

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM



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of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*

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These changes appear to be natural scribal errors; there is little or no evidence of conscious editing. Most of the changes are minor, and about one in five produce a discernible difference in meaning. Because they were all relatively minor, most of the errors thus introduced into the text have remained in the printed editions of the Book of Mormon and have not been detected and corrected except by reference to the original manuscript. About twenty of these errors were corrected in the 1981 edition.

The compositor for the 1830 edition added punctuation, paragraphing, and other printing marks to about one-third of the pages of the printer's manuscript. These same marks appear on one fragment of the original, indicating that it was used at least once in typesetting the 1830 edition.

In preparation for the second (1837) edition, hundreds of grammatical changes and a few textual emendations were made in P. After the publication of this edition, P was retained by Oliver Cowdery. After his death in 1850, his brother-in-law, David WHITMER, kept P until his death in 1888. In 1903 Whitmer's grandson sold P to the REORGANIZED CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS, which owns it today. It is wholly extant except for two lines at the bottom of the first leaf.

The original manuscript was not consulted for the editing of the 1837 edition. However, in producing the 1840 edition, Joseph Smith used O to restore some of its original readings. In October 1841, Joseph Smith placed O in the cornerstone of the NAUVOO HOUSE. Over forty years later, Lewis Bidamon, Emma SMITH's second husband, opened the cornerstone and found that water seepage had destroyed most of O. The surviving pages were handed out to various individuals during the 1880s.

Today approximately 25 percent of the text of O survives: 1 Nephi 2 through 2 Nephi 1, with gaps; Alma 22 through Helaman 3, with gaps; and a few other fragments. All but one of the authentic pages and fragments of O are housed in the archives of the LDS Historical Department; one-half of a sheet (from 1 Nephi 14) is owned by the University of Utah.

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ROYAL SKOUSEN

BOOK OF MORMON NAMES

The Book of Mormon contains 337 proper names and 21 gentilics (or analogous forms) based on proper names. Included in this count are names that normally would not be called proper, such as kinds of animals, if they appear as transliterations in the English text and not as translations. Conversely, proper names that appear only in translation are not included, such as Bountiful and Desolation. Of these 337 proper names, 188 are unique to the Book of Mormon, while 149 are common to the Book of Mormon and the Bible. If the textual passages common to the Book of Mormon and the Bible are excluded, 53 names occur in both books.

It would seem convenient to divide the Book of Mormon collection or listing of names (onomasticon) into three groups because it mentions (1) JAREDITES, (2) the community founded by LEHI (which might be termed "Lehites"), and (3) the people referred to as the people of Zarahemla (who might be called "Mulekites"), each of which contributed to the history of the Book of Mormon and therefore to the list of proper names (*see* BOOK OF MORMON PEOPLES). While this grouping can be made with some degree of accuracy for Jaredite names, it is not easy to maintain the distinction between Lehite and Mulekite, because a portion of the Lehites united with the Mulekites sometime before 130 B.C.; practically nothing is known about Mulekite names before that time. For the present, Lehite and Mulekite names must be treated together. Given this grouping of the Book of Mormon onomasticon, 142 of the 188 unique Book of Mormon names are Lehite-Mulekite, 41 are Jaredite, and 5 are common to both groups.

Much preliminary work remains to be done on the Book of Mormon onomasticon. The transliteration system of the English text must be clarified: does the j of the text indicate only the Nephite phoneme /y/ or can it also represent /h/ in the name "Job," as it does once in the King James Version? A reliable critical analysis of the text is needed: what is the range of possible spellings of Cumorah that might indicate phonemic values? Linguistic phenomena beg explanation: there are no exclusively Book of Mormon names that begin with /b/; but several begin with /p/. Q and x do not occur in any Book of Mormon name. V, w, and y do not occur in any exclusively Book of Mormon name. D, f, and u do not begin any exclusively Book of Mormon name.

The Lehite-Mulekite names often show great-

est affinity with Semitic languages (*CWHN* 6:281–94). For instance, Abish and Abinadi resemble *ab*, father, names in Hebrew; Alma appears in a Bar Kokhba letter (c. A.D. 130) found in the Judean desert; Mulek could be a diminutive of West Semitic *mlk*, king; Omni and Limhi appear to have the same morphology as Old Testament Omri and Zimri; Jershon is remarkably close to a noun form of the Hebrew root *yrš* (see below). Some Lehite-Mulekite names more closely resemble Egyptian: Ammon, Korihor, Pahoran, and Paanchi (*CWHN* 5:25–34). Jaredite names exhibit no consistently obvious linguistic affinity.

Like proper names in most languages, the proper names of the Book of Mormon probably had semantic meanings for Book of Mormon peoples. Such meanings are evident from several instances wherein the Book of Mormon provides a translation for a proper name. For example, Irreantum means “many waters” (1 Ne. 17:5), and Rabbanah is interpreted as “powerful or great king” (Alma 18:13). The single greatest impediment to understanding the semantic possibilities for the Book of Mormon proper names remains the lack of the original Nephite text. The transliterations of the English text allow only educated conjectures and approximations about the nature of the names and their possible semantic range. In addition, such postulations, if to be of any value, must be based on a knowledge of the possible linguistic origins of the names, such as Iron Age Hebrew and Egyptian for Lehite and Mulekite names.

The proper names of the Book of Mormon can provide information about the text and the language(s) used to compose it. When studied with apposite methodology, these names testify to the ancient origin of the Book of Mormon. For example, Jershon is the toponym for a land given by the Nephites to a group of Lamanites as an inheritance; based on the usual correspondence in the King James Version of *j* for the Hebrew phoneme /*y*/, Book of Mormon Jershon could correspond to the Hebrew root *yrš* meaning “to inherit,” thus providing an appropriate play on words in Alma 27:22: “and this land Jershon is the land which we will give unto our brethren for an inheritance.” Similarly, one Book of Mormon name used for a man that might have seemed awkward, Alma, now is known from two second-century A.D. Hebrew documents of the Bar Kokhba period (Yadin, p. 176) and thus speaks for a strong and continuing Hebrew presence among Book of Mormon peoples.

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BOOK OF MORMON NEAR EASTERN BACKGROUND

According to the Book of Mormon, the JAREDITES, the NEPHITES, and the “Mulekites” (see MULEK) migrated to the Western Hemisphere from the Near East in antiquity, a claim that has been challenged. While Book of Mormon students readily admit that no direct, concrete evidence currently exists substantiating the links with the ancient Near East that are noted in the book, evidence can be adduced—largely external and circumstantial—that commands respect for the claims of the Book of Mormon concerning its ancient Near Eastern background (*CWHN* 8:65–72). A few examples will indicate the nature and strength of these ties, particularly because such details were not available to Joseph Smith, the translator of the Book of Mormon, from any sources that existed in the early nineteenth century (see BOOK OF MORMON TRANSLATION BY JOSEPH SMITH).

1. LEHI (c. 600 B.C.) was a righteous, wellborn, and prosperous man of the tribe of Manasseh who lived in or near Jerusalem. He traveled much, had a rich estate in the country, and had an eye for fine metalwork. His family was strongly influenced by the contemporary Egyptian culture. At a time of mounting tensions in Jerusalem (the officials were holding secret meetings by night), he favored the religious reform party of Jeremiah, while members of his family were torn by divided loyalties. One of many prophets of doom in the land, “a visionary man,” he was forced to flee with his family, fearing pursuit by the troops of one Laban, a high military official of the city. Important records that Lehi needed were kept in the house of Laban (1 Ne. 1–5; *CWHN* 6:46–131; 8:534–35). This closely parallels the situation in Lachish at the time, as described in contemporary records discovered in 1934–1935 (H. Torczyner, *The Lachish Letters*, 2