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Abstract: *The word* baptize *appears 119 times in the Book of Mormon; three speakers (Jesus Christ, Mormon, and Nephi) account for 87% of all of these usages. Each of these individuals have distinctive patterns in how they use the word* baptize, *indicating that each speaker has his own unique voice. When one accounts for the fact that Christ says relatively fewer words than Mormon, it is evident that per 1,000 words spoken, Jesus Christ uses the word* baptize *more than any other speaker in the Book of Mormon. This finding holds true for Christ's words both in and outside of 3 Nephi. Among other patterns, we demonstrate that Jesus Christ associates his name with baptism more than any other Book of Mormon speaker and that Christ is responsible for 58% of the Book of Mormon's invitations to be baptized. Additional patterns and their implications are discussed.*

The scriptures teach that baptism is a requirement for entering the Kingdom of God. This message is particularly prominent in the Book of Mormon. *Baptize*[1] appears 119 times in the Book of Mormon (in contrast to 138 times in all other books of scripture combined). Speaking of this emphasis, Noel B. Reynolds has written, "The Book of Mormon accounts make clear that baptism by water is the act wherein repentant

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1. For the purposes of this study, we also include the variants *baptized* and *baptizing.* The noun form, *baptism,* is not considered in this study. *Baptize* is used much more than *baptism* in the scriptures (257 versus 85 times), and particularly in the Book of Mormon (119 versus 26 times).

converts to Jesus Christ can witness to the Father that they have repented and covenanted to keep his commandments."[2]

In the Book of Mormon, *baptize* first appears in 1 Nephi 10, where Nephi describes a dream Lehi[3] had depicting the work of John the Baptist. Nephi says *baptize* again in 1 Nephi 11:27. The next time the word occurs is in 2 Nephi 9:23, when Jacob states, "And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel." This is the first mention in the text of the necessity for all people to be baptized. In 2 Nephi 31 (the next chapter in which *baptize* appears), Nephi continues this message, saying, "If the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water, to fulfill all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water!" (2 Nephi 31:5). While the word *baptize* does not appear between 2 Nephi 31 and Mosiah 18, it does appear in every subsequent book. The final occurrence of *baptize* is in Moroni 8:10: "Teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little children, and they shall all be saved with their little children" (Moroni 8:10). Thus from the beginning to the

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2. Noel B. Reynolds, "The True Points of My Doctrine," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 5.2 (Provo, UT: Maxwell Institute, 1996): 43, https://publications.mi.byu.edu/publications/jbms/5/2/S00002-50be20638eb692Reynolds.pdf. See also Noel B. Reynolds, "The Gospel according to Mormon," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 68 (2015): 218-34, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2474&context=facpub.

3. While *baptize* does not appear in the Old Testament, it is found in the Book of Moses, which indicates that baptism was an ancient principle with which Lehi and his family would have been familiar. *Baptize* appears six times in the Book of Moses in the Pearl of Great Price; Moses writes that Adam was "baptized, even in water" in Christ's name (Moses 6:52) and that he also was "baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost" (Moses 6:66). Moses also records that Enoch taught that people should be baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, … and of the Holy Ghost" (Moses 7:11), and Noah taught that people must be "baptized in the name of Jesus Christ … and … receive the Holy Ghost" (Moses 8:24). Noel B. Reynolds has pointed out similarities the brass plates (which Lehi and his family brought with them from Jerusalem) may have had with the Book of Moses (Noel B. Reynolds, "The Brass Plates Version of Genesis," in *By Study and Also by Faith*: Vol. 2, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990)). The Book of Moses itself addresses the absence of the word *baptize* in our current Old Testament records in Moses 1:41, where the Lord says to Moses, "And in that day when the children of men shall esteem my words as naught and take many of them from the book which thou shalt write …"

end, Book of Mormon writers consistently emphasize the importance of being baptized. Table 1 shows how often the word appears in the various books of the Book of Mormon.

Table 1. Occurrences of *baptize* (and its derivatives) by book.

Book	Occurrences of *Baptize*
1 Nephi	7
2 Nephi	9
Mosiah	18
Alma	19
Helaman	8
3 Nephi	44
4 Nephi	1
Mormon	5
Ether	3
Moroni	5

Unique Voices in the Book of Mormon

While one could profitably study the doctrine of what it means to *baptize* or be *baptized* in the Book of Mormon, analyzing how different speakers in the Book of Mormon utilize the word provides an additional lens of examination. The idea that distinct voices can be heard in ancient texts is not new to this study. For example, Dorota Dutsch has examined Roman literature written between 300–200 BC. Her study focused on works written by two male Roman authors (Terence and Plautus). Both these men included female characters in their works, and these female characters were consistently portrayed as having distinctive patterns of speech.[4] Similar analyses have been done on the Book of Mormon.

One specific type of analysis that examines different authorial voices is known as stylometry. Some stylometric studies of the Book of Mormon have confirmed that there are indeed different authorial voices in the

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4. Dorota M. Dutsch, *Feminine Discourse in Roman Comedy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Book of Mormon.[5] Roger Keller's examination of themes and patterns in the words used by Book of Mormon speakers provides one example of how the distinctive ways speakers discuss specific topics can be a useful lens. Keller said that "[s]ince the Book of Mormon is believed by Latter-day Saints to be a compilation of writings from numerous ancient authors, then one should be able to discern the unique content words used by the authors whose messages are preserved within its pages."[6] Keller's study focused on "content words," words that "are theologically, culturally, and historically significant."[7] He created word clusters, related groups of words, and analyzed them to determine if there were statistically significant differences in how they were used.

One word cluster Keller identified was a group of 109 words related to the ancient Near East. This cluster included words such as Babylon, Egypt, Jeremiah, and Moses. Collectively, these 109 words are used 1,179 times in the Book of Mormon. Keller then examined whether certain speakers in the Book of Mormon used these words more frequently than others. He noted, "The authors who are most distant in time from the Ancient Near East context use the words of this group the least, while those nearest in time, use them the most." [8] Keller expected his study of content words and other stylometric studies to support each other, and found that "there are clear and recognizable differences in the content words used and the meanings attached to them by the authors within the Book of Mormon."[9]

Book of Mormon Speakers' Use of *Baptize*

The present study seeks to further the work of analyzing word patterns of different individuals in the Book of Mormon to see how this elucidates the key word *baptize*. While the word *baptize* appears throughout the Book of Mormon, it is emphasized to different degrees by the different

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5. Matthew Roper, Paul J. Fields and G. Bruce Schaalje, "Stylometric Analyses of the Book of Mormon: A Short History," *Journal of Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture* 21, no. 1 (2012), https://publications.mi.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=1380&index=3.

6. Roger Keller, Roger R. Keller, *Book of Mormon Authors: Their Words and Messages* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1996), xi, https://rsc.byu.edu/out-print/book-mormon-authors-their-words-and-messages.

7. Ibid., 4.

8. Ibid., 8. Keller also notes two exceptions to this general pattern, namely Nephi$_2$ and Mormon in his sermonic materials.

9. Ibid., xiii.

speakers in the book. In order to determine which speakers used the word *baptize,* we used a database known as "The Voices of the Book of Mormon," created by John Hilton III, Shon Hopkin, Jennifer Platt, Randal Wright, and Jana Johnson. This database parses the text of the Book of Mormon by the person to whom the text is attributed.[10]

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10. In order to identify correctly who is speaking in any given passage, John Hilton III, Shon Hopkin, Jennifer Platt, Randal Wright, and Jana Johnson each independently analyzed the Book of Mormon to identify the different speakers. They then reviewed their individual findings and examined passages in which they disagreed on who was speaking. After creating an integrated version of the Book of Mormon parsed out by the person speaking, they compared their work to other scholars who had made similar efforts, and in some cases made adjustments to their original speaker designations (studied works include Robert Smith's *Critical Text*, which was based on John L. Hilton and Kenneth D. Jenkins, *A Full Listing of Book of Mormon References by Author and Literary Form*, FARMS Preliminary Report H&J-82 (Provo, UT, 1983), https://publications.mi.byu.edu/publications/PreliminaryReports/Set 3/ Prelim Rep/Hilton and Jenkins, All Book of Mormon References by Author and Literary Form, 1983.pdf. We also consulted Rencher's speaker divisions, which were the basis of Wayne A. Larsen and Alvin C. Rencher, "Who Wrote the Book of Mormon? An Analysis of Wordprints," in Noel B. Reynolds, ed., *Book of Mormon Authorship*, (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1982), https://publications.mi.byu.edu/book/book-of-mormon-authorship-new-light-on-ancient-origins/. Finally, we consulted the use of quotation marks in Grant Hardy's *A Reader's Edition of the Book of Mormon* to identify how he chose where to begin or end quotes. With Isaiah passages we consulted John D. W. Watts, *Word Biblical Commentary 24: Isaiah 1–33* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985) and *Word Biblical Commentary 25: Isaiah 34–66* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987). The resulting text was incorporated into WordCruncher, which powers the database. Unfortunately, the database is currently not available due to copyright issues (it uses the 2013 Book of Mormon text, which is under copyright). This database is admittedly limited in that it assumes that editors such as Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni accurately recounted the words spoken by specific individuals (rather than paraphrasing) and it assumes a literal translation of the Book of Mormon. This database was also used in writing John Hilton III and Jana Johnson, "Who Uses the Word Resurrection in the Book of Mormon and How Is It Used?" *The Journal of Book of Mormon and Restoration Scriptures*, 21/2 (2012): 30–39, https://publications.mi.byu.edu/publications/jbms/21/2/S00003-510c35663d5553-Hilton.pdf; and Shon Hopkin and John Hilton III, "Samuel's Reliance on Biblical Language" *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 24 (2015): 31–52, https://publications.mi.byu.edu/publications/jbms/24/JBMS-v24-Hopkin-Hilton.pdf.

Table 2 shows how many times individual speakers in the Book of Mormon say *baptize*. (The last column is the speaker's total spoken words as a percentage of the total words spoken in the Book of Mormon.)

Table 2. Use of *baptize* by major Book of Mormon speakers.[11]

Speaker	Times used per 1,000 words spoken	Times used	Percent of total uses of *Baptized*	Percent of total words spoken in the Book of Mormon
Jesus Christ	2.54	36	30.3%	5.28%
The Father	0.70	1	0.8%	0.56%
Mormon	0.57	56	47.1%	36.36%
Nephi$_1$	0.42	12	10.1%	10.49%
Jacob	0.24	2	1.6%	3.16%
Moroni$_2$	0.20	4	3.4%	7.27%
Alma$_2$	0.20	4	3.4%	7.47%
The Lord	0.08	1	0.8%	4.46%

As indicated, more than three-quarters of the uses of *baptize* come from Jesus Christ and Mormon. Of the major speakers in the Book of Mormon, Nephi$_1$ is the only other individual to frequently employ this word. We might expect other major speakers, such as Moroni$_2$, Alma$_2$, King Benjamin, and Jacob also to utilize this word often, but they do not. Because Jesus Christ, Mormon, and Nephi$_1$ are the speakers who use *baptize* frequently enough to see unique usage patterns, we will focus only on these speakers throughout the remaining tables in this article, unless specifically indicated otherwise.

Although Mormon uses *baptize* more than any other speaker, it is important to note that Jesus Christ uses the word much more frequently than any other individual in terms of times used per 1,000 words spoken. As we will see, this has interesting implications. While Christ is the most frequent user of *baptize*, the Lord is the least frequent among major Book of Mormon speakers (in terms of times used per 1,000 words spoken).

Admittedly, it is difficult to distinguish between the voices of "God, the Father," "Jesus Christ," and "The Lord." While good arguments could be made for combining these voices, we determined that if a

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11. The word counts in Table 2 (and similar tables throughout this article) are based on the Voices of the Book of Mormon database described in the previous footnote.

statement is specifically attributed to the Father, or if context made it clear that the Father was speaking (e.g. 2 Nephi 31:11), we categorized that statement as being from the Father.[12] We likewise attributed words in which Jesus Christ was textually identified as the person speaking (e.g., 3 Nephi 30:1-2) as belonging to him. Generic references to deity (e.g., Lord, God) were assigned to the Lord.

One interesting insight from isolating instances when Jesus Christ was explicitly identified as the speaker in the Book of Mormon is that it allows us to see subtle differences in the way the words of the Lord are recorded as opposed to those specifically attributed to Jesus Christ. One important difference in their speaking patterns is that the Lord says *baptize* only once, but Jesus Christ says it 36 times. This seems to indicate a significant difference in speaking patterns, since Jesus Christ and the Lord speak approximately the same number of words.[13]

As we analyzed the ways in which Jesus Christ, Mormon and Nephi$_1$ employ the word *baptize*, we found patterns and idiosyncrasies in the ways each of them do so. The following three sections focus on these unique usage patterns.

Christ's Use of *Baptize*

It is important to recognize that Christ's emphasis on being baptized is not simply a function of his focus on this topic in 3 Nephi 11. In fact, not only does Jesus Christ say *baptize* more per 1,000 words than any other speaker, he is consistent in his use of *baptize* throughout the text. Table 3 illustrates this point.

Table 3. Christ's use of *baptize* inside and outside 3 Nephi 11–28.

Location	Appearances of *baptize*	Total words spoken	Uses of *baptize* per 1,000 words
Inside 3 Nephi 11–28	25	9,694	2.58
Outside 3 Nephi 11–28	11	4,467	2.46

Table 3 indicates that in addition to regularly saying *baptize* in 3 Nephi 11–28, Christ also consistently uses the word throughout the entire text of the Book of Mormon. In 3 Nephi 11–28 Christ speaks 9,694

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12. While the phrase "eternal father" appears 13 times in the Book of Mormon there are no words that are attributed to the "eternal father."

13. Jesus Christ speaks 14,161 words, and the Lord speaks 11,909 words.

words and says *baptized* 25 times — 2.58 times per 1,000 words.[14] Outside those chapters he speaks 4,467 words and says *baptized* 11 times — 2.46 times per 1,000 words.[15] In 3 Nephi 11 he gives the specific manner of baptism; however, apart from that deviation, Christ is fairly consistent in his use of *baptize* throughout the text. He typically focuses on the idea that people should be baptized in his name and receive the Holy Ghost (e.g., 2 Nephi 31:12).

Aside from looking at quantitative differences in the use of *baptize* among different Book of Mormon speakers, we can look at how certain collocates of *baptize* are unique to certain speakers. For example, Christ is much more likely than other speakers to associate *name* with *baptize*, as illustrated by Table 4.

Table 4. Appearances of *baptize* and *name* in the same verse.

Speaker[16]	Times used per 1,000 words	Number of verses in which *baptize* appears	Number of verses in which *baptize* and *name* appear together	Percent of verses using *baptize* that also include *name*
Jesus Christ	2.54	28	17	61%
Mormon	0.57	47	5	11%
Nephi$_1$	0.42	7	0	0%

There is a stark difference between these speakers in terms of their propensity to use *baptize* and *name* in the same verse. Christ uses *name* in 61% of the verses in which he utilizes *baptize*. In contrast, Mormon only does so 11% of the time (he is the only person to utilize the phrase *baptized in the name of Jesus*). We never hear Nephi's voice employ *baptize* and *name* in the same verse. Importantly, Mormon's use of *name* and *baptize* appears to be related to Christ's, a point that will be revisited later in this article.

While this example shows a clear difference in voice, it may also expand our understanding and appreciation of the ordinance of baptism. Christ's consistent connections between baptism and his own name can perhaps deepen our appreciation for the nature of baptismal covenants. It

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14. For example, see 3 Nephi 11:33-34.
15. For example, see Moroni 7:33-34.
16. Other appearances: The Father, 1; Jacob, 2; Moroni2, 1; Alma$_{2, 1}$

may also aid us in taking more seriously the concept of baptism when we realize how personal it is for the Savior, given how closely he associates the ordinance with his own name.

Another example of Christ's unique use of *baptized* in the Book of Mormon is in the personal connection he makes between it and himself. Christ uses phrases like "Whoso believeth in *me* and is *baptized* shall be saved" (3 Nephi 11:33) and "Come unto *me* and be *baptized*" (3 Nephi 21:6). When we included every possible reference to Christ (e.g., "come unto *him*, be baptized unto the *Lord*) Jesus Christ still is much more likely to say *baptize* in reference to himself than other speakers are to say it about him.

Christ associates himself with being baptized in 23 verses, which is more than all other speakers combined, making him responsible for 56% of the appearances of *baptize* that relate to Christ. This number is disproportionate with the fact that he is responsible for only 30% of the appearances of *baptize* in the text. Christ's abundant association of himself and *baptize* can help readers of the Book of Mormon recognize the close connection between being baptized and coming to Christ. As with the connection with *name* and *Christ*, this can perhaps deepen our understanding of how important baptism is to Christ.

Of the 119 instances of *baptize* in the Book of Mormon, 12 are invitations or commands to be baptized.[17] Of those who frequently say *baptize*, only Jesus Christ and Mormon issue invitations to be baptized. Table 5 illustrates their relative usage, along with the others who issue invitations to be baptized. From Table 5, we see that while Christ is responsible for about 30% of the instances of *baptize* in the Book of Mormon, he is disproportionately responsible for 58% of the invitations to be baptized. Such direct invitations to be baptized are unique to the Book of Mormon,[18] and Christ predominantly extends these invitations. All of these invitations to be baptized are associated with the concept of repentance. Clearly Christ places emphasis on the importance of being baptized.

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17. There are also two invitations to be baptized associated with the word *baptism* (out of 26 instances of *baptism*).

18. There are no direct invitations to be baptized in the New Testament. The Doctrine and Covenants contains a direct invitation in 39:10 (other instances are commands to missionaries).

Table 5. Invitations to be baptized.

Speaker	Times used per 1,000 words	Number of times speaker uses baptize	Invitations to be baptized
Jesus Christ	2.54	36	7 (2 Nephi 31:12, 3 Nephi 11:37, 38, 3 Nephi 27:20, 3 Nephi 30:2, Ether 4:18, Moroni 7:34)
The Father	0.70	1	1 (2 Nephi 31:11)
Mormon	0.57	56	1 (Mormon 7:8)
Alma$_2$	0.20	4	2 (Alma 5:62, Alma 7:14)
The Lord	0.08	1	1 (Mormon 3:2)

Nephi's Use of *Baptize*

Perhaps the most unique aspect of how Nephi$_1$ discusses baptism is that he is the only speaker to mention the event of Christ's being baptized. He does so in three separate pericopes,[19] demonstrating that this is a topic of importance to him. In connection with his words about Jesus Christ's baptism, he consistently uses the phrase *Lamb of God* and *baptized* together.[20] For example, Nephi states, "And after he had *baptized* the Messiah with water, he should behold and bear record that he had *baptized* the *Lamb of God*, who should take away the sins of the world" (1 Nephi 10:10), and (in an apparent reference back to this verse) "I would that ye should remember that I have spoken unto you concerning that prophet which the Lord showed unto me, that should *baptize* the *Lamb of God*, which should take away the sins of the world" (2 Nephi 31:4).

Alma$_2$ is the only other speaker to combine these phrases, and he only does so once.[21] This may be more a function of Nephi's relative propensity to employ the phrase *Lamb of God*; nevertheless, it does provide an interesting and unique collocate.

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19. 1 Nephi 10:10, 11:27 and 2 Nephi 31:4–7.

20. 1 Nephi 10:10, 1 Nephi 11:26, 2 Nephi 31:4, 5, 6.

21. Alma$_2$ and Nephi$_1$ use these words together quite differently. Nephi$_1$ uses these phrases in his descriptions of Christ's baptism, but Alma$_2$ says, "Come and be baptized unto repentance, that ye may be washed from your sins, that ye may have faith on the Lamb of God." It is possible that Alma$_2$ could be referencing the words of Nephi$_1$, but it is also possible that the uniqueness of these phrases might be a factor of *Lamb* itself being a uniquely-used word in the Book of Mormon.

Mormon's Use of *Baptize*

Mormon utilizes the word *baptize* throughout his narrative. Most frequently he describes the action of people being baptized. Instances of this include verses such as the following:

> Therefore, Alma did go forth into the water and did baptize them; yea, he did baptize them after the manner he did his brethren in the waters of Mormon; yea, and as many as he did baptize did belong to the church of God; and this because of their belief on the words of Alma. (Mosiah 25:18)

> "And it came to pass that the work of the Lord did prosper unto the baptizing and uniting to the church of God, many souls, yea, even tens of thousands." (Helaman 3:26)

In both of these preceding verses, Mormon connects the words *baptize* and *church*, something he has a unique propensity for doing, as evidenced in Table 6.

Table 6. *Church* and *baptize* appearing together.

Speaker	Times used per 1,000 words	Number of verses in which *baptize* appears	Verses in which *baptize* and *church* appear together	Percent of total verses using *baptize* in which *church* also appears
Jesus Christ	2.54	28	3[22]	10.7%
Mormon	0.57	47	15[23]	31.9%
Nephi₁	0.42	7	0	0%

Differences and Similarities between the New Testament and Book of Mormon

In addition to how individual speakers within the Book of Mormon use the word, there are also different patterns in how *baptized* is used in the Book of Mormon as opposed to the New Testament.[24]

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22. Mosiah 26:22, 3 Nephi 18:5, 16.

23. Mosiah 18:7; Mosiah 25:18; Mosiah 26:4, 37; Alma 4:4, 5; Alma 6:2; Alma 15:13; Alma 19:35; Alma 49:30; Helaman 3:24, 26; 3 Nephi 26:21; 3 Nephi 28:18; 4 Nephi 1:1.

24. Baptize appears about as frequently in the Book of Mormon as in the New Testament. The Book of Mormon contains 283,349 words, and baptize appears

In contrast to his frequent use of *baptize* in the Book of Mormon, Christ speaking in the four Gospels says *baptize* only .25 times per 1,000 words spoken. Put differently, given any 1,000 words, Christ is 10 times more likely to use the word *baptize* in the Book of Mormon than the New Testament. We find one possible explanation for this in 1 Nephi 13:26, where an angel speaking to Nephi says, "for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away … Wherefore, thou seest that … there are many plain and precious things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God." It is possible that some of the "covenants of the Lord" taken away may be some of Christ's teachings about baptism in the Bible. If this is the case, it could account for the drastic differences in Christ's use of baptism in the Book of Mormon and the New Testament.

Another plausible explanation is that the Nephites were particularly confused about baptism. In 3 Nephi 11:28, Christ suggests that there had been arguments among the Nephites about baptism and tells them, "And according as I have commanded you thus shall ye baptize. And there shall be no disputations among you, as there have hitherto been; neither shall there be disputations among you concerning the points of my doctrine, as there have hitherto been." Noel B. Reynolds also made this point saying, "Detailed instructions on baptism are given explicitly to settle some earlier (and unreported) disputations".[25] Christ may have focused so many of his words to the Nephites on baptism because he knew they did not fully understand it.[26]

Christ uses *baptize* differently in the Book of Mormon and the New Testament. Primarily, in the four gospels Christ's use of *baptize* centers on the phrase "baptized with the baptism that I am baptized

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119 times (0.419 times per 1,000 words). The New Testament contains 188,259 words and baptize appears 77 times (0.409 times per 1,000 words).

25. Reynolds, Noel B. "The Gospel of Jesus Christ as Taught by the Nephite Prophets."*BYU Studies*31 (Summer 1991): 39, https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2500&context=facpub.

26. We might also look to the compilers of these records for an explanation of Christ's different uses of baptize. With limited space and resources, Mormon had to decide what was most valuable to include in the record. It is possible that Christ spoke very similarly to the Nephites as he did to those in Jerusalem, but Mormon saw baptism as a particularly important concept and other things as being less so. Similarly, those who recorded Christ's words in the New Testament may have felt it more necessary to focus on certain other points of Christ's doctrine.

with."[27] However, Christ never uses this phrase in the Book of Mormon. Similarly, most of the phrases Christ uses in the Book of Mormon are not used in the New Testament.

For example, Christ's frequent association between *baptize* and *name* stands as a contrast between his teachings in the Book of Mormon and the New Testament. In the New Testament, *baptize* and *name* appear together nine times.[28] However, in only one of these instances does Christ say these words in the same verse (Matthew 28:19). While Christ frequently extends invitations to be baptized in the Book of Mormon, he never employs *baptize* as part of any invitation to others to be baptized.[29]

At the same time there are similarities in Christ's teachings about being baptized in the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. In both books Christ commands his disciples to go forth and baptize others. In Matthew 28:18-19, Christ commands his 11 disciples, saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Similarly in 3 Nephi 11:21–25, Christ tells his disciples, "I give unto you power that ye shall baptize this people when I am again ascended into heaven … saying: … I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Baptized Unto Repentance and the Name of Christ

An interesting phrase that ties together many aspects of this article is *baptized unto repentance* and its derivative phrases.[30] This phrase is utilized 12 times by four individuals[31] in the Book of Mormon, but never appears in the Bible.[32] The first person to employ the phrase is Jesus Christ, when

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27. Matthew 20:22–23, Mark 10:38–39, and Luke 12:50.

28. Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12, 16; Acts 10:48; Acts 19:5; Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 1:13, 15.

29. Neither does he extend any such invitations using the word *baptism*.

30. For a theological examination of what it might mean to be "baptized unto repentance" see Noel B. Reynolds, "Understanding Christian Baptism through the Book of Mormon," *BYU Studies Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (2012), https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol51/iss2/2.

31. Alma$_2$ (Alma 5:62, Alma 7:14), the Angel speaking to many people (Alma 9:27), Jesus Christ (Mosiah 26:22), and Mormon (Alma 6:2, Alma 8:10, Alma 48:19, Alma 49:30, Helaman 3:24, Helaman 5:17, 19, 3 Nephi 1:23, 3 Nephi 7:26).

32. Similarly, the phrase *baptism is unto repentance* appears one time in the Book of Mormon (Moroni 8:11) but never in the New Testament. In contrast, the similar phrase baptism of repentance appears four times in the

speaking to Alma$_1$. Christ says, "this is my church; whosoever is baptized shall be *baptized unto repentance*" (Mosiah 26:22). It would be interesting to know if Christ employed similar language in instructing Alma$_2$, who later said, "I, Alma, do *command you in the language of him who hath commanded me*…Come and be *baptized unto repentance*" (Alma 5:61–62). Alma$_2$ later utilizes this identical phrase ("come and be baptized unto repentance") when teaching the people of Gideon (Alma 7:14).

Of special interest is how Mormon uses this terminology, particularly when he begins and ceases to employ it. The first time Mormon uses the phrase *baptized unto repentance* is in Alma 6:2 (*after* it was introduced by Christ in Mosiah 26:22). In this verse Mormon states, "whosoever did not belong to the church who repented of their sins were baptized unto repentance, and were received into the church" (Alma 6:2). Similarly, Mormon later writes phrases such as, "they did preach the word of God, and they did baptize unto repentance all men whosoever would hearken unto their words" (Alma 48:19) and "there were thousands who did join themselves unto the church and were baptized unto repentance" (Helaman 3:24).

However a shift takes place after Christ's extensive emphasis on being *baptized in his name*. As discussed previously, Christ clearly emphasized the connection between his name and baptism. Prior to 3 Nephi 26, Mormon never speaks of being baptized in the name of Christ. However, *after* Mormon provides an account of Christ's ministry, we see several examples where he might previously have employed the phrase "baptized unto repentance" but now substitutes it with a reference to being baptized in the name of Christ. For example, we read, "as many as were baptized in the name of Jesus were filled with the Holy Ghost" (3 Nephi 26:17), "And they who were baptized in the name of Jesus were called the church of Christ" (3 Nephi. 26:21), and "And as many as did come unto them, and did truly repent of their sins, were baptized in the name of Jesus" (4 Nephi 1:1).

Table 7 illustrates situations in which Mormon might have employed the phrase *baptized unto repentance* but instead speaks of being *baptized in the name of Jesus.*

New Testament and never in the Book of Mormon. While it could be argued that this is a textual coincidence, we believe that Book of Mormon speakers' consistent usage of the phrase baptized unto repentance indicates an ongoing tradition in the Book of Mormon.

Table 7. Mormon's descriptions of baptism before and after Christ's ministry to the Lehites.

Mormon writing before 3 Nephi 11	Mormon writing after 3 Nephi 25
"Whosoever did not belong to the church who repented of their sins *were baptized unto repentance*, and were *received into the church*" (Alma 6:2).	"And they who *were baptized in the name of Jesus* were *called the church of Christ*" (3 Nephi 26:21).
"*Nephi went forth* among the people, and also many others, *baptizing unto repentance*" (3 Nephi 1:23).	"*The disciples of Jesus were journeying* and were…*baptizing in the name of Jesus* (3 Nephi 27:1)
"There were thousands who did join themselves unto the church and *were baptized unto repentance*" (Helaman 3:24)	"And as many as did come unto them, and did truly repent of their sins, *were baptized in the name of Jesus*" (4 Nephi 1:1).

Mormon does not only speak of being baptized in the name of Jesus in his narrative descriptions. In a sermon to his people, Mormon says, "repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus" (Mormon 7:8) a statement that mimics Christ's statements in his personal ministry to the Nephites and is different from Alma$_2$'s statement "Come and be baptized unto repentance" (Alma 5:62, Alma 7:14).

Why does Mormon employ the phrase *baptize unto repentance* eight times before 3 Nephi 9 and never thereafter? Why does he five times utilize the phrase *baptized in the name of Jesus* after Christ's visits to the Lehites but never previously? One answer could be that Mormon took his textual cues from the Savior. Perhaps once he understood through his redaction of 3 Nephi the extent to which Christ emphasized being *baptized in his name*, he followed suit. If this is the case, it demonstrates an interesting textual way in which Mormon's voice changes in order to better harmonize with the voice of the Lord. Another possibility is that Mormon wanted to stay true to the text of those who went before them. Perhaps those who wrote on the plates prior to Christ spoke of being *baptized unto repentance* and Mormon simply followed their lead.

Conclusion

The unique ways speakers in the Book of Mormon use *baptize* support the notion that various speakers within its pages are individuals with

different points of emphasis and different ways of expression. This depth of the characters in the Book of Mormon adds to the overall complexity of the Book of Mormon text. We can see the desires of individual speakers coming to light through their use of certain words and their focus on particular concepts. While the general topic of being baptized is discussed in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon, *baptize* appears differently in each book, and within the Book of Mormon, speakers do not evenly say *baptize*; rather, different individuals focus on different aspects of the word.

Perhaps the most valuable insight that comes from analyzing the different voices that employ *baptize* in the Book of Mormon is that it highlights the importance that Christ places on this ordinance. We see that he focuses on baptism more than any other individual and that he does so in a way that encourages a personal relationship with him. Christ frequently associates baptism with himself and with his name, as evidenced in this verse: "[C]ome unto me, and be baptized in my name" (3 Nephi 30:2). When we understand how Christ views baptism, it may change how we perceive it as well.

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