



Tennis Shoes Among the Nephites

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Jim Hawkins has a bad attitude. What's more, he enjoys having a bad attitude about everything--especially about church.

Garth Plimpton is a fanatic. He's spent so much time studying the scriptures and thick books on archaeology that that he can't carry on a normal conversation with other kids. That's why they consider him a nerd.

Through an unusual chain of events, these two opposites become fast friends. It all began when Garth told Jim a simple truth: "They really existed once, you know."

"Who?" Jim asked.

"Nephites," Garth replied. "Every character in the Book of Mormon ate, slept, died, was buried . . ."

That statement, taken for granted before, would soon echo deeply in the two boys' minds--because they were on the trail of a chilling secret.

Tennis Shoes Among the Nephites Details

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Zippy says

Not as good as I remembered, but since I read it the first time about 20 years ago, it doesn't surprise me that I am more critical of it as an adult reader. The ending felt abrupt and too convenient for the characters. But, that being said, I still enjoyed it. A good book to read while I feed the baby.

Krista says

fun to listen to with girls on Sundays

Patrick says

This was MUCH better than I thought it was going to be. I had avoided it for years because it looked like horrible Mormon fiction. The story is mostly well done, and I loved the little politics and bringing to life of Nephite life.

The 2nd book was pretty over the top and unrealistic. (As in characters acting cheesy and stupid--not as in time traveling Book of Mormon characters.) So I don't know if I'll continue reading after Silver Sword.

Cmh us says

just started reading it! haha i noticed that you are too, brianne!
its kinda weird i guess...i'm not that far into it, though. I just hope that Jamie (Jim, whatever!) doesn't tell somebody about the picture!

Kaylee says

it makes you think how lucky we are to have the book of mormon.

Anne says

I guessed the day I read this.. I think it was my junior year. I believe I read most of the series. I relaly enjoyed these books. When i read the scriptures, i would incorporate the stories and imagine what i had imagined while reading the books. It really helped to keep me interested in the scriptures. It was pretty silly when the kids that i babysat were reading the same book. :)

Rebecca says

I absolutely love this series. I have read them several times and I never get bored with the story. The narration is both humorous and adventurous at the same time. I haven't read these since before I was in college and my more advanced literary eye noticed some things this most recent reading. Heimerdinger has a great voice. It's as if the main character is your friend talking to you about his adventures, rather than you reading a narrative. Heimerdinger's story concepts are original, but I feel the endings are rushed. He approaches the fantastic climax with a lot of foundation of imagery and character development, but afterwards proceeds to the denouement with almost the minimum amount of words to get there. The series is still one of my favorites that I am sure I will read several more times.

Aaron Hubbard says

My wife loves these books so I thought I would give them a try. I have to admit that I have always thought that Mormon fiction was a little weird. The author uses a lot of creative liberty to make the characters in the Book of Mormon come to life. I am not sure how I feel about that, I am pretty sure if we needed to know more about their personal lives Mormon would have added it to the plates. Heimerdinger also sneaks in his personal viewpoints on different subjects, for example, when girls should start wearing make up. The main character, Jim, becomes the mouthpiece for Heimerdinger and the book almost seems like he is trying to teach Sunday School throughout the book.

Brooklyn says

I'm sorry but I just didn't like it. It was really dark and the kid was my age in the beginning of the book. I am LDS but this book was just too much for me. I mean he DRANK!!! I thought that was a little much because me, being 12, know a bunch of kids who would NEVER EVER do that. So I am sorry to the author and those who liked the book but this just wasn't my favorite. It was a little dark for me.

Valerie says

This book was highly recommended to me with no doubt that I would really like it, and I did. It is a story about a Mormon boy named Jim who is making a hard time for himself, hanging out with the wrong friends and such. That is until he meets and hangs out with Garth who is almost the exact opposite of him; Garth being studious, openly friendly, and patient. The two, along with Jim's sister, are somehow transported into a different place and time; as the cover suggests its back in the time of the Nephites.

With a character like Jim I would've enjoyed almost any sort of adventure that would come his way. He is funny, sarcastic, but also caring. The journey was really well done. I'm pretty sure that the author did research about how the life of the Nephites might've been like, from their build, and house structures to the way they might've ate and even their personalities seemed well thought out. There was lots of description (but not overbearingly so) that I could appreciate because their must've been a lot of effort put into it.

As for Jim, his sister and Garth's adventure, I was surprised at how significant of a role they played without it seeming to change the way of the original Book of Mormon. But I guess it makes sense since the Lamanites and Nephites weren't just made up of the big names like Amalaki, Moroni and Helamen.

It has its adventure and excitement, though I wish I would've seen more of Jim's sister. And I didn't like how it ended. I didn't seem fair to Garth, Jim and Jenny. They are young kids I guess but after all that... It makes sense and guess it was for the best but I'm still mopping.

Kelly says

read this to my kids at night, they loved it!

Lanae3 says

Reading it to Garrett for story time!

Cara says

Excellent. This was the first word that came to my mind when I finished. Granted this book really isn't for everybody. It's geared towards middle school aged boys, but I can say (at least in my case) it didn't lessen my enjoyment of the book. I should also mention that this is really a book for people who already are LDS members. Of course you can read it if your aren't but I doubt that it would be as entertaining. A lot of the funny moments wouldn't make sense and it's always a shame not to get a good joke.

I absolutely thought that the main characters, Jim and Garth, were the perfect match to go back to the time of the Nephites and Lamanites. Jim with his sense of adventure and Garth with all his knowledge of the Book of Mormon made this team priceless.

I thought the author did everything almost pitch perfect. From how he thought all the heroes of the Book of Mormon would have acted to the general feel of the culture at the time. When I finished I wanted to go right away and read the Book of Mormon and see how well the book followed the events that actually happened (well I am really going to do that after I finish this review).

This book is the first of the series and I'm sorry to say that I know I won't be reading any of the others, even though I really did think this book was a real gem. It just that I know that the other books won't have the same charm as this one. Jim will no longer be a rebel (which was part of what made the book funny)and there is only so much chessiness (don't think that's a word but oh well) you can take. It was fine in this one but I doubt as Jim gets older it will be as endearing. I know if I read the whole series that it would mess up this happy, glowy feeling I'm getting from the first one.

The story did it's job though. It made all those stories I read in the Book of Mormon seem more real, even though obviously I knew they were true. A definite must read for any boys out there that sound like they are Jims:)

Kamry F 5 says

The book *Tennis Shoes Among the Nephites*, by Chris Heimerdinger, is about the main boy, Jamie, called Jim, who becomes friends with Garth when Jim's sister Jennifer follows them into a cave, back in time. The boys are twelve or thirteen years old, and Jennifer is ten or eleven. In the land they travel to, they got captured, and were saved by a nice group of people to take care of them. Jennifer was separated from the boys, and the boys became translators for all the people. I gave this book five stars because I have read a book with the characters that helped Garth and Jim, so the book's plot was easy to follow. I also gave it five stars because a lot of the subjects it talked about I could relate to. Each event smoothly went into the next event too. The only thing I didn't like was that there were a lot of words on just one page, and the pages were tall, so it made it hard for me to read. The life lesson of this book, is that your friends and family will always be there for you when you need them, and to always be nice to everyone, because you could lose them at any moment, and you need to cherish those moments you do have with them.

Sheryl says

I can't believe I am just now reading this book to my kids, Jayden got it six years ago for his baptism and it's just been collecting dust... So we pulled out the CDs while driving through Utah and started the adventure!

Great fictional version of true beloved Book of Mormon stories...my kids can't wait to start the next one!

Kristi says

just read it again... I loved it 9 years ago when I first read it and loved it again this time!

P.S. Let me know if anyone has a copy of the other books in the series :) I only got to book 5 last time but want to read them all again and the rest.

Heather says

So I've read this entire series, a long time ago, and I remembered that this first book was my favorite. It didn't disappoint as a selection to listen to in the car on our vacation. My family loved it, and I enjoyed hearing little bits of Jim's wit and commentary that I hadn't remembered. Some CDs are terrible when the author reads his own work, but that wasn't the case with this one.

Jacque says

I read this aloud to my kids. MD gave it 4 stars, CN-4 and MK-3.5. I gave it 4 stars. All three kids loved the story, but were frustrated with the ending. They really wanted it to be a true story.

Teresa says

My fourth time "listening" to this book as we did it for our book club this month (all the other women who read it also liked it) so I'll be starting the series again. I usually do every few years so since it's been 1 1/2 years... I can't read them anymore because they're too addicting. Listening I still can clean and do things. Here's my review before if anyone's interested:

You have to read this series! VERY ADDICTING! After staying up all night to read the first three in a few days time I had to get the rest on audio so I could still have a life. :) There are 10 so far with more to come. They're fiction but the characters are going through events in the Book of Mormon so you feel you're there and you get adventure, suspense and spirituality all in one. The first one may seem for younger readers as it starts out when he's 13 but you have to read it and everyone I know who's read them has loved them. Even my Dad and husband! All Chris Heimerdinger's books are worth reading as he has a lot of others not in this series and his first movie based from his other book is out on DVD now "Passage to Zarahemla."

Ebster Davis says

I've started reading this book several times and found it so boring I couldn't continue it.

My dad and I went on a road trip and we listened to the novel on tape. We skipped the first CD because neither of us wanted to listen to it again.

The part of the Book of Mormon this story retells is full of intrigue and scandal; if you are unfamiliar with those events, this book is likely going to be really, really confusing.

This novel puts a lot of thought into imagining what life was like in mesoamerica as seen through the eyes of an "average mormon kid". Written in the style of a first person memoir.

This novel renewed my hatred for that narrative form. Every character, interaction, and plot twist (every aspect of this ancient world) is communicated through this really irritating and ignorant character.

The moments that could have given soul to the story are glazed over. Maybe the author thought they would be too deep for his target audience, or sound to phoney coming from such a superficial character.

The plot itself did start to become intriguing, right before it was resolved.

I think the concept behind this story was a good one; I liked the idea of bringing ancient south america to life in this way.

However, I didn't get enough out of it to warrant reading the sequel. I don't care what happens to Jim Hawkins, I care what happens to Alma, Pahoran, and Moroni. And I can read that in the Book of Mormon.

*Edit: I listened to this on CD and the guy who reads it varies the volume of his voice instead of the tone or pitch. So the dialogue WILL BE REALLY LOUD, and the narrative (will be really, really low). We had to

adjust the volume frequently.
