

HEBRAISMS IN THE BOOK OF MOSES: LAYING GROUNDWORK AND FINDING A WAY FORWARD

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The Book of Moses, the early chapters of Joseph Smith's revision of the Old Testament, presents some unique challenges.¹ When one tries to study the text carefully, one often finds phrases that are hard to understand, and it may be difficult, on occasion, to see the overall structure of the text. This becomes an even more difficult problem when one reads the manuscripts of the first draft of the text. However, this may have less to do with Joseph Smith's writing style and more to do with how he translated the text.

Scholars who have worked extensively on the text, such as Robert J. Matthews, Kent P. Jackson, and Scott H. Faulring, have observed that the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) does a few different things: (1) it restores the original text of the Bible that is no longer extant, (2) it restores things that biblical characters actually said but that were never included in the Bible, (3) it makes edits to the text to make it easier to understand, and (4) it changes the text based on modern revelation.² As I am sure will be clear from many of the other papers in this volume, much of the Book of Moses, particularly chapters 1 and 5–8, is an example of the first of these: it restores the original text of the Bible that has been lost over the years, and it seems that Joseph sometimes restored text that was originally written in a Semitic language, likely an early version of Hebrew. Because of this, the text occasionally demonstrates elements of Hebraic style, or "Hebraisms." Understanding these Hebraisms can help to make sense of difficult parts of the text.

This paper will (1) give examples of some traditional Hebraisms in the Book of Moses, (2) give examples of Hebrew phrases that are translated differently in the Book of Moses than in the King James Old Testament, (3) give examples of chiasmus in the Book of Moses, and (4) discuss how the evolution of the Hebrew Language impacts the search for Hebraisms in the Book of Moses.

Traditional Hebraisms and the Book of Moses

A Hebraism is an example of an occasion when a text translated from Hebrew into another language reflects the style of the Hebrew original. These Hebraisms are used by scholars of the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint or LXX, to determine which portions of the LXX go back to a Hebrew *Vorlage* and which do not. Scholars have been doing this for some time with texts like LXX Job, for example, so there is an established methodology in place for doing studies like these.³

Many Latter-day Saints may be familiar with the term *Hebraisms* from Book of Mormon scholarship.⁴ Hebraisms may suggest that parts of the Book of Moses were translated out of Hebrew, some of which this paper will now review.⁵

The first Hebraism relates to the relative clause, something we would usually translate as “who” or “which,” in English, these words usually come directly after the words they refer to. In Hebrew, this is not the case, and one sometimes sees space between the two. This construction appears in both the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses: “But ye know that the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, who were the armies of Pharaoh” (1 Nephi 17:27), as well as, “And by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten” (Moses 1:33).⁶ In standard English, one would usually expect something like, “By the son, who is my Only Begotten, I created them,” but allowing for some space is common in Hebrew.

Another Hebraism in the Book of Moses is the compound preposition. Prepositions are words like *under*, *over*, *around*, *in*, *on*, etc. (my 3rd grade teacher described them as anything a rabbit can do to a log). Compound prepositions do what they sound like they would do: combine prepositions to act like one word like *in front of*, *on top of*, *over against*, etc. One of these appears in Judges 11:23: “The Lord God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites *from*

before his people Israel” (emphasis added). Moses 1:1 similarly uses this construction: “Moses was caught *up into* an exceeding high mountain” (emphasis added).⁷

The next Hebraism one finds in the Book of Moses has to do with possessive pronouns like *my*. English speakers use these words once and have the word apply to an entire list, while biblical Hebrew repeats these pronouns for each word in the list. Joshua 2:13, for example, states, “Ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters.” Moses 1:38–39 uses a similar construction: “And there is no end to my works, neither to my words. For behold, this is my work and my glory.”⁸

Another Hebraism in the Book of Moses is called resumptive repetition. This is the equivalent of an ancient Hebrew parenthesis because ancient Hebrew did not have punctuation. In English, when authors want to give an aside, they use a dash, a comma, or a parenthesis, but in ancient Hebrew, authors usually repeated a key phrase from shortly before the aside to signal that they were returning to the main point. One sees this in the Old Testament:

And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, *even* all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. . . .

And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, *and* all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.

But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. (Exodus 14:22–23, 27–29; emphasis added)

Moses 1 also has Hebraisms like this:

And, behold, thou art *my son*; wherefore *look, and I will show thee* the workmanship of mine hands; but not all, for my works are without end, and also my words, for they never cease.

Wherefore, no man can behold all my works, except he behold all my glory; and no man can behold all my glory, and afterwards remain in the flesh on the earth.

And I have a work for thee, Moses, my son; and thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior, for he is full of grace and truth; but there is no God beside me, and all things are present with me, for I know them all.

And now, *behold, this one thing I show unto thee*, Moses, *my son*, for thou art in the world, and now I show it unto thee. (Moses 1:4–7; emphasis added)⁹

The next Hebraism in the Book of Moses that is of some note is the “if . . . and” construction. In English, one generally says that *if* someone does something, *then* something will happen. In Hebrew, one finds an “if . . . and” construction in which the text states *if* someone does something *and* something will happen.¹⁰ Kent Jackson noticed this construction in the Book of Moses: “*If* thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all their transgressions, and be baptized, even by water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, which is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ . . . *and* ye shall ask all things in his name, and whatsoever ye shall ask, it shall be given.”¹¹

Another Hebraism in the Book of Moses that is hard to miss is the phrase “and it came to pass.” It appears approximately forty-two times in just chapters 1 and 5–7 of the Book of Moses, so often that it would almost seem absurd except that this phrase (a single word in Hebrew: ויהי) occurs equally as often in the Hebrew Bible, appearing twenty-two times in Genesis 1 alone. This element of the text that appears so often it is almost grating is likely just an example of a tight translation from a Semitic Vorlage.

An equally grating phrase is what seems in English like the overuse of the word *and*. This word appears so often in chapter 1 of the Book of Moses that out of the forty-two verses in the chapter, only nine do not begin with *and*. Although one might simply be tempted to think this is just Joseph dictating the entire text of the Book of Moses as one long run-on-sentence, this is actually a

common way of writing in Hebrew. This is, in part, because ancient Hebrew texts do not have punctuation, and long strings of *ands* make the text comprehensible without using periods or commas. In addition, this Hebrew word can also be translated as *but*, meaning that this word may be even more common than it already seems.

Another Hebraism one finds in the Book of Moses is also found in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint, or LXX: the phrase וְגַם, “and also.” This is not necessarily an unusual phrase in English, but the way it is used in Hebrew is slightly different from how one might generally use it in English. See, for example, Moses 8:20–21: “And it came to pass that Noah called upon the children of men that they should repent; but they hearkened not unto his words; And also, after that they had heard him.” Although the way the phrase is used here is not completely absurd, it is not quite what one would expect in English. One might expect, “And after they heard him,” or “Also, after they heard him,” but not, “And also.” However, this “and also” construction is common in Hebrew. In fact, it is so common that a version of the LXX that translated וְגַם hyperliterally as “and also” instead of just “and” or “also” is known as the Kaige recension, named after the Greek’s odd rendering *kai ge*, “and also.”

An additional example of Semitic language that some readers may already have noticed in the previous paragraph is the use of the phrase “after that” in Moses 8:21: “And also, after that they had heard him.” This is not how one would usually use the phrase in English (rather using it as something like “we went to dinner, and after that we went to the movies”), and is likely a direct translation from Hebrew, which sometimes uses the word *that* after prepositions as a way to begin a subordinate clause. One often sees it with the word *because* in Hebrew. Genesis 26:5, for example, states, “Because that Abraham obeyed my voice.” This is not meant to single out Abraham (“*that* Abraham”) but is simply a direct translation of the Hebrew word אֲשֶׁר, *that*, which sometimes comes after words like *because*. One sees this in Moses 4:3: “Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me.” This is not to emphasize Satan (“*that* Satan”) but is simply a way of saying, “Because Satan rebelled against me” when translated directly out of a Semitic language.

The next Hebraism in the Book of Moses to be examined relates to how the ubiquitous word *and* is used.¹² Moses 5:4 states that Adam and Eve heard the Lord “speaking unto them, and they saw him not; for they were shut out from his presence.” One would think that this verse would use the word *but* instead of *and* because it says God was speaking to them, but Adam and Eve did not see him. However, Hebrew often uses the word ׀, *and* to mean both *but* and *and*, and in this verse, it seems that Joseph translated the word literally as *and* even though one would probably translate it as *but* if one were sensitive to the context. This appears to be yet another instance of a literal translation out of a Semitic language in the Book of Moses.

Another Hebraism stems, in part, from the lack of parentheses in Hebrew (like the resumptive repetition mentioned earlier) and manifests itself in yet another unusual use of *and*. Moses 6:6 states that Adam and Eve’s children were taught to read and write. Then verses 7–8 record two parenthetical statements before getting back to the issue at hand: that these people kept a genealogy. The two parenthetical statements record, “Now this same Priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall be in the end of the world also. Now this prophecy Adam spake, as he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost, and a genealogy was kept of the children of God.” The two comments following the word *now* are parenthetical statements that are brought to an end by the word *and*, which goes back to the topic at hand. This is similar to what one finds in Genesis 18:10–12. In these verses, Sarah overhears that she is going to have a son. It then states, translated hyperliterally, “Now Abraham and Sarah were old and advanced in days, and it was no longer with Sarah after the way of women, and Sarah laughed” (Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia [BHS], translations my own). The context strongly suggests that Sarah laughs in response to what seems to her to be the hilarious statement she just overheard that she will have a child in her old age, but the parenthetical comment about Sarah’s menopause is mentioned in the middle of her overhearing and responding with the word *and* ending the parenthetical comment, just as one finds in the Book of Moses. This is an interesting example because this parallel is only clear in Hebrew as the King James Bible did not render the construction as woodenly in this case.

Another common feature in the Hebrew Bible that one also sees in the Book of Moses relates to the use of the word *behold*. This word, הִנֵּה in Hebrew, may seem as though it is used more or less randomly, but it actually has a number of different functions. One of these functions is to give background information. One sees this in the Book of Moses when Moses asks God a question and there is a brief pause beginning with the word behold to give background information before proceeding. Moses 1:30–31 reads, “And it came to pass that Moses called upon God, saying: Tell me, I pray thee, why these things are so, and by what thou madest them? And behold, the glory of the Lord was upon Moses, so that Moses stood in the presence of God. . . . And the Lord God said unto Moses: For mine own purpose have I made these things.” Genesis 15:12–13 does something similar. Translated more woodenly out of Hebrew than the King James, this would read “And it came to pass, that the sun was going down, and a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and behold, great terrifying darkness fell upon him. And he said to Abram” (BHS, translations my own). In these verses, Abram falls asleep, and the Lord speaks to him, but the *behold* introduces the background information that a great terrifying darkness had also fallen on Abram. Understanding that *behold* can be used this way can help readers to understand the Book of Moses better and is especially interesting because, as with the last example, this is not how the verses are translated in the King James Bible.

One intriguing example of Hebraisms in the Book of Moses relates to Matthew Bowen’s work on Hebrew wordplay in the Book of Moses. Bowen has argued persuasively that there is a possible Hebrew wordplay on the name Joseph in Moses 1:41 where the Lord talks about taking from the writings of Moses and then raising up another so that they shall be had again. According to Matthew Bowen, Moses 1:41 plays on the name Joseph which means “may he [Yahweh] add,” when God tells Moses about a future figure who would re-reveal words of Moses which has been lost so they could be “had again.”¹³ Another possible example Bowen has pointed out is a pun on the name Cain. In Moses 5:31 Cain says he is “the master of this great secret, that [he] may murder and get gain.” The name Cain (קַיִן) in Hebrew is pronounced *qayin*, while the word for “gain” (קַיִן) in Hebrew is pronounced *qenayin*. These names

are similar enough to each other that this likely an example of a pun on the name. What is intriguing about this is that the word *Cain* and *gain* also sound similar in English, suggesting a carefully thought-through translation that made sure a pun preserved in the source language (presumably Hebrew) would also be preserved in the target language (English.)¹⁴

Another Hebraism that helps to make sense of an unusual part of the text relates to the word translated as the phrase “that which.”¹⁵ The Hebrew word translated as “that which” (אשר), the relative pronoun in Hebrew, always stays the same regardless of gender or number. This explains the strange phrase in Moses 7:39: “And that which I have chosen hath pled before my face,” in this verse, it is clear from the context that “that which I have chosen” is Jesus, but the phrase itself is unclear in English. However, if “that which” is a direct, literal translation from Hebrew, it is how one would render the word rather than “he whom I have chosen,” which is how we would normally say this in English.

An additional interesting Hebraism is found in Moses 8:27: “And thus Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord; for Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation; and he walked with God, as did also his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth,” in this verse Noah is the one who walks, and his sons are inserted later as secondary subjects. This is common in Hebrew, with the verb being conjugated only for the primary subject, not for the secondary subjects.

The Book of Moses has a surprising lack of adverbs as we usually use them in English and tends to use nouns in prepositional phrases instead. One good example of this comes in Moses 7:66: “Looking forth with fear.” Generally, one would say “looking forth fearfully” rather than “looking forth with fear,” but this version of the phrase is how one would say it in Hebrew. One also sees this in Isaiah 12: “with joy shall ye draw water” instead of “joyfully shall ye draw water.”

These kinds of Hebraisms can help readers understand the text better by allowing them to not misread portions of the text from assuming a native English construction for a phrase that is really a translation from a Hebrew text. However, understanding

the underlying Hebrew can also help readers understand specific unusual phrases that are more difficult to understand otherwise.

Phrase-based Hebraisms

When examining the Book of Mormon, another text translated by Joseph Smith, one sometimes finds phrases that seem to come from Hebrew but are not translated the same way as they are in the King James Bible. Instead, they are taken basically word-for-word from Hebrew and translated quite literally. These phrases, known as calques, are what one might call phrase-based Hebraisms, and they occur throughout the text. Take, for example, 1 Nephi 14:12, which uses the phrase “wickedness and abominations.” This phrase appears often throughout the Book of Mormon,¹⁶ but it does not come from the King James Version of the Bible and never appears there. However, this does not mean that the phrase was not in the Bible. It likely comes directly from the Old Testament but is simply translated differently in the Book of Mormon than the way one finds it rendered in the King James. The phrase “wickedness and abominations” is a reasonable translation of a phrase from Ezekiel 36:31, “And shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.” The phrase, “for your iniquities and for your abominations” can also be translated as, “for your wickedness and for your abominations,” which is similar to how the phrase appears in 1 Nephi 1:19, “He truly testified of their wickedness and their abominations,” initially, the pronoun is repeated in both cases, but the phrase is soon shortened, and this becomes the version known in much of the rest of the Book of Mormon.

Another example comes in Helaman 5:30: “They heard this voice, and beheld that it was not a voice of thunder, neither was it a voice of a great tumultuous noise, but behold, it was a still voice of perfect mildness.” The phrase “still voice of perfect mildness” is a reasonable translation of the phrase usually rendered as, “still small voice,” from 1 Kings 19:12. The context strongly suggests that this phrase in the Book of Mormon is an allusion to 1 Kings 19.¹⁷ Notice that the text states that the voice was not loud or dramatic, as one might expect, but was actually soft. This is the context of the phrase in 1 Kings 19 as well when the Lord does not reveal himself to

Elijah in the earthquake, fire, or wind but in the still, small voice.¹⁸ In both of these examples, Joseph has rendered a Hebrew phrase from the Old Testament in a slightly different way than is found in the King James Bible.

However, one issue that complicates the use of the Old Testament phrasing in the Book of Mormon is that these Old Testament references sometimes draw on New Testament language. In Mosiah 3:5, for example, King Benjamin states that Christ will “come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay.” That phrase, “tabernacle of clay,” never appears in the English of the King James Version of the Bible, but it is a decent translation of the Hebrew phrase *בתי־חמר*, “house of clay,” found in Job 4:19. This I likely translated as *tabernacle* in the Book of Mormon instead of *house* because the Book of Mormon translation was influenced by the New Testament language of texts like 2 Peter 1:14 which equates the body with a tabernacle: “Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.”¹⁹

One finds something like this in the Book of Moses as well. Moses 6:52 states that people should be baptized in the name of Christ, “who is full of grace and truth.” This Johannine phrase appears five times in the Book of Moses, and one might initially just assume that this is one occasion where Joseph Smith was expanding on the text of the Bible without the use of any kind of ancient *Vorlage*. However, Joseph Smith’s use of the Old Testament is more complicated than this in both the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses. As in the case of “tabernacle of clay,” in which Joseph translated a Hebrew phrase by employing New Testament language, “full of grace and truth” similarly uses phraseology from the King James Version of the New Testament to render a phrase from the Hebrew Bible. The Hebrew phrase, *רַב־חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת*, gets translated a couple ways in the King James Version of the Bible. Psalm 86:15 renders it as “plenteous in mercy and truth,” and Exodus 34:6 renders it as “abundant in goodness and truth.” But “full of grace and truth” is a fine translation of this phrase, and it is clear that the Gospel of John gets this phrase from Exodus

as many commentators have noted.²⁰ Thus, despite the New Testament language, this phrase may be an example of a phrase-based Hebraism in the Book of Moses.²¹

Chiasmus and Parallelism

Another type of Hebraism that helps readers to understand the text is chiasmus, the use of inverted repetition, which is well-known in Latter-day Saint circles.²² As with the other kinds of Hebraisms observed in this paper so far, one must exercise a certain amount of caution when discussing chiasmus as a Hebraism in the Book of Moses. Because the Book of Moses survives only in translation, it is sometimes difficult to be sure about chiasms that exist in the text. As the prolific biblical scholar John Paul Heil has noted about the Pauline epistles, one must be cautious when proposing chiastic structures in a book, even when one has the text in its original language.²³ One must look carefully at the actual words of the text to determine if there is a chiastic correspondence between parts of the text and not just rely on general thematic chiasms, which one could accidentally impose on the text rather than draw out of the text.²⁴ Because the Book of Moses exists only in translation, one cannot always expect the exact words of the text to match when examining chiasms, making the project even more difficult.

Thankfully, the LXX can help be helpful in this regard. LXX scholar Gerhard Tauberschmidt spent years looking at how the translators of the LXX rendered the chiasms in the Book of Proverbs when they translated the Hebrew text into Greek, and he found something encouraging: the chiasms in the Book of Proverbs not only survived translation from Hebrew into Greek but were actually more obvious in Greek than they were originally in Hebrew.²⁵ However, this is generally the case when it comes to smaller chiastic units, not large ones where one runs the risk of accidentally seeing chiasms where none exist.

One possible example of a chiasm in the Book of Moses that survived translation into English is Moses 1:40–2:1, as noted by Mark Johnson:

- A ...this earth upon which thou standest
 B write the words which I shall speak. (40)
 C And in a day when the children of men
 D shall esteem my words as naught
 E and take many of them from the book which
 thou shall write,
 F behold, I will raise up another
 F' like unto thee
 E' and they shall be had again
 C' among the children of men
 D' as many as shall believe. (41)
 B' ...*write the words which I speak*
 A' ...*and the earth upon which thou standest. (2:1)*²⁶

This is longer than the simple two-line parallelisms one often finds in traditional English proverbs, yet it is not so long that one can accuse Johnson of forcing this non-chiastic text into a chiastic mold. And note that there are existing matches between the parts of the chiasm with the phrases “earth upon which thou standest,” “words which I shall speak,” and “children of men,” matching exactly between the parts of the chiasm.

Another chiasm that is larger, and perhaps slightly more speculative, pointed out by Johnson, is found in Moses 1:1–2:1:

- A The word of God, which he spoke unto Moses upon an exceeding high mountain (1)
 B Endless is God’s name (3)
 C God’s work and his glory (4)
 D The Lord has a work for Moses
 E Moses is in the similitude of the Only Begotten (6)
 F Moses beholds the world and the ends thereof (7-8)
 G The presence of God withdraws from Moses (9)
 H Man, in his natural strength, is nothing (10)
 I Moses beheld God with his spiritual eyes (11)
 J Satan came tempting him (12)
 K Moses’ response to Satan (13-5)
 L Moses commands Satan to depart (16-8)

- M Satan ranted upon the earth (19)
 N Moses began to fear
 O Moses called upon God
 N' Moses received strength (20)
 M' Satan began to tremble and the earth shook
 L' Moses cast Satan out in the name of the Only Begotten (21)
 K' Satan cried with weeping and wailing
 J' Satan departs from Moses (22)
 I' Moses lifted up his eyes unto heaven (23-4)
 H' Moses is made stronger than many waters
 G' Moses beheld God's glory again (25)
 F' Moses is shown the heavens and the earth (27-31)
 E' Creation by the Only Begotten (32-3)
 B' God's works and words are endless (38)
 C' God's work and his glory (39)
 D' Moses to write the words of God (40-1)
 A' The Lord spoke unto Moses concerning the heaven and earth (Moses 2:1)

This chiasm is significant because of what lies at its center. If, as is often the case with chiasmus, the center of the chiasm is the most important part of it, this chiasm focuses on Moses calling on God and receiving strength and comfort from him, which helps provide insight into the chapter.²⁷

The chiasm also suggests that the first half of the chapter is closely related to the other half of the chapter, with Moses encountering God surrounding his confrontation with Satan. Moses's second encounter with God is deeper and more revelatory because of the realizations Moses has about himself in his encounters with Satan.²⁸

One significant aspect of chiasmus that is often overlooked is that elements of the outer portion of the chiasm often parallel the

center of the chiasm. Strength, seen in the center of the chiasm with Moses being strengthened, also appears in verse 10 and 25. Another parallel of significance is that Moses 1:39, which discusses God's work and glory, is paralleled in verse 5, with verse 39 giving a cosmic dimension to verse 5.²⁹

Another chiasm in Moses 1 that is somewhat tighter is found in Moses 1:31–39:

- A God's purpose (verse 31)
- B Worlds without number / worlds pass away (32-34)
- C Only an account of this earth (35)
- C' Moses accepts an account of only this earth (36)
- B' Heavens cannot be numbered / heavens pass away (37-38)
- A' God's purpose (39)³⁰

However, chiasms like these are not the only kind of parallelism in the Book of Moses. Moses 1:1–41 is another interesting possible example of a large parallelism in the text.

- A Moses is caught up to see God (1)
- B God declares himself as the Almighty (3)
- C God is without beginning of days or end of years (3)
- D Moses beholds the world (7)
- E Moses beholds the children of men (8)
- F Moses sees the face of God (11)
- G Moses to worship the Only Begotten (17)
- H Moses bore record of this, but due to wickedness, it shall not be had among the children of men (23)
- A' Moses beholds God's glory (24-25)
- B' God declares himself the as Almighty (25)
- C' God to be with Moses until the end of his days (26)
- D' Moses beholds the earth (27)
- E' Moses beholds the earth's inhabitants (28)
- F' Moses sees the face of God (31)
- G' Creation through the Only Begotten (33)
- H' Moses to write the words of God, but they shall be taken away (41)³¹

Another parallel is found near the beginning of the chapter, setting off Moses' first encounter with God.

Moses was caught up into an exceedingly high mountain
 Moses saw God face to face, and he talked with him
 The glory of God was upon Moses
 Moses could endure his presence. (Moses 1:1-2)
 The presence of God withdrew from Moses.
 God's glory was not upon Moses.
 Moses was left unto himself.
 Moses fell unto the earth. (Moses 1:9)

This parallelism echoes Moses going up to be with God and then back down to earth again, echoing the actions of Moses.

Chiasmus has the potential to be an immensely helpful tool in analyzing the Book of Moses because it could help guide readers through the text and help them understand the main foci of various portions of the text. These examples, while useful, are only a place to begin.

The Evolution of the Hebrew Language and Hebraisms in the Book of Moses

Unfortunately, there is one significant methodological problem that one encounters when examining Hebraisms in the Book of Moses: the evolution of the Hebrew language.³² If the text really does date from the time of Moses, then scholars of the Book of Moses have a problem: there are no extant Hebrew inscriptions from the time of Moses.³³ This may not seem like much of a problem at first, but there are a few difficulties. Hebrew, like all languages, has evolved over time, meaning that the kind of Hebraisms one would be looking for in the Book of Moses would be very different from the kinds of Hebraisms one might look for in, for example, the Book of Mormon. The Hebrew of Lehi is a different dialect from the oldest extant Hebrew that one would be interested in when examining the Book of Moses (Classical Biblical Hebrew for the Book of Mormon vs. Archaic Hebrew for the Book of Moses).³⁴ Thus, instead of looking at the kind of Hebrew present in the Deuteronomistic history or Isaiah or the rest of the large corpus of biblical Hebrew that matches what one would expect to find during the time the Book of Mormon was written, one would have to delve into the earliest extant Hebrew

in the Bible when attempting to do the same thing for the Book of Moses. The problem with this is that the surviving corpus of Archaic Hebrew is very small; it includes the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15), the Song of Deborah (Judges 5), the Blessings of Jacob (Genesis 49) and of Moses (Deuteronomy 33), the Oracles of Balaam (Numbers 23–24), and the Song of Moses (Deuteronomy 32) as well as Psalm 68 and a few other early psalms.³⁵ This means that it is more difficult to determine the style of the Hebrew well enough to identify Hebraisms in the Book of Moses compared to the Book of Mormon. Some scholars have even suggested that none of those texts date that early. However, the oldest texts in the Hebrew Bible probably do date either from the time of Moses or from roughly one hundred years after Moses, close enough to assume that Moses could indeed have been writing in Hebrew.³⁶

There are a number of reasons for dating portions of the Hebrew Bible this early. One reason for dating these texts to somewhere near the time of Moses is that these archaic poems contain a



Figure 1. One of the letters from Tel El Amarna. These letters give insights into the language of Canaan as it would have been spoken near the time of Moses.

number of similarities with a language known as Ugaritic, which was from an area north of Israel. These texts all predate the time of Moses, suggesting that portions of the Hebrew Bible that are similar to Ugaritic are likewise early. Grammar, syntax, a lack of certain kinds of particles, a kind of parallelism known as staircase parallelism, as well as whole phrases and word pairs that are all found in Ugaritic and Exodus 15 all suggest that these portions of the Bible are indeed early, from close to the time of Moses. Another thing that supports this idea is that these poems from the Hebrew

Bible also share a number of similarities with the Amarna letters, which are also pre-Israelite.

These similarities with early texts from both the Northern and Southern Levant strongly suggest that these quirks found in the biblical Hebrew texts are not an indication of geography, as some have posited, but rather of date.³⁷

Thankfully, there may be ways around this problem of finding Hebraisms in the Book of Moses based on such a small corpus. An examination of Ugaritic style might also be in order as this language is related to Hebrew but we have more examples of it from closer to the time of Moses as noted above. The language of the El-Amama letters might be helpful as well when considering Hebraisms in the Book of Moses.

However, looking at Isaiah or Kings and assuming that the Hebraisms in the Book of Moses will match this kind of Hebrew may not be as fruitful as one might wish. One may originally assume that these differences would not be that significant—ancient Hebrew is ancient Hebrew, after all, but the differences are actually jarringly significant. Reading through Exodus 1–14 in the original language and then suddenly encountering the antique style of Exodus 15 is about like reading through a modern novel and suddenly encountering a selection from Chaucer or some other bit of Middle English; it would be close enough to be mostly understandable but just barely. This means that scholars, when examining Hebraisms in the Book of Moses in the future, may want to focus on these portions of the Bible and on Archaic Hebrew constructions rather than on Classical Biblical Hebrew.

With this in mind, there may be one Hebraism in the Book of Moses that connects to this earlier stratum of the language, and it is related to the last one in the list of conventional Hebraisms mentioned earlier. Generally, Hebrew adjectives are fairly straightforward. In both Classical Biblical Hebrew and late biblical Hebrew, adjectives generally appear right after the word they are modifying, and they are translated the same way one would usually state the adjective in English: a good woman, a big city, etc.³⁸ However, Archaic Hebrew does not work this way. These earliest texts of the Bible express the adjective differently through something called a construct chain.³⁹ This is a Hebrew grammatical construction that is the Hebrew

equivalent of the English word *of*. Deuteronomy 33, for example, uses this construction: verse 19 refers to the people offering זבחי צדק, “sacrifices of righteousness,” which means “righteous sacrifices.”⁴⁰ Later Hebrew uses this construction, and one sees it fairly often in other parts of the Bible.⁴¹ However, this is the only way adjectives appear in the oldest strata of the Hebrew Bible.⁴² This is interesting in light of Moses 6:57 and 7:35 in which the name for God is “man of holiness.” This is how one would literally translate the Hebrew construct form, which suggests the possibility that it could be seen as yet another Hebraism but one that matches the kind of Hebrew one might expect to find from near the time of Moses.

There is at least one other indication that at least part of the Book of Moses relies on text that dates from an early time because the Book of Moses may show an understanding of a Hebrew word taken from another language (a loan word) that seems to have been lost later on. Moses 5:23 records God’s reply to Cain when he offered an offering that was not accepted: “If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee.” The extra phrase “and Satan desireth to have thee,” not present in the King James Bible, may simply be Joseph’s explanation of what it means for sin to lie at the door, as the expression is somewhat strange. However, the extra phrase is



Figure 2. A depiction of a demon from the ancient Near East.

interesting in light of the origins of the word רבץ, translated as *lieth* in the King James Bible.

This word is a participle that comes from an Akkadian root and means “to crouch, lie in wait,” but also has the connotation of “to lurk.”⁴³ In other words, sin is “crouching” or “lurking” outside Cain’s door in much the same way that a demon would in the Akkadian cultural sphere.⁴⁴

However, as M. L. Barré has noted, the hypothesis that this word comes from Akkadian “is complicated by the extremely problematic nature of this passage: no satisfactory solution to its difficulties has yet been reached.”⁴⁵ People generally understand the verse to mean “But if you do not do well/do your best, sin is a croucher-demon at the door.”⁴⁶ However, Barré goes on to note that there are issues with this interpretation because many things about the verse are strange, including word-order.⁴⁷ However, he states that this word could refer to a demon who was trying to get Cain to murder Abel.⁴⁸ The idea of the demon lurking at the door fits with how these kinds of demons are usually portrayed, lurking in places where people usually go, waiting to pounce. But the strange thing about this is that, as he notes, “the Akkadian sources portray the *rābiṣu* as a being that attacks its victims, not one that tempts them to commit sin.”⁴⁹

It is clear from the description above that this verse is somewhat problematic in the Hebrew Bible as it currently exists. When one looks at this issue in light of the version of the verse in the Book of Moses, however, the verse makes more sense. “If thou doest well, thou shalt be accepted. And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, and Satan desireth to have thee” (Moses 5:23). Instead of one of these demons crouching outside the door, tempting them to sin, this version can be read to mean that Satan, an embodiment of sin, is lurking outside the door, waiting to pounce on Cain so he can have him. God is telling Cain that Satan is lying in wait to capture Cain as these demons were thought to do. Because these demons are mentioned as having this function in texts from the late Old Babylonian period, a few hundred years before Moses, this suggests the possibility that the Book of Moses may reflect something very old indeed, perhaps from the time of Moses himself.⁵⁰

However, one should be cautious in seeking to use data like this to date the Book of Moses from Moses's time. Most of the Hebraisms cited above are taken from Classical Biblical Hebrew sources, not Archaic Hebrew sources. This means that the text could date from the time of Moses but could also be much later. Matthew Bowen's work on wordplay in the Book of Moses strongly suggests that the text was originally written in Hebrew, but beyond that, it is hard to say when the text was written.

Conclusion

As noted above, anyone seeking to use Hebraisms to establish the antiquity of the Book of Moses should approach the task with great caution. Take, for example, the "if . . . and" construction. This may seem, at first glance, to be the Hebraism with the most potential for demonstrating the antiquity of the Book of Moses, as this construction is never rendered this way in the King James translation of the Bible, suggesting that this is indeed an unmistakable example of "tight translation" on the part of Joseph Smith from an ancient text. Thus, the Book of Moses must be ancient. Unfortunately, things are not so simple even in the case of this most promising of Hebraisms. As odd as the construction may sound to us, it was apparently part of Joseph Smith's English, as it appears at least once in his writings.⁵¹ This does not mean that the "if . . . and" construction may not sometimes be an example of a tight translation from a Semitic *Vorlage*, but it is impossible to know whether it is or not based on the available evidence. Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen has noted that phrases that work fine in the target language and in Hebrew can add a Hebraic flavor to the text when used more often than one might expect, making phrases like this a sort of Hebraism, even if they are possible in the target language.⁵² The "if . . . and" construction may be something like that in English. Another example of this is the use of *that* in phrases like "after that" or "because that," which are also common in English during some periods.

As for the other Hebraisms noted above, it is difficult to know why they are present in the Book of Moses. They certainly could be there because Joseph was actually restoring an ancient text written in a Semitic language, but they could also be there because

Joseph sought to mimic the style of the King James Bible as closely as possible when creating the Joseph Smith Translation. However, if one assumes that the Book of Moses comes from an ancient Semitic *Vorlage* based on the abundance of other types of evidence found in the text, then one can use these Hebraisms as a way to understand the text better, rather than trying to use the Hebraisms to demonstrate the antiquity of the text. Any single Hebraism, by itself, could possibly be the result of Joseph Smith mimicking the Bible to make the text sound more biblical or could be the result simply of chance. Some Hebraisms may be difficult to chalk up to coincidence, but one should reserve a certain amount of academic humility about such things, realizing that because the text survives only in translation, the task is inherently speculative.

However, these Hebraisms can, and should, be used as a tool to help readers to understand the text better. As scholars with a background in Semitic languages like Archaic Hebrew and Ugaritic read through the Book of Moses more carefully, they may be able to gain a better understanding of Hebraisms in the Book of Moses, making them a better tool for understanding the Book of Moses. In addition, scholars interested in the LXX and other texts translated from Hebrew or Aramaic may also be able to bring these methods to bear on the Book of Moses in a more rigorous way, allowing for a better understanding of the Book of Moses.

Book of Mormon scholars can also play a role. Donald W. Parry's new book, *Preserved in Translation: Hebrew and Other Ancient Literary Forms in the Book of Mormon* contains no fewer than thirty categories of Hebraisms found in the Book of Mormon, and a careful study of the Hebraisms in this book may help scholars to find Hebraisms from these categories in the Book of Moses.⁵³

Many of the Hebraisms discussed in this paper deserve more attention and further discussion. In many ways, this very preliminary review of the topic is more of an invitation to other scholars to examine the text for more Hebraisms and to nuance our understanding of the ones in this paper. Some of the most interesting Hebraisms, phrased-based Hebraisms, or calques, are difficult to find because they are difficult to search for. One must simply know the Book of Moses well enough that one notices them when reading through the Hebrew Bible or vice versa, but they can

be very helpful when one is seeking to understand the nuances of unusual words and phrases. These kinds of Hebraisms have great potential to help readers understand the Book of Moses better, but they have to be discovered serendipitously and, therefore, slowly, meaning it would be helpful to have more Hebraists involved in looking for them.

Another thing that should be noted is that editing the Book of Moses to make it read better in English has likely removed a number of Hebraisms from the text, and it is preferable, but more difficult, to use the original manuscript on the Joseph Smith Papers website when doing this kind of work. I have used the 2013 version of the text to give hope to those seeking to do work on this in the future: if some Hebraisms survived the revisions made to the text, there will likely be many more to uncover when examining the older version of the text.

Ultimately, the key will be to use the underlying Hebrew to help readers understand the text better. For example, “and also” in Hebrew may more strongly connect two things than just “and,” meaning that there might be stronger connection between the two things. This could help deepen our understanding of the places where this construction appears in the Book of Moses. Understanding these Hebraisms would help readers to understand nuances of the Book of Moses better and ultimately gain greater insight into the text.

Discussion

Jo Ann H. Seely:

Thank you, Jonathon, for your intriguing and very interesting presentation. I think it will open up lots of new avenues for further study in this area. After listening to all these interesting examples and the variety of examples that you've presented, what do you think are the three most convincing Hebraisms in the book of Moses and why?

Jonathon Riley:

The most convincing ones, in my opinion, are Matt Bowen's ideas about Joseph. That's a very good one because it actually places it in Hebrew pretty certainly. Another one I think is good is a related one, the Cain one, because that also puts you very solidly in Hebrew. Those are two that I think are really good ones as far as actually being able to say, "No, this is almost certainly from Hebrew, not some other language."

Another one, though, that's useful for actually understanding the texts is the use of *that*. *That* is one of those things I never really thought was weird until I started talking to people about it who thought that it was weird too. I had people ask me, "Well, what does that mean? Is it because *that* was signaling out Satan, or did it just mean *after*, but then what does *that* mean?" I think realizing that *that* is just the Hebrew construction and that you can almost drop it most of the time helps you understand a lot of things way better and avoid confusion. As far as pay off, that may be one of the most interesting ones.

Jo Ann:

Interesting. When you just sit down and read the Book of Moses, do these kinds of Hebraisms pop out to you continually in most verses, or how often do you seem to run into that?

Jonathon:

You know what? The Hebraisms actually are fairly common. They're fairly common throughout the whole thing actually.

What's interesting, though, is that when I first read this, when I first got the invitation to do this paper and sat down and read the Book of Moses, I thought, *there are not that many of them*. And so I made a short list and thought that was it. But then I thought, "No. *Maybe there are more in there.*" So I asked David Larsen and Jackson Abhau to help me. And while I was waiting to hear back from them, then I sat down and did it again. And I started going through it and still didn't really find much.

And then I said, "Wait a second. We have good examples of people translating into an Indo-European language (like English) from Hebrew. The entire Old Testament was translated into Greek from Hebrew; that's what the Septuagint is." So I just started going through all the quirky Septuagint things in my head and thought, "Ok, *let's see if that's in the Book of Moses.*" And there they were. So these do not just stick out immediately when you read it, at least not for me, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized that there are a lot of these. And then Jackson and David got back to me with others I hadn't noticed. I realized there are actually a lot of these throughout the whole text, but you don't necessarily notice them at first, or you don't notice that they're Hebraisms at first.

Jo Ann:

Okay. I've noticed that the formula "and it came to pass" occurs much more frequently in the Book of Moses than it does in Genesis. Why do you think that is so?

Jonathon:

I think some of that might have to do with translation because I was wondering the same thing. And then I went back and actually just looked up the Hebrew "and it came to pass." And I realized that, yeah, it's a little bit more common still in the Book of Moses, but actually not that much. Once you actually go back and find the word *vhea* in Hebrew and count it up per chapter, it starts to be actually pretty close to the same as the Book of Moses. The King James doesn't always translate it because it feels crazy to always translate it all the time like that. But if you were to actually do it, it'd be almost the same.

Jo Ann:

Maybe the translators were being a little more poetic and not so repetitive. Okay. Do you think it's possible to determine the original language of the Book of Moses, and what do you think the key factors are in that determination?

Jonathon:

Yes, that's hard because number one, what do you mean by original language? Because for example, is this in archaic biblical Hebrew or classical biblical Hebrew? I don't know. That's actually a pretty hard thing. We don't have enough archaic biblical prose to know. So as far as dialect, that's almost impossible, maybe, I don't know. Like I said, we might have other people that would be better equipped to deal with that who know the super old strata better and know the really old languages that could really help us. But beyond that, I think it might be possible to determine that it's in Hebrew, but what you'd have to do is you would have to find a number of different, very solid Hebrew puns to be able to say, "Okay yeah, this has got to be Hebrew, and it wouldn't work in say Aramaic or Greek or something."

Another thing is to find quotations of it in Hebrew texts. There's one good one that we have found so far, and there may actually be a couple other good cases where the Book of Moses is quoted in the Dead Sea scrolls or where pieces of it are quoted. And so that's pretty good to be able to say, "Yes, maybe this is Hebrew." But even then, Dead Sea Scroll authors may be quoting stuff that they have in Aramaic. It's a hard question. If we had a bunch of really solid puns, (Matt Bowen, just keep on keeping on with that) maybe. If we found a bunch of them, then maybe we could say, "Yes, this is definitely Hebrew."

Jo Ann:

Do you think there's a difference in the methodology of studying Hebraisms in the Book of Moses versus studying them in the Book of Mormon, and what might we learn from that comparison?

Jonathon:

Yes, I would say the methodological difference is that (1) the Book of Moses is maybe what you call sort of a mixed text. There's a lot of work done on this that the Joseph Smith Translation has not only just what Joseph Smith is receiving as he is restoring ancient texts by revelation but he may also, at times, be expanding on it by himself by revelation, so it's hard to know, at times, which is which. So that makes that a little bit methodologically difficult because we might be dealing with a mixed text. I don't know how mixed the Book of Moses is, honestly, but other parts of the JST are pretty clearly of mixed.

So that does complicate it slightly. Another thing that may complicate the question is dialect again; is this archaic biblical Hebrew from Moses's time or is this classical biblical Hebrew? Because that changes what Hebraisms you look for and how you look for them. But honestly, as I was doing this, I often would think, "There's stuff like this in the Book of Mormon too." And I think methodologically it is pretty similar, although the big kicker is the dialect. That's maybe one of the biggest things. Which dialect are you looking at?

Jo Ann:

What has been the biggest payoff to you of doing this study?

Jonathon:

The biggest payoff, I think, is potential. There's a lot of good potential for future work on this, not just to be able to figure out the dialect, although that will be interesting, but also to understand the text better. I think if we were to really do this carefully and systematically, especially in chapter 1 and especially in chapters 5 through 7, where there aren't really parallels with things in Genesis to speak of.

That would be a really, really big help in figuring out nuance. Because so often, especially with calques or the phrase-based Hebraisms, you have these phrases, and you're not a one hundred percent sure what they mean in English. You can go pull out the 1828 Webster's dictionary, but you have to realize that this is a

translation and that it's a little bit hard to figure out what stuff means. But if I can say, "Oh, this is a translation of this Hebrew phrase. It is not translated the same as the King James, but here it is in Hebrew," then I can look up the Hebrew words and I can go, "Okay. That means this; it's used in these other places." And then you finally have something.

Jonathon Riley received an MA in Biblical Studies from Trinity Western University in Langley, Canada and a BA in Ancient Near Eastern Studies from Brigham Young University. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Biblical Studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, and spent three years writing KnoWhys for Book of Mormon Central. He and his wife, Sara, have two children, and he enjoys hiking with his family.

Notes

1. I am indebted to the inimitable Sara Riley for her assistance in formatting this paper for publication.
2. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004): 8–10; Robert J. Matthews, “The Role of the Joseph Smith Translation in the Restoration,” in *Plain and Precious Truths Restored: The Doctrinal and Historical Significance of the Joseph Smith Translation*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Robert J. Matthews (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 45–46; Robert J. Matthews, *A Plainer Translation: Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible, A History and Commentary* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1975), 253.
3. Ilmari Soisalon-Soininen, “Back to the Question of Hebraisms,” trans. Theo van der Louw, 1, *Academia*, https://www.academia.edu/5172607/Back_to_the_Question_of_Hebraisms_I_Soisalon_Soininen; trans. of “Zurück zur Hebraismenfrage,” in *Studien zur Septuaginta – Robert Hanhart zu Ehren*, MSU 20 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 35–50.
4. For the most recent work on Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon, see Donald W. Parry, *Preserved in Translation: Hebrew and Other Ancient Literary Forms in the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2020).
5. Mark J. Johnson, “Hebrew Literary Features of Moses 1 (Moses 1),” *Book of Moses Insight* 44. Pearl of Great Price Central, <https://www.pearlofgreatpricecentral.org/hebrew-literary-features-of-moses-1/> (accessed July 21, 2021).
6. Johnson, “Hebrew Literary Features.”
7. Johnson, “Hebrew Literary Features.”
8. Johnson, “Hebrew Literary Features.”
9. Johnson, “Hebrew Literary Features.”
10. For anyone wanting to look this up in a grammar book for more information, the “if” clause is called a protasis, and the “then” clause is called an apodosis.
11. Kent P. Jackson, “If . . . And”: A Hebrew Construction in the Book of Moses,” in *Bountiful Harvest: Essays in Honor of S. Kent Brown*, ed. Andrew C. Skinner, D. Morgan Davis, and Carl Griffin, (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship and Brigham Young University, 2012), 207.
12. In this and the following two paragraphs, I had come up with some sub-par examples of these Hebraisms in the Book of Moses, but Jackson Abhau sent me some much better examples, which I was gratefully able to use instead.

13. Matthew L. Bowen, "And They Shall Be Had Again': Onomastic Allusions to Joseph in Moses 1:41 in View of the So-called Canon Formula," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 32 (2019): 297–304.
14. Matthew L. Bowen, "Getting Cain and Gain," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 15 (2015): 115–141.
15. I am indebted to Jackson Abhau for pointing out this and the following Hebraism to me, which I did not notice when going through the Book of Moses.
16. See also 2 Nephi 28:17; Jacob 2:10, 31; Mosiah 3:7, 7:26; 29:18, etc. The phrase occurs over forty times in the Book of Mormon.
17. On this subject, see Matthew L. Bowen, "A Still Small Voice': Three Permutations of *qôl dēmāmâ daqqâ* in the Book of Mormon" in "Seek Ye Words of Wisdom": *Studies of the Book of Mormon, Bible, and Temple in Honor of Stephen D. Ricks*, ed. Donald W. Parry, Gaye Strathearn, and Shon D. Hopkin (Salt Lake City: Interpreter Foundation and Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2020), 29–44.
18. For more connections between the Elijah cycle and the Book of Helaman, see my earlier work on the topic, Book of Mormon Central, "How Did Nephi Use the Power to Seal on Earth and in Heaven?" *KnowWhy* 182, posted September 7, 2016, <https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/knowhy/how-did-nephi-use-the-power-to-seal-on-earth-and-in-heaven>.
19. Book of Mormon Central, "How Did King Benjamin Teach His People to Trust God More?" *KnowWhy* 314, posted May 17, 2017, footnote 2, <https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/how-did-king-benjamin-teach-his-people-to-trust-god-more>.
20. See Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, vol. 1 (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003), 416–7.
21. For more on this, see my article, Jonathon M. Riley, "Lord of Grace and Truth: Understanding Grace in the Old Testament and Book of Mormon," BYU Religious Education Student Symposium (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 2012), 115–28.
22. For a summary, see Robert F. Smith, "Assessing the Broad Impact of Jack Welch's Discovery of Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 16, no. 2 (2007): 63–73, 98–99.
23. John Paul Heil, *Romans: Worship in Hope of the Glory of God* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2020), 1.
24. Heil, *Romans*, 1, note 1.
25. Gerhard Tauberschmidt, *Secondary Parallelism: A Study of Translation Technique in LXX Proverbs* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), xi, 12.
26. Mark J. Johnson, "Chiasmus in Moses 1 (Moses 1)," *Book of Moses Insight* 45. Pearl of Great Price Central, <https://www.pearlofgreatpricecentral>

- .org/chiasmus-in-moses-1/ (accessed July 21, 2021). Note that verse 42 has been left out of the arrangement as it is a parenthetical aside from the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith and is not part of the vision itself.
27. Johnson, "Chiasmus."
 28. Johnson, "Chiasmus."
 29. Johnson, "Chiasmus."
 30. Johnson, "Chiasmus."
 31. Johnson, "Chiasmus."
 32. I appreciate Matthew Bowen's help in beginning to investigate this question that we discussed at the national annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in November of 2019.
 33. For an overview of the archaeology, see Angel Sáenz-Badillos, "A History of the Hebrew Language," trans. John Elwolde (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 62.
 34. Sáenz-Badillos, "A History of the Hebrew Language," 52.
 35. Sáenz-Badillos, "A History of the Hebrew Language," 56–57.
 36. Sáenz-Badillos, "A History of the Hebrew Language," 35.
 37. Brian D. Russell, *The Song of the Sea: The Date of Composition and Influence of Exodus 15:1–21* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 59.
 38. Gary D. Pratico and Miles V. Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 60–64.
 39. Sáenz-Badillos, "A History of the Hebrew Language," 58.
 40. Sáenz-Badillos, "A History of the Hebrew Language," 58.
 41. Pratico and Van Pelt, *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*, 99.
 42. Sáenz-Badillos, "A History of the Hebrew Language," 58.
 43. M. L. Barré, "Rābiṣu," in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst (Leiden: Brill, 1995. 2nd rev. ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 682–83.
 44. Barré, "Rābiṣu," 682–83.
 45. Barré, "Rābiṣu," 682–83.
 46. Barré, "Rābiṣu," 682–83.
 47. Barré, "Rābiṣu," 682–83.
 48. Barré, "Rābiṣu," 682–83.
 49. Barré, "Rābiṣu," 682–83.
 50. Barré, "Rābiṣu," 682–83.
 51. Brant A. Gardner, "Silk or Sow's Ear? The Apologetic Use of the If>And Construction," *Interpreter Foundation Blog*, last modified October 13, 2013, <https://interpreterfoundation.org/blog-silk-or-sows-ear-the-apologetic-use-of-the-ifand-construction/>.
 52. Soisalon-Soininen, "Back to the Question of Hebraisms," 7.
 53. Parry, *Preserved in Translation*.