



Type: Journal Article

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Source: *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Fall 1992), 54-66

Published by: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies

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We usually remember Limhi for being the king when Ammon led the expedition to the land of Nephi (Mosiah 7:9). On the advice of Gideon, he led his people out of captivity (Mosiah 22:3–15). But Gideon and Ammon appear to have had much more active roles in the deliverance, and Limhi seems to have been relegated to the shadows. A few oddities about the story of Limhi, however, should elicit our attention.

First, we should notice a few unusual things about Limhi as an individual. Whereas Zeniff “did confer the kingdom upon” Noah (Mosiah 10:22–11:1), Limhi had “the kingdom conferred upon him by the people” (Mosiah 19:26).¹ Limhi was just “one of the sons of the king” (Mosiah 19:16), for Noah “had many wives and concubines” (Mosiah 11:2, 14). It is unknown whether Limhi was chosen because he was the oldest of Noah’s sons “among those that were taken captive” (Mosiah 19:16) when “the king commanded [his people] that all the men should leave their wives and their children” (Mosiah 19:11), or the only one so taken. We might have thought that his docile nature made him the choice of the king of the Lamanites had the record not stated that it was “the people” who chose him (Mosiah 19:26).

¹ On the nature of Nephite kingship, see Daniel C. Peterson, “Authority in the Book of Mosiah,” *F.A.R.M.S. paper*, 1991, 3–10. Note that by virtue of who conferred the kingship on Limhi, he did not hold the priesthood.

We could hazard a guess that Limhi was a young man at the time he took over the kingdom, being left among the children.²

If speech reveals the man, it constitutes our major key to Limhi. Most of Limhi's speeches are nothing but a pastiche of scriptural quotations. And it is in his speeches that the most revealing clues to Limhi's personality appear.

Direct quotations of Limhi occur in the following places in the record: (1) The trial of Ammon, Amaleki, Helem, and Hem (Mosiah 7:8–15); (2) an official address given to all his subjects at a covenant renewal ceremony (Mosiah 7:17–33);³ (3) the discussion with Ammon about the records (Mosiah 8:5–21); and (4) the interrogation of the king of the Lamanites (Mosiah 20:13–22). Something subtle and quite authentic has been done here in the Book of Mormon. All the direct quotations derive from situations where an official scribe would be on hand to write things down: a covenant renewal ceremony⁴ where the king would have “caused that the words which he spake should be written” (Mosiah 2:8), two trials,⁵ and an inspection of the

² As Scott Lorimer reminds me, Saul too was left behind “among the stuff” (1 Samuel 10:22). “Stuff” refers to the baggage the Israelites would bring with their families on the occasion of the yearly festivals (Exodus 23:14–19; Leviticus 23:1–44; Numbers 28:11–29:40; cf. Luke 2:42–44; Mosiah 2:1–7; Hugh W. Nibley, “The Hierocentric State,” in *The Ancient State*, vol. 10 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1991], 99–101; Hugh W. Nibley, “Old World Ritual in the New World,” in *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, 3d ed., vol. 6 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1988], 295–309; John A. Tvedtnes, “King Benjamin and the Feast of Tabernacles,” in John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, eds., *By Study and Also by Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh W. Nibley*, 2 vols. [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1990], 2:198–99, 220–23). Parallels to the life of Muhammed on this theme also exist; see ‘Abdu-l-Mālik ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīra al-Nabawiyya*, 4 vols. (Cairo: Mustafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī wa-Awlāduhu, 1932), 1:192–93.

³ The covenant renewal ceremony is discussed in Blake T. Ostler, “The Covenant Tradition in the Book of Mormon,” in John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne, eds., *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1991), 230–40.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ For examples of recorded trial proceedings, see T. Eric Peet, *The Great Tomb-Robberies of the Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1930), vol. 2; T. Eric Peet, *The Mayer Papyri A & B* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1920); Hans Goedicke, “Was Magic Used in the

records where Limhi obviously hoped to get a translation of some otherwise mysterious records (Mosiah 8:6, 11–12). The quotes come from other official (i.e., court) records, scriptures, and personal accounts (e.g., Zeniff's first-person narrative). Although there is ample opportunity to exploit direct speech in the narrative,⁶ the Book of Mormon does not. The Book of Mormon is careful; unlike Homer,⁷ Thucydides,⁸ or Herodotus,⁹ whom scholars have taken to task for composing long speeches and putting them in the mouths of the heroes who are engaged in the middle of battle and under fire,¹⁰ the Book of Mormon authors have a perfect chance of putting all sorts of long quotations in the mouth of King Limhi as the debate over how to escape the Lamanites is taking place. Yet there is no debate (Mosiah 20:23–22:2); there are no long quotations. Furthermore, those accounts that do have large quotations are all from official documents. Gideon's speeches (Mosiah 20:17–22; 22:3–8) seem to be the sole exception. But they are carefully worded proposals of a trusted advisor to the king and have their counterparts in Egyptian documents.¹¹ They may have been recorded for distribution in both cases.

Although no scribe is mentioned, we can be assured that they were unobtrusively in the background. It was an ancient practice to employ scribes to record all the official statements or

Harem Conspiracy against Ramses III?" *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 49 (1963): Plates X–XI.

⁶ As the Bible does; on which see Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 63–87.

⁷ For example, Patroclus spouts off eleven lines of hexameters as he dies; see Homer, *Iliad* XVI, 843–55.

⁸ On the *post facto* crafting of speeches by Thucydides, see Thucydides, *Historiae* I, 22, 1.

⁹ Even his contemporary countrymen thought Herodotus fabricated his speeches; see Herodotus, *Historiae* III, 80, 1.

¹⁰ Skillfully if satirically done by Richard W. Armour, *The Classics Reclassified* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), 5–20.

¹¹ Annals of Thuthmoses III, in Kurt Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, 4 vols., Abteilung IV of *Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1907), 3:649–51 (hereafter *Urk.* IV). On the historicity of this passage; see Anthony J. Spalinger, *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 35–36. Many of the El-Amarna letters follow this pattern; e.g., El-Amarna Tablets 73–74, 76–77, 79, 81–92, 244, in Jørgen A. Knudtzon, *Die El-Amarna Tafeln* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1908–15).

acts of kings, a practice dating back to the first dynasty of Egypt. On the Palette of Narmer, the king is everywhere shown followed by a scribe.¹² Apollonius, traveling the world as a sophist, took with him two scribes, a tachygrapher (or shorthand specialist) and a calligrapher (who could write up the official reports); however, after being noted, the scribes are treated much like the camels: they are there implicitly in the background and never take part in the story.¹³ One has simply to look at the official libraries kept by Assurbanipal and at Mari to realize that the scribe played an important though often neglected role in the ancient world. The scribe's duties included the responsibility to record any auspicious words and deeds of the king or the sage. The Assyrians employed scribes to handle Assyrian, Aramaic, and even Egyptian.¹⁴ Closer still is the Barrakab relief from Samail, which depicts King Barrakab attended by his scribe. The king's name is written above his personage in the old Phoenician script.¹⁵ This seems to be what is occurring in the courts of Zeniff, Noah, and Limhi. The court stenographer is there taking notes and recording the words but is

¹² Although some believe that the man is merely a sandal bearer (William W. Hallo and William Kelly Simpson, *The Ancient Near East: A History* [New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971], 204), Arnett claims that the man is a scribe (William S. Arnett, *The Predynastic Origin of Egyptian Hieroglyphs* [Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982]). In his estimation that the man is a scribe he concurs with Hugh W. Nibley, "Genesis of the Written Word," in Truman G. Madsen, ed., *Nibley on the Timely and the Timeless* (Provo: Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center, 1977), 105, reprinted in Nibley, *Temple and Cosmos*, vol. 12 in *The Collected Works of Hugh Nibley* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1992), 456. Though I concur with Arnett on this point, I do not agree with his general thesis, preferring that of Erik Hornung, *Idea into Image: Essays on Ancient Egyptian Thought*, trans. Elizabeth Bredeck (n.p.: Timken, 1992), 20–21.

¹³ Philostratos, *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana* I, 18.

¹⁴ Listed as LÚ.A.BA.MEŠ KURÁš-šur-a-a, LÚ.GAM KURMu-su-ra-a-a and LÚ.A.BA.MEŠ KURAra-ma-a-a, see J. V. Kinnier Wilson, *The Nimrud Wine Lists*, vol. 1 of *Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud* (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 1972), plate 20, lines 18'–20'.

¹⁵ See Orient-Comités zu Berlin, *Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli IV*, vol. 14 of *Königliche Museen zu Berlin, Mitteilungen aus den orientalischen Sammlungen* (Berlin: Reimer, 1911), Tafel LX. This stele is now on display in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin and is included in the catalog for the Babylonian section.

always in the background.¹⁶ The Lord tells the Zeniffites that “except they repent I will utterly destroy them from off the face of the earth; yet they shall leave a record behind them” (Mosiah 12:8). If it were possible to have a scribe present for the quotations, then we can be reasonably sure of the accuracy of the transmission.

The first direct quotation of Limhi consists of the following formulaic elements:¹⁷ (1) He gives his name and titles

¹⁶ The Egyptian *Tale of the Eloquent Peasant* (B1 109–12; B2 127–31 in R. B. Parkinson, *The Tale of the Eloquent Peasant* [Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1991], 20, 48; notice that although a scroll is made no scribe is mentioned) testifies of this but the court records of the Twentieth Dynasty Tomb-Robberies are perhaps more demonstrative as are the military records upon which later battle accounts were drawn.

¹⁷ The references given here are for illustrative purposes only. They illustrate the type of trial procedure common in the scribal traditions to which the Nephites belong (see 1 Nephi 1:3; Mosiah 1:2–4), albeit a much earlier stage. The trial procedures reflect most closely those preserved in the Egyptian records. The Mesopotamian evidence is problematic because there are few records of actual trials and they principally state only the basics of the case and the contention of the prosecution, the names of the witnesses and the oaths involved, and end with the witnesses to the decision and the judges. The most important recent discussion of the problem is in J. N. Postgate, *Fifty Neo-Assyrian Legal Documents* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1976), 60. The Mesopotamian legal records all follow Sumerian models. The following list of collections of sources (listed chronologically) is representative: Dietz O. Edzard, *Sumerische Rechtsurkunden des III. Jahrtausends aus der Zeit vor der III. Dynastie von Ur* (München: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1968); Adam Falkenstein, *Die neusumerischen Gerichtsurkunden*, 3 vols. (München: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1956–57), esp. #99, 2:159–62; Josef Kohler and P. E. Peiser, *Aus dem babylonischen Rechtsleben* (Leipzig: Pfeiffer, 1890) [though the translations are out-of-date, they are still accurate enough to get the general idea of the trial procedure]; Josef Kohler and Arthur Ungnad, *Assyrische Rechts-Urkunden* (Leipzig: Pfeiffer, 1913); Herbert P. H. Petschow, *Mittelbabylonische Rechts- und Wirtschafts-urkunden der Kilprecht Sammlung Jena* (Berlin: Akademie, 1974); Postgate, *Fifty Neo-Assyrian Legal Documents*; Mariano San Nicolo, *Babylonische Rechtsurkunden des ausgehenden 8. und des 7. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.* (München: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1951); Mariano San Nicolo and Herbert P. H. Petschow, *Babylonische Rechturkunden aus den 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr.* (München: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1960).

(Mosiah 7:9);¹⁸ (2) he asks a question of the prisoners giving the charge of which they are accused (Mosiah 7:10);¹⁹ (3) he tells his prisoners the penalties that depend upon their answers (Mosiah 7:11);²⁰ and (4) he pronounces the verdict of the trial (Mosiah 7:14–15).²¹

In the covenant renewal ceremony, Limhi begins by instructing his people to rejoice, and gives them reason to rejoice by citing examples from scriptural history: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and the Exodus of the children of Israel, the parting of the Red Sea, the manna in the wilderness, and the deliverance of Lehi and his family from Jerusalem (Mosiah 7:19–20). These are the same things Nephi recited to his brethren to persuade them to trust in their deliverance (1 Nephi

¹⁸ The name and titles are the common opening lines of any official address, whether written or oral. For Sumerian examples, see Ilmari Kärki, *Die Königsinschriften der dritten Dynastie von Ur* (Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 1986), passim; for an Akkadian example, see Kodex Hammurabi I.50–IV.66; for a Roman example, see Julius Caesar, *De Bello Gallico* I, 43–44. Since this is the standard pattern in Egypt, a few instances from each period will suffice; Royal: Old Kingdom: Kurt Sethe, *Urkunden des Alten Reichs*, Abteilung I of *Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1932), 7–8 (hereafter Urk. I); Second Intermediate Period: Frank T. Miosi, ed., *A Reading Book of Second Intermediate Period Texts* (Toronto: Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities, 1981), 1, 4, 12, 15, 20; New Kingdom: Urk. IV, 626, 642, 647; Late Period: Heinrich Schäfer, *Urkunden der älteren Äthiopienkönige* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1905), 60–61; Kurt Sethe, *Hieroglyphische Urkunden der griechisch-römischen Zeit* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1904), 7–10, 125–26; Non-royal: Old Kingdom: Urk. I, 15, 28; First Intermediate Period: Rudolf Anthes, *Die Felseninschriften von Hatnub* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1928, reprint Hildesheim: Olms, 1964), 28, 32, 35–36; Middle Kingdom: Kurt Sethe and Wolja Erichsen, *Urkunden des Mittleren Reiches* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1935), 1, 7–8, 11, 44, 53; New Kingdom: Urk IV, 898–906; Ricardo A. Caminos, “Papyrus Berlin 10463,” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 49 (1963): Plates VIA–VI. For trials see Papyrus British Museum 10054, 1.1–3, in Peet, *Great Tomb-Robberies of the Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty*, 2:Plate VII.

¹⁹ Cf., e.g., Papyrus British Museum 10403, 3.22–25, in Peet, *Great Tomb-Robberies of the Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty*, 2:Plate XXXVI.

²⁰ Cf. *ibid.*; also Goedicke, “Was Magic Used in the Harem Conspiracy,” Plate X, lines 3–5.

²¹ Cf. Papyrus d’Orbiney 19.5, in Alan H. Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, vol. 1 of *Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca* (Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1932), 29; the verdict is actually given on pp. 18–19. For the general Egyptian procedure, see Peet, *Great Tomb-Robberies of the Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty*, 1:25–27.

17:23–29; cf. 1 Nephi 4:2). Limhi knows the basic deliverance tales from the brass plates and Nephite history.²²

Limhi then tells the people that “it is because of our iniquities and abominations that he has brought us into bondage” (Mosiah 7:20). Yet by so doing he is merely changing the tense and agent of the verb in the prophecy of Abinadi: “Thus saith the Lord, it shall come to pass that this generation, because of their iniquities, *shall be brought* into bondage” (Mosiah 12:2). It is likely that Limhi knows the details of Abinadi’s prophecies.

At this point, Limhi continues the story and describes Zeniff as “being over-zealous to inherit the land of his fathers” (Mosiah 7:21). Limhi is quoting from Zeniff’s own record where Zeniff describes himself as “being over-zealous to inherit the land of our fathers” (Mosiah 9:3). The only change here is from first to third person, as would be expected of one retelling a story from his grandfather’s journal.

Limhi then says that Zeniff was “deceived by the cunning and craftiness of king Laman” (Mosiah 7:21). In doing so he is only echoing the words of his grandfather’s account: “For this very cause has king Laman, by his cunning, and lying craftiness, and his fair promises, deceived me, that I have brought this my people up into this land” (Mosiah 10:18). Earlier his grandfather had written, “Now it was the cunning and craftiness of king Laman, to bring my people into bondage, that he yielded up the land that we might possess it” (Mosiah 9:10). The earlier account has the same phrase, “the cunning and craftiness of king Laman,” that Limhi uses, whereas the latter repeats the meaning of the phrase with the key verb “deceived.” Limhi was familiar the phrasing as well as the content of Zeniff’s history.

In his description of the territory encompassed by the treaty (mentioned in Mosiah 7:21 and 9:6), Limhi again falls back on the description of Zeniff, describing it as “the city of Lehi-Nephi, and the city of Shilom; and the land round about” (Mosiah 7:21). Zeniff uses two different phrases to describe his possessions: “the land of Lehi-Nephi, and the land of Shilom” (Mosiah 9:6) and “the city of Lehi-Nephi, and the city of Shilom” (Mosiah 9:8) Limhi’s account seems to reflect the latter

²² Limhi’s knowledge of mainstream Nephite history after the foundation story seems rather weak. It is questionable whether Zeniff’s group had any records other than (1) a copy of the brass plates; (2) the twenty-four Jaredite plates; and (3) their own records.

wording with consideration of the former. Limhi, being king, would probably also have had access to the official treaty. Though the Lamanites kept no records at this time (see Mosiah 10:16; 24:6), Zeniff's colony did (mentioned in Mosiah 8:5, 12; 12:20; 13:11; 17:4; 22:14; 25:5; not all of which were legible, Mosiah 8:9, 11–13, 19; 21:27).

Limhi, then, refers to the reason that Zeniff gave why King Laman had entered into the treaty with Zeniff's group (Mosiah 7:22; cf. Mosiah 9:11–12). He then gives a list of the tribute which they must give to the Lamanites (Mosiah 7:22); this corresponds roughly with the description given later in the official history (Mosiah 19:15). The phrase "even one half of all we have or possess" (Mosiah 7:22) echoes "even one half of all they possessed" (Mosiah 19:15) of the later account, and both probably come from the official treaty describing the tribute, for in his speech Limhi emphasizes the produce of farms and ranches, while the official account stresses the treasures of the earth. Both were most likely included in the treaty.

Limhi then describes the wars, contentions, and bloodsheds among themselves (Mosiah 7:23–25). Among these he makes special mention of "a prophet of the Lord" whom they have slain (Mosiah 7:26). He then quotes Abinadi, always with the proper standard formula "he said (that) . . ." In most ancient texts this formula is the sure sign of a quote,²³ even if the source is not identified.²⁴ We might punctuate the verse as follows to show the use of quotations:

²³ For some Egyptian examples see Papyrus Chester Beatty 1, 2.9–3.1 in Gardiner, *Late Egyptian Stories*, 39; and Papyrus Geneva D 191, in Jaroslav Černý, *Late Ramesside Letters*, vol. 9 of *Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca* (Bruxelles: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1939), 57–60. Old Babylonian letters citing previous correspondence use a similar formula, *umma anākuma*, *umma attāma*, *umma šūma*, etc., examples of which are scattered throughout the series *Altbabylonische Briefe*, 11 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1964–). Biblical examples may be found in Matthew 1:22–23; 2:17–18; 3:3; 4:14–16; 5:21, 27, 31, 38, 43; 8:17; 12:17–21; 13:14–15, 35; 15:7–9; 17:11; 19:4–5; 21:4–5, 9; 22:24, 31–32, 43–44; cf. Matthew 2:5–6; 4:6–7, 10; 11:10; 21:13, 16, 42; 22:37–39; 26:31; 27:9; other examples may be readily found by the reader without much trouble. Note that this is not the only formula used to introduce a quotation—often there is no formula—but that when the formula appears a quotation or at very least a paraphrase is expected.

²⁴ See the marginalia at 1 Corinthians 9:10 and 1 Timothy 5:18 in Kurt Aland et al., eds., *Novum Testamentum Graecae*, 26th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983).

And because he saith unto them that "Christ was the God, the Father of all things" and saith that "he should take upon him the image of man and it should be the image after which man was created in the beginning" or in other words he said that "man was created after the image of God" and that "God . . . should come down among the children of men;" and take upon him flesh and blood; and go forth upon the face of the earth. (Mosiah 7:27)

There are four quotations of Abinadi here. We can compare all of them with the original texts from the history of the people as it was later compiled. The first is "Christ was the God, the Father of all things" (Mosiah 7:27). Abinadi does refer to "Christ the Lord, who is the very Eternal Father" (Mosiah 16:15), and "God, yea, the very Eternal Father of heaven and earth" (Mosiah 15:4). But whether Limhi's quotation conflates the two statements (as with some of the quotes of Zeniff above), or is a quotation of preaching that we do not have in our present record abridged by Mormon cannot be stated for certain. Abinadi first mentions Christ toward the latter half of his defense (Mosiah 15:21).

The second quotation is "he should take upon him the image of man and it should be the image after which man was created in the beginning" (Mosiah 7:27). This passage is not in the preserved corpus of Abinadi's speeches.²⁵

The third quotation is "man was created after the image of God" (Mosiah 7:27). This quotation is also missing from the corpus of Abinadi's sayings, but it does reflect Genesis 1:26–27. That these quotations of Abinadi are lacking from our record should not surprise us; not only is the Book of Mormon an abridgment of the complete record (Words of Mormon 1:3), but there were at least two records of Abinadi's preaching: Alma's

²⁵ The passage resembles *Odes of Solomon* 7: "He became like me, that I might receive Him. In form He was considered like me, that I might put Him on. . . . Like my nature He became, that I might understand Him. And like my form, that I might not turn away from Him. . . . He has allowed Him to appear to them that are His own; In order that they may recognize Him that made them, And not suppose that they came of themselves." *Ode of Solomon* 7:4, 6, 12, James H. Charlesworth, *The Odes of Solomon* (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1977), 33–36. This is not the passage cited.

(Mosiah 17:4) and the official court record that Limhi quotes (implied in Mosiah 25:5–6).²⁶

The fourth quotation from Abinadi in this verse is “God should come down among the children of men” (Mosiah 7:27). This actually comes from two different places. The first source is the official trial proceedings where Abinadi is officially charged with preaching “God himself should come down among the children of men” (Mosiah 17:8). This is the official charge brought against Abinadi and the only charge for which he was convicted. All he had to do was to recant and he could go free; but he refused. This charge is a quotation from the preaching of Abinadi that “God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people” (Mosiah 15:1). But he defended himself saying, “Have [all the prophets] not said that God himself should come down among the children of men, and take upon him the form of man?” (Mosiah 13:34). Limhi would seem to have been familiar with the official court records of Abinadi’s trial.

Limhi finished his speech by quoting three items of scripture, prefacing each with “the Lord hath said” (Mosiah 7:29) or the equivalent “again he saith” (Mosiah 7:30–31). But these items of scripture are unavailable to us outside Limhi’s quotations. Let us consider each in order:

1. “I will not succor my people in the day of their transgression; but I will hedge up their ways that they prosper not and their doings shall be as a stumbling block before them.”²⁷

2. “If my people shall sow filthiness they shall reap the chaff thereof in the whirlwind and the effect²⁸ thereof is poison.”

3. “If my people shall sow filthiness they shall reap the east wind which bringeth immediate destruction.”

²⁶ John W. Welch thinks that Mosiah compiled his record of Abinadi’s ministry from Alma’s records (personal communication). I doubt that we have sufficient evidence to establish that.

²⁷ This quotation is not found in any of the scriptures that are presently available to us. The term “stumbling block” is prominent in Nephi’s writings (1 Nephi 14:1; 2 Nephi 4:33; 18:14; 26:20), but it also occurs in the law (Leviticus 19:14) and in Isaiah 8:14; 57:14, Psalm 119:165, and Jeremiah 6:21. But none of these is the scripture we are looking for.

²⁸ In the 1830 edition this reads “effects.”

These passages are not attested in any of the scriptures presently available to us. Their closest parallels are Hosea 8:7: "For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind" and *Testament of Levi* 13:6: "If you sow evil, you will reap every trouble and tribulation." We might guess that Hosea relied on the same scripture that Limhi did, although what that source might be remains unknown. The two scriptures are similar but there are differences as well, indicating that both of the scriptures either derive from the same source or one is derived from the other, but until the source of these quotations comes to light, this will only be speculation. We are told that the biblical records were "not so many" as the brass plates (1 Nephi 13:23), so we should not be surprised that we cannot find these quotations in the Bible.²⁹

There are thirteen quotations in this speech of Limhi. Some of them are from the trial records of Abinadi, others are quotations of Zeniff's autobiography, and still others are prophecies now lost. There are also allusions to the brass plates.

Limhi's third major speech occurs at the end of his interview with Ammon (Mosiah 8:19–21).

The interjection, "O how marvelous are the works of the Lord" seems to be a clear reference to Jacob 4:8, but how much access Zeniff's group had to Jacob's writings remains unclear. Limhi does not mention the deliverance of Mosiah (Omni 1:12–13) in his earlier list (Mosiah 7:19). Zeniff's group had left before the small plates had been turned over to King Benjamin (Omni 1:27–30; compare with Mosiah 9:2–3).³⁰

Soon thereafter, Limhi makes another statement, "How blind and impenetrable are the understandings of the children of men; for they will not seek wisdom neither do they desire that she should rule over them" (Mosiah 8:20). This is an allusion to Proverbs 8:12–17.

Finally, Limhi describes his people "as a wild flock' which fleeth from the shepherd and scattereth and are 'driven'

²⁹ For that matter, Paul quotes sources in 1 Corinthians 9:10 and 1 Timothy 5:18 which no one has yet been able to identify.

³⁰ Note that Amaleki describes the leader as "a strong and mighty man, and a stiffnecked man" (Omni 1:28), whereas Zeniff describes the leader as "an austere and a blood-thirsty man" (Mosiah 9:2). These are two distinct literary traditions reflected in the language. Had Joseph Smith been making this up and keeping track of the details to repeat them later would he have thought to keep the descriptions of separate literary traditions distinct while meshing those of the same literary tradition?

and are devoured ‘by’ the ‘beasts’ of the forest” (Mosiah 8:19–21). This is a quotation of the last words of Abinadi: “Ye shall be smitten on every hand, and shall be driven and scattered to and fro, even as a wild flock is driven by wild and ferocious beasts” (Mosiah 17:17).

The final speech of Limhi is his interrogation of the king of the Lamanites. In this terse question-and-answer session, Limhi asks two questions and issues two orders. There are no quotations of scripture and no reason for quotation of scripture—what does the king of the Lamanites care about scriptures (Mosiah 10:11–17; 24:3–5; Alma 22:7)—but previous treaties and oaths are mentioned (Mosiah 20:14).

These are the major speeches of King Limhi and they are dotted with quotations from previous records and prophecies, some of which are no longer available to us. These speeches seem to show a man very well versed in his records. From these it seems that Limhi had spent a good deal of time studying and memorizing the records of his people. Limhi was probably more comfortable in the library than the throne room.

There is another odd feature here. In the Book of Mormon, Limhi’s quotations of the documents precede the cited documents themselves. If Joseph Smith were making up the story at the rate of seven or eight pages a day,³¹ that would be quite a trick. Furthermore, all quotations are from material chronologically preceding Limhi and to which he could have had access. Limhi’s prophecies do not come from Malachi or Alma². But in the Book of Mormon, the quotations precede the material quoted and the quotations make perfect sense in the original context. A man dictating without correction at the rate of eight pages a day would have a hard time keeping the facts straight if the events never happened. The forger of the Archko volume was a contemporary of Joseph Smith’s and could not resist attributing long quotations to the most obscure characters on ordinary occasions,³² just like any other novelist of Joseph Smith’s day.³³ Solomon Spaulding inserts long clandestine

³¹ “How Long Did It Take to Translate?” in John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and F.A.R.M.S., 1992), 4.

³² For examples, see Richard Lloyd Anderson, “The Fraudulent Archko Volume,” *BYU Studies* 15 (1974): 43–64.

³³ For example, the opening conversation in Hermann Melville’s short story “Bartleby” deals with accounting endeavors of an aging Turkey, while the final one takes place between the narrator and a grub-man. See

conversations into his narrative.³⁴ Yet in this part of the Book of Mormon's narrative, all the quotations come on official occasions, no informal chit-chat between Limhi and Gideon or Ammon is preserved, everything is on the official level where the scribe would be there to record it. The Book of Mormon is *not* a typical product of Joseph Smith's environment.

The Book of Mormon implies that Limhi knew his scriptures (in the broadest and most basic sense of the word: writing in general). Limhi, as a passionate scripturist, was the first to want to read the record of a lost people contained in twenty-four golden plates, that matter engaging his attention (Mosiah 8:6–21) even before he attempted to rescue his people (Mosiah 21:36–22:16) or get out of the fifty-percent tax bracket (Mosiah 7:22; 19:15; contrast Mosiah 2:14; 11:3). Limhi's passionate interest in records and scriptures might also explain why he was righteous in spite of the wickedness of his father (Mosiah 11:1–15; 19:17), the court (Mosiah 11:4–11; 12:25–29, 37; 13:11; 17:2, 11–12), and the people in general (Mosiah 7:24–25; 23:9, 12). Furthermore, unlike Noah and his priests (Mosiah 12:25–30; 13:7–8, 11), Limhi takes these things seriously (Mosiah 7:26; 21:31–35). We need look no further than Limhi for reasons to be serious about studying our scriptures.

also Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*, esp. chaps. 4 and 16. Melville was born on 1 August 1819 in New York City; Hawthorne was born on 4 July 1804. If the Book of Mormon were a typical product of its day why does it not read like a typical product of its day?

³⁴ E.g., the conversation between Elsion and Lamesa when "they were together in one of the apartments of the Emperors palace—the company had all retired." See Solomon Spaulding, *Manuscript Story* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1886), 57.