

# INTERPRETER

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## REFLECTING ON GOSPEL SCHOLARSHIP WITH ABŪ AL-WALĪD AND ABŪ ḤĀMID

*Daniel C. Peterson*

The theologian, jurist, philosopher, and mystic Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ghazālī (d. AD 1111 in his Persian hometown of Tūs, after spending much of his career in Baghdad) has sometimes been characterized as the single most influential Muslim besides the Prophet Muḥammad himself. The Andalusian philosopher and jurist Abū al-Walīd Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Rushd (d. AD 1198 in Marrakesh, modern-day Morocco, but ultimately buried in his family tomb in Córdoba, Spain) is generally considered to be the greatest medieval commentator—whether Jewish, Christian, or Muslim—on the works of Aristotle. Often known as Averroës, a corruption of his Arabic name, Ibn Rushd was respected even by medieval Christians. For example, Dante Alighieri, in his immortal *Inferno*, placed him only on the rim of Hell—in the relatively benign Limbo of unbaptized infants—and not among the torturous punishments of Hell’s lower levels.<sup>1</sup>

It was the best that Dante could do for a non-Christian. Even Dante’s guide through Hell and Purgatory, the great pagan Roman poet Virgil, could not enter Paradise with him. And, in Limbo, Virgil explains why:

“You don’t ask,” my good Teacher said to me,

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1. See Dante, *Inferno*, 4:144, where the poet mentions “Averois che ’l gran comento feo” (“Averroës, who created the great Commentary”) amidst such other titans as Homer, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Euclid, Ptolemy, Galen, Hippocrates, and Ibn Rushd’s fellow Muslim, Avicenna (or Ibn Sīnā).

“who are these souls you look upon? Before  
 you go on in your journey, you must know  
 They did not sin. If they had merits, these  
 were not enough—baptism they did not have,  
 the one gate to the faith which *you* believe.  
 And if they lived before the Christian faith,  
 they did not give God homage as they ought,  
 and of these people I myself am one.  
 For such a falling short, and for no crime,  
 we all are lost, and suffer only this:  
 hopeless, we live forever in desire.”<sup>2</sup>

Though al-Ghazālī died fifteen years before Ibn Rushd was even born, thousands of miles to the east, Ibn Rushd was very much aware of his predecessor, and part of their fame rests upon a legendary “debate” between the two. One of al-Ghazālī’s greatest books is entitled *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* (“The Incoherence of the Philosophers,” or, as the medieval Latin translation rather evocatively put it, *Destructio philosophorum*).<sup>3</sup> In it, he brilliantly argued that the philosophers of the Aristotelian tradition could not deliver the religious certainty that they claimed to be able to provide, and that, in some respects at least, they had departed from orthodox Islamic belief into heresy. Decades later, Ibn Rushd responded with his *Tahāfut al-tahāfut*, “The Incoherence of *The Incoherence*.”<sup>4</sup>

These two men, al-Ghazālī and Ibn Rushd, among the very greatest thinkers ever produced by the Islamic intellectual tradition, thought long and hard, and wrote extensively, about the relationship between reason and revelation. I can only scratch

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2. Dante, *Inferno*, 4:31–42, as rendered in Dante, *Inferno*, trans. Anthony Esolen (New York: The Modern Library, 2003), 35.

3. See Michael E. Marmura, trans., *Al-Ghazali's The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, 2d. ed. (Provo, UT: BYU Press, 2002).

4. See Simon van Den Bergh, trans., *Averroes' Tahāfut Al-Tahāfut: The Incoherence of the Incoherence, Volumes I and II* (London: Luzac, 1978).

the surface of their arguments in this brief introduction, but I think it worthwhile to consider some of what they had to say.

I will draw chiefly on a brief essay by Ibn Rushd entitled *The Book of the Decisive Treatise* (*Kitāb faṣl al-maqāl*).<sup>5</sup> The essay can be viewed as a plea before a tribunal in which the divinely revealed Law of Islam (whether the *sharī'ah* or the Qur'an itself) is the sole acknowledged authority. Together with its explanatory *Epistle Dedicatory*, it provides an impassioned defense of the legitimacy and proper role of reason in a community of faith. Ibn Rushd was writing at a time when forces of xenophobic anti-intellectualism were on the rise in Muslim Spain, and this was his defense.

"The goal of this statement," he writes at the beginning of his essay, "is for us to investigate, from the perspective of Law-based reflection, whether reflection upon philosophy and the sciences of logic is permitted, prohibited, or commanded—and this as a recommendation or as an obligation—by the Law."<sup>6</sup> In other words, is it appropriate for a devout Muslim to rely on scholarship that draws upon non-Muslim sources, that seeks to understand the universe not only according to the Qur'an and Islamic tradition but also on the basis of reason and science?

Now, it must be understood that, although he was Islam's first and last pure Aristotelian, Ibn Rushd was not thinking of philosophy as a body of dogma to be received nor as a school of thought to which one adhered (e.g., as Platonism, Neoplatonism, Aristotelianism, Scholasticism, Marxism, empiricism, idealism, logical positivism)—importing such external bodies of "doctrine" into a religious tradition is an obviously risky venture, and a separate issue. Rather he saw philosophy as a way of thinking and living. The word *philosophy*, after all,

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5. Averroës, *The Book of the Decisive Treatise Determining the Connection between the Law and Wisdom, and Epistle Dedicatory*, translated with introduction and notes by Charles E. Butterworth (Provo, UT: BYU Press, 2001).

6. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 1 (1:4–8).

simply means “love of wisdom.” He imagined a life guided by reason instead of fideism.

Ibn Rushd strikes quickly. He loses no time in announcing his conviction that philosophy, thus broadly understood, is required by the Qur’an itself. His position is daring, especially when one considers the time and place in which he wrote.

Ibn Rushd cites several verses from the Qur’an in support of his viewpoint: “Consider, you who have sight,” advises one Qur’anic verse after reciting an example of God’s action in history (Qur’an 59:2).<sup>7</sup> We are, therefore, admonished to reflect on what history has to teach us about God. And we are to consider what nature tells us, as well. “Did they not look at the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth and what God has created?” (Qur’an 7:185). “And thus did We show Abraham the kingdoms of the heavens and the earth, so that he might be among those who are certain” (Qur’an 6:75). “Do they not look at how the camel was made, and how the sky was lifted up, and how the mountains were fixed in place, and how the earth was spread out?” (Qur’an 88:17).

Behold, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day are signs for those of understanding, who remember God while standing, sitting, and lying on their sides and who contemplate the creation of the heavens and the earth. O Lord, you did not create this for nothing. Praise be to you! (Qur’an 3:190–91)

From these passages—and there are many others that he could have cited—Ibn Rushd concludes that philosophy, taken in the minimal, fundamental sense of a disciplined quest for understanding rather than as a body of doctrines, is not merely permissible to Muslims but actually mandated by their sacred book:

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7. This and all other translations from the Qur’an are mine.

So we say: If the activity of philosophy is nothing more than reflection upon existing things and consideration of them insofar as they are an indication of the Artisan—I mean insofar as they are artifacts, for existing things indicate the Artisan only through cognizance of the art in them, and the more complete cognizance of the art in them is, the more complete is cognizance of the Artisan—and if the Law has recommended and urged consideration of existing things, then it is evident that what this name indicates is either obligatory or recommended by the Law.<sup>8</sup>

One might be justified, I think, in chiding Ibn Rushd for a bit of equivocation here—a terminological sleight of hand. For philosophy, in his day, was typically more narrowly pursued as Platonism, Neoplatonism, and, especially for him, Aristotelianism. Philosophy as it was undertaken in his day was more than a desire for wisdom. It was a comprehensive worldview and way of life embodied in systematic doctrine.<sup>9</sup> But for purposes of discussion, let's take him at his word.

There are many analogous passages in the Bible and in Latter-day Saint scripture. Several of these call upon believers to “remember” events of the historical or scriptural past and to learn from them.<sup>10</sup> I will cite three examples.

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8. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 1 (2:9)–2 (2:3).

9. I treated this topic in “‘What Has Athens to Do with Jerusalem?’: Apostasy and Restoration in the Big Picture,” *FARMS Review* 12/2 (2000): xi–xxxvii; at <http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/review/?vol=12&num=2&id=349>.

10. Louis Midgley has written extensively on this topic, in such essays as “The Ways of Remembrance,” in John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne, eds., *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991), 168–76; “‘O Man, Remember, and Perish Not’ (Mosiah 4:30),” in John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992), 127–29; “Preserving and Enlarging the Memory of the Saints,” *FARMS Review* 19/2 (2007): 21–24; with Gary Novak, “Remembrance and the Past,” *FARMS Review* 19/2 (2007): 37–66; “To Remember and Keep: On the Book of Mormon as an Ancient Book,” in Stephen D. Ricks, Donald W. Parry, and

“When I consider thy heavens,” writes the contemplative Psalmist, “the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psalm 8:3–4). In the New Testament, the apostle Paul draws a moral lesson from his reflections on the external world:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse (Romans 1:18–20).

The Book of Mormon prophet Alma also considers the testimony of the heavens and the earth in order to make a straightforward argument for the existence of God:

I have all things as a testimony that these things are true; and ye also have all things as a testimony unto you that they are true; and will ye deny them? . . . The scriptures are laid before thee, yea, and all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that are upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets which move in their regular form do witness that there is a Supreme Creator. (Alma 30:41, 44)

Unlike proponents of “revealed theology,” Alma, Paul, and the Psalmist cite no revelations and quote no scriptures to

make their arguments. They are, rather, quite plainly engaging in a simple form of “natural theology,” an approach founded upon reasoned reflection about ordinary experience (e.g., in these cases, upon looking at the night sky and thinking about the natural world). It seems to me that Ibn Rushd is correct in believing that such passages charter efforts in natural theology and philosophy. Indeed, one could go further and argue that they legitimate attempts to detect “intelligent design” in nature—aside from the question of whether current intelligent design theories have any scientific merit.

Ibn Rushd carries his argument forward by remarking that

Since it has been determined that the Law makes it obligatory to reflect upon existing things by means of the intellect, and to consider them; and consideration is nothing more than inferring and drawing out the unknown from the known; and this is syllogistic reasoning or by means of syllogistic reasoning, therefore, it is obligatory that we go about reflecting upon the existing things by means of intellectual syllogistic reasoning.<sup>11</sup>

In other words, having established our obligation to reflect upon the world, it follows that we should do so in a rational manner, according to logic. And logic, for Ibn Rushd, is a matter of syllogisms—structures of reasoning in which a proposition is correctly inferred from two or more valid premises (e.g., “All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.”). Thus, Ibn Rushd concludes, the revealed command to reflect upon the world around us implies that we should do so in the best possible manner. And that, he says, entails the study of logic and sound reasoning:

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11. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 2 (3:22–27). The adjective *intellectual* here represents the Arabic *‘aqli*, which could also be translated as *rational*.

Since the Law has urged cognizance of God (may He be exalted) and of all of the things existing through Him by means of demonstration; and it is preferable—or even necessary—that anyone who wants to know God (may He be blessed and exalted) and all of the existing things by means of demonstration set out first to know the kinds of demonstrations, their conditions, and in what [way] demonstrative syllogistic reasoning differs from dialectical, rhetorical, and sophistical syllogistic reasoning; and that is not possible unless, prior to that, he sets out to become cognizant of what unqualified syllogistic reasoning is, how many kinds of it there are, and which of them is syllogistic reasoning and which not; and that is not possible either unless, prior to that, he sets out to become cognizant of the parts of which syllogistic reasoning is composed—I mean, the premises and their kinds—therefore, the one who has faith in the Law and follows its command to reflect upon existing things perhaps comes under the obligation to set out, before reflecting, to become cognizant of these things whose status with respect to reflection is that of tools to work.<sup>12</sup>

The idea that the methods of logic are analogous to tools used in carpentry and similar work is a significant one, to which I will return. The idea didn't originate with Ibn Rushd, though. The standard collection of Aristotle's six works on logic—*Categories*, *On Interpretation*, *Prior Analytics*, *Posterior Analytics*, *Topics*, and *Sophistical Refutations*—had already long been known as the *Organon*, which, in Greek, means “instrument” or “tool.”

Ibn Rushd makes important distinctions between demonstrative, dialectical, and rhetorical reasoning. (“Sophistical”

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12. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 3 (4:3–19).



reasoning, as might be expected, simply means, for him, bogus arguments. These can be safely dismissed. Nobody with any integrity advocates their use.) Demonstrative reasoning ranks the highest in Ibn Rushd's view. In fact, to him it's the only kind of reasoning worthy of a philosopher. Dialectical reasoning proceeds from absolutely sure premises via logically sound patterns to absolutely certain conclusions. Thus, what it says can be taken as undoubtedly true. (As Ibn Rushd himself says, "demonstration is only of the truth.")<sup>13</sup> Nobody doubts, for example, that all men are mortal. And nobody doubts that Socrates was a man. Accordingly, the conclusion that Socrates was mortal is indisputably true. Ibn Rushd, along with virtually all pre-modern Aristotelians, may have been overconfident about the absolute truth of the premises that they used to build up an elaborately systematic worldview, but the concept of demonstrative reasoning seems fairly clear.

The trouble is that only a relative handful of people have the ability and the training to master Aristotelian syllogistic reasoning in its full complexity. "People's natures," explains Ibn Rushd:

vary in excellence with respect to assent. Thus, some assent by means of demonstration; some assent by means of dialectical statements in the same way the one adhering to demonstration assents by means of demonstration, there being nothing greater in their natures; and some assent by means of rhetorical statements, just as the one adhering to demonstration assents by means of demonstrative statements.<sup>14</sup>

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13. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 13 (16:7–8).

14. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 8 (11:10–16). On page 18, intriguingly, Ibn Rushd seems to suggest that Islamic "combat" against false beliefs is to be conducted not by military campaigns but by these three modes of persuasion.

Far more people can follow an argument from the scriptures (whether the Bible or the Qur'an). And this, in fact, represents a good example of dialectical reasoning. It works from widely accepted premises—widely accepted, for example, within a particular tradition or community of faith—that are not absolutely certain, or, at least, aren't universally recognized as beyond dispute. Thus, for instance, a person might be able to demonstrate that the Book of Mormon teaches a certain doctrine, and that all who believe in the Book of Mormon are obligated to accept that doctrine. But a person who rejects the Book of Mormon will feel no such obligation, any more than a Latter-day Saint will feel bound to adopt a certain view of God simply because it's taught in the Qur'an.

Dialectical reasoning, on the other hand, will leave some people behind. And this would have been especially true in a pre-modern era like that of Ibn Rushd, when the majority of people were uneducated and illiterate. However, even an uneducated individual might still be persuaded via sermons and anecdotes and similes to accept true beliefs and to act properly. Strictly speaking, even though such similes, anecdotes, and sermons might not "prove" anything at all, they might still be "convincing" and lead to sound faith and good behavior. As a modern analogy, we might think of commercials: They seldom reason with us. Rather, they try to persuade us that, if we drink a certain kind of beer, we'll soon be frolicking with beautiful models on a beach, too. The ends may be a bit low, but the attempt to persuade and motivate is not altogether different. And, given the vast sums that advertising agencies can command, it seems that such efforts are effective.

"Not all people," Ibn Rushd remarks:

have natures such as to accept demonstrations or dialectical arguments, let alone demonstrative arguments, given the difficulty in teaching demonstrative

arguments and the lengthy time needed by someone adept at learning them; and since what is intended by the Law is, indeed, to teach everyone, therefore, it is obligatory that the Law comprise all the manners of the methods of bringing about assent and all the manners of the methods of forming a concept.<sup>15</sup>

For people are of three sorts with respect to the Law. One sort is in no way adept at interpretation. These are the rhetorical people, who are the overwhelming multitude. That is because no person of unimpaired intellect is exempted from this kind of assent.<sup>16</sup>

It's clear that the Abrahamic religions aren't intended merely for an intellectual elite; they try to reach all people, regardless of educational attainments or occupation or academic talent. Thus it is not surprising that the scriptures are replete with stories, parables, exhortations, and other attempts to convey the message of repentance and salvation to Everyman:

Since some of the methods for bringing about assent—I mean, assent taking place because of them—are common to most people, namely, the rhetorical and the dialectical, the rhetorical being more common than the dialectical; and some of them are particular to fewer people, namely, the demonstrative; and what is primarily intended by the Law is taking care of the greater number without neglecting to alert the select [few], therefore, most of the methods declared by the Law are the methods shared by the greater number with respect to concept or assent taking place.<sup>17</sup>

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15. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 24 (39:7–13).

16. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 26 (44:7–10).

17. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 24 (40:14–22).

Concerning the things that are known only by demonstration due to their being hidden, God has been gracious to His servants for whom there is no path by means of demonstration—either due to their innate dispositions, their habits, or their lack of facilities for education—by coining for them likenesses and similarities of these [hidden things] and calling them to assent by means of those likenesses, since it is possible for assent to those likenesses to come about by means of the indications shared by all—I mean, the dialectical and the rhetorical.<sup>18</sup>

Of course, there are some who simply won't pay any attention, no matter what method of persuasion the scriptures and the prophets attempt to use:

When this divine Law of ours called to people by means of these three methods, assent to it was extended to every human being—except to the one who denies it obstinately in speech or for whom no methods have been determined in it for summoning to God (may He be exalted) due to his own neglect of that.<sup>19</sup>

But Ibn Rushd is principally concerned to defend the legitimacy of philosophy or, in his terms, of demonstrative reasoning against the criticisms of those who see it as unscriptural if not apostate and certainly as foreign, the province of outsiders and unbelievers. Accordingly, he concentrates on it and leaves dialectical and rhetorical reasoning alone. Nobody in his world is contesting their legitimacy.

Since, according to Ibn Rushd, we're under an obligation to use sound logic when considering the universe around us, we should be willing to study the principles of logic and sound

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18. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 19 (27:1–8).

19. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 8 (11:17–21).

reasoning, even if the best way of doing so involves immersing ourselves in the work of those whose faith differs from ours. For if logic is a tool, we should be no more concerned about the religion or lack thereof of the person who created it than we would be worried about whether an unbeliever made the saw and the trowel that we're using to build a temple:<sup>20</sup>

From this it has become evident that reflection upon the books of the Ancients is obligatory according to the Law, for their aim and intention in their books is the very intention to which the Law urges us. And [it has become evident] that whoever forbids reflection upon them by anyone suited to reflect upon them—namely, anyone who unites two qualities, the first being innate intelligence and the second Law-based justice and moral virtue—surely bars people from the door through which the Law calls them to cognizance of God—namely, the door of reflection leading to true cognizance of Him. That is extreme ignorance and estrangement from God (may He be exalted).<sup>21</sup>

Ibn Rushd is now going on the offensive against those who don't believe that believers ought to study philosophy and logic. He plainly implies, though, that only those believers ought to involve themselves in such fields who possess the intellectual, and moral, and spiritual qualifications to do so.

I do not find an equivalent within the Latter-day Saint tradition to Ibn Rushd's concept of absolutely certain demonstrative reasoning. In fact, it's plain that the old triumphalist view of philosophy methodically building vast, systematic, comprehensive structures by means of indisputable syllogisms

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20. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 4 (5:11–6:31). I've substituted a Mormon example for his in order to make the same point, because explaining the use of tools in Muslim festival sacrifices would be an unnecessary distraction here.

21. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 6 (10:20)–7 (10:4).

is largely dead elsewhere, too. As has sometimes been pointed out, the scandal of the history of philosophy is that it *has* a history. After two and a half millennia of philosophical argument, living Thomists, Platonists, Neoplatonists, Aristotelians, Marxists, empiricists, absolute idealists, logical positivists, existentialists, and representatives of other schools still hold forth. Even consensus on small issues is rare, and there is certainly no comprehensive system to which all philosophers adhere.

In Mormonism, spiritual certainty doesn't come through demonstrative syllogisms or philosophy, but personally and nontransferably through personal revelation.<sup>22</sup> But in place of Ibn Rushd's "philosophy" we might think of a range of areas of advanced study—of Mormon history and scripture, for example—that are seen as powerfully conducive to faith by some (including myself) but that are stumbling blocks to others:

If someone goes astray in reflection and stumbles—due either to a deficiency in his innate disposition, poor ordering of his reflection, being overwhelmed by his passions, not finding a teacher to guide him to an understanding of what is in them, or because of a combination of all or more than one of these reasons—it does not follow that they are to be forbidden to the one who is suited to reflect upon them. For this manner of harm coming about due to them is something that attaches to them by accident, not by essence. It is not

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22. The classic example is, of course, Moroni 10:4–5. In his famous intellectual autobiography, *Al-munqidh min al-ḡalāl* ("The Deliverer from Error"), al-Ghazālī tells of his futile search for religious certainty among "the people of authoritative instruction" (essentially the Ismā'īlī sect of Shī'ism, with its purportedly infallible imams), the theologians, and the philosophers, and how he finally found what he was looking for in personal mystical experience, which he compares to the incommunicable experience of *dhawq* or "taste." The similarity to Latter-day Saint epistemology is striking, and merits consideration. His autobiography is translated in W. Montgomery Watt, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī* (Chicago: Kazi Publications, 1982).

obligatory to renounce something useful in its nature and essence because of something harmful existing in it by accident.<sup>23</sup>

Ibn Rushd lists several factors that might lead people to “go astray” and “stumble” in reflection on religious or theological matters. They might simply be incapable of handling difficult subjects—perhaps because they lack intelligence or maturity. (We seldom try to teach algebra or calculus to six-year-olds, no matter how great their native intelligence. Latter-day Saints do indeed have a reasonable notion of “milk before meat.”) Or they might have gone about their reflections in a disorderly way, failing to grasp the basics before trying to go on to more advanced topics. (This is perhaps related to another of the factors he lists: “not finding a teacher to guide him to an understanding.” Think, perhaps, of the historically uninformed Mormon who suddenly stumbles upon some troubling and previously unknown historical claim on the Internet.) Finally, the aspiring student might be “overwhelmed by his passions,” which would prevent him from acquiring a proper understanding of divine things. (Latter-day Saints are very familiar with this kind of caution; we’re frequently told that unworthiness, or lack of personal preparation, can interfere with our ability to grasp spiritual things or maintain our testimonies of religious truth.)

But, Ibn Rushd insists, the mere fact that philosophy can be dangerous to those not properly equipped to cope with it—whether because of mental, educational, or moral deficiencies—does not mean that it should be prohibited for people properly prepared. Quite to the contrary, he argues that denying the benefits of philosophy to those who are suited to it harms them grievously:

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23. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 7 (10:4–13).

Indeed, we say that anyone who prevents someone suited to reflect upon the books of wisdom from doing so on the grounds that it is supposed some vicious people became perplexed due to reflecting upon them is like one who prevents thirsty people from drinking cool, fresh water until they die of thirst because some people choked on it and died. For dying by choking on water is an accidental matter, whereas [dying] by thirst is an essential, necessary matter.<sup>24</sup>

But wherein, exactly, does the potential danger from philosophy consist? It's necessary to remember that Aristotelian philosophy wasn't merely the kind of thing taught in college philosophy departments today. It was, among many other things, the prestige science of the pre-modern world. So, in order to understand the challenge that it could pose, we need to think, perhaps, of the "established" science of our own time. Can it pose a threat to faith? Certainly it can. How should that challenge be handled?

"We firmly affirm," says Ibn Rushd, "that, whenever demonstration leads to something differing from the apparent sense of the Law, that apparent sense admits of interpretation according to the rule of interpretation in Arabic."<sup>25</sup> (We might, instead of "interpretation," say "allegorizing," or "taking as merely figurative," or "not taking literally.") "Muslims," he says,

have formed the consensus that it is not obligatory for all the utterances of the Law to be taken in their apparent sense, nor for all of them to be drawn out from their apparent sense by means of interpretation, though they

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24. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 7 (10:18–24). The phrase "some vicious people" (Arabic: *qawman min arādhil al-nās*), incidentally, refers not to people who are nasty but, literally, to people who are "vile," "contemptible," or "low," meaning that they are involved in actual "vice." They are, thus, neither morally nor spiritually prepared to recognize or receive religious truth.

25. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 9 (14:23–25).



disagree about which ones are to be interpreted and which not interpreted.<sup>26</sup>

And so it is today. Our knowledge of the natural world around us has progressed rapidly in the past century or two, and our understanding of it must constantly be revised. We know far more about ancient history, too, and Mormon historical studies are much more sophisticated today than they were a few generations back—new facts and interpretations flow in a steady stream. But our understanding of scripture and revelation hasn't yet reached the equilibrium of perfection, either. While the words of our canonical scriptures don't change, our understanding of them is fallible and conditioned by our surroundings, our upbringing, and our personalities. In this life, said the apostle Paul (including himself in the statement), "we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . . For now we see through a glass, darkly" (1 Corinthians 13:9–10, 12).

Al-Ghazālī lamented the damage that could be done by:

the man who is loyal to Islam but ignorant. He thinks that religion must be defended by rejecting every science connected with the philosophers, and so rejects all their sciences and accuses them of ignorance therein. He even rejects their theory of the eclipse of sun and moon, considering that what they say is contrary to revelation. When that view is thus attacked, someone hears who has knowledge of such matters by apodeictic

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26. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 10 (14:5–9). He immediately offers as an example of this disagreement certain passages in the Qur'an and the traditions of Muḥammad that seem to describe an anthropomorphic God: "The Ash'arites, for example, interpret the verse about God's directing Himself [2:29] and the Tradition about His descent, whereas the Hanbalites take them in their apparent sense." (Compare page 20.) On page 16, he suggests that the Qur'an itself subverts the traditional Islamic denial that the universe is eternal.

demonstration. He does not doubt his demonstration, but, believing that Islam is based on ignorance and the denial of apodeictic proof, grows in love for philosophy and hatred for Islam.

A grievous crime indeed against religion has been committed by the man who imagines that Islam is defended by the denial of the mathematical sciences, seeing that there is nothing in revealed truth opposed to these sciences by way of either negation or affirmation, and nothing in these sciences opposed to the truths of religion.<sup>27</sup>

Latter-day Saints can likewise damage the reputation of their faith or put at risk the testimonies of young minds and inquisitive older ones, if we take the position that being a faithful member of the Church entails a rejection of either science or historical scholarship. We needn't be slaves of the latest scientific doctrines—the history of science abundantly illustrates how many consensus views have been overturned by new discoveries—but we should be appropriately humble as well about how accurately we understand the mind of God and even the ultimate meaning of the scriptures. All truth, we're told, ultimately belongs to one great, harmonious whole, even if we sometimes can't quite see how that will be so.

Citing as an example a principle of Aristotelian logic, al-Ghazālī asks

What connection has this with the essentials of religion, that it should be denied or rejected? If such a denial is made, the only effect upon the logicians is to impair their belief in the intelligence of the man who made the denial and, what is worse, in his religion, inasmuch as he considers that it rests on such denials.<sup>28</sup>

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27. Watt, *Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī*, 34–35.

28. Watt, *Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī*, 36.

Henry Eyring, a former president of the American Chemical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the father of the current First Counselor in the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, regularly reiterated as a personal motto that “in this Church you don’t have to believe anything that isn’t true.”<sup>29</sup>

“I do not . . . believe that there is a single revelation,” said President Brigham Young:

among the many God has given to the Church, that is perfect in its fulness. The revelations of God contain correct doctrine and principle, so far as they go; but it is impossible for the poor, weak, low, groveling, sinful inhabitants of the earth to receive a revelation from the Almighty in all its perfections. He has to speak to us in a manner to meet the extent of our capacities.<sup>30</sup>

Like children, we are only capable of receiving revelations in part, or in basic form, in concepts that are already at least partially familiar to us from our fallen earthly surroundings: “Behold, I am God and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants *in their weakness, after the manner of their language*, that they might come to understanding” (D&C 1:24; italics added).

“Oh, Lord,” prayed a frustrated Joseph Smith in an 1832 letter to William W. Phelps, “deliver us in due time from this little, narrow prison, almost as it were, total darkness of paper, pen and ink;—and a crooked, broken, scattered and imperfect language.”<sup>31</sup>

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29. See Henry Eyring, “My Father’s Formula,” at <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1978/10/my-fathers-formula?lang=eng>

30. *Journal of Discourses* 2:314.

31. As reproduced in B. H. Roberts, ed. *History of the Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 1:299.

So, given the danger that advanced study or thinking might pose to the faith of people ill-equipped to deal with it, what is the duty of the leaders of the Islamic faith, or, indeed, of the leaders of any other religious community—or even the parents of a family with small children? Ibn Rushd has an answer for that question:

It is obligatory that interpretations be established only in books using demonstrations. For if they are in books using demonstrations, no one but those adept in demonstration will get at them. Whereas, if they are established in other than demonstrative books with poetical and rhetorical or dialectical methods used in them, as Abū Ḥāmid [al-Ghazālī] does, that is an error against the Law and against wisdom.<sup>32</sup>

Why is it so dangerous? It endangers souls because demonstration or philosophy (or, we might add, history or science) has two functions with regard to certain scriptural passages: It dismantles the literal sense, and it guides to a figurative understanding. History can dissolve traditional understandings, and, if pursued, can often create a deeper and richer account. But what if someone fully follows the dismantling, fully comprehends the dissolving of traditional stories, but lacks the capacity, for whatever reason, to follow the argument all the way to the new reinterpretation that is now put in its place? It would be rather like someone leaving the security of one bank of a river in order to go to the other side, but, once in the water, discovering that the current is far too strong or even that she can't swim.

“When something pertaining to these interpretations,” says Ibn Rushd,

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32. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 21 (35:24–30).

is declared to someone not adept in them—especially demonstrative interpretations, due to their remoteness from things about which there is shared cognition—both he who declares it and the one to whom it is declared are steered to unbelief. The reason is that interpretation includes two things: the rejection of the apparent sense and the establishing of the interpretation. Thus, if the apparent sense is rejected by someone who is an adept of the apparent sense without the interpretation being established for him, that leads him to unbelief if it is about the roots of the Law. So interpretations ought not to be declared to the multitude, nor established in rhetorical or dialectical books—I mean, books in which the statements posited are of these two sorts—as Abū Ḥāmid [al-Ghazālī] did.<sup>33</sup>

Decades ago, I attended a gathering in southern California where the late Stanley Kimball, a professor of history at Southern Illinois University and a president of the Mormon History Association, spoke. His apparently unpublished remarks have stuck in my mind ever since.

Professor Kimball explained what he called the “three levels” of Mormon history, which he termed Levels A, B, and C. (Given my own background in philosophy, I might have chosen Hegel’s terminology instead: *thesis*, *antithesis* and *synthesis*. Those terms seem to me to catch very neatly what Professor Kimball had in mind.)

Level A, he said, is the Sunday School version of the Church and its history. Virtually everything connected with the Church on Level A is obviously good and true and harmonious. Members occasionally make mistakes, perhaps, but leaders seldom, if ever, do. It’s difficult for somebody on Level A to imagine why everybody out there doesn’t immediately rec-

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33. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 26 (45:17)-27 (45:2).

ognize the obvious truth of the gospel, and opposition to the Church seems flatly satanic.

Level B—what I call the “antithesis” to Level A’s “thesis”—is perhaps most clearly seen in anti-Mormon versions of Church history. According to many hostile commentators, everything that Level A describes as good and true and harmonious turns out actually to be evil and false and chaotic. Leaders are deceitful and evil, the Church’s account of its own story is a lie, and, some extreme anti-Mormons say, even the general membership often (typically?) misbehaves very badly.

But one doesn’t need to read anti-Mormon propaganda in order to be exposed to elements of Level B that can’t quite be squared with an idealized portrait of the Restoration. Every maturing member of the Church will eventually discover that other Saints, including leaders, are fallible and sometimes even disappointing mortals. There are areas of ambiguity, even unresolved problems, in Church history; there have been disagreements about certain doctrines; some questions don’t have immediately satisfying answers.

Dr. Kimball remarked that the Church isn’t eager to expose its members to such problems. Why? Because souls can be and are lost on Level B. And, anyway, the Church isn’t some sort of floating seminar in historiography. Regrettably, perhaps, most Latter-day Saints—many of them far better people than I—aren’t deeply interested in history, and, more importantly, many other very important priorities demand attention, including training the youth and giving service. Were he in a leadership position, Kimball said, he would probably make the same decision.

But he argued that once members of the Church have been exposed to Level B, their best hope is to press on to the richer but more complicated version of history (or to the more realistic view of humanity) that is to be found on Level C. In fact, he said that, as a historian, he would love it if everybody were

to reach Level C, which he regarded (and I concur) as far more nourishing and more deeply satisfying. Very importantly, he contended (and, again, I agree) that Level C—what I call the “synthesis”—turns out to be essentially, and profoundly, like Level A. The gospel is, in fact, true. Church leaders at all levels have, overwhelmingly, been good and sincere people, doing the best that they can with imperfect human materials (including themselves) under often very difficult circumstances.

But charity and context are all-important. Life would be much easier if we could find a church composed of perfect leaders and flawless members. Unfortunately, at least in my case, the glaringly obvious problem is that such a church would never admit me to membership.

The claims of the Restoration do, in fact, stand up to historical examination, although (very likely by divine design) their truth is not so indisputable as to compel acceptance—least of all from people disinclined to accept them. And people are lost on Level B.

Faced with a similar problem, Ibn Rushd is not content with simple confidence that Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* won’t likely be a bestseller at the supermarket checkout counter and, so, won’t damage those who are unprepared for it. Instead, he calls for a legal prohibition:

What is obligatory from the imams of the Muslims is that they ban those of his books that contain science from all but those adept in science, just as it is obligatory upon them to ban demonstrative books from those not adept in them. Yet the harm befalling people from demonstrative books is lighter, because for the most part only those with superior innate dispositions take up demonstrative books. And this sort [of people] is misled only through a lack of practical virtue, reading

in a disorderly manner, and turning to them without a teacher.<sup>34</sup>

And, on this, al-Ghazālī agrees with him:

The majority of men, I maintain, are dominated by a high opinion of their own skill and accomplishments, especially the perfection of their intellects for distinguishing true from false and sure guidance from misleading suggestion. It is therefore necessary, I maintain, to shut the gate so as to keep the general public from reading the books of the misguided as far as possible.<sup>35</sup>

But, in Ibn Rushd's judgment, at least, there shouldn't be a complete prohibition of such reading:

Totally forbidding demonstrative books bars from what the Law calls to, because it is a wrong to the best sort of people and to the best sort of existing things. For justice with respect to the best sort of existing things is for them to be cognized to their utmost degree by those prepared to be cognizant of them to their utmost degree, and these are the best sort of people.<sup>36</sup>

So much for the responsibilities of leaders. What, if any, are the obligations of those who are not qualified to plumb the depths of science, philosophy, and advanced history? If you plunge into the river, seeking the opposite bank, you need to be very sure that you can swim, and, if you can, that you have the endurance to reach the other side:

For anyone not adept in science, it is obligatory to take them [the descriptions of the next life] in their apparent sense; for him, it is unbelief to interpret them

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34. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 22 (36:13–20).

35. Watt, *Faith and Practice of al-Ghazālī*, 40.

36. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 22 (36:21–26).



because it leads to unbelief. That is why we are of the opinion that, for anyone among the people whose duty it is to have faith in the apparent sense, interpretation is unbelief because it leads to unbelief. Anyone adept in interpretation who divulges that to him calls him to unbelief; and the one who calls to unbelief is an unbeliever.<sup>37</sup>

According to ancient Greek mythology, the Pierian spring in Macedonia was the metaphorical source of the arts and sciences because it was sacred to the nine Muses. Devotees of the spring believed that drinking from it brought great knowledge and inspiration. But Alexander Pope's 1711 poem "An Essay in Criticism" contains a famous warning about drinking from that source:

A little learning is a dang'rous thing;  
 Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring;  
 There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,  
 And drinking largely sobers us again.  
 Fir'd at first sight with what the Muse imparts,  
 In fearless youth we tempt the heights of Arts,  
 While from the bounded level of our mind  
 Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;  
 But more advanc'd, behold with strange surprise  
 New distant scenes of endless science rise!  
 So pleas'd at first the towering Alps we try,  
 Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky,  
 Th' eternal snows appear already past,  
 And the first clouds and mountains seem the last;  
 But, those attain'd, we tremble to survey  
 The growing labours of the lengthen'd way,  
 Th' increasing prospects tire our wand'ring eyes,

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37. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 21 (34:17–23).

Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise!<sup>38</sup>

In other words, a shallow draught of knowledge from the Pieran spring can intoxicate people such that they imagine themselves to know far more than they actually do. But “drinking largely” from it sobers them and makes them wiser. “Nobody,” says the Qur’an of itself, “knows its interpretation except God and those who are well-grounded in knowledge” (Qur’an 3:7).<sup>39</sup> In this light, it’s interesting to read Professor Steven Harper’s impression of at least some people who have lost their belief based on encounters with unexpected elements in Latter-day Saint history:

Having visited with many of them, I believe that they are generally sincere but poorly-informed souls who assumed they were well-informed and then found themselves in a crisis of faith when they encountered evidence that overturned their assumptions.<sup>40</sup>

This is obviously regrettable from the standpoint of a believing Latter-day Saint. But what is to be done about such cases? As we have seen, Ibn Rushd would forbid deeper knowledge to those who seem unable to handle it:

In general, with respect to everything in these [Law-based statements] admitting of an interpretation apprehended only by demonstration, the duty of the select is that interpretation, whereas the duty of the multitude is to take them in their apparent sense in both respects—I mean, with respect to concept and

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38. Alexander Pope, “An Essay in Criticism,” lines 215–32.

39. I’m following Ibn Rushd’s punctuation proposal for the passage, which is not standard but is entirely plausible. See Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 12 (16:22–24).

40. Steven C. Harper, *Joseph Smith’s First Vision: A Guide to the Historical Accounts* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012), 11.

assent—for there is nothing more than that in their natures.<sup>41</sup>

The duty of those within the multitude who are not capable of more than rhetorical statements is to let them stand in their apparent sense, and it is not permissible for them to know that interpretation at all.<sup>42</sup>

He compares the Lawgiver—that is, in his terms, the Prophet or imam of the Muslim community or, perhaps even better, a philosopher within that community—to a physician. Not all people are physicians. Patients, who, for the most part, won't understand what the physician is doing or requiring because they lack the requisite knowledge, should simply trust him.<sup>43</sup>

Modern Latter-day Saints take a much more democratic view. The priesthood is more widely diffused in this dispensation than at any earlier time. The temple is open to virtually everybody, if they meet basic standards, rather than being restricted to a hereditary, all-male priestly caste. Church leaders plainly want all members to know the scriptures well. Accordingly, counsel from a Latter-day Saint point of view might be to take responsibility for your own health, but in conjunction with, and with the help of, trusted authorities. “Would God that all the Lord’s people were prophets,” said Moses, “and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!” (Numbers 11:29). Or, to put it another way, if you intend to swim to the other side of the river—and you really should—learn to swim first. And don’t swim without a buddy. And then, when you’re in the water and the current is strong, swim for all you’re worth.

The Interpreter Foundation exists to encourage and to publish scriptural and historical scholarship by faithful Latter-day

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41. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 25 (42:19–24).

42. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 26 (43:3–6).

43. Averroës, *Decisive Treatise*, 27 (48:27)–28 (48:7).

Saints. We reject the notion that such scholarship should be the exclusive province of a small elite.

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## BOOK REVIEW

*Cassandra Hedelius*

*Review of Paul F. Fink. Comparing and Evaluating the Scriptures: A Timely Challenge for Jews, Christians, Muslims, and Mormons. Lompoc, CA: Summerland Publishing, 2008. 166 pp. \$16.95 (paperback and e-book format).*

I expected better things from Professor Fink's book, as it points out on the cover that he started as the son of a "conservative Christian Minister" and ended as a professor of philosophy; such a life journey, made thoughtfully, ought to sow very interesting things to say. His stated purpose is broad: an "orderly," "even-handed" analysis of the Bible, Koran, Torah, and Book of Mormon. He invites readers to imagine themselves on a jury—one called to impartially evaluate the evidence regarding these sacred works, with minds cleared of presupposition and bias, and required to conclude with completely logical answers to the questions Fink poses at the end of the book.

The questions, disappointingly, are of the smugly conclusory variety, all obviously calculated to encourage the inquisitor's predetermined decision, which is that as an intelligent and mature participant in this very scholarly exercise, I must conclude that religion makes no sense, creates awful consequences, and must be abandoned (see pp. 126–29 and 136–37 for Mr. Fink's clearest expression of these sentiments). This is the book Korihor might have written for an introductory seminar, though even the dimmest student might recognize that the choices of *which* evidence to present and *which* questions to ask

are crucial ones a prosecutor does not make accidentally, and that there can be no fair trial without two opposing lawyers making their respective cases. Fink assures us his presentation of evidence is all we need, for he will impart an “honest understanding of the beliefs of our religious brethren” (p. 8). And so the trial begins.

I’m genuinely puzzled as to whom Fink intended this book to persuade. He titled it a “timely challenge” to the religious believers themselves and presents himself as an expert challenger, but it took me a mere twelve pages to suspect that his grasp of Mormon theology is shockingly poor. I doubt other believers—Christians, Muslims, and Jews—could get much further without acquiring the same suspicion. Here are some of Fink’s worst blunders regarding Mormonism (I will leave other theologies to fend for themselves):

- When Nephi married into the family of Ishmael, it was *the* Ishmael, discarded son of Abraham (p. 21).
- Mormons continue to circumcise their male children as required by covenant (p. 23).
- It fell to church president “Joseph E. Smith” to distance Mormons from trinitarianism and proclaim Jesus is a material being separate from his Father (p. 88).
- A cited Book of Mormon passage describing the formation of “*many* churches” among the gentiles is, in Mr. Fink’s telling, actually a symptom of major anti-Catholic sentiment (p. 105).
- The Book of Mormon describes the origin of the Negro race (p. 105).
- The Book of Mormon consigns the wicked to “eternal torture” in hell. Although the cited passage does read that way, Fink is proof-texting without betraying any awareness of, say, Alma 40, let alone D&C 76 (p. 106).
- Nephi’s quoting Isaiah on women with certain vices—“wanton eyes,” “tinkling” feet, and such (2 Nephi 13:16—

24)—indicates an “antagonistic and demeaning view of women,” not a more obvious warning against pride directed toward Israelites of both genders (p. 106).

- A complicated Isaiah passage directly addressing the devil and anticipating slaughter for “his children” is interpreted as approval of ethnic warfare and genocide in a presentist Middle Eastern framework (p. 108).

There’s every indication that Fink simply thumbed through the Book of Mormon, pulling out passages here and there to support the points he already planned to make without the slightest effort at really understanding even its basic historical setting and message, let alone Mormon doctrine as a whole. The omissions wouldn’t have been so glaring had they been unrelated to the points he wanted to make and the condemnation he wanted to bestow, but they’re all of a piece. It is laughable to see Fink in his “Professor of Civilized Morality” garb condemning Mormonism for sadism because it foretells eternal torture for the non-Mormon. This is especially true considering that a ten-minute conversation with a knowledgeable Latter-day Saint would have spared him the embarrassment of committing all of this to print.

I suspect that this book, though dressed up as an assault on all Western religion, is at heart really a rebellion against and self-justification for Fink’s own strict Protestant past. Remember his father, the “conservative Christian Minister”? Dear old Dad must have emphasized some very specific beliefs about the Bible, because his son can’t seem to tear his gaze away from their particular prism. The heart of the book is the case, tendentiously presented, that the religious of necessity believe their scripture is infallible, dictated directly by God, correct in all details, and so forth. The argument is worth presenting in its entirety—it won’t take long—because it shows, better even than Fink’s Mormon gaffes, that his understanding of the great

diversity of believers he is presuming to expertly correct is extraordinarily shallow:

The positions dictated above [a few proof texts from each book stating that scripture is revealed from God] are unequivocal. Clearly, their authors regard Holy Scriptures as being supernatural in origin. They are, therefore, taken to be the authoritative Word of God. Since God is thought to be perfect, His Word likewise is thought to be perfect. Hence many religious persons use words like “divinely inspired,” “revealed,” “infallible,” “authoritative,” “inerrant,” and “holy” to describe their Bibles [Mr. Fink here uses “Bibles” generically to mean scripture]. Scriptures are to be understood as presenting divine commandments for almost all our thoughts and actions. So important are these commandments thought to be that no other source of theological or moral truth is necessary, or even legitimate. The Holy Scriptures are believed to contain all the divine truth and wisdom we will ever need to guide our lives. It is not only unnecessary, but also mistaken to look elsewhere. (pp. 44–45)

It would be kind to assume Professor Fink is actually sheltered enough to truly think that religious belief requires scriptural inerrantism. However, his position is so convenient to the rest of his argument that one does begin to wonder. In searching the Book of Mormon for convenient quotations, he never stumbled across one of several passages forthrightly stating that it may contain errors? He’s never encountered a believer with a nuanced view of scriptural accuracy despite preparing to write a book that claims to completely invalidate the scripture of Jews, Muslims, Christians, and Latter-day Saints in one fell swoop? So again I wonder who Fink’s intended audience really is. Perhaps the lightly churchied, young and self-righteous,



unfamiliar with the issues raised, and ripe for being eased by intellectual and moral flattery into taking the short step away from faith into atheism. From the premise that religion requires inerrancy, Fink devotes several pages rehearsing the well-worn litany of obvious inaccuracies in the Old Testament—Ahaziah’s age at the start of his reign and so forth—which, along with the moral depravity he finds evident in much of scripture, provides all the evidence Fink needs to reach the verdict that religion is bunk and enlightened individuals should liberate themselves therefrom.

By the end, Fink is reduced to sniffy condemnation of Jesus calling Mary “woman,” and hitching his argument to that of “new atheists” like Daniel Dennett, Sam Harris, and Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy, whose book weakly posits that Jesus was invented from pagan lore.<sup>1</sup> Underwhelming all around—not that a thorough, thoughtful case can’t be made for rejecting organized religion, but Fink’s book isn’t it. To anyone predisposed to think that the choice between belief and atheism is such a simplistic one, I hope such an important decision is not made on the basis of such weak research and poor arguments.

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1. Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy, *The Jesus Mysteries: Was the “Original Jesus” a Pagan God?* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1999).



# BIBLICAL AND NON-BIBLICAL QUOTES IN THE SERMONS AND EPISTLES OF PAUL

*John A. Tvedtnes*

*Abstract: In 2010, BYU's Neal A. Maxwell Institute published an article in which I demonstrated that the charge of plagiarism, frequently leveled against Joseph Smith by critics, is untrue.<sup>1</sup> I noted, among other things, that the authors of books of the Bible sometimes quoted their predecessors. One of those authors was the apostle Paul, who drew upon a wide range of earlier texts in his epistles. This article discusses and demonstrates his sources.*

Paul, also known by his Hebrew name Saul, was a Pharisee (Philippians 3:5–6; Galatians 1:13–14). Though born in the city of Tarsus in Cilicia (southern Turkey), he studied in Jerusalem under the famous rabbi Gamaliel I<sup>2</sup> and was in the employ of the high priest when the risen Christ intervened to chastise him for persecuting Christians (Acts 8:3–4; 9:1–5; 22:3–8). The Pharisees were noted for the various teachings of what they termed “the oral law,” said to have been given to Moses atop the mount at the same time as the written law

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1. John A. Tvedtnes, “Was Joseph Smith Guilty of Plagiarism?” FARMS Review 22/1 (2010): 261–75.

2. Gamaliel was more tolerant than Paul, recommending leniency for Jesus’s apostles when they appeared before the Sanhedrin of which he was a leader (Acts 5:33–41). Gamaliel’s grandfather, Rabbi Hillel, is the one who formulated the “golden rule” modified by Jesus (Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31): “Whatever is hateful to thee, do not unto thy fellow man: this is the whole Law; the rest is mere commentary.”

(*Pirqe Abot* 1:1), so some of Paul's quotes may derive from those traditions.<sup>3</sup>

Having been raised in the diaspora, in a Greek-speaking city, Paul also became acquainted with some of the writings of various Hellenistic philosophers and historians, and quoted some of their sayings. Thus, Jerome (ca. A.D. 340–420), in his *Letter 70 to Magnus* 2, wrote, “The Apostle Paul also, in writing to Titus [Titus 1:12], has used a line of the poet Epimenides: ‘The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.’ Half of which line was afterwards adopted by Callimachus . . . In another epistle Paul quotes a line from Menander: ‘Evil communications corrupt good manners’ [1 Corinthians 15:33]. And when he is arguing with the Athenians upon the Areopagus he calls Aratus as a witness citing from him the words ‘For we are also his offspring’ [Acts 17:28]”<sup>4</sup>

Paul claimed to have received “the gospel” directly from Christ, and not from mortals (Galatians 1:11–12), so while most of the sayings he attributes to Jesus are found in the gospel accounts, he may have received some of them directly from the risen Lord or, as some scholars believe, from a collection of Jesus' sayings that were written down and circulated even before the composition of the four “gospels” (cf. John 20:30; 21:25). Several such collections were found in the Middle East during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Some of Paul's statements, while similar to material found in the Old Testament and other works known in his day, may have been totally independent of written sources. The reader will have to decide if Paul is deliberately quoting

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3. In Galatians 1:14, Paul mentions the “traditions of my fathers” that he was taught. For Jesus's comments on the “traditions of the elders/fathers,” see Matthew 15:1–6; Mark 7:1–13; 1 Peter 1:18. These traditions, when codified, became what is called in Judaism “the oral law,” incorrectly attributed to Moses to give them authority.

4. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, eds., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 6:149.

another source or unconsciously reflecting that source or just saying the same thing without having any earlier source in mind. This has a direct bearing on critics' argument that the Book of Mormon borrows passages from the Bible, especially from the New Testament.<sup>5</sup>

Like other New Testament writers, Paul tends to quote Old Testament passages from the ancient Greek translation known as the Septuagint (abbreviated LXX), which was used by his Greek-speaking audience.<sup>6</sup> The following chart compares Paul's quotes with his sources, using the King James version (KJV) of the Bible where applicable. I have italicized portions of Paul's words that suggest that he knew he was quoting an earlier source. I have tried to eliminate from the list sources that are questionable and have not included Old Testament stories where it is clear that Paul was summarizing and not trying to directly quote (e.g., Galatians 4:22–30).<sup>7</sup>

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5. In Part II of their book *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, Jerald and Sandra Tanner list various New Testament passages that they claimed were borrowed by Joseph Smith for use in the Book of Mormon. In my review of their work (*Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 3 [1991]), I demonstrated that at least some (and perhaps all) of these passages originally came from the Old Testament and would have been available to the Nephite writers who used them. The Tanners subsequently maintained that Joseph Smith used passages from the Apocrypha when he produced the Book of Mormon. Matt Roper and I responded to this argument in our article "Joseph Smith's Use of the Apocrypha: Shadow or Reality?" in *Review of Books on The Book of Mormon* 8/2 (1996). See also my response to Wesley P. Walters's *The Use of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon*, in *Review of Books on The Book of Mormon* 4 (1992). One must also keep in mind that many ancient texts available to New Testament writers have not survived until our day.

6. Tradition holds that the Greek translation was prepared by seventy Jewish scholars, hence the use of the Roman numeral LXX, for seventy. All LXX translations in this article are from Lancelot C. L. Brenton, 1851. *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), 2005.

7. In 1 Corinthians 10:1–4, Paul summarizes elements found in the books of Exodus and Numbers, but the Corinthian passage is the only one in the Bible that suggests that the rock that provided water for the Israelites in the wilderness "followed them." This concept is, however, found in various other ancient and medieval Jewish texts, so Paul must have had a nonbiblical source. For the water-

## From Paul

## Source

### Acts 9:5

"it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Jesus' words to Paul)

See also Acts 26:14

A quotation from Euripides (ca. 480–406 BC), *Bacchae* 794–5.<sup>1</sup> The idiom refers to rebellion against God.

### Acts 13:22

"And when he had removed him [Saul], he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also *he gave testimony, and said*, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will."

No one passage reads as Paul gives it, so it may be a text that has been lost or a paraphrase of **1 Samuel 13:14** ("But now thy [Saul] kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart"), **Psalms 89:20** ("I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him"), and **1 Chronicles 10:14** ("[Saul] enquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him, and turned the kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.")

### Acts 13:24–25

"When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John fulfilled his course, *he said*, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose."

(See also Acts 19:4)

### Mark 1:4

"John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." (see also Luke 3:3)

### John 1:21

"And they asked him . . . Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No."

### Mark 1:7

"There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose" (see also Matthew 3:11; John 1:15, 30)

### Acts 13:33

"*as it is also written in the second psalm*, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee"

### Psalms 2:7

"Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee"

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bearing rock in the Bible, see Exodus 17:5–6; Numbers 20:7–11; Deuteronomy 8:15; Nehemiah 9:15; Psalms 78:15–16, 20; 105:41; 114:8; Isaiah 48:21.

**Acts 13:34**

*“he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David”*

**Isaiah 55:3**

*“I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.”*

**Acts 13:35**

*“he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption”*

**Psalms 16:10**

*“neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption”*

**Acts 13:40–41**

*“Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.”*

**Habakkuk 1:5**

*“Behold ye among the heathen [LXX ye despisers], and regard [LXX vanish], and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you.” (cf. Isaiah 29:14).*

**Acts 13:47**

*“For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.”*

**Isaiah 49:6**

*“I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.” (also quoted in 1 Nephi 21:6)*

**Acts 14:15**

*“God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein”*

**Psalms 146:6**

*“God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein” (also quoted in Acts 4:24)*

**Acts 15:15–17**

“And to this agree *the words of the prophets; as it is written*, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.”

**Acts 17:23**

“For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.”

**Acts 17:24**

“God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.”

**Acts 17:26**

“[God] hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.”

**Acts 17:27**

“That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us”

**Amos 9:11–12**

“In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom [LXX men],<sup>2</sup> and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this.”

An altar with this inscription, dating to ca. 100 BC, was found on the Palatine Hill in Rome. Paul had reference to an altar he had seen in Athens. There may have been many such altars throughout the Roman Empire.

Probably influenced by Solomon’s words at the dedication of the Jerusalem temple in

**1 Kings 8:27**

“But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded?”

Probably influenced by

**Deuteronomy 32:8**

“When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people.”

**Isaiah 55:6**

“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near”



**Acts 17:28**

“For in him we live, and move, and have our being; *as certain also of your own poets have said*, For we are also his offspring.”<sup>3</sup>

The first part of the verse (up to the word “being”) draws on Epimenides (ca. 600 BC), writing about the Greek god Zeus in *De oraculis/peri Chresmon*.<sup>4</sup> Hesiod may be the author of the words at the end of the verse, which were borrowed by Epimenides and Callimachus, but were also used by Aratus<sup>5</sup> and Cleanthes.<sup>6</sup>

**Acts 17:30**

“And the times of this ignorance God winked at”

**Ecclesiasticus (Ben-Sirach) 28:7**

“remember the covenant of the Highest, and wink at ignorance”

**Cf. Wisdom of Solomon 11:23**

“for thou canst do all things, and wink-est at the sins of men”

**Acts 17:31**

“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained”

**Psalms 96:13**

“Before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.”

**Psalms 98:9**

“Before the Lord; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.”

**Psalms 9:8**

“And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.”

**Cf. 1 Enoch 41:9<sup>7</sup>**

“for He appoints a judge for them all and He judges them all before Him”

**Acts 19:4**

“John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.”

(See also Acts 13:24–25)

**Mark 1:4**

“John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

(See also Luke 3:3)

**Acts 20:35**

*"remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."*

None of the four New Testament gospel accounts include this teaching of Jesus. The closest passage is **Matthew 10:8**, "freely ye have received, freely give"

**Acts 23:5**

*"for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people"*

**Exodus 22:28**

*"Thou shalt not . . . curse the ruler of thy people"*

**Acts 26:14**

*"it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks"* (Jesus' words to Paul)  
(See also Acts 9:5)

A quotation from Euripides (ca. 480–406 BC), *Bacchae* 794–5. The idiom refers to rebellion against God.

**Acts 28:25–27**

*"Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them"*

**Isaiah 6:9–10**

*"Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."*  
(Also cited in Matthew 13:13–15; John 12:39–41) [LXX does not use a causative verb, but merely describes the heart as being gross, the ears dull of hearing, and the eyes closed.]

**Romans 1:17**

*"as it is written, The just shall live by faith"* (see also Galatians 3:11)

**Habakkuk 2:4**

*"the just shall live by his [LXX my] faith"*

**Romans 1:22–23**

“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.”

**Romans 1:32**

“Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

**Romans 2:1**

“wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.”

**Romans 2:5–6**

“But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds”<sup>8</sup>

Perhaps an allusion to

**Deuteronomy 4:16–18**

“Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth:”

**Testament of Asher 6:2**

“for they both do the evil thing and they have pleasure in them that do it”

**Matthew 7:1–2**

“Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged”

**Luke 6:37**

“Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned”

**Job 21:30–31**

“the wicked . . . shall be brought forth to the day of wrath . . . who shall repay him what he hath done?”

**Proverbs 24:12**

“and shall not he render to every man according to his works?”

and **Psalms 62:12**

“thou renderest to every man according to his work”

**Romans 2:11**

"For there is no respect of persons with God." (See also Galatians 2:6; Ephesians 6:9 and cf. Colossians 3:25)

**Romans 2:19**

"And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind,<sup>9</sup> a light of them which are in darkness"

(Cf. Simeon's blessing of the newborn Jesus in Luke 1:79: "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace")

**Romans 2:24**

"For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, *as it is written.*"

**Romans 2:29**

"circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter" (cf. Colossians 2:11)

Romans 3:1

"What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?"

**JST Romans 3:1**

"What advantage then hath the Jew over the Gentile? or what profit of circumcision, who is not a Jew from the heart?"

**Deuteronomy 10:17**

"For the Lord your God . . . regardeth not persons" (Cited in 2 Samuel 14:14; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Acts 10:34; 1 Peter 1:17; Moroni 8:12; D&C 1:35; 38:16)

**Isaiah 42:6-7**

"I . . . give thee for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out . . . them that sit in darkness" (see also v. 16)

**Cf. Micah 7:8**

"when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me"

**Ezekiel 36:20**

"And when they [the Israelites] entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name"

**Isaiah 52:5**

"they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed."

**Deuteronomy 10:16**

"Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart"

**Deuteronomy 30:6**

"And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart"

**Jeremiah 4:4**

"Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your [LXX circumcise your hardness of] heart"

**Romans 3:4**

"as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged"

**Romans 3:9–12**

"we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

**Romans 3:13**

"Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips"

**Romans 3:14**

"Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:"

**Psalms 51:4**

"that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest [LXX in thy sayings], and be clear when thou judgest [LXX mightiest overcome when thou art judged]."<sup>10</sup>

Cited in Matthew 12:37;<sup>11</sup> cf. Moses 6:34.

**Psalms 14:1–3 (also Psalm 53:1–3)**

"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy [LXX unprofitable]: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

(Cf. Ecclesiastes 7:20, "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" and Micah 7:2, "The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men.")

**Psalms 5:9**

"their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter [LXX used deceit] with their tongue"

**Psalms 140:3**

"They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips."<sup>12</sup>

**Psalms 10:7**

"His mouth is full of cursing and deceit [LXX bitterness] and fraud"

**Romans 3:15–17**

“Their feet are swift to shed blood:  
Destruction and misery are in their  
ways:  
And the way of peace have they not  
known”

**Romans 3:18**

“There is no fear of God before their  
eyes”

**Romans 3:20**

“Therefore by the deeds of the law there  
shall no flesh be justified in his sight”

**Romans 3:23**

“For all have sinned, and come short of  
the glory of God” (see also Galatians  
3:22)

**Romans 4:3**

“*For what saith the scripture?* Abraham  
believed God, and it was counted  
unto him for righteousness.” (see also  
Romans 4:9, 22; Galatians 3:6)

**Romans 4:6–8**

“*Even as David also describeth* the  
blessedness of the man, unto whom  
God imputeth righteousness without  
works, *Saying*, Blessed are they whose  
iniquities are forgiven, and whose  
sins are covered. Blessed is the man to  
whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

**Isaiah 59:7–8**

“Their feet run to evil, and they make  
haste to shed innocent [LXX om.]  
blood: their thoughts are thoughts of  
iniquity [LXX murder]; wasting and  
destruction are in their paths. The way  
of peace they know not.”

**Cf. Proverbs 1:16**

“For their feet run to evil, and make  
haste to shed blood”<sup>13</sup>

**Psalms 36:1**

“there is no fear of God before his eyes”

**Psalms 143:2**

“for in thy sight shall no man living be  
justified”

**Micah 7:2?**

“The good man is perished out of the  
earth: and there is none upright among  
men”

**Genesis 15:6**

“And he believed in the Lord; and he  
counted it to him for righteousness.”

**Psalms 32:1–2**

“A Psalm of David . . . Blessed is he  
whose transgression is forgiven, whose  
sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto  
whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity”

**Romans 4:17**

"As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations"

**Genesis 17:5**

"for a father of many nations have I made thee"

**Romans 4:18**

"according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be"

**Genesis 15:5**

"So shall thy seed be"

**Romans 4:22-23**

"And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him" (see also Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6)

**Genesis 15:6**

"And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

**Romans 5:5**

"And hope maketh not ashamed"

**Psalms 119:116**

"let me not be ashamed of my hope"

**Romans 7:7**

"the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (See also Romans 13:9)

**Exodus 20:17 (also Deuteronomy 5:21)**

"Thou shalt not covet"

**Romans 8:36**

"As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter"

**Psalms 44:22**

"Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter"

**Romans 8:38**

"nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers" (see also Ephesians 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:15; Titus 3:1)

**1 Enoch 61:10**

"all the angels of power, and all the angels of principalities" (cf. JST Genesis 14:31)  
See also D&C 121:29; 128:23; 132:13, 19

**Romans 9:5**

"Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever"

**1 Enoch 77:1**

"there in quite a special sense will He who is blessed for ever descend."

**Romans 9:7**

"Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: *but*, In Isaac shall thy seed be called"

**Romans 9:9**

"*For this is the word of promise*, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son"

**Romans 9:12**

"*It was said unto her*, The elder shall serve the younger"

**Romans 9:13**

"*As it is written*, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated"

**Romans 9:14**

"Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid."

**Romans 9:15**

"*For he saith to Moses*, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (cf. vs. 18)

**Romans 9:17**

"*For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh*, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth"

**Genesis 21:12**

"And God said unto Abraham . . . in Isaac shall thy seed be called."

**Genesis 18:10**

"I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son."

**Genesis 18:14**

"At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son"

**Genesis 25:23**

"And the Lord said unto her . . . the elder shall serve the younger"

**Malachi 1:2-3**

"yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau"

Perhaps an allusion to

**Psalms 92:15**

"to shew that the Lord is upright . . . and there is no unrighteousness in him."

**Exodus 33:19**

"I . . . will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy" (Paul follows the word order of LXX)

**Exodus 9:16**

(addressed to Pharaoh)

"And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth"



**Romans 9:20–21**

“Nay but, O man, who art thou that repleist against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?”

**Romans 9:25–26**

“As *he saith also in Osee*, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God”

Isaiah 45:9

“Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! . . . Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands?”<sup>14</sup>

LXX Isaiah 45:9

“shall the clay say to the potter, What art thou doing that thou dost not work, nor hast hands? Shall the thing formed answer him that formed it?”

Isaiah 29:16

“shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He had no understanding?”

**Jeremiah 18:6**

“O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel.”

cf. **Job 9:12**

“who will say unto him, What doest thou?”

**Hosea 1:9–10**

“ye are not my people . . . in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God”  
Cf. **Hosea 2:23** (“I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God”) and **Zechariah 13:9** (“I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God”)

**Romans 9:27–28**

*“Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.”*

**Romans 9:29**

*“And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha”*

**Romans 9:33**

*“As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed”* (See also Romans 10:11)

**Romans 10:5**

*“For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them”*

**Isaiah 10:22–23**

*“For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land”* (Paul’s quote is from LXX version)

**Isaiah 1:9**

*“Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah”*

**Isaiah 28:16**

*“Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste”* (LXX reads “shall not be ashamed”) See also Isaiah 8:14–15

**Leviticus 18:5**

*“Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them”*

Cf. **Deuteronomy 4:1** (“hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live”) and **Ezekiel 20:11** (“And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them”)

**Romans 10:6–8**

*“But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach”*

(See also Ephesians 4:9–10)

**Deuteronomy 30:12–14**

“It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.” (cf. John 3:13, “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” Cf. also D&C 88:6, Psalm 139:8, and Genesis 28:12 [paraphrased in John 1:51])

**Romans 10:11**

*“For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed”*

(See also Romans 9:33)

**Isaiah 28:16**

“he that believeth shall not make haste” (LXX reads “shall not be ashamed”)

**Romans 10:13**

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (cf. Acts 2:21; Alma 9:17)

**Joel 2:32**

“whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered”  
Cf. Psalm 86:5

**Romans 10:15**

“And how shall they preach, except they be sent? *as it is written*, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!”

(See also Ephesians 6:15)

**Isaiah 52:7**

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good.”

**Cf. Nahum 1:15**

“Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!”

**Romans 10:16**

*“For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?”* (cf. John 12:38)

**Isaiah 53:1**

“Who hath believed our report?” (LXX adds to beginning “Lord”)

**Romans 10:18**

"Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

**Romans 10:19**

"*First Moses saith*, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you."

**Romans 10:20–21**

"*But Esaias is very bold, and saith*, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. *But to Israel he saith*, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."

**Romans 11:1–2a**

"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid . . . God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew"

**Romans 11:2–4**

"*Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying*, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal"

**Psalms 19:4**

"Their line [LXX voice]<sup>15</sup> is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world"

**Deuteronomy 32:21**

"I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation"

**Isaiah 65:1–2**

"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not . . . I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people" (Paul follows LXX)

**Psalms 94:14**

"For the Lord will not cast off his people."

**1 Kings 19:10 (repeated in vs. 14), 18**

(Elijah speaking): "And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away . . . [the Lord said,] Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal"

**Romans 11:8**

8 “(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.” (cf. Acts 28:25–27)

**Romans 11:9–10**

“And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway”

**Romans 11:15–21, 23–26**

(Passage too long to quote here.)

**Romans 11:25a**

“lest ye should be wise in your own conceits”

**Romans 12:16**

“lest ye should be wise in your own conceits”

**Isaiah 29:10**

“For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes” (Cf. 2 Nephi 27:5 and see also Isaiah 6:10; Jeremiah 5:21; Ezekiel 12:2)

**Deuteronomy 29:4**

“Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.”

**Psalms 69:22–23**

“Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and make their loins continually to shake.” (Paul follows LXX)

This appears to be an allusion to the olive tree parable of Zenos, preserved in **Jacob 4:14–5:77** (see also 1 Nephi 15:7, 12–20).<sup>16</sup>

Influenced by the book of Proverbs:

**Proverbs 3:7**

“Be not wise in thine own eyes [LXX conceit]”

**Proverbs 26:5**

“lest he be wise in his own conceit”

**Proverbs 26:12**

“Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit?”

**Proverbs 26:16**

“wiser in his own conceit”

**Proverbs 28:11**

“The rich man [is] wise in his own conceit;

(cf. Proverbs 18:11)

Isaiah 5:21

“Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes [LXX conceit], and prudent in their own sight!”

**Romans 11:25b**

"until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (cf. vs. 12)

**Romans 11:26–27**

"And so all Israel shall be saved: *as it is written*, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins"

**Romans 11:33**

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Cf. Ephesians 3:8, "the unsearchable riches of Christ")

**Genesis 48:19**

"his seed shall become a multitude of nations" (the Hebrew reads "fulness of gentiles/nations")<sup>17</sup>

The term "fulness of the gentiles" is found in 1 Nephi 15:13; 3 Nephi 16:4, 7; Joseph Smith History 1:41.

**Isaiah 59:20–21**

"And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord"

Paul seems to have combined this with: Isaiah 27:9

"By this therefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit to take away his sin"

**Job 5:9**

"Which doeth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number:"

**Psalms 145:3**

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable."

**Cf. Isaiah 40:28**

"there is no searching of his understanding"

**Jacob 4:8** (probably quoting Zenos)<sup>18</sup>

"Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways save it be revealed unto him"

**Romans 11:34**

“For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?”

**Isaiah 40:13**

13 Who hath directed [LXX knew] the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?

**Romans 12:9**

“Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.”

**Amos 5:15**

“Hate the evil, and love the good”

**Romans 12:14**

“Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not”

**Matthew 5:44**

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you”

**Romans 12:15**

“Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep”

**Ecclesiasticus (Ben-Sirach) 7:34**

“Fail not to be with them that weep, and mourn with them that mourn”<sup>19</sup>

**Romans 12:17**

“Recompense to no man evil for evil”

**Proverbs 20:22**

“Say not thou, I will recompense evil”

**Romans 12:19**

“*for it is written*, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord” (also quoted in Hebrews 10:30)

**Deuteronomy 32:35–36**

“To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence . . . For the Lord shall judge his people” (cf. Psalm 94:1 and Mormon 3:15)

**Romans 12:20**

“Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head”

**Proverbs 25:21–22**

“If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee”

**Romans 12:21**

“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good”

**Romans 13:1**

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”

(Cf. John 19:10–12)

**Romans 13:7**

“Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour”

**Romans 13:8, 10**

“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law . . . Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law”

**Testament of Benjamin 4:3**

“And even if persons plot against him for evil ends, by doing good this man conquers evil” (cf. Jacob 5:59, quoting Zenos)

**Wisdom of Solomon 6:1–2**

“Hear therefore, O ye kings, and understand; learn, ye that be judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, ye that rule the people . . . For power is given you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the Highest”<sup>20</sup>

**Matthew 22:21**

“Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (also in Mark 12:17, Luke 20:25)

**Matthew 22:35–40**

“Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” (citing Deuteronomy 6:5; cf. Deuteronomy 10:12; 11:13, 22; 13:3; 30:6; Joshua 22:5; and Leviticus 19:18) See also Matthew 5:43; 19:19



**Romans 13:9**

"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (See also Romans 7:7 and cf. Galatians 5:14, where Paul quotes a different saying of Jesus)

**Matthew 19:18–19**

"Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Jesus' declaration relies on **Exodus 20:13–17**, "Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet" [also in **Deuteronomy 5:17–21**] and **Leviticus 19:18**, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.")

**Romans 14:11**

"For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God"

**Isaiah 45:23**

"I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (cf. Mosiah 27:31)

**Romans 14:14**

"I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

No parallel in the gospels, but Paul may have reference to a personal revelation or to the words of the Lord to Peter (Acts 11:8–9).

**Romans 15:3**

"as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me" (see vs. 4 for reference to previous writings)

**Psalms 69:9**

"the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me"

**Romans 15:9**

"And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name"

**Psalms 18:49 (//2 Samuel 22:50)**

"Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name" (cf. Psalm 57:9; 108:3)

**Romans 15:10**

*"And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people"*

**Deuteronomy 32:43**

*"Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people"*

**Romans 15:11**

*"And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people"*

**Psalms 117:1**

*"O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people"*

**Romans 15:12**

*"And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust"*

**Isaiah 11:10**

*"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious"*

**Romans 15:21**

*"But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand"*

**Isaiah 52:15**

*"for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider"*

**1 Corinthians 1:19**

*"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent"*

**Isaiah 29:14**

*"I will proceed to do a marvellous work . . . for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid"*

**1 Corinthians 1:20**

*"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"*

**Isaiah 33:18**

*"Where is the scribe? where is the receiver [LXX counselors]? where is he that counted the towers? [LXX he that numbers them that are growing up]"<sup>21</sup>*

**1 Corinthians 1:31**

“That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord” (cf. 2 Corinthians 10:17)

**Jeremiah 9:24**

“But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord” (cf. Psalm 29:2 [quoted in 1 Chronicles 16:29]; Psalm 105:3 [quoted in 1 Chronicles 16:10]; Alma 26:16)

**Isaiah 41:16**

“thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel”  
Cf. Alma 26:16

**1 Corinthians 2:7**

“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:”

Allusion to

**Proverbs 8:22–23**

(Wisdom speaking, according to verse 1):

“The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.”

**1 Corinthians 2:9**

“*But as it is written*, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him”

**Isaiah 64:4**

“men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him”

**1 Corinthians 2:16**

“For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him?”

**Isaiah 40:13**

“Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him?”

**1 Corinthians 3:8**

“every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour”

**Psalm 62:12**

“thou renderest to every man according to his work”

**1 Corinthians 3:15**

"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

**1 Corinthians 3:16–17**

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

Cf. 1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16

**1 Corinthians 3:19**

"For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness."

**1 Corinthians 3:20**

"And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."

**1 Corinthians 4:5**

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."

Unnamed prophet cited in **1 Nephi 22:17**

"Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire." (cf. Moroni's words in Ether 4:9)

**Jeremiah 7:4–5**

"The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings"

Aphrahat, a 4<sup>th</sup>-century Church Father, read this passage "Ye are the temple of the Lord, if ye make fair your ways and your deeds" (*Demonstration* 17.6).<sup>22</sup>

**Job 5:13**

"He taketh the wise in their own craftiness"

**Psalms 94:11**

"The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity."

Probably derives from

**Isaiah 29:15**

"Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark"

**1 Corinthians 4:6**

“that ye might learn in us not to think of men above *that which is written*, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.”

I have been unable to determine Paul’s source for this quote.

**1 Corinthians 5:13**

“Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.”

Deuteronomy 17:7

“so thou shalt put the evil away from among you”

**Deuteronomy 19:19**

“so shalt thou put the evil away from among you”

Deuteronomy 24:7

“thou shalt put evil away from among you”

**1 Corinthians 6:7**

“ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?.”

Probably influenced by

**Matthew 5:40**

“And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.”

**1 Corinthians 6:11**

“Justified in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

**1 Enoch 48:7**

“In his name they are saved.”

**1 Corinthians 6:16**

“What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, *saith he*, shall be one flesh” (see also Ephesians 5:31)

Genesis 2:24

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (cited in Matthew 19:5–6; Mark 10:8).

**1 Corinthians 6:18**

“Flee fornication”

**Testament of Reuben 5:5**

“flee, therefore, fornication”

**Testament of Benjamin 7:1**

“Flee, my children, malice and fornication”<sup>23</sup>

**1 Corinthians 7:10–11**

“And unto the married I command, yet not I, *but the Lord*,<sup>24</sup> Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.”

**1 Corinthians 8:4–6**

“there is none other God but one . . . to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” (See also Ephesians 4:6)

**1 Corinthians 9:9**

“*For it is written in the law of Moses*, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.” (see also verse 14)  
(See also 1 Timothy 5:18)

**1 Corinthians 9:10**

“Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this is written*: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.”

**Matthew 5:31–32**

“It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:<sup>25</sup> But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.” (see also Matthew 19:3–9; Mark 10:2–12; Luke 16:18.)

**Deuteronomy 4:35**

“the Lord he is God; there is none else beside him”

**Deuteronomy 4:39**

“the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else”

**Deuteronomy 6:4**

“The Lord our God is one Lord”  
(see also Isaiah 43:10–12; 44:6–8; 45:5–6, 21)

**Deuteronomy 25:4**

“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.”

Not found in the scriptures, but considered by many Bible scholars to be a quote from an earlier text.

**1 Corinthians 9:14**

“Even so hath the *Lord ordained* that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel” (see also verses 9 and 18)

**Matthew 10:7–10**

“And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand . . . Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat”

**1 Corinthians 10:7**

“Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; *as it is written*, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.”

**Exodus 32:6**

“the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.”

**1 Corinthians 10:20**

“they sacrifice to devils, and not to God”

**Deuteronomy 32:17**

“They sacrificed unto devils, not to God”

**1 Corinthians 10:26**

“For the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.”

**Psalms 24:1**

“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.”

**1 Corinthians 10:28**

“for the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof”

**1 Corinthians 11:11–12**

“Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.”

Perhaps influenced by

**Genesis 5:1–2**

“In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.”

**1 Corinthians 11:23–25**

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That *the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*”

The verbiage “I have received of the Lord” may suggest that the words spoken by Jesus at the last supper were revealed to Paul from heaven.

**1 Corinthians 13:4–8, 13**

“Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away . . .

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”

**Luke 22:19–20**

“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.”

Luke’s version is much closer to Paul’s verbiage than the accounts found in Matthew 26:26–28 and Mark 14:22–24.<sup>26</sup>

Exodus 24:8. Luke wrote the book of Acts, most of which describes Paul’s missionary journeys, and he accompanied Paul on some of those journeys.

Cf. “the blood of the covenant” in Exodus 24:8.

**Moroni 7:45–47**

“And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail.”

[Vs. 48 parallels 3 John 3:3.]

**2 Nephi 26:30**

“And except they had charity they were nothing.”

I suspect that Paul, Nephi, and Mormon were all quoting from a common ancient source that has not survived the ravages of time.



**1 Corinthians 14:8**

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle"

**Ezekiel 7:14**

"They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but none goeth to the battle"

**1 Corinthians 14:21**

"*In the law [sic]<sup>27</sup> it is written*, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people; and yet for all that will they not hear me, saith the Lord."

**Isaiah 28:11–12**

For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people . . . yet they would not hear.

**1 Corinthians 14:34**

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but [they are commanded] to be under obedience, *as also saith the law.*"

Probably an allusion to

**Genesis 3:16**

"Unto the woman he said . . . and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

**1 Corinthians 15:3–7**

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins *according to the scriptures*; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day *according to the scriptures*: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles."

The "scriptures" to which Paul refers in verse 3 may be **Isaiah 53:6–12**, while those mentioned in verse 4 seem to reflect

**Hosea 6:2**: "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."

(The parallel structure of 1 Corinthians 15:5–7 suggests to some scholars that Paul was here quoting an early Christian creed about the witnesses of the resurrected Christ. That James saw the risen Lord is affirmed in *Gospel of the Hebrews*, as cited in Jerome, *Lives of Illustrious Men* 2.)

**1 Corinthians 15:25–27**

“For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. *But when he saith* all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him.” (see also Ephesians 1:22)

**1 Corinthians 15:32**

“let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.”

**1 Corinthians 15:33**

“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”

**1 Corinthians 15:35**

“How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?”

**1 Corinthians 15:36**

“that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die”

**1 Corinthians 15:45**

“And so *it is written*, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.”

**Psalms 8:6**

“Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.” (reflecting Genesis 1:28: “have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth”)

**Psalms 110:1**

“The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”

**Isaiah 22:13**

“let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die.” (Also cited in 2 Nephi 28:7–8)

From the Greek text, it is clear that Paul was quoting a proverb from Menander of Athens (342–291 BC) in his *Thais*, Fragment 218.

Perhaps from **2 Baruch 49:2**

“In what shape will those live who live in Thy day?”

Perhaps an allusion to **John 12:24**

“Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

**Genesis 2:7**

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man [Adam] became a living soul.”

**1 Corinthians 15:54–55**

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass *the saying that is written*, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

**Isaiah 25:8**

“Death is swallowed up in victory”

**Hosea 13:14**

“I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.”

**LXX reads:**

“I will deliver them out of the power of Hades, and will redeem them from death: where is thy penalty, O death? O Hades, where is thy sting? Comfort is hidden from mine eyes.

Cf. *Gospel of Nicodemus* 16:9–12 (adjunct to *Acts of Pilate* 5 (21):2):

“Isaiah said: I foresaw this by the Holy Spirit and wrote: *The dead shall arise, and those who are in the tombs shall be raised up, and those who are under the earth shall rejoice.* [from Isaiah 26:19] *O death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory?*”

For sting of death, see Mosiah 16:7–8; Alma 22:14; cf. Mormon 7:5

**1 Corinthians 16:13**

“quit you like men, be strong”

**1 Samuel 4:9**

“Be strong, and quit yourselves like men”

**2 Corinthians 4:6**

“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

**Genesis 1:3–4**

“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.”

**1 Enoch 38:4**

“And they shall not be able to behold the face of the holy, for the Lord of Spirits has caused His light to appear on the face of the holy, righteous, and elect” (cf. Exodus 34:33–35)

**2 Corinthians 4:13**

"according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak"

**2 Corinthians 5:17**

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new"

(cf. Galatians 6:15)

**2 Corinthians 6:2**

"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

**2 Corinthians 6:14**

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"

**2 Corinthians 6:16**

"for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

**Psalms 116:10**

"I believed, therefore have I spoken:"

**Isaiah 43:18-19**

"Remember ye not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth"

Cf. **Jubilees 5:12**

"A new and righteous nature"

**Isaiah 49:8**

"Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;"

Probably influenced by

**Deuteronomy 22:10**

"Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together."

**Leviticus 26:12**

"And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people."

(cf. Deuteronomy 28:9)

Quoted in **Jeremiah 7:23**

"But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people" (cf. Ezekiel 11:20)

**2 Corinthians 6:17–18**

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, *saith the Lord*, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

**Isaiah 52:11**

“Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.”

Some scholars believe that 2 Corinthians 6:18 is an allusion to 2 Samuel 7:8, 14, but a closer parallel is **Isaiah 43:6**, “bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth,” which, like Isaiah 52:11, refers to the gathering of Israel. The closest parallel of all is in **Jeremiah 31:9** (“for I am a father to Israel”) and **Jubilees 1:24** (“and I will be their Father and they shall be My children”)

**2 Corinthians 7:9–10**

“Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”

**Testament of Gad 5:6–7**

“For true repentance after a godly sort destroyeth ignorance, and driveth away the darkness, and enlighteneth the eyes, and giveth knowledge to the soul, and leadeth the mind to salvation.”

**2 Corinthians 8:15**

“As *it is written*, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack.”

**Exodus 16:18**

“And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating.”

**2 Corinthians 9:9–10**

"As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness" (see also Hebrews 12:11 and cf. Ephesians 5:9)

**2 Corinthians 10:7**

"Do ye look on things after the outward appearance?"

**2 Corinthians 10:17**

"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:31)

**2 Corinthians 13:1**

"In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

**Psalms 112:9**

"He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour."

**Isaiah 55:10**

"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater."

**Amos 6:12**

"fruits of righteousness" (also used in Philippians 1:11)

Influenced by

**1 Samuel 16:7**

"the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

**Jeremiah 9:24**

"But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord" (cf. Psalm 29:2 [quoted in 1 Chronicles 16:29]; Psalm 105:3 [quoted in 1 Chronicles 16:10]; Alma 26:16)

**Isaiah 41:16**

"thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel"

**Deuteronomy 19:15**

"at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established." (Also cited in Matthew 18:16; cf. Deuteronomy 17:6; 1 Timothy 5:19; Hebrews 10:28; D&C 6:28; 42:80–81; 128:3.)

**Galatians 2:6**

“God accepteth no man’s person”

(See also Romans 2:11; Ephesians 6:9 cf. Colossians 3:25)

**Deuteronomy 10:17**

“For the Lord your God . . . regardeth not persons” (Cited in 2 Samuel 14:14; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Acts 10:34; 1 Peter 1:17; Moroni 8:12; D&C 1:35; 38:16)

**Galatians 2:15**

“We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles”

Perhaps influenced by

**Jubilees 23:23–24**<sup>28</sup>

“And he will rouse up against them the sinners of the nations . . . they will cry out and call and pray to be saved from the hand of the sinners, the gentiles”<sup>29</sup>

**Galatians 2:16**

“for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified”

Probably a paraphrase of

**Psalms 143:2**

“for in thy sight shall no man living be justified”

**Galatians 3:6**

“Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”

(see also Romans 4:3, 22)

**Genesis 15:6**

“And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness” (also quoted in James 2:23)

**Galatians 3:8**

“And the *scripture*, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, *preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.”

**Genesis 12:3**

“in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (cf. Genesis 18:18; 22:18)

**Galatians 3:10**

“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: *for it is written*, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

**Deuteronomy 27:26**

“Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.”

**Deuteronomy 28:58**

“If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book”

**Deuteronomy 29:21**

“according to all the curses of the covenant that are written in this book of the law:”

**Galatians 3:11**

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: *for*, The just shall live by faith." (see also Romans 1:17)

**Habakkuk 2:4**

"but the just shall live by his faith"

**Galatians 3:12**

"And the law is not of faith: *but*, The man that doeth them shall live in them."

**Leviticus 18:5**

"Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them."

**Galatians 3:13**

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: *for it is written*, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"

**Deuteronomy 21:23**

"His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;)"

**Galatians 3:16**

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. *He saith not*, And to seeds, as of many; *but as of one*, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

**Genesis 22:18**

"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."<sup>30</sup> (Paul's verbiage is closer to Genesis 13:15, but the promise of land inheritance in that passage seems unrelated to Christ as the seed of Abraham, as does the same promise in Genesis 12:7)

**Galatians 3:22**

"*But the scripture hath concluded* all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." (see also Romans 3:23)

**Micah 7:2 (?)**

The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men



**Galatians 4:27**

*"For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband."*

**Galatians 4:30**

*"Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."*

**Galatians 5:14**

*"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."* (cf. Romans 13:9–10, where Paul quotes Jesus)

**Galatians 6:7**

*"whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."* (see 1 Corinthians 9:11 and cf. 2 Corinthians 9:6)

**Isaiah 54:1**

*"Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord."* (Paul follows LXX)

**Genesis 21:10**

*"Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac."*

**Leviticus 19:18**

*"thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself"*

Jesus cited this passage along with Deuteronomy 6:5, saying that "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:36–40; Mark 12:28–31; Luke 10:25)

**Job 4:8**

*"they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same."*

**Proverbs 22:8**

*"He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity"*

**Hosea 8:7**

*"For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind"*

**Hosea 10:12–13**

*"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy . . . Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity."*

(cf. Psalm 126:5; Jeremiah 12:13)

**Galatians 6:15**

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17)

**Cf. Jubilees 5:12**

"A new and righteous nature"

**Ephesians 1:9**

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself"

Perhaps influenced by

**1 Enoch 49:4**

"And no one will be able to utter vain words in his presence. For he is the Elect One before the Lord of the Spirits according to his good pleasure."

**Ephesians 1:21**

"principality, and power, and might, and dominion" (see also Romans 8:38; Colossians 1:16)

**1 Enoch 61:10**

"all the angels of power, and all the angels of principalities"

**Ephesians 1:22**

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church," (see also 1 Corinthians 15:25–27)

**Psalms 8:6**

"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:"

**Ephesians 2:17**

"And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh"

**Isaiah 57:19**

"Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord."

**Ephesians 4:8**

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

**Psalms 68:18**

"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."

**Ephesians 4:9–10**

“Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.” (cf. Romans 10:6–8)

**Ephesians 4:25**

“**speak every** man truth with his neighbour”

**Ephesians 4:26**

“Be ye angry, and sin not”

**Ephesians 5:8**

“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light”

(See also 1 Thessalonians 5:4–5)

**Proverbs 30:4**

“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?”

(cf. D&C 88:6 and John 3:13, “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” Cf. also Genesis 28:12 [paraphrased in John 1:51])

**Zechariah 8:16**

“Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour”

**Psalms 4:4**

“Stand in awe [LXX “Be ye angry”], and sin not.”

**1 Enoch 108:11**

“So now I shall summon their spirits if they are born of light, and change those who are born in darkness”

**John 12:35–36**

“Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.”

**Ephesians 5:14**

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (cf. Paul in Acts 26:23)

**2 Timothy 2:11–13**

It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." (cf. Romans 6:8)

**Ephesians 5:30–31**

"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh" (see also 1 Corinthians 6:16)

**Ephesians 6:2–3**

"Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

**Ephesians 6:9**

"your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him" (See also Romans 2:11; Galatians 2:6 and cf. Colossians 3:25)

**Isaiah 26:19**

"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." (cf. Alma 5:7)

**Job 14:12**

"So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep"

**Daniel 12:2**

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake"

**Genesis 2:23–24**

"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh . . . Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (cited in Matthew 19:5–6; Mark 10:8).

**Exodus 20:12 (also Deuteronomy 5:16)**

"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

**Deuteronomy 10:17**

"For the Lord your God . . . regardeth not persons" (Cited in 2 Samuel 14:14; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Acts 10:34; 1 Peter 1:17; Moroni 8:12; D&C 1:35; 38:16; cf. Job 34:19)

**Ephesians 6:11**

“Put on the whole armour of God”

Ephesians 6:13–14, 16–17

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God . . . Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness . . . Above all, taking the shield of faith . . . And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit”

**Ephesians 6:15**

“And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (*gospel* means “good tidings”)

Cf. Romans 10:15

**Philippians 1:19**

“For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ”

**Isaiah 59:17**

“For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head”

Wisdom of Solomon 5:17–18

“He shall take to him his [God’s] jealousy for complete armour . . . He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate, and true judgment instead of an helmet. He shall take holiness for an invincible shield. His severe wrath shall he sharpen for a sword”

Perhaps influenced by **Isaiah 52:7**

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace”

See also **Nahum 1:15**

“Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace”

**Job 13:16**

“He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him.”

The Greek of Paul’s “this shall turn to my salvation” is identical to the LXX of this passage.<sup>31</sup>

**Philippians 2:5–11**

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**Philippians 4:5**

“The Lord is at hand”

**Colossians 1:16**

“thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers” (see also Romans 8:38; Ephesians 1:21)

Many Bible scholars believe that Paul was quoting an early Christian hymn. Verse 10 derives from **Isaiah 45:23**

“I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear”

(The prayer in Nehemiah 9:5–6 relies on the verbiage of Isaiah 45:21–25. Cf. 1 Chronicles 29:11, which was added to the end of the Lord’s prayer in Matthew 6:13)

Cf. also **Isaiah 2:9–11**

“And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not. Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.” (see also vs. 17)

**Psalms 34:18**

“The Lord is nigh” (see also Psalm 145:18 and cf. Psalm 119:151; Isaiah 55:6; Joel 3:14; Obadiah 1:15)

**1 Enoch 61:10**

“all the angels of power, and all the angels of principalities”<sup>32</sup>

**Colossians 2:2-3**

“the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

**1 Enoch 46:3**

“And I asked the angel who . . . showed me all the hidden things, concerning that Son of Man . . . And he answered and said unto me: This is the Son of Man who hath righteousness, with whom dwelleth righteousness, and who revealeth all the treasures of that which is hidden.”

**1 Thessalonians 2:12**

“That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.”

Allusion to **2 Esdras 2:37**

“O receive the gift that is given you, and be glad, giving thanks unto him that hath called you to the heavenly kingdom.”

**1 Thessalonians 2:16**

“for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.”

**Testament of Levi 6:11**

“But the wrath of the Lord came upon them to the uttermost.”

**1 Thessalonians 3:13**

“at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints”

Cf. 1 Thessalonians 4:14

Allusion to **Zechariah 14:5**

“the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.”

**1 Thessalonians 4:15–18**

“For this we say unto *you by the word of the Lord*, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

Cf. 2 Thessalonians 1:7

**1 Thessalonians 5:2**

“For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” (see also vs. 5)

Some Bible scholars have suggested that Paul is paraphrasing a number of Christ’s comments; e.g.:

**Mark 9:1**

“And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.”

**Matthew 24:30** (//Mark 13:26, where vs. 27 mentions the angels)

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” (Cf. Matthew 26:64//Mark 14:62; all quote **Daniel 7:13**, “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven”)

**Luke 12:39**

“if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.”

(cf. Revelation 3:3)



**1 Thessalonians 5:3**

“then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape”

**1 Thessalonians 5:4–5**

“But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.”

See also Ephesians 5:8

**1 Thessalonians 5:15**

“See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.” (cf. Ephesians 5:8)

**Psalms 48:6**

“Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail”

**Jeremiah 6:24**

“anguish hath taken hold of us, and pain, as of a woman in travail”

**Jeremiah 22:23**

“when pangs come upon thee, the pain as of a woman in travail” (cf. Micah 4:10)

**1 Enoch 62:4**

“Then shall pain come upon them as a woman in travail”

**John 12:35–36**

“Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.” (cf. Luke 16:8)<sup>33</sup>

**Psalms 38:20**

“They also that render evil for good are mine adversaries; because I follow the thing that good is.”

Proverbs 17:13

“Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house”

Cf. Matthew 5:38–41

**2 Thessalonians 1:7**

“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels”

(Cf. 2 Thessalonians 4:16–17)

**2 Thessalonians 4: 16–17**

“And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels”

**Romans 6:8**

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.”

(cf. 2 Timothy 2:11–13)

Cf. **D&C 45:44** (Jesus to his apostles)

“And then they shall look for me, and, behold, I will come; and they shall see me in the clouds of heaven, clothed with power and great glory; with all the holy angels; and he that watches not for me shall be cut off.”<sup>34</sup>

**2 Thessalonians 2:4**

“Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

**2 Thessalonians 2:8**

“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit<sup>35</sup> of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming”

**Zechariah 14:5**

“and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee [LXX him]”

**Matthew 25:31**

“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him”

**Matthew 24:30–31**

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

**Daniel 11:36**

“And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods.”

**Isaiah 11:4**

“he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked”<sup>36</sup>

**1 Timothy 1:9**

“the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners”

**1 Enoch 93:4**

“And a law shall be made for the sinners.”

**1 Timothy 1:15**

“*This is a faithful saying*, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”

Unknown source, but **1 Enoch 94:1** has “worthy of acceptance”

**1 Timothy 3:1**

“*This is a true saying*, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.”

No known source

**1 Timothy 5:18**

“*For the scripture saith*, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. *And*, The labourer is worthy of his reward.”

(See also 1 Corinthians 9:9)

**Deuteronomy 25:4**

“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.”

Luke 10:7

“for the labourer is worthy of his hire”

**Matthew 10:10**

“the workman is worthy of his meat”  
(perhaps influenced by Deuteronomy 24:14–15)

**1 Timothy 5:19**

"Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses."

**1 Timothy 6:7**

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out"

**1 Timothy 6:15**

"Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords"

**Matthew 18:15–17**

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church."

Based on **Deuteronomy 19:15**

"One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."

(cf. Deuteronomy 17:6)

**Psalms 49:17**

"For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away"

**Ecclesiastes 5:15**

"As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand." (cf. Job 1:21)

**Deuteronomy 10:17**

"For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords" (also in Joshua 22:22; cf. 2 Chronicles 2:5; Psalm 82:1)

**Daniel 2:47**

"Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings" (cf. Psalms 95:3; 136:2; Revelation 17:14; 19:16)

**1 Enoch 9:4**

"For he is the Lord of lords, and the God of gods, and the King of kings"

**2 Timothy 2:11–13**

“It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.”

Verse 11 may rely on

**Isaiah 26:19**

“Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.”

I have not been able to ascertain if all of this derives from other sources.

**2 Timothy 2:19**

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, *having this seal*, The Lord knoweth them that are his. *And*, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

**Numbers 16:5**

“the Lord will shew who are his”

**Joshua 22:22**

“The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know”

**Ecclesiasticus (Ben-Sirach) 35:3**

“To depart from wickedness is a thing pleasing to the Lord”

**2 Timothy 3:8–9**

“Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.”

*Jannes and Jambres* is an early pseudepigraphic text whose name derives from the tradition that these were the two magicians of Pharaoh who stood up to Moses (Exodus 7:11, 22)<sup>37</sup>

**Titus 1:12**

“*One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said*, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.”

Quoting Epimenides (ca. 600 B. C.), *De oraculis/peri Chresmon*.<sup>38</sup>

Cf. Psalm 116:11

The epistle to the Hebrews has not been included here because its Pauline authorship has been questioned for nearly two millennia. The list of Pauline quotes given here, while exhaustive, may not be complete. I have identified, but excluded from this study, instances of Paul possibly being influenced by various Old Testament concepts familiar to him, but probably with no intent to quote any of them.

## Notes to the Table

1. "I would control my rage and sacrifice to him / If I were you, rather than kick against the goad. / Can you, a mortal, measure your strength with a god's?" See Phillip Vellacott, trans., *The Bacchae and Other Plays* (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 219.

2. Edom derives from the same root as Adam and the latter can be read as "mankind, mortals."

3. The Greek word rendered "offspring" in the KJV is *genos* (origin of English terms like *gene*, *genetic*, *genealogy*, and *generation*), which denotes an ethnic group of common ancestry. In our time, it would be more proper to render it "species" in Paul's speech.

4. Epimenides' poem reads: "They fashioned a tomb for thee, O high and holy one, the Cretans, always liars, evil beasts, idle bellies! But thou art not dead; thou livest and abidest forever; for in thee we live and move and have our being." Paul quoted the part about the Cretans in Titus 1:12. See James D. G. Dunn, *The Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 1443.

5. Bible scholars generally attribute the quote to Aratus, who lived in Cilicia (where Paul's home town Tarsus was located) during the late 4<sup>th</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C., from his *Phaenomena* 5, of which lines 1–5 read: "Let us begin with Zeus, whom we mortals never leave unspoken. For every street, every market-place is full of Zeus. Even the sea and the harbour are full of this deity. Everywhere everyone is indebted to Zeus. For we are indeed his offspring." See James D. G. Dunn, *The Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible*, 1249.

6. "[F]or we have our origin in you, bearing a likeness to God, / we, alone of all that live and move as mortal creatures on earth." John C. Thom, *Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus: Text, Translations, and Commentary* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 40, lines 4–5. See also Johan C. Thom, "Cleanthes' Hymn to Zeus and Early Christian Literature," in *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy Presented to Hans Dieter Betz*, ed. A. Y. Collins and M. M. Mitchell (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 477–99.

7. The oldest extant copy of *1 Enoch* dates to the first century BC. The English translations of *1 Enoch* and the other pseudepigraphal texts cited in this paper are taken from R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913); James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols., reprint ed. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2010).

8. The use of the word *treasurest* may suggest an allusion to Zephaniah 1:18, "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath."

9. Cf. also Jesus's comments on the blind who lead the blind (Matthew 15:14; Luke 6:39).

10. In LXX, this is Psalm 50.

11. Bible scholars sometimes point to Psalm 50:6 (“And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself”) as the source of Paul’s words, but the passages in Psalm 5:9 and Matthew are much closer in meaning.

12. The Sahidic Coptic version of the Bible, probably influenced by Paul’s combination of Psalms quotes, adds the verbiage from Psalm 140:3 to the end of Psalm 5:9.

13. LXX om. vs. 16.

14. Jeremiah 18:6 also employs the potter/clay metaphor.

15. The Hebrew text has *qwm*, but should be corrected to *qwl*m, “their voice,” where *qwl* means “voice” and *-m* is the pronominal suffix “their.” Some other Bible versions also have “their voice.”

16. For evidence of the parable’s antiquity and a discussion of other ancient prophets who used it in their own teachings, see John A. Tvedtnes, “Borrowings from the Parable of Zenos,” in Stephen D. Ricks and John W. Welch (eds.), *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994).

17. The Hebrew term behind *gentiles* means “nations.” See the discussion, “Who are the ‘Gentiles’?” in chapter 5 of John A. Tvedtnes, *The Most Correct Book: Insights From a Book of Mormon Scholar* (Salt Lake City: Cornerstone, 1999, later reissued by Horizon).

18. Romans 11:15–21, 23–26 appears to be an allusion to the olive tree parable of Zenos, preserved in Jacob 4:14–5:77 (see also 1 Nephi 15:7, 12–20). For evidence of the parable’s antiquity and a discussion of other ancient prophets who used it in their own teachings, see Tvedtnes, “Borrowings from the Parable of Zenos.”

19. Cf. Mosiah 18:9: “Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort.”

20. See D&C 134:1, “We believe that governments were instituted of God for the benefit of man” (read the entire section); Articles of Faith 12, “We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.”

21. The Hebrew noun *migdal*, “tower,” derives from the root *gdl*, to be big, whence the idea “grow up.”

22. Schaff and Wace, eds., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 13:388. The Greek of Jeremiah 7:4 and 1 Corinthians 3:16 both read *naos theou* (“temple of God”) and differ only in the form of the next word, the verb, which is *estin* in Jeremiah, *este* in 1 Corinthians. We cannot be sure that Paul borrowed the idea from Jeremiah, but it is certainly possible.

23. The oldest extant copies of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* are from the first century B.C.

24. In verses 12–17, Paul gives his own opinion about Christians married to nonbelievers.

25. Deuteronomy 24:1–4; cf. Isaiah 50:1; Jeremiah 3:8.

26. Luke traveled with Paul on his last mission and he it was who wrote the account of Paul’s journeys in the book of Acts (Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11;

Philemon 1:24). Luke is the “we” in Acts 16:12–13, 16; 20:6, 13–15; 21:1–8, 10, 12, 14–17; 27:1–7, 15–16, 18–20, 26–27, 29, 37; 28:10–14, 16. Luke dedicated both his gospel account (Luke 1:1–4) and Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1:1–2) to Theophilus.

27. Isaiah’s book is part of the Old Testament collection known as *Neve’im*, “prophets,” and is not part of the *Torah*, “law,” which comprises the first five books of the Bible.

28. The oldest extant copies of *Jubilees* date to the first century BC.

29. The term rendered “Gentiles” in Galatians 2:15 means “nations.” In the KJV Old Testament, the Hebrew equivalent is sometimes rendered “Gentiles,” but more often “nations.” See the discussion “Who are the ‘Gentiles?’” See Tvedtnes, *Most Correct Book*, chapter 5.

30. Paul is splitting hairs over the fact that the Hebrew term used for “seed” or “posterity” (*zera’*) is always singular, even when it alludes to all of Abraham’s descendants, as it does in Genesis 12:7; 13:15–16; 15:5, 13, 18; 17:7–10; 21:12–13; 24:7. In some of these passages, the Lord promises Abraham that his seed would be numberless.

31. Note that the Hebrew *hū’* can mean both “it” (“this”) and “he,” depending on the referent (animate and inanimate).

32. The terms used by Paul allude to various ranks of angels in many pseudepigraphic texts.

33. The expression *children/sons of light* is frequently found in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

34. D&C 45 records what Christ told his Old World disciples near the end of his mortal ministry.

35. In both Hebrew and Greek, the term meaning “breath, wind” is also used to denote “spirit.”

36. Cf. Revelation 19:15 and see John A. Tvedtnes, “Rod and Sword as the Word of God,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 5/2 (1996). Republished in John W. Welch and Melvin J. Thorne, eds., *Pressing Forward with the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999).

37. See generally Albert Pietersma, ed., *The Apocryphon of Jannes & Jambres the Magicians* (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

38. Epimenides’ poem is actually addressed to the Greek god Zeus: “They fashioned a tomb for thee, O high and holy one, the Cretans, always liars, evil beasts, idle bellies!” Paul also quoted the next line in Acts 17:28, which see.

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# EVANGELICAL CONTROVERSY: A DEEPLY FRAGMENTED MOVEMENT

*Louis C. Midgley*

*Review of Kevin T. Bauder, R. Albert Mohler Jr., John G. Stackhouse Jr., Roger E. Olson. Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism. Edited by Stanley N. Gundry, Andrew David Naselli, and Collin Hansen. Introduction by Collin Hansen. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011. 222 pp., with scripture index and general index. \$16.99 (paperback).*

*Abstract: Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism should be helpful to Latter-day Saints (and others) seeking to understand some of the theological controversies lurking behind contemporary fundamentalist/evangelical religiosity. Four theologians spread along a spectrum speak for different competing factions of conservative Protestants: Kevin Bauder<sup>1</sup> for what turns out to be his own somewhat moderate version of Protestant fundamentalism; Al Mohler<sup>2</sup> for conservative/confessional<sup>3</sup> evangelicalism; John Stackhouse<sup>4</sup> for generic evangelicalism; and Roger Olson<sup>5</sup>*

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1. Bauder is a research professor at Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

2. In 1993 Mohler became the President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

3. The labels used to identify the brand of fundamentalism/evangelicalism for which each author speaks are somewhat problematic. For example, to me it seems that Al Mohler speaks for the Calvinist/Reformed version of evangelicalism which is currently in ascendance within the Southern Baptist Convention.

4. Stackhouse is professor of theology and culture at Regent College in Vancouver, Canada.

5. Olson is professor of theology at George W. Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor University.

*for postconservative evangelicalism. Each author introduces his own position and then is critiqued in turn by the others, after which there is a rejoinder. In addition, as I point out in detail, each of these authors has something negative to say about the faith of Latter-day Saints.*

### Fragmentation and Diversity of Opinion

Collin Hansen's introduction sets out the problem to be addressed in *Four Views on the Spectrum of Evangelicalism*. According to Hansen, even if, immediately after WWII, it once made sense to speak of evangelicals as a unified body, "simply labeling ourselves evangelical no longer suffices" (p. 9). Why? The movement currently known as evangelical was launched in the mid-1940s as a large umbrella under which both various diverse opinions and competing factions could join in a concerted effort to replace the older fundamentalism. However, what is currently known, especially in America, as the evangelical movement now includes, according to Hansen, "conservative, progressive, postconservative, and preprogressive evangelicals. We are traditional, creedal, biblical, pietistic, anticeedal, ecumenical, and fundamentalist. We are 'followers of Christ' and 'Red Letter Christians'" (p. 9). What this means, Hansen acknowledges, is that evangelicals "are everything, so we are nothing" (p. 9).

Hansen then provides his own account of the often told story of how the evangelical movement arose during and immediately after WWII as an effort to blunt the influence of the older movement known as fundamentalism.<sup>6</sup> At first those now known as evangelicals called their new movement "neo-evan-

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6. Douglas A. Sweeney traces the use of the label fundamentalism to a meeting in which biblical inerrancy was endorsed that was held in 1892 in Portland by a group challenging liberal ideologies. See his insightful *The American Evangelical Story: A History of the Movement* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 159. For relevant details, see my unsigned review of this book in *FARMS Review* 20/1 (2008): 254-258.

gelical,” indicating that their movement was a novelty, but they soon came to use the much older label *evangelical* for a new and hopefully much more sophisticated and culturally relevant, and less belligerent version of conservative Protestantism. This new movement was primarily an effort by Billy Graham and his friends (who created the magazine *Christianity Today* which became the flagship publication of the evangelical movement). The goal was to provide an alternative to the older fundamentalist movement.<sup>7</sup>

Al Mohler admits that what is currently known as the evangelicalism was “born out of a deep concern to identify a posture distinct from Protestant fundamentalism” (p. 69). This is, of course, a cautious reference to the fact that more than fifty years ago, Billy Graham and his wealthy associates established a kind of broad tent under which those with different conservative Protestant opinions could, without lapsing into Protestant liberalism, work in a common effort to move beyond fundamentalist ideology. Their efforts were intended to dampen the influence of the fundamentalism they saw as a seriously flawed version of conservative Protestantism. Granting that evangelicalism covers a wide variety of beliefs, or constitutes a wide *spectrum* of opinion, Hansen concludes that “if the descriptor *evangelical* cannot stand on its own, then it is of little use. There is,” he laments, “no coherent movement, only an endless collection of self-styled labels created by Christians for their Facebook profiles” (p. 9). Some evangelical scholars, such as David F. Wells, have even questioned whether an evangelical *movement* even exists (see pp. 9–10 n. 1).<sup>8</sup> Hence Hansen’s

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7. For Hansen’s version of this story, see pp. 12–16. Bauder sets out his own history of the movement he represents and its complicated relationship to the new evangelical movement (pp. 41–49). And Mohler describes his initial hostility towards and more recent rapprochement with fundamentalism (pp. 50–59).

8. D. G. Hart, a distinguished Presbyterian historian, has no use for the label. See his *Deconstructing Evangelicalism: Conservative Protestantism in*

question: “When tempted to leave behind the headaches of this eclectic movement with no leader and no membership, we pause and ask, ‘But where should we go?’” (p. 10).

### A Unity in the Diversity?

As the essays in *Spectrum* indicate, there is still no agreement on exactly what constitutes evangelicalism and what separates this movement from various “churches,” or even what clearly distinguishes it, other than style, from the older fundamentalism against which it was a reaction. The mutual concern of the three evangelical contributors to *Spectrum* is to identify what they consider a common core of essential defining beliefs. Each respondent draws somewhat different boundaries and even differs on what constitutes a minimal core of shared belief. They do not deny that there is a spectrum of belief even though a spectrum has no core or center.

As part of their efforts to describe and debate the diversity of opinion in contemporary conservative Protestantism, these four distinguished authors manifest a stereotyped anxiety about the faith of Latter-day Saints—each explicitly exclude The Church of Jesus Christ from what they insist is authentic Christianity. It seems that, if well-informed Protestant authors do not agree on what exactly constitutes the authentic conservative Protestant faith, then at least they agree on what to exclude. Put another way, the concern of these four authors about the faith of Latter-day Saints is part of conservative Protestant boundary maintenance. What these authors seem to agree on is the rejection of certain competing truth claims. They struggle over the soundness of theological speculation circulating within conservative Protestantism. What they agree on is that the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Jesus Christ are

not genuinely Christian, while they struggle over the soundness of theological speculation currently circulating within the conservative Protestant movement.

Bauder, speaking for a brand of moderate fundamentalism, grants that “no one can speak for all fundamentalists” (p. 19). (So it seems that there is much diversity of opinion even, or especially, in the older fundamentalist camp.) He is, however, confident that fundamentalists are concerned about the need for *separation* from fellowship with apostates (pp. 29–33)—that is, those who wrongly claim to be Christians and yet deny Bauder’s own fundamentalist understanding of the gospel. He sees the necessity of opposing theological systems that “claim to adhere to Christianity while they actually deny the gospel” (p. 31). And who exactly might do that? Bauder claims that what Latter-day Saints and other groups “preach as gospel contradicts the biblical gospel. Therefore, the adherents of these religions should not be recognized as Christians at all. They should be regarded as apostates” (p. 31). He also insists that “the Roman [Catholic] gospel . . . is false” despite the fact that, “unlike Arianism and Mormonism,” it “affirms the Trinitarian orthodoxy” (p. 31). Also, according to Bauder, “Catholicism represents an apostate, rather than a Christian, system of religion” (p. 32).<sup>9</sup> Bauder insists that “this perspective is hardly unique to fundamentalism” (p. 32 n. 13), which is true.

All of this for Bauder—the emphatic exclusion of Latter-day Saints, Roman Catholics and liberal Protestants from his understanding of Christianity—involves questions of “minimal Christian fellowship.” There are heretics with whom fundamentalists must not have even minimal fellowship. A fundamentalist must, he insists, avoid fellowship with those who, even while claiming to be Christian, actually deny the gospel. Bauder tends to mimic Mohler’s version of evangelicalism

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9. Elsewhere Bauder insists that, “inasmuch as it denies the gospel, Roman Catholicism is not Christianity” (p. 33).

on this issue. Only then does Bauder address the “maximal Christian fellowship” that a fundamentalist might wish to have with those who only more or less subscribe to his theology. He senses that Mohler’s writings “reverberate with fundamentalist ideas” (p. 45) on this and some other issues. Hence there is an accommodation between Bauder and Mohler at least on this issue, since Bauder opposes “hyper-fundamentalism” (pp. 43–45), and Mohler describes his own move away from an early strong hostility towards fundamentalism and hence his current affinity for Bauder’s version of that ideology (see pp. 52–55). Such are the tides of internecine theological warfare.

“Honesty requires,” Mohler insists, “that the term [*evangelical*] be defined by its necessity. In this sense, *evangelical* has been and remains a crucial term because we simply cannot live without it. Some word has to define what it means to be a conservative Protestant who is not, quite simply, a Roman Catholic or theological [Protestant] liberal” (p. 69). I take these rather opaque sentences to mean that boundary lines must be drawn to exclude those who presumably are not correctly Protestant and hence also not genuinely Christian.

Mohler, with his version of Five-Point Calvinism,<sup>10</sup> writes as if he speaks with a special authority for the entire evangelical movement, and hence for what he believes is authentic historical, biblical, creedal, orthodox Christianity.<sup>11</sup> But this collection of essays demonstrates otherwise. Instead of showing unity, *Spectrum*, as the name indicates, demonstrates fragmentation and diversity—that is, a wide range of competing be-

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10. Often but not always identified by the acronym TULIP, which stands for Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, and Perseverance.

11. Mohler may, of course, speak with some authority for an aggressive new faction of Five Point Calvinists within the Southern Baptist Convention, but not necessarily for the entire evangelical movement.



liefs<sup>12</sup> littering a battleground in which factions with different ideologies struggle for hegemony.

But even Roger Olson, who emphatically opposes Calvinism,<sup>13</sup> refuses to worship with those he does not consider authentic Christians—for instance, Latter-day Saints and Roman Catholics (p. 65). “Bauder and I agree,” Olson writes, “that the Roman Catholic Church teaches false doctrines and rejects true doctrines” (p. 65). Olson might, he indicates, attend a Roman Catholic Mass, but only as an observer (p. 65). He also reports that he has

attended ecumenical dialogue events with Mormons at Brigham Young University without worshipping with them. Like most evangelicals (and even so-called mainstream Protestants), I consider the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints [*sic*] a heretical sect and not a Christian denomination (to say nothing of the “fourth branch of Christianity”!). However, engaging in face-to-face dialogue with them has proven beneficial to me; I have had to revise some of my opinions about them, which is good because holding wrong opinions of others is a bad thing even if they are apostates or heretics. (p. 65.)<sup>14</sup>

Stackhouse also takes a swipe at the faith of Latter-day Saints. After describing what he considers five crucial “convictions” that he believes define what he considers

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12. For indications of this diversity, see especially pp. 9-10, 51-52, 98-99, 115, 186-188, and 213-216.

13. See especially Roger E. Olson, *Against Calvinism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011).

14. See Olson’s “Confessions of an Arminian Evangelical,” *Salvation in Christ: Comparative Christian Views*, ed., Roger R. Keller and Robert L. Millet (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2005), 183-203, which is one of two papers he read at BYU. The other paper was not published.

evangelicalism<sup>15</sup> and hence also who is an authentic evangelical, he admits that “certain Mormons can and do share all five convictions of evangelicals, but they are not evangelicals, because their beliefs, affections, and practices show them to be *not Christians*” (p. 137, emphasis in original).<sup>16</sup> He adds that he is “not presuming to pronounce on their state before God. I don’t mean ‘not Christian’ the way we sometimes mean it, namely, ‘unsaved’” (p. 137). But if the Saints are *not even Christians* because of their beliefs and practices, as Stackhouse claims, is this not an indication that they cannot possibly be saved? Or are some non-evangelicals saved despite not being authentic Christians?

Who exactly is saved and who wrongly imagines or only pretends here and now that they are saved is a sticky issue for Protestants, but it is not one that Stackhouse cares to address. He offers a reason: “For the purposes of this discussion,” he adds, evangelicals “need not enter into the mysterious realm of sorting out who will enter the kingdom of heaven and who won’t” (p. 137). He asserts that “Mormonism differs so markedly from orthodox Christianity that . . . , until rather recently, the vast majority of Mormons saw the two religious identities as not only different, but even competitive for the title of ‘true church of Jesus Christ’” (p. 137). What this statement seems to demonstrate is that Stackhouse believes that some evangelical version of Christian faith is normative. This assumption forms

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15. The labels he gives for these five characteristics are *Crucicentric*, *Biblicist*, *Conversionist*, *Missional*, and *Transdenominational* (see p. 124 for details). Others also strive to define an *evangelical*. For instance, see pp. 68–70, and pp. 207–10.

16. It is not uncommon for more knowledgeable evangelicals to grant that the faith of “some” Latter-day Saints—those they have either know or whose work they have read—have a profoundly Christ-centered faith. What they fail to acknowledge is that the Book of Mormon—the founding divine special revelation upon which the faith of the Saints—all faithful Saints—is grounded is Christ-centered.

the ground for the antipathy set out in *Spectrum* towards the faith of the Saints. But the fact is that conservative Protestants, much like Latter-day Saints, Roman Catholics, and Orthodox, each in their own unique way, all claim to be in some sense the true church of Jesus Christ, just as all competing versions of the fundamentalist/evangelical movement claim to be the authentic, apostolic, biblical, orthodox Christianity, against which all other claims must be measured and graded, as the essays in *Spectrum* demonstrate.

### Competing Master Narratives

According to Mohler, Stackhouse rejects the proper understanding of the label *evangelical*. But the proclivity to collapse one's own definition of evangelical into what constitutes orthodox Christianity is at least in part what has generated the *spectrum* of competing opinions being debated in this volume. The crucial issue is what constitutes authentic Christianity. Only when the boundary issues are settled, can these authors tackle the question of whether moderate fundamentalism or some competing version of the evangelical movement speaks for authentic Christianity. Hence the following bald assertion by Mohler: "Ruled out, . . . are heretics (who are not actually Christians at all) and those who hold to theologies that are simply not recognizably Christian (like the Mormons)" (p. 152). Stackhouse admits that at least "certain Mormons" share what he considers his crucial so-called five basic convictions that define evangelical faith (p. 137). But even these are not Christians.

It turns out that Bauder, Mohler, Stackhouse, and Olson set out objections to the faith of the Saints in their effort to set boundaries to exclude false claims to being Christian. This seems to me to have been done as part of what each considered the crucial defining attributes of their own version of conservative Protestantism, which each author considers the

best current embodiment of authentic Christian faith. Each of these four apologists for a different and hence competing brand of evangelical faith sees their way of being evangelical as the key to being genuinely Christian. Be that as it may, both Latter-day Saints, whom these authors deny are Christians, as well as Orthodox and Roman Catholics, do not care to be included under a label that merely identifies a movement within recent conservative Protestantism. In addition, both Roman Catholics and Latter-day Saints deny that contemporary Protestantism (or one of its competing factions) determines who may or may not use the word *Christian*, or what constitutes authentic Christian faith. The Orthodox, Roman Catholics, and Latter-day Saints each have their own narrative setting out their claim to be the most authentic Christian faith.<sup>17</sup>

By defending his Arminian objections to versions of Calvinism, Olson offers one possible alternative account of the conservative Protestant grounding narrative. This proclivity, which each author manifests, demonstrates and explains the diversity and quarrels found in *Spectrum*. In addition, each of the other major competing traditions makes a claim to being what Stackhouse calls “the true Church of Jesus Christ” (p. 137). Each of the competing claims, both within the evangelical movement and between the four major traditions—that is, Latter-day Saint, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox—are necessarily in competition. Instead of a unity of faith and hence a harmony, there is disputation and a cacophony, earlier signs of which once set young Joseph Smith on his prayerful quest for divine assistance, which led (from the LDS perspective) to the opening of the heavens and a new dispensation of the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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17. For a detailed examination of a typical Calvinist version of the Protestant narrative setting out the claim to being authentic Christianity, see Midgley, “Telling the Larger ‘Church History’ Story,” *Mormon Studies Review* 23/1 (2011): 157–71.

## The Extent of Radical Evangelical Controversy

Some differences between contemporary evangelicals tend to challenge what are often held to be the essential elements of the Protestant Reformation. Some of this shows up in *Spectrum*. For example, Mohler objects strongly to the position taken by N. T. (Tom) Wright, an Anglican and the foremost Protestant biblical scholar, who self-identifies as an evangelical. Wright insists that the stance taken on justification by Luther and Calvin, following Augustine—that a person is justified and in that sense saved the moment he or she confesses Jesus—is a radical misunderstanding of what was taught by the Apostle Paul.<sup>18</sup> Wright’s position on this issue deeply troubles Mohler, who insists that “justification by faith *alone* is an evangelical essential, a first-order issue” (p. 93, emphasis in original). The fact is that Wright’s views on justification fit rather well with what is clearly taught in the Book of Mormon.<sup>19</sup> Nothing in the Book of Mormon suggests that one is justified the moment one confesses Jesus, at which time one receives an alien righteousness while still remaining totally depraved. Instead, what is taught is that one’s ultimate or final justification follows

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18. See, among a host of other essays and books on Paul by N. T. Wright, his *Justification: God’s Plan and Paul’s Vision* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009). See my review of this book in the *FARMS Review* 21/1 (2009): 216–20. To begin to compare Wright’s arguments with one of the less acrimonious especially Calvinist responses, see my review of John Piper, *The Future of Justification: A Response to N. T. Wright*, in *FARMS Review* 21/1 (2009): 223–224. Wright was initially popular among evangelicals until they began to sense his total rejection of the Protestant obsession with the idea God imputes an alien righteousness to totally depraved sinners at the moment they confess Christ as Lord and Savior. Wright holds that one is ultimately only justified at the final judgment, if one has been true to the covenant that makes one a disciple of Jesus Christ.

19. For some details, see Midgley, “Debating Evangelicals,” *FARMS Review* 20/2 (2008): xi–xlvii at xxxvi–xxxix; and Midgley, “The Wedding of Athens and Jerusalem: An Evangelical Perplexity and Latter-day Saint Answer,” *FARMS Review* 21/2 (2009): xi–xliii at xxxii–xxxix.

the necessarily difficult process of seeking and allowing the Holy Spirit to purge, cleanse, purify, and hence sanctify the one who is thereby genuinely reborn through a baptism of the Holy Spirit. Latter-day Saints will, I believe, easily recognize both Wright's understanding of the Way of the Lord, and also Mohler's typical contrasting stance on this important matter.

Mohler also defends penal substitution—the dominant Protestant understanding of the Atonement—which is the theory that Jesus of Nazareth somehow became objectively guilty of every sin, past, present, and future—or his death would not have redeemed totally depraved humans by the imposition of an alien righteousness on sinners. Most of the ways of understanding the Atonement, of course, involve the idea that Jesus did for humans what they could not possibly do for themselves. But in the penal substitution theory Jesus is not seen as an innocent, sinless substitute for sinful humanity. He is, instead, pictured as somehow being guilty in a real way of all past, present and future sins of totally depraved humans—he became in our place the focused object of the wrath of God. Martin Luther (in a commentary on Galatians 3:13) insisted that

all the prophets say this, that Christ was to become the greatest thief, murderer, adulterer, robber, desecrator, blasphemer, etc., there has ever been anywhere in the world. He is not acting in his own Person now. Now he is not the Son of God, born of the Virgin. But he is a sinner, who has and bears the sin of Paul, the former blasphemer, persecutor, and assaulter: of Peter, who denied Christ; of David, who was an adulterer and a murderer, and who caused the Gentiles to blaspheme the name of the Lord (Rom. 2:24). In short, he has and bears all the sins of all men in his body—not in the sense that he has committed them but in the sense that he took those sins, committed by us, upon his own

body, in order to make satisfaction for them with his own blood. Therefore this general Law of Moses included him, although he was innocent so far as his own Person was concerned; for it found him among sinners and thieves. Thus a magistrate regards someone as a criminal and punishes him if he catches him among thieves, even though the man has never committed anything evil or worthy of death. Christ was not only found among sinners, having assumed the flesh and blood of those who were sinners and thieves and who were immersed in all sorts of sin. Therefore when the Law found him among thieves, it condemned and executed him as a thief.<sup>20</sup>

In the typical Protestant theory of the Atonement, Jesus Christ was both sinless and also the ultimate sinner. If his bloody death was to be efficacious either (1) for those pictured in Calvinist theology as predestined at the moment of creation out of nothing to salvation, or (2) potentially for all of mankind who may decide to confess Jesus as Lord and Savior (in other competing Protestant dogmas), Jesus had to be fully guilty of all human sins. This, of course, flies in the face of what is taught in the Book of Mormon, where Jesus is pictured as having made a wholly sinless sacrifice for all of humanity, which is something they could not possibly have done for themselves. He managed this with a glorious victory over all the demonic powers that beset human beings during their mortal probation by (1) defeating mortal death and thereby opening the door for an eventual universal resurrection, and (2) by also making available merciful forgiveness of sin for all those who choose

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20. Declan Marmion and Rik Van Nieuwehnove, *An Introduction to The Trinity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 135, quoting from Martin Luther, *Lectures on Galatians 1535*, vol. 26, *Luther's Works*, eds. Jaroslav Pelikan and Walter A. Hansen (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), 277.

to follow him, seek and accept sanctification as genuine Saints, and endure faithfully to the end.

Mohler sees the penal substitution theory as essential to evangelical identity and hence to his understanding of what constitutes the authentic Christian faith. Those who reject the penal substitution theory of the Atonement, Mohler explains, do so mainly on moral grounds. They see no good reason to insist that God imputed all human sin to a sinless Jesus of Nazareth and then demanded, in Mohler words, “the blood sacrifice of his son to satisfy his divine wrath and display his righteousness” (p. 94). Mohler, however, also admits that critics of the penal substitution theory of the Atonement see this theory, as I do, as “a slander against God’s own character” (p. 94). In addition, he indicates that those who reject the Protestant penal substitution theory of the Atonement do so because “such a rendering of God is immoral. Some have gone so far as to claim that such a [penal] rendering of the atonement amounts to a form of divine child abuse” (p. 94). Mohler argues “that denying penal substitution as the central biblical concept for our [evangelical] understanding of the atonement is, in the end, fatal to our witness to the gospel” (p. 198).

Mohler insists that Jesus of Nazareth somehow actually became guilty of all human sin, thus drawing the justified wrath of God on him. This explains his brutal torture, extreme suffering, and bloody death. Put another way, God the Father had God the Son slaughtered to satisfy His wrath and thereby in some way reveal His righteousness, as well as make it possible for His righteousness to be imputed to totally depraved sinners, if they either confess His name or were predestined to salvation at the moment of creation out of nothing.

Stackhouse also insists that penal substitution is “a vital and nonnegotiable part of *Christian* theology in general, without which any understanding of salvation is seriously deficient” (p. 133). And he ends his treatment of the controversy over pe-



nal substitution by proclaiming that “evangelical theologians, therefore, must not jettison substitutionary atonement” (p. 135).

The Book of Mormon, I believe, sets out an account of the story of that Atonement that differs in crucial ways from the sophisticated Protestant speculation on this all-important matter. Latter-day Saints, I believe, may find the penal substitution theory of the Atonement especially odd, since the Book of Mormon makes it clear that the Holy One of Israel—the one known before His incarnation as Yahweh (YHWH)—was sinless and hence also an innocent victim of demonic powers over which He gained a final victory over both the death of our bodies and, on condition of our faithfulness, of our souls—the two deaths that all humans face. All of this is set out clearly in the Book of Mormon.

Roger Olson, who describes the central place of penal substitution in the Reformation (see pp. 93–94), cautiously mentions some negative reactions by unnamed evangelicals to it “primarily on moral grounds” (p. 93). He may even come close to agreeing with me in objecting to penal substitution, since he indicates, in an enigmatic remark, that “fundamentalists confuse their own interpretation of the Bible (e.g., penal substitution Atonement) with the Bible itself” (p. 65).<sup>21</sup> It would please me if, for Olson, it is not just petulant fundamentalists who insist that penal substitution is proclaimed in the Bible.

*Spectrum* also includes some responses to Al Mohler’s very negative estimates of what is called Open Theism (see pp. 92–93, 212), which challenges, I believe correctly, elements of classical theism. His rejection of Open Theism are shared by Bauder (pp. 30, 212), and also by Stackhouse, who describes the nasty controversy that has taken place within evangelical intellectual circles over Open Theism (see pp. 131–33).

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21. Olson offers some negative comments directed against Bauder (pp. 65–66) on this matter, but remains silent on the support for the penal substitution theory of the Atonement from both Mohler and Stackhouse.

### What or Who Really Speaks for Evangelicalism?

It is not clear to those who opine in *Spectrum* why Mohler insists that his stance is “confessional.” It is clear, however, that he is determined to define the evangelical movement in narrow strictly Calvinist terms. Moreover, he also seems to have in mind the great ecumenical creeds and later confessions which Protestants took over from the Orthodox and Roman Catholics. Be that as it may, he claims that “at the end of the day, the confessional church must do what the evangelical movement cannot—confess with specificity the faith once delivered to the saints” (p. 155). All of this, and more, is packed into an interesting conversation about the definition of *evangelicalism* in which Mohler’s critics contend that the movement is much broader than his Calvinist theological preferences permit. For him (as well as for the fundamentalist Bauder) the evangelical umbrella is too large for true Christian fellowship, since it includes heretics. Mohler demands a tighter circle. And Bauder chides Olson for having turned Billy Graham’s evangelical “broad tent” of vague family resemblances (with much diversity) into a “circus tent,” and not a “revival tent, or perhaps a menagerie of ecclesiastical oddities and curiosities” (p. 193).

Much of *Spectrum* is an effort to both understand the metaphor of embracing or facing a supposed center of belief and to delineate the extent of theological boundaries—that is, it is a quarrel over classification logic in which each of those who speak for a competing faction sets out their position in an effort to justify their own theological preferences. It is not clear who or what is to determine whether one is facing or embracing a center, or who or what determines what constitutes a center, or how one distinguishes secondary questions from truly fundamental beliefs. Beyond mere slogans, there is no agreement on what, if anything, constitutes the central core of belief. The center simply does not hold. One reason is that Protestantism has

no *magisterium*, being an anarchy from the start; it is, instead, among other things a diverse and shifting theological movement and hence has a broad spectrum of diverse beliefs. The fact is that those who self-identify as evangelicals are free to expand or contract the movement's assortment of competing beliefs in whatever way suits their fancy.

If this is close to being true, we must ask why evangelicals like Olson, whose historical scholarship is often congruent with the larger LDS historical narrative, insist on excluding the faith of the Saints from their understanding of authentic Christian faith. I do not see this proclivity as necessarily a sign of ignorance, confusion, or bigotry. I respect evangelical scholarship far too much to adopt that explanation. Is it, instead, an indication of evangelical boundary maintenance. It may also be an effort on the part of evangelical scholars to avoid the kinds of ignominy heaped upon the genteel and gentle Calvinist Richard Mouw for his famous apologies to the Saints for the outrages of the countercult industry.<sup>22</sup> With all of this in mind, I strongly recommend *Spectrum* for those seeking a better understanding of the evangelical movement, and also why learned evangelicals find it necessary to distinguish their faith from that of Latter-day Saints, since they tend to differ with each other as much as they do with Latter-day Saints.

### A Hodgepodge of Competing Beliefs

Have I overstated the extent or significance of Protestant diversity? I don't think so. Without even considering liberal Protestantism, or the dramatic growth of Pentecostal religiosity (which had no voice in *Spectrum*), there is within conservative Protestantism an ongoing struggle between remnants of the old fundamentalism and the wide variety of opinion as-

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22. For the relevant details, see "Bearing False Witness: A Brief Addendum," to Midgley, "Cowan on the Countercult," *FARMS Review* 16/2 (2004): 401–3.

sembled under the umbrella provided by Billy Graham when he and his associates set in place what is now known as the evangelical movement. There is, in addition to that to which I have called attention, additional evidence of diversity.

It simply will not do for evangelical apologists to insist that this diversity, and the controversy it generates, involves merely unimportant secondary issues, thus implying a solid agreement on core beliefs. Why? In addition to the evidence found in *Spectrum*, the InterVarsity Press (through IVP Academic) has published a series entitled *Spectrum Multiview Books*. These nineteen volumes<sup>23</sup> illustrate the wide variety of beliefs currently found in conservative Protestant circles. In addition, Zondervan has a similar sixteen volume *Counterpoint* series<sup>24</sup>

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23. See Robert G. Clouse, ed., *Meaning of the Millennium: Four Views* (1977); David Basinger & Randall Basinger, eds., *Predestination and Free Will* (1986); Donald L. Alexander, ed., *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification* (1989); Bonnidell Clouse & Robert G. Clouse, eds., *Women in the Ministry: Four Views* (1989); H. Wayne House, ed., *Divorce and Remarriage: Four Christian Views* (1990); John Sanders, ed., *What About Those Who Have Never Heard?: Three Views on the Destiny of the Unevangelized* (1995); Edward W. Fudge & Robert A. Peterson, *Two Views of Hell: A Biblical and Theological Debate* (2000); Richard F. Carlson, ed., *Science and Christianity: Four Views* (2000); James K. Belby & Paul R. Eddy, eds., *Divine Foreknowledge: Four Views* (2001); Gregory E. Ganssle, ed., *God and Time: Four Views* (2001); James K. Beilby & Paul R. Eddy, eds., *Nature of the Atonement: Four Views* (2006); P. C. Kemeny, ed., *Church, State and Public Justice: Five Views* (2007); Gordon T. Smith, ed., *Lord's Supper: Five Views* (2008); David F. Wright, ed., *Baptism: Three Views* (2009); James K. Beilby & Paul R. Eddy, eds., *The Historical Jesus: Five Views* (2009); Eric L. Johnson (ed.), *Psychology & Christianity: Five Views*, 2nd edition (2010); James K. Beilby, Paul Rhodes Eddy, eds., *Justification: Five Views* (2011); Stanley E. Porter and Beth M. Stovell, eds., *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views* (2012); R. Keith Loftin, *God and Morality: Four Views* (2012).

24. See Wayne A. Grudem, ed., *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today? Four Views* (1996); Greg L. Bahnsen, Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., David J. Moore, Douglas J. Moo, William VanGemeren, *Five Views on Law and Gospel* (1996); Melvin E. Dieter, Anthony A. Hoekema, Stanley M. Horton, J. Robertson McQuilkin, John F. Walvoord, *Five Views on Sanctification* (1996); William Crockett, ed., *Four*

providing additional evidence of the competing beliefs held by evangelicals. Furthermore, Protestant scholars have broadened the scope of competing viewpoints beyond even what can be seen in these thirty-five volumes.<sup>25</sup>

Calvinists, like Al Mohler, are not pleased with the hodge-podge or jumble of Protestant beliefs. In the role of Gate Keepers of evangelical orthodoxy they tend to drift back closer to the older fundamentalism.<sup>26</sup> Those who both describe and

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*Views on Hell* (1996); Richard R. Reiter, Paul D. Fineberg, Gleason L. Archer, Douglas J. Moo, *Three Views on the Rapture*, revised edition (1996); C. Marvin Pate, ed., *Four Views on the Book of Revelation* (1998); J. P. Moreland & John Mark Reynolds, eds., *Three Views on Creation and Evolution* (1999); Darrell L. Bock, ed., *Three Views on the Millennium and Beyond* (1999); Steven B. Cowan, ed., *Five Views on Apologetics* (2000); J. Matthew Pinson, ed., *Four Views on Eternal Security* (2002); C.S. Cowles, Daniel L. Gard, Eugene H. Merrill, Tremper Longman III, *Show Them No Mercy: Four Views on God and Canaanite Genocide* (2003); Paul E. Engle & Steven B. Cowan, eds., *Who Runs the Church? 4 Views on Church Government* (2004); James R. Beck, ed., *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, revised edition (2005); Kenneth Berding & Jonathan Lunde, eds., *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (2008); Gary T. Meadors, ed. *Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology* (2009); and Gregory A. Boyd, William Lane Craig, Paul Kjoss Helseth, Ron Highfield, Dennis Jowers, *Four Views on Divine Providence* (2011).

25. See, for example, Gregory A. Boyd and Paul R. Eddy, *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Academic, 2002), which broadens and deepens the number of topics about which there is considerable disputation in evangelical circles. And see also Olson's remarkable *The Mosaic of Christian Belief*. I have addressed these two fine books in "On Caliban Mischief," xxv-xxxii.

26. Protestant fundamentalism rests in part on a series of papers published under the title *The Fundamentals*, ed. by R. A. Torrey, A. C. Dixon and others (that appeared in twelve volumes between 1910 and 1915, and is now available in various editions). While some large figures, for example, Benjamin B. Warfield, contributed, the essays in this series were generally by minor figures and also highly tendentious. See, for example, R. G. McNiece, "Mormonism: Its Origin, Characteristics, and Doctrine," which can be found in volume 4, pp. 109-24. [This essay can be accessed (as of 20 November 2012) at <http://www.biblebelievers.net/cults/mormonism/kjcmormd.htm> (also available at <http://user.xmission.com/~fidelis/volume4/chapter10/mcniece.php>).] McNiece, who claims to

celebrate diversity of beliefs are primarily not Calvinists who strive to shrink the range of permissible issues about which disagreement and debate is suitable. And it also explains their antipathy towards certain brands of contemporary Protestant theology such as Social Trinitarianism, Open Theism, and N. T. Wright's approach to Paul, all of which are much closer to LDS beliefs than Five-Point Calvinism.

Latter-day Saints are familiar with defections within their own community, and are also insistent on a debilitating Great Apostasy that made necessary the restoration of the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The apostasy was great but not total or complete. Latter-day Saints are not adverse to accepting the self-identification as Christian of virtually any individual or group. This is, however, not the case among contemporary conservative Protestants, who tend to have serious misgivings about the Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions. Roger Olson, whose historical scholarship I admire, while denying that the Church of Jesus Christ is Christian, will worship with Calvinists. The reason is that he believes they are Christ-centered.

My own experience with both Orthodox and Roman Catholic worship and dogmatic theology indicates that, despite the large differences from my own beliefs and mode of worship, they are both at their best clearly Christ-centered and hence Christian. I overlook the inevitable hypocrisy at the chapel or cathedral door. I look, instead, for signs of sanctification rather than proper presumably orthodox theology. Conservative Protestants, and those with fundamentalist proclivities such as those often found in the sectarian countercult industry, of-

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have been for twenty years the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Salt Lake City, ends his diatribe with the following remark: "It is difficult for any one to study this Mormon system as a whole, without coming to the conclusion that there is something in it beyond the power of man, something positively Satanic" (p. 124). The more extreme elements of the dreadful countercult industry build on this bizarre notion.

ten claim that the faith of Latter-day Saints does not comport with what they believe is biblical, historic, creedal Christianity. Unfortunately versions of this opinion turn up among distinguished evangelical scholars.

Even some who are aware of the rubbish spewed out against the Church of Jesus Christ by countercultists, and who have themselves been the targets of countercult revilement, are inclined to make a distinction between what they describe as the “mainstream Christian tradition” and what the Saints believe. Richard Mouw, for example, tells us that among what he calls “mainstream Christianity in all its forms”—that is, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant—there has always been a plethora of arguments “carried on . . . within the mainstream of Christianity.”<sup>27</sup> He illustrates his point by mentioning quarrels between Protestants and Roman Catholics over whether there “are additional sources of revealed truth” other than merely the Bible, or with Eastern Orthodox over “divinization” (or *theosis*).<sup>28</sup>

## Competing Master Narratives

The large branches of Christian faith—that is, the Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Latter-day Saints, as well as the various varieties of Protestantism, each have their own narrative (or, a complex of somewhat competing stories) with which they strive to distinguish themselves from other Christian traditions. *Spectrum* supports my belief that there is a wide array of competing beliefs on a host of important issues within contemporary conservative

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27. Richard Mouw, *Talking with Mormons: An Invitation to Evangelicals* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012), 48.

28. C. S. Lewis, an evangelical favorite, believed in *theosis*. And N. T. Wright finds it in the New Testament. See Midgley, review of Nicholas Perrin and Richard B. Hays, eds., *Jesus, Paul and the People of God: A Theological Dialogue with N. T. Wright* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), in *Mormon Studies Review* 23/1 (2011):180–83.

Protestantism. Master narratives make known each tradition (or, or in the case of Protestants, faction) to its own communicants by picturing itself as the authentic bearer of the original Apostolic Christian faith and hence the *true church*, while the other traditions are understood as flawed, as lesser or inferior versions of Christian faith, or as flatly false. Primarily because of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon, the Latter-day Saints see themselves as the covenant people of God. This prevents both the Saints and also their sectarian critics from confusing the Church of Jesus Christ with some version of evangelicalism. I see this as both desirable and providential.

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# IN HIS FOOTSTEPS AMMON<sub>1</sub> AND AMMON<sub>2</sub>

Val Larsen

*Abstract. Mormon is a historian with a literary sensibility and considerable literary skill. Though his core message is readily apparent to any competent reader, his history nevertheless rewards close reading. Its great scope means that much that is said must be said by implication. And its witness of Christ is sometimes expressed through subtle narrative parallels or through historical allegory. This article focuses on parallel narratives that feature Ammon<sub>1</sub> and Ammon<sub>2</sub>, with special attention to the allegorical account of Ammon<sub>2</sub> at the waters of Sebus. To fully comprehend the power of the testimony of Christ that Mormon communicates in his Ammon narratives, readers must glean from textual details an understanding of the social and political context in which the narratives unfold.<sup>1</sup>*

Compared with other works of scripture of the world's great religions, the Book of Mormon is distinguished by the length and complexity of its integrated narrative. But its remarkable comparative length and complex unity notwithstanding, the Book of Mormon recounts less than the hundredth part of what happened during the time period it covers (Words of Mormon 1:5). The brevity of the account relative to the historical period covered has two important consequences: first, there was ample scope for Mormon to select content that served his rhetorical and aesthetic purposes, and second, much

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1. Peter Eubanks, Brant Gardner, Grant Hardy, and two reviewers at *Interpreter* read and helpfully commented on an a previous draft of this article.

of the history will be present—if it is present at all—only by implication.

With respect to the first consequence, Mormon's history, like other ancient histories, is not primarily empirical. His account is shaped by a clear rhetorical purpose: to bear testimony of Christ and illustrate the consequences of accepting or rejecting him. Since his history is so brief, Mormon has the option—and has exercised it—of selecting material that is aesthetically unified, that can be arranged to feature narrative parallels and contrasts that anticipate, echo, and amplify.<sup>2</sup> If we recognize his literary sensibility, we will be better prepared to see important dimensions of meaning that he communicates allegorically or implicitly in the micro and macro structure of his history.

With respect to history present only by implication, it can be classified under four broad headings: (a) some meanings are obscured by identifiable errors in the production or transmission of the text that can be corrected through textual criticism; (b) some events happen mostly off stage because they are not the main focus of the narrative but add important context if reconstructed through a close reading of their fragmentary appearance in the main narrative; (c) some things the author meant to say are unclear because he assumes background knowledge that most readers don't have but that can be deduced from what he does say; and (d) some things the author meant to hide but couldn't fully eliminate because they were too important a part of the story to fully disappear.

The methodological objective of this article is to argue for and illustrate an explicitly literary method of reading the Book of Mormon that highlights the rhetorical unity of the text and reveals new dimensions of implicit meaning. The substantive objective is to deepen understanding of two interrelated nar-

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2. Richard Dilworth Rust, "Recurrence in Book of Mormon Narratives" *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 3/1 (1994): 39–52.

ratives in the books of Mosiah and Alma that feature Ammon<sub>1</sub> and Ammon<sub>2</sub>.

### Method

As is true for almost all writers, Mormon faces the difficult task of getting into the head of his readers and anticipating what they already know and what must be explained for them to understand his intended meaning. Because his audience is diverse and distant in both culture and time, this normal writing task is an especially daunting one for Mormon. Although, like Moroni (Mormon 8:35), he undoubtedly had a measure of prophetic insight into his audience, he could not be fully conscious of tacit knowledge that he unreflectively assumed readers would share.<sup>3</sup>

Given these unavoidable difficulties Mormon faced as a writer, modern readers cannot be passive if they want to fully understand the testimony Mormon has handed down to them. They must meet him and his sources half way. Reading carefully between the lines, they must look for the subtle linkages that reveal the underlying unity and coherence of the real lives and real cultures he describes. They must do this because unconscious and unstated background knowledge and off-stage actions that are present only by implication will sometimes be the key to a fuller understanding of an intended meaning. Thus, to fully comprehend the reality Mormon experienced and what he meant to say (or not say), readers must sometimes ransack the nooks and crannies of his text looking for information it did not occur to him to explicitly tell us, i.e., cultural norms

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3. See Deborah Brandt, *Literacy as Involvement: the Acts of Writers, Readers, and Texts*, (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990) on the challenges and mutual obligations writers and readers face as they co-create meaning for a text.

and implicit knowledge about life and people that form the matrix of the meanings he meant to communicate.<sup>4</sup>

One key to discovering these implicit narratives is structural corroboration—the convergence of an array of facts and plausible conjectures upon a compelling conclusion.<sup>5</sup> Taken together, in some cases fact and conjecture may form a clear or even obvious account of what occurred. In reconstructing implicit history, the most important support for an interpretation is found in tangential facts explicitly mentioned in the text. These facts may be a minor element of the main narrative but critically important in the implied narrative. Particularly significant are anomalous facts that seem inconsistent with other textual details. Anomalies of this kind suggest that there is more going on than meets the eye. Since they are not consciously intended to develop the implied narrative, these tangential facts are often not fully developed and may not be entirely on point in that narrative. Taken singly, they may not provide dispositive support for the reality they imply. But taken together, the constellation of tangential facts may powerfully converge upon a compelling conclusion and clearly develop another dimension of the narrative.

In addition to tangential facts within the text, support for a conclusion may come from outside the text. A reading may be supported by information from the Bible and other ancient works. Or we may plausibly fill in gaps in a narrative by assuming that people off stage will behave as people ordinarily do in

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4. For an excellent discussion of the relevant issues, see, Brant A. Gardner, "The Case of Historicity: Discerning the Book of Mormon's Production Culture," accessed 12/13/2011 at [http://www.fairlds.org/FAIR\\_Conferences/2004\\_Case\\_for\\_Historicity.html](http://www.fairlds.org/FAIR_Conferences/2004_Case_for_Historicity.html). See also Gardner's principal source, Bruce J. Malina and Richard L. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992).

5. See Stephen C. Pepper, *World Hypotheses*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1970) for a discussion of structural corroboration.

like circumstances. Thus history or social science may deepen our understanding.

Mormon's literary sensibilities and rhetorical habits may also be apparent in and support a reading. Though he is often didactic in his writing, Mormon also develops themes subtly through parallel and contrast at the macro level of his narrative.<sup>6</sup> Readings that show him again using habitual rhetorical strategies may have enhanced plausibility. Readings may likewise be more plausible if they are thematically consistent with the rest of Mormon's oeuvre, i.e., when the proposed reading powerfully testifies of Christ.

When reading between the lines as proposed in this article, the persuasiveness of the reading must be a function of the constellation of convergent evidence rather than of the intrinsic aptness of any single supporting datum. *Ex hypothesi*, the tangential evidence has some other purpose in the text than developing the implicit narrative. But though individual pieces of evidence will often not be precisely on point, when combined to fully develop the implied narrative, the data should fit together without contradiction and have cumulative persuasive force because they recount the real lives of real people.

### The Amlicite Amalekites

An example of the fruitfulness of readings based on structural corroboration is the insight that the Amlicites and Amalekites are the same people and that they were motivated by a desire to restore the Davidic monarchy after the Nephite royal line that began with Mosiah<sub>1</sub> and ended with Mosiah<sub>2</sub> renounced power. Christopher Conkling makes a cogent case for their sameness, drawing upon a large body of internal tex-

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6. Mormon's didacticism and literary subtlety are discussed in Heather Hardy, "Another Testament of Jesus Christ: Mormon's Poetics," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 16 /2 (2007): 16–27.

tual evidence, e.g., the fact (discussed more fully below) that the Amalekites appear at the very point in the text where the Amlicites disappear.<sup>7</sup> He also cites Royal Skousen's reasoning on the production and transmission of the Book of Mormon text, e.g., the well attested variance in Oliver Cowdery's spelling and the probability that the *c* in Amlicites is meant to convey the *k* sound which, combined with an accent on the first syllable of both words, makes the sound of Amlicite and Amalekite virtually identical.<sup>8</sup>

Understanding that the Amlicites are the Amalekites, we can better appreciate the unity and literary power of the Book of Alma. The book opens with a morally and politically normative thesis statement that encapsulates the point of view that will govern the narrative: "[Mosiah<sub>2</sub>] had established laws, and they were acknowledged by the people; therefore they were obliged to abide by the laws which he had made" (Alma 1:1). The main narrative thread of the book then focuses on the conflict between those who accept and those who reject this obligation.

Unstated but clearly implied is the antithesis of the book's thesis: when Mosiah<sub>2</sub> died without a royal successor, the right to rule reverted by virtue of the Davidic covenant to the Mulekite royal line that had governed prior to the arrival of

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7. J. Christopher Conkling, "Alma's Enemies: The Case of the Lamanites, Amlicites, and Mysterious Amalekites," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 14/1 (2005): 108–17. Cf. Gary L. Sturgess, "The Book of Mosiah: Thoughts about Its Structure, Purposes, Themes, and Authorship," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 4/2 (1995): 107–35. This idea seems to have first been suggested by John A. Tvedtnes, "Book of Mormon Tribal Affiliation and Military Castes," in *Warfare in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Stephen D. Ricks and William J. Hamblin (Salt Lake City, Deseret Book, 1990), 298–301.

8. Royal Skousen, "History of the Critical Text Project of the Book of Mormon," in M. Gerald Bradford and Alison V.P. Coutts eds., *Uncovering the Original Text of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002), 15; Royal Skousen, ed., *The Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Extant Text* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2001), 245; and Royal Skousen, ed., *The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Entire Text in Two Parts* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2001), 396–97, 514.

Mosiah.<sup>9</sup> Mormon leaves this antithesis unstated probably because it is so plausible that stating it might leave readers ambivalent about the conflict between the judges and the revanchist Amlicite\Amalekite king-men.<sup>10</sup> Mormon reveals what was surely a key political fact and the strongest argument of the Mulekites—that they descend from Mulek, a son of David—only after the land of Zarahemla has fallen into the hands of the Lamanites and thereby weakened any Mulekite claim to the throne (Helaman 6:10; 8:21). This conflict between incompatible Nephite and Mulekite ideologies is the unstated rationale for the civil war during the reign of King Benjamin (Words of Mormon 1:15–10), and it pervades the Book of Alma, from the appearance in chapter one, verse two of Nehor, the spiritual leader of the Amlicites (Alma 2: 1, 24: 28), to a final great battle in the last three verses of the book as the dissenters again stir up anger and send forth yet another army that must be repelled (Alma 63:14–17).

This very strong reading structurally corroborates and is corroborated by a close reading of the stories of Ammon<sub>1</sub> and Ammon<sub>2</sub>. The story of these two Ammons is situated within this larger political narrative in which the reign of kings gives way to the governance of judges, which in turn evokes a Davidic rebellion and effort to reassert monarchical authority. The two Ammons play key and interlinked roles in the unfolding of this macro narrative. It is through the eyes and ears of Ammon<sub>1</sub> that readers first see and hear why monarchy needs

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9. See Grant Hardy, “The Book of Mormon’s Missing Covenant,” *Meridian Magazine*, December 27, 2010, <http://www.ldsmag.com/1/article/7089>, which discusses the suppression of the Davidic covenant in the Book of Mormon.

10. The Mulekite’s claim of a right to rule grounded in the Davidic covenant is analogous to the New Testament claim that Christ is the legitimate king of Israel by virtue of his lineal descent from David (Matt 1:1–17). Mormon’s faith and political sympathies prevent him from sympathetically articulating the point of view of the Amlicites, but his integrity as a historian compels him to report sufficient information for us to reconstruct the motives of those whose views Mormon reprehends. See H. Hardy, “Mormon’s Poetics.”

to be abolished. Then, Ammon<sub>2</sub> plays his role in abolishing the monarchy by refusing to be king and by persuading thousands of Lamanites to embrace the ancient religion, the foundational myth, and the new civic culture of the Nephites.

### Method Applied to Ammon<sub>1</sub> and Ammon<sub>2</sub>

#### Ammon<sub>1</sub>

The first Ammon we encounter in the Book of Mormon is a Mulekite who is a descendant—a grandson or great grandson—of the last Mulekite king, Zarahemla (Mosiah 7:3). While he himself has some claim to the throne in the land of Zarahemla, he is a supporter and confidant of king Mosiah<sub>2</sub>, the third in the line of Nephite kings who succeeded Zarahemla as rulers of the combined Nephite and Mulekite peoples. It is very apparent—and unsurprising—that the transition from Mulekite to Nephite rule was not entirely smooth. Direct descendants of king David, the Mulekites were the original inhabitants of the shared land and were more numerous than the Nephites (Mosiah 25:2). In any ordinary calculus, they had the more compelling claim to the throne when the two peoples combined. Nevertheless, Mosiah<sub>1</sub> was appointed king, presumably with the acquiescence of King Zarahemla (Omni 14–19).

Some Mulekites were apparently unhappy with this change to Nephite rule, so, as is often the case when the legitimacy of a government is in question, the moment of succession became especially perilous for the regime. When Mosiah<sub>1</sub>'s son Benjamin succeeded his father, “he had somewhat of contentions among his own people” (Words of Mormon 1:12). Benjamin was clearly concerned that his son, Mosiah<sub>2</sub>, would likewise face Mulekite resistance when he became king. During the assembly to crown Mosiah<sub>2</sub>, Benjamin seeks to unify his two peoples by giving them a shared name that might sup-



plant the two names that divide them (Mosiah 1:11–12, 5:7–8).<sup>11</sup> Though spiritual themes predominate in the sermon he delivers on this occasion, the political subtext in Benjamin's coronation speech is unmistakable. He condemns "open rebellion" (Mosiah 2:37; cf. Alma 3:18) and urges his people to submit to the rule of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> as they have submitted to his rule. He equates the commands of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> with the commands of God, making obedience to Mosiah<sub>2</sub> and the maintenance of peace a religious duty. He suggests that any who listen to Satan and contend against Mosiah<sub>2</sub>, as some contended against Benjamin himself, will risk the damnation of their soul (Mosiah 2:31–33). Thus tensions that will produce conflict when the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> refuse the kingship may be traced through each of the previous accessions of the Mosiah<sub>1</sub> dynasty.

But those tensions seem to diminish over time. Conjecture about details unstated by Mormon may help explain why. As part of the merger of the two peoples, Mosiah<sub>1</sub> would likely have arranged a marriage between one or more of his children and those of Zarahemla. If Benjamin, his heir, was thus married (a reasonable hypothesis), then Mosiah<sub>2</sub> would be half Mulekite. And if this premise be granted, it follows that Ammon<sub>1</sub> is closely related to Mosiah<sub>2</sub> by marriage, most likely being a brother but at least a first or second cousin of Mosiah<sub>2</sub>'s wife. In this instance, the conclusion reciprocally supports the premise, because we know that Ammon<sub>1</sub> was a trusted military aide of Mosiah<sub>2</sub>, a circumstance that increases the likelihood that they were related since it was a common practice in ancient monarchies as in modern dictatorships to place close relatives in important military positions.<sup>12</sup>

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11. Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007), 3:107–8.

12. See Wayne T. Brough and Mwangi S. Kimenyi, "On the Inefficient Extraction of Rents by Dictators," *Public Choice* 48 (1986): 37–48.

This may explain why Mosiah<sub>2</sub> asked Ammon<sub>1</sub>, a “strong and mighty” Mulekite, to lead a team of “strong men” on a search for the long lost Nephite followers of Zeniff (Mosiah 7:2–3). Ammon<sub>1</sub> deeply respects Mosiah<sub>2</sub> and acknowledges his calling not just as king but as prophet and seer (Mosiah 8:13–18). This charge to find the Zeniffites is a token of Mosiah<sub>2</sub>’s reciprocal respect for Ammon<sub>1</sub> as a skilled and dependable military leader. The Zeniffites were Nephites who, having followed Mosiah<sub>1</sub>, then wrongly rejected his prophetic leadership and returned to the Land of Nephi, their 400-year-old ancestral homeland. By sending a Mulekite to find them, Mosiah<sub>2</sub> subtly signals that his people have become one. And by accepting the assignment, Ammon<sub>1</sub> indicates that he too sees the Nephites and Mulekites as one people.

Not knowing where Zeniff’s people were located, Ammon<sub>1</sub> and his companions undertake an arduous forty-day journey to find the Land of Nephi (Mosiah 7:4), suffering while on this journey “many things . . . hunger, thirst, fatigue” (Mosiah 7:16). Forty days is a symbolically pregnant time period in both the Old and New Testaments, so this constellation of details strongly hints that Ammon<sub>1</sub>’s journey should be subjected to an allegorical as well as a historical reading. In Noah’s time, forty days of rain cleansed the earth and made a new beginning for humanity. Moses spent forty days on Mount Sinai, like Ammon<sub>1</sub> without food or water, receiving the Law of Moses which he then delivered as a new covenant to the Israelites. Moses sent spies who explored Israel for forty days and then, when the Israelites refused to enter the land of milk and honey, they were compelled to spend forty years in the Sinai wilderness before passing on to the Promised Land. Christ fasted forty days before beginning his ministry, then following the resurrection, ministered to the disciples for forty days before finally ascending to heaven. These and other biblical parallels create a typology of deliverance following forty days of tribulation.

Here, Ammon<sub>1</sub> suddenly appears after a forty-day journey as the savior of a people who are trapped in sin and slavery and who have no hope of saving themselves. He sets up camp on the border of the land Shilom, perhaps an alternative spelling of the Hebrew word *shalom*, meaning peace, safety, prosperity, wholeness, completeness. *Shalom* is literarily appropriate, for Ammon<sub>1</sub> will bring peace, safety, and prosperity to this wretched, impoverished people. He will restore wholeness by bringing the wanderers back into the Zarahemlan fold (Mosiah 7–8).<sup>13</sup>

Taking Hem<sup>14</sup> and two other companions, Ammon<sub>1</sub> enters the land of Shilom. Like other divinely commissioned saviors, Ammon<sub>1</sub> is not well received at first. He is bound and cast into prison. But on the third day, he comes forth and explains who he is. The grandson of Zeniff, king Limhi, then joyfully receives him as the savior who will deliver Zeniff's people from bondage. Limhi had earlier sought to find Zarahemla but his search party instead found "a land which had been peopled; yea, a land which was covered with dry bones; yea a land which had been peopled and which had been destroyed" (Mosiah 21:26; c.f. Mosiah 8:8). Remembering, we may plausibly speculate, tensions between the Nephites and Mulekites, Limhi concluded this destruction was the result of a civil war and "supposed it to be the land of Zarahemla" (Mosiah 22:26). (It was actually the

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13. The word Shilom/Shalom may have a deeper, temple resonance. It is linked, D. John Butler shows, to the middle room, the Hekal, of the three room ancient temple. So the mention of Shilom/Shalom may frame the sojourn of the Zeniffites in the land of Nephi as part of a tripartite temple allegory, with Zeniff's initial departure from Zarahemla corresponding to the Ulam, the porch of the temple, and the return to Zarahemla corresponding to passage into the Debir, the Holy of Holies, the land of Gideon being a kind of heaven on earth (see Alma 7); D. John Butler, *Plain and Precious Things* (Charleston, NC: CreateSpace, 2012).

14. Hem, in Egyptian, means *servant*, especially, servant or priest of Amon; see Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites*, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1952), 23.

Jaredites.) Thus, when Ammon<sub>1</sub> arrives, Limhi and his people are sunk in despair with no hope of salvation.

But having suffered greatly and having repented of their sins, they are now rescued. Ammon<sub>1</sub> leads an exodus that takes them back to the land of Zarahemla where they are again subject to king Mosiah. Speaking to the people, now settled in the land of Gideon, the prophet Alma<sub>1</sub>, who shared in their sins and suffering under king Noah, exhorts “the people of Limhi and his brethren, all those that had been delivered out of bondage, that they should remember that it was the Lord [not Ammon<sub>1</sub>] that did deliver them” (Mosiah 25:16). At once history and allegory, this narrative thus pays tribute to and bears testimony of the saving power of Christ.

As history, Ammon<sub>1</sub>’s rescue of the Zeniffites leads directly to a major change in Nephite political culture. The narrative of Zeniffite suffering under wicked king Noah and a translated record of the destroyed Jaredites help the people of Zarahemla learn what damage a wicked king can do, something they could not have learned from their own righteous kings. Thus Ammon<sub>1</sub>’s mission and the words of Alma<sub>1</sub> convince Mosiah<sub>2</sub> and his sons that the monarchy should be abolished.<sup>15</sup> This sets the stage for the story of Ammon<sub>2</sub>.

## Ammon<sub>2</sub>

One generation younger than Ammon<sub>1</sub>, Ammon<sub>2</sub> is a son of Mosiah<sub>2</sub>. Like Ammon<sub>1</sub>, he has not been as faithful to God as he should have been (Mosiah 22:33; Mosiah 27:8) but, nevertheless becomes the protagonist of a lengthy narrative. The two extended narratives share many parallels. Each narrative begins when subjects of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> come to him and unceasingly plead for him to authorize an important mission to the land of Nephi (Mosiah 7:1–2; Mosiah 28:1–8). The purpose of both

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15. Sturgess, “Book of Mosiah.”

missions is to reincorporate into the Nephite religious and civil polity a related people that has wrongly separated itself. In the Ammon<sub>1</sub> narrative, it is the Zeniffites who left Zarahemla and established a new king in the Lamanite dominated Land of Nephi. In Ammon<sub>2</sub>'s case, it is the Lamanites who, much earlier, rejected the legitimate leadership of Nephi<sub>1</sub>.

Initially reluctant (Mosiah 7:1; Mosiah 28:5), Mosiah<sub>2</sub> eventually grants both requests and in each case sends forth a small group of well-armed men that is led by their respective Ammon (Mosiah 7:3; Alma 17:18).<sup>16</sup> These groups, of roughly equal size, each face an arduous journey to the Land of Nephi during which they experience considerable hunger (Mosiah 7:16; Alma 17:9). Having arrived at the borders of Nephi, each Ammon leaves all or most of his companions behind and ventures forth to meet the people he has come to rescue (Mosiah 7:6; Alma 17:17–19). Each Ammon is taken and bound by the inhabitants of the land and is brought before the king to be tried for his life (Mosiah 7:7–8; Alma 17:20). Each defends himself with a speech that greatly pleases the king (Mosiah 7:12–14; Alma 17:23–24). And each is eventually permitted to preach the gospel to the king and his people, Ammon<sub>1</sub> doing this indirectly by recounting the great sermon of king Benjamin (Mosiah 8:3), Ammon<sub>2</sub> using his own words (Alma 18:24–39). In each case, the people respond favorably to the teaching and make a covenant with God (Mosiah 22:32–35; Alma 19:33–35).

But both covenant peoples are threatened by surrounding unbelievers (Mosiah 21:13–19; Alma 27:2). Each Ammon thus consults with the king and devises a plan to lead the believers back to the land of Zarahemla where they can be reincorporated into the legitimate polity (Mosiah 22:1–8; Alma 27:4–15).

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16. Mosiah<sub>2</sub> is the politically and religiously legitimate figure who links the main narrative in the land of Zarahemla with both divergent narratives set in the land of Nephi. He also establishes the political norms against which the revanchist Mulekites wrongly rebel.

The rescued groups follow their Ammon back to Zarahemla (Mosiah 22:11; Alma 27:11–14) and each now settles in a new land, Gideon or Jershon, that is allied with Zarahemla. Each comes to be known as the “people of God” (Mosiah 25:24; Alma 25:13). Unlike the other Nephite lands, Jershon and Gideon then reject the false teacher Korihor. In both lands the people bind him and carry him before their high priest to be judged (Alma 30:19–21). (The people of Gideon had earlier done the same with Nehor [Alma 1:7–10].) Both peoples are thereafter repeatedly celebrated for their notable faithfulness, with their righteousness being explicitly mentioned or otherwise indicated for the rest of their recorded history (e.g., Alma 7:17–19; Alma 27:26–27).

What are we to make of these many parallels? The thesis of this article is that they are not accidental. As noted above, Ammon<sub>1</sub> may have been Ammon<sub>2</sub>’s uncle, and it is certain that they knew each other. No member of Mosiah<sub>2</sub>’s court or family could have avoided hearing about the exploits of Ammon<sub>1</sub> during his successful mission to rescue lost souls in the Land of Nephi. And no close aide to the king could have failed to know about his sons, the princes of the kingdom. Given Ammon<sub>1</sub>’s importance as a military aide to Mosiah<sub>2</sub> and his probable familial connection to Mosiah<sub>2</sub>’s wife, it is even likely that Ammon<sub>2</sub> was named after Ammon<sub>1</sub>, a circumstance that would have reinforced the mutual loyalties of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> and Ammon<sub>1</sub> and would have created a bond between the two Ammons who star in the parallel narratives. Also distinguished by military prowess (Alma 17:36–38), the younger Ammon may have sought to replicate the worthy achievement of his boyhood hero by undertaking his own rescue mission to the land of Nephi and may have emphasized parallels when recounting the experience. These parallels would have appealed to Mormon’s literary sensibilities. Thus history is transcended into divine purpose revealed by repetition. Both Ammons become allegorical as well

as historical saviors,<sup>17</sup> and a number of loose ends in the Book of Mormon may be tied up.

*Why did Ammon<sub>2</sub> lead the expedition to the land of Nephi instead of his brother Aaron?* In a culture that clearly respects primogeniture, it is puzzling that Ammon<sub>2</sub> led the mission to the land of Nephi rather than his older brother Aaron. Aaron's primacy is apparent in the people's request that Aaron be made king when Mosiah<sub>2</sub> raised the question of succession with them (Mosiah 29:1–3). Culture dictates that Aaron, the older brother, lead, yet Ammon<sub>2</sub> is the clear leader of the group. His leadership is explicitly noted (Alma 17:18), and when the names of the brothers are mentioned together, as they often are, it is always in a sequence that lists Ammon<sub>2</sub> first: Ammon, Aaron, Omner, and Himni. If, as hypothesized above, Ammon<sub>2</sub> initiated the mission to fulfill a longstanding dream of following in his namesake's footsteps, Aaron might have given up his traditional leadership role in acknowledgement that this is Ammon's quest. Aaron does, however, briefly reclaim his role when he believes his younger brother, flush with success, is boasting inappropriately (Alma 26:10). It is also possible that Mormon emphasized the role of Ammon more than that of Aaron to strengthen narrative parallels.

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17. The name Ammon may have cued Mormon's recognition of the allegorical potential of these narratives. Ammon was the great universal god of the Egyptians, the being in their theology most akin to Jehovah and the most popular name in the Egyptian empire in Zedekiah's time; see Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert*, 27. Amon, a popular king of Judah during Lehi's youth, was named after this Egyptian god; see J. P. Lesley, "Notes on an Egyptian Element in the Names of Hebrew Kings, and Its Bearing on the History of the Exodus," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 19/109 (1881): 419–20; and seems to have worshipped his namesake (2 Kings 21:18–24). So the cult of Ammon was surely well known to the migrating Mulekites who may, therefore, have used Ammon as one of the names of God, a fact that would be known to Mormon if true. See also D&C 95:17, 78:20, and Hugh Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon, Part 2*, (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2004), 342.

*Why were Mulekites willing to accept the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> as their rulers but not Alma<sub>2</sub>?* As noted above, when Mosiah<sub>2</sub> asked his people whom they wanted to replace him as king, they replied that they wanted Aaron, the rightful heir (Mosiah 29:1–2). As previously discussed, evidence suggests that the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> were direct descendants of Zarahemla, the last Mulekite king, and were at least half and, possibly, as much as three-quarters Mulekite. Bloodlines probably explain, in part, the explosion of unrest that occurs when Alma<sub>2</sub>, a pure blooded Nephite with Zeniffite roots, is appointed as first chief judge. Alma<sub>2</sub>'s appointment restores the unstable status quo of Mosiah<sub>1</sub>'s time, at least with respect to the ethnicity of the ruler. Amlici, who is presumably a descendant of Zarahemla, Mulek, and David, becomes the first king-man who lays claim to the throne that the dynasty of Mosiah<sub>1</sub> has just abandoned. It is clear that Amlici's claim is a strong one and has much popular support, for it is only the first in a series of similar credible claims that continue to be made and to spark conflict through the end of the Book of Alma. In the fifth year of the reign of the judges, Amlici raises an army and attempts to install himself as king by force. When he is defeated, his people flee to the Lamanite lands and become, *ex hypothesi*, the Amalekites.

*Why was a city named Jerusalem constructed by dissenters from Zarahemla in Lamanite lands and why were Aaron, Muloki, and Ammah sent there to preach?* In Alma 21:1–2, we learn that a great city named Jerusalem has been constructed by the Lamanites and two groups of Nephite dissenters, the Amalekites and the Ammulonites. The Ammulonites (descendants of the priests of Noah) we know well. But who are the Amalekites? They are introduced, like the Ammulonites, without any explanation of where they came from, as if, like the Ammulonites, we should already know who they are. The most likely explanation is that they are followers of Amlici. They appear in the narrative at the precise point where the



Amlicites disappear, and they share the same Nehorite religion as the Amlicites. Like Amlici, they are king-men who hate the Nephites and want to establish a monarchy in Zarahemla.

Establishing a city named Jerusalem is something we might expect Amlicites to do. Unlike the Nephites who will have, at best, ambivalent feelings toward the wicked city of Jerusalem whose leaders sought to kill Lehi and Nephi, the Mulekites (like the Lamanites [1 Nephi 17:21]) most likely see Jerusalem as a wonderful place tragically lost to them. Naming their city Jerusalem while explicitly noting that it is called “after the land of their fathers’ nativity” (Alma 21:1) may have the purpose of reminding the Nephites and Lamanites that the Amalekites are of royal lineage, that as Mulekites they have “the blood of nobility” (Alma 51:21) and are entitled by the Davidic covenant to rule in this new Jerusalem as their ancestor David ruled in the old.

That the Amalekites are Mulekite dissenters and that Mosiah<sub>2</sub>’s son Aaron has Mulekite blood are mutually reinforcing speculations that are both supported by the same telling detail. When the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> split up and go their separate ways, Aaron headed for Jerusalem and “first began to preach to the Amalekites” (Alma 21:4). We know Aaron to be the rightful king of the Mulekite homeland, Zarahemla. He was popular with the people who wanted the monarchy to continue, perhaps including some of these very dissenters. Who could be better placed to command the respect of and persuade the disgruntled Mulekite king-men than Aaron? So while the visit is not a success, it probably represents a strategic effort on the part of Mosiah<sub>2</sub>’s sons to capitalize on the prestige of Aaron, the rightful Mulekite king, in order to save the lost souls of these Mulekite king-men.<sup>18</sup>

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18. While this account of Aaron making his first missionary stop in the city of Jerusalem and there addressing the Amalekites fits with the supposition that the Amalekites are the dissident Mulekite king-men elsewhere called Amlicites,

*Why did Aaron rather than Ammon<sub>2</sub> lead the mission to teach Lamoni's father in the land of Nephi when the king had requested Ammon<sub>2</sub>'s presence?* While as indicated above, Ammon<sub>2</sub> is clearly portrayed as the leader of the mission to the land of Nephi, Aaron also plays an outsized role in the mission—unlike Ammon<sub>2</sub>'s other brothers, Omner and Himni. Indeed, at God's behest, Aaron supplants Ammon<sub>2</sub> in the very circumstance that would have most fulfilled Ammon<sub>2</sub>'s youthful dream, if he dreamed of following in Ammon<sub>1</sub>'s footsteps. Ammon<sub>2</sub> begins his mission in the land of Ishmael. Following his success there and his violent subduing of Lamoni's father, the overall king of the land, Ammon<sub>2</sub> is invited to come to the capital city which is located in the land of Nephi, to come perhaps to the very palace of Noah where Ammon<sub>1</sub> had been received by Limhi,<sup>19</sup> and preach the gospel to the great king of the

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it is also the only major piece of evidence that Amlicites and Amalekites may not be the same people. Amlici does not raise his army against Alma<sub>2</sub> until the fifth year of the reign of judges (Alma 2:1) while the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> arrived in the land of Nephi in the first year of the reign of the judges (Alma 17:6). How then can Amlicites be builders of Jerusalem, a city that is already built when Aaron arrives? Words of Mormon 1:16 makes it clear that dissenters have been going over to the Lamanite side since the time of Benjamin. And the shared Nehorite religion of the Amlicites\Amalekites also necessarily entails the movement of people between Jerusalem and Zarahemla prior to the first year of the reign of judges when Alma<sub>2</sub> executed Nehor in Zarahemla. So dissenting Mulekites have been living in both locations before and after the inauguration of the reign of the judges. The fact that the uprising of the Amlicites in the land of Zarahemla was coordinated with an attack from the land of Nephi (Alma 2:24) also suggests that there is an ongoing relationship between dissidents in the two lands. Relatedly, it is possible that the leader Amlici takes his name from the people he leads and who preexist him rather than the other way around. The next leader of the kingmen insurgency, *Amalickiah*, has a remarkably similar name, again assuming an accent on the first syllable. *Amalickiah* may imply son of Amlici (Amliki) as Moronihah is the son of Moroni. We would thus see a similar pattern in the name changes of the successive overall leaders of both the Nephite and Amlicite/Amalekite/Amalickiahite armies. Finally, it is not entirely clear at what point in their 14-year mission Aaron undertook his mission to Jerusalem.

19. Helaman 5:21 makes it clear that the palace complex of Noah where Ammon<sub>1</sub> was imprisoned was still used by the Lamanites in the time of Ammon<sub>2</sub>.

land (Alma 20:27). But God directs Ammon<sub>2</sub> another way and he humbly gives up what would probably have been the crowning and complete fulfillment of his dream of following in the footsteps of Ammon<sub>1</sub>.

The spirit of the Lord leads Aaron to the palace of the king where he must explain to the disappointed king that Ammon<sub>2</sub> will not be coming (Alma 22:1–4). In bringing Aaron rather than Ammon<sub>2</sub> to the capital city, the Lord arranges for the rightful overall king of the Nephites to preach the gospel to and convert the overall king of the Lamanites. The symmetry of this encounter is probably not accidental. Perhaps Mormon, his most likely source, Ammon<sub>2</sub>, and even God Himself take care to recognize and memorialize Aaron's status and role as rightful king of the Nephites.

*Why did the Lamanites and Amalekites react so violently to the religious conversion of some of their fellow Lamanites?* It is evident that the Amalekites and unconverted Lamanites regard the successful mission of Mosiah's sons as a very aggressive and threatening act. In response to the conversions, they slaughter more than a thousand of the unresisting Anti-Nephi-Lehies and then attack and utterly destroy the Mulekite city of Ammonihah.<sup>20</sup> Though morally reprehensible, their response is understandable in political terms. The Amlicite Amalekites want to seize power in Zarahemla but lack the military strength to do so on their own. Allied with the Lamanites, they may be able to achieve their political objective. So they have embraced the founding myth of the Lamanites (which is compatible with their own Mulekite founding myth) and have voluntarily tak-

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20. That Ammonihah is a Mulekite city is indicated by its name, its religion (Nehorite) which links it with the Mulekite dissenters, and by the necessity Amulek feels to tell Alma<sub>2</sub> that he is a Nephite when he first meets him (Alma 8:20). If Ammonihah were a predominantly Nephite city, that declaration of lineage would have been unnecessary. See Tvedtnes, "Book of Mormon Tribal Affiliation," 301.

en upon themselves the mark of the Lamanites (Alma 3:4–10, 13–18).

The sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub>, the very man who established the political order that Amlici and his Amalekites were struggling to overthrow, have now come among them and have persuaded many of their Lamanite allies, including the most powerful of all, the overall king, to switch sides in their long twilight struggle against the Nephite usurpers. Indeed, it was the putative overall Nephite king himself who persuaded the overall king of the Lamanites to switch sides. The Lamanite king has decided to give up coercive power over his people, which means a *de facto* end of the Lamanite monarchy and movement in the direction of the rule of judges. In short, the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> have persuaded many Lamanites to adopt the political ideology and foundational myth of the Nephites (Alma 18:36–38), a change in belief which makes Nephites of these new converts (Alma 2:11). Nor are these changes an accident. From the beginning of their mission, the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> sought to “convince [the Lamanites] of the iniquity of their fathers; and . . . cure them of their hatred towards the Nephites, that they might become friendly to one another, and that there should be no more contentions in all the land” (Mosiah 28:1–3). In other words, from the beginning, their mission had a political as well as a religious purpose. It is, therefore, no surprise that it has evoked a forceful political response from their enemies.

Ironically, the effort of the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> to establish peace between the Nephites and Lamanites has the opposite effect from what they intended. It reduces the number of Lamanites who are willing to attack the land of Zarahemla. But it initiates a very long series of wars between the Nephites and their allied enemies, the Lamanites and Amalekites.<sup>21</sup> And

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21. In political terms, there is a clear parallel between the mission of the sons of Mosiah to the Lamanites and Alma's mission to the Zoramites. Both sets of missionaries hope to foster peace with actual or potential enemies by inducing

instead of strengthening the Nephites militarily, the pacifist Lamanite converts of the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> initially add to the military burdens of the Nephites by compelling them to defend an allied people who will not defend themselves.

### Ammon<sub>2</sub> at the Waters of Sebus

No episode in the Book of Mormon is more strange and, on its surface, incoherent than the account of Ammon<sub>2</sub>'s fight at the waters of Sebus and its aftermath.<sup>22</sup> The most surprising facts connected with the narrative are these: (a) the plundering of the king's flocks is routine and predictable, yet he doesn't send a force capable of protecting his property; (b) the servants of the king make no effort to fight the marauders in spite of the fact that they will be executed if they fail to protect the flocks; (c) when they predictably fail, the king kills his own servants and, thus, weakens his forces; (d) the king refers to the marauders as "my brethren"; and (e) the marauders and their families are unafraid to hang around the king's palace in the immediate aftermath of the fight. This is an improbable constellation of details. How are we to account for it? The answer must lie in the implicit dynamics of Lamanite politics in the land of Ishmael. In what follows, I draw heavily on Brant Gardner's interpretation,<sup>23</sup> adding however, what is probably the lynchpin of the whole affair—the role of Lamoni's father.

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those enemies to embrace the gospel. In both cases, the missionaries have considerable success, and many of the people they preach adopt Nephite ideology and move to the Nephite land of Jerushon. But in both cases, this success becomes the immediate cause of a bitter, destructive war as the remaining Lamanites and Zoramites view the conversions and departures as a major threat to their ideology and power.

22. See Hugh W. Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 539.

23. Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007), 3:274–78.

In my reading, the back story at Sebus is a conflict between Lamoni, the titular king in the land of Ishmael,<sup>24</sup> and another group of nobles whom Lamoni calls “my brethren” (Alma 18:20), e.g., some mix of brothers, uncles, or cousins. The contest between the two groups is deadly earnest, but neither can do violence to the other because all are loved and protected by Lamoni’s father, the great king of the land, who has a short temper and who responds ferociously if anyone, including his own family, crosses him (Alma 20:8–16). Since they cannot directly attack each other without risking their lives by antagonizing their shared patron, Lamoni and his rivals seek to weaken their opponent by attacking their economic interests and by ruining their reputation in the eyes of the great king. It is in this context that Lamoni’s servants face doom at the waters of Sebus. The herdsman servants are ordinary citizens of the kingdom. Knowing the disposition of Lamoni’s father, they probably understand that they and their family will die a painful death if they do the slightest injury to any of the great king’s extended family. So if they are so unlucky as to be attacked at the waters of Sebus by the king’s noble relatives, they are doomed. They cannot raise a hand to prevent Lamoni’s flocks from being scattered and plundered by his noble rivals. And if they fail to prevent the scattering and loss of the flocks, Lamoni will put them to death.

But why will Lamoni execute them when they fail? Doesn’t he injure himself when he does that by reducing his political and military base in the land of Ishmael? In an ordinary political situation, that would be the case. No king could afford to get trapped in a process that causes him to regularly eliminate his own forces and thereby weaken his hand against his enemies. But in this case, Lamoni has only one relevant constituent—his father. As long as he has a mandate to govern from his father, he need not be concerned about what any person, ordinary or

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24. Alma 20:26 makes it clear that Lamoni had no independent power until after Ammon<sub>2</sub> subdued his father.

noble, thinks of him, for no one dares challenge his father's authority. Importantly, Lamoni's father believes a king should use aggressive violence to enforce his will. Lamoni retains his kingdom only if his father is persuaded that he, too, is a man of violence who will impose the severest sanctions on those who fail him. Lamoni executes his servants not because he is angry with them but as an act of political theater to appease his father, a fact that, of course, holds no consolation for his doomed servants.

The sudden appearance of Ammon<sub>2</sub> in the land of Ishmael provides Lamoni with an opportunity to modify this unsatisfactory political equilibrium. Ammon<sub>2</sub> is the son of a powerful neighboring king and thus provides another potential base for Lamoni's political power. Having learned that Ammon<sub>2</sub> is a prince, Lamoni offers to let him "take one of his daughters to wife" (Alma 17:24), a marriage that could ally Mosiah<sub>2</sub> with Lamoni in his struggle against his brethren. When Ammon<sub>2</sub> declines and forecloses that option but offers to become a servant, Lamoni hatches another plan to injure his enemies. He sends Ammon<sub>2</sub> to Sebus where he knows his noble enemies will attack. When they attack, unlike the ordinary servants, this noble outsider will have no compunction about defending himself. There is a chance that Ammon<sub>2</sub> may kill some of Lamoni's enemies (which will be good for Lamoni) and a near certainty that Lamoni's enemies will kill the son of a powerful neighboring king who may seek retribution against them (which will also be good for Lamoni).

In fact, events at Sebus unfold in a way Lamoni could never have anticipated. When the noble enemies attack and scatter the flock, Ammon<sub>2</sub> kills six of the attackers with his sling. When the remaining attackers press close and try to kill him with clubs, he cuts off every arm that is raised against him and kills the leader of the attacking nobles. Having been saved by this godlike intervention, Ammon<sub>2</sub>'s fellow servants are filled with a gratitude that primes them to be eternally saved—which

had been Ammon<sub>2</sub>'s plan from the beginning (Alma 17:29). The servants, in turn, help prepare Lamoni and his wife to receive God's grace through the ministrations of Ammon<sub>2</sub>, whom Lamoni now believes to be a god. And having heard the gospel preached in power, Lamoni and all his house are filled with and overcome by the spirit, as is Ammon<sub>2</sub> (Alma 19:14).

Crowds of commoners and nobles gather at the palace to view the apparent destruction of the king and his household. Among the nobles are some of the marauders who had been at Sebus, a nearly infallible proof that this is a case of intra-noble political intrigue. Their sympathies being with their fellow peons, the common people speculate that this evil has fallen upon Lamoni and his household because he theatrically killed his servants for failing to protect his flocks (Alma 19:20). Though the commoners are disparaging the gathered nobles' enemy, Lamoni, the class solidarity of these nobles is stronger than their enmity for their noble rival. They rebuke the commoners for suggesting that a nobleman might be punished for exercising the privilege of taking a commoner's life but are enraged that Ammon<sub>2</sub>, a putative servant, has killed nobles (Alma 19:21). Though Lamoni is incapacitated, his noble rivals dare not attack him (he is still his ferocious father's son). But the brother of the leader at Sebus, whom Ammon<sub>2</sub> killed, now vainly tries to kill Ammon<sub>2</sub>. When he fails, the other nobles apparently scurry off to the land of Nephi to attend a previously scheduled feast with Lamoni's father and to kindle the great king's wrath against his son and his new Nephite servant. In full anger Lamoni's father comes to Ishmael, is defeated by Ammon<sub>2</sub>, frees Lamoni and his people from his rule (thus granting Lamoni the preeminence in his kingdom he has been striving for), and expresses his willingness to have the gospel preached to him in his palace. Salvation for thousands, then a great war of retribution follows.



If we correctly interpret the political dynamics in the land of Ishmael, we can recognize in this narrative a profound allegory of the human condition and of the plan of salvation, including its key element, the Atonement. Lamoni's servants are caught on the horns of a horrible dilemma. They are bound by two incompatible laws that, taken together, seal their doom. They must not fail to keep the commandment of their lord to protect his flock and they must not raise a hand against any noble relative of the great king. When the nobles scatter the flock, hopeless and helpless despair is the only available response for the servants because their doom is sure.

For their predecessors, that was the end of the story. But for these fortunate servants the story is wonderfully changed. A godlike nobleman—the most powerful of all, one who can vanquish even the great king himself—has condescended to come among them and voluntarily share their servant status. When the crisis comes and they fall into despair, he rallies them. From him they draw the courage and ability to keep their lord's commandments. Placing their faith in him and doing as he commands (an essential element in their redemption), they gather the scattered flock and encircle them to prevent their flight.

He, the suffering servant, in turn, goes forth to bear the brunt of the violence meant for them which they were powerless to resist. Against all human odds, this godlike nobleman defeats forces arrayed against him and them. He reconciles the two laws, making it possible for his fellow servants to keep both. They have neither allowed the flock to be plundered nor lifted a hand against the great king's relatives. Led by their savior, the servants return to their lord without blemish, their lives preserved by the gracious intervention of the godlike figure who condescended to be one with them. Their faith in this noble savior redeems not just their bodies but their eternal souls, for he brings them back not just to their temporal lord, Lamoni, but to their eternal lord, the Lord God.

Mormon apparently recognized the symbolic potential of Ammon<sub>2</sub>'s adventure at Sebus and featured it precisely because, read allegorically, it testifies so powerfully of Christ. While the general application of this allegory is probably apparent, its precise application is worthy of comment. Like Lamoni's servants, all humanity are caught on the horns of a horrible dilemma. We are required to keep two mutually incompatible laws. On the one hand, we must remain pure and innocent, completely unspotted by sin, which we can do only by remaining in the protective presence of God. On the other hand, we must acquire bodies, multiply and replenish the earth, and make profound moral choices between good and evil, which we can do only by leaving God's presence and living in a fallen world where we are tempted and inevitably sin. (As early Christians understood, the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden allegorically illustrates this choice all face.)<sup>25</sup> The consequence of violating either of these laws is damnation. Keeping the first law and violating the second leads to the blessed damnation of remaining forever in the presence of God as sinless but undeveloped spirit children, never able to be ourselves or know ourselves because the full exercise of our agency is there not possible. The consequence of keeping the second but violating the first is the starker damnation of spiritual death, eternal separation from God, that we impure natural men impose upon ourselves because we cannot feel any tolerable ease in God's presence but must, from internal necessity, flee from it to the mental hell our sins have created for us (Alma 12:13–14). Caught in this dilemma, all humanity is as doomed in the eternities as Lamoni's servants were at the waters of Sebus.

But like Lamoni's servants, we are rescued by a savior, in this case *the* Savior, whose divine parentage and extraordinary character make it possible for him, alone, to keep both laws. He

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25. See Terryl L. Givens, *When Souls Had Wings: Pre-Mortal Existence in Western Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 94, 107.

alone is able to come to earth, face the full spectrum of temptations and moral choices and yet remain completely pure. He alone, after facing all life in this world has to offer, is able to be again in God's presence with joy rather than the wish for annihilation that all others feel because of their sins. However, He does not take the easy path back to God that is available to Him. Like Ammon<sub>2</sub> at Sebus—but on an infinitely grander scale—He condescends to join us ordinary human beings in suffering. In the hell our sins have created for Him and us, He bears the brunt of our eternal damnation. In doing so, like Ammon<sub>2</sub>—but on an infinite scale—He opens a path for us to escape our eternal doom. Out of our despair, we may be born again as sanctified souls if we exercise faith in Him, then with broken heart and contrite spirit hear and obey His commands. Drawing discipline and courage from the enabling power of His Atonement, we may join Him in gathering the scattered of the flock, then in purity follow Him as he humbly leads us back into the presence of His and our Lord.<sup>26</sup>

These stories have depth. Though each contains elements that mark it as a good adventure tale, neither Ammon narrative may be properly appreciated if attention is focused primarily on plot. These concrete accounts of human doom and deliverance testify of Christ. Pervasive parallels signify their transcendence of history, the primacy of their allegorical witness that Jesus is the Christ.

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26. It is worth noting that just as Lamoni's servants are not culpable because the flock was once scattered if it is ultimately returned safely to the king, so we are not culpable for the sins we commit if we come back into God's presence as one who no longer has the "disposition to do evil, but to do good continually" (Mosiah 5:2). By rallying with broken heart and contrite spirit to the Savior who has joined us in our suffering for sin, by drawing the strength from Him to humbly keep His commands, we are reborn as sinless sons and daughters of Christ who again feel nothing but joy in the presence of God. God will care—and we will care—about what we are, not about what we have been.

## Conclusion

Apologetics and hermeneutics, defending and understanding, are the two great tasks the Book of Mormon poses for faithful scholars. Latter-day Saint scholars can more fully accomplish both tasks if they are attentive to the fact that the people who inhabit the Book of Mormon have lives that continue off stage. The necessary brevity of the Book of Mormon means that most details of most lives will be present in the text—if present at all—only by implication. If the Book of Mormon is an authentic historical text, apparently random details should prove to be interconnected when the text is read closely. In this article, I have attempted to show that such interconnections are ubiquitous.

The core message of the Book of Mormon—its powerful testimony of Jesus Christ—is unmistakable for any competent reader because of Nephi's passion for plainness when bearing testimony and Mormon's didactic commitment to sharing an unambiguous testimony of the Savior.<sup>27</sup> But neither Nephi nor Mormon are merely didactic authors. Like the authors of the Old Testament, they have a literary sensibility.<sup>28</sup> So even with respect to the Book of Mormon's most consequential core message, we can discover important new dimensions of meaning if we pay attention to narrative structure and to the implied cultural and historical milieu of the testament that has been handed down to us. That which is implicit generally converges with, reinforces, and sometimes makes more profound the witness of Jesus Christ that is the dominant theme of the Book of Mormon.

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27. H. Hardy, "Mormon's Poetics."

28. Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, (New York: Basic Books, 2011).

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## BOOK REVIEW

*Robert Boylan*

*Review of Bart D. Ehrman. Forgery and Counterforgery: The Use of Literary Deceit in Early Christian Polemics. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). x + 628 pp, including bibliography and index. \$39.95. Hardback.*

Bart Ehrman's works have long been known to Latter-day Saint scholars, including his studies that reveal presumably theologically driven corruptions to various biblical passages;<sup>1</sup> his analysis of writings that some early Christian communities privileged as authoritative, though they never became part of the biblical canon; as well as the diverse nature of early Christianity itself.<sup>2</sup> *Forgery and Counterforgery* may well be another volume by Dr. Ehrman that will be referenced by both LDS and non-LDS interested in the question of alleged pseudepigraphic texts in the New Testament and early Christian literature.

Ehrman focuses upon both canonical and noncanonical works that he postulates are in various ways fraudulent. In his discussion of what appear to be forged noncanonical works in early Christianity, his investigation centers largely on texts that were influential in the development of both Christian history and

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1. Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

2. Ehrman, *Lost Scriptures: Books That Did Not Make It into the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), and see also his *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scriptures and the Faiths We Never Knew* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

theology, and not those of merely trivial importance. One such document is *The Apostolic Constitutions*, a work dealing with the matter of church order, allegedly written by the apostles of Jesus (hence its name), though in reality, the document was produced by an author “living three hundred years after they had been laid to rest in their respective tombs” (p. 14). Notwithstanding the spurious nature of this text, we read of how the Trullan Council in AD 692, a council convened to dogmatically define the topic of church discipline, “accepted as fully authoritative the eighty-five Apostolic Canons, which appear in 8.47 of the book” (p. 19).

Ehrman discusses the theory that the Epistle of James represents a forged New Testament text (see pp. 283–97), concluding that authorship of the Epistle was (1) falsely attributed to James, the brother of Jesus, to bolster its credibility and it (2) was used as the written medium through which “Paulinism,” that is, the abuse of Paul’s soteriology in Romans and Galatians (two epistles Ehrman accepts as genuinely Pauline) could be counteracted. One piece of evidence used to arrive at this conclusion is that James appears to be a pseudepigraphic text because this epistle seems dependent upon Paul’s letters specifically on the topic of justification and its relationship to the nature of “works” and “works of the law.” Ehrman notes the parallels in the Greek between James 2:24, Galatians 2:16 and Romans 3:28 (pp. 292–93):

- James 2:24, which reads: “We see that a man is justified by works, and not by faith alone.” (This is my translation, since Ehrman does not provide a translation of ὁρᾶτε ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος καὶ οὐκ ἐκ πίστεως μόνον.)
- Galatians 2:16, which reads: “Knowing a man is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ” (again my translation of εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).



- Romans 3:28, which reads “We reckon that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law” (again my translation of λογίζομεθα γὰρ δικαιούσθαι πίστει ἄνθρωπον χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου).

The parallels between these three texts, Ehrman acknowledges, have been noted for many decades, though they still remain striking today: “all of them contain a verb of knowing, an indefinite *person*, the verb *justified* in the passive voice, and the antithetical contrast of *works* and *faith*. Nowhere else in all of early Christian literature are these elements combined. Yet the two authors take what appear to be—at least on the surface—opposite sides of the arguments.” In addition, these passages “are far too close to have been accidentally created in such similar yet contrary fashion” (p. 292). Ehrman recognizes that there are also important terminological differences between James and Paul with respect to the topic of “works”: “For James, ‘works’ are not the demands of the Law [of Moses] placed on Jews. Instead, they are good deeds. One needs to do good deeds in order to be justified . . . For Paul, too, there is no such thing as (‘true’) faith without obedience (Rom. 1:5) or active love (Gal. 5:6)” (p. 294).

While many will, of course, disagree that the letter attributed to James is pseudepigraphic, as well as reject the evidences used to arrive to such a conclusion, Ehrman’s comments about the relationship between James’s and Paul’s epistles on justification, works, and “works of Law” will, I believe, be welcomed by Latter-day Saints, since there are now a growing number of Latter-day Saint scholars who welcome N. T. Wright’s version of what is being called the New Perspective on Paul (NPP). Latter-day Saint scholars tend to accept Wright’s scholarly position on the apostle Paul. He holds a “covenantal nomism” which is that Paul taught that one becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ by entering into a New Covenant with God through grace, whose sign is faith rather than circumcision and dietary

restrictions. One maintains this covenantal relationship with God through an active faith by keeping the commandments and thereby undergoing sanctification ending with justification at the final judgment. Wright's position on this issue is now being seen by LDS scholars as an accurate account of both Pauline soteriology and one that fits rather comfortably with an informed Latter-day Saint soteriology—that is, one drawn from the Book of Mormon.

Other canonical works that are treated in depth by Ehrman include 2 Thessalonians (pp. 156–71) and the Pastoral Epistles (pp. 192–222). Ehrman argues that these particular texts were fabricated to explain concerns about the delay of the final coming of Christ and also to forward a particular ecclesiology in the fledgling church. While not everyone will reach the same conclusions as Ehrman does in *Forgery and Counterforgery*, there is no question that this is one of the best scholarly texts on these important and contentious issues. His grasp of the relevant topics, ranging from the intellectual history of the debate about pseudepigraphic writings in antiquity, the cultural and historical context of the texts in question, as well as their influence on the development of Christianity, in addition to his interactions with past and present critics of his hypotheses, make this scholarly work the equal to his masterful *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*. For informed Latter-day Saints interested in deepening their understanding of these issues within New Testament studies, this volume is a must-read.

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# FROM THE EAST TO THE WEST: THE PROBLEM OF DIRECTIONS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

*Brant A. Gardner*

*Abstract: The 1985 publication of John L. Sorenson's An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon presented the best argument for a New World location for the Book of Mormon. For all of its strengths, however, one aspect of the model has remained perplexing. It appeared that in order to accept that correlation one must accept that the Nephites rotated north to what we typically understand as northwest. The internal connections between text and geography were tighter than any previous correlation, and the connections between that particular geography and the history of the peoples who lived in that place during Book of Mormon times was also impressive. There was just that little problem of north not being north. This paper reexamines the Book of Mormon directional terms and interprets them against the cultural system that was prevalent in the area defined by Sorenson's geographical correlation. The result is a way to understand Book of Mormon directions without requiring any skewing of magnetic north.*

In 1985, John L. Sorenson published *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*.<sup>1</sup> That book was the culmination of decades of work establishing a real world setting that plausibly fit the textual geography in the Book of Mormon. Sorenson's model places the Book of Mormon in part of the region known as Mesoamerica, extending from perhaps a little

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1. John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985).

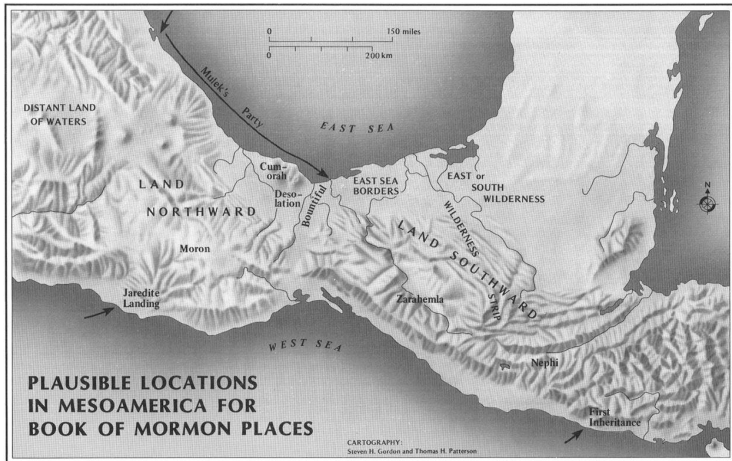


Figure 1: John L. Sorenson's correlation, from *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*

south of modern Guatemala to somewhat north of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.

In addition to his work on the geography, Sorenson expanded his correlation to include the relationship between the available historical and cultural information for that region and the descriptions and events in the Book of Mormon. The correlations were impressive and have led to further productive investigation.<sup>2</sup>

In spite of the many reasons that recommend this model, there is one major problem with the correlation. Deanne

2. John L. and Janet F. Hilton, "A Correlation of the Sidon River and the Lands of Manti and Zarahemla with the Southern End of Rio Grijalva (San Miguel)," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 1/1 (1992): 142–62, and Lawrence L. Poulsen, "The River Sidon," <http://www.poulsenll.org/bom/grijalvasidon.html>, have increased the detail of the suggested correlation between the Sidon and the Grijalva River. I have used Sorenson's geographic and general cultural connections as the underlying model for explaining the correspondence of the actions in the Book of Mormon with Mesoamerican culture and history. See Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007–08).

G. Matheny, a lawyer with a PhD in anthropology from the University of Utah, explains:

The most fundamental geographical problem associated with Sorenson's model has to do with issues of directionality. . . . In order for his model to fit the geography of Mesoamerica, one must assume that the Nephites had a system of directions with cardinal directions skewed "45 degrees or more" off of the usually observed cardinals. . . . In other words, the whole directional card must be shifted more than 60 degrees to the west for this model to fit the geography of the chosen area. Otherwise, as Vogel has pointed out, the land north will be on the west, the land south on the east, and so forth. . . . Making this shift in directions creates its own set of problems, however, because in such a Nephite directional system the sun would come up in the south and set in the north.<sup>3</sup>

These are serious considerations. How could Nephites possibly think that the sun would come upon in the south and set

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3. Deanne G. Matheny, "Does the Shoe Fit? A Critique of the Limited Tehuantepec Geography," in *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 277. Perhaps the most important criticism of Sorenson's model has been the variance from cardinal directions. Doug Christensen, post to Book of Mormon Archaeological Forum Group, Facebook. <http://www.facebook.com/groups/bmaf.org/permalink/10151035621679242/>:

Despite the differences, there is almost unanimous agreement among scholars that Sorenson's so called "Nephite North" which is required in order to make his model work, unnecessarily muddies the picture. . . . Joseph and Blake Allen recently responded to an inquiry about the Sorenson model. Their answer is typical of the current thinking of most LDS scholars: "We don't feel that there is any strength to the idea of a rotated map. Sorenson pursued the hourglass concept and then superimposed it on a Mesoamerican map, thereby proposing a shift in Nephite directions from the standard cardinal directions, rotating the map and calling the result by the name of "Nephite north." This theory has received an abundant amount of negative criticism, as there is no evidence from either the Book of Mormon or Maya culture that hints at a directional shift.

in the north? They couldn't. Yet we have a geographic correlation that fits both real world geography and cultural history remarkably well—except when we come to the terms *north*, *south*, *east*, and *west*.<sup>4</sup> I propose that if Mesoamerica is a good fit for the Book of Mormon's real world geography, then information about Mesoamerica may be used to reexamine and refine the nature of that fit.<sup>5</sup> In short, an understanding of the Mesoamerican directional system offers an explanation for the way that Book of Mormon directions correspond to that geography, without recourse to an artificial shift in the directions.

### The Mesoamerican Directional System

Scholars have found a very similar directional system among the various Mesoamerican cultures. Much of the data come from the Maya cultures because the ability to translate the carved and painted texts provides a unique view of pre-contact culture currently unavailable for any other Mesoamerican people. Nevertheless, what may be more carefully worked out in the Maya data has sufficient corroboration in data from oth-

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4. The cultural data have been sufficiently impressive that other LDS authors have attempted to retain the basic culture area, but find a way to correlate the geography with the cardinal directions rather than Sorenson's necessary shift of the Nephite cultural north. See Dee Stoddard, "From the East to the West Sea? An Analysis of John L. Sorenson's Book of Mormon Directional Statements," 2009, at <http://www.bmaf.org/node/251>.

5. John L. Sorenson, "Viva Zapato! Hurray for the Shoe!," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, 6/1 (1994): 305 notes: "This supposed 'standard scheme' [cardinal directions] is actually a mental artifact of Western European culture developed largely since the rise of the compass and of science not many centuries ago." Sorenson's defense of his understanding of directions is based on appropriate anthropology. The refinement suggested here is the result of a more specific application of the Mesoamerican data. However, an important point of difference is that Sorenson believes that: "Aside from whatever these translated words for directions denoted in relation to the natural world, their use in the language of the Nephites does not seem to show that they paid prime attention to the sun's rising or setting." (p. 308) I will examine the evidence that the Nephite terms are based on a prime attention to the path of the sun.

er cultures to depict an essentially pan-Mesoamerican orientation system.

The Mesoamerican system is not a replica of our Western understanding of cardinal directions, even though it is often described using Western directional terms. While both systems are used to describe the real world and share some base characteristics, there is an incomplete overlap in meaning between the two systems. That incomplete overlap in meaning is too often hidden when we use the terms from the Western system of cardinal directions to describe the Mesoamerican system.

To begin with, unlike our four cardinal directions, the Mesoamerican system had five “directions.” Four have similarities to our north, south, east, and west, but the fifth “direction” was the center, which has no Western counterpart. To our Western understanding, the center doesn’t seem like a direction, but it was nevertheless a very important part of the Mesoamerican method of orientation in the world. David Freidel, Professor of Archaeology at Washington University in St. Louis and Linda Schele, Professor of Art at the University of Texas, describe this concept for the Maya:

Just as the gods marked the periphery by placing the four sides and corners around the center, the Maya shaman creates a five-part image to sanctify space and open a portal to the Otherworld. Mayanists have adopted the Latin word *quincunx* for this five-point-plan concept, although the Maya have many ways of expressing it in their own languages. The discerning of the four sides or the four corners and the establishing of their position relative to the center point is what we mean by “centering.” The Yukatek farmers today “center” their fields ritually even before they begin to cut them out of the fallow brushland. They mark off their fields and the units within them with small piles of

stones, just as villages mark off their lands from those of neighboring communities with large piles of stones.<sup>6</sup>

For Westerners, the very idea of a “direction” almost implies movement. Our system tells us where we are headed. The Mesoamerican system helped people define where they were. From small to large or large to small, Mesoamerican peoples centered themselves, their homes, and their cities at the crossroads of the world. Mary Miller, Professor of History of Art at Yale, and Karl Taube, Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of California Riverside, describe the way that the five-part concept influenced multiple levels of the Mesoamerican world:

One of the underlying organizational principles of Mesoamerican religion is replication, in which essential patterns of everyday life and the surrounding world are copied and incorporated as models of religious thought and action. Basic features of the social world are often repeated on an increasingly larger scale to encompass the world and the workings of the universe. For example, in the Maya region, the house with its four walls and corner posts could stand for a maize field, the community, and the structure of the cosmos. Grand and abstract concepts are placed in human terms, and conversely, the ordered structure of the universe serves to sanctify and validate human social conventions.<sup>7</sup>

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6. David Freidel, Linda Schele and Joy Parker, *Maya Cosmos: Three Thousand Years on the Shaman's Path* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1993), 128–29.

7. Mary Miller and Karl Taube, *An Illustrated Dictionary of the Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993, paperback 1997), 30.



There was no universal center. Each city was its own world—its own center. Each family home replicated the world and placed that family at its center. For Mesoamerican cultures, direction was equally symbolic as descriptive.

Not only does the “center direction” differ from our Western understanding, even the Mesoamerican directions that roughly correspond to our north, south, east, and west were differently conceived. Susan Milbrath, affiliate professor of Anthropology at the University of Florida, describes the Mesoamerican mode of orientation using a Maya community as her example: “Analysis of Chamula astronomical concepts indicates that the primary axis is an east-west direction based on the sun’s daily path. . . . Even though they recognize that the zenith position is overhead, the east is visualized as the ‘up’ direction and the west as ‘down.’”<sup>8</sup> A universal aspect of Mesoamerican directional systems is that they are based on the path of the sun. They encode that path throughout the year, tracing the shifting rising and setting of the sun from solstice to solstice.



Figure 2

Western cardinal directions are conceptually a + (Figure 2), with each direction directly and cleanly associated with the “pure” direction equidistant from all other directions. The Mesoamerican system, on the other hand, is better represented in the form of an ‘x.’ East is not a line toward the sun at the equinox, but the entire wedge created by tracing the passage of the sun along the horizon from solstice to solstice from the center. Archaeologist Prudence M. Rice puts it clearly: “Maya quadripartite organization of horizontal space is not strictly based on the four fixed cardinal directions recognized in the modern world. Instead, the divisions seem to invoke the solstice-equinox positions and movements

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8. Susan Milbrath, *Star Gods of the Maya: Astronomy in Art, Folklore, and Calendars* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 17, 19.

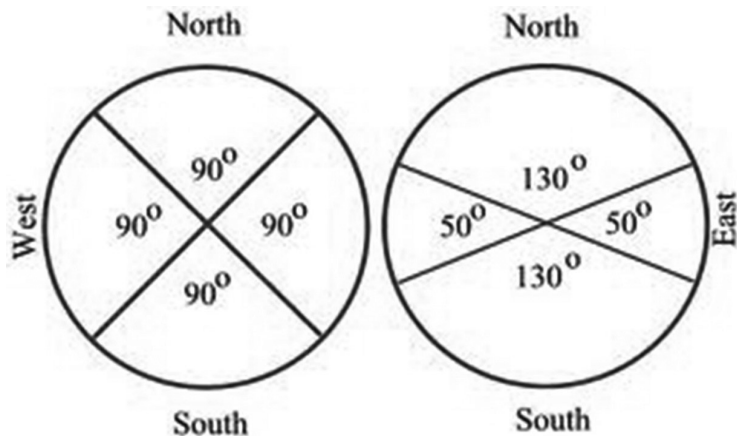


Figure 3: The figure on the right indicates the solstitial path. This was often conceptually regularized into the pattern on the left.

of the sun as it rises on the eastern horizon and sets on the western.”<sup>9</sup> Although the plausible origin of this conception is the travel of the sun along the horizon, Mesoamerican systems regularized their depictions (and therefore their perceptions) into a quadripartite system surrounding the center (Figure 3). The world was depicted as a square with lines drawn from corner to corner. The Codex Mendoza shows the Aztec capital city at the center of the world. Tenochtitlan, indicated by the eagle on the cactus (the symbol for Tenochtitlan), sits at the center of the crossed lines that extend from each corner of the cosmos to the opposite corner.<sup>10</sup>

9. Prudence M. Rice, *Maya Political Science. Time, Astronomy, and the Cosmos* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004), 20.

10. “Codex Mendoza” in *Antigüedades de México* (Mexico: Secretaria de Hacienda y Crédito Público, 1964), 1:7. This initial page shows Tenochtitlan centered in the cosmos. “Codex Fejervary-Mayer,” in *Antigüedades de México* (Mexico: Secretaria de Hacienda y Crédito Público, 1964), 4:189. This codex opens with a depiction of a deity at the center of the cosmos, depicting not only the center and the quadripartite directions, but also the world trees anchoring the corners of the cosmos.

While the five-part concept defined the understanding of one's orientation in the cosmos, the actual directional system appears have been built on only a single "direction," which was the path of the sun throughout the day and throughout the year. Other spatial relationships were made against that defining axis.

Steven Pinker, Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, provides some interesting background on this terminological problem. His emphasis was on understanding how the brain encodes meaning rather than anything to do with geography, but the example is informative:

A set of studies by the anthropologist Stephen Levinson and his colleagues aim[ed] to show that a language's spatial terms determine how its speakers use the three dimensions of space to remember the locations of objects. Levinson's group examined Tzeltal, a language spoken in the Chiapas region of Mexico. . . Tzeltal has no general words for "left" or "right." The closest it has are terms for the left or right arm or leg, but the terms are rarely used to refer to the left side of an object, table, or room. Instead the Tzeltal speakers describe spatial arrangements relative to the mountain slope that dominates their villages. The spatial vocabulary of Tzeltal includes words that mean "up-the-slope" (which is roughly southward), "down-the-slope" (roughly northward), and "across-the-slope." These coordinates are used not just when traipsing up and down the mountain but also when on flat terrain or indoors, and even when describing the arrangements of small objects. According to Levinson, Tzeltal speakers say "The spoon is downslope of the teacup," not "The spoon is on the right of the teacup."<sup>11</sup>

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11. Steven Pinker, *The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window into Human Nature* (New York: Viking, 2007), 141–42.

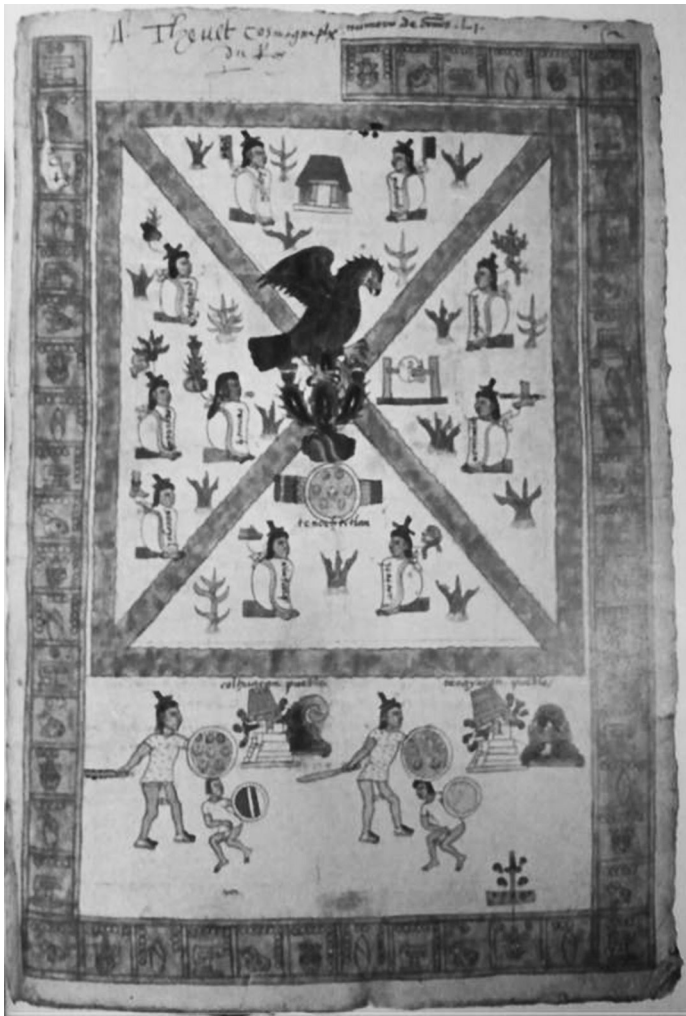


Figure 4: Tenochtitlan at the Center, from the Codex Mendoza

We should not assume that Tzeltal speakers don't understand right and left. They certainly do. They simply use different terminology to describe those spatial relationships. What Pinker didn't know was that the upslope/downslope spatial orientation was repeated in their concept of world directions. Upslope/downslope are not only the terms the Tzeltal use in-

stead of “left/right,” but are also used instead of “south/north.”<sup>12</sup> The Tzeltal conceive of the East/West axis as the critical direction for orientation. Upslope (left and south) and downslope (right and north) are simply the same terms they would use for anything else that is spatially oriented against the main reference (the sun in the case of the directions, or the human body in the case of the location of the spoon in the cup). They are not precisely terms for “north” or “south”, but for spatial orientation against a reference position.

David Stuart of the Peabody Museum at Harvard University analyzed two Maya glyphs and argued for their meaning as “right” and “left” by noting their visual associations with other glyphs typically given as “south” and “north.” He concludes: “As students of Maya cosmology have often noted, the sun’s path defines the principal axis of the universe, with its ‘right’ and ‘left’ determining the perpendicular axis that corresponds to our ‘north’ and ‘south.’ In Chamula and other Maya communities, the celestial ‘sides’ are perceived from the sun’s own perspective.”<sup>13</sup>

This idea is corroborated by a larger study of direction terms in various Mesoamerican languages. Nicholas A. Hopkins, visiting instructor at the Centro de Estudios Mayas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, and J. Kathryn Josserand, Research Associate, Pre-Columbian Art Research

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12. Nicholas A. Hopkins and J. Kathryn Josserand, “Directions and Partitions in Maya World View,” *Foundation for the Advancement of Mesoamerican Studies, Inc.* 2011, <http://www.famsi.org/research/hopkins/DirectionalPartitions.pdf>, 13. This paper is an expansion of a paper presented March 24, 2001 in the symposium “Four Corners of the Maya World,” 19<sup>th</sup> Maya Weekend, University Museum, University of Pennsylvania. The current publication is posthumous for Dr. Josserand. In it, they explain, “Some languages form the words for ‘north’ and ‘south’ on the basis of local geographical conditions.” (p. 13) They do not collect the Tzeltal terms for north and south. They do collect a ‘down-slope’ meaning for ‘north’ and ‘right-handed’ for Nahuatl, see p. 14.

13. David Stuart, “Glyphs for ‘Right’ and ‘Left’?” January, 2002, 4, available online at <http://www.mesoweb.com/stuart/notes/RightLeft.pdf>.

Institute, found a general agreement in vocabulary for east and west that was related to the path of the sun.<sup>14</sup> They noted: “Terms for ‘north’ and ‘south’ are much more elusive. First, there are far fewer reports of these terms. Second, there are no consistent patterns in the nomenclature. Many languages have no recorded terms for ‘north’ and ‘south’, even when ‘east’ and ‘west’ are noted.”<sup>15</sup> They concluded:

The extreme chaos of terms for ‘north’ and ‘south’ reinforces the idea that these “directions” are almost irrelevant. Directional orientation is based on the movements of the sun, east to west, and the other two “directions” are of lesser importance. How then, do we derive the system of four directions that is recorded in village barrios, regional states, and other matters? The solution seems to be, as Karen Bassie has argued, that ‘east’ and ‘west’ are not directions at all, but are broad quadrants of the sky centered on, but not limited to, the cardinal directions ‘east’ and ‘west’. ‘East’ is the entire section of the horizon where the sun rises during the year, from solstice to solstice and back again. This quadrant is represented in site layout by the E-group complexes found at Uaxactun and elsewhere. ‘West’ is the corresponding quadrant where the sun is observed to set. ‘North’ and ‘south’ are simply the quadrants that lie between these two, that lie ‘at the sides of the sky’, ‘to the right hand’ or ‘to the left’. That is, two defined quadrants imply two others, giving a total of four. The “four corners of the Maya world” are simply the limits of the east-west quadrants, and do not imply four cardinal directions.<sup>16</sup>

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14. Hopkins and Josserand, “Directions and Partitions,” 9–11.

15. Hopkins and Josserand, “Directions and Partitions,” 13.

16. Hopkins and Josserand, “Directions and Partitions,” 15–16.

Hopkins and Josserand report an interesting example of what happened when an informant was asked to give the word for “north.” The Tojolabal speaker (a Mayan language) did not provide a word, but rather a definition: “wa xkilatik ti b'a norte ta wa xkan to b'a surda jk'ab'tik b'a. . wa xmukxi ja k'ak'u'i (We are looking north when we stand with our left hand toward where the sun goes down.)”<sup>17</sup>

There was no “north” in the Mesoamerican system—only a spatial relationship to that side of the sun’s path. That is why the vocabulary varies so greatly. It wasn’t that Mesoamericans didn’t know where north was, they conceived it—and described it—entirely differently. It existed only as a quadrant on the right or left of the sun’s path: some Mesoamerican cultures called it “right” and some “left.”

It is both interesting and important to note that Mesoamericans were not the only peoples to use left/right rather than specific names for directions. William J. Hamblin, professor of History at Brigham Young University, notes:

The Hebrews, like most Semitic peoples, oriented themselves by facing east, toward the rising sun. Thus *east* in Hebrew was simply *front* (*qedem*), with *south* as *right* (*yamîn*), *north* as *left* (*šêmol*), and *west* as *rear* (*achôr*) or “sea” (*yam*). . . .

The Egyptians oriented themselves by facing south, toward the source of the Nile. “One of the terms for ‘south’ [in Egyptian] is also a term for ‘face’; the usual word for ‘north’ is probably related to a word which

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17. Hopkins and Josserand, “Directions and Partitions,” 14, periods as they appear in the original. This is prefaced with the explanation “The Tojolabal entries are clearly not lexical; the compiler of the dictionary, Carlos Lenkersdorf, is concerned with explaining to Tojolabal speakers the meaning of terms in Spanish (and vice versa) rather than simply listing lexical items.” (p. 13–14).

means the ‘back of the head.’” The word for *east* is the same as for *left*, and *west* is the same word as *right*.<sup>18</sup>

One need not assume any linguistic connection between the Middle Eastern and Mesoamerican languages to account for the similarities. Using the body as the directional model from an accepted focal point is easily seen as independent invention. For both Middle Eastern and Mesoamerican terminology, directional terms were created based upon a particular orientation of the body.

### So Where is Mesoamerican North?

Perhaps the most important indication of the difference between our modern Western perception of directions and that of the Mesoamerican cultures is our persistent desire to find north. It likely reflects our reliance on the compass pointing to north, but is buttressed by our familiarity with maps that conventionally place north at the top. Thus we understand where we are on a map when we can find north and place the map into its proper relationship with the land around us.

For the Mesoamericans, the question would be “where is east,” and the answer was determined by the sun. What was in the east could range from solstice to solstice, but it could also be rectified to the central point. Even though what might lie in the east (or on the north) could fall into a quadrant emanating from the center point, it could also be standardized into the average between the two. When Mesoamerican cities were built, there was often an east-west road also often intersected by a perpendicular north-south road. A road may be built only in one place, and the center point of the range of what was east or on the north was used.

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18. William J. Hamblin, “Directions in Hebrew, Egyptian, and Nephite Language,” in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1992), 183.



This is easily demonstrated in one of the early features of many Mesoamerican cities. It was a complex that has been called an E Group. Francisco Estrada-Belli, Visiting Assistant Professor at Boston University (specializing in Mesoamerican archaeology), describes this type of construction: “E-Groups are generally formed by a western pyramid with radial stairways to the west and an elongated platform with one or three small substructures on the east side of the plaza. Their name is derived from Group E of Uaxactun, which was the first of this type to be recognized. Triadic Groups are normally situated on an elevated platform and are formed by a main pyramidal temple flanked by two smaller ones facing each other.”<sup>19</sup> This platform was used as a marker for the passage of the sun along the horizon.<sup>20</sup> Importantly, there is a central pyramid in the group. Thus while Mesoamericans might comprehend a quadrant of the sky as east, they could—and did—use what we would see as cardinal directions to lay out sites according to those center points of the quadrant.

The important concept for understanding directions in the Book of Mormon is that although Mesoamerican cultures could certainly find and use our cardinal points, their descriptions of personal orientation were given against the most obviously available spatial referent, the sun. That means that when

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19. Francisco Estrada-Belli, *The First Maya Civilization: Ritual and Power Before the Classic Period* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 67.

20. Susan Toby Evans, *Ancient Mexico and Central America: Archaeology and Culture History* (London and New York: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 2004), 237. However, Estrada-Belli, *The First Maya Civilization*, 67 notes: “The most common orientation of the Triadic Groups is west-facing, although other cardinal orientations are not uncommon, especially at sites where several Triadic Groups are present.” Estrada-Belli also suggests: “While in the sample of Lowland E-Groups analyzed . . . the equinoctial and solstitial target points were generally found not to be the norm, the targeted positions did mark specific 20-day intervals (or multiples of) in relation to the sun’s passage to the zenith, thus underscoring the paramount importance of this solar phenomenon in providing meaningful time-markers in the calendar.” (p. 78)

describing the orientation of actions in the Book of Mormon, they would be referencing directions according to the location of the sun which traveled along the horizon, rather than the fixed conceptual center point of its travel.

### Book of Mormon Directions in Translation

It is worth emphasizing that our Book of Mormon is the result of Joseph Smith's translation. The nature of that translation has been the subject of discussion among faithful scholars, with opinions ranging from Brigham H. Roberts's declaration that Joseph "expressed [the translation] in such language as the Prophet could command"<sup>21</sup> to Royal Skousen's understanding that Joseph Smith precisely read a translation that had already been done and which appeared in some manner when using the interpreters.<sup>22</sup> My own analysis of the available data is more in line with Roberts.<sup>23</sup>

In the case of Book of Mormon directions, I suggest that Joseph used common vocabulary to express the Book of Mormon system of spatial orientation and that the perception of cardinal directions in the text is the result of the translation rather than

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21. Brigham H. Roberts, *New Witnesses for God*, 3 vols. (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1909), 2:116, brackets mine.

22. Royal Skousen, "Translating the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited*, edited by Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997), 64–65. A revised version is Royal Skousen, "How Joseph Smith Translated the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7/1 (1998): 24. Skousen's understanding is best represented by his definition of "tight control" in these documents: "Joseph Smith saw specific words written out in English and read them off to the scribe—the accuracy of the resulting text depending on the carefulness of Joseph and his scribe."

23. Brant A. Gardner, *The Gift and Power: Translating the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011), 183–95, 227–47.

the plate text.<sup>24</sup> I also suggest that there are sufficient hints in the text to allow a reconstruction of that plate text system.

Although we certainly find the words north, south, east, and west in the Book of Mormon, there is an important and very specific phrase that I believe replicates the essential Mesoamerican directional system: “From the east to the west.” Against the background of Mesoamerican directions, it is a reasonable initial hypothesis that this phrase represents plate

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24. Stoddard, “‘From the East to the West Sea’ An Analysis of John L. Sorenson’s Book of Mormon Directional Statements,” is adamant that Book of Mormon directions conform to something similar to our western cardinal directions:

1. The directional system of the Nephites has *six* Nephite cardinal directions: north, northward, south, southward, east, and west.
2. “Northward” reflects the general direction of northwest rather than northeast. “Northward” could be either a northwest or a northeast direction by its very nature, but northwest is the correct orientation from an Isthmus of Tehuantepec perspective. Or, as Noah Webster in his 1828 dictionary says about “northward” as an adjective, as in land *northward*: “Being towards the north, or nearer to the north than to the east and west points.”
3. “Southward” reflects the general direction of southeast rather than southwest. “Southward” could be either a southeast or a southwest direction by its very nature, but southeast is the correct orientation from an Isthmus of Tehuantepec perspective. Interestingly, Noah Webster does not show an adjectival definition for “southward” in his 1828 dictionary.
4. North, south, east, and west are the directions that readers of the twenty-first century are accustomed to based on compass bearings. When these cardinal directions are viewed from the perspective of a horizontally positioned hourglass that is placed over a map of Mesoamerica, they coincide with the same four cardinal directions employed by Book of Mormon readers of the twenty-first century.

The certainty of these declarations comes from dual assumptions. The first is that the translation must necessarily represent the precise plate meaning that is found in the English words. The second is that the application of modern meaning may therefore accurately interpret textual information. Neither of these propositions can be supported by the data that I have reviewed.

Stoddard’s ideas are influenced by Joseph Lovell Allen and Blake Joseph Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 2nd ed. (Orem, UT: Book of Mormon Tours and Research Institute, 2008), 360–61.

text terms that indicated the path of the sun. This phrase implying solar movement occurs six times.<sup>25</sup>

There is a single occurrence of “from the west to the east” in 3 Nephi 1:17 and three related phrases mentioning a sea:

Helaman 3:8 “from the sea west to the sea east”

Helaman 4:7 “from the west sea, even unto the east”

Helaman 11:20 “from the sea west to the sea east”

Importantly, all but one of these (Helaman 4:7) come in the context of an expression of the “whole earth”:

And they began to know that the Son of God must shortly appear; yea, in fine, all the people upon the face of the whole earth from the west to the east, both in the land north and in the land south, were so exceedingly astonished that they fell to the earth. (3 Nephi 1:17)

And it came to pass that they did multiply and spread, and did go forth from the land southward to the land northward, and did spread insomuch that they began to cover the face of the whole earth, from the sea south to the sea north, from the sea west to the sea east. (Helaman 3:8)

And thus it did come to pass that the people of Nephi began to prosper again in the land, and began to build up their waste places, and began to multiply and spread, even until they did cover the whole face of the land, both on the northward and on the southward, from the sea west to the sea east. (Helaman 11:20)

Helaman 4:7 has a different context that appears to describe an intended direction rather than a generalization: “And there they did fortify against the Lamanites, from the west sea,

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25. Alma 22:27, 29, 32, 33; 50:8; 3 Nephi 20:13. Instances compiled using an electronic search for the terms ‘east’ and ‘west’ and compiling only those with this particular configuration.

even unto the east; it being a day's journey for a Nephite, on the line which they had fortified and stationed their armies to defend their north country." This may be a counter-indication, or it may be a requirement of the more specific starting point of the sea west rather than the indeterminate "unto the east" which does not specify the ending point.<sup>26</sup>

Although the "from-to" construction implies movement, most of the cases of "from the west to the east" do not come in connection with any movement but rather with descriptions of "the face of the whole earth." With only three examples it is a weak hypothesis, but I suggest that there was a literary reversal used in describing the "whole earth." I believe that by reversing the known path of the sun, it placed "the face of the whole earth" firmly in the metaphorical rather than the physical realm.<sup>27</sup>

In contrast to the movement implied when using the phrase "from the east to the west," the common usage for the other two "directions" is "on the north/on the south."<sup>28</sup> There are no instances of "from the north to the south" or "from the south to the north," except in Helaman 3:8, dealing with the whole earth

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26. Another possible counter-indication is 3 Nephi 20:13: "And then shall the remnants, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them." This verse combines the correct order of east to west with "the face of the earth." However, this is not a "*from the east to the west*." There is a difference in the phrase, and I am suggesting that it is the presence of the from-to construction that is important.

27. The phrase "on the east and on the west" occurs in Mosiah 27:6, but this is also in the context of the "face of the earth." When it occurs in 22:27, it is a description of "all the regions round about." Helaman 1:31 uses "on the east, nor on the west" as part of a description of Lamanites who were surrounded. The only context that is not clearly related to "all" or being surrounded, is Alma 50:34: "And it came to pass that they did not head them until they had come to the borders of the land Desolation; and there they did head them, by the narrow pass which led by the sea into the land northward, yea, by the sea, on the west and on the east."

28. Alma 22:29, 33; 46:17; 3 Nephi 6:2.

rather than directions. For example, Alma 46:17: “And it came to pass that when he had poured out his soul to God, he named all the land which was south of the land Desolation, yea, and in fine, all the land, both *on the north* and *on the south*—A chosen land, and the land of liberty.”<sup>29</sup> Hopkins and Josserand report that many of the languages they surveyed use terms such as *on the left*, or *on the right* to designate south and north.<sup>30</sup> Where the Mesoamerican cultures used terms such as *on the right/ on the left* or some other spatial indicator (such as the *upslope/ downslope* of the Tzeltal) the Book of Mormon translation supplies the words *north/south*. Although the specific word comes from Joseph’s western understanding, the words are couched in phrases that replicate the functional relationships of the Mesoamerican system.

The Book of Mormon vocabulary of spatial orientation also replicates the four quarters assigned to east-west and the sides of the sky we know as north and south. In Mosiah 27:6 we find: “And there began to be much peace again in the land; and the people began to be very numerous, and began to scatter abroad upon the face of the earth, yea, on the north and on the south, on the east and on the west, building large cities and villages in all quarters of the land.”<sup>31</sup> Of course, this is not definitively a translation from the plate text because we also find quarters

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29. The Book of Mormon can also use *on the east* or *on the west* as terms of spatial orientation rather than direction:

Therefore when Zerahemnah saw the men of Lehi **on the east** of the river Sidon, and the armies of Moroni **on the west** of the river Sidon, that they were encircled about by the Nephites, they were struck with terror. (Alma 43:53).

And now, behold, the Lamanites could not retreat either way, neither **on the north**, nor **on the south**, nor **on the east**, nor **on the west**, for they were surrounded on every hand by the Nephites. (Helaman 1:31)

30. Hopkins and Josserand, “Directions and Partitions,” 13–14.

31. This is the only verse indicating the four quarters. However, a phrase indicating that something is “in” a quarter occurs more frequently. See Alma 43:26; 52:10; 56:1; 58:30; 58:35; Ether 2:5; 14:15.

of the land in the Bible and it is always possible that the term was borrowed from biblical usage.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, it fits with the entire system, even if it cannot be probatory of the source of the concept.<sup>33</sup>

This conception of the Nephite usage of directional terms helps explain a passage that would otherwise be difficult. The flight of the Lamanite/Amlicite army is described in Alma 2:35–37:

And it came to pass that when they had all crossed the river Sidon that the Lamanites and the Amlicites began to flee before them, notwithstanding they were so numerous that they could not be numbered.

And they fled before the Nephites towards the wilderness **which was west and north**, away beyond the borders of the land; and the Nephites did pursue them with their might, and did slay them.

Yea, they were met on every hand, and slain and driven, until they were scattered **on the west, and on the north**, until they had reached the wilderness, which was called Hermounts; and it was that part of the wilderness which was infested by wild and ravenous beasts.

In this description, a fleeing army heads both west and north. Because we see “northward” with some frequency in the Book of Mormon, it could have been used to indicate travel

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32. Genesis 19:4; Numbers 34:3; Joshua 15:5; 18:14–15; Isaiah 47:15; 56:11; Mark 1:45.

33. Hopkins and Josserand, “Directions and Partitions,” 16: “This concept of quadrants survives even where the directional terms have been lost. In Tenejapa Tzeltal, directional orientation has shifted to *ta alan*, ‘downhill’ (north) versus *ta ajk’ol* ‘uphill’ (south). However, these are conceived of as quadrants, separated and opposed to the other quadrants (east and west), both called *ta jejch* ‘transverse’, ‘to the side’.”

to the northwest.<sup>34</sup> Instead, the text opts for travel both north and west. This is conceptually difficult in the plus style (+) cardinal directions, but quite understandable if the x-style quadrants are meant. In that case, they would simply wander back and forth over the conceptual line dividing the west from the northern quarter.<sup>35</sup>

Just as with the description given by the Tojolabal speaker, if one were to stand with their left hand to the sun's setting during the summer solstice, one would be looking "north," and that "north" corresponds quite nicely to the north that Sorenson suggested. No skewing of north 60 degrees to the west is required. However, it should be noted that it would be a misrepresentation of Nephite directions to use north to indicate only the direction based upon the summer solstice. For the Nephites, "north" would indicate anything to that side of the sun's path.

An inherent misperception of any ancient directional system occurs simply by our attempts to represent them on a map. Our maps take a bird's-eye view, and often literally a satellite's view of the land we are interested in. Almost any map we use to describe the Book of Mormon geography assumes an understanding of an area of land much larger than the ancients would have comprehended. Their world was limited to what they could see, travel to, or have described to them.<sup>36</sup> No re-

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34. Northward, eastward, and southward are all used as directions of travel. There is no occurrence of travel westward, but there is no reason to assume that it wasn't a possible lexical item. As directions of travel: northward—Alma 52:23; 56:36; 63:6; southward—Alma 17:1; Ether 15:10; eastward—1 Nephi 17:1; Ether 9:3; 14:26.

35. Lawrence L. Poulsen, "The War with the Amlicites," *Book of Mormon Geography* <http://www.poulsenll.org/bom/amlicites.html>, accessed April 2011.

36. Alan Jones, a friend recently returned from a mission in the Philippines, described a problem encountered when attempting to explain maps to a Filipino. They had no concept of what it meant and it had to be explained to them that they were seeing as if they were a bird flying above the land. The very concept of our maps was foreign to them.



maining map created by any Mesoamerican people has any of the details of our modern maps. They are spatially inaccurate and locate landmarks without precise distance interrelationships. The maps place the reader at the center and describe the conceptual bounds of the world in distances that might be a day or two of travel.<sup>37</sup>

Combined with the differences in terminology and cultural perceptions, it is little wonder that the Book of Mormon directions appear difficult fit onto a modern map. That inherent difficulty becomes even greater when we insist upon reading literal geographic statements where the text does not intend a literal reading. That is the issue that clouds our understanding of the Nephite seas.

### Where are the Nephite Sea East and Sea West?<sup>38</sup>

Another possible contraindication for Sorenson's geographic correlation is the relationship of that geography to surrounding seas. Helaman 3:8 clearly mentions four seas: "And it came to pass that they did multiply and spread, and did go forth from the land southward to the land northward, and did spread insomuch that they began to cover the face of the whole earth, from the **sea south** to the **sea north**, from the **sea west** to the **sea east**." Some Book of Mormon geographers therefore insist on identifying four surrounding bodies of water.<sup>39</sup> However, John E. Clark notes of these seas:

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37. Some of this information is presented in Lawrence L. Poulsen, "Book of Mormon Geography," paper presented August 2008 at the Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research Conference. <http://www.fairlds.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/2008-Larry-Poulsen.pdf>, 9.

38. Many of the concepts presented in this section were worked out in conversation with Lawrence Poulsen, for whose counsel I am grateful.

39. V. Garth Norman, *Book of Mormon Geography—Mesoamerican Historic Geography*, third edition (ARCON/Ancient America Foundation, 2008). A graphic of the map is available online at: V. Garth Norman, "The Definitive Mesoamerican Book of Mormon Lands Map." <http://www.ancientamerica>.

I am convinced that the reference to a north sea and a south sea is devoid of any concrete geographical content. All specific references or allusions to Book of Mormon seas are only to the east and west seas. Any geography that tries to accommodate a north and south sea, I think, is doomed to fail. But we cannot dismiss the reference to these seas out of hand. If they are metaphorical, what was the metaphor?

Figure [5] shows a conceptualization of Nephite lands. The city of Zarahemla and the lands immediately surrounding it were the “center” (Helaman 1:24–27) or “heart” (Alma 60:19; Helaman 1:18) of the land. The surrounding lands, to the various wildernesses, were considered quarters of the land. A Bountiful quarter (Alma 52:10, 13; 53:8; 58:35) and a Manti quarter (43:26; 56:1–2, 9; 58:30) are mentioned. Moroni was another “part” of the land (Alma 59:6). We lack information on the eastern quarter; my designation of “Melek” is merely my best guess.

We have seen that the Nephite lands were surrounded by wilderness on every side. And, conceptually, beyond each wilderness lay a sea to the south, north, west, and east. Thus the land was conceived as surrounded by seas or floating on one large sea. The land was divided into a center and four quarters. Each quarter duplicated the others. The quartering of the land was not the way most of us would do it, by making a cross following the cardinal directions, but was a cross as shown in figure [3]. Such a conception of

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org/library/media/HTML/7hvlmli5/book%20of%20mormon%20map.htm, accessed November 16, 2012. Interestingly, Norman has the sea north and the sea east as the Gulf of Mexico. See also E. L. Peay, *The Lands of Zarahemla: Nephi's Land of Promise*, 2 vols. (Provo, UT: Cedar Fort, 1994), 2:24, has a sea west, east, and south, but no listing for a sea north.

the world would not be out of place in the Middle East at the time of Lehi; and it is remarkably close to the Mesoamerican view of their world. . . The main point is that the reference to north and south seas fits nicely into the Mesoamerican scene as part of a metaphor for the whole earth and was probably used in a metaphorical sense in the Book of Mormon.<sup>40</sup>



Figure 5

Clark's proposal that the north and south seas are metaphorical rather than physical finds an interesting parallel in the metaphorical use of the phrase "the other side of the sea" in various Maya documents. Frauke Sachse of the University of

40. John E. Clark, "Revisiting 'A Key for evaluating Nephite Geographies,'" *Mormon Studies Review* 23/1 (2011): 41 [13–43].

Bonn, and Allen J. Christenson of Brigham Young University, note that it is a metaphor that “remains hitherto largely unrecognized because a presumed literalness has obscured its metaphorical interpretation.”<sup>41</sup> They conclude by noting that “the phrase ‘the other side of the sea’ in the Colonial sources is only a metaphor for a place of origin in the sense of creation and not departure, and thus does not necessarily refer to an actual location that could be found on any map.”<sup>42</sup> It is perhaps not coincidental that the metaphorical meaning that Clark suggests for the sea north and sea south is also associated with a conceptual organization of the world.

As Hopkins and Josserand worked through the vocabulary terms used for east and west, they presented their reconstruction of what the Classic Maya terms might have been. For east and west they reconstruct both the words and the plausible original meanings: “\*’el-ab k’in ‘the front porch of the house of the Sun (where the Sun exists),’ and \*’och-ib k’in ‘the door of the house of the Sun (where the Sun enters).’”<sup>43</sup> They argue that these proto-forms may be traced to as early as 2000 BC.<sup>44</sup>

In a world conceptually surrounded by seas, the house of the sun would lie across the sea, or on “the other side of the sea.” Thus Sachse and Christenson explain: “We understand that in the Maya world view all creation involves the underlying concept of birth from a primordial sea in darkness. The world came into being because the earth and the mountains arose from the sea and the sky was lifted up from the water.

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41. Frauke Sachse and Allen J. Christenson, “Tulan and the Other Side of the Sea: Unraveling a Metaphorical Concept from Colonial Guatemalan Highland Sources,” *Mesoweb Publications*, <http://www.mesoweb.com/articles/tulan/Tulan.pdf>, 1–2.

42. Sachse and Christenson, “Tulan and the Other Side,” 25–26.

43. Hopkins and Josserand, “Directions and Partitions,” 7–8. The \* at the beginning of the word indicates that it is a reconstruction of an early form and is not actually found in that form in the later data.

44. Hopkins and Josserand, “Directions and Partitions,” 8.

Creation thus involves ‘dawning.’”<sup>45</sup> The “other side of the sea” refers metaphorically to an origin in the conceptual east sea, the place of dawning and creation. Thus there was a very strong cultural preference for having a sea east and the parallel sea west. The question is how that conceptual world might have related to the physical seas that the Book of Mormon text requires.

In contrast with the metaphorical meanings for sea north and sea south, and the metaphorical meaning associated with the east sea, the Book of Mormon text clearly supports the physical presence of a sea east. Sorenson’s correlation has the expected sea east, but applies that designation to the Gulf of Mexico. Anyone examining a modern map perceives the Gulf of Mexico to be north of the lands surrounding the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. How can this body of water in the north be the sea east? In Sorenson’s correlation, this is part of the skewing of directions. I suggest that no skewing is necessary, only the application of the principles of Mesoamerican directions.

The first important part of the explanation is the Mesoamerican concept of the center. Any directions given in the Book of Mormon necessarily related to some location that is conceptually the center of the world for those who live there. Directions related to a different center might result in different locations being placed in the direction quadrants. We can see this same principle even in our modern directional system. We may describe Denver as being in the east when we are located in Salt Lake City, but in the west when we are located in St. Louis. What is in the east (or west) depends upon the vantage point from which we view the direction. I propose that the term “sea east” is a description rather than a name, and that two different bodies of water might have been considered the sea east based upon the different center points from which they are described.

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45. Sachse and Christenson, “Tulan and the Other Side,” 2.

The original Nephite center point was not Zarahemla, but rather the City of Nephi. In Sorenson's correlation, we have the highland valley of Guatemala as a plausible land of Nephi. From that center, the east sea would be right where several Book of Mormon geographers suggest; off the coast of modern Belize.<sup>46</sup> From that original center point, the Nephites would then have had the option of calling the Pacific either the sea west or sea south, since it creates the coastline that would be both south and west of the land of Nephi. Because the definition of Mesoamerican direction system had the sun setting in the sea west, it is logical that they would have selected that designation for what we know as the Pacific Ocean. The interesting combination of the sea west being both west and south helps explain Alma 53:22: "And now it came to pass that Helaman did march at the head of his two thousand stripling soldiers, to the support of the people in the borders of the land on the south by the west sea." The land south of Zarahemla bordered the west sea, not a south sea even though there was a coastline on the south.

While there is a reference to a sea east from the land of Nephi, most references to the sea east come from the time when directions were given in relation to the City of Bountiful, not the

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46. The verse used to establish this correlation is Alma 22:27, which provides a description of the lands, but from the center point of a Lamanite king in the land of Nephi. Some of those making this correlation based on that passage are: Joseph L. Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon* (Orem, UT: S.A. Publishers, 1989), 195; Allen and Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 393; Norman, *Book of Mormon Geography—Mesoamerican Historic Geography* Lawrence L. Poulsen, "Lawrence Poulsen's Book of Mormon Geography," <http://www.poulsenll.org/bom/index.html>. While the verse is found in the book of Alma where the action focuses on Zarahemla as the center of Nephite culture, Alma 22:27 is given as part of the missionary journey to the land of Nephi and describes geography from that vantage point. See also Stephen L. Carr, "A Summary of Several Theories of Book of Mormon Lands in Mesoamerica," <http://www.bmaf.org/node/108>. Four of the five maps place the sea east off the coast of Belize.

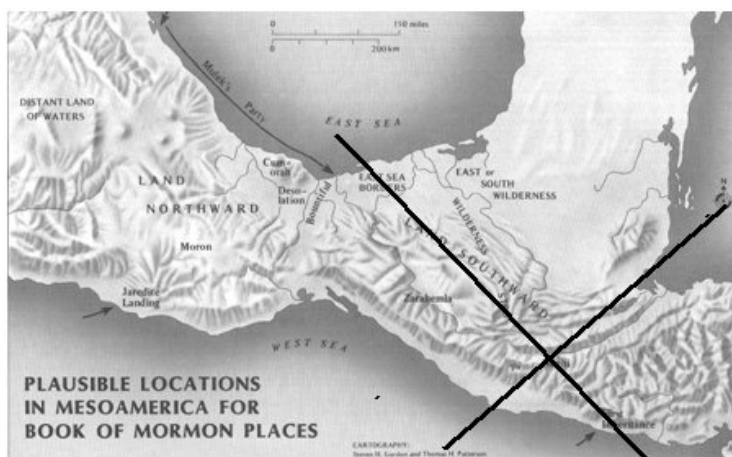


Figure 6: Directions Centering on Nephi

City of Nephi or even the City of Zarahemla.<sup>47</sup> Using Sorenson's correlation, Bountiful would be located at the northern side of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. With that location as the center point, the Gulf of Mexico lies both on the north and on the east. Just as the cultural necessity of the sun rising across a sea east and setting in the sea west allowed the Nephites to define a sea west from the center point of the City of Nephi, that same cultural preference would naturally select sea east as the appropriate designation of that major body of water. No skewing of directions is necessary to see the Gulf of Mexico as the sea east based on the perspective of Bountiful as the center. Regardless of the body of water, the sea east existed as a description that was related to the cosmological understanding of the east as a place of creation and of the rising/birth of the sun. In the Book of Mormon, it is plausible that two different bodies of water served that function and were designated (not named) sea east to conform to the cosmological principle.

47. **Nephi as the center:** Alma 22:27

**Bountiful as the center:** Alma 22:32–33; 27:22; 50:34; 52:13; Helaman 4:6–7.

There are two other references I am not listing because the east sea occurs in a context that reads better as a metaphor for 'the whole world': Helaman 3:8; 11:20.

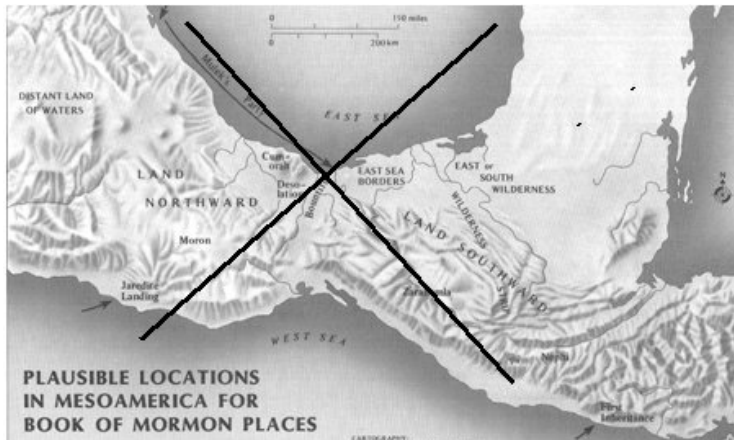


Figure 7: Directions Centering on Bountiful

## The Land Northward and Land Southward

There is another feature of the Book of Mormon that may be plausibly related to an underlying Mesoamerican directional system. The vast majority of the times we see either the word *northward* or *southward* in the Book of Mormon, they are descriptive of a place, not of movement. They refer to the *land northward* and the *land southward*.<sup>48</sup> The term *northward* only appears three times as a description of motion and *southward* only twice.<sup>49</sup> *Eastward* oc-

48. **Land northward:** Omni 1:22, Alma 22:30–33, 46:22; 50:11, 29, 31, 33–34; 51:30; 52:2, 9; 63:4–5, 7, 9–10; Helaman 3:3, 9–11; 6:6; 7:1–2, 11:20; 3 Nephi 3:24; 4:23; 6:2; 8:12; Mormon 2:29.

**Land southward:** Alma 22:31, 32; Helaman 3:8; 4:8; 5:16; 3 Nephi 3:24; 6:2; 8:11; Mormon 1:6; 2:29; 3:5; 8:2; Ether 9:31–32; 10:19, 21.

Another verse may represent the metaphorical ‘whole world.’ “And thus it did come to pass that the people of Nephi began to prosper again in the land, and began to build up their waste places, and began to multiply and spread, even until they did cover the whole face of the land, both on the northward and on the southward, from the sea west to the sea east.” (Hel. 11:20). In this case, northward and southward are locations, even though not stated as lands. I hypothesize that this constitutes a generic reference rather than a directional one.

49. **Northward motion:** Alma 63:6; Mormon 2:20, Ether 1:42 (in the Old World). **Southward motion:** Alma 17:1; Ether 15:10.



curs three times, always as an indication of direction of travel, and *westward* does not occur at all.<sup>50</sup>

The phrases ‘land northward/land southward’ can parallel the functions of the ‘north/south’ spatial orientation markers, but they are textually distinct from them. We find in 3 Nephi 6:2 “And it came to pass that they had not eaten up all their provisions; therefore they did take with them all that they had not devoured, of all their grain of every kind, and their gold, and their silver, and all their precious things, and they did return to their own lands and their possessions, both *on the north and on the south, both on the land northward and on the land southward.*” There is no reason to indicate the spatial orientation twice, and the reference here clearly separates the ‘land’ from the spatial orientation.<sup>51</sup>

The two lands conceptually meet along a dividing line: “Thus the land on the northward was called Desolation, and the land on the southward was called Bountiful, it being the wilderness which is filled with all manner of wild animals of every kind, a part of which had come from the land northward for food” (Alma 22:31). When the land northward has a name, it is Desolation. When the land southward has a name, it is Bountiful. They are adjacent lands. *Land northward* and

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50. **Eastward motion:** 1 Nephi 17:1; Ether 9:3, 14:26.

51. John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting*, 41–42, notes the occurrences of northward/southward, but always considers them as indicators of directions rather than as labels as I am suggesting:

A semantic point from the Book of Mormon is important. The Book of Mormon usually refers to the “land northward” and “land southward,” rarely to the “land north” or “land south.” (The latter terms occur only seven times; *-ward* terms appear 47 times.) The suffix *ward*, of course, signifies “tending or leading toward.” Gage correctly thought of Guatemala as “southward” from Mexico City, even though technically it was more nearly east. Similarly, if you board a plane in Los Angeles for Caracas, Venezuela, do you not mentally consider your direction southward? After all, your destination is South America; but actually you’ll end up traveling more east than south. Still, *southward* is correct.

Sorenson appears to want to use *-ward* as a specific direction rather than as an indicator of direction of travel, or as a name.

*Desolation* are interchangeable labels, as are *land southward* and *Bountiful*.

The obvious conceptual inversion of *Desolation/Bountiful* suggests that there is another aspect of Mesoamerican direction systems in play. Prudence M. Rice indicates that each of the four conceptual directions had other attributes:

Among the lowland Maya, this solar basis for naming directions is evident by incorporating, *k'in* 'sun', into the term. East (*lak'in*) was associated with sunrise, birth, and the color red (*chak*), while West (*chik'in*, *ochk'in*) was associated with sunset, death, and the color black (*ek'*). By contrast, *xaman* (North) was associated with "up" (as in the sun at zenith), the Sun God's "right" side on his journey, heavens, the number 13, the place of ancestors, and the color white (*sak*). *Nojol* (South) was associated with "down" or the sun's nadir, the sun's "left," the Underworld, the number 9, night ("death" of the sun and its Underworld journey back to the east), and the color Yellow (*k'an*).<sup>52</sup>

Although the association between "north" and "right" is common, it was not universal. David Stuart indicates:

The "south" glyph is widely thought to read *nohol*, the word for "south" in the Yucatecan language, attested also in Chontal and Cholti. The -lo suffix on a "south" glyph written in Naj Tunich cave offers good support for this reading. . . The root of the term is *noh*, which has the related meanings of "large, great," "principal," or "right-side". . . .

The NOH reading seems fitting in the context of the "hand" terms on Tikal's Marcador. The first glyph of the pair would simply read NOH-K'AB, a wide-

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52. Rice, *Maya Political Science*, 20.

spread and familiar term in Mayan languages for “right hand.”<sup>53</sup>

In the case Stuart describes, the orientation that leads to the terms for “north” and “south” is based on facing the sun rather than from the perspective of the sun.

It appears that there were two possible methods of deriving a term for “north” or “south,” both based on the same principle, but from either facing the sun or from the sun’s perspective. In that light Hopkins and Josserand note the data from the later Mexico, who were Nahuatl speakers: “While Classical Nahuatl has a mythological reference to the ‘place of Death’ as the base of ‘north’, one variety of modern Nahuatl makes an association of ‘south’ (for which no term is recorded) as ‘sinister, left-handed’, and regards ‘north’ as positive and right-handed [while calling it ‘down-slope’].”<sup>54</sup> As with the data for Mayan languages, the Nahuatl languages also demonstrate a reversal of the “handedness” of north and south.

There are strong indications that there was a similar bad/good perception about left/right (and therefore north/south which shared those terms) among the Classic Maya as there was in the Classical Nahuatl. Objects to the left of the viewer are consistently of lower status than those on the right.<sup>55</sup> Maya epigraphers Stephen Houston, David Stuart, and Karl Taube note: “Consistently the right hand is ‘straight, correct large’ (*no* or *to* in Ch’olti’) or ‘fine, pure’ (*batz’i k’ob* in Colonial Tzotzil) and *wikiaq’ab*, ‘decorated, adorned’ in K’iche’, while the left hand is not quite obedient and thus, as in Colonial Yucatek, ‘ill

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53. Stuart, “Glyphs for ‘Right’ and ‘Left’?”, 2.

54. Hopkins and Josserand, “Directions and Partitions,” 14.

55. Stephen Houston, David Stuart, and Karl Taube, *The Memory of Bones. Body, Being, and Experience among the Classic Maya* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 29.

behaved, graceless' (*tz'ik*) or 'clumsy like a cloven hoof' (*tz'itz'*), and in K'iche', *moxq'ab*, 'crazy hand'."<sup>56</sup>

In a spatial relation system that uses the right/left hand designation for the terms we call south and north, it is not surprising at all that the Nephites used a word for 'left hand/north' that would have a pejorative association. That was mirrored by the favorable association of 'right hand/south.' That the land northward was also associated with a "dead" Jaredite culture simply vindicated the pejorative association. This gives us a very simple explanation for why the land northward is Desolation and land southward is Bountiful. The labels replicate the cultural perception of the spatial relationships based upon one facing the rising sun (and indicate that the Nephite preference was to associate left/north similar to the Mayan languages of Yukatek,<sup>57</sup> Chontal, and Cholti).

## Conclusion

The most serious contraindication for Sorenson's correlation between Mesoamerica and the Book of Mormon has been his apparent shifting of north some 60 degrees to the west. The quality of the correlations with the rest of the geography and cultural data suggest that we look to Mesoamerica to see if the cultural data from the region in which the Book of Mormon took place (according to this correlation) might provide an understanding of what has come to be called "Nephite North" (though it is not a term Sorenson used<sup>58</sup>). The combination of the Mesoamerican center and the perception of the quadrants

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56. Houston et al., *Memory of Bones*, 30.

57. Yukatek is the more modern spelling and Yucatec the more traditional. Both terms appear depending upon the preference of the author. I have left the spelling as in the original citations.

58. Sorenson, "Viva Zapato! Hurray for the Shoe!," 305: "The concept 'Nephite north' is not mine, consequently it is not appropriate on a map representing my views."

as wedges emanating from that center explain how the Book of Mormon “north” might include a region that our cultural predisposition for cardinal directions would not recognize. Combined with the shifting center points from which directions or spatial relationships may be discussed, we have a culturally appropriate understanding the underlying plate text directions that yielded the English translations of north, south, east, and west. In addition to explaining the spatial terms, it also provides a cultural underpinning for why the land northward was Desolation and the land southward Bountiful. Sorenson’s geographic correlation not only remains the best supported, but what has been a directional conundrum actually provides further indication that the plate text was written in a region steeped in the Mesoamerican understanding of spatial orientation.

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# NEPHITE INSIGHTS INTO ISRAELITE WORSHIP PRACTICES BEFORE THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

A. Keith Thompson

*Abstract: General historical consensus holds that synagogues originated before the destruction of the Second Temple in AD 70, and therefore probably originated during the Babylonian captivity. The suggestion in Philo and Josephus that synagogues may have originated during the exodus was discredited by some historians in the 17th century, yet the Book of Mormon speaks of synagogues, sanctuaries, and places of worship in a manner which suggests that Lehi and his party brought some form of synagogal worship with them when they left Jerusalem around 600 BC. This essay revisits the most up to date scholarship regarding the origin of the synagogue and suggests that the Book of Mormon record provides ample reason to look for the origins of the synagogue much earlier than has become the academic custom.*

## Introduction

In his seminal historiographical review of American culture, David Hackett Fischer has observed that emigrants are often more loyal to the folkways of their motherland than those left behind.<sup>1</sup> By retaining their old speech ways, their building ways, their family ways, their marriage ways, their gender

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1. D. H. Fischer, *Albion's Seed* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). Brian Barry has also observed "that diasporas are liable to be culturally conservative, clinging to ways of behaving that have been abandoned in their countries of origin, Brian Barry, *Culture and Equality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 57.

ways, their sex ways, their child-rearing ways, their naming ways, their age ways, their death ways, their religious ways, and so forth,<sup>2</sup> those striking out in a new world retain their identity and sense of well being in part through loyalty to their home country culture. Indeed Fischer suggests that “the four large waves of English-speaking immigrants”<sup>3</sup> who came to “the present area of the United States . . . from 1629 to 1775”<sup>4</sup> in many respects preserved their cultural folkways more faithfully than those left behind. Certainly, their cultures were also changed,<sup>5</sup> but in what became the United States, speech patterns,<sup>6</sup> intellectual obsessions,<sup>7</sup> and varieties of religious belief<sup>8</sup> “persisted long after they had been forgotten in the mother country”<sup>9</sup> and “long after England had moved beyond them.”<sup>10</sup>

Can Fischer’s new approach to historical research assist our understanding of Israelite worship practices before the Babylonian captivity? The questions about when synagogal worship began in Judaism are legend. Is it possible that the Nephite record can shed light upon that vexed question because the Nephites more faithfully preserved pre-exilic worship practices than did the captives in Babylon whose circumstances forced them to adapt more quickly and completely? Fischer says he has sought “a new answer to an old problem about the relationship between the past and the present.”<sup>11</sup> “[E]very period of the past, when understood in its own terms, is immediate to the present.”<sup>12</sup> His effort was to write a cultural history that braided

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2. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 8–9.

3. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 6.

4. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*.

5. For example, Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 262–63.

6. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 259–60.

7. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 803.

8. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 117.

9. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, 803.

10. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*.

11. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*, x.

12. Fischer, *Albion’s Seed*.



together pure historical narrative and the cultural values and individual purposes which drove events in the past.<sup>13</sup> Fischer is modest, but essentially he suggests that cultural historiography is what Thomas Kuhn and Michael Foucault might have called a thought revolution.<sup>14</sup> It requires a paradigm shift to splice all manner of culture into traditional historical narrative. But the resulting picture is much more faithful to the reality than were the simpler purely narrative approaches to history in the past.

### Origins of the Synagogue

General historical consensus acknowledges that synagogues originated before the destruction of the Second Temple in AD 70 and therefore during the Babylonian captivity when faithful Jews could no longer worship at their Temple in Jerusalem.<sup>15</sup> However, archaeological remains of synagogues have been found in Egypt dating to the 3rd century BC and near Jericho during the Hasmonean era in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC which means that it is possible that synagogues have a much earlier origin in Israelite history.

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13. Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, xi.

14. Fischer, *Albion's Seed*, vii.

15. See for example, *Academon*, 13 March 2005, "Origins of the Synagogue", <http://www.academon.com/Essay-Origins-of-the-Synagogue/56613> where it is stated: "One tradition dates the origin of the synagogue to the Babylonian exile of the 6th century B.C., assuming that the returnees brought back the basic structure that was to be developed by the 1st century A.D. 'into a well-defined institution around which Jewish religious, intellectual, and communal life was to be centered from this earliest period into the present' (Synagogue Pp). Others believe that the synagogue originated after the Hasmonean revolt, 167–164 B.C., as a Pharisaic alternative to the Temple cult (Synagogue Pp)."

Runesson, Binder, and Olsson attribute the idea that the institution of the synagogue "had its beginnings in the Babylonian exile as a replacement for the lost temple cult" to Sigonius in the 16th century (Anders Runesson, Donald D. Binder, and Birger Olsson, *The Ancient Synagogue from its Origins to 200 C.E.* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 6.

During the last decade, Don Binder<sup>16</sup> and Anders Runesson<sup>17</sup> have collected and summarized the many theories which have been advanced to explain the origin of the synagogue. They agree that some of the older theories propose much earlier origins than are considered by recent theorists, but that is because most of the recent research has focused on the evolution of the later synagogue's unique Torah-reading liturgy.

Runesson opines that the Torah-reading liturgy was a product of the Persian colonial period,<sup>18</sup> and that the Persian approach to stability in conquered provinces was to use or resurrect institutions that had been destroyed or suppressed by their Babylonian predecessors and to promote their new colonial legal system through those institutions.<sup>19</sup> The existing Jewish custom of reading the law simply needed to be enhanced to achieve Persian purposes<sup>20</sup> but gradually hardened into a formal institution in the hands of the Rabbis. This understanding also explains why Cyrus famously allowed Ezra and Nehemiah to return from Babylon to Israel and rebuild the Temple<sup>21</sup> and, eventually, Jerusalem's city walls.<sup>22</sup> But it is arguable that this theory does not adequately recognize the idea which originated in the 19th century that Josiah's earlier reforms to centralize sacrificial worship in Jerusalem in the late 7th century were

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16. Donald D. Binder, *Into the Temple Courts: The Place of the Synagogues in the Second Temple Period* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature), 1999.

17. Anders Runesson, *The Origins of the Synagogue: A Socio-Historical Study* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell 2001).

18. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 261–95.

19. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 264–65, 271.

20. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 274–75.

21. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 271.

22. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 278, where Runesson notes that although Artaxerxes initially stopped the reconstruction of the city walls, when he later wished to strengthen this province against an Egyptian rebellion, he “authoris[ed] the fortification of the city and the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem.”

ultimately successful and account for the abolition of sacrifice outside Jerusalem in what remained of Joshua's Israel.<sup>23</sup>

Binder's focus, following and developing Levine's theory, has been to show that the synagogue grew out of the Jewish practice of conducting all business at the city gates.<sup>24</sup> Synagogues were public buildings that developed when city-gate architecture changed and as the cities and villages of Israel became affluent enough to afford the construction of monumental buildings.

There are many other theories of synagogue origins, but nearly all those which are the subject of current research are focused on identifying where the distinctive rabbinic liturgies practised in the later synagogue came from.<sup>25</sup> There are enduring conundrums surrounding whether synagogues ever included sacrifice in their rituals, and if they did, when and why that ceased;<sup>26</sup> whether synagogues were extensions of the Jerusalem temple or whether they were created by groups who opposed efforts to centralize sacrificial worship; whether pro-seuchai or prayer houses included sacrificial liturgies; whether they are properly seen as synagogues or whether they are an entirely different institution; and how and when the high places which were historically used for sacrificial worship were used after the construction of the First Temple and whether they resumed their functions after the First Temple was destroyed.

## Deuteronomic Redaction

Synagogue origins research is complicated by the work of the so-called Deuteronomic redactors. Beginning in the 19th

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23. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 99–109 where Runesson explains this theory but does not believe that Josiah's reforms were successful (109, 260).

24. Binder, *Into the Temple Courts*, 204–26. Binder and Levine are not alone in proposing this theory. Runesson notes three other scholars of the same mind (Low, Silber, and Hoenig: Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 89).

25. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 193–96.

26. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 436–55.

century, Old Testament scholars have considered that the Old Testament books of Deuteronomy through Kings, that have come down to us in the King James Bible and other translations, are not in original form. That insight is not new to Latter-day Saints who have always been taught that many plain and precious parts have been taken away from the Bible (1 Nephi 13:28) and accordingly that we only believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly (Articles of Faith 8). But the scholarship surrounding Deuteronomistic redaction has become quite explicit. The most benign version of “the redaction theory” holds that the original chronicles now covered by our books of Deuteronomy through Kings are simply the result of earlier abridgment. Some theorists suggest there has been more than one abridgment. But most redaction theorists are agreed that the abridgments were not completely benign. That is, those who did the abridgments had agendas beyond providing posterity with a faithful historical record.

The Book of Mormon certainly contributes to this discussion since it is clear that the Nephites sought to comply with the Mosaic law, including the offering of sacrifices, until Christ taught them that He had fulfilled that law including its requirement of sacrifices (3 Nephi 9:17–22). The Book of Mormon also records that synagogues were built by the Nephites (Alma 16:13), the Lamanites (Alma 26:29), the Zoramites (Alma 31:12), and the Amalekites (Alma 21:4, 6), meaning perhaps that there were at least three different ways in which one civilization of people in Ancient America tried to live the law of Moses. It is also noteworthy that Lehi built an altar and offered sacrifice three days into his journey south from Jerusalem around 600 BC (1 Nephi 2:7), and that he again offered sacrifice after his sons returned successfully from their expedition to recover the brass plates (1 Nephi 5:9), and when they returned to Lehi’s camp with Ishmael’s family (1 Nephi 7:22). That raises interesting questions about the reasons for his departure within 40

years after Josiah's reforms, which are generally recognized to have outlawed sacrifice other than at the Temple in Jerusalem.<sup>27</sup>

If there was no contact between the Old and New Worlds after Lehi left Jerusalem, so that the Book of Mormon provides a "time capsule" view of the synagogue in 600 BC, is there sufficient material in the Book of Mormon to enable us to identify the synagogue practice that Lehi and his party brought with them? Did the merger of the Nephite and Mulekite civilizations under Mosiah<sub>1</sub> around 150 BC change the previous synagogue practice of either group? Did the likely 12–15 year gap between the Nephite and Mulekite departures from Jerusalem, or the fact that the Nephites had records and the Mulekites did not, make any difference to their worship practices? Were the worship practices of the two groups the same, since Lehi may have purposely distanced himself from the orthodoxy of Zedekiah's court, which likely came with Mulek's group? Or did other differences evolve during the 400 plus years which passed before the two groups merged in the New World? Is the distinction between temples, sanctuaries, and synagogues in the Nephite record a distinction which has any reference points in the older theories about the origin of the synagogue? And is the apparent prohibition on sacrifice in synagogues a practice that is respected in the Nephite practice? If so, since we know from Benjamin's valedictory conference that the Nephites practised sacrifice at their temples (Mosiah 2:3), were there other places where sacrifices were performed by the Nephites or did they follow Josiah's orthodoxy and proscribe sacrifice elsewhere? Did the Nephites ever ritually read from their Torah-equivalent scriptures, or is the absence of this ritual among them proof that Torah-reading liturgies did evolve later as Runesson and others have proposed?

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27. For further discussion of some of the reasons why Lehi may have been required to leave Jerusalem, see John W. Welch, David Rolf Seely, and Jo Ann H. Seely, eds., *Glimpses of Lehi's Jerusalem* (Provo, UT: BYU and FARMS, 2004).

## Pre-exilic Theories about the Origins of the Synagogue

Both Binder and Runesson acknowledge that there are theories that attribute the creation of the synagogue to Moses. Binder does little more than note this attribution in Philo and Josephus and infers that these Mosaic attributions are either the result of their undiscerning acceptance of authority claimed by the Deuteronomic redactors<sup>28</sup> or anachronistic attribution of ancient authority to the synagogal practice which Philo and Josephus observed in their own day.<sup>29</sup> But Runesson goes a lot farther and notes the reasons why some writers have found synagogal origins in patriarchal times.<sup>30</sup> He acknowledges the reasons why earlier theorists considered that synagogues may have grown out of the *beit ha-midrash*, the *beit ha-knesset*, the college or academy, or even the schools of the prophets to which Biesenthal refers.<sup>31</sup> He also notes, despite all the redactive theory which swirls around the book of Deuteronomy, that “Moses was indissolubly connected to the reading of the Torah,”<sup>32</sup> meaning that this understanding was not so much redactive as axiomatic. However he then says that since Vitringa<sup>33</sup> refuted “the Moses theory” in the 17th century, no one has tried to resurrect it.

Vitringa argued that the Tabernacle of the Congregation could not be a precursor to the synagogue because it was not set apart for either instruction or prayer;<sup>34</sup> Moses did not use that space when he needed answers to his prayers to solve prac-

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28. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 240.

29. Binder, *Into the Temple Courts*, 209.

30. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 77, where Runesson notes from Leydekker and Biesenthal that Abraham’s daughter-in-law went to a place or building to seek answers to her prayers.

31. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 74–77.

32. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 78.

33. Campegius Vitringa Sr, *De Synagoga Vetere Libri Tres* (Franeker, 1685; 2d ed. 1696).

34. Vitringa, *De Synagoga Vetere*, 27.

tical problems;<sup>35</sup> the house of Israel could only worship in one place in Moses' time;<sup>36</sup> Abraham was similarly restricted to the one place of worship (Genesis 12:7; 13:4) where the Lord had appeared unto him; Jacob only ever prayed and sacrificed at Bethel (Genesis 28:16; 35:1–7);<sup>37</sup> and that David and Solomon similarly only ever worshipped at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, which was later developed as the site of the First Temple.<sup>38</sup>

Other reasons he cited include the lack of a single precept or injunction to public prayer in the first five books of Moses;<sup>39</sup> the confinement of Levitical duties to the tabernacle and sacrifices there;<sup>40</sup> and the requirement to read the law every seven years rather than weekly on the Sabbath day.<sup>41</sup>

But all of these arguments have been discredited in more recent scholarship. For example, Vitringa's assertion that the Tabernacle of the Congregation was never used for gathering is now discredited by the very definition of the word *synagogue*, which meant "a gathering of people" or "a congregation." Binder points out that *syn* plus *ago* meant "bring together" so that synagogue meant "'a bringing together,' or less awkwardly, 'a gathering.'"<sup>42</sup>

While it is evident that the children of Israel could not all be contained within even the outer court, this space was provided so that representatives of the camp as a whole could witness the sacred ordinances performed on the altar, and so that they could witness the priests as they entered both the Holy

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35. Vitringa, *De Synagoga Vetere*, 27–28.

36. Vitringa insisted that a "one place for worship" interpretation was the only conclusion that could be drawn when Exodus 20:24 and Deuteronomy 12:13, 14 were considered together.

37. Vitringa, *De Synagoga Vetere*, 28–29.

38. Vitringa, *De Synagoga Vetere*, 29.

39. Vitringa, *De Synagoga Vetere*.

40. Vitringa, *De Synagoga Vetere*.

41. Vitringa, *De Synagoga Vetere*, 31.

42. Binder, *Into the Temple Courts*, 92.

Place and, once a year, the Holy of Holies, to perform their sacred intercessory duties. The dimensions of the outer court stand in contrast to the smaller dimensions of both the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies within the tent, which were completely encompassed by the outer court. While Vitringa is right that we do not have tangible evidence of how the Tabernacle of the Congregation was used in the time of Moses, that is also true in respect of “the Holy Place” and “the Holy of Holies,” yet we believe we know how these parts of the “Tent in the Desert” were used, though this usage is not set out in any detail in the Pentateuch.<sup>43</sup> Most scholars also accept that prayer accompanied every sacrifice in every Jewish mind from the earliest of times.<sup>44</sup> The congregation looked on and prayed while the priest performed the sacrifices and burnt the offerings. The smoke from those offerings ascended and was always a symbol of the prayers of the congregation.

Nor does it require archaeological evidence or excessive assumption and inference to work out that the reason Israel was instructed to build the portable Tabernacle, which they took with them after they left Sinai, was so that they could worship in sacred space wherever they went.

Vitringa’s dismissal of origins for the synagogue in the time of Moses is unjustified. While we can understand scholarly disinterest in such early origins when the search is only for the origin of the weekly Torah reading practice, the existence of synagogues and worship sanctuaries in the Book of Mormon, which must date back to pre-exilic times, means that there must have been synagogues and sanctuaries in Israel much earlier than most synagogue origins scholars have considered. This pa-

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43. For example, the dimensions of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies appear to confirm LDS understanding that the latter was only ever used by one occupant per year on the Day of Atonement.

44. For example, Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (Grand Rapids: MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 457–59.



per will now reconsider the case for earlier synagogal practice by reference to the seminal work of Roland de Vaux and the Old Testament itself—despite the problems which arise in getting an accurate picture of pre-exilic Israelite worship practice because of the likely propaganda of the Deuteronomic redactors. Since the Book of Mormon account makes a distinction between Temples, Synagogues, and Sanctuaries which must have originated in pre-exilic times, a review of the existing scholarship on pre-exilic worship practices is additionally useful since it may yield reciprocal understanding of the differences between these three different types of religious buildings—both among the descendants of Lehi and Mulek on the American continent, and in ancient Israel before both Lehi and Mulek departed Jerusalem.

### Roland de Vaux on Early Israelite Worship Practices

De Vaux documents and discusses early Israelite sanctuaries at Shechem, Bethel, Mambre, and Beersheba and concludes that all these sanctuaries were eventually condemned, not because worship was centralized,<sup>45</sup> but because the worship at these places had been corrupted, possibly by syncretism.<sup>46</sup> De Vaux used the word *syncretism* to describe the corruption of authentic Israelite worship practices by admixture and change under the influence of the different local worship practices which were encountered in the various places Israel settled when they entered Palestine. De Vaux explained that various prophets<sup>47</sup> and authorities<sup>48</sup> considered that pagan practices had contaminated pure Israelite worship at these sanctuaries and so they disavowed them. He notes that the construction

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45. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 293.

46. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 322.

47. For example by Amos at Amos 3:14; 4:4; 5:5 (De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 293–94) and Hosea at Hosea 9:15.

48. For example, by Hezekiah (De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 288 citing 2 Kings 18:4) and Josiah (De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 287 citing 2 Kings 23:19).

of the Israelite desert sanctuary likely followed Arab desert practice where their sacred objects were always packed up last and protected within a tent while camped.<sup>49</sup> However, from the entry into the Promised Land onward, an “anxiety to connect the new worship with the old”<sup>50</sup> inspired Joshua to protect the Ark of the Covenant with a building at Shiloh<sup>51</sup> and David to similarly protect it with a tent when he brought it to Jerusalem, before Solomon also built a Temple to protect it.<sup>52</sup>

Though “places of worship whose foundation was attributed to the Patriarchs are scarcely mentioned in the Bible once Israel is settled in Canaan . . . other sanctuaries are brought to the fore.”<sup>53</sup> Though the location of Gilgal is now disputed, it lies somewhere between the Jordan and Jericho, and was initially “marked by a circle of stones from which it took its name.”<sup>54</sup> At Gilgal, Joshua met “the captain of the Lord’s host” (Joshua 5:15), and like Moses at Sinai, was told to remove his shoes because he stood on holy ground. Samuel went there as well as to Bethel and Mizpeh to judge Israel.<sup>55</sup> It was at Gilgal that Samuel proclaimed Saul king (1 Samuel 11:15); Gilgal is where Samuel killed Agag the Amalekite king (1 Samuel 15:12–33); and it is also where Saul was rejected as king (1 Samuel 13:7–15). Gilgal is similarly the place where Judah came to meet David when he returned from Transjordan (2 Samuel 19:16, 41).

Shiloh and Bethel have already been mentioned, but de Vaux says there were also sanctuaries at Mizpeh, Gibeon,

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49. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 296.

50. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 297.

51. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, citing 1 Samuel 1:7, 9; 3:15. It is noted from these early chapters in 1 Samuel that the building which housed the Ark of the Covenant is called variously a Temple and “the House of the Lord.” This is the house where Samuel came to live with Eli, the priest.

52. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*.

53. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 302.

54. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 303, citing Joshua 4:20.

55. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 303, citing 1 Samuel 7:16.

Ophra, and Dan.<sup>56</sup> However, de Vaux says that it is David's installation of the Ark at Jerusalem which changed the focus of common worship forever. Jerusalem was David's "own personal conquest, and did not belong to the territory of any of the Twelve Tribes."<sup>57</sup> Not only was this place sacred from Abrahamic times, but David there restored the Ark, set up an altar,<sup>58</sup> and thus made Jerusalem "heir to the sanctuary of Shiloh and to the Tent in the desert."<sup>59</sup> "Jerusalem became the focal point of [Israel's] . . . history of salvation. . . . [It] became the Holy City, and its religious significance was destined to eclipse its political importance . . . [for] as a religious centre it would survive the break-up of David's empire, and even the total destruction of national independence."<sup>60</sup>

But there was also some admixture here. For David did all this as king and not by virtue of any ancestry which made him a priest. Though he accepted the counsel of Nathan the prophet that he should not build the new Temple he had planned (2 Samuel 7:1–17), and though Nathan cursed him for his adultery with Bathsheba without recorded consequence (2 Samuel 12:1–12), no one questioned David's authority to do religious things and even to minister as a priest, despite the fact that Samuel clearly withheld similar authority from Saul. David thus demonstrated to all his heirs and successors, the power available to the Israelite king if he could control religious and political authority at the same time. It is submitted that this innovation by king David was the premise for future efforts to centralize worship. Such centralization was seen as essential if any future king was to resume the political power David had demonstrated and consolidated.

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56. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 304–308.

57. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 309.

58. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 309.

59. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 309.

60. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 309.

However, de Vaux, like Runesson, holds that the various efforts to centralize worship were never fully effective. Runesson has said that “the cult centralization [under Josiah] was a limited phenomenon and in any case did not last beyond Josiah’s death . . . as was also the case with the cult centralization of Hezekiah . . . [meaning] that the high places were in use when the exiles returned.”<sup>61</sup> De Vaux is more detailed and disagrees with Runesson. He credits Josiah with an idea which “triumphed in the end.”<sup>62</sup> He wrote:

Two kings of Judah tried to make Jerusalem’s Temple not merely the central sanctuary of the nation, but the only sanctuary in which public cult could be performed. . . . [Hezekiah] had learnt a lesson from the destruction of the Northern Kingdom, and wanted to strengthen and unite the nation by a return to traditional ways; the centralization of the cult at Jerusalem, under his eyes, was one element of this policy . . . [but] the work of [Hezekiah] . . . died with him, and his immediate successor, Manasseh, re-established the high places. . . .

To secure the centralization of Yahwistic cult, Josia[h] recalled to Jerusalem all the Priests in Judah “from Geba to Beersheba” and suppressed the local sanctuaries, *i.e.* the “high places.” . . . The reform covered the territory of the former Northern kingdom, too: the sanctuary at Bethel was certainly dismantled. . . . The conclusion of the reform was celebrated by a solemn Passover, attended by the entire nation, at Jerusalem; it was a natural consequence of the centralization of worship. This was the Passover of the year 621. Unfortunately, the reform was quickly compromised: after the death of Josia[h] at Megiddo in 609,

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61. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 109.

62. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 337.

the country once again fell under foreign domination, first Egyptian, then Babylonian. The old errors returned—syncretism in the Temple, foreign cults, and a new lease of life for the country sanctuaries . . . historical circumstances seemed to have put an end to the reforms of Josia[h]. But his ideas triumphed in the end, for the community which returned from exile never had any sanctuary in Judah except the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem. The reason was that the reform was based on a written law which survived longer than the men who opposed it: it was the Book of Deuteronomy.<sup>63</sup>

Both de Vaux and Runesson agree that there was local worship in sanctuaries before the centralization efforts of both Hezekiah and Josiah. Josiah's redaction of the law in the book of Deuteronomy changed the practice in the future, but worship in Israel before the exile was local in character. The Deuteronomic redaction may well be responsible for the impression which the Pentateuch leaves that there was no local worship in Israel before or after the exile. But it is still possible to glean some evidence of local worship in what remains of those first five books of scripture which have come down to us in the Judeo-Christian Bible.

### **Injunctions to Worship from Moses in the Residual Pentateuch**

The Mosaic injunctions to worship in the Christian Bible that are most relevant to this essay are those made in prospect of their entry into the promised land without Moses. Both Moses and Joshua contemplated Israel's division into different and widely spread lands of inheritance.

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63. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 336–37.

The primary reason why it is reasonable to expect regular weekly worship in Israel, even after they entered the Promised land, is the second commandment received at Sinai:

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. (KJV Exodus 20:8–11)

It is hard to imagine that Israel would have ceased to live this law after they entered the Promised Land even though the Tabernacle would be remote from many of the tribes. Vitranga, of course, denied that Israel worshipped at the Desert Temple or elsewhere,<sup>64</sup> but others disagree. When discussing the theories as to when the synagogue originated, de Vaux has noted that synagogues may have resulted from “the reform of Josia[h] . . . when the country people were deprived of their local sanctuaries . . . [when] they could [not] go off to Jerusalem for the big feasts . . . they began to meet on certain days for public worship, but without offering sacrifice.”<sup>65</sup> One reason there may thus still be some evidence of local worship left in the Bible is that Josiah’s centralization policy may have allowed Sabbath observance to continue in the home or in other local places provided there was no sacrifice. There is thus still some scrip-

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64. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 26–27, where he interprets the Sabbath observance law as prohibiting the children of Israel from leaving their homes to worship in public or do anything else.

65. De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 343. See also Binder, *Into the Temple Courts*, 205.

tural material that alludes to regular community worship in Israel before the exile. The following references are examples.

The first three verses of Leviticus 23 are a record of Moses' instruction in connection with the observance of the weekly Sabbath:

And the Lord spake unto Moses saying, Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein; it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings. (Leviticus 23:1–3)

The chapter then goes on to name the national or annual feasts that were to be observed—Passover (Leviticus 23:5), unleavened bread (Leviticus 23:6–8), firstfruits (Leviticus 23:10–14), Pentecost (Leviticus 23: 15–22; Pentecost is also known as the feast of weeks), trumpets (Leviticus 23:24–25), Atonement (Leviticus 23:27–32), and tabernacles (Leviticus 23:34–36, 39–43), also known as *ingathering*, at the completion of the harvest. Every Sabbath celebrated by the children of Israel, save for the Day of Atonement, was to involve a feast, that Israel might rejoice in her God and in His abundant mercy and gifts to them all.<sup>66</sup> Each Sabbath was to be a “convocation,” which means a calling together of a group of people—a congregation. The original word used to describe congregations of people gathered for religious reasons in Israel was *synagogue*. Before the word *synagogue* came, by the associative process of metonymy, to mean the building in which the synagogue met, the word referred to the congregation itself.

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66. Note also that in modern revelation, the early saints of this dispensation were taught that their Sabbaths were likewise to be days of “rejoicing and prayer” (D&C 59:9–22, esp. 14).

However it was not just the weekly Sabbaths that were celebrated in local convocations. The national feasts were also celebrated locally since the whole population was not expected to pack up and make the trek to Shiloh, and later Jerusalem, up to six times every year.<sup>67</sup> This point is made later in the same chapter of Leviticus:

Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath, the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf, an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord. (Leviticus 23: 10–12)

If we interpret this passage in light of the requirement that sacrifices can only be performed in Jerusalem, then we must assume the Priest spoken of is serving in the Temple. But if the feast follows right on the heels of completion of the harvest, the reference is more likely to be local observance and sheaf-waving by a local priest. It is surprising that this reference remains in our latter-day version of Leviticus since it is a clear allusion not just to local worship, but to legitimate local sacrifice. In this context, Runesson refers to the theory that synagogues may have out-

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67. Note that even in Deuteronomy 16:16, which Miller, Barker, and Christensen hold to be part of the Josiah-corrupted text, only three visits to “the place” appointed by the Lord are required, which rather begs the question of where (and how) the other feasts were to be celebrated. See Geoffrey P. Miller, “Golden Calves, Stone Tablets, and Fundamental Law,” New York University School of Law Working Paper 10–02, at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1531262>; Margaret Barker, “What did King Josiah Reform?” in *Glimpses of Lehi’s Jerusalem*, 523; and Kevin Christensen, “The Temple, the Monarchy, and Wisdom,” in *Glimpses of Lehi’s Jerusalem*, 475. The three feasts where personal male presence was required were unleavened bread, weeks (Pentecost), and tabernacles.



grown the Ma'amadoth. The Ma'amadoth was the name given to the congregation left behind by the pilgrims from a place or village who responded to the commandment to go to Jerusalem three times a year to worship and make sacrifice in accordance with the law of Moses. While those who made the pilgrimage were seen as acting vicariously on behalf of those left behind, Runesson affirms that the congregation left behind still considered that they needed to make their own sacrifices in the right spirit to comply with the full spirit of the law.<sup>68</sup>

If Runesson is correct that the great national feasts were also celebrated locally, then it is possible that careful review of the references to priestly involvement in those ordinances and feasts may reveal more local involvement and ministry by local priests than has been considered by most of the researchers who have accepted that the national feasts were only observed in the temple at Jerusalem.

The rules about how properties were to be consecrated to the Lord in Leviticus 27 also suggest local worship practice. Priests were assigned to value the offerings made (Leviticus 27:8, 12, 23). These offerings included cash (Leviticus 27:3–8) and animals (Leviticus 27:9–13) but also homes and fields (Leviticus 27:14–23), which are not movable chattels. While it is possible that priests were assigned to go out on circuit from the Tabernacle at Shiloh or the Temple at Jerusalem to value the offerings made, it seems much more reasonable to infer that the priests involved in such valuations were based in the villages and towns where the people making these offerings lived (Leviticus 27:12–33). Perhaps this was one of the distinctions between the service of the Levites and that of the sons of Aaron. The Levites were all appointed, and later divided in courses,<sup>69</sup> to do the work of the Tabernacle. But save for the high priestly

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68. Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 124–27, 138.

69. Runesson says that rabbinic literature states that both the priests and the Levites were “divided regionally” into 24 courses (*Origins of the Synagogue*, 125).

descendants of Aaron, all Aaron's other sons were to minister as priests at the local community level, much as bishops do in the latter days.<sup>70</sup> While it is possible to read the recitation of ordinances in Numbers 15 as referring to priestly service at the tabernacle, since the reference twice is to their manner of worship after they have "come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you," (Numbers 15:2, 18), it again seems more likely that the reference is to regular community worship where a priest would intervene to help his local flock.<sup>71</sup> That reading is yet more reasonable if it is accepted that the participants in these ordinances were expected to involve the strangers among them (Numbers 15:15)—unlikely if this meant that they were to also insist that the strangers among them make pilgrimages to Shiloh or Jerusalem either three or six times every year.

That the sacrifices referred to in Numbers 28 are local seems undeniable, again since they are to be made weekly. Would the people have been left to make sacrifices in their own homes? Certainly the Passover feast was celebrated in Israelite homes from the very beginning in Egypt, but allowing or authorizing all worship at home would have involved the risk of ordinance change and corruption, a concern to many prophets when ordinances were carried out away from Jerusalem. The authorization of the performance of ordinances in the home also ran the risk that every man might become a law unto himself.<sup>72</sup> In any event, there is no reference in Numbers 28 to the

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70. This interpretation also resonates with Ezekiel's denunciation of the shepherds who did not feed their flocks but rather simply consumed their offerings without reverence (Ezekiel 34). See also D&C 68:15–21.

71. It also gives more meaning to Jeremiah's woe pronounced against the pastors of his people who had scattered the flock, driven them away and not visited them (Jeremiah 23:1–2). This denunciation would surely have been unreasonable unless the pastors spoken of were local ministers. See also Jeremiah 2:8 and 10:21.

72. Note that Isaiah taught that the people were cursed if they changed the ordinances (Isaiah 24: 5,6). And the idea that every man should do that which is right in his own eyes, was often castigated in the Old Testament, including even

sacrifices there specified being made in the Tabernacle. That omission is surprising since these instructions in Numbers 28 follow the chapter where Joshua was set apart to take Moses' place and therefore came at a time when worship practice after dispersion must have been top of mind for all leaders. Where were these ordinances and this feasting to take place? As when the people ate the first Passover, the feasting must have taken place in their own homes—but only after local Aaronic priests had supervised and endorsed the sacrifices to ensure that they conformed to Mosaic requirements. It will be remembered that on the occasion of the first Passover, the blood of the lambs was to be smeared across the lintel of the front door of each home—after Moses had given very explicit instructions as to the nature of the sacrificial symbol, how the sacrifice was to be made, how the blood was to be shed and spread, and how the resulting meal was to be eaten (Exodus 12:5–11). All of these actions took place at a time when there was no known tabernacle nor temple in Israel. Certainly the place of the sacrifice was changed when the tabernacle was raised among them, but the sacrifices were always made under the direction of appointed priestly leaders, and the meals were always eaten at home.

The sacrifices detailed in Numbers 29, however, must have been a national event, and that seems eminently reasonable since they only happened once a year. The volume of the sacrifices and their frequency witness that this was a great gathering, for no local community could provide, sustain, or consume all the food that would have been produced by the offerings which are here set forth.

Deuteronomy 12 is generally accepted by those who theorize about synagogue origins as part of the redaction of the law consistent with Josiah's reform policy. In this chapter it is stated that there was to be "one place" where Israel would worship

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a possibly self-serving reference by the Deuteronomizers (Deuteronomy 12:8; Judges 17:6; 21:25; Proverbs 12:15; 21:2).

and make her sacrifices, and that place would be shown them (Deuteronomy 12:5,11,14,18; See also Deuteronomy 16:6, 7, 11, 16; 26:2). Only in this place were they to pay their tithes and make their offerings (Deuteronomy 12:5, 11, 14).<sup>73</sup> The statement that this “one place for worship” policy was reinforced to end other practices which allowed Israel to do “after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes” (Deuteronomy 12:9), is surprising since it implies grand failure in Moses’ leadership, since he had been their personal guide for the last 40 years. Deuteronomy 12’s anticipation that a king would be appointed after they came into the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 17:14–20), also seems self-serving, particularly since no reference to this text is made by Samuel in the biblical record that remains to document Saul’s first appointment (1 Samuel 8:5–20).

But there is no reference to synagogues or other formal meeting places at a local level. Is it possible that the local congregations of Israel simply met under cover of trees in high places, commemorative both of the sacred trees of Eden (themselves commemorated in the Temple; 1 Kings 7:16–22<sup>74</sup>) and of the high places where their prophets received revelation from God? Although it is more familiar to think of scriptural references to “high places” as intending the counterfeit places where idolatry was practised, De Vaux says that high places were the places where Israel worshipped before her practice was systematized

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73. Note that there is a similar reference to “the place” where their tithes should be paid in Deuteronomy 26.

74. Runesson documents the theory that *bamoth* constituted the forerunner of the synagogue from Wellhausen (*Origins of the Synagogue*, 97–101). *Bamoth* is the name given to “high places” where traditional worship occurred and, in Wellhausen’s theory, the identification of *bamoth* with the embryonic synagogue was one of “three main stages” in its history (Runesson, *Origins of the Synagogue*, 98). See also De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 284, where he notes that the name *bamoth* was also given to the artificial creation of “mounds or knolls” for worship. De Vaux also notes that sacred places where worship occurred in Israelite history were often marked by sacred trees (De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 278).

and centralized at Jerusalem. Barker says worship at high places was a prominent part of “Old Testament [worship] . . . before Josiah’s purge.”<sup>75</sup> She notes the nature of transplanted Old Testament worship practices in Ethiopia and Western China and quotes Professor Thomas Torrance in relation to the latter: “The religious observances of the Chiang seem to derive from a period in Israel’s history . . . before the centralization of the cult in Jerusalem had been carried out, when high place worship was still prevalent.”<sup>76</sup> And then she adds her own comments:

The Chiang Min worship on a high place, with an altar of unhewn stones, a sacred tree behind the altar, and a white stone set between them. God, whom they called Abba Malak, came to his people through the sacred tree. They had remembered that Abba meant Father, but had lost the meaning of Malak, which is clearly the Hebrew for angel. They had a sacred rod in the form of a snake twisting around a pole, and they called their faith “the White Religion.”<sup>77</sup>

Runesson, Binder, and Olsson note the argument recounted in Joshua 22:10–34 which nearly resulted in war when the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half of Mannaseh were said to have offended the other tribes by building an altar of their own away from Shiloh. And they conclude that this “passage is . . . most likely an attempt by priestly circles in the Persian period to ‘neutralise’ evidence of a sacrificial cult dedicated to the God of Israel in an ‘unclean land’” but does not “provide . . . early evidence of synagogue liturgy . . . since no such rituals are

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75. Barker, “What did King Josiah Reform?” 536.

76. Barker, “What did King Josiah Reform?” 536, quoting Thomas F. Torrance, *China’s First Missionaries: Ancient “Israelites,”* 2nd ed. (Chicago: Shaw, 1988), p. vii.

77. Barker, “What did King Josiah Reform?” 536, again quoting Torrance, pp. 53, 117, 121.

mentioned.”<sup>78</sup> But even if this narrow view of synagogal origins is accepted, since even the redacted text which remains accepts that the dispute was resolved when the three errant tribes explained they were not proposing to offer sacrifices, it is clear that non-sacrificial worship was allowed away from Israel’s temple place whether that place was Shiloh or later Jerusalem. However, the political agenda of the redacted account is still flawed since it seems unlikely that any Israelite tribe would have built an altar if the worship they proposed was non-sacrificial in nature.

What then of the Nephite preservation of pre-exilic Israelite worship places? Does the Book of Mormon say anything that can enlighten us about the origins of the synagogue, or the manner of Israelite worship before the exile and perhaps even before the construction of the first Temple?

If Lehi was faithful to earlier forms of worship, and if his people culturally replicated the pre-Josiah older forms as Fischer implies they would have done, does the Book of Mormon provide better understanding of pre-exilic Israelite worship practices? For example where and how did the Israelites worship before Solomon built the First Temple? Did they only worship at Shiloh during the reign of the judges while the Tabernacle rested there, or did they renew their covenants regularly at other places? Remote irregular worship certainly seems inconsistent with the nature of worship in wilderness Israel—and both Moses and Joshua must have considered and planned for the need for regular covenant renewal after the entry into the promised land, when few would be close enough to the Tabernacle to attend regularly for worship. Kevin Christensen says that “[t]he Book of Mormon prophets kept the law of Moses according to the version they brought with them on the brass plates,”<sup>79</sup> and specifically notes from Mosiah 2:3 that they offered sac-

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78. Runesson, Binder, and Olsson, *Ancient Synagogue*, 290–94.

79. Christensen, “The Temple, the Monarchy, and Wisdom,” 475.

rice and burnt offerings according to the law of Moses.<sup>80</sup> But most LDS scholars acknowledge that the events recounted in “the Sermon at the Temple” were likely a Day of Atonement commemoration at the Temple<sup>81</sup> rather than part of their regular and perhaps weekly community worship practice. Does the Book of Mormon provide insights about regular community worship at the local level?

### Nephite Worship Practices

The answer of course is a resounding yes. For without looking for inferential proofs, there are twenty-one references to the existence of synagogues among the Nephites and the Lamanites before the Savior’s visit. Perhaps the first of these is the most instructive, coming as it does within the first century after the flight of Lehi’s family from their native Jerusalem. Nephi writes “Behold, hath he commanded any that they should depart out of the synagogues, or out of the houses of worship? Behold, I say unto you, Nay” (2 Nephi 26:26).<sup>82</sup>

This reference is deceptively simple but rich in meaning and implication. First, it makes the word *synagogue* a synonym

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80. Christensen, “The Temple, the Monarchy, and Wisdom,” 475.

81. John W. Welch and Terrence L. Szink have suggested that King Benjamin’s famous address at the Temple three years before he died, at the time when he inaugurated his son Mosiah<sub>2</sub> as the new Nephite king in Zarahemla, bears all the hallmarks of coinciding with a Mosaic autumnal festival including the Day of Atonement. However they warn that we should not expect to find exact correlations between the Nephite religious practices and those in postexilic Israel because they would have diverged and both were changed after Lehi’s departure. In earlier Israel there was no clear demarcation between autumnal festivals of the seventh month on the Jewish calendar, which were later differentiated into Rosh ha-Shanah (New Year), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and Sukkot (Festival of Tabernacles) celebrations. See John W. Welch and Terrence L. Szink, “King Benjamin’s Speech in the Context of Ancient Israelite Festivals,” at <http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/books/?bookid=31&chapid=119>.

82. See also 3 Nephi 18:32 which confirms that the interchangeability of the word *synagogue* and the phrase *place of worship* remained common practice even after the time of the resurrected Lord’s visit.

for the phrase, *house of worship*. That makes it fair to read *synagogue* for *house of worship* or similar expressions in other places where the latter phrase occurs in the Book of Mormon, and certainly during the first 600 years before the risen Christ's visit.<sup>83</sup> Secondly, it is clear that the Nephites, following Nephi's lead, drew a distinction between *synagogue* worship and *Temple* worship.<sup>84</sup> And thirdly, Nephi implies that Nephite religious practice held that no one could be excommunicated or otherwise excluded from worship in the synagogue. This third insight is the more noteworthy when it is compared with the Zoramite exclusion of the poor from their synagogues, a practice they may have shared with the followers of Nehor, which in turn is reminiscent of rabbinic practice in Jerusalem and Judah at the time of Christ.<sup>85</sup>

Questions may also reasonably be raised as to why the word *synagogue* was chosen in the Book of Mormon to represent the concepts originally recorded on the gold plates.<sup>86</sup> For example,

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83. It is conceivable that Christ might have authorized or instructed the Nephites in the construction of formal places of worship, though no such instructions are recorded in the 3 Nephi record of His three-day ministry. However, while it is the submission of this essay that the Lehitites likely preserved pre-exilic Israelite worship practices more faithfully than did the Jews in Babylon, it is probably pressing the argument to suggest that references to synagogues in the Nephite scriptures more than 600 years after the separation of the two cultures can inform our understanding of practices beforehand.

84. Note that one of the first things that Nephi did after Lehi's death and the separation from his brethren was to build a Temple (2 Nephi 5:16).

85. John W. Welch has observed to the author in private correspondence (3 April 2011) that there may well have been expulsions from pre-exilic synagogues because Alma's quotation of Zenos's words to comfort the repentant Zoramites (Alma 33:9–10) suggests that Zenos himself had been expelled but did not let that impede either his worship or his prayers.

86. While it might be asserted that Joseph Smith chose the word *synagogue*, Terryl Givens's summary of the limited materials we have explaining the process of Book of Mormon translation says that "sentences would appear and were read by the Prophet and written by Martin, and . . . [that sentence] remained until corrected" if an error had been made. Terryl L. Givens, *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture that Launched a New World Religion* (Oxford: Oxford



was this word chosen to replicate 19th century understanding or to reflect understanding at some earlier period in Israelite history? Answers to those questions are beyond the scope of this article and the writer has assumed that the Israelitish peoples dealt with in the Book of Mormon were indeed endeavoring to replicate and preserve worship “according to the Law of Moses” “after the manner of the Jews” as the original editors stated several times, though the first Nephi was reluctant to preserve every Jewish custom he remembered since he did not consider that all those traditions were righteous or spiritually helpful.<sup>87</sup>

Nineteen of the references to synagogues or places of worship in the Book of Mormon are found in the book of Alma, five of those in Alma 21 and seven in Alma 32. They are quoted in order and discussed briefly below:

And Alma and Amulek went forth preaching repentance to the people in their temples, and in their sanctuaries, and also in their synagogues, which were built after the manner of the Jews. (Alma 16:13)

And it came to pass that Aaron came to the city of Jerusalem, and first began to preach to the Amalekites. And he began to preach to them in their synagogues, for they had built synagogues after the order of the Nehors; for many of the Amalekites and the Amulonites were after the order of the Nehors. Therefore, as Aaron entered into one of their synagogues to preach unto the people, and as he was speaking unto them, behold there arose an Amalekite and began to contend with him, saying . . . How knowest thou that we have cause

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University Press, 2002), quoting *Latter-day Saints Millennial Star* 44 (February 6, 1882), 86–87.

87. See typical references to Nephite aspirations to live according to the law of Moses until Christ came in 1 Nephi 4:15; 2 Nephi 25:24; Mosiah 13:27; Alma 25:15; 30:3. As to variable Nephite wishes to replicate Jewish culture, see 2 Nephi 25: 2, 5–6; Alma 16:13.

to repent? How knowest thou that we are not a righteous people? Behold we have built sanctuaries, and we do assemble ourselves together to worship God. We do believe that God will save all men. (Alma 21:4–6)

Therefore, when [Aaron] saw that they would not hear his words, he departed out of their synagogue, and came over into a village which was called Ani-Anti, and there he found Muloki preaching the word unto them; and also Ammah and his brethren. And they contended with many about the word. . . . And they went forth whithersoever they were led by the Spirit of the Lord, preaching the word of God in every synagogue of the Amalekites, or in every assembly of the Lamanites where they could be admitted. . . . But [king Lamoni] caused that there should be synagogues built in the land of Ishmael; and he caused that his people, or the people who were under his reign, should assemble themselves together. (Alma 21:11, 16, 20)

Yea, [the king of the Lamanites] sent a decree among them, that they should not lay their hands on them to bind them, or to cast them into prison; neither should they spit upon them, nor cast them out of their synagogues, nor scourge them; neither should they cast stones at them, but that they should have free access to their houses, and also to their temples, and their sanctuaries. . . . And now it came to pass that when the king had sent forth this proclamation, that Aaron and his brethren went forth from city to city, and from one house of worship to another, establishing churches, and consecrating priests and teachers throughout the land among the Lamanites, to preach and to teach the word of God among them; and thus they began to have great success. (Alma 23:2, 4)

And we have entered into their houses and taught them, and we have taught them in their streets; yea,

and we have taught them upon their hills; and we have entered into their temples and their synagogues and taught them; and we have been cast out, and mocked, and spit upon, and smote upon our cheeks; and we have been stoned, and taken and bound with strong cords, and cast into prison; and through the power and wisdom of God we have been delivered again. (Alma 26:29)

Now, when [Alma and his brethren] had come into the land, behold to their astonishment, they found the Zoramites had built synagogues, and that they did gather themselves together on one day of the week, which day they did call the day of the Lord; and they did worship after a manner which Alma and his brethren had never beheld; For they had a place built up in the center of their synagogue, a place for standing, which was high above the head; and the top thereof would admit only one person. (Alma 31:12)

And it came to pass that [Alma and his brethren] did go forth, and began to preach the word of God unto the people, entering into their synagogues, and into their houses; yea, and even they did preach the word in their streets. And it came to pass that after much labor among them, they began to have success among the poor class of the people; for behold, they were cast out of the synagogues because of the coarseness of their apparel—Therefore they were not permitted to enter into their synagogues to worship God, being esteemed as filthiness; therefore they were poor; yea, they were esteemed by their brethren as dross; therefore they were poor as to the things of the world; and also they were poor in heart. Now as Alma was teaching and speaking unto the people upon the hill Onidah, there came a great multitude unto him...and the one who was foremost among them said unto him: Behold, what shall

these our brethren do, for they are despised of all men because of their poverty, yea, and more especially by our priests; for they have cast us out of our synagogues which we have laboured abundantly to build with our own hands . . . and we have no place to worship our God; and behold, what shall we do? And now when Alma heard this, he . . . said unto them. . . . Behold my brother hath said, What shall we do?—for we are cast out of our synagogues, that we cannot worship our God. Behold, I say unto you, do ye suppose that he cannot worship God save it be in your synagogue only? And moreover, I would ask you, do ye suppose that ye must not worship God only once in a week? I say unto you, it is well that ye are cast out of your synagogues, that ye may be humble, and that ye may learn wisdom. (Alma 32:1–12)

And Alma said unto them: Behold, ye have said that ye could not worship your God because ye are cast out of your synagogues. But behold, I say unto you, if ye suppose that ye cannot worship God, ye do greatly err, and ye ought to search the scriptures; if ye suppose that they have taught you this, ye do not understand them. Do ye not remember to have read what Zenos, the prophet of old, has said concerning prayer or worship? For he said: Thou art merciful O God, for thou hast heard my prayer, even when I was in the wilderness; yea, thou wast merciful when I prayed concerning those who were mine enemies, and thou didst turn them unto me. Yea, O God, and thou wast merciful unto me when I did cry unto thee in my field; when I did cry unto them in my prayer, and thou didst hear me. And again, O God, when I did turn to my house thou didst hear me in my prayer. And when I did turn unto my closet, O Lord, and prayed unto thee, thou didst hear me. Yea, thou art merciful unto thy children when they cry unto thee, to be heard of thee

and not of men, and thou wilt hear them. Yea, O God, thou hast been merciful unto me and heard my cries in the midst of thy congregations. Yea, and thou hast also heard me when I have been cast out and have been despised by mine enemies; yea, thou didst hear my cries, and wast angry with mine enemies, and thou didst visit them in thine anger with speedy destruction. And thou didst hear me because of mine afflictions and my sincerity; and it is because of thy Son that thou hast been thus merciful unto me; therefore I will cry unto thee in all my afflictions, for in thee is my joy; for thou hast turned thy judgments away from me, because of thy Son. (Alma 33:2–11)

It will suffice for the present time to make some simple observations which flow from these verses:

1. The children of Lehi all copied Jewish practice when they built synagogues (Alma 16:13). Therefore there were synagogues in Israel before the exile.
2. The missionary labors of Alma, Amulek, and the sons of Mosiah, manifest significant similarity with Christ's practice among the Jews during His mortal ministry among them. In particular, Luke records: "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in all their synagogues, being glorified of all" (Luke 4:14–15).
3. The children of Lehi distinguished between temples, synagogues, and sanctuaries.
4. Lehiite synagogal practice not only allowed itinerant preachers to enter any synagogue and teach, but it also allowed other attendees to ask questions and even debate what was taught (Alma 21:5–6). This practice again

is reminiscent of what we know of Jewish practice in the time of Christ.

5. LeHITE religious practice featured sectarian division, but several of the sects built synagogues of their own.<sup>88</sup> While they were still recognizable as synagogues, there were architectural differences most notably in the Zoramite synagogue which featured a raised stand for one person to use at a time—called the Rameumpton (Alma 31:12–14, 21). This architectural difference was shocking to Alma (Alma 31:19).<sup>89</sup>
6. When some LeHITE congregations perceived heresy, they followed similar disciplinary practices to those which applied among the Jews at the time of Christ. That is, they took steps to stone heretics (Alma 26:29). While there is no reference in the Book of Mormon to throwing a blasphemer headlong off a cliff and stoning him at the base,<sup>90</sup> the spitting and cheek slapping also have a particularly Jewish ring to them.<sup>91</sup>
7. People who offended religious rules (including rules of caste?) were excluded from some synagogues. This exclusion, though not perhaps the reason, is consistent with practices encountered by Christ among the Jews.<sup>92</sup>

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88. We read of synagogues built by the Amalekites (Alma 21:16), the Zoramites (Alma 31:12), and those built under direction of the kings (Alma 21:20).

89. It is possible that Alma's shock came from the use to which the Zoramites put their altar rather than from the fact that it was raised.

90. The Nazarenes sought to execute Christ in this manner when they disapproved of his sermon from Isaiah 61:16–21 wherein he proclaimed himself the Messiah (Luke 4: 28, 29).

91. Note again Professor Welch's observation to the author in note 85 that the prophet Zenos may well have been expelled from a pre-exilic synagogue.

92. For example, the man born blind who was healed by the Savior was excommunicated from the synagogue when he would not disclaim the Messiahship of the author of his miraculous healing (John 9:1–38).

8. The retreat of the poor among the Zoramites to the hill Onidah to hear Alma and Amulek preach since they had all been excluded from the synagogue, reminds us that the Israelites from time immemorial had built altars and worshipped in high places before they built Temples and presumably synagogues and other sanctuaries. It is further noteworthy that *Onidah* is used in respect of two different places in the Book of Mormon, both of them raised places of gathering, retreat and perhaps even sanctuary (Alma 32:4; 47:5). While it is possible they were the same place, we cannot be sure from the limited text provided by Alma and Mormon. If they are not, *Onidah* may have some generic sacred significance in denoting a hill, mountain, or other traditional high place but without any formal religious structure yet erected upon it.
9. For Alma at least, prayer was an essential or basic element of worship and did not require a building. The paradigm among the Zoramites was that they could not worship save in a building. This thought paradigm is reminiscent of Josiah's idea that worship should be centralized in one place (the temple). It also suggests that worship in synagogues, including congregational prayer, was very well established among the Lehtes and probably indicates the nature of synagogal worship in Israel before Lehi's departure.
10. There is no reference in any of these passages in the Book of Mormon to the reading of the Torah as part of Lehte liturgy. This is a little surprising, since in many respects the reading of the Torah is the critical feature of synagogal worship which is sought by scholars looking for the origins of the synagogue among the Jews. The Book of Mormon references imply that prayer and preaching were the elemental aspects of Lehte synagogal ritual. We

may further infer that anyone could preach in a Lehite synagogue; that debate about the content of preaching was acceptable and even standard practice; but that the practice of exclusion from the synagogue varied among the Lehite sects.<sup>93</sup>

Helaman's two short references to synagogues do not add a great deal but they do manifest that the construction of places of worship was among the primary tasks whenever the children of Lehi established a new community.

And the people who were in the land northward did dwell in tents, and in houses of cement, and they did suffer whatsoever tree should spring up upon the face of the land that it should grow up, that in time they might have timber to build their houses, yea, their cities, and their temples, and their synagogues, and their sanctuaries, and all manner of their buildings. . . . But behold, a hundredth part of the proceedings of this people, yea, the account of the Lamanites and the Nephites . . . and their building of temples, and of synagogues and their sanctuaries . . . cannot be contained in this work (Helaman 3:9, 14).

The synagogue-building practice of the children of Lehi provides affirmative evidence that synagogal worship predated the Babylonian exile. Is there anything else in Lehite religious

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93. Note that local Zoramite practice allowed exclusion from the synagogue in the first century BC. However, four centuries earlier, Nephi says that it was contrary to the law of God that anyone be excluded from the synagogue (2 Nephi 26:26). However, Nephi's expectation would appear to be his 'correct' and rhetorical interpretation of the law in relation to synagogues. For since Jacob and presumably Nephi had read Zenos (both the allegory of the Olive Tree as recited in Jacob 5 and his teaching relative to prayer as recited by Alma in Alma 33), Nephi must have been aware that synagogal exclusion was practiced in Judah and perhaps in Israel in historical times. It also seems likely that one reason Lehi felt obliged to leave Jerusalem was because he too had been excluded from a synagogue for heretical teaching (see n 27 and supporting text).



practice which provides insight into the nature of Israelite worship before the exile?

The children of Lehi worshipped in at least four different places: temples, synagogues, sanctuaries, and in high or raised places when they had no building in which to worship. It was noted above that the word translated by Joseph Smith as “synagogue” appears to have been nothing more than a name for a place of worship. But why did he use the additional term *sanctuary*? Part of the reason for Joseph Smith’s choice of that word must have to do with the fact that he had to translate strings of ideas. If two different words or ideas were used, it would have been unsatisfactory for him to have chosen only one word when two different ideas were used in the record from which he was translating. This reasoning is sound even if the differences he was translating were no more than matters of nuance. In the minds of the children of Lehi, what were the differences between temples, synagogues, sanctuaries, and other raised places where they worshipped? The children of Lehi had altars in their temples where they sacrificed according to the Law of Moses. That much is clear from the detail in King Benjamin’s final address at the temple (Mosiah 1:18; 2:1, 3). But it is clear that the Nephite sanctuaries, or at least some of them, also featured altars. For the account of the mission of Alma and Amulek to Sidom, in Nephite territory, states:

Therefore after Alma having established the church at Sidom, seeing a great check, yea, seeing that the people were checked as to the pride of their hearts, and began to humble themselves before God, and began to assemble themselves together at their sanctuaries to worship God before the altar, watching and praying continually, that they might be delivered from Satan, and from death, and from destruction. (Alma 15:17)

Did the synagogues and sanctuaries among the children of Lehi all have altars, or is the presence of an altar a distinction between these two types of religious buildings? And, if this is a difference, did they sacrifice in community sanctuaries but use synagogues for other purposes? Or does the word *sanctuary* refer to the holiest part of the place of worship (synagogue) as is familiar in modern Christian parlance?—which seems to pick up on the original Mosaic use of the word *sanctuary* in reference to the most sacred part of the portable tabernacle, and which may be the reason Joseph Smith chose to use both *synagogue* and *sanctuary* in his translation of the Book of Mormon. Helaman's separate reference to sanctuaries as buildings built by Lehi's descendants also suggests that they were different from both synagogues and temples. This insight is consistent with de Vaux's findings and suggests that sanctuaries were local places of sacrifice rather than prayer, as seems to have been the nature of synagogues among the children of Lehi. If that is correct, then it seems fair to infer that the worship that Josiah proscribed in the 7th century BC was worship in sanctuaries rather than worship in synagogues.

What of the high places used for religious purposes among the children of Lehi? Were these places precursors to both synagogue and sanctuary before they had organized themselves or accumulated enough resources to build either? Or did they continue to use high places even after they had built religious buildings, and if so for what purposes? We cannot answer all of these questions from the Book of Mormon record we have so far, but there is enough material in the extant text for us to make educated guesses to answer some of these questions.

The word *altar* is only used four times in the Book of Mormon. The first time is when Lehi “built an altar of stones, and made an offering unto the Lord, and gave thanks unto the Lord our God” (1 Nephi 2:7). At this point the family was only three days journey from Jerusalem (1 Nephi 2:6), but they were

in the wilderness and apparently had no other place to worship. In constructing “an altar of stones,” Lehi followed a very old tradition. Modern Latter-day Saints understand that Adam similarly built an altar upon which he offered sacrifice (Moses 4:4–8), but biblical scripture confirms that Noah (Genesis 8:20), Abraham (Abraham 2:17, 20; Genesis 12:7, 8; 22:9), and many other prophets did likewise.<sup>94</sup> And most of the time, these places of prayer and sacrifice appear to have been elevated places.<sup>95</sup>

The second reference to an altar is in Jacob’s quotation of Isaiah’s vision and call as a prophet in 2 Nephi 16:6. The third reference is to the account of Alma and Amulek’s missionary journey to Sidom quoted above, where it was noted that the sanctuaries in that city at least featured altars (Alma 15:17). The last reference to an altar in the Book of Mormon comes in a passage about the missionary work of the sons of Mosiah<sub>2</sub> among the Lamanites. In that final Book of Mormon reference to an altar, it appears that the conversion of new church members involved a ritual appearance at the altar in the presence of the members of the congregation. The ritual is most apparent in the following passage: “And they had been teaching the word of God for the space of fourteen years among the Lamanites, having had much success in bringing many to the knowledge of the truth; yea, by the power of their words many were brought before the altar of God, to call on his name and confess their sins before him” (Alma 17:4).

This practice is strikingly unusual to modern Latter-day Saints and our inclination is to consider that it is probably a symbolic reference. It resonates more with our understanding of evangelical Christianity than with any ritual with which Latter-day Saints are familiar. Indeed, though there is a famous reference to Alma the Elder’s institution of the ordinance of baptism in the establishment

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94. For example in Genesis 35:1, 3, 7, where Jacob built an altar at Beth-el.

95. For example, when Abraham went to Moriah, he was directed to a mountain place and went up to make the appointed sacrifice (Genesis 22:2–14).

of his churches (Mosiah 18:8–16; 25:17, 18),<sup>96</sup> there is only one mention of the baptism of Lamanite converts arising from the mission of the sons of Mosiah to that people (Alma 19:35). Now perhaps that is because baptism was such an established part of the conversion ritual among all the children of Lehi that it did not need particular emphasis. Perhaps Alma as recorder was simply waxing adjectival when he chose to describe the Lamanite converts as having been brought before the altar to call on God's name and to confess their sins. But it is more likely that Alma intended to draw attention to something much more profound that had happened in the hearts of these converts—something that would reassure their future Nephite fellow-worshippers of the sincerity of these new Lamanite converts to the church established by his father. Perhaps for Alma, this confessional practice before the altar of their sanctuary was a better and more convincing proof than baptism of that humility which was the essential proof of true conversion, and that is why it rated more particular mention.

But this also brings to mind the Zoramite practice of one-by-one prayer on their raised stand or Rameumptom (Alma 31:12–23, esp. 21), within their synagogues. Rather than impress Alma, this shocked and appalled him (Alma 31:9–12, 24–35). He seems to have regarded it as apostasy—a corruption or changing of the ordinances that had not been approved by the prophets or local religious authorities. But the practice seems to have been derived from Nephite practice, both because these people were dissenters from the Nephites (Alma 31:8), and because Alma felt it his duty to reclaim them (Alma 31:35). Was the Rameumptom a species of altar? It seems that the normal synagogal practice of all Jewish peoples involved one standing and reading or reasoning from the scriptures from the focal point within that place of worship. When Christ later went and taught in the synagogue at Nazareth, the eyes of all those in at-

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96. Note, however, that Alma the Younger did baptize Zeezrom, who was a converted Nephite from the city of Ammonihah (Alma 15:12–14).

tendance were fastened or focused upon him (Luke 4:20). And it was similar when Aaron was taken to task as he spoke in the Amalekite synagogue (Alma 21:4–6). What was it about the Zoramite practice that so shocked Alma? His shock seems to have come from the hypocrisy he felt in what he heard—and the fact that the stand or altar was raised so conspicuously. For it does not seem that Alma had been shocked at all by the public confession of the converted Lamanites before other altars. For Alma, it seems that the Zoramite practice was hypocritical (Alma 31:23, 27). Not only did the words spoken condescend to other people who did not worship in their manner (Alma 31:22), but it did not generate pure religious activity as the fruit of its spirit.<sup>97</sup> But Alma was also appalled by the Zoramite exclusion of the poorer classes among them from their synagogues (Alma 32:9, 10) and affirmed, quoting Zenos, that they could worship anywhere at all (Alma 33: 2–10).<sup>98</sup>

Runesson, Binder, and Olsson also note some postexilic synagogal practices in the Old World that seem connected with the Zoramite synagogue practices which Alma found offensive. For in connection with the healing of the daughter of Jairus, they note that the synagogue leaders and scribes were a separate class from the generality of the people;<sup>99</sup> they note “fixed wording of public and private prayers for proselytes” from around AD 200;<sup>100</sup> and they note that when the Alexandrian Jews were

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97. Rather Alma perceived that their hearts were set upon their riches and the other vain things of this world (Alma 31:24, 28).

98. Note that these ‘private religious worship’ injunctions from Zenos may explain why his words appeared on the brass plates but not in the Old Testament biblical records that have descended to us through the Jews. If Zenos’s teaching about private religious devotion was taken at face value, it would have undermined totally the central worship which both Barker and Miller assert that King Josiah sought to establish in his reforms. If Zenos was known for his advocacy of private religious devotion, this may have been good reason to exclude his words from the canonical text.

99. Runesson, Binder, and Olsson, *Ancient Synagogue*, 81–82.

100. Runesson, Binder, and Olsson, *Ancient Synagogue*, 105.

deprived of their *proseuche* (either a prayer hall or a synagogue) by Flaccus, the Roman Prefect in Egypt during the first century AD, the synagogal congregation retreated to the nearby beach to pray and sing hymns.<sup>101</sup>

There is “cultural significance” in all of this. For, in the spirit of David Hackett Fischer’s insight that transplanted people often follow the religious practices of their home more faithfully than those left behind,<sup>102</sup> it seems that at least some groups of the children of Lehi used “access to the synagogue” as a means of exercising social control over their peers. For the exclusion of the man born blind from the synagogue because he would not deny Jesus (John 9:34); the fear of that man’s parents lest they be excluded (John 9:22); and the lament of the poor Zoramites that they could not worship because of an exclusion already carried out (Alma 32:2), have a similar spirit. And there is a similar spirit too in the fact that Peter (Acts 5:18; 12:3–6) and Paul (Acts 22:24; 23:10; 25:4), Alma and Amulek (Alma 14:4, 17–28), Aaron and his brethren (Alma 20–29), and Nephi and Lehi (Helaman 5:21–50) were all imprisoned for preaching unacceptable doctrines in synagogues that were theoretically open to all who would preach from the scriptures. Though there is nothing particularly remarkable about imprisonment for preaching religion, there is a particular and unique hypocrisy in excommunication with imprisonment following teaching in a synagogue.

## Conclusion

The thesis of this essay is that Nephite worship practices likely provide a better picture of pre-exilic Jewish worship practices than has been preserved by Old World tradition. That is because the Nephites were probably more faithful to the

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101. Runesson, Binder, and Olsson, *Ancient Synagogue*, 179–180.

102. See above, nn. 5–10, and supporting text.

old traditions than the Jews who remained in Jerusalem and who were later exiled to Babylon. This essay has suggested that this thesis can be tested by a careful review of Nephite worship practices as those are revealed in the Book of Mormon. In particular, the Nephite practice and use of synagogues and other places of worship in local communities is likely to have preserved the practices that existed in Jerusalem before Lehi left in a less adulterated form than came back with the exiles from Babylon. Traditional Jewish scholarship holds that synagogues did not exist before the exile, that synagogal worship evolved in Babylon as a response to separation from the Temple in Jerusalem. But a more holistic view of Israelite religious practice after the exodus from Egypt suggests that Moses and Joshua must have made provision for local worship where the tribes which were to settle in Palestine were necessarily separate from, first, the portable tabernacle at Shiloh and, later, Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem. That the Nephites built not only a temple, but also synagogues, sanctuaries, and other places of worship after their exodus from Jerusalem suggests that the practice of local worship in synagogues or like places of worship was much older than the Jewish exile in Babylon.

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# NEW LIGHT AND OLD SHADOWS: JOHN G. TURNER'S ATTEMPT TO UNDERSTAND BRIGHAM YOUNG

*Craig L. Foster*

*Review of John G. Turner, Brigham Young: Pioneer Prophet (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2012), viii, 500, map, photos, notes, index.*

Brigham Young has repeatedly been described as larger than life and most people, critics and supporters, would agree. Brigham Young (1801–1877), second president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, led the Saints like a modern-day Moses from the turmoil of Nauvoo to the Great Basin. He then oversaw the settlement of over three hundred communities in the intermountain west. He directed the growth and development of the LDS Church and left an indelible mark on both Mormonism and the western United States. Brigham Young was, indeed, larger than life.

With such a complex and dynamic individual as Brigham Young, undertaking the writing of his biography is very difficult with many possible pitfalls. Leonard J. Arrington's award-winning work, *Brigham Young: American Moses* (1985), was excellent in some ways but fell short in other aspects of analyzing Young's life. Other Brigham Young biographies, including the well-researched, very readable, and certainly enjoyable *Brigham Young and the Expanding American Frontier* (1986) by Newell G. Bringhurst, have also fallen short to one degree or another.

John Turner's *Brigham Young: Pioneer Prophet* has attempted to go beyond the previous Brigham Young biographies,

and in some ways he has succeeded. The depth and breadth of Turner's material is certainly impressive and the fact he was allowed "access to the entirety of the massive Brigham Young Papers and several other key collections" (p. 487) adds to the richness of the biography. Unfortunately, this book too falls short in some areas. It is uneven: some sections of the book, such as the prologue and first chapter, are very well written and flow beautifully. Other parts of the book are plodding and redundant, leaving the reader both disappointed and frustrated.

John G. Turner comes to this biography with an impressive background, having earned degrees in theology and history at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary and Notre Dame. He was able to approach Brigham Young and early Latter-day Saint history from both a theological and historical perspective and, because of his diverse training and research expertise, was able to place Brigham Young's and the Mormon experience into a broader social and historical context. This helps readers to have a better understanding of what happened and why.

Perhaps one of the best features of the book is the extent to which Turner spent time discussing the wives of Brigham Young. About fifty pages of the biography are dedicated to discussing both the wives and the complex relationships which Brigham had with them. The lack of discussion about Brigham Young's home life was one of the weaknesses of Arrington's Brigham Young biography and, while Bringham had some excellent information regarding the wives and children, he was limited by time and space. Turner was able to discuss this aspect of Brigham's life in much greater depth.

Unfortunately, while the book certainly spends more pages discussing Brigham Young's family life, it did not live up to its potential. This is particularly the case when it comes to its treatment of Brigham's fifty-seven children. Despite the non-Mormon caricatures of Brigham Young as an unloving, uncaring despot who neither knew the names nor personalities of

his numerous wives and children, Brigham Young was actually very loving and caring, particularly when it came to his children.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, while there was information about the various wives, such as Miriam Works and Mary Ann Angell, both of whom he married monogamously, and such plural wives as Lucy Ann Decker, Clarissa Decker, Emily Partridge, Emmeline Free, Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner, Zina D. Huntington, Harriet Amelia Folsom, and (naturally) Ann Eliza Webb, some of the wives seem to have received less attention than they merited, while others were examined in more detail than necessary.

For example, Augusta Adams Cobb, who left her non-Mormon husband and married Brigham Young, received almost as much attention in the book as Zina D. Huntington and Eliza R. Snow, both of whom served as general presidents of the women's Relief Society. Cobb received more attention than Emmeline Free, significantly more than either Clarissa or Lucy Ann Decker, or Emily Dow Partridge, all of whom bore Young a number of children and who would have been considered more important in the Young household. In fact, Augusta Adams Cobb had more attention in the text than Harriet Amelia Folsom who was supposed to have been Brigham Young's great love in his old age. Cobb even had more attention than Ann

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1. Artemus Ward, American author and humorist, wrote in *Artemus Ward: His Travels* (New York: Carlton, 1865), "He don't pretend to know his children, there is so many of um, tho they all know him. He sez about every child he meats call him Par, & he takes it for grantid it is so." <http://twain.lib.virginia.edu/roughingit/map/morward.html>. For more examples of the negative portrayal of Brigham Young and plural marriage, see Craig L. Foster, "Victorian Pornographic Imagery in Anti-Mormon Literature," *Journal of Mormon History* 19 (Spring 1993): 115–32 and Douglas McKay, "The Puissant Procreator: The Comic Ridicule of Brigham Young," *Sunstone* 7/6 (November–December 1982): 14–17. For examples of Brigham Young's actual relationship with his children, see the following: Susa Young Gates, "How Brigham Young Brought Up His 56 Children," *Physical Culture* (February 1925): 29–31, 138–44; Dean C. Jessee, "Brigham Young's Family: The Wilderness Years," *BYU Studies* 19:4 (1979): 1–23; and Jessee, *Letters of Brigham Young to His Sons* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974).

Eliza Webb who gained notoriety for suing Brigham Young for divorce and then traveling the country talking about the horrors of polygamy. Admittedly, Cobb was an extremely colorful individual of questionable sanity whose prolific writing is a fertile reservoir for provocative quotes, such as her request to be sealed to Jesus Christ or at least Joseph Smith and then complaining to Brigham Young about his sowing “holy seed [with younger wives]” (p. 192) and referring to Brigham Young as “Lord Brigham,” “his Excellency,” and “Mr. Proxy” (p. 193). Nevertheless, given Brigham Young’s rocky relationship with her, which limited the interactions which they shared, as well as her lack of historical importance, the reader is left to wonder why Augusta Adams Cobb received so much attention.

In general, John Turner did a fairly good job in retaining a neutral posture regarding plural marriage. Still, there were places in the book where the claim of neutrality seemed strained. While discussing Joseph Smith’s relationship with Fanny Alger, Turner described it as Smith’s “first well-documented nonmonogamous relationship” and then quoted Oliver Cowdery calling the relationship a “dirty, nasty, filthy affair” (p. 88). He concluded his discussion about Fanny Alger by stating, “Whether Smith was motivated by religious obedience or pursued sexual dalliances clothed with divine sanction cannot be fully resolved through historical analysis” (p. 88).

Turner’s approach to Fanny Alger is problematic for a couple of reasons. The first is that describing her as the “first well-documented nonmonogamous relationship” (p. 88) is certainly not neutral in tone or implication, since the unspoken suggestion is that Joseph had been involved in other non-documented

relationships prior to Fanny.<sup>2</sup> This has long been a trope used by hostile voices, but the evidence for it is scant.<sup>3</sup>

The second problem is that while Turner cited some primary documents—Oliver Cowdery’s letter to his brother, Warren Cowdery—the only two secondary sources cited were Todd Compton’s *In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* (1997) and George D. Smith’s *Nauvoo Polygamy* (2008). For some reason, Turner chose not to cite the excellent essay by Don Bradley, titled, “Mormon Polygamy Before Nauvoo? The Relationship of Joseph Smith and Fanny Alger.” In this groundbreaking essay, Bradley showed that Oliver Cowdery had first written “scrape,” which at that time could mean a problematic

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2. There was at least one reader/reviewer who felt Turner “overreaches when he describes Joseph Smith’s seduction of the teenage servant girl Fanny Alger as the prophet’s ‘first well-documented nonmonogamous relationship.’ The business was more sordid than that.” This according to Alex Beam, “Latter-day Patriarch,” *The New York Times* (19 October 2012), <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/21/books/review/brigham-young-pioneer-prophet-by-john-g-turner.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>. Beam took issue with Turner’s handling of plural marriage which he described as “squishy in the extreme.” Beam, a columnist for the *Boston Globe* is presently writing a book about the death of Joseph Smith. His review of Turner’s book might give people a hint of the tone his book on Joseph Smith will take. As a part of his review of Turner’s book, Beam wrote, “For over a century, the church cleaved to ‘faith-promoting’ histories about heroic Joseph and Brigham, and the evil Gentiles who persecuted them. As recently as 19 years ago, Salt Lake’s guardians of the Saintry flame excommunicated several prominent writers and historians for what the old-line Soviets would have called ‘deviationist’ points of view.”

3. A good example is Richard Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1989), 4–5. See a similar style in George D. Smith, “Nauvoo Polygamy: ‘... but we called it celestial marriage’,” (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2008), 44–45. Even Van Wagoner’s endnotes somewhat undercut this narrative. For a detailed discussion of the evidentiary problems with this approach, see Gregory L. Smith, “Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Plural Marriage\* (\*but were afraid to ask),” FAIR Conference presentation, Sandy, UT, 7 August 2009, <http://www.fairlds.org/fair-conferences/2009-fair-conference/everything-you-always-wanted-to-know-about-plural-marriage-but-were-afraid-to-ask>. See also a review of the 2008 volume’s treatment in Gregory L. Smith, “George D. Smith’s *Nauvoo Polygamy* (A review of “*Nauvoo Polygamy: ... but we called it celestial marriage*” by: George D. Smith),” *FARMS Review* 20/2 (2008): 60–68.

event or mess, rather than “affair” but had crossed out what was considered “a low word” and replaced it with “affair” which was considered a more sophisticated word. Realizing that “scrape” was the word originally used, however, changes the popular interpretation of Cowdery’s description of the relationship and supports Bradley and others’ argument that Fanny Alger was Joseph Smith’s first plural wife.<sup>4</sup>

While discussing possible sexual relations in polygamous marriages, Turner wrote, “There is some, but not as much, evidence that Smith consummated the marriages to plural wives who already possessed husbands” (pp. 89–90). Once again, Turner could have enriched the discussion by citing Brian C. Hales’s argument in, “Joseph Smith and the Puzzlement of ‘Polyandry.’” Hales argues persuasively that Joseph Smith did not engage in sexual activity with any already married woman to whom he was sealed except for Sylvia Sessions Lyon, who was estranged and regarded herself as divorced from her husband. This was the same marriage for which Turner cited Compton’s *In Sacred Loneliness*,<sup>5</sup> but he has missed the additional data provided by Hales.

The Smith-Alger relationship and the question of sexuality in polyandrous marriages were not the only aspects of plural marriage about which John Turner appears to have been less than neutral. While discussing how the “marital stampede” of the Mormon Reformation of 1856–1857 “led to a decrease in the marriage age,” Turner wrote, “Although marriages of fourteen-year-old girls were not unheard of in the rest of the United States (the legal age of consent was often twelve for girls), such unions were very rare. Mormon lead-

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4. Don Bradley, “Mormon Polygamy Before Nauvoo? The Relationship of Joseph Smith and Fanny Alger,” in *The Persistence of Polygamy: Joseph Smith and the Origins of Mormon Polygamy* ed. Newell G. Bringhurst and Craig L. Foster (Independence, MO: John Whitmer Books, 2011), 32.

5. Brian C. Hales, “Joseph Smith and the Puzzlement of ‘Polyandry’” in *Persistence of Polygamy*, 99–151.

ers, by contrast, blessed an unusual number of early marriages, especially during the reformation [*sic*]” (p. 257).

Unfortunately, Turner did not adequately source his statement regarding the commonality of early age of marriage. Two endnotes later, however, he cited Todd Compton’s essay, “Early Marriage in the New England and Northeastern States, and in Mormon Polygamy: What was the Norm?” which appeared in Bringham and Foster, *The Persistence of Polygamy*.<sup>6</sup> Apparently he used Compton’s essay as source information regarding the age of marriage. Amazingly, it appears that Turner’s use of material from *The Persistence of Polygamy* was somewhat selective. As seen above, he chose not to cite Don Bradley’s essay regarding Fanny Alger and he also chose to ignore the essay by Craig L. Foster, David Keller, and Gregory L. Smith, “The Age of Joseph Smith’s Plural Wives in Social and Demographic Context,” which argues that while marriage to fourteen-year-old girls was not as common as to older teenage girls, the relatively young marital ages among nineteenth-century Saints did, indeed, fit within the larger historical context of American society, especially on the frontier.<sup>7</sup> It is a pity that Turner focused on Compton’s analysis, which relied on the New England states, rather than the arguably more relevant data about the American frontier. Nauvoo-era Mormons were on the frontier, and those of Reformation-era Utah were even more so. Because of this, readers miss a vital bit of historical context.

It should be noted that in a discussion between the reviewer and John G. Turner in Salt Lake City on 20 October

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6. Todd M. Compton, “Early Marriage in the New England and Northeastern States, and in Mormon Polygamy: What was the Norm?” in *Persistence of Polygamy*, 184–232.

7. Craig L. Foster, David Keller, and Gregory L. Smith, “The Age of Joseph Smith’s Plural Wives in Social and Demographic Context” in Newell G. Bringham and Craig L. Foster, *The Persistence of Polygamy: Joseph Smith and the Origins of Mormon Polygamy* (Independence, MO: John Whitmer Books, 2011), 152–83.

2012, Turner stated that *The Persistence of Polygamy* came out too late for him to really use or cite it much in his book. This claim, however, is problematic given the fact that he was able to cite the essay that agreed with his assumption that marriage to fourteen-year-old girls was “very rare” while ignoring the essay that counters this assumption. If one essay was able to be cited, why not others?

Turner also dwelt quite a bit on what could be termed the *culture of violence* among the early Latter-day Saints, in both word and deed. In fact, the subject was brought up so often in one context or another that it seemed to be a key sub-theme of the book. To his credit, Turner attempted to place some of these examples of violence within a broader cultural and historical context. He did not, however, go far enough.

For example, while Turner cited Kenneth W. Godfrey’s “Crime and Punishment in Mormon Nauvoo, 1839–1846” and Glen M. Leonard’s *Nauvoo: A Place of Peace, a People of Promise*, as well as a couple of other sources, he still made it sound as if counterfeiting and other crimes were only a Nauvoo problem and that they might specifically have been a uniquely or particularly Mormon problem. After describing an indictment for counterfeiting issued against Brigham Young and other prominent church leaders, Turner wrote, “It remains unclear whether Young or only lower-ranking church leaders like Turley had sanctioned the bogus-making operation in Nauvoo” (p. 127). Turner also explained there were “serious instances of vigilantism” in Nauvoo (p. 122).

The historical record demonstrates that counterfeiting and extralegal violence did exist in Nauvoo. But not only does Turner appear to make some assumptions, he should also have placed Mormon Nauvoo within the social milieu of that time by explaining how the Mississippi River Valley was a “rough and tumble society” and that “counterfeiters congregated” in



the Mississippi River Valley and “along the borders of states and territories, seeking refuge in the cracks and crevices of the federal system.”<sup>8</sup> (We note, as with the age of plural wives, that Turner is again ignoring the frontier nature of Mormon society.) Nauvoo, in spite of its taverns, brothels, petty criminals, and other social ills, actually seemed to generally fare better than other places in the Mississippi River Valley where life could be “poor, nasty, brutish and short, [and] was certainly filthy, chaotic and dangerous.”<sup>9</sup>

In other words, while activities and cultural climate should certainly have been better in a community founded on religious principles, Nauvoo was no different than other Mississippi River communities and perhaps even better than most. The Latter-day Saint culture of violence, according to Turner, continued and even expanded when they settled in the Great Basin. Furthermore, the violence was not only condoned but encouraged by Brigham Young who preached beheading as punishment (p. 186) and the concept of blood atonement which was explained that “adulterers, murderers, violators of the covenants made in the endowment, and those who had committed the biblically opaque sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit” should pay by the shedding of their blood “that the smoke thereof might ascend to God as an offering to appease the wrath that is kindled against them” (p. 258).

Turner gave a number of examples of acts of extra-legal violence or vigilantism which included beatings, castration and death. Extra-legal justice was meted out for an array of crimes

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8. Stephen Mihm, *A Nation of Counterfeiters: Capitalists, Con Men, and the Making of the United States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 17, 159.

9. Roger K. Miller, “No romanticizing of life on Mississippi,” *Chicago Sun-Times* (24 October 2010), <http://www.suntimes.com/entertainment/books/2830250,SHO-Books-wicked24.article>. The article discusses Lee Sandlin, *Wicked River: The Mississippi When It Last Ran Wild* (New York: Pantheon, 2010).

and sins including apostasy, theft, adultery and seduction, as well as murder (pp. 258–59, 262, 349). Regarding extralegal justice and violence, Turner wrote:

Utah, of course, differed in important ways from other parts of the mid-century American West. Unlike in San Francisco, there were no widespread political or ethnic divisions fueling vigilantism, and there was no apparent popular demand for extralegal violence. In comparison to other western states and territories, indeed, Utah was remarkable for its lack of organized vigilante activity. In Utah, though, the governor and head of the territory's quasi-established religion lent his approval—at least after the fact—to shadowy acts of retribution that alarmed even some loyal Mormons. Ordering the deaths of horse thieves was unremarkable in the American West, but Young also condoned the castration of Thomas Lewis and the Parish-Potter murders and suggested that an unspecified number of other individuals deserved to die. Brigham Young, who had feared for his life while on the margins of Illinois society, created a climate in which men and women on the margins of Mormon society lived in a similar state of fear. (p. 262)

Turner's description of territorial Utah, while generally correct, verges on the melodramatic. It is true that extralegal justice took place, at times with the blessings of community and religious leaders. It is also true that punishment not only involved beatings and expulsion from the community, but also castration and even death. But, as Turner, noted, Utah's acts of vigilantism were remarkably lower than surrounding states and territories. Furthermore, Turner does attempt to place Utah's acts of violence within historical context, but he falls short of adequately doing so.

First of all, while Brigham Young's preaching and rhetoric might seem strange, even offensive, to modern ears, it was what a rougher, less gentle group of people needed at that time. In his article, "Raining Pitchforks: Brigham Young as Preacher," Ronald W. Walker explored Young's preaching, explaining that he did not want the people to be complacent, especially in their weaknesses and sins. Instead, Brigham Young stated, "You need, figuratively, to have it rain pitchforks, tines downwards. . . . Instead of the smooth, beautiful, sweet, still, silk-velvet-lipped preaching, you should have sermons like peals of thunder."<sup>10</sup>

Brigham Young's tough talk was especially strong during times of real and perceived problems.

During the Mormon Reformation of 1856 he delivered what was described by Wilford Woodruff as "one of the strongest addresses that was ever delivered to this Church & Kingdom." Young denounced the Saints "for lying[,] steali[n]g, swaring, committing adultery, quarelli[n]g with Husbands wives & Children and many other evils[.] He spoke in the power of God & the demonstration of the Holy Ghost & his voice & words were like the Thunderings of Mount Sina."<sup>11</sup>

In spite of a celebrated temper and strong sermons, Brigham Young was known for having a loud bark but not a strong bite.<sup>12</sup> In spite of raining pitchforks and preaching blood-curdling threats, Brigham Young tended to be kind, sagacious, and forgiving when dealing individually with sinners and members with problems. This did not, however, mean

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10. *Journal of Discourses* 3:222–223 as quoted in Ronald W. Walker, "Raining Pitchforks: Brigham Young as Preacher," *Sunstone* 8 (May–June 1983): 7.

11. Wilford Woodruff Diary, 14 September 1856, as quoted in Walker, "Raining Pitchforks," 7.

12. Walker, "Raining Pitchforks," 8.

there was no bite. Brigham, like other leaders of his time, could be hard when needed.

Again, this was a different, rougher time where physical punishment was more common and certain levels of violence were not only expected but accepted. Richard Maxwell Brown wrote that “a salient fact of American violence is that, time and again, it has been the instrument not merely of the criminal and disorderly but of the most upright and honorable” and “Americans have never been loath to employ the most unremitting violence in the interest of any cause deemed a good one.”<sup>13</sup> What is more, many vigilante groups and movements were led by and included some of the most upstanding and respected men in the community.

Another point that Turner should have noted is that while there were certainly examples of extralegal justice and violence among Latter-day Saints, they were not alone. Other religious denominations also experienced and participated in the culture of violence that permeated America to one degree or another from the time of colonial settlement throughout the nineteenth century and arguably to the present. For example, the Ulster Presbyterians who settled on the American frontier were known for their violence. It has been suggested that they may “have been a product of their strict Calvinist heritage. Like many religious groups, orthodox Scottish and Irish Presbyterians were firmly wedded to the notion of an unvarying religious truth, but the manner in which they defended that truth often gave their institutions an unusual rigidity.”<sup>14</sup>

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13. Richard Maxwell Brown, *Strain of Violence: Historical Studies of American Violence and Vigilantism* (USA: Oxford University Press, 1977), 4, 7.

14. Joanna Brooks, “Held Captive by the Irish: Quaker Captivity Narratives in Frontier Pennsylvania,” *New Hibernia Review* 8/3 (2004): 31; and Ned C. Landsman, “Roots, Routes, and Rootedness: Diversity, Migration, and Toleration in Mid-Atlantic Pluralism,” *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 2/2 (2004): 294.

The Ulster Presbyterians were not alone in their heritage of violence. Methodists were both the recipients and the perpetrators of sectarian and extralegal violence that included rioting, jeering, rock throwing, and even lynching.<sup>15</sup> In fact, some early nineteenth-century Methodist writings “emphasized the moral value of defending the self and others.” Methodists were, of course, influenced by an American culture in which “dominant images of masculinity and the cultural fascination with violence in the West and South also made it easier to justify the use of violence as a reasonable and even necessary responsibility.”<sup>16</sup>

Some of the aforementioned violence involved Methodist confrontations with Baptists—the war of words would sometimes turn physical. Among the Baptists, particularly the Southern Baptists, violence was both inter- and intra-denominational. “Mainstream Southern religion has rarely been distinguished by either restraint or lethargy.”<sup>17</sup> The entire nineteenth-century saw examples of Baptist mob violence that included intimidation, beatings and even murder.<sup>18</sup>

Religious violence certainly was not confined to the South and West. Even staid New England and the eastern seaboard experienced examples of extralegal and religious-influenced violence. In the early colonies, Puritans “turned their violent energies against members of their own community by

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15. Richard Carwardine, “Methodists, Politics, and the Coming of the American Civil War,” *Church History* 69/3 (September 2000): 593, 604–605. For examples of anti-Mormon violence similar to what the Methodists experienced, see Patrick Mason, *The Mormon Menace: Violence and Anti-Mormonism in the Postbellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

16. Jeffrey Williams, *Religion and Violence in Early American Methodism: Taking the Kingdom by Force* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010), 128.

17. Charles Wellborn, “Brann vs the Baptists: Violence in Southern Religion,” *Christian Ethics Today* 33 (27 December 2010): 14. The article may also be accessed at <http://www.christianethicstoday.com/cetart/index.cfm?fuseaction=Articles.main&ArtID=786>.

18. Wellborn, “Brann vs the Baptists,” 14.

banishing, torturing, and killing those Puritans who embraced the Quaker doctrine of the inner light or who were accused by their neighbors of witchcraft.”<sup>19</sup> In Philadelphia, a series of Protestant-Catholic conflicts over Bible-reading in public schools escalated into full-blown violence in the summer of 1844 leading to “a series of violent confrontations in which churches and homes were destroyed by arson and at least seventeen people were killed.”<sup>20</sup> Other eastern cities also experienced Catholic-Protestant violence. Boston, for example, experienced religious rioting brought on by evangelical Protestant evangelizing as late as 1895.<sup>21</sup>

Noted historian Anne M. Butler wrote, “One almost cannot speak of western history without taking into account the place and power of violence in the heritage of the west.”<sup>22</sup> In reality, while the Old West is famous for a high level of real and imagined violence, what happened in the West only reflected an earlier heritage that was carried from the Old World into the colonies and then traveled westward with the pioneer migration. While the Scotch-Irish have a reputation of having transported with them to America a violent tradition that stemmed from centuries of having lived in the Celtic fringe of northern England, Scotland, and Ireland, they were not alone. Even those living in other parts of England had a heritage of violent reaction to real and perceived crimes and injustices.<sup>23</sup>

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19. Daniel P. Buchanan, “Tares in the Wheat: Puritan Violence and Puritan Families in the Nineteenth-Century Liberal Imagination,” *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 8/2 (Summer, 1998): 205.

20. Tracy Fessenden, “The Nineteenth-Century Bible Wars and the Separation of Church and State,” *Church History* 74/4 (Dec. 2005): 784.

21. Margaret Bendroth, “Rum, Romanism, and Evangelism: Protestants and Catholics in Late-Nineteenth-Century,” *Church History* 68/3 (September 1999): 643.

22. Robert R. Dykstra, “Body Counts and Murder Rates: The Contested Statistics of Western Violence,” *Reviews in American History* 31/4 (2003): 554.

23. For examples of an English culture of violence see: Craig B. Little and Christopher P. Sheffield, “Frontiers and Criminal Justice: English Private

An example of what would be viewed as a violent tradition transported from the Old World to the New was castration. In *Brigham Young*, Turner repeatedly invoked the castration of Thomas Lewis (pp. 258–59, 262, 307, 345, 375). While such an act is viewed as barbaric and repulsive by modern readers, it was used as legal and extralegal punishment in both the Old and New World. In early Britain, castration was punishment for rape as a part of *lex talionis*, “the law of retaliation.”<sup>24</sup> This type of punishment was brought to the colonies: Connecticut had several cases of castration as a lesser punishment than death. Not all of the cases of castration involved rape. At least one was punishment for committing mayhem.<sup>25</sup> An example of castration as a form of extralegal justice was the castration of two Methodist ministers in North Carolina in August 1831. The two men were accused of having adulterous relations with the wife of a North Carolina Congressman. The Methodists were attacked and castrated by a mob.<sup>26</sup>

While it is debatable whether or not castration was better than death, death was certainly not ruled out for both legal and extralegal punishment. Naturally, death was usually the punishment for crimes like murder and horse stealing, but could also be meted out to people guilty of rape, sexual assault, or even seduction. The extent of public outrage and the subsequent punishment naturally varied depending upon the region

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Prosecution Societies and American Vigilantism in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” *American Sociological Review* 48/6 (December 1983): 796–808.

24. Cyndi Banks, *Punishment in America: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 10. For the definition of *lex talionis*, see “Lex Talionis,” *New World Encyclopedia*, [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Lex\\_talionis](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Lex_talionis).

25. “Whipping and Castration as Punishment for Crime,” *The Yale Law Journal* 8/9 (June 1899): 380–84.

26. David Grimsted, *American Mobbing, 1828–1861: Toward Civil War* (New York: Oxford, 1998), 93.

of the country, with reaction and retribution generally being harsher in the South and West.

At the very least, a man guilty of sexual dishonor could be jailed and fined, and those known or even believed to be guilty of such conduct were in danger of much worse. "Friends and relatives of a woman who had been 'unlawfully shocked, or whose feelings have been wounded' would feel an almost instinctual urge to avenge her honor."<sup>27</sup> Across the country during the middle of the nineteenth century there was a "so-called 'unwritten law' [which] decreed that a man had the right to avenge the sexual dishonor of a wife, mother, daughter, or sister."<sup>28</sup> It was recognized and accepted that "an outraged husband, father, or brother could justifiably kill the alleged libertine who had been sexually intimate with the defendant's wife, daughter or sister."<sup>29</sup>

Unfortunately, John Turner recounted the murder of Newton Brassfield without placing it in context of the belief that seducers and adulterers must pay a penalty up to and including death, and that friends and relatives could avenge that honor. Brassfield, a non-Mormon, was shot shortly after a marriage to Mary Emma Hill, a plural wife of a "Mormon then absent on a church mission" (p. 349). Brigham Young

denied any involvement in or knowledge of the crime, but he condoned the murder by adding that were he "absent from home," he "would rejoice to know that

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27. Lawrence M. Friedman, *Crime and Punishment in American History* (New York: Basic Books, 1993), 220.

28. Friedman, *Crime and Punishment*, 221.

29. Robert M. Ireland, "The Libertine Must Die: Sexual Dishonor and the Unwritten Law in the Nineteenth-Century United States," *Journal of Social History* 23/1 (Autumn 1989): 27. According to John A. Peterson, Thomas Lewis was guilty of a sexual crime for which he was being transported to the territorial penitentiary and it was for that reason he was intercepted and castrated, "Warren Stone Snow, a Man in between: The Biography of a Mormon Defender," MA Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1985, 112–22.



I had friends there to protect and guard the virtue of my household.” As Young had previously done on a number of occasions, he stressed that husbands—and friends on their behalf—had the right to take vengeance on their wives’ seducers. (p. 349)

Brigham Young was repeating a commonly held belief in America at that time. Not only did Turner not place this event and attitude within the proper cultural and historical context, he stated that this and another murder explained later “raised fears among Utah’s non-Mormons that Young was making a renewed effort to intimidate Gentiles through violence” (p. 349).

To his credit, Turner mentioned that “Utah was remarkable for its lack of organized vigilante activity” (p. 262). Going a step further, in spite of the examples Turner gave in his biography, the number of violent incidents appears to have been less than in most surrounding states and territories. For example, cases of lynching between 1882 and 1903 are as follows: Arizona had 28, California 41, Colorado 64, Idaho 19, Montana an incredibly high 85, New Mexico 34, Oregon 19, Washington 26, and Wyoming 37. Of the states and territories surrounding Utah, only Nevada, with 5, had less than Utah’s 7 recorded cases of lynching.<sup>30</sup> Methods of ministering the ultimate judgment could be brutal. Along with hanging, some people were burned, others beaten to death, shot, and mutilated.<sup>31</sup> In Mississippi, a mob beheaded a victim, played kickball with the man’s head, and threw his body to hungry pigs.<sup>32</sup> Grisly as such acts are, it is hard to see how a mere seven deaths in Utah could

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30. Walter White, *Rope and Faggot: A Biography of Judge Lynch* (New York: Knopf, 1929; repr. New York: Arno, 1969), 254–59 and Frank Shay, *Judge Lynch: His First Hundred Years* (New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1969), 141, 144–47, 150, as quoted in Craig L. Foster, “Myth vs. Reality in the Burt Murder and Harvey Lynching,” *Journal of the West* 43/4 (Fall 2004): 54.

31. “Lynching,” <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/L/LY001.html>.

32. Grimsted, *American Mobbing*, 16.

successfully “intimidate” non-Mormons when the risks were higher elsewhere. This is especially true if such lynchings followed genuine crimes and offenses, such as rape and murder, instead of being mere persecution targeted at non-Mormons. A non-Mormon who did not rape or commit other outrages was almost certainly safer in Utah than most other places in the West, and one suspects that most knew it. Turner’s portrait smacks more of 19th century anti-Mormon sensationalism.

The emphasis on a culture of violence continued in the chapter discussing the Utah War and Mountain Meadows Massacre. John Turner naturally used a number of sources, two of which were Will Bagley’s *Blood of the Prophets* (2002) and Ronald W. Walker, Richard E. Turley, and Glen M. Leonard’s *Massacre at Mountain Meadows* (2008). The two books take different approaches to this tragic event, with *Blood of the Prophets* being highly critical of Brigham Young and the Mormons, claiming Brigham Young ordered the massacre and that there were no Indians involved.

Turner appears to have done an awkward tap dance between the two approaches, usually falling ungracefully onto the side of *Blood of the Prophets*. In describing accusations that some members of the Baker-Fancher wagon train that was eventually massacred might have poisoned Indians and livestock, Turner mentioned the theory propounded by Walker et al. that the “poisoning” of the cattle and subsequently the Indians was actually caused by anthrax, but people at that time naturally would not have known about anthrax.<sup>33</sup> Yet after stat-

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33. Turner did not mention the death of Proctor Robison who became ill shortly after skinning one of the cattle thought by people at that time to have been poisoned. Robison died on 21 September 1857, well after the wagon train had left Corn Creek and was later massacred. Nevertheless, cattle continued to become ill and local people thought it might still be from the supposed poisoning. A detailed study was conducted with inconclusive findings but suggestions for further, more detailed research, was probably published too late for Turner to have used in his book. The article is Ugo Perego, et al., “The Mountain

ing that it might have been anthrax, Turner wrote, “Later on, Young and others repeated false rumors that members of the Arkansas company had brought trouble upon themselves by poisoning the creek and an ox they had given to the Indians” (p. 276). Such a statement forces us to ask how these men could have been spreading false rumors if they sincerely did not understand about microbes and infectious diseases and had instead reached a conclusion that seemed plausible? Mistaken they could have been, but this does not mean they were intentionally spreading “false rumors.”

The tap dance continued with Turner writing that “Mormons and possibly some remaining Paiutes butchered the women, wounded, and most of the children” (p. 278). Possibly? The Indians either were or were not present. Walker et al. claimed Indians were present while Bagley insisted they were not. The awkward dance continued with Turner explaining that Will Bagley, “proud of his ‘Mormon heritage’ but no longer a church member . . . documented a long history of denial, obfuscation, and obstruction on the part of church leaders in relation to the massacre,” concluded that Brigham Young had planned and ordered the massacre. Turner then turned around and stated that “more recently, three historians employed by the Church History Department depicted the massacre as the work of local church leaders” (p. 279). He either knowingly or unknowingly biased the readers by painting Bagley as a “proud of his ‘Mormon Heritage’” historian who dutifully performed an enormous amount of research vs. Walker, Turley, and Leonard, “three historians employed” by the LDS Church who “depicted,” not documented, “the massacre as the work of local leaders.”

He then continued, “They [the three church historians] allow that ‘errors were made’ by Young, but they include his mistakes among those of James Buchanan and many others” (pp. 279–80). The reader is left to assume that all blame and mistakes must rest with Young and no others. Were there not mistakes made all around? Most historians of this tragic event certainly think so. Ultimately, continuing the awkward tap dance, Turner admitted “there was no good reason for Young to order a massacre” but then later added, and probably rightfully so, “Young bears significant responsibility for what took place at Mountain Meadows” (p. 280). Thus Turner had a foot on either side in his strange dance.

In spite of Turner’s minimal attempts to place Mormon examples of violence into a greater context, there seemed to be an over-emphasis on Mormon foibles and problems that reinforced not only a subtheme of a Mormon culture of violence but also brought into question the intellectual, spiritual, and moral fortitude of the Latter-day Saints as well as the character of Brigham Young. The following examples provide justification for such a strong statement.

Turner emphasized Brigham Young’s lack of patience with people, as well as mistreating and being “vindictive for years toward those who crossed him” (p. 5). He later commented, “In order to illustrate the hazards of apostasy, Young publicly humiliated those who strayed” (p. 330). He then described how Brigham Young had publicly humiliated Thomas Marsh, “Young’s former apostolic superior” who had returned to the church after years away from it. He then concluded, “After Marsh became thoroughly submissive, Young showed charity and mercy to his former superior” (p. 330).

Regarding Brigham Young’s continued theological and personality conflicts with Orson Pratt, Turner wrote, “Young wanted the Latter-day Saints to embrace him as the church’s living oracle, to see him as the font of true doctrine. Ideally, he

wanted a submission that flowed from sincere acceptance, not grudging obedience" (p. 332). But acceptance by church members of Brigham Young as a prophet might have been difficult, given the man portrayed by Turner.

Young was portrayed as irascible, mean-spirited, vindictive, and, as was shown in several different places of the biography, also vulgar and routinely used swear words. Turner pointed out that "Young sometimes said he only swore from the pulpit, but he also employed profanity in private councils" (p. 177). In explaining his bad language, Brigham Young explained, "I acknowledged in Nauvoo I was not so good a man as Joseph" (p. 178).

Whether or not Brigham Young "was not so good a man as Joseph" Smith, the previous examples seem calculated to call into question the character of Young. Moreover, given the repeated negative emphasis placed on Brigham Young's character flaws and some questionable decisions and actions, the book implicitly casts doubt on the judgment of Latter-day Saint contemporaries who accepted Young as an inspired man, even a prophet. If Turner's portrait of Young is a fair and balanced one, why did so many follow him and even love him despite his character flaws? What did they see that Turner does not show us? "The biographer is more than the equal of his subject," warned Gertrude Himmelfarb, "he is his superior. 'Raised upon a little eminence,' as Woolf says, he can look down upon his subject, the better to observe his petty, all too human features."<sup>34</sup>

This is not to suggest that Brigham Young's character flaws and mistakes should not be discussed. To the contrary, it is vital that they should be. Otherwise, it would not be an honest attempt to truly understand the man and his life. Nevertheless, Turner's tone at times, as well as his dwelling on the negative, leaves the reader to wonder whether or not John Turner actu-

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34. Gertrude Himmelfarb, *On Looking Into the Abyss: Untimely Thoughts on Culture and Society* (New York, Vintage Books, 1994), 35.

ally liked Brigham Young. If not, biography will generally suffer, as British poet Carol Rumens noted: “The ideal biographer must admire his subject but remain clear-eyed.”<sup>35</sup>

The Brigham Young portrayed by John Turner was not a likable person. Indeed, he was a most unlikable individual. Other readers had similar reactions. Doug Gibson announced “I don’t care much for Brigham Young the man.”<sup>36</sup> Julie M. Smith wrote how she had felt an increased appreciation for previous church presidents after reading their biographies. With this book, she declared, “I can’t say the same about Brigham Young; I liked him—and respected him—less. Much less.”<sup>37</sup> Jason Lee Steorts was even more descriptive in his distaste for “a man both great and greatly flawed.” He began his review of the book by stating, “If a magnetic, irritable, and occasionally horrifying Moses were the main character in a quite bloody western, watching it might be something like reading this new biography of Mormonism’s second prophet.”<sup>38</sup>

If John Turner’s goal was to dissuade readers from liking or admiring Brigham Young then he was quite successful. It is doubtful that was his goal. Still, the Brigham Young portrayed in this book is not as multidimensional as he could have been and is more negatively portrayed than he should have been. It was not only right but necessary for Turner to address controversial issues and teachings like the Adam-God theory, denying blacks the priesthood, the Mormon Reformation of 1856–1857,

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35. Carol Rumens, “[review of] *The Bard*, By Robert Crawford,” *The Independent* (16 January 2009), <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/the-bard-by-robert-crawfordbr-a-night-out-with-robert-burns-ed-andrew-ohagan-1379914.html>.

36. Doug Gibson, “Brigham Young biography portrays a great leader and an unpleasant man,” *Standard-Examiner* (8 October 2012), <http://www.standard.net/stories/2012/10/05/brigham-young-biography-portrays-great-leader-and-unpleasant-man>.

37. Julie M. Smith, *Times and Seasons* (10 September 2012), <http://timesandseasons.org/index.php/2012/09/book-review-brigham-young-pioneer-prophet-by-john-g-turner/>.

38. Jason Lee Steorts, “The Mormon Moses,” *National Review* 64/20 (29 October 2012): 42.

the movement to boycott non-Mormon businesses as a way of encouraging them to leave Utah, and a host of other issues. The fact that Brigham Young sometimes swore like a sailor and used violent language like “cut their throats” is also necessary in order to get a well-rounded picture of Brigham Young.

But was there not enough room to also include some of Brigham Young’s other teachings and statements? Certainly Turner, in the process of studying the *Journal of Discourses* and other publications of Brigham Young’s numerous speeches would have found and could have included some of Young’s teachings about Jesus Christ and His gospel. For example, Young stated, “Our faith is concentrated in the Son of God, and through him in the Father.”<sup>39</sup> He also taught, “The Latter-day Saints believe in the Gospel of the Son of God, simply because it is true”<sup>40</sup> and “This Gospel will save the whole human family; the blood of Jesus will atone for our sins, if we accept the terms he has laid down; but we must accept those terms or else it will avail nothing in our behalf.”<sup>41</sup>

Brigham Young didn’t stop there in his teachings about and personal faith in the atoning sacrifice. He explained how God’s plan of salvation affected all of His children:

Millions of [people] have passed away, both in the Christian and in the heathen worlds, just as honest, just as virtuous and upright as any now living. The Christian world say they are lost; but the Lord will save them, or at least, all who will receive the Gospel. The plan of salvation which Jesus has revealed, and which

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39. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 26, as quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1997), 32.

40. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 30 as quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, 38.

41. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 7-8 as quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, 39.

we preach, reaches to the lowest and most degraded of Adam's lost race.<sup>42</sup>

With his own personal failings in mind and certainly with a hope in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Young preached:

We rejoice because the Lord is ours, because we are sown in weakness for the express purpose of attaining to greater power and perfection. In everything, the saints may rejoice ... Do you ask if I rejoice because the Devil has the advantage over the inhabitants of the earth and has afflicted mankind? I most assuredly answer in the affirmative; I rejoice in this as much as in anything else. I rejoice because I am afflicted. I rejoice because I am poor. I rejoice because I am cast down. Why? Because I shall be lifted up again. I rejoice that I am poor because I shall be made rich; that I am afflicted because I shall be comforted, and prepared to enjoy the felicity of perfect happiness, for it is impossible to properly appreciate happiness except by enduring the opposite.<sup>43</sup>

In spite of Brigham Young's prickly personality and obvious character flaws, he taught an upbeat gospel of love and hope. "How do you feel, Saints, when you are filled with the power and love of God? You are just as happy as your bodies can bear."<sup>44</sup> "The whole world are after happiness. It is not found in gold and silver, but it is in peace and love."<sup>45</sup> Julie M. Smith complained that the reader is "not left with any reason

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42. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 60-61 as quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, 52.

43. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 228 as quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, 178.

44. *Millennial Star Supplement*, 15:48 as quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, 184.

45. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 235 as quoted in *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young*, 184.



as to why people would have made the enormous sacrifices that were part of believing that Brigham Young was the prophet.”<sup>46</sup> If Turner had included just some of Brigham Young’s other sermons and teachings, the reason for the Saint’s devotion and support would have been more obvious.

Thus John G. Turner’s *Brigham Young: Pioneer Prophet* falls short of portraying the whole person, and lacks vital contextualization that help us to understand some of his less appealing traits. Because of the negative tone and apparent over-emphasis on the darker side of Brigham Young and Mormonism, as well as some factual errors,<sup>47</sup> I cannot recommend this book for the average reader. I do, however, strongly recommend the book for experienced students and scholars of Mormon history in general and Brigham Young in particular.

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46. Smith, *Times and Seasons*.

47. Among a number of factual errors are two examples. The first was on p. 85 in which Turner stated that Brigham Young and others were introduced the Endowment ceremony in “the same upper room in the lodge,” meaning the Masonic lodge. Both the Masonic lodge and the endowments were held in the upstairs room of Joseph Smith’s Red Brick Store. Construction on the Masonic Hall or lodge was not started until 1843 and not completed until 1844. Turner should have been more specific if he was aware of the difference between these two buildings. The second example is on p. 273 in which he quoted Brigham Young speaking about Johnston’s Army approaching Utah in 1857, “I shall lay this building [the Salt Lake Tabernacle] in ashes.” The problem with Turner’s added note to the quote is that construction on the now standing Salt Lake Tabernacle was not started until 1864 and it was completed in 1867. Brigham Young was probably have been speaking in the third bowery constructed on Temple Square. The first two boweries had outlived their use and the Old Tabernacle was completed in 1852. It proved, however, to be too small and a third, much larger bowery was constructed in 1854 and was used when the weather was warm. As Young gave the quoted speech on 16 August 1857, the meeting was probably not in the smaller, more cramped Old Tabernacle. See Stewart L. Grow, “Buildings in Kirtland, Far West, Nauvoo, and Miller’s Hollow,” in *The Tabernacle: “An Old and Wonderful Friend,”* ed. Scott C. Esplin (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2007), 107–136, <http://rsc.byu.edu/archived/tabernacle-old-and-wonderful-friend/thesis/3-buildings-temple-block-preceding-tabernacle>, accessed 8 December 2012.

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# ONE DAY TO A CUBIT

Hollis R. Johnson

*Abstract: An investigation of ancient astronomy shows that a cubit was used not only as the metric of length (elbow to fingertip) but also as a metric of angle in the sky. That suggested a new interpretation that fits naturally: the brightest celestial object—the sun—moves eastward around the sky, relative to the stars, during the course of a year, by one cubit per day!*

A mong the intriguing aspects of the Book of Abraham are the three facsimiles and their somewhat esoteric interpretations. In particular, Fig. 1 of facsimile No. 2 is explained as follows: “Kolob, signifying the first creation, nearest to the celestial, or the residence of God. First in government, the last pertaining to the measurement of time. The measurement according to celestial time, which celestial time signifies one day to a cubit. One day in Kolob is equal to on thousand years according to the measurement of this earth, which is called by the Egyptians Jah-oh-eh.”

While this entire passage provokes pondering, the phrase *one day to a cubit* is especially puzzling, and, as far as this author is aware, no precise interpretation of the phrase has been given. For example, in his thorough treatment of the significance of Abraham’s visit to Egypt, scholar Hugh Nibley<sup>1</sup> does not even mention the phrase. It is likewise ignored by H. Donl

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1. Hugh Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1981).

Peterson<sup>2</sup> in his useful reference work, *The Pearl of Great Price: A History and Commentary* and by James R. Harris<sup>3</sup> in his detailed study of the Book of Abraham facsimiles. The verse-by-verse commentary by Draper, Brown, and Rhodes reproduces the facsimiles but passes over the phrase with the simple comment: “We do not know how to interpret this.”<sup>4</sup>

In a recent article, Samuel Brown<sup>5</sup> discusses the use of the “chain of belonging” by Joseph Smith and other early Church leaders. Based on original material from contemporary sources, Brown states that, in their work on the Kirtland Egyptian Project, Joseph Smith and William W. Phelps “wove together a distinctive exegesis of the Hebrew astrogonomy.”<sup>6</sup> In doing so, “they employed a cubit as an astronomical metric,” and used “a special cubit—one quarter of the length from the end of the longest finger to the end of the other when the arms are extended—approximately 21 inches” (well within the range of the normal cubit described below). Furthermore, to apply the concepts “a day is equal to 1,000 years” and “one day to a cubit,” Brown suggests that Phelps and Smith used a “symbolic multiplier”<sup>7</sup> to convert cubits to astronomical distances parallel to the conversion of a day to a millennium.

However, in addition to the rich symbolism within the Book of Abraham, there appears to be a straightforward scientific explanation for the rather curious phrase *one day to a*

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2. H. Donl Peterson, *The Pearl of Great Price: A History and Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987).

3. James R. Harris, “The Book of Abraham Facsimiles,” in *Studies in Scripture, Vol 2: The Pearl of Great Price*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Kent P. Jackson (Salt Lake City: Randall Book Company, 1985).

4. 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), 290.

5. Samuel Brown, “The Early Mormon Chain of Belonging, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 44/11 (2011): 1

6. Brown, “Early Mormon Chain of Belonging, 9.

7. Brown, “Early Mormon Chain of Belonging, 9.

*cubit*. It is quite possible that the phrase describes exactly the movement of the brightest celestial object, the sun, as it moves among the stars during the course of a year, a reflection of the earth's orbital motion.

### What is a Cubit?

An English dictionary defines the word *cubit* as an ancient (from Old Testament times) unit of length; namely, the distance between a man's elbow and the tip of his middle finger—some 18 to 22 inches. Since the word is now obsolete, it is of interest only because of its use in the Bible and the Book of Abraham. The English word *cubit* is derived from the Latin word for “elbow.” Extensive literature on its etymology and history is available from Wikipedia or an etymological dictionary.

Since the length of a cubit naturally differs from person to person, it is not a precise metric. Consequently, a “standard cubit” appeared very early among ancient cultures. Among the earliest attested standard cubits was the Egyptian royal cubit, known from the Old Kingdom pyramids of Egypt: 523 to 529 mm (20.6 to 20.8 inches). Whatever its exact value, a cubit was a common measure of length in ancient times. However, any straightforward relation between a day and a cubit has remained mysterious because a time (a day) and a distance (a cubit) are related by a speed or velocity, and it is very difficult to imagine a speed of any object anywhere as slow as a cubit to a day. Even snails move faster than that!

### A Cubit in the Sky?

A hint toward an interpretation of the odd phrase in the Book of Abraham comes from an extended meaning of the word *cubit*. Although originally and widely employed as a measure of *length* (above), the use of the word was extended

by ancient scholars to include a measure of *angle*, especially in the sky.

For example, in recounting his famous travels, Marco Polo (1254–1324) mentioned his surprise when, on reaching the island of Sumatra, he discovered the (North) Pole Star was not visible there.<sup>8</sup> Sailing northwest thereafter to a part of India called Comorin, Marco Polo caught a “glimpse of the Pole Star rising out of the water to about one cubit.”<sup>9</sup> Sailing further to Malabar, he noted the Pole Star seemed to “rise about two cubits above the water,”<sup>10</sup> and at Gujarat, “the Pole Star is more clearly visible, with an apparent altitude of six cubits.”<sup>11</sup> Here Marco Polo and his translators use the word *cubit* exactly as we would currently use the word *degree* to measure a very small angle.

A much more ancient text from Mesopotamia also used the word *cubit* to describe angular measures of celestial objects. An astronomical record from 331 BC has this passage: “the moon was [nn cubi]ts below β Geminorum, the moon being 2/3 cubit back to the west.” A later passage states: “the moon was six cubits below ε Leonis, the moon having passed ½ cubit behind α Leonis.”<sup>12</sup> Among astronomers, stars are commonly referred to (now and anciently) by a Greek letter plus the genitive form of the constellation name where the star belongs, starting with the brightest star or the star nearest the head of the figure represented by the constellation as “α”, that is, alpha. In the citation above, therefore, β Geminorum, ε Leonis, and α Leonis are

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8. Ronald Latham, trans. *The Travels of Marco Polo* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1958), 253.

9. Latham, trans. *Travels of Marco Polo*, 288.

10. Latham, trans. *Travels of Marco Polo*, 290.

11. Latham, trans. *Travels of Marco Polo*, 291.

12. Francesca Rochberg, “Natural Knowledge in Ancient Mesopotamia,” in *Wrestling with Nature*, ed. Peter Harrison, Ronald L. Numbers, and Michael Shank (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 18.

well known bright stars in the constellations Gemini, Leo, and Leo, respectively.

Since the word *cubit* was used anciently as a measure of *angle* as well as a measure of *length*, the phrase *one day to a cubit* in the Book of Abraham seems to refer to *angular velocity* rather than *linear velocity*. With this changed perspective, we can readily interpret the otherwise opaque passage *one day to a cubit* as an excellent description of the motion of the sun as it passes among the stars and constellations during the course of a year. The passage then becomes a statement of scientific fact.

It is not known exactly what instruments were employed by ancient observers to measure angles in the heavens. However, in *very* ancient times they may have employed a simple method still used today. With one's arm fully extended, the width of the pointer finger seen against the sky covers approximately one degree (technically it "subtends" one degree of arc), and this is a convenient means to measure small distances (small angles) between celestial objects near one another. For example, the sun and moon in the sky each subtend roughly half a degree in diameter. Readers may try this method on the moon. (This and other rough measurements made with the hand are described in many elementary astronomy books.)

The understanding that a circle has 360 degrees is common knowledge and its use dates back to ancient Mesopotamia.<sup>13</sup> Since the Earth orbits the sun in a year of approximately 365 days, the sun, *as seen from Earth*, traces a complete circle through the constellations of the zodiac during that period. (This motion is not the apparent daily westward motion of the sun across the sky due to Earth's rotation, but the slow eastward movement of the sun among the stars as seen from Earth during the course of a year.) The near coincidence of the num-

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13. Michael Hoskin, "Astronomy in Antiquity," in Hoskin ed., *The Cambridge Concise History of Astronomy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 18–47.

ber of degrees in a circle (360) and the number of days in a year (365) means that, *as seen from Earth, each day the sun moves approximately one degree eastward* relative to the background stars. Anciently, one would have stated: *each day the sun moves through one cubit* relative to the background stars.

## Conclusion

The phrase *one day to a cubit* in the explanation of Facsimile no. 2 in the Book of Abraham plays no significant role in the Abraham narrative, and it has generally been ignored or left unexplained by Mormon scholars. However, it has nevertheless remained an intriguing passage.

Some enlightenment is gained when we understand that the word *cubit*, traditionally understood to refer to the length of a man's forearm, was extended in meaning by ancient observers to include *angular* measurements as well as *linear* measurements, especially in the sky. An observer, even with crude instruments, or even with the hand itself, can make simple measurements to yield angular information about objects close together in the sky—measurements in which the pointer finger at arm's length subtends an angle of about a degree, called a "cubit" by the ancients.

With the extended perspective that a *cubit* is an angle of a degree, the curious phrase *one day to a cubit* from the Book of Abraham describes precisely the movement of the brightest celestial object—the sun. *As seen from earth, each day the sun travels one degree eastward with respect to the background stars and constellations.* Ancient scholars would have stated that each day the sun travels one cubit. *One day to a cubit!*

**Editors' Note:** Since posting this article, Professor Johnson has made some revisions which can be found at <http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/one-day-to-a-cubit/#comment-2242>.



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