

The Holy Scriptures

The Word of God

Table of Contents

God, Jesus Christ, and Eternal Life 4

 I Am the Bread of Life 6

We Need to Know the Scriptures..... 7

 Hearken and Hold Fast to the Word of God 9

Is all Scripture given by Inspiration of God 10

Conclusion..... 13

The Holy Scriptures: The Word of God

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Sadly, it seems that there are many people today who neither read their Holy Scriptures nor fully understand the importance of doing so. It appears that there are few which take the time to search the Scriptures diligently, and perhaps fewer still, are those who truly feast upon the word of God, meaning those who study, spiritually understand the Scriptures, and follow all the commandments of God. Likewise, there are those who question the Scriptures as a whole, asking, “What are the Scriptures,” “Why are they important,” and, “Do they have any relevance in today’s world, or are they relics of the past, written by men to justify their own purposes?” Ironically, the only way in which we can truly answer these questions is by going to the source.

In Paul’s second epistle to Timothy, he wrote, “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been *assured of*, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to *make thee wise unto salvation* through faith which is in Christ Jesus. And all scripture given by *inspiration of God, is profitable* for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God *may be perfect*, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.¹” In short, all Scripture which has been given through the power of God is for the benefit of man unto salvation, and as God is an unchangeable being, what was used for reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness thousands of years ago, still has precedence with His creation today.

The Scriptures have explained that “all things are written by the Father; therefore out of the books which shall be written, shall the world be judged.²” Moreover, Jesus has said, “What I, the Lord, have spoken I have spoken, and I excuse not myself; and though the heavens and the earth pass away, *my word* shall not pass away, but shall all be fulfilled, whether by mine own voice, or by the voice of my servants, *it is the same*; for behold, and lo, the Lord is God, and the *Spirit beareth record*, and the record

¹ 2 Timothy 3:14-17

² 3 Nephi 3:3

is true, and the truth abideth for ever and ever. Amen.³ People have frequently wondered whether God truly authored the Scriptures. Admittedly, a passage from Scripture explaining that God has written all things through His servants and through the power of the Holy Ghost might not convince those who either do not believe or struggle to believe in the Scriptures. However, perhaps reading the testimonies of some of the various authors of the Scriptures would be both appropriate and beneficial for the reader.

| Prophet/Apostle | Life |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jesus | Crucified on the cross |
| Isaiah | suffered martyrdom by being sawn in two by Manasseh |
| Jeremiah | suffered martyrdom by stoning at Tahpanhes in Ancient Egypt where he was also buried |
| Ezekiel | The chief of the Jews who was in the land of the Chaldeans slew him, because he rebuked him for worshipping idols |
| Micah | He suffered martyrdom by Jehoram and buried in his land near the cemetery of the Anakim |
| Amos | Tortured by Amaziah and then martyred either by him or his son, Ahaziah |
| Joseph Smith, Jr | Martyred in 1844 by a mob |
| Paul | Beheaded during the persecution under Emperor Nero about 66 AD |
| Peter | Crucified upside down at his request because he did not feel he was worthy to die in the same manner as Jesus |
| James the brother of John | Was captured and condemned to die by beheading by Herod the Agrippa |

By the standards of the world, the prophets and servants of God lived miserable lives, as they often lived in poverty and suffered persecutions and afflictions of every kind. We would ask the reader, why would someone go through such tribulation in order to write the Scriptures? It could not have been for money, for they died poor, and it could not have been for praise of the world, for it was the world that hated and killed them. In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, Paul wrote of the servants of God, saying, “And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; Of whom the world *was not worthy*; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promises; God having provided some better things for them through their sufferings, for without sufferings they could not be made perfect.⁴”

To some individuals it might seem foolish or strange that these servants endured such trials because of their faith in Jesus Christ, while to others their faith is something to aspire to. We hope that the evidences presented above will help to demonstrate that the Scriptures were not written by men seeking for fame and glory, but rather they were written by men seeking to serve their Heavenly Father as well as their Savior.

³ DC 1:8

⁴ Hebrews 11:36-40

God, Jesus Christ, and Eternal Life

In order for us to understand Scripture, it is first important to know what the purpose of mankind is. Assuredly, the world has many different views on this subject, or perhaps none at all, and the same can be said for many Christians. Oddly enough, in order for us to know what the purpose of man is, we would ask the reader to consider what the Scriptures have to say on this subject and to search for the truth in their own heart.

From the Scriptures, we read that the purpose of man is to receive the greatest of all gifts, which is the love of God, or in other words eternal life. Jesus once prayed, “And this is life eternal, that they might *know thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”⁵ It is only through this knowledge that we can receive the remarkable and indescribable joy that before we loved God, He first loved us and sent His Son to be the restorer of our souls. Therefore, in order to understand the love which God has toward all of His creation, the Scriptures explain that our time on this earth is a probationary state, which is a time for us to prepare to meet God as no unclean thing can enter into His presence. Thus, the Lord has commended the children of men to “seek not for riches but for wisdom; and, behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich.”⁶

Further, we can surmise from Scripture, that God’s greatest desire for mankind is for us to choose Him not because we are commanded to, but because we love Him. Wherefore, it is sensible to say that God’s purpose is to bring about the eternal life of mankind. However, we would ask the reader, how is this done? How does man receive the gift the eternal life?

The 1828 Webster’s Dictionary defines the word Scripture, in part, as a word “used either in singular or plural number, to denote the sacred writings or divine oracles, called sacred or holy, as proceeding from God and containing sacred doctrines and precepts.” Webster utilizes the following sentence as an example, “There is not any action that man ought to do or forbear, but the Scripture will give him a clear precept of prohibition for it.”

How does an individual receive the gift of eternal life without first having knowledge of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, and how can an individual learn what they must do receive this gift without Scripture to instruct him or her in righteousness? The same question could be applied to the job market today. For example, how does a contractor build architecture without a blueprint? How does a person learn to become a doctor without the proper education? How does a musician compose an orchestra without music on a page?

While it is true that at some point, people were able to accomplish these tasks without having blueprints, proper education, or information on a page because it all had to start somewhere. The same is true with the prophets in the Scripture. Following the separation of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden because of transgression, Adam did not have any written instruction in which to learn the way of eternal salvation, or the way to instruct his children, but through direct revelation given by God, Adam

⁵ John 17:3

⁶ DC 6:3b-c

was able to write the first set of Scriptures. The same can be said about the architect or the educator. For a Scriptural example, let us consider Noah, who was not able construct the arc because of his own knowledge of shipbuilding, but rather because he was instructed by the Lord.

God created both the Heavens and the earth, and the earth is his footstool. Mankind did not invent science, mathematics, or language, but we gained truth and more understanding of God through these subjects. As God said in Genesis, chapter six, “And, behold, all things have their likeness; and all things are created and made to bear record of me; both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual; things which are in the heavens above, and things which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath, all things bear record of me.”⁷ Johannes Kepler, the father of Physical Astronomy, often said, “O God, I am thinking Thy thoughts after Thee.” Kepler believed that the universe testified of the truth and existence of God.

For an example in history, we will look to Christopher Columbus, who told how a heavenly messenger instructed him to find the New World. Mr. P. De Roo, a historian of America, said “There is no sense in ascribing Columbus’ admirable achievement merely to his enthusiasm or his genius. Foolhardiness would in this case be the more correct expression. Divine revelation only, or scientific acquirements could entitle him to predict with assurance as he did, the success of his undertaking. We may well ask whether Divine Providence traced beforehand those guiding lines on Columbus’ charts.”⁸ Please read an excerpt from a letter that Christopher Columbus wrote to King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain:

He [the most High] gave to thee [Columbus] the keys of those great gates of the ocean...which fast closed with such mighty chains.⁹

Perhaps Arthur Oakman, an apostle in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and a man of great faith, phrased it best. He once said, “He [meaning God] has created us in a world, in a way that we are able, by our God given reason, to know the world, and it is our God given duty to know it. Moreover, he has created the world and is imminent and present in it, as well as over and above it, and he is imminent in it in such a way that man, knowing the world, cannot but know something of God’s power and wisdom.”

“Of whatever kind of knowledge that we are possessed, we cannot but know something of his power and his wisdom, and therefore this kind of knowledge is never something merely natural and worldly. If we have knowledge of the world and of the universe, we gain that knowledge by acts in which something God made is grasped according to divine destiny and this knowledge then in itself becomes something holy, something sacred. And is as far as true knowledge does exist, it is all at the same time natural and supernatural. In learning more about the world we are learning more about God.”

Ultimately, the Scriptures were given to the children of men for our profit and learning so that we might have a rod of iron to hold fast too, that we might know God, and that we might know how to obtain

⁷ Genesis 6:66

⁸ P. De Roo, *History of America Before Columbus*, Vol. 2, pages 501-502.

⁹ Montgomery, *Leading Facts of American History*, page 18.

eternal life. In the first chapter of John, we read that the Gospel was preached from the beginning of the world, and that the Gospel was the word of Jesus Christ. Further we read, "In him [Jesus] was the gospel, and the gospel was the life, and the life was the light of men."¹⁰ The Church of Jesus Christ believes that the Gospel testifies that Jesus is the Son of God and that He was sent to be the reconciliation for the sins of the world for all those who would believe on His name and follow His commandments.

I Am the Bread of Life

In sixth chapter of John, Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst....No man can come unto me, except he doeth the will of my Father who hath sent me. And this is the will of him who hath sent me, that ye receive the Son; for the Father beareth record of him; and he who receiveth the testimony, and doeth the will of him who sent me, I will raise up in the resurrection of the just...Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life."¹¹ Read the following passage from John 5:38-40:

5:38 And the Father himself who sent me, hath borne witness of me. And verily I testify unto you, that ye [Pharisees and Sadducees] have never heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape; **5:39** For ye have not his word abiding in you; and him whom he hath sent, ye believe not. **5:40** Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which **testify of me.**

In short, Jesus Christ is our blessed hope of eternal life. The first letter to Timothy, chapter two, informs us that Jesus is the only mediator between God and man and that He is the atonement for our sins. It is important to note, that we only have an advocate with God because of Jesus Christ, who died and rose again. The apostle John instructed mankind that we sin not, "but if any man sin and repent, we have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments...whoso keepeth his word, in him is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him."¹²

However, how can we know Christ and keep His commandments so that we might receive eternal life if we do not know the principles that He taught? Thus, we must be a student of Scripture, which is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul wrote, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the *word of truth*."¹³ "Wherefore, I said unto you, Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do."¹⁴ Nonetheless, the Scriptures not only teach us the commandments of Jesus Christ, but they also instruct us on how to follow them. Jesus said, "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like. He is like a

¹⁰ John 1:1-5

¹¹ John 6:35; 44; 47-48

¹² 1 John 2:1-3; 5

¹³ 2 Timothy 2:15

¹⁴ 2 Nephi 14:4

man who built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock.¹⁵ Jesus said simply, “If ye love me, *keep my commandments*.¹⁶”

We Need to Know the Scriptures

If the Scriptures were written thousands of years ago, do we really need them anymore? Do they actually have relevance in today’s present world? The answer is undeniably yes. To understand why, we must first recognize the fact that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever and that He does not change. In Isaiah, chapter twenty-nine, we read, “For behold, I am God; and I am a God of miracles, and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men, save it be according to their faith.¹⁷”

If we believe in God, then we must also believe that He is a God of justice, and a God of justice does not and cannot change. If God did change, how could we trust in Him or in the commandments which He has given through the Gospel of Jesus Christ? The Scriptures also testify that Jesus is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,¹⁸” as well as the Holy Ghost [read 1 Nephi 3:26-27]. Therefore, if God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost never change, why would the Scriptures change? As the reader read earlier, “All scripture given by *inspiration of God, is profitable* for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God *may be perfect*, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.¹⁹” What God has given to mankind so that we might become perfect in Jesus Christ is just as true today as it was in the days of Adam.

“God did call on men, in the name of his Son, (this being the plan of redemption which was laid,) saying: If ye will repent, and harden not your hearts, then will I have mercy upon you, through mine only begotten Son. Therefore, whosoever repenteth, and hardeneth not his heart, he shall have claim on mercy through mine only begotten Son, unto a remission of his sins; and these shall enter into my rest.²⁰” The commandment to believe in the Son of God, to repent, to be baptized, and to endure to the end has stood from the foundation of the world and will continue to stand forever more. The Scriptures have been given to the children of men for their profit and learning so “that they might *know thee* the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.²¹” Please read of the importance of the Gospel from Romans 1:16-17, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 1 Nephi 4:39-44, Matthew 24:39, and 1 Peter 1:24-25:

1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God *unto salvation* to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. **1:17** For therein is the righteousness of God revealed through faith on his name; **as it is written**, The just shall live by faith.

¹⁵ Luke 6:46-48

¹⁶ John 14:15

¹⁷ Isaiah 29:25

¹⁸ Hebrews 13:8

¹⁹ 2 Timothy 3:16-17

²⁰ Alma 9:54-55

²¹ John 17:3

15:1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and ***wherein ye stand***; **15:2** By which also ***ye are saved***, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. **15:3** For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins **according to the scriptures**; **15:4** And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day **according to the scriptures**;

4:39 And I said unto them, that it was the **word of God**; and whoso would hearken unto the word of God, and would hold fast unto it, they would ***never perish***; **4:40** Neither could the temptations and the fiery darts of the adversary, overpower them unto blindness, **to lead them away to destruction**. **4:41** Wherefore, I, Nephi, did exhort them to give heed unto the word of the Lord; **4:42** Yea, I did exhort them with all the energies of my soul, and with all the faculty which I possessed, that they would give heed to the word of God, and remember to keep his commandments always, **in all things**.

24:39 And whoso treasureth up my words, ***shall not be deceived***.

1:24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; **1:25** But **the word of the Lord *endureth forever***. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

The word of God will never pass away, but we have the promise that it will endure forever, thus it is imperative that we hold fast to the Scriptures so that we can press forward and obtain eternal life. In Matthew, chapter four, we read a perfect example of why we need to have a good understanding of the Scriptures. In this chapter, Satan tempted Jesus after He had spent forty days and nights caught up into the Spirit. “And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” Jesus responded and said, “***It is written***, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” It is important to understand that in response to Satan’s temptation, Jesus used Scripture to defeat him. Jesus actually quoted from Deuteronomy 8:3:

8:3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

After Jesus refuted Satan’s temptation, the Spirit caught Jesus up and brought Him to the top of the temple. “Then the devil came unto him and said, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, ***for it is written***, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.” The second time Satan tempted Jesus, he himself used Scripture, which is why it is so important for us to both study and to live the commandments, so that when we hear a Scripture ***misused or misquoted***, we will know the truth of it and we will not be deceived. Satan quoted from Psalms 91:11-12:

91:11 For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. **91:12** They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Jesus again rebuffed Satan's temptation by responding with Scripture, "Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," which is taken from Deuteronomy 6:16. Following Satan's second temptation, Jesus was again taken up by the Spirit of God and brought to an exceeding high mountain where He witnessed all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. "And the devil came unto him again, and said, All these things will I give unto thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him." Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 8:19:

8:19 And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.

For the third and final temptation, Jesus once again rebuffed Satan by using the words "it is written." Thus, we see how important the Scriptures are in our walk with the Lord. For if the Master used Scripture in order to defeat the temptations of the wicked one, as well as to teach against the false doctrines of the Pharisees and Sadducees, then how much more should we know the Scriptures so that we are not overpowered into blindness and led away?

Hearken and Hold Fast to the Word of God

In John, chapter one, we read, "In the *beginning* was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made which was made. In him was the gospel, and the gospel was the life, and the life was the light of men.²²" John clarified later in the same chapter that "for in the beginning was the Word, even the Son, who is made flesh, and sent unto us by the will of the Father. And as many as believe on his name shall receive of his fullness. And of his fullness have all we received, even immortality and eternal life, through his grace.²³" Therefore, when we read of either the Gospel or the word of God, we know that the Scriptures are actually speaking of Jesus Christ. It is crucial therefore that we both hearken and hold fast to Jesus, even the Word of God.

As we read above in the first chapter of John, the Gospel, or in other words Jesus, is the life and light of men. However, we read in the following verse, "And the light shineth in the world, and the world perceiveth it not,²⁴" meaning that because of the darkness²⁴ of the world, man is not able to see or comprehend the light of Christ. What is the darkness of the world? To answer this question, please read the following Scriptures from Genesis 7:31-32, Hosea 4:1 and 6, 1 Nephi 3:125, 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12, and Matthew 24:23:

7:31 And Enoch was high and lifted up, even in the bosom of the Father and the Son of Man; and, behold, the powers of Satan were upon all the face of the earth; and he saw angels descending out of heaven, and he heard a loud voice, saying, Woe! woe! be unto the inhabitants

²² John 1:1-4

²³ John 1:16

²⁴ John 1:5

of the earth! **7:32** And he beheld Satan, and he had a great chain in his hand, and it **veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness**; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.

4:1 Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel; for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, **nor knowledge of God in the land**.

4:6 My people are destroyed ***for lack of knowledge***; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee...

3:125 And the mists of darkness are the **temptations of the devil**, which blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into broad roads, that they may perish, ***and are lost***;

2:9 Yea, the Lord, even Jesus, whose coming is not until after there cometh a falling away, by the working of Satan with **all power, and signs and lying wonders**, **2:10** And with all **deceivableness of unrighteousness** in them that perish; because they ***received not*** the love of the truth, that they might be saved. **2:11** And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they **should believe a lie**; **2:12** That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

24:23 For in those days, there shall also arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if possible, **they shall deceive the very elect**, who are the elect according to the covenant.

The various verses above all testify to different degrees that the darkness which prevents mankind from perceiving the light of the Gospel is the lack of knowledge and understanding that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came to redeem the children of men *from* their sins. Nonetheless, through studying the Word we learn that the Gospel is the light and the life of the world, and as such, it is imperative that we feast on the words of Christ so that we will not be led astray and so that we might receive the gift of eternal life.

Is all Scripture given by Inspiration of God

The question arises that once we understand that the Scriptures truly testify of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, which Scriptures should we read and are all Scriptures given by the inspiration of God? Although these questions can seem overwhelming at first glance, we can find the answer by once again turning to the Scriptures. Undoubtedly, it can be well-nigh impossible to discern whether or not a Scripture has been truly inspired of God unless we study them through the power of the Holy Ghost. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, ***except he has*** the Spirit of God.²⁵" [For more on the Holy Ghost please read **Chapter Three**]. It is therefore absolutely critical that before the reader studies any Scripture or work, that they pray to the Father in the name of the Son so that the Holy Ghost will lead them into all truth.

²⁵ 1 Corinthians 2:11

Providentially, the Scriptures themselves give us understanding on how to discern the Spirit of God. To begin, as we have mentioned several times throughout this book, God has said, “For I am the Lord, I change not,²⁶” and because of this fact we both know and understand that the Scriptures which have been given through the inspiration of God will not contradict themselves, as Paul wrote, “And the spirits of the prophets are *subject* to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.²⁷” In other words, the truth that is found in the Scriptures is unchangeable, and thereby any “Scripture” presented must agree with the truth that has already been established. Jesus Christ defined truth as the “knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come; and whatsoever is more or less than this, is the spirit of that wicked one, who was a liar from the beginning.²⁸”

Another standard which God has established through His word so that we might discern the truth is found in the first epistle of John. “Beloved, *believe not every spirit, but try the spirits* whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh *is of God*; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh *is not of God*.²⁹” In short, in order for a Scripture to be inspired of God it must (1) testify that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that He came to save as many as will, (2) it must be confirmed by the power of the Holy Ghost, and (3) it must not contradict previously established doctrine.

The Church of Jesus Christ believes that the Inspired Version of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants meet all three qualifications mentioned above. In order to demonstrate this, we will examine a Scripture passage from the Old Testament which testifies of all three. [For further information on the Book of Mormon, read **Chapter Twenty**] Please read the following passage from Ezekiel 37:15-22:

37:15 The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, **37:16** Moreover, thou son of man, take thee **one stick** [Scripture] and write upon it, **for Judah**, and for the children of Israel his companions; then take **another stick**, and write upon it, **for Joseph**, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions; **37:17** And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. **37:18** And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? **37:19** Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the **stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim**, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with **the stick of Judah**, and make **them one stick**, and they shall be **one in mine hand**. **37:20** And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. **37:21** And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; **37:22** And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all;

²⁶ Malachi 3:6

²⁷ 1 Corinthians 14:32-33

²⁸ DC 90:4b

²⁹ 1 John 4:1-3

and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms anymore at all;

Most scholars and theologians agree that the stick of Judah is the Bible. Nonetheless, they tend to disagree on the meaning behind the stick of Joseph. The Restoration firmly believes that the stick of Joseph is speaking of the Book of Mormon, as we find that those who wrote this book were descendants of Joseph, one the twelve sons of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. The following Scriptures from the Book of Mormon clarify that while the peoples were decedents of Joseph, they were not descendants of Ephraim but of his brother Manasseh. Please read Ether 6:8 and Alma 8:3:

6:8 Wherefore the remnant of the **house of Joseph shall be built upon this land**; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and thy shall no more be confounded, until the end come, when the earth shall pass away.

8:3 And Aminadi was a descendant of Nephi, who was the son of Lehi, who came out of the land of Jerusalem, who was a **descendant of Manasseh**, who was the son of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt by the hands of his brethren.

The reader might be asking, “If Ezekiel prophesized that the stick of Joseph would be in the hand of Ephraim but the people in the Book of Mormon were descendants of Manasseh, how then is the Book of Mormon the stick mentioned in this prophecy, and what does this have to do with the Doctrine and Covenants?” The answer is found in the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which states in *Church History Vol. 2* that Joseph Smith, Jr., who translated the Book of Mormon, was a descendent Ephraim, thereby the “stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim,” is the Book of Mormon. Moreover, Joseph Smith wrote the revelations which he received from God in what is called the Doctrine and Covenants just as the prophets of old did before him. The Scripture passage from Ezekiel, chapter thirty-seven, testifies of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants, which is why these three standard books have been utilized throughout this work. However, it is important that the reader receives confirmation of the truth from God as the Lord has counseled in James 1:5-7 and Moroni 10:3-7:

1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, **let him ask of God**, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. **1:6** But let him ask **in faith**, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. **1:7** For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.

10:3 Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam, even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts. **10:4** 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; **10:5** 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.** **10:6** And whatsoever thing is good, is just and true; wherefore, nothing that is good denieth the Christ, but acknowledgeth that he is. **10:7** And ye may know that he is, by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore I would exhort you, that ye deny not the power of God; for he worketh by power, according to the faith of the children of men, the same to-day and to-morrow, and for ever.

Conclusion

The Restoration believes that God is unchangeable and that He is the same today, yesterday, and forever. Further, the Restoration believes that God has revealed Himself through the ages and continues to do so today through the power of the Holy Ghost. The Scriptures not only teach and verify this truth, but they also show us the path that we might come to know both our Heavenly Father and our Savior, Jesus Christ. In particular, we have discussed in this chapter that by following the commandments which God has laid before us, we can receive the gift of eternal life, which is God's purpose for all the children of men. Therefore, it is both important and relevant to study the Gospel of truth which testifies of Jesus Christ, and to follow it.

It is our prayer that the reader has learned the necessity and the significance of the Scriptures. The Holy Scriptures are not simply words written by men to further their own carnal purposes, but they are divine inspirations given by God that we might learn the path which leads to salvation and understand the joy of the great plan of redemption. The Scriptures speak the truth as plain as truth can be, thus God desires mankind to study them diligently so that we might know Him, and know all things which we should do. In closing, please read the following Scriptures from 2 Nephi 13:3-5, 2 Nephi 14:4-9, and Deuteronomy 30:11-16:

13:3 Wherefore the things which I have written, sufficeth me, save it be a few words which I must speak, concerning the doctrine of Christ; wherefore I shall speak unto you **plainly**, according to the plainness of my prophesying. **13:4** For my soul delighteth in plainness: for after this manner **doth the Lord God work** among the children of men. **13:5** For the Lord God giveth light unto the understanding: for he speaketh unto men **according to their language, unto their understanding**.

14:4 Wherefore, I said unto you, Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do. **14:5** Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye can not understand them, it will be because ***ye ask not, neither do ye knock***; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark. **14:6** For behold, again I say unto you, that if ye will enter in by the way and receive the Holy Ghost, it will shew unto you all things what ye should do.

14:7 Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ; and there will be no more doctrine given, until after he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh. **14:8** And when he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh, the things which he shall say unto you, **shall ye observe to do**. **14:9** And now I, Nephi, can not say more: the Spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief, and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiffneckedness of men: for they

will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, ***even as plain as word can be***.

30:11 For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it ***far off***. **30:12** It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? **30:13** Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? **30:14** But ***the word is very nigh unto thee***, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. **30:15** See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; **30:16** In that I command thee this day to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live...