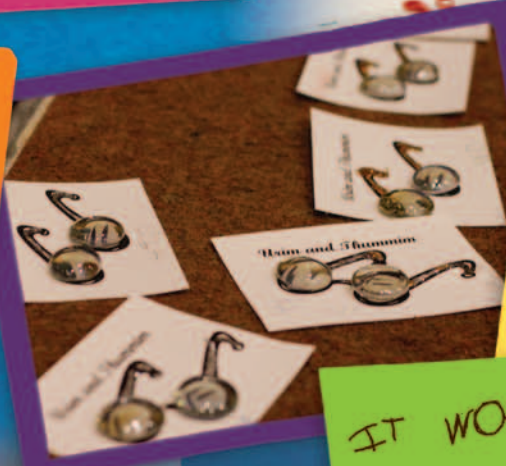


I had fun! I really thought the teachers were cool and the projects were great! The movie was pretty interesting. I can't wait to help next year as this was my last year to get to go.
by Hannah Edwards

Photos courtesy of Rachel Howen



Upon leaving Book of Mormon Day for Kids, 1st grader Kaylee Ballantyne tells her mother "Oh, I loved it! I want to go back next year and next year and the next year!" She loved the quill pen station so much that she asked for a quill pen and some ink for Christmas!



My favorite thing was the Translation station. I liked making the umm and thumma.
by Rosemary Etter

IT WAS FUN
by Seth Newell



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With God, ALL Things are Possible

by Jamie Spencer

I had the amazing experience of helping with the Book of Mormon Day for Kids this year. I had agreed to help a few weeks before and was really excited about it! However, the morning of the event, I woke up with a terrible headache—and an attitude to match. I did not feel like helping. I just wanted to stay at home with my family and relax. I prayed about it and asked the Lord to give me the energy, joy and excitement needed to teach class for the day. I told Him, “Lord, this is ALL you. I just don’t have it in me today. Please help me to not only get through today, but to be able to enjoy it as well.” I also had a friend of mine staying with me that week who was going to help. As we drove to the Book of Mormon Day, my headache disappeared, and my mood lifted considerably. I had plenty of energy for the day, and we were all able to have a great time praising the Lord through song and learning of His work through Joseph Smith. By the end of the day, I was tired, but it was such a great day—I am so thankful the Lord blessed me with everything needed to be able to serve Him. At the beginning of the day, I had felt as though there was no way I could have the energy for the day, but God showed me otherwise. He showed me that, even when it seems like there is no hope for your heavy and unwilling heart, but you have the desire for it to change, He will do it for you. This experience showed me that, if at any time I have felt like the joy and enthusiasm has come from me, now was the time that I realized it only comes from God. On my own, I am nothing, but with *Him*, I can do all things.

