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The Life-giving "Water" of the Restoration

Daniel C. Peterson

Abstract: *Where there is water, there is life, not only literally, as in the Nile River in Egypt and in the cities of Mesopotamia, but also symbolically, as we read in the words of the prophet Ezekiel, who in vision saw a magnificent spring of fresh water flowing east from the temple, healing even the waters of the Dead Sea (Ezekiel 47). A psalm also testifies to the divine beneficence of water (Psalm 1) and John, in Revelation, quotes the Lord as giving to those "athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely" (21:10–14), a "crystal clear river" that flows from the center of the temple in the New Jerusalem. Also in the last days, "in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water" (Doctrine and Covenants 133:29). We, the writers and volunteer staff of the Interpreter Foundation, invite readers to help spread and defend the life-giving water of the Restoration, for "the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few" (Matthew 9:37).*

The great ancient Greek historian Herodotus (d. ca. BC 425) is commonly believed to have remarked that "Egypt is the gift of the Nile."[1] That this observation is true can be seen by anybody who ascends from the urban sprawl of modern Giza, directly west of Cairo, to the desert plateau on which the great pyramids of Khufu, Khafre, and Menkaure — or, alternatively, in the Hellenized forms of their names, Cheops, Chephren, and Mykerinos — have stood since the early third millennium before Christ.

It's even more evident a bit south, near the still-older complex of King Zoser's "Step Pyramid" at Saqqara: Vehicles climb up from the lush

1. Strictly speaking, he didn't put it exactly that way. See Herodotus, *Histories*, 2.5. But it's close enough.

agricultural land of the valley and then, suddenly, find themselves in the desert, in the Sahara (which is the Arabic equivalent of the English word *deserts*). The vegetation at Saqqara doesn't gradually grow sparse — it just ends. Instantly. Abruptly. And there's not a blade of grass, nor so much as a scrawny attempt at a tree, beyond that boundary. Even farther southward, at Luxor and at Aswan, one can sail on the mighty river and, within easy walking distance, see enormous desert cliffs and sand dunes rising immediately beyond palm trees and verdant fields.

Where there is water, there is life. Where there isn't, there's not.[2] That's why the great civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia grew up alongside rivers, as did the cultures of the Indus River Valley and the Yangtze River Valley.

It's scarcely surprising, in that light, that the ancient Egyptians regarded the River Nile as divine. Their utter dependence on it was starkly evident. (Which is, I suppose, why the ability of Moses's God to interfere with it — demonstrated, significantly, in the first two of the ten "plagues of Egypt" — might have been so very unnerving, and so very powerful a symbolic statement, to them.)[3]

It's scarcely surprising, too, to see water used as a symbol of divinely given life in the Bible as well.

Consider, for example, one of the visions recorded by the seventh-to-sixth-century BC prophet Ezekiel. He sees a future temple, located among the hills of Jerusalem, a city that sits on a ridge running north-south between the Mediterranean Sea on the west and the Jordan River Valley (and the much lower Dead Sea) on the east. Significantly, too, it's a city that was sustained, anciently, by one main but relatively small and vulnerable source of water, the Gihon Spring — which was associated with the New Testament's Pool of Siloam and with Hezekiah's remarkable eighth-to-seventh-century BC tunnel.

An angelic guide calls Ezekiel's attention to specific features of the visionary Jerusalem that he's being shown:

> Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water

2. See the 2015 film *The Martian* for a vivid illustration of this fact. The movie was filmed in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan's spectacular red-desert Wadi Rum.

3. See Exodus 7:14–8:15. Unless otherwise indicated, biblical quotations in this article are drawn from the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Bible.

> was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and behold, the water was trickling out on the south side.
>
> Going on eastward with a measuring line in his hand, the man measured a thousand cubits, and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was waist-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen. It was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. And he said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?"[4]

Of course, neither Ezekiel nor any other ancient or modern resident of the city had ever seen such a quantity of water in the area before, let alone so rich a spring emerging from beneath the temple itself. And, unsurprisingly in such a dry region, the water is powerfully life-giving:

> Then he led me back to the bank of the river. As I went back, I saw on the bank of the river very many trees on the one side and on the other. And he said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and enters the sea; when the water flows into the sea, the water will become fresh."[5]

The "sea" in question is the Dead Sea, which, as any visitor to the region will readily confirm, abundantly deserves its name. (Hebrew prose works sometimes actually call it "the Sea of Death.") But the river issuing from the temple, Ezekiel is told, will heal even the life-denying waters of the Dead Sea, which are nearly ten times as salty as Earth's oceans:

> And wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish. For this water goes there, that the waters of the sea may become fresh;

4. Ezekiel 47:1–6 (English Standard Version or ESV).

5. Ezekiel 47:6–8 (ESV). Anciently the term *Arabah* (or, in Hebrew, *Arava* or *Aravah*) referred to pretty much the entirety of the Jordan Rift Valley, from the southern end of the Sea of Galilee to the northern end of what Israelis call the Gulf of Eilat and Arabs refer to as the Gulf of Aqaba.

> so everything will live where the river goes. Fishermen will stand beside the sea. From Engedi to Eneglaim it will be a place for the spreading of nets. Its fish will be of very many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea.[6]

The "Great Sea" is the Mediterranean, so very different from the Sea of Salt (as the Hebrews often called the Dead Sea) or the Asphaltite Lake (as it was inauspiciously known to the Greeks).[7]

> And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for healing.[8]

This will be a blessed state, reminiscent of the divine beneficence described in the first psalm:

> Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.
>
> But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.
>
> And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.[9]

Contrast it with the condition of the wicked, those who remain untouched by the blessed waters:

> The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.
>
> Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6. Ezekiel 47:9–10 (ESV).
7. Engedi or EnGedi ("Spring of the Young Goat") is a large oasis in the cliffs directly to the west of the Dead Sea. The location of Eneglaim ("Spring of the Two Calves") is unknown, but it was, presumably, somewhere in the vicinity of EnGedi.
8. Ezekiel 47:12 (ESV).
9. Psalm 1:1–3.

> For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.[10]

Ezekiel's was a vision of things future, of things yet to come. And, six or seven centuries later, according to the New Testament, John the Revelator received a similar divine disclosure:

> And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
>
> And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.
>
> And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.
>
> And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.
>
> And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.[11]

Rather like the oxen that support the baptismal fonts in the temples of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the gates of this New Jerusalem number twelve, symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel and facing, in groups of three, toward each of the four quarters of the Earth:

> And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,
>
> Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

10. Psalm 1:4–6.
11. Revelation 21:2–6.

> And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:
>
> On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.[12]

Moreover, symbolically and like the Church itself, the city is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone":[13]

> And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.[14]

Also reminiscent of the temple is the fact that only the righteous are permitted to enter into the city; the unrighteous are denied admission to it:

> Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.
>
> For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.[15]

In this light, initially it may be rather surprising to notice that John's vision of the new Jerusalem mentions no separate and distinct temple. But this is so, plainly, for the simple and sufficient reason that the city itself, as the residence of the Father and the Son, seems to be a kind of temple:

> And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.
>
> And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.
>
> And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

12. Revelation 21:10–13.
13. Ephesians 2:20.
14. Revelation 21:14.
15. Revelation 22:14–15.

> And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.
>
> And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.
>
> And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.[16]

The "oracle" or "most holy place" of Solomon's ancient temple is said to have been "twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof" — in other words, perfectly cubical — and to have been "overlaid with pure gold."[17] Similarly, Ezekiel's angelic guide had previously shown him "the most holy place" and had "measured the length thereof, twenty cubits; and the breadth, twenty cubits."[18]

Accordingly, maintaining its temple-like status, John's new Jerusalem is also, itself, a perfect cube:

> And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.[19]

And just as with Ezekiel's visionary temple, a life-giving river flows from the center of John's city-temple, from beneath the throne of the Father and the Son:

> And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.
>
> In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.
>
> And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

16. Revelation 21:22–27.
17. 1 Kings 6:20.
18. Ezekiel 41:4.
19. Revelation 21:16.

> And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.
>
> And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.[20]

Now, precisely how literally all of this is to be taken, I do not know. Will the Dead Sea really be healed by water flowing from Jerusalem's Temple Mount? It's difficult to see how this could be done. But, of course, the God who created the universe, parted the waters for the exodus of the children of Israel, and raised Jesus from the dead is capable of a very great deal more than we can predict. And modern revelation is consistent with the prophecies of Ezekiel and John when it predicts, for instance, that in the last days, "in the barren deserts there shall come forth pools of living water; and the parched ground shall no longer be a thirsty land."[21]

Whether these accounts are meant to be taken as fully literal or not, however, their symbolic significance is clear and readily apparent:

Life-giving water comes from the temple. And it's surely very significant that it actually comes from *below* the temple and that, in the temples of the Latter-day Saints, the life-giving water of the baptismal font is located in the lowest room. For, as the Prophet Joseph Smith taught in a 6 September 1842 epistle to the Latter-day Saints,

> the baptismal font was instituted as a similitude of the grave, and was commanded to be in a place underneath where the living are wont to assemble, to show forth the living and the dead, and that all things may have their likeness, and that they may accord one with another — that which is earthly conforming to that which is heavenly.[22]

Moreover, the temple can be seen as standing in for, representing, the gospel as a whole. The good news of Jesus Christ is life-giving.

Most of all, though, life comes from God — from the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost — "for in him we live, and move, and have our being."[23]

20. Revelation 22:1–5.
21. Doctrine and Covenants 133:29.
22. Doctrine and Covenants 128:13.
23. Acts 17:28.

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
>
> The same was in the beginning with God.
>
> All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
>
> In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
>
> And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.[24]

It is this conviction that motivates the work of the Interpreter Foundation.

In the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John, an evidently substantial number of the very first Christian converts are offended by something that Jesus has just said. "From that time," the evangelist reports,

> many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.
>
> Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?
>
> Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.
>
> And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.[25]

To us, the restored Gospel of Christ represents the very best of all good news, the most important message in the world, the greatest hope for this life and the next. And because we believe that, we seek to extend and deepen knowledge of the Restoration in ourselves and in others, as well as to encourage others to adopt and share our belief.

> Brethren [and sisters], shall we not go on in so great a cause? Go forward and not backward. Courage, brethren [and sisters]; and on, on to the victory! Let your hearts rejoice, and be exceedingly glad.[26]

We're grateful to all of those who serve in the Kingdom and to all of those who seek to build it up, in any capacity and anywhere in the world. Not as a substitute for service in the Church, but as a supplement to that, we invite any and all who would like to participate in the efforts

24. John 1:1–5.
25. John 6:66–69.
26. Doctrine and Covenants 128:22.

of the Interpreter Foundation, to share in its mission of commending and defending the claims of the Restoration, to join us. In this, as in so many worthy fields of labor, "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few."[27]

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27. Matthew 9:37.

Scriptures with Pictures: Methodology, Unexamined Assumptions, and the Study of the Book of Abraham

Mark J. Johnson

Abstract: *Research on the origins and nature of the Book of Abraham and the accompanying facsimiles has long been hampered by faulty methodology. And while the last few years have seen a significant reexamination of the assumptions that represent the underpinning of our understandings of the Book of Abraham, some unexamined assumptions persist. This study addresses seven aspects of the Book of Abraham, which include a discussion of the sources, the process, the results, the content, the witnesses, and the historical background. For each of these aspects, this study identifies lingering assumptions and shows how a proper methodology can validate or eliminate these assumptions from the scholarly discourse.*

The Book of Abraham is an ancient work revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith. A version of this book had fallen into the hands of the early Latter-day Saints and was among the texts discovered in the cache of ancient scrolls purchased from a traveling collection owned by Michael Chandler.[1] The scroll that held the Book of Abraham also featured a unique vignette that illustrated a scene from the life of Abraham. This picture became Facsimile 1 of the published Book of Abraham.

This study explores seven facets related to the production of the Book of Abraham. For each of these facets, a more careful and nuanced look at assumptions regarding the Book of Abraham is examined, and methodological parameters are recommended as a foundation for further

1. Instead of repeating this story here, the reader is referred to Kerry Muhlestein, "Assessing the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Introduction to the Historiography of their Acquisitions, Translations, and Interpretations," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 22 (2016), 21–27.

studies. I hope to demonstrate that by discarding incorrect assumptions and relying on a proper methodological framework for our studies, a correct picture for the Book of Abraham will emerge.

Once unexamined assumptions are allowed to fall away, I wish to reveal a simple background for the scrolls and an ancient Book of Abraham. This study surmises that an ancient copy of the Book of Abraham was preserved by a Theban priest who paired it with a more standard funerary document. To ornament the Book of Abraham, he drew a unique vignette at the start of the scroll which featured the attempted sacrifice and delivery of Abraham. This vignette featured items that were familiar to Horos, such as a lion-couch functioning as the altar, and canopic jars below awaiting organs of the offering.

The Problem

A continual difficulty for students of the Book of Abraham is a perceived disconnect between Joseph Smith's explanations of the facsimiles and that of the translation and interpretation of the vignettes by Egyptologists. This disconnect is further widened by the rediscovery of the Joseph Smith Papyri in 1967.[2] Critics of Joseph Smith quickly pointed out that while the papyri fragments seemingly contained the source for Facsimile 1, the surrounding text doesn't contain the Book of Abraham but is a document called an *Egyptian Book of Breathings Made by Isis*.[3] Latter-day Saint scholars and students have taken it upon themselves to discover a device to explain these discrepancies, and many creative approaches have been conceived in this regard.[4]

2. A convenient summary is found in John Gee, "A History of the Joseph Smith Papyri and the Book of Abraham" (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), 7.

3. Note that this name is now outdated and likely incorrect. It has recently been called a "Letter of Recommendation Made by Isis." See John Gee, "Some Puzzles from the Joseph Smith Papyri," *FARMS Review* 20/1 (2008), 135.

4. These approaches have ranged from the text of the Book of Abraham as received solely by revelation, the papyrus acting as a catalyst of some type, to the text of the Book of Breathings as a mnemonic device to assist in the memorization of the text of Abraham, to actually having the Book of Abraham written in Hebrew characters that were hidden inside the hieratic words of the Book of Breathings. See respectively Karl Sandberg, "Knowing Brother Joseph Again: The Book of Abraham and Joseph Smith as Translator," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought,* 22/4 (1989), 17–37; John A. Tvedtnes, "Internal Evidence for an Abrahamic Oral Tradition," *Book of Abraham Symposium*, ed. John A. Tvedtnes (Salt Lake City: Institute of Religion, 1971), 44–48; and Joe Sampson, *Written by the Finger of God: A Testimony of Joseph Smith's Translations* (Sandy, UT: Wellspring, 1993).

The difficulty of dealing with this disconnect is not assuaged by lingering assumptions and faulty methodology that have surrounded many studies of the Book of Abraham. Great care needs to be taken so as not to contribute more problems with faulty methodology.[5]

The ability to study the Book of Abraham is limited on two fronts. The first obstacle is a large number of primary documents that are missing. It has been noted that "between the current fragments and some very bad copies of characters from the papyri, we know Joseph Smith had papyri or portions of papyri from at least five individuals."[6] All that remain of these papyri are eleven fragments that were cut from the scrolls and mounted under glass to preserve them. Among the lost papyri, the original papyri versions of facsimiles numbers two and three are missing. Also absent is an original manuscript for the English translation that was revealed to Joseph Smith. There are copies of this original manuscript, but even these are currently incomplete and contain only part of what became the published version of the Book of Abraham.

A second difficulty lies in the fact that witness statements to the papyri and the mummies are not on equal ground. Only recently have these statements been scrutinized to validate if the statements are reliable or whether they should be considered as hearsay. Most uses of these statements also fail to consider the motivation of the witnesses by taking all statements at face value. Some descriptions were clearly attempts to mock the work of Joseph Smith, while other attempts to describe the papyri and the translation were well-meaning and faith-promoting.[7] An additional problem lies in a misunderstanding of the Egyptian documents by the early Latter-day Saints, which was fueled by a fascination with the facsimiles. The environment was ripe for speculation and embellishment regarding the papyri and the mummies, which led to incorrect and contradictory statements. The early Saints applied bad methodology by deciding what these scrolls constitute and

5. Kerry Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri and the Book of Abraham: A Faithful, Egyptological Point of View," in *No Weapon Shall Prosper: New Light on Sensitive Issues*, ed. Robert L. Millet (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2011), 226.

6. Gee, "Some Puzzles from the Joseph Smith Papyri," 118.

7. John Gee, "Eyewitness, Hearsay and Physical Evidence of the Joseph Smith Papyri," in *The Disciple as Witness: Essays on Latter-day Saint History and Doctrine in Honor of Richard Lloyd Anderson*, ed. Andrew Hedges, Donald W. Parry, and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2000), 192–95. See also Brian M. Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham: Manuscripts and Editions* (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2010), 213–23.

providing their analyses of the vignettes based on this incorrect identity. Curiously, many modern students of the Book of Abraham continue to apply this faulty method.

Following the lead of other Latter-day Saint scholars,[8] I wish to stress the importance of a proper methodology for research of the papyri and the Book of Abraham. The use of proper methodological steps can expose incorrect assumptions about the book and eliminate them from the scholarly narrative. Many studies of the Book of Abraham and the accompanying facsimiles not only severely limit their potential by not taking into account the proper methodological parameters but also risk fatal errors in their conclusions by not starting on solid ground. Latter-day Saint Egyptologist John Gee, who has been leading the charge for a correct methodological approach to the study of the Book of Abraham, has noted that "[unexamined] assumptions always color, and in most cases overwhelmingly guide, the work done. Yet these assumptions are rarely made explicit."[9]

Because details of the origins of the Book of Abraham are unknown due to lost documents and cultural misunderstandings both on the part of the early Saints and on the part of later writers, some of our conclusions must be built on guesswork. However, if we can formulate a solid methodology, we can make better and more reasonable assumptions that will allow us to piece the puzzle together.

Methodology

In this paper, I suggest the following methodological parameters as essential to a study of the Book of Abraham and its accompanying documents, e.g., the papyri fragments and the Kirtland Egyptian papers. This is by no means an exhaustive list, nor is it free from further refinement, but I feel it helpful to gather these ideas together in one place. Some of these methods have been explored by other scholars, while I will suggest others based on my own observations. These parameters attempt to deal with a wide gamut of aspects regarding the Book of Abraham: the sources, the process, the results, the content, the witnesses, and the historical background. This methodology is designed to include the other scriptural records brought forth by Joseph Smith as a benchmark for analysis. These parameters comprise:

8. Gee, "Eyewitness,"175–217. See also Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 217–43.

9. John Gee, "A Method for Studying the Facsimiles" *FARMS Review* 19/1 (2007), 351.

1. The Scrolls: Attention and priority need to be paid to all the scrolls and documents in the Prophet's collection. The idea that the Book of Abraham was written on one of the now lost scrolls has been called the "Missing Scroll Theory." If it's possible that the Book of Abraham physically existed on a part of the scrolls now lost to us, this translation theory ought to be the preferred theory, as it nullifies other theories of translation, as will be established below.
2. The Facsimiles: The illustrations that became the facsimiles need to be studied and understood individually before they are considered as a set. If the vignettes constitute different documents from different sources, we should be cautious about interpreting them by the same set of rules.
3. Method of Translation: By the time Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham, he already had experience in producing new scriptures. Any study of the mode of translation of the Book of Abraham ought to give precedence to methods already familiar to the Prophet.
4. The Manuscripts: A fuller understanding should be sought for the translation documents of the Book of Abraham. The translated text exists only partially; much of the documentation of the translation remains unaccounted for. Studies of the Book of Abraham need to factor in the existence of possible lost manuscripts.
5. The Timeline: The time it took the Prophet to translate the record is unknown, and attempts to reconstruct a production timeline have yielded mixed results. Just as with the method of translation, the rate of translation should be considered against the Prophet's other scriptural projects. Consideration ought to be given to what the Prophet was doing when he used the term *translation*.
6. The Witnesses: While there are many descriptions of the Book of Abraham and the papyri, these observations were made before the discipline of Egyptology reached any kind of maturity. The witness statements need to be filtered through the mindset of the people of Kirtland and Nauvoo. This can be done by observing the patterns of understanding the Saints had toward the ancient artifacts they encountered.
7. The Ancient Past: There may be a significant difficulty in understanding the ancient Egyptian mind. Indeed, the

> explanations of the facsimiles may not need to be viewed in a strict Egyptological fashion but may be profitably studied through a Semitic lens. Yet even this may prove difficult. Indeed, there may not be only one source of influence on the explanations.

First method: Gathering the Scrolls

First, serious attention needs to be paid to the so-called "Missing Scroll Theory," which holds that the text of the Book of Abraham was written on one of the scrolls in the Prophet's possession that has now been lost. *If there is a reasonable possibility that the Book of Abraham existed on one of the scrolls, then this theory should take priority over all other translation theories.*

This theory of the source of the Abrahamic text ought to be the preferred theory because it nullifies other theories.[10] The theory that the Book of Abraham was extracted from the Book of Breathings as a result of the Prophet's work on the Alphabet and Grammar documents accounts for only the Egyptian text on the surviving papyri fragments and doesn't account for the possibility of lost fragments or material. This can also be said for the "Mnemonic Device Theory," which was also based only on the extant Book of Breathings fragments, although it would extract the text of the Book of Abraham in a different manner. Last, if the Abrahamic text was written on part of the scrolls now lost, it would also override the "pure revelation" theory, which has Joseph Smith getting the text without its being present on the scrolls.

I have mentioned that there were found at least four scrolls and a hypocephalus with the mummies that were purchased in Kirtland. Three of these scrolls contained Egyptian Books of the Dead. The fourth scroll contained a document called a Book of Breathings, Made by Isis.[11] The owner of this scroll was an Egyptian priest from Thebes named Horos.[12] The Missing Scroll Theory centers in this scroll.

To affirm the likelihood of the Missing Scroll Theory, certain criteria ought to be met. It needs to be shown that there was room on the scroll

10. A convenient summary of these theories can be found in John Gee, *A Guide to the Joseph Smith Papyri*, (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2000), 19–23.

11. Gee, *A Guide to the Joseph Smith Papyri*, 10–11. See also Gee, "Eyewitness," 188–91.

12. He has also been called Hor or Horus by other scholars, depending on their translation preferences. This study will refer to him as Horos.

of Horos for the text of the Book of Abraham. Second, it should be demonstrated, if possible, that the scroll of Horos featured a second text. These two caveats are of course related, but the fulfillment of one doesn't automatically confirm the other. Last, it should be demonstrated that the inclusion of a story of Abraham on an Egyptian priestly scroll is not anachronistic with regard to the time and place of the scroll's fashioning.

The Scroll of Horos: This scroll was created by an Egyptian priest who lived in the Ptolemaic Period.[13] He would have come from a priestly family and would have been quite literate.[14]

The scroll of Horos features the vignette of a man lying on an altar or lion-couch while another character stands over him. This vignette became the first facsimile of the Book of Abraham. This vignette was only one part of this scroll. Latter-day Saint Egyptologist Michael D. Rhodes describes the physical characteristics of this papyrus scroll:

> The text of the Book of Breathings is written on the recto of the papyrus (the side with the papyrus strips running horizontally). … Column 1 contains nine lines of text, and columns 2, 3, and 4 each contain thirteen lines. The height of the papyrus is approximately 11 cm. The width of the initial vignette is 19 cm, and the approximate widths of the surviving columns are (1) 8.5 cm, (2) 20 cm, (3) 28 cm, and (4) 21 cm. Assuming an approximate width of 20 cm for each of the two missing columns and another 20 for the second vignette, the length for the entire book of Breathings would have been about 156 cm. By way of comparison, the Denon Book of Breathings papyrus is 187 cm long and has an average height of 20.5 cm. During the Ptolemaic period, the average size of a papyrus roll was about 320 cm long and 32 cm high. Thus the Hor Book of Breathings would have taken up about half the length of one of these rolls, and it is about one-third the standard height.[15]

13. While Horos of Thebes would have had the literacy to create these documents, I am uncertain that priests of this type could create their own Book of Breathings (or Books of the Dead or hypocephali. for that matter) while they were alive or whether this task needed to be done post-mortem. For the remainder of this paper, I will assume that Horos was the author of this scroll.

14. Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 217–43.

15. Michael Dennis Rhodes, *The Hor Book of Breathings: A Translation and Commentary* (Provo: FARMS, 2002), 4.

Rhodes notes that a likely size of the scroll belonging to Horos is 320 cm (or about 10 feet) long if it were a standard size scroll of its place and time of production. This would leave 164 cm available for an additional text. However, this scroll was possibly longer. Some of the early witnesses of the papyri describe one of the scrolls as being a "long roll,"[16] as long as one room in the Nauvoo house. The difficulty with this statement is that it is based on a third-hand source and may not be verifiable. If the roll was unrolled in Nauvoo, then this was likely after the papyri had been cut apart and some of the pieces mounted behind glass. Despite the fact that the length is uncertain, the important thing to note is that a long roll was among the collection and that its length was a noticeable feature among the witnesses.[17] An attempt to determine the length of the scroll of Horos has been attempted by use of a mathematical model, but this has proven problematic.[18]

Other considerations should be brought into an examination of the length of the scroll. What is a comparable length for other long scrolls from this period? Gee has noted that a long scroll — "The scroll — ROM 978x43.1, a Ptolemaic period Book of the Dead — has since been unrolled; its length (including the fragmented portions) is about seven meters (roughly twenty-three feet)."[19] Also notable is that the so-called Great Isaiah scroll of the Dead Sea Scrolls is about 24 feet long and has 53 columns of text.

The length of the scroll shouldn't be determined by what we think it *ought* to hold. This would be bad methodology. If it were somehow possible to determine an approximate length, we could then postulate how much content it would hold. The fact that a standard-sized papyrus roll of this period is 320 cm can't serve as strong evidence that the scroll of Horos was actually that long. However, the possibility of a longer scroll invites room for exploration. If the mathematical models cannot provide a maximum length, perhaps they can point to a *minimum* length. If the numbers demonstrate any size larger than the estimated 156 cm for the Horos Book of Breathings, then there was room on the scroll for more material.

Multiple texts: If this scroll had room on it for a second text, is there a precedent that scrolls of this type have multiple texts? Not surprisingly,

16. Gee, "Some Puzzles," 119–23.
17. Ibid., 123.
18. Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 217–43.
19. John Gee, "Formulas and Faith," *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture*, 21/1 (2012): 62.

the existence of multiple texts on a single scroll has been well established.[20] The Horos Book of Breathings need not be the only text on the scroll.

An unexpected witness to the scroll of Horos is provided by a trained scholar who saw the remainder of the scroll in the St. Louis Museum. Gustavus Seyffarth left a description of the scroll, which was used by the museum's catalogue. His notes on the scroll have been preserved and examined by John Gee.

Gee describes Seyffarth's involvement with this scroll:

> Gustavus Seyffarth saw this papyrus in the Wood Museum and describes it indicating not only that Facsimile 3 was still part of this roll but also that the roll contained another text. Seyffarth did not see the Book of Breathings contained in Papyrus Joseph Smith XI + X because these fragments were not part of the fragments that went to the Wood Museum. … Seyffarth's description allows the reconstruction of the opening lines of the new text of the scroll of Hor, which were "Beginning of the Book of … " Unfortunately, Seyffarth's description does not allow us to determine exactly which book was included.[21]

Seyffarth provides a firsthand witness that the papyri contained a second text that was featured on the scroll of Horos.

Abraham in Egypt: The last item to be addressed is the prospect of a biblical character being predominantly mentioned on an Egyptian scroll. This can't serve as evidence, but it can open the door to the possibility of the Book of Abraham's being on this roll.

Latter-day Saint Egyptologist Kerry Muhlestein brings together information to demonstrate that not only were biblical characters known to the priests at Thebes, but they were also known during the time frame of the production of the Horos Book of Breathings. He notes that "our current evidence indicates that a group of priests from Thebes possessed, read, understood, and employed biblical and extrabiblical texts, most especially texts about Abraham and Moses."[22]

A story about a biblical character being included on scrolls from the Ptolemaic period isn't out of place at all. But why would Horos include

20. Gee, "Eyewitness," 192.
21. Ibid., 10–11.
22. Kerry Muhlestein, "The Religious and Cultural Background of Joseph Smith Papyrus I," *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture*, 22/1 (2013): 30.

information about Abraham on his own scroll? Again, Muhlestein provides a logical answer:

> Interestingly, we know that Hor was involved with rituals that had to do with calling on preternatural aid to ward off potential evil forces. These rituals often involved either real or figurative human sacrifice. Now that we know that priests from Hor's era and geographic location would have used biblical figures to augment their religious rituals and spells, we better understand why he would have been interested in the story depicted on Facsimile 1, that of a biblical figure who was saved from sacrifice by divine intervention.[23]

Delivery from death would have been an appealing theme to this priest of Thebes. This is a reasonable explanation, although there may be additional explanations.[24]

Walking through our steps, we find the Horos Book of Breathings is remarkably similar to the Book of Breathings found on Louvre 3284, an indication they likely belong to the same category of documents. Based on the size of the Book of Breathings fragments in Joseph Smith's possession as well as considerations for the size of the scroll, we find that if this particular scroll was the standard length for the time and location it was produced, the Book of Breathings belonging to Horos would have taken up only half the scroll. If the Horos Book of Breathings was 156 cm long, there would have remained at least 164 cm for an additional text. This scroll began with a vignette showing a man lying on a lion couch, followed by a Book of Breathings Made by Isis. At the end of this document (or after the start of the next) was a vignette of Horos being introduced into the presence of Osiris, surrounded by Anubis and Ma'at. This was followed by a second text, which very well could be the Book of Abraham. Observations by Gustavus Seyffarth indicate that the scroll had a second text on it beginning near the vignette that became Facsimile 3.

The collective evidence demonstrates that the scroll of Horos contained a second text beyond the Book of Breathings. That the text

23. Muhlestein, "The Religious and Cultural Background," 30.

24. Stephen O. Smoot and Quinten Barney, "The Book of the Dead as a Temple Text and the Implications for the Book of Abraham," *The Temple Ancient and Restored Temple on Mount Zion Series 3*, ed. Stephen D. Ricks and Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Eborn Books; Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2016), 175–201.

could have been the Book of Abraham is a likely possibility but ultimately still remains a matter of faith.

Second Method: Taking the Vignettes out of the Frames

A significant methodological error is that the facsimiles are studied as a complete set and that all three are subject to the same history and consequently the same guidelines of understanding. *The illustrations from which Joseph Smith derived the Book of Abraham facsimiles need to be examined independently of each other. If we focus only on what we think are commonalities among the illustrations, we will miss what we can learn from their differences. Caution must be taken when applying analysis to the facsimiles: methods that apply to one of the vignettes may not be appropriate for the others.*

When the papyrus was cut up and portions were mounted under glass, the vignettes were removed from their original context. Illustrations from the Books of the Dead were viewed and interpreted alongside illustrations from the Book of Breathings. We should be careful not to view the facsimiles the same way. If we can extricate the three illustrations from each other, we can properly see how they originated and then how they relate to the Book of Abraham.

John Gee provides an example of this line of thinking in a discussion of the Kirtland Egyptian papers:

> Before we proceed with an examination of this group of documents, it is worth remembering that each of the documents has its own reason for existence and its own subsequent history. Just because the documents are lumped together now does not mean that they were lumped together then or that they should be lumped together. Different criteria applied to the documents create a surprisingly different grouping of documents.[25]

This same technique will be beneficial to the facsimiles. Because the facsimiles are now published together and have been arranged to roughly follow the Book of Abraham narrative, it is tempting to view them as a matching set, i.e., seeing all three of them belonging to an ancient Book of Abraham. However, a more careful examination will

25. John Gee, "Joseph Smith and Ancient Egypt," *Approaching Antiquity: Joseph Smith and the Ancient World* eds. Lincoln H. Blumell, Matthew J. Grey and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2015), 438.

show differences among these documents. These differences include their ancient authorship, ownership, function, and size. An examination of the text of the Book of Abraham is also warranted, as it has a direct correlation to the facsimiles.

The first indicator that the facsimiles should be studied independently is the recognition that Facsimile 2 is a different type of document than the other two vignettes. It belongs to a class of documents known as hypocephali. The owner of this document was a man named Sheshonq.[26] This type of document was created by the scribe drawing the scene, and the text of this blessing to the dead on a disk was placed under the head of the deceased. A more thorough explanation has been stated this way:

> Facsimile 2 belongs to a class of Egyptian religious documents called hypocephali (Greek: ipokefalos, *hypokephalos*), "under the head," a translation of the Egyptian *hry-tp* with the same meaning). A hypocephalus is a small, disk-shaped object, made of papyrus, stuccoed linen, bronze, gold, wood, or clay which the Egyptians placed under the head of their dead. They believed it would magically cause the head and body to be enveloped in flames or radiance, making the deceased divine. The hypocephalus symbolized the Eye of Re or Horus, that is, the sun. The scenes portrayed on it relate the Egyptian concept of resurrection and life after death. To the Egyptians, the daily rising and setting of the sun was a vivid symbol of the resurrection. The hypocephalus itself represented all the sun encircles, the whole world. The upper portion represented the world of men and the day sky, and the lower portion (the part with the cow) represented the netherworld and the night sky.[27]

More than one hundred hypocephali have been found and catalogued by scholars. Each of these documents is uniquely made for the individual owners, although they broadly follow a similar structural pattern.[28]

The hypocephalus of Sheshonq is an authentic representative of an existing class of funerary documents. As such, it wouldn't have been

26. The name has also been translated as *Sheshonchis* or *Sesonchis*.

27. Richard D. Draper, S. Kent Brown, and Michael D. Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 294. After describing the upper and lower portions, it is unfortunate that following this description, the book publishes Facsimile 2 upside-down.

28. Luca Miatello, "The Hypocephalus of Takerheb in Firenze and the Scheme of the Solar Cycle," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur*, Bd. 37 (2008), 277–87.

inscribed on the same papyrus scroll as the other vignettes, as some have depicted. Consider that (1) the owner of the hypocephalus is a different person than Horos, (2) the size of the hypocephalus (19 cm x 20 cm) is larger than the scroll of Horos is tall (11 cm),[29] (3) the early witnesses note that separate items with astronomical notations were found apart from the rolls, (4) if the so-called Church Historian's copy of Facsimile 2 is an accurate representation of the original hypocephalus and its lacuna, it should be noted that damage to this document is a different shape and pattern than the damage to the scroll of Horos, which occurred after it was rolled and placed with the mummies.[30]

Once recognized that the hypocephalus of Sheshonq wasn't on the scrolls but was a separate item altogether, it can be seen that it was conscripted by the Prophet Joseph Smith to represent narrative and doctrinal elements from the Book of Abraham. This is the most straightforward explanation for its connection to the Book of Abraham.

If the hypocephalus that became Facsimile 2 was originally created for the man Sheshonq and was later adopted to match elements of the Book of Abraham, what should be made of the other two facsimiles?

There were at least two vignettes on the scroll belonging to Horos. One vignette appears to be a fairly standard illustration of a typical scene and as such has given the most difficulty to students of the Book of Abraham. The other vignette is a unique illustration that defies parallels to other scenes but is comfortably matched to the Book of Abraham story.

A look at Facsimile 3 is in order. If this vignette is removed from the Book of Abraham and the other facsimiles and examined under its own terms, it will be seen that it was drawn to accompany the Book of Breathings made by Isis. Rhodes notes that "this vignette clearly portrays the deceased Hor being introduced to Osiris after having been declared innocent … in the Hall of the Two Truths; he is worthy to enter into the presence of Osiris."[31] Another Pearl of Great Price commentary expounds on the contents of the vignette:

> The illustration from which Facsimile 3 was copied came at the end of the Book of Breathings belonging to Hor. His

29. Gee, "Eyewitness," 189. The facsimiles were printed from carved blocks based on tracings that Reuben Hedlock made of the originals. The original prints of Facsimile 2 and the printing block for the same measured about 19 cm by 20 cm.

30. For a picture of this document, see Hugh W. Nibley and Michael D. Rhodes, *One Eternal Round* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2010), 635.

31. Rhodes, *The Hor Book of Breathings,* 23.

> name appears three times in the hieroglyphic writing in this illustration. In its present form, this vignette represents the deceased man, Hor (Figure 5), being introduced into the presence of Osiris (Figure 1), god of the dead, seated on a throne with his sister/wife Isis (Figure 2), standing behind him. In front of Hor is the goddess of truth, Ma'at (Figure 4), and behind him is the jackal-headed God Anubis (Figure 6). Hor has just passed through the hall of judgment, and having been found worthy, is introduced by Ma'at into the presence of Osiris, there to live with him and the other gods throughout eternity and to become a god himself.[32]

The vignette that became Facsimile 3 is an appropriate scene for the Horos Book of Breathings. The names of the characters are spelled in hieroglyphic columns above them. Like the hypocephalus of Sheshonq, this vignette belongs to an existing class of vignettes and is fully functional in that role. Rhodes notes that this type of vignette is common among the known Book of Breathings.[33]

A difference between this vignette and the vignettes that accompany other Books of Breathings is the location of the vignette of Horos in relation to the text. However, scholars have noted, the location of the vignette didn't always matter to the Egyptian scribes when they created their scrolls.[34] If this applies to the scroll of Horos, the vignette is best understood as a typical illustration that supplements a Book of Breathings.

This "presentation scene" is at home with the Book of Breathings made by Isis and appears to have been reinterpreted to match the Book of Abraham narrative, similar to the hypocephalus. Difficulties are found only once this illustration is paired to the Book of Abraham and assigned new explanations.

The outlier of the vignettes is Facsimile 1. There has been great effort on the part of scholars, students, and critics to match this vignette to other types of Egyptian vignettes.[35] There also has been a near equal effort to demonstrate the uniqueness of this scene. It might be difficult to have it both ways. Further complicating any prospective analysis is that any text columns in this scene have, for the most part, been broken off and are now lost. If the creator of this vignette wished to portray

32. Draper, Brown and Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price,* 296.
33. Rhodes, *The Hor Book of Breathings,* 17.
34. Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 224–25.
35. Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 232–34.

Abraham (or Horos or Osiris, for that matter), we cannot ascertain that fact from the vignette alone.

Many LDS scholars have noted that the vignette of a man on a lion couch is unique in that it doesn't appear in conjunction with any other Books of Breathings. Muhlestein notes,

> There is no known case of any vignette remotely like Facsimile 1 that is associated with the type of text that is adjacent to it. No other copies of the Book of Breathings contain anything similar. Based on ancient parallels to the Book of Breathings, the most likely conclusion is that the picture next to the text was not associated with the text.[36]

This vignette is different from other funerary[37] scenes. Instead of a mummification scene, this one features a live participant on the lion couch. Muhlestein notes that "some scholars have suggested that Facsimile 1 is a typical embalming scene rather than a depiction of Abraham on an altar. Yet this vignette is as different from other embalming scenes as it is similar to them. The only similarities are that a person lies on a lion couch with another person standing nearby."[38] Others interpret this vignette as a resurrection scene, but the details on the vignette make parallels difficult as well.[39]

There has been much effort to match this vignette with other types of scenes. That the vignette needs to conform to a standard scene is an unexamined assumption and should be challenged.

The difficulty most scholars have with understanding the facsimiles is trying to figure out if the vignettes are funerary scenes or if they are not. This is because they are and they aren't. Once Facsimile 1 is allowed to be apart from the other scenes, it isn't requisite that scholars force it into something it is not, namely a standard funerary document.

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36. Ibid., 225.

37. In this paper, I use the term *funerary* somewhat loosely, as these documents are more than just accessories for burial. See Smoot and Barney, "The Book of the Dead as a Temple Text," 175–76.

38. Kerry Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 99.

39. Robert K. Ritner, *The Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri: A Complete Edition* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2013), 91. Ritner proposes that Osiris is on the altar displaying his potency, as in other reanimation scenes. However, this suggestion by Ritner isn't possible; the current vignette doesn't have room for such an addition. See John Gee, "A Tragedy of Errors" *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* vol. 4 (1992), 101–02.

Next, a look at the text of the Book of Abraham and its relationship to the facsimiles is justified. Verses 12, 13, and 14 of chapter one link the first facsimile with the story of Abraham's impending sacrifice. These verses make especial mention of the form of the altar and the types of the Egyptian gods. These items were important enough to the author or redactor of the text to interrupt the narration of the story.

The general assumption of some readers of the Book of Abraham was that Abraham himself wrote these particular descriptions and therefore by extension was responsible for the vignette showing the sacrifice. These verses are responsible for modern readers' deciding that Abraham was creating primitive drawings to accompany his story. Based on these assumptions, it is not difficult to see Abraham as the creator of the illustration if not the actual papyrus itself. Indeed, many early Latter-day Saints believed this, and many critics of Joseph Smith still assign this belief to the Church and its members, regardless of whether it is correct or not.[40]

However, if these descriptions in question are a textual gloss by a later author and not Abraham, the need to have Abraham compose the illustrations fades away. Kevin L. Barney notes that "deleting these back references not only would do no harm to the flow and sense of the text, it would actually improve them."[41]

If the descriptions of the altar and the gods are a gloss from a later author/editor, it will be seen that the story flows smoothly and dramatically with the additions removed. Following Barney's suggestion, the deletion of the back references gives the narrative a seamless flow:

> And it came to pass that the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me also, as they did those virgins upon this altar; … and as they lifted up their hands upon me, that they might offer me up and take away my life, behold, I lifted up my voice unto the Lord my God, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and he filled me with the vision of the Almighty, and the angel of his presence stood by me, and immediately unloosed my bands. (Abraham 1:12, 15)

The flow of the narrative gives good reason to believe the descriptions in the text of the Book of Abraham were a later addition specifically

40. Gee, *A Guide to the Joseph Smith Papyri*, 27.

41. Kevin L. Barney, "The Facsimiles and Semitic Adaptation of Existing Sources," in *Astronomy, Papyrus, and Covenant, Studies in the Book of Abraham* 3, ed. John Gee and Brian M. Hauglid (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2005), 123–24.

created to link the lion couch vignette to the text of the Book of Abraham. There is no way to know definitively if the gloss is the product of Horos or the editorial work of Joseph Smith himself.

Last, it is notable that if there were (at least) two texts on the scroll of Horos, we should at least be open to the idea of at least one of the vignettes drawn for the Book of Breathings and another for the Book of Abraham. The notion of having two independent texts on the scroll allows for the two vignettes to be viewed independently of each other as well. Indeed, the burden of proof needs to be on those who wish to have the vignette of Horos being presented to Osiris and the vignette of Abraham on the altar being attached to the same text — either both to the Book of Breathings or both to the Book of Abraham.

The solution with the greatest simplicity is to have the vignette of Abraham on the lion-couch created as a frontispiece for the Book of Abraham and the vignette of Horos being introduced to Osiris acting in its function with the Book of Breathings, just as similar vignettes are created for other Books of Breathings. The vignette that became Facsimile 3 as well as the hypocephalus of Sheshonq, are connected to the Book of Abraham because the Prophet Joseph assigned new meanings to them from the texts and themes of the Book of Abraham and not because they were associated with Abraham's writings anciently. If the facsimiles are parceled from the Book of Abraham, it is apparent that two of them were adopted by the Prophet to illustrate the Book of Abraham narrative by being assigned new meanings that were not originally immanent.

Third Method: Processes of Translation

By the time Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham, he already had experience producing new scriptures. Based on the method of translation of the Book of Mormon, a similar means of translation for the Book of Abraham should be a preferred approach until further evidence comes to light.

One of the most debated aspects of the Book of Abraham is the method of translation. As mentioned earlier, this aspect of the Book of Abraham is difficult to understand due to a lack of primary supporting manuscripts as well as unspecific journal entries. Critics of the Prophet Joseph Smith frequently examine the method of translation in hopes of disproving the Book of Abraham and by extension also discredit the Book of Mormon.

Opinions about the translation method range from the translation being obtained through the Urim and Thummim[42] or seer stones, to the translation being directly revealed to Joseph Smith through revelation, to his having acquired the translation by decoding the hieratic characters from the Book of Breathings.

John Gee notes that "there is no evidence that Joseph Smith used the Urim and Thummim in translating the Book of Abraham. Indeed, the Urim and Thummim were probably surrendered to Moroni years previously."[43] The difficulty here is that there is very little direct evidence for any method of translation, let alone for the use of the Urim and Thummim. One of the very few firsthand witnesses was Warren Parrish, who stated that "I have set ~~down~~ by his side and penned down the translation of the Egyptian Hieroglyphicks [sic] as he claimed to receive it by direct inspiration from Heaven."[44] This statement supports the idea that the Book of Abraham was received through revelation, but it doesn't specify anything beyond that. The prophet himself was also careful to state that the translation was given to him, as opposed to his working the translation on his own.[45]

It is to be noted, however, that close associates of the prophet seem to collectively favor the use of the Urim and Thummim or the seer stones. Wilford Woodruff[46] and Parley P. Pratt, who were close friends to the Prophet, tell that the Urim and Thummim were used in the translation process.[47]

Although the use of sources will be considered later in this paper, it ought to be mentioned that firsthand witnesses should take priority

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42. The name *Urim and Thummim* is used here to represent the Nephite Interpreters sealed up with the Book of Mormon plates. The interpreters were never referred to as the U&T in the Book of Mormon text, although the early brethren of the Church adopted that name for both the interpreters and for Joseph Smith's seer stones.

43. Gee, "A History of the Joseph Smith Papyri," 11.

44. Warren Parrish, Letter to the editor, *Painesville Republican*, 15 February 1838, as cited in Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham*, 217.

45. Nibley provides a good discussion of this issue. See Hugh Nibley, "Translated Correctly?" in *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2005), 55.

46. Michael H. MacKay and Gerrit J. Dirkmaat, *From Darkness unto Light: Joseph Smith's Translation and Publication of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2015), 228.

47. H. Donl Peterson, *The Story of the Book of Abraham: Mummies, Manuscripts and Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 161–63.

over second- and third-hand sources. However, there needs to be consideration of multiple statements that have convergence. And while this convergence doesn't guarantee an accurate recollection, it should cause a more thoughtful look at the collective evidence.

It might seem problematic that the Urim and Thummim were described as being used for the translation; the Prophet had likely surrendered them some years earlier. He did, however, still have some of his seer stones. Eric Eliason has noted that the early Saints didn't differentiate between the seer stones and the Urim and Thummim: "It seems that early Mormons began to use the terms *seer stone* and *Urim and Thummim* interchangeably, with the latter convention winning the day."[48] Matthew J. Grey takes this into consideration when he notes that "when the Egyptian papyri appeared, Joseph again turned to his seer stones and divine inspiration for assistance in translating the ancient documents."[49] Mackay and Frederick note that Joseph Smith had given away his brown seer stone in 1830 but that he would have used his white seer stone when the Book of Abraham was translated in 1835.[50]

If Joseph Smith used a seer stone to produce the Book of Abraham, it would have been a comparable process to his translating the Book of Mormon. During the Book of Mormon translation, he had the plates nearby but did not examine them physically to get the translation; rather he saw the translation via his seer stone (or the interpreters) that he placed in a hat to shield out the light.[51] The prophet's mother reported that while translating the Book of Abraham, he would look into his hat and read not only the translation on the scrolls but also read portions of the papyri that were broken off and were missing.[52]

This should be the preferred theory of the revelation of the text to the Prophet because it most closely resembles the translation of the Book

48. Eric A. Eliason, "Seer Stones, Salamanders, and Early Mormon 'Folk Magic' in the Light of Folklore Studies and Bible Scholarship," *BYU Studies* 55:1 (2015), 78.

49. Matthew J. Grey "The Word of the Lord in the Original," *Approaching Antiquity: Joseph Smith and the Ancient World,* eds. Lincoln H. Blumell, Matthew J. Grey and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2015), 260.

50. Michael Hubbard Mackay and Nicholas J. Frederick, *Joseph Smith's Seer Stones*, (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2016), 126–129.

51. A thorough description of this process is explored in MacKay and Dirkmaat, *From Darkness unto Light,* 123–30.

52. *Friends Weekly Intelligencer*, 3 October 1846, 211, as cited in Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham*, 223.

of Mormon. Joseph Smith likely would have recognized the hieratic text of the scrolls as a "reformed" Egyptian and returned to a familiar method. Also notable is that this method is different from his Inspired Translation of the Bible or other revelations. If the Book of Abraham were present on one of the scrolls,[53] this would be similar to the Prophet's physically possessing the golden plates. The Inspired Version, on the other hand, was received in part through the direct revelation of large narrative portions as well as combing through the King James Version to find verses that needed emendation.

Evidence is lacking for all theories concerning the translation, and the witness statements aren't firsthand, but the use of the seer stones would answer many questions, as I will show later.

Fourth Method: Understanding the Manuscripts

A proper methodology for studying the documents relating to the Book of Abraham includes not only correctly understanding the documents we do have but also accounting for probable documents now lost. This would include manuscript pages that contain the full translation of the Book of Abraham; portions of the published translation are now without any documentation.

Researchers of the Book of Abraham need to come to an understanding of the manuscripts that relate to the translation. This is another instance in which research on the Book of Abraham is hampered by a lack of documentation. Instead of an original manuscript of the Prophet's dictated translation, we have a small collection containing partial copies of the translation and explanations of the facsimiles. Included in this collection are seemingly related papers with sundry logographic characters and definitions. While some documents containing parts of the prepublished translation exist, it would be a mistake to think those were the only ones produced and therefore rest a research model on those pages alone.

This section of methodology will first examine the so-called Kirtland Egyptian Papers. Following this, I will explore the possibility of an original manuscript.

53. However, Joseph also saw through the Urim and Thummim an ancient parchment belonging to John the Beloved. This document was apparently not in possession of the Prophet, but he was able to see and obtain a translation all the same. See a brief discussion in MacKay and Dirkmaat, *From Darkness unto Light,* 123.

The Kirtland Egyptian Papers: The Kirtland Egyptian Papers are brought into the discussion of the translation because they are claimed by many to be the source of the Book of Abraham translation. These documents fall roughly into two categories: one group contains manuscript copies of the translation of the Book of Abraham (these have been referred to as the *Kirtland Egyptian Papers-Abraham*, or *KEPA*), while the other group appears to be an attempt to decode ancient languages (called *the Kirtland Egyptian Papers-Egyptian*, or *KEPE*).[54] The documents labeled Ab1, Ab2, Ab3, and Ab4 are the overlap of these two categories because they contain elements of both.[55] This overlap, as well as the overall lack of other documents, has caused confusion about the translation process.

These four documents are viewed by some as being the source of the Book of Abraham translation because they feature Egyptian characters placed in a margin next to a copy of the translation. These characters appear to be extracted from the beginning of the Horos Book of Breathings. This has resulted in some critics of the Prophet as well as some members of the Church claiming these KEPA documents are the source (or working papers) of the translation. This forced connection of the hieratic characters with the text of the Book of Abraham is seen as tying the two together when such a connection is never made explicit in the documents themselves.[56] In turn, this has led to the assumption that there is a valid connection between the characters on the left of the margin and the translation on the right and that the Book of Abraham was believed to come from the Egyptian characters at the beginning of the Book of Breathings. Once this assumed connection is made, it is presented as evidence of Joseph Smith's gift of translation (or lack thereof).[57]

54. Like the papyrus fragments in the possession of the Church, study of these so called "Egyptian papers" is also beleaguered by multiple labels, such as the "Valuable Discovery." See Ritner, *The Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri,* 76–77.

55. Brian M. Hauglid, "The Book of Abraham and the Egyptian Project," *Approaching Antiquity: Joseph Smith and the Ancient World* eds. Lincoln H. Blumell, Matthew J. Grey and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2015), 477–79.

56. While some claim these characters represent a "before and after" method of translation, perhaps the Egyptian characters were placed there as ornamentation for the text.

57. This is a new version of an old argument. Before the rediscovery of these pages, some scholars made the same observations regarding the Egyptian writing

One of the difficulties of this assessment is that it is based on a communitive view of the papers. Taken as a whole, they seem to support the notion that they are a reflection of the translation. But this view appears possible only because the papers are "lumped together."[58] If each set of documents is examined under its own terms, the notion of these pages being the working papers for the translation becomes more difficult to maintain.

It needs to be noted that because the KEPA copies exist, that doesn't give them superiority in the process of the production of the Book of Abraham. Robert J. Matthews notes, regarding the Prophet's revelations, that "the existence of multiple copies is not an unusual circumstance, for multiple copies were made of nearly all of the revelations that the Prophet Joseph received, in order that the information could be made available to the members of the Church as rapidly as possible."[59]

There are a number of methodological difficulties with viewing the KEPA collection as the source of the translation of the Book of Abraham. I have noted earlier that the study of the Book of Abraham is inhibited by a lack of adequate documentation. The KEPA theory of translation is appealing to many not because the theory works, rather because it fills the void in the documentation. Assigning the KEPA papers to the method of translation also provides a purpose for the otherwise mysterious collection.

Hauglid observed that "perhaps, an alphabet was drawn from the already extant Book of Abraham. This … possibility begs the question as to why one would attempt to create an Egyptian alphabet from a preexistent English text."[60] The answer would appear to be that the alphabet was not for the purpose of the translation but to supplement the ongoing original language project, which will be discussed below. Failure to consider the KEPA and KEPE papers in light of this ongoing project is to ignore historical context.

Automatically adopting the KEPA papers to be the source of the Book of Abraham is bad methodology; it doesn't consider the possibility of other translation documents that might now be lost. Further, it ignores

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on the facsimiles and the explanations provided by the Prophet. See Barney, "The Facsimiles and Semitic Adaptation,"109–14.

58. Gee, "Joseph Smith and Ancient Egypt," 438.

59. Robert J. Matthews *"A Plainer Translation"; Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible: A History and Commentary* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1975), 61.

60. Hauglid, "The Book of Abraham and the Egyptian Project," 484.

how grammars are produced[61] and ignores the relation to the evidently related project of decoding the lost language of Adam, which is a better fit for the KEPE papers.

Some have proposed that the papers of the so called Alphabet and Grammar were co-opted into functioning as a guide to the translation or to use for the ancient languages project. I would argue that these papers (Ab1, Ab2, Ab3, and Ab4) were specifically created for the ancient languages project under the prompting of W. W. Phelps, who made Ab1.[62] These four early copies of the Book of Abraham translation were made with a deliberate left margin on the folio pages. No other copies of the Prophet's revelations have this type of margin. This open space seems deliberately created to hold characters extracted from the scroll of Horos.

Because of so many unknowns regarding the KEPA papers, research may be best suited to determine what the collection is *not*. The process of elimination could narrow the possible purposes of these papers.

The Original Manuscript: It has been noted that one of the difficulties of assigning the Kirtland Egyptian papers as the source of the Book of Abraham is that it ignores the possibility of an earlier original manuscript. These KEPA pages in possession of the Church seem to be a by-product of a larger work. Brian Hauglid posits that Joseph Smith produced a master translation manuscript (which Hauglid labels Ab0) which is now missing.[63] He notes that "while closely examining the Abraham manuscripts, one fact quickly became clear: all of the surviving manuscripts containing text of the Book of Abraham represent copies of earlier documents." [64] He elaborates:

> We have a fairly good idea of how Joseph Smith worked when it came to receiving revelation and dictating it to a scribe. From the surviving originally dictated manuscripts of the Book of Mormon, we know that there was no paragraphing, sentence structure, or punctuation because the text in the dictated manuscripts appears as one long sentence. Joseph Smith appears to have dictated the Book of Mormon text in a generally continuous fashion, rarely stopping. The text in the Abraham manuscripts, on the other hand, exhibits paragraphing, sentence structure, and punctuation that

61. Gee, *A Guide to the Joseph Smith Papyri*, 21–23.
62. Hauglid, *A Textual History,* 149.
63. Ibid., 7, 21.
64. Hauglid, "Thoughts on the Book of Abraham," 250.

> would be characteristic of text that had evolved beyond the dictation phase.[65]

These original manuscript pages would have been gathered and tied together with string to create a portfolio that could be read like a book. This technique was also used for the original manuscripts of the Book of Mormon. These pages contain the original version of the revelation, which then went on to be standardized with paragraphing and punctuation while the Prophet made revisions and clarifications he thought necessary to prepare the text for publication.

This original manuscript appears to be the subject of this journal entry by Anson Call in 1838. He writes that translation manuscripts of the Book of Abraham and Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible were kept together and that the translation of the Book of Abraham took about two hours to read.[66] That this manuscript is not from the KEPA collection should be obvious. This manuscript is much longer than our current published version, perhaps four times as long.[67]

This account also makes clear that the Prophet kept the original manuscript for the Book of Abraham with the manuscripts for his translation of the Bible (JST). Matthews traces the path of the JST manuscripts from this point in 1838 through the possession of his secretary, James Mulholland, and after that through Mulholland's sister-in-law, Ann Scott, who held on to the documents for a few months before turning them over to Emma Smith.[68] Matthews notes that Joseph Smith had the manuscripts with him during the Nauvoo period (1839–1844).[69]

It was during this Nauvoo period that the Prophet would have begun to prepare the translation for publication. Documents Ab5, 5a, 6, and 7 were likely produced as a printer's manuscript in the same way the Book of Mormon had a later printer's manuscript based on the original manuscript. Because these documents don't contain the full five chapters of the current Book of Abraham, it seems logical to conclude that even this set from the KEPA collection is missing pages.

An original manuscript for the Book of Abraham, while not currently extant, is likely based on the attributes of the other documents

65. Hauglid, "Thoughts on the Book of Abraham," 251.
66. Matthews, "*A Plainer Translation*," 98.
67. Gee, "Eyewitness," 200–01.
68. Matthews, "*A Plainer Translation*," 99.
69. Ibid., 100. Note that while Matthew's primary concern was the trail of the JST manuscripts, he does note other papers that were kept together as well. The Book of Abraham manuscript seems to be in this collection.

as well as being a natural by-product of a logical translation process. Just as distant planets are discovered by their gravitational influences on known objects, so too does an original manuscript explain the states of the other Egyptian documents.

While Hauglid demonstrates that a large manuscript could have been possible, he also notes a lack of evidence regarding the same.[70] Caution needs to be taken here so as not to marshal a lack of evidence as evidence.[71] It is true that there is no direct mention of a master translation manuscript, although it may be that Joseph Smith and contemporaries never mentioned it as being called such. References may exist albeit in an unclear or nonspecific description. Because these witnesses refer to the translation, it may be uncertain to which document they are referring.

And while there may not be a contemporary mention of an original manuscript, Church leadership in the late 1800s believed such manuscripts existed. H. Donl Peterson writes of a "mission to the states" to locate the original translation documents.[72] Elders Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith were dispatched back east to enquire about the relationship of these documents to RLDS Church leadership as well as to research a rumor that these documents were still intact and possibly in the newly rebuilt Wood Museum. They unfortunately returned empty-handed.

I mentioned earlier that collections Ab5 and Ab7 were likely created as a printer's manuscript for publication in the *Times & Seasons* periodical. Ab5 consists of thirteen folios with the text of Abraham 1:1–2:18. Each of these pages is labeled in the upper left corner with a page number from one to fourteen. Folio 4 is currently missing. Ab7 is a single sheet containing Abraham 3:18b–22a. The folio sheet is labeled 7 on the front and 8 on the back. If this was from a collection of pages for the second published extract, then it is the only page remaining. The pages of Ab5 and Ab7 average about 160 words per sheet. Based on the total word count of the published Book of Abraham, the first published installment had fourteen manuscript pages, and the second installment could have had approximately twenty pages or ten double-sided pages.

70. Hauglid, *A Textual History*, 5.

71. For a look at this methodological problem, see Hugh W. Nibley, "How to Write an Anti-Mormon Book," *Tinkling Cymbals and Sounding Brass: The Art of Telling Tales about Joseph Smith and Brigham Young,* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991), 499–502.

72. Peterson, *The Story of the Book of Abraham*, 217–29. Peterson does not make it clear whether he is referring to the papyri fragments or to a written manuscript.

Fifth Method: A Translation Timeline

Another difficulty posed by the lack of documentation of the translation is the mystery of how long the translation actually took. *Just as viewing the method of the translation of other scriptural projects should be factored in to a study of the Book of Abraham, so too should the production timeline be viewed in light of other projects.* Two aspects of the translation time can perhaps benefit from comparison to other projects. First, the pace of translation of the papyri should be compared against the earlier rate of translation of the Book of Mormon. Second, Joseph Smith was concurrently preparing his Inspired Version of the Bible for publication while he was working on the Abraham manuscripts. Examining the work on the JST will prove helpful to understand the Prophet's work on the Book of Abraham.

There are two theories regarding how long it took Joseph Smith to translate the papyri. One posits that the translation was largely completed by 1835. Another theory suggests the early translation happened in 1835, and the rest was completed in 1842 in anticipation of the publication of the selections of the translation in *Times & Seasons*. Both theories are based on the word *translate* in the Prophet's journals. Kerry Muhlestein and Megan Hansen have noted that the current evidence is mixed on when the prophet completed his translation. They write that "at this point, there is no theory that accounts for all of the evidence."[73]

It should be noted that much of the evidence for the later translation date can be explained in a context that fits the earlier dates as well. Most of this evidence consists of the Prophet's journal entries and will be addressed shortly.

The Rate of Translation: One of the avenues briefly explored by Muhlestein and Hansen discusses the rate of the translation.[74] Looking at only the translation up to Abraham 2:18, they note that if Joseph Smith had translated this particular section of text, "that would mean that he translated 49 verses, or 2,149 words, averaging almost 6 verses or 253 words a day" during his eight and a half days of translating near the end of 1835.

They use this figure to demonstrate the unlikelihood that a minimum portion of the text was translated in 1835 while the rest of the translation

73. Kerry Muhlestein and Megan Hansen, "The Work of Translating: The Book of Abraham's Translation Chronology" in *Let Us Reason Together: Essays in Honor of the Life's Work of Robert L. Millet* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2016), 157.

74. Muhlestein and Hansen, "The Work of Translating," 142–43.

was completed in 1842. They note that the rest of the translation of the published version, had it been translated in 1842, would have been completed at a rate nine times faster than the earlier efforts, with an average result of 2226 words per day. The divide between these two rates moves them on to other methods for establishing a timeline, such as the teachings from the Abrahamic record which were recorded between 1835 and 1842 when the translation was published.

The difficulty with this experiment (which was why the analysis was performed) is that it deals with uncertain journal entries and is based on only a handful of manuscripts. The discovery of manuscripts could change the picture drastically. That said, it may be useful to look at the translation of the Book of Mormon as a comparison of the Prophet's *modus operandi*.

John W. Welch notes that the Book of Mormon translation proceeded along at a "blistering" eight pages per day average.[75] The eight pages referred to is in reference to the first printed edition of the Book of Mormon. Welch also cites Terryl Givens, who gives an average of over 3,500 words per day produced by the Prophet.[76] A random sample[77] from a reprint of the 1830 Book of Mormon reveals approximately 3,770 words for an eight page-selection, which is in the ballpark of Givens' estimate.

The published version of the Book of Abraham contains approximately 5,770 words within its five chapters. Building on the notion that Joseph Smith returned to his use of the seer stones for the translation method, our current version of the Book of Abraham could have been completed in *under two days*. Even if Warren Parrish wrote at half the speed of Oliver Cowdery, who was chief scribe for the Book of Mormon, the published version still could have taken four days.

Two points should be made in regard to this proposition. First, there is still too much we don't know about the translation process for any estimation of time to be attached to the translation. The fact that the Prophet spent the latter half of July 1835 translating as well as a number of days in October and November of the same year doesn't definitively demonstrate that he completed his work by that point. However, if

75. John W. Welch, "Miraculous Translation of the Book of Mormon" in *Opening the Heavens: Accounts of Divine Manifestations, 1820–1844* (Provo, UT: *BYU Studies*; Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2005), 102.

76. Welch cites Terryl Givens, *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture that Launched a New World Religion*, (Cambridge, MA: Oxford University Press, 2003), 37.

77. Mosiah 17:1–20:22a

the Prophet was returning to a familiar technique of translating and dictating the text, then the Prophet would have been able to translate a large portion of the text of Abraham, if not all of it, in this short time, given his spiritual gifts and abilities.

Second, if Joseph Smith was able to dictate an average of eight pages per day by this method, the number of translation days would allow for a larger manuscript to be produced. The manuscript described by Anson Call could comfortably have been made during these time constraints. The potential for a rapid translation demonstrates that a larger manuscript with additional content could have been produced, but this by no means can prove that it existed.

Hauglid also considers the translation rate in regard to an original manuscript when he notes that if the Prophet "worked at translating the papyri during a good portion of the month of July and the seven additional recorded translation days in late 1835 at a somewhat slower pace than the Book of Mormon, he still could have produced 50–60 manuscript pages of Abraham text by the end of 1835."[78]

A comparison of the translation of the Book of Mormon with the Book of Abraham doesn't prove the Abrahamic record was translated in its entirety in 1835, but it does show that such a feat has a methodological precedence.

The word *Translation*: An additional difficulty occurs in reconstructing a translation time line, in that there is some question on Joseph's usage of the word *translation*. Muhlestein and Hansen astutely note that when the Prophet mentioned "translating," he could have been actually revising the text.[79] While the term seems to be ambiguous, a look at the JST translation process may be helpful, for it was undergoing a similar development.

It was noted above that the manuscripts of the Book of Abraham and the JST were kept together leading into the Nauvoo period and that Joseph continued to work on them extensively for their publication. During this time, Joseph Smith requested that an office might be provided for him so he could continue the work of translation. The account of this meeting proposes

> that the church having erected an office where he can attend to the affairs of the Church without distraction, he thinks and verily believes that the time has now come, when he should

78. Hauglid, *A Textual History*, 5.
79. Muhlestein and Hansen, "The Work of Translating," 149.

> devote himself exclusively to those things which relate to the Spiritualities [sic] of the Church and commence the work of translating the Egyptian Records — the Bible — and wait upon the Lord for such Revelations as may be suited to the Condition and circumstances of the Church.[80]

Robert J. Matthews has observed that "although the translation [of the JST had] … been sealed up and 'finished' in 1833, the above memorial indicates that the Prophet intended to do more with the Bible, in addition to translating the Egyptian records."[81] In this instance, it seems that Joseph used the word *translate* to refer to further work on the documents, even though he considered the translation finished. If these smaller emendations to the text of the JST was labeled as *translating*, such a process for the text of the Book of Abraham may also indicate a completed status at an earlier time.

Indeed, caution should be exercised when referring to the journal entries that mention the translation. Matthews notes that the Prophet also used the word *translation* "to convey the meaning generally assigned to the term *transmitted*."[82] The Eighth Article of Faith is used as an example of this usage. The word *translation* needn't always refer to the decipherment of languages or the revelation of ancient content.

Though the translation timeline for the Book of Abraham remains unknown for now, many of the methods of examination seem to favor an 1835 time frame.

Sixth Method: Deposition of Witnesses

Inevitably, any study of the Book of Abraham or the papyri will deal with witness statements, which all need to be examined according to a number of factors. The witness statements need to be examined on their own merit, but they shouldn't always be taken at face value. They shouldn't be treated as if they were puzzle pieces which were handed out randomly by Joseph Smith and which, if they all could be collected and assembled, reveal a clear picture of the Book of Abraham. Instead, many of these pieces are duplicates of each other. Many pieces have been altered over time due to faulty memory or reshaped to embarrass the Prophet. And of course many pieces have been lost.

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80. "History, 1838–1856, volume C-1 [2 November 1838–31 July 1842]," p. 1063, The Joseph Smith Papers, http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838–1 856-volume-c-1–2 -november-1838–3 1-july-1842/235

81. Matthews, *"A Plainer Translation,"* 42.

82. Ibid., 7.

Research on the scrolls, vignettes and mummies in possession of the Saints needs to be done within the larger picture of how those of Joseph Smith's era understood ancient artifacts. When patterns of belief and behavior toward other antiquities are encountered, this mindset needs to be applied to the Egyptian collection as well. Researchers should also be mindful of whether the witness statements can be considered accurate if they are from second- or third-hand sources.

The witnesses of the scrolls lived in a pre-scientific culture that understood antiquities in a different manner than what is understood today. Egyptian was just beginning to be understood in faraway places, which often left these early witnesses to use their best judgment to interpret the ancient scrolls. This interpretation was built on the revelatory groundwork given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, but many of their best guesses about the papyri have now proven incorrect.[83]

Nineteenth-Century Understandings: First, research needs to focus not only on what the witnesses saw, but how they saw it. It is necessary to understand the attitudes and understanding of the Bible in postcolonial America, for this will shape how the Saints viewed the Book of Abraham. The Bible was not only their religious guide, but it also provided proof-texts for theological reasoning, a baseline for science and astronomy, and a reliable handbook for world history. Philip Barlow notes that "Joseph Smith grew up in a Bible-drenched society, and he showed it. Like those around him, his religious conceptions and his everyday

83. This understanding of the Bible by these early Latter-day Saints needs to be coupled with their perceptions of Hebrew in early America. Among the Bible-believing Christians, Hebrew became something of a gold standard for scriptural understanding. Scholars and clergy clamored to learn the Hebrew script to aid in their exegesis of the Old Testament. The Hebrew language was also thought to be closer to the original or pure language of Eden. If the Latter-day Saints thought that the scrolls in the Egyptian collection contained Hebrew characters, it was to testify of the antiquity of the scrolls. Gray notes that "references to Hebrew on the papyri appear to have been the impressions of the documents' ancient and sacred nature, rather than accurate paleographic descriptions." If witness statements record that Hebrew was featured in the scrolls, these statements need to be analyzed according to this criterion. See Matthew J. Grey "The Word of the Lord in the Original" *Approaching Antiquity: Joseph Smith and the Ancient World,* eds. Lincoln H. Blumell, Matthew J. Grey, and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2015), 260.

speech were biblically informed. He shared his era's assumptions about the literality, historicity, and inspiration of the Bible."[84]

These early Latter-day Saints viewed themselves as direct heirs to the Kingdom of God that existed in ancient times. In addition to seeing themselves reflected in antiquity, they viewed the rest of the world around them as remnants of the biblical epoch. Mark Alan Wright sets the stage for understanding the early Saints' notions of antiquity:

> The Saints were very comfortably situated within the cultural context of their day. The discipline of North American archeology was still in its infancy, an era we now refer to as the "Speculative period," which began in 1492 and lasted until 1840. According to North American archeologist Larry Zimmerman, "Epistemologically … [during the Speculative period, people] were mostly prescientific. What they knew was based on theological models of explanation. Essentially, if something wasn't in the Bible, it had no real explanation." The expectation, then, was that the Bible would explain the sometimes strange things that were being unearthed by antiquarians — and, conversely, that the artifacts would validate the biblical narrative. In this regard, Joseph Smith and his followers were very much products of their time.[85]

Wright's important study demonstrates how this model of explanation functioned when the Saints encountered ancient relics. He shows how the discoveries of Native American remains came to be interpreted as ancient Lamanite warriors. The "discovery" of the Kinderhook plates also had ties to the biblical era in the minds of some of the Saints, even though the antiquity of the plates has now proven to be a hoax. Wright further details that when

> artifacts were brought to his attention, Joseph would virtually always attempt to sacralize them by placing them within the context of scriptural peoples or places — generally, the very scriptures he claimed to bring to light. The artifacts and

84. Philip L. Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible*, 2nd Edition (Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), 10.

85. Larry Zimmerman, "Archeology," in *A Companion to the American Indian*, ed. Thomas Biolsi (Malden, MA: Blakwell, 2008), 527, as cited in Mark Alan Wright, "Joseph Smith and Native American Artifacts," *Approaching Antiquity: Joseph Smith and the Ancient World*, eds. Lincoln H. Blumell, Matthew J. Grey, and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2015), 121–122.

> the scriptures had a symbiotic relationship in his mind; the scriptures provided the history of the objects and the objects provided the history of the scriptures.[86]

The Saints had the mindset that they were being blessed with ancient artifacts and that these artifacts in turn went on to support the Bible and the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon was frequently used to show support for the legitimacy of the Bible, so much so that it became a literal and physical fulfillment of Ezekiel 37, with its mention of the Stick of Joseph. The Nephite interpreters included with the golden plates were soon called the Urim and Thummim, based on the sacred objects of the Old Testament.

Building on this paradigm, the idea that the Egyptian collection had biblical ties is not unreasonable, given the expectations of the early members of the Church. In addition to the papyri being tied to the biblical accounts, it became only natural for the mummies also to be connected to the biblical record. Muhlestein notes that "accounts make it clear that there was some kind of belief during the Nauvoo era that the mummies were royalty; and perhaps were connected with the Exodus."[87] Further,

> If Joseph Smith knew that he had the writings of Abraham and Joseph and if he knew or suspected that these writings did not take up all the papyri, it is logical that he would assume that there were writings from other great biblical figures present as well. Correspondingly, such biblical awareness creates the natural assumption that legged snakes were a depiction of the Garden of Eden story, for it was not until after the eating of the fruit that the serpent was told to go about on its belly.[88]

Muhlestein is on the right track. This "biblical awareness" leads Joseph Smith and the early Saints to assume the whole collection of Egyptian artifacts belonged to a biblical treasure trove. With the Book of Abraham physically present on the scroll of Horos, the other items in the collection would have naturally belonged to other biblical figures.

86. Wright, "Joseph Smith and Native American Artifacts," 134.

87. Kerry Muhlestein, "Joseph Smith's Biblical View of Egypt," *Approaching Antiquity: Joseph Smith and the Ancient World* eds. Lincoln H. Blumell, Matthew J. Grey and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2015), 464.

88. Kerry Muhlestein, "Joseph Smith and Egyptian Artifacts: A Model for Evaluating the Prophet Nature of the Prophet's Ideas about the Ancient World," *BYU Studies*, 55:3 (2016), 76-77.

Witnesses report seeing within the scrolls the writing of Joseph of Egypt, the patriarch Jacob, Moses, and others.[89]

Muhlestein shows how the vignettes on the Tshemmin scroll could be seen as representations of biblical stories, particularly when one of its vignettes features a serpent with legs. With this new reinterpretation, other vignettes on the scroll were assigned to other biblical events. A representation of the Trinitarian Godhead was seen, as was the pillar of Enoch. In addition to the Tshemmin vignettes, Muhlestein reports that some of the early witnesses were likely referring to the judgment scene of the Neferninub scroll as being representative of Jacob's ladder.[90]

Based on this pattern of interpretation, the scroll of Neferninub could be seen as a scroll of Jacob by some of the witnesses, the mummies could be seen as Egyptian royalty, and the hypocephalus of Sheshonq as a Celestial Globe that showed the System of Astronomy. The large quantity of material on the scrolls would prompt Oliver Cowdery to exclaim that "volumes" would be needed to hold the translations.[91]

Perhaps unfortunately, this paradigm also shows the writings of Joseph of Egypt were likely part of the biblical inventions. Oliver Cowdery spoke most explicitly of the Book of Joseph, describing it as containing pictures that are a match to the vignettes of the Tshemmin roll.[92] A simpler solution is that he was attempting to make sense of this scroll by assigning biblical connections to the vignettes when in reality it contained no such writings of any of the patriarchs.

The idea of the Book of Joseph was fueled in part by the legitimate presence of the writings of Abraham and the then current "scientific" approach of linking mysterious artifacts to the Bible. The idea of a Book of Joseph continues to be perpetuated in our day by a certain "list-mania" that can exist among students of lost scripture.[93]

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89. Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham*, 213–23.

90. Muhlestein, "Joseph Smith and Egyptian Artifacts," 49.

91. Oliver Cowdery, "Egyptian Mummies," *Latter Day Saints Messenger and Advocate* 2/3 (December 1835): 236. See also William West's statement that the translation would be larger than the Bible. See William S. West, *A Few Interesting Facts Respecting the Rise Progress and Pretentions of the Mormons* (n.o., 1837), 5, as cited in Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham*, 217.

92. Cowdery, "Egyptian Mummies," 236.

93. Examples of such lists can be found in Peterson, *The Story of the Book of Abraham: Mormons, Manuscripts and Mummies*, 262–63; 269–71. See also Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine, 2nd ed.,* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 453–55. Among these lists it is common to see full books assigned to people mentioned very briefly in scriptural passages. For example, McConkie implies

Witnesses and Hearsay: The witness statements themselves can be difficult to study based on how researchers group them together. Should they be categorized by their status of being eyewitnesses as opposed to being a secondhand account? How much credence should be given to convergences? Should the accounts of content based on the vignettes be understood differently than the witnesses of the content of the translation? These are questions that invite further exploration.

An introductory query into the topic of witness statements and hearsay has been written by John Gee,[94] who carefully guides the reader through examples of witnesses seeing the same things but reporting the events differently.

The Prophet Joseph Smith was the best witness for the translation of the Book of Abraham. Gee notes that "published statements of the Prophet take precedence over secondhand garbled remembrances, no matter how well intentioned."[95]

Unfortunately, Joseph Smith had little to say about the translation process. However, he needs to be regarded as an expert witness to the contents of the unpublished portions of the Book of Abraham. If the Prophet completed more of the translation than what was eventually published (and the evidence reviewed shows that this is likely the case), he would be the best source for information on the contents of the papyri. As an example of this, consider the following statement, which was part of a sermon delivered by the Prophet in Nauvoo:

> [The] Everlasting covenant was made between three personages before the organization of this earth, and relates to their dispensation of things to men on the earth; these personages, according to Abraham's record, are called: God the first, the Creator; God the second, the Redeemer; and God the third, the Witness or Testator.[96]

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that statements in the Book of Mormon from prophets such as Zenock, Neum, and Ezais were extracted from their respected books. However, these prophets of the Brass Plates may have had their words recorded only in a now unknown historical narrative, such as with Old Testament prophets Elijah and Elisha.

94. Gee, "Eyewitness,"175–217.

95. Ibid., 195.

96. Quoted by William Clayton, reporting an undated discourse given by Joseph Smith in Nauvoo, Illinois; in L. John Nuttall, "Extracts from William Clayton's Private Book," pp. 10–11, Journals of L. John Nuttall, 1857–1904, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah; copy in Church Archives, as cited in Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham*, 220.

Of course, the current version of Abraham's record doesn't mention these names of God, nor does it reflect an everlasting covenant made among these three personages. This statement now indicates lost material that was never published. Equally important, it gives us a glimpse at what the missing content contained.

An additional comment by the prophet is worth examination. The Prophet Joseph Smith, speaking at a conference of the Church on 27 August 1843, turned his remarks to the subject of the eternal nature and power of the Melchizedek Priesthood. During this sermon, the Prophet quoted or paraphrased an episode between Abraham and Melchizedek regarding the Priesthood. The account reads:

> Abram, says to Melchisedec, I believe all that thou hast taught me concerning the Priesthood, and the coming of the Son of Man; so Melchisedeck [sic] ordained Abram and sent him away. Abram rejoiced saying now I have a Priesthood.[97]

These details from the meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek are not attested to in the book of Genesis, the prophet's Inspired Translation of the Bible, or the Book of Mormon. The themes of Abraham's receiving the priesthood are unique to the Book of Abraham.[98] Such a statement would be a fulfillment of the desires of Abraham that he recorded in the first part of his record. It is also consistent with a statement likely provided by Lucy Mack Smith that the Book of Abraham contains "more particular accounts than our Bible gives us, of Noah, the Ark and the flood — of Abraham and Melchizedec — of Joseph and Pharaoh — and of various other distinguished characters."[99] It is also worth noting that Joseph Smith here used the name *Abram*, rather than the longer *Abraham*. This is consistent with the earliest copies of the Book of Abraham manuscripts, which used this form as well.

Second- and third-hand accounts need to be considered carefully, as they are steps removed from eyewitness accounts. For instance, the prophet's friends and family left descriptions of the contents of the papyri, as did many visitors to Nauvoo who saw the mummies and papyri. These descriptions included items that were both on the papyri

97. History, 1838–1856, volume E-1 [1 July 1843 – 30 April 1844], p. 1708, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838–1 856-volume-e-1–1 -july-1843–3 0-april-1844/80. This sermon was recorded by Willard Richards.

98. Hauglid, "Thoughts on the Book of Abraham," 247.

99. *Friends Weekly Intelligencer*, 3 October 1846, 211, as cited in Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham*, 223.

(such as vignettes now lost) as well as descriptions of unpublished sections of the Book of Abraham. There is a built-in difficulty in this task: all the descriptions of the contents of the Book of Abraham are not on equal ground. Extra care needs to be taken not to equate an eyewitness account of the scrolls with second- or third-hand accounts, which amount to hearsay.[100]

A unique case about the witness statements is that there is sometimes a convergence of ideas. These need to be dealt with carefully. They might carry more weight than a single account, and they need also to be studied based on their source. If multiple witness statements are based on one incorrect witness, then caution needs to be the rule. And while only looking at firsthand accounts would be a nice ideal, Muhlestein notes that to ignore statements on the ground that they are firsthand remembrances would be lazy scholarship.[101]

An additional admonition: it needs to be remembered that many of the Prophet Joseph Smith's journal entries were added after the fact by his scribes. Indeed, many of these journal entries were included years after they actually happened. Before relying too heavily on these accounts, these ought to be checked against the Prophet's original papers to verify that they actually say what they report to say.

Seventh Method: Approaching Antiquity

It was noted at the beginning of this study that one of the problems of Book of Abraham research is that it is riddled with unspoken yet faulty assumptions. One of the main unspoken assumptions that dominates the field regards the antiquity of the scrolls and the facsimiles. Many studies want to place the papyri and the vignettes in Abraham's hands without thinking about whether he would have created them. *The age of the papyri and the vignettes shouldn't at the outset be retrofitted to Abraham's day. Related to this idea is the notion that Abraham drew the vignettes himself to illustrate his record. This does not honestly treat the papyri for what they are. Studies connecting Abraham and the vignettes need to be done with caution.*

A methodological difficulty is often attempted by studies that begin with the end result of the facsimiles and their explanations and then try to trace their history back in time to their origin, to levels of ancient Egyptian understanding and/or to Abraham's own time so we can get the story to match up with our expected conclusions.

100. Gee, "Eyewitness ," 175–217.
101. Muhlestein, "Joseph Smith's Biblical View," 451.

A second unspoken assumption is the notion that the Book of Abraham, the facsimiles, and the papyri correspond with ancient Egyptian language, religion and culture. However, exactly how the correspondence is supposed to work has never been clear. Recently, scholars have been questioning why an Egyptian background for the Book of Abraham is necessary.[102] Studies of the Book of Abraham that seek an Egyptian connection need to demonstrate why such connections are required.

Antiquity of the scrolls: The first assumption that needs to be addressed is the notion that Abraham was the literal author of the scrolls and fragments now in possession of the Church. This has been called *Autographic Assumption*[103] and was a much more prominent idea among early members of the Church, but it still lingers in the minds of some critics of the Church as well as with a small number of Latter-day Saints.

These assumptions had their origin early on and are perpetuated by a misunderstanding of early eyewitness statements like that of Josiah Quincy, who reported that the papyrus contained the "handwriting of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful"[104] as well as the Book of Abraham's heading, which states that the book was written by Abraham's "own hand, upon papyrus," which some extend to mean the scroll fragments now in possession of the Church, and that the accompanying vignettes were literally created by Abraham.[105]

Muhlestein notes some of the problems with this assumption:

> Critics say that if this papyrus was written in the second century BC it could not possibly have been written by Abraham himself. In regard to this assumption, I ask, who said this particular papyrus was written by Abraham himself? The heading does not indicate that Abraham had written that particular copy but rather that he was the author of the original. What these critics have done is confuse the difference between a text and a manuscript. … A text, regardless of how many copies of it exist in the world, is written by one author. However, each copy of that text is a manuscript.[106]

102. Muhlestein, "Assessing the Joseph Smith Papyri," 41; Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 98–99.
103. Barney, "The Facsimiles and Semitic Adaptation of Existing Sources," 111.
104. Gee, "Eyewitness," 194–95.
105. Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 97.
106. Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 230.

The notion of Autographic Assumptions has been thoroughly dismantled by Kevin L. Barney,[107] whose important study details the process by which these assumptions were called out by critics of the Church, and members of the Church had to reassess their views. As Egyptology grew as a discipline, the idea that the scrolls and the facsimiles were the product of Abraham's day became more and more unlikely.

Curiously, the notion of Autographic Assumptions still exists for many students of the Book of Abraham regarding the facsimiles. Scholars are willing to grant that the scrolls in Joseph Smith's possession were from the Ptolemaic era, but some still wish to see the facsimiles as holdovers from Abraham's original work. Perhaps this could be called *Autographic Illustrations*. Note that much of this analysis is designed to deal with the explanations of the facsimiles rather than the facsimiles themselves.

A version of this idea is manifest in a commentary on the Pearl of Great Price that was compiled by Richard D. Draper, S. Kent Brown, and Michael D. Rhodes. The authors put forth the hypothesis that the explanations of the facsimiles provided by Joseph Smith were interpretations of original drawings made by Abraham. The illustrations that accompany the Book of Abraham in the Pearl of Great Price are the result of these original drawings being transmitted over time, especially modified to suit the purposes of Horos, the owner of the papyrus.[108] If the explanations don't match the Egyptian originals, it is because the Egyptian vignettes have been modified beyond their original purpose.

This theory has the advantage of being able to bridge this disconnect between the explanations and the vignettes. It provides a buffer between the vignettes and the explanations to allow the explanations room for vindication by favorable comparison to antiquity. As such, Joseph Smith can be shown to have provided us with much more than "good guessing."[109]

This theory has the disadvantage of being entirely unprovable. The authors advance their assumptions first and then develop a theory that fits. Because they believe that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, his explanations would have been doctrinally and historically correct. Because the vignettes don't entirely agree with the explanations, and because the explanations aren't likely to have been changed or

107. Barney, "The Facsimiles," 107–30.
108. Draper, Brown and Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price*," 243.
109. Ibid., 283.

misunderstood, this disconnect must lie on the part of the facsimiles themselves. To solve this, the authors invent Abrahamic originals, which then must have matched the explanations in their original form. Draper and the other authors need that there be original illustrations by Abraham himself if Joseph Smith's explanations are to make sense.

The difficulty with this, of course, is that it invents documents to fill in a gap based on their assumptions. They also make the error of lumping all the facsimiles into one category, in this case as belonging to the original Abrahamic writings.

Turning to Facsimile 1, the authors suggest that

> in its present form, the illustration represents the deceased owner of the papyrus, Hor, lying on a lion-couch and being resurrected. Above his head is a human-headed bird representing his soul (Egyptian *ba*). The standing figure is Anubis, god of mummification and guide of the dead, who leads the resurrected person to the hall of judgment and, if the person passes the judgment, into the presence of Osiris, the god of resurrection.[110]

While this vignette could represent Horos, Anubis, and the *ba* of Horos, the document itself doesn't actually say who is featured. The only real connection of this vignette to the Horos Book of Breathings is based on proximity. This interpretation of the vignette containing Horos and Anubis may be possible, but it isn't the only one.

This interpretation of the vignette depends on there having been an Abrahamic original which was modified into a standard funerary illustration. Unique features of this vignette are explained because of this document's dual nature as being a hybrid of an original picture and a newly modified document. The authors note that parts of this vignette do not match standard funerary illustrations and explain them as remnant parts of an original Abrahamic scene. They give a similar treatment to Facsimile 3, where in this scene "pharaoh has become a female goddess, as has his son. The king's waiter, Shulem, is now Hor, the owner of the papyrus,"[111] etc.

The difficulty with this position is that if Abraham originally drew these illustrations, only to have them modified to more Egyptian-style documents, they have changed to the point where they don't represent the Book of Abraham. It has been mentioned above that the hypocephalus

110. Draper, Brown and Rhodes, 287.
111. Ibid., 296.

of Sheshonq and the presentation scene are fully functional examples of their genre. Re-drawing supposed originals as stock Egyptian scenes means they are no longer the originals nor are they even faithful copies, just images that are vaguely similar. Were someone to replace his or her television remote control with a scientific calculator, it will be unable to turn on the television, even though the two items may look analogous.

The output of this theory changes Abraham's teaching in Pharaoh's court into an accurate presentation scene introducing Horos to Osiris, yet the scene of Abraham on the altar appears not to match standard embalming scenes very well, although the authors in this particular commentary label it as such. The consequences of applying the same rules to all three documents results in an analysis that must include exceptions because Facsimile 1 doesn't conform in the way the other documents do. They note that Horos's being in the classic gesture of prayer and the presence of the crocodile-god below the altar are different from standard embalming scenes and therefore, according to the authors, must be remnants of the Abrahamic originals.[112]

There is an even larger difficulty here as well. The hypocephalus was not owned by Horos and was created by a different scribe. Even if the two vignettes from the scroll of Horos were based upon Abrahamic originals, it doesn't explain how an additional Abrahamic vignette became transformed into a hypocephali and preserved by another individual away from the scroll of Horos. Even if this scenario were true for Horos, it wouldn't guarantee that Sheshonq would follow the same procedure. Indeed, Sheshonq and Horos may have lived at different times and been entombed in entirely different catacombs, only to have these disparate documents excavated and collected together centuries later.

There is one last problem with this specific theory, that the vignettes of the scroll of Horos were based on Abrahamic originals. Draper, Brown, and Rhodes invoked a version of the missing papyrus theory by stating that a copy of the Book of Abraham on the scroll of Horos was "most likely."[113] These authors claim the pictures attached to the Book of Breathings were originally drawn by Abraham and modified by the scribe who created the scrolls for Horos. If these illustrations were created by Abraham for his record, why were they removed from the version of the Book of Abraham that was on the scrolls and heavily modified and repurposed for Horos's Book of Breathings? Especially if the Book of Abraham were still included in the collection of scrolls? Why couldn't

112. Draper, Brown and Rhodes, 287.
113. Ibid., 242.

the author preserve the original style of the Abrahamic drawings for the Book of Abraham and then craft new illustrations for his Book of Breathings? Further, if the original drawings of Abraham were heavily repurposed for the Book of Breathings, why doesn't Facsimile 1 have anything to do with the sequence or content of the Book of Breathings?

Balk like an Egyptian: It has been the standard procedure to judge the translation and interpretation of the scroll and the vignettes by comparing them with those of professional Egyptologists. I noted earlier that the differences between Joseph Smith's versions and that of the Egyptologists has caused no small disconnect. However, Latter-day Saint scholars have come to question the methodology of this approach. The matter of using the Egyptological standards of interpretation seems to be rarely cut and dried. This of course does not mean that legitimate parallels to the explanations cannot be found in the Egyptian historical record, but this is not as simple as it appears on the surface. William Hamblin demonstrates the complexity of the task by noting:

> In other words, by the Late Period at the latest, the Egyptians had developed religious methods of reinterpreting their own ancient iconographic symbols and images (which were by that time already 2000 years old). *Different movements and sects within Egypt produced differing interpretations of the same images.* This phenomenon broadly parallels similar and roughly contemporaneous developments of different movements of textual exegesis and interpretation among both Egyptians, Alexandrian Greeks, and Jews within Egypt itself.[114]

Kevin Barney makes the correct observation that while the Book of Abraham as we know it was written on papyrus, Abraham himself sojourned in Egypt only for a short time. He further notes the likelihood that Abraham penned his writings in an ancient language such as Akkadian or another Semitic language.[115] Abraham was not an Egyptian and needn't have spoken the language. He may have taught Pharaoh the principles of astronomy through an interpreter. John Gee also notes the idea that an Egyptian interpretation of the facsimiles is an assumption that ought to be questioned. He asks, "Why do Joseph Smith's interpretations need to match ancient Egyptian interpretations at all? I do not intend

114. William J. Hamblin, "Iconotropy and the JS Abraham Facsimilies," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, 2013. Emphasis in original..

115. Barney, "The Facsimiles," 113.

to address the issue here but merely to raise it. Critics should note that unless they can answer this question satisfactorily, they have no case."[116]

By the same token, those who wish to provide faith-promoting scholarship should also demonstrate why Joseph's explanations of the facsimiles need to match ancient Egyptian thought.

One such theory, posited by Kevin Barney, sees the shortcomings of a strictly Egyptian analysis and proposes a different ancient model for the explanations of the facsimiles. His Semitic Adaption theory shows us a potentially useful way of viewing the facsimiles through a "Semitic prism" rather than through the sometimes problematic Egyptological lens. His analysis is creative and insightful in viewing the facsimiles in this new light. This Semitic view is a result of his correctly choosing to abandon any Autographic Assumptions, as mentioned above. He also demonstrates examples in which Egyptian and Jewish texts influenced each other. He explains,

> I suggest that as part of the redaction of the text, J-red (our hypothetical Egyptian-Jewish redactor) adopted or adapted vignettes from a Book of Breathings and a hypocephalus as illustrations for the Book of Abraham. In co-opting the papyri to a new purpose, this person reinterpreted them in accordance with Semitic religious sensibilities and the requirements of the Abraham story. Therefore, the Egyptian material in the facsimiles has been refracted through a Semitic prism. It is only by viewing the facsimiles through a Semitic lens that we can clearly see how the explanations relate to the figures.[117]

This theory gives rise to the correct idea that the illustrations could benefit from a Semitic explanation, but to do this he has to invent a Jewish-Egyptian redactor, which seems methodologically difficult. Another problem present in this theory is the unspoken notion that an ancient Jew would need to be responsible for the Semitic content. This could be a likelihood for the presence of Semitic content, but it may not be the only source.

Unfortunately, there seems to be one fatal error in this particular version of Semitic influence. It may well be that the explanations to the facsimiles have a Semitic slant, but let us note that this specific information isn't built into the vignettes. The burden of the Semitic

116. Gee, "A Method for Studying the Facsimiles," 352.
117. Barney, "The Facsimiles," 115.

Adaption theory is to demonstrate that J-red had specific interpretations in mind that aren't explicit in the vignettes as we now have them. If he had specific meaning in mind, where did this information originate if it didn't come from the vignettes themselves? The parsimonious answer is that the explanations originated from Joseph Smith himself, through revelation, through his own studies of the Egyptian scrolls, or through a combination of both.

Barney is willing to entertain the idea that the vignettes were not part of the original Book of Abraham but instead were standard illustrations of the time, then adapted or adopted to the Book of Abraham by a Jewish-Egyptian scribe. One of the difficult positions Barney suggests is that the hypothetical J-red had selected both the vignettes from the scroll of Horos and the hypocephalus of Sheshonq to supplement the Abraham story.[118] Here he makes the mistake of subjecting all three facsimiles to the same rules of interpretation when they needn't be lumped together at all. As mentioned above, the hypocephalus of Sheshonq and the vignette of Horos introduced into the presence of Osiris are, for all intents and purposes, standard examples of their respective classes of documents. The only sign of adapting or adopting of the facsimiles comes from the explanations and not from facsimiles themselves.

Comparative studies: Another area where bad methodology can thrive is in comparative studies. These can be methodologically problematic if the underlying assumptions behind such studies are incorrect. One of the biggest problems of comparative studies is the often unaddressed idea that correlation between similar concepts or ideas is the same as causation, which may not be the case. Scholars have noted that hypocephali (such as the one owned by Sheshonq) can be shown to have thematic connections to Abraham. However, we would be mistaken to believe that because such connections exist, it indicates that Abraham drew our particular hypocephali or that the hypocephali were deliberately created to represent Abraham's teachings.

One such example is the fact that Abraham has been connected with the Wedjat Eye or the Eye or Ra, which is also one of the names of the hypocephalus. Rhodes notes an Egyptian text that mentions "Abraham, the pupil of the eye of the Wedjat."[119] This specific connection of Abraham to the hypocephalus includes Abraham as part of the ancient milieu,

118. This is also intoned by Michael Lyon, *Appreciating Hypocephali as Works of Art and Faith [Transcript]*, (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), 1.

119. Michael Dennis Rhodes, "The Joseph Smith Hypocephalus … 17 Years Later" (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1994), 6. See also Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 101.

but it may be difficult to claim more than that. Any further attempt to connect these items risks a syllogistic fallacy: if (A) the hypocephalus is a Wedjat eye, and (B) Abraham is the Wedjat eye, then (C) Abraham is the hypocephalus. While the mention that Abraham has been called the eye of the Wedjat in one text seems to be an intriguing parallel, it is notable that similar titles have been given to the Egyptian deity Hathor[120] as well as the land of Egypt itself.[121] The nature of the parallel changes if more data are considered.

Great effort needs to go into studies to avoid forms of "parallelomania."[122] Samuel Sandmel warns that when parallel material is believed to have been found between two texts, the parallels need to stand in context rather than being viewed only in isolation. Such parallels taken out of context may miss important underlying factors, such as mistranslations or cultural difference. Scholars need to be wary of producing quantity rather than quality when making such connections.

Origins of the Facsimile Explanations: A difficulty is encountered in the perception that the explanations of the facsimiles are of ancient origin and therefore need to be accounted for by linking them to antiquity.

The explanations suffer from the same endemic problem as the rest of the Book of Abraham: an overwhelming lack of documentation. There is only one existing copy of these explanations among the Church's Egyptian papers, the explanations for Facsimile 3 being missing entirely. In addition to this singular copy, these pages appear to have been created very near the publication of the facsimiles in the *Times & Seasons* and may have been the printer's manuscripts for the publication. If the ideas for the explanations existed earlier to this, the documentation of these ideas is lacking.[123] Gee notes:

> The earliest manuscripts of any of the Explanations are the Book of Abraham manuscripts 5A and 6, both in the handwriting of Willard Richards. There is nothing in the

120. Nibley, *One Eternal Round*, 318. See also Hugh W. Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt* 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 2005), 517.

121. Ibid., 204.

122. Samuel Sandmel, "Parallelomania," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 81/1 (March, 1962), 1–13.

123. The journal by Appleby has some of this information from the explanations, but there is some question as to whether he had this information earlier or supplemented his account with information from the published explanations after the fact. See Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham*, 201.

> documents that indicates authorship. While I am not saying that assuming that Joseph Smith wrote the Explanations is a bad assumption, it does need to be pointed out that it is an assumption and not provable.[124]

This question of the authorship of the explanations also extends to Abraham or a later scribe somewhere along the lines of transmission. The explanations provided for facsimiles 2 and 3 are not inherent within the vignettes themselves. Claiming Abrahamic authorship for these explanations is impossible to prove. Like the Autographic Assumptions mentioned earlier, it is illogical to start with the results of the explanatory notes being ancient and then seek a path to prove such a path to antiquity existed.

Far too often, scholars and critics deal with the explanations of the symbols as either right or wrong. This however denies the fluid nature of symbolism. As William Hamblin has noted, the symbolism of Egyptian imagery went through an evolution over the years. Symbols can have a wide multivalence depending on time or culture. Studies of the facsimiles would do better to deal with the subject of symbolism as "valid" or "invalid" instead of "right" or "wrong." If imagery has multiple possible meanings, the act of labeling one particular interpretation right or wrong leaves out additional and even contradictory layers of meaning that may be considered appropriate as well. Thinking of the symbolism as valid or invalid may take a little more work, but it will yield a more honest result.

Accuracy of the facsimiles: Another error that has been made regarding the facsimiles is the notion that they have been incorrectly reproduced in the Pearl of Great Price and need a proper restoration. Larson commits this error when he begins applying what he believes are correct features to Facsimile 1. He has already decided that Joseph Smith's representation is incorrect, so he creates a new version based on other funerary texts. By assuming the vignette of Abraham on the altar should have been a standard funerary illustration, he makes changes he feels appropriate. This method is putting the cart before the horse. His approach might seem applicable if the vignette were a standard funerary text, but if it is a unique illustration unrelated to the Book of Breathings, his restorations are incongruous.

The correct way to approach possible restorations is first to see if the existing markings on the papyri would support the restoration rather

124. Gee, "Joseph Smith and Ancient Egypt," 437–38.

than deciding what needs to be in the picture and making the new figures fit.[125] Larson's restorations of the additional bird in lieu of a hand and the resurrected holding his phallus may be similar to other funerary documents, but these emendations don't fit what is already on the extant papyri.[126]

Observations

With these methodological parameters in place, a new look at the translation, the papyri and the vignettes seems warranted. To be clear, I am basing these observations on the notion that the Book of Abraham existed in some state among the literature of the Theban archives, which Horos, feeling that something about this record was worth recording, copied it alongside his Book of Breathings on the scroll. I hope these observations will be a springboard for replacing the bad methodology still present in all too many studies about the Book of Abraham.

The Facsimiles: There have been many opinions regarding the nature of the facsimiles. Gee summarizes some of the options as that

1. The facsimiles belong to Egyptian funerary texts and have nothing whatsoever to do with Abraham.
2. The facsimiles originated with Abraham and were drawn by him on the papyrus. This requires that the manuscripts date to the time of Abraham.
3. The facsimiles originated with Abraham and were copied along with the manuscript.
4. The facsimiles are illustrations only loosely dependent on the text. They were illuminations of the day the papyri were produced, using stock motives of the art of the time and the place where the papyri were produced. The facsimiles are thus comparable to mediaeval manuscript illuminations in

125. For example, see Bell's "restoration" of JSP I as a more careful attempt than the heavy-handed work of Larson. Bell sees the second hand of the man on the couch for what it is instead of a second bird. See Lanny Bell, "The Ancient Egyptian "Books of Breathing," the Mormon "Book of Abraham," and the Development of Egyptology in America," in *Egypt and Beyond: Essays Presented to Leonard H. Lesko upon his Retirement from the Wilbour Chair of Egyptology at Brown University,* (Charlestown, MA: Brown University, 2008), 30.

126. Charles M. Larson, *By His Own Hand upon Papyrus: A New Look at the Joseph Smith Papyri* (Grand Rapids, MI: Institute for Religious Research, 1992). See also Ritner, *The Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri: A Complete Edition,* 91.

biblical manuscripts.[127]

The correct nature of the facsimiles is likely a combination of categories 1 and 4. The difficulty of these categories is that they judge the facsimiles based on their final location in the published Book of Abraham and apply the same rules of interpretation to all three vignettes, which muddies the picture. Allowing each vignette to be studied as a separate document gives a much cleaner picture.

The Book of Abraham was published in installments, with three illustrations accompanying the text. The original monograph written by Abraham himself was produced well over a thousand years before Horos of Thebes made a copy of this text on his own papyrus scroll. While it is certainly possible that Abraham included illustrations to go with his story, there is no scholarly way to know this. Modern assumptions use an implied but unexamined *a priori* argument that since the Book of Abraham was published with pictures, Abraham must have been responsible for those pictures as well as the text. This reasoning is held in place with Abraham 1:12–14 as a lynchpin.

However, even if the text of this statement was supplied by Abraham, it still applies only to the scene of Abraham on the lion couch. The other facsimiles aren't mentioned in our current published Book of Abraham. Whereas the text of Abraham 3:15 states that the visions of the cosmos are being shown to Abraham so he can teach them in Egypt, our current text doesn't mention any connected illustrations.

The facsimiles were created because Joseph and the early Saints viewed the Egyptian collection as being biblical-era artifacts. The hypocephalus was known as a Celestial Globe from an early date. As such, it is likely that it held the same weight of importance to the members as the scrolls themselves. It should be seen as being published as part of the whole biblical collection instead of being a physical part of the scroll of Horos and, hence, separate from the Book of Abraham.

There have been numerous and massive studies on the relationship between Abraham, the ancient religion of the Egyptians, and the facsimiles. While it can't be proven that the hypocephalus of Sheshonq and the presentation scene of Horos and Osiris have direct ancient ties to Abraham, many of the ideas assigned to these vignettes by the Prophet Joseph Smith have proven to be at home in an ancient milieu.

127. Gee, "A History of the Joseph Smith Papyri," 15–16. Gee notes that he favors the last view that the facsimiles are similar to illuminated manuscripts.

It is difficult to tell if Joseph Smith thought the other vignettes were legitimate scenes from the Book of Abraham or whether he simply accepted a good idea by having a vignette match the story and chose other pictures that would be a good fit for the Abraham extracts. Joseph could have recognized a good idea and run with it.

Since this study sees Joseph Smith as having co-opted the vignette of Horos and Osiris as well as hypocephalus of Sheshonq, it seems possible the prophet could have gone on to adapt additional vignettes for further installments of the Book of Abraham in the *Times & Seasons*.

Facsimile 1: This vignette was specifically created to supplement the text of the Book of Abraham in the same manner that other vignettes are used on other scrolls. Specifically, assuming that Horos is responsible for the textual gloss that became Abraham 1:12,[128] the purpose of this vignette is to show the type of altar and the gods of the Egyptians. Why this is important to the author isn't clear, but it seems to fulfill his purposes. That said, the rest of the details of his illustration don't necessarily matter. Since the surviving papyrus is missing the head of the idolatrous priest, his knife, and the head of the angel of the Lord, there has been no small stir about if they were reproduced correctly by Joseph Smith and Reuben Hedlock. Ultimately, it doesn't really matter if the angel has a bird head or a human head or if the priest has a human head or a jackal head. The purpose of the picture isn't about those things. Efforts might be better served by determining why it was important to the author to show the form of the altar rather than to decide if the original drawing featured a hand or a bird's wing.

Horos isn't specially modifying an embalming scene or a resurrection scene as has been suggested by others, he is creating a new scene that uses the same techniques and styles he undoubtedly used elsewhere. This vignette was created on Horos's own volition. Before this, the Book of Abraham, like the rest of ancient biblical scrolls, had no illustrations. For Horos's version, he added a vignette following a similar tendency to illustrate contemporary Books of Breathings and Books of the Dead.

The idea of providing a vignette for the story would have made sense to the Egyptian scribe of this scroll but also might have been a novelty for a scroll containing writings of a biblical figure. To the best of my knowledge, scrolls of Jewish origin do not contain illustrations. Indeed, the prohibition of certain images in Jewish art has a long and complicated history. The Babylonian Talmud Tractate Abodah Zarah

128. This idea would also be true if Joseph Smith were the originator of this gloss.

42a, 43a, and 43b[129] present complicated guidelines regarding the use of the imagery of idolatrous gods as well as other images, such as human faces, the sun, moon and stars, and dragons,[130] all of which are featured in the vignettes. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* further mentions that the Rabbis forbade the fashioning of the four figures of Ezekiel,[131] which appear in both Facsimile 1 and 2 as the Egyptian Sons of Horus.

If we wish to maintain an Abrahamic origin of the facsimiles or at least an ancient Jewish origin, we need to acknowledge the possibility that the inclusion of gods and dragons might be offensive to ancient Jewish readers, and the idea that the vignettes existed in conjunction with the Book of Abraham in a different form before they were matched to the Horos Book of Breathings made by Isis may prove problematic, based on old traditions of Jewish aniconism. I do not claim any expertise on this matter, but it seems that further research on this topic is definitely warranted.

Facsimile 2: As the Prophet was preparing the extracts from the Book of Abraham for publication, he "likened" other drawings to reflect the contents of the Book of Abraham. The hypocephalus of Sheshonq was given an Abrahamic explanation that featured many principles of astronomy that didn't make it into our current Book of Abraham.

The Prophet had been preparing to introduce the temple endowment to the Saints during the previous months. He could have seen familiar themes in the Hypocephali (such as blessings of strength and vitality, priesthood and power, and resurrection and eternal life) and described the contents of the hypocephalus to conform to the basis of the endowment, by use of the principles of astronomy as described in the Book of Abraham as the source of the language (Kolob, etc.).

A common interpretation of Facsimile 2 approaches the hypocephalus as an example of sacred astronomy, it being specifically an

129. "Babylonian Talmud: Tractate 'Abodah Zarah, Folio 42a," accessed August 20, 2016, http://halakhah.com/zarah/zarah_42.html; "Babylonian Talmud: Tractate 'Abodah Zarah, Folio 43a," accessed August 20, 2016, http://halakhah.com/zarah/zarah_43.html.

130. This entry of the Talmud defines a dragon as an animal with scales between its legs, which would match the crocodile god Sobek. The dragon as portrayed in the KJV can be translated as a jackal. Both are portrayed on Facsimile #1.

131. Joseph Jacobs, Kaufmann Kohler, and Judah David Eisenstein, "Art, Attitude of Judaism Toward," accessed August 20, 2016, http://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/1823-art-attitude-of-judaism-toward#anchor1.

example of the divine center.[132] The hypocephalus has been portrayed as a map or microcosm of the cosmos, following a similar motif as temple symbolism. A paradigm of sacred astronomy was all-important in the religions of the ancient world. This archetypal framework has been noted in numerous comparative studies. Facsimile 2 has elements of this motif, with Kolob at the center, then stars, and then the earth portrayed as one moves away from the middle. The brethren of the church in Kirtland were certainly correct when they referred to the hypocephalus as a Celestial Globe.[133]

However, if this type of comparative analysis can be done with the hypocephalus of Sheshonq, then it can be done with other hypocephali as well. Quite a number of hypocephali have been found that match the hypocephalus of Sheshonq in purpose and pattern. Because of these similarities, one could substitute, for example, the hypocephalus of Lady Wst-wrt[134] or the hypocephalus of Lady Ta-khred-Khonsu[135] for Facsimile 2 without any need to change to the facsimile's explanations.

It may seem appropriate to connect the hypocephalus of Sheshonq to the Book of Abraham through the lens of astronomy, but nothing is unique to this hypocephalus that can't be found in other examples. Indeed, those who wish to make such connections need to demonstrate that the hypocephalus of Sheshonq and the Book of Abraham contain the same *type* of astronomy. If different systems are on display in the respective works, the astronomy connection is moderate at best.

Facsimile 3: In its original form on the scroll, it had nothing to do with the biblical patriarch Abraham but was to serve as a vignette to accompany the Horos Book of Breathings.

This drawing was interpreted by Joseph Smith to document one of the scenes in the Book of Abraham. It seems uncertain if the Prophet knew he was giving the vignette a reinterpretation or whether he thought the scene was actually representative of the story from the Book of Abraham.

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132. Michael Lyon, "Appreciating Hypocephali as Works of Art and Faith," 12–17. See also Nibley, *One Eternal Round,* 260, 285. Note that Tamás Mekis interprets the hypocephalus as demonstrating the transition from day to night and west to east, the equatorial line being the boundary of the halves. See Tamás Mekis, "Hypocephali: Thesis of the Dissertation" (Master's Thesis, University Eötvös Loránd , 2013).

133. William Appleby is one of the men who record this title. See Hauglid, *A Textual History,* 219.

134. Nibley, *One Eternal Round*, 636; Lyon, "Appreciating Hypocephali," figure 7.

135. Lyon, "Appreciating Hypocephali," figure 13.

Taken at face value, Joseph Smith's explanations pose some difficulty. The biggest difficulty is that the names of each of the scenes' participants are written above their heads in the columns of text. Joseph was correct in noticing that the names of the characters were above their heads, but he provided different names to these characters. Also noticeable is the difference in the gender of the characters between the vignette and Joseph's explanation.[136]

The significance of the explanation of Facsimile 3 is that it shows details of a story from the missing portion of the translation. The importance the explanation is not that Pharaoh is a woman in this scene or that Abraham is substituting for Pharaoh but that the story in the Book of Abraham originally contained the characters of Pharaoh, the prince, and so on.

The missing story in the Book of Abraham no doubt tells of Abraham sitting on Pharaoh's throne teaching the principles of astronomy. Abraham teaches that stars and planets exist one above another and intelligences also exist one above another. Perhaps most significant to Joseph's interpretation is the classes of people found in the scene. It ranges from Pharaoh to one of his princes and on down the ranks to a chief waiter (court official) named Shulem and last to a slave belonging to the prince, named Olimlah. Nibley notes, "The five figures in our Facsimile 3 represent a different social stratum, from divinity to slave, though (and this is important) all belong to the same universe of discourse."[137] If Abraham taught Pharaoh that wise men existed one above another and that intelligences existed one above another, then the members of the scene would also have provided a handy illustration of this system because Pharaoh was greater than the prince, who was greater than Shulem, etc.

Joseph Smith appears to mention the words of Abraham that he taught in Pharaoh's court when he said:

> I want to reason a little on this subject; I learned it by translating the papyrus which is now in my house. I learned a testimony concerning Abraham, and he reasoned concerning the God of Heaven; in order to do that said he, — "suppose we have two facts, that supposes another fact may exist; two men on the earth, one wiser than the other, would logically shew that another who is wiser than the wisest may exist.

136. Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 101.
137. Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt*, 452.

> Intelligencies [sic] exist one above another, so that there is no end to them." If Abraham reasoned thus — if Jesus Christ was the son of God, and John discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ had a Father, you may suppose that he had a Father also.[138]

Note that while this teaching from the writings of Abraham is reminiscent of Abraham 3:18–19, this is from a different occasion because it is Abraham who is doing the teaching. The most likely setting for this event is that it is from the missing portion of the Book of Abraham that is described in the explanations of Facsimile 3.

It has been observed that this vignette has received the least amount of attention, perhaps because of the problems mentioned above. If we understand that this vignette was adopted by Joseph Smith to represent a new context, the problems largely disappear.

The Scroll of Horos: Horos, son of Osoroeris and Taykhebit, created a scroll in the second century BC. This scroll was roughly 11 cm in height and 320 cm in length, the standard length for scrolls of the Ptolemaic era, although it's possible that this scroll could have been longer.

On the outer portion of the scroll was a document called the Book of Breathings, made by Isis belonging to Horos. The scroll of Horos contained at least two illustrations, one of an attempt to sacrifice a man on an altar and the other of Horos presented before the throne of Osiris in the company of other gods. The interior portion of the scroll contained the Book of Abraham. The text of the Book of Abraham was amended by Horos to make mention of the illustration of the attempted sacrifice at the beginning of the scroll. This drawing was placed at the beginning of the scroll to illustrate the gods and the altar mentioned in the Book of Abraham narrative.

I propose that Horos was creating on this roll a standard Book of Breathings made by Isis. Many Books of Breathings feature a "presentation scene" at the beginning of the book and conclude with a vignette of an incense offering being offered by the deceased. Horos left room for these two illustrations and was planning to add them after he completed the text. In the process of producing this scroll, he decided a second book should be added to the interior of this scroll and selected the Book of Abraham. As such, he followed his priestly tradition and

138. "History, 1838–1856, volume F-1 [1 May 1844–8 August 1844]," p. 103, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838–1 856-volume-f-1–1 -may-1844–8 -august-1844/109

created a new vignette, painting it in where the "presentation scene" was slated to go.

It could also be that Horos incorrectly placed the two vignettes in each other's spot. This could have happened if Horos had left room on the scrolls for the vignettes while writing the texts with the intent of adding the illustrations later. If the vignette of Horos being introduced into the presence of Osiris was at the beginning of the scroll, it would be a closer match to the other Books of Breathings mentioned above. This would also put the vignette of Abraham on the lion couch near the commencement of the Book of Abraham.

Muhlestein notes that "priests in Thebes had both biblical texts and nonbiblical stories about biblical figures in their possession by at least 200 BC and that one of the characters they read the most about was Abraham."[139] It shouldn't be a surprise to find a book associated with Abraham being preserved by a priest of Thebes. As more evidence comes to light, the idea of the Book of Abraham contained on the scroll of Horos becomes a match to the culture whence it came.

The Missing Manuscript: The Kirtland Egyptian Papers are a standard ledger size of 12½ by 7¾ inches (32 by 20 cm). These sheets would be a good candidate for the paper holding the lost translation. In its current form, the Book of Abraham has approximately 5,500 words. If Anson Call's account is correct, the full translation could contain up to 22,000 words and well over 120 manuscript pages if these pages were similar to the pages of Ab5 and Ab7.

If this original manuscript took two hours to read, as Anson Call suggested in his journal, we need to account for the reading time relative to the condition of the portfolio. If it generally lacked capitalization and punctuation, it may have taken a bit longer to read and therefore may not be as long as has been suggested. Gee suggests that our current version of Abraham takes approximately 30 minutes to read,[140] but this seems to be based on a formatted text. If the readers of these pages had to work their way through this unpolished version, this may indicate a somewhat smaller length of text.

If a master translation existed, what became of this collection of documents? The original manuscript hasn't been found in the current collections of the LDS Church or the archives of the Community of Christ.

139. Muhlestein, "Egyptian Papyri," 223.
140. Gee, "Eyewitness," 201.

One possibility has been noted by Matthews in his research on the JST:

> In October 1881 the general offices of the RLDS Church were moved from Plano to Lamoni, Iowa. On January 5, 1907, the offices at Lamoni were destroyed by fire, and many valuable historical documents were lost. The report of the fire in the *Saints' Herald* indicated that the loss was estimated at $40,000 but that the greatest loss was not financial. "The Church library, containing many rare and valuable books was destroyed," and "nothing was saved from the office of the Church Historian."[141]

The Seer Stone: If the Prophet wasn't actually translating off the papyrus physically but instead seeing it by the means of the seer stone, perhaps he might not have known that the text surrounding the vignette of Abraham on the altar wasn't actually the Book of Abraham or that he was translating from a different part of the scroll. This would be an easy assumption to make. Perhaps because of this, these beginning Egyptian characters from the Book of Breathings papyri are used as part of the Kirtland Egyptian papers. Hauglid has noted, "It appears that Joseph Smith (and his associates) made a literal connection between the Egyptian papyri and the Book of Abraham by translating specific characters on the papyri to produce both the Egyptian and Abraham manuscripts."[142]

The Prophet's mother describes her understanding of the translation process. Although she doesn't mention the seer stones, the process she describes was used to translate the Book of Mormon by use of one of the Prophet's seer stones.

> [Lucy Smith] said, that when Joseph was reading the papyrus, he closed his eyes, and held a hat over his face, and that the revelation came to him; and that where the papyrus was torn, he could read the parts that were destroyed equally as well as those that were there; and that scribes sat by him writing, as he expounded.[143]

Lucy's mention of Joseph reading the torn parts of the papyrus might be extrapolation on her part, especially if she, like so many other

141. Robert J. Matthews "*A Plainer Translation*," 102.
142. Hauglid, "The Book of Abraham and the Egyptian Project," 486.
143. *Friends Weekly Intelligencer*, 3 October 1846, 211, as cited in Hauglid, *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham*, 223.

early members of the Church, believed the Book of Abraham was the only thing on the scroll.

If the revelatory process through the seer stone showed the prophet the translation of the hieratic Book of Abraham without his translating directly off the papyri, the location of the text of Abraham might not have been obvious. Believing the characters at the beginning of the scroll were the start of the Book of Abraham is an easy and forgivable assumption.

The Book of Joseph: In addition to the Book of Abraham, many of the saints believed the rest of the scrolls contained other accounts of the patriarchs. If one scroll had the writings of Abraham, it would be only natural for the other scrolls to be a record of Joseph, the other patriarch who had ties to Egypt. The writings of Joseph of Egypt were, from an early date, believed to be contained in the scrolls.[144] Once the Saints decided the other roll was the Book of Joseph, they began the task of assigning biblical meanings to the vignettes. Eve tempted by the serpent was seen in the vignettes as was Enoch's Pillar.

The early saints can hardly be blamed for their overzealous interpretation. The Lord was revealing truths at an incredible rate through revelation and through ancient writings. With the Book of Mormon and its accompanying artifacts, it is easy to see that the cache found with the writings of Abraham would also belong to a sort of treasure trove of the biblical patriarchs.

This mindset is clear in the statement of Parley P. Pratt:

> The record is now in course of translation by means of the Urim and Thummim, and proves to be a record written partly by the father of the faithful, Abraham, and finished by Joseph when in Egypt. After his death, it is supposed they were preserved in the family of the Pharaohs and afterwards hid up with the embalmed body of the female with whom they were found.[145]

Pratt strives to present a plausible solution for how the records could have been preserved in the catacombs of Egypt. However, once the discipline of Egyptology started to gain steam, his theory has shown to be impossible regarding these particular scrolls.

Pratt also presents the interesting idea that there may not have been a separate Book of Joseph but rather that Joseph finished the record of his great-grandfather. If there is any truth to the existence of the writings

144. Muhlestein, "Joseph Smith's Biblical View of Egypt," 452.
145. Parley P. Pratt, "Editorial Remarks," *Millennial Star* 3/3 (July 1842): 47.

of Joseph being present in the collection of the scrolls, this scenario seems most likely. However, this idea may have been borrowed from the Book of Mormon narrative, with Moroni finishing the story of his father Mormon. Pratt's testimony stands in contrast to the statements of other witnesses, for example Oliver Cowdery and Albert Brown, who stated that the writings of Joseph were on a separate scroll.

One recent study has attempted to collect all the pertinent information on the lost writings of Joseph of Egypt.[146] To the author's credit, he makes his assumptions transparent within the paper. However, whenever the evidence is ambiguous, he chooses to interpret the evidence in favor of his thesis. The witness statements cited are given the maximum benefit of the doubt based on each of the witness's proximity to Joseph Smith. Nor does the author acknowledge the possibility that Joseph Smith was mistaken about the contents of the rest of the scrolls.

As an additional limitation it needs to be remembered that many of the Prophet Joseph Smith's journal entries were added after the fact by his scribes. Indeed, many of these journal entries were included years later, after they actually happened. It needs to be acknowledged that the secretaries employed by the Prophet had the opportunity to interject their own views. For example, the first journal entry mentioning the writings of Joseph was given the dates of 6–8 July 1835, but it wasn't originally written by Joseph Smith; rather it was likely inserted into the church history manuscripts by W. W. Phelps in 1843.

This author, as well as H. Donl Peterson before him, takes note of a lengthy description of Joseph of Egypt's scroll by Oliver Cowdery. They both note that Cowdery describes "the Godhead, the creation, the fall of Adam and Eve, Satan in the Garden of Eden, and other temple related themes."[147] Of course, other scholars have noted that these biblical themes appear to be based on the vignettes of the Tshemmin scroll. The author acknowledges these parallels in the footnotes but puts forward the familiar idea that the location of the vignettes need not appear next to the text they supplement. The author cites Malcom Mosher: "[In] documents from the 21st Dynasty on, misalignment of the text and vignette of a spell can occur, with the text preceding the vignette, or

146. Quinten Barney, "The Joseph Smith Papyri and the Writings of Joseph of Egypt" *Journal of Mormon History*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (April 2016), 95–109.

147. Barney, "The Joseph Smith Papyri and the Writings of Joseph of Egypt," 103–04. See also Peterson, *The Story of the Book of Abraham*, 130.

vice versa."[148] This implies that the writing of Joseph could have been elsewhere on the Tshemmin scroll, in the same manner as the Book of Abraham coexists on the Horos scroll with the Book of Breathings. This is a creative theory, one worthy of further research.

However, I find two difficulties with this theory. First, while some vignettes may not be aligned with their respective texts, this doesn't appear to be the case with the Tshemmin Book of the Dead; the vignettes appear next to their respective chapters. The vignette of the deceased sitting before three seated deities (which is described by Cowdery as the Godhead) is next to a chapter titled "A chapter for sitting among the great gods."[149] Cowdery's description of the Eve and the serpent vignette is next to a chapter that allows the deceased to walk the earth.[150] The Pillar of Enoch that Cowdery describes is a hieroglyphic sign for Heliopolis. The chapter next to this vignette describes the deceased entering Heliopolis.[151] Muhlestein notes that these descriptions as understood by Egyptologists are different from those given by Cowdery and other witnesses.[152] This is, of course, to be expected. The significance of these witness statements is not that they are different from those of Egyptologists but rather that these witnesses believed they were seeing scrolls and pictures associated with biblical accounts.

Second, while Horos could have been inclined to include the Book of Abraham on the interior of his scroll, we have no indication that Tshemmin had the same proclivities. And while it is possible that writings of Joseph could exist on the interior of the Tshemmin scroll, there could have been another Book of Breathings, another text entirely, or no text at all.

Following the mindset of the early Latter-day Saints, it seems likely that the Book of Joseph was invented because of the large number of scrolls in the collection. Since the collection had a perceived connection to Biblical world, it only became natural that the Book of the Dead of Tshemmin was seen as the Book of Joseph and that the curious vignettes it contained were representative of Biblical scenes, even if all of these scenes were not understood.

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148. Barney, "The Joseph Smith Papyri and the Writings of Joseph of Egypt," 103, footnote 19.

149. Michael Dennis Rhodes, *Books of the Dead Belonging to Tshemmin and Neferirnub: A Translation and Commentary* (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2010), 54.

150. Michael Dennis Rhodes, *Books of the Dead*, 43.

151. Michael Dennis Rhodes, Books of the Dead, 44.

152. Muhlestein, "Joseph Smith and Egyptian Artifacts," 53–60.

Conclusion

Following a careful methodology instead of merely relying on assumptions for a study of the Book of Abraham yields clear and perhaps unexpected results. By letting the papyri and the vignettes speak for themselves, we find a unique story of an Egyptian priest who preserved a lost story of Abraham by literally taking it to his grave. We may never know Horos's motivation for including the Book of Abraham alongside his Book of Breathings, but he provided it with a new vignette to ornament the story.

The Egyptian collection of writings and mummies was seen by the early Latter-day Saints to be from the biblical world. The legitimate presence of the writings of Abraham in the papyri inspired others to view the rest of the collection as containing the writings of other biblical patriarchs and prophets. The hypocephalus of Sheshonq and a vignette from the Book of Breathings were also regarded as being from ancient prophets.

By seeing the other facsimiles as being co-opted into the Book of Abraham by the Prophet Joseph Smith, we are free to jettison what were previously problematic interpretations. More important, we can now focus on what the Prophet had in mind with his explanations, rather than spend our efforts trying to reinforce flimsy and peripheral Egyptian connections.

The methodology also points to a large and rapid translation. John Gee's observations are largely borne out by the parameters discussed in this paper. He concludes his own study as follows:

> The Joseph Smith Papyri were considerably larger than the critics claim. Most of the Joseph Smith Papyri probably were destroyed in the Chicago Fire. The Book of Abraham seems to have been translated from part of the missing papyri. The Book of Abraham was translated faster than the critics claim and was originally much larger than the published version. The Kirtland Egyptian Papers are an after-the-fact by-product of the translation process.[153]

Granted, not everyone will be happy with the results, but I believe that observing a better methodology and discarding unexamined assumptions will allow us to see a clear, yet surprisingly simple story for the text and the illustrations.

153. Gee, "A History of the Joseph Smith Papyri," 16.

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The Healing and Exalting Powers of Christ Weave Together at Easter

Ann Madsen

Abstract: *In this personal essay, Ann Madsen reflects on the ways in which the healing power of Christ converges with His exalting power at Easter. Cold gives way to warmth, pride to submission, and reflection to sanctification. The weekly Sacrament provides a time for cleansing, renewal, and drawing our thoughts toward the Lord. The path leads to us becoming like Him.*

During the gray days of winter we look for the light. On a sunny day the light surrounds us, though we may still feel frigid as we venture out into the snow. But in spring the world changes; it brightens and gradually warms.

It is the perfect setting for Easter.

It signals fresh, new beginnings as sleeping bulbs awake and stretch sunward. Women often feel the impulse to clear away the winter dust and call it "spring cleaning." The impulse to be clean is shared by many humans everywhere. Our grandmothers taught us in these western valleys that "cleanliness is next to Godliness." (A saying I disliked as a young girl each Saturday morning as I was urged to ready our home for the Sabbath.) As a great-grandmother, "clean" takes on a deeper meaning. It's all about being clean, isn't it? *Purified*, *cleansed*, and *sanctified* are all closely related terms. The beautiful scene of Jesus washing his apostles' feet illustrates this when he declares they can be "clean every whit" (John 13:8–10).

My husband often called the temple a sanctuary, I think because he saw it as a *place* where we learn to be sanctified. If the temple is a sanctuary or place where we can become sanctified, then the Sacrament is the *time* each week — a time and space we can wall off — in which we can be cleansed and renewed and increase our worthiness for temple

worship. "No unclean thing can enter his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end" (3 Nephi 27:19).

All that we take into our souls should sanctify us.

Each week we come to the Sacrament to measure ourselves next to Jesus Christ, our eternal standard. What do we bring? We bring Him our sins, reckoned in complete honesty — not a lamb or a dove as they did anciently, but our broken hearts and contrite spirits, remembering again His blessed sacrifice for us.

The Sacrament Prayers[1]

The words are repeated
once again,
this sacred, Sabbath time.
Words I can trace
through the week
but this time
unique,
spoken quietly
in youthful
intonation
and the nourishment
is proffered
to me
by a boy's hand,
in exchange
for
my changing.

Picture a conduit of light with you inside it, sitting silently with head bowed, asking, "How holy am I? Why do I promise to remember Christ? What is the exchange that is taking place?"

I sacrifice my sins and ask with all my heart each week, "What lack I yet?" When the answer comes, I write it down. These are a few of the impressions that came one Sabbath day in 1995:

- Know when to speak and when to keep silent.
- Do nothing.
- Keep sacred things in my heart.
- Give myself to Truman every day. (He died 14 years later.)
- Process pain through love. Metabolize hurt with charity.
- Restraint.

1. Ann Madsen, January 14, 1990, PV 1 Sacrament Meeting.

I eat the bread and drink the water, taking into myself the symbols of a perfect life, lived for me, given for me, my everlasting example of goodness and decency. And I do it with others, sitting side by side, that through this ordinance we may be "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). Truman Madsen wrote, "By partaking, accompanied by the Spirit of God, we are preparing ourselves to be sufficiently pure to enter His presence … [T]he Spirit is invited in and comes to stay."[2]

We partake of a tiny piece of bread, which has been blessed and sanctified to our souls' good, a tiny piece of bread, symbolizing the resplendent, resurrected body of Him who redeems us. We drink a single swallow of water in the smallest of cups, symbolizing His blood, which cleanses our inner vessel and washes clean our souls.

This is the exchange: His love for us, a pure love that never fails, an Atonement infinite and eternal in exchange for our growing love for Him, which enables our changing. We remember Him, we promise again and again to always remember Him so that *we* may become like Him, not His everlasting inferior, but *like Him* in every way we have learned to observe and feel in our hearts. We cannot withhold our hearts from Him. His magnetic love draws us to Him. We cannot ignore His sacrifice for us. I cannot ignore His sacrifice for me. This is the Christ we remember each Sabbath.

I lived in Jerusalem for nearly five years, and I could visit Gethsemane often. One day I had a few moments alone there. I went into the lovely church built near the ancient olive trees. It has violet-stained glass windows to make it seem always night-time, the time when Jesus pleaded with His Father to let the awful cup pass, and set the pattern for us forever.

"Nevertheless, not my will, but *thine,* be done" (Luke 22:42, emphasis added).

It was a strangely quiet time for that usually crowded place of pilgrimage. No one was in sight. I was brimming with love and gratitude and felt the Spirit in my pounding heart. I sank to my knees to quietly whisper a prayer. I knew that somewhere nearby, not far from where I knelt, He had knelt in agony. It was a sacred moment in a sacred space. As I arose from my knees, I had been able to say only the smallest part. I was prompted to write down the last of the prayer I had spoken. I wanted to remember the moment, the sacred space the sanctifying

2. Truman G. Madsen, *The Sacrament: Feasting at The Lord's Table* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 2015; original edition 2008), 134.

time. This is how I ended that prayer. I didn't realize it was poetry until I wrote it down:

Beneath the Violet Windows — Gethsemane[3]

Dear Lord Jesus,
Thou who lovest
The people of the Mosque,
Who would have gathered
The people of the synagogue,
Whose arms continue open
To each saffron-robed monk
And searching nun,
Lord of the children
And the childlike,
Pulled by thy love,
Seized by thy suffering,
Drawn to thee
By everlasting cords,
I come!

How can I duplicate these sacred feelings each Sacrament time? Can I go in my mind to the place He knelt bringing my specific, honest, evaluation of myself from the week just past? Can I offer my list to Him from my broken heart, on the altar we call a Sacrament table? Can I give away all my sins to know Him and by that action become more like Him?[4] How could I know Him better than to become like Him and embrace His attributes? Can I cry out in my heart, "Dear Lord Jesus, I come! I will become the pure in heart thou knowest I can be. I will create my own sacred space and resolutely stand in it. I will walk out of each Sacrament meeting cleansed. It will take time, but I will one day say simply, 'I am clean, I am clean.'"

Truly, this healing and exalting power of Christ weave together and converge at Easter.

Ann Madsen, *wife of the late Truman G. Madsen, is the mother of three (plus an Indian foster son), a grandmother of sixteen, and a great-grandmother of 37 going on 40. She loves swimming, cooking, writing*

3. Ann Madsen, October 17, 1976.
4. See Alma 22:18.

poetry, family history, and photography. Ann received her BS degree from the University of Utah and her MA degree from BYU in Ancient Studies with a minor in Hebrew. She has taught Ancient Studies at BYU for 41 years. Her church service has included: Mission Presidents's wife (New England Mission 1962–65), Stake Relief Society President (BYU 8th Stake and Provo Utah Sharon East Stake), and Jerusalem Branch Relief Society President 1991–93. She was on the Gospel Doctrine writing committee for the Church for 17 years. Ann served a short-term mission in the Adriatic North Mission in 2013, was released from the Sunday School General Board in 2014, and is presently a Visiting Teacher in her ward.

Looking Deeper into Joseph Smith's First Vision: Imagery, Cognitive Neuroscience, and the Construction of Memory

Robert A. Rees

Abstract: *Critics of Joseph Smith assert that he invented or imagined the First Vision and then deliberately altered the details in his subsequent first-person accounts of the event (also reflected in accounts recorded or related by others) to mislead his followers. That the details of the narrative changed so dramatically between the first version (1832) and the last authorized version (1842) is considered* prima facie *evidence that Joseph was deliberately inventing and embellishing his narrative to make it more credible. The only thing, say critics, that could possibly explain such divergent, and in some cases, radically different versions of the same event is either incredible forgetfulness or deliberate falsification. This paper, based on close textual analysis and the findings of contemporary scientific research on memory acquisition and retention — particularly memories of dramatic and powerful events — offers an alternative explanation, one that preserves the credibility and integrity of the prophet.*

A tenet of modern Mormon criticism is that Joseph Smith invented the narrative of his First Vision and then deliberately altered the details in subsequent retellings over the years to mislead his followers. That the details of the narrative changed so dramatically between the first version (written in 1832) and the authorized version (written in 1838) is seen by some critics as incontrovertible evidence that Joseph fraudulently invented and reinvented his theophany to make it more

dramatic, more hagiographic, and more self-aggrandizing.[1] This paper, based on evidence from both textual analysis and cognitive neuroscience, posits a possible alternative explanation.

The contours of the story of the First Vision as it was first told are rather straightforward, and known by heart to Mormons the world over: An earnest fourteen-year-old frontier boy named Joseph Smith finds himself confused by the religious contention aflame both in his family and in his community. Reading the epistle of James one day, he is struck by what he sees as the simple admonition to ask God for an answer to his burning question as to which of the many contending sects is true. Taking the scriptural advice literally, he repairs to the nearby woods to pray. He reveals that he has never before prayed vocally, but on this occasion, he does so. As soon as he begins, he is frightened and almost overcome by the presence of some dark power that seems intent on his destruction. In desperation, he calls on God to deliver him; at that moment the heavens open and the darkness is dispelled by a pillar of light descending just above him, the brightness of which he describes as being greater than that of the sun. As the light descends and envelops him, he looks up and sees two beings whose brightness and glory are beyond his powers of description. One of the personages calls him by name and, pointing to the other, says, "This is my Beloved Son. Hear Him!" Then ensues a conversation in which Joseph asks the question for which he had been seeking an answer. He is told that he should join none of the churches because they are all corrupt. He is also told "many other things" which he says he cannot reveal. The experience overpowers him, and he awakens later to find himself "looking up into heaven," the vision gone (JS–H 1:20). Although challenged immediately by incredulous hearers and experiencing "bitter persecution and reviling," Smith nevertheless later affirms his experience: "I had actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two Personages, and they did in reality speak to me; and though I was hated and persecuted for saying that I had seen a vision, yet it was true … I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and I could not deny it."[2]

1. See "Scientific Literature on Memory and Recall" at MormonThink.com which tries to take some of what scientists say about memory recall and apply it to Smith, but does so in a manner that attributes the differences among accounts to Joseph Smith's deliberate self-serving manipulation and deception. http://mormonthink.com/firstvisionweb.htm#memoryrecall.

2. See my "Joseph Smith and the Face of Christ," unpublished MS; copies available upon request at bobrees2@gmail.com.

That affirmation, along with the countervailing acceptance and skepticism that have ensued for two centuries, lies at the heart of Mormonism. On that singular event hinges what Mormons refer to as the Restoration — the claim that the original Church of Jesus Christ fell into apostasy and therefore required a restoration in the latter days. From that dramatic beginning in a frontier forest, the panoply of modern Mormonism has unfolded and flowed progressively into the world.

The standard argument against Joseph Smith's account of his First Vision is that there are many conflicting accounts — or at least, many conflicting details among the accounts — leading to the conclusion that Joseph simply couldn't keep his story straight. The differences among the various versions are neither subtle nor trivial and lead to multiple and valid questions. Was there a religious revival in the Palmyra area at the time Joseph says? Was Joseph's intent in seeking divine help for forgiveness of his sins or in acquiring wisdom as to which church he should join? How many divine or angelic personages did he see, and who were they? Was Joseph commissioned by the divine personages to open the Last Dispensation of the gospel? How does one begin to approach a story for which four primary accounts survive (1832, 1835, 1838, and 1842), along with additional documentation by at least five other writers?

As a textual critic, I am convinced that our most productive focus is on the texts themselves. One cannot ignore whatever historical material exists relative to the texts, but since that information is itself often incomplete and open to dispute, what we are ultimately left with are the words of the texts — the vocabulary, syntax, rhetorical devices, narrative patterns, and stylistic expressions of the author or authors. What do these reveal beyond the obvious, surface differences? Do they offer any clues to the resolution of the question of Joseph's veracity and integrity? What details in the text are most revelatory, both of the reliability of Joseph's account of his vision and of him as the teller or reliable narrator of his story? In considering such questions, we will first examine the text itself and then consider the vagaries of memory and how memory itself is affected by what we understand of modern cognitive neuroscience in relation to powerful, emotionally resonant experiences commonly called "flashbulb memories."

An assignment I regularly give students in my Mormon Studies courses at Graduate Theological Union and University of California, Berkeley, is to undertake a close comparative reading of the various versions of the First Vision. I urge them to pay particular attention to the details, especially the degree of rhetorical sophistication and the use of

such stylistic devices as imagery, repetition, and symbolism. Generally, they do not see what I hope they will, so I have to point things out as we read the texts together. What follows are examples of the kind of close reading I feel the First Vision texts deserve.

The text I consider the most authentic and reliable, as far as capturing Joseph's experience in the Sacred Grove is concerned, is the first, the 1832 version penned by Frederick G. Williams and Joseph Smith himself. It clearly reveals Joseph's lack of sophistication and expressive skills (something his wife noted in relation to his translation of the Book of Mormon). Joseph acknowledges his stylistic insufficiency in a letter to William W. Phelps, admitting his account is written in a "crooked broken scattered and imperfect Language."[3] Of the various versions, to my mind this one rings true in a way later, more consciously constructed, sophisticated, and coherent accounts do not.

One of the things that seems highly significant in comparing the texts is the imagery related to epistemology, that having to do with cognitive and spiritual ways of knowing. All the accounts use language relating to inquiry, searching, and finding truth, but their respective uses of rhetoric and imagery are quite different. For example, in the 1832 version the word "mind" occurs three times and "heart" five times. Thus, Joseph speaks of his mind becoming "seriously imprest" "with regard to the … wellfare of [his] immortal Soul," but then speaks of pondering "many things in [his] heart," an expression that echoes Mary's encounter with divinity in her Magnificat.[4]

The clear focus of this first version is on emotional or spiritual — as opposed to cognitive or rational — experience. For example, Joseph's association of "mind" in this version is not with light or enlightenment but with "darkness" and "distress," whereas the associations with "heart" are linked with the more positive words "considers" and "exclaims." Although there is one negative association with "heart," it is presented in God's words, not Joseph's (God says, "Their hearts are far from me"). The account ends with what I consider an exultant summary of the entire experience, one clearly centered on the heart: "my soul was filled with love and for many days I could rejoice with great joy and the Lord was with me but [I] could find none that would believe in the hevnly vision

3. "Joseph Smith to William W. Phelps, 27 November 1832," Church History Library (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City), *http://josephsmithpapers.org/papersummary/letter-to-william-w-phelps-27-november-1832.*

4. Original spelling, grammar, and syntax are retained in all quotations from this narrative

nevertheless I pondered these things in my heart," a framing, as pointed out earlier, that echoes Mary's theophany. That "nevertheless" illustrates Joseph's determination throughout his life to seize the light in the face of darkness.

In the primary 1835 version, the emphasis shifts to cognitive processes, with no mention of "heart" at all. Thus, Joseph is "wrought up" and "perplexed" in his mind, and he speaks of "the different systems taught the children of men," suggesting systematic thought and possibly belief. Further, he speaks of "a realizing sense" and seeking and finding as he searches for "information" with a "fixed determination," all of which suggest rational processes. As with the 1832 account, this one ends with Joseph being filled with "joy unspeakable."

Whereas the 1832 version emphasized the heart, and the 1835 version focused more on the mind (with no mention of the heart), the 1838 version includes references to both mind (four times) and heart (five times) but leans more heavily on reason and ratiocination than on intuitive or heart-based knowing. Thus, Joseph speaks about "inquirers after truth," "facts as they have transpired," "priest contending against priest," "strife of words," and "contest about opinions." In addition, he speaks of "great excitement" of mind; "serious reflection"; an inability to "come to any certain conclusion"; Presbyterians who, in contending with Baptists and Methodists, use "their powers of either reason or sophistry to prove their [respective] errors"; and Baptists and Methodists "endeavoring to establish their own tenets and disprove all others." This "war of words" and "tumult of opinions" leaves Joseph wondering (that is, trying to figure out) who is right and who is wrong and, the ultimate question, "How shall I know it?" In other words, he is left bewildered by this flurry of verbal, cognitive, and rational conflict.

There are references to the more emotional, intuitive, or spiritual ways of knowing in the 1838 version, including Joseph's having "deep and often pungent" feelings, the passage in James entering "with great force into every feeling of [his] heart," and his offering up "the desires of [his] heart to God," but clearly, as in the 1832 version, the major focus is not on the heart but rather on the mind.

After focusing on the contrast between heart and mind imagery in my classes for a number of years, I read Steven C. Harper's *Joseph Smith's First Vision: A Guide to the Historical Accounts* (2012). I was pleased to see that he had arrived at the same conclusion I had. He writes, "When we listen to Joseph carefully, we also hear his subtle but significant distinction between his mind and his heart … Each of his accounts

narrates a struggle between his head and his heart." He adds, "What seems like inconsistency in Joseph's story can be interpreted as the very point he intended to communicate, namely that his head and his heart were at odds, and he desperately needed wisdom from 'God in order to discern which, if either, he should favor.'"[5] I differ from Harper in that I believe Joseph's use of heart and mind imagery, especially in the 1832 version, is not conscious but rather an inadvertent, unconscious revelation of the deep inner conflict between his rational and intuitive faculties which led to his young mind and heart becoming troubled.

What I think accounts for the dramatic shift from the heart to the mind between 1832 and 1838 (with a short interval in 1835) is that by the early to mid-1830s, Joseph was in the process of establishing a rational theology for his new religion. This was influenced not only by the criticism and persecution he had experienced over his initial telling of the First Vision, but also by people like Oliver Cowdery and Sidney Rigdon, two close associates who possessed skills of reasoning, rhetoric, and expression significantly superior to Joseph's.

Discussion of rhetoric and style alone does not address the criticism of the substantive differences and discrepancies among the various accounts of Joseph's seminal visionary experience — those having to do with his age, his reason for seeking guidance, the identification and number of heavenly visitors, the presence of a dark or demonic power, etc. In other words, it isn't just the imagery; a number of significant details change with each telling. Harper addresses such criticism under the category of "Invention and Embellishment," as this is the common charge among those dismissive of Joseph's claims. The consensus among those who do not consider Smith a prophet is that the First Vision was an invention created by the young Joseph, that as time and circumstance dictated, he continued to revise and embellish his original story, apparently forgetting what he had written earlier — or believing no one would compare the versions and expose him. My belief is that there is an alternative explanation for the wide variation of key elements in the respective versions of Joseph's theophany.

Other factors are relevant in considering the variances in the accounts: the autobiographical details of Joseph's life during each of the accounts (events in his personal life might have affected his memory, or even his motives, as he shaped his narrative); the cultural milieu in which each version was related; and the nature of the audience to which

5. Steven C. Harper, *Joseph Smith's First Vision: A Guide to the Historical Accounts* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012), 92, 93.

the accounts were directed. The intended audience frequently affects the delivery of a story, address, or sermon — one wouldn't recount the story of Noah and the Flood or Jesus being tempted of the Devil in the same way to a seminary class as one would to a scholarly audience. The details, narrative flow, rhetorical flourishes, and tone would differ — either slightly or dramatically. In each respective version, Joseph wrote both with a specific purpose as well as for a specific audience.

In his first account, Joseph seems to be writing in response to a command to begin a history of the Church (D&C 85:1–2) rather than with a definite audience in mind. Essentially, he seems intent on recalling and recording the facts and impressions of the vision as he remembered them at the time. It is also important to keep in mind that, as Richard Bushman reminds us, "At first, Joseph was reluctant to talk about his vision."[6] Given the skeptical — even hostile — responses he received when he did begin telling what happened, it would have been natural for him to be even more reluctant to speak of his experience; that reluctance would likely have affected both his memory and his selection of specific details when he began his initial record of what happened.

In contrast to the unspecified general audience of the 1832 account, the two 1835 versions (one on November 9th and the other on November 14th) were addressed as responses to requests from two individuals: "an eccentric visitor from the east"[7] and Erastus Holmes. Based on the accounts, the circumstances of the inquiries — although similar — seemed to have dictated different tellings. The first began immediately with the visionary experience, whereas the second covered Joseph's experience from age six to fourteen when he received "the first visitation of angels." It is probable that, having already experienced negative response to his claim to having seen God and Christ, Joseph chose the more generic, less specific "personages" and "angels" for these accounts.

The 1838 account, like the one from 1832, was written as a result of a desire to record the particulars of the vision in a history of the Church commenced by Joseph and Sidney Rigdon. Variations of this account, which constitutes the current official version found in The Pearl of Great Price, are are found in "Times and Seasons" (15 March 1842) and constitute the current official version found in The Pearl of Great Price. As with the first account, this version appears to be directed to a general audience. A polished orator and preacher, Rigdon's influence

6. Richard Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling* (NY: Knopf, 2006), 39.
7. Harper, 41.

may account for the more elevated vocabulary, sophisticated rhetorical style, and narrative structure of the 1838 account.

The influence of the various scribes who assisted — either by writing or transcribing the oral dictation or speech — must also be considered. Undoubtedly, some were more reliable recorders than others. Any changes during the printing of the various accounts might also explain some minor differences as well as stylistic infelicities.

However, as important as all these factors are in accounting for variations in the texts, the most significant may be the nature of memory itself. The scientific understanding of memory is relatively modern, although attempts to understand and classify it go back at least as far as Aristotle, who was the first to posit that upon birth the human brain is a "tabula rasa" — a blank slate on which experience imprints memories. Over the intervening centuries, various hypotheses about what we remember and how we remember it didn't significantly advance the understanding of memory until the past two centuries when serious scientific research began to expand our understanding of this central human function.

Although we now know much more about the brain and memory than in the past, there is still much to learn and many erroneous assumptions to correct. As LDS scientist Jeffrey Bradshaw states:

> There are many popular, persistent myths about the way the brain works — for example the erroneous idea that we use only a small percentage of the brain or exaggerated notions about people's being right-brained or left-brained. Here, I will touch briefly on only two of these: 1) the myth that the human visual system works like a simple camera, and 2) the myth that human memory works like today's computer "memory." The first thing to know about such human sensory and cognitive processes is that they are active, not passive. Visual data is not simply taken in passively as in a simple camera that focuses the light from an entire scene through the lens and onto a sensor; memory is not laid down in the brain as simple traces of experience that, in principle, could be retrieved intact at a later time, like a series of bits in computer memory. Instead, the brain relies not only on complex feedback mechanisms that shape learning based on past experience but also on

> feedforward mechanisms that direct cognitive processes by anticipating future experience.[8]

Bradshaw's last point is worth considering in relation to Joseph Smith's versions of the First Vision. The skeptical and hostile responses he received when he first felt emboldened to tell his experience to people outside his family could certainly have "direct[ed his] cognitive processes by anticipating future experience."

Modern cognitive neuroscience has completely revised our understanding of memory. In such books as Daniel Schacter's *The Seven Sins of Memory*[9] and *Memory Distortion*[10] and William Hirstein's *Brain Function*,[11] studies reveal memory to be both more complex and more subtle than most people assume. Considering the nature of the First Vision in relation to what is currently understood about memory should cause even the most sophisticated and skeptical textual scholar to be cautious in making judgments about the consistency of the Prophet's various accounts of his experience.

Cognitive neuroscientists have found that, by and large, memories are constructed, not remembered — or at least are a combination of remembered facts and largely unconscious invention; at any given moment we are not likely to be able to distinguish between the two. Israel Rosenfeld (1988) argues that memory is always constructed and that the circumstances surrounding the event affect what and how we remember: "Recollection is a kind of perception, … *and every context will alter the nature of what is recalled*"[12] (emphasis added). These findings suggest that caution should be exercised in judging an account based on memories.

A particular type of memory — created from dramatic and emotionally powerful (and often disturbing) events — is referred to as a "flashbulb memory" in popular parlance. Cognitive neuroscientists have found these memories to be among our most unstable and

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8. "The Future Isn't What It Used to Be: Artificial Intelligence Meets Natural Stupidity," Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and David H. Bailey, eds., *Body, Brain, Mind, and Spirit. Science and Mormonism Series 2* (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation), in preparation.

9. Daniel Schacter, *The Seven Sins of Memory: How the Mind Forgets and Remembers* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001).

10. Daniel Schacter, ed., *Memory Distortion: How Minds, Brains and Societies Reconstruct the Past* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000).

11. William Hirstein, *Brain Function: Self-Deception and the Riddle of Confabulation* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005).

12. Israel Rosenfield,*The Invention of Memory: A New View of the Brain* (NY: Basic Books, 1988), 89.

unreliable remembrances. Scientific studies across a broad demographic demonstrate that participants in or witnesses to such events have the illusion that they are recalling them with fidelity and precision when in fact the opposite is more likely to be true. The more powerful or disturbing the event, the less reliable the memory and the more likely the recalled experience will morph into even more elaborate or contradictory retellings over time. This phenomenon is described in such books as Affect and Accuracy in Recall[13] and Trauma and Memory[14] as well as in scholarly articles in scientific journals.[15] The authors of these studies document the neurological processes that cause inadvertent false, inconsistent, and contradictory memories. Such misremembrance is surprising, for we tend to feel that we would recall such dramatic events with the most accuracy and consistency. Such "fictions of memory" regarding significant emotional events are not deliberate inventions but rather are influenced both by physiological processes occurring at the time of these events and the later more routine, reconstructive processes involved in recall and retelling.

While such memories are common to us all, we are seldom confronted with a question about the accuracy of our recollections, simply because it is generally assumed that our memories of such events are accurate. The dramatic re-telling likely disarms our normal skepticism, and we mistakenly assume that something so vivid is not likely to have been invented. There is also wide latitude for exaggeration or invention of narratives that serve the purpose of binding families, groups, and communities together.

For those who are prominent or in the public spotlight, however, such misremembrances can be embarrassing, precisely because we hold such figures to a higher standard of veracity. Additionally, in the twenty-first century such memories can be checked by audio, video, and other eyewitness accounts. Examples of distorted memories of highly unusual

13. Eugene Winograd and Ulrich Neisser, eds., *Affect and Accuracy in Recall: Studies of "Flashbulb" Memories* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

14. Austin Sarat, Nadav Davidovitch, and Michal Alberstein, eds., *Trauma & Memory: Reading, Healing, and Making Law* (Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

15. Examples include Patrick S. R. Davidson, et al., "Source Memory in the Real World: A Neuropsychological Study of Flashbulb Memory," *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Neuropsychology*, 27:7 (Oct., 2005), 915–929; Michelle L. Roehm, "An Exploration of Flashbulb Memory," *Journal of Consumer Psychology* 26:1 (June 2015), 1–1 6.

or dramatic events and experiences include President George W. Bush's misremembered account of hearing the news of the attacks on 9/11; Hillary Clinton's assertion that she came under sniper fire during a trip to Tuzla, Bosnia in 1996; Ronald Reagan's false remembrance that he was present at the liberation of Auschwitz; Mitt Romney's mistaken remembrance of seeing his father "march with Martin Luther King;" and, more recently, TV anchor Brian Williams' misremembrance of what happened during a dramatic US Army mission in Iraq 2003 that he accompanied as a reporter for NBC. Once such stories are told (and usually believed) by the teller and listener alike, unconsciously elaborating on them with successive tellings becomes almost inevitable.

This does not mean that any particular memory is inaccurate, conflated, or subject to unconscious transformation, nor does it mean that there are not those who deliberately invent, fabricate, or exaggerate autobiographic episodes. That such deliberate fabrication happens makes it easy to confuse memories of unusual or remarkable experiences with outright falsification. And there is no question that trusted public figures are, and should be, held to a higher standard, but we should be careful not to rush to judgment when retellings of memories prove not as accurate as one would prefer. Of course, we have no audio or video recordings of the First Vision, but even if we did, they likely would not allow us to reconstruct exactly what transpired that day in the Sacred Grove or instruct us how to communicate or relate what was experienced. In truth, our experience, like the Prophet's, would also be subject to the idiosyncrasies of memory, and our ability to describe it would be constrained by the limitations of language and meaning, as recent studies of eyewitness testimonies show.[16]

Joseph's varied remembrances of what transpired in the Sacred Grove appear to be the result of such a phenomenon: he was surprised, astonished, and likely even shocked by an overwhelmingly dramatic encounter with the forces of both darkness and light. In relation to the first, which was so threatening that he feared for his very soul ("I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction"), he

16. Laura Engelhardt, "Commentary on a Talk by Barbara Tversky and George Fisher, 'The Problem with Eyewitness Testimony,'" *Stanford Journal of Legal Studies,* 1:1, 25–30; John Bohannon, "How Reliable is Eyewitness Testimony? Scientists Weigh In," *Science* (Oct. 3, 2014); http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2014/10/how-reliable-eyewitness-testimony-scientists-weigh; Hal Arkowitz and Scott O. Lilienfeld, "Why Science Tells Us Not to Rely on Eyewitness Accounts," Scientific American (Jan. 1, 2010), https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/do-the-eyes-have-it/#.

recounts, "Thick darkness gathered around me and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction" (JS–H 1:15–16). "Thick" seems a particularly potent adjective, especially when one considers that its meanings include "marked by haze, fog, or mist" and "extremely intense."[17] At the point of being overwhelmed by this dark "power of some actual being from the unseen world," Joseph was delivered by an even more dramatic and powerful presence, one of light and glory. Whatever the nature of this experience, for a teenage boy, it must have been both wondrous and overwhelming.

Like others who have powerful emotional, physical, or spiritual experiences, it would not have been unusual for Joseph to consider if what he had seen was real. Note that following his theophany he says, "When I came to myself again, I found myself lying on my back, looking up into heaven" (emphasis added). This indicates an awareness of a physical and psychological break between his state after his experience and what transpired during it. Such an amazing, vivid experience may indeed have seemed dreamlike to him at times, both because it was unlike anything he had ever experienced and because there was almost instant — and nearly universal — skepticism that such experiences were possible or could be of divine origin.

It would have been natural for Joseph to be ambivalent about telling others what he had seen and heard, especially when he soon discovered that he was "hated and persecuted for saying that [he] had seen a vision." Such reactions likely caused him not only to be more cautious in sharing his experience but also more careful in the way he did so. Given the hostility and rejection he faced, it is also possible that he began to be uncertain as to the particulars of what he had seen and possibly at times even doubtful about the entire experience. The difference between vision and dream, as the scriptures make clear, is not always easy to distinguish. In the face of negative, skeptical, and accusatory responses, Joseph says he felt like Paul who, like himself, was persecuted for claiming a theophany, being "ridiculed and reviled" and accused of being "dishonest" and even "mad" [JS–H 1:24]). In light of such hostile reception, it would have taken considerable resolve for Joseph not to entertain some self-doubt.

One of the things we know about memories of dramatic and traumatic experiences is that over time they not only tend to become distorted, but they can also become conflated with other, especially similar experiences. Thus, it would not be surprising if Joseph's recollection in 1832 of what had happened in Palmyra eighteen years previously was

17. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/thick.

not influenced by the various appearances of Moroni close to the time of the First vision, just as his 1838 account may have been influenced by the visitation of other heavenly messengers, including John the Baptist, Moses, Elijah, and Peter, James, and John, among others. The most likely influences would have been his other theophanies. In his *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* article, "Latter-day Appearances of Jesus Christ," Joel A. Flake records:

> In 1832, Jesus Christ again appeared in a vision to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon.
>
> Both men saw and conversed with him (D&C 76:14) and also witnessed a vision of the kingdoms to which mankind will be assigned in the life hereafter. The Lord also appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in April 1836 in the Kirtland Temple shortly after its dedication and manifested his acceptance of this first latter-day temple (D&C 110:1–10).
>
> A revelation pertaining to the salvation of the dead was given to Joseph Smith in an earlier appearance of Jesus Christ and the Father in the Kirtland Temple on January 21, 1836: "The heavens were opened upon us, and I beheld … the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son" (D&C 137:1, 3). Joseph Smith said that visions were given to many in the meeting and that "some of them saw the face of the Savior" (HC 2:382).
>
> Joseph Smith also recorded other occasions when Church members beheld the Savior. On March 18, 1833, he wrote of a significant meeting of the School of the Prophets: "Many of the brethren saw a heavenly vision of the Savior, and concourses of angels, and many other things, of which each one has a record of what he saw" (HC 1:335). He wrote of a similar experience of Zebedee Coltrin (HC 2:387) and on another occasion reported that "the Savior made His appearance unto some" at a meeting the week after the dedication of the Kirtland Temple (HC 2:432).[18]

According to what cognitive neuroscientists say about the unconscious construction and reconstruction of highly emotional

18. Joel A. Flake, "Latter-day Appearances of Jesus Christ," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Vol. 2*, http://eom.byu.edu/index.php/Jesus_Christ#Jesus_Christ:_Latter-Day_Appearances_of_Jesus_Christ.

or dramatic memories, such an abundance of heavenly visions and visitations could indeed account for some of the discrepancies among the various versions of the First Vision.

As we begin to understand more of the ways in which the brain constructs memories, particularly of highly emotional or dramatic events, it seems plausible that any discrepancies in Joseph's varying accounts of the First Vision may have more to do with the vagaries of memory, as he recalled his initial powerful vision at different times over the course of his life, than that he deliberately falsified, invented or changed the particulars of that experience. Of course, we will never know for sure what explains the differences in the Prophet's various First Vision narratives, but the discovery of the unique way in which spectacular experiences are imprinted on our cognitive and limbic systems, along with the evidence from the texts themselves, provide a reasonable defense of the prophet's intention and integrity. Most importantly, it is consistent with what believers consider the necessarily dramatic inauguration of the Restoration, an event so important in the history of humankind that it required a visitation by the Father and the Son to a humble American farm boy.

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Overcoming Obstacles: Becoming a Great Missionary

Craig L. Foster

Review of Matthew Jensen, *Overcoming Obstacles: Becoming a Great Missionary*. S.l.: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2016. 44 pp. $5.50. Kindle edition, $1.50.

Abstract: *Matthew Jensen's book* Overcoming Obstacles: Becoming a Great Missionary *shows how missionaries can remove their "perfect missionary" mask and learn to truly care about their investigators and what is best for them. In the process, they will become great missionaries.*

Reading this short book brought back many mission memories. In fact, I cannot imagine a returned LDS missionary reading this and not having a flood of memories of his or her own mission. The book came about when the author, Matthew Jensen, was asked to give advice to a cousin just beginning his mission, and he recalled his own highs and lows as a missionary in the Denmark Copenhagen Mission.

Jensen recalled going from a high to a low as he and his companion went from teaching a number of investigators to "knocking and contacting all day, every day" (p. 8). After a couple of transfers to a couple of "dead" areas, he experienced a crash in which he did some serious soul-searching.

Jensen explains that almost all missionaries enter their missions with the goal of being the "perfect missionary." Jensen suggests that most missionaries envision a lot of baptisms as the mark of being a perfect missionary. I must admit, at this point I couldn't help but think of Elder Kestler and Elder Greene from *Saturday's Warrior* boastfully announcing,

> We are not the ordinary,
> Fearlessly extraordinary …
> Bearing swords of truth we plunder,
> slicing wicked men asunder,
> We are something of a wonder,
> In our Humble Way.[1]

I remember laughing at the silly false pride of these two missionaries when I saw the musical. Yet two years later, as I prepared to enter the MTC, I too had visions of grandeur of baptizing a lot of people and making my family proud. I am sure I went to the MTC with, as Jensen so nicely explained, "a 'perfect missionary' mask" (p. 9) in place.

Some missionaries are able to wear this mask their whole missions, but most experience a crash when the numbers game of investigators and teaching experiences does not add up to Wilford Woodruff-esque baptism numbers. The crash can be hard and painful, and many missionaries go through a period in which they question why they are even there.

Jensen explains that most missionaries will crash, but "every missionary can get through it if he or she focuses on the important things. There will be miracles and blessings which come from successfully enduring all types of trials, even this one" (p. 18).

Difficult choices will have to be made. Do they keep the mask on or do they seek to truly be guided by the spirit and make the necessary changes that will make them better missionaries? Depending on their decisions, most missionaries will fit into three categories: "numbers missionaries," "zombie missionaries," and "great missionaries."

Not surprisingly, great missionaries don't care about numbers as much as they do about people. They "care about their investigators and desire the best for them" (p. 23). A mission becomes more than just getting baptisms because the gospel of Jesus Christ is more than just a numbers game.

As I read this fascinating book, I thought of missionaries I knew decades ago in the Belgium Brussels Mission and couldn't help but picture them as I read the three main categories. Thinking of the ups and downs of my mission, I also asked myself where I was in this spectrum. I'm not sure, but I do know that as other missionaries in my mission and I faced the reality that we would never have the numbers of baptisms

1. Douglas Stewart and Lex de Azevedo, "Humble Way," *Saturday's Warrior* (Salt Lake City: Embryo Music, 1974).

as those in other missions, we went through the process described by Jensen. I do know that I went away from my mission with a love for the Belgian and French people, some of whom I still keep in touch with thirty-six years later.

An important part of the book is the comments from other missionaries, at least one of whom is still serving on his mission. These missionaries expressed their thoughts about crashing, changing, working, and loving the people they served. Their experiences and comments helped bring the book to life. I hope this is just the first of more editions in which Jensen will include more comments from other missionaries describing their lows and how reading this book and following its advice changed and enhanced their mission experiences. These comments and experiences will ultimately be even more helpful for readers.

I wish I had this book when I entered the MTC. The principles and insights are helpful for missionaries and for life. Matthew Jensen correctly states that if missionaries no longer have that mask when they come off their missions, "they have made lasting changes and really improved their true selves" (p. 24). That is what everyone should hope for.

I wholeheartedly recommend this book for new missionaries, old missionaries, and even regular members of the church.

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On Doubting Nephi's Break Between 1 and 2 Nephi: A Critique of Joseph Spencer's *An Other Testament: On typology*

Noel B. Reynolds

Abstract: *In 2012 Joseph Spencer published an analysis of 1st and 2nd Nephi that interprets a phrase in 1 Nephi 19:5 as implying the true break in Nephi's writings is not between the two scriptural books we now use but rather to be found at the end of 2 Nephi 5 and that the spiritual core (the "more sacred part") of the small plates is in 2 Nephi chapters 6–30. In this essay I have mobilized several arguments from the canons of literary interpretation and basics of the Hebrew language to demonstrate that this starting point for Spencer's interpretation of Nephi's writings is seriously flawed.*

[***Editor's Note:*** *This paper repeatedly refers to three passages in which Nephi distinguishes his large and small plates projects. For convenience, the version of those passages from the Critical Text Project are fully provided in Appendix 1.*]

I will begin by locating this essay in its larger context. A few contemporary Book of Mormon scholars are increasingly convinced that the internal structures of Nephi's writings provide important guidance for would-be interpreters of his teachings. Joseph Spencer and I are two who are working on this issue currently. While the following essay may seem like a hard-hitting critique of his work, readers need to know that I have great respect both for his abilities and his work and that neither of us claims to have final answers on these matters. We both nourish the hope that, as we continue both private and public dialogue, we may eventually come to shared understandings that will enable us to appreciate Nephi's great work more fully. And we would both welcome more participants in this quest!

It is noteworthy that the opening two books in the Book of Mormon are written by the same author and were labeled by him *The Book of Nephi, his reign and ministry* and *The Book of Nephi* respectively, though subsequent editions have titled them *The First Book of Nephi* and *The Second Book of Nephi* to enable clear reference.[1] In the background we know that Nephi's first great writing project, his large plates, probably contained these same materials interspersed with a detailed account of the people of Lehi and their proceedings. But we have access today only to this more focused second project.

What should attract our attention is the unique division of Nephi's writings on the small plates, or what he labels "the ministry and the prophecies, the more plain and precious parts of them," or "the more sacred things,"[2] into two books. The oddness of this break is further accentuated by the fact that the first book ends in a meeting in which Nephi is testifying of Christ and his gospel to his brothers and explicitly mentions that his father Lehi has also testified to these things (1 Nephi 22:31), and then the second book begins with an apparent continuation of the same meeting: "And now it came to pass that after I Nephi had made an end of teaching my brethren, our father Lehi also spake many things unto them" (2 Nephi 1:1). The two books are immediately tied together by the closing reference to Nephi and Lehi testifying and teaching and by the opening reference to their joint teaching of Nephi's brethren. There is no gap in time suggested, nor is there any change of topic or other shift in the narration. So why does Nephi need to start a new book at this point? Nephi does not point to any external circumstances or internal purposes that would explain the division.

For readers who have been sensitized to the insights of literary or rhetorical analysis in the Bible or other ancient literatures, any unexplained break of such undeniable magnitude forces reflection on the author's reasons, which may most likely be found in separate purposes, messages, or rhetorical structures in the two books. In other writings I have argued for a single rhetorical structure in 1 Nephi, built around two parallel chiasms[3] and more recently for a different structure in 2 Nephi in which twelve sequential inclusios are organized chiastically

1. See the documentation and explanations for these changes in Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon*, Part One, 42–43 and 470–471. Skousen makes it clear that this division and the titles were in the original text.

2. See 1 Nephi 19:3, 5.

3. "Nephi's Outline," *BYU Studies,* 1980, v. 20:2, 1–18.

around a central inclusio, which is itself another chiasm.[4] 1 Nephi presents a carefully arranged selection of six stories from the Lehite exodus experience to support Nephi's announced thesis: "I Nephi will shew unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord is over all them whom he hath chosen because of their faith to make them mighty, even unto the power of deliverance" (1 Nephi 1:20b).[5] 1 Nephi thus presents itself as a detailed demonstration that the Lord has kept the promise made to Lehi that if he and his family would obey the Lord, they would be led to a promised land. 2 Nephi shifts into a higher gear theologically, beginning with Lehi's account of the plan of salvation, centered on the testimonies of Christ from those prophets who have seen him, and climaxing with what I have found to be the most complete and authoritative presentation of the doctrine or gospel of Christ to be found in any scripture.[6] These findings would seem to provide emphatic support for the assumption that Nephi had strong rhetorical reasons for dividing his writings on the small plates into two books as he did.

But not all scholars agree with this approach. Thirty years ago, Fred Axelgard argued that the true division in Nephi's writings comes between chapters 5 and 6 of 2 Nephi.[7] And more recently Joseph Spencer has adopted Axelgard's conclusion and arguments to provide grounding for his interpretation of 2 Nephi as an esoteric writing.[8] Axelgard's argument is straightforward. He sees a clear division between the first 27 chapters featuring historical content (1 Nephi 1–2 Nephi 5), and the last 28 chapters featuring spiritual content. "Everything Nephi has to offer in the way of historical information is presented between 1 Nephi 1 and 2 Nephi 5. … These passages thus give two main purposes for

4. "Chiastic Structuring of Large Texts: Second Nephi as a Case Study." A prepublication version is available online at http://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/facpub/1679/.

5. All quotations from the text of the Book of Mormon, including punctuation, are taken from the Yale critical edition. See Royal Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, Yale University Press, 2009.

6. See, "The Gospel According to Nephi," *Religious Educator*, vol. 16, No. 2 (2015), 51–75.

7. Frederick W. Axelgard, "1 and 2 Nephi: An Inspiring Whole," *Brigham Young University Studies*, vol 26:4 (Fall, 1986), 53–65.

8. Joseph M. Spencer, *An Other Testament: On Typology*, Salt Press, 2012, esp. ch. 2. While in both private correspondence and in the introduction to the 2016 second edition there are clear indications that Spencer sees his position evolving, the published text remains unchanged. With that caveat, this critique will have to focus on the 2012 version as reprinted in 2016.

Nephi's record: one historical, to inform his descendants of their Israelite heritage; and one spiritual, to give them the gospel of Jesus Christ."[9] As will be discussed below, Spencer accepts this Axelgard proposal, and refines it by dividing these two sections again, thereby restricting the spiritual core of Nephi's writings to 2 Nephi 6–30.

While I will not devote a lot of space to this claim in this essay, I want to make it clear that I find it to be both unclear and seriously mistaken. There is a lot more of a story maintained through the first 27 chapters. But 16 of those chapters also contain almost all the original revelations to Nephi and Lehi, some of their doctrinal explanations and teachings, and two of the Isaiah chapters. In an unpublished working paper, I show the principal two prophecies rehearsed by Jacob, Isaiah, and Nephi in 2 Nephi 6–30 are featured because of the revelations given to Lehi and Nephi in earlier chapters and can be fully appreciated only in the Nephite context in light of those earlier and more detailed revelations.[10] Rather than taking the reader to new heights of spiritual insight, 2 Nephi 6–30 provides the required multiple witnesses to the same prophecies. As Nephi explains at the very center of 2 Nephi, "Wherefore by the words of three, God hath said, I will establish my word. Nevertheless God sendeth more witnesses, and he proveth all his words" (2 Nephi 11:3).

Axelgard then focuses on 1 Nephi 19:5 as "the decisive evidence for breaking Nephi's record into two parts."[11] It will be helpful to include this passage here, as both Axelgard and Spencer place enormous interpretive weight on a few English words it contains (italics identify the key terms used in their interpretation):

> And an account of my making these plates shall be given hereafter. *And then behold*, I proceed according to that which I have spoken; and this I do that the *more sacred things* may be kept for the knowledge of my people. (1 Nephi 19:5)

The traditional reading of this verse has been that Nephi is referring in the first sentence to the third "account" he will give "hereafter" in 2 Nephi 5:28–34. And the second sentence has been understood simply to restate Nephi's purpose in the small plates and the fact that after this four-verse aside to readers, he is returning to what he was writing about — all of which is part of this record that features the "sacred" or "the

9. Axelgard, 54–55.

10. See the online working paper "Understanding the Abrahamic Covenant through the Book of Mormon" at http://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/.

11. Axelgard, 55.

more sacred things." But both Axelgard and Spencer reject that reading and emphasize the English word *then* to portray that future account "as a threshold [Nephi] will cross [in his writing of the small plates], before he conveys 'more sacred things.'"[12] By assigning such a strong temporal meaning to "and *then* behold," these authors hope to justify their proposed new distinction between the "sacred things" covered in Nephi's writings up through 2 Nephi 5 and the "more sacred things" covered in the remaining chapters of 2 Nephi.

Spencer narrows the "more sacred things" even further by dividing off Nephi's closing three chapters (2 Nephi 31–33) and characterizing them as "a brief conclusion," as "less sacred material," and as "summary reflections on baptism."[13] Spencer then leverages his adaptation of the Axelgard thesis 1) to interpret everything after 1 Nephi 18 as a late change of writing plan for Nephi, 2) to focus on 2 Nephi 6–30 as "the core of Nephi's writings," and 3) to connect a perceived fourfold division of Nephi's writings with a fourfold pattern he discerns in the prophet's life and with the fourfold pattern Spencer postulates in the plan of redemption as taught in the Book of Mormon.[14]

These authors offer their interpretations as a "close reading" of 1 and 2 Nephi. But in the critique that follows I will argue that they have ignored or violated a number of generally accepted norms for careful reading of ancient texts. In Axelgard's case, the whole exercise ironically brings him to a general conclusion that I would strongly support but for different reasons than those he advances. Nephi's writings do constitute an inspiring whole — contrary to the prevailing academic opinion in the 1980s that 2 Nephi was a random collection of leftovers. Spencer, however, uses Axelgard's approach to support what I see as a seriously flawed interpretation of Nephi's writings that both misinterprets and undervalues what Nephi considered to be his most sacred teaching.

I will begin my analysis by listing some commonsense guidelines for interpreting ancient texts that I find to be most relevant in this discussion. While there are many norms that scholars generally follow in the interpretation of ancient texts, I only advance here three that I have found to be universally recognized in my research and teaching and that

12. Ibid.

13. Spencer, 36, 39, and 42.

14. Space will not permit a reasonable description or critique of the pattern Spencer outlines. Suffice it to say, the four stages he sees in Nephi's small plates and in the plan of salvation as taught in the Book of Mormon are creation (1 Nephi 1–18), fall (1 Nephi 19–2 Nephi 5), atonement (2 Nephi 6–30), and veil (2 Nephi 31–33).

would seem to require special explanation by an interpreter that did not find them to be applicable to the writings of Nephi:

1. **The author knows best.** The reader must allow the author to guide his interpretation through explicit statements, culturally recognized rhetorical devices, and textual organization. The reader should not twist the text to accommodate philosophical, doctrinal, or historical theses or insights the reader has brought to the exercise.
2. **Respect the original language.** For most ancient texts we have access to the original language version, which must be given full priority over translations in interpretations. Because we do not have the original language version of Nephi's writings, we should generally assume that he was writing in Hebrew and interpret recognizable hebraisms as they would have been interpreted by late seventh-century BCE writers of Hebrew texts.[15]
3. **Respect the plain meanings first.** Much ancient writing employed irony or esoteric strategies to convey a separate and truer message to its more perceptive readers, over the heads of ordinary readers. Plato and others developed these techniques when writing in politically dangerous environments. In the absence of such an environment, readers should make every effort to fit their interpretations to the plain meanings of the text. And reversions to esoteric or ironic readings must be explained with adequate supporting evidence from the text. Coincidence with the interpreter's own theses or philosophical insights would not be a convincing reason.
4. **Respect the author's categories.** Categories or concepts used in modern discourse should not be substituted for those advanced and explained by the ancient author. Of course, categories and concepts of modern discourse may be used to talk about the ancient text without anachronism, but should not be substituted for those used in the text when interpreting it.

15. While I agree with most scholars that Nephi was most likely writing the small plates in Hebrew, there are other possibilities. See the discussion in Brian D. Stubbs, "Book of Mormon Language," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism,* 1:179–181.

In the following section of this paper, I will discuss some of Axelgard and Spencer's violations of these widely accepted norms for the interpretation of ancient texts such as the Book of Mormon.

Violating the Hermeneutical Rules

The most obvious and probably most egregious offense introduced by Axelgard and followed by Spencer is their disregard for Nephi's division of his writing into two books. While they do offer an argument for seeing another division between 2 Nephi 5 and 6, neither of these writers even pauses to recognize the clear facts of Nephi's two-book division and the enormous interpretive burden they have assumed in disregarding the evident intention of the author and asserting a different one as his true intention. There may be a number of places in the modern English edition of the Book of Mormon where we could disagree quite convincingly with Orson Pratt's division of the text into chapters and verses. But not even Pratt was so bold as to challenge the book divisions left to us by the original authors such as Nephi or Mormon. Neither Axelgard nor Spencer even slows down to acknowledge the improbability of an intelligent author like Nephi making a mistake of this magnitude in the way he has explicitly organized his text. Such a dramatic and *prima facie* improbability and violation of rule #1 requires special comment and explanation. By failing to recognize and address that issue directly, Axelgard and Spencer immediately provoke a suspicion that they are more interested in developing and promoting their own insights and are not willing to let the author of the text guide readers to his meaning with his organization.

Spencer pairs Nephi's second and third explanations for the two sets of plates (1 Nephi 19:1–5 and 2 Nephi 5:28–34) for this analysis. But he fails to mention the first time Nephi offers this explanation in 1 Nephi 9:2–4, which, incidentally, is paired with the second explanation in the parallel two-part structure of 1 Nephi.[16] Nor is there anything special about the third explanation, inasmuch as we learn nothing new and can in fact get the full picture on the distinction between the two records from the first two explanations. The third one does explain the chronological relationship between the two projects — the earlier and continuing large-plates Nephite history and the immediate and limited small-plates account of the ministries of the first Nephite prophets. See Appendix I.

16. "Nephi's Outline," 4.

Whether the ambiguous pronoun references in the opening verses of 1 Nephi 19 are an artifact of modern translation or of the original composition, they do open the door for Axelgard's 1986 interpretation. Whatever the cause, we are forced to go beyond Nephi's recurring phrase "these plates," to a contextual determination of when he is referring to the predominant "large plates" project, which would be handed down over all generations of Nephite leaders to become the primary resource for Mormon's abridgment, and the secondary "small plates" project, which Nephi passed on to his younger brother Jacob and his descendants. None of these ever matched Nephi's effort, and the small-plates project died out in the next generation.

There is no problem keeping up with Nephi's references as he switches back and forth between the two projects in the first three verses. The first verse provides the heretofore missing background information that Nephi had at some early point received a commandment from the Lord to write "the record of my people," which we now learn contains "the record of my father and also our journeyings in the wilderness and the prophecies of my father" and "many of mine own prophecies." That is Nephi's descriptions of the large plates or what Nephi twice labels the "first plates" (1 Nephi 19:2). These were the only plates Nephi produced during the first thirty years following their flight from Jerusalem. But after thirty years, the Lord said to Nephi, "Make other plates" to contain things "which are good in my sight for the profit of thy people" (2 Nephi 5:30). And so he made the small plates to include "that which is pleasing unto God." So if his people are "pleased with the things of God," they will be pleased with what he has written on the small plates. But if they desire to know "the history of my people, they must search mine other plates" (2 Nephi 5:33). Nephi's reference to the small plates in the aside beginning 1 Nephi 19:1–5 provides additional clarification, for Nephi reports having received a specific commandment "that the ministry and the prophecies — the more plain and precious parts of them — should be written upon these [the small] plates," and that they "should be kept for the instruction of my people" as well as "for other wise purposes … known unto the Lord" (1 Nephi 19:3). In these passages, Nephi clearly states his perspective that his historical writings are in the large plates and that the small plates contain things "pleasing unto God" (2 Nephi 5:32–3 3).

Referring again back to the large plates ("the other plates"), Nephi explains that that record "gives a greater account of the wars and contentions and destructions of my people." He has kept that larger

record and has commanded his people to do the same "that *these plates* should be handed down from one generation to another or from one prophet to another until further commandments of the Lord" (1 Nephi 19:4). It is at this point that pronoun references seem to slip a bit as Nephi lets us know that in writing now on the small plates he plans later on to provide "an account of my making *these plates* … that *the more sacred things* may be kept for the knowledge of my people" (1 Nephi 19:5). The phrase "these plates" in verse four refers properly back to the large plates described in the preceding sentence, where they were termed "the other plates," to distinguish them from the small plates described in the previous verse. But now, in verse 5, Nephi returns to the project in hand — his writing on the small plates and calls them "these plates." Axelgard and Spencer have missed this shift in reference and have interpreted the end of verse four to be referring, like verse 5, to the small plates.

This error in reference interpretation facilitates the next and more serious error, which brings us to rule #2, respecting the original language. Following Axelgard, Spencer places enormous interpretive weight on the English phrase *and then behold* that begins the second sentence of verse 5. The *then* is interpreted to be saying that Nephi *will proceed* to a recording of "the more sacred things" only after he gives his account of making the small plates in 2 Nephi 5.[17] This interpretation was designed to support their claim that Nephi's writings really divide at that point between the sacred and the more sacred — a curious distinction itself, it must be noted. They might have questioned their interpretation first by noticing that Nephi does not use the future tense here but instead says, "behold I *proceed* according to that which I have spoken … that the more sacred things may be kept for the knowledge of my people" (1 Nephi 19:5). And just in case we may have inferred the wrong thing, he immediately clarifies, "I do not write any thing upon plates save it be that I think it be sacred" (1 Nephi 19:6) — apparently squashing any erroneous attribution to him of a distinction between *sacred* and *more sacred*. And it should also be clear that "the more sacred things" he mentions here refer to the contents of the small plates generally, not to some future section. Just as in verse 3 he says the small plates generally contain "the more plain and precious parts" of the ministry and prophecies that should "be kept *for the instruction of my people*," here in verse 5 he proceeds to write "that the more sacred things may be kept *for the knowledge of my people*" (1 Nephi 19:3, 5). The standard interpretation of this passage would seem to be correct. The phrases "sacred things," "more sacred things," and

17. Spencer, 34.

"more plain and precious parts" all refer generally to the contents of the small plates and not to some distinct section within Nephi's writings in the small plates. So what seems to have happened is simply this: Axelgard and Spencer have borrowed the distinction Nephi developed to explain the different foci of his large and small plates projects and have tried to use that distinction to divide the small plates into two sections between 2 Nephi 5 and 6. This would seem on its face to be a serious error of interpretation — and not convincing evidence for rejecting Nephi's division of his writing into two books.

But now we can get back to the huge interpretive weight these authors have placed on Nephi's phrase *and then behold*. For their thesis to have plausibility, this phrase must denote temporal sequence, as it can do in English. But, we should also notice, this is a stock biblical phrase, and we would be right to suspect that it has a predictable Hebrew term behind it. Even in English, the phrasing does not require an interpretation of time sequence. But if we look at the available options for an underlying Hebrew original, we discover that in the biblical occurrences there is no Hebrew word for *then*, but only for *behold*, (*hinneh*) or *and behold* (*we-hinneh*). While there may be other less obvious linguistic possibilities, the authors would need to make that case. There are only three places (twice in Jeremiah 14:18 and once in Daniel 8:15) where the *KJV* translators chose to add *then* into the English translation of this Hebrew phrase, and eight completely different passages where it is inserted by the New American Standard Bible translators (Genesis 15:4, 41:3, 41:6, Numbers 25:6, Judges 19:16, 19:27, Jeremiah 38:22, Ezekiel 9:11).

There is obviously a lot of translator discretion here, and the reason is that the underlying Hebrew for all these and for hundreds of other Bible passages is simply the Hebrew conjunction *we* (and/but) followed by the particle *hinneh* and usually translated as *behold*. One can review all the occurrences of *behold* in the principal translations of the Hebrew Bible, and there is never a separate Hebrew word there to provide the meaning of *then* as indicative of a time sequence, even though English translators sometimes feel a need to include *then* as part of the translation.[18] Clearly, if Hebrew is the ancient language substrate, we should not put significant interpretive weight on the English word *then* in 1 Nephi 19:5. But that is the principal assumption of the Axelgard interpretation. The straightforward sense of the sentence in that case would be to interpret "and then behold, I proceed according to that which I have spoken," as,

18. See this laid out in detail at http://biblehub.com/hebrew/hinneh_2009.htm and http://biblehub.com/hebrew/vehinneh_2009.htm.

having acknowledged that there will be a future expanded explication of the small plates, and that now Nephi is returning us to what he has just said about his distinctions between the large and small plates. And because he clarifies that both are sacred (v.6), we would naturally conclude that the reference to the "more sacred" is to the small plates, which we are reading.

The same Hebrew phrase *we-hinneh* is usually translated as "and behold," "and now behold," or as "and then behold" throughout the Hebrew bible, with different translators choosing different English options at different points of the text. The Book of Mormon English translation also uses all three of these options, but uses *and then behold* only twice. *And behold* is used 315 times, and *and now behold* is used 111 times. The second occurrence of *and then behold* in 3 Nephi 8:19 is instructive. *For behold* and *and then behold* clearly are used as a pair rhetorically to set off a parenthetical comment that does not fit in the list of catastrophic consequences either substantively or grammatically. *For behold* begins the side comment, and *and then behold* signals its end and transition back to the main account. It should also be noticed that the modern insertion of dashes as punctuation at exactly those points in effect duplicates the function of the two *behold* phrases:

> And it came to pass that when the thunderings and the lightnings and the storm and the tempest and the quakings of the earth did cease —
>
> > *for behold,* they did last for about the space of three hours; and it was said by some that the time was greater; nevertheless all these great and terrible things were done in about the space of three hours —
>
> *and then behold*, there was darkness upon the face of the land.

Hebrew linguists explain that this is standard usage of *hinneh,* to signal a change in perspective. For example, Old Testament scholar Adele Berlin has demonstrated in some detail why *hinneh* and *we-hinneh* are atemporal. She explains that *hinneh* and *we-hinneh* are used primarily to signal a change of perspective for the narrator, a character in the narration, or the reader.[19] That explanation would seem to fit 1 Nephi 19:5 well where *and then behold* functions to signal Nephi's transition from his account of the divine commands to make and distinguish these two

19. See Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative,* "The uses of the word *hinneh*," 91–95.

records back to what he is doing at the moment — engraving the second record, the small plates. Given the evidence above, a stronger case can be made that this phrase indicates a shift in authorial perspective and not a time lapse.

Whereas in vs. 1–5a Nephi had interrupted his narrative to provide this background explanation of the origins and purposes of the dual records as an aside to his readers, in 5b he returns to the point at which he drifted into this aside — perfectly indicated by *we-hinneh*. Assuming *we-hinneh* as the substrate, an alternate translation following Berlin's teaching could be: "And an account of my making these plates shall be given hereafter; but *at this point* I proceed according to that which I have spoken, and this I do that the more sacred things may be kept for the knowledge of my people." Not only does this interpretation of 1 Nephi 19:1–5 flow more naturally from the text as it endorses the traditional reading, it also avoids the awkwardness of attributing to Nephi a change of plans at this point in the narrative. I see Nephi as far too intelligent and thoughtful a writer to be caught midstream with the necessity of making a major change of plan. And even if that had happened to him, he would almost certainly have provided a more straightforward explanation. His own account tells us that he had been working on the large plates for almost thirty years before receiving the commandment to make a second record. And he had been planning and then engraving that second record for ten years by the time he completed the first 27 chapters.[20]

Spencer's motivation for adopting that key part of the Axelgard thesis in the first place was that it gave him a way to focus on 2 Nephi 6–30 and characterize these chapters as the spiritual core of all of Nephi's writings. But in doing so, he has discounted all of 1 Nephi and the final three chapters of 2 Nephi as less sacred. Based on my own previous and ongoing studies of Nephi's writings, this seems to be an error that fundamentally misses Nephi's principal theses. It ignores Nephi's basic thesis announced in the opening chapter:

> I Nephi will shew unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord is over all them whom he hath chosen because of their faith to make them mighty, even unto the power of deliverance. (1 Nephi 1:20b)

1 Nephi is a tightly composed and inter-related selection of the experiences of Lehi's people designed to prove that thesis over and over

20. Compare 2 Nephi 5:30 and 34.

again. Nephi uses both historical episodes and numerous revelations, including the great vision given to both Lehi and Nephi, to make his case — using all 22 chapters in a carefully designed rhetorical structure that includes all the text.[21] 2 Nephi has its own carefully designed rhetorical structure — providing us with the most plausible and convincing explanation possible for the problem explained in the opening paragraph of this paper — the division by Nephi of his writings into two separate books at a juncture where there is no obvious break in the story.[22]

Through this surprising break in the story, Nephi can alert the reader without verbal explanations, to the large rhetorical structures that end and then begin at that point in the text. 2 Nephi begins with Lehi's explanation of the plan of salvation, centers on Nephi's assemblage of proofs for the prophesied ministry and atonement of Jesus Christ, and concludes in chapters Spencer has categorized as less sacred, with what Nephi presents as the spiritual climax of all his writings, the delayed account of how the Father and the Son had personally team-taught him the gospel of Jesus Christ, which constitutes the only way "whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God" (2 Nephi 31:21). By separating off the final three chapters as less sacred material to balance his assessment of 1 Nephi, Spencer has missed Nephi's carefully positioned *inclusios* that define and bind together the first and second parts of Nephi's final sermon, constituting most of the seven chapters of 2 Nephi 25–31 as a single literary unit.[23]

It should also be noted that the Axelgard/Spencer proposal to divide Nephi's writings in a different way than the author's explicit organization would indicate and Spencer's division of the text into more and less sacred sections both implicitly suggest that Nephi is an esoteric writer who is propounding a more serious message which may only be discovered by his most careful readers. As mentioned earlier, esotericism is not rare in ancient texts and usually signals the writer's fear for his personal welfare

21. See Reynolds, "Nephi's Outline." While I do see a need to update that 1980 essay in light of the dramatic advances in the field of Hebrew rhetoric over the last four decades, the basic outline proposed there still stands.

22. See Reynolds, "Chiastic Structuring of Large Texts: Second Nephi as a Case Study," in press at *Interpreter*. The pre-publication working paper is available meanwhile at http://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2699&context=facpub

23. This analysis of the rhetorical limits of the sermon and the inclusios that define them is fully explained in Reynolds, "The Gospel According to Nephi," 56–59. The content and organization of the sermon is analyzed in the same paper.

under an oppressive political or religious regime.[24] It can also signal the writer's concern for naive readers or doctrinal neophytes who are not ready for the full message he wants to share with some.[25]

But we would not expect Nephi to be writing a different message to a select few of his more perceptive readers. Again and again he stresses that his message is for all his descendants, for all Israel, and for all the Gentiles. And because he wants everyone to understand him, he repeatedly emphasizes his determination to speak with "plainness;" he "glor[ies] in plainness" (2 Nephi 33:6).[26] Any analysis that implies Nephi is really an esoteric writer would seem to contradict his clearly and repeatedly stated intentions and preferences. And to be credible, it would need to be grounded in a detailed supporting rhetorical analysis and assemblage of passages with evident double meanings. Any interpretation of Nephi that needs to resort to esotericism will more likely be drawing on the interpreter's own theses and philosophical positions than on teachings and clues deliberately embedded in the text by Nephi himself.

Conclusions

The primary goal of scholarly interpretation of ancient scripture is to improve our understanding of the messages intended by their authors. This is never easy, as we have to cope with cultural and linguistic barriers and with the centuries of change in human thinking and world views. Equally challenging is the temptation to read our own modern categories and concepts and even understandings of the gospel into ancient writing. I began this paper by noting some commonsense rules that guide the efforts of scholars of ancient literatures including 1) letting the author guide you to his meaning, 2) respecting the original language, 3) giving priority to the plain meaning of the text, and 4) respecting the author's categories as he or she would have understood them. The inevitable uncertainties of these endeavors are best reduced by paying close attention to the author's statements of purpose, watching for rhetorical devices and structures that were known to the author's contemporaries, and looking for an interpretation that is consistent with the rest of the author's writings.

24. This observation is famously developed in Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, Free Press, 1952.

25. See, *e.g.*, Hebrews 5:12–14 and 1 Corinthians 3:2.

26. See also 1 Nephi 13:26, 32, 34, 40, 14:23, 19:3, 2 Nephi 1:26, 9:47, 25:4, 7, 20, 28, 26:33, 31:2–3; and 32:7.

In this paper I have argued that Fred Axelgard (1986) and Joseph Spencer (2012, 2016) have grounded their analyses of 1 and 2 Nephi on a flawed interpretation of 1 Nephi 19:4–5 in which they interpret the phrase *and then behold* to refer to a future stage in the writing of the small plates which will begin to record "the more sacred (spiritual) things," as contrasted with the less sacred historical things in the rest of 1 and 2 Nephi. I have advanced the following evidences and arguments to support this judgment:

1. Neither of these authors seems to recognize the enormous burden of proof they assume when they discount Nephi's explicit division of his work into two books. They do not explore or assess the author's reasoning for this division but simply announce their own analysis in terms of a separation and sequence of historical information followed by spiritual things, a categorization that does not really fit well, especially for many of their "historical" chapters that are actually filled with key revelations. Their section of "more sacred things" (2 Nephi 6–30) does not include Lehi's first theophany and visions (1 Nephi 1), his tree of life vision (1 Nephi 8), Lehi's prophecies of the Messiah (1 Nephi 11), the great vision given to Nephi (1 Nephi 11–14), Lehi's unique and formative explanation of the plan of salvation (2 Nephi 2), nor the direct and personal teaching of the gospel to Nephi by the Father and the Son in 2 Nephi 31 — one of the most sacred passages in all scripture and, in my opinion, the most authoritative, complete, and detailed explanation of the gospel that we have anywhere.
2. These authors abandon the traditional interpretation of Nephi's explanation of the origins and roles of the two sets of plates by interpreting the distinctions Nephi makes between his large and small plates to be a distinction between two parts of the small plates. They reject the usual understanding that the last sentence of verse four reports Nephi's command to his successors that the first or large plates — *these plates* — be kept and handed down from one generation to another and that when Nephi goes on in verse five to talk about a future account of the making of "these plates," he has switched back to talking about the

small plates on which he is currently engraving an account.

Then comes the crux of the Axelgard and Spencer thesis, the interpretation of *and then behold* in 1 Nephi 19:5 to mean that Nephi will not record "more sacred things" until after he completes another future explanation of the small plates. It is probably fair to say the full weight of the Axelgard/Spencer claim that the true division of Nephi's writings comes at the end of 2 Nephi 5 and not where Nephi himself divided it into two books, rests on their insistence on interpreting *then* to have a strong meaning in terms of time sequences. But as I have shown, Bible translators dealing with the Hebrew *we-hinneh,* that most likely lies behind our English *and then behold,* know that it denotes no such time indicators but indicates only a shift in the writer's point of view — in this case as Nephi shifts from talking about the distinction between the two sets of plates back to his current project of writing on the small plates. And this is all we are given to justify their rejection of the author's quite obviously intentional division of his writing at an earlier point in the text.

3. The claim that Nephi actually intended a different division and structure of his writings than what he stamped on the surface implicitly interprets Nephi to be an esoteric writer who is sending his true message to especially perceptive readers and over the heads of most readers. While esoteric writing is common in the ancient world in times of religious or political persecution, that is not Nephi's world. And such a suggestion clearly contradicts Nephi's repeated commitment to plainness in writing.

Each of these authors has advanced a variety of proposed interpretive insights and conclusions about Nephi's writings that depend on a novel interpretation of 1 Nephi 19:5. In so doing they took on an enormous burden of proof by rejecting the surface organization provided by Nephi. But their basic defense turns out to depend on a particular meaning of an English word (*then*), a word which likely does not have a referent in the Hebrew original that could bear the meaning they want it to have. On the analysis presented here and to the extent that other theses advanced in *An Other Testament* are derived from the Axelgard/Spencer division

of Nephi's writings between chapters 5 and 6 of 2 Nephi, there may be a need for reassessment of those positions as well.

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Appendix I

Three Texts from the Yale edition:

1 Nephi 9:2–4

2 And now as I have spoken concerning these plates, behold, they are not the plates upon which I make a full account of the history of my people ….

3 Nevertheless I have received a commandment of the Lord that I should make these plates for the special purpose that there should be an account engraven of the ministry of my people.

4 And upon the other plates should be engraven an account of the reigns of the kings and the wars and contentions of my people. Wherefore these plates are for the more part of the ministry, and the other plates are for the more part of the reigns of the kings and the wars and contentions of my people.

1 Nephi 19:1–5

1 And it came to pass that the Lord commanded me, wherefore I did make plates of ore that I might engraven upon them the record of my people. And upon the plates which I made I did engraven the record of my father and also our journeyings in the wilderness and the prophecies of my father. And also many of mine own prophecies have I engraven upon them.

2 And I knew not at that time which I made them that I should be commanded of the Lord to make these plates. Wherefore the record of my father and the genealogy of his forefathers and the more part of all our proceedings in the wilderness are engraven upon those first plates of

which I have spoken. Wherefore the things which transpired before that I made these plates are of a truth more particularly made mention upon the first plates.

3 And after that I made these plates by way of commandment, I Nephi received a commandment that the ministry and the prophecies — the more plain and precious parts of them — should be written upon these plates, and that the things which were written should be kept for the instruction of my people, which should possess the land, and also for other wise purposes, which purposes are known unto the Lord.

4 Wherefore I Nephi did make a record upon the other plates, which gives an account or which gives a greater account of the wars and contentions and destructions of my people. And now this have I done and commanded my people that they should do after that I was gone and that these plates should be handed down from one generation to another or from one prophet to another until further commandments of the Lord.

5 And an account of my making these plates shall be given hereafter. And then behold, I proceed according to that which I have spoken; and this I do that the more sacred things may be kept for the knowledge of my people.

6 Nevertheless I do not write any thing upon plates save it be that I think it be sacred.

2 Nephi 5:28–34

28 And thirty years had passed away from the time we left Jerusalem.

29 And I Nephi had kept the records upon my plates which I had made of my people thus far.

30 And it came to pass that the Lord God said unto me: Make other plates; and thou shalt engraven many things upon them which are good in my sight for the profit of my people.

31 Wherefore I Nephi, to be obedient to the commandments of the Lord, went and made these plates upon which I have engraven these things.

32 And I engravened that which is pleasing unto God. And if my people be pleased with the things of God, they be pleased with mine engravings which are upon these plates.

33 And if my people desire to know the more particular part of the history of my people, they must search mine other plates.

34 And it sufficeth me to say that forty years had passed away….

Exploring Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan Languages

John S. Robertson

Review of Brian D. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan,* Provo, UT: Grover Publications, 2015. 436 pp. $30.

Some thirty-plus years ago, toward the beginning of my career as professor of linguistics at BYU, a young Brian Stubbs knocked at my office door to make what was, in my opinion, a wild claim — that he had found a significant number of cognates[1] that would link a New World language family (Uto-Aztecan) to an Old World language family (pre-exilic Hebrew[2] and later others).

My masters and PhD training made me suspicious of Stubbs's claim because the scholarly consensus was and is that among the thousands of languages spoken in the New World prior to European contact, there was nothing beyond speculation that could tie a New World language to an Old World language — except Eskimo, which is spoken on both sides of the Bering Strait, and likely Athabaskan, centered in Alaska and Canada. The idea of any genetic relationship between Near Eastern languages and Uto-Aztecan seemed out of the question. Nonetheless I listened, a bit intrigued with the data he showed me. I suggested that he apply to the research center FARMS for a summer grant to pursue his interests.

A lifetime later, Brian has established himself as one of the leading Uto-Aztecan comparatists, owing to the many papers he has read at conferences and his many publications in journals the likes of *International Journal of American Linguistics* — but most especially to his massive 411-page book, *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary.*[3] It is an imposing work, reviewed by Kenneth C. Hill:

"Part III (pp. 47–420) is the core of the work, the comparative vocabulary. Stubbs numbers the sets 1–2703, but in reality there are many more than 2,703 sets because many subsets are given with numbers like 7a, 7b, 7c, for vocabulary that may or may not be groupable into a single more inclusive set. Each set is discussed in some detail and the serious comparativist will delight in the discussions." Hill's final comment was, "All in all, this is a monumental contribution, raising comparative UA to a new level."[4] Stubbs's work effectively doubled the entire number of known correspondence sets, genuinely establishing him as one of the leading Uto-Aztecanists worldwide. In a 2012 email in my possession, Stubbs makes the point that "more than half of the book is original — 2700 sets vs. the 1200 previously known sets."

There is backstory to all this, however. Stubbs's earliest interests and training became a lifelong passion. His undergraduate BA from Brigham Young University emphasized Semitic languages, where he took courses in Hebrew, Arabic, and Egyptian. Then, at the University of Utah, he began graduate school, working toward a PhD (ABD), taking courses in Semitic (Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic). However, his Semitic coursework brought him to courses in linguistics, which captivated him. He changed majors and went on to earn an MA in Linguistics, specializing in Uto-Aztecan (UA) at the feet of Wick Miller and others whose program was at the time the principal center for UA studies. It was the fortuitous connection of his expertise in UA with Semitic, both firmly ensconced in his head, which led him to see ever more correlations between the two.

As he began his scholastic career, his presentations and publications emphasized UA, with little mention of the New-Old World connections. More recently, however, he began to include his Near Eastern insights, but in 2015 he published his crowning work, *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan*.[5]

Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan

Like his earlier 2011 *Uto-Aztecan* publication, his 2015 publication, *Exploring the Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan*, is also massive, not only because of its 436 tight, single-spaced pages but also because of the 1500+ well-considered correlations between Semitic/Egyptian and UA. It is an impressive follow-up to his earlier UA work. His 2015 publication deserves the same assessment of the data that has been given to his earlier 2011 publication — even in the face of his

unusual claim. It is not in Stubbs's character to ignore the painstaking, comparative focus apparent in his earlier UA scholarship.

Stubbs's 2015 publication also raises "comparative UA studies to a new level." The title, *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan*, suggests that "the explanatory power of Semitic and Egyptian" answers "many of the otherwise unresolved questions in Uto-Aztecan [that] eluded UA specialists" over the years.[6] Unknown to Uto-Aztecanists, many of the insights in his 2011 publication resulted from his knowledge of the Semitic/Egyptian correlations. "In fact, the Semitic [and] Egyptian forms proposed to underlie the UA forms often answer questions and explain puzzles in UA that Uto-Aztecanists [had] not yet been able to explain."[7]

The book has nine chapters, including

1. An Introduction: Basics of Linguistics, Introduction to Semitic Languages, Introduction to Egyptian, Introduction to Uto-Aztecan;
2. The Semitic-*kw:* Contribution to Uto-Aztecan, which suggests remnants of two Hebrew dialectal influences on Uto-Aztecan: a "*kw* dialect" from a Phoenician-like dialect, and a "*p* dialect" from the conservative, pre-exilic dialect, preserved in the Biblical Hebrew language and the closely-related Aramaic dialect (see 5 and 8 below);
3. The Pronouns of Uto-Aztecan, where a significant number of pronouns aligns with Semitic;
4. The Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan, including grammar, sound changes, and prefixed articles (See 2 above);
5. The Semitic-*p* Contribution to Uto-Aztecan (see 2 above);
6. Seven Uto-Aztecan puzzles explained by Egyptian and Semitic, which as mentioned above, contribute to the "power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan" in explaining unresolved UA conundrums;
7. Other Comparative Matters, Consistencies, and Patterns, which includes a comprehensive summary of transferred patterns: phonology, grammar and morphology, and basic vocabulary;
8. The Aramaic Leaning of the Semitic-*p* Contribution (see 2 and 5 above);
9. Conclusions.

There are also four appendices, which amount to useful indices that both summarize and reference the central part of the book:

1. A: Sound Correspondences, which evaluates two important Semitic infusions, the *kw-dialect* against the *Semitic-p* dialect.
2. B: English Index for the Correspondence Sets.
3. C: Semitic Index in Alphabetical Order of Hebrew Consonants.
4. D: Egyptian Index in Alphabetical Order of Egyptian Consonants.

There is an extensive bibliography, and finally, a brief statement about the author.

Discussion: The Comparative Method

The methodology Stubbs follows is called "the comparative historical method," which, from the 19th century on, has had a long history of remarkable success. Calvert Watkins, among the greatest Indo-Europeanists and a renowned practitioner of the comparative historical method, makes this claim: "[T]he Comparative Method is one of the most powerful theories about human language that has ever been proposed — and the one most consistently validated and verified over the longest period of time."[8]

C.S. Peirce says what philosophy *ought* to do, but we can readily apply this to what the comparative method *does* do: The Comparative Method imitates

> the successful sciences in its methods, so far as to proceed only from tangible premises which can be subjected to careful scrutiny, and to trust rather to the multitude and variety of its arguments than to the conclusiveness of any one. Its reasoning should not form a chain which is no stronger than its weakest link, but a cable whose fibers may be ever so slender, provided they are sufficiently numerous and intimately connected.[9]

Proper application of the comparative method does require tangible premises subjected to careful scrutiny, relying on a variety of arguments sufficiently numerous and intimately connected, capable of clarifying the relationships among languages in the context of language change.

As applied in Stubbs's work, the comparative method produced "rules of sound change that create consistent sound correspondence, hundreds of vocabulary matches consistent with those sound correspondences, [as well as] grammatical and morphological alignments,"[10] which have

produced a quantity of inductive material that form a cohesive body. Taken together, these strands are sufficiently numerous and intimately connected as to stand as a cable in strong support of his hypothesis. The temptation, however, is to cherry-pick a strand or two that might suggest it does not support the hypothesis, thereby "disqualifying" the multitude of strands that constitute the whole. This, of course, is a glaring misappropriation of the replication found in deduction and experimentation, a hallmark of the scientific method.

The comparative method requires originating forms and derived forms found in each daughter language. That is, there are *ancestral forms* and *derived forms* that are the product of *different sets of rules* belonging to each daughter language. Such rules calculate the path of change from the originating forms to the appropriate outcomes found in each daughter language, as briefly sketched below in Table 1. The real value of this method lies in its power of prediction, the ability to systematically account for data that would otherwise be unexplained or even unnoticed outside the mediation of the comparative method. But that is not all. Consistently applied, this method effects an ever-growing understanding of the character, nature, and especially, the telling subtleties that emerge among related languages — their history and their consequent relationships.

So the question naturally arises: Does Stubbs's work bridge the gap between the seemingly improbable geographic and epistemological distance between Near Eastern and UA language families?

It seems obvious that the answer is impossible without a conscientious examination of what this scholar has laid out in terms of well-established linguistic standards. After all, the data and the logic of his work are now out there, open to authoritative assessment. Of course, it would not be difficult to dismiss the whole of his argument out of hand on grounds that all previous attempts to connect any New World language to European or Middle Eastern languages have been amateurish, even laughable by credible linguistic standards; or that because Stubbs is a Mormon, his scholarship would naturally be tainted and therefore untrustworthy on grounds of aprioristic and biased "expertise," or that Semitic and Egyptian are related (both are Afro-Asiatic); but the time depth that separates them is so distant as to make it impossible for both to have any correlation as regards UA; or that language contact resulting in truly blended languages (particularly the lexicon) is a rare phenomenon; or that his comparisons use a variety of languages: pre-Exilic Hebrew, Aramaic, and even on occasion Arabic;[11] or that some of the semantic 1500

connections are questionable — and so on. Nevertheless, I emphasize that massive amounts of data are there to be evaluated in terms of the well-established comparative historical method. Surely rejection of his work on aprioristic grounds, short of dealing with the data themselves, would be unfair if not misleading.

Whereas it is impossible to capture the breadth and depth of Stubbs's work in any review — any real evaluation requires consideration of the totality of his work — it might be worthwhile here to touch ever so briefly on some of the data. Let us see a few examples from the thousands ready for inspection in his many publications.

- Semitic *b, d, g* > UA *p, t, k*;[12] also Semitic q > k (Read: Semitic *b, d, g* go to UA *p, t, k*):
  - **b > p:**
  - (527) *baraq* "lightning" > UA **pïrok*; My berok "lightning"
  - (528) *byt* / *bayit* / *beet* "spend the night, house" > UA **pïtï*; Tr *bete* "house"
  - **d > t:**
  - (606) *dubur* "buttocks, rear" > UA **tupur* "hip, buttocks"
  - (607) *dobɛr* "pasture, vegetation" > UA **tupi* "grass, vegetation"
  - **g > k:**
  - (57) **siggoob* "squirrel" > UA **sikkuC* "squirrel"
- Semitic ʾaleph or glottal stop ʾ > w in UA:
  - (566) *ʾariy* / *ʾarii* "lion" > UA **wari* "mountain lion"
  - (569) Hebrew *ʾegooz* "nut tree" > UA **wokoC* "pine tree" (C = unknown consonant).
- Semitic initial **r-** > **t-** in UA:
  - (604) Aramaic *rəʾemaan-aa* / *reemaan-aa* "antelope-the" > UA **tïmïna* "antelope"
  - (99) *rakb-u* "they mounted, climbed" > UA **tiʾpu* / *tïppu "climb up"
  - (889) Aramaic *rakbaa* / *rikbaa* "upper millstone" > UA **tïppa* "mortar (and/or) pestle"
- The Semitic voiced pharyngeal ʕ > UA w/o/u, i.e., some form of rounding, as the Phoenician ʕ symbol > Greek o:
- (677) ʕagol "round" > UA **wakol* "round(ed)"
  - (676); *paqʕ-* "whiteness, species of fungus" > UA **pakuwa* "mushroom, fungus" (*q > k)
  - (1197) Hebrew ʕaaqeeb "heel, footprint" > UA **woki* "track, footprint" (*q > k)
- Many speech sounds remain much the same, such as **t, k, p, s, m, n:**
- (52) Hebrew *mukkɛ* "smitten" > UA **mukki* "die, be sick,

smitten"

- (769) **taqipa* (sg), *taqipuu (pl) "overpower" > UA **takipu* "push"
- (750) *tmh* "in awe, fear, speechless," Syriac *təmah* > UA *tuma'* / *tu'mï* / *tehmat* / *tïhmï* "be silent, afraid"
- (755) Hebrew *kutónet* "shirt-like tunic" > UA **kutun* "shirt"
- (754) Hebrew participle *pone* "turn to, look" > UA **puni* "turn, look, see"
- (851) Hebrew *panaa-w* "face-his" > UA **pana* "cheek, face"
- (852) pl construct *paneey* - (**panii*) "face, surface of" > UA **pani* "on, on surface of"
- (1339) šippaa "make smooth" > UA **sipa* / **sippa* "scrape, shave"
- (56) šɛkɛm / šikm-, Samaritan šekam "shoulder" > UA **sïka* "shoulder, arm," Numic **sikum* "shoulder"
- (563) *sapat* "lip" > UA **sapal* "lip"
- (879) šwy / šawaa "broil, roast" > UA **sawa* "boil, apply heat, melt"
- (1138) Hebrew šor "navel"; Arabic *surr* "navel cord" > Sr *ṣuur* "navel"
- (13) *snw* "shine, be beautiful" > Hopi *soniwa* "be beautiful, bright, brilliant, handsome"
- (890) *kann* "shelter, house, nest" > UA **kanni* (NUA) "house" > **kali* (SUA) "house"
- (903) *khh*, *kehah* "be inexpressive, disheartened" > UA *-kïhahï-* "sad"
- (1045) Hebrew **moškat* "bracelet, fetter, belt" > Tb *mohkat-t* "belt"
- (1105) *kali* / *kulyaa* "kidney" > UA *kali "kidney"
- (1409) Aramaic *kuuky-aa'* "spider-the" > UA **kuukyaŋw* "spider"; Hopi *kòokyaŋw* "spider"

There are many other rules that accurately predict the trajectory of changes from Semitic to UA, all of which, when taken together, add up to 1,528 well-considered correspondence sets!

To give a single example of the comparative method and the "many of the otherwise unresolved questions in Uto-Aztecan" that find resolution in terms of the Near Eastern data, consider Table 1.

Table 1: Showing the Semitic source of the UA related forms **kwïkï, *paka, *yaCkaC/*yakka, *takka.*

Originating Forms: Semitic[13]	Hebrew: *bakaay* "cry" [kw]-dialect	Syriac:[14] *baka'* "to cry" Perfect [p]-dialect	Hebrew: *ya-bkay* "he/it weeps" Imperfect Masculine [p]-dialect	Hebrew: *ta-bkay* "she/it weeps" Imperfect Feminine [p]-dialect
Rules:	*b > kw* *a* > ï	*b > p*	*bk > Ck; bk > kk*	*bk > kk*
Derived Forms: UA	**kwïkï* "to cry"	**paka* "to cry"	**yaCkaC/*yakka* "to cry"	**takka* "to cry"

Without Semitic, UA comparatists would have to ignore the not-so-obvious relationship of the reconstructed etyma **kwïkï, *paka, *yaCkaC/*yakka, *takka*, all of which carry the semantic notion "to cry, to shed tears," and all of which are derivable from sets of rules that have application to hundreds of other forms. Without the originating Semitic forms, the specifics of these and other relationships would otherwise be impossible to detect.

Two Dialects

Uniting Northwest Semitic and Egyptian with UA sheds light on certain data in UA that would otherwise remain obscure. Among other things, the union reveals two ancient dialects, one the "p-dialect," which has characteristics of Hebrew/Aramaic and the other the "kw-dialect," which is Phoenician-like.

Table 2: Showing differences between the p-dialect and kw-dialects

p-dialect	**kw-dialect**
Sem **b** > UA **p** (528) Semitic ***b**yt* / ***b**ayit* / ***b**eet* "house, spend the night" > UA ****p**ayïC* "go home"; *TrC **b**ete* "house" (531) Hebrew ***b**oo'* "coming" (used as "way to") > UA ****p**ooC* "road, way, path" (534) Hebrew ***b**att* "daughter" > UA ****p**attï* "daughter" (550) Aramaic ***b**əsár* "flesh" > UA ****p**isa* "penis" (from the p-dialect) (559) Semitic ****b**akay*; Syriac ***b**aka'* "cry" > UA ****p**aka'* "cry" (plus 36 other examples of Semitic b > UA *p)	Sem b > UA kw (4) Hebrew *baašel* "cook, boil, ripen" > UA **kwasï* "cook, ripen" (5) Hebrew *báášaar* "flesh, penis" > UA **kwasi* "tail, penis, flesh" (6) Hebrew *baalaʕ* "swallow" > UA **kwïluC* "swallow" (7) Semitic ****b**ahamat* "back" > UA ****kw**ahami* "back" (24) Semitic ****b**akay* "cry" > UA ****kw**ïkï* "cry" (of the kw-dialect) (plus 20 other examples of Semitic **b** > UA ***kw**)

Sem ṣ > UA s **booṣer* "eye" > UA **pu**s**i* "eye"	Sem ṣ > UA c (= ts) 8&9 ***ṣ***abba* "grasp, lock, lizard" > UA ***c***akwa* "lock, lizard"
Aramaic **ar** > **a** ***b***əśár > UA ***p***isa* "penis"	Sem ar > ay ~ i Hebrew *baś***ar** "flesh/penis" > UA **kwas**iy*** "tail/penis" Sem þoṭɛr "rod" > UA UA **(h)uc**i*** "tree, stick"
Sem **q**-, **k**-, and **g**- > PUA ***k**- ***k***utónet "shirt-like tunic" > UA **kutuni* "shirt" Sem ***q***aašay; *Aramaic* ***q***əša' "be hard, severe, harsh (of taste)" > UA ***k***ïsa "sour, harm(ed), bad"	q-, k-, and g- > PUA Ø Sem ***k***akkar "valley" > UA **aki* "arroyo, canyon, valley"
Sem **x**- > PUA *k- (1088) ***x***ld* "burrow"; **x**uld / ***x***ild-aa'* "mole-the" > UA ***k***ita* "groundhog" (630) ***x***ole* "be sick, hurting" > UA ***k***oli* "to hurt, be sick" (631) ***x***mr* "to ferment"; ***x***amar* "wine" > UA ***k***amaC* "drunk" (632) ***x***nk* "put around the neck" > UA ***k***onaka* "necklace, string of beads" (634) ***x***aṣr-* > ***x***aṣṣ* "hip, haunch, loins" > UA ***k***aca* "hip"	The kw-dialect did not have **x* because Classical Hebrew preserved the voiceless (ħ) and voiced (ʕ) pharyngeal fricatives as well as the voiceless (x) and voiced (ɣ) velar fricatives, whereas Phoenician merged ħ and x > ħ, and ʕ and ɣ > ʕ. The Phoenician merger had occurred by the eleventh century BC, as evidenced by the speech sounds represented in the earliest Phoenician alphabet.[15] This is significant because, in UA, words that share the merger (leaving only the Phoenician ħ and ʕ) also show Phoenician b > UA kw (kw-dialect), whereas words that maintain the four distinctions (ħ, ʕ, x, ɣ) show Classical Hebrew b > UA p.

There are a large number of other instances showing the difference between pre-exilic Hebrew and Phoenician-like dialects, which find expression in UA.

Language Contact

One of the consequences of languages in contact is the frequent combining of words. For example, in the creole of Martinique, *lapo* means "skin."[16] It comes from combining French *la peau* "the skin" (pronounced *lapo*). The meaning of *la* ("the") was fused with *peau* ("skin"), such that the separate word *la* ("the") no longer exists in the language. Without a knowledge of French, however, it would be impossible to know that the *la* of *lapo* used to mean "the."

A linguist would put it in these terms: "The borrowing of morphologically complex word forms often involves the loss of morpheme boundaries and, hence, the loss of internal morphological structure."[17] There are numerous such examples in UA.

> [P]atterns of how verbs are conjugated is not productive in UA, but hundreds of fossilized forms of both the suffixed / perfective conjugation (singular *yašiba*; plural *yašib-uu*) and the prefixed / imperfective conjugation (*yi-/ya-*, *ti-/ta-*, etc) are found in UA.[18]

A telling example is a Hebrew phrase that becomes a single word in UA:

daqar panaa-w "till/dig its surface" > UA **tekipanawa* "work."[19]

Furthermore, there are other interesting parallels between the Semitic personal pronouns and UA:

Table 3: Showing an example of Semitic grammatical forms preserved in Uto-Aztecan.[20]

Hebrew/Semitic sg	**Hebrew/Semitic pl**	**Maghrib Arabic**	**Nahuatl**
1st *'e-/'a-* "I (verb)"	*ni-/na-* "we (verb)"	*n-* "I verb"	*ne'wa/nehwa* "I"
2nd *ti-/ta-* "you sg (verb)"	*ti-/ta-* "you pl (verb)"	*t-* "you verb"	*te'wa/tehwa* "you, sg"
3rd *yi-/ya-* "he (verbs)"	*yi-/ya-* "they (verb)"	*y-* "he verbs"	*ye'wa/yehwa* "he"

> The Classical Nahuatl (CN) singular pronoun series — *nehwa* (I), *tehwa* (you), *yehwa* (he) — parallels the imperfective of the Aramaic "be" verb — *'ehwe, tehwe, yehwe*. Though the Nahuatl first person singular (I) form (*nehwa*) differs from the verb form, the *n-* of the CN form is analogically like the fundamental n of most Semitic "I/me" forms. In fact, the Maghrib Arabic dialect did the same thing, that is, analogized the impfv verb prefixes to *n-, t-, y-* (Goldenberg 2001, 86), just like the Classical Nahuatl singular series — *nehwa, tehwa, yehwa*.[21]

Pre-Exilic (Biblical) Hebrew and Aramaic

Historically, scholars have said that Aramaic came into prominence relative to Biblical Hebrew in *post*-exilic times, but now a large number of scholars believe Aramaic was a persistent part of Classical Hebrew, and then continued down through the ages.

> Very important is the point stressed by experts such as Rendsburg, that a large proportion of the forms considered "Aramaisms" by scholars are rather very likely to be native Aramaic-like features of Hebrew dialects. These Aramaic-like features were part of Hebrew from the beginning, and it depended on factors such as authorial preference to what degree they are represented in various literary works from a range of historical periods.[22]
>
> Thus, from the beginning of Israelite history, there were two linguistic strata; literary/formal and dialectical/ colloquial. This situation of diglossia persisted throughout pre-exilic Israelite history and goes a long way toward explaining both the stability of the literary language and the various instances of linguistic diversity in the biblical texts and in the inscriptions.[23]

Thus, if hundreds of instances of Biblical Hebrew are found in the UA families, it follows that hundreds of instances of Aramaic, contemporary with Hebrew through the ages, would be similarly present.

Northern Semitic and Egyptian

Another question that deserves attention was mentioned above: Semitic and Egyptian are related because they have a common ancestor, Afro-Asiatic — but the time depth is so distant as to make it impossible for both to have had any connection with UA. The answer to the "problem," however, is not far to seek. In a much later stage, long after Hebrew and Egyptian had emerged from Afro-Asiatic as distinct languages, there are well-attested instances of bilingualism where pre-exilic Hebrew/Aramaic is written in Egyptian text (Demotic). In 1983 Nims and Steiner wrote in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* "A Paganized Version of Psalm 20:2–6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script." Here is an Aramaic scripture written in Egyptian characters.[24] In 1984 the same authors produced, "You Can't Offer Your Sacrifice and Eat It Too: A Polemical Poem from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script."[25] In 1991 Richard C. Steiner, in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* wrote this article: "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script: The Liturgy of a New

Year's Festival Imported from Bethel to Syene by Exiles from Rash."[26] There are other instances of Aramaic written in Demotic, all of which witness that a certain Egyptian-Northern Semitic bilingualism was a factual reality.

Conclusion

As a practitioner of the comparative historical method for 40+ years, I believe I can say what Stubbs's scholarship does and does not deserve: It does not deserve aprioristic dismissal given the extensive data he presents. It *does* deserve authoritative consideration because, from my point of view, I cannot find an easy way to challenge the breadth and depth of the data.

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Endnotes

1. The word *cognate* comes from Latin *cognatus*, meaning "blood relative [lit. 'born together]." For linguists, cognates are words found in related languages that descend from a common source. For example Latin is the common source of the daughter forms found in Italian, Spanish, Catalan, and French. *Otto*, *ocho*, *vuit*, *huit*, which are cognates descending from their Latin ancestor, *octō* "eight."
2. Pre-exilic, Biblical Hebrew is the Semitic language spoken circa 1000 to 600 bc, before the Israelites were taken captive by King

Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon, which prompted watershed changes in the Biblical Hebrew after that. Uto-Aztecan is an Amerindian language family sporadically distributed from Northern Wyoming through the American Southwest, through Northwestern Mexico to Southern Mexico continuing as far South as San Salvador — a language family of an unusual geographic distribution.

3. Brian D. Stubbs, *Uto-Aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary* (Flower Mound, TX: Shumway Family History Services and Rocky Mountain Books, 2011).
4. Kenneth C. Hill, "Uto-aztecan: A Comparative Vocabulary by Stubbs," *International Journal of American Linguistics* 78/4 (October 2012): 591–592.
5. With some justification, there has been some criticism that the book was not published in some well-established press. However, given the attitude of the scholarly world regarding such an out-of-paradigm claim, finding such a publisher would almost certainly have been impossible.
6. Brian D. Stubbs, *Exploring the Explanatory Power of Semitic and Egyptian in Uto-Aztecan* (Provo, UT: Grover Publications, 2015), 1, summarized on p. 356, and chapter 6 and especially chapter 7.
7. Stubbs, *Exploring*, 9.
8. Calvert Watkins, "New Parameters in Historical Linguistics, Philology and Culture History," *Language* 65/4 (1989):783.
9. Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1934), 5:157.
10. Stubbs, *Exploring*, 9.
11. While it is true that Arabic is rarely used, Stubbs is careful in its use. Consider the fact that Classical Hebrew does not record a word for "squirrel," but Arabic has *singaab*, which would give Hebrew **siggoob*, by two rules (**aa* > *oo* and **ng* > *gg*). This gives UA *sikkuC* "squirrel" by the rule **g* > *k* and, conditionally, **o* > *u*. Furthermore, there is a strong argument that diglossia was a feature of Classical Hebrew, such that Hebrew was the prestige language, and Aramaic was the common, spoken language. See Marsha White, review of *Diversity in Pre-Exilic Hebrew*, by Ian Young, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 116, no. 4 (1997): 730–732.

12. As a shorthand way of saying Semitic b become UA p, linguists symbolize it thus: Semitic b > UA p.
13. For two Semitic dialects, see Table 1.
14. Syriac is a Western dialect of Aramaic.
15. Jo Ann Hackett, "Phoenician and Punic," in *The Ancient Languages of Syria-Palestine and Arabia* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 84. This same merger occurred centuries later in post-exilic Hebrew.
16. *Dictionnaire du Creole Martinique*, http://www.potomitan.info/dictionnaire/l.pdf.
17. Ana R. Luís, "The effect of language contact on Romance verbal paradigms: an empirical survey," *Revista de Estudos Linguísticos da Universidade do Porto*, vol. 3 (2008), 142, http://ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/6879.pdf.
18. Stubbs, *Exploring*, 2, parenthesis omitted for clarity. A full discussion is found pp. 334–338.
19. Ibid., 338.
20. Ibid., 335.
21. Ibid.
22. Ian Young, Robert Rezetko, and Martin Ehrensvärd, *Linguistic Dating of Biblical Texts, Volume 1: An Introduction to Approaches and Problems* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 221.
23. White, review of *Diversity in Pre-Exilic Hebrew*, 73
24. Charles F. Nims and Richard C. Steiner, "A Paganized Version of Psalm 20:2–6 from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Script," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103 (1983): 261–274.
25. Richard C. Steiner and Charles F. Nims, "You Can't Offer Your Sacrifice and Eat It Too: A Polemical Poem from the Aramaic Text in Demotic Scrpit," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 43, no. 2 (1984): 89–114.
26. Richard C. Steiner, "The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script: The Liturgy of a New Year's Festival Imported from Bethel to Syene by Exiles from Rash," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 111/2 (1991): 362–363.

Joseph Smith: Monogamist or Polygamist?

Brian C. Hales

Abstract: *In the past decades much of the debate regarding Joseph Smith and plural marriage has focused on his motivation — whether libido or divine inspiration drove the process. Throughout these debates, a small group of observers and participants have maintained that Joseph did not practice polygamy at any time or that his polygamous sealings were nonsexual spiritual marriages. Rather than simply provide supportive evidence for Joseph Smith's active involvement with plural marriage, this article examines the primary arguments advanced by monogamist proponents to show that important weaknesses exist in each line of reasoning.*

Whereas several individuals, religions, and groups have consistently advocated the position that Joseph Smith did not practice plural marriage, over the past few decades none have championed that position more consistently than RLDS fundamentalists Richard and Pamela Price. In a book and an online series they attempt solid investigative methodology to support their thesis.[1] Other more recent advocates have echoed this same interpretation, including blogger Rock Waterman in 2010.[2] On March 22, 2015, LDS excommunicant Denver Snuffer declared in an essay posted on his website that Joseph Smith did not practice

1. See Richard and Pamela Price, "Joseph Smith Fought Polygamy," accessed October 6, 2016, http://restorationbookstore.org/jsfp-index.htm.

2. Rock Waterman, "Why I'm Abandoning Polygamy," accessed December 16, 2016, http://puremormonism.blogspot.com/2010/06/why-im-abandoning-polygamy.html.

polygamy.[3] The same message is reinforced in an article posted months later by an anonymous author who may be a Snuffer follower.[4]

Authors like these generally admit that Brigham Young practiced plural marriage as a religious tenet of Mormonism. This acknowledgment requires that monogamist proponents overcome two issues. First, they advance arguments to discount documentation that supports that Joseph Smith was a pluralist:

1. Most of the historical evidence supporting Joseph as a polygamist was written years, even many decades, after his death.
2. There are no documented children fathered by Joseph Smith with a plural wife.
3. Section 101 of the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants purportedly condemns polygamy.
4. Joseph Smith reportedly repudiated the practice of polygamy in Nauvoo.
5. Emma Smith purportedly denied that Joseph practiced polygamy.
6. The provenance of Section 132 is supposedly uncertain.

The second issue is creating a credible alternate narrative of the origin of plural marriage among the Latter-day Saints that doesn't include Joseph's active participation. This may involve implicating a Cochranite connection or a pamphlet published in Nauvoo called *The Peace Maker*. Others seek to blame the practice on John C. Bennett or, more commonly, Brigham Young.

Most Historical Evidence Was Written Years Later

Few contemporaneous manuscripts from the Nauvoo period exist that link Joseph Smith and plural marriage. Most of the supportive evidence was penned years later by polygamists in the West who experienced life in Nauvoo and understandably had strong biases. The question is whether the chronological remoteness and narrator prejudices are sufficient to dismiss the entire lot of testimonials.

3. Denver Snuffer, "Plural Marriage," accessed June 19, 2015, http://denversnuffer.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Plural-Marriage.pdf.

4. Anonymous, "Joseph Smith's Monogamy: Exploring a Counter-narrative Regarding Plural Marriage," accessed Oct. 3, 2016, http://downloads.miridiatech.com.s3.amazonaws.com/remnant/JosephSmithsMonogamy.pdf.

Contemporaneous Evidence

Plural marriage in Nauvoo was a clandestine practice. Zina Huntington recalled: "We hardly dared speak of it. The very walls had ears. We spoke of it only in whispers."[5] While all early polygamists may not have obeyed this strict code of silence, this sentiment suggests that few insiders close to Joseph Smith would have created discoverable documentation of the practice at the time it was practiced.

Several sources from the early 1840s — a private journal and declarations from former Latter-day Saints — provide manuscript evidence that Joseph was a polygamist. The earliest is from then-excommunicated John C. Bennett, who, in October 1842, identified several women who he claimed were sealed to Joseph Smith, including Agnes Smith, Louisa Beaman, Presendia Buell, Elizabeth Davis Durfee, and Patty Sessions.[6] What is controversial is whether Bennett learned this from Joseph Smith directly, from Nancy Rigdon, from rumors, or from some other source. What is not controversial is that the identities published by Bennett are corroborated by numerous later recollections from credible witnesses.[7]

As quoted below, William Clayton recorded in his journal on July 12, 1843, that he "wrote a revelation" dictated by the Prophet "showing the designs in Moses, Abraham, David and Solomon having many wives and concubines &c."[8] Dissidents William and Jane Law both signed affidavits on May 4, 1844, stating that they had read that document.[9] On that same day, Austin Cowles signed his own affidavit:

> In the latter part of the summer, 1843, the Patriarch, Hyrum Smith, did in the High Council, of which I was a member, introduce what he said was a revelation given through the Prophet; that the said Hyrum Smith did essay to read the said

5. John Wight, "Evidence from Zina D. Huntington Young," Interview with Zina, October 1, 1898, *Saints Herald* 52 (January 11, 1905): 29. Available at http://mormonpolygamydocuments.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/JS0752.pdf.

6. John C. Bennett, *History of the Saints: Or an Exposé of Joe Smith and Mormonism*. Boston: Leland & Whiting, 1842, 256. Available at https://archive.org/details/historysaints00benngoog.

7. See Brian C. Hales, Joseph *Smith's Polygamy: History and Theology*, 3 vols., Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2013, 2:324–28.

8. George D. Smith, ed. *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995, 110.

9. William Law, Affidavit, Jane Law, Affidavit, *Nauvoo Expositor* 1, no. 1 (June 7, 1844): 2. Available at http://signaturebookslibrary.org/nauvoo-expositor/.

> revelation in the said Council, that according to his reading there was contained the following doctrines: … the doctrine of a plurality of wives, or marrying virgins; that "David and Solomon had many wives, yet in this they sinned not save in the matter of Uriah." This revelation with other evidence, that the aforesaid heresies were taught and practiced in the Church.[10]

While these references are not numerous, most are from credible sources, contemporaneous with Joseph Smith, and demonstrate that both Hyrum and Joseph were involved with plural marriage during their lifetimes.

Later Recollections

Investigating Nauvoo polygamy uncovers multiple corroborating accounts in later years. As the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints expanded its claims after 1860 that Joseph Smith was not a polygamist, many Brighamite church members in the West recorded their own recollections. This section references a number of these, but many more could be cited.

The earliest narratives date Nauvoo polygamy teachings to 1840 or 1841. Wilford Woodruff recalled that the Prophet "taught the principle to certain individuals. … There was no one teaching it only under his direction."[11]

Cyrus Wheelock remembered that he first learned of the principle from the Prophet at Joseph Noble's home in 1841.[12] He reported that such teachings were subsequently shared with others on a "rainy and chilly" day in a forest setting about a mile west of Montrose, Iowa: "Joseph … taught us the principle of plural marriage, but his teaching was not specially directed to me, but to all who were in the company. We talked about it as we might here or any brother qualified and having authority

10. Austin Cowles, Affidavit, *Nauvoo Expositor* 1, no. 1 (June 7, 1844): 2. Available at http://signaturebookslibrary.org/nauvoo-expositor/.

11. Wilford Woodruff, deposition, Temple Lot Transcript, Respondent's Testimony, Part 3, pp. 56 question 536; sentence order reversed. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

12. Cyrus Wheelock, deposition, Temple Lot Transcript, Respondent's Testimony, Part 3, p. 538, question 78. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

to do so will discuss principles when he gets along with his brethren in friendly and confidential discourse."[13]

Several apostles returned from their mission to England in 1841 (Heber C. Kimball, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, George A. Smith, and Brigham Young). Multiple documents exist describing how they were personally taught by Joseph Smith about polygamy. In a discourse delivered on the tenth anniversary of the martyrdom, Apostle John Taylor recalled those early days when the Prophet introduced the principle of plural marriage to them:

> I remember being with President Young and Kimball and I think one or two others with Brother Joseph soon after we had returned from England. He talked with us on these principles and laid them before us. It tried our minds and feelings. We saw it was something going to be heavy upon us. It was not that very nice pleasing thing some people thought about it. It is something that harried up our feelings. … We should have been glad to push it off a little further. We [would have] been glad if it did not come in our day but that somebody else had something to do with it instead of us.[14]

Years later on October 14, 1882, President John Taylor again referred to the event: "Upon that occasion, Joseph Smith laid before us the whole principle pertaining to that doctrine, and we believed it. Having done this, Joseph felt, as he said, that he had got a big burden rolled off his shoulders. He felt the responsibility of that matter resting heavily upon him."[15]

During an 1892 deposition taken in the Temple Lot litigation,[16] Wilford Woodruff recounted, on October 5, 1841, his feelings upon returning from England:

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13. Ibid., p. 539, question 80. See also questions 107, 136, 139, 142. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

14. John Taylor, "Sermon in Honor of the Martyrdom," June 27, 1854, Papers of George D. Watt, MS 4534, Box 2, Disk 2, images 151–52, CHL. Sermon not in *Journal of Discourses* or in CR 100 317. Transcribed by LaJean Purcell Carruth, September 1, 2009. Used by permission. Terminal punctuation and initial capitals added.

15. John Taylor, quoted in *Minutes of the Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1835–1893* (Salt Lake City: Privately Published, 2010), 342 (October 14, 1882).

16. In August 1891, the RLDS Church, led by Joseph Smith III, sued the Church of Christ (Temple Lot). The RLDS claimed they were natural successors to the church organized in 1830 and as such were the rightful owners of the temple lot

> Joseph Smith of course taught that principle while in Nauvoo, and he not only taught it, but practiced it too. … I heard him teach it — he taught it to the quorum of twelve apostles, and he taught it to other individuals as they bear testimony. I know he taught it to us. … In his addresses to the quorum of twelve apostles, when he visited us, he would teach that. … It was nearly six months, and he spoke of it frequently. … He taught it to us as a principle amongst other things.[17]

Apostle George A. Smith also remembered this period. "At one of the first interviews" he had with Joseph after returning from his mission to England on July 13, 1841, he "was greatly astonished at hearing from his lips that doctrine of Patriarchal marriage, which he continued to preach to me from time to time. My last conversation with him on this subject occurred just previous to my departure from Nauvoo (May 9, 1844) in company with Elder Wilford Woodruff, to attend Conference in Michigan. … He testified to me and to my father [John Smith] that the Lord had given him the keys of this sealing ordinance, and that he felt as liberal to others as he did to himself."[18]

Brigham Young returned to Nauvoo July 1, 1841, and later recalled:

> When I returned home and Joseph revealed these things to me, I then understood the reflections that were upon my mind while in England. … This was in 1841; the revelation was given in 1843, but the doctrine was revealed before this, and when I told Joseph what I understood which was right in front of my house in the street, as he was shaking hands and leaving me, he turned round and looked me in the eyes,

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in Independence, Missouri. The Church of Christ disagreed, saying Joseph Smith taught polygamy, and since the RLDS did not, it could not be the natural successor. On March 16, 1892, an entourage of lawyers traveled to Salt Lake City to depose men and women who participated in Nauvoo polygamy. Although the LDS Church was not a party to the suit, it provided support to the Church of Christ because polygamy was a primary issue and, perhaps, because it did not want the RLDS Church to gain possession of this sacred property.

17. Wilford Woodruff, deposition, Temple Lot Transcript, Respondent's Testimony, Part 3, pages 10, 58, questions 62–64, 573–80. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript. Woodruff's recollection of a six-month teaching period fits quite well with the documented meetings from August 1841 to March 1842, the most intense period being in the late fall and winter of 1841–42.

18. George A. Smith, letter to Joseph Smith III, October 9, 1869, Journal History. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0737.

> and says he: "Brother Brigham, are you speaking what you understand, — are you in earnest?" Says I: "I speak just as the Spirit manifests to me." Says he: "God bless you, the Lord has opened your mind," and he turned and went off.[19]

A few months later Brigham would propose a plural marriage to Martha Brotherton, which made him the second person in Nauvoo, after Joseph, ever to seek a polygamous union.

Joseph C. Kingsbury recounted in 1892: "Joseph Smith taught me the principle of polygamy. He gave me to understand it with his own mouth that he had married wives more than one. Now in conversation with him, he told me that."[20] Another Nauvoo resident, Nathan Tanner, affirmed: "In the Spring of 1844 at Montrose, lee County, Iowa, he heard President Joseph Smith … teach the doctrine of Celestial Marriage or plurality of wives."[21]

In 1894, Joseph Kelting recounted his meeting with the Prophet:

> Calling at the house of the prophet one day, early in the spring of 1844, on some business or other not now remembered, the prophet invited me into a room up stairs in his house, called the Mansion. After \we/ entered the room he locked ~~it~~ \the door,/ and then asked me if I had heard the rumors connecting him with polygamy. I told him I had. He then began a defense of the doctrine by referring to the Old Testament. I told him I did not want to hear that as I could read it for my self.
>
> He claimed to be a prophet — I believed him to be prophet — and I wanted to know what he had to say about it. He expressed some doubts as to how I might receive it, and wanted to know what stand I would take if I should not believe what he had to say about it. I then pledged him my word that whether I believed his revelation or not I would not betray him.
>
> He then informed me that he had received a revelation ~~a revelation~~ from God which taught the correctness of the

19. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 18:241 (June 23, 1874). Available at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/JournalOfDiscourses3/id/9613/rec/18.

20. Joseph Kingsbury, deposition, Temple Lot Transcript, Respondent's Testimony, Part 3, page 178, question 18. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

21. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books, MS 3423, CHL. Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage.

> doctrine of a plurality of wives, and commanding him to obey it. He ~~then~~ acknowledged to having married several wives. I told him that was all right. He then said he would like a further pledge from me that I would not betray him. I asked him if he wanted me to ~~ex~~ accept the principle by marrying a plural wife. He answered yes. A short time after this I married two wives in that order of marriage.[22]

Elsewhere Kelting recalled asking Joseph Smith during the interview: "Have you more than one wife sealed to you by this authority"? The Prophet answered directly: "I have."[23]

Lorenzo Snow left several accounts of his experience with the Prophet:

> In the month of April 1843 I returned from my European Mission. A few days after my arrival at Nauvoo, when at President Joseph Smith's house, he said he wished to have some private talk with me, and requested me to walk out with him; It was toward evening, we walked a little distance and sat down on a large log that lay near the bank of the river; he there and then explained to me the doctrine of plurality of wives. He said that the Lord had revealed it unto him, and commanded him to have women sealed to him as wives, that he foresaw the trouble that would follow, and sought to turn away from the commandment, that an angel from heaven appeared before him with a drawn sword, threatening him with destruction unless he went forward and obeyed the commandment.[24]

Benjamin F. Johnson's initial introduction was similar:

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22. Joseph A. Kelting, "Statement," Joseph Smith Affidavits, CHL. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0361. See also https://archive.org/stream/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage/MS_3423_1–4 #page/n74/mode/1up.

23. Joseph Kelting, affidavit, September 11, 1903, CHL. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0452.

24. Lorenzo Snow, Affidavit dated August 28, 1869, MS 3423, CHL; copied into Joseph F. Smith, Affidavit Books, 2:19. Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage. See also Lorenzo Snow, "Discourse," *Millennial Star*, 61 (August 31, 1899) 35: 548. Available at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/MStar/id/36780/rec/61. Eliza R. Snow, *Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow*. Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1884, 70. Available at https://archive.org/details/biographyfamilyr00snowrich.

> On the first day of April A.D. (1843,) eighteen hundred and forty-three, President Joseph Smith, Orson Hyde, and William Clayton and others came from Nauvoo to my residence in Macedonia or Ramus in Hancock Co. Illinois, and were joyfully welcomed by myself and family as our guests. On the following morning, Sunday April second, President Smith took me by the arm for a walk, leading the way to a secluded spot within an adjacent grove, where to my great surprise, he commenced to open up to me the principle of plural or celestial marriage.[25]

Erastus Snow related his experience:

> [About April 1843] I had a very enjoyable visit for about a month with the Prophet and my kindred and brethren. It was during this visit that the Prophet told me what the Lord had revealed to him touching upon baptism for the dead and marriage for eternity, and requiring his chosen and proved servants to take unto themselves wives, and introduced several of those who had been sealed to himself and others of the first elders of the Church.[26]

Besides teaching the principle, Joseph Smith acted as an intermediary in organizing a few plural marriages. Mary Ann Covington was sealed to William Smith in the spring of 1844. She remembered:

> I went to live at Orson Hyde's and soon after that time Joseph Smith wished to have an interview with me at Orson Hyde's. He had the interview with me, and then asked me if I had ever heard of a man's having more wives than one, and I said I had not. He then told me that he had received a revelation from God that man could have more wives than one, and that men were now being married in plural marriage. He told me soon after that his brother William wished to marry me as a wife in plural marriage if I felt willing to consent to it. … He said that there was power on earth to seal wives in plural marriages.[27]

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25. Joseph Smith Affidavit Books, 2:3–6 . Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage.

26. Franklin R. Snow, "Autobiography of Erastus Snow," *Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine* 14 (April 1923): 109. Available at https://archive.org/details/utahgenealogical14gene.

27. Mary Ann West, deposition, Temple Lot Transcript, Respondent's Testimony, Part 3, pages 495–96, 504, questions 13, 272. Available at https://

Another Nauvoo Latter-day Saint, Mercy Rachel Fielding Thompson, explained in 1892 that her plural marriage was arranged by the Prophet: "The Prophet himself … was the one that introduced it to me, and he was the one that taught that principle of plural marriage to me first, and I heard him teach it to others. He taught it to me I know, and he must to others, for my sister was the first one that came to me and spoke to me about being sealed to Hyrum Smith."[28]

Besides these accounts, multiple documents demonstrate that Joseph participated in the plural marriage ceremonies. In 1869, Orson Hyde signed an affidavit stating that "Joseph sealed him to Martha R. Browitt in February or March of 1843."[29] On March 4, 1870, Harriet Cook Young signed an affidavit affirming that on November 2, 1843, Joseph sealed her to Brigham Young.[30] Many other Latter-day Saints signed affidavits describing how Joseph Smith taught them about plural marriage, including Mary Ann Angell Young, Augusta Adams Young, Elizabeth Lucy Ann Decker Young, Elizabeth Brotherton Pratt, Roxsena Rachel Adams, Harriet Cook Young, Clara Decker Young, Adeline Brooks Andrus Benson, Pamelia Andrus Benson, and Mary Ann Frost Pratt.[31]

Evidence Joseph Smith Practiced Plural Marriage

Besides teaching and assisting with plural marriages, much evidence exists that Joseph himself was sealed to plural wives. On June 26, 1869, Joseph B. Noble declared: "On the fifth day of April A.D. 1841, At the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, he married or sealed Louisa Beaman, to Joseph Smith, President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, according to the order of Celestial Marriage revealed to the Said Joseph Smith."[32] When asked about the authority he used to perform the ceremony, Noble stated with a hint of pride: "I know this, that the law giver [Joseph Smith] authorized it. … I got it all right

archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript. According to her testimony, this was the only time she discussed plural marriage with the Prophet. See ibid., page 503, questions 264–65.

28. Mercy Rachel Thompson, deposition, Temple Lot Transcript, Respondent's Testimony, Part 3, pages 238–40, 263–64, questions 23–31, 512, 522. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

29. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books, 2:45, MS 3423, CHL. Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage.

30. Ibid., Affidavit Books, 2:12.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid., Affidavit Books, 1:3.

— right from the Prophet himself. That is where I got it. … I sealed her to him and I did a good job too."[33]

Dimick Huntington also attested that he performed the sealings of Joseph to Huntington's sisters Zina and Presendia. On May 1, 1869, he attested, "On the 27th day of October A.D. 1841, at the City of Nauvoo, County of Hancock, State of Illinois, he married or Sealed Zina D. Huntington to Joseph Smith President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and also on the eleventh day of December A.D. 1841 at the same place he married or Sealed, Presendia L. Huntington to the Said Joseph Smith, according to the laws of said Church, regulating marriage; in presence of Fanny M. Huntington."[34] Fanny corroborated these in separate affidavits.[35]

Multiple women recounted their own sealings to Joseph Smith. Eliza R. Snow wrote:

> In Nauvoo I first understood that the practice of plurality of wives was to be introduced into the church. The subject was very repugnant to my feelings. … I was sealed to the Prophet, Joseph Smith, for time and eternity, in accordance with the *Celestial Law of Marriage* which God has revealed — the ceremony being performed by a servant of the Most High.[36]

On July 27, 1842, Joseph dictated a revelation recorded by Newel K. Whitney concerning the Prophet' sealing to Sarah Ann Whitney:

> Verily thus saith the Lord unto my se[r]vant N. K. Whitney the thing that my sevant Joseph Smith has made known unto you and your Famely [Family] and which you have agreed upon is right in mine eyes. … These are the words which you shall pronounce upon my sevant Joseph [Smith] and your Daughter S. A. [Sarah Ann] Whitney. They shall take each other by the

33. Joseph Bates Noble, deposition, Temple Lot transcript, respondent's testimony (part 3), pages 432, 436, questions 793, 799, 861; sentence order reversed. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

34. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books, MS 3423, CHL. Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage.

35. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books, MS 3423, CHL. Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage.

36. Eliza R. Snow, "Sketch of My Life," in "Utah and Mormons" collection, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley, microfilm copy in CHL, under call number MS 8305, Reel 1, Item 11, page 13. Transcript available at MormonPolygamyDocuments JS0410. See also Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, ed., *The Personal Writings of Eliza Roxcy Snow*, Logan, UT: USU Press, 2000, 16–17.

> hand and you shall say: you both mutu[al]ly agree calling them by name to be each others companion so long as you both shall live presser[v]ing yourselv[es] for each other and from all others and also through [o]ut all eternity reserving only those rights which have been given to my servant Joseph [Smith] by revelation.[37]

Desdemona Fullmer married Joseph Smith in July 1843:[38] "Having been convinced of the truth of polygamy I therefore entered into the order but I dared not make it known not even to my parents for I was forbidden by the Prophet for it would endanger the life of Joseph and also many of the Saints."[39]

In 1877, Eliza Partridge penned: "After a time my sister Emily and myself went to live in the family of the Prophet Joseph Smith. We lived there about three years. While there he taught to us the plan of Celestial marriage and asked us to enter into that order with him. This was truly a great trial for me, but I had the most implicit confidence in him as a Prophet of the Lord."[40] Eliza's sister Emily similarly recorded: "The first intimation I had from Brother Joseph that there was a pure and holy order of plural marriage, was in the spring of 1842, but I was not married until 1843. I was married to him on the eleventh of May, 1843,

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37. Revelation for Newell K. Whitney, July 27, 1842. Original manuscript in CHL; quoted in Michael Marquardt, *The Joseph Smith Revelations: Text and Commentary*, Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999, 315–16. Available at http://signaturebookslibrary.org/the-joseph-smith-revelations/. See also Revelations in Addition to Those Found in the LDS Edition of the D&C on *New Mormon Studies: A Comprehensive Resource Library*. CD-ROM. Salt Lake City: Smith Research Associates, 1998.

38. Desdemona Fullmer, Affidavit, June 17, 1869, Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books, 1:32, 4:32, CHL. Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage. William Clayton Affidavit, February 16, 1874, CHL; published in Andrew Jenson, "Plural Marriage," *Historical Record*, Salt Lake City, 6 (July 1887) 225; available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1000.

39. Desdemona Fullmer, Autobiography, [not MS 734 in CHL], quoted in D. Michael Quinn papers – Addition – Uncat WA MS 244, bx 1, Yale University, Special Collections. The exact source of this quotation is unknown. Church historians have been unable to locate it in the archives. When contacted by Don Bradley on July 14, 2008, Quinn was unable to recall additional details but was confident of the accuracy of the document.

40. Eliza Maria Partridge Lyman, "Life and Journal of Eliza Maria Partridge Lyman," n.p., n.d. [1877?], not paginated but covers pages 7–8 in the holograph, CHL, typescript MS 9546, holograph MS 1527. Typescript available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org links JS0025, JS0249.

by Elder James Adams. Emma was present. She gave her free and full consent."[41] Almera Johnson recorded a similar story:

> In the years 1842 and 1843, I resided most of the time at Macedonia, in the County of Hancock, State of Illinois. … During that time the Prophet Joseph Smith taught me the principle of Celestial Marriage including plurality of wives and asked me to become his wife. … I was sealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith. At the time this took place Hyrum Smith, Joseph's brother, came to me and said, I need not be afraid. I had been fearing and doubting about the principle and so had he, but he now knew it was true. After this time I lived with the Prophet Joseph Smith as his wife, and he visited me at the home of my brother Benjamin F. at Macedonia.[42]

Lucy Walker remembered:

> When the Prophet Joseph Smith first mentioned the principles of plural marriage to me I became very indignant, and told him emphatically that I did not wish him ever to mention it to me again, as my feelings and education revolted against any thing of such a nature. … I received a powerful and irresistible testimony of the truth of plural marriage, which testimony has abided with me ever since. Shortly afterwards I consented to become the Prophet's wife, and was married to him May 1, 1843, Elder William Clayton officiating.[43]

Similarly, Malissa Lott testified: "He [Joseph Smith] was the one that preached it [plural marriage], and taught it to me."[44] Besides these, other sworn statements from Joseph's plural wives attest that they were sealed to him while in Nauvoo. Included were Zina D. Huntington, Presendia Huntington, Ruth Vose, Marinda Nancy Johnson,

41. Emily D. Partridge, "A Living Testimony," *Millennial Star*, 47 (September 7, 1885) 570–71. Available at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/MStar/id/29192/rec/47.

42. Almera W. Johnson, affidavit dated August 1, 1883, digital holograph, MS 3423, CHL; typescript published in Joseph Fielding Smith, *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1905), 70–71. Available at https://archive.org/details/bloodatonementor00smit.

43. Andrew Jenson, "Plural Marriage," *Historical Record* 6 (July 1887): 229–30. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1000.

44. Malissa Lott, deposition, Temple Lot transcript, respondent's testimony (part 3), p. 102, question 181. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript

Rhoda Richards, Sarah Ann Whitney, Elvira A. Cowles, Patty Bartlett, and Martha McBride.[45]

All of these statements and many more that could be supplied fulfill the requirements to be introduced as valid evidence in a court of law. If Joseph Smith did not introduce and practice polygamy, it seems that only a conspiracy of unimaginable scope could account for these documents.

No Documented Children Fathered by Joseph Smith and a Plural Wife

Multiple authors in the past (including me) have reported Joseph Smith may have fathered one or two children with his plural wives.[46] Recent research including DNA testing has eliminated the most likely candidates. Currently there are no known children fathered by Joseph Smith and a plural wife and none with a seemingly high probability.

Several documents support the possibility that Joseph had children by a plural wife. Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner stated: "I know he [Joseph Smith] had three children. They told me. I think two are living today but they are not known as his children as they go by other names."[47] On another occasion she declared: "I don't know about his having children, but I heard of three that he was the father of."[48] A secondhand account from Lucy Meserve Smith[49] (wife of Apostle George A. Smith) in Nauvoo recalls that her husband "related to me the circumstance of calling on the Prophet one evening about 11, o clock, and he was out on the porch with a basin of water washing his hands, I said to him what is up, said Joseph one of my wives has just been confined and Emma was midwife and I have been assisting her. He said she had granted a no. of women for him."[50]

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45. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books, MS 3423, CHL. Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage.

46. See http://mormonpolygamydocuments.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Possible-Children-chart.jpg.

47. Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, "Remarks" at Brigham Young University, April 14. 1905, vault MSS 363, fd 6, Harold B. Lee Library, Special Collections, 5. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0118.

48. J. D. Stead, *Doctrines and Dogmas of Brighamism Exposed*, Lamoni, IA: RLDS Church, 1911, 218. Available at https://archive.org/details/doctrinesdogmaso00stearich.

49. For a history of Lucy Meserve Smith (1817–1892) see Kenneth W. Godfrey, Audrey M. Godfrey, and Jill Mulvay Derr. *Women's Voices: An Untold History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830–1900*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1982, 261–71.

50. Lucy Meserve Smith, Statement, Wilford Wood Collection of Church Historical Materials, Microfilm at CHL, MS 8617, Reel 8, Internal reference within

The lack of identifiable offspring to Joseph is not completely surprising in light of the difficulties he would have encountered finding time to spend with his wives. The lack of children could indicate that sexual relations with plural wives were less common, but it does not shut the door on such relations.

During the last eight months of his life, the Prophet lived publicly as a monogamist, but several of his plural wives lived in the Nauvoo Mansion with him and Emma. Any could have become pregnant and later delivered without anyone documenting the event. As with so many research realities, the absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. That is, the absence of documented births is not evidence that no such births occurred. In evaluating whether or not Joseph Smith practiced polygamy, the real question is not about children. Focusing solely on offspring is something of a detour. If Joseph consummated any of the plural sealings — whether there was offspring or not — then he practiced polygamy in the full sense, just as Old Testament patriarchs had done. Claims that he was a monogamist would be in error.

Another evidence supporting Joseph Smith's consummation of at least some of his plural unions is found in what is now Doctrine and Covenants section 132. Verse 63 specifies one of the reasons for plural marriage, "to multiply and replenish the earth, according to my commandment." Similarly, "raising up seed" is the only reason given in the Book of Mormon to explain why God might command his people to practice plural marriage (Jacob 2:27, 30).

Manuscript evidence exists supporting the possibility of sexuality in twelve of Joseph's plural marriages, along with ambiguous evidence in a few more.[51] The validity of the documents varies from plain declarations from participants given under oath to much less reliable reports.

Several firsthand statements are available. As quoted above, in an 1883 affidavit, Almera W. Johnson admitted she had "lived with Joseph Smith

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collection — 4-N-b-2. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0474. For a very similar handwritten statement, dated May 18, 1892, signed by Lucy M. Smith, see copy of holograph in Linda King Newell Collection, Marriott Library. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0166. See also Todd Compton, "A Trajectory of Plurality: An Overview of Joseph Smith's Thirty-Three Plural Wives," *Dialogue*, 29 (Summer 1996) 2:16.

51. See "Did Plural Marriages Include Sexual Relations," at Joseph Smith's Polygamy website, (accessed January 3, 2017) http://josephsmithspolygamy.org/common-questions/plural-marriages-sexual/.

as his wife."[52] During the Temple Lot dispositions, Malissa Lott gave the response, "Yes sir," when the lawyer inquired: "Did you ever room with Joseph Smith as his wife?" [53] Emily Partridge also answered, "Yes sir," when asked, "Did you ever have carnal intercourse with Joseph Smith?"[54] These statements were included in the women's deposed testimonies taken under oath and are very credible.

Multiple additional statements affirm sexuality. "Yes, they did," was Benjamin Winchester's reply when asked, "Did they sleep together?" regarding Joseph and Louisa Beaman.[55] Benjamin F. Johnson affirmed that either Emily or her sister, Eliza, had "occupied the Same Room & Bed" as Joseph Smith."[56] On another occasion he wrote: "I saw one of my sisters [Almera?] married to him [Joseph Smith] and know that with her he occupied my house on May 16 and 17, 1843."[57]

When asked, "Where did they [Joseph Smith and plural wife Louisa Beaman] sleep together?" Joseph Noble's answered: "Right straight across the river at my house they slept together."[58] Similarly, plural wife Malissa Lott affirmed she had been Joseph's wife "in very deed" (see discussion below). D. H. Morris, quoted Lucy walker saying she "married Joseph Smith as a plural wife and lived and cohabited with him as such."[59] She likewise attested in 1902: "I know that [Emma] gave

52. Almera W. Johnson, Affidavit, August 1, 1883; published in Joseph Fielding Smith, *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage,* 71. Available at https://archive.org/details/bloodatonementor00smit.

53. Malissa Lott, Deposition, Temple Lot Transcript, Part 3, pp. 97, 105–6, questions 87–93, 224–60. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

54. Emily Dow Partridge Young, Deposition, Temple Lot Transcript, Part 3, pp. 371, 384, questions 480–84, 747, 751–62. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

55. Benjamin Winchester, Testimony to Joseph Smith III, Council Bluffs, Iowa, November 27, 1900. Transcript available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0938.

56. Benjamin F. Johnson, (1818–1905), Letter to George S. Gibbs, 1903, Church Archives, typescript. Available at https://archive.org/stream/BenjaminFJohnsonLetterToGeorgeFGibbs/Benjamin%20F%20Johnson%20Letter%20to%20George%20F%20Gibbs#page/n0/mode/2up.

57. Benjamin F. Johnson, "More Testimony," Letter, *Deseret Evening News*, April 12, 1904, 4. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1223.

58. Joseph B. Noble, deposition, Temple Lot transcript, respondent's testimony (part 3), page 426, question 683. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

59. D. H. Morris, Untitled typed statement, June 12, 1930. Text begins: "The following was given by Judge D. H. Morris of St. George, Utah. . . . " Vesta P. Crawford

her consent to the marriage of at least four women to her husband as plural wives, and she was well aware that he associated and cohabited with them as wives."[60]

Respecting sexuality in plurality, there is both theological support and convincing historical evidence corroborating its presence in some of Joseph Smith's polygamous marriages.

Section 101 of the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants's Purported Condemnation of Polygamy

In early August of 1835, Joseph Smith left Kirtland, Ohio, with First Presidency Counselor Frederick G. Williams to visit Pontiac, Michigan, returning on August 23rd.[61] Shortly after the Prophet's departure from Kirtland, Oliver Cowdery and Sidney Rigdon hastily called a "General Assembly" of Church leaders and members specifically "for the purpose of examining a book of commandments and covenants, which [had] been compiled and written."[62]

The assembly proceeded to accept the Doctrine and Covenants as a binding religious document for the Latter-day Saints. In addition, an article on "Marriage," written by Oliver Cowdery, was read and was "accepted and adopted and ordered to be printed in said book, by a unanimous vote."[63] Accordingly, the marriage declaration was published in the very next issue of the *Messenger and Advocate* (dated August, 1835, but printed sometime in September) and was included in the first edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants* as section CI (101).[64]

Papers, MS 125, Box 1, fd. 5, Marriott Library. Copy of transcript available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1337.

60. Lucy Walker, affidavit, December 17, 1902; available at https://archive.org/stream/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage/MS_3423_1–4 #page/n74/mode/1up. See also Joseph Fielding Smith, *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage*, Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1905, 68. Available at https://archive.org/details/bloodatonementor00smit.

61. Journal History, CHL, August 23, 1835; see also *History of the Church* 2:253. Available at https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE490292.

62. Fred C. Collier ed., *Kirtland Council Minute Book*, August 19, 1835, Salt Lake City: Collier's Publishing, 2nd ed., 2002, 122. Transcript available at https://archive.org/details/KirtlandHighCouncilMinutes.

63. "General Assembly," *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (August 1835) 2: 162; *History of the Church*, 2:246. Available at https://archive.org/stream/latterdaysaintsm01unse#page/n165/mode/2up.

64. "General Assembly," *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (August 1835) 2: 162. 1835 Doctrine and Covenants CI (pages 251–52); available at http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/doctrine-and-covenants-1835/259.

It specified, "Inasmuch as this Church of Christ has been reproached with the crime of fornication and polygamy, we declare that we believe that one man should have one wife, and one woman but one husband."[65] The declaration seems to specify monogamy and disallow polygamy and was interpreted as such by Nauvoo Saints, who published it at least twice as evidence that the Church advocated only monogamy.[66]

After the main body of Church members migrated to the Rocky Mountains and embraced the practice of plural marriage, members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints continued to advance the monogamous view. However, RLDS Elder David H. Bays pointed out in an 1897 book:

> You may have observed the ingenious phraseology of that part of the document [1835 D&C section 101] which is designed to convey the impression that the assembly, as well as the entire church, was opposed to polygamy, but which, as a matter of fact, leaves the way open for its introduction and practice. The language I refer to is this:
>
> "We believe that one man shall have *one* wife; and one woman *but one husband*." Why use the restrictive adverb in the case of the woman, and ingeniously omit it with reference to the man? Why not employ the same form of words in the one case as in the other? Of the woman it is said she shall have *but one husband*. Why not say of the man, he shall have "*but one wife* except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again."[67]

Section CI (the Article on Marriage) became Section 109 in the 1844 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants; available at http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/doctrine-and-covenants-1844/440.

65. 1835 Doctrine and Covenants CI:4 (page 251); available at http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/doctrine-and-covenants-1835/259; "General Assembly," *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (Aug 1835) 2: 163; available at http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/doctrine-and-covenants-1835/259.

66. See "Inasmuch as the public mind has been . . . ," *Times and Seasons*, 3 (September 1, 1842), 909; available at https://archive.org/details/TimesAndSeasonsVol3. "On Marriage," *Times and Seasons*, October 1, 1842, 939–940; available at https://archive.org/details/TimesAndSeasonsVol3.

67. Davis H. Bays, *Doctrines and Dogmas of Mormonism Examined and Refuted*, St. Louis: Christian Publishing, 1897, 328; italics in original. Available at https://archive.org/details/doctrinesdogmas00bays.

In 1902, LDS Church President Joseph F. Smith made the same observation: "The declaration … that 'one man should have one wife, and one woman *but* one husband,' bears the implication that a man might possibly be permitted at some time to have more than one wife."[68]

These two authors took the position that the statement in the Article on Marriage could be seen as ambiguous due to the absence of a needed qualifier "we believe that one man should have [*only* or *at least?*] one wife." Bays condemns the lack of specificity, while President Smith implied it was an intended loophole.

Whether the precise terminology was truly deliberate is unknown because Joseph Smith apparently never referred to the technical aspects of the declaration. It is possible the language was crafted by Joseph himself, since by 1835, he knew the practice of plural marriage was one of the many things he was expected to restore.[69]

Despite early interpretations, the actual language seems less definite either to deny the possibility of acceptable polygamy or to affirm monogamy. It was removed from the Doctrine and Covenants with the 1876 printing, which included what is now section 132. It would seem that proponents of the idea that the 1835 D&C section 101 constituted a strong statement against polygamy are going beyond the evidence.

Joseph Smith's Reported Repudiation of the Practice of Polygamy in Nauvoo

Besides the article on "Marriage," Joseph answered "no" to the question "Do the Mormons believe in having more wives than one?"[70] But in 1837, polygamy was not a publicly official doctrine of the Church, which did not occur until 1852. On other occasions he condemned individuals who were practicing polygamy without proper authority, as in the cases of Hiram Brown.[71]

Perhaps the most popular "denial" was uttered on May 26, 1844, when Joseph Smith declared: "What a thing it is for a man to be accused

68. Joseph F. Smith, "The Real Origin of American Polygamy," *The Arena*, vol. XXVIII (Nov. 1902), 494; italics in original. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link 84.068.

69. See Brian C. Hales, *Joseph Smith's Polygamy: History and Theology*, 3 vols., Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2013, 1:85–91.

70. [Editorial,] *Elder's Journal*, 1 (November 1837), 28, 43. Available at http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/elders-journal-october-1837/1.

71. "NOTICE," *Times and Seasons*, 5:423. Available at https://archive.org/stream/TimesAndSeasonsVol5/Times_and_Seasons_Vol_5#page/n5/mode/2up.

of committing adultery, and having seven wives, when I can only find one."[72] Since he had been sealed to over two dozen women for time and eternity by that time, this was a dodge that used creative language to avoid acknowledging a practice that he believed God approved but that many of his listeners might not.

Combining all the reported "denials" or reading them separately fails to find a revelation or other prophetic pronouncement categorically condemning celestial plural marriage or denying it might have been practiced by the Latter-day Saints in Nauvoo. A close reading of all the statements indicates they could be read as (1) denying polygamy as an official Church doctrine at that time; (2) denying John C. Bennett's immoralities, which never involved a marriage ceremony and therefore were technically not polygamy; (3) denying polygamy teachings and practices that were unauthorized; or (4) denying polygamy through verbal technicalities that contained intentional ambiguity.

Emma Smith's Purported Denial that Joseph Practiced Polygamy

Several weeks before the passing of Emma Hale Smith, on April 30, 1879, her sons Joseph and Alexander arranged for a question-and-answer interview. Several of the responses were printed in the RLDS publication *The Saints' Herald,* and as a pamphlet shortly *after* her death:

> Ques. Did he [Joseph Smith] not have other wives than yourself?
>
> Ans. He had no other wife but me; nor did he to my knowledge ever have.
>
> Ques. Did he not hold marital relation with women other than yourself?
>
> Ans. He did not have improper relations with any woman that ever came to my knowledge.[73]

Attempts to correlate these comments with the multitude of contradictory narratives has generated several theories. Historian

72. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourse of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980, 377, May 1844 (Sunday Morning), p. 377.

73. "Last Testimony of Sister Emma," *Saints Herald*, October 1, 1879, 289–9 0; available at https://archive.org/details/TheSaintsHerald_Volume_26_1879. See also in *Saints' Advocate* 2 (October 1879): 49–52; available at http://www.latterdaytruth.org/pdf/100130.pdf.

Lawrence Foster suggests that "the questions had been carefully prepared in advance, with ambiguities in wording that, whether deliberate or not, allowed for 'deniability.'"[74] Author Mark Staker proposed another explanation: "Perhaps, Emma's memory was already failing in February [1879] when Joseph Smith III interviewed her. She may have made statements in those declining weeks that were not intentionally inaccurate but influenced by growing senility."[75]

A third possibility deals with Joseph Smith III's apparent willingness to edit out undesirable details in published conversations dealing with polygamy. On October 20, 1885, he interviewed Malissa Lott in her Lehi, Utah home. His recollection of the interview was published later:

> I asked, plainly, "Melissa will you tell me just what was your relation to my father, if any?"
>
> She arose, went to a shelf, and returned with a Bible which she opened at the family record pages and showed me a line written there in a scrawling handwriting:
>
> "Married my daughter Melissa to Prophet Joseph Smith — " giving the date, which I seem to remember as late in 1843.
>
> I looked closely at the handwriting, and examined the book and other entries carefully. Then I asked:
>
> "Who were present when this marriage took place — if marriage it be called?"
>
> "No one but your father and myself"'
>
> "Was my mother there?"
>
> "No, sir."
>
> "Was there no witness there?"
>
> "No, sir."
>
> "Where did it occur?"
>
> "At the house on the farm,"
>
> "And my mother knew nothing of it, before or after?"
>
> "No, sir."

74. Lawrence Foster, *Women, Family, and Utopia: Communal Experiments of the Shakers, the Oneida Community, and the Mormons*, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991, 168.

75. Mark Staker, email to the author, July 20, 2016.

> "Did you ever live with my father as his wife, in the Mansion House in Nauvoo, as has been claimed?"
>
> "No, sir."
>
> "Did you ever live with him as his wife anywhere?" I persisted.
>
> At this point she began to cry, and said, "No, I never did: but you have no business asking me such questions. I had a great regard and respect for your father and your mother. I do not like to talk about these things."[76]

Malissa Lott's own record of their interview allows researchers to compare the two:

> Ques. 1 – Were you married to my father?
>
> Ans. – yes
>
> Ques. 2 – When
>
> Ans. – I handed him the family Bible in which was recorded by my father at the time of my said marriage & told him he would find it there.
>
> Ques. 3 – Was you a wife In very deed?
>
> Ans. – yes
>
> Ques. 4 – Why was there no children say in your case?
>
> Ans. – Through no falt of either of us. Lack of proper conditions on my part probably or it might of been in the wisdom of the Almighty that we should have none. The Prophet was Martyred 9 mos. After our marriage
>
> Ques. 5 – Did you know of any brother or sister of mine by my father?
>
> Ans. – I did not know of any.[77]

Malissa's account differs from Joseph Smith III's on several important points. It might be said that it is simply a matter of "he said she said," both

76. Mary Audentia Smith Anderson, *The Memoirs of President Joseph Smith (1832–1914)*, Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1979, 245. This is a reprint of *The Saint's Herald*, April 28, 1936.

77. This manuscript is in possession of Preston Richard Dehlin. See also Raymond T. Bailey, "Emma Hale: Wife of the Prophet Joseph Smith." MA thesis, Brigham Young University, 1952, 100–102; available at http://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=5493&context=etd.

sides claiming the other is lying. Yet, additional documents created long before this conversation support both that Malissa was Joseph Smith's plural wife and that the union was consummated.[78] Malissa reported saying she was a wife of the Prophet "in very deed," unmistakable language for sexual relations and consistent with things she had said on multiple occasions prior to their visit.

Joseph reported exactly the opposite, portraying Malissa as avoiding the question and beginning to cry. If true, Malissa had done an abrupt reversal concerning this issue, only to again affirm her consummated plural marriage to Joseph in the years afterward.[79]

Joseph Smith III also mentioned additional conversational points with responses that Malissa apparently omitted. On March 16, 1892, while under oath during the Temple Lot litigation, she addressed several of these, describing how "Hyrum Smith performed the ceremony" and how "There was quite a good many around my father's house at the time" of the sealing ordinance.[80] She also affirmed that Emma gave her consent and answered "Yes, sir" when asked, "Did you ever room with Joseph Smith as his wife?"[81] These statements again contradict the version published by Joseph Smith III.

In light of the discrepancies between the two accounts of their interview, the possibility that young Joseph edited his mother's actual answers to the questions regarding polygamy cannot be excluded. Eliza R. Snow seemed to hold such suspicions, writing in the *Deseret News*:

> If what purports to be her "last testimony" was really her testimony, she *died with a libel* on her lips — a libel against her husband — against his wives — against the truth, and a libel against God, and in publishing that libel, her son has

78. See Lott Family Bible, MS 3373, CHL; transcript available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0472. Malissa Lott, Affidavit, May 20, 1869, Joseph F. Smith, Affidavit Books, 1:23, 4:23. CHL. Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage. George A. Smith, Letter to Joseph Smith III, October 9, 1869; available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0737.

Eliza R. Snow, "First list of wives," Document #1, in Andrew Jenson Papers, MS 17956, Box 49, fd. 16; transcript available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link 50.010.

79. Malissa Lott, Temple Lot Transcript [1892], Part 3, pp. 97, 105–106, questions 87–9 3, 224–60. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

80. Malissa Lott, deposition, Temple Lot transcript, respondent's testimony (part 3), pp. 93, 95–96. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

81. Ibid.

> fastened a stigma on the character of his mother, that can never be erased. … I would gladly have been silent and let her memory rest in peace, had not her misguided son, through a sinister policy, branded her name with gross wickedness — charging her with the denial of a sacred principle which she had heretofore not only acknowledged but had acted upon.[82]

Joseph Smith III's Private Acknowledgment

Surprisingly, an unexpected verification that Joseph Smith practiced plural marriage comes from the hand of Joseph Smith III. Sometime before January 6, 1894, young Joseph wrote to RLDS Elder E. C. Brand, who was living in Salt Lake City, asking him to create a list of women who were reportedly plural wives of his father. Brand responded by providing a list of twenty names. Then on January 6, 1894, Joseph Smith III replied to Brand's letter by providing commentary on each of the names provided in the earlier correspondence.

During the process, Joseph Smith III revealed his personal beliefs regarding his father's alleged polygamy: "I have been getting used to contemplating my respective step-mothers, and possible half brothers & sisters." He then complimented Brand: "I have always given you credit for a kind heart, and tenderness of feeling, and a sensibility and recognition of proprieties not usual among men; and have believed that much of what I facetiously called 'cheek,' was bravery for the best and political reasons. That is why I asked you to look after the 'limbs of the' family tree, I wanted to see if they were akin to the 'root.'"[83]

RLDS President Smith wrote of possible "stepmothers," indicating a belief that his father was married polygamously. Also, references to "possible half-brothers & sisters" and "limbs of the family tree" seem to acknowledge his belief that blood relatives might have been born to some of the plural unions.

A second letter also supports that Joseph Smith III believed his father practiced polygamy. His uncle, William B. Smith, had written to him about his intent to compose a biography of his brother, the Prophet (which was never written). On March 11, 1882, nephew Joseph responded, "Father's history is not yet written for the world, and ought to

82. Quoted in "Joseph the Seers Plural Marriages," *Deseret News*, 28:604–05, October 22, 1879. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0884.

83. Joseph Smith II to Bro. E.C. Brand, Joseph Smith II Letter Press Book, P6, JSLB4, 63, Community of Christ Archives, January 26, 1894. Typescript available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1401.

be written by a friend, of course."[84] Contemplating what his uncle might write, he continued:

> I have long been engaged in removing from Father's memory and from the Early church, the stigma and blame thrown upon them because of Polygamy; and have at last lived to see the cloud rapidly lifting. And I would not consent to see further blame attached, by a blunder now. Therefore uncle, bear in mind our standing today before the world as defenders of Mormonism free from Polygamy and go ahead with your personal recollections of Joseph & Hyrum.[85]

Joseph then admonished William: "If you are the wise man I take you to be, You will fail to remember anything contrary to the lofty standard of character by which we esteem those good men. You can do the Cause great good; you can injure it by injudicious sayings."[86] Encouraging William to "fail to remember anything" conflicting with the standard of "Mormonism free from Polygamy" suggests that William could remember plural marriage and young Joseph was aware of the likelihood.

That Joseph Smith III would have known from reliable sources concerning his father's plurality is not unexpected. The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints was formed on April 6, 1860. Three years later William Marks was called as Joseph Smith III's First Counselor in the First Presidency, serving there until Marks's death on May 22, 1872. Marks's attendance on August 12, 1843 with the Nauvoo High Council when they heard Hyrum Smith read the revelation on celestial and plural marriage is well documented in both contemporaneous and late manuscripts.[87] There is little doubt that Marks

84. Joseph Smith III, letter to William B. Smith, March 11, 1882, P6, Joseph Smith III Letter Book 3, pp. 335–36. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0886.

85. Ibid.

86. Ibid. The original transcription replaced "contrary" with "[contrasting]," although the script is fairly clear.

87. See Austin Cowles, Affidavit, *Nauvoo Expositor* 1, no. 1 (June 7, 1844): 2 (available at http://signaturebookslibrary.org/nauvoo-expositor/); Ebenezer Robinson, "Items of Personal History." *The Return* 3 (February 1891) 29; available at https://archive.org/details/TheReturnExcerpts. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Book, 1:27, 1:42; 1:54, 1:82; available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage. John Hawley statement, January 1885 (original in the archives of the Community of Christ Church); available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1291. Franklin D. Richards Notebook, "Words of the Prophets/ Scriptural Items." LDS CHL; typescript

was privy to polygamy's introductory activities, even if he remained aloof or nonparticipating.[88] Since one of the primary tenets of the RLDS church was that Joseph Smith the Prophet was not a polygamist, the topic likely would have been raised in conversation with the RLDS First Presidency. It is also probable they would have asked Marks concerning his published statement in the July 1853 *Zions Harbinger and Baneemy's Organ*, stating that Joseph was involved, but in the weeks before his death had planned to give up the practice.[89]

The Supposed Uncertain Provenance of D&C 132

The provenance of LDS section 132 is sometimes criticized by those who believe Joseph Smith was a monogamist. Available manuscript data provide a credible historical background for the document that is today published in the LDS Doctrine and Covenants. William Clayton recorded in his journal that he wrote the original revelation on July 12, 1843 as it was dictated to him by the Prophet:

> This A.M, I wrote a Revelation consisting of 10 pages on the order of the priesthood, showing the designs in Moses, Abraham, David and Solomon having many wives and concubines &c. After it was wrote Presidents Joseph and

at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0355. James Allred, "statement," October 15, 1854. CHL; see MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1380. Thomas Grover to Brigham Young, 14 October 1870, Brigham Young Collection, CR 1234, 1, (Reel 45) CHL, pages 1–2; transcript at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0671. Leonard Soby, affidavit dated March 23, 1886, MS 3423, CHL; available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage.

88. Church of Christ (Disciples) minister Clark Braden reported that William Marks's daughter may have rejected polygamy, possibly influencing her father's reaction to the practice. (E. L. Kelley and Clark Braden, Public Discussion of the Issues Between The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and The Church of Christ (Disciples) Held in Kirtland, Ohio, Beginning February 12, and Closing March 8, 1884 Between E. L. Kelley, of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and Clark Braden, of the Church of Christ. St. Louis: Clark Braden, 1884, 203.) Available at https://archive.org/details/publicdiscussion00kell.

89. William Marks, "Epistle," *Zions Harbinger and Baneemy's Organ* 3 (July 1853): 52–54 (published in St. Louis, by C. B. Thompson). Available at http://latterdaytruth.org/pdf/100170.pdf. See also the discussion in Hales, *Joseph Smith's Polygamy*, 2:247–56.

> Hyrum presented it and read it to E[mma] who said she did not believe a word of it and appeared very rebellious.[90]

Then one or two days later, Newell K. Whitney requested permission to have a copy made.[91] Joseph C. Kingsbury described the copying process in 1886:

> Bishop Newel K. Whitney handed me the Revelation … the day [after] it was written or the day following and stating what it was asked me to make a copy of it. I did so, and then read my copy of it to Bishop Whitney, who compared it with the original to which he held in his hand while I read to him. When I had finished reading, Bishop Whitney pronounced the copy correct and Hyrum Smith came into the room at the time to fetch the original. Bishop Whitney handed it to him. I will also state that this copy, as also the original are identically the same as published in the present edition [1876] of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.[92]

The existence of the Kingsbury copy was fortunate because the original Clayton document was destroyed within weeks of its creation.[93]

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90. George D. Smith, ed. *An Intimate Chronicle: The Journals of William Clayton*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1995, 110.

91. Willard Richards made a separate private copy sometime before November of 1843. (Robert J. Woodford, "The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants." PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1974, 1460, table 110. Available at MormonPolygamyDocument.org link JS0829. To view both copies, see (accessed December 18, 2016) https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE537526.) Whether Brigham Young was aware of this copy is unknown.

92. Joseph C. Kingsbury, Affidavit dated May 22, 1886, MS 3423, CHL. See also Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books, 2:18; available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage. Andrew Jenson, "Plural Marriage," *Historical Record* 6 (July 1887): 226. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1000. See also Joseph Kingsbury, deposition, Temple Lot transcript, respondent's testimony (part 3), page 178, question 19. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

93. See Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 13:193, October 7, 1869; available at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/JournalOfDiscourses3/id/9608/rec/13. Andrew Jenson, "Plural Marriage," *Historical Record* 6 (July 1887): 226; available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1000. Brigham Young, August 9, 1874, *Journal of Discourses*, 17:159; available at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/JournalOfDiscourses3/id/9612/rec/17. Comments of Joseph F. Smith, at Quarterly conference held March 3–4, 1883, USHS #64904, page 271; CD manuscripts series 11, reel 2; available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0797. Charles A. Shook, *The True Origin of Mormon Polygamy.*

In the months following its being committed to paper, multiple Nauvooans learned about the revelation and its contents. William Law reported in the *Nauvoo Expositor*, published June 7, 1844:

> I hereby certify that Hyrum Smith did, (in his office,) read to me a certain written document, which he said was a revelation from God, he said that he was with Joseph when it was received. He afterwards gave me the document to read, and I took it to my house, and read it, and showed it to my wife, and returned it next day. the revelation (so called) authorized certain men to have more wives than one at a time, in this world and in the world to come.[94]

Jane Law signed a similar affidavit.[95] Others left records referring to the revelation, many saying they either handled it or heard it read to them. Mercy Rachel Thompson stated she was privileged to keep the written revelation "some four or five days. Something like that."[96] Lucy Walker testified that she saw the revelation "at the Nauvoo Mansion" where she was living.[97]

Several documents affirm that the revelation was read to the Nauvoo High Council. One member, David Fullmer, described what happened:

> Dunbar Wilson made inquiry in relation to the subject of plurality of wives, as there were rumors about respecting it, and he was satisfied there was something in those rumors, and he wanted to know what it was. Upon which Hyrum Smith stepped across the road to his residence, and soon returned bringing with him a copy of the revelation on celestial

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Cincinnati, OH: The Standard Publishing Co., 1914, 153; available at https://archive.org/details/trueoriginofmorm00shoo. William E. McLellan, M.D. to President Joseph Smith [III], Independence, Jackson County Missouri. July 1872, original in Community of Christ CHL, copy at CHL, MS 9090; transcript available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0363.

94. William Law, "Affidavit." *Nauvoo Expositor* 1, no. 1 (July 7, 1844): 2. Available at http://signaturebookslibrary.org/nauvoo-expositor/.

95. Jane Law, "Affidavit." *Nauvoo Expositor* 1, no. 1 (July 7, 1844): 2. Available at http://signaturebookslibrary.org/nauvoo-expositor/.

96. Mercy Rachel Thompson, deposition, Temple Lot Transcript, Respondent's Testimony, Part 3, p. 250, questions 244. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

97. Lucy Walker, deposition, Temple Lot transcript, respondent's testimony (part 3), page 452, questions 66–68. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

> marriage given to Joseph Smith July 12, 1843, and read the same to the High Council, and bore testimony to its truth.[98]

Seven other Nauvoo High Councilors and stake leaders, James Allred, Thomas Grover, William Huntington, Aaron Johnson, Leonard Soby, and Austin Cowles, left similar records.[99]

Another witness of the revelation's existence is Cyrus Wheelock, who recounted how Joseph Smith "had that revelation read to a group of three or four or five together" by his clerk.[100] He added: "There was a few of us in the woods, getting out of the way and we were talking and I heard about it."[101] Others who recorded similar testimony were John Hawley, Franklin D. Richards, Ebenezer Robinson, James Leithead, Charles Smith, Mary Ann West, John Taylor, Jane Snyder Richards, and Charles Lambert.[102]

Apostle George A. Smith reported in 1871: "In 1843 the law on celestial marriage was written, but not published, and was known only to perhaps one or two hundred persons."[103] The quantity of testimonies from both believers and unbelievers regarding a revelation dictated

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98. Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Book, 1:27. Available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage. See also Andrew Jenson, "Plural Marriage," *Historical Record* 6 (July 1887): 227; available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1000. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1905) 79. Available at https://archive.org/details/bloodatonementor00smit. James Allred left a similar affidavit in 1869 (Joseph F. Smith Affidavit Books, 1:82.

99. See Thomas Grover, Letter to A. Milton Musser, January 10, 1886; available at MormonPolygamyDocument.org link JS1264. See also Thomas Grover, Affidavit, July 6, 1869, Joseph F. Smith, Affidavit Book, 1:42; available at https://archive.org/details/AffidavitsOnCelestialMarriage. Abraham H. Cannon, "Diary Excerpts of Abraham H. Cannon," June 10, 1883; Austin Cowles, Affidavit, *Nauvoo Expositor*, June 7, 1844, 2; available at http://signaturebookslibrary.org/nauvoo-expositor/.

100. Cyrus Wheelock, deposition, Temple Lot transcript, respondent's testimony (part 3), page 542, question 141–42; page 540, question 96. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript. The names of the other men were Joseph Bates Noble, Daniel Davis, and two men with the surnames of Van Alstine and Williams.

101. Cyrus Wheelock, deposition, Temple Lot transcript, respondent's testimony (part 3), page 539, question 79. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.

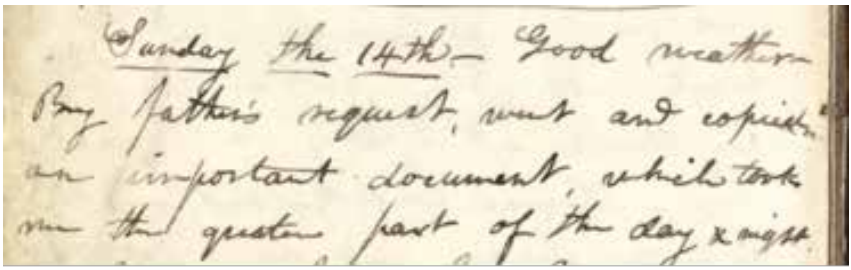
102. See Brian C. Hales, *Joseph Smith's Polygamy: History and Theology*, 3 vols., Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2013, 2:139–52.

103. George Albert Smith, *Journal of Discourses*, 14:213, August 13, 1871. Available at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/JournalOfDiscourses3/id/9609/rec/14.

by Joseph Smith in the summer of 1843 is important evidence that a document dealing with polygamy then existed.

Some critics contend that at some point the Kingsbury copy was changed, ostensibly by Brigham Young or under his direction. Evidence for this theory is thin. Historian Lyndon Cook described what happened next to the Kingsbury manuscript: "Newel K. Whitney preserved the Kingsbury copy of the revelation. In March of 1847, at Winter Quarters, Brigham Young asked Bishop Whitney for the Kingsbury copy, which transcript was published in 1852."[104] In 1885, Helen Mar Kimball explained what occurred at Winter Quarters:

> Sunday, the 14th [March 1847], my husband [Horace Whitney] penned in his journal: "By father's request I went and copied an important document, which took me the greater part of the day and into the night."[105]


Sunday the 14th — Good weather
By father's request, went and copied
an important document, which took
me the greater part of the day & night.

March 14, 1847, entry in Horace Whitney's journal.

The revelation on plural marriage was the "document" referred to, which he afterwards gave to President Young, retaining a copy.[106]

If emendations were made by Brigham Young, they would have occurred after he took possession of the document in March 1847. However, the widespread knowledge of the revelation would have made successfully altering it more difficult. Success would have required a widespread intrigue involving many individuals. Kingsbury would have needed to collaborate by penning an altered (or new) revelation as directed by Brigham Young because Section 132 is a transcription of his

104. *Lyndon W. Cook, Joseph C. Kingsbury*, Provo, UT: Grandin Book Co., 1985, 79.

105. Horace K. Whitney journals, 1846–1847, entry for March 14, 1847, MS 1616, CHL.

106. Helen Mar Kimball, *Woman's Exponent,* vol. 14, no. 4, 15 July 1885, pp. 30–31; available at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/compoundobject/collection/WomansExp/id/12626/rec/316.

manuscript and shows no sign of editing. Clayton and Kingsbury would have needed to agree to promote the changed manuscript as the original. While many Nauvoo polygamists may not have remembered details of the revelation, many other members were still alive who were familiar enough with its message to detect alterations.

Contemporaneous evidence corroborates some details in the Kingsbury copy. The testimonies of William and Jane Law as published in the *Nauvoo Expositor*, that the original revelation "authorized certain men to have more wives than one at a time, in this world and in the world to come,"[107] dovetail with Law's later recollections. When asked in 1887, "What do you remember about Emma's relations to the revelation on celestial marriage?" Law replied, "Well, I told you that she used to complain to me about Joseph's escapades whenever she met me on the street. She spoke repeatedly about that pretended revelation. She said once: "*The revelation says I must submit or be destroyed. Well, I guess I have to submit.*"[108]

Proponents of the altered revelation theory must also confront the question of why Brigham would have included verses 51–66, which deal with personal issues confronting the Prophet and his wife over plural marriage. The sometimes confusing narrative in those verses documents Emma's awareness and a struggle between her and Joseph that fits their known marital tensions in the summer of 1843.

It seems Brigham Young had no need to frame Joseph Smith as the initiator of the practice or the revelation. Multiple voices, early and late, friendly and unfriendly, verify Joseph as the originator.

Additional Theories

Several alternative theories have been advanced to explain Nauvoo polygamy that do not implicate Joseph Smith or his active participation. Each, however, fails to "pass muster" when compared to the available data.

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107. William Law, "Affidavit." *Nauvoo Expositor* 1, no. 1 (July 7, 1844): 2, available at http://signaturebookslibrary.org/nauvoo-expositor/.

108. William Law in "The Law Interview," *The Daily Tribune*: Salt Lake City, Sunday Morning, July 31, 1887. Transcript available at http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/ut/tribune2.htm#073187.

A Cochranite Connection?

There is no question that early Church missionaries were aware of Jacob Cochran, the charismatic founder of a group called the Cochranites, who was sent to prison for adultery in 1819.[109] Orson Hyde encountered members of the group in October 11, 1832, writing in his journal: "They had a wonderful lustful spirit, because they believe in a 'Plurality of wives' which they call spiritual wives, knowing them not after the flesh but after the spirit, but by the *appearance they know one another after the flesh*."[110] Three years later, on August 21, 1835, nine of the Twelve [apostles] met in conference at Saco, Maine," where they again encountered those holding to Cochranite beliefs.[111]

Despite these observations, there is no evidence that any of the LDS members were influenced by the Cochranites to embrace their extramarital practices or in any other way. The timeline, too, is disconnected. Meetings in 1832 and 1835 are years apart from the 1842 practice when the apostles first entered plural unions. Cochran's ideas were nothing similar to the new and everlasting covenant and sealing authority that formed the basis for Nauvoo plurality. Anyone reading the Old Testament would have learned of polygamy in a more acceptable light. Interacting with Cochran or his followers in the early 1830s was unneeded to introduce early Bible-reading members to the subject of a patriarchal plurality of wives.

Udney Jacob's *The Peace Maker*

Some proponents of the position Joseph Smith was not a polygamist allege that plural marriage among the Latter-day Saints in the early 1840s arose from a pamphlet published on the Church's printing press, authored by nonmember Udney Jacob. The theory is that the apostles and a few other church members read it and wanted to apply its precepts among Church members.[112]

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109. "From the Boston Patriot," *National Intelligencer*, November 13, 1819; available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1134.

110. Orson Hyde, 1832 mission journal for date, (typescript), BYU HBLL Special Collections, Americana Collection; BX 8670, M82 vol. 11; emphasis in original. available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0459.

111. [Letter, Kirtland, Ohio, October, 1835], *Messenger and Advocate*, 2 (October 1835): 206. Available at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/NCMP1820–1 846/id/7308.

112. See John L. Brooke, *The Refiner's Fire: The Making of Mormon Cosmology, 1644–1844*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, 265; Harry M. Beardsley,

Born in 1781, Jacob was bold in his attempt to expound scripture and perhaps gather a following. Several pieces of evidence, however, indicate that he never met Joseph Smith, who was uninvolved with the creation and publication of the pamphlet.[113]

The most convincing observation is found within the text itself.[114] *The Peace Maker* discusses polygamy on only three out of thirty-seven pages, with brief references to it in two other places.[115] Its message is not a gentle defense of plural marriage in Old Testament times. Instead, Jacob implements a sledgehammer approach that could have had little effect other than to alienate its readers, especially women, concerning the practice of polygamy: "A man cannot be put lawfully under the law of marriage to the woman; she is his property in marriage … when his wife rebels; and by depriving him of the right of marrying more than one wife, you totally annihilate his power of peaceable government over a woman, and deprive the family of its lawful and necessary head."[116] For

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Joseph Smith and His Mormon Empire, New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1931, 269; William D. Morain, *The Sword of Laban: Joseph Smith, Jr. and the Dissociated Mind*, Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1998, 190.

113. Concerning the possibility that Joseph Smith may have authored the booklet, historian Kenneth W. Godfrey reported: "It seems safe to conclude that Jacob, not Joseph Smith, wrote *the Peace Maker.* … [It] should [not] be viewed as binding upon members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. [It was], in fact, written by a nonmember of the Church." (Kenneth W. Godfrey, "A New Look at the Alleged Little Known Discourse by Joseph Smith," *BYU Studies*, 9 [Autumn 1968] 1: 53.) See also Ronald O. Barney, *The Mormon Vanguard Brigade of 1847: Norton Jacob's Record*, Logan, UT: USU Press, 2005, 21 fn18.

114. Williard Griffith, believed that "Parley Pratt was the prime originator of the system of polygamy" and that he wrote the "book called 'Father Jacobs,'" which is likely the *Peace Maker.* (Deposition, Temple Lot transcript, part 4, pages 40, questions 121, 123. Available at https://archive.org/details/TempleLotCaseTranscript.)

115. Udney Hay Jacob, *An Extract, From a Manuscript Entitled The Peace Maker, or the Doctrines of the Millennium: Being a Treatise on Religion and Jurisprudence. Or a New System of Religion and Politicks*. Nauvoo, IL: J. Smith, 1842, 29–31, and 17, 36. Available at https://archive.org/details/extractfrommanus00jaco. Richard Van Wagoner assesses: "*The Peace Maker*, a thirty-seven-page- booklet, skillfully articulated scriptural and theological justifications for polygamy." (Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989, 50.) This seems fanciful at best.

116. Udney Hay Jacob, *An Extract, From a Manuscript Entitled The Peace Maker, or the Doctrines of the Millennium: Being a Treatise on Religion and Jurisprudence. Or a New System of Religion and Politicks*. Nauvoo, IL: J. Smith, 1842, 29–30. Available at https://archive.org/details/extractfrommanus00jaco.

Jacob, Old Testament polygamy was just one more evidence that women should be subordinate to men.

Even more problematic claims are found within the pages: "It is written in Malachi 4:5–6: Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet. … The author of this work professes to be the teacher here foretold."[117] Jacob apparently touted himself as Elijah returned. It seems improbable that Joseph Smith would have endorsed statements that so clearly conflicted with his own revelations or promoted a publication containing them.[118]

The wordy *Peace Maker* contained plenty of rhetoric, sufficient to offend just about any female who read it no matter how devout her faith in the Bible. Understandably, Church sisters in Nauvoo, not receptive to its message, approached the Prophet concerning it. In response he wrote in the *Times and Seasons*: "There was a book printed at my office, a short time since, written by Udney H. Jacob, on marriage, without my knowledge; and had I been apprised of it, I should not have printed it; not that I am opposed to any man enjoying his privileges; but I do not wish to have my name associated with the authors, in such an unmeaning rigamarole of nonsense, folly, and trash."[119]

John C. Bennett

John C. Bennett arrived in Nauvoo in the fall of 1840, bringing a troubling hidden past. Historian Linda King Newell assessed: "There is no evidence that Bennett was hampered by either theological or ethical considerations."[120]

By mid-February, 1841, Joseph Smith sent George Miller to McConnelsville, Ohio, to investigate rumors about his reputation.[121] Four weeks later Miller reported back that Bennett, who had been passing himself off as a bachelor, was already married and that "his poor, but confiding wife, followed him from place to place, with no suspicion

117. Ibid., Preface.

118. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery had already witnessed the return of Elijah in the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836 (D&C 110:13–16).

119. "Notice," *Times and Seasons*, 4 (December 1, 1842) 32. Available at https://archive.org/details/TimesAndSeasonsVol4.

120. Linda King Newell, "Emma Hale Smith and the Polygamy Question." *Journal of the John Whitmer Historical Association* 4 (1984): 13 en18. Available at http://www.jwha.website/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/1984-The-John-Whitmer-Historical-Association-Journal-Volume-Four-.pdf.

121. See Andrew C. Skinner, "John C. Bennett: For Prophet or Profit?" in H. Dean Garrett, ed., *Regional Studies in Latter-day Saint Church History: Illinois*, Provo, UT: Department of Church History and Doctrine, BYU, 1995, 256–6 3.

of his unfaithfulness to her; at length however, he became so bold in his departures, that it was evident to all around that he was a sore offender, and his wife left him under satisfactory evidence of his adulterous connections."[122]

Having been the focus of numerous rumors himself, Joseph did not immediately expose Bennett. Perhaps hoping that church affiliation might assist Bennett's redirection, Joseph supported his election as Nauvoo's first mayor and even asked him to serve as an "assistant" to the First Presidency.[123]

Because of the close relationship of the two and the nature of Bennett's later accusations, multiple authors have concluded that Bennett was privy to Joseph's marriage teachings or may have been the primary mover in the practice of polygamy.[124] However, the two systems were very different. Bennett's extramarital activities were called "spiritual wifery," which created "spiritual wives" who could have sex with men who became their spiritual husbands so long as they kept the union a secret. The spiritual wifehood and spiritual husbandhood meant nothing after the liaison unless the couple decided to recreate their secret sexual union at some future time. This was a far different practice than eternal marriage or eternal plural marriage as revealed by the Prophet.

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122. See Joseph Smith, "To the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and to all the Honorable Part of Community," *Times and Seasons* 3:839–40 (July 1, 1842). Available at https://archive.org/details/TimesAndSeasonsVol3.

123. For more historical information about Bennett and his part in the management of the Church and Nauvoo, see Brian C. Hales, "John C. Bennett and Joseph Smith's Polygamy: Addressing the Question of Reliability, *Journal of Mormon History*, vol. 41 (April 2015) no. 2, 131–181.

124. See Todd Compton, *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith.* Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997, 239. Gary James Bergera, "John C. Bennett, Joseph Smith, and the Beginnings of Mormon Plural Marriage in Nauvoo," *Journal of the John Whitmer Historical Association,* 25 (2005) 52; available at http://www.jwha.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/2005-The-John-Whitmer-Historical-Association-Journal-Volume-Twenty-Five.pdf. *Conflict in the Quorum: Orson Pratt, Brigham Young, Joseph Smith*, Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002, 16; "'Illicit Intercourse,' Plural Marriage, and the Nauvoo Stake High Council, 1840–1844," *The John Whitmer Historical Association Journal*, 23, 2003, 65; available at http://www.jwha.website/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/2003-The-John-Whitmer-Historical-Association-Journal-Volume-Twenty-Three.pdf. Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994, 298. George D. Smith, *Nauvoo Polygamy: "… but we called it celestial marriage*," Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2008, 65, 67, 70.

Bennett later denied he knew anything about Joseph's teachings of eternal marriage. In a letter to the *Iowa Hawk Eye* published December 7, 1843, he wrote that he never learned about "marrying for eternity," monogamously or polygamously, while in Nauvoo.[125] Plural marriage sealings were always for time and eternity. The discussion above indicates that Bennett's spiritual wifery and Joseph's eternal plural marriage were disconnected the entire time Bennett was in Nauvoo.[126]

Brigham Young

The most common alternative explanation for Nauvoo and Utah polygamy is that it started with Brigham Young. The problem is that available historical evidence does not fit that explanation. As John Adams observed, "facts are stubborn things."[127]

It might be likened to the story of George Washington and the cherry tree. The original story tells of when Washington was six years old he received a hatchet as a gift and proceeded to chop his father's cherry tree. When his father discovered the damage, he confronted young George who admitted: "I cannot tell a lie. … I did cut it with my hatchet." According to the narrative, Washington's father then embraced him, rejoicing in his son's honesty.[128] The story has since been shown to be nonhistorical because there was no documentation to corroborate it. Instead, it appears to have arisen from the imagination of an author seeking to portray Washington in a positive light, with or without genuine supporting evidence.

Similarly, available evidence from Nauvoo polygamists fails to identify Brigham as the originator. Joseph B. Noble testified the first plural sealing in the Church (between Joseph and Louisa Beaman) occurred months before Brigham returned from England. After accepting the teachings in the summer of 1841, Brigham Young became

125. John C. Bennett, "Letter from General Bennett," *Hawk Eye*, December 7, 1843, 1, emphasis in original. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS1135.

126. See Brian C. Hales, "John C. Bennett and Joseph Smith's Polygamy: Addressing the Question of Reliability, *Journal of Mormon History*, vol. 41 (April 2015) no. 2, 131–181.

127. John Adams, "In Defense of the British Soldiers on trial for the Boston Massacre," December 4, 1770, (accessed December 18, 2016). Quoted at http://www.foundingfatherquotes.com/quote/68.

128. See Mason Locke Weems, *The Life of Washington the Great* (Augusta, GA: George P. Randolph, 1806), 8–9. Available at https://archive.org/details/lifeofgeorgewashweem.

a trusted confidant of the Prophet to teach selected individuals about the principle. Joseph A. Kelting recollected that the Prophet "referred me to Brigham Young if I wanted any more on this subject, Brigham seeming to be the man he trusted most with this matter, and was putting him to the front."[129]

Contemporaneous evidence, published in 1842, acknowledges Brigham's involvement with plural marriage but also lists Joseph's participation as well. Brigham taught Martha Brotherton, who was terrified and confused. Brigham found the Prophet who, according to Brotherton, joined their conversation, telling Martha that plural marriage "is lawful and right before God — I know it is. … I have the keys of the kingdom, and whatever I bind on earth is bound in heaven, and whatever I loose on earth is loosed in heaven, and if you will accept of Brigham, you shall be blessed."[130] The accuracy of the report is subject to debate, but the detail that both Brigham and Joseph were secretly advancing polygamy teachings at that time is supported by other later historical data.

For example, on October 23, 1843, Brigham Young wrote in his journal: "With Elder H. C. Kimball and George A. Smith, I visited the Prophet Joseph, who was glad to see us. … He taught us many principles illustrating the doctrine of celestial marriage, concerning which God had given him a revelation."[131]

It seems only a superficial evaluation of historical manuscripts would allow the conclusion that Brigham was the originator of eternal plural marriage in Nauvoo, Illinois in the early 1840s.

Conclusion

The documents and observations above support that Joseph Smith introduced and engaged in plural marriage in Nauvoo in the early 1840s, while alternative explanations seem insufficient. History describes many instances in which sincere, intelligent, and devoted individuals were capable of discounting vast quantities of evidences that contradict their accepted views regarding history, science, or religion. Joseph defended

129. Joseph Kelting, affidavit date September 11, 1903, CHL. Available at MormonPolygamyDocuments.org link JS0452.

130. Ibid.

131. Eldon J Watson, *Manuscript History of Brigham Young.* Salt Lake City: Smith Secretarial Service, 1969, 154. Available at http://www.boap.org/LDS/Early-Saints/MSHBY.html. See also Journal History, CHL, for date. Available at https://dcms.lds.org/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE501665.

the position that "all men are, or ought to be free … to think, and act, and say as they please."[132] Yet he also emphasized that "truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come"[133] and invited everyone to embrace it.

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Appendix: Chronology of Plural Marriage

The chronology of the marriage dates of Joseph Smith's plural wives provides a general view of his involvement with polygamy. While the marriage dates for several of Joseph Smith's plural wives are unknown, solid documentation is available for the vast majority:

Joseph Smith's Plural Wives	***Marriage Date***	***Year***
Fanny Alger		1835?
Louisa Beaman	April 5	1841
Zina Huntington	Oct.	
Presendia Huntington	Dec. 11	
Agnes Coolbrith	Jan. 6	1842
Mary Elizabeth Rollins	Feb.	
Patty Bartlett	March 9	
Marinda Nancy Johnson	April	

132. Joseph Smith to James Arlington Bennett, September 8, 1842. Quoted in "History of Joseph Smith," *Millennial Star* 20 (January 16, 1858) 38. Available at http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/MStar/id/21647.

133. D&C 93:24.

Joseph Smith's Plural Wives	***Marriage Date***	***Year***
Delcena Johnson	pre-July	1842
Eliza R. Snow	June 29	
Sarah Ann Whitney	July 27	
Martha McBride	Aug.	
Sylvia Sessions	Early	1843
Ruth Vose	Feb.	
Flora Ann Woodworth	Spring	
Emily Dow Partridge	March 4	
Eliza Maria Partridge	March 8	
Almera Johnson	April	
Lucy Walker	May 1	
Sarah Lawrence	May	
Maria Lawrence	May	
Helen Mar Kimball	May	
Hannah Ells	mid-year	
Elivira Annie Cowles	June 1	
Rhoda Richards	June 12	
Desdemona Fullmer	July	
Olive G. Frost	Summer	
Malissa Lott	Sept. 20	
Fanny Young	Nov. 2	
Lucinda Pendleton	Unknown	
Nancy Winchester		
Elizabeth Davis		
Sarah Kingsley		
Esther Dutcher		
Mary Heron		

During his lifetime, Joseph Smith also authorized 29 other men to be sealed to plural spouses:

Nauvoo Polygamists	***Year***	***Date of First Plural Sealing***	***Total Plural Wives***
1. Heber C. Kimball	**1842**	early	1

Nauvoo Polygamists	***Year***	***Date of First Plural Sealing***	***Total Plural Wives***
2. Brigham Young	**1842**	June 14	4
3. Vinson Knight		pre-July 31	1
4. Willard Richards	**1843**	January 18	3
5. William D. Huntington		February 5	1
6. Orson Hyde		February	2
7. Lorenzo Dow Young		March 9	1
8. Joseph Bates Noble		April 5	2
9. William Clayton		April 27	1
10. Benjamin F. Johnson		May 17	1
11. James Adams		July 11	1
12. Parley P. Pratt		July 24	1
13. William Felshaw		July 28	1
14. Hyrum Smith		August 11	4
15. John Smith		August 13	2
16. John Taylor		December 12	4
17. Isaac Morley		December 19	2
18. William Henry Sagers		December	1
19. Edwin D. Woolley		?	2
20. Theodore Turley	**1844**	January	3
21. Erastus Snow		April 2	1
22. William Smith		April-May	1
23. Ezra T. Benson		April 27	1
24. Joseph W. Coolidge		?	1
25. Howard Egan			1
26. Joseph A. Kelting			2
27. John E. Page			1
28. Lyman Wight			3
29. Reynolds Cahoon			1
		Total	50

Multiple historical documents corroborate that by the time of the martyrdom, approximately 115 men and women had entered into plural unions, each authorized by Joseph Smith.

"If Ye Will Hearken": Lehi's Rhetorical Wordplay on Ishmael in 2 Nephi 1:28–29 and Its Implications

Matthew L Bowen

Abstract: *Nephi's preservation of the conditional "first blessing" that Lehi bestowed upon his elder sons (Laman, Lemuel, and Sam) and the sons of Ishmael, contains a dramatic wordplay on the name* Ishmael *in 2 Nephi 1:28–29. The name* Ishmael *— "May El hear [him]," "May El hearken," or "El Has Hearkened" — derives from the Semitic (and later Hebrew) verb* šāmaʿ *(to "hear," "hearken," or "obey"). Lehi's rhetorical wordplay juxtaposes the name* Ishmael *with a clustering of the verbs "obey" and "hearken," both usually represented in Hebrew by the verb* šāmaʿ. *Lehi's blessing is predicated on his sons' and the sons of Ishmael's "hearkening" to Nephi ("if ye will hearken"). Conversely, failure to "hearken" ("but if ye will not hearken") would precipitate withdrawal of the "first blessing." Accordingly, when Nephi was forced to flee from Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael, Lehi's "first blessing" was activated for Nephi and all those who "hearkened" to his spiritual leadership, including members of Ishmael's family (2 Nephi 5:6), while it was withdrawn from Laman, Lemuel, the sons of Ishmael, and those who sympathized with them, "inasmuch as they [would] not hearken" unto Nephi (2 Nephi 5:20). Centuries later, when Ammon and his brothers convert many Lamanites to the truth, Mormon revisits Lehi's conditional blessing and the issue of "hearkening" in terms of Ishmael and the receptivity of the Ishmaelites. Many Ishmaelite-Lamanites "hear" or "hearken" to Ammon* et al., *activating Lehi's "first blessing," while many others — including the ex-Nephite Amalekites/Amlicites — do not, thus activating (or reactivating) Lehi's curse.*

The prophet Lehi's importance as patriarch over the clan(s) that became the broader Lamanite and Nephite societies requires little

comment. Although Ishmael's role as patriarch and ancestor over the clan was scarcely less important in many respects,[1] it is often forgotten or underemphasized.

Nephi records that "Ishmael died and was buried at the place which was called Nahom" and that his family — and in particular his daughters — "did mourn exceedingly."[2] From this point onward, Ishmael himself no longer remains an active part of Nephi's narrative.[3] However, by virtue of his name and by virtue of his ancestral role, he retains a formidable background narrative presence in Nephi's small-plates record as well as in the post-King Benjamin period of Lehite history preserved in Mormon's abridged record. Nephi, who married one of Ishmael's daughters (perhaps the very one who interceded on his behalf with Laman, Lemuel, and her brothers),[4] never gives the personal name of any member of Ishmael's family. He always refers to them as "the sons of Ishmael"[5] or "daughter[s] of Ishmael."[6] Nephi does not even give the name of the daughter of Ishmael who became his wife. For Nephi's purposes on the small plates, the filial relationship between Ishmael and his children was a sufficiently significant descriptor for each individual.

The clearest intersection of the name *Ishmael*, which in Hebrew denotes "May El [God] hearken" (*yišmāʿēl*, or consonantally *yšmʿʾl*, with the root from which the name is built: the verb *šāmaʿ*, "hear," "hearken," "obey") occurs in Lehi's admonition to Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and the sons of Ishmael in 2 Nephi 1:28–29 in which Lehi exhorts them to "hearken" unto Nephi's voice, promising them his (Lehi's) first blessing if they do "hearken" to Nephi, and warning them that the first blessing will be Nephi's if they fail to "hearken." In this paper, I propose that the intersection of the name *Ishmael* and a verb rendered "hearken" suggests a deliberate wordplay on — or a play on the meaning of — the name *Ishmael*.

I will further suggest that Lehi intended this wordplay, spoken in Hebrew and reported by Nephi on his small plates,[7] to garner the attention of Ishmael's sons and daughters. Lehi had foreseen the almost-inevitable refusal of Laman and Lemuel to "hearken" to his own and Nephi's spiritual direction (see, e.g., 1 Nephi 8), but at least one of the sons of Ishmael and one of the daughters (not to mention Ishmael's wife) had previously supported Nephi — even sticking their necks out for him, so to speak (see 1 Nephi 7:19). I will attempt to show how Lehi's wordplay on "Ishmael" in 2 Nephi 1:28–29 works as part of a rhetorical attempt to win support for Nephi among Ishmael's family.

Moreover, all this appears to have implications for Mormon's telling of the Lamanite conversion narratives in his abridged Book of Alma and the conversion of the Lamanite royal family who lived in the land of Ishmael. Mormon represents Ammon in a literary way as "Nephi." In so doing, Mormon invokes the terms "hear"/"hearken" — represented in Hebrew by the verb *šāmaʿ* — that recalls Lehi's admonition in 2 Nephi 1:28–29. In this admonition, Lehi predicated his promised "first blessing" on "hearkening" to Nephi. The Ishmaelite-Lamanites in the Land of Ishmael "hearkened" to Ammon's spiritual guidance and leadership in the same way that Lehi had hoped Laman and Lemuel would "hearken" to Nephi's spiritual guidance and leadership. Conversely, the ex-Nephite Amalekites/Amlicites who rejected the preaching of Ammon's brother Aaron and the Lamanites who rejected the preaching of Ammon's other brothers (and those with them) worsened their spiritual disinheritance.

"If Ye Will Not Hearken": A Methodological Note

Biblical Hebrew gives us a pretty good idea of what the phrases "if ye will hearken (unto)" and "if ye will not hearken" (2 Nephi 1:28–29) would have looked like in the language of Lehi, Nephi, Ishmael, and their families. Forms of these phrases are attested in Genesis 34:17 ("But if ye will not hearken unto us [*ʾim lōʾ tišmĕʿû ʾēlēnû*]"); Leviticus 26:14 ("But if ye will not hearken unto me [*ʾim lōʾ tišmĕʿû lî*]"); Deuteronomy 11:13 ("if ye shall hearken diligently unto [*ʾim šāmōaʿ tišmĕʿû ʾēl*] my commandments");[8] Jeremiah 17:24 ("if ye diligently hearken unto me," [*ʾim šāmōaʿ tišmĕʿûn ʾēlay*]); Jeremiah 17:27 ("But if ye will not hearken unto me [*ʾim lōʾ tišmĕʿû ʾēlay*]"); Jeremiah 26:4 ("If ye will not hearken to me [*ʾim lōʾ tišmĕʿû ʾēlay*]"); and Ezekiel 20:39 ("if ye will not hearken unto me [*ʾim ʾênĕkem šōmĕʿîm*]"). Without exception, the idiom used in these legal and prophetic texts employs the verb *šāmaʿ*, whence the name *Ishmael* derives.

Throughout this article, I work on the assumption that Hebrew was the everyday language Lehi, Ishmael, and their families used, irrespective of how Nephi chose to represent that language on his small plates (cf. 1 Nephi 1:2). In other words, the Hebraistic wordplay in 2 Nephi 1:28-29 (and elsewhere) works on the level of what Nephi reports his father Lehi to have *spoken*. Lehi almost certainly would have used conditional expressions identical or close to *ʾim tišmĕʿû ʾēlay* and *ʾim lōʾ tišmĕʿû ʾēlay*, both of which have strong lexical and aural resonances with the name *Ishmael*.

The Name *Ishmael*

Ishmael is a Semitic[9] and Hebrew name meaning "May El [God] Hearken" or "El [God] has heard."[10] In addition to being the name of the son of Abraham and Hagar and the eponymous name of his tribal descendants, "Ishmael" is further attested in the Bible as the name of a prince of Davidic descent who assassinated Gedaliah, the Babylonian-appointed governor of Judah after the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of its inhabitants to Babylon (see 2 Kings 25:25). "Ishmael" is attested abundantly in Hebrew seal inscriptions.[11] The books of Ezra and Chronicles mention other Israelites/Judahites named "Ishmael."[12] Beyond Nephi's mentions of his father-in-law Ishmael and the use of the name *Ishmael* as both a toponym and the ethnonym of the family patriarch's descendants, Ishmael is attested at least once as a later Nephite personal name belonging to one of Amulek's ancestors (see Alma 10:2).[13]

Semites who bestowed this name upon their children would have done so in the hope that their deity would "hear" the child so named. Perhaps, too, the name was given in gratitude that God had already "heard" prayers for and on behalf of the child so named, especially in the granting of the child (cf. the name *Saul*, "requested"). The biblical cycle that first introduces the name *Ishmael* places repeated emphasis on its derivation from and connection with the verb *šāmaʿ* (to "hear" or "hearken") via wordplay.

"The Lord Hath Heard Thy Affliction": Biblical Wordplay on the Name *Ishmael*

The first biblical wordplay on the name *Ishmael* occurs at the beginning of the pericope that describes his mother's relationship with Abraham and Ishmael's subsequent birth.[14] Ishmael's advent into the narrative history is anticipated already when Sarah gives her handmaid Hagar to Abraham as a wife of lesser status for the purpose of childbearing:

> Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. **<u>And</u> Abram <u>hearkened</u>** [*wayyišmaʿ*] to the voice of Sarai. (Genesis 16:1–2; emphasis in all scriptural citations is added)

As Moshe Garsiel has noted, the verb form *wayyišmaʿ* anticipates and alludes to the name *Ishmael*.[15] At the moment of Hagar's introduction to the narrative and Sarai's despairing of having a child herself, the text signals the advent of Ishmael in the phrase "And Abraham hearkened." The narrator's use of the Hebrew verb *šāmaʿ* presages the giving of the name *Ishmael*. This verb will serve as a *Leitwort* (a "lead-word" or leading term)[16] throughout the Abraham-Ishmael-Isaac cycle.

Subsequently, Hagar conceives and there is an almost immediate falling-out between her and Sarah on account of the former "despising" the latter (see Genesis 16:4–5). Thus "when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face" (Genesis 16:6) into the wilderness. The angel of the Lord finds her there and instructs her: "Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands" (Genesis 16:7–9). The angel of the Lord, with divinely invested authority, promises to "multiply [her] seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude" (16:10) and then instructs her regarding the birth of her son, which constitutes a narrative etiology for the name *Ishmael*:

> And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name ***Ishmael*** [*yišmāʿēl*]; because **the Lord hath heard** [*šāmaʿ yhwh*] thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. (Genesis 16:11–12)

What was an implicit etiological wordplay in verse 2 now becomes explicit. The angel offers a basis for her son's naming: he will be Ishmael ("May El hear" or "El has heard") because the Lord (Yahweh) has "heard" his mother in her affliction.[17]

Ishmael's name, like his brother Isaac's subsequently, is divinely appointed — one might say, in Latter-day Saint terminology, "foreordained." The words "[thou] shalt call his name" are both predictive and prescriptive. We see other examples of this phenomenon in the Old Testament and elsewhere in scripture. In addition to Ishmael and Isaac, we have the names of Hosea's[18] and Isaiah's children,[19] John the Baptist,[20] Jesus,[21] and Joseph Smith,[22] among others.[23]

Later in the narrative, when the Lord promises Abraham his son Isaac and prescribes the latter's naming, we find that promise and prescription interlocked with wordplay on the name *Ishmael*:

> Then Abraham fell upon his face, **and laughed** [*wayyiṣḥāq*], and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an

> hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that **Ishmael** [*yišmāʿēl*] might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; **and thou shalt call his name Isaac** [*yiṣḥāq*]: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And **as for Ishmael** [*yišmāʿēl*], **I have heard thee** [*šĕmāʿtîkā*]: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. (Genesis 17:17–20)

The form of *ṣāḥaq* here, *wayyiṣḥāq*, anticipates the imminent fulfillment of the Lord's promise to Abraham concerning his having a son through Sarah (see Genesis 17:16).[24] Abraham's "laughing" or "rejoicing" is followed by his interjection of Ishmael's name, to which the Lord responds by commanding or foretelling Isaac's birth and his naming as a form of *ṣāḥaq*. It is at this point that the Lord speaks Ishmael's name and plays on in terms of the verb *šāmaʿ*.

This is not the only occasion that we find this kind of interlocking, interwoven wordplay on the names of these two important sons. The occasion of Isaac's birth is marked by etiological wordplay on the name *Isaac* as well as an echo of the name *Ishmael*, his elder son: "And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son **Isaac** [*yiṣḥāq*] was born unto him. And Sarah said, **God** hath made me **to laugh** [*ṣĕḥōq*], so that all **that hear** [*haššōmēaʿ*] **will laugh** [*yiṣḥāq*] with me" (Genesis 21:5–6). Garsiel observes that "this pairing of terms from the two roots of *š-m-ʿ* and *ṣ-ḥ-q* … creates an implied confrontation between the two sons, Ishmael and Isaac."[25]

That confrontation becomes a reality in the verses that follow, a confrontation described in terms of the verb *ṣāḥaq*, whence the name *Isaac* is described:

> And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham [i.e., Ishmael], **mocking** [*mĕṣaḥēq*]. Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with **Isaac** [*yiṣḥāq*]. And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son. And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, **hearken** [*šĕmaʿ*] **unto her voice**; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called. (Genesis 21:9–12)

Regarding this passage, Robert Alter has noted that "mocking laughter would surely suffice to trigger outrage."[26] He further states, "Given the fact … that she is concerned lest Ishmael encroach on her son's inheritance, and given the inscription of her sons name in this crucial verb, we may also be invited to construe it as 'Isaac-ing-it' — that is, Sarah sees Ishmael presuming to play the role of Isaac, child of laughter, the legitimate heir."[27]

Ironically, the verb *šāmaʿ* becomes the focal point of divine approval for Hagar's expulsion from the household. However, that same verb continues to demonstrate God's concern and providence for Hagar and Ishmael. In the text that follows, the narrator places double emphasis on the fact that God has "heard" Ishmael: "And **God heard** [*wayyišmaʿ ʾĕlōhîm*] **the voice of the lad**; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; **for God hath heard** [*kî-šāmaʿ ʾĕlōhîm*] **the voice of the lad** where he is" (Genesis 21:17). Robert Alter observes that in the wordplay here on Ishmael, "the ghost of its etymology — 'God will hear' — hovers at the center of the story."[28]

"Ishmaelites" and Brothers Hearkening

Moshe Garsiel points to some additional instances of wordplay[29] on the name *Ishmael* that may have relevance to what we find in the Book of Mormon. Genesis 28:8–9 records that Jacob "obeyed" or "hearkened" to his parents in going to members of their extended family in Padan-aram to seek a wife. Esau, who had previously married Canaanites, takes additional wives from descendants of Ishmael, also extended family: "And … Jacob **obeyed** [*wayyišmaʿ*] his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram; And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father; Then went Esau unto **Ishmael** [*yišmāʿēl*], and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath **the daughter of Ishmael** [*yišmāʿēl*] Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife" (Genesis 28:7–9).

The wordplay on Ishmael in terms of *šāmaʿ* emphasizes the narrator's view that Jacob conducted himself worthy of the birthright and birthright blessing that Rebekah had helped him orchestrate to receive, while Esau conversely failed to honor and obey his parents by marrying Canaanite women. His later intermarrying with Ishmael's descendants constituted an attempt at making amends for this disobedience.

The narrator's use of the phrase "the daughter of Ishmael" (*bat yišmāʿēl*) also deserves special notice. The only other scriptural

formulations of this phrase are found the Book of Mormon (see 1 Nephi 7:6, 19; 16:7, 35). Lehi's sons and Zoram marry the "daughters of Ishmael" and "the eldest daughter of Ishmael" respectively (see below).

Later on in the Joseph Cycle (Genesis 37–50), when Joseph's brothers conspire against him, they decide to sell him to the Ishmaelites, who were relatives. Garsiel notes[30] the literary treatment of the name *Ishmael* in terms of *šāmaʿ*: "Come, and let us sell him to the **Ishmeelites** [Ishmaelites], and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren **were content** [*wayyišmĕʿû*, i.e., "his brothers hearkened" or "his brothers listened"]" (Genesis 37:27). Joseph, the favored brother who will eventually receive the birthright, is sold into Egypt by his disfavored brothers through the medium of his Midianite and "Ishmaelite" kin (see Genesis 37:28–36; 39:1).

The narrator's interconnection of Ishmael, Esau, and the other sons of Jacob (except for Joseph), pertains to the ongoing theme or pattern of older sons not receiving the birthright blessing.[31] This is the very issue that Lehi raises in 2 Nephi 1:27–29 as recorded by Nephi. It should not surprise us that Nephi, upon whom Lehi's "first blessing" eventually rests, was careful to explain exactly why he received that blessing and not his older brothers. The name *Ishmael* emerges as a key piece of that explanation.

Willing to "Hearken": Ishmael and His Family

Several earlier scenes in Nephi's record lay the groundwork for Lehi's declaration in 2 Nephi 1:27–29. The first Book of Mormon attestation of the name *Ishmael* occurs in 1 Nephi 7:2, when Lehi receives a revelation from the Lord that his sons are to return to Jerusalem and persuade Ishmael's family to join them in their journey. Laman and Lemuel's characteristic murmuring and complaining regarding their father's requests are noticeably absent on this occasion:

> And it came to pass that the Lord commanded him that I, Nephi, and my brethren, should again return into [~~unto~~][32] the land of Jerusalem, and bring down **Ishmael** and his family into the wilderness. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did again, with my brethren, go forth into the wilderness to go up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass that we went up unto the house of **Ishmael**, and we did gain favor in the sight of **Ishmael**, insomuch that **we did speak unto him the words of the Lord**. And it came to pass that the Lord did soften the heart of **Ishmael**, and also his [whole] household,[33] insomuch

> that they took their journey with us down into the wilderness to the tent of our father. (1 Nephi 7:2–5)

Nephi himself implicitly *hearkens* to the Lord's commandment when he "go[es] forth into the wilderness" with his brothers to "bring down Ishmael and his family into the wilderness." One can well envision that this constituted one of the most difficult sales pitches of all time: to get Ishmael and his entire household to leave their homes and lives in Jerusalem on a journey whose conclusion, in an unknown land, was far from certain. Nephi does not tell us exactly what they said in making their pitch, only that "we did speak unto him the words of the Lord." Presumably that sales pitch included prophecies about the imminent destruction of Jerusalem and Babylonian captivity. In any case, Ishmael and his family implicitly *hearken* to the Lord's commandment when they "t[ake] their journey into the wilderness" to join Lehi's family.

Moreover, Nephi emphasizes the "we" pronoun here. In other words, Nephi would not have been the only one who spoke on this occasion. Laman and Lemuel's voices — and perhaps Sam's voice too — constituted an essential part of the brothers' attempt to persuade Ishmael and his household. Miraculously, the sales pitch works! The Lord softened the hearts of Ishmael and his entire family. Nevertheless, trouble quickly ensues:

> And it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness, behold Laman and Lemuel, and two of the daughters of **Ishmael**, and the two sons of **Ishmael** and their families, did rebel against us; yea, against me, Nephi, and Sam, and their father, **Ishmael**, and his wife, and his three other daughters. And it came to pass in the which rebellion, they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem. And now I, Nephi, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, therefore I spake unto them, saying, yea, even unto Laman and unto Lemuel: Behold ye are mine elder brethren, and how is it that ye are so hard in your hearts, and so blind in your minds, that ye have need that I, your younger brother, should speak unto you, yea, and set an example for you? How is it that **ye have not hearkened** [cf. Hebrews *lōʾ šĕmaʿtem*][34] unto the word of the Lord? (1 Nephi 7:6–9)

Nephi's second question[35] to Laman and Lemuel ("how is it that ye have **not hearkened** unto the word of the Lord?") is particularly interesting in the immediate context of the rebellion of "Laman and

Lemuel, and two of the daughters of Ishmael, and the two sons of Ishmael and their families" against "Nephi, and Sam, and their father, Ishmael, and his wife, and his other three daughters." Laman and Lemuel's refusal to "hearken unto the word of the Lord" — the very "words of the Lord" that they had spoken to Ishmael and his family (1 Nephi 7:4) and to which Ishmael and his family had hearkened with "soften[ed] … heart" (7:5) — had already created a rift in the family, a lasting one as evident in 2 Nephi 5.

The key point here is that Nephi has carefully ascribed the division of Lehi's and Ishmael's families to the failure of Laman and Lemuel to "hearken." This, in turn, leads members of Ishmael's own family similarly to fail to "hearken unto the word of the Lord" (cf. 1 Nephi 7:9). In fact, Laman and Lemuel caused members of Ishmael's family to "not hearken" unto the very "words of the Lord" the brothers — including Laman and Lemuel themselves — had spoken unto Ishmael and his household (1 Nephi 7:4).

Importantly, it is members of Ishmael's family — including one of the daughters of Ishmael and one of the previously rebellious sons of Ishmael — that save Nephi's life:

> And it came to pass that they were angry with me again, and sought to lay hands upon me; but behold, one of the daughters of **Ishmael**, yea, and also her mother, and one of the sons of **Ishmael**, did plead with my brethren, insomuch that they did soften their hearts; and they did cease striving to take away my life. (1 Nephi 7:19)

We can probably surmise that the daughter of Ishmael who intercedes and pleads on Nephi's behalf is the same daughter of Ishmael that he mentions marrying in 1 Nephi 16:7. Nephi records that she did this on at least one other occasion as well (see 1 Nephi 18:17, 19). In any case, it is scarcely possible that Nephi would have married anyone from Ishmael's family who sympathized with his brothers and their murderous hostility toward him or had failed to speak up on his behalf.

It is important too that Ishmael and his wife (and the mother of Nephi's then-future wife), according to Nephi's own words, had supported Nephi (see again 1 Nephi 7:6, 19). Nephi's posterity thus were also Ishmael's posterity. His own children would have been, in a very real sense, "sons of Ishmael" and "daughters of Ishmael."

Thus, the "brethren" to whom Nephi addresses his words in 1 Nephi 15 and again in 1 Nephi 16:2–4 certainly include Laman and Lemuel but also would have included the sons of Ishmael. Nephi, writing

this account about forty years after the fact,[36] mentions the marriages of Lehi's family and Zoram with Ishmael's daughters. Nephi's following statement, then, was directed to, and meant to be apprehended by the sons of Ishmael as well: "And now my brethren, if ye were righteous and **were willing to hearken to the truth**, and give heed unto it, that ye might walk uprightly before God, then ye would not murmur because of the truth, and say: Thou speakest hard things against us" (1 Nephi 16:3).

Laman and Lemuel were only occasionally "willing to hearken" to the truth. The sons of Ishmael, who were initially willing to hearken to Lehi's sons and accompany their father Ishmael and other kin into the wilderness to join Lehi's party, were becoming increasingly hardened by Laman and Lemuel's antics. In 1 Nephi 16–18, Nephi details their increasing hardness of heart on the journey from Nahom to Bountiful, in the land of Bountiful, and during the voyage from Bountiful to the Promised Land. As we shall see, the verb *šāmaʿ* surfaces at a key moment within this material.

"Because We Would Hearken"

Much of the murmuring in the chapters that describe the Lehite and Ishmaelite clan through the wilderness revolves not only around Laman and Lemuel but also Ishmael's family.

The word *hearken* — Hebrew *šāmaʿ* — is a key term in the brothers' accusation against Lehi and Nephi and in Nephi's subsequent response:

> And we know that the people who were in the land of Jerusalem were a righteous people; for they keep [~~kept~~][37] the statutes and [the][38] judgments of the Lord, and all his commandments, according to the law of Moses; wherefore, we know that they are a righteous people; and our father hath judged them, and hath led us away **because we would hearken unto his word** [~~words~~][39] yea, and our brother is like unto him. And after this manner of language did my brethren murmur and complain against us. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, spake unto them, saying: Do ye ***believe***[40] that our fathers, who were the children of Israel, would have been led away out of the hands of the Egyptians **if they had not hearkened** unto the words of the Lord? (1 Nephi 17:22–23)

The statement attributed to the brothers, that they had been led on the wilderness journey "because we would hearken" — i.e., "because we were willing to hearken" — was so ironic as to be laughable in the

context of everything that had transpired to this point on that journey. That irony was by no means lost on Nephi, who included the statement for the benefit of his readers.

Nephi's rejoinder to this statement notably addresses their asserted willingness to "hearken." Nephi, in effect, likens them to the children of Israel when he asks: "Do ye believe that our fathers … would have been led away out of the hands of the Egyptians **if they had not hearkened** …?" (1 Nephi 17:23). The Israelites as a nation ultimately made it to their Promised Land, just as Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael would to theirs, at least in temporal terms. But they murmured and complained against Nephi just as the Israelites did against Moses and would suffer a similar spiritual fate to the Israelites who died in the wilderness: they would not "enter into [the Lord's] rest" (Psalm 95:11).

This scene, perhaps more than any other, anticipates the weight of Lehi's conditional "first blessing" predicated on "hearkening" (2 Nephi 1:28–29). Nephi, like his father Lehi, knew that Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael were *capable* of "hearkening." The real issue was *willingness* (see 1 Nephi 8). In fact, toward the end of his exchange, Nephi makes the point that they did "hear" the Lord's voice from time to time:

> Ye are swift to do iniquity but slow to remember the Lord your God. Ye have seen an angel, and he spake unto you; yea, **<u>ye have heard</u> 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**; wherefore, he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder, which did cause the earth to shake as if it were to divide asunder. (1 Nephi 17:45)

Their having physically "heard" the Lord's voice made their continued obduracy utterly inexcusable. Nephi here, however, distinguishes another level of hearing. When the Lord spoke in a "still small voice," his words had to be "felt." Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael had become so obdurate they could not "hear" the Lord's voice in terms of "feeling" the words of the Holy Ghost. This already effectively "cut [them] off from the presence of the Lord" as had been foretold to Nephi (1 Nephi 2:21) and as Lehi would again forewarn (2 Nephi 1:20; 4:4).

"Hearken unto Me, O Jacob": Nephi's Rhetorical Use of Isaiah 48–49

When Nephi states regarding the general human tendency toward hard-heartedness that "they set [the Holy One of Israel] at naught, **and <u>hearken</u>**

<u>not</u> to the voice of his counsels" (1 Nephi 19:7), it is difficult not to hear at least a partial allusion to his brothers and the sons of Ishmael. Nephi goes on in the subsequent verses to describe (yet again) the fulfillment of the Lord's promise that he would be "a teacher and a ruler" over them (1 Nephi 2:22)[41] when he states: "I, Nephi, did teach my brethren these things" (1 Nephi 19:22). He taught them from the scriptures, making particular use of the words of Isaiah: "that I might more fully persuade them to **believe** in the Lord their Redeemer I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah" (1 Nephi 19:23).

In invoking Isaiah at length for the first time (at least insofar as he informs us), Nephi introduces Isaiah's prophecies with the emphatic proclamation formula[42] "hear"/"hearken":

> Wherefore I spake unto them [i.e., my brethren], saying: **<u>Hear ye</u>** the words of the prophet, ye who are a remnant of the house of Israel, a branch who have been broken off; **<u>hear ye</u>** the words of the prophet, which were written unto all the house of Israel, and liken them unto yourselves, that ye may have hope as well as your brethren from whom ye have been broken off; for after this manner has the prophet written. **Hearken <u>and hear</u>** [MT: *<u>šimʿû</u>*, "hear"] this, O house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah … who swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of Israel, yet they swear not in truth nor in righteousness. (1 Nephi 19:24–20:1)

Israel and Judah, each in turn, had been conquered and exiled by foreign superpowers because they would not "hear" the messages of repentance the Lord had sent them through prophets. Likewise, Nephi's introduction and citation of Isaiah here emphasize what Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael have consistently failed to do: to "hear."

Even to "hear" or "see" events transpire within the physical realm does not necessarily mean that one will "hear" or "see" the meaning, especially the spiritual meaning, in those events. We recall that Laman and Lemuel had experienced great things — miracles, even! In the course of the Lord's saving them from the impending destruction of Jerusalem and preserving their lives en route to a new land of promise they saw an angel and "heard" the voice of the Lord speak to them (see 1 Nephi 3:29–31; 7:10; 16:39; 17:45). Thus, it is interesting to consider the potential application (or "likening") of what follows in Nephi's quotation of Isaiah 48 to the family's circumstances, including those of Laman and Lemuel and Ishmael's family:

> Thou hast seen **and heard** [*šāmaʿtā*] all this; [or, **You have heard**; now see all this (NRSV)] and will ye not declare them? And that **I have showed** [or *hišmaʿtîkā*, "caused thee to hear"] thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning, even before the day when **thou heardest them** [*lōʾ šĕmaʿtām*] not they were declared unto thee, lest thou shouldst say — Behold I knew them. Yea, and **thou heardest not** [*lōʾ šāmaʿtā*]; yea, thou knewest not; yea, **from that time thine ear was not opened**; for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb (1 Nephi 20:6–8).

Nephi's citation of this particular Isaiah text becomes particularly apropos in the context of the events that led up to Nephi's statement in 1 Nephi 17:45: "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**; wherefore, he has spoken unto you like unto the voice of thunder … " Thus, Nephi uses Isaiah to summon his brothers, including the sons of Ishmael to "hearken":

> **Hearken unto me** [*šĕmaʿ ʾēlay*], O Jacob, and Israel my called, for I am he; I am the first, and I am also the last. Mine hand hath also laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens. I call unto them and they stand up together. All ye, assemble yourselves, **and hear** [*ûšmû*]; who among them hath declared these things unto them? The Lord hath loved him; yea, and he will fulfil his word which he hath declared by them; and he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall come upon the Chaldeans. (1 Nephi 20:12–14)
>
> **O that thou hadst hearkened** [attended, *hiqšabtā*] **to my commandments** — then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea. (1 Nephi 20:18)

Whether he has taken it from the brass plates version of Isaiah or has interjected it himself, Nephi introduces his recitation of Isaiah 49 in similar fashion to his introduction of Isaiah 48, using the prophetic proclamation formula "hearken":

> And again: **Hearken, O ye house of Israel**, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off, that

> are scattered abroad, who are of my people, O house of Israel. **Listen** [*šimʿû*], **O isles, unto me** [*ʾēlay*], **and hearken** [or, attend] ye people from far; the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. (1 Nephi 21:1)

Nephi's reading in the voice of Isaiah helps him to find and establish his own prophetic voice. He thus speaks to his brothers and brothers-in-law (and their families) with authority of the Lord's "servant" (1 Nephi 21:3 citing Isaiah 49:3), as well as that of their "teacher and [their] ruler" as noted above. Although the broader themes of the scattering and gathering of Israel furnish the superstructure of Nephi's message in 1 Nephi 20–21, his more immediate message to his brothers and their descendants remains a simple one: hear/hearken/listen [*šāmaʿ*] and hearken/attend *hiqšib*]. The phonetic components of the name *Ishmael* would have been particularly heard in the twofold use of the formula *šĕmaʿ ʾēlay* / *šimʿû … ʾēlay* ("hearken unto me" or "listen [ye] unto me") and also in Nephi's adaptation of the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:15-19 (1 Nephi 22:20). All of this sets the stage for Lehi's Deuteronomy-based final admonitions to his children and the children of Ishmael, on obedience to which his final blessings will be predicated.

"Even Unto His Commanding That Ye Must Obey" (2 Nephi 1:27)

Just ahead of his pronouncing his conditional blessing upon his older sons and the sons of Ishmael, Lehi cites an instance of their "obeying" Nephi, when he spoke under the constraint of the spirit: "And it must needs be that the power of God must be with him, even unto his commanding you that ye must obey. But behold, it was not he, but it was the Spirit of the Lord which was in him, which opened his mouth to utterance that he could not shut it" (2 Nephi 1:27).

The word rendered "obey" here ultimately represents the spoken Hebrew word *šāmaʿ*, to "hear" which includes the idea "to obey." It is worth noting that our English word "obey" ultimately derives from a Latin word which means to "hear": *obey* < Old English *obeyer* < Old French *obeir* < Latin *oboedire* < *ob* (directional) + *audire* (to "hear").[43] Thus "obedience" means to be in a state of "hearing" or "hearkening."

Lehi uses this example of almost-forced obedience — "hearing" or "hearkening" — to Nephi and the blessings that it brought the family[44] to preface the bestowal of his conditional "first blessing," which Lehi bestows on Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and the sons of Ishmael. Lehi will

predicate this blessing, on "hearkening" to — i.e., "obeying" — Nephi's spiritual leadership, which, of course, becomes an issue of political leadership.[45]

"If Ye Will Hearken"/"But If Ye Will Not Hearken": Lehi's Conditional "First Blessing" (2 Nephi 1:28–29)

Today, as anciently, an Israelite's most important responsibility is to "hear," as the so-called Shema prefaced and included what Jesus called "the first great commandment": "Hear [*šĕmaʿ*], O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy 6:4–5). As Jesus himself formulated it, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Deuteronomy 4:19–20 suggests that teaching one's children in this regard — parental parenesis[46] — constituted one of the most important of duties.

2 Nephi 1:1–4:12 is mainly parenetic in character. Lehi speaks to his sons and "unto all his household, according to the feelings of his heart and the Spirit of the Lord which was in him" (2 Nephi 4:12). At the conclusion of the first part of his final blessings and admonitions (2 Nephi 1), Lehi speaks to all his sons who are older than Nephi (Laman, Lemuel, and Sam) and to the sons of Ishmael. Here he bestows a conditional "first blessing," predicated on their willingness to "hear" or "hearken unto" Nephi — that is, follow his spiritual guidance and leadership:

> And now my son, Laman, and also Lemuel and Sam, and also my sons who are **<u>the sons of Ishmael</u>** [*yišmāʿēl* or *yšmʿʾl*] behold, **<u>if ye will hearken</u>** [cf. Hebrew *ʾim tišmāʿû* or *tišmĕʿû*] **unto the voice of Nephi** ye shall not perish. And **<u>if ye will hearken unto him</u>** I leave unto you blessing, yea, even my first blessing. But **<u>if ye will not hearken unto him</u>** I take away my first blessing, yea, even my blessing, and **it shall rest upon him**. (2 Nephi 1:28–29)

Lehi's admonition and blessing, as it appears in Nephi's text, closely juxtaposes the name *Ishmael* with a threefold repetition of the verb *šāmaʿ*.[47] If we include "obey" from 2 Nephi 1:27, the repetition is fourfold. The polyptotonic[48] repetition of *šāmaʿ* around the name *Ishmael* would have had the immediate rhetorical effect of garnering the attention of Ishmael's sons (and probably any of his daughters who were present on the occasion). The imminence and urgency of their decision to

"hearken" is accentuated by the repetition of the root *šāmaʿ* in its verbal and onomastic forms.

Moreover, at this point we are reminded of Abraham's exclamation regarding his son Ishmael: "O that Ishmael might live **before thee**! [*lĕpānêkā*]" (Genesis 17:18). Before Abraham fully understood the Lord's promise to him, his prayer was that Ishmael might be his spiritual heir and "live before" Yahweh — i.e., live in his "presence" (*pānîm*). Living in the Lord's presence now and in eternity was the very spiritual birthright that Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael were on the verge of forfeiting.[49]

Regarding Lehi's first blessing, Noel B. Reynolds, writes:

> This is a curious blessing. From Laman and Lemuel's perspective, it must have been very frustrating. In order to obtain the first blessing, they had to obey Nephi; on the other hand, if they did not obey Nephi, the father's blessing would go to Nephi. Either way, Nephi wins, although under the first option Laman might preserve the blessing for his posterity by submitting himself during his lifetime to Nephi.[50]

Lehi's clear implication is that Nephi was his spiritual successor, even if political leadership roles remained for the elder brothers. Beyond the possession of legitimate political authority, which Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael could have retained, Lehi's conditional "first blessing" seems to be, more or less, an adumbration of his restatement of the Lord's conditional promise:

> O my sons, that these things might not come upon you, but that ye might be a choice and a favored people of the Lord. But behold, his will be done; for his ways are righteousness forever. And he hath said that: Inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land; but inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall be cut off from my presence. (2 Nephi 1:19–20; cf. 2 Nephi 4:3–4)

Much has already been written on the clear parallels that Nephi draws between the exodus and Israel's journey through the wilderness toward the Promised Land and the journey of the Lehites and Ishmaelites through the Arabian wilderness toward their Promised Land.[51] Nephi unquestionably wishes his audience to see Laman and Lemuel's "hardened hearts" and relentless "murmuring" against Lehi and Nephi in terms of Israel's conduct towards Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

Accordingly, Lehi's conditional "first blessing" carries firm echoes of the language of Psalm 95:7–11:

> … To day **<u>if ye will hear his voice</u>** [*ʾim bĕqōl tišmāʿû*], **Harden not your heart** [*ʾal taqšû lĕbabĕkem*], as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: Unto whom I sware in my wrath that they should not enter into **my rest.** (Psalm 95:7–11)

This psalm alludes back to the story of Israel in the wilderness. Psalm 95:7–11 recalls not only the account of Israel's lack of faith to go up to the land in Numbers 13–14 and Deuteronomy 1:22–40 but also — in view of D&C 84:23–24[52] — Israel's refusal to endure Yahweh's presence (see Exodus 19:3–20:19; compare and contrast Deuteronomy 5:23–33; 18:15–19).

Yahweh's covenant with and blessing upon Israel was predicated on "hearing": "Now therefore, **if ye will obey my voice indeed** [*ʾim šāmôaʿ tišmĕʿû bĕqōlî*; or, **if you really will hear my voice**], and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine" (Exodus 19:5). However, Israel refuses to "hear" (or see) Yahweh: "And they said unto Moses, **Speak thou with us, and we will <u>hear</u>** [*nišmāʿâ*]: but let not God speak with us, lest we die" (Exodus 20:19; cf. Deuteronomy 18:15–19). Israel's subsequent story (Joshua–2 Kings) is one of failure to "hear" or "obey" and thus one of failure to receive the conditionally predicated blessings (cf. D&C 82:10; 130:20–21). The story of Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael represents a similar story.

"Wherefore, They Did Hearken unto My Words"

Nephi details the final fracturing and division of the Lehite/Ishmaelite clan in 2 Nephi 5. Importantly, Nephi distinguishes those who followed him from those who did not follow him, first with the term "believe," perhaps as an ironic play on the name *Laman*,[53] and then secondly with the term "hearken," perhaps as a play on the name *Ishmael*:

> Wherefore, it came to pass that I, Nephi, did take my family, and also Zoram and his family, and Sam, mine elder brother and his family, and Jacob and Joseph, my younger brethren, and also my sisters, and all those who would go with me. And all those who would go with me were **those who *believed* in**

> **the warnings and the revelations of God**; wherefore, **they did <u>hearken</u> unto my words**. (2 Nephi 5:6)

At least some of Ishmael's posterity "hearkened" unto Nephi's words. In so doing, they became joint-heirs with Nephi to Lehi's "first blessing." They would have access to the "presence of the Lord" in terms of having the gift and power of the Holy Ghost but also access to the ritual "presence of the Lord" in the temple that Nephi would have his people build (see 2 Nephi 5:16). They would have access to the writings on the brass plates. In short, they would be able to "enter into [the Lord's] rest" because they were willing to "hear" or "hearken," in the Psalmist's words "today" (Psalm 95:7–11). Thus, "immediately … the great plan of redemption [could] be brought about" or activated for them (Alma 34:31; cf. 34:16).[54]

"Inasmuch as They Will Not Hearken"

It is also clear that Ishmael's sons and some of his daughters and other members of his family did not "hearken unto [Nephi's] words." Nephi states the consequences of this failure to "hearken," again playing on the name *Ishmael*: "Wherefore, the word of the Lord was fulfilled which he spake unto me, saying that: **Inasmuch as <u>they will not hearken</u>** unto thy words they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord. And behold, they were cut off from his presence" (2 Nephi 5:20).

Nephi's declaration of the fulfillment of the Lord's words to him in 2 Nephi 5:20 has at least a twofold reference. First, it recalls the Lord's earlier promise to Nephi: "And inasmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee, **they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord**" (1 Nephi 2:21). That promise came much earlier in Nephi's life after, as he tells us, "Laman and Lemuel **would not <u>hearken</u> unto my words**; and being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts I cried unto the Lord for them" (1 Nephi 2:18). Laman and Lemuel's unbelief and unwillingness to "hearken" had now taken many members of Ishmael's family away with them.

Secondly, however, the phrase "inasmuch as they will not hearken" more immediately recalls Lehi's words in 2 Nephi 1:28–29 and the conditional "first blessing" and marks the fulfillment of the negative promise: "But **if ye will not <u>hearken</u>** unto him I take away my first blessing, yea, even my blessing, and it shall **rest** upon him" (2 Nephi 1:29). The "first blessing" now "rested" upon Nephi, and they would not "enter into [the Lord's] rest" (Psalm 95:11) but would be "cut off from his presence"

until such a "day" as they would be willing to "hear" or "hearken" (Psalm 95:7).

"Wilt Thou Hearken"?

Apart from Nephi's writings, the strongest concentration of narrative mentions of the name Ishmael and "Ishmaelites" is in Mormon's abridged Lamanite conversion narrative. There is a significant narratological focus on "hearing" and "hearkening" to Nephite spiritual guidance.

From the outset of this narrative, Mormon emphasizes the connection between Lamoni and the Lamanite royal family and the Ishmaelites: "And thus Ammon was carried before the king who was over the land of Ishmael; and his name was Lamoni; and he was a descendant of Ishmael" (Alma 17:21). Ishmael and the Ishmaelites are not mentioned in such a prominent way in Mormon's narrative heretofore.

The narrative places dramatic emphasis on Lamoni's reaction as he "hears" of Ammon's exploits (Alma 18:4, 10, 16, 18, and 22). More to the point, however, Mormon's account of Lamoni's "hearkening" to Ammon's words demands consideration in light of the refusal of Laman and Lemuel and sons of Ishmael, in times past, to "hear" and "hearken." Lamoni's "hearing" and "hearkening" activates the spiritual blessings promised to Lehi's older sons and the sons of Ishmael in 2 Nephi 1:28–29.

Ammon, Nephi's descendant through the Nephite royal line,[55] in a real sense represents his ancestor Nephi at this moment in Nephite-Lamanite history — a moment which re-creates earlier moments when Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael had the choice to "hearken" unto Nephi or to "not hearken" (e.g., 2 Nephi 1:28–29). The willingness of Lamoni, the Ishmaelite king in the land of Ishmael, to "hearken" opens the way for him to be taught the gospel and concerning the rebellions of his ancestors, especially the sons of Ishmael:

> Now Ammon being wise, yet harmless, he said unto Lamoni: **Wilt thou hearken unto** [cf. Hebrew *tišmaʿ ʾēlāy*][56] **my words**, if I tell thee by what power I do these things? And this is the thing that I desire of thee. And the king answered him, and said: Yea, ***I will believe*** **all thy words**. (Alma 18:22–23)
>
> And he also **rehearsed unto them concerning the rebellions of Laman and Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael**, yea, all their rebellions did he relate unto them; and he expounded unto them all the records and scriptures from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem down to the present time. But this is not all;

> for he expounded unto them the plan of redemption, which was prepared from the foundation of the world; and he also made known unto them concerning the coming of Christ, and all the works of the Lord did he make known unto them. And it came to pass that after he had said all these things, and expounded them to the king, that the king ***believed*** all his words. (Alma 18:38–40)

Lamoni's willingness to "hearken" and "believe" opens the way for many other Ishmaelite-Lamanites in the Land of Ishmael to "hearken" and "believe."[57] Mormon then states that "the queen [had] **heard** of the fame of Ammon, therefore she sent and desired that he should come in unto her" (Alma 19:2). The ensuing scene replicates much of what had just happened between Ammon and king Lamoni. The queen and many others in the royal court also participate in an ecstatic vision.[58] When misunderstanding and contention arise concerning the meaning of these events, Abish, the queen's (providentially) already-converted maidservant, acts to ensure that these events do not culminate in disaster.[59] After Lamoni and his wife are "raised" from their visions, Mormon records the willingness of many of Lamoni's "Ishmaelitish" people to "hear" or "hearken":

> And he, immediately, seeing the contention among his people, went forth and began to rebuke them, and to teach them **the words which he had heard** from the mouth of Ammon; and **as many as heard his words *believed***, and were converted unto the Lord. But **there were many among them who would not hear his words**; therefore they went their way. (Alma 19:31–32)

Brant Gardner suggests that the text here refers to an "Ishmaelite elite"[60] of a "rival lineage, representatives of whom were present, [who] made these events part of their political resistance."[61] If these observations are correct, Lamoni's teaching "the words which he had heard from the mouth of Ammon" and the "many among them who would not hear his words" take on additional significance in light of Lehi's declaration to Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and the sons of Ishmael regarding the importance of "hearing." Thus we see Mormon further re-creating the moment of decision from centuries earlier: to "hearken" to or "hear" Nephi (now to "hear" Ammon) and to receive Lehi's "first blessing," or to not "hearken" to or "hear" and to remain in darkness, cut off from the Lord's presence.

"They Would Not Hearken"

Mormon further contrasts the initial receptivity of the Ishmaelite-Lamanites vis-à-vis the Lamanites in Middoni and some other places (although many Lamanites at Middoni later converted; see Alma 23:10). Ammon's brothers did not fare as well in Middoni as he did in the land of Ishmael:

> And, as it happened, it was their lot to have fallen into the hands of a more hardened and a more stiffnecked people; therefore **they would <u>not hearken</u> unto their words,** and they had cast them out, and had smitten them, and had driven them from house to house, and from place to place, even until they had arrived in the land of Middoni; and there they were taken and cast into prison, and bound with strong cords, and kept in prison for many days, and were delivered by Lamoni and Ammon. (Alma 20:30)

Many of the Lamanites in Middoni became more receptive to the gospel as time went on, especially after the conversion of Lamoni's father, the king of all the Lamanites. They too became spiritual heirs to the blessings that Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael had denied their posterity.

Aaron, Ammon's brother, experienced similar hardness of heart among the Amalekites/Amlicites in "the city of Jerusalem" in "the land which was called by the Lamanites, Jerusalem, calling it after the land of their fathers' nativity" (Alma 21:1, 4). The Amalekites/Amlicites, of course, had rejected the traditional Nephite faith and religion in favor of the order of the Nehors.[62] By politically aligning themselves with the Lamanites, just as the sons of Ishmael had aligned themselves with Laman and Lemuel many years earlier and by rejecting the faith, they had disinherited themselves from the spiritual blessings attached to Lehi's "first blessing":

> And it came to pass as he began to expound these things unto them they were angry with him, and began to mock him; and **<u>they would not hear</u> the words which he spake**. Therefore, **when he saw that <u>they would not hear</u> his words**, he departed out of their synagogue, and came over to a village which was called Ani-Anti, and there he found Muloki preaching the word unto them; and also Ammah and his brethren. And they contended with many about the word. And it came to pass that **they saw that the people would harden their**

> **hearts**, therefore they departed and came over into the land of Middoni. And they did preach the word unto many, and **few *believed* on the words** which they taught. (Alma 21:10–12)

One on level, Mormon's twofold statement regarding the Amalekites/Amlicites that "they would not hear" Aaron's words further emphasizes the hardness of those to whom he preached.[63] By the words "they would not hear," we are to understand "they did not want to hear." There is an allusion to Lehi's report of his dream and Laman and Lemuel's refusal to come and partake of the tree of life: "And it came to pass that I saw them, but they would not come unto me and partake of the fruit" (1 Nephi 8:18). As Jennifer C. Lane has noted, Lehi was stating "they did not want to come."[64]

On another level, we should view Mormon's remarks here against the backdrop of Lehi's conditional blessing in 2 Nephi 1:28–29, especially in consideration of the conversions that have already taken place among the Ishmaelite-Lamanites previously. To the degree that Lamanites of Middoni and Ani-Anti, to whom Aaron, Ammah, and Muloki preached, "would not hear," they remained subjected to the negative promises of Lehi's blessing (2 Nephi 1:29). Mormon's statement "few believed" highlights the persistent "unbelief"[65] that Ammon and the sons of Mosiah as well as those who accompanied them encountered in their missionary work. Fortunately this is not the end of the story.

Ishmaelite "Hearkening"

The story was clearly different among the Lamanites in the land of Ishmael, who — Mormon emphasizes — were descendants of Ishmael:

> But he [Lamoni] **caused that there should be synagogues built in the land of Ishmael**; and he caused that his people, or the people who were under his reign, should assemble themselves together. And he did rejoice over them, and he did teach them many things. And he did also declare unto them that they were a people who were under him, and that they were a free people, that they were free from the oppressions of the king, his father; for that **his father had granted unto him that he might reign over the people who were in the land of Ishmael**, and in all the land round about. (Alma 21:20–21)

In other words, these Ishmaelite-Lamanites were the first to "hear" and the easiest to be entreated with the message of the gospel. Mormon mentions "the people of the Lamanites who were in the land of Ishmael"

(Alma 23:9) at the top entry in his catalogue of Lamanite conversions (see Alma 23:8–15). They were blessed accordingly (see 2 Nephi 1:28).

When the unconverted Lamanites became an existential threat to the converted Lamanites, "a council" was held in "the land of Ishmael" (Alma 24:5). When many of the previously hardened Lamanites joined the converted Lamanites, "many of them came over to dwell in the land of Ishmael and the land of Nephi, and did join themselves to the people of God" (Alma 25:13). The name *Ishmael* in these chapters (Alma 17–25) becomes a fitting symbol of the people's willingness to "hearken" to the Lord and his messengers, and the Lord in turn "heard" or "hearkened" to them.

Conclusion and Pragmatics

Nephi's writings contain two final statements that invoke the theme of "hearkening" and "obedience" (cf. Hebrew *šāmaʿ*).[66] Nephi concludes his first "book" thus:

> Wherefore, my brethren, I would that ye should consider that the things which have been written upon the plates of brass are true; and they testify that **a man <u>must be obedient</u>** to the commandments of God. Wherefore, ye need not suppose that I and my father are the only ones that have testified, and also taught them. Wherefore, **<u>if ye shall be obedient</u> to the commandments, and endure to the end, ye shall be saved at the last day**. And thus it is. Amen. (1 Nephi 22:30–31)

This conclusion sets the topical framework for Lehi's final paranesis to his sons in 2 Nephi 1–4 and its aftermath in 2 Nephi 5, including Lehi's conditional blessing upon Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael in 2 Nephi 1:28–29, "if ye will hearken … " / "but if ye will not hearken … "

In conjunction with an inclusio that brackets all of his writings and plays on his own name,[67] Nephi also closes the body of his writings that he made "to be obedient to the commandments of the Lord"[68] with statements that emphasize the importance of "obeying" or "hearkening":

> And now, my beloved brethren, and also Jew, and all ye ends of the earth, **<u>hearken</u> unto these words and believe in Christ**; and if ye believe not in these words believe in Christ. And if ye shall believe in Christ ye will believe in these words, for they are the words of Christ, and he hath given them unto me; and they teach all men that they should do **good** [cf. Egyptian *nfr* = good]. (2 Nephi 33:10)[69]

The last thing that Nephi ever says (in writing) emphasizes a willingness to "hear" that has ever characterized his mortal life and that will forever define him: "For what I seal on earth, shall be brought against you at the judgment bar; for thus hath the Lord commanded me, and **I must obey**. Amen" (2 Nephi 33:15).

Nephi knew, as did his father Lehi, the necessity of "hearkening" in order to activate the blessings of the doctrine of Christ and the plan of salvation — "To day, if ye will hear his voice" (Psalm 95:7; cf. Deuteronomy 18:15-19; 1 Nephi 22:20). To delay "hearkening" was to remain "cut off from the presence of the Lord" and to fail to "enter into [the Lord's] rest" (Psalm 95:11), perhaps eternally.

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Notes

1. Erastus Snow, an early Latter-day Saint leader, made the following statement regarding Ishmael: "Whoever has read the Book of Mormon carefully will have learned that the remnants of the house of Joseph dwelt upon the American continent; and that Lehi learned by searching the records of his fathers that were written upon the plates of brass, that he was of the lineage of Manasseh. The Prophet Joseph informed us that the record of Lehi was contained on the 116 pages that were first translated and subsequently stolen, and of which an abridgement is given us in the first Book of Nephi, which is the record of Nephi individually, he himself being of the lineage of Manasseh; but that Ishmael was of the lineage of Ephraim, and that his sons married into Lehi's family, and Lehi's sons married Ishmael's daughters, thus fulfilling the words of Jacob upon Ephraim and Manasseh in the 48th chapter of Genesis, which says: 'And let my name be named

on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the land.' Thus these descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim grew together upon this American continent, with a sprinkling from the house of Judah, from Mulek descended, who left Jerusalem eleven years after Lehi, and founded the colony afterward known as Zarahemla and found by Mosiah — thus making a combination, an intermixture of Ephraim and Manasseh, with the remnants of Judah and for aught we know, the remnants of some other tribes that might have accompanied Mulek. And such have grown up on the American continent." Erastus Snow, Speech delivered on May 6, 1882, *Journal of Discourses* 23:184–185.

2. 1 Nephi 16:34–35.

3. E.g., Alma 3:7; 17:19–21; 20:14–17; 21:18–21; 22:1, 4; 23:9; 25:13; 43:14.

4. See 1 Nephi 7:19.

5. 1 Nephi 7:6, 19; 16:20, 27, 37; 18:9, 17; 2 Nephi 1:28; 4:10, 13.

6. 1 Nephi 7:6, 19; 16:7, 35.

7. See 1 Nephi 1:2.

8. Cf. Deuteronomy 7:12: "If [*ʿeqeb*, or better, because] you hearken [*tišmĕʿûn*] to these judgments, and keep, and do them … "

9. E.g., West Semitic *Yašmaḫi-el*, Akkadian *Išme-ilum* or *Išme-ilī* [*Išme*-DINGIR] and Old South Arabic *ysmʿʾl*. See HALOT 447, citing Theodor Bauer, *Die Ostkanaanäer: Eine philologisch-historische Untersuchung über die Wanderschicht der sogenannten "Amoriter" in Babylonien* (Leipzig, Netherlands: Verlag der Asia Major, 1926), 30; J.J. Stamm, *Die akkadische Namengebung* (Leipzig, Netherlands: Hinrichs, 1939; repr. 1968), 72; Karl Mlaker, *Die Hierodulenlisten von Maʿîn* (Leipzig, Netherlands: Harrassowitz, 1943), 37.

10. HALOT, 447.

11. Graham I. Davies, Markus N.A. Bockmuehl, *et al.*, *Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions: Corpus and Concordance* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 1:380, 2:169.

12. See Ezra 10:22; 1 Chronicles 8:38; 9:44; and 2 Chronicles 19:11.

13. Alma 10:2: "I am Amulek; I am the son of Gidanah [~~Giddonah~~], who was the son of **Ishmael**, who was a descendant of Aminadi; and it was that same Aminadi who interpreted the writing which was upon the wall of the temple, which was written by the finger of God." On reading Gidanah over Giddonah, see Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon, Part Three: Mosiah 17–Alma 20* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2006), 1174.

14. See, e.g., Moshe Garsiel's (*Biblical Names: A Literary Study of Midrashic Derivations and Puns*, trans. Phyllis Hackett [Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1991], 186) discussion on the onomastic wordplay on Ishmael in terms of *šāmaʿ* throughout the Ishmael-Isaac birth cycle.

15. Ibid.

16. Martin Buber ("Leitwort Style in Pentateuch Narrative," in *Scripture and Translation* [ed. Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig; trans. Lawrence Rosenwald and Everett Fox; ISBL; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994], 114) coined the term *Leitwort* ("lead-word," or "guiding word") and defines it thus: "By *Leitwort* I understand a word or word root that is meaningfully repeated within a text or a sequence of texts or complex of texts; those who attend to these repetitions will find a meaning of the text revealed or clarified, or at any rate made more emphatic. As noted, what is repeated need not be a single word but can be a word root; indeed the diversity of forms strengthens the overall dynamic effect." See further Martin Buber, *Darko shel Mikra: ʻiyunim bi-defuse-signon ba-Tanakh* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1964), 284.

17. Cf. Garsiel, *Biblical Names*, 186.

18. Hosea 1:4: "And the Lord said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel"; Hosea 1:6: "And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Lo-ruhamah: for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away"; Hosea 1:9: "Then said God, Call his name Lo-ammi: for ye are not my people, and I will not be your God."

19. Shear-jashub (Isaiah 7:3; 10:21); Maher-shalal-hash-baz: (Isaiah 8:3–4); Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14). "Behold, I and the children whom

the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion" (Isaiah 8:18).

20. Luke 1:13: "But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and **thou shalt call his name John**."

21. "But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and **thou shalt call his name JESUS**: for **he shall save** his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:20–21). Luke also confirms this datum: "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and **shalt call his name JESUS**" (Luke 1:31). 2 Nephi 25:19: "For according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah cometh in six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem; and according to the words of the prophets, and also the word of the angel of God, **his name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God**."

22. 2 Nephi 3:15: "And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me; for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation"; JST Genesis 50:33: "And that seer will I bless, and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded; for this promise I give unto you; for I will remember you from generation to generation; **and his name shall be called Joseph**, and it shall be after the name of his father; and he shall be like unto you; for the thing which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand shall bring my people unto salvation."

23. 1 Chronicles 22:9 suggests that Solomon's name was divinely mandated or "foreordained": "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for **his name shall be <u>Solomon</u>**, and I will give **<u>peace</u>** [*šālôm*] and quietness unto Israel in his days."

24. Genesis 17:15–16: "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her."

25. Garsiel, *Biblical Names*, 186.
26. Robert Alter, *The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: Norton, 2004), 103.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 105.
29. Garsiel, *Biblical Names*, 186.
30. Ibid.
31. The pattern of younger sons receiving the birthright or becoming the covenant son begins with Abel and Seth (vis-à-vis Cain and their older siblings; Genesis 4:25; Moses 6:2). The Book of Moses shows that this pattern resurfaces with Shem, whom the text clarifies was the second son of Noah (see Moses 8:12). The pattern again emerges with Isaac (vis-à-vis Ishmael); Jacob (vis-à-vis Esau); Joseph (vis-à-vis Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah); Ephraim (vis-à-vis Manasseh). The Lord chooses David for kingship over his older brothers Eliab, Abinadab, Shammah, *et al*. Nephi's being "chosen" can be viewed as fitting within this pattern.
32. Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon, Part One: Title Page, Witness Statements, 1 Nephi 1–2 Nephi 10* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2004), 140–142.
33. Ibid., 142–143.
34. See also Jeremiah 25:3–4 ("but ye have not hearkened [*wĕlōʾ šĕmaʿtem*]"; 2x); 25:7 ("yet ye have not hearkened unto me [*lōʾ-šĕmaʿtem ʾēlay*]"); 26:5 ("but ye have not hearkened [*wĕlōʾ šĕmaʿtem*]"); 34:17 ("ye have not hearkened unto me [*ʾattem lōʾ-šĕmaʿtem ʾēlay*]").
35. Nephi records that he asked three additional "how is it" questions "How is it that ye have forgotten that ye have seen an angel of the Lord? Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten what great things the Lord hath done for us, in delivering us out of the hands of Laban, and also that we should obtain the record? Yea, and how is it that ye have forgotten that the Lord is able to do all things according to his will, for the children of men, if it so be that they exercise faith in him? Wherefore, let us **be faithful** to him" (1 Nephi 7:10–12). On the evident wordplay involving the name *Laman* and "faith"/"faithfulness" (Hebrew *ʾmn* and its cognates) vis-à-vis "unbelief" (cf. Hebrew) *lōʾ ʾēmun*, Deuteronomy 32:20), see

Matthew L. Bowen, "Not Partaking of the Fruit: Its Generational Consequences and Its Remedy," in *The Things Which My Father Saw: Approaches to Lehi's Dream and Nephi's Vision: The 40th Annual Brigham Young University Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*, ed. Daniel L. Belnap, Gaye Strathearn, and Stanley A. Johnson (Salt Lake City/Provo, UT: RSC and Deseret Book, 2011), 240–63; idem, "The Faithfulness of Ammon," *Religious Educator* 15/2 (2014), 64–89.

36. Nephi mentions the Lord's commandment to make the small plates in 2 Nephi 5:30–33. In the very next sentence, he mentions that "forty years had passed away" (2 Nephi 5:34).

37. Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants*, 1:360.

38. Ibid., 360–361.

39. Ibid., 361–362.

40. On the wordplay on the name *Laman* evident here, see Bowen, "*Not* Partaking of the Fruit," 240–263, see especially 242–243.

41. Cf. also 1 Nephi 16:37 and 2 Nephi 5:19.

42. On prophetic speech formulas in the Book of Mormon, see Donald W. Parry, "Thus Saith the Lord": Prophetic Language in Sam's Speech, *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 1/1 (1992): 181–83, citing David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), 88–100.

43. http://www.websters1913.com/words/Obey.

44. See, e.g., 2 Nephi 1:24: "Rebel no more against your brother, whose views have been glorious, and who hath kept the commandments from the time that we left Jerusalem; and who hath been an instrument in the hands of God, in bringing us forth into the land of promise; for were it not for him, we must have perished with hunger in the wilderness; nevertheless, ye sought to take away his life; yea, and he hath suffered much sorrow because of you."

45. Noel B. Reynolds, "The Political Dimension in Nephi's Small Plates," *BYU Studies* 27/4 (1987): 15–37.

46. Parenesis (*paranesis* or *paraenesis*, from Greek *parainesis*) is a rhetorical term designating speech or discourse containing advice, counsel, or exhortation, particularly of a religious nature.

47. Even in Egyptian, the cognate verb *sḏm* [or *śḏm*] would have been preserved the wordplay involving Ishmael and "obey"/"hearken"/"hear."

48. Polyptoton = a wordplay involving the repetition of terms from the same root.

49. On living in "the presence of the Lord" as a spiritual heritage or inheritance, see, e.g., 1 Nephi 2:21; 2 Nephi 1:20; 4:4; 5:20; Alma 9:13–14; 36:30; 37:13; 38:15; 50:20; Ether 2:15; 10:11. See further 2 Nephi 9:6; Alma 42:6–15; Helaman 12:21; 14:6. Leviticus 22:3: "Whosoever he be of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the Lord, having his uncleanness upon him, that soul **shall be cut off from my presence**: I am the Lord."

50. Reynolds, "The Political Dimension in Nephi's Small Plates," 32.

51. See, e.g. George S. Tate, "The Typology of the Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon," in *Literature of Belief: Sacred Scripture and Religious Experience*, ed. Neal E. Lambert (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 1981), 246–62; Terrence L. Szink, "To a Land of Promise (1 Nephi 16–18)," in *Studies in Scripture*, *Vol 7:1 Nephi to Alma 29*, ed. Kent P. Jackson (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 60–72; idem, "Nephi and the Exodus," *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991), 35–51; Noel B. Reynolds, "Lehi as Moses," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9/2 (2000): 26–35, 81–8; idem, The Political Dimension in Nephi's Small Plates," 15–37; S. Kent Brown, "The Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon," in *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla: Literary and Historical Studies of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 1998), 75–98.

52. D&C 84:23–24: "Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God; But they hardened their hearts and could not endure his presence; therefore, the Lord in his wrath, for his anger was kindled against them, swore that they should not enter into his rest while in the wilderness, which rest is the fulness of his glory."

53. Bowen, "*Not* Partaking of the Fruit," 242–243.

54. Amulek's statement in Alma 34:31 constitutes a paraphrase of Psalm 95:7–11.

55. Cf. Mosiah 25:13, which states: "And now all the people of Zarahemla were numbered with the Nephites, and this because the kingdom had been conferred upon none but those who were descendants of Nephi." Mosiah II, Benjamin, and Mosiah I (going back to Nephi, presumably) were all kings from Nephi's lineage. Ammon, Aaron, and their brothers as Mosiah II's sons, of course, belonged to this lineage.

56. Cf. Jeremiah 38:15: "Then Jeremiah said unto Zedekiah, If I declare it unto thee, wilt thou not surely put me to death? and if I give thee counsel, **wilt thou** not **hearken unto me** [*tišmaʿ ʾēlāy*]?"

57. Bowen, "*Not* Partaking of the Fruit," 240–263.

58. Ecstatic (< Greek *ek* + *stasis* = standing outside). An ecstatic vision is one in which one is "standing outside" one's own body — i.e., an "out-of-body" vision. Cf. 2 Corinthians 12:2–3; 3 Nephi 28:15; D&C 137:1).

59. Matthew L. Bowen, "Father Is a Man: The Remarkable Mention of the Name *Abish* in Alma 19:16 and Its Narrative Context," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 14 (2015): 77–93.

60. Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Textual Commentary on the Book of Mormon, Volume 4: Alma* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007), 4:305.

61. Ibid., 4:308.

62. See especially Alma 2:1 (and following); 21:45; 24:48.

63. See especially Mormon's comment in Alma 21:3: "Now the Lamanites of themselves were sufficiently hardened, but the Amalekites and the Amulonites were still harder; therefore they did cause the Lamanites that they should harden their hearts, that they should wax strong in wickedness and their abominations."

64. Jennifer C. Lane, "The Presence of the Lord," in *The Things Which My Father Saw: Approaches to Lehi's Dream and Nephi's Vision*, ed. Daniel L. Belnap, Gaye Strathearn, and Stanley A. Johnson (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2011), 130.

65. On Lamanite "unbelief," see again Bowen, "*Not* Partaking of the Fruit," 240–263.

66. Nephi would have used a form of Hebrew *šāmaʿ* or its Egyptian cognate equivalent *sḏm* (*śḏm*).

67. See Matthew L. Bowen, "Nephi's Good Inclusio," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, 17 (2015): 181–195.

68. 2 Nephi 5:31.

69. Bowen, "Nephi's Good Inclusio," 181–195.

Apostate Religion in the Book of Mormon

A. Keith Thompson

Abstract: *Nephite missionaries in the first century BC had significant difficulty preaching the gospel among Nephites and Lamanites who followed Zoramite and Nehorite teaching. Both of these groups built synagogues and other places of worship suggesting that some of their beliefs originated in Israelite practice, but both denied the coming or the necessity of a Messiah. This article explores the nature of Zoramite and Nehorite beliefs, identifies how their beliefs and practices differed from orthodox Nephite teaching, and suggests that some of these religious differences are attributable to cultural and political differences that resonate in the present.*

There is a longstanding inference that the Amlicites and the Amalekites of the Book of Mormon are the same people.[1] This inference was developed by Chris Conkling from John L. Sorensen's[2] 1992 entry in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* and is strengthened by the more recent textual studies done by Royal Skousen.[3] The two peoples are not recognized as the same, Conkling claims, because of inconsistencies in Oliver Cowdery's spelling as scribe, despite Joseph Smith's having spelled out some of the names during the translation process.[4]

My purpose in revisiting this analysis is to search for a better understanding of the religions the Nephites considered apostate in the Book of Mormon. I have previously suggested that Sherem's version of worship according to the Law of Moses may have originated in Josiah's reforms before the departure of Lehi and his group from Jerusalem around 600 BC.[5] Brant Gardner and Mark Wright suggest that the apostate religion discussed in the Book of Mormon narrative may be partly explained by syncretization with pre-existing religion in ancient Mesoamerica.[6] In this article, I suggest that the Nehorite religion likely had patriotic Mulekite antecedents which relied upon Davidic genealogy.

The evidence available is limited, which makes this discussion speculative. However, in my previous research I have suggested that the earliest Jewish synagogues likely originated soon after the children of Israel entered their Promised Land under Joshua, during the second millennium BCE. This would predate their Babylonian captivity, during which the Jews were separated from their principal Temple at Jerusalem, despite conventional Jewish scholarship to that effect.[7] The Book of Mormon says the Nephites, the Zoramites and the Nehorites all worshipped in synagogues, among other places of worship. The presence of altars within some of these New World places of worship[8] during the first millennium BCE, along with the way guests were generally welcomed and allowed to speak and pray within them, also suggests that these synagogues had Hebrew antecedents, since Christ and Paul did some of their missionary work by invitation in Jewish synagogues.

Zoramite and Nehorite rejection of the Nephite teaching that the Law of Moses necessarily included the redemptive mission of the Son of God as a Messiah is presented in the Book of Mormon as the principal cause of conflict between those two sects and Nephite religion. I seek to define more clearly the origin of that theological difference. I also believe that identifying the Nehorite religion's origins within the Mulekite society may enable a closer understanding of the political and possibly racial tensions in Zarahemla at the time the judicial republic was inaugurated.

I approach this task in four parts. In Part I, I survey the current scholarship that surrounds the Mulekite identity of both the Amlicites and the Amalekites. That survey will include discussion of John Tvedtnes's work on the Jaredite origin of many Nephite place and personal names. I also suggest that Tvedtnes's hypothesis is supported by the parallel work of Skousen on Oliver Cowdery's variable spelling as Joseph Smith's scribe for most of the Book of Mormon translation and Sorenson's suggestions of Jaredite and Mulekite influence on Nephite and Lamanite culture.

In Part II, I will discuss the references to the Amlicites and the Amalekites in the Book of Mormon and inferences other researchers have drawn about their influence on Nephite and Lamanite politics. Though Mulekite/Amlicilite/Amalekite politics are not central to Alma_2's mission to Ammonihah, I will suggest that the close connection between the Nehorite religion and the Mulekite people evident during that mission helps explain the civil conflicts and wars of the Nephites in Zarahemla throughout the book of Alma.

In Part III, I seek to identify the components of the Nehorite religion and to distinguish those from what was Nephite and Zoramite. Again, my purpose is to suggest that the Book of Mormon text we have provides more evidence than we realize about the nature of the politics and religious difficulties the Kings and Judges had to manage at Zarahemla and in its tributary geography.

In Part IV, I endeavor to draw all the evidence together and suggest that while the Mulekites at Zarahemla appear to have welcomed the literate Nephites to Zarahemla when they acceded to the appointment of Mosiah_1 as their King, by the time the third generation had passed, the more numerous indigenous Mulekites had grown tired of the patrician Nephite aristocracy, and they sought a restoration of their own monarchy, despite the best efforts of Mosiah_2 and Alma_2 to manage them. I also suggest that if the Nephites were always an elite minority among the Mulekites, as seems likely, the Mulekite sense of grievance is easy to understand. Indeed, it probably resonated with the Lamanite tradition that the Nephites were usurpers and robbers and the Zoramite teaching that the Nephites had corrupted the true nature of Israelite religion. This is, of course, not the story the Book of Mormon editors tell, but it can help explain the enduring nature of the Nephite difficulties and why their episodes of hypocritical unrighteousness had such devastating political consequences.

I conclude that even if the Nephites had been as true to their faith as the faithful King Benjamin, it still seems unlikely they would have lived out their existence free of political and religious commotion. Understanding the political and religious turmoil that plagued their civilization provides greater context for the words and actions of their prophets, leaders, and missionaries; indeed, it provides relevance and greater understanding of our own days.

Part I: The Mulekite Identity of the Amlicites and the Amalekites

Back in 1973 when he was an MA student, John Tvedtnes wrote a technical paper in which he assumed that the principal tongue of the Nephite/Mulekite peoples was Hebrew, while the Jaredites spoke Akkadian/Sumerian.[9] He used this analysis to identify the origin of Jaredite names and traced them into Nephite/Mulekite usage.[10] Though readers of the Book of Mormon may infer that — save for Coriantumr[11] — there was no physical interaction between the Jaredites and the Mulekites before the latter merged with the Nephites/Lamanites,

Tvedtnes, following Hugh Nibley, believed otherwise. Tvedtnes said simply:

> It is obvious that Jaredites of whom we have no record must have intermarried with the Mulekites (probably before the latter merged with the Nephites), preserving both Jaredite names and Jaredite customs.[12]

Nibley justified his belief that Jaredite and Nephite people interacted by noting Mosiah$_2$'s statement that remnants of the Jaredites had survived the great battle catalogued by Ether.[13] Nibley also believed the Mulekite and Jaredite cultures had likely overlapped "over many years"[14] and that the overlap enabled the Jaredite civilization to make "a permanent cultural impression on the Nephites through Mulek."[15] That permanent cultural impression is also apparent in the fact that Alma$_2$ gave at least two of his three sons names with Jaredite roots.[16]

It is well attested that no vowels were used in ancient Hebrew,[17] meaning the names Mulek, Amlici, and Amalek are likely derived from the same root, possibly referring, as does the first part of the name *Melchizedek*, to the royal birth of the person named.[18] Tvedtnes, John Gee, and Matthew Roper develop this point in their discussion of the Hebrew origin and derivation of the name of the Book of Mormon missionary Muloki. They have written:

> MULOKI was one of the men who accompanied the sons of Mosiah on their mission to the Lamanites (see Alma 20:2, 21:11). His name suggests that he may have been a Mulekite. Also from the same root are names such as Mulek and Melek, which is the Hebrew word meaning "king". Mulek is hypocoristic for Hebrew *Mlkyh*(*w*) (KJV Melchiah and Malchiah), which is attested both in the Bible (see 1 Chronicles 6:40; Ezra 10:25, 31; Nehemiah 3:14, 31; 8:4; 11:12; Jeremiah 21:1, 38:1, 6) and in numerous ancient inscriptions, most of them from the time of Lehi. Indeed, it has been suggested that one of the men bearing this name is the Mulek of the Book of Mormon. He is called "Malchiah the son of Hammelech," which means "Malchiah, the son of the king" (see Jeremiah 38:6).

Muloki corresponds to the name *Mlky* on a bulla found in the City of David (Jerusalem) and dating from the time of Lehi (footnotes omitted).[19]

In his article in the same journal five years later, Conkling uses what he calls "hints in the traditional text that many readers have not noticed"[20] and "spelling variations in the original manuscripts of Oliver Cowdery"[21] to theorize that the Amalekites and the Amlicites are the same people. The "hints in the traditional text" that he finds are the complete disappearance of the Amlicites from the Nephite record after Alma 3:20 — after 43 mentions inside two chapters — and their cultural identity with the Amalekites whose dissent caused such problems for the Nephites between Alma 21:2 and Alma 43:44.[22] Though "there are two Amalekis in the record (see Omni 1:12–30; Mosiah 7:6), neither one has any connection with this [Amalekite] group"[23] which is surprising since "we cannot find another instance in this abridged record where a group is introduced without explanation or introduction."[24] Conkling also mentions Sorenson's speculation that the Amalekites "constituted the Amlicite remnant, … their new name possibly arising by 'lamanitization' of the former."[25]

Conkling then discusses the "spelling variations in the original manuscripts of Oliver Cowdery" identified by Skousen in his "long-term Book of Mormon critical text project."[26]

> [T]he apostate groups in the book of Alma currently spelled *Amlicites* and *Amalekites* are most likely the same group of dissenters, founded by Amlici, and … the names should be spelled identically.[27]

[T]hese types of errors in the original and printer's manuscripts were due to inconsistencies in Oliver Cowdery's spelling style.[28]

Conkling's article demonstrates these inconsistent spellings with photographs of fragments from the original and printer's manuscripts of the Book of Mormon, showing "Amelicites," "Amalakites," "Amaleckites," and "Amelekites" in the original and how these appear to have been standardized to "Amalekites" in the printer's version.[29] Conkling infers that is likely because the printer was told to standardize spelling but is not completely sure such instruction accounts for the variability of Oliver's spelling since the names "Amlicites" and "Amalekites" are so different. Conkling concludes that "using the records we have (Cowdery's handwritten manuscripts), there is little support that the Amlicites and the Amalekites were two separate groups."[30]

In his following analysis, Conkling suggests that "Alma structured his narrative record more tightly and carefully than we may previously have realized."[31] His introduction of Nehor and Amlici at the beginning of his book introduced "the major threat and problem that Alma had to deal with the rest of his life."[32] Conkling then asks, in effect, what is $Alma_2$'s message for our day? Perhaps that "dissension, which was dealt with by preaching the word, can lead to apostasy and then to treason, which was dealt with by legal action and war"[33] and always ended with "the dead bodies of the enemy soldiers being thrown into the River Sidon" and carried out "to the depths of the sea."[34]

Conkling also identifies several perplexing questions that have resulted from Book of Mormon readers' not understanding that the Amlicites and the Amalekites were the same people. One of those questions is how the Amlicite/Amalekite people could have become so established among the Lamanites after their initial rebellion in the early years of $Alma_2$'s reign as chief judge. Evidence of their establishment in Lamanite society is seen, as they were partially responsible for the construction of the city named Jerusalem (Alma 21:1–4) before Aaron ran into trouble with them there at the beginning of his mission.

Conkling suggests two possible answers for this issue. The first is that perhaps Aaron did not preach at this Lamanite/Amalekite city as early in his mission as we suppose. The second is that we misunderstand the Amlicite grievances and subsequent threat without the context of history in the year after the judicial republic was created. This answer appears more plausible and will be the focus of my discussion in this essay. The incidents with Nehor and Amlici did not happen instantly or in isolation. It is likely that there had been conflict in Zarahemla for a long time before the judicial republic was created..[35] Like Conkling, I believe the conflicts at the beginning of $Alma_2$'s reign as chief judge had been building for some time[36] and were part of the reason why the sons of $Mosiah_2$ were not interested in assuming their father's hereditary throne.

Part II: Amlicite Politics and Religion

Having established the likelihood that the Amlicites and the Amalekites were the same people and that both are remnants of the Mulekites, I propose to simplify further discussion by referring to them solely as Amlicites, save for when there is some benefit in drawing attention to their Mulekite/Amalekite connections.

Conkling says that $Alma_2$ introduces the Amlicites in the Book of Alma because they constituted a threat to Nephite religion and

civilization for the rest of his life.[37] The record of his ministry "begins and ends in the same place, embroiled in problems resulting from the apostasy of Nehor and the Amlicites."[38] Gary L. Sturgess says that "questions of political order and spiritual well-being"[39] were intimately connected "among ancient peoples,"[40] and he points to Noel B. Reynold's insight that "the doctrine of Christ was central to the political question among the Book of Mormon peoples: 'Who has the right to rule?'"[41]

Reynold's thesis is that this "right to rule" quarrel was the root cause of the centuries of military and political struggle documented in the Book of Mormon. The Lamanites asserted that the Nephites had usurped the accepted Israelite primogeniture requirement that political leadership was the birthright of the eldest son. Nephite dissenters would "split away to join the Lamanites when they could not win control inside the Nephite system,"[42] but the doctrine of Christ recorded in the Nephite records continued to be used to justify Nephite political supremacy.[43]

Val Larsen has speculatively advanced Reynold's political thesis some distance where the Mulekites and the Amlicites are concerned. To Larsen, the Mulekites were not as submissive in the appointment of Mosiah_1 as their king in Zarahemla, as the book of Omni suggests.[44] He suggests that the civil wars of King Benjamin's time as well as the later rebellions of both the Amlicites and the king-men in the Book of Alma are consequences stemming from the Mulekite belief that they were entitled to rule "by virtue of the Davidic covenant."[45] That is, since the Mulekites were the descendants of Zedekiah, the last king at Jerusalem, the right to rule reverted to them when Mosiah_2 relinquished the throne in favor of a system of judges. When the Amlicite descendants of the Mulekites failed to gain control through the Nephite political system, they defected to the Lamanites, established a city they unsurprisingly named Jerusalem, and supported Amalackiah in his ascension to the true Lamanite throne.[46]

At this point, the Lamanites, together with all the Nephites who had defected to Lamanite rule (including some claiming Zoramite lineage) and the remnants of the Mulekites, would answer Reynold's question regarding right to rule in exactly the same way: they would deny the Nephite claim to independence and self-rule. This political division grew even greater after the Anti-Nephi-Lehi converts to Nephite Christianity left the land of Lehi-Nephi for Jershon, because all the Lamanites who remained rejected Nephite Christianity and its justification for Nephite political leadership.

Though Larsen's analysis is speculative, the foundational idea that the Mulekite remnant were never completely happy with Nephite politics and religion is consistent with the observations of Tvedtnes, Sorenson, Reynolds, Conkling, and Sturgess, among others. What I suggest in consequence is that there is a strong connection between Mulekite genealogy and the Nehorite religion. An understanding of that connection provides insight into the nature of Nehorite Judaism: how it was different from Zoramite Judaism and how both disagreed with Nephite Christianity. It is likely, however, that not all those with Mulekite ancestry belonged to the Nehorite Church. Larsen suggests that King Benjamin and his sons may have married into the Mulekite aristocracy[47] and may have been at least 50% Mulekite themselves. But the combination of religion, ethnicity, and aristocracy made Nephite society and politics more volatile than we may yet have understood. Those multicultural complications echoed and resonated down into their last days.

Part III: Nehorite Religious Belief and Practice

Our greatest insights into Nehorite belief and practice necessarily come by inference, as it was not the purpose of the authors or editors of the Nephite records to detail the beliefs of those they felt had apostatized from true religion. For the same reason, it is easy to understand why the various Book of Mormon contributors did not set out their theological differences, or the foundations of those differences, in a systematic way.[48] But that does not leave us completely without resource in determining the nature of those differences. The extended account of the mission of Alma_2 and Amulek to the Nehorite city of Ammonihah provides significant background information; the way these missionaries approached their assignment, the theological material they used, and the analogies they drew all suggest points of agreement and difference.

Nehorite Religion at Ammonihah

I have elsewhere suggested that Alma_2 may have chosen to speak about Melchizedek among the Ammonihahites because the story resonated with him.[49] It is also likely that the angel's direction for Alma_2 to return to Ammonihah after being rejected suggested that God saw the potential for these sinners to repent as did the people of Melchizedek. It seems unlikely, however, that he would have told this story or made these analogies unless the underlying material was familiar to his listeners. But the "Melchizedek material" is not the only material that suggests

the Nehorite religion had Israelite antecedents. When $Alma_2$ arrived at Ammonihah, he was rejected by the people. Although Ammonihah was a city within the sphere of Nephite sovereignty, they claimed that $Alma_2$ had no jurisdiction over them because he had relinquished the judgment seat, and the people of Ammonihah were "not of [his] church."[50] That expression — their statement that they did not "believe in such foolish traditions"[51] — and the statements in Alma 14, 15, and 16[52] that the people of Ammonihah were of the order and profession[53] of Nehor, imply that Nehorism was an independent form of religion with its own forms of worship and ritual. John Welch suggests that the way the Ammonihahites ultimately rejected $Alma_2$ and Amulek in Alma 14 followed a formulaic Israelite judicial-religious pattern. Of that rejection, Welch has written:

> After the burning of the innocents, the chief judge approached Alma and Amulek and "smote them with his hand upon their cheeks" several times (Alma 14:14, 15, 17, 20). He returned the next day and "smote them again on their cheeks" and many others did the same each one taunting, accusing, and threatening Alma and Amulek (v. 20). Many days later, the chief judge and the accusers again returned, each one smiting the prisoners on the check and "saying the same words, even until the last" (vv. 24–25).
>
> It would seem that something formulaic was occurring here. Every judge and witness did and said exactly the same thing, one at a time. Although there is no precedent that absolutely confirms this practice in the ancient world, it appears that the slap on the cheek was used in Ammonihah as a form of ritual indictment.[54]

Welch continued to say that, while "it is a novel thesis that the slap on the cheek had procedural legal significance in this ancient context, there is support for the idea."[55]

> Physical gestures often accompanied the making of serious oaths and the incurring of legal obligations … [and] it is significant that smiting on the cheek is mentioned four times in the Old Testament in connection with judicial process or legal punishment.[56]

Welch also suggests that the Savior's admonition that his disciples turn the other cheek when they were smitten infers a slapping ritual with ancient Israelite disciplinary antecedents.[57]

Similar observations might be made about the Israelite practice of spitting in the face of religious teaching deemed offensive or apostate. Once again, scholars have not identified a definitive source or theological reason for this practice,[58] but its history coincides with the history Welch has provided for ritual smiting. However, spitting seems to have been reserved for the crime of blasphemy, specifically that which asserts the Messianic role of Jesus Christ.[59]

We presume that Alma_2 was the source for the third person abridgement in Alma 8:13, since he had no missionary companion at that time, and it is unlikely that any Ammonihahite records found their way into the Nephite sacred library. The account of the first rejection of Alma_2 at Ammonihah reads:

> Now when the people had said this, and withstood all his words, and reviled him, and spit upon him, and caused that he should be cast out of their city, he departed then and took his journey towards the city which was called Aaron.

On this, his first visit to Ammonihah, there is no record of ritual slapping, perhaps because Alma_2 was not brought to trial at that time. However, spitting upon him appears to have formally denounced him as a teacher of false and even blasphemous religion. It would have notified him that there would be greater consequences, including legal consequences, should he return and preach this doctrine again.[60]

Further inferences as to some Israelite genealogy in Nehorite religious practices at Ammonihah may be drawn from

- Ammonihahite observance of the law of two or more witnesses[61]
- A tradition which included "the commandments of God"[62]
- A belief that God would destroy those who do not repent when called to do so by a prophet[63]
- Amulek's identification of his mixed Ishmaelite and Nephite ancestry before he spoke[64]
- The belief that it was a crime to criticize their law or civic leaders[65]
- The belief that there was only one God[66]
- The belief that salvation was universal and unrelated to repentance[67]
- The lack of any doctrine of resurrection[68]
- The use of stoning as part of public trial practice[69]

- The suggestion that false religious teachers should save themselves to demonstrate their authority[70]
- Imprisonment of prophets whose messages they did not like.[71]

Each of these practices has at least one analogue in other scriptural records of Israelite religious discipline in the Old World.

We also know that the Nehors worshipped in synagogues. That suggests that the Nehors valued some connection with the law of Moses, unless the name *synagogue* had become a generic name for a place of worship among all the children of Lehi. Since the Amulonites were, or became, Nehors, it is legitimate to question how their version of worship according to the law of Moses differed from that preached by Abinadi in the court of King Noah.

Synagogal worship

Because I have discussed the origin and nature of worship in synagogues elsewhere,[72] I will not revisit that material in detail. The significance for this discussion, however, is that it was not only the Zoramites who built synagogues for their worship.[73] The Amalekites and the Amulonites also built synagogues "after the order of the Nehors" at their city of Jerusalem[74] and elsewhere in Lamanite territory,[75] and they specifically sought and obtained permission from the Lamanite king to do so.[76]

As discussed above, though the Nephite missionary Aaron may not have gone to Jerusalem as quickly as we infer from the Book of Mormon text, more likely there were Amalekites in Lamanite lands before the unsuccessful Amlicite uprising recounted in Alma 1 and 2. This view appears to be confirmed by the statement in Alma 21:16 that after Aaron and his companions were released from prison

> by the hand of Lamoni and Ammon … they went forth again to declare the word … whithersoever they were led by the Spirit of the Lord, preaching the word of God in every synagogue of the Amalekites, or in every assembly of the Lamanites where they could be admitted.[77]

This passage suggests that the Amalekites had synagogues among the Lamanites outside the city of Jerusalem. That seems to be confirmed by Alma_2's record of the conversation between Aaron and the chief Lamanite King that follows in the next chapter. In that conversation, Aaron asks whether the King believes "that there is a God," and the King answered:

> I know that the Amalekites say that there is a God, and I have granted unto them that they should build sanctuaries, that they may assemble themselves together to worship him. And if now thou sayest there is a God, behold I will believe.[78]

This passage suggests that Amalekites had been defecting to the Lamanites for some time before the events recounted in Alma 1 and 2, and before there were enough Lamanite Amalekites to build their own city. Though this passage in Alma 22 refers to 'sanctuaries' rather than 'synagogues' as in the previous chapter, its description of the sanctuaries which the Lamanite King approved suggests that they were meant as sacred places of assembly for worship rather than Lamanite places of assembly, as referenced in Alma 21:16 above.

Additionally, Alma 21 and 22 also establish that the Nehors:

- worshipped God
- worshipped in communities
- invited guest preachers according to the familiar post-Babylonian Jewish model
- debated their guest preachers about doctrine
- sincerely believed that they had no need for repentance but that they were righteous
- believed "that God w[ould] save all men"
- believed that the Nephites were foolish to believe "that the Son of God sh[ould] come to redeem mankind from their sins"
- did not believe in the resurrection or in redemption "through the death and sufferings of Christ, and the atonement of his blood"
- did not believe that Aaron, his brethren or their Nephite forbears knew anything that lay in the future[79]

Readers familiar with the theology of the antichrists Sherem and Korihor will immediately recognize the doctrinal similarity here. I have written elsewhere that:

> Sherem's doctrine is summarized in just two verses in Jacob 7. Sherem objected to 1) Jacob's teaching as "the gospel" the "doctrine of Christ," and 2) Jacob's supposed perversion of "the law of Moses into the worship of a being which ye say shall come many hundred years hence.[80]

Both of Sherem's objections are repeated in the Nehorite doctrine contained in Alma 21. The Nehors did not believe that the Nephites could know of things to come, and they did not believe in Christ.

$Alma_2$'s account of his meetings with Korihor provide us with more detail of Korihor's rhetoric, but there is not a great deal more theology. In summary, Korihor denied that any man could know of the future and that it was foolishness to believe in anything to come, denied that there should be a Christ and that he should redeem human beings from their sins, and added that "every man fared in this life … according to his own genius" and that "whatsoever a man did was no crime"[81]

Additionally, whereas the Nehorites presumably believed in God — since they built their synagogues as places in which to worship him — Korihor denied that he believed there was a God,[82] though he later recanted his denial.[83]

$Alma_2$'s summary of Nehor's trial in the first year of the reign of the judges some sixteen years earlier said that Nehor declared that religious teachers should not have to work but be supported by the people according to their popularity,[84] and that because the Lord had created all men, he would also redeem them all as well.[85]

This last statement implied, as he also taught, that there was no such thing as sin or crime, a teaching that would be subversive in any society that aspired to follow the rule of law.

Additional information regarding Nehorite beliefs can be discovered when we recall that Alma 21 states, "many of the Amalekites and the Amulonites were after the order of the Nehors."[86] Amulon was the leader of the priests of King Noah who lobbied for Abinadi's death and who thereafter sought $Alma_1$'s life. Tvedtnes speculated that Zeniff's party, which traveled back to the land of Nephi from Zarahemla (recounted in Omni 1:27–30), may have included some Mulekites. He finds this probable, as $Ammon_1$, who was assigned by $Mosiah_2$ to find the missing party, was likely a Mulekite.[87] If all these speculations are correct, and Amulon was also a Mulekite, then the theological differences between Abinadi and the priests of King Noah confirm what we have already established about Nehorite beliefs. Indeed, they may reveal even more, if my suggestion as to their Nehorite/Mulekite origin is correct.

Amulonite Nehorism — The differences between the theology of Abinadi and the priests of King Noah

We do not know Abinadi's origins,[88] but his religious teaching became controversial among the Zeniffites during the reign of King Noah.

Though the abridgement of Zeniff's record suggests these return settlers were light on religion,[89] the fact that they left a record which mentioned afflictions in consequence of their infidelity indicates a level of established religious adherence. Only religiously minded people attribute their difficulties or their deliverance to their god or gods. It is therefore likely there were a variety of reasons why the Zeniffites wanted to return to the land of their first inheritance.[90] It was not just nostalgia that drove them, but factors regarding climate[91] as well as access to sacred religious sites.

Whether we take the condescending[92] summary of Lamanite culture in Mosiah 10 at face value or not, it seems fair to accept the assertion that the Zeniffites were more industrious by comparison. For not only did they "repair the walls of the cit[ies] … of Lehi-Nephi, and … Shilom,"[93] they implemented agriculture and horticulture and built new buildings.[94] During the reign of King Noah,[95] that construction work included "a spacious palace"[96] for the king, the refurbishment of the existing temple with fine wood, copper, brass, and pure gold,[97] as well as a tower in the refurbished temple complex in the land of Lehi-Nephi and another on a historic hill of sanctuary in the land of Shilom.[98]

Despite Zeniff's assertion that this people did not remember the Lord as they should have, religion and religious buildings appear to have been very important to the Zeniffites. Though the Nephite abridgement of their record implies that Noah's taxation and consumption were avaricious and extravagant,[99] it is likely these people revered their kings as prophets, seers, and revelators, as was the case in Zarahemla and earlier in the land of Lehi-Nephi.[100] If that were so, then the king's palace was also a religious building and the successful construction of these religious buildings explains why the Zeniffite population was so angry when Abinadi came to declare repentance.

Abinadi was more than just a prophet of impending doom. In the full tradition of Jeremiah, he declared the Lord their God had "seen their abominations, and their wickedness, and their whoredoms; and w[ould] visit them in … anger."[101] If they did not repent, they would be delivered as slaves "into the hands of their enemies."[102] Two years later, he was even more specific about their impending punishments. They would be "smitten on the cheek … slain" and have their flesh devoured by vultures, dogs and wild beasts.[103] Their prophet king's life would "be valued … as a garment in a hot furnace,"[104] while the people would "have burdens lashed upon their backs; and … be driven like … dumb ass[es]," at the same time hail, the proverbial east wind and insects would "pester their land … and devour their grain."[105] More picturesque, but no less

treasonous, was the prophecy that King Noah would be trodden under foot like a dry stalk and blown "upon the face of the land" like "the blossoms of a thistle."[106] However, save for idolatry and whoredoms,[107] the Book of Mormon record of Abinadi's preaching is not specific about the sins of King Noah and his people.[108]

Welch explains how Abinadi's trial closely followed "ancient Israelite and subsequent Jewish judicial practices."[109] Welch's analysis suggests that Abinadi had charged the king with idolatry and disregard of "the law that prohibited the king from economic excesses and pride."[110] The charges against Abinadi were that he had lied, made false prophecies, blasphemed, and reviled against the king.[111] Abinadi was said to have lied when he said the people hardened their hearts and committed evil abominations;[112] he made false prophecies because what he predicted two years earlier had not yet come to pass;[113] he blasphemed because he said that God himself would come down and perform the atonement;[114] and he reviled against the King "with a simile curse … that Noah's life would be as a garment in a hot furnace."[115] Welch says that "it was for the offense of reviling that Abinadi was executed," even though "about twenty-five years" later, "Limhi … told Ammon … that Abinadi was executed for allegations of blasphemy, not reviling."[116]

In earlier work, I have noted that Abinadi taught both the atonement and the resurrection[117] but was judged to have blasphemed because he taught "that God himself should come down among the children of men."[118] This discussion reveals a distinction between Abinadi's teaching and that of King Noah's priests, including Amulon, many of whose followers were later described "as being after the order of Nehor."[119] Though the Nehorites said they believed in, taught, and aspired to follow the law of Moses like Sherem before them[120] and Korihor after them,[121] King Noah and his priests did not believe there would be a Christ. Indeed, after Abinadi completed his discourse, which covers four chapters in the current edition of the Book of Mormon, King Noah simply dismissed Abinadi and directed his execution.[122] Before Abinadi's detailed theological discourse and charge that the priests were not leading the King or the people in righteousness, King Noah had more generously opined that Abinadi was mad.[123] But Abinadi's plainness seems to have eliminated the possibility of any leniency, and we know that there was no insanity defense to criminal charges in Israelite jurisprudence.[124]

To summarize, the worship practice of Amulon and the other priests who advised King Noah was focused on the law of Moses;[125] held that it was the function and ministry of religious teachers and prophets to

uplift the people;[126] accepted the ten commandments given by God to Moses on Mt Sinai as their law, despite Abinadi's assertion that they did not adequately teach them to their people;[127] accepted the teachings on the plates of brass as scripture; and they believed salvation came by obedience to the law of Moses.[128] They also conducted their criminal trials according to established Israelite procedure,[129] but they did not believe in the redeeming Christ to come, or in the doctrine of resurrection.

What, then, differentiated the Nehorite and Zoramite versions of Israelite worship according to the law of Moses? An examination of Zoramite worship practices allows for better comparison.

Zoramite religious practice in the Book of Mormon

Like Nehorite religious practice, Zoramite religious practice is not set out in a systematic way in the Book of Mormon. The keepers of the Nephite records and their editors sought to promote orthodox Nephite religion, not apostate beliefs. So once again, we must deduce those beliefs from the records in existence. Alma_2's mission to the Zoramites in the land of Antionum east of Zarahemla, recorded in Alma 31–35, is the most revealing on this subject because it is specific.

At least the following can be reasonably drawn from that account. The Zoramites

- worshipped some idols[130]
- practiced a faith which involved a craft[131]
- did not keep the commandments and ordinances according to the law of Moses — at least, according to orthodox Nephite understanding — though their worship in synagogues suggests that they aspired to do so[132]
- did not practice daily prayer, but had established a set liturgical prayer which they recited individually once each week[133]
- did not believe it was legitimate to pray other than in a synagogue[134]
- worshipped weekly in synagogues, but their synagogue differed from the pattern familiar to Alma_2 because it featured a raised praying stand called the Rameumptom[135]
- allowed guest preachers in their synagogues[136]
- may not have believed in the need for repentance[137]

The theology behind their set prayer liturgy also appears to have justified the following beliefs:

- that God had elected them alone to be his saved "holy children"[138]
- that everyone who did not belong to their synagogue would perish[139]
- and that there was no harm in either the accumulation or public display of wealth[140]

The Zoramites also claimed the specific revealed knowledge, contrary to Nephite orthodoxy, that there should be no Christ,[141] or that He would come among men.[142]

While it is not clear what $Alma_2$ meant when he called the Zoramites "our brethren,"[143] his similar observation that "many of them are our brethren" in his prayer at the beginning of the mission,[144] implies either that the Zoramites had been members of the orthodox Nephite church until recently or that they were Nephite, as opposed to Mulekite or Lamanite in ancestral origin.[145]

To easily compare the differences between Nephite orthodoxy and the Zoramite and Nehorite heresies, a table has been provided below.

Subject	Nephite Orthodoxy	Nehorite Beliefs	Zoramite Beliefs
The need for a Savior	Yes[146]	No[147]	No[148]
The coming of Christ	Yes[149]	No[150]	No[151]
The atonement/ redemption	Yes[152]	No	No
The gift of prophecy	Yes[153]	No	No
The foundation of salvation	Personal righteousness[154]	No information	Being chosen[155]
The need for repentance	Yes[156]	Perhaps not[157]	Perhaps not[158]
Accountability for sin/crime and final judgment[159]	Yes[160]	No[161]	No information
The foundation for temporal prosperity	Obedience to commandments[162]	Not clear but likely personal achievement[163]	Personal achievement[164]
The resurrection	Yes[165]	No[166]	No[167]
Definition of blasphemy	No information	Reviling religious authority[168]	No information
Punishment for blasphemy	Death penalty?[169]	Death penalty[170]	No information

Subject	Nephite Orthodoxy	Nehorite Beliefs	Zoramite Beliefs
Precedent for slapping	No information	Yes[171]	No information
Precedent for spitting	No information	Yes[172]	No information
Precedent for stoning	No information[173]	Yes[174]	Yes[175]
Observance of law of witnesses	Assumed	Yes[176]	No information
Accepted Mosaic commandments	Yes[177]	Yes[178]	No[179]
Attitude toward sign seeking	Signs proved credibility of prophets[180]	Signs proved credibility of prophets[181]	No information[182]
Speech against the established order a crime	Yes[183]	Yes[184]	Yes[185]
Penalty for sedition	Death, but remittance on repentance[186]	Death[187]	Unclear[188]
Theistic	Yes[189]	Yes[190]	Yes[191]
Monotheistic	Yes[192]	Yes, but idols seem to have been allowed[193]	Yes, but idols allowed[194]
Worshipped idols	No[195]	Maybe[196]	Yes[197]
Religion included "a craft"	No	No information	Yes[198]
Ethno/political connections	Not required	Mulekite and maybe Jaredite	Zoramite
Worshipped in communities	Yes	Yes	Yes
Worshipped in synagogues	Yes	Yes[199]	Yes[200]
Accepted guest preachers	No information	Yes[201]	Yes[202]
How should religious teachers be temporally sustained?	Support themselves except in cases of illness or misadventure[203]	Supported by followers[204]	Supported by followers

In my article entitled "Who was Sherem?" I suggested that

> Zoramite practice and theology … in the Book of Mormon has a distinctly Deuteronomist and even rabbinical flavor … that many of the anti-Christian threads in the Book of Mormon likely also have Zoramite origins. I also suggest that those anti-Christian connections may be the reason why Korihor died among the Zoramites, and why many Zoramites denied the Christ.[205]

This supposition is based on my suggestion that Sherem was a son or grandson of Zoram[206] and because "Sherem was completely wedded to the idea that the Law of Moses was an end in itself and did not include any concept of an atoning Messiah to come."[207]

I also noted Welch's observation that "if Sherem … was a Zoramite, then the rift between the Zoramites and the Nephites that erupted into warfare in the days of $Alma_2$ had roots as far back as the contention between Sherem and Jacob."[208]

In Part IV, I seek to draw together all this information to compare the theological difference of all three religions. As I do so, I recognize that there is significant speculation in my suggestions. Nonetheless, I hope that generous readers will find the exercise provocative, thoughtful and maybe even helpful.

Part IV: The Three Israelite Religions in the Book of Mormon Compared

The theological comparison enabled by the table above suggests that Nehorite and Zoramite theology were more like each other than they were like Nephite orthodoxy. Indeed, both rejected the core Nephite teaching that there would be a Messiah who would redeem mankind from temporal and spiritual death on conditions of repentance, and who would bring to pass the resurrection of the dead.

If we accept that the priests of King Noah were early Nehorites, then even though they rejected Nephite scriptural interpretation that found the Messiah laced through everything recorded on the plates of brass, they still purported to follow the Law of Moses. If the Zoramites were heirs of Sherem's religious practice, then they also followed the Law of Moses.[209] By the time of $Alma_2$, however, maybe 400 years later, the commandments under that law were not as important[210] as the fact that they were chosen or elected by God for salvation, while everyone else was destined to be "cast … down to hell."[211]

Of course, the possibility that the priests of King Noah were some of the earliest Nehors or the supposition that the Zoramites were the heirs of

Sherem's theology cannot be conclusively established. First, the Nehorite religion is named after Nehor, who appears among the Nephites around 91 BC, nearly 60 years after Abinadi's trial in the court of King Noah. Second, the Law of Moses does not seem to have been as important to the Zoramites around 74 BC as it was to Sherem just one generation after the landing of Lehi's party in the New World. However, these theological differences ought not surprise us, particularly the difference between Sherem's theology and later Zoramite religion. Christian and LDS history suggest that the details of religious theology change significantly over time even while core beliefs remain constant. For example, Protestant Christianity has held on to the reformation idea of salvation by grace, even though the details of the election and predestination doctrines have shifted. Perhaps then, Sherem's insistence that there would be no Christ remains important in later anti-Nephite theology, even though the Mosaic performances have dropped off in importance — and were even replaced in Zoramite theology by an election doctrine.

Nor should it surprise us that these three religions seem to divide down tribal lines. Tvedtnes has suggested that the "descendants of Lehi's colony were calling themselves Nephites, Jacobites, Josephites, Zoramites, Lamanites, Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites, after the founders of their lineage groups"[212] from "as early as the[ir] second generation in the New World."[213] I suggest that a distinctly Zoramite strain of Israelite religion developed from the beginning, although it went largely unrecorded. That contention between the Nephites and the Mulekites after the formation of the judicial republic led to the descendants of Mulek forming their own church is consistent both with human nature and what Tvedtnes suggests is a tribal division habit among the descendants of Lehi. It also added to what Reynolds and Sturgess might have called a theological justification for their right to rule.[214] As noted above, Larsen takes this even further. He says:

> the Amlicites and Amalekites … were motivated by a desire to restore the Davidic monarchy after the Nephite royal line that began with Mosiah_1 and ended w[hen] Mosiah_2 renounced power.[215]

Larsen admits his thesis is unstated in the Book of Mormon text, but it clearly implied that:

> when Mosiah_2 died without a royal successor, the right to rule reverted by virtue of the Davidic covenant to the Mulekite royal line that had governed prior to the arrival of Mosiah_1

> … This conflict between incompatible Nephite and Mulekite ideologies is the unstated rationale for the civil war during the reign of King Benjamin (Words of Mormon 1:15–10), and it pervades the Book of Alma, from the appearance in chapter one, verse two of Nehor, the spiritual leader of the Amlicites (Alma 2:1, 24:28), to a final great battle in the last three verses of the book as the dissenters again stir up anger and send forth yet another army that must be repelled (Alma 63:14–17).[216]

Larsen's interpretation also squares with Conkling's view that:

> it was the Nephite apostate groups — Amlicites, Amulonites, and Zoramites — who were responsible for most of Alma's problems with the Lamanites. As already noted in Alma 21:3, these apostate groups were "still harder" than the Lamanites.[217]

For Conkling, Nephite apostates were the "truly vicious villains"[218] in the Book of Mormon. They took their venom and stirred up reluctant Lamanites to go to battle to avenge their common grievance — that the religiously orthodox Nephites had usurped the right to rule. This understanding explains the "and thus we see" passages spread through the Book of Alma.[219]

I suggest, based on the analysis of the three worship traditions according to the Law of Moses found in the Book of Mormon, that Sherem provided the foundation from which both the Zoramite and Nehorite religions evolved. I have previously suggested that Sherem was a descendant of Zoram, or what Tvedtnes might have called the Zoramite tribe of Nephites. The theology of that tribe remained true to Sherem's original teaching that the Law of Moses had nothing to do with a Christ to come — indeed, that there should be no Christ — but it developed an elitist strain which shocked the Nephite missionaries under Alma_2 in the first century BC.[220] I also suggest that the Mulekites, who appear to have had only oral traditions when the Nephites under Mosiah_1 came to rule them, accepted the Nephite religion because it resonated with their collective memory but then adapted it to justify their own nationalism when the Nephite republic was established. In part, those adaptations resonated with the Zoramite and Lamanite tradition that the Nephites were usurpers and had no hereditary right to rule. Larsen makes this case most strongly when he suggests their argument revisited the historic wrestle between Judah and Joseph, since the Mulekites could claim Davidic origins.[221] I suggest the Mulekite religion was named for

Nehor simply because he was such a passionate and articulate advocate of their cause.

Conclusion

In this article, I have suggested that the Zoramites in the time of $Alma_2$ were the heirs of a theological tradition that began with the Anti-Christ Sherem in the sixth century BC. I have also suggested that the Nehorite religion was developed to provide theological justification for the Amlicite sedition subtext that runs through the Book of Alma.

If these suggestions have any validity, it is not surprising that the Zoramites and the Nehors found common cause with the Lamanites in opposing the Nephite aristocracy. It is also not surprising that the Nephite idea of religious liberty was culturally and politically unpopular. These cultural and political conflicts the Nephites faced after the Nephite/Mulekite merger have modern coordinates. The culture wars of the twenty-first century are creating new alliances that threaten the faith of modern saints in similar ways, and they are seeding the same kinds of apostasy against which ancient and modern prophets have warned.

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Endnotes

1. J. Christopher Conkling, "Alma's Enemies: The Case of the Lamanites, Amlicites and the Mysterious Amalekite," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 14/1 (2005): 108–117, 130–132.

2. John L. Sorensen, "Peoples of the Book of Mormon," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow *et al.* (New York: MacMillan, 1992): 194.

3. Royal Skousen, "The Systematic Text of the Book of Mormon," *Uncovering the Original Text of the Book of Mormon: History and Findings of the Critical Text Project*, ed. M. Gerald Bradford and Alison

V.P. Coutts (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002): 54 and "History of the Critical Text Project of the Book of Mormon," in *Uncovering the Original Text*: 15; *The Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Extant Text* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2001): 245 and *The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Entire Text in Two Parts* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2001): 396–397, 514.

4. Conkling, "Alma's Enemies," 111, 113.
5. A. Keith Thompson, "Who was Sherem?" *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture,* 14 (2015): 1–15.
6. Brant A. Gardner and Mark Alan Wright, "The Cultural Context of Nephite Apostasy," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, 1 (2012): 25–55. See also Brant A. Gardner, "Excursus, *Religions* of the Nehors," *Second Witness, Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon,* Vol 4 (Sandy, UT: Greg Kofford Books, 2007): 41–51.
7. A. Keith Thompson, "Nephite Insights into Israelite Worship Practices before the Babylonian Captivity," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, 3 (2013): 155–195.
8. Alma 15:17; 17:4.
9. John A. Tvedtnes, "A Phonemic Analysis of Nephite and Jaredite Proper Names," presented at the Twenty-Second Annual Symposium on the Archaeology of the Scriptures and Allied Fields, held at Brigham Young University on October 28, 1973. http://ancientamerica.org/library/media/HTML/qx6x4fwp/A%20PHONEMIC%20ANALYSIS%20OF%20NEPHITE%20AND%20JAREDITE%20PROPER%20NAMES.htm?n=0. Tvedtnes' assumption seems justified both in this article and in subsequent scholarship.
10. Tvedtnes acknowledged that he was following in the footsteps of Hugh Nibley, who did similar research in Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert; The World of the Jaredites; There Were Jaredites* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1952, 1989): 27–30.
11. Omni 1:21.
12. Tvedtnes, "Phonemic Analysis," under his heading "Biblical Names."
13. Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 242, discussing Mosiah 8:12 and Ether 13:21.
14. Ibid., 244.
15. Ibid., 244. Gardner and Wright make similar points in their article about the possible syncretization of Nephite religion with other ancient Mesoamerican practices.

16. Tvedtnes suggests that the names Shiblon and Corianton are of Jaredite origin. Tvedtnes, "Phonemic Analysis" (citing Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert,* 245). Sorenson says that "Jaredite personal names were used among the Nephites … particularly among Nephite dissidents," referring specifically to five names, "Morianton, Coriantumr, Korihor, Nehor, and Shiblon that betray strong anti-Nephite leanings" He adds that "$Alma_2$ named two and perhaps all three of his sons who were born during his 'idolatrous' phase of life (Mosiah 27:8) with (probable Jaredite names — Shiblon, Corianton, and perhaps Helaman." John L. Sorenson, *Mormon's Codex, An Ancient American Book* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2013): 505–506.

17. For example, see John Tvedtnes, John Gee, and Matthew Roper, "The Book of Mormon Names Attested in Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies,* 9/1 (2000): 40–51, 78–79 . Specifically, on page 43:

    > The Canaanite languages, along with a number of other Semitic languages, were written with consonants only, right-to-left rather than the left-to-right orientation of English writing. The reader had to mentally add the vowels according to the context of the words — which is still the case in modern Hebrew. The vowels found in medieval Hebrew Bible scrolls and in modern printed Hebrew Bibles were supplied by later scribes. Thus, the Hebrew form of Alma was written 'lm'. From Hebrew phonetic rules, the most likely pronunciation was Alma, which is how its discoverer, Yigael Yadin, rendered it in English.

18. Note, however, that there may be other Semitic meanings for the Hebrew word *mlk*. See, for example, https://onoma.lib.byu.edu/index.php/MULEK where there is discussion as to whether the names Mulek and Muloch have the same etymological origin, whether they refer to the same person and whether they come from the common Semitic root *mlk*. That root means "to reign (malāk), king (melek)" in Semitic, but in East Semitic it means "to counsel (malāku), counselor (malku)" (citing Ariel Crowley, "The Escape of Mulek," *Improvement Era*, May 1955, 324; and Sjodahl, *Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, p. 11). It should also be noted that Ammoron claimed he and he his brother Amalickiah were of Zoramite descent (Alma 54:23). Though Tvedtnes's research would suggest the names of these two brothers were Jaredite in origin, that does not mean they were not Zoramite, as parental naming choices are not set. But Ammoron's assertion of Zoramite ancestry does not remove the possibility that these two brothers did not have Mulekite blood running in their veins as well. That is more likely since Amalickiah was also said to have been "a Nephite by birth" and "a bold Lamanite." John A. Tvedtnes, "Book of Mormon Tribal Affiliations and Military Castes," *Warfare in*

the Book of Mormon, Stephen D. Ricks and William J. Hamblin eds., (Salt Lake City and Provo, UT: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990): 305, quoting Alma 49:25 and Alma 54:24.

19. Tvedtnes, Gee and Roper, "Book of Mormon Names," 51.
20. Conkling, "Alma's Enemies," 110.
21. Ibid., 110.
22. Ibid., 110.
23. Ibid., 111. Nor is there any recorded connection with the Amalekites with whom Moses and the Children of Israel had difficulties during their 40 years in the wilderness as recorded in the Old Testament. The *LDS Bible Dictionary* states that they were at constant war with the Hebrews from the time of Moses (Exodus 17:8, etc.), till their power was broken by Saul and David (1 Samuel 15; 27:8; 30; 2 Samuel 8:12), and their last remnant was destroyed by the Simeonites (1 Chronicles 4:43).
24. Ibid., 110–111.
25. Ibid., citing Sorenson, "Peoples of the Book of Mormon" in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 194.
26. Ibid., 111.
27. Ibid., citing Skousen, "The Systematic Text of the Book of Mormon" in *Uncovering the Original Text,* 54. Conkling notes from his personal correspondence with Royal Skousen that Skousen attributes the original insight to Lyle Fletcher in the early 1990s.
28. Ibid., citing Skousen.
29. Ibid., 111–112.
30. Ibid., 113.
31. Ibid., 113.
32. Ibid., 113.
33. Ibid., 113.
34. Ibid., 113, citing Alma 3:3 and 44:22.
35. Ibid., 114.
36. Ibid., 114.
37. Ibid., 113.
38. Ibid., 113.

39. Gary L. Sturgess, "The Book of Mosiah: Thoughts about Its Structure, Purposes, Themes and Authorship," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 4/2 (1995): 107–135 (132–133).

40. Ibid., "Book of Mosiah."

41. Ibid., citing Noel B. Reynolds, "Nephi's Political Testament," *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991) 220–229.

42. Reynolds, "Nephi's Political Testament."

43. Ibid.

44. Val Larsen, "In His Footsteps: Ammon_1 and Ammon_2," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, 3 (2013): 85–113.

45. Larsen, "In His Footsteps," 91.

46. Ibid., 91–92, 101. Note again, however, that Ammoron claimed he and his brother Amalackiah, were of Zoramite descent (Alma 54:23). See discussion above at n18.

47. Ibid., 93.

48. In my article about Sherem, I have observed that it is doubtful that the Book of Mormon editors wanted to provide Sherem with any credibility. Thompson, "Who was Sherem?" 1–15(3).

49. Thompson, "Were We Foreordained to the Priesthood, or Was the Standard of Worthiness Foreordained? Alma 13 Reconsidered," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture,* 21 (2016): 249–274.

50. Alma 8:11,12.

51. Alma 8:11.

52. Alma 14:16–18; 15:15; 16:11.

53. While it may seem odd to modern readers to refer to a religion as both an "order" and a "profession," note that a principal reason for Paul's difficulties among the Ephesians (Acts 19:24–41) was the objection of the silversmiths who feared that Paul's preaching would undermine their "craft." As Sturgess has earlier observed, the economy, politics and religion were inextricably connected in ancient societies. Sturgess, "Book of Mosiah."

54. John W. Welch, *Legal Cases in the Book of Mormon,* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press and the Neal A Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2008): 263.

55. Ibid., *Legal Cases*, 263 n 48 referring to Gwilym H. Jones, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eedrmans, 1984), 2:368; Carl

Friedrich Keil, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Ezekial*, trans. James Martin (Ediburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1857), 1:312; George A. Butterick and others, eds., *The Interpreter's Bible* (New York: Abingdon, 1956), 5: 969; and William L. Holladay, *A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 542.

56. Ibid., *Legal Cases*, 263–264, referring to the smiting of the prophet Micaiah before Zedekiah (1 Kings 22:24–27); the smiting of Jeremiah perhaps by Pashur (Jeremiah 20:2); "against the judges who imposed such sanctions" (Micah 5:1), and Isaiah 50:6–9 where Isaiah referenced smiting, hair plucking and spitting as symbols of accusation against the righteous by their opponents.

57. Ibid., 265.

58. See, for example http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Judaism/spitting.html where the tradition of three spits is noted in various historical sources but without conclusive explanation.

59. See, for example http://failedmessiah.typepad.com/failed_messiahcom/2010/04/why-do-haredim-spit-at-christians-456.html where ultra-orthodox Jews are still spitting at Christians to this day. Also note that Christ was both smitten and spit upon during the Jewish trial which preceded His crucifixion (Matthew 26:57–68 (67); 27:30; Mark 14:65; 15:19) and this was considered by His followers to be the fulfillment of Messianic prophecy (Luke 18:32). Note that there is also authority in some strains for Judaism for the idea that Christian converts to Judaism must spit upon a cross to demonstrate the completeness of their rejection of Christianity, https://firstlightforum.wordpress.com/2012/03/02/reprobate-jews-spit-on-christ-christians-and-the-cross-anything-sacrosanct-to-the-only-true-and-trinitarian-deity-of-israels-patriarchs-and-the-bible/. Note that the Ammonihahites also spat upon Zeezrom when the beginning of his conversion became manifest (Alma 14:7).

60. Note that the spitting which accompanied $Alma_2$'s first rejection is repeated as a part of the public trial which accompanied the second rejection (Alma 14:21).

61. Alma 9:6; 10:12. Compare Deuteronomy 17:6.

62. Alma 9:8. Compare Exodus 20:1–17. Note that $Alma_2$ may have been referring here to the official Nephite traditions, since he refers to Lehi's wilderness journey in verse 9.

63. Alma 9:12. Note again $Alma_2$'s reference is again to the official Nephite tradition which featured Lehi's prophecy that those who did not keep the commandments would be cut off from the presence of God (Alma 9:13 referring to 2 Nephi 1:20). Compare Jonah 3:1–10.

64. Alma 10:2–3. Note Hugh Nibley and John Tvedtnes's view that the extensive use of colophons (literary devices identifying the author and his integrity) in the Book of Mormon are evidence of the book's ancient authenticity. Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 17–18; John A. Tvedtnes, "Colophons in the Book of Mormon," *Rexploring the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, and Provo, UT: FARMS, 1992): 13–17.
65. Alma 10:24; 14:2, 5. Compare Deuteronomy 13:1–18; John 18:22.
66. Alma 11:28, 35.
67. Alma 11:35. Note that the idea that there is no future life has origins in ancient Israel that may predate the origin of the Sadduceean party in Jewish politics and theology (A. Keith Thompson, "The Doctrine of Resurrection in the Book of Mormon," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture,* 16 (2015): 101–129, (104–107).
68. Alma 12:20–21. Compare again Thompson, "The Doctrine of Resurrection, 101–129.
69. Alma 12:7. Compare Numbers 15:35 and Acts 7:58.
70. Alma 14:24. Compare Matthew 4:6 and 27:40, though note that the original source for the allusion in Matthew 4:6 does not appear to exist in the current canon of Jewish scripture.
71. Alma 14:22. Compare Jeremiah 37:6–21 and Matthew 14:3–5.
72. Thompson, "Nephite Insights."
73. Alma 31:12.
74. Alma 21:2–11(4).
75. Alma 21:16.
76. Alma 22:7.
77. Alma 21:16.
78. Alma 22:7.
79. Alma 21:4–9.
80. A. Keith Thompson, "Who was Sherem?" 9–10.
81. Alma 30:13–17.
82. Alma 30:37–38.
83. Alma 30:52–53.
84. Alma 1:3.
85. Alma 1:4

86. Alma 21:4.

87. Tvedtnes, "Book of Mormon Tribal Affiliations."

88. However, note Roger Terry's suggestion that Abinadi was Amaleki's missing brother from Omni 1:30 (Roger Terry, "Scripture Notes: Unearthing Abinadi's Genealogy," *Sunstone Magazine*, June 11, 2013 https://www.sunstonemagazine.com/scripture-notes-unearthing-abinadis-genealogy/).

89. In Mosiah 9:3, Zeniff's account is abridged to say that there was a civil war between these return settlers while they were en route, and that their afflictions were result of the fact that they "were slow to remember the Lord their God."

90. Mosiah 9:1.

91. See for example, David A. Palmer, *In Search of Cumorah* (Springville, UT: Horizon Publishers and Distributors Inc, 1999): 179.

92. Condescending, because its assertion that Lamanite culture was completely corrupt does not square with its size and competitiveness with the culture and civilization of the Nephites. Note that President Dieter F Uchtdorf has observed:

> In the Book of Mormon, both the Nephites as well as the Lamanites created their own "truths" about each other. The Nephites' "truth" about the Lamanites was that they "were a wild, and ferocious, and a blood-thirsty people," [Mosiah 10:12] never able to accept the gospel. The Lamanites' "truth" about the Nephites was that Nephi had stolen his brother's birthright and that Nephi's descendants were liars who continued to rob the Lamanites of what was rightfully theirs [Mosiah 10:12; Alma 20:13]. These "truths" fed their hatred for one another until it finally consumed them all.
>
> Needless to say, there are many examples in the Book of Mormon that contradict both of these stereotypes. Nevertheless, the Nephites and Lamanites believed these "truths" that shaped the destiny of this once-mighty and beautiful people ("What is Truth?", https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/ces-devotionals/2013/01/what-is-truth?lang=eng).

93. Mosiah 9:8.

94. Mosiah 9:8,9.

95. Mosiah 11:3, 8–13.

96. Mosiah 11:9.

97. Mosiah 11:10–11.

98. Mosiah 11:13.
99. Mosiah 11:4.
100. Mosiah 8:13–18.
101. Mosiah 11:20.
102. Mosiah 11:21.
103. Mosiah 12:2.
104. Mosiah 12:3.
105. Mosiah 12:3–6.
106. Mosiah 12:11–12.
107. Mosiah 11:6, 20.
108. Mosiah 11:20.
109. Welch, *Legal Cases,* 139–209.
110. Ibid., 148, referring to Mosiah 11:6–7 and Deuteronomy 17:16–20.
111. Ibid., 200, referring to Mosiah 12:14; 17:7–8, 12.
112. Ibid., referring to Mosiah 12:1 and Leviticus 19:11.
113. Ibid., referring to Mosiah 12: 12 and Deuteronomy 18:20.
114. Ibid., referring to Mosiah 7:26–28, 15:1–8 and Leviticus 24:16.
115. Ibid., referring to Mosiah 12:3, 10–12 and Exodus 22:28.
116. Ibid., referring to Mosiah 7:27–28. See also Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1997): 171–172.
117. Thompson, "The Doctrine of Resurrection," 101–129 (111).
118. Mosiah 17:8.
119. Alma 21:4.
120. Jacob 7:2.
121. Alma 30:6.
122. Mosiah 17:1.
123. Mosiah 13:1.
124. John Welch has observed that "[n]o insanity defense existed under biblical law," and that meant that "[e]ven a 'mad' person could be punished if he had broken the law." Welch, *Legal Cases,* 179, citing Zeve W. Falk, *Hebrew Law in Biblical Times,* ed. John W. Welch (Provo, UT:

Brigham Young University Press; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001): 69.

125. Mosiah 12:31–32.

126. Mosiah 12:20–24.

127. Mosiah 12:25–37; 13:11–26.

128. Mosiah 13:27.

129. Welch, *Legal Cases*, 110.

130. Alma 31:1.

131. Alma 35:3. The nature of this "craft" is not specified in the text, but it is reminiscent of the later objections of the silversmiths at Ephesus to the preaching of Paul since he persuaded his converts that idols they manufactured were no gods at all (Acts 19:23–27).

132. Alma 31:9–10.

133. Alma 31:10, 12–23.

134. Alma 32:9–10.

135. Alma 31:13, 21.

136. Alma 32:1.

137. Alma 34:32–36.

138. Alma 31:16–18.

139. Alma 31:28.

140. Alma 31:28. Note that Abinadi's chastisement of King Noah and his priests seems to have been premised in part on their ostentatious worship in breach of a code supposed to practice modest humility (Welch, *Legal Cases*). Note as well that the importance of wealth in the most elite form of Zoramite worship is manifest in their eviction of the poorer classes from their synagogues after the mission of $Alma_2$ and his colleagues, despite their sacrifices in the construction of those buildings (Alma 32:2–10). Gardner and Wright suggest that the wearing of costly apparel and ostentatious displays of wealth were more than "a cultural norm;" they were a tangible sign of apostasy. (Gardner and Wright, "Cultural Context of Nephite Apostasy.")

141. Alma 31:16.

142. Alma 34:37.

143. Alma 34:37.

144. Alma 31:35.

145. For more information about the way the Book of Mormon peoples appear to have discussed their own family or tribal connections, see Tvedtnes, "Book of Mormon Tribal Affiliations," 305.

146. For example, Mosiah 15:19–20; Alma 9:26–27; 11:38–40; 34:8–16.

147. Alma 14:5.

148. Alma 31:15–17.

149. For example, Alma 34:2, 8.

150. Alma 14:5.

151. Alma 31:16, 29.

152. For example, Alma 19:13; 34:8–16.

153. Alma 12:3, 7.

154. For example, Alma 34:28–30, 36–41.

155. Alma 31:16–18, 28.

156. For example, Mosiah 15: 26–27; Alma 9:12–30; 13:27–30; 34:28–41.

157. Alma 21:6, however note that the Amalekites may have been arguing here about their need to repent of the sins Aaron attributed to them rather than of sin generally.

158. Alma 34:32–36.

159. Note that Korihor denied the existence of crime (Alma 30:17).

160. For example, Alma 12:12–18; 13:16, 29–30.

161. Nehor's conduct in killing Gideon consistent with his teaching that because "all mankind should be saved at the last day, … [so] that they need not fear and tremble," suggests he did not believe that human beings can sin or commit crime (Alma 1:4, 9).

162. I accept that this summary is simplistic and contestable. However, it is one reasonable interpretation of 2 Nephi 1:20.

163. This is an assumption derived from Nehor's assertion that all mankind should be saved at the last day (Alma 1:4).

164. Again, this is an assumption derived from the idea that they may not have believed in repentance (Mosiah 15: 26–27; Alma 9:12–30; 13:27–30; 34:28–41).

165. For example, Mosiah 15:20–26; Alma 11:40–45; 12:8, 24–25.

166. Alma 12:20–21; 21:9–11.

167. Zoramite theology on the resurrection is not completely clear. However, it would seem that they denied the need for a resurrection since they held that God "wast a spirit, and that thou art a spirit, and that thou wilt be a spirit forever." Alma 31:15.

168. See Welch, Legal Cases. See also Alma 14:8–9, 14–19.

169. Jacob 7:14. However, Sherem's death was not the result of a sentence by a civil tribunal. Note also that Korihor was not sentenced to death either (Alma 30:47–50), and Nehor was sentenced to death because he had murdered, not because he had blasphemed. In Nehor's case, Alma said that Nehor's death sentence "did not put an end to the spreading of priestcraft … [because] the law could have no power on any man for his belief." Alma 1:16–17.

170. Alma 14:8–9, 14–19.

171. Alma 14:14, 15, 17, 20, 24–25. See also Welch, Legal Cases, 263–265; and the discussion in the text above supported by nn 54–57.

172. Alma 8:13; 14:7, 21. See also above nn 58–60 and discussion in the supporting text.

173. Note, however, that the Jewish practice of stoning rejected prophets in Israel was known to the orthodox Nephites (1 Nephi 1:20; Alma 33:17).

174. Alma 15:1; 26:29

175. Alma 38:4.

176. The entire account of Abinadi's trial in the court of King Noah proceeds on the understanding that both parties accepted the Law of Moses as the religious and secular law of their community (Mosiah 12–16).

177. 1 Nephi 4:15; 2 Nephi 5:10; 11:4; 25:24; Jacob 4:5; Jarom 1:5,11; Mosiah 2:3; Alma 25:15–16; 30:3; 34:13; Helaman 13:1; 15:5; 3 Nephi 1:24 (though, note that this reference provides negative proof of the proposition); 3 Nephi 9:17; 15:2; 25:4; 4 Nephi 1:12 (note again, this last reference provides only negative proof).

178. Mosiah 12:28–29,31–32; 13:27–28; 16:1. Note that once Amulon joined forces with the Lamanites, though he taught them trade and commerce, he appears to have abandoned instruction in the Law of Moses (Mosiah 24:5).

179. Alma 31:9. Note that this is an orthodox Nephite view of Zoramite religious observance and may not square with what the Zoramites thought of their own religious observance.

180. 2 Nephi 17:11–14. Where Jacob quotes from the Brass Plates, Isaiah's use of a sign to convince Ahaz of the truth of his prophecies. See also $Alma_2$'s

discussion of the use of signs as proof when he was teaching the poor among the Zoramites (Alma 32:17). See also Helaman 9:24–25; 14:2–6, 12, 14, 20, 28.

181. Alma 14:20, 24.

182. Note, however, that if Sherem was one of the first Zoramites as I have elsewhere surmised (Thompson, "Who was Sherem?" 1–15), then the Zoramites accepted the Jewish premise that true prophets could be recognized by the fulfillment of their prophecies (Jacob 7:13; Deuteronomy 18:18–22).

183. Alma 46:35; 51:7, 15–21; 60:24; 62:9–10. However, note that it is unclear from these references whether it was mere speech or taking up the sword against the established political order that was punished by law.

184. Alma 10:24, 28–29; 14:2, 5, 8–10. The Nehorites imposed the death penalty by fire for such dissent.

185. Alma 32:5. This reference is only proof of criminal treatment of dissent in Zoramite Antionum if this city was run along theocratic lines. Note, however,that when the Ammonites in Jershon received the Zoramite refugees, the Zoramites were angry with the Ammonites for receiving them which suggests that the Zoramites considered that the Ammonites were undermining their law (Alma 35:1–11).

186. The Nephites seem to have accepted an oath and covenant as proof that a dissenter had renounced sedition completely. Compare Alma 44:1–20, where Captain Moroni accepted an oath from the Zoramite, Amalekite and Lamanite soldiers that they would not fight against the Nephites ever again, and the apparent willingness of Giddianhi, the dissenting Nephite Gadianton leader to likewise received the Nephites among his people if they would swear a similar oath of allegiance (3 Nephi 3:6–9).

187. Alma 14:2, 5, 8–10.

188. Alma 35:8. It appears that the Zoramites did not expect the Ammonites to inflict the death penalty on their dissenters, only that they cast them out. What would have happened to those dissenters if they returned to Zoramite Antionum is unclear.

189. For example, see Alma 11:26–29. Note that Ammon taught King Lamoni that there was one God (Alma 18:24–28) and Aaron similarly taught his father (Alma 22:7–14).

190. If the priests of King Noah — rather than just the later Amulonites — were Nehorites, then they believed that they worshipped God according to the Law of Moses. The same conclusion flows from their worship in

synagogues among the Lamanites in Alma 21 and 22. Nehor also said that "the Lord had created … and redeemed all men" (Alma 1:4).

191. Alma 31:12–18.
192. Alma 11:26–29; 14:5. Note, however, that Abinadi's teaching in the court of King Noah is ambiguous as to whether God and Christ are separate Gods (Mosiah 15:1–4). Zeezrom also highlighted this apparent ambiguity in Nephite teaching (Alma 11:35).
193. Mosiah 11:6,7.
194. Alma 31:1, 12–18.
195. Mosiah 13:12–13.
196. Mosiah 11:6,7.
197. Alma 31:1.
198. Alma 35:3.
199. Alma 21:5, 16; 22:7.
200. Alma 31:12–13; 32:1–3, 5, 9–1 2; 33:2.
201. Alma 21:5.
202. Alma 31:19; 32:1.
203. Mosiah 2:14; 18:24, 26, 28; Alma 30:32–35.
204. Alma 1:3.
205. Thompson, "Who was Sherem?" 4.
206. Thompson, 13.
207. Thompson.
208. Thompson, citing Welch, *Legal Cases,* 108–1 09.
209. Jacob 7:7.
210. Alma 31:9.
211. Alma 31:17.
212. Tvedtnes, "Book of Mormon Tribal Affiliations."
213. Tvedtnes.
214. Sturgess, "The Book of Mosiah," and Reynolds, "Nephi's Political Testament."
215. Larsen "In His Footsteps," 89.
216. Ibid., 90–91.

217. Conkling, "Alma's Enemies," 115.

218. Ibid., 116.

219. Ibid.. President Henry B. Eyring suggests that these "and thus we see" passages are among the most important in the whole of the Book of Mormon, for they explain the reason why this content was included. We are supposed to learn from them the dangers of personal and collective apostasy. See, for example, an address he gave to religious educators while he was serving as a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy on 5 February 1993 (https://si.lds.org/bc/seminary/content/library/talks/evening-with/and-thus-we-see_helping-a-student-in-a-moment-of-doubt_eng.pdf).

220. Gardner and Wright ("Cultural Context of Nephite Apostasy") might well attribute the development of this elitist strain to syncretization with religion that existed in Mesoamerica before the arrival of either the Lehite or Mulekite parties.

221. Larsen, "In His Footsteps."

Understanding Jacob's Teachings about Plural Marriage from a Law of Moses Context

Brian J. Baird

Abstract: *This paper reviews the Book of Mormon prophet Jacob's proscription against plural marriage, arguing that the verses in Jacob 24–30 should be interpreted in a Law of Moses context regarding levirate marriage, by which a man was responsible for marrying his dead brother's wife if that brother died before having an heir. I also review how these verses have been used in arguments for and against plural marriage, and how levirate marriage practices worked in Mosaic tradition.*

In the Book of Jacob in the Book of Mormon, Jacob preaches to the people following the death of this his brother Nephi. He is "weighed down" (Jacob 2:3) on this occasion because of the serious topics he has to address. He then preaches about the seeking of riches (Jacob 2:12–19) and marrying multiple wives (Jacob 2:23–35).

Throughout the history of the LDS Church, the verses in Jacob 2:24–30 have received much attention relating to the topic of plural marriage. These verses have been cited by both critics and apologists of the Church's nineteenth-century plural marriage practices.[1] Part of this reason is that these verses both strongly condemn plural marriage and at the same time clearly open the door for the practice:

> 24 Behold, David and Solomon truly ***had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me***, saith the Lord.

1. A good general overview of arguments made by both sides on LDS plural marriage practices can be found in the Fair Mormon website article "Mormonism and Polygamy," http://en.fairmormon.org/Mormonism_and_polygamy.

> 25 Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a righteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph.
>
> 26 Wherefore, I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old.
>
> 27 Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: ***For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife***; and concubines he shall have none;
>
> 28 For I, the Lord God, delight in the chastity of women. And whoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts.
>
> 29 Wherefore, this people shall keep my commandments, saith the Lord of Hosts, or cursed be the land for their sakes.
>
> 30 ***For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people***; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things. (Jacob 2:24–30)

Critics cite verses 24–27 along with D&C 132:38 as evidence that Joseph Smith taught against plural marriage and then changed his mind. They point out that at first he condemned David and Solomon's plural marriages and then condoned them. By contrast, apologists cite verse 30 in conjunction with D&C 132, arguing that the Lord ***did*** command his people to begin practicing plural marriage.

So much attention has been focused on these verses regarding the LDS practices of plural marriage that Jacob's real intentions may have been missed. This paper examines Jacob's teachings on plural marriage in the context of the Law of Moses rather than how they may apply to nineteenth-century Mormon doctrine.

Jacob's Impact on the Modern Plural-Marriage Discussion

My intent is not an exhaustive investigation on how Jacob 2 has been used to argue for or against plural marriage in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but since that has been such a major use of these verses, a quick look at the arguments is necessary. The Church officially announced publicly its practice of plural marriage on 29 August 1852 in an address delivered by Orson Pratt.[2] In this first address, Elder Pratt

2. Orson Pratt, "Celestial Marriage," *Journal of Discourses*, 1:53–66. The *Journal of Discourses* can be found multiple places online; one representative site

laid out many arguments for the practice of plural marriage and gave the reason God had revealed this practice by citing the Lord's words:

> I have here in reserve noble spirits, that have been waiting for thousands of years, to come forth in the fullness of times, and which I designed should come forth through these my faithful and chosen servants, for I knew they will do my will, and they will teach their children after them to do it.[3]

This argument — that the Lord is using plural marriage as a tool to bring forth his noble spirits into homes where they could be taught the gospel — has often been used by apologists to the present day. An article on the Church's official website, entitled "Plural Marriage in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,"[4] quotes Jacob 2:30 directly: "The Book of Mormon identifies one reason for God to command it: to increase the number of children born in the gospel covenant in order to "raise up seed unto [the Lord]."

Likewise, critics have long made use of Jacob 2 to argue *against* the practice of plural marriage, claiming the Church changed its beliefs about the practice. The critics make two main arguments: first, that the Church was *against* plural marriage as proscribed by Jacob 2, and second, that the Church then was *for* plural marriage, as explained in D&C 132. Most members of the Church believe the Book of Mormon is a translated record of the Nephites that testifies of their faith in Christ.[5] Yet it was never intended as a handbook of how the modern Church should operate any more than the Bible does. That is why most apologists quote the Jacob verses in a context of Nephite practices.[6]

Critics also point out how Jacob strongly condemned David and Solomon for having multiple wives: "Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before

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for this discourse is found at http://en.fairmormon.org/Journal_of_Discourses/1/9.

3. Ibid., 1:63.

4. https://www.lds.org/topics/plural-marriage-in-the-church-of-jesus-christ-of-latter-day-saints?lang=eng.

5. For this reason in 1982 the Church added a subtitle (*Another Testament of Jesus Christ*) to the Book of Mormon.

6. For example, Henry W. Naisbitt taught in 1885, "The Book of Mormon expressly declares that it was necessary in the first colonization of this country that marriage should be monogamic, because the sexes were equal, and the people realized that marriage was an indispensable thing to both man and woman; but there is also indication that necessity would give final enlargement to this practical question." Henry W. Naisbitt, *Journal of Discourses*, 26:122, http://en.fairmormon.org/Journal_of_Discourses/26/13.

me, saith the Lord" (Jacob 2:24). There is no ambivalence here: it is a strong condemnation of their practice, and it was a practice that Moses warned the Israelites about before they crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land. He said that when they established themselves, they would want a king, and he warned them to choose a righteous king. Also "Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold" (Deuteronomy 17:17). Moses's warning was not meant to condemn all plural marriage and all wealth; he warned against excess. It was a warning to the people that their kings should not have an excessive number of wives, particularly marriages made to foreign women as a way to strengthen alliances with other kingdoms.[7]

Jacob, in his sermon to his people, warned the Nephites against both of these same risks of corruption caused by excess and cited David and Solomon as examples. While Moses was vague about what *multiply* meant in his address to the Israelites, Jacob was very specific in proscribing the general practice of plural marriage among his people.

The Doctrine and Covenants clarifies that having plural wives, when done in accordance with the Lord's principles, is not the problem. When those principles are not followed, the problems occur, and as with Jacob, the Lord also uses David and Solomon as examples:

> David also received many wives and concubines, and also Solomon and Moses my servants, as also many others of my servants, from the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin save in those things which they received not of me. David's wives and concubines were given unto him of me, by the hand of Nathan, my servant, and others of the prophets who had the keys of this power; and in none of these things did he sin against me save in the case of Uriah and his wife; and, therefore he hath fallen from his exaltation, and received his portion; and he shall not inherit them out of the world, for I gave them unto another, saith the Lord. (D&C 132:38–3 9)

Again, the conflict between the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants advanced by the critics does not hold up to careful scrutiny. Over the years, both critics and apologists have spoken and

7. Solomon is a perfect example of what Moses meant in his warning when the Lord condemned the number of his marriages — particularly those to foreign women. See 1 Kings 11.

written in great detail about plural marriage, citing these verses from Jacob, and generally that is where the discussion of Jacob 2 ends. Critics continue to point out what they perceive to be inconsistency/hypocrisy, and apologists continue to clarify this misunderstanding.

The interpretations presented by most apologists and Church members for Jacob 2 are valid, but we probably miss what Jacob is really writing about when he says of plural marriage, "For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people" (Jacob 2:30). Let us consider that Jacob does not address simply a population issue, but more importantly an inheritance issue.

Levirate Marriage

The term *levirate* comes from the Latin *levir*, meaning "husband's brother," and describes a common practice in the Middle East where strong clan relations require a way for widows to be cared for and family lines to be continued.[8] The practice is detailed in the Law of Moses as follows:

> If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. And it shall be, *that* the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother *which is* dead, that his name be not put out of Israel. (Deuteronomy 25:5–6)

This is the way the law worked: if a man died without having a male heir (the KJV translates it as "child," but in Hebrew it is "son"), then his brother must marry the widow and take care of her. Also, the first son that she bears will be considered the son of the dead brother and heir to his estate. The law provides security for both the widow and the continuation of the family line and property rights of the dead man.

This practice predates the Law of Moses and was practiced by the sons of Jacob, as is recorded in Genesis 38. We read that Judah had three sons. The first son died because he was wicked and the Lord "slew him" (Genesis 38:7). Judah instructed his second son, Onan, to "go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother" (Genesis 38:8). Thus we see that levirate marriage was a custom among

8. Numerous scholarly articles and monographs have been written on this subject. Dvora E. Weisberg presents a good overview of this practice in her book *Levirate Marriage and the Family in Ancient Judaism*. Hanover, US: Brandeis, 2009.

the House of Israel before the Israelites went into Egypt. Onan seemed more than willing to have sexual relations with Tamar, his brother's wife but was unwilling, for reasons unexplained, to impregnate her, so the Lord "slew him also" (Genesis 38:9–10). The third son, Shelah, was too young to fulfill the levirate obligation, so Judah instructed Tamar to go live with her own family until "my son be grown" (Genesis 38:11).

At this point, Judah was worried that Shelah, too, might die if he married Tamar, so he did not honor the tradition, and Tamar used subterfuge to get herself an heir (twins in this case) and to shame Judah for failing to honor this important custom. When the news broke that Tamar was pregnant and that Judah was the father, Judah admitted, "She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son" (Genesis 38:26). Tamar had deceived her father-in-law, pretended to be a harlot to seduce Judah (Genesis 38:15) and thus became pregnant out of wedlock, but the tradition of levirate marriage was so strong and important to the culture that it was Judah who must admit his wrong and acknowledge that Tamar's actions were justified by his own neglect of tradition.

Tradition and Mosaic Law allowed for a man to extricate himself legally from a levirate arrangement by the following steps:

> And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother. Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and *if* he stand *to it,* and say, I like not to take her; then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house. And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed. (Deuteronomy 25:7–10)

The law provided a way for a man not to fulfill his levirate obligation, but the social stigma was severe, including public shaming and a mark on the family name for generations.

Levirate marriage continued to be practiced in the Old Testament. We see it play out in the story of Ruth, the great-grandmother to King David. Ruth, a Moabite woman, married an Israelite man named Mahlon, who had moved to Moab with his parents, Elimelech and Naomi, and his brother Chilion to escape a drought in Israel. Elimelech,

Chilion, and Mahlon all died, leaving no male heir to marry Ruth or her sister-in-law Orpah. Naomi, devastated, prepared to return home to Israel. Having nothing left, she pointed out this sad fact when she told her daughters-in-law, "Why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?" (Ruth 1:11). Ruth refused to leave Naomi and traveled with her mother-in-law back to Israel to live life as a stranger. She was doomed to a life of poverty, scavenging grain in the fields that was left by the harvesters. Naomi promised Ruth, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee? And now is not Boaz of our kindred?" (Ruth 3:1–2).

Ruth presented an interesting case. How far does the levirate obligation stretch? Ruth was a foreigner. Did the Law of Moses apply to her? Boaz was a kinsman but not a brother to Ruth's dead husband. What obligation did Boaz have to the widowed wife of a kinsman? As we read the story of Ruth, we admire her dedication to Naomi — as well we should. But ancient Jews who read this story admired Boaz for his commitment to his clan and the support he was willing to give to extended family.[9] Some rabbis even praise his prophetic powers to recognize that through his marriage to Ruth, King David would be born.[10]

Boaz's family connection was far enough removed that Naomi and Ruth did not seem to realize there was a family member more closely related than Boaz. Ruth declared to Boaz that he had a levirate responsibility to her. She put him in a situation in which he had the choice to treat her with honor, or he could ignore her claim privately, since she had approached him at night when there were no witnesses. Boaz told Ruth, "My daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I" (Ruth 3:11–12).

The next day Boaz, following the law as outlined in Deuteronomy 25, gave the near kinsman a chance to fulfill the levirate obligation to Ruth. The responsibility included marrying Ruth and providing an heir for her dead husband but also to redeem the dead husband's property. This meant the kinsman had to buy back land once belonging to the family of Ruth's husband. He had to marry and support Ruth, and when she had a son, the redeemed land became that son's property. The levirate

9. See *Ruth Rabbah*, trans. Jacob Neusner (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1989) and *Targum Ruth*, trans. C. M. M. Brady. http://targuman.org/targum-ruth/targum-ruth-in-english/.

10. See Targuman Ruth 2:11.

obligation was quite strong here; it required great sacrifice with very little reward. The near kinsman rejected the obligation:

> And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it. Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe. (Ruth 4:6–8)

Finally, we see that levirate law was still culturally significant to the Jews at the time of Christ, 600 years after Lehi left Jerusalem, when the Sadducees questioned Jesus, trying to trap him in a circular argument about the resurrection: "Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother" (Matthew 22:24).

These examples demonstrate that levirate marriage was a strong legal and cultural practice among the Israelites, of which Lehi would have been fully aware. These practices would have served a strong, practical, and obvious solution to Lehi and his sons in caring for widows among a small group of people isolated from others, as Lehi's posterity were in the new world.[11] This is the context we should consider when we read Jacob's words: "Hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife. … For if I will, saith the Lord of

11. In recent years, some scholars have made strong arguments that Lehi's descendants did not inherit an empty continent and that they probably had interaction with other cultures soon after arriving in the Promised Land. However, the Book of Mormon prophets stressed the importance of adhering to the Law of Moses (see citations later in this article) and did maintain at least some cultural separation from others — even the Lamanites. For example, Nephi explains that the curse of darkness that came upon the Lamanites was to ensure "that they might not be enticing unto my people" (2 Nephi 5:21). Furthermore, there was a strong tradition of isolation among the Israelite people when they reached the land of their inheritance. The Lord warned them, "I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people. And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine" (Leviticus 20:24, 26). See also Joshua's warnings to the children of Israel about how mingling with the native people would lead them away from God (Joshua 23). This isolationist tradition would have been strongly set in the minds of Lehi's initial descendants and would have affected their interactions in the new world — especially in Jacob's day.

Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things" (Jacob 2:27–30).

Jacob presented a revelation that he, as the priest to the people, had received from the Lord,[12] telling them that plural marriage was not to be practiced among the descendants of Lehi. But he also made allowances for its practice if the Lord wishes to "raise up seed" (Jacob 2:30). One of the primary purposes of levirate marriage is to "raise up seed" to a man who has died without an heir. Given the context in which Jacob was speaking to a people who lived the Law of Moses, a levirate-marriage interpretation explains the meaning behind Jacob's statement of exemption for his hard proscription against plural marriage.

From the Book of Mormon record, we learn that Jacob's mandate was largely accepted by the people. The issue of plural marriage does not surface again until the record of Zeniff, where we learn that his son, King Noah, had "many wives and concubines. And he did cause his people to commit sin, and do that which was abominable in the sight of the Lord" (Mosiah 11:2). Later, when King Limhi, Noah's son ruled, there was a large number of widows in the land because of the many men who had been killed while fighting losing battles against the Lamanites. But it seems that levirate marriage or other forms of plural marriage were not practiced by Limhi's people, even though it would have made sense for them to do so. They were an isolated clan, and plural marriage had been practiced among them — at least by their leaders. Instead we learn,

> Now there was a great number of women, more than there was of men; therefore king Limhi commanded that every man should impart to the support of the widows and their children, that they might not perish with hunger; and this they did because of the greatness of their number that had been slain. (Mosiah 21:17)

From this verse it appears that widows were cared for by the community as a whole rather than through levirate practices, an indication that the practice of levirate law may have disappeared completely from among the Nephites.

The only other hint that plural marriage might have been practiced in some form among the Nephites is Amulek's words to his fellow

12. "I inquired of the Lord, thus came the word unto me, saying: Jacob, get thou up into the temple on the morrow, and declare the word which I shall give thee unto this people" (Jacob 2:11). Beginning in verse 23 with the words "For behold, thus saith the Lord," the next ten verses are largely the Lord speaking in first person.

citizens of the City of Ammonihah, in which he proclaimed that the Lord "hath blessed mine house, he hath blessed me, and my ***women***, and my children, and my father and my kinsfolk; yea, even all my kindred hath he blessed" (Alma 10:11). The question comes down to what Amulek meant by "women" (plural). It could mean all the women in his family, his wife, his daughters, his mother, etc. But given the context of women being named before children, and his father and kinsfolk being mentioned after women, the term could certainly be interpreted as plural wives.

Conclusion

The Book of Mormon makes it very clear that the Nephites lived the Law of Moses until the death of Christ. Nephi best sums up their feeling about the Law of Moses when he says, "And, notwithstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the law of Moses, and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ, until the law shall be fulfilled" (2 Nephi 25:24). The need for the Law of Moses is discussed repeatedly in the Book of Mormon, from Sherem accusing Jacob of not teaching the Law of Moses fully (Jacob 7) to the priests of King Noah telling Abinadi that salvation comes through the Law of Moses (Mosiah 13), to the Nephites debating whether the Law of Moses was fulfilled following the birth of Christ (3 Nephi 1). It was an ever-present factor in their lives. We do not see its cultural effects very often in the Book of Mormon, but that is to be expected, given that the Book of Mormon was written by Mormon, a prophet who lived over 300 years after the Law of Moses was fulfilled and was no longer practiced among his people. In a parallel way, American culture and laws have been significantly influenced by Great Britain, but only devoted students of American history ever contemplate that fact. How much would the Law of Moses have affected Mormon's culture and thinking? Further, his record is an abridgement that was written, as he says, for the posterity of Lehi and Israel, and thus he charges them, "Know ye that ye must come to the knowledge of your fathers, and repent of all your sins and iniquities, and believe in Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of God" (Mormon 7:5). The intent of his record is to teach people about Christ and his gospel, not the culture, history, and legal practices of the Nephites.

Most stories and history in the Old and New Testaments as well as the vast majority of the writings of the prophets do not deal directly with the Law of Moses. They teach doctrines covered by the law, but rarely do they cite the law or preach it directly. It is somewhat like a TV drama whose plot is about the police or lawyers. From watching the

show, the viewer learns a little about how the law works in America, but the program is not meant to be an education in the law. So, too, with the scriptures. Understanding the Law of Moses enables a reader to see its presence throughout the scriptures, but it is rarely a primary topic. Thus, in the Book of Mormon, while the authors often acknowledge that they are living the Law of Moses, Mormon's abridgement contains few examples of the impact of living under this law in Nephite culture. But that does not mean the Nephites did not live it. Therefore, while Jacob 2 does not directly cite the practice of levirate marriage, Jacob did address this law when he proscribed plural marriage among his people. His explanation was logical when he proclaimed to the Nephites that plural marriage would not be allowed unless "I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me" (Jacob 2:30).

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How Joseph Smith's Grammar Differed from Book of Mormon Grammar: Evidence from the 1832 History

Stanford Carmack

Abstract: *Some of the grammar of Joseph Smith's 1832 History is examined. Three archaic, extra-biblical features that occur quite frequently in the Book of Mormon are not present in the history, even though there was ample opportunity for use. Relevant usage in the 1832 History is typical of modern English, in line with independent linguistic studies. This leads to the conclusion that Joseph's grammar was not archaizing in these three types of morphosyntax which are prominent in the earliest text of the Book of Mormon. This corroborating evidence also indicates that English words were transmitted to Joseph throughout the dictation of the Book of Mormon.*

Joseph Smith's 1832 History is a text of slightly more than 2,000 words, originally written down partly in his own hand (about two-thirds of it), and partly by Frederick G. Williams.[1] Here I look at some language usage in the history — both frequent and occasional — that has a bearing on Book of Mormon patterns of use. This evidence provides insight into the nature of Joseph's own linguistic preferences. In short, the 1832 History contains a significant amount of language typical of the early 19th century. Given what linguists know about English usage of this time, these particular usage tendencies would have been expected in this short write-up by Joseph of his personal history.

A descriptive linguistic analysis of the 1832 History shows that Joseph's language differed substantially from Book of Mormon usage in at least three important respects. This provides support for the view that English words were actually transmitted in some way to Joseph in 1829, words that he then dictated to scribes.

No attempt has been made to examine a larger corpus of Joseph's language at this time. Further studies based on a larger corpus may be carried out in the future. The 1832 History is examined for what it is and what it can tell us about Joseph's grammar in relation to the grammar of the Book of Mormon. The history has the advantage of being mostly written down by Joseph himself and close in time to when the Book of Mormon was set down in writing, making it a fairly reliable, homogeneous text. Also, some features of the history are archaizing and biblical, such as verbal inflection. These things tend to make a linguistic comparison of the Book of Mormon and the 1832 History valid and meaningful.

Findings

Against both frequent and occasional Book of Mormon usage, Joseph Smith's 1832 History does **not** employ:

- periphrastic *did* in positive declarative statements
- the relative pronoun *which* after personal antecedents
- the {-th} plural — that is, archaic {-th} inflection after plural subjects
- finite complementation after the verbs *desire* and *suffer*

Consonant with frequent or occasional Book of Mormon usage, Joseph Smith's 1832 History **does** employ:

- plural *was* as well as *were*
- "exceeding great" (as well as "exceedingly distressed")
- past-tense *come* and *become* (as well as *came* and *became*)

Frequent, Consistent Usage of the 1832 History

No Periphrastic *did*[2]

There is no *did*-periphrasis in positive declarative statements in the 1832 History, even though 88 past-tense main verbs are present.[3] To match Book of Mormon rates there would need to be 26 instances of periphrastic *did* in this account.[4]

The complete lack of periphrastic *did* in this account agrees with independent linguistic studies that did not find appreciable maintenance of this Early Modern English phenomenon after the 17th century (Early Modern English can be thought of as ranging in time from 1500 to 1700).[5] It constitutes strong evidence that periphrastic *did* was not part of Joseph's own dialect. Because Book of Mormon usage is not derivable

from biblical usage, the nearly 2,000 instances of positive periphrastic *did* found throughout the Book of Mormon point to English words being transmitted to Joseph throughout the dictation.

Skousen defined "tight control" nearly 20 years ago as the following: "Joseph saw specific words written out in English and read them off to the scribe — the accuracy of the resulting text depending on the carefulness of Joseph and his scribe."[6] This description, however, is no longer unambiguous since Brant Gardner has developed an approach that involves Joseph seeing specific words even though Gardner believes that only ideas were revealed to Joseph: "We need a mechanism that explains how Joseph could be the translator and still read what he saw on the interpreters or his seer stone."[7] For clarity, we must step back one degree and state that either ideas or words were transmitted to Joseph, something I do in this paper.

The delivery of words mentioned in 2 Nephi 27:24 supports the view that the Lord caused mostly English words to be sent to Joseph.[8] A concrete form of expression — words — is mentioned as being delivered. The primary evidence, however, resides in the archaic, extra-biblical vocabulary, form, and structure of the Book of Mormon text. Such language was foreign to Joseph Smith's way of speaking and writing. More than 1,800 instances of positive declarative periphrastic *did* is a prime example of that. The match with 16th-century English usage is present on multiple levels: rate of use, syntactic distribution of the auxiliary and infinitive, and individual verb use tendencies.[9]

No Personal *which*

The relative pronoun *which* is not used with personal antecedents in the 1832 History. There are only a dozen clear instances of personal *that* and personal *who:*

Personal *that* [2 instances]

- all **that** were able to render any assistance [JS's hand]
  (cf. "that they might get all **which** were upon the face of the land" [Ether 15:14])[10]
- but could find none **that** would believe the hevnly vision [JS's hand]
  (cf. "there were none **which** were Amlicites or Amulonites" [Alma 24:29])

Personal *who* [10 instances]

- the son of the living God of **whom** he beareth record [FGW's hand]
  (cf. "I am Jesus Christ of **which** the prophets testified" [3 Nephi 11:10])
- goodly Parents **who** spared no pains [JS's hand]
  (cf. "our first parents **which** came out of the land of Jerusalem" [Helaman 5:6])
- even in the likeness of him **who** created ~~him~~ ^[*them*] [JS's hand]
  (cf. "and slay him **which** should attempt to approach" [Alma 50:5])
- a being **who** makith Laws … **who** filleth Eternity
  who was and is and will be from all Eternity to Eternity (three instances) [JS's hand]
  (cf. "a being **which** never hath been seen nor known" [Alma 30:28])
- for there was none else to **whom** I could go [JS's hand]
  (cf. "the Men, to **which** He speakes" [1610, John Boys, EEBO A16549])[11]
- all those **who** believe on my name [JS's hand]
  (cf. "And whosoever of those **which** belonged to their band" [Helaman 6:24])
- Daughtr of Isaach Hale **who** lived in Harmony Susquehana County [FGW's hand]
  (cf. "the Gaddianton robbers, **which** dwelt upon the mountains" [3 Nephi 1:27])
- a man by the name of Martin Haris **who** became convinced of the vision [FGW's hand]
  (cf. "a man **which** was large and was noted for his much strength" [Alma 1:2])

Above we can see that Joseph Smith favored the use of personal *who,* which agrees generally with the textual record and independent linguistic research.[12]

The systematic use of the relative pronouns *who* and *that* with personal antecedents in the 1832 History is also a problem for those who favor Joseph being responsible for the wording of the Book of Mormon, since the earliest text is quite heavy in its use of personal *which* (much of it edited out by 1837),[13] and relative-pronoun selection mostly reflects subconscious authorial preferences.

This is a complex area of study. Factors such as the function of the relative pronoun (restrictive [defining] versus non-restrictive; object versus subject) and the type of antecedent affect the (subconscious) choice of the relative pronoun. I have limited my analysis to restrictive contexts but have considered various antecedents.

On average, the earliest text of the Book of Mormon clearly prefers personal *which,* followed by personal *that,* followed by *who(m).* I have considered four different types of personal antecedents in the Book of Mormon and have found the earliest text employs *which* 56% of the time, *that* 28% of the time, and *who(m)* 16% of the time. This is very different from the usage found in the 1832 History, which contains 10 instances of *who(m),* two instances of personal *that,* but none of personal *which.*

Significantly, the Book of Mormon does not imitate biblical usage in this regard, although it is definitely archaic.[14] The King James Bible strongly prefers personal *that* (more than 80% of the time), followed distantly by *which* (about 12% of the time), and then *who(m).*[15] Overall, these two scriptural texts are uncorrelated in their choice of relative pronouns after personal antecedents.

With different antecedents, relative-pronoun usage varies in the scriptural texts. In the case of the antecedent *he/him,* the Book of Mormon is 80% "he/him **that**," approaching the 96% of the King James Bible. But when the antecedent is *those/they/them,* the Book of Mormon is only 20% *that.* This is quite different from the 81% of the King James Bible.

The Book of Mormon is very heavy in its use of "people which" (93%), while the King James Bible is heavy in its use of "people that" (82%). Thus far I have pinpointed only two or three Early Modern English writings that employ restrictive "people which" in the majority of possible cases. The two texts that clearly contain the distribution of Book of Mormon usage are Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations … of the English Nation* (1589–1600, 57% "people which") and Edward Grimeston's translation of a French work titled *The Estates, Empires, and Principalities of the World* (1615, 54% "people which"). The third text that is a candidate for majority "people which" usage is a mid-17th-century encyclopedia by Peter Heylin (1652, 56% "people which"). This work, however, has a large number of non-restrictive "people, who" examples.

After the year 1700, "people who" begins to dominate the written record, followed by "people that." "People which" is merely an occasionally found minor variant in the 18th century and beyond. I have cross-verified this by considering usage in two five-million-word corpora

of the authors Walter Scott and James Fenimore Cooper. I found only one instance of restrictive "people which" in these two single-author databases — in one of Cooper's books. These authors employed "people who" more than 80% of the time, with almost all the remaining use being "people that."

No {-th} Plural[16]

There are 12 verbs that carry archaic {-th} inflection in the 1832 History:

> doeth (twice), hath (twice), beareth, bindeth,
> decreeth, filleth, lieth, makith, saith, seeketh

All these verb forms occur after third-person **singular** subjects, meaning that these archaic, inflected forms are biblical in character. Consequently, there is not a single example of the {-th} plural in the account. I have noted at least eight possible contexts for the {-th} plural in this short text:[17]

- they **have** turned aside … and **keep** not the commandments (two instances) [JS's hand]
  (cf. except they **humble** themselves … and **believeth**" [Mosiah 3:18])
- they **draw** near to me [JS's hand]
  (cf. "for because they **yieldeth** unto the devil" [2 Nephi 26:10])
- many things … which since **have** been revealed [FGW's hand]
  (cf. "my account of the things which **hath** been before me" [3 Nephi 5:19])
- all these **bear** testimony and **bespeak** an omnipotent and omnipreasant power (two instances) [JS's hand]
  (cf. "them that are left in Zion and **remaineth** in Jerusalem" [2 Nephi 14:3])[18]
- all those who **believe** on my name [JS's hand]
  (cf. "save it be unto those who **repenteth** of their sins" [Helaman 7:23])
- my Fathers family **have** suffered many persicutions [FGW's hand]
  (cf. "angels **hath** ministered unto him" [1 Nephi 16:38])

In four cases the {-th} plural would have been particularly favored syntactically, historically speaking, and as reflected in the Book of Mormon: in conjoined predicates ("and keepeth," "and bespeaketh"), and after relative pronouns ("things … which … hath," "those who believeth"). But the {-th} plural is not used in these syntactic contexts in

the history. The non-use of the {-th} plural in the 1832 History suggests that it wasn't part of Joseph's own language. This view is corroborated by independent linguistic observations on the history of the {-th} plural in English.[19]

An examination of the textual record shows that the {-th} plural was very rare in the 1820s. However, it is anything but rare in the Book of Mormon, since we find about 200 instances of it in the text.[20] It is used in the earliest text with all the variety of the Early Modern English period: after noun phrases and infrequently after pronouns,[21] after relative pronouns and in conjoined predicates, and with different kinds of nearby variation.

Thus, the absence of the {-th} plural in the 1832 History also casts into doubt the view that Joseph was responsible for the wording of the Book of Mormon from revealed ideas. The fairly frequent and variable use of the {-th} plural found in the earliest text was almost certainly not a part of his dialect.

Summary and Implications of the Foregoing Linguistic Evidence

The 1832 History provides solid evidence that Joseph's dialect did not retain Early Modern English *did*-periphrasis in positive declarative statements or the {-th} plural, and that personal *which* usage was not common in his dialect. Yet these are found in great abundance in the earliest text of the Book of Mormon: periphrastic *did* occurs nearly 2,000 times; there are close to 200 instances of the {-th} plural; and there are close to 1,000 cases of personal *which,* the usage being dominant.

By way of comparison, the King James Bible contains less than 2% positive declarative periphrastic *did* [22] and no clear instances of the {-th} plural;[23] also, personal *that* is dominant in this biblical text.

These three linguistic features of Early Modern English are present in such quantities in the earliest text of the Book of Mormon that it is accurate to say that two of them are essential syntactic components of the book, and the third — the {-th} plural — is fairly prominent. These same features of the 1832 History, by reason of their frequency of occurrence and systematic, categorical nature, constitute the primary evidence found in this account that the Lord did indeed transmit words and their grammatical forms to Joseph Smith for the dictation of the Book of Mormon. This view is established by the following types of manuscript and textual evidence:

- spelled-out names in the original manuscript[24]

- archaic, extra-biblical semantic usage in context[25]
- archaic, extra-biblical morphology[26]
- archaic, extra-biblical syntax[27]

These are mutually supportive. To these we can now add the following specific evidence:

- no periphrastic *did,* personal *which,* or {-th} plural in Joseph Smith's 1832 History

The absence of these features from Joseph's 1832 History argues against the notion that the earliest text of the Book of Mormon might have emanated from a very conservative American dialect that Joseph grew up speaking. Such a dialect has been presumed to have maintained a host of archaic forms, structures, vocabulary, and systematic usage from centuries before.[28] That was always a doubtful view — whenever it might have been first conjectured — because of known, documented diachronic shifts in English usage. It does not appear that proponents of this theory have taken into account linguistic studies of the kind referenced in this paper.

Specific and general linguistic evidence indicates that the following view of the translation process of the Book of Mormon is an extremely unlikely one: "Because this process occurred in Joseph Smith's mind, the conversion of thought to language had access to his normal vocabulary, grammar, and cultural contexts."[29]

Descriptive linguistic research on Book of Mormon language provides concrete evidence that the earliest text is not fashioned specifically after Joseph's language. The present-tense verbal system of the earliest text of the Book of Mormon is different from both 19th-century American dialect and biblical usage. Nonetheless, the present-tense verbal system is archaic, with nearby {-s} ~ {-th} inflectional variation, ample doses of the {-th} plural, and some non-emphatic *do*-periphrasis as well, all characteristic of the 1500s and 1600s. In addition, the past-tense system is clearly different from both 19th-century American dialect and biblical usage, and the complex, variable perfect verbal system is as well. So also is verbal complementation, subjunctive marking, auxiliary usage, etc.[30]

In 2006, Skousen wrote that "the biblically styled language of the text seems to date from [the 1500s and 1600s], yet it does not imitate the specific language of the King James Bible."[31] This studied view generally runs counter to Oaks (2003:119), as quoted in Gardner (2011:165): "The

language of the Book of Mormon translation was likely influenced by Joseph's own language."[32]

Some aspects of the earliest text might have been tailored to specific dialectal idiosyncrasies that Joseph shared with others of his speech community (taken in a broad, multi-regional sense of upstate New York and New England), but a large amount of the language was not tailored to this dialect.

Archaic, extra-biblical features of the text, however, did not make it difficult to understand for 19th-century English speakers, especially for anyone familiar with archaic King James English, since there was plenty of shared use. But, as partially outlined, in quite a few important ways the usage of the two scriptural texts is systematically distinct. And the texts are different in many ways that fall short of being called systematic because there is less-than-frequent occurrence of forms and constructions.

Occasional and/or Mixed Usage of the 1832 History

The remaining sections of this short study address other linguistic evidence from the 1832 History.

No Finite Complementation after the Verbs *desire* and *suffer*

There is one example of the verb *desire* used with verbal complementation in the 1832 History and another example of the verb *suffer.* The instance involving the verb *desire* reads "he desired **to** carry them to read to his friends" [JS's hand]. The complementation in this case is infinitival, which is typical when the person desiring something and the person doing the desired action are the same. But twice the Book of Mormon employs a *that*-clause and the auxiliary *might* in such a case. Had this syntax been employed in this part of the history, it would have been of the form "he desired **that he might** carry them to read to his friends." Here are the two Book of Mormon examples of this:

Helaman 16:1

> they confessed unto him their sins and denied not,
> desiring **that they might** be baptized unto the Lord.

3 Nephi 28:9

> for ye have desired **that ye might** bring the souls of men
> unto me

It is important to note that in contexts with no change in subject between the main clause and the embedded clause, as in the above passages, finite complementation after the verb *desire* is exceptional in the Book of Mormon.[33] There is usually infinitival complementation when there is no change in subject. Consequently, there was only a small chance that Joseph would have used this uncommon construction once in the 1832 History, had he been responsible for its usage in the Book of Mormon.

It was more likely for Joseph to have employed finite complementation after the verb *suffer* in the 1832 History (had he been responsible for the wording of the Book of Mormon), since finite complementation after *suffer* occurs more than 60% of the time in the earliest text. The 1832 usage in question reads in the infinitive: "the Lord suffered the writings **to** fall into the hands of wicked men" [JS's hand].

Verbal complementation after the verb *suffer* in the Book of Mormon most commonly occurs with a *that*-clause and the auxiliary *should,* although there is substantial variation in usage, almost all similar to what is found in the Early Modern English period. In the 1832 History finite complementation in this case would have read: "the Lord suffered **that** the writings **should** fall into the hands of wicked men." Such language would have been analogous to the following Book of Mormon passages:

1 Nephi 17:12

> For the Lord had not hitherto suffered **that** we **should** make much fire

Mosiah 2:13

> neither have I suffered **that** ye **should** be confined in dungeons

"Exceeding Great"

The 1832 History contains the following language written in Joseph's hand: "the things which are so **exceding great** and marvilous" and "my mind become **excedingly distressed**." The bigrams "exceeding great" and "exceedingly distressed" are found both before the year 1700 and after that time, in the modern period. They are also typical Book of Mormon usage: the earliest text always employs the abbreviated form of the adverb with the adjective *great* and the {-ly} form with verbal past participles.[34]

The Google Books *Ngram Viewer* indicates that around the year 1830 "exceeding great" appeared in printed books 77% of the time, and the later, modern form "exceedingly great" 23% of the time.[35] Over the following decades both phrases are used at decreasing rates, and the share of the older one, "exceeding great," diminishes so that it is close to 50% by 1940.

The 1816 pseudo-biblical text *The Late War*, written by the New Yorker Gilbert J. Hunt, has one instance of "exceeding great" and one of "exceedingly great." Based on Hunt's mixed usage and *Ngram Viewer* data, one would expect at least a few instances of modern "exceeding**ly** great" if Joseph Smith had been responsible for the wording of this bigram in the Book of Mormon. Consequently, the earliest text's consistent usage of "exceeding great" (57 times) is remarkable. A single instance of "exceeding great" in the 1832 History doesn't provide sufficient evidence that would lead one to alter that view. Frequent, categorical usage of "exceeding great" in the Book of Mormon also points to words and their grammatical forms having been transmitted to Joseph.

Nonstandard Usage of the 1832 History

Plural *was* and *were*

The 1832 History contains several examples of nonstandard plural *was:*

- There was plates [FGW's hand]
- there was engravings [FGW's hand]
- where the plates was deposited [FGW's hand]
- wherefore the Plates was taken from me [JS's hand]

There is variability in the account, with *were* used in the following cases:[36]

- they were given unto him [FGW's hand]
- all that were able [JS's hand]
- we were deprived [JS's hand]
- there were many things [FGW's hand]

We note that the earliest text of the Book of Mormon contains 47 instances of "there **were** many" and eight of "there **was** many." This means that the earliest text employs plural *was* 14.5% of the time in this three-word sequence. But "there was <plural noun phrase>" is found at much higher rates when *was* is not followed by *many.*

Either Early Modern English usage or Joseph Smith's dialect can explain a goodly portion of the earliest text's plural *was* usage, but dialectal usage doesn't explain all of it. For example, when archaic language is combined with plural *was,* an Early Modern English view is more likely. A prime example of this is "Adam and Eve, *which* **was** our first parents" (1 Nephi 5:11). This phraseology combines plural *was* with archaic personal *which* (a non-restrictive relative pronoun). This is a relative-pronoun usage that we don't expect to have come from Joseph's own language, based on evidence from the 1832 History and independent studies of American English.

The five-word sequence "Adam and Eve, which was" can be found in the 16th century by an author who also wrote about hiding **up** things *in the ground* — archaic, extra-biblical language that we read in the books of Helaman and Mormon.[37]

There is also no syntactically influenced *was* ~ *were* variation in the 1832 History, while there are a number of examples of this variation in the earliest text of the Book of Mormon (as well as analogous subject–verb agreement variation with *is* ~ *are* and *has* / *hath* ~ *have*). The extensive variation present in the earliest text points to Early Modern English possibilities, as in the following case:[38]

Mosiah 24:15

> the BURDENS *which* **was** laid upon Alma and his brethren
> **were** made light;

1560, John Knox, *An answer to a great number of blasphemous cavillations written by an Anabaptist*

> That … proveth not
> that all the ISRAELITES *which* **was** called from Egypt
> **were** within God's holy election to life everlasting
> in Christ Jesus.

Consequently, one cannot convincingly assert that the plural *was* of the Book of Mormon is 19th-century vernacular usage, nor that the earliest text's plural *is* / *has* / *hath* usage must stem from Joseph's American dialect.

Past-tense *come* and *become*

There are four instances of past-tense *come* and *become* in the 1832 History (all in Joseph Smith's hand):

- a piller of fire light … **come** down from above and rested upon me
- my mind **become** seriously imprest
- my mind **become** excedingly distressed for I **become** convicted of my sins

Ignoring cases of "it came to pass," we also note the following instances of standard past-tense *came* and *became:*

- an angel of the Lord **came** [FGW's hand]
- who **became** convinced of th[e] vision [FGW's hand]
- and ^[*h*[*e*]] imediately **came** to Suquehannah [JS's hand]

These examples provide evidence that past-tense *come* and *become* was a feature of Joseph Smith's language and that he varied his usage.

There might be a few examples of past-tense *come* and *become* in the earliest text of the Book of Mormon, although all possible candidates may be cases of scribal mix-ups A detailed treatment of the manuscript and first-edition evidence of past-tense *come* and *become* will appear shortly in part 3 of Royal Skousen, *The History of the Text of the Book of Mormon.*

Summary

Linguistic evidence from Joseph Smith's 1832 History appreciably strengthens the position that the delivery of the English-language text of the Book of Mormon involved transmitted words. This view ultimately rests on observable, descriptive linguistic facts: the earliest text of the Book of Mormon contains a large amount of archaic language — vocabulary, syntax, and morphology — that is not found, either systematically or at all, in 19th-century American dialect or in the King James Bible. Massively represented syntax supports independent instances of archaic, extra-biblical vocabulary. Obsolete lexical usage supports the descriptive linguistic conclusion that there is archaic, extra-biblical syntax and morphology.

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Primary Sources

Besides the page images and transcription of the 1832 History made available online by the Joseph Smith Papers project, bit.ly/2nN9fYY, the Yale edition of the Book of Mormon was essential to this study: Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), bit.ly/2ocoerM. Directly related to this is Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: FARMS and BYU Studies, 2004–2009); Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon,* 2nd edition (Provo, UT: FARMS and BYU Studies, 2017); and Royal Skousen, *Grammatical Variation* [Parts 1 and 2 of *The History of the Text of the Book of Mormon*] (Provo, UT: FARMS and BYU Studies, 2016). LDS View provided access to the current LDS text of the scriptures (ldsview.wordcruncher.com; Salt Lake City, UT: Intellectual Reserve, 2001–).

The principal English textual source used in this study was the *Early English Books Online* database (EEBO; eebo.chadwyck.com). It currently contains close to 60,000 transcribed texts printed between the years 1473 to 1700. The publicly searchable portion of EEBO (Phase 1 texts) is to be found at <quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebogroup>. Other important textual sources include Literature Online (LION; literature.proquest.com), Google Books (books.google.com), and *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO; quod.lib.umich.edu/e/ecco). The full database of ECCO is available through some public libraries, as is the Oxford English Dictionary (www.oed.com).

I have mainly derived Early Modern English examples from a 700-million-word WordCruncher corpus that I made from almost 25,000 EEBO Phase 1 texts (www.wordcruncher.com; Provo, UT: BYU, 1991–). This corpus is precisely searchable, making it a valuable resource for discovering Early Modern English usage. In addition to ECCO, the Google Books database was essential for the modern period, as well as the associated *Ngram Viewer.*

Notes

1. Page images, a transcript, source notes, and a historical introduction of Joseph Smith's 1832 History are available at "History, circa Summer 1832," 1, The Joseph Smith Papers, http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-circa-summer-1832/1 (bit.ly/2piHjMI).

2. For some background, see Stanford Carmack, "The Implications of Past-Tense Syntax in the Book of Mormon," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 14 (2015): 119–186, bit.ly/2nLFIiA.

3. Here is a current alphabetical listing of past-tense main verbs taken from the 1832 History: appeared (4), became, become (3), brake, brought (2), built, called (2), came (2), come, commenced, considered (2), constituted, contained, covenanted, cried (3), desired, discovered, established, exclaimed, fell, felt, found (3), gave (3), heard, inquired (2), knew, learned, led (2), lived, looked, made (2), moved (2), obtained (2), opened, pervaded, pondered (2), proceeded, required, rested, returned, revealed (2), said (7), sought (2), saw, shewed (3), sinned, spake (2), spared, stood, suffered, took (3), transpired, went.

   For most of these verbs we can find Book of Mormon usage of positive declarative periphrastic *did*. According to a recent count, there are 397 cases of "did <infinitive>" adjacency with these verbs in the earliest text (see primary sources section at the end of this paper).

4. This figure is derived from a 30% usage rate in primarily non-biblical portions of the Book of Mormon and a current count of 88 positive past-tense main-verb instances in the 1832 History.

   Of course here I properly exclude five negative declarative cases: "they did not adorn," "mankind did not come," "[I] kept not," "[I] obtained them not," and "I had not where to go"; these give evidence of variation in Joseph's language with respect to verbal negation.

5. See, for example, Matti Rissanen, "Spoken language and the history of *do*-periphrasis," in *Historical English Syntax*, ed. Dieter Kastovsky (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1991), 324, 328, 332 (Table 2), bit.ly/2p2kHjK; and Alvar Ellegård, *The Auxiliary Do: The Establishment and Regulation of Its Use in English* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1953), 157, 161–162. Citing two earlier studies, Ellegård wrote on page 157 that periphrastic *do* (both present-tense and past-tense) "first occurred in prose ca. 1400, gained ground slowly in the 15th and rapidly in the 16th century. In the 17th century the tide fell fast in affirmative declarative sentences, whereas the use of *do* became regular in negative and interrogative ones. The modern state of things was practically achieved around 1700."

   Matti Rissanen wrote the following: "In the second half of the sixteenth century, the use of *do*-periphrasis in affirmative statements

reaches a peak … The periphrasis is common in most text types" Matti Rissanen, *The Cambridge History of the English Language, Volume III, 1476–1776,* ed. Roger Lass (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 240, bit.ly/2nN4FKs. On page 242 he observed that "in the eighteenth century *do*-periphrasis was used more or less in the same way as today."

Susanne Wagner discussed the lack of maintenance in a conservative North American dialect in "Unstressed periphrastic *do* — from Southwest England to Newfoundland?" *English World-Wide* 28 (2007): 249–278. On page 254 Wagner mentioned the 19th-century Dorset dialect and its use of *did* for "imperfect or habitual action."

6. Royal Skousen, "How Joseph Smith Translated the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7.1 (1998): 24, bit.ly/2nLyn2t

7. Brant Gardner, *The Gift and Power: Translating the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City, UT: Greg Kofford Books, 2011), 274

8. The phraseology "the words which I have commanded thee" (2 Nephi 27:22), where the *I* is the Lord, is an expression that has a somewhat obscure, biblical meaning for the verb *command* (see definition 6b of the Oxford English Dictionary, both online and in the second edition). Taking this biblical meaning into account, we get that the above phrase means 'the words that I have caused to come to you, or sent to you with authority.'

9. See Carmack, "Past-Tense Syntax," 158–159, 169–172.

10. Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), bit.ly/2ocoerM.

11. The possible Book of Mormon case with personal "to which" is questionable: "and also by the maintenance of the sacred word of God to which we owe all our happiness" (Alma 44:5). Here the *which* may refer to *maintenance, word,* or *God*. If the *which* refers to Deity, it would be similar to the following: "to whom we owe this great victory" (Alma 57:22).

12. Xavier Dekeyser, on page 71 (Table XI) of "Relativizers in Early Modern English: A dynamic quantitative study," *Historical Syntax,* ed. Jacek Fisiak (Berlin: Mouton, 1984), 61–88, outlined the "de-humanization" of *which* over the period 1520–1649, a change that was "virtually completed by 1700," bit.ly/2pA1J0e.

For a brief overview, see Matti Rissanen, "Syntax," *The Cambridge History of the English Language, Volume III, 1476–1776,* ed. Roger Lass (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 293–294, bit.ly/2p2wL4I. See also, for example, Catherine N. Ball, "A diachronic study of relative markers in spoken and written English," *Language Variation and Change* 8.2 (1996), 227–258.

13. See Royal Skousen, *Grammatical Variation* (Provo, UT: FARMS and BYU Studies, 2016), 1188–1247.

14. Matti Rissanen, on page 430 of "The choice of relative pronouns in 17th century American English," *Historical Syntax,* ed. Jacek Fisiak (Berlin: Mouton, 1984), 417–435, wrote the following: "*Which* can be found with personal antecedents in seventeenth century texts, but the number of cases is low and decreases towards the end of the century. In the earlier corpus there are fifteen cases of *which* out of the total of 134 cases with personal antecedent, in the later [corpus there are] twelve out of 169 [cases with personal antecedent]," bit.ly/2pdeaCs. In other words, Rissanen's pre-1650s American English corpus is only 11% personal *which;* his late-1600s American English corpus is only 7% personal *which*.

15. One can rather quickly see that the King James Bible employs personal *that* more than personal *which,* and personal *which* more than personal *who,* by noting instances of "people that/which/who," "men that/which/who," and "a man that/which/who." My own counts of restrictive (defining) "people that/which/who" reveal that the 1769 biblical text (the last extensive standardization of the KJV) is 82% restrictive "people that," 14% restrictive "people which," and 4% restrictive "people who(m)."

16. For some background, see Stanford Carmack, "The Case of the {-th} Plural in the Earliest Text," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 18 (2016): 79–108, bit.ly/2oxH7rW.

17. In the first, second, and second-to-last items of this list, the Lord is quoted by Joseph Smith. The Lord could have tailored the language to Joseph's language, or Joseph could have remembered it according to his own language. Evidence that he could have imposed his own linguistic form on portions of the statements is provided by the close error *kindling* for *kindled* (as used in the phrase "mine anger is kindling against the inhabitants of the earth"). In any event, there is no direct evidence of Early Modern English {-th} plural usage in these four present-tense instances of the third-person plural.

18. The {-th} plural is not found in the corresponding biblical passage.

19. Herbert Schendl, on page 144 of "The 3rd Plural Present Indicative in Early Modern English — Variation and Linguistic Contact," *English Historical Linguistics 1994: Papers from the 8th International Conference on English Historical Linguistics,* ed. Derek Britton (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1996), 143–160, wrote that the {-th} plural was obsolete from the standard by the middle of the 17th century (bit.ly/2oFWNcO).

    Charles Barber, on page 169 of *Early Modern English* (Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), wrote that already in "the later sixteenth century, plural {-eth} is very rare." Roger Lass, on page 166 of *The Cambridge History of the English Language, Volume III, 1476–1776,* ed. Roger Lass (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), wrote that "the southern {-th} plural is always a minority form, though it persists (if decreasingly) in the standard well into the seventeenth century" (bit.ly/2obexd8). Henry Cecil Wyld, on page 339 of *A History of Modern Colloquial English,* 3rd edition (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1936), gave about 25 examples of the {-th} plural, mostly from the 16th century.

    Google Books shows that the {-th} plural is rare in 18th-century writings. By the early 19th century the {-th} plural is almost non-existent.

    Laura Wright, on pages 244–245 of "Third Person Plural Present Tense Markers In London Prisoners' Depositions, 1562–1623," *American Speech* 77.3 (2002): 242–263, discusses a historical *they*-constraint, something that the earliest text of the Book of Mormon shows signs of, since it has very low levels of {-th} usage after plural pronouns, and significantly higher rates of use in other plural contexts. Mosiah 3:18 contains a specific example of the *they*-constraint in which the {-th} inflection is used only in a predicate linked to *they,* not immediately after *they:* "They humble themselves and become … and believeth." Counterexamples to this occur in both Early Modern English and the Book of Mormon.

20. Skousen, *Grammatical Variation,* 465–474.

21. This includes first-person and second-person pronouns — for example, "we layeth" (Helaman 13:34) and "ye doth" (Alma 41:15)

22. See Carmack, "Past-Tense Syntax," 123, 143, 160. If "did eat" is excluded from counts, then positive declarative periphrastic *did* is only employed about 1% of the time in the King James Bible.

23. See Carmack, "The Case of the {-th} Plural," 86–89.

24. Skousen, "How Joseph Smith Translated," 24, 25, 31. Book of Mormon spelling control is largely confined to the first instance of proper nouns.

25. Evidence of archaic vocabulary was first published in Royal Skousen, "The Archaic Vocabulary of the Book of Mormon," *Insights: A Window on the Ancient World* 25.5 (2005): 2–6, bit.ly/2pAfoUW; and in his *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: FARMS and BYU, 2004–2009), under Mosiah 19:24, bit.ly/2nLRMQI. Further discussion can be found on pages xxxvii–xxxix of Royal Skousen, "Editor's Preface," *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text,* ed. Royal Skousen (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), xxix–xlv; and on pages 89–93 of Royal Skousen, "The Original Text of the Book of Mormon and its Publication by Yale University Press," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 7 (2013): 57–96, bit.ly/2oxGVJe. See also pages 45–47 of Stanford Carmack, "Joseph Smith Read the Words," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 18 (2016): 41–64, bit.ly/2obtGex.

26. See Skousen, *Grammatical Variation,* 481–483, 491–492. An example of archaic, extra-biblical morphology is the occasional use in the earliest text of the Book of Mormon of the verb form *art* in non–second-person singular contexts. For instance, the earliest text has one example of "they who art" (Alma 32:15). This is a case of Book of Mormon grammar that was probably not part of Joseph's 19th-century vernacular. We can find this kind of language on *Early English Books Online:* "And a man's foes shall be they that art of his household" (1548, EEBO A16036); "Experience teacheth that those which art apt will construe almost as soon without the book" (1612, EEBO A16865).

27. See the examples scattered throughout Skousen, *Grammatical Variation,* as well as my various articles on the subject in this journal.

28. See Dallin D. Oaks, "Book of Mormon, Language of the Translated Text of," in *Book of Mormon Reference Companion,* ed. Dennis L. Largey (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 2003), 116–119, as cited in Brant Gardner, *The Gift and Power: Translating the Book of Mormon*

(Salt Lake City, UT: Greg Kofford Books, 2011), 164–165. This may not be Oaks' view of things now. The statements Gardner quotes are basically 1990s conclusions based on non-systematic study of the 1981 text. Skousen once had similar, American dialectal views of the text, before systematically studying the earliest text.

29. Gardner, *The Gift and Power,* 276.

30. The future-tense system of expression (*will* ~ *shall* variation) appears to be close to biblical use, particularly Old Testament patterns, but it is different from 19th-century patterns.

31. Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: FARMS and BYU, 2004–2009), 1393 (Mosiah 19:24); *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon,* 2nd edition (Provo, UT: FARMS and BYU Studies, 2017), 1445 (Mosiah 19:24).

32. See Oaks, "Book of Mormon, Language of the Translated Text of," as cited in Gardner, *The Gift and Power,* 164–165.

33. See Skousen, *Grammatical Variation,* 1061 (bottom of page).

34. See Skousen, *Grammatical Variation,* 296–305.

35. *Ngram Viewer* (books.google.com/ngrams); Jean-Baptiste Michel et al., "Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books," *Science* 331/6014 (2011): 176–182 (published online ahead of print on 16 December 2010).

36. There is also an anomalous instance of *were:* "my Father Joseph Smith Seignior moved to Palmyra Ontario County in the State of New York and being in indigent circumstances were obliged to labour hard for the support of a large Family." This is either a case of proximity agreement, a switch to an unexpressed plural subject, or singular *were.*

    There are various examples of proximity agreement with *were* in the earliest text of the Book of Mormon, such as "whomsoever suffered himself to be led away by the Lamanites were called under that head" (Alma 3:10). There are also cases of singular *were* in the earliest text, such as "they whose flight were swifter than the Lamanites did escape" (Mormon 5:7).

37. See page 114 of Stanford Carmack, "The Case of Plural *Was* in the Earliest Text," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 18 (2016): 109–137, bit.ly/2oy0qzx. Thomas Becon also wrote "but have hid them up in the ground" (1550, EEBO A06898). The phrasal verb

"hide up" is characteristic of Early Modern English, as shown by more than 200 instances to be found on *Early English Books Online* and fewer than 150 instances to be found on *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. See the final section for information on these primary sources.

38. Skousen, *Grammatical Variation,* 912, has this pair of examples as well as another similar to the curious *was* ~ *were* variation of Helaman 1:7 (which still persists in the current LDS text). Many Early Modern English examples similar to these could be provided. Some of these are shown in my article Carmack, "The Case of Plural *Was* in the Earliest Text."

How Big A Book? Estimating the Total Surface Area of the Book of Mormon Plates

Bruce E. Dale

Abstract: *We do not have the Book of Mormon metal plates available to us. We cannot heft them, examine the engravings, or handle the leaves of that ancient record as did the Three Witnesses, the Eight Witnesses, and the many other witnesses to both the existence and nature of the plates. In such a situation, what more can we learn about the physical nature of the plates without their being present for our inspection? Building on available knowledge, this article estimates the total surface area of the plates using two independent approaches and finds that the likely surface area was probably between 30 and 86 square feet, or roughly 15% of the surface area of the paper on which the English version of the Book of Mormon is now printed.*

There are two questions I seek to address in this article. First, what is the estimated surface area of the plates on which the Book of Mormon was engraved? Second, is this estimate a reasonable value when compared with the printed surface area of the current English translation of Book of Mormon? This article provides two separate, independent calculations that estimate the surface area of the plates on which the Book of Mormon was engraved. These calculations are what engineers and scientists refer to as "order of magnitude" estimates — they are not intended to yield exact results. If the two independent calculations give roughly comparable and physically reasonable results, then our confidence in both the calculations and the reality of the plates is strengthened.

The two approaches taken here are: 1) how many square feet of plates were actually used to engrave the Book of Mormon, given what we know about the physical nature of the plates, and 2) how many square feet of plates would be required in order to write the Book of Mormon, given what we

know or can infer about the language and script used. We will begin with things we already know and then use that knowledge to learn more.

Estimating the Thickness of the Plates

I am indebted to Jerry Grover for his interesting and useful paper entitled *Ziff, Magic Goggles and Golden Plates*.[1] Grover provides a thorough summary of various accounts of the physical properties of the plates.[2] He also performed an impressive number of experiments and calculations to learn more about the plates. I have relied heavily on his work for portions of my analysis.

Since Joseph Smith Jr. had more contact with the plates than anyone else, I will use the physical information provided by him whenever possible. Smith said the plates containing the Book of Mormon measured about 6 inches wide by 8 inches long and were "not quite so thick as common tin."[3] The engravings were small and filled both sides of the plates.[4] The plates weighed approximately 40–60 pounds,[5] and about half of the plates were sealed.[6] Thus the Book of Mormon as we have it today was written on about 20–30 pounds of thin metal plates.

We have reasonably good estimates of the weight, length, and width of the plates, but not the thickness. In the time of Joseph Smith, "common tin" was actually tinplate, which was iron covered with a thin layer of tin to prevent corrosion. A standard wooden box of tinplate sheets was 14 inches by 20 inches and held 112 sheets, each weighing about a pound.[7]

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1. Jerry D. Grover, *Ziff, Magic Goggles, and Golden Plates: Etymology of Zyf and a Metallurgical Analysis of the Book of Mormon Plates* (Provo, UT: Grover Publishing, 2015). Available online at https://archive.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/ziff-magic-goggles-and-golden-plates-etymology-zyf-and-metallurgical-analysis-book-mormon

2. Ibid., 67–70.

3. Joseph Smith, "Church History," in *Times and Seasons* (Nauvoo, IL), 1 Mar. 1842, vol. 3, no. 9 (whole no. 45), pp. 707, online at http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/church-history-1-march-1842/2.

4. "What was the Appearance of the Engravings on the Gold Plates?" *FairMormon Answers*, online at https://www.fairmormon.org/answers/Question:_What_was_the_appearance_of_the_engravings_on_the_gold_plates%3F.

5. Martin Harris interview, *Iowa State Register*, August 1870, as quoted in Richard Lloyd Anderson, *Investigating the Book of Mormon Witnesses* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 14.

6. Kirk B. Henrichsen, "What Did the Golden Plates Look Like?," *New Era* (July 2007): 31.

7. Mike Smith, "Tin Plate," http://mike.da2c.org/igg/rail/12-linind/tinplate.htm.

Obviously, for the tinplate sheets to fit in the box, they would have to be somewhat smaller than the outside dimensions of the box. The full box of tinplate sheets weighed well over 100 pounds and would need to be quite sturdy to withstand shipping and storage. Accordingly, I assume that each of the boards from which the box was constructed was about 1 inch thick, meaning the tinplate sheets measured about 12 inches by 18 inches, a convenient width and length for construction purposes. I neglect the contribution of the density of tin to the overall density of a sheet of tinplate and assume the density of the tinplate is roughly equal to the density of iron (491 pounds per cubic foot).

With these assumptions, we can estimate the thickness of a sheet of tinplate. The formulae are:

- Weight = density x volume
- Volume = area (length x width) x thickness

Since each sheet of tinplate weighed about one pound, the thickness of tinplate can be calculated using this formula:

- 1.0 pound = (491 pounds/cubic foot) x (12 inches x 18 inches) x thickness x conversion factor (cubic feet to cubic inches)

Rearranging the equation above to calculate thickness we find:

- Thickness (in inches) = (1.0 pounds/(491 pounds per cubic foot x 12 inches x 18 inches)) x 1728 cubic inches per cubic foot) = 0.0163 inches

There are other ways we can estimate the plate thickness as well. William Smith, Joseph's brother, stated that the plates were made of gold and copper.[8] Mesoamericans did use a copper-gold alloy the Spaniards called "tumbaga," but there was no fixed ratio of copper to gold in the

8. "The Old Soldier's Testimony. Sermon preached by Bro. William B. Smith, in the Saints' Chapel, Detroit, Iowa, June 8th, 1884. Reported by C.E. Butterworth," *Saints' Herald* 31 (4 October 1884): 643–44; reproduced in Dan Vogel ed., *Early Mormon Documents* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1996), 1:505. https://www.fairmormon.org/answers/Source:William_Smith:The_Old_Soldier%27s_Testimony:1884:When_the_plates_were_brought_in_they_were_wrapped_up_in_a_tow_frock._My_father_then_put_them_into_a_pillow_case.

alloy, which could vary from 95% copper to 95% gold.[9] (Tumbaga also contained some silver that was naturally present along with the gold.)

Grover evaluates four different likely scenarios for the composition and construction of the plates. Two of the scenarios exceed the weight limit of 60 pounds, and the third applies to gold gilding on a copper base. Plates prepared under the third scenario would have been more susceptible to corrosion and therefore would probably not have been used by Nephi.

Grover's fourth scenario uses an upper limit of plate thickness of 0.01 inches and estimates a total weight of the plates of 53.6 pounds with a composition of 85.2% copper, 11.4% gold, and 3.4% silver. For purposes of my calculations, I assume Grover's fourth scenario is both realistic and possible.

Ancient American metal workers could form metal to a thickness of about 0.2 millimeters (about 0.008 inches),[10] agreeing well with Joseph's statement that the plates on which the Book of Mormon were written were "not quite as thick as common tin" and also with Grover's estimate that the plates may have been up to 0.01 inches thick. (Grover's experiments actually indicate a plate thickness less than 0.01 inches for ease of manipulation.) The fact that the plates could be manipulated with the thumb and would make a noise like paper does when ruffled also argues strongly for a thin, somewhat pliable sheet of metal.[11]

First Approach: Calculating the Area from the Mass and Thickness of the Plates

Given the background information considered so far, a reasonable questioner might ask if it is plausible to write a record like the Book of Mormon on 20–30 pounds of plates, each plate being about between about 0.008 to 0.016 inches thick by 6 inches wide and 8 inches long.

The relevant equations are:

- Mass of plates = density x volume of plates = density x (plate thickness x plate width x plate length x number of plates)
- Total surface area for writing = 2 x area per plate (accounts for the front and back sides of a plate) x number of plates

9. See "Tumbaga," *Antique Jewelry University*, online at http://www.langantiques.com/university/index.php/Tumbaga.

10. Warwick Bray, "Gold-Working in Ancient America" *Gold Bulletin* 11/4 (1978): 137–38. (My thanks to Dr. John Sorenson and his book *Mormon's Codex* for this valuable reference.)

11. "Last Testimony of Sister Emma," *Saints' Herald*, 26 (1879): 290; interview conducted between Februay 4 and February 10, 1879.

We want to calculate the total surface area available for writing on 20 to 30 pounds of this metal. The math is straightforward if the thickness of the plates and the density of the metal in the plates are known. The thickness is estimated at between 0.008 to 0.016 inches, and the density can be estimated from Grover's calculations, assuming the densities of copper, gold, and silver are additive according to their mass percentages in the mixture (85.2%, 11.4%, and 3.4% respectively). Applying this assumption, the density of the metal in the plates is about 646 pounds per cubic foot.

We solve Equation 1 for the number of plates using a plate thickness of between 0.008 and 0.016 inches and total weight of plates between 20 and 30 pounds and then multiply the number of plates by 2 x the area per plate (48 square inches) and divide by 144 square inches per square foot to get the total surface area for writing.

The result is that 10–31 square feet would be available for writing on these plates. The estimate of 31 square feet is probably closer to being correct than the lower estimate because a thinner plate is needed to provide the necessary pliability, as Grover indicates. If so, I estimate the plates contained about 30 square feet for engraving.

This is one estimate, but there is an independent way of checking this calculation. We can try to estimate how many square feet of plates would be needed to write the Book of Mormon.

Second Approach: Calculating by Word Count Compared to the Qu'ran

We can also compare the Book of Mormon with the Qu'ran. The Book of Mormon contains about 250,000 words in my English translation, while my English translation of the Qu'ran contains about 77,500 words. Why the Qu'ran? Because Hebrew and Arabic are both Semitic languages and thus have no vowels and no punctuation. As a result they are very compact. The Book of Mormon was apparently written in some system that allowed for a more compact script than even Hebrew (Mormon 9:33). The combination of a compact language written in a compact script would help Mormon write a long book on relatively few plates.

Several years ago I visited Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and was taken by my hosts to tour the Museum of Islam. In this museum there is a beautiful framed painting containing the entire text of the Qu'ran. The painting of the text is done in very small but perfectly legible Arabic script. As I looked at the painting, and admired its beauty, the idea for this calculation came into my mind. I asked my hosts to take a picture

of me standing by the painting. (I did not want to ask for a tape measure and measure the painting. My hosts were very friendly and kind people, but I did not want to risk causing them any offense.)

The hat that I wore to the museum measured 12 inches front to back and about 10.8 inches side to side. By proportion with my hat in the photograph, and by my own visual estimates while looking closely at the painting, this painting is about 4 feet high by 8 feet wide, or 32 square feet. There are four decorative circles in the painting that I estimate are about 6 inches in diameter (0.8 square feet in total for the four of them) and a decorative strip running lengthwise that is about 8 inches tall and 7 feet long (4.7 square feet). So the entire text of the Qu'ran can be written on about 32–4 .7–0 .8 = 26.5 square feet.[12]

How about the Book of Mormon? If we are willing to make some assumptions and approximations, how many square feet of plates would it take to write the Book of Mormon?

Given the presumed similarities of the languages and the size and compactness of both scripts, one approach is to assume it would take proportionally the same square footage of plates to write the Book of Mormon in Arabic as it did to write the entire Qu'ran. To state this assumption in another way: we are assuming for the sake of this calculation that the language in which the Book of Mormon was written is similar to Arabic in its compactness and can express the same ideas in a similar surface area devoted to writing.

Since the painting required about 26.5 square feet to write 77,500 words of Arabic it would take approximately (250,000/77,500) x 26.5 square feet or about 86 square feet of plates to write the Book of Mormon in Arabic, assuming that as many words can be written per square foot of plates in Reformed Egyptian as in Arabic.

Thus, the two independent estimates of the writing area required to engrave the Book of Mormon differ by a factor of three or less. One estimate is about 30 square feet and the other estimate is about 86 square feet.

The two estimates would tend to converge if:

1. the reformed Egyptian characters used by Mormon were more compact than the Arabic characters used in the painting, so that more words would fit on one square foot of plates, reducing the number of plates in the second calculation

12. The photograph is in my collection but is not provided here, as it would likely not reproduce well in the printed version of this article.

2. the characters used by Mormon were placed together on the plates even more closely than the Arabic script was on the painting, again allowing more words per square foot of plates and also decreasing the number of plates in the second calculation

I believe these conditions could be achieved and likely were achieved in the construction of the plates and their engraving with the Book of Mormon. In each case, the primary motivation would be to reduce the weight of the plates that Mormon and Moroni (and later Joseph Smith) would be required to carry around.

Engraving on a hard metal is well suited to producing small characters and is very difficult work, as Jacob attests (Jacob 4:1). While the Arabic characters of the painting in the museum were compact, I believe they could have been placed even more closely than they were without loss of readability.

Therefore, to a first approximation, the Book of Mormon was engraved on about 60 square feet of plates. This figure splits the difference between the two independent estimates and allows some room for the three rings by which the plates were bound[13] and also free space around the edges so the engravings did not fill the entire plate.

Using the 60 square feet estimate, if each plate measured 6 inches by 8 inches (roughly the page size of the modern Book of Mormon) and was engraved on both sides, then the entire Book of Mormon was engraved on approximately 40 individual plates. In other words, it was about 80 pages long (two pages per plate), roughly fifteen percent of the length of our modern English copies of the Book of Mormon (531 pages).

These calculations and estimates all pass the test of reasonableness. They are two completely independent estimates of a single variable: the total surface area on which the Book of Mormon was engraved. And the different estimates vary by a factor of about three or less.

This may be only a small coincidence, but perhaps it is a useful addition to the many other correspondences, large and small, with which the Book of Mormon is filled. Cumulatively these correspondences gain great force as their number increases.

Conclusion

The total surface area required to engrave the characters in which the Book of Mormon is written on the plates is unknown. However, we do

13. Joseph Smith, "Church History," in *Times and Seasons* (Nauvoo, IL), 1 Mar. 1842, vol. 3, no. 9 (whole no. 45), 707.

have a considerable amount of eyewitness testimony as to the dimensions and weight of the plates. We also have a modern language, Arabic, which is likely similar to the language in which the Book of Mormon plates were written. We know approximately how much surface area was required to write the Qu'ran, using very small Arabic characters. Based on this and other information, several questions can be asked: 1) Can we estimate the surface area required to engrave the Book of Mormon? 2) Can we check that estimate using an independent method of calculation? 3) Do these two estimates give physically reasonable results?

Two separate and completely independent calculation approaches were taken to address the question of the surface area of the Book of Mormon plates. The results of the calculations are between about 30 and 86 square feet, a difference of less than three-fold. The average of these two values is about 60 square feet, meaning the Book of Mormon was engraved on about 40 individual plates. This is roughly 15 percent of the surface area of the text of the Book of Mormon in our modern English translation. Thus the two independent calculation approaches give consistent and reasonable values. They also support the idea that the Book of Mormon authors achieved great economy of space in writing the Book of Mormon.

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The Amlicites and Amalekites: Are They the Same People?

Benjamin McMurtry

Abstract: *Royal Skousen's Book of Mormon Critical Text Project has proposed many hundreds of changes to the text of the Book of Mormon. A subset of these changes does not come from definitive evidence found in the manuscripts or printed editions but are conjectural emendations. In this paper, I examine one of these proposed changes — the merging of two dissenting Nephite groups, the Amlicites and the Amalekites. Carefully examining the timeline and geography of these groups shows logical problems with their being the same people. This paper argues that they are, indeed, separate groups and explores a plausible explanation for the missing origins of the Amalekites.*

In the landmark Book of Mormon Critical Text Project, Royal Skousen endeavored to restore the original reading of the Book of Mormon. By examining the manuscripts and earliest printed editions of the Book of Mormon, he discovered and corrected hundreds of errors. There are instances where an appeal to the original texts did not yield a conclusive result, however. In such cases, Skousen chose to create a new reading based on his conjectural emendation.[1] There are many such conjectural emendations in his Earliest Text,[2] but perhaps the one that has had the greatest potential impact on how we understand the story of the Book of Mormon is the decision to change every instance of *Amalekite(s)* to *Amlicite(s).*

In the four-page explanation[3] that Skousen gave on the subject, he offers spelling and narrative reasons for and against merging the two groups. The original manuscript is not extant for Alma 2 and 3, so all that could be examined was the printer's manuscript for *Amlici(tes).* It showed that in 41 of 43 occurrences, the name was spelled correctly. In two occurrences, a *k* was used instead of a *c*. Skousen suggests "that

Joseph Smith pronounced *Amlicites* (as well as its base morpheme, the name *Amlici*) with a /k/ sound rather than with the /s/ sound." The original manuscript is also missing for the first eight occurrences of *Amalekite(s).* Occurrences nine through eighteen show variations in the consonants *c* and *k* and the vowels *a*, *e*, and *i.* These spelling variations were corrected when the manuscript was copied. "The printer's manuscript (and every published edition) uses the term *Amalekite(s)* to refer to a group of religious apostates, fourteen times in Alma 21–27 and five times in Alma 43."

Emma Smith, Joseph's wife and one of his scribes, explained that he would spell out the first instance of a proper noun letter by letter.[4] When the same word came up again, Joseph would not respell it; it would be up to the scribe to continue to spell it correctly. Oliver Cowdery did not spell *Amalekites* consistently, but this is not unusual. In fact, there are many spelling variations of proper nouns in late instances in the original manuscript that were later corrected in the printer's manuscript. The spelling of a similar name, *Amalickiah,* shows similar misspellings in the original manuscript.[5] This is consistent with the way that we understand that Oliver did his scribal work.[6] We should trust the consistent spelling in the printer's manuscript and printed editions as correct over the inconsistent late occurrences from the original manuscript.[7] It is important to note that in all instances of *Amlicites*, the word begins with *aml* and in all instances of *Amalekites* there is either an *e* or *a* between the *m* and *l*. Skousen recognizes this vowel problem, but minimizes it by calling it "only the intrusive *e*." Thus, *Amlicites* is always a three-syllable word and *Amalekites* is always a four-syllable word.

It seems to me that Skousen makes a stronger case for keeping the two groups separate, based both on spelling and on the narrative, than he does for uniting them. However, after the manuscripts yielded no conclusive answer, he accepted the ideas of Lyle Fletcher and John A. Tvedtnes[8] to merge the two groups. This proposal has seen fairly wide acceptance.[9]

The rest of this paper will examine the narrative data and demonstrate that the Book of Mormon requires the Amlicites and Amalekites to be two separate peoples, even though they clearly have similar names.

The Chronological Problem

The first textual reference to either of these groups is the appearance of Amlici in Alma 2:1. The rise of Amlici was in the commencement of the fifth year of the reign of the judges. Amlici gains a following, and they call themselves Amlicites (Alma 2:11). They do battle with the Nephite

armies. Amlici is killed by the sword of Alma the Younger, and his followers are defeated and scattered. This all occurs in the fifth year of the judges.

The first textual reference to the Amalekites occurs in Alma 21:2: "Now the Lamanites and the Amalekites and the people of Amulon had built a great city, which was called Jerusalem." We must not fall into the trap of thinking that because this story appears nineteen chapters after the story of the Amlicites that it takes place at a later time. The text reveals that Alma 21 takes place "when Ammon and his brethren separated themselves in the borders of the land of the Lamanites" (Alma 21:1). This separation took place "in the first year of the judges" (Alma 17:6). The Amalekites very likely existed long before the first year, due to the fact that their city was already "great" when it was first discovered by Aaron in the first year of the judges. They continued to be a distinct people until the eighteenth year of the judges (Alma 43:4, 6).

Skousen addresses this time disparity. "The problem with the emendation *Amlicite(s)* for *Amalekites(s)* is that there is no mention of the Amlicites until the fifth year of the reign of the judges, when Amlici first appears in the narrative (see Alma 2:1–11)."[10] Skousen suggests that the chronological issue might be related to imprecision in the story recorded for the sons of Mosiah. He offers: "We should not automatically assume that the city of Jerusalem was the first place where Aaron preached … There is no explicit statement about how long and where Aaron and his companions might have worked prior to reaching the city of Jerusalem."[11]

Could Aaron have taken more than five years to start his ministry in Jerusalem? The text explains that when Aaron separated from his brethren, he "took his journey towards the land which was called by the Lamanites, Jerusalem" (Alma 21:1). It does not explicitly say how long he took to get there, but the text follows with two explanatory verses about Jerusalem and its inhabitants and proceeds in verse four with, "And it came to pass that Aaron came to the city of Jerusalem, and first began to preach to the Amalekites" (Alma 21:4). There is room in the text for some time between separating from his brothers and arriving in Jerusalem, but could it have taken more than five years?

This story of Aaron ties into the story of Ammon. As recounted in Alma 17–20, Ammon goes to Ishmael and becomes a servant to King Lamoni. On his third or fourth day in Ishmael, Ammon was given instructions to go with the other servants to water the king's flocks and to prepare the horses and chariots to carry King Lamoni to the city of Nephi to a great feast being held by his father in honor of his sons and

his people. Due to the example and teachings of Ammon, Lamoni was converted and did not go to that feast. After the conversion of the king, a church was established in the land. Ammon is then told by the Lord to go to Middoni to free Aaron and others from prison. On the way to Middoni, they meet King Lamoni's father on the highway, and he is very upset that Lamoni did not come to the feast.

This illustrates that a few weeks to a few months would have passed from the time that Ammon first arrived in Ishmael and Aaron and his brethren were in prison in Middoni. The only way for Aaron to have taken five years to get to Jerusalem is for Ammon to also have taken five years to get to Ishmael and begin his ministry.

Skousen offers another possibility: The Amalekites

> … were after the order of the Nehors, as was Amlici himself. Nehor "began to establish a church after the manner of his preaching" (Alma 1:6) in the first year of the reign of the judges, the same year that the four sons of Mosiah left on their mission to the Lamanites. Thus the reference in Alma 21:4 to meeting the Amalekites (that is, Amlicites) may be an anachronistic use of the name Amlicite(s) in the original text to refer to followers of Nehor who later became identified as the Amlicites.[12]

Here Skousen shows that there are problems with this emendation. He notes the parallel events of the rise of Nehor and the departure of the sons of Mosiah. He does not make a connection between these two events other than to say they both occurred in the first year. He seems to imply support for a literal understanding that the Amalekite order of the Nehors was established by Nehor himself. His final sentence about the anachronistic use of the name accepts that the Amlicites and Amalekites are separate peoples unified only by their being after the order of Nehors. Thus, Skousen argues that the followers of Amlici from Alma 2 were Amlicites, but the separate group in Jerusalem became known as Amlicites at a later time because they were both after the order of the Nehors.

It is unclear if Skousen believes the people in Jerusalem later physically joined with the Amlicites, or if Amlicite became a symbolic name for those after the order of the Nehors. The symbolic name approach is not consistent with the text, as Alma the Younger never uses the term *Amlicite* to refer to the Nephites living in Ammonihah, even though the text says they were after the order of Nehor (Alma 15:15). It is likely that *Amlicite* was not a symbolic name but referred only to followers of Amlici.[13] The order of Nehors was symbolic,[14] and the Amalekites in Jerusalem likely never had contact with Nehor himself.[15]

J. Christopher Conkling also addresses this issue. He proposes:

> It is highly unlikely that Amlici could rise to prominence with almost half the population's support, undertake a lively national election, receive an illegitimate coronation, raise a huge army, move major parts of the Nephite population, form alliances with the Lamanites, and manage three major battles all in one year (see Alma 2:2–3:25).[16]

In this, Conkling is surely correct, but he offers no further explanation as to how Amlici could have led the people who built the great city of Jerusalem before the time of the judges. There is nothing in that scenario that explains why Amlici's followers would have been found by Aaron in Lamanite territory five years before Amlici's rise in Zarahemla.

The Geographical Problem

There are also irreconcilable geographic differences between the Amlicite and Amalekite groups. Amlici attempted to take over Zarahemla and establish himself as king. The Amalekites lived in the city of Jerusalem, which was located "away joining the borders of Mormon" (Alma 21:1) in Lamanite territory. According to *Mormon's Map,*[17] Sorenson places this city on the west side of the waters of Mormon, on the opposite side from where Alma the Elder baptized his people. The map shows that Jerusalem is approximately 160 miles south of Zarahemla, as the crow flies. The Amalekites are also mentioned as living in the Amulonite cities of Helam and Amulon around the thirteenth year of the reign of the judges (Alma 24:1).

When the Amlicites took up arms against the Nephites, they assembled themselves together "upon the hill Amnihu, which was east of the river Sidon" (Alma 2:15). The armies, led by Alma the Younger, drove the Amlicites to the south beyond the valley of Gideon. The Amlicites then crossed over to the west side of the river Sidon and joined with an army of the Lamanites. This combined army was defeated, and the survivors fled to the west and the north (Alma 2:36). Those fleeing armies were slain and driven on every hand until they entered into a "wilderness which was infested by wild and ravenous beasts" (Alma 2:37). Many of them died in the wilderness. Most of the Amlicites were destroyed, but the few survivors may have continued to the west and the north until they found the city of Ammonihah, an apostate Nephite city that lies to the west and north of Zarahemla (Alma 8:3–6). The Amlicites are never heard from again.

The text shows that, geographically, there was a very great distance between where the Amlicites lived, fought, and were eventually scattered, and the well-established Amalekite territory.

Differences in Religious Philosophy

The Amlicites wanted to "deprive [the people] of their rights and privileges of the church; for it was [their] intent to destroy the church of God" (Alma 2:4). An Amalekite, on the other hand, says, "Behold, we have built sanctuaries, and we do assemble ourselves together to worship God" (Alma 21:6). He contended with one of the sons of Mosiah (Aaron) using antichrist arguments typical of Nephite dissenters found in many other places in the Book of Mormon.[18]

Discovering the Origins of the Amalekites

In Alma 43, the Amalekites fight alongside the Zoramites and Lamanites. The armies are led by an Amalekite[19] named Zerahemnah (Alma 43:5-6). His name, being so close to Zarahemla, indicates that he was also a Mulekite.[20]

Mulekite[21] dissention occurred during what Larson calls a "civil war"[22] between the people of Zarahemla and the people of Nephi. It is thought the reason for the civil war is that the people of Zarahemla believed they had the right to rule, instead of King Benjamin, because they were direct descendants of King Zedekiah through Mulek.[23] Perhaps the Amalekites were these Mulekites, and after losing the struggle in the capitol city, they "[dissented] away unto the Lamanites" (Words of Mormon 1:16). They then built a new city for themselves in Lamanite territory. Could there be a better name for the city in which the rightful heir to the throne ruled than *Jerusalem*, the name the Amalekites chose for their city? Perhaps the leader of this group was named Amalek, a name found throughout the Old Testament. No date is given for this civil war, but it could be around 150 BC, sixty years before the reign of the judges.

Why is it that we have to piece together an origin story of the Amalekites rather than reading it explicitly in the text? It is quite unusual for Mormon to leave out the origins of a named people. If the scenario above is true, the Amalekites originated in the time before our current Book of Mosiah begins. That means Mormon did not leave this out of his record. The most likely scenario is that he included it in what came to be known as "the lost 116 pages." In other words, it is likely we don't know of their origins today because their origin story was in the chapter(s) lost from the Book of Mosiah.

Another plausible explanation for the origins of the Amalekites (but one I consider secondary) lies in Mosiah chapters 26–27. Starting in Mosiah 26:1–7, there was a very large group of people who dissented from the church. They disputed points of doctrine and "were a separate people as to their faith" (Mosiah 26:4). We know about the Amalekite faith; they did not believe in Jesus Christ and did not believe that anyone could know of things to come (Alma 21:5–10). These dissenters' names were "blotted out" by Alma the Elder as he "did regulate all the affairs of the church" (Mosiah 26:36–37). It could be that this group became the Amalekites. Mosiah gave a strict command that there should be no persecution, and later the people "began to scatter abroad upon the face of the earth, yea, on the north and on the south" (Mosiah 27:3, 6). It is possible that these dissenters left, to the south, at this time when there were many groups leaving Zarahemla.

Aaron finds the Amalekites living with the Amulonites (Alma 21:2). Why would they have decided to live together? We know that Alma the Elder brought "children of Amulon and his brethren" with him when he returned to Zarahemla after being in bondage (Mosiah 25:12). These Amulonites denounced their heritage and took upon themselves the name of "Nephite." But in the years and decades later, might some of the children of these former Amulonites have become unbelievers just like the children of Alma the Elder and King Mosiah? Might there have been some of the rising generation who remembered living with the Lamanites before Alma brought them to Zarahemla? Might there have been Amulonite families who were split when Alma led the people back to Zarahemla? The children left with their mothers while their fathers, who were guards over the people of Alma, were overcome with a deep sleep (Mosiah 24:19). Perhaps this break-off group consisted of a mix of children of the Amulonites and others including Mulekites. When they left Zarahemla, they went first to the Amulonites because they knew they would be well received because some of them had family connections. They distinguished themselves by taking on the name of their leader, presumably Amalek.

Why, then, would this potential origin for the Amalekites be left out of our Book of Mormon? Perhaps their origin story was never recorded in the large Plates of Nephi, so Mormon simply did not know what it was. Their dissention took place while Alma the Elder was the record keeper. Writing from Zarahemla, he knew there were colonies of people leaving the capitol and settling in other places, but he would not have known that one of them settled back with the Amulonites and called

themselves Amalekites. Who might have known where the Amalekites came from? It is likely that Aaron might have been able to find this out. King Lamoni's father should also have known where they came from, as he was king over all the land and "granted unto them that they should build sanctuaries" (Alma 22:7). Unfortunately, the individuals who may have known the Amalekites' origins never passed on that information to Alma the Younger, who engraved the Large Plates. Thirty years or more may have passed from the time of their founding to the time that Alma the Younger was writing about them.[24] Thus, if the recorders of the Large Plates were unaware, themselves, of the Amalekite origins, then Mormon had no way to include it in his compilation of the records.

Conclusion

Careful study of the Book of Mormon reveals that the Amalekites were a long-term group of Mulekite dissenters who lived in the Lamanite city of Jerusalem, worshiping God in their synagogues according to a typical antichrist theology. Amlici, on the other hand, led an unsuccessful flash-in-the-pan uprising to establish himself as king in Zarahemla and destroy the church of God. Skousen's critical textual analysis discovered more reasons to keep the two groups separate than to merge them, but he followed the ideas of other scholars and merged them anyway.[25] I believe there is more evidence against this conjectural emendation than there is for it. We should trust that, in this case, Oliver Cowdery corrected the spelling mistakes he made during the original dictation and that the Amlicites and the Amalekites are two separate peoples.

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Notes

1. In the scholarly world, such emendations are not unusual and, in many cases, help to advance our understanding of what would otherwise be unclear. Since such changes are based on limited objective information colored by subjective (albeit expert

subjective) deductions, it is possible for them to be open to differing conclusions. Hence, this paper.

2. Royal Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 742.

3. Royal Skousen, "Alma 2:11–12," *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon Part Three: Mosiah 17– Alma 20* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2006), 1605–1609. Skousen's thinking on the "sameness" of Amalekites and Amlicites dates back to at least 2002. See Royal Skousen, "The Systematic Text of the Book of Mormon," in *Uncovering the Original Text of the Book of Mormon: History and Findings of the Critical Text Project*, ed. M. Gerald Bradford and Alison V.P. Coutts (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002), 54. In this paper, I address only his culminating explanation provided in his later work.

4. Edmond C. Briggs (reporting an interview with Emma Smith), "A Visit to Nauvoo in 1856," *Journal of History* 9 (October 1916): 454. "When my husband was translating the Book of Mormon, I wrote a part of it, as he dictated each sentence, word for word, and when he came to proper names he could not pronounce, or long words, he spelled them out, and while I was writing them, if I made a mistake in spelling, he would stop me and correct my spelling, although it was impossible for him to see how I was writing them down at the time."

5. Royal Skousen, "Alma 2:11–12," 1608. "In fact, in the original manuscript Oliver Cowdery frequently misspelled *Amalickiah* as *Ameleckiah* (28 times) and *Amelickiah* (21 times)."

6. Royal Skousen. "The Original and Printer's Manuscripts," at a Book of Mormon Lecture Series, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, February 26th 2013. Lecture. http://mi.byu.edu/watch-skousens-3-part-lecture-series-on-the-book-of-mormon-critical-text-project/.

7. There would be no confusion concerning *Amlicites* vs. *Amalekites* if the original manuscript were extant for the very first occurrence of the word *Amalekites*. Understanding that we, sadly, don't have that manuscript, we are left to wonder if the two words were simply uncorrected spelling variations. Contra Skousen and a few others, I believe we should trust that when he was making

the printer's manuscript, Oliver looked back at the spelling from the first instance and wrote it correctly in the printer's manuscript thereafter.

8. Skousen's full conclusion reads: "The emendation of *Amlicite(s)* for *Amalekite(s)* was first suggested by Lyle Fletcher in an unpublished paper he wrote on this question in the early 1990s. John A. Tvedtnes, on pages 324–325 in *The Most Correct Book: Insights from a Book of Mormon Scholar* (Salt Lake City: Cornerstone, 1999) proposes that the Amalekites might be the Amlicites and provides considerable evidence to show that these Amalekites were Nephite dissenters." We do not have access to the unpublished works of Lyle Fletcher. Tvedtnes does not address this issue on pages 324–325 but does take it up on page 293 of *The Most Correct Book*. It reads, "But who where the Amalekites? Were they the same as the Amlicites, a Nephite apostate group who had joined the Lamanites in the time of Alma the elder (Alma 2:24)? If so, why the change in spelling 19 chapters later? We simply cannot be sure." Tvedtnes wonders if there is a connection, but offers no evidence to support them being the same people.

   Another scholar who supposed this connection was John L. Sorenson. Skousen does not reference his idea specifically, but he would have been aware of it. Sorenson wrote "Book of Mormon Peoples," in the *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, in 1992 (http://eom.byu.edu/index.php/Book_of_Mormon_Peoples). "One of the earliest groups of Nephite dissenters was the Amlicites. Ambitious Amlici, a disciple of Nehor, likely claiming noble birth (Alma 51:8), gathered a large body of followers and challenged the innovative Nephite system of rule by judges instituted by Mosiah 2; Amlici wished to be king. When his aim was defeated by 'the voice of the people,' he plotted an attack coordinated with the Lamanites that nearly succeeded in capturing Zarahemla, the Nephite capital. Loyal forces under Alma 2 finally succeeded in destroying or scattering the enemy (Alma 2:1–31). Amlici was slain, but the fate of his forces is unclear. Likely, elements of them went with the defeated Lamanite army to the land of Nephi. The name Amlicite is not used thereafter. Another group of Nephite dissenters, the Amalekites, lived in the land of Nephi (Alma 21:2–3;43:13). Their origin is never explained. However, based on the names and dates, it is possible that they constituted the Amlicite remnant previously mentioned, their new name possibly arising by 'lamanitization' of

the original." Here Sorenson offers a solution to the geographical problem noted later in the paper. However, we are told that the Amlicite remnant was scattered north and west, and the retreating Lamanites would have gone south. Sorenson does not address the chronological problem.

9. J. Christopher Conkling, "Alma's Enemies: The Case of the Lamanites, Amlicites, and Mysterious Amalekites," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 14/1 (Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2005): 108–17, 130–32. http://publications.mi.byu.edu/publications/jbms/14/1/S00013–5 0be6cccd0a2511Conkling.pdf. Val Larson, "In His Footsteps: Ammon1 and Ammon2," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* (2013), 3:85–113. http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/in-his-footsteps-ammon-and-ammon/. "How Were the Amlicites and Amalekites Related?" *Book of Mormon Central* (27 May 2016). https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/how-were-the-amlicites-and-amalekites-related. "AMALEKITES." *Book of Mormon Onomasticon* (BYU Harold B. Lee Library), https://onoma.lib.byu.edu/index.php/AMALEKITES.

10. Royal Skousen, "Alma 2:11–12," 1608–9.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. See Alma 2:11. Also note that the Amlicites, as a people, ceased to exist after the battle in which their leader, Amlici, was killed.

14. See Brant Gardner, "Mormon's Editorial Method and Meta-Message," FAIR Mormon 2008 Conference. South Towne Exposition Center, Sandy, Utah, August 7th 2008. https://www.fairmormon.org/fair-conferences/2008-fair-conference/2008-mormons-editorial-method-and-meta-message. "Even more than Mormon's coloration of Nehor, however, is the fact that Mormon names an entire religious movement after him. The evidence indicates that the facets of the religion that Nehor preached were precisely those found in the court of Noah long before we see Nehor on the scene. Nehor was not the earliest practitioner nor even the most infamous. The text's very next story emphasizes the rift created by the Nehorite Amlici; clearly a much more serious social disruption. I suggest that Mormon intentionally named that religion for a murderer because he wanted to clearly link it with

an unsavory connotation. I strongly suspect that it was called by some other name in the source plates and that the identification of "order of the Nehors" is Mormon's label written long after the fact."

15. Nehor himself is mentioned only in the first year of the judges in Zarahemla (Alma 1:2–15). Nehor's order or profession is referenced to Amlici in Zarahemla in the fifth year (Alma 2:1), the people in Ammonihah in the tenth year (Alma 15:15), and finally in Jerusalem with the Amalekites and Amulonites in the first year (Alma 21:4). It is possible that Nehor lived in Jerusalem before going to Zarahemla, but there is no evidence of this from the text.
16. J. Christopher Conkling, "Alma's Enemies," 114.
17. John L. Sorenson, *Mormon's Map* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2000), inside front cover.
18. See, for example, Sherem in Jacob 7, Nehor in Alma 1, Korihor in Alma 30, and the Zoramites in Alma 31.
19. "Chapter 33: Alma 43–51." *Book of Mormon Student Manual*, (2009), 248–55. https://www.lds.org/manual/book-of-mormon-student-manual/chapter-33-alma-43–5 1?lang=eng.
20. "ZERAHEMNAH," BYU Harold B. Lee Library, https://onoma.lib.byu.edu/index.php/ZERAHEMNAH
21. Although modern writers use *Mulekite* to refer to those claiming Mulek as an ancestor, the actual term *Mulekite* is not attested in the Book of Mormon.
22. Val Larson, "In His Footsteps: Ammon_1 and Ammon_2," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* (2013), 3:91. http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/in-his-footsteps-ammon-and-ammon/.
23. Mosiah 25 shows that even long after Benjamin established peace in Zarahemla, the people of Zarahemla and the people of Nephi were counted differently and assembled themselves in separate bodies to hear Mosiah read the record of Zeniff. Mosiah 25:13 shows marginalization of the people of Zarahemla by the Nephites. "And now all the people of Zarahemla were numbered with the Nephites, and this because the kingdom had been conferred upon none but those who were descendants of Nephi." Note that later the Mulekites are believed to be the king men who took over Zarahemla around 62 B.C. (Alma 51, 61–62) (see also "The Mulekite Connection," *Step by Step Through the Book of Mormon,* by Alan C. Miner, http://ancientamerica.org/library/media/HTML/

k3hid744/The%20Mulekite%20Connection.htm?n=0), and that about ten years later Zarahemla fell again to a Mulekite named Coriantumr (Helaman 1:15).

24. The events of Mosiah 26 took place between 120 and 100 BC. Alma heard the stories of the sons of Mosiah in about 77 BC. See Alma 17.

25. I greatly respect and revere Royal Skousen's work on the Book of Mormon Critical Text Project. The fact is that if we really look at what he actually found on the manuscripts, there was absolutely no reason for him to change the Amalekites to become Amlicites. I believe he liked Lyle Fletcher's and others' ideas to merge the two groups; he liked that it solved the mystery of the unknown origins of the Amalekites. Perhaps, as he was reviewing the manuscripts, this desire to solve the mystery caused him to read more into the evidence than was actually there, and his judgment was affected by confirmation bias.

The Book of Mormon Versus the Consensus of Scholars: Surprises from the Disputed Longer Ending of Mark, Part 1

Jeff Lindsay

Abstract: *Following the account of the ministry of Christ among the Nephites as recorded in the Book of Mormon, Christ gave a charge to His New World disciples (Mormon 9:22–25). These words are very similar to the commission of Christ to His apostles at the end of the Gospel of Mark (Mark 16:9–20). According to the consensus of modern Bible scholars, Christ did not speak those words; they are a later addition. If so, this is a problem for the Book of Mormon. Fortunately, recent modern scholarship offers compelling reasons for overturning the old consensus against the longer ending of Mark. Some of the factors from modern scholarship that indirectly help overcome a potentially serious objection to and apparent weakness in the Book of Mormon also help us better appreciate its strength as we explore unifying themes derived from an ancient Jewish perspective. In this Part 1 of a two-part series, we look at the evidence for the unity of Mark and the plausibility of Mormon 9:22–25. In Part 2 we examine further Book of Mormon implications from the thematic evidence for the unity of Mark.*

One of the most effective and interesting arguments against the Book of Mormon is that it quotes from the disputed ending of the Gospel of Mark. In Mormon 9:22–25, Mormon quotes words spoken by Christ to His disciples in the New World that gave them essentially the same commission that Christ gave His apostles at the end of the Gospel of Mark in Mark 16:15–18: go preach the gospel, and he that believes and is baptized will be saved; and signs will follow. Some will object to New Testament language being used at all in the Book of Mormon, but there is no problem with Christ quoting Himself, as He does with the Sermon

on the Mount in His words to the Nephites (3 Nephi 12–14). So why should we worry also about Christ using His own words as quoted in Mark?

However, there is a problem, for the quoted words from Mark should not be in the Bible; they are a later, spurious addition, according to the consensus of most Bible scholars. The two earliest extant New Testament manuscripts both have the Gospel of Mark ending at 16:8 with two women, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James, fearful and seemingly unwilling to proclaim the gospel message as they stand before the empty tomb: "And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid." According to modern scholars, the following verses, known as the "longer ending of Mark," covering the appearance of Christ to Mary and then the apostles and the great commission to preach the gospel to every creature, should not be there; allegedly, they were inserted into some manuscripts much later. So what is this ending doing in the Book of Mormon, ascribed to Christ in His teachings to the disciples? If the words in the longer ending of Mark were not in Mark's Gospel and were not spoken by Christ, it is unlikely that Christ would quote them or words similar to them in the New World.

Fortunately, very recent scholarship on the longer ending of Mark provides many compelling reasons to accept the disputed longer ending after all. It is a fascinating story with many lessons for students of the Bible and the Book of Mormon.

For those interested in this matter, a key resource available in both print and Kindle editions is Nicholas P. Lunn's *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9–20.*[1] Lunn, a Bible translation consultant with Wycliffe Bible Translators with a doctorate in Hebrew from the London School of Theology, demonstrates how to dig deeply into the scriptures and explore them from many lines of analysis. Also see James Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9-20,* 2016 Edition,[2] with extensive information about early Christian references to the longer ending of Mark. In another useful resource, cases for and against the longer ending are provided by four differing authors in

1. Nicholas P. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9–20* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014).

2. James Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition* (James Snapp Jr.: 2016), Kindle edition.

Perspectives on the Ending of Mark,[3] though the analysis in favor of the longer ending lacks the benefit of the extensive foundation provided by Nicholas Lunn's later work. William R. Farmer's 1974 work, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark*,[4] examined some of the external evidence relative to the longer ending, finding it unable to resolve the issue on its own, yet concluding that the omission of the longer ending was done deliberately by some Alexandrian scribes who may have been concerned about the possibility of believers picking up snakes and drinking poison.[5] Farmer also laid a foundation for analysis of the internal evidence. An outstanding review of the literature and the development of related theories over time is provided by David Hester in his 2015 work *Does Mark 16:9–20 Belong in the New Testament?*[6] (Hester, writing from an openly apologetic perspective, offers analysis that supports the authenticity of the longer ending of Mark.) Many other works on both sides of the debate can be considered,[7] but Lunn appears to present the most complete, thorough, and far-ranging case for the authenticity of Mark.

Here is the passage in question from Mormon 9:22–25:

> 22. For behold, thus said Jesus Christ, the Son of God, unto his disciples who should tarry, yea, and also to all his disciples, in the hearing of the multitude: Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;
> 23. And he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned;
> 24. And these signs shall follow them that believe — in my

3. *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark*, ed. David Alan Black (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2008).

4. William R. Farmer, *The Last Twelve Verses of Mark* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, first published 1974, digital edition 2005), as cited by Lunn; https://books.google.com/books?id=yT-13BpsyQ0C.

5. Ibid., 62–72, as cited by Lunn, 13.

6. David Hester, *Does Mark 16:9–20 Belong in the New Testament?* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015).

7. E.g., Bruce M. Metzger and Bart D. Ehrman, *The Text of New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 322–27. For a detailed examination of the longer ending that questions its authenticity, see Travis B. Williams, "Bringing Method to the Madness: Examining the Style of the Longer Ending of Mark," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 20/3 (2010): 397–418; https://www.academia.edu/1444542/Bringing_Method_to_the_Madness_Examining_the_Style_of_the_Longer_Ending_of_Mark. For a rebuttal, see Tommy Wasserman, "Maurice Robinson Responds to T.B. Williams, pt. 1," *Evangelical Textual Criticism*, Oct. 18, 2010, http://evangelicaltextualcriticism.blogspot.com/2010/10/maurice-robinson-responds-to-tb.html.

> name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover;
> 25. And whosoever shall believe in my name, doubting nothing, unto him will I confirm all my words, even unto the ends of the earth.

Here is the related portion from Mark 16:

> 15. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
> 16. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.
> 17. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;
> 18. They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.
> 19. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.
> 20. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

If these verses were made up by some scribe to round out the abrupt ending of Mark at Mark 16:8, and if Jesus did not actually say this to His apostles in the New World, it would seem very odd that Mormon would quote from the teachings of Christ to His New World disciples and end up with the very same content given in the disputed longer ending of Mark. It is an issue that needs to be considered. One could argue, as some Latter-day Saint people have, that the Book of Mormon is somehow an expanded text that builds on ancient gold-plate material or, more extremely, at least on ancient "truthy" ideas, with Joseph's added commentary and thoughts taken from modern sources, but this is unsatisfying and is inconsistent with the data we have about the translation process, both in terms of the mechanics of dictation and composition as well as the structure and language found in that text.

Fortunately, in spite of an ongoing scholarly "consensus," there is surprisingly impressive evidence that the longer ending of Mark is authentic. Before we explore some of those details, first note that over

95% of the existing ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament have the longer ending of Mark. The problem came with the relatively recent discovery of the two oldest extant manuscripts, the *Codex Sinaiticus* and the *Codex Vaticanus*, both of which end at Mark 16:8 and lack the longer ending. These mid-fourth-century manuscripts, though, differ from our canon in many other ways and need not be assumed to be the best and most accurate manuscripts simply because they are the oldest manuscripts that have survived intact.

While they are the oldest extant manuscripts, they are clearly not the oldest manuscripts that were used and quoted by early Christians. Dozens of ancient sources provide evidence that at least multiple portions of the longer ending of Mark were known and used in the Christian community before the *Codex Sinaiticus* and the *Codex Vaticanus* came into existence. In fact, both those manuscripts provide evidence that their copyists were at least aware of an alternate ending for Mark (one has an unusually large space after Mark 16:8 as if leaving space for the additional verses, and the other has unusual markings at the end as if to physically prevent insertion of known additional verses). Both come from the same Alexandrian school, or the same "scriptorium," and so should not be considered as independent witnesses against the longer ending.

The case for the longer ending of Mark, as we explore below, includes an impressive array of insights from various lines of analysis. The evidence from early Christian writers is noteworthy. Lunn's analysis of individual words, themes such as the Exodus theme, grammatical patterns, parallelism, prophecy and fulfillment, and so on provide a fascinating, multidimensional approach to Mark from an able Bible scholar whose work provides a strong basis for accepting the integrity of Mark as we now have it. As a bonus, along the way we can also apply some interesting approaches to the Book of Mormon to better appreciate several subtleties in that ancient text.

About that Consensus

Looking at statements of Bible scholars, one can easily wonder why anyone would entertain any hope that the longer ending of Mark is authentic. The issue seems to be beyond debate. As New Testament scholar Dr. Stephen C. Carlson of the Australia American Catholic

University reminds us, "This issue is no longer disputed among New Testament textual critics."[8] The debate is over.

Some examples of scholarly statements on the issue have been compiled by Snapp.[9] In light of abundant evidence relevant to the controversy (or *non-controversy*, according to many), the following statements are all surprisingly wrong or at least incomplete and misleading. For example, many scholars have informed their readers that verses 9–20 of Mark 16 "are lacking in many of the oldest and most reliable manuscripts" (Norman Geisler[10]) and that "many" ancient Greek manuscripts simply end at Mark 16:8 (e.g., Larry O. Richards, Wilfrid J. Harrington, Jim Levitt). Eugene Peterson notes that the long ending "is contained only in later manuscripts." Donald Juel even speaks of the "almost unanimous testimony of the oldest Greek manuscripts" in excluding the longer ending. This error is further amplified by Ernest Findlay Scott's claim that the 12 verses of the longer ending "are found in no early manuscript," and David Ewert takes that error to its zenith with "all major manuscripts end this Gospel at 16:8." Craig Evans says, "Many of the older manuscripts have asterisks and obeli marking off the Long or Short Endings as spurious or at least doubtful" and "later copies contain vv. 9–20, but they are marked off with asterisks or obelisks, warning readers and copyists that these twelve verses are doubtful." Evans continues: these verses "were added at least two centuries after Mark first began to circulate," which would seem to put the origins of the longer ending to sometime after AD 260. Tim Geddert writes, "Not only do some of the most ancient authorities" lack these verses (as NRSV reads) — "they all do."[11]

To Snapp's lengthy list we could add many further statements. For example, Dillon Burroughs, an associate editor for *The Apologetics Study*

8. Stephen C. Carlson, "Review of a Book by Nicholas P. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9–20*," *Australian Biblical Review* 63 (2015); available at https://www.academia.edu/22718193/Review_of_Nicholas_Lunn_The_Original_Ending_of_Mark_2014_.

9. The examples that follow are as cited by Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, "Introductory Summary: Mark 16:9–20: A Scholarly Consensus?" in the section "Manuscript Evidence."

10. Norman Geisler, *The Big Book of Bible Difficulties* (Ada, MI: Baker Books, 1992), 377–78, as cited by Snapp, *Authentic*, Kindle edition, "Introductory Summary."

11. Tim Geddert, "Beginning Again (Mark 16:1–8)," *Direction Journal* 33/2 (Fall 2004), as cited by Snapp, Jr., *Authentic*, Kindle edition, "Introductory Summary: Mark 16:9–20: A Scholarly Consensus?" in the section "Patristic Evidence."

Bible for Students, author of over 60 books, and graduate of the Dallas Theological Seminary, wrote on his blog *Holy Writ* that, "The earliest manuscripts, including our earliest Greek Bible called *Codex Sinaiticus*, do not include the longer ending. In fact, it is some centuries after Mark was written that we first find a longer ending."[12]

This is only a sampling of the sometimes egregious claims made by scholars as they quote one another in perpetrating and amplifying errors from this "non-controversy." In light of numerous such statements regarding the manuscript-evidence, the evidence from early Christian fathers, the evidence from various early versions (translations) of the New Testament, and the evidence from lectionary sources, all used to deny the genuineness of Mark 16:9–20, Snapp observes that this obliges us to make an important choice:

> Regardless of how fond we may be of 12 verses that have appeared in cherished English translations, this evidence presents all honest Bible-readers with a choice: you must either acknowledge that Mark 16:9–20 was added by copyists, and is not part of the Word of God, or else you must ignore these scholars. I recommend ignoring these scholars, because almost all of the statements that I have just quoted are incorrect, and the ones that are not flatly incorrect are deceptively vague and one-sided.[13]

The apparent consensus of scholars becomes less impressive once the pervasively overlooked evidence in favor of the long ending of Mark is brought to light. While the works of Lunn, Snapp, and others might not change that consensus in the eyes of many scholars, it can change things for some. After reading Lunn, Bible scholar Craig A. Evans, Dean of the School of Christian Thought at Houston Baptist University (and author of some of the questionable quotes listed by Snapp above), wrote:

> Nicholas Lunn has thoroughly shaken my views concerning the ending of the Gospel of Mark. As in the case of most gospel scholars, I have for my whole career held that Mark 16:9–20, the so-called "Long Ending," was not original. But in

12. Dillon Burroughs, "Mark 16: The Alternative Ending of Mark," *Holy Writ*, Patheos.com, March 3, 2011; http://www.patheos.com/blogs/holywrit/2011/03/mark-16-the-alternative-ending-of-mark/.

13. Snapp, Jr. *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, "Introductory Summary: Mark 16:9–20: A Scholarly Consensus?," section "Lectionary Evidence."

> his well-researched and carefully argued book, Lunn succeeds in showing just how flimsy that position really is.[14]

Evans is a welcome example of a scholar changing his mind in light of the evidence on this matter. Many scholars feel there is no need to even consider the questions Lunn and others raise about the consensus rejection of the longer ending of Mark, but this is unfortunate and might remind us to exercise caution when adjusting our faith based on a purported scholarly consensus.

Some Basic Problems with the Consensus View

The widespread view that Mark should end at Mark 16:8 poses *prima facie* problems that need to be recognized. Robert H. Stein, while accepting the consensus about the longer ending, notes that an ending at v. 8 is problematic:

> The troublesome nature of this ending, however, is apparent at first glance. It is acknowledged as a theological "scandal," creating "an intolerable discontinuity in the narrative and in the readerly expectations created by it," "a shocking reversal of expectations," and a "mysterious anti-climax." These quotations, it should be noted, come from advocates of the view that 16:8 is the intended ending of the Gospel. Nevertheless, they acknowledge the difficulty involved in assuming that Mark 16:8 is the Evangelist's intended ending.[15]

Among the many challenges is that a Gospel of Mark ending at 16:8 seems obviously incomplete. The tomb is empty, and a young man states that Christ is risen, but we are left with merely the empty tomb, women being afraid, and failure to spread or even recognize the good news of Christ's majestic triumph over death. The earliest expressions of Christian belief emphasized the resurrection and the appearance of Christ to witnesses (see Acts 2:23–24, 31–32, 3:15, 10:39–40, 13:29–31, 17:31; 1 Corinthians 15:3–5). Of 1 Corinthians 15:3–5 — which states that Christ died for our sins, was raised on the third day, and was seen by the twelve — Gordon Fee concludes that "it is generally agreed that in vv. 3–5 Paul is repeating a very early creedal formulation that was

14. Craig A. Evans, statement printed on the back cover of Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, back cover, see also http://www.jeffriddle.net/2015/04/new-book-defends-traditional-ending-of.html.

15. Robert H. Stein, "The Ending of Mark," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 18/1 (2008): 79–98.

common to the entire church."[16] Without the longer ending, the basic creedal system of the early Church is incomplete in Mark. For this fundamental and vital aspect of the Christian message to be left muted without the clear and emphatic emphasis that the resurrected Lord was alive and seen by witnesses is inconsistent with the early Christian message and with Mark's apparent purpose in writing.

Mark repeatedly provides evidence that prophecies made by or related to Christ are fulfilled, but we are left without important evidence if the longer ending is abandoned, as Lunn observes:

> As Robert Gundry comments: "Mark has repeatedly and in detail narrated the fulfillments of Jesus' other predictions so far as those fulfillments occurred during Jesus' time on earth …. They include the seeing of God's kingdom as having come with power at the Transfiguration, the finding of a colt, some disciples' being met by a man carrying a jar of water, the showing of the Upper Room, the betrayal of Jesus by one of the Twelve, the scattering of the rest of the Twelve, the denials of Jesus by Peter, and of course the Passion…."[17] In this light, having created the strong expectation of a resurrection through repeated predictions it conflicts with his practice elsewhere for Mark not to incorporate a narration of the fulfillment of these predictions. Consequently, it is extremely unlikely that this Gospel did not originally include such an account of the risen Jesus. [18]

Snapp likewise explains:

> Another difficulty with the whole idea that the abrupt ending was intentionally designed by Mark is that when Mark presents predictive statements made by Jesus which are imminently fulfilled, he describes their fulfillment explicitly. Mark does

16. Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 718; https://books.google.com/books?id=XlBp10nUTXAC.

17. Robert H. Gundry, *Mark: A Commentary on His Apology for the Cross* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 1009; visible at https://www.amazon.com/Mark-Commentary-Apology-Cross Chapters/dp/0802829112/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1474901832&sr=8–3 &keywords=Gundry%2C+Mark%3A+A+Commentary+on+His+Apology+for+the+Cross#reader_0802829112. Gundry advocates a lost ending of Mark, but his point on the inadequacy of an ending at Mark 16:8 without fulfilling the Galilee prediction is still relevant to Lunn's analysis of the longer ending.

18. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 12.

> this so often that it may be called a strong characteristic of Marcan style. Mark 10:33 to 34, for example, is fulfilled in step-by-step detail. The predictive aspect in 11:2 to 3 is fulfilled completely in 11:4 to 6. Jesus' words in 14:13 to 15 come true in 14:16. After Jesus predicts that "one of the twelve" will betray Him in 14:20, Mark adds, in 14:43, "one of the twelve" when describing Judas Iscariot, even though Judas Iscariot has already been introduced; the reason for the insertion of the phrase is to make explicit the fulfillment of Jesus' prediction. And, in Mark 14:30, Jesus predicts that Peter will deny Him three times before the rooster crows — a prediction which is fulfilled step-by-step in Mark 14:66 to 72. The reader is thus led to expect an explicit fulfillment of the angel's prediction that Jesus will be seen in Galilee [Mark 16:7, see also 14:28]. With the abrupt ending, however, the expected fulfillment never comes [this issue is discussed in the following section on problems in the longer ending, since the longer ending does not explicitly mention Galilee as we might expect]. No stylistic irregularity in Mark 16:9–20 is nearly as unMarcan as the irregularity of the abrupt ending.[19]

The abrupt ending at Mark 16:8, which leaves readers in suspense in a way that many modern novels do, seems out of place for Mark to some scholars, such as Wilfred Lawrence Knox,[20] while others have argued that the approach in Mark 16:8 is actually consistent with Mark's style[21] or that the tension created between fear and the need to proclaim the gospel is a brilliant literary device and an appropriate ending.[22] But in terms of content, it defies logic, as Snapp observes, that Mark would end the Gospel with the women fearful and silent, as if they had disobeyed the commandment to tell others about the resurrection, when it was well

19. Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, Part Two: Internal Evidence, Chapter 9, Section "Efobounto Gar."

20. Wilfred Lawrence Knox, "The Ending of St. Mark's Gospel, *Harvard Theological Review*, 35/1 (Jan. 1942): 13–23; http://www.jstor.org/stable/1508349.

21. Thomas E. Boomershine and Gilbert L. Bartholomew, "The Narrative Technique of Mark 16:8," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 100/2 (June 1981): 213–23; http://www.jstor.org/stable/3266065.

22. Thomas E. Boomershine, "Mark 16:8 and the Apostolic Commission," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 100/2 (June 1981): 225–39; http://www.jstor.org/stable/3266066.

known in the Christian community (e.g., Matthew 28:5–8) that they had shared that information.[23]

Other fair questions remain. For example, if the longer ending was a late fabrication and obvious forgery, one that added strange foreign material involving snakes and poison, how did it gain such widespread acceptance in the early church — and do so without vocal objection from any of the early Church fathers?[24] If the longer ending is so obviously a fraud, how could it have been used and apparently accepted by Irenaeus, and how did it enter his copy of Mark, one of the earliest known (but not extant) New Testament manuscripts?[25]

The propriety of ending a verse, pericope, or entire book with the Greek particle γὰρ (*gar*) at the end of Mark 16:8 has also been debated, and while it is unusual, reasonable responses support the possibility that in terms of grammar and language, Mark 16:8 could be Mark's intended ending.[26] On the other hand, while Snapp recognizes that the grammatical problem of ending with γὰρ is surmountable, the stylistic problem is not so easily resolved. The three instances that have been offered as examples of γὰρ ending a book or narrative[27] do not withstand scrutiny and led Snapp to point out that there are *no examples* in Greek literature prior to the Gospel of Mark showing a narrative end the way Mark would if 16:8 were his intended ending.[28] More decisive than the debate around whether or not v. 8 *could* end the Gospel of Mark is the external evidence showing that it most likely did not, the internal evidence showing the

23. Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, Part Two: Internal Evidence, Chapter 9, Section "Efobounto Gar."

24. This question is raised, for example, by David Hester in *Does Mark 16:9–20 Belong in the New Testament?*, Kindle edition, "Foreword."

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid. See also N. Clayton Croy, *The Mutilations of Mark's Gospel* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003), 48, as cited by Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9-20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, Part Two: Internal Evidence, Chapter 9, Section "Efobounto Gar." For evidence offered in favor of closing a book with γὰρ, P. W. van der Horst, "Can a Book End with Γαρ? A Note on Mark Xvi. 8," *Journal of Theological Studies*, new series, 23/1 (April 1972): 121–24; http://www.jstor.org/stable/23960017.

27. See James Edwards' commentary *The Gospel of Mark*, Pillar Commentary series (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 501, as cited by Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, Part Two: Internal Evidence, Chapter 9, Section "Efobounto Gar."

28. Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, Chapter 9, Section "Efobounto Gar." On the extreme rarity of statements ending in γὰρ, see also Hester, *Does Mark 16:9–20 Belong in the New Testament?*, 48–50.

arguments against the longer ending are inadequate, and that the content of the longer ending is consistent with Markan authorship.

Basic Problems with the Longer Ending

The longer ending does have some problems which may be related to the reasons why a school of scribes in Alexandria produced two early Greek manuscripts without it. There was obviously some kind of issue in some Christian circles with the ending, given that a few manuscripts end at Mark 16:8 (sometimes called "the abrupt ending"), and a few have what is known as the "Shorter Ending" which, with some variation, is basically this sentence: "But they reported briefly to Peter and those with him all that they had been told. And after this, Jesus himself (appeared to them and) sent out by means of them, from east to west, the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation." This is attested in only a handful of sources and is universally recognized to be a late attempt to repair the ending of Mark. Another obvious forgery is found only in the *Codex Washingtonianus* (dating to about AD 400, likely from Egypt) called the "Freer Logion."[29] The variability in the ending of Mark points to some problem encountered in the early scriptural records, even though the longer ending is found in an overwhelming majority of manuscripts, lectionary materials, and versions.

One of the obvious problems is that the transition between verses 8 and 9 in Mark 16 is choppy. It is a non-transition, actually. This, however, does not require rejecting the longer ending as part of the canon. It could still have been written by Mark, perhaps at a later time than the earlier verses, or under his direction by an assistant or follower who wrote the longer ending some time after v. 8.

A reasonable hypothesis proposed by Snapp is that while Mark was composing his Gospel in Rome, persecution or some other urgent problem prevented him from completing or polishing the ending of his manuscript.[30] He may have passed on a rough draft of the conclusion to others, asking them to complete the text and distribute it. His final notes simply may have been attached by someone unwilling to use his

29. See Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 58–59. The Freer Logion is a passage inserted into and dependent on the longer ending of Mark. Thus, while the Freer Logion is a forgery, it also requires the existence of the longer ending. Thus *Codex Washingtonianus* actually stands as one of many witnesses for the longer ending.

30. Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, "Introductory Summary: Mark 16:9–20: A Scholarly Consensus?," section "Lectionary Evidence." See also "Preface."

own words for a sacred text. Alternatively, Mark may have written the ending later. Snapp is convinced the ending is Markan, but it could have been completed under Mark's authority by someone else or by Mark's own hand. For Snapp, the vital question is not if Mark himself wrote it, but rather if the final manuscript, once production was completed and authoritative transmission begun, included the longer ending.

Snapp suggests that if the Gospel of Mark was prepared in two stages or parts, perhaps a Christian scribe in Egypt later dealing with a copy of the manuscript may have remembered seeing the first portion of Mark as a separate text and felt that only the recollections of Peter in that document should be included in the Gospel, feeling perhaps that the longer ending should be a separate document.[31] Thus, some manuscripts were made that ended at Mark 16, and later an additional ending, the Shorter Ending, was prepared by someone in Egypt who could not bear the abrupt stop at v. 8. There is speculation in this scenario, as there must be in any attempt to explain how we reached the state of documents we now have, but the theory seems to account for the major issues in the controversy.

Lunn offers a different theory for the state of Mark in ancient documents. He suggests the loss of the longer ending may have been deliberate and took place in Egypt. He speculates that a Gnostic group in Egypt, antagonistic to the concept of physical resurrection, deleted the final portion of Mark. Their manuscripts may have been picked up by neighboring Christian groups. Thus, by the early fourth century, Eusebius in Egypt felt that a majority of manuscripts he had seen lacked the longer ending. Interestingly, Tertullian and Irenaeus accuse the Gnostics of excising portions of the scriptures that they disliked, and Irenaeus specifically mentions the doctrine of the physical resurrection as one of the topics targeted for deletion of offending passages.[32]

Whether Lunn's theory, Snapp's theory, some combination of both, or some other route led to the rejection of the longer ending in Alexandria and in a minority of New Testament manuscripts and versions, the abundance of evidence, as discussed below, points to the longer ending being a legitimate part of the canon that should not be rejected, in spite of the choppy transition or other cited problems.

A frequent objection to the longer ending is that it introduces many new words that Mark does not use elsewhere, but it is easy to demonstrate that other undisputed passages of Mark contain even higher rates of new

31. Ibid.
32. See Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 349–51.

words introduced and that the rate of unique words in the longer ending is about what one would expect based on passages of related length elsewhere in Mark.[33] Differences in grammar are also pointed to, though this can also be done with many sections of Mark, since it is a relatively short work with a good deal of variety. In my opinion, Lunn examines these charges in great detail and with strong effect.[34]

There are also objections to the grammar in the longer ending as being uncharacteristic of Mark. For such a short work, however, almost any section can be shown to have unique features that stand out from the rest of Mark. The details of the grammar, like the details of the vocabulary, are handled verse by verse and element by element in Lunn and shown to be within a plausible range of variation for Mark.[35] Lunn also explains the many factors that can lead to linguistic variation in a text, including accidental variation, intentional variation to avoid repetitiveness, a deliberate literary device, dependency on another source, the involvement of a co-author, or the work of a second author under the direction of the first. Lunn also observes that even the latter possibility would still make the longer ending categorically Markan.[36]

Perhaps one of the most commonly cited objections is the passage about the signs that would follow believers, including being able to handle snakes and drink poison (Mark 16:18). The possibility of experiencing such miracles of protection did not seem to cause serious objections among early believers, nor did it lead large number of Christians to deliberately handle snakes or ingest poison. In fact, divine protection from a snake bite is one of the miracles that attended Paul's ministry (Acts 28:3). Though not designed to appeal to modern sensibilities, especially in light of concerns about snake-handling Christians who may abuse the intent of Christ's words, the strangeness of that passage is not a sound reason for rejecting it, though it may have been a motivation for some scribes to reject it in a small percentage of ancient manuscripts. The issue of taking up serpents, strange as it may seem to us, also strengthens the subtle Exodus overtones in Mark, as we will see below. As an aside, the uniqueness and strangeness of some parts of the longer ending also weigh against the possibility of its being a late forgery by someone trying to convince early Christians to add some strange foreign material

33. Hester, *Does Mark 16:9–20 Belong in the New Testament?*, 129–35, and Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 118–27.

34. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 118–57.

35. Ibid., 117–64.

36. Ibid., 133–34.

to their scriptures, especially in a community trained to respect and preserve scripture, not adding or subtracting to the word (Deuteronomy 4:2). Those who wish to claim the longer ending was a forgery have failed to provide a plausible mechanism for how it could have been passed off as legitimate and gained such widespread acceptance without howls of disapproval.

Another challenge in the longer ending involves the prophecy regarding Christ and Galilee mentioned above (Mark 14:28 and 16:7). Without the longer ending, the prediction is left completely unfulfilled, whereas with it, Christ is definitely seen by His apostles, but the location of Galilee is not specifically mentioned. Some use this as an argument against the validity of the longer ending. In response, Lunn offers this explanation:

> So what of the Galilean appearance in Mark? While it is evident that this is not explicitly mentioned in 16:9–20, its occurrence may be assumed as an implicature. One of the telescoped events in the mind of the author is doubtless that in Galilee. At least one commentator on Mark is of the opinion that a "possible connection with Galilee is found in 16:15–20; for Mark's verses 15, 16 resemble Matt. 28:19, which records words spoken by the resurrected Lord in Galilee."[37] The similarity of contents, though not so much of language, between Matthew 28 and Mark 16 at this particular point would seem to indicate that within the larger compressed account the specific event upon which Mark 16:15–18 is based is that of the Galilean appearance.
>
> The indications then are that the author of the ending consciously incorporated material relating to Jesus' resurrection appearance in Galilee. He might also have expected his readers to appreciate this, just as he expected them to understand that his closing narrative did not portray the happenings of a single day. As his intended audience would probably have been aware that the ascension he recorded was separated from the preceding events by an interval of time, so the actual occasion of commissioning the apostles would perhaps have been understood to be in reality separated

37. William Hendriksen, Exposition of the Gospel according to Mark, Reprint. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002), 686, as cited by Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 323.

> from the events of the adjoining narrative by a distance of both time and space. Regarding this, of course, we cannot be certain, and in the final analysis it is not of great consequence. What is important is that to the mind of the author, according to the literary conventions of the time, a Galilean appearance has been taken into account, being represented, though not explicitly, within the telescoped section consisting of 16:14–20.[38]

Lunn goes on to conclude that Mark's failure to mention Galilee explicitly is a minor issue and that the primary objective in the longer ending was the reality of the physical resurrection, fulfilling the multiple predictions given earlier in Mark.

External Evidence for the Authenticity of the Longer Ending of Mark

Let us now review a portion of the external evidence for the authenticity of the disputed longer ending of Mark (Mark 16:9–20). Snapp explains that the evidence from New Testament manuscripts does not present an overwhelming case for rejecting the longer ending:

> Regarding the Shorter Ending [a later addition to round out the abrupt ending at Mark 16:8], it is very misleading to vaguely say that some manuscripts have the Shorter Ending and some manuscripts have verses 9–20, because only six Greek manuscripts contain the Shorter Ending. The Shorter Ending was composed in Egypt, where the abruptly-ending text had previously circulated, in order to round off the otherwise sudden stoppage of the narrative. All six of the Greek manuscripts that contain the Shorter Ending also present at least part of the usual 12 verses, showing that they contained the entire passage when they were in pristine condition. The rest of the Greek manuscripts, that is to say, the remaining 99% of the manuscripts, uniformly present Mark 16:9–20 after verse 8. Gundry's assertion that these manuscripts (over 1,600 in number) "hopelessly disagree" with each other is absurd. [39]

38. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 323.

39. Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, "Introductory Summary: Mark 16:9–20: A Scholarly Consensus?" in the section "Manuscript Evidence."

In the following section, "Patristic Evidence," Snapp summarizes evidence from the earliest references to Mark (discussed in much detail in later sections):

> Four compositions from the 100s attest to the existence of copies of Mark which contained Mark 16:9–20: *Epistula Apostolorum* (by an unknown author), *First Apology* (by Justin Martyr), the *Diatessaron* (by Tatian), and *Against Heresies* (by Irenaeus).
>
> *Epistula Apostolorum* (150) echoes the narrative structure of these 12 verses; it depicts the disciples not believing the report of a woman who had seen the risen Jesus — an event unrecorded in the Gospels except in Mark 16:10–11. The author also mentions the command of Christ to the apostles to "Go and preach" (resembling Mark 16:15), and his use of the phrase "mourning and weeping" resembles wording in Mark 16:10.
>
> Justin Martyr (155), in *First Apology* chapter 45, as he interprets Psalm 110, makes a strong allusion to Mark 16:20 (blended with Luke 24:52, just as one would expect a person to do who was using a Synoptics-harmony, as Justin did). As Justin refers to how the apostles went forth from Jerusalem preaching everywhere, he used three words — *exelthontes pantachou ekeruxan* — which appear together nowhere else except in Mark 16:20, in a different order. In chapter 50 of *First Apology*, Justin alludes to the scene in Mark 16:14, using the phrase, "And later, when he had risen from the dead and was seen by them."
>
> Tatian (c. 172) incorporated all twelve verses into his *Diatessaron*, which expanded on his predecessor's Synoptics-harmony by including the text of the Gospel of John. In the Latin *Codex Fuldensis* (a Diatessaronic witness from the West), and in the Arabic *Diatessaron* (from the East), the contents of Mark 16:9–20 are given essentially the same arrangement, thus echoing their second-century ancestor.
>
> Irenaeus (c. 184), in the tenth chapter of Book Three of *Against Heresies*, wrote, "Also, towards the conclusion of his Gospel, Mark says: 'So then, after the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God.'" Like most of Irenaeus' work, this part of *Against Heresies*

> exists only in Latin. A Greek annotation in Codex 1582 (based on an ancestor-manuscript produced in the mid-400's) next to Mark 16:19 affirms the genuineness of Irenaeus' statement; the annotation says, "Irenaeus, who lived near the time of the apostles, cites this from Mark in the third book of his work *Against Heresies*." This annotation also appears in minuscule 72, and in an uncatalogued manuscript recently described by the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts.
>
> Papias, a writer very early in the 100s (c. 110), wrote something that may relate to the contents of Mark 16:18. Eusebius of Caesarea, in Book 3, chapter 39 of his *Church History*, quotes Papias along the following lines: "Papias, who lived at the same time, relates that he had received a wonderful narrative from the daughters of Philip. For he relates that a dead man was raised to life in his day. He also mentions another miracle, regarding Justus surnamed Barsabbas: he swallowed a deadly poison, and received no harm, on account of the grace of the Lord."
>
> Papias describes a believer who was not harmed by poison, but he does not explicitly say that he is providing an example of the fulfillment of the prophetic words of Mark 16:18. It is possible that he mentioned this anecdote as an illustration of how Mark 16:18 was to be understood — that is, as a prophecy about incidental dangers, rather than deliberate self-endangerment — but it is also possible that he told the story simply because it was interesting.[40]

Snapp addresses widespread claims that Clement and Origen show no knowledge of the longer ending, which turn out to be arguments from silence that bear little evidentiary weight. But in fact, there is a compelling case that Clement actually was aware of the longer ending, as discussed below.

Further, Jerome is repeatedly said, by commentator after commentator, to have regarded the longer ending of Mark as spurious and to have known of no Greek manuscripts supporting it. But those claims arise from his tendency to freely copy the text of others with minimal change, resulting in his use of a passage deriving from Eusebius that questioned the longer ending. However, Jerome himself actually supported the longer ending by including it in his Vulgate Gospels.

40. Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, section "Introductory Summary," subsection "Patristic Evidence."

As for Eusebius, who is perhaps the main early Christian voice cited to support rejection of the longer ending, he was clearly aware of New Testament manuscripts that had the longer ending, did not insist that it should be rejected, and "recommended to Marinus that the passage be punctuated and retained."[41]

The patristic support for the longer ending includes Tertullian (documents from AD 195–220), Hippolytus (AD 235), Vincentius (AD 256), and many more. Snapp has chapters dealing with evidence from the 100s, the 200s, the 300s, the 400s, and later evidence for the authenticity of the longer ending. It is also clear that the longer ending was an important part of early Christian lectionary documents used in worship.[42]

If the concepts in Mark 16:9–20 were fabricated long after the Gospel of Mark was written, it is difficult to understand how some of the earliest Christian documents we have provide support for their authenticity. Many of these documents existed long before the two related manuscripts, the *Codex Vaticanus* and *Codex Sinaiticus*, were composed, the earliest *extant* Greek manuscripts that are the primary tools used to reject the longer ending of Mark. What we learn from the early Christian evidence is that much earlier manuscripts of Mark were known in the Christian world but are not extant today, which support the authenticity of the longer ending of Mark. This strengthens the possibility that Christ actually spoke the words quoted at the end of Mark 16 and that he could have spoken similar words to His New World disciples in the Book of Mormon, as quoted in Mormon 9.

Lunn's take on the extensive evidence from early Christianity is also valuable. Among the many sources he considers, one of the more important is the work known as First Clement, the book authored by Clement of Rome and one of the earliest Christian writings we have after the New Testament. Lunn illustrates Clement's awareness and use of the Gospels in several ways, with language and teachings drawn from Mark, Matthew, and Luke. Words and phrases unique to Mark are used in several cases, such as in Clement's allusion to the parable of the sower (First Clement, 24:4–5[43]).

41. Ibid.

42. Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, "Introductory Summary:Mark 16:9–20: A Scholarly Consensus?," section "Lectionary Evidence." See also Chapter 7, section "Lectionary Evidence."

43. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 65–6.

In First Clement 42:3–4, right after a discussion of the apostles having received the gospel from Jesus Christ, who was sent by God (42:1–2), Clement uses language with striking parallels to the longer ending of Mark, compared below:

> Having therefore received their orders, and being fully assured by the resurrection [ἀναστάσεως] of our Lord Jesus [κύριος Ἰησοῦς] Christ, and full of faith in the word [τῷ λόγῳ] of God, with full assurance of the Holy Spirit they went out [ἐξῆλθον] proclaiming the good news [εὐαγγελιζόμενοι] that the kingdom of God was about to come, … preaching [κηρύσσοντες] in the country and in the towns (1 Clement 42.3–4).…
>
> Having been raised [ἀναστὰς] … he appeared to the Eleven … and he said to them, "Go into all the world and preach [κηρύξατε] the gospel [τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] to all creation …. "So then, after the Lord Jesus [κύριος Ἰησοῦς] had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And going out [ἐξελθόντες] they preached [ἐκήρυξαν] everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word [τὸν λόγον] through the accompanying signs. (Mark 16:9, 14–15, 19–20).[44]

Lunn notes that the setting in both passages is similar, dealing with the commissioning of the apostles and their going forth to preach the gospel. There is also "obvious thematic coherence" and in some cases "words unique to that ending among all the Gospel accounts." Lunn explains:

> Regarding the apostles going out to preach, the particular verb chosen by Clement to describe that event (ἐξελθεῖν) is the same as that occurring in Mark 16:20 of precisely the same action. None of the other Gospel writers uses this verb in this context. This uniqueness with respect to the verb found in the Markan ending makes a strong connection between Clement and that intertext. The verb "preach" in the active voice with the apostles as grammatical subject appears in both Clement (κηρύσσοντες) and the disputed verses of Mark (κηρύξατε, ἐκήρυξαν), yet not in this particular way in any of the other Gospel endings. Luke is the only one here to employ the same

44. Ibid., 66.

> verb, though evidently in quite a different manner. Luke makes no explicit mention of the apostles as the agents of preaching, while his use of the verb is passive with the abstract noun "repentance" as the grammatical subject. Moreover, Clement and Mark are further united in using "preach" absolutely, that is, without an explicit grammatical object. The former has the phrase "preaching [κηρύσσοντες] in the country and in the towns," and the latter "they preached [ἐκήρυξαν] everywhere." In each instance the absolute verb is qualified by a locative expression. Undoubtedly there is much semantic overlap between "in the country and in the towns" and "everywhere." Indeed, it may be the case that, for stylistic reasons, Clement here consciously avoided using "everywhere" (πανταχοῦ) since he had used this very term just a few sentences before in 41.2. Whether this is so or not, there is a specific semantic and structural correspondence at this point between the two phrases which is unparalleled in the other Gospels. Also found in both writers is the definite noun "the word" referring to the message preached. This sense of λόγος is another uniquely Markan feature in the Gospel endings. The presence of all these elements together in a passage relating an identical setting, plus the fact that the other Gospel endings do not contain such usages, makes not merely a good case but an extremely forceful one for Clement's familiarity with the questioned ending of Mark. If so, the significance of this cannot be overestimated since Clement's letter is generally dated to the late first century.[45] [*footnotes omitted*]

Lunn also considers the possibility that another document from the Apostolic Fathers alludes to the longer ending of Mark as Lunn examines the Shepherd of Hermas, a document often mentioned by LDS apologists for its vivid reference to early Christian baptism for the dead. Like First Clement, the Shepherd of Hermas was also written in Rome, where by tradition Mark was said to have written his Gospel. Since the Shepherd of Hermas was mentioned by Irenaeus and the author of the Muratorian Canon, both dating to around AD 175–190, it was likely written around AD 150 or earlier, and some authorities give much earlier dates. While it does not directly quote from Mark or any other scriptural source, it has apparent allusions to scripture. Lunn says, "It is certain that the author

45. Ibid., 67.

was familiar with the Gospel of Mark seeing that in 97:2–3 unmistakable reference is made to Mark 10:23–24."[46] The passage in question is part of a parable involving twelve figurative mountains, compared with a part of the longer ending of Mark below:

> And from the eighth mountain, where there were many springs and all the creation [πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις] of the Lord drank from the springs, are believers [οἱ πιστεύσαντες] such as these: apostles and teachers who preached [κηρύξαντες] to the whole world [εἰς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον], and who taught the word [τὸν λόγον] of the Lord [τοῦ κυρίου] soberly and purely, and who misappropriated nothing for evil desire, but always walked [πορευθέντες] in righteousness and truth. (Herm. 102:1–2) …
>
> And he said to them, "Go [πορευθέντες] into all the world [εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἅπαντα] and preach [κηρύξατε] the gospel to all creation [πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει]. Whoever believes [ὁ πιστεύσας] and is baptized will be saved …." And going out they preached [ἐκήρυξαν] everywhere, the Lord [τοῦ κυρίου] working with them and confirming the word [τὸν λόγον] through the accompanying signs (Mark 16:15–16, 20).[47]

Lunn offers this analysis:

> Here the mountain with its springs that give water to all creation represents those who preach the gospel to the world. Obviously there are several NT texts that deal with a similar subject. Yet of these, the phraseology of one in particular is traceable in the Hermas passage significantly more than any other, and that is the commissioning and preaching of the apostles recorded in Mark 16:15–20. The most conspicuous link between the two texts is the occurrence in each of not just one but both of the semantically related phrases "all creation" and "the whole world." The former phrase, apart from grammatical case, is identical in words and order (πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις/πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει), while the latter in both instances consists of the basic prepositional phrase εἰς τὸν κόσμον with a synonymous quantifying adjective adjoining the noun. *Mark 16:15 is, it should be stressed, the only verse in the entire*

46. Ibid., 68.
47. Ibid.

> NT *where both these ideas are expressed together.* Elsewhere in the NT the phrase "all creation" also appears in Romans 8:22; Colossians 1:15, 23. The first two of these three texts do not concern the subject of preaching. Though Colossians 1:23 does relate to preaching, the use of the verb "preach" in this text differs from that found in Hermas in three ways: the subject is not the third person plural referring to the apostles but the third person singular of the gospel, the verb is passive not active, and the context lacks any equivalent phrase "to the whole world." *Hermas and Mark 16, on the other hand, agree in all these specifics.* Speaking of the apostles each employs the aorist active of the verb κηρύξαι which, as explained earlier, is *a form particular to Mark among the four Gospel endings.* Additionally, both Hermas and the Markan passage contain the noun "the word" of the gospel message, which in each case is associated with "the Lord." Both passages also refer to believers by means of an aorist participle. These several verbal connections, some quite specific, and especially the co-occurrence of the two phrases relating to κτίσις and κόσμος, *lead to the conclusion that the author of the Shepherd of Hermas was in fact familiar with the final verses of Mark.*[48] [*emphasis added*]

Lunn also points to the early Epistle of Barnabas, which has some specific parallels to the longer ending, though the evidence is not as strong as the two cases considered above. Lunn also explores a variety of noncanonical or apocryphal sources which provide early allusions to the longer ending of Mark[49] before delving into evidence from AD 150 to AD 300[50] and later sources.

The evidence in favor of the longer ending is not limited to Greek writings. Snapp weaves together numerous threads from other parts of early Christianity. Among the Armenian evidence, for example, we have this:

> Eznik of Golb (440) was one of the Armenian scholars who took part in the revision of the Armenian translation of the Bible in the 400s. Eznik quoted Mark 16:17–18 in part 112 of his composition "Against the Sects" (also known as "De Deo") 1:25: "And again, 'Here are signs of believers: they will dislodge

48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., 71–76.
50. Ibid., 76ff.

> demons, and they will take serpents into their hand, and they will drink a deadly poison and it will not cause harm.'" This evidence is over 400 years earlier than the earliest Armenian manuscript of Mark which does not contain Mark 16:9–20.[51]

The wide variety of early Christian sources pointing to the authenticity of the longer ending of Mark strike me as compelling and impressive evidence. But for Lunn, it is just the beginning of the extensive analysis and evidence to be considered. Here we survey a few highlights of the internal evidence, and in Part 2 find that there may even be some lines of analysis that can help us better appreciate some details in the Book of Mormon.

Internal Evidence

Much of Lunn's lengthy book deals with the internal evidence that supports the authenticity of the longer ending as a genuine Markan product. He begins by pointing out the serious flaws in the arguments used to reject the longer ending, such as the previously discussed argument based on the number of new words found in those verses.

Lunn's significant, detailed, and lengthy analysis of the internal evidence involves many technical issues that require a good knowledge of biblical Greek. I am unable to assess the accuracy of many of these points, but much can still be appreciated and understood by laymen and by those who have explored authorship in terms of statistical analyses like word prints and other measures. While Lunn is not a statistician and could certainly refine the statistical tools he applies, the analyses he conducts generally strike me as reasonable in principle and often quite compelling. The extensive and multidimensional nature of the arguments is generally impressive. Some of the subtle points he makes suggest lines of analysis that might bear fruit in exploring the Book of Mormon, though we lack the benefit of the text in the original language of the authors.

As one of several aspects of his exploration, Lunn examines each of the major words in the disputed ending as well as the grammatical patterns employed and compares them to Mark and other texts, providing evidence pointing in many cases to Markan origins. For example, except for a related instance in Luke said to be dependent on

51. Snapp, Jr., *Authentic: The Case for Mark 16:9–20: 2016 Edition*, Kindle edition, "Introductory Summary: Mark 16:9–20: A Scholarly Consensus?" in the section "Patristic Evidence."

Mark, the only occurrences of the form "cast out/demons/in the name of" are found in the longer ending of Mark and earlier in the main body of Mark, consistent with common authorship.[52]

Analysis of Jesus's statement "they shall lay hands on the sick" shows that the collocation of "lay hands upon" and a sick person occurs five times in Mark, including the longer ending, but just once in Matthew and twice in Luke. In Matthew and Luke, the healed person is represented with a pronoun, while Mark alone uses a noun to refer to the infirm/infirmity (6:5, 8:25, and 16:18 in the longer ending).

> More than this, in 6:5 those upon whom Jesus lays His hands are described as ἀρρώστοις ("sick"), an adjective that we have previously noted to be more frequent in Mark than the other Synoptics. What is significant here is that this is the very same word as that appearing in the collocation of 16:18. So with that specific object in view, this three-part collocation is found only in Mark 6:5 and 16:18. In the whole of NT literature, the grouping "lay/hands/on the sick" is seen to be an exclusively Markan collocation.[53]

This kind of thing crops up over and over in the analysis and may create another compelling case for common authorship. Of course, other scholars argue that the use of Markan words, phrases, and grammatical patterns is evidence of deliberate imitation. Lunn properly objects to that argument as wanting to have it both ways: unique words or grammatical patterns are said to be evidence of a second author, and common words and style are also evidence of a second author just trying hard to imitate Mark. But it is in the abundance of subtle consistency that the "just imitating Mark" argument becomes implausible, for many of the details favoring Markan authorship require scholarship, analysis, and attention to detail that just doesn't make sense for a plagiarizer, much as most of the plagiarism charges against the Book of Mormon don't make sense if one wishes to offer a coherent theory of how the Book of Mormon was concocted.

Here are some summaries from a couple of the chapters dealing with internal evidence to give a flavor for the work:

52. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 187–88.
53. Ibid., 189.

Summary for Chapter Five, "Linguistic Evidence (2)"

In this chapter I have studied a selection of different linguistic features present in Mark 16:9–20. From this I have observed the following significant facts:

- The analysis of the various parts of speech, regarding their range of frequency in individual sections, their hierarchy, and their deviation from the Markan average, results in the inclusion of the longer ending within the parameters exhibited by the rest of Mark. The same cannot be said of the undoubtedly spurious Shorter Ending and Freer Logion.
- The implicit manner of participant reference used with respect to Jesus at the beginning of the distinct units within the longer ending (16:9, 12, 14) matches that commonly found in the same episode-initial position in the preceding part of Mark.
- The majority of the two- or three-part collocations found in the longer ending have their exact or closest parallels elsewhere in Mark.
- The rare temporal phrase μετὰ τὸ + infinitive (16:19), attested only five times elsewhere in the Gospels, has its only exact Gospel parallels earlier in Mark.
- The particular form of juxtaposed genitive absolute phrases (16:20) has three matching constructions in Mark, which is more than appear in all the other Gospels.
- For the verb ἀκούειν followed by a complement clause in the present tense (16:11) the majority of its Synoptic parallels occur in Mark.
- The partitive phrase with preposition and pronoun (16:11) conforms to the pattern seen elsewhere in Mark's Gospel.
- The form of the conjoined noun phrases with possessive pronoun (16:14) corresponds precisely to the preferred configuration for such constructions in Mark.

The commonality of these very specific and very varied features with known Markan usage carries considerable weight. This contrasts with the weakness of the usual linguistic arguments against the genuineness of the longer ending discussed and refuted in the previous chapter. Here then we have noted positive linguistic indicators that collectively form another important element of our case for Markan authorship.

We note in conclusion that the findings of this chapter effectively refute Kelhoffer's thesis that the supposed later author of the longer ending actually sought to deliberately imitate Mark. Kelhoffer's arguments are based largely upon surface features of the language, in which it is posited that the hypothetical writer only partially imitated the earlier Evangelist, leaving the basic non-Markan nature of his work detectable to the scholar. This, however, raises an insurmountable objection. Assuming the correctness of this thesis, if even regarding the more obvious features, he only managed to imitate some and not others, how do we explain the fact that he went to even greater efforts to conform to Markan usage in less evident features of the language, such as those dealt with above? The greater subtlety of such linguistic components as discussed in this chapter is supported by the fact that no scholar, either in antiquity or in recent times, has remarked upon these within the context of the present debate. Almost certainly our hypothetical writer would have been completely ignorant of such things. Furthermore, assuming he or she was so linguistically informed to have taken the trouble to have included these elements would have been pointless, since their significance would have remained almost entirely unappreciated by those who read or heard his or her work. Consequently, to claim imitation with respect to such details is quite groundless.

To bring our consideration of language-related matters to a close, we may conclude that the findings of this chapter, plus the conclusions of the previous, contrary to popular scholarly opinion, enable us to firmly set Mark 16:9–20 linguistically within the Markan domain.[54]

54. Ibid., 200–201.

Summary for Chapter Six, "Literary Evidence"

This chapter has looked to literary factors for the resolution of the question concerning the authenticity of the longer ending. Through the examination of a range of diverse rhetorical techniques commonly used by the biblical writers, I have demonstrated that these disputed verses show no signs of being a late appendage, but rather form an integral and indeed essential part of the author's original composition. Several strands of literary evidence, both structural and intratextual, confirm the church's traditional acceptance of this portion of the Gospel. Here, by way of conclusion, I summarize the findings of this chapter. My investigation has demonstrated that

(a) the longer ending, by the recurrence of particular themes, words, and phrases, establishes an inclusio with the opening passages of the Gospel (1:1–20),

(b) the longer ending conforms to a specific form of episodic structure (ABCX) that is exclusively Markan,

(c) the longer ending relates to the immediately preceding verses (16:1–8) by way of a formal parallelism with distinct verbal and thematic correspondences,

(d) the unified narrative of chapter 16, in displaying a resurrection-unbelief-preaching sequence, aligns closely with the material closing the first major section of the Gospel (5:21–6:13), with which it also correlates at a macrostructural level,

(e) the unified narrative of chapter 16 relates intratextually to material of 5:21–6:13 through multiple verbal linkages,

(f) the resurrection-unbelief-preaching accounts of 5:21–6:13 function as narrative anticipations or foreshadowings of the events recorded in 16:1–20.

Had my findings merely consisted of one or two possible literary features, these might have been dismissed as coincidental. The literary evidence, however, is plainly manifold and in most instances quite objective. Such testimony cannot so readily be dismissed, especially when to it we add the corroboration

> of the thematic evidence, the topic that next falls to my examination.[55]

Lunn is not alone; many others have seen evidence of unity between the longer ending and the rest of Mark based on literary evidence. For example, Maurice Robinson sees what appears to be deliberate parallels between Mark 1 and the longer ending,[56] as shown in Table 1. Additional relationships of longer ending elements are shown for Mark 3:14–15 in Table 2. Relationships for Mark 6:7–13 and 16:9-20 are shown in Table 3, and relationships for Mark 7:24–8:38 are shown in Table 4.

Table 1. Maurice Robinson's Comparison of Common Elements in Passages from Mark 1 and 16.

Mark 1:32–39	Mark 16:9–20
1:32 Narrative setting: as the sun goes down	16:9 Narrative setting: when the sun rises early
1:33 Many people	16:9 one alone (Mary Magdalene)
1:33 People appear at the door of the house where Jesus was	16:9 Jesus appears to Mary outside the door of the tomb (cp. 16:3, 8)
1:34 Healing many having diseases	16:18 Laying hands on the sick for healing
1:34 Casting out many demons	16:17 Casting out demons
1:34 No speaking by demons	16:17 Disciples to speak in various languages
1:34 (Unbelieving) demons knew him to be Christ	16:16 Unbelieving humans will be condemned
1:35 Having risen very early he went forth	16:9 Having risen early he appeared
1:35 And he departed into a desert place	16:20 Having gone forth
1:35 Simon [Peter] and those with him followed	16:13 Having departed (cp. 16:6 a place)
1:38 And Jesus said to them, Let us go into the surrounding towns	16:10 She reported to those with him [and (16:7) to Peter]

55. Ibid., 240.

56. Maurice Robinson, "Amid Perfect Contempt, a Place for the Genuine: The Long Ending of Mark as Canonical Verity," in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark: Four Views*, ed. David Alan Black (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2008), Kindle edition, chapter 2

Mark 1:32–39	Mark 16:9–20
1:38 in order that also there I might proclaim	16:15 And Jesus says to them, Go into all the world
1:39 And he was proclaiming … in the whole of Galilee	16:15 Proclaim the Gospel

Table 2. Robinson's Comparison of Elements in Passages in Mark 3:14–15 and 16:9–20.

Mark 3:14–15	Mark 16:9–20
3:14 Christ appoints Twelve	16:14 Christ appears to the Eleven
3:14 That he might send them out to proclaim	16:15 He tells them to go and proclaim
3:15 He gives them authority to heal diseases	16:18 They shall place hands on the infirm and they shall recover
3:15 And to cast out demons	16:17 They shall cast out demons

Table 3. Robinson's Comparison of Elements in Passages in Mark 6:7–13 and 16:9–20.

Mark 6:7–13	Mark 16:9–20
6:7 Christ calls toward the Twelve	16:14 Christ appears to the Eleven
6:7 And he begins to send them out	16:15 He tells them to go and proclaim
6:7 He gives them authority over unclean spirits	16:17 They shall cast out demons in my name
6:12 Having gone forth they were proclaiming	16:20 Having gone forth they proclaimed
6:13 They cast out many demons	16:17 They shall cast out demons
6:13 They anointed with oil many infirm	16:18 They shall place hands upon the infirm
6:13 And they shall recover	16:18 And they shall become well

Table 4. Robinson's Comparison of Elements in Passages in Mark 7:24–8 :38 and 16:9–20.

Mark 7:24–8:38	Mark 16:9–20
7:24 Having risen, he departed	16:9 Having risen
7:24–30 Into Tyre	16:13 Having departed
7:31–37 Into Sidon	16:15 Go into all the world

Mark 7:24–8:38	Mark 16:9–20
8:22 Into Bethsaida	16:17 They shall cast out demons
7:24–30 Cast out demons	16:17 They shall speak with new tongues
7:31–37 Dumb man healed, speaks for the first time with a "new" tongue	16:15 proclaim the gospel to all creation
7:36 And he the more proclaimed	16:20 And these having gone forth proclaimed everywhere
8:11 Seeking a (refused) sign from him	16:17 And (accepted) the signs will follow
8:13 Jesus departs to the other side, after speaking to them	16:19 Jesus departs into heaven after speaking to them
8:23 And having laid his hand upon them 8:25 And again he laid his hands upon them	16:18 They will lay hands upon the sick and they shall recover
8:29 Peter proclaims Jesus is the Christ	16:19–20 Jesus is proclaimed the Lord
8:31 After three days he will rise; Peter rebukes him	16:9 Now when he had risen (16:7 Tell Peter)
8:34 If anyone wants to follow behind me	16:17 Signs will follow those who believe 16:20 who believe, By the signs following
8:35 … will save it	16:16 … will be saved

This level of relationship is most naturally explained by some degree of authorial intent and craftsmanship unlikely to be matched by a forger attempting to emulate Mark's style.

In Chapter 7, "Thematic Evidence," Lunn explores the extensive foreshadowing in Mark that points to multiple elements in the longer ending that are needed to complete prophecy or complete themes raised by Mark earlier.[57] Lunn finds that a relatively unique aspect of Mark is the way he lays out forthcoming themes (foreshadowing) "with distinct verbal links in the narrative fulfillments."[58] With that in mind, Lunn explains that the multiple predictions of the resurrection of Christ, Mark 8:31, 9:31, and 10:33–34, are not completed by the empty tomb alone if Mark ends at 16:8, but require the declaration that Christ has arisen.

57. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 241–72.
58. Ibid., 246.

"Having risen … " in 16:9, the first verse of the disputed longer ending, does precisely that with a "resounding" echo of Christ's words.[59]

Another unifying theme in Mark reviewed by Lunn is the contrast between fear and faith, with fear often giving way to faith in God. Given this trend in Mark, terminating the Gospel on the note of fear seems implausible. The longer ending in this aspect is much more appropriate.[60]

Mark's frequent treatment of the unbelief of his followers was noted by W. S. Vorster as a significant theme in Mark:

> In Mark's Gospel, like in any other narrative, the story of Jesus is presented by the narrator from a certain perspective or viewpoint. Narrative point of view signifies the perceptual, conceptual, and ideological way in which the story gets told. It is the means by which the reader is directed to identify with the message of the narrative and to accept the norms of judgement presented in the text. Petersen[61] has correctly observed that until chapter 13 the reader is educated to accept the view presented by Jesus and the unclean spirits and to view Jesus in terms of the things of God (cf. 8:33) and not in terms of man, as the other characters in the narrative, including the disciples, do. The other characters wrongly view Jesus as the worldly messiah and do not understand his mission. The disciples' lack of understanding is woven like a golden thread through the fabric of the text. The reader knows, because he is given the information by the narrator, that Jesus is the Son of God and what his fate as Son of man is (cf. 4–10); that death, resurrection and parousia await Him. The disciples, however, are presented as characters who are unable to comprehend.
>
> > … They do not comprehend what the reader is given to comprehend, namely that messiah and kingdom are to be understood in terms of death, resurrection, and parousia of Jesus, the Son of man who is the Son of God.[62]

59. Ibid., 246–47.

60. Ibid., 265–68.

61. N.R. Petersen, "'Point of View' in Mark's Narrative," *Semeia* 12 (1978): 97–121, as cited by W.S. Vorster, "Literary Reflections on Mark 13:5–37: A Narrated Speech of Jesus," *Neotestamentica*, 21/2 (1987): 203–24, citation at 213; http://www.jstor.org/stable/43070392.

62. N.R. Petersen, "The reader in the gospel," *Neotestamentica* 18 (1984): 38–51, as cited by Vorster, "Literary Reflections on Mark 13:5–37," at 213.

> In literary terms, it means that Jesus is a reliable character because his perspective is presented by the narrator as trustworthy, while the disciples are unreliable.[63]

The longer ending of Mark continues to display the "golden thread" woven into the fabric of the text. The theme of unbelief continues as Jesus dines with those who are still His disciples and "upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen" (Mark 16:14). This is followed by promises of salvation to those who believe and are baptized, and the commission to take this message to all the world, with the promise of signs that would follow them that believe (Mark 16:15–18). Then in the last verse we learn that they did go forth and signs followed them (Mark 16:20), showing that the disciples, of course, had overcome their doubts and become men of faith and courage.

Among other persistent themes in Mark, Lunn shows that subtle Exodus themes unite Mark.[64] Lunn details numerous references to the Exodus in the language of Mark, suggesting that Mark has framed the mission of Christ as a New Exodus. Christ seeks to bring Israel across the waters of baptism into a spiritual Promised Land, and in so doing, rather than casting out Gentile nations, Christ's work is to cast out Satan and his demons.

As one of many examples, Lunn explains how the transfiguration in Mark 9 points to Moses at Mount Sinai, something which a variety of scholars have previously observed.[65] Both take place in a mountain, and Moses and Jesus both take three persons with them (Exodus 24:1,9; Mark 9:2). In both cases, a cloud overshadows the mountain. A voice is heard from the cloud. There are references to tabernacles in both (Exodus 25:9; Mark 9:5). The appearance of both principal characters is transformed. The injunction to "Hear him" in Mark 9:7 also has overtones from Moses, with similar words used to describe a Moses-like prophet in Deuteronomy 18:15,[66] as other scholars have also noted.

Among other details, the miracles of feeding point to manna in the wilderness, and the last supper points to the Passover feast. Christ's words, "This is the blood of the new testament" (Mark 14:24), have been observed by many commentators to reflect Exodus 24:1–8, where God

63. Vorster, "Literary Reflections on Mark 13:5–37," quote at 213.
64. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 248–63.
65. Ibid., 256–57.
66. Ibid.

establishes His covenant through Moses. As Moses throws blood upon the altar, he says, "Behold the blood of the covenant."

Not surprisingly, the longer ending makes multiple Exodus allusions that are consistent with Mark's overarching implementation of Exodus themes. The appearance of Christ to the Eleven uses the term *appeared* in a way that recalls the divine commission of Moses. Exodus 3:2 reports that "the angel of the Lord appeared unto him," but we soon learn it is Jehovah that is appearing to Moses and giving him his commission, just as Christ does for the Eleven.

The call of Moses in Exodus 3 and 4 involves miraculous signs, possibly reflected in the reference to signs in Mark 16:17. In both cases the signs are related to the belief of the people.

Lunn also sees a parallel in the snakes mentioned in the longer ending: "they shall take up serpents" (Mark 16:18). Taking up a serpent with his hand is exactly what Moses does after his rod is turned into a snake by the Lord (Exodus 4:2–3). It is a fascinating parallel that may be new to most of us. Also in this episode, "hands" play an important role in both accounts.

Mark's use of "hardening" of hearts also has affinity to the Exodus account in the Old Testament, both from the Egyptians' response to His message and miracles and in the waning faith of the House of Israel.

Moses is also commanded to "go" and carry out his work of deliverance from slavery (Exodus 3:10), just as the apostles are commanded to "go" and preach the gospel among all nations.

With this perspective, it seems that much in the longer ending resonates subtly with the Exodus theme that permeates Mark, consistent with common authorship and thematic intent.

In addition to the Exodus theme that permeates Mark's Gospel, references to Elijah play a role in Mark. Lunn writes:

> In recent years scholars have detected an Elijah motif in the portrayal of Jesus in the Gospels, or a joint Elijah-Elisha motif. Some studies, like those of Adam Winn and Warren Gage, see such a motif as being particularly applicable to the Gospel of Mark. Here in the prologue John the Baptist is clearly presented as an Elijah-like figure. Yet Jesus too, through his fasting for forty days in the wilderness (Mark 1:13), evokes narratives of both Moses and Elijah. The body of the Gospel then includes nine specific references to Elijah (6:15; 8:28; 9:4, 5, 11, 12, 13; 15:35, 36). Luke and John contain less. Matthew also has nine, though mostly in parallels to Mark. Besides these explicit

references there are also further allusions. Gage shows how "the undisputed portions of Mark's Gospel allude to five of the six major narratives in the Old Testament accounts of Elijah's life, as well as several events from the life of Elijah's successor, Elisha." Among these are the question concerning Baalzebub (Mark 3:22; cf. 2 Kings 1:2–8), and the theophany on Mount Horeb evoked in the account of the transfiguration (Mark 9:2–8; cf. 1 Kings 19:9–15). In this latter passage Mark is the only evangelist who produces the names in the order "Elijah" then "Moses" (9:4). Further, Mark alone of the Gospel writers presents not one but two versions of the saying that some held Jesus to be Elijah (6:15; 8:28).

Considering the nature of the Markan inclusio, noted earlier, the strong Exodus overtones in the prologue accompanied by less prominent Elijah allusions may be matched by similar features in the Gospel's conclusion. In the latter the Moses-Exodus connections, as already outlined, are reasonably pronounced. What of Elijah? Interestingly, there is a possible echo in the Markan ending of the final event involving the prophet. When Elijah was taken up, witnessed by Elisha his successor, the LXX text says "As they were walking along talking [ἐλάλουν] … Elijah was taken up [ἀνελήμφθη] in a whirlwind as into heaven [εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν]" (2 Kings 2:11). This exhibits the same words as used in Mark's ending with reference to Jesus' ascension (16:19), "the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken [λαλῆσαι] to them, was taken up [ἀνελήμφθη] into heaven [εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν]." The sequence ἐλάλουν … ἀνελήμφθη … εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν in 2 Kings is matched by λαλῆσαι … ἀνελήμφθη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν in Mark. Since each contains three related elements occurring in the same order, with the verb in identical form, the similarity is not likely to be purely coincidental. The deliberateness of it has been firmly advocated by Gage, who also contends that with regard to Elijah "thematic analysis of the Gospel supports the conclusion that the longer ending of Mark fits within the typological structure of the Gospel." Accepting the validity of this allusion results in further evidence of an essential unity

> of thought between the ending and the opening, as well as the body, of the second Gospel.[67]

Maurice Robinson also points to the Elijah themes in Mark to strengthen the case for the authenticity of the longer ending.[68]

Importantly, Mark's references to Elijah should be understood in the context of the common misunderstanding during and after the ministry of Christ that Christ was merely another prophet like Elijah. The Jews were waiting for Elijah to return, and many said this miracle worker was Elijah or an Elijah. Mark, aware of this misunderstanding, is careful to show that Christ transcends the role of Elijah as Savior and Son of God. Mark F. Whitters explains:

> The reader is to infer that John the Baptist has played the role of Elijah and that he has suffered the very fate awaiting Jesus (9:12–13). This is how the Malachi passages about Elijah have been fulfilled according to the gospel of Mark. The "messenger to prepare the way" (Malachi 3:1a) is John the Baptist; "the Lord whom you seek [and who] will suddenly come to his temple" (Malachi 3:1b) is Jesus; "the great and terrible day of the Lord" (Malachi 3:23 [4:5]) is the day of Jesus. This narrative background explains the misinterpretation of Jesus' cry on the cross before he died. In effect the account of Jesus' last words recapitulates the earlier debate between those who believed Jesus was Elijah and those who believed that John the Baptist was Elijah.
>
> The reader's attention is drawn to vv. 34–36 by the fact that the quotation (Psalm 22:1 [2]) is not in Greek. Jesus's words first appear as a transliteration into Greek letters of what is apparently his own language, and a Greek translation follows. Scholarly interest has tended to focus on the confused transliteration, which reflects a quotation that is neither pure Aramaic nor pure Hebrew. But it is the misunderstanding

67. Ibid., 263–64. Unfortunately, the work of Warren A. Gage that Lunn cites is an unpublished document.

68. Robinson, "Amid Perfect Contempt," in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark: Four Views*, Kindle edition, chapter 2, section "'Literalists of the imagination': The Elijah Emphasis." Like Lunn, Robinson also refers to the unpublished study of Warren Gage.

> of the crowd, not the accuracy of the transliteration, which rivets the reader's attention.[69]

Lunn's examination of unifying Exodus and Elijah themes throughout Mark is not only useful in assessing the authenticity of the longer ending of Mark, but may also be useful to students of the Book of Mormon in considering the allusions and themes woven into the account of the ministry of the Savior to the Nephites. In a sense, the works of Lunn and others in defending the longer ending of Mark are doubly relevant to the Book of Mormon, first in clarifying the alleged weakness of Christ quoting from His own words given in the longer ending of Mark; and second in strengthening our appreciation of the literary tools at play in the Book of Mormon's account of the Savior's ministry as well as some related events shortly before it, a topic we take up in Part 2.

Implications of the Evidence for the Origins of Mark and the Book of Mormon

The evidence reviewed and presented by Lunn and other authors considered here does much to refute a long-standing rejection of the longer ending of Mark by many Bible scholars. It also reminds us of the dangers of blindly accepting a scholarly consensus when that consensus may have been driven by limited data and a few influential views repeated and propagated on the basis of previous authority.

The evidence for the early existence of the longer ending, its Markan style, and its thematic unity with Mark, while strongly supporting the propriety of including the longer ending in the canon, does not necessarily mean that Mark wrote it himself or that it was in the initial draft of the Gospel of Mark. It could have been written under Mark's direction or by a follower of Mark and may have been an update or addition to an initial manuscript. For example, David Alan Black argues that Mark wrote the longer ending as a later postscript to his Gospel that had already been in circulation.[70] However it was produced, the evidence suggests that there was no reason for the early Christian community to question its inclusion in Mark and its sacred nature, and there is no

69. Mark F. Whitters, "Why Did the Bystanders Think Jesus Called upon Elijah before He Died (Mark 15:34–36)? The Markan Position," *The Harvard Theological Review*, 95/1 (January 2002): 119–24, citation at 122; http://www.jstor.org/stable/4150741

70. David Alan Black, "Mark 16:9–20 as a Markan Supplement," in *Perspectives on the Ending of Mark: Four Views*, ed. David Alan Black (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2008), Kindle edition, chapter 4.

reason for us to exclude it and condemn it today. Likewise, there is no reason to doubt that Christ gave the apostolic commission recorded in Mark 16 and repeated again to His disciples in the New World, as quoted in Mormon 9:22–25.

As for the disputed passage in Mormon 9, there is no substantial problem in Christ using the same or similar words in the New World that He spoke to His apostles in the Old World. Abundant evidence suggests that the longer ending of Mark belongs in the canon and was not a late forgery, leaving us with good reasons to reject the argument against the Book of Mormon based on the words of Christ cited in Mormon 9.

The commission of Christ to His disciples is more than just a late afterthought from Joseph Smith thrown in near the end of the Book of Mormon. It is placed not in 3 Nephi directly, but later in the final words of Mormon as he speaks to future readers of the Book of Mormon and discusses the significance of miracles and signs, a theme that is motivated by his discussion in Mormon 8 of the ministry of the Three Nephites, the special group from among the original disciples who were translated and given power to continue living and ministering unknown to the world until Christ should return again. In Mormon 8:24, he writes that

> [I]n his name could they remove mountains; and in his name could they cause the earth to shake; and by the power of his word did they cause prisons to tumble to the earth; yea, even the fiery furnace could not harm them, neither wild beasts nor poisonous serpents, because of the power of his word.

The power over poisonous serpents is one of the specifically mentioned signs given in the next chapter, Mormon 9:24, which would follow those that believe. The causing of the earth to shake and the (threatened) tumbling of prisons is also found in Helaman 5 in a scene that appears to foreshadow artfully the ministry of Christ in 3 Nephi with connections to the commission of Christ to the disciples, as discussed below.

Interestingly, the Book of Mormon implications from a study of the longer ending and particularly from the work of Nicholas Lunn extend beyond rebutting a significant attack on the authenticity of the text. In fact, there may be other insights to glean from the tools and methods in Lunn's work when applied to the Book of Mormon, particularly to 3 Nephi, which is the subject of Part 2 of this paper.

Conclusion

Modern scholarship provides excellent answers for the alleged Book of Mormon problem of Christ quoting from the longer ending of Mark in His words to the Nephites in the Book of Mormon. Extensive external and internal evidence weakens the arguments against and provides powerful evidence for the authenticity of Mark 16:9–20. There is no reason to suppose that Christ did not speak those words and give His apostles the apostolic commission found at the end of Mark. There is no inherent problem with the similar commission given to the disciples in the New World by the Savior.

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The Book of Mormon Versus the Consensus of Scholars: Surprises from the Disputed Longer Ending of Mark, Part 2

Jeff Lindsay

Abstract: *Following the account of the ministry of Christ among the Nephites as recorded in the Book of Mormon, Christ gave a charge to His New World disciples (Mormon 9:22–25). These words are nearly like the commission of Christ to His apostles at the end of the Gospel of Mark (Mark 16:9–20). According to the general consensus of modern Bible scholars, Christ did not speak those words; they are a later addition. If so, this is a problem for the Book of Mormon. Fortunately, recent modern scholarship offers compelling reasons for overturning the old consensus against the longer ending of Mark. Some of the factors from modern scholarship that indirectly help overcome a potentially serious objection to and apparent weakness in the Book of Mormon also help us better appreciate its strength as we explore unifying themes derived from an ancient Jewish perspective. Part 1 of this two-part series looked at the evidence for the unity of Mark and the plausibility of Mormon 9:22–25. In Part 2, we examine further Book of Mormon implications from the thematic evidence for the unity of Mark.*

In Part 1, we examined new scholarship supporting the authenticity of the widely disputed longer ending of Mark in Mark 16:9–20, where the great commission Christ gave to His disciples is referenced in Mormon 9:22–25. If Christ never spoke those words, the use of similar words quoted by Mormon in Christ's commission to the New World disciples would be problematic. Fortunately, an abundance of evidence from early Christian sources, such as writings of early Christian fathers, liturgical materials, and New Testament manuscripts and translations (versions), support the authenticity of the longer ending of Mark. It is further

supported by internal evidence from the language and themes employed. Of particular importance is the recent scholarship in Nicholas P. Lunn's *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9–20*.[1] Detailed analysis from Lunn and others shows that the commonly accepted reasons for rejecting the longer ending of Mark are seriously flawed and are overly reliant on arguments of authority that need to be reexamined. Thus Mormon's use of language similar to part of the longer ending is not a serious indictment of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.

Lunn's analysis of themes that unify Mark and strengthen the case for the longer ending as authentic also have bearing on the Book of Mormon, for some of the same themes appear to be used with subtle skill in the Book of Mormon.

3 Nephi and the Exodus Theme

In many cases, what we learn from Lunn has ramifications for Book of Mormon studies. For example, what happens when we look at 3 Nephi through the lens of the Exodus account? Does it show similar themes in the appearance of the Messiah to Book of Mormon peoples? Is there a new Exodus present in that book? Does Lunn's analysis of the theme of transfiguration offer any help in appreciating 3 Nephi and its transfiguration/translation scenes?

It is already well known (among serious students of the Book of Mormon) that subtle Exodus themes are pervasive in the Book of Mormon, especially in Nephi_1's writings,[2] so much so that some critics

1. Nicholas P. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark: A New Case for the Authenticity of Mark 16:9–20* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014).

2. See Terrence L. Szink, "Nephi and the Exodus," in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1991), 39–42; http://publications.mi.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=1111&index=6; Bruce J. Boehm, "Wanderers in the Promised Land: A Study of the Exodus Motif in the Book of Mormon and Holy Bible," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3/1 (1994): 187–203; http://publications.mi.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=1385&index=12; and S. Kent Brown, "The Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon," in *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla: Literary and Historical Studies of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1998), 75–98; https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/jerusalem-zarahemla-literary-and-historical-studies-book-mormon/exodus-pattern-book-mormon. On the significance of flight into the wilderness as an exodus theme, see David E. Bokovoy, "The Bible vs. the Book of Mormon: Still Losing the Battle," *FARMS Review* 18/1 (2006): 3–19, particularly at 7; https://publications.mi.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=1446&index=3.

have pointed to this extensive and clearly deliberate hypertextuality as evidence of crude plagiarism, though this does injustice to the seemingly Semitic craftsmanship of the text.[3] While Nephi_1's interweaving of Exodus themes is noteworthy, related references are found elsewhere. For example, Abinadi's actions and preaching exhibit many allusions to Moses and the Exodus. Abinadi gives the Ten Commandments, his face glows, as did Moses's, and his actions and words suggest that his speech before King Noah may have been given at the Feast of Pentecost.[4] Like Moses challenging Pharaoh, Abinadi challenges King Noah. Pharaoh's response, "And Pharaoh said, *Who is the Lord*, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?" (Exodus 5:2) is echoed by King Noah: "Who is Abinadi, that I and my people should be judged of him, or *who is the Lord*, that shall bring upon my people such great affliction?" (Mosiah 11:27). The result of Abinadi's brave ministry is similar to Moses's: the people are led away from the influence of the wicked ruler by escaping into the wilderness, where they enter into a covenant with the Lord. In the Book of Mormon, though, they are not led not by Abinadi himself but by his convert, the priest Alma_1.

Many other references and parallels to Exodus themes can be found in other scenes of deliverance and covenant making in the Book of Mormon. Here, though, I focus on later material related to the ministry of Christ in the Americas and compare it with the findings of Lunn relating to the Gospel of Mark.

Lunn's analysis reveals structure and unifying themes in Mark that can be easily missed by modern readers and, likewise, by ancient or modern forgers. Analysis of the Exodus theme throughout Mark, including the disputed longer ending, is important evidence of its unity and of the authenticity of the disputed verses. The same can also be said of the weaker but still noteworthy Elijah theme. For a Jewish writer steeped in the Hebrew scriptures and aware of its Messianic prophecies and symbols, the Gospel of Mark is made more powerful and instructive through its subtle and clever adaptation of those themes to describe the New Exodus led by Christ in a role with Elijah-like overtones. In Lunn's

3. See the responses to some such complaints in Jeff Lindsay, "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Map: Part 1 of 2," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 19 (2016): 153–239;http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/joseph-and-the-amazing-technicolor-dream-map-part-1-of-2/.

4. See, for example, "Did Abinadi Prophesy During Pentecost?," *Book of Mormon Central*, KnoWhy #90, May 2, 2016; https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/did-abinadi-prophesy-during-pentecost.

analysis of the parallels between the longer ending of Mark and the Exodus, he offers these comparisons as a summary (*numbering added*):[5]

Mark 16	**Exodus**
1. Jesus "appeared" to the disciples (v.14)	The LORD "appeared" to Moses (3:16, 4:5)
2. Commissioned to "go" into all of creation and proclaim the gospel (v. 15)	Commissioned to "go" to Egypt and bring out the Israelites from slavery (3:10)
3. "Whoever believes … whoever does not believe … " (v. 16)	"What if they will not believe me … ?" (4:1);"that they may believe … " (4:5)
4. "signs" (v. 17)	"signs" (4:9, etc.)
5. "with their hands" (v. 18)	"in his hand" (4:4)
6. "they will pick up snakes" (v. 18)	Moses took hold of a snake (4:4)
7. The disciples went and preached, accompanied by signs (vv. 19–20)	Moses went and spoke the message and performed the signs (4:20, 30–31)
8. "hardness of heart" (v. 14)	"hardened … heart" (*passim*)
9. "cast out seven demons" (v. 9)	cast out seven nations (3:8; 34:24, etc.)

The last item in his list may be a stretch and is easy to criticize. Nevertheless, it is at least possible that Mark saw significance in the number seven when choosing to mention that detail. If the frequent theme of casting out demons in Mark was viewed as an analog to the casting out of pagan nations in Israel as part of God's New Exodus through the ministry of Christ, perhaps Mark felt the number was significant, but it is simply speculation.

In looking at the parallels Lunn sees in the ending of Mark with the appearance of Christ and His commission to the apostles, we may wonder if anything similar might be happening in 3 Nephi with the appearance of Christ to Book of Mormon peoples. Exodus themes are strongly present in the Book of Mormon, though most strongly in the writings of Nephi_1. Alma the Younger, clearly a devoted student of the brass plates, also uses Exodus themes in his writings. But do we find that in the 3 Nephi account of Christ's appearance and ministry in the New World?

Several of the items in Lunn's list have relationships to the Book of Mormon account. Obviously, Christ's ministry begins with an appearance to the Nephites. The heading before 3 Nephi 11, present in the earliest manuscripts of the Book of Mormon and thus representing

5. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 262–63.

text from the gold plates, not a later editorial insertion, states that "Jesus Christ sheweth himself unto the people of Nephi. … And on this wise did he shew himself unto them."[6] The word *appeared* is also used directly in the body of the chapter. After a divine voice speaks three times to the people to call attention to the descent of Christ, they look up and see a Man descending from heaven but did not know what it meant and "thought it was an angel that had *appeared* unto them" (3 Nephi 11:8). The same word, *appeared*, as found in the KJV of Mark and Exodus, is also used to describe the visit of the Lord in the New World, though this is not surprising.

Incidentally, just as the Nephites initially thought it was an angel appearing unto them, so Exodus 3 initially reports that "an angel of the Lord appeared unto [Moses]" in the fire of the burning bush (v. 2), but shortly thereafter we learn that it is actually God calling Moses from the midst of the bush (vv. 4–6).

Regarding issue 2, the charge to "go" given to Moses and the apostles is also found in 3 Nephi 11:41 in the introductory words of Christ, where He commissions His disciples to "go forth unto this people, and declare the words which I have spoken, unto the ends of the earth." It is a commission to go unto "this people," but the words and the gospel message are intended to be taken "unto the ends of the earth." This echoes the commission in the longer ending of Mark and reminds us of God's command to Moses to "go" and free Israel in Exodus 3:10. ("Go" is found in many translations of Exodus 3:10, such as the NIV, though the KJV has "Come now" instead of the NIV's "So now, go," even though the corresponding Hebrew root, *yalak*, is much more frequently translated as "go" in the KJV.)[7]

The next three issues in Lunn's table, items 3 to 5 dealing with belief, signs, and hands, are all present in 3 Nephi 11 and somewhat in later parts of 3 Nephi.

Before the miraculous appearance of the Lord, 3 Nephi 11:2 refers to the "sign" that had been given and fulfilled concerning His death in the Old World. Another dramatic sign is given immediately after His appearance, when the Lord invites the Nephites to come and "thrust your hands into my side" and to "feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of

6. Royal Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 593.

7. Strong's H312, *Blue Letter Bible*, https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H3212&t=KJV.

the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world" (3 Nephi 11:14). Here the Lord offers His hands as both a visual and tactile sign and asks those present to use their hands to touch Him and confirm that He had been slain, removing any grounds for disbelief, that they might know that their God had appeared and completed His Atonement to redeem them. The topic of "signs" is explicitly addressed later, when the Lord speaks of a "sign" He will give Israel in the latter days so that they might know the Lord is fulfilling His promises and keeping His covenant with Israel (3 Nephi 21:1–2, 7).

The Exodus-related significance of Christ's opening words and the wounds He showed have been noted by S. Kent Brown.[8] Brown observes that in ancient times, agents sent to negotiate for the release of captives in foreign lands would be sent with credentials that could be shown to confirm that they had the requisite authority. Thus Moses and Aaron, sent as representatives of the Lord to Pharaoh (Exodus 3:10; 4:14–15), presented their "credentials" in the form of divine signs worked by the power of the rod of Aaron/Moses (Exodus 7:8–12). Relating this concept to the Book of Mormon, Brown writes:

> When we turn to 3 Nephi, the need and the effort to recover those who were captives of sin becomes clear. The principal differences, of course, were that (a) the risen Jesus, the one who sought the recovery, came in person rather than sending a messenger, and (b) there was no captor to whom he needed to present his credentials. In this connection, important features of Jesus' visit grew out of the scene in which he presented his "credentials" and the tokens of his mission to those whom he sought to rescue. Note the following overtones in the wonderful moments just after his arrival: "Behold, I AM Jesus Christ whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. And behold, I AM the light and the life of the world" (3 Nephi 11:10–11). The similarities with Moses' situation cannot be missed. In the first instance, Jesus identified himself as the one whom the gathered crowd had been expecting. Moses, too, had to identify himself as the envoy of Israel's

8. S. Kent Brown, "The Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon," *BYU Studies* 30/3 (Summer 1990):111; reprinted and revised in S. Kent Brown, *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla: Literary and Historical Studies of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1998), 75–98; https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/jerusalem-zarahemla-literary-and-historical-studies-book-mormon/exodus-pattern-book-mormon.

> God (Exodus 4:29–31). Further, Jesus announced himself specifically by using the divine name I AM, the same name which Moses carried from his interview on the holy mount (3:14). Additionally, as Moses had carried at least one token of his commission which had the form of a physical malady, namely, his arm which could be made leprous (4:6–8), so Jesus bore the tokens of his crucifixion in his person. Moreover, to demonstrate the validity of his wounds, Jesus asked the entire crowd of twenty-five hundred people (3 Nephi 17:25) to come forward so that "ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet" (11:14). My last point in this context is that as the children of Israel had "believed" Moses and had then "bowed their heads and worshipped" (Exodus 4:31), so the people in Bountiful, after "going forth one by one … did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come" (3 Nephi 11:15). They too "did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him" (11:17). And like the scene in which worship was extended to Jesus who was present, the Israelite slaves worshiped the Lord who "had visited the children of Israel" (Exodus 4:31).[9]

Both the acceptance of the tokens and the response seem significant in each context.

Brown points to additional parallels between 3 Nephi and the Exodus account, including the use of "I AM" and the response of the Nephites in bowing and worshiping Him Who "had visited the children of Israel" (Exodus 4:31). Christ, of course, was visiting the Nephites, and, in His address to them, said that the Father will "*visit* him [who believes in Christ] with fire and with the Holy Ghost" (3 Nephi 11:35).

Turning to the next item on Lunn's list, number 6, there is no mention of snakes or serpents in 3 Nephi, apart from a passage on the Sermon on the Mount as adapted for and quoted to the Nephites ("Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?" in 3 Nephi 14:10). However, Mormon, in Mormon 9:22–25, later reports that Christ told the disciples essentially the same words found in the commission to the apostles in the disputed longer ending of Mark (Mark 16:15–18, with the taking up of serpents mentioned in v. 18 and in Mormon 9:24). Though it is so speculative that I hesitate to mention it, if the Nephites in Mesoamerica

9. Ibid.

connected the brass serpent of Moses with Christ, perhaps in the context of an early form of what would become the Quetzalcoatl myth, then there is a conceivable link between touching Christ with their hands and the Exodus theme of Moses taking up the serpent that would become his rod again or more directly a link to touching the living reality behind the symbol of the brass serpent. But if such a connection were intended in 3 Nephi, one might hope to find an allusion to the brass serpent or to Moses's rod associated with the scene in 3 Nephi 11.

As for item 7, speaking the message accompanied by signs, this was thoroughly accomplished by the twelve disciples in the New World. Beginning the very night after Jesus appeared, they undoubtedly led the effort to announce the coming of the Lord to thousands during the night that they might be present for His return the next day (3 Nephi 19:1–4). On the next day, they then began fulfilling their commission by teaching what Jesus had taught, dividing the crowd into twelve bodies, then leading them in prayer and teaching the very words that Christ had taught the day before (3 Nephi 19:5–8). That day their divinely appointed ministry would be confirmed through dramatic signs, including the return of Christ in their midst. This commission to go and teach the words of Christ would continue throughout their lives (3 Nephi 26:17). Many signs would accompany the ministry, in particular those of the three disciples who were given special power to tarry on earth until the return of Christ in the last days (3 Nephi 28:1–23). These three "did go forth upon the face of the land, and did minister unto all the people" (3 Nephi 28:18) and would miraculously survive many attempts of the wicked to kill them or hold them captive (3 Nephi 28:19–22).

Item 8, which deals with the "hardness" of hearts, is not clearly present in the context of Christ's ministry, though in 3 Nephi it is referenced as a key factor associated with the wickedness of the people before the great destruction in 3 Nephi 8. As reported in 3 Nephi 1:22, "there began to be lyings sent forth among the people, by Satan, to harden their hearts, to the intent that they might not believe in those signs and wonders which they had seen; but notwithstanding these lyings and deceivings the more part of the people did believe, and were converted unto the Lord." Here the hardening of hearts under Satan's influence leads to disbelief in the signs and wonders they saw that pointed to the coming of Christ. Then 3 Nephi 2:1–2 again reports that the people "began to be hard in their hearts, and blind in their minds, and began to disbelieve all which they had heard and seen," ascribing signs and wonders from God to the works of Satan or the deception of men.

Further, in 3 Nephi 21, in speaking of a sign to be given in the latter days regarding the gathering of Israel, Christ states that the Gentiles may be counted among his people "if they will not harden their hearts," and in the following verse He observes that His prophecies about the gathering of Israel in the last days "shall be a sign unto them [the Gentiles]" (3 Nephi 21:6–7). These passages link hardness of hearts to disbelief in divine signs, which is what we find in several verses in Exodus. For example, in Exodus 4:21, "the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart [the JST has 'Pharaoh will harden his heart'], that he shall not let the people go." In spite of signs, the hardened heart does not believe and obey. Later in Exodus 7:3–4, the Lord tells Moses that He "will harden Pharaoh's heart [also changed to 'Pharaoh will harden his heart' in the JST], and though I multiply my signs and wonders in Egypt, he will not listen to you" (NIV).

Other heart-related passages in 3 Nephi include 3 Nephi 7:16, where the great prophet Nephi_3, "being grieved for the hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds — went forth among them" to preach repentance. Then when the Lord speaks to the Nephites immediately after the great destruction of 3 Nephi 8, He commands them to "offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit" (3 Nephi 9:20), which is the opposite of a hardened heart. In Christ's initial words to the Nephites, He warns against Satan's power over the hearts of men, to stir them up to anger (3 Nephi 11:29–30). While not using the word "hardness," the concept is related. (On Nephi_3 as an Elijah figure, like John the Baptist, see the discussion below.)

Item 9, as mentioned (casting out seven nations/seven demons), may be a weak element in Lunn's analysis and is not found in 3 Nephi. However, the Exodus theme of casting out pagan nations to prepare the way for Israel not only parallels Christ's casting out demons in Mark as part of a New Exodus, it also has links to 3 Nephi, where the theme of a New Exodus is also present. Unfortunately, this New Exodus appears to require casting out portions of a pagan Gentile nation in the New World, as described in 3 Nephi 20:15–22 and 21:12–24. The words Christ uses make the ties to the account in Exodus particularly strong, for He introduces the concept after declaring that "this land" in the New World was given unto the Nephites/House of Israel for an inheritance (3 Nephi 20:14), and then begins to warn the Gentiles on this land (3 Nephi 20:15–22). Among the Gentiles, the remnant of the House of

Jacob shall be "as a lion among the beasts of the forest, and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep" (v. 16), a quoting of Micah 5:8 but also making reference to Numbers 23:22–24, where Balaam prophesies that Israel, as it had left Egypt and was entering its promised land, would "rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain" (v. 24). This lion/young lion combination is repeated in a similar context in 3 Nephi 21:12. The future gathering of Israel, coupled with some degree of scattering of Gentile peoples who reject the gospel, is part of the New Exodus of the last days and is rich in parallels to the original Exodus.

Significantly, nearly all the Exodus themes that Lunn lists for the disputed ending of Mark, where Christ appears and gives the great commission to His apostles, are also found in 3 Nephi, where Christ does the same with His twelve disciples in the New World. Elements identified by Lunn in defense of the integrity of Mark also help us see more of the Exodus links in 3 Nephi.

Other Parallels Between Exodus and 3 Nephi

While Lunn focuses on Sinai-related parallels to Exodus 3 and 4, the Sinai experience continues in Exodus 6, where we find several noteworthy relationships to the 3 Nephi account in vv. 1–8:

> Then the Lord said unto Moses, Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh: for with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.
>
> And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, *I am the Lord*:
>
> And *I appeared* unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.
>
> And I have also *established my covenant with them, to give them the land* of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.
>
> And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and *I have remembered my covenant.*
>
> Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I

> will redeem you *with a stretched out arm,* and with great judgments:
>
> And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.
>
> And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and *I will give it you for an heritage: I* am *the Lord.* (emphasis added)

Parallels to 3 Nephi occur in the declaration "I am the Lord" and "I appeared" as well as the language around the covenant and the land of inheritance given to the House of Israel, all discussed above. Further, Christ begins His words to the Nephites as He "stretched forth his hand and spake" (3 Nephi 11:9), similar to the "stretched out arm" in Exodus 6:6. He then declares, "Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. And behold, I am the light and the life of the world" (3 Nephi 11:10–11).

Other parallels to consider include the location of the appearance of the Lord at the temple in Bountiful, the "mountain of the Lord's house" (Isaiah 2:2), which can be connected to Mount Sinai, site of Moses's theophany.

Among the other Exodus concepts that occur in 3 Nephi, another dramatic one is the feeding of the people with bread and wine in a sacramental meal offered by Christ, even though neither bread nor wine was brought for that event (3 Nephi 20:3–7), a parallel to the feeding of Israel with manna and miraculously produced water during their journey in the wilderness. This event is treated in more detail below in relationship to Elisha.

Another water-related concept from Exodus is the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14), for which Lunn sees parallels in Mark to teachings regarding baptism. This is consistent with 3 Nephi's emphasis on baptism, one of the first topics that Christ touches upon after He appears (3 Nephi 11:21–27). Baptism, of course, is a ceremony whose symbolism includes being rescued from the waters of death and chaos. Water is explicitly mentioned in 3 Nephi: "ye shall go down and stand in the water" (3 Nephi 11:23), "then shall ye immerse them in the water" and "come forth again out of the water" (3 Nephi 11:26); "I have given power that they may baptize you with water," and "after ye are baptized with water, behold, I will baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost" (3 Nephi

12:1); and four times in the context of baptism in 3 Nephi 19 (vv. 10–13), including going down to the water's edge (3 Nephi 19:10), which may parallel the House of Israel approaching the Red Sea before the miracle began or to the crossing of the Jordan by Joshua and the priests carrying the tabernacle (Joshua 3:5–17, with the "brink of the water of the Jordan" mentioned in v. 8, or "the edge of the Jordan's waters" in the NIV). Further, those who are not built upon His rock but on a sandy foundation will be received by the gates of hell "when the floods come" (3 Nephi 11:40, 18:13), followed by two references to the floodlike "waters of Noah" (3 Nephi 22:9, quoting Isaiah 54:9), waters whose destructive force reminds us of the Red Sea that destroyed the Egyptian army with its horses and chariots.

Speaking of horses and chariots, Christ's partial quotation of Micah 5:10 in 3 Nephi 21:14, "I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots," is likely a reference to the destruction of Egypt's horses and chariots in the Red Sea (Exodus 14:6-9, 17–18, 23–28; 15:19; and especially Deuteronomy 11:4, where the Lord "destroyed" the Egyptian's horses and chariots).

The "cloud" that surrounds Jesus and hides him from the Nephites as He ascends into heaven (3 Nephi 18:38) is also reminiscent of the cloud associated with God's presence and power in the Exodus story (Exodus 13:21–22; 14:19–20, 24; 16:10; 19:9, 16; 24:15–16, 18; 34:5; 40:34–38).

Christ's command to "Look unto me, and endure to the end" (3 Nephi 15:9), followed by healing of the people (3 Nephi 17:9), may point to the account of the brass serpent that healed Israelites who would look to that symbol of Christ (Numbers 21:8–9), as George S. Tate has suggested.[10]

Several major scenes involve apparent references to the Exodus as well as to Elijah-Elisha themes, such as scenes involving fire and translation, but these will be considered below.

Elijah in the Book of Mormon

As mentioned in Part 1, in addition to multiple Exodus themes that unite the longer ending of Mark with the rest of his text, Lunn also notes

10. George S. Tate, "The Typology of the Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon," in *Literature of Belief: Sacred Scripture and Religious Experience*, ed. Neal E. Lambert (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1981), 245–62; https://rsc.byu.edu/pt-pt/archived/literature-belief-sacred-scripture-and-religious-experience/13-typology-exodus-pattern-book.

the subtle presence of references to Elijah in Mark's text, including the longer ending.[11]

Several other scholars have noted the many ways in which Elijah themes are used in the Bible. Thomas L. Brodie, for example, finds evidence that Luke deliberately shapes accounts of Jesus to correspond to events from Elijah's life.[12] In examining the relationship between the Assumption of Christ and Elijah's departure in the chariot of fire, for example, Brodie observes:

> What is essential is that, even though, within the Bible as a whole, there are indeed three other references to people being taken away (Enoch in Genesis 5:24; and Elijah in 1 Maccabees 2:58 and Sirach 48:9), there are no other biblical texts, apart from 2 Kings 2:1 and Luke 9:51, which speak of the one who is soon to be assumed as journeying to the fated place. Nor are there any other biblical texts which place the image of assumption so close to the image or idea of death. The link is unique.[13]

Examining different aspects of the text, J. Severino Croatto argues that Luke not only links Elijah to John the Baptist but carefully applies other roles of Elijah to Christ to illustrate not only His role as Messiah and Savior but as a prophet.[14] Croatto bemoans the historical and current neglect of Christ's prophetic roles as the focus on the traditional messianic lens applied to the Gospels has blurred the varied perspectives presented for the role of Jesus, particularly His prophetic roles, including "a historical Jesus prophet, according to several biblical typologies, and a paschal Jesus Messiah, with the paschal extension of Prophet-Teacher 'like Moses.'"[15] After reviewing the strong but sometimes subtle evidence of Christ's varied prophetic roles in Luke, Croatta concludes:

> Jesus fulfills everything foretold about the prophet (Luke 4:21), the Son of Man (18:31), the Messiah (24:26, 44–48; Acts 3:18), or "these days" (Acts 3:24). But above all, Jesus

11. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 263–5.

12. Thomas L. Brodie, "The Departure for Jerusalem (Luke 9,51–56) as a Rhetorical Imitation of Elijah's Departure for the Jordan (2 Kings 1,1–2, 6)," *Biblica*, 70/1 (1989): 96–109; http://www.jstor.org/stable/42707462.

13. Brodie, "The Departure for Jerusalem," 103.

14. J. Severino Croatto, "Jesus, Prophet like Elijah, and Prophet-Teacher like Moses in Luke-Acts," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 124/3 (Fall, 2005): 451–65; http://www.jstor.org/stable/30041034.

15. Croatto, "Jesus, Prophet like Elijah," 451.

> develops a multiple prophetic function for himself: (1) in the tradition of the great prophets; (2) as Elijah (prophet and healer); (3) being killed, just like the prophets; and (4) as eschatological prophet-teacher, interpreter of the Scriptures. This prophetic-magisterial activity includes the affirmation of Jesus' paschal messiahship and the "jesuanic" prefiguration of the prophet who is rejected and condemned to death. In the last instance, Jesus' paschal messiahship is the reverse of his terrestrial prophetic activity. This activity is clarified and interpreted by his new prophetic-magisterial role "like Moses," which is also paschal.
>
> The prophetic perspective of Jesus' activity is so intense in the Lukan *magnum opus* that it is astonishing that it could be replaced by the messianic readings and that such interpretation became almost the only one. *The blurring of the prophetic dimension of Jesus in the theological tradition — not only in the exegetical tradition — is connected to the absence of a prophetic typology in the nomenclature of the saints.* The saints can be confessors, virgins, martyrs, doctors, but there are no prophets in the Christian catalogue. (*emphasis added*)[16]

Croatto will be happy to learn that there are prophets in the Christian catalogue of the Latter-day Saints and that the Book of Mormon strongly affirms Christ's role not only as Messiah but as the archetype and fulfillment of the ancient, early Christian and modern Restoration role of prophets, including the more common role of paschal prophet-teachers but also the more dramatic role of prophets like Joseph Smith offering a bold new theophany, bold new visions, prophecies, and so forth.

Elijah is rarely mentioned in the Book of Mormon, yet Elijah themes appear in several contexts, sometimes with subtlety and skill, adding to the richness and unity of the Book of Mormon, as Elijah themes contribute to the meaning and unity of the Gospel of Mark.

Elijah themes have been noted several times in previous investigations of the Book of Mormon. High Nibley, for example, saw a parallel between Elijah's going into hiding and Abinadi's departure from and then later return in disguise to the people of King Noah in the city of Nephi.[17] While Abinadi may be linked more directly with themes

16. Ibid., 465.

17. Hugh W. Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon*, Semester 2, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993), Chapter 33, p. 59; http://gospelink.com/library/

related to Moses (e.g., he gives the Ten Commandments, his face glows as did Moses's, etc.[18]), his role as a prophet out of hiding and challenging a wicked king makes a plausible allusion to Elijah.

Following Lunn's lead, I will consider possible Elijah themes related to Christ and His followers in 3 Nephi and the adjacent texts of Helaman and 4 Nephi.

Christ and Elijah

Many modern scholars traditionally focus on the role of John the Baptist as an Elijah figure,[19] often overlooking the strong evidence showing Christ as an Elijah figure. This topic, relevant to Lunn's analysis, has been fruitfully explored by a variety of authors, such as John Poirier,[20] J. Severino Croatto,[21] Craig Evans,[22] and Thomas L. Brodie,[23] who generally focus on Luke. Adam Winn,[24] Thomas L. Brodie,[25] and Wolfgang Roth[26] have also considered related Elijah-Elisha themes in

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document/30770.

18. See, for example, "Did Abinadi Prophesy During Pentecost?," *Book of Mormon Central*, KnoWhy #90, May 2, 2016; https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/did-abinadi-prophesy-during-pentecost. Further, one could also argue that like Moses challenging Pharaoh, Abinadi challenges King Noah, and the result of his brave ministry is somewhat similar: a people are led away from the influence of the wicked ruler by escaping into the wilderness, where they enter into a covenant with the Lord. In the Book of Mormon, though, they are not led not by Abinadi himself but by his convert, the priest Alma.

19. For example, see Markus Öhler, "The Expectation of Elijah and the Presence of the Kingdom of God," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 118/3 (Autumn, 1999): 461-476; http://www.jstor.org/stable/3268184.

20. John C. Poirier, "Jesus as an Elijianic Figure in Luke 4:16–30," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 71/2 (April 2009): 349–363; http://www.jstor.org/stable/43726546.

21. Croatto, "Jesus, Prophet like Elijah."

22. Evans, "Luke's Use of the Elijah/Elisha Narratives."

23. Brodie, "The Departure for Jerusalem."

24. Adam Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative: Considering the Practice of Greco-Roman Imitation in the Search for Markan Source Material* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), Kindle edition.

25. Thomas L. Brodie, *The Crucial Bridge: The Elijah-Elisha Narrative as an Interpretive Synthesis of Genesis-Kings and a Literary Model for the Gospels* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), as cited by Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 120.

26. Wolfgang Roth, *Hebrew Gospel: Cracking the Code of Mark* (Oak Park, IL: Meyer Stone, 1988), as cited by Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 120.

Mark, sometimes with significantly different results.[27] Mark Whitters, also examining the Gospel of Mark, finds evidence that Elijah themes are applied both to John the Baptist and Christ.[28]

The first explicit reference to Elijah in the Book of Mormon comes in the words of Christ as He quotes Malachi chapters 3 and 4 (3 Nephi 24, 25). Malachi 4:5–6 is the often-cited passage prophesying that the Lord would send Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, and that He would turn the hearts of the children to the fathers and vice versa. That statement is preceded by a command to remember the Law of Moses, the Lord's servant, who received the law "in Horeb" (3 Nephi 25:4). Appropriately, Moses and Elijah are both linked to Christ in the New Testament and in the Book of Mormon.

The appearance of Christ to the Nephites in 3 Nephi 11 invokes the "still small voice" from Elijah's theophany on Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:9-15), where Elijah first witnessed the destructive forces of wind, earthquake, and fire (1 Kings 19:11–12). (Elijah's experience on Horeb also naturally recalls the theophany of Moses on the same mountain.) The destructive elements Elijah witnessed occur in the destruction reported in 3 Nephi 8, which begins with a great storm (v. 5) bringing a "great and terrible tempest" (v. 6; see also vv. 17, 19) and whirlwinds (vv. 12, 16), the shaking of the earth "as if it was about to divide asunder" (v. 6; quaking of the earth is also mentioned in v. 12 and other seismic activity in vv. 9, 10, 18, 19), and destruction by fire in the city of Zarahemla (v. 7; with other cities destroyed by fire in v. 14), perhaps due to lightning strikes, v. 7, or the apparent volcanic activity at that time.[29] A storm with fierce winds, the shaking of the earth, and fire

27. Adam Winn, for example, critiques W. Roth's attempt to see John the Baptist in an Elijah role and Christ in a contrasting Elisha-like role. Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 56.

28. Mark F. Whitters, "Why Did the Bystanders Think Jesus Called upon Elijah before He Died (Mark 15:34–36)? The Markan Position," *The Harvard Theological Review*, 95/1 (Jan, 2002): 119–124; http://www.jstor.org/stable/4150741.

29. Benjamin R. Jordan, "Volcanic Destruction in the Book of Mormon: Possible Evidence from Ice Cores," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 12/ 1 (2003): 78–87; http://publications.mi.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=1402&index=8 (HTML) or http://publications.mi.byu.edu/publications/jbms/12/1/S00008–5 0e5fa62cbc4c9Jordan.pdf (PDF). For detailed analysis from a geologist, see Jerry D. Grover Jr., *Geology of the Book of Mormon* (Vineyard, UT: Grover Publications, 2014), available at http://www.academia.edu/18172439/Geology_of_the_Book_of_Mormon. Also see "What Caused the Darkness and Destruction in the 34th Year?," KnoWhy #197, *Book of Mormon Central*, September 28, 2016; https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/what-caused-the-darkness-and-destruction-in-the-34th-year.

are the destructive elements, in that order, that initiate the destruction in 3 Nephi 8.

The period of destruction is immediately followed by the voice of the Lord speaking to the surviving Nephites, explaining what has happened, and urging them to repent (3 Nephi 9). Then, after "many hours" of silence (3 Nephi 10:2), that voice comes again and urges the people again to repent and be saved (3 Nephi 10:3–7). But the term "small voice," like the "still small voice" from the Lord finally heard by Elijah (1 Kings 19:12), is not used in 3 Nephi until the third time a voice speaks to the surviving Nephites, which may have been months later as the Nephites gather at the temple in Bountiful.[30] There, the people are surprised by a voice from heaven which at first they cannot understand. It is described as a "small voice" that pierces them to the center (3 Nephi 11:3) and causes their frames to shake. It takes three times before they can understand this message, and then they can hear the voice of the Father, saying, "Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name — hear ye him" (3 Nephi 11:7). This voice causes their hearts to burn (3 Nephi 11:3; cf. Helaman 5:30) as Christ begins His majestic descent to them.

The ascension of Christ, said by Lunn to complete Mark's use of the Elijah theme by having Christ ascend with language similar to that describing Elijah's ascent, is also present in 3 Nephi 18:38–39 but with different language. Here it is a cloud that shields Christ from view as He ascends, while Elijah "went up by a whirlwind into heaven" with a chariot of fire and horses of fire that separated Elijah from Elisha (2 Kings 2:11) and caused that Elisha "saw him no more" (2 Kings 2:12). While the cloud in 3 Nephi overshadows the people such that "the multitude … could not see Jesus" (3 Nephi 18:38), the disciples "saw and did bear record that he ascended again into heaven" (3 Nephi 18:39).

Christ's ascension is also described as being part of a divinely timed plan, for Christ announces His temporary departure in 3 Nephi 17 with "Behold, my time is at hand" (v. 1) and "now I go unto the Father" (v. 4). While He delays His departure out of compassion for the yearning Nephites, right before His ascent He again announces the plan: "And now I go unto the Father, because it is expedient that I should go unto the

30. S. Kent Brown, "When Did Jesus Visit the Americas?" in *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla: Literary and Historical Studies of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1998), 146–56; https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/jerusalem-zarahemla-literary-and-historical-studies-book-mormon/when-did-jesus-visit.

Father for your sakes" (3 Nephi 18:35). The theme of assumption by plan is an aspect in Brodie's analysis of parallels between Luke and the Old Testament:

> The Lord's … plan for taking up Elijah is recounted in (2 Kings 2:1): "Now when the Lord was about to take Elijah up to heaven by a whirlwind …" And the text goes on to emphasize, in an account that is almost as repetitious as the death decree: the Lord is really going to do it (cf. 2 Kings 2: 3, 5).
>
> The NT suggests the presence of a … plan for the assumption (*analĕmpsis*) of Jesus: "When the days were drawing near [literally], "were being filled up" (*en tō symplĕrousthaí*) for him to be taken up, he set his face … " [Luke 9:51].[31]

Another aspect of the ascension that may connect with the Elijah-Elisha account is the use of the word *tarry*. Just as Elisha resists the departure of Elijah and seeks to stay with him longer, so also when Christ is about to depart for the first time, the Nephites sorrow and yearn for Him to "tarry" longer (3 Nephi 17:5). The word *tarry* is used repeatedly in 2 Kings 2:1–12 (three times, vv. 2, 4, and 6) to describe Elijah's attempts to depart from Elisha, though it is Elijah who asks Elisha to "tarry" in particular spots while he moves on. Perhaps the yearning of the Nephites for Christ to "tarry" alludes to the same word in Elijah's departure but in a literary reversal. (This word is used more prominently later to describe the Three Nephites, who would "tarry," as noted below.)

Further, before Christ ascends again into heaven, He does what Elijah did with Elisha: He passes on power and authority, that the divine ministry might continue. In 3 Nephi 18:36–37, immediately before His ascension, Christ touches each disciple with His hand, one by one, and speaks to them, giving them power to give the Holy Ghost. This power is on miraculous display the next day in 3 Nephi 19, and again may be described with subtle references to Elijah.

In general, Christ's ministry among the Nephites elicits comparison to Elijah as well as Elisha. First, He is the Anointed One, and Elijah, like Elisha, was one of the few explicitly anointed prophets in the Old Testament. Like Elijah, the Savior performs miracles, and some of these miracles relate to Elijah's miracles. Christ also healed the sick, as Elijah healed a sick boy who had apparently died (1 Kings 17:17–23). While the record does not explicitly attribute raising the dead to Christ's acts

31. Brodie, "The Departure for Jerusalem," 102.

in 3 Nephi, His disciple, $Nephi_3$, son of the Elijah-like $Nephi_2$, did raise his brother from the dead (3 Nephi 19:4) through the power of Christ. Relationships to one of the miracles in the Elijah-Elisha account may be especially interesting in 3 Nephi 20.

The Miraculous Feeding of a Large Multitude in 3 Nephi 20

As Elijah provided grain and oil for a woman in a time of famine (1 Kings 17:10–16) and as Elisha multiplied a woman's oil (2 Kings 4:1-7) and also miraculously fed a crowd with just 20 loaves of barley (2 Kings 4:42–44), so Christ miraculously provided bread and wine for the large crowd of Nephites on His second day of ministering (3 Nephi 20:3-9; note also the miracle of ravens providing Elijah with bread in 1 Kings 17:6). That miracle among the Nephites clearly recalls the two times He miraculously fed crowds of people in the New Testament (five thousand in Mark 6:30–44, and four thousand in Mark 8:1–9), which, according to Winn, have deliberate parallels to 2 Kings 4:42–44. Among the various clues in the text of Mark that the story was written to allude to Elisha is the command given to others to pass out the food, such as "Give ye them to eat" in Mark 6:37, parallel to "Give the people, that they may eat" in 2 Kings 4:43.[32] In 3 Nephi 20, Christ likewise commands the disciples "that they should break bread, and give unto the multitude" (v. 4) and "that they should give [wine] unto the multitude" (v. 5).

The large number of people apparently fed by Elisha (about 100 according to 2 Kings 4:43) is bettered by the thousands fed by Christ. Winn sees this as an important progression ("intensification") that gives emphasis to the greater nature of Christ's miracles.[33] The Book of Mormon, of course, refers to a "multitude," probably even more than the 5,000 in Mark 6. The account of day one of Christ's ministry to the Nephites ends with a count of 2,500 people as eyewitnesses (3 Nephi 17:25). They then labor tirelessly throughout the night to spread the word and gather even more people for the next day, and when they gather, there are now too many to be taught in one single group, so the 12 disciples break them up into 12 groups to rehearse the words of Christ from day one (3 Nephi 19:2–5) before Christ comes and ministers to them and feeds them miraculously. This is a logical intensification: the minor miracle of Elisha is magnified by the mortal Messiah among the Jews and then even further by the resurrected Lord among the Nephites.

32. Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, 81–83.
33. Ibid., 83.

Winn also finds it significant that in the miracles of Mark, Christ begins with a smaller amount of food than Elisha did: five loaves and two fishes in Mark 6:41 and seven loaves in Mark 8:5 versus 20 loaves in 2 Kings 4:42.[34] The line of progression continues: Christ's miraculous feeding of the Nephites is done with no bread or wine to begin with (3 Nephi 20:6–7), the ultimate intensification of this aspect of the story.

Another feature in the Elisha story noted by Winn is that the command to give to the people is given twice, which has a seemingly weak parallel in Mark with the command to the people to be seated (a second command) in Mark 6:39 and 8:6.[35] But in 3 Nephi 20, the command to give to the multitude is explicitly stated twice, once for the bread and once for the wine (vv. 4–5). Another parallel from Winn is that Elisha's servant gives the bread to the crowd, as the apostles give to the crowd for Christ.[36] Likewise, it is the Nephite disciples who distribute the miraculously provided bread and wine to the multitude.

Further, Winn notes that extra food remains after Elisha's miracle (2 Kings 4:44), just as baskets of extra food remain after Christ feeds the crowds (Mark 6:43 and 8:8).[37] Whether food remained among the Nephites is not mentioned in the text, but the word *remnant* is used immediately after the miracle: "when they had all given glory unto Jesus, he said unto them: Behold, now I finish the commandment which the Father hath commanded me concerning this people, who are a *remnant* of the house of Israel" (3 Nephi 20:10). Christ again speaks of gathering the scattered "remnants" of Israel in v. 13.

Finally, Winn notes that the Elisha account occurs in a time of famine ("a dearth in the land," 2 Kings 4:38), in parallel to the hunger from going a day or longer without food in Mark 6:31 and 8:1–2.[38] The hunger is implicit in 3 Nephi 20, since the Nephites who were present on day one of Christ's ministry have been laboring apparently nonstop through the night to spread the word of the Messiah's appearance to bring crowds to Bountiful the next day and naturally may have neglected food with so much work to do and so great a miracle before them. Their hunger may be alluded to when Christ explicitly mentions hunger and thirst after He leads the sacramental rite, saying, "He that eateth this bread eateth of my body to his soul; and he that drinketh of this wine

34. Ibid.
35. Ibid., 82.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.

drinketh of my blood to his soul; and his soul shall never *hunger* nor *thirst*, but shall be filled" (3 Nephi 20:8, *emphasis added*).

Overall, Winn proposes eight parallels that relate the Elisha story to the miraculous feeding accounts in Mark. They are shown in Table 1; parallels in 3 Nephi 20 are also shown.

Table 1. Common Elements in the Miraculous Feedings in Mark and in the Elisha Account, Adapted from a Table by Adam Winn,[39] Compared with 3 Nephi.

Elisha (2 Kings 4:42–44)	Christ in Mark 6:30–44 and 8:1–10	3 Nephi 20
Hunger/famine in land (38)	Hunger implied: day or days without food (6:31, 8:1–2)	Implicit, since those present on first day labored through night to bring a larger crowd. Hunger and thirst are mentioned also in v. 8
Small amount of food: 20 barley loaves and fig cakes (42)	Small amount of food: 5 loaves + 2 fish (6:38), 7 loaves and a few fish (8:5, 7)	The miracle begins with no food or wine present (vv. 6–7)
Command to pass out food: "Give to the men so they may eat" (42)	Command to provide food: explicit (6:37) and implied (8:2–3)	Christ commands the disciples to give bread and wine to the multitude (vv. 4–5)
Servant responds with doubt/hesitation (43)	Disciples respond with doubt/hesitation (6:37, 8:4)	Doubt is absent. The disciples and multitude respond with faith and unity (vv. 1, 9–10)

39. Ibid.

Elisha (2 Kings 4:42–44)	Christ in Mark 6:30–44 and 8:1–10	3 Nephi 20
Command is repeated (43)	Command to the disciples to sit the people down (6:39, 8:6)	The command to give to the people is repeated: once for bread, once for wine (vv. 4–5)
Food distributed by a servant (44)	Food distributed by disciples (6:41, 8:6)	Food distributed by disciples (vv. 4–5)
A large number of people eat: 100 (44)	A large number of people eat: 5,000 (6:42) and 4,000 (8:8)	Multitude is several times larger than the 2,500 of the previous day (3 Nephi 17:25, 19:2–5)
Extra food remains (44)	Extra food remains: 12 baskets full (6:43) and 7 baskets full (8:8)	Remnants of food not mentioned, but remnants of Israel are cited immediately after the miraculous feeding (vv. 10, 13)

Interestingly, of the eight elements in the story of Christ's miraculous feedings that Winn lists as having parallels with the 2 Kings 4 account of Elisha, seven of these are also found in 3 Nephi 20, sometimes with further logical intensification. What is missing is the parallel element of doubt expressed by Elisha's servant and Christ's apostles (2 Kings 4:43, Mark 6:37 and 8:4). This absence, however, is consistent with the emphasis on the greater faith of the Nephites at this stage. Among this tried and faithful people, Christ is able to work greater miracles, as Christ tells them in 3 Nephi 19:35. The absence of doubt as a parallel is a reasonable and appropriate reversal of the pattern apparently alluded to in 2 Kings 4 (Winn observes that reversals of themes are often used in ancient literature when building on a previous text[40]). Thus one can argue that Mark's use of Elisha's miraculous feeding in the account of two of Christ's miracles is used with equal detail and resonance in 3 Nephi 20,

40. Ibid, 13–14, 29, 79–81, 112.

while differing from Mark in some significant and appropriate ways rather than being a clumsy copy.

Taken Up

The most dramatic aspect of Elijah is his being taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire, an incident that may have a relationship to the disappearance of Moses.[41] The assumption of Elijah appears to be alluded to in the New Testament description of the ascension of Christ and perhaps also in the Book of Mormon's description of Christ's initial ascension from among the Nephite people. Interestingly, the Book of Mormon provides other parallels to Elijah's assumption.

The first Book of Mormon character who may have been "taken up" by the Lord is Alma_2 around 73 BC, who was "taken up by the Spirit, or buried by the hand of the Lord, even as Moses" (Alma 45:19). His disappearance is preceded by a journey as he "departed out of the land of Zarahemla, as if to go into the land of Melek," after which he was never seen again (Alma 45:18).

Before his departure, he transferred the sacred records in his care and apparently the interpreters and possibly other sacred relics into the hands of his son, Helaman (Alma 37). Helaman continued his ministry in the stead of Alma_2. These events have parallels with Elijah, whose disappearance is preceded by a journey and is accompanied with a transfer of a symbol of authority to his follower, Elisha, who calls Elijah "my father" and continues the ministry and works of Elijah (2 Kings 2:1–14).

The same pattern later occurs with Helaman's son, the prophet Nephi_2, who shortly before the birth of Christ transferred sacred records and sacred relics ("all those things which had been kept sacred from the departure of Lehi out of Jerusalem") to his son, Nephi_3 (3 Nephi 1:2) and then "departed out of the land, and whither he went, no man knoweth" (3 Nephi 1:3); he apparently vanished, as had his grandfather.

However, the parallels to the ascent of Elijah are more detailed in the account of the disciples of Christ, as discussed below.

Fire and Translation

As with the burning bush on Sinai and as with Elijah's departure in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2), one of the striking elements in the 3 Nephi

41. Peter J. Leithart, "Elijah and Moses," *Biblical Horizons Newsletter* 51 (July 1993), http://www.biblicalhorizons.com/biblical-horizons/51/.

account of the Lord's ministry to the Nephites is the word *fire*. The theme of fire and burning begins with the first hint of the Lord's appearance, as the "small voice" from the heavens pierced the souls of the people gathered at the temple and "did cause their hearts to burn" (3 Nephi 11:3). After Christ appeared and spoke, He said that those who believed in Him would be visited "with fire and the Holy Ghost" (3 Nephi 11:35). Being baptized with "fire and the Holy Ghost" is mentioned again in 3 Nephi 12:1–2. Dramatically, in 3 Nephi 17:24, the little children in the group are encircled by heavenly fire.

The transfiguration of Christ, an important Exodus and Elijah theme in Mark 9, also plays a large role in 3 Nephi, where transfiguration occurred for Christ and His disciples (3 Nephi 19:14, 24–25), a scene in which "the light of [Christ's] countenance did shine upon them" (v. 25) and caused the disciples' faces and clothing to glow white, like Christ, in this mystical transfiguration scene, apparently alluding to the way that Moses's face shone when he came down from Sinai (Exodus 34:35). The surrounding of the children in 3 Nephi 17 with divine fire also resembles a transfiguration scene. Even the declaration of the Father introducing the Son in 3 Nephi 11:7, following the language from the Father about the Son on the mount of transfiguration (Luke 9:35), may recall Moses, as Craig A. Evans explains in his discussion of Luke: "The command of the heavenly voice to 'listen to him' [Luke 9:35] probably echoes Deuteronomy 18:15 and so strengthens the link to the Moses tradition."[42]

Finally, the translation of the three Nephite disciples should also be considered. Here Lunn's analysis of the transfiguration of Christ in Mark 9, relevant to the many ways Mark alludes to the Exodus in his writings, also has relevance to 3 Nephi. One of the parallels between Mark 9 and the Exodus is that "Moses and Jesus both take with them three named persons (Exodus 24:1, 9; Mark 9:2)."[43] The Three Nephites who are translated/transfigured and given power to live until Christ returns would seem to fit that pattern, but their names are withheld, except as listed among the twelve (3 Nephi 28:1–17). The word *transfiguration* is used twice to describe the change (3 Nephi 28:15, 17), which was accompanied by being caught up into heaven as the dramatic change took place (3 Nephi 28:13–15). This not only recalls the transfiguration of Moses and the story of Elijah (see below), but as 3 Nephi 28:15 tells us,

42. Craig A. Evans, "Luke's Use of the Elijah/Elisha Narratives and the Ethic of Election," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 106/1 (March 1987): 75–83; http://www.jstor.org/stable/3260555.

43. Lunn, *The Original Ending of Mark*, 256.

this change made it so "they could behold the things of God," which may also allude to Enoch, who in Moses 6:36 is changed so he "beheld also things which were not visible to the natural eye."

Elijah and the Disciples: Further Parallels

Several Elijah themes may be built into the record regarding the disciples of Christ. An example is the scene in 1 Kings 18 in which Elijah overthrows the evil priests of Baal. One possible relationship to Elijah that may not have been previously discussed in Book of Mormon studies is the way in which the newly called 12 disciples lead the Nephite people after the first day of Christ's ministry while waiting for Christ to return on the second day. This scene, which may reflect the way Christ's authorized servants are to lead His people in the time between the First Coming and the Second Coming, shows some interesting parallels to Elijah in his dealing with the priests of Baal. In that Old Testament scene, after Elijah has criticized the false priests, he prepares a sacrifice in which the miraculous power of the Lord will be shown. First, Elijah repairs the altar of the Lord, rebuilding it with 12 stones, chosen to represent the 12 tribes of Israel (vv. 30–32). The body of a sacrificial ox is then divided into pieces and drenched with a total of 12 barrels of water (vv. 33–35). Elijah then prays to the Lord, imploring His miraculous acceptance of the sacrifice so the people might know the Lord and turn their hearts back to him (vv. 36–37). At this point, divine fire descends from heaven (v. 38), and the people fall to the earth in wonder, worshipping the Lord (v. 39). The evil priests of Baal are then cast out and slain (v. 40).

Surprisingly, elements of this scene from Elijah's victory over the priests of Baal have parallels in the ministry of the newly authorized disciples of Christ in 3 Nephi 19, between the ascent of Christ on day one of His ministry to the Nephites and His second visitation on day two. These disciples, who have now been touched and presumably anointed by the Savior and given divine power, bring the people together on day two and lead them in turning their hearts and minds to the Savior to prepare for His coming. These actions cannot include offering sacrifice or dividing the body of an animal into multiple pieces on an altar of 12 stones because Christ has just instructed the people no longer to offer up animal sacrifices (3 Nephi 9:19). Instead, they "shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit" (3 Nephi 9:20). The disciples then divide the body of the people into 12 bodies (3 Nephi 19:5), and each of the 12 disciples then leads the people in prayer to the Father in the name of Jesus (3 Nephi 19:6–7), after which each disciple teaches

his group the very things which Christ taught the day before. They are, in a sense, offering up broken hearts and contrite spirits as they seek the return of the Savior, and this is associated with the number 12, as in the Elijah account.

At this point, there is a drenching of the 12 disciples as they are baptized, beginning with and under the direction of Nephi_3 (v. 10–12), again an association of the number 12 with water, as in Elijah's story. After baptism, the 12 disciples, the righteous priests of the Lord, then receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, which "did fall upon them" (v. 13), just as fire "fell" upon the wicked priests of Baal (1 Kings 18:38). Indeed, as the Holy Ghost falls upon the disciples, so does divine fire from heaven, for they are "filled … with fire" (3 Nephi 19:13) and "they were encircled about as if it were by fire" (v. 14). As the people around Elijah saw his miracle, the Nephite "multitude did witness it, and did bear record" (v. 15). Angels then descend, and soon Christ is standing in the midst of the disciples, as day two of His ministry to the Nephites begins.

An emphasis on 12, prayer led by an anointed servant of God, a drenching with water, the descent of divine fire upon priests, and a multitude witnessing the miracle that helps strengthen their faith in God are common elements between 3 Nephi 20 and the account of the miraculous sacrifice offered by Elijah. In a sense, this scene completes the eradication of Satan's power and the reign of righteousness among the Nephites.

Another ascent-related parallel may be found in an event just before the Lord's final recorded ascent in 3 Nephi. That event in 3 Nephi 28 again involves the use of the word *tarry*, mentioned above in discussing 3 Nephi 17:5 and Elijah's use of *tarry* with respect to Elisha, but here it is applied to the disciples. In 3 Nephi 28, Christ parts from His disciples, after giving then a final blessing, including special powers to the Three Nephites before the Lord ascends. These are "the three who were to tarry" after Christ's departure (3 Nephi 28:12). In 4 Nephi 1:14, they are the "three who should tarry." *Tarry* is again used to describe them in 4 Nephi 1:30 and 37, Mormon 8:10, and Mormon 9:22, the latter verse being one of the questioned verses that includes words found in the longer ending of Mark.

The blessing the Three Nephites received reminds us of the blessing Elijah gave to Elisha, passing on his mantle in 2 Kings 2. To His Nephite disciples, Christ said, "What is it that ye desire of me, after that I am gone to the Father?" (3 Nephi 28:1). When He addresses the reticent Three Nephites specifically, He again asks, "What will ye that I should do unto

you, when I am gone unto the Father?" (3 Nephi 28:4). This is similar to the words of Elijah to Elisha: "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee" (2 Kings 2:9). In fact, the second question to the Three more closely follows the wording of Elijah to Elisha.

"And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me" (2 Kings 2:9), meaning that he wanted power to work the miracles that Elijah had done. In the Book of Mormon, after Christ then touches all the disciples except "the three who were to tarry" (3 Nephi 28:12), He departs, then the heavens open, and it is the Three who, like Elijah, "were caught up into heaven, and saw and heard unspeakable things" (3 Nephi 28:13). They were changed in some way and then proceeded to do grand miracles that served as signs that they have received power from Christ (3 Nephi 28:18–23), just as Elisha went forth doing miracles with the power he received from Elijah.

While Christ may be the "new Elijah/Elisha" in the Gospel of Mark, His elect Three Disciples also seem to play that role in the Book of Mormon. Like Elijah, they are "caught up into heaven," though not permanently. Like Elijah and Elisha, they work great miracles after having received divine authority. Like Elisha, they are associated with the word *tarry* multiple times, as they are the ones who will tarry following the physical ascent of their Master.

3 Nephi may thus display not only intentional allusions to Exodus themes but also make references to Elijah in ways similar to Mark's subtle but pervasive themes that unify his Gospel.

An objection to Christ as Elijah in the Gospel of Mark is that Mark identifies John the Baptist as a type of Elias/Elijah. Mark 1 introduces John the Baptist as the messenger preparing the way for Christ, "clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins" (Mark 1:6), an allusion to 2 Kings 1:8, where we read that Elijah was a "hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins," a visual link. Elijah is mentioned several times in Mark 9 in the middle of that Gospel, where in v. 13 Christ states that "Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him," referring to the recent martyrdom of John the Baptist. If John is Elias, how can Elias be Christ? The issue is resolved by recognizing that Elias can be a role or an archetype who can involve more than one agent or more than one aspect of the role. Christ, in working miracles, showing divine authority, and ascending majestically to the Father, acts as an Elijah/Elias.

A similar issue is found in the Book of Mormon. Christ ascends to heaven and displays the miraculous powers of Elijah, but His successors

in a miraculous ministry, the Three Nephites, take up the mantle and work wonders like Elisha, while they themselves are "caught up" into heaven for a while.

Forerunners of Christ: Elias/Elijah Figures in the Book of Helaman

In addition to the Elijah themes in the account of Christ's ministry, the role of Elijah as a forerunner or an "Elias" to prepare the way for the Savior, like John the Baptist, is paralleled in the Book of Mormon by Nephi_2. The son of Helaman and father of the prophet Nephi_3, another worker of miracles, Nephi_2 was ministered to by angels and like Elijah, disappeared without a known burial (3 Nephi 1:3), as mentioned above.

Book of Mormon Central recently highlighted the relationship between Nephi_2 and Elijah.[44] In Nephi_2's theophany in Helaman 10, the Lord gives Nephi_2 power to "smite the earth with famine" (Helaman 10:6), and the power to "seal" and "loose" "on earth" and "in heaven" (v. 7). Nephi_2, seeking to help the Nephites break out of their suicidal pattern of warfare and wickedness, figuratively "seals" the heavens to cause a drought that results in famine (Helaman 11). This parallels the first recorded words of Elijah when he tells wicked king Ahab that "there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (1 Kings 17:1). "Elijah, just like Nephi_2, used the priesthood to 'seal' the heavens to keep it from raining."[45] In fact, Elijah says that "rain" will cease "according to my words" (1 Kings 17:1), while Nephi_2 also says that "rain" will cease "according to my words" (Helaman 11:13). Such parallels in wording seem intentional.

Several more parallels between Nephi_2 and Elijah are listed at *Book of Mormon Central*. For example, both experience divine power involving fire, an earthquake, and a soft voice from God (Helaman 5:23,30–31; 1 Kings 19, further discussed below). Both warn the unrepentant that they will be eaten by dogs (Helaman 7:19; 2 Kings 9:36). Both have an experience in which they stand before the Lord (Helaman 10:1–12; 1 Kings 17:1, 18:15). Both are taken by the spirit from place to place (Helaman 10:16–17; 1 Kings 18:12, 2 Kings 2:16). Finally, as mentioned above, both depart the earth without a recorded death or burial (3 Nephi 1:3; 2 Kings 2:11). Thus the tapestry of Elijah themes in 3 Nephi

44. "How Did Nephi Use the Power to Seal on Earth and in Heaven?," *Book of Mormon Central*, KnoWhy #182, Sept. 7, 2016; https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/how-did-nephi-use-the-power-to-seal-on-earth-and-in-heaven.

45. Ibid.

extends into the "forerunner" book of Helaman, where an Elijah-like figure prepares the way for the ministry of Christ. This is particularly noteworthy in Helaman 5. Table 2, from *Book of Mormon Central*, highlights these parallels. *Book of Mormon Central* observes that such parallels are "made even more interesting by the fact the Elijah story itself shares much in common with the Moses story,"[46] citing Marvin A. Sweeney's *I & II Kings: A Commentary*.[47]

Table 2. Parallels Involving Sealing Powers of Elijah and Nephi_2.

Elijah and the Sealing Power	Nephi and the Sealing Power
Elijah causes a famine by "sealing" the heavens.	Nephi causes a famine by "sealing" the heavens.
Elijah experiences a fire and an earthquake in connection with hearing a soft voice from God (1 Kings 19).	Nephi experiences a fire and an earthquake in connection with hearing a soft voice from God (Helaman 5:23, 30–31).
Elijah warns that the unrepentant will be eaten by dogs (2 Kings 9:36).	Nephi warns that the unrepentant will be eaten by dogs (Helaman 7:19).
Elijah has an experience in which he stands before the Lord (1 Kings 17:1; 18:15).	Nephi has an experience in which he stands before the Lord (Helaman 10).
Elijah says that "rain" will cease "according to my words" (1 Kings 17:1).	Nephi says that "rain" will cease "according to my words" (Helaman 11:13).
Elijah is taken by the spirit from place to place (1 Kings 18:12; 2 Kings 2:16).	Nephi is taken by the spirit from place to place (Helaman 10:16–17).
Elijah does not have a recorded death or burial (2 Kings 2:11).	Nephi does not have a recorded death or burial (3 Nephi 1:3).

46. Ibid.

47. Marvin A. Sweeney's *I & II Kings: A Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2007), 223, as cited in "How Did Nephi Use the Power to Seal on Earth and in Heaven?," *Book of Mormon Central*.

There are further parallels in Helaman in an episode that fits into the category of Elias-like activities to prepare way for the coming of the Messiah to the Nephites.

Helaman 5: Prefiguring the Ministry of Christ

Helaman 5 may have some especially noteworthy relationships to Elijah and Elisha. In light of Lunn's analysis of the role of Elijah themes in Mark, we can better appreciate the role played by the Book of Helaman in anticipating the ministry of Christ in 3 Nephi. A dramatic scene in Helaman 5 in particular brings together several of the concepts that Lunn examines.

Helaman gives final counsel to his two sons, Nephi_2 and Lehi_2, bearing witness of Jesus Christ "who shall come" and pointing to His atoning blood as the only means through which man can be saved (v. 9). Echoing the New Testament account of the annunciation of Christ's birth, Helaman tells them that the Father has "sent his angels to declare the tidings of the conditions of repentance, which bringeth unto the power of the Redeemer" (v. 11). Then in v. 12 he alludes to the foundation that the Savior gives men, making them able to withstand the mighty winds, hail, and storms from the Adversary, similar to the counsel of Christ in Matthew 7:24–27 regarding those built on a rock (those who keep His sayings) in contrast to those who are built upon the sand and are destroyed when the floods and winds come.

Helaman 5 then records that Nephi_2 and Lehi_2 "went forth" (consistent with the later commission of Christ to His apostles and disciples) among the Nephites and converted many. They preached with great power, having the words "they should speak given unto them" (v. 18) as would happen in 3 Nephi 19:24: when the disciples prayed unto Christ "it was given unto them what they should pray."

After Lehi_2 and Nephi_2 "had gone forth among all the people of Nephi," they kept preaching as they then went south to the Lamanites and converted 8,000, baptizing them. These troublemakers were soon taken by an army and imprisoned when they dared go to the land of Nephi in the heart of Lamanite territory to preach. Later, when a group of about 300 came to the prison to take them and slay them, a miraculous scene occurred (vv. 23–52) that transformed disbelief into fervent faith for the 300 and catalyzed further missionary work to such an extent that hostilities between the Lamanites and Nephites ceased.

The land of Nephi was the place where Nephi_1 first settled and built a temple. It was a meaningful area for the Nephites that had been lost to

the Lamanites, though temporarily taken over by a group of Nephites, led by Zeniff, who fell into captivity to the Lamanites after flourishing for a time, eventually escaping and returning to Zarahemla. For $Lehi_2$ and $Nephi_2$ to return there to preach was a brave and significant act, made particularly appropriate by Helaman's words calling them to emulate the good works of their eponymous forefathers. It is fitting that one of the greatest miracles of deliverance in the Book of Mormon would take place there, one that would prepare many people for the coming of Christ. In retrospect, we can see that for Mormon or for the writers he was drawing upon, the account is interwoven with allusions that look forward to the ministry of Christ to the Nephites in ways that, like Mark's treatment of Christ's ministry, point to Moses, the Exodus, and possibly to Elijah.

> And after they had been cast into prison many days without food, behold, they went forth into the prison to take them that they might slay them.
>
> And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi were encircled about as if by fire, even insomuch that they durst not lay their hands upon them for fear lest they should be burned. Nevertheless, Nephi and Lehi were not burned; and they were as *standing in the midst of fire and were not burned.*
>
> And when they saw that they were encircled about with *a pillar of fire,* and that it burned them not, their hearts did take courage. …
>
> And it came to pass that Nephi and Lehi did stand forth and began to speak unto them, saying: Fear not, for behold, it is God that has shown unto you this marvelous thing, in the which is shown unto you that ye cannot lay your hands on us to slay us.
>
> And behold, when they had said these words, the earth shook exceedingly, and the walls of the prison did shake as if they were about to tumble to the earth; but behold, they did not fall. …
>
> And it came to pass that they were overshadowed with a *cloud* of darkness, and an awful solemn fear came upon them.
>
> And it came to pass that there came a voice as if it were above the *cloud* of darkness, saying: Repent ye, repent ye, and seek no more to destroy my servants whom I have

> sent unto you to declare good tidings. (Helaman 5:22–29, *emphasis added*)

Like Moses before the burning bush on Sinai and like Elijah ascending in a chariot of fire, a divine fire does not burn Nephi and Lehi (v. 23) and is part of a theophany. This may also serve as a reversal to Elijah incidents when he called down fire from heaven that incinerated a sacrifice and led to the slaughter of priests of Baal (1 Kings 18:38–40) and when he called down fire that destroyed two groups of 50 soldiers who had come to take Elijah (2 Kings 1:9–12).

In Helaman 5:24, the fire is relabeled as a "pillar of fire," strongly recalling the pillar of fire experienced by fleeing Israel as they also faced destruction by an army but were led by a pillar of fire and the presence of the Lord in a cloud and also recalling the pillar of fire Lehi encountered in his theophany (1 Nephi 1:6). Exodus 13:21–22 refers to the "pillar of a cloud" in the day and the "pillar of fire" at night that guided Israel as they fled Egypt. At the critical moment as the armies of Pharaoh neared, the "pillar of a cloud" moved to the rear to protect them (Exodus 14:19), and "throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light to the other side" (Exodus 14:20; NIV, with "a cloud and darkness" in the KJV). Finally, the Lord "looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud" and troubled them (Exodus 14:24). Here the deliverance of Moses and Israel from destruction at the hands of an army is associated with a pillar of fire and a cloud that has properties of bringing light to one side but darkness to the other. These elements appear to be deliberately paralleled in Helaman 5, where there is a cloud of darkness (dark unto those seeking to harm the Lord's servants) and a pillar of fire that is obviously full of light for those experiencing the theophany, just as we may presume was like the cloud that shielded Christ from the Nephites in His initial ascent to heaven (3 Nephi 18:38–39).

The divine cloud continues to play a role in Exodus 16:10, as the Lord speaks from within the cloud in the wilderness and again on Sinai in Exodus 19:9, 16 and 24:15–18 and later to show His presence at the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34–38) and in many other passages of the Old Testament.[48]

48. Matthew L. Bowen notes that "This 'cloud of darkness' evokes the theophanic cloud which was said to surround Yahweh and which Yahweh was said to reside (Psalm 97:2, 1 Kings 8:12/2 Chronicles 6:1) … as well as the 'cloud' in the storm-god imagery sometimes used to describe Yahweh's presence in the Hebrew Bible (see Psalm 104:3; Isaiah 19:1; Jeremiah 4:13; Ezekiel 38:9)." He also compares it to the

The parallels to the Exodus may go beyond the fire and the cloud. In Helaman, the people are threatened with but spared from the collapse of the walls of the prison, which trembled with divine power. In Exodus, the Israelites are spared from the collapse of the walls formed from the separated waters of the Red Sea ("the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left" in Exodus 14:22 and 29), walls that would collapse and take the lives of the Egyptian army.

The "good tidings" of Helaman 5:29 reflect New Testament language about the coming of Christ (Luke 2:10), but the phrase is also found in the Old Testament (e.g., Isaiah 40:9, 41:27, and 52:7, a passage from a chapter that appears to have been highly influential in Nephite religion[49]).

Helaman 5 continues with details that recall Elijah on Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:9–15), as he experienced the trembling of the earth in an earthquake and the rending of rocks in a mighty wind (1 Kings 19:11) as well as a fire, only to find the Lord in "a still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12). The description in Helaman 5 seems to look back to Elijah while looking forward to what the Nephites would experience with the ministry of Christ, when a still small voice speaking three times would also help the Nephites look to Christ:

> And it came to pass when they heard this voice, and beheld that it was not a voice of thunder, neither was it a voice of a great tumultuous noise, but behold, it was *a still voice of perfect mildness*, as if it had been a whisper, and it did pierce even to the very soul —
>
> And notwithstanding the mildness of the voice, behold *the earth shook exceedingly*, and the walls of the prison trembled again, as if it were about to tumble to the earth; and behold the *cloud* of darkness, which had overshadowed them, did not disperse —

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cloud that initially veiled the Lord from the brother of Jared (Ether 2:4–15; 14). See Matthew L. Bowen, "'My People Are Willing': The Mention of Aminadab in the Narrative Context of Helaman 5–6," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 19 (2016): 83–107;http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/my-people-are-willing-the-mention-of-aminadab-in-the-narrative-context-of-helaman-5–6 /.

49. Jeff Lindsay, "'Arise from the Dust': Insights from Dust-Related Themes in the Book of Mormon (Part 2: Enthronement, Resurrection, and Other Ancient Motifs from the 'Voice from the Dust')," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 22 (2016): 233–77; http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/arise-from-the-dust-insights-from-dust-related-themes-in-the-book-of-mormon-part-2-enthronement-resurrection-and-other-ancient-motifs-from-the-voice-from-the-dust/.

> And behold the voice came again, saying: Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand; and seek no more to destroy my servants. And it came to pass that the earth shook again, and the walls trembled.
>
> And also again the *third time the voice came*, and did speak unto them marvelous words which cannot be uttered by man; and the walls did tremble again, and the earth shook as if it were about to divide asunder. (Helaman 5:30–33, *emphasis added*)

The cloud of darkness prevents the army and the Nephite dissenters with them from fleeing in fear, and instead, with the help of one of those dissenters who recalls the basics of their former religion, they come to realize that Lehi_2 and Nephi_2 are participating in a theophany and a scene of transfiguration:

> And it came to pass that the Lamanites could not flee because of the cloud of darkness which did overshadow them; yea, and also they were immovable because of the fear which did come upon them.
>
> Now there was one among them who was a Nephite by birth, who had once belonged to the church of God but had dissented from them.
>
> And it came to pass that he turned him about, and behold, he saw through the cloud of darkness the faces of Nephi and Lehi; and behold, they did shine exceedingly, even as the faces of angels. And he beheld that they did lift their eyes to heaven; and they were in the attitude as if talking or lifting their voices to some being whom they beheld. (Helaman 5:34–36)

The theophany has thus become a transfiguration. Nephi_2 and Lehi_2 now "shine exceedingly" with faces like those of glowing angels. This recalls the assumption of Elijah in the midst of fire and both horses and horsemen of fire (2 Kings 2:11–12). It also recalls the transfiguration of Moses, who, after 40 days and nights on Mount Sinai, a time spent fasting (Exodus 34:28) just as Nephi_2 and Lehi_2 had gone without food for many days, then comes down from the presence of God, not realizing that his face is now shining (Exodus 34:29–30); and it would shine again and need to be veiled after speaking again with the Lord (vv. 34–35). Of

course, this transfiguration scene also foreshadows the transfigurations of 3 Nephi, previously discussed (see particularly 3 Nephi 19:14, 25).

With the help of a Nephite dissenter who recognizes what is happening, the crowd in the prison is able to turn and see the faces of Nephi_2 and Lehi_2 as they converse with angels, encircled in divine fire, a scene that foreshadows the theophany in 3 Nephi 17 when angels came and conversed with the little children that Jesus had just blessed:

> And he [Christ] spake unto the multitude, and said unto them: Behold your little ones.
>
> And as they looked to behold they cast their eyes towards heaven, and they saw the heavens open, and they saw angels descending out of heaven as it were in the midst of fire; and they came down and encircled those little ones about, and they were encircled about with fire; and the angels did minister unto them. (3 Nephi 17:23–24)

The Nephite dissenter is Aminadab, a name obviously significant to Mormon, who repeats it three times (Helaman 5:39, 41). Aminadab tells the people that Nephi_2 and Lehi_2 are conversing with the angels of God. In fear and wonderment, they ask what they must do "that this cloud of darkness may be removed from overshadowing" them. They are willing to repent, and in discussing the widespread conversion among the Lamanites described in Helaman 5, Mormon in Helaman 6:36 mentions the "willingness to believe" in the Lord's words, accompanied by the great outpouring of the Spirit upon that people.

Significantly, as Matthew L. Bowen points out in a careful analysis of yet another clever wordplay in the Book of Mormon, the name Aminadab in Hebrew can mean "my kinsman is *willing*" or "my people are *willing*."[50] Bowen argues that this name can refer to the Lord as the willing kinsman who redeems us, as well as the blessings that come when a people are willing to accept Him. The willingness of the people to pray and repent is quickly manifest, and they then partake in the glorious miracle as they, too, become surrounded by and are baptized in divine fire, filled with joy.

The wordplay involving "willingness" and Mormon's mention of the blessings brought by the Lamanites' "willingness" in Helaman 6:36 points to the future wording of the sacrament prayer in the blessing of the bread (Moroni 4:3), which we partake to show our willingness to

50. Bowen, "'My People Are Willing': The Mention of Aminadab in the Narrative Context of Helaman 5–6."

follow the Savior. That language is drawn from the words of the Savior to the Nephites when He administered the sacrament to them and explained that "this doth witness unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you" (3 Nephi 18:10). Those words were spoken shortly before He gave the disciples the power to give the gift of the Holy Ghost (3 Nephi 18:36–37) and then ascended again to the Father as "there came a cloud and overshadowed the multitude that they could not see Jesus" (3 Nephi 18:38–39).

Continuing with Helaman 5:41–50 (*emphasis added*):

> And Aminadab said unto them: You must repent, and cry unto the voice, even until ye shall have faith in Christ, who was taught unto you by Alma, and Amulek, and Zeezrom; and when ye shall do this, the cloud of darkness shall be removed from overshadowing you.
>
> And it came to pass that they all did begin to cry unto the voice of him who had shaken the earth; yea, they did cry even until the cloud of darkness was dispersed.
>
> And it came to pass that when they cast their eyes about, and saw that the cloud of darkness was dispersed from overshadowing them, behold, they saw that they were encircled about, yea every soul, by a pillar of fire.
>
> And Nephi and Lehi were in the midst of them; yea, they were encircled about; yea, they were as if in the midst of a flaming fire, yet it did harm them not, neither did it take hold upon the walls of the prison; and they were filled with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.
>
> And behold, *the Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven*, and did enter into their hearts, and they were filled as if with fire, and they *could speak forth marvelous words*.
>
> And it came to pass that there came a voice unto them, yea, a pleasant voice, as if it were a whisper, saying:
>
> Peace, peace be unto you, because of your faith in my Well Beloved, who was from the foundation of the world.
>
> And now, when they heard this they cast up their eyes as if to behold from whence the voice came; and behold, they saw the heavens open; and *angels came down out of heaven* and ministered unto them.

> And there were about three hundred souls who saw and heard these things; and they were *bidden to go forth* and *marvel not, neither should they doubt.*
>
> And it came to pass that *they did go forth*, and did minister unto the people, declaring *throughout all the regions round about* all the things which they had heard and seen, insomuch that the more part of the Lamanites were convinced of them, because of the *greatness of the evidences* which they had received.

As in 3 Nephi 11 at the time of the descent of Christ, the voice of the Father speaks to them, again in a pleasant, still small voice (v. 46). Foreshadowing the descent of Christ in the majestic theophany of 3 Nephi 11, "the Holy Spirit of God did come down from heaven" (v. 45), and "angels came down out of heaven" (v. 48) to minister to them.

In v. 45, those filled with the Holy Spirit, who were "filled as if with fire," were able to "speak forth marvelous words," anticipating the scene during the ministry of Christ to the Nephites when He blessed the Nephite children on day one of His visit (3 Nephi 17:12–25) and again on day two after baptism and partaking of the sacrament (3 Nephi 19:10–34). Christ would later explain in His words following the great destruction at the time of His death, when He said "whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and they knew it not" (3 Nephi 9:20).

The theophany of Lehi_2 and Nephi_2 becomes a shared theophany for the group, all experiencing the power of baptism by heavenly fire and by conversing with angels.

Like Nephi_2 and Lehi_2 earlier in Helaman 5 and like the future disciples and apostles, these new converts are commanded "to go forth" to share the gospel message (Helaman 5:49). The words "go forth" remind us of the commission of Christ to both the apostles (Mark 16:15, where it is "go forth into all the world") and the New World disciples (Mormon 9:22, though there it is simply "go ye into all the word").

Reminding them not to doubt also recalls the final scene in the long ending of Mark, where Christ upbraids the apostles for not believing and being hard in their hearts (Mark 16:11–14), consistent with the ongoing theme of opposing disbelief and hardness of hearts throughout Mark. But the command to "not doubt" more closely follows the language of Christ in the commission to the disciples, where He says "whosoever

shall believe in my name, doubting nothing, unto him will I confirm all my words" (Mormon 9:25), and two verses later, "Doubt not, but be believing" is also Mormon's injunction (Mormon 9:27).

The 300 fulfill their commission, for "they did go forth" like the disciples and apostles "throughout all the regions round about" (v. 50). Just as the signs given to Moses and the signs that would follow the apostles and disciples would help remove doubt and build faith, the "greatness of the evidences" from these great miracles witnessed by so many willing converts convinces the majority of the Lamanites, and they become a righteous people. The signs and evidences of Moses leading to the Exodus and the signs and evidences Christ gave in His ministry to the Nephites are alluded to and foreshadowed in Helaman 5, just as Mark links Exodus and other themes to the ministry of Christ in his subtly unified work, long ending included.

Helaman 5 looks forward to 3 Nephi in several ways, including the gift of the Holy Ghost, theophanies and the coming down of divine beings, transfiguration, the divine cloud, and willingness to repent and accept Christ.

Elijah, Elisha, and Clothing as a Symbol of Authority

Though the Book of Mormon does not mention the prophetic "mantle" of Elijah and Elisha, it clearly teaches the importance of passing on divine authority and provides related concepts of clothing as a symbol of authority or covenant making. Of course, garments as symbols of authority and divine covenants are found in several contexts in ancient Christianity and Judaism and in the Bible,[51] where, for example, the "coats of skins" given to Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:21 are described with the same Hebrew word, *kĕthoneth* (כְּתֹנֶת), used for the embroidered coats or linen coat the Lord instructs Moses to prepare for Aaron and the sons of Aaron as part of their covenant-related temple garb.[52]

Garments are also found as symbols of authority and covenants in the Book of Mormon. In Jacob 2:2, for example, in a scene at the temple,

51. See, for example, Nissan Rubin and Admiel Kosman, "The Clothing of the Primordial Adam as a Symbol of Apocalyptic Time in the Midrashic Sources," *The Harvard Theological Review*, 90/2 (Apr. 1997): 155–74; http://www.jstor.org/stable/1510070, and Blake Ostler, "Clothed Upon: A Unique Aspect of Christian Antiquity," *BYU Studies* 22/1 (Winter 1982): 31–45; http://www.jstor.org/stable/43040878.

52. Strong's H3801, *Blue Letter Bible*, https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H3801&t=KJV. Compare its use in Genesis 3:21 to Exodus 28: 4, 39, 40; 29: 5, 8; 39: 27; and 40:14; Leviticus 8: 7, 13; 10:5; and 16:4.

the Nephite priest and prophet Jacob declares that he seeks to "rid [his] garments" of the Nephites' sins by declaring the word of God to them (cf. 2 Nephi 9:9; Jacob 1:19; Mosiah 2:28; Mormon 9:35; Ether 12:38); and the faithful, including those who receive the priesthood and live up to its covenants, are told many times that their garments will be washed white in the blood of the Lamb (Alma 13: 11–12; cf. 1 Nephi 12:10–11; Alma 5:21, 24, 27; 7:25; 34:36; 3 Nephi 19:25; 27:19; Ether 12:37; 13:10). The "beautiful garments" of Isaiah 52:1, put on by the faithful as they shake off the dust of death and sin and accept the covenants of the Lord and associated enthronement, are part of an important complex of themes in the Book of Mormon from a passage on the brass plates that appears to have broad if not foundational importance in Nephite religion.[53]

Indeed, the importance of garments, and particularly garments made of animal skins, may mean much more than readers of the Book of Mormon have realized, thanks to the intriguing new analysis of Ethan Sproat, who provides compelling evidence from the Book of Mormon text that the skins of the Nephites, said to be "dark" in Alma 3:5–6 and elsewhere, refers to animal skins worn by the Lamanites in possible imitation of symbols of authority worn by the Nephites.[54] Apart from interesting implications for better understanding of what the Book

53. Jeff Lindsay, "'Arise from the Dust': Insights from Dust-Related Themes in the Book of Mormon (Part 1: Tracks from the Book of Moses)," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 22 (2016): 179–232; http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/arise-from-the-dust-insights-from-dust-related-themes-in-the-book-of-mormon-part-1-tracks-from-the-book-of-moses/, and Lindsay, "'Arise from the Dust' (Part 2)."

54. Ethan Sproat, "Skins as Garments in the Book of Mormon: A Textual Exegesis," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 24 (2015): 138–65; http://publications.mi.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=3592&index=6. Sproat carefully examines the use of skins in Alma 3:5–6, which first describes the (animal) skins that the Lamanites wore, and then in the next sentence declares that the "skins of the Lamanites were dark." In context, the second sentence could very well parallel the previous sentence and may not be a statement about human skins, but about symbols of authority that might worn by humans. If so, Sproat argues that Alma 3:5–6, with the most detailed statements relevant to Lamanite skins and "marks" upon skin, could be a Rosetta stone for interpreting other references to Lamanite skins in the Book of Mormon. The argument is buttressed by consideration of temple themes in the Book of Mormon, the use of animal skins therein to describe enemies of the Nephites, particularly those challenging the religion and authority of the Nephites, the ability of rebels to apply self-inflicted "marks" on their skin as symbols of their cursed state, and also the use of the indefinite article before *skin* in both the Book of Mormon and the KJV Bible, suggesting also that "a skin of darkness" in 2 Nephi 5:21 is an animal skin that represents a bogus claim to authority (Sproat, 140).

of Mormon does and doesn't say about race in the Book of Mormon, Sproat's analysis points to the importance of clothing as a symbol of authority and covenant making (or breaking) in the text.

Though speculative, concepts related to Elijah's mantle may be hinted at, for example, in the story of Moroni and the title of liberty, formed from a portion of his own rent coat or garment held up on a pole like a banner to rally defenders of liberty to his cause.

Regarding Elijah and his mantle, Fred E. Woods explains that the description of Elijah as a "hairy man" (2 Kings 1:8) most likely refers to the hairy garment he wore, which is likely the mantle given to Elisha as a symbol of divine authority (1 Kings 19:13, 19; 2 Kings 2:8, 13–14), as D.M. Stec determined in an analysis of the Hebrew text.[55] This garment is also paralleled in the description of John the Baptist's wearing a garment of camel's hair (Matthew 3:4; cf. Mark 1:6) and is alluded to in Zechariah, who literally refers to the "hairy mantle" of prophethood (Zechariah 13:4; the NIV has "prophet's garment of hair").[56] Upon receiving this mantle from Elijah as he ascends, Elisha first rends his own garment into two pieces (2 Kings 2:12), apparently in grief at Elijah's departure.

Just as the hairy garment of John the Baptist appears to be an allusion to the garment of Elijah that was a symbol of his prophetic authority, so the title of liberty formed from Moroni's garment appears to have been a symbol of his authority as a military leader, leading the people in making a covenant to defend their religion and their families against the wicked Amalickiah, who seeks the throne. Moroni in his anger over the threat from the Nephite rebel takes his "coat" in Alma 46:12 and rends it, writing on a piece of it "in memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children." He mounts the rent coat on a pole, forming a banner, which he calls the "title of liberty" (v. 13), prays aloud as he kneels for their freedom (vv. 13–18), then waves the rent part of his "garment" in the air to rally the Nephites and leads them in making a covenant to keep God's covenants and defend their freedom, or, should they fall into transgression, to be rent even as they were rending their garments in token of accepting the covenant (vv. 19–22).

55. D. M. Stec, "The Mantle Hidden by Achan," *Vetus Testamentum*, 41/3 (July 1991): 356–59; http://www.jstor.org/stable/1519078.

56. Fred E. Woods, "Elisha and the Children: The Question of Accepting Prophetic Succession," *BYU Studies* 32/3 (Summer 1992): 47–58; http://www.jstor.org/stable/43041552.

The symbol Moroni has placed on the pole to lead the people in a covenant is described both as his "coat" and his "garment," which could have been made from an animal skin or a woven fabric. Then he refers to an account from the brass plates (which we no longer have) involving Jacob and a fragment of Joseph's coat of many colors that had not decayed, a symbol of a portion of the house of Joseph that would be preserved (vv. 23–27). It is reasonable that the reference to Moroni's "coat" would use the same word or be directly associated with the word translated as "coat" in Joseph's coat of many colors. In Genesis 37, in the tale of Joseph's coat of many colors, the word translated as "coat" is the same word used for the "coats" of skins given to Adam and Eve and the sacred coats given to Aaron and his sons for temple rituals (see vv. 3, 23, 31–33), *kĕthoneth* (כְּתֹנֶת), as mentioned above. All occurrences of that word in the Pentateuch refer either to the clothing given to Adam and Eve, to Aaron and his sons, or to Joseph.

Moroni's coat/garment, the garment of the inspired defender of the Nephite people in a time of crisis, may have served as a symbol of authority and covenant making, with ritual overtones. Could the word *garment,* also used to describe the title of liberty, refer more directly to the garment or mantle of Elijah (see 1 Kings 19:13, 19; 2 Kings 2:8, 13–14)? Elijah's mantle is *'addereth (אַדֶּרֶת)* which the KJV usually translates a "mantle" or "garment," though it can also mean "glory."[57] In a time of trouble, Elijah calls upon Elisha to follow him as he "cast his mantle upon him" (1 Kings 19:19); might this relate to Moroni's call to the Nephites to rise up and follow him as he waves his garment before them and as they in response "cast" their garments at the feet of Moroni to make a covenant with him (Alma 46:22)? Might there also be a relationship with Elisha's act of rending his own clothes into two pieces as he sees Elijah ascend into heaven before he takes up the mantle of Elijah that falls from him (2 Kings 2: 11–13)? The relationships, though tenuous, may merit further investigation.

A Note on the Importance of Signs

Signs following those who believe is a recurring theme in the scriptures and should hardly be a surprise in coming from the words of Christ to the Nephites.

In examining the themes in the early Christian *Apocalypse of Elijah*, David Frankfurter observes that its treatment of "saints" and the

57. Strong's H155, *Blue Letter Bible*, https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H155&t=KJV.

persecution they face shows "a millennialist ideology and self-definition, 'saints,' clearly rooted in Jewish apocalypticism and its tradition of 'signs,' Adversaries, and exalted prophets."[58] In Helaman, 3 Nephi, and 4 Nephi, the texts bracketing the ministry of Christ among the Nephites, we find marvelous signs and wonders given to prepare the people for Christ, to teach the people of Christ, to bless the people in the ministry of Christ, and to bear witness of Christ. As in the Gospels, the New World testament of Christ teaches that signs truly do follow those who believe and have been commissioned as His servants, and they were particularly prominent around the time of His ministry. It should be no surprise that Christ would teach the importance of signs to the Nephites, as quoted in Mormon 9, or to His apostles in the longer ending of Mark.

Conclusion

Modern scholarship provides excellent resolutions to the alleged Book of Mormon problem of Christ quoting from the longer ending of Mark in His words to the Nephites in the Book of Mormon. Extensive external and internal evidence weakens the arguments against and provides powerful evidence for the authenticity of Mark 16:9–20. There is no reason to suppose that Christ did not speak those words and give His apostles the apostolic commission found at the end of Mark. There is no inherent problem with the similar commission given to the disciples in the New World by the Savior.

Further, the lines of analysis provided by Nicholas Lunn and others who support the integrity of Mark also have bearing on the Book of Mormon, for they provide insights into subtle themes in that New World account. Just as Mark saw Exodus and Elijah themes in Christ's ministry, similar themes appear to have been woven into the Book of Mormon account in ways that make sense for ancient lovers of the Hebrew scriptures who understood the majesty of the ministry of Christ. As always, there is more to the Book of Mormon than meets the eye.

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58. David Frankfurter, "The Cult of the Martyrs in Egypt before Constantine: The Evidence of the Coptic 'Apocalypse of Elijah,'" *Vigiliae Christianae*, 48/1 (March 1994): 25–47, quote at 27; http://www.jstor.org/stable/1584374.

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