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Observations

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(We do not want to offend anyone, please contact us to be removed from our email list. Otherwise you are welcome to pass this information on to any whom you think would like it or could help us in our search for truth or you could forward us their email address. Thank you.) Hang in there non-Book of Mormon readers or believers, as we will give you exclusive, undeniable evidences of its truthfulness which may change your understanding of the purpose of life.

72 Personal Discoveries

It's easy to gain a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon, the hard part is living by the precepts it teaches us.

Being a poor reader in my youth I was somewhat over whelmed with those of my same age who seem to grasp that offered in the Book of Mormon that I seemed to be missing. Why, they could quote scriptures with chapter and verse in Sunday School classes, while I couldn't even remember what I had read last night. In time those same friends were being called on missions right and left, but not me. One day however, the bishop called me in, and asked me if I would like to go on a mission. Before even thinking the word "No" came out of my mouth, and he ask me to think about it. I thought about it, even day and night with the conclusion, after mentally comparing myself with my friends, that "How could I teach others what I had not learned myself", and my answer was still no. I look around nowadays, and some of my friends have been or are bishops, stake presidents, even general authorities. And I today am not even a member any more.

In all my life, my growing up years, in the military while I felt quite inadequate at times with my religious beliefs, I could never say I did not know the Book of Mormon was true and the word of God. I had done, as best I could read most of my assignments. You see, I took every Seminary and Institute class offered, and never failed one, but really never participated. I rarely ever missed Sunday School all my life, my mother saw to that.

In my personal studies, but because I had a hard time comprehending from my poor reading of anything, with the Book of Mormon in order to hold my interest it seems I had to find things it was teaching that I could personally relate too. In this way, I would then search or look forward for more of that which I could relate too. It began with Archery. It seemed for some reason as far back as I can recollect Archery had been a part of my life. I remember my mother must have picked up on this as a small boy as she made me Indian outfits. Then it wasn't until later in life that my father told me that he took me to a Seminole Indian reservation in the Everglades of Florida. You see, we lived at this time in Miami, Florida. He told me they turned around and I was gone. They literally could not find me anywhere. They searched and searched, but I was gone. Finally I came wondering out of one of the thatched roofed Indian houses with a bow and arrows the Indian's had given me, according to my father. Now I can't remember this, but it does seem Archery seem to have been born with me.

So finally while reading the Book of Mormon I finally reached the point where young Nephi broke his metal bow. Now this was something I could relate

too as I had broken my metal bow while attending BYU. And I could hardly wait to find the next offering which would include archery in some way. I even, because my other friends were underlining meaningful messages in the Book of Mormon all the time. I began to underline in red, anything that would pertain to Archery.

I share this with you because even though I was slow at grasping the content of the Book of Mormon, nevertheless, in my heart I knew of its importance. I dare say, I doubt that anyone since it was restored has carried it closer to themselves personally than I. I never went on a hunting trip, fishing trip, no matter where I went, even in times around the world, the jungles in Central America, all through the military, there never was a night I did not sleep with my scriptures under my head. Of course, like Joseph Smith, I find, my hunting knife was also there. Today I have several versions of the Book of Mormon in my computer, and I never go any where without my laptop. When I have a minute, I turn it on, and have it read parts of the Book of Mormon to me. I can plug my computer in to my vehicle, and listen to it as I drive, I even go into the hills near my home, turn off the vehicle and listen and study the Book of Mormon.

I have, over the years extended my research to include geological landmarks, ruins, artifacts, anything that might parallel what the Book of Mormon is teaching. The interesting thing is, much of my findings today, while very interesting and I believe fortifications of its truthfulness, are things that you will never learn in a church setting.

In the beginning of my studies, I read words, with little of the real message of happenings coming through to me. It took many readings over many years before the actual story really unfolded into my mind. In time I could hold my own in a discussion about different parts of the history. Finally I realized that more than words, but teachings by examples was emerging in my mind. A second method of teaching us. Word as commands teach us what and how we should live was nice, but what emerged was actual examples of people who either lived the directions taught and prospered, or in varying degrees they fell from living as the words taught, to finally become more and more wicked until they suffered the results of not living the words which had been taught to them and to us.

This really begin to catch my attention. Now to expand this further, I began to use both of these ways of teaching us, and applying it to the ways we live today.

Strange things then began to take shape in my research, a real awakening. Even one which I did not like, for you see the comparisons I was coming up with was that we today seem to be more closely parallel with those in the Book of Mormon who were the more wicked, instead of those who were the more righteous.

Now let me digress a little. For approximately fifty years, the way I see it today, not being a member today, is that because of my personal ignorance in being a little slow in understanding the scriptures as a member, I place trust in those of whom I placed above me, who I perceived knew so much more than I. The Book of Mormon calls them “teachers”. But I cannot say that this is all bad, because a good part of my learning came from them. But as I say this, in my

mind, this is really incorrect, because as I at present reflect on my learning of the Book of Mormon, it really began to fall into place only when I had forsaken my membership. Now being all alone in my research, never wavering in my knowledge that the Book of Mormon was true, and now the clincher. I began to only place my trust in God, as I had no one else. I had no teachers, no bishop's, no general authorities, even prophets, but just me and my creator to depend upon.

Now in the beginning, I felt sorry for myself, and it took a long time before minute changes began to form within me. As I continued in my study and research, all alone, I might add. Relying to a greater degree on my prayers, more and more things seem to come to me. Things like, thoughts during the night as I slept. Some times I would even awake myself to read what I was thinking about, some times to even underline, or make notes in my scriptures. This experience seem to be enlarging to a point that even throughout the day, thoughts would come to me, and again, I would either refer to my book or make notes to study at a later, more peaceful and quiet time.

Then in my studies, of which I had read and read over and over for many years, I found out that Lehi, Nephi and others were taught in their dreams, and even most of the time in the night. Again, a parallel with personal experiences. My push then was to attempt to enlarge on this process, a process I had never experienced while being an active member.

But it does not stop here. Things I read and studied seemed to stand out in my sight and mind that I had never seen or felt before. It was almost like as I read along some of the words became enlarged like in capitols, I say this now, but this really did not happen, its only to give you an idea. But impressions like this began to take place more and more often.

I began to realize so many things it is impossible to write them down. They kept coming faster and faster, throughout the day and night, and I did not know what to do with them. Things like, there needs be opposition in all things. If I allow myself to dwell on this even for a few seconds it's like an ever expanding world within its self. I can visualize this necessary process in every aspect of our lives, and that everything good must have its opposite.

Another for example is, at present in my mind I see the Jews in Jerusalem at the time Lehi attempts to point out their sinful way of life, as he tells them if they continue they must surely parish. Then they attempt to destroy him for saying these things and in time they parish. But in addition to seeing this, at the same time I am seeing us today, and we are participating in the very same things Lehi is teaching them of, the sins they perished because of. And yet we are living as if "All is well in Zion" as we, for the more part, are trusting in our "teachers". Taking this a little further, just who are our "teachers", those of flesh we are told by Christ that we will be cursed if we place trust in men or flesh. Are we a duplicate today of those in Jerusalem in Lehi's time. Must we get out of Jerusalem like Lehi, or today, as warned by John, get out of Babylon? I am sure we are living in a Babylon life style, ready and waiting for the cleansing, in this case the burning.

What I am attempting to share with you is my personal experience which leads me to believe "all is not well in Zion", that in fact, the cleansing will even

begin in his own house. That according to what is taught in the Book of Mormon relating to this cleansing will never be addressed in a church setting, as it will always be referred to as those outside the church. But what the scriptures teach, by word and example, those in the gravest situation are those who treat his Holy Word as a thing of naught. Meaning, while reading and praying, we are not applying the very precepts God give us in the Book of Mormon in our lives. The reason is because we are still placing or dividing our pure trust in God with men of flesh. There several names given for this, one is Idolatry, another is denying the Holy Ghost, the gravest sin of all.

Now I don't ask you to believe me, but only believe what has been given you in the Book of Mormon, but really understand what God has given you, and avoid placing trust in any being of flesh in order to gain a full understanding.

Let me show you an example, of which you will most likely abhor in your present state. As a new potential member the missionaries teach the lessons and give the prospective member a copy of the Book of Mormon with the instructions to read and pray about it.

In time, a prospective member is actually set upon as a result of his or her prayers by the Holy Ghost and knows it to be true and of God. Everything is normal and acceptable to God, and great blessings are had by all. When I say all, every person back down through the person doing the reading the praying, the missionaries, the parents and their families are blessed. And it does not end there. The Bishop, contributing members, the actual church facility, the general authorities, the church as a whole, but it does not end there. The grand parents, Joseph Smith, even back to glorify our first parents Adam and Eve. In my opinion this is the grease which greases the wheels of progress of the entire church organization. However, this does not mean that every item and process within the church is accepted by God in the same manner, but nevertheless, his holy word is being spread throughout the world to every kindred, tongue and people.

Everything is wonderful, and euphoria is experienced by all, most profoundly by the missionaries and the reader.

Once this experience is in full swing, the natural next step is for the person having had this experience is to owe their allegiance to those who brought this priceless happening into their lives. This means, not only get baptized, but giving commitment or covenant of their lives to trust in a prophet of flesh by being confirmed a member of an earthly church. Now to the members, this appears to be a most glorious happening. But standing out side the church, and now looking back, having read and read the Holy Word of God, it appears to me, that in participating in this process one has just experienced pure direct revelation with God the Father through the Holy Ghost, the process by which that person can receive all truth, and now in one swift move, divides that trust in God with men of flesh, to then be cursed by trusting in men or flesh.

To me, now standing off from the church, and having now studied happenings from the very restoration of the Book of Mormon containing God's precepts of his church, no wonder the membership, unlike prior to the establishment of the modern church, do not receive all those gifts given by God. Those gifts explained by Moroni that would identify a righteous people.

Namely: Moroni 10 (We quote this scripture so much, but we don't quote the whole scripture) : *4 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.*

(So this has now taken place within the new prospective member.)

5 And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.

(So this their example, by this method, not by placing trust in flesh, the individual may duplicate this process to learn the truth of all thing. What more does a person need? Why do they need a prophet to teach them or oversee their lives?)

6 And whatsoever thing is good is just and true; wherefore, nothing that is good denieth the Christ, but acknowledgeth that he is. 7 and ye may know that he is, by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore I would exhort you that ye deny not the power of God;

(Then, by this process the individual can share in Christ's power, not by associating by placing men of flesh above and between their selves and Christ.?)

for he worketh by power, according to the faith of the children of men, the same today and tomorrow, and forever.

(So all is had as a result of the faith placed in God, not in men.)

8 And again, I exhort you, my brethren, that ye deny not the gifts of God, for they are many; and they come from the same God. And there are different ways that these gifts are administered; but it is the same God who worketh all in all; and they are given by the manifestations of the Spirit of God unto men, to profit them.

(There is no mention of the necessity of becoming a member of any other organization or to place faith in men in order to participate in the manifestations of Gods Holy Spirit of enlightenment.)

9 For behold, to one is given by the Spirit of God, that he may teach the word of wisdom. 10 And to another, that he may teach the word of knowledge by the same Spirit. 11 And to another, exceedingly great faith; and to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 12 And again, to another, that he may work mighty miracles; 13 And again, to another, that he may prophesy concerning all things; 14 And again, to another, the beholding of angels and ministering of spirits; 15 and again, to another, all kinds of tongues; 16 And again, to another, the interpretation of languages and of divers kinds of tongues. 17 And all these gifts come by the Spirit of Christ; and they come unto every man severally, according as he will.

Now don't stop here, read on, but analyze the gifts which have been given to you. If you are not sharing in the above gifts; Why? Where are you placing your trust, purely in God alone? Or is your trust divided with an earthly organization and with men of flesh? For if so, if that given us by God is true, then we must believe it, and accept it. If not we then will be cursed according to Christ.

As you are baptized you are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Amen. The person has just become a member of the Church offered in the Book of Mormon, referred to as the Church or the Lamb of God. To maintain membership in good standing you must live the precepts as pointed out in his Holy Word, and take upon yourself his work, placing no trust in man, but only in God and you will know the truth of all things, as the example has been given the individual through direct revelation from God as to the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon he has provided.

Do you find the necessity of placing trust in men of flesh, of the need to join another church organization, (as there really is only two churches, Christ's and Satan's, thereby providing the opposite in all things). By covenanting that the head of the church is a prophet, does not make him a prophet of God, only in name.

Let me ask you this question: As a member of Christ's real church, are you sharing in the blessing afore mentioned by Moroni? If not, you should be if you are a member of Christ true church, as did those of the past, i.e.:

The Holy Ghost was with us in more power during the eight months previous to April 6, 1830, than ever at any time thereafter. Almost everyone who was baptized received the Holy Ghost in power, some prophesying, some speaking in tongues, the heavens were opened to some, and all the signs which Christ promised should follow the believers were with us abundantly. We were an humble happy people, and loved each other as brethren should love. By David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses who was there at this time.

Now these happenings occurred prior to the establishment of the Church corporation, there was no prophet, no apostles, no high priests, etc. and yet these people experienced these gifts, not just leaders, but the members meeting in homes, all experiencing all these gifts as mentioned by Moroni and offered by Christ to us.

I ask, are you as members experiencing these gifts? Are you going forward or backward in righteousness. Even with massively beautiful chapels, temples, wealth, not even the leaders are experiencing what the early members did shortly after the Book of Mormon was brought forth.

I ask you, is all well in Zion, or are we somewhat like the Jews Lehi attempted to teach? It's your life and salvation we are addressing here!

Duane

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