

## LESSON 6

# The Book of Mormon Was Written for Our Day

### Introduction

The Book of Mormon and the restored gospel of Jesus Christ are part of “a marvelous work and a wonder” wrought by God in the latter days (2 Nephi 25:17). Because the Book of Mormon contains a fulness of the gospel, it plays a key role

in overcoming apostasy and bringing souls to Christ. This lesson emphasizes that this sacred record was written by inspired writers who saw our day.

### Background Reading

- Jeffrey R. Holland, “Safety for the Soul,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 88–90.
- “Flooding the Earth and Our Lives with the Book of Mormon,” chapter 10 in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* (2014), 137–45.

### Suggestions for Teaching

**2 Nephi 27:6, 29–30, 35; 3 Nephi 29:1–2; Moses 7:62; Joseph Smith—History 1:34**

#### *The role of the Book of Mormon in the latter-days*

Explain to students that the Book of Mormon records prophecies that there will be wickedness and apostasy on the earth in the latter days (see 2 Nephi 27:1, 4–5). The Book of Mormon also records the Lord’s solution to these problems. Ask a student to read 2 Nephi 27:6, 29–30, 35 aloud while the class looks for the Lord’s solution.

- According to these verses, what will the Lord do in the last days to counteract wickedness and apostasy?
- In what ways does the Book of Mormon provide a solution to the wickedness of the latter days?

Tell students that Mormon recorded a prophecy about an additional role the Book of Mormon would play in the last days. Give students a few minutes to study 3 Nephi 29:1–2 and look for that prophecy. You might point out that the phrase “these sayings” refers to the Book of Mormon.

- What important work would begin with the coming forth of the Book of Mormon? (The gathering of Israel.)

Explain that President Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994) described the central role of the Book of Mormon in the Restoration of the gospel and the commencement of the Lord’s work in the last days. Invite a student to read aloud the following statement:



"[The Book of Mormon] was published just a few days before the Church was organized. The Saints were given the Book of Mormon to read before they were given the revelations outlining such great doctrines as the three degrees of glory, celestial marriage, or work for the dead. It came before priesthood quorums and Church organization. Doesn't this tell us something about how the Lord views this sacred work?" ("The Book of Mormon—Keystone of Our Religion," *Ensign*,

Nov. 1986, 4).

- Why do you think that the coming forth of the Book of Mormon preceded so many other important events of the Restoration and is so central to the Lord's work of gathering Israel and overcoming wickedness in the last days?

To help answer this question, ask a student to read Joseph Smith—History 1:34 aloud. Invite the class to look for what the Book of Mormon contains.

- What does the Book of Mormon contain? (Help students identify the following truth: **The Book of Mormon contains the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.**)
- What is the meaning of Moroni's declaration that the Book of Mormon contains "the fulness of the everlasting Gospel"?

To help answer this question, display the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson and ask a student to read it:



"The Lord Himself has stated that the Book of Mormon contains the 'fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ' (D&C 20:9). That does not mean it contains every teaching, every doctrine ever revealed. Rather, it means that in the Book of Mormon we will find the fulness of those doctrines required for our salvation. And they are taught plainly and simply" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* [2014], 131).

- What are some of the "doctrines required for our salvation" contained in the Book of Mormon? (These doctrines include the Atonement, faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.)

Explain that the Lord taught the prophet Enoch about the significance of the Book of Mormon in the last days. Invite a student to read Moses 7:62 aloud. (You might write on the board that "righteousness [sent] down out of heaven" refers to the revelations that made the Restoration possible and "truth [sent] forth out of the earth" refers to the Book of Mormon. Encourage students to write these definitions in the margin of their scriptures or create a note in their electronic scriptures.)

- According to this verse, how will the Book of Mormon be used in the latter days? (To help gather God's elect into the Church from the four corners of the earth.)
- When have you seen the Book of Mormon help someone become converted to the gospel and join the Lord's Church?

- What are some ways that we can “sweep the earth” with righteousness and the message of the Book of Mormon “as with a flood”?

Invite students to commit to do something to “flood” their hearts, their homes, and the earth with the message of the Book of Mormon during the coming week.

### 3 Nephi 21:9–11

#### *The truth of the Book of Mormon withstands opposition*

Ask students to consider a time when they defended the Book of Mormon or the message of the Restoration of the gospel against opposition.

Invite a student to read 3 Nephi 21:9–11 aloud. Before the student begins reading, explain that Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles identified the “servant” in these verses as the Prophet Joseph Smith (see *Christ and the New Covenant* [1997], 287–88).

- How does the Prophet Joseph Smith fit the description found in these verses?
- According to these verses, what will the Savior show the people who oppose Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon in the latter days? (Help students identify the following doctrine: **God’s wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil.**)
- How does the Book of Mormon help to show that God’s “wisdom is greater than the cunning of the devil”?

Display and read the following statement by Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:



“For [more than 180] years this book has been examined and attacked, denied and deconstructed, targeted and torn apart like perhaps no other book in modern religious history—perhaps like no other book in *any* religious history. And still it stands. Failed theories about its origins have been born and parroted and have died. . . . None of these frankly pathetic answers for this book has ever withstood examination because *there is no other answer* than the one Joseph gave as its young unlearned translator. In this I stand with my own great-grandfather, who said simply enough, ‘No wicked man could write such a book as this; and no good man would write it, unless it were true and he were commanded of God to do so’ (*“Safety for the Soul,” Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2009, 89).

- Why do you think there is so much opposition to the Book of Mormon?
- What experiences have taught you that the Book of Mormon can withstand the opposition brought against it?
- What have you felt and what have you learned as you have taught others about the Book of Mormon or defended its truthfulness?

## Mormon 8:1–5, 26–35

### *The Book of Mormon was written for our day*

Remind students that Moroni witnessed the destruction of his civilization. Ask students to read Mormon 8:1–5 and consider what Moroni might have been required to do to protect the gold plates.

- Imagine that you were Moroni. What are some reasons why you would want others to read your record?

Ask students to read Mormon 8:26–35, looking for what Moroni prophesied about the conditions at the time when the Book of Mormon would be brought forth. You might encourage students to mark what they find.

- How did Moroni describe the time when the Book of Mormon would be brought forth? (It would be a day of apostasy and wickedness.)
- What conclusions can you make based upon verse 35? (You might point out that in addition to Moroni, other prophets including Nephi, Jacob, and Mormon stated that they were writing for future generations. Consider having students cross-reference verse 35 with 2 Nephi 25:21–22 and Mormon 7:1.)
- Why is it important to know that Moroni and other Book of Mormon writers were aware of the problems we face today? (As you discuss this question, emphasize the following truth: **The teachings in the Book of Mormon are of great worth to us today because the writers were aware of the problems we would face.**)

To help students understand this truth, invite a student to read the following statement by President Ezra Taft Benson:



“The Book of Mormon ... was written for our day. The Nephites never had the book; neither did the Lamanites of ancient times. It was meant for us. Mormon wrote near the end of the Nephite civilization. Under the inspiration of God, who sees all things from the beginning, he abridged centuries of records, choosing the stories, speeches, and events that would be most helpful to us.

“Each of the major writers of the Book of Mormon testified that he wrote for future generations. ... If they saw our day and chose those things which would be of greatest worth to us, is not that how we should study the Book of Mormon? We should constantly ask ourselves, ‘Why did the Lord inspire Mormon (or Moroni or Alma) to include that in his record? What lesson can I learn from that to help me live in this day and age?’” (*Teachings: Ezra Taft Benson*, 140).

- How might remembering that the Book of Mormon was written for our day change the way we read it?

Invite students to give examples of how the Book of Mormon has given them direction, strength, answers to questions, or solutions to problems.

## Student Readings

- 2 Nephi 25:17–18; 3 Nephi 21:9–11; 29:1–4; Mormon 8:1–5, 26–35; Ether 12:22–26; Moses 7:62; Joseph Smith—History 1:34.

- “Flooding the Earth and Our Lives with the Book of Mormon,” chapter 10 in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Ezra Taft Benson* (2014), 137–45.