



BUILDING

*faith like*

THE  
BROTHER  
*of*  
JARRED

BRYAN BAGGALEY



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# Chapter 1

# THE SEARCH FOR GOD

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**M**any of the world's religions have four common tenants or beliefs that are intended to explain God's existence and the purpose of life. These four common beliefs include the following:

1. There is a God who is all knowing and all powerful.
2. There is a place or existence where God dwells, commonly referred to as heaven.
3. The purpose of this life is to serve as a test to determine if our souls are worthy of attaining heaven after this life.
4. This test must allow us freedom of choice so that our true nature may be revealed. Because of this, it is necessary for Deity to be concealed. Otherwise, the knowledge of God may influence our choices inconsistent with our true nature, invalidating the test.

Since the beginning of time, the determination to discover, uncover, or disprove the existence of God has been the great quest of the ages. Every intellectual inquiry and scientific investigation have been implemented and devoted to the quest to discover God. However, as God has used His matchless power to conceal Himself, no earthly investigation has been capable of proving or disproving the existence of Deity. Some have come to the conclusion that since so many scientific methods have failed to prove the existence of God, God must not exist. Some have gone so far as to teach and even militantly preach the non-existence of God with the audacious assumption that their capacity and ability to discover God is greater than the ability and power of Deity to conceal Himself. Many more come to the conclusion that it is impossible for man to discover God or know God in any capacity. Many of these people have given up on the quest to discover God and have resigned themselves to an agnostic view of life.

People of religious persuasion have learned that just because mankind has no scientific capacity or earthly ability to discover God, does not mean that

God does not exist or cannot be known. If God is all powerful, it is certainly possible that God may choose to reveal His reality to those who demonstrate that their nature is compatible with heaven. The revealing of His reality may come in the form of feelings, answered prayers, or miracles that do not compromise freedom of choice but still increase our comprehension of Him. Thus, God may choose to reveal His existence to an individual in a manner comparable with the faith they have demonstrated. Those who develop great faith may even align their nature with Deity such that they could see God and stand in His presence. These individuals, or prophets, under the guidance of God, could then organize a religion to give direction to those who desire to follow. Therefore, a true religion must include a record of prophets who have, in fact, stood in the presence of God, as well as a record of their teachings and direction.

The Old Testament, which is accepted and revered by many world religions, contains the record of Abraham, Moses, and several others who stood in God's presence and have proceeded to lead and teach those who would follow. The New Testament is a record of God Himself walking on earth. Yet, of the thousands of people who interacted with Him, few could see and comprehend His divinity.

The Book of Mormon provides additional examples of prophets who have stood in the presence of God, culminating with the appearance of the Savior to thousands of people. These people witnessed that they had seen and stood in the presence of the Lord.

Since the First Vision of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and throughout the restoration of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, there have been multiple records of those who have entered into the presence of God. Of all of the teachings of the Restoration, one of the most beautiful is that it is actually God's work, desire, and glory to bring each of His children back into His presence.

The story of the brother of Jared stands out among the records of man's pursuit to discover God and enter His presence. This record contains one of the most detailed encounters of mankind with God when the brother of Jared saw the premortal Jesus Christ. In this encounter, God revealed all things to the brother of Jared, including the past, present, and future.

What makes the story of the brother of Jared even more remarkable is that a short time previously, the Lord chastised the brother of Jared because he ceased to pray for an extended period of time—possibly for a number of years. In the church today some may have labeled the brother of Jared as “inactive” or “fallen away.” Yet despite his years of faithlessness, the brother of Jared was able to repent and increase his faith over a short period of time such that he was able to enter into the presence of God and view the visions of eternity.

What brought about this incredible transformation that changed an “inactive” man into one of the greatest prophets of the Book of Mormon? How was a man who hadn’t prayed in years able to find the faith necessary to stand in the Lord’s presence? What can we learn from his experience that can help us increase our faith so that we can dwell in the presence of God? How can we learn to build our faith like the brother of Jared?

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