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The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) existed from 1979 until 2006, when it was formally incorporated into the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship. Archived by permission.



INSIGHTS

AN ANCIENT WINDOW

The Newsletter of
the Foundation for
Ancient Research
& Mormon Studies

December 1997

"by study and also by faith" D & C 88:118

Thirteen Is Lucky for the *FARMS Review of Books*

For the thirteenth time, FARMS has invited reviewers to examine books about the Book of Mormon, other scriptures, and related topics. The latest issue of the *FARMS Review of Books* (volume 9, number 2) covers eight books about the Book of Mormon and eight books on other topics. It also contains an editor's introduction that raises serious and stimulating questions about weaknesses in the methods of contemporary biblical scholarship.

Ralph C. Hancock reviews two books—one by H. Verlan Andersen and the other by Brad E. Hainsworth—that attempt to understand and defend the U.S. constitution from a Latter-day Saint perspective and alert the Saints to possible political implications of their faith. Hancock is sympathetic to their goals, believing that "we ought to ask ourselves what guidance we as citizens can receive from the gospel in general and from the Book of Mormon in particular," but he sees problems in parts of their arguments and carefully analyzes where he thinks they succeed and fail.

John S. Thompson reviews Hoyt W. Brewster Jr.'s *Isaiah Plain and Simple*, finding that on the whole it is a worthy effort. Its primary contribution is to gather together commentary from other sources (plus some of his own) on the passages of Isaiah that are included in the Book of Mormon.

However, little attention is given to the Book of Mormon context of the Isaiah passages; it uses the Book of Mormon as little more than a guide to which chapters or verses to discuss.

Roger R. Keller's *Book of Mormon Authors: Their Words and Messages* (Religious Studies Center) is reviewed by John A. Tvedtnes. Keller's main purpose appears to be to show that the writings of different Book of Mormon authors are clearly distinct in their word usage. While Tvedtnes finds that the work is not a rigorously scientific statistical study, he explains in this review why he thinks the book is an insightful contribution that will influence future studies of the Book of Mormon.

Both Richard H. Cracroft and Neal W. Kramer review *The Viper*

on the Hearth: Mormons, Myths, and the Construction of Heresy by Terryl L. Givens (Oxford University Press). Both believe that it is a significant contribution to our understanding of anti-Mormon sentiment expressed through nineteenth-century fiction, but each focuses on different aspects of that contribution.

Working toward Zion: Principles of the United Order for the Modern World, by James W. Lucas and Warner P. Woodworth (from a vanity press), also receives two reviews, but this time the reviews differ considerably in tone. Don Norton focuses on the book's potential impact on individual behavior, finding much in the book that can help individuals reconsider their economic behavior, resist the temptations of

Continued on page 4

Subscriptions and Donations Still Essential for FARMS

Since the announcement that FARMS has been invited to become part of BYU, we have received several phone calls asking whether FARMS still needs the financial support of its subscribers and donors. The answer is emphatically yes!

The Foundation could never have come this far without the generosity of volunteers, subscribers, and donors—people who care

enough about faithful scholarship on the Book of Mormon to help make a difference. The resources that BYU will give to FARMS will provide a stronger base for our operations, but our research and publishing programs cannot succeed and grow without the continued support of subscribers and donors. You are as important to the work of FARMS as ever.



FARMS UPDATE

A Report on Research in Progress

The Foundation for
Ancient Research
& Mormon Studies

Number 115

Hebraic Elements in the Language of the Book of Mormon

Recent research has yielded another interesting clue about the language of the Nephites and about the manner in which it was translated into English. By comparing the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon to the subsequent printed versions, Royal Skousen has found that the original English-language text of the Book of Mormon contained expressions that are uncharacteristic of English.¹ One such expression is a Hebrew-like conditional clause.

In English, it is common to express a conditional idea in the following manner: "if you come, then I will come," with *then* being optional. In Hebrew this same idea is expressed in another manner: "if you come, and I will come." This structure makes perfect sense in Hebrew but is not found in English. When Joseph Smith translated 1 Nephi 17:50, he dictated "if he should command me that I should say unto this water be thou earth, and it shall be earth." This non-English construction was removed from this verse by Oliver Cowdery as he copied the original manuscript to produce the printer's manuscript. He deleted the word *and*, making the text read better in English. The sentence now reads: "if he should command me that I should say unto this water be thou earth, it should be earth."

Thirteen other occurrences of this Hebraic conditional were

printed in the first edition of the Book of Mormon and then later removed by Joseph Smith in his grammatical editing in preparation for the second edition of the Book of Mormon, published in 1837 in Kirtland, Ohio. One of these instances is the famous passage in Moroni 10:4, which originally read: "and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart with real intent having faith in Christ, and he will manifest the truth of it unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost" (1830 edition, p. 586). In the 1837 and all subsequent editions, the *ands* in conditional clauses like this one have been dropped to express the idea appropriately in English.

This use of *and* is not due to scribal error. Strong evidence of this is found in Helaman 12:13–21, where the *if-and* expression occurred seven times in the 1830 edition (p. 440):

13 yea and if he saith unto the earth move, and it is moved

14 yea if he saith unto the earth thou shalt go back that it lengthen out the day for many hours, and it is done

16 and behold also if he saith unto the waters of the great deep be thou dried up, and it is done

17 behold if he saith unto this mountain be thou raised up and come over and fall upon that city that it be buried up, and behold it is done

19 and if the Lord shall say be thou accursed that no man

shall find thee from this time henceforth and forever, and behold no man getteth it henceforth and forever

20 and behold if the Lord shall say unto a man because of thine iniquities thou shalt be accursed forever, and it shall be done

21 and if the Lord shall say because of thine iniquities thou shalt be cut off from my presence, and he will cause that it shall be so

This type of structure is perfectly acceptable in Hebrew, but these verses were changed in 1837 to make the book read more smoothly and convey the proper meaning in English.

These observations support the idea that Joseph Smith's translation was a literal one and not simply a reflection of either his own dialect or the style of early modern English found in the King James Version of the Bible. They also support the idea that the language from which the book was translated into English was Hebrew or Hebrew-like.

¹ Royal Skousen, "The Original Language of the Book of Mormon: Upstate New York Dialect, King James English, or Hebrew?" *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3/1 (1994): 28–38; "Translating the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (1997), 61–93.

Based on research by Royal Skousen

Scholar watch

Several Significant Historical and Anthropological Essays of John Sorenson Gathered in Two New Volumes

Nearly two dozen essays by John L. Sorenson, professor emeritus of anthropology at Brigham Young University, have been conveniently gathered into two paperback volumes by a Salt Lake publisher, New Sage Books. Some of these essays will be familiar to FARMS readers, but many will be new. Both collections can be obtained at a discount from FARMS using the enclosed order form.

Mormon Culture contains fifteen essays; five have never before been published and a few others come from publications not readily accessible. They include:

- The Mormon People: A View from Anthropology
- Mormon Folk and Mormon Elite
- Ritual as Theology
- Consider Their Origin: Interpreting and Enriching American Family Histories through an Understanding of Cultural Differences
- "Being Wrong" in Mormon Thought

- Science and Mormonism as Traditions
- Mormon World View and American Culture
- Channels of Innovation in Mormon Life
- The Second Gathering: New Migrants to Utah
- The West as a Network of Cultures
- The Language of the Mormons: A Sociocultural Perspective
- Industrialization and Tradition in a Mormon Village
- Mormon Funeral Behavior
- Toward a Characterization of Mormon Personality
- Five Theories in Search of Mormon Personality

Nephite Culture and Society contains eight essays, two previously unpublished. They include:

- The Composition of Lehi's Family
- The Brass Plates and Biblical Scholarship
- Transoceanic Crossings

- When Lehi's Party Arrived in the Land, Did They Find Others There?
- The "Mulekites"
- The Settlements of Book of Mormon Peoples
- Seasonality of Warfare in the Book of Mormon and in Mesoamerica
- The Political Economy of the Nephites

The Nibley corner

Nibley Temple Essay Reprinted

FARMS has reprinted (from volume 4 of the *Collected Works of Hugh Nibley*) an influential article by Nibley on the temple of ancient Israel, entitled "What Is a Temple?" The subheadings in the text give a sense of its content and emphases:

- The Loss of the Temple
- What Makes a Temple? The Cosmic Plan
- The Place of Contact
- The Ritual Drama
- The Initiation
- Loss and Diffusion of the Temple Ordinances
- The Question of Priority
- Looking Backward

The essay was first written in 1958 for the dedication of the London Temple. The concluding section was added much later to update Nibley's study of the temple. If you are interested in the history and meaning of the temple and have not read this article, you will not want to miss it.

In the news

Paul's Detention Site in Israel Believed Found

Reuters reports that archaeologists in Israel have uncovered a Roman governmental complex in Caesarea where they believe Paul was held in detention. In Acts 23-26 we read that Paul was kept in Herod's judgment hall in Caesarea, where he faced in turn Felix, Festus, and Agrippa and where he appealed to be sent be-

fore Caesar's judgment seat in Rome. An inscription found in the site indicates that the complex housed the government bureau responsible for internal security for Judea, making this complex the likely spot for Paul's incarceration and hearing before the Roman governor.

*Media center***Videos Available in PAL**

For a nominal charge of \$1.50 above the regular price, any FARMS video can be converted into PAL format. Simply indicate on any FARMS order form your desire to have the PAL format, or call the FARMS office. We hope that this service makes FARMS videos more useful to subscribers around the world.

Lucky Thirteenth Review (continued from page 1)

covetousness, and take responsibility for their own and others' needs. T. Allen Lambert agrees that individuals will find inspiration and "practical examples for the here and now," but he discusses what he sees as serious conceptual problems in the authors' analysis of economic systems.

Reviewer Dana M. Pike hoped that *Dead Sea Scrolls and the Mormon Connection*, by Keith Terry and Stephen Biddulph, might fill the need for a book that summarizes what is known about the scrolls and discusses parallels between LDS doctrine and practice and the contents of the scrolls, but he concludes that it does not. Beyond the numerous factual errors it contains, the leading but unsubstantiated statements that hint at but do not directly discuss how the scrolls' teachings are connected to Mormon doctrine and practice were the most disappointing to Pike, given the title's promise to make that connection.

Paul Y. Hoskisson considers Lynn F. Price's *Every Person in the Book of Mormon: A Chronological Reference and Synopsis* a handy tool that is relatively easy to use. John A. Tvedtnes, on the other hand, finds that *Truths from the Earth*, by David T. Harris, is a travesty from cover to cover.

For readers interested in keeping up with the state of anti-Mormon arguments, reviews by Daniel C. Peterson, Duane Boyce, and L. Ara Norwood will be particularly interesting. Peterson examines the intellectual foibles of Rüdiger Hauth in *Die Mormonen: Sekte oder neue Kirche Jesu Christi? (The Mormons: Sect or New Church of Jesus Christ?)*, which consist chiefly of providing no support for his positions other than his own authority and of ignoring relevant research and publications. Boyce finds that D. Michael Quinn's *Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power* is marred by inaccuracies, distortions, failure to substantiate important claims, failure to define key terms, and even deliberate misleading. Similarly, Norwood examines examples of unsubstantiated claims, errors, straw-man arguments, and faulty logic found in Kurt Van Gorden's *Mormonism*.

Four FARMS publications are also summarized and reviewed: Richard D. Van Orden discusses two bibliographies on the Book of Mormon that he believes together make "a most significant contribution to Book of Mormon study and scholarship"; Madison Sowell praises Richard D. Rust's *Feasting on the Word: The Literary Testimony of the Book of Mormon*; and J. Howard Rytting reviews the features of *Expressions of Faith: Testimonies of Latter-day Saint Scholars*, edited by Susan Easton Black, that make it worth reading.

INSIGHTS
AN ANCIENT WINDOW

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The Purpose of FARMS

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) encourages and supports research about the Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ, and other ancient scriptures.

FARMS is a nonprofit educational foundation. Its main research interests include ancient history, language, literature, culture, geography, politics, and law relevant to the scriptures. Although such subjects are of secondary importance when compared with the spiritual and eternal messages of the scriptures, solid research and academic perspectives alone can supply certain kinds of useful information, even if only tentatively, concerning many significant and interesting questions about the scriptures.

The Foundation works to make interim and final reports about this research available widely, promptly, and economically. As a service to teachers and students of the scriptures, research results are distributed both in scholarly and popular formats.

It is hoped that this information will help all interested people to "come unto Christ" (Jacob 1:7) and to understand and take more seriously these ancient witnesses of the atonement of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

1998 Reading Suggestions

Old Testament and Pearl of Great Price

Each year FARMS compiles a list of books that may aid readers in their study of the scriptures in the Gospel Doctrine class of the Sunday School. For 1998, the assigned scriptures are the Old Testament and the Pearl of Great Price. We have made arrangements with several publishers to make available to FARMS subscribers at a 20% discount a number of good introductory books that may supplement your study of these scriptures. You may find these books helpful in supporting (not replacing) your study of these scriptures for the coming curriculum year. To order any book on this list, enter its title and the name of its author on the order form (or call the FARMS office).

We wish you well in your study of the scriptures in 1998.

Hugh W. Nibley, *Old Testament and Related Studies*
\$24.95 retail • sale price: \$19.95

Hugh W. Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*
\$23.95 retail • sale price: \$19.15

Ellis T. Rasmussen, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament*
\$25.95 retail • sale price: \$20.75

Thy People Shall Be My People and Thy God My God, the 22nd Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium
\$15.95 retail • sale price: \$12.75

Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet, *Studies in Scripture: Genesis to 2 Samuel*
\$15.95 retail • sale price: \$12.75

Kent P. Jackson and Robert L. Millet, *Studies in Scripture: 1 Kings to Malachi*

~~\$18.95~~ retail • sale price: \$15.00

Daniel H. Ludlow, *A Companion to Your Study of the Old Testament*

~~\$15.95~~ retail • sale price: \$12.75

Roland DeVaux, *Ancient Israel*, two volumes
~~\$30.00~~ retail • sale price: \$24.00

Ralph Gower, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times* (featuring maps and illustrations)
~~\$29.95~~ retail • sale price: \$23.95

Isaac M. Kikawada, *Before Abraham Was*
~~\$11.95~~ retail • sale price: \$9.50

Paul J. Achtemeier, ed., *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary Revised*
~~\$45.00~~ retail • sale price: \$36.00

Anchor Bible Dictionary, 6 volumes (special order; allow 3–4 weeks for delivery); price per volume
~~\$60.00~~ retail • sale price: \$48.00

William Wilson, *Old Testament Word Studies*
~~\$10.95~~ retail • sale price: \$8.75

William Whiston, trans., *The Works of Josephus*
~~\$12.95~~ retail • sale price: \$10.35

John Bright, *A History of Israel*
~~\$37.00~~ retail • sale price: \$29.50

Abraham Joseph Heschel, *The Prophets*, 2 volumes
~~\$30.00~~ retail • sale price: \$24.00

Victor P. Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Poet, and Seer*
~~\$24.95~~ retail • sale price: \$19.95

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We are pleased that more and more LDS bookstores are featuring FARMS books and journals. While we are happy to make FARMS publications available to you through this newsletter and other mailings, so that you can order in the convenience of your own homes, we recognize and appreciate the important services that bookstores provide.

Sometimes it is difficult to decide whether to purchase a book without holding it in your own

hands and perusing the table of contents, the introduction, and sample chapters. Sometimes comparing books leads to a more informed purchase. We are pleased that LDS bookstores are adding FARMS books to their mix of offerings and we recommend that FARMS readers support their local bookstores so that they can continue to provide such services.

Catalog Number	Items featured in this issue	Qty.	Unit Price	Total Price
REV-97a	Daniel C. Peterson, ed., <i>FARMS Review of Books</i> 9/2, 230 pp.		\$8.95	
SOR-97	John L. Sorenson, <i>Mormon Culture</i> , New Sage Books, 200 pp., \$16.00 retail		\$12.95	
SOR-97b	John L. Sorenson, <i>Nephite Culture and Society</i> , New Sage Books, 200 pp., \$16.00 retail		\$12.95	
N-TMP	Hugh W. Nibley, "What Is a Temple?" 21 pp.		\$2.00	
BRD-97	M. Gerald Bradford, ed., <i>Ancient Scrolls from the Dead Sea: Photographs and Commentary on a Unique Collection of Scrolls</i> , FARMS, softbound, 48 pp., full-color, retail \$7.95		\$6.35	
F-V4	<i>Masada and Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibits</i> , video, FARMS, 40 min.		\$9.95	
ALL-97	Marti Lu Allen, <i>The Story of Masada: A Pocket Guide to the Exhibition</i> , BYU Studies, 20 pp., with New Testament notes by John W. Welch, retail \$6.00		\$3.50	
MAS-97	<i>The Story of Masada: Discoveries from the Excavations</i> , full-color catalog of the exhibit BYU Studies and Hebrew University, 160 pp. retail \$20.95		\$15.95	
BYUS-MAS	John F. Hall and John W. Welch, eds., <i>Masada and the World of the New Testament</i> , BYU Studies, 400 pp., retail \$16.95		\$11.25	
INF-97W INF-97M	Price Reduction! 1997 edition of Infobase <i>LDS Collectors Library on CD</i> , retail \$99.95 Windows version Macintosh version		\$79.95 \$79.95	
W&D-97	Welch and Dant, eds., <i>The Book of Mormon Paintings of Minerva Teichert</i> , BYU Studies hardbound, 160 pp., commercial retail \$39.95		\$29.95	
	Christmas gift subscription to <i>INSIGHTS</i>		\$12.00	
	Old Testament Books (from the back of this order form)			
	Selected items from previous issue of <i>INSIGHTS</i>			
DSS-CD	<i>The Dead Sea Scrolls on CD: The FARMS Electronic Database</i>		\$249.00	
REY-97V	Noel B. Reynolds, "The Authorship of the Book of Mormon," BYU Forum address, video, BYU, 45 min.		\$7.95	
N-V04	<i>Hugh Nibley on the Meaning of Temples</i> , video, FARMS, 71 min.		\$9.95	
N-PGP	Hugh W. Nibley, <i>Teachings of the Pearl of Great Price</i> , transcripts of 26 lectures, FARMS softbound		\$14.95	

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