



Type: Magazine Article

The Book of Mormon

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Source: *Improvement Era*, Vol. 64, No. 3 (March 1961)

Published by: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Page(s): 189, 199

Abstract: This article discusses how the Book of Mormon was key in the restoration of the priesthood and the Church. It has survived a century and a quarter of anti-Mormon criticism.

The school program for senior members of the Aaronic Priesthood and wives has been a powerful medium for helping men to qualify themselves for advancement in the priesthood. Such schools have been very successful both in rural and urban districts.

Participation in school classes helps men to overcome inhibitive fears that often keep them from active Church participation. It provides a psychological, competitive challenge to each participant that gives group strength to individual conquest. It affords the opportunity to teach the principles of the gospel and to give men responsibilities without their feeling that there are personal implications. It is a means of integrating a group into a working unit with a common objective and with the incentive and power to reach it.

A well-directed school will unify its members and give direction to learning and activity. In such a school, the strength of the group becomes the strength of each individual in the group.

They lean on and support each other in reaching out for worthy goals and in overcoming individual weaknesses or undesirable habits.

Senior members participating in groups usually advance faster than those who are worked with by personal contact only, and they often maintain a social group status when they become elders.

We urge all ward bishops to provide schools for senior members and their wives. We urge, too, that a close follow-up be made with bishop interviews, cottage meetings, and assignments. The results will be rewarding.



WARD TEACHING SUPPLEMENT

THE BOOK OF MORMON

“ . . . 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.

“And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.” (Ezekiel 37:19-20.)

This marvelous prophecy has been literally fulfilled in our day. The Book of Mormon, the stick of Joseph, is in the hands of Ephraim. The vast majority of the membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are of Ephraim. It has been united with the stick of Judah, the Bible, as a witness to all the world that Jesus is the Christ and that his unchangeable gospel is the only and everlasting plan for the salvation of mankind.

The Lord, with purpose, restored the Book of Mormon simultaneously and in connection with the restoration of the priesthood and the Church. It has been and is the greatest missionary aid of this dispensation. It is a book that offers a test of its own divinity to all who will prayerfully read it.

“And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it

unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.” (Moroni 10:4.)

Its restoration has, to the chagrin and embarrassment of some and to the blessings of others, fulfilled other great prophecies.

The book was to be the voice of a humbled people and would speak “. . . out of the ground . . .” and “. . . low out of the dust, . . .” To the righteous the voice would be “. . . as of one that hath a familiar spirit, . . .”

The Prophet indicated that the book, part of which was sealed, would be delivered “. . . to one that is learned saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:

“And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned.” (Isaiah 29:11-12.)

This prophecy was fulfilled when Martin Harris presented a copy of some of the characters from the golden plates to Professor Charles Anthon of Columbia University. When told that part of the plates were sealed, he said “I cannot read a sealed book.” The book was given to the young and humble Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr., who had little formal education, and he translated it by the power of God.

And concerning the book the Prophet also said: “. . . for the wisdom (Continued on page 199)

enthusiasm and kneel to ask the Lord to bless your day. This phrase carries its own guarantee. This I can say: It can make a great difference in those thirty or thirty-one days ahead of you.

"Put his seal on your day. Stamp it with his name which is the same as calling it good. It is bound to carry that quality through. Start your job with him. Dedicate one moment to him—and the next—and the next. They will become the best moments you have ever known! They will become purposeful, fulfilled, worthwhile. And at the day's ending?—You will find yourself encircled with uplifting strength which comes from him. Then you yourself can proclaim in heartfelt sincerity: "This *has* been a good day!"

The Presiding Bishopric's Page

(Continued from page 189)

of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid." (*Ibid.*, 29:14.)

For over a century and a quarter many unbelieving men have tried in vain to explain away the divinity of the Book of Mormon. They have sought without success for inconsistencies and contradictions. This book has survived the acid test of critical scrutinizing.

The introduction of the book, written on its title page, gives a concise statement of its contents and purpose.

"Wherefore, it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites—Written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile—Written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation—Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed—To come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof—Sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by way of the Gentile—The interpretation thereof by the gift of God."

The Book of Mormon should be read and studied. It is the word of God, but only to those who read it.

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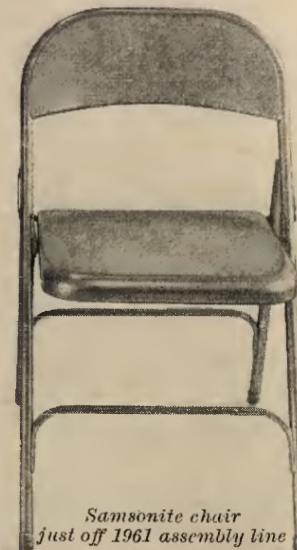
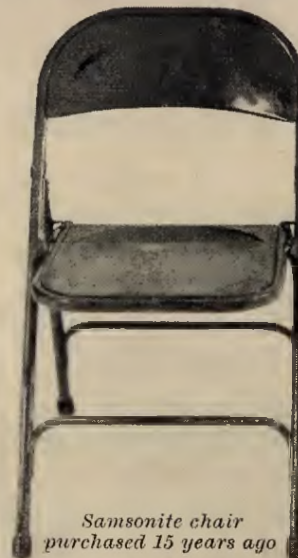
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