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Book of Mormon Study Guide

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Abstract: "Of all of Dad's credentials, the most important is this, Dad loved the scriptures. His passion was the Book of Mormon. He was a lifetime student of the scriptures. He devoted his life to teaching others to love - and to a greater understanding of - the scriptures.

As a young missionary in the 1930s, he began compiling the *Combination Reference* as a scripture reference tool for other missionaries. In 1945, as a chaplain in the U.S. Army, his missionary zeal led him to present a copy of the Book of Mormon to Pope Pius XII. After the war, in 1949, he joined the religion faculty at BYU, where he was instrumental in making the Book of Mormon a required class. This *Book of Mormon Study Guide* was developed at BYU as a personal study aid for all students of the Book of Mormon.

He hoped that this book would aid you in your personal scripture study. And, like Nephi of old, may 'your soul also delight in the scriptures.'"

BOOK OF MORMON
STUDY
GUIDE



By
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PREFACE

The Prophet Joseph Smith referred to the Book of Mormon as “the keystone of our religion” and declared that a man will get “nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book” (D.H.C. 4:461). The Lord has commanded members of the Church to teach it (D. & C. 42:12) and revealed that possessors of the volume shall be judged by its contents (2 Nephi 25:22; 33:14-15). In view of these pronouncements it is imperative that Latter-day Saints be diligent students of the Book of Mormon.

The *Book of Mormon Study Guide* is designed to promote a careful study of the Book of Mormon. (Ideally, its use will be preceded by a pre-reading of, at least, the narrative highlights of the volume.) The means provided to facilitate this detailed examination are questions running parallel with the text. Some readers may elect to use these questions merely to preview each chapter before studying it thoroughly and as a self-checking device afterwards to satisfy themselves that they have mastered the main elements of the chapter. It is anticipated that, in addition to following this procedure, most readers will utilize them to their full advantage and write out responses in the space provided for such purpose. Although writing must inevitably slow down one’s reading the practice serves to insure retention of the things one has learned and also to build a valuable handbook for the subsequent teaching of the Book of Mormon to others. In group study this procedure has the additional advantage of providing an objective basis for the correction and clarification of responses by the group leader or instructor. It is understandable, of course, that in a class of very limited duration the instructor may feel the necessity of specifying in advance only certain questions to be answered in writing.

Ordinarily, the questions can be answered quickly, as the portion of the text upon which each question is based is cited in parentheses immediately after the question. This provides the reader with what constitutes, virtually, a built-in key to the answers. Some questions are preceded by a little commentary or supplementary material. Some direct the reader to other parts of the Book of Mormon or to other Standard Works of the Church for pertinent supporting facts or explanations. Still other questions—and this type constitutes the majority—are intended simply as road signs or pointers to items of importance within the immediate text.

Although this book of questions is designed, in the foregoing ways, to enrich the verse-by-verse reading of the Book of Mormon there is a larger purpose envisioned in its preparation. This more inclusive aim is to help students prepare more adequately to become teachers of the volume themselves in an age when doubt and agnosticism have left large segments of the human family bereft of faith in the divinity and saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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ABBREVIATIONS

With few exceptions sources cited are indicated in full. Occasionally P. of G. P. is used as an abbreviation for Pearl of Great Price and D. & C., for Doctrine and Covenants. The symbol *ff* means *and following*. A reference citation to Alma 12:2-4 *ff.* directs the reader to the Book of Alma, chapter twelve, verses two through four, *and following* verses.

THE FIRST BOOK OF NEPHI

The First Book of Nephi is the first part of an ancient record known to us as the *Small Plates of Nephi*. This record was found by the Prophet Mormon one day while he was searching through a library of records that had come down from his ancestors. According to the dictates of the Spirit he later attached the *Small Plates of Nephi* to his own *Plates of Mormon*, upon which he had engraved a synopsis of the religious history of his nation. In their modern translated form the *Small Plates of Nephi* comprise the first 133 pages of the Book of Mormon.

Chapter 1

23. When did Nephi begin writing this record? Consult 2 Nephi 5:28-31 for your answer.
24. W. J. Moulton, in "The Social Institutions of Israel," says of the early Hebrew literature, "The moral instruction of the children is emphasized as one of the weightiest obligations of the *father*." Although Nephi pays tribute to the goodness of both his parents to whom does he give the credit for his education (v. 1)?
25. In what language characters did Nephi write? Compare Mosiah 1:4 and Mormon 9:32-33.
26. According to 2 Kings 24:15-18, who was the Zedekiah of whom Nephi speaks (v. 4)?
27. What does 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 say in reference to Nephi's assertion that "there came many prophets, prophesying" during this period (v. 4)?
28. What two visions of Lehi's does Nephi relate in this chapter (vs. 6-16)?
29. Into what country were many of the Jews soon to be taken captive (v. 13)?
30. How does Lehi's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Babylonian captivity square with Biblical history? Consult 2 Kings, chapter 25, for your answer.
31. Whose journal or record does Nephi use to help him clearly recall and accurately record details of his own early "proceedings" or experiences (v. 17)?
32. How does the persecution that Lehi experienced compare with the treatment accorded other prophets in the Old Testament era who prophesied of Christ? Consult Acts 7:51-52 for your answer.

Chapter 2

33. In your opinion, why didn't the Lord inform Lehi at first that his destination was a land of promise on the other side of the earth?

34. A casual reading of verses four through six gives one the impression that Lehi traveled from Jerusalem to the Red Sea in three days. A closer inspection suggests the possibility that three days was the length of time he traveled in the vicinity of the Red Sea (probably along the coast) after reaching it. What is the basis of this latter interpretation (v. 5)?
35. What Hebrew custom did Lehi conform to shortly after pitching his tent at his Red Sea camp site (v. 7)?
36. In the highly significant and far reaching revelation that comprises verses 19-24 what did Nephi learn, first of all, was the reason for the Lords' blessing him with a direct answer to his prayers (v. 19)?
37. What did the Lord tell Nephi was the condition upon which he would prosper (v. 20)?
38. Lehi had been told by the Lord simply to get out of Jerusalem because his life was in danger. What larger purpose did the Lord now unfold to Nephi (v. 20)?
39. In what glowing words did the Lord describe the "land of promise" (v. 20)?
40. What was to be the fate of Nephi's brothers if they rebelled against him (v. 21)?
41. In early Hebrew society the eldest son usually succeeded his father in family leadership. How was this custom to be reversed in the case of Nephi and his brothers (v. 22)?
42. Upon what condition alone would the descendants of Nephi's brothers ever have power over Nephi's descendants (v. 23)?
43. In your opinion, what elements of the revelation comprising verses 19-24 are of present day value to the people of America and the world?

Chapter 3

44. When Nephi was asked by his father to go back after the *Brass Plates of Laban* what great statement did he make that eloquently expressed his faith (v. 7)?
45. When Laman attempted to obtain the *Brass Plates of Laban* simply by asking for them and, failing in the attempt, was ready to abandon the project, what fiery oath did Nephi utter to register his determination to succeed (v. 15)?
46. What new scheme did Nephi now propose for acquiring the plates (v. 16)?
47. What did Laman and Lemuel do when Nephi's scheme for obtaining the plates failed (v. 28)?
48. What did the angel say that indicated the ancient custom of the eldest son succeeding his father in the right to rule (the law of primogeniture) was going to be reversed in Lehi's family (v. 29)?

49. What do we learn from the murmurings of Laman and Lemuel about the authority of the "mighty man," Laban (v. 31)?

Chapter 4

50. According to the Bible has the Lord ever destroyed the wicked or commanded the righteous to destroy them? Explain. For your answer consult Genesis 6:5-13, Deuteronomy 7:2 and 9:4, Acts 5:1-11, and 1 Nephi 17:35.
51. What nation would "dwindle and perish in unbelief" (v. 13) without the scriptures that Laban possessed? (Compare the fate of the Mulekites, Omni, verse 17.)
52. In your opinion, if a nineteenth century American religious leader had written the Book of Mormon as a "pious fraud" to win converts to a new Christian sect would he have had Nephi slay Laban? Why or why not?
53. The fact that Nephi promised Zoram that "he should be a free man like unto us" (v. 33) sounds like Zoram was a bond servant or slave. Was slavery, involving Hebrew slaves, practiced during the reign of King Zedekiah? Consult Jeremiah 34:8-11 for your answer.
54. After Nephi and Zoram had exchanged oaths (vs. 32-35) Nephi says, "... our fears did cease concerning him" (v. 37). From the Hebrew standpoint was Nephi justified in placing full faith in Zoram's oath? Compare this with Joshua 9:1-21.

Chapter 5

55. Lord Kingsborough found that many American Indian groups were acquainted with early Biblical events. What record provided their forefathers with such data (v. 10ff.)?
56. What did the *Brass Plates of Laban* contain (vs. 11-14)?
57. The *Brass Plates of Laban*—as also the records kept by Nephi and his descendants in the New World—dealt with the descendants of which of Jacob's sons (v. 14)?
58. What did Lehi prophesy concerning the *Brass Plates of Laban* (vs. 17-19)?

Chapter 6

59. Nephi did not write the *Small Plates of Nephi* for the purpose of offering people a textbook of history or archaeology or anthropology or geography. What did he say was "the fullness" of his "intent," his real purpose for writing (v. 4)?
60. What kind or quality of reader did Nephi know his writings would not please, and what kind did he know they would please (v. 5)?

61. In your opinion (in connection with verse 5), would it be correct to say, "The Book of Mormon is not on trial; the world is"? Compare this with 2 Nephi 25:22, 33:14-15; and 3 Nephi 26:6-11, especially verse 11.

Chapter 7

62. What is the minimum possible number of people that could have been in Lehi's colony? (Note verse 6 and 1 Nephi 2:5 and 4:35.)
63. How many unmarried daughters did Ishmael have (v. 6)? How does this number compare with the number of unmarried sons Lehi had?
64. Nephi discovered early in his career the singular fact about God that He ". . . giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them" (1 Nephi 3:7). Explain how the Lord had prepared the way for Nephi and his brothers to convince Ishmael's family to forsake everything they had in Jerusalem for a life in the desert. Specifically, (a) what remarkable event occurred earlier that seemingly by coincidence now provided Nephi and his brothers with an unanswerable argument that the Lord was behind the venture (1 Nephi 3:29), and (b) what occurred earlier that seemingly by coincidence answered the problem of marriage for Ishmael's unmarried children (1 Nephi 4:35)?

Chapter 8

65. In Lehi's dream or vision he first of all found himself following a mysterious visitor through a "dark and dreary waste" for "many hours in darkness" (vs. 4-8). In your opinion, what was the Lord probably waiting for Lehi to do (v. 8) before unfolding to his view the vision that was to follow?
66. In addition to Lehi a later Book of Mormon prophet, Alma, said of the fruit of the precious tree, ". . . and unto those who do not belong to the church I speak by way of invitation, saying: Come and be baptised unto repentance, that ye also may be partakers of the *fruit of the tree of life*" (Alma 5:62). In the Church today what is the word (beginning with the letter *t*) that we are accustomed to using to designate this foretaste of divine life and love that brings men hope and enthusiastic conviction in the Lord's work?
67. Judging by your own experience or the experience of others who have partaken of the joyous testimony that the gospel brings, would you say that Lehi's desire to share the fruit with others was typical (v. 12)? Explain.

68. What did "the river of water" of verse 13 represent? Consult 1 Nephi 15:26-29 for your answer.
69. What did the "rod of iron" of verse 19 represent? Consult 1 Nephi 15:23-24 for your answer.
70. At what point does the vision extend beyond Lehi's family and become the story of the whole human family?
71. What did the "mist of darkness" of verse 23 represent? Consult I Nephi 12:17 for your answer.
72. What did the "great and spacious building" of verse 26 represent? Consult 1 Nephi 12:18 for your answer.
73. Who were the four groups of people that Lehi saw? Note (a) vs. 21-23 (b) vs. 24-28 (c) v. 30 (d) v. 31.

Chapter 9

74. For what special purpose does Nephi say he made "these plates"—the *Small Plates of Nephi* (v. 3)?
75. What kind of subject matter does Nephi say he inscribed on his "other plates"—the *Large Plates of Nephi* (v. 4)?
76. Did Nephi know the purpose the Lord had in mind when He commanded him to prepare the *Small Plates of Nephi* (v. 5)? Explain.

Chapter 10

77. At the beginning of the record that we are reading Nephi stated that he was going to give an account of his own proceedings or experiences; in doing so he would draw first from his father's record and after that proceed on his own (1 Nephi 1:17). At what point does it now appear Nephi ceases to use his father's history?
78. How many years before the birth of Christ did Lehi leave Jerusalem (v. 4)?
79. What are two of the several important facts that Lehi states concerning Christ (vs. 4-6)?
80. Was the migration of Lehi's colony part of the prophesied scattering of Israel (v. 13)?
81. In contrast with the popular idea that the Holy Ghost did not function in the affairs of men before Christ came into the world Nephi says the Holy Ghost has always been "the gift of God unto all those who diligently seek him" (v. 17). Is Nephi's doctrine verified by the Bible? Consult Acts 1:16 and 2 Peter 1:21 for your answer.

94. What was the book that "proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew" (vs. 20-25)?
95. Why is it that "an exceeding great many do stumble" in their attempts to understand the Bible (vs. 26-29)?
96. Have the American Indians been "smitten . . . by the hand of the Gentiles" (v. 34), as Nephi prophesied they would be? Explain.
97. What are three "other books" besides the Bible that have come forth "by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles" to the American Indians (v. 39)?
98. In your opinion, does the world need latter-day scripture to "establish the truth" of the Bible (v. 40)? Why?

Chapter 14

99. Nephi speaks repeatedly of certain covenants that the Lord made with the House of Israel (vs. 5, 8, 17). What is the primary covenant that the Lord made with Abraham and, through him, with Isaac and Jacob (Israel) and their posterity? Consult Abraham 2:6-11 (especially the latter part of verse 11) in the Pearl of Great Price for your answer.
100. In what sense is the gospel an "either or" challenge (v. 7)?
101. In what larger sense does the Heavenly Messenger now seem to use the term "church of the devil" (v. 10) in contrast with the seemingly quite specific reference to a single organization in 1 Nephi 13:4-6?
102. In your opinion, does the "larger sense" referred to in the foregoing question have any relationship to the Lord's instructions to Joseph Smith about the churches of the world being "all wrong" and their creeds "an abomination in his sight" (P. of G. P., Joseph Smith 2:18-19)? How so?
103. In your opinion, what does the devil expect to accomplish by fostering churches that teach many wonderful truths and some errors and attract many good people?
104. During the last days of wickedness that Nephi foresaw the restored church of Christ was to be a world-wide organization. Was it to be a relatively large or small organization (v. 12)?
105. What did Nephi foresee concerning the opposition that the restored church would face (v. 13)?
106. Where may one read the remainder of the things that Nephi saw but which was not permitted to write (vs. 18-27)?

107. What other prophet does the Book of Mormon tell about who also appears to have seen the things that John the Revelator saw (v. 26)? For your answer consult Ether 3:25-28 and 4:4-7.
108. Apart from whatever Nephi may have seen in vision that his father did not see was he privileged to see what his father saw (v. 29)?

Chapter 15

109. What troubled Nephi most about the things he had been shown in vision (v. 5)?
110. Why were Laman and Lemuel unable to grasp the great spiritual truths that Lehi and Nephi comprehended so well (vs. 7-10)?
111. What significant lesson relative to man's quest for truth does Nephi here restate (v. 11)?
112. In verse 12 Nephi explains that the term "olive-tree" stands for the House of Israel. Then in verse 16, he speaks of a day when a remnant of his colony's posterity (American Indians and such) "shall be grafted in, being a natural branch of the olive-tree [House of Israel], into the true olive-tree [House of Israel]. What is "true" Israel, as distinguished here from the "natural branch" of Israel?
113. In the light of the important distinction set forth by Nephi in verse 16, in your opinion what does the Apostle Paul mean when he says, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel"? (Romans 9:6).
114. When one becomes "grafted in" to "true" Israel he also becomes part of the spiritual family of Abraham, for Abraham was Israel's (Jacob's) grandfather. Based now upon Paul's epistle to the Galatians (Galatians 3:27-29), what is the specific ordinance by which Jews and Gentiles alike enter this family and become "heirs according to the promise"? Consult also Pearl of Great Price, Abraham 2:6-11, especially verse 10, then 2 Nephi 30:2 and 3 Nephi 21:6.
115. The Nephite prophets appear to have applied the term "Gentile" both to those who have no Israelitish blood and those who are of mixed Israelitish-Gentile extraction. It is undoubtedly in this latter category that most members of the Church find themselves. (Compare this with Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Way to Perfection* [9th ed.], p. 140.) In view of this, how has the gospel come forth "by way of the Gentiles" in these latter days (v 17)?
116. What remarkable prophecy of an event that is now current does Nephi tell us he taught his brothers (v. 19)?

117. If the Arabs of the Middle East were to read and believe the Book of Mormon, why would they cease trying to drive the Jews out of Palesine (v. 20)?
118. Nephi's vision of what his father had been shown in vision was so precise that he was able to point out a small detail that his father had overlooked but which was there all the time (v. 27). How does this interesting fact challenge the theory that revelation has no source beyond the mind of the prophet?
119. What would be wrong with the Kingdom of God if the filthy, meaning the wicked, could dwell in it (v. 33)?
120. What is the greatest of all God's gifts (v. 36)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 14:7 and 88:4.

Chapter 16

121. Why do people who are guilty of such infractions of divine law as, say, the law of chastity and the Word of Wisdom dislike hearing discourses on the subject (v. 2)? Compare this with John 3:19-21.
122. Where did the events transpire that are recorded in chapters 8 through 15 (v. 6)? Compare this with 1 Nephi 2:8-10, 14.
123. Whom did Ishmael's five daughters marry (v. 7)?
124. Nephi's testimony that "the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them" (1 Nephi 3:7) was again confirmed at the commencement of their great migration to the Land of Promise when the Lord provided them with a device that helped make their journey possible. What was this device (v. 10)?
125. Describe the device that Lehi received in verse 10. Compare with verses 26-29.
126. What name did Lehi give to the device that he received in verse 10? Consult Alma 37:38 for your answer.
127. What equally miraculous and far more spectacular device than the one provided Lehi's group did the Lord earlier employ to guide the Children of Israel to their Promised Land? Consult Exodus 13:21-22 for your answer.
128. How many days' journey was the second major encampment, Shazer, from the Valley of Lemuel, and what direction was it from the Valley of Lemuel (v. 13)?
129. What direction did the little band of emigrants travel to their third major encampment, the name of which is not mentioned in the record (vs. 14-17)?

130. In the apparently hopeless plight that the colonists found themselves at their third encampment, whose faith proved the stronger, Nephi's or his father's (vs. 18-22)?
131. How did Nephi display remarkable honor and respect toward his father in connection with the broken bow incident (v. 23)?
132. What direction did the travelers take to reach their fourth major encampment, Nahom (vs. 33-34)?
133. In your opinion, if the Lord always prepares a way for the accomplishment of tasks that He assigns His children (1 Nephi 3:7) was He "playing fair" to let Ishmael die (v. 34) after commanding Lehi's family to bring him and his family into the wilderness (1 Nephi 7:2)? Explain.
134. In your opinion, was the faith of any of the Latter-day Saints during their westward migration tried as severely as Lehi's group was in respect to the death of Ishmael (v. 34)? Explain.
135. Was the fear that Laman and Lemuel had that their younger brother, Nephi, would someday rule over them (vs. 37-38) based upon anything concrete, or was it entirely groundless? Consult 1 Nephi 3:29 and 2 Nephi 5:19 for your answer.
136. Laman and Lemuel had to admit that Nephi worked what seemed to be miracles, but by what means did they say he worked them (v. 38)?

Chapter 17

137. In what direction did Lehi's band travel after leaving Nahom, the site of their fourth major encampment (v. 1)?
138. In your opinion, would the average person of today be talking about the great "blessings of the Lord" if he were in Nephi's circumstances (vs. 1-2)? Explain.
139. How many years did it take Lehi's colony to get from Jerusalem to Irreantum (v. 4)?
140. What was Nephi's reaction when, after long tiresome years of travel in Arabia, the Lord commanded him to tackle the seemingly impossible task of building a home-made ship and crossing the ocean (vs. 7-9)?
141. Apart from the fact that fire might have attracted desert marauders, how might the limited use of fire on their overland journey (v. 12) have served to prepare Lehi's group for the dietary problem that would be presented on the long ocean voyage ahead by the necessarily limited fuel supply?
142. What was the reaction of Nephi's brothers to his ship-building plans (v. 15-18)?

157. Where must the animals have come from that Lehi's colony found in the New World (v. 25)? Consult Ether 2:1-3 and 6:4 for your answer.
158. What kinds of metal ore did the colonists find in the Promised Land (v. 25)?

Chapter 19

159. When Joseph Smith commenced the translation of Mormon's book-by-book summary of the *Large Plates of Nephi* he says he found that the first book was named the Book of Lehi. What could have been Nephi's reason for designating the first part of his record the Book of Lehi (v. 2)?
160. When Nephi made his *Large Plates of Nephi* he had no idea that the Lord would later command him to make the *Small Plates of Nephi* that we are now reading. What are some of the things, therefore, that Nephi engraved on the *Large Plates* that he didn't see fit to repeat on his *Small Plates* (v. 2)?
161. What kind of subject matter did Nephi include on his *Small Plates of Nephi* (v. 3)?
162. After preparing his second set of plates (the *Small Plates of Nephi*), what kind of subject matter did Nephi *thereafter* inscribe on his first set of plates (the *Large Plates of Nephi*) (v. 4)?
163. Based on the later account alluded to in verse 5, when did Nephi make "these plates." Consult 2 Nephi 5:28-31 for your answer.
164. What indication does Nephi give that Jesus was the God of the Old Testament (v. 10)? Compare 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.
165. What can we learn about the completeness or incompleteness of the Bible from the fact that Nephi quotes Zenock, Neum, and Zenos (v. 10)?
166. What record formed Nephi's source for the prophecies that he quotes in verses 10 through 17? Compare verse 22.
167. Does Nephi appear to have been a careful scribe (vs. 10-17)? Explain.
168. What impressive phenomena were witnessed by the House of Israel immediately after the crucifixion of Christ (vs. 10-11)?
169. What, basically, is the reason that the Jews have been subjected to so much sorrow and suffering since New Testament times (vs. 13-14)?
170. When will the afflictions of the Jewish people come to an end (v. 15)?
171. What are some of the great things in store for the Jews and the rest of the House of Israel when they repent and accept Jesus Christ (vs. 15-17)?

187. What is going to be the fate of churches whose primary aim is to gain popularity, influence, and wealth (v. 23)?
188. In your opinion, what does it mean that "the righteous must be led up as calves of the stall" (v. 24)?
189. John the Revelator said he saw an angel with "a great chain in his hand" come down from heaven and bind the Devil for a thousand years (Revelation 20:1-2). What appears to be the real "chain"—in contrast with the apparently figurative one spoken of by John—that will bind Satan during the Millennium (v. 26)?

THE SECOND BOOK OF NEPHI

Chapter 1

190. After the arrival of Lehi's colony in the New World the Lord gave Lehi proof in vision that Jerusalem had been destroyed (v. 4). How did this particular vision fulfill a promise that the Lord earlier had made to Nephi (1 Nephi 17:14)?
191. Apart from the material blessings that mark America "a land which is choice above all other lands" (v. 5), what are some of the spiritual blessings that have been (and will yet be) poured out upon this land? In formulating your answer consider Doctrine and Covenants 107:53-56 and Section 116; 3 Nephi chapter 11 ff.; Ether 13:4-8 ff.; Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2.
192. In your opinion, is it primarily the spiritual blessings or primarily the material blessings that denote America "a land which is choice above all other lands" (v. 5)?
193. In contrast with the popular conception that America's liberty can be safeguarded by a healthy economy and strong military establishment, what does Lehi explain is the only thing that can safeguard it (v. 7)?
194. If the people of America are ever brought into captivity what will be the reason (v. 7)?
195. Did the Nephites, and the Jaredites before them, fulfill the condition that is necessary for the preservation of liberty? Explain. Compare this with Ether 2:11-12 and Moroni 9:20.
196. Whether or not everybody in America fulfills the condition upon which liberty is based what is the reassuring promise that the Lord, nevertheless, makes to those who do fulfill it? (Note the latter part of verse 7.) Compare Doctrine and Covenants 45:66-71.

197. Why did the Lord keep "this land" so long hidden from the knowledge of Europe and the Orient (v. 8)?
198. If Lehi's posterity had kept the Lord's commandments from Lehi's time to the present how would the history of America (especially the part pertaining to the European conquest of America) have been vastly different (v. 9)?
199. What punishment did Lehi say would befall his descendants if they failed to keep God's commandments (vs. 11-12)?
200. As Lehi, a few days before his death (v. 14), beheld through the eyes of prophecy the tribulations that his posterity would undergo he was moved to make a final impassioned appeal to his wayward sons to keep faith with God (vs. 13-29). In your opinion, is it likely that an uninspired man could have originated the spontaneous burst of poetic eloquence that poured from the lips of Lehi on this dramatic occasion? Explain.
201. In what verse does Lehi restate the great secret of success and failure for men and nations? Compare this with Proverbs 14:34 and 1 Nephi 2:20-21.
202. How does Lehi's plea for unity in verse 21 compare with Jesus' great prayer in behalf of his disciples at the Last Supper? Consult John 17:11, 20-23.
203. How does Lehi's plea for unity in verse 21 compare with the counsel of the Lord to us today? In formulating your answer consult Doctrine and Covenants 38:27.
204. What, probably, was the "sore curse" that Lehi was alluding to in verse 22? Compare this with 1 Nephi 2:21-23 and 2 Nephi 5:20-24.
205. What high praise did Lehi heap upon Nephi (vs. 24-27)?
206. What old complaint of Laman's and Lemuel's did Lehi foresee would still be a source of trouble for Nephi (v. 25)? Compare 1 Nephi 3:29; 16:38; 18:10.
207. What clue does Lehi provide to the fact that Zoram held no grudge against Nephi for forcing him to leave Jerusalem (v. 30)?
208. What promise did Zoram receive in his patriarchal blessing from Lehi (vs. 31-32)?

Chapter 2

In Lehi's inspired and profound discourse that comprises chapter 2 we find the theological and philosophical core of the Book of Mormon. Within the limits of this single treatise the prophet explains (a) the hopelessness of man's plight without

a redeemer, v. 5 (b) man's dependence upon Christ for his salvation, vs. 6-9 (c) the legal demands of divine justice, v. 10 (d) the reason for God's allowing evil in the world, vs. 10-13 (e) the story of the fall of Adam and its purpose in opening the doorway to man's mortality in the midst of good and evil, vs. 14-25 (f) man's freedom to attain Eternal Life through the redemption of Christ, vs. 26-29. *Study the chapter carefully, and then answer the following:*

209. What remarkable vision had Jacob received in his youth (vs. 3-4)? Compare this with 2 Nephi 11:3 and Jacob 7:12.
210. In consequence of the fall of Adam, the human family came under the penalty of "the temporal law" and the "spiritual law" (v. 5). In your own words, what was this two-fold penalty? Compare Alma 42:6-9.
211. For whom did Jesus' sacrifice for sin answer the "ends" or requirements of divine law (v. 7)? Compare this with Alma 9:27.
212. Through whose merits will some members of the human family eventually gain life in the presence of God (v. 8)?
213. Does divine law provide that everyone finally shall gain happiness (v. 10)? Explain
214. What desirable results (can) come from the contest between good and evil, the "opposition" of which Lehi speaks (v. 11)?
215. What undesirable results (can) come from the contest between good and evil (v. 11)?
216. In your opinion, what determines whether one derives the desirable or undesirable results from the contest between good and evil?
217. In the latter half of verse 11 Lehi seems to be saying that the universal law of opposites that prevails in the moral realm has its counterpart in the biological or physical realm also. In what sense does the physical body have its opposite, without which "it must needs remain as dead"? Compare Doctrine and Covenants 88:15.
218. What actually is the root of the contest between good and evil, the root without which the opposites of sin and righteousness could neither be defined nor distinguished in the first place (v. 13)?
219. Why is an argument that "there is no law" also an argument that "there is no sin" (v. 13)? In formulating your answer consult 1 John 3:4 in the Bible.
220. In man's life and death struggle between good and evil the process of winning is called righteousness, and the process of losing is

- called sin or wickedness. What is the prize for winning and the penalty for losing (v. 13)?
221. In your opinion, why would it have been disastrous to God's *great plan of happiness* for the human family if Satan had been permitted to control the contest as he proposed "that one soul shall not be lost" (Pearl of Great Price, Moses 4:1 ff)?
222. Verse 16 seems to imply that in the Garden of Eden state, at first, Adam and Eve did not have true moral free agency because, although they had God's influence, they had no contrary influence that required them to make a choice. At what point in the Garden of Eden narrative, then, did they gain their free agency or freedom to choose between good and evil? Compare Doctrine and Covenants 29:39.
223. John the Revelator saw that after the war in heaven Satan was "cast out into the earth" (Revelation 12:9). In view of Lehi's discourse on the necessity of man's having opposition to overcome in order to gain happiness why can we be confident that it was no coincidence that the Lord consigned Satan to our earth rather than to some empty planet in outer space?
224. Why did God give the commandment that all men must repent (v. 21)?
225. What does Lehi say that indicates that the transgression of divine law by the human inhabitants of our planet brought a blight not only upon Adam and Eve but, somehow, also upon all of the plant and animal life of our planet (v. 22)?
226. What does Lehi say that indicates the spirit children of God wouldn't have gained mortality (and thus would have been deprived of the opportunity of gaining happiness through the process of overcoming opposition in a physical world) if Adam and Eve had not partaken of the fruit that caused their bodies to become mortal (vs. 22-23)?
227. Contrary to the popular supposition that the Garden of Eden state was an ideal existence for Adam and Eve, what does Lehi say that indicates it was a morally static vegetative life (v. 23)?
228. Why was it impossible for Adam and Eve, at first to know true happiness or true misery in the Garden of Eden state? Compare vs. 11 and 15.
229. In the grand summary of Lehi's discourse on opposition and the fall of Adam that constitutes verse 25, what does Lehi indicate was (a) the purpose of Adam's fall and (b) the

purpose of the mortal experience (with its life and death struggle between good and evil) that Adam's fall opened to the human family?

230. Could man attain a fullness of joy without the resurrection that Christ brought? Explain. Consult Doctrine and Covenants 93:33-34 for your answer.
231. The reader will recall that Lehi's discourse in verses 11-25 grew out of the prophet's remarks on the atonement of Christ and man's dependence upon Him for his salvation (vs. 3-10). At this point (vs. 26-27) the prophet now returns to his original discussion and reminds us that—despite the marvelous moral and physical laboratory, called mortality, that the Lord has provided man for his attainment of joy—man still would not be free to choose Eternal Life (which is the life of eternal joy, D. & C. 88:4; Mormon 7:7) without the redemption of Christ. What did Jesus do that enables us to choose Eternal Life? Compare vs. 6-8.
232. When the scriptures speak of man's "free agency" or freedom to choose, what do they mean, *finally*, that we are free to choose (v. 27)?
233. What clue does Lehi give to the fact that his discourse is based on the writings of some prophet earlier than himself (v. 30)?

Chapter 3

234. Joseph, who was sold into Egypt, was promised that his "branches" would "run over the wall" (Genesis 49:22). What does Lehi say that indicates the migration of his colony to the New World fitted this prophecy (vs. 4-5)?
235. How is the Messiah being manifested to Lehi's descendants—Joseph's branch in the New World—in these latter-days (v. 5)?
236. In a heretofore unpublished prophecy, uttered by Joseph who was sold into Egypt, we learn that Joseph spoke of a "choice seer" who would be raised up from among his descendants (vs. 6-7 ff.) What clues do we find to the fact that this prophesied seer was Joseph Smith (vs. 15, 18, 24)?
237. The ministry of what other prophet did Joseph of old foretell (vs. 9-10)?
238. What prophecy was made by the Biblical prophet, Ezekiel, who lived at the same time Lehi did, that harmonizes with Lehi's prophecy in verse 12? Consult Ezekiel 37:15-20 for your answer.

239. What is the purpose of the union of the writings of Judah's descendants (the Bible) and the writings of Joseph's descendants (the Book of Mormon) in these latter days (v. 12)?
240. Why must verses 13-15 have been a great source of consolation and strength to Joseph Smith?
241. Joseph Smith, whose time was largely employed in writing, was to be assisted by a "spokesman," who would help expound his prophetic writings to the world (v. 18). Who was this "spokesman"? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 100:9-11 for your answer.
242. How does the work of Joseph Smith serve to bring about "much restoration unto the house of Israel, and unto the seed of thy brethren" (v. 24)? Compare this with 1 Nephi 13:34-36 and Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2:34.
243. What four Josephs does this chapter deal with or hint at? Consult vs. 1-3, 4-7, 15.
244. Would you say that Lehi's son, Joseph, had received a good name? Why?

Chapter 4

245. What does Nephi say that gives us reason for supposing that Joseph of old was a far greater prophet than the Bible (which mentions few of his prophecies) would seem to indicate (v. 2)?
246. On what set of plates could Lehi and Nephi read a copy of the prophetic writings of Joseph of old (v. 2)?
247. In your opinion, is Lehi's testimony concerning the rearing of children in verse 5 applicable today? Explain.
248. Lehi's observation on the rearing of children in verse 5 seems to be derived from his study of the Book of Proverbs on the Brass Plates of Laban. What does the original statement in Proverbs 22:6 say?
249. Lehi told Laman's children that if they were cursed it would be "answered upon the heads" of their parents (v. 6). According to Doctrine and Covenants 68:25-28, who is guilty in the eyes of God if children of Latter-day Saint parents have not been taught something of the first principles of the gospel by the time they are eight years old?
250. Did Lehi give every member of his colony a blessing (vs. 10-12)? Review chapters 1 through 4:12 for your answer.
251. Upon what set of plates did Nephi write more historical details than he did upon the *Small Plates of Nephi* that we are reading (v. 14)? Compare this with 1 Nephi 9:1-4.

252. In the beautiful "Psalm of Nephi," that comprises verses 16-35, Nephi recounts some of the unusual spiritual experiences of his prophetic career. What may have been the occasion, referred to in verse 21, of Nephi's being filled with the love of God "unto the consuming of my flesh"? Consult 1 Nephi 17:48 for your answer.
253. What may have been the occasion, referred to in verse 22, of the Lord's causing Nephi's enemies to quake before him? Consult 1 Nephi 17:53-54 for your answer.
254. Upon what single occasion was Nephi given knowledge in vision (as mentioned in verse 23), administered to by an angel (as mentioned in verse 24), and carried away upon a high mountain (as mentioned in verse 25)? Consult 1 Nephi chapter 11 ff. for your answer.
255. In your opinion or experience, what is "mighty prayer"?
256. Nephi prayed, "Wilt thou make me that I may shake at the appearance of sin" (v. 31)? In your opinion, should Latter-day Saints seek to develop the sensitivity to sin that Nephi's statement suggests, or should they seek to develop a broad-minded and tolerant attitude toward sin, to become shock proof as it were?
257. In your opinion, do we put our trust in "the arm of flesh" (v. 34) when we trust military power alone to guarantee peace?
258. The first principle of the gospel is not faith in "the arm of flesh" (v. 34) but faith in what? See *Articles of Faith*.

Chapter 5

259. What complaint of Laman's and Lemuel's finally led to their seeking Nephi's life (vs. 1-3)?
260. Who followed Nephi into the wilderness (v. 6)?
261. What did Nephi's followers call the place where they settled (v. 8)?
262. The judgments, statutes, and commandments of what legal code did Nephi and his people live by (v. 10)?
263. What precious items did Nephi take with him when the colony broke up (vs. 12-14)?
264. What sword did Nephi use as the pattern for the swords he made (v. 14)?
265. After what temple was the Nephite temple patterned (v. 16)?
266. Whom did Nephi's followers choose for their king (v. 18)?

Chapter 9

280. What would be the fate of the human family "if the flesh should rise no more" (v. 8)?
281. In describing events concerning the final day of judgment John the Revelator said, ". . . and *death* and *hell* delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works" (Revelation 20:13). In the light of Jacob's explanation, what is *death*, and what is *hell* (vs. 10-12)?
282. Exactly what will death deliver up, and what will hell deliver up (vs. 10-12)?
283. What will death and paradise deliver up (v. 13)?
284. What is the fate of those who are "filthy still," the so-called sons of perdition (v. 16)? Compare Doctrine and Covenants 76:31-36, 88:32-35, 102.
285. Does God know everything (v. 20)? Compare Doctrine and Covenants 93:26-28.
286. How much did Jesus suffer (v. 21)? Compare Doctrine and Covenants 19:16-18 ff.
287. What are the basic requirements for entrance into the Kingdom of God (vs. 23-24)? Compare this with John 3:1-5.
288. Is divine punishment and condemnation in store for people who have received no law (v. 25)? Explain.
289. To the members of what church may verse 27 be said to have a special application in our age?
290. What is the pitfall, according to the Prophet Jacob, that so often ensnares learned men (v. 28)?
291. Upon what condition is education a good thing (v. 29)?
292. What is wrong with the popular tradition that Saint Peter is the gate keeper at the entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven (v. 41)?
293. Why will the well-educated (who are proud because of their education) and the wealthy (who are proud because of their wealth) find it hard to get into the Kingdom of Heaven (v. 42)?
294. Will the wicked go on rationalizing and making excuses for their sins in the day of judgment (v. 46)?
295. What further praying should we do more than praying each night before going to bed (v. 52)? Compare this with Alma 34:18-27.

Chapter 10

296. How much time elapsed between the sermon given by Jacob in chapter 9 and his sermon in chapter 10? (Note the last verse of chapter 9.)

297. Why did the Savior come down among "the more wicked part of the world" (v. 3)?
298. What does Jacob prophesy that should give the inhabitants of America tremendous hope for the preservation of liberty in this land (vs. 10-12)?
299. Jacob prophesied that ". . . he that fighteth against Zion shall perish, said God" (v. 13). What is the basic meaning of the word *Zion*? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 97:21 ff. for your answer.
300. What clue does Jacob give that shows that the word *Zion* does not simply apply to the Jewish people (v. 16)?
301. What is the process by which Gentiles become "numbered among the house of Israel" (v. 18)? Compare 1 Nephi 15:16, and note the questions based thereon. See also Galatians 3:27-29.
302. To what people has the Lord promised the land of America (v. 19)?
303. What is an oddity about the last part of verse 20 that argues for an ancient rather than modern authorship of 2 Nephi?

Chapter 11

304. Why did Nephi quote extensively both from Isaiah and from his brother Jacob (v. 3)?
305. The law of Moses "and all things which have been given by God from the beginning of the world" pointed to whom (v. 4)?
306. What, above everything else, was Nephi trying to prove (v. 6)?

Chapters 12-24

(No questions)

Chapter 25

307. Who does Nephi say will find the words of Isaiah easy to understand (v. 4)?
308. Nephi affirms that destruction never has been visited upon the Jews except for what (v. 9)?
309. What is the purpose of the Lord's bringing the Book of Mormon to the attention of the Jews in these latter days (v. 18)?
310. Can salvation come through Confucius, Mohammed, or Buddha (v. 20)? Explain.
311. By what standard will people who possess the Book of Mormon be judged (v. 22)? Compare 2 Nephi 29:11.
312. What important statement does Nephi make about the role of grace and the role of works in the plan of salvation (v. 23)?

313. Nephi and his people believed in Christ, but what law did they keep (v. 24)?
314. Why did Nephi and his people speak to their children concerning the law (v. 27)?
315. Although we must bow down and worship Christ (and the Father) with all our "might, mind, and strength" (v. 29), do we formally address our prayers to Christ or His Father? Consult Ephesians 3:14 for your answer. Compare this with 3 Nephi 18:21.

Chapter 26

316. With what appearance of Christ do verses 1-9 deal? Compare 3 Nephi, chapters 8-11 ff.
317. In the light of verses 14-18 how do you interpret Isaiah 29:1-6?
318. What do we learn from the latter part of verse 22 about the way the devil works to enslave men and women.
319. Nephi testifies that the Lord ". . . doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world" (v. 24). In this connection, what did the Lord reveal to Moses concerning His work? Consult Pearl of Great Price, Moses 1:39 for your answer.
320. Does the Lord deny any member of the human family the right to become a candidate for salvation (vs. 25-28)? Explain.
321. What does Nephi mean by "priestcrafts" (v. 29)?
322. What is "charity"? Compare Ether 12:34 and Moroni 7:47.
323. Do members of the Church have an obligation to see that missionaries and other Church workers have the necessities of life (v. 30)?
324. What must the Church worker not make an object of his labors (v. 31)?

Chapter 27

325. With what chapter of the Bible does this chapter run in harmony? Compare Isaiah 29.
326. What one thing do we know the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon contains (v. 7)? Compare this with Ether 4:1-7.
327. Who were the three witnesses who beheld the Book of Mormon plates "by the power of God" (v. 12)? See *The Testimony of Three Witnesses* in the forepart of the book.
328. Who were the "few" additional witnesses, besides the three, who saw the plates "according to the will of God" (v. 13)? See *The Testimony of Eight Witnesses* in the forepart of the book.
329. What is the incident to which verses 15-18 allude? Consult Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2:63-65 for your answer.

- 330. The incident predicted in verses 15-18 may be interpreted as a symbolical rejection of the Lord's work by what class of people (v. 20)?
- 331. In what way do we limit God's work (v. 23)?
- 332. What do Latter-day Saints believe is the "marvelous work and a wonder" spoken of in verse 26 of this chapter and also in verse 14 of the twenty-ninth chapter of Isaiah?
- 333. Verse 28 of this chapter and verse 17 of the twenty-ninth chapter of Isaiah indicate that not long after the coming forth of the "marvelous work and a wonder" in the last days that Lebanon should become fruitful. Is the country called Lebanon, which is immediately north of Israel in the Middle East, today becoming fruitful? Explain.
- 334. What book is spoken of in verse 29 of this chapter and verse 18 of the twenty-ninth chapter of Isaiah?

Chapter 28

- 335. In your opinion, do verses 3-9 provide an accurate description of some of the churches and church leaders of our day? Explain.
- 336. Has the "blood of the saints" (v. 10) been spilled in the cause of truth today? Explain.
- 337. How does Nephi's prediction that "they have all gone out of the way" (v. 11) correspond with the Lord's statement to Joseph Smith in the first vision? Compare this with Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2:19.
- 338. What indication is provided in this chapter that destruction need not actually befall our generation if people will repent (v. 17)?
- 339. What does Nephi prophesy about our day that should cause members of the Church to be on their guard against being too complacent and self-satisfied. (vs. 21-27)?
- 340. What statement seems to coincide with Emerson's assertion that "Truth comes only to the prepared mind" (v. 30)?

Chapter 29

- 341. What did the Prophet Nephi foresee would be the objection that many Bible believers would raise against the Book of Mormon (v. 3)?
- 342. What scriptural work does Nephi indicate will yet come forth (v. 13)?

Chapter 30

- 343. Whereas all people who are of the House of Israel may be said to be potentially the cove-

nant people of the Lord, who are actually covenant people (v. 2)? Compare Galatians 3:27-29.

344. Did Nephi consider himself and his people Jews (v. 4)? Compare Doctrine and Covenants 19:27.
345. What is the promise made to the American Indian remnant that is to be fulfilled within a few generations after they accept the Book of Mormon and the restored gospel (vs. 5-6)?
346. Will the Millenium come about simply through the process of the world's getting better and better or through sudden destruction of the wicked (vs. 9-10)? Compare this with 2 Peter 3:10 and Doctrine and Covenants 101:23-24.
347. Verses 11-15 are a quoted portion of the writings of Isaiah as drawn from the *Brass Plates of Laban*. (Compare Isaiah 11:4-9.) What will life on our planet be like during the Millennium? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 101:23-24.

Chapter 31

348. Jesus insisted on John's baptizing him "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15). Wherein did Jesus fulfill all righteousness in being baptized (vs. 5-7)?
349. What lessons for our benefit can we derive from the baptism of Jesus (vs. 9-10)?
350. What conditions must be complied with before one can receive the Holy Ghost (v. 13)?
351. What does the Lord say of those who deny Him after they have received the Holy Ghost (v. 14). Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 76:31-36.
352. Did Nephi actually teach that the people of his day and age—nearly six centuries before Christ—must be baptized (v. 17)? Explain.
353. Who do Latter-day Saints believe was the first person ever baptized? Consult Pearl of Great Price, Moses 6:64-68 for your answer.
354. Judging by verses 13-17 was the plan of salvation any different for the people who lived before Christ's time than it was for the people who lived after Christ's time? Explain.
355. Why may verses 17-21 be regarded as a great sermon for complacent Church members?

Chapter 32

356. In harmony with what power do angels speak (v. 3)?
357. What does the Holy Spirit—in contrast with the evil spirit—teach one to do (v. 8)?
358. Why should one pray to the Lord, for example, before paying his tithing (v. 9)?

373. Do you get the impression from chapter 1 that Jacob began engraving his little book immediately after Nephi turned the *Small Plates of Nephi* over to him or a number of years afterwards?

Chapter 2

374. What did Jacob advise his people to do before seeking riches (vs. 18-19)?
375. Jacob taught that after one has obtained "a hope in Christ" he can gain wealth if he seeks it; but what does he say will then be his motive for seeking it (v. 19)?
376. Of the numerous notable polygamists of Hebrew history (including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses), what two (alone) does Jacob condemn (vs. 23-24)?
377. According to the Bible what sins did David and Solomon commit in connection with their practice of polygamy that made God displeased with them? For your answer consult 2 Samuel 12:8-11, 1 Kings 15:5, and 1 Kings 11:1-8.
378. What does Jacob say that indicates God might command polygamy (in which case its practice would be righteous), but that unless it is divinely commanded people shall not practice it (v. 30)?

Chapter 3

379. What fate did Jacob prophesy would befall the Nephite nation if they did not repent (vs. 3-4)?
380. In the day of disaster, predicted by Jacob, what was to be the fate of the righteous (v. 4)? Compare Omni, vs. 12-13.
381. In what respect were the Lamanites more righteous than the Nephites (vs. 5-7)?
382. Is the term, "plates of Jacob," the name of a separate set of plates from the *Small Plates of Nephi* or merely Jacob's section of the *Small Plates of Nephi* (v. 14)? Compare this with Jacob 1:1-4.

Chapter 4

383. Why did the Nephite prophets keep some of their records on metal sheets (vs. 1-2)?
384. What was the intent that Jacob (and Nephi) had in writing "these things" (v. 4)?
385. Who, besides Jacob and Nephi, had a hope in Christ before the birth of Christ (v. 4)? Compare Luke 24:27.
386. In whose name did the ancient prophets worship the Father (v. 5)?
387. Why did the Nephites keep the law of Moses (v. 5)? Compare 2 Nephi 25:24-25.

388. Abraham's offering of his son, Isaac, was a similitude of what other sacrifice of a father's son (v. 5)?
389. In the Doctrine and Covenants (50:29) the promise is made, "And if ye are purified and cleansed from all sin, ye shall ask whatsoever you will in the name of Jesus and it shall be done." How did the Nephite prophets measure up in respect to this promise (v. 6)? Compare this with 1 Nephi 17:50 and Matthew 17:19-20.
390. What is the only way, finally, that one can know the ways of God (v. 8)?
391. What is Jacob's argument for a belief in the principle of continuous revelation (v. 9)?
392. What is the "stone" that Jacob is talking about in verses 15-16? Compare this with Acts 4:10-12.

Chapter 5

393. What is the point of Zenos' allegory of the tame and wild olive tree? Compare 1 Nephi 10:12-14; 15:12-16; Romans 11:13, 17, 24.

Chapter 6

394. What day or period of history is "the day that he shall set his hand again the second time to recover his people" (v. 2)?
395. What does Jacob say will happen to the world soon after the vineyard is pruned for the last time (v. 3)?

Chapter 7

396. Why was it quite out of the question for anybody to shake Jacob from the faith (v. 5)?
397. Upon what theme have all the prophets of God prophesied from the beginning (v. 11)?
398. What did the Sherem episode cause the Nephite people to do (v. 23)?
399. With what success did the Nephites do missionary work among the Lamanites during this period (v. 24)?

THE BOOK OF ENOS

Chapter 1

400. How long did Enos continue in "mighty prayer" before he received a remission of his sins (vs. 4-5)?
401. Was Enos' guilt for past misdeeds swept away by the formation of a new set of habits alone, or was there something miraculous involved (vs. 6-8)? Explain.

402. It is apparent from Enos' three prayers that when he made contact with God his love for his fellowmen increased immeasurably. For whom did Enos pray the first time (v. 4), the second time (v. 9), the third time (v. 11)?
403. In what way is our generation indebted to Enos and other ancient Nephite prophets for their faith and prayers (vs. 12-19)? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 3:19 and 10:46-53 for your answer.
404. Why did the prophets of Enos' time use fear as a motivation to righteousness in their preaching and prophesying (v. 23)?
405. If the Prophet Jacob were born, say, about four years after Lehi left Jerusalem how much of Nephite history was spanned by his life and the life of his son, Enos (v. 25)?

THE BOOK OF JAROM

406. What relation was Jarom to Enos (v. 1)?
407. What did Jarom consider his primary reason for writing (v. 1)?
408. For whose benefit did Jarom say he was writing (v. 2)?
409. Who were the more numerous during this period, Nephites or Lamanites (v. 6)?
410. What ancient promise to Nephi was again verified in Jarom's generation (v. 9)? Compare 1 Nephi 2:20 and 2 Nephi 1:20.
411. When—in reference to the Christian calendar—did Jarom close his little entry (v. 13)?
412. Inasmuch as Jarom was not lacking for important things to write about (v. 2), why did he write so little (v. 14)? Compare Omni, verse 30.
413. In terms of the present printed edition of the Book of Mormon, Nephi wrote the first 107 pages of the Small Plates of Nephi; Jacob wrote a little over 17½ pages; Enos wrote a little more than two pages; Jarom wrote approximately one and a half pages; and five writers crammed their writings into the last three pages of the metal book. (Compare Omni, verse 30.) In your opinion, does this progressive diminishing of space utilized by succeeding writers on the *Small Plates of Nephi* constitute an argument favoring the claim: (a) that Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon himself or (b) that the Book of Mormon is the product of ancient writers? Why?

427. How did Mosiah learn who the ancestors of Zarahemla were (v. 18)?
428. By what means did Mosiah translate the inscriptions on the stone that Zarahemla showed him (v. 20)? Compare this with Mosiah 8:13-18.
429. What clue did the Nephites gain from the people of Zarahemla to the fact that a yet earlier civilization had existed in America than either the Nephite or Mulekite civilization (vs. 20-22)?
430. How long did Coriantumr live among the Mulekites (v. 21)?
431. In a later period a record of the fallen (Jaredite) civilization was discovered by the Nephites (Mosiah 8:7-9); and, later still, Moroni wrote a synopsis of it on the *Plates of Mormon*. What are a few pertinent facts about the identity and tragic career of Coriantumr that we glean from Moroni's synopsis (Ether, chapters 12-15)?
432. What disposition of the *Small Plates of Nephi* did Amaleki say he was going to make (v. 25)?
433. Why didn't Amaleki turn the *Small Plates of Nephi* over to a son or grandson (v. 25)?
434. What kind of a "sacrificial" offering does Amaleki urge all people to make to Christ, the Holy One of Israel (v. 26)?
435. In your opinion, what does it mean to "continue in fasting and praying, and endure to the end" (v. 26)?
436. Who was the scout or spy of the first party of dissatisfied Nephites that decided to move back to the Land of Nephi, and who was the leader of the second group (vs. 27-29)? Consult Mosiah 9:1-3 ff. for your answer.
437. What is one possible reason why some of the Nephites were dissatisfied with life in Zarahemla (vs. 27-29)? Consult Alma 46:40 for your answer.
438. With what personal note does Amaleki bring the *Small Plates of Nephi* to a close (v. 30)?

THE WORDS OF MORMON

Sometime before the Hill Cumorah massacre of 385 A.D. the Prophet Mormon undertook the monumental task of making a one volume summary of the *Large Plates of Nephi*, which set of plates served as the principal record of the Nephite nation for nearly a thousand years. Mormon engraved his summary of this great history on a separate set of plates that he prepared with his own hands (3 Nephi 5:11), which we call the *Plates of Mormon*. It was while working on his summary that he rediscovered, among the national archives of his people, the *Small*

**Mormon's Abridgment of
THE BOOK OF MOSIAH**

As we enter the Book of Mosiah we move into the second of seven book digests or summaries that Mormon wrote on the *Plates of Mormon*, the source of which was the *Large Plates of Nephi* (3 Nephi 5:10-12). The reason we refer to the Book of Mosiah as the second book digest and not the first is that the Prophet Joseph Smith indicated, in a special preface to the first edition of the Book of Mormon, that the first book he translated was Mormon's abridgment of the Book of Lehi. Martin Harris, the Prophet's secretary, lost the 116 page translation of this Book of Lehi (according to the foreknowledge of God), which covered Nephite history down to the reign of King Benjamin (Doctrine and Covenants 10:40-41). It was replaced by the *Small Plates of Nephi* that we have just completed.

The reader should keep in mind that the narrator of the ensuing synopsis of the Book of Mosiah is not Mosiah but Mormon. Mormon re-tells the story as he read in in the original Book of Mosiah on the *Large Plates of Nephi*.

Chapter 1

445. In what way was the Mosiah (v. 2) of the Book of Mosiah related to the Mosiah of the Book of Omni? Compare Omni, verse 23.
446. In what language characters were the ancient Brass Plates of Laban written (v. 4)?
447. What did the Prophet King Benjamin teach his sons regarding the value of the scriptures that had come down from their forefathers (v. 5)?
448. Besides giving Mosiah II "charge concerning all the affairs of the kingdom," what tangible sacred items did King Benjamin pass on to him (vs. 15-16)?
449. Soon after their arrival in the New World the Nephites built a temple in the Land of Nephi (2 Nephi 5:8, 16). Where is the temple that is now mentioned (v. 18)? Note allusion to a third temple in 3 Nephi 11:1.

Chapter 2

450. What indication do we have that the Nephites still lived the Mosaic law of sacrifice (vs. 3-4)?
451. What clue do we have to the fact that the Nephites, like their Hebrew ancestors, were a family centered society (v. 5)?
452. Mormon copied King Benjamin's address from the original Book of Mosiah that Benjamin's son, Mosiah II, wrote on the *Large Plates of Nephi*; but what possibly could have been the source of Mosiah's copy of the address (v. 8)?

453. Why might the Book of Mormon have been classed as "abolitionist" or anti-slavery literature in the United States in 1830 (if someone had wished to strain a little to make an objection to it on that basis) (v. 13)?
454. What had the Prophet King Benjamin done in order that his people might not be "laden with taxes" (v. 14)?
455. What great lesson in practical everyday religion does King Benjamin provide for us in verse 17?
456. In what way are we dependent upon God from day to day and from moment to moment (v. 21)?
457. In return for all of the Lord's gifts to us, what alone does He require of us (v. 22)?
458. Do we have to wait until the final day of judgment for all of our rewards, or do we get some of them as we go along (v. 24)? Explain.
459. Judging by King Benjamin's example, what are some of the things a Latter-day Saint must do if he is to be found blameless before God in the day of judgment—and hence worthy of dwelling in His presence (v. 27)? Compare Jacob 1:19 and Doctrine & Covenants 4:2 and 88:81-82.
460. What clue does King Benjamin provide to the fact that the spirit world paradise—even though it is not the final heaven of the righteous—is, nevertheless, a heavenly state (v. 28)?
461. King Benjamin appears to have made no distinction between the obligation of the people to obey the commandments of his prophet son—who was to be their leader in both temporal and spiritual things—and their obligation to obey the commandments of God (v. 31). In our enlightened day and age does the Lord require that we obey the commandments of prophets, who, after all, are only human? In formulating your answer consult Doctrine and Covenants 1:14, 38.
462. What temporal blessing were the Nephites again promised if they would obey the commandments of God (v. 31)?
463. What is the fate of those, who, after knowing that the gospel is true, go contrary to it and so withdraw from the Spirit of the Lord (vs. 36-39)? Compare Doctrine and Covenants 76:31-36 ff.
464. Is the hell of the finally unredeemed merely a recognition of lost opportunities (vs. 38-39)? Explain.
465. Why may it be said that keeping the commandments of God is all gain and no loss (v. 41)?

Chapter 3

In chapter 3 King Benjamin announces sensational news. An angel from God has appeared to him to inform him and his people that Christ's earthly advent is "not far distant." Direct from the angel's lips he has learned of the Savior's forthcoming ministry and atonement and of the necessity of man's putting off the "natural man" and gaining sainthood through Christ. The words of the angel are quoted from verses 3 through 27 to form almost the whole of one of the most remarkable and important chapters of the Book of Mormon.

466. What were the "glad tidings of great joy" that the angel unfolded to Benjamin (vs. 1-5 ff.)?
467. According to the angel, how intensely would Jesus suffer "for the wickedness and abominations of his people" (v. 7)? Compare Luke 22:44 and Doctrine and Covenants 19:15-19.
468. What atones for those who die, "not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned" (v. 11)?
469. What did the angel say that indicates other people than the Jews and the Nephites were informed of the coming of Christ and of His atonement (v. 13)? Compare this with Acts 3:18.
470. The angel said "the law of Moses availeth nothing except it were through. . ." what (v. 15)?
471. What did the heavenly messenger say is the fate of little children who die before they reach the age of accountability (v. 16)? Compare this with Moroni 8:10-20 ff.
472. Can salvation come through Confucius, Mohammed, Zoroaster, or Buddha (v. 17)? Explain.
473. In the words of the angel, "men drink damnation to their own souls" unless they do what (v. 18)?
474. Is man naturally good (v. 19)? Explain.
475. What clue does verse 22 provide us to the fact that Benjamin is still quoting the heavenly messenger?

Chapter 4

476. What was the reaction of the people to the marvelous message that the angel had brought to them through their prophet leader (vs. 1-2)?
477. Who receives salvation through the atonement (vs. 6-8)?
478. The principle is set forth in scripture that after one has gained a remission of his sins, "... unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins

return, saith the Lord your God" (Doctrine and Covenants 82:7). What did King Benjamin tell his people that they must do in order to *retain* or keep a remission of their sins (vs. 11-12)?

479. What won't true Latter-day Saint parents allow their children to do, and what will they teach them to do (vs. 14-15)?
480. What should be our attitude about giving food and clothing to the beggar (v. 16)?
481. In what sense are we all beggars (v. 19 ff.)?
482. Who is the owner of our homes and automobiles, our farms and factories (v. 22)?
483. For what important personal reason should people, who have received a remission of their sins through baptism, impart of their substance to the poor and visit the sick, "administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally" (v. 26)?
484. In verse 27 King Benjamin counsels his people, finally, to use common sense in their charitable endeavors. One should not try to "run faster than he has strength," he says, although everyone should be sufficiently "diligent, that thereby he might win the prize" (of Eternal Life). In your opinion, are the majority of us guilty of over-doing ourselves in helping the poor and the sick and the needy, or are we guilty of not being diligent enough in such matters?
485. What counsel does Benjamin give on borrowing that is applicable equally to the borrowing of a dollar, a paint brush, a book, or a cup of sugar (v. 28)?
486. Why didn't the Prophet Benjamin see fit to give his people a comprehensive check list of all the ways in which, if they were not careful, they might commit sin (v. 29)?
487. Inasmuch as Benjamin's people were looking forward to the (first) coming of Christ in their period of history and we are looking forward to His (second) coming in ours, verse 30 applies with peculiar force to Latter-day Saints. What must we do to keep from falling into transgression as we prepare for the coming of the Lord (v. 30)?
488. There are those who say that the Book of Mormon is a "pious fraud" written by a nineteenth century farm lad named Joseph Smith, who was twenty-one when he received the plates and barely twenty-four when the volume was published. In your opinion, does the foregoing chapter sound like the counsel of a youth in his twenties or of an aged and wise prophet of God?

509. Since 1938 discoveries have been made of the remains of what one news report calls "a lost race of giants" in Sonora, Mexico; in Lower California (Mexican territory); and in New Mexico. What clue do we have that the Nephites also discovered the physical remains of large men who dwelt in ancient America (v. 10)?
510. Why is the Lord very careful as to whom he allows the use of the "interpreters" or Urim and Thummin (v. 13)?
511. What is a seer (vs. 16-17)? Compare this with Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2:35.

Chapter 9

512. With chapter 9 Mormon carries us suddenly back to the beginning of the southern colony's history. Chapters 9 and 10, in fact, are an inserted verbatim record of the writings of the colony's original leader, Zeniff. If the date of Zeniff's departure from Zarahemla were "about B.C. 200," as suggested by the (modern) footnote, then how many years had the southern colony been out of contact with the main Nephite body when Ammon's group arrived?
513. How many survivors returned to Zarahemla with the ill-fated party in which Zeniff served as a spy or scout (vs. 1-2). Consult Omni, verses 27-30 (at the end of the *Small Plates of Nephi*) for your answer.
514. As Zeniff recounts the brief history of his life, that comprises chapters 9 and 10, we detect a note of regret and self-deprecation in his remark, "And yet, I being *over-zealous* to inherit the land of our fathers. . . ." (v. 3). Explain how he must have gone contrary to the counsel of God in reestablishing a Nephite colony in the Land of Nephi (Omni, vs. 12-13).
515. Who probably had built the buildings and city walls that the Lamanites had let fall into decay (v. 8)? Compare this with Omni, vs. 12-13.

Chapter 10

516. What "secret weapon" did the Nephites have that the Lamanites were totally unacquainted with (vs. 10-11)? Compare this with Mosiah 9:17-18.
517. Verses 12-15 are particularly important to the student of the Book of Mormon, for they provide the key to the endless attempts of the Lamanites to subjugate their Nephite cousins. What were some of the distorted Lamanite traditions that served to keep alive their hatred of the Nephites from generation to generation?

518. Why was it that the Lamanites forever looked upon the Nephites as an illegal offshoot of their own people, who properly belonged under their rule (v. 15)? Compare this with 1 Nephi 16:38; 2 Nephi 5:3; Alma 54:17, 18, 24.
519. What priceless item did the Lamanites claim Nephi had stolen from their founding fathers (v. 16)?
520. At what stage of Zeniff's life do you suppose he wrote the memoirs that form chapters 9 and 10? (Note that the whole document is written in the past tense, up to and including verse 22.)

Chapter 11

521. How does Noah's taxation program compare with the modern U.S. income tax (v. 3)?
522. The unsuspecting members of the southern colony were probably quite unaware of the extent of Noah's betrayal of their trust. How might they even have been led to believe that they were following a religious-minded ruler (vs. 5, 10)?
523. In respect to his beautiful palace and temple and his wives and concubines, what Biblical character does Noah remind one of? Compare 1 Kings, chaps. 5-11.
524. What were the highlights of Abinadi's prophecy (vs. 20-25)?
525. What was Noah's reaction to Abinadi's message (vs. 27-28)?

Chapter 12

526. What did Aabinadi now prophesy about King Noah's life (v. 3)?
527. Abinadi's allusion to the devastation that would be wrought by the "east wind" (v. 6) serves to remind us that we are reading the work of a Hebrew people in the New World. Although the term probably only *symbolized* disaster among the Nephites, among their Palestinian ancestors the east wind brought, on occasion, crop destroying sandstorms. Judging by the geographical location of Palestine, why was it the east wind that brought destruction instead of the west wind?
528. What period of Nephite history is momentarily referred to in verse 8? Compare this with Mormon 8:1-6 ff.
529. Perhaps it was because Abinadi had been prophesying evil tidings of evil that one of the priests challenged him to explain the Prophet Isaiah's commendation of messengers "that bringeth good tidings of good" (v. 21). Whatever the motive of Abinadi's questioner, he

served to provide Abinadi with an ideal text for his message; and the question proved the turning point of the trial. How did Abinadi now promptly and neatly seize the initiative in the proceedings (vs. 25-28 ff.)?

530. By what means did Abinadi seek to emphasize the fact that Noah's priests, who posed as experts in the interpretation of the law of Moses, didn't know the ABC's of the law of Moses (vs. 34-36 and 13:13-24)?

Chapter 13

531. What Biblical prophet (other than Moses) appears to have experienced a manifestation of the Spirit of the Lord similar to that experienced by Abinadi (v. 5)? Consult Acts 6:9-15 for your answer.
532. In the Bible the Ten Commandments are set forth in the twentieth chapter of Exodus and repeated in the fifth chapter of Deuteronomy. Where are the Ten Commandments found in the Book of Mormon?
533. Why did the Lord give the Israelites a "law of performances and of ordinances" (vs. 29-31)?
534. What did many of the Children of Israel fail to comprehend relative to the limitations of the law of Moses (v. 32 ff.)?
535. What one important matter did Moses and all other prophets of God in all ages predict (vs. 33-35)?

Chapter 14

536. Some Biblical critics today are saying that the Old Testament contains no prophecies of Christ. Judging by Abinadi's use of Isaiah, what is one passage of the Bible (among many) that Latter-day Saints can confidently say foretells Christ's ministry and atonement? Compare this with Acts 8:26-35.

Chapter 15

537. Christ is "The Father, because He was conceived by the power of God. . . ." (v. 3). How many beings in the Godhead does this account for?
538. In a statement entitled, "The Father and the Son: a Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency and the Twelve," published in 1916, we read that Jesus is referred to as "Father," in the scriptures, in three distinct senses. These are (1) The "Father" as Creator, (2) The "Father" of Those Who Abide in His Gospel, and (3) The "Father" by Divine Investiture of Authority. (For the complete statement see

Articles of Faith, James E. Talmage [Twelfth Edition], Appendix 2, pp. 465-473.) In which of these three senses does Abinadi indirectly allude to Christ's fatherhood in verses 10-13?

539. Finally, in answer to the question put to him earlier by his priestly interrogator (Mosiah 12:21-24), Abinadi explains the identity of those who publish peace and bring good tidings of good, as prophesied by Isaiah. Who does he say they are (vs. 13-17)?
540. Who, above all others, is the bringer of "good tidings" (vs. 18-19)?
541. Who are they who come forth in the first resurrection (vs. 21-25)?

Chapter 16

542. Now that the atonement has been wrought, what is the fate of the man who "persists in his own carnal nature, and goes on in the ways of sin" (v. 5)?

Chapter 17

543. Immediately after the trial King Noah ordered Abinadi executed (v. 1) and then changed his mind and ordered his imprisonment while he conferred with his priests (vs. 5-6). What appears to have interrupted Noah's original determination to have Abinadi put to death at once (vs. 2-4)?
544. When and by whom was the address of Abinadi first recorded (v. 4)?
545. What was the official pretext that Noah gave for Abinadi's conviction and execution (vs. 7-8)?
546. What was Abinadi's final prophecy (vs. 15-19)?

Chapter 18

547. Each time we, as Latter-day Saints, partake of the sacrament of the Lord's supper we enter into a covenant: (a) to take upon ourselves Christ's name; (b) to always remember Christ, and (c) to always keep His commandments (Moroni 4:3). We speak of this as renewing our covenants, by which we mean the covenants that we entered into at the time of our baptism. What points of correspondence can you find between Alma's explanation of the meaning of baptism (vs. 8-10) and the above mentioned sacramental covenant? Compare this with Alma 7:15.
548. If we uphold the covenants that we renew when we partake of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, the Lord promises us that we shall always have His Spirit to be with us

(Moroni 4:3). Is it the same blessing or some other blessing that Alma implies comes in the wake of keeping the baptismal covenant (v. 10)?

549. Once while speaking of the Melchizedek priesthood among the Israelites *after the time of Moses*, Joseph Smith said, "All the prophets had the Melchizedek Priesthood and were ordained by God himself." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 181.) From whence does Alma say he got his priesthood authority (v. 13)?

550. Are we necessarily obliged to conclude that the Nephites lacked any semblance of a church before Alma's time (vs. 17-18)? In formulating your answer consult 3 Nephi 5:12; 2 Nephi 5:26; 2 Nephi 6:2; 2 Nephi 9:23-24; 2 Nephi 31:17 ff.

551. What very strict commandments did Alma give to those whom he ordained to the priesthood that restricted them from preaching anything to the people but the revelations of God (vs. 18-20)?

552. How did Alma's people become "the children of God" (vs. 16-21)? Compare this with Moses 6:64-68.

553. What were the priests to receive for their labor (v. 26)?

554. What was Alma's welfare and relief plan (vs. 27-28)?

Chapter 19

555. Why couldn't Noah possibly have been killed in a duel with Gideon (vs. 4-8)? Consult Mosiah 12:3, 10 and Mosiah 13:10 for your answer.

556. What disgraceful order did Noah issue when defeat appeared imminent (vs. 10-11)?

557. What were the ignominious terms of peace that the Lamanites imposed upon the conquered Nephites (v. 15)?

558. What interesting story did Gideon's men hear from the embarrassed and disgusted men who had followed Noah into the wilderness (vs. 19-23)?

Chapter 20

559. How did it happen that the Lamanites went to war against Limhi's people through a complete misunderstanding (vs. 1-7)?

560. What example is provided in this chapter of the tremendous respect that the Nephites attached to an oath (vs. 24-26)? Compare this with 1 Nephi 4:33-37.

Lined writing area for student answers.

longer be called by the names of their fathers" (v. 12)? Consult Mosiah 20:3 for assistance in formulating your answer.

577. Why were the people of Zarahemla (the Mulekites) counted as Nephites (v. 13)?
578. Is it your impression that Mosiah II was acting in his capacity as civil ruler or in his capacity as a prophet, seer, and revelator (Mosiah 8: 12-18) when he gave Alma "power to ordain priests and teachers over every church" (v. 19)? Compare this with Mosiah 26:8.
579. What clue do we find in verse 23 to the fact that the Book of Mormon is telling the story of only part of the original Nephite nation (v. 23)? Compare verses 1-4. Consult also Jacob 3:4 and Omni, vs. 12-13.

Chapter 26

580. In what state or condition were non-church members who, after having every opportunity to accept the gospel, "would not be baptized; neither would they join the church" (v. 4)? Compare this with Mosiah 16:5.
581. Alma was blessed because of his "faith in the words alone" of the Prophet Abinadi (v. 15), and his original converts were blessed because of "their exceeding faith in the words alone" of Alma (v. 16). In your opinion, why is it commendable to believe the truth of the gospel without being overwhelmed with evidence? Compare this with John 20:29 and 3 Nephi 12:1-2.
582. What remarkable promise did the Lord give to Alma I in his old age (v. 20)? Compare this with 2 Peter 1:10 and Doctrine and Covenants 88:4.
583. How should the Church deal with the repentant sinner (v. 29)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenant 42:25-26.
584. What does the Lord say of the person who "forgiveth not his neighbor's trespasses when he says that he repents" (v. 31)?
585. Will the Lord's true Church cause unrepentant sinners to undergo physical torture for their sins or force them to recant their unauthorized views on penalty of death (v. 32)? Explain. Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 134:10.
586. In your opinion, what does it mean to "pray without ceasing, and to give thanks in all things" (v. 39)?

Chapter 27

587. Verse 14 teaches another of the truly great lessons of the Book of Mormon. Inferentially,

it unfolds to our view the singular fact that just as Christ's perfection and faith enabled Him to become a Savior for all mankind, if we are faithful we may be the means of miraculously helping others get on the road that leads to salvation. Who, in a sense, was the savior of Alma II, or whose faith and prayers opened heaven's doorway to his conversion? Compare this with Enos, vs. 11-18 and Doctrine and Covenants 10:46-53.

588. In the light of verse 14, why should we pray for Church leaders, missionaries, the sick and afflicted. speakers in sacrament meeting, teachers, parents, children, and for one another generally? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 50:29.
589. What does it mean to be "born of God" (v. 25)? Compare this with Mosiah 3:19.
590. Without the spiritual rebirth, that everyone is entitled to experience through the Holy Ghost, what goal or destiny is denied him—even though (like Alma II, presumably) he may have been a member of the Church all of his life (v. 26)? Compare this with Alma 5:14, 26.
591. At the final day of judgment everyone, including those "who live without God in the world," shall confess that the Lord is God (v. 31)? Who does Alma mean by those "who live without God in the world?" Consult Alma 41:11 for your answer.

Chapter 28

592. What did the four sons of King Mosiah now feel was the most important thing that they could do in life (v. 3)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 18:15-16.
593. When the sons of Mosiah II continued to plead for permission to go on a mission, to whom did their father go for counsel (v. 6)?
594. What comforting assurance did Mosiah II gain regarding the success and physical safety that his sons would enjoy among the Lamanites (v. 7)?
595. When the four sons of King Mosiah informed their associates in Zarahemla that they were going on a mission to the Lamanites, what was the popular reaction to the news? Consult Alma 26:23-25 for your answer.
596. What was the name of "the plates of gold which had been found by the people of Limhi" (v. 11)? Consult Ether 1:2 for your answer. Compare this with Mosiah 8:7-9.
597. Who succeeded Mosiah in the custody of the sacred records and "the interpreters" or Urim and Thummim (v. 20)?

614. What indication does the narrator provide us to the fact that the name, "Nephite," had become almost synonymous with "Church member" (v. 11)?
615. By what means did Alma gain the victory over Amlici in personal combat (vs. 29-31)?

Chapter 3

616. Who, besides the blood descendants of Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael, were considered Lamanites (v. 10)? Compare this with verse 17.
617. How did the Amlicites unwittingly fulfill an ancient prophecy (vs. 13-18)?
618. Upon what basis will the Lord mete out rewards and punishments in the day of judgment (vs. 26-27)?

Chapter 4

619. Unlike the explanation that most Americans probably would give under similar circumstances, how did the Nephites account for the terrible calamity that had recently come upon them (v. 3)?
620. Was Nephiah formally approved by the people as the new chief judge or was he merely appointed by Alma II (v. 16)?
621. Why did Alma resign from the chief judgeship (v. 19)?

Chapter 5

622. What does Alma ask that serves to remind us that a person can be a member of the Church and yet never have been "born of God" (v. 14)? Compare this with Mosiah 27:25-26.
623. In view of verse 14, when the elders lay their hands upon the head of the individual who has just been baptized and confirm him a member of the Church, do they confer the Holy Ghost (which brings the birth of the Spirit), or do they confer the *right* to receive the Holy Ghost?
624. What does Alma say that tells us that without the atonement of Christ no amount of personal repentance or works of righteousness would be sufficient to save a man in the Kingdom of Heaven (v. 21)? Compare this with 2 Nephi 2:8 and Alma 21:9.
625. What does Alma ask that suggests that we can spiritually be "born of God" and afterwards slip away from the new spiritual life that we have entered (v. 26)?
626. In your judgment, if one has once been born of the Spirit and afterwards has drifted away from it, what may he do to be born again? In formulating your answer consult Mosiah 3:19, Mosiah 4:11-12, and Mosiah 5:5, 7.

627. What does Alma say that indicates there is a great deal more to gaining salvation than merely being baptized into the Church (vs. 27-31)?
628. To whom does the Lord extend the invitation to Eternal Life (vs. 33-34)?
629. What was "the holy order of God" to which Alma belonged (v. 44)? Compare this with Alma 13:6-7, 14.
630. Judging by Alma's experience, what must one do to obtain a strong testimony of the gospel (vs. 45-46)?
631. What doctrinal message was Alma called to preach to members of the Church and to everyone throughout the land (v. 49)? Compare this with verse 2.
632. Although Alma's discourse emphasizes the necessity of the spiritual rebirth, what does he say that shows he does not overlook the necessity of baptism (v. 62)?

Chapter 6

633. Who does Mormon mean by "the children of God" (v. 6)? Compare this with Mosiah 25:23-24.

Chapter 7

634. Does Alma say that the Savior, who was born in Bethlehem, would be born of Mary in the city of Jerusalem or in the land of Jerusalem (v. 10)?
635. What prize does Alma say is in store for the person who not only enters a covenant to obey God's commandments (and signifies it by baptism) but actually keeps the covenant thenceforth (vs. 15-16)?
636. What beautiful admonition does Alma impart to the Church members in Gideon that could almost be used as the definition of a true Latter-day Saint (vs. 23-24)?

Chapter 8

637. What clue do we glean from the latter part of verse 15 to the possibility that angels are assigned to watch over faithful servants of God? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 84:88.
638. What important information did the Lord impart to Alma regarding the nefarious plans of the people of Ammonihah (v. 17)?
639. What message had Amulek received in vision before Alma's arrival (v. 20)? Compare this with Alma 10:7-9.

Chapter 9

640. Why, according to Alma, would the Lord be more merciful to the Lamanites than to the Nephites (vs. 16, 23-24)?
641. Who, in brief, did Jesus come to redeem (v. 27)? Compare this with Alma 7:15-16.

Chapter 10

642. What interesting tidbit of information does Amulek provide concerning one of his forefathers (v. 2)?
643. Which branch of the House of Joseph did Lehi belong to, the Ephraimite branch or the Manassehite branch (v. 3)?
644. Amulek testified, ". . . I was called many times and I would not hear" (v. 6). In your opinion, how would Amulek probably compare with the average good member of the Church today?
645. What astonished the people about Amulek's testimony that, in principle, is both astonishing and bothersome to our generation about the coming forth of the Book of Mormon plates (v. 12)?
646. What force may we infer is saving America today from destruction (vs. 22-23)?
647. In view of verse 23, what wicked acts may we infer helped lay the groundwork for the American Civil War—the bloodiest war in American history? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 136:34-36 and 87:1-8.

Chapter 11

648. Under the legal code of Mosiah, what was the basis upon which judges were paid (v. 1)?
649. How did the corrupt judges of Ammonihah take advantage of the Nephite system of judicial compensation (v. 20)?
650. What indication does verse 22 provide that Amulek was determined to live in harmony with the Spirit of the Lord every single moment?
651. In what sense is there but one God (vs. 28-29)? In formulating your answer consider the latter part of verse 44 and John 17:11, 20-22.
652. Whose transgressions did Jesus take upon Him (v. 40)? Compare this with Alma 9:27.
653. The Doctrine and Covenants says of the "sons of perdition" that they are "Yea, verily, *the only ones who shall not be redeemed* in the due time of the Lord, after the sufferings of His wrath. For all the rest shall be brought forth by the resurrection of the dead, *through the triumph and the glory of the Lamb . . .*" (D. & C. 76:38-39). Although "sons of perdition" are not redeemed from the devil and

although their resurrection in nowise reflects the triumph and glory of the Lamb, what does Amulek say that necessarily indicates that they, too, will be resurrected (v. 41 ff.)? Compare this with Alma 12:18 and Doctrine and Covenants 88:27-32.

654. What does Amulek say that indicates the resurrected body will be a perfect body in every particular (v. 43 ff.)?
655. What vivid recollections will flood across our minds when, after the resurrection, we stand before the judgment bar of God (v. 43)?
656. Upon what basis will God judge us (v. 44)?
657. Did Amulek mean that when we are resurrected we will step back into the self-same body that we had in mortality or receive a different body (v. 45)?
658. What does Amulek say that indicates there is no such thing as a separation of body and spirit, which we call death, again possible after the resurrection (v. 45)?
659. The Bible tells us that Jesus had a solid tangible body of "flesh and bones" after His resurrection (Luke 24:39). In what sense was it also "spiritual," as Amulek terms the resurrected body (v. 45)?

Chapter 12

660. What restriction is placed upon one who may have had a revelation or dream or otherwise have been permitted to gain special insight into the mysteries of God (v. 9)?
661. What does Alma say that indicates that there actually is such a thing as knowing the mysteries of God completely (v. 10)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 93:26-28.
662. What is meant by "the chains of hell" (v. 11)?
663. What does Alma contribute to the subject of the judgment (v. 14) that serves to enlarge upon Amulek's brief explanation of it in Alma 11:44?
664. When is the time that the "second death" will gain complete mastery over the souls of the wicked (v. 16)? Compare this with verse 12.
665. The Doctrine and Covenants says that the "sons of perdition" are ". . . the only ones on whom the second death shall have any power" (D. & C. 76:37). The second death that comes to them is a "spiritual death," meaning a death pertaining to what (v. 16)? Compare this with verse 32.
666. Why can't the wicked die after their resurrection and so find merciful release from their misery (v. 18)?
667. What condition or fate came upon all mankind through the fall of Adam (v. 22)?

668. In what sense is mortality "a probationary state" (v. 24)?
669. What does Alma say that indicates men did not have to wait until the time of Jesus to first hear the plan of redemption (vs. 28-30 ff.)?
670. What is meant by the "rest" of the Lord (vs. 35-37)? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 84:24 for your answer.

Chapter 13

671. What does Alma say that indicates the Lord has foreknown from the beginning who would prove worthy in mortality of holding the priesthood (v. 3)?
672. For whom has the calling to the priesthood been prepared from the foundation of the world (v. 5)?
673. The Apostle Paul refers to the high priesthood as being "after the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 7:17, 21). Why is it equally correct to call it "after the order of His Son" (v. 7 ff.)? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 107:1-4 for your answer.
674. The writer of Hebrews (King James text) speaks of Melchizedek as being "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life" (Hebrews 7:3). In the light of Alma's explanation in verse 8, would you say that Paul was speaking of Melchizedek, the man, or of the Melchizedek priesthood? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 84:16.
675. What group of people appears to have "entered into the rest of the Lord their God" (v. 12) very early in human history? Consult Pearl of Great Price, Moses 7:18-21, for your answer.
676. At least how far back in history does the principle and practice of tithing extend (v. 15)? Compare this with Genesis 14:18-20.

Chapter 14

677. In what cruel manner did the bloodthirsty mob at Ammonihah decide to wipe out all traces of the despised Nephite religion in their midst (v. 8)?
678. What clue do we find, incidentally, to the fact that, besides the records that the Nephites kept on metal plates, they also had manuscript copies of the scriptures (v. 8)?
679. What indication do we have to the fact that, notwithstanding the terrible turn of events that their mission had taken, Amulek's faith in the Lord was still unshaken (v. 10)?

680. What does Alma say of the destiny of the martyrs that reminds us that death is no tragedy to righteous members of the Church (v. 11)?
681. What remarkable and important explanation does Alma give as to why the Lord sometimes allows the innocent to suffer and die at the hands of the wicked (v. 11)?
682. Why didn't the Lord let Alma and Amulek join the ranks of the martyrs on this occasion (v. 13)?
683. What story of sublime faith (that every Latter-day Saint child should be taught) is provided by this chapter (vs. 14-29)?

Chapter 15

684. What excellent illustration of the Latter-day Saint concept of a "burning hell" does this chapter provide (vs. 3, 5)? Compare this with Mosiah 2:36-39.
685. Zeezrom was healed through his faith in whose power (vs. 6-11)?
686. What losses had Amulek suffered for the gospel's sake (v. 16)?

Chapter 16

The destruction of Ammonihah, narrated in this chapter, brings to an end an episode that is packed with meaning for our times. In an age when both Russia and the United States are stockpiling hydrogen bombs and the question of national survival is the leading question of government, this compelling Book of Mormon story (which comprises chapters 8 through 16) tells in convincing terms that the Lord will be the Watchman and Defender of the people that put their trust in Him and keep His commandments.

To appreciate the power of the lesson that the story conveys, let us picture ourselves as citizens of Zarahemla during this period. The people of Zarahemla, it will be recalled, had caught the spirit of religious reform preached by Alma and were striving to obey the commandments of God (Alma 7:3-4). Soon afterwards, when Alma was leaving Ammonihah in discouragement, the Lord sent an angel to tell Alma to return to Ammonihah and that the people were plotting to destroy the nation's liberty (Alma 8:17). This news meant that they were planning war against their countrymen, and in modern parlance, was "military intelligence" of prime importance. At this same juncture, we learn subsequently, the Lamanites were furious over the conversion of a considerable number of their people by a band of Nephite missionaries and were plotting a sneak attack upon some Nephite city in retaliation (Alma 25:1-2).

687. How did the Lord use one enemy of the people of Zarahemla to destroy another of Zarahemla's enemies at this time (vs. 1-2, 10)?
688. When the Lamanites retreated with Nephite captives (who were not citizens of the corrupt city of Ammonihah), what valuable "military intelligence" did the Lord give the Prophet Alma that enabled Nephite soldiers to regain every captive (vs. 3-8)?
689. In your opinion, if the people of America would obey God, how might the Lord ward off enemy attacks for us as He did for the people of Zarahemla?
690. The Book of Mormon provides the people of America (and all nations) with "a foreign policy" that is guaranteed to make them "free from all other nations under heaven." According to Ether 2:11-12, what is this policy?

Chapter 17

691. The italicized superscription that appears above the chapter heading is part of the original text. It introduces the account that follows and informs us that it is "according to the record of Alma." Who, necessarily, is the author of the superscription? In formulating your answer consult 3 Nephi 5:10-12.
692. Through the experience of Mosiah's four sons we learn the priceless secret of how ordinary members of the Church, who will apply themselves, can grow spiritually to the point where they can have the gift of prophecy and revelation. What are three things that they did to qualify for this gift (vs. 2-3)?
693. During the years of separation for Alma and the four sons of King Mosiah, Alma, likewise, had become a prophet of God. What was the secret of his transformation? Consult Alma 5:44-47 for your answer.
694. In your opinion, is the purpose of fasting (v. 3) solely to give one's digestive system a rest and to save money to donate to the poor, or is there some other reason also? Explain.
695. Chapters 1-16, which deal with the experiences of Alma among the Nephites, cover the same period of history as chapters 17-28, which deal with the experiences of the four sons of King Mosiah among the Lamanites. How many years do these accounts cover (v. 4)?
696. What indication do we have that idol worship was prevalent among the Lamanites (v. 15)?
697. What was Ammon's social status among the Nephites that properly made him eligible to marry a king's daughter (v. 24)? Compare this with Mosiah 27:34-35.

698. What was Ammon's motive for wanting to show forth his power to his fellow servants (v. 29)?
699. Notwithstanding the fact that Ammon was aided by the Lord in his miraculous feat of swordsmanship (vs. 37-38), what training would he certainly have received as the son of his father that might have helped prepare him for this moment?

Chapter 18

700. What was the Lamanite (and also American Indian) name for God (vs. 2-5)?
701. Although the Lamanites had something of a concept of God, they didn't let it interfere with their conduct (v. 5)? How does this attitude compare with the attitude of many people today?
702. An article in the *Popular Science Monthly* for January, 1954, p. 148, says of the work of certain excavators in California, "Already they have discovered the remains of prehistoric men, horses, and camels lying together, thus proving for the first time that they lived in the same time and in the same place." What might scientists have learned on the subject of horses in ancient America more than a hundred years ago from the Book of Mormon (vs. 9-12)?
703. Conybeare and Howson, in their *Life and Epistles of Paul*, p. 47, say of Gamaliel, under whom Paul studied before his conversion, "His learning was so eminent, and his character so revered, that he is one of seven, who alone among Jewish doctors have been honoured with the title of 'Rabban'." What strikingly similar title was applied to Ammon (v. 13)? Compare this with John 20:16.
704. Why, in your opinion, was Ammon very wise to begin teaching Lamoni from the scriptural record that their joint forefathers had brought from Jerusalem (v. 36)? Compare this with Alma 37:3, 9.

Chapter 19

705. What remarkable exhibition of faith did the Lamanite queen display (v. 9)?
706. What joyful announcement did Lamoni make immediately upon regaining consciousness (vs. 12-13)?
707. How had Abish (the only Lamanite woman mentioned by name in the Book of Mormon) become converted to a belief in the Nephite God (v. 16)?
708. Ammon could not be slain because of his father's faith (v. 23). What other example

does the Book of Mormon afford of a righteous parent being the means of saving a son? Consult Mosiah 27:14 for your answer.

709. What indication do we have that the Lamanite queen was evidently blessed with the gift of tongues (v. 30)?
710. Why was it necessary for King Lamoni and his wife to submit to baptism after being so richly endowed spiritually (v. 35)? Consult 2 Nephi 9:23-24 for your answer.

Chapter 20

711. Ammon, who had formed the habit of listening to the promptings of the Spirit, was told to decline Lamoni's invitation to go to the Land of Nephi, and, instead, to go to the Land of Middoni. Can you cite an example of a divine warning being received by someone in modern times?
712. What was the basis of the old Lamanite complaint that Nephi had robbed their fathers (v. 13)? Consult Mosiah 10:15-16 for your answer.
713. Why is it less tragic for a good man to die than for a bad man (vs. 17-18)?
714. What convinced the old Lamanite king that Ammon had no sinister designs (vs. 24-27)?

Chapter 21

715. All that we know of the Amalekites (vs. 2-3) is that they appear to have been one of a number of groups of Nephite dissenters that joined the Lamanites. (Compare Words of Mormon, v. 16.) Who, however, were the Amulonites? Consult Mosiah 23:30-39 and 24:1-5 ff. for your answer.
716. What did the Amalekites, like many people in our day, seem to feel was proof of their spirituality (v. 6)?
717. There could be no redemption for mankind save it were through what (v. 9)?

Chapter 22

718. What had really "disarmed" the old Lamanite king, the power of Ammon's sword or the power of his love (v. 3)? Compare this with Alma 20:20-27.
719. Why does death have no real sting or hold no real terror to the true Latter-day Saint (v. 14)?
720. Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26). What was the old king willing to give in exchange for his soul's well-being (v. 15)?

721. What are a few examples of some of the little sacrifices that the Lord calls upon His Saints to make in these last days—sacrifices which many would-be seekers of Eternal Life say are too hard? Contrast these with Genesis 22:1-14, Matthew 10:34-38, and Luke 18:18-23.
722. What did Aaron tell the Lamanite king he must do in order to gain a hope in Christ (v. 16)?
723. Inasmuch as verse 16 says nothing about baptism, are we to conclude that the Nephite missionaries did not teach the Lamanites that baptism was necessary? Consult Alma 19:35-36 for your answer.
724. What indication do we have that there were two classes of Lamanites during this period, one more primitive than the other (v. 28)?
725. Why were the Nephites quite vulnerable, militarily, during this period (v. 29)?
726. What was the Nephite name for the region immediately north and the region immediately south of the narrow neck of land (vs. 31-32)?

Chapter 23

727. What proclamation was made by the Lamanite king at this time that served to make the task of the Nephite missionaries a great deal easier (vs. 2-3)?
728. What indication do we have that the conversion of the Lamanites was thorough (v. 6)?

Chapter 24

729. According to Professor Hugh Nibley there is a Semitic and common Indo-European root corresponding to "anti" that means "in the face of" or "facing," as of one facing a mirror, and by extension either "one who opposes" or "one who imitates." If the latter be the meaning of "anti," in its usage as a prefix to "Nephi-Lehi," what would be the connotation of "Anti-Nephi-Lehi" (vs. 1-2)?
730. Consider the system of naming cities and peoples in Mosiah 23:31-32, Alma 8:7, and Alma 30:59, and then explain what appears to have been the reason why the new king (who was quite mature, v. 5) had his name changed to correspond to the name adopted by his people (v. 3)?
731. Only this once in the entire course of Nephite-Lamanite history is it recorded that Church members refused to defend themselves when attacked. What accounted for this unusual behavior on the part of the converted Lamanites (vs. 11-16)?

732. The Prophet Mormon, who relates this great story of wartime non-resistance, was himself active in the defense of the Nephite nation in his generation (Mormon, chapters 1-7). Why do you suppose he didn't try to persuade his people to follow the non-resistance policy of the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi? In formulating your answer consider Alma 43:46-47 and Alma 61:10-14.
733. What may be the origin of the American Indian custom of burying the hatchet (v. 17)?
734. How does Mormon soften the impact of the death of the one thousand and five Anti-Nephi-Lehies (vs. 22, 26-27)?
735. What moral does Mormon discern in the fact that the Amalekites and Amulonites were more bitter in their opposition to the gospel than the Lamanites were (v. 30)? Compare this with Alma 23:14, Hebrews 6:4-6, and Doctrine and Covenants 76:31-35.

Chapter 25

736. How does the Lamanite destruction of Ammonihah (v. 2) serve to illustrate one possible meaning of the Lord's prediction that "the wicked shall slay the wicked" in the last days (Doctrine and Covenants 63:33)? (Remember that this was the same destruction of Ammonihah as that mentioned in Alma 16:1-11).
737. What atrocity did the half-breed descendants of Amulon's priests and their Lamanite wives commit that finally caused the Lamanites to reject their leadership forever (vs. 6-8)?
738. What sentence shows that Mormon, in writing his summary of the Book of Alma, sometimes quoted Alma's original account verbatim (v. 9)?
739. How was the prophecy of the martyred Prophet Abinadi fulfilled during this period (vs. 10-12)?
740. What was the value of the law of Moses to the converted Lamanites (v. 16)?

Chapter 26

741. In the course of what may have been a missionary testimony meeting Ammon burst forth into spontaneous poetry as he reviewed the amazing accomplishments of his group of missionaries. What was Aaron's first reaction to this recitation (v. 10)?
742. How did Ammon justify his glorying in the accomplishments of the missionary party (vs. 11-16 ff.)?
743. To whom is it given to know the mysteries of God (v. 22)?

744. What does Ammon say (v. 25) that shows that some of the Nephites of his day were as unwise as some Americans of our day in their advocacy of a "preventive war"?
745. What tribute does Ammon pay to God's power, wisdom, and understanding (v. 35)?
746. What does Ammon say that serves to remind us that God has not forgotten the people of Czechoslovakia, Poland, China, Russia, and the rest of the "iron curtain" countries (v. 37)?

Chapter 27

747. Who was the chief judge to whom the four sons of Mosiah reported their adventures when they returned from their Lamanite mission (v. 20)? Consult Alma 4:17-20 and Alma 50:37 for your answer.
748. What area or territory did the Nephites turn over to the converted Lamanites (v. 22)?
749. Upon what generous condition did the Nephites give the converted Lamanites a place to live and also the promise of military protection (v. 24)?
750. What name did the Nephites use to designate the people of Anti-Nephi-Lehi (v. 26)?
751. In your judgment, what does it mean to have a "zeal towards God *and also towards men*" (v. 27)? Compare this with 1 John 4:20-21.
752. For what qualities did the converted Lamanites gain distinction among the Nephites (vs. 27-28)?

Chapter 28

753. At the end of verse 8—if not before—it appears that Mormon interrupts his narrative to quote the reflections and observations that the original writer, Alma, had recorded on the *Large Plates of Nephi*. Inasmuch as there are no quotation marks (which are a relatively modern literary device) how can you tell that Mormon is quoting (vs. 9-14)?
754. Why were many thousands of the Nephites able to rejoice in the midst of their mourning for lost loved ones (v. 12)?
755. In what sense are men quite unequal in the eyes of God (v. 13)?
756. Why are diligent missionaries "in the vineyards of the Lord" urgently needed (v. 14)?

Chapter 29

757. Mormon's quotation from Alma's writings, that appears to have started in chapter 28, continues through chapter 29, where it rises to the level

- of a psalm. What unforgettable experience of Alma's youth is recalled by verses 1 and 2? Compare this with Mosiah 27:11-18.
758. How does Alma's explanation of the way human sorrow could be eliminated (v. 2) compare with some of the cure-alls proposed in our day?
759. What is the process by which non-members of Christ's Church may "come unto God" (v. 2)? In formulating your answer consult Galatians 3:27 and 3 Nephi 27:20.
760. Why did Alma feel that he was actually sinning a little even to wish he had greater ability and power to preach the gospel than he had (v. 3)?
761. How does God regard infant children and mentally incapacitated individuals, who are incapable of knowing the difference between good and evil (v. 5)?
762. Alma says that people who know good and evil are given according to their desires (v. 5.) Does this mean that without their putting forth any effort, "wishing will make it so"? Compare this with James 2:14-20 and Mosiah 4:30.
763. What indication does Alma give that God is fair and just to all the people of the earth in His dispensing of gospel truths to them (v. 8)?
764. To what "captivity" does Alma probably have reference in verses 11-12? Consult Mosiah 24:11-25 for your answer.

Chapter 30

765. If we receive no monetary compensation for our efforts in the Church, "what doth it profit us to labor in the church" (v. 34)?
766. What, according to Alma, bears witness of the fact that there is a Supreme Creator (v. 44)?
767. How did Korihor know from personal experience that the devil is no myth (v. 53)?
768. What important moral does Mormon see in the tragic fate of Korihor (v. 60)?

Chapter 31

769. What had Alma discovered had a "more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else" (v. 5)?
770. What was the Rameumpton, and how did it figure in the Zoramite synagogue worship (vs. 13-23)?
771. Analyze and contrast the two prayers in this chapter, the one uttered by the Zoramites (vs. 15-18) and the other uttered by Alma (vs. 26-35).

772. What does Alma say of the Zoramites that serves to remind us that we make a mockery of prayer if we address God while our hearts are set on the vain and superficial things of life (vs. 27-28)?
773. What clue do we have to the fact that a good many members of the true Church had become members of the Zoramite cult (v. 35)?

Chapter 32

774. What misconception did the expelled synagogue worshippers have that many people in our day and age also have (vs. 5, 8-11)?
775. Upon what condition does forced humility prove a blessing (vs. 12-13)?
776. Who is more blessed, the man who is humbled because his crop or business fails or the man who humbles himself "because of the word" (vs. 14-15)?
777. Why is a person who has been converted to the gospel by a miracle in a more precarious position than one who "only believeth, or only hath cause to believe" (vs. 16-19)?
778. What is faith (v. 21)?
779. Is the privilege of receiving visits from angels restricted to men (v. 23)? Explain.
780. What are the first steps in the process of acquiring faith in (or a testimony of) the gospel (v. 27)?
781. How may one know that the gospel brings richness of life and illumination of the mind and, hence, that it is genuinely good (v. 28)?
782. To what extent is the "knowledge perfect" of the person who has experienced only a small measure of the joy the gospel brings (vs. 33-36)?
783. How does a testimony of the gospel grow or else diminish (vs. 37-38)?
784. What besides the "seed" must be good if the tree of testimony is to bear fruit (v. 39)?
785. In connection with Alma's description of the tree in verse 42, how did the Prophet Lehi describe the tree of his vision? Consult 1 Nephi 8:10-12 for your answer.

Chapter 33

786. When the poor among the Zoramites wanted to know how to plant the seed or how to start exercising faith Alma reminded them of the earlier problem that they had raised of how they could worship God outside the synagogue. What did he offer as the single solution to both problems (vs. 3-11)?

787. Evidently because Alma felt that his message pertaining to the technique of developing faith would not be complete without making very clear what people should have faith in, he concluded with his testimony of man's dependence upon Christ for his redemption (vs. 12-23). In passing, what does he say that Moses' brass serpent in the wilderness typified (v. 19)? Compare this with Helaman 8:14-15.

Chapter 34

788. Why is the sacrifice of Christ called "a great and last sacrifice" (v. 13)?
789. What was "the whole meaning of the law" of Moses (v. 14)?
790. What does Amulek mean by the statement that "he that exercises no faith unto repentance is exposed to the whole law of the demands of justice" (v. 16)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 19:15-17 ff.
791. Amulek says, "therefore only unto him that has faith unto repentance is brought about the great and eternal plan of redemption" (v. 16)? What else is necessary besides "faith unto repentance"? Compare this with Alma 9:27.
792. Where should we pray (vs. 18-26)?
793. When should we pray (vs. 18-26)?
794. What are some of the things for which we should pray (vs. 18-26)?
795. The Apostle Paul admonished members of the Church in his day to "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). How is this possible (v. 27)?
796. What exceptionally practical counsel does Amulek give on keeping prayer free from vanity and hypocrisy (v. 28)?
797. If the sinner truly repents (and is baptized) how soon does he begin to reap the benefits of Christ's "plan of redemption" (v. 31)?
798. What is the main thing that this life is given us to prepare for (v. 32)?
799. How much of our eternal future depends upon the way we conduct ourselves in "this day of life" that we call mortality (v. 33)?
800. Amulek taught the Zoramites that they now had the opportunity of repenting and accepting the gospel (vs. 30-31) and implied that if they postponed accepting it until death they would never be able to rectify their neglect and never be able to dwell with God (vs. 32-33). In seeming contrast with this, isn't it the Latter-day Saint belief that those people who were indifferent to the message of the Prophet Noah while they were upon the earth and who afterwards received the gospel from Christ in the

spirit world (1 Peter 3:18-20) will inherit the celestial kingdom and so dwell with God? In formulating your answer consult Doctrine and Covenants 76:71-78.

801. If a person gains the testimony of Jesus in mortality (which implies being baptized) and fails to serve Christ valiantly, can't he do something after death (in spite of verse 33) that will enable him to dwell with God, along with friends and family associates who were valiant? In formulating your answer consult Doctrine and Covenants 76:77-79.
802. What is the fallacy of so-called death bed repentance, as also the fallacy of supposing that one can change his status after death (v. 34)?
803. How many times a year should a Latter-day Saint observe "thanksgiving" day (v. 38)?
804. How do we place ourselves in spiritual jeopardy if we revile against those who mistreat us (v. 40)?

Chapter 35

805. Where did the humble among the Zoramites find refuge after their expulsion (v. 6)?
806. Why did the people of Ammon move out of the Land of Jershon and let others move in, in the face of the oncoming battle (v. 13)? Consult Alma 24:15-19 and Alma 27:21-26 for your answer.

Chapter 36

807. In what sense did Alma feel that he had been a murderer in his youth (v. 14)?
808. What did Alma discover that hell is like after spending three days in it (vs. 12-16)?
809. How was it vividly brought home to Alma that Christ is man's miraculous Savior from sin and the devil (vs. 17-23)? Compare this with Alma 38:8 and Enos, vs. 1-8.

Chapter 37

810. Only a few extracts of the *Brass Plates of Laban* appear in the Book of Mormon. How long will the Lord continue to keep and preserve the original work (vs. 3-5)?
811. What ancient promise—in relation to which the Nephite prophets interpreted the ups and downs of history—was reaffirmed by Alma to Helaman (v. 13)?
812. What does Alma say that indicates the prophet custodians of the *Large Plates of Nephi* depended on the Spirit every step of the way in the preparation of their record for us (vs. 15-16 ff.)?

813. It is not clear whether "Gazelem" refers here (v. 23) to the brother of Jared, the first prophet of the destroyed Jaredite civilization (Ether 3:23-24), or to Mosiah II, who translated the Jaredite record into the Nephite language by means of the Urim and Thummim (Mosiah 28:11-17). It appears to be a title, synonymous with Seer, that applies to any possessor of the sacred interpreters. Who do we know has borne this title in modern times? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 104:26, 43 for your answer.
814. What particular part of the Jaredite writings did Alma command Helaman to withhold from the Nephite people (vs. 27-29)?
815. What did Alma instruct Helaman to teach (vs. 32-34)?
816. In your opinion, why is it extremely important to learn in one's youth "to keep the commandments of God" (v. 35)? Compare this with Proverbs 22:6.
817. If the word, "state," were substituted for "God" and "Lord," each time they appear in verse 36, what modern political philosophy would be pretty well described?
818. Why is it to one's own advantage to counsel with the Lord in all of his doings (v. 37)?
819. How did the Liahona work (vs. 38-42)?
820. What moral or lesson did Alma see in the workings of the Liahona (vs. 43-45)?
821. Do you agree with Alma's thought that there is grave danger of one's being "slothful" and indifferent to the gospel "because of the easiness of the way" of salvation (v. 46)? Explain.

Chapter 38

822. What had Shiblon suffered for the gospel's sake on his mission to the Zoramites (vs. 3-4)?
823. How did Alma really know that if Shiblon were faithful he would be "lifted up at the last day" (vs. 5-6)?
824. What wise parental counsel did Alma give to Shiblon for his own personal conduct (vs. 10-13 ff.)?
825. What excellent advice did Alma give Shiblon against self-righteousness in prayer (v. 14)?

Chapter 39

826. How does Alma describe the enormity of the sin of unchastity (vs. 1-5)?
827. What is the unpardonable sin (v. 6)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 76:31-36 ff.

828. As in the case of Corianton's transgression (v. 11), the misconduct of Church members today often has what kind of an effect upon non-members?

829. Why is it pointless to spend all of one's time and energy in the pursuit of financial success (v. 14)?

Chapter 40

830. Alma prophesied that there would be no resurrection until after what (v. 2)?

831. What is the state of the soul between death and the resurrection (vs. 11-14)? Compare this with 2 Nephi 9:10-13.

832. What physical restoration comes with resurrection (vs. 22-24)?

Chapter 41

833. An American general in World War II told his men that if they died fighting for democracy they would never have to worry about going to hell for their sins because they would have known enough of suffering on earth. How does this square with the Prophet Alma's explanation (vs. 3-5 ff.)?

834. If a sinful person has repented (and been baptized, Alma 9:27) and thereafter "desired righteousness until the end of his days" what will be his lot in the day of judgment (v. 6)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 19:16 ff. and Matthew 20:1-16.

835. In what sense is each of us *now* the judge of his own destiny (v. 7)?

836. Why is it unthinkable that the term, "restoration," could mean that people will be "restored from sin to happiness" (v. 10)?

837. Who does Alma say is proceeding "contrary to the nature of God" and "contrary to the nature of happiness" (v. 11)?

838. What is the meaning of "restoration" in reference to the resurrection (v. 13)?

839. Why should we "deal justly, judge righteously, and do good continually" (v. 14)?

840. What, in a nutshell, will return to us in the day of judgment (v. 15)?

Chapter 42

841. Why would it have been tragic if Adam, after his transgression, had been allowed to put forth his hand immediately and partake of the tree of life (vs. 2-8)? Compare this with Alma 12:23-26.

842. Alma says "the soul could never die" and, in the same breath, says that the fall brought upon the human family "a spiritual death." What is a spiritual death, if it isn't death of the soul (v. 9)?
843. Why would all men be miserable after death if it were not for the plan of redemption (v. 11)? Compare this with 1 Corinthians 15:19 ff.
844. Divine justice demands that the plan of redemption from sin should not be extended to men "only on conditions of . . ." what (v. 13)?
845. Even with the aforementioned change in course from sin to righteousness, men could not be recipients of divine mercy (which brings forgiveness of sin and Eternal Life in God's presence) except for what (v. 15)?
846. Alma indicates that the happiness of the redeemed will last forever. How long will the punishment of the unredeemed (sons of perdition) last (v. 16)?
847. What kind of punishment comes in the wake of transgressed law (v. 18)?
848. If God were merciful to the exclusion of being just and, hence, determined to forgive all men instead of punishing sinners, what, besides justice, would be dethroned (v. 22)? Compare verses 13 and 25.
849. It is fashionable today to speak of the love and mercy of God without mentioning His wrath and justice. Judging by Corianton's inclination to "deny the justice of God" (v. 30) what probably accounts for the modern de-emphasis of the doctrine?
850. What must we teach our fellowmen to do in order "that the great plan of mercy may have claim upon them" (v. 31)? Compare this with Alma 9:27.

Chapter 43

851. Why did the Lamanites appoint apostate Nephites to be their wartime military leaders (vs. 6-7)? Compare this with Alma 48:5.
852. What indication do we have that the Nephite-Lamanite wars were, fundamentally, religious wars (vs. 9-12, 30, 45-49)? Compare this with Alma, chapters 24-25 and 35:1-12.
853. Seventy-four years before the birth of Christ the Nephite military leader, Moroni, introduced into the army protective armor as a new type of defensive weapon of war (vs. 19-21, 38). To what "handbook" of "military history" may his idea be traced? Consult Ether 15:15 for your answer, and compare Mosiah 28:12-17.

854. What excellent example is provided in this chapter of (a) one man's willingness to conduct his affairs in harmony with the counsel of a living prophet and (b) the Lord's willingness to assist those who will put their trust in Him in their problems of national defense (vs. 23-26 ff.)?

855. Why didn't the Nephites, who were guided by prophets of God follow a policy of military non-resistance, as has been advocated by certain modern religious societies (vs. 46-47)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 98:23-32 ff.

Chapter 44

856. Why did the question of religion prove such an important one in the truce talk (vs. 1-5, 9)? In formulating your answer consider the issue that had brought on the war (Alma 35:1-13).

857. What indication do we find that Zarahemnah, wicked as he was, didn't want to be an oath breaker (v. 8)?

858. How did Zarahemnah lose his scalp or skull skin (vs. 12-15)?

Chapter 45

859. According to the superscription, whose writings formed Mormon's source from chapter 45 through 62?

860. What curse awaits the people of America "when they are fully ripe" (v. 16)?

861. What saying went abroad in the Church concerning Alma's mysterious disappearance (v. 19)?

Chapter 46

862. When Moroni, who had helped win the war, saw that his people were in danger of losing the peace, what was the slogan under which he rallied them (v. 12 ff.)?

863. How did Moroni signify that he was willing to fight to preserve the Nephite republic from the poisonous doctrine of autocratic government being spread by Amalickiah (v. 13)?

864. What nickname were the believers in Christ given by those outside the Church (vs. 13-16)? Compare this with Acts 11:26.

865. What did Moroni name all the land north and south of the Land of Desolation (v. 17)?

866. What was the significance of the fact that they "rent their garments" (vs. 21-22)?

867. What interesting prophecy of Jacob's, that is not found in the Bible, is quoted here by Moroni (vs. 24-26)?

868. What application did Moroni make of Jacob's prophecy (v. 27)?
869. What indication do we have that Moroni was not disposed to mollycoddle traitors who refused to renounce their intention to overthrow the government (v. 35)?
870. Why was the climate of Zarahemla not particularly favorable to good health (v. 40)?

Chapter 47

871. By what acts of perfidy and treachery did Amalickiah become king of the Lamanites (vs. 1-35)?
872. Why, in your opinion, was a marriage between Amalickiah and the Lamanite queen politically advantageous to both?

Chapter 48

873. What new city defense system or device did Moroni institute in preparation for the war with Amalickiah (v. 8)? Compare this with Alma 50:1-5.
874. What timely lesson in national defense planning does the Nephite record provide the people of America today (vs. 14-16)? Compare this with Ether 2:11-12.
875. Why is it not surprising that the Prophet Mormon named his own son, *Moroni*, (possibly) after the great Nephite military leader of this period (vs. 11-13, 16-17)?

Chapter 49

876. It is virtually an axiom in modern warfare that whenever one side introduces an improved technique or device for battle the other side will soon adopt it. How does this apply to the Lamanites (v. 6)? Compare this with Alma 43:19-20 ff.
877. How was Moroni's inspiration verified in respect to the defense of Ammonihah and Noah (vs. 1-25)?

Chapter 50

878. What aggressive action did Moroni take to strengthen the military position of the Nephites (vs. 7-16)? Compare this with Alma 22:29.
879. What ancient promise does Mormon observe was again verified during this period of Nephite history (vs. 19-23)?
880. In your judgment, why would it have been a major military setback to the Nephites if Morianton had united with the people of Bountiful, as Moroni feared he would try to do (v. 32)? Compare this with Alma 52:9.

881. How did it happen that the *Large Plates of Nephi*, which during the early part of Nephite history formed a secular record kept by the kings, shifted from the hands of the government heads to the prophets (v. 38)?
882. Who succeeded Nephiah in the judgeship (vs. 39-40)?

Chapter 51

883. Nothing less than the aim to reestablish what system of government was behind the simple request that "a few particular points of the law should be altered" (vs. 2-5)?
884. What was the primary reason that the "freemen" or republicans were opposed to the governmental changes advocated by the "kingmen" or royalists (v. 6)?
885. Why was the dispute, engendered by descendants of the old royal line, so ill-timed (vs. 8-9)?
886. How did Amalickiah meet his death (vs. 33-34)?

Chapter 52

887. What action did Ammoron take to divide the Nephite forces (vs. 12-13)?
888. How was the city of Mulek retaken and the army of Jacob defeated (vs. 16-40)? Compare this with Joshua 8:3-7 in the Bible.

Chapter 53

889. What dilemma did the former Anti-Nephi-Lehies face, and how did they solve it (vs. 10-19)?
890. What does Mormon say that indicates Helaman's troops possessed a quality that is much needed today among employees and employers, students and teachers, parents and church workers (v. 20)?

Chapter 54

891. What Lamanite-type reasoning did Moroni cast into Ammoron's teeth in support of his (Moroni's) threatened war of extermination against the Lamanites (v. 13)? Compare this with vs. 23-24.
892. What hackneyed old complaint did the "naturalized" Lamanite citizen, Ammoron, offer as the Lamanite interpretation of the issue at stake in the Lamanite-Nephite wars (vs. 16-24)? Compare this with Mosiah 10:15-17.

Chapter 55

893. How did Moroni engineer the escape of the Nephite prisoners without having to exchange Lamanite prisoners for them (vs. 1-24)?

Chapter 56

- 894. What sublime example of faith did the two thousand sons of the former Anti-Nephi-Lehies display (vs. 30-48 ff.)?
- 895. How was the faith of Helaman's two thousand young Ammonite warriors (as well as the faith of their parents) substantiated in the outcome of the first battle (vs. 55-56)?

Chapter 57

- 896. What further confirmation of the faith of the Ammonite boys (and their parents) came in the second engagement with the enemy (vs. 19-27)?
- 897. What circumstance brought about the providential and timely return of the prisoner guards (vs. 28-35)?

Chapter 58

- 898. From what source did Helaman's troops gain assurance of ultimate victory (vs. 10-11)?
- 899. What variation of their earlier decoy trick did the Nephites use to gain possession of Manti (vs. 13-29)? Compare this with Alma 56:30-54.

Chapter 59

- 900. What bad news did Moroni receive concerning the city of Nephiah that served to offset, in a measure, the good news from Helaman (vs. 5-13)?

Chapter 60

- 901. Why does the Lord allow Latter-day Saint boys and others, who are seeking to live virtuous upright lives, to be killed in battle (vs. 12-13)?
- 902. What does Moroni ask that shows our generation that dependence upon the Lord for national defense does not remove the necessity of putting forth our own efforts (v. 21)?

Chapter 61

- 903. How had the royalist "fifth column" shown its true colors when it finally got control of the Nephite capital and installed its own king (v. 8)?
- 904. Does the Lord expect His people to use passive or active resistance against aggressors (vs. 10-14)? Explain. Compare this with Alma 43:46-47.

Chapter 62

905. What prompt action did Moroni take to rid the government of traitors and thus bring about a united war effort (vs. 3-11)?
906. By what device did Moroni regain possession of Nephiah (vs. 18-26)?
907. What request were many of the Lamanite prisoners granted (vs. 27-28)?
908. How did the valiant Teancum and the wicked Ammoron meet their end (vs. 35-36)?
909. What does Mormon say was the reason the Nephite nation had been spared destruction in the long drawn-out war that Amalickiah had started (v. 40)?
910. What significant observation on the two fold effect of war does the writer make in verse 41?

Chapter 63

911. Whose writings necessarily formed Mormon's literary source for the events recorded in this chapter (vs. 1, 17)?
912. In your opinion, what recurring disaster were the emigrants to the land northward probably trying to escape (v. 4 ff.)?
913. Who was Hagoth (v. 5 ff.)?
914. What provides Book of Mormon students the basis for supposing that some—perhaps many—of the Pacific Islanders are of Nephite extraction (vs. 7-9)?
915. To whom did Shiblun pass the sacred records before his death (vs. 11, 13)?

**Mormon's Abridgment of
THE BOOK OF HELAMAN**

Chapter 1

916. How did Pahoran II, Paanchi, and Pacumeni, respectively, come to an untimely death (vs. 1-22)?
917. How did Coriantumr's bold seizure of the Nephite capital prove his undoing (vs. 23-32)?

Chapter 2

918. Only two family lines had occupied the chief judgeship since its inception, the family of Alma and the family of Nephiah. To which family line did Helaman II, the new chief judge, belong (v. 2)?
919. Who appears to have been the master mind of the secret society to which the assassin, Kishkumen, belonged (vs. 4-5)? Compare Helaman 6:18.

933. Judging by Helaman's reason for naming his sons after illustrious prophet ancestors (v. 6) what do you think may have been the Lord's purpose for calling imperfect members of His Church, "Saints"? Compare this with Ephesians 4:12.
934. In your judgment, what is the difference between the idea that Christ redeems men "in their sins" and the idea that He redeems men "from their sins" (v. 10)?
935. Why is it all-important that we build our faith "upon the rock of our Redeemer" and not upon the philosophies and theories of men (v. 12)?
936. What lesson in (true) repentance does verse 17 provide?
937. How many Lamanites were converted by Lehi and Nephi in Zarahemla (v. 19)?
938. In what prison were Lehi and Nephi incarcerated after their arrest (v. 21)? Compare this with Mosiah 7:6 ff.
939. What did Lehi and Nephi discover the voice of God sounds like (vs. 31-32 and 46-47)?
940. When had the Nephite dissenters in the crowd heard Alma, Amulek, and Zeezrom, all three, preaching the gospel (v. 41)? Consult Alma 31:6-7 ff. for your answer. Compare this with Alma 43:4.
941. What portion of the Lamanite nation was converted by the testimony of the three hundred converts (vs. 49-50)?
942. Explain how two men and God quickly and simply brought thousands of souls to Christ and, incidentally, won as great a military victory as Moronihah's army had done during a two year military campaign (vs. 51-52).

Chapter 6

943. Who were the more righteous during this period, Nephites or Lamanites (vs. 1-2)?
944. What new group of missionaries now began to appear on the Nephite scene (vs. 4-6)?
945. What names came to designate the entire "land north" and the entire "land south" of the narrow neck of land (v. 10)?
946. What portion of the Nephites became members of the Gadianton society (v. 21)?
947. Inasmuch as Helaman obeyed his father's injunction not to make public the secret oaths and signs of the ancient Jaredites, how did the founders of the Gadianton band gain access to them (vs. 25-30)?
948. What indication do we have that many of the Nephites worshipped idols during this period (v. 31)?

- 949. What method did the Lamanites employ to root out the Gadianton society from among them (v. 37)?
- 950. How did the Gadianton band gain control of the Nephite government (vs. 38-39)?

Chapter 7

- 951. Why did Nephi cut short his missionary labors among the Nephites in the land northward (vs. 1-3)?
- 952. What very human tendency does Nephi display in verses 7 through 9?
- 953. Upon what fair and equitable basis does the Lord dispense His strength to men and nations (v. 23)?
- 954. When was the prophecy of verse 24 fulfilled? Consult Mormon, chapters 1-8, for your answer.

Chapter 8

- 955. What basis did the judges have for accusing Nephi of reviling their laws (v. 3)?
- 956. What argument does Nephi offer in support of the claim that the Lord confers tremendous power on human agents (vs. 11-12)? Compare this with Matthew 16:19.
- 957. The Bible has not preserved a certain important lesson that Moses taught his people concerning the brazen serpent episode of Numbers 21:6-9. What does the Book of Mormon tell us was that lesson (vs. 14-15)? Compare this with Alma 33:19-22.
- 958. What is meant by "the order of God; yea, even . . . the order of his Son" (v. 18)? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 107:1-4 for your answer.
- 959. From what record did the Nephites get the prophecies of such prophets as Zenos, Zenock, and Ezias (vs. 19-20)? Consult 3 Nephi 10:14-17 for your answer.
- 960. By way of review, what Israelitish tribes were represented by the Mulekites and Nephites in the New World? Compare this with Omni, verse 14 and questions based thereon.
- 961. What indication do we find in verse 23 to the fact that Nephi knew that the Saviour (who had not yet been born) and his own ancestors (who had died) were all very much alive?
- 962. What revelation actually came to Nephi during his public address (v. 27)?

Chapter 9

- 963. How did the judges try to account for Nephi's knowledge of the murder of the chief judge (v. 16)?

964. What appears to have proved more impressive to the majority of the people, Nephi's prophetic power or his message (vs. 40-41)?

Chapter 10

965. It is said that self-preservation is the first law of nature. What was more important to Nephi than self-preservation (v. 4)?
966. Why could the Lord safely promise Nephi unlimited power (v. 5)?
967. After Nephi's refreshing contact with God his discouragement was gone (v. 12). What lesson does his experience offer us?

Chapter 11

968. How did Nephi use his great power to provide his people a blessing in disguise (vs. 4-5)?
969. In your opinion, does the Lord have anything to do today with drought and war and depression? Explain.
970. Who, besides Lehi and Nephi, received revelations during this period (v. 23)?
971. How did it happen that the Nephites and Lamanites, who had been enemies for centuries, now found themselves fighting side by side against a common foe (vs. 24-32)?

Chapter 12

972. What does Mormon say that indicates that when a people are righteous God sometimes causes their prospective enemies to drop their war plans in favor of peace (v. 2)?
973. What usually happens when people get too prosperous and comfortable (v. 2)?
974. Unless the Lord chastens His people with afflictions what does it seem that they will not do (v. 3)?
975. In what sense does Mormon mean that human beings are "less than the dust of the earth" (vs. 7-8)?
976. What does Mormon say in the latter part of verse 15 that shows he possessed a correct understanding of a one-time, much-disputed principle of astronomy?

Chapter 13

977. Who is the best known of the Lamanite missionaries who labored among the Nephites during this era (v. 2 ff.)? Compare this with Helaman 6:4-6.
978. What would have caused God to countermand or defer the prophesied destruction of the Nephite nation (vs. 10-11)?

979. Judging by verses 12 and 13, upon what basis or condition might the Latter-day Saint people be instrumental in saving America from destruction?
980. When was Zarahemla to be destroyed (v. 14)? Compare this with 3 Nephi 9:1-3 ff.
981. What strange curse did Samuel, the Lamanite, predict would one day befall the Nephite people (vs. 17-20)?
982. In your opinion, are the people of America close to or far from the conditions described in verse 22?
983. In what way were the people of Zarahemla, at this time, worse than many of their ancestors had been (vs. 25-26)?

Chapter 14

984. What signs were to announce Jesus' birth (vs. 3-6)?
985. How would you answer the person who concludes, on the basis of verse 8, that a mere acceptance of Christ is sufficient to carry men to salvation? In formulating your answer consult verse 13 and also Alma 7:15-16 and 9:27.
986. Who does Samuel say was "the Creator of all things from the beginning" (v. 12)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 38:1-3.
987. In what sense does the resurrection of Christ redeem all mankind from spiritual death (vs. 16-17)?
988. What does Samuel say that indicates there will be a class of unrepentant souls who will not *remain* redeemed from spiritual death after the final day of judgment (v. 18)?
989. What were to be some of the signs of Christ's death (vs. 20-27)?
990. There is a theory held by certain psychologists that sin is an outmoded concept, that no one is really responsible for his actions since we are the product of our environment. What does the Prophet Samuel say that contradicts this view (vs. 30-31)?

Chapter 15

991. Why were the Lamanites to be preserved and the Nephites to be destroyed (vs. 4-17)?

Chapter 16

992. To whom did the converted Nephites go for baptism (v. 1)?
993. What manifestations were given to wise men in the period shortly before Christ's birth (v. 14)?
994. As an example of the inadequacy of human reason to cope with the things of God, what did many people argue was "not reasonable" about the prophesied coming of Christ (vs. 17-19)?

Mormon's Abridgment of**THIRD NEPHI¹****THE BOOK OF NEPHI****Chapter 1**

995. How does the mysterious disappearance of Nephi, the son of Helaman (vs. 2-3), compare with the disappearance of Alma II? See Alma 45:18-19.
996. Who were the five immediate ancestors of the new custodian of the sacred records (v. 3)? Consult the superscription for your answer.
997. What public miracle occurred the night enemies of the Church planned to massacre the believers (vs. 9-21)?
998. If the law of Moses was not fulfilled when Christ was born (vs. 24-25) when was it fulfilled? In formulating your answer consult Alma 34:13.

Chapter 2

999. What were the three successive bases for the reckoning of time used among the Nephites (vs. 5-8)?
1000. What physical change came over the Lamanites who accepted the gospel and united with the Nephites (vs. 14-16)?

Chapter 3

1001. Wherein does the bandit army chieftain's letter betray his attempt to (a) flatter (b) belittle (c) bluff Lachoneus into submission (vs. 1-5)?
1002. What was the Gadianton robber leader's bold ultimatum (vs. 6-8)?
1003. What explanation did the Gadianton chief offer as the justification for his incredible demand (v. 10)?
1004. In a very realistic move to bolster the Nephite defenses Lachoneus not only called upon his people to gather together into one central body but also asked them to do what other important thing—something that few modern military leaders would think to suggest (vs. 12-16)?

1. *Third Nephi* is a modern caption; it is not part of the original text. It was first employed in the 1879 Edition as an aid to reference work to distinguish it from the two books of Nephi (pp. 1-107) on the *Small Plates of Nephi* and the later book of [Fourth] Nephi on the *Plates of Mormon* (pp. 456-459).

1005. What qualifications did the Nephites look for in men whom they desired for their military commanders (v. 19)?
1006. What was Gidgiddoni's attitude toward a "preventive war," such as has been advocated by certain individuals in our day (vs. 20-21)?
1007. From the standpoint of its strategic location why was it expedient that the Nephites strengthen the military defenses of Bountiful, as well as the defenses of Zarahemla (v. 23)? Compare this with Alma 22:33-34.

Chapter 4

1008. Why were the bandits virtually compelled to attack the Nephites, notwithstanding the fact that the Nephites were militarily stronger than they were (vs. 5-6)?
1009. Why did the robber warriors look grotesque to the Nephites (v. 7)?
1010. What act on the part of the defenders gave the bandit army an unjustified feeling of overconfidence (vs. 8-10)?
1011. Why was Zemnarihah obliged to lift the siege (vs. 16-23)?
1012. How did Gidgiddoni's forces steal a march and win the war (vs. 24-27)?
1013. To what fact did the Nephites attribute their victory (v. 33)?

Chapter 5

1014. What was the nature of the prisoner indoctrination program carried on by the Nephites among their captives of war (v. 4)?
1015. Mormon pauses in his narrative to remind us that his record of the events of the first twenty-five years of the Christian era (v. 8) is "according to the record of Nephi" (v. 10). Which Nephi does he mean? Compare this with 3 Nephi 1:3.
1016. What does Mormon say that indicates he wrote his abridgement upon a set of plates (which we call the *Plates of Mormon*) that was entirely separate and apart from the plates (the *Large Plates of Nephi*) that formed his source (vs. 11-12)?
1017. Why does Mormon say it was expedient that he "make a record of these things which have been done" (v. 14 ff.)? Compare this with Enos, vs. 13-18 and Doctrine and Covenants 10:46-49 ff.
1018. What record is referred to in verse 17? See footnote *l*.
1019. Mormon says he was "a pure descendant of Lehi" (v. 20). How could he have been anything else than a pure descendant of Lehi? In formulating your answer consult Omni, vs. 12-19.

Chapter 9

1034. If verses 1 through 11 were a song, what impressive words would constitute the refrain?
1035. In spite of the fact that the prophecies indicate that at the time of the second coming of Christ the earth's population generally will be corrupt (and only a relatively small handful be prepared to receive Him) there are those who say that Christ will not come until the human family (as a whole) is ready for him. Judging by verses 1 through 12 would you say that the majority of the Nephites were ready or not ready to receive Christ?
1036. There are those who say that when Christ comes again He will not destroy the wicked because He is a God of love. How would you answer this in the light of verses 1 through 13?
1037. Who are we again reminded "created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are" (v. 15)?
1038. In your judgment, what is meant by the statement, "I am in the Father, and the Father in me . . ." (v. 15)? Compare this with John 17:20-21.
1039. To whom is it given to become "the sons of God" (v. 17)? Compare this with Pearl of Great Price, Moses 6:64-68.
1040. What takes the place of the Mosaic law of sacrifice (vs. 19-20)?

Chapter 10

1041. The prophecies repeatedly assert that the righteous will be preserved in the day of Christ's future coming (1 Nephi 22:17, 19; Doctrine and Covenants 63:33-35; Pearl of Great Price, Moses 7:61). How does this promise square with what took place at the time of Christ's coming to the Nephites (vs. 12-13)?
1042. What Old World scriptural record contained prophecies of Christ's coming to the Nephites (vs. 16-17)?
1043. Mormon, who was writing of these events several hundred years after their occurrence, spoke of Christ's appearing to the Nephites "soon after the ascension" (v. 18). Approximately how much time appears to have elapsed from the time of the calamities in 3 Nephi 8:5 until the Savior's personal visit (v. 18)?

Chapter 11

1044. When Jesus first appeared to the Nephites it was an assembly of approximately 2500

people (3 Nephi 17:25). This gathering must have been a special convocation of some kind, for all twelve of the men that Jesus was to choose to lead His Church were in attendance. On the temple grounds of which Nephite temple were the people gathered (v. 1)?

1045. How does the record describe the voice of God (v. 3)? Compare this with Helaman 5:30-31, 46-47.
1046. The Father introduced His Son to the multitude (v. 7). Upon what other recorded occasions has the Father introduced the Son? In formulating your answer consult Matthew 3:17; 17:5; Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2:17.
1047. What was the "bitter cup" from which Christ drank (v. 11)? Compare this with Mark 14:32-36.
1048. What unmistakable identification marks did Jesus preserve in His resurrected body (v. 14)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 45:51-52.
1049. What important and authoritative information did the Savior provide the Nephite people on the subject of baptism that should interest all men everywhere (vs. 23-26)?
1050. What did Jesus say regarding the propriety of theological "disputations" or arguments (vs. 28-30)?
1051. What did Jesus say that indicates baptism is essential to salvation and applicable to all men (vs. 32-35)?
1052. What does it mean to "become as a little child" (vs. 38-39)? Consult Mosiah 3:19 for your answer.
1053. In your opinion, who in the world today is declaring "more or less than" the doctrine of salvation that Jesus enunciated to the Nephites (v. 40)?

Chapter 12

1054. Joseph Smith refers to the Nephite disciples, that Jesus appointed to lead His Church, as apostles. (*Documentary History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 538.) How many did Jesus select (v. 1)?
1055. Who were the more blessed, those who saw Jesus and believed in Him or those who were afterwards converted through the testimony of those who saw Him (v. 2)?
1056. In harmony with God's perfect program of justice Jesus taught the Nephite branch of the House of Israel the same truths that He taught the Jewish branch in Palestine. (Compare 3 Nephi 15:1). To both groups he presented the discourse known as the Sermon

on the Mount. The Book of Mormon rendition of this discourse should be read alongside the Bible rendition in Matthew, chapters 5 through 7. It will be observed that the Book of Mormon version sheds important light on the Biblical version. At the outset, in contrast with the popular view that the Sermon on the Mount constituted Jesus' teachings on the good life to all men everywhere—the unbaptized as well as the baptized—the Book of Mormon shows that it was directed specifically to those who were or were to be baptized members of Christ's Church. What preliminary instructions, given by Jesus to His Nephite listeners, show that the Sermon presupposes baptism (vs. 1-2)? Compare this with 3 Nephi 11:21-41.

1057. What evidence can you find in Matthew 5:1-2 (supplemented by Matthew 5:25) that supports the claim that Jesus was not addressing the world at large but, instead, was simply instructing a group of His disciples while seated informally upon the ground?
1058. Verse 3 of the Book of Mormon text appears to be a virtual restatement of the latter half of verse 2. What, then, is meant by the "poor in spirit *who come unto me*"?
1059. All they that mourn (who have first come down into the depths of humility and been baptized and received the Holy Ghost, verse 2) shall be comforted (v. 4). Why is the mourning of the Saints (for the loss of loved ones, for example) invariably swallowed up in comfort?
1060. The meek (who have first come down into the depths of humility and been baptized and received the Holy Ghost, verse 2) shall inherit the earth (v. 5). When will this be so? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 88:17-20 for your answer.
1061. All they that hunger and thirst after righteousness (who have first come down into the depths of humility and been baptized and received the Holy Ghost, verse 2) shall be filled with the Holy Ghost (v. 6) and enjoy its constant companionship. How does this coincide with the injunction and promise that one receives at the time he is confirmed a member of the Church?
1062. The merciful (who have first come down into the depths of humility and been baptized and received the Holy Ghost, verse 2) shall obtain mercy (v. 7). In what form is Christ's mercy manifested? Consult Alma 12:33-34 for your answer.

1063. The pure in heart (who have first come down into the depths of humility and been baptized and received the Holy Ghost, verse 2) shall see God and dwell with Him (v. 8). How does this harmonize with latter-day revelation? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 76:51-62 for your answer.

1064. All the peacemakers (who have first come down into the depths of humility and been baptized and received the Holy Ghost, verse 2) shall be called the children of God (v. 9). Who are the peacemakers? Consult Mosiah 15:11-18 for your answer.

1065. Who are they who are given to be "the salt of the earth" (v. 13)? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 101:39-40 for your answer.

1066. What did Jesus mean by the "light" that his hearers should cause to "shine" before their fellow men (v. 16)? Consult 3 Nephi 18:24 for your answer.

1067. Jesus commended the setting of a good example (v. 16)? Is that all we are obliged to do, or are we also supposed to teach the gospel with words? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 88:81 for your answer.

1068. When Jesus addressed His disciples in Palestine, as is recorded in Matthew 5:18, He told them that the Mosaic law *would be* fulfilled, whereas He told the Nephites in America that it *had been* fulfilled (v. 18). How do you account for the difference in tense? Compare this with Alma 34:13.

1069. Who gave the law of Moses to the Children of Israel (v. 19)? Compare this with 3 Nephi 15:5.

1070. In your judgment or experience, if someone harbors ill-will toward you (vs. 23-24) why is it important that you seek his goodwill before approaching the Lord in prayer?

1071. What did Jesus evidently mean when He instructed His people not to swear but rather let their words be "Yea, yea; Nay, nay" (vs. 33-37)?

1072. Is Christ perfect, or is He constantly working toward perfection (v. 48)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 93:26 ff.

Chapter 13

1073. Upon what condition is one *not* rewarded for contributing to the welfare of the needy (v. 1)?

1074. In your opinion, if the Lord knows what we need before we ask what is the purpose of our asking (v. 8)? Compare this with Revelation 3:20.

1075. What does the Lord require of those who would obtain forgiveness of their sins (vs. 14-15)?
1076. In your judgment, why is secrecy such an emphatic part of Jesus' teachings on fasting and prayer and charity (vs. 1-18)?
1077. In your judgment, how do we lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven (vs. 19-21)?
1078. Whom did Jesus single out for the instruction that begins with verse 25? Compare this with Matthew 6:25.

Chapter 14

1079. In your judgment, what did Jesus mean by the injunction. ". . . neither cast ye your pearls before swine . . ." (v. 6)?
1080. What did Jesus say constitutes "the law and the prophets" (v. 12)?
1081. The word "strait" (vs. 13-14) means narrow. (Note that both the "gate" and the "way" are narrow.) What is the "gate" through which each must pass to get on the way to Eternal Life? Consult 2 Nephi 31:17 ff. for your answer.
1082. Did Jesus teach that many people or few find the way to Eternal Life (v. 14)? Compare this with 2 Nephi 31:19-20.
1083. How can we detect false prophets (vs. 15-20)? Compare this with Moroni 7:16-18.
1084. What does Jesus say that indicates that mere lip service will never make a man eligible to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven (vs. 21-27)?

Chapter 15

1085. Who was the God of the Old Testament (v. 5)? Compare this with 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.
1086. Who was Jesus speaking about when He referred to "other tribes of the house of Israel, whom the Father hath led away out of the land" (v. 15)?
1087. Where in the Bible do we find the prophecy to which Jesus alludes in verse 17? Note footnote *q*.
1088. Whose mission was it to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (v. 22)?

Chapter 16

1089. Who did Jesus say He was going to visit after leaving the Nephites (vs. 1-3)? Compare this with 3 Nephi 17:4.
1090. Knowledge of what people could Christ's followers at Jerusalem have received if they had but asked (v. 4)?

1091. How is the gospel today serving to gather the House of Israel from the four quarters of the earth (v. 5)?
1092. Orson Pratt believed that Christ's prophecy that the gospel would be taken from the Gentiles if they should reject it (v. 10) was fulfilled when the Church migrated to the Indian territory of the West (at which time the missionaries were temporarily called home). If his interpretation be correct what would be the probable explanation of the promise in verse 11 that the gospel would then be taken to the House of Israel? Compare *Masterful Discourses of Orson Pratt*, pp. 316, 318.
1093. What passage in this chapter has caused some people to suppose that Indians and Mexicans of North and South America may some day rise up against the Gentiles of America (vs. 14-15)?

Chapter 17

1094. What beautiful illustration does this chapter provide of the Lord's responsiveness to the prayerful yearnings of His people (vs. 4-5 ff.)?
1095. What kind of a picture of God's love for man does this chapter portray?

Chapter 18

1096. When the disciples and the multitude partook of the sacrament of the Lord's supper they were "filled" (vs. 4-5, 9). With what were they filled? Consult 3 Nephi 20:9 for your answer.
1097. In your opinion, what is wrong if one partakes of the sacrament and is not "filled"?
1098. For whom is the sacrament intended (vs. 5, 11)?
1099. Partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's supper signifies that the partaker vows (a) to take upon himself Christ's name, (b) to always remember Him and (c) to always keep His commandments (Moroni 4:3). What, besides merely making the vow, is necessary to gain the constant companionship of the Holy Spirit (vs. 7, 11)?
1100. Why did Jesus say we should "pray always" (v. 18)?
1101. In whose name should we pray (v. 19)?
1102. What did Jesus say of family prayer (v. 21)?
1103. What did Jesus say that indicates the Church should maintain an "open door policy" toward unbelievers (v. 22)? Compare this with verses 30 and 32.

Chapter 23

1133. Why did Jesus again admonish the Nephites to make a careful study of the words of Isaiah (vs. 1-3)?
1134. What does the Bible say concerning the resurrection of others besides Jesus at the time that the Savior came forth from the grave (vs. 9-10)? Consult Matthew 27:52-53 for your answer.
1135. What lesson might ward clerks and secretaries gain from Nephi's experience (vs. 11-13)?
1136. Judging by Jesus' concern that the Nephite scriptural records be accurate and complete (vs. 11-13) do you consider it probable that some of the New Testament may be based on records made while Jesus was still alive?

Chapter 24

1137. How did ancient Israel rob God (vs. 8-9)?
1138. What economic or material blessings did the Lord promise tithepayers in ancient times (vs. 10-11)?

Chapter 25

1139. When the Angel Moroni came to Joseph Smith he restated, among other prophecies, the part of Malachi's prophecy that appears in verse 1; but he made one interesting change that seemingly meant that Christ and His heavenly hosts will be the Source of the fire that will burn up the wicked. What was this change? Consult Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2:37 for your answer.

Chapter 26

1140. What explanation did Jesus give as to why He had quoted the scriptures that we know of as the third and fourth chapters of Malachi (v. 2)?
1141. Mormon, who lived at the end of nearly a thousand years of Nephite history, was the heir to many sacred records (Mormon 1:3); the bulk of these he buried in the earth, "save it were these few plates which I gave unto my son Moroni" (Mormon 6:6). On two occasions Joseph Smith was shown this great library of Nephite records, but he was not permitted to translate them. Neither was he permitted to translate the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon plates (Ether, chapters 4 and 5). Why has the Lord given us such a small part of the Nephite writings (v. 9)?

Chapter 28

1160. What was the desire and request of nine of the twelve disciples (v. 2)?
1161. At what age of life were the nine disciples promised that their request would be granted (v. 3)?
1162. What desire was John the Beloved granted (v. 6)? Consult John 21:21-25 and Doctrine and Covenants, Section 7, for your answer.
1163. What desire did Jesus say would be granted three of the Nephite disciples (vs. 6-10)?
1164. What change came over the "three Nephites" (vs. 13-17)?
1165. What does Mormon tell us of the later career of the "three Nephites" (vs. 18-24)? Compare this with 4 Nephi, vs. 30-33.
1166. Why didn't Mormon write the names of the "three Nephites" (v. 25)?
1167. How did Mormon, who lived during the fourth century A.D., know for sure that the "three Nephites" were still alive (v. 26)? Compare this with Mormon 8:10-11.
1168. What did Mormon prophesy concerning the future labors of the "three Nephites" (vs. 27-32)?
1169. After writing that he did not know whether the three Nephite disciples "were mortal or immortal, from the day of their transfiguration" (v. 17) Mormon took the question to the Lord and received a revelation on the subject. What did he learn about their status or condition (vs. 36-40)? Compare this with Joseph Fielding Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 170.

Chapter 29

1170. Mormon prophesied that the coming forth of the Book of Mormon would be the signal that what great event was underway (v. 1)?
1171. What does Mormon say to those who would spurn the works of the Lord in the day of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon (v. 4)?
1172. What does Mormon say to those who would ridicule or "make game" of the Jews or "any of the remnant of the House of Israel" (v. 8)?

Chapter 30

1173. What is the promise in store for the Gentiles if they will repent and be baptized (v. 2)?

Mormon's Abridgment of

FOURTH NEPHI¹

THE BOOK OF NEPHI

1174. What relation was the Nephi of the Book of *Fourth Nephi* to the Nephi of the Book of *Third Nephi*? Note title heading.
1175. There are those who say that when Christ comes again very few people will be likely to accept Him. What percentage of the Nephite-Lamanite peoples were converted to the gospel within two years after Jesus' visit (v. 2)?
1176. What evidence do we again have that the Nephites, after Christ's visit, lived a form of the "United Order" (v. 3)? Compare this with Acts 4:32 ff., Doctrine and Covenants, Section 78, and Pearl of Great Price, Moses 7:18.
1177. What important landmark of Book of Mormon geography was restored after the coming of Christ to the Nephites (v. 8)?
1178. Did the Quorum of the Twelve cease with the death of the original Nephite Twelve or were new disciples ordained to replace those who died (v. 14)? Compare this with Acts 1:21-26.
1179. Using the year of Christ's coming to the Nephites as the beginning date and the year when their "United Order" broke up as the ending date (v. 24), how long did the "short term Millennium" last among the Nephites?
1180. What is meant by the statement that (in the year 231 A.D.) "there arose a people who were called the "Nephites" (v. 36)? Compare this with verse 17.
1181. During the Nephite "short term Millennium" the people achieved the "classless society" that later constituted Karl Marx's ideal. In your judgment, what is the difference between the way the Nephites achieved it and the way Communist dominated countries today seek to achieve it?

1. *Fourth Nephi* is an editorial label like *Third Nephi*. It is not part of the original text.

**Mormon's Abridgment of
THE BOOK OF MORMON**

Chapter 1

1182. Upon what set of plates did Ammaron instruct young Mormon to write when he reached the age of twenty-four (vs. 3-4)?
1183. What was the name of Mormon's father (v. 5)?
1184. In your opinion, why does Mormon refer to Nephites and Lamanites, in this record of history, as "two parties" instead of two nations (v. 9)?
1185. How did Mormon distinguish himself at the age of fifteen as a youth of tremendous moral and spiritual force (vs. 15-16)?

Chapter 2

1186. If you had written the Book of Mormon as a work of fiction, with the intention of palming it off as a work of history, why would you have avoided saying that Mormon assumed the leadership of the army in his sixteenth year (v. 2)?
1187. Why wasn't Mormon's appointment to the leadership of the army in his sixteenth year as unusual as it sounds? Consult 3 Nephi 3:19 and Mormon 1:15-16 for your answer.
1188. Upon what set of plates did Mormon make a "full account of all the wickedness and abominations" of his people (v. 18)?
1189. Upon what set of plates did Mormon make an abbreviated or abridged account of the wicked acts of his people (v. 18)?
1190. Why were the Nephites, in their final stages, weak like the Lamanites (v. 26)?
1191. What were the terms of the peace treaty of 350 A.D. (vs. 28-29)?

Chapter 3

1192. How long did the peace last following the treaty of 350 A.D. (v. 1)?
1193. What indication does verse 4 afford that the Lamanites had not yet forsaken all ethics of battle?
1194. Why did Mormon resign his command (vs. 8-16)?
1195. Who will judge the whole House of Israel (v. 18)?
1196. Who will judge the descendants of Lehi in America, and who will judge their judges (v. 19)?
1197. For what cause did Mormon write to the world of the latter days (vs. 20-22)?

Chapter 7

1213. To whom does Mormon address the discourse that comprises chapter 7 (v. 1)?
1214. If one has a genuine belief in the Bible what does Mormon testify he will also believe (vs. 8-9)?

Chapter 8

1215. Who is the author of chapter 8 (v. 1)?
1216. Why does Moroni say he was unable to write a discourse on "the intent" of the plates (v. 5)?
1217. In the final analysis who brought about the downfall of the Nephites (v. 8)? Compare this with 1 Nephi 17:35-38.
1218. What indication does Moroni give us that the destruction of the Nephites did not bring peace to ancient America (v. 8)?
1219. What famous personages did Moroni and his father see (vs. 10-11)? Compare this with 3 Nephi 28:25-26 ff.
1220. What verse of this chapter appears to have marked the end—for a time—of Moroni's addition to his father's record?
1221. Moroni advises a study of the prophecies of Isaiah (v. 23). What prophecy did Isaiah make concerning a people crying "from the dust" and the coming forth of such a work as the Book of Mormon in the last days? Compare this with Isaiah 29:4-14 ff.
1222. How has "the blood of saints" been caused to "cry unto the Lord" since the coming forth of the Book of Mormon (v. 27)? In formulating your answer consider Doctrine and Covenants 135 and also 136:34-36.
1223. Why could Moroni speak with such certainty and power concerning our era (v. 35)?

Chapter 9

1224. What does Moroni say sinners would feel like if they were consigned to dwell in the presence of God (vs. 4-5)?
1225. In what sense will all men be redeemed through Christ (v. 13)?
1226. If God ceases to perform miracles among men what is the reason (v. 20)?
1227. In what language characters did Moroni and his father, Mormon, write (v. 32)?
1228. If some of the Hebrew used in the day of Mormon and Moroni were found today why should we expect it to vary somewhat from any known Old World form of Hebrew (v. 32)?

**Moroni's Abridgment of
THE BOOK OF ETHER**

Chapter 1

1229. Moroni says he takes his account from twenty-four plates "found by the people of Limhi, which is called the Book of Ether" (v. 2). What were the circumstances surrounding that discovery in the year 121 B.C.? Consult Mosiah 8:7-9 for your answer.
1230. Josephus, Jewish historian who lived at the time of Christ, in chapter 5, book I, of his *Antiquities of the Jews*, says of the Tower of Babel episode, "After this they were dispersed abroad, on account of their languages, and went out by colonies everywhere; and each colony took possession of that land which they lighted upon, and unto which God led them; so that the whole continent was filled with them, both the inland and maritime countries. *There were some also who passed over the sea in ships, and inhabited the islands . . .*" What interesting connection does this have with the Book of Ether (v. 33)? Compare this with Genesis 11:1-9.
1231. Judging by the Lord's promise concerning the future greatness of the Jaredite nation (v. 43) how must it have compared, at its height, with such nations as Babylonia, Persia, Greece, China, and Rome.

Chapter 2

1232. Josephus says the king of the people who built the Tower of Babel was one Nimrod, a grandson of Ham. What was the name of the valley northward into which the migrating colony traveled (v. 1)?
1233. Dr. Hugh Nibley, in his *Lehi in the Desert and the World of the Jaredites*, p. 188, says, "The founders of the Second Civilization of Egypt had the bee as the symbol of their land, their king, and their empire, to all of which they applied the designation *deseret* or something [*dsrt*] very close to it. What meaning did the Jaredites attach to the word "Deseret" (v. 3)?
1234. Moroni pauses in his account of the Jaredites to discuss the promises that the Lord has made concerning the Western Hemisphere and the obligations that residence in it entails (vs. 7-12). How did the Lord describe the land of promise (v. 7)?
1235. What did the Lord tell the brother of Jared, that should be of keen interest to all the inhabitants of America today, relative to the

1247. Inasmuch as the Lord knew that the brother of Jared had seen no more of His Person than the finger that He had shown him, why do you suppose He asked him whether he had seen any more (vs. 9-10)?
1248. What final display of faith did the Lord ask the brother of Jared to make before admitting him into His presence (vs. 11-12)?
1249. How does one become a member of the spiritual family of Christ (v. 14)? Compare this with Mosiah 15:10-13 and Pearl of Great Price Moses 6:64-68.
1250. What statement gives us the basis for supposing that our mortal body is patterned after our pre-mortal body (v. 16)?
1251. Some people say that revelation is merely the product of an individual's best thinking and involves God not at all, while certain others say the individual has nothing to do with it but that it is all up to God. How does the experience of the brother of Jared in chapters 2 and 3 show, rather, that revelation involves a partnership between the earnest seeker and his Heavenly Father?
1252. Is it possible for members of Christ's Church, while still in mortality, to see God? In formulating your answer consult Doctrine and Covenants 67:10 ff. and Joseph Fielding Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 150-151.

Chapter 4

1253. When the Prophet-king Mosiah II translated the Jaredite record into the Nephite language in the year 92 B.C. (Mosiah 28:11-17), why did he refrain from publishing the glorious vision of the brother of Jared (v. 1)?
1254. During what golden age of Nephite history did the Nephites have access to the details of the vision of the brother of Jared (v. 2)? Compare this with Ether 3:21, 28.
1255. What one thing, at least, do we know the sealed plates of the Book of Mormon contain (v. 4 ff.)? Compare this with 2 Nephi 27:7 and Ether 3:25-26.
1256. What were the interpreters that Moroni sealed up with the plates (v. 5)? Compare this with Ether 3:23-24 and Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2:34-35.
1257. Judging by verse 6, why has the Lord not yet seen fit to give the Church today the account of the brother of Jared's vision?
1258. When will we be privileged to have access to the detailed vision of the brother of Jared (vs. 6-7)?

1259. The coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a sign that the revelations of which apostle of Christ are about to be fulfilled (v. 16)?

Chapter 5

1260. What instructions pertaining to the sealed vision did Moroni leave on record for the benefit of the latter-day translator, Joseph Smith (v. 1)?

1261. How many witnesses were to see the Book of Mormon plates "by the gift and power of God" (vs. 2-4)? Compare this with 2 Nephi 27:12-13.

1262. In your opinion, does the testimony of eye witnesses to the Book of Mormon plates condemn men and women of our generation (a) for not believing the Book of Mormon or (b) for not investigating the book of Mormon?

Chapter 6

1263. What did the brother of Jared and his people do that served to prevent the boredom of the journey from getting the best of them (v. 9)?

1264. How long did the ocean voyage last (v. 11)?

1265. How many people would you estimate were in the Jaredite colony by the end of the brother of Jared's life (vs. 14-16, 20)?

1266. It is apparent that the brother of Jared and not Jared was the recognized leader of the New World colony, for when the people wished to establish a monarchy they offered the kingship to his sons. When the sons of the brother of Jared declined the kingship who finally was chosen to be their king (v. 17 ff.)?

Chapter 7

1267. The brother of Jared predicted that setting up a kingship would lead to captivity (Ether 6:23). How was this fulfilled during Shule's lifetime (vs. 7-18)?

1268. What did King Shule do to protect the prophets (vs. 24-26)?

Chapter 8

1269. What insidious plan did Jared and his daughter devise (vs. 8-12)?

1270. The oaths that Akish administered to his secret band of conspirators had been handed down from whom (v. 15)?

1271. What does Moroni say will be the fate of any nation that tolerates secret societies until they have spread over the nation (v. 22)?

1272. Who is the real originator of secret combinations (v. 25)?

Chapter 9

1273. How did Omer escape assassination (v. 2)?

1274. How did Akish gain the throne for himself (vs. 5-6)?

1275. What indication do we have that the downfall of the Jaredite nation in the age of Akish was probably due to the corruption of the people as much as to the corruption of their leaders (vs. 11-12)?

1276. The Jaredites had horses (v. 19). What have excavators discovered relative to the existence of horses in ancient America? In formulating your answer consult question number 702.

1277. What two animals did the Jaredites use domestically that are unknown to us today—at least by the Jaredite names (v. 19)?

1278. What urgent reminder (for America today) does Moroni again repeat (v. 20)?

1279. What glorious manifestation was vouchsafed to Emer in his old age (vs. 21-22)?

1280. How does Corianton's length of life (v. 24) compare with the length of life of some of the Biblical patriarchs, who may have lived during this period of history? Consult Genesis 25:7; 35:28; and 50:22.

1281. What terrible disaster came upon the Jaredite nation in the days of King Heth after the people had rejected the warnings of the prophets of God (vs. 28-35)?

Chapter 10

1282. It is likely that over half of Moroni's thumbnail sketch of Jaredite history is covered by this chapter. Starting with Shez (v. 1), how many generations does it deal with? Compare this with Ether 1:13-25.

Chapter 11

1283. What does Moroni appear to be saying was the reason for Com's prosperity in his later years (vs. 1-3)?

1284. After the revolting brother of Shiblom caused the prophets to be put to death, what old story was reenacted (vs. 5-8)?

1285. In your opinion, why does the Book of Ether follow the fortunes of one particular family line on and off the throne so persistently that, at times, while mentioning the names of exiled claimants to the throne, who belonged to this family, it seems to overlook

completely—as a matter of no consequence—the names of actual kings (vs. 9, 15-22)? Consider verse 23 as the probable key to the answer.

Chapter 12

1286. What wise counsel does Moroni give those who would demand eyewitness proof of spiritual phenomena as the price of their belief (v. 6)?
1287. In view of Moroni's discourse on faith (vs. 6-22), what may be concluded was (a) the reason that the resurrected Savior appeared only to certain special witnesses instead of to the world at large and (b) the reason that the Lord allowed the Book of Mormon plates to be shown only to a few? Compare this with Acts 10:39:41.
1288. In the light of verses 24 and 25 what is the probable reason that the brother of Jared whose name, (Joseph Smith learned by revelation, was Mahonri Moriancumer) is always referred to in Moroni's writings as the brother of the less distinguished Jared?
1289. What reference do we have in the Book of Mormon to a mountain literally being moved by faith (v. 30)? Compare this with Matthew 17:20 and Pearl of Great Price, Moses 7:13.
1290. What latter-day martyr used Moroni's farewell in verses 37 and 38 as his own? Consult Doctrine and Covenants 135:4-5 for your answer.

Chapter 13

1291. What hint do we have that the flood covered the Western Hemisphere (v. 2)?
1292. What did Ether prophesy concerning the future destiny of the Biblical city, Jerusalem (v. 5)?
1293. What surprising information does this chapter provide concerning the site of the New Jerusalem (v. 6)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 84:2-3.
1294. What Israelitish tribe can rightfully voice a claim to dwell in America (v. 8)?
1295. At the end of the Millennium the New Jerusalem and the rebuilt city of (old) Jerusalem will be caught up into heaven and returned to the celestialized earth. Who will then inhabit the holy cities (vs. 10-11)?
1296. In your opinion, was the promise that Coriantumr would survive his people (vs. 20-21) meant to be a blessing or a curse?

1321. What is the "light" by which we may distinguish between good and evil (v. 18)?
1322. What, in a word, must Church members first have in order to become possessors of every good (spiritual) gift (vs. 20-26)?
1323. If miracles and the appearance of angels cease in the Church what is the reason (vs. 35-38)?
1324. For what sublime gift may faithful members of Christ's Church have hope—through the atonement of Christ (v. 41)?
1325. What is the meaning of the word "charity," as used by Mormon, without which one is nothing in the eyes of God (vs. 43-47)? Compare this with Ether 12:34.
1326. What, finally, does Mormon urge members of the Church to pray for with all the energy of their hearts (v. 48)?

Chapter 8

1327. What important event had just transpired in Moroni's life when, as a youth, he received the letter from his father that comprises this chapter (vs. 1-2)?
1328. What beautiful parental prayer did Mormon offer constantly in behalf of his son (v. 3)?
1329. What did Mormon say in his letter that indicates his views on the subject of infant baptism and damnation were not based on personal opinion (vs. 7-8)?
1330. In what strong words did Mormon condemn the practice of infant baptism (v. 9)?
1331. What did Mormon admonish his son to teach the people (v. 10)?
1332. Mormon told his son that the doctrine of infant baptism implies what false notion concerning God (v. 12)?
1333. What, actually, is the fate of infants who die without baptism (vs. 17, 22)?
1334. What brings a remission of sins (v. 25)?
1335. How can the hope and love that the Holy Ghost brings be perpetuated in the daily lives of those who receive it (v. 26)?

Chapter 9

1336. What great lesson does Mormon's second epistle to Moroni provide Church members today in their fight for righteousness in the midst of a world of evil (v. 6)?
1337. What war-time atrocities were the Lamanites guilty of (vs. 7-8)?
1338. What war-time atrocities were the Nephites guilty of (vs. 9-10)?
1339. Mormon mentions an enemy military leader, named Aaron (v. 17), by whom his army had just been beaten (v. 2). At what period in

- Mormon's career could this have taken place? Consult Mormon 2:9-21 for your answer.
1340. Who were the more wicked in the era of the Nephite downfall, the Nephites or the Lamanites (v. 20)?
1341. Why didn't Mormon dare recommend his soldiers to God (v. 21)?
1342. What does Mormon say that shows he was thinking of the Book of Mormon benefiting descendants of the Nephites as well as descendants of the Lamanites (v. 24)? Compare this with Doctrine and Covenants 3:16-17 ff.
1343. In the midst of the numerous distracting influences of his day what did Mormon urge his son, Moroni, to think about (v. 25)?

Chapter 10

1344. What appears to have been the year of Moroni's final entry on the plates (v. 1)?
1345. How may one know for himself that the Book of Mormon is true (vs. 3-4)?
1346. Upon what basis does the Lord show forth His power to men (v. 7)?
1347. What are some of the spiritual gifts that the Lord pours out upon the faithful (vs. 9-17)?
1348. Moroni's declaration that he was "as one crying from the dead, yea, even as one speaking out of the dust" (v. 27) recalls what Biblical prophecy? Consult Isaiah 29:4 ff. for your answer.
1349. How may we become perfect in Christ and become sanctified in Him (vs. 32-33)? Compare this with Helaman 3:35.
1350. Where and when will we meet the resurrected Moroni (v. 34)? Compare this with verse 27.

BOOK OF MORMON STUDY GUIDE SUPPLEMENT

THE CASE OF THE
BOOK OF MORMON WITNESSES



By

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1963

THE CASE OF THE BOOK OF MORMON WITNESSES

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

I want to tell a story. It is a true story. It is also an amazing one. Even in a day of inter-continental missiles and earth girdling satellites it is amazing. In my opinion, it is the prologue to the most significant drama of our age.

The event that forms the basis of my story is corroborated by witnesses. My story, in fact, is merely their story with observations of my own relative to its credibility. It has to do mainly with three men, an angel, and a book. I call it, "The Case of the Book of Mormon Witnesses."

The best way I know to present the story would be for the witnesses to tell it with their own lips. Since they are deceased, however, we shall "inter-

view" them by way of recorded statements that they have left behind in published and unpublished sources.

To properly set the stage for this inquiry I shall ask my readers to play the role of a jury — as, indeed, they are part of the "jury" of world opinion that finally must decide on the merits of the case. I shall assume the role of an investigator acting in their behalf. Together, then, we shall exercise the quite exceptional prerogative of calling various people who claim some knowledge of the facts to the "witness stand" for questioning. *And the answers that they give will be assertions made by them in real life without the least variation.* Only the method of presenting them will be improvised.

CHAPTER 2

The Background of the Case

Here is the background of the case. On the night of September 21, 1823, a seventeen year old boy, living with his parents on a farm in up-state New York, had a remarkable experience. His name was Joseph Smith. He later described the experience and certain subsequent developments in the following words:

"On the evening on the 21st of September, A.D. 1823, while I was praying unto God, and endeavoring to exercise faith in the precious promises of Scripture, on a sudden a light like that of day, only far purer and more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room, indeed the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming fire; the appearance produced a shock that affected the whole body; in a moment a personage stood before me surrounded with a glory yet greater than that with which I was already surrounded. This messenger proclaimed himself to be an angel of God, sent to bring the joyful tidings that the covenant which God made with ancient Israel was at hand to be fulfilled, that the preparatory work for the second coming of the Messiah was speedily to commence; that the time was at hand for the Gospel in all its fullness to be preached in power, unto all nations that a people might be prepared for the Millennial reign. I was informed that I was chosen

to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of His purposes in this glorious dispensation.

"I was also informed concerning the aboriginal inhabitants of this country and shown who they were, and from whence they came; a brief sketch of their origin, progress, civilization, laws, governments, of their righteousness and iniquity, and the blessings of God being finally withdrawn from them as a people, was made known unto me; I was also told where were deposited some plates on which were engraven an abridgment of the records of the ancient Prophets that had existed on this continent. The angel appeared to me three times the same night and unfolded the same things. After having received many visits from the angels of God unfolding the majesty and glory of the events that should transpire in the last days, on the morning of the 22nd of September, A.D. 1827, the angel of the Lord delivered the records into my hands.

"These records were engraven on plates which had the appearance of gold, each plate was six inches wide and eight inches long, and not quite so thick as common tin. They were filled with engravings, in Egyptian characters, and bound together in a volume as the leaves of a book, with three rings running through the whole. The volume was some-

thing near six inches in thickness, a part of which was sealed. The characters on the unsealed part were small, and beautifully engraved. The whole book exhibited many marks of antiquity in its construction, and much skill in the art of engraving. With the records was found a curious instrument, which the ancients called "Urim and Thummim," which consisted of two transparent stones set in the rim of a bow fastened to a breast plate. Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God.

"In this important and interesting book the history of ancient America is unfolded, from its first settlement by a colony that came from the Tower of Babel, at the confusion of languages to the beginning of the fifth century of the Christian Era. We are informed by these records that America in ancient times has been inhabited by two distinct races of people. The first were called Jaredites, and came directly from the Tower of Babel. The second race came directly from the city of Jerusalem, about six hundred years before Christ. They were principally Israelites, of the descendants of Joseph. The Jaredites were destroyed about the time that the Israelites came from Jerusalem, who succeeded them in the inheritance of the country. The principal nation of the second race fell in battle

towards the close of the fourth century. The remnant are the Indians that now inhabit this country. This book also tells us that our Savior made His appearance upon this continent after His resurrection; that He planted the Gospel here in all its fulness, and richness, and power, and blessing; that they had Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Teachers, and Evangelists; the same order, the same priesthood, the same ordinances, gifts, powers, and blessings, as were enjoyed on the eastern continent, that the people were cut off in consequence of their transgressions, that the last of their prophets who existed among them was commanded to write an abridgment of their prophecies, history, &c, and to hide it up in the earth, and that it should come forth and be united with the Bible for the accomplishment of the purposes of God in the last days. . . .

"As soon as the news of this discovery was made known, false reports, misrepresentations and slander flew, as on the wings of the wind, in every direction; the house was frequently beset by mobs and evil designing persons. Several times I was shot at, and very narrowly escaped, and every device was made use of to get the plates away from me; but the power and blessing of God attended me, and several began to believe my testimony."¹

CHAPTER 3

The Claim of the Witnesses

Three of the "several" who began to believe Joseph Smith's testimony were David Whitmer and Martin Harris, farmers, and Oliver Cowdery, a young schoolteacher. There were others, but we shall concern ourselves primarily with these three.

In the month of June, 1829, Joseph Smith finished his translation of the Book of Mormon. He was then staying at the home of David Whitmer's parents in the township of Fayette, a few miles south of Waterloo, New York. Immediately after completing the task, he sent the good news to his own parents in Manchester township near Palmyra, New York, and asked them to join him. They promptly responded to his invitation; and, accompanied by Martin Harris, who earlier had assisted Joseph in a secretarial capacity, they journeyed to the Whitmer home. Here they met their son Joseph and also David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery. These three were young men in their twenties. Martin Harris was forty-six.

It was the day after the arrival of Joseph's father and mother and Martin Harris that it happened. That was the day that the "three witnesses" claim that they, in company with Joseph Smith, viewed the sacred plates. Such an assertion might not be exciting if it weren't for the additional fact that they say they were shown them by an angel of God and heard the voice of God declare that they were correctly translated.

At this point, of course, the superficial investigator, who is trying his hand at the riddle of the Book of Mormon's origin, turns away muttering

something about some people's astonishing gullibility. But the man whose curiosity is not so easily satisfied and lingers after the crowd has gone home presently finds that the show has just begun.

Now, inasmuch as we are going to interrogate people whose recorded statements give evidence of some knowledge of the circumstances connected with the viewing of the plates, it seems to me that this is a good place to begin. Let's commence by calling upon Joseph Smith's mother.

Lucy Mack Smith, will you kindly come to the "witness stand."

Mrs. Smith, I note, in an account of your son's life which you once wrote, that after your arrival in Fayette you and your friends spent the evening reading the Book of Mormon manuscript and that you greatly rejoiced. Will you please now tell us the details of anything that afterwards happened at or near the Whitmer residence which you consider pertinent to this inquiry?

"The next morning, after attending to the usual services, namely, reading, singing and praying,

Joseph arose from his knees, and approaching Martin Harris with a solemnity that thrills through my veins to this day, when it occurs to my recollection, said, 'Martin Harris, you have got to humble yourself before God this day, that you

<p>Testimony of Lucy Mack Smith</p>
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¹Joseph Smith, "The Wentworth Letter," *History of the Church*, Vol. 4, pp. 536-538.

may obtain a forgiveness of your sins. If you do, it is the will of God that you should look upon the plates, in company with Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer.'

"In a few minutes after this, Joseph, Martin, Oliver and David, repaired to a grove, a short distance from the house, where they commenced calling upon the Lord, and continued in earnest supplication, until he permitted an angel to come down from his presence, and declare to them, that all which Joseph had testified of concerning the plates was true."²

Mrs. Smith, that is very interesting. Since you do not claim to have been yourself an eyewitness to the angel's visit, however, I trust you won't mind if we ask you to step aside while we call upon someone else to tell us what took place there.

Joseph Smith, Jr., will you take the "witness stand."

Mr. Smith, will you kindly explain to us precisely what occurred in the woods that morning in 1829.

"According to previous arrangements, I commenced by vocal prayer to our Heavenly Father, and was followed by each of the others in succession. We did not at the first trial, however, obtain any answer or manifestation of divine favor in our behalf. We again observed the same order of prayer, each calling on and

praying fervently to God in rotation, but with the same result as before."³

In other words, you are saying, Mr. Smith, that you prayed aloud, and after you had prayed each of the other three prayed aloud in turn. Then all four of you prayed aloud once more. What happened then?

"Upon this, our second failure, Martin Harris proposed that he should withdraw himself from us, believing, as he expressed himself, that his presence was the cause of our not obtaining what we wished for. He accordingly withdrew himself from us, and we knelt down again, and had not been many minutes engaged in prayer, when presently we beheld a light above us in the air, of exceeding brightness; and behold, an angel stood before us."⁴

What did he do? What did he say?

"In his hands he held the plates which we had been praying for these to have a view of. He turned over the leaves one by one, so that we could see them, and discern the engravings thereon distinctly. He then addressed himself to David Whitmer, and said, 'David, blessed is the Lord, and he that keeps His commandments,' when immediately afterwards, we heard a voice from out of the bright light above us, saying, 'These plates have

²Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, pp. 151-152 (1945 edition).

³Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 54.

⁴*Ibid.*

been revealed by the power of God, and they have been translated by the power of God. The translation of them which you have seen is correct, and I command you to bear record of what you now see and hear."⁵

I see. What did you do then?

"I now left David and Oliver, and went in pursuit of Martin Harris, whom I found at a considerable distance, fervently engaged in prayer. He soon told me, however, that he had not yet prevailed with the Lord, and earnestly requested me to join him in prayer, that he also might realize the same blessings which we had just received. We accordingly joined in prayer, and ultimately obtained our desires, for before we had yet finished, the same vision was opened to our view, at least it was again opened to me, . . ."⁶

That's right, Mr. Smith, we want you to tell us precisely what you saw and what you heard.

". . . and I once more beheld and heard the same things; whilst at the same moment, Martin Harris cried out, apparently in an ecstasy of joy, 'Tis enough; tis enough; mine eyes have beheld; mine eyes have beheld;' and jumping up, he shouted, 'Hosanna,' blessing God, and otherwise rejoiced exceedingly."⁷

Thank you, Mr. Smith. You may step down.

Now, it seems to me that it would be advantageous to ascertain the attitude of these men as they returned to the house. Were they whistling a popular tune? Were they laughing? Were they discussing the livestock on the farm? Were they talking about the crops or the weather? Or did they speak and look and act as if something wonderful had taken place? Let's call on Joseph Smith's mother again to see if she can illuminate our minds on this point.

Mrs. Smith, I understand that you were in the house when Joseph, Oliver, David, and Martin returned. Will you tell us what they said and what they did when they came in.

"When they returned to the house it was between three and four o'clock p.m. Mrs. Whitmer,

Mr. Smith and myself, were sitting in a bedroom at the time. On coming in, Joseph threw himself down beside me, and exclaimed, 'Father, mother, you do not know how happy I am: the Lord has now caused the plates to be shown to three

more besides myself. They have seen an angel, who has testified to them, and they will have to bear witness to the truth of what I have said, for now they know for themselves, that I do not go about to deceive the people, and I feel as if I was relieved of a burden which was almost too heavy for me to bear, and it rejoices my soul, that I am not any longer to be entirely alone in the world.'⁸

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, p. 152.

Testimony
of
Joseph
Smith

Further
Testimony
of
Lucy
Mack Smith

What about the other men, Mrs. Smith? What about Mr. Cowdery, Mr. Whitmer, and Mr. Harris?

“Upon this, Martin Harris came in: he seemed almost overcome with joy, and testified boldly to what he had both seen and heard. And so did David and Oliver, adding that no tongue could express the joy of their hearts, and the greatness of the things which they had both seen and heard.”⁹

Thank you, Mrs. Smith. You have been very helpful.

I believe that fairness impels us to acknowledge that the attitude of these men, as described by Mrs. Smith, is exactly what we should expect it to have been if they had had such a marvelous experience as they claim they had.

Later, to meet the requirements of a sophisticated modern world, the three witnesses presented their joint testimony in a formal statement that has appeared in each edition of the Book of Mormon since its first publication. I quote it in full for the record.

“Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken.

**Statement
of the
Three
Witnesses**

“And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true.

“And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man.

“And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvelous in our eyes.

“Nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things.

“And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 152-153.

Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

Oliver Cowdery

David Whitmer

Martin Harris”¹⁰

Concerning the experience about which these three men testify, B. H. Roberts, attorney, Church leader, and long-time student of the Book of Mormon concludes:

“An argument may be formulated against the probability of such an occurrence. It may be alleged that they were ignorant, uncritical, incompetent and therefore unworthy of belief. All this may be done, nay, it has been done; but no one can stand up and say that he knows what they say is not true, that what they say they saw, they did not see.”¹¹

There were others besides the three who claim they looked at the plates. Eight men maintain they saw and handled them a few days after Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris did. There is, however, one important difference. Whereas the three affirm that they were shown them by a heavenly visitant, Joseph Smith is reported to have personally displayed them to the eight. Their viewing of the record took place in Manchester soon after the return of Joseph’s parents from Fayette. It occurred in the woods not far from the Smith home at a spot where, as Mother Smith explains, members of her family “were in the habit of offering up their secret devotions to God.”¹² Here the eight, accompanied by Joseph Smith, examined the ancient record with their own eyes and handled it with their hands. Later the same day, all of the witnesses, the eight as well as the three who were also now in Manchester, met for a religious service in the Smith home where each bore testimony to the rest concerning the wonderful experience that he had had. Even Joseph’s fourteen year old brother, Don Carlos, although not himself an eyewitness, declared his conviction that a new dispensation of the gospel had been ushered in.¹³ And nine months later, in March 1830, when the Book of Mormon came off the press, it carried not only the testimony of the three witnesses but also the testimony of the eight. Here is their published declaration:

“Be It Known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That Joseph Smith, Jun., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath

¹⁰“The Testimony of Three Witnesses” in the forepart of the *Book of Mormon*. (The paragraph arrangement above is the author’s.)

¹¹B. H. Roberts, *New Witnesses for God*, Vol. 2, p. 281.

¹²Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, p. 154.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 155.

**Statement
of
Eight
Witnesses**

been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and

of curious workmanship.

“And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen. And we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

Christian Whitmer	Hiram Page
Jacob Whitmer	Joseph Smith, Sen.
Peter Whitmer, Jun.	Hyrum Smith
John Whitmer	Samuel H. Smith” ¹⁴

It is not our purpose in this reexamination of the documents to consider the implications of the testimony of the eight witnesses. It is sufficient simply to note that their affirmation corroborates the claim of Cowdery, Whitmer, and Harris respecting the single fact that Joseph Smith had access to an antique looking metal volume of some kind. **The testimony of the three is the proper subject of our inquiry, for upon the truth of their words hinges the question of whether all men everywhere should not stop immediately and read the book. Admittedly if their statement be true that an angel showed them the record and God declared its truth, then it stands to reason that it contains a message of transcendent importance for our generation. In fact, if their statement be true, reason also declares that it contains—as adherents of the volume maintain—the solution to mankind’s problems of war and peace¹⁵ and sin and salvation. Yes, the truth of the testimony of the three witnesses argues forcefully for the claim that God has preserved a textbook for our times that all men everywhere should prayerfully and carefully read without delay.** Let us, then, continue our investigation of the testimony of the three.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized officially April 6, 1830, and eight years later it was in the throes of a crisis. By then a considerable body of the membership of the Church had been driven out of Jackson County, Missouri, by an armed mob, and an economic depression was sweeping the nation. In the course of this business recession the Kirtland Safety Society, the bank in which most of the members of the Church in Ohio had their savings, failed, and a storm of criticism was directed at Joseph Smith. During this tumultuous period most of the Prophet’s friends deserted him, and—what at first blush appears disastrous to the case of the Book of Mormon witnesses—among

¹⁴“The Testimony of Eight Witnesses” in the forepart of the *Book of Mormon*. (The paragraph arrangement above is the author’s.)

¹⁵As a case in point see Ether 2: 11-12, p. 481.

them were Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris. This is not to say that they had had differences with Joseph Smith regarding the Book of Mormon. Nor is it to say that they left the Church because they chose to do so. They were expelled. They were expelled because they had become openly critical of the Church’s leadership, which mainly means critical of Joseph Smith. There were other reasons, too, such as negligence in the matter of Church attendance or, as in the case of Oliver Cowdery, “For leaving his calling in which God had appointed him by revelation, for the sake of filthy lucre, and turning to the practice of law,”¹⁶ and in David Whitmer’s case, “For not observing the Word of Wisdom,”¹⁷ the Church’s health code. It was, of course, a time when great loyalties were demanded. Either men stood solidly behind the Church and its leadership, its principles, and its practices or else they were required to step aside.

One can only guess how differently things might have turned out if the founder of “Mormonism” and his erstwhile three associates had conspired to perpetrate a fraud. Says Roberts:

“Suppose, for a moment. . . collusion did exist. In that event, if the Three Witnesses fell into transgression—as they evidently did—and violated Church discipline ever so flagrantly, would Joseph Smith dare to break friendship with them by excommunicating them? Would he not, on the contrary, say in his heart: It matters not what these men may do, I dare not raise my hand against them; for if I do they will divulge our secret compact, and I shall be execrated as a vile imposter by the whole world, I shall be repudiated by my own people, and driven out from all society a vagabond. At whatever cost I must cover up their iniquity, lest I myself by them be exposed to shame. Such, doubtless, would have been his course of reasoning; and had he with them conspired to deceive mankind, such, doubtless, is what would have taken place; for I maintain that men who would be base enough to concoct such a deception would also be base enough to expose it and become traitors when they became disaffected towards each other. But nothing of the kind took place. When these men violated the law of God and would not repent and forsake the evil they did, neither Joseph Smith nor the Church would any longer fellowship with them, but boldly excommunicated them.

“By the act of excommunication, Joseph Smith virtually said to the Three Witnesses: Gentlemen, God has made you witnesses for himself in this age of spiritual darkness and unbelief, but you refuse to keep his laws, therefore we must withdraw the hand of fellowship from you. This may fill you with anger and malice; you may raise your hand against me and the work of God to destroy it; Satan may put it into your hearts to deny the testimony you have borne; but I know you received that wit-

¹⁶“History of Joseph Smith,” *The Latter-day Saints’ Millennial Star*, Vol. 16. No. 9, March 4, 1854, p. 133.

¹⁷*Ibid.*

ness from God. I was with you when you received it, I saw the glorious messenger from heaven show you the plates; I, myself heard the voice of God bear record to you that the translation was correct and the work true—now deny that testimony if you dare—this work is of God, and he can sustain it even if you should turn against it; therefore we

will not fellowship you in your wickedness—you are cut off from our association—do your worst!”¹⁸

Let us now follow these men after their dismissal from the Church and see what happens to their testimony of the angel and the book.

We shall first consider Oliver Cowdery.

CHAPTER 4

Oliver Cowdery

Oliver Cowdery was expelled from the Church at Far West, Missouri, April 12, 1838 and from 1838 to 1848 practiced law. Brigham Young once said of him, and I quote his statement for the record:

“He saw and conversed with the angel, who showed him the plates, and he handled them. He left the Church because he lost the love of the truth; and after he had travelled alone for years, a gentleman walked into his law office and said to him, ‘Mr. Cowdery, what do you think of the Book of Mormon now? Do you believe that it is true?’ He replied, ‘No, sir, I do not.’ ‘Well,’ said the gentleman, ‘I thought as much; for I concluded that you had seen the folly of your ways and had resolved to

renounce what you once declared to be true.’ ‘Sir, you mistake me: I do not believe that the Book of Mormon is true; I am past belief on that point, for I KNOW that it is true, as well as I know that you now sit before me.’ ‘Do you still testify

that you saw an angel?’ ‘Yes, as much as I see you now; and I know the Book of Mormon to be true.’”¹⁹

A somewhat similar experience of Oliver Cowdery’s is related by former Juvenile Court Judge C. M. Nielsen of Murray, Utah. Let’s invite Mr. Nielsen to the “witness stand” to give us an account of the incident.

Mr. Nielsen, will you tell us what you know about Oliver Cowdery once stating in court that he had seen the Book of Mormon plates.

“In the year 1884 I was traveling as a missionary in Minnesota. I had most of the eastern part of the state to myself. I was without purse or scrip and one night slept in a haystack. Next day I came to a city and wandered up and down the streets. I had no money, no friends and didn’t know where to go. I passed a large store called the Emporium, something like our Z.C.M.I. I was attracted by it, but didn’t know why. There were about 25 teams hitched near the place, owned by farmers in town on business. Something told me to ‘Go over and see a certain man.’ The street was full of people and I wondered which man. Then one man seemed to

me as big as three ordinary men. The spirit whispered: ‘Go over and speak to him!’ I hesitated to approach this entire stranger, but the same voice came to me a second and third time. Then I went.

“He was a prosperous looking farmer with a fine two-seated buggy, which he was ready to enter, and was a prominent man, I afterwards learned. Not knowing what else, I said: ‘How far are you going?’ ‘Home; where are you going?’ ‘I have no certain place; I am from Utah.’ ‘You are not a Mormon, are you?’ he asked, anxiously. ‘Yes.’ ‘Then God bless you!’ he replied, reaching out his arms and dropping the lines. ‘Get into this buggy as fast as you can. When we get home, my wife will rejoice as I rejoice now. I will then explain all. But you are not one of these make-believers are you?’ ‘No, I’m a real live Mormon from Utah.’

“Reaching the home, he called, ‘Mother, here’s a real live Mormon elder.’ I’m afraid I didn’t look very fine, as I had slept in a haystack the previous night. They took me by the hand and led me into the house. I was very hungry and begged for something to eat. After my hunger was satisfied, they called in their sons and daughters and we sat around the table. My new found friend then said:

“Now, young man, you thought it strange how I acted when you spoke to me. When I get through you will realize the importance of your coming to us. When I was 21 years of age I was working my father’s farm in Michigan. I had worked hard on the farm that summer and decided to take a day off, so went to the city. Near the courthouse I saw a great many people assembling and others walking that way, so I went over to see what was up. There was a jam in the courtroom, but being young and strong, I pushed my way close up to the center, where I found the prosecuting attorney addressing the court and jury in a murder trial. The prosecuting attorney was Oliver Cowdery, and he was giving his opening address in behalf of the state. (After he was cut off from the Church, Oliver Cowdery studied law, practicing in Ohio, Wisconsin and then Michigan, where he was elected prosecuting attorney.) After Cowdery sat down the attorney

¹⁸B. H. Roberts, *New Witnesses For God*, Vol. 2, pp. 307-308.

¹⁹“Remarks by President Brigham Young, delivered in the Bowery, Provo, June 27, 1858,” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, page 55.

representing the prisoner arose and with taunting sarcasm said: "May it please the court and gentlemen of the jury, I see one Oliver Cowdery is going to reply to my argument. I wish he would tell us something about the Mormon Bible; something about that golden Bible that Joe Smith dug out of the hill; something about the great fraud he perpetrated upon the American people whereby he gained thousands of dollars. Now he seems to know so much about this poor prisoner, I wonder if he has forgotten all about Joe Smith and his connection with him." The speaker all the while sneering and pointing his finger in scorn at Cowdery in the hope of making him ridiculous before the court and jury.

"Everybody present began to wonder if they had been guilty of making such a mistake as choosing a Mormon for prosecuting attorney. Even the judge on the bench began looking with suspicion and distrust at the prosecuting attorney. The prisoner and his attorney became elated at the effect of the speech. People began asking, "Is he a Mormon?" Everybody wondered what Cowdery would say against such foul charges."²⁰

Please excuse me, Mr. Nielsen, if I interrupt you at this crucial point. Some writers have suggested that the fact that these three men continued to affirm the truth of their story means only that they didn't want to admit they were liars. After all, no one wants to go through life labeled a liar. There is, I think, an easier way of squirming out of a situation of that kind than saying "I lied." It would be to say, "I was mistaken," or "I was deceived." These men surely would have been bitter toward those who had expelled them from their racket. The normal human reaction would be to strike back. If the Book of Mormon were a fraud, may we not suppose that Oliver Cowdery, on the occasion in question, would have denounced Joseph Smith as a crook, a scoundrel, and a deceiver—the more so to clear his own name from any suspicion of sympathy for the things he stood for? Can we not imagine his waxing eloquent about deluded "Mormons" being led astray by false leaders and then, maybe, in a self-righteous display declaring that he wanted nothing more in life than to correct the error to which he had been a party in his youth?

Now Mr. Nielsen, will you kindly tell us what Oliver Cowdery actually said on this occasion, as related by your informant?

"Finally Oliver Cowdery arose, calm as a summer morning. I was within three feet of him. There was no hesitation, no fear, no anger in his voice, as he said: "May it please the court, and gentlemen of the jury, my brother attorney on the other side has charged me with connection with Joseph Smith and the golden Bible. The responsi-

bility has been placed upon me, and I cannot escape reply. . . . Before God and man I dare not deny what I have said, and what my testimony contains and as written and printed on the front page of the Book of Mormon. May it please your honor and gentlemen of the jury, this I say, I saw the angel and heard his voice—how can I deny it? It happened in the daytime when the sun was shining bright in the firmament; not in the night when I was asleep. That glorious messenger from heaven, dressed in white, standing above the ground, in a glory I have never seen anything to compare, with the sun insignificant in comparison, and these personages told us if we denied that testimony there is no forgiveness in this life nor in the world to come. Now how can I deny it—I dare not; I will not!"²¹

Thank you, Mr. Nielsen, for your thought-provoking testimony. You may step down.

There is a happy ending to the story of Oliver Cowdery's expulsion from the Church. He rejoined the Church. After being on the outside looking in for ten years he humbly sought to be baptized into membership again. The year was 1848. As far as his testimony while he was out of the Church is concerned, therefore, we are dependent upon neither the reference to the law office incident nor Nielsen's account of the courtroom episode. For the purpose of our inquiry, his years of separation from the Church are overshadowed by the fact that he voluntarily sought and gained membership anew in the organization from which he had been cast aside.

Now, may I ask our "jury" of Book of Mormon investigators to consider what he was getting back into. Was it a rich, well-established, and widely accepted institution? Did he have reason to expect that it could offer him power, station, wealth? One would hardly think so, for just two years earlier the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had been driven out of the United States of America and into the Indian Territory westward. The migration to the Rocky Mountains was still under way, and the Church was passing through one of its darkest hours.

Oliver Cowdery journeyed to Kanessville, Iowa, with his wife and daughter in October of 1848. Many of the "Mormons" there were preparing for the move westward. On October 21 he was invited to address a Church conference attended by about two thousand people. His words were recorded as he spoke by Bishop Reuben Miller. We are now going to call Bishop Miller to the "witness stand" and ask him to give us a verbatim account of that portion of Cowdery's address that applies to the Book of Mormon.

Bishop Miller, will you come forward.

Bishop Miller, will you please tell us exactly what Oliver Cowdery told the conference in Kaness-

²⁰Oliver Cowdery and His Testimony: An Address Delivered by Judge C. M. Nielsen in the Twenty-fourth Ward Meeting House, Salt Lake City, Utah, February 20, 1910." *Liahona The Elder's Journal*, Vol. 8, August 30, 1910, pp. 162-163.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 163. Although Oliver Cowdery is here reported as speaking of a single angel he mentions "these personages," evidently an allusion both to the angel, whom the three witnesses saw, and to the Lord whose voice they heard but saw not.

ville, Iowa, on the occasion of his asking for permission to become a member of the Church once more? We request the part that relates to the Book of Mormon.

“Following is a verbatim report: ‘Friends and Brethren: — My name is Cowdery, Oliver Cowdery. In the early history of this Church I stood identified with her, and one in her councils. True it is that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance; not because I was better than the rest of mankind was I called; but, to fulfill the purposes of God, he called me to a high and holy calling.

“I wrote, with my own pen, the entire Book of Mormon (save a few pages) as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith, as he translated it by the gift and power of God, by the means of the Urim and Thummim, or, as it is called by that book, “Holy interpreters.” I beheld with my eyes, and handled with my hands, the gold plates from which it was transcribed. I also saw with my eyes and handled with my hands the “holy interpreters.” That book is true. Sidney Rigdon did not write it; Mr. Spaulding did not write it. I wrote it myself as it fell from the lips of the Prophet. It contains the everlasting gospel, and came forth to the children of men in fulfillment of the revelations of John, where he says he saw an angel come, with the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, kindred, and people. It contains the principles of salvation; and if you, my hearers, will walk by its light and obey its precepts, you will be saved with an everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God on high.’”²²

We appreciate this information very much, Bishop Miller. Will you also tell us what Oliver Cowdery said at a subsequent meeting of the High Council at Kanessville that, as I understand, met to give final approval to his request for readmission in the early part of November.

“‘Brethren, for a number of years I have been separated from you. I now desire to come back. I wish to come humbly and to be one in your midst. I seek no station; I only wish to be identified with you. I am out of the Church. I am not a member of the Church; but I wish to become a member of it. I wish to come in at the door. I know the door. I have not come here to seek precedence. I come humbly and throw myself upon the decisions of this body, knowing as I do that its decisions are right and should be obeyed.’

“Brother George W. Harris, President of the Council, moved that Brother Cowdery be received. Considerable discussion took place in relation to a certain letter which, it was alleged, Brother Cowdery had written to David Whitmer. Brother Cowdery again rose and said:

“‘If there be any person that has aught against me, let him declare it. My coming back and humbly asking to become a member through the door, covers the whole ground.—I acknowledge this authority.’

“Br[other] Hyde moved that br[other] Oliver Cowdery be received into the Church by baptism, and that all old things be dropped and forgotten. Seconded and carried unanimously.”²³

Thank you, Bishop Miller. That will be all.

Returning now to the Kanessville conference of October 21, 1848, we have another witness, George A. Smith. Mr. Smith was also present at the assembly and has left a written account of the event.

George A. Smith, will you come forward.

Mr. Smith, not quite two and a half months after Cowdery’s public plea for readmission into the Church the *Millennial Star*, a Latter-day Saint periodical published in England, printed a letter bearing your name that evidently was written by you to Orson Pratt October 31, 1848. That would be just ten days after the Kanessville conference, wouldn’t it? Will you please give us further light on Cowdery’s speech as set forth in that letter.

“Oliver Cowdery, who had just arrived from Wisconsin with his family, on being invited, addressed the meeting. He bore testimony in the most positive terms of the truth of the Book of Mormon—the restoration of the priesthood to the earth, and the mission of Joseph Smith as the Prophet of the last days; and told the people if they

wanted to follow the right path, to keep the main channel of the stream — where the body of the Church goes, there is the authority; and all these lo here’s and lo theres have no authority; but this people have the true and holy priesthood; ‘for the angel said unto Joseph Smith, Jr., in my hearing, that this priesthood shall remain on the earth unto the end.’ His testimony produced quite a sensation among the gentlemen present, who did not belong to the Church, and it was gratefully received by all the Saints. Last evening, President Hyde and myself spent the evening with Brother Cowdery. He told us he had come to listen to our counsel and would do as we told him. He had been cut off from the Church by a council; had withdrawn himself from it; stayed away eleven years; and now came back, not expecting to be a leader, but wished to be a member and have a part among us. He considered that he ought to be baptized; and did not expect to return without it. He said that Joseph Smith had fulfilled his mission faithfully before God until death. He was determined to rise with the Church, and if it went down he was willing to go down with it. I saw him to-day, told him I was going to write to you. He sends his respects to you; he says, ‘tell Brother Orson I am advised by the brethren to remain here this winter, and assist Brother Hyde

**Testimony
of
Bishop
Reuben Miller**

**Testimony
of
George A.
Smith**

²²Deseret News, April 13, 1859.

²³Ibid.

in the printing office, and as soon as I get settled I will write him a letter.—I remain, as ever, your brother in the kingdom of patience.

GEO. A. SMITH.”²⁴

Thank you very much, Mr. Smith.

Two months later—in January 1849—Cowdery and his wife decided to visit one of the other excommunicated witnesses, David Whitmer, who was his brother-in-law, and on the way were obliged to seek shelter from a severe snow storm at the home of one Samuel W. Richards. As it turned out they were snowbound for two weeks, during which time Richards seized the opportunity to ask him many questions about his life. I think it would be most interesting to call Mr. Richards to the “witness stand” to tell us what he was able to learn from Cowdery during his interviews that lasted half a month.

Mr. Richards, will you be kind enough to tell what you learned about the Book of Mormon through your conversations with Oliver Cowdery during the fortnight that he was your guest.

“I had but the fall before returned from my first mission to the British Isles, and was in the spirit of inquiry as to all matters of early history and experiences in the Church, and soon found there was no reserve on the part of Oliver in answering my many questions. In doing so his mind seemed as fresh in recollection of events which occurred more than a score of years before as though they were but of yesterday.

“Upon carefully inquiring as to his long absence from the body of the Church, he stated that he had

**Testimony
of
Samuel W.
Richards**

never met the Prophet Joseph, after his expulsion from the Church, while he lived, apparently feeling that the Prophet could with equal propriety inquire after him as for him to visit the Prophet, and as his pride would seemingly not allow him to become suppliant

without that inquiry, it was never made; while he felt quite sure that had he ever met the Prophet there would have been no difficulty in effecting a reconciliation, as a feeling of jealousy towards him, on the part of his accusers, had entered largely into their purpose of having him removed, which he thought Joseph must have discovered after going up to Missouri.”²⁵

I see. Now, Mr. Richards, there is a question that I can't resist the temptation to ask you that is a little afield from our inquiry, although related to it in principle. Joseph Smith says that Oliver Cowdery was not only with him when the Angel Moroni displayed the plates, but that he also was

²⁴“Letters to the Editor,” *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 11, No. 1, January 1, 1849, p. 14.

²⁵Elder Samuel W. Richards, “Oliver Cowdery,” *The Improvement Era*, Vol. 2, December 1898, p. 94.

with him on several other occasions when heavenly beings appeared. My question is this: Did he ever speak to you about any of these other visitations during his prolonged stay. If so, what was your reaction to it?

“To hear him describe in his pleasant but earnest manner the personality of those heavenly messengers, with whom he and the Prophet had so freely held converse, was enchanting to my soul. Their heavenly appearance, clothed in robes of purity; the influence of their presence so lovely and serene; their eyes that seemed to penetrate to the very depths of the soul, together with the color of the eyes that gazed upon them, were all so beautifully related as to almost make one feel that they were then present; and as I placed my hands upon his head where these angels had placed theirs, a divine influence filled the soul to that degree that one could truly feel to be in the presence of something that was more than earthly; and from that day to this—now almost fifty years ago—the interest of those glorious truths upon the mind has never been lost, but as a beacon light ever guiding to the home of their glory for a like inheritance.”²⁶

Thank you, Mr. Richards, we are grateful for your testimony. You may step down.

Oliver Cowdery planned to go west to Utah, but while visiting at the home of his father-in-law, Peter Whitmer, later that same year, he contracted tuberculosis and died March 3, 1850. Among those present were Phineas H. Young and his wife, Lucy P. Young (Cowdery's half-sister), and, appropriately enough, David Whitmer, one of the other expelled witnesses.

At this juncture I should like to enter into the record two quotations from Andrew Jenson's *L.D.S. Biographical Encyclopedia*. Jenson quotes Phineas

**Statement
of
Andrew
Jenson**

Young as saying of Cowdery: “. . . his last moments were spent in bearing testimony of the truth of the gospel revealed through Joseph Smith, and the power of the holy Priesthood which he had received through his administrations.”²⁷

Jenson explains, as follows, Lucy P. Young's version of Cowdery's last moments:

“... Oliver Cowdery just before breathing his last, asked his attendants to raise him up in bed that he might talk to the family and his friends, who were present. He then told them to live according to the teachings contained in the Book of Mormon, and promised them, if they would do this, that they would meet him in heaven. He then said, ‘Lay me down and let me fall asleep.’ A few moments later he died without a struggle.”²⁸

To the foregoing I add a statement by David

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 95.

²⁷Andrew Jenson, *L.D.S. Biographical Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1, p. 251.

²⁸*Ibid.*

Whitmer. Although himself outside the Church at the time he wrote these words, Whitmer says, "I was present at the death of Oliver Cowdery, and

his last words were, 'Brother David, be true to your testimony to the Book of Mormon.' He died here in Richmond, Mo. on March 3d, 1850."²⁹

CHAPTER 5

David Whitmer

Let us now shift the spotlight from Oliver Cowdery to David Whitmer. David Whitmer was cut off from the Church at Far West, Missouri, April 13, 1838. In time he moved from Far West, Missouri, to Richmond, Missouri, where he spent the remainder of his life. Here he was affiliated with a little splinter group of "Mormonism," which called itself the Church of Christ. Although he never returned to the Church, it is sufficient for our purpose to note that to the day of his death he belonged to a faction—indeed, was one of its leaders—that affirmed the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon; so regardless of his differences with the leadership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in other particulars, he appears to have been at one with them on the question of the truth of the Book of Mormon. Now, from the several incidents in his out-of-the-Church career that bear upon his testimony of the angel and the book there are a few representative ones to which I should like to call the "jury's" attention. I now ask David Whitmer to take the "witness stand."

Mr. Whitmer, the *Kansas City Daily Journal* of June 5, 1881, carries the report of an interview between you and a newspaper man who allegedly had been sent to your home in Richmond to converse with you. The reporter found you somewhat pale and feeble in the wake of a recent illness. He introduced himself and, according to the article in question, began the conversation as follows:

"Mr. Whitmer, knowing that you are the only living witness to the translation of the Book of Mormon and also that you were a resident of Jackson County during the Mormon troubles in 1833, I have been sent to you by the *Journal* to get from your lips the true statement of facts in regard to these matters. For nearly half a century the world has had but one side only, and it is now our desire to present to our readers for the first time the other side."³⁰

The journalist says you replied:

"Young man, you are right. I am the only living witness to the Book of Mormon, but I have been imposed upon and misrepresented so many times by persons claiming to be honorable newspaper men, that I feel a delicacy in allowing my name to come before the public in newspaper print again."³¹

The reporter maintains that he assured you that the interview would be published exactly as it took place and that your statements would not be garbled or distorted in any manner. Will you now give us the

main elements of your story as you related it to the *Kansas City Daily Journal* man.

"I first heard of what is now termed Mormonism in the year 1828. I made a business trip to Palmyra, N.Y., and while there stopped with one Oliver Cowdery. A great many people in the neighborhood were talking about the finding of certain golden plates by one Joseph Smith, Jr., a young man of that neighborhood. Cowdery and I, as well

Testimony of David Whitmer

as others, talked about the matter, but at that time I paid but little attention to it, supposing it to be only the idle gossip of the neighborhood. Cowdery said he was acquainted with the Smith family, and he believed there must be some truth in the story of the plates, and that he intended to investigate the matter. I had conversations with several young men who said that Joseph Smith had certainly had golden plates, and that before he attained them he had promised to share with them, but had not done so, and they were very much incensed with him. Said I, 'how do you know that Joe Smith has the plates?' They replied: 'we saw the . . . [place] in the hill that he took them out of just as he described it to us before he obtained them.' These parties were so positive in their statements that I began to believe there must be some foundation for the stories then in circulation all over that part of the country. I had never seen any of the Smith family up to that time, and I began to inquire of the people in regard to them, and learned that one night during the year 1827, Joseph Smith, Jr., had a vision, and an angel of God appeared to him and told him where certain plates were to be found, and pointed out the spot to him, and that shortly afterward he went to that place and found the plates which were still in his possession. After thinking over the matter for a long time, and talking with Cowdery, who also gave me a history of the finding of the plates, I went home, and after several months Cowdery told me he was going to Harmony, Pa.—whither Joseph Smith had gone with the plates on account of persecutions of his neighbors—and see him about the matter. He did go and on his way stopped at my father's house and told me that as soon as he found out anything either truth or untruth he would let me know. After he got there he became acquainted with Joseph Smith, and shortly after, wrote to me telling me that he was convinced that Smith had the records and that he (Smith) had told him that

³⁰*Kansas City Daily Journal*, Vol. 24, No. 300, June 5, 1881, p. 1.

³¹*Ibid.*

²⁹David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ*, p. 8.

it was the will of heaven that he (Cowdery) should be his scribe to assist in the translation of the plates. He went on and Joseph translated from the plates and he wrote it down. Shortly after this Cowdery wrote me another letter in which he gave me a few lines of what they had translated, and he assured me that he knew of a certainty that he had a record of a people that inhabited this continent, and that the plates they were translating gave a complete history of these people. When Cowdery wrote me these things and told me that he had revealed knowledge concerning the truth of them, I showed these letters to my parents, and brothers and sisters. Soon after I received another letter from Cowdery, telling me to come down into Pennsylvania and bring him and Joseph to my father's house, giving as a reason therefor that they had received a commandment from God to that effect. I went down to Harmony, and found everything just as they had written me. The next day after I got there they packed up the plates and we proceeded on our journey to my father's house where we arrived in due time, and the day after we commenced upon the translation of the remainder of the plates. I, as well as all of my father's family, Smith's wife, Oliver Cowdery, and Martin Harris were present during the translation."³²

That is very interesting, Mr. Whitmer, very interesting, indeed. Will you kindly also tell us when and under what circumstances you saw the Book of Mormon plates from which Joseph Smith translated.

"It was in the latter part of June, 1829. Joseph Oliver Cowdery and myself were together, and the angel showed them to us. We not only saw the plates of the Book of Mormon, but he also showed us the brass plates of the book of Ether and many others. They were shown to us in this way. Joseph and Oliver and I were sitting on a log when we were overshadowed by a light more glorious than that of the sun. In the midst of this light but a few feet from us appeared a table upon which were many golden plates, also the sword of Laban and the directors. I saw them as plain as I see you now, and distinctly heard the voice of the Lord declaiming that the records of the plates of the Book of Mormon were translated by the gift and the power of God."³³

Mr. Whitmer, approximately at this point in your interview with the representative of the *Kansas City Daily Journal*, the reporter says he asked you a question that we consider highly significant to this inquiry. I am going to restate the question very carefully and shall appreciate it if you answer just as carefully. Mr. Whitmer, "Did you see the angel?"

"Yes; he stood before us. Our testimony as recorded in the Book of Mormon is absolutely true, just as it is written there."³⁴

³²Ibid.
³³Ibid.
³⁴Ibid.

Thank you very kindly, Mr. Whitmer. We welcome this contribution. There is now another matter that, with your help, I should like to bring to the "jury's" attention. About two and a half months before your interview with the reporter of the *Kansas City Daily Journal* there appeared in the *Richmond Conservator* a strongly worded statement of protest written by you. It was directed at someone who apparently had misquoted you regarding your testimony of the Book of Mormon. Will you please tell us what you wrote in the *Richmond Conservator* at that time. The date was March 24, 1881.

"Unto all Nations, Kindred Tongues and People, unto whom these presents shall come:

"It having been represented by one John Murphy, of Polo, Caldwell County, Mo., that I, in a conversation with him last summer, denied my testimony as one of the three witnesses to the 'Book of Mormon.'

"To the end, therefore, that he may understand me now, if he did not then; and that the world may know the truth, I wish now, standing as it were in the very sunset of life, and in the fear of God, once for all to make this public statement:

"That I have never at any time denied that testimony or any part thereof, which has so long since been published with that Book, as one of the three witnesses. Those who know me best, well know that I have always adhered to that testimony. And that no man may be misled or doubt my present views in regard to the same, I do again affirm the truth of all my statements as then made and published.

"He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear; it was no delusion! What is written is written, and he that readeth let him understand."³⁵

That is certainly plain enough, Mr. Whitmer. That will be all.

There is more to David Whitmer's statement in the *Richmond Conservator*, but only this much of it bears upon our investigation at this point. Whitmer's printed testimony is followed by an endorsement of his personal integrity and veracity signed by twenty-one public officials, judges, doctors, businessman, and other prominent citizens. It looks as if he went to a great deal of effort, indeed, to set the record straight about his testimony.

In the same issue of the *Richmond Conservator* of March 24, 1881, the following editorial appeared. I offer it as a supplement to Whitmer's testimony. It is entitled, "An Explanation."

"Elsewhere we publish a letter from David Whitmer, an old and well-known citizen of Ray [County], as well as an indorsement of his standing as a man, signed by a number of the leading citizens of this community, in reply to some unwarranted aspersions made upon him.

"There is no doubt that Mr. Whitmer, who was

³⁵*Richmond Conservator*, March 24, 1881; as quoted in David Whitmer, *An Address to All Believers in Christ*, pp. 8-9.

one of the three witnesses of the authenticity of the gold plates, from which he asserts that Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon (a fac simile of the characters he now has in his possession with the original records), is firmly convinced of its divine origin, and while he makes no effort to obtrude his views or beliefs, he simply wants the world to know that so far as he is concerned there is no 'variableness or shadow of turning.' Having resided here for near a half of a century, it is with no little pride that he points to his past record with the consciousness that he has done nothing derogatory to his character as a citizen and a believer in the Son of Mary to warrant such an attack on him, come from what source it may, and now with the lillies of seventy-five winters crowning him like an aureole, and his pilgrimage on earth well nigh ended, he reiterates his former statements, and will leave futurity to solve the problem that he was but a passing witness to its fulfillment."³⁶

Our next witness is the Honorable James H. Moyle, who for twenty-five years was United States Commissioner of Customs. With the help of Mr. Moyle we shall seek to gain additional insight into the story of the angel and the Book of Mormon plates as related by David Whitmer in July, 1885, forty-seven years after his expulsion from the Church and just three years before his death.

Mr. Moyle, will you be so kind as to tell us the details of your 1885 interview with David Whitmer.

"I was always deeply interested in the Book of Mormon, and had been on a mission to the Southern

States before I entered the University of Michigan. During my three years' residence at the University I learned that David Whitmer was still living and in good health. I concluded to visit him on the way home to Salt Lake City. I graduated the latter part of June, 1885,

and arrived in Richmond, Missouri, early in July.

"Richmond is a small, rural town. I talked with the hack driver (that is what they called them) who took me to the hotel, and learned from him that David Whitmer was a highly respected citizen of the city. I likewise questioned the clerk of the hotel with the same results. I made such inquiry as I could concerning him during my visit of part of a day."³⁷

I am not surprised to hear you say that the hack driver and others informed you that he was highly respected, Mr. Moyle. Despite calumny heaped upon the other witnesses to the Book of Mormon, David Whitmer seems to have come away relatively free from criticism. Now, please, continue with your narrative.

"I found David Whitmer seated under a fruit

tree in front of his home, which was located near the street and surrounded by an orchard. I understood that he had been bothered a good deal by curiosity seekers, and to make him feel more at home with me, I presented him with an appropriate book. I said that I had just graduated as a law student and was on my way home, and was extremely anxious to obtain from him whatever he would be good enough to tell me about the Book of Mormon, the plates from which it was translated and his testimony concerning the same which he had given to the world.

"I entered in a little diary which I kept the mere fact that I had visited David Whitmer and that he had verified all that had been published to the world concerning the Book of Mormon by him in his testimony, and that was about all. In making that visit I had no thought of anything but my personal knowledge and did not contemplate publishing anything concerning it—it was purely an individual matter with me at the time. I told my friends about it and spoke of it in the ward, but at that time it seemed to be common knowledge. David Whitmer died about three years after I saw him. My memory of the main facts is perfectly clear. I have always enjoyed good health, never better than at the present."³⁸

Mr. Moyle, pardon me if I break into your story, but would you mind giving us a description of David Whitmer?

"David Whitmer was a man above medium height, slender rather than stout and was in his shirt sleeves. His hair was white, as was his long, patriarchal beard. As I remember, he was a man of fairly intellectual appearance, for the plain citizen that he was, and of good countenance. I am quite sure he was a serious-minded man."³⁹

Mr. Moyle, can you tell us how you led up to the question about the angel and the plates.

"I told him that I had been born in the Church, my mother also; that my father joined the Church when he was a boy in his teens; that I had grown up believing implicitly in the Book of Mormon; that I was about to commence life's activities as he was getting ready to lay them down, and pleaded with him to tell me the truth—not to permit me to go through life believing in a falsehood—that meant so much to me. I told him that he knew the facts and urged him to tell me just what happened in connection with the introduction of the Book of Mormon. I seemed to gain his confidence and felt free to ask him questions, and in fact did everything I could think of that would bring out the facts, particularly all of the circumstances and details of his seeing the Angel, seeing and handling the plates and where the interview with the Angel Moroni took place and the conditions and circumstances surrounding the same."⁴⁰

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷James H. Moyle, "David Whitmer's Testimony," *Liahona The Elders Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 7, September 13, 1938, p. 150.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

Good. And what was his answer?

"He said that they (Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and Martin Harris) were out in the primitive woods in western New York; that there was nothing between them and the Angel except a log that had fallen in the forest; that it was in the broad daylight with nothing to prevent either hearing or seeing all that took place. He then repeated to me that he did see and handle the plates; that he did see and hear the Angel and heard the declaration that the plates had been correctly translated; that there was absolutely nothing to prevent his having a full, clear view of it all. I remember very distinctly asking him if there was anything unnatural or unusual about the surroundings or the atmosphere. He answered that question. I do not remember exactly the words he used, but he indicated that there was something of a haze or peculiarity about the atmosphere that surrounded them but nothing that would prevent his having a clear vision and knowledge of all that took place. He declared to me that the testimony which he had published was true and that he had never denied any part of it.⁴¹

Coinciding with your testimony at this point, Mr. Moyle, is a statement made by Whitmer seven years before to Joseph F. Smith and a party of visitors. Since the statement bears upon the peculiar light that attended the angel's visit, I should like to insert it into the record at this point. I quote:

"The fact is, it was just as though Joseph, Oliver and I were sitting just here on a log, when we were overshadowed by a light. It was not like the light of the sun nor like that of a fire, but more glorious and beautiful. It extended away round us, I cannot tell how far, but in the midst of this light about as far off as he sits (pointing to John C. Whitmer, sitting a few feet from him), there appeared, as it were, a table with many records or plates upon it, besides the plates of the Book of Mormon, also the Sword of Laban, the directors—i.e., the ball which Lehi had, and the Interpreters. I saw them just as plain as I see this bed (striking the bed beside him with his hand), and I heard the voice of the Lord, as distinctly as I ever heard anything in my life, declaring that the records of the plates of the Book of Mormon were translated by the gift and power of God."⁴²

And now returning to your story, Mr. Moyle, you were saying that Whitmer declared to you "that the testimony which he had published was true and that he had never denied any part of it." What did you ask him after that?

"I asked him why he had left the Church. He replied that he had never left the Church, that he had continued with the branch of the Church that was originally organized in Richmond and still pre-

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 150-151.

⁴²"Report of Elders Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith," *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 40, No. 49, December 9, 1878, p. 772.

sided over it. In answer to my questions, he said, in an unqualified, emphatic way, that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, but had become a fallen prophet through the influence which Sidney Rigdon exercised over him; that he accepted everything that was revealed to the Prophet down to the year 1835, but rejected everything thereafter because he did not know whether it came from the Lord or from Sidney Rigdon."⁴³

We are curious to know whether you gained any clue during your visit, Mr. Moyle, as to why his attitude toward Joseph Smith had become altered.

"He manifestly had become embittered against Sidney Rigdon due to his promotion to second place in the Church over men like himself who had been with the Prophet from the beginning and who had done so much for the Church. I then concluded, as I now believe, that jealousy and disappointment had soured his soul, but nothing could obliterate his testimony of the divinity of the Book of Mormon."⁴⁴

Did you ask him any further questions?

"I asked him about the manuscript from which the Book of Mormon was published. He said that he had the original of the three copies⁴⁵ that were made before the Book of Mormon was printed. I asked him if he would sell the manuscript. He said, 'No.' I then asked him if he wouldn't sell it at any price. He said, 'No,' that he would not part with it. He also said, pointing to his home, that when a cyclone struck Richmond a few years before every room in his house was destroyed except the one in which that manuscript was kept. He seemed to regard the manuscript sacredly. As he appeared to be a poor man, at least in very ordinary circumstances, I was greatly impressed by the fact that he would not even talk about selling it and with the fact that he seemed to regard the care of the manuscript as being something of a sacred trust. Neither did he seek a reconciliation with the Church, although that would have inevitably increased his worldly comfort, and made him a highly honored personage among Latter-day Saints.

"President Joseph F. Smith had previously interviewed him and had seen the manuscript. He said to me that it was not the original, but a copy made by Oliver Cowdery."⁴⁶

Thank you, Mr. Moyle; thank you very much. You may step down.

I urge the "jury" of investigating readers to ponder for a moment on Whitmer's notion that the manuscript had been miraculously saved from the

⁴³James H. Moyle, "David Whitmer's Testimony," *Liahona The Elders Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 7, September 13, 1938, p. 151.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid. We assume this allusion to "three copies" to be an error, either of David Whitmer's or James H. Moyle's (or else a typographical mistake), as only two manuscript copies are mentioned by Joseph Smith and others associated with the publication of the work.

⁴⁶James H. Moyle, "David Whitmer's Testimony," *Liahona The Elders Journal*, Vol. 36, No. 7, September 13, 1938, p. 151.

cyclone. You and I do not know whether the manuscript was providentially preserved. The important fact for our purpose, though, is that Whitmer felt that it was. He thought God had saved it from destruction and, with it, the room in which it lay. Plainly he believed there was something sacred about the book. Sometimes little out-of-the-way details like this are worth more than the obvious and big things in evaluating the sincerity of a man's convictions. Incidentally, the interview between Joseph F. Smith and David Whitmer, alluded to by Moyle, was held about three months after the cyclone, which swept through Richmond in June, 1878. In President Smith's report of the visit, which was published not long afterwards, he seems to have been intrigued not only with the fact that David Whitmer believed that the manuscript had been miraculously saved from the cyclone but also with the fact that:

"The whole Whitmer family are deeply impressed with the sacredness of this relic. And so thoroughly imbued are they with the idea and faith that it is under the immediate protection of the Almighty that, in their estimation, not only are the Mss. themselves safe from all possible contingencies, but that they are a source of protection to the place or house in which they may be kept, and, it may be to those who have possession of them."⁴⁷

David Whitmer died January 25, 1888, at eighty-three years of age. The ensuing week's issue of the *Richmond Democrat* carried an account of his death and of several incidents connected with his final illness. I wish to enter into the record several quotations from the newspaper in question. One of these involves, once more, an explanation of the angel and the book. Here is the newspaper reporter's version of his claim:

"Repairing to the woods they engaged in prayer for a short time, when suddenly a great light shone round about them far brighter and more dazzling than the brilliancy of the noon day sun, seemingly enveloping the wood for a considerable distance.

A spirit of elevation seized him as of joy indescribable and a strange influence stole over him which so entranced him that he felt that he was chained to the spot. A moment later and a divine personage clothed in white raiment appeared unto

them, and immediately in front of the personage stood a table on which lay a number of gold plates, some brass plates, the 'urim and thummim' and the 'sword of Laban.' All of these they were directed to examine carefully and after their examination they

**Statement
of the
Richmond
Democrat**

⁴⁷"Report of Elders Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith," *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 40, No. 49, December 9, 1878, p. 774.

were told that the Lord would demand that they bear witness thereof to all the world."⁴⁸

The newspaper account also adds this informative detail:

"While describing this vision to us, all traces of a severe cold from which he was suffering disappeared for the time being, his form straightened, his countenance assumed almost a beatified expression and his tones became strangely eloquent. Although evidently no studied effort, the description was a magnificent piece of word painting and he carried his hearers with him to that lonely hill by the old farm and they stood there with him awed in the divine presence. Skeptics may laugh and scoff if they will, but no man can listen to Mr. Whitmer as he talks of his interview with the Angel of the Lord, without being most forcibly convinced that he has heard an honest man tell what he honestly believes to be true."⁴⁹

In the same issue of the *Richmond Democrat* is a report of what evidently was Whitmer's last formal testimony concerning the truth of the Book of Mormon. It was uttered just three days before his death.

"On Sunday evening at 5:30, January 22, 1888, Mr. Whitmer called his family and some friends to his bedside, and addressing himself to the attending physician, said: 'Dr. Buchanan I want you to say whether or not I am in my right mind, before I give my dying testimony.'

"The doctor answered: 'Yes you are in your right mind for I have just had a conversation with you.'

"He then addressed himself to all around his bedside in these words: 'Now you must all be faithful in Christ. I want to say to you all the Bible and the record of the Nephites, (Book of Mormon) is true, so you can say that you have heard me bear my testimony, on my death bed. All be faithful in Christ and your reward will be according to your works. God bless you all. My trust is in Christ forever, world without end.—Amen.'"⁵⁰

The aforementioned article in the *Richmond Democrat* pays this tribute to David Whitmer:

"He lived in Richmond about half a century, and we can say that no man ever lived here, who had among our people, more friends and fewer enemies. Honest, conscientious and upright in all his dealings, just in his estimate of men, and open, manly and frank in his treatment of all, he made lasting friends who loved him to the end."⁵¹

⁴⁸*Richmond Democrat*, Vol. 16, No. 6, February 2, 1888.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

⁵⁰*Ibid.*

⁵¹*Ibid.*

CHAPTER 6

Martin Harris

We now turn our attention to the third witness, Martin Harris. According to a letter by John Smith to his son, George A. Smith, dated at Kirtland, Ohio, January 1, 1838, Harris was cut off from the Church during the last week of December, 1837.⁵² A second letter written at Kirtland by Justin Brooks to Joseph Smith and dated November 7, 1842, states, "Twelve persons were baptized yesterday and information has just reached me that Brother Martin Harris has been baptized, and is now on his way home from the water."⁵³ Notwithstanding his rebaptism, however, when the Church began its westward trek in 1846 Martin Harris remained behind and was for many years regarded as being, at least in spirit, an outsider.

Just as I think it significant that David Whitmer, though expelled from the Church, remained a member of an offshoot group that affirmed the truth of the Book of Mormon, so too, I think it counts for something that Martin Harris, during his years of separation from the body of the Church, used to show visitors through the "Mormon" temple at Kirtland. Evidently he continued to feel some kind of attachment for the Church.

Of the many people who visited Mr. Harris in Ohio during this period of his life none provides us a more detailed and informative account than William Harrison Homer. Homer was returning from a mission for the Church in 1869 and decided to visit the Kirtland Temple. He seems to have been unaware of the fact that the custodian was Martin Harris, his sister's father-in-law. But let me not tell Homer's story, when, according to the rules of this investigation, we are free to call upon Mr. Homer himself.

Mr. Homer, will you please take the "witness stand" and tell our "jury" of inquiring readers about your encounter with Martin Harris.

"I first saw Martin Harris in Kirtland, Ohio, about the last of December, 1869. On my return

**Testimony
of
William
Harrison Homer**

from a mission in England I stopped to visit some of my relatives in Pennsylvania. On resuming my journey, one of my cousins, James A. Crockett, who was not a member of the Church, came as far as Kirtland, Ohio, with me. We remained in Kirtland over night and the next morning after breakfast, we asked the landlord who was custodian of the Mormon Temple at Kirtland and he informed us that Martin Harris was custodian, and pointed out to us where we could find the old gentleman. Accordingly we went to the door and

knocked. In answer to our knock there came to the door of the cottage a poorly clad, emaciated little man, on whom the winter of life was weighing heavily. It was Martin Harris."⁵⁴

Would you be so kind as to give us details about Harris's appearance, Mr. Homer? What did he look like?

"In his face might be read the story of his life. There were the marks of spiritual upliftment. There were the marks of keen disappointment. There was the hunger strain for the peace, the contentment, the divine calm that it seemed could come no more into his life. It was a pathetic figure, and yet it was a figure of strength. For with it all there was something about the little man which revealed the fact that he had lived richly, that into his life had entered such noble experiences as come to the lives of but few."⁵⁵

Now, Mr. Homer, although we asked for details we must also ask you to try to keep your testimony, as far as possible, free from personal opinion. Tell us merely what you said and saw and heard.

"I introduced myself modestly as a brother-in-law of Martin Harris, Jr.—as he had married my eldest sister—and as an Elder of the Church who was returning from a foreign mission."⁵⁶

What was the effect of the introduction? Was he glad to see his son's brother-in-law or glad to see someone from Utah?

"The effect of the introduction was electric[al]. The fact of relationship was overwhelmed by the fact of Utah citizenship. The old man bristled with vindictiveness. 'One of those Brighamite Mormons, are you?' he snapped. Then he railed impatiently against Utah and the founder of the 'Mormon' commonwealth. It was in vain that I tried to turn the old man's attention to his family. Martin Harris seemed to be obsessed. He would not understand that there stood before him a man who knew his wife and children, who had followed the Church to Utah."⁵⁷

May I ask the "jury" whether it wouldn't have been strange for the excommunicated Martin Harris to have allowed his son to go west with the "Mormons" if this thing had been a monstrous fraud? Surely the father would have informed the son that there was no angel and that there were no plates and thus have prevented him from chasing delusion and false leaders into a barren desert? But apparently the elder Harris had told him nothing of the sort. This we infer from the simple fact that the son had gone west with the Church.

Please continue, Mr. Homer.

⁵²Wayne Cutler Gunnell, *Martin Harris — Witness and Benefactor to the Book of Mormon: A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of the Department of Religion, Brigham Young University*, June 1955, p. 50.

⁵³*Ibid.*

⁵⁴William Harrison Homer, "The Passing of Martin Harris," *The Improvement Era*, Vol. 29, March 1926, pp. 468-469.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 469.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷*Ibid.*

"After some time, however, the old man said, 'You want to see the Temple, do you?' 'Yes, indeed,' I exclaimed, 'if we may.' 'Well, I'll get the key.' From that moment, Martin Harris, in spite of occasional outbursts, radiated with interest. He led us through the rooms of the Temple and explained how they were used. He pointed out the place of the School of Prophets. He showed where the Temple curtain had at one time hung. He related thrilling experiences in connection with the history of the sacred building."⁵⁸

An unthinkable thing for him to be doing unless he believed God had had something to do with it all! Please go on, Mr. Homer.

"In the basement, as elsewhere, there were many signs of dilapidation; the plaster had fallen off the ceilings and the walls; windows were broken; the woodwork was stained and marred. Whether it was the influence of these conditions or not, it is difficult to tell, but here again, Martin Harris was moved to speak against the Utah 'Mormons'. An injustice, a gross injustice had been done to him. He should have been chosen President of the Church."⁵⁹

Mr. Homer, we would be very much interested to know whether you asked him about his testimony of the Book of Mormon, and if so, how you approached the question.

"When the old man was somewhat exhausted, I asked, 'Is it not true that you were once very prominent in the Church, that you gave liberally of your means, and that you were active in the performance of your duties?' 'That is very true,' replied Martin Harris. 'Things were alright then. I was honored while the people were here, but now that I am old and poor it is all different.'

"'Really,' I replied, 'how can that be? What about your testimony to the Book of Mormon? Do you still believe that the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet?' Again the effect was electric[al]. A changed old man stood before me. It was no longer a man with an imagined grievance. It was a man with a message, a man with a noble conviction in his heart, a man inspired of God and endowed with divine knowledge. Through the broken window of the Temple shone the winter sun, clear and radiant.

"'Young man,' answered Martin Harris with impressiveness, 'Do I believe it! Do I see the sun shining! Just as surely as the sun is shining on us and gives us light, and the . . . [moon] and stars give us light by night, just as surely as the breath of life sustains us, so surely do I know that Joseph Smith was a true prophet of God, chosen of God to open the last dispensation of the fulness of times; so surely do I know that the Book of Mormon was divinely translated. I saw the plates; I saw the Angel; I heard the voice of God. I know that the Book of Mormon is true and that Joseph Smith was

a true Prophet of God. I might as well doubt my own existence as to doubt the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon or the divine calling of Joseph Smith.' It was a sublime moment. It was a wonderful testimony. We were thrilled to the very roots of our hair. The shabby, emaciated little man before us was transformed as he stood with hand outstretched toward the sun of heaven. A halo seemed to encircle him. A divine fire glowed in his eyes. His voice throbbed with the sincerity and the conviction of his message. It was the real Martin Harris whose burning testimony no power on earth could quench. It was the most thrilling moment of my life."⁶⁰

The "most thrilling moment of your life," you say? We can well imagine. Now, kindly tell us what happened after that.

"I asked Martin Harris how he could bear so wonderful a testimony after having left the Church. He said, 'Young man, I never did leave the Church the Church left me.'

"Martin Harris was now in a softer mood. He turned to me and asked, 'Who are you?' I explained again our relationship. 'So my son Martin married your sister,' repeated the old man, shaking my hand. 'You know my family, then?' 'Yes', I replied. 'Wouldn't you like to see your family again?' 'I should like to see Caroline and the children,' mused Martin, naming over the children, 'But I cannot, I am too poor.' 'That need not stand in the way,' I answered, 'President Young would be only too glad to furnish means to convey you to Utah.' 'Don't talk Brigham Young,' warned Harris; 'he would not do anything that was right.' 'Send him a message by me,' I persisted, now deeply concerned in the project. 'No,' declared Harris emphatically, 'yet I should like to see my family.' 'Then entrust me with the message,' I pleaded. Martin paused. 'Well,' he said slowly, 'I believe I will. You call on Brigham Young. Tell him about our visit. Tell him that Martin Harris is an old, old man, living on charity with his relatives. Tell him I should like to visit Utah, my family, my children—I would be glad to accept help from the Church, but I want no personal favor. Wait! Tell him that if he sends money, he must send enough for the round trip. I should not want to remain in Utah.' For 25 years he had nursed the old grudge against the leaders of the Church, probably because nobody had had the patience with him that I had shown.

"After we had bidden Martin Harris goodbye, and had taken a few steps from the Temple, my cousin placed his hands on my shoulders and said, 'Wait a minute.' Looking me squarely in the eyes, he said, 'I can testify that the Book of Mormon is true. There is something within me that tells me that the old man told the truth. I know the Book of Mormon is true.'"⁶¹

That is extremely interesting, Mr. Homer. Your

⁵⁸Ibid.
⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid., pp. 469-470.
⁶¹Ibid., pp. 470-471.

testimony adds much to our inquiry. You may skip, now, if you wish, the intervening details and tell us whether Martin Harris ever got to Utah.

"During the summer of 1870, Elder Edward Stevenson was authorized to collect money by subscription to bring Martin Harris to Utah. About two hundred dollars were raised; and on August 30, 1870, Martin Harris arrived in Salt Lake City, in the company of Elder Stevenson.

"When Martin reached Salt Lake City, he visited Brigham Young at his home. They became reconciled, and Martin Harris was invited to speak in the Tabernacle, and he bore a faithful testimony. He went to Smithfield, and later to Clarkston and made his home with his son, Martin Harris, Jr., and in course of time he returned to full fellowship and communion with the Saints."⁶²

Thank you, Mr. Homer. You may step down; but please do not go away. We shall wish to call on you again.

Mr. Homer spoke of an Elder Edward Stevenson as the one who actually escorted Harris to Utah in the summer of 1870. We shall call upon Mr. Stevenson to testify.

Mr. Stevenson, we should appreciate the privilege of asking you a few questions. Will you kindly tell us when and where you first came into contact with Martin Harris?

"While I was living in Michigan, then a Territory, in 1833, near the town of Pontiac, Oakland Co., Martin Harris came there and in a meeting where I was present bore testimony of the appearance of an angel exhibiting the golden plates, and commanding him to bear a testimony of these things to all people whenever opportunity was afforded him to do so; and I can say that his testimony had great effect in that vicinity. Martin had a sister living in our neighborhood. About this time Oliver Cowdery, one of the other three witnesses also, in company with Joseph Smith the Prophet bore the same testimony, and further, Joseph the Prophet promised those who with honest hearts obeyed the Gospel should receive the Holy Ghost, and signs would follow them."⁶³

I see. Is it not also true that you met Martin Harris thirty-six years afterwards in 1869, the same year that Homer did?

"In the year 1869 I was appointed to a mission to the United States. Having visited several of the Eastern States, I called at Kirtland, Ohio, to see the first Temple that was built by our people in this generation. While there, I again met Martin Harris, soon after coming out of the Temple. He took from under his arm a copy of the Book of Mormon, the first edition, I believe, and bore a faith-

⁶²Ibid., pp. 471-472.

⁶³"Incidents in the Life of Martin Harris," *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 44, No. 5, January 30, 1882, p. 78.

ful testimony, just the same as that I heard him bear 36 years previous. He said that it was his duty to continue to lift up his voice as he had been commanded to do in defence of the Book that he held in his hand, and offered to prove from the Bible that just such a book was to come forth out of the ground, and that, too, in a day when there were no prophets on the earth, and that he was daily bearing testimony to many who visited the Temple."⁶⁴

Good. Now, Mr. Homer has said that you were authorized by your Church leaders to collect money by subscription to bring Martin Harris to Utah and that you raised about two hundred dollars for this purpose. Will you proceed to add any details about the journey to Salt Lake City that you think interesting to our "jury."

"On the 21st of August, Martin was with me in Chicago, and at the American Hotel bore testimony to a large number of people, of the visitation of the angel, etc."⁶⁵

Is it also true that he addressed a group in Iowa?

"While in Des Moines, the capital of Iowa, brother Harris had opportunity of bearing testimony to many, and at a special meeting held in a Branch of our Church, brother James M. Ballinger, President, brother Harris bore testimony as to viewing the plates, the angel's visit, and visiting professor Anthon, with characters from the plates, who after giving him a certificate, etc., as to the correctness of the characters, asked him to fetch the plates for him to see. Martin said that they were sealed, and that an angel had forbidden them to be exhibited. Mr. Anthon then called for the certificate, tore it up and consigned it to the waste basket, saying, that angels did not visit the earth in our day, etc.

"On the following day I baptized a sister of President Ballinger, in the Des Moines River. The Branch here contributed a new suit of clothes to Brother Harris, for which he felt to bless them. On the 29th of August we landed in Ogden, and the Ogden Junction said:

"Martin Harris arrived whose name is known almost throughout the world as one of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon. They left Kirtland on the 19th of August."⁶⁶

The arrival of Martin Harris and Edward Stevenson in Salt Lake City on August 30 was announced in the local newspapers. The *Salt Lake Herald* reported it briefly on Tuesday, August 31, and ran the following story Friday of the same week. I introduce it into this inquiry as a reminder of Harris' constancy in respect to his testimony of the angel and the book.

"We had a call yesterday morning from Elder Edward Stevenson, who introduced Martin Harris, one of the 'three witnesses' to the Book of Mormon. Mr. Harris is now eighty-eight years of age, and is

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 79.

⁶⁶Ibid.

remarkably lively and energetic for his years. He holds firmly to the testimony he has borne for over forty years, that an angel appeared before him and the other witnesses, and showed them the plates upon which the characters of the Book of Mormon were inscribed. After living many years separated from the body of the Church, he has come to spend the evening of life among the believers in that Book to which he is so prominent a witness. Mr. Harris, who has a number of relatives in the Territory, came from the east under the care of Elder Edward Stevenson.⁶⁷

**Statement
of the
Salt Lake Herald**

The Sunday after Harris reached Salt Lake Brigham Young invited him to make a public address. I have in my possession a photostatic copy of a handwritten statement by one Charlotte H. Adams, who was present on that occasion. I offer her statement also for the "jury's" consideration.

"In 1870 I had the privilege of hearing Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon, testify to the truth of its restoration. He

**Statement
of
Charlotte
H. Adams**

was an average size man [and] looked rather frail. It was in the old Tabernacle, which stood where now stands the Assembly Hall in Salt Lake City. President Brigham arose and took Martin Harris by the arm and introduced him to the congregation, saying, 'Brother Harris wishes to bear testimony regarding the plates of the Book of Mormon.' He gave greetings, which I do not recall. What struck me most was [that] he stretched his right arm and said, 'I would rather have my right arm cut off than deny the knowledge of seeing and handling the plates and hearing the words of the angel regarding the truth of the records.' [I] also had the privilege of shaking hands with him, the privilege which I esteem."

Martin Harris spent the last five years of his long life—a time when a man usually seeks to make peace with his maker—visiting congregations of the Saints and bearing testimony to what he had seen and heard. I have personally talked to a woman who heard him give his testimony at a Church service when she was a very young girl. She told how impressed everyone was with his story about seeing the angel and the Book of Mormon plates; and I must admit that to me it was moving even to hear her second hand account of his experience. This matter of the impressiveness of Martin Harris's testimony, by the way, calls to mind the fact that even after he reached his nineties and in the face of imminent death he still went on testifying that he had seen the angel and the book. It seems to me that this very zeal, that failed to dim with the passing

⁶⁷*Salt Lake Herald*, September 3, 1870. The *Herald* gives Martin Harris' age as eighty-eight. In fact, he was eighty-seven.

years, is a point that should not be overlooked.

Edward Stevenson, will you return to the "witness stand" please. Mr. Stevenson, it occurs to me that you might be able to make a further contribution to our inquiry by commenting on the zeal or enthusiasm that Martin Harris is said to have had for the Book of Mormon even to the end of his very long life. Can you offer any comment or observation in reference to this matter?

"I will give one or two instances of Martin's enthusiasm. When President George A. Smith and others of us were being driven by John Henry Smith in a carriage to take a bath in the Warm Springs, near Salt Lake City, while passing over a high hill, President Smith directed the curtains of the carriage to be raised, giving a magnificent

**Further
Testimony
of
Edward
Stevenson**

*view of the city below. The immense Tabernacle and the Temple—and in fact the beautiful city in full view—looked wonderful to Brother Harris, who seemed wrapped in admiration and exclaimed, 'Who would have thought that the Book of Mormon would have done all this?' On one occasion while celebrating a baptism, several persons being in attendance, Brother Harris with joyful feelings said, 'Just see how the Book of Mormon is spreading.'"*⁶⁸

We welcome this additional information, Mr. Stevenson. And before you leave the "witness stand" we wonder if you would also tell us about the occasion, when, in the presence of a number of guests at your home in Salt Lake, Mr. Harris was asked again to relate the circumstances attending the viewing of the plates.

*"At an evening visit of some of my friends at my residence in Salt Lake City, to see and hear Brother Harris relate his experience (which always delighted him) Brother James T. Woods . . . asked him to explain the manner in which the plates containing the characters of the Book of Mormon were exhibited to the witnesses. Brother Harris said that the angel stood on the opposite side of the table on which were the plates, the interpreters, &c., and took the plates in his hands and turned them over. To more fully illustrate this to them, Brother Martin took up a book and turned the leaves over one by one. The angel declared that the Book of Mormon was correctly translated by the power of God and not of man, and that it contained the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Nephites, who were a branch of the lost sheep of the House of Israel, and had come from the land of Jerusalem to America. The witnesses were required to bear their testimony of these things, and of this open vision to all people, and he (Harris) testified, not only to those present but to all the world, that these things were true, and before God whom he expected to meet in the day of judgment he lied not."*⁶⁹

⁶⁸"The Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon," *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 48, No. 25, June 21, 1868, p. 390.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 136.

We thank you, Mr. Stevenson. It has been a real privilege to have you with us. You may step down. Oh, just a moment, Mr. Stevenson. As you know, during the days of the westward migration it was customary for Latter-day Saints arriving in Utah to renew their baptismal covenant. Now, notwithstanding the fact that Martin Harris was rebaptized into the Church in 1842 is it not true that Harris was rebaptized in Utah by you?

“ . . . I baptized him, and President Geo. A. Smith, and Apostles John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Jos. F. Smith and Orson Pratt confirmed him by the laying on of hands, Orson Pratt being mouth.”⁷⁰

Thank you, Mr. Stevenson. Thank you for your informative testimony.

After spending some time in Salt Lake, Martin Harris, as noted earlier by William Harrison Homer, established himself in Smithfield, Utah, and afterwards moved to Clarkston, where he made his home with his son, Martin Harris Jr. It was here that, at the age of ninety-two, he incurred the illness that was to be his last. We are going to call on three people who were present during different periods of that illness to inform us whether he said anything on his deathbed that sheds light on or shows variation in his testimony of the Book of Mormon. The first person that I shall invite to testify is George Godfrey, one of a number of neighbors and friends who sat with Mr. Harris during the final stages of his sickness.

Mr. Godfrey, will you tell us whether you heard Martin Harris say anything about the Book of Mormon during the last hours of his life and, if so, what he said.

“Prior to his death and in his last sickness I sat up nights with him in connection with my brothers John E. and Thomas Godfrey, both of whom now reside at Clarkston. They can both make affidavit to the things I am herein stating. Many times I have heard Martin Harris bear witness to the truthfulness and genuineness of the Book of Mormon at times when he was enjoying good health and spirits and when he was on his deathbed. His testimony never varied. I have seen others, and I, myself, have tried to entrap him relative to the testimony which he bore by cross questioning him relative to the scenes and events which are Church History in connection with the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon, and that upon all of these questions his mind was as clear as it is possible for the human mind to be. His testimony has left no trace of doubt in my mind that he actually conversed with an angel who bore testimony to him of the truthfulness of the records contained in the Book of Mormon, that he saw and handled the gold plates from which the records were taken.

“A few hours before his death and when he

⁷⁰Incidents in the Life of Martin Harris, *The Latter-day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 44, No. 6, February 6, 1882, p. 87.

was so weak and enfeebled that he was unable to recognize me or anyone, and knew not to whom he was speaking, I asked him if he did not feel that there was an element at least, of fraudulence and deception in the things that were written and told of the coming forth of the Book of

**Testimony
of
George
Godfrey**

Mormon, and he replied as he had always done so many, many times in my hearing and with the same spirit he always manifested when enjoying health and vigor and said: ‘The Book of Mormon is no fake. I know what I know. I have seen what I have seen and I have heard what I have heard. I have seen the gold plates from which the Book of Mormon is written. An angel appeared to me and others and testified to the truthfulness of the record, and had I been willing to have perjured myself and sworn falsely to the testimony I now bear I could have been a rich man, but I could not have testified other than I have done and am now doing for these things are true.’

“I prepared the grave and assisted in the burial of Martin Harris in the Clarkston graveyard where the remains now rest.”⁷¹

Thank you, Mr. Godfrey.

Our next witness is Martin Harris, Jr., son of the deceased.

Mr. Harris, shortly after your father's death on July 10, 1875, the *Deseret Evening News* gave a synopsis of his life. In the course of it you were quoted. The particular part that I want to ask you to re-tell is the part about your bishop's visit during your father's sickness.

“The Bishop told father that he had something of importance to tell him in relation to the publishing of the Book of Mormon in the Spanish language, by the request of the Indians in Central America. Upon learning this, my father brightened up, and his pulsation improved, and although very weak, he began to talk as he formerly had

**Testimony
of
Martin
Harris, Jr.**

done previous to his sickness, and I think that he spoke about two hours, so that you may see by this that the mere mention of the Book of Mormon seemed to put new life into him.”⁷²

Thank you, Martin Harris, Jr.

I should like to recall to the “witness stand” William Harrison Homer, brother-in-law of Martin Harris, Jr. Homer and his mother were attending Martin Harris, Sr., when death came.

Mr. Homer, will you please tell us any remarks, questions, or responses uttered by Mr. Harris during his final illness that bear upon our investigation. We should particularly like to know whe-

⁷¹George Godfrey, “Testimony of Martin Harris.” From an unpublished manuscript copy in the possession of his daughter, Florence (Godfrey) Munson of Fielding, Utah.

⁷²*Deseret Evening News*, July 17, 1875.

ther anything akin to a deathbed testimony or confession was forthcoming.

“Early in July, 1875, five years after he had come to Utah, Martin Harris was stricken with a kind of paralysis. It was the venerable witness’ last illness, but through it all he remained true to his faith. At that time I and my small family lived in Clarkston. With other members of the Clarkston Ward, I called at the Harris home to relieve them in the care of the old man.

“We began to think that he had borne his last testimony. The last audible words he had spoken were something about the Book of Mormon, but we could not understand what it was, but these were not the aged witness’ last words.

**Further
Testimony
of
William
Harrison Homer**

“The next day, July 10, 1875, marked the end. It was in the evening. It was milking time, and Martin Harris, Jr., and his wife, Nancy Homer Harris, had gone out to milk and to do the evening’s chores. In the house with the stricken man were left my mother, Eliza Williamson Homer, and myself, who had had so interesting a day with Martin

Harris at Kirtland. I stood by the bedside holding the patient’s right hand and my mother at the foot of the bed. Martin Harris had been unconcious for a number of days. When we first entered the room the old gentleman appeared to be sleeping. He soon woke up and asked for a drink of water. I put my arm under the old gentleman, raised him, and my mother held the glass to his lips. He drank freely, then he looked up at me and recognized me. He said, ‘I know you. You are my friend.’ He said, ‘Yes, I did see the plates on which the Book of Mormon was written; I did see the angel; I did hear the voice of God; and I do know that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of God, holding the keys of the Holy Priesthood.’ This was the end. Martin Harris, divinely-chosen witness of the work of God, relaxed, gave up my hand. He lay back on his pillow and just as the sun went down behind the Clarkston mountains, the soul of Martin Harris passed on. When Martin Harris, Jr., and his wife returned to the house they found that their father had passed away, but in the passing, Martin Harris, favored of God, repeated an irrefutable testimony of the divine inspiration and the prophetic genius of the great Prophet, Joseph Smith.”⁷³

CHAPTER 7

Summation

In retrospect and by way of summary I should like to observe that God’s use of eyewitnesses to implement his work is not without precedent. Consider the manner in which the divinity of Jesus was attested in connection with his birth and resurrection. Mary testified that an *angel* appeared to her and informed her that she was to be the mother of the Son of God. Joseph testified that an *angel* confirmed to him the truth of Mary’s claim. A group of sheep herders said that an *angel* informed them that the infant Jesus was the Christ; and three gift-bearing foreigners affirmed that they, too, had seen a miraculous sign in the heavens that signified his Messiahship. Of course, everyone then on earth might have been pleased to have had such special proofs of his divinity; but evidently the Lord gave only enough evidence of this sort to prompt sincere seekers of truth to investigate the teachings and claims of the Savior himself.

In similar fashion the Bible tells us that eyewitness testimony supported the fact of Christ’s resurrection. It was not to the world at large that Jesus appeared after his resurrection, even though unbelievers might have demanded—as, indeed, many still demand—such proof as the price of their acceptance. In the words of the Apostle Peter, “Him God raised up the third day and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.”⁷⁴

It was these handpicked special witnesses, whose

faith had already been tried during his ministry, that Jesus permitted to see with their eyes and hear with their ears and touch with their hands his resurrected body. From direct, first-hand, face-to-face experience these men knew that He was risen from the grave.⁷⁵

And what is accomplished by such testimony? Again I say—and we need but look into the hearts of believers for this answer—sincere men are motivated to investigate the Savior’s message. And as the lover of truth earnestly studies, and prays, and seeks to know the truth of that message, there comes to him something more precious than proof to the mind alone. It is the testimony of the Holy Spirit that transforms the soul and makes sinners saints. Simply stated, the Lord makes a few men eyewitnesses that he might make many men soul witnesses.

There is self-evident consistency between the manner in which the Lord used eyewitnesses to attest the Savior’s divinity anciently and the manner in which He has used eyewitnesses to attest the divinity of the Book of Mormon today. It is my conviction that in both instances He has presented to all men, even the busiest of men, enough evidence of the truth as to leave them without excuse if they fail to investigate it.

Let us now take a final look at the evidence presented by the Book of Mormon witnesses. In so doing, we again quote B. H. Roberts:

⁷³William Harrison Homer, “The Passing of Martin Harris,” *The Improvement Era*, Vol. 29, March 1926, p. 472.

⁷⁵Luke 24:36-43.

⁷⁴Acts 10:40-41. Italics are the author’s.

“In the Church and while out of it they steadfastly maintained what they first published to the world respecting the Book of Mormon. The plates existed, they saw them, and the engravings upon them. An angel of God appeared before them, and laid the records before their eyes. The record was translated by the gift and power of God; for his voice had declared it unto them, hence they knew it. No evidence exists that they ever denied that testimony. They never attempted to resolve the appearance of the angel, the exhibition of the plates, or hearing the voice of God into hallucination of the mind; nor did they ever attempt to refer this really great event to some jugglery on the part of Joseph Smith. They never allowed even the possibility of their being mistaken in the matter. They saw; they heard; the splendor of God shone about them; they felt his presence. . . . It was a simple, straightforward fact that had taken place before their eyes. The visitation of the angel was in the broad light of the day. Moreover it occurred after such religious exercises as were worthy to attend upon such an event, viz.: after morning devotional exercises common to all really Christian families of that period—the reading of a scripture lesson, singing a hymn, and prayer; and after arriving at the scene of the revelation, devout prayer again by the Prophet and each of the then-to-be Witnesses. The revelation then followed under the circumstances already detailed, which circumstances were of such a nature that the Witnesses could not be mistaken. There exists no possibility of resolving their testimony into delusion or mistake. Either they spoke the truth in their published Testimony to the world, or they were wilful, conscious liars, bent upon a wicked scheme of deception relative to a subject—religion—which, as it is the most sacred, so should it also be the furthest removed from the practice of deceptions.”⁷⁶

“What motive, then, prompted these Witnesses to enter into a wicked collusion to deceive mankind in a matter so grave? Did they become vil-

lains that they might preach righteousness? Did they wickedly conspire to deceive mankind in order that they might spend their lives in toil, and suffering; and invite the opposition of the world as expressed in ridicule, scorn, vituperation, to say nothing of actual violence through malicious prosecutions before courts, illegal imprisonment, repeated acts of mob violence, ending in house-burning, in drivings, in cruel whippings, in other brutal assaults, and often in outright murder—if not of the Witnesses themselves, then of their dearest friends and neighbors; and, of course, with reference to the Prophet Joseph and his brother Hyrum (who must have been necessarily members of the conspiracy, if one existed), their persecutions ended in their martyrdom. I refer to the well-known history of these men and to the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for proof that the results just enumerated followed the testimony of the Three Witnesses; that they endured all these things in consequence of their testimony. I refer to the whole body of doctrine held by the Church, brought into existence, under God, by Joseph Smith and these Witnesses; to the Book of Mormon in particular; to the periodicals published by the Church, and to the letters and other writings of these men, in proof of the facts that their motives were pure, their purposes honest, their efforts praiseworthy, and having for their sole object the attainment of righteousness by themselves and by their fellow men. Why, I ask again, should they become rogues and villains only to pursue a course that makes for righteousness, for a more exalted morality, for a higher spiritual life than at the time was known among men.”⁷⁷

“The possibility of their being mistaken set aside, every circumstance connected with their relationship to the Book of Mormon favors the theory of their being true witnesses, their testimony standing not only unimpeached but unimpeachable; it must follow that they are God’s solemn Witnesses of a great truth—the verity of the Book of Mormon.”⁷⁸

CHAPTER 8

What Does It Mean?

Well, that’s it, ladies and gentlemen of the “jury”. That’s the case of the Book of Mormon witnesses.

Now, what does it mean?

I should like to think that it means you are now convinced that the Book of Mormon is true, convinced that through its sacred pages the Lord God of Israel has spoken to mankind again; but I know that belief does not always come so easily or so soon.

Even the most casual reader, though, must agree that the weight of evidence supports the *possibility* that a merciful God, foreseeing the dilemma of our times, may have chosen such an avenue as a book to communicate his will to his perplexed children. Certainly all will agree that no generation in recorded history has needed the help of Providence more desperately than does ours today.

And recognizing the possibility—the barest chance—that the Book of Mormon contains a mes-

⁷⁶B. H. Roberts, *New Witnesses For God*, pp. 304-305.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 312-313.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p. 314.

sage from God means that the conscientious investigator will leave no stone unturned until he reads the Book of Mormon and earnestly prays to God to know for himself whether it be of God. It also means that he must not let a day pass by until he has learned for himself whether it offers the secret of survival to a world bent on suicide. It means, too, that he must set every non-essential task aside until he knows—and this is the most important thing—whether it be genuine new evidence that Jesus of Nazareth is the Savior and Redeemer of the world with a timely and timeless message for men today.

A secondhand knowledge of the Book of Mormon's contents—whether from proponents or opponents—is not enough. In the final analysis, one does not even have to take the word of Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris—although I trust that their testimony will be weighed on the same scale upon which Christendom generally weighs the testimony of the ancient apostles concerning the resurrection of Christ. There is no substitute, however, for coming to grips with the book itself, face to face and heart to heart. Anything less cannot bring peace of mind. So the case of the Book of Mormon witnesses means that sincere seekers after truth everywhere must recognize a compelling moral obligation, that transcends all other obligations, to study the book prayerfully, carefully and without delay.

And what assurance is there that the reader will discover that the Book of Mormon is true even if he reads it with prayer? The last of the ancient writers of the volume provides the answer in these words:

“And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a *sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ*, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost” (Moroni 10:4, page 520).

He also says:

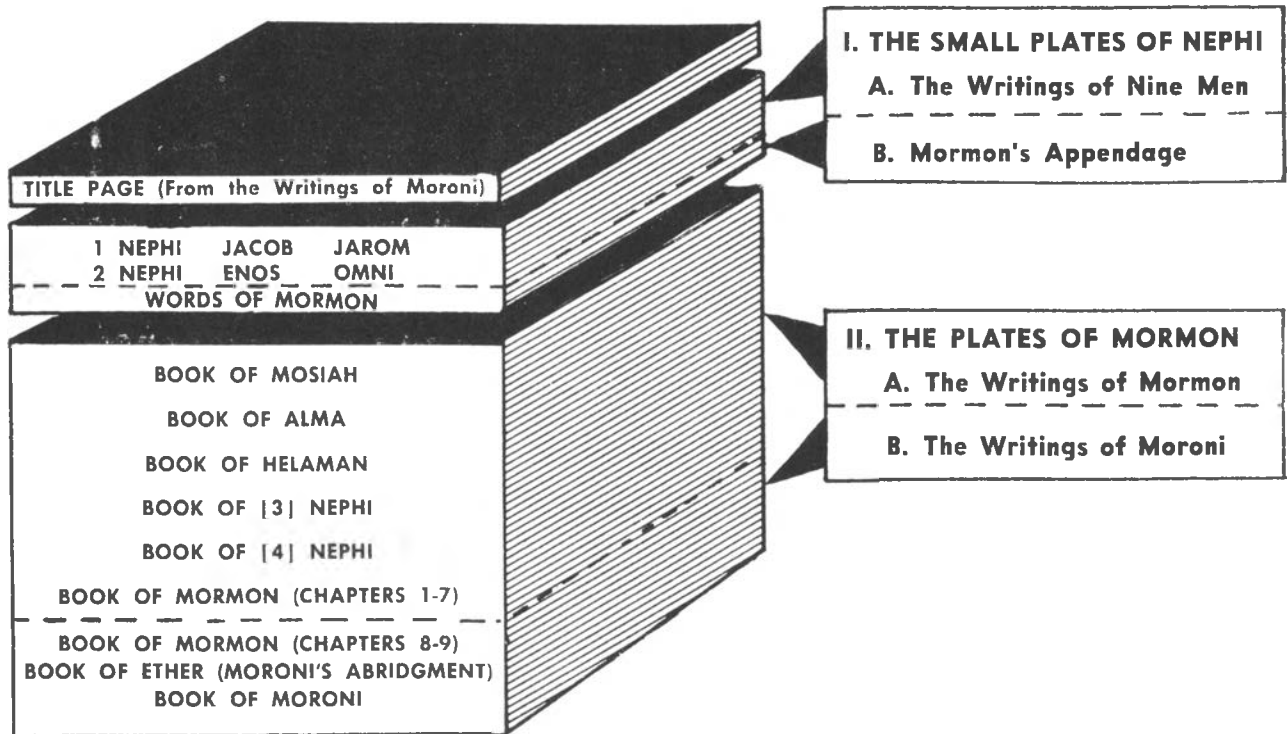
“And I exhort you to remember these things; for the time speedily cometh that ye shall know that I lie not, for ye shall see me at the bar of God; and the Lord God will say unto you: Did I not declare my words unto you, which were written by this man, like as one crying from the dead, yea, even as one speaking out of the dust?

“I declare these things unto the fulfilling of the prophecies. And behold, they shall proceed forth out of the mouth of the everlasting God; and his word shall hiss forth from generation to generation.

“And God shall show unto you, that that which I have written is true” (Moroni 10:27-29, page 521).

STORY OF THE FORMATION OF THE BOOK OF MORMON PLATES

*An Analysis of the Sources and Structure
of the Sacred Record*



ELDIN RICKS

PREFACE

Elder Eldin Ricks, my colleague in the Division of Religion at Brigham Young University, is a close student of the Book of Mormon. He has written helps of great value to the teacher of the Nephite record. Now he favors us with a study of the formation of the sacred volume that should prove of great interest. It is a useful addition to our Book of Mormon literature and I recommend the study of it by teachers and students alike.

SIDNEY B. SPERRY, Director
of Graduate Studies in Religion,
Brigham Young University

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Second Edition

ART WORK BY
IVAN L. SANDERSON

STORY OF THE FORMATION OF THE BOOK OF MORMON PLATES

An Analysis of the Sources and Structure of the Sacred Record

The Large Plates of Nephi

The fourth century A. D. was a century of crisis in ancient America. It was a century of conflict between the Nephites and Lamanites, two rival factions that had inhabited the Western World for nearly a thousand years. During this tumultuous period a Nephite prophet, named Mormon, became custodian of a certain great record, engraved on sheets of metal, that had been handed down by his ancestors from their beginnings as a nation.¹ We refer to this record as the *Large Plates of Nephi*. Mormon explains, as follows, the circumstances surrounding his appointment to add the history of his generation to the *Large Plates of Nephi*:

“And about the time that Ammaron hid up the records unto the Lord, he came unto me, (I being about ten years of age, and I began to be learned somewhat after the manner of the learning of my people) and Ammaron said unto me: I perceive that thou art a sober child, and art quick to observe; Therefore, when ye are about twenty and four years old I would that ye should remember the things that ye have observed concerning this people; and when ye are of that age to go to the land Antum, unto a hill which shall be called Shim; and there have I deposited unto the Lord all the sacred engravings concerning this people. And behold, ye shall take the plates of Nephi unto yourself, and the remainder shall ye leave in the place where they are; *and ye shall engrave on the plates of*

*Nephi all the things that ye have observed concerning this people.”*²

In due time Mormon did as he was instructed. He obtained the *Large Plates of Nephi* from their repository in the Hill Shim and engraved on them the history of his times. This history turned out to be the tragic tale of his nation’s downfall. When he was finished with his work the *Large Plates of Nephi* included the books of Lehi, Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, [3] Nephi, [4] Nephi, and Mormon. Altogether they spanned Nephite history from about 600 B. C. to 385 A. D.

The Book of Lehi section of the plates deserves special consideration.³ In Joseph Smith’s preface to the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon he explains the loss of the first 116 manuscript pages of his translation and identifies the lost part as an abridgment of the Book of Lehi. In the Doctrine and Covenants, section 10, verse 41, we learn, in addition, that this missing portion extended to the reign of King Benjamin. It may then be said that the Book of Lehi covered Nephite history from the time of Lehi, who left Jerusalem about 600 B. C., to the opening of the Book of Mosiah, which, for practical purposes, was B. C. 130.⁴

It is noteworthy that during the early part of

²Mormon 1:2-4. Italics are ours.

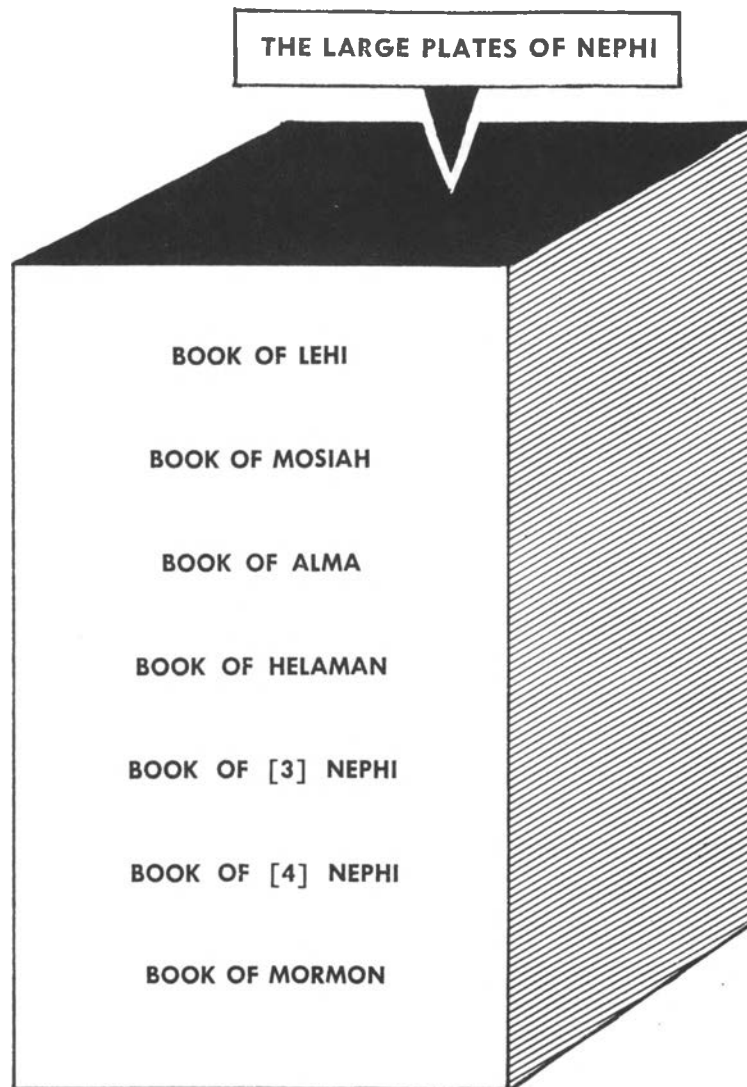
³The Book of Lehi name may have originated with Lehi’s journal or record that Nephi transcribed at the first of his *Large Plates of Nephi*. (1 Nephi 19:1).

⁴Since Lehi, himself, lived but a fraction of this extensive period (2 Nephi 4:12) the Book of Lehi—like the later books of Alma, Helaman, and [4] Nephi—necessarily comprised the writings of a number of historians.

¹1Nephi 9:2-4 and 19:1-4; 2 Nephi 5:28-29, 33; Jacob 3:13 and 7:26; Omni, v. 11; Words of Mormon, vs. 10-11; Mosiah 1:16; Alma 37:1-2; 3 Nephi 5:10 and 26:7; Mormon 1:1-4, 2:17-18, and 6:6.

Nephite history, which means during the Book of Lehi period, the *Large Plates of Nephi* formed a political and civil history, "an account of the reign of the kings, and the wars and contentions"⁵ of the nation. In time, however, the secular character of the record was altered to include religious history also. This change came about at least as early as the time of Mosiah II—perhaps earlier. Especially significant in

this shift may have been the refusal of Nephihah I, the second chief Judge of the Nephite republic, to accept the record,⁶ from which time forth it stayed in the hands of the prophets. The point we wish to stress is that, whereas the Book of Lehi portion of the *Large Plates of Nephi* was mainly a secular history, the rest of the record was religious as well as secular. This fact assumes importance later in our story.



⁵1 Nephi 9:4. Compare Jacob 1:1-3 and Jarom, v. 14.

⁶Alma 50:37-38.

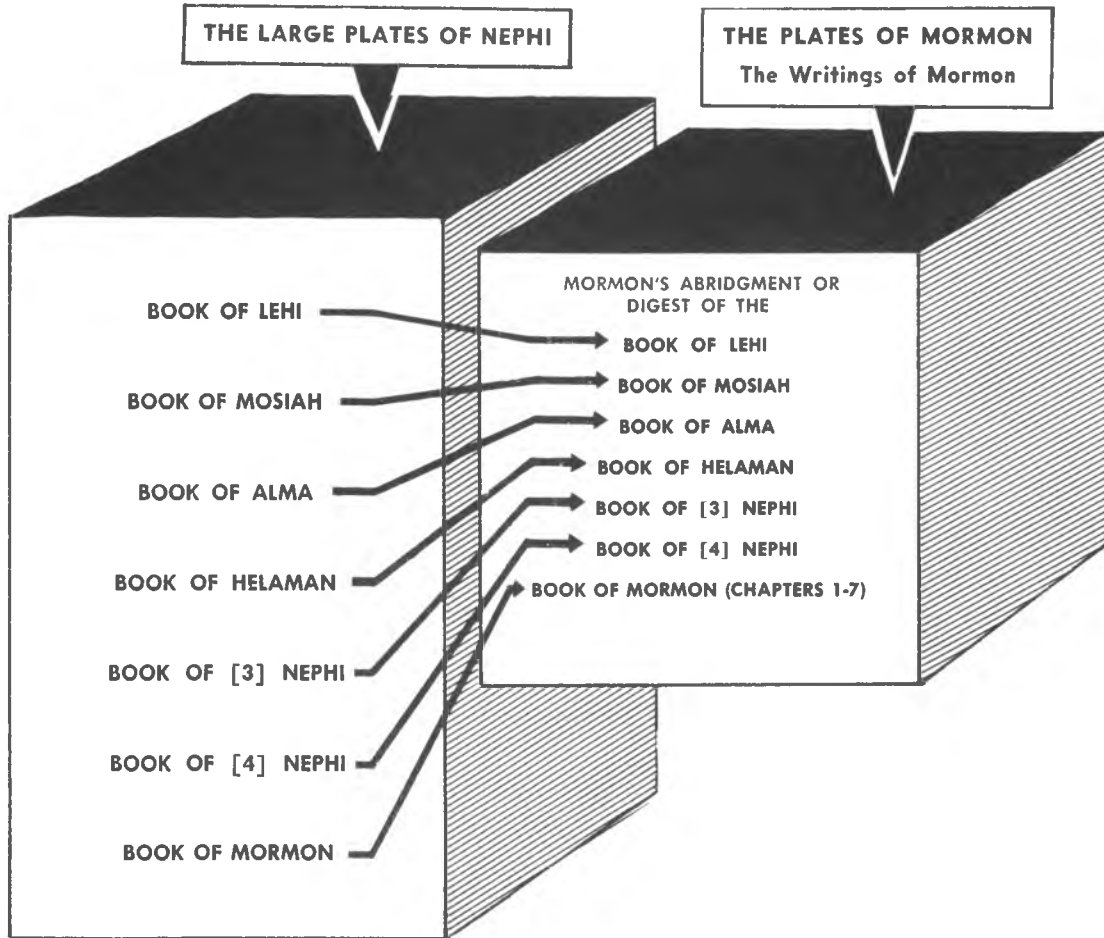
The Plates of Mormon — a Digest of the Large Plates of Nephi

At or near the close of his literary efforts on the *Large Plates of Nephi* Mormon received the inspiration to write a small digest of the entire record. For this purpose he formed a separate metal volume. We judge that he did so in some degree of secrecy as he employed no craftsmen to make it but constructed it, he says, "with mine own hands."⁷ On these plates, which we call the *Plates of Mormon*, he carefully engraved, in his own words and style of writing, a summary of the entire history of his ancestors. He even summarized the history of his own generation that he had personally inscribed at the end of the *Large Plates of Nephi*.^{8 9} In the midst of his condensation of Third Nephi he pauses to make the following explanation of his work:

"And it hath become expedient that I, according to the will of God, that the prayers of those who have

gone hence, who were the holy ones, should be fulfilled according to their faith, should make a record of these things which have been done—Yea, a small record of that which hath taken place from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem, even down until the present time. Therefore I do make my record from the accounts which have been given by those who were before me, until the commencement of my day; And then I do make a record of the things which I have seen with mine own eyes. . . . I am Mormon, and a pure descendent of Lehi. . . ."¹⁰

In a later period Joseph Smith was to receive and translate the Plates of Mormon—the abridgment of the Large Plates of Nephi—but not the original Large Plates of Nephi. This fact should be kept clearly in mind as we proceed.



⁷3 Nephi 5:11.

⁸Mormon 2:18 and 5:9.

⁹Mormon's abridgment of his own history apparently comprises Mormon, chapters 1-5. Chapters 6 and 7, which contain an account of the fateful outcome of the Hill Cumorah battle,

were written after the *Large Plates of Nephi* were buried (Mormon 6:6) and, hence, strictly speaking, could not have been part of the abridgment. For convenience, however, in the diagrams presented herein, we represent Mormon's abridgment of his own history as embracing Mormon, chapters 1-7.

¹⁰3 Nephi 5:14-17, 20.

The Small Plates of Nephi

One day while Mormon was working on his digest he discovered in his library of ancient records a little volume of the prophetic writings of his early forefathers.¹¹ An examination of its contents revealed that it had been started by the same Prophet Nephi who originally formed the *Large Plates of Nephi*. Because of its brevity we call it the *Small Plates of Nephi*. When Joseph Smith received the *Plates of Mormon* the *Small Plates of Nephi* were attached to them. It is important, therefore, that we know something about them.

Soon after the arrival of the original colony from Jerusalem, probably about 590 B. C., the young Prophet Nephi was commanded by the Lord to prepare a record for the history of his people. This was the *Large Plates of Nephi* that we have already discussed. Then, about twenty years later, the Lord commanded him to prepare the *Small Plates of Nephi* as an exclusive religious record. His explanation of this new task is found in 2 Nephi 5:28-33 of the translated *Small Plates of Nephi*.

“And thirty years had passed away from the time we left Jerusalem. And I, Nephi, had kept the records upon my plates, which I had made, of my people thus far. And it came to pass that the Lord God said unto me: Make other plates; and thou shalt engraven many things upon them which are good in my sight, for the profit of thy people. Wherefore, I, Nephi, to be obedient to the commandments of the Lord, went and made these plates upon which I have engraven these things. And I engraved that which is pleasing unto God. And if my people are pleased with the things of God they will be pleased with mine engravings which are upon these plates. And if my people desire to know the more particular part of the history of my people they must search mine other plates.”

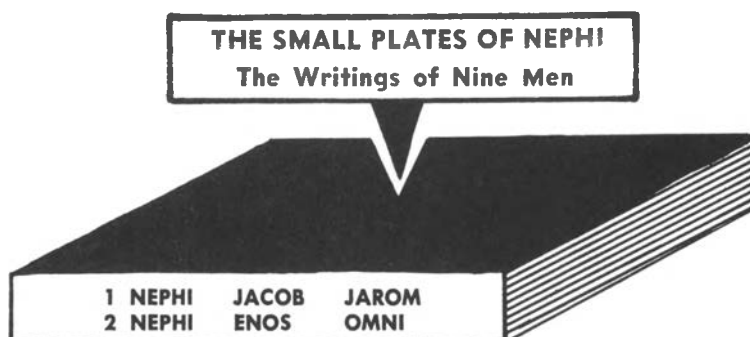
In the fulfillment of the religious purpose of the *Small Plates of Nephi* the record may be said to be

indebted to an ancient volume that the original colony brought with them from Jerusalem. This earlier work, which we know of as the *Brass Plates of Laban*, evidently set the pattern for the Nephite practice of preserving their most precious writings on metal. Also it appears to have established the language pattern for at least some of these works.¹² Most especially the influence of the *Brass Plates of Laban* is to be noted in respect to the contents of the plates we are discussing. Of the 132 pages (English language edition) that comprise the translation of the *Small Plates of Nephi* nearly forty-five pages are directly or indirectly related to the *Brass Plates of Laban*. About thirty-one pages are quoted from them verbatim.

A singular aspect of the *Small Plates of Nephi* is that (in terms of the translated work) Nephi and his brother, Jacob, inscribed 125½ of its 132 pages, and the seven record keepers who followed them during the next three hundred years or so averaged less than a page each. Nor were they necessarily lacking in things prophetic to engrave on the plates. Jarom, for instance, one of the seven, alludes to his prophecies and revelations¹³ but does not relate them.

He rather indicates that his primary purpose in reference to the plates was simply to preserve the family genealogy.¹⁴ Why they did not add more metal sheets to the book in order to write as extensively as they chose, we can only guess. Very likely they looked up-

on the volume as pre-eminently the private work of the two illustrious prophet brothers of the original colony and, in consequence, felt that it would be presumptuous to altar the character of their work by adding to its pages. Whether or not this be the correct explanation, since they had no revelation authorizing them to enlarge it with more sheets they let it strictly alone. The last writer, Amaleki, merely comes to the end of the volume with the abrupt announcement that “. . . these plates are full. And I make an end of my speaking.” Thereafter religious as well as secular history was entered upon the *Large Plates of Nephi*.



¹¹Words of Mormon, v. 3.

¹²Mosiah 1:4. Compare 1 Nephi 1:2 and Mormon 9:32-33.

¹³Jarom, v. 2.

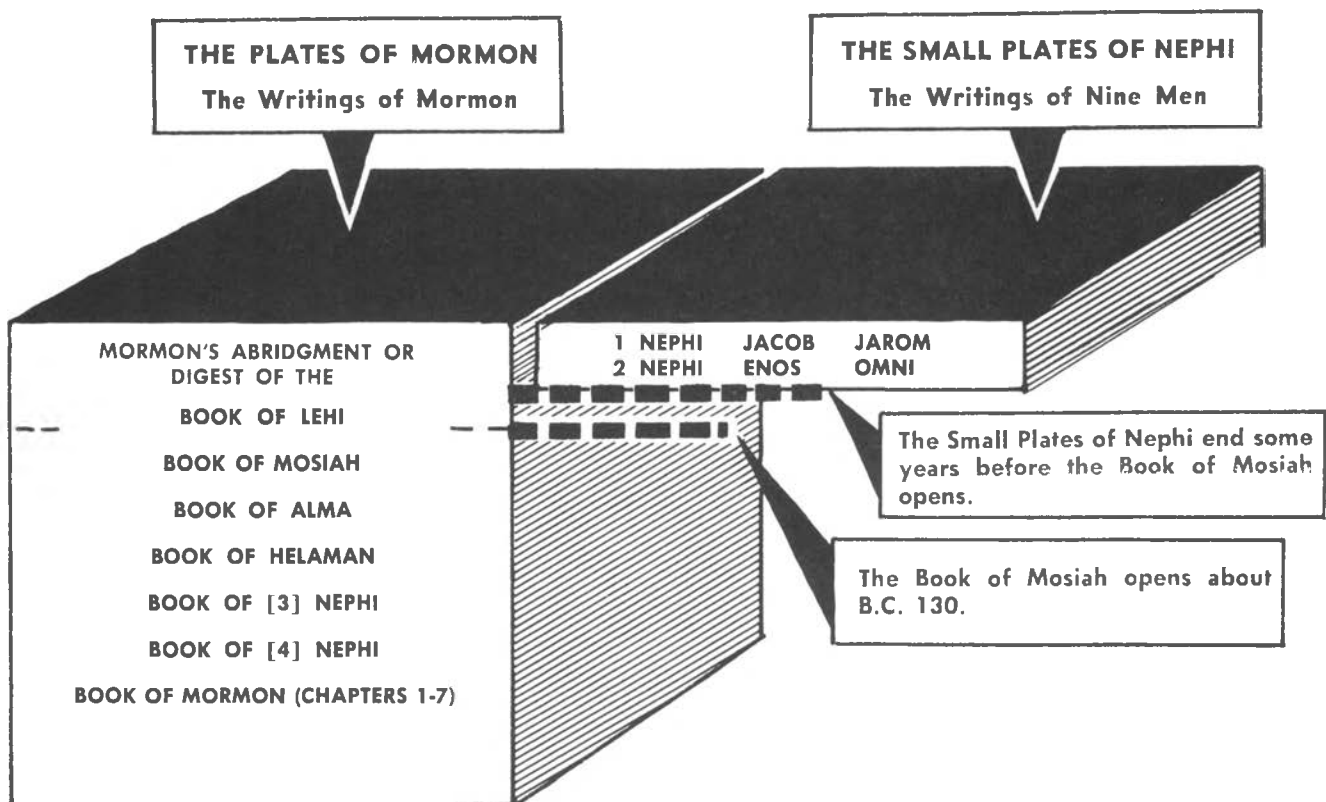
¹⁴Jarom, v. 1. Compare Omni, v. 1.

The Book of Lehi and the Small Plates of Nephi

Mormon's purpose in writing a synopsis of his ancestors' great history was, in the words of his son Moroni, "to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting himself unto all nations."¹⁵ In view of such a lofty religious goal we are not surprised to find that his abridgment (that is, the part that we have in translated form) abounds in prophecies, missionary experiences, doctrinal discourses, and miraculous happenings. Even the fascinating stories of war, political upheaval, and such that he selected to condense and pass on to us carry some faith-promoting lesson. Nor was it hard to draw such items from the combined secular and religious portion of the *Large Plates of Nephi*, which means from the Book of Mosiah to the end. It must have been considerably more difficult, however, to glean illustrations from the Book of Lehi portion of the plates in support of his objective; for, as we have already observed, the Book of Lehi was almost exclusively a political and civil record. We can well

appreciate his satisfaction, therefore, when, just as he was nearing the close of his abridgment of the Book of Lehi,¹⁶ he discovered the *Small Plates of Nephi* and learned that they formed a religious work of the Book of Lehi period. The thing that pleased him about the plates, he says, was their "prophecies of the coming of Christ."¹⁷ And no wonder. This was exactly the kind of evidence for the messiahship of Jesus that he was seeking for his own record. What was he to do? Could he discard his abridgment of the Book of Lehi and substitute the *Small Plates of Nephi*?

Before we consider what Mormon finally did with the volume that he found we should note that the *Small Plates of Nephi*, which had been kept by a private line of record keepers, extended from the time of Nephi to the *early* reign of King Benjamin. In contrast, the Book of Lehi, which had been written by an entirely different line of record keepers,¹⁸ extended from the time of Nephi to the *late* reign of the same King Benjamin.¹⁹



¹⁵Title page.

¹⁶See discussion on pages 3 and 4, and then compare Words of Mormon, v. 3.

¹⁷Words of Mormon, v. 4.

¹⁸Jarom, v. 14; Omni, v. 11.

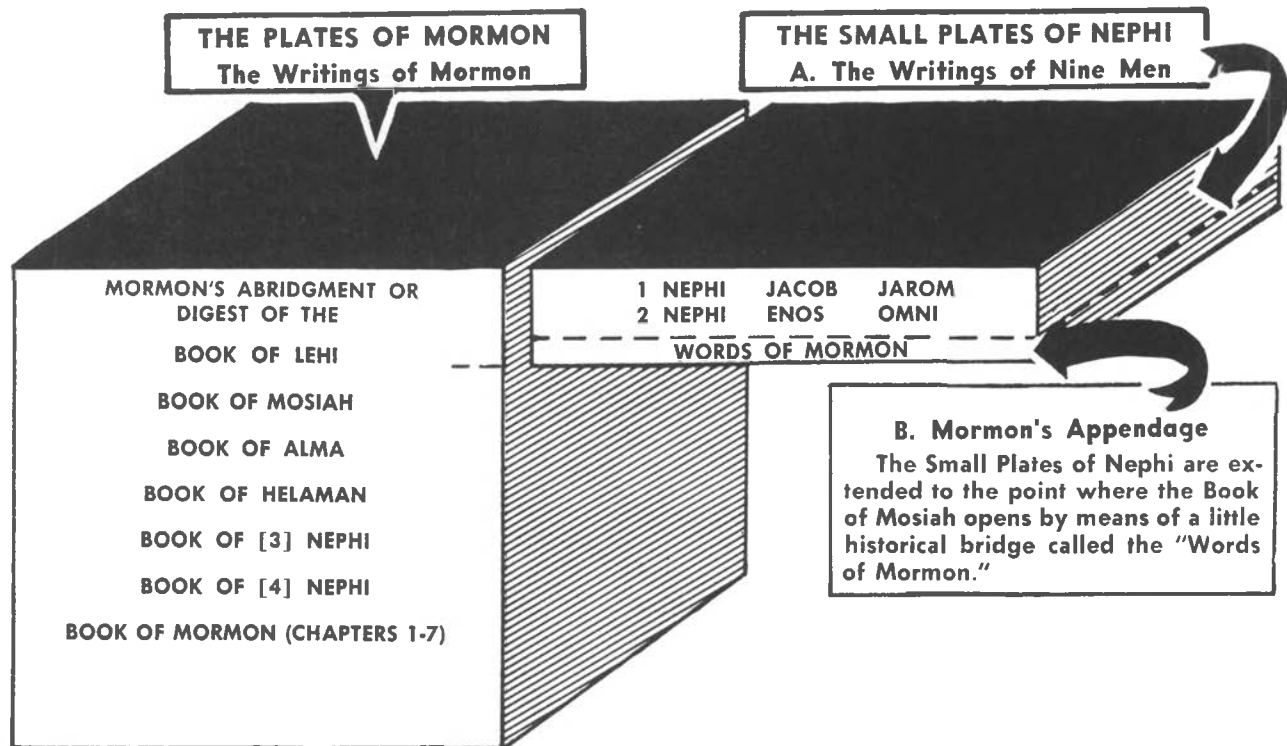
¹⁹That the Book of Lehi ended in the late reign of King Benjamin is based on the necessary assumption that it closed at the point where the next book, the Book of Mosiah, begins; and the Book of Mosiah begins only shortly before Benjamin's retirement from the throne (Mosiah 1:9; 2:30).

Mormon Adds a Tiny Historical Bridge to the Small Plates of Nephi

To learn what Mormon did with the *Small Plates of Nephi* we must now turn to an intriguing little section that he wrote late in life. The year was 385 A.D., and Mormon was seventy-four.²⁰ It was then that he took the *Small Plates of Nephi*, that he had found earlier, and added a little appendage to the end of them,²¹ and entitled it, the Words of Mormon. The opening verse betrays the late period of his writing. "And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making into the hands of my son Moroni, behold I have witnessed almost all the destruction of my people, the Nephites" (verse 1). Quite plainly the months or years of careful composing and tedious engraving of his abridgment were at an end when he inscribed these lines.

Interestingly enough, after explaining in this appendage how he had earlier found the precious little record (verse 3), why he treasured it (verse 4), and how he now felt impressed to include it with his own metal book (verses 6-7), he proceeded, in a few short paragraphs, to give the highlights of King Benjamin's reign. There can be but one explanation for his adding this historical appendage to the ancient *Small Plates of Nephi*. It was necessary as a bridge

between the point in the early lifetime of King Benjamin where the *Small Plates of Nephi* end and the point in the later lifetime of Benjamin where the Book of Mosiah begins. It was necessary, that is, if the *Small Plates of Nephi* were to serve as a possible substitute for, or complete historical supplement to, the secular Book of Lehi. Perhaps from Mormon's point of view his action, then and there, made the Book of Lehi the supplement and the *Small Plates of Nephi* the real history of the early period; for by integrating the *Small Plates of Nephi* with the Book of Mosiah he now had a continuous record of the religious writings of his people from the days of the Prophet Nephi down to his own day. Nor did he rely upon his memory for the data to fill the gap between the two records. As he shifts from the explanatory part of his Words of Mormon to the history part he announces, "And now I, Mormon, proceed to finish out my record, which I take from the plates of Nephi . . ." (verse 9). We understand this simply to mean that he returned to his basic source book, the *Large Plates of Nephi*, to obtain the information for the historical notes that comprise the little bridge that follows in verses 9-18. (Note especially verse 16).



²⁰Mormon was born about 311 A.D. See Mormon 2:2.

²¹Notwithstanding the fact that Amaleki, the last writer of the original *Small Plates of Nephi*, closed the volume with the words, ". . . and these plates are full. And I make an end of my speaking" (Omni, v. 30), we are still obliged to conclude that Mormon added his "Words of Mormon" to the *Small Plates of Nephi*. Whether he did so on a cover sheet,

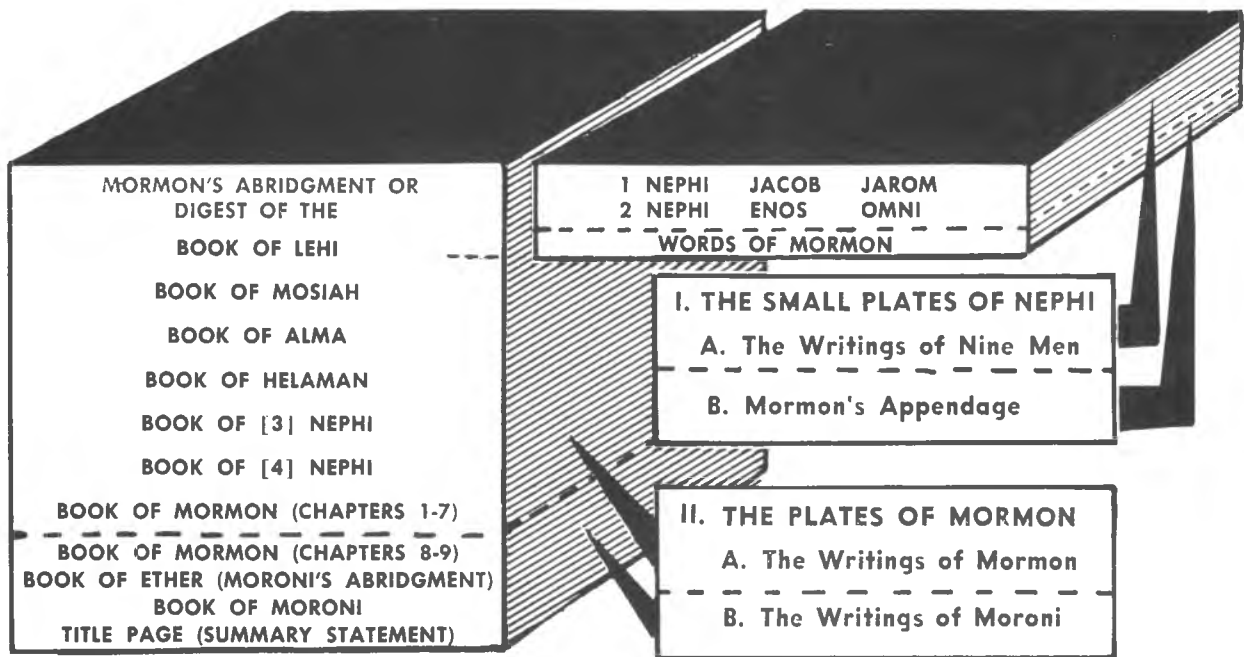
which may have been employed to protect the sacred engravings, or whether he simply inserted an extra leaf or found and utilized a little unused space at the end of the record, there can be little question but that he added his appendage to the original *Small Plates of Nephi*. This seems to be confirmed by his statement, "Wherefore, I chose these things to finish my record upon them . . ." (Words of Mormon, v. 5).

Moroni's Contribution to the Sacred Record

After Mormon had bridged the historical gap between the two records—and just before the Hill Cumorah massacre crushed the Nephite nation forever—Mormon deposited the *Large Plates of Nephi* in the Hill Cumorah and passed on to his son, Moroni, the *Plates of Mormon* together with the *Small Plates of Nephi*.²² Then for sixteen years the record is strangely silent. Suddenly, about 401 A.D., Moroni writes a little postscript to his father's account lamenting his nation's downfall, his father's death, and his own intense loneliness.²³ Intermittently during the next twenty years he made other contributions to the record. At length, when he ceased to write, about 421 A.D., he had made four distinct additions to the volume. These were: (1) Certain reflections and

prophecies that comprise chapters eight and nine of Mormon; (2) The Book of Ether, a thumb-nail sketch or abridgment of the record of a long extinct nation, called the Jaredites, whose ruins the Nephites discovered about B.C. 121;²⁴ (3) The Book of Moroni, a miscellany of epistles, exhortations and other items pertaining to the discipline and doctrine of the Nephite Church; (4) a descriptive summary statement that modernly forms the title page of the translated volume.²⁵

Whether Moroni attached the *Small Plates of Nephi* to the top or the bottom of the *Plates of Mormon* or inserted them somewhere in between is a matter of conjecture. No attempt is made herein to illustrate the several possibilities.



²²Mormon 6:6.

²³Mormon 8:1-6 ff.

²⁴Ether 1:1-2 and Mosiah 8:7-9 ff.

²⁵See page 14.

The Sealed Plates

An air of mystery surrounds the final development in the history of the formation of the sacred record. Sometime during the thirty-six year period that followed the Hill Cumorah battle of 385 A.D. Moroni added another group of plates to the compilation. We call these the *Sealed Plates*. Moroni addressed specific instructions to the latter-day translator of the Book of Mormon not to attempt to translate this section.²⁶ The contents of this record will be revealed when the world is spiritually prepared, Moroni affirmed; but that day still lies ahead. He speaks of the section as follows:

“And the Lord commanded the brother of Jared to go down out of the mount from the presence of the Lord, and write the things which he had seen; and they were forbidden to come unto the children of men until after that he should be lifted up upon the cross. . . . And after Christ truly had showed himself unto his people he commanded that they should be made manifest. And now, after that, they have all dwindled in unbelief; and there is none save it be the Lamanites, and they have rejected the gospel of Christ; therefore I am commanded that I should hide them up again in the earth. Behold, I have written upon these plates the very things which the brother of Jared saw; and there never were greater things made manifest than those which were made manifest unto the brother of Jared. Wherefore the Lord hath commanded me to write them; and I have written them. And he commanded me that I should seal them up; and he also hath commanded that I should seal up the interpretation thereof; wherefore I have sealed up the interpreters,

according to the commandment of the Lord. For the Lord said unto me: They shall not go forth unto the Gentiles until the day that they shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord. And in that day that they shall exercise faith in me, saith the Lord, even as the brother of Jared did, that they may become sanctified in me, then will I mani-

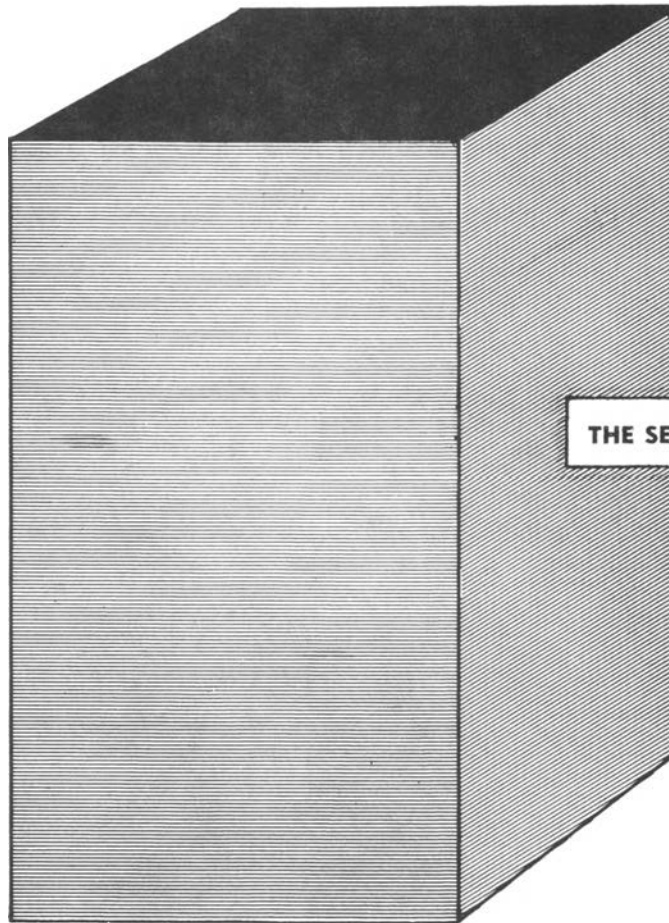
fest unto them the things which the brother of Jared saw, even to the unfolding unto them all my revelations, saith Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heavens and of the earth, and all things that in them are.”²⁷

About all that we can glean from the Book of Mormon concerning the contents of the *Sealed*

Plates is that they contain “a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof.”²⁸ Whether other matters are included we do not know.

As far as can be determined Joseph Smith did not leave on record any statement as to how the so-called *Sealed Plates* were sealed or what proportion of the total collection they constituted.

He simply says of the combined plates that, “The volume was something near six inches in thickness, a part of which was sealed.”²⁹ George Q. Cannon says that, “All the sheets were bound together by three golden rings that passed through one edge, and three smaller rings fastened the other edge of about one-third, so that this part was sealed.”³⁰ Orson Pratt, who had the advantage of close association with Joseph Smith, affirms that the sealed portion comprised “about two-thirds” of the whole.³¹



THE SEALED PLATES

²⁶Ether 5:1.

²⁷Ether 4:1-7.

²⁸2 Nephi 27:7.

²⁹Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, Vol. 4, p. 537.

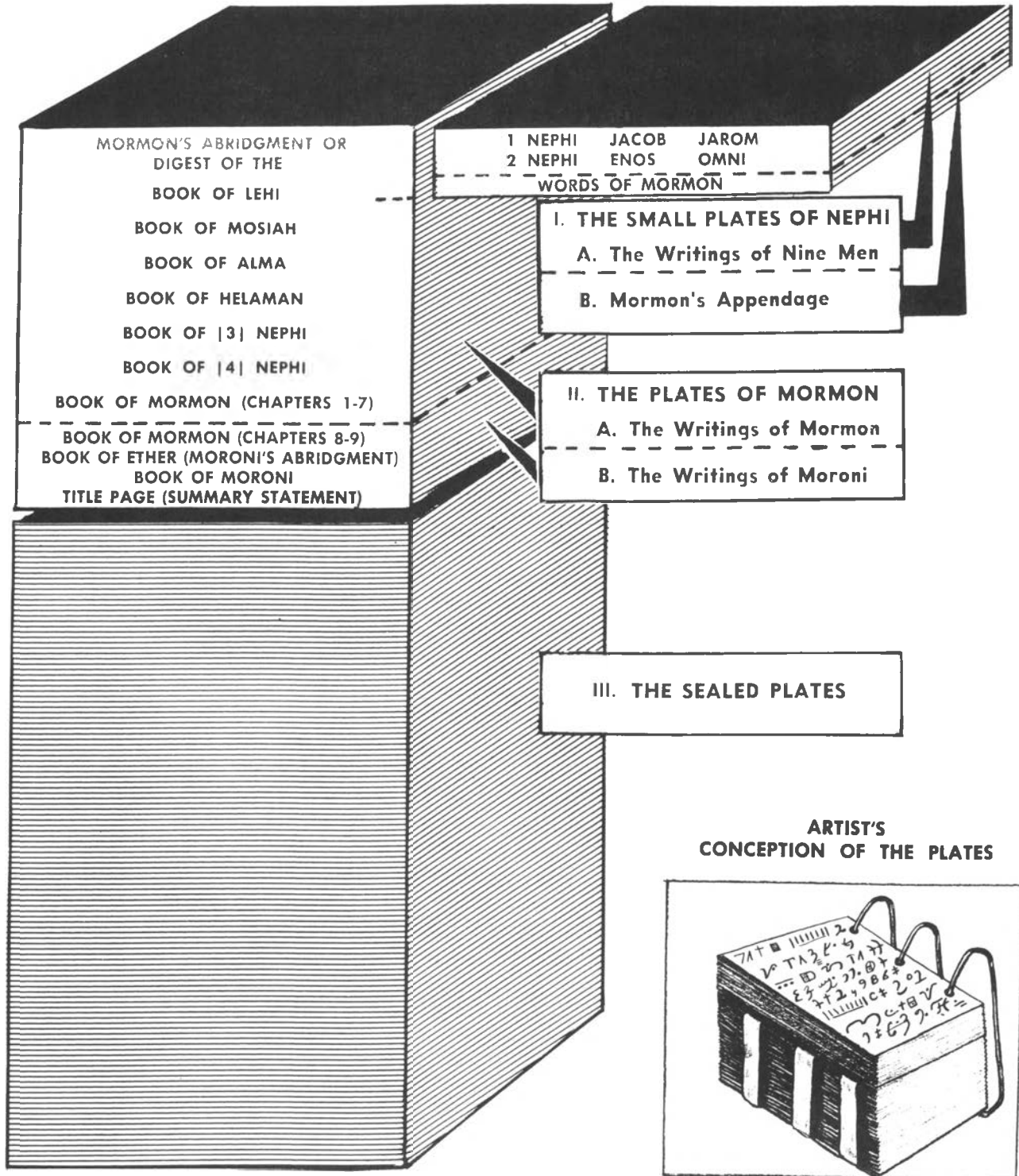
³⁰George Q. Cannon, *Young People's History of Joseph Smith*, p. 25.

³¹*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, p. 347; Orson Pratt, *Remarkable Vision*, p. 6.

The Completed Record

When Moroni was finished with his literary labors he deposited the combined plates in the Hill Cumorah.

The entire compilation comprised the *Small Plates of Nephi*, the *Plates of Mormon*, and the *Sealed Plates*.



Joseph Smith Receives and Translates the Sacred Record

For fourteen hundred years the Book of Mormon plates lay undisturbed in the Hill Cumorah. Then important things began to happen. Joseph Smith narrates these occurrences as follows:

“On the evening of the 21st of September, A.D. 1823, while I was praying unto God, and endeavoring to exercise faith in the precious promises of Scripture, on a sudden a light like that of day, only of a far purer and more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room, indeed the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming fire; the appearance produced a shock that affected the whole body; in a moment a personage stood before me surrounded with a glory yet greater than that which I was already surrounded. This messenger proclaimed himself to be an angel of God, sent to bring the joyful tidings that the covenant which God made with ancient Israel was at hand to be fulfilled, that the preparatory work for the second coming of the Messiah was speedily to commence; that the time was at hand for the Gospel in all its fullness to be preached in power, unto all nations that a people might be prepared for the Millennial reign. I was informed that I was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of His purposes in this glorious dispensation.

“I was also informed concerning the aboriginal inhabitants of this country and shown who they were, and from whence they came; a brief sketch of their origin, progress, civilization, laws, governments, of their righteousness and iniquity, and the blessings of God being finally withdrawn from them as a people, was made known unto me; I was also told where were deposited some plates on which were engraven an abridgment of the records of the ancient Prophets that had existed on this continent. The angel appeared to me three times the same night and unfolded the same things. After having received many visits from the angels of God unfolding the majesty and glory of the events that should transpire in the last days, on the morning of the 22nd of September, A.D.

1827, the angel of the Lord delivered the records into my hands.

“These records were engraven on plates which had the appearance of gold, each plate was six inches wide and eight inches long, and not quite so thick as common tin. They were filled with engravings in Egyptian characters, and bound together in a volume as the leaves of a book, with three rings running through the whole. The volume was something near six inches in thickness, a part of which was sealed. The characters on the unsealed part were small, and beautifully engraved. The whole book exhibited many marks of antiquity in its construction, and much skill in the art of engraving.”³²

The reader will recall that when Mormon was ready to turn the plates over to his son, Moroni, just before the Hill Cumorah battle, he was prompted to add a little historical bridge to the *Small Plates of Nephi* and include those plates intact with his own *Plates of Mormon*. His inspiration was now remarkably verified, for when Joseph Smith received the plates he first translated Mormon’s abridgment of the Book of Lehi. Then his assistant, Martin Harris, lost the 116 page translation of this section.³³ Although the Prophet was filled with despair at this apparent tragedy we may suppose that his despair turned to joy when he learned that the sacred *Small Plates of Nephi* (with Mormon’s appendage thereto) covered the same period of history as the more secular Book of Lehi and was “more particular concerning the things”³⁴ which the Lord intended should be brought to the knowledge of the human family in our generation. (Evidently the Lord chose this device as a means of teaching him and all adherents of the Book that His marvelous work cannot be thwarted by the carelessness or craftiness of men). When the Prophet finished his translation of the *Small Plates of Nephi* he returned to the *Plates of Mormon* and translated the rest of Mormon’s abridgment but stopped short of the *Sealed Plates*, for he was not permitted to translate them.

³²Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, Vol. 4, pp. 536-537. Compare Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith, 2:30-60.

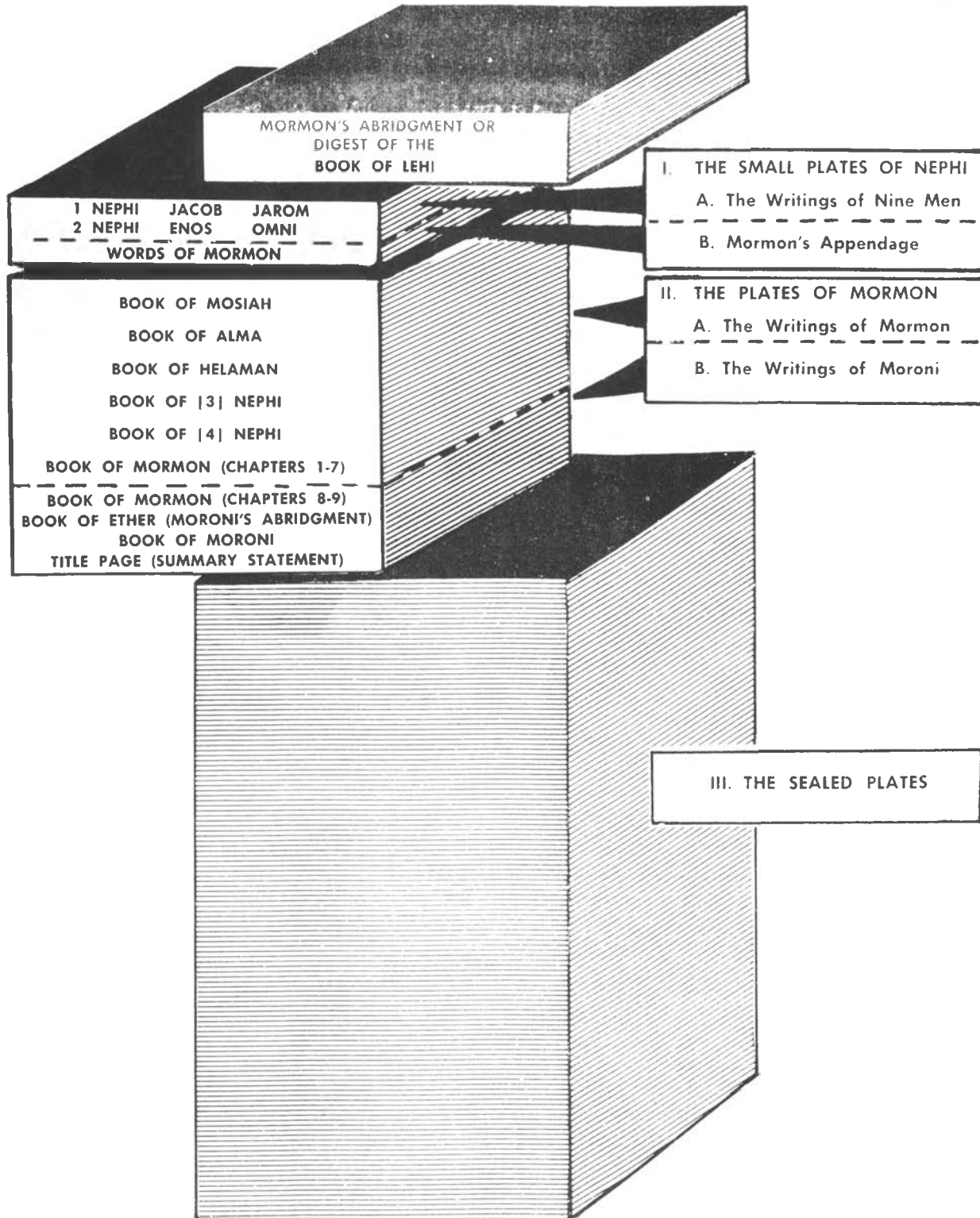
³³Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 56.

³⁴Doctrine and Covenants 10:41 ff.

Portion of the Record Extracted for Publication

The diagram below represents (in black) the portion of the plates that was included—and (in red) the portion of the plates that was not included—in the published Book of Mormon. It also represents

the substitution of the translated text of the *Small Plates of Nephi* for Mormon's abridgment of the Book of Lehi.



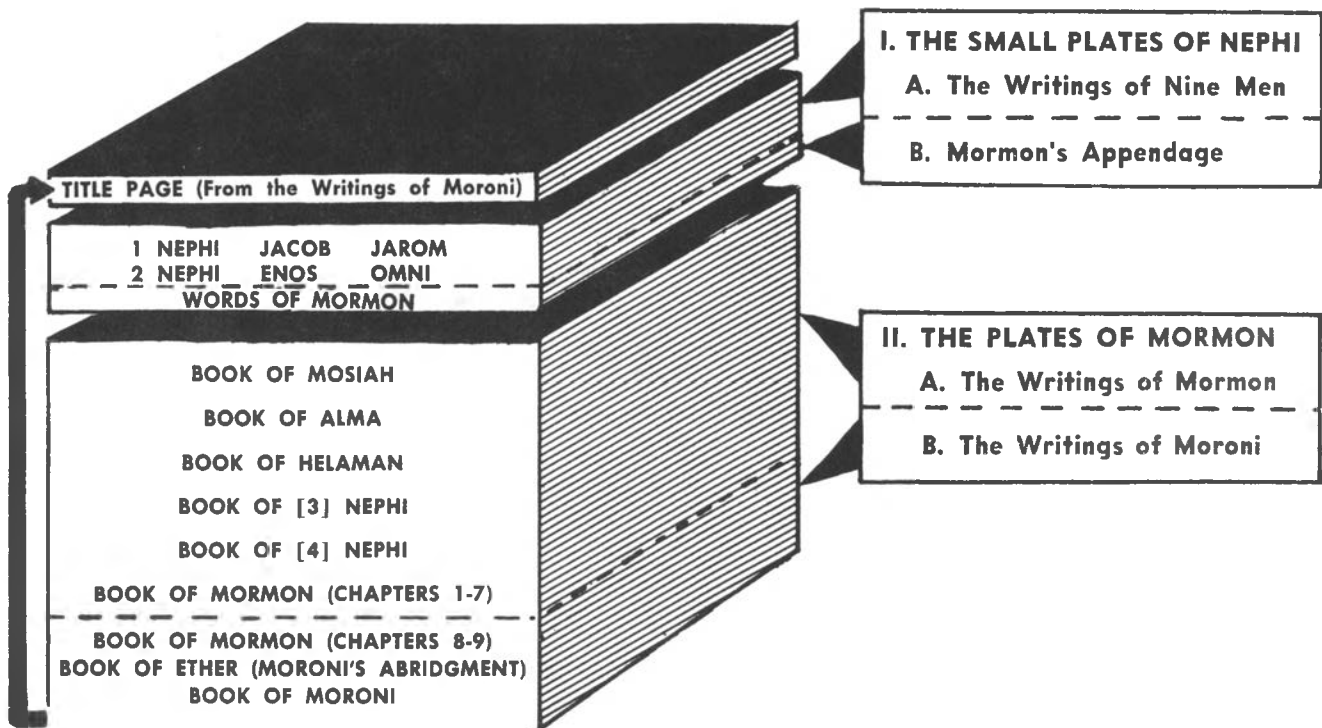
The Title Page

Joseph Smith utilized Moroni's summary statement, that he found at the end of the plates, as the title page of the translated volume. He explains this action in his journal:

"I wish to mention here that the title-page of the Book of Mormon is a literal translation, taken from the very last leaf, on the left hand side of the collection or book of plates, which contained the record

which has been translated, the language of the whole running the same as all Hebrew writing in general; and that said title-page is not by any means a modern composition, either of mine or of any other man who has lived or does live in this generation. . ."³⁵

The finished translation, therefore, included, in order, the title page, the *Small Plates of Nephi*, and all of the *Plates of Mormon* except the Book of Lehi.

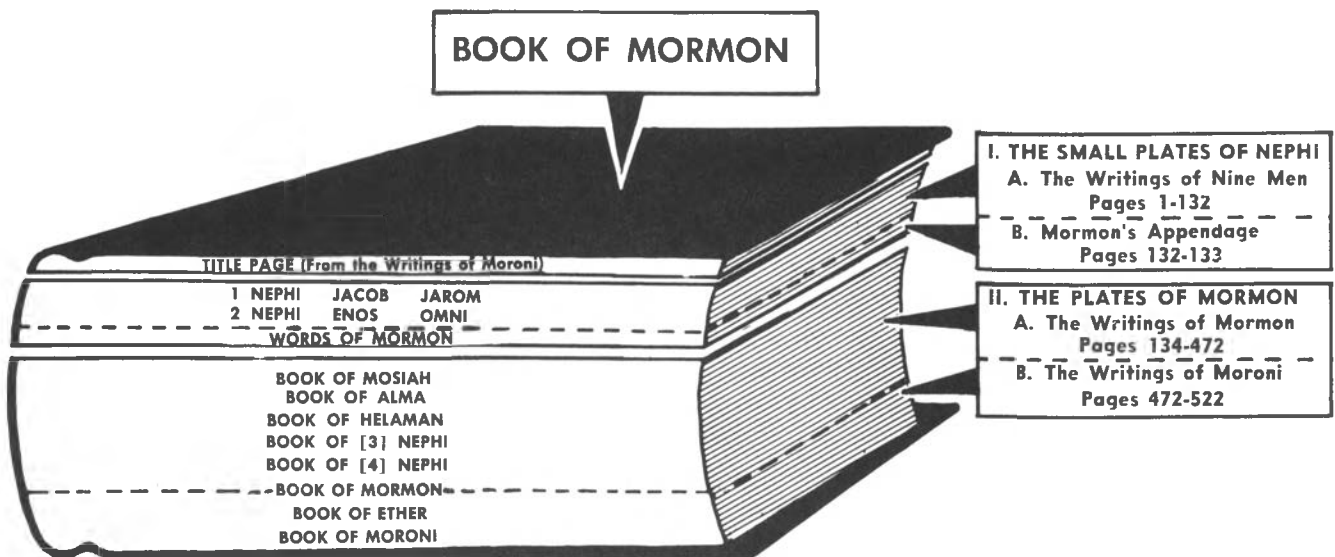


³⁵Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 71.

The Published Book of Mormon

When the Book of Mormon first appeared in published form in 1830 it had 114 chapters. In 1879 Orson Pratt divided it into 239 chapters and formed the present verse arrangement as an aid to reference work. At the same time the prefixes, "Third" and "Fourth," were attached to the two Book of Nephi titles from the *Plates of Mormon* to distinguish them from the First Book of Nephi and the Second Book of Nephi of the *Small Plates of Nephi*. In 1920 chapter sub-headings were added, and the present format, style of type, paging, etc., were adopted.

Thus we come to the end of our story. But is it the end? Today through the medium of the printing press and thousands of missionary emissaries this volume, so carefully and lovingly prepared by ancient Nephite prophets, goes forth to the far corners of the earth. It bears fresh new evidence to a world that has forgotten God—to a world contemplating its own destruction—that "JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD manifesting himself unto all nations."³⁶ Its mission will be achieved when "every knee shall bow . . . and every tongue shall confess"³⁷ that Jesus is the Christ. The story is only well begun.



³⁶Title page.

³⁷Romans 14:11.

CAN YOU ANSWER THESE?

1. The Prophet Mormon lived during the century A.D. (p. 3).
2. After Mormon added the history of his own times to the *Large Plates of Nephi* the great record contained seven book divisions. The name of the first of these was, and the name of the last was (p. 4).
3. The seven book digests that Mormon wrote on the *Plates of Mormon* were: 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6..... 7..... (p. 5).
4. When the important *Small Plates of Nephi*, which formed a religious record, came to an end religious as well as secular history was entered upon (p. 6).
5. It appears that Mormon, who was preparing a record of the great religious lessons of his nation, wanted the sacred *Small Plates of Nephi* to serve as a possible substitute for his digest of the secular Book of Lehi but was faced with a problem. The *Small Plates of Nephi* ended in the early reign of King Benjamin, and the Book of Lehi ended in the late reign of the same King Benjamin. In order to extend the *Small Plates of Nephi* to the point reached by the Book of Lehi (which was to the opening of the Book of Mosiah) Mormon appended a few historical notes pertaining to Benjamin's life and times. This appendage is called (p. 8).
6. The books of the *Small Plates of Nephi*, counting Mormon's late appendage as the last book, were the following: 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6..... 7..... (p. 8).
7. Mormon passed his *Plates of Mormon* and the *Small Plates of Nephi* to his son, Moroni, who added to the *Plates of Mormon* the following writings: Chapters 8 and 9 of, an abridgment or book digest of, then, and finally (p. 9).
8. After Moroni finished out his father's book the *Plates of Mormon* contained the following sections or books: 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6..... 7a..... 7b..... 8..... 9..... 10..... (p. 9).
9. Moroni also added to the collection a group of plates that he sealed so that they could not readily be opened. We call this set of plates simply (p. 10).
10. Altogether, the plates that Joseph Smith received comprised three major groups or sets. These were: and (p. 11).
11. Joseph Smith was not permitted to translate the *Sealed Plates* and his assistant, Martin Harris, lost the translation of Mormon's abridgment of the Book of Lehi. The two sets of plates that we may say, therefore, were extracted for publication were and the greater part of (p. 13).
12. Joseph Smith utilized Moroni's summary statement, which he found at the end of the plates, as the of the translated volume (p. 14).
13. Not counting the title page, our present Book of Mormon is a translation of the following (p. 15):
 - I. THE SMALL PLATES OF NEPHI
 - A. The Writings of Nine Men (pp. 1-132)
 - 1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5..... 6.....
 - B. Mormon's Appendage (pp. 132-133)
 - 7.....
 - II. THE PLATES OF MORMON
 - A. The Writings of Mormon (pp. 134-472)
 - 8..... 9..... 10..... 11..... 12..... 13a.....
 - B. The Writings of Moroni (pp. 472-522)
 - 13b..... 14..... 15.....