

Found through the Power of the Book of Mormon

By Elder Rubén V. Alliaud
Of the Seventy

All must experience and be found by the power of the truths contained in the Book of Mormon.

When I visit converts in their homes, one of the questions I frequently like to ask them is how they and their families learned about the Church and how they came to be baptized. It doesn't matter if the person in that moment is an active member or hasn't attended church for many years. The answer is always the same: with a smile and their countenance glowing, they begin to tell the story of how they were found. In fact, it seems that the story of conversion is always the story of how we are found.

Jesus Christ Himself is the Lord of lost things. He cares for lost things. That is surely why He taught the three parables that we find in the 15th chapter of Luke: the parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and, finally, the prodigal son. All these stories have a common denominator: It doesn't matter why they were lost. It doesn't matter even if they were aware they were lost. There reigns supreme a feeling of joy that exclaims, "Rejoice with me; for I have found [that] which was lost."¹ In the end, nothing is truly lost to Him.²

Allow me to share this afternoon with you one of the most precious things to me—the story of how I myself was found.

Just before I turned 15, I was invited by my uncle Manuel Bustos to spend some time with him and his family here in the United States. This would be a great opportunity for me to learn some English. My uncle had converted to the Church many years before, and he had a great missionary spirit. That is probably why my mother, without my knowing, spoke with him and said she would agree to the invitation on one condition: that he did not try to convince me to become a member of his Church. We were Catholics, and we had been for generations, and there was no reason to change. My uncle was in complete agreement and kept his word to the point that he didn't want to answer even simple questions about the Church.

Of course, what my uncle and his sweet wife, Marjorie, could not avoid was being who they were.³

I was assigned a room that contained a large library of books. I could see that in this library there were roughly 200 copies of the Book of Mormon in different languages, 20 of them in Spanish.

One day, out of curiosity, I took down a copy of the Book of Mormon in Spanish.



It was one of those copies with a sky-blue soft cover, with the figure of the angel Moroni on the front. When I opened it, on the first page there was written the following promise: “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, by the power of the Holy Ghost.”

And then it added: “And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.”⁴

It is difficult to explain the impact that these scriptures had on my mind and heart. To be honest, I was not looking for “the truth.” I was just a teenager, happy with his life, enjoying this new culture.

Nevertheless, with that promise in mind, I secretly began reading the book. As I read more, I understood that if I really wanted to get anything from this, I had better start to pray. And we all know what happens when you decide not only to read but also to pray about the Book of Mormon. Well, that is just what happened to me. It was something so special and so unique—yes, just the same as what has happened to millions of others around the world. I came to know by the power of the Holy Ghost that the Book of Mormon was true.

I then went to my uncle to explain to him what had happened and that I was ready to be baptized. My uncle could not contain his astonishment. He got into his car, drove to the airport, and returned back with my plane ticket to fly back home, with a note addressed to my mother that simply stated, “I had nothing to do with this!”

In a way he was right. I had been found directly by the power of the Book of Mormon.

There may be many who have been found through wonderful missionaries around the world, in every case through miraculous ways. Or maybe they have been found through friends that God has deliberately placed in their path. It might even be that they have been found by someone from this generation or through one of their ancestors.⁵ Whatever the case, in order to progress toward a true personal conversion, sooner rather than later, they all must experience and be found by the power of the truths contained in the Book of Mormon. At the same time, they must personally decide to make a serious commitment to God that they will strive to keep His commandments.

When I returned to Buenos Aires, my mother realized that I truly wanted to be baptized. Since I had a somewhat rebellious spirit, instead of opposing me, she very wisely took my side. And without even knowing it, she did my baptismal interview herself. Indeed, I believe that her interview was even more in-depth than those that our missionaries conduct. She told me, “If you want to be baptized, I will support you. But first I’m going to ask you some questions, and I want you to think very hard and answer me honestly. Do you commit to attend church absolutely every Sunday?”

I told her, “Yes, of course I’m going to do that.”

“Do you have any idea how long church is?”

“Yes, I know,” I said.

She replied, “Well, if you get baptized, I am going to make sure that you attend.” Then she asked me if I was truly willing to never drink alcohol or smoke.

I answered, “Yes, of course I am going to comply with that as well.”

To which she added, “If you get baptized, I am going to make sure that that is the case.” And she proceeded on in that way with almost every commandment.

My uncle had called my mother to tell her not to worry, that I would get over this soon. Four years later, when I received my call to serve in the Uruguay Montevideo Mission, my mother called my uncle to ask him exactly when I was going to get over all this. The truth is that from the time I was baptized, my mother was a happier mother.

I came to know that the Book of Mormon was crucial in the conversion process by experiencing firsthand the promise that “a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts.”⁶

Nephi explained the central purpose of the Book of Mormon in this way:

“For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God. ...

“And [so] we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, [and] we prophesy of Christ, ... that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.”⁷

The entire Book of Mormon is imbued with that same sacred purpose.

For this reason, any reader who commits to a sincere study of it, with the spirit of prayer, will not only learn about Christ but will learn *from* Christ—especially if they make the decision to “try the virtue of the word”⁸ and not reject it prematurely due to prejudiced unbelief⁹ by what others have said about things that they have never read.

President Russell M. Nelson reflected: “When I think of the Book of Mormon, I think of the word *power*. The truths of the Book of Mormon have the *power* to heal, comfort, restore, succor, strengthen, console, and cheer our souls.”¹⁰

My invitation this afternoon to each of us, regardless of how long we’ve been a member of the Church, is to allow the power of the truths of the Book of Mormon to find us and embrace us once again and day after day as we diligently seek for personal revelation. It will do so if we allow it.

I solemnly testify that the Book of Mormon contains the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ and that the Holy Ghost will confirm the truth of it time after time to anyone who, with a sincere heart, seeks knowledge unto the salvation of their soul.¹¹ In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.