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Twenty Years After "Paradigms Regained," Part 2: Responding to Margaret Barker's Critics and Why Her Work Should Matter to Latter-day Saints

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Twenty Years After "Paradigms Regained," Part 2: Responding to Margaret Barker's Critics and Why Her Work Should Matter to Latter-day Saints

Kevin Christensen

Abstract: *Here I address specific criticisms of Margaret Barker's work. First, I set the stage by discussing Thomas Kuhn's* The Structure of Scientific Revolutions *as a map and compass for navigating this kind of controversy. I show how his observations cast light on debates about Jesus in the Gospel of John, which in turn resemble present debates. In this context, I then consider some notable criticisms of Barker's work as "not mainstream" and consider an instructive appreciation of Barker by Father John McDade in his "Life of Jesus Research." I then respond in detail to a recent* BYU Studies *essay that was critical of Barker's work.*

> But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better. (Luke 5:38–39)
>
> By p[r]oving contrarieties, truth is made manifest.
> — Joseph Smith[1]

A 2012 interviewer asked Margaret Barker, "What do [you] say to independent scholars?" In reply, she wrote:

> First, read Thomas S. Kuhn's book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, first published 50 years ago, and see how changes come about. Although written about a world very different

> from biblical studies, it shows how establishments resist changes until in the end the next generation [us!] forces a paradigm shift. The current paradigm is going towards a non-faith-based study, which has no future. By this I do not mean simply that the study is not faith-based; it is based on non-faith, and so criticism does not mean close study; it so often means destructive study. New paradigms emerge from those aware of the crisis, who recognize that the situation is not likely to be remedied by the methods that caused it.[2]

Thomas Kuhn's 1962 book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* is a careful study of how and why the background frameworks in which science is done changes, for example when going from the earth-centered Ptolemaic astronomy to the sun-centered Copernican astronomy. Kuhn has observed that in science "novelty ordinarily emerges only for the man who, knowing *with precision* what he should expect, is able to recognize that something has gone wrong. Anomaly appears only against the background provided by the paradigm."[3]

While some readers may wish to ignore Kuhn and simply jump into a discussion of Barker and her critics, I have found Kuhn as an essential way to follow the advice of Jesus to first "cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:5). We ought not start out by supposing we have no beams in our eye to remove, that we could never see more clearly than we do now. A person who is not conscious of the existence and implications of their own paradigm cannot be self-critical of that paradigm but will be unconsciously subject to it for good or ill. A good example of that is the father of the scientific method, Bacon himself:

> Bacon, the philosopher of science, was, quite consistently, an enemy of the Copernican hypothesis. Don't theorize, he said, but open your eyes and observe without prejudice, and you cannot doubt that the Sun moves and that the earth is at rest.[4]

A paradigm is defined both *as* and *by* "scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners."[5] Kuhn explains that "paradigms provide scientists not only with a map but also with some of the directions essential for map-making."[6] For example, when Joseph Smith reports that "the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passages of scripture so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question by an appeal to the Bible" and that "I came to the conclusion

that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs, that is, ask of God" (Joseph Smith — History 1:12, 13), that account becomes paradigmatic within Latter-day Saint culture. Joseph Smith provides both a map and directions for map-making.

Different background paradigms account for the different responses to Joseph Smith's visions. The minister who declared to Joseph that "there were no such things as visions in these days; that all such things ceased with the death of the apostles, and there would never be any more of them"[7] represents one set of paradigmatic expectations, rooted in Enlightenment Rationalism and *sola scriptura*, just as Solomon Chamberlin, a visitor to the Smith home in 1829, demonstrated another set of expectations when he met Hyrum Smith at door and asked, "Is there anyone here that believes in visions or revelations?"[8] What the minister demonstrated was trial by ideology, dismissing Joseph Smith's claims for daring to exist in the face of his own contrary beliefs. What Solomon Chamberlin demonstrated was enough openness and sincere curiosity to leave the Smith home with some prepublication pages of the Book of Mormon, and a subsequent conversion and lifelong commitment to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Just as different expectations exist under different paradigms, so can different interpretations of open questions exist within a paradigm. Kuhn observes that "every problem that normal science sees as a puzzle can be seen, from another viewpoint, as a counterinstance and thus as a source of crisis."[9] Kuhn further explains that

> if all members of a scientific community responded to each anomaly as a source of crisis or embraced each new theory advanced by a colleague, science would cease. If, on the other hand, no one reacted to anomalies or to brand new theories in high-risk ways, there would be few or no revolutions. In matters like these the resort to shared values rather than to shared rules governing individual choice may be the community's way of distributing risk and assuring the long-term success of its enterprise.[10]

Kuhn reports that

> to be accepted as a paradigm, a theory must seem better than its competitors, but it need not, and in fact never does, explain all the facts with which it can be confronted.[11]
>
> It makes a great deal of sense to ask which of two actual and competing theories fits the facts *better*.[12]

As I consider questions raised by various mainstream critics of Barker's work, and questions raised by critics of the Latter-day Saint appreciation and use of Barker's work, it is important to consider how a critic proposes to settle the question of "which paradigm is better?" Do they engage in a self-reflective and comparative "Why us?" inquiry, or just a self-referential "Not us!" dismissal based on their preexisting ideology? Kuhn observes that the most important values for paradigm choice are puzzle definition and testability, accuracy of key predictions, comprehensiveness and coherence, fruitfulness, simplicity and aesthetics, and future promise.[13] I long ago noted that Alma 32 promotes equivalent values for resolving such questions.[14] That is, Alma sets up a test, invites an experiment with discernable results, talks about how a person's understanding is enlightened and mind begins to expand, how the knowledge gained is delicious, fruitful, and soul enlarging; and he emphasizes the future promise, all despite one's knowledge *not* becoming perfect (Alma 32:36).

Paradigm Debate Demonstrated in the Gospel of John

For an example of the importance of differing background conceptions for religious questions, consider the familiar story of Nicodemus discussing with Jesus in John 3 what it means to be born again. When Jesus says, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3), Nicodemus responds, "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born" (John 3:4)? This, I notice, is a very good example of the kind of thing a young Joseph Smith noticed, that different teachers of religion can understand the same words differently. Knowing that they can and do differ is one issue. How we decide who has the better understanding and why is of greater importance. As Barker explains, "Jesus then taught him about birth 'from above' and seeing the kingdom of God, being born of water and the Spirit and entering the kingdom of God (John 3.3–8)." This was the mystery of the temple, and yet Jesus had to say to Nicodemus, "Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand this? (John 3.10, [Barker's] translation)."[15] The point of John's gospel telling several such stories of such conceptual misunderstanding is to demonstrate that the "Jews had lost touch with their original temple teachings," the Jews in John's Gospel being those that Josephus had defined as the ones who had returned from Babylon,[16] and as such, heirs and advocates of the Deuteronomist way of thinking. In her book *King of*

the Jews: Temple Theology in John's Gospel, Barker further demonstrates that

> underlying Jesus's conversation with Nicodemus and the explanation of who he is are three royal texts: Psalm 110; Isaiah 52.13–53.12; and Deuteronomy 32.43, all of which would have been well known to those who studied the Hebrew Scriptures, *but all of which are different in the Masoretic Hebrew from which English Bibles are translated*.
>
> - No text of Psalm 110 has been found at Qumran to show what the text was in the time of Jesus; this has to be reconstructed from the Greek.
> - The Isaiah passage in the Qumran Isaiah scroll has a few more letters than the Masoretic Hebrew text, and so says that the Servant is "anointed" rather than disfigured (Isa. 52:14) and that he sees the light (that is, the glory) after his suffering (Isa. 53:11).[17]
> - The Qumran text of Deuteronomy 32:43 has four more lines than the Masoretic Hebrew text, and these include the Christian proof text.
>
> It would be possible to conclude from this evidence that texts which were important for Christian claims — and indeed for Jesus's own understanding of his role — were removed from the Hebrew text or significantly altered. They may have been removed after Jesus made his claims and in reaction to them, or they may have been royal and temple texts that had already been edited out of some copies of the Hebrew Scriptures during the second-temple period, the work of the "restoring scribes." If the latter, then Nicodemus could not have recognized and understood what Jesus was saying.[18]

The contrasting interpretations of the same phrase by Nicodemus and Jesus concerning being "born again," and just as significantly, what *we ourselves see in that same familiar story*, with or without considering the context of Barker's temple theology and the state of the Hebrew available to Nicodemus, should illustrate Ian Barbour's observations:

> In N. R Hanson's oft quoted words, "*All data are theory-laden*," the procedures of measurement and the interpretation of the resulting numerical values depend on implicit theoretical assumptions. Most of the time, of course, scientists work within a framework of thought which they have inherited. …

> But, says Feyeraband, when the background theory itself is at issue, when the fundamental assumptions and basic concepts are under attack, then the dependence of measurement on theoretical assumptions is crucial.[19]

As Kuhn explains,

> In learning a paradigm the scientist acquires theory, methods, and standards together, usually in an inextricable mixture. Therefore, when paradigms change, there are usually significant shifts in the criteria determining the legitimacy both of problems and of proposed solutions.[20]

The New Testament includes several examples of how some people, on facing the message of Jesus, weighed the message by personal experiment, and how others turned to their favored authorities and traditions to deal with a new and challenging complexity. Where some said, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46), others responded, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed" (John 7:48, 49).

There is a discernable difference between those who are looking for further light and knowledge and who are willing to personally investigate "whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11), to judge by experiment whether new wine is better, and those who just want to know whether some notable wine connoisseur approves. The story of the healing of the blind man in John 9 shows how some seek to "make a man an offender" (Isaiah 29:21) relative to their existing beliefs, and in their investigation dismiss all witnesses and evidence that did not conform to their preconceptions:

> Thou art his disciple: but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. (John 9:28–29)

The healed blind man responds, and demonstrates the difference in his own approach, by saying,

> Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. (John 9:30)

What happens in John 9 as the Pharisees investigate a report of a healing illustrates the importance of knowing the difference between puzzle solving within a given paradigm, and paradigm testing. The Pharisees in John 9 are engaged in puzzle solving and *never* make the shift to paradigm testing. They carefully explore the reports of the healing of

the blind man but reject the implications of all evidence, witness, and opinion that do not conform to the rules of their game.

> Assimilating a new sort of fact demands a more than additive adjustment of theory, and until that adjustment is completed — until the scientist has learned to see nature in a different way — the new fact is not quite a scientific fact at all.[21]

They defend the old wine and refuse the new, not because they have solved the puzzle of what had happened between the blind man and Jesus, but because their old wine bottles simply cannot contain what that evidence implies about Jesus. I can say the same thing about scholarship challenging the belief in the Book of Mormon. This is not because there is no evidence that supports such belief,[22] nor because open questions or critical arguments regarding the Book of Mormon inevitably overwhelm any believer who looks at them,[23] but rather that

> the transfer of allegiance from paradigm to paradigm is a conversion experience that cannot be forced. Lifelong resistance, particularly from those whose productive careers have committed them to an older tradition of normal science, is not a violation of scientific standards but an index to the nature of scientific research itself. The source of resistance is the assurance that the older paradigm will ultimately solve all its problems, that nature can be shoved into the box the paradigm provides.[24]

In John 6 the account of the response to the Bread of Life sermon shows another side of the issue, a de-conversion experience, where many followers of Jesus depart on grounds that "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:60). That is, what Jesus taught on that occasion seemed hard to believe, so much so that many left his community "and walked no more with him" (John 6:66). Kuhn observes that all paradigm choice involves deciding "which paradigm is better?" where the question of how a person measures "better" should not be completely paradigm-dependent. Another decision is "which problems is it more significant to have solved?"[25]

In the account of the healing of the blind man, the problem and solution for the Pharisees is defined by their orthodox belief that Jesus cannot be the Messiah. For the blind man himself, the significant problem and solution was that now he could see, whereas before he was blind. In the account of the Bread of Life sermon, for those who followed no more, the problem was that the teaching of Jesus for them now involved "an

hard saying, who can hear it?" For Peter, the most important issue in that context became "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

In these accounts, we also see the community aspect of paradigm choice. One is not just choosing a private opinion or an objective fact but choosing between communities defined by paradigms.[26] The blind man is rejected by and rejects the company of the Pharisees. He chooses Jesus and his community. Those who followed no more after Jesus after the Bread of Life Sermon were also choosing community, as was Peter in holding to Jesus.

Preference and Familiarity for Old Wine vs. New

Of the open-mindedness and devotion to truth from whatever source demonstrated in the history of science, Thomas Kuhn has noted that

> no part of the aim of normal science is to call forth new sorts of phenomena; indeed those that will not fit the box are often not seen at all. Nor do scientists normally aim to invent new theories, and they are often intolerant of those invented by others. Instead, normal-scientific research is directed to the articulation of those phenomena and theories that the paradigm already supplies.[27]

Joseph Smith commented on the problem of dealing with the preconceptions and traditions of the Latter-day Saints:

> But there has been a great difficulty in getting anything into the heads of this generation. It has been like splitting hemlock knots with a corn-dodger for a wedge, and a pumpkin for a beetle. Even the Saints are slow to understand.
>
> I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see [that] some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions: they cannot stand the fire at all.[28]

On the other hand, Nibley reports that "the book of Enoch was given to the Saints as a bonus for their willingness to accept the Book of Mormon and as a reward for their sustained and lively interest in all scriptures, including lost books: they were searchers, engaging in eager speculation and discretion, ever seeking like Adam and Abraham, for

"greater [light and] knowledge" (Abraham 1:2). And we have been told that if we stop seeking, we shall not only find no more, but lose the treasures we already have."[29]

It is important to consider trends and fruitfulness over time. What kinds of experiences do those who nurture the seed carefully, in good soil, over time, have in comparison to those who don't bother to seriously try, or who insist on inhospitable soils when they do try? As Wendy Ulrich reminds us to consider what kind of ongoing payback do people who nurture the word carefully obtain?[30]

"Is it a Good Seed?": Questions and Patterns of Nurture in Criticism of Barker's Work

Now it is time to consider some objections to Barker's work. The patterns that a critic displays always tell us something about the critic and their criticism, and in many cases, that pattern is at least as telling as what they observe about Barker's work. For instance, Evangelical blogger Fred Anson offers a 2020 blog post called "Debunking Mormon Appeals to Margaret Barker":

> She is the darling of Mormon Apologists and Liberal Christian Theologians the world over as her work can be used to undermine confidence in and the authority of the Bible. What follows are the two finest debunkings of Margaret Barker that I have found to date.[31]

The first debunking Anson offers comes from a Latter-day Saint blogger from 2007, then a post-graduate student who posts anonymously as TT. TT complains about Barker's methods and assumptions, based on his listening to a single 2003 talk on "What King Josiah Reformed."[32] TT argues in terms of his suspicion and doubts regarding her methods, against the modes and assumptions of Biblical criticism with which he has been trained. (I had earlier seen him comment regarding Barker that "no one I know takes her seriously," which is another way of saying he does not know the Archbishop of Canterbury, Andrei Orlov, N. T. Wright, the members of the Society for Old Testament Study who elected her as president, or any of the many other academics whose interest and respect I have noted in my broad survey of her career.) Barker was also trained in that approach at Cambridge, and consciously and deliberately decided to offer an alternative paradigm. TT, quite naturally, prefers his own approach, his own teachers, his own society and their ingrained paradigm.

Barker and Enoch

Remember Kuhn's observation that "consciously or not, the decision to employ a particular piece of apparatus and to use it in a particular way carries an assumption that only certain sorts of circumstances will arise."[33] For instance, TT writes:

> She uses [Dead Sea Scrolls] and Enochic literature to reconstruct what was happening in the First Temple, even though these texts were written hundreds of years after the First Temple had been destroyed. She conflates Jubilees, *1 Enoch*, and the Damascus covenant as if they represented a shared view of the temple. But most egregiously, she fails to note that the critiques of the temple in these texts have to do with Second Temple politics, including disputes over priestly families in control of the temple, not with the First Temple at all.[34]

We shall shortly encounter Professor John McDade's observation that "there is then a radical dependence between the reconstructed Jesus and the reconstructed context/model: how the context and social model are understood determines how Jesus is understood."[35] This implies that there is a radical dependence between the reconstructed *1 Enoch* and how it is dated and contextualized. As Barker comments,

> If we could prove that the Enoch books were actually composed at Qumran, and that these surviving bits were from the author's actual manuscript, then the physical remains could date the texts to the second or third century BC. But we can do no such thing. Imagine what this method of dating would do for the Old Testament. Our earliest physical proofs for the existence of the Old Testament, pieces of ancient scroll we can see and handle, are also among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Does this mean that the Old Testament books were all composed in the second century BC in the Qumran monastery? It is unlikely! We must not have one set of rules for the biblical texts and another for the non-biblical.[36]

In making his criticisms, TT admits that he had not read any of Barker's other works in which she prepared the ground for her use of Enoch in later works. In *The Older Testament*, she cites a range of Enoch interpreters and observes that

> the setting in which we have seen the earliest apocalypses function, e.g., the troubles of the second century, or the Qumran community, has, until recently, been assumed to be that of their origin. But there is no organic link between the problems of this period and the major *themes or forms* of the literature. These were used only to interpret the problems of the period, they were the established framework within which the world had to be viewed. The ultimate origin of apocalyptic must therefore lie in a setting where ascents to the upper world, the hosts of heaven, astrology, astronomy, and superhuman wisdom were as much at home as those other elements — evil angels, supernatural conflicts mirrored on earth, the visions of history and judgement which were taken up and emphasized for their relevance to the second century.[37]

For comparison, I notice that, if authentic history, our book of Mosiah is contemporary with the Second Temple politics that TT cites as the context in which he sets *1 Enoch* as contemporary critiques. The story of Amulon and the other wicked priests of Noah include telling and consistent allusions to the fallen angels of the Enoch stories.[38] Described from the start as "prideful" (Mosiah 11:5–13), they pervert sacred knowledge for gain (Mosiah 11:5–6; 12:28–29), and they take wives that they should not have (Mosiah 20:1–5). Amulon's priests teach the Lamanites to be cunning and wise "as to the wisdom of the world" (Mosiah 23:31–35; 24:1–7). Finally, their descendants from the union with the stolen wives become "hardened" and meet with destruction (Alma 25:4, 7–9). Mormon did not invent the Fallen Angel mythology to make this critique of Amulon and his fellows but alluded to it for its relevance to their case.

In *The Older Testament* chapter on "The Book of Enoch," Barker reports that "it has proved possible to trace the roots and antecedents of its mythology into the very earliest stratum of the Old Testament."[39] She makes intensive comparisons with Isaiah, for instance, showing that Isaiah knew the Enoch tradition. And she notes in a paper published by the Maxwell Institute that

> after seeing the tree of life, Enoch traveled to the centre of the earth — that is, to Jerusalem —and saw the holy mountain. From its eastern side, water issued and flowed to the south by way of the Gihon Spring and the brook Kidron (*1 Enoch* 26:1-3). This means that for Enoch the holy mountain was not the area we nowadays call the Temple Mount. It must have been the

> hill to the southeast of it, the Ophel, from which the Gihon gushes. Before Hezekiah built the tunnel that brought its water into the city (2 Kings 20:20; 2 Chronicles 32:30), the water of the Gihon probably created a real stream in the Kidron Valley. It is interesting that Enoch's journey describes accurately the geography of Jerusalem before the time of Hezekiah, that is, in the early ministry of Isaiah.[40]

She noted in the introduction to *The Older Testament* that

> the link between the Old and New [Testaments] is far more complex than the use of proof texts and the fulfillment of prophecies. These are the tip of an iceberg whose greater part remains invisible. I have tried to reconstruct the invisible mass from its effects which are perceived. Thereby I have left myself open to the charge of going beyond the evidence. The outline offered results from projecting given positions and problems back to the point of their confluence and solution. Whether or not this is an acceptable method remains to be seen."[41]

TT does not accept her methods. I do. We use different paradigms. We contextualize differently, favor different authorities, and draw on different evidence as most significant. It is not just regarding Margaret Barker's scholarship, but the historicity of the Book of Mormon as well. TT obviously has formal training that I do not, though he graciously acknowledges that he has not read nearly as much of Barker's work as I have. And I note that there are many other scholars, Latter-day Saint and otherwise, who do have equivalent formal training that do appreciate Barker's work.

An Evangelical Apologist's View

Anson's second authority is Rob Bowman, an Evangelical Christian apologist with a PhD in Biblical Studies at the South African Theological Seminary. Bowman has been involved with the Institute for Religious Research since 2008. Anson cites some of Bowman's Facebook posts which offer this conclusion regarding Barker's case:

> To sum up: (1) Margaret Barker's theory is a flimsy reconstruction of the history of ancient Judaism and early Christianity based on idiosyncratic speculations and dubious interpretations of isolated texts; (2) it makes mincemeat of the Old Testament; (3) it does not support the idea that the Jews ever held to a belief system comparable to Mormonism; (4) the Mormon use of

> Barker's theory renders the Old Testament essentially valueless, viewing things quite backward (the good guys are really the bad guys, etc.); (5) the New Testament assumes the reliability of the Old Testament text and doctrine, and it affirms the monotheism of the so-called Deuteronomists; and (6) the Book of Mormon is also "Deuteronomic"![42]

One of the most telling passages from Bowman is this one:

> There are roughly a thousand statements in the Old Testament equating Yahweh with Elohim in a variety of ways: using the compound name "Yahweh Elohim," affirming "Yahweh is Elohim," referring to Yahweh as "our/my/your/his/their Elohim" or "Yahweh the Elohim of Israel," and so on. Not only are there many such statements in the OT, but they are spread throughout the OT. Statements referring to or identifying Yahweh as Elohim occur in all but five of the books of the OT (Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, and Obadiah). Of these five short books, Esther uses neither name even once, Ecclesiastes uses only Elohim and never Yahweh, and the other three books use only Yahweh and never Elohim. These five books, then, never have the opportunity (lexically speaking) to identify Yahweh as Elohim or to distinguish Yahweh from Elohim.[43]

Notice how completely this statement misses the direction and implications of Barker's case.[44] Remember this passage from Barker's *The Great Angel*:

> *All the texts in the Hebrew Bible distinguish clearly between the divine sons of Elohim/Elyon and those human beings who are called sons of Yahweh*. This must be significant. It must mean that the terms originated at a time when Yahweh was distinguished from whatever was meant by El/Elohim, Elyon.[45]

In the same place, Barker continues:

> A large number of the texts continued to distinguish between El Elyon and Yahweh, Father and Son, and to express this distinction in similar ways with the symbolism of the temple and the royal cult. By tracing these patterns through a great variety of material and over several centuries, Israel's second God can be recovered.[46]

The crucial title *El Elyon, God Most High*, does not appear anywhere in Bowman's case, which demonstrates that he has not addressed the extensive evidence Barker provides in *The Great Angel*. He mentions her name but does not name any of her books, let alone quote them. His response amounts to a "Not us!" dismissal, rather than a genuine "Why us?" inquiry. He mentions two of my essays ("Paradigms Regained" and "The Deuteronomistic De-Christianizing of the Old Testament") but never quotes me, nor does he mention any other scholar, Latter-day Saint or otherwise, who has cited her work. Later, I will return to the questions concerning Barker's view of the value of the Old Testament and the question of Deuteronomy and the Book of Mormon, since these issues recur in other critiques.

Professor McDade Defending Barker Relative to the "Mainstream"

I see a common dismissal or Barker's work as "not mainstream," which, if you pause to think about it, translates directly to "Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed on him?" or just as well, "Do you preach the orthodox religion?" This means that we first ought to take a closer look at what "mainstream" signifies. And, as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we ought to recognize that we are not mainstream. We should reflect on why we should choose to be so.[47]

Here I will quote from a broad survey of "Life of Jesus" research by Professor John McDade which I think provides a realistic assessment of what "mainstream of scholarship" really is and does. Along the way, he also situates Barker:

> I point you to Telford's summary of how Jesus emerges as a social type if he is considered in the light of "foreground data" (the narrative tradition, especially the miracles, sayings and the traditions surrounding his death) and "background data" (the elements of general context posited as appropriate to understanding him in his first century setting). Here, weighting is all and what should strike us about this helpful taxonomy is the selective and constructed character of the images of Jesus offered by historians, depending on their choice of emphasis, what counts as primary data, which heuristic models are used, and so on. Telford speaks of a consensus today "that a combination of *teacher, prophet, healer* best captures historically his social identity or role." (Telford, p. 55)

Foreground data

- If weight is given to the miracle tradition, then Jesus emerges as an ancient magician (Morton Smith) or as a Jewish charismatic healer and exorcist (Vermes).
- If the weight is given to the sayings tradition, then a range of images of Jesus is adduced.
  - If the *wisdom sayings* (proverbs, parables, aphorisms etc.) are given prominence, then Jesus emerges as a *sage* (Vermes, Flusser) or even an *itinerant subversive sage* (Borg, Robinson, Funk).
  - If an emphasis on the authenticity of the *prophetic and apocalyptic sayings* is retained, then Jesus emerges as an *eschatological prophet* (Meyer, Sanders, Charlesworth).
  - If his Kingdom sayings are interpreted *apocalyptically* (following Schweitzer), and are linked with the Son of Man sayings, then Jesus is an other-worldly figure, expecting cosmic catastrophe and as being relatively indifferent to social concerns.
  - If the Kingdom sayings are not interpreted apocalyptically, and the Son of Man sayings are viewed as secondary, then Jesus emerges as a this-worldly figure, a *social prophet*, with a social programme (Borg, Horsley, Hollenbach).
- If the emphasis is placed on the opposition to him and his death at the hands of the Romans, then Jesus emerges as a para-Zealot *revolutionary* (Brandon) or the pacifist victim of oppression.

Background data

The choice of *context* in which to place Jesus affects the estimate given of him:

- When emphasis is placed on the Palestinian Jewish context and, within that, on the Rabbinic tradition (although that did not flourish till after AD 70), then Jesus can be seen as the inspired *Rabbi* (Flusser, Chilton) or the *Pharisee* (Falk).
- If the choice is made to place him in the context of *apocalyptic* Judaism, then he can be seen as the "*humane*

apocalyptist" (Charlesworth) or the "*reasonable visionary*" (Sanders).

- If his Galilean provenance is emphasised, then he becomes a charismatic holy man or *hasid* in the same tradition as Honi the Circle-Drawer or Hanina ben Dosa (Vermes).
- If Hellenistic influences in Galilee are emphasised, then he can be seen as a *Cynic teacher* (Mack, Crossan).
- If it is judged that he conforms to no particular social type, he cannot be placed in one of these categories (Hengel).

> The Jesus who is envisaged in these accounts is the pre-canonical Jesus, arrived at through certain judgements about the nature of the Gospel traditions (both canonical and extra-canonical — the Gospel of Thomas is now a controversial card in the game), and set in the dynamics of the religious, social and economic life of Palestine. There is then a radical dependence between the reconstructed Jesus and the reconstructed context/model: how the context and social model are understood determines how Jesus is understood. *Determines* is not too strong a word, for one of the problems with this approach is that the grid of social and economic context is such a strong factor that it can inhibit responsible handling of the actual textual evidence we have for Jesus.[48]

McDade here cites a range of well-known mainstream scholars who offer a range of contradictory pictures of Jesus, mostly secular and at home in a university setting, few of which conform well to the testimonies in the New Testament that most Christian churches offer in their Sunday preaching. It is worth comparing McDade's conclusion here about the "radical dependence between the reconstructed Jesus and the reconstructed context/model" and the conclusions Richard Bushman reaches about histories of Joseph Smith.

> I wish to explore, in broad general terms, the histories to which historians have attached Joseph Smith. As you can imagine, the context in which he is placed profoundly affects how people see the Prophet, since the history selected for a subject colors everything about it. Is he a money-digger like hundreds of other superstitious Yankees in his day, a religious fanatic like Muhammad was thought to be in Joseph's time, a prophet like Moses, a religious revolutionary like Jesus?

> To a large extent, Joseph Smith assumes the character of the history selected for him. The broader the historical context, the greater the appreciation of the man. If Joseph Smith is described as the product of strictly local circumstances — the culture of the Burned-over District, for example — he will be considered a lesser figure than if put in the context of Muhammad or Moses. Historians who have been impressed with Joseph Smith's potency, whether for good or ill, have located him in a longer, more universal history. Those who see him as merely a colorful character go no farther than his immediate environment for context. No historians eliminate the local from their explanations, but, on the whole, those who value his genius or his influence, whether critics or believers, give him a broader history as well. I want to talk first about the way historians have sought the Prophet's larger meaning by assigning him a history, and then examine the histories to which Joseph Smith attached himself.[49]

McDade's observation that there is "a radical dependence between the reconstructed Jesus and the reconstructed context/model" directly compares to Bushman's observation that "to a large extent, Joseph Smith assumes the character of the history selected for him." Both observations compare to Jesus's parable of the Sower: the same words, planted in different soils, nurtured in different ways, produce vastly different harvests. "Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?" (Mark 4:13). Remember too, where Kuhn notes that "consciously or not, the decision to employ a particular piece of apparatus and to use it in a particular way carries an assumption that only certain sorts of circumstances will arise."[50] McDade, as a both scholar and believing Christian, can point to tendencies in mainstream scholarship which broadly demonstrate "post-Enlightenment bias about religion and religious experience"[51] and which portray the historical Jesus as something very different from the Christ of faith. He notes that other mainstream, but believing scholars such as Ben Meyer and N.T. Wright push back against those secular assumptions, and that leads to how he introduces Margaret Barker in relation to these broader currents.

> A very original contribution to these questions of Jesus's religious experience, its connection with experiential patterns in first century Jewish religion and the possible value of non-Gospel New Testament writings for Jesus research has come recently from Margaret Barker: her proposals about

> these three areas go against the grain of much New Testament scholarship and are therefore worth attention. I can only give an inadequate summary of her complex case. She places Jesus in contact with two religious traditions which she conjectures have contributed to the form of his self-understanding: first of all, she suggests he may have been in touch with the tradition of mystical, ascending visionary experience of God — mysticism of the throne of God, "*merkabah* mysticism" — in which Jewish visionaries ascended into the presence of God, were transformed into heavenly beings and given insight into heavenly mysteries.[52]

McDade appreciates that Barker "offers a new paradigm which replaces the distinction between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith. From his baptism onwards, he is the Lord who has risen into the presence of God, and so he conducts his ministry with a sense that he comes 'from above' — in which case the Johannine pattern of descent from above becomes plausible — with a clear sense of himself as the LORD who rescues his people by an atoning sacrifice in his blood, after which he would be exalted and enthroned in heaven as the companion of God's throne."[53]

He then quotes Barker in *The Risen Lord*:

> What Jesus believed about himself was identical to that which the young church preached about him, even though he had been imperfectly understood at times. It makes Jesus himself the author and finisher of the faith, rather than the early communities, a supposition which has been fashionable for some time. The great message of atonement was not just a damage limitation exercise on the part of a traumatised group of disciples who could find no other way of coming to terms with the death of their leader.[54]

McDade's appreciation of Barker's importance against the secular mainstream, and as additive to work of prominent believing scholars, comes back to the key issue of contextualization, the soil in which we plant the seed, and how that decisively influences the harvest:

> Meyer and Wright have made a strong case for a body of esoteric teachings given by Jesus about his death to an inner group of disciples. Barker has amplified this and provided a possible account of the source and content of that teaching by uncovering the significance of mystical traditions within

> Judaism which were afterwards excised by the Rabbinic reordering of Judaism after the traumas of CE 70 and 135. What flows into the Christian development of 2nd Temple imagery has as much right to claim continuity with Biblical Judaism as does Rabbinic Judaism. If Barker is right, then the principal Jewish context in which we must place Jesus is not that of Galilean healers and teachers, but that of mystical Judaism and Temple traditions.[55]

Barker suggests, in *The Risen Lord*, that Jesus had an experience at his baptism that not only included the voice of the spirit declaring that he was Lamb of God, my beloved son, but that he received the vision of the Lamb ascending to the throne as recorded in Revelation 4–6, which is designated as The Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:1).

> All the gospels agree that the baptism of Jesus marked the beginning of his ministry. I want to explore the possibility that for Jesus this was the moment at which he "became" son of God. His baptism was a *merkavah*[56] ascent experience when he believed he had become the heavenly high priest, the Lord with his people.[57]

We should not just consider the importance of her work for the initial setting of the Book of Mormon, but should recognize that her picture of Jesus having a profound revelation of his own divine nature and mission at his baptism matches D&C 93:12–19 very closely.

> And I, John, saw that he received not of the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace; And he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness;
>
> And thus he was called the Son of God, because he received not of the fulness at the first.
>
> And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and sat upon him, and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son.
>
> And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father;
>
> And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him.

> And it shall come to pass, that if you are faithful you shall receive the fulness of the record of John.
>
> I give unto you these sayings that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time receive of his fulness. (D&C 93:12–19)

So given a set of different understandings of Jesus, and a range of scholarly and religious methods and opinions as providing potential backgrounds against which paradigm testing of Barker's work for "compatib[ility] … with other theories"[58] and to "to preserve a relatively large part of the concrete problem-solving ability that has accrued"[59] to her predecessors, does it make more sense to give the most weight to the streams dominated by secular scholars, or believers? Barker herself states,

> There is no such thing as objective biblical scholarship, that is, biblical scholarship produced by those with no faith commitment. I have often said that a professor of French who had never been to France, did not speak the language, and doubted that France even existed would not be taken seriously. *The same should apply with biblical studies, but it does not.*
>
> The result is that the much biblical study produced in the UK, outside the faith-based institutions, is of no use to the consumers of biblical scholarship, that is, the faith-based communities. Any medical school that produced no graduates fit to practise medicine and no research relevant to the human body would be closed down. *The same should apply with biblical studies, but it does not.*
>
> All the independent biblical scholars that I know work from a faith-based perspective, and it is with us that the future lies. It is necessary to recognize this, and not allow ourselves to be convinced that those who are not earning a living by their scholarship are somehow second rate.[60]

Ian Barbour has also noted that "too detached an attitude may cut a person off from the very kinds of experience which are religiously most significant. … Religious writings use the language of actors, not the language of spectators."[61]

Guest Editor at *BYU Studies* Weighs in on Barker

A guest-edited issue of *BYU Studies* in 2021 provides another skeptical response to Barker's work and its implications for Latter-day Saint studies. The title is "Is the Bible Reliable? A Case Study: Were King Josiah's Reforms a Restoration from Apostasy or a Suppression of Plain and Precious Truths? (And What about Margaret Barker?)"[62] The article was written by guest editor Eric Eliason, a BYU professor who teaches folklore and the Bible as literature, but his footnote 9 states that "the discussion from here [that is, pages 163–78, the bulk of the essay] until the conclusory section was initially drafted by Cory Crawford, who has agreed to the use of his edited draft in this essay." Crawford is assistant professor of Biblical Studies in the Department of Classics and World Religions at Ohio University.[63] Because of its publication in *BYU Studies*, where Barker herself had been published and reviewed several times, this essay deserves engagement and discussion.

Eliason notes both the low profile of Josiah's reform in Latter-day Saint tradition and textbooks, and the emerging recognition of his crucial importance in contemporary scholarship.

> Josiah might not be the most well-known Sunday School story, but for scholars of Hebrew scripture, his is *an* important, if not *the* most important, story in understanding who wrote the Old Testament, how its overarching editorial and narrative goals were established, how it was compiled, who compiled it, and why. But do Latter-day Saints really want to embrace this scholarly understanding? After all, secular scholars calling a long-hidden, but newly revealed, scripture a self-serving fraud[64] is an accusation with which we are all too familiar. But on the other hand, might scholars have provided an explanation for "God the Son's" relative absence from the Old Testament when he is omnipresent in the pre–Christian era parts of the Book of Mormon? It is easy to see how Latter-day Saints might see both things to like and things to suspect in both the traditional and scholarly understandings of Josiah and his reforms.[65]

The essay summarizes the story of King Josiah's reform as a prelude to its assessment of Barker's take, and then continues,

> This is where Barker begins to go far beyond mainstream scholarship that shares her suspicion of Josiah but does not see much evidence of pre-Josianic religion persisting underground

> for centuries until Jesus's day. Barker's hypothesis allows her both to explain the absence of themes important to her and to create the space into which they can be inserted — or re-inserted, as she would have it — into the narrative. Barker's work caught the attention of Latter-day Saint authors such as Noel Reynolds, John W. Welch, Daniel Peterson, and Kevin Christiansen [sic], who seized on her notion of the alleged removal of temple ideas and motifs as evidence of ancient apostasy — a particularly pronounced moment of the removal of the "plain and precious things" alluded to in the Book of Mormon. Because of this particular interest, Margaret Barker has been a regular presence at Latter-day Saint scholars' conferences and in their edited volumes. Still other publications by Latter-day Saint acolytes distill her work for a wider Church-member audience — generally with little skepticism.[66]

The footnote for the "other publications" lists only one "for example" publication, my "Paradigms Regained." In Part 1 of this series,[67] one of the reasons I included an extended survey of Latter-day Saint scholars who have drawn on her work was to provide a much more detailed picture to compare with the label of "acolytes" and the assertion that we write with "little skepticism" and, by implication, produce suspect work that needs no serious engagement to dismiss.

Eliason reports,

> It is easy to see how Barker's books have found a considerable fan base among educated, perhaps even especially religiously conservative and educated, Latter-day Saints despite the books cutting directly, and perhaps uncomfortably, against the grain of the Sunday School manual and the idea that the Bible generally presents a reliable narrative. Unfortunately, it is hard to tell whether the limited and ambiguous nature of Barker's evidence proves her point that ideas and practices were suppressed or whether this lack of evidence *is* evidence that they were never there in the first place. She is often dismissed as a fringe figure in the biblical-studies field — including by professionally trained ancient scripture professors at BYU, who tend not to be her acolytes and rarely find her claims worth engaging. Even when what she says differs little from the mainstream take on Josiah, she is still often dismissed out of hand. This might not happen as much

> if she had a traditional academic appointment or was willing to subject her books to the peer-review process. These are baseline requirements to be taken seriously in academia, but should they be for the pursuit of religious truth, especially in the Latter-day Saint tradition? But neither does our Latter-day Saint faith tradition see reluctance to fully follow scholarly practices, in and of itself, as praiseworthy or evidence of reliability.[68]

Behind Eliason's declaration of "the limited and ambiguous nature of Barker's evidence," he provides no substantial engagement with or detailed discussion of her sources and evidence. As we shall see, he quotes some of her critics, but the analysis rarely goes deeper than quotation for assertion without backing demonstration. It happens that the bibliographies and lists of primary sources in Barker's books are intimidatingly substantial,[69] as are her language skills. And though Eliason eventually observes that Lehi and Nephi have a story that "is, remarkably, contemporary with Josiah's reforms in late seventh-century Jerusalem,"[70] *he nowhere addresses the question of whether the Book of Mormon itself counts as evidence for or against her case*. Given how much attention he gives to reviewers who question her evidence, should not this be an issue of relevance for readers of *BYU Studies*? And though Eliason in his footnote 12 lists her 2005 talk at the Joseph Smith Conference, "Joseph Smith and Preexilic Israelite Religion," as published in *BYU Studies*,[71] his article does not mention that her topic was the Book of Mormon. *My primary point in writing "Paradigms Regained" was to demonstrate that the existence of the Book of Mormon allowed a reciprocal test between it and Barker's work*.[72]

Part 1 of this series included a broad, though not complete, survey of Barker's publications, citing several journal articles and significant academic engagement in a variety of institutional settings.[73] This shows that Barker has published more often, and published in peer-reviewed journals and books on many occasions, and has much more eminence and support among a wide range of scholars and academics in several countries than do the authors of that 2021 *BYU Studies* essay. And what was her election to the Presidency of the Society of Old Testament study but a significant "peer review," especially since knowledge of Hebrew is a requirement for membership? What was her Lambeth Doctor of Divinity but a notable peer review? I also cited McDade to provide a clearer understanding of what "mainstream" really means, and how Barker relates to some of those streams.

Notice the carefully ambiguous survey language, "often," "tend," and "rarely," in Eliason's dismissive paragraph in this sentence: "She is *often* dismissed as a fringe figure in the biblical-studies field — including by professionally trained ancient scripture professors at BYU, who *tend* not to be her acolytes and *rarely* find her claims worth engaging." Part 1 of this series included many names of Biblical scholars who recognize Barker's work in contrast to this kind of insinuative, rather than explicit, argument and rhetoric. And consider the rhetorical weight of the contrasting labels applied: "fringe" versus "professionally trained," and "acolytes" versus "ancient scripture professors." This is not rhetorically neutral language but is designed to influence the reader. Every writer wants to influence their readers, but whether that influence is earned on substance or acquired via posturing makes a difference.[74] I point this out here so that readers can consider whether the impression such language conveys accurately accounts for the specific professional engagements with her work that I have reported among a wide swath of institutionally embedded scholars over many years.

I cannot help but notice the importance of the labels and categories attached to different perspectives on Barker's work in Eliason's essay and how they function as indicators of the implied value of those perspectives. Labels and categories are both inevitable and useful, but in the case of his article, much of the weight of the arguments remains primarily in the existence of the labels, rather than in careful and detailed engagement.

Consider that one of the implicit prerequisites for a traditional academic appointment is that one represent the paradigm to which that academic institution and society is committed. Barker's personal experience with those institutional commitments led her to choose her own path outside of the institutions in order to "maintain my academic freedom."[75] As an example of the challenges faced by scholars pursuing mainstream paths relative to the paradigms of secular academia, one might consider the dramatic changes that occurred within the Maxwell Institute at Brigham Young University around 2012.[76] The change at the Maxwell Institute was, in my view, fundamentally about preferred social commitments on the part of certain academics in administrative positions which was very different from that of the founders, the editors, hundreds of contributors, and many thousands of readers, aiming instead to please outside secular scholars while making the kind of scholarship Neal A. Maxwell had encouraged much more difficult at BYU.[77] Barker may have faced similar challenges had she pursued a traditional academic post. Indeed, what Barker has accomplished over

many decades strikes me as much more impressive because she has done so without formal institutional backing, beginning as "just a housewife," albeit one that the notably learned Archbishop of Canterbury recognized as "massively learned,"[78] and who was initially encouraged in her efforts by Father Robert Murray.

On the topic of peer review, we should think back to the peer review that Luke reports, when Jesus stood up to read from Isaiah 61 in Nazareth: "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath" (Luke 4:28).

Should we take that "peer review" as the most important and telling source of information about Jesus? We can also look back at one of Joseph Smith's early and most influential peer reviewers, Alexander Campbell, who famously titled his response to Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon as "Delusions."[79] It should be evident that "peer review" is not a synonym for "certified and approved as unquestionably the last and final word on this or any topic." Peer review has an important social function, but the process of review does not begin and end with prepublication review, nor does any single group among many competing peer groups have the last word among all those available, nor does any academic appointment bestow omniscience and infallibility.

Richard Bushman has noted,

> We must at least acknowledge that no scholarship, no truth, exists in a social vacuum. Though it is rarely mentioned in the work itself, all scholarship is tied to a community of some kind and bears the marks of that community's influence. Scholarship is the product of people who are located in institutions — universities, research institutes, or circles of like-minded thinkers. They publish their work and want to have it read by others. Their reputations, promotions, pay raises, and appointments depend on how that work is received. When they write, they use the language, the mannerisms, the forms of their scholarly community. In taking an intellectual position, they silently, but inevitably associate themselves with people of a similar outlook.[80]

Witness Selection and Suppression

Much of the weight in Eliason's essay comes from selectivity in whose opinions are quoted and whose are suppressed. For example, Eliason cites one reviewer of Barker's *Temple Themes in Christian Worship*:[81]

> Mary Coloe found *Temple Themes in Christian Worship* dissatisfying because "Barker's process lacks solid argumentation, evidence, and a clear methodology. The work progresses by inference and an accumulation of text references without establishing the necessity that these texts be read intertextually. Statements are simply made without providing sufficient, and sometimes any, evidence in support. The accumulation of texts certainly suggests what Barker is proposing, but suggestion is not the same as evidence."[82]

Consider that Coloe agrees that "the accumulation of texts certainly suggests what Barker is proposing," despite dissatisfaction, perhaps, I think, because Barker views her books as a serial effort, with each one building on and dependent on those that came before. A reviewer who has not read her previous work will have a different experience than one who has read it all, just as a new theater goer who comes into the middle of a play like Hamlet will have a different experience than one who not only arrived on time, but knows both the play and its theatrical conventions. And consider that Eliason does not mention that Dr. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, endorsed the book on the dust jacket and awarded Barker the Lambeth Doctor of Divinity in response to her work. Why not mention this? What qualities and/or agenda makes Coloe's obscure review notable and William's unavoidably conspicuous response not worth mentioning?

Eliason reports that as "eminent Enoch scholar George Nickelsburg puts it in his review of *The Older Testament,* Barker's work 'is repeatedly marked by two basic methodological flaws: the assertion that possibility is fact, and the assumption that a rhetorical question will receive an answer that supports the author's hypothesis.'"[83] If this assertion regarding Barker's scholarship is correct and valid, then it should be easy enough to demonstrate with repeated examples, and indeed, should be demonstrated, if the one making that specific assertion does not want a visit from the Irony Police. But, for Eliason, one assertion from Authority is enough to demonstrate that Barker relies on mere assertion, and it also happens that Eliason's essay is marked by a number of rhetorical questions which all assume that the answer supports the author's hypothesis. I will later return to that other task for the Irony Police.

"Proof" vs. "Cause to Believe"

We should consider Barker's own statement of what she has "proved" in her book, compared to the cited complaint by Nicklesburg as a "basic methodological flaw." For instance, in her chapter on Job, she writes, "I propose an outline to see whether or not my theory about exilic developments is compatible with the Book of Job. Such an exercise can *prove* nothing, but the more material which can be illuminated by the hypothesis, the more it deserves consideration."[84] It does not seem to me that Barker is under the illusion that she has proved something, but rather is aware that her approach can be enlightening with respect to her questions and contextualization. She offers not "proof" that bestows absolute knowing (see Alma 32:17–18), but rather the results of testable questions, experiments upon the word, and enlightenment on many important questions that add up to a "cause to believe" (Alma 32: 18–19) and invite further testing. She explained the kind of enlightenment she seeks in her introduction:

> Where, then, are we to look for the origin of New Testament imagery labelled Greek or pagan on grounds that is it not Jewish? This is the most fundamental of the introductory questions, since, without a knowledge of the frame of reference, there can be no understanding of the points within it. The allusions will escape us, and the signs, parables and works will be interpreted because they are a part of our tradition, and not because they are in themselves significant pointers.[85]

In her introduction she explains,

> The link between Old and New [Testaments] is far more complex than the use of proof texts and the fulfillment of prophecies. These are the tip of an iceberg whose greater part remains invisible. I have tried to reconstruct the invisible mass from its effects which are perceived. Thereby I have left myself open to the charge of going beyond the evidence. … Whether or not this is an acceptable method remains to be seen.[86]

And on the final page she writes:

> It has proved possible to isolate recurring patterns in the extra-biblical texts and assemble them into a viable whole. It may be objected that the process has been based upon the hypothesis of an early original constructed simply

> by retrojection. True, but the pattern thus formed and its relevance to so many of the problems of the Old Testament invites consideration.[87]

Testing of a hypothesis must be conducted on the tentative assumption that a proposition is true. We must remember that before some experimental evidence for the Higgs boson was provided, someone had to not only theorize the possibility, and to conceive of relevant experiments, but someone also had to construct the CERN supercollider that made the performance of those experiments possible. When Joseph Smith decides to try prayer, he does so on the assumption that an answer of some kind is possible. Before the results are in, the experiment proceeds on faith, at least as much in the process as in the final outcome. In considering the efforts of Bible scholars as a group, Eliason concludes:

> Bible scholarship, even at its most sober, is a field characterized by best guesses, tentative conclusions, and dot-connecting with far fewer available data points than most scholars would want. Not usually, but occasionally, the wildest guesses might jump up the plausibility scale with the help of newfound evidence. Barker's thesis may someday get a boost of this variety.[88]

This would be an excellent place to mention the implications of the Book of Mormon as a potential source of "newfound evidence" that could provide a plausibility boost by defining the opening setting as "the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah" (1 Nephi 1:4), who happens to be a son of King Josiah. Instead, Eliason never tests Barker's work against the content of the Book of Mormon but against the opinions of selected representatives of "mainstream" academic Biblical scholarship on one side and more traditional Latter-day Saint thinkers on the other. I recognize that most mainstream scholars, whether trained in divinity schools or secular academia, also dismiss the Book of Mormon. But few of them have read it carefully or commented professionally. For the record, I have closely considered several such attempts over the years.[89] Should the opinions of selected mainstream scholars be the only "experiment upon the word" that Latter-day Saints should weigh in considering Barker's work?

Note, as well, Eliason's unsubtle rhetorical association of Barker's work with "wild guesses" without any demonstration that this labeling accounts for her case. Rather than seeing Barker's work as "wild guesses," Dr. Rowan Williams gives credit to Barker's "massively learned and

creative re-reading of what the Bible has to tell us about the religion of ancient Israel, using her wide knowledge of material in Hebrew, Syriac and other Semitic languages, texts from Jewish, Gnostic and Christian sources"[90]

Despite her learning, Barker admits that she had "no idea" of what the young Joseph Smith produced in six to eight weeks of dictation in 1829 using a stone in a hat. So why do we have such an elaborate convergence of time, place, first temple themes and numerous interconnected details? A few random but insignificant parallels might be expected between any two large texts,[91] but we have an unexpected and complex phenomenon centering on Jerusalem and the first temple to somehow explain. Personally, I think the deep correspondence between Barker's work and the Book of Mormon is far better explained by common inspiration and accuracy than as the product of independent "wild guesses."

Witness and Partiality

In quoting Nicklesburg's review of *The Older Testament* to bolster a lack of confidence in Barker, Eliason should mention that one of the authors that Barker has criticized in *The Older Testament* is Nicklesburg.[92] For instance, in her chapter on *1 Enoch*, she compares his approaches to that of another scholar, Paul D. Hanson, writing that, "Several attempts have been made to explain the Semihazah-Asael conflation. *Nicklesburg's analysis has a disappointingly tame conclusion*. … Hanson offers a more complex solution. … Both suggestions are open to criticism. … Both writers have a problem with the wisdom element."[93] Having been criticized by Barker, Nicklesburg in turn may not be an objective source for evaluating Barker's work. That doesn't mean his analysis is necessarily wrong, but the possibility should be disclosed in a fair evaluation of Barker.

I find Barker's discussion of published arguments interesting and worth reading for its insights in how scholarship works in general, as well as how she makes her case in particular. Disagreement in interpretation among scholars is simply what happens among scholars. Barker wrestles with some specific arguments among Enoch scholars, not whether the scholars, personally, should be be taken seriously on any topic whatsoever. Despite her disagreements with Nicklesburg and some others on various points, and her showing when and how they also disagree with one another, she never dismisses them as authorities unworthy of consideration. For instance, she also comments that "Nicklesburg has shown that 1 En. 62–3 is related to Isa. 14; 52 and 53,

as well as to several other non-biblical texts which suggests that all are part of a lost tradition about the last judgement, a great angel who is both warrior and priest, exaltation and ascension."[94]

Hugh Nibley commented that "scholarship is an open-ended discussion in which things are never settled. The important thing, therefore, is not to be right on a particular point but to be able to enter into the discussion."[95] Accounting for the data at hand is what gives weight to a scholar's arguments in moving a discussion along, but as a young Joseph Smith observed both to his dismay and his enlightenment, the same passages can be interpreted differently by different scholars (Joseph Smith — History 1:12). The problem is not usually that one or the other is unreasonable, but that paradigm debate always involves weighing options, contextualization, alternatives and available sources, and choosing which reading a person thinks is better.

Survey, Selectivity, and Representation

Eliason asserts that "there has not yet been a full critical response within Latter-day Saint circles," and in a footnote he reports that BYU Professor of Ancient Scripture David Rolph Seely "has challenged the uncritical absorption of Barker's views in his conference presentation, 'The Book of Deuteronomy and the Book of Mormon,' Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, Georgia, November 23, 2015."[96] If you search for this particular presentation, you will find a summary that discusses an extended version of that presentation given at the BYU Law School,[97] as well as an audio recording of that BYU presentation.[98] The written summary does not mention Barker at all, nor does the recording. I don't know if or how the shorter version of the talk given in Atlanta refers to Barker; however, there are some more accessible sources for Seely's opinions regarding Barker and the Latter-day Saint engagement with her work.

First, Seely was one of the editors for *Glimpses of Lehi's Jerusalem*, which included essays that took a traditional view of Josiah,[99] as well as essays by Barker and myself that challenged that view. In an essay published in 2016 in *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity,* Seely commented publicly on Barker:

> Perhaps most interesting is a movement among some LDS scholars following the ideas of Margaret Barker, a Methodist scholar. The basic idea of this group is directly connected with the idea formulated in the Documentary Hypothesis that the D-strand — essentially the book of Deuteronomy and the

> related Deuteronomistic History in the book of Judges — is a form of propaganda and a product of Josiah's reform in 623 BCE. Barker argues that Josiah's reform, called by some the Deuteronomic Revolution, effectively purged idolatrous objects and practices from Judahite religion but at the same time purged many ancient and authentic beliefs of biblical religion going back to the time of Abraham, including the tree of life, council visions, associations between stars and angels, El Elyon as the High God and Yahweh as his son, the Holy One of Israel, Melchizedek priesthood, Wisdom traditions, and the Mother of the Son of God. She further argues that these elements of the purged ancient religion are preserved in later Jewish and Christian apocryphal and pseudepigraphal literature. Certain Mormon authors — because some of these teachings resonate with LDS beliefs in the Book of Mormon and in Mormon temple traditions — have adopted and promulgated this view in terms of Mormon studies.[100]

After discussing a variety of instances of Latter-day Saint applications of the results of modern biblical criticism and scholarship, Seely notes that "while some [Latter-day Saint] scholars avoid areas dealing with higher criticism, they are perfectly willing to use methods and sometimes assumptions of higher criticism as long as it can be harnessed in the explication and defense of their faith."[101] This is a fair concern, and perhaps was the actual source of Eliason's statement about Seely's concern about "the uncritical absorption of Barker's views."

Uncritical and misinformed application of scholarly studies is a problem not just for apologetics, but in numerous aspects of modern society, including healthcare and numerous social policies. But just because some Latter-day Saints — myself included — explore the potential of Barker's paradigm does not mean that we are "uncritical" or careless. I have often quoted Ian Barbour: "Commitment to a paradigm allows its potentialities to be systematically explored, but it does not exclude reflective evaluation."[102] It is through evaluation of the evidence and understanding the limits and strengths of related scholarship that we can most appropriately engage with related work. This, of course, takes time and refinement; and certainly mistakes and excessive enthusiasm can occur along the way.

Eliason writes, "So far, Latter-day Saint scholars with doctoral training in the Bible and ancient Near Eastern religions seem to have mostly found it best to refrain from much comment on her work, leaving

positive, uncritical attention to enjoy a heyday."[103] Again, notice the ambiguity regarding the extent and methods for the survey hidden behind the word "mostly," and the failure to mention a range of Latter-day Saint and non-Latter-day Saint scholars who have commented favorably and publicly on her work and who have referenced her in their own works.

Socialization into streams of thought, bounded by acceptance of common methods and assumptions, guided in crucial respects by the protocols that suit secular detachment from covenant and personal commitment, influences who controls positions, editorial perspectives, and promotions — all are points worth considering when assessing who appreciates and who deprecates Barker.

What Can a Christian See?

Eliason sees Barker's "larger project" as "thoroughly and unabashedly a Christian enterprise," asserting in a footnote,

> This is not a criticism but an understanding of her work as less an attempt to understand the Hebrew Bible we have now on its own terms and more as an attempt to read between the lines to link it to early Christianity. Perhaps the most manifest confirmation of the overt Christian valence of her project is in her introduction to Barker, *Older Testament* — a work that suggests it might be about lost teachings of the Hebrew Bible but which consists mostly of a discussion of New Testament scholarship, because that is the background for understanding Jesus that she seems more interested in explaining than the history of Israelite religion.[104]

There are several things going on here. One is the explicit suggestion that Barker is doing something other than trying "to understand the Hebrew Bible we have on its own terms," which all objective scholars ought to do, with the implicit suggestion that having an overt Christian valence somehow goes against any possibility of understanding the Hebrew Bible we now have.

In her 2000 talk "Reflections on Biblical Studies in the Twentieth Century," Barker noted that in the universities,

> Any form of faith commitment in biblical scholarship, any attempt to work within a theological framework can be suspect. One ploy is to keep one's biblical study in a separate compartment of one's life, to pursue the most radically destructive investigations of biblical texts and then go to

> evensong. People of commitment often take refuge in safe areas like Hebrew, or archaeology, although that is no longer "safe" as I shall show in a moment. Let me quote now from the introduction to Francis Watson's recent book *Text and Truth* 1997, "It is believed that theological concerns have an inevitable tendency to distort the autonomous processes of biblical exegesis, a prejudice so strong that to identify a theological motivation underlying an exegetical position is often held to be sufficient refutation." ... "The lines of demarcation between systematic theology and Old and New Testament scholarship represent more than mere division of labour; they are ideologically motivated. They represent a collective decision of biblical scholarship that biblical texts are to be construed as something other than Christian scripture."[105]

First, as Barker's overall work and language skills and sources make clear, the Masoretic Hebrew Bible is not the whole story. The oldest complete copy is much later[106] than the Dead Sea Scrolls, which contain several pre-Christian variant texts. She observes in *The Great High Priest* regarding the Masoretic text that "The distribution of unreadable Hebrew texts is not random; *they are texts which bear upon the Christian tradition*."[107] The state of the texts, the variety of texts, the challenges in figuring out how certain passages in the Septuagint relate to certain passages in the Hebrew, as well as patterns of differences in the Aramaic Targums, and the relationships between the Masoretic Hebrew and non-canonical writings, and archeology, are all things she considers. Barker explains:

> What I have done is select from a wide range of material sufficient to formulate a theory which brings together many of the problems of this field, and presents them as different aspects of a fundamental misreading of the Old Testament. This misreading is one which has been forced upon us by those who transmitted the text.[108]

Eliason reported that the introduction to *The Older Testament* discusses New Testament scholarship as a means of defining the problems that the book attempts to solve, implying to him that the book will not be interested in the history of Israelite religion. Yet the chapters of the book are these:

> Introduction: The Problem and the Method
> The Book of Enoch
> Wisdom

The Names of God: (1) The Holy One
Isaiah of Jerusalem
Deuteronomy
The Second Isaiah
The Era of the Restoration
The Third Isaiah
Transformations in the Post-exilic Era: (1) The Menorah
Transformations in the Post-exilic Era: (2) The Eden Stories
The Names of God: (2) Elyon
The Book of Job
Conclusions

The Older Testament offers a very careful survey of several crucial periods and developments in the history of Israelite religion and the transmission of Hebrew texts. And she answers a relevant question, at least to those willing to challenge the "collective decision of biblical scholarship that biblical texts are to be construed as something other than Christian scripture." Years ago I responded to an author who, based on her training in Biblical studies, confidently wrote that "no Jew expected a messiah like Jesus," with the crucial question "Then how do we explain Christianity?"[109] Noticing that Barker is interested in answering that question is not by itself a "sufficient refutation" of her body of work. And at least one reader — me — finds the end of her introduction to *The Older Testament* of particular interest to the Latter-day Saints.

> The life and work of Jesus were, and should be, interpreted in the light of something *other* than Jerusalem Judaism. This *other* had its roots in the conflicts of the sixth century B.C. when the traditions of the monarchy were divided as an inheritance amongst several heirs. It would have been lost but for the accidents of archaeological discovery and the evidence of pre-Christian texts preserved and transmitted *only by Christian hands*.[110]

The Company We Keep and What People Might Think

Eliason comments that "Latter-day Saint writers who ground their theology in Margaret Barker's work open themselves to the charges of unsound reasoning leveled at her,"[111] and as an example footnotes a critic of the Church, Paul Owen, and his essay in *The New Mormon Challenge*.[112] He does not mention that both Barry Bickmore and I responded to Owen's critique and that neither of us grounds our theology in Margaret

Barker's work, but rather explores the implications of her work for our preexisting theology. And I notice that in referring to Owen here, for those inclined to check specifics, Eliason's reference exposes Owen to the charges of unsound reasoning we leveled at him. Bickmore's essay in response to Owen was titled "Of Simplicity, Oversimplification, and Monotheism."[113] My own response includes this observation:

> Owen bases his response on two fundamental assumptions:
>
> - He assumes the authority of the received Old and New Testament texts — at least those passages and versions that he cites as proof texts — to be substantially accurate and without significant change.
> - He assumes the authority of "orthodox" interpretations of the Old and New Testaments (that is, as articulated in the councils of the third to fifth centuries), *even when in explicit contradiction to the beliefs of earlier Christians* (see p. 481 n. 169).
>
> Barker's work deals directly with these assumptions in ways that undercut Owen's foundations:
>
> - Barker questions the authority of several key texts and readings, starting her arguments by identifying unresolved tensions in the scriptures as we have them, including variant readings and corrupt passages, and by searching widely through relevant literatures in order to account for these tensions.
> - She undercuts the authority of late "orthodox" interpretations by citing a wide range of earlier but neglected Christian texts and their Jewish antecedents, always working from a position of faith, not of skepticism.[114]

What are the Implications of the Deuteronomist Reform?

Eliason then moves to question the possible implications of Barker's approach to the Bible.

> Are Church members really ready to label as ahistorical, even fraudulently apostate, virtually all of Deuteronomy and the major historical books of the Old Testament? Deuteronomy contains some of the fullest and most intricate expressions of bedrock theological ideas in the restored gospel, such as

> covenants and divine love, referenced approvingly by Jesus himself! "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Jesus in Matt. 4:10, referencing Deut. 6:13). Following Deuteronomy, the Deuteronomistic historians articulated what Latter-day Saints may recognize as a "pride cycle" in Judges and identified faithful and unfaithful monarchs throughout 1–2 Kings — an approach that may have given rise to these themes' prevalence in the Book of Mormon narrative.[115]

Elsewhere, noted Latter-day Saint biblical scholar Julie Smith in an essay on Huldah, which Eliason refers to in some detail, similarly commented, as a footnoted aside with no development, that "there are solid reasons to dispute Barker's thesis [regarding Josiah's reform], not the least of which is that it requires taking the position that a vast portion of the Hebrew Bible advocates false religion."[116]

First, are we really labeling the Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomist histories as "ahistorical, even fraudulently apostate," or saying, as Julie Smith puts it, that "a vast portion of the Hebrew Bible advocates false religion?" Or, rather, are we considering the history implied by the state of the texts, the variety of texts, the variation in the texts, the passages directly contradicted by Jeremiah and Nephi,[117] and the differences between the Kings and Chronicles accounts centered on the temple,[118] and the fact that the third Isaiah directly opposes the agenda of the Deuteronomists?[119] Even where 1 Nephi 13 points to specific "plain and most precious" parts being lost, along with "many covenants" (1 Nephi 13:26), Nephi states that the value of the "record of the Jews" is that it "contain[s] the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the Gentiles" (1 Nephi 13:23).

None of us following Barker's take on the Reform have suggested that the "covenants of the Lord" have all gone away, nor that what we have now in the Bible, including Deuteronomy, lacks "great worth." What we are saying is that the state of the texts, the variety of the texts, the contradictions in texts, the silences in the texts, and the archeology and outside texts, themselves tell a valuable story that happens to be consistent with 1 Nephi 13, as well as accounts for the attitudes of characters like Sherem, who believed in the Law and Moses, but not in prophesy or that Christ would come (Jacob 7:2, 7). For example, Neal Rappleye explicitly explains that "being against parts of the *ideology* of a particular group who uses Deuteronomy as a foundation is not the same thing as being

opposed to that text itself. Lehi and Nephi were not anti-Deuteronomy, and certainly were not anti-Moses."[120]

One of the more interesting Latter-day Saint commentaries on Deuteronomy is Hugh Nibley's 1982 essay "How to Get Rich."[121] He comments, "That law was never rescinded, but only superseded by a higher law. … It is preparation for more to come when we are ready to receive it. … The reward it promises explicitly and repeatedly is success — prosperity and long life in the new land of promise. One looks in vain for direct promises of eternal life and exaltation."[122] Nibley cites many passages that describe an idealistic-here-and-now moral code that includes things like this:

> He doth execute the judgment (*mishpat*) for the orphan and the widow, and he loves the stranger and wants him to be provided with food and clothing. *Therefore, you* must do the *same*: love the stranger — remember that you too were strangers [and *were* oppressed] in the land of Egypt (Deuteronomy 10:18–19).[123]

After reading through the very high moral standards and social tolerances expressed through Deuteronomy, Nibley then goes through the covenant curses, the reversal of the promised blessings that go with disobedience. These final pages are much more than chilling, for they describe much of world history and much of the modern world, including Nibley's observation on Deuteronomy 28:59, which promises "You will suffer from chronic epidemics."[124] One does not have to look far to find people who have not kept that particular promise for orphans, widows, and strangers, nor must we seek far to see where that particular covenant curse is in effect. This is all very insightful and valuable, but I also notice that neither Nibley nor Eliason discusses the key places where Jeremiah and Lehi and Joseph Smith directly contradict Deuteronomy nor on the absence of the Day of Atonement from the festival calendar in Deuteronomy 16. Nibley elsewhere shows immense concern for promises of eternal life and salvation.[125] And Nibley also points out that the Book of Mormon treatment of atonement is "in the milieu of the old Hebrew rites before the destruction of Solomon's temple."[126] The points of difference between Deuteronomy and other Biblical texts and between versions of Biblical texts, including differences in the 10 commandments as listed in Exodus,[127] and the absence of the Day of Atonement from the calendar in Deuteronomy 16, are as important and telling in relation to the questions we raise as are the presence of relevant admonitions, laws, covenants and consequences in their own sphere.

Nephi and His Asherah

Along the way, Eliason cites Daniel Peterson's important essay "Nephi and His Asherah" to complain that "his reading is by no means the plain and obvious meaning of the text for a modern reader, at least. But why is it not?"[128] Eliason overlooks Nephi's declaration that "there is none other people that understand the things which were spoken unto the Jews like unto them, save it be that they are taught after the manner of the things of the Jews" (2 Nephi 25:5). Peterson's groundbreaking essay is an exercise in appropriate contextualization, noting how that ancient Jerusalem 600 BCE context changes the harvest for those specific seeds. Peterson asks, "Why would Nephi, without any explicit direction from his guide, have seen an immediate connection between a tree and the virginal mother of a divine child?"[129] Remember, too, that though Eliason mentions Barker's presence at the 2005 Joseph Smith Conference, he does not engage anything she said there:

> The tree of life made one happy, according to the Book of Proverbs (Proverbs 3:8), but for detailed descriptions of the tree we have to rely on the non-canonical texts. Enoch described it as perfumed, with fruit like grapes (*1 Enoch* 32:5), and a text discovered in Egypt in 1945 described the tree as beautiful, fiery, and with fruit like white grapes. I do not know of any other source that describes the fruit as white grapes. Imagine my surprise when I read the account of Lehi's vision of the tree whose white fruit made one happy, and the interpretation that the Virgin in Nazareth was the mother of the Son of God after the manner of the flesh (1 Nephi 11:14–23). This is the Heavenly Mother, represented by the tree of life, and then Mary and her Son on earth. This revelation to Joseph Smith was the ancient Wisdom symbolism, intact, and almost certainly as it was known in 600 BCE.[130]

Choosing Our Associations

Eliason's essay also has this paragraph, which begins well enough:

> Another reason for Margaret Barker's enthusiastic reception may be her personal story's more-than-passing resemblance to Joseph Smith's — a solitary individual outside the scholarly establishment gathers together scattered ancient remnants, revitalizes marginalized themes, and restores them to their proper order to tell a coherent and compelling story of true

> religion lost, then found again. It helps too that the story Barker tells corresponds, on a number of key points, quite nicely with the one revealed through Joseph Smith.[131]

But the paragraph ends with this:

> But we have Joseph Smith for this. Do we really also need Margaret Barker — especially if carrying water for her work might discredit Restoration truth claims by association?[132]

Consider that question in light of more of what we have from and through Joseph Smith:

> Nevertheless, God sendeth more witnesses, and he proveth all his words. (2 Nephi 11:3)

> One of the grand fundamental principles of Mormonism is to receive truth let it come from whence it may.[133]

> Have the Presbyterians any truth? Yes. Have the Baptists, Methodists, etc., any truth? Yes. They all have a little truth mixed with error. We should gather all the good and true principles in the world and treasure them up, or we shall not come out true "Mormons."[134]

> For what doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift? Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in him who is the giver of the gift. (D&C 88:33)

> Wo be unto him that shall say: We have received the word of God, and we need no more of the word of God, for we have enough!

> For behold, thus saith the Lord God: I will give unto the children of men line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little; and blessed are those who hearken unto my precepts, and lend an ear unto my counsel, for they shall learn wisdom; for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have. (2 Nephi 28: 29–30)

Telling Patterns in Eliason's Rhetoric

If the Lord gives us patterns in all things (D&C 52:14), that we might know the truth of all things, truth being "knowledge of things as they

are, as they were, and as they are to come" (D&C 93:24), what patterns emerge from the overall use of rhetoric in Eliason's essay? I have studied the patterns of paradigm debate[135] and the scriptural patterns for seeing truth.[136] What pattern appears in the *BYU Studies* essay?

Personally, I am struck by the rhetorical weight of the many labels that appear. For Barker, we see:

- maverick Methodist Bible scholar
- fringe figure
- presumably nonpartisan
- problematic methods
- limited and ambiguous nature of Barker's evidence

For her Latter-day Saint defenders:

- considerable fan base
- especially religiously conservative
- mostly in disciplines other than biblical studies
- Latter-day Saint acolytes
- her acolytes
- *amateur* scholarship (in the etymological sense of the word, as something that derives from one's untrained passion rather than vocational expertise)
- generally with little skepticism
- carrying water for [metaphorically implying servitude, rather than cooperation and gratitude]

For her Latter-day Saint critics:

- professionally trained ancient scripture professors at BYU, who tend not to be her acolytes

Notice that the section in Eliason's essay that gives a good overview of "Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomistic History" entirely lacks this kind of labeling and ironic undertone. For this reason, it is the best part of the essay.

Notice that the section "Margaret Barker on Josiah's Reform and Its Aftermath" never quotes Barker in the main text. Of the nine footnotes for this section, five refer to Barker's writings, mentioning by name only *The Older Testament*, *The Great Angel,* and *The Great High Priest*. Only footnote 21 (p. 168) contains a direct, if brief, quote from Barker that "wisdom was despised and impurity installed in the temple," which refers to how *1 Enoch* depicts what happened just before the first temple was destroyed (*1 Enoch* 93:8) and as the second temple was established

(*1 Enoch* 89:73–74). Three footnotes refer to other scholars. Footnote 27 amounts to an ideological protest against "the overt Christian valence of her project" based on the preface discussing "New Testament scholarship," rather than that reader's expectation of an introductory discussion of "the lost teachings of the Hebrew Bible"[137] and an evident ideological preference for reading the "Hebrew Bible we have now on its own terms." This is not Barker on the Reform, but Eliason's filtered response to her.

Similarly, in the section on "Possible Reasons for Latter-Day Saint Barker Enthusiasm," no enthusiastic Church members are quoted and only a very few are even named. We get some acknowledgement of the most conspicuous surface issues as "aspects of the restored gospel that dovetail quite readily with Barker's work, especially on issues where we are distinct from most Protestants: temple culture, apotheosis, the divine feminine, and apostasy."[138] But there is no engagement with specific names, specific books and essays, nor in-depth explorations. This means that Eliason's "possible reasons" stand at a distance from our published and demonstrated reasons.

Wisdom and the Unexamined Life

Here is one example of the kind of thing Eliason never mentions. This concerns Barker's reconstruction of the ancient wisdom tradition and how it relates to Nephi. Referring to the book of Daniel, Barker notes that "the text itself claims to be about a *wise man* who predicts the future, interprets dreams and functions at court."[139] She observes that

> Joseph, our only other canonical model [of a wise man], is very similar; he functions at court, interprets dreams and predicts the future. … Daniel is sufficiently Judaized to observe the food laws, but how are we to explain his dealings with heavenly beings, and his use of an inexplicable mythology? The elaborate structures of the book suggest that it was using a known framework, and not constructing imagery as it went along, but there is no hint of such imagery in Proverbs, *except in passages where the text is now corrupt*. This suggests that the wisdom elements in the non-canonical apocalypses which have no obvious roots in the Old Testament may not be foreign accretions, but elements of an older wisdom which the reformers have purged.[140]

While Nephi does not interact with Zedekiah's court in the manner of Joseph or Daniel, he does accept kingship in the New World (2 Nephi 5:18). Nephi also interprets dreams and predicts the future (1 Nephi 10–15). Like Daniel, he shows commitment to the Law (1 Nephi 4:14–17; 2 Nephi 5:10), has dealings with angels (1 Nephi 3:29–30; 11:21, 30; 12:1; 2 Nephi 4:24), recognizes the need to seek interpretation of symbols (1 Nephi 11:11), and speaks of the need to understand the cultural context behind prophetic writing (2 Nephi 25:1–5). Lehi discovers in the brass plates his descent from Joseph (1 Nephi 5:14–16; 2 Nephi 3:4), and the Book of Mormon shows access to Joseph traditions that do not survive in the present Bible (2 Nephi 3 and Alma 46:23–27).[141] What else might Nephi have in common with the wisdom tradition? Starting from the observations of the common ground between Daniel and Joseph, Barker fills in other details of the lost tradition:

> This was a mythology of angels and of scenes of a great judgement. …
>
> The exaltation to the stars appears as the wise who turn many to righteousness shining like the stars forever. … The wise man has *knowledge* of God, is a child/servant of the Lord, has God as his father and, as God's son, will receive help (Wisdom 2:12ff). At the great judgement he will be exalted and take his place with the sons of God, the Holy Ones.[142]
>
> The pattern of the "lost" tradition therefore included, as well as the angels and the great judgement, the stars and the foreign kings, the kingship of Yahweh, the Holy Ones, exaltation, sonship and wisdom.[143]
>
> In [Jubilees] 4:17, … Enoch learns the forbidden art of writing *and* the calendrical calculations which *1 Enoch* includes amongst the revealed secrets of heaven.[144]
>
> Wisdom was the secrets of creation, learned in heaven and brought to earth, the recurring theme of the apocalypses. There must have been some way in which the king, and the wise men, "went" to heaven like the prophets in order to learn these secrets by listening in the council of God.[145]
>
> Another of the angelic arts was metal-working, and we find wisdom attributed to a variety of craftsmen in the Old Testament. … 1 [Enoch] 8 links this skill to the arts of war, and in Isaiah 10:13 we do find that the king of Assyria's military

> prowess is called wisdom. Job 28 implies that wisdom extended to the techniques of mining, damming and irrigation. Ezekiel 27:8–9 says that the navigators and shipwrights were also wise. The knowledge of mathematics required for these skills is also presupposed by the later astronomical material in *1 Enoch*, and by the calendrical calculations.[146]

Beyond Nephi as a king, a dreamer, an interpreter of apocalyptic visions, a foreteller who prophesies a great judgment to come (1 Nephi 11:36; 22:12–19), who claims personal knowledge of the mysteries of God (1 Nephi 11; 2 Nephi 4:23–25), and who knows of both the heavenly hosts of angels and the fallen ones (1 Nephi 1:8–10; 11:1, 30–31; 2 Nephi 2:17), he demonstrates his knowledge of writing (1 Nephi 1:2), and his writings show extensive ties to the known and surmised wisdom literatures.[147] He also demonstrates wisdom in relation to mining and metalworking (1 Nephi 17:9–10), shipbuilding (1 Nephi 17:8–9; 18:1–8), navigation (1 Nephi 18:12–13, 22–23), and the arts of war (2 Nephi 5:14, 34). He is likely the source of the means of calendrical calculations that his descendants used to determine the holy days and the passage of years related to Lehi's 600-year prophecy of the Messiah (1 Nephi 10:4).

Barker further notes, "Wisdom included medicine, taught to Noah (Jub. 10.10) and to Tobit (Tob. 6.6) by angels, and brought by the rebels in *1 Enoch* 8, where they taught the cutting of roots. In the Old Testament the art of healing belongs to God (Exod. 15.26; Deut. 32.39; Job 5.18) and the gift of healing was given to prophets (1 Kings 17; Isa. 39). We know virtually nothing of the medicines."[148]

The Book of Mormon shows connection to both the spiritual power given to the prophets and the wisdom tradition of medicinal knowledge:

> And it came to pass that they went immediately, obeying the message which he had sent unto them; and they went in unto the house unto Zeezrom; and they found him upon his bed, sick, being very low with a burning fever; and his mind also was exceedingly sore because of his iniquities; and when he saw them he stretched forth his hand, and besought them that they would heal him. (Alma 15:5)

> And there were some who died with fevers, which at some seasons of the year were very frequent in the land — but not so much so with fevers, because of the excellent qualities of the many plants and roots which God had prepared to remove

> the cause of diseases, to which men were subject by the nature of the climate. (Alma 46:40)

Another aspect of the ancient wisdom tradition involved the arts of divination, of foretelling the future. Barker observes that even though "Deut. 18 prohibits the use of all divination in no uncertain way; … such practices are quite consistent with the ways of Daniel and Joseph."[149] For example, she explains, "We have to find a place within Israel's tradition for … Urim and Thummim (Num. 27.21; Deut. 33.8) and for the belief that the outcome of any lot was determined by the Lord (Prov. 16.33). Daniel and Joseph both give God the credit for their skills as diviners (Gen. 41.6; Dan. 2.27)."[150]

Looking to the Book of Mormon, we easily find stories that are at home with these traditions. For instance, Nephi reports how "we cast lots — who of us should go in unto the house of Laban" (1 Nephi 3:11). This story and the description of the function of the Liahona, as strange as it seemed to Joseph Smith's contemporaries, fits nicely into the world of the ancient wise men.

> And it came to pass that as my father arose in the morning, and went forth to the tent door, to his great astonishment he beheld upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass. And within the ball were two spindles; and the one pointed the way whither we should go into the wilderness. … And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the pointers which were in the ball, that they did work according to the faith and diligence and heed which we did give unto them. And there was also written upon them a new writing, which was plain to be read, which did give us understanding concerning the ways of the Lord; and it was written and changed from time to time, according to the faith and diligence which we gave unto it. And thus we see that by small means the Lord can bring about great things. (1 Nephi 16:10, 28–29)

In *Since Cumorah,* Nibley compared the function of the Liahona to an ancient Semitic practice of divination using arrows.[151] We also have the account of the interpreters in the Book of Mormon, which Joseph Smith later associated with the Urim and Thummim.

> Now Ammon said unto him: I can assuredly tell thee, O king, of a man that can translate the records; for he has wherewith that he can look, and translate all records that are

> of ancient date; and it is a gift from God. And the things are called interpreters, and no man can look in them except he be commanded, lest he should look for that he ought not and he should perish. And whosoever is commanded to look in them, the same is called seer. … But a seer can know of things which are past, and also of things which are to come, and by them shall all things be revealed, or, rather, shall secret things be made manifest, and hidden things shall come to light, and things which are not known shall be made known by them, and also things shall be made known by them which otherwise could not be known. (Mosiah 8:13, 17)

Clearly, the Book of Mormon connects not just to the more traditional understandings of wisdom but also melds with Barker's reconstruction. Crucially, Nephi qualifies remarkably well as a representative of the wisdom tradition as Barker reconstructs it, as does his brother Jacob.[152] My essays contain more comparisons of the Book of Mormon and Barker's extensive reconstructions of the wisdom tradition; and I should mention here that Hugh Nibley,[153] Daniel Peterson,[154] Val Larsen,[155] Alyson Von Feldt[156] and Taylor Halverson[157] have looked further and show that there are other distinct and complex wisdom patterns and concepts that *manifest throughout the text*. Eliason's essay does not so much as hint at any of this. Consider that Kuhn notes that "particularly persuasive arguments can be developed if the new paradigm permits the prediction of phenomena that had been entirely unsuspected while the old one prevailed."[158] Consider Alma's observation that due to experiments upon the word in which it sprouts and grows, "your understanding doth begin to be enlightened, and your mind doth begin to expand. Oh then, is not this real?" (Alma 32:33–35).

Margaret Barker, Hugh Nibley and Fashion vs. Substance

In Eliason's essay, we get some comparison between Margaret Barker and Hugh Nibley:

> In many ways, Barker can be understood as filling the void[159] left by Nibley (with the added benefit of her presumably nonpartisan Methodist affiliation). Her wide-ranging methods and prolific publications that resonate with the Myth-and-Ritual school are similar to Nibley's. Her assertion that lost temple teachings can be recovered piecemeal through creative readings of widely divergent texts and her skepticism

> of a discipline she claims has not properly understood its object of study in centuries of labor, may also remind readers of the late great Latter-day Saint scholar.[160]

Lest we take that comparison as a compliment, the footnote explains that "the 'Myth-and-Ritual School' is a term for a now long-out-of-fashion approach to ancient texts that posited a close connection between performance and narrative, and even that scholars can reconstruct rituals underlying existing mythological and other texts."[161] We can add "now long-out-of-fashion" to the list of dismissive labels.

Scholarly Communities

The next section in Eliason's paper, "Scholarly Critiques of Barker's Work," is a short, ideologically selective survey, laced with occasional interpretative passages and rhetorical questions that demonstrate unintended ironies. Earlier in this paper, I included discussion of John McDade's scholarly consideration of Barker's work against a broad survey of "Life of Jesus" research as a deliberate contrast; and in Part 1 of this series, I surveyed her academic career at length and in enough detail to demonstrate the presence and significance of many notable institutionally connected scholars who appreciate and admire her contributions. McDade's study demonstrated that scholars travel in multiple streams, divided by secular and religious ideologies and institutional imperatives and personal inclinations, rather than as one homogenous collection of clear thinkers who see eye to eye on everything important. In his section on scholarly critiques, Eliason says this:

> Even with these critiques in mind, it is still not entirely clear that the rejection of Barker's conclusions by her relevant scholarly community can be attributed *entirely* to her problematic methods.[162]

Because I have been able to cite many very relevant scholars, including Dr. Rowan Williams, then Archbishop of Canterbury, Crispin Fletcher-Louis, N.T. Wright, Andrei Orlov, John McDade, Robert Murray, and several others, as well as mentioning those who elected her as President of the Society for Old Testament Study, and publication of many of Barker's essays in range of peer-reviewed journals that Eliason's charge of "rejection by her relevant scholarly community" conveniently ignores, I can at the very least be comfortable in questioning the sole relevance and authority of the scholarly community that Eliason has in

mind. And I have raised the issue of Eliason's silence on the point of whether the Book of Mormon itself offers a valid test of Barker's methods.

Rhetorical Questions and the Beam in One's Own Eye

Recall that a critic which Eliason cited had complained of Barker's "assumption that a rhetorical question will receive an answer that supports the author's hypothesis."[163] That raises the issue of how Eliason's own rhetorical questions ought to be answered. I will quote only the rhetorical questions that he points directly at Barker's work, followed by my answers.

> Might some of the reaction also stem from her own choice to stand apart from that community by not participating in identity-defining practices such as peer-review?[164]

I have shown that the question is flawed by assuming, without investigation or demonstration, that Barker has not participated in peer review, and that the reviews that Eliason cites accurately and adequately represent the scholarly communities most relevant to the question.

> Are Church members really ready to label as ahistorical, even fraudulently apostate, virtually all of Deuteronomy and the major historical books of the Old Testament?[165]

No. Moreover, that is not required of us by the description of the loss of plain and precious things in 1 Nephi 13, nor by the Articles of Faith. For example, as quoted earlier, "being against parts of the ideology of a particular group who uses Deuteronomy as a foundation is not the same thing as being opposed to that text itself. Lehi and Nephi were not anti-Deuteronomy, and certainly were not anti-Moses."[166]

> That is, in order for Barker to discover the lost temple themes in Hebrew texts, she must often adopt an antagonistic stance to the textual tradition she is examining. Must one also adopt such a contrary stance vis-à-vis the Book of Mormon in order to make it sing with temple themes?[167]

No, there are multiple examples of Latter-day Saint scholarship that one can reasonably cite in response.[168]

> Does this mean that we should view suspiciously the prophet Mormon — whose editorial voice we hear throughout the Book of Mormon — as another Josiah who removed and suppressed such themes?[169]

No, and again there are multiple examples that can be provided in response, including Grant Hardy, Lisa Bolin Hawkins, and Gordon Thomasson.[170]

> Does the nonappearance, or at best minimal and much subdued appearance, of Barker's "temple themes" (including Wisdom and the Goddess) in the Book of Mormon suggest that its authors were also victims of a suppressive editor's hand, or that Joseph Smith as its translator inherited a post-Josianic tainted set of theological ideas?[171]

This sentence contains multiple assertions. When it comes to temple themes, see articles I referenced in this essay and that Eliason does not mention from my survey of Latter-day Saint scholars who have closely examined the Book of Mormon for Wisdom themes, such as Alyson Von Feldt, D. John Butler, and Val Larsen.[172] When it comes to Joseph Smith and what he did or didn't inherit, notice that while Joseph Smith must necessarily receive revelation in his weakness, after the manner of his language, that he might come to understanding (see D&C 1:24–28), notice that Joseph's story — with theophany, revelation, angels, temples outside of Jerusalem, and seeking of mysteries — all demonstrates that whatever he inherited from his culture, Joseph contradicts Deuteronomy on the same key passages, as do Jeremiah, Lehi, and Nephi.[173]

> Do we really also need Margaret Barker — especially if carrying water for her work might discredit Restoration truth claims by association?[174]

Yes, if we are looking for fulfillment of the prophecy of the plain and precious things in 1 Nephi 13. I directly responded to this earlier in this essay.

> What all these scenarios [such as God allowing Israel to have a King against his advice] have in common is the Lord responding to human weakness and imperfection. Might something similar have been at work with Josiah's reforms?[175]

At best, maybe. But maybe not.

> Might this worthy goal [eliminating child sacrifice] have warranted the use of any ideology that could get the job done, even if the cost was oversimplifying more multifaceted truths for a time?[176]

Again, at best, maybe. But again, maybe not.

At this point, I must step back and reflect on the patterns displayed and what those patterns tell us. Though Eliason shows some notable desire to show balance between Latter-day Saint traditional views and findings of modern scholars on the Bible in the sections giving an overview of Josiah, and in a late section surveying Julie Smith's interesting essay on "Huldah's Long Shadow,"[177] the pattern I see in his treatment of Barker and the questions he raises is different. It is not the pattern of conscious paradigm testing, with careful puzzle definition, and weighing accuracy of key predictions, comprehensiveness and coherence, simplicity and aesthetics, fruitfulness, and future promise. The dominant "which problems are more significant to have solved?" issues that emerge alternate between "What would the scholarly authorities think?" and "What would the most traditional Latter-day Saint think?" and seem to exhibit a notable fear that using her work might "discredit Latter-day Saint claims by association." The weight in resolving the "which paradigm is better?" issue falls mostly on deference to opinions about, rather than careful exploration of, Margaret Barker's work relative to Latter-day Saint scripture and a substantial body of work by many notable Latter-day Saint scholars. In comparison to the Bible recommendations for seeing truth,[178] there is some *interest*, though the lack of quotations or of any evidence of in-depth exploration does not demonstrate "May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore, what these things mean?" (Acts 17:19–20). Rather it leans to deference to authorities, "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?" and shows a notable strain of "seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him" (Luke 11:54).

We don't see a close *examination of the works* (John 10:38), nor a broad *consideration of the witnesses* available (Matthew 18:16 and Deuteronomy 19:15–19). Eliason cites only the arguments of skeptical critics and labels defenders as uncritical, untrained acolytes, following "old fashioned" methods. There is little consideration of the credentials and motives of critics, but much of Barker and her defenders. And as the evidence of Eliason's own rhetorical questions demonstrates, there is not much self-reflection, little *checking one's own eye for beams* (Matthew 7:3–5). While an inquiry into Barker's significance for the Church and students of our scriptures is valid, reasonable, and timely, and is doubtless motivated by good intentions, this essay does not turn out to be particularly groundbreaking or insightful or even helpful.

Pattern Recognition

I do see strong indications of another telling pattern: In drawing out the implications of her introduction to *The Older Testament*, I see *mind reading*. In the concerns about critics of the Latter-day Saints discrediting us by association, I see *fortune telling*. In concerns that adopting Barker's views might lead us to adopt suspicion of Joseph Smith as tainted by post-Josianic ideas,[179] and Moroni as suppressive editor, I see *catastrophizing*. We also see *labeling*, and *discounting positives* (for instance, no mention of Barker's talk on the Book of Mormon, or her Doctor of Divinity from the Archbishop of Canterbury), *negative filtering* (no real engagement with Barker's work in depth and or her productive work with Latter-day Saints, or with a wide range of top scholars and institutions), *over-generalizing* from negative critics, *dichotomous thinking* in arguing that any criticizing of negative aspects of the Deuteronomist reformers and Josiah means throwing out much of the Old Testament, *blaming* Barker for supposedly not being willing to submit to peer review or the prestige and authority of a formal academic appointment, a series of negative "*What ifs*?" demonstrated by the rhetorical questions, *emotional reasoning* displayed in the anxiety about what authorities might think or cultural disasters that might ensue, and *inability to disconfirm* demonstrated in the failure to consider easily accessible scholarship that might contradict the conclusions and arguments of the essay, and the anxiety demonstrated in saying of what Barker offers us that "perhaps what she offers us is too good *not* to be true. But, perhaps unfortunately, that does not mean that it is."[180]

This pattern collectively matches a known set of "common cognitive distortions."[181] By definition, cognitive distortion is

> an exaggerated pattern of thought that's not based on facts. It consequently leads you to view things more negatively than they really are. In other words, cognitive distortions are your mind convincing you to believe negative things about yourself and your world that are not necessarily true.[182]

This set includes what I italicized as mind reading, catastrophizing, etc.

This pattern contrasts with Kuhn's descriptions of the key values for paradigm testing, and with the Biblical recommendations for finding truth.

Potentials and Directions for Ongoing Testing of the New Paradigm

In the concluding section of *Paradigms Regained*, I wrote,

> All I have done is to conduct a preliminary survey. Much more could be done. I hope more will be done. Yet clearly, Barker's overall picture holds a simple beauty that elegantly accounts for much complexity. My comparisons to the Book of Mormon have been fruitful, and most importantly, I find them wonderfully promising."[183]

I also finished that essay, as my title suggests for this one, by stating my conviction that Barker's work contributes to the fulfilment of the prophesy in 1 Nephi 13:39–41 on the restoration of specific plain and precious things.

This current survey demonstrates that over the past twenty years, much more has been done by many very talented people, and I retain the hope that more will be done. I think often of Kuhn's observation:

> Led by a new paradigm, scientists adopt new instruments and look in new places. Even more important, during revolutions scientists see new and different things when looking with familiar instruments in places they have looked before.[184]

I think of Barker's own statement:

> The new paradigm is that the Enoch tradition is ancient, as it claims, and that it was the original myth of the Jerusalem temple, long before Moses became the key figure and the Exodus the defining history. The world of the first temple was the taproot of Christianity, and that is why the young Church treated Enoch as Scripture. Those who preserved the Enoch traditions were a formative influence on Christianity and its key concepts: the Kingdom and the resurrected Messiah. Since Enoch was a high priest figure, and Jesus was declared to be "a great high priest" (Heb. 4.14), we should also concern ourselves with the high priesthood.[185]

Among her critics, as I have shown, it is common to complain that she uses texts such as *1 Enoch* to project back to the First Temple, based on their assumption of a late date for *1 Enoch*. TT, for instance, sees it as a third century BCE critique of the Second Temple. Barker notes that the oldest copies of *1 Enoch* are from Qumran, as are the oldest copies of Isaiah. There were 20 copies of *1 Enoch* at Qumran, and 21 copies of

Isaiah.[186] She notes that no one dates the Bible texts to the age of the oldest surviving copies, nor to the latest allusions or editing discernable in them.

> It is not consistent to say that some of Isaiah was written in the eighth century BCE because the text says so, but that Enoch was composed in the third century BCE because there is no physical evidence for its existence before that date. A simple inspection of the text suggests that Isaiah knew Enoch but not Moses, which implies that eighth-century Jerusalem had more place for Enoch than Moses.[187]

Notice her paradigm-defining statement, that "the Enoch tradition is ancient," not that the books of Enoch that we have are necessarily completely ancient as they stand. That is, they may contain more recent allusions and editing and content, and still be the remnants and witnesses of an ancient tradition. In responding to TT, I quoted this from Barker:

> The setting in which we have seen the earliest apocalypses function, e.g., the troubles of the second century, or the Qumran community, has, until recently, been assumed to be that of their origin. But there is no organic link between the problems of this period and the major *themes or forms* of the literature. These were only used to interpret the problems of the period, they were the established framework within which the world had to be viewed. The ultimate origin of apocalyptic must therefore lie in a setting where ascents to the upper world, the hosts of heaven, astrology, astronomy, and superhuman wisdom were as much at home as those other elements — evil angels, supernatural conflicts mirrored on earth, the visions of history and judgement which were taken up and emphasized for their relevance to the second century.[188]

I also noted her observation that "Enoch's journey describes accurately the geography of Jerusalem before the time of Hezekiah, that is, in the early ministry of Isaiah."[189] And consider that Alyson Von Feldt not only compared Ezekiel's vision to the tenth century BCE Taʿanach offering stand, but also noted two elongated objects on the front panel, saying "with their scroll-shaped tops tapering to narrower bases, they look like tornadoes, evoking the winds that 'bear the earth as well as the firmament of heaven … the very pillars of heaven' (*1 Enoch* 18:3). Perhaps they are not trees, but rather evoke the 'whirlwinds' that carried

Enoch into heaven (*1 Enoch* 39:3) or the 'whirlwind' that came to Ezekiel encompassing the strange creatures that he sees (Ezekiel 1:4)."[190]

Barker devotes a long section of *The Older Testament* to a close reading of *1 Enoch*, in subsequent chapters, noticing close thematic and linguistic ties between *1 Enoch* and Isaiah. For example, she notes that in First Isaiah, "The sins of Jerusalem and the other nations will show the prophet's ideas of right and wrong, thus the framework in which he made his judgements. Isaiah's catalogue of sins is so striking that it demands close scrutiny. There are three dominant sins: pride, rebellion, and wisdom, the sins of the angels."[191] Those concerns resemble those of *1 Enoch* as well as the concerns of the visions of Lehi and Nephi in 1 Nephi. Another thing Isaiah and *1 Enoch* have in common is little concern for Moses and the Ten Commandments. That is a difference with 1 Nephi, but the proximity of the Deuteronomist Reforms and the presence of the Brass plates with books of Moses accounts for the Book of Mormon emphasis on Moses and the Exodus. Notice how Nephi makes a distinction between the importance of Moses and Isaiah:

> And I did read many things unto them which were written in the books of Moses; *but that I might more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer* I did read unto them that which was written by the prophet Isaiah; for I did liken all scriptures unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning. (1 Nephi 19:23)

That is, Nephi used the Books of Moses the Nephites had obtained on the Brass plates but declares that "to more fully persuade them to believe in the Lord their Redeemer," he goes to Isaiah. In her *Eerdman's Commentary* article on Isaiah, Barker makes another key comment on how the depiction of the Servant in Isaiah can benefit from comparisons to *1 Enoch*:

> The fullest picture of the Servant is found in the "Parables" of *1 Enoch*, which describe him triumphant in heaven, that is, in the sanctuary, after he has effected the great atonement which precedes the judgment. This is described in *1 Enoch* 46–50. He is the "Anointed One" (Isa. 52.14; cf. *1 Enoch* 48:10; 52:4); the "Chosen One" (Isa. 42:1; cf. *1 Enoch* 40:5; 45:3, 49:2, 51; etc.); "the Righteous One" (Isa. 53:11; cf. *1 Enoch* 38:2; 47:4); he has the "Spirit" (Isa. 42:1; cf. *1 Enoch* 62:6); he "establishes justice" (Isa. 42:4); cf. *1 Enoch* 41:9; 45:3; 49:4;, etc.); he is the "light of the peoples" (Isa. 42:6; 49:6; cf. *1 Enoch* 48:4); he is

> "hidden" (Isa. 49:2; cf. *1 Enoch* 39:7; 48:6; 62:7); and "kings are amazed and humbled before him" (Isa. 49:7; 52:15; cf. *1 Enoch* 48:5–10; 55:4; 62:19). So many motifs from Isaiah's Servant are combined in the "Parables" and given a clear context which is not apparent in Isaiah but obviously their original setting. The only realistic explanation for the Servant texts is that they were part of the royal cult, perhaps sanctuary visions or the record of a mystic's experience (Isa.50:4; cf. 2 Sam 23:1–7). Their form in the "Parables" includes material from later periods, but the similarity to the book of Revelation shows that this was a living tradition throughout the Second Temple period.[192]

As Nibley observes,

> It is important to specialize. It is sound professional policy to deal with something that nobody else understands. But there are natural limits to specialization: inevitably one reaches the point at which the study of a single star cannot be pursued further until one has found out about a lot of other stars. The little picture starts expanding into a big picture, and we soon discover that without the big picture the little one cannot be understood at all.[193]

That is, a big-picture approach to Isaiah that includes *1 Enoch* will benefit from contextual clues that a more specialized and narrowly focused approach will not see.

In his important essay on "The Deuteronomist Reforms and Lehi's Family Dynamics: A Social Context for the Rebellions of Laman and Lemuel," Neal Rappleye writes:

> As mentioned earlier, visions and Messianic teachings such as those taught by Lehi and Nephi were in conflict with Deuteronomist ideals. Yet Lehi knew that Laman and Lemuel held Moses in high regard, and thus sought to use him as an archetype for his own calling. Hence, the above suggestion that Nephi may have used the law to appeal to Laman's and Lemuel's Deuteronomist sensibilities, while trying to point them to something greater, may likewise apply here: Lehi draws on the figure of Moses because he knows it will appeal to Laman and Lemuel, but at the same time he is using the Moses type to suggest that he himself was a true and legitimate prophet.[194]

Zenos, Zenock, and Enoch

Also, Nephi (1 Nephi 19) cites two non-Biblical northern prophets, Zenos and Zenock, in support of a more explicitly Christian role for the God of Israel. Apart from quotes showing an explicit awareness that the God of Israel would be "lifted up, … crucified, and buried" Nephi mentions prophecies of the accompanying signs:

> For thus spake the prophet [Zenos]: The Lord God surely shall visit all the house of Israel at that day, some with his voice, because of their righteousness, unto their great joy and salvation, and others with the thunderings and the lightnings of his power, by tempest, by fire, and by smoke, and vapor of darkness, and by the opening of the earth, and by mountains which shall be carried up.
>
> And all these things must surely come, saith the prophet Zenos. And the rocks of the earth must rend; and because of the groanings of the earth, many of the kings of the isles of the sea shall be wrought upon by the Spirit of God, to exclaim: The God of nature suffers. (1 Nephi 19:11–12)

From here, consider an appreciative review that John W. Welch wrote concerning George Nicklesburg's commentary and translation of *1 Enoch*.[195] Welch cites Nicklesburg's literal translation of the meanings of the names of twenty of the evil angels in *1 Enoch* who rebelled against God. He then compares those names with these prophecies of Zenos:

> Thus, it seems significant that when "the prophet" (Zenos) spoke of the Lord God visiting the house of Israel in the day of destruction that would accompany the cataclysmic death of the Son of God, the Book of Mormon text in 1 Nephi 19 includes most of these heavenly elements as the instruments that will implement the visitation of the Lord. In other words, the Book of Mormon text assumes that these rebellious forces are again (or perhaps were actually always) in line under the dominion of the Lord God of Israel. The Enochic elements directly or arguably present in this prophecy include:
>
> 1. "God surely shall visit" (1 Nephi 19:11)
> 2. "opening of the earth," "power" (1 Nephi 19:11)
> 3. "vapor," understandable as volcanic clouds (1 Nephi 19:11; compare 3 Nephi 8:20)

5. "righteousness" (1 Nephi 19:11)

6. "thunderings" (1 Nephi 19:11)

7. "they shall be scourged" (1 Nephi 19:13)

8. "fire" (1 Nephi 19:11)

9. "lightnings" (1 Nephi 19:11)

10. "God of nature" (1 Nephi 19:12)

12. "tempest" (1 Nephi 19:11)

13. "smoke" (1 Nephi 19:11)

14. "darkness" (1 Nephi 19:11)

17. "salvation of the Lord" (1 Nephi 19:17)

18. "mountains" (1 Nephi 19:11)

19. "isles of the sea" (1 Nephi 19:12, 16) or "at that day" (1 Nephi 19:11)

20. "I [will] gather in" (1 Nephi 19:16)

> Absent here, for some reason, are references to the potentates related to the sun (#15), moon (#16), stars (#4), and Hermon (#11); but more than three-quarters of the twenty heavenly chiefs named in *1 Enoch* 6:7 seem to stand in the background of the ancient Israelite prophecies used by Nephi in 1 Nephi 19. This would indeed suggest some significant linkage between Nephi's explanation of the "sign" that should be given "unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea" (1 Nephi 19:10) and these beings in the Enochic heavenly host, whose main activity, as is clear from *1 Enoch* 8:3, also involved the dispensing of "signs." Although in *1 Enoch* these rebellious watchers acted in defiance of the plan of God and outside the scope of their authority, both the cosmic view of *1 Enoch* and the worldview of Zenos and the prophets cited by Nephi would seem to see these principalities operating in or around the assembly of God with power to communicate signs from the heavenly sphere to mortals abroad on the earth.[196]

Does not this indicate that Zenos, a pre-exilic prophet, knew the Enoch tradition, and therefore, provides notable "cause to believe" (see Alma 32:17–21) that the Enoch tradition is ancient? Does not this reenforce Barker's case that Isaiah of Jerusalem knew the Enoch

tradition? Is this not another case where the Book of Mormon might be considered in testing Barker's hypotheses? There is more. In a chapter of *Enoch the Prophet*, Nibley broadly compared the themes and language of the Enoch story with some of the oldest writings of the Ancient Near East, surveying notable accounts in the myths of many different nations. After surveying Egyptian and Babylonian and other traditions, Nibley comments that

> Greek mythology is an endless procession of familiarly recurring themes — the abominations of the ancients, the deeds of inspired holy men, upheavals of nature, fearful punishments and glorious ascensions, and so on. … Thus we may see that Greeks have all the original building blocks, but they have admittedly lost the blueprints and never tire of trying to put the parts back together in the proper order. I.E.S. Edwards says much the same thing about the Egyptians.[197]

Nibley notes that in Helaman 13:33, Samuel's declaration that "Oh that we had remembered the Lord our God in the day that he gave us our riches, and then they would not have become slippery that we should lose them" compares to an Enoch passage discovered in 1883, "Ye have not remembered the Lord in the day he gave you your riches; ye have gone astray that your riches shall not remain."[198] There are many other notable points of comparison between *1 Enoch* and the Book of Mormon, including ascent visions, the fountain of living waters and the tree of life,[199] woe oracles,[200] and emphasis on the divine titles of the Holy One of Israel and the Lord of Hosts. In *The Older Testament*, Barker includes sections on these two titles, and in *Paradigms Regained*, I compared her observations to the use of those titles in the Book of Mormon.[201]

While there was an edition of the Lawrence translation of *1 Enoch* potentially available to Joseph Smith, the unlikelihood of Smith having seen and used it is most clearly demonstrated in comparisons to the Qumran Book of Giants, which is not included in the Lawrence Enoch. Nibley first pointed out how the Qumran Mahujah/Enoch account compares to a story in Moses 6,[202] and Jeff Bradshaw and David Larsen have furthered that study:

> Although the *Book of the Giants* scarcely fills three pages in the English translation of Martinez, we find in it the most extensive series of parallels between a single ancient text and

> Joseph Smith's Enoch writings. Note that the term *giants* in the title of the book is somewhat misleading. Actually, this book describes two different groups of individuals, referred to in Hebrew as the *gibborim* and the *nephilim*. In discussing the *gibborim*, we will use the customary connotation elsewhere in the Bible of "mighty hero" or "warrior." In his Enoch writings, Joseph Smith specifically differentiated the "giants" from Enoch's other adversaries.[203]

In a similar vein, Jeff Lindsay and Noel Reynolds have recently examined evidence that the Book of Mormon shows dependence on material from the Book of Moses, including its account of Enoch, which again argues for the antiquity and importance of the Enoch tradition.[204]

Tentative Conclusions and Ultimate Priorities

All of this, I submit, invites our interest and rewards our efforts. But we should not forget that the point and center of all of this is neither Margaret Barker, nor Joseph Smith, but Jesus Christ. In an interview in 2017, Barker explained,

> When I preach at Good Friday services, I find that people are much more able to relate to this Temple understanding of atonement, where Jesus's self-sacrifice is not substitutionary — it's the real thing. For practical reasons in the Temple, animals represented the high priest; so the symbolism was that the covenant bonds were healed and restored by self-sacrifice, not by other people doing it for you — which people rightly see as unjust. Romans 12.1, "offer yourselves as a living sacrifice," is the basis of Christian ethics. We've simply lost that. The natural order is maintained by self-sacrifice. That's the message we need today in a materialistic, consumer society.[205]

Or, as Moroni puts it,

> For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.
>
> For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for everything which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power

> and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God. (Moroni 7:15–16)

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Endnotes

1 "Letter to Israel Daniel Rupp, 5 June 1844," p. 1, The Joseph Smith Papers, https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-to-israel-daniel-rupp-5-june-1844/1.

2 Margaret Barker, "Being an Independent Scholar, Part 3," Providence, Divine Action and the Church (blog), November 15, 2012, http://christpantokrator.blogspot.com/search/label/Barker%3A%20%27Being%20an%20Independent%20Scholar%27.

3 Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 65.

4 Karl R. Popper, *The Myth of the Framework: In Defence of Science and Rationality* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 84–85, https://books.google.com/books?id=Ye2tAhDX7agC&pg=PA82&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false.

5 Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, viii.

6 Ibid., 109.

7 Richard Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 58–59.

8 See Larry C. Porter, "Solomon Chamberlin's Missing Pamphlet: Dreams, Visions, and Angelic Ministrants" in *BYU Studies* 37, no. 2 (1997–98): 114, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3219&context=byusq.

9 Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 79.

10 Ibid., 186.

11 Ibid., 17–18.

12 Ibid., 147.

13 Ibid., 153–58, 185–87.

14 For example, Kevin Christensen, "Paradigms Crossed" in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 7, no. 2 (1995): 144–218, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/msr/vol7/iss2/9/.

15 Margaret Barker, *Temple Mysticism: An Introduction* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2011), 101.

16 Ibid., 100–101.

17 Margaret Barker, *King of the Jews: Temple Theology in John's Gospel* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2014), 205. Barker elsewhere observes that Luke 24:26 on a suffering anointed one presupposes the Qumran version of Isaiah rather than the Masoretic version. See Barker, "Text and Context" in *The Great High Priest: The Temple Roots of Christian Liturgy* (New York: T & T Clark, 2003), 303–4; also at http://www.margaretbarker.com/Papers/TextAndContext.pdf. On the other hand, Barker's reading of the Qumran Isaiah scroll is disputed. See footnote 10 in Loren Blake Spendlove, "There Is No Beauty That We Should Desire Him," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 53 (2022): 1–30, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/there-is-no-beauty-that-we-should-desire-him/. Barker responds to this published criticism as follows: "I am puzzled by Loren Spendlove's observation that Targum Jonathan of Isaiah gives no indication of the Servant being anointed. Tg. Isa.52.13 is *ʿbdy mšyḥ*, 'My Servant the Messiah', and later verses in the same poem say that his appearance was not that of an ordinary man, but rather *zyw qwdšʿzywyh*, 'a holy countenance shall be his countenance', Tg. Isa. 53.2. The Targumist must have known that the Servant was the Messiah whose appearance was transfigured by his anointing. S/he must have known a Hebrew text like that of 1QIsa[a] and read *mšḥty*, either as *māšaḥtî* 'I have anointed' [not *meshachti* as Spendlove renders it; the form in 2 Samuel 12.7 which he cites has a suffix which alters the pointing]; or as *mišḥāthî*, 'my consecrated /anointed one'. Hence my use of this important piece of evidence." Margaret Barker, e-mail message to author, September 15, 2022.

18 Barker, *King of the Jews,* 205.

19 Ian Barbour, *Myths, Models, and Paradigms: A Comparative Study of Science and Religion*, Chapter 6: Paradigms in Science (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 95, https://www.religion-online.org/book/myths-models-and-paradigms-a-comparative-study-in-science-and-religion/.

20 Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 109.

21 Ibid., 53.

22 See, for example, materials at Book of Mormon Central, https://bookofmormoncentral.org/ and the related site Evidence Central, https://evidencecentral.org/recency.

23 See, for example, Kevin Christensen, "Eye of the Beholder, Law of the Harvest: Observations on the Inevitable Consequences of the Different Investigative Approaches of Jeremy Runnells and Jeff Lindsay," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 10 (2014): 175–238, https://journal/interpreterfoundation.org/eye-of-the-beholder-law-of-the-harvest-observations-on-the-inevitable-consequences-of-the-different-investigative-approaches-of-jeremy-runnells-and-jeff-lindsay/.

24 Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 151–52. For example, after Hugh Nibley showed Professor Matthew Black how the Pearl of Great Price account of Enoch and *Mahujah* compared to Black's then recent publication of the Dead Sea Scrolls account, Black responded, "Well, someday we will find out the source that Joseph Smith used." See *Hugh Nibley Observed*, eds. Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Shirley S. Ricks, and Stephen T. Whitlock (Orem, UT: Eborn Books, 2021), 426.

25 Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 110.

26 Ibid., 94.

27 Ibid., 24.

28 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1967), 331. See. Also Joseph Smith Papers, Wilfred Woodruff Journal, 1843 January–1844 December, https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/assets/09e6d1b1-cd59-41d4-bc46-e3d74899ceac/0/195.

29 Hugh Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*, ed. Stephen. D. Ricks (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986), 95.

30 Wendy Ulrich, "'Believest thou … ?': Faith, Cognitive Dissonance, and the Psychology of Religious Experience," FAIR Conference, Provo, UT, 2005, http://www.fairmormon.org/perspectives/fair-conferences/2005-fair-conference/2005-believest-thou-faith-cognitive-dissonance-and-the-psychology-of-religious-experience.

31 Fred Anson, "Debunking Mormon Appeals to Margaret Barker," Beggars Bread (website), Feb. 16, 2020, https://beggarsbread.org/2020/02/16/debunking-mormon-appeals-to-margaret-barker/.

32 Margaret Barker, "What King Josiah Reformed," (lecture, Institute for the Study and Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, May 6, 2003), https://speeches.byu.edu/speakers/margaret-barker/. The text was published as "What Did King Josiah Reform?" in *Glimpses of Lehi's Jerusalem*, ed. John W. Welch, David Rolph Seely, JoAnn H. Seely (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2004), 523–42, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/mi/39/

33 Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 59.

34 TT quoted in Anson, "Debunking Mormon Appeals to Margaret Barker."

35 John McDade, "Jesus in Recent Research," *The Month* (December 1998): 498, https://archive.org/details/sim_month_1998-12_31_11/page/498/mode/2up?view=theater.

36 Margaret Barker, *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1988), 22.

37 Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1987), 20–21.

38 Kevin Christensen, "The Temple, the Monarchy, and Wisdom: Lehi's World and the Scholarship of Margaret Barker," *Glimpses of Lehi's Jerusalem,* ed. John W. Welch, David Rolph Seely, JoAnn H. Seely (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2004).

39 Barker, *The Older Testament*, 69.

40 "Margaret Barker, "The Fragrant Tree" in *The Tree of Life: From Eden to Eternity* (Salt Lake City and Provo, Deseret Book and FARMS, 2011), 59. Recent findings indicate that the tunnel is

older than Hezekiah. See Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, "What New Archeological Discoveries in Jerusalem Relate to Hezekiah?," *Meridian Magazine*, Aug. 19, 2018, https://latterdaysaintmag.com/what-new-archaeological-discoveries-in-jerusalem-relate-to-hezekiah/.

41 Barker, *The Older Testament,* 6.

42 Robert Bowman, as quoted by Anson, "Debunking Mormon Appeals to Margaret Barker."

43 Ibid.

44 Barry Bickmore's essay in *The FARMS Review* is also very helpful here. See Barry R. Bickmore, "Of Simplicity, Oversimplification, and Monotheism," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 15, no. 1 (2003): 215–58, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/msr/vol15/iss1/14.

45 Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1992) 10.

46 Ibid.

47 See 1 Nephi 8:24–36 on the pointing and mocking from the great and spacious building, and those who subsequently feel ashamed and leave the tree and its fruit.

48 McDade, "Jesus in Recent Research," 497–98.

49 Richard L. Bushman, "Joseph Smith's Many Histories," *BYU Studies* 44, no. 4 (2005): 4, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol44/iss4/3/.

50 Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 59.

51 McDade, "Jesus in Recent Research," 502.

52 Ibid., 502–503.

53 Ibid., 504.

54 Ibid. See also Margaret Barker, *The Risen Lord: The Jesus of History as the Christ of Faith* (Valley Forge, PA: T&T Clark, 1996), 109.

55 McDade, "Jesus in Recent Research," 504.

56 *Merkavah* refers to the chariot throne in the temple and to Ezekiel's vision of the chariot. There is a tradition in Judaism of merkavah mysticism. See Gershom Gerhard Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism,*

Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1960).

57 Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 27.

58 See Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 185.

59 Ibid., 169.

60 Margaret Barker, "Being an Independent Scholar, Part 2," Providence, Divine Action and the Church (blog), November 12, 2012, http://christpantokrator.blogspot.com/search/label/Barker%3A%20%27Being%20an%20Independent%20Scholar%27.

61 See Ian Barbour, *Myths, Models, and Paradigms: A Comparative Study of Science and Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), 136, https://www.religion-online.org/book-chapter/chapter-7-paradigms-in-religion/.

62 Eric A. Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable? A Case Study: Were King Josiah's Reforms a Restoration from Apostasy or a Suppression of Plain and Precious Truths? (And What about Margaret Barker?)" *BYU Studies* 60, no. 3 (2021): 159–82, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol60/iss3/14/.

63 See "Cory Crawford," Maxwell Institute, https://mi.byu.edu/scholars/cory-crawford/.

64 For example, see Robert M. Price, "Joseph Smith: Inspired Author of the Book of Mormon" in *American Apocrypha: Essays on the Book of Mormon*, ed. Dan Vogel and Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002), 321–66. Price uses the account of the discovery of the book of the law as a model of pious fraud (assumed as such, without demonstration), which he then applies to Joseph Smith. It does not occur to Price to test the Book of Mormon against the 600 BCE context nor against Barker's work with which he is familiar as offering a paradigm change. Other scholars do not see the book of the law as fraudulent. For example, William Doorly argues, "For the first time, Yahweh, their ancient God of six centuries spoke to his people through writings on a scroll." William J. Doorly, *Obsession with Justice: The Story of the Deuteronomists* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1994), 1. Also compare Brant Gardner's citation of Norman Gottwald's introduction to Deuteronomy for *The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible* [(Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1971) 102–103] in his 2003 FAIR talk on "Monotheism, Messiah, and

Mormon's Book," https://www.fairlatterdaysaints.org/conference/august-2003/monotheism-messiah-and-mormons-book.

65 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 162.

66 Ibid., 164.

67 Kevin Christensen, "Twenty Years After 'Paradigms Regained,' Part 1: The Ongoing, Plain and Precious Significance of Margaret Barker's Scholarship for Latter-day Saint Studies," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 54 (2022), 1–64, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/twenty-years-after-paradigms-regained-part-1-the-ongoing-plain-and-precious-significance-of-margaret-barkers-scholarship-for-latter-day-saint-studies/.

68 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 162–63.

69 See for example, Margaret Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship* (New York: T&T Clark, 2007), 241–56.

70 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 170.

71 Margaret Barker, "Joseph Smith and Preexilic Israelite Religion," *BYU Studies*, 44, no. 4 (2005): 69–82.

72 Kevin Christensen, "Paradigms Regained: A Survey of Margaret Barker's Scholarship and Its Significance for Mormon Studies," ed. William Hamblin, FARMS Occasional Papers 2 (2001): 6, https://archive.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/paradigms-regained-survey-margaret-barkers-scholarship-and-its-significance-mormon-studies.

73 Christensen, "Twenty Years After Paradigms Regained, Part 1," https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/twenty-years-after-paradigms-regained-part-1-the-ongoing-plain-and-precious-significance-of-margaret-barkers-scholarship-for-latter-day-saint-studies/

74 See Hugh Nibley, "Victoriosa Loquacitas: The Rise of Rhetoric and the Decline of Everything Else" in *The Ancient State: The Rulers and the Ruled,* ed. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City: Desert Book, 1991).

75 Though he names three of my articles in the footnotes, this is the only time Eliason quotes me, on page 171, footnote 32. He complains that I gave no source for the quote, referring to my comment in my footnote 1, yet my footnote 2 in *Paradigms Regained* on the same page clearly reports that the quote came

from autobiographical material formerly at Barnes and Noble Books' website. This material was provided by Margaret Barker as author. This is an unfortunate lapse.

76 A brief summary of changes beginning in 2012 is provided at Wikipedia, s.v. "Maxwell Institute," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maxwell_Institute.

77 See Spencer Fluhman, "On Audience and Voice in Mormon Studies Journal Publishing," BYU Maxwell Institute (blog), November 21, 2016, https://mi.byu.edu/intro-msr-v4/. Consider that control of what was the *FARMS Review* has passed from BYU to Claremont, and that control of the *Journal of Book Mormon Studies* has passed from BYU to the University of Illinois. And consider that rather than disappearing, the community of scholars that supported the older journals have continued to thrive with *Interpreter* and Book of Mormon Central. For a personal perspective on the transition at the Maxwell Institute, see Daniel C. Peterson, "Once More, On My Ouster from the Maxwell Institute," Sic et Non (blog), May 29, 2017, https://www.patheos.com/blogs/danpeterson/2017/05/ouster-maxwell-institute.html.

78 See Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, back cover of Margaret Barker, *The Mother of the Lord*, vol. 1, *The Lady in the Temple* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012).

79 Alexander Campbell, *Delusions: an analysis of the Book of Mormon; with an examination of its internal and external evidences, and a refutation of its pretences to divine authority* (Boston, MA: Benjamin H. Greene, 1832), https://archive.org/details/delusionsanalysi01camp.

80 Richard Bushman, "The Social Dimensions of Rationality," in *Expressions of Faith: Testimonies of Latter-day Saint Scholars,* ed. Susan Easton Black (Salt Lake City and Provo, UT: Deseret Book, and FARMS, 1996), 73, https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1467&context=cgu_fac_pub. Compare William J. Hamblin, "How BYU Destroyed Ancient Book of Mormon Studies," Enigmatic Mirror (blog), September 8, 2015, https://www.patheos.com/blogs/enigmaticmirror/2015/09/08/how-byu-destroyed-ancient-book-of-mormon-studies/.

81 Margaret Barker, *Temple Themes in Christian Worship* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2007).

82 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 173.

83 Ibid., 172–73.

84 Barker, *The Older Testament*, 261.

85 Ibid., 4–5. Compare 2 Nephi 25:1–5; 3 Nephi 17:2–3.

86 Ibid., 6.

87 Ibid., 282.

88 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 177.

89 For example, I carefully read and reviewed skeptical readings by: (1) Robert Price and John Charles Duffy in Kevin Christensen, "Notice and Value," in *Remembrance and Return: Essays in Honor of Louis Midgely*, ed. Ted Vaggalis; and Daniel C. Peterson (Orem, UT and Salt Lake City: Interpreter Foundation and Eborn Books, 2019), 423–68; (2) by Ann Taves in Kevin Christensen, "Playing to an Audience: A Review of Revelatory Events," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 28 (2018): 65–114, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/playing-to-an-audience-a-review-of-revelatory-events/; and (3) by Elizabeth Fenton in Kevin Christensen, "Table Rules: A Response to Americanist Approaches to the Book of Mormon," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 37 (2020): 67–96, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/table-rules-a-response-to-americanist-approaches-to-the-book-of-mormon/.

90 Williams, *Mother of the Lord*, vol 1, back cover.

91 See Benjamin L. McGuire, "Finding Parallels: Some Cautions and Criticisms, Part One," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 5 (2013) 159, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/finding-parallels-some-cautions-and-criticisms-part-one/ and Benjamin McGuire, "Finding Parallels: Some Cautions and Criticisms, Part Two," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 5 (2013), 61–104, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/finding-parallels-some-cautions-and-criticisms-part-two/.

92 Barker, *The Older Testament*, 290.

93 Ibid., 22, emphasis added.

94 Ibid., 40. Think also of these same themes in 3 Nephi 8–28.

95 *Of All Things! Classic Quotations from Hugh Nibley*, comp. Gary P. Gillum, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993), 230.

96 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 171n33.

97 Kirk Magleby, "Deuteronomy in the Book of Mormon," Book of Mormon Resources (blog), November 18, 2015, http://bookofmormonresources.blogspot.com/2015/11/deuteronomy-in-book-of-mormon.html.

98 David Rolph Seeley, "Deuteronomy in the Book of Mormon" (lecture), Soundcloud.com, Book of Mormon Central channel, Nov. 18, 2015, https://soundcloud.com/bookofmormoncentral/deuteronomy-in-the-book-of-mormon-david-rolph-seely.

99 See Aaron P. Schade, "The Kingdom of Judah: Politics, Prophets, and Scribes in the Late Preexilic Period," in *Glimpses of Lehi's Jerusalem*, 300–303, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/mi/39/.

100 David R. Seely, "We Believe the Bible to Be the Word of God, as Far as It Is Translated Correctly": Latter-day Saints and Historical Biblical Criticism," *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* 8 (2016): 64–88, here at 80, https://www.academia.edu/34550207/Studies_in_the_Bible_and_Antiquity_8_2016_. On the same page of that essay, Seely offers this comment in footnote 33, which does not sound like the voice of one who dismisses Barker's work: "Christensen, though not a trained biblical scholar, is a published scholar of Latter-day Saint scripture and is one of the most articulate and informed advocates and commentators on Barker's scholarly views and their relationships to Latter-day Saints scholarship."

101 Ibid., 81.

102 Barbour, *Myths, Models, and Paradigms,* 172.

103 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 171.

104 Ibid., 169n27.

105 Margaret Barker, "Reflections on Biblical Studies in the Twentieth Century" (lecture, Society of St. Alban and St. Serius, 2000), 4, 6, http://www.margaretbarker.com/Papers/ReflectionsOnBiblicalStudies.pdf.

106 The Leningrad codex dates to Cairo, 1008 CE.

107 Barker, "Text and Context," 9.

108 Barker, *The Older Testament*, 1.

109 Kevin Christensen, "The Deuteronomist De-Christianizing of the Old Testament," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 16, no. 2 (June 1, 2004), https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/msr/vol16/iss2/5/.

110 Barker, *The Older Testament,* 6–7. I quoted this passage three times in "Paradigms Regained."

111 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 174.

112 Paul Owen, "Monotheism, Mormonism, and the New Testament Witness," in *The New Mormon Challenge: Responding to the Latest Defenses of a Fast-Growing Movement*, ed. Francis J. Beckwith, Carl Mosser, Paul Owen (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 271–314.

113 Bickmore, "Simplicity, Oversimplification, Monotheism," 215–58.

114 Kevin Christensen, "A Response to Paul Owen's Comments on Margaret Barker," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 14, no. 1–2 (2002): 196–97, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/msr/vol14/iss1/12/.

115 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 175.

116 Julie Smith, "Huldah's Long Shadow," *A Dream, a Rock, a Pillar of Fire: Reading 1 Nephi 1*, ed. Adam S. Miller (Provo, UT: Maxwell Institute, 2017), 5n13.

117 See Kevin Christensen, "Prophets and Kings in Lehi's Jerusalem and Margaret Barker's Temple Theology," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 4 (2013): 177–93, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/prophets-and-kings-in-lehis-jerusalem-and-margaret-barkers-temple-theology/.

118 See Margaret Barker, "The Temple Hidden in 1 Kings," (lecture, Temple Studies Group, July 2, 2011), text at http://www.templestudiesgroup.com/Papers/2Jul11_TempleHiddenInKings.pdf.

119 Barker, "The Third Isaiah" in *The Older Testament*, 205: "A relatively uncritical appraisal of the book gives a picture of the enemies whom the prophet attacked, but the picture is not one for which we have been prepared. I have not found any commentary which actually dwells upon the identify of these enemies, or draws the very obvious conclusion. They were those inspired by the ideals of the Deuteronomists."

120 Neal Rappleye, "The Deuteronomist Reforms and Lehi's Family Dynamics: A Social Context for the Rebellions of Laman and Lemuel," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, 16 (2015), 97, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/the-deuteronomist-reforms-and-lehis-family-dynamics-a-social-context-for-the-rebellions-of-laman-and-lemuel/.

121 Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion,* ed. Don E. Norton (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 178–201.

122 Ibid., 178.

123 Ibid., 185.

124 Ibid., 199.

125 Ibid., 554–614. See also *Eloquent Witness: Nibley on Himself, Others and the Temple,* ed. Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: Maxwell Institute, 2008), 161–62, 169–70.

126 Nibley, *Approaching Zion*, 566–67.

127 In a paper written for Eco Congregation Ireland, Barker wrote: "The change from the eternal covenant to the Moses covenant can be seen clearly in the two forms of the ten commandments. The older version exhorts people to observe the Sabbath 'for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day' (Exod 24.11). They were to keep the Sabbath to be in harmony with the pattern of creation. But when emphasis was shifted to the Moses covenant, at the end of the first temple period and throughout the second, the commandment changed: Observe the Sabbath day. ... You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to keep the Sabbath day' (Deut. 5. 12, 15). They were to keep the Sabbath because of their own history, led by Moses from slavery in Egypt." Margaret Barker, "The Everlasting Covenant Between God and Every Living Creature," p. 10, pdf download at https://www.ecocongregationireland.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/The-Everlasting-Covenant-Margaret-Barker-DD.pdf.

128 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 175n43.

129 Daniel C. Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah: A Note on 1 Nephi 11:8–23" in *Mormons, Scripture and the Ancient World:*

Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson, ed. Davis Bitton, (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998), 194, https://archive.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/nephi-and-his-asherah-note-1-nephi-118-23.

130 Barker, "Joseph Smith and Preexilic Israelite Religion," 76.

131 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 177.

132 Ibid. And consider that the Restoration story already carries a significant load of baggage that is commonly used by critics to discredit Latter-day Saint claims, *not the least of which* are the foundational stories of the vision, the angel, the plates, the witnesses, and the miraculous translation.

133 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 313. See also "Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 2, 10 March 1843–14 July 1843," p. 302, The Joseph Smith Papers, https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-2-10-march-1843-14-july-1843/310.

134 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 316, also "Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 3, 15 July 1843–29 February 1844," p. 14, The Joseph Smith Papers, https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/journal-december-1842-june-1844-book-3-15-july-1843-29-february-1844/20.

135 See Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*. Also see, for example, Kevin Christensen, "Truth and Method: Reflections on Dan Vogel's Approach to the Book of Mormon," *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 16, no. 1 (2004): 287–354, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/msr/vol16/iss1/15/.

136 See Kevin Christensen, "Biblical Keys for Discerning True and False Prophets", FAIR—Faithful Answers, Informed Response, https://www.fairlatterdaysaints.org/answers/Biblical_Keys_for_Discerning_True_and_False_Prophets/Seeing_the_truth.

137 Rather than in the introduction, Barker places information on "lost teachings" in the conclusion (pp. 279–82 of *The Older Testament*), that is, *after* her investigation and presentation of the evidence.

138 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 170.

139 Barker, *The Older Testament*, 91.

140 Ibid., 91–92, emphasis in original.

141 The material in 2 Nephi 3 has been compared to the Messiah Ben Joseph traditions in Joseph F. McConkie, "Joseph Smith as Found in Ancient Manuscripts," in *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*, eds. Monte S. Nyman, Charles D. Tate. Jr. (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1984), 11–31, https://rsc.byu.edu/isaiah-prophets/joseph-smith-found-ancient-manuscripts.

142 Barker, *The Older Testament,* 92.

143 Ibid., 93.

144 Ibid., 94.

145 Ibid., 95. Compare Moses 1 and Abraham 3–4.

146 Barker, *The Older Testament*, 95.

147 See Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," 209–18. See also Alyson Skabelund Von Feldt, "'His Secret is with the Righteous': Instructional Wisdom in the Book of Mormon," *FARMS Occasional Papers* #5 (2007): 49–83, archived at https://web.archive.org/web/20130701164749/http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/papers/?paperID=9&chapterID=74. The document is also available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Fg1zuabUj5r156AhrlRlGAfUgBzdQpQL/view.

148 Barker, *The Older Testament*, 95.

149 Ibid., 96.

150 Ibid., 97.

151 Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah: The Book of Mormon in the Modern World* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1967), 283–96.

152 See Kevin Christensen, "The Temple, Monarchy, and Wisdom," in *Glimpses of Lehi's Jerusalem*, ed. John W. Welch, David Rolph Seely, JoAnn H. Seely (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2004), 502–504, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/mi/39/.

153 Hugh Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon,* ed. John W. Welch, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1989), 551.

154 Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah."

155 Val Larsen, "Hidden in Plain View: Mother in Heaven in Scripture," *Square Two* 8, no. 2 (Summer 2015), https://squaretwo.org/Sq2ArticleLarsenHeavenlyMother.html#backfrom104;

and Val Larsen, "Josiah to Zoram to Sherem to Jarom and the Big Little Book of Omni," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 44 (2021): 217–64, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/josiah-to-zoram-to-sherem-to-jarom-and-the-big-little-book-of-omni/.

156 Von Feldt, "'His Secret is with the Righteous'," 49–83, and Alyson Skabelund Von Feldt, "Does God Have a Wife?," review of *Did God Have a Wife? Archaeology and Folk Religion in Ancient Israel,* by Willliam G. Dever, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 19, no. 1 (2007): 81–118, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/msr/vol19/iss1/10/."

157 Taylor Halverson, "Reading 1 Nephi with Wisdom," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 22 (2016): 279–93, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/reading-1-nephi-with-wisdom/.

158 Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 154.

159 Consider too, whether the full A-to-Z list of contributors to *Interpreter* and other Latter-day Saint publications are best described as a "void." See "Journal Author Index," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship*, https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/indexes/journal-author-index/.

160 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 170–71.

161 Ibid., 171n30, citing Taylor Petrey for the observation.

162 Ibid., 174.

163 Ibid., 172–73.

164 Ibid., 174.

165 Ibid., 175.

166 Rappleye, "The Deuteronomist Reforms," 97.

167 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 175.

168 See, for example, John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple and Sermon on the Mount* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1999), https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/mi/42/. Also see John W. Welch, "The Temple in the Book of Mormon: The Temples at the Cities of Nephi, Zarahemla and Bountiful" in *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism*, ed. Donald W. Parry (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1994), 297–387, and D. John Butler, *Plain and Precious*

Things: The Temple Religion of the Book of Mormon's Visionary Men (self-published, 2012).

169 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 175.

170 On Mormon as an editor with a distinct perspective, see Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 89–120; and Lisa Bolin Hawkins and Gordon C. Thomasson, "I Only Am Escaped Alone to Tell Thee: Survivor Witnesses in the Book of Mormon" (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1984), https://archive.bookofmormoncentral.org/content/i-only-am-escaped-alone-tell-thee-survivor-witnesses-book-mormon.

171 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 175.

172 See also the video "How Does the Doctrine of Christ Relate to the Ancient Temple," Book of Mormon Central, March 3, 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHieRKUC6kU. Further, see Kevin and Shauna Christensen, "Nephite Feminism Revisited" in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 10, no. 2 (1998): 9–61, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/msr/vol10/iss2/5/. Also consider D&C 1:26, "inasmuch as they sought wisdom they might be instructed."

173 See Christensen, "Prophets and Kings."

174 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 177.

175 Ibid., 180.

176 Ibid., 181.

177 Smith, "Huldah's Long Shadow," discussed in Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 179–80.

178 Christensen, "Biblical Keys."

179 Eliason, "Is the Bible Reliable?," 17.

180 Ibid., 177. How would Eliason respond to a BYU student who applied the same rhetoric to the claims of Jesus or Joseph Smith, that perhaps what they claim is too good to be true?

181 I have drawn on a partial list from Robert L. Leahy, Stephen J. F. Holland, and Lata K. McGinn, *Treatment Plans and Interventions for Depression and Anxiety Disorders* (New York: Guilford Press, 2012).

182 Sandra Silva Casabianca, "15 Cognitive Distortions to Blame for Negative Thinking," PsychCentral.com, (website), January 10, 2022, https://psychcentral.com/lib/cognitive-distortions-negative-thinking.

183 Christensen, *Paradigms Regained*, 86.

184 Kuhn, *Scientific Revolutions*, 111

185 Barker, *The Hidden Tradition of the Kingdom of God* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2007), 33.

186 Ibid., 10.

187 Ibid., 43.

188 Barker, *The Older Testament*, 20–21.

189 "Barker, "The Fragrant Tree," 59.

190 Von Feldt, "Does God Have a Wife?," 101.

191 Barker, *The Older Testament*, 128.

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