

# JOSEPH SMITH'S USE OF THE APOCRYPHA

In 1968, we did a study of the relationship between the Book of Mormon and the Apocrypha. Our research led us to believe that Joseph Smith borrowed material from the Apocrypha in creating his Book of Mormon. Recently, we took a closer look at the Apocrypha and discovered additional evidence which provides even stronger support for the theory that Smith used it. Mormon Apostle Bruce R. McConkie gave this information regarding the Apocrypha:

Scholars and Biblical students have grouped certain apparently scriptural Old Testament writings, which they deem to be **of doubtful authenticity or of a spurious nature**, under the title of the Apocrypha. There has not always been agreement as to the specific writings which should be designated as apocryphal . . .

These apocryphal writings **were never included in the Hebrew Bible**, but they were in the Greek Septuagint . . . and in the Latin Vulgate. . . .

The Apocrypha **was included in the King James Version of 1611**, but by 1629 some English Bibles began to appear without it, and since the early part of the 19th century it has been excluded from almost all protestant Bibles . . . it is apparent that controversy was still raging as to the value of the Apocrypha at the time the Prophet began his ministry. (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1979, page 41)

On March 3, 1826, the following appeared in the Wayne Sentinel, the newspaper Joseph Smith's family subscribed to: ". . . it appears . . . that the unhappy controversy about the expediency of publishing the Apocryphal books with those of the Old and New Testament, has at length ended; and that the General Committee of the Bible Society, in London, have determined henceforward, wholly **to exclude the Apocrypha from their editions of the Sacred Scriptures.**" On June 2, 1826, the same newspaper noted that the "apocryphal books are so called from the Greek word, which signifies 'hid,' or 'concealed;' because their origin, their real authors, times, and places are unknown. They are undoubtedly of great antiquity . . . But they do not claim to be, and have no title to be considered inspired."

Although Protestants were questioning the worth of the Apocrypha, Joseph Smith showed a good deal of interest in it. In fact, when he purchased a Bible in the late 1820's he picked one which contained the Apocrypha. Mormon scholar Reed Durham mentioned this purchase in his dissertation: "The Bible used for Joseph Smith's Revision was purchased in E. B. Grandin's Bookstore in Palmyra, New York; on October

8, 1828; it was a large family Bible . . . It was an edition of the Authorized Version **'together with the Apocrypha,'** which was located between the two testaments, and was an 1828 edition, printed in Cooperstown, New York, by H. and E. Phinney Compan." ("A History of Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible," by Reed C. Durham, Jr., Ph.D. dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1965, page 25). Wesley P. Walters, however, claimed that the actual date of purchase was October 8, 1829, not October 8, 1828.

## THE SEARCH FOR NEPHI

It is important to note that although the name "Nephi" is not found in either the Old or New Testaments of the Bible, it is one of the most important names in the Book of Mormon. Those who followed Nephi when his brothers rebelled against him were called Nephites. Mormon writers have spent a great deal

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of time speculating on the source of this name. The noted Mormon scholar Dr. Hugh Nibley tried to link the name Nephi to the Egyptian language:

First, consider a few Egyptian names, setting off the Book of Mormon names (BM) against their Old World equivalents (OW). . . . Nephi (BM), founder of the Nephite Nation.

**Nehi, Nehri** (ow), famous Egyptian noblemen.

Nfy was the name of an Egyptian captain. Since BM insists on “ph” Nephi is closer to Nihpi, original name of **the god Pa-Nepi, which may even have been Nephi.** (*Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites*, by Hugh Nibley, 1952, pages 27, 29)

Dr. Wells Jakeman, a noted Brigham Young University scholar, did not seem to agree with Hugh Nibley’s statement that Nephi may have derived his name from the Egyptian “god Pa-nepi.” He felt that it was unlikely that Lehi “would have **named his son after this Egyptian animal god Panepi**, the ‘Apis-bull’ (a ‘Nile-god of fertility and the animal representative of Ptah, a god of the dead.)”

Dr. Jakeman argued that the name Nephi “is Lehi’s rendering of the Egyptian name of the personification or ‘**god of grain in Egyptian belief** . . .” For more information about this matter see Wells Jakeman publication, *Stela 5, Izapa, Chiapas, Mexico*, University Archaeological Society, Special publications No. 2, 1958, pages 38-42)

While Mormon scholars were diligently seeking to find evidence that Nephi is an Egyptian name, we discovered the actual name in the King James version of the Apocrypha.

The word “Nephi” is found hundreds of times in the Book of Mormon. In fact, it first appears as the second word in the Book of Mormon: “**I Nephi** having been born of goodly parents . . .” (1 Nephi 1:1). At least four men in the Book of Mormon are named Nephi. It is also the name of four books in the Book of Mormon, a city, a land, and a people.

While most Mormon writers tended to ignore our discovery for many years, in 1994 the Mormon scholar John Gee wrote:

Even if the word “**Nephi**” appears once in the King James Version of the apocrypha, it still does not prevent it from deriving from the proper milieu. (*Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 6, no. 1, page 105, note 177)

The FARMS publication, *Insights*, November 1992, contained an article which acknowledged that “the name

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**Nephi** is also found in the Apocrypha in 2 Maccabees. . . . it is possible **that Joseph Smith was acquainted with the name** from that source.”

Since there is no way to prove the conjectures set forth by Mormon scholars concerning the origin of the name Nephi, and since we have found **the actual name** in the Apocrypha, this should settle the issue of its origin.

It is important to note that according to the Book of Mormon, Nephi came to the New World not long after 600 B.C., which, of course, is many centuries before the word Nephi was written in the Apocrypha. The edition of the Apocrypha which we are using in this article was published in 1812 in *The Holy Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments: Together With the Apocrypha*, by Merrifield and Cochran. This Bible gives a date “Before Christ 144” for the book of 2 Maccabees. Modern biblical scholars Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix think that it was written c. 110-70 B.C. Another Bible commentary suggests that it may have been written around 50 B.C.

The Mormon Church has included a Bible Dictionary in its publication of the King James Version of the Bible. On page 611 of that dictionary we read that 2 Maccabees “is inferior to that book [i.e., 1 Maccabees] both in simplicity and in accuracy because **legends are introduced** with great freedom.”

In the Apocrypha the word “Nephi” appears at the end of a legend regarding a mysterious “thick water” that miraculously produced fire. According to the story, when the Jews were “led into Persia” the priests “took the fire of the altar privily, and hid it in an hollow place of a pit without water . . .” Many years later Neemias sent men “of the posterity of those that had hid it to the fire: but when they told us they found no fire, but **thick water**; Then commanded he them to draw it up, and to bring it; and when the sacrifices were laid on, Neemias commanded the priests to sprinkle the wood, and the things laid thereupon, with the water. When this was done, and the time came that the sun shone, which afore was hid in the cloud, there was **a great fire kindled**, so that **every man marvelled**” (2 Maccabees 1:19-22).

The Apocrypha goes on to reveal that “when the sacrifice was consumed, Neemias commanded the water that was left to be poured on the great stones. When this was done there was kindled **a flame**: but it was consumed by the light that shined from the altar” (verses 31-32).

At the conclusion of this story we find the following:

Then the king, inclosing the place, made it holy, after he had tried the matter.

And the king took many gifts, and bestowed thereof on those whom he would gratify.

And Neemias called this thing Naphthar, which is as much as to say, A cleansing: but many men call it **Nephi**. (2 Maccabees 1:34-36)

With regard to the statement that a fire was kindled on some stones, it is interesting to note that in the very first chapter of the Book of Mormon, verse 6, we read that Nephi’s father, Lehi, had a revelation in which **fire** appeared on **a rock**:

. . . as he **prayed unto the Lord**, there **came** a pillar of **fire** and dwelt upon a rock . . .

Notice how similar this is to a statement in 2 Maccabees 2:10:

. . . as when Moses **prayed unto the Lord** the **fire** **came** down. . . .

Our computer research of the Bible does not reveal any wording that is as close to this portion of the Book of Mormon as the Apocrypha. In addition, as we have shown above, in one case where Neemias was present, the sacred water kindled a fire upon “stones” (2 Maccabees 1: 31-32). Interestingly, the fire Nephi’s father saw was “upon a rock” (1 Nephi 1:6). It should also be noted that in the next chapter (1 Nephi 2:7) we read that Lehi “built an altar of stones, and made an offering unto the Lord . . .” The evidence clearly points toward plagiarism from the Apocrypha.

### WRITTEN IN EGYPTIAN?

The first few chapters of the Apocrypha, 2 Maccabees, seem to have provided some important structural material for Joseph Smith’s Book of Mormon. For example, in the very first chapter of the Book of Mormon, verse 2, Nephi makes the startling announcement that although he and his family were Jews, he was not going to make his record in the Hebrew language, but rather in “the language of the **Egyptians**.” Moreover, Nephi also claimed that a man named Laban, who lived in Jerusalem, already had a copy of the Old Testament written in Egyptian on Plates of Brass. Since the Bible makes it clear that the Jews had once lived in Egypt and had been made slaves while they were there, they despised the Egyptians. Consequently, faithful Jews certainly would not want their sacred scriptures to be written in that language.

Even J. N. Washburn, a dedicated defender of the Book of Mormon, acknowledged that the claim that the Egyptian language was used presented a real problem:

The point at issue is not that Father Lehi, the Jew, could read and understand Egyptian, **though that is surprising enough**. . . .

No, the big question is how the scripture of the Jews (official or otherwise) came to be written in Egyptian. It is hardly enough to say that the Jews had a long and intimate association with Egypt. That was long before the days of most Hebrew scriptures. Nor does it help very much to remind ourselves that probably the Egyptian characters require less space than the Hebrew, since we have little knowledge of other Hebrew sacred writings preserved in that language. . . .

If I were to suggest what I think to be the **most insistent problem** for Book-of-Mormon scholarship, I should unquestionably name this one: account for the Egyptian language on the Plates of Brass, and the Brass Plates themselves! (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, page 81)

Joseph Smith was apparently oblivious to the problem he created when he spoke of the sacred records being written in the Egyptian language. We believe that it is likely that the Apocrypha played a role in bringing Smith to the decision that the Book of Mormon should be written in Egyptian. It seems significant that **the very first** verse found in 2 Maccabees mentions the **Jews in Egypt**, and that the **second verse** in the Book of Mormon speaks “of the learning of the **Jews** and the language of the **Egyptians**.”

In the text of 2 Maccabees we find this statement: “The brethren, **the Jews** that be **at Jerusalem**, and in the land of

Judea, wish unto the brethren the **Jews** that are throughout **Egypt**, health and peace” (2 Maccabees 1:1). In verse 10 of the same chapter we read: “. . . the people that were **at Jerusalem** . . . sent greeting . . . to **the Jews** that were in **Egypt**.”

In a “word for word reprint” of the original 1611 King James printing of the Apocrypha, and in the 1812 edition we are using, there is an introduction to the first chapter of 2 Maccabees which contains this statement: “A letter from **the Jews at Jerusalem** to them of **Egypt** . . .” (In the original King James Version the word “Jews” is spelled “Iewes.”) The introductory statement is interesting because the four-word phrase “**the Jews at Jerusalem**” is found later in the Book of Mormon, 4 Nephi 1:31. Although this phrase is found once in the New Testament, it never appears in the Old Testament.

These statements concerning correspondence between the Jews in Jerusalem and the Jews in Egypt could have caused Joseph Smith to think about the Egyptian language. Smith may have reasoned that since there were Jews living in Egypt, they may have learned the Egyptian language. This, in turn, could have led him to believe that these Jews actually wrote the sacred scriptures in that language.

Other factors, which we will not take the time to discuss here, could also have played a part in Smith’s claim that the Book of Mormon was written in Egyptian. In any case, since the Jews already spoke the Hebrew language, to have them write the Book of Mormon in the Egyptian language would be about as unparalleled as for the present prophet of the Mormon Church to order that future printings of the Book of Mormon should be in the Chinese language.

Even the prophet Moroni lamented that “if we could have written in Hebrew, behold ye would have had no imperfection in our record” (Mormon 9:33).

Mormon scholar Dr. Hugh Nibley maintained that the writing found in the Book of Mormon was derived from the Egyptian script known as demotic. He acknowledged, however, that demotic is “**the most awkward, difficult, and impractical system of writing ever devised by man!**” (*Lehi in the Desert and the World of the Jaredites*, 1952, page 16).

### RECORDS & ABRIDGMENTS

In the very first verse in the Book of Mormon, the prophet Nephi claimed that he was going to “make a **record** of my proceedings in my days.” This is interesting because in the first verse in the second chapter of 2 Maccabees, we read: “It is also found **in the records**, that Jeremy the prophet commanded them that were carried away to take of the fire . . .”

In 1 Nephi 13:40 we find the words “**in the records**.” A parallel is found to this in 2 Maccabees 2:1, where we find the words: “**in the records**.” This three-word parallel is never found in the Old or New Testament of the King James Bible.

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In the second chapter of 2 Maccabees we read concerning the abridgment or condensation of five books into one:

All these things, I say being declared by Jason of Cyrene in five books, we will assay to **abridge** in one volume. . . . to us that have taken upon us this painful labour of **abridging**, it was not easy . . . Leaving to the author the exact handling of every particular, and labouring to follow the rules of **an abridgment**. . . . But to use brevity, and avoid much labouring of the work, is to be granted to him that will **make an abridgment**. (2 Maccabees 2:23, 26, 28, 31)

This idea of making an abridgment seems to have had a strong influence on Joseph Smith. In the very first chapter of the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 1:17, Nephi wrote: “Behold I **make an abridgment** of the record of my father . . . after I have **abridged** the record of my father then will I make an account of mine own life.”

The reader will notice that both the Apocrypha and the Book of Mormon contain the words “**make an abridgment**.”

Joseph Smith’s title page for the Book of Mormon proclaims that it is “an account written by the hand of Mormon upon plates taken from the plates of Nephi[.] Wherefore, it is **an abridgment** of the record of the people of Nephi . . . **An abridgment** taken from the Book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared . . .”

In The Words of Mormon 1:3, we read that Mormon “made **an abridgment** from the plates of Nephi . . .” In Mormon 5:9, we find these words: “. . . I write a small **abridgment**, daring not to give a full account of the things which I have seen . . .” Moroni, his son also wrote an abridgment: “Now I, Moroni, after having made an end of **abridging** the account of the people of Jared, I had supposed not to have written more . . .” (The Book of Moroni 1:1).

It would seem, then, that the Apocrypha created a real interest in abridgments in the mind of Joseph Smith and that he became rather obsessed with the idea of making abridgments. Significantly, the Bible never uses the words abridge, abridged, abridging nor abridgment.

We noted above that the Book of Mormon speaks of the Hebrew scriptures being translated into the Egyptian language and engraved on plates of brass. This is mentioned in 1 Nephi 3:3: “For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews and also a genealogy of my forefathers upon **plates of brass**.” It is likely that this idea also came from the Apocrypha. In the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus 50:3, we read of “**plates of brass**.” Although those particular plates may not have had writing upon them, in 1 Maccabees 8:22 the following appears: “And this is the copy of the epistle which the senate wrote back again in tables **of brass**, and sent to Jerusalem . . .”

In chapter 14 of 1 Maccabees we find the following:

They wrote unto him, in tables **of brass**, to renew the friendship and league which they had made with Judas and Jonathan his brethren: Which writings were read before the congregation at Jerusalem. . . . So then they wrote it in tables **of brass**, which they set upon pillars in mount Zion . . .” (verses 18-19, 27)

## THE TREASURY OF LABAN

In 1 Nephi 3:2-5, we are told that after Lehi left Jerusalem he “dreamed a dream,” in which the Lord told him that Nephi

and his brethren must return and obtain the “plates of brass” from an evil man named Laban. Unfortunately, Laban thwarted the plan and would not allow Nephi and his brethren to take the plates which were stored in “**the treasury** of Laban” (1 Nephi 4:20). Since these plates contained the sacred scriptures and important genealogical information, they were a very valuable treasure. As it turned out Nephi had to kill Laban and kidnap one of Laban’s servants so that he could take the plates from his treasury (1 Nephi 4:18, 31).

Interestingly, 2 Maccabees, chapter 3, contains a story about a treasury and an attempt to plunder its contents. A man named Apollonius was told “that **the treasury** in Jerusalem was full of infinite sums of money . . .” (verse 6). Apollonius, in turn, told a certain king, who did not respect the wishes of the Jewish people, about the money. This “king chose out Heliodorus his treasurer, and sent him with a commandment to bring him the foresaid money” (verse 7). The people of Jerusalem were very opposed to the plundering of the treasury and “called upon the Almighty Lord, to keep the things of trust safe and sure . . .” (verse 22).

In spite of the pleas, Heliodorus

executed that which was decreed. Now, as he was there present himself with his guard about **the treasury**, the Lord of spirits, and the Prince of all power, caused a great apparition, so that all that presumed to come in with him were astonished at the power of God, and fainted, and were sore afraid. . . . And Heliodorus fell suddenly unto the ground, and was compassed with great darkness . . . Thus him that lately came with a great train, and with all his guard, into **the said treasury**, they carried out . . . Then straightway certain of Heliodorus’ friends prayed Onias that he would call upon the most High to grant him his life, who lay ready to give up the ghost. (2 Maccabees, 3:23-24, 27-28, 31)

The story of Heliodorus trying to plunder the treasury begins in the third chapter of 2 Maccabees and the account of Nephi getting the plates of brass out of Laban’s treasury also begins in the third chapter of the current edition of the Book of Mormon (the chapters in the 1830 edition of the Book of Mormon were much larger). In any case, both stories are approximately the same distance into the text.

There are enough similarities between the two stories to make one believe that Joseph Smith was borrowing from the Apocrypha. Those who take a careful look at the two narratives will notice that in both cases it is the followers of the God of Israel who finally prevail.

Nephi and his brothers made two unsuccessful attempts to obtain the plates but both times Laban threatened them with death and drove them away. On the second attempt Laban took their gold and silver and precious things (1 Nephi 3:24-26).

In spite of these problems, one night Nephi “crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban.” As he came near the house of Laban he “beheld a man, and he had **fallen to the earth** before me . . .” (1 Nephi 4:7). This, of course, resembles 2 Maccabees 3:27, where we were told that “Heliodorus **fell suddenly unto the ground** . . .” In both cases God was responsible for their fall. While Heliodorus saw

“a great apparition,” Laban fell because he “was drunken with wine.” According to 1 Nephi 4:10-11, God had planned that Laban would fall so that Nephi could kill him: “And it came to pass that I was constrained by the Spirit that I should kill Laban . . . And the Spirit said unto me again: Behold the Lord hath delivered him into thy hands.”

Consequently, Nephi claimed that he “took Laban by the hair of the head, and I smote off his head with his own sword” (verse 18). Even though this would seem to have created a rather bloody mess, Nephi said that “after I had smitten off his head . . . I took the garments of Laban and put them upon mine own body; yea, even every whit; and I did gird on his armor about my loins” (verse 19).

Nephi then proceeded “unto **the treasury** of Laban.” On the way he “saw the servant of Laban who had the keys **of the treasury**. And I commanded him in the voice of Laban that he should go with me into **the treasury**. And he supposed me to be his master, Laban, for he beheld the garments and also the sword girded about my loins. . . . And I spake unto him as if it had been Laban. And I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings, which were upon the **plates of brass**, to my elder brethren, who were without the walls. . . . And it came to pass that when the servant of Laban beheld my brethren he began to tremble . . . And now I, Nephi, being a man large in stature . . . therefore I did seize upon the servant of Laban, and held him, that he should not flee. And it came to pass that I spake with him . . . that if he would hearken unto our words, we would spare his life. . . . And it came to pass that we took the **plates of brass** and the servant of Laban, and departed into the wilderness, and journeyed unto the tent of our father” (1 Nephi 4:21, 23-24, 30-32, 38).

The reader will notice that in the quotation given above Nephi used the words “**of the treasury**.” While this three-word phrase is never found in the King James Bible, it does appear in 2 Maccabees 3:40.

A person might wonder what caused Joseph Smith to link the plates of brass with a treasury. The answer may be found in 1 Maccabees 14:48-49:

So they commanded that this writing should be put in tables **of brass**, and that they should be set up within the compass of the sanctuary in a conspicuous place; Also that the **copies thereof** should be laid up in **the treasury**, to the end that Simon and his sons might have them.

While this reference does not specifically state what the “copies” were written on, the original was written on brass plates, and this certainly could have led Joseph Smith to write a story concerning plates of brass in the treasury of Laban. Interestingly, this reference (1 Maccabees 14:48-49) is found only about two pages before the book of 2 Maccabees, which contains the story of Heliodorus’s attempt to plunder the treasury in Jerusalem.

It would appear, then, that Joseph Smith borrowed from both First Maccabees and Second Maccabees in creating this tale. The reader will notice, however, that Smith has turned the story around somewhat. While the Apocrypha has an ungodly man failing in his attempt to plunder the treasury at Jerusalem, the Book of Mormon states that it was a servant of God who tricked Laban’s servant into allowing him to take the “plates of brass” from the treasury. Significantly, in both stories it is the ungodly who are brought to the ground—one is beheaded and

the other “lay ready to give up the ghost.” It really comes as no surprise that in both cases the godly prevailed against the wicked.

## BORROWING FROM JUDITH?

It is hard to escape the conclusion that Joseph Smith borrowed from the books of First and Second Maccabees in creating his story about Laban. In addition, it appears that he also took material from the book of Judith—the fourth book in the Apocrypha. In the *Illustrated Davis Dictionary of the Bible*, page 44, we find this comment about the book of Judith:

The narrative contains misstatements, anachronisms, and geographical absurdities. **It is doubtful if there is any truth in the story** . . . it may have existed as early as 175 to 100 B.C., say four or six hundred years after the event it professed to record. By that time to say that Nabuchodonosor, apparently Nebuchadnezzar, **reigned in Nineveh, instead of Babylon** (Judith i. 1), would not look so erroneous as it would to a contemporary of the great king.

In this tale a woman by the name of Judith is a heroine who saves Israel from Holofernes the chief captain of king Nabuchodonosor’s army.

As we have shown in our book, *Covering up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, pages 14-15, Joseph Smith downplayed the role of women in his Book of Mormon. Although the Book of Mormon sometimes refers to women mentioned in the Bible, it contains the names of only three Nephite, Lamanite or Jaredite women. While Smith had very little to say about women in the Book of Mormon, it appears that he was very interested in the story of Judith. Since he did not want the hero of the tale to be a woman, he apparently decided to attribute material written about Judith to Nephi.

As we indicated above, Laban was a very wicked man. While the name Laban is found in the Bible, it is interesting to note that right in an important part of the story of Judith she mentions the name “**Laban**” (see Judith 9:26). This, of course, could have suggested the name to Joseph Smith.

In any case, there are a number of other important parallels between Judith and the story of Nephi.

## A LIST OF PARALLELS

In view of the evidence it seems obvious that Joseph Smith read at least portions of the Apocrypha before writing the book of First Nephi. He was apparently familiar with the book of Judith and both First and Second Maccabees. From these three books he absorbed portions that he combined into one story in the Book of Mormon. Below are thirty-two interesting parallels between material found in the three books of the Apocrypha and the Book of Mormon. While these parallels contain a good deal of material not mentioned above, there is also some repetition. Those who really want to understand how strong the case of plagiarism is should take the time to carefully read all thirty-two of the parallels below.

The reader will notice that in the study that follows we refer to the Book of Mormon by the three letters **BOM**, and the word Apocrypha is abbreviated to **APO**.

1. As noted above, both the book of Nephi and the book of 2 Maccabees use the word “Nephi” in their opening chapter.

**BOM:** **Nephi** (1 Nephi 1:1)

**APO:** **Nephi** (2 Maccabees 1:36)

2. There is, in fact, a significant parallel in wording between 2 Maccabees and the Book of Mormon in that both books use the words “the place” and “call it Nephi.”

**BOM:** And my people would that we should call the name of **the place** Nephi; wherefore, we did **call it Nephi**. (2 Nephi 5:8)

**APO:** Then the king, inclosing **the place**, made it holy . . . many men **call it Nephi**. (2 Maccabees 1:34, 36)

3. As pointed out above, the name “Laban” occurs in both Judith and the Book of Mormon.

**BOM:** **Laban** hath the record (1 Nephi 3:3)

**APO:** **Laban** his mother’s brother (Judith 8:26)

4. Both Nephi and Judith were very devout servants of the Lord.

**BOM:** Nephi . . . was favored of the Lord (Mosiah 10:13)

**APO:** she feared God greatly (Judith 8:8)

5. Both stories speak of a wicked man who wanted to destroy God’s people.

**BOM:** Laban . . . sent his servants to slay us (1 Nephi 3:25)

**APO:** The next day Holofernes commanded all his army . . . to make war against the children of Israel. (Judith 7:1)

6. In both cases the people were in great fear.

**BOM:** Laban . . . is a mighty man, and he can command fifty, yea, even he can slay fifty; then why not us? (1 Nephi 3:31)

**APO:** God hath sold us into their hands, that we should be thrown down before them with thirst, and great destruction. (Judith 7:25)

7. Both Nephi and Judith counseled their associates to be strong.

**BOM:** Therefore let us go up; let us be strong like unto Moses (1 Nephi 4:2)

**APO:** Now, therefore, O brethren, let us shew an example to our brethren (Judith 8:24)

8. Both claimed that God’s strength did not depend upon numbers.

**BOM:** the Lord . . . is mightier than all the earth, then why not mightier than Laban and his fifty (1 Nephi 4:1)

**APO:** For thy power standeth not in multitude, nor thy might in strong men . . . a saviour of them that are without hope. (Judith 9:11)

9. Both Nephi and his brethren and Judith and her maid went on a secret mission for the Lord.

**BOM:** we came without the walls of Jerusalem. And it was by night; and I caused that they should hide themselves without the walls . . . I Nephi, crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban. (1 Nephi 4:4-5)

**APO:** Thus they went forth to the gate of the city of Bethulia . . . the men of the city looked after her, until she was gone down the mountain, and till she had passed the valley, and could see her no more. (Judith 10:6, 10)

10. In both cases the wicked man was delivered into the hands of the servant of the Lord.

**BOM:** I beheld a man, and he had fallen to the earth before me (1 Nephi 4:7)

**APO:** And Judith was left alone in the tent, and Holofernes lying along upon his bed (Judith 13:2)

11. In both cases the wicked man was drunk.

**BOM:** **he was drunken with wine** (1 Nephi 4:7)

**APO:** **he was filled with wine** (Judith 13:2)

12. In both cases the servant of the Lord took hold of the wicked man’s weapon.

**BOM:** I beheld his sword, and I drew it forth (1 Nephi 4:9)

**APO:** she . . . took down his fauchion from thence (Judith 13:6)

13. In both cases the servant of the Lord took hold of the wicked man’s hair.

**BOM:** **took** Laban by **the hair of the head** (1 Nephi 4:18)

**APO:** **took** hold of **the hair of his head** (Judith 13:7)

14. In both cases the wicked man’s head was cut off with his own weapon.

**BOM:** **and I smote** off **his head** with his own sword (1 Nephi 4:18)

**APO:** **And** she **smote** twice upon his neck . . . and she took away **his head** from him (Judith 13:8)

15. In both cases the servant of the Lord returned to those who were waiting without being caught.

**BOM:** I went forth unto my brethren, who were without the walls (1 Nephi 4:27)

**APO:** Now, when the men of her city heard her voice, they made haste to go down to the gate of their city (Judith 13:12)

16. Both Nephi and Judith made off with some of the wicked man’s possessions.

**BOM:** I took the garments of Laban and put them upon mine own body; yea, even every whit; and I did gird on his armor about my loins. . . . we took the plates of brass and the servant of Laban, and departed into the wilderness (1 Nephi 4:19, 38)

**APO:** they gave unto Judith Holofernes’ tent, and all his plate, and beds, and vessels, and all his stuff (Judith 15:11)

17. When the people learned of the success of the mission they rejoiced.

**BOM:** they did rejoice exceedingly (1 Nephi 5:9)

**APO:** the people shouted with a loud voice, and made a joyful noise in their city (Judith 14:9)



18. In both cases the people offered burnt offerings to the Lord.

**BOM:** they did . . . offer sacrifice and burnt offerings (1 Nephi 5:9)

**APO:** they offered their burnt-offerings (Judith 16:18)

19. Both Nephi and Judith use a similar expression.

**BOM:** his tens of thousands (1 Nephi 4:1)

**APO:** he came with ten thousand (Judith 16:4)

20. Nephi was raised in a house in Jerusalem, but before he killed Laban, his father took the family into the wilderness and they lived in tents. Judith also lived in a house. After her husband's death, however, she made a tent which she put on top of her house. Later she cut off Holofernes' head in his own tent.

**BOM:** he [Nephi's father] departed into the wilderness. And he left **his house** . . . and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and **tents** . . . my father dwelt in a tent . . . (1 Nephi 4-5)

**APO:** So Judith was a widow in **her house** three years and four months. And she made her **a tent** upon the top of her house . . . And she fasted (Judith 8:4-6)

21. In both 1 Nephi and Judith we find the words "three days," "valley," and "to the tent of."

**BOM:** when he had traveled **three days** in the wilderness, he pitched his tent in a **valley** . . . I, Nephi, returned . . . **to the tent of** my father (1 Nephi 2:6; 3:1)

**APO:** Thus they went straight forth in the **valley**; and the first watch of the Assyrians met her . . . and they brought her **to the tent of** Holofernes . . . she abode in the camp **three days**, and went out in the night into the **valley** (Judith 10:11, 17; 12:7)

22. In both accounts the servant of the Lord changes apparel.

**BOM:** I took **the garments of** Laban and put them upon mine own body; yea, even every whit (1 Nephi 4:20)

**APO:** She . . . pulled off the sackcloth which she had on, and put off **the garments of** her widowhood . . . her countenance was altered, and her apparel was changed (Judith 10:2-3, 7)

23. Both Nephi and Judith used trickery to obtain the desired result.

**BOM:** I took the garments of Laban and put them on... I went forth unto the treasury of Laban. . . . I saw the servant of Laban who had the keys of the treasury. And I commanded him in the voice of Laban that he should go with me into the treasury. And he supposed me to be his master, Laban . . . I spake unto him as if it had been Laban. And I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings, which were upon the plates of brass, to my elder brethren . . . And he, supposing that I spake of the brethren of the church, and that I was truly that Laban whom I had slain, wherefore he did follow me (1 Nephi 4:19-24)

**APO:** Then said Holofernes unto her, woman, be of good comfort . . . Judith said unto him, Receive the words of thy

servant . . . and I will declare no lie to my lord this night. And if thou wilt follow the words of thine handmaid, God will bring the thing perfectly to pass by thee; and my Lord shall not fail of his purposes. . . . And I will lead thee through the midst of Judea, until thou come before Jerusalem; and I will set thy throne i[n] the midst thereof (Judith 11:1, 5-6, 19)

24. Both Laban and Holofernes were slain while others were sleeping.

**BOM:** And it was by night . . . I, Nephi, crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban (1 Nephi 4:5)

**APO:** Now when the evening was come, his servants made haste to depart, and Bagoas shut his tent without, and dismissed the waiters from the presence of his lord; and they went to their beds: for they were all weary, because the feast had been long. And Judith was left alone in the tent, and Holofernes lying along his bed (Judith 13:1-2)

25. Both 1 Nephi and the book of Judith contain a similar expression.

**BOM:** left gold and silver, and (1 Nephi 3:16)

**APO:** left her gold and silver, and (Judith 8:7)

26. As we mentioned above, the very first verse found in 2 Maccabees mentions the Jews in Egypt. The second verse in the Book of Mormon contains Nephi's incredible statement that the book would be written in the Egyptian language. The letter mentioned in the Apocrypha may have led Joseph Smith to conclude that it would be acceptable to claim his book of sacred scriptures was written in Egyptian.

**BOM:** I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of **the Egyptians** (1 Nephi 1:2)

**APO:** The brethren, **the Jews** that be **at Jerusalem**, and in the land of Judea, wish unto the brethren the **Jews** that are throughout **Egypt**, health and peace. (2 Maccabees 1:1)

27. We have also mentioned that the introduction to the first chapter of 2 Maccabees contains a four-word phrase which is also found in the Book of Mormon.

**BOM:** **the Jews at Jerusalem** (4 Nephi 1:31)

**APO:** **the Jews at Jerusalem** (Introductory statement at the start of 2 Maccabees)

28. In the second verse of the Book of Mormon Nephi says that he is going to make a "record." 2 Maccabees 2:1 speaks of some "records" which told of a commandment given by Jeremy the prophet. A three-word parallel is found later in 1 Nephi.

**BOM:** **in the records** (1 Nephi 13:40)

**APO:** **in the records** (2 Maccabees 2:1)

29. In the very first chapter of the Book of Mormon, Nephi says he is going to make an abridgment of his record. This is suspiciously like a portion of 2 Maccabees. There is an interesting three-word parallel in the two accounts.

**BOM:** **make an abridgment.** (1 Nephi 1:17)

**APO:** **make an abridgment.** (2 Maccabees 2:31)

30. Both 1 Nephi and 1 Maccabees refer to a “treasury,” plates or tables “of brass,” and use the word “commanded.”

**BOM:** I went forth unto **the treasury** of Laban . . . I saw the servant of Laban . . . And I **commanded** him . . . that he should go with me into **the treasury**. . . . I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings which were upon the plates **of brass**, to my elder brethren (1 Nephi 1:20, 24)  
**APO:** So they **commanded** that this writing should be put in tables **of brass**, and that they should be set . . . in a conspicuous place; Also that the copies thereof should be laid up in **the treasury**, to the end that Simon and his sons might have them. (1 Maccabees 14:48-49)

31. The reader will remember that 2 Maccabees, chapter 3, contains a story about “the treasury in Jerusalem” and Heliodorus’ attempt to plunder its contents. Laban’s treasury was also in Jerusalem. Both Nephi and Heliodorus had to travel to Jerusalem in their attempt to obtain access to the treasury.

**BOM:** I spake unto my brethren, saying: Let us go up again unto **Jerusalem** . . . I Nephi, crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban (1 Nephi 4:1, 5)  
**APO:** the king chose out Heliodorus . . . and sent him with a commandment to bring him the foresaid money. So forthwith Heliodorus took his journey . . . And when he was come to **Jerusalem**, and had been courteously received of the high priest . . . he . . . declared wherefore he came (2 Maccabees 3:7-9)

32. Both Laban and Heliodorus were brought to the ground so they could not thwart the work of the Lord.

**BOM:** as I came near unto the house of Laban I beheld a man, and he had fallen to the earth before me . . . And when I came to him I found that it was Laban (1 Nephi 4:7-8)  
**APO:** And Heliodorus fell suddenly unto the ground, and was compassed with great darkness (2 Maccabees 3:27)

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## LIKE SALAMANDER LETTER

Interestingly, twenty-eight of the thirty-two parallels to the Apocrypha are found in **the first five chapters of the Book of Mormon**. It will be very difficult for Mormon scholars to explain this extraordinary cluster of similarities. It seems obvious that the only answer to these remarkable parallels is that Joseph Smith borrowed from the Apocrypha in creating his Book of Mormon.

The way that Joseph Smith plagiarized portions of the Apocrypha and incorporated them into the Book of Mormon bears a remarkable resemblance to the work of the notorious Mormon forger Mark Hofmann (see our book, *Tracking the White Salamander*). Hofmann fooled the Mormon officials to the point that they even traded documents worth many thousands of dollars for his forgeries. Although Hofmann’s forgeries were often favorable to the Mormon Church, he sometimes created documents which tended to embarrass the church.

The reader may remember that Hofmann’s most disturbing forgery was known as the “Salamander Letter.” It was reportedly written by Martin Harris, one of the Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon. In this letter Harris was supposed to have

written that when Joseph Smith went to get the gold plates for the Book of Mormon, a “**white salamander**” in the bottom of the hole “transfigured himself” into a “spirit” and “struck me 3 times.” This was in stark contrast with Joseph Smith’s story that an angel from heaven revealed the plates to him.

Mormon scholars accepted this letter as authentic. The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS), an organization that is allowed to use “office space” and “campus facilities” at the church’s Brigham Young University, strongly supported the authenticity of the Salamander letter.

We found the Salamander letter to be a very perplexing document. When we were first told about the contents of the letter in November, 1983, we realized that it could deal a devastating blow to the Mormon Church. We had previously written a book entitled, *Mormonism, Magic and Masonry*, in which we presented strong evidence that Joseph Smith was involved in money-digging and magic. Martin Harris’s letter seemed to provide new and important evidence supporting our thesis.

Fortunately, we were able to obtain some revealing extracts from the letter and were preparing to print them in the March 1984 issue of the *Messenger*. We were very excited that we at Utah Lighthouse Ministry would be the first to break this important story to the world. While in the midst of marshaling evidence to support the authenticity of the Salamander letter, we made a discovery that shook us to the very core. We discovered that the account of the transformation of the white salamander into the spirit was remarkably similar to a statement E. D. Howe published in the book, *Mormonism Unveiled*. This book, written four years after the date which appears in the Harris letter, told of a toad “which immediately transformed itself into a spirit” and struck Joseph Smith. Even more disconcerting, however, was the fact that other remarkable parallels to the Salamander letter were found two or three pages from the account of the transformation of the toad into a spirit in Howe’s book (see *Mormonism Unveiled*, pages 273, 275-276).

While our original plan was to use the Salamander letter as evidence against Joseph Smith’s work, the evidence of plagiarism was so clear that we felt it was important to publish the material we had discovered. We pointed out some of the serious problems with the letter in the March, 1984, issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger* and then made this statement: “While we would really like to believe that the letter attributed to Harris is authentic, we do **not** feel that we can endorse it until further evidence comes forth.”

After that we published a number of newsletters questioning Hofmann’s documents. The Mormon Church’s newspaper, *Deseret News*, for September 1, 1984, reported that “outspoken Mormon Church critics Jerald and Sandra Tanner suspect the document is a forgery, they told the *Deseret News*. Jerald Tanner . . . says similarities between it and other documents make its veracity doubtful.”

In an article published in the *New York Times*, Robert Lindsey wrote the following after he learned that investigators suspected the Hofmann documents were forgeries: “In a newsletter that he publishes with his wife, Sandra, Mr. Tanner began raising questions about their authenticity, in some cases comparing the texts with known Mormon writings. But



if senior Mormon officials were aware of his warnings, they apparently paid little attention. Several of the church's highest officials have acknowledged negotiating to acquire documents from Mr. Hofmann until the day of the first two bombings." (*New York Times*, Feb. 16, 1986)

When Mark Hofmann finally confessed that the Salamander letter was a forgery, he admitted that we were right in saying that he plagiarized from E. D. Howe's book in creating the document. The following is taken from Hofmann's confession:

**Q** Now the white salamander, you were going to explain that?

**A** I was going to say that the idea for the **White Salamander derived from the toad in A. [sic] D. Howe's book**. Salamander, from my reading of folk magic, seemed more appropriate than a toad. (*Hofmann's Confession*, 1987, page 440)

While the FBI's examination of the Salamander letter revealed nothing wrong with the document, two document experts were eventually able to produce convincing evidence that it was forged.

A member of the Salt Lake County attorney's office asked one of the editors of this newsletter (Jerald) if he would testify for the prosecution regarding documents at Hofmann's trial. As it turned out, however, after the preliminary hearing Mark Hofmann plead guilty to murder and forgery and the case never came to trial.

As noted above, the method Mark Hofmann used to create his Salamander letter is strikingly like Joseph Smith's use of material from the Apocrypha in his Book of Mormon. In both cases, material was taken from another book that was readily accessible to the plagiarist, and in both cases the author was careful to change the sources extracted just enough so that it would be difficult for the reader to discern the origin of the information.

In both cases the most revealing evidence is the clustering of similarities. In Hofmann's case we find that he borrowed important information from pages 273 and 276 of E. D. Howe's *Mormonism Unveiled*. He also plagiarized from a number of other pages in the same book (see our book, *Tracking the White Salamander*, page 7, for other sources he used in creating his forgery). Material drawn from a number of different pages of Howe's book (as well as other books) all comes together in the Salamander letter.

Joseph Smith also plagiarized from a number of pages in the Apocrypha. As noted above, a very significant cluster of structural material appears to have been taken from 1 Maccabees chapter 14 and 2 Maccabees, chapters 1 through 3. This material was incorporated into the first few chapters of the Book of Mormon. Like Hofmann, Joseph Smith also borrowed other material from the source he was using—i.e., the Apocrypha.

Interestingly, the Apocrypha contained in Protestant Bibles is not a very large collection of material when compared with the Old and New Testaments. While the old Bible we are using contains approximately 950 pages, the Apocrypha takes up less than 150 of those pages.

Although we have not had the time to make a thorough study of the relationship between the Apocrypha and the Book of Mormon, we feel that it is possible that other material or phrases from that collection of material may have been used

by Joseph Smith. We did find what appears to be a significant number of parallels in wording between the early chapters of the book of Mosiah and the Apocrypha. This, however, was only a cursory examination. The book of Alma also had a number of interesting similarities.

## WAS IT A COINCIDENCE?

There is another intriguing similarity between the Apocrypha and the Book of Mormon which could be significant. In the very first book of the Apocrypha, 1 Esdras, we find a date printed at the side of the first page which indicates that the narrative related began "**Before Christ 623.**"

Surprisingly, this places the account within the very period when Lehi lived at Jerusalem, which was not long before the destruction of that city. Since Joseph Smith used a good deal of material from the Apocrypha in the first few chapters of the Book of Mormon, one might ask the question as to whether 1 Esdras influenced his decision regarding the time frame he utilized to bring Lehi's people to the New World. We do know that 1 Esdras 8:2 speaks of a man named **Ezias**, and, as we will show below, the same name appears in the Book of Mormon.

The heading for the first chapter of 1 Esdras, speaks of king Zedechias (spelled Zedekiah in the Old Testament). It refers to Josias and "his successors unto **Zedechias**, when Jerusalem &c. was destroyed." On the very first page of the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 1:4, Nephi relates that "in the commencement of the first year of the reign of **Zedekiah** . . . there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed."

Although Lehi's group left Jerusalem just before the destruction of the city, Lehi claimed he had a vision in which he learned that "Jerusalem is destroyed" (2 Nephi 1:4). Later on in the Book of Mormon there is another statement regarding the destruction of Jerusalem: ". . . and now we know that **Jerusalem was destroyed** . . ." (Helaman 8:20). The reader will notice how close this wording is to that found in the heading to the first chapter of the apocryphal book of 1 Esdras: "**Jerusalem &c. was destroyed.**"

It certainly seems possible that the book of 1 Esdras may have given Joseph Smith some historical background which he could use for his story concerning Lehi's flight from the Old World. Nevertheless, if the Apocrypha provided the original spark for this idea, the Mormon prophet undoubtedly went to the Old Testament to get the King James spelling for the names he used. Furthermore, it is likely that he may have read somewhat concerning Jeremiah in the Old Testament. In his Book of Mormon Smith used the phrase "of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah," and this same wording is found in the book of Jeremiah 28:1.

We have already mentioned the spelling difference between Zedechias and Zedekiah. It should also be mentioned that Jeremiah is spelled **Jeremy** in the Apocrypha. The reader may remember that 2 Maccabees also spoke of the prophet Jeremy. While this spelling is not used in the Old Testament, the prophet Jeremiah is referred to twice as Jeremy in the New Testament (see Matthew 2:17, 27:9).

It is interesting to note that while Joseph Smith did not use the name “Jeremy” in the Book of Mormon itself, in September, 1832, he gave a revelation in which he incorporated that name into a revelation concerning priesthood: “. . . And Elihu [received the priesthood] under the hand of **Jeremy**; And **Jeremy** under the hand of Gad . . .” (*Doctrine and Covenants* 84:9-10). The Mormon Church’s Bible Dictionary contains this notation: “There was another **Jeremy** who lived near to the time of Abraham, and who held the Melchizedek Priesthood. Nothing more is known of him today.” Joseph Smith may have extracted this name from the Apocrypha or from the book of Matthew. In any case, we have been unable to find anything regarding a “Jeremy” who lived close to the time of Abraham.

However this may be, in the Apocrypha we find both Zedechias (Zedekiah) and Jeremy (Jeremiah) mentioned in the first two chapters of 1 Esdras:

So after a year Nabuchodonosor . . . made **Zedechias** king of Judea and Jerusalem . . . And he did evil . . . and cared not for the words that were spoken unto him by the prophet **Jeremy** from the mouth of the Lord. . . . And after that king Nabuchodonosor had made him to swear by the name of the Lord he forswore himself, and rebelled . . . he transgressed the laws of the Lord God of Israel . . .

Nevertheless the God of their fathers sent by his messengers to call them back . . . But they had his messengers in derision . . . they made a sport of his prophets; So far forth, that he, being wroth with his people for their great ungodliness, commanded the kings of the Chaldees to come up against them; Who slew their young men . . . and spared neither young man nor maid . . .

As for the house of the Lord, they burnt it, brake down the walls of Jerusalem . . . and the people that were not slain with the sword he carried into Babylon; Who became servants to him and his children, till the Persians reigned, to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of **Jeremy** . . .

In the first year of Cyrus king of the Persians, that the word of the Lord might be accomplished, that he had promised **by the mouth of Jeremy**, The Lord raised up the spirit of Cyrus the king of the Persians, and he made proclamation . . . Saying, Thus saith Cyrus . . . The Lord of Israel, the most high Lord, hath made me king of the whole world, And commanded me to build him an house at Jerusalem . . . If therefore there be any of you that are of his people . . . let him go up to Jerusalem . . . and build the house of the Lord of Israel . . .” (1 Esdras 1:45-48, 50-53, 55-57; 2:1-5)

We have already noted that the name **Ezias**, comes from the Apocrypha, 1 Esdras 8:2. While at first glance this may not seem too significant, it is, in fact, extremely important because the name appears in a verse in the Book of Mormon which mentions both the prophet Jeremiah and the fact that “Jerusalem was destroyed”:

And behold, also Zenock, and also **Ezias**, and also Isaiah, and **Jeremiah**, (**Jeremiah** being that same prophet who testified of the **destruction of Jerusalem**) and now we know that **Jerusalem was destroyed** according to the words of **Jeremiah**. O then why not the Son of God come, according to his prophecy? (Helaman 8:20)

Since the name **Ezias** is only found one time in the entire Book of Mormon, it seems remarkable that it appears in a section of the Book of Mormon which contains information about Jeremiah and the fall of Jerusalem. The most reasonable explanation seems to be that as Joseph Smith was reading from the Apocrypha (1 Esdras) concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, he continued to read or browse until he encountered the name **Ezias** in the second verse of chapter eight. For some reason he liked the name and decided to include it in his own book. While the Apocrypha gives no information about **Ezias**, Joseph Smith elevated him to the position of an important prophet who spoke in Old Testament times. Interestingly, this name does **not** appear anywhere in the Old or New Testament!

It is also possible that Joseph Smith’s curiosity concerning the Apocrypha led him to make a theological mistake regarding Jesus Christ. While many of the ancient Israelites believed that the Messiah would come, neither the name “Jesus” nor the title “Christ” can be found anywhere in the Old Testament. It was not until just before the birth of Christ that the angel announced that Mary’s baby would be called Jesus (Matthew 1:21).

Joseph Smith, however, came to believe that the Savior was referred to as “Jesus Christ” even during the time when Adam was on the earth. In Smith’s Book of Moses we read: “And he [God] called upon our father Adam by his own voice, saying: I am God . . . he also said unto him: If thou wilt turn unto me . . . and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine **Only Begotten Son**, who is full of grace and truth, which is **Jesus Christ** . . . ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost . . .” (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Moses 6:51-52).

Joseph Smith’s mistaken idea may have come from reading in the Apocrypha, 2 Esdras 7:28-29:

For my **son Jesus** shall be revealed with those that be with him, and they that remain shall rejoice within **four hundred years**. After these years shall my **Son Christ** die, and all men that have life.

In the Book of Mormon the prophet Nephi wrote the following:

For according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah cometh **in six hundred years** from the time that my father left Jerusalem . . . his name shall be **Jesus Christ**, the Son of God. (2 Nephi 25:19)

It seems likely that when Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon he blindly followed the idea set forth in the Apocrypha of revealing Jesus’s name before it was actually made known to the world. Since the story in 2 Esdras purports to take place about 400 years before the time of Christ, Joseph Smith apparently assumed that this dating was accurate. This, of course, was a very serious mistake which apparently led Smith into the mistaken notion that centuries before Christ people were accustomed to hearing the words “Jesus Christ” used by followers of the Lord. In reality, however, this was not the case.

The evidence seems to suggest that 2 Esdras was actually written after the time of Christ. In the *Illustrated Davis Dictionary of the Bible*, page 43, we read: “2 ES’DRAS. This

is in quite a different style from 1 Esdras. . . . a date from about A.D. 88 to about A.D. 117, is generally accepted.” This, of course, would be well after the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Although, the Mormon Church’s own Bible Dictionary does not attempt to give a date, it does say that “Many scholars feel that book was composed **in the first century A.D.**” (page 610). Even if it could be established that the book was written earlier, Bible scholars have noted that it has interpolations taken from New Testament scriptures. Consequently, 2 Esdras is a very poor book to rely upon to try to prove that people in Old Testament times used the words “Jesus Christ.”

## ROBERTS AND ESDRAS

Surprisingly, B. H. Roberts, the noted Mormon historian and defender of the church, came to have serious doubts about the Book of Mormon. Roberts was one of the greatest scholars the church has ever known. He not only prepared the “Introduction And Notes” for Joseph Smith’s *History of the Church* (seven volumes), but he also wrote the six-volume work, *A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. He is also noted for his many works supporting the Book of Mormon.

When B. H. Roberts read the book *View of the Hebrews*, a book written by Ethan Smith in 1825, he was shocked by the parallels he found to the Book of Mormon:

One other subject remains to be considered in this division . . . viz.—**was Joseph Smith possessed of a sufficiently vivid and creative imagination as to produce such a work as the Book of Mormon** from such materials as have been indicated in the preceding chapters . . . That such power of imagination would have to be of a high order is conceded; **that Joseph Smith possessed such a gift of mind there can be no question.** . . .

In the light of this evidence, there can be no doubt as to the possession of **a vividly strong, creative imagination by Joseph Smith**, the Prophet, an imagination, it could with reason be urged, which, **given the suggestions that are found in the “common knowledge”** of accepted American antiquities of the times, supplemented by such a work as Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews*, **would make it possible for him to create a book such as the Book of Mormon is.** (*Studies of the Book of Mormon*, Edited by Brigham D. Madsen, 1985, pp. 243, 250)

While reading the book, *View of the Hebrews*, B. H. Roberts encountered quotations taken from 2 Esdras. (This, of course, is the same apocryphal book we have been discussing.) Roberts felt that he had discovered some significant parallels between 2 Esdras, chapter 13, and the book of Ether—a work found near the end of the Book of Mormon. B. H. Roberts wrote the following about the similarities:

Both the Book of Mormon and Ethan Smith’s *View of the Hebrews* bring their people to the New World by migrations from the old. . . . Ethan Smith, accepting the general idea extant in his day that America was peopled via Bering Strait, thought it possible that “the lost tribes” of Israel might as well have come that way as any other people from Asia . . . The Book of Mormon peoples, both

Jaredites and Nephites, are brought by way of the sea. In one respect, however, the migrations of the Jaredites and of Ethan Smith’s ‘lost tribes’ are strikingly similar, and the fact is mentioned in both cases in language nearly identical—both people are brought into a land “**where never man dwelt.**” . . . Ethan Smith, in working out his theory that the American Indians are the “ten lost tribes” of Israel, takes his account of the migration of that people from the **Apocryphal book of Esdras** (II Esdras 13). . . .

Let us now turn to the Book of Mormon account of the Jaredite migration to the New World. . . .

It is to be noted first of all that a consultation is had among those to whom the journey is proposed, in both cases. . . . in both cases the motive of removal was a religious one. . . .

The journey in both cases was to the north. . . . In each case the journey of the two people was to be a long one. In the case of Ethan Smith’s Israelites it was “of a year and a half’s” duration. In the case of the Jaredites, it required 344 days to cross the great sea . . . let us here be reminded that what is sought in this study is not absolute identity of incidents, and absolute parallel of conditions and circumstances all down the line; but one thing here and another there, that may suggest another but similar thing in such a way as to make one a product of the other, as in the above parallel between the journey of the Jaredites and Ethan Smith’s Israelites. Such as the motive for their journey being the same; the direction of the journey in both cases being northward; both people entering a valley at the commencement of their journey; both of them encountering many bodies of water in their journey; the journey in both cases being an immense one; and to a land, in the one case, “**where never man dwelt.**” . . . and in the other case, “**into a quarter where there never had man been**” (Ether 2:5). Where such striking parallels as these obtain, it is not unreasonable to hold that where one account precedes the other, and if the one constructing the later account has had opportunity of contact with the first account, then it is not impossible that the first account **could have suggested the second**; and if the points of resemblance and possible suggestion are frequent and striking, then it would have to be conceded that the first might even have supplied the ground plan of the second.

Also let it be borne in mind, that the facts and the arguments employed here are cumulative and progressive, and that we have not yet reached the end of the story. (*Studies of the Book of Mormon*, pages 183-186)

We believe that B. H. Roberts made an important find with regard to the relationship between the apocryphal book of 2 Esdras and the Book of Mormon. His parallel “**where never mankind dwelt**” (2 Esdras 13:41) with the book of Ether’s “**where there never had man been**” (Ether 2:5) is a remarkable discovery which is supported by additional evidence which Roberts brought forth.

A paper-back edition of Roberts’s *Studies of the Book of Mormon* is available from Utah Lighthouse Ministry for only \$14.95 (plus shipping charge).

Our cursory examination of 2 Esdras, 13:42-56, revealed a number of interesting parallels. For example, verse 43 contains the words “**by the narrow passages.**” In the book of Mormon, Alma 50:34, we find the words “**by the narrow pass,**” and in Mormon 2:29 we read about “**the narrow passage.**” No parallel wording is found in the King James Bible.



A four-word parallel “**and now when they**” appears in 2 Esdras, 13:46, and the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 16:32. This phrase is not found in the Bible.

The words “**sawest thou**” are found in both 2 Esdras, 13:47, and the Book of Mormon, Ether 3:9. This phrase only appears in the Bible twice.

The phrase “**are they that are**” is not found in the Bible, but it is found in both 2 Esdras, 13:48, and the Book of Mormon, Alma 14:7.

The words “**defend his people**” appear in both 2 Esdras, 13:49, and the Book of Mormon, Alma 48:13, but are lacking in the Bible.

The book of 2 Esdras, 13:52, contains the words “**are in the deep of the sea,**” and we find the following in the Book of Mormon, Alma 3:3, “**are in the depths of the sea.**” There is no strong parallel to this in the Bible.

The words “**diligence unto**” are not in the Bible, but they are found in both 2 Esdras, 13:54, and the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 29:4.

Verse 56 of 2 Esdras, 13, uses the phrase “**thee mighty,**” and these identical words are found in the Book of Mormon, Helaman 10:5. They are, however, lacking in the Bible.

It is difficult for us to believe that all of these parallels to the Book of Mormon could have occurred by accident when the same wording falls within just 14 verses of the apocryphal book of 2 Esdras.

## THE BROTHER OF JARED

B. H. Roberts’s research with regard to the apocryphal book of 2 Esdras led us to seek other parallels to the book of Ether. This book was named after Ether, a Book of Mormon prophet who lived to see the destruction of the Jaredites. The main character in the book, however, was a man who brought the Jaredites from the Tower of Babel to the New World. Surprisingly, when Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon, he did not give this important man a name; he was referred to simply as “the brother of Jared.” Later, however, Joseph Smith supposedly said his name was “Mahonri Moriancumer.”

In any case, both Esdras and the brother of Jared were mighty prophets who diligently prayed and received visits from the Lord. Esdras related the following: “And it came to pass . . . there came a voice out of a bush . . . and said, Esdras, Esdras! And I said, Here am I, Lord” (2 Esdras 14:1-2). In the Book of Mormon, Ether 2:4, we read: “. . . the Lord came down and talked with the brother of Jared; and he was in a cloud, and the brother of Jared saw him not.”

Both Esdras and the brother of Jared go up upon a mount. In 2 Esdras 2:33 we read: “I Esdras received a charge of the Lord upon **the mount Oreb**, that I should **go** unto Israel; but when I came unto them, they set me at nought, and despised the commandment of the Lord.”

The brother of Jared, likewise, went up upon a mount, spoke with the Lord, and was told to go back down: “And it came to pass that the brother of Jared . . . went forth unto the mount, which they called **the mount Shelem** . . . And the Lord commanded the brother of Jared, to **go** down out of the mount from the presence of the Lord . . .” (Ether 3:1; 4:1)

Both Esdras and the brother of Jared were shown innumerable people and things that would happen in the last

times. In 2 Esdras 2:42 we read: “I Esdras saw upon the mount Sion a great people, whom **I could not number** . . .” In 2 Esdras 8:63 we find: “Behold, O Lord, now hast thou shewed me the **multitude of the wonders**, which thou wilt begin to do in the last times . . .”

The Lord showed the brother of Jared “**all the inhabitants of the earth** which had been, and also all that would be; and he withheld them not from his sight, even unto the ends of the earth. . . . Behold, I [Moroni] 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” (Ether 3:25; 4:4).

Both Esdras and the brother of Jared supposedly saw Jesus Christ long before he came into the world. As we mentioned above, 2 Esdras 7:28-29 mentions “my **son Jesus**” and “my **Son Christ**.” In 2 Esdras 2:43, 47, we read: “And in the midst of them there was a young man of a high stature, taller than all the rest, and upon every one of their heads he set crowns, and was more exalted; which I marvelled at greatly. . . . So he answered and said unto me, It is the **Son of God**, whom they have confessed in the world.” In 2 Esdras 13:32 we find: “and then shall **my Son** be declared, whom **thou sawest as a man** ascending.”

In the Book of Mormon we find the following regarding the brother of Jared’s encounter with Jesus Christ:

And the veil was taken from off the eyes of the brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord . . . And the Lord said unto him: Because of thy faith thou hast seen that I shall take upon me flesh and blood; and never has man come before me with such exceeding faith as thou hast; for were it not so ye could not have seen my finger. Sawest thou more than this? And he answered: Nay; Lord, show thyself unto me. . . . And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said . . . Behold, I am **Jesus Christ**. I am the Father and the **Son** . . . Wherefore, having this perfect knowledge of God, he could not be kept from within the veil; therefore he saw **Jesus**; and he did minister unto him. (Ether 3:6, 9-10, 13-14, 20)

Both Esdras and the brother of Jared are commanded to write the revelations they received. The phrase “shall write” is found only twice in the Bible. Interestingly, however, it is used in both 2 Esdras and the book of Ether. Esdras wrote: “But if I have found grace before thee, send the Holy Ghost into me, and I **shall write** all that hath been done in the world since the beginning . . .” (2 Esdras 14:22). In the Book of Mormon we read that “the Lord said unto the brother of Jared . . . And behold, when ye shall come unto me, ye **shall write** them . . .” (Ether 3:21).

Similar wording, which is not present in the Bible, is found in 2 Esdras and the book of Ether. In Ether 4:16 we find the words “**caused to be written.**” 2 Esdras 15:2 contains the words “**cause them to be written.**”

As indicated above, the revelations received by Esdras and the brother of Jared were extremely important. In both cases the Lord warned these prophets that they were not to reveal certain things they had written. The Lord told the brother of Jared that he should “**not** suffer these things . . . to go forth unto the world, until the time cometh that I shall glorify my name in the flesh . . . ye shall write them and shall seal them up, that no one can interpret them; for ye shall write them in a language that they cannot be read” (Ether 3:21-22).

In 2 Esdras 12:37 the prophet Esdras is instructed to “write all these things that thou hast seen in a book, and **hide them**: And teach them to the wise of the people, whose hearts thou knowest may comprehend and **keep these secrets**.” In chapter 14 of the same book, the Lord instructed Esdras to take five men

which are ready to write swiftly; And come hither, and I shall light a candle of understanding in thine heart, which shall not be put out, till the things be performed which thou shalt begin to write. And when thou hast done, some things shalt thou publish, and some things shalt thou shew **secretly** to the wise . . .

So I took the five men, as he commanded me, and we went into the field, and remained there. . . . The Highest gave understanding unto the five men, and they wrote the wonderful visions . . . As for me, I spake in the day, and I held not my tongue by night. In forty days they wrote two hundred and four books. And it came to pass, when the forty days were fulfilled, that the Highest spake, saying, The first that thou has written publish openly, that the worthy and unworthy may read it: But keep the seventy last, that thou mayest deliver them **only to such as be wise** . . . For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge. (2 Esdras 24-26, 37, 42-47)

We have already explained that Ether was the last Jaredite prophet. The Book of Mormon says that the prophet Ether told the people “**all things, from the beginning** of man . . .” (Ether 13:2). Esdras, likewise, said that he wanted to write “**all that hath been done in the world since the beginning** . . .” (2 Esdras 14:22).

## THE TREE OF LIFE

The apocryphal book of 2 Esdras may have furnished some material for Lehi’s vision of “the tree of life” which is found in the very first book of the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi, chapter 8. In chapters 11 and 12 of the same book Nephi related that he also saw a similar vision.

In making the suggestion that material may have been borrowed from the apocrypha, we do not want to give the reader the impression that this was Joseph Smith’s only source. In fact, in our book *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, we have presented irrefutable evidence that Smith plagiarized a great deal of material from the New Testament book of Revelation in the pages of 1 Nephi (see pages 87, 91, 94, 95-98, 100-101, 103, 105, 107-108 of our book). The damaging thing about this plagiarism from the book of Revelation is that Joseph Smith has Lehi and Nephi quoting this New Testament book **almost seven centuries before it was written!** This in itself tends to discredit the Book of Mormon.

Although it is obvious that the book of Revelation was the main source for Joseph Smith’s story regarding the “tree of life,” Esdras certainly could have supplied supplementary material. Like the Nephite prophets, Esdras wrote concerning the tree of life. In 2 Esdras 2:12 we read that “They shall have **the tree of life** for an ointment of sweet savour; they shall neither labour, nor be weary.” In 7:53 we read that “there should be shewed a paradise, whose **fruit** endureth for ever . . .” In the next chapter we find: “For unto you is paradise opened, **the tree of life is planted** . . .” (2 Esdras 8: 52).

In the Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 8:10-11, Lehi reported: “And it came to pass that I beheld **a tree**, whose **fruit** was desirable to make one happy . . . the **fruit** thereof . . . was most sweet, above all that I ever before tasted.” After seeing the same vision, Nephi wrote: “. . . I beheld that the rod of iron . . . was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to **the tree of life** . . .” (1 Nephi 11:25).

Both Esdras and Lehi had inspired revelations and dreams. Like Joseph of the Old Testament, Esdras wrote: “**And it came to pass . . . I dreamed a dream** by night . . .” (2 Esdras 13:1). Nephi used similar wording when he wrote the following about his father’s vision of the “tree of life”: “**And it came to pass** . . . he spake unto us, saying: Behold, **I have dreamed a dream**; or, in other words, I have seen a vision” (1 Nephi 8:2).

While the book of Revelation provided a great deal of the information Joseph Smith needed for his vision of the tree of life, it does not contain the word “field.” Lehi claimed that in the vision he saw a “field.” The word “field” is mentioned a number of times in 2 Esdras. For example, at one time when Esdras was receiving revelations, he was commanded to “go into a **field** of flowers, where no house is builded, and eat only the flowers of the **field** . . .” (9:24). In verse 26, he said that he “did eat of the herbs of the **field**, and the meat of the same satisfied me.” Later, Esdras wrote: “But I remained still in the **field** seven days, as the angel commanded me . . .” (12:51). Lehi maintained that the field he saw in his vision was “**a large and spacious field**” (1 Nephi 8:9). In 2 Esdras 7:6 we read that a “city is builded, and set upon a **broad field** . . .”

In his vision the prophet Lehi saw “**a great and spacious building**” standing “as it were in the air . . .” (1 Nephi 8:26). The prophet Esdras was commanded “to go into the **field**, where no foundation of any building was” (2 Esdras 10:53). The account goes on to say that he was shown a very large and beautiful building and instructed to go in “and see the beauty and **greatness** of the **building**, as much as thine eyes be able to see . . .” (2 Esdras 10:55). The reader will notice a parallel here; the Book of Mormon uses the word “**great**” in referring to the building, and the Apocrypha speaks of the “**greatness**” of the building.

As Lehi watched the vision of “the tree of life,” he saw that two of his sons did not partake of “the fruit.” Consequently, “he exceedingly feared for Laman and Lemuel; yea, he feared lest they should be cast off from the presence of the Lord” (1 Nephi 8:35-36). Lehi also noted that many others “fell away into forbidden paths and were lost” (1 Nephi 8:28). Esdras, likewise, was deeply concerned about the people who were lost. In one of his visions Esdras was told to not be “curious how the ungodly shall be punished . . .” To this Esdras replied, “that there be many more of them which perish, than of them which shall be saved . . .” (2 Esdras 9:13, 15). At one point Esdras was told that he was to ask “no more questions concerning the multitude of them that perish” (2 Esdras 8:55).

There is one short portion of 2 Esdras which could have provided a number of words found in the “tree of life” vision:

And I said, Speak on my God. Then said he unto me, The sea is set in a wide place, that it may be deep and great. But put the case the entrance were **narrow**, and like a **river**, Who then could go into the sea **to look upon** it . . . if he went not through the **narrow**, how could he come into the **broad**? A city is builded, and set upon a **broad field**, and is full of all

good things: The entrance thereof is **narrow**, and is set in a dangerous place to fall, like as if there were a fire on the right hand, and on the left a deep **water**: And one only **path** between them both, even between the fire and the **water**, so small that there could but one man go there at once. . . . Then were the entrances of this world made **narrow** . . . full of perils, and very painful. For the entrances of the elder world were wide and sure, and brought immortal **fruit**. If then they that live labour not to enter these **strait** and vain things, they can never receive those that are laid up for them. (2 Esdras 7:3-8, 12-14)

The words which are printed in **bold type** in the quotation above are also found in the accounts by Lehi and Nephi of the “tree of life” vision (see 1 Nephi, chapters 8, 11-12). While these words do not give us the story found in the Book of Mormon, they certainly could have provided structural material for Joseph Smith’s fertile mind. We emphasize again, however, that most of the vision of the “tree of life” was plagiarized directly from the biblical book of Revelation.

The reader will notice that the following words are found in the verses taken from 2 Esdras: **fruit, river, water, strait, narrow, path, broad, field**, and the phrase **to look upon**. The reader will remember also that we have previously mentioned that a great “**building**” and “**the tree of life**” are also found in 2 Esdras.

One thing that is especially interesting about Esdras’s vision is the material found in two of the verses in 2 Esdras 7:7-8 which we have cited above: “The entrance thereof is **narrow**, and is set in a dangerous place to fall, like as if there were a fire on the right hand, and on the left a deep **water**: And one only **path** between them both, even between the fire and the water, so small that there could but one man go there at once.”

Lehi’s account of “the tree of life” reveals that there was “a **strait** and **narrow path**” and that many “were pressing forward, that they might obtain the **path** which led unto the tree by which I stood” (1 Nephi 8:20-21). The Apocrypha indicates that only one man at a time can follow the “**path**” through the “dangerous place.” The Book of Mormon also seems to imply that those who walk on the “**narrow path**” must go single file. It says that there was “a rod of iron” which “extended along the bank of the river, and led to the tree” and that those who wished to be saved had to cling “to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree” (1 Nephi 8:19, 24).

In the account in 2 Esdras we are told that “on the left” of the **path** there was “like as if there were” some “**deep water**” which was hazardous to those passing over the path. In fact, the possibility one could “fall” is mentioned. This is significant because in the Book of Mormon we read: “And it came to pass that many were **drowned** in the **depths** of the fountain . . .” (1 Nephi 8:32).

There are other parallels between the wording in 1 Nephi, chapters 8, 11 and 12, and 2 Esdras. For example an “angel” made this comment to Esdras: “**It is the Son of God** . . .” (2 Esdras 2:4). In 1 Nephi 11:7 we also find the words, “**it is the Son of God**.”

The words “**what thou desirest**” are found in 2 Esdras 4:43. In 1 Nephi 11:2, 10, we find the same words in a different order, “**what desirest thou**.”

In 2 Esdras 5:2 the phrase “**thou seest**” appears. The same words are found in 1 Nephi 11:18.

The words “**multitudes of peoples**” are found in both 2 Esdras 5:27 and 1 Nephi 11:31.

The term “**these words said he unto me**” appear in 2 Esdras 6:30. In 1 Nephi 11:24 we read, “**these words, he said unto me**.”

In 2 Esdras 9:38 the phrase “**with a loud voice**” is used. The same words appear in 1 Nephi 11:6

The words “**the meaning of the**” appear in 2 Esdras 10:40. They are also found in 1 Nephi 11:21.

In 2 Esdras 10:44 we find the words “**whom thou seest**.” The same words are found in 1 Nephi 11:18.

The words “**And I saw, and**” appear in 2 Esdras 11:2. The same words appear in 1 Nephi 11:32.

In 2 Esdras 11:36-37 we find the words “**said unto me, Look . . . And I beheld**.” The same words appear in 1 Nephi 11:24.

In 2 Esdras 12:10 the following wording appears: “**And he said unto me**, This is **the interpretation** . . .” In 1 Nephi 11:10-11 we find similar wording: “**And he said unto me**: What desirest thou? And I said unto him: To know **the interpretation** . . .” The reader will notice that in the parallel above the two books contain seven words that are identical.

The words “**gathered together to**” are found in 2 Esdras 13:8. The same words appear in 1 Nephi 11:28.

We suspect that there are many other parallels between the Book of Mormon and the Apocrypha which would require a sophisticated computer program to ferret out. What we really need is a careful computer examination of two, three or more word parallels between the Book of Mormon and the Apocrypha. In the meantime we feel that we have demonstrated important connections between Joseph Smith’s Book of Mormon and the Apocrypha. We, of course, have already noted that when Smith bought a Bible it contained the Apocrypha.

Edward Stevenson, one of Joseph Smith’s followers, made this statement concerning Smith’s view of the Apocrypha:

Opening the Bible **to the Apocrypha**, he [Joseph Smith] said, “**There are many precious truths in these books,—just as true as any of the Bible**—but it requires much of the Spirit of God to divide the truths from the errors which have crept into them.” (*The Juvenile Instructor*, September 15, 1894, page 570)

At the time Joseph Smith was revising the Bible he even claimed to have a revelation from the Lord concerning the Apocrypha. In the *Doctrine and Covenants* Smith wrote:

Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you concerning the **Apocrypha**—There are many things contained therein that are true, and it is mostly translated correctly; There are many things contained therein that are not true, which are interpolations by the hands of men. . . . Therefore, whoso readeth it, let him understand, for the Spirit manifesteth truth; And whoso is enlightened by the Spirit shall obtain benefit therefrom; And whoso receiveth not by the Spirit, cannot be benefited. Therefore it is **not needful that it should be translated**. Amen. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 91)

Those who want to know more about the Apocrypha may be interested in knowing that we have copies of the King James Version of the Apocrypha available for **\$9.00** a copy (plus shipping charge).



## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS

“I can’t thank you enough for what has happened to my son who went on a mission last AUG. **He left the mission last week and left the church too.** Someone had left a copy of Mormonism—Shadow or Reality in the apt. that they moved into. He read it and two weeks later **left all behind.** I had tried to talk him out of the Mormon bit and especially the mission but he wouldn’t listen. Your book accomplished everything INSTANTLY. I can’t imagine how that book got to be in **that apt. at that time** but I expect its nothing short of a miracle. God bless you both.” (Letter from Oregon)

“I am a prior Mormon myself and your **work was instrumental in my leaving ‘the church.’** You do the tedious research and investigation that most Christians don’t have the time to do full-time. Your materials have helped me in my witnessing and church classes.” (Letter from Alabama)

“I appreciate the work you’re doing. Your ministry **helped me to leave Mormonism** and become a true Christian.” (Letter from Hawaii)

“. . . I’ve read your book *The Changing World of Mormonism* and got a lot out of it. I just recently **left the Mormon Church and became a Born Again Christian.** . . . I was a member for 24 years . . . I’m really interested in starting a ministry in my new church in the area of helping Mormons find Christ . . .” (Letter from Ohio)

“I have been wavering about the church after reading some of your literature passed to me by a friend. This has **finally clinched it for me** & after being active for 50 years **I will never go back.** . . . I am so grateful to you both for the hard work & effort . . . I have made my decision & I thank my Heavenly Father & you people for being there to help me . . . I finally feel so much better about myself . . . but I am sorry that I . . . wasted so much time.” (Letter from Alberta, Canada)

“I want to thank you so much for your precious work . . . I am 24 years old, 5th generation Mormon. In the past couple of years I’ve had so many doubts about the church, and all my questions went unanswered! My bishops told me not to worry about such things . . . After reading ‘A Gathering of Saints’ and ‘The Changing World of Mormonism’ I am positive **it is very wrong.** My fiancé was taking the [missionary] lessons & **you’ve helped us both get out!!** Now I’ve given material to my friend . . . who has been doubting since she was married in the L.V. Temple three years ago. **She’s ready to leave now too.** . . . I am so scared of the reaction I will have . . . **But I feel so free now** I can find the true Christ!! (Letter from Nevada)

“I can’t say all the words of thanks on this little paper. But please know that your hard work has been an instrument through which **God was finally able to reach me** . . . Thank you Sandra for giving my now husband a tape & words of encouragement. I’m so glad he didn’t give up on me!” (Letter from Utah)

“I myself am a former Mormon Missionary who left my mission . . . I’ve accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Personal Savior and been born Again.” (Letter from Pennsylvania)

## IN THE LIGHTHOUSE AT LAST!

We are very happy to report that we have finally moved into the new Utah Lighthouse building at **1358 South West Temple**—just one door south of the house we used for over thirty years to carry on our ministry to Mormons. We want to extend our thanks to all those who have helped us reach the end of this long and dusty road. We were so crowded in our former location that it was hard to function effectively.

Those who are interested in helping us reach the Mormon people should be aware that Utah Lighthouse is a non-profit organization. In addition to our work with Mormons, we provide support for **44 children** through World Vision. Those who are concerned about helping this ministry can send their **tax- deductible** contributions to **UTAH LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRY**, PO Box 1884, Salt Lake City, UT 84110. Both contributions and orders can be made over the phone (801-485-0312) with Visa, MasterCard, or Discover Card.

We deeply appreciate the financial contributions that we receive. Nevertheless, we strongly believe that **PRAYER** is the most important thing and that it will bring thousands of Mormons to the truth. As Apostle Paul admonished: **“Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving”** (Colossians 4:2).

## BOOKS AND TAPES

(Mail orders add 10% - Minimum postage \$1.50)

*Occultic Ritual Abuse: Fact or Fantasy?* by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. **Price: \$6.95**

*The Mormon Hierarchy: Origins of Power*, by D. Michael Quinn. **Price: \$29.95**

*The Nauvoo Expositor* — Joseph Smith tried to suppress this newspaper because it told the truth about polygamy and other practices. This act led to Smith’s death. This is a photomechanical reprint of the original. **Price: \$2.00** — 5 for **\$8.00** — 10 for **\$14.00**

*Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess*, by Richard S. Van Wagoner. Reg. \$28.95 — **Special Price: \$27.00**

*Inventing Mormonism*, by H. Michael Marquardt and Wesley P. Walters. An important discussion of Joseph Smith’s early years and the origin of Mormonism. **Special Price: \$27.00**

*New Approaches to the Book of Mormon*, edited by Brent Metcalfe. BYU professor Louis Midgley says this is “the most sophisticated attack on the truth of the Book of Mormon” that is currently available. **Special Price: \$25.00**

**BOOKS AND TAPES**

Continued from page 15

(Mail orders add 10% — Minimum postage \$1.50)

*Out of the Cults and Into the Church: Understanding & Encouraging Ex-Cultists*, by Janis Hutchinson. **Price: \$10.00**

*Sandra Tanner Tape No. 3*. Two radio interviews. Contains information about the 1990 changes in the Mormon temple ceremony and the false translation of the Book of Abraham. **Price: \$3.00**

*Questions to Ask Your Mormon Friend: Challenging the Claims of Latter-day Saints in a Constructive Manner*, by Bill McKeever & Eric Johnson. **Price: \$9.00**

*How to Rescue Your Loved One from Mormonism*, by David A. Reed & John R. Farkas. **Price: \$9.00**

*Mormonism: The Christian View*. A video narrated by Wesley P. Walters. Deals with Mormon history, doctrines, claim to authority, changes in doctrine and witnessing suggestions. **Price: \$24.00**

*Faithful History*, edited by George D. Smith. This book contains D. Michael Quinn's speech which infuriated Mormon officials. **Price: \$18.95**

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*Mormons Answered Verse by Verse*, by David Reed and John Farkas. **Price: \$7.00**

*Answering Mormons' Questions*, by Bill McKeever. **Price: \$7.00**

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*Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons*, by Pastor Mark Cares. Good introduction to Mormon culture and beliefs, with helpful insights on witnessing. **Price: \$11.00**

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*After Mormonism What? Reclaiming the Ex-Mormon's Worldview for Christ*, by Latayne Scott. **Price: \$8.00**

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