

Come Follow Me Podcast
Elo Viz Production
Week 1 - January 1-7
Introduction to the Book of Mormon

I am so excited that we get to focus on the Book of Mormon this year. It is my favorite collection of holy writ. The reason that it is my favorite is because this is written specifically for us for our day. And clearly translated by God into our language. Now, some of you I'm sure are saying, "No, Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon." In reality, when we think about it There really is no way that Joseph could have translated the Book of Mormon. He was just the vessel that God used to bring us this wonderful work. Let me give you another example of this principle.

Back in 2019 Loren Dalton shared this story:

my mom would always start her days in her morning prayers saying, "God, trust me with at least one prompting that day." And I PROMISED Him that I would act on it IMMEDIATELY. Well, one day in a Family Home Evening she shared with us a story. It happened years earlier. It went like this: She said that she was folding laundry and all of the sudden she had this Thought. I need to call so-and-so. So, she stopped what she was doing and went to make the call, and the call went like this:

Other Woman: "Hello" (in a mean, irritated voice)

My Mom: "Hi! This is Sister Dalton. How are you doing?"

Other Woman: (in that same mean voice) "Fine."

My Mom: "I just felt that I should..."

Other Woman: "Okay" (in that same rude voice)

My Mom: "Is there anything I can do for you?"

Other Woman: "No. Bye!" (in a mean voice – and hangs up on my mom).

My mom shrugged her shoulders and smiled. She knew she did what God wanted and went back to the laundry. Three days later, a knock came to our door. My mom answered the door. "Why did you call me?" "Well, I just felt that..." "No. I have to know. Why did you call me three days ago when you did?" My mom said, "Come in and I'll tell you." She came in and sat down and said, "I was doing the laundry and of a sudden I had the strongest impression that I needed to call you." The woman started to crying uncontrollably. When she finally came to, she said, "Let me tell YOU why you called me!! For months, I had been falling into a deeper and deeper state of depression. I hadn't shared it with anybody. Three days ago, I decided that I was going to end my life. I got on my knees and said a prayer to God and said that unless a miracle happens, tonight my sweet husband is coming home to a dead wife. I was in the very act of doing so, when the phone rang. Without thinking, I grabbed it. And then after I grabbed it, I said, "Why did I answer the phone?" And that's why I was so rude to you and I am sorry that I was. But, as soon as I hung up the phone with you, this thought popped into my head, "That was your miracle." 'No, it's just a coincidence.' But for three days, I kept getting that thought. 'That was your miracle. Ask her. That was your miracle. Go ask her.' So, I had to ask you, and now I know that you Sister Dalton were my miracle. Thank you for acting on a prompting. You saved my life.

<https://www.ensign.edu/devotionals/loren-dalton>

When we hear this story we could assume that it was sister Dalton that saved this woman's life. But if we are truly being honest with ourselves then we can admit that she was just the vessel that God was using to help one of His children in need. There was no way for Sister Dalton to know what was going on in this woman's life at that exact moment. But God did, and Sister Dalton was prepared to do what God needed done in order to save a child in need.

This year as we study the Book of Mormon I would like to do something a little different. I feel that this topic of hearing and recognizing God's Voice when He speaks is so important. It is the foundation of most of the stories we read about in this ancient text. They struggled with it then just as much as we do today. There is no doubt that the reason for contention, war, and evil in this world is due to the adversary convincing us that it is not God speaking when He talks to us.

So.. as we study the Book of Mormon together this year, my plan is to focus on those moments when each person received a prompting from the Holy Spirit, what their reaction was, and the cause or effect that came because of them listening or ignoring the prompting.

In order to begin to recognize these moments we must first know what the voice of the spirit sounds like. And the simple answer is: It sounds just like you do.

Here is what I mean by that: The Voice of the Holy Spirit is a voice that speaks not to our natural ears but to our spirit. In order to hear the words of the spirit we must listen with our spiritual ears.

Doctrine and Covenants 8 states:

"I will **tell** you in your mind and in your **heart**, by the **Holy Ghost**, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart. Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation;" (D&C 8:2-3)

Doctrine and Covenants 11 says:

"I will impart unto you of my Spirit, which shall **enlighten** your **mind**, which shall fill your soul with **joy**;" (D&C 11:13)

Elder Packard described it this way:

"The scriptures generally use the word voice, which does not exactly fit. These delicate, refined spiritual communications are not seen with our eyes, nor heard with our ears. And even though it is described as a voice, it is a voice that one feels, more than one hears.

Once I came to understand this, one verse in the Book of Mormon took on a profound meaning, and my testimony of the book increased immeasurably. It had to do with Laman and Lemuel, who rebelled against Nephi. Nephi rebuked them and said, "Ye have seen an angel, and he spake unto you; yea, ye have heard his voice from time to

time; and he hath spoken unto you in a still small voice, but ye were past *feeling*, that ye could not *feel* his words.” (1 Ne. 17:45; italics added). ...”

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/teaching-seminary-preservice-readings-religion-370-471-and-475/the-candle-of-the-lord?lang=eng>

So how do we distinguish our own voice and the voice of the Spirit and in addition the voice of the adversary?

Elder Dalton describes it this way:

“In a physical way it appears to us like a positive thought that will just pop into our heads. And that is revelation. That's the Holy Ghost talking to us.

The problem is that we take credit for it. We think it's our thought and as a result we don't usually act on it. Let me give you an example:

You're playing a computer game or you are on Pinterest or you're watching TV, whatever it is, and all of a sudden you have a thought pop into your head to call so-and-so. Now so-and-so is a friend of yours who you haven't seen in five years, you haven't even thought about in two years. But, all of the sudden while you're doing this one thing (BING!), I need to call so-and-so. But you think it's your thought so, you say, “I will. I will when I am done doing this.” Then, when you're done with it, you have already forgotten about it and you never call. And you don't feel badly about it because you figure it was just your idea.

Does it make sense that you, out of the blue, would be thinking about this person that you haven't thought about in years, while you were doing something else? No, the Holy Ghost knew that that person needed to hear from you right then. And that's why you had that thought.

Now, when I would tell this and teach it to my missionaries, some of them would say, "Now, President, that makes sense, but how can I tell the difference between the Holy Ghost prompting me and when it's just my own thought?" I said, "Elders and Sisters. It just doesn't matter. Do it. If it really was your idea, and it probably wasn't - most often it will be the Holy Ghost -but if it really was your idea to do this positive thing and you do it, will God be mad? Of course not. However, if it was a prompting from the Holy Ghost and you don't do it, you risk losing God's confidence in you and the next time he's going to have to prompt someone else."

Also, from President Russell M. Nelson in his first General Conference as President of the Church, he taught us about revelation. He said, "**The privilege of receiving revelation is one of the greatest gifts of God to His children (NOTE: He did NOT say that it is one of the greatest gifts of God to his PROPHETS, but to His children....YOU AND ME!! And THEN, he goes on to tell us EXACTLY how to get revelation!! Do you want to know?? Here he goes.....)** Pray in the name of Jesus Christ about your concerns, your fears, your weaknesses—yes, the very longings of your heart. And then listen! Write the **thoughts that come to your mind**. Record your feelings and **follow through with actions that you are prompted to take** And then he said, "As you repeat this process day after day, month after month, year after year, **you will "grow into the principle of revelation."** Who would know better what revelation is than our prophet?"

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"In the coming weeks and months we are going to really talk about this in detail with stories and examples that will make it very clear. We are going to get to the point that when the Spirit speaks to us that we have no doubt in our mind who the voice in our head is. But for now, this week let us focus on the random, illogical promptings we receive to act, when those come let's drop what we are doing and obey. Ignore the rational that will immediately follow the prompting that tries to talk us out of it and just obey as quickly as we can. And as those moments happen I would encourage you to write them down and keep a spiritual journal of these moments so we can see the progress and recognition as we improve throughout this year. And I would love to hear about some of your experiences as well. You can send me a message through the website CFMpodcast.org.

I very much look forward to our adventure together. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.