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IT CAME FROM BEYOND

Daniel C. Peterson

Abstract: *The early Latter-day Saints viewed the Book of Mormon not only as a symbol of Joseph Smith's prophetic calling but also as the most powerful evidence for that calling. However, perhaps because they were ardent believers in the Bible who had been formed in a distinctly Bible-drenched culture and perhaps also because many of them had come to the Book of Mormon relatively late in their lives, they tended to quote from the Nephite record only rarely. Surprisingly, this was the case even for Joseph Smith himself — which can be taken as a sign that he didn't write the book.*

In the early 1980s I attended a presentation at the Latter-day Saint Institute of Religion located on Hilgard Avenue, adjacent to the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Delivered by Grant Underwood, who was then a doctoral student at UCLA, it made a deep and lasting impression on me. An article setting forth Underwood's argument that night was eventually published in *BYU Studies* as "Saved or Damned: Tracing a Persistent Protestantism in Early Mormon Thought."¹

In it, Underwood makes the case that the vision of the three degrees of glory recorded as Doctrine and Covenants 76 — commonly known in the nineteenth century as "the Vision" — had surprisingly little discernible impact on Latter-day Saint thought in general and, most shocking of all, little or no noticeable impact on the thinking of Joseph Smith himself, for several years after its reception. And it was received quite early in the Restoration. Although many tend, and not without reason, to associate Latter-day Saint notions of a plurality of gods and of human deification or exaltation with the Nauvoo period of Joseph Smith's ministry (roughly 1839–1844), Section 76, which strongly

1. Grant Underwood, "Saved or Damned: Tracing a Persistent Protestantism in Early Mormon Thought," *BYU Studies* 25 no. 3 (Summer 1985): 85–103, <https://byustudies.byu.edu/content/saved-or-damned-tracing-persistent-protestantism-early-mormon-thought>.

suggests both of those concepts, was given on 16 February 1832, fewer than two years after the formal organization of the Church.

Underwood contends that what he terms “the minimal role of the Vision in early LDS thought”² was the result of theological backgrounds and assumptions brought into the Church by both Joseph Smith and his early converts. On the basis of numerous biblical passages, he explains,

in the world into which Mormonism was born, it was customary to conceptualize man as either saint or sinner, righteous or wicked, bound for heaven or headed for hell; and this formed an important part of the cultural baggage early converts carried with them into the Church.³

Underwood sketches “the persisting lineaments of traditional salvationist rhetoric” among Latter-day Saints of the 1830s and even 1840s and demonstrates that “the vision of the three degrees of glory did not begin to alter such notions until the end of the Nauvoo period.”⁴ Surveying the historical sources, he remarks that

it seems clear that a saved-damned duality was deeply entrenched in early Mormon thought. But what about the vision of the three degrees of glory? Did it not immediately uproot all the old “either-or” notions? Did not the Saints quickly discard their former thinking as theologically naive when presented with this vision of a pluralized rather than a polarized afterlife? The answer is “no,” and that should not come as much of a surprise to those aware of the historical development of ideas within the Church. Nonetheless, that early Mormons neither understood the implications of the vision of the three degrees of glory nor lampooned notions they still retained is significant enough to merit careful consideration. ...

The Vision seemed to attract some attention for the first year or two. ... A specific search of presently available periodicals, pamphlets, and tracts as well as hundreds of unpublished diaries, journals, and letters from this time reveals that throughout the rest of the decade and on into the early 1840s, the Vision was virtually ignored. Admittedly there were numerous references to the celestial kingdom, but that term

2. *Ibid.*, 98.

3. *Ibid.*, 88.

4. *Ibid.*, 87.

for most Mormons seems to have been just another name for the heaven Christians had always talked about, and it required no new mental framework to adopt it. *Celestial*, after all, was a common synonym for *heavenly*. Discussion, even mention of the terrestrial and telestial glories, however, which might have hastened the demise of dualistic thinking, appears to have been almost nonexistent.⁵

The dualistic mainstream Christian framework that constrained early Latter-day Saint thoughts about the world to come also influenced their conception of the judgments of the Last Days, which, they had first assumed, would entirely sweep the wicked (whom they identified as those who had failed to accept the Restored Gospel) from the Earth. Thus,

When in 1841 Joseph first advanced the idea that there would be “wicked” men on the earth during the Millennium, it represented an abrupt about-face from a decade’s consensus to the contrary, and it would be at least another decade before the idea really caught hold even among Church leaders. To introduce the color gray to those so accustomed to black and white was not easy.⁶

The only instance of anything resembling a substantial or sustained reflection on the Vision in the early Church came in Joseph Smith’s own versified summary of it, which he wrote in 1843. Underwood speculates that this renewed engagement with his early-1832 revelatory experience might have inclined Joseph to alter his thinking on salvation and damnation,

for in the remaining sixteen months of his life he discussed in new ways the nature of hell and the torment of the damned. Furthermore, he specifically ridiculed the pervasive Protestant rhetoric that in the hereafter there were only two possible outcomes — heaven or hell. This represents a watershed in Mormon thought. Until that time, if the Vision were discussed at all, it was done from within an interpretive framework that was still patently polarized. ... Just four months after the Prophet versified the Vision, he began to publicly and repeatedly denounce the heaven-hell dichotomy. ... Toward the close of his life, then, Joseph Smith began to emphasize a pluralized, rather

5. *Ibid.*, 93–94.

6. *Ibid.*, 91.

than a polarized picture of eternity. He symbolized hell, diminished damnation's domain, and expanded salvation.⁷

This is striking. It strongly suggests that Joseph Smith himself did not begin to grasp the implications of the great 1832 revelation on the three degrees of glory for at least nine to eleven years after it was given. Only then did he begin to share the expanded understanding of divine benevolence and human destiny that was already plainly present in Section 76. However, observes Underwood, "The fact that he repeatedly discussed these concepts the last months of his life did not ... guarantee that they were instantly internalized by the Saints."⁸

It's pretty clear why the doctrinal implications of D&C 76 required more than a decade to take root in the thinking of the Latter-day Saints: The Vision was a gift to them from the outside, from God. It certainly didn't emerge from their prior assumptions; instead, it clashed with them and was forced to overcome their resistance.

But the same was surely true for Joseph Smith himself. His recognition of what the Vision entailed came only gradually, requiring years to sink in. He was only slightly ahead of the general membership of the Church in this regard.

And that fact, it seems to me, is highly significant. It suggests that the ideas in Section 76 were not conclusions Joseph himself had drawn over some undetermined period prior to 16 February 1832 — perhaps, as some critics have suggested, developed as the result of his alleged studies in the works of the remarkable Swedish scientist and mystic Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772). They seem to have arrived suddenly, from outside Joseph's own mind. That is why he took so long to assimilate them, to recognize the implications of what he had seen. It's important to remember as well that Joseph Smith wasn't alone in seeing the Vision. He shared it with Sidney Rigdon. Moreover, others present — notably Philo Dibble — also perceived something of it if only partially, which makes it difficult to take seriously the suggestion that the doctrines of Section 76 represent purely the culmination of Joseph's own personal thought processes.⁹

Recently, I've encountered a claim regarding Joseph Smith's use of the Book of Mormon — or, more precisely, the relative *rarity* of his use of the Book of Mormon — that has reminded me of the matter of D&C 76.

7. Ibid., 94–95, 98, 99.

8. Ibid., 99.

9. On Philo Dibble's experience during the reception of the revelation, see <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/manual/doctrine-and-covenants-student-manual/section-76-the-vision-of-the-degrees-of-glory>.

Joseph's apparent preference for citing the Bible over the Book of Mormon, so the claim goes, is persuasive evidence that he made it up.

But, in my judgment, this seems to be precisely the opposite of the likely truth.

When, in 1986, President Ezra Taft Benson delivered his enormously influential exhortation to the Saints to pay more attention to the Book of Mormon,¹⁰ I was, frankly, rather puzzled. I was unaware that we had been neglecting it. After all, as a freshman student at Brigham Young University, I had taken the required year-long course on the Book of Mormon. I had already come under the influence of Hugh Nibley, and I was an enthusiastic follower of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS), which was beginning to reach its stride after having been founded in 1979, turning out an abundance of first-rate faithful scholarship on the Church's "keystone scripture."

Yes, I had read the Lord's revealed warning to the elders of the Church, given in late September 1832 and alluded to by President Benson:

Your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received — Which vanity and unbelief have brought the whole church under condemnation.

And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all. And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written.

That they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father's kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a scourge and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion. (D&C 84:54–58)

Still, it was perhaps not until I read Noel Reynolds's important 1999 *BYU Studies* article "The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon in the Twentieth Century" that I realized the truth and justice of President Benson's lament that we as a people had not taken the Book of Mormon as seriously as we ought to have done. In fact, the freshman Book of Mormon class that I had imagined perpetually fixed in stone had only been made mandatory for graduation a few years before

10. Ezra Taft Benson, "A Sacred Responsibility," *Ensign* 16 (May 1986), <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1986/04/a-sacred-responsibility>.

and even then not without facing considerable resistance.¹¹ Reading Reynolds's article, which is fascinating in itself but which also seems to me a salutary warning that is once again increasingly and unfortunately relevant, I was convinced that "the Book of Mormon was underutilized by most Latter-day Saints until interest in it surged during the second half of the twentieth century."¹²

Happily, in recent years the Book of Mormon has indeed grown "to become appreciated not just as an artifact, but as a fully utilized tool in teaching the pure gospel of Jesus Christ."¹³ Thus, as the California-born son of a non-member father and a semi-active Latter-day Saint mother, I had both come of age and to religious commitment at a time when Latter-day Saints — some of them, anyway — were beginning to take the Book of Mormon very seriously and to accord it central importance in the Restoration and in their own reading.

And, by and large, that focus on the Book of Mormon has continued. However, Professor Reynolds observed,

Such fervor did not always exist. Early LDS converts were students of the Bible, and with no traditions concerning the Book of Mormon, they did not readily incorporate the new scripture into their devotions. The early Saints valued the Book of Mormon as evidence of the Restoration, but by the Nauvoo period, focus on the book had already decreased. As recently as the mid-1930s, BYU and the LDS Institutes of Religion only

11. Noel B. Reynolds, "The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon in the Twentieth Century," *BYU Studies* 38 no. 2 (1999): 7–47. See also Grant Underwood, "Book of Mormon Usage in Early LDS Theology," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 17 (Autumn 1984): 35–74, https://www.dialoguejournal.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi/articles/Dialogue_V17N03_37.pdf; Casey Paul Griffiths, "The Book of Mormon among the Saints: Evolving Use of the Keystone Scripture," in Dennis L. Largey, Andrew H. Hedges, John Hilton III, and Kerry Hull, eds., *The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon: A Marvelous Work and a Wonder* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 2015), 199–226, <https://rsc.byu.edu/coming-forth-book-mormon/book-mormon-among-saints-evolving-use-keystone-scripture>. I have not yet consulted Alton D. Merrill, "An Analysis of the Papers and Speeches of Those Who Have Written or Spoken about the Book of Mormon, Published during the Years of 1830 to 1855 and 1915 to 1940, to Ascertain the Shift of Emphasis" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1940), <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/4938/>, but, according to Reynolds, Merrill's findings agree with his own perceptions.

12. Reynolds, "The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon in the Twentieth Century," 7.

13. Griffiths, "The Book of Mormon among the Saints," 200.

occasionally featured the Book of Mormon in their curricula. ... [T]he Book of Mormon was largely overlooked throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁴

Further, Professor Reynolds wrote,

Although the existence and truthfulness of the Book of Mormon was a crucial point of faith and touchstone of conversion for the early Saints, it would take time and effort for the contents of that distinctive volume to come into widespread use. ... [A] very low percentage of early LDS speeches and writings overtly encouraged the study or distribution of the book.¹⁵

In support of his claim, Reynolds draws upon analysis published by Grant Underwood in a 1984 *Dialogue* article entitled “Book of Mormon Usage in Early LDS Theology,” indicating that early Latter-day Saint writing cited the Book of Mormon far less frequently than it cited the Bible. From 1832 to 1838, for instance, the ratio of biblical references to Book of Mormon references averaged nineteen to one. In fact, in some publications (such as the *Elders’ Journal*), the ratio rose to fully 40 to one.¹⁶

Why was this so? Virtually all adult members of the Church in its first years were necessarily converts. They had grown up knowing the Bible, and — as scripture — *only* the Bible, in a particularly Bible-drenched era of American and Western history when people who knew the Bible tended to know it quite *well*. It’s scarcely surprising, therefore, that “most of the early Saints felt more comfortable sharing doctrine pulled from biblical passages.”¹⁷

And, in this regard, Joseph Smith was at one with his environment. As Casey Paul Griffiths puts it,

Even the Prophet Joseph Smith, the instrument used in bringing forth the book, showed a tendency to favor biblical passages in his teachings. A study of the Nauvoo discourses of Joseph Smith revealed allusions to 451 different biblical passages compared to 22 references to the Book of Mormon, or a ratio of 21:1. ... Joseph’s marked propensity toward using the Bible was likely the product of his upbringing and his desire to build on the common beliefs already held by

14. Reynolds, “The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon in the Twentieth Century,” 7, 8.

15. *Ibid.*, 8.

16. *Ibid.* Reynolds is citing Underwood, “Book of Mormon Usage in Early LDS Theology,” 52–53.

17. Griffiths, “The Book of Mormon among the Saints,” 203.

most new converts. The discovery of the Book of Mormon as a doctrinal gem was still in the process during the first generation of the Church, the Prophet included.¹⁸

So, what does this mean?

Maybe you've had the experience of needing an appliance or a tool — a computer, perhaps. You may even have made a list of the specific features you needed. You researched online. You talked to friends who might know something about the subject. Finally, after long and careful consideration, you made your purchase and, when it arrived, you knew exactly what to do with it and you put it to immediate use. But many of us, I suspect, may also have had the experience of receiving an unexpected gift. We'd never thought about it before, nor felt any need for it. We're grateful for the gift, of course, but, very possibly we then put it on a shelf or in a closet and essentially forget about it — perhaps to the quiet disappointment of the giver of the gift. Only later do we perhaps bring it back out again and, for the first time, recognize how valuable and useful it is.

I see the Book of Mormon as in a sense analogous to such an unexpected gift. Moreover, it seems to me that the case of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon is entirely comparable with the case of Joseph Smith and the vision of the three degrees of glory. Joseph didn't work his way through to the doctrine and the stories of the Book of Mormon. Rather, the Book of Mormon was an unexpected gift to him. It came from outside him, from a source external to his mind. Had it been his composition, he would have known it thoroughly, and its thoughts would have (literally) been his thoughts. It would have been directly relevant to his issues because it would have been composed on the *basis* of those issues.

But that isn't what we find with Joseph and his subsequent behavior relative to the Book of Mormon. Although it passed through his mind during an intensive and miraculous period of two or three months, that translation process did not position it equally in his mind with the Bible, which was virtually omnipresent in his upbringing and in the ambient culture and the religious discourse of his day. This is not to make him the master of the biblical text (or the literary arts) that he would have had to be in order to have composed the Book of Mormon himself, especially in the rapid manner it was dictated. But it seems inevitable that he would have been much more comfortable, just as the other members of his Church were, with the Bible than with the Book of Mormon.

18. *Ibid.*, 204.

While it's scarcely decisive proof, this seems to me an indicator not that Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon but rather that he didn't.

However, I thank those who *have* written the articles and reviews in this issue of *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship*. They write and review without financial compensation. I'm grateful to the peer reviewers, the source checkers, the copy editors, and all those who make the production of the *Journal* possible — and especially to Allen Wyatt and Jeff Lindsay, who oversee that relentlessly demanding production, week in and week out. And this is an appropriate place to express my appreciation for all those who are involved with the Foundation in various ways and on various fronts. (Many of them — necessarily omitted are our peer reviewers, who are anonymous as a matter of policy — are listed on pages ii–iii of the present volume.) Without the time and effort and financial support offered by a large number of generous people, the Interpreter Foundation would be dead in the water.

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A UNI-DIMENSIONAL PICTURE OF A MULTI-FACETED NAUVOO COMMUNITY

Richard E. Bennett

Review of Benjamin E. Park, *Kingdom of Nauvoo: The Rise and Fall of a Religious Empire on the American Frontier* (New York City: Liveright Publishing, 2020). 336 pages. \$28.95 (hardback).

Abstract: *Benjamin Park recently wrote a substantive revisionist history of Nauvoo, Illinois, the one-time Church capital under the leadership of Joseph Smith, Jr. This article serves as a critical review of Park's work. Congratulating the author for placing this well-known Latter-day Saint story within the larger Jacksonian American democratic context, as well as for utilizing a great many primary sources hardly used before, Richard Bennett in this critical review assesses both the strengths and the weaknesses of this important new book. While complimenting Park for his significant contributions on politics, women, and race in Nauvoo, Bennett nonetheless finds much to criticize in what he sees as a unidimensional, highly political study that disregards many previous studies of Nauvoo and fails to address many other critically important facets of the city's life and history from its inception in 1839 until the Saints' departure in 1846.*

Having heard conflicting reports about Benjamin Park's most recent study of Nauvoo before receiving an invitation from *Interpreter* to review it, I eagerly awaited obtaining my own review copy. And being as vain, perhaps, as the next reviewer, I immediately flipped through its many footnotes (unfortunately, there is no bibliography) to see how many of my own books and articles were referenced, if not relied upon then at least as counterpoint to the author's points of view. I was saddened to see that not one of my published works over the past three decades on so many aspects of Nauvoo history made the grade — including articles on the Nauvoo Charter, the Council of Fifty, the Battle

of Nauvoo, the ensuing Nauvoo Poor Camps, the sale and burning of the Nauvoo Temple, “Lamanism” and Alpheus Cutler’s dream of aligning with the Native Americans — not even my book-length studies of the exodus from Nauvoo in February 1846. It was one of those humbling moments in every scholar’s life when you realize that your works have not left nearly so deep an impression as perhaps you once thought they would have. Such is to be expected in the up-and-down, give-and-take life of the scholar.

Crestfallen, I then began to look more deeply to see if the same fate had befallen some of my contemporaries, especially those of us who tend to see Nauvoo through a much wider lens than Park has chosen to do. It didn’t take long to see that earlier generations of scholars I deeply respect suffered much the same fate, including the likes of B. H. Roberts, T. Edgar Lyon, Glen M. Leonard, Leonard J. Arrington, Kenneth W. Godfrey, Brian Hales, and many others. Hardly if at all mentioned, their works have obviously fallen out of favor in Ben Park’s new and revisionist political history of Nauvoo. For instance, Glen Leonard’s and T. Edgar Lyon’s collaborative 828-page magnum opus on the topic — *Nauvoo: A Place of Peace, a People of Promise*¹ — is quickly dispatched in the author’s view as an “exhaustive social, if devotional, history of Nauvoo directed to faithful Mormons” (288n6) as if hardly worth the read. It was then I realized I had to go back to the beginning and re-read this new study as well as review earlier Nauvoo studies to gauge as fairly as possible its strengths and weaknesses. Failing to engage so much of previous scholarship, Park nevertheless has a particular point of view, as if he’s the first and only one to espouse it — a deeply troubling error.

Anxious to probe vexing questions of Joseph Smith’s plural marriages and his alleged desire to establish a Latter-day Saint “empire,” if not a religious dictatorship on the Mississippi, Park has written what some might argue is one of the most debatable studies on the topic since Robert Bruce Flanders’ much heralded, *Kingdom on the Mississippi*, which appeared in print some 55 years ago. *Kingdom of Nauvoo* is a well-researched, highly engaging, carefully considered, and finely crafted study of Nauvoo historical scholarship, the very kind of history Roger D. Launius and John E. Hallwas hoped for in their edited volume of essays, *Kingdom on the Mississippi Revisited*, published in 1996 in which they wrote, “Not all Mormon scholars have achieved

1. Glen Leonard and T. Edgar Lyon, *Nauvoo: A Place of Peace, a People of Promise* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002).

a functional objectivity in their writing, but clearly many are striving in that direction.”² Unquestionably, *Kingdom of Nauvoo* is more akin to Flanders’ *Kingdom on the Mississippi* in terms of tone, content, and argument than any other recent Nauvoo study, which is not to say that Park is merely borrowing from Flanders, but in many ways, they arrive at much the same interpretations. If Flanders showed convincingly that Joseph Smith did indeed practice plural marriage – much to the discomfiture of many RLDS (Community of Christ) observers at the time, Park maintains that Smith used plural marriage as a forceful means of cementing his will and formulating his doctrines, much to the chagrin of many current Latter-day Saint readers. For those who are content to read and interpret the Church-sponsored Nauvoo story through the sounds of Mississippi pageants and popular pioneer plays, and for site missionaries and tour guides who are instructed to leave off the very mention of the word “polygamy,” this work will be a difficult but necessary read. Park feels he has a commission to fill a vacuum few others are prepared or inclined to do. As if the real story hasn’t yet been told.

Relying heavily on manuscript sources previously unavailable, including the minutes of the Nauvoo High Council, the Nauvoo Relief Society, the Council of Fifty, and the Joseph Smith Papers, Park is to be congratulated for writing a fascinating political history of Nauvoo. A promising American and Latter-day Saint historian, Park places the Nauvoo story within the American context and argues that Nauvoo “failed” because it was too religious, too priesthood theocratic, too undemocratic and frankly too un-American for a rough and tumble American frontier democracy. He also argues that American democracy likewise “failed” because it was too republican, too unprepared, too fragile to accept an uncomfortably theocratic religion within its democratic framework. “The question the Mormons posed was not just about the boundaries of religious liberty,” Park concludes near the end of his book; more to the point, “it concerned the limits of American democracy ... [which] was envisioned to manage different interests and grant individual freedoms. With the Mormons, the process broke down” (278–79). Park’s work is, therefore, a must-read for historians of nineteenth century Jacksonian American democracy as a case study in the limits of the great American experiment.

2. Roger D. Launius and John E. Hallwas, eds., *Kingdom on the Mississippi Revised: Nauvoo in Mormon History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 251.

Unfolding over seven long, very readable chapters is the author's study of Nauvoo from the time of its inception in 1839, in what was once Commerce on the banks of the Mississippi, to Joseph Smith's murder in 1844, and then its hasty decline before Brigham Young led the Saints to the Rocky Mountains, beginning in February 1846. Like the Puritans and other religious groups before them, the Latter-day Saints were concerned that the nation had forgotten its true Christian purpose and moral compass and believed their mission as modern Israel was to be "its savior" (24). More to the point, Park's primary argument is that Smith had concluded that the federal government had utterly failed to protect religious freedoms generally and Latter-day Saint interests in Missouri particularly, and that the dominant States' rights doctrine then ascendant in America was antagonistic to preserving religious differences and freedoms. American democracy was "a misguided effort that had run its course," Smith is said to have believed, and consequently, he sought to replace it with "a theocratic kingdom" (3). On the other hand, the "tyranny of the majority," to quote de Tocqueville, was alive and well in Jacksonian America, and there was no place for an authoritarian if not autocratic religion like Smith was intent on developing in America. Nauvoo became a clash of cultures and political ideologies, a "radical" — Park's favorite word throughout — expression of religious belief that led to inevitable misunderstanding, persecution, and eventual expulsion. Governor Thomas Ford may never have proclaimed a Lilburn Boggs-like extermination order, but the need for the Latter-day Saints to get out of Illinois amounted to much the same thing.

It bears repeating that one of the virtues of this work is the author's command of American history and his efforts to place the Church story within the wider American context. He makes a compelling argument, for instance, that the place of Catholicism in American life provided a model for debates over Mormonism and that both religions suffered from American Protestant notions of liberty that dominated both political and cultural spheres (34–35). Park also injects into his work some cultural issues previously glossed over or minimized in earlier Nauvoo studies. This is particularly true of his attempt to elevate the place of women and Emma Smith, the "elect lady" and first president of the Nauvoo Relief Society, above all. Emma is made out to be quite the heroine in this work, a force for change, a leader among women and men, a foe of the infidel, a friend of the indigent, and an increasingly vocal critic of her husband's polygamous marriages. Not since *Mormon Enigma* have we seen a work more inclusive and supportive of the first

lady of Mormonism.³ She was “not willing to make exceptions for any person in her quest for social reformation — not even her husband” (113). And the Relief Society, Park insists, became far more than a benevolent or charitable society but part of a developing kingdom of “priests and priestesses” and a bulwark against immorality and indecency. While polygamy is carefully portrayed in this book as something that “brought harm and pain to many people” (5), the women in Nauvoo were nonetheless able “to exert power and influence rarely seen anywhere in America at the time, and did far more to shape Mormonism ... than is commonly assumed” (6). Park places all this within the larger American context by affirming that the voice of women in America was growing at the time of Nauvoo, that while guardians of domestic virtue, they often led various movements for cultural reform (39).

As for matters of race, Park follows such contemporary scholars as Paul Reeve in arguing that this is a topic long neglected and worthy of discussion and that there were both free blacks and black slaves in Nauvoo, some of whom, like Elijah Able, had been previously ordained to the priesthood and served missions for the Church.⁴ Park maintains that Joseph Smith had been consistently opposed to slavery and that Church members in Nauvoo were “somewhat liberal” on the question of racial integration (69). He also gives space to a fair discussion of the relationship of Nauvoo Latter-day Saints and American Indians, to whom they believed the Book of Mormon was written. In the end, however, Park concludes — without evidence — that “[d]espite their professed good intentions, Mormon views of blacks and Natives in reality remained close to those of other whites in the period” (71).

Park also argues that the anti-American, anti-democratic tendencies of Nauvoo increased in intensity over time. They were best expressed in Smith’s cementing of personal authority over both the secular and religious spheres, eventually becoming both mayor and candidate for the presidency of the United States and a target of those who believed in the separation of church and state, that too much political power was becoming concentrated in one religious leader. This is not a new argument but certainly is a persuasive one, and Park goes further to show that Smith’s enemies resisted and debated this centralization of power in one man. They also criticized the Nauvoo Charter, with its

3. Linda King Newell and Valeen Tippetts Avery, *Mormon Enigma: Emma Hale Smith, Prophet’s Wife, “Elect Lady,” Polygamy’s Foe* (New York: Doubleday, 1984).

4. W. Paul Reeve, *Religion of a Different Color: Race and the Mormon Struggle for Whiteness* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015).

provision for a municipal court with arguably excessive powers of habeas corpus as well as provision for a Nauvoo Legion with independency of action. While some other Nauvoo scholars have long argued that the Charter granted them the legal protection Missouri never allowed (myself included), Park argues the Charter granted them the “political sovereignty” they had long coveted (55). He maintains that the Legion was an ominous “private army,” independent of external government control and more “warlike” than any other military force in Illinois — an assertion much in line with Flanders’ earlier argumentst. Still following Flanders’ earlier points, Park makes an even stronger argument that the Nauvoo Municipal Court, as provisioned in the Charter, wielded a great deal of questionable authority, something even Glen Leonard recognized as a “desperate” maneuver.⁵ He also makes a convincing argument that Latter-day Saint involvement in state and local politics, their penchant for bloc voting, and their switching sides from Whig to Democrat and vice versa, led to no end of misunderstanding and hard feelings, for the fact is that both political parties recognized that as Nauvoo grew in size, they had no choice but to curry Smith’s mercurial support.

The book is elegantly produced, carefully edited, and nicely illustrated, with highly readable print and interesting chapter titles indicative of a growing tree complete with roots, trunks, and branches. And its 32 pages of primary and secondary sources are impressive.

Kingdom of Nauvoo does, however, have serious drawbacks, limitations, and disturbing deficiencies. They cluster around three categories: first, its dedicated emphasis on telling a unilateral, highly political rendering of Nauvoo at the expense of so many other important facets of Nauvoo life; second, the devaluation of the revelatory or the spiritual, missing the point that in the end, Nauvoo history was religious, not fundamentally political; and thirdly, if not a misreading of newly-obtained manuscript material, certainly an out-sized desire to view them almost entirely in support of a singular, particular thesis.

In Park’s discussion of the political excesses he sees in Joseph Smith’s Nauvoo, I was disappointed that he fails to plumb sufficiently the enormously negative consequences that earlier Missouri atrocities had brought upon the Saints, illegal and unjustified persecutions that led the Mormons to react so defensively and so assertively in the protection of their political rights in Illinois. He does admit that “Smith and the Mormons never forgot Missouri” (31), but so many of these perceived excesses in Nauvoo were a reaction to the wrongs and injustices they

5. Leonard and Lyon, *Nauvoo*, 288.

had suffered in a supposedly democratic society that in the end sought their expulsion — not once, not twice, but *three times* — and their extermination in the same Jacksonian mode of maltreating and debasing the American Indian. If one is going to argue that Smith’s brand of politics and city rule were beyond tolerable American limits and the cause of so much anti-Mormon opposition, then much more needs to be said about cause and effect, and of the terribly unjust excesses of persecution and the threats of extermination levied against members of the Church in Missouri. Further, when he does talk of these Missouri difficulties, more careful analysis is needed. For instance, Park goes even so far as to argue that the Danites — a group of Sampson Avard extremists and Latter-day Saint military vigilantes — reflected Church political thought, that its constitution justified “an opposition to legitimate American political bodies” (29), and that this illegal band of renegades “planted the seeds for political dissent, and even extralegal action” (29). However, Park makes no effort to distinguish the Danites from the Church, treating them as if they were synonymous — a point most other historians, even critics, understand.

In contrast to this view of Nauvoo usurping power beyond limit, other scholars (myself included) have argued that the Nauvoo Charter, with its three provisions for a city legion, a municipal court, and a public university, was very much consistent with several other city charters, not only in Illinois but in several other states of the Union. The fact that Joseph Smith turned to the lobbying efforts of a savvy, relatively unknown and unscrupulous manipulator such as John C. Bennett may have well proved problematic later, but at the same time reflected his earnest desire to establish Nauvoo on a legal footing so he could address so many other pressing issues for which he was better suited. The fact is that the Nauvoo Charter granted to the Saints in 1841 was, therefore, anything but “extralegal,” and it was fundamentally an American construct created in obedience to law. Other scholars would argue that the excesses of the Latter-day Saint Danites of Missouri were a lesson learned; that the Legion was “independent” only in the sense that it was independent of county and other nearby militias, and it was answerable to the governor of the state and not to the Latter-day Saint First Presidency; and that in the end it was the Nauvoo Legion — not the more “warlike” militias — that laid down its public arms on the day of Smith’s martyrdom.⁶ This action was hardly a radical expression borne

6. See Richard E. Bennett, Susan Easton Black, and Donald Q. Cannon, *The Nauvoo Legion in Illinois: A History of the Mormon Militia 1841–1846* (Norman, OK:

of autocratic rule. Still, Park has a point in saying that the perception of the Mormons by outsiders was the driving issue. The truth is, however, that many outsiders were friendly and receptive and did not share the same negative views as some of those in Warsaw and elsewhere.

Regarding the actions of the Nauvoo Municipal Court, a more careful comparative study would help readers understand that such a city court was sanctioned in several other American cities. It should also be noted that since the early English charters, mayors have held supreme powers as “conservators of the peace,” both criminal and civil. The municipal court’s “exclusive jurisdiction” clause did not originate with Nauvoo and may be found in scores of other American city charters of the early nineteenth century, Chicago, Springfield, and Alton, Illinois included.⁷ Its alleged excesses and debatable over-reach of recognized municipal authority most often came in response to repeated illegal attempts by Missouri to extradite and try the Latter-day Saint prophet in admittedly hostile surroundings. The most recent scholarship on the legal history of Nauvoo — another perspective sorely lacking in Park’s study — refutes “the anachronistic modern idea that the Nauvoo Municipal Court did not have jurisdiction to consider interstate habeas corpus matters.”⁸ If one is seeking to understand the legal history of Nauvoo, they will not find it here.

My next point: the title of the book clearly indicates that this work set out to be a history of Nauvoo, even “the rise and fall” of a kingdom. However, Park’s overriding commitment to emphasize the politics of Nauvoo, the “patriarchal dynasty” of Joseph Smith, and the political tensions between Church member and Gentile, leaves a vacuum in which the social and daily life of Nauvoo is almost entirely omitted. Consequently, Park fails completely to address the economics of Nauvoo, which Flanders and Leonard both did so well. How can one study an “empire” without carefully studying its economics? And how can one study Nauvoo’s economics without understanding the faithful tithes of the people, their sacrifices and devotions? This is, in my opinion, a critical

The Arthur H. Clark Company, 2010).

7. Richard E. Bennett and Rachel Cope, “A City on a Hill’ — Chartering the City of Nauvoo,” in *The John Whitmer Historical Association: 2002 Nauvoo Conference, Special Edition*, ed. Joni Wilson (Kansas City, MO: JWHA, 2002), 25. See also James L. Kimball Jr., “A Study of the Nauvoo Charter, 1840-1845” (master’s thesis, University of Iowa, August 1966).

8. For the most recent study involving the Nauvoo Municipal Court, see A. Keith Thompson’s “Missourian Efforts to Extradite Joseph Smith and the Ethics of Governor Thomas Reynolds of Missouri,” *Interpreter : A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship*, Vol. 29, no.1 (2018): 307-24.

omission, since Nauvoo's spectacular growth in size and economics created no end of jealousies among such stubborn critics as Warsaw's newspaper editor, Thomas C. Sharp, and a host of other enemies. Smith's declaration of bankruptcy in 1842, so well discussed in volume 9 of the recent *Documents* series of the *Joseph Smith Papers*, is a topic that should have been explored as another possible cause of outside irritation.⁹ Ironically, had Park addressed economics, that may have gone far to support some of his main points. The result is a book that retreats from being a study of the "rise and fall" of Nauvoo or a comprehensive history of what the Saints intended their Zion community to be. Instead, it is virtually a skewed biography of Joseph Smith in Nauvoo, not a cultural, social, legal, and certainly not an economic history of Nauvoo at all. Nauvoo deserves to be studied through these many lenses, not just one.

Which leads me to yet another criticism — the devaluation of the revelatory or the religious and spiritual and the emphasis on the "radical." It is well known by most scholars that B. H. Roberts, in his *The Rise and Fall of Nauvoo* published 120 years ago, saw it all in starkly religious terms, God and man, the kingdom of God or nothing.¹⁰ Later studies, like Lyon and Leonard, likewise cherished the doctrinal revelations Smith introduced in Nauvoo. Flanders, on the other hand, largely ignored or misunderstood their significance to the Saints, whereas Park's study, while not shunning Smith's doctrinal innovations, does so in a way that relegates them to a place of secondary importance. One will find here a discussion of the Nauvoo temple and its new "rituals" of salvation, which Park tends to see as stemming from Smith's translation of the Book of Abraham (90–91) as well as "a sacred liturgy" based on Masonic fraternal rites (97).¹¹ Other practices, such as baptism for the

9. Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Documents, December 1841–April 1842*, vol. 9, eds. Alex D. Smith, Christian Heimburger, and Christopher James Blythe (Salt Lake City: Church Historian's Press, 2019).

10. B. H. Roberts, *The Rise and Fall of Nauvoo* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1900).

11. The author goes on to argue that the Book of Abraham "prefigured the Social Darwinism of the late nineteenth century" with its anti-egalitarian, highly structured, preferential hierarchical view of those with varying degrees of intelligence, a highly-layered society of kingdoms and authorities (90-91) which Smith was trying to imitate. However, missing is any mention of Smith's better-known translation of the Book of Mormon and its preference for a society without kings and hierarchies and often based on the voice of the people. Relying on one book of scripture to understand Church doctrine at the expense of omitting another can lead to a faulty, one-sided approach.

dead, the endowment, marriage sealings — even Smith’s famous King Follett discourse — are briefly discussed but woefully underdeveloped. They are treated in a secondary way that would reinforce the author’s argument that “[e]verything revolved around priesthood authority” (60), and that while Latter-day Saint theology was certainly non-Protestant in its ordinance-based, salvific message, all such doctrinal advances were in obedience to Smith’s growing claims to authority.

The truth is Nauvoo was a religious community, first and entirely foremost. America in the 1840’s was arguably far more religious than it is today, and we need to see it in light of its time, not only through the dominant secular-political lens of the early 21st century. While politics were very important, they were not the primary factor of life in Nauvoo. Smith was looking for help to establish Nauvoo on as firm a political foundation as he could, what he called the “temporalities” of the Church, so that he could turn his attention to the “spiritualities,” or matters of doctrine and Church governance.

Smith’s introduction and expansion of what Park refers to as the “scandalous” practice of plural marriage colors this work. It is placed in a context of a race against time, that Smith’s grasp on political and religious power largely depended on keeping his involvement in plural marriage secret and that once discovered, it would lead to his downfall. Park sees Smith’s plural marriages, including those of a polyandrous nature, as experimental “extramarital affairs,” evidence of “transgressiveness” (66), and most certainly not the result of divine command. Any claim to their revealed origins is de-emphasized if not dismissed. For a work that examines plural marriage as much as this one does, there is surprisingly little room given to statements made by Smith’s many wives, some of whom spoke in defense of what came to be later known as the “Principle.”¹² Unlike Fawn Brodie, who saw the Latter-day Saint prophet as a sex-driven, psychologically disturbed megalomaniac,¹³ Park argues that “Smith was never intent on merely vindicating promiscuity.” However, he argues that polygamy became a buttress to his visions of a “multilayered patriarchal hierarchy that

12. See Todd Compton’s *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1997). Park does briefly reference Eliza R. Snow’s conversion to the practice as primarily “another step in a path toward personal sanctification and transcendence,” (115), “a path to becoming queens of a godly kingdom,” but more practically as sought-for social stability in the chaotic Nauvoo society (116).

13. Fawn McKay Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith: The Mormon Prophet* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1945).

governed the cosmos” (63). In Parks’ world, not only was polygamy a tool in Smith’s toolbox of autocratic control but also the doctrine of eternal marriage was “inextricably tethered to Smith’s polygamy revelation” (177). He even goes so far as to argue that Joseph Smith convinced his more mild-mannered older brother Hyrum to accept plural marriage as the purchase price, or at least down payment, for eternal salvation by promising him eternal marriage with his wives in the hereafter. One is led to conclude that the doctrine of the eternality of the marriage covenant so beloved by so many in Nauvoo as revelation, came as part of a hastily drawn-up bargain to convince a hesitant brother to accept polygamy (150–51). While most serious historians would agree that polygamy, the way it was secretly introduced, denied, covered up, and inculcated, was a major contributing factor in the eventual death of the Latter-day Saint leader, many also give gracious provision for his sincere belief in the divine origin of the practice — a belief many of his wives shared.

While it is not always clear on which side of these political arguments Park adheres, since he gives so much space and credence to the perception of critics both from within and without, his work certainly tries to show that Smith brought upon himself a great many of his own difficulties, especially from within the ranks of Nauvoo leadership. William Law, a counselor in the First Presidency who became disillusioned over plural marriage and various other new doctrines, is virtually excused in his participatory plans to assassinate Smith. He “worked to bring an end to what he believed were Nauvoo’s corruptions” (223). Emma Smith, already shown as the guardian of virtue, becomes almost Joseph’s adversary (195), sadly, one the prophet “could no longer trust” (197). John C. Bennett, however, remains the villain and “saintly scoundrel” — to borrow from Andrew H. Smith’s book title¹⁴ — but one for whom the “Mormons provided a new opportunity in his perpetual climb” (54). The almost inevitable murder of Joseph and Hyrum Smith may not be justified, but the perpetrators of their death are hardly condemned — indeed, they were “ready to bring Mormon leadership to justice” (198), the inevitable result of a frontier America impatient with legal maneuverings and cumbersome, obstructed forms of justice. Such a review of the causes of Joseph Smith’s death may be a justifiable attempt to understand what eventually happened at Carthage but it is hardly a balanced or defensible study in excusing it.

14. Andrew F. Smith, *The Saintly Scoundrel: The Life and Times of Dr. John Cook Bennett* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997).

Yet another point: if more of the sentiments of the ordinary convert had been incorporated into Park's work — the men and women who gave up country and culture, friend and family to come to Illinois, and without whose sacrifices this "Kingdom of Nauvoo" would never have occurred — then this work would have been more accurately representative of what happened in Nauvoo and why. Simply put, the *people* of Nauvoo are missing in this work *on* Nauvoo. Their stories of faith, sacrifice, consecration, and commitment are nowhere to be found, while the words of critics both from within and without Nauvoo abound.

My final criticism and perhaps the most important question one can ask about this book is as follows: do the many new manuscript sources, which Park relies upon so heavily and which were unavailable to Flanders, Leonard, Klaus Hansen, James Kimball, and other earlier scholars of Nauvoo, support Park's political-based thesis? Do the minutes of the Nauvoo Relief Society, for instance, show a Society increasingly at odds with its founder and this because of plural marriage? Likewise, do the minutes of the Council of Fifty, with their discussion of a new constitution and kingdom of God upon the earth (200–201), back up the author's claim that the Church was a fundamentally undemocratic empire? And do the minutes of the High Council and of Nauvoo's Municipal Court support the view that Smith was pursuing a damaging, self-aggrandizing personal agenda?

With respect to such new sources, there is the underlying assumption that the Church itself has misread, downplayed, or at the very least tried to disengage itself from its history. Park states early on that one of the reasons for the recent directives on calling the Church by its full name rather than the term *Mormon* is a way to "distance the faith from its past identity" (4). In all fairness to the Church, this perceived detachment hardly squares with its recent efforts to publish the multi-volume Joseph Smith Papers, including the Minutes of the Council of Fifty, the Minutes of the Nauvoo Relief Society, the Nauvoo City Council Minutes, and other organizational records — the very records Park relies upon — and to make electronically available so many heretofore hard to find minutes, letters, journals, and related manuscript sources. The Church may once again be refashioning its identity, as it has in the past, but this time not at the cost of whitewashing or downplaying its history.

In my review of several of these new manuscript sources and my use of them in various studies, I submit that one can see what he or she wants to see in them. They certainly attest to a growing religion that believed itself to be the kingdom of God restored to earth once more, not a mere

outgrowth of American traditions and practices, a religious movement unquestionably more theo-democratic than most other contemporary American religions. In regard to the Relief Society, Park is correct in arguing that one of its central purposes was to be a watchdog on Nauvoo morality. Under Emma's direction and not unlike other female societies in contemporary America, it was to improve behavior and decorum in Nauvoo. However, its more important functions were to be a charitable society and to prepare the Saints for temple worship. Park emphasizes the former at the expense of its other dominant functions. And as to polygamy, the truth is many of the founding sisters of the Relief Society entered into plural marriage and were highly, albeit secretly, supportive of it — including Eliza R. Snow and Helen Mar Kimball Whitney — and spent their lives in support of it. Again, the work needs more balance, more attention to the other sides of the argument.

As for the Council of Fifty and its “radical” efforts to write a new constitution, they may indeed have reflected Smith's desire to find refuge in the west where the Church could thrive without persecution, establish a “shadow government,” and “reinstate God's kingdom,” but even Park admits that the council “never sought to enact any of his most radical proposals” (206). The Council of Fifty may have been more than a mere advisory body on Smith's candidacy for president of the United States and on later post-martyrdom plans and preparations for moving the Church west. However, what sounded obviously un-American in its deliberations was not an attempt to overthrow America but its Millennial emphasis on prophecy that God would soon “set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed” (Daniel 2:44) and that the Church of Jesus Christ had been established to fulfill that destiny. These are points once again of a religious nature, not a secular or political one, which I believe the author glosses over or fundamentally misunderstands.

To conclude, *Kingdom of Nauvoo* is a significant contribution to Latter-day Saint history and scholarship as well as to American history more generally. Even if the author has neglected or at least downplayed much previous scholarship, it deserves careful reading and analysis, if for no other reason than that it utilizes so many new primary sources. While raising issues of real importance on race and women's issues too long neglected, Park unfortunately portrays Joseph Smith as eventually overcome by his own claim to power and authority, a view I find disturbingly unsubstantiated, highly disappointing, and certain to be hotly debated by those who see the Prophet Joseph Smith much differently. In the end, Park shows that the Latter-day Saint empire could

not co-exist in an American democracy unprepared and unwilling to accept so difficult a religious enterprise. Unfortunately, he does so from a unidimensional perspective and at the minimization of those many other economic, legal, and religious elements of Nauvoo's exciting history that made it, at least for many observers, not a failure but a qualified success.

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SOME NOTES ON JOSEPH SMITH AND ADAM CLARKE

Kent P. Jackson

***Abstract:** Authors of two recent articles believe they have found evidence that Joseph Smith, in preparing his revision of the Bible, drew ideas from a contemporary Bible commentary by British scholar Adam Clarke. The evidence, however, does not bear out this claim. I believe that none of the examples they provide can be traced to Clarke's commentary, and almost all of them can be explained easily by other means. The authors do not look at their examples within the broader context of the revisions Joseph Smith made to the Bible, and thus they misinterpret them. Some of the revisions they attribute to Clarke are ones that Joseph Smith had made repeatedly before he arrived at the passages where they believe he got ideas from Clarke. In addition, there is a mountain of material in Clarke that is not reflected in the Joseph Smith Translation, and there is a mountain of material in the Joseph Smith Translation that cannot be explained by reference to Clarke. The few overlaps that do exist are vague, superficial, and coincidental.*

Recently Thomas A. Wayment, professor of classics at Brigham Young University, published an article, "A Recovered Resource: The Use of Adam Clarke's Bible Commentary in Joseph Smith's Bible Translation," co-authored with his former research assistant, Haley Wilson-Lemmon.¹ That article was followed by Wayment's "Joseph Smith, Adam Clarke,

1. Thomas A. Wayment and Haley Wilson-Lemmon, "A Recovered Resource: The Use of Adam Clarke's Bible Commentary in Joseph Smith's Bible Translation," in *Producing Ancient Scripture: Joseph Smith's Translation Projects in the Development of Mormon Christianity*, eds. Michael Hubbard MacKay, Mark Ashurst-McGee, and Brian M. Hauglid (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2020), 262–84.

and the Making of a Bible Revision.”² In the articles the authors present their view that Joseph Smith drew some of the ideas and language for his Bible revision — the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) — from a commentary written by British scholar Adam Clarke. The online posting of the research conclusions, as part of the student grant Wilson-Lemmon received, was the first publication of their proposed Adam Clarke-Joseph Smith connection.³ Wayment subsequently discussed the research in online interviews in 2017 and 2019,⁴ and Wilson-Lemmon did as well in 2018 and 2020.⁵ Likely the first reference to the matter in an academic publication was my own mention of it in Dennis L. Largey, ed., *Pearl of Great Price Reference Companion*. In an article on the JST I noted that in making revisions in the Bible, the Prophet was “sometimes drawing ideas for those changes from a popular Bible commentary.”⁶ I made that statement without doing the research myself but trusting the scholarship of Professor Wayment.

Since then I have studied closely the Wayment article and the Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon article and their proposed connections between Clarke’s commentary and Joseph Smith. I have examined in detail every one of the JST passages they set forth as having been influenced by Clarke, and I have examined what Clarke wrote about those passages. I now believe that the conclusions they reached regarding those connections cannot be sustained. I do not believe that there is

2. Thomas A. Wayment, “Joseph Smith, Adam Clarke, and the Making of a Bible Revision,” *Journal of Mormon History* 46, no. 3 (July 2020): 1–22.

3. Haley Wilson and Thomas Wayment, “A Recently Recovered Source: Rethinking Joseph Smith’s Bible Translation,” *Journal of Undergraduate Research*, March 16, 2017, <http://jur.byu.edu/?p=21296>.

4. Thomas A. Wayment, “Joseph Smith’s Use of Bible Commentaries in His Translations,” LDS Perspectives Podcast, Episode 55, <https://ldsperspectives.com/2017/09/26/jst-adam-clarke-commentary/>; Kurt Manwaring, “10 Questions with Thomas Wayment,” January 2, 2019, <https://www.fromthedesk.org/10-questions-thomas-wayment/>.

5. Haley Wilson-Lemmon, “The Joseph Smith Translation — Revelation or Plagiarism,” Mormon Discussions, <https://mormondiscussionpodcast.org/2018/05/haley-lemmon-joseph-smith-translation-revelation-plagiarism/>; “Haley Wilson-Lemmon — the BYU Undergrad who Discovered Joseph Smith’s Plagiarisms in his Bible ‘Translation,’” Mormon Stories, <https://www.mormonstories.org/podcast/haley-wilson-lemmon/>. When citing these sources, I will reference the time of the recorded words.

6. Kent P. Jackson, “Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible,” in *Pearl of Great Price Reference Companion*, ed. Dennis L. Largey (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2017), 187.

any Adam Clarke-JST connection at all, and I have seen no evidence that Joseph Smith ever used Clarke's commentary in his revision of the Bible. None of the passages that Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon have set forward as examples, in my opinion, can withstand careful scrutiny.⁷

There is nothing wrong with the idea of Joseph Smith getting some ideas from an external source when revising the Bible, and I will propose some possible examples below. When I first became aware of the proposed Adam Clarke-Joseph Smith connection, I had no reason not to welcome the discovery. The New Translation begins with dramatic revelations that are now contained in the Book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price. Throughout the rest of the translation are other blocks of text, large and small, that I believe can only be explained as revelation. In between are a few thousand small changes that are simply rewordings of the language of the King James Version text (KJV) — word changes that correct, modernize, simplify, clarify, or amplify. I doubt that anyone can know if Joseph Smith required individual revelations to make each and every one of those small changes aside from a general divine mandate to make the Bible more doctrinally accurate, more clear, and more usable for the Latter-day Saints. There is no reason to think that in those revisions the Prophet could not have simply used his own common sense where needed, or that he could not have been influenced by printed sources available to him to improve the text. Indeed, three times in revelations (not related to working on the JST) we have references to seeking “words of wisdom” “out of the best books” (D&C 88:118; 109:7, 14). The only question is whether proof exists for that taking place in his revision of the Bible.

The revisions in the JST that Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon attribute to Clarke's commentary are almost all small rewordings. None of the examples they invoke are found in the Book of Moses or in Joseph Smith—Matthew, the two canonized sections of the JST. It is likely that most Latter-day Saints would not consider them to be among the JST's most significant passages, though some of them are represented in footnotes in the Church's English publication of the Bible. Most consist only of a word or two resembling something in Clarke's commentary.

7. The suggestion that Adam Clarke's commentary was a source for readings in the JST is not new. An early example is Ronald V. Huggins, “Joseph Smith's ‘Inspired Translation’ of Romans 7,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 26, no. 4 (Winter 1993): 159–82.

Translations and Commentaries

In Joseph Smith's generation, several new translations of the Bible were published in the United States. Many Americans had come to see the language of the King James Version as awkward and inelegant, and above all, many realized that the KJV was not in their own spoken language and felt that its archaic vocabulary and grammar were an impediment to understanding the word of God. Thus, by 1833, when Joseph Smith finished his translation, several Americans had published new translations of all or parts of the Bible:⁸ Charles Thomson (entire Bible),⁹ Abner Kneeland (New Testament),¹⁰ Alexander Campbell (New Testament),¹¹ George R. Noyes (New Testament, most of Old Testament),¹² Egbert Benson (New Testament epistles),¹³ Noah Webster (revision of entire KJV),¹⁴ and Rodolphus Dickinson (New Testament).¹⁵ Only one of those translations, Campbell's New Testament, sold in large quantities and became historically significant.

In addition to those new translations, several European Bible commentaries were widely used in America. Their authors discussed the

8. See Kent P. Jackson, "The King James Bible in the Days of Joseph Smith," in *The King James Bible and the Restoration*, ed. Kent P. Jackson (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2011), 138–61. Some of the translations cited in the following notes were in multiple editions, thus those cited here are representative. I have not included any translations that were first published after 1833, when the JST was finished, though three of them (Noyes, Webster, and Dickinson) were published that year and thus likely could not have been consulted by Joseph Smith during his Bible revision. In the following notes I have only included the first lines of the lengthy titles.

9. Charles Thomson, *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Covenant*, 4 vols. (Philadelphia: Jane Aitken, 1808).

10. Abner Kneeland, *Hē Kainē Diathēkē. The New Testament, in Greek and English* (Philadelphia: William Fry, 1823); and *The New Testament; Being the English only of the Greek and English Testament* (Philadelphia: William Fry, 1823).

11. Alexander Campbell, *The Sacred Writings of the Apostles and Evangelists of Jesus Christ* (Buffaloe, VA: Alexander Campbell, 1826).

12. George R. Noyes, *An Amended Version of the Book of Job* (Cambridge, MA: Hilliard and Brown, 1827); *A New Translation of the Book of Psalms* (Boston: Gray and Bowen, 1831); *A New Translation of the Hebrew Prophets* (Boston: Charles Bowen, 1833).

13. Egbert Benson, *A Manual. The Apostolic Epistles* (New York: Egbert Benson, 1830).

14. Noah Webster, *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments* (New Haven, CT: Durrie and Peck, 1833).

15. Rodolphus Dickinson, *A New and Corrected Version of the New Testament* (Boston: Lilly, Wait, Colman, & Holden, 1833).

text, explained it, and sometimes provided alternative wording or even new translations.¹⁶ Among the most common were the commentaries of Matthew Poole (entire Bible),¹⁷ John Gill (entire Bible),¹⁸ James Macknight (New Testament epistles),¹⁹ Matthew Henry (entire Bible),²⁰ Thomas Coke (entire Bible),²¹ Adam Clarke (entire Bible),²² Philip Doddridge (New Testament),²³ and Thomas Scott (entire Bible).²⁴

Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible

Joseph Smith's Bible revision was not a translation from ancient languages and was not even a "translation" by today's definition of the word. In his day the word *translate* was often used in contexts closely related to its etymological meaning: "carry across." Thus, Noah Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language*, contemporary with Joseph Smith's revising of the Bible, lists among the meanings of *translate*: "to bear, carry or remove from one place to another," "to transfer; to convey from

16. All of these were published multiple times and by different publishers, and thus the examples in these notes are representative.

17. Matthew Poole, *Annotations upon the Holy Bible*, 3rd ed. (London: Thomas Parkhurst, et al., 1696–).

18. John Gill, ed., *An Exposition of the Whole Old Testament*, 6 vols. (London: 1748–); *An Exposition of the Whole New Testament*, 3 vols. (London: 1746–).

19. James Macknight, *A New Literal Translation from the Original Greek, of all the Apostolical Epistles*, 6 vols. (Boston: W. Wells and T. B. Wait, 1810).

20. Matthew Henry, *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament* (Edinburgh: Bell and Bradfute, 1790–91).

21. Thomas Coke, *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*, 6 vols. (London: G. Whitfield, 1801–1803).

22. Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible, Containing the Old and New Testaments*, vol. 1 [Genesis to Joshua] (New York: J. Emory and B. Waugh, 1832); vol. 2 [Judges to Job] (New York: N. Bangs and J. Emory, 1828); vol. 3 [Psalms to Isaiah] (New York: N. Bangs and J. Emory, 1826); vol. 4 [Jeremiah to Malachi] (New York: J. Emory and B. Waugh, 1832); *The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, vol. 1 [Matthew to Acts], vol. 2 [Romans to Revelation] (New York: J. Emory and B. Waugh, 1832). When I quote from Clarke in this article, I quote from these editions in the Hathi Trust Digital Library.

23. P. Doddridge, *The Family Expositor*, vol. 1 [the Gospels, part 1], 4th ed. (London: J. Buckland, et al., 1763); vol. 2 [the Gospels, part 2], 3rd ed. (London: J. Waugh and W. Fenner, 1761); vol. 3 [Acts] (London: J. Waugh, 1748); vol. 4 [Romans, 1–2 Corinthians] (London: J. Waugh, 1753); vol. 5 [Galatians to Philemon] (London: J. Waugh and W. Fenner, 1756); vol. 6 [James to Revelation], 7th ed. (London: T. Longman et al., 1792).

24. Thomas Scott, *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments*, 6 vols. (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong and Crocker and Brewster, 1824–31).

one to another,” and “to change.” Also included is “to interpret; to render into another language.”²⁵ Joseph Smith and his contemporaries called the work the “New Translation,” though they clearly knew that it was not a rendering from one language to another. It was the re-creation of the Bible into a new form. Did they consider it inspired? Joseph Smith called it a “branch of my calling.”²⁶ In a revelation the Prophet received in December 1830, God states that through the Bible revision “the scriptures shall be given, even as they are in mine own bosom, to the salvation of mine own elect” (D&C 35:20). At the top of the first Old Testament manuscript, scribe Oliver Cowdery wrote, “A Revelation given to Joseph the Revelator,”²⁷ and he wrote a few pages later, “A Revelation given to the Elders of the Church of Christ.”²⁸ At the top of the first New Testament manuscript, scribe Sidney Rigdon wrote, “A Translation of the New Testament translated by the power of God.”²⁹

One way to look at the JST is to see it as having three categories of changes: (1) blocks of entirely new text without biblical counterpart, (2) revisions of existing text that change its function and meaning, and (3) revisions that change the wording of existing text but not the meaning. Having all three of those categories of changes, Joseph Smith’s Bible revision is radically unlike the translations in the volumes listed above, which contain only the third kind of revisions. Those works provided traditional translations or revisions of earlier texts, either from the Hebrew or Greek originals or from the King James Version. None added new text or changed the function and meaning of existing passages the way Joseph Smith’s revision did. Thus, if one were to discover that the Prophet was influenced in word changes by other published sources, it would be historically interesting but ultimately of little consequence, because the passages in the third category are not the most important parts of his New Translation.

The original manuscripts of the JST, as well as the Bible used in the revision, still exist. They show the following process at work: Joseph

25. Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: S. Converse, 1828), s.v. “translate.” These definitions remained the same in the second edition of 1844.

26. See Joseph Smith, “History of Joseph Smith (Continued),” *Times and Seasons* 5 (May 1, 1844): 513.

27. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004), 83.

28. *Ibid.*, 86.

29. *Ibid.*, 159.

Smith had his Bible in front of him, likely in his lap or on a table, and he dictated the translation to his scribes, who recorded what they heard him say. Contrary to the repeated assertion of Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, there are no parts of the translation in which the scribes “copied out the text of the Bible.”³⁰ The evidence on the manuscripts is clear that this did not happen. The Prophet dictated without punctuation and verse breaks, and those features were inserted as a separate process after the text was complete. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon seem to suggest that following their proposed copying of text out of the Bible, the scribes then inserted the “numerous strikethroughs of words and phrases, interlinear insertions, and omissions,” and thus Joseph Smith’s revised text was born.³¹ But the overwhelming majority of the revisions were in the original dictation and are simply part of the original writing on the manuscripts. There are indeed strikeouts and interlinear insertions on the manuscripts, but they came during a second pass through parts of the manuscripts and comprise only a minority of the revisions Joseph Smith made.

Wayment has stated that in Genesis Joseph Smith “likely used the Urim and Thummim,” but “by the time he comes to Matthew, he’s using the best books.”³² However, no source contemporary to Joseph Smith suggests that he used the Urim and Thummim anywhere in his revision of the Bible.³³ Whether he did or did not is a historical question that does

30. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 276.

31. *Ibid.*, 276, and note 45.

32. Wayment, “Joseph Smith’s Use of Bible Commentaries,” 7. The Prophet’s use of Clarke’s commentary, Wayment believes, is tantamount to him saying, “I went to these sources, I looked at them, I deliberated with those, and I made changes to the Bible based on what they said” (7).

33. In support of their case for the use of the Urim and Thummim in Genesis, Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon cite a man named Lorenzo Brown (1823–1902) supposedly quoting Joseph Smith talking about revising the Bible. (“A Recovered Resource,” 278–79.) They call Brown’s statement “remarkable,” but it is actually very problematic, and its uncertain provenance renders it unusable. Despite the fact that the year 1880 is written on the report of the statement, Wayment says that it is “a journal reference” of a contemporary of Joseph Smith (“Joseph Smith’s Use of Bible Commentaries,” 7; “Making of a Bible Revision,” 21). Instead, the statement is found in a five-page document called “Sayings of Joseph by Those Who Heard Him at Different Times,” perhaps produced around the beginning of the twentieth century. The document contains an unnamed compiler’s collection of statements attributed to Joseph Smith, as reported by several earlier informants. The document does not say when it was produced, how the compiler obtained the statements, what the criteria were for inclusion, or whether he or she compiled them from memory.

not have significant implications about the inspiration or value of the text, but the idea that he used the Urim and Thummim in Genesis suggests to Wayment that the translation beginning in Matthew underwent a “shift to using academic sources,”³⁴ a transition “from a more revelatory

There is no indication that the compiler was a witness to the informants writing or uttering the quotes. We know that the document is not the original, because a note on it identifies it as a copy. These are Joseph Smith’s purported words according to the Lorenzo Brown statement:

After I got through translating the Book of Mormon, I took up the Bible to read with the Urim and Thummim. I read the first chapter of Genesis and I saw the things as they were done. I turned over the next and the next and the whole passed before me like a grand panorama and so on chapter after chapter until I read the whole of it. I saw it all! ... (This was spoken at the House of <Benj> Brown N.Y. 1832 Sidney Rigdon being along. Related by Lorenzo Brown 1880). (“Sayings of Joseph by Those who heard him at different times,” page [2], Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.)

Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon copied the words of the statement from a secondary source.

Brown was nine years old in 1832 when Joseph Smith supposedly said these words, and Brown supposedly related the story 48 years later. In his autobiography Brown first mentions meeting Joseph Smith in 1837, and Brown did not join the Church until 1838. (“Lorenzo Brown Diary and Autobiography,” page [2], L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University.) Perhaps Brown remembered the date wrong and a conversation with Joseph Smith took place in 1837, when the Prophet visited his family and Brown was fourteen. If Brown remembered the wrong date in 1880, that gives us even more reason to doubt the reliability of the quoted words.

No sources from Joseph Smith or any of his scribes mention the use of seer stones or the Urim and Thummim during the Bible revision. In a recent collection of over 160 early statements regarding Joseph Smith’s use of those devices, Brown’s statement is the only one that mentions them in the context of the Bible revision. (See Michael Hubbard MacKay and Nicholas J. Frederick, *Joseph Smith’s Seer Stones* [Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2016], 181–232.)

Another problem with Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon’s use of the Brown quote is that it does not say what they want it to say. The quote never says that it has only to do with Genesis. The Prophet picked up the Bible, started with its first chapter, turned to the next and the next, and the whole passed before him and so on, chapter after chapter, until he read the whole of it. Wayment’s interpretation of this as referring only to Genesis does not come from the text but is imposed on it in support of the idea of a revelatory Genesis revision followed by an academic revision that drew ideas from Adam Clarke. In addition, Brown’s comment is incompatible with the evidence on the manuscripts.

34. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 3.

mode to a more secular mode,”³⁵ a “shift in focus to textual issues” that “may reflect the influence of Clarke’s commentary.”³⁶ It was apparently from that point on that they believe the Prophet “was inclined to depend on Clarke’s commentary for matters of history, textual questions, clarification of wording, and theological nuance.”³⁷ I do not believe that any of this is true. Among other reasons, the “revelatory mode” certainly continued, with Joseph Smith adding new text throughout the Gospels and then later in the Old Testament as well.

Adam Clarke’s Commentary

There are individual phrases in the JST that share common vocabulary with some of the contemporary translations or with passages in contemporary commentaries. That is because the translators and commentators often had a goal that Joseph Smith apparently also had — to make the Bible more clear and understandable.³⁸ The question is whether the Prophet obtained any of his ideas for revising the Bible from printed translations or commentaries. Was he influenced by the word choices that others had made when he prepared his own Bible revision? In almost every case, I believe that the answer is no. There are, however, some very rare passages in the New Translation where he made changes that could have been influenced by the published work of others. He could have been made aware of the passages by reading about them, or perhaps his associates brought them to his attention, or perhaps he came to a passage that he wanted to look up. In no case, however, is there evidence to suggest an ongoing consultation of a printed source, as Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon maintain.

An example of possible influence from a printed source may be at 2 Chronicles 22:2, where the JST revises the age of King Ahaziah from forty-two to twenty-two, which is the age given in the parallel account in 2 Kings 8:26. The number in 2 Chronicles is undoubtedly incorrect, as is pointed out in the commentaries of Clarke, Thomas Scott, John Gill, Matthew Henry, and Matthew Poole.³⁹ Another example is at Nehemiah

35. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 278.

36. *Ibid.*, 277.

37. *Ibid.*, 267.

38. Rodolphus Dickinson’s strange New Testament translation was an exception, with its apparent purpose of using as many obscure words as possible.

39. Wayment includes this example in “Making of a Bible Revision,” 5. It is impossible to know how the contradiction between Kings and Chronicles was brought to Joseph Smith’s attention. The commentaries of Clarke, Scott, John Gill, Matthew Henry, Matthew Poole, and John Wesley all point out the contradiction.

7, where there is a list of families with their numbers. The same list is found in Ezra 2, but some of the names and numbers are different. Joseph Smith edited the Nehemiah list to be consistent with the list in Ezra. In their commentaries, Poole, Henry, Clarke, and Scott mention briefly that the lists are different. Scott views the differences to be the result of scribal error, but Clarke argues that both lists are correct, and thus he is *not* inclined to make Nehemiah's list consistent with Ezra's. Joseph Smith's solution — significant for the subject at hand — was the opposite of Adam Clarke's.

I am not persuaded that the age of an unimportant king and the precise numbers in an obscure Old Testament name list are the kinds of subjects that bring forth divine revelation, though I may be wrong. I cannot rule out the possibility that the Prophet and his scribe, Frederick G. Williams, noticed the discrepancies and looked them up, or were made aware of the matters from some printed source — one of the commentaries or something similar. The source may even have been the cross-references in the margins of the Prophet's printed Bible. In the margin at 2 Chronicles 22:2, "2 Kings 8, 26" appears twice, and at Nehemiah 7, references to "Ezra 2" appear nineteen times. Also, a table in the back of the Prophet's Bible points out that the Ezra and Nehemiah lists are not the same.⁴⁰

Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon set out to find sources for the revisions that Joseph Smith made to the King James text, and they settled on Adam Clarke's commentary as the source for many of them. They suggest that in the spring of 1831, probably under the influence of Sidney Rigdon, Joseph Smith began turning to Clarke's commentary for assistance in revising the biblical text.⁴¹ He "studied" Clarke's commentary,⁴² and "if it wasn't on the table" he at least "had read it thoroughly before he did his Bible translation."⁴³ Surprisingly, the two published articles on the subject do not lay out evidence to argue for the

The Prophet's printed Bible has a note that directs readers to 2 Kings 8:26, which provides the correct age. That the order of the numbers is reversed to match 2 Kings exactly ("two and twenty") rather than the wording of Clarke and most other contemporary sources ("twenty-two") is evidence that 2 Kings 8:26 is the ultimate source, even if the Prophet learned of the discrepancy in some other way.

40. "Index to the Holy Bible," 760.

41. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, "A Recovered Resource," 266, 284; Wayment, "Making of a Bible Revision," 4–5.

42. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, "A Recovered Resource," 280.

43. Wilson-Lemmon, "The Joseph Smith Translation," at c. 49:22.

theory but simply announce it, take its truth for granted from that point on, and provide illustrations. None of it is convincing.⁴⁴

The intentions and the content of the printed commentaries available in Joseph Smith's day varied. Some were theological, others were oriented toward family devotional reading, and several had Christian living as an emphasis. The commentaries of Scott, Henry, and Doddridge had elements of all of these. Adam Clarke's was a fairly recent academic commentary when the Prophet was working on the New Translation. It was large. In the printing that I have cited in the notes, it contained over 5,200 pages. Wayment is correct in stating that "typically the KJV text takes up only about one-fourth of each page while the commentary

44. Errors in "A Recovered Resource" are disappointing. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon's idea of Joseph Smith's scribes copying text from a printed Bible, for example, shows a lack of familiarity with the documents. Several of the quotations in "A Recovered Resource" contain transcription errors, and several are cited from secondary sources when the authors could have examined accessible originals. The authors state that Joseph Smith revised Genesis 1:1–6:13 "working with John Whitmer as his scribe" ("A Recovered Resource," 264). Whitmer was the scribe for parts of only four of the twenty pages in that section, and the authors left out Oliver Cowdery, Emma Smith, and Sidney Rigdon. Similarly, in a previous article, Wayment provided a list of Joseph Smith's scribes and left off Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams, the two who between them were responsible for the writing on two-thirds of the manuscript pages. ("Intertextuality and the Purpose of Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible," in *Foundational Texts of Mormonism Examining Major Early Sources*, ed. Mark Ashurst-McGee, Robin Scott Jensen, and Sharalyn D. Howcroft [Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2018], 74.) Twice in that same article Wayment misidentified the scribe of the second Matthew 26 translation (93, 94). Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon state, "Once Smith and Rigdon had finished revising the New Testament, they returned to the Old Testament" ("A Recovered Resource," 264). This is not correct. The final scribe for the New Testament was not Sidney Rigdon but Frederick G. Williams, who continued on as the scribe for almost all of the Old Testament from that time on. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon state that "excerpts of the translation were published in early church newspapers" and then in 1851 the Church "republished the Bible revision for the early chapters of Genesis as the 'Book of Moses'" ("A Recovered Resource," 264). This is not correct. The Genesis material in the 1851 *Pearl of Great Price* was in two sections, titled "Extracts from the Prophecy of Enoch ..." and "The words of God, which he spake unto Moses. ..." The title "Book of Moses" did not appear until half a century later, in the edition of 1902. They misidentify the publisher of the 1851 *Pearl of Great Price* and list instead the printing company (*ibid.*, 264n6). In a footnote they write that "the marked-up Bible used by Smith includes a notation at the end of Malachi: 'Finished on the 2d day of July 1833'" (*ibid.*, 275n44). That notation, however, was not written in the Bible but on the last page of the final Old Testament manuscript.

he offered was often three-quarters of each page or more.”⁴⁵ Like the other commentaries, Clarke’s contained much sermonizing, but it was by far the most philological commentary in popular use. It placed a great deal of emphasis on words, on their meanings, and on their use in the biblical text. Clarke understood the principles of text criticism and made frequent reference to manuscripts, versions, and alternate readings. He was uninhibited in his analysis and freely made critiques of the King James Version. Much of his commentary responds to the King James text and its word choices, and thus it offers many paraphrases in the process of discussing the verses. A significant number of passages in it include Clarke’s own translations or rewordings, often preceded by “that is ...,” “or ...,” “rather ...,” or “meaning” His numerous rewordings, paraphrases, and wordy comments on the verses often provide more accessible language than is found in the KJV. Because many of the word changes Joseph Smith made had the same effect, there are indeed occasional convergences between words in Clarke and the revised wordings of Joseph Smith. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon mistake those similarities for the Prophet copying Adam Clarke, but that is not what they are. They are random occurrences that coincide with only a fraction of the comments, rewordings, and restatements that Clarke provides and with only a fraction of the word changes that Joseph Smith made. I have found similarities between Joseph Smith’s wording and other translations and commentaries as well, but they are likewise random and insignificant. There are far more with Clarke, but that is because the sheer bulk of Clarke’s philological commentary provides a massive amount of vocabulary in which to find coincidental connections with Joseph Smith.

Examining the Evidence

In the two articles and in their public announcements about their research, Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon have presented over thirty passages in which they believe that Joseph Smith was dependent on Adam Clarke. According to Wilson-Lemmon, they “put the best ones” in “A Recovered Resource,” though over a third of them are discussed in both articles.⁴⁶ I have decided to address each of the passages that they have proposed, even though I realize that doing so makes this article long

45. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 14.

46. Wilson-Lemmon, “BYU Undergrad,” at c. 37:20.

and sometimes technical.⁴⁷ My conclusions, which follow the discussion of the individual passages, will summarize some of my concerns.

As a believer in the mission of Joseph Smith, I accept as true that he was both commissioned by God to revise the Bible and inspired in the work. With respect to the individual word changes in the following passages, I do not pretend to know the balance between revelation, Joseph Smith's prophetic agency, and his common sense. I can only describe the mechanical process and the resulting text, not the nature or level of inspiration in that process. My attempt will be to explain, based on the Prophet's observable methods for revising biblical passages, how he arrived at the readings which Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon want to attribute to Adam Clarke. When I reference or quote from Clarke's commentary and other early sources, I will draw from the editions cited in the notes I have provided. Because various editions differ in pagination, references will be to the Bible passages and not to page numbers in any particular print edition. I have standardized the spelling, capitalization, and punctuation of the JST verses.⁴⁸

47. I will assume throughout that the examples given by Wilson-Lemmon in her interviews represent the conclusions of both her and Wayment, because that is how she presents them.

48. In "A Recovered Resource," two sizable quotes from Clarke lack source references (273–74). Most of the Clarke quotations have transcription errors (usually the omission of his frequent italics) and give the impression that they were copied from an electronic text rather than from early printings of Clarke's volumes. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon's first citation of Clarke's commentary is as follows: "Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments* (London: Butterworth, 1815; Nashville: Abingdon, 1977)" (263n2). This is not correct. The 1977 Nashville reprint that they used is a reprint of an 1837 edition published in New York. It contains internal dates from the 1820s and 1830s. The 1977 Nashville printing places two of Clarke's six volumes within each binding, so it consists of three books. Internally the six volumes are paginated separately because they are reprints of separate nineteenth-century volumes. On the spines of the Nashville volumes are misleading labels: "Clarke's commentary: Genesis–Esther," "Clarke's commentary: Job–Malachi," and "Clarke's commentary: Matthew–Revelation." Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon cite the volumes by those modern spine labels and not by the titles of the actual books (which are never called "Clarke's commentary"). And because there are two independently paginated volumes within each of the three bindings, when they cite page numbers, they do not realize that they are citing from two different volumes. For example, footnote 18 reads "Clarke, *Clarke's Commentary: Matthew–Revelation*, 525," and footnote 19 reads "Ibid., 478." These two page numbers do not belong to the same numbering system because the first is in Clarke's volume 6, *Romans to the Revelations*, and the second is in Clarke's volume 5, *Matthew to the Acts*. The authors give no indication that they noticed any

The burden of proving the Adam Clarke theory falls on Wayment, Wilson-Lemmon, and anyone else who espouses it. They need to show (a) clear examples of Joseph Smith’s revisions being dependent on Clarke’s commentary and (b) a consistent pattern of such revisions dependent on Clarke. In my opinion, they have not succeeded in doing so. Random isolated similarities are not sufficient to prove their theory, particularly if those similarities can be explained by simpler means. Too often Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon did not read carefully what Clarke wrote, and thus they frequently misinterpret him by ascribing intentions to him that cannot be sustained from his own words. In almost every one of their examples, far simpler explanations are available that are based on the nature of the JST text and on Joseph Smith’s demonstrable patterns of revising it. In my view, their lack of examination of the passages in the context of the Prophet’s other revisions blinded them to what was actually happening in the translation. For example, some of the convergences they propose are revisions the Prophet had already made multiple times before arriving at the passages where they think Clarke influenced the change. I do not believe that the justifications they set forth for any of the individual passages are compelling, nor that the cumulative total of them is compelling.

Exodus 11:9⁴⁹

KJV: Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you

JST: Pharaoh will not hearken unto you

For linguistic reasons, Adam Clarke criticized the King James translators for their use of “shall” here instead of “will.”⁵⁰

Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon suggest that Joseph Smith followed Clarke in making this change, but there is no reason to think that this is the case. The manuscripts show that the Prophet dictated both “shall” and “will” when revising texts. Prior to arriving at this verse, he had already changed “shall” to “will” in several places, including Genesis 23:9, Romans 3:30, and Revelation 19:15. In a passage similar to the one

of this. The quotes in Wayment’s “Making of a Bible Revision” correctly include Clarke’s italics.

49. In her interview, Wilson-Lemmon (“The Joseph Smith Translation,” at c. 15:22) gives the reference as Exodus 9, but it is clear that she means Exodus 11:9, because that is where the phrase is that she discusses, and that is where Clarke’s commentary is located as well.

50. Clarke’s insightful argument is that the two verbs are not synonymous but that *shall* suggests inevitability while *will* implies the use of agency.

here, he had already changed “he shall not let the people go” to “he will not let the people go” (Exodus 4:21). In a passage identical to this one, he had already changed “Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you” to “Pharaoh will not hearken unto you” (Exodus 7:4). Clarke suggested none of those changes, and thus, because Joseph Smith made them prior to arriving at Exodus 11, the connection that Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon make with Clarke is unfounded.

The Prophet made other significant changes in this verse and in surrounding verses, but Clarke’s commentary cannot explain any of them. This is something we shall see repeatedly.

Exodus 22:28

KJV: Thou shalt not revile the gods

JST: Thou shalt not revile against God

That Adam Clarke disliked the KJV here is understandable, because its wording is indefensible. Joseph Smith’s change is different from Clarke’s paraphrase, but both replace “the gods” with “God,” as do virtually all modern translations.

Wayment suggests that the Prophet was dependent on Adam Clarke here, but there is a much better explanation.⁵¹ One of his guiding instincts in revising Bible passages was to correct errors, particularly doctrinal errors. There are no “gods,” and why would the law of Moses want to protect “the gods” from ridicule anyway? This is a common-sense revision that is predictable and consistent with many other changes Joseph Smith made.

Psalms 33:2

KJV: Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery, and an instrument of ten strings.

JST: Praise the Lord with thy voice, sing unto him with the psaltery and harp, an instrument with ten strings.

Adam Clarke’s commentary expresses displeasure with the KJV of this verse and argues that the words represented as “psaltery” and “an instrument of ten strings” are a single instrument. His reconstruction of the Hebrew removes the “*and*” between them.

51. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 5.

Joseph Smith's revision is not at all what Clarke had in mind, but Wayment misreads Clarke here and wants to attribute it to Clarke.⁵² The Prophet reinvented the verse. He retained the "and" and relocated "harp" following it, equating the harp, not the "psaltery," with the ten-stringed instrument. He inserted "thy voice" in the place of the harp in the first clause of the sentence. There is much evidence in the JST to show that when the Prophet removed or replaced words, he had a tendency to save the deleted words and place them elsewhere, and this is a good example.⁵³ All of these revisions are the opposite of what Clarke wanted.

Psalms 119:20

KJV: My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times

JST: My heart breaketh, for my soul longeth after thy judgments at all times

King James's translators rejected the sensible reading of the Geneva Bible in the first clause, "Mine heart breaketh." Clarke does not call for a revision of the text but merely comments in the course of his discussion, "We have a similar expression: — *it broke my heart — that is heart-breaking — she died of a broken heart.*"

With no more evidence than that, Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon believe that those words from Clarke influenced Joseph Smith to change "soul" to "heart."⁵⁴ They have no case here, and there are other changes in the passage that cannot be attributed to Clarke. Many examples in the manuscripts and Joseph Smith's Bible show that he viewed italicized words with suspicion. Because this verse contains a string of three italicized words, it invites a change. The unidiomatic nature of the first phrase is obvious. We do not say "My soul breaketh" in modern English, so Joseph Smith changed it sensibly to "My heart breaketh," consistent with revisions he made to other unidiomatic phrases. But he may also have been especially sensitive about the meaning of the word "soul." Shortly before he made this revision in Psalms, he received a revelation stating that "the spirit and the body are the soul of man. And the

52. Ibid., 5.

53. This is particularly visible in the passages in which God is described as repenting or hardening someone's heart, e.g., Genesis 6:6; Exodus 9:12; 2 Samuel 24:16.

54. Wilson-Lemmon, "The Joseph Smith Translation," at c. 17:40.

resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul” (D&C 88:15–16). With those words in mind, the phrase “my soul breaketh” makes no sense at all.

True to his frequent pattern of preserving KJV words when changing the meaning of a verse, he saved the word “soul” and moved it to a different location in the verse, certainly not anticipated by Clarke. He revised the grammar of the sentence further by replacing the noun “longing” with a verbal phrase, “longeth after,” likewise not anticipated or desired by Clarke. The combined changes make the passage read very nicely and are a significant improvement over the KJV.

This is one of several examples in which Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon isolate one small similarity to something Clarke wrote in his commentary, but it is in a Bible passage where nothing in Clarke can account for the other changes Joseph Smith made.

Song of Solomon

JST: “The Songs of Solomon are not inspired writings”

There is no justification for Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon’s attribution of this statement to the influence of Adam Clarke.⁵⁵

Clarke opposed interpreting the Song of Solomon as an allegory for Christ and the Church, as some Christians did. Indeed, he opposed interpreting it as anything other than what the words in it actually say, and he advised ministers not to preach from it. With no more evidence than that, Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon come to the conclusion that Joseph Smith was influenced by Clarke to reject the book as scripture. Their only attempt to support this idea is to point out that Clarke in his introduction called the book by a traditional Latin title that is a plural noun, “Canticles,” and Joseph Smith’s scribe, Frederick G. Williams, wrote a plural noun, “Songs.” Reasoning like this does not work at all, and the argument is misleading anyway. Clarke never uses the word “songs” for the book. He uses the plural “Canticles” a total of three times in his introduction, but elsewhere he refers to the book over *ninety* times with singular titles, nouns, and pronouns.⁵⁶ We may never know why

55. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 270–71; Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 6.

56. “Song of Solomon,” “Song of Songs,” “a song,” “the Song,” “this Song,” “this poem,” “it,” “this book,” “the book,” “an ode,” “the ode,” etc. Yet Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon write that in Clarke’s introduction, “several places referred to ‘odes’ or ‘songs,’ in grammatical agreement with the plural title ‘Canticles’ rather

the Prophet or his scribe chose “songs,” but nothing suggests that it was because of Adam Clarke.

Many readers, starting centuries ago, have concluded that the Song of Solomon is “not inspired writings,” so the conclusions of Joseph Smith and Adam Clarke were not unique to them.⁵⁷ But there is something else to consider — not only here but elsewhere as we look at the Adam Clarke theory. By the time the Prophet came to this book in his Bible revision, probably in the spring of 1833, he had already dictated every word of the Book of Mormon and every word of what would later be called the Book of Moses. He had also already received about eighty of the revelations now in the Doctrine and Covenants. I believe that he was in a unique position to discern the nature of inspired writings, and I don’t believe he needed suggestions from anyone else to do so.

Isaiah 34:7

KJV: the unicorns shall come down

JST: the re-em shall come down

Clarke provides the Hebrew word that underlies “unicorns,” רֶאֱמִים, and also the singular form and its transliteration: “רֶאֶם *reem*.” Joseph Smith’s revision of the word, according to Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “demonstrates fairly direct borrowing from Clarke,”⁵⁸ and “Clarke appears to be the obvious source.”⁵⁹ This is highly unlikely.

Scholars and lay readers in Joseph Smith’s day and earlier viewed “unicorns” as an unfortunate word choice in the King James Bible. Thus, standard commentaries had explanations for it. Noah Webster’s Bible has a note, “or *rhinoceros*,” and George Noyes translates it “wild buffaloes.” John Gill’s commentary proposes rhinoceroses or buffalos, and Clarke mentions wild goats and rhinoceroses.

Based on other revisions he made in his Bible, it seems unlikely that Joseph Smith would have needed an outside motivation to replace an infelicitous word like “unicorns.” But how he arrived at “*re-em*” is another question. He likely got the word from some printed source, or from someone who had learned of it from a printed source. Perhaps

than with the singular title ‘Song of Solomon’” (“A Recovered Resource,” 271). Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon should have known that this is not true.

57. For various interpretations over the centuries, see Marvin H. Pope, *Song of Songs: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 89–229.

58. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 268.

59. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 6.

when he and Williams came to “unicorns” in Isaiah 34:7, they looked it up somewhere. Several factors argue against Clarke’s commentary being the source. Clarke does not suggest replacing the English word with a transliteration of the Hebrew word but with an English noun. If Joseph Smith had followed Clarke, he would have inserted the name of an animal, as Clarke proposes. Clarke transliterates the singular as “*reem*,” which suggest a one-syllable word to untrained eyes and does not explain why Joseph Smith or his scribe inserted a hyphen in the middle of the word. Had they looked at Clarke, they would have had no reason to assume a two-syllable word. The hyphen had to come from somewhere, but Clarke’s commentary does not include it anywhere, and nothing in Clarke suggests the need for it.

The Prophet’s two-syllable “*re-em*” is the Hebrew singular form, but we do not know if he knew that it is the singular or intended it to be singular. It replaces a noun that is obviously plural in a passage full of plural animals.

The word *unicorn* appears six times in the King James translation, and *unicorns* appears three times. Clarke addresses each of those but one, and this is the only one that Joseph Smith addressed. At the first occurrence, Numbers 23:22, Clarke discusses the animal at length, but Joseph Smith made no change there. At Psalm 22:21 Clarke discusses it again. In this case the Prophet revised the verse substantially, but he did not remove the word *unicorns*, and his revision to the verse cannot be explained with reference to Clarke.

In his commentary on the surrounding verses in Isaiah 34, Clarke makes several suggestions for revising the text. The fact that none of those suggestions are reflected in Joseph Smith’s translation adds to the unlikelihood that Clarke was the Prophet’s source here at all.⁶⁰

Matthew 5:22

KJV: whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause

JST: whosoever is angry with his brother

60. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon mistranslate the singular “*re-em*” with the plural English word “unicorns”: “‘Re-em,’ which is readily recognizable as a transliteration of the Hebrew word translated into English as ‘unicorns’” (“A Recovered Resource,” 268). Wayment provides three transliterations of the Hebrew words, and all of them are incorrect: *rə’ēmēm* (Ibid., 269), *reim*, and *re-im* (“Making of a Bible Revision,” 6). It is unclear whether he intends the latter two to represent the singular or the plural.

Adam Clarke's commentary points out that the Greek word translated "without a cause" is not found in Vaticanus nor in some other manuscripts, and "it was probably a marginal gloss originally, which in process of time crept into the text." This was not a revolutionary discovery, because even the translations of Martin Luther and William Tyndale did not include the clause.

Wilson-Lemmon states that the absence of this clause was the first discovery she made that linked Joseph Smith's translation with the commentary of Adam Clarke.⁶¹ But Clarke is not the source for the Prophet's rendering of this verse, the Book of Mormon is. The evidence is clear that when he revised Matthew 5, Joseph Smith edited the KJV text against 3 Nephi in the 1830 Book of Mormon, pages 479–81. He did not copy the Book of Mormon text exactly, but he inserted into Matthew 5 about thirty wordings of it that differ from the KJV. The Book of Mormon is the source for the absence of "without a cause" in the JST, not Adam Clarke. In addition to those revisions, Joseph Smith's translation of Matthew 5 also contains over ten other changes that cannot be accounted for with reference to Adam Clarke.

Matthew 6:13

KJV: And lead us not into temptation

JST: And suffer us not to be led into temptation

Adam Clarke paraphrases this passage as follows: "*Bring us not into sore trial.*"

Wayment attributes Joseph Smith's revision of this phrase to Clarke, even though Clarke's restatement of the Greek differs entirely from the Prophet's revision.⁶² Clarke points out, however, in the middle of a commentary of about 200 words, that God "only *permits* or *suffers*" some things to happen, and those words are the very thin basis for Wayment's connection. But Clarke was making a theological point, not a lexical one, and he was certainly not suggesting that the verse be revised. This JST revision is a predictable Joseph Smith change based on doctrinal instincts: God does not lead people into temptation. The word *suffer*, meaning "allow," was not foreign to the Prophet's vocabulary and appears many times in the King James Bible and the Book of Mormon.

61. Wilson-Lemmon, "The Joseph Smith Translation," beginning at c. 6:25.

62. Wayment, "Making of a Bible Revision," 8–9.

Matthew 19:19

KJV: Honour thy father and *thy* mother

JST: Honour thy father and mother

Wayment's attribution of this JST edit to Clarke is unconvincing.⁶³ Here and elsewhere he and Wilson-Lemmon obscure the discussion by failing to italicize the words that appear in italics in the King James translation. In this case Wayment neither italicizes the "*thy*" nor even mentions that it is italicized. To make this distinction is critical, and not to do so is a serious error when dealing with the JST, because it has long been known that Joseph Smith focused on italicized words when revising the text. There are many examples of him revising text by deleting italicized words or by deleting and replacing them.⁶⁴ Thus, reasons internal to the JST provide a better explanation for the change than reliance on Adam Clarke.

Matthew 20:21

KJV: the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left

Clarke: the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left

JST: the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left

Adam Clarke changed "the" in "on the left" to "thy," resulting in "on thy left."

Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon state that Joseph Smith, "apparently reflecting Clarke, changed the verse in the same manner: "The one on thy right hand and the other on ~~the~~ <thy> left."⁶⁵ The trouble with this assertion is that the Prophet did not change this passage at all. He dictated the words exactly as in the King James translation, "on the left," and that is how they were recorded by his scribe Sidney Rigdon. When John Whitmer later made a transcription of the dictated manuscript, he made a scribal error here and miswrote "the" as "thy." The argument of Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon here is based on Whitmer's transcribing error, not on a Joseph Smith revision of the verse. Thus, it has nothing to do with Adam Clarke.

63. Ibid., 9.

64. Examples can be seen in revisions at Genesis 21:29; Psalms 11:6; Mark 2:1-2; 3:13.

65. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, "A Recovered Resource," 272.

Matthew 22:14

KJV: many are called, but few *are* chosen

JST: many are called but few chosen, wherefore all do not have on the wedding garment

Clarke simply comments on the story, universalizing the wedding story to represent dwelling with God in glory. Because his comments include the words “marriage garment,” Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon believe that Joseph Smith’s addition to verse 14 was somehow influenced by him, even though Clarke does not suggest revising the verse, makes no attempt to add to it, and does not even restate it.⁶⁶

It is difficult to see how someone could come to the conclusion that this insertion has anything to do with Adam Clarke, unless one had already decided in advance that Joseph Smith necessarily borrowed from Clarke. Part of this parable is about someone showing up at the wedding without the wedding garment. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon do not account for the fact that the words “wedding garment” appear twice in the preceding verses. Verse 11 says that the man came to the event without wearing a wedding garment, verse 12 says that the host was not pleased that the man did not have a wedding garment, and verse 13 says that the man was therefore thrown out of the event. There are thus ample suggestions already in the text for Joseph Smith to add those same words to bring the story to its conclusion, so why would someone look outside the text for an explanation? Clarke, by the way, does not even use the words “wedding garment.” He says “marriage garment.” Nothing in Adam Clarke suggests this revision.

Matthew 27:37

KJV: And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

JST: And Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew. And the chief priest said unto Pilate, It should be written and set up over his head his accusation: This is he that said he was Jesus, the king of the Jews. But Pilate answered and said, What I have written I have written. Let it alone.

66. Ibid., 274.

Commenting on this verse, Adam Clarke wrote, “Both Luke, chap. xxiii. 38, and John, chap. xix. 20, say that this accusation was written in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.” On the basis of that statement, Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon write that the Prophet’s revisions at Matthew 27:37 may “be explained in terms of him imitating Clarke’s commentary on this verse, which addresses the languages of the sign fastened to the cross.”⁶⁷

The Prophet’s revision is extensive, and nothing in it looks like Clarke’s commentary except the mention that the sign was written in three languages, something Joseph Smith already knew. His revision adds to this text elements found in the accounts of Luke and John, but much of the language is unique to this revision. The best explanation is that it is a harmonization, in the sense that it draws Matthew’s text closer to those of Luke and John. The intent seems to have been a general one to flesh out Matthew’s terse account with information that Joseph Smith and other Bible readers already knew from previous readings of other Gospels. Further evidence against an Adam Clarke connection is the fact that the Prophet revised Mark’s account (Mark 15:26) in about the same way, also with no relation to anything in Clarke. It is difficult to understand why Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon propose Adam Clarke to be the source of this revision rather than the more obvious parallel texts in Luke and John.

Mark 8:29

KJV: Thou art the Christ

JST: Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God

Wayment states that Clarke “argued directly for this addition.”⁶⁸ That is not true, though Clarke does point out that some manuscripts and versions have it.

There is a much simpler explanation for this revision than reliance on Clarke. As with the example from Matthew 27:37 above, it is far more likely that the Prophet simply felt that Peter’s statement was incomplete as it stood, and thus he fleshed it out to make it consistent with the more familiar reading in Matthew 16:16. Part of the evidence for this is that earlier on the same manuscript page, at Mark 8:12, he had already revised Mark’s words to match Matthew 12:39, without any suggestion

67. Ibid., 273.

68. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 6; Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 272–73.

from Clarke. Further evidence for conscious harmonization of this verse is that he also rewrote Luke's version of this passage to match Matthew's, though Clarke makes no such suggestion there.

Clarke provides what he felt was better wording for four passages in this chapter. Joseph Smith's translations contains none of them. And Joseph Smith made over thirty changes in the chapter, some of them rather extensive, and none of them resemble anything in Clarke. Thus, we have, as we see again and again in the passages with supposed Adam Clarke connections, numerous rewordings proposed by Clarke, many changes made by Joseph Smith, and only random and inconsequential similarities between the two.

Luke 19:25

KJV: (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

JST: Deleted

Adam Clarke mentions that some manuscripts omit this verse, but he believed it was an original saying and that it should be retained. He even provided a very wordy alternate reading for it. Joseph Smith removed the verse entirely.

Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon believe that Clarke is the source for this revision, but I find this idea to be without merit.⁶⁹ To have Joseph Smith dependent on Clarke here, who believed that the verse was authentic, they argue, unfairly, that though the Prophet or Rigdon got the idea from Clarke, they did not understand what he was saying and thus got it wrong. Clarke's analysis of the verse, however, is only two sentences long, his intent is clear, and to suggest that Joseph Smith misunderstood Clarke is indefensible. Additional changes made to nearby text at the same time this verse was revised show no resemblance to anything in Clarke's commentary, and revisions proposed by Clarke are not found in the JST.

While we do not know why Joseph Smith deleted verse 25, it should be noted that in the text it is clearly intrusive. It is a quotation that appears in the middle of a quotation from a different speaker. A reasonable reader could easily conclude that it is out of place. This is perhaps why the King James translation has it in parentheses, and it is perhaps why it was deleted in the JST.

69. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, "A Recovered Resource," 268; Wayment, "Making of a Bible Revision," 7-8.

Luke 23:32

Clarke's KJV: there were also two other malefactors led with him to be put to death

Joseph Smith's KJV: there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death

JST: there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death

Adam Clarke's edition of the King James Bible reads as noted above. He states that this verse "should certainly be translated *two others, malefactors*. ... As it now stands in the text, it seems to intimate that our blessed Lord was also a *malefactor*." Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon state, "Apparently in deference to Clarke, Smith rendered the problematic line in precisely the same way," that is, by inserting the letter *s* to change "other" to "others."⁷⁰

But there is nothing here "in deference to Clarke," and the lack of care with which Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon treat this example is troubling. Unlike Clarke's Bible, the edition of the KJV that Joseph Smith used in preparing his revision already has "others." Joseph Smith did not change this verse at all. He simply read it as it appeared in his Bible, and his scribe wrote it down.⁷¹

John 2:24

KJV: because he knew all men

JST: because he knew all things

Clarke prefers a different Greek word than the one that underlies "all" in the KJV, which translates, according to Clarke, as "*every* man, or *all things*." For theological reasons, he prefers "all things."

Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon again cloud the discussion by failing to italicize the words that appear in italics in the King James translation.⁷² In this case they do not mention that the word "*men*" is italicized. It invites a change. Because revisions often started with the removal of italicized words, that is likely what happened here. Without the italicized "*men*," the English clause ends with an adjective that does

70. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, "A Recovered Resource," 269.

71. This could have been checked against an 1828 H. & E. Phinney Bible. Wayment misquotes the KJV of this verse in "Making of a Bible Revision" (9).

72. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, "A Recovered Resource," 275; Wayment, "Making of a Bible Revision," 9.

not have anything to modify, and the insertion of “things” completes the thought consistent with Jesus’s omniscience. There is thus no need to look for an external influence.

There is even further reason to rule out Clarke as the source for this change. His commentary on John 2 has over 3,000 words, and he recommends changing the text in ten places. Joseph Smith made over thirty changes in this short chapter, but this is the only one that resembles anything in Clarke. Why, among Clarke’s thousands of words and scores of thoughtful insights, would Joseph Smith make only this one small revision of minimal consequence if he had Clarke’s commentary in front of him? This example illustrates the fundamental weakness of the Adam Clarke-JST theory.

Romans 9:25

KJV: Osee

JST: Hosea

The King James translators chose to use the Greek New Testament forms of Old Testament names rather than using the more familiar Old Testament forms. In this verse the KJV uses “Osee” for the name of the prophet Hosea. Clarke points out that “Osee” was “Hosea.”

This is an obvious place for Joseph Smith to make a sensible change, and he did not need influence from any other source, though other translations and commentaries make the identification. “Osee” is unrecognizable and unhelpful and is found nowhere else in the scriptures. If the Prophet did not know who “Osee” was, the printed Bible he used has a side note here directing the reader to “Hos 2, 23.” Wayment attributes this change to Clarke, but he does so without consideration of the Prophet’s other name changes.⁷³ In revising the New Testament, the Prophet generally retained the New Testament forms of the names when he came to them, but he occasionally dictated the more recognizable Old Testament forms. By this point in his New Translation he had already changed “Esaias” to “Isaiah” in Mark 7:6, and “Sem” and “Noe” to “Shem” and “Noah” in Luke 3:36. Clarke mentions none of those.

Romans 11:2

KJV: how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying

JST: how he maketh complaint to God against Israel, saying

73. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 9–10.

Clarke gives a theological commentary on this verse and in the process states that Elijah, “in his addresses to God, made his complaint against Israel.” He simply uses those words in his own discussion of God’s relationship with Israel and of the conditions that prevail in modern times. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon misrepresent Clarke by saying that changing the wording of the verse was “a suggestion that was made by Clarke.”⁷⁴ Clarke makes no such suggestion.

Clarke’s commentary on the verse is almost 200 words long, and in it he cites three other passages of scripture and two earlier authors, and he includes five Greek words and one Hebrew word. After all that, the word *complaint* appears in his retelling of the story. I believe there is a better explanation for the JST’s use of the word than reliance on Clarke. First, it is clear in the next verse that what Elijah was doing was complaining. Thus, I suspect that the phrase “maketh intercession to God against” caught Joseph Smith’s eye and invited a change. Elijah was not making intercession, he was complaining. More particularly, the words refer to Elijah speaking *against* people. In modern revelation, “make intercession” is used only with respect to the saving work of Jesus Christ, and it is always followed by the preposition *for* (e.g., 2 Nephi 2:9–10; Mosiah 14:12). In this case at Romans 11:2, Elijah is pleading *against* Israel, and the words “make intercession” in that context look unnatural to Christian eyes. This seems to me to be a predictable correction of an unidiomatic phrase that Joseph Smith felt was wrong.

Romans 14:23

KJV: And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith

JST: And he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because it is not of faith

Adam Clarke retranslates these words as follows: “*But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith.*” Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon believe that the change of “damned” to “condemned” was influenced by Clarke and “may have influenced later Mormon thought regarding the doctrine of the judgment of the wicked,” though they do not explain how.⁷⁵

It is true that Joseph Smith and Adam Clarke both replaced “damned” with “condemned” here, but there is no similarity in the

74. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 271.

75. *Ibid.*, 273; also Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 10.

other revisions each made to the verse, suggesting that the one common change was coincidental. The reason for the Prophet's revision is actually quite clear inside the JST itself. This passage is one of several in which he softened, or ratcheted down, the level of condemnation in the KJV text. One of the instincts that guided him was the instinct to soften words like "damned" when discussing God's judgments. Some examples include the change from "damnation" to "punishment" (Matthew 23:14), "hell" to "prison" (Acts 2:27), "worthy of death" to "inexcusable" (Romans 1:32), and "damnation" to "punishment" (Romans 13:2). The Prophet made all of those revisions before making this one at Romans 14:23, and he continued to make similar revisions afterward.⁷⁶ In seeking isolated word similarities out of context, Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon are missing important information like this and are drawing conclusions that cannot be sustained.

1 Corinthians 11:10

KJV: For this cause ought the woman to have power on *her* head

JST: For this cause ought the woman to have a covering on her head

Clarke provides a commentary of over 1,300 words on this verse and concludes that he does not know what it means. Wayment attributes to Clarke words that Clarke quotes from another author, a "Bishop Pearce," who says that the power mentioned is "the power of the husband over the wife. The word *power* standing for the *sign* or *token* of that power which was a *covering* or *veil*." Wayment says that the Prophet and Clarke "change the verse in precisely the same way."⁷⁷ This is not true. Nowhere does Clarke (or Bishop Pearce) propose a change for this verse. But why look outside of Paul's own words for the origin of the word "covering"? Wayment does not consider the immediate context of the preceding verses, which are in part about people wearing coverings on their heads. The chapter synopsis in the Prophet's Bible mentions head covering, and Paul mentions head covering in verses 4, 5, 6, and 7. Thus, when Joseph Smith came upon the nonsensical phrase in verse 10 that a woman should wear "power on *her* head," he made a rational and predictable change. There is no reason to look outside the text itself to explain the revision.

1 Corinthians 15:26

KJV: The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death

76. Examples include 1 Corinthians 11:29 and 2 Peter 2:3.

77. Wayment, "Making of a Bible Revision," 7.

JST: The last enemy, death, shall be destroyed

Clarke provides a paragraph in which he says that the general resurrection will put an end to death, but nowhere does he talk about the wording of the verse. Wayment’s statement that Joseph Smith’s revision is “the exact word order suggested by Clarke” is simply not true.⁷⁸ Clarke does not suggest a word order.

There is a better explanation for how the Prophet came to revise this verse. This short sentence has two italicized words in it, not mentioned by Wayment. Removing them yields, “The last enemy shall be destroyed death.” The Prophet’s rewording is a predictable fix for the verse that is consistent with how he revised many other verses in the JST.

1 Corinthians 15:52

KJV: in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump

JST: in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the trump

Clarke gives a 200-word commentary on “at the last trump,” drawing from rabbinic tradition to explain it.

Wayment’s statement that Joseph Smith’s revision follows “a clarification first proposed by Clarke” is untrue.⁷⁹ Clarke makes no proposal anywhere in this verse, and the words from Clarke that Wayment quotes have to do with a later clause in the verse that Joseph Smith did not revise. The Prophet removed the word “last,” but it is evident that Clarke did not want it removed, because he repeats it in his commentary. That Joseph Smith removed it shows that there is no relationship between his revision and Clarke.

Colossians 2:20–22

KJV: [20] why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, [21] (Touch not; taste not; handle not; [22] Which all are to perish with the using,) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

JST: why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances which are after the doctrines and commandments of men, who teach you to touch not, taste not, handle not all those things which are to perish with the using?

78. Ibid., 10.

79. Ibid.

In this passage, Joseph Smith, among many changes, moved the second half of verse 22 to the end of verse 20. The Alexander Campbell and Rodolphus Dickinson translations reorder the verses in the same way. Clarke writes, “These words should follow the 20th verse, of which they form a part.” Without rearranging the words, the translations of Abner Kneeland and John Palfrey insert extra words in attempts to make better sense of the existing text.⁸⁰ These examples show that others in Joseph Smith’s generation observed that the awkward passage was in need of repair. But had the Prophet done as Clarke advised, it would still be very awkward, and it would not look much like how he actually revised it. If there were a printed source that influenced the JST, Campbell’s translation, because it was widely available and known, would be a better candidate than Clarke’s six-volume commentary.

There is no way to tell if the Prophet was influenced by any printed source to make this revision. Campbell, Clarke, Dickinson, Kneeland, and Palfrey were not drawing from superior Greek manuscripts, nor from special academic knowledge, in wanting to revise the passage. They simply observed that in its current state — in Greek as well as in English — the text was cumbersome. The awkwardness of the text itself was sufficient to invite a change, and Joseph Smith could see this as well as anyone else. Verses 20–23 constitute a single sentence — both in Greek and in the King James translation — with a parenthetical phrase inserted in the middle that spreads over a verse and a half (verses 21–22a). The insertion interrupts the grammar of the sentence and makes the whole passage awkward and difficult to comprehend. Joseph Smith’s revision places the parenthetical phrase in a clause at the end of a sentence, and it makes the whole passage read very nicely. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon write that “the change does little to smooth out the flow of the English translation, and nothing to clarify the meaning.”⁸¹ This is manifestly untrue, because the revision certainly does smooth out the flow and clarify the meaning, and thus it is startling that they would be so condescending about it. With several carefully selected additional words (not suggested by Clarke or Campbell), the revision creates the clearest reading of this passage that I have found. It makes the sentence grammatically whole, and the insertion of “who teach you to” changes

80. John Gorham Palfrey, ed., *The New Testament in the Common Version, Conformed to Griesbach’s Standard Greek Text* (Boston: Gray and Bowen, 1830).

81. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 268; see also Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 7.

the overall meaning significantly and makes sense of the “touch not, taste not, handle not” sequence. This JST revision is a gem.

Joseph Smith made other changes in the surrounding text (in verse 23, for example) that cannot be explained with reference to Clarke, suggesting even more that Clarke was not the source for any changes in this passage.

Clarke recommended reordering verses in other passages. He believed, for example, that verse 13 of Matthew 23 should come after verse 14, but Joseph Smith did not make that change. Joseph Smith, in turn, moved text in other places. He placed John 1:28 after 1:34 and Mark 14:10–11 after 14:28, moves not suggested in Clarke. He moved verse 23 of 1 Timothy 5 to after verse 25, even though Clarke (in a small mention in a large commentary on other topics) stated that the verse was in the correct place and should not be moved. The Prophet also put Philippians 1:22 in front of 1:21 and moved Hebrews 7:21 to after 7:22, changes not reflected in the commentary of Clarke. He moved a piece of Exodus 33:3 to 33:1, also not noted in Clarke. And he reversed the order of verses 49 and 50 in John 6, also not noted in Clarke. Examples like these show Joseph Smith’s independence as a reviser of the text, something readily apparent in the more dramatic changes he made in Genesis and elsewhere.

2 Timothy 3:16

KJV: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable

JST: And all scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable

Clarke states, “This sentence is not well translated,” and he renders it “*Every writing divinely inspired, is profitable.*” The primary issue in the English translation is whether there is an implied *is* before “given by inspiration of God,” as the KJV translators assumed, or whether “All scripture given by inspiration of God” is the subject of the sentence.

I can think of two reasons why Joseph Smith might have wanted to revise this verse, and neither of them suggests reliance on Adam Clarke. To begin with, the verse as it stands in the King James translation is not true. One of the Prophet’s guiding instincts was to remove errors, and it is an error to state that everything in the Bible is inspired and profitable. As we have seen, in revising the Old Testament he rejected a whole book as “not inspired,” and he later taught, “[There are] many things in the Bible which do not, as they now stand, accord with the revelation of the

Holy Ghost to me.”⁸² Perhaps it was the false idea expressed in this verse that led to the revision.

But there is also a textual issue here. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon again distort the matter by not showing the italics in the KJV passage.⁸³ They believe that Joseph Smith was “apparently persuaded by Clarke’s reading of the verse,”⁸⁴ but instead the change reflects the Prophet’s instinct to focus on italicized words. This is another example in which he deleted italicized words and then adjusted the remaining words to make sense of what remained. In this case, the deletion of the first italicized word, the verb “*is*,” makes almost inevitable the other changes he made. Clarke argued that the “and” should be omitted, but the Prophet kept it and moved it to the beginning of the sentence. Altogether, the only words that the revisions of Joseph Smith and Adam Clarke have in common are the two words that neither of them changed.

Titus 2:11

KJV: the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men

JST: the grace of God, which bringeth salvation to all men, hath appeared

In his lengthy commentary on this verse, Adam Clarke mentions the two possible readings, and it appears that for theological reasons he favors the same reading that Joseph Smith used.

In revising the passage the Prophet was not alone. The King James translators rejected the superior reading of the Tyndale and Geneva translations to place “to all men” after “hath appeared,” but Coke’s commentary argues for the same revision, and Kneeland translated the verse in the same way. Most modern translations do as well. According to Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, the Prophet apparently arrived at his revision “by reading Clarke,”⁸⁵ but a better argument can be made that he was not influenced by a printed source at all. This is a very simple revision that is invited by the KJV text itself. Many examples exist of

82. “Discourse, 11 June 1843–A, as Reported by Willard Richards,” p. [245], *The Joseph Smith Papers*, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/discourse-11-june-1843-a-as-reported-by-willard-richards/>, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization standardized.

83. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 269; Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 11.

84. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 270.

85. *Ibid.*, 274; see also Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 10.

Joseph Smith revising text that he felt was in error. The KJV makes the revision predictable because it is simply not true that God's salvation had already appeared to everyone (a point that Clarke makes as well). In addition, Joseph Smith's text does not match any of Clarke's suggestions in surrounding verses, making it unlikely that he was aware of Clarke's comments here. This appears to be a common-sense correction on Joseph Smith's part to correct a passage that he believed was inaccurate.

Hebrews 9:15–18, 20

KJV: testament

JST: covenant

In Hebrews 9:15–20, Joseph Smith changed “testament” to “covenant” in all six occurrences. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon attribute the revisions to him following Clarke's lead.⁸⁶

Kneeland and Macknight use “covenant” here in their translations, Coke and Clarke clearly prefer it, and Thomson's translation had the subtitle “Containing the Old and New Covenant.” Even Dickinson, with a preference for obscure and grandiose vocabulary, uses “covenant” in some of the verses in Hebrews 9 in his translation. These examples show that the natural evolution of the English language had made “testament” no longer a desired term in passages like these. Joseph Smith had produced texts containing the word “covenant” on many occasions prior to arriving at Hebrews. His revision of Genesis has over forty occurrences of the word. Clarke likewise argues for “covenant” to replace “testament” in the sacrament accounts in the Gospels and 1 Corinthians, but Joseph Smith did not revise those.⁸⁷ Whether he was influenced here by an outside source or not, he concluded, as most modern readers will, that “testament” is an awkward and unidiomatic word choice for what elsewhere in the scriptures is called “covenant.”

Perhaps a strong argument that this revision was not dependent on Clarke is something that we see in many other places with supposed Adam Clarke connections. The Prophet made significant wording changes on the same manuscript page, but none of those changes resemble anything in Clarke's commentary.

86. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 270; Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 8.

87. Clarke argues for the change explicitly at Matthew 26:28 and Luke 22:20. At Mark 14:22 and 1 Corinthians 11:25 he refers readers to his discussion at Matthew 26.

James 1:2

KJV: count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations

JST: count it all joy when ye fall into many afflictions

Adam Clarke writes that the word translated “temptation” means “affliction, persecution, or *trial* of any kind.” Of his three alternative English words to replace the one in the KJV, he noted his preferred choice, “*trial*,” by italicizing it.

It may be tempting to see Joseph Smith being influenced by Clarke here, but it certainly cannot be demonstrated.⁸⁸ And again, there is a simpler explanation. I suspect that it was the meaning of the English word that suggested to the Prophet to make the revision. Perhaps we should rejoice in our trials and afflictions, but rejoicing over temptation is something else. The word has a very specialized meaning in modern English, and the context of the passage (verses 2–4) suggests that it is not the right choice here. Joseph Smith was aware of what the verse was supposed to be communicating, and he knew that a revision was in order. He made revisions like this in many places.

1 John 2:7

KJV: I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning

JST: I write a new commandment unto you, but it is the same commandment which ye had from the beginning

Clarke points out the obvious contradiction between this verse (“no new commandment”) and the following verse (“a new commandment”), but his discussion is theological, not lexical.

Again there is no reason to view Joseph Smith’s revision as being dependent on any printed source, as Wayment believes.⁸⁹ Clarke does not call for a change and likely would not have liked what the Prophet did to this verse. The rewrite simply harmonizes it with John 13:34, 1 John 2:8, and 2 John 1:5. This seems to be a case of him feeling that the wording was inaccurate and thus in need of revision to reflect the more familiar wording in other verses. Joseph Smith was as capable of concluding this as was anyone else.

88. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 10–11.

89. *Ibid.*, 12.

1 John 3:16

KJV: Hereby perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for us

JST: Hereby perceive we the love of Christ, because he laid down his life for us

Adam Clarke restates this verse as follows: “*We have known* the love of God, because he had laid down his life for us.” Joseph Smith did not make any of the changes Clarke proposed, and Clarke does not propose the one change that Joseph Smith did make. Clarke notes that the italicized “*of God*” “is not in the text,” but he points out the obvious that either God’s love or Christ’s love “is necessarily understood.” He mentions that an “Arabic” manuscript has “of Christ,” and a Syriac manuscript has “his love to us.”⁹⁰

That Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon include this example as a connection with Clarke is puzzling, but that they disguise the problem in the verse by failing to mention that “*of God*” is in italics is indefensible.⁹¹ They state that “the word ‘Christ’ inexplicably appears” in the JST of the verse, but its appearance is not inexplicable at all. Two of Joseph Smith’s translating instincts are at work here — focus on italicized words and desire for doctrinal purity. The two italicized words are an obvious invitation for the Prophet to make a change, not only because they are a hypothetical insertion on the part of King James’s translators but also because they are imprecise to the point of being doctrinally wrong. God the Father did not lay down his life for us, Jesus did. An italicized insertion that is doctrinally weak provides a predictable location for a change, for which Joseph Smith provided a revision without reference to a printed source.

1 John 5:13

KJV: that ye may believe

JST: that ye may continue to believe

The word “believe” appears twice in this verse. Joseph Smith changed the second one to “continue to believe,” as did the translations of Campbell and Macknight. Clarke likewise prefers “continue to believe” and gives theological reasons why Christians must continue to believe.

90. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon misstate Clarke’s comment about a Syriac manuscript; “A Recovered Resource,” 271–72.

91. *Ibid.*, 271; Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 11.

Wayment states that “Clarke was clearly the source for this altered translation,” but the evidence shows that this is not the case.⁹² The Prophet had already made this change repeatedly before arriving at this verse, and thus there is no justification for attributing the change to Clarke. Wayment does not take into account that Joseph Smith had already added the word “continue” four times only inches earlier on the same manuscript page, at 1 John 3:6, 8, and 9 (twice). None of those are suggested by Clarke, and Clarke explicitly argues *against* making the kind of change in verse 9 that Joseph Smith made. The idea of continuing in sin as opposed to sinning was clearly on the Prophet’s mind, and he again added “continue” in a revision on the next line of the manuscript, at 1 John 5:18. Clarke does not mention that one either. In addition, Joseph Smith had already added “continue” to verbs in similar situations in Matthew 13:12 and Mark 4:24–25, neither of which was suggested by Clarke. Also, the Prophet’s text does not match any of Clarke’s other thoughts in those or surrounding passages.

Wilson-Lemmon says that there is “a strike through” at 1 John 5:13. There is no strike through on the manuscript, so it is unclear what she means.⁹³

Jude 1:11

KJV: ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core

JST: ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and shall perish in the gainsaying of Core

Jude was writing about apostates in his time and likening them to apostates in the Old Testament. Concerning them, Clarke writes, “It appears that these persons *opposed the authority of the apostles* of our Lord, as Korah and his associates did that of *Moses and Aaron*: and St. Jude predicts them a similar punishment.” From those words, Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon conclude that Joseph Smith’s revision is “a change that is directly noted by Clarke.”⁹⁴ It is difficult to follow their reasoning here, but in addition, Clarke does not propose a change to the text at all. He simply restates the obvious that the apostates Jude contended with would suffer the same fate as others in the past, which was Jude’s point.

92. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 8.

93. Wilson-Lemmon, “The Joseph Smith Translation,” at c. 17:05.

94. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 272.

Joseph Smith's revision is a clear improvement on the meaning of the English text. Even though the Greek verb is translated in the past tense in most translations, Jude's intent in using it was to foretell what was yet to come.⁹⁵ Joseph Smith's revision from the past tense to the future tense better reflects Jude's purpose by making the analogy more coherent and understandable.

Revelation 12:9

KJV: the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan

JST: the great dragon, who was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and also called Satan

Adam Clarke does not comment on this chapter but quotes instead the lengthy commentary of one J. E. Clarke.⁹⁶

The reason for Joseph Smith's revision is quite simple. In the KJV there is a comma after "the Devil" that makes possible the interpretation that Satan is someone different from the devil. The Prophet's change simply does away with the ambiguity, but it also identifies the terms "great dragon," "old serpent," "devil," and "Satan" as referring to the same being. Wayment makes leaps in reasoning when he states that the revision was "argued for by Clarke."⁹⁷ He says this because in the course of the 400-word commentary on the verse, J. E. Clarke mentions the obvious fact that the terms "devil" and "Satan" both refer to the same thing. But he writes that all of those terms refer not to that being whom Latter-day Saints call Satan but to the Roman Empire, the "heathen power" that persecuted early Christians. J. E. Clarke's commentary is not about Satan but about Roman emperors and the triumph of Constantine and his family. Wayment's interpretation would have us believe that Joseph Smith waded through all of that to learn something very simple that he already knew.

Needless to say, Joseph Smith's interpretation has nothing to do with the Roman Empire, and he did not follow Clarke's commentary here in any way. The revisions in this verse are part of an important reinvention

95. "The aorist ἀλώλοντο is equivalent to a 'prophetic perfect,' i.e. it views the future judgment of the false teachers with the certainty of an event which has already occurred." Richard J. Bauckham, *Jude, 2 Peter*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 50 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 84.

96. Wayment makes no mention of this.

97. Wayment, "Making of a Bible Revision," 12.

of the text, spanning through verses 7–9, telling the story of the war in heaven and the casting out of Satan and his followers, who continue to make war against God’s children.⁹⁸ Depending on how one counts, the Prophet made about ten significant changes in those three verses, and none of them resemble anything in Clarke’s commentary.

Revelation 19:15 (and 21)

KJV: out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron

JST: out of his mouth proceedeth the word of God, and with it he will smite the nations, and he will rule them with the word of his mouth

Joseph Smith also changed “sword” to “word” later, in verse 21. Wayment believes that Joseph Smith’s revisions “were argued for by Clarke.”⁹⁹ This is not true. Clarke does not argue for anything at all, but like Joseph Smith he did realize that the sword going out of Jesus’s mouth was a metaphor that represents speech. The Prophet was no less able to come to that conclusion than was Clarke. The connection between the two is unconvincing, and the Prophet’s wording, “the word of God,” is different from the explanations Clarke provides: “the word of the Gospel,” “his *word*, the unadulterated *Gospel*.” Those are the phrases Wayment invokes to argue that Joseph Smith’s revisions were dependent on Adam Clarke. In the second metaphor, Clarke equates the “rod of iron” in this verse with “the severest judgment on the opposers of his truth,” but Joseph Smith’s change tells us nothing about “severest judgment.”

These revisions are easily explained within the context of Joseph Smith’s recognizable patterns of revising biblical passages. Many examples in the JST show that he was often uncomfortable with letting metaphor go without explanation.¹⁰⁰ Jesus does not have a sword in his mouth, and he does not rule the nations with a rod of iron. Nothing about those two changes is surprising, and neither change can be shown in any way to be dependent on Adam Clarke.

98. According to the commentary, “heaven” in the passage means “the *throne* of the Roman empire, the war in heaven consequently alludes to the breaking out of civil commotions among the governors of this empire.”

99. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 13.

100. Other examples include Exodus 7:1; Joel 1:6; and Matthew 3:11.

Conclusion

Wayment states that Adam Clarke “shaped Smith’s Bible revision in fundamental ways.”¹⁰¹ Even if all of the passages he attributes to Clarke were really influenced by Clarke, it seems difficult to justify such a sweeping statement, given the mostly minor rewordings that we have seen. If among the verses listed above are the best examples, as Wilson-Lemmon states,¹⁰² then the Adam Clarke-JST theory can be dismissed out of hand. I see no smoking guns here, no examples that show real evidence of being influenced by Clarke. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon speak and write with complete certitude about their theory, but to their credit they sometimes include words like “may have,” “likely,” and “seems to” when referring to individual examples. Those modifiers only underscore the fact that their case has little to stand on. Wayment argues regarding several examples that the revisions took careful deliberation on Joseph Smith’s part and that producing them was a “labor-intensive” effort.¹⁰³ To me, this seems to be a confession that the connections are not there. If it takes hard effort to find connections between JST revisions and Adam Clarke, as Wayment admits, then why would one pursue that option when much simpler and transparent explanations exist? Consider again the revision of 1 John 3:16, which Wayment believes “required some deliberation to make sense of what Clarke intended.”¹⁰⁴ Which of the following options is more reasonable? Joseph Smith (a) reads the verse and says, “God didn’t lay down his life for us, Christ did. Let’s make a change here,” or he (b) digs through Clarke’s 200 words of ambiguous commentary before he comes to that same conclusion — something he already knew. And consider again the Prophet’s revision at Revelation 12:9, which Wayment states “required careful reading of the textual commentary.”¹⁰⁵ Which of the following options is more reasonable? Joseph Smith (a) sees that the text can be misunderstood, so he makes it clear that the devil and Satan are the same, or he (b) pores through hundreds of words of dense commentary about the Roman Empire persecuting Christians, in the course of which he sees the words “also called *Satan*,” something he already knew, and makes the change. Questions like these can be asked of most of the revisions attributed

101. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 22.

102. Wilson-Lemmon, “BYU Undergrad,” at c. 37:20.

103. Wayment, “Making of a Bible Revision,” 6, 11–15.

104. *Ibid.*, 11. Notice how this sentence starts with the assumption that the revision comes from Clarke’s commentary.

105. *Ibid.*

to Clarke. The Adam Clarke-JST theory starts with the given that Joseph Smith borrowed ideas from Adam Clarke, and then it searches through Clarke for words that can be invoked as evidence for it. The real explanations are almost always much easier and much more intuitive than the explanations that involve Adam Clarke.

Indeed, if Joseph Smith borrowed from Adam Clarke, the evidence would be obvious. There would be direct, recognizable uses of distinctive words of Clarke, and there would be a clear and repeated pattern of them. As we saw earlier, in 1 Corinthians 15:26, Paul writes, “The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.” Clarke’s paraphrase for “shall be destroyed” is that death “shall be *counter-worked, subverted, and finally overturned.*” Had Joseph Smith used any such distinctive vocabulary in his revision, there might be a case for influence from Clarke. We saw how Clarke paraphrased the beginning of 2 Timothy 3:16 as “*Every writing divinely inspired.*” Had the Prophet used that phrase, there might be a case for Clarke’s influence there. We also saw Clarke’s words “sore trial,” at Matthew 6:13. Had the Prophet used a phrase as distinctive as that, there might be a case. Had he used even less distinctive words, but words that could actually be identified as coming from Clarke’s commentary, there might have been a case. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon cannot produce convincing corollaries between Clarke’s words and the JST, and that convinces me that there are none. Instead, the selective choosing of vague, distant resemblances out of large blocks of Clarke’s wordy text in which nothing else resembles the JST, coupled with misinterpretation of Clarke’s words and lack of analysis of JST revisions in context, produced a theory that does not hold up.

As a control for the Adam Clarke thesis, I examined a list of over 260 verses with JST revisions that are representative of other revisions Joseph Smith made.¹⁰⁶ I did not find in any of those verses revisions that I would attribute to dependence on Clarke’s commentary. Of course there are overlaps, like these: Clarke takes note of the archaic word *wot*, but Joseph Smith had already discarded it before Clarke ever made mention of it in his commentary. Some JST changes are at passages where Clarke makes observations that any reasonable reader could have made, such as at Matthew’s odd account of Jesus riding two animals in the Triumphal Entry (Matthew 21:6–7). Clarke’s anti-Calvinist instincts coincide with Joseph Smith’s in two passages that the Prophet revised, one of which Clarke argues against revising (Isaiah 63:17; Acts 13:48). And Clarke

106. The list was not made with the Adam Clarke question in mind and thus serves as a good control sample. Many of the verses contain multiple revisions.

comments on passages in which God is said to have hardened people's hearts. Joseph Smith required only common sense and knowledge of the gospel, not access to commentaries, to know that those verses needed to be revised, and Clarke did not recommend revising them anyway. Those few overlaps are inconsequential and in no way suggest dependence by Joseph Smith on the ideas of Adam Clarke. More telling is the fact that almost all of the revisions in my control sample do not coincide in any way with Clarke's thoughts, and a sizable number of them include word changes Joseph Smith made that go against Clarke's views as expressed in his commentary.

There is an insurmountable mathematical problem associated with the idea that Joseph Smith relied on Adam Clarke. The Prophet made changes in about 3,600 verses of the KJV (in addition to the thousands of words of new text he added that have no KJV counterpart). In some of those verses he made multiple word changes. Clarke's commentary provides hundreds of thousands of bits of data that the Prophet could have drawn from in the JST had he used it. The convergences that Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon propose are individually unconvincing, but they are also tiny and random and statistically negligible compared with the massive amount of data available in Clarke. On the other side of the equation, Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon cannot account for the thousands of changes Joseph Smith made that do not resemble in any way Clarke's commentary. And they do not explain why Joseph Smith would pay attention to one isolated comment from Clarke in the midst of scores of others, nor why he would look to Clarke to make revisions of little consequence while Clarke was proposing many reinterpretations of significance. The numbers do not work at all. The idea that Joseph Smith "either read" Clarke's commentary or "has it in front of him" or "reads it at night," as Wayment maintains,¹⁰⁷ cannot be sustained.

Could any of the thousands of revised wordings in Joseph Smith's New Translation have been influenced by written sources that he became aware of? As noted earlier, I see no reason to rule that possibility out. The changes he made at 2 Chronicles 22:2, Nehemiah 7, and Isaiah 34:7 may have resulted from him becoming aware that there were issues in those passages. But those examples are themselves random and disconnected. Nothing suggests any kind of systematic effort to consult a commentary or translation in preparation for, or during, the revising of the text.

Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon try to link the Prophet with Clarke's commentary by citing an 1843 article in which the story is told that

107. Wayment, "Joseph Smith's Use of Bible Commentaries," 6.

Nathaniel Lewis, Emma Smith's uncle, asked if he could borrow the Urim and Thummim. The setting is 1828 or 1829, when Joseph Smith was translating the Book of Mormon. Because Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon misrepresent and embellish the story, it is presented here:

And when the story came out about the “gold plates,” and the “great spectacles,” he (Lewis) asked Joe if any one but himself could translate other languages into English by the aid of his miraculous spectacles? On being answered in the affirmative, he proposed to Joe to let him make the experiment upon some of the strange languages he found in Clarke's Commentary, and stated to him if it was even so, and the experiment proved successful, he would then believe the story about the gold plates.¹⁰⁸

Almost two decades later, the same author included the story in a book. In that version, Lewis states, “I've got Clarke's Commentary, and it contains a great many strange languages; now, if you will let me try the spectacles, and if by looking through them I can translate these strange tongues into English, then I'll be one of your disciples.”¹⁰⁹

A careful reading of this hearsay account shows that it proves nothing except that the author was telling a clever story at the expense

108. [George Peck,] “Mormonism and the Mormons,” *Methodist Quarterly Review* 25, 3rd series, vol. 3 (January 1843): 113. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon include this quote but do not tell us the source for their transcription of it, so it is not clear whether the minor errors in it are theirs or if they obtained the quote from a secondary source. They introduce the story with “Lewis reportedly stated,” whereas the story is clearly in the words of someone other than Lewis (“A Recovered Resource,” 266). Wayment states that in this quote the Prophet “was asked to translate a passage from Clarke's commentary,” but it was Lewis who wanted to do the translating (“Making of a Bible Revision,” 5). The author of the story is not listed but was George Peck, editor of the *Methodist Quarterly Review*. The hostile nature of the article is evident throughout, including in the comment that though Emma Smith was a good cook, “she was of decidedly moderate intellectual caliber” (“Mormonism and the Mormons,” 112).

109. George Peck, *Early Methodism within the Bounds of the Old Genesee Conference from 1788 to 1828* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1860), 332–33. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon cite this account, but from a secondary source instead of examining the original. Peck's story is quoted in Emily C. Blackman, *History of Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen, & Haffelfinger, 1873), 104–5. Lewis was clearly not impressed by Joseph Smith. He called him a “lying impostor” (Blackman, *History of Susquehanna County*, 579) and “not a man of truth and veracity; ... an impostor, hypocrite and liar” (E. D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* [Painesville, OH: E. D. Howe, 1834], 267).

of the Latter-day Saints. There is nothing in the story, even if it did take place *exactly* as reported, to suggest that Joseph Smith knew what Lewis was talking about when he made reference to Clarke’s commentary, nor that he had ever seen a volume of it. That was not even the point of the story. Without citing a source, Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon write, “The story is retold in several later accounts, some of which report that Lewis pulled Clarke’s commentary from his own bookshelf and then questioned Smith.”¹¹⁰ This is simply not true. No such “later accounts” are known to exist, let alone “several,” except for the 2003 account by Evangelical scholar Ronald V. Huggins, who added considerable rhetorical embellishment when he wrote that “Lewis lifted down a large volume from its place on the shelf and opened it.”¹¹¹ Huggins’s modern words are Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon’s “later accounts” for the story. Wayment states, “There’s a story of his brother-in-law presenting Joseph Smith with a copy of Adam Clarke.” This is not true, and there is nothing in the story that suggests Lewis was “presenting” the Prophet with anything but a snide proposal.¹¹² Further, “We do not know whose copy of Adam Clarke it is, but we do know that Nathaniel Lewis gives it to the prophet.” This is not true, and there is no hint of it in the story.¹¹³ Then Wayment adds, “We know he had it in his hands.”¹¹⁴ None of this is true.¹¹⁵

Why do Joseph Smith’s revisions so often look so *unlike* those of Adam Clarke? In some of the passages that Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon invoke, the Prophet actually changed the text in ways very different from those favored by Clarke. It did not take me long to find other examples of the same phenomenon. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon have not presented evidence that Joseph Smith drew ideas from Adam Clarke’s commentary, and I do not believe that they have provided evidence to

110. Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, “A Recovered Resource,” 266.

111. Ronald V. Huggins, “‘Without a Cause’ and ‘Ships of Tarshish’: A Possible Contemporary Source for Two Unexplained Readings from Joseph Smith,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 36, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 173. Huggins’s embellishment was based on his belief that the accounts suggest that the commentaries were nearby (Ronald V. Huggins to author, October 30, 2019).

112. And Nathaniel Lewis was Emma Smith’s uncle.

113. And in the story the book is clearly identified as Lewis’s copy.

114. Wayment, “Joseph Smith’s Use of Bible Commentaries,” 7.

115. In a later publication, Peck mentions Joseph Smith and Emma Smith’s family (misnaming her father “Jesse”) but does not retell the Nathaniel Lewis story. See *The Life and Times of Rev. George Peck, D.D., Written by Himself* (New York: Nelson & Phillips, 1874), 67–68.

suggest that he had ever even heard of it. In repeatedly asserting that he did, they are not even acknowledging two other possibilities — that Joseph Smith was inspired in changing those passages, or that he had the intelligence or common sense to make the revisions on his own.

Joseph Smith had supreme confidence in his prophetic calling and believed that his authority even exceeded that of the Bible. That is why he so freely revised it and reinterpreted it.¹¹⁶ He was not prone to care what other religions taught, and we have no record of him turning to others to obtain ideas on doctrinal or scriptural matters. His Bible-based sermons, like the revisions he made to the Old and New Testaments, show that he and the religion God founded through him truly stood “independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world” (D&C 78:14). While it is not impossible that he learned from books about textual issues such as those examples I have listed, it does not fit his life’s pattern for him to seek outside of his own prophetic instincts to try to find answers to scriptural questions.

Consider the following: Before Joseph Smith started revising the Bible, he had already produced a new volume of ancient scripture — the Book of Mormon — with thousands of words that correct, reinterpret, and redefine almost every aspect of how we view the teachings and text of the Old and New Testaments. As for his Bible revision specifically, prior to arriving at the point at which Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon believe he started using Adam Clarke, Joseph Smith had already reinvented the Bible itself. He had announced that Christianity was revealed from the beginning of the world, and he had identified Adam, Eve, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses as Christians. He had redefined the nature of God. He had announced the scope of God’s work to cover the universe, with myriad worlds throughout the cosmos inhabited by God’s children. He had explained God’s plan for human salvation in terms better than any found in the New Testament. He had revealed the nature and motives of Satan. He had explained the fall of Adam and Eve in ways that far eclipse any understanding of the topic in the Bible. And he had redefined the purpose of animal sacrifice. It does not seem likely to me that someone as confident of his prophetic calling as Joseph Smith was, who had already revised the biblical text so dramatically, would be inclined to search for suggestions in someone else’s book.

116. That is the point I argue in Kent P. Jackson, “Joseph Smith and the Bible,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 63, no. 1 (2010): 24–40.

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JANUS PARALLELISM: SPECULATION ON A POSSIBLE POETIC WORDPLAY IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

Paul Hoskisson

Abstract: *In this article, Paul Hoskisson discusses the question of whether Janus parallelism, a sophisticated literary form found in the Hebrew Bible and elsewhere in manuscripts of the ancient Near East, might also be detected in the Book of Mormon. Because the Book of Mormon exists only in translation, answering this question is not a simple matter. Hoskisson makes the case that 1 Nephi 18:16 may provide the first plausible example of Janus parallelism in the Book of Mormon.*

[**Editor’s Note:** Part of our book chapter reprint series, this article is reprinted here as a service to the LDS community. Original pagination and page numbers have necessarily changed, otherwise the reprint has the same content as the original.]

See Paul Hoskisson, “Janus Parallelism: Speculation on a Possible Poetic Wordplay in the Book of Mormon,” in *“To Seek the Law of the Lord”: Essays in Honor of John W. Welch*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson and Daniel C. Peterson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2017), 151–60. Further information at <https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/to-seek-the-law-of-the-lord-essays-in-honor-of-john-w-welch-2/>.]

John W. Welch’s discovery in 1967 of chiasmic structures in the Book of Mormon was to that date the most important literary discovery regarding latter-day scripture since the beginning of the Restoration, and it continues to be a singular event in the scholarship of the text of the Book of Mormon. He not only opened up hitherto unexplored and

fertile research fields, but he also pointed the way forward to previously untouched approaches to the text. All faithful scholars have benefitted from this discovery. It is therefore a daunting task to write a requisite article to thank and honor a great scholar and a dear friend.

While serving a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Germany, John, or Jack as his friends call him, began his discovery serendipitously by attending a class in the Regensburg Priestler Seminar on the New Testament. This led him to a book that explained the chiasmic structures in and of the Book of Matthew. He became intrigued with the concept of chiasmus, for, “if it is evidence of Hebrew style in the Bible, it must be evidence of Hebrew style in the Book of Mormon.” He soon enough found chiasms in the Book of Mormon. After returning home he wrote his master’s thesis on chiasmus and has never looked back.¹

Janus Parallelism in the Hebrew Bible

In 1978, eleven years after Jack’s discovery, Cyrus H. Gordon published an article defining and outlining the literary form he termed *Janus parallelism*, and about which he had lectured previously.² He chose the name because the Roman god Janus had two faces, one looking forward and one looking back. Thus, this label describes “a literary device in which a middle stich of poetry parallels in a polysemous manner both the line that precedes it and the line which follows it.”³ Gordon came upon the concept one day when reading Song of Solomon 2:12, which reads in my own translation,⁴

The blossoms are seen on the earth;
the time of pruning/singing has come,
and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land.

1 For Jack’s own account of his discovery see John W. Welch, “The Discovery of Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon: Forty Years Later,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 16, no. 2 (2007): 74-87, 99.

2 Cyrus H. Gordon, “New Directions,” *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 15, no. 1/2 (1978): 59-66. I remember hearing Gordon talk of Janus parallelism during the academic year 1972-73 in classes I took from him at Brandeis University.

3 Scott B. Noegel, *Janus Parallelism in the Book of Job*, (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 12, citing Gordon, 59-66.

4 Unless otherwise noted, all Old Testament quotes are from the King James version. This verse reads in the King James translation, “The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of *birds* is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.”

The key to the polysemous parallel is the Hebrew word *zāmîr* in the middle stich, and whose translation I have rendered with two of its meanings, “pruning” and “singing.” The meaning “pruning” looks back to the time of *blossoms* in the first stich, and the meaning “singing” looks forward to the sounds of the *voice* (of the dove) in the third stich.

Gordon discovered other scattered examples of Janus parallelism in the Hebrew Bible, none of which, like Song of Solomon 2:12, are recognizable in English translations (see below). Others followed his lead. Gary Rendsburg, a student of Gordon, found examples in the book of Genesis.⁵ Another scholar, Scott Noegel, published a fairly exhaustive study with numerous examples from the book of Job.⁶ In fact, Janus parallels are attested in a wide array of Near Eastern languages, including “Akkadian, Arabic, Hebrew, Hieroglyphic Egyptian, and Ugaritic.”⁷

One of the reasons that Janus parallels in the Hebrew Bible went relatively unnoticed for so long is that the context tends to mask the polysemy. Unlike chiasmus, which depends on the mirrored inversion of a poetic structure that creates a balanced structural configuration of semantic parallels, Janus parallels depend on polysemy. The polysemous nature of the key word allows it to parallel at least two other words that by themselves are not parallel. For example, in the case of Song of Solomon 2:12, the word *blossoms* in the first stich is not a semantic parallel, antithetical or synonymous, with *voice* in the third stich. Adding to the difficulty is that *zāmîr* with the meaning “singing” occurs much more often in the Hebrew Bible than with the meaning “pruning.” In fact, while neither is common, the meaning “singing” occurs six times,⁸ and the meaning “pruning” occurs only three times, including in the

5 Gary Rendsburg, “Janus Parallelism in Gen. 49.26,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99 (1980): 291-93; and “Notes on Genesis XV,” *Vetus Testamentum* 42.2 (1992), 266-72.

6 Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*. For examples in literatures other than Hebrew, see Zackary M. Wainer, “Janus Parallelism in Šulgi V,” *Bible Lands e-review*, 2013, no. S2, and, as cited in Wainer, Wayne Horowitz and Shalom Paul, “Two Proposed Janus Parallelisms in Akkadian Literature,” *NABU*, 1995, no. 1 (Mars): 11-12; Noegel, “Yasîm-El’s Sophisticated Rhetoric: A Janus Cluster in ARMT XXVI, 419, 1. 10,” *NABU* 1995, no. 4 (Décembre): 81-82; and Shalom Paul, “Polysensuous Polyvalency in Poetic Parallelism,” in *Sha’arei Talmon: Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and the Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon*, ed. M. Fishbane and E. Tov (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 147-163.

7 Wainer, “Šulgi V,” in the second paragraph.

8 2 Sam. 23:1; Isa. 24:16; 25:5; Ps. 95:2; 119:54; and Job 35:10.

verse in question.⁹ Only because Gordon knew Hebrew, Arabic, Ugaritic, Akkadian and Egyptian lexicography so well was he sensitive enough to recognize the polysemic nature of homophonic and homographic *zāmîr*.

Most examples, however, of Janus parallelism in the Hebrew Bible are even more difficult to recognize than homographic and homophonic *zāmîr*. The monographic, polyphonic, and polysemic example in Genesis 15:1 of the unvowelled Hebrew text illustrates this difficulty.¹⁰ In the King James translation, this tristich reads,

Fear not, Abram:
I am thy shield,
and thy exceeding great reward

The consonant-only text of the middle stich reads, *'nky mgn lk*. With no vowel markings, several different standard vowel patterns can be applied to the consonantal structure, resulting in different ways to read the middle stich. When the Masoretes supplied the vowels to the previously consonant-only text, of the theoretically possible patterns they could supply only one, namely, *'ānōkī māgēn lāk*, “I am thy shield,” for the middle stich. With this vowel pattern, the polyphonic and polysemic nature of the consonant-only text is obscured. That is, with the vowels it can only be pronounced in one way and mean, in its literal sense, only one thing, so that the reader is less likely to think of other options for vocalization and meaning. Furthermore, the meaning “shield” for *māgēn* is well known from the Hebrew Bible (and even in modern Hebrew) and provides a strong parallel to “fear not” in the first stich.¹¹ Therefore, most readers of Hebrew would rarely consider other less well-known meanings that are possible through different vowelings.

If, however, the vowels of the Masoretic text are ignored, then other readings and meanings can emerge, thus creating the possibility of polysemy. By reading the text silently, the reader can ponder which of the acceptable and normative vowel patterns fits the consonant-only text. And if the reader is astute, the polysemous nature of the middle

9 As a verb, *zmr* is attested many times with the meaning “to sing or praise,” but with the meaning “to prune or trim” it occurs in only two passages, Isa. 5:6 and Lev. 25:3-4. As *zmr* it is attested in line 6 of the Gezer tablet.

10 For a discussion of the Janus parallelism in this verse see Noegel, *Janus Parallelism*, 12, which is based on Rendsburg, “Gen. 49.26” What follows is my own analysis of this verse.

11 The meaning “shield” in this verse may hark back to Gen. 14:20 where the *piel* perfect verb *miggēn* occurs in the phrase “delivered thine enemies into thy hand” (KJV). I thank my friend and colleague Dana Pike for this suggestion.

stich can be discovered. For instance, if *mgn* is vocalized as the Hebrew noun *megen*, which means “gift,” the parallel with “reward” in the third stich is strong.¹² Notice, though, that because reciting the consonant-only text out loud requires inserting vowels, reading out loud eliminates all but one of the meanings of *mgn*.¹³

To summarize, Janus parallels are constructed in two slightly different ways. First, as in the example in Song of Solomon 2:12, a homographic and homophonic word has different meanings, allowing for a word play. Second, the consonant-only text can be read polyphonically and therefore polysemously, as in Genesis 15:1. It should also go without saying that the polysemous nature would be lost in any translation because the translator, unless extremely gifted at finding polysemous words in the target language, would have to settle on only one of the possible meanings of the source text word.

To give the reader an idea of how Janus parallelism might work in English, I have constructed the following example. Note that it only works because I have mixed modern and older English spelling conventions with imaginative forms, which forces the reader to ponder which meaning to assign to the unusual spelling *tyme*.

Of all mortalle spycs
that temporally entyce us
it is tyme
that orders every season
with eternal, divine reason.

Admittedly, my attempted English Janus parallel is rather clumsy. The task of constructing valid examples is extremely difficult because English requires vowels, and both vowels and consonants are usually phonemic in English. Most homographic polysemous English words would not force the reader to consider any meaning other than the most common one.

12 Another way to read *mgn* is as the *piel* infinitive verb *maggēn*, meaning “to gift.” But an infinitive in this middle stich does not make a lot of sense.

13 The polysemous nature of the consonant-only texts suggests, if not demands, that these texts did not have their origin in oral recitation, but rather were composed in written form and were designed to serve a literate clientele. As interesting as this topic is, it is, unfortunately, beyond the scope of this paper to explore the origin of the written text of the Hebrew Bible. For further study into this issue, consult the works of the Israeli scholars Aaron Demsky and Shalom Paul. See also Brian B. Schmidt, *Contextualizing Israel's Sacred Writings: Ancient Literacy, Orality, and Literary Production* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2015).

Having provided a basic, if technical, explanation of Janus parallelism in the Hebrew Bible, I now turn to the Book of Mormon.

A Possible Janus Parallelism in the Book of Mormon

Using the same basic logic with which Jack began his study of chiasmus in 1967, I suggest that if Janus parallelism is a feature of Hebrew writing, which it undoubtedly is despite being relatively unknown in the wider academic community, then it is possible that it exists in the Book of Mormon.

The main stumbling block to recognizing polysemous parallels in the Book of Mormon is that the book is a translation, and no translation of the Janus parallels in the Hebrew Bible (or other languages where they exist) survive when translated into English or almost any other modern language.¹⁴ If translators become aware of polysemy in the source language, they would still be faced with the nearly impossible task of finding in the target language an equally polysemous word that replicates the same intentional meanings of the word in the source language. In the original example above from Song of Solomon 2:12, what single English word could mean both “sing” and “prune”? Therefore, it would appear that searching for English lexical polysemy in the Book of Mormon would be arduous at best and impossible at worst.

A better approach would be to look for tristich forms. That is, in its simplest form, any Janus parallel translated into English would probably appear as a tristich. But since not every tristich in the Book of Mormon (or in the Hebrew Bible for that matter) contains polysemy, the acid test would be to back translate the English into Hebrew.¹⁵ Admittedly, any back translation introduces a level of subjectivism that proscribes any claim to certainty. Assuming, however, that the back translation is reasonably valid, an absence of any polysemy in the back translation would greatly diminish the plausibility of a Janus parallel. All attempts,

14 An exception might be languages that use the Arabic script without vowels.

15 This is not the place to quibble over whether the language on the plates that Joseph transmitted to us was Hebrew or Egyptian. If it was not Hebrew, then it was Egyptian, and the Egyptian hieroglyphic script is capable of producing polysemous words, a prerequisite for constructing a Janus parallel. (See the discussion above with notes 6 and 7.) Unfortunately, not knowing any Egyptian, I am unaware of any specific examples of Janus parallels in Egyptian. For a general discussion of related literary forms in Egyptian, see Antonio Loprieno, “Puns and Word Play in Ancient Egyptian,” in *Puns and Pundits: Word Play in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, ed. Scott B. Noegel (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2000), 3-20.

therefore, to demonstrate polysemous parallels in the Book of Mormon should elicit high levels of skepticism.

Nevertheless, I believe that a plausible case can be made that a Janus parallel exists in 1 Nephi 18:16. The relevant words of the tristich read,

I did look unto my God,
and I did praise him all the day long;
and I did not murmur against the Lord because of mine
afflictions.

This verse,¹⁶ with its three part parallelism, is manifestly poetic, even in English. And the artful and progressive lengthening of each stich reinforces the poetic nature of the verse. Additionally, the fact that this verse seems only loosely attached to the previous verse and relatively unattached to the following material would appear to call attention to its stand-alone nature as a tristich.

The polysemy would center on the verb in the second stich, *praise*. Immediately it can be seen that *praise Him* in the second stich is a strong antithetical parallel to *murmur against the Lord* in the third stich. But *praise Him* is not entirely parallel synonymously with *look to God* in the first stich. That is, in English, there is at best a weak semantic parallel between the first and second stich. If this verse is a candidate for Janus parallelism, a back translation into Hebrew would have to provide a better semantic parallel between the first and second stich while polysemously preserving the strong parallel between the second and third stich.

The most common verb in Hebrew for *praise* is *hallēl*.¹⁷ This is the Hebrew word behind the English expression *hallelujah*, meaning, “Praise ye the Lord” (Ps. 147:1). It is also the verb used in Hebrew in “I will praise him among the multitude” (Ps. 109:30). The consonantal structure underlying *hallēl* in Hebrew is polysemous. In addition to “to praise” it can also mean “to shine,” as in Job 31:26, “If I beheld the sun when it shined;” and “to give light” in Isaiah 13:10, “For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light.” An extended meaning of *hallēl* could be “to cause to shine.”¹⁸ Therefore, in 1 Nephi 18:16 it could mean something similar to “I did cause him [my

16 When I say “verse” here I am not referring to the versification introduced into the Book of Mormon with the 1879 edition, but rather to the seeming independence of the form of this tristich from the surrounding material.

17 There is no *qal* form of this verb, just the *piel*, *pual* and *hithpael* forms.

18 Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., Richardson, M. E. J., & Stamm, *The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994-2000), electronic ed., 249, הלל I. Hereafter, *HALOT*.

God] to shine all the day long,” in the sense that the actions of the author made his God to shine forth in glory. But in my mind, these semantic gymnastics using *hallēl* do not provide a stronger parallel with the first stich than the monosemous *praise*.

A better candidate in this verse for a back translation of “praise” into Hebrew would be the piel verb *zammēr*, the same root translated as “song” in Song of Solomon 2:12 that started the discovery of Janus parallelism. Besides “to sing” and “to prune” as explained above, this verb in Hebrew also means “to praise.” For example in Psalm 57:7 (verse 8 in Hebrew), *zammēr* is poetically paired with *šir*, “to sing”: “I will sing [’*āšîrâ*] and give praise [’*āzammērâ*].” In Psalm 147:1 *zammēr* is paralleled with *hallēl*, “to praise”: “Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God.” But literally, the verse reads, “Praise Yah! For it is good to sing¹⁹ our God,” making *halēlû* parallel to *zammērâ*. The difference between *zammēr* and *hallēl* seems to lie in the nature of the intended action; *zammēr* is sung or chanted out loud musically and therefore could be a more public expression of praise, while *hallēl* could be spoken aloud but could also be spoken in the mind, privately, silently.

With these two not totally unrelated meanings of *zammēr*, it is possible to construct in plain English an admittedly speculative case that 1 Nephi 18:16 could contain a Janus parallelism. I therefore suggest that the first and second stichs could be read as

I did look unto my God,
and I did sing unto him all the day long;

and that the second and third stichs be read as they now appear in the 2013 edition,

and I did praise him all the day long
and I did not murmur against the Lord because of mine
afflictions.

The polysemous parallel succeeds because the Hebrew verb *zammēr* can mean both “praise” and “sing.”

¹⁹ My own literal translation. It should be noted here that *zammēr*, neither in its meaning, “to sing” nor in its meaning “to praise” takes a preposition; both senses are transitive in Hebrew. Thus, unlike English, which requires a preposition if *sing* is used to “sing to someone,” in Hebrew there is no preposition.

Conclusion

In our English Book of Mormon 1 Nephi 18:16 reads nicely as it stands. The tristich works well enough that most readers probably never stop to contemplate the verse or examine its poetic structure. The first and second stichs exhibit a weak but recognizable parallel. The second and third stichs form a demonstrably strong antithetical parallel. And if it were not for the possibility of a Janus parallel hiding behind the English text, no further discussion would be necessary.

But knowing that Janus parallels are an occasional feature of Hebrew, and other ancient poetry, is enough of an enticement to brave a speculative back translation of the verse into Hebrew to see if a stronger synonymous parallel might exist in a posited Hebrew urtext. The back translation that I offer seems to suggest a stronger synonymous parallel between the first and the second stich while maintaining the strong antithetical parallel with the third stich.²⁰

Might this verse be an example of a Janus parallel? I can only claim that it is plausible. We will never know for sure until the urtext becomes available. In the meantime, perhaps other verses might prove to be potential candidates. But no matter how many plausible instances might be observed, no one of them alone will be totally convincing without the witness of the urtext.

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20 Given the context of verse 16, that is, Nephi had just suffered tremendously from the cruelty of his brothers, another polysemous parallel suggests itself. The root *zmr*, besides meaning “to sing” and “to praise,” also means “protection” in Amorite (a North-west Semitic language that predates Hebrew) and survives in Hebrew personal names such as *Zimri*. See *HALOT*, זמרי. As tempting as this lexeme is, it would require more modification of the tristich than I am comfortable with. In the first place, *zmr* would have to be read as a verb. But *zmr* as a verb meaning “to protect” is not attested in biblical Hebrew, though it does exist as a verb in Ugaritic. Also, in order to parallel the first stich, the second stich would have to read “I am protected by Him all the day long,” which would be hard to reconcile homographically with the extant reading, “I did praise him all the day long.” A phonological intimation of such a polysemy however cannot be ruled out (*‘āzammērā* might suggest *zimrī*, “my protection” or the hypothetical form **‘ezzāmēr* “I am protected”).

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“I OF MYSELF AM A WICKED MAN”: SOME NOTES ON ALLUSION AND TEXTUAL DEPENDENCY IN OMNI 1:1-2

Matthew L. Bowen

ABSTRACT: *Omni greatly revered his ancestors and their personal accounts on the small plates of Nephi. A close examination of Omni’s brief autobiography (Omni 1:1–3) evidences borrowing from all four of his predecessors’ writings. Moreover, his self-description, “I of myself am a wicked man,” constitutes far more than a confession of religious dereliction. That self-assessment alludes to Nephi’s autobiographical wordplay on his name in terms “good” and “having been born of goodly parents” and his grandfather Enos’s similarly self-referential wordplay in describing his own father Jacob as a “just man.” Omni’s name most likely represents a hypocoristic form of a longer theophoric name, *’omnīyāhû (from the root *’mn), meaning “Yahweh is [the object of] my faith” or “Yahweh is my guardian [or, nursing father],” but could also be heard or understood as a gentilic, “faithful one” or “trustworthy one.” These observations have implications for Omni’s stated defense of his people the Nephites (traditionally, the “good” or “fair ones”) against the Lamanites, those who had dwindled in “unbelief” (cf. Hebrew lō’-’ēmun). In the end, Omni’s description of himself as “a wicked man” should be viewed in the context of his reverence for “goodly” and “just” ancestors and brought into balance with those sacred trusts in which he did prove faithful: preserving his people, his genealogy, and the small plates themselves.*

Years ago, John S. Tanner offered the following fresh appraisal of the five authors of the Book of Omni and their (mostly) laconic autobiographical accounts:

Many of Jacob’s descendants (especially Omni and Abinadom) were refreshingly frank about their weaknesses. Perhaps we could learn from their humility and unblinking self-honesty

as well. Moreover, all Jacob’s descendants — even “wicked” Omni — treated the sacred record with respect. They appear to have felt the plates’ power. The very inadequacy they expressed implies that they had read the record and been moved, even intimidated, by its majesty. So it’s not entirely fair to dismiss these men as apostate. Perhaps we shouldn’t even assume the self-confessed are completely reprobate. All Jacob’s posterity manifested humility, honesty, reverence for the sacred, and a common commitment to duty. This suggests that Jacob’s legacy of righteousness was not utterly lost in his posterity. His righteous blood still flowed in their veins; his sensitivity still circulated in their souls.¹

A careful reading of the Book of Omni suggests that the authors of that book revered the writings of their predecessors down to the word level. Omni and his descendants wrote their brief autobiographies often using the language, phraseology, and syntax of earlier writers on the small plates of Nephi.² Omni not only held the writings of his predecessors in reverence but also relied upon and borrowed from the words of each to create a brief account of his own life.

In this article, I focus on the writings of Omni himself as the first of the five writers of the book that bears his name. I try to show how Omni’s respect for his predecessors is evident in his use of and allusions to their writings. Recognizing Omni’s borrowings helps us to better appreciate the quality and meaning of what he wrote. In particular, I endeavor to show that Omni’s confession, “I of myself am a wicked man” (Omni 1:2),³ has in view Nephi’s and Enos’s autobiographical introductions: “I Nephi having been born of goodly parents” (1 Nephi 1:1) and “I Enos knowing my father that he was a just man” (Enos 1:1). To fully appreciate what Omni does in his self-effacing confession, one must observe how scrupulously Omni uses the language of his predecessors. Probable meanings of Omni’s name — “Yahweh is [the object of] my faith,” “Yahweh is my guardian,” or even “faithful one” — emerge as relevant not only with respect to Omni’s “confession” but also with respect to the context of declining Nephite faith and faithfulness in the epoch in which Omni and his sons lived.

“I Omni”: Omni’s Opening Syntax and the Meaning of the Name Omni

Regarding Omni’s opening statement, Brant Gardner writes, “Almost certainly, he copied this opening phrase from his father’s [Jarom’s] record.

It should therefore be considered formulaic rather than descriptive."⁴ Omni begins in similar fashion to his father:

Jarom 1:1	Omni 1:1
Now behold, I Jarom write a few words according to the commandment of my father...	Behold it came to pass that I Omni being commanded by my father...

Jarom, in turn, models his self-introduction on the self-introduction of his grandfather, Jacob (Jacob 1:1–2, see below).

While Gardner is certainly correct as to Omni's imitation of his father Jarom's emphasis on keeping a genealogy, a close inspection reveals additional textual dependency. The syntax of Omni's opening statement appears to closely follow that of his grandfather, Enos:

Enos 1:1	Omni 1:1
Behold it came to pass that I Enos knowing my father...	Behold it came to pass that I Omni being commanded by my father...

Both begin with a particle rendered "behold" (cf. Hebrew *hinnê* or Egyptian *m=k > mk*). This is followed by a verb rendered "it came to pass" (Hebrew *hâyâ*; Egyptian *hpr.n*). There follows in both instances first-person statements of authorial responsibility: "I Enos" and "I Omni" as following the precedent established by Nephi at the outset of the small plates (see 1 Nephi 1:1).

As Robert F. Smith has noted,⁵ the name Omni may derive from the Hebrew root *'mn*. Omni is best explained as a hypocoristic form⁶ of **'omniyyāhû* (following the same pattern as the names Omri and Zimri).⁷ He further recommends the meaning "Yahweh/the Lord is my trust," or the substantive *'omen* with a first common singular pronominal suffix, thus *'omnî*, 'my faithfulness/trust,' '(the object of) my faithfulness/trust,' or as a gentilic 'Faithful, Trustworthy.'⁸ In other words, Omni translates easily as "Yahweh/the Lord is [the object of] my faith" or "faithful one."

Another possibility runs along similar lines: if the *'mn-* element in Omni is the Hebrew substantive *'ōmēn*, "attendant" or "guardian"⁹ of children, the name would mean "Yahweh is my attendant" or "Yahweh is my guardian" — i.e., "Yahweh is the one who brought me up" or "Yahweh is my nursing father." In the Hebrew Bible we see this

word used in several relevant instances. Moses complains to the Lord that the latter is expecting him to function as Israel's *ʾōmēn*: “Have I begotten them, that thou shouldest say unto me, Carry them in thy bosom, as a nursing father [*hāʾōmēn*] beareth the sucking child ...?” (Numbers 11:12). Isaiah prophesies that gentile kings will be Israel’s “nursing fathers” (*ʾōmēnayik*, Isaiah 49:23; 1 Nephi 21:23; 2 Nephi 6:7; 10:9), as the masculine counterpart to the wet-nurse (*mēnîqōtayik* = “thy nursing mothers,” Isaiah 49:23, et al.). Mordecai served as Esther’s (or Hadassah’s) *ʾōmēn*: “he [Mordecai] brought up [*ʾōmēn*] Hadassah, that is, Esther” (Esther 2:7). Esther uses the cognate noun in nearly an identical sense: “Esther did the commandment of Mordecai, like as when she was brought up [*ʾomnâ*] with him [perhaps, in trust with him]” (Esther 2:20). The Deuteronomistic Historian twice mentions *hāʾōmēnîm* — the “guardians” or “bringers up” of Ahab’s children in 2 Kings 10:1, 5 (i.e., those whom he had entrusted to bring them up). Mormon preserves a possible wordplay on Ammon that might reflect a similar idea: “Now we see that *Ammon* could not be slain, for the Lord had said unto Mosiah, his father: I will spare him, and it shall be unto him according to *thy faith* — therefore, Mosiah *trusted* him unto the Lord” (Alma 19:23).

In either case one can clearly hear the Hebrew root **mn* and thus the latent idea of “faith,” “faithfulness,” and “trust” in the name *Omni*. The Lord — Yahweh — is the one in whom the one named *Omni* “has faith” or “trusts” or Yahweh is the one who is “entrusted” with the one so named. But perhaps *Omni* also functioned as a kind of gentilic noun, “faithful one” or “trustworthy one.”¹⁰ The name *Lamoni* as a *nisbe* (or *nisba*) adjectival form of *Laman* (i.e., “Lamanite” or one of/descendant of *Laman*) appears to have functioned precisely in this way.¹¹ I have argued elsewhere that the gentilic terms *Nephite* (“good[ly] one” < Egyptian *nfr*),¹² *Lamanite* (pejoratively treated as “unfaithful” or “unbelieving one”),¹³ *Zoramite* (pejoratively “one who is lifted up” or “high one”),¹⁴ just as the term “Jew”/“Judahite” (“one who is to be praised” or “one who is to be thanked” < *ydy/ydh*, “praise” or “thank”)¹⁵ functioned similarly.

It is further possible that *Jarom* had something like the following in mind when he named his son *Omni*: “And it came to pass that they came many times against us, the Nephites, to battle. But our kings and our leaders were *mighty men in the faith* [*ʾēmûnat*] of the Lord [*yhwh*]; and they taught the people the ways of the Lord; wherefore, we withstood *the Lamanites* and swept them away out of our lands, and began to fortify our cities, or whatsoever place of our inheritance” (*Jarom* 1:7). As we will

see, the *'mn* connection has implications for Omni's defense of his people against the Lamanites and his confession to having been a "wicked man."

“Commanded ... to Preserve Our Genealogy”

Beyond his imitation of the opening syntax of Enos's autobiography, Omni aligns the content of his subsequent phraseology to the opening statements of Jacob and Jarom. Both Jacob and Jarom emphasize the “commandment” concerning future content on the small plates that their immediate predecessors — Nephi and Enos, respectively — gave:

Jacob 1:1–2 and Jarom 1:1	Omni 1:1
<p>For behold, it came to pass that fifty and five years had passed away from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem; wherefore Nephi <i>gave me</i> Jacob a commandment concerning these small plates upon which these things are engraven. And he gave me Jacob a commandment that I should write upon these plates a few of the things which I considered to be most precious. (Jacob 1:1–2)</p> <p>Now behold, I Jarom write a few words according to the commandment of my father Enos, that our genealogy may be kept. (Jarom 1:1)</p>	<p>Behold, it came to pass that I Omni being commanded by my father Jarom that I should write somewhat upon these plates to preserve our genealogy...</p>

When Nephi records the Lord's direct commandment to make the small plates, he reports that the Lord commanded him: “Make other plates; and thou shalt engraven *many things* upon them *which are good in my sight* for the profit of thy people” (2 Nephi 5:30). “Good” here appears to be an allusion to Nephi's own name (Egyptian *nfr* = “good”).¹⁶ Even prior to this, however, near the outset of the small plates record, Nephi had stated his intent to “write the things of God” upon these plates (1 Nephi 6:3). Then he further declared: “Wherefore the things which are pleasing unto the world I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God and unto them which are not of the world. Wherefore I shall give commandment unto my seed that they shall not occupy these plates with *things which are*

not of worth unto the children of men” (1 Nephi 6:5–6). Sometime after his making of the small plates and the foregoing statements of intent, Nephi changed his plan to pass on this record to his “seed” and instead decided to entrust the small plates to Jacob, his brother, with a “commandment” to “write upon these plates a few of the things which I [Jacob] considered *to be most precious*” (Jacob 1:2).

Jacob states that he passed the small plates on to his son Enos, and “told him the things which my brother Nephi had commanded me, and he promised obedience unto the commands” (Jacob 7:27). For his part, Enos never mentions the small plates upon which he made his record except implicitly as a part of the larger body of Nephite records (Enos 1:13–16), nor does he ever mention his son Jarom. Jarom, however, explains that he was, first, “writ[ing] a few words according to the commandment of my father, Enos, that our genealogy may be kept” and, second, that “these things [i.e., the small plates] are written for the intent of the benefit of our brethren the Lamanites” (Jarom 1:2).

Jarom demurs on writing much in terms of recording prophesy or revelation: “For what could I write more than my fathers have written . . .?” (Jarom 1:2) and he closes his short record with the statement “And I deliver these plates into the hands of my son Omni, that they may be kept according to the commandments of my fathers” (Jarom 1:15). Terrence Szink suggests that Jarom “seems to have not understood the nature or purpose of the record to be kept upon the plates” and believes “that Jarom made a mistake in not writing his prophecies and revelations.”¹⁷ However, Jarom’s statement that the small plates’ contents “were written for the intent of the benefit of the Lamanites” suggests that he did understand the overarching purpose. Szink acknowledges Jarom’s recognition that the latter’s predecessors had already “revealed the plan of salvation” (Jarom 1:2).¹⁸ However, Jarom did not need to replicate Nephi’s treatise on the doctrine of Christ (2 Nephi 31–32), especially if he had limited space to write. Nephi’s statement in 1 Nephi 6:6 (“they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the children of men”) implies that the small plates had limited space from the outset (hence their being described as “small”). Amaleki’s assertion at the end of the small plates, “these plates are full” (Omni 1:30), strongly suggests that space considerations increasingly became a concern for Jarom and his successors. It may have been a contributing factor to the autobiographies before Amaleki becoming increasingly laconic. Amaleki’s decision to write a longer autobiography and account than his immediate predecessors seems to reflect an *a priori* decision to end

the record and hand it over to King Benjamin, since he himself had “no seed” (Omni 1:25). In other words, Amaleki knew that he no longer needed to conserve space for future generations since he was the last in his line, so he filled up what remained.

Beginning with their transfer from Enos to Jarom, the small plates increasingly took on a genealogical function¹⁹ — the family story of one line of Jacob’s descendants. Omni’s autobiography accelerated that trend.

**“I Fought Much with the Sword to Preserve My People”:
Omni as Protector or “Preserve[r]” Against the Lamanites**

Omni partly takes his cue for describing his days (“wherefore in my days ...”) from Nephi’s circumstantial clauses in 1 Nephi 1:1: “having seen many afflictions in the course of my days, nevertheless, having been highly favored of the Lord in all my days.” But Omni also has two other statements from earlier in the small plates in mind in the description of his days that follows:

2 Nephi 6:2 and Jacob 1:10	Omni 1:2
<p>Behold, my beloved brethren, that <i>I Jacob</i> having been called of God and ordained after the manner of his holy order and having been consecrated by <i>my brother Nephi</i>, unto whom ye look <i>as a king or a protector</i> and on whom ye depend for safety, behold, ye know that I have spoken unto you exceeding many things. (2 Nephi 6:2)</p> <p>...<i>The people</i> having loved <i>Nephi</i> exceedingly, <i>he</i> having been a great <i>protector</i> for them, having wielded the sword of Laban in their defence, and having labored in all his days for their welfare... (Jacob 1:10)</p>	<p>Wherefore <i>in my days</i> I would that ye should know <i>that I fought much with the sword to preserve my people the Nephites</i> from falling into the hands of their enemies the Lamanites.</p>

Trading Jacob’s two descriptions of his brother Nephi in 2 Nephi 6:2 and Jacob 1:10 as a “protector” (Jacob [*ya’āqōb*] = “may [God] protect”),²⁰ Omni emphasizes that he, like Nephi his predecessor, “preserved” his people by means of the sword. Conceivably, the sword that Omni used to “preserve” his people was one of many made after the pattern of the sword of Laban as mentioned in 2 Nephi 5:14: “And I Nephi did take the sword of Laban and

after the manner of it did make many swords, lest by any means the people who were now called Lamanites should come upon us and destroy us. For I knew their hatred towards me and my children and they who were called my people.” The generational wars in which Omni fought had, of course, had already begun during Nephi’s time (see 2 Nephi 5:34).

As has been noted elsewhere,²¹ the Nephites very early on began to treat the name *Laman* and its gentilic derivative *Lamanites* in terms of “unbelief” or “no faith” (cf. especially Hebrew *lō’-’ēmun*, Deuteronomy 32:20). The outcome shown to Nephi in vision regarding the posterity of Laman, Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael had long since come to fulfillment: “these shall dwindle in unbelief” (1 Nephi 12:22). The Lamanites’ “dwindl[ing] in unbelief” became the stock-in-trade of the Nephites’ pejorative view of them (see e.g., Mosiah 1:5–6; Alma 56:3–4; Mormon 5:15). Jarom’s statement in Jarom 1:7 is meant at least partly to contrast the “faith” and “faithfulness” of the Nephite leaders with the unbelieving or unfaithful Lamanites (and perhaps implicitly some of the “stiffnecked”²² Nephites themselves): “And it came to pass that [the Lamanites] came many times against us, the Nephites, to battle. But our kings and our leaders were *mighty men in the faith* [Hebrew *’ēmūnat*] of the Lord; and they taught the people the ways of the Lord; wherefore, we withstood *the Lamanites* [cf. *lō’-’ēmun*] and swept them away out of our lands.” (Jarom 1:7).

It is not impossible that when Jarom wrote the foregoing, Omni was already one of the Nephite “leaders” and was, on some level, one of the “mighty men in the faith of the Lord” — i.e., “mighty men in the faith of Yahweh.” Whatever his personal failings, Omni had not fully “dwindle[d] in unbelief” like Laman and Lemuel and their posterity, and Yahweh was still the object of his faith, as implied by his name (Omni = “Yahweh [is the object of] my faith”). Omni still had faith in “the Lord” (Yahweh), whom he mentions at the end of Omni 1:2. Omni had been faithful to the sacred trust of “preserving [Jacob’s descendants’] genealogy.” He also proved true and faithful to a second trust: “preserv[ing] [his] people.” Thus the reader should bring into balance Omni’s subsequent self-confession with his keeping of these two trusts.

“But Behold, I of Myself Am a Wicked Man”

Although he links himself to Jacob, Enos, and Jarom in terms of his faithful “preservation” of the family genealogy, and to Nephi in terms of faithfully wielding the sword to “preserve” his people, Omni puts tremendous distance between himself and his predecessors in terms of his personal righteousness. A comparison between the autobiographical

introductions of Nephi, Enos, and Omni speaks to Omni's acute consciousness on this point:

1 Nephi 1:1 and Enos 1:1	Omni 1:1-2
<p><i>I Nephi</i> [<i>nfr</i> = good] having been born of <i>goodly parents</i>, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father And having seen many afflictions <i>in the course of my days</i>, nevertheless having been highly favored of the Lord <i>in all my days</i>, yea, having had a great knowledge of <i>the goodness</i> and the mysteries of God, therefore I make a record of my proceedings <i>in my days</i>. (1 Nephi 1:1)</p> <p>Behold, it came to pass that <i>I Enos</i> [<i>'énôš</i>], knowing my father that he was a <i>just man</i> [Hebrew <i>'iš/'énôš</i>], for he taught me in his language and also in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Enos 1:1)</p>	<p>Behold, it came to pass that <i>I Omni</i> [= "faithful one," "Y. is my faith"] being commanded by my father ... wherefore, <i>in my days</i>, I would that ye should know that I fought much with the sword to preserve my people, <i>the Nephites</i> [cf. good/fair ones], from falling into the hands of their enemies, the <i>Lamanites</i> [cf. the "unfaithful ones"] But behold, <i>I of myself am a wicked man</i>, and I have not kept the statutes and the commandments of the Lord as I ought to have done.</p>

Thus, Omni's description of himself as a "wicked man" has at least a double reference. His "confession" recalls Enos's description of his father, Jacob, as "just man," including the play on the meaning of Enos's name, "man."²³ Both Omni's self-evaluation as "a wicked man" and Enos's description of his father as a "just man" recall Nephi's description of Lehi, the patriarch of both Nephites and Lamanites, as a "goodly parent" (cf. his later description of Lehi as a "tender parent," 1 Nephi 8:37).

The qualifying phrase "of myself" in Omni's confession ("I of myself am a wicked man") inverts the force of the autobiographical wordplays of Nephi ("I Nephi having been born of goodly parents") and Enos ("I Enos knowing my father that he was a just man"). By means of wordplay, Nephi and later Enos (imitating Nephi) had attributed the appropriateness of their names to qualities or attributes possessed by their parents. Omni uses an antonymic adjective rendered "wicked" as a deliberate and self-effacing means of distinguishing himself from his "good" forefathers Lehi and Nephi and the "just men" Jacob and Enos who were his ancestors. In particular, Omni's use of the self-description

“wicked man” echoes Enos’s description of Jacob as a “just man” as the very obverse of the latter description.

“I Have Not Kept the Statutes and the Commandments of the Lord as I Ought to Have Done”

Omni explains what he means by the self-confession: “I of myself am a wicked man,” with the admission, “I have not kept the statutes and the commandments of the Lord as I ought to have done.” Here, too, we find a possible intertextual precedent in the small plates. Nephi affirms his people’s fidelity to the law of Moses with his use of the stereotyped formula “keep the judgments and the statutes and the commandments of the Lord” (2 Nephi 5:10). Nephi derives this formula from the Book of Deuteronomy, which attests the formula “the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments” (and slight variations thereon) in abundance.²⁴ Omni seems to have borrowed Nephi’s language from 2 Nephi 5:10; the precise wording “the statutes and the commandments of the Lord” appears only there and in Omni 1:2:

2 Nephi 5:10 and 1 Nephi 17:22	Omni 1:2
<p><i>And we did observe to keep the judgments and the statutes and the commandments of the Lord, in all things according to the law of Moses. (2 Nephi 5:10)</i></p> <p>Compare Laman and Lemuel’s reported speech: “And we know that <i>the people who were in the land of Jerusalem were <u>a righteous people</u></i>, for they kept the statutes and judgments of the Lord and all his commandments according to the law of Moses; wherefore we know that they are <i><u>a righteous people</u></i>.” (1 Nephi 17:22)</p>	<p><i>But behold, I of myself am <u>a wicked man</u>, and I have not kept the statutes and the commandments of the Lord as I ought to have done.</i></p>

Thus, Omni’s partial use of the Deuteronomic “commandments”-formula amounts to a confession of failure to fully keep the Law of Moses. Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet write, “It need not be supposed from such an admission that he [Omni] was guilty of any gross immorality, but rather that he was not zealous in honoring the law of Moses and in

keeping other religious obligations.”²⁵ Szink rightly suggests that “we should not be too quick to condemn Omni. We might ask ourselves, Who among us has kept the statutes and commandments of the Lord as he or she ought to have done? The fact that Omni admits that he was a wicked man is at least evidence of humility. Wicked people do not normally acknowledge the fact that they are wicked.”²⁶ Perhaps Omni felt that he had not adequately lived up to his father’s description of those “leaders [who] were mighty men in the faith of the Lord” (Jarom 1:7) and wished to distance himself from that description.

“He Would Not Suffer that the Words Should Not Be Verified”

Whatever “other religious obligations” Omni failed to keep, he had been true to the “preservation” of his people — i.e., his community — and the “preservation” of his genealogy. He had at least taught his sons Amaron and Chemish enough of “the ways of the Lord” (Jarom 1:7) that they were able to faithfully and conscientiously preserve the small plates. Amaron, for his part, recognized the activation of the Lord’s judgments during his own time and reported the “verification” of the Lord’s words thus:

For the Lord would not suffer after he had led them out of the land of Jerusalem and kept and preserved them from falling into the hands of their enemies, yea, *he would not suffer that the words should not be verified* which he spake unto our fathers, saying that inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments, ye shall not prosper in the land. Wherefore the Lord did visit them in great judgment. Nevertheless he did spare the righteous that they should not perish, but did deliver them out of the hands of their enemies. (Omni 1:6–7)

Two passages from the Hebrew Bible use idioms that describe the “verification” of previously spoken “words” (human and divine). They offer intimations of how the Nephites would have expressed this idea, including the authors on the small plates — i.e., with causative forms of the verb *’mn*. In the Joseph cycle, Joseph — still unknown to his brothers — uses the hiphil form of *’mn*: “But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words *be verified* [*wěyē’āmēnū*] and ye shall not die” (Genesis 42:20). Solomon uses a similar form of *’mn* in his temple dedicatory prayer: “And now, O God of Israel, *let thy word, I pray thee, be verified* [*yē’āmen*], which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father” (1 Kings 8:26).

These passages shed further light on both Amaron’s words in Omni 1:6–7 but also on his grandfather Jarom’s description of the

verification of the Lord's words generations earlier — words which Amaron directly borrows. We recall Jarom's mention of the Nephite leaders Jarom 1:7: "mighty men in the faith [*'ēmūnat*] of the Lord," leaders which may have even included Omni (despite his self-confession, "I of myself am a wicked man"). Jarom then reports,

And thus being prepared to meet *the Lamanites* [cf. *lō'*-*'ēmūn*, "no faith," "unbelief"], they did not prosper against us. But the word of *the Lord was verified* which he spake unto our fathers, saying that inasmuch as ye will keep my commandments, ye shall prosper in the land. (Jarom 1:9)

Amaron reworks Jarom's earlier statement, inverting it into a double-negative: "*he would not suffer that the words should not be verified* which he spake unto our fathers, saying that inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall not prosper in the land." In the context of the books of Jarom and Omni, Amaron's apparent use of the verb *'mn* (or its equivalent) becomes a wordplay on the name of his father, Omni, and on "Lamanites." Similar wordplay on *'mn* and Lamanites recurs in the Book of Alma at Alma 9:14; 25:12, 17; 50:19, 21.²⁷

Conclusion

When we examine Omni's declaration "I am of myself a wicked man" (Omni 1:2) in the context of and as an allusion to the earlier autobiographical introductions of Nephi ("I Nephi having been born of goodly parents," 1 Nephi 1:1) and Enos ("I Enos knowing my father that he was a just man," Enos 1:1) on the small plates, it appears less a self-confession and more self-effacement.²⁸ Where Nephi and Enos used wordplay that attributed the appropriateness of their names to righteous parentage ("goodly parents" and a "just man"), Omni wished to distance his personal failings — small or great — from Jarom, his father and his predecessors. He revered them.

Jarom's description of Nephite leaders who were "mighty men in *the faith* [*'ēmūnat*] of the Lord [*yhw*h]" (Jarom 1:7), if not a description meant to include his son Omni, at least reflects the sentiment and hope embodied in the naming of Omni ("Faithful one" or "Yahweh is [the object of my] faith"). Whatever Omni's personal failings, we should never look past the fact that his preservation of his people and genealogy meant the preservation of Nephi's small plates themselves and all that they contain. Omni reared and taught two sons (Amaron and Chemish), who, whatever their own personal failings, faithfully kept and preserved the small plates.

Amaron recognized the activation or “verification” (cf. *wěyē’āmēnū*) of the Lord’s words regarding the Nephites during Omni’s and his own time (Omni 1:6; cf. Jarom 1:9). In proving faithful to this trust, Omni and his descendants are to be praised and thanked for their faithfulness no less than those who preserved the ancient biblical texts (cf. 2 Nephi 29:4).

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Endnotes

- 1 John S. Tanner, “Jacob and His Descendants as Authors” in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon: Insights That You May Have Missed Before*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991), 57–58.
- 2 A wider study of intertextuality in the Book of Omni will, at some point, be forthcoming. One major example of this is the precedent that Nephi sets as he winds down his first book with the statement “And now I Nephi make an end” (1 Nephi 22:29; he uses a less abrupt variation of this in 1 Nephi 14:30; 2 Nephi 30:18; and 2 Nephi 31:1). Jacob follows this precedent when he makes a substantive break in writing (Jacob 3:14) and does so again when he concludes his book for the final time (Jacob 7:27). Omni resumes the practice of using the abbreviated form that Nephi uses at the end of 1 Nephi, “And I make an end” (Omni 1:3); Chemish, the son of Omni and the brother of Amaron, follows suit (“And I make an end,” Omni 1:9), as does Abinadom, the son of Chemish (Omni 1:11). Lastly on

the small plates, Amaleki closes the Book of Omni and the small plates record with the longer variation, “and I make an end of my speaking” (Omni 1:30).

- 3 Book of Mormon citations will generally follow Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009).
- 4 Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007), 3:38.
- 5 *Book of Mormon Onomasticon*, s.v. “Omni,” last modified November 21, 2015, <https://onoma.lib.byu.edu/index.php/OMNI>.
- 6 Hypocoristic names abound in ancient Israel and in the ancient Near East. For example, the name *Moses* constitutes a hypocorism of an originally longer Egyptian name and means “(the deity is) Begotten.” 1 Samuel 25:44 attests the name *Phalti*, a hypocoristic form of *Phaltiel* (“El [God is my deliverance]”), the latter, fuller form being attested in 2 Samuel 3:15. As noted in Brill’s *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, the shortening of hypocoristic names in spelling and pronunciation “is usually one of convenience, though it may also be motivated by the desire to express endearment or for other purposes.” Richard S. Hess, “Hypocoristic Names,” in *Encyclopedia of Hebrew Language and Linguistics*, ed. Geoffrey Khan (Leiden, NDL: Brill, 2013), https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopedia-of-hebrew-language-and-linguistics/hypocoristic-names-EHLL_COM_00000227?s.num=1. I am so far unaware of any evidence that the use of such hypocorisms was considered irreverent as it sometimes is today in some modern English contexts.
- 7 *Onomasticon*, “Omni.”
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden, NDL: Brill, 2001), 64.
- 10 *Onomasticon*, “Omni.”
- 11 John A. Tvedtnes, “One Small Step,” *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon 1989–2011*: 15, no. 1 (January 2003): 185. Tvedtnes further cites the names Moroni (“Moronite” or one from the

- land of Moron) and Muloki ("Mulochite" [or "Mulekite"], i.e., descendant of Muloch/Mulek]), which likely constitute examples of this same phenomenon. On the name *Lamoni*" see also *Book of Mormon Onomasticon*, s.v. "Lamoni," last modified November 11, 2017, <https://onoma.lib.byu.edu/index.php/LAMONI>.
- 12 Matthew L. Bowen, "'O Ye Fair Ones': An Additional Note on the Meaning of the Name Nephi," *Insights: A Window on the Ancient World* 23, no. 6 (2003): 2-3. On the name Nephi as a derivation from Egyptian *nfr*, see John Gee, "A Note on the Name Nephi," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 1, no. 1 (July 1992): 189-91; John Gee, "Four Suggestions on the Origin of the Name Nephi," in *Pressing Forward with the Book of Mormon: The FARMS Updates of the 1990s*, ed. John W. Welch and Melvin J. Thorne (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), 1-5.
 - 13 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*, eds. Daniel L. Belnap, Gaye Strathearn, and Stanley A. Johnson (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and RSC, 2011), 240-63; Bowen, "The Faithfulness of Ammon," *Religious Educator: Perspectives on the Restored Gospel* 15, no. 2 (2016): 64-89. See further Bowen, "Laman and Nephi as Key-Words: An Etymological, Narratological, and Rhetorical Approach to Understanding Lamanites and Nephites as Religious, Political, and Cultural Descriptors" (Provo, UT: FairMormon Conference, August 2019), <https://www.fairmormon.org/conference/august-2019/laman-and-nephi-as-key-words>.
 - 14 Matthew L. Bowen "See That Ye Are Not Lifted Up': The Name Zoram and Its Paronomastic Pejoration," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 19 (2016):109-43, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/see-that-ye-are-not-lifted-up-the-name-zoram-and-its-paronomastic-pejoration/>.
 - 15 Matthew L. Bowen, "'What Thank They the Jews'? (2 Nephi 29:4): A Note on the Name "Judah" and Antisemitism," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 12 (2014): 111-25, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/what-thank-they-the-jews-2-nephi-294-a-note-on-the-name-judah-and-antisemitism/>.
 - 16 Matthew L. Bowen, "Nephi's Good Inclusio," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 17 (2016): 181-82, 194, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/nephis-good-inclusio/>.

- 17 Terrence L. Szink, “Writing the Things of God,” in *Living the Book of Mormon: Abiding by Its Precepts*, ed. Gaye Strathearn and Charles Swift (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2007), 129. Szink continues, “The information he gave is, for the most part, forgettable. It does not have the impact Jacob’s preaching or Enos’s prayer have, and it does nothing to help bring us to Christ. In fact, Jarom does not so much as mention the name of Jesus Christ in his book. Jarom may have gone against Nephi’s commandment that his seed “not occupy these plates which things are not of worth unto the children of men” (1 Nephi 6:6).” In my view, Szink understates the value of Jarom’s writings. He critiques Jarom for not mentioning the name “Jesus Christ” in his book, this in spite of the fact that Jarom mentions the Messiah by title in Jarom 1:11 (“persuading them [the Nephites] to look forward unto the Messiah, and believe in him to come as though he already was” cf. 2 Nephi 25:24–27) and mentioning the Lord five other times. It is hard to imagine dismissing the entire Hebrew Bible for not mentioning the name Jesus Christ or the Book of Esther for not mentioning God.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Genealogy was one important function of the brass plates (see, e.g., 1 Nephi 3:3, 12, 19–20; 1 Nephi 5:14, 16. Thus, the genealogical use of the small plates among Jarom and his descendants did constitute a misuse of the plates, per se.
- 20 Martin Noth, *Die israelitischen Personennamen im Rahmen der Gemeinsemitischen Namengebung* (BWANT 3, no. 10; Stuttgart, DEU: W. Kolhammer, 1928), 177–78, 197. Matthew L. Bowen, “Jacob’s Protector” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 27 (2017): 229–56, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/jacobs-protector/>
- 21 See Bowen, “Not Partaking,” 243; Bowen, “Faithfulness of Ammon,” 73–75.
- 22 Jarom 1:4; see also 2 Nephi 25:28 (quoting Exodus 33:3, 5; Deuteronomy 9:6; cf. Exodus 32:9; 34:9; Deuteronomy 9:13; 10:16); Jacob 6:4; Enos 1:22.
- 23 For more on Enos’s use of wordplay on his own name and on that of his father, Jacob, see Matthew L. Bowen, “Wordplay on

the Name 'Enos,'" *Insights: A Window on the Ancient World* 26, no. 3 (2006): 2; Bowen, "And There Wrestled a Man with Him' (Genesis 32:24): Enos's Adaptations of the Onomastic Wordplay of Genesis," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 10 (2014): 151–60, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/and-there-wrestled-a-man-with-him-genesis-3224-enoss-adaptations-of-the-onomastic-wordplay-of-genesis/>.

- 24 See, e.g., Deuteronomy 5:31 [MT]; 6:1; 7:11; 8:11; 11:1; 26:17; 30:16. Variations on the formula "the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments" also occurs in the "Deuteronomistic History" (see, e.g., 1 Kings 2:3; 6:12; 8:58. This combination of terms occurs first in Leviticus 26:15, but not as a stereotyped formula until Deuteronomy. See also Nehemiah 1:7; 9:3; 10:29.
- 25 Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2, *Jacob Through Mosiah* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 113.
- 26 Szink, "Writing Things of God," 130.
- 27 Alma 9:14: "Now I would that ye should remember that inasmuch as the Lamanites have not kept the commandments of God, they have been cut off from the presence of the Lord. Now we see that the word of the Lord *hath been verified* in this thing, and the *Lamanites* have been cut off from his presence from the beginning of their transgressions in the land"; Alma 25:12: "And he said unto the priests of Noah that their seed should cause many to be put to death in the like manner as he was, and that they should be scattered abroad and slain, even as a sheep having no shepherd is driven and slain by wild beasts. And now behold, these words *were verified*, for they were driven by the *Lamanites*, and they were hunted and they were smitten"; Alma 25:17: "And now behold, Ammon, and Aaron and Omner and Himni and their brethren did rejoice exceedingly for the success which they had had among the *Lamanites*, seeing that the Lord had granted unto them according to their prayers and that *he had also verified* his word unto them in every particular"; Alma 50:19–22: "And thus we see how merciful and just are all the dealings of the Lord, to the fulfilling of all his words unto the children of men. Yea, we can behold that his words *are verified*, even at this time, which he spake unto Lehi, saying: Blessed art thou and thy children. And they shall be blessed! And inasmuch as they shall keep my commandments, they shall

prosper in the land. But remember, inasmuch as they will not keep my commandments, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord. And we see that these promises *have been verified* to the people of Nephi; for it has been their quarrelings and their contentions, yea, their murderings and their plunderings, their idolatry and their whoredoms and their abominations which were among themselves, which brought upon them their wars and their destructions. And those who *were faithful* in keeping the commandments of the Lord were delivered at all times, whilst thousands of their wicked brethren have been consigned to bondage or to perish by the sword or to dwindle in *unbelief* and mingle with the *Lamanites*.”

- 28 This is consistent with the conclusions Clifford Jones obtained through thoughtful textual analysis; Clifford P. Jones, “The Prophets Who Wrote the Book of Omni,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020): 221–44; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/the-prophets-who-wrote-the-book-of-omni/>.

THE VISIONS OF MOSES AND JOSEPH SMITH'S BIBLE TRANSLATION

Kent P. Jackson

Abstract: *This contribution focuses on the earliest and one of the most significant chapters of the Book of Moses: Moses 1, sometimes called the “Visions of Moses.” Kent Jackson summarizes the sources available relating to the production of this chapter, illuminating obscure corners of its often misunderstood background with his extensive knowledge of the history, manuscripts, and significance of the Joseph Smith Translation.*

[**Editor’s Note:** Part of our book chapter reprint series, this article is reprinted here as a service to the LDS community. Original pagination and page numbers have necessarily changed, otherwise the reprint has the same content as the original.]

See Kent P. Jackson, “The Visions of Moses and Joseph Smith’s Bible Translation,” in *“To Seek the Law of the Lord”: Essays in Honor of John W. Welch*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson and Daniel C. Peterson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2017), 161–70. Further information at <https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/to-see-the-law-of-the-lord-essays-in-honor-of-john-w-welch-2/>.]

Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible covers the entire Bible but not with equal emphasis. The most extensive and dramatic additions to the text are found in Genesis and were revealed in the first months of the translation. Because of the lack of conclusive historical sources for much of the summer and fall of 1830, there are unanswered questions about the earliest stages of the translation work. In this paper I do not argue a thesis but simply describe and discuss the evidence. I identify

some of the questions about the early translation and attempt to show what can and cannot be said in response to those questions.¹

In June 1830, two months after the Church of Christ was organized, Joseph Smith dictated the first pages. They are recorded on a manuscript that archivists call Old Testament Manuscript 1 because it is the earliest of the extant manuscripts of the translation.² The first nine pages of this document are in the hand of Oliver Cowdery. At the top of page 1 is a heading that was likely supplied by Cowdery: “A Revelation given to Joseph the Revelator June 1830.” The text itself starts with the title, “The words of God which he gave <spake> unto Moses at a time when Moses was caught up into an exceeding high Mountain. . . .” Over much of its history, this revelation, found on pages 1–3 of the manuscript, has been called the Visions of Moses. It was first published in 1843 in the Church’s periodical *Times and Seasons*.³ It was then published in 1851 in the *Millennial Star* and included in the British Mission pamphlet, *The Pearl of Great Price*. In 1880 it was canonized along with the rest of that collection. It is now chapter 1 of the Book of Moses.

The Visions and Genesis

The Visions of Moses has no Bible counterpart. It is not an expansion of any biblical verse or a revision of any biblical passage. Much of its content deals with themes hardly mentioned in the Old and New Testaments. It is uniquely Latter-day Saint in its teachings and is one of the most distinctive and significant texts of the Restoration. But the nature of the document leads to this question: Is it part of the New Translation of the Bible? The scribal title, “A Revelation given to Joseph the Revelator June 1830,” may suggest that Joseph Smith was not aware of its relationship

1 See Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004). Accessible summaries of current research in the New Translation are Kent P. Jackson, “How We Got the Book of Moses,” in *By Study and by Faith: Selections from the Religious Educator*, eds. Richard Neitzel Holzapfel and Kent P. Jackson (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2009), 136–47; and Jackson, “New Discoveries in the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible,” in *By Study and by Faith*, 169–81.

2 The manuscript is housed in the Library-Archives of the Community of Christ in Independence, Missouri. In the Joseph Smith Papers, it is called “Old Testament Revision 1.” See Michael Hubbard MacKay, Gerrit J. Dirkmaat, Grant Underwood, Robert J. Woodford, and William G. Hartley, eds., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Documents Volume 1: July 1828–June 1831* (Salt Lake City: Church Historian’s Press, 2013), 150–56.

3 “History of Joseph Smith,” *Times and Seasons* 4, no. 5 (January 16, 1843): 71–73. The title “Visions of Moses” was first applied in the 1878 *Pearl of Great Price*.

to the Bible initially, though that relationship became apparent in due time. The Prophet and his associates treated the revelation as something different from most of the other revelations he had received. To the best of our knowledge, it was always associated with the Genesis revision that follows it on the manuscript. It was never included in the manuscript collections of the early revelations, either in Revelation Book 1 or in the later Revelation Book 2. Nor was it included among the divine communications printed in the Book of Commandments in 1833 or the Doctrine and Covenants in 1835. It is very different from those texts, which are mostly messages to the Church at large or to individuals by name, dealing with the establishment of the Church, its mission, and its institutions. In them, God is the speaker; it is his voice that addresses the recipients.⁴

The Visions of Moses, in contrast, tells a story. It is an account in the words of an unidentified narrator. God is not the speaker. When God speaks, he is being quoted, just as the other characters are quoted in the narration. In the account, God appears to Moses and teaches him about his creations—“worlds without number” that fill the universe. Moses asks, “Tell me I pray thee why these things are so & by what thou madest them,” in response to which God tells Moses that he would reveal to him “an account of this Earth & the inhabitants thereof.” With that, Moses says, “Tell me concerning this Earth & the inhabitants thereof & also the Heavens & then thy servant will be content.”⁵

While we do not know what Joseph Smith was anticipating at the start of this revelation, the text itself tells us that it is the prologue to the Genesis creation account with which the Bible begins. God tells Moses, “I will speak unto you concerning this Earth upon which thou standest & thou shalt write the things which I shall speak.” But he then says that the day would come when people would “esteem my words as naught & take many of them from the Book which thou shalt write,” foretelling the rejection and removal of much of the revealed narrative. As a consequence, “I will raise up another like unto thee & they shall be had again among the Children of men among even as many as shall believe.”⁶

4 The exceptions to this by 1830 are the Account of John (April 1829; D&C 7) and the Articles and Covenants of the Church (ca. April 1830; D&C 20). The Account of John may be a useful analog because like the Visions of Moses, it is a narrative.

5 Old Testament Manuscript 1 (OT1), page 2, lines 27–28, 36–37, 41–43.

6 OT1, page 3, lines 6–11.

Did Joseph Smith understand these words as foretelling the restoration of lost material from the Bible? And did he understand them as instructions to *him* to restore that lost material?

Immediately after the Visions of Moses on the manuscript, we have a new heading: “A Revelation given to the Elders of the Church of Christ On the first Book of Moses.”⁷ Then come these words: “And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Moses saying Behold I reveal unto you concerning this Heaven & this Earth[,] write the words which I speak ... yea in the beginning I created the Heaven & the Earth upon which thou standest & the Earth was without form & void & I caused darkness to come up upon the face of the deep & my Spirit moved upon the face of the waters for I am God & I God said Let there be light & there was light.”⁸ These words, in obvious continuity with the words of the Visions of Moses and flowing directly from them, are the first three verses of Genesis. They do not give the impression of having been written to stand at the head of a new document but to continue the text that precedes them. Whether anticipated by Joseph Smith or not, the Visions of Moses is a prologue to the biblical creation account. It provides the context for that account within a discussion of God’s creations throughout the cosmos, and it provides a setting for the telling of the story to Moses. By the time the heading was written, “A Revelation ... On the first Book of Moses,” Joseph Smith knew at least that it was to be a Genesis revelation. And after he received the first words of it, he and his scribe certainly knew, if they did not know before, that they were creating a new version of a biblical narrative.

Notwithstanding the continuity of the narrative, the heading that separates the Visions of Moses from Genesis 1 (that is, Moses 1 from Moses 2) constitutes a significant break in the text. It introduces an audience, “the Elders of the Church,” and it likely begins a revelation that took place at a different time and perhaps in a different physical setting from what came before. The heading also introduces a new rhetorical tone with a new voice. The narrator’s voice continues only for a few words—“And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Moses saying”—after which God becomes the speaker. In addition, the break suggests a procedural separation from the past and the introduction of a new method of producing the text. From that point forward, what the Prophet was creating was a revision of existing biblical words, not a text with no Bible counterpart.

7 Ibid., lines 14, 16–17.

8 Ibid., lines 21–28.

Today it makes sense to view the Visions of Moses as part of the New Translation because Joseph Smith and those who worked on it with him did. As we have seen, Genesis 1 was written immediately following it, beginning on the same page. The entire Old Testament 1 manuscript was preserved in a wrapper labeled “Genesis” (although we do not know when that cover and title were applied). John Whitmer’s copy of the manuscript, created about the first of January 1831, reproduces the text with the Visions of Moses immediately preceding Genesis.⁹ The same is true of the copy of the text he began in March 1831, Old Testament Manuscript 2. The Visions of Moses on that manuscript has a title that was placed at its top in the hand of Sidney Rigdon—“Genesis 1st Chapter.”¹⁰ Through all of these means, the Visions of Moses was “both physically and intellectually associated” with the Bible translation that it introduces.¹¹

Location

We can probably assume that the “June 1830” date at the top of the first page of OT1 represents the month in which the Visions of Moses was dictated. Because the text is only two and one half pages long, we might assume that it was recorded in one or two sittings. One thing that makes that assumption uncertain is a change in ink, from a dark ink to a lighter ink, on the eleventh line of page 2. This would be of little notice because writers had to change ink sources from time to time, but the change corresponds with a significant break in the narrative, as though one chapter were ending and another beginning. It is important not to conclude more from that than is justified, but the break leaves open the possibility of a change of date and a change of venue.

We do not know where Joseph Smith was when the Visions of Moses was revealed. During different parts of June 1830, we have evidence of his being in Harmony, Pennsylvania, and in Colesville and Fayette, New York. The text could have been recorded in any of those locations.

Manuscript and Printed Bible

It is not certain whether the Visions of Moses on Old Testament 1 is the original text written from dictation. The evidence is mixed, suggesting

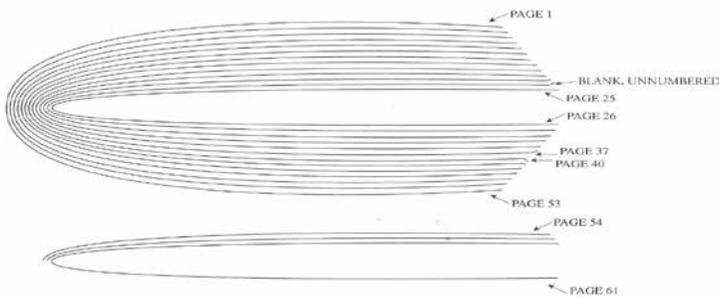
9 OT3, page 1; see Scott H. Faulring and Kent P. Jackson, “Old Testament Manuscript 3—An Early Transcript of the Book of Moses,” *Mormon Historical Studies* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 113–44.

10 OT2, page 1, line 1.

11 MacKay, Dirkmaat, et al., *Documents Volume 1*, 150.

to some that it is a copy of the original. But it is clear that it was not intended for use as a fair copy, that is, a refined copy made to be the master copy for further duplication and publication. A later manuscript, Old Testament 2, was prepared to serve that function. That document is a copy of Old Testament 1 to which have been added all the hallmarks of a fair copy—some refinements in spelling, the addition of punctuation and capitalization, correction of grammatical anomalies, and insertion of chapter and verse divisions.¹²

The makeup of Old Testament 1 as a physical artifact leads to questions. The bulk of it consists of a large gathering of sheets of paper. To make such a gathering, thirteen loose sheets of foolscap paper (ca. 16 x 13 inches) were folded in half and stitched in the middle to make a booklet of fifty-two pages. Normally, the writing would be placed on the pages after the booklet was created, but it is possible that sheets were folded and placed inside as the writing progressed, and there is no way to know at what point the stitching was added. These uncertainties are relevant, because they speak to the issue of whether the Prophet anticipated a large writing project when the words were placed on the first page (whether it was the dictated manuscript or not). The gathering begins with the Visions of Moses, and the last page ends at Genesis 21:29.¹³



12 Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible*, 585–666.

13 The name *foolscap* designates the size of paper, and it derives from paper in the eighteenth century that bore the watermark of a fool's cap. The image is from Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible*, 77. Internal errors in the numbering of the pages resulted in the final page being numbered 53. The image shows the sheets as they were originally. The booklet was preserved intact until the 1990s, but wear had caused some of the sheets to separate at the fold. The outer sheets are now separated, but the innermost sheets are still together.

In October 1829, while the Book of Mormon was being typeset at E. B. Grandin's print shop in Palmyra, New York, Oliver Cowdery bought a quarto-size Bible in Grandin's store for use in the work of the Restoration. He wrote on its flyleaf, "The Book of the Jews And the Property of Joseph Smith Junior and Oliver Cowdery ... Holiness to the Lord." The Bible Cowdery purchased was printed in 1828 by the H. & E. Phinney company of Cooperstown, New York. It would play an important role in the work of the New Translation, and perhaps also in other ways of which we are not aware.¹⁴

We know that this copy of the Bible was used in the New Translation, but we do not know if it was used from the beginning. To assess the evidence, we need to first understand the last stage of the process, from February 1832 to July 1833. Starting in mid-February 1832, a year and a half after the translation began, the Prophet and his scribes began using an abbreviated notation system by which they recorded words on the manuscript pages and insertion points in the printed Bible. Joseph Smith dictated to his scribes only chapter and verse numbers and isolated words or phrases, and that is all they wrote on the manuscripts. But in the Bible, he circled words or wrote marks to show where to put the replacement words that the scribes wrote on the manuscripts. Prior to February 1832 there was a different system. The Prophet dictated the text in full to his scribes, who wrote in longhand the words he spoke, in complete sentences and even including passages that had no changes. During that time, the text was recorded exclusively on the manuscript pages, without any notations in the Bible. Thus there is no evidence in the Bible to show that he used it for the translation before February 1832. Because he clearly used it after that date, it is not unreasonable to suppose that he used the same Bible from the beginning of Genesis as well.

From Genesis 1:1 on, the New Translation is a revision of existing King James translation text. Because of that, it seems evident that Joseph Smith had a Bible in front of him during the translation and that he read from it while his scribes wrote. When he came to a passage needing revision, he would dictate words not found in the printed text until he came back to that text and continued with it. The writing on the manuscripts shows no indication of when the text was coming out of the printed Bible and when it was not. Unless they knew the passages well,

14 See Kent P. Jackson, "Joseph Smith's Cooperstown Bible: The Bible Used in the Joseph Smith Translation in Its Historical Context," *BYU Studies* 40, no. 1 (2001): 41–70. The Bible measures ca. 9 x 11 inches.

the scribes may not have known when he was simply reading and when he was uttering words not found on the printed page.

But we do not know if Joseph Smith had the Bible open in front of him when the Visions of Moses was revealed. As we have seen, we do not know if he knew he was going to do a Bible revision at that time, and nothing in the Visions of Moses would have required the presence of a Bible. If he knew from the outset that he was beginning a Bible revision, he may have had it before him, only to discover that the first installment would be a special prologue to Genesis 1 not in need of a Bible at hand. Otherwise, he likely brought out the Bible only when he knew he was to begin revising its text, which must have happened at Genesis 1:1 or soon thereafter.

Joseph Smith as Bible Translator

In a revelation given the day the Church was organized, Joseph Smith was told that he would be called a translator.¹⁵ Because that was about eight months after the Book of Mormon had gone to press, the title seems to anticipate future works of translation, not only those in the past. At what point did he know he had translation responsibilities beyond the Book of Mormon? Did that revelation cause him to conclude that the Bible would be his next task? As we have seen, the Visions of Moses teaches that some text from Moses's record would be lost and that God would raise up someone like Moses through whom it would be restored. In the Book of Mormon, an angel told Nephi of the removal of plain and precious truths from the Bible (1 Nephi 13:21–29). Did those passages tell Joseph Smith that the Restoration in which he was engaged would include the restoration of the Old and New Testaments? None of the extant revelations contain instructions in the voice of God commanding his prophet to translate the Bible, but such instructions may not have been necessary if he came to understand through passages like these that correcting the Bible was already part of his calling.

The message seems to have been reinforced as time progressed. In July 1830, after the Visions of Moses was revealed, he was instructed in a revelation, “Thou shalt continue in calling upon [God] in my name & writing the Things which shall be given thee by the Comforter. ... & it shall be given thee in the very moment what thou shalt speak and

¹⁵ “Behold there Shall a Record be kept among you & in it thou shalt be called a seer & Translator & Prop[h]et.” Revelation, 6 April 1830 [D&C 21:1], in MacKay, Dirkmaat, et al., *Documents Volume 1*, 129.

write.”¹⁶ At about the same time, he and his scribes, Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer, were instructed, “Ye shall let your time be devoted to the studying the Scriptures.”¹⁷ That same month, his wife, Emma Smith, was also called to serve as a scribe, and two pages of Genesis are in her handwriting.¹⁸ By the end of the year, instructions for the Bible revision were coming more clearly. When Sidney Rigdon was called to serve as a scribe, God instructed him, “Thou shalt write for him[,] & the scriptures shall be given even as they are in mine own bosom to the salvation of mine own elect.”¹⁹ These words, coming when the translation was well into the account of Enoch in Genesis 5, show that at least by then the Prophet and those who worked with him knew both that they were providing a new rendering of the Bible and that their work was an important part of the Restoration.

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16 Revelation, July 1830-A [D&C 24:5–6], in MacKay, Dirkmaat, et al., *Documents Volume 1*, 158.

17 Revelation, July 1830-B [D&C 26:1], in MacKay, Dirkmaat, et al., *Documents Volume 1*, 160.

18 “Thou shalt ... be unto him a Scribe.” Revelation, July 1830-C [D&C 25:6], in MacKay, Dirkmaat, et al., *Documents Volume 1*, 162, 164. Emma Smith wrote the last three lines of OT 1, page 11, all of pages 12–13, and the first two words of page 14.

19 Revelation, 7 December 1830 [D&C 35:20], in MacKay, Dirkmaat, et al., *Documents Volume 1*, 223.

TEXTUAL CRITICISM AND THE BOOK OF MOSES: A RESPONSE TO COLBY TOWNSEND'S "RETURNING TO THE SOURCES," PART 1 OF 2

Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle

Review of Colby Townsend, "Returning to the Sources: Integrating Textual Criticism in the Study of Early Mormon Texts and History." *Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies* 10, no. 1 (2019): 55–85, <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/imwjjournal/vol10/iss1/6/>.

Abstract: *Textual criticism tries by a variety of methods to understand the "original" or "best" wording of a document that may exist in multiple, conflicting versions or where the manuscripts are confusing or difficult to read. The present article, Part 1 of a two-part series by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle, commends Colby Townsend's efforts to raise awareness of the importance of textual criticism, while differing on some interpretations. Among the differences discussed is the question of whether it is better to read Moses 7:28 as it was dictated in Old Testament 1 version of the Joseph Smith Translation manuscript (OT1) that "God wept," or rather to read it as it was later revised in the Old Testament 2 version (OT2) that "Enoch wept." Far from being an obscure technical detail, the juxtaposition of the two versions of this verse raises general questions as to whether readings based on the latest revisions of Latter-day Saint scripture manuscripts should always take priority over the original dictations. A dialogue with Colby Townsend and Charles Harrell on rich issues of theological and historical relevance demonstrates the potential impact of the different answers to such questions by different scholars. In a separate discussion that highlights the potential significance of handwriting analysis to textual criticism, Bradshaw and Dahle respond to Townsend's arguments that the spelling difference between the names Mahujah and Mahijah in the Book of Moses may be due to a transcription error.*

In a recent article, Colby Townsend commendably pointed the attention of his readers to the importance of embracing textual criticism as a key element of methodology for studying Latter-day Saint documents. He rightfully argues that if important textual sources are missing, mistranscribed, or misunderstood, no amount of subsequent analysis can fully compensate for what may have been lost in the mishandling of this essential prerequisite.

Although Townsend's examples range over several topics in Latter-day Saint history and scripture, our response focuses specifically on topics relevant to the Book of Moses. In the present article, Part 1, we respond to material in his article that bears on three questions. The first is a general question, and the last two respond to specific examples of textual criticism that Townsend raised in his article:

- What is the status of textual criticism on the Book of Moses as a whole?
- Who wept for the wicked in Moses 7:28?
- Do the original manuscripts of the Book of Moses indicate that *Mahujah* and *Mahijah* are separate names?

In Part 2, we will continue the discussion of the Book of Moses names *Mahujah* and *Mahijah*, and the similar names *Mahujael* in Genesis 4:18 and *Mahaway* in the pseudepigraphal *Book of Giants*.

Beyond the particulars of the response to Townsend's paper, we hope this discussion will contribute to a better appreciation of the role and importance of textual criticism in understanding Latter-day Saint scripture.

1. What Is the Status of Textual Criticism on the Book of Moses?

Compared to the other works of Latter-day Saint scripture, the study of the text of the Book of Moses has accelerated more slowly. We owe great thanks to early pioneers such as Robert J. Matthews¹ and Richard P. Howard² as well as to the more recent scholarship by Kent P. Jackson, Scott Faulring, and other associates we discuss in more detail below. However, as Townsend points out, there is additional work to be done.

Townsend gives good examples of where failure to use primary sources and interpret them judiciously can lead to erroneous conclusions.³ He shows how Michael Homer overlooked a phrase that was key to his argument because of differences in the ordering of the text in the 1851 publication of selections from the Book of Moses. He also demonstrates problems with Thomas Wayment's view that

the Old Testament 1 manuscript of Moses 1 is a copy rather than an original dictation, based in part on his misreadings of Moses 1. These misreadings occurred despite the fact that Wayment, unlike Homer, “had access to recent transcriptions of OT1 and high-resolution images of it as well.”⁴ We agree with Townsend’s conclusions, and Bradshaw expands upon these and other issues relating to Wayment’s explanations for the genesis of Joseph Smith’s Bible translation in a separate review of his chapter.⁵ (Also signaling the importance of textual criticism, Bradshaw has favorably reviewed selected chapters of Samuel Brown’s book on Joseph Smith’s translations, revelations, and temple teachings, while signaling his omission of important links between the Book of Moses and the temple.⁶)

What Documents Are Currently Available for the Textual Study of the Book of Moses?

On p. 70, Townsend begins his discussion of the Book of Moses as follows:

Some may assume that the LDS Pearl of Great Price, an important part of the LDS canonical works, ha[s] received thorough treatment, but this assumption only applies to the Book of Abraham.⁷

After having encountered this statement, readers may think scholarly treatment of the Book of Moses has been deficient, but Townsend’s comment has more to do with completeness than quality. His primary concern is the need for more textual criticism of books in the Pearl of Great Price, going beyond documentary editing. According to Kent P. Jackson, the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) manuscripts (of which the Book of Moses is a part) have already received “a higher level of redundant scrutiny than is the norm in documentary editing.”⁸ Although Townsend cites Jackson’s 2005 book,⁹ *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation*, his article does not give a description of its contents because, while it is related to the issues he describes in his article, it does not provide a critical text of the sort he is calling for. Unfortunately, and more to Townsend’s point, the broader field of Latter-day Saint studies has not paid the kind of attention to Jackson’s book that it deserves.

The goal of Jackson’s 2005 book was to answer two questions: “What was Joseph Smith’s intended text?” and “How did we get from that to the current text?”¹⁰ It explains the major developments of the Book of Moses from the original manuscript in OT1¹¹ to the 1981 canonical edition.

The book contains a chapter on the “Historical Text” (pp. 53–142) that reproduces the text of OT2¹² along with a text-critical apparatus that focuses on a comparison of OT2 to OT1, EMS, 1835 LF, 1843 TS, 1851, CM, 1867 IV, 1878, 1879, 1888, 1902, 1921, and 1981 as well as to “early printings of the Book of Moses that are not part of the direct lineage of today’s text” (i.e., EMS, LF, TS, 1851, and 1879).¹³ Additionally, a chapter entitled “Manuscript Text” (pp. 143–171) brings the OT1 and OT2 manuscripts together into a single place, “with the words as the Prophet left them [i.e., following the latest revisions made in his lifetime], but with grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation standardized.”¹⁴ In addition, high-definition images of these JST manuscript pages have been available since the inexpensive publication of *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible Electronic Library (JSTEL)* in 2011.¹⁵ The transcriptions of the JST documents created by Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews were used to help create the transcription now found on the Joseph Smith Papers website.¹⁶ The JSTEL allows readers to scrutinize every word and letter of the transcriptions. Gratefully, we have been able to rely on the JSTEL for all of the JST manuscript images used in the figures of the present article.

What Specific Concerns Does Townsend Raise about Document Transcription?

With respect to the Jackson and Faulring’s transcriptions of the manuscripts of the Joseph Smith Translation, Townsend summarized his assessment as follows:

Like previous copyists that have transmitted the text of the Book of Moses, Jackson and Faulring have made errors in their transcription. This implies that caution should be used when utilizing the printed and electronic transcripts of Smith’s Bible revision, and new publications should improve upon the significant previous work of these scholars.¹⁷

Although, as with any similar work of scholarship, it is always possible that a given instance of transcription may be called into question in the future, the warning about transcription errors raised above is not currently well-supported by examples. Apart from questions that Townsend raises about the possibility of transcription errors in Emma’s handwriting (discussed later below), Townsend draws attention to only one other transcription error: a missing line in a journal publication that Jackson and Faulring made of “Old Testament Manuscript 3,”¹⁸ an early lateral private copy made by John Whitmer. However, Jackson has clarified that

this was not, as Townsend characterizes it, a transcription error “silently added in the CD-ROM edition of OT3”¹⁹ but rather an accidental deletion by the journal’s typesetter of a line contained in the manuscript submitted for publication.²⁰ Townsend has told us he is engaged in the process of locating and correcting other possible errors in the hopes that scholars will join him in creating and using new documentary editions of the manuscripts as well as a text-critical single volume edition.

According to Townsend, What Else Remains to Be Done?

Going beyond Townsend’s concerns about the accuracy of current transcriptions, subsequent discussion with him²¹ has clarified his views of what else remains to be done. He intends to make a complete text-critical study of all handwritten manuscripts (including the full text as well as quotations from parts of it) and printed editions. At present, he has identified forty-five relevant sources dating from 1828 to 1902, including lateral sources not part of the lineage of the current text. Similar to Jackson, his hope is to be able to create a text that answers the question: “What was the text in 1833 that Smith was preparing for publication?” and also provide transcriptions of the other unpublished manuscripts and printed editions that are key to understanding the Book of Moses at different times in early Mormon history. In the end, Townsend wants to provide multiple volumes: a documentary edition of all forty-five manuscript and printed sources plus a separate volume that provides a critical text with a text-critical apparatus. This will assist historians who study the first seventy years of Latter-day Saint history by providing the text of the Book of Moses in the form that members of the several branches of the Restoration movement might all feel comfortable in turning to for their understanding of the text.

Once Townsend demonstrates that he has mustered significant evidence beyond what he has offered to date to support his warning that “caution should be used when utilizing the . . . transcripts of Smith’s Bible revision,”²² the question he raises about the degree of *accuracy* of existing transcriptions can be taken up more fully by scholars. In the meantime, however, with respect to *completeness* of the textual record, we applaud Townsend’s ongoing project to provide a new documentary edition and critical text that will include all known manuscripts of the Book of Moses, whether they are in a lineal or lateral relationship to the current canonical version.

Now we move on to some more specific questions. The issues Townsend raises here provide examples of the kinds of discussions of

text-critical questions that should be taking place, and we are grateful for the willingness of Townsend and Charles Harrell to engage with us in friendly dialogue about them.

2. Who Wept for the Wicked in Moses 7:28?



Figure 1. “the God of heaven wept” (Moses 7:28) as written by Emma Smith.²³

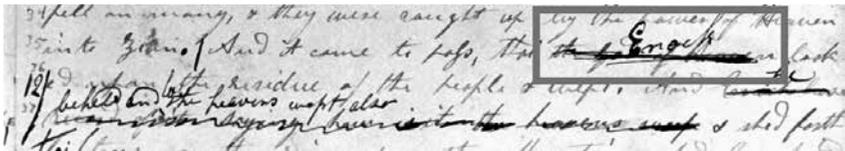


Figure 2. “Enoch ... wept” (Moses 7:28) as written by John Whitmer.²⁴

“The God of Heaven Wept” (OT1) vs. “Enoch Wept” (OT2)

The first observations that Townsend makes relating to the Enoch chapters of the Book of Moses are found on pp. 77–79. They concern what now constitutes Moses 7:28–29 in the current Latter-day Saint version of the Book of Moses. The gist of his observation has to do with the Prophet’s original dictation of the verse in Old Testament manuscript 1 (OT1), where *God* wept:

the g God of heaven looked upon the residue of the peop[le a]nd he wept and Enock bore record of it saying how is it the heavens weep and Shed fourth her tears as the rain upon the Mountains and Enock said unto the heavens how is it that thou canst weep seeing thou art holy and from all eternity to all eternity.²⁵

A subsequent revision on Old Testament manuscript 2 (OT2) changes the text so it states that *Enoch* wept rather than God:

the God of Heaven <Enock> look=ed upon the residue of the people & wept. And Enoch bore record of it Saying how is it the heavens weep <he beheld and <lo!> the heavens wept also> & shed forth <t>h[er]<eir> tears upon the Mountains And Enoch Staid²⁶ unto the heavens how is it that thou canst weep Seeing Thou art holy & from all eternity to all eternity²⁷

For reasons that have been outlined elsewhere,²⁸ the OT1 version of Moses 7, which includes the version of the text stating that God wept, is

the one retained in the current canonical version of the Book of Moses — rather than the later OT2.

In the discussion below, we will examine the following questions:

- How did Terryl Givens describe the weeping of Moses 7:28?
- Why did Townsend (and Harrell) conclude that Givens did not take the OT2 revision of Moses 7:28 seriously enough?
- Does God express only anger and wrath in Moses 7 to the exclusion of any display of sorrow and sadness?
- Should we trust OT2 more than OT1?

How Did Terryl Givens Describe the Weeping of Moses 7:28?

Of course, Townsend's observation about this revision is not new, since this change has been previously discussed in Robert J. Matthews' landmark 1975 publication,²⁹ in the 2004 publication of the transcription of the complete manuscripts of the Joseph Smith translation,³⁰ in Kent Jackson's careful 2005 study of the Book of Moses manuscripts,³¹ in Richard Draper, Kent Brown, and Michael Rhodes' verse-by-verse commentary on the Pearl of Great Price,³² in Thomas Wayment's helpful side-by-side comparison of the King James Bible and the JST,³³ and in Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and David J. Larsen's 2014 commentary,³⁴ for which Townsend was a contributor.³⁵

What is at issue for Townsend is not whether or not the current state of textual scholarship has properly documented and drawn attention to this textual concern, but rather if specific treatments of this passage, whether found in publications intended for scholarly or popular audiences, have failed to properly document, analyze, and (especially) engage with the available text-critical information. Townsend was surprised and concerned that a scholar such as Terryl Givens, who has written extensively about this passage, was apparently not aware the verse was revised after its initial dictation until Townsend pointed it out to him. To Townsend, this suggests that if better text-critical resources were available and more routinely used, these kinds of oversights would happen less often.

Within his article, Townsend specifically cites writings by Eugene England³⁶ and Terryl Givens.³⁷ These authors have been influential in sensitizing Latter-day Saints to the significant difference between the Latter-day Saint concept of a God who is capable of feeling sorrow and the untouchable God of most traditional Christian creeds (with important exceptions).³⁸ Given that Townsend acknowledges the mention of this textual change in Givens' Enoch-related publication in

2019, it seems appropriate to explore why Townsend still believes that Givens “fails to appreciate the details of this issue.”³⁹

First, what did Givens actually say? Although his explanation of the revision of Moses 7:28 does not extend as far as to include the full textual history of the verse, as Townsend does in his own article, Givens’ brief summary is nevertheless concise and eloquent in depicting both the theological implications of the verse and the historical essentials of its revision, especially in consideration of the wide audience of readers he evidently hoped to reach with his book:

Enoch ... is most struck by God’s unanticipated response to a world veiled in darkness: “And it came to pass that the God of heaven looked upon the residue of the people and he wept, and Enoch bore record of it.” Smith then revised the text to indicate that Enoch is in this scene weeping *with* God and is surprised when he sees God joining in his grief. “And he beheld, and lo, the heavens wept also and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the Mountains.” Though “heavens” stands in here for “God” in poetic metonymy, it is clearly God who weeps, and who personally responds to Enoch’s twice-expressed amazement: “How is it thou canst weep?”⁴⁰

Why Did Townsend (and Harrell) Conclude That Givens Did Not Take the OT2 Revision of Moses 7:28 Seriously Enough?

Why did Townsend feel that Givens failed to take the OT2 revision seriously enough in his most recent publication on the subject? Below, we outline and respond to Townsend’s concerns in this regard. In addition, the brief remarks from Townsend on the subject are supplemented by a summary of additional concerns generously contributed in a personal note from Charles Harrell, cited with his permission and later revised by him in light of our initial response in a previous draft.⁴¹ First, a summary of Townsend’s remarks on the subject.

Townsend views Joseph Smith as realizing “that there were some difficulties in making sense of [the OT1 dictation of] this verse. In particular, the use of the masculine pronoun for both God and Enoch, as well as the fact that God is made synonymous with the female divine heavens.” Among other things, the Prophet’s “significant revisions in OT2 ... the feminine heavens lose their pronoun for a neutral pronoun “their.” This alteration ... removes the gendered pronoun that previously defined the heavens.”⁴²

While we don't have any *a priori* objection to the possibility that the heavens might have been seen as feminine in its original dictation in OT1, we are not satisfied that the presence of the possessive *her* in OT1 constitutes unambiguous evidence of that possibility. It seems to us that there are equally plausible options. For example, the OT1 scribe could have simply (mis)heard *her* instead of the similarly sounding *their*. Or perhaps, the later revision was nothing more than a simple mechanical fix to make the possessive consistent with a plural noun ("heavens"). To place too much confidence in the idea that the *her* is a reliable indication, fraught with weighty interpretive import, that the heavens were feminine or, going further, that there were significant semantic implications of the change from *her* to *their* seems premature based on extant evidence.

In any event, it should also be noted that the change from "the feminine" heavens to the "neutered ... heavens"⁴³ was not successful in effecting a full resolution of the set of sense-making "difficulties" that Townsend has proposed. This is because the solution to the supposed gender-related problem of *her* did not fix the remaining inconsistency between the OT2's resulting plural possessive *their* and the singular pronoun used almost immediately thereafter in Enoch's question: "How is it that *thou* canst weep?" More on this seeming inconsistency below.

Of course, the most important implication of the change in pronoun for "the heavens" for Townsend is that it "changes the meaning of the text" by shifting "the action of weeping from God to Enoch."⁴⁴ However, even if one were to grant that the revision to the verse was made intentionally to put the focus on Enoch rather than God in this instance (something we see as unlikely), it seems to us that the effect of this change on the passage as a whole would be quite minimal. For reasons we will argue more fully below, we find God's predominant mood throughout the present passage is that of sorrow for the unrepentant wicked. Though God argues His grievances passionately and demonstrates no second thoughts about what He was sadly compelled to do in light of the people's recalcitrance, His ultimate theme is compassion and hope that His wayward children will accept the proffered Atonement made on their behalf. As David Bokovoy has written about the way the passage *combines* divine expressions of both grievance and mercy:

In the Book of Moses, God appears as He does in the Hebrew Bible as a deity possessing immense power. But He is also a God who loves to the extent that human sinfulness causes Him to experience intense sadness, to the point of shedding tears. He is a God who cares so passionately about His work

and glory to bring to pass human immortality and eternal life (Moses 1:39) that He experiences human emotions when His creations sin. However, in the Book of Moses, God is not simply a kind sympathetic deity. His Old Testament-like propensity toward emotion combined with immense power appears in the Book of Moses through his tearful decision to annihilate almost all creation.⁴⁵

With respect to this citation, Townsend related to us that he made Bokovoy aware of the revised version of Moses 7:28 that had Enoch rather than God “shedding tears” late in the publication process, presumably too late to make use of this finding.⁴⁶ This example corroborates Townsend’s general point that even very well-informed scholars have not made adequate use of extant text-critical resources. On this issue, we are in complete agreement with Townsend.

Although we do not know to what extent Bokovoy might have changed his text in light of later knowledge of the revision, what seems to have impressed him most in his published reading of the passage as a whole was the repeated evidence of God’s deep love for humankind: “Human sinfulness causes Him to experience intense sadness.” He cares “so passionately.” Although Bokovoy acknowledged that “God is not simply a kind sympathetic deity,” he characterized God’s determination to “annihilate almost all creation” as a “tearful decision,” not one either of unfeeling anger or of repentance for His own actions.⁴⁷

Going beyond Townsend’s hypotheses about Joseph Smith’s motivations for the OT2 revisions of the passage, Harrell turns his attention to “those who maintain that the [OT1] text is correct as it stands.”⁴⁸ While *correct* is too strong a word to use to describe our own views, we do have reasons to believe the OT1 reading is superior overall to the OT2 reading. We will have more to say later on the question of whether OT1 or OT2 is the better reading, but in the meantime, we will examine Harrell’s specific arguments that accepting the OT1 reading is “problematic”⁴⁹ at the outset. In each of the points below, our responses will follow his bolded statements.

- **Harrell: “Smith is crafting (and I don’t mean to rule out inspiration) an ancient narrative using biblical language, but also grappling with his present theology. When I read Moses 7, I see an attempt to situate God on the side of weeping with Enoch and the rest of His creations, but the composer isn’t entirely clear about what it might mean for God to weep, especially given that the teaching of an**

embodied God was still more than a decade away. Can this supreme being weep like humans weep, with actual physical tears running down physical cheeks? I wonder if perhaps Smith didn't see a clear way for that scenario to fly, so he shifted the weeping to the heavens in the form of rain, which is a common Christian literary image.⁵⁰ We accept the commonly held view of church members that Joseph Smith had a clear understanding of the corporeality of God the Father since at least the time of the First Vision,⁵¹ though he seems to have been reluctant to teach that doctrine (and for that matter to share details about his First Vision itself⁵²) in all its clarity and implications until later in his ministry. This reticence led to early statements from some church members that propounded various views to the contrary.

Study of the translations, teachings, and revelations of Joseph Smith suggest that he sometimes knew much more than he taught publicly about certain matters that were considered sacred⁵³ or that ran contrary to commonly received religious traditions.⁵⁴ For example, in some cases, we know that the Prophet deliberately delayed the publication of early temple-related revelations connected with his work on the JST until several years after he initially received them.⁵⁵ Moreover, even after Joseph Smith was well along in the Bible translation process, he seems to have believed that God did not intend for him to publish the JST in his lifetime. For example, in writing to W. W. Phelps in 1832, he said: "I would inform you that [the Bible translation] will not go from under my hand during my natural life for correction, revisal, or printing and the will of [the] Lord be done."⁵⁶

Although Joseph Smith eventually reversed his position and apparently made serious efforts to prepare the manuscript of the JST for publication, his own statement makes clear that initially he did not feel authorized to share publicly all he had produced — and learned — during the translation process. Indeed, a prohibition against indiscriminate sharing of some revelations, which parallels similar cautions found in pseudepigrapha,⁵⁷ is explicit in the Book of Moses when it says of one sacred portion of the account: "Show [these words] not unto any except them that believe."⁵⁸ Such admonitions are consistent with a remembrance of a statement by Joseph Smith

that he intended to go back and rework some portions of the Bible translation to add in truths he was previously “restrained ... from giving in plainness and fulness.”⁵⁹

With specific respect to the question at hand, so far as we have been able to discover in extant evidence, the supposition that Joseph Smith himself was “grappling with his present theology” about whether God the Father had a body (whether physical or spiritual) is based solely on inference from the fact of the OT2 revision of Moses 7:28 itself. Not only is this view currently lacking independent corroboration, it fails to allow for the argument that divine inspiration prompted the original dictation. Moreover, as we detail later on, there is complementary evidence that later substantive revisions in OT2 sometimes tend to run roughshod over important literary features integral to OT1. Such considerations make OT1, in our view, a superior reading to OT2.

- **Harrell:** “My greater concern ... is that those who choose to see God literally weeping in this account seem to want to vaunt it as a novel teaching — one that starkly contrasts with the teachings in Smith’s day. This claim of exceptionalism seems entirely unwarranted in light of the literature which evidences a passible, sympathetic God as one of the predominant teachings of the day.”⁶⁰ Of course, we concur that to the degree that literature contemporary with Joseph Smith gives evidence of a “passible, sympathetic God,” scholars should not overemphasize Latter-day Saint exceptionalism in this regard. However, detailed arguments and evidence countering the views of Givens and others who see Joseph Smith’s teachings, translations, and revelations about the passibility of God as primarily innovative rather than derivative have yet to be made.
- **Harrell:** Focusing on a perceived inconsistency in verse 28 of OT1, which has God looking upon the residue of the people and weeping, Harrell writes: “In OT1 Enoch is reported to have ‘looked’ or ‘beheld’ a total of 19 times in the two visions he is shown. God, on the other hand, is never described in these visions as ‘looking’ or ‘beholding,’ except for this single instance in verse 28. In order to preserve the presenter-viewer relationship that exists throughout the

rest of the narrative, Smith may have felt it necessary to change verse 28 in OT2 to have Enoch doing the looking and weeping, rather than God.⁶¹ Here we would begin by noting that the idea that the visionary sees the vision does not automatically exclude the idea that God is looking at the vision *with* him. For example, in Jewish,⁶² Islamic,⁶³ and other⁶⁴ ancient accounts whose narrative themes resemble Moses 7, the cosmic visions of the prophets are often described as a “picture,” “model,” or “likeness”⁶⁵ shown on a “visionary screen,”⁶⁶ — in other words a representation “projected” on the backside of the heavenly veil. In such accounts, as God and the visionary view this “blueprint”⁶⁷ of eternity *together*, the prophet asks questions, and in answer God speaks while at the same time drawing attention to particular features of each scene. This is the very setting for the vision and dialogue with God in, for example, the Jewish book of *3 Enoch*⁶⁸ and in Moses 1.⁶⁹

- **Harrell:** “Verses 37 and 40 refer to the ‘whole heavens ... even all the workmanship of mine hands’ as doing the weeping. Assuming that ‘the heavens’ does function as a metonym, why jump to the conclusion that it is a stand-in for God and not all of his works as the text states here? Finally, when used as a metonym in the OT, ‘the heavens’ doesn’t always refer to God, much less only to God. For example, in Psalm 89:5, which have the heavens praising God’s works, the Net Bible explains,⁷⁰ ‘the personified heavens here stand by metonymy for the angelic beings that surround God’s heavenly throne.’ In Psalm 19:1 ‘the heavens declare the glory of God.’ In other instances ‘the heavens’ are said by Ernest Wright and Frank Moore Cross to refer to the heavenly council.”⁷¹ We concur with this well-expressed perspective. It seems reasonable to widen Givens’ suggestion that the reference to the “heavens” “stands in ... for ‘God’ in poetic metonymy” to mean that “the heavens” ineluctably *includes* God as part of the “heavens” in “poetic metonymy.” Similarly to D&C 76:26, we might take “the heavens” to refer to “the inhabitants of the heavens.”⁷²
- **Harrell:** “The assertion that ‘the heavens’ is merely a metonym (stand-in) for God seems premature, and when

examined in context, is problematic. For example, in verses 37 and 40 God refers, in the third person, to the heavens weeping. To suggest that ‘the heavens,’ in these verses, refers to God, when God is the one referring to them, strikes me as both odd and obscurant. Why all the indirection? I’m not claiming that God couldn’t or wouldn’t address himself so indirectly, but I would like to see some discussion of this indirection and lack of straight talk.”⁷³ As to any question about the seeming indirection in God’s response, we would begin by observing that a sufficient answer may be found in the fact that God is simply responding to the exact question Enoch asked in v. 28: ‘How is it that the heavens weep ...?’⁷⁴ Only after describing the tragic situation in a passionate set of verses (using the personal terms *I*, *me*, *my*, and *mine* twenty-four times) does God refer for the first time to “the heavens,” the subject of Enoch’s question.

At that point, significantly, God makes mention of “the heavens” twice in summary fashion at the end of His speech forming the end of an *inclusio* that opened with Enoch’s question. God’s emphatic statement in v. 37, emphasizing the scope of the weeping as being the “whole” heavens and “all the workmanship of mine hands” is repeated more succinctly in v. 40, as if to bring His answer to the original question to a definite closure and to prepare the reader for the wholehearted response of Enoch in v. 41.

In addition to the dramatic narrative function served by the threefold repetition of “the heavens” in Enoch’s question and God’s answer as described above, there may also be some currently undiscerned literary purpose behind the fact that the term “the heavens” is repeated seven times in the chapter as a whole in light of the significance of the number seven in the Hebrew Bible.

- **Harrell:** “The narrative seems to want to call attention to the weeping heavens rather than the weeping God. It is as though part of the role given to the heavens is to mourn the sins and suffering of people on earth. Thus, the heavens can ‘rejoice’ (Psalm 96:11) at favorable situations or ‘weep’ (D&C 76:26) at unfortunate ones. It is further noteworthy that Moses 7:37 and 40 expressly includes all of God’s

creations in the weeping role, but nowhere is God expressly included, though admittedly not excluded either.⁷⁵

Unfortunately, this argument holds only if one excludes God *a priori* from His role *as part of* “the heavens.” On the other hand, if one takes seriously the idea that references to “the heavens” are meant to include God, it becomes apparent that references to God’s weeping are not confined to the OT1 text of Moses 7:28 but are scattered throughout the chapter. As discussed above, one must also remember that God is poetically equated with the “heavens” when Enoch addresses the “heavens” as “thou,” speaking in that instance in terms that unmistakably reference God.

- **Harrell:** “How is this unmistakable? ... Why does the pronoun ‘thou’ necessitate a reference to God rather than collectively to the heavens or the heavenly hosts God created, which seems more implicit in the text? The claim that heavens=God in Moses 7 is an inference, not an assertion made by the text itself.”⁷⁶ Despite the prefatory mention of “the heavens” in OT1 and OT2 (v. 29), the fact that Enoch’s question itself is stated with a (typically) singular pronoun: “How is it that *thou* canst weep, seeing *thou* art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity?” and goes on in v. 30–31 to refer to the creation, the curtains, the bosom, and the divine attributes of *God* before repeating the question “How is it *thou* canst weep?” are all reliable indicators that Enoch is addressing God Himself, directly and personally.
- **Harrell:** “[Another] argument against a weeping God in Moses 7 is that it would be the only place in latter-day scripture that records such an act by God. Jacob 5 is sometimes cited as an example of God weeping, but Jacob 5 is a parable in which God is represented as Lord of the Vineyard and his sadness for the loss of his vineyard is represented by his weeping. If one is to take the Lord’s weeping literally here, one would also have to take the Lord’s ignorance about what to do with his vineyard also literally, as well as his hasty resort to having it burned.”⁷⁷ Though we agree that parables are not to be taken literally in the strictest sense, we do not think the reader would be mistaken to take the weeping of the Lord of the Vineyard as the author’s

affirmation that God (probably, we think, referring to the Lord Jesus Christ in this instance) is capable of deep sorrow. After all, we have a second witness in modern scripture to this idea in the Book of Mormon, when Christ “wept”⁷⁸ and “wept again.”⁷⁹ We take the teaching of the resurrected, perfect Jesus Christ in 3 Nephi 12:48 as signifying to His disciples that He and His Father can be equated in every respect: “I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect.”

As to Harrell’s remaining observations, we must not forget that rhetorical questions have a long and distinguished history in biblical literature,⁸⁰ stretching back to Genesis 3:9 when God asked Adam: “Where art thou?” (cf. Moses 4:15: “Where *goest* thou?”) — “a strange thing for a [presumably omniscient] deity to say.”⁸¹ But, of course, God is not seeking information but rather requesting Adam to reflect openly on his intentions — in view of the fact that his feet are now pointed toward the exit of the Garden.

As to the Lord’s so-called “ignorance” of what more could be done for His vineyard⁸² and his “hasty resort” to burn it,⁸³ we should remember that the purpose of His words within the larger dialogue is not really to reveal His state of mind and intentions but rather as a means of eliciting a compassionate response from His servants — a tactic that succeeds when one servant replies, “Spare it a little longer” — precisely the response the Lord had hoped for in the first place.⁸⁴ Like similar literary devices, this teaching method “involves the use of dramatic elements which draw [not only the participants, but also] the audience in.”⁸⁵ In summary, by admitting that the Lord can weep, we are not necessarily obliged to attribute senseless questions or callous proposals for action to Him in the process. It should be remembered that Jacob 5 is, after all, as Harrell himself affirms, a parable — not necessarily a complete representation of reality in every detail.

- **Harrell:** “When one reads though to verse 41, the overarching theme seems to be God’s fiery indignation and ‘fierce anger’ which is ‘kindled against’ the wicked people (v. 34). The Almighty God, who holds all his creations in the palm of his hands (v. 36), is poised to carry out swift judgment on

sinner. No wonder it is left to the heavens and God's other creations to sympathize and weep over the outpouring of God's wrath in this narrative Any exultation of the weeping God in Moses 7, if based on OT2, strikes me as being unbalanced as it disregards the general arc of the narrative which points only [to] the commiseration of God's creations with the suffering of the ungodly. In terms of God, Moses 7 seems to accentuate only his wrath rather than his tender-heartedness."⁸⁶ Our answer to this argument is given in the section below.

Does God Express Only Anger and Wrath in Moses 7 to the Exclusion of Any Display of Sorrow and Sadness?

While we do not agree with Harrell's view that "Moses 7 accentuates only [God's] wrath rather than his tender-heartedness,"⁸⁷ we sympathize with his observation that in Latter-day Saint discourse "passages emphasizing God's passibility are sometimes emphasized at the exclusion of passages portraying God as vengeful."⁸⁸

A useful corrective to this tendency may be to compare Moses 7 to suitable Old Testament analogues. While the fusion of justice and mercy in the character of God may seem like an irreconcilable contradiction in modern thinking, ancient scripture writers had no problem in putting these seemingly opposite ideas together — often in close proximity within a single chapter of scripture.

Rather than viewing selected verses from Moses 7:28–41 in isolation, we will now examine the passage as a whole, comparing it to a general Old Testament model best exemplified in two classic chapters of the Old Testament: Isaiah 1 and Deuteronomy 32.⁸⁹ We will summarize some of the features of this model as they are portrayed in OT1, which we believe provides a better reading of the passage than OT2.

By way of introduction to our reading, we observe that the text of Moses 7:28–41 resonates with selected themes mentioned by John Hobbins in his outline of Isaiah 1, including:

- God's call for heaven and earth to witness His grievance
- The relationship of privilege and obligation entailed by a Father and his children
- The actions God will take in view of the wayward and defiant state of His children
- God's proposal for a merciful resolution of their troubles

Analogues to each of these themes will be seen in the summary presented below. In our summary, we will draw liberally from discussions of Hobbins and others to demonstrate how Enoch's grand vision, like Deuteronomy 32 and Isaiah 1, artfully combines seemingly contradictory aspects of God's nature (i.e., justice and mercy) within a single pericope.

The heavens weep for the residue of the people — God's children and Enoch's brethren. The opening verses of Moses 7:28–41 recall the opening verse of Isaiah 1:1 and Deuteronomy 32:1, where the heavens and the earth are called upon to witness the Lord's lament. However, in the Book of Moses, the heavens are not passive observers but active participants who weep with God in His sorrow.

Townsend and Harrell see a sharp discontinuity between the sympathy of Enoch, the heavens, and the earth and the anger of God. However, to us, an examination of the passage as a whole in the form it was originally dictated in OT1 seems to exhibit a continuity that steadily builds up to an almost unbearable intensity of sorrow. The weeping "God of heaven"⁹⁰ leads out in a heavenly "chorus"⁹¹ that eventually comes to include "all the workmanship of [His] hands"⁹² — at which point Enoch, the protagonist of the account, also joins in with full heart and soul.

In a few verses that precede Moses 7:28, we see additional support for the logic of the OT1 narrative that has God weeping and Enoch bearing record. Note the significant sequence when angels descend "out of heaven" to warn the earth,⁹³ followed by angels that come down "out of heaven" to bear testimony of the Godhead.⁹⁴ In perfect parallel to this sequence, we are then told that the "God of heaven" weeps, while Enoch bears record.⁹⁵ Such references seem to be anticipated in the statement of God in Moses 6:63: "All things are created and made to bear record of me."

By way of contrast, the local symmetry of the two instances of warning/weeping and witnessing is broken by the OT2 revisions, where both the weeping of God and the witnessing of Enoch are omitted.

Enoch's question: "How is it that thou canst weep?" Enoch is dumbfounded when he sees God weep. Mirroring a pattern found elsewhere in scripture,⁹⁶ Enoch's initial, indirect inquiry ("How is it that *the heavens* weep?"⁹⁷) is immediately followed with a more pointed version of the question: "How is it that *thou canst* weep?"⁹⁸

Despite the plural "heavens" that are mentioned in OT1's initial description of the addressee of Enoch's question, any ambiguity about whether the *thou* in the question ("How is it that *thou* canst weep?") refers

to the “heavens” or to “God” is resolved not only by the predominantly singular *thou* but also by his description of his interlocutor as being not only “holy and from all eternity to all eternity” but also as the *Creator* of the heavens and the earth.⁹⁹ Note also that the answer to Enoch’s question comes directly from God. Since God’s answer is given with no intervening explanation about His relationship to the heavens, it seems evident that the reader is meant to understand that God and the members of His heavenly retinue are perfectly conjoined as one in their sorrow, as Terryl Givens rightly observed. Moreover, would Enoch have asked *why* God weeps in v. 30 if he had not already *borne record of* God’s weeping in v. 28?

On the other hand, the logic of Enoch’s question in v. 30 is broken by OT2’s omission of God’s weeping in v. 28.

The Lord’s judgment: “I will send in the floods upon them.”¹⁰⁰ Book of Moses parallels to the general model of Isaiah 1 and Deuteronomy 32 continue in this section: Having called all Creation together to witness His suffering, the Lord now explains His grievance and describes the “punishment for defection.”¹⁰¹

Givens and Bokovoy rightly take a nuanced view that the “fire of ... indignation,” “hot displeasure,” and “fierce anger”¹⁰² of God be considered in the context of the larger passage. These authors appear to sense in the very passion of these words the angst of a sorrowing Father who is required by justice to execute impending judgments while simultaneously taking every appropriate measure to assure merciful provisions will be extended to all who would repent.

The Lord’s compassion for the victims of wickedness compels Him to put an end to the machinations of those who have stubbornly persisted in “hat[ing] their own blood,” being wholly “without affection” for both God and man.¹⁰³ As Abraham Heschel expresses it with respect to Isaiah 1:

The destructiveness of God’s power is not due to God’s hostility to man, but to His concern for righteousness, to His intolerance of injustice. The human mind seems to have no sense for the true dimension of man’s cruelty to man. God’s anger is fierce because man’s cruelty is infernal.¹⁰⁴

In marked contrast to the descriptions found in the pseudepigraphal *1 Enoch*, where the wicked Watchers are condemned for eternity without possibility of reprieve,¹⁰⁵ the God of the Book of Moses, while condemning the sin, is moved by mercy for the sinner. He sorrows for the (self-inflicted) suffering of the wicked (v. 37) and provides a way for their salvation by offering the gift of the atonement of Christ (v. 39) and

its accompanying invitation to “*all men, everywhere*” (v. 52) to repent and be made whole. Sadly, because of the “agency” God irrevocably gave humankind in the beginning (v. 32), He realizes that there is nothing he can do to help them unless they freely choose love over hate (v. 33). The needlessness of their suffering brings God great sorrow.¹⁰⁶

In all of this, the Book of Moses, like Isaiah 1:2–9, “echoes Deuteronomy 32:1–35 measure for measure.”¹⁰⁷ As Hobbins describes it:¹⁰⁸

First comes the call to heaven and earth to witness the indictment of Israel on charges of disloyalty; then, the playing off of Yahweh’s love for the people, the love of a father for his children, against the people’s insensate disobedience. . . . The tone is one of exasperation.

God’s reminder to the people in Moses 7:33 that He is “their Father” is consistent with similar descriptions in Isaiah 1¹⁰⁹ and Deuteronomy 32.¹¹⁰ The pointed emphasis on God’s filial relationship to humankind is significant in light of Bergey’s observation that such “father-son imagery” is “rare in the prophets and elsewhere in the Hebrew scriptures.”¹¹¹ According to Heschel, Isaiah “pleads with us to understand the plight of a father whom his children have abandoned.”¹¹²

Importantly, the defiant defection of the people does not lessen God’s love, nor does it slacken His patient, painstaking effort to bring them to their senses. As Heschel observes:¹¹³

There is sorrow in God’s anger. It is an instrument of purification and its exercise will not last forever.

Note that OT2 inexplicably substitutes the more general term *God*¹¹⁴ for OT1’s use of the term *Father*, thus diminishing the long series of poignant God-as-Father parallels between Moses 7¹¹⁵ and Isaiah and Deuteronomy.

The Lord’s lament: “Misery shall be their doom.” Further demonstrating that God’s foremost concern is over the misery of His children, He quickly abandons the theme of judgment, and launches into a stanza of lament. Hobbins aptly captured the pathos¹¹⁶ of the corresponding passage in Isaiah 1 as follows:¹¹⁷

The nation’s malaise [is described] as though the nation were an injured and uncared-for body, with the implication that, if not for estrangement, it would be cared for by the one committed to do so. The tone is accusatory and plaintive at the same time, a return to the text’s emotional point of departure.

The passage ends poignantly with God's recital of the tragic fate of his rebellious children, followed by a rhetorical question:¹¹⁸

But behold, their sins
 shall be upon the heads of their fathers;
 Satan shall be their father,
 and misery shall be their doom;
 and the whole heavens shall weep over them,
 even all the workmanship of mine hands;
 wherefore should not the heavens weep,
 seeing these shall suffer?

The tone of God's question leaves no doubt about His participation with the rest of the heavenly host in their weeping, an interpretation that reinforces God's previous metonymic identification with the heavens in the OT1 manuscript version of Moses 7:28, in contrast to the version in OT2.

The Lord's mercy: "Inasmuch as they will repent." Describing the next part of the general pattern of Isaiah 1, Hobbins writes:¹¹⁹ "Yahweh's decision not to blot the people out entirely, despite the defection, is then recounted." Similarly, in Moses 7:38–39, God explains that His "Chosen" will suffer for the sins of the penitent and release them from "prison," "inasmuch as they will repent."¹²⁰

Enoch's question about the weeping of the heavens in verse 29 had formed the opening of a powerful *inclusio* whose closing bookend is finally found in verse 40. Having concluded His answer to Enoch, God now reiterates his solidarity with the sorrowing of the heavens ("Wherefore, for this shall the *heavens* weep"), while in eloquent brevity He acknowledges that the overflow of the bitter cup of weeping now also extends to include the earth and its creatures ("yea, and *all* the workmanship of my hands").

Enoch weeps and his heart swells "wide as eternity." Only now does the realization of the depth of God's empathy finally draw out Enoch's full response as "his heart swelled wide as eternity" — in other words, as wide as God's heart.¹²¹ Now Enoch unites his own voice with the heavenly chorus of weeping in a grand finale.¹²²

Note that in the OT2 revision of Moses 7:28, in contrast to the OT1 manuscript of the Book of Moses, Enoch weeps prematurely, thus defusing the deliberate forestalling of the dramatic moment of Enoch's sympathetic resonance with the heavens until *after* the conclusion of God's poignant speech.¹²³

With specific respect to the culminating statement at the end of God's lament in Moses 7:40 ("Wherefore, for this shall the heavens weep,

yea, and all the workmanship of my hands”), is there a more plausible explanation for the literary function of this verse than as a declaration of God’s absolute solidarity with — and direct participation in — the distress of all creation? And, by way of analogue to Psalm 96 — where “all celebrate, but primacy is given, appropriately, to humankind” — so also, after the mourning of all, then — and not before — is Enoch’s weeping expected to burst forth as the heart-wrenching finale of the weeping chorus of the universe.

Beyond the beautiful literary unity and the striking echoes of the narrative structure to two notable Old Testament exemplars, what do we find of interest in this passage? Importantly, it is evident to us that in every significant divergence, the OT1 reading is superior to its equivalent in OT2.¹²⁴ That said, even if one were to substitute the OT2 revisions for the words of the original dictation in OT1, the result would not efface the overwhelming witness of the depth of God’s love as the central theme of the chapter, where “justice, love, and mercy meet in harmony divine.”¹²⁵

Is It Reasonable to Trust OT2 More than OT1?

Before continuing to our conclusions for this section, a final issue should be considered with respect to the revision of Moses 7:28: Is it reasonable to trust OT2 more than OT1? Before attempting an answer to this question, it’s important to know something about how the translation process seems to have differed for the longer additions to the Book of Moses (most notably Moses 1, 6, and 7) when compared to the more focused revisions to specific King James Bible verses.

With respect to the translation process, most scholars agree that the Prophet’s Bible translation in general and the Book of Moses in particular is not a homogeneous production. Rather, it is composite in structure and eclectic in its manner of translation. For example, the vision of Moses (Moses 1) and the story of Enoch (Moses 6–7) contain long, revealed sections that, although using King James Bible language, have little or no direct relationship to the Genesis narrative. However, other chapters are more in the line of clarifying commentary that takes the text of the King James Bible as its starting point, incorporating new elements based on Joseph Smith’s prophetic inspiration and understanding.¹²⁶ For example, evidence from a study by Kent Jackson and Peter Jasinski of two New Testament passages that were translated twice indicates that in this particular instance the JST “is not being revealed word-for-word, but largely depends upon Joseph Smith’s varying responses to the same difficulties in the text.”¹²⁷ Importantly, according to Philip Barlow, the

most common changes in the JST seem generally to have been of such a nature: “grammatical improvements, technical clarifications, and modernization of terms.”¹²⁸

With specific reference to large biblical additions of the Book of Moses, we look at the original dictation in Old Testament Manuscript 1 as being closer to a word-for-word revealed text than to anything else. In this general respect, the predominantly revelatory character of these additions appears to have been, as Royal Skousen concluded, “much like the Book of Mormon.”¹²⁹

In accepting the hypothesis that the translation process for the longer portions of the Book of Moses resembled the process of Book of Mormon translation more than anything else (though perhaps not relying so much on physical instruments in translation), we tend to view later revisions to the original dictation with greater skepticism than we would have otherwise done. With respect to Royal Skousen’s careful examination of difficult readings and conjectural emendations made by scribes and editors (and doubtless sometimes by Joseph Smith himself) in the source manuscripts of the Book of Mormon, Skousen has “determined that a fair number were unlikely or unnecessary.”¹³⁰ Besides specific arguments related to the Prophet’s revelations and translations, the general literature is full of examples of scribes who made manuscripts worse through their unintentional or intentional “corrections.”¹³¹

In light of the general considerations about differences in translation process discussed above — combined with specific indications that later revisions sometimes seem to run roughshod over important literary features of the original dictation, we take the general position that the original dictation of Moses 7 (after standardization of the English and correction of errors of dictation and transcription) should take priority over later revisions, unless there are good arguments to the contrary.¹³² Consistent with this position, and the literary considerations discussed above, we currently take the canonical version of Moses 7:28 (which follows the earliest manuscript by describing the “God of heaven” rather than Enoch as the one who weeps) to be the best reading of the verse, until and unless better arguments for particular OT2 or later readings are produced.

That said, we respectfully acknowledge that Book of Moses scholar Kent P. Jackson takes a different approach to this question. Jackson finds it unlikely that even small changes were due to deliberate or inadvertent scribal errors and notes that the Prophet himself “signed off on the text as we have it in the final manuscripts and called it ‘finished.’”¹³³

Townsend and Harrell take a similar view, according more legitimacy to later revisions than to the earliest dictation.

Conclusions from the Discussion of the Textual History of Moses 7:28

In summary, any criticism of Givens' brief fly over of the textual history of the verse in question should take into account the fact that the revisions of Moses 7:28 do not seem to be as crucial for his (nor our) reading of the rest of the chapter as they seem to Townsend. Of course, the most general lesson of the discussion is that, regardless of one's interpretation of the verse, Townsend is certainly correct that incorporating textual history as part of standard research methodology is a crucial requirement for scholars of Latter-day Saint history and scripture. Indeed, the example of Moses 7:28 is a fitting illustration of the importance of text criticism as a foundation to subsequent exegesis. It is evident that our own interpretation of the scriptural passage, as well as the arguments of Townsend and Harrell, are predicated, at least to some extent, on whether one sees OT1 or OT2 as the best reading of the pericope.

3. Do the Original Manuscripts of the Book of Moses Indicate That *Mahujah* and *Mahijah* Are Separate Names?

Another observation discussed by Townsend has to do with two similar names that appear in the Book of Moses: *Mahijah* and *Mahujah*. *Mahijah*¹³⁴ appears as a personal name while *Mahujah*¹³⁵ is typically read only as a place name, though it could be a personal name.¹³⁶

On pp. 82–83, Townsend raises the question as to whether the appearance of these two similar names in the Book of Moses is due to a possible misreading of Emma Smith's handwriting on the manuscript of Moses 6:40, based on details of her writing elsewhere in the manuscript. This example highlights the importance of the role that handwriting sometimes can play in text critical analysis.

In the three sections that follow, we will evaluate Townsend's analysis of instances of Emma's handwriting for the letters *j*, *i*, and *u*. Failing to find strong support for Townsend's argument in these instances, we also consider the implications of an instance of a "dot" that appears over what we take to be the *i* of *Mahijah* but what Townsend presumes to be the *u* of *Mahujah*. After summarizing the evidence about Emma's handwriting, we will examine the handwriting of Sidney Rigdon and John Whitmer for the name *Mahujah*.

Evaluating Townsend's Analysis of the Letter *J*

In his article, Townsend first focuses on the letter *j*:¹³⁷

One of the first letters to analyze is Emma's *j*. **There are only four examples of *j* in her writing on OT1, and two of them begin with a smooth curve up to the top of the *j*. The other two, of which *Mahijah* is one, start with a smooth curve, hook once, and then curve again up to the top of the *j*.** This irregular example is only made more difficult by the fact that the extant examples are 50/50, highlighting how the possibility of that first hook on the *j* in *Mahijah* is not going to help in deciding whether or not the vowel is an *i* or a *u*.

As a slight correction to Townsend's count (see bolded text added to the quotation above), we note that there are actually five (not four) total examples of a lowercase *j* in Emma's handwriting in OT1 if the *j* in *Mahijah* is included (see Figure 3). However, as Townsend correctly argued, the *j* in *Mahijah* is disputed and therefore can't be used as evidence, leaving only four *j*'s that can be analyzed for comparison. The *j* in the word *justify* and in one instance of *journeyed* on page 12 are both preceded by the upward hook mentioned by Townsend (see Figures 4a and 4b). By way of contrast, neither the *j* in the other instance of *journeyed* on page 12 or *journeyed* on page 13 have the preceding upward hook.

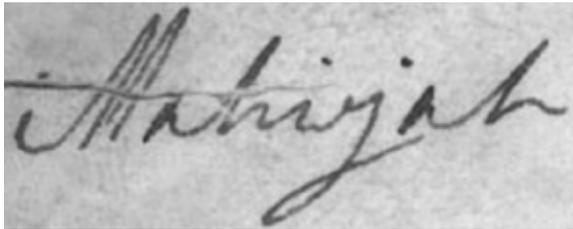
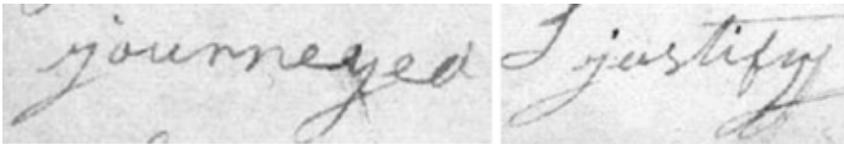


Figure 3. *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40) as written by Emma Smith in OT1¹³⁸



Figures 4a and 4b. Other instances of the preceding upward hook in Emma's *j* in Moses 6:26 (*journeyed*) and 6:34 (*justify*)¹³⁹

Unfortunately, the correction in the count described above does not shed any new light on our analysis. Because we cannot count the *j* in *Mahijah*, Townsend's conclusion that the usage of a preceding hook occurs 50% of the time in the additional examples of *j* still holds. Thus,

an analysis based on this letter alone won't actually "help in deciding whether or not the vowel [preceding the *j* in *Mahijah*] is an *i* or a *u*."¹⁴⁰

Evaluating Townsend's Analysis of the Letter *I*

According to Townsend, "When Emma wrote the letter 'u' her form was the same as her writing two 'i's consecutively, although the second part of the letter was often weak and not written as high as the first."¹⁴¹ With this in mind, he proposes that the slight upstroke between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* might actually be a shortened second upstroke of a *u*. To support this possibility, he emphasizes the apparent irregularity of the deviation between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah*.¹⁴²

In all of the examples of Emma's *i*'s except the one found in *Mahijah* the final curve of the downward stroke from the *i* to the new letter is smooth with no hesitation or stopping. The *i* in *Mahijah* is the only example that documents a deviation from her typical penmanship.

Contrary to Townsend's claim, the *i* in *Mahijah* is not the *only* deviant *i* in Emma's writing in OT1. Several of Emma's *i*'s in OT1 have slight protrusions in various directions that are comparable to the example in *Mahijah*.¹⁴³ For instance, the *i* in the word *their* (which is only two lines directly above the name *Mahijah*) has an unusual backstroke that makes it look more like an *s* than an *i* (see Figure 5). While this deviation protrudes in a different direction, it is arguably just as pronounced, if not more so, than the slight upward stroke between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* (see Figure 6).



Figure 5. Unusual backstroke in the *i* of Emma's *their* in Moses 6:39, making it look like an *s*.¹⁴⁴

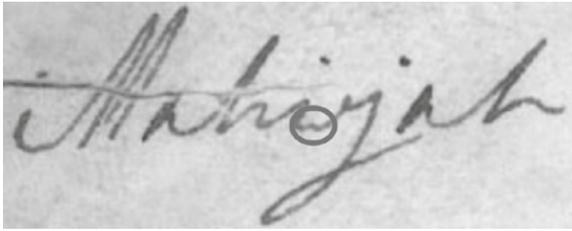


Figure 6. Slight upward stroke in Emma's *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40).¹⁴⁵

More immediately relevant is an analogous upstroke found in the first instance of the word *wife* in a letter Emma wrote to Joseph Smith in 1839 (see Figure 7). Just as found in *Mahijah*, there is an upstroke between the *i* and the next letter (in this case an *f*), and this upstroke appears to be even closer, relatively speaking, to the top of the *i* than the example in *Mahijah*. Yet, despite being a visually better candidate for an incomplete *u*, the deviation in *wife* clearly isn't a mistakenly dotted *u*.

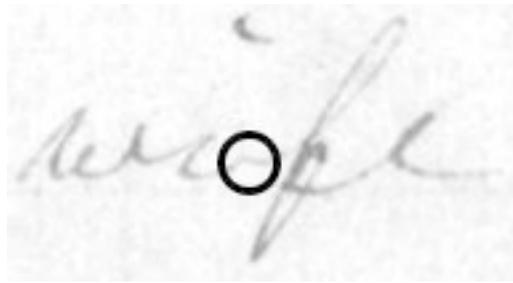


Figure 7. Slight upward stroke between the *i* and *f* in *wife* in an 1839 letter from Emma to Joseph Smith.¹⁴⁶

Another thing to consider, separate from the form of the *i*, is that many of Emma's *i*'s have significant changes in ink flow near the same approximate location of the deviation in *Mahijah*. In nine examples, the ink flow disappears altogether.¹⁴⁷ In at least a dozen others, there is a discernible difference in ink flow.¹⁴⁸ And in several instances, it appears that Emma may have reapplied the upstroke into the next letter, causing another type of minor deviation (although none of these are as pronounced as the deviation in *Mahijah*).¹⁴⁹ Thus, it can't be ruled out that the oddity in *Mahijah* might be due to some sort of disruption in ink flow, perhaps causing Emma to start again at the bottom and write (or rewrite) an upstroke that, for whatever reason, was never completed. At the very least, the variations in ink flow demonstrate another type of inconsistency between Emma's *i*'s and the letters that follow.

All of this suggests that the anomaly between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* may not be as significant as Townsend implies. As he himself

later points out, Emma made various types of errors and appears to have been writing quickly.¹⁵⁰ Like the upstroke in Emma's transcription of *wife*, the irregularity in *Mahijah* could easily be one of the many minor deviations in Emma's writing and nothing more than a sign of her haste.¹⁵¹

Evaluating Townsend's Analysis of the Letter U

Not only does Townsend overstate the consistency in Emma's instances of the letter *i*, but he also overstates the similarity between the deviation in *Mahijah* and examples of what he describes as "weak" second upstrokes of the letter *u* in Emma's handwriting.¹⁵² Neither of the instances that he points to ("mouth" or "mouths") are actually very similar to the example in *Mahijah*. The second upstroke in these *u*'s are much closer in height to the top of the first upstroke than is the deviation in *Mahijah*, and they cover more horizontal distance as well. Though Townsend disagrees with our analysis, he has not provided any measurements of his own in support of his arguments.

As evidence for our point, we have included successive images of each word and made them as proportionally accurate as we could (see Figures 8–10).¹⁵³ A horizontal line has been placed at the top of each of the second upstrokes to demonstrate the comparative differences in height, relative to the top of the first upstroke. The example in *Mahijah* strikes us as being significantly smaller than the *u* in both *mouth* and *mouths*.¹⁵⁴

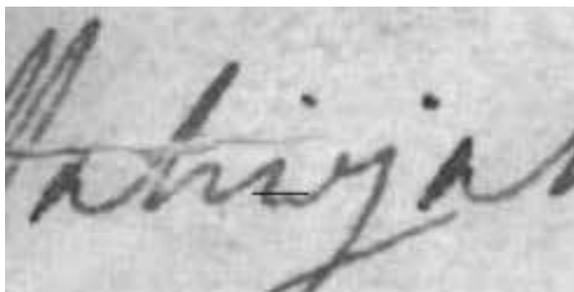


Figure 8. Relatively small size of the upward stroke in Emma's *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40).¹⁵⁵

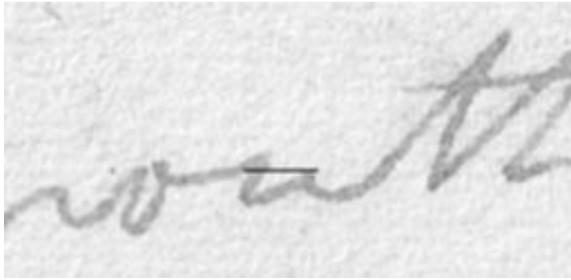


Figure 9. Comparatively larger upward stroke in Emma's *mouth* in Moses 6:30.¹⁵⁶

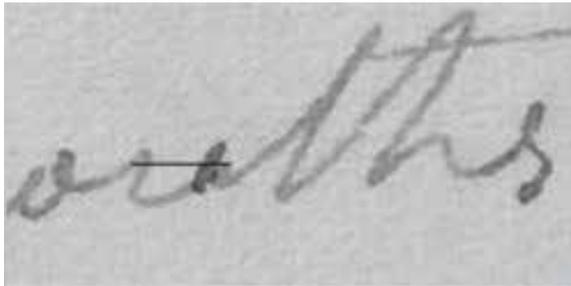


Figure 10. Comparatively larger upward stroke in Emma's *mouths* in Moses 6:30.¹⁵⁷

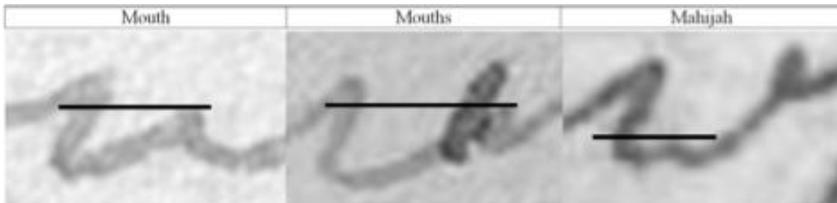


Figure 11. Side-by-side comparison.

Furthermore, our survey of each instance of the letter *u* in Emma's writing leads us to conclude that *none* of the second upstrokes in any of them are nearly as slight as the upstroke between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah*.¹⁵⁸ That being the case, Townsend's conjecture on this point is not well supported. It is certainly not impossible that the deviation in *Mahijah* could be a shortened upstroke of a *u*, but in our view the lack of any other truly comparable examples makes the possibility quite remote.

A Dot of an *I* over *Mahijah* vs. a Stray Mark over the *U* of *Mahujah*

Townsend's hypothesis faces an additional challenge: he must account for the extra dot above the first upstroke of what we take to be the *i* of *Mahijah* but what he proposes may be the *u* of *Mahujah*. To explain this

error, he points to evidence from elsewhere that Emma was in a hurry, such as the crosses on *t*'s that span more than one letter, or to a mistaken cross on the letter *l* in the word *councils*, making it look instead like *councits*.¹⁵⁹ He then postulates:¹⁶⁰

The punctuation [Emma] added for the *i* in *Mahijah* could have been hastily added as a mistake as she added the dot for the *j*, and a weak *u* would have looked like an *i* next to a *j* that needed its dot.

Of course, this supposition is not impossible, and Emma does indeed seem to have been writing quickly. Moreover, in our analysis, we actually found an instance where an accidental dot appears over the first upstroke of a *u* of the word *us* on page 13 of OT1. This provides evidence for Townsend's hypothesis that Emma may have put an erroneous dot over a *u* in *Mahujah*. However, this accidental dot may be at least partially due to the fact that a very similar looking word (*is*) was written directly above *us* (see Figure 11). Their close proximity and visual similarity may have provided more impetus than normal for Emma to add the dot, either immediately or after a quick scan for any missing punctuation.

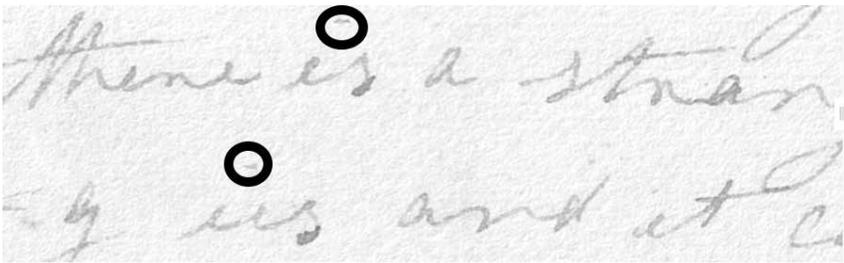


Figure 12. Emma's accidental "dot" over the upstroke of a *u* (Moses 6:38).¹⁶¹

Importantly, our analysis detected no other substantial or clearly discernible ink dots above any of the precisely one hundred instances of the letter *u* — no matter the height of its second upstroke — in Emma's handwriting in OT1.¹⁶² Thus, while an erroneous ink dot can't be completely ruled out, the actual probability of this happening (a likelihood of only 1/100 in this text) is not very encouraging for Townsend's thesis.¹⁶³ To us, it seems more reasonable in this instance to believe that we are looking at a dotted *i* rather than an unusually written and then mistakenly dotted *u*.

Summary of Evidence Bearing on Whether Emma Wrote *Mahijah* or *Mahujah*

In summary, there are several reasons we are convinced that Emma wrote *Mahijah* rather than *Mahujah*:

- The irregular upstroke between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* seems too truncated to likely be the second upstroke of a *u* (no examples of the letter *u* manifest anything comparably slight in OT1).
- The probability of Emma placing an erroneous dot over a *u* is very low (by our count, only 1/100 examples of the letter *u*, no matter the height of the second upstroke, have an erroneous dot over them in OT1).
- There are several reasonable alternative explanations for the deviation in *Mahijah* (Emma's haste, her rewrite of a failed upstroke, her hesitating about whether or not to include or omit an additional upstroke before the *j*, or simply a minor variation like many others, including the similar example in *wife*, even though it comes from a different sample of her writing).

Additionally, it should be noted that John Whitmer transcribed Emma's version of Moses 6:40 into two copies of the manuscript (his personal copy and OT2), and in both cases wrote *Mahijah* (see Figures 12–13). Also, Jackson notes that “Edward Partridge made a copy of the manuscript” and he “transcribed it *Mahijah*” as well.¹⁶⁴ Thus, for what it's worth, their individual assessments are in agreement with our analysis above.

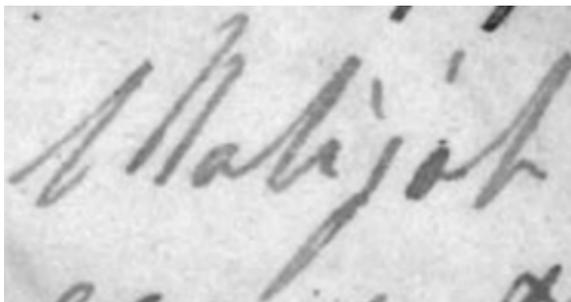


Figure 13. *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40) as copied from Emma Smith's OT1 manuscript by John Whitmer into OT3.¹⁶⁵

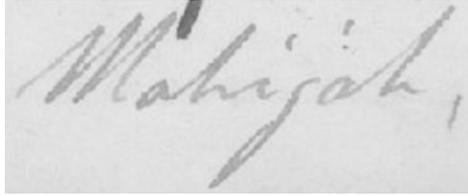


Figure 14. *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40) as copied from Emma Smith's OT1 manuscript by John Whitmer into OT2.¹⁶⁶

A Related Note: The *Mahujahs* of Sidney Rigdon and John Whitmer

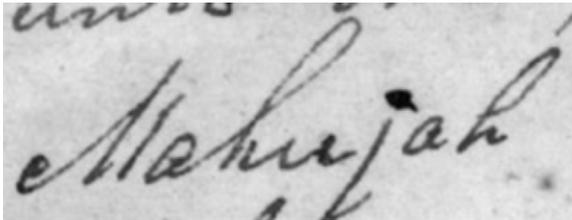


Figure 15. *Mahujah* (Moses 7:2) in the handwriting of Sidney Rigdon in OT1.¹⁶⁷

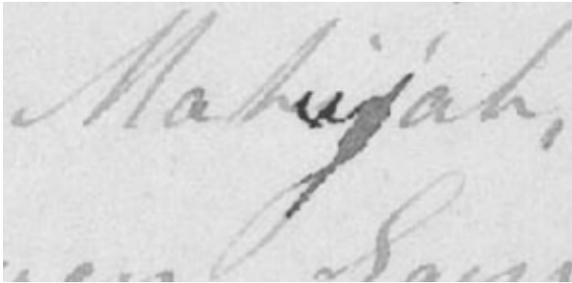


Figure 16. *Mahujah* (Moses 7:2) as copied by John Whitmer into OT2. Originally it read *Mahijah*, but was later corrected.¹⁶⁸

For completeness' sake, we observe that the textual history of the name *Mahujah* is somewhat more complicated than that of *Mahijah*. When Joseph Smith dictated the name *Mahujah* in Moses 7:2, Sidney Rigdon recorded the name as he heard it. However, when John Whitmer copied OT1 into his private copy, he mistakenly wrote *Mahijah* at Moses 7:2, having just copied *Mahijah* a few pages earlier (Moses 6:40). When Whitmer copied the previously dictated portions of the Book of Moses into OT2, he made the same mistake. But afterward he (or someone else) caught the error and corrected it to *Mahujah*.” Jackson states: “When Edward Partridge copied Moses 7:2 from OT1, he got it right: *Mahujah*.”¹⁶⁹

Although detailed historical and textual analysis does not inspire confidence in Townsend's conjecture that "the name in Emma's hand should be read *Mahujah*,"¹⁷⁰ he is certainly correct to emphasize that more careful attention to original manuscripts and textual changes is warranted. Even if Townsend's theory regarding the spelling of *Mahijah* proves to be a less likely reading of the text, it is nevertheless a possibility that shouldn't be completely dismissed.

Conclusions

This response is only a slim sampling of the many issues and questions that are raised in Colby Townsend's thoughtful article. We urge readers to look at the other examples he discusses as well as at the responses that his essay is sure to raise. Though we may differ on some issues, we are grateful for the insights and new discoveries that Townsend brings to the subjects he approaches, and we feel a kinship in our mutual interest for scripture scholarship that is couched in a search for truth. Though, like the rest of us, Townsend does not have answers for all the issues he raises, he makes intelligent observations, raises good questions, and rightly highlights the importance of textual criticism, a key and often foundational aspect of Latter-day Saint scholarship that indeed should not be neglected.

In Part 2 of this response, we will continue the discussion of the Book of Moses names *Mahujah* and *Mahijah*, and the similar names *Mahujael* in Genesis 4:18 and *Mahaway* in the pseudepigraphal *Book of Giants*. Latter-day Saint scholars, following the lead of Hugh Nibley, have argued that the seeming resemblance between the Book of Moses and *Book of Giants* names constitutes strong evidence for the antiquity of the Book of Moses. In light of new evidence that Townsend has brought to bear on the issue, the discussion in Part 2 will highlight the complexities of this argument and the different views that scholars hold about the relationships among these names.

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If there is any merit in this article, it is due in large measure to the excellence of its reviewers. Sincere thanks to Matthew L. Bowen, David Calabro, Kent Jackson, Donald W. Parry, and Stephen T. Whitlock for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of parts of this article. We are especially grateful to Colby Townsend and Charles R. Harrell for their cordial collaboration, including many important suggestions and corrections. We also thank anonymous reviewers whose selfless efforts

have improved this article. We are also grateful for the substantial and meticulous efforts of Allen Wyatt and the staff of The Interpreter Foundation to bring this paper to publication. Notwithstanding the significant contributions of the reviewers, the authors bear responsibility for its remaining faults.

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Endnotes

- 1 E.g., Robert J. Matthews, “A Plainer Translation”: *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible — A History and Commentary* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1975).
- 2 E.g., Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures* (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1969); Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures*, 2nd ed. (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1995).
- 3 Colby Townsend, “Returning to the Sources: Integrating Textual Criticism in the Study of Early Mormon Texts and History,” *Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies* 10, no. 1 (2019): 72–75, <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/imwjournal/vol10/iss1/6/>.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 75.
- 5 Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, “Book of Moses Textual Criticism 3: Was the Book of Moses Simply an Unplanned Afterthought to Moses 1?” *The Interpreter Foundation Blog* (10 September 2020), <https://interpreterfoundation.org/blog-book-of-moses-textual-criticism-3was-the-book-of-moses-simply-an-unplanned-afterthought-to-moses-1/>.
- 6 Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, “Book of Moses Textual Criticism 4: A Missing Link in Samuel Brown’s Account of the Joseph Smith Translation and the Introduction of Temple Ordinances,” forthcoming.
- 7 The most important book in this regard is Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers, Revelations and Translations (Facsimile Edition) 4: Book of Abraham and Related Manuscripts*, eds. Robin Scott Jensen and Brian M. Hauglid (Salt Lake City: The Church Historian’s Press, 2018). However, this publication has not been without its controversies (see, e.g., Jeff Lindsay, “A Precious Resource with Some Gaps,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 33 [2019]: 13–104, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/a-precious-resource-with-some-gaps/>; John Gee, “The Joseph Smith Papers Project Stumbles,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 33 [2019]: 175–86, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/the-joseph-smith-papers-project-stumbles/>). Brian M. Hauglid, ed., *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham: Manuscripts and Editions. Studies in the Book of Abraham* 5, eds. John Gee and Brian M. Hauglid (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute, Brigham Young University, 2010); Matthew J. Grow and

- Matthew C. Godfrey, “The Joseph Smith Papers and the Book of Abraham: A Response to Recent Reviews,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020): 97–104, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/the-joseph-smith-papers-and-the-book-of-abraham-a-response-to-recent-reviews/>; Jeff Lindsay, “A Welcome Response, but Flaws Remain,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020): 105–12, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/a-welcome-response-but-flaws-remain/>; John Gee, “Taking Stock,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020): 113–18, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/taking-stock/>). For additional recent perspectives, see, e.g., John Gee, *An Introduction to the Book of Abraham* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2017); Stephen O. Smoot, “Pressing Forward with the Book of Abraham,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 28 (2018): 299–308, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/pressing-forward-with-the-book-of-abraham/>; Jeff Lindsay, “John Gee’s ‘Introduction to the Book of Abraham’: A Lifetime of Book of Abraham Scholarship Distilled into a Valuable Book for a Broad Audience” The Interpreter Foundation Blog (10 November 2017), <https://interpreterfoundation.org/blog-john-gees-introduction-to-the-book-of-abraham-a-lifetime-of-book-of-abraham-scholarship-distilled-into-a-valuable-book-for-a-broad-audience/>; 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): 17–49; Terryl Givens and Brian M. Hauglid, *The Pearl of Greatest Price: Mormonism’s Most Controversial Scripture* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019).
- 8 Kent P. Jackson, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, March 2, 2020.
 - 9 Kent P. Jackson, *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 2005), <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/book-moses-and-joseph-smith-translation-manuscripts>.
 - 10 Jackson, March 2, 2020.
 - 11 Joseph Smith, Jr., “Old Testament Revision 1,” The Joseph Smith Papers, last accessed February 19, 2020, <http://josephsmithpapers>.

org/paperSummary/old-testament-revision-1, hereafter referred to as OT1.

- 12 Joseph Smith, Jr., “Old Testament Revision 2,” p. 19, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed March 20, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/old-testament-revision-2/24>, hereafter referred to as OT2.
- 13 Jackson, *The Book of Moses*, 56.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 144.
- 15 Scott H. Faulring and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible Electronic Library* (JSTEL) CD-ROM (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, Religious Studies Center, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2011).
- 16 Jackson, March 2, 2020.
- 17 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 71–72.
- 18 Kent P. Jackson and Scott H. Faulring, “Old Testament Manuscript 3: An Early Transcript of the Book of Moses,” *Mormon Historical Studies* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 113–44.
- 19 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 71.
- 20 Jackson, March 2, 2020. To his credit, Townsend could not have known of this error, since it had not been publicly mentioned until now. On the other hand, he could have more ideally approached Jackson to check his assumption before concluding that it was a transcription error.
- 21 Colby Townsend, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, March 1 (a), 2020.
- 22 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 71–72.
- 23 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–16 — Moses 7:10b–28a, Genesis 7:12b–35a. Cf. OT1.
- 24 *Ibid.*, OT 2–21 — Moses 7:15b–29b, Genesis 7:19b–35b. Cf. OT2.
- 25 Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004), OT 1–16 — Moses 7:10b–28a, OT 1–17 — Moses 7:28b–7:43, p. 106.

- 26 The symbol “†” that is shown between the S and the *a* in the transcription signals a change from lowercase to uppercase in the manuscript.
- 27 Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible*, OT2–21 — Moses 7:15b–29a, OT2–22 — Moses 7:29b–41a, p. 618
- 28 See, e.g., Jackson, *The Book of Moses*, 18–36; Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 78–79.
- 29 Matthews, “A Plainer Translation,” 159, 226.
- 30 Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*, 106, 618.
- 31 Jackson, *The Book of Moses*, 122–23.
- 32 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), 128. Though the authors discuss the OT2 revision, they do not specifically mention the change from “God wept” to “Enoch wept.”
- 33 Thomas A. Wayment, ed., *The Complete Joseph Smith Translation of the Old Testament: A Side-by-Side Comparison with the King James Version* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2009), 37.
- 34 Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and David J. Larsen, *In God’s Image and Likeness, Vol 2: Enoch, Noah, and the Tower of Babel* (Salt Lake City: Eborn, 2014), 141, <https://archive.org/details/131203ImageAndLikeness2ReadingS>.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 468–72. Townsend was the principal author a synopsis of *1 Enoch* in an appendix to the commentary.
- 36 Eugene England, “The Weeping God of Mormonism,” *Dialogue* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 63–80.
- 37 Terryl L. Givens and Fiona Givens, *The God Who Weeps: How Mormonism Makes Sense of Life* (Salt Lake City: Ensign Peak, 2012); Givens and Hauglid, *The Pearl of Greatest Price*.
- 38 While not convinced that Joseph Smith intended to have God weeping in Moses 7, Harrell argues that even if a weeping God is conceded, this would not have been at all a radical departure from religious thinking of the time. Harrell documents numerous Christian sources that argue for God’s passibility from the time

of the Reformation to Joseph Smith's day. Faulting Givens for not having signaled such sources, he writes (Charles R. Harrell, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, June 6, 2020):

To emphasize what he sees as a singularly Latter-day Saint teaching in the weeping God of Moses 7, Givens juxtaposes it against the impassible God of creedal Christianity, which he presents as the only view prevalent in Joseph Smith's day. The literature makes clear, however, that the idea of a passible God was widely embraced among Protestants of the time.

Givens differs with Harrell's view, having concluded that "the unambiguous 1830 Mormon pronouncements about the capacity of God the Father to suffer, to weep, to mourn in solidarity with human misery were harbingers of a broad change in the Christian consensus about God" (Terryl L. Givens, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, June 11, 2020). He observed (Givens and Hauglid, *The Pearl of Greatest Price*, 256):

Thomas Weinandy observed in *First Things* that "toward the end of the nineteenth century a sea change began to occur within Christian theology such that at present many, if not most, Christian theologians hold as axiomatic that God is passible, that He does undergo emotional changes of states, and so can suffer." Ronald Goetz has referred to the surge in "theopaschism" (the affirmation of a suffering god) as a "revolution," marking a "structural shift in the Christian mind." He opines, "We have only begun to see where systematic theologies rooted in the suffering God might lead." Paul L. Gavrilyuk states that there is now "a remarkable consensus" behind the claim that "God suffers."

Givens further notes (Givens, June 11, 2020):

When Methodists broke with the Anglican creed, Wesley's 1784 *Articles of Religion* affirmed belief in the "one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts," omitting the "passions." But the Methodists were clearly unsure about the passibility of God. The 1801 *Book of Common Prayer* restored the term "passions," and the American branch of Methodism (the Protestant Episcopal Church of America) also reaffirmed the precise, earlier

language in its 1801 Articles of Religion. “There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions.” However, the Methodist *Book of Discipline* of 1808 again omitted passions, describing “one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness.” Then the *Methodist Magazine* reverted to the older form (God is “without body, parts or passions”), and the formula persisted into the twentieth century. In 1831, the Presbyterian Daniel M’Calla still spoke for most Christians when he held in public debate “We never believed that God could suffer.” A few generations later, however, the doctrine had very few defenders.”

Givens has stated that his primary difference with Harrell is in Harrell’s “continual insistence by implication that our claims for [Joseph Smith] rest on claims of his chronological primacy. It never has except in some minds unfamiliar with his self-expressed modus operandi of inspired syncretism” (ibid.).

- 39 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 79n59.
- 40 Givens and Hauglid, *The Pearl of Greatest Price*, 49.
- 41 Charles R. Harrell, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, May 26, 2020.
- 42 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 77–78.
- 43 Ibid., 85.
- 44 Ibid., 78.
- 45 David E. Bokovoy, *Authoring the Old Testament: Genesis-Deuteronomy* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2014), 157–58; Bokovoy continues by quoting Moses 7:34 in support of the last point.
- 46 Colby Townsend, telephone conversation with Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, May 2020, cited with permission.
- 47 D. E. Bokovoy, *Authoring the Old Testament*, 158.
- 48 Charles R. Harrell, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, June 5, 2020.
- 49 Ibid.

- 50 Charles R. Harrell, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, May 27, 2020.
- 51 For a useful compendium of accounts describing details about the divine personages who appeared to Joseph Smith see Matthew B. Brown, *A Pillar of Light: The History and Message of the First Vision* (American Fork, UT: Covenant Communications, 2009), 30–32.
- 52 See, e.g., Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling, A Cultural Biography of Mormonism's Founder* (New York City: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 39–40; Steven C. Harper, *First Vision: Memory and Mormon Origins* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019), 1–57. For general responses to questions relating to the nature, reliability, and historicity of the First Vision, see Brown, *A Pillar of Light*, 137–76; Harper, *First Vision*; Steven C. Harper, *Joseph Smith's First Vision: A Guide to the Historical Accounts* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012), 67–83, 94–110; Steven C. Harper, “Evaluating Three Arguments Against Joseph Smith’s First Vision,” in *Exploring the First Vision*, eds. Samuel Alonzo Dodge and Steven C. Harper (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 2012), 307–23; Richard Lyman Bushman, “The Visionary World of Joseph Smith,” in *Believing History: Latter-day Saint Essays*, eds. Reid L. Neilson and Jed L. Woodworth (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 199–216.
- 53 Consider, for example, Joseph Smith’s description of the Book of Mormon translation process. While some of the Prophet’s contemporaries gave detailed descriptions of the size and appearance of the plates, the instruments used in translation, and the procedure by which the words of the ancient text were made known to him, Joseph Smith demurred when asked to relate such specifics himself, even in response to direct questioning in private company from believing friends (Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Documents 2: July 1831–January 1833*, eds. Matthew C. Godfrey et al. [Salt Lake City: The Church Historian’s Press, 2013], General Conference Minutes, Orange Township, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, 25–26 October 1831, 84). The only explicit statement we have from him about the translation process is his testimony that it occurred “by the gift and power of God” (*ibid.*, Letter to Noah C. Saxton, 4 January 1833, 354), in a parallel to the wording found in Omni 1:20 that was also taken

up by Oliver Cowdery in a 9 December 1829 letter (O. Cowdery, “Letter to Cornelius Blatchly, 9 November 1829,” *Gospel Luminary* 2, no. 49 (10 December 1829): 194, <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/NY/miscNYC1.htm>) and in the published account and testimony of the Three Witnesses (Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers, Histories 1: Joseph Smith Histories, 1832–1844*, eds. Karen Lynn Davidson et al. [Salt Lake City: The Church Historian’s Press, 2012], 318–23). See also D&C 1:29, 20:8). More generally, Brigham Young referred to the fact that those who sat in Joseph Smith’s “secret councils year after year ... heard [him] say thousands of things that the people have never yet heard” (Brigham Young, discourse, 7 October 1866. In *Early Church Conference Reports*, comp. Elden J. Watson [January 2016], CD 4:2157–59, <http://eldenwatson.net/ECCRintro.htm>). For more on the Prophet’s reluctance to share details of sacred events, see Ronald O. Barney, “Joseph Smith’s Visions: His Style and His Record,” (presentation, FAIR Conference, Provo, UT, August 2013), <http://www.fairlds.org/fair-conferences/2013-fair-conference/2013-joseph-smiths-visions-his-style-and-his-record>; Roger Nicholson, “The Cowdery Conundrum: Oliver’s Aborted Attempt to Describe Joseph Smith’s First Vision in 1834 and 1835,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 8 (2014): 27–44.

As a specific illustration of the sacred regard in which the Prophet held the temple ordinances, Andrew Ehat observed that none of the nine participants who were present when the Nauvoo endowment was first bestowed on 4 May 1842 recorded the events of that day in their personal reminiscences. In explanation of this fact, Ehat observes (Andrew F. Ehat, “‘Who Shall Ascend into the Hill of the Lord?’ Sesquicentennial Reflections of a Sacred Day: 4 May 1842,” in *Temples of the Ancient World*, ed. Donald W. Parry [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994], 49):

The Prophet Joseph Smith had asked each participant not to record the specifics of what they had heard and seen that day. Six weeks later, in a letter to his fellow apostle Parley P. Pratt, Heber C. Kimball wrote that these favored few had received “some precious things through the Prophet on the priesthood that would cause your soul to rejoice.” However, he added, “I cannot give them to you on paper for they are not to be written” (“Heber C. Kimball to Parley P. Pratt, 17 June 1842,” in *Heber C. Kimball Papers*,

1837–1866, accessed July 17, 2020, <https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/record?id=eb905feb-8b2d-4d03-bdec-2094761555f3>). They were just too sacred.

- 54 In 1844, the Prophet stated (Joseph Smith, Jr., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1969], 20 January 1844, p. 331. Cf. Andrew F. Ehat, and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980], Wilford Woodruff Journal, 21 January 1844, 319, <https://rsc-legacy.byu.edu/out-print/words-joseph-smith-contemporary-accounts-nauvoo-discourses-prophet-joseph>):

I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions.

- 55 For example, Danel Bachman has argued convincingly that nearly all of D&C 132 was revealed to the Prophet as he worked on the first half of JST Genesis (Danel W. Bachman, “New Light on an Old Hypothesis: The Ohio Origins of the Revelation on Eternal Marriage,” *Journal of Mormon History* 5 [1978]: 19–32). This was more than a decade before 1843, when the revelation was shared with Joseph Smith’s close associates. See also Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, “What Did Joseph Smith Know about Modern Temple Ordinances by 1836?,” in *The Temple: Ancient and Restored, Proceedings of the 2014 Temple on Mount Zion Symposium*, ed. Stephen D. Ricks and Donald W. Parry (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2016), 1–144, <http://www.jeffreybradshaw.net/templethemes/publications/01-Bradshaw-TMZ%203.pdf>.
- 56 Joseph Smith, Jr., Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Documents 2*, Letter to William W. Phelps, 31 July 1832, 267. This is consistent with George Q. Cannon’s statement about the Prophet’s intentions to “seal up” the work for “a later day” after he completed the main work of Bible translation on 2 February 1833: “No endeavor was made at that time to print the work. It was sealed up with the expectation that it would be brought forth at a later day with other of the scriptures . . . [See D&C 42:56–58.] [T]he labor was its own reward, bringing in the performance a special blessing of broadened comprehension to the Prophet and a general blessing

of enlightenment to the people through his subsequent teachings” (George Q. Cannon, “The Life of Joseph Smith, the Prophet” [Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1907], 129). Bradshaw has argued that the divine tutorial that took place during Joseph Smith’s Bible translation effort was focused on temple and priesthood matters — hence the restriction on general dissemination of these teachings during the Prophet’s early ministry. See Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, *In God’s Image and Likeness*, Vol. 1: Creation, Fall, and the Story of Adam and Eve (Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2014), 3–6, <https://archive.org/details/140123IGIL12014ReadingS>.

- 57 See Bradshaw, *In God’s Image and Likeness*, 2:28n0–13.
- 58 Moses 1:42. See also Moses 4:32: “See thou show them unto no man, until I command you, except to them that believe.”
- 59 The quoted words are from Latter-day Saint Apostle George Q. Cannon’s remembrance (*The Life of Joseph Smith, the Prophet*, 129n): “We have heard President Brigham Young state that the Prophet before his death had spoken to him about going through the translation of the scriptures again and perfecting it upon points of doctrine which the Lord had restrained him from giving in plainness and fulness at the time of which we write.”
- 60 Harrell, June 5, 2020.
- 61 Harrell, May 27, 2020.
- 62 Gershom Scholem wrote descriptively that “this cosmic curtain, as it is described in the Book of Enoch, contains the images of all things which since the day of creation have their pre-existing reality, as it were, in the heavenly sphere. All generations and all their lives and actions are woven into this curtain [All this] shall become universal knowledge in the Messianic age” (Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* [New York City: Schocken Books, 1995], 72).
- 63 For example, Islamic tradition speaks of a “white cloth from Paradise” upon which Adam saw the fate of his posterity (Muhammad ibn Abd Allah al-Kisa’i, *Tales of the Prophets* [*Qisas al-anbiya*], trans. Wheeler M. Thackston, Jr. [Chicago: KAZI Publications, 1997], 82). For a description of an account by al-Tha’labi, see Hugh W. Nibley, *Teachings of the Pearl of Great Price* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies [FARMS], Brigham Young University, 2004), 117.

- 64 See, e.g., Hugh W. Nibley and Michael D. Rhodes, *One Eternal Round, The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* 19 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2010), 188–585; Hugh W. Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt, The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* 14 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 42–73.
- 65 See discussion of the translation of this and related terms in Alexander Kulik, “Apocalypse of Abraham,” in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, eds. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel and Lawrence H. Schiffman (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2013), 2:1470n21. See also Ryszard Rubinkiewicz, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham en vieux slave : Introduction, texte critique, traduction et commentaire. Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Zrodlat i monografie* 129 (Lublin, POL: Société des Lettres et des Sciences de l’Université Catholique de Lublin, 1987), 175n1.
- 66 Kulik, “Apocalypse of Abraham,” 2:1470n21.
- 67 Philip S. Alexander, “3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:296n45a. The English term “blueprint” is an apt choice to describe the vision of Rabbi Ishmael (*ibid.*, 296 [cf. 298–99]). Citing precedents in translations of similar visions in Jewish tradition, Kulik translates the relevant term in *Apocalypse of Abraham* 21:2 as a “likeness” or In 22:1, 3, 5; 23:1, and “many other instances” he translates it as “picture” (East Slavic *obrazovanie*) (Kulik, “Apocalypse of Abraham,” 2:1470n21).
- 68 *Ibid.*, 296 , cf. 45:6, pp. 298–99, for example, Metatron says:
- Come and I will show you the curtain of the Omnipresent One, which is spread before the Holy One, blessed be he, and on which are printed all the generations of the world and all their deeds, whether done or to be done, till the last generation.
- 69 See Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, David J. Larsen, and Stephen T. Whitlock, “Moses 1 and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*: Twin sons of different mothers?” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 38 [2020]: 199–201, 214. <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/moses-1-and-the-apocalypse-of-abraham-twin-sons-of-different-mothers/>.
- 70 “Psalm 89,” Net Bible, accessed July 17, 2020, <http://classic.net.bible.org/bible.php?book=Psa&chapter=89#v5>. Harrell adds:

“This verse, by the way, illustrates an instance where ‘the heavens’ is exclusive of God” (Harrell, June 5, 2020).

- 71 Ibid. See G. Ernest Wright, *The Old Testament Against its Environment, Vol. 2: Studies in Biblical Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1950), 36; Frank Moore Cross, “The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12, no. 4 (October 1, 1953): 274–75, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/542950>.
- 72 Stephen E. Robinson and H. Dean Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2001–2005), 2:294, paraphrasing D&C 76:26.
- 73 Harrell, May 27, 2020.
- 74 Harrell, June 5, 2020.
- 75 Harrell, May 27, 2020.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 3 Nephi 17:21.
- 79 3 Nephi 17:22.
- 80 See, e.g., Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, eds., *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1997), 98–99, 140, 266, 285, 287, 289, 331, 391, 499, 551, 574.
- 81 Richard Elliott Friedman, ed., *Commentary on the Torah* (New York City: HarperCollins, 2001), Genesis 3:9.
- 82 See Jacob 5:41, 47, 49. Cf. 2 Nephi 15:4.
- 83 Jacob 5:49.
- 84 Jacob 5:51. Note Moshe Greenberg’s brilliant observation: “In every rhetorical question lurks the possible affirmation of what is ostensibly denied” (Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, *The Literary Guide to the Bible* [Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1990], 285).
- 85 Ibid., 574.
- 86 Harrell, May 27, 2020.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Ibid.

- 89 John F. Hobbins, “The Rhetoric of Isaiah 1:2–20: An Exploration,” *Ancient Hebrew Poetry*, last revised 2 February 2007, https://ancienthebrewpoetry.typepad.com/ancient_hebrew_poetry/files/isa_1_220_rhetoric.pdf. The structure of Moses 7:28–41, seems to follow themes generally (but not slavishly) similar to some of those mentioned by John F. Hobbins above in his outline of Isaiah 1.

Evidence indicates that both of these texts are very old. Ronald Bergey describes Isaiah 1 as “a case of early intertextuality” with Deuteronomy 32 (Ronald Bergey, “The Song of Moses [Deuteronomy 32:1–43] and Isaianic Prophecies: A Case of Early Intertextuality,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 28, no. 1 [2003]: 33–54, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/030908920302800102>). Despite controversy about the dating of other chapters in Isaiah, the first chapter is regarded by most contemporary scholars as belonging to “major collections of judgment speeches authentic to the prophet Isaiah ben Amoz” (ibid., 37). As for the Song of Moses (*Shirat Ha’azinu*) that is found in Deuteronomy 32:1–43, it is thought by the well-respected Deuteronomy scholar Jeffrey Tigay be “an independent composition, older than the rest of Deuteronomy” (Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy: The JPS Torah Commentary*, ed. Nahum M. Sarna and Chaim Potok [Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996], 510), “perhaps considerably older” (ibid., 513).

- 90 Moses 7:28.

- 91 For an extensive discussion of this “chorus” of weeping and its resemblances to Jeremiah and other ancient accounts in Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Jacob Rennaker, and David J. Larsen, “Revisiting the Forgotten Voices of Weeping in Moses 7: A Comparison with Ancient Texts,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 2 (2012): 41–71, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/revisiting-the-forgotten-voices-of-weeping-in-moses-7-a-comparison-with-ancient-texts/>.

- 92 Moses 7:40.

- 93 Moses 7:25.

- 94 Moses 7:27.

- 95 Moses 7:28. With regard to Enoch’s bearing record of God’s weeping, note the emphasis in both Mosiah 18:9 and 24:14 on

standing “as witnesses” of God through similar sympathetic interaction.

- 96 Draper, Brown, and Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary*, 128; give instances of the indirect approach: in Abraham’s appeal to the Lord not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah before his nephew Lot and family escaped (see Genesis 18:23–32), and in Jared’s requests through his brother that they keep their language and, later and most important, that the Lord lead their families to a promised land (see Ether 1:34, 38).
- 97 Moses 7:28.
- 98 Moses 7:29.
- 99 Moses 7:29–30.
- 100 Moses 7:34.
- 101 Hobbins, “The Rhetoric of Isaiah 1:2–20,” 11.
- 102 Moses 7:35.
- 103 The Lord’s “test of affection” described in the Book of Moses Enoch account is echoed in 2 *Enoch* 30:14–15, where the Lord instructs Adam: “And I said to him, ‘This is good for you, but that is bad,’” so that I should come to know whether he has love toward me or abhorrence, and so that it might become plain who among his race loves me” (F. I. Andersen, “2 [Slavonic Apocalypse of] Enoch,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:152).

Significantly, the hard words described in Job 21:7–15 seem to have been directly witnessed, not by Job, but by Enoch himself (Alexander, “3 [Hebrew Apocalypse] of Enoch,” 4:3, p. 258): “When the generation of the Flood sinned and turned to evil deeds, and said to God, ‘Go away! We do not choose to learn your ways’ [cf. Job 21:14], the Holy One, blessed be he, took me [Enoch] from their midst to be a witness against them in the heavenly height to all who should come into the world, so that they should not say, ‘The Merciful One is cruel!’” See John C. Reeves, *Heralds of that Good Realm: Syro-Mesopotamian Gnosis and Jewish Traditions. Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies* 41, ed. James M. Robinson and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit (Leiden, ND: E. J. Brill, 1996), 187. For a list of ancient sources, see *ibid.*, 183, 200n17.

In defiance of the Lord’s entreaty to “love one another, and ... choose me, their Father” (Moses 7:33), the wicked are depicted

as “say[ing] unto God, ... Depart from us: for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit should we have if we pray unto him?” (Job 21:14–15. Cf. Exodus 5:2; Malachi 3:13–15; Mosiah 11:27; Moses 5:16). Reeves characterizes these words as “a blasphemous rejection of divine governance and guidance ... wherein the wicked members of the Flood generation verbally reject God” (ibid., 188). Enoch is said to have prophesied a future judgment upon such “ungodly sinners” who have “uttered hard speeches ... against [the Lord]” (Jude 1:15, George W. E. Nickelsburg, ed., *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001], 81–108. *Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001], 1:9, p. 142. See also 5:4, p. 150; 27:2, p. 317; 101:3, p. 503. 2 Peter 2:5 labels this same generation as “ungodly”).

104 Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Prophets* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 1:80.

105 Jed Woodworth eloquently summarizes this contrast (“Extra-Biblical Enoch Texts in Early American Culture,” in *Archive of Restoration Culture: Summer Fellows’ Papers 1997–1999*, ed. Richard Lyman Bushman [Provo, UT: Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History, 2000], 191–92):

What is the fate of those who perish in the flood? In [1 Enoch], there is one fate only: everlasting punishment. Those who are destroyed in the flood are beyond redemption. For God to be reconciled, sinners must suffer forever. Enoch has nothing to say because God has no merciful side to appeal to. In Joseph Smith, however, punishment has an end. The merciful side of God allows Enoch to speak and be heard. God and Enoch speak a common language: mercy. “Lift up your heart, and be glad; and look,” God says to Enoch after the flood (Moses 7:44). There is hope for the wicked yet (Moses 7:37–38):

I will shut them up; a prison have I prepared for them. And that which I have chosen hath pled before my face. Wherefore, he suffereth for their sins; inasmuch as they will repent in the day that

my Chosen shall return unto me, and until that day they shall be in torment.

The Messiah figure in [1 Enoch 45–47] and in Joseph Smith function in different ways. In Joseph Smith, the Chosen One will come to earth at the meridian of time to rescue the sinners of Enoch’s day. After the Messiah’s death and resurrection, “as many of the spirits as were in prison came forth, and stood on the right hand of God” (Moses 7:57. Compare 1 Peter 3:20). The Messiah figure in [1 Enoch] does not come down to earth and is peripheral to the text; he presides over the “elect” around God’s throne (Richard Laurence, ed., *The Book of Enoch, the Prophet: Translated from an Ethiopic Manuscript in the Bodleian Library, the Text Now Corrected from His Latest Notes with an Introduction by the [Anonymous] Author of “The Evolution of Christianity”* [Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1883], 45:3–5, pp. 49–50; 56:3, p. 64, <http://archive.org/details/bookofenochproph00laur>) but does not rescue the sinners of Enoch’s day. “In the day of trouble evil shall [still] be heaped upon sinners” (ibid., 49:2, pp. 55–56. Cf. 49:3–4, p. 54), he tells Enoch [in that account].

Similar in attitude to the Book of Moses and somewhat different in tone from 1 Enoch, the Book of Giants records Enoch’s hope for them if they repent (Florentino Garcia Martinez, “The Book of Giants (4Q203),” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson [Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996], 8:14–15, p. 261): “set loose what you hold captive ... and pray” (Donald W. Parry and Emanuel Tov, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader* [Leiden, NDL: Brill, 2013], 4Q203, 8:14–15, p. 481). For discussions of hints in Mani’s Book of Giants that some of the wicked repented and were saved as the result of Enoch’s preaching, see Matthew Goff, “The Sons of the Watchers in the Book of Watchers and the Qumran Book of Giants,” in *Ancient Tales of Giants from Qumran and Turfan: Contexts, Traditions, and Influences*, eds. Matthew Goff, Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Enrico Morano (Tübingen, DEU: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 124–27; Gábor Kósa, “The Book of Giants Tradition in the Chinese Manichaica,” in *Ancient Tales of Giants from Qumran and Turfan: Contexts, Traditions, and Influences*, 173–75.

- 106 See Elder Neal A. Maxwell's discussion of this passage (Maxwell, *That Ye May Believe* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992], 29, 81):

Enoch saw the God of Heaven weep over needless human suffering

God's empathy is not to be defined by man's lack of empathy or by our sometimes stupid and cruel use of moral agency!

All of us should be very careful, therefore, about seeming to lecture God on suffering. God actually weeps over the suffering of His children. Enoch saw it! He questioned God about those divine tears-especially in view of God's omnipotence and His omniscience. Why cry over one people on one planet — especially in view of how far God's vast creations stretch out?

The Lord rehearsed for Enoch that humanity and this earthly habitat are "the workmanship of [God's] own hands," and, further, that He gave us our knowledge and our agency. Most strikingly, the Lord then focused on the fact that the human family should love one another and should choose God as their Father. The two great commandments! Then the Lord lamented, yet "they are without affection, and they hate their own blood."

- 107 See the comparison of key words in Bergey, "Song of Moses."
- 108 Hobbins, "The Rhetoric of Isaiah 1:2–20," 11, 13.
- 109 See the Lord's declaration to the people: "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me Children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord" (vv. 2, 4).
- 110 See the explicit description of God as a "father" (vv. 6–7) to His "children" (vv. 5, 8, 20) — His "sons" (vv. 8, 19) and "daughters" (v. 19).
- 111 Bergey, "Song of Moses," 39.
- 112 Heschel, *The Prophets*, 1:80. For an example that depicts the anguish of the rejected father but — in contrast to Deuteronomy 32, Isaiah 1, and Moses 7 — without tendering any hope of forgiveness, see S. Agourides, "Apocalypse of Sedrach," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 6:1–6, 1:610:

And God said unto him: “Be it known to you, that everything which I commanded man to do was within his reach. I made him wise [cf. Moses 7:32] and the heir of heaven and earth, and I subordinated everything under him and every living thing flees from him and from his face. Having received my gifts, however, he became an alien, an adulterer and sinner. Tell me, what sort of a father would give an inheritance to his son, and having received the money (the son) goes away leaving his father and becomes an alien and in the service of aliens [cf. Luke 15:11–15]. The father then, seeing that the son has forsaken him (and gone away), darkens his heart and going away, eh retrieves his wealth and banishes his son from his glory, because he forsook his father. How is it that I, the wondrous and jealous God, have given everything to him, but he, having received them, became an adulterer and sinner?”

- 113 Heschel, *The Prophets*, 1:83.
- 114 Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*, 618.
- 115 Moses 7:11, 24, 27, 33, 37, 47, 59.
- 116 In the older sense of the term described in Heschel, *The Prophets*, 269–72 (“the ancient classical ideas of pathos [that] included all conditions of feeling and will in which man is dependent on the outer world”), not its more recent and limited sense of “painful emotion” (p. 272) and the modern notion that the “sublime” and the “pathetic” “have nothing to do with each other” (p. 270).
- 117 Hobbins, “The Rhetoric of Isaiah 1:2–20,” 13–14.
- 118 Moses 7:37. Somewhat of a more sympathetic variant to Hobbins’ description of “a leading question and exclamation that recall by way of context and choice of terminology the status of the addressees as punished and disobedient children (ibid., 13).
- 119 Ibid., 11.
- 120 Moses 7:38–39.
- 121 Givens and Givens, *The God Who Weeps*, 24–25.
- 122 Moses 7:41.

- 123 Compare OT1, Moses 7:28, pp. 105–106 to OT2, Moses 7:28, p. 618.

Speaking of prophets in general, Abraham Heschel explains that “what convulsed the prophet’s whole being was God. His condition was a state of suffering in sympathy with the divine pathos” (Heschel, *The Prophets*, 1:118, cf. 1:80–85, 91–92, 105–27; 2:101–103). This view of prophets stands in stark contrast to the Philo of Alexandria’s parallel description of the relationship between the high priest and God in *De Specialibus Legibus*. In this passage, Philo is commenting upon the law in Leviticus 21:10–12 which prohibits the high priest from mourning for (or even approaching) the bodies of deceased parents, consistent with Greek philosophical conceptions (See Philo, “The Special Laws, 1 [De specialibus legibus, 1],” in *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*, ed. and trans. C. D. Yonge [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006], 1:113–16, pp. 165, 167).

Philo’s view of a dispassionate, yet mediating high priest is not only at odds with the portrayal of Jesus as high priest presented in Hebrews 4:15 (“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” Cf. Jacob Neusner, ed., *The Mishnah: A New Translation* [London, UK: Yale University Press, 1988], 1:4–6, p. 266), but also with Heschel’s perspective of mediating prophets as those who have entered into “a fellowship with the feelings of God” (Heschel, *The Prophets*, 1:26). As in the case of Enoch, a model of divine sympathy calls into question teachings regarding divine apathy.

This theme of shared sorrow between God and prophet is explored at length by theologian Terence Fretheim (see Fretheim, *The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 149–66). According to Fretheim, “The prophet’s life was reflective of the divine life. This became increasingly apparent to Israel. God is seen to be present not only in what the prophet has to say, but in the word as embodied in the prophet’s life. To hear and see the prophet was to hear and see God, a God who was suffering on behalf of the people” (ibid., 149). To a certain extent, so close was the association between God and prophet that the prophet’s very presence could serve as a sort of “ongoing theophany” (ibid., 151), providing Israel with a very visible and tangible representation of God’s concern.

Fretheim argues that the prophet's "sympathy with the divine pathos" was not the result of contemplating the divine, but rather a result of the prophet's participation in the divine council. He writes (*ibid.*, 150):

[T]he fact that the prophets are said to be a part of this council indicates something of the intimate relationship they had with God. The prophet was somehow drawn up into the very presence of God; even more, the prophet was in some sense admitted into the history of God. The prophet becomes a party to the divine story; the heart and mind of God pass over into that of the prophet to such an extent that the prophet becomes a veritable embodiment of God.

In the case of Enoch, the prophet enters into the presence of God (Moses 7:20) and witnesses the weeping of God and a heavenly host over the wickedness of humanity (Moses 7:28–31, 37, 40). As a result of this participation in the heavenly council, Enoch becomes divinely sensitized to the plight of the human race and begins to weep himself (Moses 7:41, 44).

- 124 In this article, the narrative drama of OT1 is described only in summary fashion. Beyond what we have already described, additional examples of where the reading of OT2 seems inferior to OT1 could be given.

For example, the replacement of *bosom* by *presence* in OT2 breaks the connection to a meaningful string of six uses of the term *bosom* in varying contexts within the chapter (Moses 7:24, 30, 31, 47, 63, 69. See a summary discussion of this key term in Bradshaw, *In God's Image and Likeness*, 2:143–44). Moses 7 is the only chapter in the Book of Moses in which the word *bosom* appears, and a key part of the culminating verse of the chapter, when God receives Zion "up into his own bosom" (Moses 7:69).

Moreover, Elder Maxwell notes the importance of the seemingly inconsequential three-letter word *yet*, which is omitted in OT2 (Maxwell, *That Ye May Believe*, 205, emphasis in original):

Notice, however, what reassured and assuaged Enoch most about Jesus amid His creations: "And *yet thou art there*, and thy bosom is there; and also thou art just; thou art merciful and kind forever."

The omission of the tiny adverb *yet* greatly weakens the strength of the phrase.

- 125 “How Great the Wisdom and the Love,” in *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), #195.
- 126 As Richard L. Bushman writes (*Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, 138):
- In redoing the early chapters of Genesis, the stories of Creation, of Adam and Eve, and the Fall were modified, but with less extensive interpolations than in the revelation to Moses. Joseph wove Christian doctrine into the text without altering the basic story. But with the appearance of Enoch in the seventh generation from Adam, the text expanded far beyond the biblical version. In Genesis, Enoch is summed up in 5 verses; in Joseph Smith’s revision, Enoch’s story extends to 110 verses.
- 127 Royal Skousen, “The Earliest Textual Sources for Joseph Smith’s ‘New Translation’ of the King James Bible,” *FARMS Review* 17, no. 2 (2005): 462. For the original study, see Kent P. Jackson, and Peter M. Jasinski, “The Process of Inspired Translation: Two Passages Translated Twice in the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (2003): 35–64.
- 128 Philip L. Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 55–57.
- 129 Skousen, “The Earliest Textual Sources,” 461. With respect to the process of translation for the Book of Mormon, Brant Gardner posits a view of functionalist equivalence — “unless a very specific, detailed textual analysis supports an argument that particular words or passages are either literalist or conceptual” (Brant A. Gardner, *The Gift and Power: Translating the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011], 247). For instance, Gardner considers, among other types of examples, the proper names of the Book of Mormon as specific instances of literal translation. He also finds examples of structural elements (e.g., chiasms and other literary features) in the Book of Mormon that are neither random nor “part of the common repertoire available to a writer in upstate New York in the 1830s. They represent features

of the plate text that have survived the translation process” (ibid., 204). For summary discussions of the detailed analysis of this issue given throughout the book, see especially ibid., 227–47, 279–83.

Royal Skousen differs in his understanding of the translation process, arguing that the words chosen for the English text of the Book of Mormon were generally given under “tight control” (Royal Skousen, “Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Book of Mormon: Evidence for Tight Control of the Text,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7, no. 1 [1998]: 22–31).

Of course, even in the case of passages that seem to be explicitly revelatory, it remained to the Prophet to exercise considerable personal effort in rendering these experiences into words (see e.g., D&C 9:7–9). As Kathleen Flake puts it, Joseph Smith did not see himself as “God’s stenographer. Rather, he was an interpreting reader, and God the confirming authority” (Kathleen Flake, “Translating Time: The Nature and Function of Joseph Smith’s Narrative Canon,” *Journal of Religion* 87, no. 4 [October 2007]: 507–508, <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/divinity/facultynews/Flake%20Translating%20Time.pdf>; cf. Grant Underwood, “Revelation, Text, and Revision: Insight from the Book of Commandments and Revelations,” *BYU Studies* 48, no. 3 [2009]: 76–81, 83–84. With respect to the Book of Mormon, scholars differ in their understanding about the degree to which the vocabulary and phrasing of Joseph Smith’s translation was tightly controlled. However, there is a consensus among Latter-day Saint scholars that at least some features of the plate text of the Book of Mormon survived translation (Gardner, *The Gift and Power*, 150–52, 197–204).

How does one reconcile the idea of something like a “word-by-word” translation facilitated by divinely provided physical artifacts with the idea that the translation process was a demanding process that drew heavily on Joseph Smith’s mental and spiritual capacities? Elsewhere, as part of a discussion of the challenges of scripture translation and interpretation, Bradshaw wrote (“Foreword,” in *Name as Key-Word: Collected Essays on Onomastic Wordplay and the Temple in Mormon Scripture*, ed. Matthew L. Bowen [Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2018], xxvii–xxviii, n17,

Foreword%20to%20Bowen-Pages%20from%20180524-Bowen%20Book%2020180524-2.pdf):

Though the English translation of the Book of Mormon seems to have involved an important visual component, it was not a merely mechanical process of “reading” in the ordinary sense. Brant Gardner has discussed possible explanations for how pre-linguistic inspiration and the mental/physiological processes of using a seer stone might have come together during translation (Gardner, *The Gift and Power*, 259–77). Although Gardner’s proposal cannot tell us anything about the process of inspiration itself, it suggests how revelation about the contents of the Nephite record could have been mediated by mental processes that were involved in the choice of specific English words in translation.

Apart from cognitive considerations, one’s fitness to translate by the gift of divine seership is inescapably a religious and moral matter. Whatever help one’s native gifts, cultural milieu, personal experience, educational opportunities, or even divinely prepared “technology” might provide to a translator devoid of scholarly method and critical apparatus, it would be insufficient compensation for the essential prerequisites that enable the Holy Ghost to be a “constant companion” (D&C 121:46) to the translator. As Greg Smith observed (Gregory L. Smith, personal communication to author, 2017), the necessary virtue to access God’s power:

is not something that can be granted simply by more [mental or technologically-assisted] processing speed — as if I would be kinder and wiser if I could access a thousand articles in an hour instead of ten We do not become like God through achieving technological mastery, or through any other exercise of power over nature. The challenge is not finding individuals who can master and carry out a scientific or technical program. Instead, the difficulty lies in finding or developing those who will not abuse power when they have it [see D&C 121:39].

- 130 Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), xxxiii. Later on the same page, Skousen gives examples of three correctors “who played an important role in the early history of the text”: Oliver Cowdery (“the main scribe for the two manuscripts”), John Gilbert

(“the typesetter for the 1830 edition”), and Joseph Smith (“the main editor for the 1837 and 1840 editions”). For each of these individuals, Skousen provides “one example where the critical text accepts the conjectural emendation and one where it is rejected.”

- 131 See, e.g., Jeffrey M. Hunt, R. Alden Smith, and Fabio Stok, *Classics from Papyrus to the Internet: An Introduction to Transmission and Reception* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2017), <https://books.google.com/books?id=6-zaDgAAQBAJ.77>. Comparing the situation of the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, Matthew Bowen concludes similarly, after extensive discussion of a relevant example: “We see abundant evidence in ancient New Testament manuscripts of scribes ... attempting to correct what they think are mistakes in the text, only to make the text worse with their corrections. Joseph’s associates did similar things with the Book of Mormon text and with his early revelations” (Matthew L. Bowen, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, February 26, 2020.) For a good example of this in the Book of Mormon, see Daniel Sharp and Matthew L. Bowen, “Scripture Note — ‘For This Cause Did King Benjamin Keep Them’: King Benjamin or King Mosiah?” *Religious Educator* 18, no. 1 (2017): 81–87, https://rsc.byu.edu/sites/default/files/pub_content/pdf/Scripture_Note%E2%80%9494For_This_Cause_Did_King_Benjam%E2%80%8Bin_Keep_Them_King_Benjamin_or_King_Mosiah.pdf. See also Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007), 1:214–22. And, in the case of the Book of Moses, we do not currently possess direct evidence that the Prophet always micromanaged the changes made in JST manuscripts.
- 132 In the case of Moses 7:28, we rely on literary arguments to confirm our general position of the original dictation being the better one. In principle, we might be persuaded for or against the superiority of the original dictation based on other kinds of arguments — historical, comparative, etc. Though we realize that such a position (like Royal Skousen’s position with respect to the default priority of the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon) is prone to generate endless debates, we see no better alternative than to consider each disputed passage individually with respect to its own merits.

- 133 Jackson, March 2, 2020. With respect to the Book of Mormon, Jackson continues:

I know that Royal Skousen does not like changes made to the Book of Mormon text after the original dictation, but I think the Book of Mormon is a different case. The Book of Mormon was a preexisting text, in English words, and the Prophet saw the words. His part was to read them. I think that the JST, like the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, was a revelatory process that was not always complete with the original dictation. Hence changes made later were part of the process.

We agree that Jackson's description of a more incremental translation process above applies to most of the JST. However, we are persuaded that several long revelatory passages in the JST (like many passages in the Doctrine and Covenants that seem to have been dictated in a similar fashion) are closer to the word-for-word revelatory pattern of the Book of Mormon. For Bradshaw's views on Joseph Smith's translation process, see Bradshaw, "Foreword."

- 134 Moses 6:40.

- 135 Moses 7:2.

- 136 Moses 7:2 reads: "As I was journeying, and stood upon the place Mahujah, and cried unto the Lord, there came a voice out of heaven, saying — Turn ye, and get ye upon the mount Simeon."

On the basis of the pronoun *I* that is present in the OT1 manuscript (see Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*, OT1 page 15, Moses 7:2, p. 103) and the use of the second-person plural *ye* that appears twice later in the verse, Cirillo argues for an alternate reading: "As I was journeying and stood in the place, Mahujah and I cried unto the Lord. There came a voice out of heaven, saying — Turn ye, and get ye upon the mount Simeon" (Salvatore Cirillo, "Joseph Smith, Mormonism, and Enochic Tradition" [Masters Thesis, Durham University, 2010], 103, <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/236/>, punctuation modified). This reading turns the name Mahujah into a personal name instead of a place name, i.e., with the meaning that Enoch is "standing with" Mahujah, "not on Mahujah" (*ibid.*, 103). An issue with this reading is that afterward, Enoch went up to meet God alone ("I turned and went up on the

mount; ... I stood upon the mount" [Moses 7:3]). The only way to reconcile the absence of Mahujah in subsequent events would be if he did not follow Enoch to the mount as he had been commanded to do in Moses 7:2 (taking the "Turn ye" to be plural).

On the other hand, in a different reading, David Calabro points out that Moses 7:2 "As I was journeying ... and I cried" "could be an example of the use of 'and' to introduce a main clause after a circumstantial clause, which is a Hebraism that is frequently found in the earliest Book of Mormon text" (David Calabro, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, January 24, 2018). In this case, the "ye" in "Turn ye" would have to be interpreted as singular rather than plural.

If the name for mount Mahujah on which Enoch ascended to pray indeed relates to the idea of questioning (as proposed in a note by Nibley below), it would provide a neat counterpart to the name of the mount Simeon (Hebrew Shim'on = he has heard), where Enoch was commanded to go in order to receive his answers. Note Al-Tha'labi's account of Adam and Eve being rejoined after their separation when "they recognized each other by questioning on a day of questioning. So the place was named *Arafat* (= questions) and the day, *Irfah*." (Abu Ishaq Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim al-Tha'labi, *'Ara'is Al-Majalis Fi Qisas Al-Anbiya'* or "*Lives of the Prophets*," trans. William M. Brinner [Leiden, NDL: Brill, 2002], 291).

- 137 Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 82. Townsend must have meant to say something like that there were four examples in *addition* to the possible *j* in *Mahijah*. Instead, his statement was left unqualified. Moreover, his next statement ("The other two, of which *Mahijah* is one") only further gives the impression that the *j* in *Mahijah* should be included as one of the four *j*'s that he was considering. See *ibid.*, 82. In essence, Townsend was not employing circular logic by including the very thing he was trying to figure out as evidence for what it is.
- 138 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–13 — Moses 6:34b–52a, Moses 6:40. Cf. OT1 page 13, Moses 6:40, p. 100.
- 139 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–12 — Moses 6:19b–34a, Moses 6:26. Cf. OT1 page 12, Moses 6:26, p. 98. Faulring and Jackson,

- Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–12 — Moses 6:19b–34a, Moses 6:34. Cf. OT1 page 12, Moses 6:34, p. 99.
- 140 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 83.
- 141 Ibid.
- 142 Ibid.
- 143 OT1 pages 12–13, pp. 98–100. See the words *since* (p. 12), *rivers* (p. 13), *raised* (p. 13), *their* (p. 13, two lines above *Mahijah*), and *vision* (p. 13).
- 144 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–13 — Moses 6:34a–52a, Moses 6:39. Cf. OT1 page 13, Moses 6:29, p. 100. Note that the word “their” in “their hands” is omitted in the canonical version of Moses 6:39.
- 145 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–13 — Moses 6:34a–52a, Moses 6:40. Cf. OT1 page 13, Moses 6:40, p. 100.
- 146 “Letter from Emma Smith, 6 December 1839,” p. 1, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed March 10, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-from-emma-smith-6-december-1839/1>.
- 147 On page 12 of OT1, this occurs in three instances of the word *which*. On page 13, it is found in the words *which* (two instances), *visible* (both *i*'s are missing the upstroke), *voice*, and *with*.
- 148 On page 12 of OT1, this occurs in the words *lived*, *died*, *sixty*, and *voice*. On page 13 of OT1, it occurs in the words *with*, *it*, *is* (two instances), *it*, *saying*, *his*, and *in*.
- 149 Ibid., see OT1 examples of *is* (p. 12, “is in my hands”), *foundation* (p. 13), and *his* (p. 13, in “by his fall”).
- 150 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 83.
- 151 Adding to this possibility is the fact that, as previously discussed, Emma had two different ways of writing a *j*. In a moment of split-second deliberation, she may have hesitated briefly before deciding to include, rather than omit, the preceding upward hook that is found in two out of the four other instances of *j* in OT1. The *j* in *Mahijah* happens to be the only lowercase *j* that occurs in the middle, rather than at the beginning, of a word in Emma's

writing in OT1. Thus, not only is it reasonable for Emma to have hesitated at this particular juncture, but it is the only location in OT1 where such a hesitation could visibly disrupt the transition from a previous letter. This reasoning doesn't work as well as an explanation for the cause of a shortened *u*. One reason is that the moment of deliberation would have had to start before the *u* was even finished. In contrast, it makes more sense that Emma completed the *i* and then, in the act of transition, hesitated before moving onto the next letter. In addition, we would also have to assume that instead of just causing a minor hesitation (which appears to be the case), the deliberation caused Emma to almost completely omit the second upstroke of the *u*.

- 152 Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 82–83.
- 153 Various factors make it difficult to ensure that the relative sizing of images is proportionally accurate. Possible differences in the zoom and camera-to-manuscript distance in the high-resolution photographs themselves, as well as the fact that the sizes of words and letters naturally tend to fluctuate in hand-written documents, likely makes a perfectly precise comparison impossible. Some measure of control, however, can be obtained by making shared letters the same size in each image. In this case, we ensured that the letter *h* in *mouth* and *mouths* were approximately the same height as the shorter of the two *h*'s in *Mahijah*. It should be noted, however, that within each image, the height of the second upstroke relative to the height of the first upstroke will remain constant, no matter how disproportional the separate images are to one another. Thus the specific feature that Townsend identifies for his analysis shouldn't be affected by any minor disproportions among the images.
- 154 With regard to the second upstroke in *mouths*, we placed the horizontal bar at the top of what appears to be the original upstroke, rather than the overwritten portion.
- 155 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, Moses 6:34a–52a, Genesis 6:36a–53a. Cf. OT1, 13.
- 156 *Ibid.*, Moses 6:19b–34a, Genesis 6:18b–36a.
- 157 *Ibid.*

- 158 Like the *u* in *mouth* and *mouths*, every other instance of a *u* appears to cover significantly more distance, either vertically or horizontally (and usually both), compared to the deviation in *Mahijah*. In a personal communication, Townsend pointed to examples of *u*'s that are completely overwritten, making a comparison of the original upstroke impossible. Yet, as the example in *mouths* indicates, just because an upstroke is overwritten, it doesn't mean that it was necessarily very low to begin with.
- 159 See Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 83.
- 160 Ibid.
- 161 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, Moses 6:34a–52a, Genesis 6:36a–53a.
- 162 Two other possible instances of dots over the letter *u* occur in the words *must* and *our* at the bottom of page 13 of OT1. However, neither of these markings look much like ink dots. They are too dark (compared to the surrounding ink), too close to the *u*, and are unusually small for intentional dots.
- 163 It could be argued that the sample size, specifically for *u*'s with shortened upstrokes, isn't large enough to reach any statistically reliable conclusions about the matter. That may be true, but to even get to this line of reasoning one has to assume, from the outset, that the slight deviation between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* is indeed an abbreviated *u* — an assumption that, as argued above, lacks persuasive power. Even if we did have such data, there is no guarantee that Emma's rate of error would increase enough to make an erroneous dot a statistically likely occurrence. After all, the only erroneous dot over a *u* in OT1 happens to be above a *u* with two upstrokes of the same approximate height, and not over a *u* with a shorter second upstroke.
- 164 Jackson, March 2, 2020.
- 165 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, Moses 6:39b–59b, Genesis 6:41b–62a.
- 166 Ibid., OT3–11 — Moses 6:39b–59b, Genesis 6:41b–62a.
- 167 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, Moses 6:64a–7:10b, Genesis 6:67a–7:12b.
- 168 Ibid., OT 2–19 Moses 6:63a–7:5b, Genesis 6:66a–7:5b. Ibid., 19.
- 169 Jackson, March 2, 2020.

170 Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 83.

TOCQUEVILLE ON NEW PROPHETS AND THE TYRANNY OF PUBLIC OPINION

Louis Midgley

Abstract: *Louis Midgley discusses the rise and fall in popularity of Alexis de Toqueville's unrivaled volumes entitled Democracy in America and the impressive renaissance of interest they have enjoyed since 1930. They were published at a time when Europe was looking for guiding principles to replace aristocratic governments with democratic regimes. Importantly, however, Toqueville also reflected broadly on the crucial roles of religion and family in sustaining the virtues necessary for stable democracies. Toqueville's arguments that faith in God and in immortality are essential for maintaining a strong society of a free people are more crucial than ever to Latter-day Saints and all those wishing to preserve democracy in America today.*

[Editor's Note: Part of our book chapter reprint series, this article is reprinted here as a service to the LDS community. Original pagination and page numbers have necessarily changed, otherwise the reprint has the same content as the original.

See Louis Midgley, "Tocqueville on New Prophets and the Tyranny of Public Opinion," in *"To Seek the Law of the Lord": Essays in Honor of John W. Welch*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson and Daniel C. Peterson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2017), 171–88. Further information at <https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/to-seek-the-law-of-the-lord-essays-in-honor-of-john-w-welch-2/>.]

In 1831 Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859)¹ traveled in the United States for nine months, while only twenty six years old; he was presumably looking into the American prison systems, but he had a different agenda in mind. He came prepared to seek the guiding principles behind what he saw as the inevitable replacement for aristocratic/regal regimes. In 1835 and 1840 he published in French his observations “on democracy in America.” His two large volumes were eventually translated into English and published under the title *Democracy in America*.² This more than seven hundred page book was, with its author, at the time of his death, “famous in France, England, the United States, and even Germany.” Then it went into decline from about 1880 to 1930.³ Tocqueville’s book has subsequently steadily increased in popularity, especially drawing the careful attention of intellectual historians and philosophers, resulting in an enormous and steadily growing, often very sophisticated secondary and supporting literature.⁴ Why?

Among many other reasons, Tocqueville has much to say about the crucial role of religion in American in sustaining the virtues necessary to make democracy safe and civilized, rather than an affair of unruly individuals and factions contending for power. He began his examination of the sources of what he calls the necessary republican virtues or “habits of the heart,” and hence also the mores (or conventions and customs) that ground the American passion for equality, as well as a fondness for a civilized liberty. He does this in part by setting out the place of Puritan religiosity, which was anchored in the Bible, in what can be called the first, and original *religious founding* of America⁵ as distinguished from and contrasted with a later *republican founding* (with the fashioning of the Constitution in 1787); both of which he considers crucial to

1 For a fine introduction to his life and literary career, see Harvey Mansfield, *Tocqueville: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

2 Among several translations of *Democracy in America* into English, I recommend (and herein cite) the one by Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000). These translator/editors have provided an excellent “Editors’ Introduction” (see xvii–lxxxvi), which is worth the cost of the volume. Their translation takes the place of the earlier one by Tocqueville’s friend Henry Reeve (1847), and also by the later better one by George Lawrence (1966).

3 This according to Andre Jardin, his biographer. See *Tocqueville: A Biography*, trans. from French by Lydia Davis and Robert Hemenway (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1988), 534.

4 A delightful survey of Tocqueville’s intellectual reputation and influence has been provided by Matthew Mancini in his *Alexis de Tocqueville and American Intellectuals: From His Times to Ours* (Lanham, MD: Bowman and Littlefield, 2006).

5 Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 32–44.

understanding the dynamics of the new regime. He also focused much attention, as I will demonstrate, on the critical role of faith in God and immortality in grounding the American regime, as well as other potentially democratic (rather than the much older and now decaying aristocratic/regal) regimes.

Tocqueville also stresses the role of solid, stable families in democratic regimes, and worried about their possible decline, especially if women ever come to shed the yoke that binds them in marriage, and hence also the decline of the “religious” instructions and moral indoctrination most often provided by mothers and wives in the home to restrain and civilize boys and men.⁶ In this and other ways he identifies the crucial role of women in generating and sustaining faith in both God and immortality. He also, as I will demonstrate, comments on the abundance of competing sects or what I call Protestant sectarian anarchy,⁷ as well as the place of the Roman Catholic Church in democratic societies.⁸

When he was young, Tocqueville seems to have encountered a literature that caused him to jettison at least his confessional attachment and thereafter he seems to have remained merely a nominal Roman Catholic.⁹ Whether or how exactly he believed in God are controversial questions that I will not directly address in this essay, though I will address some of his arguments for the utility of faith in God (and especially for concern about the important role belief in immortality of the soul must play in viable democratic regimes).¹⁰ The reason is, that whatever his own doubts and struggles might have been, he saw faith and also communities of believers (or churches), or what he also called “religion,” as a necessary foundation for a stable democratic regime. And he pictured or painted an ideal religious landscape in America as a sort of model the French (and others) should seek to emulate.¹¹

6 Ibid., 563–76.

7 Ibid., 278–88, 417–24, 504–06.

8 Ibid., 275–77, 282–92, 423–25.

9 For the usual account of at least his own confessional defection, see Jardin, *Tocqueville*, 61.

10 For my own effort to cautiously address these questions, see Louis Midgley, “The Utility of Faith Reconsidered,” in *Revelation, Reason, and Faith: Essays in Honor of Truman G. Madsen*, ed. Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002), 165–77.

11 France has, instead, become a profoundly secular regime, with matters of faith being strictly private matters. This long-standing secular establishment is currently being challenged by the growing presence of a large population with different degrees of attachment to varieties of Islamic cultural traditions and also faith.

A Caution for Latter-day Saints

Unfortunately, Tocqueville has at times been cited and “quoted” (and also misquoted) by those who have not read his famous book, but who sought to invoke his name and authority for various purposes. There is one famous quotation attributed to Tocqueville, and supposedly found in his *Democracy in America*, that is often quoted, with slight variations, as Tocqueville’s ultimate assessment of what makes America great. It is quoted for either or both devotional or partisan political purposes. It reads as follows:

I sought for the greatness and genius of America in her commodious harbors and her ample rivers, and it was not there; in her fertile fields and boundless prairies, and it was not there; in her rich mines and her vast world commerce, and it was not there. Not until I went to the churches of America and heard her pulpits aflame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because she is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.¹²

This quotation, in several versions, has been quoted by many authors, including, unfortunately, some Latter-day Saints. It is, however, not found in any edition or translation of *Tocqueville’s Democracy in America*, or in his letters, notes or other publications.¹³ In addition, as useful as it may seem to those who quote this language, it does not reflect accurately his opinions of the place of religion in American society. There is, however, in Tocqueville’s notes, correspondence, and especially in his justly famous book on American mores and laws, and, what he considered the guiding principles of democratic regimes—including, as I will demonstrate, the passion for equality—that engages the question of faith in God, and hence “religion” in this special sense.

12 For the LDS audience, I have quoted the version found in W. Cleon Skousen, *The Five Thousand Year Leap*, 30 year anniversary edition, foreword by Glenn Beck (self-published on 13 March 2009), 17; https://archive.org/stream/The5000YearLeapByWCleonSkousen/5000-year-leap-the-by-w-cleon-skousen_djvu.txt. He quoted this same language in a number of his publications.

13 This frequent false attribution has been noted by John J. Pitney, currently Roy P. Crocker Professor of American Politics at Claremont McKenna College, in an article entitled “The Tocqueville Fraud,” *The Weekly Standard* #1 (November 12, 1995), 44–45, which can be accessed at <http://www.weeklystandard.com/print/the-tocqueville-fraud/article/8100>. See also #2 (“Missattributed”) at https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Alexis_de_Tocqueville.

When I was forced to read *Democracy in America* in French in graduate school, I found Tocqueville's remarks on what he called "religion" both interesting and instructive; I have never ceased to enjoy and learn from this remarkable book.¹⁴ I urge Latter-day Saints who are unfamiliar with Tocqueville or who have only heard of his famous book to examine his views, with special attention to his treatment of individual and social virtues, which he describes as habits that restrain somewhat the passion for instant gratification, and thereby make a democratic regime viable.

Is There a Connection with Joseph Smith?

Those Saints who have either heard about or have actually read his famous book can be forgiven for wondering if (or even hoping that) Tocqueville was aware of, or somehow even met, Joseph Smith. But, neither while he traveled in America, nor subsequently, did Tocqueville, it seems, become aware of Joseph Smith, or of the faith of Latter-day Saints. However, I will argue that his thoughtful observations on what can loosely be called "religion" set out an intriguing explanation of the hostility in a democratic regime towards a faith that rests directly on new divine special revelations and hence on prophets. His opinions on this matter should be of special interest to Latter-day Saints.

I will argue that Tocqueville's understanding of the latent causes of contention that a community with a belief in a divine mission will necessarily generate in a democratic regime helps explain the hostilities directed towards Joseph Smith when stories of the recovery of the Book of Mormon began to circulate even before its publication and which continue in both sectarian and secular circles even now. In addition, I will demonstrate that Tocqueville sets out an explanation for the struggle some Saints have to sustain faith in an authority outside of themselves, as they certainly must, if they are obedient to the covenants they have made with God.

I will also sketch a portion of Tocqueville's understanding of the dynamics of American religiosity, which I believe may assist Latter-day Saints in better understanding why Joseph Smith's founding a

¹⁴ My father loved Tocqueville's famous book, and often quoted from it when we discussed political and religious issues. I still own his heavily marked copy. I was able to free myself somewhat from his way of reading Tocqueville, when I was, under a stern professor, trying to learn to read French by translating his famous book. I was also asked to teach from that book in the course to which I was assigned at Brown University as part of my work on my PhD.

community on new divine revelations seems in crucial ways, whatever the seeming similarities, radically unlike the varieties of faith common in his and now also our own world. Tocqueville has, I believe, also provided arguments that may help the Saints identify, appreciate and resist some of the elements of the larger American ethos that fray and challenge the faith of the Saints, against which our scriptures and the prophetic voice continues to speak.

Religious Liberty and Sectarian Religiosity

In the 1830s, Tocqueville found America swarming with competing Protestant preachers and sects, since religion had become, as it continues now, a business in which anyone could engage by struggling for a share of the market. He sought to understand how the numerous versions of Christian faith in America were impacted by and also shaped mores. Hence, a striking feature of Tocqueville's famous book is the attention he gives to religion (that is, both churches and preachers), and also to the crucial role of faith in providing and sustaining the necessary moral foundations of a moderate, stable democratic regime. He saw this competitive sectarian proliferation flowing from freedom, but also heavily conditioned by equality. He also saw all Christian sects, as I will demonstrate, despite their many small differences, as filling a useful role by offering essentially similar moral messages, and thereby, he argued, moderating the lust and also limiting the means for acquiring material wealth, as well as focusing attention on the remote future and thereby somewhat restraining the powerful urge for instant gratification.

Tocqueville expected that in democratic regimes their underlying principles, which he demonstrated were liberty and equality, would eventually wear away and remove the traditional official links between Bishop and King, or Pope and Prince, and thus undercut established (tax supported) churches, which was then still the situation in the American regime.¹⁵ The kinds of intrusions and corruption of regal and aristocratic authority in matters of faith in God that were, beginning with Constantine (272–337 AD), once found everywhere in Europe, in the American democratic regime were being removed and replaced by a sanguine separation between civil authority and Christian faith. He very

¹⁵ What is not now often recognized is that quite a few of the States, when the Constitution was adopted, had established churches. We tend to think that the First Amendment enshrined our current understanding of the relationship of church and state. It merely prevented the establishment of a tax supported church for the United States, but it did not abolish establishments in the States. That came later.

much favored religious liberty and also the separation of ecclesiastical and civil authority—that is, what we now know as separation of “church and state,” which was an American invention. He also sought to discover what might prevent even faith in God from also being eroded by the same secularizing forces flowing from an ever growing and also more debased notion of equality. One thing that helps prevent this from happening, he argues, is that preachers find their own self-interest in striving to perpetuate faith. Preaching thus becomes a kind of competitive business driven by mercenary self-interest. He thought that this unintentionally ends up serving the larger good of the regime.

Public Opinion and Subtle New Tyranny

With the ongoing and eventual collapse of the old aristocratic regimes with which Tocqueville begins his assessment of the American democratic regime, the now rather isolated “equal” and seemingly “free” social atoms turn away from both the traditional secular/political and/or ecclesiastical authorities. It is the passion for what easily becomes a ardent desire for equality that tends to place all authority in the individual, and hence not in princes or kings, nor in churchman or clergy, and also not in seers and prophets, and hence not ultimately in the divine.¹⁶ In addition, fads and fashions constitute the content of the opinions of isolated individuals. The reason is that in democratic times, and under the impact of an obsession with equality, each isolated individual becomes the judge of both human and divine things, but the individual, at the same time, Tocqueville argues, is at the mercy of the shifting sands of public opinion.¹⁷

Isolated, rootless individuals, liberated from traditional authorities, turn to the maelstrom of ever shifting and easily manipulated public opinion for the content and grounds of their beliefs. Hence the powerful opinion of the majority supplies individuals with a steady flow of ready-made opinions, thereby relieving them of the necessity of fashioning their own. This opens the way for what Tocqueville called the “tyranny of the majority.”¹⁸ This generates a soft and subtle, and also quite irresistible “moral empire of the majority.” This new dominant empire “is founded in part on the idea that there is more enlightenment in many men than

16 Tocqueville seems to have been the first author to identify what he called “individualism,” and hence a proud notion of self-reliance, rather than on higher powers including even God.

17 Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 407.

18 *Ibid.*, 181, 239–264.

in one alone.”¹⁹ Even in intellectual matters, such as pondering about the ultimate fate of the soul and the meaning of our lives, the majority exercises a tyranny. But this tyranny of the majority is merely a widely accepted opinion that is constantly in flux.

In democratic regimes, such as found in America, moral, political, religious, and even philosophical theories eventually come to rest on the shifting sands of public opinion and hence tend to become trendy fads and fashions. Religion in America is also impacted by this dynamic and thus is not a matter of an original divine special revelation such as found in the Bible, backed as it was beginning with Constantine by both established ecclesiastical and civil authority, than it is an expression of an uncritically accepted public opinion constantly manipulated by those often driven by mercenary motives. “Movements” tend to replace the authority of churches as centers and engines of public opinion. Hence, Tocqueville warns, that “in centuries of equality, one can foresee that faith in common opinion will become a sort of religion whose prophet will be the majority.”²⁰

For Tocqueville, the necessary uncritically accepted opinions on which a democratic regime must depend “are born in different manners and can change form and object; but one cannot make it so that there are no dogmatic beliefs, that is, opinions men receive on trust without discussing them.”²¹ Without such beliefs “there is no common action, and without common action men still exist, but a social body does not.”²² He thus holds that, despite the fickle, volatile shifting winds of public opinion, essentially uncritically accepted dogmatic beliefs are both necessary and also desirable.

By accepting some opinions on trust without discussion, one takes on a salutary bondage of the mind in both the moral realm and also in the life of the mind. We dance in our chains, but without even noticing their necessary restraints. These observations, according to Tocqueville, apply to the philosopher as well as humankind in general.²³ And even or especially in matters of faith, democratic citizens tend not to look to the heavens, but within the confines of public opinion for the final authority.

Building on these and similar related observations, Tocqueville thus observes that

19 Ibid., 236.

20 Ibid., 410.

21 Ibid., 407.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., 408

Men who live in times of equality are therefore only with difficulty led to place the intellectual authority to which they submit outside of and above humanity. It is in themselves or in those like themselves that they ordinarily seek the sources of truth. That would be enough to prove that a new religion cannot be established in these centuries, and that all attempts to cause one to be born would be not only impious, but ridiculous and unreasonable. One can foresee that *democratic peoples will not readily believe in divine missions, that they will willingly laugh at new prophets, and that they will want to find the principal arbiter of their beliefs within the limits of humanity, not beyond it.*²⁴

This observation, if correct, may help us to understand the immense hostility faced by Joseph Smith and his followers that began in village newspapers even prior to the publication of the Book of Mormon. The reason behind this hostile, mocking attitude is that Americans, as well as others enthralled by the notion of equality as sameness, “will want to find the principal arbiter of their beliefs within the limits of humanity, and not beyond it.”²⁵ Tocqueville sees a sameness notion of equality as debased and also a threat to liberty of individuals who differ from the currently dominant fads and fashions of public opinion.

In democratic times, according to Tocqueville, mankind will strive to find the authority for *everything* in themselves (or those most like themselves). In addition, they will also form and sustain factions and hostile like-minded tribes. Hence they will also tend to spurn efforts to call them to the service of some authority genuinely beyond themselves such as seers and prophets. And, under such a debased sameness notion of equality, the majority (or those who presume to speak for it) will ultimately determine (or be believed to determine) both the dogmatic content and moral message of religious beliefs, including even those that are presumably believed to have come down from the heavens in some very remote past through divine special revelations, which long ago ceased. What remains is the Bible and its competing interpreters and interpretations, which everyone is entitled to appropriate as they will, and which shift from time to time with the popularity of advocates who generate movements. The tyranny of the majority is thus at work in what Tocqueville called the business of religion in democratic times.

24 Ibid., emphasis mine.

25 Ibid.

At this point in his argument, Tocqueville reintroduces the practical—that is, moral or ethical—links between self-interest (well understood) and faith in God. In order to serve her own best interests, particularly the passion for comfort and wealth, the democratic citizen must learn to postpone, dampen, restrain or redirect at least some of her immediate interests and appetites. “The principal business of religions,” he thus argues, and something that the religious industry in America does at least moderately well, given the lush garden of temptations, “is to purify, regulate, and restrain the too ardent and too exclusive taste for well-being that men in times of equality feel.”²⁶ “Religions supply the general habit of behaving with a view to the future. In this they are no less useful to happiness in this life than to felicity in the other. It is one of their greatest political aspects.”²⁷ Without the habit of sacrificing immediate advantage for greater future gratifications, even the passion for physical comforts will erode and hence cannot persist. Therefore, Tocqueville argues, “philosophers and those who govern ought constantly to apply themselves to moving back the object of human actions in the eyes of men; it is their great business.”²⁸

However, it would be a mistake, according to Tocqueville, for preachers to direct all attention to the future life beyond life. Why? Simply because the “taste for well-being forms the salient and indelible feature of democratic ages.” Any attempt to “destroy this mother passion” would eventually cause religion to destroy itself.²⁹ After describing “the principal business of religions” as the moderation of the “taste for well-being,” Tocqueville adds that preachers “would be wrong to try to subdue it entirely and to destroy it. They will not succeed in turning men away from love of wealth; but they can still persuade them to enrich themselves only by honest means.”³⁰ Preachers can succeed in their business only by restricting their encouragement to the more or less honest pursuit of worldly prosperity and pleasure and hence not to their eradication.

Keeping Faith Alive, and Moral Restraints in Place— the Utility of Religion for Immediate Political Purposes

Though not favoring a religious establishment (that is, a state church financed by taxes), which was the common feature of regal/aristocratic

26 Ibid., 422.

27 Ibid., 522; cf. 42–43.

28 Ibid., 523.

29 Ibid., 422.

30 Ibid.

regimes, Tocqueville prescribes a kind of bland civic religion in which the essential dogma is the immortality of the soul, which should, he insisted, become an uncritically accepted dogma. In his opinion, all the various American sects he encountered on his travels in America offered sufficiently similar moral teachings to fit this requirement. In order for such a teaching to be effective in countering what he describes as selfishness, individualism, materialism, and the urge for instant gratification run wild, he cautioned that “one must maintain Christianity within the new democracies at all cost.”³¹

“What means,” Tocqueville then asks, “therefore, remain to authority to bring men back toward spiritualist opinions or to keep them in religion that evokes them?”³² He grants that his recommendation is likely to do him harm in the eyes of politicians, but “the only efficacious means governments can use to put the dogma of the immortality of the soul in honor is to act every day as if they themselves believed it.” He added, that “it is only in conforming scrupulously to religious morality in great affairs that they can flatter themselves they are teaching citizens to know it, love it, and respect it in small ones.”³³ Elected officials (and those seeking public office) should model piety for the citizens of a democratic regime. Previously, in older regal or aristocratic regimes, both civil and ecclesiastical, the social distance between those at the top of the social heap and those beneath was so great that flagrant lapses in morality, and hence the real unfaith of regal or presumably aristocratic authority figures, did little or no real damage to the social fabric. In democratic regimes this is no longer the case. I must add that the moral lapses and failures of the rich and famous, including office seekers and holders—that is, celebrity figures—are now metaphorically shouted from the housetops by electronic news media and on the Internet. From Tocqueville’s perspective, this severely damages the social fabric and frays the moral foundations of democratic regimes.

These observations are set within the broad outlines of Tocqueville’s argument for the “utility of religion” in democratic regimes. Hence the following: “Most religions,” he argues,

are only general, simple, and practical means of teaching men the immortality of the soul. That is the greatest advantage that a democratic people derives from beliefs, and it is what renders them more necessary to such a people than to all others.

31 Ibid., 521.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

Therefore when any religion whatsoever has cast deep roots within a democracy, guard against shaking it; but rather preserve it carefully as the most precious inheritance from aristocratic centuries; do not seek to tear men from their old religious opinions to substitute new ones, for fear that, in the passage from one faith to another, the soul finding itself for a moment empty of belief, the love of material enjoyments will come to spread through it and fill it entirely.³⁴

Belief in immortality thus seems to be the ground for restraining the unchecked search for wealth and pleasure, as well as the sensual gratifications these are thought to entail. Belief in immortality, coupled to belief in an eventual divine judgment of deeds, provides a compelling reason for postponing gratification and restraining the violent passions here and now. There is little in any of this argument to suggest that the opinions advanced by philosophers or by law givers/legislators are, or need to be, simply true. Hence the following:

There are religions that are very false and very absurd; nevertheless one can say that every religion that remains within the circle I have just indicated and that does not claim to leave it ...imposes a salutary yoke on the intellect; and one must recognize that if it does not save men in the other world, it is at least very useful to their happiness and their greatness in this one.³⁵

Plato's dialogues contain accounts, Tocqueville correctly suggests, without providing any details, that he asserts counter demoralizing modern materialism—that is, what he calls egoism and individualism. He also grants that “it is not certain that Socrates and his school had decided opinions about what would happen to man in the other life.”³⁶ But what he calls “Platonic philosophy” seemingly included a belief in immortality, and this gives that philosophy the “sublime spark that distinguishes it.” What has this got to do with “Socrates and his school”? Why would Tocqueville introduce Socrates at this point in his argument? Could it be that Plato's dialogues include noble or sublime, though not necessarily true, *mythoi*, or even poetic *theologia*—that is, what Plato also even called “noble lies”? Be that as it may, such sublime teachings,

34 Ibid., 519; cf. 448.

35 Ibid., 418.

36 Ibid., 520.

according to Tocqueville, tend to counter materialism,³⁷ even if they are not strictly true.

Can the Faithful Accept the Argument for the Utility of Faith?

Is it possible, from a faithful Latter-day Saint perspective, to entertain and appreciate Tocqueville's efforts to defend what he calls "religion" (here understood as faith in God and immortality) by stressing its utility for individual and social well-being, and hence also as a kind of "cement" that holds communities together and generates deeds designed to further some as yet distant even common good? The control of both the violent passions and the desire for instant gratification, and the willingness to seek the common and more remote higher good all fit snugly within the faith of the Saints. Faith and faithfulness, and hence sanctification, have utility here and now, as well as in a remote then and there. The Saints, drawing upon their scriptures often entertain moral imperatives similar to those Tocqueville set out as useful for those living in democratic regimes (or in any other possible regime). For example, our scriptures indicate that faithful obedience to covenants leads to a proper prosperity, while those who are disobedient are, sometimes both here and now, and also ultimately then and there, cut off from the presence of God, until or unless they turn or return in faith and faithfulness to God, which is always hopefully a possibility. And the work of the Holy Spirit is to purge, cleans, perfect, and hence sanctify those who seek the Lord, thereby making them genuine Saints — that is, Holy Ones.³⁸

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ In biblical Greek, the noun *hagios* means "holy," so that Saints are those who genuinely follow the Holy One of Israel we know as Jesus the Christ. And hence genuine Saints are those who seek with the help of the Holy Spirit to be sanctified. The biblical Greek word *hagiosmos* is rendered in English as "sanctification," which means to be separated for God and hence also from sinful ways. Jesus Christ has made that possible. And sanctification is therefore seen as the necessary requirement for an ultimate justification of the genuinely faithful when they face a final judgment of their works/deeds. The faithful, by relying on the mercy of a loving, gracious God, must have sought sanctification with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the very existence of Latter-day Saints challenges the received Protestant opinion that sinners are justified by "faith alone." Both Eastern Orthodox (Greek Christianity) and Roman Catholic (Latin Christianity) are more at home with the need for sanctification than are most versions of Protestantism. And both Orthodox and Catholic Christianity are more insistent that sanctification (and Sainthood) are both necessary and possible. Those influenced by Greek Christianity insist that the purpose of our mortal existence is *theosis* (deification). Roman Catholics face a post-mortal purgatory if they did not become Saints here below. Both their sins and disposition to sin must be purged so that

The Saints need not object to Tocqueville's effort to indicate that faith is useful here and now. However, those who see Joseph Smith as a genuine seer and prophet, and the Book of Mormon as both a genuine history and hence also the Word of God, must insist that the faith they embrace has an ultimate dimension—that it is simply true. And hence they must hope—one of the Christian virtues—that ultimately obedience yields a firm place in the Kingdom of God, and hence the fullness of life beginning partially here and now and more fully then and there.

Tocqueville argued that “religion” somewhat restrains the dominant, unruly and especially violent passions unleashed in democratic ages. “In men, the angel teaches the brute the art of satisfying itself.”³⁹ Unfaith unravels this salutary teaching and loosens the moral restraints imposed by faith. But for Latter-day Saints, who remember and keep the covenants they have made with God, with the attendant blessing for obedience and constant awareness of the cursing for disobedience, the necessary moral restraints are firmly in place. It is also true, again following Tocqueville's argument, that what tends to elevate, enlarge, and expand the soul in turn enables it to better succeed, even in those undertakings that are not the primary concern of the soul. In an effort to please God, one must struggle to allow God to enter and enhance one's own soul through sanctification by becoming a genuine Saint. And, by so doing, human beings also acquire the “habits of the heart”—those virtues that suppress the abundance of petty, passing desires in order to satisfy the great longing that looks toward a glorious remote future beyond the grave in our life after life. A portion of this larger understanding is what grounds Tocqueville's insistence on the utility of belief in the immortality of the soul.

In addition, Tocqueville's struggle to make a large place for religion in a democratic society can be understood as something like the endeavor of certain philosophers to show a certain deference to the opinions on which society rests, and hence especially to religious opinions, for merely practical or political reasons, even when they themselves are skeptical about all opinions. This leaves the door open for fruitful common endeavors in efforts to attain the common good and welfare of others who do not believe in divine special revelation, but who are in desperate

they can be genuine partakers of the divine nature as far as that is possible for human beings.

39 Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 521.

need of our love and assistance because we are or should be concerned about the human soul.

One cannot, it seems, separate passages on religion in *Democracy in America* from the larger context of Tocqueville's analysis and preserve the integrity of his arguments. His own uneasiness with those skeptics who mock the traditional beliefs echoes something that reaches back at least to Plato, and hence to philosophy in its original form, at least according to one way of reading the existing original texts. Even the concerns Plato seems to set out in the *Laws* about believers in divine beings who intervene in human affairs—who like atheists—were said by the interlocutors in that dialogue to be dangerous to a well-ordered regime—is also found in Tocqueville's consternation over the possibility in democratic times of a genuinely prophetic new faith turning up. And hence his insistence that if such a faith, as it did in 1830 with the publication of the Book of Mormon, were to appear in America, it would be mocked and scolded. The Saints may just be stuck with condescension and mockery from those whose own dogmatic beliefs do not have a place for the opening of the heavens to divine things. Such a faith, if Tocqueville (and the tradition in which he writes) are even close to being right, would be challenging and unsettling for the larger community in which even competing sects rest on a variety of settled, competing dogmas. This may also help to explain why princes, kings and emperors, as well as often ecclesiastical authorities, both sought to control or dominate each other.

If Tocqueville is even close to being right on these matters, both democratic peoples and those heavily impacted by the ethos of democratic regimes “will not readily believe in divine missions,” and “they will willingly laugh at new prophets, and that they will want to find the principal arbiter of their beliefs within the limits of humanity, not beyond it.”⁴⁰ In addition, modern prophets may also be seen in some subtle ways as disturbing or even challenging some of the dominant democratic ethos resting on vacillating public opinion. The reason is that new revelations may challenge the social cement of traditional dogmatic beliefs—the sentiments and opinions on which both aristocratic and democratic societies at least in part must necessarily rest. They may even challenge the moral substance of society, including both its older and traditional creedal form, or its currently more fashionable, novel secular contents.

40 Ibid., 408

Concluding Remarks

From Tocqueville's perspective, it is enough for the democratic citizen to assume that she has control of her own beliefs and is the master of her world—even though she is obviously in a kind of “salutary bondage” to dogmatic beliefs—simply because she accepts the most important opinions on trust in what are actually the ever shifting sands of public opinion. In democratic times humans become obsessed with and demand novelty—they see every shift in public opinion as moral progress. They are enthralled with the latest fads and fashions in virtually everything, including opinions even about divine things.

Tocqueville seems to have held that only God, or at least faith in God and immortality, can save people in a democratic regime from the inevitable sour fruit of the passions unleashed by the hunger for a leveling and debased equality, joined to the thirst for unrestrained and then uncivil liberty. If I understand Tocqueville correctly, then I certainly agree that only God can save us from the wreckage generated by our violent passions. But for my belief to be more than yet another opinion involving both the past and the future, that I have chosen as a narcotic or that I have merely been steered into or have administered to myself, it must be simply true. But faith and hence also faithfulness now faces the fashionable opinion that no truths can possibly transcend the situation and conditions of their production and current popularity, and that no knowledge at all touched by history can rest on a secure foundation. The end result for those who laugh at modern prophets is an inevitable enervating despair over the question of a genuinely saving truth.

In addition, as I have shown, even preachers must not, according to Tocqueville, confront the passions of the citizen directly, but only indirectly, cautiously and mildly; they must appear to show that religious beliefs and demands are fully compatible with self-interest well understood and thereby allow a large place for the somewhat modified egoism essential to (and characteristic of) the emerging democratic ethos. However, this seems to indicate that there are no really effective restraints on the passions and appetites of democratic peoples because whatever restraints that might actually flow from religion are themselves subject to the same debasements as the human soul itself. Only God can save us.

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of political philosophy, which includes efforts of Christian churchmen and theologians to identify, explain, understand and cope with the evils in this world. Dr. Midgley has therefore had an abiding interest in both dogmatic and systematic theology, and the alternatives to both. His doctoral dissertation was on the religious socialist political ideology of Paul Tillich, a once famous German American Protestant theologian, most famous for his systematic theology which is a radical elaboration of classical theism. Dr. Midgley's encounter with the writings of Leo Strauss, an influential Jewish philosopher/intellectual historian drew his attention to the radical challenge posed by what is often called modernity to both the wisdom of Jerusalem, which is grounded on divine revelation, and also the contrasting, competing wisdom of Athens, which was fashioned by unaided human reason.

**WHERE DID THE NAMES MAHAWAY AND
MAHUJAH COME FROM?
A RESPONSE TO COLBY TOWNSEND’S
“RETURNING TO THE SOURCES,” PART 2 OF 2**

Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Matthew L. Bowen, and Ryan Dahle

Review of Colby Townsend, “Returning to the Sources: Integrating Textual Criticism in the Study of Early Mormon Texts and History,” *Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies* 10, no. 1 (2019): 55–85, <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/imwjournal/vol10/iss1/6/>.

Abstract: *In the present article, Part 2 of 2 of a set of articles supporting Colby Townsend’s efforts to raise awareness of the importance of textual criticism, we focus on his argument that Joseph Smith created the Book of Moses names Mahijah and Mahujah after seeing a table of name variants in the Hebrew text of Genesis 4:18 in a Bible commentary written by Adam Clarke. While we are not averse in principle to the general possibility that Joseph Smith may have relied on study aids as part of his translation of the Bible, we discuss why in this case such a conjecture raises more questions than it answers. We argue that a common ancient source for Mahujah and Mahijah in the Book of Moses and similar names in the Bible and an ancient Dead Sea Scrolls Enoch text named the Book of Giants cannot be ruled out. More broadly, we reiterate and expand upon arguments we have made elsewhere that the short and fragmentary Book of Giants, a work not discovered until 1948, contains much more dense and generally more pertinent resemblances to Moses 6–7 than the much longer 1 Enoch, the only ancient Enoch text outside the Bible that was published and translated into English in Joseph Smith’s lifetime.*

In a recent article, Colby Townsend commendably pointed the attention of readers to the importance of embracing textual criticism as a key

element of methodology for studying Latter-day Saint documents. He rightfully argues that if important textual sources are missing, mistranscribed, or misunderstood, no amount of subsequent analysis can fully compensate for what may have been lost in the mishandling of this essential prerequisite.

Although Townsend's examples range over several topics in Latter-day Saint history and scripture, our response focuses specifically on topics relevant to the Book of Moses. In Part 1 we discussed topics related to the state-of-the-art with respect to textual criticism of the Book of Moses, along with some illustrative examples.¹ In this, Part 2, we discuss material provided by Townsend in his article and in subsequent clarifying discussions with him that relate to a small set of rare personal names that are found in what seem to be variant forms within the *Book of Giants*, the Book of Moses, and the Bible. We will structure the present article around two questions:

1. Where does the Qumran *Book of Giants* name *Mahaway* (MHWY) come from?
2. Where do the Book of Moses names *Mahujah* (MHWY/MH̄WY) and *Mahijah* (MHYY/MH̄YY) come from?

In section 3, we build on the answers to the questions above to address a third question: "Could the Book of Moses names and the *Book of Giants* names have had a common origin in the ancient world?" Following a thought experiment that examines the relative similarity of the Book of Moses names to closely corresponding counterparts in Genesis 4:18 and the *Book of Giants*, we reflect more generally on the significance of the remarkable resemblances between the ancient *Book of Giants* and the Book of Moses, a work of modern scripture.

1. Where Does the *Book of Giants* Name *Mahaway* (MHWY) Come From?

We begin our discussion of this question with a summary of Townsend's views on the origin of the *Book of Giants* name *Mahaway* (MHWY). Adopting suggestions from current scholarship on the issue, he concludes that the name is related to the Aramaic verb *to be*. We will show why these suggestions are not as promising as they may seem at first glance.



Figure 1. Fragment of the Qumran *Book of Giants* (4Q203) that was understood by its translator Józef Milik to contain the first part of the personal name *Mahaway* (outlined by a rectangle in the upper left of the photograph).² BYU Professor Hugh Nibley was the first to argue that *Mahaway* (MHWY) is related to *Mahujah* (MHWY/MHWY)³ and *Mahijah* (MHYY/MHYY)⁴ in the Book of Moses.⁵

Townsend: *Mahaway* as Creative Wordplay, Not Related to Similar Names in the Book of Moses

Though Townsend’s article gives no specific details about the origins of the *Book of Giants* name MHWY, he very clearly outlines his view that the names in the *Book of Giants* tradition and the Book of Moses tradition “are *not* the same, contra Nibley’s argument.”⁶ He continues his explanation as follows:⁷

The tri-literal roots for both names are in fact different, making the two different names altogether. . . . The fact that there is a letter difference between a “H” and a “Ḥ” moves us from one etymological study and meaning of the name to another name entirely. Mahijah/Mahujah, which are the same name, come from a root MḤH, “destroyed” or “smitten” one; and Mahaway [MHWY] comes from the root HYH, “to be,” “to happen,” “to occur,” or “to come to pass.” These are two completely separate names that are easily confused when transliterated into English from Hebrew. Nibley relied too heavily on his English transcription of both names — MHWY — and failed to recognize that the H represents two distinct letters.

We agree with the conclusion of Townsend that differences in spelling in ancient names such as those he describes imply more than a change in pronunciation, since the different spellings have different meanings.⁸ However, we think that he overstates current evidence when he concludes without qualification that the Book of Moses names Mahijah and Mahujah are necessarily identical, that they are forcibly spelled with an “H” rather than an “H,” and that they *cannot* be related to the *Book of Giants* name Mahaway.

We discuss later below the reasons for our doubts about the certainty of these conclusions. First, however, we summarize the proposals of some prominent Enoch scholars on the origins of the *Book of Giants* name Mahaway (MHWY). Some aspects of their proposals agree with the general spirit of the views expressed in Townsend’s article and some do not.

The first individual known to have advanced a hypothesis on the origin of the *Book of Giants* name MHWY was the eminent Enoch scholar Józef T. Milik, who, with the collaboration of Matthew Black, published the first English translation of the *Book of Giants* in 1976.⁹ Milik’s brief suggestions are similar to Townsend’s description above about the derivation of the name Mahaway. Speaking more broadly about the names of the three *Book of Giants* characters Hahyah, ’Ohyah, and Mahaway, Milik concluded that “these three names, comparable to YHWH, are causative forms of HWH/HYH [i.e., ‘to be’].”¹⁰ Thanks to Townsend, we were also made aware of a statement by another well-known Enoch scholar George Nickelsburg, who later cited Milik’s suggestion about the relationship of these three names to HWH/HYH, adding his view that they are “are evident plays on the Tetragrammaton [i.e., YHWH, the four-letter name of the Lord]. The angelic rebellion is exacerbated through blasphemy.”¹¹

From what we have been able to discover, later scholarship has not taken up the gauntlet to pursue the suggestions of Milik and Nickelsburg about the name MHWY with a more thorough analysis. Loren T. Stuckenbruck, a well-known *Book of Giants* scholar, simply repeated the previous suggestion of Milik and Nickelsburg with a slight variation, concluding laconically that, in the case of Mahaway (MHWY), “perhaps some derivation from the Aramaic verb ‘to be’ (HWY) in conjunction with a *mem* prefix is not impossible.”¹² In this he differed somewhat from Townsend, who wrote in his article that MHWY “comes from the [*Hebrew*] root HYH.”¹³ With respect to that difference from Stuckenbruck, Townsend informed us later, in

a personal communication, that he now believes that Mahaway is related to the Aramaic verb HWY rather than to the Hebrew root HYH, as was originally stated in his article.

After Stuckenbruck made the brief conjecture above, he immediately went on to another subject. Unfortunately, the comments of all three scholars mentioned are brief, and, so far as we have been able to find out, none supports their hypothesis with more precision than what is given above. Until we learn that this subject has received more than a cursory analysis, we will have to make our own educated guesses as to the possibilities of specific linguistic forms these scholars may have had in mind when they made their suggestions.

In addition to what is mentioned above, some additional perspectives from these scholars bear discussion. Importantly, while they agree with Townsend in their suggestion that MHWY might be related to the Aramaic verb *to be*, Stuckenbruck and Milik differ with Townsend's proposal in some important respects:

- In contrast to Townsend's unqualified assertion that MHWY derives from the Aramaic verb *to be*, Stuckenbruck is quite tentative in his suggestions. Note that his statement on the matter cited above used the cautious words "perhaps" and "not impossible."¹⁴ Moreover, in a summary qualification relating to his proposal, he conceded that the name MHWY "is impossible to decipher with any confidence."¹⁵
- Milik disagrees with another aspect of Townsend's proposal, namely the general assertion that versions of the names spelled with *H* and versions spelled with *Ḥ* are necessarily "completely separate."¹⁶ While accepting the fact that the *Book of Giants* name MHWY and the biblical name element MḤWY are spelled differently in their source texts, Milik sees no difficulty in a possible *historical* relationship between the names. In Milik's English translation of the *Book of Giants*, he wrote, without further elaboration, that the name Mahaway (MHWY) was "perhaps transformed, Genesis 4:18, into Mehujael [MḤWY-EL], son of 'Irād."¹⁷ Given Milik's suggestion and the additional evidence that we present below, it is certainly not a given that Hugh Nibley was mistaken in his conjecture that the names Mehujael (MḤWY-EL) and

Mahaway (MH \dot{W} Y) are related.¹⁸ Nibley certainly knew the difference between \dot{H} and H .

- In contrast to Nickelsburg's proposal that the Hahyah, 'Ohyah, and Mahaway "are evident plays on the Tetragrammaton [i.e., YHWH, the four-letter name of the Lord],"¹⁹ it is significant that Stuckenbruck cited the possibility of wordplay on the Tetragrammaton only in connection with 'Ohyah and Hahyah, not Mahaway.²⁰

Later on, we detail our views on why a historical relationship between the name Mehujael in Genesis 4:18, the name Mahaway in the *Book of Giants*, and the similar names Mahijah and Mahujah in the Book of Moses, is plausible. But first, for the benefit of the reader who understandably may be struggling to sort out the orthography of these similarly spelled names in their various Hebrew, Aramaic, and English incarnations, we now digress in order to summarize this topic.

Sorting Out the Ancient and Modern Spelling of the Similar *Book of Giants*, Book of Moses, and Bible Names

We begin by observing that the vowels in the English transliteration of the *Book of Giants* name MH \dot{W} Y are at present largely a matter of conjecture, since no vowels appear in the Aramaic text. Compounding the difficulty for non-specialists in recognizing similarities and differences in the spellings of ancient names is the fact that translators differ in their English transliteration. For example, the English letters *j*, *y*, and *i* are variously used to represent the Semitic letter *yod*. Thus, in English translations of the *Book of Giants*, we see several variants of the same name: Mahaway²¹ (the most common), Mahawai,²² Mahway,²³ and Mahuy²⁴ — or, with the *y* transliterated with a *j*, as is frequently done with other names containing a *yod* in the King James Bible — Mahuj.

Regarding Mahujah and Mahijah from the Book of Moses, we have English versions of the names containing vowels, but it is impossible to tell from the English text alone whether the second consonant in the names would have been written anciently as the equivalent of an H (as in the *Book of Giants*) or an \dot{H} (as in Genesis 4:18). In other words, if we assume an ancient equivalent of the English name Mahijah, it could have been written either as MH \dot{Y} Y or MHYY. Likewise, Mahujah could have been written as MH \dot{W} Y or MH \dot{W} Y.

With respect to the similar King James Bible name Mehujael, twice-mentioned in Genesis 4:18, the underlying Hebrew is spelled differently in each instance. In other words, though the name is spelled

the same way both times in English (Mehujael), in Hebrew it is spelled once as Mehujael (MH̄WY-EL) and once as Mehijael (MH̄YY-EL).²⁵ Notably, on the one hand, the Book of Moses names resemble the two Hebrew versions of the name in Genesis 4:18 in that both a *u* and an *i* variant of the name exists. However, on the other hand, the Book of Moses names are also similar to the *Book of Giants* name in that they omit the Genesis 4:18 ending “-EL.”

As in every language, the form and spellings of names change over time and as they pass from one culture to another. In the next section we argue that, contra the arguments in Townsend’s article²⁶ and despite a significant difference in one consonant (*H* [Bible] vs. *H* [*Book of Giants*]), there is currently no compelling reason why the *Book of Giants* name Mahaway (MHWY) could not have been related at some point in its history to the King James Bible name elements Mehuja-/Mehija- (MH̄WY- /MH̄YY-) and to the Book of Moses names Mahujah (MHWY/MH̄WY) and Mahijah (MH̄YY/MH̄YY).

Continuing our discussion of the origin of the name Mahaway, we now raise three specific questions about Townsend’s proposal:

- *Why is it difficult to rule out a historical relationship between the Book of Giants and biblical names?* Our response to this question attempts to flesh out one possible rationale for Milik’s unelaborated suggestion that that the name Mahaway (MHWY) could have been “transformed, Genesis 4:18, into Mehujael [MH̄WY-EL], son of ‘Irad.’”²⁷
- *What linguistic considerations make it unlikely that MHWY is involved in wordplay with ‘Ohyah and Hahyah?* We differ with Milik’s proposal that all “three names” are “comparable to YHWH” and are “causative forms of HWH/HYH [i.e., ‘to be’]”²⁸ and also with Nickelsburg’s suggestion that the three names “are evident plays on the Tetragrammaton [i.e., YHWH, the four-letter name of the Lord].”²⁹ Instead, in light of linguistic considerations, we side with Stuckenbruck, who cited the possibility of wordplay on the Tetragrammaton only in connection with ‘Ohyah and Hahyah, not Mahujah.³⁰ The lack of evidence for wordplay on the name Mahaway leaves the reader bereft of a rationale for why the author of the *Book of Giants* would have invented this name from scratch, rather than adopting an already-known name from earlier

traditions, as he did in the case of other characters, such as Gilgamesh.

- *What literary considerations make it unlikely that MHWY is involved in wordplay with ʾOhyah and Hahyah?* In our discussion of this question, we agree with Stuckenbruck, who wrote, “ʾOhyah and Hahyah may be treated together, as they are referred to as prominent giant brothers (cf. 4Q530, fragment ii, line 15).”³¹ In our response to the question, we describe several reasons, based on literary considerations, why the name and character of Mahaway, the son of Baraq̄el, should be treated *separately* from ʾOhyah and Hahyah, the twin sons of Shemihazah.

After addressing the issues raised by these questions, and while acknowledging Stuckenbruck’s conclusion that the name Mahaway “is impossible to decipher with any confidence,”³² we propose what we see as a few of perhaps many plausible alternative explanations for the origin of the name Mahaway that are consistent with our overall analysis.

Why Is It Difficult to Rule Out a Historical Relationship Between the *Book of Giants* and Biblical Names?

The evidence we present below suggests that we are not obliged to rule out some kind of relationship between the biblical name element Mehuja- and *Book of Giants* Mahaway because of a difference in spelling (Ḥ vs. H). Though Townsend recognizes that these “two completely separate names ... are easily confused when transliterated into English from the Hebrew,”³³ he never addresses the possibility that it would have also been easy for a similar confusion to have arisen in the work of one or more *ancient* authors and tradents. For example, Qumran Hebrew expert Eric Reymond has demonstrated that the confusion of H and Ḥ at Qumran goes in both directions, citing “examples of *heh* [H] written for etymological *heth* [Ḥ] and vice versa.”³⁴

Describing how such confusions could have occurred anciently as scribes copied texts, David Calabro noted that³⁵

the Hebrew letters *heh* (H) and *heth* (Ḥ) are easily mixed up, since they look very similar — especially as we read them in Hebrew hands from the period of the Dead Sea Scrolls. [Since] Townsend accepts the mix-up of the Hebrew letters *waw* (V) and *yod* (Y) in Genesis 4:18,³⁶ he has no reason not to accept

the possible mix-up of *heh* and *heth* in [the biblical and *Book of Giants*] names.

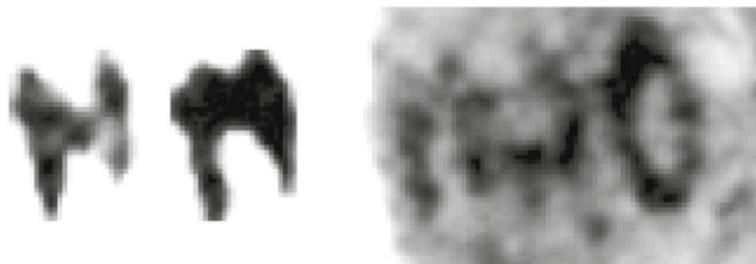


Figure 2. Digital image of *heth*, *heh*, and the word מנה (meaning “from him”) from 4Q530, illustrating the difficulties of distinguishing the similar-looking letters³⁷

Indeed, mix-ups of *heh* and *heth* of the sort noted by Calabro are not merely conjectural, but are amply demonstrated as realities that present challenges in the work of modern Dead Sea Scrolls experts.³⁸ For example, as one justification for their alternate reading of 4Q530 (an important source manuscript for the *Book of Giants*), Daniel Machiela and Andrew Perrin recognized that “the letters *heh* and *heth* are at times quite similar in this scribe’s handwriting.”³⁹



Figure 3. Photograph of *Book of Giants* manuscript 4Q530, detail of fragment 7, column ii.⁴⁰ The end of line 7 is outlined, where Milik’s transliteration, LMḤWY, led to his omission of the name *Mahaway* in his English translation of the phrase.⁴¹ By way of contrast, Puech’s newer transliteration, LMHWY, allows Cook to translate the Aramaic characters as “to Mahaway.”⁴²

Indeed, to take an example that is directly relevant to the names under discussion, we observe that differences between scholars about whether the 4Q530 scribe wrote a *heh* or a *heth* have resulted in divergent opinions about whether the name *Mahaway* appears or not in Fragment 7, column ii, line 7 (see Figure 3). In 1976 Milik read the Hebrew term in question as LMḤWY and translated the line as “here. From you, a second time.”⁴³ However, Émile Puech’s more recent transcription

reads the term as LMHWY, resulting in Edward Cook's translation of line 7 as "hither and thither a second time to Mahaway."⁴⁴

Of course, our point here is not to take a stand on which reading of this passage in 4Q530 is correct, but rather to demonstrate that confusions of *heh* and *heth* that affect transcriptions and translations today could have easily occurred in ancient times.⁴⁵

Another line of evidence, based on pronunciation, also confirms the possibility of confusion between the two letters. Note that the Semitic letter *heth* (H) was pronounced anciently as a pharyngeal fricative,⁴⁶ while the letter *heh* (H) was pronounced more like the *h* in English. In addition to evidence of confusion based on transcription errors, it is possible that tendencies in local pronunciation (i.e., weakening of gutturals) in Qumran may have also contributed to spellings in which *heth* was confused for *heh*.⁴⁷ For example, Reymond cites Kutscher, who concluded that at Qumran, "the *heth* was apparently pronounced very nearly like a *heh*."⁴⁸ Moreover, Reymond observes that visual and aural sources of error are not mutually exclusive, concluding that "although [the cited examples] may reflect *heth*'s weakening, one must recognize that all such mistakes may not reflect aural mistakes, but rather visual gaffes, the two letters being so similar in shape."⁴⁹

In summary, despite spelling differences between the name element MHWY- (Genesis 4:18) and the name MHWY (*Book of Giants*) in their extant forms, evidence relating to the possibility of transcription errors as well as the related tendencies at Qumran to weaken pronunciation of the guttural lead us to a plausible alternative to Townsend's suggestion that MHWY was deliberately invented from scratch for the purposes of wordplay by the *Book of Giants* author. The well-established fact of ancient and modern confusions of *H* and *Ḥ* opens up the possibility, discussed in more detail later below, that the similar but different names in the Bible and the *Book of Giants* may derive from a common name that pre-dated both texts. This line of reasoning also opens up the possibility that the Book of Moses names Mahujah and Mahijah are related to the names in the Bible and/or the *Book of Giants* in similar fashion, as also will be argued later on.

What Linguistic Considerations Make It Unlikely That MHWY Is Involved in Wordplay with 'Ohyah and Hahyah?

At the outset of our response to this question, we would like it to be understood that the connection between the names 'Ohyah/Hahyah and the Tetragrammaton suggested by Milik, Nickelsburg, and Townsend

seems plausible enough to us at first blush. In other words, we do not disagree up front with the straightforward argument that 'Ohyah ('WHYH) and Hahyah (HHYH) created aural plays or echoes on the Hebrew verb *to be* (HYH). However, any effort to posit a link between these two names and that of Mahaway (MHWY) by this conjecture would in addition have to explain why, if all three names were indeed invented by the *Book of Giants* author for wordplay, 'Ohyah and Hahyah would be related to a Hebrew version of the verb (HYH), while Mahaway would be related to an Aramaic one (HWY).

In addition, we are not averse to the idea that 'Ohyah and Hahyah may indeed be “plays” on or echoes of the Tetragrammaton and may point to “angelic rebellion ... exacerbated through blasphemy,”⁵⁰ as Milik and Nickelsburg first conjectured, though we note that these claims demand a more precise analysis of the grammar and form of the names. Following Milik and Nickelsburg, Stuckenbruck also suggested the possibility that wordplay using 'Ohyah and Hahyah might involve the Hebrew verb *to be*, though, like them, he refrained from positing any specific grammatical forms or meanings for these names.⁵¹

In his brief discussion Stuckenbruck suggested theophoric *-yāh* names as an alternative explanation for 'Ohyah and Hahyah. Of course, if he is correct in this suggestion, it would apply only to 'Ohyah and Hahyah, not Mahaway. While conceding that “the matter remains uncertain,”⁵² Stuckenbruck sees at least one reason to favor this latter explanation (theophoric *-yāh*) over the idea of wordplay on the Hebrew verb *to be*. He wrote, “If ... there is any analogy with many of the names of the watchers (that, e.g., carry *-'el* suffixes), then there is reason to prefer the [theophoric *-yāh*] explanation.”⁵³

Taken together, the foregoing evidence warrants strong caution against attempting to say anything about the names 'Ohyah and Hahyah with certainty from a linguistic perspective, especially in light of the absence of precise and convincing grammatical explanations for these names.

While still conceding the possibility of wordplay for 'Ohyah and Hahyah, we find the grammatical case much weaker for Mahaway (MHWY). Why is this so?

Overwhelmingly, names in the ancient Near East and in ancient Israel follow rules of name formation. Though it is true that the name MHWY might putatively match a participial Aphel form of the Aramaic HWY (meaning “to create or cause to be”), there is a paucity of attested Aphel forms in the relevant literature. Stuckenbruck is even more diffident,

suggesting that “the meaning of the name Mahaway ... is impossible to decipher with any confidence,” speculatively offering only that “perhaps ... the name includes a derivation from the Aramaic verb ‘to be’ [HWY] in conjunction with a *mem* prefix.”⁵⁴ In other words, he does not commit to a nominal or a (participial) verbal form.

One might venture with Jeffrey L. Cooley that “perhaps the three names [’Ohyah, Hahyah, and Mahaway] are deliberate corruptions of the Tetragrammaton, or even playing on Yahweh’s self-identification to Moses in Exodus 3:14 in which the verb [HYH] is used in the first-person imperfect three times.”⁵⁵ But even in so venturing, Cooley concedes that “this proposal is, of course, highly speculative.”⁵⁶ And, as observed above, the fact that ’Ohyah and Hahya would be related to a Hebrew version of the verb (HYH), while Mahaway would be related to an Aramaic one (HWY), remains unexplained.

The absence of viable grammatical proposals for Mahaway, as for the other names, is telling and ultimately renders any connection of MHWY with the Aramaic HWY, let alone wordplay involving the Tetragrammaton and the other giant names, a matter of speculation.

Leaving aside the unsupported idea that Mahaway was invented from scratch for the purposes of wordplay, a direct dependence of Mahaway on Mehujael is also doubtful. Sometimes names are shortened and theophoric elements are removed from the ends of the names, but much more rarely are root letters deliberately changed. Apart from deliberate scribal dysphemisms (e.g., Meribbaal to Mephibosheth), we think it would be very difficult to find examples of both types of deliberate changes in a single name, especially for discernible literary purposes.

As argued above, the clear ad hoc character of the names ’Ohyah and Hahyah strikes a stark contrast with the different character of Mahaway’s name. Having established the doubtful basis of any suggestion that Mahaway is involved in wordplay with these characters based on linguistic arguments, as well as the alternative suggestion that the name is directly dependent on the Bible, let us now consider the same question from a literary perspective.

] 20 [. . . עד כא סוף חלמא [vacat באדין] דחלו כל גבריא
 [ונפיליא ו]ק[ר]יו מהוי ואתה לה[תן] וז[עו לה] גבריא ושלחוהו על חנוך
 [ספר פרש]א ואמרו לה אזול] . . . [ומותא לכה די
] [ושמעתה קלה ואמר לה די יחון ינג[ו] יפ[ש]ו[ר] חלמא . . .

“[20. . .] here the dream ends”.
 [Thereupon] all the giants ²¹[and the nephilim] took fright and they sum-
 moned Mahawai and he came to them. And the giants asked him and
 sent him to Enoch, ²²[the distinguish]ed [scribe], saying to him: “Go then
 [. . .], and under pain of death you must ²³[. . .] and listen to his voice; and
 tell him that he is to explain to you and to interpret the dreams [. . .].”
 8261616

Figure 4. In this passage from p. 305 of a copy of J. T. Milik’s translation of the *Book of Giants*, 4Q530, Fragment 2, column ii, lines 20–23, ’Ohyah, Hahyah, and their fellows send Mahaway to ask Enoch to ask him about their frightful dreams. The Hebrew characters corresponding to the name *Mahaway* are circled in pencil. Townsend has tentatively identified the annotation as having been made by Hugh Nibley.⁵⁷

What Literary Considerations Make It Unlikely That MHWY Is Involved in Wordplay with ’Ohyah and Hahyah?

The short answer to this question is that throughout the *Book of Giants* narrative, ’Ohyah and Hahyah constitute a deliberate and distinctive pair. By itself, the fact that Mahaway (MHWY) stands outside this pairing makes it more difficult to argue that this name has the same literary function. This and related considerations throw additional doubt on the already unlikely argument that the name Mahaway was invented from scratch to facilitate wordplay with ’Ohyah and Hahyah.

Throughout the long, intertwined history of the two characters corresponding to ’Ohyah and Hahyah, across many different cultures and traditions, they have always been presented as a pair⁵⁸ — indeed very often as a pair of *twins* with rhyming names. When described as a single unit, as they so often are, they are variously labeled as “demonic twins,” “angels twain,” “two youths,” and so forth.⁵⁹ James Russell gives these selected highlights of the far-flung origins and history of this twosome:⁶⁰

Originally the two are Şemiḥaza or Şemḥazai, and ’Azael; and the former has two sons, Hiya and Hiwa. The rhyming names of the latter were chanted, the *Talmud* notes, by boatmen as they strained at their ropes. The Manichaean version of the *Book of Giants* knows Şahmizād and his sons ’Ohyā and Ahyā. A Sogdian text equates the former with Sām; and the

twin angels are in Persian named as Sām and Narīman. The Avestan epic hero of the cycle of the *kavis*, Kərəsāspa, belongs to the Sāma clan and is called *naire.manah-*, “manly-minded”; so the Iranizing version of the narrative has equated the fallen angels, it would seem, with him. In Parthian the giants themselves are *kaw-ān*, “kavis.” Later Jewish lore stresses the rhymed character of the twins’ names by calling them ’Aza and ’Azel. The giants in the earth practice telling lies (Aramaic *šqrh*, *kdbyn*); and in the apocryphal *Book of Jubilees* (8.1–4) the Watchers (Greek *egrēgoroi*, Aramaic *’irin*), who unlike the vigilant angels of the heavenly host are fallen beings, are said to have initiated divination using astrology. So the apocryphal literature of Jews, Christians, and Manichaeans that existed at the dawn of Islam had a pair of fallen angels whose names sometimes rhymed and who lied and invented magic.

Now let’s consider details about the distinctiveness of the ’Ohyah/Hahyah pair as they are found specifically in the *Book of Giants*. After this analysis, it will become evident why, when we try to group ’Ohyah, Hahyah, and Mahaway as a threesome, Mahaway always seems to be the “odd man out” — not merely for the linguistic considerations discussed in the previous section, but in addition for literary reasons. The table below summarizes some obvious differences between Mahaway and the other two characters.

	’Ohyah/Hahyah	Mahaway
Do the names occur elsewhere in ancient literature of pre-Christian era?	No	Yes
Explicit wordplay	Rhyming names; “Heave!” “Ho!” wordplay	Not an obvious part of the rhyming/punning wordplay
Role	Dreamers	Mediator
Relationship with Enoch	No personal acquaintance	Spoken to “very lovingly”
Father	Shemihazah	Baraq’el

Table 1. Summary of some obvious differences between the ’Ohyah/Hahyah pair and the standout Mahaway.

Do the names occur elsewhere in the ancient literature of the pre-Christian era? In contrast to name variants of the *Book of Giants* characters Mahaway, Gilgamesh, and Humbaba that are scattered in various places, the names 'Ohyah and Hahya do not occur in the ancient literature of the pre-Christian era (except in the *Book of Giants* itself), suggesting that they are of later origin than the others. Moreover, while story characters equivalent to 'Ohyah and Hahya appear in several derivative medieval Jewish⁶¹ and Islamic⁶² accounts of the two dreamers, characters with names relating to Mahaway, Gilgamesh, or Humbaba go conspicuously *unmentioned* in these late accounts. This fact highlights the virtual inseparability of 'Ohyah and Hahya, as well as their literary independence from Mahaway, Gilgamesh, and Humbaba.

In a related hint that supports this conclusion, a medieval Enoch account written in Arabic depicts a king named Yamaḥuel (suggested by Reeves and Reed as a reference to the biblical Meḥujael) who is identified with a group of idolatrous adversaries of Enoch.⁶³ Thus, while the story contains a name with arguable affinity to Mahaway, a pair of characters corresponding to 'Ohyah and Hahyah does not appear in the tale — again providing some (admittedly more limited) support for the argument that 'Ohyah and Hahyah are best understood as a literary twosome rather than a trio that includes Mahaway.

Explicit wordplay. Mahaway is not an obvious part of the sorts of rhyming and punning wordplay in which 'Ohya and Hahyah participate in various accounts of their exploits. On the other hand, the tradition of rhyming wordplay in the *Book of Giants* is so integral to these characters that it continues into late midrash, where the names of 'Ohya and Hahyah are given the similarly rhyming names of Hiwwa (*hyww*') and Hiyya (*hyy*').⁶⁴ Expanding on the explicit rhyming of the names, midrash also explicitly connects them to a wordplay on the "Heave!" and "Ho!" cry of heavy laborers,⁶⁵ leading André Caquot to go so far as to suggest that their names may have actually originated in these interjections.⁶⁶ Remarkably, the rhyming tradition of the twin names is picked up in many languages and cultures in other forms. For example, Qur'an 2:102 and related Islamic traditions relating to the 'Ohyah and Hahyah characters give us Hārūt and Mārūt,⁶⁷ the rhyming names perhaps having their origin in pre-Christian Armenian words for "plants" (*hawrot*) and "waters" (*mawrot*).⁶⁸ These names may also relate to Haurvatāt and Amərətāt, "the rhyming pair amongst the seven Aməša Spəntas, the 'Holy Immortals' of the Avesta."⁶⁹ And, continues James Russell, "at the proverbial world's edge skulk the giants of Biblical apocalyptic myth Gog⁷⁰ and Magog. ...

known to Armenians also by their Arabicized forms *Yaǰuǰ* and *Majuǰ*, from which Armenian *ǰǰ*, ‘giant,’ may derive.”⁷¹

Role. While Mahaway primarily plays the role of a serious-minded, message-bringing mediator,⁷² ’Ohyah and Hahyah are depicted as ineffectual quarrelers,⁷³ dreamers,⁷⁴ and worriers⁷⁵ — Doppelgänger afflicted with nagging Doppelträumes. In their appointed role, they seem almost to be sketched with the pen of a skilled caricaturist who has introduced a measure of comic relief that both pervades the larger narrative and persists in the very details of their Tweedledum-Tweedledee-like names. Like Hergé’s Dupond and Dupont, part of the silliness of the two brothers is in the paradoxical fact that their “most singular quality is what is common to them,”⁷⁶ most obvious in the style of the tellings of their two complementary dreams.

Relationship with Enoch. Ironically, the physically powerful ’Ohyah and Hahyah are uncharacteristically shy when it comes to posing questions to Enoch. On the other hand, Mahaway is depicted in the *Book of Giants* as someone who moves easily between the world of the *gibborim* and the world of Enoch, having met personally with the prophet on at least two occasions.⁷⁷ Thus, Mahaway, to whom Enoch himself had once called out “very lovingly,”⁷⁸ seems to have a different and unique relationship to the prophet, and, by way of contrast to ’Ohyah and Hahyah, is otherwise portrayed quite sympathetically in the *Book of Giants* overall. As Jens Wilkens observes: “One is tempted to postulate an emotional relationship between [Mahaway] and Enoch. The former obviously is not as corrupted as his fellows.”⁷⁹

There is a hint of pathos in an ancient passage that seems to highlight the contrast between the violent slaughter of Enoch’s adversaries en masse to the more singular and personal description of the dramatic death of the prominent⁸⁰ Mahaway by the supreme head of the angelic host: “the great angel has slain that messenger whom they had.”⁸¹

Father. While a single father, Shemiḥazah,⁸² sired the twin brothers, Mahaway describes himself as a son of Bara’el.⁸³ The idea that Shemiḥazah’s name was associated with a name of God (perhaps adding support for Stuckenbruck’s proposal of a theophoric *-yāh* termination in the names of Shemiḥazah’s sons ’Ohyah and Hahyah⁸⁴) is suggested by Michael Langlois, who interprets the name as “Shem sees” (i.e., “the Name sees”),⁸⁵ where “the Name” refers to God.

Here we conclude our examination of Townsend’s proposal for the origin of the *Book of Giants* name Mahaway. In the first place, we have discovered no conclusive reason why the MḤWY’L of Genesis and the

MHWY of the *Book of Giants* could not have had a common origin in an ancient name that predated both books. Second, we have presented both linguistic and literary reasons that make it unlikely that Mahaway was involved in wordplay with the names 'Ohyah and Hahyah, thus, in our view, significantly weakening the plausibility of the only rationale offered for the theory that Mahaway was a deliberate, *de novo* literary creation.

Abandoning further discussion of this seemingly unlikely option, we now sketch out what we see as a more satisfactory explanation for the name MHWY.

Is There a More Satisfactory Explanation for the *Book of Giants* Name MHWY?

Is it possible that the name Mahaway, rather than being created ad hoc by the author of the *Book of Giants*, instead had its origins in an already existent name, retained in the same or similar form that came down to the author from a tradition independent of the Bible? There is a precedent for this scenario in the author's use of the equally distinctive name of Gilgamesh, a character whose literary history is known to have pre-existed the *Book of Giants*. Could the same have been true for Mahaway? In this section, we suggest reasons why it would be difficult to rule out this explanation.

Our discussion of some plausible origins for the name Mahaway that might have predated the *Book of Giants* will rest on an examination of three questions:

- Was the *Book of Giants* primarily derived from the Bible and *1 Enoch*?
- What evidence exists for threads from ancient Mesopotamia in the *Book of Giants*?
- Might the history of the *Book of Giants* name MHWY trace back to Mesopotamia?

Was the *Book of Giants* Primarily Derived from the Bible and *1 Enoch*?

While a simple theory for the origin of the *Book of Giants* might consider it merely as a “rewritten Bible” with some dependence on *1 Enoch*, biblical scholarship is increasingly giving way to methods that require, as John Reeves and Annette Yoshiko Reed describe, “a shift away from the older scholarly obsession with ‘origins’ whereby the study of scriptures often focused on the recovery of hypothetical sources behind them.”⁸⁶

With specific respect to the sources of the Qumran library, André Lemaire observes that “accepted texts” as we think of them today simply did not exist at the time the scrolls were copied.⁸⁷

Since we live more than two thousand years after the Qumran manuscripts were copied, we may be tempted as modern readers to recognize ... [a] direct link with the books of the Bible. Such a conclusion seems obvious from the titles given to certain manuscripts. ... However these titles may give the false impression that the Aramaic manuscripts of Qumran were centered on the Bible and dependent on it even though the Bible itself ... did not yet exist. A bibliocentric vision of this sort appears anachronistic.

Going further, John Reeves explains:⁸⁸

The ... “Bible” and Qur’an are magnetized nodes within a common “text network” that share a lexicon of ancestral heroes, places, and narrativized events, a lexicon not limited by the constraints of canon or its lemmata governed by the “tyranny of canonical assumptions.” Within this lexicon resides a rich reservoir of revered tales, ancestral folklore, and tribal traditions about the pre-Deluge era that antedate their varying literary presentations in works such as the many redacted forms of Genesis, the Enochic *Book of Watchers*, renditions of the Second Temple book of *Jubilees*, and so-called rewritten components of the biblical primeval history (Genesis 1–11). Therein also resides the cultural memory — and perhaps even physical exemplars — of the written sources and editorial moves that preceded the later formal crystallization of discrete textual entities such as proto-Masoretic “Genesis” or “Jubilees.”

The skepticism of scholars such as Reeves, Reed, and Lemaire about characterizing works such as the *Book of Giants* as part of a “rewritten Bible” further extends to doubts about the idea of it being a “rewritten *1 Enoch*.” In addition to the considerations raised above, it should be remembered that the *Book of Giants* was “very popular at Qumran,” more popular than *1 Enoch* itself.⁸⁹ More significantly, the *Book of Giants* is arguably the oldest extant Enoch manuscript, and therefore, according to Nickelsburg, essential in “reconstruct[ing] the literary shapes of the early stages of the Enochic tradition.”⁹⁰ For these reasons and more, the *Book of Giants* is a document that should “be taken seriously in its

own right,”⁹¹ rather than seen merely as an intriguingly anomalous yet insignificant afterclap of *1 Enoch*.

In summary, Stuckenbruck describes three factors that make the *Book of Giants* distinctive from contemporary Jewish works:⁹²

1. Whereas the other Enochic compositions are “pseudepigrapha” in the technical sense, the *Book of Giants* seems not to have been a first-person account attributed to Enoch himself (contra Milik ...). ... In the *Book of Giants* Enoch is never clearly portrayed as a first person narrator; and furthermore, none of the *Book of Giants* materials unambiguously cast Enoch in the role of being the recipient of visions or dreams. ...
2. Secondly, the *Book of Giants* distinguishes itself in the role assigned to Enoch. As just mentioned, he is not the recipient of dreams; instead he functions in the narrative as a dream interpreter *par excellence* as he clarifies the meaning of the ominous visions given to the giants. ...
3. Thirdly, and most significant ... , the author(s) of the *Book of Giants* cast the spotlight on the gigantic offspring of the watchers more than any other extant Jewish document written or copied during the Second Temple period. ... It is only in the *Book of Giants* that any of the giants are actually given proper names.

Notwithstanding the unique nature of the narrative and the unrivaled prominence and antiquity of the *Book of Giants* at Qumran, the first reflex of some scholars is to attribute any resemblances to *1 Enoch* to “borrowing” from the latter source. As part of a larger effort to counter such reflexive tendencies, Reeves has demonstrated with a well-argued example that the tale of Hārūt and Mārūt, though sharing some affinities with *1 Enoch*, is actually more dependent in its conceptual foundations on the book of *Jubilees*.⁹³ He has concluded that the relative neglect of *Jubilees* in scholarly circles, “a work ... that does not necessarily ‘rewrite’ any of the ‘canonical’ versions,”⁹⁴ can be attributed, at least in part, to misconceptions about *Jubilees* itself that relegate it (like the *Book of Giants*) to a secondary, derivative status:⁹⁵

Speaking in both conceptual and archaeological (i.e., physical) terms, it seems to be more responsible to view *Jubilees* as simply one pre-canonical manifestation of the rich pool of sub-textual ancestral traditions that also surface in related but distinctive forms of the biblical books of Genesis-Exodus

as well as in other places outside those books that utilize many of the same characters, stories, and themes.

What Evidence Exists for Threads from Ancient Mesopotamia in the *Book of Giants*?

In contrast to the idea that the *Book of Giants* is primarily dependent on the Bible and *1 Enoch*, current scholarship sees hints of more ancient and complex roots for the text than were once acknowledged. For example, André Caquot, among others, has argued that “the reference to Gilgamesh argues for the original of the *Book of Giants* in an eastern diaspora.”⁹⁶ Extending arguments of other scholars that are based solely on Mesopotamian names in the *Book of Giants*, Matthew Goff’s significant reconstruction of the plot of the *Book of Giants* demonstrated that the text “creatively appropriates motifs” from the Gilgamesh epic.⁹⁷ Going further, Joseph Angel has subsequently concluded from his review of the evidence that the composition “preserves only the remains of a complex allegory, whose original referents cannot be recovered.”⁹⁸

Other studies specifically suggest that caution should also be exercised in assuming any direct dependence at all of the *Book of Giants* on *1 Enoch*. Indeed, André Lemaire concludes that it is a bad idea to begin with to try and assimilate the *Book of Giants* to *1 Enoch*, because “these two literary traditions are different and have had a different literary posterity.”⁹⁹ He goes on to explore evidence that bears on specific questions of transmission, gathering new evidence of contact between cuneiform culture and the Jews from additional references in the *Book of Giants* (e.g., descriptions of the “tablet” or “board” — *lwh* — that parallel the Akkadian *le’u*). He also brings in relevant evidence from the *Prayer of Nabonidus*.

As another recent example, in a comparison of Ezekiel 1, Daniel 7, *1 Enoch* 14, and the *Book of Giants*, Amanda M. Davis Bledsoe¹⁰⁰ argues that *1 Enoch* 14’s adoption of the Danielic idea of the deity shows only that this idea was “accepted even at a late period, and does not automatically make [*1 Enoch* 14] older even if the tradition may be observed in generally more ancient writings.” More generally, she concluded “that all three of these texts drew from a common tradition(s) regarding the heavenly throne and then adapted it to fit within their individual context.”¹⁰¹ In other words (according to Bledsoe), Daniel, *1 Enoch*, and the *Book of Giants* independently draw on “common tradition(s)” that are older than any of the three texts. Going further, Stuckenbruck concludes that the *Book of Giants* “has preserved the throne-theophany in an earlier

form” than what one finds in Daniel 7 and that “Daniel’s redaction of this tradition was [independently] shaped by other Enochic traditions” found in *1 Enoch* 14 and 90.¹⁰²

The conclusions of Bledsoe can be compared to the analogous mention of Noah, Daniel, and Job in Ezekiel 14:14, 20. The mention of these individuals in Ezekiel does not make the books of Ezekiel and Job late compositions because Ezekiel mentions Daniel. Nor does it make the canonical book of Daniel an early composition because Ezekiel mentions him here. These verses can be cited as evidence that well-established traditions concerning Noah, Daniel, and Job existed during Ezekiel’s time (late 7th–6th centuries BCE), if one accepts Ezekiel’s authorship of the passage (there is no convincing reason not to accept such!). The important point to be made is that such statements do nothing to help us establish the precise dating of any canonical book of scripture — this on account of the nature of the use and reuse of tradition. Just as Noah, Daniel, and Job traditions were established and venerable enough for Ezekiel to invoke them, so the intertwined texts of the Enochic tradition should be viewed in a similar light.¹⁰³

Might the History of the *Book of Giants* Name MHWY Trace Back to Mesopotamia?

Before examining specific possibilities for the origin of the name Mahaway in Mesopotamia, we should ask: What do we know generally about the source of the names in the *Book of Giants*? With respect to twenty fallen archangels (Watchers) that appear in that work and elsewhere, the highlight of Michael Langlois’ survey is both the antiquity and diversity of the names.¹⁰⁴ We have seen a glimpse of the diversity in the names of ’Ohyah, Hahyah, and Mahaway, where the first two names appear to be of late origin, while the roots of the third are less clear but, as we argue above, seem to be older.

Why is the age and the origin of the names important? Because, as is being increasingly established by scholars, there are significant — and in several respects unique — strands of Mesopotamian influences in the *Book of Giants* that set it apart from the more well-known *1 Enoch* writings, including likely influences on names. While we have argued this point more generally earlier in the article, we now want to stress its implications by a closer examination of the similarly spelled names in the Bible, the *Book of Giants*, and the Book of Moses.

As with the *Book of Giants* name Mahaway and the Book of Moses names Mahujah/Mahijah, the etymology of the biblical name Mehujael

remains uncertain. As Richard Hess observes, “It is generally agreed that Mehujael is composed of two elements, the second of which is ’l, “god” [sic] but the first element is generally disputed.”¹⁰⁵

We should not rule out the possibility that the name Mehujael is older, perhaps much older, than the biblical text of Genesis as we have it today. If one limits one’s investigation of Mehujael to possible West Semitic etymologies, “West Semitic *mh*, ‘to smite,’ and a participial form of *hyh*, ‘to live’” are the most viable options for the disputed first element.¹⁰⁶ However, limiting our search to West Semitic etymologies is an unreasonable requirement, since the ultimate origin of Mehujael and Mahaway seems as likely to be East Semitic as West Semitic. For example, although Ronald Hendel narrowly considers only Hebrew onomastics for the name Mehujael,¹⁰⁷ Nahum Sarna¹⁰⁸ and Richard Hess,¹⁰⁹ following Umberto Cassuto,¹¹⁰ suggest that the name might be explained on the basis of the Akkadian *mahhû*, denoting “a certain class of priests and seers.”¹¹¹ And what was the role of these seers? Among other things, the royal archives of the Old Babylonian kingdom of Mari recount the comings and goings of *mahhû* as intermediaries and messengers, bearing words of warning from the gods for the king,¹¹² a role that can be compared to that of Mahaway.

Further strengthening Cassuto’s argument for the derivation of the name is the agreement he finds in the word *mahhû* behind Mehujael, the name of Mehujael’s son Methusael (a name that is “analogous not only in form but also in meaning”¹¹³), and the name of Mehujael’s grandson Lamech, which Cassuto sees as likely to have come from the Mesopotamian word *lumakku*, also signifying a certain class of priests.¹¹⁴ Significantly, Hess reports that while the root *lmk* is unknown in West Semitic, it is found both in third millennium BCE personal names and in names from Mari in Old Babylon in the early second millennium BCE.¹¹⁵

With respect to Cassuto’s analysis and other possible Mesopotamian etymologies for these names we also note that Methusael may instead constitute a Hebraization of the widely accepted, but still (as yet) theoretical and unattested Akkadian form, *mutu ša ili* (“man of god”). In any case, Mesopotamia seems to be a good place to look in terms of obtaining more precise etymologies for the names in the Genesis genealogies.

Since Cassuto opens the door to considering Akkadian *mahhû* (“static, prophet”¹¹⁶) as the source of the first element in Mehujael, we can also consider the word *mahhû* (“great”) as a possible source. The latter term derives from Sumerian MAĜ (adj. “high, exalted, supreme,

great, lofty, foremost, sublime”¹¹⁷). If Cassuto is right that Lamech can be connected to Akkadian *lumakku*, we do well to note that *lumakku* or *lumahhû* (which can also mean “chief, ruler”¹¹⁸) also appears to derive from Sumerian MAĤ (LÛ.MAĤ = “great man”). This may have some further bearing on the etymology of the Book of Moses name “Mahan”¹¹⁹ [spelled “Mahon” in OT1 of the Joseph Smith Translation¹²⁰].

In summary, most scholars recognize that the surprise appearance of the names Gilgamesh and Hobabish in the *Book of Giants* is due to direct and/or indirect influences of some kind from the Akkadian *Gilgamesh* epic.¹²¹ Milik was the first to note this as the first and “only mention of Gilgamesh outside the cuneiform literature” as well as to recognize that the name Hobabish derives from Humbaba, the monster slain by Gilgamesh.¹²² Matthew Goff, among others, has clarified and amplified the relationship among the Old Babylonian epic and the fragmentary Aramaic Enoch text.¹²³ Since some scholars accept that the root *mhh* may sit behind the name Mehujael, is it possible that Mahaway (and, as we argue below, potentially the Book of Moses Mahujah and Mahijah) was independently derived from this same root, having come down to the author through extracanonical traditions rather than invented ad hoc or borrowed and altered from the Bible? We do not see any reason why this plausible scenario should be ruled out. Indeed, in consideration of the totality of the analysis above, we find this explanation more likely than any other.

2. Where Do the Book of Moses Names Mahujah and Mahijah Come From?

Townsend: “Mahujah/Mahijah” As a Rewrite of Genesis Inspired by Reading

Seeing it as “unlikely” that Joseph Smith was “dependent on an ancient manuscript or source,”¹²⁴ Townsend proposes that the names *Mahujah* and *Mahijah* were included in the Book of Moses as the result of one of the two following scenarios:

- Concluding, by analogy to similar situations in the Book of Mormon, that the personal name *Mahijah* in Moses 6:40 is an eponym for the place name mentioned in Moses 7:2, he argues that the name *Mahujah* was mistakenly substituted for *Mahijah* in that verse during the dictation process.¹²⁵ In that process, the vowels *u* and *i* might have been confused, leading to the appearance of both names in later

manuscripts and publications — *Mahijah* in Moses 6:40 and *Mahujah* in Moses 7:2. Arguments for and against this scenario are discussed in Part 1 of the present article, published previously.¹²⁶

- As an alternative scenario, Townsend proposes that Joseph Smith created the Book of Moses names *Mahijah* and *Mahujah* after seeing a table of name variants in the Hebrew text of Genesis 4:18 in a Bible commentary written by Adam Clarke.¹²⁷ The table includes an entry containing the two similar names: *Mehujael* and *Mehijael*. Because Joseph Smith and his associates lacked the expertise to read and recognize these variants in Hebrew, even in the dubious case that a Hebrew Bible might have been in their possession, Clarke’s table (or perhaps some equivalent in another English commentary) appears to Townsend to be the only reasonable purely historical explanation at present (apart from the possibility of scribal error mentioned above) for how they could have knowingly and deliberately inserted both name spellings in the Book of Moses. We now discuss look at this hypothesis in more detail.

In support of Townsend’s proposal that Joseph Smith may have borrowed the names *Mehujael* and *Mehijael* from Clarke’s table and altered them afterward to read *Mahujah* and *Mahijah*, Townsend cites Thomas Wayment and Haley Wilson-Lemmon’s¹²⁸ conclusions that Joseph Smith used Clarke’s commentary as a translation aid. A table on page 151 of the commentary lists transliterations of two Hebrew variants, *Mehujael* and *Mehijael*, that appear in Genesis 4:18. From this evidence, Townsend concludes, “It was possible, contrary to recent opinion, that Smith and his contemporaries were aware of the spelling difference of the name found in Genesis 4.”¹²⁹

SAME NAMES DIFFERING IN THE HEBREW.				
1	Gen. iv. 18.	Mehujael	Mehijael	In the same versc.
2	— x. 3.	Riphath	Diphath	1 Chron. i. 6.
3	— x. 4.	Tarshiah	Tarshishah	— i. 7.
4	— x. 4.	Dodanim	Rodanim	— i. 7.
5	— x. 23.	Mash	Meshech	— i. 17.
6	— x. 28.	Obal	Ebal	— i. 22.
7	— xxxii. 30, 31.	Peniel	Peuel	In the next versc.
8	— xxxvi. 11.	Zepho	Zephi	1 Chron. i. 36.
9	— xxxvi. 23.	Shepho	Shephi	— i. 40.
10	— xxxvi. 39.	Pau	Pai	— i. 50.
11	— xxxvi. 40.	Alvah	Aliah	— i. 51.
12	— xvi. 10.	Jemuel	Nemuel	Num. xxvi. 12.
13	— xvi. 10.	Jachin	Jarib	1 Chron. iv. 24.
14	— xvi. 10.	Zohar	Zerah	{ Num. xxvi. 13. and 1 Chron. iv. 24.
15	— xvi. 11.	Gershon	Gershom	1 Chron. vi. 1. 16.
16	— xvi. 13.	Job	Jashub	Num. xxvi. 24.
17	— xvi. 16.	Ezbon	Ozni	— xxvi. 16.
18	— xvi. 21.	Huppm	Huram	1 Chron. viii. 5.
19	— xvi. 21.	Ard	Addar	— viii. 3.
20	— xvi. 23.	Hushim	Shuham	Num. xxvi. 42.
21	Exod. iv. 18.	Jether	Jethro	In the same versc.
22	Num. i. 14.	Deuel	Reuel	Num. ii. 14.
23	Deut. xxxii. 44.	Hoshea	Joshua	Deut. xxxiv. 9.

Figure 5. “Mehujael” and “Mehijael” as they appear (at the top of the list) in Adam Clarke’s 1825 Bible commentary.¹³⁰

Townsend should be commended for identifying this possible textual source, and it seems that there is indeed a *possibility* that Smith could have incorporated his knowledge of this table in his translation of the Book of Moses. However, a first observation that should be made is that Wayment himself has drawn attention to the fact that “there are no parallels to Clarke between Genesis 1–Genesis 24.”¹³¹ Townsend’s statement above that “it was possible, contrary to recent opinion,” suggests the possibility that he is prepared to adduce evidence, not cited by Wayment and Wilson-Lemmon, that supports the presence of parallels between Genesis 1–24 and Clarke’s or other Bible commentaries which Joseph Smith could have known. We have not at present seen evidence of such parallels, so we cannot comment further.

Regardless of whether or not Joseph Smith utilized a published commentary as a translation aid during the earliest phases of his work on the Bible, what is most lacking in Townsend’s argument that the Prophet relied on Clarke’s table as he translated the relevant verses in the Book of Moses is a credible rationale for why Joseph Smith would have been motivated to do so. Readers will have to judge for themselves the likelihood that Joseph Smith would actually have had the time, patience, and — most importantly — a compelling *reason* to search through Clarke’s commentary for two variant names he could use for an obscure, twice-mentioned character in his Genesis translation, presumably in

order to give it more credibility. It should be remembered that he had no hesitation in previously publishing scores of strange-looking names in the Book of Mormon for which there was no biblical precedent.¹³²

As a counter-example to any idea that the Prophet was looking for ways to include specific biblical evidences for the Book of Moses additions to the Genesis story, we note that Joseph Smith seems to have been aware that the biblical book of Jude explicitly cites Enoch¹³³ (though he explicitly evinced no awareness of *1 Enoch*, the source Jude was quoting). If the Prophet had in reality been on the lookout for ways to bolster the case for the authenticity of his Bible translation, the most obvious thing he could have done would be to include the relevant verses from Jude somewhere within *his* Enoch account. But this he did not do.

As we continue down this line of thinking, the questions multiply. Why would it have been important for Joseph Smith to preserve both name variants, rather than normalizing them into a single English spelling in the Book of Moses, as is almost always done in ancient manuscripts and modern translations of Genesis 4:18?¹³⁴ Moreover, if Joseph Smith were aware of Clarke's table, why did he not also make changes to the names in his translation of Genesis 4:18? And why do both of Joseph Smith's versions of the names omit the theophoric suffix "-el,"¹³⁵ thus differing from the Hebrew text of the Bible and yet (coincidentally?) agreeing with its Dead Sea Scrolls¹³⁶ equivalent in the *Book of Giants*?

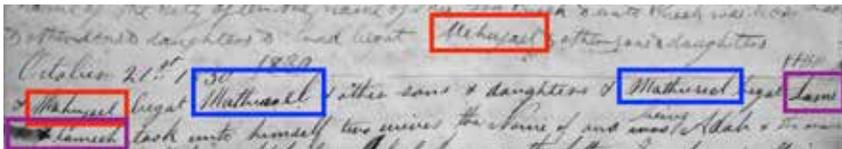


Figure 6. Genesis 4:18, JST OT1, p. 10 with variant spellings outlined: Mehujael/Mahujael (red), Mathusael/Mathusiel (blue), Lameh/Lamech (purple).¹³⁷

Evidence from Joseph Smith's name translations in Genesis 4:18–19 also casts doubt on the idea that he would have been interested in meticulous scrutiny of Clarke's table of spelling variants for two versions of the name Mehujael he could alter and use in his account of Enoch. Within the span of the few lines that contain his rendering of the biblical name Mehujael, we find three examples of variant name spellings: Mehujael/Mahujael, Mathusael/Mathusiel, Lameh/Lamech.¹³⁸ The evidence provided by these variants gives the impression that these name spellings were based simply on what the scribes heard Joseph Smith read, rather than on an effort to conform to the Bible or other written documents for consistency.

We realize that answers to secondary questions such as these might be formulated with some additional effort. But in our minds such questions are overshadowed by the lack of satisfactory answers to the central questions about whether, in view of the issues discussed above, the possibility of Joseph Smith's use of the table was reasonable and likely, and was propelled by a convincingly argued motive. In view of the current state of the evidence, we find Clarke's table to be an unlikely explanation for the inclusion of the variant names *Mahujah* and *Mahijah* in the Book of Moses.

3. Could the Book of Moses Names and the *Book of Giants* Names Have a Common Origin?

At this juncture, we propose a thought experiment of sorts. Let us suppose that for some unspecified reason Joseph Smith was determined to borrow a biblical name to use as a character in his JST Genesis account of Enoch. Let us further suppose that, since neither he nor his associates had a copy of the Bible in Hebrew or read Hebrew in 1830, he had two English translations of the Bible he could borrow from. One would be a King James Bible in which the name he was determined to use was spelled *Mehujael*; and a second would be a Bible in which the name was spelled *Mahaway*. Though the example is admittedly absurd, its purpose is to make it very plain to the reader that there is no reason, based solely on the most common English translations of both the King James and *Book of Giants* versions of the name, to prefer the idea that Joseph Smith borrowed and altered the name *Mehujael* in "inventing" the Book of Moses names *Mahujah* and *Mahijah* over the idea that he borrowed and altered the name *Mahaway*. (Of course we do not believe the Book of Moses names were invented by borrowing from and altering names in either of these sources.)

Six aspects of a possible linguistic connection between *Mahujah* and *Mahaway* are:

- **H vs. *H*.** Townsend's article asserts without qualification that the Hebrew root that sits behind them contains a *H*.¹³⁹ However, we observe that there is nothing about the Book of Moses names themselves that can be used by proponents of their ancient origin to argue directly for a Hebrew *H* behind them, since the English gives us only an indeterminate *h*. Thus, so far as we can determine without further explanation, the argument advanced by Townsend that the Genesis 4:18 and Book of Moses

names are related can only be indirect, resting solely on the claim that Joseph Smith borrowed them from the Bible in one way or another — presumably from the Genesis 4:18 names of Mehujael and Mehijah.¹⁴⁰ A corollary to the assertion that Mahijah and Mahujah *must have been* derived from Genesis 4:18 is the argument that the Book of Moses names *cannot be* related to Mahaway in the *Book of Giants*.¹⁴¹ However, when we unpack the argument that a connection between the Book of Moses names and *Mahaway* is *impossible*, it becomes evident that it, too, is forcibly dependent on one's having also previously accepted the borrowing hypothesis — and is likewise independent of anything related to the English names as we have them in the Book of Moses. Thus we conclude that the *h* in the original names behind “Mahujah/Mahijah” is not constrained to be an *H* (like *Mehujael*, as argued by Townsend), but could just as easily have been an *H* (like *Mahaway*). On the basis of the “H/H” question alone, independent of other arguments, it is as likely that “Mahujah/Mahijah” is related to *Mahaway* as it is to *Mehujael*.

- ***a* or *e* after the *M*.** English transcriptions of *Mahaway* and “Mahujah/Mahijah” are similar in that they contain an *a* after the *M*, differing from the King James English transcription of the name *Mehujael*. However, because the spelling of the name in JST Genesis 4:18 is given both ways, *Mehujael* and *Mahujael*, we will not count this as a difference with the Bible.
- ***a*, *i*, or *u* following the *H/H*.** Townsend has argued that the “*u*” sound [in *Mahujael* and *Mahujah*] also distinguishes the name from the [*a* sound in] *Mahawai* in the *Book of Giants*.¹⁴² But it must be remembered that the *Book of Giants* fragments have come to us with only consonants, and thus the English transliteration of this name is conjectural. Put simply, we have no idea what the vocalization of MHWY was. For instance, some translators render it *Mahway*, leaving out the vowel following the *h* entirely.¹⁴³ Calabro further explains,¹⁴⁴ “The vocalization *Mahway*, while perhaps possible for a pre-Masoretic stage of Hebrew (so possibly valid for the period of the Dead Sea

Scrolls), would not work in Masoretic Hebrew. . . . Another possibility is ‘Mahuy’ (with a long ‘u’), which would be a Hebrew passive participle form.” It should be additionally noted that the original pronunciation of the biblical name Mehujael was similarly uncertain, as evident in the variety of spellings attested in the ancient witnesses (e.g., Greek (LXX) *Maiēl*, Latin *Maviahel*, Syriac *maḥwā’yēl*), which struggle to offer a pronunciation of this consonant string. As Hess notes, “the Samaritan Pentateuch avoids the issue by omitting the disputed syllable”¹⁴⁵ — i.e., *mḥy’l*.¹⁴⁶ Hess goes further, arguing that “the fact that the Hebrew text was not harmonized attests to the care taken in preserving such differences, even when they exist side by side.”¹⁴⁷

Though we do not accept extant evidence as sufficient to admit Townsend’s proposal that the Book of Moses variants *Mahujah* and *Mahijah* are due either to an English transcription error or to Joseph Smith’s use of Clarke’s table, a confusion of *i* and *u* in the names *Mahijah* and *Mahujah* is possible, being exactly the kind of graphical error that one would expect if the similarly written letters *waw* and *yod* (or their equivalents in another language) were to have been mistranscribed by an ancient author at some point in time.¹⁴⁸ As an interesting alternative to this surmise, Cassuto argues that such variations, whether in form or content, are often deliberate.¹⁴⁹

For all the reasons listed above, we find that the *u* and *i* in the names *Mahujah* and *Mahijah* do not reliably indicate that the names are of different origin than the name *Mahaway*.

- **Lack of “-EL” termination in Mahujah and Mahaway.** We have previously noted that Townsend’s arguments that Mahujah and Mahaway were copied from the Bible and then altered contain no particular explanation (besides, perhaps, coincidence) for the fact that neither one of the similar names contains the theophoric ending (“-EL”). In this respect the fact that both names lack the “-EL” that is present in both variants of the Genesis 4:18 name makes their English versions more similar to each other than to the biblical names. Though the JST contains inconsistencies

in name spelling, such as the ones we have discussed earlier (most often a difference in the spelling of vowel sounds), we have found no instances in JST manuscripts where something as obvious as an “-EL” termination was dropped.

- **Missing *a* after the *y* in *Mahaway*.** As Cassuto mentions, the form *M^ehūy* (with a terminating *y* similar to the *Book of Giants* name *Mahaway*, whose vowels would be no less accurately rendered in the form *M^ehūy*) and the form *M^ehūyā* used in the biblical Mehujael (presumably similar, in our view, to the ancient form *M^ehūyā* behind the English name Mahujah in the Book of Moses — see the discussion of the terminating *h* in the point immediately below) differ only in that the latter form has retained the *a* “as a fossilized relic of the accusative termination.”¹⁵⁰ Apart from the “fossilized relic” at the end, the forms of the Book of Moses and *Book of Giants* names are identical to each other and to the primary name elements in Genesis 4:18.
- ***h* at the end of the English spellings of *Mahujah*/*Mahijah*.** The Book of Moses names terminate with an *h* in their English spellings. This makes them different from both the names in both Genesis 4:18 and in the *Book of Giants*. That said, it is impossible to know from the manuscript evidence alone whether the “-jah” termination of the Book of Moses names was meant to stand for the name of the God of Israel (Psalm 68:4), or if the *h* on the end of the English version of the name is present for some other reason. For example, given the prevalence of “-jah” terminations in Old Testament names (e.g., Elijah), it would not be surprising that an English-speaking scribe who heard the JST Genesis name pronounced during the dictation process would have written the name with an *h* at the end to make the spelling conform to this common naming convention.

Feature match to Book of Moses	<i>Book of Giants</i>	Genesis 4:18
1. Plausible “H/H.” match	+	+
2. Plausible English vowel match after “M”	+	+
3. Plausible vowel match after “H/H.”	+	+
4. No “-EL” termination	+	-
5. Plausible match of the name form termination	+	+
6. Plausible match of English “h” termination	-	-

Table 2. Table showing the plausibility of feature matches of the names in the *Book of Giants* and Genesis 4:18 to the names in the Book of Moses.

Of the six comparative elements in Table 2, five (1, 2, 3, 5, 6) indicate that Mahujah and Mahijah are as similar to *Mahaway* as they are to *Mehujael*. One element (4) indicates that Mahujah and Mahijah resemble *Mahaway* more than they do *Mehujael*. We conclude that, based on orthographic features alone, the names Mahujah and Mahijah are slightly more similar to *Mahaway* than to *Mehujael*. Thus, any argument that Mahujah and Mahijah are more similar to the Bible names based on surface features of the most common English versions of the names *Mehujah* and *Mahaway* is mistaken.

Significance of the Resemblances between the Book of Moses and the *Book of Giants*

The similarities between the names Mahijah, Mahujah, and Mahaway are not trivial details, but rather significant markers in scholarly efforts to identify the relationships among the *Book of Giants*, the Book of Moses, and the rest of the extant Enoch literature. For instance, non-Latter-day Saint scholar Salvatore Cirillo, drawing upon the similar conclusions of *Book of Giants* expert Loren Stuckenbruck,¹⁵¹ considers the names of Enoch’s adversaries, notably including Mahaway, as “the most conspicuously independent content” in the *Book of Giants*, being “unparalleled in other Jewish literature.” Moreover, according to Cirillo, “the name Mahawai in the *Book of Giants* and the names Mahujah and Mahijah in the Book of Moses represent the strongest similarity between the Latter-day Saint scriptures on Enoch and the pseudepigraphal books of Enoch (specifically the *Book of Giants*).”

Although we have no evidence that Enoch scholar Józef Milik was aware of the Book of Moses chapters that contain the names Mahujah and Mahijah, we have separate accounts from Hugh Nibley and Gordon Thomasson that Matthew Black, Milik's collaborator on the first English translation of the *Book of Giants* — someone who certainly knew enough about ancient Hebrew and Aramaic to make an expert judgment about any notable resemblances in other sources to that text — was impressed enough with the correspondence between the names in the Book of Moses Enoch account and the prominent and unique appearance of the similar name in the *Book of Giants* that he made a previously unplanned trip to Brigham Young University to learn more.¹⁵² According to Thomasson, Professor Black¹⁵³

acknowledged that the name Mahujah could not have come from *1 Enoch*. He then formulated a hypothesis, consistent with his lecture, that a member of one of the esoteric groups he had described previously [i.e., clandestine groups who had maintained, sub rosa, a religious tradition based in the writings of Enoch that pre-dated Genesis] must have survived into the 19th century, and hearing of Joseph Smith, must have brought the group's Enoch texts to New York from Italy for the prophet to translate and publish.

During the intervening years, no documentary evidence has surfaced that bears out Black's unsupported hypothesis that Joseph Smith somehow obtained access to an Enoch manuscript like the *Book of Giants* from an esoteric religious group in Europe.¹⁵⁴ On the other hand, during this same span of time, much additional evidence has come forth linking Joseph Smith's translation of the Book of Moses Enoch account to a variety of relevant ancient textual traditions, including several from the *Book of Giants*. The Mahijah/Mahujah parallel is just one of many ancient connections for which there is no completely satisfying historical explanation. In our view, the idea that these correspondences have come by coincidence or through borrowing and alteration is unconvincing. Instead, we are persuaded that they are due to common traditions that pre-date both texts, as Matthew Black apparently felt compelled to believe.

Although the combined fragments of the *Book of Giants* scarcely fill three pages in the English translation of García Martínez,¹⁵⁵ we find in it the most extensive series of significant parallels between a single ancient text and Joseph Smith's account of Enoch's preaching mission and subsequent battles with his enemies. These resemblances range

from general themes in the story line to specific occurrences of rare expressions in corresponding contexts. Some of these correspondences are summarized in Table 3.

Event	Book of Moses	Book of Giants
Secret works and murders	6:15	1Q23, 9+14+15:2-4
A “wild man”	6:38	4Q531, 22:8
Mahijah/Mahaway questions Enoch	6:40	4Q530, 2:20-23
Enoch reads record of deeds	6:46-47	4Q203, 7b col. ii; 8:1-11
Trembling and weeping after Enoch reads	6:47	4Q203, 4:6
Call to repentance	6:52	4Q203, 8:14-15
Conceived in sin	6:55	4Q203, 8:6-9
Enoch defeats <i>gibborim</i>	7:13	4Q531, 22:3-7
The “roar of wild beasts”	7:13	4Q531, 22:8
Imprisonment of wicked <i>gibborim</i>	7:38	4Q203, 7B 1:5
Repentant gathered to holy city/ cities	7:16-18, 69	Mani <i>Book of Giants</i> , Text G
The earth cries out against the sinners	7:48	4Q203, 9-10

Table 3. Examples of parallel themes and expressions in the *Book of Giants* and Moses 6-7 accounts of Enoch’s preaching mission, battles, and gathering of the righteous.¹⁵⁶

Summing Up Our Views

In this article, we have considered Townsend’s arguments that the author of the *Book of Giants* and Joseph Smith *created* remarkably similar names for an important character in their respective Enoch accounts. One might well ask, “What are the chances that they would come up with these closely resembling names independently?”

Even if, for a moment, we were to grant the hypothesis that Joseph Smith created the name Mahujah directly or indirectly through his knowledge of Genesis 4:18, why did he pick this name for his account instead of some other? If it were an arbitrary choice, why did he not

pick Irad or Methusael or the more prominent Lamech from the same verse, or some other name from the surrounding verses instead? Why is Mahujah the only named character in the Enoch chapters of the Book of Moses apart from Enoch himself — and also the only other plausibly biblically related name besides Enoch in the *Book of Giants* as well?

Going further, one of the most important parallels in the *Book of Giants* and Book of Moses names is that, in contrast to the biblical name, they both lack the theophoric element (-el). If Joseph Smith derived the names Mahujah and Mahijah by adapting them from Genesis 4:18, why wouldn't he, for the sake of consistency, have dropped the "-el" in his translation of the Bible verse itself? And if, instead, he were deliberately trying to create a new and distinctive name with the theophoric ending "-jah," what sufficiently important purpose would that have served for him to have gone to that trouble?

Moreover, since the author of the *Book of Giants* was apparently not completely bound to the written tradition and had the liberty to include names unattested elsewhere, such as 'Ohyah and Hahyah, to facilitate wordplay, as some have suggested, why wouldn't he have invented a name that was more similar to the other two instead of the more distinctive name Mahaway? And why would Joseph Smith, who has sometimes drawn criticism for the many new names that have been included in his scripture translations, have been averse to "making up" just one more?

Instead, both authors are, without a viable explanation for motive, putatively seen as creating a name that is coincidentally very similar to one found in the same Bible verse, then using these modified names to serve as a moniker for a prominent character who just happens to function in an analogous role within two independent accounts of the prophet Enoch.

After a review of the evidence, readers may understandably wonder: Were the names Mahujah and Mahijah merely borrowed and adapted from the Bible? Our analysis at the beginning of this article revealed that the evidence for this conjecture is weak and unlikely. On the other hand, could Joseph Smith have been aware of the names through an unknown Aramaic manuscript of the *Book of Giants* that was translated into English and secretly made available to him before its discovery by scholars at Qumran in 1948? Were the names somehow transferred to Joseph Smith through an unknown esoteric group, as Professor Black proposed? Once again, purely historical explanations disappoint. Such proposals are based purely on speculation and can provide no answers about the identity of these putative collaborators, how they stumbled

upon such a manuscript, why they secretly translated it into English and made it available to Joseph Smith, and how the Prophet either hid this fraud from his associates or persuaded them to collude with him. As the chain of required conjectures grows, their cumulative likelihood diminishes.

A more convincing conclusion, in our view, is that these names — along with other evidences of antiquity in the Book of Moses Enoch account — were directly restored from the ancient world through the process of divine revelation.

Conclusion

We are grateful that Townsend's article has highlighted the importance of textual criticism, a key and often foundational aspect of Latter-day Saint scholarship that requires ongoing attention. Though our conclusions diverge from his in several respects, he has graciously helped us correct some of the errors in our initial analysis and in our interpretation of his views. That said, any remaining mistakes in our response to his article are, of course, ours. We hope that readers will avail themselves of the work of patient scholars who have made existing resources available to us — and look forward to seeing additional resources for textual criticism in the future made available through the efforts of Townsend and others.

Acknowledgements

If there is any merit in this article, it is due in large measure to the excellence of its reviewers. Sincere thanks to David Calabro, Kent Jackson, Donald W. Parry, and Stephen T. Whitlock for their valuable comments. We are especially grateful to Colby Townsend for his cordial collaboration, including many important suggestions and corrections. We also thank anonymous reviewers whose selfless efforts have improved this article. Notwithstanding the significant contributions of the reviewers, the authors bear responsibility for its remaining faults.

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Endnotes

1. Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle, “Textual Criticism and the Book of Moses: A Response to Colby Townsend’s ‘Returning to the Sources,’” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 40 (2020): 99–162. See also *Temple Themes in the Scriptures* (website), www.templethemes.net.
2. Photograph of *Book of Giants*, 4QEn Giantsa[4Q203], Fragment 7b, column ii from Plate 31, Józef Tadeusz Milik and Matthew Black, eds. *The Books of Enoch: Aramaic Fragments from Qumran Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976). Cf. 4QEn Giantsa[4Q203], Fragment 7b, column ii, Plate 906, B-295417, Full spectrum color image of recto taken by Shai Halevi. The photograph is mislabeled as being of Fragment 6, though it is actually of Fragment 7b, column ii. In *The Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library*, <https://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/image/B-295417>.

Milik translates lines 5–7 as follows: “(5) [...] to you, Mah[awai ...] (6) the two tablets [...] (7) and the second has not been read up till now [...]” (Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*, 314).

Though only a small part of the “H” can be seen in the photograph of the manuscript we have reproduced here, Florentino Garcia Martinez, “The *Book of Giants* (4Q203),” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, ed. Florentino Garcia Martinez, 2nd ed., trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996), 260–61; Fragment 7, column ii, lines 5–7, p. 260, like, Milik, reads the end of line 5 as “MH.” By way of contrast, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants from Qumran: Texts, Translation, and Commentary* (Tübingen, DEU: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 84 and John C. Reeves, *Jewish Lore in Manichaean Cosmogony: Studies in the Book of Giants Traditions, Monographs of the Hebrew Union College* 14 (Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union College Press, 1992), 110 see only “M” and not “MH” in this particular fragment. Attesting to the complexity of interpreting these fragments is a later transcription by Stuckenbruck where he interprets the last nearly complete letter of line 7 as a Hebrew “B” rather than an “M” (Donald W. Parry and Emanuel Tov, eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, 2nd ed. [Leiden, NDL: Brill, 2013], 1:945). Despite the ambiguities in this particular photograph, scholars agree that Mahaway’s full name appears in

other, more complete and readable fragments from the *Book of Giants*.

3. Moses 7:2.
4. Moses 6:40.
5. Hugh W. Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet, The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley 2* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book, 1986), 277–79.
6. Colby Townsend, “Returning to the Sources: Integrating Textual Criticism in the Study of Early Mormon Texts and History,” *Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies* 10, no. 1 (2019): 81, <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/imwjournal/vol10/iss1/6>. For Nibley’s discussion of the issue, see Nibley, *Enoch*, 277–79; Nibley, “Churches in the Wilderness,” in *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless*, ed. Truman G. Madsen (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1978), 156–59; Nibley, *Teachings of the Pearl of Great Price* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS), Brigham Young University, 2004), 267–69.

In evaluating Nibley’s suggestion, Latter-day Saint scholar David Calabro observes that Nibley, while brilliant, was more of a philologist than a linguist, “and as such he did not generally focus on laying out the details of linguistic connections. He was also treating connections at a broad literary level, taking for granted that words and names sometimes get garbled in transmission” (David Calabro, e-mail message to author, January 24, 2018).

While maintaining the possibility of a correspondence between the ancient equivalent of these names, Calabro explained why we cannot posit a direct equivalence between all of them (including the related names Mahujael/Mahijael in Genesis 4:18) in their current forms (*ibid.*):

The -ah in Mahujah and Mahijah is problematic if you are interpreting the current forms of these names as equivalents of both Mahawai and also of Mehuja-/Mehija- in Mahujael/Mahijael at the same time. In other words, Mahujah can = MHWY + Jah or Mehjael can = Mahujael can = Mahujah + El, but both equations can’t be applied to the current forms of these names at the same time.

Of course, Calabro observes, the rules were different in earlier times, since “dropping of final vowels only happened sometime between 1200 and 600 BCE” (ibid.):

But it’s unlikely that the names in [the Book of] Moses are making a point of this. Joseph left the rest of the biblical names untouched. And if Lehi, Paul, and Jude all had access to the Book of Moses (as I believe they did), the name would have dropped any final short vowels before the text was finished being transmitted.

That said, Calabro goes on to explain why the connections between these names are not unlikely, even in the face of these considerations (ibid):

Very often in pseudepigraphal traditions, you get names that sound similar (or sometimes not even similar), just garbled a bit. It’s frequent in Arabic forms of biblical names: Ibrahim for “Abraham” (perhaps influenced by Elohim or some other plural Hebrew noun), Isa for Yasu “Jesus,” etc. So Mahujah, Mahijah, Mehujael/

Mehijael, and [Mahaway] could all be connected, with something getting mixed up in transmission.

With respect to correspondences between Mahujah and Mahijah, Nibley (Nibley, *Enoch*, 278; Nibley, “Churches in the Wilderness,” 157) argues that they are variants of the same name, given that “Mehuja-el” appears in the Greek *Septuagint* as “Mai-el” (Cécile Dogniez and Marguerite Harl, eds. *Le Pentateuque d’Alexandrie: Texte Grec et Traduction, La Bible des Septante* [Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2001], Genesis 4:18, p. 145; Pietersma, Albert, and Benjamin G. Wright, eds. *A New English Translation of the Septuagint and the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under that Title, NETS: New English Translation of the Septuagint* [Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007], Genesis 4:18, p. 8) and in the Latin Vulgate as Mawiah-el (Robert Weber, ed. *Biblia Sacra Vulgata*, 4th ed [Stuttgart, DEU: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990], Genesis 4:18, p. 9). Since the Greek version had no internal “H,” Nibley reasons that “Mai-” could come only from “Mahi-” (MHY-).

J. W. Wevers likewise writes that the *Septuagint* spelling of Mai-el [in Genesis 4:18] “follows the Samaritan tradition of [Mahi-el]”

(John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis* [Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1993], 62n4:18), with the only difference being the dropped “h.” According to Nibley, the Mahawai version that we see in the *Book of Giants* is probably related to Genesis 4:18. It shows up in the Latin Vulgate as “Maviahel” likely because Jerome went to the Hebrew version for his translation. He didn’t use the “H” either and made the “W” a consonant (“v”) instead of a vowel (“u”) in his transliteration. This is why in the Douay-Rheims Bible (based on the *Vulgate*), we see the name rendered as “Maviael.” See more on Genesis 4:18 below.

Note that the grandfather of the prophet Enoch also bore a similar name to Mahawai/Mahujah: Mahalaleel (Genesis 5:12–17; 1 Chronicles 1:2; Moses 6:19–20. See also Nehemiah 11:4). As a witness of how easily such names can be confused, observe that the Greek manuscript used for Brenton’s translation of the *Septuagint* reads “Maleleel” for “Maiei” in Genesis 4:18 (Lancelot C. L. Brenton, *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005], Genesis 4:18, p. 5).

7. Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 81–82.
8. See *ibid.*, 81 for Townsend’s analysis of the different meanings related to the different spellings.
9. Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*.
10. *Ibid.*, 427, s. v. Ahya.
11. George W. E. Nickelsburg, “The Bible Rewritten and Expanded,” in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period: Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha, Qimran Sectarian Writings, Philo, Josephus*, ed. Michael E. Stone (Leiden, ND: Brill, 1984), 2:96, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004275119_004.
12. Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Giant Mythology and Demnology: From the Ancient Near East to the Dead Sea Scrolls,” in *Die Dämonen: die Dämonologie der israelitisch-jüdischen un frühchristlichen Literatur im Kontext ihrer Umwelt (Demons: The Demonology of the Israelite-Jewish and Early Christian Literature in Context of their Environment)*, eds. A. Lange and H. Lichtenberger (Tübingen, DE: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 322, https://www.academia.edu/2209731/Giant_Mythology_and_Demonology_from_the_Ancient_Near_East_to_the_Dead_Sea_Scrolls. Cf. Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Myth of Rebellious Angels* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017),

41. In Stuckenbruck, "Giant Mythology", 324, Stuckenbruck briefly repeats his previous suggestion for MHWY in connection with possible explanations for the names 'Ohyah and Hahyah. We discuss the two latter names in a later section of the present article.
13. Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 81.
 14. Stuckenbruck, "Giant Mythology," 322.
 15. Ibid.
 16. Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 81.
 17. Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*, 434, s. v. Mahawai.
 18. Nibley, *Enoch*, 277–79; Nibley, "Churches in the Wilderness," 156–59; Nibley, *Teachings of the Pearl of Great Price*, 267–69.
 19. Nickelsburg, "Bible Rewritten," 96.
 20. Stuckenbruck, "Giant Mythology," 324.
 21. Parry and Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, 1Q24, Fragment 27, line 2, p. 941; Stuckenbruck, *Book of Giants*, 27; Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 93.
 22. E.g., Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*, 434, s. v. Mahawai.
 23. E.g., Parry and Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, 4Q530, Fragments 2 col. ii + 6 + 7 col. I + 8-11 + 12(?), line 21, 951.
 24. David Calabro, e-mail message to author, May 18, 2020, with permission; The Interpreter Foundation, "What Did Hugh Nibley Have to Say About the LDS Enoch and the Aramaic Book of the Giants?" YouTube video, 9:43, April 7, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tTuzRQ6bcI&t=18>; this video contains material recorded in connection with a National Interfaith Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls, 20 November 1992 in the Kresge Auditorium of Stanford University.
 25. The use of two variations of the same name in one statement is not uncommon in the Hebrew Bible. In this case, the Masoretic text of Genesis 4:18 includes both spellings of the name (Mehuja-el and Mehija-el) one right after the other, and in a context that leaves no doubt that the two occurrences refer to the same individual (see, e.g., Barry L. Bandstra, *Genesis 1–11: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text. Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible*, ed. W. Dennis Tucker, Jr. [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008], 268). Ronald S. Hendel. *The Text of Genesis 1–11: Textual Studies and Critical*

Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 47–48 attributes this phenomenon either to a graphic confusion of “Y” and “W” (cf. Nibley, *Enoch*, 278; Nibley, “Churches in the Wilderness,” 290) or to linguistic modernization of what seems to be the older form (Mehuja-el). Note that instead of featuring two different forms of the name in succession as in the Masoretic text, some other texts render the names consistently. For example, the Cairo Geniza manuscript gives Mehuja-el twice, while the Samaritan version has Mahi-el (cf. Mehijael) twice (Mark Shoulson, ed. *The Torah: Jewish and Samaritan Versions Compared* [La Vergne, TN: Lightning Source, 2008], Genesis 4:18, p. 11; Benyamim Tsedaka and Sharon Sullivan, eds. *The Israelite Samaritan Version of the Torah*, trans. Benyamim Tsedaka [Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2013], Genesis 4:18, p. 12).

26. Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 80–82.
27. Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*, 434, s. v. Mahawai.
28. *Ibid.*, 427, s. v. Ahya.
29. Nickelsburg, *Bible Rewritten*, 96.
30. Stuckenbruck, “Giant Mythology,” 324.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*, 322.
33. Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 81–82.
34. Eric D. Raymond, *Qumran Hebrew: An Overview of Orthography, Phonology, and Morphology, Resources for Biblical Study* 76, ed. Marvin A. Sweeney (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), 108. For the full discussion of these examples, see pp. 107–111. See also Lawrence H. Schiffman, James C. VanderKam, and Takamitsu Muraoka, eds., *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1:341, <http://oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/print/opr/t264/e204>.
35. Calabro, May 18, 2020.
36. See Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 81. In his analysis of the two variant names in Genesis 4:18, R. S. Hendel, *Text*, 47–48 does not rule out either version of the name (i.e., Mehujael, Mehijael) as a possibility for the presumed older version from which one of the two names diverged after a presumed graphic confusion of the Hebrew letters *waw* and *yod*. Similarly, if a graphic confusion

of *heh* with *heth* among names in the Book of Moses, the *Book of Giants*, and Genesis 4:18 occurred, it is difficult to know whether *heh* was confused for *heth* or vice versa.

37. Daniel A. Machiela and Andrew B. Perrin, “‘That You May Know Everything From Him with Certainty’: A New Reading in 4QEnGiantsb ar (4Q530) and a Literary Connection Between the *Book of Giants* and Genesis Apocryphon,” *Revue de Qumran* 25 (2011): 113-25, https://www.academia.edu/30137997/_That_You_May_Know_Everything_from_Him_with_Certainty_A_New_Reading_in_4QEnGiantsb_4Q530_and_a_Literary_Connection_between_the_Book_of_Giants_and_Genesis_Apocryphon, 9
Figure 6.
38. For several examples of *heh/heth* confusion, especially in the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsaa) versus the Masoretic Text Isaiah with the Isaiah Scrolls, see Donald W. Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls and Their Textual Variants, Supplements to the Textual History of the Bible* 3, eds. Russell Fuller *et al.* (Leiden, NDL: Brill, 2019), 60, 218, 299, 334, 362, 389.
39. Machiela and Perrin, “‘That You May Know Everything From Him with Certainty,’” 9.
40. 4Q530 (4Q EnGiantsb), Fragment 7b, column ii, 4Q530 (4Q EnGiantsb), Fragment 7b, column ii. Mislabeled photograph confirmed by Donald W. Parry (Donald W. Parry, personal communication to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, March 2, 2020).
41. E.g., Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*, 306. Cf. Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 105.
42. Parry and Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, Part 3, 4Q530, Fragment 7, column ii, end of line 7, 951.
43. E.g., Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*, 306. Cf. Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 105.
44. Parry and Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, Part 3, 4Q530, Fragment 7, column ii, line 7, 951. The Aramaic transcription of this fragment is by Émile Puech. See also the debate between Michael Langlois and Puech about a similar confusion of the two letters in Michael Langlois, “Shemihazah et compagnie(s). Onomastique des anges déchus dans les manuscrits araméens du Livre d’Hénoch,” in *Aramaica Qumranica: Proceedings of the Conference on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran in Aix-en-Provence 30 June-2 July 2008*,

- eds. Katell Berthelot and Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, *Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah* 94, eds. Florentino Garcia Martínez, Peter W. Flint, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar (Leiden, NDL: Brill, 2010), 179–80, <https://michaellanglois.org/medias/langlois-2010-shemihazah-et-compagnies-in-aramaica-qumranica-145-180.pdf>.
45. Ironically, we have fallen prey to a similar error in English transcription. The failure to correct the typographical error in Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle, “Could Joseph Smith Have Drawn on Ancient Manuscripts When He Translated the Story of Enoch?: Recent Updates on a Persistent Question,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 33 (2019): 315, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/could-joseph-smith-have-drawn-on-ancient-manuscripts-when-he-translated-the-story-of-enoch-recent-updates-on-a-persistent-question/>; (which spelled MHWY as MḤWY) added confusion to our discussion of the issue.
 46. In ancient times, this sound was not pronounced as a velar fricative (i.e., as a soft “k,” as in the German name “Bach”) as it is in modern Israeli Hebrew. By way of contrast, David Calabro notes: “The pharyngeal fricative, which is the ancient pronunciation, is a hissed or deep-throated ‘h’; some liken it to the sound we make when we breathe on glasses to mist and clean them” (Calabro, May 18, 2020).
 47. Donald W. Parry deals with the weakening of the gutturals in several places in Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*. See, e.g., pp. 30, 56, 60, 84, 103, 108, 136, 198, 218, 322, 343, 353.
 48. Reymond, *Qumran Hebrew*, 72.
 49. *Ibid.*, 108–09.
 50. Nickelsburg, “Bible Rewritten”, 96.
 51. Stuckenbruck, *Myth of Rebellious Angels*, 43.
 52. *Ibid.*, 41.
 53. *Ibid.*
 54. *Ibid.*, 41.
 55. Jeffrey L. Cooley, “The *Book of Giants* and the Greek Gilgamesh,” in *Windows to the Ancient World of the Hebrew Bible: Essays in Honor of Samuel Greengus*, eds. Bill T. Arnold, Nancy L. Erickson, and John H. Walton (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, Penn State

- Univeristy Press, 2014), 76, https://www.academia.edu/6214575/The_Book_of_Giants_and_the_Greek_Gilgamesh.
56. Cooley, “*Book of Giants* and Greek Gilgamesh,” 76.
57. Photograph courtesy of Colby Townsend (Colby Townsend, e-mail message to author, March 3, 2020). Townsend found the volume in the stacks of the Marriott Library, and being curious whether the annotations belonged to Hugh Nibley, verified the handwriting and annotation style with others who were in a position to recognize Nibley’s style. Townsend also searched the Ancient Studies room of the BYU Harold B. Library where Nibley frequently worked but was unable to find a copy of the volume. While we have no reason not to be confident in Townsend’s tentative identification of Nibley as the author of the annotations, no firm conclusions can be made without more formal analysis.
- The recent debunking of the myth of “Elvis Presley’s” copy of the Book of Mormon is an amusing but legitimate cautionary tale about the importance of doing one’s homework before placing too much credence in such suppositions (Keith A. Erekson, “Elvis has Left the Library: Identifying Forged Annotations in a Book of Mormon,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 57, no. 4 [2018]: 51-77, <https://byustudies.byu.edu/content/elvis-has-left-library-identifying-forged-annotations-book-mormon>).
58. Going beyond the example of the two brothers with their two dreams, Stuckenbruck sees “the repeated use of the number two” as a broad indicator of a “way in which the Qumran *Book of Giants* was structured” (Stuckenbruck, *Book of Giants*, 20).
59. James R. Russell, “Hārūt and Mārūt: The Armenian Zoroastrian Demonic Twins in the Qur’an who Invented Fiction” in *Commentationes Iranicae: Sbornik statei k 90-letiyu V.A. Livshitsa*, eds. S. Tokhtasev and P. Luria (St. Petersburg: Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences and Nestor-Historia, 2015), <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:34881481>.
60. Ibid.
61. John C. Reeves, “Midrash of Shemhazai and Azael [English Translation],” *John C. Reeves: UNC Course Materials* (website), <https://pages.uncc.edu/john-reeves/course->

materials/rels-2104-hebrew-scripturesold-testament/bereshit-rabbati-on-shemhazai-azael/.

62. E.g., Qur'an Sura 2:102.
63. See extracts from Pseudo-Mas'ūdī's *Akhbār al-zamān wa-min abādat al-hidhān, wa-'ajā'ib al-buldān, wa'l-ghāmīr bi-al-mā' wa'l-'imrān* in John C. Reeves and Annette Yoshiko Reed, *Sources from Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: Enoch from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, 2 vols. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018), 157-58. Reeves and Reed take Yamaḥuel to be an intended reference to the biblical Mehujael (ibid., 157n227). For a discussion of this account, see Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle, "Could Joseph Smith Have Drawn on Ancient Manuscripts When He Translated the Story of Enoch?" 321-23.
64. Reeves, "Midrash Shemḥazai and Azael". See also Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 86-94.
65. Reeves, "Midrash Shemḥazai and Azael"; Hanokh Albeck, ed., *Midrash Bereshit Rabbati* (Jerusalem, ISR: Mekitze Nirdamim, 1940), 29.14-31.8. In the midrash, Shemḥazai says to his two sons: "Do not be anxious or perturbed, for your names will not disappear from the created order. Every time that (men) drag or lift stones and logs [for] their needs, they will always shout 'heave!' and 'ho!' Immediately their anxieties were calmed" (Reeves, "Midrash Shemḥazai and Azael").
66. André Caquot, "Les prodromes du déluge : légendes araméennes du Qoumrân," *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie religieuses* 83, no. 1 (2003): 50, https://www.persee.fr/doc/AsPDF/rhpr_0035-2403_2003_num_83_1_1011.pdf.
67. John C. Reeves, "Some Explorations of the Intertwining of Bible and Qur'an," in *Bible and Qur'an: Essays in Scriptural Intertextuality*, ed. John C. Reeves, *Symposium Series* 24 (Leiden, NL: Society of Biblical Literature and Brill, 2004), 46, <https://books.google.com/books?id=WNId86Eu4TEC>; notes that "the Babylonian angels Hārūt and Mārūt (Qur'an 2:102) are most certainly reflexes of the disgraced heavenly Watchers Shemḥazai and Azael, whose corruptive activities are extensively profiled in Jewish pseudepigraphal lore." In the same source, Reeves gives a detailed analysis and useful synopsis of ten of these accounts. For more stories on these characters, see Abu Ishaq Ahmad Ibn

- Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim al-Tha'labi, *'Ara'is Al-Majalis Fi Qisas Al-Anbiya' or "Lives of the Prophets,"* trans. William M. Brinner, *Studies in Arabic Literature, Supplements to the Journal of Arabic Literature, Volume 24*, ed. Suzanne Pinckney Stetkevych, (Leiden, ND: Brill, 2002), 86-91.
68. Russell, "Hārūt and Mārūt".
 69. Ibid.
 70. Note André Caquot's mention of an affinity between 'Ohyah and "the Og of Numbers 21:3, who was held to be one of the offspring of the giants" (Caquot, "Les Prodiges, 49). This reference corresponds to the *Decretum Gelasianum's* "Ogias, of whom the heretics assert that after the flood he fought with the dragon" (Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher, "Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis (6th century)," in *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher [Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965], 1:48). 'Ohyah is also mentioned as a dragon-fighter (Leviathan) in a Parthian fragment of the *Book of Giants* (W. B. Henning, "The Book of the Giants," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 11, no. 1 (1943): 70, <http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/giants/giants.htm>).
 71. Russell, "Hārūt and Mārūt".
 72. See, e.g., Stuckenbruck, *Book of Giants*, 91, 199, 200.
 73. See, e.g., Sogdian fragment C of the *Book of Giants*, where 'Ohyah attempts to pick a fatal fight with Mahuja/Mahaway (Henning, "Book of the Giants," 66).
 74. See, e.g., Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 84-102.
 75. See, e.g., *ibid.*, 93.
 76. Cyrille Mozgovine, *De Abdallah à Zorrino: Dictionnaire des Noms Propres de Tintin* (Tournai, BE: Castermans, Bibliothèque de Moulinsart, 1992), 70.
 77. See, e.g., Stuckenbruck, *Book of Giants*, 20.
 78. Manichaean Uygur fragment quoted in Stuckenbruck, *Book of Giants*, 127n140. See also Henning, cited in Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*, 307.

79. Jens Wilkens, “Remarks on the Manichaean *Book of Giants*: Once Again on Mahaway’s Mission to Enoch,” in *Ancient Tales of Giants from Qumran and Turfan: Contexts, Traditions, and Influences*, eds. Matthew Goff, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, and Enrico Morano, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 360, ed. Jörg Frey (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 226-27.
80. Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 93: “Mahaway is expressly cited at least five times in the extant fragments of the Qumran *Book of Giants*, and his prominence as an actor in the Giants drama is indicated by his retention as a character in the Middle Persian, Sogdian, and Uighur remnants of the Manichaean recension of the book.”
81. Wilkens, “Remarks”, 227, citing the Middle Persian fragment M5900 edited by Sundermann and relating it to some new fragments described by Morano.
82. Stuckenbruck, *Book of Giants*, 52, 92. Parry and Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, 4Q530, Fragment 14, line 2, 947.
83. Parry and Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, 6Q8, fragment 1, line 4, 973. Baraq’el is said to be one of the twenty fallen Watchers listed by name in *1 Enoch*” (J. C. Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 93. See George W. E. Nickelsburg, ed., *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1-36; 81-108. Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001], 6:7, p. 174; 8:3, p. 188; George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, eds., *1 Enoch 2: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 37-82. Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012], 69:2, p. 297. Cf. 60:13-15, p. 224. See also Charles Mopsik, ed., *Le Livre Hébreu d’Hénoch ou Livre des Palais, Les Dix Paroles*, ed. Charles Mopsik [Lagrasse, FR: Éditions Verdier, 1989], 14:4, p. 109; 17:1, 3, pp. 110, 111). In Moses 5:43, the name of Mahujael’s father is given as Irad, a prominent member of the secret combination who was killed later by his great-grandson Lamech when he revealed their secrets in violation of deadly oaths he had taken (Moses 5:49-50).

In Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 6:7, p. 174; Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 69:3, p. 297, Baraq’el is the ninth chief, under the leader Shemiḥazah, of the Watchers who descended on Mount Hermon and “swore together and bound one another with a curse” (Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 6:5, p. 174) as they determined to “choose

... wives from the daughters of men” (ibid.). In Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*, 8:3, p. 188, we learn the secrets that each of the heads of the Watchers revealed to mankind. Elsewhere, we read of their responsibilities of each of these in the governing of the seven heavens (Nickelsburg and VanderKam, *1 Enoch 2*, 60:13-15, p. 224; C. Mopsik, *Hénoch*, 14:4, p. 109, 17:1-3, pp. 110-11).

“Since Baraq’el is composed from the name of ‘lightning’ followed by the theophoric suffix, [Mahuja/Mahaway, his son,] was given the Iranian equivalent Virogdad, ‘created by lightning’” (Caquot, “Les Prodiges”, 50). Cf. Henning, who first recognized Virogdad as having affinities to Baraq’el (Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*, 300, 311) in the Manichaean fragments of the *Book of Giants* (Reeves, *Jewish Lore*, 147n202; 138n98). According to *Jubilees 4:15* (Wintermute. “Jubilees.” In *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth [Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1983], 4:15, p. 2:61. See also 61-62 note g.), Baraq’el is also the father of Dinah, the wife of Enoch’s grandfather, Mahalaleel. If one assumed the descriptions in the relevant accounts were consistent (of course, a very far-fetched assumption), this would make the prophet Enoch a first cousin once-removed to Mahujah.

In the Doctrine and Covenants we also encounter the name Baraq’el (= Baurak Ale, D&C 103, 105). Note that Joseph Smith’s approach is simply to follow the lead of his Hebrew teacher, J. Seixas, who seems to have transliterated both the Hebrew letters *kaph* and *qoph* with a “k,” so it is difficult to trace what original name he is transliterating). It was sometimes used as a code name for Joseph Smith (David J. Whittaker. “Substituted Names in the Published Revelations of Joseph Smith,” *BYU Studies* 23, no. 1 [1983]: 107). Nibley, *Teachings of the Pearl of Great Price*, 268 observes:

Baraq’el is interesting, ... because[, in the *Book of Giants*,] Baraq’el is supposed to have been the father of [Mahujah]. ... A professor in Hebrew at the University of Utah said, “Well, Joseph Smith didn’t understand the word *barak*, meaning ‘to bless.’” William W. Phelps had previously suggested that “Baurak Ale” meant “God bless you.” [see Whittaker, “Substituted Names,” 107]). But “Baraq’el” means the “lightning of God” (see Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1*,

180). The Doctrine and Covenants is right on target in that.

84. Stuckenbruck, *Myth of Rebellious Angels*, 43.

85. Langlois, “Shemihazah et Compagnie(s),” 174. Alternatively, Russell, “Hārūt and Mārūt”, n13 suggests:

The name sounds, as Shaked has suggested, as though it might be simply Hebrew *ha-šēm ha-zeh*, literally “this name,” maybe a cautious circumlocution. Pious Jews refer to God discreetly as *Hashem*, “The Name.”

However, David Calabro strongly disagrees: “This suggestion seems extremely unlikely to me. The “h” in Shemihazah is the *ḥeth*, while that in *ha-shem ha-zeh* is just *heh*” (Calabro, May 18, 2020).

86. With specific reference to Enoch texts, Reeves and Reed continue as follows (*Enoch from Antiquity 1*, 8–9):

Scholars of the Hebrew Bible and specialists in ancient Judaism and Christianity have increasingly come into conversation around the trajectories of biblical interpretation and the continued lives of authoritative writings within and between religious communities. Alongside traditional source-critical, redaction-critical, and text-critical inquiries into the Torah/ Pentateuch, for instance, new approaches have emerged in the attempt to recover what James Kugel has termed “the Bible as It Was” (James L. Kugel., *The Bible As It Was* [Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1997]) — that is, not simply the text of this or that biblical book as it came to be fixed in writing, but also the much broader array of common exegetical motifs and legends through which premodern peoples encountered the primeval and patriarchal past. What has emerged, in the process, is a new sense of the degree to which premodern Jews, Christians, and Muslims — as well as Samaritans, Manichaeans, “gnostics,” and others — participated in preserving and developing a common store of traditions about figures such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. So too with Enoch. The traditions associated with this figure, however, expose the limitations of modern notions

of “the Bible” to capture the scope, dynamism, and complexity of premodern discourses about the biblical past. There has been much attention, for instance, to Jewish and Christian traditions about the fallen angels in relation to the exegesis of Genesis 6. What such studies have shown, however, is the impossibility of accounting for the history of interpretation without a sense of the ample influence of Enochic and other texts now commonly deemed “noncanonical.” So too with Genesis 5 and traditions about Enoch, which took form from an ancient matrix of Mesopotamian traditions that continued to be developed in new ways in writings produced alongside and after what we know now as “the Bible.”

Traditions surrounding Enoch thus offer especially rich foci for tracing the transmission and transformations of traditions across religious boundaries. In light of new insights into scribal practices and textual fluidity from the biblical and related manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls, it has become clear that the process of the formation of “the Bible” was much longer and more complex than previously imagined. Likewise, the recent growth of concern for the mechanics of written and oral transmission and pedagogy among ancient Jews has redescribed biblical “authorship” in continuum with interpretation, redaction, collection, and transmission — wherein oral/aural and written/visual components, moreover, often remained intertwined in various ways in various settings. Just as these insights lead us to question the assumption of any clear line between scripture and interpretation in relation to the Torah/Pentateuch, so they also open the way for integrating what we know of the formation, transmission, and reception of Enochic literature into a more complete picture of the biblical past as remembered by premodern Jews, Christians, Muslims, and others.

87. André Lemaire. “Nabonide et Gilgamesh: L’araméen en Mésopotamie et à Qoumrân,” in *Aramaica Qumranica: Proceedings of the Conference on the Aramaic Texts from Qumran in Aix-en-Provence 30 June-2 July 2008*, eds. Katell Berthelot and Daniel Stökl Ben Ezra, *Studies on the Texts of the Desert*

of *Judah* 94, eds. Florentino Garcia Martínez, Peter W. Flint, and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar (Leiden, NL: Brill, 2010), 125, <http://www.digitorient.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/LemaireAramaicQumranica.pdf>. Translation by Bradshaw.

88. John C. Reeves. "Some Parascriptural Dimensions of the 'Tal of Harut wa-Marut,'" *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 135, no. 4 (October-December 2015): 840-41, <http://www.almuslih.com/Library/Reeves,%20C%20-%20Harut%20and%20Marut.pdf>.
89. As Ken M. Penner, "Did the Midrash of Shemihazai and Azael Use the *Book of Giants*?" in *Sacra Scriptura: How 'Non-Canonical' texts functioned in early Judaism and early Christianity*, eds. James H. Charlesworth and Lee M. McDonald (London: Bloomsbury, T&T Clark, 2014), 44-45, https://www.academia.edu/4024730/Did_the_Midrash_of_Shemihazai_and_Azael_use_the_Book_of_Giants, writes:

If the identification of Qumran fragments belonging to [the *Book of Giants*] is correct, the work was very popular at Qumran: about ten copies were found, in four caves. The significance of these numbers becomes apparent when compared to those of the Aramaic book of [*1 Enoch*] itself: only seven copies found, all in a single cave. The only books more popular at Qumran are Psalms (36 copies), the books of the Pentateuch (23-24, 16, 12-13, 9, 35 copies respectively), Isaiah (21), Jubilees (17), and the Community Rule (13); the Damascus Document and Rule of the Congregation each have ten.

90. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch* 1, 11.
91. Stuckenbruck, "Giant Mythology," 319.
92. *Ibid.*, 319-21.
93. See Reeves, "Some Parascriptural Dimensions", 830-34.
94. *Ibid.*, 833. Calabro qualifies Reeves' conclusion as follows: "Relative age does not necessarily imply a relationship of direct dependence. Even so, Jubilees was composed in an environment (likely ca. 2nd century BCE) in which the book of Genesis was the best-known example of these traditions in writing (as can be quantitatively proven from the Dead Sea Scrolls), so some indirect dependence would be inevitable" (Calabro, May 18, 2020).

95. Reeves, "Some Parascritural Dimensions", 833n50.
96. Caquot, "Les Prodomes," 50.
97. Matthew Goff, "Gilgamesh the Giant: The Qumran *Book of Giants*' Appropriation of Gilgamesh Motifs," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 16, no. 2 (2009): 253.
98. Joseph L. Angel, "The Humbling of the Arrogant and the "Wild Man" and "Tree Stump" Traditions in the *Book of Giants* and Daniel 4," in *Ancient Tales of Giants from Qumran and Turfan: Contexts, Traditions, and Influences*, eds. Matthew Goff, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, and Enrico Morano, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 360, ed. Jörg Frey (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 80.
99. Lemaire, "Nabonide et Gilgamesh," 144.
100. Amanda M. Davis Bledsoe, "Throne Theophanies, Dream Visions, and Righteous Seers" in *Ancient Tales of Giants from Qumran and Turfan: Contexts, Traditions, and Influences*, eds. Matthew Goff, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, and Enrico Morano, *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 360, ed. Jörg Frey (Tübingen, DEU: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 85.
101. Davis Bledsoe, "Throne Theophanies," 90.
102. Stuckenbruck, *Myth of Rebellious Angels*, 118.
103. Of course, Daniel in Ezekiel 14:14-20 and Ezekiel 28:3 is frequently identified with Ugaritic *dn-il* and that identification is certainly plausible, but it is also interesting to consider Ezekiel 28:3 in the same stream as Daniel 9:22. Ezekiel would have been a contemporary of the biblical Daniel, which has interesting possible implications for the Daniel/Danel of Ezekiel 14:14-20; 28:3.
104. Langlois, "Shemihazah et Compagnie(s)." Two general conclusions about the names stand out: (1) Almost all (but not all) the names end with "el"; (2) the names are not of homogeneous origin in Hebrew or Aramaic — some seem to be related to northwest Semitic (i.e., Ugaritic) mythology, but regardless of whether they have their source in Ugarit, Langlois argues that they are old — no more recent than the tablets of Ugarit, i.e., 15th-14th centuries BCE. Although the respondent to the paper, Ester Eshel, throws doubt on arguments for a Ugaritic origin of the names, she does not specifically question their antiquity (see

- pp. 177-78, and the rejoinder of Langlois on p. 178). Jonathan Ben-Dov mentions the “rabbinic tradition in the Yeruslami (y. RH 56d [1:2]), saying that the names of angels originated in Babylonia with the Jewish exiles, just like the names of months” (cited in Langlois, “Shemihazah et Compagnie(s),” 180).
105. Richard Hess, s. v. “Mehujael,” in *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York City: Doubleday, 1992), 4:681.
 106. *Ibid.*, 4:681.
 107. Hendel, *Text*, 47-48.
 108. Nahum M. Sarna, ed., *Genesis. The JPS Torah Commentary* (Philadelphia, PA: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 36.
 109. Richard S. Hess, *Studies in the Personal Names of Genesis 1-11* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 41.
 110. Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, vol. 1: From Adam to Noah*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem, ISR: The Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1998), 232.
 111. *Ibid.*, 232. For more about their role and function, see A. Leo Oppenheim, *Ancient Mesopotamia: Portrait of a Dead Civilization*, revised ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1977), 221. Cf. Wolfgang Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari: A New Translation with Historical Introduction, Notes, and Commentary* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 578, s. v. “ecstatic.”
 112. See Heimpel, *Letters to the King*, 26 220, p. 262; 26 221, p. 263.
 113. Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, 233.
 114. *Ibid.* Cf. Hess, *Studies*, 46.
 115. Hess, *Studies*, 46.
 116. Jeremy Black, Andrew George, and Nicholas Postgate, eds., *A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian*, second ed. (Wiesbaden, DEU: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), 190, <https://books.google.com/books?id=-qIuVCsRb98C>.
 117. J. A. Halloran, *Sumerian Lexicon: A Dictionary Guide to the Ancient Sumerian Language* (Los Angeles, CA: Logogram Publishing, 2006), 168, <https://www.sumerian.org/sumerlex.htm>.
 118. Black, George, and Postgate, *Concise Dictionary of Akkadian*, 185.

119. Moses 5:31, 49.
120. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004), OT1 p. 10, p. 94.
121. Andrew George, ed., *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (London: The Penguin Group, 2003).
122. Milik and Black, *The Books of Enoch*, 313nL6.
123. Goff, "Gilgamesh the Giant."
124. Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 82.
125. *Ibid.*, 83.
126. Bradshaw and Dahle, "Textual Criticism and the Book of Moses."
127. See Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 83-84.
128. Thomas A. Wayment and Haley Wilson-Lemmon, "A Recovered Resource: The Use of Adam Clarke's Bible Commentary in Joseph Smith's Bible Translation," in *Producing Ancient Scripture: Joseph Smith's Translation Projects and the Making of Mormon Christianity*, eds. Mark Ashurst-McGee, Michael Hubbard MacKay, and Brian M. Hauglid (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2020); Haley Wilson and Thomas A. Wayment, "A Recently Recovered Source: Rethinking Joseph Smith's Bible Translation," *Brigham Young University Journal of Undergraduate Research* (website), March 16, 2017, <http://jur.byu.edu/?p=21296>.
129. Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 84.
130. Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments* (New York City: N. Bangs and J. Emory, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1825), 1:151, https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Holy_Bible_Containing_the_Old_and_Ne.html?id=Lds8AAAAYAAJ.
131. Thomas A. Wayment, "Joseph Smith's Use of Adam Clarke's Commentary in the JST," interview by Laura Harris Hales, *LDS Perspectives Podcast*, Sep 26, 2017, <https://ldsperspectives.com/2017/09/26/jst-adam-clarke-commentary/>. Cf. Wilson and Wayment, "A Recently Recovered Source," 283.

132. Townsend, March 3, 2020, correctly notes: “As the BYU onomastic project ... has highlighted, many of the names in the Book of Mormon are either directly or indirectly connected to biblical names in one way or another.” However, our point has nothing to do with the fact that biblically connected names are present in the Book of Mormon, but rather with the fact that scores of additional names that have no obvious connection with the Bible were also introduced.
133. Jude 1:14-15. For evidence of Joseph Smith’s awareness of these verses, see this remark in the preface to Moses 7, the account of Enoch’s vision, as part of his history (Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Documentary History)*, 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), December 1830, 1:132. Cf. Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers*, eds. Dean C. Jessee, Ronald K. Esplin, and Richard Lyman Bushman (Salt Lake City: The Church Historian’s Press, 2008-), History, 1838–1856, volume A-1 [23 December 1805–30 August 1834], 81, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-a-1-23-december-1805-30-august-1834/87>:

The common remark was, they are “lost books”; but it seems the Apostolic Church had some of these writings, as Jude mentions or quotes the Prophecy of Enoch, the seventh from Adam.

Though the portion of Joseph Smith’s history in which this quote appears was not compiled before about January 1843 when William W. Phelps began assisting Willard Richards in this task, Joseph Smith “dictated or supplied information for much of A-1” and was well-acquainted enough with the New Testament to make his knowledge of these verses in Jude plausible if not probable by December 1830 and January 1831 when the account of Enoch was translated.

Note also that the Prophet quoted a passage from Jude’s citation of Enoch (Jude 1:14) in a letter to the Saints in Missouri written on December 10, 1833 (Joseph Smith, Jr., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1969], 10 December 1833, 36. Cf. Smith, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, Letter to Edward Partridge and Others, 10 December 1833, 72, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-to-edward-partridge-and-others-10-december-1833/4>).

- Furthermore, he used Jude 1:14-15 in connection with his teachings about Enoch on October 5, 1840 (See J. Smith, Jr., *Teachings*, 5 October 1840, 170; Joseph Smith, Jr., Andrew F. Ehat, and Lyndon W. Cook, *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph*, 1980, 41, <https://rsc-legacy.byu.edu/out-print/words-joseph-smith-contemporary-accounts-nauvoo-discourses-prophet-joseph>; Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers*, Instruction on Priesthood, 5 October 1840, 6, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/instruction-on-priesthood-5-october-1840/>).
134. Note that instead of featuring two different forms of the name in succession as in the Masoretic text, some other texts render the names consistently. For example, the Cairo Geniza manuscript gives Mehuja-el twice, while the Samaritan version has Mahi-el (cf. Mehijael) twice (Shoulson, *Torah*, Genesis 4:18, p. 11; Tsedaka and Sullivan, *Israelite Samaritan*, Genesis 4:18, p. 12).
 135. Dropping the suffix is what scholars call putting the name in its “hypocoristic” form, an idea that was not likely to occur spontaneously to Joseph Smith. Moreover, because the Prophet retained the “-el” suffix in Moses 5:43 (= Genesis 4:18) rather than making the name agree with its Book of Moses equivalents, it is reasonable to assume that he did not himself recognize an equivalence among Mahujah, Mahijah, and Mehuja-el.
 136. As an exception to Bible manuscripts that otherwise always add “-el” to the end of the name, Wevers (*Notes*, 62n4:18) mentions the existence of “Mehuja” as a variant spelling of Mehuja-el in a Greek manuscript of Genesis 4:18.
 137. Scott H. Faulring and Kent P. Jackson, eds. *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible Electronic Library (JSTEL) CD-ROM* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, Religious Studies Center, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2011), JST OT1 p. 10 (Genesis 4:16-25; Moses 5:41-6:2), detail.
 138. Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible*, OT1 page 10, p. 95.
 139. Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 80.
 140. *Ibid.*, 81: “Mahijah/Mahujah, which are the same name, come from the root מַהֵּה.” Continuing, Townsend correctly points out that the biblical name Mehujael “comes from [a] root [that

means] ‘destroyed’ or ‘smitten’ one” (ibid, citing Hess, *Studies*, 42; Ludwig Koehler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden, NL: Brill, 1994), 1:567-68. However, other etymologies are possible.

For example, it is interesting that JST has Mahujah instead of Mehujah, which the MT also has written as Mehijael (same w/y spelling issue as in Mahujah and Mahijah - the LXX-A, Peshitta, and Vulgate all point to Mehijael or Mahijael), I’m drawn to the idea that the name derives from HYY/HYH and means “God gives life.” However, a paronomastic connection with MHY/MHH (“wipe out,” “annihilate” — i.e., “blot out”) is also intriguing, especially since this name occurs in the degenerate line of Cain before the Flood (cf. the use of this verb in Genesis 6:7 and 7:4). I’m even more intrigued by a possible connection between this root and the name-title “Mahan” in “Master Mahan,” which could easily be MHN (with N as an appellative), which might suggest the idea of “destroyer” or “annihilator.”

Nibley also suggests the following (Nibley, “Churches in the Wilderness,” 157):

The man who boldly put the questions to Enoch himself was Mahijah, the asker. And, since we are playing games, what the Ma- most strongly suggests is certainly the all-but-universal ancient interrogative, *Ma*, who? Or what? So that the names Mahujah and Mahijah both sound to students of Semitics like questions. In the newly discovered texts from Ebla (Tel-Mardikh) the same names are written with Ma- (Amorite) and Mi (Phoenician-Hebrew).

141. See Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 81.
142. Townsend, March 3, 2020.
143. Parry and Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, Part 3, 4Q530, Fragment 7, column ii, end of line 7, 951.
144. Calabro, May 18, 2020.
145. Hess, s.v. “Mehujael,” Freedman, *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 4:681.
146. Hess (ibid.) transliterates the Samaritan Pentateuch reading incorrectly. We have corrected it here.
147. Ibid.

148. Although we do not take it to be the case that every revelation of Joseph Smith was a transcription from a written source, we note that both in the case of physical texts such as the Book of Mormon and texts seen only in vision, such as in D&C 7, Joseph Smith saw his English translations as being generally faithful to what was written in ancient manuscripts. Notwithstanding the fact that he was obliged to render the meaning of passages in his own vocabulary, we believe his evident care in rendering names literally (Brant A. Gardner, *The Gift and Power: Translating the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011), 157–58; Royal Skousen “Translating the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript,” in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B Reynolds (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1997), 75–76, might be thought of as extending the possibility of reproducing errors in the transcriptions of names from the ancient sources.
149. With respect to Genesis 4:18, Cassuto, *Adam to Noah*, 232, argues that “no scribe would have made so noticeable a mistake as to vary the spelling of the same word occurring twice in succession. Ineluctably we must conclude that the two different forms [i.e., Mehujael and Mehijael] were fully intended.” He continues (*ibid.*, 232–33):

Nor is this an isolated example. On the contrary, such divergences are due to a common practice, in general use, which accords with oriental principles of thought and literary taste, although incongruous with European intellectual and aesthetic criteria. When two variant traditions exist, they are both quoted, side by side, so as not to invalidate one of them. Not only can there be no objection to this thesis — contrary to the opinion of several scholars whose judgment is molded by European ways of thinking, to which they are habituated — but we may go further and regard the practice referred to as the customary and favorite method followed by Scripture. Whenever it is possible to vary the phrasing, the Bible endeavors to do so in order to avoid monotony, and such variation is considered a mark of literary elegance. Even the repetitions, which are a heritage from oral epic poetry (see above, pp. 212 f.), are not, in the written books,

literal, if a change of formulation is at all possible. What has been said of the *form* applies also to the *content*. In the next action we shall discuss an interesting example of two traditions different from each other in *content*; and countless other instances may be found in biblical and Talmudic literature. With reference to variations in form, which are also numerous, it will suffice to mention two examples: the name *Peniel* and *Penuel* (Genesis 32:31-32), and the refrains at the end of the stanzas in the Psalms, which in most cases do not recur in exactly the same wording, but alter their phrasing slightly from time to time.

150. *Ibid.*, 232.
151. Salvatore Cirillo, “Joseph Smith, Mormonism, and Enochic Tradition” (Masters Thesis, Durham University, 2010), 97. Cf. Stuckenbruck, *Book of Giants*, 27.
152. For a more complete account, see Bradshaw and Dahle, “Could Joseph Smith Have Drawn on Ancient Manuscripts When He Translated the Story of Enoch?,” 318-19.
153. Academy for Temple Studies, “Panel Discussion in Provo - Enoch and the Temple,” YouTube video, 24:21, Mar 15, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EaRw40r-TfM>.
154. Nibley asked Black if he had an explanation for the appearance of the name Mahujah in the Book of Moses, and reported his answer as follows: “Well, someday we will find out the source that Joseph Smith used” (Nibley, *Teachings of the Pearl of Great Price*, 269. For the rest of Nibley’s account, see pp. 267-69). Elsewhere Nibley gives a similar account (Hugh W. Nibley, “Letter to Frederick M. Huchel,” in *Boyd J. Petersen Collection* [Provo, UT: L. Tom Perry Special Collections. Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Boyd Jay Petersen Collection, MSS 7449, Box 3, Folder 3, 1997]):

On the week [the Milik and Black translation of the Aramaic Enoch fragments] appeared in 1976, I spent several days with Dr. Black. He was greatly impressed by certain parallels between the Qumran Book of Enoch and Joseph Smith’s. When I started asking for explanations he would switch to other topics. ... He is president of the St.

Andrews Golf Club in Scotland, the oldest in the world, and greatly preferred talking golf with Billy Casper, who also happened to be visiting here at the time, than splitting heads about the Book of Enoch. He did say a number of times, shaking his head in a bemused fashion, “Someday we will find out where Joseph Smith got that. . . . Someday a source will turn up.” Which I doubt not for a moment, since we already have an impressive sampling. I am afraid it will not be what Brother Black is hoping for.

See also the video excerpt of an interview of Hugh Nibley recorded in connection with a National Interfaith Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls, 20 November 1992, in the Kresge Auditorium of Stanford University (Nibley, “What Did Hugh Nibley Have to Say About the LDS Enoch and the Aramaic Book of the Giants?”, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tTuzRQ6bcI>). His comments on his encounter with Black appear at about 6:04–6:50.

155. Martinez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, 260–62. Of course, different translations differ in page size and comprehensiveness. The *Book of Giants* occupies two pages in the translation of Geza Vermes (Geza Vermes, ed., *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, revised ed. [London: Penguin Books, 2004], 549–50) and six pages in the more complete translation of Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, Jr., and Edward Cook that includes an introduction and commentary (Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, Jr., and Edward Cook, eds. *The Dead Sea Scrolls: A New Translation* [New York City: Harper-Collins, 1996], 290–95). The most complete publication of the *Book of Giants*, including translations of many tiny fragments and both the Aramaic original and the English translation runs thirty-six pages (Parry and Tov, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader*, 938–74). However, even comparing Parry and Tov’s most extensive English version to Nickelsburg and VanderKam’s English translation of *1 Enoch* reveals that the *Book of Giants* is only about 12% the size of *1 Enoch* (George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, eds., *1 Enoch: A New Translation* [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004], 19–170). No commentary is included in this *1 Enoch* translation, though the pages are in a smaller format than those of Parry and Tov.

In practical terms, if we take 2% as a low approximation and 12% as a high approximation of relative page count, this means that one

would expect significant resemblances to Moses 6-7 in *1 Enoch* be roughly eight to fifty times more numerous than in the *Book of Giants*. In actuality, however, the parallels in *1 Enoch* are far less dense and generally less relevant and pertinent than those in the *Book of Giants*, especially if one excludes *1 Enoch Book of Parables*, where some of the most important and singular resemblances occur. Note also that a good proportion of the resemblances between the *Book of Giants* and the Book of Moses are unique, while many of the resemblances in *1 Enoch* are also found in the *Book of Giants*.

156. For more about these and other examples, see Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and David J. Larsen, *Enoch, Noah, and the Tower of Babel, In God's Image and Likeness 2* (Salt Lake City: The Interpreter Foundation and Eborn Books, 2014), 41–49, <https://archive.org/details/131203ImageAndLikeness2ReadingS>. For a more comprehensive and up-to-date discussion of relevant affinities between the *Book of Giants* and Moses 6-7, see “Book of Moses Essays,” The Interpreter Foundation, <https://interpreterfoundation.org/book-of-moses-essays/>; especially essays #5-13, 24, and 26.

THE THEOLOGY OF C. S. LEWIS: A LATTER-DAY SAINT PERSPECTIVE

Robert L. Millet

Abstract: *In this essay, Robert Millet describes the work and impact of C. S. Lewis as it pertains to the Latter-day Saints. He explores possible reasons why Church leaders have felt comfortable quoting Lewis in General Conference more than any other non-Latter-day Saint writer and provides a substantial list of the subjects for which his writings have had special appeal to the Saints. While acknowledging Lewis' personal faults and the obvious points of difference between his faith and our own, Millet concludes with an expression of gratitude for his "lasting lessons and his noble legacy."*

[**Editor's Note:** Part of our book chapter reprint series, this article is reprinted here as a service to the LDS community. Original pagination and page numbers have necessarily changed, otherwise the reprint has the same content as the original.]

See Robert L. Millet, "The Theology of C. S. Lewis: A Latter-day Saint Perspective," in *"To Seek the Law of the Lord": Essays in Honor of John W. Welch*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson and Daniel C. Peterson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2017), 189–208. Further information at <https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/to-seek-the-law-of-the-lord-essays-in-honor-of-john-w-welch-2/>.]

It is an honor to be asked to participate in this festschrift for John W. Welch, and I appreciate the kind invitation. Jack has been a significant voice in Latter-day Saint studies for many years. His work on the Book of Mormon, in particular, has stimulated thousands of minds, fanned the flame of faith already burning in people's hearts, and motivated many

people to turn and return to the scriptural work we know as Another Testament of Jesus Christ.

In this paper I would like to focus on the work and impact of C. S. Lewis, as it pertains to Mormonism. I have personally been fascinated by Lewis's life and stimulated by his writings and teachings for more than forty years. Terry Glaspey observed that, "One of the surest reasons for Lewis's vast popular appeal was his belief that the ultimate truths of life are not hidden only in the minds of the learned, but what is really most important in life is accessible to all."¹ Lewis himself noted: "My only function as a Christian writer is to preach 'Mere Christianity' not *ad clerum* but *ad populum*. Any success that has been given me has, I believe, been due to my strict observance of those limits."² Largely for this reason—his obsession with the fundamentals of the Christian faith, those principles and ideas about which Christians of most all stripes can agree—Latter-day Saint readers have admired him and, for the most part, embraced his teachings.

A Lay Church and Theological Literacy

Although The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a lay church, and sermons in the main worship service on the Sabbath are usually delivered by members of the congregation, a visitor would notice how frequently the talks revolve around scripture and scriptural commentary, with insights frequently drawn from non-LDS thinkers. Jerry Johnston, for many years a writer for Salt Lake City's *Deseret News*, found that C. S. Lewis in particular "had been quoted from the Tabernacle podium almost twenty times in twenty years—more than Thomas Jefferson, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Winston Churchill, Pearl S. Buck—more than any other non-LDS author." He suggested that Lewis's common touch with uncommon ideas is what has endeared him to Mormons. As Johnston put it, Lewis is "the one who leans over and speaks into our ear, the friend we can't help but take into our hearts."³

1 Terry W. Glaspey, *Not a Tame Lion: The Spiritual Legacy of C. S. Lewis and the Chronicles of Narnia* (Nashville: Cumberland House, 1996), 160.

2 C. S. Lewis, *Christian Reunion and Other Essays*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Collins Fount Paperbacks, 1990), 20; see also C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 6.

3 Jerry Johnston, "Ideally Speaking," *Deseret News*, 28 March 1998, E-1. Proceedings of a conference held at Brigham Young University celebrating the 100th year of Lewis's birth are found in C. S. Lewis, *The Man and His Message: A Latter-day Saint Perspective*, ed. Andrew C. Skinner and Robert L. Millet (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1999).

Perhaps a lay church like ours is more prone than a traditionally structured Christian church to adopt and appropriate writings that seek to take otherwise esoteric tenets and reduce them to reachable and memorable concepts. Lewis appears to me to be far more practical than sacramental; far more prone to speak of personal engagement with divinity than to focus on ecclesiastical or liturgical matters. In addition, his popularity in LDS culture, as with a broader Christian readership, is no doubt related to the fact that he does not come across as denominational or wedded to any particular religious persuasion. In his adherence to “mere Christianity,” he is everyman’s preacher, every woman’s exegete. He is the thinking Christian’s supreme apologist. “He was not a theological liberal, but neither did his views square with fundamentalism.”⁴

Of course, Clive Staples Lewis was not a Latter-day Saint, and I have no intention of contorting him into one. I cannot read his mind, nor can I always know assuredly what he meant by what he said. But then, neither can anyone else who reads him, unless they were intimately acquainted with him during his life. It is not even possible to say, “Well, Lewis must have meant this or that, inasmuch as he was an Anglican,” or “Surely Jack intended to convey this or that idea, since he was a defender of the Christian faith.” Why not? Because there are parts of Lewis’s theology that defy rubric, that are not placed comfortably within any particular religious tradition.

This is, in fact, what makes him so very fascinating to me and other Latter-day Saints. For pages on end, Lewis’s insights capture Christians of every denomination, and then—suddenly and without warning, in the next paragraph—he will make this person or that person extremely uncomfortable. This breadth, this inclusiveness, this freshness and distinctiveness—these are the things that endear Lewis to me. In the remainder of this paper I will consider the following five doctrinal items from Lewis’s teachings and comment on how they are viewed from an LDS perspective: (1) The True Myth; (2) Surprised by Joy; (3) The Nature of Fallen Man; (4) Transformation in Christ; and (5) Evil and Suffering. I will delimit my comments by referring to his more theological books and leave a consideration of the doctrine contained in his fictional works to others more qualified.

4 Glaspey, *Not a Tame Lion*, Introduction.

The True Myth

One area of study that has seemed especially challenging to the faith of many young Christians proved, ironically, to be foundational to Lewis's acceptance of Christianity. Central to his conversion was his recognition of similarities between mythical patterns in cultures and belief systems throughout the world. The symbols of descent and re-ascent, the suffering and dying god, rebirth and resurrection—these are, in his words, “derived (through human imagination) from the facts of Nature, and the facts of Nature from her Creator.” Lewis added that “the Death and Re-birth pattern is in her because it was first in Him.”⁵ Lewis called such phenomena “good dreams,” archetypal occurrences all about us, those “queer stories scattered all through the heathen religions about a god who dies and comes to life again, and, by his death, has somehow given new life to men.”⁶ Whereas some persons challenge the uniqueness of Christianity because of the frequent emergence of such myths, Lewis came to acknowledge Christianity as the “true myth”—the myth that became history. That is, “Christians are not claiming that simply ‘God’ was incarnate in Jesus. They are claiming that the one true God is He whom the Jews worshipped as Jahweh, and that it is He who has descended.”⁷

Latter-day Saints believe that a plan of salvation—a system of redemption in which God the Father would send his Beloved Son into the world as a Savior—was known to men and women from the beginning, and that Christian prophets have taught what we might call “Christ’s eternal gospel” and have even administered Christian ordinances since the beginning of time.⁸ In overview, Jesus is truly the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” as the Apostles John and Peter declared (1 Pet. 1:19–20; Rev. 13:8; see also Moses 7:47). The atoning sacrifice is not only timely (for those of us who regularly need its cleansing powers) but *timeless*. Though the act of atonement would not take place until Jesus suffered in Gethsemane and on Golgotha in the meridian of time, earth’s earliest inhabitants were taught from the beginning to call upon God in the name of his Beloved Son. Mormons take literally the words of the Apostle Peter that “To [Christ] give all the prophets witness” (Acts 10:43).

5 C. S. Lewis, *Miracles* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 153.

6 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 54.

7 Lewis, *Miracles*, 151.

8 See Robert L. Millet, “The Eternal Gospel,” *Ensign*, July 1996, 48–56.

Therefore, it is reasonable in the LDS view that remnants of truth, pieces of a much larger mosaic, should be found scattered throughout the world in varying cultures and among diverse religious groups, albeit in some cases in altered or even convoluted forms. President Joseph F. Smith said of those who seek to upstage Christianity: Jesus Christ “is no imitator. He taught the truth first; it was his before it was given to man. ...If we find truth in broken fragments through the ages, it may be set down as an incontrovertible fact that it originated at the fountain, and was given to philosophers, inventors, patriots, reformers, and prophets by the inspiration of God. It came from him through his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, in the first place, and from no other source. It is eternal. ...Men are mere repeaters of what he has taught them.”⁹

And so as a Latter-day Saint I find Lewis’s discussion of the true myth to be especially compelling. The “doctrine of death” of a god found throughout the world is, in Lewis’s words, “an ‘eternal gospel’ revealed to men wherever men have sought, or endured, the truth: it is the very nerve of redemption, which anatomising wisdom at all times and in all places lays bare; the inescapable knowledge which the Light that lighteneth every man presses down upon the minds of all who seriously question what the universe is ‘about.’”¹⁰

Surprised by Joy

Lewis frequently commented on another divine manifestation in life — the inner longings that men and women so often feel, a sense of divine homesickness, mysterious moments when we feel ill at ease or out of place in this life, not put off by the throes of mortality as much as by mortality itself. He noted that men and women were often “surprised by joy,” startled by moments that matter, brief brushes with eternity. “All your life,” Lewis pointed out, “an unattained ecstasy has hovered just beyond the grasp of your consciousness.”¹¹ “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy,” he stated, “the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world. ...I must keep alive in myself the desire for my true country, which I shall not find till after death; I must never let it get snowed under or turned aside; I must

9 Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971) 30–31, 395, 398–99.

10 C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 92.

11 *Ibid.*, 132.

make it the main object of life to press on to that other country and to help others to do the same.”¹²

Lewis is speaking, of course, of our longing for heaven and for heavenly things. Latter-day Saints identify with the sentiment because we have, like others, felt the same longings or homesickness. We look at the situation, however, from a slightly different perspective because we believe in a premortal existence—of a life as spirits before we were born, a time wherein we were acquainted with God. These “intimations of immortality,” as Wordsworth called them, also bespeak a memory of what once was, a longing for reunion, re-acquaintance, renewal of association. For us, “homesickness” is not figurative but literal. Our souls pine for the home our bodies cannot remember. As early as 1883, Joseph F. Smith wrote: “Our knowledge of persons and things before we came here, combined with the divinity awakened within our souls through obedience to the gospel, powerfully affects, in my opinion, all our likes and dislikes, and guides our preferences in the course of this life, provided we give careful heed to the admonitions of the Spirit. All those salient truths which come home so forcibly to the head and heart seem but the awakening of the memories of the spirit.”¹³

The Nature of Fallen Man

As a Christian, C. S. Lewis believed in the reality and in the consequences of the fall of Adam and Eve. Because of that fall, death and sin and corruption and decay have entered into the world and encompass us here. Indeed, an acknowledgement of the Fall and of man’s fallen nature is indispensable to an appreciation for the Atonement of Jesus Christ. “A recovery of the old sense of sin,” Lewis observed, “is essential to Christianity. Christ takes it for granted that men are bad. Until we really feel this assumption of his to be true, though we are part of the world He came to save, we are not part of the audience to whom His words are addressed.”¹⁴ In fact, as men and women come unto Christ and surrender their old selves, they begin to recognize more and more their need for redemption and renovation. “When a man is getting better,” Lewis said, “he understands more and more clearly the evil that is still left in him.”¹⁵

So far as I can tell, however, Lewis did not believe that men and women are punished for what Adam and Eve did or that we individually

12 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 121.

13 Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 12–13.

14 Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 51.

15 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 88; see also Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 60.

“sinned in Adam,” as the Church Fathers declared.¹⁶ Further, he taught that “The doctrine of Total Depravity—when the consequence is drawn that, since we are totally depraved, our idea of good is worth simply nothing—may thus turn Christianity into a form of devil-worship.”¹⁷ Having discussed the nature of the Fall and of fallen man, Lewis went on to say that he would have been misunderstood if anyone described his views “as a restatement of the doctrine of Total Depravity. I disbelieve that doctrine, partly on the logical ground that if our depravity were total we should not know ourselves to be depraved, and partly because experience shows us much goodness in human nature.”¹⁸ Nor did Lewis believe that the human body was to be denied or despised. “I know some muddle-headed Christians have talked as if Christianity thought that sex, or the body, or pleasure, were bad in themselves. But they were wrong. Christianity is almost the only one of the great religions which thoroughly approves of the body—which believes that matter is good, that God Himself once took on a human body, that some kind of body is going to be given to us even in Heaven and is going to be an essential part of our happiness, our beauty, and our energy.”¹⁹

President Ezra Taft Benson stated that, “Just as a man does not really desire food until he is hungry, so he does not desire the salvation of Christ until he knows why he needs Christ. No one adequately and properly knows why he needs Christ until he understands and accepts the doctrine of the Fall and its effect upon all mankind.”²⁰ The Latter-day Saints thus view the Fall as a companion doctrine to the Atonement. If there had been no Fall, there would have been no Atonement, and thus the regeneration and glorification that come only through the cleansing power of Christ’s blood could not have been extended to humankind.

Thus, for Latter-day Saints, partaking of the forbidden fruit in Eden brought about a “fortunate fall,” one that opened the way to far more glorious blessings in eternity. As one early Church leader explained: “The fall had a twofold direction—downward, yet forward. It brought man into the world and set his feet upon progression’s highway.”²¹ We teach that even though we are not responsible or accountable for the fall

16 Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 62, 76.

17 *Ibid.*, 33.

18 *Ibid.*, 59.

19 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 92.

20 Ezra Taft Benson, *A Witness and a Warning* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1988), 33.

21 Orson F. Whitney, in *Cowley & Whitney on Doctrine*, comp. Forace Green (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1963), 287.

of Adam and Eve, we are certainly affected by it—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. We agree wholeheartedly with Lewis that fallen man is “not simply an imperfect creature who needs improvement: he is a rebel who must lay down his arms.”²²

The Book of Mormon contains the clearest statements in LDS literature on the doctrine of the Fall and the plight of fallen man. Consider:

Wherefore, all mankind were in a lost and fallen state, and ever would be save they should rely on this Redeemer. (1 Ne. 10:6).

...men drink damnation to their own souls except they humble themselves and become as little children, and believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord.... (Mosiah 3:18–19)

And since man had fallen he could not merit anything of himself; but the sufferings and death of Christ atone for their sins, through faith and repentance, and so forth... (Alma 22:14)

In addition, Lewis once stated that “To ask that God’s love should be content with us as we are is to ask that God should cease to be God: because He is what He is, His love must, in the nature of things, be impeded and repelled by certain stains in our present character, and because He already loves us He must labour to make us lovable.”²³ The Book of Mormon similarly teaches the self-contradiction of God trying to save us in our sins rather than *from* our sins. “What, do ye suppose that mercy can rob justice? I say unto you, Nay; not one whit. If so, God would cease to be God” (Alma 42:25). As Brigham Young declared: “It requires all the atonement of Christ, the mercy of the Father, the pity of

22 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 59.

23 Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 43.

angels and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be with us always, and then to do the very best we possibly can, to get rid of this sin within us.”²⁴

Lewis also taught that because of the Fall we are, in the long run, far better off than if our first parents had not partaken of the forbidden fruit. That is, he believed that redeemed man will rise higher than unfallen man. Jesus Christ, he taught, offered “a deeper happiness and a fuller splendour” than if there had been no Fall. Because man has fallen, he pointed out, “for him God does the great deed.” For man, the prodigal, “the eternal Lamb is killed.” Thus “if ninety and nine righteous races inhabiting distant planets that circle distant suns, and needing no redemption on their own account, were made and glorified by the glory which had descended into our race”—namely Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God—then “redeemed humanity” would become “something more glorious than any unfallen race.” “The greater the sin,” he continued, “the greater the mercy: the deeper the death the brighter the rebirth. And this super-added glory will, with true vicariousness, exalt all creatures and those who have never fallen will thus bless Adam’s fall.”²⁵

Transformation in Christ

There is so much that could be said concerning Lewis’s views on the preeminent place of Jesus Christ. I have been stimulated over the years by Lewis’s discussions of Christ’s suffering and forsakenness in Gethsemane;²⁶ the nature of repentance and how it is that Christ’s “advantage” allows him to “pay the debt”;²⁷ and his provocative and memorable illustrations of how spiritual rebirth entails more than cosmetic or outward changes in behavior.²⁸ The following expression, which Lewis wrote in a letter in 1942, is deeply comforting to Latter-day Saints while at the same time supportive of our emphasis on the need to “endure to the end”: “No amount of falls will really undo us if we keep on picking ourselves up each time. We shall of course be very muddy and tattered children by the time we reach home. But the bathrooms are all ready, the towels put out, and the clean clothes in the airing cupboard. The only fatal thing is to lose one’s temper and give it up. It is when we

24 Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards & Sons, 1851–86), 11:301.

25 Lewis, *Miracles*, 162.

26 C. S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1992), 42, 44.

27 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 59.

28 *Ibid.* 165–66, 169–70.

notice the dirt that God is most present in us: it is the very sign of His presence.”²⁹

C. S. Lewis boldly refused to accept the impotent position of Jesus as merely a great moral teacher. Jesus of Nazareth was either a God, a liar, or a madman.³⁰ “Only two views of this man are possible,” he noted. “Either he was a raving lunatic of an unusually abominable type, or else He was, and is, precisely what He said. There is no middle way. If the records make the first hypothesis unacceptable, you must submit to the second. And if you do that, all else that is claimed by Christians becomes credible—that this Man, having been killed, was yet alive, and that His death, in some manner incomprehensible to human thought, has effected a real change in our relations to the ‘awful’ and ‘righteous’ Lord, and a change in our favour.”³¹

Let me focus briefly on two aspects of Lewis’s treatment of Christ’s redemptive work that particularly appeal to Latter-day Saints: first, the balance between divine grace and human action; and second, the ultimate glorification of man in Christ. From my reading of Lewis, I conclude that there was no question in his mind that salvation was in Christ alone and that the renovation of men and women’s souls was the work of a God. At the same time, he was perfectly clear about the fact that persons who chose to come unto Christ were expected to be more than grateful and passive observers of the changes taking place within them. “We profanely assume that divine and human action exclude one another like the actions of two fellow-creatures so that ‘God did this’ and ‘I did this’ cannot both be true of the same act except in the sense that each contributed a share.” He continued: “In the end we must admit a two-way traffic at the junction....We have nothing that we have not received; but part of what we have received is the power of being something more than receptacles.”³² As Lewis stated elsewhere, “Christians have often disputed as to whether what leads the Christian home is good actions, or faith in Christ. I have no right really to speak on such a difficult question, but it does seem to me like asking which blade in a pair of scissors is most necessary....You see, we are now trying to understand, and to separate

29 *Letters of C. S. Lewis*, ed. W. H. Lewis; rev. and enlarged ed. Walter Hooper (New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1993), 365.

30 See Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 56; C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory and Other Essays*, ed. Walter Hooper (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 105.

31 Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 21.

32 Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*, 49–50.

into water-tight compartments, what exactly God does and what man does when God and man are working together.”³³

Latter-day Saints have often been critical of those who stress salvation by grace alone, while we have often been criticized for a type of works-righteousness because we give work any significance at all. For us the gospel is, in fact, a gospel *covenant*. The Lord agrees to do for us what we could never do for ourselves—to forgive our sins, to lift our burdens, to renew our souls and re-create our nature, to raise us from the dead and qualify us for glory hereafter. Whereupon, we strive to do what we *can* do: have faith in Christ, repent of our sins, be baptized, love and serve one another, and do all in our power to put off the natural man and deny ourselves of ungodliness. In short, we believe that more is required of men and women than a verbal expression of faith in the Lord, more than a confession with the lips that we have received Christ into our hearts. Without question, the power to save us, to change us, to renew our souls, is in Christ. True faith, however, always manifests itself in *faithfulness*. Thus, the real question is not whether one is saved by grace or by works but rather, In whom do we trust? On whom do we rely? (See 1 Ne. 10:6; 2 Ne. 2:8; 31:19; Mor. 6:4.)

Mormons feel that few things would be more sinister than encouraging lip service to God while discouraging obedience and faithful discipleship. On the other hand, surely nothing could be more offensive to God than a smug self-assurance that comes from trusting in one’s own works or relying upon one’s own strength. What is perhaps the most well known passage in LDS literature on this delicate matter is found in the Book of Mormon: “For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Ne. 25:23; see also 10:24; Alma 24:10–11). That is, above and beyond all we can do, we are saved by the grace of Christ; salvation is still the greatest of all the *gifts* of God (D&C 6:13; 14:7). Further, the more we learn to trust the Lord and rely on his merits and mercy, the less anxious we become about life here and hereafter. “Thus, if you have really handed yourself over to Him,” Lewis wisely remarked, “it must follow that you are trying to obey Him. But trying in a new way, a less worried way.”³⁴

The second aspect of Christ’s redeeming work found in Lewis that I wanted to treat briefly concerns what God eventually intends to do with

33 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 131–32; see also Lewis, *Christian Reunion*, 18.

34 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 131.

us. Lewis wrote in *The Problem of Pain* that “We are, not metaphorically but in very truth, a Divine work of art, something that God is making, and therefore something with which He will not be satisfied until it has a certain character. Here again we come up against what I have called the ‘intolerable compliment.’”³⁵

From *Miracles*: “Christ, reascending from his great dive, is bringing up Human Nature with Him. Where He goes, it goes too. It will be made ‘like him’ (Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:1–2).” Lewis went on to say that eventually those who are redeemed in Christ will have the power to perform miracles, just as Christ did. “Christ’s isolation,” he continued, “is not that of a prodigy but of a pioneer. He is the first of His kind; He will not be the last.”³⁶

From *A Grief Observed*: “Sometimes, Lord, one is tempted to say that if you wanted us to behave like the lilies of the field you might have given us an organization more like theirs. But that, I suppose, is just your grand experiment. Or no; not an experiment, for you have no need to find things out. Rather your grand enterprise. To make an organism which is also a spirit; to make that terrible oxymoron, a ‘spiritual animal.’ To take a poor primate, a beast with nerve-endings all over it, a creature with a stomach that wants to be filled, a breeding animal that wants its mate, and say, ‘Now get on with it. Become a god.’”³⁷

From *The Weight of Glory*: “It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you can talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship.... There are no *ordinary* people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilisations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit.... Next to the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses.”³⁸

And from *Mere Christianity*: “Century by century God has guided nature up to the point of producing creatures which can (if they will) be taken right out of nature, turned into ‘gods.’”³⁹

35 Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 38.

36 Lewis, *Miracles*, 178.

37 C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1961), 57.

38 Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, 39–40; emphasis in original.

39 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 188

Being changed in Christ “is not a change from being brainy men to brianier men: it is a change that goes off in a totally different direction — a change from being creatures of God to being sons of God.”⁴⁰

“The command *Be ye perfect* is not idealistic gas. Nor is it a command to do the impossible. He is going to make us into creatures that can obey that command. He said (in the Bible) that we were ‘gods’ and He is going to make good His words. If we let Him—for we can prevent Him if we choose—He will make the feeblest and filthiest of us into a god or goddess, a dazzling, radiant, immortal creature, pulsating all through with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine, a bright stainless mirror which reflects back to God perfectly (though, of course, on a smaller scale) His own boundless power and delight and goodness. The process will be long and in parts very painful; but that is what we are in for. Nothing less. He meant what He said.”⁴¹

Latter-day Saints teach that all men and women, like Christ, are made in the spiritual image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27; Moses 2:27). Through Christ, our physical selves can also become begotten sons and daughters, and so Latter-day Saints feel it is neither robbery nor heresy for the children of God to aspire to be like their heavenly Father (Matt. 5:48; Phil. 2:6). Transformation comes through the merits of Christ and his Atonement (1 John 5:4–5; Rev. 2:7, 11). Through faith we become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, the natural Heir (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 4:7), thus inheriting all things, just as Jesus inherits all things (1 Cor. 3:21–23; Heb. 1:2; Rev. 21:7). In that glorified state we will be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus (Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:49; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 John 3:2), be made partakers of his divine nature (2 Peter 1:3–4), and become one with him and with the Father (John 17:21–23; Phil. 3:21).

Evil and Suffering

C.S. Lewis was an articulate voice in the centuries-old conversation regarding human suffering and the question of evil. If in fact people choose so poorly, and those choices impact others’ lives as tragically as they do, why should God allow human agency or choice? Lewis answers that for one thing, “free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having. ...Of course God knew what would happen if they used their freedom the wrong way: apparently He thought it worth the risk.”⁴² The

40 Ibid., 186.

41 Ibid., 176.

42 Ibid., 53.

inevitable pain and tragedy associated with allowing men and women — particularly debauched and vicious men and women — to exercise their moral agency was less than the evil of denying such agency and thereby reducing us to something less than human beings.⁴³

For Lewis, suffering “is not good in itself. What is good in any painful experience is, for the sufferer, his submission to the will of God, and, for the spectators, the compassion aroused and the acts of mercy to which it leads.”⁴⁴ Suffering is also God’s way of getting our attention, of focusing us on the things of greatest worth, and forcing us to assess the depth and substance of our faith; only then can we learn something about what we are made of and, like Abraham, discover what God already knows about our integrity. “God whispers to us in our pleasures,” Lewis pointed out, “speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”⁴⁵ Thus, God’s love and goodness to us are eternal in nature and work for the ultimate perfection of our character. That love and goodness may not be readily perceived as kind, for often it is through suffering that the dross is burned out and the soul is refined and purified.

God is not just a “senile benevolence” who delights in everyone moving through life in serene, uninterrupted fashion, void of challenges and absent of irony. Indeed, the Almighty has “paid us the intolerable compliment of loving us, in the deepest, most tragic, most inexorable sense.”⁴⁶ The scriptures attest that Jesus learned obedience by the things which he suffered (Heb. 5:8) and that our Lord’s personal engagement with temptation and suffering enabled him to be “touched with the feeling of our infirmities” (Heb. 4:15). Therefore “if tribulation is a necessary element in redemption, we must anticipate that it will never cease till God sees that world to be either redeemed or no further redeemable.”⁴⁷

Latter-day Saints believe that one of the major purposes of mortality is to learn to overcome, to put things into perspective, to keep our passions and desires within the bounds the Lord has set. Some of the greatest challenges to faith come in the form of pain, abuse, seemingly meaningless suffering, ironic tragedy, and man’s inhumanity to man. It is a tenet of Mormonism that pain and suffering are an essential part of

43 See Lewis, *Miracles*, 234.

44 Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, 98.

45 *Ibid.*, 83.

46 *Ibid.*, 35–37.

47 *Ibid.*, 102.

God's plan, not something we seek out, to be sure, but a vital dimension of mortality.

Like Lewis, Latter-day Saints believe that God is all-powerful, that he *could* prevent all suffering, stop all abuse, remove even the possibility of inhumanity, and erase all pain — but that he will not. I hasten to add that Mormonism is not ascetic. Latter-day Saints do not seek out persecution nor glory in pain. “Life is an obstacle course,” Truman Madsen observed. “And sometimes it is a spook alley....And some of our prayers [here in this life] are like the gamblers’, ‘Give me the money I made you promise not to give me if I asked for it.’ What does a true friend do in such a case? God will honor our first request, to let us go through it; and He will provide you with...the way to make it bearable. More, to make it productive.”⁴⁸

Elsewhere Madsen, paraphrasing how Joseph Smith might respond to the problem of evil and suffering as follows: “In [God's] relationship to us, ‘all things are possible’ that are possible. But some things are impossible. We cannot have crucial experience without having it. We cannot unfold into His fullness except in His way. We cannot develop without stress nor be perfected without suffering. The belief that we can write ‘God’ in front of these statements and thus remove the ‘nots’ is an illusion that will only end in disillusion.”⁴⁹

The Fate of the Unevangelized

There is one other dimension of the problem of evil and suffering in Lewis that deserves at least brief mention. It is what some Christian scholars have begun to call the “soteriological problem of evil.” It may be stated simply as follows: If God is good, caring, and omni-loving, how can he allow so many of his children to go to their graves without ever having heard of Jesus Christ, the only name under heaven whereby man can be saved (Acts 4:12)? Some have chosen to take a rather restrictive view of the matter and have concluded that because God is all-wise and all-good, and because no one really deserves to be saved anyway, we ought to be forever grateful that a few, relatively speaking, are saved. Others in a similar camp would simply reply that those who have never heard of Jesus were not elected to do so in the grand economy of God anyway. Still others would swing the pendulum toward a more inclusive

48 “Human Anguish and Divine Love,” in *Four Essays on Love*, Truman G. Madsen (Provo: Communications Workshop, 1971), 59.

49 Truman G. Madsen, *Eternal Man* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1966), 57.

position and thus open the door to a broader definition of “faith in God” or being in Christ.⁵⁰

Lewis explained that “Those who put themselves in [God’s] hands will become perfect, as He is perfect—perfect in love, wisdom, joy, beauty, and immortality. The change will not be completed in this life, for death is an important part of the treatment.”⁵¹ On another occasion he remarked: “Here is another thing that used to puzzle me. Is it not frightfully unfair that this new life [in Christ] should be confined to people who have heard of Christ and been able to believe in Him? But the truth is God has not told us what His arrangements about the other people are. We do know that no man can be saved except through Christ; we do not know that only those who know Him can be saved through Him.”⁵²

Further, Lewis also said: “There are people (a great many of them) who are slowly ceasing to be Christians but who still call themselves by that name: some of them are clergymen. There are other people who are slowly becoming Christians though they do not yet call themselves so. There are people who do not accept the full Christian doctrine about Christ but who are so strongly attracted by Him that they are His in a much deeper sense than they themselves understand. There are people in other religions who are being led by God’s secret influence to concentrate on those parts of their religion which are in agreement with Christianity, and who thus belong to Christ without knowing it...Many of the good Pagans long before Christ’s birth may have been in this position.”⁵³ I would suggest that Clive Staples Lewis is a classic illustration of this principle, that Lewis was led and directed to speak and write on matters of deep significance to the human family, matters that can only be fully grasped through the lenses of the restored gospel. His elevated perspective reaches well beyond what traditional Christianity offers.

In the closing pages of *The Great Divorce*, there is a fascinating conversation between Lewis and George MacDonald. There Lewis is

50 For a detailed treatment of this challenging issue, see John Sanders, *No Other Name: An Investigation into the Destiny of the Unevangelized* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992); *What About Those Who Have Never Heard?* ed. John Sanders (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995); *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*, ed. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Philips (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996); Clark Pinnock, et. al., *The Openness of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994).

51 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 177.

52 Ibid., 65.

53 Ibid., 178.

taught concerning Christ's descent into hell and told, "There is no spirit in prison to Whom He did not preach." Lewis then asked: "And some hear him?" MacDonald answers: "Aye." Lewis followed up: "In your own books,...you were a Universalist. You talked as if all men would be saved. And St. Paul too." MacDonald then delivered a rather complex and difficult response, but one in which he seems to be saying, in essence, that everyone who desires to be saved will be saved. Lewis did not attempt to correct MacDonald's doctrine for the reader.⁵⁴

Like Lewis, Latter-day Saints are inclusivists and hold out hope for the unevangelized without giving up the belief that Christ is the only way to salvation. We believe, of course, that every person will have the opportunity, either in this life or the next, to receive the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ and enter into the everlasting covenant. Thus Mormons go into temples, receive the ordinances of exaltation for themselves, and then return frequently to perform them in behalf of those who have died without them. In short, Latter-day Saints are involved in what some Evangelicals have called "postmortem evangelism."⁵⁵

Conclusion

Again, my purpose in this article has been to suggest why Latter-day Saints have such a fascination with C. S. Lewis. The fact is his writings touch on doctrinal matters that are at the heart of much of what we believe. It would not take much effort to explore ideas about which Mormons would take issue with Lewis—the nature of God, *ex nihilo* creation, the Nicene Trinity, and a few others. And there are obviously things about Mormonism that would grind on Lewis, both in terms of doctrine and lifestyle. He once remarked in a letter, for example, that he strongly objected "to the tyrannic and unscriptural insolence of anything that calls itself a Church and makes teetotalism a condition of membership."⁵⁶ But again, that is not the purpose of this article. My whole point is that C. S. Lewis is an important religious figure throughout the Christian world, including the world of the Latter-day Saints, and that his influence may be broader than many had even supposed.

54 C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1945), 121-22.

55 See Gabriel Fackre, "Divine Perseverance," In *What About Those Who Have Never Heard?* ed. John Sanders (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 71-95; Leonhard Goppelt, *A Commentary on 1 Peter*, ed. Ferdinand Hahn (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 253-65.

56 Lewis, *Letters of C. S. Lewis*, 447.

C. S. Lewis is a thinking man's theologian; a writer whose views are crisp and sharp and challenging. His presentation is neither syrupy nor sentimental on the one hand, nor tedious on the other. His discussions are both spiritually lifting and intellectually stimulating. He himself once described his task and his achievement: "When I began, Christianity came before the great mass of my unbelieving fellow-countrymen either in the highly emotional form offered by revivalists or in the unintelligible language of highly cultured clergymen. Most men were reached by neither. My task was therefore simply that of a translator—one turning Christian doctrine, or what he believed to be such, into the vernacular, into language that the unscholarly people would attend to and could understand."⁵⁷

And perhaps Latter-day Saints have been drawn to Lewis's version of "mere Christianity" because of the ongoing attacks of those who contend that Mormons are not Christian. Lewis wrote: "It is not for us to say who, in the deepest sense, is or is not close to the spirit of Christ. We do not see into men's hearts. We cannot judge, and are indeed forbidden to judge. It would be wicked arrogance for us to say that any man is, or is not, a Christian in this refined sense....When a man who accepts the Christian doctrine lives unworthily of it, it is much clearer to say that he is a bad Christian than to say he is not a Christian."⁵⁸ In paying tribute to this gifted Christian thinker, one Latter-day Saint observed wisely: "Lewis was able to deal with fundamentals without being fundamentalistic. He sought to revive Christian belief in the minds of men without being revivalistic....He believed that Christianity met every test."⁵⁹

C. S. Lewis was clearly not a closet Latter-day Saint, nor would he have been completely comfortable sitting in a Mormon pew. Like the rest of us, Lewis was a flawed human being, one whose remarkable life is littered here and there with signs of his own fallenness. But he loved God, trusted in and honored Jesus Christ, and it is to such persons that Jesus Christ extends His divine grace—in some cases magnifying goodness into greatness. Lewis partook of a significant portion of that greatness, and consequently millions of earth's fellow travellers feel a deep debt of gratitude for his lasting lessons and his noble legacy.

57 C. S. Lewis, *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1970), 183.

58 Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 10, 11.

59 William Clayton Kimball, "The Christian Commitment: C. S. Lewis and the Defense of Doctrine," *Brigham Young University Studies* 12, no. 2 (Winter 1972), 208.

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NOTES ON BOOK OF MORMON HEADS

Stephen O. Smoot

Abstract: *This paper looks at the two types of heads used in the Book of Mormon. It argues against a recent theory that these heads served as mnemonic cues that enabled Joseph Smith to extemporaneously compose and dictate the text. Instead, it argues that the function and form of heads in the Book of Mormon finds ancient precedent in Egyptian literary culture and scribal practice. A brief addendum on the ancient precedent for the chapter breaks in the original text of the Book of Mormon is also provided.*

There are two types of heads that are used in the Book of Mormon.¹ The first are what Brant A. Gardner calls “synoptic headers”² and what I call *subtitles* that occur at the beginning of eight out of the fifteen books in the Book of Mormon. These subtitles follow the main title of each book and provide a summary of that book’s content. They are reproduced in the table beginning on the next page, following Royal Skousen’s critical edition of the text.³

Of the eight subtitles, the lengthiest is found after the title of 1 Nephi (166 English words), followed by Helaman (106 words), then Alma (68 words), 3 Nephi (48 words), Jacob (31 words), 2 Nephi (28 words), and finally 4 Nephi (11 words). There is no discernible pattern in the length of the subtitles in Nephi’s small plates (1 Nephi–Omni), Mormon’s abridgement of the large plates of Nephi (Mosiah–Mormon), or Moroni’s additions to his father’s abridgement (Ether–Moroni). There does, however, appear to be a pattern in the consistency of these subtitles appearing on Mormon’s abridged books in the large plates. Mormon did not include a subtitle on his own book but did include one on each of his abridged books.⁴ One possible way to account for this is that since he was working with preexisting material, it was possible for Mormon to summarize the abridged content and give these books a subtitle.⁵ When he set out to write his own book, though, there were no preexisting

records from which to draw, so Mormon may not have planned his own book out far enough in advance to provide a subtitle.

Book Title	Subtitle
The Book of Nephi, His Reign and Ministry [1 Nephi]	An account of Lehi and his wife Sariah and his four sons, being called, beginning at the eldest, Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi. The Lord warns Lehi to depart out of the land of Jerusalem because he prophesieth unto the people concerning their iniquity and they seek to destroy his life. He taketh three days' journey into the wilderness with his family. Nephi taketh his brethren and returns to the land of Jerusalem after the record of the Jews. The account of their sufferings. They take the daughters of Ishmael to wife. They take their families and depart into the wilderness. Their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness. The course of their travels. They come to the large waters. Nephi's brethren rebelleth against him. He confoundeth them and buildeth a ship. They call the name of the place Bountiful. They cross the large waters into the promised land etc. This is according to the account of Nephi, or in other words, I Nephi wrote this record.
The Book of Nephi [2 Nephi]	An account of the death of Lehi. Nephi's brethren rebelleth against him. The Lord warns Nephi to depart into the wilderness etc. His journeyings in the wilderness etc.
The Book of Jacob the brother of Nephi	The words of his preaching unto his brethren. He confoundeth a man who seeketh to overthrow the doctrine of Christ. A few words concerning the history of the people of Nephi.
The Book of Enos	N/A
The Book of Jarom	N/A
The Book of Omni	N/A
The Words of Mormon	N/A
The Book of Mosiah ⁶	N/A
The Book of Alma the son of Alma	The account of Alma, who was the son of Alma, the first and chief judge over the people of Nephi, and also the high priest over the church. An account of the reign of the judges and the wars and contentions among the people. And also an account of a war between the Nephites and the Lamanites according to the record of Alma, the first and chief judge.

Book Title	Subtitle
The Book of Helaman	An account of the Nephites, their wars and contentions and their dissensions, and also the prophecies of many holy prophets before the coming of Christ, according to the record of Helaman, which was the son of Helaman, and also according to the records of his sons, even down to the coming of Christ. And also many of the Lamanites are converted; an account of their conversion. An account of the righteousness of the Lamanites and the wickedness and abominations of the Nephites, according to the record of Helaman and his sons, even down to the coming of Christ, which is called the book of Helaman etc.
The Book of Nephi the son of Nephi, which was the son of Helaman [3 Nephi]	And Helaman was the son of Helaman, which was the son of Alma, which was the son of Alma, being a descendant of Nephi, which was the son of Lehi, which came out of Jerusalem in the first year of the reign of Zedekiah the king of Judah.
The Book of Nephi, which is the son of Nephi, one of the disciples of Jesus Christ	An account of the people of Nephi according to his record.
The Book of Mormon	N/A
The Book of Ether ⁷	N/A
The Book of Moroni	N/A

The second category of heads are what Gardner calls “a synoptic header for a chapter [within the books of the Book of Mormon]”⁸ and what I called *markers of embedded content* that delineate embedded material (sermons, prophecies, instructions, epistles, and narratives) within individual books of the Book of Mormon. These markers are brief, none of them any longer than sixty English words (the longest appearing at Helaman 7 at 53 words).⁹

Current Chapters	1830 Chapters	Embedded Content Markers
2 Nephi 6–10	2 Nephi V–VII	The words of Jacob the brother of Nephi which he spake unto the people of Nephi:
Jacob 2–3	Jacob II	The words which Jacob the brother of Nephi spake unto the people of Nephi after the death of Nephi:

Current Chapters	1830 Chapters	Embedded Content Markers
Mosiah 9:1–21:27	Mosiah VI–IX	The Record of Zeniff. An account of his people from the time they left the land of Zarahemla until the time that they were delivered out of the hands of the Lamanites.
Mosiah 23–24	Mosiah XI	An account of Alma and the people of the Lord, which was driven into the wilderness by the people of king Noah.
Alma 5–6	Alma III–XI	The words which Alma, the high priest according to the holy order of God, delivered to the people in their cities and villages throughout the land.
Alma 7	Alma V	The words of Alma which he delivered to the people in Gideon, according to his own record.
Alma 9–14	Alma VII–X	The words of Alma and also the words of Amulek which was declared unto the people which was in the land of Ammonihah. And also they are cast into prison and delivered by the miraculous power of God which was in them, according to the record of Alma.
Alma 17–27	Alma XII–XV	An account of the sons of Mosiah, which rejected their rights to the kingdom for the word of God and went up to the land of Nephi to preach to the Lamanites. Their sufferings and deliverance according to the record of Alma.
Alma 21:1–17	Alma XIII	An account of the preaching of Aaron and Muloki and their brethren to the Lamanites.
Alma 36–37	Alma XVII	The commandments of Alma to his son Helaman.
Alma 38	Alma XVIII	The commandments of Alma to his son Shiblon.
Alma 39–42	Alma XIX	The commandments of Alma to his son Corianton.

Current Chapters	1830 Chapters	Embedded Content Markers
Alma 45–62	Alma XXI–XXIX	The account of the people of Nephi and their wars and dissensions in the days of Helaman, according to the record of Helaman, which he kept in his days.
Helaman 7–16	Helaman III–V	The Prophecy of Nephi the son of Helaman. God threatens the people of Nephi that he will visit them in his anger to their utter destruction except they repent of their wickedness. God smiteth the people of Nephi with pestilence; they repent and turn unto him. Samuel, a Lamanite, prophesies unto the Nephites.
Helaman 13–15	Helaman V	The prophecy of Samuel the Lamanite to the Nephites.
3 Nephi 11–28	3 Nephi V–XIII	Jesus Christ sheweth himself unto the people of Nephi as the multitude were gathered together in the land Bountiful and did minister unto them. And on this wise did he shew himself unto them.
Moroni 8	Moroni VIII	An epistle of my father Mormon, written to me Moroni; and it was written unto me soon after my calling to the ministry. And on this wise did he write to me, saying:
Moroni 9	Moroni IX	The second epistle of Mormon to his son Moroni.

Of the content that falls under these markers, the material at Mosiah 9:1–21:27, Alma 5–16, Alma 7, Alma 9–14, Alma 17–27, Alma 45–62, and Moroni 8–9 is presented explicitly as embedded content (“according to his own record,” “according to the record of Alma,” “the second epistle of Mormon,” etc.). Here we do discern some kind of emerging pattern, albeit one that is not universally applied throughout Mormon’s abridgement (e.g. the failure to include comparable markers of embedded content at Alma 54:4–14 and 15–23; Alma 56–58; Alma 60; Alma 61).¹⁰

What is the best way to understand the heads in the Book of Mormon? Gardner, as noted above, has recently provided an excellent discussion of how the heads function in structuring the text. Others have recently sought to identify external influences on these heads and how they affect the structure of the text of the Book of Mormon. According to William L. Davis in his recent book, they should be understood as framing devices or outlines used by Joseph Smith in his oral performance of the Book of Mormon.¹¹ They are, he maintains, essentially the product of nineteenth century sermon culture to which Joseph Smith was exposed and in which he participated.¹² I do not intend at this time to critically evaluate the entirety of Davis' argument.¹³ I do wish to propose, however, that ancient parallels can be cited for the heads in the Book of Mormon which are consistent with the book's claims that its authors had training in the Egyptian language (1 Nephi 1:2; Mosiah 1:4; Mormon 9:32).¹⁴

The Egyptian Narrative Infinitive

Ancient Egyptian features a grammatical construction known commonly as the narrative infinitive. Basically, the narrative infinitive demarcates progress in a narrative by utilizing a verbal infinitive to express the action. As explained by James Allen, "Some Middle Egyptian stories use the infinitive instead of a normal finite verb form within the body of a narration This is a stylistic device adopted from travel diaries, where the infinitive is used as the heading of each day's events It is used to give the flavor of a travel diary to the narrative. Most often it occurs after major breaks in the narrative at places where a modern novel might begin a new section or chapter."¹⁵ Or, as Daniel Selden puts it, "In historical narratives Middle Egyptian scribes often used the infinitive ... to move the story ahead. The style seems to imitate or to insert actual journal entries made on military campaign [sic] into the narratives that the scribes composed afterward for commemorative purposes."¹⁶ Ariel Shisha-Halevy, writing in 2007, succinctly notes that "[t]he narrative infinitive, a construction as important in Egyptian as it is in Semitic," serves to anchor the "narrative structure and texture" by marking "an initial episode boundary in narrative."¹⁷

The textbook example of the narrative infinitive in action comes from the story of Sinuhe: "Sinuhe's flight from Egypt is presented in journal form ... with each major stage marked by an initial narrative infinitive."¹⁸ These narrative infinitives act as a head to the episodes that feature them (emphasis added):

My making off upstream. [irt.i šmt m hntyt] I did not intend to arrive at that residence, having anticipated that unrest would develop, and I did not think to live after him. I traversed Two-Maats Canal in the area of Sycamore, landed at Snefru's Island, and spent the day on the edge of the cultivation.¹⁹

My giving a path to my feet downstream. [rdit.i wst n rdwy.i m hd] I touched the Ruler's Walls, made to bar the Asiatics. I took up my crouch in a bush, in fear that the watchmen on duty on the enclosure might see.²⁰

My making off at the time of dusk. [ir(t).i šmt tr n hzw(i)] At dawn I reached Peten, and landed at an island of the Great Black. Thirst fell and surprised me, so that I was seared, my throat dusty. I said, "This is the taste of death."²¹

My lifting up my mind and collecting my limbs. [tzt.i ib.i s3k.i h'w.i] I heard the sound of a herd's lowing, and spotted Asiatics. Their pathfinder recognized me, who had once been in Blackland, Then he gave me water and cooked milk for me. I went with him to his tribesmen. What they did was good.²²

Later in the story, after he has been rescued by the Asiatic king Ammunanši, Sinuhe faces off with an Asiatic strongman in a lengthy narrative episode that is reminiscent of the biblical story of David and Goliath (or, for that matter, the showdown between Shiz and Coriantumr in the book of Ether). The episode is, once again, demarcated with a narrative infinitive:

Coming of a strongman of Retjenu, challenging me in my tent. [iwt nht n tnw mtz.f wi m imzm.i] He was a champion without peer, for he had subdued it entirely. He said he would fight with me, he anticipated that he would rob me ...²³

Sinuhe is not the only Middle Egyptian narrative composition to feature the infinitive in a narrative head. The opening episode of the story of the shipwrecked sailor also uses the infinitive form of the verb *dd* ("to speak") to begin the account:

Recitation by an able follower. [*dd in šmsw ikr*] Be informed, high official: look, we have reached home. The mallet has been taken, the mooring-post has been hit, and the prow-rope is set on land. Praise has been given, and thanks, and every man is embracing the other. Our crew has returned safe, with no loss of our expedition. We have reached Wawat's wake, we have

gone by Bigga. So, look, we have returned in peace; our land, we have reached it.²⁴

That this use of the infinitive constitutes what could properly be called a head, heading, or caption cannot be doubted. Gardiner, in his authoritative grammar, straightforwardly notes that this form of the infinitive occurs “absolutely in *headings* to scenes, *titles* to parts of books and the like.” As he explains, “the infinitive is used in *narrative* to announce incidents of outstanding importance.”²⁵

The two main differences between Egyptian narrative heads and Book of Mormon heads are (1) the length and (2) the sentence structures. Egyptian narrative captions are typically very brief, usually only a few words. Book of Mormon heads, on the other hand, can run as long as 168 words (in English) as in the case of 1 Nephi. The markers of embedded content in the Book of Mormon, on the other hand, are overall rather brief (in some cases less than ten English words).

In terms of sentence structure, Book of Mormon subtitles and markers of embedded content do not, strictly speaking, employ infinitive verbs (English gerunds). Rather, they tend to start as a nonverbal nominal sentence (“an account of ...,” “the words of ...,” “the prophecy of ...,” etc.) before transitioning into more complex sentences involving various verbal types and clauses. This, however, is less problematic for the markers of embedded content, as we’ll explore below.

Titles for Utterances of the Book of the Dead

As Burkhard Backes explained in his 2009 study, “It is commonly known that besides the titles of the particular utterances, a longer collective title can introduce a Book of the Dead manuscript.”²⁶ This *Gesamttitel* to the Book of the Dead, as Backes calls it, can vary in length and does not appear uniformly in Book of the Dead manuscripts.²⁷ The “standard” version of the title — although so far only attested in two New Kingdom manuscripts (the Books of the Dead belonging to Hunefer and Ani)²⁸ — is rather lengthy, coming in at about 24–27 Egyptian words depending on how you count compound nouns and prepositions and 40–50 English words depending on the translation:

*ḥꜣt-ꜥ m rw nw prꜣt m hrw sꜥsw sꜣḥw prꜣ(t) ḥꜣyt m ḥr-nꜥr ꜣḥt
m imnt nfrt ḏdt hrw n ꜥrs ꜥꜣ m-ḥt prꜣt*

Beginning of the utterances of coming forth in daytime;
the praises and recitations; going and coming forth in the

necropolis; that which is useful in the beautiful West. What is to be spoken on the day of burial; entering after going forth.²⁹

Here begin the spells of going out into the day, to praises and recitations for going to and fro in the realm of the dead, which are beneficial in the beautiful West, and which are to be spoken on the day of burial and of going in after coming out.³⁰

Additional lengthy titles for individual utterances of the Book of the Dead can likewise be cited (e.g. BD 17, 130, 141, 148, 180).³¹ BD 180, for example, begins:

*r n prit m hrw dwz R^c r imnt rdit ḥknw n imiw dwz^t wn wz^t
n zḥ iḳr imi ḥr-nṯr rdit n.f šmiwt.f swšḥ nmwt.f^cḳ prit m
ḥr-nṯr irit ḥprw m b^z ḥḥ*

Utterance of coming forth in daytime; to commend Re to the West; to give praises to the inhabitants of the Duat; to open a path for the noble spirit who dwells in the necropolis, giving him his movements and extending wide his steps; for going in and out of the necropolis; for transforming shape as a living Ba.³²

As with the narrative infinitive in historical-literary prose, these titles from the Book of the Dead employ the infinitive (*prit*, *h^zyt*, *rdit*, *irit*, etc.) to express the purpose of the text.

Although the text post-dates the departure of Lehi by several centuries, a look at the full title of the Book of Breathings reveals that the idea of providing a lengthy title to the text survived into the Ptolemaic period:

*ḥz^t-^c m š^cyt m snsn ir.n ṯst n sn.s Wsir iw s^cḥḥ b^z.f r s^cḥḥ
ḥz^t.f r srnp ḥ^cwt.f nbt m wḥmy r ḥmny.f zḥt ḥn^c it.f R^c r
sh^c b^z.f m pt m itn n i^cḥ r psd ḥz^t.f m s^zḥ m ḥt n Nwt r rdit
ḥpr mitt NN n Wsir*

Beginning of the Document of Breathing which Isis made for her brother Osiris so that his soul may be caused to live; to cause his body to live; to rejuvenate all his limbs again so that he might join the horizon with his father Re; to cause his soul to appear in heaven as the disk of the moon; to make his body shine as Orion in the body of Nut; to cause the same thing to happen to the Osiris NN.³³

Like its forerunner (the Book of the Dead), the title in the Book of Breathings uses the infinitive to describe the text's purpose.³⁴ As seen from these examples, "Sometimes a particular text will have, as part of its

title, the specific purpose for which the text was written. These purposes also provide something of the *Sitz im Leben* of the work. The purposes can be quite elaborate, sometimes reminding one of Victorian English titles.³⁵ This is not to suggest that Nephi or other ancient Israelites with scribal training were instructed in the composition and transmission of Egyptian funerary texts, only that broadly speaking the idea of using elaborate heads as titles for literary works is attested in Egyptian literary culture both before and after Nephi's day.³⁶

Embedded Documents in Egyptian Historical and Narrative Texts

Like the Book of Mormon, ancient Egyptian narrative and historical texts sometimes embed documents such as epistles. When so doing, they sometimes, like the Book of Mormon, demarcate this content with clear heads. The examples from Sinuhe, once again, are illustrative. In the account, a royal decree from pharaoh Senwosret I is quoted *in extenso* with the following head (emphasis added):

*Copy of the decree brought to your servant, about fetching him to Egypt. Horus Living One of Birth, Two Ladies Living One of Birth, Dual King Kheperkare, Sun's Son Amenemhat, alive forever continually: king's decree to follower Sinuhe.*³⁷

After quoting the embedded decree, Sinuhe's response is also embedded in full with a comparable head:

*Copy of the response to this decree. Palace-servant Sinuhe, who says: In very good peace!*³⁸

Historical inscriptions, such as the Second Kamose Stela, also quote embedded documents. The Second Kamose Stela quotes an epistle but (as with the epistle of Moroni to Ammoron [Alma 54:4–14] or Helaman to Moroni [Alma 56–58]) does not provide a head comparable to what is offered in Sinuhe. Rather, it merely introduces the embedded text thus:

For it was on the upland way of the oasis that I captured his [i.e. the Hyksos king Apophis'] messenger going south to Kush with a written letter. I found on it saying in writing [*gm.n.i hr.s m ḏd m sš*]: [commencement of embedded letter]³⁹

Titles of Wisdom Texts

Worth noting here too are the intriguing parallels between the heads in ancient Egyptian wisdom or instructional texts and the heads marking

Alma's wisdom instructions ("commandments") to his sons Helaman (Alma 36–37), Shiblon (Alma 38), and Corianton (Alma 39–42):

- "The commandments of Alma to his son Helaman."
- "The commandments of Alma to his son Shiblon."
- "The commandments of Alma to his son Corianton."

These short, terse heads in the Book of Mormon follow, essentially, the typical formula employed in Egyptian wisdom texts, as can be seen in the following examples:

The beginning of the instruction which the hereditary prince and count, the king's son Hardedef made for his son whom he raised up, named Auibre. He says: [commencement of instructions]⁴⁰

Beginning of the phrases of good speech said by member of the elite, high official, god's father, god's beloved, king's son, eldest of his body, city-overseer and vizier Ptahhotep, in teaching the ignorant to learn according to the standard of good speech, as what is useful for him who will listen, as what is distressful for him who will overstep it. So, he said to his son: [commencement of instructions]⁴¹

Beginning of the teaching made by His Majesty the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Sehetep-ib-Re, the Son of Re, Amenemhat, true of voice. He speaks to reveal truth to his son, the Lord of All [Senwosret I]. He says: [commencement of instructions]⁴²

Beginning of the teaching made by a man from Sile (Dua-Khety is his name) for his son (Pepi is his name) And it came to pass that he said to him: [commencement of instructions]⁴³

Beginning of the teaching that he [Sehetep-ib-Re] made to his children: [commencement of instructions]⁴⁴

The beginning of the instruction which a man made for his son, as he says: [commencement of instructions]⁴⁵

The beginning of the teaching instruction, the utterances for the way of life, which the scribe Amunnakhte made (for) his apprentice Hor-Min. He says: [commencement of instructions]⁴⁶

The typical formula for the heads of Egyptian wisdom texts is: (1) to denominate the sayings as "instructions, teachings" (*sbꜣyt*) or in the case of Ptahhotep "good words/speech" (*mdt nfrt*), (2) to identify the giver of the instructions (typically the father), and then (3) identify the recipient (typically a son).⁴⁷ The heads to Alma's instructions to his sons follow

this formula. That Alma’s “commandments” to his sons can be properly considered wisdom teachings or instructions in the classical Egyptian (and Israelite) sense is justifiable by the fact that Alma instructs his sons in theological as well as moral matters, both of which feature prominently in ancient wisdom texts.⁴⁸ This is, I contend, a much better way to understand the heads to these portions of embedded text than the explanation offered by Davis, who sees them as simple “mnemonic cues” that granted Joseph Smith the ability to conjure 7,811 words extemporaneously.⁴⁹

Book of Mormon Heads Reconsidered

As mentioned above, the Egyptian narrative infinitive is not an exact parallel to the types of heads in the Book of Mormon. It is, however, conceptually and functionally close enough to merit our attention and consideration. The parallels between the Book of Mormon’s markers of embedded content and the Egyptian textual apparatuses mentioned above are especially noteworthy. Readers can decide for themselves whether they find Davis’ argument persuasive that Joseph Smith could have “extrapolate[d] lengthy narratives from very short outlines and extremely brief cues.”⁵⁰ What they should keep in mind as they do evaluate his claim is that there are ways to account for the structure of the Book of Mormon that are consistent with its claim to being an ancient text.

Addendum: Chapters and Other Textual Divisions

Although not directly relevant to the discussion of heads in the Book of Mormon, I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to make one final tangential note. Ancient Egyptian texts sometimes used internal markers to signal content division within a text. This includes the use of numbered “chapters” (*hwt*) — so designated in Egyptological literature — as seen in the New Kingdom hymns to Amun preserved on P. Leiden I 350 and the Instructions of Amenemope preserved on P. BM 10474.⁵¹ In addition, divisions between different texts copied on the same papyrus roll were sometimes marked with the use of the *hst-ꜥ m* (“beginning of ...”) formula, as seen in the Bremner-Rhind Papyrus to differentiate between the Songs of Isis and Nephthys and the Book of Overthrowing Apep.⁵² As it happens, the latter is “split up into a number of subsections, each of which is prefaced” with the subtitle *šꜥyt nt ...* (“the book of ...”).⁵³ We thus encounter within the Book of Overthrowing Apep:⁵⁴

- “The first book of felling ‘Apep the foe of Re” (23/16–17)⁵⁵
- “The book of felling the foe of Re daily” (26/7)
- “The book of repelling of ‘Apep the great enemy which is

- done at morning-tide” (26/11–12)
- “The book of knowing the creations of Re and felling ‘Apep” (26/21).
- Another version of the “book of knowing the creations of Re and felling ‘Apep” with the same title (28/20)
- “The stanza of conjuring their names” (29/16)
- “The book of felling ‘Apep” (32/3)
- “Another book of felling ‘Apep” (32/6)⁵⁶

How is this relevant to the Book of Mormon? “The evidence we have from the dictation of the Book of Mormon underscores that chapters were original to the plates — both for the small and large plates. Royal Skousen’s examination of the original manuscript suggests that, just as with breaks between books, there was something Joseph saw as he translated that caused him to indicate to his scribe that there would be a break, later marked as a chapter.”⁵⁷ Skousen suggests this may have been “a symbol of some kind” or “more likely ... the last words of the section were followed by blankness. Recognizing that the section was ending, Joseph Smith then told the scribe to write the word *chapter*, with the understanding that the appropriate number would be added later.”⁵⁸ Whatever the case, there is, as we’ve seen above, precedent in ancient Egyptian scribal practice for structuring textual content into both chapters and subsections. There is, incidentally, also ancient precedent for Skousen’s suggestion that Joseph was alerted to textual divisions by *vacat* space on the plates.⁵⁹

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Endnotes

1. For previous important studies on Book of Mormon heads, see Thomas W. Mackay, “Mormon as Editor: A Study in Colophons, Headers, and Source Indicators,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 2, no. 2 (July 1993): 90–109; Brant A. Gardner, “Labor Diligently to Write: The Ancient Making of a Modern Scripture,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 35 (2020): 23–37, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/labor-diligently-to-write-the-ancient-making-of-a-modern-scripture-1/>.
2. Gardner, “Labor Diligently to Write,” 23.
3. Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 5, 72, 155, 277, 507, 564, 642.
4. The exception is the book of Mosiah. But, as noted below, this book is missing its opening chapters.
5. Gardner proposes, “It is probable [that Mormon created synoptic headers] because there were outline headers on the large plates (assuming that Nephi created them on the small plates because it was part of the style he had already incorporated for the large plates). While Mormon probably saw a header for each named book he edited, the specific headers he included were his own text, not copies of what was on the large plates. Mormon’s headers are specific to the selections he made from the large plates. Therefore, Mormon copied the concept of the headers, but not the text of the headers.” Gardner, “Labor Diligently to Write,” 24.
6. The first two chapters (at least) of the Book of Mosiah are not extant, having been lost by Martin Harris in the summer of 1828. See Royal Skousen, “Critical Methodology and the Text of the Book of Mormon,” *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6, no. 1 (1994): 137–139; Don Bradley, *The Lost 116 Pages: Reconstructing the Book of Mormon’s Missing Stories* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2019), 276–278. It seems very likely, but is impossible to prove, that this book too would have had a subtitle.
7. The subtitle in the current 1981/2013 edition (“The record of the Jaredites taken from the twenty-four plates found by the people of Limhi in the days of King Mosiah”) is not part of the original text, but was composed for the 1920 edition. See Royal Skousen,

Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon, Part Six: 3 Nephi 19–Moroni 10 (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2009), 3715.

8. Gardner, “Labor Diligently to Write,” 25.
9. Here I am following, in part, the helpful and justifiable structure of this content provided by Grant Hardy, *The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ: Maxwell Institute Study Edition* (Provo, UT: The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2018), 71, 134, 185, 224, 252, 259, 265, 286, 298, 336, 343, 345, 359, 432, 446, 478, 592. Unlike Hardy, I read Moroni 8:1a as a marker of embedded content. For the text I am once again following Skousen, *The Earliest Text*, 91, 157, 217, 254, 291, 300, 308, 338, 356, 406, 415, 417, 437, 530, 550, 593, 729.
10. See further Robert F. Smith, “Epistolary Form in the Book of Mormon,” *FARMS Review* 22, no. 2 (2010): 125–35.
11. William L. Davis, *Visions in a Seer Stone: Joseph Smith and the Making of the Book of Mormon* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2020).
12. *Ibid.*, 89–159.
13. For reviews of Davis’s work, see Brian C. Hales, “Theories and Assumptions: A Review of William L. Davis’s Visions in a Seer Stone,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 39 (2020): 151–90, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/theories-and-assumptions-a-review-of-william-l-daviss-visions-in-a-seer-stone/>; Brant A. Gardner “Oral Creation and the Dictation of the Book of Mormon,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 39 (2020): 191–206, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/oral-creation-and-the-dictation-of-the-book-of-mormon/>.
14. See further Brant A. Gardner, “Nephi as Scribe,” *Mormon Studies Review* 23, no. 1 (2011): 45–55; Neal Rappleye, “Learning Nephi’s Language: Creating a Context for 1 Nephi 1:2,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 16 (2015): 151–159, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/learning-nephis-language-creating-a-context-for-1-nephi-12/>. Scholars do not doubt the Egyptian influence on Israelite scribal practices and literary culture, only the extent and the method of transmission. For recent views, see Bernd U. Schipper, “Die Lehre des Amenemope und Prov 22,17–24,22: Eine Neubestimmung des literarischen Verhältnisses (Teil

- 1) *Zeitschrift für Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 117 (2005): 53–72; Schipper, “Egypt and Israel: The Ways of Cultural Contacts in the Late Bronze Age and Iron Age (20th–26th Dynasty),” *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 4, no. 3 (2012): 30–47; Schipper, “Egyptian Backgrounds to the Psalms,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Psalms*, ed. William P. Brown (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 57–75; Nili Shupak, “The Contribution of Egyptian Wisdom to the Study of Biblical Wisdom Literature,” in *Was There A Wisdom Tradition?: New Prospects in Israelite Wisdom Studies*, ed. Mark R. Sneed (Atlanta, GA: SBL Press, 2015), 265–304; Michael V. Fox, “From Amenemope to Proverbs: Editorial Art in Proverbs 22,17–23,11,” *Zeitschrift für Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 126 (2014): 76–91; Shirly Ben-Dor Evian, “Egypt and Israel: The Never-Ending Story,” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 80, no. 1 (2017): 30–39.
15. James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Culture of Hieroglyphs*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 190–91.
 16. Daniel L. Selden, *Hieroglyphic Egyptian: An Introduction to the Language and Literature of the Middle Kingdom*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 208.
 17. Ariel Shisha-Halevy, “Determination-Signalling Environment in Old and Middle Egyptian: Work-Notes and Reflections,” in *Studies in Semitic and General Linguistics in Honor of Gideon Goldenberg*, ed. Tali Bar and Eran Cohen (Münster, DEU: Ugarit Verlag, 2007), 251.
 18. James P. Allen, *Middle Egyptian Literature: Eight Literary Works of the Middle Kingdom* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 66.
 19. Allen, *Middle Egyptian Literature*, 65–66.
 20. *Ibid.*, 70.
 21. *Ibid.*, 72.
 22. *Ibid.*, 73–74.
 23. *Ibid.*, 98.
 24. *Ibid.*, 10.
 25. Sir Alan Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar: Being an Introduction to the Study of Hieroglyphs*, 3rd rev. ed. (Oxford, UK: Griffith Institute, 1957), 230, emphasis in original. Compare Allen, *Middle*

- Egyptian: An Introduction*, 190; James E. Hoch, *Middle Egyptian Grammar* (Mississauga, CAN: Benben Publications, 1997), 68.
26. Burkhard Backes, „Was zu sagen ist“ – zum Gesamttitel des Totenbuchs,” in *Ausgestattet mit den Schriften des Thot. Festschrift für Irmtraut Munro zu ihrem 65. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden, DEU: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009), 5, translation mine: “Es ist allgemein bekannt, dass neben den Titeln der einzelnen Sprüche ein längerer Gesamttitel eine Totenbuch-Handschrift einleiten kann.”
 27. Backes, “Was zu sagen ist,” 5–28.
 28. Backes, “Was zu sagen ist,” 14.
 29. Translation mine, following P. BM 10470 (the Book of the Dead of Ani); hieroglyphic text reproduced in Backes, “Was zu sagen ist,” 15.
 30. Raymond O. Faulkner, trans., *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, rev. ed. (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 34.
 31. Helpfully gathered in John Gee, “Literary Titles in Greco-Roman Egypt,” in *En détail – Philologie und Archäologie im Diskurs Festschrift für Hans-W. Fischer-Elfert*, ed. Marc Brose, Peter Dils, Franziska Naether, Lutz Popko, and Dietrich Raue (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2019), 330–334.
 32. Translation mine, following P. Louvre 3073 (anonymous Book of the Dead); hieroglyphic text reproduced in Backes, “Was zu sagen ist,” 13; cf. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, 177.
 33. Translation mine; P. Louvre 3284 in Michael D. Rhodes, *The Hor Book of Breathings: A Translation and Commentary* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002), 53.
 34. In this case, the *r* + infinitive construct. See Allen, *Middle Egyptian: An Introduction*, 188.
 35. Gee, “Literary Titles,” 347.
 36. See further Gee, “Literary Titles,” 329–352.
 37. Allen, *Middle Egyptian Literature*, 117.
 38. *Ibid.*, 125.
 39. William K. Simpson, “The Kamose Texts,” in *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, Stelae*,

- Autobiographies, and Poetry*, ed. William Kelly Simpson, 3rd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 349.
40. Simpson, “The Instruction of Hardedef,” in *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 127.
 41. Allen, *Middle Egyptian Literature*, 171.
 42. Translation mine. For the hieroglyphic text, see Wolfgang Helck, *Der Text der „Lehre Amenemhets I. für Seinen Sohn“* (Wiesbaden, DEU: Harrassowitz, 1969), 7–10.
 43. Translation mine. For the hieroglyphic text, see Wolfgang Helck, *Die Lehre des dwz-ḥtjj* (Wiesbaden, DEU: Harrassowitz, 1970), 12–13, 19.
 44. Allen, *Middle Egyptian Literature*, 157.
 45. Simpson, “The Instruction of a Man for His Son,” in *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 176.
 46. Simpson, “The Instruction of Amunnakhte,” in *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 221.
 47. See additionally Vincent A. Tobin, “The Teaching for King Merikare,” in *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 153: “[The beginning of the Instruction made by the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Khet]y, for his son, Merikare.”
 48. These two categories are interwoven abundantly in the instructions for Merikare, to cite the most obvious example. Tobin, “The Teaching for King Merikare,” 153–65. See further the comments in Mark A. Awabdy, “Teaching Children in the Instruction of Amenemope and Deuteronomy,” *Vetus Testamentum* 65 (2015): 1–8.
 49. Davis, *Visions in a Seer Stone*, 140–41. Davis fails to appreciate not only the tight literary, theological, and narrative structure of these chapters, particularly the chiasmic structure of Alma 36, but also the precise intertextuality displayed throughout these chapters with the words of other Book of Mormon prophets, including some whose words would not be translated or otherwise rendered into English until after the rendering of Alma’s words to his sons. See, e.g., John W. Welch, “A Masterpiece: Alma 36,” in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1991), 114–131; Joseph Spencer, *An Other Testament: On Typology*, 2nd ed. (Provo, UT: The Neal A. Maxwell Institute

for Religious Scholarship, 2016), 1–32; Kerry M. Hull, Nicholas J. Frederick, and Hank R. Smith, eds., *Give Ear to My Words: Text and Context of Alma 36–42* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2019); John W. Welch, “Textual Consistency” and “Three Accounts of Alma’s Conversion,” in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1992), 21–23, 150–153; John Hilton III, “Textual Similarities in the Words of Abinadi and Alma’s Counsel to Corianton,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (2012): 39–60; S. Kent Brown, “Alma’s Conversion: Reminiscences in His Sermons” in *A Book of Mormon Treasury: Gospel Insights from General Authorities and Religious Educators* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2003), 246–61. I leave it to the individual readers to decide for themselves whether the repetitious “mnemonic cues” of a meager eight words each would be sufficient to launch “Smith’s performance into [an] ensuing narrative” (Davis, *Visions in a Seer Stone*, 141) as vibrant and rich as Alma 36–42.

50. Davis, *Visions in a Seer Stone*, 158.
51. Alan H. Gardiner, “Hymns to Amon from a Leiden Papyrus,” *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 42 (1905): 12–42; E. A. Wallis Budge, *Facsimiles of Egyptian Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum: With Descriptions, Summaries of Contents, Etc.* (London: The British Museum, 1923), 41–51; Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Volume II: The New Kingdom* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1976), 147.
52. P. Bremner-Rhind 1/1, 22/1; in Raymond O. Faulkner, *The Papyrus Bremner-Rhind (British Museum No. 10188)* (Bruxelles, BEL: Fondation égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1933) 1, 42; Faulkner, “The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus: I. A. The Songs of Isis and Nephthys,” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 22, no. 2 (December 1936): 121–140; Faulkner, “The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus: III: D. The Book of Overthrowing ‘Apep,” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 23, no. 2 (December 1937): 166–185.
53. Faulkner, “The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus: III,” 166.
54. The complete name of which is: “The book of the felling of ‘Apep the foe of Re and the foe of King Onnophris, justified, which is performed daily in the temple of Amen-Re, Lord of the Thrones

- of the Two Lands, who dwells in Karnak.” See Faulkner, “The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus: III,” 166.
55. Followed by a “second chapter” (*ḥwt mḥt-2*) at 24/21; cf. Faulkner, “The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus: III,” 166.
 56. Faulkner, “The Bremner-Rhind Papyrus: III,” 166.
 57. Gardner, “Labor Diligently to Write,” 30, citing Skousen, “Critical Methodology,” 137; cf. Royal Skousen, “Translating the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript,” in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997), 85–87; “How Joseph Smith Translated the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7, no. 1 (1998): 27–28.
 58. Skousen, “Translating the Book of Mormon,” 85.
 59. The Dead Sea Scrolls and other sources from antiquity show signs of subdividing textual units through the use of *vacats* and other spacing practices on the manuscript. “It should be noted that *vacats* appear throughout the Qumran Scrolls. They are scribal conventions to divide the texts into meaningful units.” James H. Charlesworth and James D. McSpadden, “The Sociological and Liturgical Dimensions of Psalm Peshier 1 (4QPPSa): Some Prolegomenous Reflections,” in *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Princeton Symposium on the Dead Sea Scrolls*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 334n55. See also Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001), 50–53; H. Gregory Snyder, “Naughts and Crosses: Peshier Manuscripts and Their Significance for Reading Practices at Qumran,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 7, no. 1 (2000): 26–48.

THE COVENANT OF CHRIST'S GOSPEL IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

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Abstract: *With the trained eye of an anthropologist and a historian, Steven Olsen refutes claims that the Book of Mormon is a simple hodge-podge of biblical phrases and responses to controversies that Joseph Smith absorbed from his surroundings. Through a careful discussion of four main claims, he illustrates his thesis that the Book of Mormon “evidences a high degree of focus and coherence, as though its principal writers intentionally crafted the record from a unified and comprehensive perspective.” He shows that the Book of Mormon is not merely a history in the conventional sense, but rather is purposeful in the selection and expression of its core themes.*

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See Steven L. Olsen, “The Covenant of Christ’s Gospel in the Book of Mormon,” in *“To Seek the Law of the Lord”: Essays in Honor of John W. Welch*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson and Daniel C. Peterson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2017), 209–46. Further information at <https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/to-seek-the-law-of-the-lord-essays-in-honor-of-john-w-welch-2/>.

This study supports the general thesis that the Book of Mormon text evidences a high degree of focus and coherence, as though its principal writers intentionally crafted the record from a unified and comprehensive perspective. This general thesis has four main claims.

1. Mormon and Moroni model their respective abridgments of the Nephite and Jaredite records after Nephi's Small Plates account.¹
2. Nephi's vision (1 Ne. 11–14) serves as the spiritual and interpretive centerpiece of his sacred record.²
3. Nephi's vision has three dominant themes—Christ's gospel, promised land, and chosen people—which Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni develop as covenants in their respective accounts.³
4. Covenants serve the Nephites as the foundation of their (a) special identity as a people, (b) unique historical consciousness, (c) enduring relationship with God, and (d) understanding of and hope for the blessings of eternal life.

Support for these claims comes from a variety of literary patterns in the Book of Mormon text involving diction, poetics, rhetoric, narrative contents, and formal structures, including the following:

1. By far, the four most frequently used nouns in the Book of Mormon are people, God, Lord, and land(s), with 1765, 1675, 1576, and 1353 uses respectively.⁴
2. The text's preoccupation with group identity, territorial consciousness, and historical preservation is grounded in covenant ideology.⁵

1 Steven L. Olsen, "Prophecy and History: Structuring the Abridgment of the Nephite Records," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 15, no. 1 (2006): 18–29.

2 Steven L. Olsen, "The Centrality of Nephi's Vision," *Religious Educator* 11, no. 2 (2010): 51–65.

3 Olsen, "Centrality of Nephi's Vision," 56–58; Steven L. Olsen, "The Covenant of the Promised Land: Territorial Symbolism in the Book of Mormon," *FARMS Review* 22, no. 2 (2010): 137–154; Steven L. Olsen, "The Covenant of the Chosen People: The Spiritual Foundations of Ethnic Identity in the Book of Mormon," *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scriptures* 21, no. 2 (2012): 14–29.

4 R. Gary Shapiro, comp., *An Exhaustive Concordance of the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price* (Salt Lake City: Hawkes Publication, Inc., 1977), s.v., "people," "God," "Lord," "land," and "lands."

5 Olsen, "Covenant of the Promised Land," pp. 137–154; Steven L. Olsen, "Prospering in the Land of Promise," *FARMS Review* 22, no. 1 (2010): 229–245; Olsen, "Covenant of the Chosen People," 14–29; Steven L. Olsen, "Memory and Identity in the Book of Mormon," *Journal of the Book of Mormon and other Restoration Scriptures* 22, no. 2 (2013): 40–51.

3. Covenants inaugurate Nephi's divinely-ordained ministry (1 Ne. 2:16–24), and their traditional binary structures pervade the official Nephite record.⁶
4. The structure of Mormon's historical abridgment imitates to a great extent the contents, order, and relative weighting of Nephi's prophetic account of the same period of Nephite history.⁷

The present study develops this general thesis with respect to the principal theme of the first 'act' of Nephi's dramatic vision: the mission and gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Ne. 11). It explores the covenant basis of this theme in Nephi's verbatim record and in the abridgments of Mormon and Moroni along three complementary dimensions:

1. The identity and mission of Jesus Christ
2. The nature of Christ's gospel
3. The covenant community centered on Christ's gospel

Nephi's Record

The first event that Nephi details in his Small Plates record is his father's divine calling. In this account (1 Ne. 1:8–20) Lehi sees two divine personages: (1) God "sitting on his throne" and (2) "One descending out of the midst of heaven" whose "luster was above that of the sun at noon-day." The latter is accompanied in his visitation to Lehi by "twelve others" whose "brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament." From these heavenly messengers, Lehi receives a book that warns of the impending destruction of Jerusalem and foretells the "coming of a Messiah and the redemption of the world." The people of Jerusalem try to kill Lehi for delivering these messages; nevertheless, Nephi uses Lehi's vision to preface and focus his own record whose purpose is to "show...that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance." Nephi accomplishes this ambitious objective by expanding and refining (1) the identity of "the Lord," (2) the nature of His "tender mercies," (3) the composition and character of those "whom he hath chosen," and (4) the means and objectives of His "power of deliverance."

6 Steven L. Olsen, "An Opposition in All Things: Binary Contrasts in the Book of Mormon," unpublished paper delivered at the Book of Mormon Symposium, Brigham Young University, October 11, 1987.

7 Olsen, "Prophecy and History," 18–29.

Identity and Mission of Jesus Christ

In his record, Nephi refers to deity by a number of different names,⁸ each of which adds a dimension of understanding to His identity and mission. For example, Nephi uses *Lord* and *God* most frequently and consistently—538 and 382 times, respectively. Customary biblical usage equates *Lord* with Jehovah in the Old Testament and with Christ in the New Testament. The Bible also generally associates *God* with “the supreme Governor of the universe and the Father of mankind.” Although Nephi respects these traditional distinctions, his record also transcends them. For example, he recognizes Christ as *God* (e.g., 2 Ne. 1:10; 26:12), acknowledging his partner role with the Father in the Godhead. The following additional names for deity appear less frequently in Nephi’s record. A common meaning of each follows the frequency of use in parentheses:⁹

- *Lamb* and *Lamb of God* (61 times): a sacrifice for the sins of mankind
- *Christ* (53): the anointed or Messiah
- *Holy One of Israel* (or of *Jacob*) (42): God, with reference to his central attribute—holy
- *Lord of Hosts* (37): commander of the armies of Israel and the angelic armies of heaven
- *Messiah* (29): anointed, king, deliverer
- *Father* (22): creator, all powerful, supreme being
- *Redeemer* (21): one who atones for or sets free another
- *Son of God* and variations (20): Only Begotten of the Father

8 This paper begs the theological question of whether the formal references to deity in the Book of Mormon are names or titles. Unfortunately, both terms have decidedly modern connotations, which do not easily relate to ancient traditions. In this study, I call these formal identifiers “names” for heuristic purposes, not to position this paper within the ongoing debate.

9 Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., “God,” “Lord,” “Lamb,” “Christ,” “Holy,” “Hosts,” “Messiah,” “Redeemer,” “Son,” “Jesus,” “Savior.” The following additional names for Christ appear in Nephi’s writings at least once: *Eternal God* or *Father* (1 Ne. 11:21; 12:18; 13:40; 2 Ne. 9:8; 26:12); *Rock* (1 Ne. 13:36; 15:15; 2 Ne. 4:30, 35; 9:45); *Shepherd* (1 Ne. 13:41); *True Vine* (1 Ne. 15:15); *King* (2 Ne. 16:5; 18:21); *Mighty One of Jacob* or of *Israel* (1 Ne. 21:26; 22:12; 2 Ne. 6:18); *Mediator* (2 Ne. 2:28); *Creator* (2 Ne. 9:5–6); *Immanuel* (2 Ne. 17:14; 18:8); *Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father* or *God, Prince of Peace* (2 Ne. 19:6; see also 1 Ne. 15:15; 2 Ne. 4:35; 6:17; 20:21); *Beloved and Beloved Son* (2 Ne. 31:11, 15); and *Only Begotten* (2 Ne. 25:12). Definitions of the names for Christ come from “Dictionary,” *The Holy Bible* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1979), and Madeleine S. and J. Lane Miller, *The New Harper’s Bible Dictionary* (New York: Harper & Row, 1952).

in the flesh

- *Jesus* (9): God is help or Savior
- *Savior* (6): deliverer in time of need; preserver

Although the traditional meanings of these names differ from one another, they also complement one another in Nephi's record. The following passages suggest that Nephi generally favors their complementary more than their distinctive meanings.

Yea, even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem, a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews—even a Messiah, or, in other words, a Savior of the world....Wherefore, all mankind were in a lost and fallen state, and ever would be save they should rely on this Redeemer. (1 Ne. 10:4, 6)

The Son of God was the Messiah who should come. (1 Ne. 10:17)

Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father! (1 Ne. 11:21)

The word of the justice of the Eternal God, and the Messiah who is the Lamb of God, of whom the Holy Ghost beareth record. (1 Ne. 12:18)

And thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. (1 Ne. 20:17)

They shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel. (1 Ne. 22:12)

The Holy One of Israel, the true Messiah, their Redeemer and their God. (2 Ne. 1:10)

The Messiah cometh in six hundred years...his name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (2 Ne. 25:19)

Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God. (2 Ne. 26:12)

In these and other passages, Nephi identifies Jesus Christ with Messiah, Redeemer, Holy One of Israel, Son of God, Eternal God, Lamb of God, Eternal Father, and Savior, among other names.

Most of Nephi's names for Jesus Christ focus either on His heavenly status (e.g., *God*, *Lord*, *Holy One of Israel*, and *Eternal*

Father) or on His divine roles (e.g., *Creator, Messiah, Redeemer, and Savior*). By contrast, two of the most popular types of divine names from the Bible seldom appear in Nephi's record: (1) divine attributes, e.g., *Wonderful, Counselor, Prince of Peace* (2 Ne. 19:6), and *Beloved* (2 Ne. 31:15) and (2) earthly symbols of divine qualities, e.g., *Rock* (1 Ne. 13:36; 15:15; 2 Ne. 4:30, 35; 9:45), *Shepherd* (1 Ne. 13:41; 22:25), *Vine* (1 Ne. 15:15), *Light* (1 Ne. 21:6; 2 Ne. 10:14; 19:2; 20:17), and *Stem* (2 Ne. 21:1).¹⁰ While Nephi's relative emphasis on *Lamb of God* is an exception to this general pattern, Nephi seems primarily concerned with identifying and explicating Christ's identity and mission more than with enumerating His divine qualities and attributes.

It would be incorrect to conclude from these comparisons that Nephi does not recognize the tri-partite Godhead consisting of God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. Two of the most intimate and profound spiritual experiences from Nephi's sacred record clearly distinguish God the Father from God the Son. The first inaugurates Nephi's sacred account, described above (1 Ne. 1:8–10). The symbolism of this passage implies that *God* refers to Heavenly Father and *One* to Jesus Christ.¹¹ At the end of his record, Nephi relates another encounter with God in which he repeatedly distinguishes the voice of "the Father" from that of "the Son," as they rehearse for him essential steps of the plan of salvation, which is also called the "doctrine of Christ" and which leads to the promise of "eternal life" (2 Ne. 31:11–20). Without a thorough familiarity with the Godhead as three separate and distinct but unified heavenly beings, it would be difficult, if not impossible for Nephi to recognize and distinguish the respective voices of the Father and the Son.

10 See Valentina Izmirlieva, *All the Names of the Lord: Lists, Mysticism, Magic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 37–50. Except for *Lamb of God*, Nephi's use of names from these two latter biblical categories depends largely on his citations from Isaiah's prophecies. A partial list of the biblical names of Jesus is found in Alexander Cruden, *Cruden's Complete Concordance to the Old and New Testaments*, ed. A. D. Adams, C. H. Irwin, and S. A. Waters (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1968), Preface. Izmirlieva, *Names of the Lord*, 56–66 includes the English translation of an early Christian list of 187 biblical names for Jesus and discusses the reasons why theologians and clerics have attempted over the centuries to compile exhaustive lists of biblical names for Jesus and the theological impossibility of succeeding in the attempt. See "Dictionary" The Holy Bible, "Christ, Names of" for an effort by the LDS Church to compile a comparable list from the Old and New Testaments.

11 On the significance of "One" being the first formal reference to Jesus Christ in Nephi's sacred record, see the discussion of this name in Izmirlieva, *Names of the Lord*, 52.

In most instances, however, Nephi's record emphasizes the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as reflected in Nephi's declared literary purposes in order to show God's "power of deliverance;" "persuade" all mankind "to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob and be saved;" and "persuade our children, and our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God" (1 Ne. 1:20; 6:4; 2 Ne. 25:23).

In order to demonstrate how these purposes are accomplished, Nephi develops his record around the application of the various roles and capabilities of Jesus Christ: performing the atonement, forgiving sin, destroying evil, overcoming death, revealing truth, authorizing saving ordinances, healing disease and misfortune, comforting the distressed, performing miracles, delivering the captive, establishing and fulfilling covenants, judging the righteous and the wicked, nurturing personal virtues, and administering the blessings of eternal life. For the most part, the two generic names *God* and *Lord* collectively refer to this set of divine roles. In certain instances, however, Nephi employs particular names to emphasize specific roles for Christ. The following paragraphs summarize three noteworthy patterns of usage.

Nephi's most striking pattern of the specialized names for Christ concerns the related names, *Lamb* and *Lamb of God*, which Nephi uses most frequently after *Lord* and *God*. Of the 61 uses of these names, all but five are found in Nephi's vision (1 Ne. 11–14). Although other divine names also appear in his vision — *God* (30 times), *Lord* (26), *Son of God* (5), *Christ* (4), *Son of the Eternal Father* (2), *Eternal God* (1), *Messiah* (1), *Savior* (1), and *Shepherd* (1) — *Lamb* and *Lamb of God* are clearly preferred. This name focuses Christ's principal role in the vision: He who suffers the will of the Father in performing the atonement and availing all mankind of the blessings of eternal life.

Another noteworthy pattern of specialized usage involves the related names *Jesus* and *Christ*. In Nephi's record, all nine uses of *Jesus* and 47 of the 53 uses of *Christ* appear in his final testimony (2 Ne. 25–33).¹² The six remaining uses of *Christ* in Nephi's account appear in Jacob's discourse from the temple (2 Ne. 10: 3, 7; 11:4–7). Before his vision, Nephi consistently uses traditional Hebrew names for deity. Following the vision, Nephi increasingly uses names for Christ that reveal the vision's

12 Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 32, includes Jesus Christ in 1 Ne. 12:18. For ease of exposition in this study, I have used the current LDS edition of the Book of Mormon, which substitutes the name *Messiah*.

enlarged understanding of His divine role and identity. This pattern of usage suggests that Nephi's own spiritual experiences are the principal basis for his expanded understanding of the identity and role of Jesus Christ.

Nephi's final testimony reveals a third distinctive pattern of divine names. Nearly all of the names for Christ that Nephi employs throughout the rest of his account appear as well in his final testimony.¹³ In short, Nephi's testimony is the forum for the most sophisticated, complex, and comprehensive use of his corpus of divine names. It is appropriate that Nephi reiterates these names in this context because his final testimony provides an expanded and refined view of the key messages and divine perspectives from the rest of his sacred record. Nephi's final testimony also bears solemn witness of the reality of the Savior, the truthfulness of his gospel or plan of salvation, the eternal nature of God's covenant with Abraham, the general promise of its fulfillment in the last days, and the certainty of its fulfillment in Nephi's life.

Other insightful but less prevalent patterns for the names for deity in Nephi's record include: *Holy One of Israel* is concentrated in key prophetic and doctrinal passages;¹⁴ *Lord of Hosts* appears primarily in the prophecies of Isaiah;¹⁵ *Messiah*, *Son of God*, and *Savior* are reserved exclusively for Nephi's and Lehi's prophecies;¹⁶ and with one exception, *Father* as a name for deity is restricted to Nephi's prophecies.¹⁷

In short, Nephi develops in his sacred record a concept of deity that is multifaceted and Christ-centered. While grounded in the earlier prophecies of Isaiah and Lehi, Nephi's own understanding of Christ's divine roles and identity is considerably expanded in his unique vision and in the other spiritual experiences of his record. Nephi centers his account of Christ's mortal ministry on the atonement, which enables the unconditional resurrection and the conditional salvation of all mankind. Thus Jesus is *Christ*, *Savior*, *Redeemer*, *Son of God*, and *Only Begotten of the Father*. In addition, Nephi's understanding of Jesus as the God of the Hebrews adds the identities of *Creator*, *Jehovah*, *Messiah*, *Lord of Hosts*, *Holy One of Israel*, and *Eternal God*. In Nephi's theology, Jesus is clearly

13 The following names for deity appear in 2 Ne. 25–33, with frequency of use in parentheses: *God* (77), *Lord* and *Lord God* (62), *Christ* (47), *Son* and *Son of God* (12), *Jesus* (9), *Messiah* (9), *Lord of Hosts* (9), *Holy One of Israel* (5), *Lamb of God* (3), *Redeemer* (2), *Only Begotten* (1), *Eternal God* (1), and *Savior* (1). See Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*.

14 1 Ne. 19–22, 2 Ne. 1–6, 9, 25–33.

15 1 Ne. 20; 2 Ne. 12–28.

16 1 Ne. 1, 10–15, 21–22; 2 Ne. 1–6, 26–31.

17 1 Ne. 11–14, 22; 2 Ne. 1, 25–33.

subordinate to the Father but partners with Him to create the world and administer the blessings of eternal life through his gospel to all mankind and for all eternity.

Exposition of this complex and comprehensive identity of Jesus Christ is necessary to begin to understand the covenant of Christ's gospel, but it is not sufficient for a complete understanding of this covenant in the Book of Mormon. To this latter end, Nephi's record also illustrates how the theology of Christ is properly expressed in the lives of the Nephites through their worship of and devotion to the Savior. The analysis which follows considers the role of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the lives of Nephi's family and how the gospel creates, distinguishes, and sustains a covenant community.

Gospel of Christ

According to Nephi, a principal objective of his writings is to persuade all mankind "to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God." For Nephi, the "gospel of Jesus Christ" (also called the "doctrine of Christ") consists of the "knowledge of Jesus Christ" and is the plan and power whereby all mankind may come unto God and receive the blessing of eternal life.¹⁸ In Nephi's writings, *doctrine* and *gospel* are singular, collective nouns, connoting a unified, integrated, and comprehensive perspective that is focused on achieving a common spiritual purpose: eternal life with God in His heavenly kingdom. With only one exception (2 Ne. 28:12), all uses of *doctrine* (singular) in Nephi's writings and throughout the rest of the Book of Mormon are gospel-oriented and Christ-centered. By contrast, all uses of *doctrines* (plural) throughout Nephi's writings and the rest of the Book of Mormon are associated with "false," "foolish," "evil," and devilish beliefs.¹⁹

In Nephi's writings, the covenant of Christ's gospel, stated simply and unequivocally, is, "the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and...all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved" (1 Ne. 13:40). Reinforcing and amplifying this central message are the following declarations from Nephi's record:

[The House of Israel] shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved. (1 Ne. 15:14)

18 1 Ne. 10:11–14; 13:34–37; 15:13–14; 2 Ne. 30:5–17; 31:1–21.

19 Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., "doctrine," "doctrines," and "gospel."

I say unto you, that as these things are true, and as the Lord God liveth, there is none other name given under heaven save it be this Jesus Christ, of which I have spoken, whereby man can be saved. (2 Ne. 25:20)

I know by this that unless a man shall endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God, he cannot be saved. (2 Ne. 31:16)

And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen. (2 Ne. 31:21)

Salvation, deliverance, and redemption as well as their respective variations are the words by which Nephi most frequently refers to the process of obtaining this ultimate spiritual objective.²⁰ Nephi's preferred word for this concept is *deliverance* (and its variations) which he introduces into his record in the initial statement of his literary intent: "I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender mercies of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of deliverance" (1 Ne. 1:20). While Nephi uses the term to refer to temporal deliverance as well, its primary connotation in his record is spiritual, as reflected in the following excerpt from Jacob's masterful discourse on Christ's atonement.

And because of the way of deliverance of our God, the Holy One of Israel, this death, of which I have spoken, which is the temporal, shall deliver up its dead; which death is the grave.

And this death of which I have spoken, which is the spiritual death, shall deliver up its dead; which spiritual death is hell; wherefore, death and hell must deliver up their dead, and hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies, and the bodies and the spirits of men

20 Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., "save," "saved," "salvation," "deliver," "delivered," "deliverance," "redeem," "redeemed," "redemption." Interestingly, the word *save* in the Book of Mormon is used exclusively as a synonym of "except" or "only," as in "save he shall prepare a way" (1 Ne. 3:7).

will be restored one to the other; and it is by the power of the resurrection of the Holy One of Israel.

O how great the plan of our God! For on the other hand, the paradise of God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal, and they are living souls, having a perfect knowledge like unto us in the flesh, save it be that our knowledge shall be perfect. (2 Ne. 9:11–13)

Of all the synonyms of salvation, *redeem*, *redeemed*, and *redemption* appear least frequently in Nephi's record. Nevertheless, they appear in the most poignant and personal declarations of this truth. At the end of his life, for example, Father Lehi witnesses to his descendants, "the Lord hath redeemed my soul from hell; I have beheld his glory, and I am encircled about eternally in the arms of his love" (2 Ne. 1:15). On the same occasion, Lehi declares to his son Jacob, "I know that thou art redeemed, because of the righteousness of thy Redeemer; for thou hast beheld that in the fullness of time he cometh to bring salvation unto men" (2 Ne. 2:3). Nephi ends his own record with the solemn declaration, "I glory in plainness; I glory in truth; I glory in my Jesus, for he hath redeemed my soul from hell" (2 Ne. 33:6).

Of the several antonyms of salvation in Nephi's record, including *death*, *damnation*, and *condemnation* with their respective variants, *death* is his preferred term.²¹ As with *deliverance*, *death* has a temporal application, but its prime focus is spiritual. In fact, its pattern of usage suggests that temporal death is primarily an empirical analog to the greater Nephite concern with spiritual death. In Nephi's record, physical death—the separation of the body and spirit—is a universal requirement of the plan of salvation and is overcome for all mankind by the resurrection. On the other hand, spiritual death—separation of mankind from God—is caused by sin and is overcome through the atonement of Christ.

The centerpiece of the plan of salvation in Nephi's record is the atonement of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the following examples.

21 Death and its variations—*die*, *died*, *dies*, and *dieth*—appear 48 times in Nephi's record, by far the greatest concentration of which is in Jacob's masterful discourse on Christ's atonement and the plan of salvation (see 2 Ne. 9). By contrast, Nephi uses variations of condemn only four times and of damn only once, see Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., "condemn," "condemnation," "damned," "death," "die," "died," "dies," and "dieth."

- The “redemption of the world” by Messiah is a central message of Lehi’s initial vision and of Lehi’s prophecies which serve as a prelude to Nephi’s account of his own ministry (1 Ne. 1:19; 10:1–11).
- The prime objective of Lehi’s dream of the tree of life is to have mankind partake of its fruit which is a symbol of eternal life, the “greatest of all the gifts of God” (1 Ne. 8:12–16; 15:36).
- The mission of the “great Mediator” is the fulcrum of the redemptive history of mankind as related in Nephi’s summary of his father’s patriarchal blessing to Jacob (2 Ne. 2).
- The “way of deliverance” through the resurrection and redemption of “the Holy One of Israel” is the focus of Nephi’s summary of Jacob’s masterful discourse (2 Ne. 9).
- The crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the redemption of mankind through His atonement inaugurate and conclude Nephi’s vision and his final testimony.²²

In the record of his own ministry, Nephi devotes considerable attention to the process by which God’s children can avail themselves of the blessings of salvation. The most basic requirement is keeping God’s commandments. Of all the verbs that Nephi uses to refer to this requirement of salvation—including *follow*, *obey*, and *observe*—*keep* is Nephi’s preferred term, as reflected in its frequency and contexts of use.²³ While all four verbs denote faithful adherence to God, *keep* expands and enriches the basic concept with such additional connotations as ‘guard,’ ‘protect,’ ‘preserve,’ ‘internalize,’ ‘create,’ ‘hold sacred,’ ‘make

22 1 Ne. 11, 14; 2 Ne. 25:7–26; 31–33. Olsen, “Centrality of Nephi’s Vision,” 52–55 suggests that Lehi’s dream and Nephi’s vision serve Nephi’s record respectively as figurative and literal representations of the plan of salvation.

23 Nephi uses *keep* and its variations fifty times in his record, almost exclusively with reference to *keeping* God’s commandments and more than twice as many as all other related verbs combined. For example, *observe* and its variants appear only three times in Nephi’s record, all with reference to God’s commandments. *Obey* and its variations appear nine times in Nephi’s record, nearly all with reference to God’s commandments. While *follow* and its variations appear nineteen times in Nephi’s record, less than half of these uses are in connection with God’s commandments or righteousness. See Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., “follow,” “followed,” “followers,” “following,” “keep,” “keeper,” “keepeth,” “keeping,” “kept,” “obedient,” “obey,” “obeyeth,” “observe,” “observed,” “observing.”

holy,' 'sustain,' and 'steward.'²⁴ Thus the phrase *keep the commandments* implies a profound, complex, and intimate relationship to the doctrine of Christ that engages one's whole soul during mortality and throughout eternity. In addition, Nephi regularly uses the adjective *obedient* to describe the character of those who are especially valiant in keeping God's commandments.²⁵

Nephi teaches his followers to *keep* two different but complementary commandments — the Law of Moses and the doctrine of Christ. The Law of Moses is the established religion in the Holy Land and the foundation of religious observances of Lehi's family at the beginning of Nephi's narrative. It consists of a series of practices that are intended to focus all aspects of one's mortal life on God. However, God reveals through Lehi and Nephi that the Law of Moses will be fulfilled during the earthly ministry of the Savior. In its place, Christ will institute the gospel (or "doctrine") of Christ, a higher law designed to prepare mankind for eternal life in the presence of God.

Foundational principles and practices of the gospel of Christ include faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance for one's sins, baptism by water for the remission of sins, baptism by fire (the Holy Ghost) to purify and renew one's soul, and endurance in righteousness to the end of one's life (2 Ne. 31). Prayer and obedience are important components of this spiritual progression, but achieving one's eternal potential also requires a life of devotion, dedication, wisdom, courage, service, and perseverance in view of nurturing such godly qualities as charity, patience, holiness, humility, forgiveness, and spirituality. Besides keeping the commandments, in the sense described above, Nephi emphasizes the need to cultivate spiritual gifts and experiences, such as revelation and prophecy, in order to realize one's eternal potential and to bless others to come unto and be reconciled to God.

Nephi's own spiritual preparations require also that he be willing to risk his mortal life, pursue new and seemingly impossible objectives, develop godly capabilities and talents, completely and willingly submit to the will of God, learn troubling truths about the future, suffer verbal and physical abuse, endure physical captivity, and rebuke and then forgive those who do him harm. At the end of his earthly ministry, Nephi presents himself as an exemplar of the doctrine of Christ, having received the promise of eternal life and being one whose writings constitute "the

24 See 1 Ne. 5:16; 6:1; 13:32–43; 16:14; 19:3–5; 2 Ne. 9:41.

25 1 Ne. 2:3; 22:30–31; 2 Ne. 5:31; 31:7.

words of Christ,” which will stand as a bright testimony to all mankind at the judgment “bar” of Christ at the “last day” (2 Ne. 31–33).

In short, the gospel of Jesus Christ is the means whereby all mankind can come to know their eternal identities as sons and daughters of God and become like God in preparation for returning to and enjoying His presence for eternity. The covenant of Christ’s gospel is the divine promise and principal mechanism of the fulfillment of this plan and the foundation of an eternal relationship with God.

Covenant Community

In Nephi’s record, the nature and composition of the covenant community that is created, united, and distinguished by the gospel of Jesus Christ is called most frequently “church of the Lamb of God” and “kingdom of God.”²⁶ Nevertheless, there is no evidence that Lehi’s family formally organized a church — at least as the term is understood today, namely an ecclesiastical organization with congregations, rituals, worship services, authorities, and established beliefs — even though Nephi appoints his brothers as “priests and teachers” (2 Ne. 5:26) and even though Nephi supposes that Laban had been with the “elders of the Jews” and “brethren of the church” (1 Ne. 4:22–27) on the night of his fateful death.

In Nephi’s life, the covenant community which his family actually experiences is more likely either a patriarchy (under Lehi’s direction) or a kingship (under Nephi’s direction). On his part, Lehi directs his extended family as prophet and patriarch by leading them safely away from Jerusalem and through the wilderness to the promised land; testifying repeatedly of eternal truths and exhorting them to righteousness; receiving dreams, visions, and revelations and prophecies on their behalf; performing sacrifices and rituals according to the Law of Moses; pondering the scriptures and other spiritual matters regularly and deeply; keeping a sacred record of his ministry; and bestowing patriarchal blessings on his posterity.

In his own capacity as prophet and king, Nephi faithfully carries out Lehi’s inspired directions; establishes his followers according to divine covenants and revelations; “likens” ancient prophecies and other scriptures to their contemporary lives and challenges; receives divine direction and instructs his followers and adversaries accordingly; and keeps sacred records in accordance with God’s will for the salvation of his family and of all mankind.

26 1 Ne. 13:37; 14:10–14; 15:33–35.

Although the church of God *per se* is not central to the sociology of Nephi's record, it is core to its theology. The term *church* is not used in Nephi's vision of the earthly mission of Christ; however, Christ's baptism is the first act that Nephi details of the Savior's earthly ministry, and His followers are "healed by the power of the Lamb of God" (priesthood) and are led by twelve "apostles of the Lamb" after His crucifixion (1 Ne. 11:31, 34–36). In his vision, Nephi uses *church* to provide a systematic and categorical contrast between two ideal-type covenant communities — that united by their worship of the Savior ("church of the Lamb of God") and that committed to the works of evil ("church of the devil," also called "great and abominable church," "mother of abominations," and "whore of all the earth"), as represented the following table (see 1 Ne. 13–14). In a later passage, Nephi identifies the "true church and fold of God" as part of the ancient covenant that the Lord will restore in the latter days (2 Ne. 9:1–2).

In Nephi's final testimony, essential elements of *church* as the covenant community figure prominently. He identifies Christ's followers as the "people of his church," distinguished as those who "believe in Christ, and worship the Father in his name, with pure hearts and clean hands" (2 Ne. 25:14–16). Nephi also reiterates the contrast from his vision between members of the church of the devil and those of the church of the Lamb (2 Ne. 26:20–32; 28:9–14):

- Church of the devil: "pride," "stumbled," "put down the power and miracles of God," "own wisdom," "own learning," "get gain," "grind upon the face of the poor," "envyings," "strifes," "malice," "secret combinations," "devil...is the founder," "murder," "works of darkness," "priestcrafts," "lie," "steal," "take the name of the Lord their God in vain," "contend," "whoredoms," "false and vain and foolish doctrines," "puffed up," "hide their counsels from the Lord," "corrupted," "pride," "false teachers," "rob the poor," "persecute the meek"
- Church of the Lamb of God: "charity," "love," "labor in Zion," "humble followers of Christ"

In addition, Nephi's final testimony also elaborates the "doctrine of Christ," beginning with a statement of the necessity for Christ, though sinless, to receive and embrace the covenant of baptism: "To fulfil all righteousness," Christ "humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him

in keeping his commandments” (2 Ne. 31:4–7).²⁷ By extension, Nephi testifies that all mankind need baptism in order to receive the blessings of life eternal (vv. 17–20). While it is not until well into Mormon’s abridgment that baptism is actually administered among the Nephites as a priesthood ordinance of membership in the church of Christ, its introduction in Nephi’s record as an essential ordinance of salvation is prelude to a complete understanding of the church as a central institution of the covenant community that is created, bound, distinguished, and preserved by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Mormon’s Abridgment

The covenant of Christ’s gospel is a central theme of Mormon’s abridgment, and Mormon adopts Nephi’s framework of the covenant in order to craft his account of Nephite civilization. For example, Mormon has Nephite holy men frequently repeat the covenant in terms identical to Nephi’s record, as illustrated by the following passages.

And moreover, I say unto you, that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. (Mosiah 3:17; see also 4:8; 5:8)

Remember that only in and through Christ ye can be saved. (Mosiah 16:13)

There can no man be saved except his garments are...cleansed from all stain, through the blood of [Christ] of whom it has been spoken by our fathers, who should come to redeem his people from their sins. (Alma 5:21)

And [Christ] shall come into the world to redeem his people; and he shall take upon him the transgressions of those who believe on his name; and these are they that shall have eternal life, and salvation cometh to none else. (Alma 11:40)

There is no other way or means whereby man can be saved, only in and through Christ. Behold, he is the light and life of

²⁷ Noel B. Reynolds, “Understanding Christian Baptism through the Book of Mormon,” *BYU Studies* 51, no. 2 (2012): 5–37, is one of many academic studies of the ordinance of baptism in the Book of Mormon.

the world. Behold, he is the word of truth and righteousness.
(Alma 38:9; see also Hel. 5:9)

In developing the identity and mission of Jesus Christ, Mormon follows Nephi's preference for *God* and *Lord*, using these names 1053 and 729 times respectively. For the other divine names that appear in his abridgment, Mormon draws on virtually the same corpus as Nephi,²⁸ even though he does not precisely imitate Nephi's patterns of usage. Because Mormon declares that a primary focus of his abridgment concerns Nephi's prophecies of the coming of Christ (Words of Mormon 1:4–5), he privileges the more specialized names of *Christ* (197 uses), *Jesus* (141), and *Son (of God)* (75). By contrast, between Mosiah 1 and Mormon 8, Mormon employs Nephi's two dozen other names for Christ less than a total of one hundred times. Following Nephi, Mormon uses these other names for Christ in specialized applications, as seen in the following examples.

- *Redeemer* (18 uses) occurs mostly in testimonials, exhortations and commentaries²⁹
- *Lord of Hosts* (14) occurs exclusively in prophetic contexts³⁰
- *Lord Omnipotent* (6) occurs exclusively in King Benjamin's valedictory sermon³¹
- *Only Begotten* (6) occurs exclusively in Alma's teachings³²
- *Creator* (5) occurs exclusively in prophetic exhortations³³
- *Savior* (4) appears nearly always in Mormon's editorial asides³⁴
- *Lamb (of God)* (4) appears only in sermons³⁵
- *Messiah* (2) appears only in prophecies of warning to wicked Nephites³⁶

28 Mormon slightly extends Nephi's list of divine names with *Lord Omnipotent*, which appears only in King Benjamin's valedictory address (Mosiah 3: 5, 17–18, 21; 5:2, 15) and *Alpha and Omega*, by which Christ references himself immediately preceding his post-resurrection ministry (3 Ne. 9:18).

29 Mosiah 18:30; 26:26; 27:30, 36; Alma 7:7; 19:13; 28:8; 37:9; 61:13; Hel. 5:11–12; 15:13; 3 Ne. 5:26; 10:10; 16:4; 22:5, 8.

30 Hel. 13:17–18, 32; 3 Ne. 22–25.

31 Mosiah 3, 5.

32 Alma 5–13.

33 Mosiah 3:8; 29:19; Alma 5:25; 30:44; Hel. 14:12.

34 3 Ne. 5:20; Morm. 3:14; 7:10; Moro. 8:29.

35 Mosiah 14:7; Alma 7:14; 13:11; 34:36.

36 Mosiah 13:33; Hel. 8:13.

Mormon is faithful to his declared purpose of emphasizing the prophecies of the coming of Christ and the teaching of His doctrine, especially that of the atonement. For example, of the hundreds of prophecies included in Mormon's abridgment, the single largest number foretells the earthly ministry of Christ. Virtually every Nephite holy man from Benjamin to Mormon anticipates Christ's mortal ministry, particularly his redemptive role. The following are selections from this prophetic corpus.

The time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent...shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay...for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and abominations of his people. (Mosiah 3:5-7)

God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people. (Mosiah 15:1)

He shall be born of Mary...by the power of the Holy Ghost... And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities...that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities. (Alma 7:10-13)

The Son of God shall come in his glory; and his glory shall be the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father...to redeem those who shall be baptized unto repentance through faith on his name. (Alma 9:26-27)

Christ shall come among the children of men, to take upon him the transgressions of his people, and that he shall atone for the sins of the world. (Alma 34:8)

Five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name. (Hel. 14:2)

The following excerpts illustrate that Mormon also follows Nephi in emphasizing the complementarity of the various divine names and roles of Christ.

He shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning. (Mosiah 3:8)

Redemption cometh through Christ the Lord, who is the very Eternal Father. (Mosiah 16:15)

They brought them to the knowledge of the Lord their God and to rejoice in Jesus Christ their Redeemer. (Alma 37:9)

That ye might know of the coming of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning. (Hel. 14:12)

I have reason to bless my God and my Savior Jesus Christ.... They shall know their Redeemer, who is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (3 Ne. 5:20, 26)

Mormon's focus on Christ's identity and mission is drawn even sharper in his use of the name *Father*. While Mormon refers to Christ by this name less than two dozen times in his entire abridgment, he has Christ refer to "my Father" and "the Father" nearly two hundred times in the account of His Nephite ministry alone.³⁷ While Christ uses other names, including *God*, to refer to Heavenly Father during this ministry, these instances are infrequent compared to that of *Father*. This dominant pattern leads to several conclusions about Christ's mission within Mormon's abridgment.

1. Mormon crafts his abridgment in large measure to emphasize Christ's special relationship with His Father and the "infinite and eternal" benefits that come to mankind thereby.
2. During His mission to the Nephites, Christ, as the Son of God, consistently positions himself as subordinate to, focused on, and aligned with His Father.
3. Christ's gospel is intended to qualify mankind to return to the Father's presence in order to enjoy eternal glory.

For Mormon, every other purpose and value of Christ's gospel pales by comparison.

³⁷ Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., "Father."

Nephi's grand perspective on the covenant of Christ's gospel is woven throughout and becomes integral to much of Mormon's historical narrative. I cite four general examples.

1. Conversion to or rejection of the gospel of Jesus Christ is a primary focus of the lives of particular individuals and groups in Mormon's abridgment:³⁸
 - Individuals: King Benjamin (Omni 1:25; Mosiah 2–6), King Noah (Mosiah 11), Alma the elder (Mosiah 17–18), Alma the younger (Mosiah 27; Alma 29, 36), the sons of Mosiah (Mosiah 27; Alma 26), Nehor (Alma 1), Amulek (Alma 8, 10), Zeezrom (Alma 10–15), King Lamoni (Alma 17–20), Lamoni's father (Alma 22), and Korihor (Alma 30)
 - Groups: followers of Benjamin (Mosiah 4–6), Alma (Mosiah 18), Amlici (Alma 2–3), and Amulon (Alma 21–25); residents of Zarahemla (Alma 4–6; Hel. 13–16), Gideon and Melek (Alma 6–8), Ammonihah (Alma 8–14), Sidom (Alma 15), and Bountiful and of the "lands round about" (3 Ne. 11; 4 Ne. 1); and the people of Ammon (Alma 17–24, 27) and the Zoramites (Alma 31–35)
2. Mormon develops Nephi's doctrine of baptism, the ritual foundation of the covenant of Christ's gospel, around four general purposes:
 - Sign of repentance for the remission of sins³⁹
 - Prelude to receiving the Holy Ghost⁴⁰

38 Literary scholars generally recognize that biblical writers developed their characters primarily to serve the text's central ideological purposes not to illustrate unique individuals with distinctive personalities, backgrounds, interests, appearances, and motivations (Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. Willard R. Trask [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953], 1–18; Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* [New York: Basic Books, 1981], 114–130; Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985], 321–364). Coming from a biblical culture and literary tradition, the Book of Mormon may well evidence this and other biblical literary conventions.

39 e.g., Mosiah 26:22; Alma 5:62; 6:2; 7:14; 8:10; 48:19; 62:45; Hel. 3:24; 5:17–19; 3 Ne. 1:23; 7:24–26; 11:23, 37–38; 23:5; 27:16–20; 30:2.

40 e.g., Mosiah 18:10; 3 Ne. 12:1–2; 18:5–7; 19:9–13; 26:17; 27:20; 28:18; 30:2.

- Foundation of a covenant community based on the gospel of Jesus Christ⁴¹
 - Priesthood ordinance essential for salvation in the Kingdom of God⁴²
3. Mormon defines the gospel (or doctrine) of Jesus Christ primarily in salvific terms:
- The plan of salvation is established “from the foundations of the world”⁴³
 - Mortality is a “probationary state,” a time to “prepare to meet God”⁴⁴
 - The atonement of Jesus Christ is the means whereby mankind can be purified, on condition of repentance, righteousness, and endurance to the end⁴⁵
 - Following Nephi, *deliverance* and *death* are Mormon's preferred terms for the contrasting consequences of the plan of salvation⁴⁶
 - “Between death and the resurrection,” the spirits of all mankind experience a period of happiness or misery, based on the spiritual quality of their mortal lives, in preparation for the judgment (Alma 40)
 - Jesus Christ is Judge of all mankind, and His righteous judgment “according to their works” determines their state in eternity⁴⁷
 - In eternity, the souls of all mankind receive salvation or damnation, enjoy eternal life or suffer endless death, experience joy or sorrow, and live in heaven or hell⁴⁸

41 e.g., Mosiah 18:8–10; 21:30–35; 25:18; 26:15–22, 37; Alma 4:4–5; 5:3; 15:12–14; 19:35; 62:45–46; Hel. 3:26; 3 Ne. 18:5, 16; 21:6; 26:21; 30:2; Morm. 7:10.

42 e.g., Mosiah 18:13; 3 Ne. 11:33–38; 23:5; Morm. 7:10.

43 e.g., Mosiah 4:6–7; 15:19; 18:13; Alma 12:25, 30; 13:3–7; 18:39; 22:13; 42:26; Hel. 5:47; 3 Ne. 1:14; 26:5.

44 e.g., Alma 5:28–31; 12:24–37; 34:31–34; 42:4–13; Hel. 13:38.

45 e.g., Mosiah 3:11–19; 4:2–8; 13:28–32; 15:1–20; 16:4–15; 18:13; Alma 5:15, 48; 7:11–13; 12:25–33; 13:5; 21:9; 24:13; 33:22; 34:9–31; 42:11–23; Hel. 5:9–11; 14:2; 3 Ne. 9:17–21; 27:13–15; Morm. 7:7.

46 From Mosiah 1 to Mormon 8, *deliver* and its variations appear 160 times and *death* and its variations appear 219 times, see Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., “death,” “deliver,” “deliverance,” “delivered,” “delivering,” “die,” “died,” and “dieth.”

47 e.g., Mosiah 3:10–27; 16:9–10; 27:31; Alma 5:22; 11:41–45; 12:8–15; 33:22; 36:15; 40:21–23; 41:1–3; 42:16–24; 3 Ne.i 26:4–5; 27:15–17; Morm. 3:18–22; 6:21.

48 e.g., Mosiah 2:41; 3:18–25; 5:15, 50–51; 15:7–28; 18:9–13; Alma 3:26; 5:6–10; 9:28; 12:16–20; 26:13–15; 40:24–26; 41:5–10; 42:15–16; Hel. 3:28–30; 5:8; 12:26; 14:15–19; 3 Ne. 9:14.

4. In Mormon's abridgment, the specific promise of eternal life is personally extended to:
- Alma, the elder: "Thou art my servant; and I covenant with thee that thou shalt have eternal life" (Mosiah 26:20)
 - Sons of Mosiah: "they shall have eternal life" (Mosiah 28:7; Alma 26:20)
 - Alma, the younger: "I know that he will raise me up at the last day, to dwell with him in glory" (Alma 36:28)
 - Christ's twelve disciples: "ye shall come unto me in my kingdom; and with me ye shall find rest....ye shall sit down in the kingdom of my Father; yea, your joy shall be full" (3 Ne. 28:1–10)
 - Mormon: "I know that I shall be lifted up at the last day" (Morm. 2:19)⁴⁹

This small selection of passages suggests that virtually all of the sermons, counsel, exhortations, and commentary as well as most of the details concerning particular individuals, groups, and events from Mormon's abridgment follow, refine, and expand Nephi's concept of the covenant of Christ's gospel. In what follows, I summarize four successive periods of Nephite history from Mormon's abridgment, each of which further develops a key component of the covenant of Christ's gospel.

Uniting and distinguishing the covenant community (Mosiah 1–24)

Much of the Book of Mosiah is an extended case study of the contrasting reigns of two Nephite kings—Benjamin who fully embraces the gospel of Jesus Christ and Noah who rejects and perverts it.

At the end of his exemplary life, King Benjamin gathers his people together in order to identify his chosen successor and to give them a name that will distinguish them from all other peoples (Mosiah 1:10–12). His ability to do so is a monumental accomplishment given the fact that he and his father Mosiah I had to restore peace among a people who were riven by warfare and wickedness. They also united with another people (in Zarahemla) whom the righteous survivors of these Nephite contentions discovered as they sought a new homeland apart from

49 "Lifted up" in the Book of Mormon is equivalent to the term "exalt" and its variations in the Doctrine and Covenants (see D&C 121:8; 132:17–63). Its negative connotations are usually connected with pride, ambition, and ostentation, while its positive connotations are equivalent to eternal life. See relevant references in Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., "lifted."

their wicked compatriots.⁵⁰ Through Christ-like leadership, constant vigilance, and pervasive righteousness, Mosiah I and Benjamin succeed in this worthy but ambitious endeavor. Benjamin's valedictory address at the end of his life reminds his followers how they had achieved this idyllic state and why preserving it matters to them and their descendants. Major themes of his address include (1) humility, or recognizing God as the Supreme Being, and regarding one another (including the king) as "unprofitable servants" of God are essential components of righteousness (Mosiah 2:9–30); (2) devotion, or worshiping Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the World, and keeping His commandments are required to receive the gospel blessings of peace in this life and eternal life in the next (Mosiah 2:31–4:10; 5:1–15); and (3) service, or blessing others through gospel service, is the highest expression of personal righteousness and the foundation of a holy community (Mosiah 4:11–30).⁵¹

As a result of Benjamin's discourse, his followers unite in making a covenant to live the gospel for the rest of their lives. Thus, the king bestows on them the name, "children of Christ," with the justification, "for behold, this day hath he spiritually begotten you."⁵² Benjamin's people accept this covenant identity and live accordingly until the rising generation, who had neither known the king nor heard and understood his teachings, comes of age (Mosiah 26).

Before describing the rebellion of the rising generation at Zarahemla, Mormon shifts the focus of his narrative to an account of a group of Nephites who follow the "over-zealous" Zeniff to reclaim the Nephites' former homeland. Zeniff's son, Noah, succeeds him to the leadership of this group. Mormon's account of King Noah's reign provides a systematic and categorical contrast to that of King Benjamin. Elitism, self-indulgence, ostentation, pride, wickedness, lasciviousness, and other evils foment civil unrest and eventually destroy the security and safety of Noah's kingdom. Noah and his wicked priests go so far as to put to death the prophet Abinadi, who tries unsuccessfully to save them from destruction (Mosiah 9–17). Abinadi is the first Nephite prophet

50 Omni 1:12–19; Words of Mormon 1:12–18; Mosiah 1:1.

51 See Neal A. Maxwell, "King Benjamin's Sermon: A Manual for Discipleship," in *King Benjamin's Speech: 'That Ye May Learn Wisdom'*, ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998), 1–22, and Bruce A. Van Orden, "The Use of King Benjamin's Address by Latter-day Saints," in *King Benjamin's Speech*, 411–477 for more extensive summaries of the main doctrinal points of this sermon.

52 Mosiah 5:7. Verse 9 strengthens this identity, promising in a future time that "whosoever doeth this shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ."

who is killed by his own people. Before Noah's kingdom collapses, many individuals are killed, and the survivors are placed into bondage (Mosiah 19–20). In the meantime, one of Noah's priests, named Alma, is converted by Abinadi's teaching, repents of his sins, receives from God the authority to baptize, and secretly begins to establish a covenant community among the converted people of Zeniff.⁵³ Eventually, the righteous survivors of these moral and civil disasters escape their captors and return to Zarahemla where they reunite with those ruled by King Mosiah II, Benjamin's son and worthy successor (Mosiah 21–24).

Establishing the Church of Christ among the covenant people (Mosiah 25 – 3 Nephi 10)

The catastrophe of Noah's wicked reign and the miraculous conversion of Mosiah's sons to the gospel of Jesus Christ prompt King Mosiah II to disband the long-standing practice of kingship among the Nephites and institute in its place a government of law known as the "reign of the judges" (Mosiah 26–29). A major implication of this formal shift in governance is that Nephite society now becomes segmented into functional institutions, each having a measure of independence and delegated civil authority. Mormon's abridgment recognizes three key civic institutions: government, military, and religion. For the first time among the Nephites, the religious function is concentrated in the formal organization of a church. This is not to say that earlier generations of Nephites had neither officials (priests and teachers), places of worship (temples and synagogues), nor moral and ritual systems (Law of Moses and gospel of Christ). It does recognize, however, that as far as the Book of Mormon narrative is concerned, this is the first instance of the formal organization among the Nephites of an ecclesiastical organization that operates as a separate social institution with distinct beliefs, regulations, and practices and identifiable congregations comprised of individuals that are not necessarily biologically related to one another.⁵⁴

The laws of Mosiah that allow for a church of Christ among the Nephites also allow for other, competing religions, which complicate the periodic efforts to "regulate"⁵⁵ the congregations or "churches" of

53 Mosiah 18. This may be the first instance in the Book of Mormon of a covenant community functioning beyond an extended family network.

54 Righteous descent, one of the hallmarks of leadership of the Nephite covenant community from Lehi to Mosiah II, continues to regulate succession to leadership in the church, from the time of Alma to the coming of Christ, when the twelve disciples assume the responsibility of ecclesiastical leadership.

55 Mosiah 26:37; Alma 6:7; 45:21–22; 62:44.

Christ⁵⁶ by its “priests and teachers” and “elders.”⁵⁷ Dissention from within the church and persecution from without motivate Alma (the son of Alma who was converted by Abinadi), who was initially appointed both chief judge and chief priest among the Nephites, to resign his political appointment in order to focus exclusively on his ecclesiastical duties (Alma 4).

The organization, operation, teachings, values, and practices of the church of Christ are a prime focus of Mormon's abridgment of the first half of the Book of Alma. Alma's role as chief priest is principally pastoral in nature. His efforts to regulate individual congregations concentrate on teaching correct principles, enforcing moral standards, appointing priesthood officers, and authorizing priesthood ordinances such as baptism. Mormon's narrative of this period tracks two crucial processes: Alma's ministry among the Nephite churches describes how local officers and individual members are expected to behave towards one another and towards those not of the faith, including Nephites who oppose the church of Christ (Alma 4–16), and the ministries of the sons of King Mosiah II and their companions establish the church of Christ and its gospel among the Lamanites (Alma 17–26).

Both ministries are lengthy and risky but also remarkably successful. Many repent of their sins, convert to the gospel, accept baptism, change their lives, and build up churches of Christ. Success of their efforts, however, is neither universal nor unequivocal: many Nephites and Lamanites reject or oppose the missionaries' teachings, embrace competing moral orders, undermine the spiritual stability of the social order, and seek to persecute or kill converts to Christ's gospel and establish alliances with the enemies of godliness.

Priestcraft is a term by which Mormon labels false churches and their philosophies, defined thus: “there were many who loved the vain things of the world, and they went forth preaching false doctrines; and this they did for the sake of riches and honor” (Alma 1:16). Mormon applies an even more insidious label to groups that intentionally embrace the doctrines, practices, oaths, covenants, and objectives of Satan. Rather than being simply worldly, as priestcrafts generally are, *secret combinations* establish themselves in conscious league with the devil in order to accomplish his evil bidding. While Mormon uses *secret combination* to refer to a variety of unnamed Satan-focused organizations, the “robbers of Gadianton”

56 Mosiah 25; Alma 23; 45.

57 Mosiah 27:5; Alma 4:7, 16; 6:1; 15:13; 23:4.

personify secret combinations, which Mormon credits with the eventual annihilation of the people and church of Christ.⁵⁸

The lack of faithfulness of church members to their covenants allows priestcrafts and secret combinations to undermine the moral and social stability of Nephite society. Thus the church's role in Mormon's narrative progressively diminishes in favor of the military and the ministries of individual prophets. Terrible wickedness becomes nearly universal among both Nephites and Lamanites, and civil unrest, warfare, and their related destructions become rampant. This segment of Mormon's abridgment ends with widespread natural and social disasters that destroy cities, landforms, populations, and social institutions in order to preserve a measure of the sacred covenants around which the society could be rebuilt (3 Ne. 9–10).

Christ ministering the gospel among the Nephites (3 Nephi 11–4 Nephi 1:19)

The personal ministry of the resurrected Christ reestablishes among the Nephites the covenants of salvation, including that of Christ's gospel. Details of this covenant renewal are described below.

Immediately upon appearing to the survivors of the terrible catastrophes, Christ identifies himself as: "Jesus Christ whom the prophets testified shall come into the world;" "Light and the life of the world;" One who "glorified the Father in taking upon [him] the sins of the world," "suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning;" and was "slain for the sins of the world;" "God of Israel;" "God of the whole earth" (3 Ne. 11:9–17).

After the Nephites acknowledge his divine identity, Christ bestows the power to baptize on selected disciples and teaches them the proper manner to extend to others this formal sign of the gospel covenant (3 Ne. 11:18–29). Christ then teaches his disciples how to act consistent with his gospel. Exposition of His doctrine begins with a reiteration of His

58 Hel. 2:12–14; 6:18–37; 11:26; 3 Ne. 1:27–29; 2:11–18. Secret combinations play an insidious role throughout the Book of Mormon, beginning with Nephi's record (2 Ne. 9:9; 26:22) and ending with Moroni's prophecies of the last days and his abridgment of the Jaredite record (Morm. 8:27; Ether 8:19–23; 14:8–10), see also Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., "combination(s)" and "secret." Secret combinations are consistently associated with "powers [and "works"] of darkness." The two extended expositions of secret combinations in the Book of Mormon specifically mention the formal "oaths," "signs," "words," "covenants," "plans," and "works" that put them in conscious league with the devil and make them his active agents of death and destruction (see especially Alma 37 and Hel. 6).

divine identity in the Godhead. In so doing, he emphasizes the unity and singleness of purpose of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost and the importance of baptism in the plan of salvation (3 Ne. 11:30–41). He then describes key gospel values and their associated behaviors, announcing in the process that the Law of Moses is fulfilled (3 Ne. 12–15). Following a brief rehearsal of the related covenant of the chosen people, Christ miraculously blesses and heals the assembled Nephites and their children. He also institutes among them the sacrament, instructing them of its relation to His gospel and authorizing the twelve disciples to bestow the Holy Ghost on those who have accepted the covenant through baptism (3 Ne. 16–18). The disciples then go throughout the assembled congregation, teaching the gospel, baptizing, and giving the Holy Ghost precisely as directed by Christ, after which Christ provides the emblems of his sacrifice for the sacrament. As a result the congregation is filled with the Holy Ghost (3 Ne. 19:1–20:9). After prophesying regarding the fulfillment of the covenants of salvation in the latter days and instructing the Nephites how to complete the record of Samuel's prophecies on the signs of Christ's resurrection (3 Ne. 20:9–26:11; 29–30), Christ identifies this covenant community as a "church" and informs the disciples to call it after His name (3 Ne. 27:1–12). He then summarizes the purpose of His gospel and the church, which are both centered on His atoning sacrifice: to draw all mankind unto Him so they might (1) be "judged according to their works," (2) "stand spotless before me at the last day," and (3) "be lifted up at the last day"—all characteristics of salvation (3 Ne. 27:13–22).

After Christ renews the gospel covenant, organizes his church, and institutes its associated ordinances—the converted Nephites share these blessings with the people "upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites." Eventually the people are converted unto Christ to such an extent that they institute a spiritual utopia, the likes of which the world has rarely witnessed. Peace, joy, unity, well-being, spiritual gifts, miracles, prosperity, devotion, love, and righteousness pervade and unite the people for nearly two centuries. Thus, they are collectively known as "children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God" (4 Ne. 1:1–20).

Rejecting the covenant and realizing its disastrous consequences (4 Nephi 1:20–Mormon 7)

Eventually, a small group revolt from the church, adopt the name "Lamanites," and initiate the downward spiral that results in the complete destruction of this holy society. Once the "children of Christ"

begin to reject and fight against the covenant that had blessed and distinguished them for centuries, their eventual complete destruction becomes inevitable. The covenant of Christ's gospel informs Mormon's account of this catastrophe.

Initially Mormon identifies pride, selfishness, and social stratification as causes of this decline. He then observes that the people "began to build up churches unto themselves to get gain and began to deny the true church of Christ," i.e. priestcrafts, in the sense described above. Religious diversity "did multiply exceedingly because of iniquity, and because of the power of Satan." These churches deny the Christ and begin to persecute members of the church of Christ: cast them into prison, "seek to kill them," and "cast them into furnaces of fire...[and] dens of wild beasts." Their "many priests and false prophets...do all manner of iniquity...[and] smite upon the people of Jesus." Mormon contrasts the Nephites who "dwindle in unbelief and wickedness" with the Lamanites who "willfully rebel against the gospel of Christ." He next observes that "the people began again to build up the secret oaths and combinations of Gadianton," *secret combinations*, in the sense described above. Mormon concludes this portion of his account with the lament, "the people of Nephi and the Lamanites had become exceedingly wicked one like unto another...the robbers of Gadianton did spread over all the face of the land; and there were none that were righteous save it were the disciples of Jesus" (4 Ne. 1:24–45).

Miracles and other spiritual manifestations cease among the Nephites "because of their wickedness and unbelief," and the "beloved disciples" are removed from their presence. Even the Nephites themselves "willfully rebelled against their God" and introduce "sorceries, and witchcrafts, and magics." Mormon then observes, "The power of the evil one was wrought upon all the face of the land," "the land was filled with robbers and with Lamanites," and "there was blood and carnage...and one complete revolution throughout all the face of the land."⁵⁹

In the remainder of his abridgment, Mormon chronicles (1) the progressive depravity of his people, (2) the resulting slaughter of men, women, and children, and (3) the complete disintegration of the moral fabric of society, as reflected in the following excerpts:

The people of Nephi were again hunted and driven. (Morm. 2:20)

We had become weak like unto our brethren. (Morm. 2:26)

59 Morm. 1:14–16, 19; 2:8–9.

They began to boast in their own strength, and began to swear [vengeance] before the heavens. (Morm. 3:9)

The armies of the Nephites went up unto the [armies of] the Lamanites. (Morm. 4:4)

[The Lamanites] did offer them [Nephite prisoners “both women and children”] up as sacrifices unto their idol gods. (Morm. 4:14)

And from this time forth did the Nephites gain no power over the Lamanites, but began to be swept off by them even as the dew before the sun. (Morm. 4:18)

Mormon completes his abridgment with a poignant lament for his people who are now destroyed and a rehearsal of the latter-day promises that are extended to Lehi's descendants. The covenant of Christ's gospel figures prominently in this conclusion. The intent of Mormon's record is that these people “may be persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God...[and] may more fully believe his gospel.” “Then will the Lord remember the covenant which he made unto Abraham” (Morm. 5:14–15, 20). Mormon's final plea involves the conditions and blessings of the plan of salvation: faith in Jesus Christ, repentance for sins, baptism by water and the Holy Ghost, “lay[ing] hold upon the gospel of Christ,” “following the example of the Savior,” being resurrected, experiencing the judgment, and being redeemed through the atonement of Christ, and entering into “the presence of God in his kingdom” (Morm. 6:20–7:10).

Moroni's Abridgment

Moroni's contributions to the Book of Mormon consist of (1) concluding his father's abridgment (Morm. 8–9), (2) abridging the Jaredite record (Ether 1–15), (3) adding essential details to the Nephite record (Moro. 1–9), and (4) recording his final testimony (Moro. 10). Because these segments are quite different from one another, I consider separately the covenant of Christ's gospel in each, following a general summary of Moroni's use of the names for Jesus Christ.

Moroni follows Mormon and Nephi in privileging *Lord* and *God* as the most frequent divine names in his record, using them 208 and 158 times respectively. Moroni also follows his father in employing *Christ* (102) and *Jesus* (34) as the main secondary names. Only one other divine name appears more than ten times in Moroni's record: *Son of God* and its variants. His record also includes a total of only a dozen different divine

names, far fewer than Nephi's and Mormon's more extensive lists.⁶⁰ As Nephi and Mormon before him, Moroni also links the various names of Christ to emphasize His multifaceted and comprehensive mission:

I will show unto you a God of miracles, even the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and it is that same God who created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. Behold, he created Adam, and by Adam came the fall of man. And because of the fall of man came Jesus Christ, even the Father and the Son, and because of Jesus Christ came the redemption of man. (Morm. 9:11–12)

Concluding his father's abridgment (Mormon 8–9)

Moroni's brief conclusion to Mormon's record has four primary purposes:

1. Reinforcing his father's account of the depravity and destruction of his people (Morm. 8:1–11). Moroni concludes his own poignant witness to this catastrophe with the lament, "And there are none that do know the true God save it be the disciples of Jesus who did tarry in the land until the wickedness of the people was so great that the Lord would not suffer them to remain."
2. Commenting on the nature and latter-day purpose of the Nephite record (Morm. 8:12–24; 9:32–37). Moroni informs the latter-day steward of this record that he will have God's power "to bring it to light" but only for the purpose of achieving God's glory, which he defines as "the welfare of the ancient and dispersed covenant people of the Lord." Moroni testifies that God "will remember the covenant which he hath made with them" on condition of their prayers to Him and their faith in Him.
3. Prophesying of abundant evil in the latter days (Morm. 8:25–41). Moroni mentions the churches that are "built up" unto men, characterizing them with words and phrases reminiscent of Nephi's earlier prophecies: "get gain," "pride of your hearts," "envyings, and strifes, and malice, and persecutions, and all manner of iniquities," "polluted," "love money," "praise of the world," and "secret abominations."

⁶⁰ Shapiro, *Exhaustive Concordance*, s.v., "Lord," "God," "Jesus," "Christ," "Son (of God)," "Lamb (of God)," "Eternal (God or Father)," "Savior," "Redeemer," "Judge," and "Father."

4. Bearing witness of the plan of salvation (Morm. 9:1–31). Moroni specifically addresses “those who do not believe in Christ,” whom he identifies, following Nephi, as the “Lamb of God.” He warns unbelievers of the dire spiritual consequences if they continue to “deny the Christ:” they will “dwell...under a consciousness of...guilt” and “with the damned souls in hell.” As a corrective, he instructs them, “Turn ye unto the Lord” with the contrasting covenant promises and warnings: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.... See that ye are not baptized unworthily; see that ye partake not of the sacrament of Christ unworthily; but see that ye do all things in worthiness, and do it in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God; and if ye do this, and endure to the end, ye will in no wise be cast out.”

Abridging the Jaredite record (Ether 1–15)

According to Mormon and Moroni, abridging the twenty-four plates of Ether is Moroni’s principal contribution to the Book of Mormon.⁶¹ The record’s anachronistic placement in the Book of Mormon and the specific nature of Moroni’s abridgment reveal Mormon’s and Moroni’s primary intent for its inclusion.

Moroni’s abridgment is more truncated and less detailed than every other portion of the Book of Mormon, with the exceptions of the tiny books of Omni and 4 Nephi. The history of more than thirty generations is summarized in approximately thirty pages of translation. This abbreviation is even more extreme when it is realized that Mormon’s own commentaries occupy about one-fourth of the resulting text, a considerably higher percentage than his father’s editorial asides. Moroni’s commentaries amplify four related themes, drawn from Nephi’s and Mormon’s accounts: (1) covenants of the Lord and their consequences for the covenant people;⁶² (2) identity and mission of Jesus Christ;⁶³ (3) the gospel of Christ and the plan of salvation;⁶⁴ and (4) nature and purpose of the Nephite records.⁶⁵

61 Mosiah 28:17–19; Moro. 1:1; 9:24.

62 Ether 2:8–12; 8:18–26.

63 Ether 3:17–20; 4:17–19; 12:26–41.

64 Ether 12:6–41; 13:5–13.

65 Ether 1:1–5; 3:21–28; 4:1–5:6; 12:20–25.

Moroni's abridgment of the Jaredite story itself develops two main themes. The most detailed portion of the narrative emphasizes the brother of Jared's encounters of with the pre-mortal Jesus Christ,⁶⁶ while the most extensive portion annotates the genealogy of Jaredite leaders, initially given in Ether 1:7–32.⁶⁷ Moroni's annotations provide little more information than whether the leaders were righteous or wicked and the social consequences of their lifestyles.

These features of Moroni's abridgment along with its placement at the end of the Book of Mormon imply that Mormon and Moroni intend that it not be considered a stand-alone contribution but rather that it serve as an additional witness to the core truths of the Nephite record as crafted by Nephi and Mormon, specifically that: (1) Jesus Christ is the Son of God and Savior of the world, (2) the gospel [doctrine] of Christ is the plan of salvation for all mankind,⁶⁸ (3) covenants and their related ordinances are the formal means for extending the blessings of salvation to all mankind, and (4) the Book of Mormon is a primary means for restoring to earth in the latter days God's eternal covenants of salvation.

Adding essential details (Moroni 1–9)

Moroni does not anticipate being able to add to the Nephite record after completing the abridgment of the Jaredite record (Moro. 1:1–4). However, being blessed with unused plates, extended days, and a continued measure of safety, he produces what in other writings might be called an appendix. The covenant of Christ's gospel pervades the contents of this section of his record.

He begins the appendix with a summary of essential activities of the church of Christ, including the manner of ordaining candidates to offices in the priesthood (Moro. 2–3), administering the sacrament of the Lord's supper (Moro. 4–5), determining the worthiness of candidates for baptism (Moro. 6:1–4), and conducting congregational worship services (Moro. 6:5–9). Moroni next includes a sermon by Mormon on the spiritual gifts of faith, hope, and charity (Moro. 7), followed by two epistles from his father that address (a) the false practice of infant

66 Ether 1:34–43; 2:13–3:16.

67 Ether 6:1–8:17; 9:1–12:5; 13:1–4; 13:14–15:32.

68 Ether 3:13 contains a specific promise of eternal life extended to the brother of Jared that is comparable to individual promises of salvation in Nephi's and Mormon's respective accounts: "Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall; therefore ye are brought back into my presence."

baptism, (b) abominations on both sides of the on-going civil war, and (c) the need to complete the sacred Nephite record (Moro. 8–9).

Moroni's final testimony (Moroni 10)

Moroni closes his record with his testimony of the record before it is sealed and cached away for future generations. Three key points relate to the covenant of Christ's gospel: gaining a testimony of the truth (Moro. 10:3–7); developing gifts of the Spirit and the godly virtues of faith, hope, and charity (Moro. 10:8–23); and inviting all mankind to “come unto Christ and be perfected in him” (Moro. 10:24–34).

Conclusion

This study suggests that while the writers of the Book of Mormon occasionally refer to it as a history,⁶⁹ it is not a history in the conventional academic sense: its purpose is ideological and persuasive not documentary and descriptive; it is highly selective, not comprehensive in its inclusion of material;⁷⁰ and the authors' criteria for selecting, organizing, and interpreting its contents are established by divine communication—e.g., visions, dreams, and revelations—not secular philosophies and professional methodologies. In short, the Book of Mormon articulates an eternal perspective in which God and Christ are the central figures in the story, even though they are seldom “on stage;” human actions of all kinds are explained largely in terms of divine covenants, one of which is the covenant of Christ's gospel; and covenants are a formal means for realizing God's ultimate purpose—eternal life in His presence for all His children.

While there is yet much to learn about the Book of Mormon through study and faith (see D&C 88:118), a promising field of continuing examination is literary studies—the serious and systematic analysis of the text itself. While cultural studies, scientific studies, and historical studies reveal many insights into this sacred record, literary studies may have the most to add since the written text is the best evidence to date of its origins, identity, and meaning.

The Book of Mormon serves as “another testament of Jesus Christ” by demonstrating that His power and influence are as ubiquitous and consequential for mankind as the air they breathe, the water they drink, the earth on which they stand, and the light by which they see. The key to this worldview is spiritual. To be sure, this perspective has many

69 1 Ne. 9:2; 2 Ne. 4:14; 5:33; Jacob 1:2–3.

70 See Jacob 3:13; Words of Mormon 1:5; Hel. 3:14; 3 Ne. 5:8; 26:6; Ether 15:33.

documentary and empirical dimensions, and it clearly acknowledges the existence and necessity of mankind's moral agency (e.g., 2 Ne. 2). Nevertheless, it repeatedly is grounded by the fundamental assertion, "for there is a God,"⁷¹ and builds on the premises that all mankind are His children, that He has prepared an eternal plan to realize their divine potential, and that mortality is an essential part of the plan. The plan of salvation is the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the commitment and formal mechanism to fulfill its purpose is the covenant of Christ's gospel.

In the Book of Mormon, the covenant of Christ's gospel pervades the text more than any other single theme, defining and interpreting much of mankind's spiritual consciousness, moral values, historical experiences, social relationships, and eternal consequences. The Book of Mormon accounts for several millennia of human experience largely in terms of this simple yet powerful, sophisticated, comprehensive, and integrated perspective. The extended and complex *horizontal* connections among the Jaredites, Nephites, Lamanites, Mulekites, and latter-day Jews and Gentiles are made explicit and meaningful by their respective encounters with the gospel of Jesus Christ. More important than documenting the horizontal connections among human groups of the past, present, and future—history for the writers of the Book of Mormon is the means of illuminating the network of *vertical* connections between mankind and God. By demonstrating in detail the significance of these vertical connections in the extended families of Lehi, Mulek, and Ether—the Book of Mormon leaves no doubt that covenants with God are the foundation of mankind's continued existence on earth and the basis of their hope for eternal life. The global perspective of the Book of Mormon bears witness to modern readers of the universal strength and eternal significance of the vertical connections with God, with the assurance of the value of their faithful and persistent efforts to "come unto Christ and be perfected in him" (Moro. 10:32) and of the devastating consequences for abandoning or failing in the attempt.

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71 See 2 Ne. 2:14; 11:7; Alma 30:44.

Restored: Historical Foundations of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints *and* Presidents of the Church *at the Church History Museum; the historic site restorations, Joseph and Lucy Mack Smith Farm and Sacred Grove and Book of Mormon Historic Publication Site (western New York), Historic Kirtland and John and Else Johnson Home (northeast Ohio), Cove Fort and Brigham Young Winter Home (Utah); and the Church History Library in Salt Lake City.*

