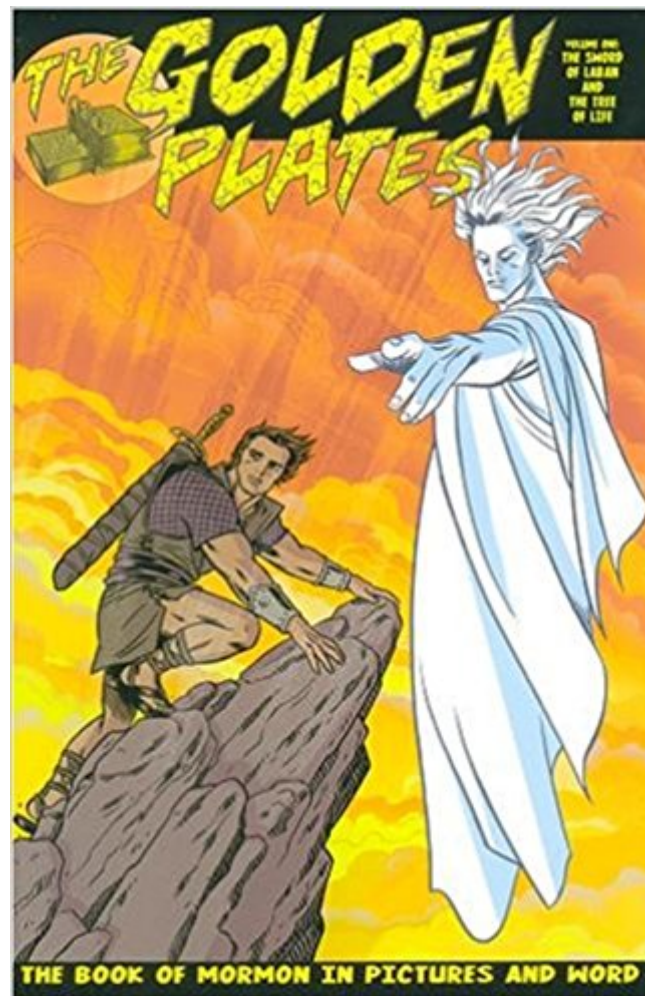




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# The Sword Of Laban And The Tree Of Life (The Golden Plates, Volume One)



## Synopsis

Adaptation and art by Michael Allred. Colors by Laura Allred. Where the PAST reveals the FUTURE and PROVES that GOD EXISTS! The Breathtaking Adventure, Romance, Terror, Joy, and Power of THE BOOK OF MORMON Begins Here! Suggested U.S. retail value \$7.99 with 64 full color pages. How do you follow X-folk, Bat-people, Madmen and Mutant Street Beatniks? Maybe look to the heavens? With The Golden Plates, Mike Allred begins his most ambitious project to date: adapting the entire Book of Mormon in a series of graphic novels! Most everyone has heard of the Book of Mormon, but what is it exactly? Simply stated, The Book of Mormon is a record of people who left Jerusalem in 600 BC through to their destruction in Central America in 400 AD. Prophets passed down the record of the intrigue, wars, and visions on thin metal plates, including the most controversial aspect of the record, the appearance and ministry of the resurrected Christ in the Americas. Did these amazing things really happen? What is in this book that has, according to US News and World Report, inspired the fastest growing Faith in the World? This is a good place to start finding out for yourself. The first volume is an extra big 64 page installment that follows the Prophet Lehi from Jerusalem, the establishment of the plates, and spectacular visions of the future including the great vision of Nephi. In addition to illustrating the events, Allred is including various archeological and anecdotal evidence at the end of each volume which will blow your mind!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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I have searched high and low for a way to get the scripture stories into my children's heads, to help them imagine the characters, their power, their spirit. Reading straight from the scriptures is something we strive to do daily, and will never stop, but never before has the imagery been as vivid as with the accompaniment of this comic book. I had no idea this was even an option, and found out about it in LDS Living. It cost almost \$20 but I would have paid double or more. Incredible way to enjoy these stories with your kids.

I was very pleased with this book. the pictures went very well with the story and they were drawn by a great artist(Micheal Allred). It's just a very neat book to have. get it while you can I can see these books being highly collectible. I definitely want them all!

This is a strong, faith-promoting interpretation of a sacred text. The visual metaphors are rich, and there's a deep level of reverence for the text being adapted. It obviously doesn't replace the scriptures. It's not trying to be the definitive and historically accurate visual companion to the Book of Mormon. It's beautiful and inspirational, however, and worth revisiting periodically. Love this series.

This book is meant for a Mormon audience and those who are part of that audience will find this is a great way to get their kids excited about these stories. We have the first three volumes and hope

that there will be many more.

As a Mormon myself, I wasn't offended at all when I saw that someone had chosen to adapt stories from the Book of Mormon into a graphic novel format -- the Bible has undergone similar treatment in the past, after all, and perhaps it would help kids relate better to that particular book of scripture. I do admit I was skeptical, however. Translating any medium to graphic novel format is always tricky, and adapting a book that millions of people hold very dear to their hearts would pose its own set of challenges. I decided to give it the benefit of the doubt, however, and picked it up at a local bookstore to browse. While the book itself is very faithful to the source material -- perhaps too much so, but I'll come back to that -- the art style is very off-putting. I think this could have been handled better. Most Mormons are familiar with the story, but as a brief summary for the uninitiated, "The Sword of Laban and the Tree of Life" follows a man named Lehi, a prophet of God who receives warning that Jerusalem is about to be attacked by the Babylonians. Following God's orders, Lehi takes his family, including his devout youngest son Nephi, into the wilderness. Nephi's older brothers complain and even openly rebel on a regular basis, but Nephi follows his father's orders unquestioningly. His faith in his father and in God will be put to the test, however, when God commands him to go back to Jerusalem and retrieve a valuable set of records... which is currently in the possession of a powerful, corrupt man named Laban. It will take all Nephi's faith and courage, as well as a little divine intervention, to complete the tasks God has set before him, and to escape Jerusalem alive. While adapting the Book of Mormon to such a visual format was bound to generate complaints from Mormons and non-Mormons alike, I do applaud the writer and artist for trying. But I think this could have been executed better. The "writers" insist on sticking to every word in the text of the book, including passages that describe physical actions such as putting on armor or drawing a weapon as a sort of "narration" text. Was this in an attempt at completion? The primary rule of a graphic novel is "show, don't tell," and much of this could have been gotten across in the illustrations instead of included in text boxes. Children aren't stupid -- they can tell what's going on in a picture. Including every last word only makes the narration redundant, and clutters up the panels with needless text boxes. The dialogue in this book is also taken verbatim from the book, resulting in some rather awkwardly phrased sentences. I can understand why this was done -- it would lessen the chances of someone misinterpreting a certain phrase. Still, it does disrupt the flow of the story a bit, especially when characters get especially wordy and their text balloons begin to dominate the page. Other adaptations of the Book of Mormon, both film and novel format, have been able to tweak the dialogue slightly and still stayed true to the spirit of the original scripture --

why not this adaptation? Perhaps the greatest failing of this book is the art. The colors are bland and drab, every character has the exact same face, and no one seems capable of emoting much, sticking mostly to a "dull surprise" sort of expression. The art looks awfully clip-art-ish, looking more like a page from a coloring book than anything stylish or dynamic. And the artist made some weird choices in depicting the angels -- they look more like they walked out of the pages of an "X-Men" comic than anything heavenly or holy. While not sacrilegious or offensive, this book is still pretty lackluster. It probably won't interest many outside the LDS church, yet those who have already read the book and are familiar with the story probably won't get much out of it either. Adapting the Book of Mormon to graphic novel format was an admirable goal, but it could have been done a lot more competently, with a better artist.

Normally I don't worry about realism in graphic novels, but these were horrible. I don't know what source material they used, but the books kept claiming that they took place in ancient, Pre-Columbian America, but all the characters were clearly carrying metal swords and wearing metal armor. There has never been any evidence of any advanced metal work, anywhere in the Americas. Then there were the stupid names. Like Moroni, who fought at the Hill Cumorah, which is a clear play on the Comoros Islands, whose capital is Moroni. Actually, I was pretty impressed that they pulled that out, because while Moroni was an important trade center in the 1830s, most Americans today don't even know the islands exist.

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