

**WHY
SHOULD I
PRAY ABOUT THE
BOOK OF MORMON
WHEN . . . ?**

Mormon missionaries often try to get people to pray about the Book of Mormon. If you receive a burning feeling in your body then the claim will probably be made that the book is therefore true; you have received a testimony of the Holy Ghost. That this 'evidence' can hardly qualify as proof will be clearly shown in this paper.



WHY SHOULD I PRAY ABOUT THE BOOK OF MORMON WHEN . . .

A) The Book of Mormon fails the basic test of comparison with the Bible.

The Apostle Paul preached his message to the Bereans. How would they know if this was the truth or not? Did they go out and pray about it until they received a warm sensation in their bodies?

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. (Acts 17:11)

They didn't have to rely on mere feelings because they had the objective yardstick of the scriptures by which to judge Paul's words. How dangerous it would be to ignore the scriptures and seek for a sign (cf. Matthew 12:39). While it is true that James 1:5 tells those who lack wisdom to ask God for it, the context refers to those who are already brethren. Also, note that it says 'wisdom' *not* 'knowledge.'

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Tim. 3:16)

A good rule to remember is: *Never pray about something when God has already spoken out on the subject.* Don't force a test on God (cf. Matthew 4:7). For example, if a beautiful angel told you to go rob a bank and give the money to the poor, you wouldn't have to pray to know His will. He already said, "*Thou shalt not steal.*" (Ex. 20:15)

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. (Proverbs 14:12)

FOR EXAMPLE, THE BOOK OF MORMON SAYS . . .

- 1) "... for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do." (2 Nephi 25:23)

This is a mission impossible salvation plan. No one on the face of this earth is saved **after all he can do**, because no one always does **all** he can do! We all have bad days. The Bible offers us a realistic salvation plan however.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.* (Ephesians 2:8,9 - true faith will have works (cf. James 2:17) but faith alone saves.)

- 2) "... I remembered also to have heard my father prophesy unto the people concerning the coming of one Jesus Christ, a Son of God, to atone for the sins of the world." (Alma 36:17)

Notice that it says "*a Son of God.*" Jesus is *the Son of God*, not just *a Son of God*. I John 4:15 tells us, "*Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*"

- 3) "And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, . . ." (Alma 7:10)

But Jesus was born in "*Bethlehem of Judæa*" (Matthew 2:1 - cf. Luke 2:4 & Micah 5:2). Jerusalem is a distinct city and not "*the land of our forefathers.*" Furthermore, Jesus was born *in* Bethlehem which is a distinct town outside of Jerusalem (Emmaus and Bethany are closer to Jerusalem. He was not born in the district of Jerusalem but in the district of Judæa.

B) Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon faith, certainly didn't take portions of the Book of Mormon very seriously. He contradicted them & changed the wording of parts of the 1830 edition (that was supposedly translated "*by the gift and power of God.*")

- 1) "For I know that God is not a partial God, neither a changeable being; but he is unchangeable from all eternity to all eternity." (Moroni 8:18)

About 14 years after the 1830 Book of Mormon came out, Joseph Smith refuted his own book! In a major sermon (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith, p. 345) we read:

"We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, ..."

- 2) "Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord." (Jacob 2:24)

Perhaps Joseph had forgotten all about Jacob 2:24 when he had this 'revelation' recorded in Doctrine & Covenants 132:1:

"... I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Issac, and Jacob, as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines—"

- 3) "... And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen." (2 Nephi 31:21)

"I will preach on the plurality of Gods. I have selected this text for that express purpose. I wish to declare I have always and in all congregations when I have preached on the subject of the Deity, it has been the plurality of Gods. ... I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods. ... we have three Gods anyhow, and they are plural; and who can contradict it?" (as recorded in *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 370)

Who can contradict it? Well, consider 2 Nephi 31:21, Alma 11:44, Mosiah 15:1-5, and "The Testimony of Three Witnesses" at the front of the B.O.M. (not to mention D. & C. 20:28)!

- 4) "And Zeezrom said unto him: Thou sayest there is a true and living God? And Amulek said: Yea, there is a true and living God. Now Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God? And he answered, No. Now Zeezrom said unto him again; How knowest thou these things? And he said: An angel hath made them known unto me. (Alma 11:26-31)

From *one* "true and living God" here, Joseph Smith ended up promoting at least *three* for this earth (see No. 3 above).

- 5) In a letter from Joseph Anderson on July 29, 1974 (then managing director of the L.D.S. Historical Department), we read:

"For example, Joseph Smith made many corrections in the 1837 and the 1840 editions of the Book of Mormon. ..."

- C) The Mormon Church was not content to let the revised Book of Mormon alone, but recently came out with yet another revision, changing portions of the book back to an 1830 wording, but then taking some parts that were faithful to the 1830 edition and changing them. For instance, the pre-1981 modern edition vs. the 1981 modern edition includes the following changes (newest is at right):

“plainness of the gospel” (1 Ne. 13:24) *VS.* “fulness of the gospel.”
“white and delightsome people” (2 Ne. 30:6) *VS.* “pure and . . .”

Why the change from white (skin-color) to pure (moral quality)? Probably this tampering with the text (which was faithful to the 1830 ed.) was an effort to remove a source of irritation for dark-skinned people.

- D) The Book of Mormon simply lacks historical credibility. For all the talk of archeological finds which “support” the Book of Mormon, the fact remains that *not even one B.O.M. city located in this hemisphere has ever been found (proven to have existed)!!* Even the knowledgeable Thomas Stuart Ferguson admitted “. . . *there is no Book-of-Mormon geography.*” (Written Symposium on Book-of-Mormon Geography, 3/12/75). The Bible, however, has a *wealth* of solid archeological evidence behind it (such as identified cities). We are asked to believe that the Jewish ‘Lamanites’ of the B.O.M. are the forefathers of the present-day Indians. Indians are of the Mongoloid race however, and not the Caucasoid (which the Jews belong to).

Also, why does the title page of the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon tell us that Joseph Smith is “*Author and Proprietor*” instead of “*Translated by Joseph Smith, Jun.*” as on the modern title page? The fact that he literally meant “proprietor” (that is, ‘owner’) is supported by one of the three B.O.M. witnesses, David Whitmer. He told of Joseph receiving a revelation for some of the brethren to go to Toronto, Canada where they would sell the copyright of the Book of Mormon. The ‘revelation’ failed (An Address To All Believers in Christ, pp. 30-31. — cf. A Comprehensive History of the Church, v. 1, pp. 164-165).

- E) One major claim made for the Book of Mormon is that it contains the *fulness of the everlasting gospel* (see Doctrine & Covenants 27:5 and 135:3). According to Doctrines of Salvation, volume 1, p. 160, we read: “*By fullness of the gospel is meant all the ordinances and principles that pertain to the exaltation in the celestial kingdom . . .*” Celestial marriage is an essential requirement to gain this exaltation (that is, Godhood), but where does the B.O.M. mention *celestial marriage* (or for that matter, *men can become Gods, God was once a man, baptism for the dead, the Word of Wisdom, a heavenly Mother, etc.*)?

This paper is only scratching the surface of a myriad of problems surrounding the Book of Mormon. You don’t have to pray about this book anymore than you’ have to pray about the Koran, the Hindu scriptures, or anything else purporting to be divine. Don’t pray about it. *Test it!* Compare it with the “Book-of-books.” If you’ve been adrift on the sea of feelings, pushed this way and that by impressions and impulses that could easily be from the dark side, throw your anchor onto the Biblical bedrock. Don’t put your faith in feelings but in the One who said, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*” (John 14:6)

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