

"Grandma, neat in a percale apron to show that she meant what she said about being put to work, crossed the two lawns to the Wilcox house, where the Wilcox daughters set her to cleaning the already immaculate front parlor for the funeral. And there on the parlor table in the place of honor was a huge scrapbook, and in the scrapbook, pasted neatly in parallel columns were [Grandma's] letters to Sea Gull over the years and Sea Gull's letters to her. [Though neither woman had known it,] Grandma's worst enemy had been her best friend.

"That was the only time I remembered seeing my grandmother cry. I didn't know then exactly what she was crying about, but I do now. She was crying for all the wasted years that could never be salvaged."¹²

Live so we have no regrets

My brothers and sisters, may we resolve from this day forward to fill our hearts with love. May we go the extra mile to include in our lives any who are lonely or downhearted or who are suffering in any way. May we "[cheer] up the sad and [make] someone feel glad."¹³ May we live

so that when that final summons is heard, we may have no serious regrets, no unfinished business, but will be able to say with the Apostle Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."¹⁴ In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. "Welcome, Welcome, Sabbath Morning," *Hymns*, no. 280.
2. John 11:25-26.
3. John 14:27.
4. Luke 23:46.
5. Minnie Louise Haskins, "The Gate of the Year," in James Dalton Morrison, ed. *Masterpieces of Religious Verse* (1948), 92.
6. 1 Corinthians 15:3-8.
7. Doctrine and Covenants 76:22-24.
8. "Have I Done Any Good?" *Hymns*, no. 223.
9. *Hymns*, no. 223.
10. Mosiah 2:17.
11. In *Works of Charles Dickens* (1982), 543, 581.
12. "The True Story of Arbutus and Sea Gull," in Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen, *A 3rd Serving of Chicken Soup for the Soul* (1996), 201-4.
13. *Hymns*, no. 223.
14. 2 Timothy 4:7.

President Boyd K. Packer

Coming forth of the Book of Mormon

I hold in my hand a first-edition copy of the Book of Mormon. It was printed in 1830 on a hand-operated letter press at the E. B. Grandin Company in the village of Palmyra, New York.

In June of 1829, Joseph Smith, then 23 years old, called on 23-year-old Mr. Grandin in company with Martin Harris, a local farmer. Mr. Grandin had three months earlier advertised his intent to publish books. Joseph Smith provided pages of a handwritten manuscript.

If the content of the book did not doom it to remain obscure, the account of where it came from certainly would. Imagine an angel directing a teenage boy to the woods where he found buried a stone vault and a set of golden plates.

The writings on the plates were translated by use of a Urim and Thummim, which is referred to a number of times in the Old Testament¹ and described by Hebrew scholars as an instrument "whereby the revelation was given and truth declared."²

Before the book was off the press, pages of it were stolen and printed in the local newspaper, accompanied by ridicule. Opposition was destined to excite mobs to kill the Prophet Joseph Smith and drive those who believed him into the wilderness.

From that very unlikely beginning to this day, 108,936,922 copies of the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ have been printed. It has been published in 62 languages, with selections of it in another 37 languages, and 22 more translations are in process.

Now 60,000 full-time missionaries in 142 countries pay their own way to devote two years of their lives to testify that the Book of Mormon is true.

Herbert Schreiter and Manfred Schütze

For generations it has inspired those who read it. Herbert Schreiter had read his German translation of the Book of Mormon. In it he read:

“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.

“And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.”³

Herbert Schreiter tested the promise and joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

In 1946, released as a prisoner of war, Herbert returned to his wife and three little daughters in Leipzig, Germany. Soon thereafter, he went as a missionary to Bernburg, Germany. Alone, without a companion, he sat cold and hungry in a room, wondering how he should begin.

He thought of what he had to offer the war-devastated people. He printed by hand a placard which read, “Will there be a further life after death?” and posted it on a wall.

About that same time, a family from a small village in Poland came to Bernburg.

Manfred Schütze was four years old. His father had been killed in the war. His mother, with his grandparents and his mother’s sister, also a widow, and her two little girls, were forced to evacuate their village with only 30 minutes’ notice. They grabbed what they could and headed west. Manfred and his mother pulled and pushed a small cart. At times the ailing grandfather rode in the cart. One Polish officer looked at the pathetic little Manfred and began to weep.

At the border, soldiers ransacked their belongings and threw their bedding into the river. Manfred and his mother were then separated from the family. His mother wondered if they might have gone to Bernburg, where her grandmother was born, perhaps to relatives there. After weeks of unbelievable suffering, they arrived in Bernburg and found the family.

The seven of them lived together in one small room. But their troubles were not over. The mother of the two little girls died. The grieving grandmother cried out for a preacher, and asked, “Will I see my family again?”

The preacher answered, “My dear lady, there is no such thing as the Resurrection. They who are dead are dead!”

They wrapped the body in a paper bag for burial.

On the way from the grave, the grandfather talked of taking their own lives, as many others had done. Just then they saw the placard that Elder Schreiter had posted on the building—“Is there further life after death?”—with an invitation from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. At a meeting they learned of the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ.

The book explains:

- The purpose of mortal life and death;⁴
- The certainty of life after death;⁵

- What happens when the spirit leaves the body;⁶
- The description of the Resurrection;⁷
- How to receive and retain a remission of your sins;⁸
- What hold justice or mercy may have on you;⁹
- What to pray for;¹⁰
- Priesthood;¹¹
- Covenants and ordinances;¹²
- The office and ministry of angels;¹³
- The still, small voice of personal revelation;¹⁴
- And preeminently, the mission of Jesus Christ;¹⁵
- And many other jewels that make up the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

They joined the Church. Soon their lives changed. The grandfather found work as a baker and could provide bread for his family and also for Elder Schreiter, who had given them "the bread of life."¹⁶

Then help came from the Church in the United States. Manfred grew up eating grain out of little sacks with a picture of a beehive on them and peaches from California. He wore clothes from the welfare supplies of the Church.

Soon after I was released from the air force, I went to the welfare mill at Kaysville, Utah, to help fill bags of wheat for shipment to the starving people in Europe. I like to think one of the bags of grain that I filled myself went to Manfred Schütze and his mother. If not, it went to others in equal need.

Elder Dieter Uchtdorf, who sits with us on the stand today as one of the Seventy, remembers to this very day the smell of the grain and the feel of it in his little-boy hands. Perhaps one of the bags I filled reached his family.

First attempts to read the book

When I was about 10, I made my first attempt to read the Book of Mormon.

The first part was easy-flowing New Testament language. Then I came to the writings of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah. I could not understand them; I found them difficult to read. I laid the book aside.

I made other attempts to read the Book of Mormon. I did not read it all until I was on a troop ship with other bomber crew members, headed for the war in the Pacific. I determined that I would read the Book of Mormon and find out for myself whether it is true or not. Carefully I read and reread the book. I tested the promise that it contained. That was a life-changing event. After that, I never set the book aside.

A young man stands up for the book

Many young people have done better than I did.

A 15-year-old son of a mission president attended high school with very few members of the Church.

One day the class was given a true-or-false test. Matthew was confident that he knew the answers to all except for question 15. It read, "Joseph Smith, the alleged Mormon prophet, wrote the Book of Mormon. True or false?"

He could not answer it either way, so, being a clever teenager, he rewrote the question. He crossed out the word *alleged* and replaced the word *wrote* with *translated*. It then read, "Joseph Smith, the Mormon prophet, translated the Book of Mormon." He marked it true and handed it in.

The next day the teacher sternly asked why he had changed the question. He smiled and said, "Because Joseph Smith did not *write* the Book of Mormon; he *translated* it. And he was not an *alleged* prophet; he was a prophet."

He was then invited to tell the class how he knew that.¹⁷

Treasured scriptures

In England my wife and I became acquainted with Dorothy James, the widow of a clergyman who lived at the Close of Winchester Cathedral. She brought out a family Bible which had been lost for many years.

Years before, the possessions of a family member had been sold. The new owner found the Bible in a small desk that had remained unopened for over 20 years. There were also some letters written by a child named Beaumont James. He was able to find the James family and return the long-lost family Bible.

On the title page my wife read the following handwritten note: "This Bible has been in our family since the time of Thomas James in 1683 who was a lineal descendant of Thomas James first librarian of the Bodleian Library at Oxford, who was buried in New College Chapel August 1629. [Signed] C. T. C. James, 1880."

The margins and the open pages were completely filled with notations written in English, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. One entry particularly touched her. From the bottom of the title page she read, "The fairest Impression of the Bible is to have it well printed on the Readers heart."

And then this quote from Corinthians: "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in the tables of stone, but in fleshly table of the heart" (2 Corinthians 3:2-3).¹⁸

My Book of Mormon also has many notes in the margins and is heavily underlined. I was in Florida once with President Hinckley. He turned from the pulpit and asked for a copy of the scriptures. I handed him my copy. He thumbed through it for a few seconds, turned and handed it back, saying, "I can't read this. You have got everything crossed out!"

Book of Mormon heals starving spirits

Amos prophesied of "a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."¹⁹

In a world ever more dangerous than the world of little Manfred Schütze and Dieter Uchtdorf, the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ has the nourishing power to heal starving spirits of the world.

Manfred Schütze is now a member of the Third Quorum of Seventy and supervises our seminaries in Eastern Europe. His mother, now 88, still attends the temple at Freiberg, where Herbert Schreiter once served as a counselor to the president.

Testimonies in many languages

With Elder Walter F. González, a new member of the Seventy from Uruguay, I attended a conference in Moroni, Utah, a town with a Book of Mormon name. There is no doctor or dentist in Moroni. They must leave town to shop for groceries. Their students are bused to a consolidated high school across the valley.

We held a meeting with 236 present. Lest Elder González see only ordinary rural farmers, I gave this sentence of testimony: "I know the gospel is true and that Jesus is the Christ." I asked if someone could repeat it in Spanish. Several hands went up. Could someone repeat it in another language? It was repeated in:

Japanese
Spanish
German
Portuguese
Russian
Chinese
Tongan
Italian
Tagalog
Dutch
Finnish
Maori

Polish
Korean

French—15 languages.

Again in English: I know the gospel is true and that Jesus is the Christ.

“We preach of Christ”

I love this Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. Study it and one can understand both the Old Testament and the New Testament in the Bible. I know it is true.

In this 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon, printed by 23-year-old Egbert B. Grandin for 23-year-old Joseph Smith Jr., I read from page 105:

“We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.”²⁰

And that, I assure you, is exactly what we do. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

NOTES

1. See Exodus 28:30; Leviticus 8:8; Numbers 27:21; Deuteronomy 33:8; 1 Samuel 28:6; Ezra 2:63; Nehemiah 7:65.
2. John M’Clintock and James Strong, *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, 10 vols. (1867–81), “Urim and Thummim,” 10:676.
3. Moroni 10:4–5.

4. See 2 Nephi 2:21; 33:9; Alma 12:24; 34:32; 42:4.
5. See 2 Nephi 9:3–7; Mosiah 16:8; 3 Nephi 11.
6. See Alma 34:34; 40:11–14, 21.
7. See 2 Nephi 9:12; Alma 40:23; 41:2; 3 Nephi 11:1–16.
8. See Mosiah 4:1–3, 12, 26; Alma 4:14.
9. See Alma 34:15–16; 41:14; 42:15–16, 22–25.
10. See 2 Nephi 4:35; 32:8–9; Enos 1:9; Alma 13:28; 34:17–27; 37:36–37; 3 Nephi 18:19–21; Moroni 7:26.
11. See 2 Nephi 6:2; Mosiah 18:18; Alma 6:1; 13; 3 Nephi 11:21; 18:37; Moroni 2:2; 3:4.
12. See 2 Nephi 11:5; Mosiah 5:5; 18:13; Alma 13:8, 16.
13. See 2 Nephi 32:2–3; Omni 1:25; Moroni 7:25, 37.
14. See 1 Nephi 16:9; 17:44–45; Enos 1:10; Alma 32:23; Helaman 5:30; 3 Nephi 11:3.
15. See 1 Nephi 11:13–33; 2 Nephi 2:6–10; Mosiah 3:5–12; Alma 7:7–13; 3 Nephi 27:13–16.
16. John 6:35.
17. See George D. Durrant, “Helping Your Children Be Missionaries,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1977, 67.
18. As quoted in Donna Smith Packer, *On Footings from the Past: The Packers in England* (1988), 329.
19. Amos 8:11.
20. The Book of Mormon (1830), 105; see also 2 Nephi 25:26.

Bishop H. David Burton

Stand tall on the side of righteousness

A man of wisdom often offered this simple piece of advice: “David, stand tall.” My dad did not expect that I would add inches to my stature or rise up on my tip-toes. He meant that I should be courageous in my decision, not compromising principles, not violating spiritual values, and not shrinking from responsibility.

When I have followed his advice, life has been very good. When I have failed to stand tall, life has usually been unpleasant.

I recently asked my two young grandsons what it would mean to them if Heavenly Father asked them to stand tall. I noticed one inadvertently raised himself to his tippy-toes so as to seem a little taller. And then they quickly said in unison, “He wants us to do what is right.”