

Book of Mormon in 8 minutes

In the Americas around AD 350, Mormon, a holy prophet, began to compile and write the record of his people and God's dealings with them. Some records were included in the first person but most were abridged and edited, by Mormon, from hundreds of years of accounts and histories. Mormon's record was finished by his son Moroni and buried in the earth.

About 1400 years later, Mormon's record was revealed to a young man named Joseph Smith. It was translated by the gift and power of God and published as, the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ.

The Book of Mormon is the story of certain peoples that God led to a promised land in the Americas. The book speaks of three main groups, all of which began their stories in a Biblical time and place.

First, there were the Jaredites. Jared, and those that followed him, were led by God from the ancient tower of Babel across a wilderness to the sea. Nestled in 8 barges, they were guided by the hand of God across the ocean to their promised land.

Over the next 2000 years God continued to call prophets that worked to bring the people to God. Although there were many periods of righteousness, ultimately the people rebelled against God and destroyed each other in a massive civil war. The final Jaredite prophet, Ether, wrote a record of his people upon 24 plates of gold and hid them up.

As the Jaredite nation was declining, God was preparing to bring new people to inherit the land. These two groups both came from Jerusalem at about the same time but were led to the promised land in different ways.

Lehi was a prophet, who, with Jeremiah and others, was striving to warn the people in Jerusalem around 600 B.C. just before the mighty empire of Babylon crushed what remained of the Judean kingdom. Lehi, his family and others, were led by the Lord through the Arabian wilderness for years before they arrived at a land by the seashore they called Bountiful.

During that time, Jerusalem had fallen. The Judean king, Zedekiah, was captured, his sons slain, and he himself was blinded and carried away captive to Babylon. But one son escaped. His name was Mulek. He was part of a group that God led through the wilderness and then across the sea. We refer to this group as the Mulekites, after the son of Zedekiah that was with them.

Meanwhile, God had also commanded Lehi's group to build a ship and they were also brought to the promised land but arrived in the southern part of the land.

When Lehi died, there was a falling out among his sons. The oldest, Laman, had always been rebellious and slow to listen to the Lord. Those that chose to follow him, became their own nation, collectively called the Lamanites. His younger brother, Nephi, was righteous and a mighty prophet. Those that followed him called themselves, Nephites. These are the two main groups of the Book of Mormon story. The record we have was written by the Nephites and chiefly follows their story.

For about the next 450 years the Lamanites sought to destroy the Nephites. Eventually, the Nephites began to turn away from the Lord. So, to preserve his people, God called a man named Mosiah to lead all who would follow him from their homeland to the lands northward. There, Mosiah and his followers found the descendants of the Mulekites led by a man named Zarahemla. Zarahemla and his people received the Nephites enthusiastically as it was discovered that both groups had come from Jerusalem anciently. Even more exciting to Zarahemla and his people was that Mosiah had brought with him records, some of which contained the writings of ancient prophets, like Moses and Isaiah, from the old world.

The two nations became one and Mosiah was made their king. The land of Zarahemla became the new homeland of the Nephite people.

Not long after, a man named, Zeniff, took a considerable number to return to the land of Nephi to try to re-inherit, their lands from the Lamanites. This he did. But, even though the people started out righteous, by the time Zeniff's grandson, Limhi, was king, the people had become sorely wicked and had fallen into bondage to the Lamanites

Desperate for help, Limhi sent men to try to find the land of Zarahemla. Instead they found a land covered with buildings but long destroyed. They had unknowingly discovered the land of the Jaredites and even found the record of Ether written on 24 plates of gold.

Meanwhile in Zarahemla, the righteous king Benjamin had united the people in God and established peace and harmony in the land. When his son, Mosiah II, became king, he sent a group to see what had become of Zeniff's people since there had been no word from them. It was that group, that helped plan an escape for Limhi and his people and brought them back to Zarahemla, so the Nephites were again reunited in one land.

King Mosiah II, a prophet and seer, was able to translate the Jaredite plates by the gift and power of God. And so the Jaredite record, and all the doings of the Lord among them, became known to the Nephites. A summary of this translation is included in Book of Mormon as the book of Ether.

For the next 90 years, the Book of Mormon tells of prophecies and missionary work, evil murderous combinations and political intrigue, wars and preaching – all leading to the grand fulfillment of sacred prophecy. The coming of the Savior, Jesus Christ, into the world.

As promised, for the people in the New World, at the sign of Christ's birth, there was a night with no darkness even after the sun went down, and then a new star. More than 3 decades later came the sign of Christ's death with great earthquakes, storms and then darkness that lasted for 3 days.

After the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the old world, He taught his disciples for 40 days and then ascended into heaven. He then ~~descended and~~ appeared to the Nephites, the "other sheep" Jesus had spoken of to his Apostles (John 10:16).

For many days he taught among the Nephites, healing the sick and establishing his Church (3 Nephi 26:13-15).

This visit from the Savior, had such a powerful effect on the hearts of the people that for about the next 200 years the people lived in peace and harmony. But eventually, pride and wickedness crept in and by AD 350, while Mormon was abridging the record of his people, they had fully rebelled against God and were facing destruction in a massive war. In that war, the Nephites were destroyed and Mormon with them. Mormon's son Moroni finished the record... and the rest you know.

Book of Mormon writers recorded prophecies, teachings, and testimonies of Jesus Christ to persuade others to believe in Him.

The Book of Mormon proves to the world that the scriptures are true, that God inspires and calls people to do His work in our day, and that God is unchangeable.

God promises that the truth of it can be made known to us by the power of the Holy Ghost.