

THE BOOK OF MORMON CHALLENGE

By Kelly J. Hunsaker

(Based on a true story)

"I know the Lord provides a way; he wants me to obey"
(Children's Songbook, 121).

Blake closed the Book of Mormon. *I did it*, he said to himself. He jumped up and ran to the kitchen, slipping a little in his church socks.

"I did it!" Blake announced. "I finished reading the whole Book of Mormon."

"You finally finished!" Dad said.

Mom pulled him in for a hug. "That's amazing! Well done."

"Wow," Blake's brother, Austin, said through a mouthful of pancake. "Was it hard?"

Blake thought about that. It had taken him a year and eight months to read the Book of Mormon. "Yeah, it was pretty hard," he said. "But I'm glad I read it. Sometimes it seemed like I'd never finish, but I kept reading."

"What was your favorite part?" Mom asked.

"I really liked when Jesus visited the Nephites," he said. "The best thing is that now I know it's true. I felt good when I prayed about it."

Mom smiled, and Dad gave him a hug. They finished eating and got ready for church.

Today was stake conference. Many of the speakers talked about how important it is to read the Book of Mormon every day. Blake was glad he'd already done that.

At the end of the meeting, the stake president gave his talk. "I want to give you a challenge today. I ask everyone to read the Book of Mormon by the end of the year," he said.

Does he mean me too? Blake wondered.

"Whether you have never read the Book of Mormon or you have read it many times, you will always find blessings from studying it daily," President Miller said.

On the drive home, Blake was very quiet. His family was talking about the challenge. But Blake wasn't excited at all. The happiness he'd felt this morning was gone. He didn't want to start all over.

He'd just finished! When they got home, Blake shuffled to his room and flopped onto his bed. He closed his eyes.

When Blake woke up from his nap, the first thing he saw was his Book of Mormon. It was on his nightstand right where he'd left it this morning.

He picked it up and opened to the title page. "The Book of Mormon, an account written by the hand of Mormon . . .," Blake read aloud. He felt a warm, peaceful feeling. He finished reading the page. Then he knelt down and prayed. "Heavenly Father, please help me read the Book of Mormon again." He started to feel excited about reading it.

Blake walked to the living room. "I'm going to read the Book of Mormon again," he told his family.

"Good for you," Dad said. "Mom and I are going to take the challenge too."

"Will you help me read it?" Austin asked.

"Sure." Blake said. "We can do it together!" ♦

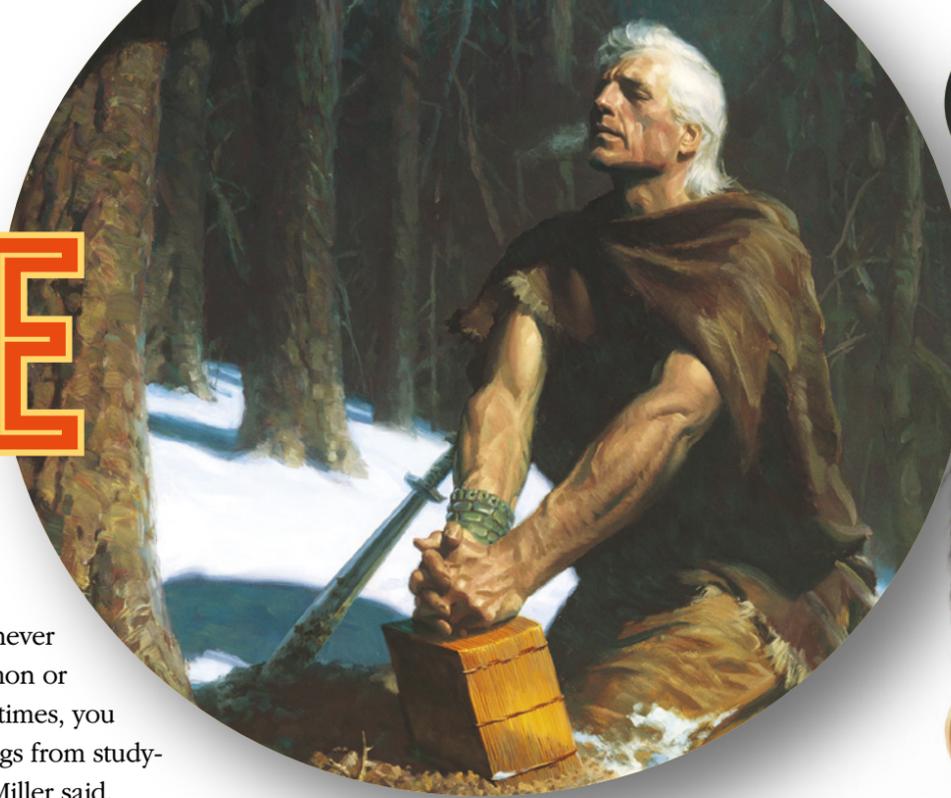
The author lives in Colorado, USA.

Blake didn't want to start over. He'd just finished!

I didn't really read scriptures this week...



It's OK, you can start reading now. I'll help!



TAKE THE CHALLENGE!

You can accept a challenge just like Blake did! Elder Neil L. Andersen challenged us to gain a personal testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith and to say good things about the Prophet. He gave two tips to help us:

- Find scriptures in the Book of Mormon that you know are true. Then share them with family and friends. Explain that Joseph Smith translated them with Heavenly Father's help.
- Read the Prophet's testimony in the Pearl of Great Price or in the pamphlet called *The Testimony of Joseph Smith*. You can find it at LDS.org. Read it often. Try recording it in your own voice, listening to it regularly, and sharing it with friends.