

Why Do We Need the Book of Mormon?

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Introduction: How can we know the words of God?

A. I can know the words of God because I know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God!

1. Jesus was born, lived and died in a specific point in time in a specific place.
2. I am urged to hear the eyewitness testimony of men who saw the Jesus after he had been raised from the dead. (**Acts 2:32; 3:14-15**)

Acts 2:32 (KJV) ³²This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Acts 3:14 through Acts 3:15 (KJV) ¹⁴But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; ¹⁵And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

3. There is the testimony of fulfilled prophecy. (**Lk 24:44**)

Luke 24:44 (KJV) ⁴⁴And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

4. God the Father declared Jesus to be His Son by His resurrection. (**Rom 1:3-4**)

Romans 1:3 through Romans 1:4 (KJV) ³Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; ⁴And declared *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

B. The revelation of the gospel was perfect!

1. It was guided by the Holy Spirit and written down. (**Eph 3:3-5; 5:17**)

Ephesians 3:3 through Ephesians 3:5 (KJV) ³How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, ⁴Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) ⁵Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

Ephesians 5:17 (KJV) ¹⁷Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.

2. Jesus promised that it would never pass away. (**Mt 24:35**)

Matthew 24:35 (KJV) ³⁵Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

3. Why do I need “another gospel?” (**Gal 1:6-9**)

Galatians 1:6 through Galatians 1:9 (KJV) ⁶I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: ⁷Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. ⁹As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

I. Reasons given for the need of the Book of Mormon

- A. A great and abominable church perverted the gospel and changed the Bible.
- B. The gospel is not translated correctly.
- C. God always meant for there to be continuous revelation
- D. We need to know the history of how God worked with the people on this part of the earth.

II. Testing the claims for the Book of Mormon

- A. There is no evidence for an intentional perversion of the Bible.
 - 1. We have thousands of manuscripts from 90 AD forward.

“The original ancient texts had to be copied by hand in order to be preserved. There are no original manuscripts in existence. However, honest scholars can easily determine if the present Bible was transmitted accurately or if there was some conspiracy to later change the text. We have at least 5,366 manuscripts of the Greek New Testament in existence today, in whole or in part, that testify to the accuracy of the New Testament. There are nearly complete manuscripts that date from 280 to 350 AD and there is a fragment that is dated around 125 AD. For the Old Testament we have the Dead Sea Scrolls that were written around 100 BC, which include a complete scroll of the book of Isaiah, along with other ancient manuscripts. ¹ What do we find when these scrolls are examined and compared to what we have today?”

- 2. It would be impossible for such changes to have been made by any group, regardless of its alleged power.

Critics, like our Muslim friend, prey upon the ignorance of others when they talk about the “errors” in the manuscripts. The bulk of these differences are in spelling and word order that have absolutely no affect upon the meaning! For example:

**“The king Herod” versus “Herod the king” and
“Jerusalem with Him” versus “all Jerusalem with Him”**

are the common kinds of differences that exist in these manuscripts. ³

If some men had developed a conspiracy to deliberately change the text, then there should be numerous examples of major differences in these manuscripts. These kinds of differences simply do not exist. In fact, it would have been impossible for any later conspirators to find all the manuscripts that were spread over several countries and then change them (in some cases parts of scripture were copied and buried with the bodies of Christians!). Because we have in our possession these vast numbers of accurate documents, we can be assured that there was no such conspiracy.

The only conspiracy that exists today is found in those that misrepresent the truth about the Bible so as to accommodate some latter-day prophet.

B. If there are questions on the translation then we could go to the ancient manuscripts and debate any “mistranslation.”

1. The Book of Mormon was not translated correctly! If so, then why all the changes?
2. How can we test the translation? We have to trust one man!

C. God did not always mean for there to be continuous revelation. (**Heb 9:26-28**)

Hebrews 9:26 through Hebrews 9:28 (KJV) ²⁶For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. ²⁷And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: ²⁸So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

D. Is the Book of Mormon really a history?

The Book of Mormon mentions: wheat (**Mosiah 9:9**), horses (**1 Nephi 18:25**), chariots (**Alma 18:9-11; 20:6; 3 Nephi 3:22**), cows (**Enos 21**), elephants (**Ether 9:19**), silk (**Alma 1:29; 4:6; Ether 9:17**), linen (**Mosiah 10:5; Helamon 6:13; Ether 10:24**), money-pieces of gold and silver (**Alma 11:3-20**), steel (**2 Nephi 5:15; Jarom 1:8; Ether 7:9**). None of these items were here before the Spaniards.

1. The next edition of the Book of Mormon will have a word change to accommodate the evidence that contradicts its claims. (See Yesterdays Daily progress, “Book of Mormon word change stirs debate among faithful, AP Press, P A6)
2. What a contrast to the Bible! (**Lk 1:1-4**)

Luke 1:1 through Luke 1:4 (KJV) ¹Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, ²Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; ³It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

III. Should we now pray for a subjective experience?

- A. Subjective religion is dependent upon how you feel and what you want to believe.
 1. Consider the person who saw “Jesus” on a hospital door.
 2. Consider the young lady who saw the “virgin Mary” in a cow pasture.
- B. Mormonism and Subjective Religion.
 1. How does one become a Mormon?
 2. What do Mormons believe?

3. How do they appeal to people?

a. They claim a direct operation of the Holy Spirit. (**Moroni 10:4-5**)

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

b. They appeal to feelings and experiences as evidence. (**D.+C. 9:8**)

8 But, behold, I say unto you, that you must ^astudy it out in your ^bmind; then you must ^cask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your ^dbosom shall ^eburn within you; therefore, you shall ^ffeel that it is right.

c. They give personal testimony of their private experience.

d. Plain statements in the word of God are denied. (**2 Nephi 29:10**)

[10] Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written.

C. This appeal is commonly used by men.

1. If there is no foundation, what will be the results? (**2 Peter 2:18-19**)

2 Peter 2:18 through 2 Peter 2:19 (KJV) ¹⁸For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. ¹⁹While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

2. Note the appeal for money. (Ex. Oral Roberts, Radio DJ)

3. Sadly, I have seen Christians run to this as a reactionary religion.

III. Does the Bible Tell Us to Follow our Feelings?

A. I do not deny that people have experiences.

1. The question is, should we follow them?

2. If a man claims an experience should I believe him?

B. The Prophet of 1 Kings 13

1. God gave him plain instructions. (**1 Kings 13:9**)

1 Kings 13:9 (KJV) ⁹For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

2. The other man appealed to his “experience” (**1 Kings 13:8**)

1 Kings 13:8 (KJV) ⁸And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:

3. Which way was right? What did God do?

C. Should we follow an angel? (**Gal 1:8**)

Galatians 1:8 (KJV) ⁸But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

D. If feelings are our guide, who then is right? (1 **Cor 14:36-37**)

1 Corinthians 14:36 through 1 Corinthians 14:37 (KJV) ³⁶What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? ³⁷If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

This outline was part of a discussion on Mormonism held at the North Charlottesville church of Christ on January 13, 2008. To access the full discussion go to:

<http://www.uvachurch.com/AFriendlyDiscussionOnMormonism.htm>