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## Textual Criticism and the Book of Moses: A Response to Colby Townsend's "Returning to the Sources," Part 1 of 2

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Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle

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# TEXTUAL CRITICISM AND THE BOOK OF MOSES: A RESPONSE TO COLBY TOWNSEND'S "RETURNING TO THE SOURCES," PART 1 OF 2

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Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle

Review of Colby Townsend, "Returning to the Sources: Integrating Textual Criticism in the Study of Early Mormon Texts and History." *Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies* 10, no. 1 (2019): 55–85, <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/imwjournal/vol10/iss1/6/>.

**Abstract:** *Textual criticism tries by a variety of methods to understand the "original" or "best" wording of a document that may exist in multiple, conflicting versions or where the manuscripts are confusing or difficult to read. The present article, Part 1 of a two-part series by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle, commends Colby Townsend's efforts to raise awareness of the importance of textual criticism, while differing on some interpretations. Among the differences discussed is the question of whether it is better to read Moses 7:28 as it was dictated in Old Testament 1 version of the Joseph Smith Translation manuscript (OT1) that "God wept," or rather to read it as it was later revised in the Old Testament 2 version (OT2) that "Enoch wept." Far from being an obscure technical detail, the juxtaposition of the two versions of this verse raises general questions as to whether readings based on the latest revisions of Latter-day Saint scripture manuscripts should always take priority over the original dictations. A dialogue with Colby Townsend and Charles Harrell on rich issues of theological and historical relevance demonstrates the potential impact of the different answers to such questions by different scholars. In a separate discussion that highlights the potential significance of handwriting analysis to textual criticism, Bradshaw and Dahle respond to Townsend's arguments that the spelling difference between the names Mahujah and Mahijah in the Book of Moses may be due to a transcription error.*

In a recent article, Colby Townsend commendably pointed the attention of his readers to the importance of embracing textual criticism as a key element of methodology for studying Latter-day Saint documents. He rightfully argues that if important textual sources are missing, mistranscribed, or misunderstood, no amount of subsequent analysis can fully compensate for what may have been lost in the mishandling of this essential prerequisite.

Although Townsend's examples range over several topics in Latter-day Saint history and scripture, our response focuses specifically on topics relevant to the Book of Moses. In the present article, Part 1, we respond to material in his article that bears on three questions. The first is a general question, and the last two respond to specific examples of textual criticism that Townsend raised in his article:

- What is the status of textual criticism on the Book of Moses as a whole?
- Who wept for the wicked in Moses 7:28?
- Do the original manuscripts of the Book of Moses indicate that *Mahujah* and *Mahijah* are separate names?

In Part 2, we will continue the discussion of the Book of Moses names *Mahujah* and *Mahijah*, and the similar names *Mahujael* in Genesis 4:18 and *Mahaway* in the pseudepigraphal *Book of Giants*.

Beyond the particulars of the response to Townsend's paper, we hope this discussion will contribute to a better appreciation of the role and importance of textual criticism in understanding Latter-day Saint scripture.

### **1. What Is the Status of Textual Criticism on the Book of Moses?**

Compared to the other works of Latter-day Saint scripture, the study of the text of the Book of Moses has accelerated more slowly. We owe great thanks to early pioneers such as Robert J. Matthews<sup>1</sup> and Richard P. Howard<sup>2</sup> as well as to the more recent scholarship by Kent P. Jackson, Scott Faulring, and other associates we discuss in more detail below. However, as Townsend points out, there is additional work to be done.

Townsend gives good examples of where failure to use primary sources and interpret them judiciously can lead to erroneous conclusions.<sup>3</sup> He shows how Michael Homer overlooked a phrase that was key to his argument because of differences in the ordering of the text in the 1851 publication of selections from the Book of Moses. He also demonstrates problems with Thomas Wayment's view that

the Old Testament 1 manuscript of Moses 1 is a copy rather than an original dictation, based in part on his misreadings of Moses 1. These misreadings occurred despite the fact that Wayment, unlike Homer, “had access to recent transcriptions of OT1 and high-resolution images of it as well.”<sup>4</sup> We agree with Townsend’s conclusions, and Bradshaw expands upon these and other issues relating to Wayment’s explanations for the genesis of Joseph Smith’s Bible translation in a separate review of his chapter.<sup>5</sup> (Also signaling the importance of textual criticism, Bradshaw has favorably reviewed selected chapters of Samuel Brown’s book on Joseph Smith’s translations, revelations, and temple teachings, while signaling his omission of important links between the Book of Moses and the temple.<sup>6</sup>)

### **What Documents Are Currently Available for the Textual Study of the Book of Moses?**

On p. 70, Townsend begins his discussion of the Book of Moses as follows:

Some may assume that the LDS Pearl of Great Price, an important part of the LDS canonical works, ha[s] received thorough treatment, but this assumption only applies to the Book of Abraham.<sup>7</sup>

After having encountered this statement, readers may think scholarly treatment of the Book of Moses has been deficient, but Townsend’s comment has more to do with completeness than quality. His primary concern is the need for more textual criticism of books in the Pearl of Great Price, going beyond documentary editing. According to Kent P. Jackson, the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) manuscripts (of which the Book of Moses is a part) have already received “a higher level of redundant scrutiny than is the norm in documentary editing.”<sup>8</sup> Although Townsend cites Jackson’s 2005 book,<sup>9</sup> *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation*, his article does not give a description of its contents because, while it is related to the issues he describes in his article, it does not provide a critical text of the sort he is calling for. Unfortunately, and more to Townsend’s point, the broader field of Latter-day Saint studies has not paid the kind of attention to Jackson’s book that it deserves.

The goal of Jackson’s 2005 book was to answer two questions: “What was Joseph Smith’s intended text?” and “How did we get from that to the current text?”<sup>10</sup> It explains the major developments of the Book of Moses from the original manuscript in OT1<sup>11</sup> to the 1981 canonical edition.

The book contains a chapter on the “Historical Text” (pp. 53–142) that reproduces the text of OT2<sup>12</sup> along with a text-critical apparatus that focuses on a comparison of OT2 to OT1, EMS, 1835 LF, 1843 TS, 1851, CM, 1867 IV, 1878, 1879, 1888, 1902, 1921, and 1981 as well as to “early printings of the Book of Moses that are not part of the direct lineage of today’s text” (i.e., EMS, LF, TS, 1851, and 1879).<sup>13</sup> Additionally, a chapter entitled “Manuscript Text” (pp. 143–171) brings the OT1 and OT2 manuscripts together into a single place, “with the words as the Prophet left them [i.e., following the latest revisions made in his lifetime], but with grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation standardized.”<sup>14</sup> In addition, high-definition images of these JST manuscript pages have been available since the inexpensive publication of *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible Electronic Library (JSTEL)* in 2011.<sup>15</sup> The transcriptions of the JST documents created by Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews were used to help create the transcription now found on the Joseph Smith Papers website.<sup>16</sup> The JSTEL allows readers to scrutinize every word and letter of the transcriptions. Gratefully, we have been able to rely on the JSTEL for all of the JST manuscript images used in the figures of the present article.

### **What Specific Concerns Does Townsend Raise about Document Transcription?**

With respect to the Jackson and Faulring’s transcriptions of the manuscripts of the Joseph Smith Translation, Townsend summarized his assessment as follows:

Like previous copyists that have transmitted the text of the Book of Moses, Jackson and Faulring have made errors in their transcription. This implies that caution should be used when utilizing the printed and electronic transcripts of Smith’s Bible revision, and new publications should improve upon the significant previous work of these scholars.<sup>17</sup>

Although, as with any similar work of scholarship, it is always possible that a given instance of transcription may be called into question in the future, the warning about transcription errors raised above is not currently well-supported by examples. Apart from questions that Townsend raises about the possibility of transcription errors in Emma’s handwriting (discussed later below), Townsend draws attention to only one other transcription error: a missing line in a journal publication that Jackson and Faulring made of “Old Testament Manuscript 3,”<sup>18</sup> an early lateral private copy made by John Whitmer. However, Jackson has clarified that

this was not, as Townsend characterizes it, a transcription error “silently added in the CD-ROM edition of OT3”<sup>19</sup> but rather an accidental deletion by the journal’s typesetter of a line contained in the manuscript submitted for publication.<sup>20</sup> Townsend has told us he is engaged in the process of locating and correcting other possible errors in the hopes that scholars will join him in creating and using new documentary editions of the manuscripts as well as a text-critical single volume edition.

### **According to Townsend, What Else Remains to Be Done?**

Going beyond Townsend’s concerns about the accuracy of current transcriptions, subsequent discussion with him<sup>21</sup> has clarified his views of what else remains to be done. He intends to make a complete text-critical study of all handwritten manuscripts (including the full text as well as quotations from parts of it) and printed editions. At present, he has identified forty-five relevant sources dating from 1828 to 1902, including lateral sources not part of the lineage of the current text. Similar to Jackson, his hope is to be able to create a text that answers the question: “What was the text in 1833 that Smith was preparing for publication?” and also provide transcriptions of the other unpublished manuscripts and printed editions that are key to understanding the Book of Moses at different times in early Mormon history. In the end, Townsend wants to provide multiple volumes: a documentary edition of all forty-five manuscript and printed sources plus a separate volume that provides a critical text with a text-critical apparatus. This will assist historians who study the first seventy years of Latter-day Saint history by providing the text of the Book of Moses in the form that members of the several branches of the Restoration movement might all feel comfortable in turning to for their understanding of the text.

Once Townsend demonstrates that he has mustered significant evidence beyond what he has offered to date to support his warning that “caution should be used when utilizing the ... transcripts of Smith’s Bible revision,”<sup>22</sup> the question he raises about the degree of *accuracy* of existing transcriptions can be taken up more fully by scholars. In the meantime, however, with respect to *completeness* of the textual record, we applaud Townsend’s ongoing project to provide a new documentary edition and critical text that will include all known manuscripts of the Book of Moses, whether they are in a lineal or lateral relationship to the current canonical version.

Now we move on to some more specific questions. The issues Townsend raises here provide examples of the kinds of discussions of



text-critical questions that should be taking place, and we are grateful for the willingness of Townsend and Charles Harrell to engage with us in friendly dialogue about them.

## 2. Who Wept for the Wicked in Moses 7:28?



Figure 1. “the God of heaven wept” (Moses 7:28) as written by Emma Smith.<sup>23</sup>

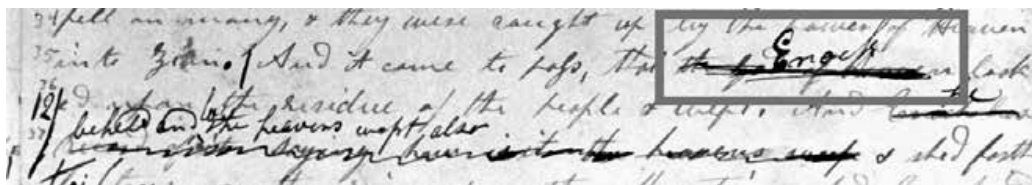


Figure 2. “Enoch ... wept” (Moses 7:28) as written by John Whitmer.<sup>24</sup>

### “The God of Heaven Wept” (OT1) vs. “Enoch Wept” (OT2)

The first observations that Townsend makes relating to the Enoch chapters of the Book of Moses are found on pp. 77–79. They concern what now constitutes Moses 7:28–29 in the current Latter-day Saint version of the Book of Moses. The gist of his observation has to do with the Prophet’s original dictation of the verse in Old Testament manuscript 1 (OT1), where *God* wept:

the g God of heaven looked upon the residue of the peop[le a]nd he wept and Enock bore record of it saying how is it the heavens weep and Shed fourth her tears as the rain upon the Mountains and Enock said unto the heavens how is it that thou canst weep seeing thou art holy and from all eternity to all eternity.<sup>25</sup>

A subsequent revision on Old Testament manuscript 2 (OT2) changes the text so it states that *Enoch* wept rather than God:

~~the God of Heaven~~ <Enock> look=ed upon the residue of the people & wept. And Enoch bore record of it saying how is it the heavens weep <he beheld and <lo!> the heavens wept also> & shed forth <t>h[er]<eir> tears upon the Mountains And Enoch S†aid<sup>26</sup> unto the heavens how is it that thou canst weep Seeing Thou art holy & from all eternity to all eternity<sup>27</sup>

For reasons that have been outlined elsewhere,<sup>28</sup> the OT1 version of Moses 7, which includes the version of the text stating that God wept, is

the one retained in the current canonical version of the Book of Moses — rather than the later OT2.

In the discussion below, we will examine the following questions:

- How did Terryl Givens describe the weeping of Moses 7:28?
- Why did Townsend (and Harrell) conclude that Givens did not take the OT2 revision of Moses 7:28 seriously enough?
- Does God express only anger and wrath in Moses 7 to the exclusion of any display of sorrow and sadness?
- Should we trust OT2 more than OT1?

### **How Did Terryl Givens Describe the Weeping of Moses 7:28?**

Of course, Townsend's observation about this revision is not new, since this change has been previously discussed in Robert J. Matthews' landmark 1975 publication,<sup>29</sup> in the 2004 publication of the transcription of the complete manuscripts of the Joseph Smith translation,<sup>30</sup> in Kent Jackson's careful 2005 study of the Book of Moses manuscripts,<sup>31</sup> in Richard Draper, Kent Brown, and Michael Rhodes' verse-by-verse commentary on the Pearl of Great Price,<sup>32</sup> in Thomas Wayment's helpful side-by-side comparison of the King James Bible and the JST,<sup>33</sup> and in Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and David J. Larsen's 2014 commentary,<sup>34</sup> for which Townsend was a contributor.<sup>35</sup>

What is at issue for Townsend is not whether or not the current state of textual scholarship has properly documented and drawn attention to this textual concern, but rather if specific treatments of this passage, whether found in publications intended for scholarly or popular audiences, have failed to properly document, analyze, and (especially) engage with the available text-critical information. Townsend was surprised and concerned that a scholar such as Terryl Givens, who has written extensively about this passage, was apparently not aware the verse was revised after its initial dictation until Townsend pointed it out to him. To Townsend, this suggests that if better text-critical resources were available and more routinely used, these kinds of oversights would happen less often.

Within his article, Townsend specifically cites writings by Eugene England<sup>36</sup> and Terryl Givens.<sup>37</sup> These authors have been influential in sensitizing Latter-day Saints to the significant difference between the Latter-day Saint concept of a God who is capable of feeling sorrow and the untouchable God of most traditional Christian creeds (with important exceptions).<sup>38</sup> Given that Townsend acknowledges the mention of this textual change in Givens' Enoch-related publication in

2019, it seems appropriate to explore why Townsend still believes that Givens “fails to appreciate the details of this issue.”<sup>39</sup>

First, what did Givens actually say? Although his explanation of the revision of Moses 7:28 does not extend as far as to include the full textual history of the verse, as Townsend does in his own article, Givens’ brief summary is nevertheless concise and eloquent in depicting both the theological implications of the verse and the historical essentials of its revision, especially in consideration of the wide audience of readers he evidently hoped to reach with his book:

Enoch ... is most struck by God’s unanticipated response to a world veiled in darkness: “And it came to pass that the God of heaven looked upon the residue of the people and he wept, and Enoch bore record of it.” Smith then revised the text to indicate that Enoch is in this scene weeping *with* God and is surprised when he sees God joining in his grief. “And he beheld, and lo, the heavens wept also and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the Mountains.” Though “heavens” stands in here for “God” in poetic metonymy, it is clearly God who weeps, and who personally responds to Enoch’s twice-expressed amazement: “How is it thou canst weep?”<sup>40</sup>

### **Why Did Townsend (and Harrell) Conclude That Givens Did Not Take the OT2 Revision of Moses 7:28 Seriously Enough?**

Why did Townsend feel that Givens failed to take the OT2 revision seriously enough in his most recent publication on the subject? Below, we outline and respond to Townsend’s concerns in this regard. In addition, the brief remarks from Townsend on the subject are supplemented by a summary of additional concerns generously contributed in a personal note from Charles Harrell, cited with his permission and later revised by him in light of our initial response in a previous draft.<sup>41</sup> First, a summary of Townsend’s remarks on the subject.

Townsend views Joseph Smith as realizing “that there were some difficulties in making sense of [the OT1 dictation of] this verse. In particular, the use of the masculine pronoun for both God and Enoch, as well as the fact that God is made synonymous with the female divine heavens.” Among other things, the Prophet’s “significant revisions in OT2 ... the feminine heavens lose their pronoun for a neutral pronoun “their.” This alteration ... removes the gendered pronoun that previously defined the heavens.”<sup>42</sup>

While we don't have any *a priori* objection to the possibility that the heavens might have been seen as feminine in its original dictation in OT1, we are not satisfied that the presence of the possessive *her* in OT1 constitutes unambiguous evidence of that possibility. It seems to us that there are equally plausible options. For example, the OT1 scribe could have simply (mis)heard *her* instead of the similarly sounding *their*. Or perhaps, the later revision was nothing more than a simple mechanical fix to make the possessive consistent with a plural noun ("heavens"). To place too much confidence in the idea that the *her* is a reliable indication, fraught with weighty interpretive import, that the heavens were feminine or, going further, that there were significant semantic implications of the change from *her* to *their* seems premature based on extant evidence.

In any event, it should also be noted that the change from "the feminine" heavens to the "neutered ... heavens"<sup>43</sup> was not successful in effecting a full resolution of the set of sense-making "difficulties" that Townsend has proposed. This is because the solution to the supposed gender-related problem of *her* did not fix the remaining inconsistency between the OT2's resulting plural possessive *their* and the singular pronoun used almost immediately thereafter in Enoch's question: "How is it that *thou* canst weep?" More on this seeming inconsistency below.

Of course, the most important implication of the change in pronoun for "the heavens" for Townsend is that it "changes the meaning of the text" by shifting "the action of weeping from God to Enoch."<sup>44</sup> However, even if one were to grant that the revision to the verse was made intentionally to put the focus on Enoch rather than God in this instance (something we see as unlikely), it seems to us that the effect of this change on the passage as a whole would be quite minimal. For reasons we will argue more fully below, we find God's predominant mood throughout the present passage is that of sorrow for the unrepentant wicked. Though God argues His grievances passionately and demonstrates no second thoughts about what He was sadly compelled to do in light of the people's recalcitrance, His ultimate theme is compassion and hope that His wayward children will accept the proffered Atonement made on their behalf. As David Bokovoy has written about the way the passage *combines* divine expressions of both grievance and mercy:

In the Book of Moses, God appears as He does in the Hebrew Bible as a deity possessing immense power. But He is also a God who loves to the extent that human sinfulness causes Him to experience intense sadness, to the point of shedding tears. He is a God who cares so passionately about His work

and glory to bring to pass human immortality and eternal life (Moses 1:39) that He experiences human emotions when His creations sin. However, in the Book of Moses, God is not simply a kind sympathetic deity. His Old Testament-like propensity toward emotion combined with immense power appears in the Book of Moses through his tearful decision to annihilate almost all creation.<sup>45</sup>

With respect to this citation, Townsend related to us that he made Bokovoy aware of the revised version of Moses 7:28 that had Enoch rather than God “shedding tears” late in the publication process, presumably too late to make use of this finding.<sup>46</sup> This example corroborates Townsend’s general point that even very well-informed scholars have not made adequate use of extant text-critical resources. On this issue, we are in complete agreement with Townsend.

Although we do not know to what extent Bokovoy might have changed his text in light of later knowledge of the revision, what seems to have impressed him most in his published reading of the passage as a whole was the repeated evidence of God’s deep love for humankind: “Human sinfulness causes Him to experience intense sadness.” He cares “so passionately.” Although Bokovoy acknowledged that “God is not simply a kind sympathetic deity,” he characterized God’s determination to “annihilate almost all creation” as a “tearful decision,” not one either of unfeeling anger or of repentance for His own actions.<sup>47</sup>

Going beyond Townsend’s hypotheses about Joseph Smith’s motivations for the OT2 revisions of the passage, Harrell turns his attention to “those who maintain that the [OT1] text is correct as it stands.”<sup>48</sup> While *correct* is too strong a word to use to describe our own views, we do have reasons to believe the OT1 reading is superior overall to the OT2 reading. We will have more to say later on the question of whether OT1 or OT2 is the better reading, but in the meantime, we will examine Harrell’s specific arguments that accepting the OT1 reading is “problematic”<sup>49</sup> at the outset. In each of the points below, our responses will follow his bolded statements.

- **Harrell:** “Smith is crafting (and I don’t mean to rule out inspiration) an ancient narrative using biblical language, but also grappling with his present theology. When I read Moses 7, I see an attempt to situate God on the side of weeping with Enoch and the rest of His creations, but the composer isn’t entirely clear about what it might mean for God to weep, especially given that the teaching of an

**embodied God was still more than a decade away. Can this supreme being weep like humans weep, with actual physical tears running down physical cheeks? I wonder if perhaps Smith didn't see a clear way for that scenario to fly, so he shifted the weeping to the heavens in the form of rain, which is a common Christian literary image.**<sup>50</sup> We accept the commonly held view of church members that Joseph Smith had a clear understanding of the corporeality of God the Father since at least the time of the First Vision,<sup>51</sup> though he seems to have been reluctant to teach that doctrine (and for that matter to share details about his First Vision itself<sup>52</sup>) in all its clarity and implications until later in his ministry. This reticence led to early statements from some church members that propounded various views to the contrary.

Study of the translations, teachings, and revelations of Joseph Smith suggest that he sometimes knew much more than he taught publicly about certain matters that were considered sacred<sup>53</sup> or that ran contrary to commonly received religious traditions.<sup>54</sup> For example, in some cases, we know that the Prophet deliberately delayed the publication of early temple-related revelations connected with his work on the JST until several years after he initially received them.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, even after Joseph Smith was well along in the Bible translation process, he seems to have believed that God did not intend for him to publish the JST in his lifetime. For example, in writing to W. W. Phelps in 1832, he said: "I would inform you that [the Bible translation] will not go from under my hand during my natural life for correction, revisal, or printing and the will of [the] Lord be done."<sup>56</sup>

Although Joseph Smith eventually reversed his position and apparently made serious efforts to prepare the manuscript of the JST for publication, his own statement makes clear that initially he did not feel authorized to share publicly all he had produced — and learned — during the translation process. Indeed, a prohibition against indiscriminate sharing of some revelations, which parallels similar cautions found in pseudepigrapha,<sup>57</sup> is explicit in the Book of Moses when it says of one sacred portion of the account: "Show [these words] not unto any except them that believe."<sup>58</sup> Such admonitions are consistent with a remembrance of a statement by Joseph Smith

that he intended to go back and rework some portions of the Bible translation to add in truths he was previously “restrained ... from giving in plainness and fulness.”<sup>59</sup>

With specific respect to the question at hand, so far as we have been able to discover in extant evidence, the supposition that Joseph Smith himself was “grappling with his present theology” about whether God the Father had a body (whether physical or spiritual) is based solely on inference from the fact of the OT2 revision of Moses 7:28 itself. Not only is this view currently lacking independent corroboration, it fails to allow for the argument that divine inspiration prompted the original dictation. Moreover, as we detail later on, there is complementary evidence that later substantive revisions in OT2 sometimes tend to run roughshod over important literary features integral to OT1. Such considerations make OT1, in our view, a superior reading to OT2.

- **Harrell:** “My greater concern ... is that those who choose to see God literally weeping in this account seem to want to vaunt it as a novel teaching — one that starkly contrasts with the teachings in Smith’s day. This claim of exceptionalism seems entirely unwarranted in light of the literature which evidences a passible, sympathetic God as one of the predominant teachings of the day.”<sup>60</sup> Of course, we concur that to the degree that literature contemporary with Joseph Smith gives evidence of a “passible, sympathetic God,” scholars should not overemphasize Latter-day Saint exceptionalism in this regard. However, detailed arguments and evidence countering the views of Givens and others who see Joseph Smith’s teachings, translations, and revelations about the passibility of God as primarily innovative rather than derivative have yet to be made.
- **Harrell:** Focusing on a perceived inconsistency in verse 28 of OT1, which has God looking upon the residue of the people and weeping, Harrell writes: “In OT1 Enoch is reported to have ‘looked’ or ‘beheld’ a total of 19 times in the two visions he is shown. God, on the other hand, is never described in these visions as ‘looking’ or ‘beholding,’ except for this single instance in verse 28. In order to preserve the presenter-viewer relationship that exists throughout the

rest of the narrative, Smith may have felt it necessary to change verse 28 in OT2 to have Enoch doing the looking and weeping, rather than God.”<sup>61</sup> Here we would begin by noting that the idea that the visionary sees the vision does not automatically exclude the idea that God is looking at the vision *with* him. For example, in Jewish,<sup>62</sup> Islamic,<sup>63</sup> and other<sup>64</sup> ancient accounts whose narrative themes resemble Moses 7, the cosmic visions of the prophets are often described as a “picture,” “model,” or “likeness”<sup>65</sup> shown on a “visionary screen,”<sup>66</sup> — in other words a representation “projected” on the backside of the heavenly veil. In such accounts, as God and the visionary view this “blueprint”<sup>67</sup> of eternity *together*, the prophet asks questions, and in answer God speaks while at the same time drawing attention to particular features of each scene. This is the very setting for the vision and dialogue with God in, for example, the Jewish book of *3 Enoch*<sup>68</sup> and in Moses 1.<sup>69</sup>

- **Harrell:** “Verses 37 and 40 refer to the ‘whole heavens ... even all the workmanship of mine hands’ as doing the weeping. Assuming that ‘the heavens’ does function as a metonym, why jump to the conclusion that it is a stand-in for God and not all of his works as the text states here? Finally, when used as a metonym in the OT, ‘the heavens’ doesn’t always refer to God, much less only to God. For example, in Psalm 89:5, which have the heavens praising God’s works, the Net Bible explains,<sup>70</sup> ‘the personified heavens here stand by metonymy for the angelic beings that surround God’s heavenly throne.’ In Psalm 19:1 ‘the heavens declare the glory of God.’ In other instances ‘the heavens’ are said by Ernest Wright and Frank Moore Cross to refer to the heavenly council.”<sup>71</sup> We concur with this well-expressed perspective. It seems reasonable to widen Givens’ suggestion that the reference to the “heavens” “stands in ... for ‘God’ in poetic metonymy” to mean that “the heavens” ineluctably *includes* God as part of the “heavens” in “poetic metonymy.” Similarly to D&C 76:26, we might take “the heavens” to refer to “the inhabitants of the heavens.”<sup>72</sup>
- **Harrell:** “The assertion that ‘the heavens’ is merely a metonym (stand-in) for God seems premature, and when



examined in context, is problematic. For example, in verses 37 and 40 God refers, in the third person, to the heavens weeping. To suggest that ‘the heavens,’ in these verses, refers to God, when God is the one referring to them, strikes me as both odd and obscurant. Why all the indirection? I’m not claiming that God couldn’t or wouldn’t address himself so indirectly, but I would like to see some discussion of this indirection and lack of straight talk.”<sup>73</sup> As to any question about the seeming indirection in God’s response, we would begin by observing that a sufficient answer may be found in the fact that God is simply responding to the exact question Enoch asked in v. 28: ‘How is it that the heavens weep ...?’<sup>74</sup> Only after describing the tragic situation in a passionate set of verses (using the personal terms *I*, *me*, *my*, and *mine* twenty-four times) does God refer for the first time to “the heavens,” the subject of Enoch’s question.

At that point, significantly, God makes mention of “the heavens” twice in summary fashion at the end of His speech forming the end of an *inclusio* that opened with Enoch’s question. God’s emphatic statement in v. 37, emphasizing the scope of the weeping as being the “whole” heavens and “all the workmanship of mine hands” is repeated more succinctly in v. 40, as if to bring His answer to the original question to a definite closure and to prepare the reader for the wholehearted response of Enoch in v. 41.

In addition to the dramatic narrative function served by the threefold repetition of “the heavens” in Enoch’s question and God’s answer as described above, there may also be some currently undiscerned literary purpose behind the fact that the term “the heavens” is repeated seven times in the chapter as a whole in light of the significance of the number seven in the Hebrew Bible.

- **Harrell:** “The narrative seems to want to call attention to the weeping heavens rather than the weeping God. It is as though part of the role given to the heavens is to mourn the sins and suffering of people on earth. Thus, the heavens can ‘rejoice’ (Psalm 96:11) at favorable situations or ‘weep’ (D&C 76:26) at unfortunate ones. It is further noteworthy that Moses 7:37 and 40 expressly includes all of God’s

**creations in the weeping role, but nowhere is God expressly included, though admittedly not excluded either.”<sup>75</sup>**

Unfortunately, this argument holds only if one excludes God *a priori* from His role *as part of* “the heavens.” On the other hand, if one takes seriously the idea that references to “the heavens” are meant to include God, it becomes apparent that references to God’s weeping are not confined to the OT1 text of Moses 7:28 but are scattered throughout the chapter. As discussed above, one must also remember that God is poetically equated with the “heavens” when Enoch addresses the “heavens” as “thou,” speaking in that instance in terms that unmistakably reference God.

- **Harrell:** “How is this unmistakable? ... Why does the pronoun ‘thou’ necessitate a reference to God rather than collectively to the heavens or the heavenly hosts God created, which seems more implicit in the text? The claim that heavens=God in Moses 7 is an inference, not an assertion made by the text itself.”<sup>76</sup> Despite the prefatory mention of “the heavens” in OT1 and OT2 (v. 29), the fact that Enoch’s question itself is stated with a (typically) singular pronoun: “How is it that *thou* canst weep, seeing *thou* art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity?” and goes on in v. 30–31 to refer to the creation, the curtains, the bosom, and the divine attributes of *God* before repeating the question “How is it *thou* canst weep?” are all reliable indicators that Enoch is addressing God Himself, directly and personally.
- **Harrell:** “[Another] argument against a weeping God in Moses 7 is that it would be the only place in latter-day scripture that records such an act by God. Jacob 5 is sometimes cited as an example of God weeping, but Jacob 5 is a parable in which God is represented as Lord of the Vineyard and his sadness for the loss of his vineyard is represented by his weeping. If one is to take the Lord’s weeping literally here, one would also have to take the Lord’s ignorance about what to do with his vineyard also literally, as well as his hasty resort to having it burned.”<sup>77</sup> Though we agree that parables are not to be taken literally in the strictest sense, we do not think the reader would be mistaken to take the weeping of the Lord of the Vineyard as the author’s

affirmation that God (probably, we think, referring to the Lord Jesus Christ in this instance) is capable of deep sorrow. After all, we have a second witness in modern scripture to this idea in the Book of Mormon, when Christ “wept”<sup>78</sup> and “wept again.”<sup>79</sup> We take the teaching of the resurrected, perfect Jesus Christ in 3 Nephi 12:48 as signifying to His disciples that He and His Father can be equated in every respect: “I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect.”

As to Harrell’s remaining observations, we must not forget that rhetorical questions have a long and distinguished history in biblical literature,<sup>80</sup> stretching back to Genesis 3:9 when God asked Adam: “Where art thou?” (cf. Moses 4:15: “Where *goest* thou?”) — “a strange thing for a [presumably omniscient] deity to say.”<sup>81</sup> But, of course, God is not seeking information but rather requesting Adam to reflect openly on his intentions — in view of the fact that his feet are now pointed toward the exit of the Garden.

As to the Lord’s so-called “ignorance” of what more could be done for His vineyard<sup>82</sup> and his “hasty resort” to burn it,<sup>83</sup> we should remember that the purpose of His words within the larger dialogue is not really to reveal His state of mind and intentions but rather as a means of eliciting a compassionate response from His servants — a tactic that succeeds when one servant replies, “Spare it a little longer” — precisely the response the Lord had hoped for in the first place.<sup>84</sup> Like similar literary devices, this teaching method “involves the use of dramatic elements which draw [not only the participants, but also] the audience in.”<sup>85</sup> In summary, by admitting that the Lord can weep, we are not necessarily obliged to attribute senseless questions or callous proposals for action to Him in the process. It should be remembered that Jacob 5 is, after all, as Harrell himself affirms, a parable — not necessarily a complete representation of reality in every detail.

- **Harrell:** “When one reads though to verse 41, the overarching theme seems to be God’s fiery indignation and ‘fierce anger’ which is ‘kindled against’ the wicked people (v. 34). The Almighty God, who holds all his creations in the palm of his hands (v. 36), is poised to carry out swift judgment on

**sinners. No wonder it is left to the heavens and God's other creations to sympathize and weep over the outpouring of God's wrath in this narrative .... Any exultation of the weeping God in Moses 7, if based on OT2, strikes me as being unbalanced as it disregards the general arc of the narrative which points only [to] the commiseration of God's creations with the suffering of the ungodly. In terms of God, Moses 7 seems to accentuate only his wrath rather than his tender-heartedness."**<sup>86</sup> Our answer to this argument is given in the section below.

### **Does God Express Only Anger and Wrath in Moses 7 to the Exclusion of Any Display of Sorrow and Sadness?**

While we do not agree with Harrell's view that "Moses 7 accentuates only [God's] wrath rather than his tender-heartedness,"<sup>87</sup> we sympathize with his observation that in Latter-day Saint discourse "passages emphasizing God's passibility are sometimes emphasized at the exclusion of passages portraying God as vengeful."<sup>88</sup>

A useful corrective to this tendency may be to compare Moses 7 to suitable Old Testament analogues. While the fusion of justice and mercy in the character of God may seem like an irreconcilable contradiction in modern thinking, ancient scripture writers had no problem in putting these seemingly opposite ideas together — often in close proximity within a single chapter of scripture.

Rather than viewing selected verses from Moses 7:28–41 in isolation, we will now examine the passage as a whole, comparing it to a general Old Testament model best exemplified in two classic chapters of the Old Testament: Isaiah 1 and Deuteronomy 32.<sup>89</sup> We will summarize some of the features of this model as they are portrayed in OT1, which we believe provides a better reading of the passage than OT2.

By way of introduction to our reading, we observe that the text of Moses 7:28–41 resonates with selected themes mentioned by John Hobbins in his outline of Isaiah 1, including:

- God's call for heaven and earth to witness His grievance
- The relationship of privilege and obligation entailed by a Father and his children
- The actions God will take in view of the wayward and defiant state of His children
- God's proposal for a merciful resolution of their troubles

Analogues to each of these themes will be seen in the summary presented below. In our summary, we will draw liberally from discussions of Hobbins and others to demonstrate how Enoch's grand vision, like Deuteronomy 32 and Isaiah 1, artfully combines seemingly contradictory aspects of God's nature (i.e., justice and mercy) within a single pericope.

**The heavens weep for the residue of the people — God's children and Enoch's brethren.** The opening verses of Moses 7:28–41 recall the opening verse of Isaiah 1:1 and Deuteronomy 32:1, where the heavens and the earth are called upon to witness the Lord's lament. However, in the Book of Moses, the heavens are not passive observers but active participants who weep with God in His sorrow.

Townsend and Harrell see a sharp discontinuity between the sympathy of Enoch, the heavens, and the earth and the anger of God. However, to us, an examination of the passage as a whole in the form it was originally dictated in OT1 seems to exhibit a continuity that steadily builds up to an almost unbearable intensity of sorrow. The weeping "God of heaven"<sup>90</sup> leads out in a heavenly "chorus"<sup>91</sup> that eventually comes to include "all the workmanship of [His] hands"<sup>92</sup> — at which point Enoch, the protagonist of the account, also joins in with full heart and soul.

In a few verses that precede Moses 7:28, we see additional support for the logic of the OT1 narrative that has God weeping and Enoch bearing record. Note the significant sequence when angels descend "*out of heaven*" to warn the earth,<sup>93</sup> followed by angels that come down "*out of heaven*" to *bear testimony* of the Godhead.<sup>94</sup> In perfect parallel to this sequence, we are then told that the "God of heaven" weeps, while Enoch *bears record*.<sup>95</sup> Such references seem to be anticipated in the statement of God in Moses 6:63: "All things are created and made to *bear record* of me."

By way of contrast, the local symmetry of the two instances of warning/weeping and witnessing is broken by the OT2 revisions, where both the weeping of God and the witnessing of Enoch are omitted.

**Enoch's question: "How is it that thou canst weep?"** Enoch is dumbfounded when he sees God weep. Mirroring a pattern found elsewhere in scripture,<sup>96</sup> Enoch's initial, indirect inquiry ("How is it that *the heavens* weep?"<sup>97</sup>) is immediately followed with a more pointed version of the question: "How is it that *thou canst* weep?"<sup>98</sup>

Despite the plural "heavens" that are mentioned in OT1's initial description of the addressee of Enoch's question, any ambiguity about whether the *thou* in the question ("How is it that *thou canst* weep?") refers

to the “heavens” or to “God” is resolved not only by the predominantly singular *thou* but also by his description of his interlocutor as being not only “holy and from all eternity to all eternity” but also as the *Creator* of the heavens and the earth.<sup>99</sup> Note also that the answer to Enoch’s question comes directly from God. Since God’s answer is given with no intervening explanation about His relationship to the heavens, it seems evident that the reader is meant to understand that God and the members of His heavenly retinue are perfectly conjoined as one in their sorrow, as Terryl Givens rightly observed. Moreover, would Enoch have asked *why* God weeps in v. 30 if he had not already *borne record of* God’s weeping in v. 28?

On the other hand, the logic of Enoch’s question in v. 30 is broken by OT2’s omission of God’s weeping in v. 28.

**The Lord’s judgment: “I will send in the floods upon them.”**<sup>100</sup> Book of Moses parallels to the general model of Isaiah 1 and Deuteronomy 32 continue in this section: Having called all Creation together to witness His suffering, the Lord now explains His grievance and describes the “punishment for defection.”<sup>101</sup>

Givens and Bokovoy rightly take a nuanced view that the “fire of ... indignation,” “hot displeasure,” and “fierce anger”<sup>102</sup> of God be considered in the context of the larger passage. These authors appear to sense in the very passion of these words the angst of a sorrowing Father who is required by justice to execute impending judgments while simultaneously taking every appropriate measure to assure merciful provisions will be extended to all who would repent.

The Lord’s compassion for the victims of wickedness compels Him to put an end to the machinations of those who have stubbornly persisted in “hat[ing] their own blood,” being wholly “without affection” for both God and man.<sup>103</sup> As Abraham Heschel expresses it with respect to Isaiah 1:

The destructiveness of God’s power is not due to God’s hostility to man, but to His concern for righteousness, to His intolerance of injustice. The human mind seems to have no sense for the true dimension of man’s cruelty to man. God’s anger is fierce because man’s cruelty is infernal.<sup>104</sup>

In marked contrast to the descriptions found in the pseudepigraphal *1 Enoch*, where the wicked Watchers are condemned for eternity without possibility of reprieve,<sup>105</sup> the God of the Book of Moses, while condemning the sin, is moved by mercy for the sinner. He sorrows for the (self-inflicted) suffering of the wicked (v. 37) and provides a way for their salvation by offering the gift of the atonement of Christ (v. 39) and

its accompanying invitation to “*all men, everywhere*” (v. 52) to repent and be made whole. Sadly, because of the “agency” God irrevocably gave humankind in the beginning (v. 32), He realizes that there is nothing he can do to help them unless they freely choose love over hate (v. 33). The needlessness of their suffering brings God great sorrow.<sup>106</sup>

In all of this, the Book of Moses, like Isaiah 1:2–9, “echoes Deuteronomy 32:1–35 measure for measure.”<sup>107</sup> As Hobbins describes it:<sup>108</sup>

First comes the call to heaven and earth to witness the indictment of Israel on charges of disloyalty; then, the playing off of Yahweh’s love for the people, the love of a father for his children, against the people’s insensate disobedience. ... The tone is one of exasperation.

God’s reminder to the people in Moses 7:33 that He is “their Father” is consistent with similar descriptions in Isaiah 1<sup>109</sup> and Deuteronomy 32.<sup>110</sup> The pointed emphasis on God’s filial relationship to humankind is significant in light of Bergey’s observation that such “father-son imagery” is “rare in the prophets and elsewhere in the Hebrew scriptures.”<sup>111</sup> According to Heschel, Isaiah “pleads with us to understand the plight of a father whom his children have abandoned.”<sup>112</sup>

Importantly, the defiant defection of the people does not lessen God’s love, nor does it slacken His patient, painstaking effort to bring them to their senses. As Heschel observes:<sup>113</sup>

There is sorrow in God’s anger. It is an instrument of purification and its exercise will not last forever.

Note that OT2 inexplicably substitutes the more general term *God*<sup>114</sup> for OT1’s use of the term *Father*, thus diminishing the long series of poignant God-as-Father parallels between Moses 7<sup>115</sup> and Isaiah and Deuteronomy.

**The Lord’s lament: “Misery shall be their doom.”** Further demonstrating that God’s foremost concern is over the misery of His children, He quickly abandons the theme of judgment, and launches into a stanza of lament. Hobbins aptly captured the pathos<sup>116</sup> of the corresponding passage in Isaiah 1 as follows:<sup>117</sup>

The nation’s malaise [is described] as though the nation were an injured and uncared-for body, with the implication that, if not for estrangement, it would be cared for by the one committed to do so. The tone is accusatory and plaintive at the same time, a return to the text’s emotional point of departure.

The passage ends poignantly with God’s recital of the tragic fate of his rebellious children, followed by a rhetorical question:<sup>118</sup>

But behold, their sins  
           shall be upon the heads of their fathers;  
           Satan shall be their father,  
 and misery shall be their doom;  
 and the whole heavens shall weep over them,  
           even all the workmanship of mine hands;  
           wherefore should not the heavens weep,  
 seeing these shall suffer?

The tone of God’s question leaves no doubt about His participation with the rest of the heavenly host in their weeping, an interpretation that reinforces God’s previous metonymic identification with the heavens in the OT1 manuscript version of Moses 7:28, in contrast to the version in OT2.

**The Lord’s mercy: “Inasmuch as they will repent.”** Describing the next part of the general pattern of Isaiah 1, Hobbins writes:<sup>119</sup> “Yahweh’s decision not to blot the people out entirely, despite the defection, is then recounted.” Similarly, in Moses 7:38–39, God explains that His “Chosen” will suffer for the sins of the penitent and release them from “prison,” “inasmuch as they will repent.”<sup>120</sup>

Enoch’s question about the weeping of the heavens in verse 29 had formed the opening of a powerful *inclusio* whose closing bookend is finally found in verse 40. Having concluded His answer to Enoch, God now reiterates his solidarity with the sorrowing of the heavens (“Wherefore, for this shall the *heavens* weep”), while in eloquent brevity He acknowledges that the overflow of the bitter cup of weeping now also extends to include the earth and its creatures (“yea, and *all* the workmanship of my hands”).

**Enoch weeps and his heart swells “wide as eternity.”** Only now does the realization of the depth of God’s empathy finally draw out Enoch’s full response as “his heart swelled wide as eternity” — in other words, as wide as God’s heart.<sup>121</sup> Now Enoch unites his own voice with the heavenly chorus of weeping in a grand finale.<sup>122</sup>

Note that in the OT2 revision of Moses 7:28, in contrast to the OT1 manuscript of the Book of Moses, Enoch weeps prematurely, thus defusing the deliberate forestalling of the dramatic moment of Enoch’s sympathetic resonance with the heavens until *after* the conclusion of God’s poignant speech.<sup>123</sup>

With specific respect to the culminating statement at the end of God’s lament in Moses 7:40 (“Wherefore, for this shall the heavens weep,



yea, and all the workmanship of my hands”), is there a more plausible explanation for the literary function of this verse than as a declaration of God’s absolute solidarity with — and direct participation in — the distress of all creation? And, by way of analogue to Psalm 96 — where “all celebrate, but primacy is given, appropriately, to humankind” — so also, after the mourning of all, then — and not before — is Enoch’s weeping expected to burst forth as the heart-wrenching finale of the weeping chorus of the universe.

Beyond the beautiful literary unity and the striking echoes of the narrative structure to two notable Old Testament exemplars, what do we find of interest in this passage? Importantly, it is evident to us that in every significant divergence, the OT1 reading is superior to its equivalent in OT2.<sup>124</sup> That said, even if one were to substitute the OT2 revisions for the words of the original dictation in OT1, the result would not efface the overwhelming witness of the depth of God’s love as the central theme of the chapter, where “justice, love, and mercy meet in harmony divine.”<sup>125</sup>

### **Is It Reasonable to Trust OT2 More than OT1?**

Before continuing to our conclusions for this section, a final issue should be considered with respect to the revision of Moses 7:28: Is it reasonable to trust OT2 more than OT1? Before attempting an answer to this question, it’s important to know something about how the translation process seems to have differed for the longer additions to the Book of Moses (most notably Moses 1, 6, and 7) when compared to the more focused revisions to specific King James Bible verses.

With respect to the translation process, most scholars agree that the Prophet’s Bible translation in general and the Book of Moses in particular is not a homogeneous production. Rather, it is composite in structure and eclectic in its manner of translation. For example, the vision of Moses (Moses 1) and the story of Enoch (Moses 6–7) contain long, revealed sections that, although using King James Bible language, have little or no direct relationship to the Genesis narrative. However, other chapters are more in the line of clarifying commentary that takes the text of the King James Bible as its starting point, incorporating new elements based on Joseph Smith’s prophetic inspiration and understanding.<sup>126</sup> For example, evidence from a study by Kent Jackson and Peter Jasinski of two New Testament passages that were translated twice indicates that in this particular instance the JST “is not being revealed word-for-word, but largely depends upon Joseph Smith’s varying responses to the same difficulties in the text.”<sup>127</sup> Importantly, according to Philip Barlow, the

most common changes in the JST seem generally to have been of such a nature: “grammatical improvements, technical clarifications, and modernization of terms.”<sup>128</sup>

With specific reference to large biblical additions of the Book of Moses, we look at the original dictation in Old Testament Manuscript 1 as being closer to a word-for-word revealed text than to anything else. In this general respect, the predominantly revelatory character of these additions appears to have been, as Royal Skousen concluded, “much like the Book of Mormon.”<sup>129</sup>

In accepting the hypothesis that the translation process for the longer portions of the Book of Moses resembled the process of Book of Mormon translation more than anything else (though perhaps not relying so much on physical instruments in translation), we tend to view later revisions to the original dictation with greater skepticism than we would have otherwise done. With respect to Royal Skousen’s careful examination of difficult readings and conjectural emendations made by scribes and editors (and doubtless sometimes by Joseph Smith himself) in the source manuscripts of the Book of Mormon, Skousen has “determined that a fair number were unlikely or unnecessary.”<sup>130</sup> Besides specific arguments related to the Prophet’s revelations and translations, the general literature is full of examples of scribes who made manuscripts worse through their unintentional or intentional “corrections.”<sup>131</sup>

In light of the general considerations about differences in translation process discussed above — combined with specific indications that later revisions sometimes seem to run roughshod over important literary features of the original dictation, we take the general position that the original dictation of Moses 7 (after standardization of the English and correction of errors of dictation and transcription) should take priority over later revisions, unless there are good arguments to the contrary.<sup>132</sup> Consistent with this position, and the literary considerations discussed above, we currently take the canonical version of Moses 7:28 (which follows the earliest manuscript by describing the “God of heaven” rather than Enoch as the one who weeps) to be the best reading of the verse, until and unless better arguments for particular OT2 or later readings are produced.

That said, we respectfully acknowledge that Book of Moses scholar Kent P. Jackson takes a different approach to this question. Jackson finds it unlikely that even small changes were due to deliberate or inadvertent scribal errors and notes that the Prophet himself “signed off on the text as we have it in the final manuscripts and called it ‘finished.’”<sup>133</sup>

Townsend and Harrell take a similar view, according more legitimacy to later revisions than to the earliest dictation.

### **Conclusions from the Discussion of the Textual History of Moses 7:28**

In summary, any criticism of Givens' brief fly over of the textual history of the verse in question should take into account the fact that the revisions of Moses 7:28 do not seem to be as crucial for his (nor our) reading of the rest of the chapter as they seem to Townsend. Of course, the most general lesson of the discussion is that, regardless of one's interpretation of the verse, Townsend is certainly correct that incorporating textual history as part of standard research methodology is a crucial requirement for scholars of Latter-day Saint history and scripture. Indeed, the example of Moses 7:28 is a fitting illustration of the importance of text criticism as a foundation to subsequent exegesis. It is evident that our own interpretation of the scriptural passage, as well as the arguments of Townsend and Harrell, are predicated, at least to some extent, on whether one sees OT1 or OT2 as the best reading of the pericope.

### **3. Do the Original Manuscripts of the Book of Moses Indicate That *Mahujah* and *Mahijah* Are Separate Names?**

Another observation discussed by Townsend has to do with two similar names that appear in the Book of Moses: *Mahijah* and *Mahujah*. *Mahijah*<sup>134</sup> appears as a personal name while *Mahujah*<sup>135</sup> is typically read only as a place name, though it could be a personal name.<sup>136</sup>

On pp. 82–83, Townsend raises the question as to whether the appearance of these two similar names in the Book of Moses is due to a possible misreading of Emma Smith's handwriting on the manuscript of Moses 6:40, based on details of her writing elsewhere in the manuscript. This example highlights the importance of the role that handwriting sometimes can play in text critical analysis.

In the three sections that follow, we will evaluate Townsend's analysis of instances of Emma's handwriting for the letters *j*, *i*, and *u*. Failing to find strong support for Townsend's argument in these instances, we also consider the implications of an instance of a "dot" that appears over what we take to be the *i* of *Mahijah* but what Townsend presumes to be the *u* of *Mahujah*. After summarizing the evidence about Emma's handwriting, we will examine the handwriting of Sidney Rigdon and John Whitmer for the name *Mahujah*.

## Evaluating Townsend's Analysis of the Letter *J*

In his article, Townsend first focuses on the letter *j*:<sup>137</sup>

One of the first letters to analyze is Emma's *j*. **There are only four examples of *j* in her writing on OT1, and two of them begin with a smooth curve up to the top of the *j*. The other two, of which *Mahijah* is one, start with a smooth curve, hook once, and then curve again up to the top of the *j*.** This irregular example is only made more difficult by the fact that the extant examples are 50/50, highlighting how the possibility of that first hook on the *j* in *Mahijah* is not going to help in deciding whether or not the vowel is an *i* or a *u*.

As a slight correction to Townsend's count (see bolded text added to the quotation above), we note that there are actually five (not four) total examples of a lowercase *j* in Emma's handwriting in OT1 if the *j* in *Mahijah* is included (see Figure 3). However, as Townsend correctly argued, the *j* in *Mahijah* is disputed and therefore can't be used as evidence, leaving only four *j*'s that can be analyzed for comparison. The *j* in the word *justify* and in one instance of *journeyed* on page 12 are both preceded by the upward hook mentioned by Townsend (see Figures 4a and 4b). By way of contrast, neither the *j* in the other instance of *journeyed* on page 12 or *journeyed* on page 13 have the preceding upward hook.

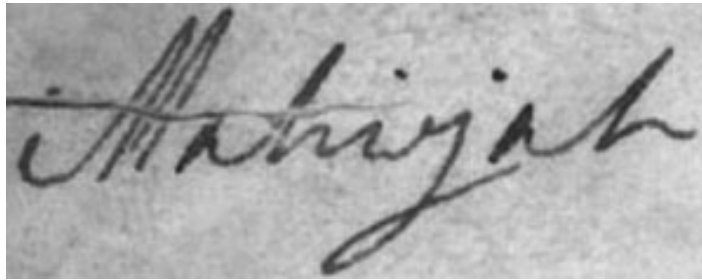
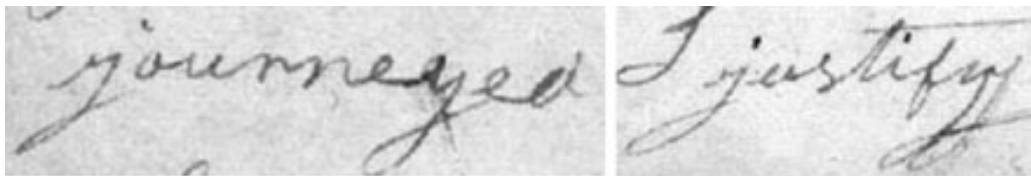


Figure 3. *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40) as written by Emma Smith in OT1<sup>138</sup>



Figures 4a and 4b. Other instances of the preceding upward hook in Emma's *j* in Moses 6:26 (*journeyed*) and 6:34 (*justify*)<sup>139</sup>

Unfortunately, the correction in the count described above does not shed any new light on our analysis. Because we cannot count the *j* in *Mahijah*, Townsend's conclusion that the usage of a preceding hook occurs 50% of the time in the additional examples of *j* still holds. Thus,

an analysis based on this letter alone won't actually "help in deciding whether or not the vowel [preceding the *j* in *Mahijah*] is an *i* or a *u*."<sup>140</sup>

### Evaluating Townsend's Analysis of the Letter *I*

According to Townsend, "When Emma wrote the letter 'u' her form was the same as her writing two 'i's consecutively, although the second part of the letter was often weak and not written as high as the first."<sup>141</sup> With this in mind, he proposes that the slight upstroke between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* might actually be a shortened second upstroke of a *u*. To support this possibility, he emphasizes the apparent irregularity of the deviation between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah*.<sup>142</sup>

In all of the examples of Emma's *i*'s except the one found in *Mahijah* the final curve of the downward stroke from the *i* to the new letter is smooth with no hesitation or stopping. The *i* in *Mahijah* is the only example that documents a deviation from her typical penmanship.

Contrary to Townsend's claim, the *i* in *Mahijah* is not the *only* deviant *i* in Emma's writing in OT1. Several of Emma's *i*'s in OT1 have slight protrusions in various directions that are comparable to the example in *Mahijah*.<sup>143</sup> For instance, the *i* in the word *their* (which is only two lines directly above the name *Mahijah*) has an unusual backstroke that makes it look more like an *s* than an *i* (see Figure 5). While this deviation protrudes in a different direction, it is arguably just as pronounced, if not more so, than the slight upward stroke between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* (see Figure 6).

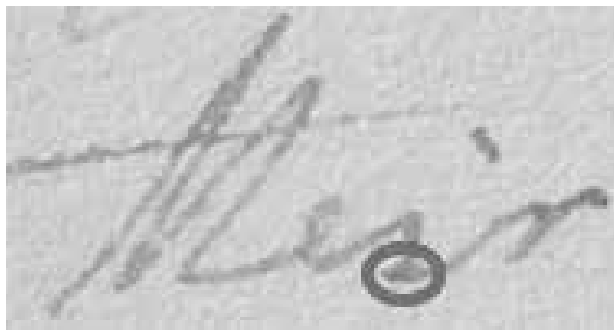


Figure 5. Unusual backstroke in the *i* of Emma's *their* in Moses 6:39, making it look like an *s*.<sup>144</sup>

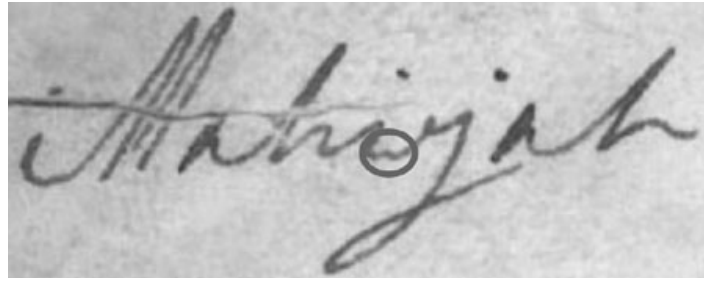


Figure 6. Slight upward stroke in Emma's *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40).<sup>145</sup>

More immediately relevant is an analogous upstroke found in the first instance of the word *wife* in a letter Emma wrote to Joseph Smith in 1839 (see Figure 7). Just as found in *Mahijah*, there is an upstroke between the *i* and the next letter (in this case an *f*), and this upstroke appears to be even closer, relatively speaking, to the top of the *i* than the example in *Mahijah*. Yet, despite being a visually better candidate for an incomplete *u*, the deviation in *wife* clearly isn't a mistakenly dotted *u*.



Figure 7. Slight upward stroke between the *i* and *f* in *wife* in an 1839 letter from Emma to Joseph Smith.<sup>146</sup>

Another thing to consider, separate from the form of the *i*, is that many of Emma's *i*'s have significant changes in ink flow near the same approximate location of the deviation in *Mahijah*. In nine examples, the ink flow disappears altogether.<sup>147</sup> In at least a dozen others, there is a discernible difference in ink flow.<sup>148</sup> And in several instances, it appears that Emma may have reapplied the upstroke into the next letter, causing another type of minor deviation (although none of these are as pronounced as the deviation in *Mahijah*).<sup>149</sup> Thus, it can't be ruled out that the oddity in *Mahijah* might be due to some sort of disruption in ink flow, perhaps causing Emma to start again at the bottom and write (or rewrite) an upstroke that, for whatever reason, was never completed. At the very least, the variations in ink flow demonstrate another type of inconsistency between Emma's *i*'s and the letters that follow.

All of this suggests that the anomaly between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* may not be as significant as Townsend implies. As he himself

later points out, Emma made various types of errors and appears to have been writing quickly.<sup>150</sup> Like the upstroke in Emma's transcription of *wife*, the irregularity in *Mahijah* could easily be one of the many minor deviations in Emma's writing and nothing more than a sign of her haste.<sup>151</sup>

### Evaluating Townsend's Analysis of the Letter U

Not only does Townsend overstate the consistency in Emma's instances of the letter *i*, but he also overstates the similarity between the deviation in *Mahijah* and examples of what he describes as "weak" second upstrokes of the letter *u* in Emma's handwriting.<sup>152</sup> Neither of the instances that he points to ("mouth" or "mouths") are actually very similar to the example in *Mahijah*. The second upstroke in these *u*'s are much closer in height to the top of the first upstroke than is the deviation in *Mahijah*, and they cover more horizontal distance as well. Though Townsend disagrees with our analysis, he has not provided any measurements of his own in support of his arguments.

As evidence for our point, we have included successive images of each word and made them as proportionally accurate as we could (see Figures 8–10).<sup>153</sup> A horizontal line has been placed at the top of each of the second upstrokes to demonstrate the comparative differences in height, relative to the top of the first upstroke. The example in *Mahijah* strikes us as being significantly smaller than the *u* in both *mouth* and *mouths*.<sup>154</sup>

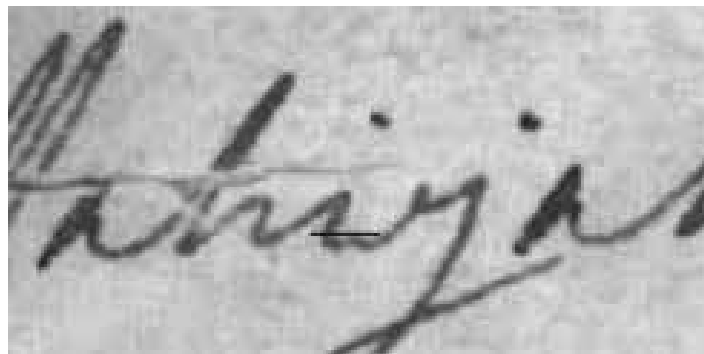


Figure 8. Relatively small size of the upward stroke in Emma's *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40).<sup>155</sup>

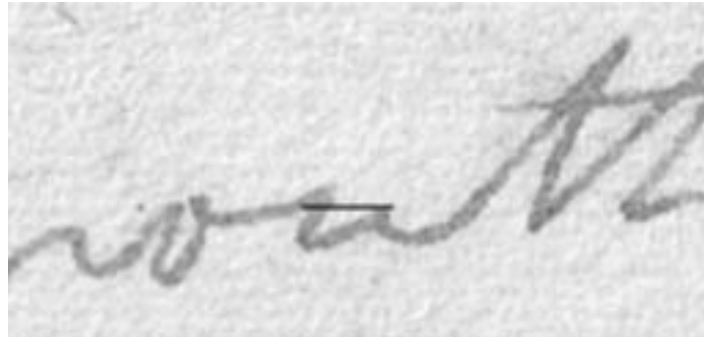


Figure 9. Comparatively larger upward stroke in Emma's *mouth* in Moses 6:30.<sup>156</sup>

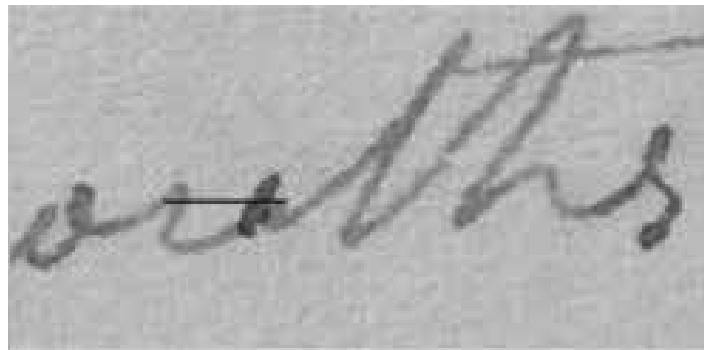


Figure 10. Comparatively larger upward stroke in Emma's *mouths* in Moses 6:30.<sup>157</sup>

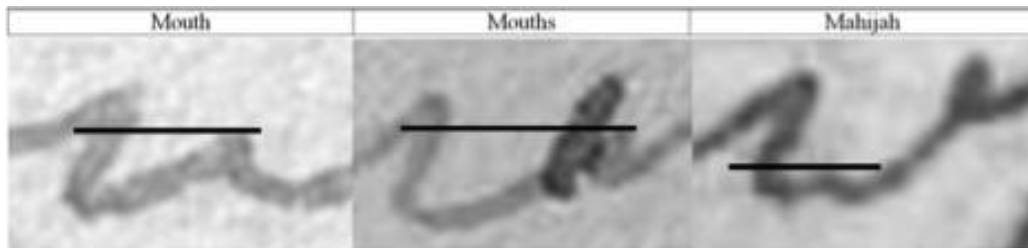


Figure 11. Side-by-side comparison.

Furthermore, our survey of each instance of the letter *u* in Emma's writing leads us to conclude that *none* of the second upstrokes in any of them are nearly as slight as the upstroke between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah*.<sup>158</sup> That being the case, Townsend's conjecture on this point is not well supported. It is certainly not impossible that the deviation in *Mahijah* could be a shortened upstroke of a *u*, but in our view the lack of any other truly comparable examples makes the possibility quite remote.

### **A Dot of an *I* over *Mahijah* vs. a Stray Mark over the *U* of *Mahujah***

Townsend's hypothesis faces an additional challenge: he must account for the extra dot above the first upstroke of what we take to be the *i* of *Mahijah* but what he proposes may be the *u* of *Mahujah*. To explain this



error, he points to evidence from elsewhere that Emma was in a hurry, such as the crosses on *t*'s that span more than one letter, or to a mistaken cross on the letter *l* in the word *councils*, making it look instead like *councils*.<sup>159</sup> He then postulates:<sup>160</sup>

The punctuation [Emma] added for the *i* in *Mahijah* could have been hastily added as a mistake as she added the dot for the *j*, and a weak *u* would have looked like an *i* next to a *j* that needed its dot.

Of course, this supposition is not impossible, and Emma does indeed seem to have been writing quickly. Moreover, in our analysis, we actually found an instance where an accidental dot appears over the first upstroke of a *u* of the word *us* on page 13 of OT1. This provides evidence for Townsend's hypothesis that Emma may have put an erroneous dot over a *u* in *Mahujah*. However, this accidental dot may be at least partially due to the fact that a very similar looking word (*is*) was written directly above *us* (see Figure 11). Their close proximity and visual similarity may have provided more impetus than normal for Emma to add the dot, either immediately or after a quick scan for any missing punctuation.

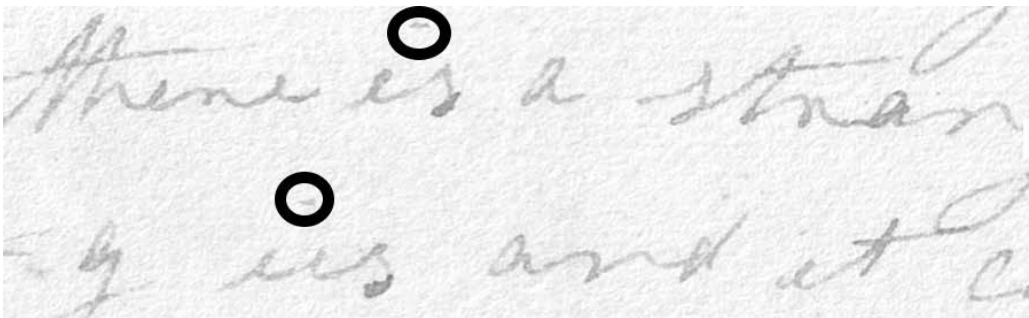


Figure 12. Emma's accidental "dot" over the upstroke of a *u* (Moses 6:38).<sup>161</sup>

Importantly, our analysis detected no other substantial or clearly discernible ink dots above any of the precisely one hundred instances of the letter *u* — no matter the height of its second upstroke — in Emma's handwriting in OT1.<sup>162</sup> Thus, while an erroneous ink dot can't be completely ruled out, the actual probability of this happening (a likelihood of only 1/100 in this text) is not very encouraging for Townsend's thesis.<sup>163</sup> To us, it seems more reasonable in this instance to believe that we are looking at a dotted *i* rather than an unusually written and then mistakenly dotted *u*.

### Summary of Evidence Bearing on Whether Emma Wrote *Mahijah* or *Mahujah*

In summary, there are several reasons we are convinced that Emma wrote *Mahijah* rather than *Mahujah*:

- The irregular upstroke between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* seems too truncated to likely be the second upstroke of a *u* (no examples of the letter *u* manifest anything comparably slight in OT1).
- The probability of Emma placing an erroneous dot over a *u* is very low (by our count, only 1/100 examples of the letter *u*, no matter the height of the second upstroke, have an erroneous dot over them in OT1).
- There are several reasonable alternative explanations for the deviation in *Mahijah* (Emma's haste, her rewrite of a failed upstroke, her hesitating about whether or not to include or omit an additional upstroke before the *j*, or simply a minor variation like many others, including the similar example in *wife*, even though it comes from a different sample of her writing).

Additionally, it should be noted that John Whitmer transcribed Emma's version of Moses 6:40 into two copies of the manuscript (his personal copy and OT2), and in both cases wrote *Mahijah* (see Figures 12–13). Also, Jackson notes that “Edward Partridge made a copy of the manuscript” and he “transcribed it *Mahijah*” as well.<sup>164</sup> Thus, for what it's worth, their individual assessments are in agreement with our analysis above.

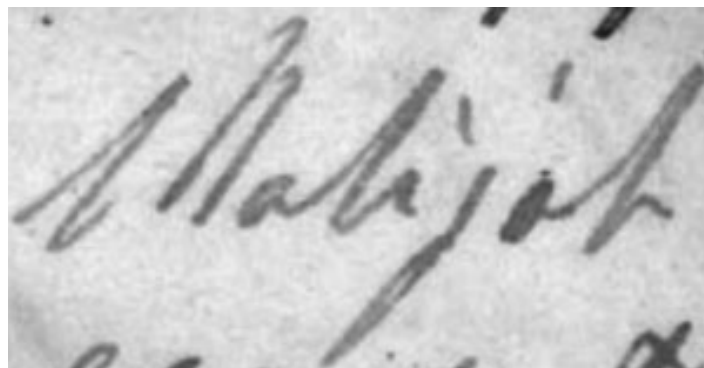


Figure 13. *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40) as copied from Emma Smith's OT1 manuscript by John Whitmer into OT3.<sup>165</sup>

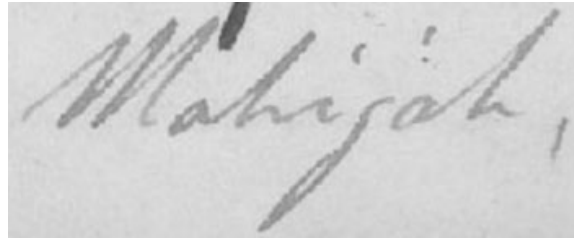


Figure 14. *Mahijah* (Moses 6:40) as copied from Emma Smith's OT1 manuscript by John Whitmer into OT2.<sup>166</sup>

### A Related Note: The *Mahujahs* of Sidney Rigdon and John Whitmer

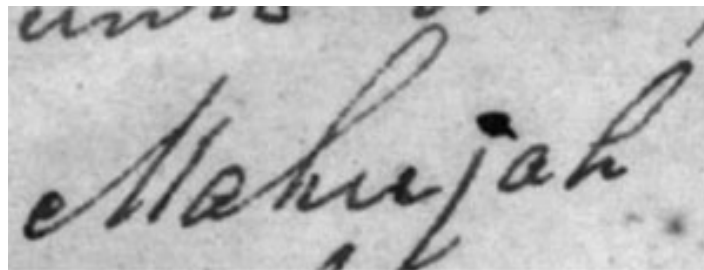


Figure 15. *Mahujah* (Moses 7:2) in the handwriting of Sidney Rigdon in OT1.<sup>167</sup>

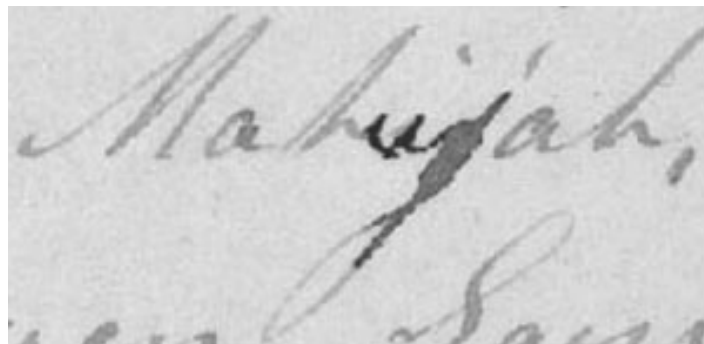


Figure 16. *Mahujah* (Moses 7:2) as copied by John Whitmer into OT2. Originally it read *Mahijah*, but was later corrected.<sup>168</sup>

For completeness' sake, we observe that the textual history of the name *Mahujah* is somewhat more complicated than that of *Mahijah*. When Joseph Smith dictated the name *Mahujah* in Moses 7:2, Sidney Rigdon recorded the name as he heard it. However, when John Whitmer copied OT1 into his private copy, he mistakenly wrote *Mahijah* at Moses 7:2, having just copied *Mahijah* a few pages earlier (Moses 6:40). When Whitmer copied the previously dictated portions of the Book of Moses into OT2, he made the same mistake. But afterward he (or someone else) caught the error and corrected it to *Mahujah*.” Jackson states: “When Edward Partridge copied Moses 7:2 from OT1, he got it right: *Mahujah*.”<sup>169</sup>

Although detailed historical and textual analysis does not inspire confidence in Townsend's conjecture that "the name in Emma's hand should be read *Mahujah*,"<sup>170</sup> he is certainly correct to emphasize that more careful attention to original manuscripts and textual changes is warranted. Even if Townsend's theory regarding the spelling of *Mahijah* proves to be a less likely reading of the text, it is nevertheless a possibility that shouldn't be completely dismissed.

### Conclusions

This response is only a slim sampling of the many issues and questions that are raised in Colby Townsend's thoughtful article. We urge readers to look at the other examples he discusses as well as at the responses that his essay is sure to raise. Though we may differ on some issues, we are grateful for the insights and new discoveries that Townsend brings to the subjects he approaches, and we feel a kinship in our mutual interest for scripture scholarship that is couched in a search for truth. Though, like the rest of us, Townsend does not have answers for all the issues he raises, he makes intelligent observations, raises good questions, and rightly highlights the importance of textual criticism, a key and often foundational aspect of Latter-day Saint scholarship that indeed should not be neglected.

In Part 2 of this response, we will continue the discussion of the Book of Moses names *Mahujah* and *Mahijah*, and the similar names *Mahujael* in Genesis 4:18 and *Mahaway* in the pseudepigraphal *Book of Giants*. Latter-day Saint scholars, following the lead of Hugh Nibley, have argued that the seeming resemblance between the Book of Moses and *Book of Giants* names constitutes strong evidence for the antiquity of the Book of Moses. In light of new evidence that Townsend has brought to bear on the issue, the discussion in Part 2 will highlight the complexities of this argument and the different views that scholars hold about the relationships among these names.

### Acknowledgements

If there is any merit in this article, it is due in large measure to the excellence of its reviewers. Sincere thanks to Matthew L. Bowen, David Calabro, Kent Jackson, Donald W. Parry, and Stephen T. Whitlock for their valuable comments on earlier drafts of parts of this article. We are especially grateful to Colby Townsend and Charles R. Harrell for their cordial collaboration, including many important suggestions and corrections. We also thank anonymous reviewers whose selfless efforts

have improved this article. We are also grateful for the substantial and meticulous efforts of Allen Wyatt and the staff of The Interpreter Foundation to bring this paper to publication. Notwithstanding the significant contributions of the reviewers, the authors bear responsibility for its remaining faults.

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### Endnotes

- 1 E.g., Robert J. Matthews, “A *Plainer Translation*”: *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible — A History and Commentary* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1975).
- 2 E.g., Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures* (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1969); Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures*, 2nd ed. (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1995).
- 3 Colby Townsend, “Returning to the Sources: Integrating Textual Criticism in the Study of Early Mormon Texts and History,” *Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies* 10, no. 1 (2019): 72–75, <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/imwjjournal/vol10/iss1/6/>.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 75.
- 5 Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, “Book of Moses Textual Criticism 3: Was the Book of Moses Simply an Unplanned Afterthought to Moses 1?” *The Interpreter Foundation Blog* (10 September 2020), <https://interpreterfoundation.org/blog-book-of-moses-textual-criticism-3was-the-book-of-moses-simply-an-unplanned-afterthought-to-moses-1/>.
- 6 Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, “Book of Moses Textual Criticism 4: A Missing Link in Samuel Brown’s Account of the Joseph Smith Translation and the Introduction of Temple Ordinances,” forthcoming.
- 7 The most important book in this regard is Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers, Revelations and Translations (Facsimile Edition) 4: Book of Abraham and Related Manuscripts*, eds. Robin Scott Jensen and Brian M. Hauglid (Salt Lake City: The Church Historian’s Press, 2018). However, this publication has not been without its controversies (see, e.g., Jeff Lindsay, “A Precious Resource with Some Gaps,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 33 [2019]: 13–104, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/a-precious-resource-with-some-gaps/>; John Gee, “The Joseph Smith Papers Project Stumbles,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 33 [2019]: 175–86, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/the-joseph-smith-papers-project-stumbles/>). Brian M. Hauglid, ed., *A Textual History of the Book of Abraham: Manuscripts and Editions. Studies in the Book of Abraham* 5, eds. John Gee and Brian M. Hauglid (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute, Brigham Young University, 2010); Matthew J. Grow and

Matthew C. Godfrey, “The Joseph Smith Papers and the Book of Abraham: A Response to Recent Reviews,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020): 97–104, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/the-joseph-smith-papers-and-the-book-of-abraham-a-response-to-recent-reviews/>; Jeff Lindsay, “A Welcome Response, but Flaws Remain,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020): 105–12, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/a-welcome-response-but-flaws-remain/>; John Gee, “Taking Stock,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020): 113–18, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/taking-stock/>). For additional recent perspectives, see, e.g., John Gee, *An Introduction to the Book of Abraham* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2017); Stephen O. Smoot, “Pressing Forward with the Book of Abraham,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 28 (2018): 299–308, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/pressing-forward-with-the-book-of-abraham/>; Jeff Lindsay, “John Gee’s ‘Introduction to the Book of Abraham’: A Lifetime of Book of Abraham Scholarship Distilled into a Valuable Book for a Broad Audience” The Interpreter Foundation Blog (10 November 2017), <https://interpreterfoundation.org/blog-john-gees-introduction-to-the-book-of-abraham-a-lifetime-of-book-of-abraham-scholarship-distilled-into-a-valuable-book-for-a-broad-audience/>; Kerry Muhlestein, “Assessing the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Introduction to the Historiography of their Acquisitions, Translations, and Interpretations” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 22 (2016): 17–49; Terryl Givens and Brian M. Hauglid, *The Pearl of Greatest Price: Mormonism’s Most Controversial Scripture* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019).

- 8 Kent P. Jackson, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, March 2, 2020.
- 9 Kent P. Jackson, *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 2005), <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/book-moses-and-joseph-smith-translation-manuscripts>.
- 10 Jackson, March 2, 2020.
- 11 Joseph Smith, Jr., “Old Testament Revision 1,” The Joseph Smith Papers, last accessed February 19, 2020, <http://josephsmithpapers>.

org/paperSummary/old-testament-revision-1, hereafter referred to as OT1.

- 12 Joseph Smith, Jr., “Old Testament Revision 2,” p. 19, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed March 20, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/old-testament-revision-2/24>, hereafter referred to as OT2.
- 13 Jackson, *The Book of Moses*, 56.
- 14 Ibid., 144.
- 15 Scott H. Faulring and Kent P. Jackson, eds., *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible Electronic Library* (JSTEL) CD-ROM (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, Religious Studies Center, Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2011).
- 16 Jackson, March 2, 2020.
- 17 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 71–72.
- 18 Kent P. Jackson and Scott H. Faulring, “Old Testament Manuscript 3: An Early Transcript of the Book of Moses,” *Mormon Historical Studies* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2004): 113–44.
- 19 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 71.
- 20 Jackson, March 2, 2020. To his credit, Townsend could not have known of this error, since it had not been publicly mentioned until now. On the other hand, he could have more ideally approached Jackson to check his assumption before concluding that it was a transcription error.
- 21 Colby Townsend, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, March 1 (a), 2020.
- 22 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 71–72.
- 23 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–16 — Moses 7:10b–28a, Genesis 7:12b–35a. Cf. OT1.
- 24 Ibid, OT 2–21 — Moses 7:15b–29b, Genesis 7:19b–35b. Cf. OT2.
- 25 Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004), OT 1–16 — Moses 7:10b–28a, OT 1–17 — Moses 7:28b–7:43, p. 106.



- 26 The symbol “†” that is shown between the *S* and the *a* in the transcription signals a change from lowercase to uppercase in the manuscript.
- 27 Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible*, OT2–21 — Moses 7:15b–29a, OT2–22 — Moses 7:29b–41a, p. 618
- 28 See, e.g., Jackson, *The Book of Moses*, 18–36; Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 78–79.
- 29 Matthews, “A Plainer Translation,” 159, 226.
- 30 Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*, 106, 618.
- 31 Jackson, *The Book of Moses*, 122–23.
- 32 Richard D. Draper, S. Kent Brown, and Michael D. Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 128. Though the authors discuss the OT2 revision, they do not specifically mention the change from “God wept” to “Enoch wept.”
- 33 Thomas A. Wayment, ed., *The Complete Joseph Smith Translation of the Old Testament: A Side-by-Side Comparison with the King James Version* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2009), 37.
- 34 Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and David J. Larsen, *In God’s Image and Likeness, Vol 2: Enoch, Noah, and the Tower of Babel* (Salt Lake City: Eborn, 2014), 141, <https://archive.org/details/131203ImageAndLikeness2ReadingS>.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 468–72. Townsend was the principal author a synopsis of *1 Enoch* in an appendix to the commentary.
- 36 Eugene England, “The Weeping God of Mormonism,” *Dialogue* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 63–80.
- 37 Terryl L. Givens and Fiona Givens, *The God Who Weeps: How Mormonism Makes Sense of Life* (Salt Lake City: Ensign Peak, 2012); Givens and Hauglid, *The Pearl of Greatest Price*.
- 38 While not convinced that Joseph Smith intended to have God weeping in Moses 7, Harrell argues that even if a weeping God is conceded, this would not have been at all a radical departure from religious thinking of the time. Harrell documents numerous Christian sources that argue for God’s passibility from the time

of the Reformation to Joseph Smith's day. Faulting Givens for not having signaled such sources, he writes (Charles R. Harrell, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, June 6, 2020):

To emphasize what he sees as a singularly Latter-day Saint teaching in the weeping God of Moses 7, Givens juxtaposes it against the impassible God of creedal Christianity, which he presents as the only view prevalent in Joseph Smith's day. The literature makes clear, however, that the idea of a passible God was widely embraced among Protestants of the time.

Givens differs with Harrell's view, having concluded that "the unambiguous 1830 Mormon pronouncements about the capacity of God the Father to suffer, to weep, to mourn in solidarity with human misery were harbingers of a broad change in the Christian consensus about God" (Terryl L. Givens, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, June 11, 2020). He observed (Givens and Hauglid, *The Pearl of Greatest Price*, 256):

Thomas Weinandy observed in *First Things* that "toward the end of the nineteenth century a sea change began to occur within Christian theology such that at present many, if not most, Christian theologians hold as axiomatic that God is passible, that He does undergo emotional changes of states, and so can suffer." Ronald Goetz has referred to the surge in "theopaschism" (the affirmation of a suffering god) as a "revolution," marking a "structural shift in the Christian mind." He opines, "We have only begun to see where systematic theologies rooted in the suffering God might lead." Paul L. Gavriluk states that there is now "a remarkable consensus" behind the claim that "God suffers."

Givens further notes (Givens, June 11, 2020):

When Methodists broke with the Anglican creed, Wesley's 1784 *Articles of Religion* affirmed belief in the "one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts," omitting the "passions." But the Methodists were clearly unsure about the passibility of God. The 1801 *Book of Common Prayer* restored the term "passions," and the American branch of Methodism (the Protestant Episcopal Church of America) also reaffirmed the precise, earlier

language in its 1801 Articles of Religion. “There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions.” However, the Methodist *Book of Discipline* of 1808 again omitted passions, describing “one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness.” Then the *Methodist Magazine* reverted to the older form (God is “without body, parts or passions”), and the formula persisted into the twentieth century. In 1831, the Presbyterian Daniel M’Calla still spoke for most Christians when he held in public debate “We never believed that God could suffer.” A few generations later, however, the doctrine had very few defenders.”

Givens has stated that his primary difference with Harrell is in Harrell’s “continual insistence by implication that our claims for [Joseph Smith] rest on claims of his chronological primacy. It never has except in some minds unfamiliar with his self-expressed modus operandi of inspired syncretism” (ibid.).

- 39 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 79n59.
- 40 Givens and Hauglid, *The Pearl of Greatest Price*, 49.
- 41 Charles R. Harrell, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, May 26, 2020.
- 42 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 77–78.
- 43 Ibid., 85.
- 44 Ibid., 78.
- 45 David E. Bokovoy, *Authoring the Old Testament: Genesis-Deuteronomy* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2014), 157–58; Bokovoy continues by quoting Moses 7:34 in support of the last point.
- 46 Colby Townsend, telephone conversation with Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, May 2020, cited with permission.
- 47 D. E. Bokovoy, *Authoring the Old Testament*, 158.
- 48 Charles R. Harrell, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, June 5, 2020.
- 49 Ibid.

- 50 Charles R. Harrell, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, May 27, 2020.
- 51 For a useful compendium of accounts describing details about the divine personages who appeared to Joseph Smith see Matthew B. Brown, *A Pillar of Light: The History and Message of the First Vision* (American Fork, UT: Covenant Communications, 2009), 30–32.
- 52 See, e.g., Richard Lyman Bushman, *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling, A Cultural Biography of Mormonism's Founder* (New York City: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 39–40; Steven C. Harper, *First Vision: Memory and Mormon Origins* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019), 1–57. For general responses to questions relating to the nature, reliability, and historicity of the First Vision, see Brown, *A Pillar of Light*, 137–76; Harper, *First Vision*; Steven C. Harper, *Joseph Smith's First Vision: A Guide to the Historical Accounts* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2012), 67–83, 94–110; Steven C. Harper, “Evaluating Three Arguments Against Joseph Smith’s First Vision,” in *Exploring the First Vision*, eds. Samuel Alonzo Dodge and Steven C. Harper (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 2012), 307–23; Richard Lyman Bushman, “The Visionary World of Joseph Smith,” in *Believing History: Latter-day Saint Essays*, eds. Reid L. Neilson and Jed L. Woodworth (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 199–216.
- 53 Consider, for example, Joseph Smith’s description of the Book of Mormon translation process. While some of the Prophet’s contemporaries gave detailed descriptions of the size and appearance of the plates, the instruments used in translation, and the procedure by which the words of the ancient text were made known to him, Joseph Smith demurred when asked to relate such specifics himself, even in response to direct questioning in private company from believing friends (Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Documents 2: July 1831–January 1833*, eds. Matthew C. Godfrey et al. [Salt Lake City: The Church Historian’s Press, 2013], General Conference Minutes, Orange Township, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, 25–26 October 1831, 84). The only explicit statement we have from him about the translation process is his testimony that it occurred “by the gift and power of God” (*ibid.*, Letter to Noah C. Saxton, 4 January 1833, 354), in a parallel to the wording found in Omni 1:20 that was also taken

up by Oliver Cowdery in a 9 December 1829 letter (O. Cowdery, “Letter to Cornelius Blatchly, 9 November 1829,” *Gospel Luminary* 2, no. 49 (10 December 1829): 194, <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/NY/miscNYC1.htm>) and in the published account and testimony of the Three Witnesses (Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers, Histories 1: Joseph Smith Histories, 1832–1844*, eds. Karen Lynn Davidson et al. [Salt Lake City: The Church Historian’s Press, 2012], 318–23). See also D&C 1:29, 20:8). More generally, Brigham Young referred to the fact that those who sat in Joseph Smith’s “secret councils year after year ... heard [him] say thousands of things that the people have never yet heard” (Brigham Young, discourse, 7 October 1866. In *Early Church Conference Reports*, comp. Elden J. Watson [January 2016], CD 4:2157–59, <http://eldenwatson.net/ECCRintro.htm>). For more on the Prophet’s reluctance to share details of sacred events, see Ronald O. Barney, “Joseph Smith’s Visions: His Style and His Record,” (presentation, FAIR Conference, Provo, UT, August 2013), <http://www.fairlds.org/fair-conferences/2013-fair-conference/2013-joseph-smiths-visions-his-style-and-his-record>; Roger Nicholson, “The Cowdery Conundrum: Oliver’s Aborted Attempt to Describe Joseph Smith’s First Vision in 1834 and 1835,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 8 (2014): 27–44.

As a specific illustration of the sacred regard in which the Prophet held the temple ordinances, Andrew Ehat observed that none of the nine participants who were present when the Nauvoo endowment was first bestowed on 4 May 1842 recorded the events of that day in their personal reminiscences. In explanation of this fact, Ehat observes (Andrew F. Ehat, “‘Who Shall Ascend into the Hill of the Lord?’ Sesquicentennial Reflections of a Sacred Day: 4 May 1842,” in *Temples of the Ancient World*, ed. Donald W. Parry [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994], 49):

The Prophet Joseph Smith had asked each participant not to record the specifics of what they had heard and seen that day. Six weeks later, in a letter to his fellow apostle Parley P. Pratt, Heber C. Kimball wrote that these favored few had received “some precious things through the Prophet on the priesthood that would cause your soul to rejoice.” However, he added, “I cannot give them to you on paper for they are not to be written” (“Heber C. Kimball to Parley P. Pratt, 17 June 1842,” in *Heber C. Kimball Papers*,

1837–1866, accessed July 17, 2020, <https://catalog.churchofjesuschrist.org/record?id=eb905feb-8b2d-4d03-bdec-2094761555f3>). They were just too sacred.

- 54 In 1844, the Prophet stated (Joseph Smith, Jr., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1969], 20 January 1844, p. 331. Cf. Andrew F. Ehat, and Lyndon W. Cook, eds., *The Words of Joseph Smith: The Contemporary Accounts of the Nauvoo Discourses of the Prophet Joseph* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980], Wilford Woodruff Journal, 21 January 1844, 319, <https://rsc-legacy.byu.edu/out-print/words-joseph-smith-contemporary-accounts-nauvoo-discourses-prophet-joseph>):

I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them, after suffering all they have for the work of God, will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions.

- 55 For example, Danel Bachman has argued convincingly that nearly all of D&C 132 was revealed to the Prophet as he worked on the first half of JST Genesis (Danel W. Bachman, “New Light on an Old Hypothesis: The Ohio Origins of the Revelation on Eternal Marriage,” *Journal of Mormon History* 5 [1978]: 19–32). This was more than a decade before 1843, when the revelation was shared with Joseph Smith’s close associates. See also Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, “What Did Joseph Smith Know about Modern Temple Ordinances by 1836?,” in *The Temple: Ancient and Restored, Proceedings of the 2014 Temple on Mount Zion Symposium*, ed. Stephen D. Ricks and Donald W. Parry (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2016), 1–144, <http://www.jeffreybradshaw.net/templethemes/publications/01-Bradshaw-TMZ%203.pdf>.
- 56 Joseph Smith, Jr., Joseph Smith, Jr., *The Joseph Smith Papers: Documents 2, Letter to William W. Phelps*, 31 July 1832, 267. This is consistent with George Q. Cannon’s statement about the Prophet’s intentions to “seal up” the work for “a later day” after he completed the main work of Bible translation on 2 February 1833: “No endeavor was made at that time to print the work. It was sealed up with the expectation that it would be brought forth at a later day with other of the scriptures ... [See D&C 42:56–58.] [T]he labor was its own reward, bringing in the performance a special blessing of broadened comprehension to the Prophet and a general blessing

of enlightenment to the people through his subsequent teachings” (George Q. Cannon, “The Life of Joseph Smith, the Prophet” [Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1907], 129). Bradshaw has argued that the divine tutorial that took place during Joseph Smith’s Bible translation effort was focused on temple and priesthood matters — hence the restriction on general dissemination of these teachings during the Prophet’s early ministry. See Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, *In God’s Image and Likeness*, Vol. 1: Creation, Fall, and the Story of Adam and Eve (Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2014), 3–6, <https://archive.org/details/140123IGIL12014ReadingS>.

- 57 See Bradshaw, *In God’s Image and Likeness*, 2:28n0–13.
- 58 Moses 1:42. See also Moses 4:32: “See thou show them unto no man, until I command you, except to them that believe.”
- 59 The quoted words are from Latter-day Saint Apostle George Q. Cannon’s remembrance (*The Life of Joseph Smith, the Prophet*, 129n): “We have heard President Brigham Young state that the Prophet before his death had spoken to him about going through the translation of the scriptures again and perfecting it upon points of doctrine which the Lord had restrained him from giving in plainness and fulness at the time of which we write.”
- 60 Harrell, June 5, 2020.
- 61 Harrell, May 27, 2020.
- 62 Gershom Scholem wrote descriptively that “this cosmic curtain, as it is described in the Book of Enoch, contains the images of all things which since the day of creation have their pre-existing reality, as it were, in the heavenly sphere. All generations and all their lives and actions are woven into this curtain . . . . [All this] shall become universal knowledge in the Messianic age” (Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* [New York City: Schocken Books, 1995], 72).
- 63 For example, Islamic tradition speaks of a “white cloth from Paradise” upon which Adam saw the fate of his posterity (Muhammad ibn Abd Allah al-Kisa’i, *Tales of the Prophets [Qisas al-anbiya]*, trans. Wheeler M. Thackston, Jr. [Chicago: KAZI Publications, 1997], 82). For a description of an account by al-Tha’labi, see Hugh W. Nibley, *Teachings of the Pearl of Great Price* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies [FARMS], Brigham Young University, 2004), 117.

- 64 See, e.g., Hugh W. Nibley and Michael D. Rhodes, *One Eternal Round, The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* 19 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2010), 188–585; Hugh W. Nibley, *Abraham in Egypt, The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* 14 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 42–73.
- 65 See discussion of the translation of this and related terms in Alexander Kulik, “Apocalypse of Abraham,” in *Outside the Bible: Ancient Jewish Writings Related to Scripture*, eds. Louis H. Feldman, James L. Kugel and Lawrence H. Schiffman (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2013), 2:1470n21. See also Ryszard Rubinkiewicz, *L’Apocalypse d’Abraham en vieux slave : Introduction, texte critique, traduction et commentaire. Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Zrodlat i monografie* 129 (Lublin, POL: Société des Lettres et des Sciences de l’Université Catholique de Lublin, 1987), 175n1.
- 66 Kulik, “Apocalypse of Abraham,” 2:1470n21.
- 67 Philip S. Alexander, “3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of) Enoch,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:296n45a. The English term “blueprint” is an apt choice to describe the vision of Rabbi Ishmael (ibid., 296 [cf. 298–99]). Citing precedents in translations of similar visions in Jewish tradition, Kulik translates the relevant term in *Apocalypse of Abraham* 21:2 as a “likeness” or In 22:1, 3, 5; 23:1, and “many other instances” he translates it as “picture” (East Slavic *obrazovanie*) (Kulik, “Apocalypse of Abraham,” 2:1470n21).
- 68 Ibid., 296 , cf. 45:6, pp. 298–99, for example, Metatron says:  
 Come and I will show you the curtain of the Omnipresent One, which is spread before the Holy One, blessed be he, and on which are printed all the generations of the world and all their deeds, whether done or to be done, till the last generation.
- 69 See Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, David J. Larsen, and Stephen T. Whitlock, “Moses 1 and the *Apocalypse of Abraham*: Twin sons of different mothers?” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 38 [2020]: 199–201, 214. <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/moses-1-and-the-apocalypse-of-abraham-twin-sons-of-different-mothers/>.
- 70 “Psalm 89,” Net Bible, accessed July 17, 2020, <http://classic.net.bible.org/bible.php?book=Psa&chapter=89#v5>. Harrell adds:



“This verse, by the way, illustrates an instance where ‘the heavens’ is exclusive of God” (Harrell, June 5, 2020).

- 71 Ibid. See G. Ernest Wright, *The Old Testament Against its Environment, Vol. 2: Studies in Biblical Theology* (London: SCM Press, 1950), 36; Frank Moore Cross, “The Council of Yahweh in Second Isaiah,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12, no. 4 (October 1, 1953): 274–75, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/542950>.
- 72 Stephen E. Robinson and H. Dean Garrett, *A Commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants*, 4 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2001–2005), 2:294, paraphrasing D&C 76:26.
- 73 Harrell, May 27, 2020.
- 74 Harrell, June 5, 2020.
- 75 Harrell, May 27, 2020.
- 76 Ibid.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 3 Nephi 17:21.
- 79 3 Nephi 17:22.
- 80 See, e.g., Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, eds., *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1997), 98–99, 140, 266, 285, 287, 289, 331, 391, 499, 551, 574.
- 81 Richard Elliott Friedman, ed., *Commentary on the Torah* (New York City: HarperCollins, 2001), Genesis 3:9.
- 82 See Jacob 5:41, 47, 49. Cf. 2 Nephi 15:4.
- 83 Jacob 5:49.
- 84 Jacob 5:51. Note Moshe Greenberg’s brilliant observation: “In every rhetorical question lurks the possible affirmation of what is ostensibly denied” (Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, *The Literary Guide to the Bible* [Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1990], 285).
- 85 Ibid., 574.
- 86 Harrell, May 27, 2020.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Ibid.

- 89 John F. Hobbins, “The Rhetoric of Isaiah 1:2–20: An Exploration,” *Ancient Hebrew Poetry*, last revised 2 February 2007, [https://ancienthebrewpoetry.typepad.com/ancient\\_hebrew\\_poetry/files/isa\\_1\\_220\\_rhetoric.pdf](https://ancienthebrewpoetry.typepad.com/ancient_hebrew_poetry/files/isa_1_220_rhetoric.pdf). The structure of Moses 7:28–41, seems to follow themes generally (but not slavishly) similar to some of those mentioned by John F. Hobbins above in his outline of Isaiah 1.

Evidence indicates that both of these texts are very old. Ronald Bergey describes Isaiah 1 as “a case of early intertextuality” with Deuteronomy 32 (Ronald Bergey, “The Song of Moses [Deuteronomy 32:1–43] and Isaianic Prophecies: A Case of Early Intertextuality,” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 28, no. 1 [2003]: 33–54, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/030908920302800102>). Despite controversy about the dating of other chapters in Isaiah, the first chapter is regarded by most contemporary scholars as belonging to “major collections of judgment speeches authentic to the prophet Isaiah ben Amoz” (ibid., 37). As for the Song of Moses (*Shirat Ha’azinu*) that is found in Deuteronomy 32:1–43, it is thought by the well-respected Deuteronomy scholar Jeffrey Tigay be “an independent composition, older than the rest of Deuteronomy” (Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy: The JPS Torah Commentary*, ed. Nahum M. Sarna and Chaim Potok [Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996], 510), “perhaps considerably older” (ibid., 513).

- 90 Moses 7:28.

- 91 For an extensive discussion of this “chorus” of weeping and its resemblances to Jeremiah and other ancient accounts in Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Jacob Rennaker, and David J. Larsen, “Revisiting the Forgotten Voices of Weeping in Moses 7: A Comparison with Ancient Texts,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 2 (2012): 41–71, <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/revisiting-the-forgotten-voices-of-weeping-in-moses-7-a-comparison-with-ancient-texts/>.

- 92 Moses 7:40.

- 93 Moses 7:25.

- 94 Moses 7:27.

- 95 Moses 7:28. With regard to Enoch’s bearing record of God’s weeping, note the emphasis in both Mosiah 18:9 and 24:14 on

standing “as witnesses” of God through similar sympathetic interaction.

- 96 Draper, Brown, and Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary*, 128; give instances of the indirect approach: in Abraham’s appeal to the Lord not to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah before his nephew Lot and family escaped (see Genesis 18:23–32), and in Jared’s requests through his brother that they keep their language and, later and most important, that the Lord lead their families to a promised land (see Ether 1:34, 38).
- 97 Moses 7:28.
- 98 Moses 7:29.
- 99 Moses 7:29–30.
- 100 Moses 7:34.
- 101 Hobbins, “The Rhetoric of Isaiah 1:2–20,” 11.
- 102 Moses 7:35.
- 103 The Lord’s “test of affection” described in the Book of Moses Enoch account is echoed in *2 Enoch* 30:14–15, where the Lord instructs Adam: “And I said to him, ‘This is good for you, but that is bad,’ so that I should come to know whether he has love toward me or abhorrence, and so that it might become plain who among his race loves me” (F. I. Andersen, “2 [Slavonic Apocalypse of] Enoch,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:152).

Significantly, the hard words described in Job 21:7–15 seem to have been directly witnessed, not by Job, but by Enoch himself (Alexander, “3 [Hebrew Apocalypse] of Enoch,” 4:3, p. 258): “When the generation of the Flood sinned and turned to evil deeds, and said to God, ‘Go away! We do not choose to learn your ways’ [cf. Job 21:14], the Holy One, blessed be he, took me [Enoch] from their midst to be a witness against them in the heavenly height to all who should come into the world, so that they should not say, ‘The Merciful One is cruel!’” See John C. Reeves, *Heralds of that Good Realm: Syro-Mesopotamian Gnosis and Jewish Traditions. Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies* 41, ed. James M. Robinson and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit (Leiden, NDL: E. J. Brill, 1996), 187. For a list of ancient sources, see *ibid.*, 183, 200n17.

In defiance of the Lord’s entreaty to “love one another, and ... choose me, their Father” (Moses 7:33), the wicked are depicted

as “say[ing] unto God, ... Depart from us: for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what profit should we have if we pray unto him?” (Job 21:14–15. Cf. Exodus 5:2; Malachi 3:13–15; Mosiah 11:27; Moses 5:16). Reeves characterizes these words as “a blasphemous rejection of divine governance and guidance ... wherein the wicked members of the Flood generation verbally reject God” (ibid., 188). Enoch is said to have prophesied a future judgment upon such “ungodly sinners” who have “uttered hard speeches ... against [the Lord]” (Jude 1:15, George W. E. Nickelsburg, ed., *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001], 81–108. *Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001], 1:9, p. 142. See also 5:4, p. 150; 27:2, p. 317; 101:3, p. 503. 2 Peter 2:5 labels this same generation as “ungodly”).

- 104 Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Prophets* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007), 1:80.
- 105 Jed Woodworth eloquently summarizes this contrast (“Extra-Biblical Enoch Texts in Early American Culture,” in *Archive of Restoration Culture: Summer Fellows’ Papers 1997–1999*, ed. Richard Lyman Bushman [Provo, UT: Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History, 2000], 191–92):

What is the fate of those who perish in the flood? In [1 Enoch], there is one fate only: everlasting punishment. Those who are destroyed in the flood are beyond redemption. For God to be reconciled, sinners must suffer forever. Enoch has nothing to say because God has no merciful side to appeal to. In Joseph Smith, however, punishment has an end. The merciful side of God allows Enoch to speak and be heard. God and Enoch speak a common language: mercy. “Lift up your heart, and be glad; and look,” God says to Enoch after the flood (Moses 7:44). There is hope for the wicked yet (Moses 7:37–38):

I will shut them up; a prison have I prepared for them. And that which I have chosen hath pled before my face. Wherefore, he suffereth for their sins; inasmuch as they will repent in the day that

my Chosen shall return unto me, and until that day they shall be in torment.

The Messiah figure in [1 Enoch 45–47] and in Joseph Smith function in different ways. In Joseph Smith, the Chosen One will come to earth at the meridian of time to rescue the sinners of Enoch’s day. After the Messiah’s death and resurrection, “as many of the spirits as were in prison came forth, and stood on the right hand of God” (Moses 7:57. Compare 1 Peter 3:20). The Messiah figure in [1 Enoch] does not come down to earth and is peripheral to the text; he presides over the “elect” around God’s throne (Richard Laurence, ed., *The Book of Enoch, the Prophet: Translated from an Ethiopic Manuscript in the Bodleian Library, the Text Now Corrected from His Latest Notes with an Introduction by the [Anonymous] Author of “The Evolution of Christianity”* [Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1883], 45:3–5, pp. 49–50; 56:3, p. 64, <http://archive.org/details/bookofenochproph00laur>) but does not rescue the sinners of Enoch’s day. “In the day of trouble evil shall [still] be heaped upon sinners” (ibid., 49:2, pp. 55–56. Cf. 49:3–4, p. 54), he tells Enoch [in that account].

Similar in attitude to the Book of Moses and somewhat different in tone from 1 Enoch, the Book of Giants records Enoch’s hope for them if they repent (Florentino Garcia Martinez, “The Book of Giants (4Q203),” in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English*, trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson [Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996], 8:14–15, p. 261): “set loose what you hold captive ... and pray” (Donald W. Parry and Emanuel Tov, eds., *The Dead Sea Scrolls Reader* [Leiden, NDL: Brill, 2013], 4Q203, 8:14–15, p. 481). For discussions of hints in Mani’s Book of Giants that some of the wicked repented and were saved as the result of Enoch’s preaching, see Matthew Goff, “The Sons of the Watchers in the Book of Watchers and the Qumran Book of Giants,” in *Ancient Tales of Giants from Qumran and Turfan: Contexts, Traditions, and Influences*, eds. Matthew Goff, Loren T. Stuckenbruck and Enrico Morano (Tübingen, DEU: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 124–27; Gábor Kósa, “The Book of Giants Tradition in the Chinese Manichaica,” in *Ancient Tales of Giants from Qumran and Turfan: Contexts, Traditions, and Influences*, 173–75.

- 106 See Elder Neal A. Maxwell's discussion of this passage (Maxwell, *That Ye May Believe* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992], 29, 81):

Enoch saw the God of Heaven weep over needless human suffering . . . .

God's empathy is not to be defined by man's lack of empathy or by our sometimes stupid and cruel use of moral agency!

All of us should be very careful, therefore, about seeming to lecture God on suffering. God actually weeps over the suffering of His children. Enoch saw it! He questioned God about those divine tears—especially in view of God's omnipotence and His omniscience. Why cry over one people on one planet — especially in view of how far God's vast creations stretch out?

The Lord rehearsed for Enoch that humanity and this earthly habitat are “the workmanship of [God's] own hands,” and, further, that He gave us our knowledge and our agency. Most strikingly, the Lord then focused on the fact that the human family should love one another and should choose God as their Father. The two great commandments! Then the Lord lamented, yet “they are without affection, and they hate their own blood.”

- 107 See the comparison of key words in Bergey, “Song of Moses.”
- 108 Hobbins, “The Rhetoric of Isaiah 1:2–20,” 11, 13.
- 109 See the Lord's declaration to the people: “I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me . . . Children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord” (vv. 2, 4).
- 110 See the explicit description of God as a “father” (vv. 6–7) to His “children” (vv. 5, 8, 20) — His “sons” (vv. 8, 19) and “daughters” (v. 19).
- 111 Bergey, “Song of Moses,” 39.
- 112 Heschel, *The Prophets*, 1:80. For an example that depicts the anguish of the rejected father but — in contrast to Deuteronomy 32, Isaiah 1, and Moses 7 — without tendering any hope of forgiveness, see S. Agourides, “Apocalypse of Sedrach,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 6:1–6, 1:610:

And God said unto him: “Be it known to you, that everything which I commanded man to do was within his reach. I made him wise [cf. Moses 7:32] and the heir of heaven and earth, and I subordinated everything under him and every living thing flees from him and from his face. Having received my gifts, however, he became an alien, an adulterer and sinner. Tell me, what sort of a father would give an inheritance to his son, and having received the money (the son) goes away leaving his father and becomes an alien and in the service of aliens [cf. Luke 15:11–15]. The father then, seeing that the son has forsaken him (and gone away), darkens his heart and going away, eh retrieves his wealth and banishes his son from his glory, because he forsook his father. How is it that I, the wondrous and jealous God, have given everything to him, but he, having received them, became an adulterer and sinner?”

- 113 Heschel, *The Prophets*, 1:83.
- 114 Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith’s New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*, 618.
- 115 Moses 7:11, 24, 27, 33, 37, 47, 59.
- 116 In the older sense of the term described in Heschel, *The Prophets*, 269–72 (“the ancient classical ideas of pathos [that] included all conditions of feeling and will in which man is dependent on the outer world”), not its more recent and limited sense of “painful emotion” (p. 272) and the modern notion that the “sublime” and the “pathetic” “have nothing to do with each other” (p. 270).
- 117 Hobbins, “The Rhetoric of Isaiah 1:2–20,” 13–14.
- 118 Moses 7:37. Somewhat of a more sympathetic variant to Hobbins’ description of “a leading question and exclamation that recall by way of context and choice of terminology the status of the addressees as punished and disobedient children (ibid., 13).
- 119 Ibid., 11.
- 120 Moses 7:38–39.
- 121 Givens and Givens, *The God Who Weeps*, 24–25.
- 122 Moses 7:41.

- 123 Compare OT1, Moses 7:28, pp. 105–106 to OT2, Moses 7:28, p. 618.

Speaking of prophets in general, Abraham Heschel explains that “what convulsed the prophet’s whole being was God. His condition was a state of suffering in sympathy with the divine pathos” (Heschel, *The Prophets*, 1:118, cf. 1:80–85, 91–92, 105–27; 2:101–103). This view of prophets stands in stark contrast to the Philo of Alexandria’s parallel description of the relationship between the high priest and God in *De Specialibus Legibus*. In this passage, Philo is commenting upon the law in Leviticus 21:10–12 which prohibits the high priest from mourning for (or even approaching) the bodies of deceased parents, consistent with Greek philosophical conceptions (See Philo, “The Special Laws, 1 [De specialibus legibus, 1],” in *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged*, ed. and trans. C. D. Yonge [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006], 1:113–16, pp. 165, 167).

Philo’s view of a dispassionate, yet mediating high priest is not only at odds with the portrayal of Jesus as high priest presented in Hebrews 4:15 (“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.” Cf. Jacob Neusner, ed., *The Mishnah: A New Translation* [London, UK: Yale University Press, 1988], 1:4–6, p. 266), but also with Heschel’s perspective of mediating prophets as those who have entered into “a fellowship with the feelings of God” (Heschel, *The Prophets*, 1:26). As in the case of Enoch, a model of divine sympathy calls into question teachings regarding divine apathy.

This theme of shared sorrow between God and prophet is explored at length by theologian Terence Fretheim (see Fretheim, *The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 149–66). According to Fretheim, “The prophet’s life was reflective of the divine life. This became increasingly apparent to Israel. God is seen to be present not only in what the prophet has to say, but in the word as embodied in the prophet’s life. To hear and see the prophet was to hear and see God, a God who was suffering on behalf of the people” (ibid., 149). To a certain extent, so close was the association between God and prophet that the prophet’s very presence could serve as a sort of “ongoing theophany” (ibid., 151), providing Israel with a very visible and tangible representation of God’s concern.



Fretheim argues that the prophet's "sympathy with the divine pathos" was not the result of contemplating the divine, but rather a result of the prophet's participation in the divine council. He writes (*ibid.*, 150):

[T]he fact that the prophets are said to be a part of this council indicates something of the intimate relationship they had with God. The prophet was somehow drawn up into the very presence of God; even more, the prophet was in some sense admitted into the history of God. The prophet becomes a party to the divine story; the heart and mind of God pass over into that of the prophet to such an extent that the prophet becomes a veritable embodiment of God.

In the case of Enoch, the prophet enters into the presence of God (Moses 7:20) and witnesses the weeping of God and a heavenly host over the wickedness of humanity (Moses 7:28–31, 37, 40). As a result of this participation in the heavenly council, Enoch becomes divinely sensitized to the plight of the human race and begins to weep himself (Moses 7:41, 44).

- 124 In this article, the narrative drama of OT1 is described only in summary fashion. Beyond what we have already described, additional examples of where the reading of OT2 seems inferior to OT1 could be given.

For example, the replacement of *bosom* by *presence* in OT2 breaks the connection to a meaningful string of six uses of the term *bosom* in varying contexts within the chapter (Moses 7:24, 30, 31, 47, 63, 69. See a summary discussion of this key term in Bradshaw, *In God's Image and Likeness*, 2:143–44). Moses 7 is the only chapter in the Book of Moses in which the word *bosom* appears, and a key part of the culminating verse of the chapter, when God receives Zion "up into his own bosom" (Moses 7:69).

Moreover, Elder Maxwell notes the importance of the seemingly inconsequential three-letter word *yet*, which is omitted in OT2 (Maxwell, *That Ye May Believe*, 205, emphasis in original):

Notice, however, what reassured and assuaged Enoch most about Jesus amid His creations: "And *yet thou art there*, and thy bosom is there; and also thou art just; thou art merciful and kind forever."

The omission of the tiny adverb *yet* greatly weakens the strength of the phrase.

- 125 “How Great the Wisdom and the Love,” in *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), #195.
- 126 As Richard L. Bushman writes (*Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, 138):
- In redoing the early chapters of Genesis, the stories of Creation, of Adam and Eve, and the Fall were modified, but with less extensive interpolations than in the revelation to Moses. Joseph wove Christian doctrine into the text without altering the basic story. But with the appearance of Enoch in the seventh generation from Adam, the text expanded far beyond the biblical version. In Genesis, Enoch is summed up in 5 verses; in Joseph Smith’s revision, Enoch’s story extends to 110 verses.
- 127 Royal Skousen. “The Earliest Textual Sources for Joseph Smith’s “New Translation” of the King James Bible.” *FARMS Review* 17 no. 2 (2005): 462. For the original study, see Kent P. Jackson, and Peter M. Jasinski, “The Process of Inspired Translation: Two Passages Translated Twice in the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 42, no. 2. (2003): 35–64.
- 128 Philip L. Barlow, *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 55–57.
- 129 Skousen, “The Earliest Textual Sources,” 461. With respect to the process of translation for the Book of Mormon, Brant Gardner posits a view of functionalist equivalence — “unless a very specific, detailed textual analysis supports an argument that particular words or passages are either literalist or conceptual” (Brant A. Gardner, *The Gift and Power: Translating the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011], 247). For instance, Gardner considers, among other types of examples, the proper names of the Book of Mormon as specific instances of literal translation. He also finds examples of structural elements (e.g., chiasms and other literary features) in the Book of Mormon that are neither random nor “part of the common repertoire available to a writer in upstate New York in the 1830s. They represent features

of the plate text that have survived the translation process” (ibid., 204). For summary discussions of the detailed analysis of this issue given throughout the book, see especially ibid., 227–47, 279–83.

Royal Skousen differs in his understanding of the translation process, arguing that the words chosen for the English text of the Book of Mormon were generally given under “tight control” (Royal Skousen, “Joseph Smith’s Translation of the Book of Mormon: Evidence for Tight Control of the Text,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7, no. 1 [1998]: 22–31).

Of course, even in the case of passages that seem to be explicitly revelatory, it remained to the Prophet to exercise considerable personal effort in rendering these experiences into words (see e.g., D&C 9:7–9). As Kathleen Flake puts it, Joseph Smith did not see himself as “God’s stenographer. Rather, he was an interpreting reader, and God the confirming authority” (Kathleen Flake, “Translating Time: The Nature and Function of Joseph Smith’s Narrative Canon,” *Journal of Religion* 87, no. 4 [October 2007]: 507–508, <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/divinity/facultynews/Flake%20Translating%20Time.pdf>; cf. Grant Underwood, “Revelation, Text, and Revision: Insight from the Book of Commandments and Revelations,” *BYU Studies* 48, no. 3 [2009]: 76–81, 83–84. With respect to the Book of Mormon, scholars differ in their understanding about the degree to which the vocabulary and phrasing of Joseph Smith’s translation was tightly controlled. However, there is a consensus among Latter-day Saint scholars that at least some features of the plate text of the Book of Mormon survived translation (Gardner, *The Gift and Power*, 150–52, 197–204).

How does one reconcile the idea of something like a “word-by-word” translation facilitated by divinely provided physical artifacts with the idea that the translation process was a demanding process that drew heavily on Joseph Smith’s mental and spiritual capacities? Elsewhere, as part of a discussion of the challenges of scripture translation and interpretation, Bradshaw wrote (“Foreword,” in *Name as Key-Word: Collected Essays on Onomastic Wordplay and the Temple in Mormon Scripture*, ed. Matthew L. Bowen [Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2018], xxvii–xxviii, n17,

Foreword%20to%20Bowen-Pages%20from%20180524-Bowen%20Book%2020180524-2.pdf):

Though the English translation of the Book of Mormon seems to have involved an important visual component, it was not a merely mechanical process of “reading” in the ordinary sense. Brant Gardner has discussed possible explanations for how pre-linguistic inspiration and the mental/physiological processes of using a seer stone might have come together during translation (Gardner, *The Gift and Power*, 259–77). Although Gardner’s proposal cannot tell us anything about the process of inspiration itself, it suggests how revelation about the contents of the Nephite record could have been mediated by mental processes that were involved in the choice of specific English words in translation.

Apart from cognitive considerations, one’s fitness to translate by the gift of divine seership is inescapably a religious and moral matter. Whatever help one’s native gifts, cultural milieu, personal experience, educational opportunities, or even divinely prepared “technology” might provide to a translator devoid of scholarly method and critical apparatus, it would be insufficient compensation for the essential prerequisites that enable the Holy Ghost to be a “constant companion” (D&C 121:46) to the translator. As Greg Smith observed (Gregory L. Smith, personal communication to author, 2017), the necessary virtue to access God’s power:

is not something that can be granted simply by more [mental or technologically-assisted] processing speed — as if I would be kinder and wiser if I could access a thousand articles in an hour instead of ten .... We do not become like God through achieving technological mastery, or through any other exercise of power over nature. The challenge is not finding individuals who can master and carry out a scientific or technical program. Instead, the difficulty lies in finding or developing those who will not abuse power when they have it [see D&C 121:39].

- 130 Royal Skousen, ed., *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), xxxiii. Later on the same page, Skousen gives examples of three correctors “who played an important role in the early history of the text”: Oliver Cowdery (“the main scribe for the two manuscripts”), John Gilbert

(“the typesetter for the 1830 edition”), and Joseph Smith (“the main editor for the 1837 and 1840 editions”). For each of these individuals, Skousen provides “one example where the critical text accepts the conjectural emendation and one where it is rejected.”

- 131 See, e.g., Jeffrey M. Hunt, R. Alden Smith, and Fabio Stok, *Classics from Papyrus to the Internet: An Introduction to Transmission and Reception* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2017), <https://books.google.com/books?id=6-zaDgAAQBAJ.77>. Comparing the situation of the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, Matthew Bowen concludes similarly, after extensive discussion of a relevant example: “We see abundant evidence in ancient New Testament manuscripts of scribes ... attempting to correct what they think are mistakes in the text, only to make the text worse with their corrections. Joseph’s associates did similar things with the Book of Mormon text and with his early revelations” (Matthew L. Bowen, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, February 26, 2020.) For a good example of this in the Book of Mormon, see Daniel Sharp and Matthew L. Bowen, “Scripture Note — ‘For This Cause Did King Benjamin Keep Them’: King Benjamin or King Mosiah?” *Religious Educator* 18, no. 1 (2017): 81–87, [https://rsc.byu.edu/sites/default/files/pub\\_content/pdf/Scripture\\_Note%E2%80%9494For\\_This\\_Cause\\_Did\\_King\\_Benjam%E2%80%8Bin\\_Keep\\_Them\\_King\\_Benjamin\\_or\\_King\\_Mosiah.pdf](https://rsc.byu.edu/sites/default/files/pub_content/pdf/Scripture_Note%E2%80%9494For_This_Cause_Did_King_Benjam%E2%80%8Bin_Keep_Them_King_Benjamin_or_King_Mosiah.pdf). See also Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007), 1:214–22. And, in the case of the Book of Moses, we do not currently possess direct evidence that the Prophet always micromanaged the changes made in JST manuscripts.
- 132 In the case of Moses 7:28, we rely on literary arguments to confirm our general position of the original dictation being the better one. In principle, we might be persuaded for or against the superiority of the original dictation based on other kinds of arguments — historical, comparative, etc. Though we realize that such a position (like Royal Skousen’s position with respect to the default priority of the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon) is prone to generate endless debates, we see no better alternative than to consider each disputed passage individually with respect to its own merits.

- 133 Jackson, March 2, 2020. With respect to the Book of Mormon, Jackson continues:

I know that Royal Skousen does not like changes made to the Book of Mormon text after the original dictation, but I think the Book of Mormon is a different case. The Book of Mormon was a preexisting text, in English words, and the Prophet saw the words. His part was to read them. I think that the JST, like the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, was a revelatory process that was not always complete with the original dictation. Hence changes made later were part of the process.

We agree that Jackson's description of a more incremental translation process above applies to most of the JST. However, we are persuaded that several long revelatory passages in the JST (like many passages in the Doctrine and Covenants that seem to have been dictated in a similar fashion) are closer to the word-for-word revelatory pattern of the Book of Mormon. For Bradshaw's views on Joseph Smith's translation process, see Bradshaw, "Foreword."

- 134 Moses 6:40.

- 135 Moses 7:2.

- 136 Moses 7:2 reads: "As I was journeying, and stood upon the place Mahujah, and cried unto the Lord, there came a voice out of heaven, saying — Turn ye, and get ye upon the mount Simeon."

On the basis of the pronoun *I* that is present in the OT1 manuscript (see Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts*, OT1 page 15, Moses 7:2, p. 103) and the use of the second-person plural *ye* that appears twice later in the verse, Cirillo argues for an alternate reading: "As I was journeying and stood in the place, Mahujah and I cried unto the Lord. There came a voice out of heaven, saying — Turn ye, and get ye upon the mount Simeon" (Salvatore Cirillo, "Joseph Smith, Mormonism, and Enochic Tradition" [Masters Thesis, Durham University, 2010], 103, <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/236/>, punctuation modified). This reading turns the name Mahujah into a personal name instead of a place name, i.e., with the meaning that Enoch is "standing with" Mahujah, "not on Mahujah" (ibid., 103). An issue with this reading is that afterward, Enoch went up to meet God alone ("I turned and went up on the

mount; ... I stood upon the mount" [Moses 7:3]). The only way to reconcile the absence of Mahujah in subsequent events would be if he did not follow Enoch to the mount as he had been commanded to do in Moses 7:2 (taking the "Turn ye" to be plural).

On the other hand, in a different reading, David Calabro points out that Moses 7:2 "As I was journeying ... and I cried" "could be an example of the use of 'and' to introduce a main clause after a circumstantial clause, which is a Hebraism that is frequently found in the earliest Book of Mormon text" (David Calabro, email message to Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, January 24, 2018). In this case, the "ye" in "Turn ye" would have to be interpreted as singular rather than plural.

If the name for mount Mahujah on which Enoch ascended to pray indeed relates to the idea of questioning (as proposed in a note by Nibley below), it would provide a neat counterpart to the name of the mount Simeon (Hebrew Shim'on = he has heard), where Enoch was commanded to go in order to receive his answers. Note Al-Tha'labi's account of Adam and Eve being rejoined after their separation when "they recognized each other by questioning on a day of questioning. So the place was named 'Arafat (= questions) and the day, 'Irfah.'" (Abu Ishaq Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim al-Tha'labi, *'Ara'is Al-Majalis Fi Qisas Al-Anbiya' or "Lives of the Prophets,"* trans. William M. Brinner [Leiden, NDL: Brill, 2002], 291).

- 137 Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 82. Townsend must have meant to say something like that there were four examples in *addition* to the possible *j* in *Mahijah*. Instead, his statement was left unqualified. Moreover, his next statement ("The other two, of which *Mahijah* is one") only further gives the impression that the *j* in *Mahijah* should be included as one of the four *j*'s that he was considering. See *ibid.*, 82. In essence, Townsend was not employing circular logic by including the very thing he was trying to figure out as evidence for what it is.
- 138 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–13 — Moses 6:34b–52a, Moses 6:40. Cf. OT1 page 13, Moses 6:40, p. 100.
- 139 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–12 — Moses 6:19b–34a, Moses 6:26. Cf. OT1 page 12, Moses 6:26, p. 98. Faulring and Jackson,

*Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–12 — Moses 6:19b–34a, Moses 6:34. Cf. OT1 page 12, Moses 6:34, p. 99.

- 140 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 83.
- 141 Ibid.
- 142 Ibid.
- 143 OT1 pages 12–13, pp. 98–100. See the words *since* (p. 12), *rivers* (p. 13), *raised* (p. 13), *their* (p. 13, two lines above *Mahijah*), and *vision* (p. 13).
- 144 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–13 — Moses 6:34a–52a, Moses 6:39. Cf. OT1 page 13, Moses 6:29, p. 100. Note that the word “their” in “their hands” is omitted in the canonical version of Moses 6:39.
- 145 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, OT 1–13 — Moses 6:34a–52a, Moses 6:40. Cf. OT1 page 13, Moses 6:40, p. 100.
- 146 “Letter from Emma Smith, 6 December 1839,” p. 1, *The Joseph Smith Papers*, accessed March 10, 2020, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/letter-from-emma-smith-6-december-1839/1>.
- 147 On page 12 of OT1, this occurs in three instances of the word *which*. On page 13, it is found in the words *which* (two instances), *visible* (both *i*'s are missing the upstroke), *voice*, and *with*.
- 148 On page 12 of OT1, this occurs in the words *lived*, *died*, *sixty*, and *voice*. On page 13 of OT1, it occurs in the words *with*, *it*, *is* (two instances), *it*, *saying*, *his*, and *in*.
- 149 Ibid., see OT1 examples of *is* (p. 12, “is in my hands”), *foundation* (p. 13), and *his* (p. 13, in “by his fall”).
- 150 Townsend, “Returning to the Sources,” 83.
- 151 Adding to this possibility is the fact that, as previously discussed, Emma had two different ways of writing a *j*. In a moment of split-second deliberation, she may have hesitated briefly before deciding to include, rather than omit, the preceding upward hook that is found in two out of the four other instances of *j* in OT1. The *j* in *Mahijah* happens to be the only lowercase *j* that occurs in the middle, rather than at the beginning, of a word in Emma's



writing in OT1. Thus, not only is it reasonable for Emma to have hesitated at this particular juncture, but it is the only location in OT1 where such a hesitation could visibly disrupt the transition from a previous letter. This reasoning doesn't work as well as an explanation for the cause of a shortened *u*. One reason is that the moment of deliberation would have had to start before the *u* was even finished. In contrast, it makes more sense that Emma completed the *i* and then, in the act of transition, hesitated before moving onto the next letter. In addition, we would also have to assume that instead of just causing a minor hesitation (which appears to be the case), the deliberation caused Emma to almost completely omit the second upstroke of the *u*.

- 152 Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 82–83.
- 153 Various factors make it difficult to ensure that the relative sizing of images is proportionally accurate. Possible differences in the zoom and camera-to-manuscript distance in the high-resolution photographs themselves, as well as the fact that the sizes of words and letters naturally tend to fluctuate in hand-written documents, likely makes a perfectly precise comparison impossible. Some measure of control, however, can be obtained by making shared letters the same size in each image. In this case, we ensured that the letter *h* in *mouth* and *mouths* were approximately the same height as the shorter of the two *h*'s in *Mahijah*. It should be noted, however, that within each image, the height of the second upstroke relative to the height of the first upstroke will remain constant, no matter how disproportional the separate images are to one another. Thus the specific feature that Townsend identifies for his analysis shouldn't be affected by any minor disproportions among the images.
- 154 With regard to the second upstroke in *mouths*, we placed the horizontal bar at the top of what appears to be the original upstroke, rather than the overwritten portion.
- 155 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, Moses 6:34a–52a, Genesis 6:36a–53a. Cf. OT1, 13.
- 156 *Ibid.*, Moses 6:19b–34a, Genesis 6:18b–36a.
- 157 *Ibid.*

- 158 Like the *u* in *mouth* and *mouths*, every other instance of a *u* appears to cover significantly more distance, either vertically or horizontally (and usually both), compared to the deviation in *Mahijah*. In a personal communication, Townsend pointed to examples of *u*'s that are completely overwritten, making a comparison of the original upstroke impossible. Yet, as the example in *mouths* indicates, just because an upstroke is overwritten, it doesn't mean that it was necessarily very low to begin with.
- 159 See Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 83.
- 160 Ibid.
- 161 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, Moses 6:34a–52a, Genesis 6:36a–53a.
- 162 Two other possible instances of dots over the letter *u* occur in the words *must* and *our* at the bottom of page 13 of OT1. However, neither of these markings look much like ink dots. They are too dark (compared to the surrounding ink), too close to the *u*, and are unusually small for intentional dots.
- 163 It could be argued that the sample size, specifically for *u*'s with shortened upstrokes, isn't large enough to reach any statistically reliable conclusions about the matter. That may be true, but to even get to this line of reasoning one has to assume, from the outset, that the slight deviation between the *i* and the *j* in *Mahijah* is indeed an abbreviated *u* — an assumption that, as argued above, lacks persuasive power. Even if we did have such data, there is no guarantee that Emma's rate of error would increase enough to make an erroneous dot a statistically likely occurrence. After all, the only erroneous dot over a *u* in OT1 happens to be above a *u* with two upstrokes of the same approximate height, and not over a *u* with a shorter second upstroke.
- 164 Jackson, March 2, 2020.
- 165 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, Moses 6:39b–59b, Genesis 6:41b–62a.
- 166 Ibid., OT3–11 — Moses 6:39b–59b, Genesis 6:41b–62a.
- 167 Faulring and Jackson, *Joseph Smith's Translation of the Bible Electronic Library*, Moses 6:64a–7:10b, Genesis 6:67a–7:12b.
- 168 Ibid., OT 2–19 Moses 6:63a–7:5b, Genesis 6:66a–7:5b. Ibid., 19.
- 169 Jackson, March 2, 2020.

170 Townsend, "Returning to the Sources," 83.