

21 August 2022

Dear Sisters and Elders:

Perhaps the most important thing we can learn on our missions is how to effectively study the gospel of Jesus Christ. In our recent zone conferences, we talked a lot about asking inspired questions. Here is a game I would encourage you to play with your companion in your companionship study this week.

One of you open your scriptures (preferably the Book of Mormon) to a random page. Without looking, place your index finger on a scripture. Read it together, and then see how many inspired questions you can ask about that scripture. I just did this very thing, opening my Book of Mormon and with my eyes closed, placed my finger on 2 Nephi 4:11. This is Lehi, speaking to his son Sam.

*“And after he had made an end of speaking unto them [the sons of Ishmael], he spake unto Sam, saying: Blessed art thou, and thy seed; for thou shalt inherit the land like unto thy brother Nephi. And thy seed shall be numbered with his seed; and thou shalt be even like unto thy brother, and thy seed like unto his seed; and thou shalt be blessed in all thy days.”*

Here are some questions I asked myself:

- 1) What are the promises made to Nephi about inheriting the Land of Promise? How do these promises relate to me?
- 2) Why would it be so important to “be numbered among his seed”? (It is interesting that the scripture says he will both inherit the land like his brother Nephi AND that his seed will be numbered with Nephi’s seed). Why are both aspects mentioned. How are they different?
- 3) He is promised he will be “blessed all his days”. What might these blessings be? What is the Lord promising here? What blessings have I seen in my life as I try to be more like Nephi?

I repeated the exercise. This time, my finger landed on Alma 32:25. This is Alma speaking to the poor of the Zoramites. These people had helped to build the synagogues but were then “cast out because of the coarseness of their apparel”.

*“For I do not mean that ye all of you have been compelled to humble yourselves; for I verily believe that there are some among you who would humble themselves, let them be in whatsoever circumstances they might.”*

Here are some questions I have come up with:

- 1) What sort of experiences compel me to be humble? Why did these poor Zoramites feel compelled to be humble?
- 2) What helps me to humble myself?
- 3) In what circumstances is it harder for me to be humble? When is it easier? What can I learn from this reflection of my own pride and humility cycles? How can I gain greater humility in my life without being compelled?

I now want to explain from the scriptures, why reading, understanding, and applying scriptures (and especially the Book of Mormon) is so important.

In Lesson 4: The Commandments at the bottom of page 76 we read, *“The scriptures are written records of God’s dealings with His children as recorded by prophets under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. We show our faith by studying, believing, and obeying God’s revealed word. We diligently search the scriptures to understand the truth. We feast upon them because they open the door to revelation and show us what we need to do and become. We search the scriptures to learn about Jesus Christ and His gospel. Faith in Jesus Christ is a gift from God and comes through studying and living His word and His gospel.”*

Here are 10 verses I have found over the years through my own scripture study that have helped me to know why learning from the scriptures is so important. There are many, many more.

- 1) Mosiah 1:3 – Without the scriptures we will suffer in ignorance and not know the mysteries of God.
- 2) Mosiah 26:39 – Studying the scriptures will advise and warn us (the word used in the verse is “admonished”).
- 3) Alma 37:8 – The scriptures will enlarge our memories. This means we will gain perspective about our eternal destinies and have a better understanding as to why what we do here on earth matters. They will also convince us of the error of our ways and bring us to a knowledge of God unto the salvation of our souls.
- 4) Alma 44:5 – Reading and studying the scriptures will bring us happiness.
- 5) Alma 37:10 – The scriptures will bring us to a knowledge of our Redeemer and help us to soften our hearts and repent of our iniquities.
- 6) 2 Nephi 31:20 – Enduring to the end requires that we “press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ.”
- 7) 2 Timothy 3:16 – All scripture is given for reproof (rebuke), for correction, and for righteous instruction.
- 8) Mosiah 1:5 – Reading, studying, and applying the scriptures will keep us from dwindling in unbelief. Without them, our belief will grow smaller and smaller.
- 9) Romans 15:4 – Reading and studying the scriptures will bring us hope.
- 10) D&C 88:118 – We can increase our faith by reading and learning from the scriptures.

I would encourage you to look up each of these scriptures. Are there inspired questions you might ask yourself as you read and ponder each one? I would ask that you take a moment or two and write down what you have learned about how you can improve your own personal scripture study and what you can gain by doing so.

These sacred records are here to help us become like Christ. Let’s lose ourselves in their pages and bask in the spirit of revelation as we do so. Remember, if you are studying the scriptures without a pen and paper in hand, prepared to write questions and take notes, you are missing so much personal revelation that the Lord desires to give you.

All my love,  
President Kunz