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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.

Roundup: New developments and research

So far, 2013 has been a year of major developments at the Maxwell Institute. They are reprised here, along with happenings on the research and publications front.

Launch of new *Mormon Studies Review*

The first annual issue of the *Mormon Studies Review*, our periodical following the academic study of Mormonism, will be published on December 1, 2013. J. Spencer Fluhman, assistant professor of history at Brigham Young University, has been named as editor, with Benjamin E. Park (PhD candidate, University of Cambridge) and our own D. Morgan Davis as associate editors. Fluhman has enlisted an advisory board for the *Review* including recognized scholars like Richard L. Bushman, Laurie Maffly-Kipp, and Patrick Q. Mason. Fluhman anticipates that the *Review* "will become an engaging, one-stop

shop where scholars and nonspecialists alike can keep up with the vibrant, growing academic field of Mormon studies."¹

Salt Press acquisition

The Institute has reached an agreement with Salt Press to republish their current—and acquire their forthcoming—titles. Salt was founded in 2009 as "an independent academic press dedicated to publishing books that engage Mormon texts, show familiarity with the best contemporary thinking, remain accessible to nonspecialists, and foreground the continuing relevance of Mormon ideas."² Forthcoming works include James E. Faulconer's *The Doctrine and Covenants Made Harder: Scripture Study Questions* and Julie M. Smith's edited compilation *Apocalypse: Reading Revelation 21–22*. Salt's four cofounders, Adam S. Miller, Joseph M. Spencer, Jenny Webb,

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The Dead Sea Scrolls: Coming to a screen near you

by Kristian Heal

The Dead Sea Scrolls are still turning heads after more than 60 years. The curious story of their discovery in 1947, the intrigue surrounding their publication, and the speculations about their contents all contribute to the mystique of the scrolls. Many see them as the most important archaeological find of the 20th century (and there's some pretty good competition).¹

Latter-day Saint interest in the scrolls is natural. The very idea of a lost community coming to light through the discovery of its ancient records is going to get our attention. It comes as no surprise, then, to learn that within a decade of their discovery Hugh Nibley had already published two

items on the Dead Sea Scrolls.² This LDS interest in the scrolls has continued and even intensified over the years, as suggested by a recent survey listing 124 LDS books and articles on the topic.³ The Maxwell Institute itself has published two volumes on the Dead Sea Scrolls aimed at LDS audiences.⁴

The Dead Sea Scrolls have a particularly important place in Maxwell Institute history because they, along with some recently acquired Syriac documents, were the impetus for establishing the Center for the Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts (CPART) in 1996. The primary goal of CPART was to create the Dead Sea Scrolls Electronic Library. The first part of this electronic library, com-



BYU's Don Parry examines the Great Isaiah Scroll

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and Robert Couch, have been asked to serve as the first members of the Institute's new Mormon studies editorial advisory board, which will assist with book manuscript solicitation and acquisitions.

New social media presence

Our Internet presence has been steadily increasing. In February, Blair Dee Hodges (MALS, Georgetown University) was brought in as our new public communications specialist. In addition to assisting with various research and editing projects, Hodges manages our new Facebook page (facebook.com/maxwellinstitute), Twitter account (@MI_BYU), and YouTube channel (youtube.com/user/themaxwellinstitute). He also edits the Institute's new blog, currently accessible at www.maxwellinstituteblog.org. It features up-to-date news and announcements, Q&As with scholars, short book notes, and research updates such as those usually published in *Insights*.

We're excited to announce that a completely new Institute website is currently under construction. In addition to making our past research more easily accessible in a variety of formats, the new site will provide information about the ongoing work being done with each of the Institute's initiatives, such as the Middle Eastern Texts Initiative, the Laura F. Willes Center for Book of Mormon Studies, and the Center for the Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts.³

Institute scholars present research

Institute scholars have been busy discussing their research at various academic conferences. In February, Kristian Heal delivered a lecture on our digitization efforts to the Committee for the Study of Late Antiquity at Princeton University. In March, Morgan Davis spoke about Islamic mysticism on a

panel at the Mormon Scholars in the Humanities conference at BYU. That same month, Blair Hodges presented a paper on intellectual disability in Mormon thought and history for the Association for Mormon Letters and another paper on the same topic in May at the Pacific Northwest region's American Academy of Religion conference.⁴ Kristian Heal and John Gee participated at the Church History Symposium, cosponsored by BYU's Department of Church History and Doctrine, the Religious Studies Center at BYU, and the LDS Church History

Department. Videos of the latter two presentations are available at BYU's Religious Education YouTube channel.⁵

Forthcoming publications

The next issue of the *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture* will be available this summer. It includes James E. Faulconer's 2013 Laura F. Willes Book of Mormon Lecture on Moroni

10, which demonstrates how a close reading of a very familiar text can yield unfamiliar but worthwhile insights. Also in the *Journal*, Kerry Muhlestein explores religious syncretism in Egyptian history, and Matthew Roper questions whether the ancient city of Manti was accurately identified by a group of traveling Latter-day Saints in 1838. Other articles discuss the Sermon on the Mount and textual interlay within the Book of Mormon.

In addition to working on this publication, the Institute's publications team is hard at work preparing John L. Sorenson's forthcoming book, *Mormon's Codex*, for publication.

It's shaping up to be an exciting year at the Maxwell Institute. We encourage readers to connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube and to watch for news and updates on the Institute's new blog.

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Book of Job on premortal existence of "first man"

by Matthew Roper

One noteworthy Latter-day Saint teaching is that Adam, the "first man" (D&C 84:16; Moses 1:34; 3:7; 6:45; Abraham 1:3), had a premortal existence (Moses 3:5) and was present at the planning and creation of the earth (Abraham 3:22–26).¹ This idea of the first man's premortal existence is implicit in the book of Job.²

Job's accuser Eliphaz challenges the suffering man's claims to wisdom, asking, "Are you the first-born of the human race? Were you brought forth before the hills? Have you listened in the council of God? And do you limit wisdom to yourself? What do you know that we do not know?" (Job 15:7–9 NRSV). Eliphaz's point is that Job cannot lay claim to such heavenly wisdom because he was obviously not "the firstborn of the human race." This presupposes that the first man could indeed lay claim to heavenly wisdom. Several elements in the narrative lead to this conclusion and reinforce the related idea of the first man's premortal existence.

First, the primal man is described in Job 15:7 as having been "brought forth" rather than "created" (*bārā'*, Genesis 1:27) or "formed" (*yāšar*, Genesis 2:7). The Hebrew verb in this verse is neither "created" nor "formed," but rather comes from the root *hyl* in the *polal* form and means "to bring forth (through labour pains)."³ The usage of this verb seems to point to an event distinct from Adam's mortal creation on the sixth day in the Genesis account. An interesting linkage of ideas suggestive of premortal birth arises here because the first human—described in Job as having "come into existence through natural means,

that is through birth"—was also "thought to have been born before the hills."⁴

The phrase "before the hills" (Job 15:7) is also used to describe the feminine personified figure of Wisdom in Proverbs. Here wisdom is said to have been possessed by God "from the beginning, or ever the earth was"; and "before the mountains were settled, *before the hills* was I brought forth" (Proverbs 8:23, 25). This language, applied to both wisdom and the first man, seems to place the first man's birth at the beginning of the creative period rather than at the end of the sixth day.

Moreover, the question "Have you listened in the council of God?" is informed by a context that places the first man in a heavenly council where he has access to heavenly wisdom. "According to Eliphaz, the wisdom of the primordial human came as a result of his presence within the council of God, and the fact that he 'listened.'"⁵ "The first man was wise," notes Old Testament scholar Margaret Barker, "because he was in the council of God."⁶ The verbs in this passage may be "alluding to a particular divine council [compare Genesis 1:26] in which the plan of creation was revealed," or they may indicate continuing access, the literal meaning being "art thou wont to be a listener[?]"⁷

Finally, in Job 38–41 the Lord lists many things that Job, with limited mortal knowledge, could not know but that God does know by virtue of his wisdom as Creator. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if

Book of Job to page 6

From Elder Neal A. Maxwell

Hugh Hewitt: You must have encountered people [with what] I think the Old Testament phrase would be "hardened hearts." How do you persuade or tempt people with hardened hearts in Scripture or revelation?

Neal Maxwell: I think it's a matter of loving and appreciating people whether they are doubters or agnostics. They are all the children of Heavenly Father. That's one of the great things that the plan of salvation tells us: who we and they are. They

don't know who they are, but I do; and I must learn to love them, even if I disagree with them or they disagree with me. Even if they are critical of me, because they are my brothers and sisters. So I've got a transcendental relationship with them that goes beyond the tactical moments down here on earth as we may be colliding over some issue. —"A Conversation with Elder Neal Maxwell," in Hugh Hewitt, *Searching for God in America* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1996), 131

Recent lectures highlight Elder Maxwell, Book of Mormon

The Maxwell Institute started the year off with two annual lectures—one focusing on the life and example of Elder Neal A. Maxwell, the other on the Book of Mormon. A third event was a series of lectures highlighting findings from the ongoing Book of Mormon Critical Text Project.

The 2013 Laura F. Willes Book of Mormon Lecture, “Sealings and Mercies: Moroni’s Final Exhortations in Moroni 10,” was delivered by BYU philosophy professor James E. Faulconer. Over the past decade, the Institute has helped Faulconer become better known for his close reading of LDS scripture by publishing his works *Scripture Study: Tools and Suggestions* (FARMS, 1999), *Romans 1: Notes and Reflections* (FARMS, 1999), and *Faith, Philosophy, Scripture* (Maxwell Institute, 2010). Most recently, Faulconer completed *The Life of Holiness: Notes and Reflections on Romans 1, 5–8* (Maxwell Institute, 2012) and *The Doctrine and Covenants Made Harder: Scripture Study Questions* (Salt Press, 2013; forthcoming edition from the Maxwell Institute).

In his lecture, Faulconer took a fresh look at Moroni 10, perhaps the most frequently cited chapter in the Book of Mormon. He asserted that the truths found in the Book of Mormon are often “obscured by what we think we already know about the text—standard interpretations that may or may not be the best.” Familiarity can obstruct; it becomes “easy to fall into the habit of thinking that we are reading when we are really just repeating to ourselves what we supposedly already know.” Faulconer said that by examining the chapter’s structure, the ways Moroni relates his ideas to each other, and the definitions he appears to apply to particular words, readers can uncover “questions that the text asks us to think about.” Faulconer concluded that Moroni’s sealing of the ancient record and his final exhortations are tied together through the principles of faith, hope, and charity.

James S. Jardine delivered the 2013 Neal A. Maxwell Lecture, “Elder Neal A. Maxwell: A Disciple’s Light.” Jardine is an attorney specializing

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James E. Faulconer



James S. Jardine



Royal Skousen

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NOTES

1. “Announcing the new *Mormon Studies Review*,” March 25, 2013, <http://www.maxwellinstituteblog.org/>.
2. “Salt Press titles come to the Maxwell Institute,” April 9, 2013, <http://www.maxwellinstituteblog.org/>.
3. For more information about the Institute’s various initiatives,

see the description posted with our mission statement at <http://www.maxwellinstituteblog.org/>.

4. A synopsis of the Mormon studies section of the AAR conference can be read at <http://www.maxwellinstituteblog.org/> under the entry for May 6, 2013.

5. <http://www.youtube.com/BYURelEd>.

Dead Sea Scrolls continued from page 1

prising all published sectarian or nonbiblical scrolls, was released in 1999, with a revised edition appearing in 2006. Since that time, CPART has been working on the second part of the library, which will contain all of the biblical scrolls. We are happy to announce that this project, led by Professor Donald W. Parry of BYU's Department of Asian and Near Eastern Languages, is nearing completion and is expected to be published within a year.

The new electronic library includes images, annotated transcriptions, and translations of the biblical scrolls, combined with the advanced search functionality of the WordCruncher software. As such, it is primarily a research tool for Dead Sea Scrolls and biblical scholars and students. As before with part 1, publisher E. J. Brill of Leiden will allow part 2 to be made available to BYU faculty and students. Information about accessing the library is forthcoming.

Those who are not BYU students or faculty need not worry. Thanks to a recently launched project by the Google Cultural Institute, many of the Dead Sea Scrolls are now available on a screen near you. Go

take a look at google.com/culturalinstitute/about/deadseascroll.html and dss.collections.imj.org/il/.

NOTES

1. Kristian S. Heal, "Dead Sea Scrolls: What's the Competition?," *Insights* 31/1 (2011): 3, <http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/insights/>.

2. Hugh W. Nibley, "More Voices from the Dust," in Nibley, *Old Testament and Related Studies*, ed. John W. Welch, Gary P. Gillum, and Don E. Norton (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1986), 239–44; and Nibley, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Book of Mormon," part 6 of Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch, 3rd ed. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988). These books and the other publications cited below can be accessed at <http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/>.

3. Daniel B. McKinlay and Steven W. Booras, "The Dead Sea Scrolls: Select Publications by Latter-day Saint Scholars," *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* 2 (2010): 105–16. This issue is entirely devoted to the Dead Sea Scrolls.

4. Donald W. Parry and Dana M. Pike, *LDS Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997); and Donald W. Parry and Stephen D. Ricks, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Questions and Responses for Latter-day Saints* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2000).

Recent lectures continued from page 3

in business, antitrust, securities, and intellectual property litigation. Among other duties, he chairs the LDS Church's Salt Lake City Public Affairs Council.

As a former student and lifelong colleague of Elder Maxwell, Jardine illustrated how Elder Maxwell's church service exemplified the combination of faith and intellect in Christian discipleship. "Those who in the future will read Elder Maxwell's talks and his thirty books will be . . . deeply impressed by the qualities of his mind," Jardine said. "It is in part due to those intellectual qualities, reflected over the years in his writing and speaking, that this Institute bears his name."

The Institute's Laura F. Willes Center for Book of Mormon Studies sponsored three lectures by Dr. Royal Skousen entitled "25 Years of Research: What We Have Learned about the Book of Mormon Text." Skousen, a professor of linguistics and English language at BYU, has spent the last quarter century analyzing the original and printer's manuscripts of the Book of Mormon, in addition to the text of subsequent print editions. His analysis has brought

attention to a number of scribal and printer's errors and discrepancies, as well as possible alternative readings. He gave an overview of the project's origins, the various technologies used in analyzing the manuscripts, and some of the more interesting variant examples that potentially clarify passages of the Book of Mormon. For instance, he proposes that "the pleasing bar of God" in Jacob 6:13 and Moroni 10:34 might better read as "the pleading bar of God," conceptually highlighting the legal aspect of the judgment bar as opposed to an affective feeling about it. He also spoke about more recent attempts to make the Book of Mormon text more visually pleasing and easier to process and appreciate, such as his *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (Yale University Press, 2009) and Grant Hardy's *The Book of Mormon: A Reader's Edition* (University of Illinois Press, 2005).

The lectures by Faulconer and Jardine are now available on the Maxwell Institute's new YouTube channel (<http://youtube.com/user/themaxwellinstitute>). Skousen's lecture series will be offered there later this summer.

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thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (38:4-7). The "First Man," notes Herbert May, "was present at the creation of the world when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy. . . . The theme is wisdom and knowledge which Job, in contrast with God, does not have; he was not there (as First Man was there) when God laid the foundations of the earth and the members of God's council (the morning stars, the sons of God) rejoiced."⁸

In response to God's questions, Job would have to admit that he did not know, but the first man, a figure often associated with the ideology of kingship in the ancient Near East, could have answered affirmatively since as one associated with God at the creation, he had access to divine wisdom about the creation of the earth.⁹ He "was present at the creation and by virtue of that fact possessed wisdom in its most intimate details. The divine speeches in [Job] chapters 38-41 make clear that the secrets of the universe lie within the primordium, the epoch of creation. As one who 'was born then,' he knew the deepest and most esoteric of knowledge."¹⁰ Having once stood in the heavenly council where he learned the wisdom of creation, "he is numbered among the sons of God" spoken of who shouted for joy.¹¹

The idea that the first man was in some way born before the creation of the earth, took part in the divine councils, and was among those who sang together and shouted for joy will resonate with Latter-day Saints, who understand through latter-day revelation that not only Adam, but all humankind, shared a premortal existence before the foundation of the world (D&C 93:23, 29).

NOTES

1. "The Priesthood was first given to Adam: he obtained the first Presidency & held the Keys of it, from generation to Generation; he obtained it in the creation before the world was formed as in Gen. 1, 26:28,—he had dominion given him over every living Creature. He is Michael, the Archangel, spoken of in the Scriptures." Joseph Smith Discourse, 8 August 1839, in *The Words of Joseph Smith*, ed. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook (Provo, UT: Grandin Book Company, 1991), 8. For recent studies of the idea of premortal existence, see Terryl L. Givens, *When Souls Had Wings: Pre-Mortal Existence in Western Thought* (Oxford: Oxford

University Press, 2010), with Job and Eliphaz mentioned on pp. 13-14; and Dana M. Pike, "Exploring the Biblical Phrase 'God of the Spirits of All Flesh,'" in *Bountiful Harvest: Essays in Honor of S. Kent Brown*, ed. Andrew C. Skinner, D. Morgan Davis, and Carl Griffin (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, 2011), 313-27.

2. Dexter E. Callender Jr., *Adam in Myth and History: Ancient Israelite Perspectives on the Primal Human* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000).

3. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 1:310-11.

4. Callender, *Adam in Myth*, 141.

5. Callender, *Adam in Myth*, 175.

6. Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (Sheffield: Phoenix Press, 2005), 244n4.

7. Callender, *Adam in Myth*, 147, citing Samuel Rolles Driver and George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Job* (New York: Scribner's, 1921), 2:96.

8. Herbert G. May, "The King in the Garden of Eden," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage*, ed. B. W. Anderson and W. Harrelson (New York: Harper, 1962), 170, 172-73.

9. Nick Wyatt, *Myths of Power: A Study of the Royal Myth and Ideology in Ugarit and Biblical Tradition* (Munster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1996), 269-70.

10. Callender, *Adam in Myth*, 176.

11. Callender, *Adam in Myth*, 176.

INSIGHTS

The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship

Blair Dee Hodges, Editor

Our mission is to deepen understanding and nurture discipleship among Latter-day Saints and to promote mutual respect and goodwill among people of all faiths through the scholarly study of religious texts and traditions.



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