Brent Lee Metcalfe, ed., ***New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology.***

Reviewed by John A. Tvedtnes

Latter-day Saints have grown accustomed to seeing apostates and non-Mormons criticize the Book of Mormon in print. But recent years have seen the introduction of a new phenomenon: Latter-day Saints taking exception to the long-held view that the Book of Mormon is a translation of an authentic ancient record. I doubt neither the sincerity nor the scholastic abilities of these researchers, and I can only guess at their motivation in trying to dissuade those who hold different views. Unlike past non-Latter-day Saint criticisms, these unorthodox Latter-day Saint views are directed at a more scholarly audience. Such is the nature of the book edited by Mr. Metcalfe, whose contributors—some of them still members of the Latter-day Saint Church—have made their views known elsewhere.

Though erudite in nature and sometimes quite thorough, the book is a bit deceptive in nature. The title alone, *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*, seems designed to lure the believer into tasting the forbidden fruit, which has the appearance of truth but denies the fundamental need of Latter-day Saints to strengthen their faith.

Nevertheless, I enjoyed reading the views of those who would challenge my own beliefs.[1] I was particularly pleased to note that some of the authors have delved into the religious turmoil of the early nineteenth century to paint us a picture of Joseph Smith's time. Few scholars would doubt that the language of the Book of Mormon must reflect, to some extent, the time in which it was published. Because my own background is the ancient Near East, it is somewhat of an adventure to be exposed to the views expressed in the book. One of my biggest regrets is that, whether by intent or by happenstance, the editor and publisher failed to provide an index. In an era of electronic typesetting, there is no valid excuse for omitting an index.

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1 Four of the ten contributors cite my work.

Anthony A. Hutchinson
"The Word of God Is Enough:
The Book of Mormon as Nineteenth-Century Scripture"

Hutchinson believes that, while the Book of Mormon is not an authentic "historical record of the ancient peoples of the Americas," it is nonetheless "the word of God." He treats as naive any attempt to maintain the historicity of the book.[2]

Hutchinson's theory is one of several along a continuum that runs from the orthodox view of the Book of Mormon as a real translation of an authentic text through Blake Ostler's view of the book as a "modern expansion" of an ancient text[3] to the complete rejection of the book as either an historical account or a source of divine will. Hutchinson's ideas lie somewhere between the latter two.

The question is, I believe, whether the book recounts any historical fact dealing with real people. Researchers like Ostler and Hutchinson have rejected the orthodox view as to historicity—one partially, the other completely—but have not yet adopted the rejectionist view of the nonbeliever. With the introduction of these intermediate theories, the orthodox believer and the nonbeliever find themselves agreeing on at least one issue: if the Book of Mormon is not authentic history, it cannot be true. Hutchinson argues that this dualist reasoning—the book is true or not true—leads people who question the historicity or antiquity of the book to reject it out-of-hand. He recommends his intermediate view as the safest one.

Now, I can accept that a prophet, being human, can prevaricate as well as the rest of us. But unlike Hutchinson, I would not feel comfortable following the teachings of a liar. By Ostler's standard, Joseph Smith added nineteenth-century material to the ancient text, leaving only a core of ancient truth—with the rest being either true or false, depending on how one views Joseph Smith's motives and prophetic calling. But acceptance of Hutchinson's view that the Book of Mormon came directly from God, albeit through a modern prophet alone, makes *God* the liar if the stories reported in the book are false. Pardon my naivete,

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2 See the review by Louis Midgley, in this volume, pages 200–254.

3 Blake T. Ostler, "The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 20 (Spring 1987): 66–124. Hutchinson and I agree that Ostler's halfway position is untenable. The Book of Mormon is either a translation of an ancient record or it isn't.

but I always thought that God could not lie (Numbers 23:19; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18; Enos 1:6; Ether 3:12). Furthermore, if the Book of Mormon's historical account is a mere fabrication, whether divinely inspired or not, why did Joseph Smith declare that it was "the most *correct* book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and that a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than any other book"?[4]

Hutchinson's criticism of John Sorenson's work on Book of Mormon geography is a gross oversimplification and the "problems" he claims to identify are mostly nonexistent. For example, he criticizes Sorenson's comment that the cows, asses, and swine of the Book of Mormon might be Mesoamerican animals such as deer, tapirs, and peccaries. "When is a cow not a cow?" he asks. I respond, "When it's a deer!" There are, in fact, many linguistic parallels to the kind of thing Sorenson discusses, wherein people have applied the names of known animals to newly discovered or newly introduced creatures. Thus, the Greeks named the huge beast encountered in the Nile River, hippopotamus, "river horse." The same kind of thing happens with both fauna and flora. For example, the term used for potatoes in a number of the languages of Europe (where the tuber is not indigenous) is "earth apple." When the Spanish introduced horses into the New World, some Amerindian tribes called them "deer." I agree with Hutchinson, however, that dogs are an unlikely explanation for the "flocks" of the Book of Mormon. The term more likely refers to herd animals meeting the requirements for cleanliness in the law of Moses.

I agree with Hutchinson in his rejection of the concept of "rotated" Nephite compass points.[5] But I believe that the difficulty may have been solved by Joseph Allen's observation that directional terms with the suffix "-ward" denote a general orientation only, while terms such as "north" without the suffix denote true compass direction. Further, I reject Hutchinson's contention that "the plain meaning" of the Book of Mormon's geography is "hemispheric" and was so understood by "early Mormons." Most Book of Mormon stories make no sense

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4 *HC* 4:461, emphasis added.

5 See my review of David A. Palmer, *In Search of Cumorah: New Evidences for the Book of Mormon from Ancient Mexico*, in *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, No. 149 (June 1982).

under such a view. In two of his books,[6] Sorenson has shown that Latter-day Saints have not always had a "hemispheric" view of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith himself hinted at a more localized geography for Book of Mormon events, as Sorenson and others have shown.[7]

To support his theory that the Book of Mormon is a thoroughly nineteenth-century production, Hutchinson gives a few linguistic examples that he believes prove that changes made in the Book of Mormon to passages shared with the Bible are based on the English and not on an underlying Hebrew (or Greek) meaning (p. 13–14). In one example, he notes that Sidney Sperry and I have contended that the quote from Isaiah 9:3 in 2 Nephi 19:3 " 'restores' an ancient form from the biblical text." I, in fact, merely showed that most ancient texts disagreed with the Masoretic text from which the King James Bible was translated at the same place where the Book of Mormon (and, presumably, the brass plates of Laban) disagreed with it, but I made it clear that these other texts also disagreed with the Book of Mormon rendering. Variant forms in texts are a common phenomenon.

In another example, Hutchinson notes that the Greek word rendered "filled" in Matthew 5:6 means "satisfied," in reference to one who has consumed food and drink. Consequently, he contends, the addition of the words "with the Holy Ghost" in 3 Nephi 12:6 is unjustified because "Smith's reflection here is based entirely on the English tradition of the KJV and has nothing to do with, indeed cannot even occur in, the original Greek of the New Testament." Since Jesus would have uttered these words to the Jews in Aramaic and to the Nephites in modified Hebrew, the Greek becomes almost irrelevant, except as the New Testament translation of his words. But more important is the fact, noted by Mark Thomas's article in the same volume, that there is a tie between the sacramental emblems of bread and wine—which are consumed—and receiving the Holy Ghost (pp. 68–69).

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6 John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1985) and *The Geography of Book of Mormon Events: A Source Book* (Provo: F.A.R.M.S., 1992).

7 See, for example, Joseph L. Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon* (Orem: AS Publishers, 1989).

Dan Vogel
"Anti-Universalist Rhetoric in the Book of Mormon"

In his fascinating study, Vogel argues that even believers in the Book of Mormon as an ancient document can accept the fact that the book addresses nineteenth-century issues.[8] He amasses an impressive volume of anti-Universalist rhetoric from the few decades before the publication of the Book of Mormon and compares it with arguments leveled against the beliefs of Nephite dissidents in the Book of Mormon.[9] The comparison, while informative, makes me wonder if Vogel wants us to believe that Joseph Smith, age twenty-four (when he produced the Book of Mormon), had read all of the books and articles to which he (Vogel) can refer only after considerable library research.

As I read Vogel's comparisons, my mind drifted back to an earlier day, when I read D. Michael Quinn's book, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*. While I had no reason to doubt that Joseph Smith and many of his contemporaries were familiar with the magical beliefs and practices of the day, Quinn's comparison of some of Joseph Smith's writings with ideas published in magical texts to which the Smith family almost certainly had no access (especially those long since out-of-print) made me feel that the author had gone too far afield. In both cases, one wonders if Joseph Smith could have known all the facts that the authors could elicit only after intensive research. How large was the Smith Farm Library, anyway?!

At least in Vogel's case, most of the publications were contemporaneous or nearly contemporaneous with Joseph Smith, though one of them appeared exactly a century before Joseph completed the Book of Mormon. But this, coupled with Vogel's evidence that several early Latter-day Saint writers used Book of Mormon passages in their own anti-Universalist rhetoric, brings another question to my mind: If the Book of Mormon was so blatantly founded in nineteenth-century issues, how could any of Joseph Smith's early converts have accepted it as an ancient record? Surely there is more to the story than Vogel presents.

My personal opinion—which, I admit, is strictly intuitive—is that universalist ideas have always existed. That is, there have

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8 The Book of Mormon often declares that it was being prepared for a latter-day audience. Vogel notes that one of the book's objectives is "to put down false doctrine in the latter days" (2 Nephi 3:12).

9 See the review by Martin S. Tanner, in this volume, pp. 420–35.

always been those who have held beliefs like those of such Book of Mormon characters as Nehor, Korihor, and Corianton. In mid-1993, a Latter-day Saint friend told me that he had concluded that, because God loves us all, he surely must have provided a way for even the most wicked to progress after the resurrection and move into the celestial kingdom, there to become exalted beside God. I countered with the arguments I knew Alma had used against Corianton, adding a few passages from the Doctrine and Covenants. Within moments, I felt that I was reenacting that centuries-old conversation between the Nephite father and his son. Yet this was before I read Vogel's article and before I had even heard of Universalism as a nineteenth-century religious movement!

Vogel, like other critics of the Book of Mormon,[10] falls into the trap of concentrating so much on his thesis that he makes inaccurate assessments of facts about the Book of Mormon. Thus, he states matter-of-factly that Alma's words to Corianton were in the form of a letter, despite the fact that Alma 35:16 expressly states that "he caused that his sons should be gathered together, that he might give unto them every one his charge separately." Vogel's assumption that Corianton went to the harlot Isabel because of his "Universalist" beliefs is pure speculation, with no support from the Book of Mormon text. Vogel had already concluded (p. 37 n. 14) that Isabel should be compared with the Jezebel of Revelation 2:20 rather than with the Jezebel of 1 Kings as Dan Peterson had done. Vogel's "more striking" parallel is possible only because of his assumption about Corianton's religious beliefs—a circular argument indeed. These may be minor points, but they are part of the normal pattern of Book of Mormon critics, who typically fail to get all of the internal facts straight before they start tearing down the structure of the book.

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10 Though he tries to give the appearance of objectivity (a tone that seems deliberate throughout the book), Vogel is, nonetheless, clearly critical of the Book of Mormon.

Mark D. Thomas
"A Rhetorical Approach to the Book of Mormon: Rediscovering Nephite Sacramental Language"

I was very disappointed with Thomas's work.[11] My initial disappointment lay in the fact that he summarily dismisses the developmental nature of the Book of Mormon sacramental prayers,[12] which provides evidence for an evolution over time—something unlikely to have happened in Joseph Smith's mind during the short period in which he dictated the book.

I was further disappointed by Thomas's approach to comparing the Latter-day Saint sacramental prayers, found in Moroni 4–5, with Protestant eucharistic liturgy and teachings current in Joseph Smith's day. The reason for my disappointment is that he glosses over the fact that the Protestant verbiage and debates were based on the New Testament accounts of the last supper. For example, New Testament accounts of the last supper declare that the sacramental emblems were to be taken "in remembrance" of the body and blood of Christ.[13] The blessing is also mentioned in reference to the bread broken by Christ (Matthew 26:26; Mark 14:22; cf. Luke 24:30). Though the Greek text does not say that he blessed the bread, neither does it specifically say that he broke the bread or distributed it, only that he "broke" and "gave." The importance of keeping the commandments, stressed in the sacramental prayer on the bread, was noted by Christ (John 14:15) on the night when, according to the synoptic gospels, he blessed the bread and wine. Thomas at least recognizes that the covenant nature of the sacrament "dates to the institution narratives themselves, [where] the cup is the 'cup of the new testament' (Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25)." The only real piece of evidence that the wording of the sacramental prayers may be related to Protestant beliefs concerning the eucharist is the use of the words "to bless and sanctify" in the 1790 Episcopal epiclesis, which Thomas cites.

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11 See the review by Richard Lloyd Anderson, in this volume, pages 379–419.

12 This development was discussed by John W. Welch in "The Nephite Sacramental Prayers: From King Benjamin's Speech to Moroni 4–5," F.A.R.M.S. preliminary report, 1986.

13 Luke 22:19 (to which JST rewords Matthew 26:22, 24; Mark 14:21, 23); 1 Corinthians 11:24–25.

Thomas indicates that the concept of taking upon oneself the name of Christ in the sacrament is a nineteenth-century idea. However, anthropologists would argue that the concept of acquiring the qualities of a deceased person by cannibalism is common to many cultures. In the case of the sacrament, the believer consumes emblems only, rather than the actual flesh and blood of Christ. Moreover, we should not overlook the fact that the Book of Mormon ties the sacrament to baptism, in which we clearly take upon ourselves the name of Christ (Acts 2:38; 8:12; Romans 6:3–8; Colossians 2:12–13; Galatians 3:27; 1 Corinthians 5:17). Alma's explanation of the meaning of baptism (Mosiah 18:9–10, 13) lists elements found in the sacramental prayers (Moroni 4–5). Viewed as a renewal of the baptismal covenant, the sacrament reflects the same principles in its prayers. Baptism, as the scriptures continually remind us, is for the remission of sins.

Thomas's suggestion that the Book of Mormon sacramental prayers were an amalgam of prayers of varying origins imputes to Joseph Smith awareness of a wide variety of different forms and arguments in favor of each. Was Joseph Smith really familiar with all of the theological arguments about the nature and purpose of the sacrament? Even if he was conversant with the various discussions noted by Thomas, are they really relevant, in view of the fact that the arguments themselves were based on what the New Testament says about the sacrament?

Thomas says that the "disputations which hath been among you [the Nephites] beforetime" (3 Nephi 18:34) can have meaning only to modern readers, since the sacrament was being established "for the first time" among the Nephites. He is wrong on two counts. Sacramental meals were common in ancient Israel, usually involving animal flesh rather than bread, although the bread and wine brought by the priest Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18) may have had sacramental significance. More important is the fact that Jesus was not referring to the disputations over the sacrament, but to the dispute over whether nonbelievers should be admitted into meetings of the Nephite church (see 3 Nephi 18:22–23, 30–32). Two of the verses (3 Nephi 18:28–29) add the injunction not to give the sacrament to the unworthy, but they are merely part of the subject of allowing nonbelievers to attend church meetings.

Melodie Moench Charles
"Book of Mormon Christology"

This article offers a wealth of information on Book of Mormon beliefs in Christ.[14] Unfortunately, though the footnotes are impressive, there is little new material here. Like others before her, Charles notes the problem of Christ as Father and Son in such passages as Mosiah chapters 3 and 15 and Alma 34. She also notes the development of Latter-day Saint views concerning the Godhead, beginning with the Book of Mormon and culminating in the First Presidency's 1916 declaration on the nature of the Father and the Son.[15]

The concept of God throughout the scriptures—even leaving aside the Book of Mormon—is a very complex matter, with no easy answers. But I tend to agree with Charles that there were times in history when the people did not have a clear view of the Godhead as taught in the Latter-day Saint Church today. To the Nephites, it seems clear that the Father and the Son are generally considered to be one God, though in 3 Nephi the Father and the Son are clearly separated, when Christ prays to the Father and speaks of "the Father." I believe that this is because the full nature of the Godhead was not revealed until the coming of Christ. John 17:25 notes that the world didn't know the Father, while John 1:18 indicates that the Father has been made known only through the Son. It is quite likely, then, that the ancient Israelites knew of but one God and that the existence of both a Father and a Son was not known to the masses and perhaps not even to all of the prophets.

Charles uses the 1832 first vision account (in which Joseph Smith reports seeing "the Lord") as evidence that Joseph Smith saw only "one being," and notes that the 1838 version follows the Lectures on Faith. She fails to note that the first account in which Joseph Smith mentions two beings is the one given in November 1835 and published in 1971 by Backman,[16] which postdates the Lectures on Faith by months rather than years. But there is no real contradiction in any of these accounts. Presumably, the "Lord" mentioned by the Prophet in 1832 was

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14 See the review of Robert L. Millet, in this volume, pages 187–99.

15 James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1955), 465–73, n. 11.

16 Milton V. Backman, Jr., *Joseph Smith's First Vision* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971), Appendix B.

Christ, the one who gave him instructions and answered his question about which church was true. I have often told a story more than once, emphasizing different details each time and omitting others that did not fit my current theme or audience. Why critics continue to harp on what is really a nonissue continues to amaze me.

Charles agrees with Alma 39:17–19 that it would have been important for the Nephites to know details of the atonement of Christ, which would affect all mankind. But she questions the necessity of including such "nonessential details" as the name and dwelling-place of Jesus' mother, the location of John's baptizing, and beliefs about Jesus held by his contemporaries. She notes that all of these facts are known from the New Testament, but stops short of accusing Joseph Smith of borrowing the material from the Bible. Why, she asks, did the Book of Mormon not give us information about Christ that, while significant, was unavailable in the Gospels, such as what he did before age twelve and when and under what circumstances he received the priesthood. We have no answers to this question, any more than we can determine why the Gospel writers omitted these same things. We can only speculate on why the Book of Mormon gave what appear to be mundane facts about Christ before his birth. Perhaps they were included to make him more real to the Nephites, who would not have the opportunity to know the mortal Christ.

We can, however, say something about Charles's contention that specific details about Jesus were not known in the ancient Near East in Lehi's time and that what the people of that time expected "was quite different from what Jesus was." In view of a number of recently released Dead Sea Scrolls that speak of the divine Messiah who would suffer and die for the sins of mankind, we can no longer second-guess the ancient prophets. Some Jews clearly expected a Messiah like Jesus; were it otherwise, he might have gleaned no following at all. Charles's footnote 22, indicating that the Dead Sea Scrolls have no "detailed prophesies [*sic*] mentioning Jesus or matching his life or mission" (p. 93) is now known to be wrong. Some of the scrolls speak of the Messiah to come in terms very similar (sometimes identical) to the ones used by such Book of Mormon prophets as Benjamin, Abinadi, and Alma. I shall deal with this matter in a forthcoming article, "The Messiah, the Book of Mormon, and the Dead Sea Scrolls."

Charles compares the statement about the infinite atonement in Alma 34:9–14 to ideas expressed by Anselm and others that were a topic of discussion in Joseph Smith's day. But the idea of atonement by an infinite being is irrelevant since the concept is biblical, at least in the New Testament. See Hebrews 7:22–28, especially verse 27, where Christ makes a single offering for the sins of the people (see also Hebrews 9:11–16, 23–28).

Charles cites Forsberg (p. 98 n. 25), who variously identifies Book of Mormon christology as Trinitarianism, Arianism, or Sabellianism (she agreeing with the latter assessment). I have always been amazed at the need critics have to pigeonhole Latter-day Saint doctrines, especially when some of the terms used denote early Christian heretical groups. Was Joseph Smith really influenced by some third-century heresy?

The question of the identification of Jesus with Jehovah is much more complex than Charles indicates. A look at Old Testament passages quoted in the New Testament usually shows that the passages have Jehovah speaking about Jesus as his son. But other New Testament evidences, along with some clear statements by Jesus in the Book of Mormon, imply that Jesus is Jehovah. The 1916 declaration of the First Presidency notwithstanding, as late as June 1961, President David O. McKay spoke of "Jehovah and His Son, Jesus Christ."[17] This may have been a slip of the tongue on the part of President McKay, in which case it illustrates the problem of judging Latter-day Saint doctrine from printed reports of sermons given by leaders of the Church.

The use of the name Jehovah to denote the Father at times and the Son at other times should not be surprising when we consider the concept of divine investiture of authority, as explained in the First Presidency's 1916 explanation of the Godhead. Charles seems to reject the idea that Joseph Smith believed in this concept, which is that Christ can speak in first person for the Father. However, that the idea was known to the Prophet Joseph is clear from Moses 5:9, where the Holy Ghost declares, "I am the Only Begotten of the Father."

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17 *Church News*, 1 July 1961, 14.

David P. Wright
" 'In Plain Terms that We May Understand': Joseph Smith's Transformation of Hebrews in Alma 12–13"

Wright presents an insightful comparison of the parallels between Alma chapters 12–13 and the New Testament Epistle to the Hebrews.[18] He assumes that Joseph Smith was the author, not the translator, of the Book of Mormon, and that Joseph borrowed directly from the KJV of Hebrews for these chapters.

Wright contends that Alma 13:17–19 is a reworking of Hebrews 7:1–4, noting six elements shared by the two texts and appearing in the same order in both.[19] Of the six elements, the fifth seems weak, paralleling Melchizedek's being "without father, without mother, without descent" (Hebrews 7:3) with his having reigned "under his father" (Alma 13:18). The fourth element is only a partial parallel; while Hebrews 7:2 interprets both the name and the title of Melchizedek ("king of righteousness .□□king of peace"), Alma 13:18 speaks only of "the prince of peace," though it does add the story of Melchizedek's faith and his preaching to the people.[20]

But these are small points compared to the fact that Wright's list is incomplete. Alma actually begins with a description of the priesthood "after the order of the Son" (Alma 13:1–9), stating that Melchizedek "was also a high priest after this same order . . . who also took upon him the high priesthood forever" (Alma 13:14). The first part of Alma 13:14 has parallels with Hebrews 6:20, the verse immediately preceding the Hebrews 7:1–4 passage examined by Wright but not included in his list. The second part of Alma 13:14 parallels the statement in Hebrews 7:3 that Melchizedek "abideth a priest continually," also omitted from Wright's list, where it should appear after number 5, along with

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18 See the reviews by John Gee, Royal Skousen, and John W. Welch in this volume, pages 51–186.

19 To his list of six, Wright adds a seventh that is pure guesswork, saying that the words "there were many before him, and also there were many afterwards" (Alma 13:19) derive from the notion of no beginning of days or end of life in Hebrews 7:3. This is much too far-fetched.

20 Josephus noted that Melchizedek had been made a priest because of his righteousness, which was reflected in the meaning of his name (*Antiquities of the Jews* I, 10, 2). Wright does not tie this to Alma 13, despite the fact that Josephus's works could have been readily available to Joseph Smith. Of significance, however, is the fact that other documents discussed in this review were *not* available to him.

other items also omitted by Wright (Melchizedek "having neither beginning of days, nor end of life" and being "like unto the Son of God," which parallels Alma 13:1–14, noted earlier). Were we to add all these to the list, it would no longer be in order. Abraham's payment of tithes to Melchizedek is also mentioned early in Alma's discussion (Alma 13:15) and parallels Hebrews 7:2, which should be inserted after number 3 in Wright's list; this also destroys the order. As we can readily see, had Wright's list been complete, the unique order of his "six elements" would not exist.

But my rejection of Wright's ordered list does not address the fact that there are clear parallels between the material in Hebrew 7 and Alma 13—even more parallels than those enumerated by Wright. Latter-day Saints have long known of the parallels and have assumed that both texts were based on an earlier story available to the Nephites on the brass plates of Laban. This view is supported by Joseph Smith's additions to Genesis 14, but these can readily be seen by nonbelievers as an attempt to resolve what is otherwise a problem by inventing a nonexistent text that could be viewed as ancestral to both the New Testament and Book of Mormon accounts of Melchizedek.

There are, in fact, pre-Christian documents that see Melchizedek in ways not found in the normal Genesis 14 account though known to Hebrews 7 and Alma 13. One of these, which is given short shrift by Wright, is the Melchizedek text from Qumran (*11QMelch*), which depicts Melchizedek as a divine, heavenly being who, at the end of the world, will judge the wicked and rescue the righteous, making expiation for them, removing their iniquities, and raising them up (perhaps referring to resurrection). The text is replete with citations from some of the major messianic passages of the Old Testament, including Isaiah 52:7 and 61:2–3 and even Daniel 9:25, where the word "messiah" is used. The Isaiah passage has a herald proclaiming peace (*s◊lm*) and declaring "thy God [*ºeˇloˉhîm*] is king," using the same term (*melek*) that forms the first element in the name Melchizedek. In *11QMelch*, Melchizedek is identified with the *ºeˇloˉhîm* in the council of God (*ºeˉl*) in Psalm 82:1–2 (which is cited), perhaps because in Genesis 14:18, he is the "priest of the most high God [*ºeˉl ªelyôn*]."

Kobelski notes that some early Christians considered Melchizedek to be an angel. He compares the Hebrew title *mlk s◊lm*, "king of Salem," with the *mlºk s◊lwm*, "angel of peace"

mentioned in one of the Dead Sea Scrolls (*4Q228* 1.1.8), *1 Enoch* 40:8; 52:5; and in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Dan 6:5; Asher 6:67; Benjamin 6:1).[21] Kobelski, who is cited by Wright but apparently not taken seriously, lists seven points of comparison between *11QMelch* and the Epistle to the Hebrews[22] and notes that some scholars have seen Hebrews 7:3, which is poetic in style, as a pre-Christian text used by the author of Hebrews.[23] This verse contains Wright's element number 5, along with three other points omitted from his list but which likewise have parallels in Alma 13.

But the Qumran document is not the only one to ascribe to Melchizedek the qualities known from Hebrews 7 and Alma 13. Some manuscripts of the Slavonic book of *2 Enoch* 71–72 tell of Melchizedek's miraculous birth from his dead mother's corpse. Conceived without intercourse, he was born fully developed and able to speak. In manuscript J, God calls him "my child." He is clothed in priestly robes and taken to heaven without tasting death to serve there as priest over all priests.[24] As with Hebrews 7, the parallels with Jesus are obvious.

Some of these elements in the *2 Enoch* account are found in Joseph Smith's reworking of Genesis 14:25–40, where we read of Melchizedek's childhood prowess (Genesis 14:26), God's approval of him (Genesis 14:27; cf. the words of God regarding Jesus in Matthew 3:17), and of the translation of Melchizedek and other high priests, such as Enoch (Genesis 14:32–34). The theme of translation for priests of the order of Melchizedek seems to be alluded to in Alma 13:6, 12–13, where we read that they "entered into his rest." The expression is also found in Hebrews 3:11, 18; 4:1, 3–5, 8–11 and is reflected by the fact that Jesus, like Melchizedek, entered into the heavenly temple to serve as priest (Hebrews 8:1; 9:24) and is said to have gone there as a "forerunner" for us (Hebrews 6:19–20).

Some of the JST additions to Genesis 14 are also found in *11QMelch*. For example, in Genesis 14:35 JST, there is mention of "the sons of God," paralleling the same term in *11QMelch* 2.14. In Genesis 14:36 JST, Melchizedek is given the additional

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21 Paul J. Kobelski, *Melchizedek and Melchiresa[a]* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 10, 1981), 60 n. 36.

22 Ibid., 128.

23 Ibid., 120.

24 While a late text (perhaps no earlier than A.D. 1000), *2 Enoch* depends at least in part on older traditions.

title "king of heaven," which corresponds to his role as heavenly priest in both *11QMelch* and *2 Enoch*.

The king addressed in Psalm 110 is invited to sit down beside God, i.e., in the heavens, in a judgment scene during which the wicked are destroyed. Verse 1, in which God invites the addressee to sit beside him, refers to Christ, according to Hebrews 1:13. Verse 4, "thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek," which is likewise said to refer to Christ in Hebrews 5:6–11, seems to lie behind Hebrews 6:20 and Alma 13:14. An early Arabic Christian document, the Book of the Rolls f.124b, interpreted "for ever" as meaning that Melchizedek would never die. In addition to the straightforward translation of Melchizedek in *2 Enoch*, his undying nature is also implied in the words "nor end of life" and "continually" in Hebrews 7:3 and by the term "for ever" in Hebrews 6:20.

Wright objects to the wording of Alma 13:15, which has Abraham paying tithes "of all he possessed" rather than of the booty taken in combat. But the word "possessed," if it derives from the same root as "possessor" in the title of God ("possessor of heaven and earth") in Genesis 14:19, has the primary meaning of "acquire," in which case it may refer only to the booty.[25]

Wright contends that the term "high" in "high priest" (Alma 13:18) was taken by Joseph Smith from the title "most high God" since, in Hebrews 7:1 (which follows Genesis 14:18), Melchizedek is called "priest of the most high God." But his footnote admits that Melchizedek was called a high priest by Philo and was said in *Targum Neofti* to be "in the high priesthood." In view of these other interpretations, need one insist that Joseph Smith depended on the Epistle to the Hebrews for his text?[26]

Wright notes that the title "prince of peace," instead of "king of peace," in Alma 13:18 derives from Isaiah 9:6. In view of the fact that Melchizedek is being compared to Christ, this is not surprising. But why must one attribute the borrowing to Joseph Smith when the writings of Isaiah were available to

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25 At first, I was surprised that Wright did not suggest that the word "possessed" in Alma 13:19 was borrowed from "possessor" in Genesis 14:19. But that would work against his thesis that Joseph Smith expanded on the account in Hebrews. After all, an expansion on the Genesis account could readily have been made by Alma or Mormon rather than Joseph Smith.

26 See the review by John W. Welch, in this volume, pages 145–86.

Alma? What is more surprising, in my view, is that the author of Hebrews didn't use the Isaiah passage.

Noting that "king of peace" and "prince of peace" are not the same, Wright states that Alma 13 "does not betray linguistic interpretation," since it derives the title from Melchizedek's establishment of peace, expanding the story beyond that given in Hebrews 7. He fails to tell us that Alma 13:18 adds that Melchizedek's title "prince of peace" was given because "he was the king of Salem." This is clearly a linguistic interpretation. Moreover, Philo notes that Melchizedek was given the title because he loved peace and was worthy of the priesthood; he adds that as a "just king," Melchizedek is the interpreter of the law.[27]

This brings us to another point. Wright chides Joseph Smith for having Book of Mormon priests involved in teaching rather than in cultic duties as in Old Testament times. Again, he is wrong. One of the principal duties of the priests under the Mosaic code was to teach (Leviticus 10:1; 14:57; Deuteronomy 17:9–11; 24:8; 33:8–10; Ezekiel 44:23; Micah 3:11). One of the most renowned priests in the Bible, Ezra, was noted for his teaching, not his work at the altar, and is considered in Judaism to be the redactor of what became the Old Testament.

Wright 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 some very important passages, he added material that can be shown from subsequent documentary discoveries to have an ancient foundation. Examples will appear in my forthcoming book on the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, which will be published by F.A.R.M.S. as part of its Ancient Texts series.

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27 Philo, *Legum Allegoriae* III, 79.

John C. Kunich
"Multiply Exceedingly: Book of Mormon Population Sizes"

Kunich investigates an area of Book of Mormon studies that most dare not touch: population growth.[28] It is, as he admits, more art than science. Kunich, like Sorenson before him, estimates Nephite, Mulekite, and Lamanite population using the only information available from the Book of Mormon, which consists of three areas: (1) estimates of the number of adults capable of reproduction in the group brought by Lehi to the New World, (2) casualty statistics reported for Nephite-Lamanite battles, and (3) the statement in Mosiah 25:2–3 that the Mulekites outnumbered the Nephites, while these two groups together were less than half as numerous as the Lamanites. Admittedly, it's not much to go on.

I tend to shy away from the kind of guesswork found in this article and approach it here only to show why I believe that such studies must be performed with caution. The guesswork begins with Kunich's attempt to estimate the number of people in Lehi's original party, in which he does not acknowledge that Nephi or Sam had children at the time they boarded the ship for the New World, despite the fact that Nephi's children are explicitly mentioned in 1 Nephi 18:19 and that 1 Nephi 17:1–2; 18:6 may indicate that Sam, too, had children at that time.

Kunich accounts for seventeen to nineteen adults in Lehi's party at the time they embarked for the New World: Lehi and his wife Sariah, their four adult sons (Laman, Lemuel, Sam, Nephi) and their wives (daughters of Ishmael), Zoram and his wife (also a daughter of Ishmael), Ishmael's wife, Ishmael's two sons and their wives. Excluding the elderly Lehi, Sariah, and Ishmael's wife, this leaves "only fourteen emigrants capable of reproduction when they arrived in the New World" (p. 233). This is a minimal estimate, however. If the sons of Ishmael already had children at the time the two families merged, some of these children could have reached puberty after eight years of wandering in the wilderness. With cousin marriage prevalent among the Israelites, some of their older children could have been married and ready to start their own families by then. While

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28 See the review by James E. Smith, in this volume, pages 255–96.

this may seem a bit picky, one, two, or three more couples could have made a big difference in subsequent population growth.[29]

To this, we add the possibility that Jacob and Joseph, sons of Lehi and Sariah, if they were born in the first couple of years after their parents left Jerusalem, could have been as much as seven and eight years old when they arrived in the promised land. Zoram and the sons of Lehi could also have had children of nearly this age and the sons of Ishmael could also have fathered additional children at the same time. So there could have been several children who, within as few as ten years after arriving in the New World, could be starting their own families. Indeed, if Zoram, the sons of Ishmael, and the four older sons of Lehi each fathered a child once a year during their eight years in the wilderness, as many as forty-nine children could have been born during that time! This far exceeds the total (adult and child) population estimate of thirty given by Kunich for the size of the group arriving in the New World.[30] Admittedly, it is a maximum possible number, and maximums are rarely reached.

Kunich includes a table showing how large the group of thirty led by Lehi could have become at various time periods at different rates of annual population growth. The rates range from .04% to 2.0%. For later Nephite populations, Kunich uses Sorenson's ratio of one soldier for every five civilians, examines the casualty figures from the Book of Mormon, estimates that they represent less than half the number of men engaged in the battle, and then calculates the total Nephite and Lamanite populations. He then says that Sorenson's estimates are wrong and that the ratio of civilians to soldiers must be higher, since not everyone could be freed from agricultural pursuits to go to battle. Using his chart of population growth, he concludes that Lehi's descendants could never have attained the population numbers required by the casualty figures.

I cannot vouch for a given ratio of soldiers to civilians, but I can say that, in the ancient Near East, there was no problem whatsoever in sending large numbers of "farm boys" off to war, since warfare was conducted during the dry season, between the

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29 See John L. Sorenson, "The Composition of Lehi's Family," in in John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, eds., *By Study and Also by Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh Nibley*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1990), 2:174–97.

30 In the preceding paragraph, I used the word "if" three times and the word "could" eight times. This illustrates the kind of guesswork that goes into this kind of study.

spring grain harvest and the fall harvest of olives and grapes, after which the rains came. As a result, the Egyptian and Mesopotamian kings launched regular summer forays into nearby lands. To be sure, things may have been different for the Nephites, depending on the climate and the care needed for the crops. But Sorenson has demonstrated that the Nephite-Lamanite wars also seem to have been seasonal.[31]

Kunich's chart allows for a maximum annual population growth of 2.0%, though he actually believes it to be much lower. Nonetheless, a survey of countries of the Middle East, whence came Lehi's group and the Mulekites, shows that the current population growth runs from 2.9% annually (Egypt) to 3.9% (Iraq), with all of the Arab countries except Egypt and Lebanon (2.1%) being over 3.4%. In Mesoamerica, where most Latter-day Saint scholars believe Lehi settled, population growth runs from 2.7% in El Salvador to 3.1% in Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras, with Mexico growing at 2.4% per year.

Kunich would counter that "rapid population growth is a recent phenomenon" (p. 251). He also cites a number of authorities to show that early population growth was 0.4%—the figure he prefers in calculating Nephite and Lamanite populations. This is based on estimates of worldwide human population in various time periods. But *estimates* are not facts. I seriously question any attempt to estimate the population of the world or of any part of it in pre-census days. To illustrate, let us look at the population statistics for the Turkish province of Yemen in the thirty years before World War I. *Contemporary* estimates from various sources run from 750,000 to as many as eight to ten million! Three sources give 750,000, with other figures running as follows: 1 million, 1.8 million, 2.252 million, 2.5 million, 3 million, 4.5 million, 3.5 to 7 million, 8 to 10 million.[32] With this much difficulty in estimating a *living* population, how much more difficult it is to estimate the population of past civilizations!

Kunich's list of large numbers in the Book of Mormon speaks of "230,000 Nephite warriors killed" at the battle at

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31 John L. Sorenson, "Seasonality of Warfare in the Book of Mormon and in Mesoamerica," in Stephen D. Ricks and William J. Hamblin, eds., *Warfare in the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1990), 445–77.

32 Charles Issawi, *The Economic History of the Middle East 1800–1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1966), 332–34. Issawi is generally acknowledged to be the world's top expert in Middle Eastern economics.

Cumorah, referring to Mormon 6:10–15. Had he included Mormon 6:7 in his research, he would have found that the people with Mormon at the last battle comprised "my people, with their wives and their children." When, after the battle, Mormon mourned those who had fallen, he spoke of the "fair sons and daughters . . . fathers and mothers . . . husbands and wives" (Mormon 6:19). It seems obvious that the 230,000 was a total population figure for the remaining Nephites and not just a count of the "warriors" as Kunich has it.

I disagree with Kunich on several other points. For example, his estimates of the size of the Mulekite group in the days of Mosiah_2 take into account only those Mulekites living in the land of Zarahemla, where Mosiah had discovered them. Since the Mulekites originally landed in the north, in the land of Desolation, where the Jaredites had lived (Alma 22:30–31; Helaman 6:10), we cannot know if all of them migrated to Zarahemla or if some remained behind or migrated elsewhere, perhaps even mingling with the Lamanites. For that matter, it is not clear how many of the Nephites fled the land of Nephi with Mosiah_1 and settled in Zarahemla (Omni 1:12–14). Those who chose not to follow Mosiah were likely assimilated by the invading Lamanites.

Kunich declares that, because the Jaredites became extinct (based on Ether 15:12–34), they "failed to contribute to Nephite-Lamanite colonizations." I have long believed that some Jaredites survived the last great battles of their civilization and that it was the civilization itself that was destroyed, not every single Jaredite. This is evidenced mostly by the existence of Jaredite names in the Nephite population.[33] Ether reported only what he saw; he could not have been everywhere. Some would cite Ether's prophecy in Ether 13:21 as evidence that all the Jaredites except Coriantumr were to be destroyed. However, a careful reading of that verse indicates that it was all of Coriantumr's "household" that was to be destroyed. We cannot know for sure how many Jaredites may have escaped to other places before or during the last great war. It is not impossible in the scenario painted by Sorenson that some of the people with whom the Lamanites intermarried were Jaredites.

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[33] For a discussion, see John A. Tvedtnes, "A Phonemic Analysis of Nephite and Jaredite Proper Names," *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology* 141 (December 1977): 1–8.

This brings us to the question of indigenous peoples with whom the Lamanites may have joined.[34] Kunich believes that such outsiders would have been mentioned in the Book of Mormon. But since that book was a clan record, it may have deliberately left out mention of peoples not originating in Jerusalem, with the sole exception of the Jaredites, who left a written record that came into the hands of King Mosiah. What fascinated the Nephites about the Jaredites was not that they existed, but that their civilization had been so utterly destroyed (Mosiah 8:12; 28:12).

Kunich uses 2 Nephi 1:8–9 as evidence that there were no other indigenous people in Lehi's time. But the text can have such a meaning only if the word *land* is read as more than the territory occupied by Lehi's descendants. In the Bible, the word *land* most often refers to the land occupied by the Israelites. Unlike some Book of Mormon readers, I do not envision the entire American continent when I read *land*. Who are the "other nations" from whom knowledge of Lehi's land was to be kept? Must it refer to indigenous Americans? Can it be restricted to the "nations" that Lehi knew in the Old World? Is there a difference between a "nation" and nomadic herdsmen or hunters? Unless we can answer these questions, we cannot state emphatically that Lehi's descendants encountered no others.

Kunich's assumption that the Nephites, in order to annex indigenous peoples, must have converted them to their religion is unwarranted. They could have intermarried with others without first converting them, in which case perhaps the conversions mentioned in the Book of Mormon (and noted by Kunich) could have reference to such outsiders who had already become Nephites by culture before adopting their religion.

There are, in fact, some possible references to outsiders in the Book of Mormon. For example, we never learn the real origin of the Amalekites, unless they are the same as the Amlicites. I have noted elsewhere that the antichrist Sherem (Jacob 7) may have been an outsider. Jacob wrote of him, "there came a man among the people of Nephi" (Jacob 7:1). Does this mean that he was not a Nephite? Jacob further notes "that he had a perfect knowledge of the language of the people" (Jacob 7:4). Don't all native speakers? This would have been remarkable only if the man were not a Nephite.

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[34] See John L. Sorenson, "When Lehi's Party Arrived, Did They Find Others in the Land?" *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 1/1 (1992): 1–34.

Kunich makes a good point concerning the fact that each man slain in battle would then be unable to start or continue his family. But he may have gone too far in assuming that these were all young men. In the ancient Near East, men of various ages were taken into the army on a seasonal basis. That they were sometimes—if not always—segregated by age is indicated in the use of the term *ne^{a}arîm* to denote troops of "young men." In the Book of Mormon, Zeniff explicitly states that he organized his ranks by age for battle against the Lamanites (Mosiah 10:9). Perhaps the older warriors, by virtue of their age and diminished strength, were more likely to die in battle than the younger. If they were segregated by age, enemy troops may have attacked the older men first. It is even possible that the older Nephite men were sent into battle first in order to give the younger men a chance to establish families. Some of this is supposition only, but no more so than most of Kunich's study of Book of Mormon population sizes.

Deanne G. Matheny
"Does the Shoe Fit?
A Critique of the Limited Tehuantepec Geography"

Of Matheny's article, I can say but little, since my exposure to Mesoamerican archaeology is limited.[35] Her objections to a "limited Tehuantepec" geography for the Book of Mormon story are deserving of consideration and I look forward to seeing the reaction of other Latter-day Saint Mesoamerican scholars.[36]

I am concerned that Matheny may have placed too much stress on the lack of fauna and flora in the archaeological record. Anyone who has been involved in archaeology knows that new discoveries are continually changing previous concepts of the past. The absence of faunal evidences has perplexed Bible scholars in the Near East. Why, for example, with the textual evidence for lions in Israel in both ancient and modern times (up to the sixteenth century A.D.), have no lion skeletons or other remains ever been found? Similarly, I know of only one instance (Timna) where remnants of an ancient tent have been found in the territory of ancient Israel, despite the frequent mention of

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[35] My background is essentially Near Eastern, though I took a few classes in Mesoamerican prehistory.

[36] See the review by John L. Sorenson, in this volume, pages 297–361.

tents in the Bible. In this light, Matheny's discussion of the lack of evidence for tents in ancient Mesoamerica loses some of its impact.

Matheny notes that the precious metals mentioned in the Book of Mormon are found only in Oaxaca and the Guatemalan highlands. This, however, does not present a problem for the Book of Mormon story if Sorenson's geographical model is accepted. Following that model, the Jaredites lived in Oaxaca (Ether 10:23), while the city of Nephi, where precious metals became such a concern to the Nephites (1 Nephi 5:15; 18:25; Jacob 1:16; 2:12; Jarom 1:8) was in the Guatemalan highlands. It was here, too, that king Noah lived amid the opulence characterized by precious metals (Mosiah 11:3, 8–9, 11; cf. 19:15; 22:12). Precious metals are mentioned only in passing elsewhere, possibly because they were imported into places like Zarahemla. It is perhaps significant that the term "ore" is used almost exclusively of the Jaredite region and the territory around Nephi, except for the very general reference in Helaman 6:11.

I am concerned about Matheny's unquestioning acceptance of Dan Vogel's assessment that it was "absolutely clear that Joseph Smith and early Mormons associated the Book of Mormon with the Mound Builder myth." There is no "clear" evidence for this and, for that matter, very little muddy evidence. Joseph Smith's statements regarding the location of the land of Zarahemla (in Mesoamerica) seem to weigh strongly against a "Great Lakes" locale. In any event, the beliefs of "early Mormons" and others are not nearly as important as the evidence from the Book of Mormon itself. Nor are the disagreements between Latter-day Saint scholars, to which Matheny, like others, makes reference.

Edward H. Ashment
" 'A Record in the Language of My Father': Evidence of Ancient Egyptian and Hebrew in the Book of Mormon"

Had Ashment honestly reflected his theme, he would have subtitled this article, "The *Lack* of Evidence of Ancient Egyptian and Hebrew in the Book of Mormon," for that is the thrust of his article. Some of his terminology is also intended to draw negative images for the reader. For example, his statement that "God *allowed* the Lamanites to destroy" (p. 330) the Nephites

(italics mine), while accurate, uses a stronger word than that employed in the Book of Mormon and places the Latter-day Saint view of God in a negative light. The terms *supernatural* and *apologist*, while correctly used, have come to have a generally negative connotation to American readers. Indeed, Ashment's substitution of "supernatural" for the words "by the hand of God" in Alma 37:4 is totally unwarranted (see p. 330 n. 7). The fact that he closes the quote before inserting the substituted word and reopens the quote immediately after it does not justify his deliberate avoidance of the terminology used in the Book of Mormon. It is an old ploy used by critics of the Book of Mormon for more than a century and a half, and should have been beneath the dignity of someone like Ashment.

In general, Ashment has approached his subject with a fair amount of aplomb. But his conclusions, reflected in some of his other articles, have led him to misstate or misinterpret facts about the Book of Mormon.[37] For example, he concludes that no "plates of brass" could have existed in the time of Lehi because brass was not invented "before Roman times" (p. 330 n. 6). He fails to tell the reader that the term "brass" is used 116 times in the Old Testament of the King James Bible to translate the Hebrew term that means "copper" or "bronze." Since Ashment readily admits that Joseph Smith relied on the KJV, his comments about the copper-zinc alloy are pointless.

In a lengthy note, Ashment points to what he sees as a problem in that some of Lehi's descendants (the Nephites) were sedentary, while others (the Lamanites) were nomadic at times, sedentary at other times. After discussing the sedentary nature of Nephite society, he notes that "in just one generation . . . Lamanites had degenerated" (p. 329 n. 3) into a nomadic society living in tents, most of whom later settled down like the Nephites, though some remained in tents. But we should not be surprised at such transformations. Lehi, after dwelling "at Jerusalem" most of his life, took to tents in the wilderness for eight years to flee to the New World. After arriving in their new land, the Nephites reverted to their sedentary ways, while the Lamanites continued the nomadic lifestyle of the previous eight years. In view of the laziness of Laman and Lemuel (1 Nephi 17:18, 49), is it any surprise that their descendants did not want to become "industrious" like the Nephites? The cities possessed

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37 See the review by Royal Skousen, in this volume, pages 121–44.

by the Lamanites were all in the land of Nephi and had been deserted by the Nephites in the time of the first Mosiah. The Lamanites, being "lazy," were happy to "bring [the Nephites] into bondage, that they might glut themselves with the labors of [their] hands" (Mosiah 9:12). Taking over cities built by Nephites seems to have been a way of life for the Lamanites (Mosiah 23:31–39).

By the time the Lamanite king returned the cities of Nephi and Shilom to the Nephites led by Zeniff (with the intent of bringing them into bondage), the city seems to have fallen into disrepair, for Zeniff recorded that he and his people "began to build buildings, and to repair the walls of the city, yea, even the walls of the city of Lehi-Nephi, and the city of Shilom" (Mosiah 9:8). It is possible that the Lamanites were anxious to absorb Nephite dissenters precisely because they could make use of their skills (cf. Alma 21:2). That the Lamanites never became as skilled in building as the Nephites is illustrated by the fact that Nephi and Lehi, sons of Helaman, were cast by the Lamanites into the same prison where Ammon and his brethren had been incarcerated nearly a century earlier (Helaman 5:21). In Ammon's day, the prison was controlled by the Nephite king Limhi (Mosiah 7:7–8; 21:23).

Ashment's contention that "everything Jewish was suppressed from the beginning" is disproved by several facts: (1) Nephi preserved, in his writings, "the learning of the Jews" (1 Nephi 1:2); (2) the Nephites kept the brass plates, which contained a "record of the Jews" (1 Nephi 3:3; 5:6, 12; 13:23; Omni 1:14; cf. 2 Nephi 9:2); (3) Nephi sometimes spoke favorably of the Jews (1 Nephi 13:23–26; 14:23; 2 Nephi 29:4–6; cf. 2 Nephi 9:2; Mormon 7:8; Ether 1:3); (4) Nephi makes specific mention of his Jewish heritage (2 Nephi 30:4; 33:8), and (5) Nephi condemns those who will not "respect the words of the Jews" (2 Nephi 33:14), just as Jesus later condemned those who "make game of the Jews" (3 Nephi 29:8). While it is true that the Nephite "monetary system" was not patterned "after the manner of the Jews" (Alma 11:4), "their synagogues . . . were built after the manner of the Jews" (Alma 16:13). The clear meaning of 2 Nephi 25:1–6 (the passage to which Ashment refers to establish his case for suppression of things Jewish) is that Nephi had kept from his children only "the manner of *prophesying* among the Jews" (emphasis added) for a reason that is unclear to us.

Ashment's examination of the language of the Book Mormon consists mostly of pitting the views of various Latter-day Saint scholars against each other. The tactic is widely used, even among pro-Latter-day Saint writers, but I personally have a strong dislike for attempts to prove that something is false just because scholars don't see eye-to-eye. In the case of the Book of Mormon, such facts prove only that the scholars disagree, not that the book is phony. I suspect that such tactics would never be used against the Bible. The fact that some biblical scholars believe that Abraham's Ur was in southern Iraq, while others place it in southern Turkey, is never used to disprove the Bible!

In point of fact, some of the Latter-day Saint writers cited by Ashment have no expertise in some of the topics—notably languages—about which they have written. And even those who have such expertise occasionally find fault with each other's approaches, though this does not make them throw the baby (in this case the Book of Mormon) out with the bathwater (theories *about* the book). Thus, I find myself disagreeing with a number of others on the matter of the language in which the Book of Mormon was written, but this disagreement does not cast a negative shadow on the book itself.

For example, I agree with Ashment in his assessment of the work done by Stubbs, Rust, and others, and with a number of his minor points. I am especially in agreement with his denunciation of the wordprint studies; indeed, I would have been more harsh in my criticism. To me the problem is twofold: (1) The wordprint studies were made of an *English* translation of a text said to have been written in another language (in which case it should reflect the language of the translator more than that of the original author). (2) The particles used in the wordprint studies (e.g., the word "of") are often nonexistent in Hebrew, which instead uses syntax to express the meaning of the English particles. I strongly object to determinations made on words that could not have existed in the original.

I totally disagree with the concept, reported by Martin Harris and mentioned by Ashment, that Joseph Smith claimed to have seen English words translated from the plates whenever he looked into the stone(s) and that these words disappeared only after they had been written down correctly. We have no such information from Joseph Smith, only second-hand accounts from someone who could not known from his own experience how it worked. The fact that Oliver Cowdery, when attempting to

follow Joseph's lead in translating the book, was told to *study it out in his mind* (D&C 9:7–10) tells me that the Harris story is probably untrue, regardless of how many Latter-day Saints may believe it. Joseph Smith's subsequent corrections to the manuscript and to the printed Book of Mormon, openly admitted by the Prophet,[38] provide evidence that Joseph Smith's story did not include the "English-sentences-in-the-stone" concept.

Ashment accuses Latter-day Saint scholars of having "scoured" the Book of Mormon text for " 'evidence' of their [preconceived] assumption" that its original language was Hebrew or Egyptian. I cannot speak for others who have written about Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon. I can only say that I did not deliberately search for such evidences. During the normal course of reading the Book of Mormon (which I always do at least once a year), I simply ran across things that struck me as strange in English but which made sense in Hebrew. I had no preconceived notions about the Book of Mormon reflecting a Hebrew background. At the time I wrote my first article on the subject in 1970, I was totally unaware of the work previously done by such people as Brookbank, Pack, Bramwell, and Sperry.[39]

While some Latter-day Saint writers have believed that the entire Book of Mormon is a "literal" translation from Hebrew or Egyptian, such a view is, to me, unacceptable. In my 1970 study, I hyperbolically said that the English translation was "in many respects a nearly literal translation."[40] I omitted all reference to literalness in my updated version of 1986.[41] In 1991, I wrote that Joseph Smith's "translation reflects the Hebrew words and word order of the original" Nephite record.[42] My in-

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38 *HC* 4:494–95.

39 Thomas W. Brookbank, *Improvement Era* (December 1909–April 1910, July–October 1914, December 1914); Sidney B. Sperry, *Improvement Era* (October 1954); E. Craig Bramwell, *Improvement Era* (July 1961); M. Deloy Pack, "Possible Lexical Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon (Words of Mormon-Moroni)," M.A. thesis, BYU, 1973.

40 John A. Tvedtnes, "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon: A Preliminary Survey," *BYU Studies* (Autumn 1970): 50.

41 John A. Tvedtnes, "Since the Book of Mormon is largely the record of a Hebrew people, is the writing characteristic of the Hebrew Language?" I Have a Question, *The Ensign* (October 1986): 64–66, reprinted with few modifications in *A Sure Foundation: Answers to Difficult Gospel Questions* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 21–26.

42 John A. Tvedtnes, "The Hebrew Background of the Book of Mormon," in John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne, eds., *Rediscovering*

tent was to show that the original was reflected by what I termed "Hebraisms" in the text of the English Book of Mormon. But as I reread the sentence in preparation for this present article, I realized that it went beyond what I meant to say and implied that the entire Book of Mormon reflected a Hebrew original. This is, of course, not true. Were it so, the Book of Mormon would be mostly unintelligible to an English-speaking audience.

That Joseph Smith used the language of the King James Bible has long been acknowledged by Latter-day Saint scholars, though they disagree on how that came to be. Unlike Ashment and others, I do not consider the use of precise New Testament phraseology in pre-Christian Book of Mormon passages to be negative, as long as the idea fits the passage. After all, Joseph Smith rendered the Book of Mormon in English theological terms of *his* day, most of which derived from the King James Bible.

When discussing Bramwell's work, Ashment notes "exceptions" to the rule. For Ashment, the Book of Mormon must apparently be all Hebrew in syntax in order for Hebraisms to be valid. But most would not claim that the entire book was Hebraic in nature, only that it occasionally reflects Hebrew syntax and idioms. Ashment points to 1 Nephi 2:4, where the possessive pronoun "his" is repeated for all of the nouns except "provisions" and "tents." Had he read my 1984 F.A.R.M.S. paper, "Was Lehi a Caravaneer?," he would have seen that I use this as evidence that the provisions and tents were not part of Lehi's home storage but were acquired specifically for the trip into the wilderness. Viewed from this perspective, the lack of pronouns for these two words is perfectly reasonable.

Ashment's dismissal of cognate accusatives as evidence of an underlying Hebrew structure is a bit humorous. He ends up illustrating how English can do the same with sentences such as "He died a violent death. He is living a sad and lonely life. He laughed a little short ugly laugh. He sighed a sigh of ineffable satisfaction." However, English uses such terms only when they are more descriptive. We do not say, in English, "He died a death," "he lived a life," "he laughed a laugh," or "he sighed a sigh." Indeed, these would not exist in Hebrew either, since the Hebrew equivalents of these verbs are stative or intransitive. But Hebrew (like the Book of Mormon) does have sentences such as

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the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1991), 77–91.

"I dreamed a dream" which, without a qualifier (e.g., "He dreamed a bad dream"), are not standard English.

Ashment attacks my explanation of the use of subordinate clauses in Hebrew to qualify the predicate of a sentence. He begins by saying that my biblical example, "and God saw the light that it was good," was invalid because "good" is here a predicate adjective and not a verb as in the Book of Mormon examples I gave. While this is a correct statement, Ashment fails to tell us that "good" is *not* the predicate of the main sentence; "light" is. The Hebrew word *t ôbð* ("good") is the predicate adjective in the subordinate clause for which the subject ("it") is understood. Perhaps I should have used as my example the sentence he cites from Genesis 6:2, where the pronoun is written out in the Hebrew text rather than being understood. Ashment wrongly states that the "more literal English translation" of this verse would be "and the sons of God saw that the daughters of mankind were beautiful." This is far from a "literal" translation. The sentence literally reads, "and the sons of God saw the daughters of mankind that they (were) beautiful." The word "were" must be supplied in English because Hebrew uses equational sentences instead of the copula to express being (though stative verbs also exist). Evidently, Ashment knows nothing of equational sentences. In this case, the subordinate clause, "they (were) beautiful," is introduced by "that." Had the Hebrew read like Ashment's "literal" translation, it would have been *wayyir^{o}u b^{e}nê ^{o}e˘lo¯hîm kî t o¯bðôt≠ b^{e}nôt≠ ha¯-^{o}a¯dða¯m* rather than *wayyir^{o}u b^{e}nê ^{o}e˘lo¯hîm ^{o}et-b^{e}nôt≠ hað-^{o}a¯dða¯m kî t ôbðôt≠ he¯nna¯h*.

I should be flattered by the fact that the order of topics in Ashment's Appendix A follows my own published work.[43] This appendix lists the various categories of what have been called "Hebraisms" in the Book of Mormon, noting similar examples from the Book of Commandments. Ashment's purpose is to show that Joseph Smith authored both books. Believers, faced with the same evidence, would argue that Joseph was inspired by the same God in dictating the contents of both books. But even in that case, the evidentiary value of Hebraisms in establishing the antiquity of the Book of Mormon would be considerably lessened if Ashment's evidence is accepted. However, most of the examples listed by Ashment are quotes from the scriptures, a common feature in Joseph Smith's revelations. One would, of

43 Ibid.

course, expect that the quotes would follow the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Ashment's listing will undoubtedly provoke further studies into the question of whether the English of the Book of Mormon reflects an original Hebrew structure. My serendipitous approach to this subject prevents me from making such an exhaustive search, though I expect that I shall continue to take note of anything unusual whenever I encounter it.

Nearly four pages of Ashment's article are devoted to a table in which he has arbitrarily divided Book of Mormon names into "stems" and "affixes" from which he then concludes that "it is difficult to justify an ancient origin" (p. 347) for these.[44] However, real stems and affixes have meaning, either lexical or grammatical. And meanings can, in fact, be established for a large number of Book of Mormon names. Ashment's arbitrary division of these names, however, destroys the real structure. At the risk of sounding Brodian (from the mindreader Fawn Brodie), I believe that Ashment deliberately distorted the names in this manner. I come to this conclusion because his language skills do not allow for unwittingly misrepresenting the Book of Mormon onomasticon.

Though he deliberately omits biblical names found in the Book of Mormon from his table, at least one of the names in the table (Akish) is also found in the Bible and, by Ashment's standards, should be considered a borrowing from the KJV. But Ashment, who apparently knows Hebrew, unknowingly (?) divides it incorrectly, thus placing it in the same untenable position as the nonbiblical names. Other names that have obvious Hebrew etymologies he likewise divides incorrectly in what seems to me to be a clear attempt to discredit the Book of Mormon rather than to discover any truth.

Ashment protests too much when, in disputing Sorenson's statements about the ability to use the Egyptian writing system "without regard to tongue," he declares that the hieroglyphic system was "integrally tied to the Egyptian language" (p. 341). Egyptian hieroglyphs were used to transliterate Semitic words borrowed during the late period, as Albright's study of the "Egyptian Syllabic Orthography" shows.[45] Moreover, it was

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44 See the review by John Gee, in this volume, pages 51–120.

45 William F. Albright, *Vocalization of the Egyptian Syllabic Orthography* (New Haven: Yale, 1934); see also William F. Albright and Thomas O. Lambdin, "New Material for the Egyptian Syllabic Orthography," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 2/2 (April 1957): 113-27.

Egyptian symbols that were used in the Proto-Sinaitic script that became the ancestor of the Hebrew and other alphabets.[46]

Ashment also dismisses Stephen Ricks's discussion of a modified Bible text whose underlying language is Aramaic but which is written in the Coptic alphabet used for the latest form of the Egyptian language. Ricks demonstrates by this example that it is not unknown to transcribe a text in one language into the writing system of another, such as is described in 1 Nephi 1:2 and Mormon 9:32. I find it interesting that Ashment does not address the question of an ostracon containing a text written in a combination of Egyptian hieratic and Hebrew characters found at Arad, west of the Dead Sea, and dating to ca. 600 B.C. I discussed the text in a paper presented in October 1970, in which I also noted that the numbers used in ancient Hebrew documents were of Egyptian origin—a fact long acknowledged by Semitic epigraphers.[47] Since then, another ostracon written in Egyptian hieratic and interspersed with several occurrences of the Hebrew word *ºaˇla¯phîm* ("thousands") has been found in the northern Sinai peninsula.[48]

Ashment notes that the long periphrastic sentences sometimes found in the Book of Mormon are not a feature of the Hebrew language, which uses concise sentences. While this is usually true, there are some examples of lengthy periphrasis in the books of Judges and Samuel, though none of them as long as some of the larger Book of Mormon examples.[49] Part of the Book of Mormon problem is the punctuation, which was introduced into the text first by the printer, then later modified by Orson Pratt and James E. Talmage. But there are some genuine examples of extremely lengthy sentences containing excursuses necessary to the reader's understanding. Ashment objects that, in view of the writing medium, one should not expect to see Mormon or others wasting precious space on the plates. But it is precisely because of the metallic medium that we should expect

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46 William F. Albright, *Proto-Sinaitic Inscriptions and Their Decipherment* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).

47 John A. Tvedtnes, "Linguistic Implications of the Tel Arad Ostraca," *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology* 127 (October 1971): 1–5.

48 Rudolph Cohen, "Did I Excavate Kadesh-Barnea?" *Biblical Archaeology Review* (May/June 1981): 20–33.

49 Note the parenthetical departures in Judges 3:1–5; 4:10–12; 10:18–11:4; 16:8–9, 26–28; 1 Samuel 4:14–16; 13:19–22 and 14:1; 14:49–50; 17:18–20; 19:31–33; 20:23–26; 21:7; 25:2–4.

to find more lengthy and convoluted sentences. Unable to erase what he had already engraved, the author would have made the best of it by moving on. Admittedly, the same argument could be made for someone like Joseph Smith dictating to a scribe.

Ashment surprises me when he dogmatically declares (p. 360 n. 38) that the pronunciation guide published in the 1869 Deseret alphabet edition of the Book of Mormon was evidence for how Joseph Smith pronounced the name Nephi. Joseph Smith had been dead for more than a quarter of a century by the time this edition came off the press and the Deseret alphabet, invented by Orson Pratt in Deseret (Utah), was unknown in the Prophet's time. The pronunciation guide is therefore of marginal value in determining how Joseph Smith pronounced the name, much less how the Nephites pronounced it. Ashment's only reason for introducing this nonsense is to enable him to attack John Gee's suggestion of an ancient Egyptian origin for the name Nephi. I would like to provide an alternative possibility to Gee's proposal, believing that the Egyptian *nfy*, "wind, sail, ship's captain," is a closer match. But Ashment, not wanting to acknowledge an ancient origin for the name, resorts to inventing facts that do not exist in order to prove his point.

When it comes to the Isaiah variants in the Book of Mormon, Ashment avoids the very favorable arguments in favor of the Nephite version and proceeds to attack only the weak ones, i.e., examples where there is minimal support for the Book of Mormon variant or where other ancient versions disagree with the Masorah/KJV without supporting the Book of Mormon. I discussed some of the stronger cases in a 1982 paper.[50] For a detailed discussion of all variants, see my lengthy study, "Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon."[51]

I was also disappointed that, in his discussion of Joseph Smith's "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar," Ashment perpetuates the anti-Mormon rhetoric about Joseph Smith interpreting real and invented Egyptian symbols in terms of "parts and degrees," as if these were grammatical terms. As long ago as 1970, I demonstrated in a symposium paper that these are merely coordinates used by Joseph Smith to denote from which part of

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50 John A. Tvedtnes, "Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," in Monte S. Nyman, ed., *Isaiah and the Prophets* (Provo: Brigham Young University and Bookcraft, 1984), 165–77.

51 John A. Tvedtnes, "Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," F.A.R.M.S. paper, 1981.

the papyri the symbol had been taken.[52] Thus, the "first part of the first degree" refers to the first column of script on the papyrus scrap containing what became Facsimile 1 in the Book of Abraham, called "the first degree" in the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. The "first part of the second degree" denotes symbols found in the first (right-hand) ruled column (marked in one-inch penciled lines on the paper to which the papyrus was glued) of what Nibley called "the small Sensen papyrus," but which Joseph Smith termed "the second degree." Knowing that these are not grammatical terms, one comes to realize that the Alphabet and Grammar is not an attempt to "translate" the symbols, but to explain them exegetically. In all this, however, there is no hint that Joseph Smith performed that work under divine inspiration; again, he was working it out in his mind. From the spacing on the pages of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar, it is clear that the Book of Abraham as we know it had already been produced and that the work was being projected backward into the "grammar." It was not a grammar in the linguistic sense of the word. I have done some work with this material and hope to find time in the next few years (after completing some other projects) to get it into print. But I don't expect the criticism to stop in the meanwhile.

Brent Lee Metcalfe
"The Priority of Mosiah:
A Prelude to Book of Mormon Exegesis"

Metcalfe begins his article by providing valuable insights into the order in which the books comprising the Book of Mormon were dictated.[53] Recapping evidences already elicited by a number of other writers, he adds material from his own research and corrects document errors that have crept into the literature. These corrections are supported by photographs of portions of the manuscripts.

Of particular interest is the pattern that emerges in the use of certain words when Mosiah is considered to be the first book dictated after the loss of the 116 pages. This pattern shows Joseph Smith's tendency to move from one form of a word to an

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52 John A. Tvedtnes, "The Critics of the Book of Abraham," in John A. Tvedtnes, ed., *Book of Abraham Symposium* (Salt Lake City: Institute of Religion, 1971), 73–74.

53 See the review by Matthew Roper, in this volume, pages 362–78.

alternate version of the same (e.g., "whosoever" to "whoso" and "therefore" to "wherefore"). However, when 1 Nephi is posited as the first book, the pattern disappears. In the past, researchers have sometimes seen the varying use of such words as evidence for different authorship of the various books in the Book of Mormon. In view of the mounting evidence for the priority of Mosiah, these views now seem untenable. The variants are more likely due to a shift in Joseph Smith's usage of the words.[54] Metcalfe correlates this shift with a shift involving the same words in the revelations dictated by Joseph Smith during the time the Book of Mormon was being produced. His evidence shows that, over time, the same pattern is seen in sections 3–12, 14–19 of the Doctrine and Covenants.

Metcalfe may be surprised to see me agreeing with him, since, in his article, he quotes me as suggesting that "therefore" was used by Mormon, while "wherefore" was used by Moroni and on the small plates and is perhaps evidence of different authorship in the various books. Had he read the whole paragraph in the article from which he quotes, he would have noted that I also wrote, "I am *not* [emphasis added] proposing that this interpretation is right and that of the Tanners wrong. My point is that the same statistical data may be used to support different viewpoints, in which case it is hardly evidence at all unless taken in context with other evidences."[55]

Metcalfe believes that "occurrences of 'therefore' and 'wherefore' in Book of Mormon passages deriving from the King James Version of the Bible (KJV) elucidate the interplay between narrative created by Smith and narrative dependent on external sources" (p. 411). To illustrate, he notes that Joseph Smith "tends to retain [or] delete, but not alter the term 'therefore' or 'wherefore' in a biblical source he is copying," even if it is not the one he is currently using in the adjacent text, while favoring his own term whenever embellishing the biblical source. While this indicates to Metcalfe that Joseph Smith was

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54 This is not to say that evidence of different authorship is nonexistent, only that the words that show a clear patterned shift, as described by Metcalfe, when Mosian priority is considered, should be excluded from such studies. Moreover, because a single individual (Joseph Smith) translated the Book of Mormon, I suspect that evidence of different authorship of the various books may not be so readily apparent.

55 John A. Tvedtnes, review of Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 3 (1991): 213.

simply taking Bible passages and building the story of the Book of Mormon around them, it need not be so. It is just as likely that he employed the KJV reading of Bible quotes in the Nephite record because that was what was most familiar to his nineteenth-century American audience. His personal preference for "therefore" or "wherefore" at any given time is then reflected in the rest of the translation. It is a simple enough explanation, unless one insists that Joseph Smith saw English words in the stone(s), which, as I indicated above, I do not.[56]

Building on his study of the distribution of the variants "therefore" and "wherefore," Metcalfe moves on to examine other apparent inconsistencies that he believes are best understood when one realizes that the book of Mosiah was dictated before the small plates of Nephi (1 Nephi through Words of Mormon).

One of his examples is the birthdate of Christ, which, in 3 Nephi, is placed six hundred years after the departure of Lehi from Jerusalem (3 Nephi 1:1). Since this part of the Book of Mormon was dictated before references to the prophecy about the six hundred years (1 Nephi 10:4; 19:8; 25:19), Metcalfe concludes that the passages in 1 Nephi depend on the information previously dictated in 3 Nephi 1:1. He reinforces this idea by noting that Benjamin and Alma seem uncertain of the time of Christ's birth, saying only that it would be soon. The most damaging passage is Alma 13:25, where Alma declares, "Would to God that it might be in my day." While this could be read as

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[56] How and why Joseph Smith used KJV language has been a matter of debate among Latter-day Saint scholars for some time. Lacking an explanation from the Prophet himself, we shall perhaps never know the real reason. My opinion, expressed in several previous works, is that he used the KJV text wherever applicable because it conveyed to the people of his day the aura and authenticity of scripture. To have departed from this language might have made the Book of Mormon less acceptable. With the current trend toward modern English Bible translations of the Bible, the RLDS Church issued a modern English revision of the Book of Mormon in 1966. I have frequently been asked by Latter-day Saints if we should not use one of the modern English translations in place of the KJV. I refer them to statements by the First Presidency and then add two points of my own: (1) Despite its problems, the KJV is no worse a translation than more recent translations and is, to a certain extent, more literal. (2) Were we to use another translation, the parallels between the KJV and the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants would no longer be apparent, making it more difficult to make comparisons between them. Though they would disagree with my motives, most of the authors who contributed to the Metcalfe volume would presumably applaud my second point.

uncertainty about when Christ would come (especially in view of the words "let it be sooner or later"), it might simply mean, "I wish it could be in my day," with no real evidence of uncertainty.

Nevertheless, I suspect that Alma was unaware of the six-hundred-year prophecy. Metcalfe takes me to task (p. 417 n. 26) for saying that Alma may have been unfamiliar with the small plates and for suggesting that Mormon's discovery of these plates when he searched the records had been prompted by mention of them on the large plates of Nephi. Mormon explicitly states that it was only after abridging the record "down to the reign of this king Benjamin" to whom Amaleki had delivered the small plates (Omni 1:25) that he "searched among the records which had been delivered into my hands, and I found these plates" (Words of Mormon 1:3). Mormon, and perhaps Alma before him, possessed a large volume of records. Indeed, Mormon noted that there were "many records" kept by the Nephites and that his abridgment contained only "a hundredth part" of them (Helaman 3:13–15). Under such circumstances, it would have been easy for him to have been unaware of the existence of the small plates until he searched for them.

But what about Alma? Metcalfe notes that Alma 36:22 "parallels almost verbatim the account of Lehi's vision" in 1 Nephi 1:8. Based on this and on the priority of Mosiah, he believes that 1 Nephi 1:8 is quoting Alma 36:22 rather than vice-versa. But there is a third possibility: Alma may have been quoting from the large plates of Nephi. To me, it is inconceivable that Lehi's vision would not have been recorded on the large plates, which were prepared by Nephi long before the small plates. It was, after all, the primal vision for Lehi. And since Nephi wrote both accounts, we should not wonder that the account reads the same—or nearly so—on both sets of plates. Had the 116 pages lost by Martin Harris survived, we would know whether the quote was copied into Mormon's abridgment of the large plates.

Metcalfe also sees Christ's appearance to the Nephites in 3 Nephi as a late development in the Book of Mormon, which was then retrofitted into prophecies from the time of Nephi (1 Nephi 12:4–8; 13:35; 2 Nephi 26:4–9; 32:6). With Joseph Smith being the author, rather than the translator, of the Book of Mormon, this would have been possible only because 1 and 2 Nephi were dictated after 3 Nephi. Metcalfe points to the fact that prophecies of Christ in the early part of Mormon's abridgment (those of

Benjamin, Abinadi, and both Almas) do not mention the appearance of the resurrected Christ to the descendants of Lehi. The concept was introduced in Alma 16:20 (cf. also Alma 45:10–14) and could therefore not have been known before that time.

The fact that Benjamin, Abinadi, and $Alma_1$ do not mention that Christ would appear in the New World is not, in my view, problematic. Their main theme was, after all, the atonement. On the other hand, Nephi's account in 1 Nephi 12:4–8; 13:35 is couched in a vision about the future of his own descendants and what would happen to them. Moreover, in 1 Nephi 19:10–12; 22:16–18, Nephi speaks of the destruction that would come at the time of Christ's crucifixion, but does not mention the appearance of Christ in the New World. Since, by Metcalfe's reckoning, the two events were already inextricably tied by Joseph Smith in 3 Nephi 8–11 before he dictated 1 Nephi, they should be mentioned together in the latter. But since these passages are silent on Christ's coming in the very context of the destructions that immediately preceded that appearance, should we be surprised that other early Book of Mormon prophets left that information out of their discourses? By contrast, note 2 Nephi 26:4–9, where both the destruction and Christ's appearance are mentioned. If we can grant 1 Nephi the option to include or omit reference to Christ's appearance in the New World, can we not do the same for the books of Mosiah and Alma?

As a test, we can take another significant event that occurs in the latter part of the Book of Mormon and see if it fits Metcalfe's pattern showing Joseph Smith to be the author of the Book of Mormon. I refer to the destruction of the Nephites by the Lamanites, which takes place in Mormon 5–6. As expected, the event is prophesied in the small plates (1 Nephi 12:12–15, 19–20; 13:35; 2 Nephi 5:25; 26:9–11; Jacob 3:3–4; Enos 1:13; Jarom 1:10). But it is also found throughout Mormon's abridgment (Mosiah 29:17; Alma 37:28, 31; 45:10–14; Helaman 7:28; 13:6–10). The event is placed some four hundred years after Christ's appearance in Mormon 8:6 (cf. Moroni 10:1). But strangely, the prophecy in 1 Nephi 12:12; 26:9 knows nothing of the four hundred years and speaks of the "fourth generation," as in 3 Nephi 27:32. If Joseph Smith merely borrowed from the later stories to invent a prophecy in the name of Nephi, why did he not use the latest information from Mormon 8:6, four hundred years? Of special interest is the fact that both the fourth generation and the four hundred years are mentioned in prophe-

cies found in Mormon's abridgment (Alma 45:10, 12; Helaman 13:9–10).

Another example of what Metcalfe considers to be a development beginning late in the Book of Mormon but reflected on the small plates (the "replacement text," as he calls it) is the nature of baptism. He points out that in Mosiah, Alma, and Helaman, as also in the pre-Christian chapters of 3 Nephi, baptism is "penitent," i.e., for repentance, while after the appearance of Christ, it is "christocentric," Christ-centered, being performed in Christ's name. This begins with 3 Nephi 11 and goes through Moroni 7 and is repeated in 2 Nephi 9:23–24; 31:11–12.

Metcalfe indicates that "the sole exception [in the pre-Christian passages] is in Alma's injunction to be 'baptized in the name of the Lord' (Mosiah 18:10)," declaring it to be a borrowing from Acts 10:48.[57] Metcalfe believes that Joseph Smith borrowed the entire concept of baptism from the Bible and that he deliberately copied "the evolving baptismal model of the KJV" from the time of John the Baptist through that of Paul and the Apostles. But if Joseph Smith were this methodical about plagiarizing the Bible, why would he make this "sole exception" in the story of Alma? Besides, Metcalfe omits from his list Alma 62:45, where people are said to be baptized "unto the Lord their God." He would probably respond that this is not the same as being baptized "in the name" of Jesus Christ. One could argue that there is no difference in meaning, only in the wording. More to the point, baptism is for both repentance and to take upon oneself the name of Christ. Alma 7:14, while speaking of baptism for repentance, adds that the initiate should have "faith on the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." Similarly, Mosiah 26:22 speaks of those who "believe in my name" being "baptized unto repentance." This is similar to Alma 9:27, which Metcalfe lists under "penitent baptism" rather than "christocentric baptism," although it clearly fits into both categories. After speaking of "the Son of God, . . . the Only Begotten of the Father" (Alma 9:26), Alma declares, "he cometh to redeem those who will be baptized unto repentance, *through*

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[57] Metcalfe adds that, despite "Alma's injunction to be 'baptized in the name of the Lord' . . . his subsequent baptisms are performed in no one's name." One could similarly argue that the New Testament's injunctions to be baptized in Christ's name are similarly "misplaced," since the baptismal formula is "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." As the sacramental prayers make it clear, baptism in the name of Christ has the principal meaning of taking upon oneself his name.

faith on his name" (Alma 9:27). Even by Metcalfe's reckoning, these passages could not have been influenced by the wording found in 3 Nephi.

Metcalfe's distinction between the baptism of repentance and baptism in the name of Christ is totally unwarranted, Acts 19:3–5 notwithstanding.[58] If John's baptism was for repentance only, why did Jesus, who was without sin, submit to it? Besides, repentance was not left out of the baptismal covenant at the time of Christ's appearance to the Nephites. Baptism in Christ's name *and repentance* are mentioned together in a number of post-Christian passages (3 Nephi 11:37–38; 18:11, 16; 21:6; 27:20; 30:2; 4 Nephi 1:1; Mormon 7:8; Ether 4:18; Moroni 7:34) and in two places on the small plates (2 Nephi 9:23–24; 31:11–12). Perhaps more significant is the fact that repentance and baptism are sometimes linked in post-Christian passages *without* mention of the "name" (Mormon 3:2; Moroni 8:10–11, 25).[59] If we follow Metcalfe's reasoning, these are out of place, since they are belong to the category of "penitent baptism" that he believes characterized the pre-Christian passages of the Book of Mormon.

Even weaker, in my opinion, is Metcalfe's study of the distribution of the word "churches" in the Book of Mormon. The use of "churches" in the later denominational sense rather than the congregational sense of the early Nephite church came about as a natural result of population growth and apostasy following the visit of Christ.[60] Metcalfe does not dispute this

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[58] I have always read Acts 19:3–6 differently from most Latter-day Saints, believing verse 5 to be part of Paul's words referring to those who heard the message of John the Baptist. If John's baptism was of no value, it is difficult to understand why Jesus would have submitted to the ordinance. Because the baptism that John said Jesus would bring was the baptism of the Spirit (Matthew 3:11), it is logical to see Acts 19:6 as Paul's response to the men who had "not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost" (Acts 19:2). But to baptize them again after they had received John's baptism makes no sense to me. I may be wrong in this assessment, and the Greek text may contain nuances that my minimal exposure to that language cannot detect.

[59] Cf. 2 Nephi 31:17. However, verse 16 says that, in being baptized, one follows the example of "the Son," while verses 11–13 speak of repenting and being baptized in the name of the Son.

[60] The growth in population also accounts for the establishment of different "churches" or congregations in the days of Alma and Mosiah (Mosiah 25:18–19, 21–23; 29:47). Prior to that time, Benjamin had assembled all of his people together (Mosiah 2:28–29). The word "church," of course, means an "assemblage." The assembling of the people prior to the

development, though he makes it part of Joseph Smith's plan rather than historical in nature. Having laid this foundation, he then notes that the use of "church" and "churches" in 1 and 2 Nephi follows the later pattern in the Book of Mormon, in which "churches" are different denominations. But since the passages in the first two books of the Book of Mormon are, as Metcalfe notes, eschatological in nature, the comparison, I believe, is unwarranted. Nephi was not describing churches that actually existed in his day. To be sure, Moroni also spoke of these future denominations in Mormon 8 (a fact also noted by Metcalfe). But this only reinforces the fact that the term is used in different senses even in the later part of the Book of Mormon. Metcalfe also does not account for Nephi's mention of "the church" that existed in his day (1 Nephi 4:26).

I am also unconvinced by Metcalfe's developmental theory about the number of witnesses who would see the plates. Omitting mention of more than three in a given passage is no different than Mormon or Moroni speaking of baptism and repentance without saying that the ordinance is performed in the name of Christ (Mormon 3:2; Moroni 8:10–11, 25), discussed above.

Metcalfe, like others before him, notes that wording found in the book of Malachi is found in pre-Christian portions of the Book of Mormon, where it is anachronistic. This is because Malachi lived after Lehi's departure from Jerusalem and it was Christ who, according to 3 Nephi 24–25, had the Nephites record these words. Part of the wording of Malachi 4:1 is found in 1 Nephi 22:15; 2 Nephi 26:4, 6. Metcalfe rejects the view that both Nephi and Malachi cited a common source dating from earlier times. Yet the concept (and much of the wording) in Malachi 4:1 is found in Isaiah 5:24; 33:11; 47:14 (cf. Obadiah 1:18) and Nahum 1:10, implying that there may, indeed, have been an earlier source.

There is not a complete parallel between the wording of 1 Nephi 22:24 and Malachi 4:2. The only words common to both are "as calves of the stall." The words "calves . . . of the stall" are also found in Amos 6:4. Nevertheless, the 1 Nephi and Malachi passages are preceded, in each case, by the verse that speaks of people being consumed or burned as stubble, showing

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time Alma founded the churches in Zarahemla is mentioned in Mosiah 18:25 and is also used to describe events in subsequent time periods (Mosiah 25:21; Alma 15:17; 21:6, 20; 22:7).

a tie. But again, the wording is not identical in the two verses and parallels can be found elsewhere, as noted above.

To Metcalfe, the evidence clearly shows that Joseph Smith used Malachi during the writing of 1 Nephi 22. But since the Prophet must have known, from his translation of 3 Nephi 26:2, that Malachi was not had among the Nephites prior to the coming of Christ, it seems strange that he should entrap himself in such a manner were he the author of the Book of Mormon rather than its translator. The most plausible explanation is that both Nephi and Malachi relied on a common source for these few points of contact.

In a footnote (p. 421 n. 31), Metcalfe compares the convocation under King Benjamin (Mosiah 2–6) with nineteenth-century revivalistic camp-meetings known to Joseph Smith. Having done so, he dismisses comparisons made by this author and others of the Nephite assembly with the ancient Israelite feast of tabernacles.[61] He does note the dependence of the camp meetings on the biblical feast, however. But his dismissal of the comparison of the Book of Mormon story with the feast of tabernacles is unwarranted, since he does not account for the fact that Benjamin's assembly also has features associated with the feast in nonbiblical literature unavailable in Joseph Smith's day.

Christ in the Book of Mormon

Ashment (p. 24), Metcalfe (pp. 427–33), and Charles (p. 86 n. 6) criticize the Book of Mormon for using the Greek word "Christ." This old argument, often raised by critics of the Book of Mormon, is unbecoming of these more scholarly writers, who have no need to grasp at straws. Saying that the use of the Greek "Christ" is evidence against the Book of Mormon because the Nephites knew no Greek is like saying that the use of the French borrowing "bruit" (meaning "rumor") in KJV Jeremiah 10:22 proves the Bible false because the Jews of Jeremiah's time didn't know French! We are, after all, dealing with an *English* translation, and English has adopted a very large number of foreign words that, through time, have become acceptable English.

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61 The latest published iteration of my work is found in the article "King Benjamin and the Feast of Tabernacles," in John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, eds., *By Study and Also by Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh Nibley*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1990), 2:197–237.

Joseph Smith's use of the latter term in pre-Christian Book of Mormon passages is justified by the fact that it was the preeminent term for "anointed one" used in his own culture. There is no hint here that the Book of Mormon contained a Greek word or that the term rendered "Christ" by Joseph Smith was foreign to pre-Christian Israelites.

Metcalfe's complaint that "Christ" was not the "name" of Jesus, as the Book of Mormon has it but, rather, a title, is misleading. Had the Book of Mormon used the term *epithet*, perhaps the debate would have ended. The fact is that the term "name" and "title" are both epithets. Surnames were originally epithets denoting one's occupation, provenance, or status. Thus, "Joseph Smith" originally denominated a man named Joseph who was a smith or metalworker.

More important is the fact that, in Hebrew, a single word denotes both "name" and "title." This is illustrated in the following well-known passage from Isaiah 9:6: "His *name* shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Whether or not one accepts this as a prophecy of Jesus, it is clear that this lengthy "name" consists of a series of *titles*. As for Joseph Smith's subsequent modification of the "name" of the Messiah in early passages of the Book of Mormon, isn't it logical to assume that he was struggling with how to express in his own language—English—a term that may not have been completely compatible but which, in prophetic terms, denoted the Savior?

Those who complain about the use of "Christ" in the Book of Mormon have often criticized the use of the French word "adieu" in Jacob 7:27 on similar grounds, i.e., the Nephites did not know French. The utter stupidity of such arguments continues to amaze me. The ancient Israelites also knew no English, but this doesn't mean we should reject translations of the Bible containing the English word "God"! Moreover, the French word *adieu*, often misspelled "adoo" by Americans, is a regular borrowing in English. It is found in at least two songs, "Red River Valley" ("Do not hasten to bid me adoo") and "There is a Tavern in the Town" ("Adoo, adoo kind friends, adoo"). And on that note, I bid you adieu!