

Autobiographical Notes

The Place of Mormon, The Waters of Mormon

Elder Dwight A. Burford
www.hisworkmanship.net
November 2002
(Last Edited December 2009)

And now it came to pass that all this was done in Mormon, yea, by the waters of Mormon, in the forest that was near the waters of Mormon. Yea, the place of Mormon, the waters of Mormon, the forest of Mormon, how beautiful are they to the eyes of them who there came to the knowledge of their Redeemer! Yea, how blessed are they, for they shall sing to His praise forever! (Mosiah 9:46)

These words best sum up the deep sense of gratitude I have for being given the opportunity to come to a saving knowledge of my Redeemer, Jesus Christ, through the Book of Mormon. Though I did not actually go to the place of Mormon mentioned above, this book became that same fountain of blessing to me as I sat and read from its rich and rewarding account each evening. There, in its pages I was afforded the opportunity to come to the refreshing fountain of living waters Jesus Christ gives to those who believe on His name.

As I read through its pages, my soul yearned to personally thank the faithful men and women who sacrificed so much to bring this book into existence. Yet, from what they had written it became abundantly clear that no greater thanks could be offered up other than to actually seek to fulfill God's promises and purposes in bringing it forth, namely to raise up a righteous people among the Gentiles who would carry its message, the fulness of the gospel, to the ancient covenant peoples of the Lord to whom it was written.^[1] For God has remembered His covenant people, and has done marvelous things that they might know Him, that He is the Lord their God who preserves them unto righteous.

It with unfathomable joy that I drank in the preaching and teaching of Lehi, Nephi, Jacob, and Enos, of King Benjamin and Abinadi, of Alma, and of Alma the younger and Amulek, of Ammon and Aaron, of Moroni and Helaman, of Samuel and Nephi with his brother Lehi, of Mormon and his son Moroni, of the brother of Jared and Ether. What incredible faith they displayed! What enduring courage they exemplified! Their ministry and teaching filled my soul with the great substance of faith.

The occasion described in the text leading up to the declaration made by Mormon^[2] quoted above confronted me with a life changing decision. The following verse sums up this amazing account found in Mosiah 9:28-64 as follows:

1 cf. Romans 11:28-36
2 III Nephi 2:95-99

And they did walk uprightly before God, imparting to one another both temporally and spiritually, according to their needs and their wants. (Mosiah 9:64)

As I read this passage describing Alma's preaching and teaching at the waters of Mormon and the community it fostered, I found myself compelled to exclaim, "Yes, Lord!" "This is the way I want to live." "This is the type of community I want to be a part of." I actually wished I had lived in their day. At the same time I realized that what they experienced could occur and should occur in our day as well, and would through faithful adherence to the truth. And so I committed myself to this end, to live as those of *the first church which was established among them after their transgression* (cf. III Nephi 2:96).