



Why We Keep Coming Back

In the seven years we have been publishing the *First Voices Journal*, we have rarely talked about ourselves. The vast majority of the time we have written about Native Americans. This makes sense since the journal is for and about Native Americans. During the same seven years, we have visited all of the tribes in Oklahoma as well as Native American friends and acquaintances (to some we have become family). The question is, why do we do it? Why do we keep publishing and keep visiting? The answer is simple – you are very, very important to us. We ask only for your time and consideration and we ask for nothing else – nothing!

Now you will ask why you are important to us. From the first issue to the most recent issue and on our web site, we have shared our beliefs of the past, present and future of Native Americans. It is knowledge of your ancient past and the great hope we have for you in the future that we are sharing today.

So in 37 words here is our message: Jesus Christ died to save you; you are the seed of Abraham (Jacob and Joseph); God did great things for your forefathers; God will do great things among you again and gather you to your own lands.

Ancient Words Shared

We want to reiterate some of those **ancient words** that we have shared with you in the past from the ancient Indian record – *the Book of Mormon*.

“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” (2 Nephi 27:23).

“And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.” (Mosiah 2:17)

“I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for I know that the Lord gives no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commands them.” (1 Nephi 3:7)

“And ye will not suffer your children that they go hungry, or naked; neither will ye suffer that they transgress the laws of God, and fight and quarrel one with another, and serve the devil, who is the master of sin, or who is the evil spirit which hath been spoken of by our fathers, he being an enemy to all righteousness.” (Mosiah 4:14)

“I have spoken these few words unto you all, my sons, in the last days of my [spiritual] probation; and I have chosen the good part, according to the words of the prophet. And I have none other object save it be the everlasting welfare of your souls. Amen.” (2 Nephi 2:30)

“And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order.” (Mosiah 4:27)

Future Hopes Shared

And now we want to share again some **future hopes** and aspirations that we about you taken from the same record.

“Yea, let us preserve our liberty as a remnant of Joseph [one of the 12 sons of Jacob]; yea, let us remember the words of Jacob, before his death, for behold, he saw that a part of the remnant of the coat of Joseph was preserved and had not decayed. And he said – Even as this remnant of garment of my son has been preserved, so shall a remnant of the seed of my son be preserved by the hand of God, and be

taken unto himself, while the remainder of the seed of Joseph shall perish, even as the remnant of his garment” (Alma 46:24).

“...Thus saith the Lord unto me: A choice seer [spiritual leader] will I raise up... And unto him will I give commandment that he shall do a work for...his brethren, which shall be of great worth unto them, even to the bringing of them to the knowledge of the covenants which I have made with thy fathers... And I will make him great in mine eyes; for he shall do my work. And he shall be great like unto Moses, whom I have said I would raise up unto you, to deliver my people, O house of Israel” (2 Nephi 3:7-9)

“And when these things [Book of Mormon] come to pass that thy seed [Native Americans] shall begin to know these things [promises of God to them] – it shall be a sign unto them that they may w that the work of the Father hath already commenced unto the fulfilling of the covenant which he hath made unto the People who are of the House of Israel [Native Americans].” (3 Nephi 21:7)

What’s in it for us?

We are glad to do God’s will and by doing so, we get to join in the blessings. “And they [non-Indians] shall assist my people [Native Americans], the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city, which shall be called the New Jerusalem.” (3 Nephi 21:23)

Reflecting Back to Earlier Issues

In the pages of the *First Voices Journal* we often refer to a spiritual/historical record we affectionately call the Translated Ancient American Indian Record. Its more common names are *Nephite Record* and *Book of Mormon*. Please give us a moment of your time to provide an explanation as to how important this book is for you. It is similar to the Bible in that it is a holy, spiritual, and civil record of the ancient Israelite people. Although the time period it covers is shorter, it is focused on a people God brought to ancient America from the land of Jerusalem and how he dealt with them and how they dealt with each other. It is about their prophets and their rulers, their blessings and their struggles.

This book contains many beautiful teachings, prophecies, and accounts of holy men of God who were the forefathers of modern day Native Americans

(as shown in the first article). So in reality, the *Book of Mormon* is a book that belongs to the Native American – it is your book. It just so happened that God used a non-Native to translate the book from its ancient language to English and He asked a non-Indian people (us) to carry it back to Native Americans for them to see what great things God did for their forefathers and what great things he is about to do among them.

You may ask what you should do with the book. First, notice that the book establishes God’s selection of Israel (Jacob) as his covenant people (including Native Americans) and that He will gather them together one day soon. It also testifies that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, the Savior and Redeemer of the world. And it prophesies that a spiritual renewal and awakening will occur in the Americas led by the Native American. In many respects, it is the true culture of the Native American.

So you may now ask, why are we explaining all of this to you? Because we want to do our part in carrying out the will of God, that is, returning your ancient and holy record back to you as we were told to do by God. You see, we are only messengers of God, carrying out His plans that he foretold, in the Bible, thousands of years ago (Ezekiel 37:15-19). We are similar to John the Baptist, who fulfilled the prophecy of the coming of Jesus as written in Isaiah (40:3).

“Behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knows all things.” (2 Nephi 2:24)

“Behold, I say unto you that ye must pray always, and not faint; that ye must not perform anything unto the Lord save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul.” (2 Nephi 32:9)

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