

Will You Pray About -

The Book of Mormon

Dear Rob,

Please accept this Book of Mormon. I want to share this precious gift and my testimony of the true gospel of Jesus Christ with you. Rob, I know that this church is true because this is our savior Jesus Christ's Church. I know Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God and he restored this church here upon this earth in 1830. I know that this Book of Mormon is true. My favorite chapter in here is 3rd Nephi 11 because it tells about the people over in the American continent and the wonderful opportunity they had when Jesus Christ appeared to them four days after his resurrection to form his church over here. I have fasted and prayed about the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith, and especially if this is the true Church of Jesus Christ. I know without a doubt in my mind that it is true. Rob, I want you to read and pray with your heart and mind open to the prompting of the Holy Ghost. Let it touch your life like it has done with mine. I wish you all the best.

Love,

Ruth

Dear Ruth,

(I put a lot of time and work into this, so you better read it all!)

Surprise! I canceled my plans for the day to finally get around to writing you. How much longer are you going to be on your mission? It looks like I'll probably be going on my mission this summer at the usual place. Anyway, I don't want to take all day to write this letter, so I'll get right into responding to your gift.

Thanks for the Book of Mormon...it's my 9th one, including an 1830 edition. When I taught on Mormon-

ism for a semester at my church last year, we used them while I spent a couple weeks going through the Book of Mormon.

Despite your wish, I know that the L.D.S. Church is not the true Christ's Church, and that Joseph Smith, Jr. was not a prophet of the true God, and that the Book of Mormon is not the word of the true God, and is definitely not even an accurate historical account, but is a fairy tale, much like Alice in Wonderland. And yes, I've read the whole Book of Mormon.

Now, instead of me stopping here with my own subjective experience (as you did with your testimony), I will proceed to give you objective evidence why such is the case. Why must I do this?

1) Everyone has a subjective experience to the truthfulness of something (the Koran, in Islam, the Upanishad in Hinduism, the Divine Principle in the Unification Church, the Moonies, etc.) If everyone simply shared their own subjective experience, no one would get anywhere. In other words, how could a person firmly devoted to one group be convinced of the (truth or untruth for that matter) of another if all that was offered to that individual was, "I know that my church and its prophets and its writings are true?" You have your set of presuppositions, or feelings that you believe are from the Holy Spirit, and I have mine, and somebody else from the Jehovah's Witnesses has his set. And guess what - we all contradict each other on very fundamental issues. We must use objective reasons, that we may all work with, to determine who really has the truth.

2) Using objective reasons is, thus, the loving thing to do. 1 Corinthians 13:6 says that love rejoices with the truth. It would simply be unloving to stand by and watch other people, in various religions, go to hell without trying to persuade them that they were in trouble. Persuading is far different from preaching at people (e.g., "I know that I have the truth and you simply must take my word for it"). Persuading entails giving answers or reasons why one should hold your position. It is very loving to try to convince a blind man that he's about to fall in a ditch. He may not believe me until I provide good reasons for the existence of an oncoming ditch (e.g., bringing him over close enough to where he may feel it without falling in).

3) This is what the prophets in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon do. We are commanded to "test all things and hold fast to that which is good" (1 Thess.

5:21), to search the Scriptures to see if these things are true (Acts 17:11), to seek after wisdom which is crying out from the streets (Proverbs. 1:20 & 21), and to defend with reason what we know to be true (1 Peter 3:15). With all this in mind, "Come, let us reason" (Isa. 1:18).

Your apostle Orson Pratt wrote concerning the Book of Mormon,

"...if false, it is one of the most cunning, wicked, bold, deep-laid impositions palmed upon the world, calculated to deceive and ruin millions who will sincerely receive it as the word of God, and will suppose themselves securely built upon the rock of truth until they are plunged with their families into hopeless despair...if, after a rigid examination, it be found an imposition, it should be extensively published to the world as such; the evidences and arguments on which the imposture was detected, should be clearly and logically stated, that those who have been sincerely yet unfortunately deceived, may perceive the nature of the deception, and be reclaimed...and that those who continue to publish the delusion, may be exposed and silenced (Orson Pratt's Works, "Divine Authority of the Book of Mormon," Liverpool, 1851, pp. 1-2).

Ruth, I have done a rigid examination, and I believe you are sincerely, yet unfortunately, deceived for the following reasons.

1) The Book of Mormon never claims to be the inspired/inerrant word of God. Instead, in 1 Nephi 19:6, Nephi says that in this writing it is possible for him to err. In Mormon 9:33, there are errors or imperfections in the record since they didn't use Hebrew. All that the Book of Mormon claims to be is a fairly accurate record of the dealings of God with the people in the Americas.

This is quite a contrast to the Bible, which does claim to be the inspired/inerrant word of God (2 Timothy 3:16 - NIV, 2 Peter 1:20 & 21, John 10:35, etc.). God used human agents as tools to write His word. If God cannot err (Hebrews 6:18, Titus 1:2), and the Bible is the word of God (Matthew 15:6), then the Bible cannot err. Translations done by fallible men err, but the Bible as originally given through the prophets and apostles cannot err.

2) The Book of Mormon is not even an accurate record. For example. A) In Ether 9:17-19, they supposedly had silks, fine linen, gold, silver, all manner of cattle, of oxen, cows, sheep, swine, goats, horses, elephants, cureloms and cumoms. None of these existed in the Americas until Columbus and other European explorers brought them over from Europe. Nobody knows what cureloms and cumoms are. B) None of the New World characters in the Book of Mormon can be confirmed by any secondary sources. There are no secondary sources (outside the Book of Mormon) that confirm any Book of Mormon New World characters. C) None of the places named in the Book of Mormon concerning the New World have ever been found or excavated to date. There are no secondary sources (outside the Book of Mormon) that confirm any Book of Mormon New World locations. D) None of the coins named in the Book of Mormon have ever been found. There are no secondary sources (outside the Book of Mormon) that confirm any Book of Mormon New World coinage. E) Certain stories are just ridiculous. For example, the battle between Shiz and Coriantumr in Ether 15:29-32, Shiz gets his head cut off and raises up on his hands, fell, and then struggled for breath, and then died. This works for chickens, not humans. Once the spinal cord is severed from the brain there is no more movement.

3) In contrast to the Bible, the Book of Mormon has a similar writing style from beginning to end (e.g., the phrase "it came to pass" is used extensively in every book). This would indicate the same author wrote all the books, yet the Book of Mormon claims to have various authors.

4) Any good anthropologist will tell you that the Indians (which Mormons believe were really the Lamanites of Jewish decent) are derived from the Mongoloid race (Asian), as opposed to the Caucasoid race of which the Jews belong. For example, Indians have scarce facial hair as opposed to the Jews with very thick facial hair.

5) Even if you still claim that the Book of Mormon is the true word of God, my next question would be, "Which edition?" Since the 1830 edition there have been around 4,000 changes to the Book of Mormon (not just grammatical or punctuation changes). Thus, either the present Book of Mormon is wrong, or Joseph Smith didn't know what he was saying when he

claimed "that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth," and when he claimed that the gold plates were translated by the gift and power of God (Doctrine & Covenants 1:29). On the other hand, maybe Doctrine & Covenants 1:29 is right and the translation was perfect (since it was done by God). Then this would seem to say that the 1830 edition is the only one really "authorized" by God. If this is the case, I still have no reason to believe the 1830 edition is really the word of God, since there are so many errors that had to be changed by later church members. For example, A) Mosiah 21:28 in the present Book of Mormon was changed from "King Benjamin" in the 1830 edition (p. 200) to "King Mosiah." B) 1 Nephi 11:18 & 21 in the present Book of Mormon was changed from "is the mother of God" (vs. 18) and "even the Eternal Father!" (vs. 21) in the 1830 edition to "is the mother of the Son of God" and "Even the Son of the eternal Father." C) Alma 13:9 in the present Book of Mormon was changed from "the Son of the only begotten of the Father" (making Jesus the grandson of the Father) in the 1830 edition to "the Son, the only begotten of the Father".

Much more may be added, but I think you get the point: By the L.D.S. Church changing the text, they have admitted that the Book of Mormon has errors in it and thus, cannot be the word of God (since God does not err). Thus, all Mormons prior to the printing of the current edition (including Joseph Smith and all the other prophets, except Benson) had a false testimony concerning the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. If this is the case, then it's at least probable that your testimony, as well as Benson's, is false as well.

6) It may also be that your testimony concerning the present edition is false, since the present Book of Mormon (as well as other past editions) contradicts other L.D.S. Scripture. For Example, A) The Book of Mormon explicitly teaches the existence of only one true God (Mosiah 15:1-5 & Alma 11:28 & 29), while the Doctrine & Covenants 132:20, and Pearl of Great Price (Abraham chapter 4) teach polytheism (the existence of many true Gods). B) Furthermore, the polygamy of such Old Testaments saints as David and Solomon is condemned in the Book of Mormon (Jacob 1:15, 2:23, 24, 21, 31, 3:5), yet it was blessed explicitly for them in Doctrine & Covenants 132:31-39.

7) Finally, I cannot accept your testimony concerning the Book of Mormon to be true because the Book

of Mormon contradicts the previous revelations of the Old and New Testaments. St. Paul said in Galatians 1:6-9 that if anyone comes and tells you anything other than that which we've already received, he is to be accursed. For example, A) 2 Nephi 25:23 contradicts St. Paul explicitly in Romans 4:5, 11:6, and Ephesians 2:8 & 9. The Book of Mormon teaches that salvation is by grace only after you've done all that you can do. The Bible teaches you can't do anything to earn God's grace, because we're all damned in sin, on our way to an eternal hell. All our own good works are as filthy rags to God (Isaiah 64:6). All you may do is freely choose to allow God to save you. From that point on (that point of faith in Christ's death for all your sins that are dragging you to hell), it is God who begins to do the work in you to perfect you into the image of His Son. B) The Holy Ghost is not an "it" as mentioned constantly throughout the Book of Mormon (e.g., 2 Nephi 32:5). The Book of Mormon never refers to Him as a "He" as the Bible does (e.g., John 16:13 & 14). The Holy Ghost is not an impersonal "it" (like electricity), but is a person who thinks and feels (Acts 13:2, 5:3 & 4, Ephesians 4:30, etc.). C) There is no essential difference between "Christ" and "the Son" in Scripture as there is in the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 31:21).

Ruth, I know the Book of Mormon is not of God, but has been used by Satan to deceive millions, like yourself, into believing the additional distortions of the L.D.S. Church. I realize that you have very unfortunately been torn into a non-Christian cult that denies the very fundamentals of Christianity, and I beg of you, in the name of Christ, to repent and leave the L.D.S. Church before it's too late! You are simply trusting in the wrong God and the wrong Jesus. There are, even as Jesus said there would be, many false Christs and gods. The L.D.S. Church is doing its part in fulfilling the words of Christ; only by promoting a false Christ and a false god (Matthew 24:24).

Your god is a big man with many wives, who is not really the Creator of everything in existence. He was created by his father, and so on and so on. You don't know who the ultimate Creator is!

The Bible teaches that God owes no one His existence. Rather, everything that exists does so because of Jesus, who is God from everlasting to everlasting (John 1:3 and Psalms 90:2, Hebrews 1:2, Colossians 1:15-18 with Genesis 1:1). He (God) is, even as the Book of Mormon says, "The Great Spirit"

(Alma 18:26-29 & 22:9-11 with John 4:24) who is omnipresent (Jer. 23:24).

Your Jesus is, thus, not the ultimate Creator, but owes his existence, as well, to his father. Your Jesus is merely the spirit brother of Satan, both of whom are our elder brothers.

This is pure blasphemy. The Son is from everlasting (Micah 5:2), and thus owes his existence to no one. He is "over all, God blessed forever" (Roman 9:5). He is, thus, the Creator of all things, including Satan (Colossians 1:15-18). He isn't Satan's brother! As a result, you should honor the Son just as you honor the Father (John 5:23). Why? Because they are both (along with the Holy Spirit) the ultimate Creator. There is none before Him and there will be none after Him (Isaiah 43:10).

Ruth, give your life to the one true God before it is too late. I continue to pray for you everyday.

Now I know what you thinking, "If he would only pray about it, then God would manifest the truth of it to Him!" - Right? The problem with this is that I (as well as yourself) don't need to pray about something that I know God has already spoken clearly about. That would be praying amiss as James 4:3 says we shouldn't do. If God tells you, "Do not steal," do you pray about stealing? No, because God has already spoken. To ask me to pray about what I know to be a fairy tale would be asking me to not keep my "head in all situations" as the apostle instructed me to do in 2 Timothy 4:5 NIV.

Ruth, you must obey the Truth. You must obey what is right. If you don't, God will allow you to freely pursue the wrong way which leads to an eternity in Hell.

Christ lost everything for you, why don't you lose everything for Him?

Love and Prayers,

Rob

Dear Rob,

I read your paper very carefully. I will be very open and honest with you, you let me down. I really thought you would take what was very precious to me in my life with an open mind and softened heart. Instead, all that you did was find all the fault you

could. Of course, that is what you are going to find when that is all that you're looking for. When you have the attitude to really find out what the truth is then you will. Rob, you are afraid of the truth. I hope you truly look into the church you belong to before you go tearing down and sharing false doctrine about other churches. I really hope you don't spend a lot of time doing that. I have one question to ask you, would Jesus Christ tear down someone else's beliefs if that is what they truly believed in? Think about it. There is a couple other things I would like to comment on.

First of all, I can't just "take your word for it" to know that your church is the true one. As missionaries in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints we share the gospel with interested people then we ask them to pray to our Heavenly Father to find out if what we are sharing is true. This is Jesus Christ's church and we, the missionaries, want people to join because of their belief in Him, not because of our own beliefs. I am just a messenger for my Heavenly Father.

Secondly, I can take all the Scriptures that you gave me and give you the correct ones but I am not going to do that. That would bring about contention. God wouldn't want that and it's not needed. I am sorry you felt it necessary to do this. I don't tear down your beliefs, I wish you wouldn't mine. Rob, I guess what it comes down to is, if we want to be friends we have to keep our beliefs and religion separate. I still do want to stay friends with you, but I will understand whatever decision you make concerning our friendship. Try to make sure your heart and mind are open when you do make this decision.

Love,

Ruth

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