Isaiah Interwoven

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I have had a longstanding interest in biblical languages and literature,[1] and for that reason I have followed the work of Latter-day Saint Hebraists, such as Donald W. Parry. In his book *Harmonizing Isaiah: Combining Ancient Sources,* Parry weaves together an English translation of the book of Isaiah drawn from four sources: (1) the Masoretic Text (MT), which is the traditional text of the Hebrew Bible and in general the text underlying the King James Version (KJV) of the Old Testament, (2) the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa[a]) discovered in Cave 1 at Qumran among the Dead Sea Scrolls,[2] (3) the Book of Mormon, and (4) the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) of the Bible.

1. This interest was first sparked when, as a young missionary in Denver around 1977, I saw C. Wilfred Griggs, during a Know Your Religion fireside, read passages from the New Testament directly from the Greek (which I recognized later as the maroon edition published by the United Bible Societies), translating on the fly. I thought then (and still think) that that was just about the niftiest trick I had ever seen.

2. For Latter-day Saint readers interested in learning more about the Dead Sea Scrolls, I recommend reading Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Questions and Responses for Latter-day Saints* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2000), and Donald W. Parry and Dana M. Pike, eds., *LDS Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1997), which contains a bibliography of further LDS-oriented studies of the scrolls.

Review of Donald W. Parry. *Harmonizing Isaiah: Combining Ancient Sources.* Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2001. ii + 286 pp., with two appendixes, notes, and bibliography. $9.95.

Parry begins by explaining what the Great Isaiah Scroll is and why it is significant to a translator. He then demonstrates the difficulty of reading the KJV because of its archaic language. There follows a basic primer on parallel forms in Isaiah, including chiasmus. The bulk of the book is the new translation. Two appendixes are included: Appendix 1 contains a long list of archaic words and expressions in the KJV of Isaiah, and appendix 2 sets forth a list of chiastic structures in that book. Sixteen pages of notes follow, with a four-page bibliography concluding the volume.

The formatting of the poetry is well done, the Hebrew translation is strong, and Parry shows excellent scholarly judgment in making text critical decisions about whether to follow MT or 1QIsa[a]. The cavalier dismissal of other ancient evidence in determining the original text was, however, problematic. Further, Parry simply includes the Book of Mormon and JST variants directly into the text. This methodology was apparently based on the assumption that all (or virtually all) such variants represent an English rendition of the original text of Isaiah. The assumption that the Book of Mormon and JST versions of Isaiah passages represent a pure textual restoration is common among members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In my view, however, this assumption has no place in what purports to be a careful text critical exercise.

Formatting

As a missionary, I purchased a copy of an Oxford annotated Revised Standard Version (RSV) of the Bible. Like nearly all modern translations, the RSV represents Hebrew poetry by showing its parallel structures. The visual clues of the poetic lines were like a revelation to me. I had earlier attempted to read poetry as if it were prose. I deduced the basics of parallel structures on my own from this experience and learned about them in greater depth when I later attended Brigham Young University.[3]

3. See Kevin L. Barney, "Understanding Old Testament Poetry," *Ensign,* June 1990, 51–54.

Parry has taken a leading role in instructing the Saints about poetic parallelism in the Bible and has extended that instruction to the parallelistic forms in the Book of Mormon.[4] The primer on parallelism in this volume is brief, but reading it will yield increased comprehension of the biblical text. Consider first the KJV block-text presentation of Isaiah 21:11–12:

> 11 The burden of Dumah. He
> calleth to me out of Seir, Watch-
> man, what of the night? Watch-
> man, what of the night?
> 12 The watchman said, The morn-
> ing cometh, and also the night: if ye
> will enquire, enquire ye: return,
> come.

I suspect most English readers would scratch their heads after reading those two verses. Now compare the KJV with Parry's presentation:

> **A Prophecy of Judgment against Dumah (21:11–12)**
>
> The burden of Dumah:
>
> One calls to me out of Seir,
>
> Watchman, what remains of the night?
> Watchman, what remains of the night? (21:11)
>
> The watchman said,
>
> The morning is coming,
> but also the night,
>
> if you will inquire,
> then inquire,

4. See, for instance, Donald W. Parry, *The Book of Mormon Text Reformatted according to Parallelistic Patterns* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1992).

> return,
> come. (21:12)

Note that Parry's translation is not appreciably different from the KJV. Nevertheless, those who read the KJV are likely to try to read these words as connected prose. Parry supplies the reader with useful boldface headings,[5] giving some context for the lines that follow. From the line division, the passage is obviously poetic. Not only does Parry convey the text in parallel lines, but he also separates the couplets and other related lines by an additional space. I had never seen such a format before. I liked this manner of presentation; I found it effective to virtually *compel* the readers to see the parallelism of the text.[6]

Parry's solution for presenting the chiastic passages of Isaiah is distinctive. I have often contemplated whether it would be better to present the text in regular parallelism or, in the case of chiastic passages, to

5. The headings are taken from Donald W. Parry, Jay A. Parry, and Tina M. Peterson, *Understanding Isaiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1998).

6. However, in a few passages this extra space was not inserted, and it was not immediately clear to me why. For example, Isaiah 12:1–3 is presented in a single-spaced format. This may be because it represents a single speech; but if that were the reason, one would think that the following verse, which also represents a single speech, would be single-spaced, yet the expected space divider does appear between the couplets of that verse. Isaiah 38:11–14 was another example of unexplained single-spaced formatting. In the prose sections (such as Isaiah 36–37:21), Parry continued to divide the verses by a space, which I found confusing; this made the prose look too much like poetry to me. I would have preferred to have the prose simply single-spaced. I had occasional quibbles with the line division (for instance, I would add a new line after "neck" in Isaiah 10:27), but these were relatively minor.

I should also mention that I was impressed that Parry presented Isaiah 10:12 as poetry. Most translations understand this verse as prose, but I think it is clearly poetry because of the parallel collocation of the word pair eyes//heart, which Parry renders:

> I will punish the fruit of the king of Assyria's boastful *heart*,
> and the glory of his haughty *eyes*.

See Wilfred G. E. Watson, "The Unnoticed Word Pair <<eye(s)>>//<<heart>>," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenchaft* 101 (1989): 398–408, and "The Word Pair <<eye(s)>>//<<heart>> Once More," *Studi epigrafici e linguistici sul Vicino Oriente antico* 9 (1992): 27–31.

show their chiastic structure. The formatting of the Isaiah passages in *Book of Mormon Text Reformatted* varies from passage to passage, but I cannot say that I have had a better idea for how to structure the presentation. What Parry has done here is present the poetry in Isaiah in its most fundamental parallelistic structure and then separately identify chiastic passages in appendix 2. This is a wonderful solution. The main text is elegantly done (a vast improvement over *Book of Mormon Text Reformatted*),[7] but the information regarding chiastic passages is readily available for interested students.[8]

In 2001 Dan Vogel gave a lecture on chiasmus and the Book of Mormon.[9] In the course of that presentation, Vogel mentioned two issues to which I believe Parry's appendix 2 has relevance. First, Vogel argued that reversals of exact, or near exact, words do not constitute "real" chiasmus. To distinguish these structures, he used the word *antimetabole* (Greek for "a turning about in the opposite direction").

7. Another improvement over *Book of Mormon Text Reformatted* in this volume is the use of headers to identify the passages appearing on each page. It is much easier to find particular verses in this volume. Parry gives the verse numbers at the *end* of each verse, rather than at the beginning, as is customary. I imagine that he did this so as not to interfere with the presentation of the parallel lines. This format takes just a little getting used to, but before long I did not even notice the difference.

8. Parry uses an interesting and efficient method for detailing the chiastic structures. He separates elements by slash marks and balanced halves by double slash marks, as in Isaiah 43:18: "do not remember/former things/ /things of old/nor consider." He uses this method for longer chiastic structures as well. Oddly, in a couple of places he switches to the more familiar letter and indentation system, as in Isaiah 55:8–9:

A For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
  B neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD,
    C For as the heavens are higher
    C than the earth,
  B so are my ways higher than your ways,
A and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Dan Vogel, in a Sunstone Symposium presentation on chiasmus, Salt Lake City, August 2001, audiotape no. 374, argued that the letter and indentation system is designed to make chiasmus look more impressive than it really is. I disagree; I simply think it is an effective mechanism for detailing the structure in a visually clear way. But I had no objection to Parry's alternative presentation; it certainly conveys the essential information to readers.

9. Vogel, Sunstone Symposium presentation.

He argued that of the forty-nine nonbiblical, simple (by which I take it he meant reversals of two elements only) chiasms in the Book of Mormon, only three[10] are based on differing words and therefore can be said to be "real" chiasmus; the others are some form of antimetabole, or same-word reversals. On what basis Vogel rejects antimetabole as "real" chiasmus is completely unclear to me. Vogel himself acknowledged that Wilfred G. E. Watson accepts such structures as chiasmus (in his terminology called "mirror" or "literal" chiasmus), and I for one am a fan of Watson's work on Hebrew poetry. Just because Vogel has found simple same-word reversals in modern advertising slogans does not mean that same-word reversals cannot constitute "real" chiasmus reflecting a genuine ancient Hebrew poetic device.[11] A quick survey of Parry's appendix 2 reveals seventeen examples of such same-word reversals in Isaiah.[12] It really does not matter to me whether we call these chiasmus or antimetabole; I am comfortable that they do represent a legitimate Hebrew poetic device.[13] If they do not, then someone forgot to tell Isaiah, easily the greatest of the Hebrew poets.

10. The three Vogel would allow are 1 Nephi 17:38; 2 Nephi 3:1; and Alma 9:12. A quick look through the catalog appended to my "Poetic Diction and Parallel Word Pairs in the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4/2 (1995): 15–81, suggests an additional seven simple chiasms not dependent on same-word reversal: 1 Nephi 17:30; 2 Nephi 25:4; Mosiah 11:29 and 12:1; Alma 60:22; 3 Nephi 9:19; and Ether 6:9. I suspect that there are others as well; Book of Mormon scholars have tended to focus on the longer, more complicated examples of chiasmus rather than the simple ones.

11. Vogel has also discovered references to antimetabole in early rhetorical handbooks such as those of Samuel Knox (Baltimore, 1809) and John Newton (London, 1821), where the form is called *epanados* (Greek for something like "a return along the way," used to indicate repetition of a sentence in inverse order). I am a great admirer of Vogel's ability to ferret out such information from early sources, but I am very skeptical that Joseph Smith was influenced, directly or indirectly, by such high literary handbooks. See John W. Welch's article, "How Much Was Known about Chiasmus in 1829 When the Book of Mormon Was Translated?" in this number of the *FARMS Review,* 47–80.

12. Isaiah 5:20 (three occurrences); 6:10; 7:22; 11:13; 22:22; 27:5; 34:4; 35:1–2; 44:21; 45:1; 48:21; 50:4; 56:5; 57:15; and 59:16–17.

13. Before I ever knew someone would try to make an issue out of same-word repetition, I commented on the phenomenon and gave references to scholarly discussion of the subject. See Barney, "Poetic Diction and Parallel Word Pairs," 24 n. 25.

Vogel not only rejects chiasmus in the Book of Mormon, he also rejects the intentionality of chiasmus in the Bible. That is, he would acknowledge that the form *appears* to be present in some passages, but he would argue that the ancient author did not intend it; it is simply an artifact of random reversals in a paralleling literature. I could not disagree more strongly with Vogel's conclusion, but I doubt that a way to "prove" authorial intentionality or unintentionality exists.[14] Ultimately, perceptions of intentionality are a subjective matter. Nevertheless, I would encourage interested readers to peruse Parry's appendix 2 and come to their own conclusions about whether the form was really intended by Isaiah. I feel confident that it was and that the occasional reversal of parallel elements was not random at all but was a fully intended variation meant, among other things, to relieve the tedium of the repetitive style. As for longer chiasms, I suppose ten thousand monkeys randomly typing could eventually come up with something like the elegant, tightly woven chiasm at Isaiah 60:1–3, but it would take a very, very long time indeed.

While I am pursuing this brief aside on chiasmus, I will say that I did agree with some of what Vogel had to say. His presentation was essentially a call for greater rigor in dealing with the phenomenon of chiasmus, and I am all for that. Many people seem to believe that God speaks in chiasms and that not only the whole of scripture—but just about everything else, from the Declaration of Independence to the phone book—was written in chiasmus. Chiasmus seems to have captured the popular imagination in an undisciplined way. On the Internet in particular, a certain "chiasmus a-go-go" character is evident in some people's attempts to make use of this rhetorical form. Responsible scholars need to lead the way and show care, caution,

14. See the excellent analysis of John W. Welch, in "Criteria for Identifying and Evaluating the Presence of Chiasmus," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4/2 (1995): 1–14. Vogel criticized this article for not being as rigorous as that of other Bible scholars he prefers. It appears to me that Welch covers all the same basic concepts, with a few controversial exceptions (such as nonparalleling central elements; but it is not clear to me that central elements necessarily need to have a parallel member). He also criticized Welch for not showing examples, but I think the basic concepts articulated by Welch are abundantly clear as stated.

and rigor in talking about chiasticity. If an element is out of balance in some way, we should not try to hide that. We should affirmatively note the problem for readers and deal with it forthrightly in concert with the other criteria of chiasmus. Such weaknesses by themselves do not mean that a passage is not chiastic, but they need to be appropriately weighed in the context of the posited structure as a whole.

Translation

In his introduction, Parry spends a few pages demonstrating that the KJV is difficult to understand. Anyone who has struggled through the Isaiah passages of the Book of Mormon will, I suspect, concur. There seems, however, to be some built-in resistance in the Latter-day Saint marketplace to alternate English translations. This is unfortunate in my view. I remember that one student in my Gospel Doctrine class would always bring his RSV and, when called upon, would read from it. While I was pleased by this (as it often generated wonderful teaching moments), I well remember the discomfort in the room when students were faced with a translation other than the KJV. People did not seem to know what to make of the varying language. I have seen the same phenomenon on other occasions since. I suspect that some of that discomfort is a concern for whatever theological bias might be present in the alternate translation. But, of course, all translations, even the KJV, suffer from theological bias. I have always felt that the concern could be controlled by using the KJV primarily and the alternate translation more as a reference. If concern still existed, more than one alternate translation could be used; perhaps two or three from different traditions, thus giving students a certain control over rogue interpretations.[15]

As I have indicated, I like Parry's translation. Predictably, it bears the same characteristics as his writing style generally: it is strong,

15. Elder Mark E. Petersen used to practice this kind of control in his writings, often quoting as many as a dozen translations to establish that he was not wresting some passage of scripture. For most purposes, however, I should think two or three translations would be sufficient.

efficient, straightforward, and without a lot of attempts at extraneous flourishes. I have no problem recommending Parry's translation from the Hebrew, and I hope that it is successful and well received. One might think that a translation from a faithful Latter-day Saint scholar would be able to leap over that hurdle to acceptance among the Saints. I am not aware of any church member ever actually trying to market a complete translation of the Bible, so it remains to be seen whether a translator's church membership would make a difference in people's attitudes toward such a work.

In the case of Isaiah, however, there is a precedent: Avraham Gileadi, a Latter-day Saint scholar, published a translation of Isaiah that seemed to enjoy some modest success and acceptance.[16] This may have been because of the difficulty of the Isaiah KJV text and the importance of understanding Isaiah for understanding the Book of Mormon. An obvious question I should address is whether Parry's translation is an improvement over Gileadi's. I have not studied Gileadi's version carefully, but I think I have seen enough to form some views concerning it and its relationship to Parry's translation. I would like to separate this issue into two parts: before addressing which translation I view to be the stronger, I would first like to address the issue of whether Gileadi's translation is fundamentally competent, and then I will move to a comparison with Parry's translation.[17]

Parry takes a very dim view of Gileadi's work in his review.[18] He concludes that the integrity and quality of Gileadi's translation do not surpass those of the KJV and are not an advance over such modern translations as the Jerusalem Bible or the New International Version (NIV). As to other modern translations, I have not looked into the

16. Avraham Gileadi, *The Book of Isaiah: A New Translation with Interpretive Keys from the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988).

17. See the comments of Bruce D. Porter and Donald W. Parry in their reviews of *The Book of Isaiah: A New Translation with Interpretive Keys from the Book of Mormon,* by Avraham Gileadi, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 4 (1992): 40–51 and 51–62. My comments here are focused on the value of the translation itself and are responsive to Parry's review of the translation, which appears from 58–62.

18. Parry, review of *The Book of Isaiah,* 51–62.

matter sufficiently to have an opinion, but I strongly disagree with Parry's conclusion that Gileadi's translation is not an advance over the KJV. This is actually a low standard for a modern translation to have to exceed. The KJV was a revision of prior English translations, and so it was already somewhat archaic when it first appeared in the early seventeenth century. Although it has been edited since that time, it remains archaic and in places difficult to understand, as Parry himself demonstrates. Naturally, the many advances in our understanding of Hebrew (and its linguistic background) since the time of the production of the KJV and in additional witnesses to the text (such as the Great Isaiah Scroll) were not available to the KJV translators and consequently are not reflected therein. The KJV reflects numerous renderings that are now considered to be incorrect.[19] As to ease of comprehension and correctness, I am confident that Gileadi's work is an improvement over the KJV. Although I certainly would not extend this claim to literary quality, Parry's translation would not best the KJV on that score either.

In order to support his negative critique of Gileadi's translation, Parry presents a chart[20] detailing some thirty-four translation errors in Gileadi's rendering of Isaiah 54. In my view, this chart is fundamentally unfair and fails to justify Parry's strong negative reaction. I would break down these thirty-four "errors" into six categories:

19. A substantial literature on the Internet addresses this point in the context of the KJV-only debate. Since I discuss this article below, here I mention only as a convenient source for some examples, David P. Wright, "Isaiah in the Book of Mormon . . . and Joseph Smith in Isaiah" (completed January 1996 and initially published on the Web August 1998), part three. This article is available at Wright's Web site, at members.aol.com/jazzdd/IsaBM1.html. A portion of this material was reworked and expanded into a separate article: David P. Wright, "Does 'and upon all the ships of the sea' (2 Ne. 12:16 // Isa. 2:16) Reflect an Ancient Isaiah Variant?" in *Mormon Scripture Studies* available at mormonscripturestudies.com/bomor/dpw/2ne1216.asp. An edited version of this material has been published as David P. Wright, "Isaiah in the Book of Mormon: Or Joseph Smith in Isaiah," in *American Apocrypha: Essays on the Book of Mormon,* ed. Dan Vogel and Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002), 157–234; see the comments of Daniel C. Peterson in his editor's introduction to *FARMS Review of Books* 13/1 (2000): ix–xv.

20. Parry, review of *The Book of Isaiah,* 59–60, with additional explanatory comments on 61–62.

1. *Omissions for the sake of English style.* Parry writes that Gileadi omits twelve instances of the וְ *waw* conjunction (normally rendered "and" but with other possible translations depending on context), five instances of the כִּי *ki* conjunction (normally rendered "because/for/since/that"), two instances of the interjection הֵן *hen* and one of הִנֵּה *hinneh* (normally rendered "behold" in the KJV), and one of גּוֹר *gor* (an infinitive absolute, which provides emphasis to the finite verb that immediately succeeds it). These are twenty-one occurrences, or over half of his total of thirty-four. In my view these are not "errors" but simply intentional omissions for the sake of English style. A translation has not only a source language (in this case Hebrew) but also a target language (in this case English). While a professor might normally encourage beginning students to represent each and every word of the source in their translation, so as to assure that they understand how those words are being used, a seasoned translator has to be given latitude to keep an eye on the needs of the target language.[21] For instance, the abundance of the word *and* in the Book of Mormon has often been claimed as a Hebraism (and I personally accept it as such). But a Hebraism by definition is a relic of overliteral translation (otherwise, we would not be able to perceive it); it would therefore seem to follow that good English style might require fewer *ands* than would good Hebrew. I checked a couple of other strong translations to which I happen to have ready access, and both the NIV, which Parry mentions in his critique, and the New English Translation (NET)[22] also omit most of these occurrences of *and.* It is not unusual for modern renderings to omit the interjection *behold,* as the NIV does here. As for the infinitive absolute, the NET mentions its presence in its extensive translation notes but makes no attempt to represent it in its English translation. The NIV similarly omits it,

21. Parry certainly understands this, as he reports in his acknowledgments that Don E. Norton, a professor of English at BYU, performed a review of the English used in his translation.

22. A product of the Biblical Studies Foundation, available at www.bible.org/netbible/index.htm.

as does another translation I checked, the translation accompanying the Soncino Books of the Bible.[23] To me, the proof is in the pudding, as Parry translates the beginning of Isaiah 54:15: "Behold, whoever will *surely* [*gor*] stir up strife." While quite accurate, I found the insertion of "surely" here somewhat gratuitous and awkward as a matter of English. I have greater sympathy for Parry's complaint about the omission of *ki* conjunctions, but I noticed that the NIV also omitted the one at Isaiah 54:4.[24] While I personally would have represented these *ki* conjunctions, at least I can see why Gileadi omitted them.

2. *Instances where Parry adopts the same "mistake" as Gileadi.* Parry must have forgotten about these comments when he did his own translation, because in four cases he makes the same "mistake" as charged to Gileadi. I do not view these as mistakes, and I would say that neither Gileadi nor Parry is being unreasonable in his approach to these translations:

A. Parry gives the preferred reading of לֹא־חָלָה [*lo*ʾ] *chalah* in Isaiah 54:1 as "you did not become weak." Gileadi renders "you were not in labor," which Parry rejects as interpretive. But in his own translation, Parry renders

> Sing, O barren one, you who did not bear;
> break forth into singing, and cry aloud, *you who did* not *labor with child* [*chalah*]

Are Parry and Gileadi wrong here? Certainly not. The problem lies in the Hebrew lexicon Parry used, which does not cover the use of this word in this passage and is therefore deficient on that score.[25]

23. I. W. Slotki, *Isaiah: Hebrew Text and English Translation with an Introduction and Commentary* (London: Soncino, 1949; rev. 1983). According to a publisher's note on the flyleaf, the English translation derives from the Jewish Publication Society of America.

24. Parry himself omits the *ki* at Isaiah 15:1. He was right to do so; Blenkinsopp calls this word here a *vox vacua* (meaning "empty voice," or a word physically present in the sentence that is not necessary and does not perform a function). See Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 296.

25. Francis Brown, Stephen R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament,* trans. Edward Robinson (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977). In

B. In Isaiah 54:4, Parry says that תַּחְפִּירִי *tachpiri*[26] should be rendered "display shame," and that Gileadi's "be disgraced" translates an active verb as a passive verb. But Parry's own translation reads in part, "and be not confounded, for you will not *be put to shame* [*tachpiri*]." Parry renders this verb with a passive construction in English, as does the NET and Soncino Bible. Nothing is wrong with this shift in voice.

C. Gileadi's translation of Isaiah 54:6 begins, "The Lord calls you *back*." Parry notes that the word *back* is not present in the Hebrew and that its addition is therefore misleading. But, once again, Parry has done the same ("For the LORD has called you *back*"), as do the NIV and the NET. Adding the English word *back* here is not misleading; it actually helps to convey the correct sense to English readers.

D. In Isaiah 54:8, Parry says that רִחַמְתִּי *richamti* is a perfect verbal form used in a habitual sense: "I have compassion." Gileadi's English future "I will have mercy" mistakenly treats the verb as an imperfect. But in his own translation, Parry renders "but with everlasting kindness *I will have compassion* [*richamti*] on you." The NIV, NET, and Soncino Bible all do the same.

3. *Instances where Parry follows a similar "mistake" to Gileadi's in another passage.*

A. In Isaiah 54:15, Parry says יָגוּר *yagur* should be rendered "he shall gather"; Gileadi renders "those who gather [into mobs]," thus improperly making a singular into a plural. But the sense here is not just singular, it is collective, and it is not uncommon to represent collectives in English with the plural. Here, Parry himself renders "*whoever* will surely stir up strife," showing the collective sense of the subject of the verb. Parry does the same thing as Gileadi at Isaiah 11:16: "as there was for Israel in the day that *they* came from the land of Egypt." The Hebrew has a singular, *he,* referring back to Israel. Parry has reflected

my reprint edition, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1979), the discussion of *chalah* appears at 317–18, where the principal meaning is given as "be weak, sick."

26. Parry transliterates this word as *tachppiri,* with a doubled *pp,* but the *dagesh* in that letter is *lene,* not *forte,* so the consonant should not be doubled.

the collective sense of the word in English with the plural *they.* Nothing is wrong with this.

B. In Isaiah 54:16, Parry says that כְּלִי *kli,* "weapon/instrument/vessel," is singular and that Gileadi improperly translates the word as a plural, "weapons." Parry himself renders the word here as a singular: "an instrument." But in Parry's translation of Isaiah 14:25, we read:

> then his yoke will be removed from them,
> and his burden will be removed from their *shoulders*.

The Hebrew here is literally singular, "their shoulder." But Parry's rendering is not wrong. Hebrew nouns can have an inherently collective quality that is often best expressed in English with a plural. "Their shoulder" would not be considered good English grammar.[27]

4. *Instances where Parry misunderstands Gileadi.*

A. In Isaiah 54:7, Parry says that קָטֹן *qaton* should be rendered "small," that Gileadi has rendered it "indeed," and that this is inaccurate. Indeed it would be, if that were what was going on here. Parry renders "For a small moment [בְּרֶגַע קָטֹן *berega*ʿ *qaton*], I forsook you" while Gileadi renders "I forsook you indeed *momentarily.*" "Momentarily" is Gileadi's rendering that equates to Parry's more literal "for a small moment." Gileadi's "indeed" is a translator's gloss looking ahead to the following *waw* conjunction, translated correctly here by Gileadi (as by Parry) with "but": "but with loving compassion I will gather you up." The "indeed" is setting up the contrast that will be expressed by "but"; it is not a translation of *qaton. Berega*ʿ *qaton* could be translated literally as "for a small time" or "for a brief moment," much as Parry has done, or a little less literally, "momentarily," as Gileadi has

27. I am reminded of an old commercial for a brand of gasoline. A retired English grammar teacher pulls up to the pump, and one of her former pupils begins to pump the gas for her (I told you it was an *old* commercial). The attendant tells her how much he likes his job and how much he enjoys being able to put such gasoline in everyone's cars and fill their *tank.* Ever the teacher, the woman corrects the young man: "Tanks! Tanks!" at which the attendant blushes and says, "Ah, you're welcome!"

done. One approach may be preferred over the other, but that does not make the other wrong.

B. In Isaiah 54:14, Parry says that תִּירָאִי [לֹא] [*lo*ʾ] *tiraʾi* should be rendered "you will not fear." Gileadi renders "have no cause to fear." Parry explains that the verbal form is imperfect, not imperative. True enough; but Gileadi did not render it as an imperative. Although it looks that way in the little snippet Parry quotes, the full context of Gileadi's rendering reveals otherwise:

> You shall be firmly established through righteousness,
> you will be far from oppression
> and have no cause to fear.

The structure of Gileadi's rendering is "you will X and have no cause to fear." Thus, for this purpose, it would have been more accurate to give Gileadi's rendering as "you will . . . have no cause to fear." It is certainly not rendered by him as an imperative.

5. *Instances where other translations support Gileadi*. In the following three cases, a number of other translations support Gileadi's rendering:

A. In Isaiah 54:2, Parry states that יַטּוּ *yattu* is technically a third-person jussive, meaning "let them extend." In his translation he renders

> Enlarge the place of your tent,
> and *let* the curtains of your dwellings *be stretched out*.[28]

Gileadi represents this with a second person imperative, "extend." But representing the jussive with an imperative is a common treatment here. The NIV reads "stretch your tent curtains wide," and the NET reads "stretch your tent curtains way out!"

B. Parry renders Isaiah 54:5 as:

28. Parry's translation appears to follow an emendation from the active (hiphil) MT *yattu* to the passive (hophal) form יֻטּוּ *yuttu,* which is suggested by a retroversion from ἐκταθήτωσαν *ektathētōsan* [a passive form of ἐκτείνω *ekteinō* "stretch out" found in several of the Greek versions]. I have no problem with this, but as a variation from MT it should have been mentioned in a textual note.

> and your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel—
> the God of the whole earth will he be called [יִקָּרֵא *yiqqareʾ*].

Gileadi renders "who is called," representing the imperfect with an English present. But note that the NIV and NET do the same.

C. In Isaiah 54:17, Parry renders in part: "and every tongue that will [revile] against you in judgment you will *condemn* [תַּרְשִׁיעִי *tarshiʿi*] as guilty." Gileadi renders "every tongue that rises to accuse you, you shall *refute*." Parry says Gileadi is inaccurate here; while that may be, note that the NIV and NET handle this the same way Gileadi does.

6. *Instances where Gileadi is being interpretive.*

A. In Isaiah 54:9, Parry says that the perfect verbal form נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי *nishbaʿti*[29] should be rendered "I have sworn," whereas Gileadi renders it with an English present: "I swear." In his translation, Parry renders "for *I swore* [*nishbaʿti*] that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth." The other translations I checked all agree with Parry, although they vary between using an English perfect and an English past tense (as Parry himself did). Biblical Hebrew verbs do not have tense in the same sense as English, but rather aspect. Whether a verb is best rendered as a past, present, or future tense in English depends on context and various grammatical clues. The Hebrew perfect cannot be mechanically equated with the English past, the Hebrew participle with the English present, or the Hebrew imperfect with the English future. Parry acknowledges that "some flexibility exists in translating Hebrew verbs,"[30] yet he seems unwilling to grant Gileadi the full range of that flexibility. Gileadi's present tense rendering here may be wrong, but a demonstration that it is in error would require more than just parsing the Hebrew verb as a perfect.

29. Parry transliterates this word as *nishbbaʿti,* with a doubled *bb,* but the *dagesh* in that letter is *lene,* not *forte,* so the consonant should not be doubled.

30. Parry, review of *The Book of Isaiah,* 62.

B. In Isaiah 54:11, Parry begins his translation "*O, afflicted one* [עֲנִיָּה *ʿaniyyah*]" where Gileadi begins "Poor wretch." Parry says that this rendering is inaccurate. I prefer Parry's rendering, but according to my Webster's one who is "wretched" is "deeply afflicted." I do not see Gileadi's choice as wildly inaccurate so much as mildly interpretive. While I would agree that Gileadi's choice here is perhaps the less elegant, it is not clear to me that it is affirmatively erroneous.

The text of Isaiah is difficult. Reasonable, competent translators can and do disagree about how to handle various passages and various problems. I certainly disagree with some of what Gileadi did in Isaiah 54, but I do not view those disagreements as major. I also disagree with the conclusion Parry draws from his review of that chapter. In my view the charge that Gileadi's translation is fundamentally or grossly incompetent is groundless. If there are problems with Gileadi's translation, and there certainly are (as with any translation), they are more on the margins than in the basics. I for one have no problem with Latter-day Saint students using Gileadi's translation as a reference in their study of Isaiah.

This brings us to the next question: between Gileadi's and Parry's translations, which is the stronger? In my view Parry's is, to some extent at least, the stronger of the two. Readers should understand a couple of limitations to this opinion, however. First, it is based on a fairly superficial spot check of various passages that I found interesting; it is not based on an exhaustive comparison of the entire text. These spot checks tend to come from the first half of the book, because I am only human and frankly I tired of the exercise after a time. Second, these are professional scholars with Ph.D. degrees in their chosen fields, while I am but a dilettante, a fool rushing in where angels fear to tread. For these reasons, caveat lector.

In most of the passages I checked, Parry and Gileadi agree. Of those where they disagree, in a few I would follow Gileadi, but in more I would follow Parry. Below are illustrations from each category:

1. *Passages where Parry and Gileadi agree.*

A. Isaiah 1:4. Where Parry has "they have turned their backs," Gileadi has "they have lapsed into apostasy." This is a good illustration of the differences between the two translations; Parry's is the more literal, Gileadi's the more free. Yet in their own way both are correct here.

B. Isaiah 1:29. Parry and Gileadi both emend the third person of MT to a second person, as reflected in Parry's "For [*you*] will be ashamed of the oaks which you have desired."[31]

C. Isaiah 3:3. Parry and Gileadi both have "skilled craftsman," where other translations render something like "skilled magician/charmer."

D. Isaiah 5:5. Parry renders "I will remove its hedge, and it will *burn*." Gileadi agrees with the concept of burning here, even though many others would have the hedge being "eaten up" (as pasture).

E. Isaiah 8:11. Parry renders "For the LORD spoke to me [*when he took me by the hand*]." Gileadi agrees with "clasping my hand," even though Blenkinsopp, in the Anchor Bible, argues against this way of reading the passage.[32]

F. Isaiah 10:3. Parry and Gileadi both understand כָּבוֹד *kabod* in this passage, which most literally means "glory," to mean "wealth."

G. Isaiah 10:17. Parry renders

> And the Light of Israel will become a fire,
> and *their* Holy One a flame;

Gileadi also renders "their Holy One," even though literally MT is singular, "his/its Holy One."

H. Isaiah 15:9. MT has the name Dimon twice in this verse; both Parry and Gileadi follow 1QIsa[a] and read Dibon instead.[33]

31. The second person is suggested by a handful of Hebrew manuscripts and the Targum.

32. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39,* 241.

33. For a discussion of this reading, Parry sends readers to Millar Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Viking, 1955), 307–8. Burrows gives as evidence for the reading Dibon as opposed to Dimon the following: (1) no city named Dimon is otherwise known, while Dibon is well known; (2) both 1QIsa[a] and the Vulgate read Dibon; and (3) the Syriac reads Ribon, apparently mistaking the Hebrew letter *daleth* for *resh* (the two letters resemble each other), but supporting the *b* instead of *m*. He goes on, however, following

I. Isaiah 20:1. Where the KJV takes Tartan as a proper name, both Parry ("commander-in-chief") and Gileadi ("general") correctly understand it as a title and translate it.[34]

2. *Passages where I would follow Gileadi over Parry.*

A. Isaiah 3:17. Parry renders

> therefore the LORD will bring sores on the head of the daughters of Zion,
> and the LORD will lay bare their *foreheads.*

Gileadi has "private parts" in lieu of "foreheads." I think this is a very close question. I can see what Parry is doing; for Hebrew פֹּת *pot* he is relying on an argument regarding Akkadian *putu,* and the references to the heads of the daughters in the prior line might support "foreheads" as a matter of parallelism. But שִׂפַּח *sippach* in the previous line (rendered here as "bring sores on") is a *hapax legomenon* (a word that appears only once in a work); based on "lay bare" in the second line it may mean something like "uncover," as Blenkinsopp takes it in the Anchor Bible.[35] Also, *pot* is not quite *hapax;* it also occurs at 1 Kings 7:50 as an

Harry Orlinsky, to opine that the prophet probably did intentionally write Dimon with an *m,* meaning the city Dibon but creating an intentional word play with the word *blood* (דָּם *dam)* used in the verse ("For the waters of *Dimon* are full of *blood* [*dam*]/For I will bring yet more upon *Dimon*"). Burrows saw 1QIsa[a] and the Vulgate as independent, common-sense corrections to Isaiah's Dimon. While I support the Dibon rendering of both Parry and Gileadi, I found the cite to Burrows without actually explaining his view (i.e., that the prophet really did intentionally write Dimon) to be somewhat problematic.

34. Parry's note at this passage is confusing. It begins "1QIsa[a] (תורתן). MT (תרתן) reads 'Tartan.'" This wording seems to suggest that he is following 1QIsa[a] in contradistinction to MT. But the only difference between the two texts is the spelling, with 1QIsa[a] (correctly) reflecting a *waw* used as a *mater lectionis* (Latin for "mother of the reading," a technical term of Hebrew grammar that refers to a consonant standing for a vowel). Since *tartan/turtan* is not a proper name but a title for an Assyrian general (derived from Akkadian *turtanu*), 1QIsa[a] does not reflect a different word than MT here (apart from its variant orthography). That is, it was the KJV that mistakenly took this word as a proper name, not MT. For a discussion of this reading, Parry cites Dewey M. Beegle, "Proper Names in the New Isaiah Scroll," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 123 (October 1951): 123, 128 (the correct page numbers are 26–30 at 28), but Beegle confirms that the variation between MT and 1QIsa[a] is simply one of orthography and does not involve different words.

35. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39,* 201.

architectural term for a socket to a door pivot, and Isaiah is not above using coarse language to describe the treatment of captives. Based primarily on context, I would give the edge to Gileadi here, which seems to be the most common approach by other scholars as well.

B. Isaiah 10:24. Parry renders

> Therefore thus says the Lord, the LORD of Hosts,
> O my people who dwell in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian;
>
> he will smite you with a rod,
> and will lift up his staff against you, after the manner of Egypt.

This is indeed a literal rendering of the Hebrew. For the third line above, Gileadi renders "*though* they strike you with the rod." Here is an example where a less literal translation can sometimes convey the meaning of the original more clearly than a very literal one. The word *though* is not present in the Hebrew text, but without it the English of this verse is confusing (i.e., first you say do not be afraid of the Assyrian, but then you say he is going to smite me, which suggests that I should be afraid of him). A number of other translations do something similar to Gileadi here.[36]

C. Isaiah 28:9b. I would agree with Gileadi, and with many other translations, that this half of the verse would be better represented as rhetorical questions rather than simple statements, as Parry takes it. Parry's treatment of Isaiah 28:9–13 seems to retain a heavy KJV influence.

D. Isaiah 40:3. Parry renders

> A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
>
> prepare the way of the LORD,
> make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

36. As with a painting, however, if one steps back and views the passage in its broader context, the parallel with the Egyptian bondage should make the meaning clear enough, even if one translates literally as Parry has done here.

The words "in the wilderness," however, belong in the next line, where Gileadi correctly puts them, as those words parallel "in the desert" from the final line of the verse. Parry's treatment once again seems to reflect a lingering KJV influence.[37]

3. *Passages where I would follow Parry over Gileadi.*

A. Isaiah 1:3. Parry renders

> Israel does not know,
> my people do not understand.

Gileadi has "are insensible"; I did not care for this translation as a matter of English.

B. Isaiah 1:26. Parry renders "the Faithful City," with a definite article as in the Hebrew, where Gileadi uses the indefinite article, "a faithful city."[38]

C. Isaiah 2:6. This is a difficult passage. I would agree with Parry that the most likely interpretation is one relating either to alliances or commerce: "And they clasp hands with foreigners," emending MT וּבְיַלְדֵי *ubeyalde* "with the children of" to וּבְיָדֵי *ubeyade* "with the hands of." Gileadi gives "and are content with the infantile heathen," which I think is wrong in any event.[39]

D. Isaiah 3:3. I think Parry is correct that the end of the verse should read something like "and the expert enchanter," as opposed to Gileadi's "orators."

E. Isaiah 3:8. Where Parry literally renders "provoking his glorious eyes," Gileadi has "an affront to his glory before his very eyes." The concept of "an affront to his glory" is fine, but the wording "before his very eyes" strikes me as a misunderstanding of the Hebrew.

37. A couple of other places where I noted a continuing KJV influence were with the retention of Jerome's "Lucifer" at Isaiah 14:12 and some of the language of Isaiah 53.

38. Note, however, that at Isaiah 10:21 Parry renders "*The* remnant will return" where the Hebrew lacks the definite article. Whether to reflect an article or the absence of an article from one language to another can be very tricky business, as other languages often use the article in ways different from English.

39. I agree with Parry's translation. Inasmuch as it appears to be based on an emendation of MT, however, Parry should have provided a textual note here explaining what he was doing.

F. Isaiah 7:20. Parry renders

> In that day the LORD will shave with a razor that is
> hired beyond the river—
>
> the king of Assyria—
>
> the head, and the hair of the feet,
> and it will also clip off the beard.

Gileadi in lieu of "the feet" has "your legs." The Hebrew רֶגֶל *regel* can refer to the lower part of the leg (below the knee), including the foot. Since feet do not have much hair to speak of, but legs do, if the word is meant to be understood literally, Gileadi's translation would be preferable. In my view, however, the word is not meant to be taken literally. The word *feet* is often used as a euphemism in the Old Testament for genitalia.[40] I believe the intended meaning here is that Assyria would shave not only the hair of the head and the beard, but also the pubic hair. Therefore, I would render either "feet" as Parry has done, so that the euphemistic usage is apparent, or "pubic hair," interpreting the euphemistic usage for readers.

G. Isaiah 8:1. Where Parry has "with an ordinary stylus," Gileadi has "in common script." The Hebrew is בְּחֶרֶט אֱנוֹשׁ *becheret ʾenosh,* literally "with a stylus of a man." Although the precise meaning of the qualifying "of a man" is somewhat obscure, a חֶרֶט *cheret* is an engraving instrument. While it is not unusual for translators to interpret the expression further as referring to a writing in ordinary letters (i.e., one that is intelligible to all), I prefer the more literal rendering here.

The above represents a sampling of what I found. In sum, while I think Gileadi's translation is fundamentally competent, I thought Parry's was at least marginally the stronger of the two.[41]

40. See Martin Noth, *Exodus* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), 50, who, writing of the "bridegroom of blood" scene where Moses' son is circumcised, writes, "'Feet' is of course here a euphemistic expression, as elsewhere in the Old Testament."

41. As with all books, this volume has its share of errors. In particular, the sigla defined on p. 35 were not consistently applied. Brackets were supposed to indicate variant

Interweaving of MT and 1QIsa[a]

Parry is a member of the expanded international team created by Emmanuel Tov in the 1990s to expedite the process of publishing the definitive series of texts from the Dead Sea, Oxford's *Discoveries in the Judean Desert*. Parry's contribution to that series will be his work, together with Eugene Ulrich and Frank Moore Cross, on the Samuel fragments. Parry has published widely on the Dead Sea Scrolls,[42] and, of special interest for the volume under review, he coedited with Elisha Qimron a recent edition of the Great Isaiah Scroll.[43] We have here a

readings from 1QIsa[a], the JST, and the Book of Mormon (indicating that MT was the base text), and parentheses were supposed to indicate words not found in Hebrew but added to the translation to make sense of the verse. In a number of instances parentheses should have been used as opposed to brackets (pp. 61 [three occurrences], 104, 156, 184, and 204). There were also instances where MT was in fact followed, so, while an endnote was appropriate, the text should *not* have been bracketed (pp. 54, 153, and 157). On p. 271 at note 110 to Isaiah 13:8 a line in MT/1QIsa[a] but not in the Book of Mormon is characterized as a "plus"; I found this confusing, since MT is the base text for bracketing purposes. Isaiah 14:19 at p. 81 is remarkable because this is the lone case in the entire volume where Parry actually follows MT/1QIsa[a] ("clothed") over the Book of Mormon/JST ("remnant"). But since he follows MT here, the text should not have been bracketed. In some instances a Book of Mormon variant is followed, being neither marked by brackets nor indicated by a note: Isaiah 3:10 "shall be/is"; Isaiah 3:26 "being/shall be [Parry has "will be"]"; and Isaiah 51:9, where Parry follows the Book of Mormon in deleting "in the generations of old." At Isaiah 1:25, Parry omits MT כְּבֹר *kabbor* "as with lye" without a note. (A lacuna appears at this point in 1QIsa[a]. Many translators, such as Gileadi, emend MT to בַּכּוּר *bakkur* "in the furnace.")

42. Excluding publications directed to a Latter-day Saint audience, his publications include the following: Donald W. Parry, "*4QSam[a]* and the Tetragrammaton," and Donald W. Parry and Steven W. Booras, "The Dead Sea Scrolls CD-ROM Database Project," both in *Current Research and Technological Developments on the Dead Sea Scrolls: Conference on the Texts from the Judean Desert, Jerusalem, 30 April 1995*, ed. Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Donald W. Parry, "Retelling *Samuel:* Echoes of the *Books of Samuel* in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Revue de Qumran* 17 (1996): 293–306; Florentino García Martínez and Donald W. Parry, *A Bibliography of the Finds in the Desert of Judah, 1970–95* (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Donald W. Parry, "More Fragments of 4QSam[a] (4Q51): A Preliminary Edition of 1 Samuel 14:24–24:22," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Fifty Years after Their Discovery: Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20–25, 1997,* ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman, Emanuel Tov, and James C. VanderKam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society in cooperation with The Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum, 2000), 19–29.

43. Donald W. Parry and Elisha Qimron, *The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa[a]): A New Edition* (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

legitimate scrolls scholar who has rubbed shoulders with and learned from the greats in the field. This experience shows in Parry's sense of discernment when deciding whether to include in his text the variant readings of 1QIsa[a]. His judgment was excellent in this matter.

For this very reason I wish the notes to this volume were a little fuller. Here we have a world-class scholar of the scrolls making decisions about which readings to follow, but we have almost no indication of how he comes to the conclusions he does. He does not "show his work," as they say in math class. Occasionally his notes will send readers to a discussion of a certain reading in another scholar's work, but he gives no clue as to what the discussion says, leaving readers to track down that other work. In most cases, there is not even such a cross-reference but only his stark decision. I realize that a full-blown textual commentary would have been far beyond the scope of this book, but a sentence here or there indicating why Parry went a certain way would have been very useful to students.

For example, at Isaiah 1:15 Parry accepts a 1QIsa[a] variant, indicated in brackets:

> Your hands are full of blood,
> [your fingers with iniquity].

Why does he accept this reading? An argument could be made against it. The new words appear to be borrowed from Isaiah 59:3 and are not present in 4QIs[f] (another Dead Sea manuscript of a portion of Isaiah). As it so happens, in this one case we do have a sense for Parry's reasoning because he mentions this passage in his introduction (p. 9). He accepts the variant because it completes the synonymous parallelism of the passage. I agree with his conclusion here. It is unfortunate that in most instances students do not similarly have an indication of what Parry based his decisions on.

Students should also be aware that this book by its nature does not present all the Isaiah Scroll variants. Students wishing to check

their own judgments against Parry's will need to consult other resources to see the other variants.[44]

While Parry interweaves readings from 1QIsa[a] into his base MT text, he does not similarly take into account readings from the Septuagint or other ancient versions. He justifies this decision in his introduction by stating that "the Greek translator (or translators) of the book of Isaiah produced an exceptionally liberal translation that included the translator's personal reflections and interpretations." Parry goes on to explain that "the translator, while undoubtedly earnest in his attempt to create a careful and correct translation, permitted his own biases to govern the translation process" (pp. 33–34). Parry notes that many scholars have observed these tendencies and provides a supporting quotation from Isaac Leo Seeligmann.

I agree with Parry's general comment. Certainly these tendencies are something that must be taken into account when using the Septuagint of Isaiah. How this comment justifies not using the Septuagint *at all* throughout sixty-six chapters of text escapes me, however. A fundamental principle of textual criticism is that even the worst ancient witness for a text can sometimes preserve an original reading. A witness cannot be ignored simply because it is generally unreliable; in each case that witness's reading must be weighed together with the other available evidence. Joseph Blenkinsopp in his textual notes throughout his Anchor Bible volume on Isaiah takes account of the Septuagint reading in almost every verse.[45] If, as was my impression, the purpose of *Harmonizing Isaiah* is to try to achieve to the greatest extent possible something resembling Isaiah's original

44. For students working in English, the variants are available in Martin Abegg Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English* (New York: HarperCollins, 1999), 267–381.

45. Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39,* passim. To cite but one of many examples where a retroversion from the Septuagint yields an interesting and possible reading, Parry renders Isaiah 3:12 conventionally as

text, then I am dismayed by the wholesale rejection of the ancient versional evidence.[46]

Parry's rejection of evidence from the Septuagint entails a couple of ironies. First, of the Book of Mormon variants that have known ancient manuscript support, a great deal of that support derives from the Septuagint and other ancient versions.[47] For instance, the well-known variant at 2 Nephi 12:16 ("ships of the sea") is attested in the Septuagint, as mentioned in the footnote to the 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon. So Parry includes the Book of Mormon variants in his text, but he rejects out of hand some of the strongest evidence supporting the possible originality of at least some of those variants.

Another irony is Parry's use of "the [virgin]" to render הָעַלְמָה *ha-ʿalmah* in Isaiah 7:14. In his note, Parry justifies this translation as a matter of pure Hebrew, but somehow I am skeptical that if the Septuagint had not read ἡ παρθένος *hē parthenos,* which led to the Vulgate's *virgo,* which led to the KJV's "a virgin," that it would have occurred to Parry to translate *ha-ʿalmah* in this way. I am not objecting to the translation so much as to the notion that the Septuagint is irrelevant support for it.

> [And] my people, *children* are their oppressors,
> and *women* rule over them.

Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39,* 197, following the Septuagint, renders

> As for my people, their oppressors *plunder* them,
> *usurers* lord it over them.

In lieu of מְעוֹלֵל *meʿolel* "infant," Blenkinsopp understands a verbal form עֹלְלוּ *ʿolelu* "devastate," following the Septuagint [καλαμῶνται *kalamōntai*], Targum, and Vulgate [*spoliaverunt*]. For נָשִׁים *nashim* "women," he reads נֹשִׁים *noshim* "creditors," with the Septuagint, Aquila, Theodotion, and the Targum.

46. In describing his primary sources, Parry refers to the critical apparatus of *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia,* with its variant readings from other Hebrew manuscripts and ancient versions, as well as to *The Book of Isaiah* in the Hebrew University Bible Project's Edition of the Bible, with its more extensive fourfold apparatus (see p. 30). Why would he bother to mention these tools if he were not going to make full use of them?

47. See LeGrande Davies, "Isaiah: Texts in the Book of Mormon," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism,* 2:700.

Maybe Parry did not want to have to deal with the complications posed by the Septuagint and other versional evidence but rather wanted simply to focus on parsing between MT and 1QIsa[a]. That would have been fine and certainly would have had value in its own right. In my view it was not necessary to reject the Septuagint out of hand as a witness in order to proceed in this fashion.

Interweaving of the Book of Mormon and JST

As I have mentioned, this book reflects the vast majority of the textual variants from KJV Isaiah in the Book of Mormon and the JST as part of its text. The introduction offers no explanation for why this was done in this fashion. Apparently, Parry assumes that the Book of Mormon and JST variants of necessity represent (in English) the original text of Isaiah. In my view this is a flawed assumption and accordingly a flawed manner of presentation.

Although the introduction does not explain this methodology, we get a pretty good hint concerning it from Parry's review of Gileadi, in which he states:

> Inasmuch as Gileadi's book was written for a Latter-day Saint audience, it should have included representations from the Book of Mormon Isaiah. At the very least the Book of Mormon Isaiah could have been represented in Gileadi's new translation in the form of a separate column juxtaposed by the Gileadi translation, or perhaps represented in parentheses, footnotes, or endnotes. The title chosen by the author—*The Book of Isaiah: A New Translation with Interpretive Keys from the Book of Mormon*—suggests incorporation of the Book of Mormon Isaiah, but it is nowhere to be found.[48]

I remember having a similar reaction to Parry's as to why Gileadi did not engage the Book of Mormon and JST variants.[49] The alternative

48. Parry, review of *The Book of Isaiah,* 55.

49. Oddly, at Isaiah 13:4 Gileadi does follow the Book of Mormon reading, attributing its loss to a case of "double haplography" in a footnote. Gileadi mentions neither the Book

presentations Parry suggests for Gileadi—parallel columns, *à la* Origen, or an apparatus of some sort—would have worked well in Parry's volume also. But it is clear from this quotation that Parry's favored manner of presentation was to bring the variants directly into the text itself, which is in fact what he has done in this book.

I have not the slightest doubt that Parry's method of incorporating the variants into the text itself was pursued with the very best of intentions. I fully agree with him that the variants are important, they have value, and we need to encourage greater study of them by Latter-day Saint students of scripture. I wish to be very clear that *that* is not the issue. The problem is that by inserting these variants *directly* into what is otherwise a rigorous text critical exercise, Parry conveys the strong impression that all such variants necessarily represent material from Isaiah's original text. This indeed appears to be Parry's position. In his review of Gileadi he states the following:

> Several Book of Mormon chapters, . . . drawn from the brass plates of Laban, represent the earliest known extant chapters of Isaiah. The chapters predate by centuries other known texts of Isaiah, including the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, the Dead Sea Scroll editions of Isaiah, and the Aquila, Symmachus, Theodosian, Syriac, Targums, Vulgate, Old Latin, Sahidic [a Coptic dialect], Coptic, Ethiopic, Arabic, and Armenian texts of the Bible. . . . In my opinion, the Isaianic chapters represented in the Book of Mormon are the most accurate and exact sections of Isaiah in existence.[50]

It seems jarring to see Parry exercising careful critical judgment in distinguishing between MT and 1QIsa[a] on the one hand but then on the other incorporating the Book of Mormon and JST variants without demonstrating that same sense of judgment. If Parry's auto-

of Mormon nor John Tvedtnes, who is the source for this "double haplography" argument. This may be because Gileadi's translation was presented in settings both inside and outside the Church of Jesus Christ.

50. Parry, review of *The Book of Isaiah,* 54–55.

matic exclusion of the Septuagint reflects a case of the "bad witness" fallacy, his automatic privileging of the Book of Mormon and JST variants looks to me like a case of the "best manuscript" fallacy. This would be like a New Testament textual critic deciding that, say, Codex Sinaiticus is the best manuscript of some book and following its readings no matter what, or like a Book of Mormon textual critic always following the readings of the original manuscript (O), irrespective of whether they made the most sense in light of all the evidence in any one particular instance.[51]

I learned a little something about this subject from hard personal experience. In the early 1980s I had returned from my mission and was studying at BYU. At some point I became interested in textual criticism, and so I spent time in the library on my own studying the subject. In the course of this personal study I became aware that a number of passages in the Bible occur in which ancient textual evidence paralleled what Joseph Smith had done in the JST. Most of these parallels had not been previously mentioned in print. At that time I shared the assumption that Parry evidently holds that all JST variants necessarily represent textual restorations. Convinced that I had stumbled on evidence supportive of this assumption, I began to write a paper detailing my findings.

I still have in my files a draft of an attempted beginning to that paper, constituting over one hundred handwritten pages. I really did not get very far, though. I simply could not make the JST fit my preconceptions. I began to realize that the JST is not a pure textual restoration but rather incorporates a variety of approaches. While in my view it does include textual restorations, it includes other things as well. I therefore began to develop a more eclectic approach to the

51. Davies, "Isaiah: Texts in the Book of Mormon," 700–701 n. 45, suggests that the Book of Mormon Isaiah should be granted "full recensional status" and asks whether it should not "be considered as valid as, say, the Dead Sea Isaiah texts?" Subject to the qualification that the Book of Mormon exists only in translation (and all the limitations that that entails), I have no problem with these statements for believing Latter-day Saints (nonbelievers, of course, would not accept it as such). But Parry does not treat the Book of Mormon and JST variants as a recension or like the Dead Sea Isaiah texts; he privileges them in a way he does not 1QIsa[a].

JST.[52] One cannot simply assume that the entire JST represents just one approach; rather, individual passages have to be examined with a range of possibilities in mind. These possibilities include (1) restorations of original text, (2) restorations of nonoriginal text, (3) alternate translations without positing any change in underlying text, (4) historical corrections of incorrect text, (5) harmonizations of biblical text with revealed doctrine, and (6) midrashic commentary (much like the *targumin* and the genres of "rewritten Bible" and *pesharim* attested among the Dead Sea Scrolls). Readers may recognize this list; it is my adaptation of the suggestions of Robert J. Matthews as to some of the different ways the JST text may relate to the biblical text, which I have elsewhere labeled the "Matthews paradigm."[53]

That the JST does not represent a "pure" textual restoration is reflected in the following statements from prominent Latter-day Saint scholars.[54] Richard Lloyd Anderson, writing about Joseph Smith—Matthew, says:

52. See Kevin L. Barney, "The Joseph Smith Translation and Ancient Texts of the Bible," *Dialogue* 19/3 (1986): 85–102. An edited version of this article appeared as chapter 11 in *The Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scripture,* ed. Dan Vogel (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990).

53. See Kevin L. Barney, "Reflections on the Documentary Hypothesis," *Dialogue* 33/1 (2000): 76–77; and Robert J. Matthews, *"A Plainer Translation": Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible: A History and Commentary* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1985), 253.

54. My article, "The Joseph Smith Translation," was largely written while I was an undergraduate and, apart from a couple of student essays, was my first published work. Apparently I was less than articulate in that article, for one day, while browsing at the LDS bookstore near the Chicago temple, I saw that Thomas E. Sherry, "Appendix: Changing Attitudes toward Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible," in *Plain and Precious Truths Restored: The Doctrinal and Historical Significance of the Joseph Smith Translation,* ed. Robert L. Millet and Robert J. Matthews (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995) had categorized my article as "critical" (in the negative sense). If Richard Lloyd Anderson and Stephen E. Robinson, whose statements below are simply more articulate versions of what I was trying to say, are to be considered "critical" for holding this view, then count me as "critical" also. Consider also the following from John Tvedtnes: "[David Wright, to whom Tvedtnes was responding,] can take some comfort in the fact that I agree with his assessment that the Joseph Smith Translation often has changes that are secondary to the Bible text rather than a restoration of original text. There is much evidence for this, including the fact that the Prophet sometimes made a change which he later modified again or returned to its original form. This does not, however, invalidate everything Joseph Smith added or modified. As with the Book of Mormon, he was probably studying it out in his mind.

> In no case did Joseph Smith work with any original language to reach these results. In fact, Greek variant readings simply do not exist for most changes made, whether here or elsewhere in the Inspired Version. Such evidence proves that Joseph Smith worked on the level of meaning and doctrinal harmonization, not narrow textual precision. This is the most dramatic example of the Prophet presenting historical material with long explanations that go far beyond any original writing. This suggests that the Prophet used his basic document—in this case the King James Version—as a point of departure instead of a translation guide. Thus his sweeping changes are only loosely tied to the written record that stimulated the new information. The result is content oriented. One may label this as "translation" only in the broadest sense, for his consistent amplifications imply that the Prophet felt that expansion of a document was the best way to get at meaning. If unconventional as history, the procedure may be a doctrinal gain if distinguished from normal translation procedure, for paraphrase and restatement are probably the best way to communicate without ambiguity. The result may be the paradox of having less literally the words of Bible personalities while possessing more clearly the meanings that their words sought to convey. Thus Joseph Smith's revisions can best be judged on a conceptual, but not a verbal level.[55]

Stephen E. Robinson's remarkable *How Wide the Divide?* provides the following:

In some very important passages, he added material that can be shown from subsequent documentary discoveries to have an ancient foundation." John A. Tvedtnes, review of *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology,* ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe, in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/1 (1994): 23.

55. Richard Lloyd Anderson, "Joseph Smith's Insights into the Olivet Prophecy: Joseph Smith 1 and Matthew 24," in *Pearl of Great Price Symposium: A Centennial Presentation* (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Publications, 1976), 50.

An area in which Evangelicals almost always misunderstand LDS theology (and in which the average Mormon often does, too) is the relationship between the Joseph Smith Translation (hereafter JST) and the biblical text. The Book of Mormon teaches that "plain and precious" things have been taken out of the Bible (1 Nephi 13:24–29). Both Latter-day Saints and Evangelicals often assume this means that the present biblical books went through a cut-and-paste editing process to remove these things, and that the JST restores the edited texts back to their original forms. However, I see no reason to understand things this way, and in fact I think it is largely erroneous. . . . In 1828 the word *translation* was broader in its meaning than it is now, and the Joseph Smith *translation* (JST) should be understood to contain additional revelation, alternate readings, prophetic commentary or midrash, harmonization, clarification and corrections *of* the original as well as corrections *to* the original. . . . Joseph Smith often saw more than one meaning in a passage and brought many of these explicitly to our attention by means of the JST. Certainly the existence of a JST variant reading for a passage ought *not* to imply that the KJV is *incorrect,* since the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants sometimes agree with the KJV rather than the JST.

Most of the objections I hear concerning the JST result from assuming we know what Joseph was doing and how he was doing it, and from assuming a view of the texts and a translational philosophy on the part of Joseph Smith that cannot be established from the documents. For example, Evangelicals might assume that a "prophetic" translation would be one that restored the *original* text, word for word and without any additions and subtractions, but this is not an LDS assumption. Joseph Smith did not explain his "translation" process. He did not describe the parameters of his work or explain either the procedures or the principles he employed, but it seems to me that his main concern was not

> merely to reproduce God's word to ancient prophets but also to produce a correct text for the use of Latter-day Saints in the latter days.
>
> I happen to believe Joseph did frequently restore ancient information in the JST and that the JST is "correct" in all its doctrinal particulars, but this does not necessarily mean that the received text is corrupt or that the JST always represents the original, unexpurgated text of Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. I do not personally assume this. I affirm only that the JST is "inspired" and that the LDS should consult it as a supplement to their canonical Scriptures.[56]

The Book of Mormon also involves an inspired translation from the gold plates. Scholars take different views concerning how "tight" or "loose" Joseph's control[57] over the language of the plates was. My own approach is, once again, eclectic. I believe we need to seriously consider a spectrum of approaches in various passages as the evidence in each case warrants.[58]

Nevertheless, even if one insists on a strict "tight control" view of the entire translation of the Book of Mormon, it would not necessarily follow that the Book of Mormon variants would represent Isaiah's original text. In order to simplify this discussion, let us assume, for the

56. Craig L. Blomberg and Stephen E. Robinson, *How Wide the Divide? A Mormon and an Evangelical in Conversation* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1997), 63–65.

57. For the concept of tight vs. loose control, see Royal Skousen, "Towards a Critical Edition of the Book of Mormon," *BYU Studies* 30/1 (1990): 50–56.

58. The presentation of Isaiah 29 in this book is a good illustration of the difficulties inherent in simply incorporating the Book of Mormon and JST variants into the text. In this chapter Parry gives up on his bracketing system, but he continues to incorporate his own translations. It would take several hours of comparative work for students to sort out what derives from the Book of Mormon, the JST, and Parry's translation of MT. For details concerning this chapter, Parry cites an excellent article by Robert A. Cloward, "Isaiah 29 and the Book of Mormon," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon,* ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 191–247. In that article Cloward reviews Isaiah 29 in its Isaianic context, in its Book of Mormon context, and in its JST context, seeing the later versions as containing *pesher*-like "likening" commentary on the text. By artificially creating a single version of this chapter, however, Parry obliterates Cloward's textured reading of the different accounts.

sake of argument, that all sixty-six chapters of the book of Isaiah were penned by Isaiah the son of Amoz in the latter half of the eighth century B.C. The source for the Isaiah quotations and paraphrases found in the Book of Mormon was the plates of brass. It should be perfectly obvious that some sort of textual transmission had to exist between Isaiah's original text and the plates of brass. We do not know how many copies or copies of copies intervened between Isaiah's original text and the plates of brass. It has been suggested that the plates of brass may have represented a northern recension of the scriptures;[59] if so, the plates of brass may have undergone a somewhat different textual development than the proto-MT and any other Hebrew textual traditions in the south. Furthermore, the plates of brass were transliterated into Egyptian script or, possibly, translated into the Egyptian language (Mosiah 1:3–4). Such a transliteration (or translation) would be a substantial additional complicating factor in the transmission of the text.

In the New World, the plates of brass text was recopied, in most cases one additional time onto the small plates of Nephi, but in some cases two additional times, first onto the large plates of Nephi and from there onto the plates of Mormon. We do not know the precise mechanics involved in how these texts were transcribed. For instance, when quoted during discourses, did a scribe record what the speaker said? Did the speaker actually have the plates of brass physically in front of him, or did he at times rely on memory during his discourse? Did someone visually copy the plates of brass text into the small plates of Nephi or large plates of Nephi, as applicable? Was the text translated again from the language of the plates of brass into some other language? No matter how it was done, whenever you copy a text, you create the potential for textual variation.

At the conclusion of his excellent article on the Book of Mormon text of the Isaiah passages, Royal Skousen indicates that trying to recover the English text is a "complex" matter.[60] Trying to recover the

59. Andrew C. Skinner, "Nephi's Lessons to His People: The Messiah, the Land, and Isaiah 48–49 in 1 Nephi 19–22," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon,* 95–97.

60. Royal Skousen, "Textual Variants in the Isaiah Quotations in the Book of Mormon," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon,* 389.

ancient text of Isaiah is at least as complicated a process and perhaps more so given the different languages and greater antiquity involved. Yet, vis-à-vis the Book of Mormon and JST variants, Parry's book does not take that fundamental complexity fully into account.

In contrast with Parry's methodology in this volume is what John Tvedtnes has done in his lengthy, unpublished study of the Book of Mormon Isaiah variants.[61] Tvedtnes studied each variant in light of the available evidence (including the ancient versions) and ultimately grouped them into the following categories:

- superiority of the Book of Mormon over the KJV as a translation from MT Hebrew
- version support for the Book of Mormon
- evidence of scribal error in ancient times, with evidence favoring the Book of Mormon
- evidence indicating that the Book of Mormon is from a more ancient text than MT
- singular-plural distinctions
- the Book of Mormon and KJV as equally valid translations from MT Hebrew
- the Book of Mormon disagreement with KJV/MT in instances where at least some versions also disagree, without supporting the Book of Mormon or KJV
- items found elsewhere
- deletion of KJV italicized words in the Book of Mormon
- change of KJV italicized words in the Book of Mormon
- Book of Mormon variations from KJV with no explanation
- uncorrected Book of Mormon errors
- Book of Mormon errors subsequently corrected
- attempts at updating the KJV language in the Book of Mormon

61. John A. Tvedtnes, "Isaiah Textual Variants in the Book of Mormon" (FARMS, 1981). Selected examples from this study were published in an abbreviated format as John A. Tvedtnes, "Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," in *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament,* ed. Monte S. Nyman (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984), 165–77.

- changes in post-1830 editions of the Book of Mormon
- internal variations in the Book of Mormon quotations of Isaiah
- paraphrases of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon

In my view, Tvedtnes's approach to the evidence is appropriately eclectic.

David Wright has written a vigorous critique of the Isaiah variants in the Book of Mormon, concluding that the variants have nothing to do with antiquity and therefore support his view that the Book of Mormon is not an ancient work.[62] Wright addresses common Latter-day Saint misconceptions, responds to Tvedtnes's study, and offers a kind of tract designed to cause its readers to lose faith in the Book of Mormon. His article is both lengthy and highly technical, and a complete response to it is beyond the scope of this review. Nevertheless, since its subject matter does relate to that of Parry's book, I will offer a few brief comments on it here.[63]

I agree with certain of Wright's broad conclusions—namely, that the KJV of Isaiah forms the base text for the Book of Mormon Isaiah passages,[64] that translation errors occur in the KJV of Isaiah, and, *pace* Skousen, that Joseph Smith probably understood the significance of KJV italics.[65] I also agree with many of his minor observations. For instance, I would agree with Wright that the Septuagint does not support the Book of Mormon variant at Isaiah 48:14. Nevertheless, overall I do not view the evidence the same way Wright does. This fundamental difference in our perceptions is largely a function of the differing assumptions we bring to the task.

62. For information about Wright's critique, see note 19 above.

63. In my view Tvedtnes's study is quite important but has languished unpublished (except in part), largely unread and underappreciated. I believe a vigorous critique such as Wright's was just what the doctor ordered to enable Tvedtnes to go back and revise, improve, and hone his study (it is to be hoped) for full publication. For this, I think Wright is deserving of our thanks.

64. Skousen, "Textual Variants in the Isaiah Quotations," 373–77, gives a demonstration of this point.

65. Italics in the KJV were not used for emphasis. Rather, they were used to designate words that are not literally present in the underlying language text but must be added for English sense.

If completely naturalistic assumptions are applied, then the Book of Mormon simply cannot be an authentic ancient text. Even if God did not exist, Lehi could have lived, his family could have crossed the ocean, his descendants could have had a long history in the New World, they could have created a record on gold plates, and the young Joseph Smith could have stumbled upon this ancient record and dug it out of the ground. However, naturalistic assumptions cannot account for Joseph's translation of the record unless one believes he intellectually deciphered the unknown script on the plates (and I know of no one, believer or not, who would accept that). Therefore, the Book of Mormon can only be authentically ancient if God does indeed exist and intervenes in the affairs of men, thus making it possible that Joseph Smith really did translate the record by the gift and power of God, as he claimed.

Since Wright's assumptions are purely naturalistic, it necessarily follows that for him the Book of Mormon simply *cannot* be authentically ancient. If I shared those assumptions, I think I would aver with Sterling McMurrin: "you don't get books from angels and translate them by miracles; it is just that simple,"[66] and be done with it. For Wright personally, the exercise of writing his article must have been superfluous, unless he retained unresolved doubts about his naturalistic position.

Since I believe in God and have received a spiritual witness of the Book of Mormon pursuant to the process described in Moroni 10:3–5, I, of course, see possibilities where Wright sees none. I reread both Tvedtnes's and Wright's studies together in connection with writing this review. As I did so, I once again marveled at the Prophet's amazing sensitivity to the text. Although I could cite many examples of how my way of seeing differs from Wright's, in the interest of space I will share only two:

Isaiah 9:3 KJV reads in part: "Thou hast multiplied *the nation* [הַגּוֹי *haggoy*], and *not* [לֹא *lo*ʾ] increased the joy." Second Nephi 19:3 omits the negative "not." Tvedtnes notes as follows:

66. Blake Ostler, "An Interview with Sterling McMurrin," *Dialogue* 17/1 (1984): 25.

> Jewish scholars of the MT sometimes realized that a mistake was present in the biblical text. But since it was forbidden to alter the sacred scripture, they left the error as a *Ketib* ("that which is written"), while adding a footnoted *Qere* ("that which is read") to be vocalized in reading the text. In this passage, the *Ketib* of MT has the negative particle, while the *Qere* deletes it, as do twenty Hebrew manuscripts, all of which substitute the word *lw* (for *l',* which is pronounced the same), "for him." Compare the same expression in Job 12:23 and Isaiah 26:15, both of which are like BM [the Book of Mormon].[67]

The *Qere* reading can be seen in Gileadi's translation, which agrees with it:

> Thou has enlarged the nation
> and increased *its* joy.

In his response, Wright grudgingly acknowledges that the negative was indeed perceived to be problematic in antiquity, but he opines that Joseph could have figured this out on his own. He further observes that the Book of Mormon did not manifest the solution of the traditional Hebrew reading by replacing the negative with the preposition and pronoun "for him/it." While this is true, I would argue a very good reason exists for this. The traditional Hebrew reading was an attempt to correct the mistaken MT, but it too was a mistake. The correct text can be discerned by paying attention to the parallelism of the couplet. It seems reasonably clear that the words *haggoy lo'* "the nation not" represent a corruption of הַגִּילָה *haggilah* "the rejoicing,"[68] which then properly parallels "the joy." As correctly rendered by Parry,[69] the lines should read:

67. Tvedtnes, "Isaiah Variants," 171–72.

68. K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1990), 688 at apparatus note 2a; Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39,* 246.

69. This passage would be another example in which I would follow Parry over Gileadi.

> You have increased the rejoicing,
> you have magnified the joy;

Therefore, neither the *Ketib* nor the *Qere* reading is correct; the text had been corrupted prior to the time the *Qere* reading arose as a response to the *Ketib*. Wright mentions this proposed emendation of the text and complains that the Book of Mormon retains a corrupt text by keeping the word *nation*. So, to summarize, the Book of Mormon successfully deletes the negative, rightly avoids the traditional Hebrew reading, but fails to replace "nation" with "rejoicing." Here I believe Wright displays unrealistically rigid assumptions about the supposed perfection of the Book of Mormon text. As we have suggested, the Book of Mormon does not represent a perfect textual restoration. The Book of Mormon and JST variants often reflect a fundamental conservatism, making only the least change possible to achieve the desired effect. By far the most substantive problem with the KJV is the presence of the negative; by using a scalpel (rather than a bludgeon) and excising that one word, the Book of Mormon achieves a substantial correction of the KJV's blatantly erroneous reading. Since the KJV is followed as the base text, it necessarily follows that this correction interacts with and is expressed in terms of the extant KJV English. This basic fact does not prevent the Book of Mormon reading from being, in this case, in effect either a partial textual restoration or an improved translation. That which Wright sees as counting against Joseph, I see as buttressing Tvedtnes's original point. Where Wright sees a miss, I see a rather amazing hit.

The second example I will mention occurs at Isaiah 10:29, which reads in part in the KJV as follows: "*Ramah* is afraid; Gibeah of Saul is fled." Second Nephi 20:29 replaces "Ramah" with "Ramath." Tvedtnes observes that Ramath "would be the more ancient form of the name, with the old feminine -*ath* suffix which, in later (usually even biblical) Hebrew disappeared in the pausal form of the noun,"[70] being replaced by the later feminine ending -*ah*. As an example, Tvedtnes notes that

70. Tvedtnes, "Isaiah Variants," 172.

the preceding verse (Isaiah 10:28) has Aiath, with the *-t* feminine ending (represented in the KJV by *-ath*). Tvedtnes points out that this was written with an *-h* ending as Aiah in 1QIsa[a], with the *-t* being added above the line, apparently as an afterthought. I have seen this same phenomenon Tvedtnes describes, particularly in place names, which tended to preserve the archaic *-t* longer than other words.[71]

Wright has three objections to the Book of Mormon variant here. First, he notes that the *Book of Mormon Critical Text*[72] observes that the Peshitta has *rameta* and the Targum *ramata,* forms that show a *-t* ending for the place name. Wright rejects this support, because these versions generally have a form ending in *-t* where the MT has Ramah. Wright therefore concludes that this is simply the way those versions render the underlying text. While Wright is correct, in my view these readings should not be understood apart from Tvedtnes's point. To me the Syriac and Aramaic *-t* forms are significant because they show what the name would have been like without the linguistic evolution of the feminine ending experienced by Hebrew. Consider a different example, in Joshua 19:12: Here we read of a Levitical city named Daberath at the foot of Mt. Tabor within the tribe of Issachar. In Joshua 21:28, however, the name of this same city is given in its later Hebrew form, "Daboreh." The Aramaic (*dabbarta*) and Syriac (*deboritha*) forms of this name attest to the fact that without the shift to *-h* endings, the Hebrew name of the town would have continued with its *-t* ending as Daberath. Unlike the case of Daberath, we do not have an attestation of the early unbound (i.e., lexical) form Ramath in the Old Testament, but the general linguistic evolution of Hebrew coupled with the specific support of the Aramaic and Syriac cognates render it highly probable that the more ancient name of the city was "Ramath" as the Book of Mormon has it. Wright concedes this, calling it a "linguistic fact," but I do believe that the Aramaic and Syriac

71. Note that some Hebrew feminines still retain a *-t* ending in their unbound singular forms, such as אָחוֹת *ʾachot* [sister] and בְּרִית *berit* [covenant].

72. *Book of Mormon Critical Text: A Tool for Scholarly Reference* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1986).

forms provide a useful illustration for those who are not students of Hebrew.

Wright's second objection is that the construct form of Ramah is sometimes transliterated in the KJV as "Ramath," and Joseph Smith could have picked up that spelling from one of these other passages. Wright's observation is correct; "Ramath" does occur in the KJV, and Joseph could have picked up this spelling from one of those passages. But, while this is certainly possible, is it likely? In order to have a basis for judgment, the following table sets forth all the forms of Ramah in the KJV Old Testament[73] of which I am aware:

Ramah Forms in the Old Testament

KJV Spelling	Grammatical Form	Number of Occurrences or Citation
Ramah	Unbound feminine singular noun	36
Ramath-mizpeh	Singular construct[74]	Joshua 13:26
Ramath of the south	Singular construct	Joshua 19:18
Ramath-lehi	Singular construct	Judges 15:17
Ramathite	Gentilic[75]	1 Chronicles 27:27
Ramoth	Plural	8

73. The word appears once in a New Testament quotation as "Rama," in Matthew 2:18.

74. In any expression *X of Y,* the noun *X* is in the construct state. The construct noun and the absolute noun (the *Y*) following it reflect a genitival relationship and have the nuances of meaning associated with the preposition "of."

75. A gentilic is a form of an adjective designating a country or place or its inhabitants, as in "Israeli."

Ramoth-gilead	Plural construct	19
Ramathaim-zophim	Dual[76]	1 Samuel 1:1
Remeth (= Ramoth?)	(Corrupted?) plural	Joshua 19:21

Ramah means "height" in Hebrew and was the name for several different cities. Note that its most basic spelling, Ramah, is also the most common, occurring more than all other forms combined. The plural, plural construct, gentilic, and dual forms all involve spelling changes that make them unlikely candidates as a source for the Book of Mormon Ramath. The singular construct Ramath-mizpeh is unlikely because of the compound hyphenated form used in the KJV transliteration. This leaves us with only two possibilities: (1) "Ramath of the south," and this only because the KJV translated the second part of the name rather than using the compound hyphenated form, and (2) "Ramath-lehi," and this only because of Wright's speculation as to whether Joseph might have noticed this one because of the possible connection between the *-lehi* element of the compound and the Book of Mormon's "Lehi."

While Wright's argument is possible, it strikes me as unlikely. The putative sources for the spelling change occur in Joshua and Judges, far removed from Isaiah. Would Joseph have even taken notice of these other spellings? He had not yet studied Hebrew, so he would have had no way of knowing that "Ramath" was a related form to the more common "Ramah." If Joseph were influenced by Ramath-lehi, why did he not reproduce the full hyphenated form? Also, what is the motive for Joseph to make the change from Ramah to Ramath? I frankly cannot see one. Further, as Wright himself notes, the Book of

76. Dual is a number of a noun (the others being singular or plural), usually used to indicate things that appear in pairs, such as parts of the body.

Mormon does use the form Ramah at Ether 15:11,[77] so it is difficult to see that Joseph could have had a general objection to that spelling.

Wright's third objection is that this could be a dictation or copying error. Yes, that is possible, but no evidence exists to support that claim. This verse is not on the extant portion of the original manuscript. Ramah and Ramath are not homophones; the pronunciation of the *-ath* ending would have been distinctive from the *-ah* ending. In the printer's manuscript, Skousen's sigla indicate that the *h* in Ramath is only partially legible, but the *t* is completely legible.[78]

Wright maintains that the evidence is not conclusive. I would agree; I never thought that it was. I am nevertheless very impressed by what appears to me to be another hit by the Prophet. Wright has to have his escape hatch, and I will grant it to him; no one is compelled to see this variant as the restoration of the ancient form of the name Ramah. Nevertheless, that is the way I see it, and I think the Book of Mormon's change from Ramah to Ramath is truly remarkable.

Let us now return to Parry's book. The practice of incorporating the Book of Mormon and JST variants directly into the text raises a number of other methodological concerns, such as the following:

1. *Which variants were not included?* According to the introduction (p. 31), Parry includes "significant" or "major" Book of Mormon Isaiah readings that are at variance with the KJV. It is unclear where the dividing line is between variants that are significant and those that are not. If it is significant to add the word *yea* in Isaiah 13:15 (p. 77), what then is left as insignificant? Since Parry is presenting all sixty-six chapters of Isaiah, given his premise I would have thought he would have included absolutely all the variants. As it is, no good way exists for interested students to know what he included versus what he excluded. The selection of the variants for inclusion appears to have been subjective and not based on a consistently applied methodology.

77. Royal Skousen, ed., *The Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Extant Text* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2001), 552.

78. Royal Skousen, ed., *The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Entire Text in Two Parts* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2001), 1:203.

For example, the Ramah/Ramath variant we described above is not mentioned in Parry's text; he follows MT Ramah (p. 71). Other overlooked or omitted variants I noted were stay/staff from Isaiah 3:1, an insertion of "and" into Isaiah 3:9, and the deletion of "one" from Isaiah 14:32. The failure to include the "and" in Isaiah 3:9 is especially surprising, given that the Book of Mormon variant is attested by 1QIsa[a]. Readers have no way of knowing whether these were simply missed or were intentional omissions, and if the latter, why they were omitted.

An added layer of complexity to Parry's task is that the English texts of the Book of Mormon and JST have had a history of their own. Parry has used the best available tools for deriving the text of the Book of Mormon and JST,[79] but he gives readers no information concerning the choices he has made with respect to the English text. For instance, Parry used Skousen's work on the original manuscript (O) and the printer's manuscript (P), and the 1830 and 1981 editions as the sources for his Book of Mormon readings, but these readings are all presented simply by their Book of Mormon citation without a delineation of their source. So in Isaiah 2:9 Parry renders

> And mankind has [not] been humbled
> and man has [not] been brought down; do not forgive them.

The first "not" did not appear in P or the 1830 edition (O is not extant for this text) but was added by Joseph Smith to the 1837 edition; of course, it also appears in the 1981 edition. In this case I agree with Parry's choice, but I wonder whether other such cases might exist where I would not agree. Readers are not given the information necessary to evaluate the choice made. For most purposes, Parry's presentation of the Book of Mormon text would have been entirely adequate. When used as part of a rigorous text critical exercise, how-

79. Including in particular Skousen, *The Original Manuscript* and *The Printer's Manuscript,* and a prepublication copy of Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *The Joseph Smith Translation: Original Documents* (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, forthcoming).

ever, I would have preferred more specific notes as to the derivation of the Book of Mormon or JST readings, at least in cases where any doubt exists concerning whether that reading should be followed as part of the English text.[80]

2. *Why is variant text assumed to be original, but nonvariant text is not?* Parry's premise is that the Book of Mormon and JST represent the most ancient and most valuable text of Isaiah. Therefore, the variants from KJV in these works are considered sacrosanct and allowed to override all other considerations. If this is true, however, why is the nonvariant text subject to correction by MT and 1QIsa[a]? Given his premise, it would seem as though it should not be. I personally think it is fine for him to override the KJV text in that case, but then I do not share his premise.

To illustrate this point, consider Isaiah 4:2, which Parry renders

> In that day the branch of the LORD will be for beauty and glory,
> and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and honor
> for them that are escaped of Israel [and Judah].

The evidence for the last words of the verse lines up as follows: "escaped of Israel" (both MT and Book of Mormon) and "escaped of Israel and Judah" (1QIsa[a]). Parry has no problem overriding the Book of Mormon reading when it does *not* vary from MT. If the Book of Mormon reading *does* vary from MT, however, he follows the Book of Mormon (or JST) reading in virtually every instance. This is a curious methodology that requires explanation.[81]

80. I acknowledge that my own work on the JST suffered from this same defect. When the critical text of Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews becomes available (to match Skousen's work on the Book of Mormon), citing the variants more precisely will be easier.

81. In this example, if the Book of Mormon is the earliest text and MT the latest, Parry has to account for the loss of "and Judah" from the Book of Mormon, its recovery in 1QIsa[a], and its subsequent loss again in MT. Perhaps 1QIsa[a] reflects a different textual tradition from the Book of Mormon/MT; in that case, why would Parry assume it to be primary and the Book of Mormon secondary?

3. *What principles govern when the Book of Mormon and JST diverge?* As Skousen has demonstrated,[82] the JST for the Isaiah passages where Book of Mormon parallels exist generally follows the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon. Occasionally, however, the JST diverges from the Book of Mormon reading. What principle Parry follows in such cases is unclear.

For example, at Isaiah 2:21b, Parry renders

> for fear of the LORD [will come upon them],
> and the [majesty of the Lord][will smite them] when he arises to shake terribly the earth.

The second bracketed variant in these lines, "majesty of the Lord," derives from the JST. The MT reads "glory of his majesty" and the Book of Mormon reads "majesty of his glory." On what basis did Parry select the JST over the Book of Mormon? If one were intent on choosing either the JST or the Book of Mormon, one could make an argument for the priority of the Book of Mormon text, because the MT could then be accounted for by simple transposition, making the JST an explanatory gloss. Perhaps Parry was influenced by the fact that 2 Nephi 12:10 and 19 both retain KJV "glory of his majesty," suggesting that the Book of Mormon variant might have reflected an English scribal error or, possibly, an ancient scribal error. Or perhaps Parry took the view that the JST variant should control as being the later in time. We simply are not told.

4. *Because of the composite nature of the presentation, we do not have a complete copy of Parry's treatment of MT v. 1QIsa^{a}.* The Book of Mormon and JST variants from KJV Isaiah are readily accessible to Latter-day Saint students of scripture. By building those variants into the text, we are excluded from seeing how Parry would have handled any variants between MT and 1QIsa^{a} that happen to be in the same position as one of the Book of Mormon or JST variants. We are also excluded from seeing Parry's own translation of those portions of the Hebrew text.

82. Skousen, "Textual Variants in the Isaiah Quotations," 387–88.

5. *The presentation does not adequately distinguish between hard textual variants and alternate translations.* The style of the textual notes is very similar to those used in the *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*;[83] Parry may have used that as a model. Every footnote in the *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* gives a hard textual variant—that is, a variant that actually exists in one of the scrolls or some other ancient manuscript. Similarly, in this volume, every endnote and every instance of bracketed text from 1QIsa[a] represents a hard textual variant from that source. These circumstances contribute to the impression readers get that the Book of Mormon and JST variants are also being given as hard textual variants that existed in an ancient manuscript source at one time.[84]

I have already argued against that position as being correct across the board; here I would like to highlight one of the different possibilities I have previously mentioned, if only because it seems to be so rarely considered by the Saints: that some of these variants may be alternate *translations* of the same Hebrew text underlying MT.

Most people approach this issue with an overly narrow view of what a translation can be.[85] For them, translation can only be very literal, *verbum pro verbo,* word for word. But translations can also be freer, *sensus de sensu,* meaning for meaning. The word *targum* is Aramaic for "translation," but such translations tend to be free. As Parry mentions, the Septuagint rendering of Isaiah has been characterized as having a relatively free approach to the *Vorlage* (original Hebrew text from which the LXX of Isaiah was created). In particular,

83. Ulrich, *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible.*

84. Parry assumes that all the Book of Mormon and JST variants were Hebrew variations that actually existed in an ancient manuscript. But that is not necessarily the case. I am suggesting that many of the English Book of Mormon variants may simply be alternative *translations* of the *same* Hebrew word that existed in MT (without an ancient variant). As such, the Book of Mormon in that case would not be represented by a different ancient manuscript.

85. As a corrective to this restrictive view, I would recommend Hugh Nibley's chapter "Translated Correctly?" in his book *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975), 47–55, in which he expands on the definition of Wilamowitz: "A translation is a statement in the translator's own words of what he thinks the author had in mind" (pp. 47–48).

Arie Van der Kooij has noted the following tendencies in such a free translation: "the aim of writing good Koine Greek [for the Book of Mormon we could substitute good English], both with respect to syntax and to idiom; inconsistency, or variety, of lexical choices; different word order as well; grammatical and contextual changes, such as harmonizations; [and] that of adding or subtracting words or phrases."[86] If the Septuagint of Isaiah is a translation, and it is, then perhaps we should consider a broader view of the possibility of translation in the Book of Mormon and JST.

Many of the variants Parry includes in brackets in his text from the Book of Mormon and JST appear to me to represent alternate translations rather than hard textual variants. For instance, Isaiah 3:7 reads in part "for in my house [there] is neither bread nor clothing." Note 33 tells us that the bracketed word *there* is present in the JST, in 2 Nephi 13:7, and in 1QIsa[a], but not in MT. First of all, this note is in error; based on Parry's own edition of 1QIsa[a], I see no distinction in text between 1QIsa[a] and MT.[87] Second, it is not even clear to me what Hebrew word could be posited that would result in the addition of "there." This is purely a matter of English translation. The Hebrew (both MT and 1QIsa[a]) has אֵין *ʾen,* which is a negation of existence, usually translated something like "there is not." KJV renders "for in my house is neither bread nor clothing," which is acceptable; the Book of Mormon and JST simply have an alternate rendering including the word *there,* which is also acceptable.

The very next Book of Mormon/JST variant appears at Isaiah 3:8: "because their tongues and their deeds [have been] against the

86. Arie Van der Kooij, "The Old Greek of Isaiah in Relation to the Qumran Texts of Isaiah: Some General Comments," in *Septuagint, Scrolls and Cognate Writings: Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and Its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings (Manchester, 1990),* ed. George J. Brooke and Barnabas Lindars (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 203.

87. The *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible,* 275, which follows 1QIsa[a] as its base text, renders "In my house *there* is neither food nor clothing." It appears that someone assumed from this that 1QIsa[a] reflects the word *there* in Hebrew, while MT does not. This assumption is incorrect. I suspect a research assistant must have done this, for Parry would surely have understood that 1QIsa[a] was not at variance with MT here.

LORD," where the Book of Mormon/JST read "have been" and the KJV reads "are." The Hebrew text does not have any verb here at all; does Parry mean to suggest that a verb dropped out? The Book of Mormon strikes me as more likely being a (properly) interpretive rendering of the MT. The English perfect "have been" stresses events that began in the past and continue to the present. The leaders of Jerusalem and Judah did not just all of a sudden turn from the Lord; their present course was a continuation of past actions. As I peruse Parry's book, it appears to me that there are many examples like these that would be better understood as alternate translations rather than hard textual variants.

Conclusion

I believe that a new translation of Isaiah incorporating readings from the Great Isaiah Scroll geared to the needs of Latter-day Saint students is a good idea. This volume goes a long way toward providing that study aid. The translations from the Hebrew are well done. The formatting is, in my judgment, excellent. And Parry shows a good sense of discernment in deciding whether to follow MT or 1QIsa[a]. It is a pleasure to see such a fine scholar at work, especially for a Latter-day Saint audience.

Many Latter-day Saints likely share Parry's view that virtually all Book of Mormon and JST variants represent a pure restoration from Isaiah's original text as he penned it. They will therefore perhaps appreciate and make use of the interweaving of those variants into the MT/1QIsa[a] text. In fact, given his premises, I think Parry did a good job of folding the Book of Mormon/JST variants into his text; I suspect this was not easy to do.

As should be clear by now, I am among those faithful Saints who do not share Parry's assumptions about the Book of Mormon/JST variants. Since in my view those variants represent different things—including textual restorations but certainly not limited to textual restorations—for me, the decision to bring those variants directly into the text represents a fundamental methodological problem with this book.

Parry could have gone any number of other directions that would have ameliorated this problem. One possibility would have been to present the Book of Mormon/JST variants separately, either in parallel columns or in an apparatus of some kind. This would have made them available for close study by students while still allowing different variants to be understood in different ways, as the evidence might warrant in each particular case. That might have been messy, however, and I suspect that Parry wanted the unified, seamless presentation he was able to show off to good effect with his formatting.

If Parry really had his heart set on putting the variants into the text itself, he could have included a lengthy explanation of his methodology in the introduction. That way students might understand that the Book of Mormon/JST variants were being put forward for their value generally but not because they were necessarily to be seen as restorations of text (perhaps designating them with a different type of brackets or otherwise distinguishing them from the MT/1QIsa[a] variants). Another possibility would have been to forego a treatment of the variants in this study entirely and give them a separate treatment altogether, perhaps in a response to Wright.[88]

In any event, the decision to put the variants directly into the text has been made, and considering alternatives is too late now. In my view this aspect of the book is unfortunate.

Nevertheless, if the inclusion of the variants into the text causes Latter-day Saint students of scripture to look at the variants anew and to take the variants more seriously than they have in the past; if it leads them to further, more detailed study of the texts of Isaiah, the Book of Mormon and the JST; and if in the course of that study they should come to a more mature understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the result will have been a net gain.

88. I believe an eclectic can engage Wright's study, as I have done on a small scale here, but I have my doubts that one who makes simplistic assumptions about across-the-board textual restoration would be able to respond to it as effectively.