The Case Against Mormonism

Volume 2

Jerald and Sandra Tanner

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By Jerald and Sandra Tanner

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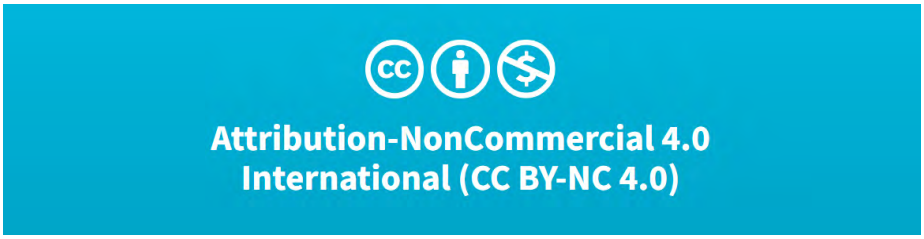

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PREFACE

The Mormon prophet Joseph Smith claimed that on the night of September 21, 1823, at the age of seventeen, an angel appeared to him and stated that gold plates were buried in the Hill Cumorah. The angel stated that the plates contained "an account of the former inhabitants of this continent," and that they also contained "the fulness of the everlasting Gospel." Four years later, on September 22, 1827, he received the plates, and sometime later he began to translate them. The translation was published in 1830 under the title of The Book of Mormon.

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made this statement concerning the Book of Mormon:

> The Book of Mormon claims to be a divinely inspired record, written by a succession of prophets who inhabited Ancient America. It professes to be revealed to the present generation for the salvation of all who will receive it, and for the overthrow and damnation of all nations who reject it.
>
> This book must be either **true** or **false**. If true, it is one of the most important messages ever sent from God to man, affecting both the temporal and eternal interests of every people under heaven to the same extent and in the same degree that the message of Noah affected the inhabitants of the old world. If false, it is one of the most cunning, wicked, bold, deep-laid impositions ever palmed upon the world, calculated to deceive and ruin millions who will sincerely receive it as the word of God, and will suppose themselves securely built upon the rock of truth until they are plunged with their families into hopeless despair.
>
> The nature of the message in the Book of Mormon is such, that **if true, no one can possibly be saved and reject it; if false, no one can possibly be saved and receive it.** Therefore, every soul in all the world is equally interested in ascertaining its truth or falsity. In a matter of such infinite importance no person should rest satisfied with the conjectures or opinions of others; he should use every exertion himself to become acquainted with the nature of the message: he should carefully examine the evidences on which it is offered to the world: he should, with all patience and perseverance, seek to acquire a certain knowledge as to whether it be of God or not. Without such an investigation in the most careful, candid, and impartial manner, he cannot safely judge without greatly hazarding his future and eternal welfare.
>
> If, after a rigid examination, it be found an **imposition**, it should be **extensively published** to the world as such; **the evidences and arguments on which the imposture was detected, should be clearly and logically stated**, that those who have been sincerely yet unfortunately deceived, may perceive the nature of the deception, and be reclaimed, and that those who continue to publish the delusion, may be exposed and silenced, not by physical force, neither by persecutions, bare assertions, nor ridicule, but by strong and powerful arguments—by **evidences** adduced from scripture and reason. Such, and such only, should be the weapons employed to detect and overthrow false doctrines—to reclaim mankind from their errors—to expose religious enthusiasm—and to put to silence base and wicked impostors.
>
> But on the other hand, if investigation should prove the Book of Mormon true and of divine origin, then the importance of the message is so great, and the consequences of receiving or rejecting it so overwhelming, that the American and English nations—to whom it is now sent, and in whose language it is now published, (being th[e] first in these latter times who have been so highly favored as to receive a preparatory message for the second advent of the Son of God,)—should speedily repent of all their sins, and renounce all the wicked traditions of their fathers, as they are imperatively commanded to do in the message: they should utterly reject both the Popish and Protestant ministry, together with all the churches which have been built up by them or that have sprung from them, as being entirely destitute of authority: . . . (*Orson Pratt's Works*, "Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," Liverpool, 1851, pages 1-2)

In this volume we plan to deal primarily with the Book of Mormon, showing that it is not an ancient or divinely inspired record, but rather a product of the 19th century. We hope to state "clearly and logically" the "evidences and arguments on which the imposture was detected."

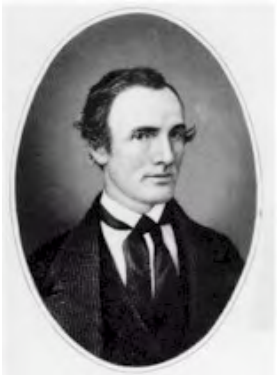
Although several individuals and libraries have provided information, microfilms and photocopies, we are particularly indebted to James Wardle, LaMar Petersen, Wesley P. Walters and the Utah State Historical Society for the help they have given.

Bold is used for emphasis throughout this book.

1. Book of Mormon Witnesses

Joseph Smith claimed that after the Book of Mormon was translated he returned the gold plates to the angel. Therefore, there is no way for us to know if there really were any gold plates or whether the translation was correct.

Joseph Smith did, however, have eleven men sign statements in which they claimed that they had seen the plates. The testimonies of these eleven men are recorded in the forepart of the Book of Mormon in two separate statements. In the first statement Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris claimed that an angel of God showed the plates to them. Below is the testimony of the three witnesses:



Oliver Cowdery

David Whitmer

Martin Harris

THE TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES

BE IT KNOWN unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken. And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvelous in our eyes. Nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

OLIVER COWDERY
DAVID WHITMER
MARTIN HARRIS

The second statement is signed by eight men who claimed to see the plates, although they did not claim that an angel showed the plates to them.

THE TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES

BE IT KNOWN unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That Joseph Smith, Jun., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has go' the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen. And we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

CHRISTIAN WHITMER	HIRAM PAGE
JACOB WHITMER	JOSEPH SMITH, SEN.
PETER WHITMER, JUN.	HYRUM SMITH
JOHN WHITMER	SAMUEL H. SMITH

The Mormon Church claims that the witnesses to the Book of Mormon never denied their testimony. There are, however, at least two statements in Mormon publications which would seem to indicate that they (the witnesses) had some doubts. Brigham Young, the second president of the Mormon Church, stated:

> Some of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, who **handled the plates** and conversed with the angels of God, were afterwards **left to doubt and to disbelieve that they had ever seen an angel**. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, page 164)

The following appeared in a poem which was published in the Mormon publication, *Times and Seasons*, in 1841:

> Amazed with wonder! I look around
> To see most people of our day,
> Reject the glorious gospel sound.
> Because the simple turn away.
> Or does it prove there is no time,
> Because some watches will not go?
> . . . .
> Or prove that Christ was not the Lord
> Because that Peter cursed and swore?
> **Or Book of Mormon not his word**
> **Because denied, by Oliver?**
> (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 2, page 482)

This poem would seem to apply to Oliver Cowdery—one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon.

Character of Witnesses

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement concerning the Book of Mormon witnesses:

> The Book of Mormon plates were seen and handled, at different times, by eleven competent men, of independent minds and **spotless reputations**, who published a formal statement of their experience.
>
> Oliver Cowdery, **whose reputation for honesty has never been questioned**, was with Joseph Smith when John the Baptist came to restore the authority of the Aaronic Priesthood. . . .
>
> All these witnesses, **of unchallenged honesty** in the affairs of life, remained true to their testimonies throughout their lives without deviation or variation. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, by John A. Widtsoe, Salt Lake City, 1951, pages 338-339)

On the other hand, non-Mormons have made many charges against the witnesses. For instance, Lucy Harris, the wife of Martin Harris, left him and made some very bitter statements against him:

> Palmyra, Nov. 29, 1833.
>
> Being called upon to give a statement to the world of what I know respecting the Gold Bible speculation, and also of the conduct of Martin Harris, my husband, who is a leading character among the Mormons. I do it free from prejudice, realizing that I must give an account at the bar of God for what I say. Martin Harris was once industrious attentive to his domestic concerns, and thought to be worth about ten thousand dollars. He is naturally quick in his temper and in his mad-fits frequently abuses all who may dare to oppose him in his wishes. However strange it may seem, I have been a great sufferer by his unreasonable conduct. At different

POETRY.

For the Times and Seasons.

BY J. H. JOHNSONS.

"*The wise shall understand.*"—Daniel.

Amazed with wonder! I look round
To see most people of our day,
Reject the glorious gospel sound,
Because the simple turn away.
Or does it prove there is no time,
Because some watches will not go?
But does it prove there is no crime
Because not punished here below?
Or can it prove no gems remain,
Because some fools, throw their's away?
Or can it prove no king can reign
Because some subjects wont obey?
Or prove the gospel was not true
Because old Paul the Saints could kill?
Because the Jews its author slew,
And now reject their Saviour still?
Or prove that Christ was not the Lord
Because that Peter cursed and swore?
Or Book of Mormon not his word
Because denied, by Oliver?
Or prove, that Joseph Smith is false
Because apostates say tis so?
Or prove that God, no man exalts
Because from priests such doctrines flow?
O, no! the wise will surely say;
No proof unto the man that's wise,
Then O! dig deep ye wise to-day;
And soon the truth will be your prize.
Not like the fool who chane'd to see,
The Saint forsake his heavenly course,
And turn to sin and vanity—
Then cries your "scheme is all a farce."

For the Times and Seasons.

PSALM.

BY

MISS L. R. SNOW.

Praise the Lord O my soul: Praise him all ye sons and daughters of Zion.

Let us sing unto him a new song: let us sing of his marvellous doings in the last days.

He is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; therefore I will praise him for what my eyes have seen, and my ears have heard.

He hath opened the fountain of knowledge: he hath unlock'd the treasures of wisdom and understanding.

He hath brought to pass that which he spake by the mouth of his ancient prophets: yea, he hath caused truth to "spring up out of the earth, and righteousness to look down from heaven."

In ancient time he call'd his servant David from the sheep-fold to preside over the nation of Israel; yea, from a tender of flocks did he ra he him to the sovereignty of his covenant people.

He call'd Elijah from the occupation of husbandry, even when "ploughing in the field with twelve yoke of oxen;" to be a prophet in Israel:

Yea by the hand of Elijah, was he anointed to the office of his calling, even to proclaim the word of the Lord—to declare the counsels of the Most High to the people.

In these last days the Lord hath call'd his servant Joseph—the son of an husbandman; to be a prophet and a teacher: yea, to be a mighty instrument in rolling forward and establishing that kingdom which "shall fill the whole earth."

The Lord hath spoken to him from the heavens—he hath instructed him thro' the ministration of angels—he hath taught him by the power of the holy spirit.

He hath opened the heavens, he hath rent the veil thereof, before his face—he hath spread the visions of eternity in his presence—he hath drawn aside the curtain of futurity and showed unto his servant things to come.

He hath anointed him with the oil of understanding, and instructed him in the great mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; even those "mysteries which have been hid from ages and from generations."

Rejoice all ye Saints of the Lord and listen to the instructions of his prophet—be careful to depart from evil—let your hearts be pure for the great day of the Lord approaches.

He will perform a speedy work upon the earth—he will cut it short in righteousness—he will not suffer his word to perish.

Therefore, let the nations be wise—let the great ones of the earth receive counsel; let the honest in heart prepare and gather even unto Zion:

For "the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunken man," yea, she shall groan because of iniquity which is already increasing heavily upon her.

But "Zion shall be redeem'd with judgment, and her converts with righteousness"—the nations of the earth will honor her—the glory of the Lord will encompass her round about; and his praises will be heard in her midst.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Manchester, April 17th 1841.

DEAR BRO. JOSEPH:—

Once more I take my pen to write a few lines to you; most gladly would I embrace the opportunity of a personal interview with you, did it offer; but vain is the indulgence of such thoughts at present.

A photograph of the *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 2, page 482. The *Times and Seasons* was a Mormon publication. In the poem that appears on this page it is stated that Oliver denied the Book of Mormon.

between the two, liable continually to be operated upon by the power of the enemy; and it is through that power that the children of men are made to doubt the evidences of their own senses, when, at the same time, if they would reflect for a moment and listen to the intelligence which God has placed within them, they would know, when they saw what is termed a miracle, the power by which it is wrought: they would know when they have seen with their eyes and felt with their hands, or when they have had a heavenly vision.

Some of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, who handled the plates and conversed with the angels of God, were afterwards left to doubt and to disbelieve that they had ever seen an angel. One of the Quorum of the Twelve—a young man full of faith and good works, prayed, and the vision of his mind was opened, and the angel of God came and laid the plates before him, and he saw and handled them, and saw the angel, and conversed with him as he would with one of his friends; but after all this, he was left to doubt, and plunged into apostacy, and has continued to contend against this work. There are hundreds in a similar condition.

In comparison, there is but a hair's breadth between the depths of infidelity and the heights of the faith of the Saints; and the organization of man is perfectly independent in its sphere. Life and death, truth and falsehood, light and darkness, good and evil, the power of the Devil and the influence of God, the things of God and the things of the Devil, all these inducements and powers are interspersed among the children of men; and they of necessity must undergo this ordeal to prove themselves; and in the absence of the Spirit of revelation, let their sound judgments arise and declare, "Though he slay me, I will not forsake him."

Some of the brethren come to me and say, "Brother Brigham, is it my duty to pray when I have not one particle of the spirit of prayer in me?" True, at times men are perplexed and full of care and trouble; their ploughs and other implements are out of order, their animals have strayed, and a thousand things perplex them; yet our judgment teaches us that it is our duty to pray whether we are particularly in the spirit of praying or not. My doctrine is, it is duty to pray; and when the time for prayer comes, John should say, "This is the place and this is the time to pray: knees bend down upon that floor, and do so at once. But John says, "I do not want to pray: I do not feel like it." Knees get down, I say; and down bend the knees, and he begins to think and reflect. Can you say anything? Can you not say, God have mercy on me a sinner? Yes, he can do this, if he can rise up and curse his neighbour for some ill deeds. Now, John, open your mouth and say, Lord, have mercy upon me. "But I do not feel the spirit of prayer." That does not excuse you, for you know what your duty is. You have a passion, a will, a temper to overcome. You are subject to temptation as other men; and when you are tempted, let the judgment which God has placed within you and the intelligence he has given you by the light of the Spirit be the master in this case.

If I could not master my mouth, I would my knees, and make them bend until my mouth would speak "But the cattle are in the corn." Let them eat; you can attend to them when you have finished praying. Let the will of the man be brought into subjection to the law of Christ—to all the ordinances of the house of God. What, in his darkness and depression? Yes; for that is the time to prove whether one is

A photograph of the *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, page 164. In this sermon Brigham Young claims that some of the witnesses were left to disbelieve that they had seen an angel.

times while I lived with him, he has whipped, kicked, and turned me out of the house. About a year previous to the report being raised that Smith had found gold plates, he became very intimate with the Smith family, and said he believed Joseph could see in his stone any thing he wished. After this he apparently became very sanguine in his belief, and frequently said he would have no one in his house that did not believe in Mormonism; and because I would not give credit to the report he made about the gold plates, he became more austere towards me. In one of his fits of rage he struck me with the but end of a whip, which I think had been used for driving oxen, and was about the size of my thumb, and three or four feet long. He beat me on the head four or five times, and the next day turned me out of doors twice, and beat me in a shameful manner.—The next day I went to the town of Marion, and while there my flesh was black and blue in many places. His main complaint against me was, that I was always trying to hinder his making money.

. . . Mrs. Putnam told him never to strike or abuse me any more; he then denied ever striking me; she was however convinced that he lied, as the marks of his beating me were plain to be seen, and remained more than two weeks. Whether the Mormon religion be true or false, I leave the world to judge, for its effects upon Martin Harris have been to make him more cross, turbulent and abusive to me. His whole object was to make money by it. I will give one circumstance in proof of it. One day, while at Peter Harris' house, I told him he had better leave the company of the Smiths, as their religion was false; to which he replied, if you would let me alone, I could make money by it.

. . . .

With regard to Mr. Harris' being intimate with Mrs. Haggard, as has been reported, it is but justice to myself to state what facts have come within my own observation, . . . Mr. Harris was very intimate with this family, . . . They lived a while in a house which he had built for their accommodation, and here he spent the most of his leisure hours; and made her presents of articles from the store and house. . . . At times when Haggard was from home, he would go there in the manner above described, and stay till twelve or one o'clock at night, and sometimes until day light.

The above statement of facts, I affirm to be true.

LUCY HARRIS.

(Statement by Lucy Harris, as quoted in *Mormonism Unvailed*, by E. D. Howe, Painesville, Ohio, 1834, pages 254-256)

Abigail Harris made this accusation against Martin Harris:

Palmyra, Wayne Co. N.Y. 11th mo. 28th, 1833.

. . . In the second month following, Martin Harris and his wife were at my house. In conversation about Mormonism, she observed, that she wished her husband would quit them, as she believed it was all false and a delusion. To which I hea[r]d Mr. Harris reply: "what if it is a lie; if you will let me alone I will make money out of it!" I was both an eye and an ear witness of what has been stated above, which is now fresh in my memory, and I give it to the world for the good of mankind. I speak the truth and lie not, God bearing me witness.

ABIGAIL HARRIS.

(Statement by Abigail Harris, as quoted in *Mormonism Unvailed*, by E. D. Howe, page 254)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe, however, claims that Howe's book is not reliable:

In the preparation of a book against the Church he secured from upwards of a hundred people in Palmyra and vicinity unfriendly affidavits as to the character of Joseph Smith and his family. This was done in 1833, eight or ten years after the period discussed in the affidavits.

. . . Honest historians would accept with much caution statements made by such a combination. In *Mormonism Unvailed* hate and the lust for money stand out primarily. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, by John A. Widtsoe, pages 76-77)

On page 80 of the same book, John A. Widtsoe stated:

The famous affidavits in Howe's book are remarkably alike in composition. One hand must have written them.

. . . .

It is a marvel that authors writing against Joseph Smith's spiritual claims would stoop to mull over interminably, charges evidently manufactured by admitted enemies to suit their purposes. Even in a contest, fair play should be recognized.

While the Mormons may try to dismiss statements that appear in Howe's book as being untrue, they cannot easily ignore the statements which will follow. Strange as it may seem, some of the most damaging statements against the character of the Book of Mormon witnesses came from the pen of Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders.

A Wicked Man

In a manuscript dictated by Joseph Smith the following statement concerning Martin Harris appears:

and it came to pass that after we had translated 116 pages that he [Martin Harris] desired to carry them to read to his friends that peradventure he might convince them of the truth therefore I inquired of the Lord and the Lord said unto me that he must not take them and I spake unto him (Martin) the word of the Lord and he said inquire again and I inquired again and also the third time and the Lord said unto me let him go with them only he shall covenant with me that he will not show them to only but four persons and he covenanted with the Lord that he would do according to the word of the Lord therefore he took them and took his journey unto his friend to Palmira Wayne County and State of New York and he brake the covenant which he made before the Lord and the Lord suffered the writings

> to fall into the hands of wicked men and Martin was chastened for my transgression for asking the Lord the third time wherefore the plates was taken from me by the power of God and I was not able to obtain them for a season . . . ("An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions," Master's thesis, BYU, 1965, pages 131-132; see Vol. 1 of *The Case Against Mormonism*, pages 100-104, for photographs of this portion of Paul Cheesman's thesis)

It is very interesting to note that in a revelation given in July of 1828, Martin Harris is called a "wicked man":

> And when thou deliveredst up that which God had given thee sight and power to translate, thou deliveredst up that which was sacred into the hands of a **wicked man**,
>
> Who has set at naught the counsels of God, and has broken the most sacred promises which were made before God, and has depended upon his own judgment and boasted in his own wisdom. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. 3, verses 12-13)

In another revelation given sometime later, Martin Harris is again called a wicked man:

> Behold, they have sought to destroy you; yea, even the man in whom you have trusted has sought to destroy you.
>
> And for this cause I said that he is a **wicked man**, for he has sought to take away the things wherewith you have been entrusted; and he has also sought to destroy your gift. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, sec. 10, verses 6-7)

Nevertheless, Martin Harris was chosen as one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon.

Page's Stone

There is little doubt that the Book of Mormon witnesses were very credulous. Ezra Booth relates the following:

> Hiram Page, one of the eight witnesses, and also one of the "money diggers," found a smooth stone, upon which there appeared to be a writing, which when transcribed upon paper, disappeared from the stone, and another impression appeared in its place. This when copied, vanished as the former had done, and so it continued, alternately appearing and disappearing; in the meanwhile, he continued to write, until he had written over considerable paper. It bore striking marks of a Mormonite revelation, and was received as an authentic document by most of the Mormonites, till Smith, by his superior sagacity, discovered it to be a Satanic fraud. (Statement by Ezra Booth, as quoted in *Mormonism Unvailed*, by E. D. Howe, pages 215-216)

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith confirmed the fact that Hiram Page was using a stone to give revelations:

> . . . Hiram Page who began to get revelations through the medium of a black stone, certain characters appearing on that stone which he wrote down. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 2)

The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe made this statement concerning Hiram Page:

> Hiram Page (1800-1852), appears to have been somewhat fanatical. He found a stone through which he claimed to receive revelations, often contrary to those received by Joseph Smith. For this he was reprimanded. (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, page 58)

George Q. Cannon, who was a member of the First Presidency, made this statement:

> In the early days there was a man that was a witness to the Book of Mormon, who had been selected by the Lord to handle the plates, to heft them, and then to write his testimony concerning that which he had seen and felt. He obtained possession of a **seer stone**—or as it is called sometimes, a peep-stone. Through this peep-stone he professed to obtain revelations, which he wrote. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 24, page 364)

The Mormon writer Ivan J. Barrett gives us this interesting information:

> Stone gazing was a very popular fad in northwestern New York.
>
> > Among the stones found near Palmyra were certain small, peculiar glasslike objects that the superstitious called "magic stones" or "peek stones." The fortunate owner of such a stone was thought to be able, by gazing intently into it, to find lost or stolen goods. (Tyler, *Freedom's Ferment*, 88.)
>
> Or, there were those who claimed to discern spiritual matters. This was a devise of the devil to discredit the Urim and Thummim and the seer stone provided by the Lord to be used by the Prophet Joseph Smith in bringing to man the sacred scriptures heretofore hidden from his understanding.
>
> Hiram Page . . . became one of the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon . . . he obtained a stone through which he received some spurious revelations. This stone was preserved as a souvenir and is now in possession of the Reorganized Church. It is a flat stone about seven inches long, four inches wide and a quarter of an inch thick, dark gray in color with waves of brown and purple gracefully interwoven across the surface. A hole was drilled through one end and a string drawn through it with which the stone was hung around the owner's neck. It is hardly impressive enough to be used as a paper weight and yet it became a tool used by the adversary of righteousness to stir up strife and create a schism in the Church. (McGavin, op, cit., p. 93.)
>
> . . . So Hiram Page decided to settle the question as where Zion was to be built through his magical stone.

> . . . Oliver Cowdery and the Whitmer family were deceived by the false declarations of Hiram Page. (*More Remarkable Stories of How We Got the Revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants*, by Ivan J. Barrett, Extension Publications, BYU, page 7)

Joseph Smith himself admitted that Hiram Page gave false revelations through his stone and that the other witnesses were influenced by his revelations:

> To our great grief, however, we soon found that Satan had been lying in wait to deceive, and seeking whom he might devour. Brother Hiram Page had in his possession a certain stone, by which he had obtained certain "revelations" concerning the upbuilding of Zion, the order of the church, etc., all of which were entirely at variance with the order of God's house, as laid down in the New Testament, as well as in our late revelations. . . . the Whitmer family and Oliver Cowdery, were believing much in the things set forth by this stone, we thought best to inquire of the Lord concerning so important a matter; . . . (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, Vol. 1, pages 109-110)

The revelation that Joseph Smith received is found in Section 28 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In verse 11 we read:

> And again, thou shalt take thy brother, Hiram Page, between him and thee alone, and tell him that those things which he hath written from that stone are not of me, and that Satan deceiveth him;

In a letter which was published in the *Saints' Herald* in 1887, David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement concerning Page's stone:

> As to the revelations which came through Hiram Page's stone, I will state that Oliver and I never thought much about them. We talked of them, and thought they might be from God, or might be from Satan. (*Saints' Herald*, February 5, 1887, page 90)

Joseph Smith's mother, Lucy Smith, told of another incident with a stone:

> At this time a certain young woman, who was living at David Whitmer's, uttered a prophecy, which she said was given her, by looking through a black stone that she had found. This prophecy gave some altogether a new idea of things. She said, the reason why one third of the Church would turn away from Joseph, was because that he was in transgression himself; that he would fall from his office on account of the same; that David Whitmer or Martin Harris would fill Joseph's place; and that the one who did not succeed him, would be the Counsellor to the one that did.
>
> This girl soon became an object of great attention among those who were disaffected. Dr. Williams, the ex-justice of the peace, became her scribe, and wrote her revelations for her. Jared Carter, who lived in the same house with David Whitmer, soon imbibed the same spirit, . . . They still held their secret meetings at David Whitmer's, and when the young woman, who was their instructress, was through giving what revelations she intended for the evening, she would jump out of her chair and dance over the floor, boasting of her power, until she was perfectly exhausted. (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith*, by Lucy Smith, Liverpool, 1853, pages 211-212)

Years later David Whitmer claimed that this story was false:

> I will state, that the whole of these things from first to last are entirely false, . . . I suppose the girl to whom reference is made, was Adaline Fuller. . . . In those days several of us had this gift. I would call it the gift of discernment, or prophecy; but none of them pretended to dictate for the church, . . . She, nor any of them, never did give a revelation to the church, . . . I have no knowledge whatever of her ever receiving a revelation that I would fill Joseph's place when he died. . . . We never did hold any secret meetings at my house, . . . As to her jumping out of her chair and dancing over the floor . . . I say this is false in toto, . . . (*Saints' Herald*, February 5, 1887, page 90)

In Trouble

Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, constantly found himself in trouble with the church. On one occasion Joseph Smith wrote:

> The council proceeded to investigate certain charges presented by Elder Rigdon against Martin Harris; one was, that he told A. C. Russell, Esq., that Joseph drank too much liquor when he was translating the Book of Mormon; and that he wrestled with many men and threw them; and that he (Harris) exalted himself above Joseph, in that he said, "Brother Joseph knew not the contents of the Book of Mormon, until it was translated, but that he himself knew all about it before it was translated."
>
> Brother Harris did not tell Esq. Russell that Brother Joseph drank too much liquor while translating the Book of Mormon, but this thing occurred previous to the translating of the Book; he confessed that his mind was darkened, and that he had said many things inadvertently, calculated to wound the feelings of his brethren, and promised to do better. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 26)

Under the date of June 16, 1834, this statement is recorded in the *History of the Church*:

> Martin Harris having boasted to the brethren that he could handle snakes with perfect safety, while fooling

> with a black snake with his bare feet, he received a bite on his left foot. The fact was communicated to me, and I took occasion to reprove him, and exhort the brethren never to trifle with the promises of God. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 95)

Oliver Cowdery, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, also found himself in trouble with the church on many occasions. Joseph Smith made this statement concerning an incident which occurred in 1830:

> Whilst thus employed in the work appointed me by my Heavenly Father, I received a letter from Oliver Cowdery, the contents of which gave me both sorrow and uneasiness. . . . He wrote to inform me that he had discovered an error in one of the commandments— . . .
>
> The above quotation, he said, was erroneous, and added: "I command you in the name of God to erase those words, that no priestcraft be amongst us!"
>
> I immediately wrote to him in reply, in which I asked him by what authority he took upon him to command me to alter or erase, to add to or diminish from, a revelation or commandment from Almighty God.
>
> A few days afterwards I visited him and Mr. Whitmer's family, when I found the family in general of his opinion concerning the words above quoted, and it was not without both labor and perseverance that I could prevail with any of them to reason calmly on the subject. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pages 104-105)

In November, 1831, Joseph Smith received a revelation in which the following appeared:

> Hearken unto me, saith the Lord your God, for my servant Oliver Cowdery's sake. It is not wisdom in me that he should be entrusted with the commandments and the moneys which he shall carry unto the land of Zion, except one go with him who will be true and faithful. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 69, verse 1)

Anti-Mormon writers have stated that this revelation shows that Oliver Cowdery was not trustworthy. B. H. Roberts, on the other hand, gives this explanation:

> It must not be understood from the first paragraph of this revelation that Oliver Cowdery was untrustworthy, and therefore it was necessary that a companion be provided for him. The fact was that much of the journey . . . was through a sparsely settled country, . . . where there is always a gathering, more or less, of lawless people; and it was at considerable risk that a person traveled through such a country, especially when alone and carrying money with him. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 1, page 234, footnote)

Be this as it may, as the years went by the split between some of the Book of Mormon witnesses and Joseph Smith began to widen.

Apostasy

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith related the following:

> After the organization of the Twelve Apostles, and the so far finishing of the Kirtland Temple as to hold a solemn assembly and confer the Kirtland endowment therein, the spirit of apostacy became more general, and the shock that was given to the Church became more severe than on any previous occasion.
>
> . . . One of the First Presidency, several of the Twelve Apostles, High Council, Presidents of Seventies, the **witnesses of the Book of Mormon**, Presidents of Far West, and a number of others standing high in the Church were all carried away in this apostacy; and they thought there was enough of them to establish a pure religion that would become universal.
>
> This attempted organization was under the direction of Warren Parrish, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, pages 114-115)

Thomas B. Marsh wrote Wilford Woodruff a letter in which he stated:

> President Smith, and his company, returned, on, or about the 10th of December; soon after which this dissenting band, openly, and publicly, renounced the church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, and claimed themselves to be the old standard; called themselves the church of Christ, excluded that of Saints, and set at naught Br. Joseph, and the whole church, denounced them as heretics. . . .
>
> Also, the church has had much sorrow during the past winter, on account of the unfaithfulness of Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Lyman E. Johnson, and in consequence of this, and their opposition to our beloved brother Joseph Smith jr, and the best interest of the church of Jesus Christ, and for persisting in the same, a number of charges have been substantiated against them, before the Council and Bishop of the church, and they have also been excluded from fellowship. "How has the gold become dim, the most fine gold changed!!!" (*Elders' Journal*, July, 1838, pages 36-38)

Brigham Young made this statement concerning the apostasy at Kirtland:

> At this time the spirit of speculation, disaffection and apostacy imbibed by many of the Twelve, and which ran through all the quorums of the Church, prevailed so extensively that it was difficult for any to see the path to pursue.
>
> On a certain occasion several of the Twelve, the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, and others of the authorities of the church, held a council in the upper room of the Temple. The question before them was to ascertain how the Prophet Joseph could be deposed

> and David Whitmer appointed President of the Church. (*Deseret News Weekly*, February 10, 1858, page 386, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, by Max H. Parkin, 1966, page 311)

The Mormon writer Max H. Parkin made this comment:

> The disgruntled dissenters were anxious to make some changes in the Church. Late in the spring they conceived a plot to depose Joseph Smith from Church leadership and replace him with David Whitmer. (*Conflict at Kirtland*, page 311)

In a footnote on the same page, Max Parkin gives this information:

> It is possible that David Whitmer was selected to be Smith's replacement by this dissenting group due to an earlier ordination he had received in Missouri in July, 1834, by the Prophet Joseph. On the 15th of March, 1838, in Far West, Missouri, the minutes of a meeting attended by Joseph Smith gives the following details: "President Joseph Smith, Jun., gave a history of the ordination of David Whitmer which took place in July, 1834, to be a leader or a Prophet to this Church, which [ordination] was on conditions that he [i.e. Joseph Smith, Jun.] did not live to God himself." ("Far West Record," page 108)

The Mormon writer John J. Stewart made this statement concerning David Whitmer's ordination:

> Joseph was so favorably impressed with David in the early years of their acquaintance that he once ordained him as his successor in the event his own life were suddenly taken; . . . (*Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet*, by John J. Stewart, Salt Lake City, 1966, page 30)

John Whitmer—David Whitmer's brother—made this statement:

> . . . Smith called a conference at the house of Lyman Wight, three miles west of Liberty, in which conference the most of the official members belonging to Zion were present, where Smith organized the High Council of Zion, as I said in a former chapter, in which David Whitmer was ordained President of Zion, and John Whitmer and W. W. Phelps his counselors. Here at the same time, he ordained David Whitmer Prophet, Seer and Revelator and Translator.
>
> CHAPTER XXII.
>
> Now from this time forth, which was in July, 1834, Smith seemed to be in doubt where into this thing would grow, and began to upbraid D. Whitmer, and abuse him as his natural custom was to do unto those whom he feared, lest they should become great in the sight of God or man; therefore, he harangued the conference and sought to destroy the confidence of the people present in David Whitmer, on whom he had bestowed all the gifts and power that he had himself received by inspiration, by the laying on his hand according to the order of heaven. (*John Whitmer's History*, page 24)

David Whitmer himself gave this information concerning the ordination:

> To show you that Brother Joseph and myself still loved each other as brethren after this, I will tell you that he had so much confidence in me that in July, 1834, he ordained me his successor as "Prophet Seer and Revelator" to the Church. He did this of his own free will and not at any solicitation whatever on my part. I did not know what he was going to do until he laid his hands upon me and ordained me. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, page 55)

Because of this ordination, several people tried to get David Whitmer to lead the Church at various times.

Although David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery were excommunicated, there seems to be some confusion concerning Martin Harris' excommunication. In volume one of *Doctrines of Salvation* (which contains the sermons and writings of Joseph Fielding Smith, compiled by Bruce R. McConkie) we find this statement:

> All three left the Church. Martin Harris was **never** excommunicated, but the other two were. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 222)

On page 226 of the same book, we find this statement:

> Now let me say something about Martin Harris. He was **never** excommunicated, but drifted away and became disaffected.

In volume three of the same work, however, we find this statement:

> It is well known that Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer left the Church, but it has been generally supposed that Martin Harris was never excommunicated. The *Journal History of the Church* under the date of Jan. 1, 1838, however, tells of his **excommunication** by the High Council in Kirtland in Dec., 1837. He was rebaptized Sept. 17, 1870, in Salt Lake City by Edward Stevenson and confirmed the same day by Orson Pratt. *Journal History*, Sept. 17, 1870. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 229, footnote 8)

Be this as it may, Martin Harris became very upset at Joseph Smith. In an affidavit dated September 13, 1842, Franny Brewer stated:

> "In the spring of 1837 I left Boston for Kirtland to assemble with the Saints and worship God more perfectly. . . . Martin Harris told me that the prophet was most notorious for **lying and licentiousness.**" (*Mormon Portraits*, by Dr. W. Wyl, 1886, pages 249-250)

The Mormon leaders in turn published an attack on the character of Martin Harris. The following appeared in the *Elders' Journal*—a Mormon publication—edited by Joseph Smith:

> One thing we have learned, that there are negroes who were white skins, as well as those who wear black ones.
>
> Granny [Warren] Parrish had a few others who acted as lackies, such as **Martin Harris**, Joseph Coe, Cyrus P Smalling, etc. but they are so far beneath contempt, that a notice of them would be too great a sacrifice for a gentleman to make.
>
> Having said so much, we leave this hopefull company, in the new bond of union which they have formed with the priests. While they were held under restraints by the church, and had to behave with a degree of propriety, at least, the priests manifested the greatest opposition to them. But no sooner were they excluded from the fellowship of the church and gave loose, to all kind of abominations, swearing, lying, cheating, swindling, drinking, with every species of debauchery, . . . (*Elders' Journal*, August, 1838, page 59)

Oliver Cowdery also turned on Joseph Smith and the church. In a letter dated January 21, 1838, Oliver Cowdery accused Joseph Smith of adultery:

> When he [Joseph Smith] was there we had some conversation in which in every instance I did not fail to affirm that what I had said was strictly true. **A dirty, nasty, filthy affair of his and Fanny Alger's** was talked over in which I strictly declared that I had never deserted from the truth in the matter, and as I supposed was admitted by himself. (Letter dated January 21, 1838, recorded by Warren Cowdery, original located in Huntington Library, San Marino, California, microfilm copy at the Utah State Historical Society)

On February 4, 1838, Oliver Cowdery wrote a letter to his brothers, Warren and Lyman, in which he stated:

> You will have received an answer to the matter of Mr. Smith's accusation against me in publick ere this arrives. Matters in the church here are assuming a form to be looked at by the candid candidly: The radical principles taught when Messrs. Smith & Rigdon were here, have given loose to the enthusiastick, and there seems to be a disposition prevalent to carry forward those **damning doctrines** to the subversion of the liberties of the whole church. . . . The council have concluded they have nothing to do with me. So I am not drawn in question; but calculate to attend one meeting, say what I think wisdom and leave them to their own **damnation.** My soul is sick of such scrambling for power and self-aggrandizement, by a pack of fellows more ignorant than Balaams Ass! . . . Our hearts are encouraged, for we believe in Gods holy word—we believe in enjoying equal rights and equal privileges and we believe it to be our duty to separate ourselves from all who are disposed to fulminate, **pretend revelation** and uphold corruption **by lying**. . . . By yours I learned that some of the brethren have finally come out against impunities &c. and **declared the "Church of Christ."** (Letter dated February 4, 1838, Huntington Library, microfilm copy at Utah State Historical Society)

In a postscript to the same letter Oliver Cowdery added:

> Give me my freedom or take my life! I shall no longer be bound by the chains of hell; I shall speak out when I see a move to deceive the ignorant. We do not expect the great body of the church here to unite in our views—We do not ask—we want none but independent men—not the ragmuffians who believe in man more than God!

In a letter to his brothers dated February 24, 1838, Oliver Cowdery wrote:

> Judge Phelps received a letter also from Messrs. Rigdon & Smith, . . . I know not what will follow their arrival here, but I fear that a blast like that which has fallen on the devoted town of Kirtland, will come after time sufficient to test the impropriety of those plans advocated by some in this church. . . . There is a great stir here, and so far as I am able to learn, the names of all who refuse to confess those **disorganizing doctrines** lately introduced into the church, to be correct, are denounced as wicked, devilish, and more than all with them "not friendly to Joseph." I am certainly sick of such perfect foolery—**there is no God in it!** There is no alternative in my mind, but those desperate and hot headed power seeking, ignorant men, here, will drive the inteligent and independent to declare their belief to an astonished world! . . . From what I learn I have long been **pointed out for a victim**, to receive the displeasure of men who profess to hold the connecting link between earth and heaven! and of course **if** I believe it, I am in danger: but I don't fear. I have heretofore written but little in my letters . . . on the subject of your divisions, but have thought the more—in due time you will hear me speak. I want to say, however, that if those who have taken a stand against those **wicked doctrines**, heretofore taught, they may be instrumental in preserving the **Church of Christ** on Earth. But if they do it will be by a holy walk and Godly conduct—not by following those wild enthusiastic slandering examples set before us for a few months past. (Letter dated February 24, 1838, Huntington Library, microfilm copy at Utah State Historical Society)

Speaking of Oliver Cowdery's letters, the Mormon writer Leland H. Gentry made this statement:

> Cowdery's personal bitterness toward Joseph Smith shines forth in each of his letters written at this time. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, by Leland Gentry, BYU, 1965, page 129, footnote 65)

In a footnote on page 139 of the same book, Leland Gentry stated:

> For evidence of Cowdery's dislike for Joseph Smith at this time, see "Cowdery Letters," January 21, February 4, and February 24, 1838.

Leland Gentry even claims that Oliver Cowdery was preparing to print his "dissenting views":

> Oliver then removed to Far West where he presented these notes claiming that they were long overdue. He also made plans to use **the press to spread his dissenting views.** (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, page 147)

Finally, in Far West the division became so great that the Mormons drove out the dissenters. John Whitmer, one of the eight witnesses, related the following:

> Joseph Smith, Jr., S. Rigdon, and Hyrum Smith moved their families to this place, Far West, in the spring of 1838. As soon as they came here, they began to enforce their new organized plan, which caused dissensions and difficulties, threatenings and even murders. Smith called a council of the leaders together, in which council he stated that any person who said a word against the heads of the Church, should be driven over these prairies as a chased deer by a pack of hounds, having an illusion to the Gideonites, as they were termed, to justify themselves in their wicked designs. Thus on the 19th of June, 1838, they preached a sermon called the **Salt Sermon**, in which these Gideonites understood that they should **drive the dissenters**, as they termed those who believed not in their secret bands, in fornication, adultery or midnight machinations. . . . They had threatened us, **to kill us**, if we did not make restitutions to them, by upholding them in their wicked purposes and designs. . . .
>
> But to our great astonishment, when we were on our way home from Liberty, Clay County, we met the families of **Oliver Cowdery** and L. E. Johnson, whom **they had driven from their homes**, and robbed them of all their goods, save clothing, bedding, etc.
>
> While we were gone Jo. and Rigdon and their band of Gadiatons kept up a guard, and watched our houses, and abused our families, and threatened them, if they were not gone by morning, they would be **drove out**, and threatened our lives, if they ever saw us in Far West. (*John Whitmer's History*, page 22)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement:

> If you believe my testimony to the Book of Mormon; if you believe that God spake to us three witnesses by his own voice, then I tell you that in June, 1838. God spake to me again by his own voice from the heavens, and told me to "**separate myself from among the Latter Day Saints**, for as they sought to do unto me, so should it be done unto them." In the spring of 1838, the heads of the church and many of the members had gone deep into **error and blindness**. . . . About the same time that I came out, the Spirit of God moved upon quite a number of the brethren who came out, with their families. **All of the eight witnesses who were then living** (except the three Smiths) **came out**; Peter and Christian Whitmer were dead. **Oliver Cowdery came out also.** Martin Harris was then in Ohio. The church went deeper and deeper into **wickedness.** (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, 1887, pages 27-28)

The Mormon writer George Reynolds made this statement concerning the three witnesses:

> Again, there is one very note-worthy fact with regard to these three men. They were all severed from the communion of the Church during the life-time of the Prophet Joseph. . . . Although, at certain periods of their lives, they smarted under the denunciations and reproofs they received from the Prophet and entertained towards him the most bitter feelings, for the course he took towards them, going so far as to denounce him as a **fallen prophet**, yet with all their acrimony and hatred they never once deviated from the testimony that is printed above their names at the commencement of the Book of Mormon. (*The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* by George Reynolds, Salt Lake City, 1883, pages 76-77)

Wicked Witnesses

After the witnesses left the church, the Mormons accused them of wickedness and crime. For instance, George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency, charged that Oliver Cowdery was an adulterer:

> The case of Oliver Cowdery illustrated in the most striking manner this great and important truth. Chosen to be one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, he beheld an holy angel. It might be thought that after receiving the ministration of heavenly messengers and beholding the face of the Redeemer, there would be no danger of his falling; but, alas! he transgressed the law of God; he **committed adultery**; the spirit of God withdrew from him, and he, the second elder in the Church, was excommunicated from the Church. (*Juvenile Instructor*, December 1, 1885, page 360, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, by Max Parkin, page 170)

On another occasion he stated:

> He was eager to have another wife. Contrary to the remonstrances of Joseph, and in utter disregard of his warnings, he took a young woman and lived with her as a wife, in addition to his legal wife. Had Oliver Cowdery **waited** until the Lord commanded His people to obey this principle, he could have taken this young woman, had her sealed to him as his wife, and lived with her without condemnation. But taking her as he did was a grievous sin, and was doubtless the cause of his losing the Spirit of the Lord, and of being cut off from the Church. (*Juvenile Instructor*, September 15, 1881, page 206, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, page 170)

Brigham Young, the second president of the Mormon Church, made this statement:

> They [i.e. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery] had a revelation that the order of Patriarchal Marriag [*sic*] and the Sealing was right. Oliver said unto Joseph, "Br. Joseph why don't we go into the Order of Polygamy, and practice it as the ancients did we know it is true then why delay." Joseph's reply was I know that we know it is true and from God, but the time has not yet come. This did not seem to suit Oliver who expressed a determination to go into the order of Plural Marriage anyhow, altho Joseph said, "Oliver if you go into this thing it is not with my faith or consent." Disregarding the counsel of Joseph, Oliver Cowdery took to wife Annie Lyman cousin to Geo. A. Smith. From that time he went into darkness and lost the spirit. Annie Lyman is still alive, a witnes [*sic*] to these things. (Statement recorded in "Charles L. Walker Journal." VIII, page 118 or whole page 444, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, page 169)

In a letter dated December 16, 1838, Joseph Smith made this statement concerning some of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon:

> Such characters as McLellin, **John Whitmer, David Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery, and Martin Harris, are too mean to mention**; and we had liked to have forgotten them. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 232)

Joseph Smith made this statement concerning David Whitmer who was one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon:

> God suffered such kind of beings to afflict Job—but it never entered into their hearts that Job would get out of it all. This poor man who professes to be much of a prophet, has no other dumb ass to ride but **David Whitmer**, to forbid his madness when he goes up to curse Israel; and this ass not being of the same kind as Balaam's, therefore, the angel notwithstanding appeared unto him, yet he could not penetrate his understanding sufficiently, but that he brays out cursings instead of blessings. Poor ass! Whoever lives to see it, will see him and his rider perish like those who perished in the gainsaying of Korah, or after the same condemnation. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 228)

Before driving these dissenters from Far West, the Mormons wrote them a very threatening letter in which they accused them of stealing, lying and counterfeiting:

> Far West, June, 1838.
>
> "To Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, John Whitmer, William W. Phelps, and Lyman E. Johnson, greeting:
>
> "Whereas the citizens of Caldwell county have borne with the abuse received from you at different times, and on different occasions, until it is no longer to be endured; . . . out of the county you shall go, and no power shall save you. And you shall have three days after you receive this communication to you, including twenty-four hours in each day, for you to depart with your families peaceably; which you may do undisturbed by any person; but in that time, if you do not depart, we will use the means in our power to cause you to depart; for go you shall. . . . there is but one decree for you, which is depart, depart, or a more fatal calamity shall befal you.
>
> "After Oliver Cowdery had been taken by a State warrant for stealing, and the stolen property found in the house of William W. Phelps; in which nefarious transaction John Whitmer had also participated. Oliver Cowdery stole the property, conveyed it to John Whitmer, and John Whitmer to William W. Phelps; and then the officers of law found it. While in the hands of an officer, and under an arrest for this vile transaction, and, if possible, to hide your shame from the world like criminals, (which, indeed, you were,) you appealed to our beloved brethren, Presidents Joseph Smith, jr., and Sidney Rigdon, men whose characters you had endeavored to destroy by every artifice you could invent, not even the basest lying excepted; and did you find them revengeful? No; . . . They enlisted, as you well know, their influence, to save you from your just fate; and they, by their influence, delivered you out of the hands of the officer. . . . Did you practise the promised reformation? You know you did not; but, by secret efforts, continued to practise your iniquity, and secretly to injure their character, notwithstanding their kindness to you. . . . As we design this paper to be published to the world, we will give an epitome of your scandalous conduct and treachery for the last two years. We wish to remind you that Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer were among the principal of those who were the means of gathering us to this place by their testimony which they gave concerning the plates of the Book of Mormon; that they were shown to them by an angel; which testimony we believe now, as much as before you had so **scandalously disgraced it**. . . .

"The saints in Kirtland having elected Oliver Cowdery to be a justice of the peace, he used the power of that office to take their most sacred rights from them, and that contrary to law.

"He supported a parcel of blacklegs, and in disturbing the worship of the saints; . . . Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Lyman E. Johnson, united with a gang of **counterfeiters**, thieves, liars, and blacklegs of the deepest dye, to deceive, cheat, and defraud the saints out of their property, by every art and stratagem which wickedness could invent; using the influence of the vilest persecutions to bring vexatious lawsuits, villanous prosecutions, and even stealing not excepted. . . . Oliver Cowdery and his gang (such of them as belonged to the church) were called to an account by the church for their iniquity. They confessed repentence, and were again restored to the church; but the very first opportunity they were again practising their former course. . . . During the full career of Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer's bogus money business, it got abroad into the world that they were engaged in it, and several gentlemen were preparing to commence a prosecution against Cowdery; he finding it out, took with him Lyman E. Johnson, and fled to Far West with their families; Cowdery stealing property, and bringing it with him, which has been, within a few weeks past, obtained by the owner, by means of a search-warrant; and he was saved from the penitentiary by the influence of two influential men of the place. He also brought notes with him, upon which he had received pay, and made an attempt to sell them to Mr. Arthur of Clay county. . . . Neither were you contented with slandering and vilifying here, but you kept up continual correspondence with your gang of marauders in Kirtland. encouraging them to go on with their iniquity; which they did to perfection, by swearing falsely to injure the characters and property of innocent men, stealing, cheating, lying, instituting vexatious lawsuits, selling bogus money, and also stones and sand for bogus; in which nefarious business Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Lyman E. Johnson were, engaged, while you were there. Since your arrival here, you have commenced a general system of that same kind of conduct in this place. You set up a nasty, dirty, pettifogger's office, pretending to be judges of the law, . . .

"And, amongst the most monstrous of all your abominations, we have evidence (which, when called upon, we can produce,) that letters sent to the post office in this place have been opened, read, and destroyed, and the persons to whom they were sent never obtained them; thus ruining the business of the place. We have evidence of a very strong character that you are at this very time engaged with a gang of counterfeiters, coiners, and blacklegs, as some of those characters have lately visited our city from Kirtland, and told what they had come for; and we know, assuredly, that if we suffer you to continue, we may expect, and that speedily, to find a general system of stealing, counterfeiting, cheating, and burning property, as in Kirtland— . . . we will put you from the county of Caldwell: so help us God." (Letter quoted in *Senate Document 189*, February 15, 1841, pages 6-9)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement concerning this letter:

> This unfortunately, was followed shortly afterwards by a communication drawn up by Elder Rigdon, it is said, and addressed to the leading dissenters, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, John Whitmer, William W. Phelps and Lyman E. Johnson, commanding them to leave Caldwell county within three days under penalty of a "more fatal calamity" befalling them if they refused to depart. The document was signed by eighty-four men, more or less prominent in the church, but neither the Prophet's nor Sidney Rigdon's name is included among the signatures. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pages 438-439)

According to Ebenezer Robinson, Hyrum Smith—Joseph Smith's brother and a member of the First Presidency—also signed the letter.

The "Far West Record" contains some very important information concerning Oliver Cowdery and the bogus money business. The "Far West Record" is an unpublished "record book containing minutes of meetings in Kirtland and Far West, Missouri." The original is in the LDS Church Historian's Office. For years the Mormon leaders have suppressed this record. (This is one of the documents that they would not microfilm for us.) Recently, however, Leland Gentry, a Mormon who was working on his thesis at the Brigham Young University, was permitted access to it. On page 117 of the "Far West Record," Leland Gentry found testimony given by Joseph Smith and Fredrick G. Williams that tended to link Oliver Cowdery with the bogus money business. Leland Gentry states:

> [Fredrick G.] Williams, who vacillated between being a dissenter and a faithful member of the Church, testified that **Oliver had personally informed him of a man in the Church by the name of Davis who would compound metal and make dies which could print money that could not be detected from the real thing.** Oliver allegedly told Williams that there was **no harm** in accepting and passing around such money, provided it could not be determined to be unsound.
>
> **Joseph Smith's testimony was similar.** He claimed that a non-member of the Church by the name of Sapham had told him in Kirtland that **a warrant** had been issued **against Oliver**, "for being engaged in making a purchase of **bogus money and dies** to make the counterfeit money with." According to the Prophet, he and Sidney Rigdon went to visit Oliver concerning the matter and told him that if he were **guilty, he had better leave town**; but if he was innocent, he should stand trial and thus be acquited. "That night or next," the Prophet said, **Oliver** "**left the country.**" (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, page 146)

ont of the house; and issued writs against the saints for endeavoring to sustain their rights; and bound themselves under heavy bonds to appear before his honor; and required bonds which were both inhuman and unlawful; and one of these was the venerable father, who had been appointed by the church to preside—a man of upwards of seventy years of age, and notorious for his peaceable habits. Oliver Cowdrey, David Whitmer, and Lyman E. Johnson, united with a gang of counterfeiters, thieves, liars, and blacklegs of the deepest dye, to deceive, cheat, and defraud the saints out of their property, by every art and stratagem which wickedness could invent; using the influence of the vilest persecutions to bring vexatious lawsuits, villanous prosecutions, and even stealing not excepted. In the midst of this career, for fear the saints would seek redress at their hands, they breathed out threatenings of mobs, and actually made attempts with their gang to bring mobs upon them. Oliver Cowdrey and his gang (such of them as belonged to the church) were called to an account by the church for their iniquity. They confessed repentance, and were again restored to the church; but the very first opportunity they were again practising their former course. While this wickedness was going on in Kirtland, Cowdrey and his company were writing letters to Far West, in order to destroy the character of every person that they thought was standing in their way; and John Whitmer and William W. Phelps were assisting to prepare the way to throw confusion among the saints of Far West. During the full career of Oliver Cowdrey and David Whitmer's bogus money business, it got abroad into the world that they were engaged in it, and several gentlemen were preparing to commence a prosecution against Cowdrey; he finding it out, took with him Lyman E. Johnson, and fled to Far West with their families; Cowdrey stealing property, and bringing it with him, which has been, within a few weeks past, obtained by the owner, by means of a search-warrant; and he was saved from the penitentiary by the influence of two influential men of the place. He also brought notes with him, upon which he had received pay, and made an attempt to sell them to Mr. Arthur of Clay county. And Lyman E. Johnson, on his arrival, reported that he had a note of one thousand dollars against a principal man of this church, when it was a palpable falsehood, and he had no such thing; and he did it for the purpose of injuring his character. Shortly after Cowdrey and Johnson left Kirtland for Far West, they were followed by David Whitmer; on whose arrival a general system of slander and abuse was commenced by you all, for the purpose of destroying the characters of certain individuals, whose influence and strict regard for righteousness you dreaded; and not only yourselves, but your wives and children, led by yourselves, were busily engaged in it. Neither were you contented with slandering and vilifying here, but you kept up continual correspondence with your gang of marauders in Kirtland, encouraging them to go on with their iniquity; which they did to perfection, by swearing falsely to injure the characters and property of innocent men, stealing, cheating, lying, instituting vexatious lawsuits, selling bogus money, and also stones and sand for bogus; in which nefarious business Oliver Cowdrey, David Whitmer, and Lyman E. Johnson were engaged while you were there. Since your arrival here, you have commenced a general system of that same kind of conduct in this place. You set up a nasty, dirty, pettifogger's office, pretending to be judges of the law, when it is a notorious fact that you are profoundly ignorant of it, and of every other thing which is calculated to do mankind good; or, if you know it, you take

A photograph of page 8 of *Senate Document 189*. Notice that the Mormons accused Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer of being involved in the bogus money business.

his father Lehi, that his seed should not be utterly destroyed; *for out of his seed* which should not all be destroyed (the Indians) should come to this "Choice Seer." This is the interpretation of this chapter. This "Choice Seer" will be of that seed. His name will be Joseph, and his father's name Joseph. He is to translate sealed records yet to come forth, (spoken of in 2 Nephi xi: 18). *"And not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord,* BUT TO THE CONVINCING THEM OF MY WORD." How many Indians did Brother Joseph convince? He never preached a sermon to them in his life to my knowledge. May God help you brethren to understand this chapter, for it can only be understood by the enlightening power of the Holy Ghost. It is very plain to me. I speak in full on this subject in chapter X.

I want to say to the Latter Day Saints, that the elders of the Church of Christ, in coming to them, come to them as their brethren, in love and in meekness. God forbid that we should persecute you, who have likewise taken upon yourselves the "shame of Christ" in this age of the world—which shame, in the eyes of the world, is believing the Book of Mormon. No; we love you, and by the help of God we will labor, trusting that the day is not far distant when the honest in heart among you, and among all believers in the Book of Mormon, and the world, may all be one with us upon the doctrine of Christ, working by the power and gifts of God to prepare the way for the gospel to go to the House of Israel. God only knows how I have grieved and suffered and plead with him for you for the past forty-eight years, that you might repent and be enlightened by the Holy Ghost to see the errors into which you have been led. To God belongs the mystery of his dealings with his people; he is allwise, and his ways are not man's ways. Mormon stood alone for many years, when the whole church of Nephites and Lamanites had every one gone into error and transgression. He stood alone, holding the authority, and prayed to God continually that he might go to them and preach to them; but the Lord forbid him to preach to them. Then let no man judge hastily as to my authority, lest he judge wrongly and continue in error; but go to God in prayer and fasting, and find out the truth, for the Holy Ghost will guide you into all truth. If you believe my testimony to the Book of Mormon; if you believe that God spake to us three witnesses by his own voice, then I tell you that in June, 1838, God spake to me again by his own voice from the heavens, and told me to "separate myself from among the Latter Day Saints, for as they sought to do unto me, so should it be done unto them." In the spring of 1838, the heads of the church and many of the members had gone deep into error and blindness. I had been striving with them for a long time to show them the errors into which they were drifting, and for my labors I received only persecutions. In June, 1838, at Far West, Mo., a secret organization was formed, Doctor Avard being put in as the leader of the band; a certain oath was to be administered to all the brethren to bind them to support the heads of the church in *everything they should teach.* All who refused to take this oath were considered dissenters from the church, and certain things were to be done concerning these dissenters, by Dr. Avard's secret band. I make no farther statements now; but suffice it to say that my persecutions, for trying to show them their errors, became of such a nature that I had

27

A photograph of page 27 of *An Address to All Believers in Christ.* David Whitmer—one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon—claims that God told him to leave the Church.

From this information it would appear that Joseph Smith was almost an accessory after the fact, since he warned Oliver Cowdery to flee from the law if he was guilty.

Joseph Smith's testimony was given at the time Oliver Cowdery was being tried for his membership in the church. The 8th charge against Oliver Cowdery read as follows:

> Eighth—For disgracing the Church by being connected in the **bogus business**, as **common report** says. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 16)

According to Joseph Smith, the eighth charge against Oliver Cowdery was "sustained" (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 17). In a footnote on the same page the Mormon historian B. H. Roberts stated:

> . . . since these charges were sustained upon testimony of witnesses, as the minutes of the High Council proceedings in the Far West Record clearly show, it is to be believed that the Church had sufficient cause for rejecting him.

According to Leland Gentry, Sidney Rigdon also testified concerning Oliver Cowdery's involvement in the bogus business. We will probably never know just what Sidney Rigdon said until the Mormon leaders release a copy of the "Far West Record."

The second charge against Oliver Cowdery read:

> Second—For seeking to destroy the character of President Joseph Smith, Jun., by falsely insinuating that he was guilty of adultery. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 16)

This charge was also "sustained." It must have grown out of Oliver Cowdery's accusation concerning the "**dirty, nasty, filthy affair of his** [Joseph Smith] and Fanny Alger's." The ninth charge read as follows:

> Ninth—For dishonestly retaining notes after they had been paid; and finally, for leaving and forsaking the cause of God, and returning to the beggarly elements of the world, and neglecting his high and holy calling, according to his profession. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 16)

According to Leland Gentry, Joseph Smith testified against Oliver Cowdery on this charge:

> Evidence to support the final charge, namely, that Oliver was guilty of retaining bank notes after they had been paid and had forsaken the cause of God to seek after "the beggarly elements of the world," was also abundant. Joseph Smith, for example, testified that Cowdery had informed him that he had "come to the conclusion to get property, and that if he could not get it one way, he would get it another, God or no God, Devil or no Devil, property he must and would have." Joseph Smith also claimed that Oliver told him that since he had been dishonestly dealt with by others, it was his intention in the future to deal dishonestly.
>
> Sidney Rigdon gave similar testimony. He claimed that in January of 1837, Oliver had sold his interests in the printing office in Kirtland to himself (i.e., Rigdon) and Joseph Smith, who gave as payment their personal notes. Later on, according to Rigdon, Oliver changed his mind and wished to recover his property. Permission was granted on the condition that Cowdery deliver up the notes which he held against the two presidents. Instead, Cowdery went to the printing establishment, took whatever he pleased from it, and then refused to give up the notes according to his agreement. Oliver then removed to Far West where he presented these notes claiming that they were long overdue. (*A History of the Latter-day Saints in Northern Missouri From 1836 to 1839*, page 147)

The ninth charge was also "sustained."

Six of the nine charges against Cowdery were "sustained" and he was "considered no longer a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, page 17). David Whitmer was also excommunicated from the church.

The Mormons continued to attack the character of the witnesses in the *Times and Seasons*—a Mormon publication. Hyrum Smith—Joseph's brother—made this statement:

> . . . I cannot help making particular mention of Lyman Cowdery, who, in connexion with his brother Oliver, took from me a great many things; and to cap the climax of his iniquity, compelled my aged father, by threatning to bring a mob upon him, to deed over to him, or his brother Oliver, about 160 acres of land to pay a note which he said I had given to Oliver for $165, such a note I confess I was, and still am entirely ignorant of, and after mature consideration, I have to say that I believe it must be a forgery. (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 1, pages 22-23, December 1839)

On page 81 of the same volume, we find this statement:

> These characters were busy in striving to stir up strife and turmoil among the brethren, and urging on mean and vexatious lawsuits; they were also, studiously engaged in circulated false and slanderous reports against the saints, to stir up our enemies to anger against us, that they might again drive us from our homes, and enjoy the spoils together, we are disposed here, to give the names of some of those characters, believing that justice to an injured people, requires it at our hands. They are as follows, viz: **Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmore**, W. W. Phelps, **John Whitmore**, and Lyman E. Johnson, of whom we may have occasion to speak hereafter. (*Times and Seasons*, April, 1840, page 81)

In volume 3 of the *Times and Seasons*, we find the following statement concerning Oliver Cowdery:

> . . . in Kirtland, when persecution raged, Oliver Cowdery, Warren Parrish, Jacob Bumb, and others whose course of conduct had been the most inconsistent were the first to cry out imposture, and delusion; and while some of them had been engaged in **extensive frauds in the Bank**, and were the principle cause of its not being able to meet its liabilities; they were the first to cry out speculation and fraud, and to try to palm their iniquities upon the unoffending and innocent; they seized hold of the popular prejudice, aided and abetted in obtaining funds for paper, **fraudulently obtained by them**, instituted vexatious law-suits and made themselves fat at the expense of the innocent; glutted upon the misery, ruin and distress of their brethren—but with what measure they meted it has been measured to them again. (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 3, page 868, August 1, 1842)

After examining the charges made against the Book of Mormon witnesses and the countercharges the witnesses made against Joseph Smith, R. C. Evans stated:

> **If Smith tells a hundredth part of the truth about the three witnesses they were three scoundrels**, and as such we should not be expected that such characters would be the comrades of angels and blessed with personal conversations with God and Christ, therefore we are justified in refusing to believe their testimony.
>
> On the other hand, **if they tell one hundredth part of the truth about Smith, he was a false prophet,** a murderer in his heart, a liar of the deepest dye, and the author of the infamous revelation on polygamy and concubinage, and that he not only taught and practiced these abominations, but that as a result of his life of shame he has prostituted hundreds of thousands of his followers, who have lived in these unhallowed conditions a whole life time and went down to death despised by all who love God and clean respectable conduct. (*Forty Years in the Mormon Church*, by R. C. Evans, Toronto, Canada, 1920, page 26)

Cowdery a Methodist

Brigham Young, the second president of the Mormon Church, made this statement concerning Oliver Cowdery:

> He left the Church because he lost the love of the truth; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, page 55)

The Mormon writer Stanley R. Gunn quoted W. Lang as making this statement concerning Oliver Cowdery:

> In the spring of 1840, on the 12th day of May he addressed a large Democratic gathering . . . He was then on a tour of exploration for a location to pursue his profession as a lawyer, having entirely abandoned and broken away from all his connections with the Mormons. (Statement quoted in *Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder and Scribe*, by Stanley R. Gunn, Salt Lake City, 1962, page 169)

After separating himself from the Mormons, Oliver Cowdery became a member of the "Methodist Protestant Church of Tiffin, Seneca County, Ohio." G. J. Keen gave this affidavit in 1885:

> State of Ohio. }
> County of Seneca. } ss.
>
> Personally appeared before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public within and for said county, G. J. Keen, a resident of said county, to me well known, and being sworn according to law makes oath and says:
>
> I was well acquainted with Oliver Cowdery who formerly resided in this city, that sometime in the year 1840 Henry Cronise, Samuel Waggoner and myself, with other Democrats of this county, determined to establish a Democratic newspaper in this city to aid in the election of Martin Van Buren to the Presidency, and we authorized Henry Cronise, Esq., to go East and purchase a suitable press for that purpose. Mr. Cronise went East, purchased a press and engaged Oliver Cowdery to edit the paper. Mr. Cowdery arrived in Tiffin (O.) some time before the press arrived. Some time after Mr. Cowdery's arrival in Tiffin, we became acquainted with his (Cowdery's) connection with Mormonism.
>
> We immediately called a meeting of our Democratic friends, and having the Book of Mormon with us, it was unanimously agreed that Mr. Cowdery could not be permitted to edit said paper.
>
> Mr. Cowdery opened a law office in Tiffin, and soon effected a partnership with Joel W. Wilson.
>
> In a few years Mr. Cowdery expressed a desire to associate himself with a Methodist Protestant Church of this city.
>
> Rev. John Souder and myself were appointed a committee to wait on Mr. Cowdery and confer with him respecting his connection with Mormonism and the Book of Mormon.
>
> We accordingly waited on Mr. Cowdery at his residence in Tiffin, and there learned his connection, from him, with that order, and his full and final renunciation thereof.
>
> We then inquired of him if he had any objection to making a public recantation.
>
> He replied that he had objections; that, in the first place, it could do no good; that he had known several to do so and they always regretted it. And, in the second place, it would have a tendency to draw public attention, invite criticism, and bring him into contempt.
>
> "But," said he, "nevertheless, if the church require it, I will submit to it, but I authorize and desire you and the church to publish and make known my recantation."
>
> We did not demand it, but submitted his name to the church, and he was unanimously admitted a member thereof.

At that time he arose and addressed the audience present, admitted his error and implored forgiveness, and said he was sorry and **ashamed of his connection with Mormonism.**

He continued his membership while he resided in Tiffin, and became **Superintendent of the Sabbath-School**, and led an exemplary life while he resided with us.

I have lived in this city upwards of fifty-three years, was auditor of this county, was elected to that office in 1840.

I am now in my eighty-third year, and well remember the facts above related.

(Signed) G. J. Keen.

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence, this 14th day of April, A.D. 1885.

Frank L. Emich,
Notary Public in Seneca, O.

(Affidavit quoted in *The True Origin of the Book of Mormon*, by Charles A. Shook, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1914, pages 58-59)

In a letter dated August 3, 1882, W. H. Gibson, a resident of Tiffin, Ohio, made this statement concerning Oliver Cowdery:

> Referring, now, to yours of the 13th February, making inquiries as to Oliver Cowdery, I beg to reply, though perhaps too late for your purpose. I think that it is absolutely certain that Mr. C., after his separation from the Mormons, never conversed on the subject with his most intimate friends, and never by word or act, disclosed anything relating to the conception, development or progress of the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." He was an able lawyer, a fine orator, a ready debater and led a blameless life, while residing in this city. He united with the **Methodist Protestant Church, and was a consistent, active member.** (*The True Origin of the Book of Mormon*, page 57)

The Mormon writer Stanley R. Gunn frankly admitted that Oliver Cowdery joined the Methodist Protestant Church:

> . . . we know that Oliver did become a member of the Methodist Protestant Church of Tiffin, Ohio and he did act as a clerk therein . . . (*Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder and Scribe*, page 62)

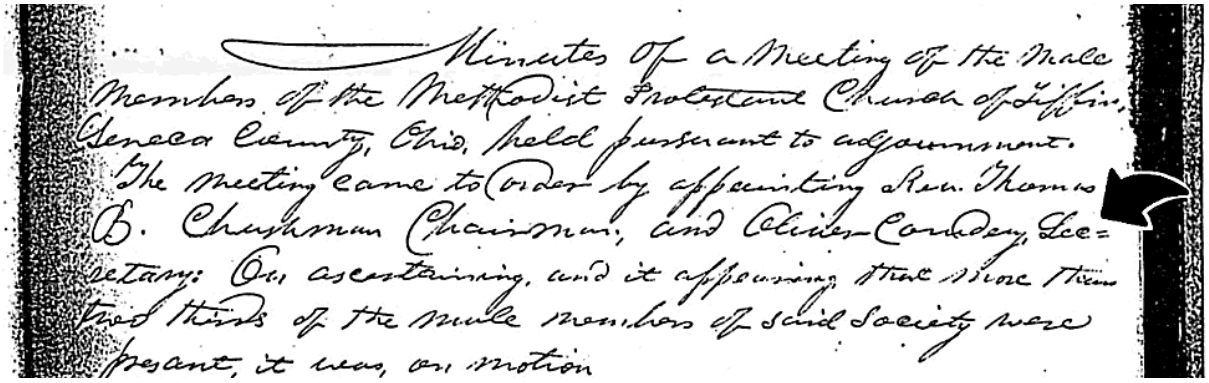
On page 179 of the same book, Stanley Gunn stated:

> There has been some controversy as to whether or not Oliver became a member of any other sect after severing his connections with the Church he had helped to organize. It is claimed by some that he joined James J. Strang and his group in the settlement in Wisconsin. Others support the claim that he became a member of the Methodist Protestant Church while at Tiffin, Ohio. This last assumption is correct. Oliver did become a member of this Church, in fact, the minute books of said Church indicate that he was one of the Charter Members.

Below is a photograph from the minutes of a meeting of the male members of the Methodist Protestant Church of Tiffin, held January 18, 1844. This photograph shows that Oliver Cowdery was appointed Secretary of the meeting.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts claimed that Oliver Cowdery never denied his testimony to the Book of Mormon, yet he admits that even some of the Mormons believed that he did:

> It is evident that the reports about Oliver Cowdery denying his testimony obtained some credence even among the Saints at Nauvoo; for in the *Times and Seasons*, published by the Church at Nauvoo, one J. H. Johnson in some verses written by him maintaining the fact that the truth stands fast though men may be untrue to it, says:
>
> Or prove that Christ was not the Lord
> Because that Peter cursed and swore,
> Or Book of Mormon not His word
> Because denied by Oliver.
>
> (As quoted in *Oliver Cowdery—The Man Outstanding*, by Joseph Hyrum Greenhalgh, Phoenix, Ariz., 1965, page 28)


Minutes Of a Meeting of the Male Members of the Methodist Protestant Church of Tiffin, Seneca County, Ohio, held pursuant to adjournment. The meeting came to Order by appointing Rev. Thomas B. Cheshuman Chairman, and Oliver Cowdery, Secretary: On ascertaining, and it appearing that more than two thirds of the male members of said Society were present, it was, on motion

As evidence that Oliver Cowdery maintained his testimony to the Book of Mormon after he separated himself from the Mormon Church, B. H. Roberts related the following:

> In an affidavit given before A. A. Dixon, notary public in Salt Lake City, Judge C. M. Nielsen, of Utah, under date of 3rd of December, 1909, states that while on a mission in the state of Minnesota, a Mr. Barrington, a successful farmer of that state related to him the following incident in the career of Oliver Cowdery that happened in the state of Michigan, when Mr. Barrington was about twenty years of age. A murder trial was in progress in the town where Mr. Barrington then lived, and walking along the main street one day Mr. B. "noticed a great many people walking up to the county court house, and not knowing what was going on there," he says, "I became inquisitive, and made up my mind to go there also, and on entering the court room I found that the same was crowded to overflowing, but being young and strong I soon made my way up to the railing in front of the bench and jury box, and I then learned from a friend that it was a murder trial on before the court, and that the young attorney who was then addressing or making his opening argument to the jury was the county attorney, Oliver Cowdery; as soon as Mr. Cowdery closed his opening argument, the attorney for the prisoner arose, and, in a sneering way, said: 'May it please the Court, and gentlemen of the jury, I challenge Mr. Cowdery, since he seems to know so much about this poor defendant to tell us something about his connection with Joe Smith, and the digging out of the hill of the Mormon Bible, and how Mr. Cowdery helped Joe Smith to defraud the American people out of a whole lot of money by selling the Mormon Bible and telling them that an angel appeared to them from heaven, dressed in white clothes.' . . . The people did not believe, or know before this, that they had elected a county prosecutor who had been an associate of the 'Mormon Prophet,' Joseph Smith. Finally, when the defendant's attorney had completed his argument, Oliver Cowdery's turn came to reply, and everybody in the court room strained their necks to catch a glimpse of Mr. Cowdery. He arose as calm as a summer morning, and in a low but clear voice which gradually rose in pitch and volume as he proceeded, said:
>
> > If your honor please, and gentlemen of the jury, the attorney on the opposite side has challenged me to state my connection with Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon; and as I cannot now avoid the responsibility, I must admit to you that I am the very Oliver Cowdery whose name is attached to the testimony, with others, as to the appearance of the angel Moroni; and let me tell you that it is not because of my good deeds that I am here, away from the body of the Mormon church, but because I have broken the covenants I once made, and I was cut off from the church; but, gentlemen of the jury, I have never denied my testimony, which is attached to the front page of the Book of Mormon, and I declare to you here that these eyes saw the angel, and these ears of mine heard the voice of the angel, and he told us his name was Moroni; that the book was true, and contained the fulness of the gospel, and we were also told that if we ever denied what we had heard and seen that there would be no forgiveness for us, neither in this world nor in the world to come."
>
> (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, Vol. 1, pages 140-142)

Brigham Young related a similar story and said it happened while Oliver Cowdery "was pleading law in Michigan."

> A gentleman in Michigan said to him, when he was pleading law, "Mr. Cowdery, I see your name attached to this book; if you believe it to be true, why are you in Michigan?" The gentleman read over the name of the witnesses, and said, "Mr. Cowdery, do you believe this book?" "No, sir," replied Oliver Cowdery. "That is very well, but your name is attached to it, and you say here that you saw an angel, and the plates from which this book is said to be translated, and now you say that you do not believe it. Which time was you right?" Mr. Cowdery replied, "There is my name attached to that book, and what I have there said that I saw, I know that I saw, and belief has nothing to do with it, for knowledge has swallowed up the belief that I had in the work, since I know it is true." He gave this testimony when he was pleading law in Michigan. After he had left the Church he still believed "Mormonism;" . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 258)

The Mormon writer Stanley R. Gunn, however, shows that it is unlikely that Oliver Cowdery ever practiced law in Michigan. In his Master's thesis written at the Brigham Young University, he states:

> From the foregoing evidence **it is hard to conceive of Oliver's ever having practiced law in Michigan** unless it be merely to try one case and then go back to either Tiffin, Ohio or Elkhorn Wisconsin, . . . but this need not entirely discredit the story. The story was told to Judge C. M. Nielsen of Salt Lake City some thirty odd years after its actual happening and in view of this, it seems entirely possible that the setting may have been Wisconsin rather than Michigan. . . . Although attempts have been made to check the fact that Oliver practiced in Michigan, the writer could find no such record. His correspondence from the two states, Wisconsin and Tiffin, as well as his court cases on record are also in favor of his never having practiced law in Michigan.
>
> The testimony is given here merely as "possible or probable testimony," but its authenticity lacks official confirmation. ("Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," by Stanley R. Gunn, Master's thesis, BYU, 1942, typed copy, page 139)

By 1962 Stanley R. Gunn still had found no evidence that Oliver Cowdery practiced law in Michigan. In his book, *Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder and Scribe*, Mr. Gunn stated:

> Following Oliver's cases through the various terms of court and following him by the letters he has written, we can see no period when he could have resided in Michigan long enough to establish a practice for himself, let alone be elected . . . prosecuting attorney.

> Also it must be noted that Judge William Lang states specifically that when Oliver located in Tiffin in the fall of 1840, he entered Oliver's law office to read law. He added that Oliver left Tiffin in 1847 to move to Elkhorn, Wisconsin with his family. Mr. Lang knew Oliver very well; in fact, Oliver had examined him for position as school teacher in Tiffin before Mr. Lang entered the practice of law. Mr. Lang had said that he was intimately acquainted with Oliver from the time he came to Tiffin until he left in 1847. This, too, makes it difficult to conceive of a period when Oliver might have practiced in Michigan. (*Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder and Scribe*, pages 200-201)

Strangites

James Jesse Strang, like Joseph Smith, claimed that he found some plates which he translated with the Urim and Thummim. He had witnesses who claimed they saw the plates, and their testimony is recorded in almost the same way that the testimony of the eleven witnesses is recorded in the Book of Mormon. Russell R. Rich gives the following information concerning the Strangites:

> On September 1, 1845, the Lord's messenger visited Strang to tell him where the plates were located. Twelve days later he took witnesses to the spot and dug up the plates which were lodged in the roots of an oak tree. The story of this discovery spread rapidly.
>
> At the end of Strang's interpretation of the plates (by power of the Urim and Thummim that the angel had given him) were the words "The forerunner, men shall kill, but a mighty Prophet there shall dwell." This was intended to refer to Joseph Smith and James Jesse Strang. (*Those Who Would Be Leaders*, by Russell R. Rich, page 22, Brigham Young University Leadership Week, Extension Publications)

In the *Gospel Herald*—a Strangite publication—for May 4th, 1848, James J. Strang published a revelation which was supposed to have been given to him in September, 1845:

> Revelation Given September, 1845.
>
> The Angel of the Lord came unto me James, on the first day of September, in the year eighteen hundred and forty-five, and the light shined about him above the brightness of the sun, and he shewed unto me **the plates of the sealed record** and he gave into my hands the Urim and Thummim. And out of the light came the voice of the Lord saying: My Servant James, in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thee, because I have tried thee and found thee faithful. . . .
>
> A work shall come forth and the secrets of the past shalt thou reveal. Yea by little and little shalt thou reveal it, . . . Behold the record which was sealed from my servant Joseph. Unto thee it is reserved. . . . Yea as my servants serve me, so shalt thou translate unto them.
>
> But in their weakness I have not forgotten them. Go to the place which the Angel of the presence shall show thee and there shalt thou dig for the record of my people in whose possession thou dwellest. Take with thee faithful witnesses, for in evil will the unfaithful speak of thee, . . .
>
> Speak thou unto the Elders of my church and say . . . He that rejecteth you him will I reject in the day that I come in my kingdom. . . . . And while I was yet in the Spirit the Angel of the Lord took me away to the hill in the East of Walworth against White River in Voree, and there he shewed unto me the record buried under an oak tree as large as the body of a large man, it was inclosed in an earthen casement and buried in the ground as deep as to a man's waist, and I beheld it as a man can see a light stone in clear water, for I saw it by Urim and Thummim, and I returned the Urim and Thummim to the Angel of the Lord and he departed out of sight.
>
> (*Gospel Herald*, May 4, 1848, page 27)

In the same issue the testimony of four witnesses appeared:

> TESTIMONY OF FOUR WITNESSES.
>
> On the thirteenth day of September, 1845, we, Aaron Smith, Jirah B. Wheelan, James M. Van Nostrand and Edward Whitcomb, assembled at the call of James J. Strang, who is by us and many others approved as a Prophet and Seer of God. He proceeded to inform us that it had been revealed to him in a vision that an account of an ancient people was buried in a hill south of White river bridge near the east line of Walworth county, and leading us to an oak tree about one foot in diameter told us that we should find it inclosed in a case of rude earthen ware under that tree at the depth of about three feet, requested us to dig it up, and charged us to so examine the ground that we should know we were not imposed upon, and that it had not been buried there since the tree grew. The tree was surrounded by a sward of deeply rooted grass, such as is usually found in the openings, and upon the most critical examination we could not discover any indication that it had ever been cut through or disturbed.
>
> We then dug up the tree and continued to dig to the depth of about three feet, where we found a case of slightly baked clay containing three plates of brass. . . .
>
> In fine we found an alphabetic and pictorial record, carefully cased up, buried deep in the earth, covered with a flat stone, with an oak tree one foot in diameter growing over it, with every evidence that the sense can give that it has lain there as long as that tree has been growing. . . .
>
> AARON SMITH,
> JIRA B. WHEELAN,
> J. M. VAN NOSTRAND,
> EDWARD WHITCOMB.
>
> (*Gospel Herald*, Voree, Wisconsin, May 4, 1848, page 27)

The Mormons considered Strang a wicked man. On September 2nd, 1844, the following appeared in the Mormon publication *Times and Seasons*:

> TO THE SAINTS.
>
> Whereas Elders James J. Strang and Aaron Smith have been circulating a "revelation" (falsely called) purporting to have been received by Joseph Smith on the 18th of June, 1844; and through the influence of which they have attempted and are attempting to establish a stake, called Voree, in Wisconsin Territory, thereby leading the saints astray: therefore, the said James J. Strang and Aaron Smith are cut off from the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, this 26th day of August, 1844.
>
> By order of the Council of the Twelve.
>
> W. RICHARDS, Clerk.
>
> (*Times and Seasons*, September 2, 1844, Nauvoo, Ill., page 631)

Joseph Smith's brother, William, and even his mother were influenced for a time by the Strangite movement. On January 11th, 1847, Brigham Young told of a dream he had, apparently relating to Lucy Smith and the Strangites:

> I told the brethren I dreamed of seeing Joseph, the Prophet, last night and conversing with him, that Mother Smith was present and very deeply engaged reading a Pamphlet, when Joseph with a great deal of dignity turned his head towards his mother partly looking over his shoulder, said, "Have you got the word of God there?" Mother Smith replied, "There is truth here." Joseph replied, "That may be, but I think you will be sick of that pretty soon." Joseph appeared to feel extremely well, was sociable and laughed heartily. ("Manuscript History of Brigham Young," January 11, 1847, typed copy)

Lucy Smith evidently joined with the Strangites, for Brigham Young made this statement in a letter dated January 27, 1847:

> Strang is but little better off, . . . all his old friends have been strangled or have died of the intermitent fever, or some worse disease called unbelief, to wit, William Smith who is said to have ordained the self- styled seer and revelator has apostatized and wandered far from the sheepfold. . . . Mother Smith was at Knoxville, Knox County, Illinois, and William was with her at the last report. She was a Strangite, but we think she will not be long, for Strangism like Sidneyism appears destined to a speedy annihilation. ("Manuscript History of Brigham Young," January 27, 1847, typed copy)

The following appeared in the Strangite publication, *Voree Herald*, in July, 1846:

> I have since I returned to Nauvoo last, for the first time been appraised of an appointment made by Joseph Smith to James J. Strang. On hearing this, I took pains to gather all the evidence that could be adduced to see if there was any foundation at all for the claims of Mr. Strang.
>
> I called in to see sister Emma, to enquire concerning the appointment. Sister Emma says that Joseph received a letter from Mr. Strang—Hyrum was present and he called in brother J. F. Green; at first Joseph thought all was not right, but Hyrum thought otherwise. They talked over matters a while and came to the conclusion that Joseph would write a letter: so Joseph and brother Green went out for that purpose.
>
> . . . And I further state that Joseph did not appoint the twelve as his successor, and I was in the last council with him, and had an opportunity of knowing and hearing his sentiments in regard to these things.
>
> I also heard Joseph say, that should the time ever came that Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball would lead this church, that they would lead it to hell. This was said in the hearing of sister Emma Smith,—The whole Smith family of the Joseph stock join in sustaining J. J. Strang
>
> It is to be remembered that soon after Joseph and Hyrum's death, brother Green died, and he was heard by numerous individuals to say, that Joseph had appointed Strang.
>
> WILLIAM SMITH.
>
> This is to certify that the Smith family do believe in the appointment of J. J. Strang.
>
> WILLIAM SMITH, Patriarch,
> LUCY SMITH, Mother in Israel,
> ARTHUR MILLIKEN,
> NANCY MILLIKEN,
> W. J. SALISBURY,
> CATHERINE SALISBURY,
> SOPHRONIA McLERIE.
>
> Nauvoo, March 1st, 1846. (*Voree Herald*, Voree, Wisc., July, 1846)

Catherine Salisbury later claimed: "I never signed my name to such certificate or document: . . ." This may be true, but we know that both William and Lucy Smith joined with the Strangites.

It is interesting to note that members of Joseph Smith's own family were so credulous that they were led into another movement involving plates, but even more interesting is the fact that some of the Book of Mormon witnesses were influenced by Strang. On January 20th, 1848, James J. Strang wrote the following:

> . . . early in 1846 the tract reprint of the first number of the *Voree Herald*, containing the evidence of my calling and authority, strayed into upper Missouri. Immediately I received a letter from Hiram Page, one of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, and a neighbor and friend to the Whitmers' who lived near him, and that they rejoiced with exceeding joy **that God had raised up one to stand in place of Joseph**, and was so much overjoyed that they could not rest till they had gone and communicated the glad news to their brother who lived at some distance. He goes on to say that all the witnesses

> of the Book of Mormon living in that region **received the news with gladness**, and finally that they held a council in which David and John Whitmer and this Hiram Page were the principle actors; and being at a loss what they ought to do about coming to **Voree**, sent up to me **as a prophet of God to tell them** what to do. This letter I answered shortly after receiving it, and last April (1847) I received another letter from the same Hiram Page, acknowledging the receipt of mine and of many papers from me, and giving me the acts of another council of himself at the Whitmers', in which, among other things, they invite me to come to their residence in Missouri and receive from them, David and John Whitmer, church records, and manuscript revelations, which they had kept in their possession from the time that they were active members of the church. These documents they speak of as great importance to the church, and offer them to me as the true shepherd who has a right to them, and were anxious that I should come and receive them in person, because they were of too much importance to be trusted in the mails. It is very true that these letters were not written by David Whitmer, but they were written by Hiram Page as the common epistle of himself and the Whitmers'. [I] have just as much reason to believe Hiram Page is an honorable and an honest man as that Whitmer is, and do not think he would write those things unless they are true; and if they are true how can I believe that Whitmer professes to be prophet instead [of] Joseph? No, I think him too honest for that. (*Gospel Herald*, January 20, 1848)

In a letter to David Whitmer, dated December 2nd, 1846, William E. McLellin stated:

> I was visited by James J. Strang of Voree, Wisconsin. He laid siege to me in order to have me unite with him in his organization. . . . The brethren here generally received him as the Successor of Jos. Smith, according to his profession—He told me that all the witnesses to the book of Mormon yet alive were with him, except Oliver. I think he told me he had a letter from Hiram Page. He said he expected you all at Voree soon. . . .
>
> I received a letter from Oliver a few weeks since. They were all well. He thinks Strang is a wicked man. (*Ensign of Liberty*, Kirtland, Ohio, April, 1847, pages 17, 19)

Strang was probably telling the truth when he stated that the Book of Mormon witnesses—except Cowdery—believed his claims, for John Whitmer, one of the eight witnesses, wrote the following in his history of the church—later, however, it was crossed out:

> God knowing all things prepared a man whom he visited by an angel of God and showed him where there were some ancient record hid, and also put in his heart to desire of Smith to grant him power to establish a stake to Zion in Wisconsin Terrytory, **whose name is James J. Strang.** Now first Smith was unfaverably disposed to grant him this request but being troubled in spirit and knowing from the things that were staring him in his face that his days must soon be closed therefore he enquired of the Lord and behold the Lord said (three words indecipherable) James J. Strang a Prophet Seer & Revelator to my church, for this stake. Shortly in a meeting they got a letter &c. Shortly after this appointment of Strang the mob gathered and took by Strategy Joseph & Hyrum Smith conveyed them to Carthage the Seat of Justice in & for the Co. of Hancock ("Caldwell" has been stricken out in favor of "Hancock") as if to try them by the law of the land, but instead of trying them by the law of the land for their crimes they murdered them & thus the Lord's anointed fell by the brutal hand of man, & they are gone the way of all the earth and Strang Reigns in the place of Smith the author and proprietor of the Book of Mormon. (*John Whitmer's History*, Chapter 21, page 23)

Stanley R. Gunn made this statement concerning Oliver Cowdery: "It is claimed by some that he joined James J. Strang and his group in the settlement in Wisconsin" (*Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder and Scribe*, page 179).

It is true that Oliver Cowdery moved to Wisconsin in 1847. In fact, according to the Strangite publication, *Gospel Herald*, January 13, 1848, Oliver Cowdery was living "only 12 miles from Voree," and the Mormon Apostle Orson Hyde said that Voree, Wisconsin was "Mr. Strang's place of gathering" (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 7, page 157). While it may be possible that Oliver Cowdery moved to Wisconsin to investigate Strang's movement, Stanley R. Gunn claims that he could find no evidence that he actually joined with the Strangites:

> The writer on his trip into Wisconsin investigated such claims at Old Vorhee and Burlington, strongholds of the Strangites, but he could find no evidence to support this claim. (*Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder and Scribe*, page 202, footnote 38)

Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, did join the Strangite movement and went on a mission to England for them. The Mormon Historian Joseph Fielding Smith admits that Martin Harris was "out of harmony with the Church" and that he went to England, but he does not tell that he was on a mission for the Strangites:

> Now let me say something about Martin Harris. He was never excommunicated, but drifted away and became disaffected. He went off to England and preached the Book of Mormon, but he was out of harmony with the Church from the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith until some time after the people came here. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, page 226)

Andrew Jenson (who was Assistant Church Historian), however, frankly admitted that Martin. Harris went on a mission for the Strangites. Under the date of October 1, 1846, he wrote the following in the book *Church Chronology*:

—Martin Harris and others, followers of the **apostate James J. Strang**, preached among the Saints in England, but could get no influence. (*Church Chronology*, Salt Lake City, 1899, page 31)

The Mormon Church's own publication, *Millennial Star*, had a great deal to say about Martin Harris when he arrived in England. (It should be remembered that the *Millennial Star* was published in England at the very time Martin Harris went on his mission for the Strangites.) The following statements appeared in that publication:

One of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, yielded to the spirit and temptation of the **devil** a number of years ago—turned against Joseph Smith and became his bitter enemy. He was filled with the rage and madness of a demon. One day he would be one thing, and another day another thing. He soon became **partially deranged** or shattered, as many believed, flying from one thing to another, as if reason and common sense were thrown off their balance. In one of his fits of monomania, he went and joined the "Shakers" or followers of Anne Lee. He tarried with them a year or two, or perhaps longer, having had some flare ups while among them; but since Strang has made his entry into the apostate ranks, and hoisted his standard for the rebellious to flock too, Martin leaves the "Shakers," whom he knows to be right, and has known it for many years, as he said, and joins Strang in gathering out the tares of the field. We understand that he is appointed a mission to this country, but we do not feel to warn the Saints against him, for his own unbridled tongue will soon show out specimens of folly enough to give any person a true index to the character of the man; but if the Saints wish to know what the Lord hath said of him, they may turn to the 178th page of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, and the person there called a "wicked man" is no other than **Martin Harris**, and he owned to it then, but probably might not now. It is not the first time the Lord chose a wicked man as a witness. Also on page 193, read the whole revelation given to him, and ask yourselves, if the Lord ever talked in that way to a good man. . . .

. . . We also learn, from Elder Wheelock's letter of Birmingham, that Martin Harris and his escort have paid them a visit. He introduced himself to their conference meeting and wished to speak, but on being politely informed by Elder Banks that the season of the year had come when Martin sought a more genial climate than England, he had better follow. On being rejected by the united voice of the conference, he went out into the street, and began to proclaim the corruption of the Twelve; but here the officers of government honoured him with their presence—two policemen came and very gently took hold of each arm and led Martin away to the Lock-up. We would insert brother Wheelock's letter entire if he had room. Elder Wheelock will remember that **evil men, like Harris**, out of the evil treasure of their hearts bring forth evil things. . . .

Just as our paper was going to press, we learned that **Martin Harris**, about whom we had written in another article, had landed in Liverpool, and being afraid or ashamed of his profession as a Strangite, and we presume both, for we are confident we should be, he tells some of our brethren on whom he called, that he was of the same profession with themselves—that he had just come from America and wished to get acquainted with the Saints. But there was a strangeness about him, and about one or two who came with him, that gave them plainly to see that the frankness and honest simplicity of true hearted brethern were not with them. **A lying deceptive spirit attends them**, and has **from the beginning.** They said they were of the same profession with our brethern, when they knew they lied. If they were of our profession, why not call at our office and get their papers endorsed? Because they know that they are of **their father, the devil**, who was a liar from the beginning, and abode not in the truth. The very countenance of Harris will show to every spiritual-minded person who sees him, that the **wrath of God is upon him.** (*Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, Vol. 8, November 15, 1846, pages 124-128)

After Martin Harris returned to the Mormon Church, he was unwilling to admit the purpose of his mission to England. In a letter dated January, 1871, he stated:

Dear Sir:—Your second letter, dated December, 1870, came duly to hand. I am truly glad to see a spirit of inquiry manifested therein. I reply by a borrowed hand, as my sight has failed me too much to write myself. Your questions:

Question 1. "Did you go to England to lecture against Mormonism?"

Answer. I answer emphatically, No, I did not. No man ever heard me in any way deny the truth of the Book of Mormon, the administration of the angel that showed me the plates; nor the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, under the administration of Joseph Smith, Jun., the prophet whom the Lord raised up for that purpose in these latter days, that He may show forth His power and glory. (Letter quoted in *The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* by George Reynolds, 1883, page 90)

Although the Book of Mormon witnesses were attracted to Strang for a short time, they soon became interested in a movement William E. McLellin was trying to start. McLellin had at one time "given some encouragement" to Strang, but he soon changed his mind and made this statement concerning Strang and his plates:

He professes that his angel ordination took place on the very same day on which Joseph fell, in Carthage jail; . . . But how stands the matter relative to his **three little brass plates?** Provided they were dug from the earth, as published to the world, then what? He claims to be "like Joseph." And we ask for the likeness between his three brass ones, and that great pile of gold plates delivered

> to Joseph Smith. We saw Strang's, and we should think that they were not over two and a half inches long by one and one eighth wide. Mormon's plates were about eight inches long by six wide. No comparison in metal or size. Who went with Joseph when he dug up his plates? No person. Who went with Strang? Four chosen witnesses. No likeness here . . . Strang says he translated his plates by Urim and Thummim. Who ever saw that sacred instrument in his possession? No man. Who knows whether Strang translated his plates correctly? No man. (*The Ensign of Liberty*, Kirtland, Ohio, page 32)

Whitmer's Revelations

William E. McLellin was one of the original apostles in the Mormon Church. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement concerning him and the movement he tried to start after leaving the church:

> . . . William E. McLellin was finally excommunicated from the Church at Far West. Thence forward he took an active part in the persecution of the Saints in Missouri, and at one time expressed the desire to do violence to the person of Joseph Smith, while the latter was confined in Liberty prison. Subsequently he attempted what he called a reorganization of the Church, and **called upon David Whitmer to take the presidency thereof**, claiming that he was ordained by Joseph Smith on the 8th of July, 1834, as his (the Prophet Joseph's) successor. The Prophet himself, according to the minutes of the High Council held in Far West, on the 15th of March, 1838, referred to his ordaining of David Whitmer in July, 1834, and this is the account of what he said:
>
> "President Joseph Smith, Jun., gave a history of the ordination of David Whitmer which took place in July, 1834, to be a leader or a **prophet** to this Church, which (ordination) was on conditions that he (Joseph Smith, Jun.,) did not live to God himself. President Joseph Smith, Jun., approved of the proceedings of the High Council after hearing the minutes of the former councils."—*Far West Record*, page 108. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 3, pages 31-32, footnote)

Five of the Book of Mormon witnesses definitely supported McLellin's movement and another gave some encouragement to it. According to William E. McLellin, Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses, was baptized into his group on February 13th, 1847:

> On Saturday 13th, of February, Martin Harris, William E. McLellin, Leonard Rich and Aaron Smith, were immersed, confirmed, and reordained to the same authority which we had held in the Church before Latter Day Saintism was known. (*The Ensign of Liberty*, January, 1848, page 56)

Martin Harris even joined with Leonard Rich and Calvin Beebe in a "Testimony of Three Witnesses" that Joseph Smith ordained David Whitmer as his "Successor in office":

> TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES.
>
> We cheerfully certify, to all whom it may concern, that we attended a general conference, called at the instance of Joseph Smith, in Clay county, Mo., on the 8th day of July, 1834, at the residence of Elder Lyman Wight. And while the conference was in session, Joseph Smith presiding, he arose and said that the time had come when he must appoint his Successor in office. Some have supposed that it would be Oliver Cowdery; but, said he, Oliver has lost that privilege in consequence of transgression. The Lord has made it known to me that David Whitmer is the man. David was then called forward, and Joseph and his counsellors laid hands upon him, and ordained him to his station, to succeed him. Joseph then gave David a charge, in the hearing of the whole assembly. Joseph then seemed to rejoice that that work was done, and said, now brethren, if any thing should befal me, the work of God will roll on with more power than it has hitherto done. Then, brethren, you will have a man who can lead you as well as I can. He will be Prophet, Seer, Revelator, and Translator before God.
>
> MARTIN HARRIS,
> LEONARD RICH,
> CALVIN BEEBE.
>
> (*The Ensign of Liberty*, December, 1847, pages 43-44)

On July 28, 1847, Oliver Cowdery wrote a letter to David Whitmer in which he gave some support to McLellin's ideas and told Whitmer that "our right gives us the head":

> Brother David: Our mutual friend and former co-laborer, Elder McLellin, called on me a day or two since, informing me at the same time, that he was, or is now, on his way to Missouri, mainly for the purpose of visiting yourself. . . . so far as I understand his labor, it has simply been directed to one great object—to wit: In preparing, or endeavoring to prepare the way for the old ship to unhitch her cables and again sail forth. There is no doubt in either of our minds I apprehend, as to the fact that she has been "lying to," for some time past, either for the want of pilots or hands to work her. Let me speak plainly . . . Joseph Smith was meanly and unlawfully murdered! Then came a trying time . . . to see who is to be called the **head**. Rigdon succeeded in gathering around him a large number of persons. But he has had his day. He has tried, as try he must, to be the great man. Strang has raised his standard, and cried "Lo here." The twelve have perhaps not as a matter of choice at first, but of necessity taken such as would adhere to them and fled to the western slope of our continent. I do not say that it were necessary that those men should all try to be great, and occupy the place of Joseph Smith; but I do say, that for any one who could accomplish that great work, to wit, lead the church, to have undertaken to have done so he would only have made "confusion wo___ confounded." In consequence of transgression, we have fallen back a series of years. Men's minds have become so confused, that they must have time to see for themselves that those individuals have not the authority, consequently not the **power.**

. . . If ever the church rises again in true holiness, it must arise in a measure upon our testimony, and upon our characters as good men. Such being the case, it is or was necessary before that time, that some **one** should step forward—capable and worthy, who knew us well, and whose heart the Lord should or has touched, whose duty and office should be to vindicate our characters, and disabuse the minds of the honest of those prejudices which they do and would otherwise labor under. . . . for when once the imputation is wiped away our names will shine in his holy kingdom on earth, when that kingdom is once built up—whether we live to see it or not. On this great subject I want to see you much. True it is that our right gives us the **head**. . . . We may not live to see the day, but we have the authority, **and do hold the keys.** It is important, should we not be permitted to act in that authority, that we confer them upon some man or men, whom God may appoint, . . .

That our brother William has been directed and influenced in what he has been doing by the Holy Spirit, I need not say to you I fully believe. I do not say that every thing he has done has been done by inspiration—it would be strange if it were so. But that God has touched his heart, that he might begin to prepare the way, I have no doubt. In thus doing he has done well, and he will in no wise lose his reward.

As to the time, I will further add that those men of whom I spoke must have time to develop to their followers that the Lord has not chosen them for that purpose or work. . . . I will only say that when the time comes, **I am ready**! But I am not persuaded that it has yet fully come. . . . Lay your hands upon brother William, that he may be patient and steadfast. Let us hear from you often, and do come and see us if you can. Our love to all our relatives, father, mother, and all.

As ever your brother, OLIVER COWDERY.

(Letter by Oliver Cowdery, written July 28, 1847, from Elkhorn, Wisconsin, printed in *The Ensign of Liberty*, May, 1848, pages 91-93)

In a letter dated September 8, 1847, David Whitmer wrote to Oliver Cowdery and told him that it was "the will of God that you be one of my counsellors in the presidency of the church":

FAR WEST, MO. Sept. 8, 1847.

Dear brother Oliver:—I write in answer to your last. We have held a council in Caldwell county, at brother John's. . . .

Now I say it is your duty to prepare so fast as God will open the way before you to cut loose from the world—and lay hold of the work of God, and assist in building up the church, even the church of Christ. I would give you a detail of the whole matter but have only time to say that we have established, or commenced to establish the church of Christ again, by laying aside our dead works, and being re-ordained to our former offices of President and Counsellor, as formerly—and it is the **will of God** that you be **one of my counsellors in the presidency of the church.** Jacob and Hiram have been ordained High Priests, and W. E. McLellin President, to stand in relation to me as you stood to Joseph, &c. &c. Now you behold that **the time has come**, to clear away the old rubbish, and build again those principles which constitute the church of Christ. Brother McLellin has still to continue his work in exposing the man of sin, &c. &c.

I am your brother in the new Covenant,

DAVID WHITMER.

(Letter by David Whitmer, printed in *The Ensign of Liberty*, May, 1848, page 93)

The Mormons were very disturbed by the endorsement the witnesses gave to William E. McLellin's movement. Hosea Stout made this entry in his journal on December 3, 1848:

Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmore & W. E. McLelland were trying to raise up the kingdom again. also William Smith. But the "Sound of their grinding is low." They are all waiting **for the Twelve & Presidency to fall.** (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, edited by Juanita Brooks, Vol. 2, page 336)

In the *Ensign of Liberty* for August, 1849, William E. McLellin gave this information concerning a conference held in September, 1847:

OUR TOUR WEST IN 1847

When I published the third number of this paper, I did not then deem it wisdom to publish the particulars of the conference held in Far West, on the 7th and 8th days of Sept., with some of the original "witnesses" of the book of Mormon. But as circumstances have transpired since, and as matters now stand, we believe it to be our duty to present to our readers a history of that important conference. But let us premise a little here. It will be remembered that in Dec. 1846, I wrote a long letter to President David Whitmer. And in March and April following, I published the first and second numbers of this paper, and immediately sent them to him and his friends. When I parted with O. Cowdery the last of July, in Wisconsin, he immediately wrote to David and acquainted him with the fact that I was on my way to make him a visit. This letter he had received some days before I arrived. . . .

On the 4th of Sept., about sunset, I arrived in Richmond, Ray Co., Mo., at the residence of David Whitmer. We spent until midnight's hour in familiar converse relative to his gifts and callings from God, . . .

On the 6th, David and Jacob Whitmer, and Hiram Page, accompanied me to Far West, to visit their brother John Whitmer. On the 7th, in the morning, we bowed in family prayer—David being mouth. . . . We conversed freely, and particularly about the re-organization of the same church by us in Kirtland, in Feb. 1847. I was particular to relate to them all the great and important principles made known to us, and upon which we acted. The following revelation which we had received on the 10th of Feb. preceding, which was the cause of the re-organization, was read and approved: "Verily I the Lord say unto those who are now present . . . as you desire to know my will and how you shall go forward to please me, as you have taken upon you the name of Christ,

mine Anointed, then it will be pleasing unto me that you should also take upon you mine ordinances of baptism and confirmation, and then re-ordination—or rather a confirmation of the holy authority of the Priesthood which you had received in my church. . . .

"And now concerning the authority of my servant David, I would say unto you that no man being directed by my spirit will ever condemn what my spirit now teaches you. . . . amen."

Every part and principle of the above was scanned, and as I supposed well understood by all those present. (*The Ensign of Liberty*, pages 99-101)

William E. McLellin goes on to relate how David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, gave revelations supporting his organization and condemning the Mormon Church:

We then agreed to call upon the Lord to know his mind and will concerning those who were there present. And we agreed or covenanted to implicitly obey what the Lord might reveal to us. I took my seat at a table prepared to write; David took his seat near to me, and he requested the others to gather near around him.—Then after a few moments of solemn secret prayer, the following was delivered solely through and by **David Whitmer, as the revelator**, and written by me as scribe, viz:

"Verily, verily thus saith the Lord unto you my servants David, and John, and William, and Jacob, and Hiram, it is for my name's sake saith the Lord God of hosts, that your sins are now forgiven, and that you shall have my word concerning you. Therefore marvel ye not that I the Lord your God have dealt with you on this wise, concerning you on this land. Behold I have looked upon you from the beginning, and have seen that in your hearts dwelt truth, and righteousness. And now I reveal unto you my friends, through my beloved son, your Savior. And for the cause of my church it must needs have been that ye were cast out from among **those who had poluted themselves and the holy authority of their priesthood**, that I the Lord could preserve my holy priesthood on earth, even on this land on which I the Lord have said Zion should dwell.

"Now marvel not that I have preserved you and kept you on this land. It was for my purpose, yea even for a wise purpose, that the world and my church should not know, speaking after your manner of language; for my church for a time did not dwell on earth,—speaking of the righteousness of the church of Christ. For verily, verily saith the Lord, even Jesus, your Redeemer, **they have polluted my name, and have done continually wickedness in my sight, therefore shall they be led whithersoever I will and but few shall remain to receive their inheritances.** Therefore I say unto you my son David, fear not, for I am your Lord and your God; and I have held you in my own hands. You shall continue your inheritance on this my holy land; and it is for a wise purpose in me, which purpose shall be revealed hereafter.

"It is even for the testimony that all those who are present have borne and remain honest therein, that the covenants that I the Lord have given you should be kept sacred on this land, and were it not so, you could not now receive wisdom at my hand. For I the Lord had decreed that my people, who had taken upon them my holy name, should not pollute the land by the holy authority of their priesthood. Now I say unto you that **my church may again arise, she must acknowledge before me that they all have turned away from me and built up themselves. Even in the pride of their own hearts have they done wickedness in my name, even all manner of abominations, even such that the people of the world never was guilty of.**

"Therefore I the Lord have dealt so marvelously with my servant William. Therefore I have poured out my spirit upon him from time to time, that the 'man of sin' might be revealed through him. To him I have given my Holy Spirit. I have inspired his heart to discern the true principles of my kingdom, that he may again build up my church as from the beginning. Therefore I have inspired him to build it up according to my law. Therefore he shall continue to do all things according to the pattern that I have shown to him. Now I say unto you my servant William, that you may not err, be meek and humble before me, and you shall always know by my spirit the correct principles of my kingdom. Therefore I the Lord command you to instruct all the honest in heart, and to break down all those false theories and principles of all those who claim to hold authority from my church.—And the work that thou shalt do in my kingdom shall be to preach and to gather out those who are honest in heart, whithersoever thou canst find them. And after this mission thou shalt return towards thy home and preach wherever my spirit commands thee. For I have a work for thee to do in the land where thy family resides. For there shalt thy work commence.

"Thou shalt build up my church even in the land of Kirtland, and set forth all things pertaining to my kingdom. **Thou shalt write concerning the downfall of those who once composed my church**, and set forth to the world by the light and power of my spirit, why I the Lord did not prosper them. For verily, verily thus saith the Lord unto you, thine heart have I prepared to do this work. It must needs be, in as much as they have all wandered and been led astray in many instances, that they must now be proven and tried, so that they may learn to keep my law, and do my will, saith the Lord your God. And if they prove themselves holy before me, then they shall have my word and my law from Zion. Therefore have I the Lord said that 'the meek shall inherit the earth,' even so, amen."

"One thing in the foregoing revelation came in direct contact with one of my previous opinions. I had supposed that Kirtland would become the residence of David, the Lord's Prophet. But while I was marveling in my mind how the work could go on and he remain in Missouri, and also freely speaking to John Whitmer some of my thoughts and feeling on the subject, brother David came and seated himself near me again, and said, brother William, **the Lord has something more for us**, and you may write again. And the word of the Lord came as follows:

"Behold I the Lord, say unto you my friends, in as much as you have covenanted to be my friends, and to keep all my commandments, I will reveal unto you this mystery, which you have sought for; that in as much as it was expedient in me to preserve my church or a remnant thereof, agreeable to the covenants which I have made with all the holy saints from the beginning of the world.—Therefore as I had built up my kingdom according to my holy order, and placed you upon this land, and consecrated you to the holy order of my priesthood, therefore my servant David if thou should'st leave this land, and those of thy brethren who have remained with thee, then you shall forfeit your right and make the word of God of none effect. For I have said unto you in days past and gone, that but few should remain to receive their inheritances. Therefore a commandment I give unto you my servant David, and also my servants John, and Hiram, and Jacob, that you must remain until I command you, and then you shall only be permitted to visit the faithful in my kingdom. For now ye do hold the right of this, the consecrated land of Zion, that in the fulness of time your brethren may claim by right of the covenant which ye have kept, inheritances in the land of Zion. Now I say unto you all, that from time to time ye shall see and know by my Spirit all things pertaining to these words which I have now given you. Now I say no more unto you concerning this matter; even so, amen."

With the above I was perfectly satisfied. Cause and effect were both set forth, and we felt to acquiesce.—But then I saw what a great responsibility would rest on me, especially when I should return to Kirtland. I then saw and in some measure realized, that we should see each other but seldom. Near a thousand miles would separate us and our fields of labor, — for a season at least. And I said in my heart, O Lord, if thou hast a word of intelligence more for me, reveal it, O reveal it now to me! I expressed my anxiety to my brethren present, and the enquiry being made, the Lord through his servant David, made known, while I wrote the following:

"Verily, verily thus saith the Lord your God, unto you my servant William, as I have shown unto you at many a time by the power of my spirit, that I have called you to my work. Therefore I admonish you to be meek and lowly in heart, that you may have my spirit always to be with you. For it must needs be that you must have my spirit, even the spirit of discernment. For thou shalt discern between the righteous and the wicked, for there will be many spirits which shall manifest themselves in the church of Christ. And it must needs be that my servants who teach my people must discern all these things. Therefore I have given you the pattern, and the power, and the wisdom, and the understanding, to build up my church in Kirtland, to be a standard and a light to the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that the **Church of Christ** is established here on earth. And I the Lord will that you should teach my servants at Kirtland, and else-where, to adhere to the order of my church as it is written in the holy scriptures; that all who have not obeyed the gospel in my church may be taught the principles of my church in the light of truth and righteousness, in all holiness and meekness before me, saith your God. For it is wisdom in me saith the Lord, that my people who name my name should observe harmony and good order, that the truth of God may prevail among the children of men."

But here **David said a vision opened before him**, and the spirit which was upon him bid him stop and talk to me concerning it. He said that in the bright light **before him he saw a small chest or box of very curious and fine workmanship**, which seemed to be locked, but he was told that it contained precious things, and that if I remained faithful to God, I should obtain the chest and its contents. I marveled at this relation, from the fact that on the 29th day of April, 1844, while in vision, I saw the same or a similar promise from the Spirit which talked with me. I was told that it contained "the treasures of wisdom, and knowledge from God."

At this point we counselled particularly relative to the authority by which the church was reorganized in Kirtland, and the reasons why the Lord required us to be re-baptized, confirmed, ordained. They said the principles and reasons which had actuated us were correct, and that they were ready. They felt it, they said, to be their duty to do as we had done. But it was late in the afternoon, and was raining, therefore we deemed it wisdom to wait until morning. Here objecters could not reasonably find fault and say that these men were over-persuaded, or that they acted in haste in this important matter.—But morning came, and a beautiful bright day it was too. We repaired to the water about a mile distant, and there on the bank of a beautiful stream, we dedicated ourselves to God in the united solemn prayer of faith. I then led those four men into the water and ministered to them in the name of the Lord Jesus. But as we returned again to our council room, brother David and I turned aside, and called upon the Lord, **and received direct instruction** how we should further proceed. And we all partook of bread and wine in remembrance of the Lord Jesus. I then confirmed those who were now born into the church of Christ, anew.—And then (as directed) I ordained H. Page to the office of High Priest, in the holy priesthood which is after the order of the Son of God. And we two ordained Jacob Whitmer to the same office. Then we all laid hands on John Whitmer and re-ordained him to the priesthood, and to be counsellor to David in the first presidency of the church. And then with the most solemn feelings which I ever experienced, we stepped forward and all laid hands upon David and re-ordained him to all the gifts and callings to which he had been appointed through Joseph Smith, in the general assembly of the inhabitants of Zion, in July 1834. The above being accomplished, David said to me we will now inquire of God, and finish the revelation to you, commenced on yesterday; and we received the following, viz:

"Now again I the Lord say unto you my servant William, that you must be contented with what you have received concerning Zion. Thou shalt again return to the land of Kirtland, and there thou shalt teach and expound, and write all things concerning my kingdom. For to thee have I given power, and in as much as you ask wisdom concerning those matters relative to my church, thou shalt in no wise stumble. For I the

> Lord willeth that my people should know the great preparation that must be brought about in establishing this last kingdom. Therefore I command thee to do all things in wisdom; and set forth no points concerning the redemption of Zion, for that matter remaineth with me, and I shall see to it as seemeth me good, that I may have all the glory thereof. Therefore it must needs be that you instruct all my servants concerning these matters, and this for my cause's sake.—And thou shalt teach them to instruct all men that they are only called to preach the gospel, and build up the church of Christ here on earth, according to that which is written.—Now I say unto you, my servant William, to thee have I given wisdom and light, therefore teach them in spirit and in truth, and thou shalt be blessed in thy calling. And now you know your calling, therefore see to it, and I will bless you forever; Amen." At this point we closed our conference. W. E. McLELLIN, Secretary.
> (*The Ensign of Liberty*, August, 1849, pages 101-104)

William E. McLellin made this statement concerning David Whitmer's revelations:

> I, as scribe, have written revelations from the mouth of **both the revelators, Joseph Smith and David Whitmer**. . . . therefore I speak as one having experience. . . . I have known both those men mentioned above, to seat themselves, & without premeditation, to thus deliver off in broken sentences, some of the most sublime pieces of composition which I ever perused in any book. But here I might be asked, do you endorse the principles and conduct of Joseph Smith? And I answer no. His professional career for good wound up with his appointment of David, his successor, in the year 1834. Between this period and the time when the church was first organized in 1830, I believe Joseph endeavored to live a holy life, but after that important event he never even professed to give but a few revelations, and in them I have **no confidence.** In those published in this paper given through **David, I have all confidence.** They were dictated, I believe, by the power of the Holy Spirit.
> (*The Ensign of Liberty*, August, 1849, pages 98-99)

The Book of Mormon witnesses did not support McLellin for long, however. The following appeared in the *Gospel Herald*—a Strangite publication—under the date of May 11, 1848:

> The following is a postscript to a letter just received from Kirtland. Probably we shall publish the letter hereafter.
>
> Since writing the foregoing McLellin's church have received a letter from David Whitmer, the contents of which, though it is as far as possible kept from the public, yet enough has been learned to enable us to say unequivocally that Mc. and David are at logerheads, and that Wm. has either apostatized from David or David has from Wm. It is on the existence of the office of high priests in the church. David (it appears) denies any powers of priesthood in Joseph save the power of translating the Book of Mormon, consequently his own ordination as the successor of the prophet Joseph. . . . all the members of McLellin's church of Christ, must give up David . . . Mc will not again write that David is the Lord's Seer, since he does not see with the doctor.
> AUSTIN COWLES.
> (*Gospel Herald*, May 11, 1848, page 32)

From this it would appear that David Whitmer was moving away from McLellin and from the teachings of Joseph Smith. Hiram Page, one of the eight witnesses to the Book of Mormon, wrote a letter on June 24, 1849, in which he stated that McLellin's movement was "not in accordance with the order of the Gospel Church." He admitted that they—i.e., the witnesses—had errored in following McLellin. He claimed that the offices of "Seer" and "High Priest" which Joseph Smith had established were not supposed to be in the church. He also talked of the "abominations practiced by the Mormons." This letter was printed in *The Olive Branch* in August, 1849:

> RICHMOND, RAY CO., MO., June 24, 1849.
>
> To all the saints scattered abroad as we are and ought to be, who by the grace of God have been made partakers of the divine nature, . . . who are built up and stand upon the true order of the church of Christ. . . .
>
> We rejoice that there are yet so many that run not after strange flesh, as some have done who know that it is not in accordance with the doctrine of Christ, and they do it too by the pretended authority of a priesthood, which causes the hearts of the innocent to bleed, . . .
>
> It is well known by many, that since we were driven from far west by the Mormons . . . we have been laying dormant, while fifty odd persons have been appointed to rule and govern the church by Joseph Smith, and there were divisions and sub-divisions, until the true order of the church of Christ was entirely neglected. In 1847 brother William [E. McLellin] commenced vindicating our characters as honest men; in that he done well. In September, 1848, he made us a visit and professed to have been moved upon by the same spirit of God that led him to do us justice by vindicating our characters, moved upon him to come here and have us organize ourselves in a church capacity; . . . But we had not as yet come to an understanding, but consented to the organization after three days successive intreaties. Now we acknowledge that the organization was not in accordance with the order of the Gospel Church. . . . the understanding which we have received is as follows:
>
> 1. That the office of High Priest does not belong to the church of Christ under the gospel dispensation, . . .
>
> 2. The office of a Seer is not, nor never has been the means by which the Lord intended his church should be governed, after he had ministered to them in the flesh . . .
>
> 3. That the gathering dispensation has not come, . . .
>
> 4. That the manner of the teaching to the world should be to teach the plain, simple doctrine of the gospel of salvation, . . .
>
> 5. That a reorganization of the church of christ in this generation, contrary to that of April 6, 1830, is inconsistant . . .

> When a man receives authority of God by ordination, his authority remains with him until death . . . unless he denies the faith or defiles the priesthood.
>
> 6. That any Elder of the church who has not lost his authority upon the principles of injustice . . . has a perfect right to organize and build up according to . . . the order of the church as established on the 6th of April, 1830, and he can ordain others, and it is the privilege of each branch to appoint their own presiding officers, . . .
>
> Any High Priest who has been legally ordained an Elder by legal authority, and has not denied the faith or defiled the holy priesthood, can act in his office as an Elder after confessing before the Lord the abominations of the church.
>
> In consequence of the abominations practiced by the Mormons, . . . it is evident that the way is not opened for us to organize as we would; but when the way is opened, we shall organize according to the Apostlic order.
>
> . . . . . HIRAM PAGE
>
> TO ALFRED BONNY
>
> ISAAC N. ALDRICH,
>
> M. C. ISHEM.
>
> P. S. The above is in answer to a letter directed to David Whitmer, by the above named gentlemen, of Kirtland, Ohio. (*The Olive Branch*, Springfield, Ill., August, 1849, pages 27-29)

Later in his life, David Whitmer was somewhat reluctant to talk about his association with McLellin:

> . . . Brother Joseph ordained me his successor—. . .
>
> This is why many of the brethren came to me after Brother Joseph was killed, and importuned me to come out and lead the church. I refused to do so. Christ is the only leader and head of his church. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, Richmond, Mo., 1887, page 55)

Although William E. McLellin continued to believe in the Book of Mormon, he apparently lost all faith in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. In 1878 he was visited by Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith. Later they wrote the following concerning their visit with McLellin:

> At Independence we met with Wm. E. McLellin, one of the first Council of the Twelve. . . . he denounced, in toto, all the revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants*, and the idea of the restoration of the priesthood of Melchisedek or of Aaron to man, but believes in the Apostleship, which he thinks comprises everything, although he had no faith in the ordination of the first Twelve. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. XL, no. 49, December 9, 1878, page 770)

Strange as it may seem, the Mormon Church still publishes McLellin's testimony as to the truth of the *Doctrine and Covenants* in the "Explanatory Introduction" to that book. (See *The Case Against Mormonism*, Vol. 1, page 189.)

Cowdery Wavers

Stanley R. Gunn gives this information concerning Oliver Cowdery:

> After eleven year's absence from old friends and associates—eleven hard years of **financial worry and frequent spells of ill health**, Oliver was at last making very definite plans for rejoining the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.
>
> Previous to this time, the members of the Council of Twelve had written him at Elkhorn pleading with him to be rebaptized and rejoin them; and from his correspondence, we learn that Phineas H. Young had called upon Oliver, bringing with him the personal regards of the Council. The two men evidently discussed the return at great length. (*Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder and Scribe*, page 203)

The following statement concerning Oliver Cowdery appeared on October 5, 1848, in the Strangite paper, *Gospel Herald*, published at Voree, Wisconsin:

> We are in the weekly receipt of the *Walworth Democrat*, published by Cooley and (Oliver) Cowdery. . . . By the way, what has become of all Dr. McLellin's promises that brother Cowdery was about to join him in building up a new Mormon church? . . .
>
> By the way, not long since Oliver was in nomination for Representative in the State Assembly, and that blackguard, the "Elkhorn Star," opposed him on the ground of his being a witness of the Book of Mormon. . . .
>
> On the whole, Oliver seems to be in good demand and first rate standing. Even Phineas Young is here, telling that brother Cowdery is going with him to Council Bluffs. We don't doubt he does so with just as much truth as McLellin told that he was going with him. A short time ago all were against him; now all crying him up, and bragging that he will go with them. Don't think they will lift him high enough to make him dizzy. If they should, they would let him fall very hard. (*Gospel Herald*, October 5, 1848, page 144)

The *Gospel Herald* for June 7, 1849, states that Phineas Young was successful in persuading Oliver Cowdery to join with the Mormon Church at Council Bluffs, Iowa. Some of the Mormons, however, felt that Oliver Cowdery's transgressions were so serious that he should not be allowed to return to the church. The following statement was published in the *Improvement Era*:

> Soon after this, the matter of his return to the Church was taken up by the High Council, and was thoroughly discussed by its members. Some thought that he [Oliver Cowdery] could not possibly be sufficiently repentant to entitle him to return; but Orson Hyde stood up for him—declared that the past with all its offenses should be forgotten and forgiven, and that he should be restored

> to full fellowship. This view prevailed, and he was so received, by re-baptism. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. XIV, no. 5, March, 1911, page 392)

According to the "general report of the presiding authorities at Kanesville," Oliver Cowdery was questioned concerning the letter which appeared in McLellin's publication, *Ensign of Liberty*:

> He made some explanations in relation to the letter which appeared in the *Ensign of Liberty*. We invited him to attend the High Priests Quorum on the first Sunday in November, (November 5th), the High Council and Bishop Knight being present. Brother Cowdery made some statements, wishing to be received back into the Church. Councilor William Snow, president of the High Priests quorum wished some explanations in relation to certain items which appear in a letter over the signature of Oliver Cowdery, in relation to himself and David Whitmer; and named the following: "True it is our right gives us the head." * * "We have the authority and do hold the keys." He (Oliver) stated that this was a private letter to his brother-in-law David Whitmer, and never was intended for the public eye, and was printed without his consent and knowledge; and that since that time has **changed his views** on the subject. President Snow enquired what had produced that change, as he presumed the letter contained his sentiments at the time it was written, as it was to a confidential friend. Brother Oliver replied: "When I wrote that letter I did not know of the revelation which says, that the keys and power conferred upon me, were taken from me and placed upon the head of Hyrum Smith, and it was that revelation which changed my views on this subject. I have not come to seek place, nor to interfere with the business and calling of those men who have borne the burthen, since the death of Joseph. I throw myself at your feet, and wish to be one of your number, and be a mere member of the Church, and my mere asking to be baptized is an end to all pretensions to authority." He was received by the unanimous vote of the quorum, and all present; and was subsequently baptized and confirmed by President Orson Hyde. (Report quoted in the *Improvement Era*, Vol. XIV, no. 5, March, 1911, pages 393-394)

Oliver Cowdery evidently hoped to go west with the Mormons and hunt for gold in California. In a letter to Phineas Young he stated:

> I am poor, very poor, and I did hope to have health and means sufficient last spring to go West and get some gold, that I might so situate my family, that I could be engaged in the cause of God; but I did not succeed. (Letter by Oliver Cowdery, quoted in *Oliver Cowdery—Second Elder and Scribe*, by Stanley R. Gunn, page 261)

Even though Oliver Cowdery was re-baptized into the Mormon Church, there is some evidence that the reconciliation was not complete. The Strangites claimed that the Mormon leaders "would not trust power" in Cowdery's hands, and that his reconciliation with the Mormon Church may have lasted only a few weeks:

> You will observe also that they make no mention of Oliver Cowdery in filling up their organization. The truth is, he is not the sort of man for them. It was a singular mania by which he was led off after them, and seems to have **lasted him but a few weeks.** I understand he is now in Crab Orchard, Mo., and do not consider it by any means certain that he has anything whatever to do with them. In their organization of a State government he would have been better than they all, but they would **not trust power in his hands a single moment.** (*Gospel Herald*, November 1, 1849)

The *Saints' Advocate*, published by the Reorganized Church, gave this information concerning Oliver Cowdery's return to the Mormon Church:

> The writer is in possession of facts which show Elder Cowdery to have been, up to the hour of his death, sternly and uncompromisingly opposed to the peculiar doctrines, policy, and practices endorsed and advocated by the Utah leaders.
>
> David Whitmer, Sen., of Richmond, Mo., said to the writer and a company of near twenty, at his own house, April 4th, 1883, when questioned as to why Elder Cowdery was baptized by some of the Utah ministers in 1847 at Council Bluffs, Iowa, that he did so in order to reach his relatives and others among the Brighamites, and redeem them from the errors and evils of polygamy, etc., etc.
>
> He said Elder Cowdery "did not endorse their peculiar doctrines—did not believe in polygamy nor anything like it—but he died like a man of God." (This we take from notes made at the interview. Ed)
>
> In a letter said to have been written by Elder Cowdery to Daniel Jackson, and Phebe, his (Cowdery's) sister, from Tiffin, Ohio, July 24th, 1846, he said alluding to polygamy:
>
> "I can hardly think it possible that you have written us the truth; that, though there may be individuals who are guilty of the iniquities spoken of yet no such practice can be preached or adhered to as a public doctrine. Such may do for the followers of Mahomet; it may have been done some thousands of years ago; but no people professing to be governed by the pure and holy principles of the Lord Jesus can hold up their heads before the world at this distance of time, and be guilty of such abomination. It will blast, like a mildew, their fairest prospects, and lay the ax at the root of their future happiness" — *Saints' Advocate*, Vol. 1, pages 112, 113.
>
> In this Elder Cowdery uses almost the exact language against polygamy found in the Book of Mormon, page 116, which he penned nearly twenty years previous. This makes it highly improbable that he would indorse and heartly unite with a polygamic church.
>
> Besides this, a sister of O. Cowdery, **now living, says that O. Cowdery, when at Council Bluffs**, previous to his death, expressed, **in her presence his regret** and sorrow over the **base doctrines** and corrupt practices of the **Brighamite leaders**. (*Saints' Advocate*, June, 1884, pages 453-455)

It is very possible that Oliver Cowdery did not die in full fellowship with the church, for they paid little tribute to him at the time of his death. Juanita Brooks states:

> Another letter in the same issue of the *Millennial Star*, page 43, also contains word of the confession of Oliver Cowdery. Signed by Wilford Woodruff . . . it says: "Dear Brother Pratt: I received a letter from Elder Hyde, saying that Oliver Cowdery had come to the Bluffs . . . He was assisting Elder Hyde to put the press in operation for printing, expecting to send forth the *Frontier Guardian* soon. . . . I was truly glad to hear he had returned to the fold."
>
> Yet on December 11, 1848, Orson Hyde himself wrote directly to Orson Pratt in England and made no mention either of the confession or the baptism. The *Frontier Guardian* (Kanesville, Iowa) made its appearance on February 7, but made no mention of the Cowdery visit, confession, or baptism. Nor did it record his death some fifteen months later though it normally printed death notices.
>
> On June 15, 1850, the *Deseret News* (Salt Lake City), on a back page and without any striking headline did record the death: "We are informed that Oliver Cowdery, Esq., died at Richmond, Ray County, Missouri on the 3rd day of March last of consumption." (*On the Mormon Frontier, The Diary of Hosea Stout*, Vol. 2, page 337, footnote 8)

R. N. Baskin quotes the Mormon Apostle John Henry Smith as giving the following testimony in court:

> Witness: Your Honor, I would like to make one statement right here, and that is this: That Oliver Cowdery, the immediate friend and associate of Joseph Smith, apostatized from the Mormon Church. He was never killed. He knew all that Joseph Smith knew. David Whitmore and Martin Harris, who were his immediate associates, apostatized from the church. They were never hurt, in any degree. **Every one of them died outside of the Church.** (*Reminiscences of Early Utah*, 1914, page 97)

Some writers have claimed that Oliver Cowdery never did return to the Mormon Church. The Apostle John Henry Smith's statement has been used as evidence against his (Cowdery's) return. We feel, however, that a more reasonable explanation is that he did return, but did not die in full fellowship. Wilford Woodruff, the fourth president of the Mormon Church, claimed that Oliver Cowdery never recovered in its fulness the "power and testimony" he had before he apostatized:

> ". . . the moment he [Oliver Cowdery] left the kingdom of God, that moment his power fell like lightning from heaven. He was shorn of his strength, like Samson in the lap of Delilah. He lost the power and testimony which he had enjoyed, and he **never recovered it again in its fulness** while in the flesh, although he died in the church. It does not pay a man to sin or to do wrong." (*Deseret News*, weekly, Vol. xxxvi page 391)." (Quoted in *A Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, Vol. 1, page 217, footnote)

Oliver Cowdery died at David Whitmer's home on March 3, 1850, and Whitmer claimed that he died believing that Joseph Smith was a fallen prophet and that his revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants* must be rejected:

> I did not say that Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer had not endorsed the *Doctrine and Covenants* in 1836. They did endorse it in 1836; I stated that they "came out of their errors (discarded the *Doctrine and Covenants*), repented of them, and died believing as I do to-day," and I have the proof to verify my statement. If any one chooses to doubt my word, let them come to my home in Richmond and be satisfied. In the winter of 1848, after Oliver Cowdery had been baptized at Council Bluffs, he came back to Richmond to live, . . . Now, in 1849 the Lord saw fit to manifest unto John Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery and myself nearly all the remaining errors **in doctrine** into which we had been led by the **heads of the old church.** We were shown that the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants* contained, **many doctrines of error**, and that it must be **laid aside**; . . . They were led out of their errors, and are upon record to this effect, rejecting the *Book of Doctrine and Covenants*. (*An Address to Believers in the Book of Mormon*, 1887, pages 1-2)

Oliver Cowdery must have trusted David Whitmer more than he did the Mormon leaders, for, according to Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery charged him to preserve the Book of Mormon manuscript. The *Chicago Tribune*, for December 17, 1885, carried this statement concerning the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon:

> The original manuscript from which the Book of Mormon was printed is still in Mr. Whitmer's possession and most of it is in the handwriting of his brother Christian and his brother-in-law, Oliver Cowdery. Mr. Whitmer also has an exhaustive history of the church, which was compiled by his brother, and an accurate copy of several plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated. These records he has preserved against all temptations and in the face of death. Several years ago a delegation of Mormons came to Richmond from Salt Lake and made every overture to Mr. Whitmer in a vain attempt to gain possession of the records, but he stood aloof and declined every offer. A prominent businessman of the place, at that time engaged in banking, informed your correspondent that he knows of his own knowledge that the Mormon Church would have willingly paid Mr. Whitmer $100,000 for the documents, and that the delegation returned home thoroughly convinced that Mr. Whitmer was proof against all financial temptation so far as concerned his records. (*Chicago Tribune*, Thursday, December 17, 1885, page 3)

The Mormons have denied that Whitmer was offered $100,000 dollars for the manuscript, but it is a well known fact that the Mormons were anxious to

obtain the manuscript. The Mormon Apostles Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith related that David Whitmer told them the following in 1878:

> Elder O. P. Have you in your possession the original Mss. of the Book of Mormon?
>
> D. W. I have; they are in O. Cowdery's hand writing. He placed them in my care at his death, and charged me to preserve them as long as I lived; they are safe and well preserved.
>
> J. F. S. What will be done with them at your death?
>
> D. W. I will leave them to my nephew, David Whitmer, son of my brother Jacob, and my name-sake.
>
> O. P. **Would you not part with them to a purchaser?**
>
> D. W. **No.** Oliver charged me to keep them, and Joseph said my father's house should keep the records. I consider these things sacred, and would not part with nor barter them for money.
>
> J. F. S. We would not offer you money in the light of bartering for the Mss., but we would like to see them preserved in some manner where they would be safe from casualties and from the caprices of men, in some institution that will not die as man does. (Interview quoted in *Millennial Star*, Vol. XL, no. 49, December 9, 1878, page 773)

If Oliver Cowdery had been in full fellowship with the Mormon Church he probably would have given the manuscript to them instead of trusting David Whitmer with it. According to Mormon writers Phineas Young (a Mormon) was present at Whitmer's house when Oliver Cowdery died; therefore, Oliver Cowdery could have given the manuscript to him.

Anti-Mormon writers claim that Oliver Cowdery's "funeral was conducted by John Sexsmith, a Methodist minister, at the request of Cowdery." (See *The Book of Mormon?* by James D. Bales, Rosemead, Calif., 1958, page 72.) Be this as it may, there is evidence that Oliver Cowdery was not in full fellowship in the Mormon Church at the time of his death.

Harris Confused

The Mormon writer Ivan J. Barrett tells that after Martin Harris left the church he "became very embittered for some years." In 1859 Joel Tiffany published his interview with Martin Harris and claimed he stated the Mormons were under the influence of the devil:

> It is but simple justice to Mr. Harris, that we should state that he is still an earnest and sincere advocate of the spiritual and divine authority of the Book of Mormon. He does not sympathize with Brigham Young and the Salt Lake Church. He considers them apostates from the true faith; and as being under the influence of the devil.
>
> Mr. Harris says, that pretended church of "Latter Day Saints," are in reality "latter day **devils**" and that himself and a very few others are the only genuine Mormons left. He is living in the expectation that the time is at hand when his faith will be in the ascendant, and all other modes of faith will be overthrown. (*Tiffany's Monthly*, New York, May, 1859, as quoted in *A New Witness For Christ in America*, Vol. 2, page 373, 1959 ed.)

In an unpublished manuscript, LaMar Petersen gives us the following information concerning Martin Harris:

> Christopher G. Crary, a resident of Kirtland for whom Harris once worked, penned this sketch of his employee during the period of his osctracism from the Church:
>
> "Martin Harris remained in Kirtland twenty-five or thirty years after the Mormons left. His mind, always unbalanced on the subject of Mormonism, had become so demented that he thought himself a bigger man than Smith, or even Christ, and believed that most of the prophecies in the Old Testament referred directly to him. One day, when working for me, he handed me a leaflet that he got printed, taken from some of the prophets, telling of a wonderful person that should appear and draw all men after him. I looked it over and returned it to him. He said, 'Who do you think it refers to?' I said, 'Why, of course, it refers to you.' He looked very much pleased, and said, 'I see you understand the scriptures.' In 1867 or 1868, while acting as township trustee, complaint was made to me that Martin Harris was destitute of a home, poorly clothed, feeble, burdensome to friends, and that he ought to be taken to the poor-house. I went down to the flats to investigate, and found him at a house near the Temple, with a family lately moved in, strangers to me. He seemed to dread the poor-house very much. The lady of the house said she would take care of him while their means lasted, and I was quite willing to postpone the unpleasant task of taking him to the poor-house. Everybody felt sympathy for him. He was willing to work and make himself useful as far as his age and debility would admit of. Soon after that he was sent for and taken to Salt Lake . . ." [*Pioneer and Personal Reminiscences*, pages 44-45]

The Mormon writer Ivan J. Barrett gives this interesting information concerning Martin Harris and his return to the church:

> Martin did experience misery. After his separation from his first wife he married a daughter of John Young. She lived with him in Kirtland until the Church moved to Salt Lake Valley, then, not being able to induce Martin to leave Ohio she left him and took the long journey to the valley of the mountains. With her went their children. On her way west she gave birth to a baby which added to trials of her journey. His wife's departure left a lonely and sorrowful Martin.
>
> While living at Kirtland he was poor and ill-kept. He lamented his condition to William Homer after he was asked if once he was very prominent in the Church and had given of his means to help the work progress:

> "That is very true," replied Martin, "Things were all right then. I was honored while the people were here, but now I am old and poor it is different." Edward Stevenson seeing Martin old and poor in Ohio "felt a degree of compassion for him," and made possible his being brought to Utah. President Brigham Young subscribed twenty-five dollars for the purpose. Martin was elated with the prospective journey to the land of the Saints.
>
> While Martin was visiting his friends and bidding them farewell, he walked across a large pasture. Part way across he became bewildered, dizzy, and faint. In his effort to get out he staggered through the blackberry vines which grew in abundance. His clothes were torn, his flesh lacerated; bloody and faint he lay down under a tree to die. As his strength revived, his spirit also lifted and he called upon the Lord for deliverance. Finally at midnight he found his friend, his body in a fearful condition, but he was cared for and soon regained his strength. After arriving in Salt Lake City he related the incident as a snare of the adversary to hinder him from joining the Saints. (*The Life of Edward Stevenson*, page 1530) (*Supplement to the Remarkable Story of How We Got the Revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants*, by Ivan J. Barrett, BYU Leadership Week, page 35)

A reporter who interviewed David Whitmer gave this information concerning Martin Harris' return to the church:

> Harris became estranged from the church at about the same time [as Cowdery] and from the same causes also, but long after he had become **feeble in both body and mind** he was persuaded by persistent importuning to join his destinies with the Utah Mormons, and thither he went more than ten years ago, only to lay down his bones in the shadow of the great tabernacle. Mr. Whitmer entertains no doubt whatever that this singular action upon the part of Harris **was wholly chargeable to the enfeebled condition of his mind**, which had begun to manifest certain positive symptoms of imbecility even before he entertained the overture from the Rocky Mountain saints. (*Des Moines Daily News*, October 16, 1886)

LaMar Petersen gives this information concerning Martin Harris' return to the church:

> Martin at first protested rebaptism but when it was explained to him that all emigrating Saints repeated the ritual upon arriving in Zion he consented. His sponsor, Edward Stevenson of the Council of Seventy who had instigated proceedings for bringing the aged Witness to Utah, wrote:
>
> "That Martin Harris was very zealous, somewhat enthusiastic, and what some would term egotistical, is no doubt the case; but the Lord has shown this generation that He can carry on His work independently of all men, only as they live closely and humbly before Him. . . . Having been absent so long from the body of the Church and considering his great age, much charity was necessary to be exercised in his behalf." [*Millennial Star*, June 21, 1886, page 389] (Unpublished manuscript, by LaMar Petersen)

Even though Martin Harris returned to the church there is some evidence that he was not in full fellowship. A. Metcalf interviewed him "in the winter of 1875-6." In his report of the interview Mr. Metcalf related the following:

> Harris said that Joe Smith (he never called him Joseph in my presence) commenced having false revelations soon after, and, in fact, before the church was organized. In or about the year 1833, the servant girl of Joe Smith stated that the prophet had made improper proposals to her, which created quite a talk amongst the people. Joe Smith went to Martin Harris to counsel with him concerning the girl's talk. Harris, supposing that Joe was innocent told him to take no notice of the girl, that she was full of the devil, and wanted to destroy the prophet of God; but Joe Smith acknowledged that there was more truth than poetry in what the girl said. Harris then said he would have nothing to do in the matter, Smith could get out of the trouble the best way he knew how. Harris further stated that the Kirtland Bank was a swindle, and he would have nothing to do with it. About that time Harris began to lose confidence in Joe Smith, as a man of truth, honor and principle, yet he believed him to be a prophet of God. I asked him how he could reconcile such conduct with what should be the conduct of a prophet of God. He then showed me what the prophet Isaiah had said: "That God would choose the base things of this life to bring to note things that are," and claimed that that prophecy had been fulfilled in Joe Smith. Harris had good evidence that Joe Smith was practicing polygamy as early as 1838, five years before the revelation on polygamy was received by the prophet. **He also claimed that polygamy, baptism for the dead, and such endowments as were given in Nauvoo and Salt Lake City, were no part of Mormonism.** I asked him why he had taken his endowments when he arrived in Salt Lake City. He answered that "his only motive was to see what was going on in there." This was said in the presence of James Bowman, of Soda Springs, Idaho, and myself.
>
> Martin Harris asked me to look on his face and see how it was wrinkled with old age. I never knew his correct age, but I understood him to be about ninety years old at that time. He then read that part of the prophet Isaiah, which speaks of some man "whose visage was so marred more than any other man's, so shall he sprinkle many nations." Harris said, "I am him," and that he would yet lead the faithful of all the Latter Day Saints back to Zion, in Jackson County, Missouri, and "I know it will come to pass, as well as I know that Mormonism is true." About two years later Harris died. Harris never believed that the Brighamite branch of the Mormon church, nor the Josephite church, was right, because in his opinion, God had rejected them; but he did believe that Mormonism was the pure gospel of Christ when it was first revealed, and I believe he died in that faith. (*Ten Years Before the Mast*, by A. Metcalf, pages 70, 73, as quoted in *A New Witness for Christ in America*, Vol. 2, pages 348-349, 1959 ed.)

Whitmer's Accusations

David Whitmer never did return to the Mormon Church. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts stated:

> And while David Whitmer remained separated from the communion of the church to the day of his death, he still adhered to the truth of his testimony, as is abundantly witnessed by his *Address to All Believers in Christ*, quoted above, and published only about one year before his death. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, Vol. 1, page 145)

Although David Whitmer maintained that the Book of Mormon was true, in his pamphlet, *An Address to All Believers in Christ*, he made it clear that he believed Joseph Smith was a fallen prophet:

> Just before April 6, 1830, some of the brethren began to think that the church should have a leader, just like the children of Israel wanting a king. Brother Joseph finally inquired of the Lord about it. He must have had a desire himself to be their leader, which desire in any form is not of God. . . . Joseph received a revelation that he should be the leader; that he should be ordained by Oliver Cowdery as "Prophet Seer and Revelator" to the church, and that the church should receive his words as if from God's own mouth. **Satan surely rejoiced on that day**, for he then saw that in time he could overthrow them. . . . He gave the church a leader, but it proved their destruction and final landing of the majority of them in the Salt Lake valley in polygamy, believing that their leader had received a revelation from God to practice this abomination. . . . Brother Joseph would listen to the persuasions of men, and inquire of the Lord concerning different things, and the revelations would come just as they desired and thought in their hearts.
>
> . . . Brother Joseph belonged to the class of men who could fall into error and blindness. From the following you will see that Brother Joseph belonged to the weakest class—the class that were very liable to fall. . . . (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, pages 33-34, 36)

David Whitmer tells of false revelations given by Joseph Smith and concerning the changes that had to be made in the revelations. He goes on to give a great deal of evidence to show that the Mormon Church is in a state of apostacy.

David Whitmer was a respected resident of Richmond, Missouri. Twenty-two citizens of Richmond stated that he was a man of "highest integrity." He was a member of a small church that based its teachings on the Bible and Book of Mormon, but rejected the *Doctrine and Covenants* and many other Mormon teachings.

Reliable Witnesses?

Since a person who is investigating the Book of Mormon has only the testimony of eleven men to rely on, he should be certain that they were honorable men. If the Book of Mormon witnesses were honest, stable and not easily influenced by men, we would be impressed by their testimony. Unfortunately, however, we find that this is not the case. The evidence shows that they were gullible, credulous, and their word cannot always be relied upon.

Since the testimony of the three witnesses who claimed to see the angel is especially important, we want to summarize the information we have on their character.

Martin Harris

Martin Harris seems to have been very unstable in his religious life. G. W. Stoddard, a resident of Palmyra, made this statement in an affidavit dated November 28, 1833:

> I have been acquainted with Martin Harris, about thirty years. As a farmer, he was industrious and enterprising, so much so, that he had, (previous to his going into the Gold Bible speculation) accumulated, in real estate, some eight or ten thousand dollars. Although he possessed wealth, his moral and religious character was such, as not to entitle him to respect among his neighbors. . . . He was first an orthadox Quaker, then a Universalist, next a Restorationer, then a Baptist, next a Presbyterian, and then a Mormon. By his willingness to become all things unto all men, he has attained a high standing among his Mormon brethren. (*Mormonism Unvailed*, by E. D. Howe, 1834, pages 260-261)

Martin Harris' instability did not cease when he joined the Mormon Church. The Mormons admitted this in 1846:

> One day he [Martin Harris] would be one thing, and another day another thing. He soon became partially deranged or shattered, as many believed, flying from one thing to another, as if reason and common sense were thrown off their balance. In one of his fits of monomania, he went and joined the "Shakers" or followers of Anne Lee. He tarried with them a year or two, or perhaps longer, having had some flare ups while among them; but since Strang has made his entry into the apostate ranks, and hoisted his standard for the rebellious to flock too, Martin leaves the "Shakers," whom he knows to be right, and has known it for many years, as he said, and joins Strang in gathering out the tares of the field. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 8, November 15, 1846, page 124)

The Mormon writer E. Cecil McGavin admitted that Martin Harris was easily influenced by man:

> Martin Harris was an unaggressive, vacillating, easily influenced person who was no more pugnacious than a rabbit. . . . His conviction of one day might vanish and be replaced by doubt and fear before the setting of the sun. He was changeable, fickle, and puerile in his judgment and conduct. (*The Historical Background for the Doctrine and Covenants*, page 23, as quoted in an unpublished manuscript by LaMar Petersen)

The Mormon writer Ivan J. Barrett made this statement concerning Martin Harris:

> Martin was a talker and was an enthusiastic advocate of the new light soon to burst upon the inhabitants of the earth. At times he let his zeal go beyond reason. Once, according to his neighbors, he prophesied that Christ would come within fifteen years and all who did not accept the Book of Mormon "would absolutely be destroyed and damned." (*Painesville Telegraph*, March 15, 1831.) (*Supplement to the Remarkable Story of How We Got the Revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants*, by Ivan J. Barrett, BYU Ex. Publications, page 23)

On pages 29-30 of the same booklet, Mr. Barrett stated:

> The Lord knew of Martin's weakness to abuse those he felt bitterness towards and warned him, . . . At least three times he is counseled to be humble and the last words of the Lord to him are: "Or canst thou be humble and meek, and conduct thyself wisely before me?" (verse 41) This was a hard task for Martin, who was naturally proud and whose tendency was to boast. It was extremely difficult for him to cultivate true humility. While traveling to Missouri in Zion's Camp he boasted to his brethren that he could handle snakes with perfect safety. One day while fooling with a black snake with his bare feet, he was bitten. . . .
>
> The Lord knowing the propensities of his son, Martin, warned him against telling all he knew or pretended to know. . . . When Martin went into Ohio he stopped at the Painesville Hotel and began telling the crowd in the bar room "all about the gold plates, Angels, Spirits" and the work of the Prophet Joseph. He boasted of having seen the golden plates and having handled them. According to the report of his speech he was "very flippant, talking loud and fast. Every idea that he advanced, he knew to be absolutely true, by the Spirit and power of God." (*Painesville Telegraph*, March 15, 1831.) He was far along in life before he learned to be discreet in what he said, but the Lord had warned him early.

If G. W. Stoddard is correct, Martin Harris was a Quaker, a Universalist, a Restorationer, a Baptist and a Presbyterian before he became a Mormon. He stayed with the Mormons for a few years. Then, according to Mormon writers, he joined the Parrish group. Later he became a Shaker, next a Strangite, then a member of the McLellin group. Finally, he returned to the Mormon Church. But, according to A. Metcalf, he "never believed that the Brighamite branch of the Mormon church, nor the Josephite church, was right, because in his opinion, God had rejected them," and he took his endowments in Salt Lake City, only to find out "what was going on in there."

According to a revelation given by Joseph Smith, Martin Harris was "a wicked man." When he was on his mission for "the apostate James J. Strang," the Mormons in England said that he was "filled with the rage and madness of a demon." They also said that it was "not the first time the Lord chose a wicked man as a witness," and that "evil men, like Harris, out of the evil treasures of their hearts bring forth evil things." Speaking of Martin Harris and one or two who came with him, the Mormons stated that "a lying deceptive spirit attends them," and that "they are of their father, the devil." They also made this statement concerning Harris: "The very countenance of Harris will show to every spiritual-minded person who sees him, that the wrath of God is upon him" (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 8, pages 124-128). Dr. Storm Rosa made this statement concerning Martin Harris:

> "As to Martin Harris, of late I have heard but little of him. My acquaintance with him induces me to believe him a monomaniac; he is a man of great loquacity and very unmeaning, ready at all times to dispute the ground of his doctrines with any one." (Letter quoted in *Early Days of Mormonism*, by J. H. Kennedy, New York, 1888, page 172)

The Mormons themselves admitted that he had "fits of monomania." The statements made by the wife of Martin Harris are not actually much worse than those made by the Mormons. Mrs. Harris stated that Martin had "mad-fits." The Mormons stated that when he left the church he "was filled with the rage and madness of a demon." She stated that Martin was a liar. The Mormons admitted that when he came to England "a lying deceptive spirit" attended him. She stated that Mormonism had made him "more cross, turbulent and abusive to me." Joseph Smith himself later classified Martin Harris as one of those who were "too mean to mention."

Oliver Cowdery

Oliver Cowdery was apparently rather credulous. According to Joseph Smith, Cowdery was led astray by Hiram Page's "peep-stone." He was excommunicated from the Mormon Church and united with the "Methodist Protestant Church" at Tiffin, Ohio. In 1841 the Mormons published a poem which stated that the Book of Mormon was "denied" by Oliver. He accused Joseph Smith of adultery. The Mormons, on the other hand, claimed that Oliver "committed adultery." Joseph

Smith listed Oliver Cowdery among those who were "too mean to mention." The Mormons claimed that he joined "a gang of counterfeiters, thieves, liars, and blacklegs." Joseph Smith testified that when a warrant was issued against Cowdery for "being engaged in making a purchase of bogus money and dies," he "left the country." Joseph Smith also testified that Cowdery intended to get property "and that if he could not get it one way, he would get it another, God or no God, Devil or no Devil, property he must and would have." According to Leland Gentry, Joseph Smith claimed that Oliver Cowdery told him that he intended to deal dishonestly in the future. Hyrum Smith accused Oliver Cowdery of helping steal "a great many things" from him. David Whitmer claimed that Oliver Cowdery died believing that Joseph Smith was a fallen prophet.

David Whitmer

David Whitmer was also very credulous. He was influenced by Hiram Page's "peep-stone," and possibly by a woman with a "black stone," in Kirtland, Ohio. Joseph Smith identified David Whitmer with those who were "too mean to mention," and also called him a "dumb ass." The Mormons accused Whitmer of joining with a "gang of counterfeiters, thieves, liars, and blacklegs." David Whitmer evidently supported James J. Strang for awhile, then changed his mind and supported the McLellin group. Whitmer was to be the prophet and head of the McLellin church. He gave a revelation in which the Lord was supposed to have told him the Mormons "polluted my name, and have done continually wickedness in my sight." The revelation also stated that "in the pride of their own hearts have they done wickedness in my name, even all manner of abominations, even such that the people of the world never was guilty of." David Whitmer also claimed that "in the bright light before him he saw a small chest or box of very curious and fine workmanship."

David Whitmer never returned to the Mormon Church. Toward the end of his life he was a member of the "Church of Christ"—another small group which believed in the Book of Mormon. Just before his death, Whitmer published *An Address to All Believers in Christ* in which he stated:

> If you believe my testimony to the Book of Mormon; if you believe that God spake to us three witnesses by his own voice, then I tell you that in June, 1838, **God spake to me again by his own voice** from the heavens, and told me to "**separate myself from among the Latter Day Saints**, for as they sought to do unto me, so should it be done unto them." In the spring of 1838, the heads of the church and many of the members had gone deep into error and blindness. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, by David Whitmer, 1887, page 27)

Conclusion

At the first of this chapter we quoted the Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe as saying that the Book of Mormon plates were seen and handled "by eleven competent men, of independent minds and **spotless reputations**." We feel, however, that we have demonstrated that these witnesses were easily influenced by men and therefore were **not** competent witnesses. Contrary to John A. Widtsoe's statement, these witnesses were not men of "spotless reputation," but rather men whose word could not always be relied upon. Some of them even gave false revelations in the name of the Lord. Mr. Widtsoe stated that Oliver Cowdery's "reputations for honesty has never been questioned." We have shown, however, that the Mormons themselves—including Joseph Smith—testified that Oliver was dishonest and even involved in the bogus money business. We feel, therefore, that the Book of Mormon witnesses have been "weighed in the balances" and found wanting.

2. Angels and Gold plates

In Joseph Smith's account of the origin of the Book of Mormon we find the following statements:

> . . . on the evening of the above-mentioned twenty-first of September, after I had retired to my bed for the night, I betook myself to prayer and supplication to Almighty God for forgiveness of all my sins and follies, . . .
>
> While I was thus in the act of calling upon God, I discovered a light appearing in my room, . . . a personage appeared at my bedside, . . .
>
> He called me by name, and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God to me, . . .
>
> He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants;
>
> . . . .
>
> Convenient to the village of Manchester, Ontario county, New York, stands a hill of considerable size, and the most elevated of any in the neighborhood. On the west side of this hill, not far from the top, under a stone of considerable size, lay the plates, deposited in a stone box. . . .
>
> . . . I looked in, and there indeed did I behold the plates, . . .
>
> I made an attempt to take them out, but was forbidden by the messenger, . . .
>
> At length the time arrived for obtaining the plates, the Urim and Thummim, and the breastplate.
>
> On the twenty-second day of September, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, . . . the same heavenly messenger delivered them up to me . . . (*Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith, 2:29-59)

As we have shown in the last chapter, eleven men besides Joseph Smith stated that they had seen the plates—three of these eleven witnesses claimed that they were shown the plates by an angel of God. Brigham Young claimed that there was at least one other man who claimed he was shown the plates:

> One of the Quorum of the Twelve—a young man full of faith and good works, prayed, and the vision of his mind was opened, and the angel of God came and **laid the plates before him**, and he saw and handled them, and saw the angel, and conversed with him as he would with one of his friends; but after all this, **he was left to doubt**, and plunged into apostacy, and has continued to contend against this work. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, page 164)

Brigham Young does not tell us the name of the "young man." David Whitmer, however, claimed that his own mother also saw the plates:

> When I was returning to Fayette, with Joseph and Oliver, all of us riding in the wagon. Oliver and I on an old-fashioned wooden spring seat and Joseph behind us; while traveling along in a clear open place, a very pleasant, nice-looking old man suddenly appeared by the side of our wagon and saluted us with, "good morning, it is very warm," at the same time wiping his face or forehead with his hand. We returned the salutation, and, by a sign from Joseph, I invited him to ride if he was going our way. But he said very pleasantly, "No, I am going to Cumorah." This name was something new to me, I did not know what Cumorah meant. We all gazed at him and at each other, and as I looked around enquiringly of Joseph, **the old man instantly disappeared**, so that I did not see him again. . . . I also remember that he had on his back a sort of knapsack with something in, shaped like a book. It was the messenger who had the plates, who had taken them from Joseph just prior to our starting from Harmony. Soon after our arrival home, I saw something which led me to the belief that the plates were placed or concealed in my father's barn. I frankly asked Joseph if my supposition was right, and he told me it was. Sometime after this, my mother was going to milk the cows, when she was met out near the yard **by the same old man** (judging by her description of him) who said to her: "You have been very faithful and diligent in your labors, but your are tired because of the increase of your toil; it is proper therefore that you should receive a witness that your faith may be strengthened." Thereupon he showed her the plates. (*Latter-Day Saints' Millennial Star*, December 9, 1878, Vol. XL, report of an interview with David Whitmer, pages 772-773)

The Mormons have asked those who do not believe in Joseph Smith's story to come up with a more reasonable explanation for the Book of Mormon than the one given by Joseph Smith. Many theories have been advanced by anti-Mormon writers to explain away the angels and the gold plates. Some of these theories are rather interesting, while others are quite ridiculous.

Motives

One theory concerning the Book of Mormon is that it was a moneymaking scheme. The wife of Martin Harris was one of the first to advance this theory. She claimed that Martin's "whole object was to make money by it," and that he had told her that if she would let him alone, he could make money by it. Abigail Harris also testified that she had heard Martin Harris say: "what if it is a lie; if you will let me alone I will make money out of it!" According to David Whitmer, Hyrum Smith (who was also one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon) became upset at Martin Harris and wanted to exclude him from any profits that might be received in printing the Book of Mormon:

> When the Book of Mormon was in the hands of the printer, more money was needed to finish the printing of it. We were waiting on Martin Harris who was doing his best to sell a part of his farm, in order to raise the necessary funds. After a time Hyrum Smith and others began to get impatient, thinking that Martin Harris was too slow and under transgression for not selling his land at once, even if at a great sacrifice. Brother Hyrum thought they should not wait any longer on Martin Harris, and that the money should be raised in some other way. Brother Hyrum was vexed with Brother Martin, and thought they should get the money by some means outside of him, and not let him have anything to do with the publication of the Book, or receiving **any of the profits** thereof if any profits should accrue. He was wrong in thus judging Bro. Martin, because he was doing all he could toward selling his land. Brother Hyrum said it had been suggested to him that some of the brethren might go to Toronto, Canada, and **sell the copy-right of the Book of Mormon for considerable money:** and he persuaded Joseph to inquire of the Lord about it. . . . Hiram Page and Oliver Cowdery went to Toronto on this mission, but they failed entirely to sell the copy-right, returning without any money. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, pages 30-31)

George Reynolds made this statement concerning Martin Harris:

> Martin Harris was the instrument used by the Lord to enable Joseph to print the Book of Mormon. He supplied the funds necessary to pay the printer. All of this was repaid to him, by Joseph, and as he said, "more too." We mention this because it has been falsely asserted that Joseph made Martin Harris his dupe and never paid back the money he borrowed of him. (*The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* Salt Lake City, 1883, page 86)

George Reynolds quotes the following statement from an interview David B. Dille had with Martin Harris:

> "I then asked Mr. Harris if he ever lost 3,000 dollars by the publishing of the Book of Mormon?
>
> "Mr. Harris said, 'I never lost one cent. Mr. Smith paid me all that I advanced, and more too.' As much as to say he received a portion of the profits accruing from the sale of the books." (*The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* page 89)

Be this as it may, we do not feel that the Book of Mormon can be entirely explained away as merely a moneymaking scheme. Even if the Book of Mormon is considered to be spurious, many other motives could have entered into it. The desire for fame and power, for instance, can sometimes be even greater than the desire for money. It is also a well known fact that some people who profess to be religious will practice forgery simply to try to prove their point of view. Dr. Hugh Nibley, for instance, gives this information concerning the Gnostics:

> The trouble with the Gnostics-so-called is not that they claimed to possess the wonderful post-resurrection revelations but that they did not possess them—they were only faking or wishfully thinking; they didn't have the Gnosis at all, and when the time came to deliver the goods, as it soon did, since they all challenged each other's exclusive claims, they were caught empty-handed— . . . hence the willingness to make full use of genuine or spurious holy writings or even to forge new ones outright. (*Since Cumorah*, by Hugh Nibley, Salt Lake City, 1967, page 84)

On page 98 of the same book, Dr. Nibley makes this statement concerning the Gnostics:

> These people made a practice of claiming to be the unique and secret possessors of the earliest Christian writings. To make good their claims, they did not hesitate to practise forgery, and they borrowed freely from any available source.

Some anti-Mormon writers have pointed to the fact that many of the witnesses were related. Of the eleven witnesses, three were from the Smith family and five from the Whitmer family. Ebbie L. V. Richardson admits that many of the witnesses were related but points out that they never exposed the Book of Mormon as a fraud:

> . . . there have been numerous attempts to invalidate the sworn statements of these eleven men, all of whom died still bearing testimony, without alteration, to what they had seen and heard and with their characters still unimpugned.

> Not the least among these attempts is the "family of witnesses" criticism. Of the Three Witnesses, David and Oliver were brother-in-law; Martin Harris, an older man, was unrelated. In the case of the Eight Witnesses, **four** of them were brothers of David: Christian, Jacob, Peter, Jr., and John Whitmer. A fifth witness, Hiram Page, was a brother-in-law, having married the Whitmers' sister, Catherine, . . . The other three, Joseph Smith, Sr., Hyrum and Samuel H. Smith, were respectively father and brothers of Joseph, the Prophet.
>
> In view of the unusual circumstances which followed the organization of the Church, there can be little made of the charge of collusion, as can be seen from the Whitmer family: Peter and Christian both died in good standing in the original Church; David, Jacob and John, apart from it—yet none of them ever denied or in any way indicated a doubt as to their respective testimonies; and this in spite of the rather strong feelings of animosity that ultimately developed betwe[e]n them and Joseph Smith. ("David Whitmer—A Witness to the Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," Master's thesis, BYU, 1952, by Ebbie L.V. Richardson, pages 37-38, typed copy)

Mormon writers have made much of the fact that the witnesses did not expose the Book of Mormon as a fraud when they turned on Joseph Smith. At least one anti-Mormon writer, however, has pointed out that even if the witnesses were involved in a deliberate fraud they might not expose it since it would ruin their own character in the eyes of the world to do so. They might prefer to remain silent and pretend that they still believed in the Book of Mormon.

At any rate, there are at least four theories as to the origin of the Book of Mormon: First, Joseph Smith was given the gold plates by an angel, and the Book of Mormon is true. Second, all of the witnesses joined Joseph Smith in a deliberate fraud. Third, Joseph Smith and one or more of the witnesses were guilty of fraud and tricked the others into believing the Book of Mormon was true. Fourth, only Joseph Smith was guilty of fraud, and he was able to trick all of the witnesses into believing that the Book of Mormon was true.

Gold Plates

Thomas Ford, who had been Governor of Illinois, related a story which throws doubt upon the existence of the plates. Fawn Brodie quotes this story and then makes this statement:

> Yet it is difficult to reconcile this explanation with the fact that these witnesses, and later Emma and William Smith, emphasized the size, weight, and metallic texture of the plates. Perhaps Joseph built some kind of makeshift deception. (*No Man Knows My History*, page 80)

It is very possible that Joseph Smith did have some type of metal plates. There have been several reports of metal plates being found which later turned out to be forgeries. One of the latest cases was reported in a newsletter published by the Brigham Young University Department of Archaeology on January 17, 1962:

> GOLD PLATES FROM MEXICO. News of a set of small gold plates, purportedly found in an ancient grave in southern Mexico, and inscribed with characters resembling the Demotic Egyptian—like characters in the Anthon Transcript from the plates of the Book of Mormon(!), has come from several sources. Photographs of these plates and drawings of their inscriptions have also been received by the BYU Department of Archaeology.
>
> The set apparently consists of two small and three very small plates (the latter measure only about two cm. in length and one cm. in width, and are very thin). The three smaller ones have been made into a bracelet, by means of clips attached to one edge. All five are inscribed on each side with five lines of mixed Anthon Transcript and Maya-like characters, with the exception of one of the larger plates, which bears only a few such characters, distributed around a complex of symbols which Dr. M. Wells Jakeman of the BYU archaeology department has identified as definitely Aztec—four purely Aztec day-name symbols, a tree pictograph, and a cross-shaped symbol.
>
> Dr. Jakeman, as well as Dr. Ross T. Christensen also of the archaeology department, feel that these plates are **not of ancient origin;** because of the mixing, in the inscriptions, of symbols from at least two different writing systems widely separated in time. They note, however, that this argument is not conclusive, since the particular Maya symbols seemingly represented by some of the characters may well have originated in the Nephite "reformed Egyptian" writing illustrated by the Anthon Transcript, and since the Aztec symbols could have been added by an Aztec priest who had inherited or discovered these plates of more ancient date.
>
> But even stronger indication that the plates are not of ancient origin or authentic, is the near-certainty that the Aztec symbols were copied from one of the two surviving Aztec hieroglyphic manuscripts. Variable Aztec symbols, such as pictographs of trees, are not exactly the same in any two renderings. They differ with the scribes who painted them, and changed in style over a period of time. The chances of finding two such symbols exactly alike in **independently authentic** manuscripts or inscriptions are practically nil. And yet, as pointed out by Dr. Jakeman, the mentioned Aztec tree pictograph on one of the plates in question is identical, in both its form and all its elements and markings, to a tree pictograph in the surviving Aztec manuscript called the Codex Borbonicus . . . There can be little doubt, therefore, that it was copied from the tree pictograph in that manuscript—and that consequently, in turn, the four Aztec day-name symbols on the same plate were also copied from symbols in that or another Aztec manuscript.

> From a preliminary investigation, then, it would appear that these gold plates from Mexico are **forgeries**, and that **a serious fraud** has been committed, since the plates are reported to have been sold for a large sum of money, on the testimony of the "discoverer" that they are of ancient origin.
>
> Dr. Christensen points out that even if these plates should prove to be authentic, their removal from an ancient burial by a person without government license to engage in archaeological excavation—as evidently in the present case—and their subsequent sale and exportation from Mexico, would constitute illegal activities that in view of the importance of the find might result in serious consequences for the parties involved. There are laws in Mexico, as in most other countries, severely prohibiting the extraction, sale, and exportation of antiquities without a government permit. (*University Archaeological Society Newsletter*, Brigham Young University, January 17, 1962, page 4)

If Joseph Smith was not capable of making a set of gold plates, he probably had friends that were. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts gives this information concerning Oliver Cowdery:

> . . . Oliver Cowdery had followed in boyhood and early manhood a variety of callings: farming, blacksmithing, clerk in a store, and finally, in the winter of 1828-9, school teaching. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, Vol. 1, pages 119-120)

If Oliver Cowdery had spent time blacksmithing before he met Joseph Smith, it would have been possible for him to have made a set of metal plates. As we have shown, the Mormons themselves later accused him of joining a gang of counterfeiters, and Joseph Smith said that he "left the country" when he was told that a warrant had been issued against him.

There has been a great deal of controversy over the materials that Joseph Smith's gold plates were composed of and how much they weighed. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts makes this statement:

> The weight of the plates was doubtless considerable, being of gold, and each plate six by eight inches in width and length, and the whole volume six inches thick. (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, Vol. 1, page 93)

Joseph Smith's mother—Lucy Smith—tells a story which would make the reader believe the plates were not too heavy:

> The plates were secreted about three miles from home, . . .
>
> Joseph, on coming to them, took them, from their secret place, and, wrapping them in his linen frock, placed them under his arm and started home.
>
> After proceeding a short distance, he thought it would be more safe to leave the road and go through the woods. Travelling some distance after he left the road, he came to a large windfall, and as he was **jumping** over a log, a man sprang up from behind it, and gave him a heavy blow with a gun. Joseph turned around and knocked him down, then ran at the **top of his speed.** About half a mile further he was attacked again in the same manner as before; **he knocked this man down** in like manner as the former, and ran on again; and before he reached home he was assaulted the third time. In striking the last one he dislocated his thumb, which, however, he did not notice until he came within sight of the house, when he threw himself down in the corner of the fence in order to recover his breath. As soon as he was able, he arose and came to the house. (*Joseph Smith's History By His Mother*, photomechanical reprint of the original 1853 edition, pages 104-105)

According to B. H. Roberts, the anti-Mormon writer John Hyde stated that the plates would weigh "something like two hundred pounds." The Mormon writers John A. Widtsoe and Franklin S. Harris, Jr. admit that "a cube of solid gold of that size" would weigh two hundred pounds, but they claim that the plates may not have been made of pure gold:

> A cube of solid gold of that size, if the gold were pure, **would weigh two hundred pounds**, which would be a heavy weight for a man to carry, even though he were of the athletic type of Joseph Smith. This has been urged as an evidence against the truth of the Book of Mormon, since it is known that on several occasions the Prophet carried the plates in his arms. It is very unlikely, however, that the plates were made of pure gold. They would have been too soft and in danger of destruction by distortion. For the purpose of record keeping, plates made of gold mixed with a certain amount of copper would be better, for such plates would be firmer, more durable and generally more suitable for the work in hand. If the plates were made of eight karat gold, which is gold frequently used in present-day jewelry, and allowing a 10 percent space between the leaves, the total weight of the plates would not be above **one hundred and seventeen pounds**—a weight easily carried by a man as strong as was Joseph Smith. Elder J. M. Sjodahl basing his conclusions on an experiment with gold coins, comes to the conclusion that the plates weighed less than one hundred pounds. (*Seven Claims of the Book of Mormon* by John A. Widtsoe and Franklin S. Harris, Jr., Independence, Mo., 1937, pages 37-38)

While Joseph Smith could no doubt carry over a hundred pounds, would he be able to carry the plates three miles, running "at the top of his speed," jump over a log and fight off three assailants along the way? The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts explained that Joseph Smith was strong and athletic:

> For greater security Joseph left the high-way and made the journey through the woods and fields. His enemies were evidently on the watch for him, for three times he was assaulted by as many different persons; but being strong and athletic, by dint of blows and flight he threw them off and finally reached home utterly exhausted from the excitement and the fatigue of his adventures. (*Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, by B. H. Roberts, Salt Lake City, 1930, Vol. 1, page 91)

Even if the plates only weighed seventy-five pounds a man would have to be very "strong and athletic" to perform in the manner that Joseph's mother claimed he did.

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt made this rather strange statement concerning the plates:

> Eight other witnesses testify that Joseph Smith showed them the plates, and that they saw the engravings upon them, and that they had the appearance of ancient work and curious workmanship. They describe these plates as being about the thickness of common tin, . . . Upon each side of the leaves of these plates there were fine engravings, which were **stained with a black, hard stain**, so as to make the letters more legible and easier to be read. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, page 31)

There are several different opinions as to the thickness of each plate. Joseph Smith said that each plate was "not quite so thick as common tin" (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 537). On one occasion David Whitmer said they were about as thick as "common tin used by tinsmiths" ("David Whitmer—A Witness to the Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," page 39 of typed copy). Martin Harris, on the other hand, said that "each of the plates was thicker *than the thickest tin" (The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* page 89).

There is also some question as to the thickness of the entire set of plates. Joseph Smith maintained that the "volume was something near six inches in thickness" (*History of the Church*, Vol. 4, page 537). Martin Harris, however, stated that they were "about four inches" thick (*Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* page 89).

One of the strangest things about the plates was that two-thirds of them were "sealed." The Mormon Apostle John A. Widtsoe stated:

> A part of the plates, said to be about **two-thirds, was sealed.** (*Joseph Smith—Seeker After Truth*, Salt Lake City, 1951, page 38)

The Book of Mormon was supposed to have been translated from the unsealed portion—the remaining third. The other two-thirds were to be revealed at a later time.

Some anti-Mormon writers have maintained that it would have been impossible for the entire Book of Mormon—over 500 pages—to have been written on the limited number of plates that would have been in the unsealed portion of the plates. M. T. Lamb figures that there could have been only about "sixty-six or sixty-seven plates" in the unsealed portion (*The Golden Bible*, New York, 1887, page 248), and he states that it would have required more than 500 plates to make a book the size of the Book of Mormon. Mormon writers, however, maintain that it would not require that many plates. William E. Berrett stated:

> Elder Sjodahl estimates that less than **forty-five plates**, engraved on both sides, would be necessary for the entire record translated, including that portion for which the translation was lost. (*The Restored Church*, Salt Lake City, 1956, page 41)

Although it may not be impossible, we feel that it would be a remarkable feat for anyone to engrave the contents of the Book of Mormon in any known language on such a limited number of plates. If Joseph Smith had stated that the entire stack of plates was used, the story would be easier to believe.

However this may be, there is another interesting aspect to the story that two-thirds of the plates were sealed. If the plates were forgeries, it would be very difficult and time consuming to make engravings on the entire stack. By sealing two-thirds of them together, however, it would only be necessary to make engravings on the remaining third. These could be shown to the witnesses and they might never suspect that the other two-thirds of the plates did not have engravings on them. Also it would only be necessary for the outer edges of these plates to have the appearance of gold. This type of deception is well known. For instance, in the early days of Ohio a man filled a barrel with some worthless material and then put counterfeit coin on the top. He showed this barrel to another man, who, seeing the coins on the top, assumed that the entire barrel was filled with counterfeit coin. He purchased the entire barrel at a special price, but was later very disappointed to find that he had bought a barrel of worthless material. He could not go to the sheriff, of course, because he was trying to buy counterfeit coin. Many similar examples could be related.

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt claimed that Joseph Smith was not allowed to break into the sealed portion of the plates:

> You recollect that when the Book of Mormon was translated from the plates, about **two-thirds were sealed up**, and Joseph was commanded not to break the seal; that part of the record was hid up. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 3, page 347)

David Whitmer gave this information to a reporter from the *Chicago Times*:

> The plates which Mr. Whitmer saw were in the shape of a tablet, fastened with three rings, about one-third of which appeared to be loose, in plates, the other **solid**, but with perceptible marks where the plates seemed to be sealed, and the guide that pointed it out to Smith very impressively reminded him that the loose plates alone were to be used, the sealed portion was **not** to be tampered with. (As quoted in *The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* page 82)

David Whitmer told Dr. Poulson the following concerning the sealed portion of the plates:

> "I—Did the angel turn all the leaves before you as you looked on it?
>
> "He—No, not all, only that part of the book which was not sealed, and what there was sealed appeared as **solid to my view as wood.**" (Interview with David Whitmer, as quoted in "David Whitmer—A Witness to the Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," Master's thesis, BYU, 1952, by Ebbie L.V. Richardson, page 164, typed copy)

Since the Book of Mormon witnesses were neither experts in ancient languages or qualified archaeologists, it would have been very easy for Joseph Smith to have fooled them with some "kind of makeshift deception."

The Vision

While the testimony of the eight witnesses could be explained simply by admitting that Joseph Smith had some type of plates, the testimony of the three witnesses is more difficult to explain. They claim that "an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; . . ." Anti-Mormon writers have tried to explain this vision in several ways. Some state that Joseph Smith was able to hypnotize the witnesses. Others claim that it was the devil appearing as an angel of light, and at least one writer claims that the witnesses were intoxicated. Still another idea is that it was a man disguised as an angel who appeared to the three witnesses.

The testimony of the three witnesses leaves a person with the impression that they all saw the angel and the plates at the same time. Such was not the case, however. Joseph Smith, in his history, admits that Martin Harris was not present at the time they first saw the plates:

> Not many days after the above commandment was given, we four, viz., Martin Harris, David Whitmer, Oliver Cowdery and myself, agreed to retire into the woods, and try to obtain, by fervent and humble prayer, the fulfilment of the promises given in the above revelation—that they should have a view of the plates. . . . and having knelt down, we began to pray in much faith to Almighty God . . . We did not at the first trial, however, obtain any answer or manifestation of divine favor in our behalf. We again observed the same order of prayer, each calling on and praying fervently to God in rotation, but with the same result as before.
>
> Upon this, our second failure, Martin Harris proposed that he should withdraw himself from us, believing, as he expressed himself, that his presence was the cause of our not obtaining what we wished for. He accordingly **withdrew** from us, and we knelt down again, and had not been many minutes engaged in prayer, when presently we beheld a light above us in the air, of exceeding brightness; and behold, an angel stood before us. In his hands he held the plates . . .
>
> I now left David and Oliver, and went in pursuit of Martin Harris, whom I found at a considerable distance, fervently engaged in prayer. He soon told me, however, that he had not yet prevailed with the Lord, and earnestly requested me to join him in prayer, that he also might realize the same blessings which we had just received. We accordingly joined in prayer, and ultimately obtained our desires, for before we had yet finished, the same vision was opened to our view, at least it was again opened to me, and I once more beheld and heard the same things; whilst at the same moment, Martin Harris cried out, apparently in an ecstasy of joy, "'Tis enough; 'tis enough; mine eyes have beheld; mine eyes have beheld;" and jumping up, he shouted, "Hosanna," blessing God, and otherwise rejoiced exceedingly. (*History of the Church,* Vol. 1, pages 54-55)

In the account as it was first published, Joseph Smith quoted Martin Harris as saying: ". . .'Tis enough; mine eyes have beheld,' . . ." (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 3, page 898). In the *History of the Church* six words have been added to make it appear that Martin Harris was even more excited: ". . .'Tis enough; '**tis enough;** mine eyes have beheld; **mine eyes have beheld;**' . . ."

The important thing about Joseph Smith's statement, however, is that it shows that Martin Harris was not present when the other witnesses saw the plates. There seems to be some question as to the time that elapsed between the two visions. Joseph Smith would have us believe that Martin Harris' vision occurred immediately after the other vision. But, according to a reporter who interviewed David Whitmer, it was a day or two later:

> In a **day or two after**, the same spirit appeared to Martin Harris while he was in company with Smith, and told him also to bear witness to its truth, which he did, as can be seen in the book. Harris described the visitant to Whitmer, who recognized it as the same that he and Cowdery had seen. (As quoted in *The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* page 83)

Martin Harris, according to Anthony Metcalf, claimed that it was about three days later when he saw the plates:

> He said: "I never saw the golden plates, only in a visionary or entranced state. I wrote a great deal of the Book of Mormon myself, as Joseph Smith translated or spelled the words out in English. Sometimes the plates would be on a table in the room in which Smith did the translating, covered over with a cloth. I was told by Joseph Smith that **God would strike him dead if he attempted to look at them**, and I believed it. When the time came for the three witnesses to see the plates, Joseph Smith, myself, David Whitmer and Oliver Cowdery, went into the woods to pray. When they had engaged in prayer, they failed at that time to see the plates or the angel who should have been on hand to exhibit them. They all believed it was because I was not good enough, or, in other words, not sufficiently sanctified. I withdrew. As soon as I had gone away, the three others saw the angel and the plates. In about **three days** I went into the woods to pray that I might see the plates. While praying I passed into a state of entrancement, and in that state I saw the angel and the plates." (*Ten Years Before the Mast*, as quoted in *A New Witness for Christ in America*, Salt Lake City, 1959, Vol. 2, pages 347-348)

According to George Reynolds, Martin Harris saw the plates on another occasion:

> But it must be remembered that this was not the only time that Martin Harris saw the plates. He states that on one occasion he held them on his knee for an hour and a half, . . . (*The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* page 87)

George Reynolds quotes the following statement by Harris from an interview which David B. Dille had with him:

> . . . for did I not at one time hold the plates on my knee an hour and a half, while in conversation with Joseph, when we went to bury them in the woods, that the enemy might not obtain them? Yes, I did. (*The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* page 88)

This interesting information concerning an interview with Martin Harris appeared in *Tiffany's Monthly*:

> Before the Lord showed the plates to me, Joseph wished me to see them. But I refused, unless the Lord should do it. At one time, before the Lord showed them to me, Joseph said I should see them. I asked him, why he would break the commands of the Lord. He said, you have done so much I am afraid you will not believe unless you see them. I replied, "Joseph, I know all about it. The Lord has showed to me ten times more about it than you know."—Here we inquired of Mr. Harris—How did the Lord show you these things? He replied, "I am forbidden to say anything how the Lord showed them to me, except that by the power of God I have seen them."
>
> Mr. Harris continues: "I hefted the plates many times, and should think they weighed forty or fifty pounds." (*Tiffany's Monthly*, as quoted in *A New Witness for Christ in America*, Vol. 2, page 379)

John H. Gilbert, who helped print the Book of Mormon, gave this interesting information:

> Martin was something of a prophet:—He frequently said that "Jackson would be the last president that we would have; and that all persons who did not embrace Mormonism in two years would be stricken off the face of the earth." He said that Palmyra was to be the New Jerusalem, and that her streets were to be paved with gold.
>
> Martin was in the office when I finished setting up the testimony of the three witnesses,—(Harris — Cowdery and Whitmer) I said to him, — "Martin, did you see those plates with your naked eyes?" Martin looked down for an instant, raised his eyes up, and said, "No. I saw them with a spiritual eye." (Memorandum, made by John H. Gilbert, September 8th, 1892, as quoted in *Joseph Smith Begins His Work*, Salt Lake City, 1963, Vol. 1, Introduction)

According to a manuscript dictated by Joseph Smith, which the Mormon Church suppressed for over a hundred years, Oliver Cowdery saw the plates even before he came to write for Joseph:

> . . . and it came to pass after much humility and affliction of soul I obtained them again when [the] Lord appeared unto a young man by the name of Oliver Cowdry and **showed unto him the plates** a vision and also the truth of the work and what the Lord was about to do through me his unworthy servant therefore he was desirous to come and write for me to translate . . . ("An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions," Master's thesis, BYU, 1965, by Paul R. Cheesman, page 132)

It would appear, then, that Oliver Cowdery had already seen the plates when Joseph Smith and the witnesses went into the woods to pray. David Whitmer saw them for the first time in the woods. Oliver Cowdery saw them for the second time, and Martin Harris saw them sometime later.

Excitement

Besides the angel that appeared to the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, there were many other occasions in the history of Mormonism when angels were supposed to have appeared. Joseph Smith declared that on March 27, 1836, the Kirtland Temple was filled with angels;

> Brother George A. Smith arose and began to prophesy, when a noise was heard like the sound of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the Temple, and all the congregation simultaneously arose, being moved upon by an invisible power; many began to speak in tongues and prophesy; others saw glorious visions; and I beheld the Temple was **filled with angels**, which fact I declared to the congregation. The people of the neighborhood came running together (hearing an unusual sound within, and seeing a bright light like a pillar of fire resting upon the Temple), and were astonished at what was taking place. This continued until the meeting closed at eleven p.m. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 428)

Under the date of March 30, 1836, the following appears in Joseph Smith's History:

> The Savior made His appearance to some, while angels ministered to others, and it was a Pentecost and an endowment indeed, long to be remembered, for the sound shall go forth from this place into all the world, and the occurrences of this day shall be handed down upon the pages of sacred history, to all generations; as the day of Pentecost, so shall this day be numbered and celebrated as a year of jubilee, and time of rejoicing to the Saints of the Most High God. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 433)

Joseph Smith claimed that he and Oliver Cowdery saw Moses, Elias, Elijah and the Lord in the Kirtland Temple. In the *Doctrine and Covenants*, section 110, we read the following:

> We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, . . . and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:
>
> I am the first and the last; . . .
>
> For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house.
>
> . . . .
>
> Yea the hearts of thousands and tens of thousands shall greatly rejoice in consequence of the blessings which shall be poured out, and the endowment with which my servants have been endowed in this house.
>
> And the fame of this house shall spread to foreign lands; . . .
>
> After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us; and Moses appeared . . .
>
> After this, Elias appeared, . . .
>
> After this vision had closed, another great and glorious vision burst upon us; for Elijah . . . stood before us, . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 110, verses 2, 3, 7, 9-13)

If a person reads only Joseph Smith's account of this "endowment" he is apt to be very impressed. William E. McLellin, however, gives an entirely different story. He claims that there was "no endowment." In March, 1848, he stated:

> . . . we boldly affirm that no endowment from God has as yet been given in Kirtland. (*Ensign of Liberty*, Kirtland, Ohio, March, 1848, page 69)

It should be remembered that William E. McLellin was one of the twelve Apostles at the time the endowment was supposed to have been given. On pages 6-7 of the same publication, William E. McLellin joined with five others in stating:

> And, during the winter of thirty-five and six, hundreds upon hundreds of the Ministers of the Church collected in from the east, west, north, and south, in order to receive their "endowment from on high." . . . Sunday morning, March 27th, 1836, arrived, and hundreds after hundreds wended their way early, saying, "Come, let us go up to the House of the Lord." . . . It was dedicated in the presence of hundreds by hundreds, . . .
>
> The next thing that engaged the attention of all, was to prepare for the endowment. Washings and anointings were strictly attended to by all the Ministry of the two orders of Priesthood in the Church. Finally, the 6th of April, the time, the long looked for time arrived. Early, yes, very early in the morning, about five hundred Ministers seated themselves in the Temple—the most of them expecting to wait on the Lord there, until he visibly displayed himself, by shedding upon them, as it were, "cloven tongues of fire," so that they might go to all the world, and preach to them in their own languages, . . .
>
> But we are sorry to have to record, that the light of the next morning's sun found disappointed hundreds wending their way from that noble edifice, to their homes and their firesides, to reflect upon, and brood over their sad disappointment. The least we can say relative to the anticipated endowment is, **it was a failure!!**

While speaking of the dedication at Kirtland the Mormon Apostle George A. Smith stated:

> That evening there was a collection of Elders, Priests, Teachers and Deacons, etc., amounting to four hundred and sixteen, gathered in the house; . . . David Whitmer bore testimony that he saw three angels passing up the south aisle, and there came a shock on the house like the sound of a mighty rushing wind, . . . and hundreds of them were speaking in tongues, . . . or declaring visions, . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 10)

David Whitmer, however, called the story of the endowment "a trumped up yarn." In fact, a reporter for the *Des Moines Daily News* stated that David Whitmer absolutely denied the manifestations in the temple (in the article it reads "temple at Nauvoo," but it must refer to the Kirtland temple since Whitmer left the church before the Nauvoo temple was built):

> Many of the declarations of the prophet, after he lost the spirit of revelation, which were called prophecies, signally failed to come to pass. The great heavenly "visitation," which was alleged to have taken place in the temple at Nauvoo, was **a grand fizzle.** The elders were assembled on the appointed day, which it was promised would be veritable day of Pentecost, but **there was no visitation.** No Peter, James and John; no Moses and Elias, put in an appearance. "I was in my seat on that occasion," says Mr. Whitmer, "and **I know that the story sensationally circulated**, and which is now on the records of the Utah Mormons as an actual happening, was nothing but a **trumped up yarn.** I saw a great many of these things which I know were not right, but I clung on in patience, trusting everything would eventually be but right." (*Des Moines Daily News*, October 16, 1886)

David Whitmer's charge that the endowment was a "trumped up yarn" becomes very interesting when we compare the report of the proceedings of March 27, 1836, which were published at the time with those published about sixteen years later in Joseph Smith's History. In the *Messenger and Advocate* for March, 1836, we read:

> President F. G. Williams bore record that a Holy Angel of God, came and set between him and J. Smith sen. while the house was being dedicated.
>
> President Hyrum Smith, (one of the building committee) made some appropriate remarks . . . (*Messenger send Advocate*, Vol. 2, page 281)

In Joseph Smith's History (first published in Utah about sixteen years later) a statement that David Whitmer saw angels has been added:

> President Frederick G. Williams arose and testified that while President Rigdon was making his first prayer, an angel entered the window and took his seat between Father Smith and himself, and remained there during the prayer.
>
> **President David Whitmer also saw angels in the house.**
>
> President Hyrum Smith made some appropriate remarks . . . (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 427)

Apparently some of the Mormons saw the angels and others did not. At the funeral of Myron Tanner, President David John made the following statement:

> "When Brother Tanner was a boy ten years of age he lived in Kirtland; was there at the time of the erection of the temple, and when it was dedicated in the spring of 1836. I do not think he would take offense if I told here what he has told me scores of times. We all know that angels appeared in that temple, and that Joseph and Oliver saw them, and others also saw them. They came and delivered the keys of their ministry and of this dispensation to the Prophet Joseph Smith. Bishop Tanner told me that he saw angels ascending and descending during those days, and that he called his mother out to see them, but his mother could not see them, although he saw them plainly." (*Biography of Myron Tanner*, published by authority of the family, Salt Lake City, 1907, pages 28-29)

Ebenezer Robinson made this statement concerning the angel that was supposed to have sat between F. G. Williams and Joseph Smith's father:

> "President F. G. Williams bore record that a Holy Angel of God came and sat between him and J. Smith sen. while the house was being dedicated."
>
> **We did not see the angel**, but the impression has evidently obtained with some, that we did see the angel, from the fact that different persons, strangers from abroad, have called upon us and expressed gratification at meeting with a person who had seen an angel, referring to the above circumstance. We told them they were mistaken, that **we did not see that angel**, but that President F. G. Williams testified as above stated. We believed his testimony, and have often spoke of it both publicly and privately. (*The Return*, Vol. 1, no. 6, June 1889, typed copy)

Extreme Behavior

When we look at the testimony of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon or the report of happenings in the Kirtland temple we must remember that some of the early Mormons were very credulous and could be worked up into a state of excitement in which they actually believed that they saw visions. The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith made this statement concerning an incident in the Kirtland temple:

> Sylvester Smith bore testimony of seeing the hosts of heaven and the horsemen. In his exertion and excitement it seemed as though he would jump through the ceiling. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 10)

John Whitmer, who was Church Historian in Joseph Smith's time, related the following concerning some of the visions that members of the church had:

> For a perpetual memory, to the shame and confusion of the Devil, permit me to say a few things respecting the proceedings of some of those who were disciples, and some remain among us, and will, and have come from under the error and enthusiasm which they had fallen.
>
> Some had visions and could not tell what they saw. Some would fancy to themselves that they had the sword of Laban, and would **wield it** as expert as a light draggon; some would act like an Indian in the **act of scalping;** some would **slide or scoot on the floor** with the rapidity of a serpent, which they termed sailing in the boat to the Lamanites, preaching the gospel. And many other vain and foolish maneuvers that are unseeming and unprofitable to mention. Thus the Devil blinded the eyes of some good and honest disciples. (*John Whitmer's History*, chapter 6)

The Mormon publication *Times and Seasons* admitted that "false spirits" had sometimes been in the church:

> The church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints have also had their false spirits; . . .
>
> Soon after the gospel was established in Kirtland, and during the absence of the authorities of the church, many false spirits were introduced, many **strange visions** were seen, and wild enthusiastic notions were entertained; men ran out of doors under the influence of this spirit, and some of them got upon the stumps of trees and shouted, and all kinds of extravagances were entered into by them; one man pursued a ball that he said he saw flying in the air, until he came to a precipice when he jumped into the top of a tree which saved his life, and many ridiculous things were entered into, calculated to bring disgrace upon the church of God; . . . At a subsequent period a Shaker spirit was on the point of being introduced, . . . We have also had bretheren and sisters who have had the gift of tongues falsely; they would speak in a muttering, unnatural voice, and their

bodies be distorted like the Irvingites before alluded to; whereas there is nothing unnatural in the spirit of God. . . .

There have also been ministering angels in the church which were **of Satan** appearing as an angel of light:—A sister in the State of New York had a vision who said it was told her that if she would go to a certain place in the woods, **an angel** would appear to her,—she went at the appointed time and saw a glorious personage descending arrayed in white, with **sandy coloured hair;** he commenced and told her to fear God and said that her husband was called to do great things, but that he must not go more than one hundred miles from home . . . Many true things were spoken by this personage and many things that were **false.**—How it may be asked was this known to be a **bad angel?** by **the color of his hair;** that is one of the signs that he can be known by, and by his contradicting a former revelation. (*Times and Seasons*, Joseph Smith, editor, April 1, 1842, Vol. 3, page 747)

Ezra Booth, who had apostatized from the Mormon Church, wrote the following:

"Being carried away by the spirit," and "I know it to be so by the spirit," are well known phrases, and in common use in the Mormonite church. We will first notice the gift of tongues, exercised by some when carried away in the spirit. These persons were apparently lost to all surrounding circumstances, and wrapt up in the contemplation of things, and in communicating with persons not present.—They articulated sounds, which but few present professed to understand; and those few declared them to be the Indian language. A merchant, who had formerly been a member of the Methodist society, observed, he had formerly traded with the Indians, and he knew it to be their dialect. Being myself present on one of these occasions, a person proffered his services as my interpreter, and translated these sounds to me which were unintelligible, into the English language. One individual could read any chapter of the Old or New Testament, in several different languages. This was known to be the case by a person who professed to understand those languages. In the midst of this delirium they would, at times, fancy themselves addressing a congregation of their red brethren; mounted on a stump, or the fence, or from some elevated situation, would harrangue their assembly until they had convinced or converted them. They would then lead them into the water, and baptize them, and pronounce their sins forgiven. In this exercise, some of them actually went into the water; and in the water, performed the ceremony used in baptizing. These actors assumed the visage of the savage, and so nearly imitated him, not only in language, but in gestures and actions, that it seemed the soul and body were completely metamorphosed into the Indian. No doubt was then entertained but that was an extraordinary work of the Lord, designed to prepare those young men for the Indian mission; and many who are still leaders of the church, could say, "we know it is the work of the Lord." And now they can say, "they know it is the work of the devil." Most of those who were the principal actors, have since apostatized, and the work is unanimously discarded by the church. The limits which my want of time to write, as well as your want of patience to read compel me to prescribe for myself, will allow me only to touch on some of the most prominent parts of this newly invented, and heterogeneous system.

A new method of obtaining authority to preach the Gospel was introduced into the church. One declared he had received a commission, directly from Heaven, **written upon parchment.** Another, that it was written upon the palm of his hand, and upon the lid of his Bible, &c. Three witnesses, and they were formerly considered persons of veracity, testified that they saw the parchment, or something like it, when put into the hands of the candidate. These commissions, when transcribed upon a piece of paper, were read to the church, and the persons who had received them, were ordained to the Elder's office, and sent out into the world to preach. But this also sunk into discredit, and experienced the fate of the former.

Visions, also, were in high credit, and sounded abroad as an infallible testimony in favor of Mormonism. The visionary, at times, imagined he saw the city of New Jerusalem; unlocked its gate, and entered within the walls; passed through its various apartments, and then returned, locked the gate, and put the key into his pocket. When this tour was finished, he would entertain his admiring friends, with a detailed description of the Heavenly City.

. . . .

Smith describes an angel, as having the appearance of "a tall, slim, well built, handsome man, with a bright pillar upon his head." The Devil once, he says appeared to him in the same form, excepting upon his head he had a "black pillar," and by this mark he was able to distinguish him from the former. (*Mormonism Unvailed*, Painesville, Ohio, 1834, pages 183, 184, 185 and 187)

The Mormon writer Max Parkin admits that there was a good deal of unrestrained enthusiasm among the Mormons:

The doctrine of the restoration of the ancient order of Christianity including spiritual gifts as taught by the Lamanite missionaries invited misunderstanding and extravagant behavior in the newly converted society. The Ohio converts to the Church not having been taught regulating and discriminating controls, were ill-prepared to properly handle certain subsequent events. Mormonism suffered from some of the same extremes which were characteristic of early religious revivals, as well as from outlandish expressions peculiar to Mormonism itself. The confusion increased due to the absence of Mormon leadership in Ohio to counsel the new converts in such strange and exciting spiritual operations.

. . . . .

Immediately after the departure of the Lamanite missionaries and prior to the arrival of Joseph Smith from New York, extreme behavior by some of the Saints began to manifest itself. "Scenes of the wildest enthusiasm" occurred, reported an observer whose views were published in the *Painesville Telegraph* as early as February, 1831. In giving detail to these events he added:

> . . . The [Mormonites] would fall, as without strength, roll upon the floor, and, so mad were they that even the females were seen on a cold winter day, lying under the bare canopy of heaven, with no couch or pillow but the fleecy snow. At other times they exhibited all the apish actions imaginable, making grimaces both horrid and ridiculous, creeping upon their hands and feet, etc. Sometimes, in these exercises the young men would rise and play before the people, going through all the Indian maneuvers of knocking down, scalping, ripping open, and taking out the bowels. At other times, they are taken with a fit of jabbering after which they call speaking foreign languages by divine inspiration. At other times they would start and run several furlongs, then get upon stumps and preach to imagined congregations, baptize ghosts, etc.

These reports were not to be credited just to the malice of anti-Mormon writers alone. John Corrill, an early Mormon convert, writing of them said,

> They conducted themselves in a strange manner, sometimes imitating Indians in their maneuvers, sometimes running out into the fields, getting on stumps of trees and there preaching as though surrounded by a congregation,—all the while so completely absorbed in visions as to be apparently insensible to all that was passing around them.

. . . .

It seems that young men and women were chiefly involved in these odd distortions and spiritual manifestations. Three of the young men who participated in this inordinate behavior were Edson Fuller, Herman Basset, and Burr Riggs. While engaged in proselyting activities, these young men demonstrated their peculiar gifts. These men received revelations, saw angels, prophecied, fell down while frothing at the mouth, and behaved generally in an awesome way. Levi Hancock credited the worst behavior to Burr Riggs, whom he saw jump up from the floor and strike his head against the ceiling joist, swing some minutes and then fall as if he were dead. After an hour or two in this state, he would regain his "life" and inform the spectators of what his slumber had disclosed. Of the others, Levi said,

> Edson Fuller would fall and turn black in the face, Herman Bassett [*sic*] would behave **like a baboon.** He said he had a revelation he had received in Kirtland from the hand of an angel, he would read it and show pictures of a course of angels declared to be Gods, then would testify of the truth of the work.

A Gentile writer further stated that they were seen "running over the hills in pursuit, they say, of balls of fire which they see flying through the air." Corrill concurred with this, for he said, they saw "wonderful lights in the air and on the ground. . . ." Philo Dibble, who was in Kirtland during these winter months said that there were many signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth which the Saints saw as well as being viewed by the strangers among them. In fact, said he, "A pillar or light was seen every evening for more than a month hovering over the place where we did our baptizing."

. . . the following January, the three previously named young men claimed to receive their own commissions directly "from Heaven, on parchment, which they caught in their hands in the air, and had only time to copy them, before the parchment disappeared." Their commission directed them to preach "repentance and remission of sins" and it was said to be endorsed be a "Divine Seal." Letters, too, were falling from heaven to exhort the receiver to increase his faith. Concerning these activities *The Sun* reported,

> At one time, a young man gave information to his brethren, that he was about to receive a message from heaven; and specified the time and place. At the appointed time, they repaired to a spot designated; and there, they solemnly assert, a letter descended from the skies, and fell into the hands of the young man who was expecting to receive the message;—the purport of which was, to inform him that he was about to be called to preach Mormonism, and to exhort him to increase his faith. The deluded Mormonites declare their most solemn belief that this letter was written in heaven, by the finger of the Almighty; and the youth who pretended to have received it, says, the writing was in a round Italian hand, and the letters were in gold—he attempted to copy it; but, as fast as he wrote, the letter disappeared from the original until it entirely vanished.

In addition to the three men previously named, available records do not freely identify all that participated in these strange practices. Another young man, however, twenty-year old Warner Doty, "was one of the most active and zealous" whose faith was such that he believed he should live "a thousand years." A disease struck him and he was dead in five days. . . .

It was natural for these operations to confuse some of the sincere devotees of Mormonism who strongly accepted what they believed were the normal operation of the Holy Ghost. Both, however—the normal and the abnormal—were strange and objectionable to the non-believing Gentile who made no attempt to distinguish between the two types of operations. Some of the new converts were apprehensive about these abnormal expressions and found themselves in a dilemma. Levi Hancock, one of these, was fearful to speak out against the abnormal operations of Fuller, Basset, and Riggs for fear he should speak against the Holy Ghost. Yet, the majority of the Saints became angry at their claims and endeavored to convince Levi that their conduct was unworthy of his confidence. One Girl said she would rather go to hell than to believe in the claims of Basset, Fuller, and Riggs, and in a short time she died. "I could not help thinking," mused Levi, "she was taken at her word." He admitted that he was taken in by their unusual conduct and lamented, "I believed it all, like a fool." Some, however, never let these events bother them, while others believed these abnormal actions were from the devil.

. . . . .

These exercises arose to such alarming measures that the elders were determined to do something about them. Accordingly, Parley Pratt and John Murdock, and others contacted the Prophet to inquire about such

questionable behavior in the Church. The Prophet Joseph responded with a revelation. "There are many spirits which are false spirits," stated the revelation, "which have gone forth in the earth, deceiving the world." Furthermore, the revelation offered the key by which one might discern the nature of spirits,

> Wherefore, it shall come to pass, that if you behold a spirit manifested that you cannot understand, and you receive not that spirit ye shall ask of the Father in the name of Jesus; and if he give not unto you that spirit, then you may know that it is not of God.

The evil operations continued for a time, however, in some cases under the pretext of their being good spiritual experiences. . . .

These unacceptable exercises continued occasionally during the following years, for on the 19th of February, 1834, two days after the Kirtland High Council was permanently organized, it had the occasion to try Elder Curtis Hodge, Sr. This was the first case for the High Council, and Elder Hodge was brought to account for going into "a Methodist spasm, shouting and screaming in such a manner as caused one of the Elders to rebuke him." (*Conflict at Kirtland*, by Max H. Parkin, Salt Lake City, 1966, pages 66-75)

The Mormon Apostle George A. Smith related the following:

> They had a meeting at the farm, and among them was a negro known generally as Black Pete, who became a revelator. Others also manifested wonderful developments; they could see angels, and letters would come down from heaven, they said, and they would be put through wonderful unnatural distortions. Finally on one occasion, Black Pete got sight of one of those revelations carried by a black angel, he started after it, and ran off a steep wash bank twenty-five feet high, passed through a tree top into the Chagrin river beneath. He came out with a few scratches, and his ardor somewhat cooled. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, page 4)

J. J. Moss gave this testimony in the "Braden and Kelly Debate":

> J. J. Moss being produced, first being duly sworn, testified as follows:
>
> EXAMINED BY MR. BRADEN
>
> Q. Mr. Moss may state the time when he was teaching school here and the appearance of three Mormon preachers here, his attending meetings. What the facts are? A. I commenced teaching school in Kirtland, . . . in the fall of 1830. . . . In the course of the winter I attended their meetings. The things that were stated last night in reference to the things that took place here are correct. On the side hill across the flat, east of the present mill at night, Black Pete and two white men went from a meeting in a log house on the flat and got up on to stumps, and were preaching to imaginary audiences.
>
> John Tanner and myself were at the foot of the hill. John Tanner came from the State of New York with me, and when I took a school at the flats he took a school in the Newell district. He put his hands to his mouth and made an awful screech, when they all jumped from the stumps. The two white men ran angling down the hill, and black Pete ran straight down on the snow and ice, crying out, "Here we go, here we go." His feet slipped from under him, and as his seat struck the ground he sang out, "Oh God, here we go." He went back into the house, and they had some tomahawking, scalping and ripping up the bowels, and Indian talk; and that was the scene that night. I saw Black Pete in the orchard on the left hand side of the road from the post-office as you go to Mentor, or where the road now goes to Painesville, There was but one house on that corner then; the orchard was just back of that house. Black Pete chased the Devil sometimes, and sometimes the Devil was chasing him around the stumps and apple trees. That I saw. I was called out of my school in to the shoemaker's shop of Mr. Cahoon . . . I found his eldest son. I do not remember his first name, fighting with the Devil. . . . He acted like a crazy man as much as anything else, and would say, "there you come; I see you." And when the Devil got pretty close to him he would jab his fingers at him, and say, "Zick! Zick!" I went to my school room and called in eight or ten of my largest scholars, some young men and some young women, to witness the scene. He got the Devil at last in the corner where there was some old boots and shoes, jabbing his fingers at him—"Zick! Zick!" I slipped behind the scholars and got my foot behind an old shoe, and when the Devil was coming again I suddenly shoved it before him. He jumped about two feet high and ran down stairs out into the field, just back of the school house, and there was quite a number of stumps, and the Devil was after him; he dodged first around one stump and then another.
>
> I believe I was the first person, with a young man, whose name I have forgotten, who was present when they took what was called the sacrament up at the Morley house. They were in the habit of turning every body out of the door when they partook of the bread and wine, putting blankets up at the windows, shutting off the sight from without. They started a regular pow-wow, and when they got well going, then they opened the door and let us all come in again. A young man and myself made it up that we would stay in unless they took us out by force. The young man got asleep, and I had a dump evil and could not talk; but they did not carry us out but went on with the sacrament. The poor-house in Portage County, Ohio, where there were half a dozen insane and idiotic persons, was the best comparison of anything to the scene that night. And if I had had my cloak on I would have stolen the wine and carried it home to see whether it was drugged or not. (*The Braden and Kelley Debate*, beginning February 12, and closing March 8, 1884, Kirtland, Ohio, 1955 reproduction, pages 383-384)

William Smith, not to be confused with Joseph's brother, gave this testimony:

> Q. You may state next, Mr. Smith, whether you attended the meetings of the Saints during the winter of 1830-31, and what you saw? A. I have attended the meetings at Mr. Morley's, I think the given name is Isaac. The buildings were upon a little flat, and if my memory serves me, when the people began to come there they put up a log cabin or small addition to the house part. I am sure I have attended those meetings, and my first attendance was when it began to be generally noised around that there was strange things done, and we young folks were curious to see what it was.

Q. You may state about the falling and what you saw in the meeting? A. I attended three or four at Isaac Morley's in the evening. I have heard Black Pete, as we called him, as he went over the hills halloaing and making strange noises, and the common report was that he was speaking in tongues and making speeches. And in the house I have seen young men and women seemingly unconscious and the folks said they had lain so for two days and they were there on their beds and nobody tried to prevent us looking at them, but we were not allowed to go into the room. That is all I have got to say with regard to the meeting.

CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. KELLEY:

Q. Have you been in those meetings? A. Yes sir.

Q. Have you seen any display of power in the meetings? A. I have seen people lose their consciousness and fall off from their seats.

Q. Any other performances aside from this? A. No other performances in the congregation except those I have stated to you.

Q. Now was there any other performances or anything of that kind? A. Black Pete used to make a noise like Indians but I can not say how he made it. It was made close to me sometimes in the dark and sometimes in the moonlight. Report said it was Black Pete, I say we all thought so. (*The Braden and Kelley Debate*, 1955 reproduction, page 388)

On at least one occasion even Joseph Smith had a hard time deciding whether a manifestation was from God or the Devil. Ezra Booth related the following:

As the 4th of June last, was appointed for the sessions of the conference, it was ascertained, that that was the time specified, when the great and mighty work was to be commenced, . . . To give, if possible, energy to expectation, Smith, the day before the conference, professing to be filled with the spirit of Prophecy, declared, that "not three days should pass away, before some should see their Savior, face to face." Soon after the session commenced. Smith arose to harangue the conference. He reminded those present of the Prophecy, which he said "was given by the spirit yesterday." He wished them not to be overcome with surprise, when that event ushered in. He continued, until by long speaking, himself and some others became much excited. He then laid his hands on the head of Elder White, who had participated largely in the warm feeling of his leader, and ordained him to the High Priesthood. He was set apart for the service of the Indians, and was ordained to the gift of tongues, healing the sick, casting out Devils, and discerning spirits; and in like manner he ordained several others; and then called upon White to take the floor. White arose, and presented a pale countenance, a fierce look, with his arms extended, and his hands cramped back, the whole system agitated, and a very unpleasant object to look upon. He exhibited himself as an instance of the great power of God, and called upon those around him, "If you want to see a sign, look at me." He then stepped upon a bench, and declared, with a loud voice, he saw the Savior; and thereby, for the time being rescued Smith's prophecy from merited contempt.—It, however, procured White the authority to ordain the rest. So said the spirit, and so said Smith. The spirit in Smith selected those to be ordained, and the spirit in White ordained them. But the spirit in White proved an erring dictator; so much so, that some of the candidates felt the weight of hands thrice, before the work was rightly done. Another Elder, who had been ordained to the same office as White, at the bidding of Smith, stepped upon the floor. Then ensued a scene, of which you can form no adequate conception; and which, I would forbear relating, did not the truth require it. The Elder moved upon the floor, his legs inclining to a bend; one shoulder elevated above the other, upon which the head seemed disposed to recline, his arms partly extended; his hands partly clenched; his mouth partly open, and contracted in the shape of an italic O; his eyes assumed a wild ferocious case, and his whole appearance presented a frightful object to the view of the beholder.—"Speak, brother Harvey" said Smith. But Harvey intimated by signs, that his power of articulation was in a state of suspense, and of the Devil, but Smith said, "the Lord binds in order to set at liberty." After different opinions had been given, and there had been much confusion, Smith learnt by the spirit, that Harvey was under a diabolical influence, and that Satan had bound him; and he commanded the unclean spirit to come out of him. (*Mormonism Unvailed*, Painesville, Ohio, 1834, pages 188-189)

The Mormon writer Max H. Parkin gives this information concerning the same incident:

During the latter part of February, 1831, the Prophet Joseph recorded a revelation instructing him to gather the missionaries that had been sent out to preach to return to Kirtland . . . the Prophet, himself, announced on Friday, June 3rd, that "the man of sin" would be revealed. The following day the elders met in a string of small buildings in Kirtland to receive instructions and to attend to Church business.

As matters got underway, Levi Hancock, a witness to the strange events said that while Joseph was ordaining Harvey Whitlock a high priest, "He turned as black as Lyman [Wight] was white. His fingers were set like claws. He went around the room and showed his hands and tried to speak, his eyes were in the shape of oval O's." Hyrum Smith was not willing to accept this behavior as being from God, and told his brother, the Prophet, so. Joseph retorted, "Do not speak against this." "I will not believe, unless you inquire of God and he owns it," demanded Hyrum. "Joseph bowed his head, and in a short time got up and commanded Satan to leave Harvy [*sic*]," concluded Levi Hancock, "laying his hands upon his head at the same time." John Whitmer concurred with this in saying that Satan "bound Harvey Whitlock and John Murdock, so that they could not speak."

Leman Copley, a very large man of two hundred and fourteen pounds, from his sitting position in the window turned a complete summersault in the house and settled back across a bench where he lay helplessly. The Prophet instructed Lyman Wight to "chase" Satan out of Copley, after which the evil spirit immediately

> left him. Then another, Harvey Green, was bound and began screaming like a panther. There operations continued all day and into the night intermixed with the instructions from their Prophet. Levi Hancock reflected upon the scenes of the day by writing, "I was so scared I would not stir without his [Joseph's] liberty for all the world. I knew the things I had seen were not made [up]." (*Conflict at Kirtland*, by Max H. Parkin, pages 79-80)

David Whitmer, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, made this statement:

> In Brother John's history he speaks of the Spirit of God being poured out in abundance upon that occasion, some seeing visions, etc., but brethren, you will learn in the next world, if you do not know it already, that the devil can give visions, appearing as an Angel of Light. Brother John gives an account of a prophecy uttered by Lyman Wight just after Brother Joseph ordained him a High Priest, which prophecy will prove to be a false prophecy. Brother John's history of the church says as follows: "He (Joseph) laid his hands upon Lyman Wight and ordained him to the high priesthood after the holy order of God. And the spirit fell upon Lyman, and he prophesied concerning the coming of Christ. He said that there were some in this congregation that should live until the Savior should descend from Heaven with a shout, with all the holy angels with him, etc." The early future will determine as to whether this prophecy was true or false. (*An Address to All Believers in Christ*, Richmond, Missouri, 1887, page 65)

On February 9, 1843, Joseph Smith gave a revelation which was supposed to give "three grand keys by which good or bad spirits may be distinguished." It is now published as section 129 of the *Doctrine and Covenants* and reads as follows:

> 1. There are two kinds of beings in heaven, namely: Angels, who are resurrected personages, having bodies of flesh and bones—
>
> 2. For instance, Jesus said: Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.
>
> 3. Secondly: The spirits of just men made perfect, they who are not resurrected, but inherit the same glory.
>
> 4. When a messenger comes saying he has a message from God, **offer him your hand and request him to shake hands with you.**
>
> 5. If he be an angel he will do so, and you will **feel his hand.**
>
> 6. If he be the spirit of a just man made perfect he will come in his glory; for that is the only way he can appear
>
> 7. Ask him to shake hands with you, **but he will not move**, because it is contrary to the order of heaven for a just man to deceive; but he will still deliver his message.
>
> 8. If it be **the Devil** as an angel of light, when you ask him to shake hands he will **offer you his hand, and you will not feel anything;** you may therefore detect him.
>
> 9. These are three grand keys whereby you may know whether any administration is from God. (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 129)

It would seem, according to this revelation, that if the Devil ever found out that a person cannot feel his hand, he could greatly deceive the Mormons by refusing to shake hands so that they would think he was "a just man made perfect."

Heber C. Kimball (who was a member of the First Presidency) claimed that he could scare the Devil away with a weapon of death:

> Now, I will tell you, I have about a hundred shots on hand all the time,—three or four fifteen-shooters, and three or four revolvers, right in the room where I sleep; and the Devil does not like to sleep there, for he is afraid they will go off half-cocked.
>
> If you will lay a **bowie knife or a loaded revolver under your pillow** every night, you will not have many unpleasant dreams, nor be troubled with the nightmare; for there is nothing that the Devil is so much **afraid of as a weapon of death.** (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 5, page 164

On page 278 of the same volume, Heber C. Kimball stated:

> When I sleep, I have fifteen shooters, six shooters, and all other kind of shooters; and **the Devils to not come there:** and if they succeed in troubling me, they have to get into some other person's body.

It seems that the early Mormons could see almost anything in vision. John Pulsipher recorded the following in his journal:

> One pleasant day in March, while I was at work in the woods, about one mile from the Temple, with father [i.e. Zerah Pulsipher], Elias Pulsipher and Jesse Baker, there was a **steamboat past over Kirtland in the air!** It was a clear, sunshine day. When we first heard the distant noise, we all stopt [*sic*] work. We listened and wondered what it could be. As it drew nearer, we heard the puffing of a steamboat, intermingled with the sound of many wagons rattling over a rough stony road. We all listened with wonder—but could not see what it was. It seemed to pass right over our heads,—we all heard the sound of a steamboat as plain as we ever did in our lives. It passed right along and soon went out of our hearing. When it got down to the city it was seen by a number of persons. It was a large fine and beautiful boat,

painted in the finest style. It was filled with people. All seemed full of joy. Old Elder Beamon, who had died a few months before was seen standing in the bow of the Boat swinging his hat and singing a well known hymn, The boat went steady along over the city passed right over the Temple and went out of sight to the west! This wonderful sight, encouraged the Saints because they knew the Lord had not forgotten them.

The people of Kirtland that saw the steamboat in the air said it arrived over the Temple, a part of it broke off and turned black and went north and was soon out of sight. While the boat, all in perfect shape went to the W[est] more beautiful and pure than before. ("John Pulsipher Journal," as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, page 331)

Levi Hancock related the following in his journal:

When night came Solomon and J. Wheeler Baldwin and some others started to my father, we walked heavily, some said that they felt as if they would be ceased [*sic*] by Satan. Others that they felt as the Devil and his angels were hanging about them. I kept my feelings to myself, until we came to the mill pond of Mr. Forgdons about half or a little over the distance we had to go that night. When we had got against the pond which was about fourteen rods across and very deep. I said, "let us pray." So we all kneeled down and prayed around the circle, as soon as the last one got through about nine o'clock at night and the moon shown brightly. **A sudden bray of a jackass was heard** about twenty feet behind us we looked and could see nothing in the way. It started toward the pond braying all the time. I never had seen one in my life and I know that there was none about there for I was well acquainted there. I heard how they brayed. The most of our company had seen them. This braying continued across the pond and ascended the high hills on the other side until it grew less and less distant until it got out of hearing. "There," said Brother Baldwin, "this proves to me that this work is true, for when we prayed for assistance the Devil ran away." We all felt that it must have been Satan, and some said as much. We then started on our way feeling much better and as light as ever we felt. We told some but it seemed like an idle tale to them. This took place on the fifth of June, 1831. This may appear strange to some but God knows that I lie not. ("Levi Hancock Journal," pages 50-51, as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, page 81)

But, the reader may ask, were the Book of Mormon witnesses that credulous? Anti-Mormon writers claim that they were. E. D. Howe, for instance, made this statement concerning Martin Harris:

He was naturally of a very visionary turn of mind on the subject of religion, holding one sentiment but a short time. . . . He frequently declares that he has conversed with Jesus Christ, Angels and the Devil. Christ he says is the handsomest man he ever saw; and the **Devil looks very much like a jack-ass**, with very short, smooth hair, similar to that of a mouse. . . . He has frequent fits of prophecying, although they are not held in very high repute among his brethren. A specimen of his prophetic powers we subjoin. They were written for the special information of a friend of his who placed them upon the wall of his office, and are in these words:

"Within four years from September 1832, there will not be one wicked person left in the United States; that the righteous will be gathered to Zion, [Missouri,] and that there will be no President over these United States after that time. MARTIN HARRIS."

"I do hereby assert and declare that in four years from the date hereof, every sectarian and religious denomination in the United States, shall be broken down, and every Christian shall be gathered unto the Mormonites, and the rest of the human race shall perish. If these things do not take place, I will hereby consent to have my hand separated from my body. MARTIN HARRIS."

Martin is an exceedingly fast talker. He frequently gathers a crowd around him in bar-rooms and in the streets.—Here he appears to be in his element, answering and explaining all manner of dark and abstruse theological questions, from Genesis to Revelations; declaring that every thing has been revealed to him by the "power of God." During these flights of fancy, he frequently prophecies of the coming of Christ, the destruction of the world, and the damnation of certain individuals. At one time he declared that Christ would be on earth within fifteen years, and all who did not believe the book of Mormon would be destroyed.

He is the source of much trouble and perplexity to the honest portion of his brethren, and would undoubtedly long since have been cast off by Smith, were it not for his money, and the fact that he is one of the main pillars of the Mormon fabric. Martin is generally believed, by intelligent people, to be laboring under a partial derangement; and that any respectable jury would receive his testimony, in any case, of ever so trifling a nature, we do not believe; yet, the subjects of the delusion think him a competent witness to establish miracles of the most unreasonable kind. But we leave him for the present. (*Mormonism Unvailed*, Painesville, Ohio, 1834, pages 13-15)

J. J. Moss gave this testimony in the *Braden and Kelly Debate*, page 387:

Q. You may state Mr. Moss, what Martin Harris said to you about seeing the Devil? A. He said he saw the Devil and **he looked like a jackass**, and he had hair like a mouse, . . .

. . . .

Q. Did Martin Harris give that as a part of his faith, or was it a joke. Was he giving it as a joke? A. I do not think he was.

Q. He was giving his experience the reason he came to speak of it? A. That was what called it out, the general conversation in reference to the truth of the Book of Mormon, and revelations, and as an evidence that he had revelations, he stated that the Devil appeared to him.

Q. Now, Mr. Moss did you hear Martin state that he had received revelations from the Lord, or make such a claim, or receive personal revelations from the Lord? A. He said he saw the Devil, he was giving us as an evidence of revelation or vision that he had **seen the Devil.**

Fawn Brodie feels that Joseph Smith was capable of convincing the Book of Mormon witnesses that they had seen a vision. Perhaps Mrs. Brodie is correct. Mary Rollins Lightner (a devout Mormon) wrote this interesting information in her journal:

> A few evenings after his [Joseph Smith's] visit to our house, Mother and I went over to the Smith home. We wanted to hear more about the Golden Bible. They were not settled yet, but as there were other visitors, when the Prophet saw us he said, "We might as well have a meeting." I sat with others on a plank that had been provided, the ends resting on boxes. After prayer and singing. Joseph began talking. Suddenly he stopped and seemed almost transfixed. He was looking ahead and his face outshone the candle which was on a shelf just behind him. I thought I could almost see the cheek bones. He looked as though a searchlight was inside his face. After a short time he looked at us very solemnly and said, "Brothers and Sisters, do you know who has been in our midst this night?" One of the Smith family said, "An angel of the Lord." Joseph did not answer. Martin Harris was sitting at the Prophet's feet on a box. He slid to his knees, clasped his arms around the Prophet's knees and said. "I know, **it was our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.**" Joseph put his hand on Martin's head and answered, "Martin, God revealed that to you. Brothers and Sisters, the Savior has been in your midst. I want you to remember it. He cast a veil over your eyes, for you could not endure to look upon Him. You must be fed with milk and not meat. I want you to remember this as if it were the last thing that escaped my lips. He has given you all to me and commanded me to seal you up to everlasting life, that where He is there you may also be, and if you are tempted of Satan say, 'Get thee behind me, Satan.'" These words and his looks are photographed on my brain. Then he knelt and prayed. I have never heard anything like it since. I felt he was talking to the Lord. . . . ("Mary Elizabeth Rollins Lightner Journal," as quoted in *Conflict at Kirtland*, by Max Parkin, pages 82-83)

Sacred Roll

In the "Braden and Kelly Debate," Clark Braden made this statement:

> Harris declared repeatedly that he had as much evidence for a **Shaker book** he had as for the Book of Mormon. (*The Braden and Kelly Debate*, page 173)

This statement is of interest because we know that Martin Harris did support the Shakers in the 1840's, and we also know that they did publish a book similar to the Book of Mormon in 1843. This book was entitled *A Holy, Sacred and Divine Roll and Book; From the Lord God of Heaven, to the Inhabitants of Earth*.

Whitney R. Cross gives us this information concerning the Shakers:

> Mother Ann Lee, prophet and founder of Shakerism, crossed the Atlantic from England with a small group of followers in 1774. Her adherents, first assembled at Watervliet two years later, soon moved to New Lebanon, where they established a communal enterprise in 1787.
>
> . . .
>
> Like a number of novel beliefs yet to arise, Shakerism was established upon a theory of the Second Coming and the millennium. Ann Lee represented the second embodiment in human flesh, this time of the feminine spirit of a bisexual God.
>
> Despite, or perhaps because of, the Pentecostal orientation of Shaker beliefs, they included elements which tended to make for greater liberality than did the orthodox theologies. Punishment of the wicked was not to be everlasting. Predestination and original sin were abandoned. Baptism, the Communion, and concepts of the Trinity and the atonement, alike were discarded. Literal adherence to the Bible was supplanted by direct revelation. The chaste, honest, industrious, and saintly life a person led, rather than any sacrament or creed, was his chief claim to sanctification. It involved among other things eschewing tobacco, alcoholic beverages, war, politics, and corporal punishment, while it demanded the discharge of all debts and the labor of one for all. (*The Burned-Over District*, New York, 1965, pages 31-32)

Fawn Brodie makes this statement concerning the Shakers:

> There was Ann Lee, mother of the Shakers, who called herself the reincarnated Christ . . . In 1826 some Shakers built community halls in Sodus Bay, only thirty miles from Palmyra. The young Joseph Smith might have spent an evening at their shuffling processional dance, watching first one and then another break away and whirl dervish-like till they fell exhausted on the floor, uttering an incoherent gibberish generously referred to as "the gift of tongues." (*No Man Knows My History*, pages 12-13)

In March, 1831, Joseph Smith gave a revelation in which the following appeared:

> 1. Hearken unto my word, my servants Sidney, and Parley, and Leman; for behold, verily I say unto you, that I give unto you a commandment that you shall go and preach my gospel which ye have received, even as ye have received it, unto the Shakers.
>
> 2. Behold, I say unto you, that they desire to know the truth in part, but not all, for they are not right before me and must needs repent.
>
> . . . .
>
> 22. And again, verily I say unto you, that the Son of Man cometh not in the form of a woman, . . . (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 49)

John Whitmer made the following statement concerning this revelation.

> Lemon Copley, one of the disciples who was formerly a Shaker-Quaker, was anxious that some of the elders should go to his former brethren and preach the gospel. He also teased to be ordained to preach himself, and desired that the Lord should direct in this and all matters, . . .
>
> The above named brethern went and proclaimed according to the revelation given to them, but the Shakers hearkened not to their words, and received not the gospel at that time; for they were bound up in tradition and priestcraft, and thus they are led away with foolish and vein imaginations. (*John Whitmer's History*, chapter 6, page 4)

In 1841 the Mormons admitted that at one time "a Shaker spirit was on the point of being introduced" into the Church (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 3, page 747).

Like the Mormons, the Shakers believed that the Church of Christ had been taken from the earth and that God was trying to restore His Church:

> 24. Let the bloody and merciless reign of antichrist, which for hundreds of years, did bind the consciences, enslave the souls of men, and drench the earth with human blood, be a solemn and awful warning to all the human race. For greater crimes of heaven-daring wickedness, according to the age, by man cannot be committed, than was perpetrated by the secular arm, under this long, dark and gloomy reign, in which there was **no true Church of Christ upon the earth;** and all this, pretendedly, under the banner of Christ. (*A Holy, Sacred and Divine Roll and Book*, 1843, page 59)

On page 70 we find this statement:

> 16. But remember, the Lord your God hath declared, that the gospel brought forth by the Lord Jesus Christ, was never known or practiced, in antichrist's reign; neither was the strait gate entered, or the narrow way traveled, **from the time that the primitive church declined**, and fell away, until Christ, or the fullness of the same spirit was sent forth the second time, without sin unto salvation, by my Holy Power, and Eternal Wisdom.

Like the Book of Mormon, the "Sacred Roll and Book" claimed that the Bible had been perverted by wicked men, and therefore new revelation was necessary:

> . . . much of the record of my sacred word, delivered in past ages, hath been destroyed, and much that is now handed down to the present generation, hath been greatly perverted by such as were enemies to the yoke and cross, . . . (*A Holy, Sacred and Divine Roll and Book*, page 70)

Both the Book of Mormon and the Shaker book quote extensively from the Sermon on the Mount (Compare Book of Mormon, pages 423-429, with the "Sacred Roll and Book," pages 46-49).

Joseph Smith claimed that he translated a parchment written "by John and hidden up by himself" (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 7). The Shakers likewise claimed to have received "A holy roll written by John the Revelator." Verse one reads as follows:

> 1. Come listen candidly unto my words all ye travelers in time, for as a true friend and well wisher to your souls I address you. I am John, the beloved disciple of Christ; the brother of James, and the son of Zebedee. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 257)

The Shakers also claimed that they received a revelation from Jeremiah:

> 1. Bow down thine ear to hear O man, and thine heart to receive O son of man, this most sacred word of your Heavenly Father, is the voice to me, the ancient Prophet Jeremiah, who art still alive, and dwelling in mansions not made with hands; yea, though the earthly tabernacle which I once inhabited, has, for thousands of years, been mouldered to dust, yet I am still alive in the spirit; and in the power of my God I often go forth with his holy word to the children of men; and now I rejoice that the time has come for this, his Sacred Roll, to go forth to the nations of the earth, that all may be left inexcusable before his holy throne.
>
> . . . .
>
> 5. Therefore hearken, O ye nations of the earth, and listen all ye people, to this his Sacred Roll, as the voice of the living God in solemn warning and tender love; and if you believe the words which I spake in days of old, believe me now, when I say that this Sacred and Divine Roll which is now sent forth unto you, is not the work of the vein and aspiring imagination of fallen men; but was directed by the holy spirit of the Lord your God, and contains those solemn truths to which every soul must bow, or finally fail of his protection and blessing; for He hath not sent forth his word in vein, nor will He strive with man for nought. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 223-224)

The Shakers also claimed they received a revelation from Noah. In this revelation we find the following:

> 2. I am Noah, a prophet of the Lord who dwelt on earth in ancient days, and who prophecied unto the people concerning the flood of waters which the Lord, as a heavy judgment, would pour upon the earth and its inhabitants, because of the wicked abominations therein.
>
> . . . .
>
> 19. I warn you, (for this is my mission,) to be found ready to meet the calls of the spirit, and attend to the requirements as made plain in this Sacred Roll and Book; for remember, as you treat these, so will you be treated by your God.
>
> . . . .

> 24. I am Noah the prophet; you have learned by historical account, something of the work which I did, and the same of many of the servants of God; but the half ye have never learned. But if ye will believe the word of the Lord now sent unto you, well will it be with you: If not, you will be as the people unto whom I declared the word of the Lord in ancient days; for they were found repenting when too late: and just so it will be with you.
>
> 25. For the truth of God is being declared even as in that day: and souls who believe and repent, and return to seek God's favor, unto the same will God be merciful; but such as disbelieve and disregard it, setting it aside as false prediction, will He sweep off in the flood of his judgment. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 230, 232 and 233)

On page 253 of the same book we find a revelation which was supposed to have been given by "Simon Peter." In this revelation we read:

> 1. Hearken, O ye children of Zion, and give a willing ear, O ye fellow brethren and sisters of mine, who dwell on the earth. I am Peter, of whom ye read, an apostle of your blessed Lord and Savior, and a servant of the Most High God, whose command I make it my delight to obey.
>
> . . . .
>
> 3. I was near even at the side of your blessed Savior, in presence of your holy Mother Ann, at the time your Heavenly Father commissioned his holy Angels to go forth with the sacred Roll and Book, which I well know, and testify to all nations and people that move on the earth, his Almighty power did prepare, and send by his mighty Angel to his Church on the Holy Mount of Lebanon, there to be copied by mortal hand, in deep tribulation and the holy fear of God; which I know hath been done according to his own choosing; for I have accompanied the holy Angels, with many other glorified spirits, and have with them been a careful observer of the operations in Heaven and on earth, in preparing this sacred Roll and Book for the nations thereof, from the beginning to this time; and still shall be, till it reaches those for whom it was designed by the Almighty.

This book also contains revelations from Isaiah, Elisha, Micah, Ezekiel, Malachi, and from a number of angels. The Lord himself was supposed to have spoken the following:

> 24. And now, my last and closing word in this sacred and solemn Roll of my mercy, I do send forth to all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, that dwell upon the face of the whole earth.
>
> 25. As you deal with one another, so will your God deal with you; as you treat this, his sacred and solemn word, so will He treat you, in the dispensation of his judgment, and of his mercy. As you regard the laws of nature herein required to be kept, so will He regard you.
>
> . . . .
>
> 27. As you regard the requirement of Me, your God, respecting the reading of this solemn Roll of my word, and Book of everlasting truth, to the inhabitants of earth, in your solemn assemblies, so will the Lord your God, in the day of his heaviest visitation in judgment, regard, and cause his holy Angels to regard you.
>
> . . . .
>
> 29. According as you believe and obey, or disbelieve and disobey, the words contained in this Sacred Roll [and Book,] so shall the sincerity of your cries and lamentations, in the day that you are constrained to pour them forth for my mercy, be regarded or disregarded by your God.
>
> . . . .
>
> 32. And so far as the inhabitants of the earth regard, in truth, the sacred requirements contained in the holy scriptures, and in this my Sacred Roll, now sent forth directly from my eternal throne, in the age and day in which they live, so far are they justified in my sight.
>
> . . . .
>
> 43. And thus endeth the Roll, sent forth from Me, the God of Heaven and earth, consigned to all possessing mortal clay, saith the AL FI'NO of all creation, the Beginning and the Ending; even so, eternally it shall stand, Amen. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 183-185)

Philemon Stewart, who claimed to be an "Inspired Writer," made this statement:

> This morning [May 4, 1842], between the hours of six and seven, the word of the Lord, through a Holy Angel, came to me, saying, Arise, O thou little one, and appear before the Lord, on the Holy Mount; . . . for the Lord hath words for thee to write; . . . and the words shall be revealed unto thee, in flames of fire.
>
> . . . .
>
> And as I reached the foot of the hill, . . . language cannot describe the sensations of my soul; . . . as I approached the Fountain, and seated myself low, to write, all became calm; and an inexpressible feeling, as of a consuming fire within, filled my mortal frame, and prepared me to write the following communication.

On page 13 of this book the "Sacred, Solemn and Sealed Roll" begins:

> 1. I AM THAT I AM, A God of Justice, of Wisdom, and of Truth. A God of long Forbearance, of tender Kindness, and loving Mercy. A God of whom ye read, who created the Heavens, and the Earth, and all that is therein.
>
> A God who sent forth the overwhelming deluge, to sweep from the earth's face, even that which I had created in my own image, bearing immortality, because of their gross wickedness, in perverting the order of nature which I had given them.

About 200 pages of instructions from the Lord follow after verse one. Part II contains revelations from "Ancient Prophets and Holy Angels."

It is very interesting to compare the testimony given by the witnesses to the Book of Mormon with that given by the witnesses to the "Sacred Roll and Book." Adah Zillah Potter made these statements in her testimony:

> It was in the evening of the twenty second of January, eighteen hundred and forty two, while I was busily employed putting all things in readiness, for the close of the week, that I distinctly heard my name called very loudly, and with much earnestness . . . the word was repeated three times, and I hastened to the place from whence the sound seemed to come, but there was no one present.
>
> I soon saw in the middle of the room, four very large and bright lights, or balls of fire, as they appeared to be; they moved slowly each way, and after a little time, joined together in one exceedingly large light, or pillar of fire. At this moment, I heard a loud voice, which uttered many words, with such mighty force that I feared to stay in the room, and attempted to go out; but found I had not power to move my feet.
>
> . . . .
>
> From this moment, I was not sensible where I was; and after a little time of silence, the body of light, or pillar of fire, dispersed; and I saw a mighty Angel coming from the east, . . .
>
> . . . .
>
> February twenty first, eighteen hundred forty two, this morning, . . . I retired to my writing table; but as soon as I was seated, I felt some one, as I thought, take hold of my arms and hold them fast; but I could not see any thing around me. After a little time, I was released, and went to my writing; and very soon, I heard the following words, very powerfully and loudly spoken.
>
> Where, O where is the mortal, that will condescend to listen to a mighty voice from the Heavens, and obey the same?
>
> . . . .
>
> The voice now ceased speaking, and I beheld, in the east, an Angel, moving slowly along, and soon came very near. The appearance was solemn and terrible; . . .
>
> . . . in the right hand was a very large Roll, sealed with ninety nine seals; and in the left a Book, the lids or cover of which, was of some kind of metal, but I did not know what; and it was clasped together with a clasp of steel. . . .
>
> . . . .
>
> On March twelfth, eighteen hundred forty two, . . . the holy and mighty Angel entered the room . . .
>
> The Angel now put forth his right hand and bade me take the Roll, and unseal it; but I could in no wise reach it; and he, stooping low, gave it to me. I took it, and unsealed the ninety and nine seals one at a time, and unrolled it upon the floor. I looked upon it for a moment, and feared to look longer; but the Angel said, Thou mayest read freely, but it will not profit thee, for it is yet to be written.
>
> But now, seal again the Roll and hand it unto me. I did so, and he then said, Now hearken unto my word, which, if thou wilt obey, it shall be well with thee; . . .
>
> On May first, eighteen hundred forty two, while assembled with many others, upon the Holy Mount, . . . I saw a band of Angels coming from the east, and the mighty Angel I had before seen followed them; . . . His word at this time, was a lengthy prophecy, upon the place on which we were assembled; but he did not speak to me, save these words;
>
> Child of earth, knowest thou what thou beholdest? I answered, I behold the mighty Angel of God, whose time I keep, and whose word I know. Then showing me the Roll and Book he said,
>
> These, ye now behold closed and sealed; but when again ye see them, they shall be opened; and upon this holy ground, will I show forth signs of that which I shall hereafter declare openly, and proclaim aloud.
>
> . . . .
>
> Thursday, July seventh, . . . I was awakened, just as the clock struck three, by these words; Up quickly, and gird thyself with that which I shall prepare for thee to wear; and at the hour of four, start for the Holy Mount, and there will I meet thee. Three mornings shalt thou do likewise; and upon the third morning shalt thou begin to write. One of the Rulers and a witness shall attend thee. Now this is my will and word at this time.
>
> . . . .
>
> The word ceased, and I fell on my knees, . . .
>
> At this instant, the Angel took both the Book and Roll, and arose out of my sight; . . .
>
> . . . .
>
> I have now nothing more to say, save only that I saw the mighty Angel with the mortal writer of the foregoing Roll, several times, while writing the Book. And it is with a degree of pleasure, that I add my testimony, to the truth and reality of the whole word and work; and can readily hand forth this statement, as a witnessing word, in obedience to the word of the Holy Angel. And now, this whole word, I am willing and ready to seal with my life, or in whatever manner it may please a just and holy God to require it of me. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 268, 271, 273, 278, 279, 281 and 282)

Harriet Goodwin stated:

> Sabbath morning, July tenth, . . . I saw, placed on the top of the dwelling house, a beautiful sign; it reached the whole length of the house, . . . it shown with such very great brightness. It resembled the color of gold.
>
> . . . I soon beheld three mighty Angels guarding it; I then knew it to be something placed there by a supernatural power.
>
> On saturday evening . . . I again beheld the same. On Sabbath morning . . . it was again made plain to my view, so that I could behold many of the letters; but I could not read it. On the evening of the same day, after

retiring to rest, I suddenly heard a voice sounding in my ears like peals of mighty thunder, . . .

. . . .

Sabbath afternoon, August fourteenth, . . . while in meeting, I saw a holy and mighty Angel enter the meeting room. He marched to the head of the room, and placed his wings upon many of the brethren and sisters, saying; Arise, arise, and witness for me; for lo I am an Angel of Almighty Power, sent from the throne of God . . .

And surely great is my mission, and marvelous shall be my word and work; . . .

After meeting was closed, . . . I was met by the Angel . . .

The Angel . . . bid me follow him back into the meeting room, which I did; and there I found one of the sisters; he then placed my hand in hers, and bid me walk with her and sing the little solemn song which he sung; this I did.

. . . The Angel then entered one of the rooms where several were assembled, and turning to the one whom his God had chosen to write the Sacred Roll, he said; O thou beloved one, prepare thy heart for tribulation; great has been, and great shall yet be thy tribulation. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 283 and 285)

On pages 289-290, we find the testimonies of "Eleven Mighty Angels," written by Harriet Goodwin. One of the angels was supposed to have stated:

I, a Holy Angel of the Lord, do solemnly declare, that within the covers of this Sacred Book, is inserted the word of the Lord correctly written by mortal hand, which has been done in the true fear of God; and let all who peruse it, do it in a measure of the same holy fear in which it was given. For I will ever stand as a witness of the usage of this Sacred Roll; and with a just reward will I meet every soul when they have done with time.

John Allen stated:

In presenting to you this my testimony, and affixing my name hereunto as a witness of the divine origin of the Sacred Roll now laid before you, I am induced by no other motive than the pure love which I owe to that God who gave me breath, . . . and a fear to displease the same;

. . . .

On the first of May, . . I plainly saw the preceding Roll, . . .

February fourth, . . . while ascending the Holy Mount . . . I looked and beheld an innumerable host of flaming heralds, . . .

They held in their mouths the preceding Sacred Roll. . . .

I saw the Roll several times previous to its being written, . . . between three and four months before the Roll was written, the Angel brought and placed it before me, . . . (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 291-292)

Luther Copley stated:

On the eighteenth of April, . . . I was called by the holy Angel, . . . to arise. . . .

Arise, and boldly bear testimony of the work of God, regardless of mortals, who, though they take the life of the body, cannot destroy the soul; . . .

. . . I feel loudly called upon, to add my testimony, with that of many others, to the truth of the word contained in the foregoing pages. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 293)

Hiram Rude stated:

I do testify that I have been shown by the Angels of God, at five different times, in vision, a portion of that work now revealed in the Zion of God upon earth.

. . . .

And again I do testify, that I saw two mighty Angels at the time of the writing of the foregoing Roll. The Angel of Mercy went before, and the Angel of Power followed after, with a red robe; whose eyes were like flames of fire. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 294)

Abigail Crosman stated:

On the following day, . . the Holy Angel whom I had previously seen with the Book and Lamp, again appeared to my view. At this time he opened not his Book, but placed himself before the Leaders of the meeting, and desired all present to bow . . .

I have also seen at many different times, a Mighty Angel assemble with us, holding in his hand a large Book, with the following inscription written thereon. The word of Almighty God, written and sealed with his own hand, for the children of earth.

. . . .

I therefore testify unto all, that to me they are solemn realities, firmly grounded by a knowledge which I can never deny, should my life be required in consequence of a refusal.

Having proved by experience, the uprightness and integrity of this despised number, (called Shakers,) for the last twenty five years, I can with confidence bear witness that it is the vineyard of the Lord's planting, . . . (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 297)

Hannah Blake testified:

> . . . I was surrounded by a company of Holy Angels, whose brightness was far superior to any thing my eyes ever beheld.
>
> . . . .
>
> Their appearance at first, terrified me, . . . I looked, and beheld upon the head of the Mighty Angel, a large Roll. He held in his right hand, a pen of pure gold; and in his left, a Book; and upon the cover was written thus—The true Record of Heaven.
>
> . . . .
>
> As I turned to view the fourth Angel, I saw him shut the Book, and seal it with yellow seals. . . .
>
> The Angel took from his head, the afore-mentioned Roll, and said, This is the word of the Lord God of Heaven and earth, . . .
>
> The Roll was then opened, and held by the four holy Angels, and it formed a perfect cross, pointing to the four quarters of the earth. I viewed it with surprise, for I understood not the language in which it was written. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 298)

Olive Wheeler stated:

> On the fifth of February, . . . I distinctly heard the mighty Angel, beating, as it were, upon a drum three times. I then saw him enter the room . . .
>
> But after a little while, I looked out of the window, and to my surprise, saw him marching the street, with forty holy Angels. . . .
>
> And I do solemnly testify and declare to all, . . . that the origin of the foregoing Roll is divine, and that it is the word of God, . . . (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 302)

On page 304 of the same book we find the testimony of eight witnesses. They claim that they saw an angel and the "Roll and Book":

> We, the undersigned, hereby testify, that we saw the holy Angel standing upon the house-top, as mentioned in the foregoing declaration, holding the Roll and Book.
>
Betsey Boothe.	Sarah Maria Lewis.
Louisa Chamberlain.	Sarah Ann Spencer.
Caty De Witt.	Lucinda McDoniels.
Laura Ann Jacobs.	Maria Hedrick.

Sally Maria Stewart related the following on page 306 of the same book:

> I heard the sound of a trumpet, . . . I looked up, and beheld . . . a Mighty Angel, holding in his right hand a trumpet, and in his left a Roll or Book: . . . It was also made known to me at this time, who the instrument was, that the Lord had chosen to reveal the words of this Roll to the people.

Willard Allen stated:

> . . . there appeared unto me an Angel, having in his possession a Roll and Book, . . .
>
> The above Roll was unsealed in my presence, and the Angel read to me from it, on each day of his visit, from different sections, four different sentences; making in all, twelve.
>
> The Angel then informed me, that this Roll and Book was to be written by mortal hand, and circulated for the general benefit of mankind. But the name of the one who should pen these things, and bring them to the sight and understanding of man, and the time of its accomplishment, was then concealed from my knowledge.
>
> But in the reading of the foregoing Roll and Book, I recognized and knew the twelve sentences referred to above, as being the same, verbatim, as those read to me by the Angel a year before. . . . the same Angel who read to me at that time, was in attendance on the reading of the foregoing Roll and Book, on the ninth and eleventh instant. And he there and then informed me, these were correct copies of those he had previously shown me. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 309)

Martha Van Valen stated:

> . . . while in meeting, I saw a very powerful Angel enter the east side of the room, clothed in shining brightness. . . . He said to me, I am the Angel of Eternal Truth. Look thou! behold this Roll, which shall be written in my time. I looked and saw a very lengthy Roll held before me, and it was sealed with many seals.
>
> The Angel broke the first seal, and commenced unrolling it. He unrolled a part, and then came to another seal. In this manner he continued unrolling and breaking the seals, until it was all unrolled. And by the space it covered in the room, it must have been about twenty feet long, and several feet wide. I saw it was covered with writing, but could not read one word of it.
>
> Sabbath morning, . . . There was also another spirit standing by me; and I said, What does this mean? Is this for me to read? Nay, said the spirit, it is not for you to read; but it is the eternal word of God, and will be written and sent to all nations of the earth. You will yet know this to be true. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 313-314)

Judith W. Collins stated:

> . . . I beheld a large Book lying on a table in the room; and was told to open it. I did so, but could read very little. I looked along in the Book, until I came to the three hundred and twelfth page.

April fourth, . . . I retired to my room to meditate . . . While I was seriously and solemnly reflecting upon these things, the holy Angel of the Lord entered the room, and spake as follows:

Child of mortality, . . . I have come to summon thee for a witness; therefore write thou thy name, that it may be recorded in the sacred Roll which God thy Heavenly Father hath purposed to send forth to the inhabitants of the earth. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 315)

Averill Haskell testified:

. . . there appeared around me a light, and I heard a voice calling unto me, . . .

I saw in the light, an Angel of God, and many unbodied spirits whom I knew, clothed with brightness, having a large and beautiful box. . . .

"I was much pleased with the box; and asked what it contained. They answered; The word and seal of the Living God, and Holy Wisdom. The Angel then took from it a trumpet; he also took a Book, and opened it. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 317)

Jefferson White gave this testimony:

. . . a holy Angel brought me a spiritual roll, at about eight o'clock A. M. This Angel was accompanied by several spirits and other Angels.

The Angel who brought the roll said he was the same Angel that brought the Book; that is, the word of the Lord, and showed it to Averill Haskell last June; and stated, that on the twenty fifth of February last, at three o'clock A. M. he showed me the same Book; which is to go to all nations, kindreds, tongues and people.

I recollect a Book was shown to me at that time; and the word from the Angel to me then was, that the time would come when it would be published to all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, . . .

The holy Angel read the contents of the roll, which was a seal of the living God. I had a plain view of the words on the roll, . . . (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 318-319)

Eliza L. Chapin related the following:

. . . I beheld a very mighty, holy and powerful Angel, whose brightness was like that of the sun at its meridian height, bearing in his right hand a Book; . . .

April sixth, . . . I heard a voice speak unto me, . . .

At the seventh hour. I heard the voice speak again and say; Haste ye now and write my word, . . .

I am the holy Angel of the Lord that thou didst see, bearing in my hand a Book; and in the Book was written the Roll, containing the word of the Lord God of Heaven and earth. And this Roll has been correctly copied by mortal hand. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 322-323)

Rollin Cramer made this statement on page 323 of the same book:

. . . I saw a mighty Angel place upon the floor of our dwelling house a large Book, which had the appearance of bright gold, with the following words written on the outside, "The Lord Jehovah." The book was not open, nor sealed; but appeared to be fastened together with a clasp.

Enos Learnard stated:

On the fourteenth of September,. . I was suddenly stopped by a mighty Angel, and remained insensible for a short time.

I looked up and saw the Angel standing before me, and in his hand he held a Roll and Book, which appeared to be as large as a common sized New Testament.

It was sealed, and the Angel opened the seals and Book, and said; This Book shall be laid before an instrument of mortal clay, and the instrument shall write therefrom until all be correctly written. The Angel then sealed the Book and disappeared. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 325)

Minerva L. Hill made this statement:

While assembled with my brethren and sisters . . . I saw a large company of Angels. . . I also saw the Savior and Mother Ann, having burning candles in their right hands.

. . . . .

In the summer of eighteen hundred and thirty nine, I saw the Savior with a gold trumpet in his hand; and through it he repeated these words: When God my Heavenly Father shall speak, the inhabitants of the earth shall know it. . . . I know I have seen my Holy Savior, Mother Ann and many of the holy Angels; . . . (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 333-334)

Hester Ann Adams stated:

. . . I saw a holy and mighty Angel, holding in his hand a long and bright Roll; presently the Roll appeared in the form of a Book, and the Angel held the Book open before me. I gazed with astonishment and great fear.

The Angel then spake and said, What you see will yet go forth to every nation on the face of the earth; for holy Angels are passing and re-passing therein, . . .

The heavy word which you see, is to be copied by mortal hand, as a holy Angel readeth word for word, from this Roll or Book, at the Holy Mount of the most High God; . . . (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 345)

Myra A. Bean made this statement:

> . . . my senses were withdrawn from earth, and I beheld heavenly and divine things. I saw blessed Mother Ann, who held in her hand a large book; I looked at it, and saw the cover was yellow, and appeared to be of gold.
> . . .
>
> Thus having received much previous knowledge at different times, I have not the least reason to doubt the divine origin of this Sacred Roll and Book; but affirm it to be the true and unalterable word of our Heavenly Father, sent forth upon the earth, by no other means than that of divine inspiration. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 346-347)

Cynthia B. Bradley stated:

> . . . I felt the presence of an holy Angel of God. He came and stood before me saying, Arise and write my word.
> . . . .
> . . . I the holy Angel of witness, do testify saying, Behold the time has come. I saw the holy and Mighty Angel stand before the throne of Eternal Power and Wisdom, and from thence receive an Holy Roll and Book, containing the word of God to the nations of the earth. With holy wisdom was he anointed, and with mighty power was he clothed, and commissioned to go to earth and reveal the contents of the Sacred Roll and Book, that it might be correctly copied by an instrument of mortal clay. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 350)

Mary Fall made this statement:

> I also know that Christ has made his second appearance on earth, in a chosen female known by the name of Ann Lee, and acknowledged by us as our blessed Mother in the work of redemption. She, with the help of God and her associates, did form a society, which is led by the same spirit that Christ manifested in his first appearing, which constitutes it the Church of Christ or true people of God.
>
> I can further testify unto all, that I have heard, from an invisible source, at three different times, words concerning the foregoing Roll and Book, that God hath purposed to send forth to the nations of the earth. And I know it was revealed in mercy, for mortal hand to copy; and that the writer was inspired by the power of God, through the influence of his mighty Angels.
>
> I can further testify, that by inspiration I do know that the Roll and Book has been copied correctly, as the Mighty Angel did read unto the inspired writer; yea, I do know that it has not been done by the will of man or woman, but by the will of Him that sitteth on the throne.
>
> For the word of God through an Angel unto me, was as follows: Thus saith the Almighty, Wherever this my Roll and Book shall go, there I will send my Angels; and a true record shall be kept of its reception with every nation, kindred, tongue and people on the face of the globe.
>
> Hearken again, O ye people, saith God. If ye refuse this my word unto you, or say it is the work of man or woman, I will in my fierce anger, pour out my heavy judgments upon you. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 358)

Rebecca Robinson testified:

> Again, some time in the month of November, one thousand eight hundred and forty two, while in the worship of God, I saw a mighty Angel who appeared like a flaming fire; and he had in his right hand a large shining Roll. He passed through the room three or four times, back and forth, holding out the Roll as he passed.
> . . . .
>
> May fourth, eighteen hundred and forty three, while assembled in our sacred place of worship, I saw four mighty Angels who attended the reading of the Sacred Roll; and they had in their right hands a large trumpet, resembling very bright silver; and in their left, a golden sceptre of truth. They turned in every direction, and sounded through their trumpets very loud and powerful; in the mean time holding out their golden sceptres of truth as they turned. After they had finished sounding, they spoke in one united voice, as follows:
>
> We are the holy witnessing Angels of the living God, and thus has the Lord Jehovah, who knoweth all things in Heaven and on earth, whose arm of mercy and judgment is stretched out to all the inhabitants thereof, caused this his sacred and saving word, to be correctly written by mortal hand, . . .
>
> The Angels now vanished out of my sight. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 360)

Lavina P. McIntire stated:

> At nine o'clock Sabbath evening, April eighteenth, eighteen hundred forty three, the Prophet Zephaniah gave me a white marble Box, wherein he said was a Roll and Book.
>
> Not knowing what the Prophet intended for me to do with the box, I retired to my room, where I intended to examine it; but had not time to do this, before the prophet told me the box must be given to the Holy Anointed of this place, and by them conveyed to Holy Ground, or Canterbury, N.H., where it would be opened and the contents of the Roll and book clearly ascertained.
>
> July eighteenth, as I was about to copy what I had received from the prophet, suddenly there appeared a bright light passing and re-passing before me, and these words followed, spoken by a holy Angel:

> The box which the prophet gave you, was to you a sealed box; and would have remained so, had you retained it longer; for the time had not fully come for you to know what the Roll and Book contained. But now it hath been sounded in your ears, and made plain to your understanding; for it was never intended from the beginning, that this great and all-wise purpose should be veiled in mystery. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 364)

Sophia F. Mace made this statement:

> On the morning of the eighteenth of September, eighteen hundred and forty two, as I was busily engaged in my usual occupation, I heard a sudden noise like that of a strong wind, and rain beating powerfully upon the house. I quickly arose and passed along towards the window, and observed that the natural elements were all calm and still; but I cannot describe or paint on paper that which I saw and felt. The heavenly music which I heard, and the bright Angels which I saw, took every natural thing from my view, and my soul was swallowed up in adoration and love to God.
>
> A mighty Angel advanced towards me, holding in one hand a Book, and in the other a large Roll. I was about to turn away from the sight, for fear of some further requirement, when the holy Angel spake to me as follows: Stop, and behold the work of the Lord your God, and me the holy Angel who am shod with Eternal Truth, and in whom is no darkness at all; for my dwelling is before the throne of God, and I am sent forth unto the Zion of God, to proclaim his power and to sound forth his word of solemn warning unto the nations of the earth.
>
> . . . .
>
> The Angel then disappeared from my sight, and I saw nor heard any thing more concerning the Roll, until on the morning of the eighteenth of January, eighteen hundred and forty three, while I was engaged in my morning duties, I heard a sound as of continued shouting, which sounded very heavenly and melodious, and I was deeply struck with the solemn fear of God. I saw nothing at first; but this shouting, or melodious sound, apparently drew nearer and nearer, until it took my whole sensation.
>
> I looked and beheld a bright band of Angels, and many good and happified spirits; they were unitedly marching in regular order through our dooryard and dwellings; and as they marched towards me, I saw the great and powerful Angel of the Lord, holding or bearing the Roll which spread far and wide; (the length and breadth I did not exactly know.)
>
> Then spake the Holy Angel these words unto me: Know thou that I am an holy proclaiming Angel of the Lord, and the same Angel, holding the same Roll in my hand which I plainly showed unto thee four months ago this very day, which is now unsealed, opened and revealed in the Zion of God on earth, by the will, word and command of God your Heavenly Father, and is speedily preparing to go abroad in the world. (*Sacred Roll and Book*, pages 365-366)

It would be impossible to quote all of the testimonies here since there were more than sixty individuals who gave testimony to the "Sacred Roll and Book." Although not all of them mention angels appearing, some of them tell of many angels visiting them. For instance, one woman told of eight different visions. There are over a hundred pages of testimony from "Living Witnesses."

Joseph Smith only had three witnesses who claimed to see an angel. The Shakers, however, had a large number of witnesses who claimed they saw angels and the Roll and Book.

It is somewhat ironical that Martin Harris, one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon, should join the Shakers. According to the *Millennial Star* (a Mormon publication) Martin Harris "tarried" with the Shakers for at least a year or longer and had known for "many" years that they were right:

> In one of his fits of monomania, he went and joined the "Shakers" or followers of Anne Lee. He tarried with them a year or two, or perhaps longer, having had some flare ups while among them; but since Strang has made his entry into the apostate ranks, and hoisted his standard for the rebellious to flock too, Martin leaves the "Shakers," whom he knows to be right, and has known it for many years, as he said, and joins Strang in gathering out the tares of the field. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 8, November 15, 1846, page 124)

As we have shown earlier, Clark Braden charged that "Harris declared repeatedly that he had as much evidence for a Shaker book he had as for the Book of Mormon." However this may be, we do know that Martin Harris did join the Shakers after he left the Mormon Church, and since he was a Shaker he must have accepted at least some of their beliefs. One of their teachings was that "Christ has made his second appearance on earth, in a chosen female known by the name of Ann Lee, and acknowledged by us as our blessed Mother in the work of redemption" (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 358). Benjamin Seth Youngs expressed it this way:

> . . . Christ the Anointing, the Savior of men, has verily made his second appearing in the woman Ann Lee, whom God had before ordained and chosen to be the "Mother of the New Creation" . . . (*Sacred Roll and Book*, page 378)

If Martin Harris accepted this teaching, he was certainly out of harmony with Joseph Smith's revelations, for the *Doctrine and Covenants* states that "the Son of Man cometh not in the form of a woman, . . ." (*Doctrine and Covenants*, section 49, verse 22)

The fact that Martin Harris would even join with such a group shows that he was unstable and easily influenced by men. Therefore, we feel that his testimony that the Book of Mormon was of divine origin cannot be relied upon. How can we put our trust in a man who was constantly following after movements like the Shakers?

Deceivers

Joseph Smith was certainly not the first to claim revelations or to bring forth a new book purporting to be scripture. For instance, the story of the Koran—the Mohammedan Bible—is similar to the story of the origin of the Book of Mormon. The *American College Dictionary* gives this definition of the Koran: "the sacred scripture of Islam, believed by orthodox Mohammedans to contain revelations made in Arabic by Allah directly to Mohammed." R. V. C. Bodley gives this information concerning Mohammed and the Koran:

> The first of the divine revelations took place in the year 610 A.C. It was during the month of Ramadan, and Mohammed had gone to his cave on Mount Hira to fast and pray and meditate. . . .
>
> Wrapped in his mantle, Mohammed lay on the rock floor of his cave half asleep. Suddenly a voice—a strange, clear voice unlike any he had heard before—roused him. Twice the voice called, each time more urgently. Mohammed, with his superstitions about djinns, tried to close his ears to the voice. But it persisted and grew louder. The effect was so disturbing that Mohammed fainted. When he came to, he saw a dazzling angel in human form standing before him. The same voice spoke once more:
>
> "Read thou!" it commanded.
>
> "I cannot," replied Mohammed.
>
> "Read thou!" insisted the angel. "Read thou, in the name of the Lord who created all things, who created man from a clot; read in the name of the Most High, who taught man the use of the pen, and taught him what before he knew not."
>
> These words Mohammed, now strangely elated, repeated until he knew them by heart. When he had finished, the angel said:
>
> "O Mohammed, truly thou art the messenger of Allah, and I am his angel Gabriel."
>
> With that he vanished.
>
> Mohammed's reply to the angel that he could not read raises another controversy which has been much debated by opponents and partisans of the founder of Islam. Some say that he was illiterate, others say that he was not. (*The Messenger, The Life of Mohammed*, New York, 1946, pages 56-57)

In the last chapter we gave some information concerning James J. Strang and his plates of brass. William E. McLellin ridiculed Strang by saying that his plates were very small and that the translation "contains some fifteen lines—a mere epitaph" (*The Ensign of Liberty*, page 32). Strang later brought forth a book entitled *The Book of the Law of the Lord*, translated from "the plates of Laban." Dale L. Morgan gives us this information concerning Strang's book:

> According to Strang's own preface, however, the *Book of the Law of the Lord* was the most important of all the lost books of the Bible, kept in the Ark of the Covenant and too sacred to go into the hands of strangers. "When the Septuagint translation was made, the Book of the Law was kept back, and the Book lost to the Jewish nation in the time that they were subject to foreign powers. The various books in the Pentateuch, containing abstracts of some of the laws, have been read instead of it, until even the existence of the book has come to be a matter of doubt. It is from an authorized copy of that book, written on metallick plates long previous to the Babylonish captivity, that this translation is made. And being made by the same spirit by which the words were originally dictated, it is beyond doubt as perfect as the language will admit of. The utmost pains have been taken to make the execution of it in all respects what it should be, and the editor flatters himself that no error has crept into the body of the work, and none of importance into the notes." A note following the table of contents further explains that Strang's source was "the plates of Laban, taken from the house of Laban, in Jerusalem, in the days of Zedekiah, king of Judah," these being plates which figure prominently in the early chapters of the Book of Mormon. All of the 38 chapters comprising the book were translated from these plates except Chapter II, "written by the prophet James, by inspiration of God,". . .
>
> The preliminary matter includes the title, "testimony" of seven witnesses, preface, table of contents, and a statement (as noted above) of the origin of the several portions of the book. The main text begins with Chapter I, numbered p. 9, and ends on p. 80 with a summation of the entire contents, amounting to 38 chapters, 285 sections, 15,488 words, and 65,659 letters. (*The Western Humanities Review*, Winter 1950-51, pages 68-69)

James D. Bales makes this statement concerning Strang's book:

> When the Latter-day Saints ask us how we meet the testimony of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon we also ask them how they meet the testimony of the four witnesses to *The Book of the Law of the Lord*. . . .
>
> Here is the testimony:
>
> "Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, to whom this Book of the Law of the Lord shall come, that James J. Strang has the plates of the ancient Book of the Law of the Lord given to Moses, from which he translated this law, and has shown them to us. We examined them with our eyes, and handled them with our hands. The engravings are beautiful antique workmanship, bearing a striking resemblance to the ancient oriental languages; and those from which the laws of this book were translated are eighteen in number, about seven inches and three-eighths wide, by nine inches long, occasionally embellished with beautiful pictures.

> "And we testify unto all that the everlasting kingdom of God is established, in which this law shall be kept, till it brings in rest and everlasting righteousness to all the faithful."
>
> Samuel Graham,
> Albert N. Hosmer,
> Samuel P. Bacon.
>
> This testimony was copied by the author from his copy of *The Book of the Law*. On the title page we are told that it was "printed by command of the King. At the Royal Press, St. James. A.R.I." It is the second edition. Someone has written in my copy, on the page containing the above testimony, that in the first edition there were seven witnesses whose names were recorded. These were Ebenezer Page, Warren Post, Phonies Wright, and G. Savage, in addition to the above. (*The Book of Mormon* by James D. Bales, Rosemead, California, 1958, pages 67-68)

As we have shown, the Book of Mormon witnesses gave some support to Strang, and Martin Harris even went on a mission to England for the Strangites.

James Colin Brewster was another man who made claims that were similar to those made by Joseph Smith. Dale Morgan gives the following information concerning Brewster:

> Of the other churches which at this time were struggling for a place in the sun, the most interesting are the organizations of James Colin Brewster and Charles B. Thompson.
>
> Born in Erie County, New York, October 20, 1826, Brewster announced himself, when only ten years old, to be in communication with the Angel Moroni. He commenced writing a Book of Moroni, but the authorities at Kirtland pronounced the work to be of the devil, and the boy was disfellowshipped. Undismayed, in December, 1838, the twelve-year-old Brewster embarked upon a more ambitious work which he completed and published in 1842, his family meanwhile having moved to Springfield, Illinois. Over the next three years he got out two other pamphlets, but during this time largely limited himself to polemic and the production of new scriptures. . . .
>
> The ferocious schisms which beset Strang's church, beginning in the fall of 1846, provided a seedbed for many of the new factions, and the nucleus of the church Brewster founded in 1848 was made up of the scattered branches in Illinois, Ohio, and Iowa whose members could no longer fellowship Strang. The faithful hungered for the word of the Lord; Brewster provided it, and also endless instalments of the scripture he was restoring, the lost books of the prophet Esdras. (*A Bibliography of the Churches of the Dispersion*, by Dale L. Morgan, page 113)

James Colin Brewster made this statement concerning his work:

> . . . When in Kirtland, Ohio, in the year 1837, being at that time ten years of age, I saw a vision, in which I was shown a large round table, and on it a vast quantity of writing, &c.
>
> . . . .
>
> Time passed on, and in August of the following year, (1838) when near Dayton, Ohio, I saw in another vision a large number of books in the English language, and was told "these are the lost books of Esdras.". . . In December following, I saw a third vision, and the angel whom I had seen before, then declared that "It is the will of the Lord that you should commence and write those books of Esdras."
>
> . . . .
>
> On the twenty-seventh of December, 1838, I commenced the book called "The Words of Righteousness to all Men,". . .
>
> It was late in the fall of 1840, that the first light was obtained from those writings on the subject of the gathering, or the place of refuge for the saints. Soon after, it became generally known to the branch in Springfield, that we had these writings, and Hyrum Smith visiting this place, my father invited him to his house, and laid it before him. He made no decision, but advised us to lay it before Joseph, at the same time saying, "We have no right to condemn a gift in a child."
>
> In June, 1841, my father went to Nauvoo again, taking with him the manuscript we had written. Joseph took the writings, and after keeping them in his possession six days he returned them, saying, "I have inquired of the Lord concerning this, and have not received an answer." After this, we continued to write as often as we had time, without neglecting our other business. Many members of the church had by this time heard a part of the writing read, as they came to our house for this purpose; but as yet nothing had been published, . . . on the twenty-ninth day of March, 1842, I received the following instruction:
>
> "Thus saith the Lord your God, it is my will . . . that ye cause small portions of the books to be printed in various places, . . ."
>
> We at once set ourselves about it, and in June following, the pamphlet entitled "The Words of Righteousness to all Men" was printed. Since that time, we have published extracts from the writings of Esdras as much as our poverty would permit. (*The Olive Branc*h, Kirtland, Ohio, October, 1848, pages 33-35)

On pages 93-94 of the same publication we find the following:

> Our answer, then, to those that would examine us is, first, that James Colin Brewster, a young man, twenty-one years of age, is a translator of ancient sacred writings for the church, and not of sacred writings only, but of all literary works that have as yet come before him also, whether in the engraving of Catherwood and Stevens in their discoveries in Central America, or on plates of records obtained from the bowels of the earth, as those found in Pike county, Illinois.
>
> . . . As in the case of our brother, the evidence that he had the gift of seeing in vision distant objects not seen by the natural eye coming to the knowledge of some of the first authorities of the church, after

> examination, he was taken to the house of the Lord, and under the hands of the president or patriarch of the church blessed by the spirit of prophecy, with the gift of seer, prophet, revelator and translator. His own relation of the circumstance is as follows: "Soon after this interview [or visit they had received], I and my father were requested by J. Smith, Sen. and Elder Beaman to come to the house of the Lord. We went in and the door was locked: after some conversation with Messrs. Smith, Beaman, and Holman, Elder Beaman called upon the Lord: they then proceeded to lay their hands upon my head and pronounced a blessing upon me in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and sealed it upon me by the power of the holy priesthood which they held, J. Smith then acting as first president of the church in Kirtland. The prophetic blessing was, that I should be a prophet, a seer, a revelator and translator, and that I should have power given me of God to discover and obtain the treasures which are hid in the earth." (*The Olive Branch*, December, 1848, pages 93-94)

On page 110 of the same publication, James Colin Brewster gave this information:

> If I could command the means requisite for the accomplishment of such a work, I would publish a Key to the American hieroglyphics, by the aid of which any intelligent person might become sufficiently acquainted with the ancient languages of the aboriginal nations to decypher the inscriptions on their ruined edifices with the same ease and assurance that the learned antiquarians can read the hieroglyphics of Egypt.

On pages 117-120 we find a description of "Bashan" (California) taken from "one of the Books of Esdras." James Colin Brewster must have been a prolific writer, for his followers claimed: ". . . we have ten of those Books, in manuscript, which we could publish if we had sufficient means."

James Colin Brewster could find the ruins of the ancient Nephites or Lamanites and could translate "ancient characters engraved on the rocks":

> About two miles from the crossing of the Little Arkansas, we found a rock on which is engraved a number of ancient characters. They have the appearance of great antiquity, but are still distinctly visible. This rock lies on the top of the bluff, among hundreds of similar shaped rocks, so that it is impossible to give any description of its locality which would enable the future traveler to find it.
>
> The following is a translation of the hieroglyphics:
>
> "Komnor, the son of Kish and Lahanto, chief catam of the armies of Kish, king of the people of Gerad, sojourned in this valley in the third year of his reign."
>
> In several places in New Mexico I have found ancient characters engraved on the rocks, the translation of which I will forward for publication by the next mail.
>
> This country abounds with ruins of ancient cities; one of these I have visited. They were built by that part of the Lamanites who understood the art of building, after the overthrow of the Nep[h]ites. I could find no hieroglyphics on the ruins, but there were some on the rocks near by. In my next communication I will give a description of these interesting remains. J. C. BREWSTER. Albuquerque, New Mexico, November 23, 1850. (*The Olive Branch*, April, 1851, pages 141-142)

In August, 1848, this statement appeared in *The Olive Branch*:

> He it is that hash been pleased to bestow that grace or favor upon an illiterate youth, by which he is enabled to sit down by the scribe, and give the English of those characters by Catherwood, from the hieroglyphics inserted in the history of his discoveries in Central America, with as much ease and assurance as an English scholar can read the English alphabet. It will be remembered by many, that in the year 1841 or 1842 that a gentleman in Kinderhook, Pike County, Illinois, obtained from a mound in that vicinity, six brass plates, on which were engraved ancient characters. Those plates were carried to Nauvoo, and a **facsimile** obtained from them by the engraving by Elder Reuben Hadlock. The translation of that record we have also with us. Thus, while the world cannot by their wisdom find out the things of God, the Lord, by or through a weak instrument, one whom the world will despise, will confound the wisdom of the wise, and show that the knowledge of the prudent is nothing worth; and they will be left to marvel to wonder and to perish, while they say, How knoweth the boy those things, having never learned? (*The Olive Branch*, August, 1848, page 16)

On December 1, 1842, the Mormon publication, *Times and Seasons*, denounced Brewster and his revelations. In this denunciation we read the following:

> We have lately seen a pamphlet, written and published by James C. Brewster; purporting to be one of the lost books of Esdra; and to be written by the gift and power of God. We consider it a perfect humbug, and should not have noticed it, had it not been assiduously circulated, in several branches of the church.
>
> This said Brewster is a minor; but has professed for several years to have the gift of seeing and looking through or into a stone; and has thought that he has discovered money hid in the ground in Kirtland, Ohio. His father and some of our weak brethren, who perhaps have had some confidence in the ridiculous stories that are propagated concerning Joseph Smith, about money digging, have assisted him in his foolish plans, for which they were dealt with by the church. They were at that time suspended, and would have been cut off from the church if they had not promised to desist from their ridiculous and pernicious ways. Since which time the family removed to Springfield, in this state; and contrary to their engagement have been seeing, and writing, and prophecying, &c. for which they have been dealt with by the Springfield church. (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 4, page 32)

Under the date of December 31, 1842, Joseph Smith made this statement concerning James Colin Brewster and his work:

> Brewster showed me the manuscript he had been writing. I inquired of the Lord, and the Lord told me the book was not true—it was not of Him. If God ever called me, or spoke by my mouth, or gave me a revelation, he never gave revelations to that Brewster boy or any of the Brewster race. (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, Vol. 5, page 214)

There have been many others who have brought forth false revelations. One group even published the Book of Enoch with "the missing parts restored by Divine inspiration, through Baneemy, Patriarch of Zion" (see *Zion's Harbinger and Baneemy's Organ*, St. Louis, October, 1852).

There are still many in Utah who claim to give revelations, and some are still searching for gold plates and Nephite treasures. The *Salt Lake Tribune* for November 7, 1966, contained this information:

> FILLMORE — Two Salt Lake men were killed Sunday afternoon while working in a 90-foot-deep excavation in Chalk Creek Canyon three miles east of here.
>
> Millard County Sheriff Calvin P. Stewart said the shaft is being dug by volunteer workers who believe it contains the **sealed portion of the golden plates** which—according to doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—Joseph Smith, LDS church founder, returned to the Angel Moroni after having translated the Book of Mormon from other portions of the plates.
>
> . . . .
>
> It had not been determined Sunday night whether the two men had been struck by falling rocks or had been overcome by lack of oxygen or gas fumes remaining in the shaft after the earlier dynamite blast. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, November 7, 1966, page 21)

Conclusion

In chapters one and two we have shown that the witnesses to the Book of Mormon were not dependable, and that other movements made claims that were similar to those made by Joseph Smith.

Therefore, it is plain to see that we cannot rely solely upon the testimony of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon or upon Joseph Smith's story. The book itself must be critically examined and tested to see if it is a genuine document. Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, states:

> But in all these matters we hold Joseph Smith to account. **His book enjoys no immunity to the severest tests** and asks for none. The study of forged documents is by no means in its infancy; . . . It has been known for centuries that the easiest of all forgeries to test and detect are long historical documents, and that it is never necessary to go beyond the inner inconsistencies of such documents to expose their fraudulence. So here is the Book of Mormon: **if its title page is not telling the truth, it is a big, shallow, clumsy fraud,** and there are hundreds of scholars in the world quite capable of refuting its claims within the hour. But whoever offers to undertake the job must be willing to submit his claims and arguments to the same severe criticism that it is his business to mete out. With this understanding the Book of Mormon may some day enjoy the serious critical examination it deserves. (*Since Cumorah*, Salt Lake City, 1967, page 444)

In the chapters that will follow we hope to demonstrate that the Book of Mormon is not what its title page claims it to be.

3. Ancient or Mordern?

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, makes this comment concerning the Book of Mormon:

> The Book of Mormon must be read as an ancient, not as a modern book. Its mission, as described by the book itself, depends in great measure for its efficacy on its **genuine antiquity.** (*An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, by Hugh Nibley, 1957, Salt Lake City, page 1)

On page 13 of the same book, Dr. Nibley states: "The Book of Mormon can and should be tested. It invites criticism, . . ." Many members of the Mormon Church feel that Dr. Nibley is the church's greatest scholar and that his work in behalf of the Book of Mormon is "unanswerable." Richard Anderson made this statement:

> Yet the main case against the Book of Mormon continues to be argued mainly on the ground that it is the inevitable product of the nineteenth century. In the first place, no one has so far offered this thesis who is in the slightest competent to say whether the Book of Mormon is more like the nineteenth century than the ancient world that it chronicles. A student of the nineteenth century may indeed find parallels in this period and the Book of Mormon, but without a knowledge of the world of antiquity, he simply is not equipped to make a judgment whether the Book of Mormon resembles more Joseph Smith's environment or the ancient culture it claims to represent. Professor Nibley is the only person now publishing on this question who is equipped to make valid observations. (*Since Cumorah*, by Hugh Nibley, 1967, Salt Lake City, Forward, page xii)

Hugh Nibley has spent a great deal of time trying to prove that the Book of Mormon is an authentic "record of ancient religious history." Dr. Nibley has published many books and articles in which he has attempted to show that there are parallels between the Book of Mormon and "the ancient culture it claims to represent." While Dr. Nibley has found a number of parallels we feel that they are of very little importance, especially when we consider the vast number of books and ancient records which he has had access to. If Dr. Nibley had spent half the time searching for parallels to the nineteenth century, we feel that he would have found an impressive list.

An Ignominious Death

In the Book of Mormon we find a story concerning a wicked man named Nehor (see Alma 1:2-15). Dr. Nibley makes these comments concerning this story:

> There is a peculiar rite of execution described in the Book of Mormon whose ancient background is clearly attested. When a notorious debunker of religion was convicted of murder, "they carried him upon the top of the hill Manti, and there he was caused, or rather did acknowledge, between the heavens and the earth, that what he had taught to the people was contrary to the word of God; and there he suffered an ignominious death." (Alma 1:15.) A like fate was suffered centuries later by the traitor Zemnarihah. This goes back to a very old tradition indeed, that of the first false preachers, Harut and Marut (fallen angels), who first corrupted the word of God and as a result hang to this day between heaven and earth. These may be only old legends, but they were legends that certain ancient people took very seriously, and the peculiar and symbolic punishment they describe is known to the author of the Book of Mormon. (*Since Cumorah*, by Hugh Nibley, pages 276-278)

We feel that there is a better explanation for the story of Nehor than the "old tradition" Hugh Nibley speaks of. In 1827 a man by the name of Jesse Strang was hung for a murder which he had committed in Albany, New York. The people in New York were very upset over the murder, and a crowd estimated at "thirty thousand persons" witnessed the hanging. At least five articles were printed concerning this affair in the *Wayne Sentinel*, which was published in Palmyra. We know that the Smith family was familiar with this newspaper, for on August 11, 1826, Joseph Smith's father was listed as a delinquent subscriber. Almost two years before Joseph Smith's father had run an advertisement in this paper (see *A New Witness For Christ in America*, Vol. 1, page 16)

The following is a list of parallels that we find between the story of Jesse Strang and the story of Nehor found in the Book of Mormon:

1. Both Strang and Nehor committed a murder.

> . . . he [Nehor] was wroth with Gideon, and drew his sword . . . Now Gideon . . . was slain . . . (Book of Mormon, Alma 1:9)

> . . . Strang . . . confessed the murder of the unfortunate Whipple. . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, June 22, 1827)

2. In both cases the victim was a righteous man.

> . . . a righteous man, yea, a man who has done much good among this people; . . . (Book of Mormon, Alma 1:13)

> . . . he was exemplary . . . . and just in all his dealings. . . . and above all, sensible of his obligation to his Maker, . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 24, 1827)

3. Neither Strang or Nehor held to orthodox religious beliefs or seemed to fear eternal punishment.

> And he [Nehor] had gone about among the people, . . . bearing down against the church; . . . and he also testified . . . that all mankind should be saved at the last day, and that they **need not fear nor tremble**, . . . (Book of Mormon, Alma 1:3-4)

> . . . we fear that your [Strang's] heart has been long since hardened, and your mind darkened into Atheism; that infidelity was the source of an early and intense depravity, . . . If you had **no dread of eternal consequences**, . . . Did it never cross your . . . restless mind, that you had honest parents, . . . whose life might terminate in sorrow for your crimes? (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 17, 1827)

4. Both appeared before a very religious judge.

> . . . Alma was appointed to be the first chief judge, he being also the **high priest**, . . . (Book of Mormon, Mosiah 29:42)

> Jesse Strang was sentenced before Judge Duer, who gave a stronger sermon than most preachers would today. In his address to the prisoner he stated:
>
> ". . . if you do not already believe that your accountability is not confined to the world; as sure as you still exist, you will one day know it—and you will soon know that without the divine mercy, you must meet eternal punishment—as sure as there is a God.
>
> "Prepare then to meet him face to face. Pray, if you ever have or ever can, for his mercy, . . . On earth you can expect no pardon. . . . But it is to be obtained only from the infinite mercy of the God whom you have denied; through the merits and intercession of the Saviour you have despised; . . ." (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 17, 1827)

5. Both Strang and Nehor were found guilty and were sentenced to death.

> And thou hast shed the blood of a righteous man, . . . Therefore thou art condemned to die, according to the law . . . (Book of Mormon, Alma 1:13-14)

> The jury . . . have found you guilty, . . . The sentence of the law is, . . . you are to be brought forth . . . and there hung by the neck until you are dead. (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 17, 1827)

6. Both were taken to the place of execution and acknowledged their sin.

> And it came to pass that they took him; and his name was Nehor; and they carried him upon the top of the hill Manti, and there he was caused, or rather did acknowledge, between the heavens and the earth, that what he had taught to the people was contrary to the word of God; . . . (Book of Mormon, Alma 1:150

> . . . thirteen companies, . . . marched to the place of execution. . . . the hills upon three sides, rise abruptly to a considerable height, the scaffold, therefore, was overlooked, . . . He . . . ascended the steps of the scaffold with firmness. Addressing the multitude, he said, in an audible voice, that he perceived a great many people present, who had come, . . . to witness his execution; and he hoped that it would lead them to reflect upon the effects of sin and lust, and induce them to avoid those acts . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 31, 1827)

7. Both accounts use the expression "ignominious death."

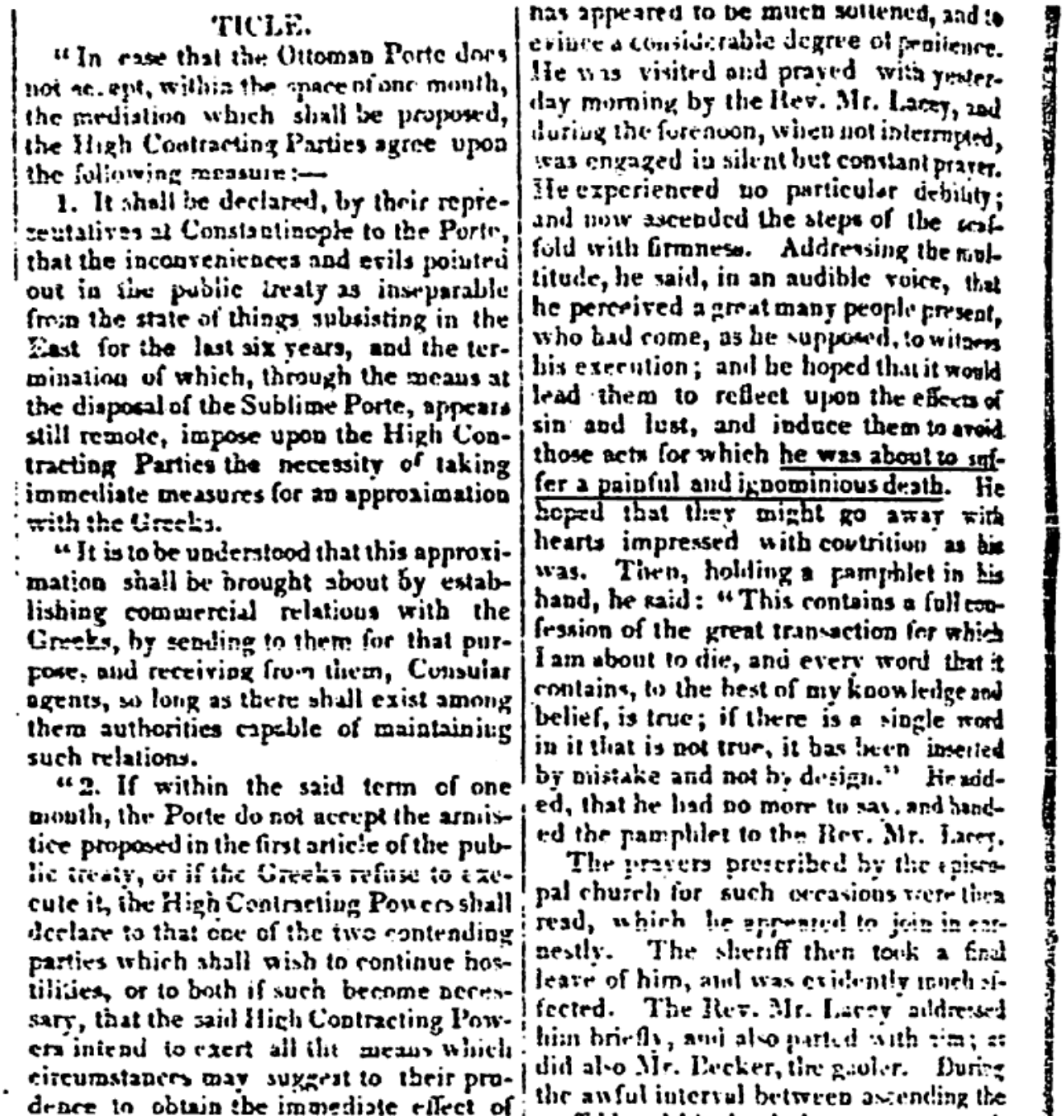
> . . . **he suffered** an **ignominious death.** (Book of Mormon, Alma 1:15)

> . . . **he** was about to **suffer** a painful and **ignominious death.** (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 31, 1827)

Although the word "ignominy" is found in Proverbs 18:3, the word "ignominious" is not found in the King James version of the Bible. It is interesting to note that the only place it appears in the Book of Mormon is in connection with the execution of Nehor. Because of the similarity of the two accounts, we feel that the story of Strang's execution could have been the source for the story of Nehor in the Book of Mormon. Certainly this is a more likely source for the story of Nehor than the "old tradition" mentioned by Dr. Nibley.

Speaking of Nehor's execution Dr. Nibley says: "A like fate was suffered centuries later by the traitor Zemnarihah. This goes back to a very old tradition . . ." (*Since Cumorah*, page 276). The Book of Mormon states that Zemnarihah was hung:

> And their leader, Zemnarihah, was taken and hanged upon a tree, yea, even upon the top thereof until he was dead. (3 Nephi 4:28)



TICLE.

"In case that the Ottoman Porte does not accept, within the space of one month, the mediation which shall be proposed, the High Contracting Parties agree upon the following measure:—

1. It shall be declared, by their representatives at Constantinople to the Porte, that the inconveniences and evils pointed out in the public treaty as inseparable from the state of things subsisting in the East for the last six years, and the termination of which, through the means at the disposal of the Sublime Porte, appears still remote, impose upon the High Contracting Parties the necessity of taking immediate measures for an approximation with the Greeks.

"It is to be understood that this approximation shall be brought about by establishing commercial relations with the Greeks, by sending to them for that purpose, and receiving from them, Consular agents, so long as there shall exist among them authorities capable of maintaining such relations.

"2. If within the said term of one month, the Porte do not accept the armistice proposed in the first article of the public treaty, or if the Greeks refuse to execute it, the High Contracting Powers shall declare to that one of the two contending parties which shall wish to continue hostilities, or to both if such become necessary, that the said High Contracting Powers intend to exert all the means which circumstances may suggest to their prudence to obtain the immediate effect of

has appeared to be much softened, and to evince a considerable degree of penitence. He was visited and prayed with yesterday morning by the Rev. Mr. Lacey, and during the forenoon, when not interrupted, was engaged in silent but constant prayer. He experienced no particular debility; and now ascended the steps of the scaffold with firmness. Addressing the multitude, he said, in an audible voice, that he perceived a great many people present, who had come, as he supposed, to witness his execution; and he hoped that it would lead them to reflect upon the effects of sin and lust, and induce them to avoid those acts for which he was about to suffer a painful and ignominious death. He hoped that they might go away with hearts impressed with contrition as his was. Then, holding a pamphlet in his hand, he said: "This contains a full confession of the great transaction for which I am about to die, and every word that it contains, to the best of my knowledge and belief, is true; if there is a single word in it that is not true, it has been inserted by mistake and not by design." He added, that he had no more to say, and handed the pamphlet to the Rev. Mr. Lacey.

The prayers prescribed by the episcopal church for such occasions were then read, which he appeared to join in earnestly. The sheriff then took a final leave of him, and was evidently much affected. The Rev. Mr. Lacey addressed him briefly, and also parted with him; as did also Mr. Becker, the gaoler. During the awful interval between ascending the

A photograph of a portion of page 2 of the *Wayne Sentinel*, August 31, 1827. This newspaper was published in Palmyra, New York. Notice that the murderer Strang was about the "suffer a painful and ignominious death." The Book of Mormon tells of a murderer by the name of Nehor who "suffered an ignominious death." (Alma 1:15)

While Dr. Nibley would like to link the death of Zemnarihah with a "very old tradition," we feel that it is more likely that the idea came from occurrences Joseph Smith was familiar with. For instance, when Judge Duer sentenced Strang he said: ". . . you are to be brought forth . . . and hung by the neck until you are dead" (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 17, 1827).

It could very well be that the story concerning Jesse Strang and Judge Duer was the source for another part of the Book of Mormon. In Alma 30:6-60 we read of another man—an atheist—who was brought before Alma. The stories in chapters one and thirty of the Book of Alma seem to be alike in several respects.

One, the man's name was Korihor. Notice that the last three letters in his name are identical with those in the name Nehor.

Two, he preached against Christ in "the land of Gideon" (Alma 30:30). It was in the "valley of Gideon" that "Gideon . . . was slain by the hand of Nehor" (Alma 2:20).

Three, there are some phrases in the first chapter of Alma that are similar to those found in the thirtieth chapter. For instance, in Alma 1:18 we read: ". . . he that murdered was punished unto death." In Alma 30:10 we read: ". . . if he murdered he was punished unto death; . . ." In Alma 1:17 we find this statement: ". . . the law could have no power on any man for his belief." In Alma 30:2 we read: ". . . there was no law against a man's belief; . . ." In Alma 1:26 we find: ". . . thus they were all equal, . . ." And in Alma 30:11 we read: ". . . all men were on equal grounds."

The following is a list of parallels which we find between the story of Jesse Strang and the story of Korihor in the Book of Mormon:

1. In both cases the prisoner either admitted or was accused of atheism:

> And then Alma said unto him: Believest thou that there is a God?
>
> And he answered, Nay. (Alma 30:37-38)

> Perhaps you doubt that there is a God, . . . we fear that . . . your mind [has been] darkened into Atheism; that infidelity was the source of an early and intense depravity, . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 17, 1827)

2. In both cases the prisoner is rebuked because of his hardness of heart.

> . . . I am grieved because of the hardness of your heart, . . . (Alma 30:46)

> . . . we fear that your heart has been long since hardened, . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 17, 1827)

3. In both cases the prisoner is threatened with eternal destruction.

> . . . I am grieved . . . that ye will still resist the spirit of the truth, that thy soul may be destroyed. (Alma 30:46)

> . . . you will soon know that without the divine mercy, you must meet eternal punishment . . .(*Wayne Sentinel*, August 17, 1827)

4. Both finally acknowledged their sin and a confession was written.

> And Korihor put forth his hand and wrote, . . . I withstood the truth, even until I have brought this great curse upon me . . .
>
> Now the knowledge of what had happened unto Korihor was immediately published throughout all the land; . . . (Alma 30:52, 53 and 57)

> . . . he said, . . . he hoped that it would lead them to reflect upon the effects of sin and lust, . . . holding a pamphlet in his hand, he said: "This contains a full confession of the great transaction for which I am about to die, . . ." (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 31, 1827)

5. Both Strang and Korihor came to a terrible end.

> Korihor was "struck dumb" and was later "Trodden down" by a wicked people "until he was dead." (Alma 30:49 and 59)

> Judge Duer told Strang he was to be hung by the neck "until you are dead." (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 17, 1827)

6. Both the Book of Mormon and the *Wayne Sentinel* make an issue of the man's death.

> . . . thus we see the end of him who perverteth the ways of the Lord; . . . (Alma 30:60)

> Thus perished the murderer. (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 31, 1827)

It is also interesting to note that the address which Judge Duer gave at the time he sentenced Strang is somewhat similar to some verses found in a speech given by Amulek—Amulek was supposed to be Alma's friend. Judge Duer said: "Prepare then to meet him face to face" (*Wayne Sentinel*, August 17, 1827). Amulek stated: ". . . this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; . . ." (Alma 34:32). Judge Duer told Strang that his "heart of stone must be converted to a heart of flesh; . . ." In Alma 34:31 Amulek stated: ". . . harden not your heart any longer; . . ." Judge Duer said "Improve then the time afforded you." Amulek likewise warned that we must "improve our time while in this life, . . ." (verse 33). Judge Duer stated: "Your only hope of pardon after death, depends on the sincerity of your repentence before you die. For in the grave there is neither repentance nor forgiveness: . . ." Amulek likewise stated: ". . . do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for after this day of life, . . . then cometh the night, of darkness . . . Ye cannot say, . . . I will repent, that I will return to my God" (Alma 34:33-34).

It is also into resting to note that Judge Duer told Strang, the murderer, that he could be forgiven "through the merits" of the Saviour. In the Book of Mormon the Lamanites who had committed many "murders" were likewise forgiven "through the merits" of Christ (Alma 24:10).

In his address Judge Duer uses the expression "an offended God." The same expression is found in the Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi 28:35. Judge Duer also uses the words "immortal soul." These same words are found in the Book of Mormon, Mosiah 2:38. These words, of course, were rather common in religious writings of Joseph Smith's time. Nevertheless, the word "immortal" is used only once in the Bible (1 Timothy 1:17), and is not used with the word "soul."

The story of Korihor being "struck dumb" is very similar to an article that appeared in the *Western Farmer*, a newspaper published in Palmyra, New York, in 1821. Below is a comparison of the two stories:

> And now Korihor said unto Alma: if thou wilt show me a sign, that I may be convinced that there is a God, yea, show unto me that he hath power, and then twill I be convinced of the truth of thy words.
>
> But Alma said unto him: Thou hast had signs enough; will ye tempt your God? . . . if thou shalt deny again, behold God shall smite thee, that thou shalt become dumb, that thou shalt never open thy mouth any more, that thou shalt not deceive this people any more.
>
> Now Korihor said unto him: . . . ye do not know that there is a God; and except ye show me a sign, I will not believe.
>
> Now Alma said unto him: This will I give unto thee for a sign, that thou shalt be **struck dumb**, according to my words; and I say, that in the name of God, ye shall be struck dumb, that ye shall no more have utterance.
>
> Now when Alma had said these words, Korihor was struck dumb, that he could not have utterance, according to the words of Alma.
>
> And Korihor put forth his hand and wrote saying: I know that I am dumb, for I cannot speak; and I know that nothing save it were the power of God could bring this upon me; . . .
>
> And thus we see the end of him who perverteth the ways of the Lord; . . . (Alma 30:43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 50, 52 and 60)

> Dear Sir—I received the following account from an officer in the army. . . .
>
> During the year 1819, a private soldier in a regiment of foot, quartered at _____; in Ireland, was noted for profane swearing and horrid imprecations. particularly for calling upon God and the devil alternately, to strike him deaf & dumb. One evening, being in the guard house, he related some things to his companions which seemed to them incredible, and in confirmation of which he cursed and swore vehemently. Sergent _____ reproved him, and reasoned with him on the wickedness of his conduct, and the danger of provoking God to punish him. But, instead of standing reproved, he made an open profession of his infidelity. At eleven o'clock, he went to his post. At twelve o'clock, Sergeant _____ with an orderly man, visited the different sentinels, and, in approaching the profane swearer, was surprised to find himself not challenged. Sergeant _____ spoke, but received no answer; and approaching him found him resting on his musket, and tears running down his face. On shaking him by the arm, the unfortunate man, by putting his fingers to his ears and mouth, signified that his horrid imprecation was answered by **the loss of his hearing and speech**. How awful the state of that man who contendeth with his Maker! It is hard to kick against the goads. W. W. (*Western Farmer*, October 10, 1821)

The story of Korihor in the Book of Mormon also resembles the account of Zacharias in the New Testament. In the first chapter of Luke we read: "And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. . . . And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. And the angel answering said . . . behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, . . . And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless. . . . Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; . . . And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all" (Luke 1:11, 12, 18, 20, 22, 57, 62 and 63).

A Great Storm

In the Book of Mormon we read the story of a great storm the Nephites encountered on their way to the "promised land":

> . . . wherefore, we did all go down into the ship, with our wives and our children, we did put forth into the sea and were driven forth before the wind towards the promised land.
>
> And after we had been driven forth before the wind for the space of many days, behold, my brethren and the sons of Ishmael and also their wives began to make themselves merry, . . . wherefore, I, Nephi, began to speak to them with much soberness; but behold they were angry with me, . . .
>
> And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel did take me and bind me with cords, and they did treat me with much harshness; . . .

> And it came to pass that after they had bound me insomuch that I could not move, the compass, which had been prepared of the Lord, did cease to work.
>
> Wherefore, they knew not whither they should steer the ship, insomuch that there arose a great storm, yea, a great and terrible tempest, and we were driven back upon the waters for the space of three days; and they began to be frightened exceedingly lest they should be drowned in the sea; nevertheless they did not loose me.
>
> And on the fourth day, which we had been driven back, the tempest began to be exceeding sore.
>
> And it came to pass that we were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea. And after we had been driven back upon the waters for the space of four days, my brethren began to see that the judgments of God were upon them, and that they must perish save that they should repent of their iniquities; wherefore, they came unto me, and loosed the bands which were upon my wrists, and behold they had swollen exceedingly; and also mine ankles were much swollen, and great was the soreness thereof.
>
> . . . and my parents being stricken in years, and having suffered much grief because of their children, they were brought down, yea, even upon their sick-beds.
>
> Because of their grief and much sorrow, and the iniquity of my brethren, they were brought near even to be carried out of this time to meet their God; yea, their grey hairs were about to be brought down to lie low in the dust; yea, even they were near to be cast with sorrow into a watery grave. . . .
>
> And there was nothing save it were the power of God, which threatened them with destruction, could soften their hearts; wherefore, when they saw that they were about to be swallowed up in the depths of the sea they repented of the thing which they had done, insomuch that they loosed me.
>
> And it came to pass after they had loosed me, behold, I took the compass, and it did work whither I desired it. And it came to pass that I prayed unto the Lord; and after I had prayed the winds did cease, and the storm did cease, and there was a great calm. (1 Nephi 18:6, 8-15, 17, 18, 20 and 21)

There is a story in the *Wayne Sentinel* which, we feel, might have been the source for at least a portion of the story in the Book of Mormon. This story is entitled "The Sea Voyage," and ran for three consecutive issues in the *Wayne Sentinel*. Below is a list of parallels between the two stories:

1. Both stories tell of a terrible storm at sea.

> . . . there arose a great storm . . . (Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 18:13)
>
> . . . the long looked for storm arose in all its granduer. (*Wayne Sentinel*, April 6, 1827)

2. Both accounts speak of the storm as a "tempest."

> . . . a great and terrible **tempest**, . . . (1 Nephi 18:13)
>
> . . . a **tempest**, that threatened our destruction. (*Wayne Sentinel*, April 6, 1827)

3. Both accounts tell that the ship was "driven" by the storm.

> . . . **we had been driven** back upon the waters for the space of four days, . . . (1 Nephi 18:15)
>
> **We had been driven** in this manner at the mercy of the waves for about a week. . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, April 13, 1827)

4. In both accounts the violence of the storm increased.

> . . . on the forth day, . . . the tempest began to be exceeding sore. (1 Nephi 18:14)
>
> The violence of the storm every hour increased, . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, April 6, 1827)

5. Both stories tell that the storm threatened the people with destruction.

> . . . **threatened** them **with destruction**, . . . (1 Nephi 18:20)
>
> . . . **threatened** us **with destruction.** (*Wayne Sentinel*, April 6, 1827)

6. In both stories the people began to fear they would perish.

> . . . they began to be frightened exceedingly . . . (1 Nephi 18:13)
>
> . . . alarm began to be felt by all on board, . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, April 6, 1827)

7. Both accounts speak of a man being "bound."

> . . . they had **bound** me insomuch that I could not move, . . . (1 Nephi 18:12)
>
> . . . the emaciated wretch **bound** to the windless. (*Wayne Sentinel*, March 30, 1827 — NOTE — this man was found on a wrecked ship. He was the sole survivor of a terrible storm and had bound himself to the windless to keep from being washed overboard)

8. Both men had been bound for days during a storm.

> . . . for the space of four days, . . . (1 Nephi 18:15)
>
> He had been in this situation two days. . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, March 30, 1827)

9. Both men were finally released.

> . . . they loosed me. (1 Nephi 18:20)
>
> He was released . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, March 30, 1827)

10. In "The Sea Voyage" we read of a man and his wife by the name of Campbell who suffer much grief. In the Book of Mormon, Lehi and his wife, Sariah, also go through much sorrow.

> . . . my parents . . . suffered much grief . . . (1 Nephi 18:17)
>
> Mrs. Campbell, like a faithful mirror, invariably reflected the gloom of her husband's countenance; . . . (*Wayne Sentinel*, March 30, 1827)

11. Sickness and the possibility of death are mentioned in both accounts.

> . . . they were brought down, yea, even upon their sickbeds.
> Because of their grief and sorrow, and the iniquity of my brethren, they were brought near even to be carried out . . . to meet their God; . . . (1 Nephi 18:17-18)
>
> She was confined almost entirely to her cabin, and sickness was assigned as the cause. (*Wayne Sentinel*, April 6, 1827)
> . . . his mind was strongly imbued with the belief that his own death was near at hand. (*Wayne Sentinel*, March 30, 1827)

12. Both accounts use the expression "a watery grave."

> . . . into **a watery grave.** (1 Nephi 18:18)
>
> . . . to **a watery grave.** (*Wayne Sentinel*, April 6, 1827)

It must be admitted, of course, that all stories concerning the sea would have some parallels. Nevertheless, we feel that "The Sea Voyage" could have had an influence upon the story in the Book of Mormon.

There is another source for this story which cannot be easily brushed aside, for the evidence of plagiarism is all too apparent. This is the story concerning Jesus found in Mark 4:37-39 (King James version). Below is a comparison of the two stories.

1. The two stories use identical language when speaking of the storm.

> . . . **there arose a great storm,** . . . (Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 18:13)
>
> . . . **there arose a great storm,** . . . (Mark 4:37)

2. In both stories the storm becomes so severe that the people are about to "perish," and they seek help from their spiritual leader.

> . . . my brethren began to see that . . . they must **perish** . . . wherefore, they came unto me, and loosed the bands . . . (1 Nephi 18:15)
>
> . . . they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we **perish**? (Mark 4:38)

3. In both cases after the spiritual leader comes forth, the storm ceases. Almost identical wording appears in both accounts concerning the calming of the sea.

> . . . the winds did cease . . . and there was a great calm. (1 Nephi 18:21)
>
> . . . the winds ceased, and there was a great calm. (Mark 4:39)

It is very obvious that the author of the Book of Mormon has borrowed from Mark, yet the book of Nephi is supposed to be about 600 years older than the book of Mark. Therefore, the appearance of this story in the Book of Mormon proves that it is not an ancient document. Dr. Hugh Nibley states: "A forgery is defined by specialists in ancient documents as 'any document which was not produced in the time, place, and manner claimed by it or its publishers'" (*Since Cumorah*, page 160). Certainly, the Book of Mormon falls into this class.

Ancient Inhabitants

On February 19, 1823, an article appeared in the *Palmyra Herald* which could have had some influence on the Book of Mormon story. In this article we read the following:

> The Indians are reported the aborigines of North America; — but I doubt the truth of this proposition. The fortifications and the remains of antiquity in Ohio and elsewhere, clearly prove them to be the work of some other people than the Indians. Many of these fortifications were not forts, but religious temples, or places of public worship.—Many of them much resemble the druidical temples still existing in England.
>
> The first settlers of North America were probably the Asiatics, the descendants of Shem—Europe was settled by the children of Japheth. The Asiatics, at an early period, might easily have crossed the Pacific Ocean, and made settlements in North America. The South American Indians probably were the first inhabitants of North America.—The descendants of Japheth might afterwards cross the Atlantic, and subjugate the Asiatics, or drive them to South America.
>
> Visionary as this idea may appear, several facts tend to corroborate the conjecture. The language, customs, and religious ceremonies of the South American Indians, resemble those of the Asiatics. The manners, language, and even size of the N. American Indians, especially the Esquimaux, have a great resemblance to the northern nations of Europe. What wonderful catastrophe destroyed at once the first inhabitants, with the species of the mammoth, is beyond the researches of the best scholar and greatest antiquarian. Discoveries of this kind furnish subjects for the investigation of the learned, and gratify the imagination of the inquisitive. (*Palmyra Herald*, February 19, 1823)

It is interesting to note that the Book of Mormon tells that America was inhabited by two races of people. In a letter to John Wentworth, Joseph Smith stated:

> We are informed by these records [the Book of Mormon] that America in ancient times has been inhabited by two distinct races of people. The first were called Jaredites, and came directly from the Tower of Babel. The second race came directly from the city of Jerusalem, about six hundred years before Christ. . . . The Jaredites were destroyed about the time that the Israelites came from Jerusalem, who succeeded them in the inheritance of the country. (Letter by Joseph Smith, as quoted in *A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, by B. H. Roberts, Vol. 1, page 167)

Like the article in the *Palmyra Herald*, the Book of Mormon claims that the first inhabitants of North America came from Asia. The *Palmyra Herald* states that the Asiatics may have crossed the Pacific Ocean. A footnote on page 572 of the 1888 edition of the Book of Mormon states that the Jaredites landed on "the Western coast of North America," so we would assume that they also came across the Pacific Ocean. The article in the *Palmyra Herald* states: "What wonderful catastrophe destroyed at once the first inhabitants, with the species of the mammoth, is beyond the researches of the best scholar and greatest antiquarian." The Book of Mormon, however, attempts to answer this question:

> And now I, Moroni, proceed to give an account of those ancient inhabitants who were destroyed by the hand of the Lord upon the face of this north country. (Book of Mormon, Ether 1:1)

Notice that the *Palmyra Herald* mentions mammoths. The Book of Mormon states that the Jaredites had "elephants" (Ether 9:19), but it says nothing about the Nephites having them. It is also of interest to note that the *Palmyra Register* for January 7, 1818, carried this statement about mammoths: "A St. Louis paper says that living Mammoths have been seen near the rocky mountains."

The Book of Mormon claims to have been written in "the language of the Egyptians" (1 Nephi 1:3). This is rather strange since the Nephites were supposed to have come from Jerusalem. This unusual idea, however, may have been suggested by an article which appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel* on June 1, 1827:

> Decyphering of Hieroglyphics.—Professor Seyffarth of Leipsig, who has been employed in decyphering the Egyptian Antiquities at Rome, states, . . . that he has found . . . a Mexican manuscript in hieroglyphics, from which he infers, that the Mexicans and the Egyptians had intercourse with each other from the remotest antiquity, and that they had the same system of mythology. (*Wayne Sentinel*, June 1, 1827)

The Book of Mormon tells of three Nephites who were never to "taste of death" (3 Nephi 28:7). The Mormon Apostle Parley P. Pratt, in a book published in 1855, stated that these Nephites are "now about one thousand eight hundred years old" (*Key to Theology*, page 24). This idea could have been suggested by an article which appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel* on October 8, 1823. It told of a man who was teaching that "many of the disciples of the former Christ **never died.**" John 21:23 could have been another source for this idea.

The Book of Mormon is strongly against a paid ministry. In the *Wayne Sentine*l for September 7, 1827, we find a copy of an "Epistle" from the "Yearly Meeting of Friends in London. In this "Epistle" we find an attack on the paid ministry, stating that "the ministry of the Gospel is to be **without money and without price.**" In the Book of Mormon, Alma 1:20, we read: ". . . they did impart the word of God, one with another, **without money and without price.**" The words "without money and without price" also appear in Isaiah 55:1. Nevertheless, it is interesting that both the "Epistle" published in the *Wayne Sentinel* and the Book of Mormon use these words to attack a paid ministry.

The *Wayne Sentinel* for October 5, 1827, tells of a group of Indians who were converted to Christianity by some missionaries. The Book of Mormon tells a story concerning a group of Lamanites—dark people—who were converted to Christianity by the Nephites—white people. In both cases the converts became friendly to the white people and were later attacked. In the *Wayne Sentinel* the Indians were massacred by white people who professed to be Christians. In the Book of Mormon story they were attacked by Lamanites who were stirred up to anger by dissenters from the Nephites. The most interesting thing about these two stories, however, is that in both cases the converts were so filled with the love of God that they made no "resistance." Below is a comparison of the two stories.

BOOK OF MORMON—Alma 24:21-22

> Now when the people saw that they were coming against them they went out to meet them, and prostrated themselves before them to the earth, and began to call on the name of the Lord; and thus they were in this attitude when the Lamanites began to fall upon them, and began to slay them with the sword.
>
> And thus without meeting any resistance, they did slay a thousand and five of them; . . .

WAYNE SENTINEL—October 5, 1827

> The people of Otulaska made no resistance, they implored no mercy. The hatchet of defence rested at their feet—no one lifted it up. Hatred was extinct in their hearts, and the hand of the murderer could not kindle its flame. The warriors bowed their heads to the stroke of death, and the mother yielded up her babe to the red knife of slaughter, ere her dim eye had closed on its struggles.

Westminster Confession

In the *Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* we read the following:

> The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms were adopted, in 1729, by the General Synod of the Presbyterian Church, as the "confession of their faith," excepting certain clauses relating to the civil magistrate. (*Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church*, 1964-65, page 7)

In 1825 Alexander Campbell made this charge against the Presbyterians:

> 1st. Not the Holy Scriptures, but the Westminster Catechism, is the "text-book" for the religious instruction of the offspring and households of Presbyterians. Thus the understanding, and consequently the conscience of those youths are biassed and moulded into the Presbyterian form. (*The Christian Baptist*, edited by Alexander Campbell, Vol. 3, page 42)

While Alexander Campbell may have been exaggerating, the Westminster Confession and Catechisms were, no doubt, a vital part of the Presbyterian faith in the nineteenth century.

According to Joseph Smith, his "father's family was proselyted to the Presbyterian faith" before the angel told him about the gold plates (see *Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith 2:7). Since the Westminster Confession and Catechisms were sold at the Wayne Bookstore in Palmyra (see *Wayne Sentinel*, January 26, 1825), it is likely that the Smith family possessed them. Although Joseph Smith was not converted to the Presbyterian Church, he may have been familiar with the Westminster Confession. In fact, he may have heard his brothers learning the Catechisms at various times.

Although the Book of Mormon theology is not Calvinistic, certain portions of it resemble the Westminster Confession and Catechisms. For instance, below is a comparison of a few verses from "The Shorter Catechism" with some from the Book of Mormon:

. . . Believest thou that there is a Great Spirit? And he said, Yea. And Ammon said: This is God. (Alma 18:26-28) Q. 4. What is God? A. God is a Spirit, . . . ("The Shorter Catechism" as printed in *The Confession of Faith: The Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, Philadelphia, 1813)
. . . there is a true and living God. Now Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God? And he answered, No. (Alma 11:27-29) Q. 5. Are there more Gods than one? A. There is but one only, the living and true God. ("The Shorter Catechism")

The Westminster Confession, chapter 32, is probably the source for Alma, chapter 40. Below is a comparison of the two.

1. Both claim to give information concerning the state of man after death.

> . . . **the state of** the soul between **death and the resurrection** . . . (Book of Mormon, Alma 40:11)
>
> . . . **the state of** Men after **death**, **and** of **the resurrection.** (Westminster Confession, chapter 32, as printed in *The Confession of Faith: The Larger and Shorter Catechisms*, Philadelphia, 1813)

2. Both state that the souls of men return to God after death.

> . . . the spirits . . . are taken home **to** that **God who gave them** life. (Alma 40:11)
>
> . . . their souls . . . return **to God who gave them.** (Westminster Confession, chapter 32:1)

3. Both claim that the righteous are received into a state of peace.

> . . . **the** spirits **of** those who are **righteous are received into** a state of happiness, . . . (Alma 40:12)
>
> **The** souls **of** the **righteous** . . . **are received into** the highest heavens, . . . (Westminster Confession, chapter 32:1)

4. Both state that the wicked are cast out into darkness.

> . . . **the** spirits **of the wicked**, . . . shall be **cast** out **into** outer **darkness**; . . . (Alma 40:13)
>
> . . . **the** souls **of the wicked** are **cast into** hell, . . . and utter **darkness**, . . . (Westminster Confession 32:1)

5. Both state that the souls of the wicked remain in darkness until the judgment.

> . . . **the souls of the wicked**, yea, in **darkness**, . . . **remain in** this state, . . . until the time of their resurrection. (Alma 40:14)
>
> . . . **the souls of the wicked** . . . **remain in** . . . **darkness**, reserved to the judgment of the great day. (Westminster Confession, chapter 32:1)

6. Both state that the soul will be united again with the body at the time of the resurrection.

> . . . the **souls** and the **bodies** are re-**united**, . . . (Alma 40:20)
>
> . . . **bodies**, . . . shall be **united** again to their **souls** . . . (Westminster Confession, chapter 32:2)

Mormon writers feel the fortieth chapter of Alma is one of the best portions of the Book of Mormon. J. N. Washburn stated:

> It is in its sermons that the Book of Mormon reaches its greatest heights, and heights they are, in the combination of profound (often striking) thoughts and frequently notable language.
>
> We have now a provocative treatment of a theme that has universal significance, the condition of men between death and the resurrection. **There is nothing like this in the Bible.** (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, by J. N. Washburn, Salt Lake City, 1954, pages 120-121)

Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, stated:

> Certainly Joseph Smith could not have found ideas in *View of the Hebrews* to compose what is said about the state of the soul between death and the resurrection in Alma 40:11-14. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, by Sidney B. Sperry, Salt Lake City, 1964, page 178)

While there may be "nothing like this" in the Bible or the *View of the Hebrews*, the Westminster Confession is so similar that we are forced to believe that the Book of Mormon teaching concerning the state of the soul between death and the resurrection was taken from it.

The teachings of the Book of Mormon concerning the Fall appear to be similar to those found in the Westminster Confession. We will not take the time, however, to list the parallels.

There are many expressions found in the Westminster Confession which are similar to those used in the Book of Mormon. Below is a comparison of some of these words.

1. "God **from all eternity**" (Westminster Confession, ch. 3:1) — "the Lord . . . **from all eternity**" (Mosiah 3:5). The word "eternity" is only used once in the Bible (Isaiah 57:15) and not in connection with the words "from all."

2. "**infinite good of God**" (Westminster Confession, ch. 5:4) — "**infinite goodness of God**" (Mosiah 5:3). The word "infinite" is found only three times in the Bible and never in connection with "goodness of God."

3. "**Our first parents**" (Westminster Confession, ch. 6:1) — "**our first parents**" (Alma 42:2). All three of these words are found in the Bible, but they are never used in this order.

4. "**before the tribunal of** Christ" (Westminster Confession, ch. 33:1) — "**before the tribunal of** God" (Alma 5:18). The word "tribunal" is never used in the Bible.

5. "**thoughts, words and deeds**" (Westminster Confession, ch. 33:1) — "**thoughts**, and your **words**, **and** your **deeds**" (Mosiah 4:30). Although these words are used in the Bible, they are not found in this order.

6. "**carnal security**" (Westminster Confession, ch. 33:3) — "**carnal security**" (2 Nephi 28:21). Although both these words are found in the Bible, they are not found together.

The Apocrypha

The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie gives us this information concerning 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. . . .
>
> These apocryphal writings were never included in the Hebrew Bible, but they were in the Greek Septuagint (the Old Testament used by the early apostles) 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. The American Bible Society, founded in 1816, has never printed the Apocrypha in its Bibles, and the British and Foreign Bible Society has excluded it from all but some pulpit Bibles since 1827.
>
> From these dates 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*, by Bruce R. McConkie, 1966, page 41)

The following appeared in the *Wayne Sentinel* on March 3, 1826:

> *Decision of the Apochrypham Question.*
>
> —It appears from a notice to the *London Christian Guardian*, 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.

In an article published in the *Wayne Sentinel*, June 2, 1826, we read:

> APOCHRYPHAL BOOKS.
>
> The apochryphal 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 the Apocrypha was not generally accepted among the Protestants, Joseph Smith was interested in it, for when he purchased a Bible in the late 1820's he picked one which contained the Apocrypha. Reed Durham gives us this interesting information:

> 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 sold for $3.75. . . . 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 Company. ("A History of Joseph Smith's Revision of the Bible," by Reed C. Durham, Jr.. Ph.D. dissertation, Brigham Young University, 1965, page 25)

In a footnote on the same page Reed Durham gives the following source for this information:

> Israel A. Smith (President of the Reorganized Church), Letter to John D. Giles (Business Manager of *Improvement Era*), August 12, 1946. In writer's possession. He informed Giles that on the flyleaf of the Bible in Joseph Smith's own handwriting were these words: "The history of the Jews, the property of Joseph Smith and Olivery [*sic*.] Cowdery. Bought at E. B. Grandin's Book Store, Palmyra, Wayne County, New York, October 8, 1828. $3.75."

Wesley P. Walters also copied the writing off the flyleaf of Joseph Smith's Bible. According to his notes, the date of purchase was October 8, 1829. However this may be, Joseph Smith chose a Bible with the Apocrypha, and must have been somewhat familiar with its contents. Edward Stevenson made this statement concerning Joseph Smith:

> I very well remember the Prophet . . .
>
> 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)

Since we know that Joseph Smith purchased a Bible with the Apocrypha and was somewhat familiar with its contents, it should come as no surprise to find that the Book of Mormon contains some parallels to it.

Search For Nephi

The name "Nephi" is not found in either the Old or New Testament of the Bible, but it is one of the most important names in the Book of Mormon. At least four men in the Book of Mormon are named "Nephi." It is also the name of several books in the Book of Mormon, a city, a land, and a people. Mormon writers have spent a great deal of time trying to find the source for this name. In the *Commentary on the Book of Mormon* we find the following:

> "Nephi" means "prophet," one who speaks for God. That name, the Hebrew "nebi," the Egyptian "Kneph" and "Noub," and the Uto-Astecan "Nahua," seem to be closely related. The word is still found in "Napo," the name of one of the affluents of the Amazon River; also, in such Indian names as "Nepas," "Nahuapos" and "Napotas." (*Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, by George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Salt Lake City, 1956, Vol. 1, page 3)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, made this statement concerning the name "Nephi":

> 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. (Spiegelberg, in JEA XII, 35.) (*Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites*, by Hugh Nibley, Salt Lake City, 1952, pages 27 & 29)

Dr. Wells Jakeman, also of the BYU, does not seem to agree with either the *Commentary on the Book of Mormon* or Dr. Nibley:

> . . . it will be advisable first to discuss the meaning of the name Nephi. Unfortunately this has not yet been definitely established. . . . In fact, there does not seem to be any acceptable Hebrew meaning or derivation for this name.
>
> . . . .
>
> In accordance with these indications (and the absence of an acceptable Hebrew etymology), an Egyptian derivation also for the name Nephi has recently been proposed; namely, that it is from "Nihpi," asserted original name of the Egyptian god "Pa-nepi." Unfortunately, this particular Egyptian derivation so far suggested is not admissable, for the reason that the name of the god referred to here was not "Pa-nepi" but Panepi (if hyphenated, Pan-epi), of which the original form was not "Nihpi" but very probably Pahen(i)h-epi ("Ox of Epi," i.e. the "Apis-bull"). It may be added that besides the mistaken etymology given here for the Egyptian name Panepi, another reason for rejecting this particular Egyptian derivation of the Book of Mormon name Nephi is that it is not likely that Lehi, an Israelite prophet who emphasized the teachings of Moses, 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).
>
> There is, however, a defensible Egyptian derivation that has not previously been noted. This is that the name Nephi (very probably—as pointed out above—pronounced "Nephee," with the *ph* an aspirate *p* rather than an *f*) is Lehi's rendering of the Egyptian name of the personification or "god" of grain in Egyptian belief, N(e)pri (from n[e]pri, the Egyptian word for grain). . .
>
> This derivation of Nephi's name from the name of the young Egyptian grain god Nepri or Nepi brings us in turn to a further conclusion. This is that the descendants of Lehi and Nephi in the New World, in any portrayal of Nephi such as in the Lehi Tree-of-Life episode, may well have used—as a convenient name-glyph for identifying him therein—the Egyptian symbol (already at hand and doubtless known to them) of this young grain god Nepi whose name he bore; i.e., a representation of a young man wearing ears of grain or a grain plant on his head. (*Stela 5, Izapa, Chiapas, Mexico*, by M. Wells Jakeman, University Archaeological Society, Special Publications no. 2, BYU, 1958, pages 38-42)

These three references should give the reader an idea of the confusion among Mormon writers regarding the source for the name "Nephi."

We feel there is a much simpler explanation for the appearance of the name "Nephi" in the Book of Mormon. The author of the Book of Mormon may have been reading the Apocrypha and found this reference in 2 Maccabees 1:36:

> And Neemias called this thing Naphthar, which is as much as to say, a cleansing: but many men call it **Nephi.**

We feel that this is probably the source for the word "Nephi" found in the Book of Mormon.

The name "Ezias," found in the Book of Mormon, Helaman 8:20, is another name that does not appear in the Old or New Testaments of the Bible. It is interesting to note, however, that this same name is found in the Apocrypha, 1 Esdras 8:2.

Without a Head

The story of Judith in the Apocrypha seems to be reflected in the story of the decapitation of Laban in the Book of Mormon. Below is a list of parallels between the two stories.

1. Both Nephi and Judith were servants of God.

> . . . Nephi . . . was favored of the Lord, . . . (Mosiah 10:13)

> . . . she feared God greatly. (Judith 8:7)

2. Both stories speak of a wicked man who wanted to destroy God's people.

> . . . Laban . . . sent his servants to slay us, . . . (1 Nephi 3:25)

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

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

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

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

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

> Therefore let us go up; let us be strong . . . (1 Nephi 4:2)

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

5. Both claimed that God's strength did not depend upon numbers.

> . . . the Lord; . . . is mightier than all the earth, then why not mightier than Laban and his fifty, yea, or even than his tens of thousands? (1 Nephi 4:1)

> For thy power standeth not in multitude, nor thy might in strong men: . . . (Judith 9:11)

6. Both Nephi and Judith went out on a secret mission.

> . . . we came without the walls of Jerusalem.
> And it was by night; . . . and after they had hid themselves, I, Nephi, crept into the city and went forth towards the house of Laban. (1 Nephi 4:4-5)

> Thus they went forth to the gate of the city 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 and 10)

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

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

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

8. In both cases the wicked man was drunk.

> . . . **he was** drunken **with wine.**

> . . . **he was** filled **with wine.**

9. In both cases the servant of the Lord took the wicked man's weapon.

> . . . I beheld his sword and I drew it forth . . . (1 Nephi 4:9)

> . . . she . . . took down his fauchion from thence, . . . (Judith 13:6)

10. In both cases the servant of the Lord took hold of the wicked man's hair.

> . . . **took** Laban by **the hair of** the **head,** . . . (1 Nephi 4:18)

> . . . **took** hold of **the hair of** his **head**, . . . (Judith 13:7)

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

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

> **And** she **smote** twice upon his neck with all her might, and she took away **his head** from him, . . . (Judith 13:8)

12. In both cases the servant of the Lord returned to those waiting outside without being discovered.

> . . . I went forth unto my brethren, who were without the walls. (l Nephi 4:27)

> 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)

13. Both Nephi and Judith obtained some of the wicked man's possessions.

> . . . I took the garments of Laban . . . and I did gird on his armor about my loins . . . we took the plates of brass and the servant of Laban, . . . (1 Nephi 4:19 and 38)

> . . . they gave unto Judith Holofernes his tent, and all his plate, and beds, and vessels, and all his stuff: . . . (Judith 15:11)

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

> . . . they did rejoice exceedingly, . . . (1 Nephi 5:9)

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

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

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

> . . . they offered their burnt offerings, . . . (Judith 16:18)

16. Both Nephi and Judith use a similar expression.

> . . . his tens of thousands? (1 Nephi 4:1)

> . . . he came with ten thousands . . . (Judith 16:4)

The Apocrypha could have been the source for many ideas found in the Book of Mormon—especially in the First Book of Nephi. The first sentence in the Book of Mormon begins: "I, Nephi, . . ." (l Nephi 1:1). As we have shown, "Nephi" is found in the Apocrypha—2 Maccabees 1:36.

In the second verse of the Book of Mormon Nephi states: ". . . I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians." In Mormon 9:32-33 we read:

> And now, behold, we have written this record according to our knowledge, in the characters which are called among us the **reformed Egyptian**, being handed down and altered by us, according to our manner of speech.
>
> And if our plates had been sufficiently large we should have written in Hebrew; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us also; and if we could have written in Hebrew, behold, ye would have had no imperfection in our record.

Ecclesiasticus, in the Apocrypha, may have been a source for these ideas. In the introduction to Ecclesiasticus we read:

> Wherefore let me intreat you to read it with favour and attention, and to pardon us, wherein we may seem to come short of some words, which we have laboured to interpret. For the same things uttered in Hebrew, and translated into another tongue, have not the same force in them; and not only these things, but the law itself, and the prophets, and the rest of the books, have no small difference, when they are spoken in their own language. For in the eight and thirtieth year coming into **Egypt**, when Euergetes was king, and continuing there some time, I found a book of no small learning: therefore I thought it most necessary for me to bestow some diligence and travail to interpret it; . . .

In 2 Maccabees 1:1 we read:

> 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: . . .

In First Nephi 1:17 we find this statement:

> Behold, **I make an abridgment** of the record of my father, upon plates which I have made with mine own hands; wherefore, after I have **abridged** the record of my father then will I make an account of mine own life.

The idea of an abridgment may have also come from the Apocrypha, for in 2 Maccabees 2:23, 26 and 31 we read:

> All these things, I say, being declared by Jason of Cyrene in five books, we will assay to **abridge** in one volume. . . .
>
> Therefore to us, that have taken upon us this painful labour of abridging, it was not easy, but a matter of sweat and watching; . . .
>
> But to use brevity, and avoid much labouring of the work, is to be granted to him that will make an **abridgment.**

The Book of Mormon tells us that the Jewish scriptures were written on "plates of brass" (1 Nephi 3:3). In the Apocrypha, Ecclesiasticus 50:3, we read about "plates of brass." Although these particular plates may not have had writing upon them, in 1 Maccabees 8:22 we read that "the senate wrote back again in tables of brass, . . ." In 1 Maccabees 14:18-19 we read:

> 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.

In the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 4:20- 24) we read that Nephi took the plates of brass from "the treasury" of Laban. In 2 Maccabees 3:6 we read of "the treasury" in Jerusalem. It is also interesting to note that even the name "Laban" is found in Judith 8:26. (The name Laban is, of course, also found in the Old Testament.)

We have already pointed out many parallels between the story of the beheading of Holofernes and the story of Laban's death. We could list other parallels between the Apocrypha and the Book of Mormon, but this should be sufficient to show that there is some connection between the two.

The apocryphal books were written hundreds of years after the Nephites were supposed to have left Jerusalem. Dr. Hugh Nibley states that 1 Maccabees was "written about 175 B.C." (*An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, page 127). Therefore, the parallels between the Book of Mormon and the Apocrypha tend to demonstrate that the Book of Mormon is not the ancient record it claims to be.

Bible Influence

The King James Version of the Bible probably had more influence on the Book of Mormon than any other book. The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt, however, claimed that Joseph Smith was not familiar with the Bible:

> . . . he was **unacquainted** with the contents of the Bible; he was brought up to work. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, page 288)

The evidence, however, seems to show that Joseph Smith was very familiar with the Bible. In a manuscript which the Mormon Church suppressed for about 130 years Joseph Smith himself stated:

> At about the age of twelve years my mind became Seriously, imprest with regard to the all important concerns for the wellfare of my immortal Soul which led me to Searching the Scriptures, as I was taught, that they contained the word of God . . . thus from the age twelve years to fifteen I pondered many things . . . and by Searching the Scriptures I found that . . . there was no society or denomination that built upon the gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in the new testament . . . ("An Analysis of the Accounts Relating Joseph Smith's Early Visions," by Paul R. Cheesman, Masters thesis, BYU, 1965, pages 127-128)

Joseph Smith's own mother quoted him as saying:

> . . . but Joseph, from the first, utterly refused even to attend their meetings, saying, "Mother, I can take my Bible, and go into the woods, and learn more in two hours, than you can learn at meeting in two years, if you should go all the time." (*Joseph Smith's History By His Mother*, photo-reprint of *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith*, 1853 ed., page 90

Unlike the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt, the Mormon writer J. N. Washburn freely admits that Joseph Smith was familiar with the Bible:

> One thing appears to be beyond doubt: Joseph knew his Bible. (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, by J. N. Washburn, 1954, page 4)

Old Testament

There can be no doubt that the first books of the Bible furnished a great deal of source material for the writing of the Book of Mormon. The book of Genesis seems to have had a real influence upon the first few chapters of the Book of Mormon.

Two of Nephi's brothers, Joseph and Jacob, have names taken from the book of Genesis. His mother's name is Sariah, which reminds us of Abraham's wife Sarah—also called Sarai (Genesis 17:15). Ishmael—a friend of the family—is also a name taken from Genesis (see ch. 17:18). The name Laban is likewise found in Genesis (see ch. 24:29).

The story of Nephi in some ways parallels the story of Joseph found in Genesis. Below are a few parallels between the two stories.

1. The Lord revealed to both Joseph and Nephi that he was to rule over his brothers.

> And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: Blessed art thou, Nephi, because of thy faith, . . .
>
> And inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments, thou shalt be made a ruler and a teacher over thy brethren. (1 Nephi 2:19 & 22)

> And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.
>
> . . . and his father rebuked him, and said . . . Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?
>
> And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying. (Genesis 37:9-11)

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2. In both cases the brothers wanted to kill him.

> . . . And it came to pass that they did lay their hands upon me, for behold, they were exceeding wroth, and they did bind me with cords, for they sought to take away my life, that they might leave me in the wilderness to be devoured by wild beasts. (1 Nephi 7:16)

> Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams. (Genesis 3 7:20)

3. In both cases the brothers found themselves bowing to the one whom they had wanted to kill.

> . . . they did bow down before me, . . . (1 Nephi 7:20)

> . . . Joseph's brethren came, and bowed down themselves before him . . . (Genesis 42:6)

There are also several parallels between Jacob's trouble with Laban and Nephi's trouble with a man by the same name which we do not have room to list here.

The story of Moses leading the children of Israel out of bondage seems to have been the source for a good deal of material found in the First Book of Nephi. Below is a comparison of the two stories.

1. Both accounts tell that the people were led out into the wilderness near the Red Sea.

> And he came down by the borders near the shore of the Red Sea; and he traveled in the wilderness in the borders which are nearer the Red Sea; . . . (1 Nephi 2:5)

> But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt. (Exodus 13:18)

2. In both cases the people were led by the Lord.

> . . . the Lord . . . commanded him that on the morrow he should take his journey into the wilderness. . . . in the morning, . . . he beheld upon the ground a round ball of curious workmanship; and it was of fine brass. And within the ball were two spindles; and the one pointed the way whither we should go into the wilderness. (1 Nephi 16:9-10)

> And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: (Exodus 13:21)

3. In both cases the people state that it would have been better if they had died in the land from which they came.

> . . . it would have been better that they had died before they came out of Jerusalem than to have suffered these afflictions. (1 Nephi 17:20)

> And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, . . . (Exodus 16:3)

4. In both cases the people suffered from hunger.

> . . . they did suffer much for the want of food. (1 Nephi 16:19)

> . . . ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger. (Exodus 16:3)

5. In both cases the people murmured, and the Lord provided them with meat.

> And it came to pass that Laman and Lemuel and the sons of Ishmael did begin to murmur exceedingly, because of their sufferings and afflictions in the wilderness; and also my father began to murmur against the Lord his God; yea, and they were all exceeding sorrowful, even that they did murmur against the Lord.
>
> Now it came to pass that I, Nephi, having been afflicted with my brethren because of the loss of my bow, and their bows having lost their springs, it began to be exceedingly difficult, yea, insomuch that we could obtain no food.
>
> And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came unto my father; and he was truly chastened because of his murmuring against the Lord, insomuch that he was brought down into the depths of sorrow.
>
> And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord said unto him: Look upon the ball, and behold the things which are written.
>
> And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did go forth up into the top of the mountain, according to the directions which were given upon the ball.
>
> And it came to pass that I did slay wild beasts, insomuch that I did obtain food for our families. (1 Nephi 16:20, 21, 25, 26, 30 and 31)

> And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:
>
> And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel. At even, then ye shall know that the **LORD** hath brought you out from the land of Egypt:
>
> And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the **LORD**; for that he heareth your **murmurings against the LORD**: and what are we, that ye murmur against us? . . .
>
> And the LORD spake unto Moses saying,
>
> I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying. At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God.
>
> And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. (Exodus 16:2, 6, 7, 11, 12, and 13)

6. In both cases the people suffered from thirst.

> . . . and they did murmur against my father, because he had brought them out of the land of Jerusalem, saying: Our father is dead; yea, and we have wandered much in the wilderness, and we have suffered much affliction, hunger, thirst, and fatigue; . . . (1 Nephi 16:35)

> And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst? (Exodus 17:3)

7. In both cases the people were about to put the leader to death.

> And Laman said unto Lemuel and also unto the sons of Ishmael: Behold, let us slay our father, and also our brother Nephi . . . (1 Nephi 16:37)

> And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. (Exodus 17:4)

8. In both cases the people wanted to return to the land from which they came.

> And thus they did murmur against my father, and also against me; and they were desirous to return again to Jerusalem. (1 Nephi 16:36)

> And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt. (Numbers 14:4)

9. In both cases the people accused their leader of taking them into the wilderness to gain power over them.

> . . . But behold, we know that he lies unto us; . . . that he may deceive our eyes, thinking, perhaps, that he may lead us away into some strange wilderness; and after he has led us away, he has thought to make himself a king and a ruler over us, that he may do with us according to his will and pleasure. (1 Nephi 16:38)

> Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? (Numbers 16:13)

10. In both cases the people were being led to a land of promise.

> . . . wherefore, inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall be led towards the promised land; and ye shall know that it is by me that ye are led. (1 Nephi 17:13)

> Remember thy servants, . . .
> Lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say, . . . the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them, . . . (Deuteronomy 9:27-28)

11. In both cases the Lord miraculously prepares their food.

> And so great were the blessings of the Lord upon us, that while we did live upon raw meat in the wilderness, our women . . . were strong. . . .
> For the Lord had not hitherto suffered that we should make much fire, as we journeyed in the wilderness; for he said: I will make thy food come sweet, that ye cook it not; . . . (1 Nephi 17:2 & 12)

> Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every clay, that I may prove them, . . .
> . . . the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full: . . . (Exodus 16:4 & 8)

12. In both cases the Lord provided the people with light.

> And I will also be your light in the wilderness; and I will prepare the way before you, if it so be that ye shall keep my commandments; . . . (1 Nephi 17:13)

> . . . to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:
> He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night, . . . (Exodus 13:21-22)

13. In both cases the people wandered for many years in the wilderness.

> And we did sojourn for the space of many years, yea, even eight years in the wilderness. (1 Nephi 17:4)

> And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness. (Numbers 14:33)

14. The Lord told both Nephi and Moses to go up on a mountain.

> . . . the voice of the Lord came unto me, saying: Arise, and get thee into the mountain. And it came to pass that I arose and went up into the mountain and cried unto the Lord. (1 Nephi 17:7)

> And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. (Exodus 19:20)

15. The Lord tells both Nephi and Moses that He is God, and that He brought them out of the land from which they came.

> Yea, and the Lord said also that: After ye have arrived in the promised land, ye shall know that I, the Lord, did deliver you from destruction; yea, that I did bring you out of the land of Jerusalem. (1 Nephi 17:14)

> I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. (Exodus 20:2)

16. Both Nephi and Moses went up on the mountain several times, and they were both given instructions to build something.

> And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto me, saying: Thou shalt construct a ship, after the manner which **I shall show thee**, . . . (1 Nephi 17:8)

> And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.
> According to all that **I shew thee**. . . . (Exodus 25:8)

17. Both the Nephites and the children of Israel were to use timber.

> . . . we did **work timbers** of curious **workmanship.** (1 Nephi 18:1)

> . . . in carving of **timber**, to **work** in all manner of **workmanship.** (Exodus 31:5)

18. The Spirit of God came upon both Nephi and Moses in such a powerful manner that the people feared them.

> . . . neither durst they lay their hands upon me nor touch me with their fingers, even for the space of many days. Now they durst not do this lest they should wither before me, so powerful was the Spirit of God; and thus it had wrought upon them. (1 Nephi 17:52)

> And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. (Exodus 34:30)

19. In both stories the people danced and forgot the Lord.

> . . . my brethren and the sons of Ishmael and also their wives began to make themselves merry, insomuch that they began to dance, and to sing, and to speak with much rudeness, yea, even that they did forget by what power they had been brought thither; . . . (1 Nephi 18:9)

> And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. (Exodus 32:19)

The story of the Jaredites in the Book of Mormon also resembles the story of Moses and the children of Israel. Below is a list of parallels between the two stories.

1. Both Moses and the brother of Jared went up to the top of a mountain.

> . . . the brother of Jared, . . . went forth unto **the top of the mount**, . . . (Ether 3:1)

> . . . the LORD called Moses up to the **top of the mount**; . . . (Exodus 19:20)

2. The brother of Jared, like Moses, asked the Lord to turn away His anger from the people.

> . . . **turn** away thine anger **from** this **thy people** . . . (Ether 3:6)

> **Turn from** thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against **thy people.** (Exodus 32:12)

3. Both the brother of Jared and Moses had special stones that were touched by the finger of God.

> . . . the Lord stretched forth his hand and touched the **stones** one by one **with** his **finger.** (Ether 3:6)

> And he gave unto Moses, . . . two tables of testimony, tables of **stone**, written **with** the **finger** of God. (Exodus 31:18)

4. The Lord appeared in a cloud to both the brother of Jared and Moses.

> And it came to pass that when they had come down into the valley of Nimrod 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. (Ether 2:4)

> And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the LORD appeared **in the cloud.**
> And the LORD spake unto Moses, . . . (Exodus 16: 10-11)

5. The Lord led the Jaredites in the same manner that he led the children of Israel.

> And it came to pass that the Lord did go before them, and did talk with them as he stood in a cloud, and gave directions whither they should travel. (Ether 2:5)

> And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way: . . . (Exodus 13:21)

6. Both groups were in the wilderness many years.

> Behold, O Lord, thou hast smitten us because of our iniquity, and hast driven us forth, and for these many years we have been in the wilderness; . . . (Ether 3:3)

> And your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and bear your whoredoms, until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness. (Numbers 14:33)

The story of the deliverance of the children of Israel also seems to be reflected in the story of Alma and his people in the Book of Mormon. Follwing is a list of parallels.

1. Both the Israelites and Alma's group were brought into bondage, and taskmasters were put over them.

> And now it came to pass that Amulon began to exercise authority over Alma and his brethren, and began to persecute him, and cause that his children should persecute their children.
>
> For Amulon knew Alma, that he had been one of the king's priests, and that it was he that believed the words of Abinadi and was driven out before the king, and therefore he was wroth with him; for he was subject to king Laman, yet he exercised authority over them, and put tasks upon them, and put **task-masters** over them. (Mosiah 24:8-9)

> And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we:
>
> Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.
>
> Therefore they did set over them **taskmasters** to afflict them with their burdens. (Exodus 1:9-11)

2. Both accounts use the words "burdens" and "bondage."

> . . . the **burdens** which are put upon your shoulders, . . . while you are in **bondage:** . . . (Mosiah 24:14)

> . . . to afflict them with their **burdens**. . . . they made their lives bitter with hard **bondage**, . . . (Exodus 1:11 & 14)

3. Both accounts state that the people cried out to God because of their afflictions.

> And it came to pass that so great were their afflictions that they began to cry mightily to God. (Mosiah 24:10)

> And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage. (Exodus 2:23)

4. God heard their cries and spoke of a "covenant."

> And it came to pass that the voice of the Lord came to them in their afflictions, saying: Lift up your heads and be of good comfort, for I know of the covenant which ye have made unto me; and I will **covenant** with my people and deliver them out of bondage. (Mosiah 24:13)

> And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his **covenant** with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.
>
> And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them. (Exodus 2:24-25)

5. In both accounts God promised to deliver them.

> And it came to pass that so great was their faith and their patience that the voice of the Lord came unto them again, saying: Be of good comfort, for on the morrow I will **deliver** you out of bondage. (Mosiah 24:16)

> And I am come down to **deliver** them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land . . . (Exodus 3:8)

6. In both accounts the people go out into the wilderness.

> And Alma and his people departed into **the wilderness**; . . . (Mosiah 24:20)

> But God led the people about, through the way of **the wilderness** . . . (Exodus 13:18)

7. In both cases they took their flocks.

> . . . his people in the night-time gathered their **flocks** . . . (Mosiah 24:18)

> Also take your **flocks** . . . (Exodus 12:32)

8. In both cases the Lord warns His people that the wicked people are going to follow them.

> And now the Lord said unto Alma: Haste thee and get thou and this people out of this land, for the Lamanites have awakened and do pursue thee; . . . (Mosiah 24:23)

> And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: . . . (Exodus 14:17)

9. In both stories the Lord stops the wicked people.

> . . . I will stop the Lamanites in this valley that they come no further in pursuit of this people. (Mosiah 24:23)

> And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; . . . (Exodus 14:28)

The story in the Book of Mormon concerning the Priests of king Noah stealing the daughters of the Lamanites is very similar to a story concerning the children of Benjamin found in the Bible. Below is a comparison of the two stories.

BOOK OF MORMON — Mosiah 20:1-5.

> Now there was a place in Shemlon where the daughters of the Lamanites did gather themselves together to sing, and to dance, and to make themselves merry.
>
> And it came to pass that there was one day a small number of them gathered together to sing and to dance.
>
> And now the priests of king Noah, being ashamed to return to the city of Nephi, yea, and also fearing that the people would slay them, therefore they durst not return to their wives and, their children.
>
> And having tarried in the wilderness, and having discovered the daughters of the Lamanites, they laid and watched them;
>
> And when there were but few of them gathered together to dance, they came forth out of their secret places and took them and carried them into the wilderness; yea, twenty and four of the daughters of the Lamanites they carried into the wilderness. (Mosiah 20:1-5)

BIBLE — Judges 21:19-23.

> Then they said, Behold, there is a feast of the LORD in Shiloh yearly in a place which is on the north side of Beth-el, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to She-chem, and on the south of Le-bo-nah.
>
> Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards;
>
> And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shi-loh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shi-loh, and go to the land of Benjamin.
>
> . . . .
>
> And the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them. (Judges 21:19-23)

It is very interesting to note that king Noah in the Book of Mormon planted vineyards and became a wine-bibber:

> And it came to pass that he planted vineyards round about in the land; and he built wine-presses, and made wine in abundance; and therefore he became a wine-bibber, and also his people. (Mosiah 11:15)

The idea for this probably came from Genesis 9:20-21:

> And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:
>
> And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.

The Mormon leaders claim that the Nephites had the Old Testament books which were written prior to the time they left Jerusalem—i.e., about 600 B.C. Large portions of Isaiah are quoted in the Book of Mormon. In fact, more than eighteen chapters of Isaiah are found in the Book of Mormon. The ten commandments and many other portions of the Old Testament are also found in the Book of Mormon. In this work we cannot even begin to list all of the verses that are taken from the Old Testament.

Since the Nephites claimed to have the books written before 600 B.C., we are not too concerned about quotations taken from them. The Book of Mormon, however, borrows from books written after 600 B.C. For instance, the Book of Daniel seems to have had some influence on the Book of Mormon. When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were cast into the "fiery furnace," they were seen "walking **in the midst of the fire**, and they have no hurt; . . ." (Daniel 3:25). The Book of Mormon tells that Nephi and Lehi "were encircled about as if by fire," and they were "as standing **in the midst of fire**, and were not burned" (Book of Mormon, Helaman 5:23). Later in the Book of Mormon it tells of Nephites who "were cast into a furnace" and also, like Daniel, thrown into "a den of wild beasts":

> And thrice they were cast into a furnace and received no harm.
>
> And twice were they cast into a den of wild beasts; and behold they did play with the beasts as a child with a suckling lamb, and received no harm. (3 Nephi 28:21, 22)

In the Book of Daniel we read that a hand wrote upon the wall and that Daniel interpreted the writing (Daniel 5:5). In the Book of Mormon we read that Aminadi "interpreted the writing which was upon the wall of the temple, which was written by the finger of God" (Alma 10:2).

One of the most serious mistakes the author of the Book of Mormon (BOM) made was that of quoting from the Book of Malachi many years before it was written. Below is a comparison of some verses which were supposed to have been written by Nephi sometime between B.C. 588 and 545, and some verses which were written by Malachi about 400 B.C.

> For behold, saith the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned. (BOM - 1 Nephi 22:15)

> For behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. (Bible - Malachi 4:1)

. . . he shall rise from the dead with healing in his wings; . . . (BOM - 2 Nephi 25:13)

. . . the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; . . . (Bible - Malachi 4:2)

> Wherefore, all those who are proud, and that do wickedly, the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, for they shall be as stubble.
>
> . . . and they shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall consume them, saith the Lord of Hosts. (BOM - 2 Nephi 26:4 & 6)

> For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. (Bible - Malachi 4:1)

> But the Son of righteousness shall appear unto them; and he shall heal them, and they shall have peace with him, until three generations shall have amassed away, . . . (BOM - 2 Nephi 26:9)
>
> But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. (Bible - Malachi 4:2)

About 600 years after Nephi wrote these words. Jesus was supposed to have appeared to the Nephites and said: ". . . Behold other scriptures; I would that ye should write, that ye have not" (Book of Mormon - 3 Nephi 23:6). Jesus then said:

> . . . write the words which the Father had given unto Malachi, which he should tell unto them. And these are the words which he did tell unto them, saying: Thus said the Father unto Malachi—Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, . . .
>
> For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.
>
> But unto you that fear my name, shall the Son of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves in the stall. (3 Nephi 24:1; 25:1 & 2)

These words, attributed to Jesus, very plainly show that the Nephites did not have the words of Malachi until Christ came among them. George Reynolds stated:

> As Malachi lived between two and three hundred years after Lehi left Jerusalem, the Nephites knew nothing of the glorious things that the Father had revealed to him until Jesus repeated them. (*Complete Concordance of the Book of Mormon*, by George Reynolds, Salt Lake City, 1957, page 442)

Now, if the Nephites knew nothing concerning these words until the coming of Christ, how did Nephi quote them 600 years before?

New Testament

Mark Twain made this statement concerning the Book of Mormon:

> The book seems to be merely a prosy detail of imaginary history, with the Old Testament for a model; followed by a tedious plagiarism of the New Testament. The author labored to give his words and phrases the quaint, old-fashioned sound and structure of our King James's translation of the Scriptures; and the result is a mongrel—half modern glibness, and half ancient simplicity and gravity. (*Roughing It*, by Mark Twain, page 110)

Hugh Nibley makes this statement concerning Mark Twain's criticism of the Book of Mormon:

> Mark Twain accuses Joseph Smith of having in composing the Book of Mormon "smouched from the New Testament, and no credit given." But since the Book of Mormon was written to be read by people who knew and believed the Bible—indeed one cannot possibly believe the Book of Mormon without believing the Bible—it is hard to see why a deceiver would strew the broadest clues to his pilfering all through a record he claimed was his own. (*Since Cumorah*, by Hugh Nibley, page 127)

We agree with Dr. Nibley that "it is hard to see why a deceiver would strew the broadest clues to his pilfering all through a record he claimed was his own." Nevertheless, the clues are there. Wesley M. Jones stated:

> The New Testament was one of Joseph Smith's most important sources. He used . . . St. Matthew with a sprinkle here and there from the other Gospels and, of course, from St. Paul. Whatever he used, though, he enlarged and expanded "to make it more plain." In short, St. Matthew was the clay and Joseph the potter. (*A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources*, by Wesley M. Jones, Detroit, Michigan, 1964, page 65)

The ministry of Christ seems to have been the source for a good deal of the Book of Mormon. For instance, the story of Christ raising Lazarus from the dead seems to have had a definite influence upon a story concerning Ammon, found in the Book of Mormon. Below is a list of parallels between the two stories:

1. In both stories a man seems to die.

> . . . he fell unto the earth, as if he were dead. (Alma 18:42)
>
> . . . Lazarus is dead. (John 11:14)

2. In both cases the servant of the Lord is sent for.

> Now the queen having heard of the fame of Ammon, therefore she sent and desired that he should come in unto her. (Alma 19:2)
>
> Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. (John 11:3)

3. In both cases a period of time elapsed.

> And it came to pass that after two days and two nights they were about to take his body and lay it in a sepulchre, which they had made for the purpose of burying their dead. (Alma 19:1)
>
> Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already. (John 11:17)

4. In both cases there was great sorrow.

> . . . and his wife, and his sons, and his daughters mourned over him . . . greatly lamenting his loss. (Alma 18:43)

> When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled. (John 11:33)

5. Both Martha and the queen use the word "stinketh."

> . . . others say that he is dead and that **he stinketh**, . . . (Alma 19:5)

> . . . by this time **he stinketh**: . . . (John 11:39)

6. Both Ammon and Jesus use the word "sleepeth" with regard to the man.

> . . . he **sleepeth** . . . (Alma 19:8)

> . . . Lazarus **sleepeth**; . . . (John 11:11)

7. Both Ammon and Jesus say that the man will rise again.

> . . . he **shall rise again**; . . . (Alma 19:8)

> . . . Thy brother **shall rise again**. (John 11:23)

8. The conversation between Ammon and the queen contains other phrases that are similar to those used by Jesus and Martha.

> And Ammon **said unto her: believest thou this?** And **she** said **unto him**: . . . **I believe** . . . (Alma 19:9)

> Jesus **said unto her**, . . . **believest thou this?**
> **She** saith **unto him**, Yea, Lord: **I believe** . . . (John 11:25-27)

9. In both cases the man arose.

> . . . he arose, . . . (Alma 19:12)

> . . . he that was dead came forth, . . . (John 11:44)

The story of Jesus raising Jairus' daughter from the dead may have also had an influence upon the story found in the Book of Mormon. In the Bible Jesus said: ". . . she **is not dead, but sleepeth**" (Luke 8:52). In the Book of Mormon, Ammon told the queen: "He **is not dead, but** he **sleepeth** . . . (Alma 19:8)

The Book of Mormon story goes on to relate that the queen fell to the ground "as though" she were dead, but a woman who had been converted to the Lord came "**and took** the queen **by the hand**, . . . **and she arose**" (Alma 19:29). This is quite similar to the wording found in the story of Jairus' daughter: "**and took** her **by the hand**, . . . **and she arose** . . ." (Luke 8:54-55).

A sermon delivered by Alma in the Book of Mormon contains some similarities to the sermon on the mount. Below are a few parallels between the two.

1. In both cases the sermon was delivered on a hill.

> . . . Alma was teaching . . . upon the hill Onidah, . . . (Alma 32:4)

> . . . he went up into a mountain: . . . and taught them, . . . (Matthew 5:1-2)

2. Both accounts mention a multitude.

> . . . there came a great **multitude** unto him, . . . (Alma 32:4)

> . . . the **multitudes**, . . . (Matthew 5:1)

3. Both accounts use similar expressions.

> . . . **say unto you,** . . . (Alma 32:10)
> . . . **blessed are** they who humble themselves . . . (Alma 32:16)
> . . . **blessed are ye**; . . . (Alma 32:13)

> . . . **I say unto you**, . . . (Matthew 5:22)
> **Blessed are** the meek: . . . (Matthew 5:5)
> **Blessed are ye**, . . . (Matthew 5:11)

This was supposed to have happened about 74 years before Jesus was born.

Alma goes on to teach a parable which is similar to Jesus' parable of the sower. Below are a few similarities between to two.

1. In both parables the seed is the word of God.

> Now, we will compare the word unto a seed. (Alma 32:28)

> Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. (Luke 8:11)

2. Both parables use the words "and bring forth fruit."

> . . . **and bring forth fruit** . . . (Alma 32:37)

> . . . **and bring forth fruit** . . . (Luke 8:15)

3. Both parables talk of the seed sprouting up, but in both cases it soon withers away.

> . . . when the heat of the sun cometh and **scorcheth it**, **because it hath no root it withers away**, and ye pluck it up and cast it out. (Alma 323:38)

> But when the sun was up, it was **scorched**; and **because it had no root, it withered away.** (Mark 4:6)

Samuel the Lamanite was supposed to have preached to the Nephites about six years before the birth of Christ yet his warnings to them sound strikingly like those given by Jesus in the book of Matthew. Below is a comparison.

1. Both Samuel the Lamanite and Jesus upbraid a number of cities for their wickedness.

> . . . wo be unto this great city. . . . wo be unto the city of Gideon, . . .
> Yea, and wo be unto all the cities which are in the land round about, . . . (Helaman 13:14-16)

> Woe unto thee, Chorozin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! . . .
> And thou, Capernaum, shalt be brought down to hell: . . . (Matthew 11:21 and 23)

2. Both Samuel and Jesus condemned the people for killing the prophets.

> . . . wo unto this people, . . . ye do cast out the prophets, and do mock them, and cast stones at them, and do slay them, . . . (Helaman 13:24)

> O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee . . . (Matthew 23:37)

3. Both people claim that they would not have stoned the prophets if they had lived in their day.

> And now when ye talk, ye say: If our days had been in the days of our fathers of old, we would not have slain the prophets; we would not have stoned them, and cast them out. (Helaman 13:25)

> And say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. (Matthew 23:30)

4. Both Samuel and Jesus gave the people a similar warning.

> . . . **behold**, . . . **your houses** shall be **left unto you desolate.** (Helaman 15:1)

> **Behold**, **your house** is **left unto you desolate.** Matthew 23:38)

5. Both Samuel and Jesus gave a similar warning to the women who would be with child at the time of destruction.

> . . . your women shall have great cause to mourn in the day that they shall **give suck**; . . . **wo unto them** which **are with child**, . . . (Helaman :5:2)

> And **woe unto them** that **are with child**, and to them that **give suck** in those days! (Matthew 24:19)

6. Both Samuel and Christ tell the people that others would have repented if they had seen the same mighty works that they had.

> . . . had **the mighty works** been shown unto them which have been shown unto you, yea, unto them who have dwindled in unbelief because of the traditions of their fathers, ye can see of yourselves that they never would again have dwindled in unbelief. (Helaman 15:15)

> . . . if **the mighty works**, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. (Matthew 11:23)

7. Both Samuel and Jesus warn that it will be more tolerable for the other people than for them.

> Therefore I say unto you, it shall be better for them than for you except ye repent. (Helaman 15:14)

> But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee. (Matthew 11:24)

A story concerning Nephi, Lehi and the Lamanites, which was supposed to have happened 30 years before the birth of Jesus, reminds us of the transfiguration of Christ. (The Nephi and Lehi mentioned in this story are not the same men mentioned in the first part of the Book of Mormon.) Below is a list of parallels.

1. Both stories use the words "did shine."

> . . . he saw . . . the faces of Nephi and Lehi; and behold, they **did shine** exceedingly, even as the faces of angels. (Helaman 5:36)

> . . . and his face **did shine** as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. (Matthew 17:2)

2. In both accounts they conversed with heavenly visitors.

> . . . they were in the attitude as if talking or lifting their voices to some being whom they beheld. . . . And Aminadab said . . . They do converse with the angels of God. (Helaman 5:36 & 39)

> And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. (Matthew 17:3)

3. Both stories talk of people being overshadowed with a cloud.

> . . . they were **overshadowed**, with **a cloud** of darkness, . . . (Helaman 5:28)

> . . . **a** bright **cloud overshadowed** them: . . . (Matthew 17:5)

4. Both stories speak of a voice coming after the cloud appeared.

> . . . **a voice** as if it were above **the cloud** . . . (Helaman 5:29)

> . . . **a voice** out of **the cloud**, . . . (Matthew 17:5)

5. Both stories tell that the people were filled with fear.

> . . . an awful solemn fear came upon them. (Helaman 5:28)
>
> . . . they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. (Matthew 17:6)

The death of Abinadi (about 148 B.C.) reminds us of the death of Jesus. Below are a few parallels between the two stories.

1. The preaching of both Abinadi and Jesus made the rulers angry and they sought to kill them.

> . . . they sought from that time forward to take him. (Mosiah 11:29)
>
> . . . the scribes sought how they might take him . . . (Mark 14:1)
> And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him. (Matthew 26:16)

2. Both Abinadi and Jesus were arrested.

> . . . the king caused that his guards should surround Abinadi and take him; and they **bound him** . . . (Mosiah 17:5)
>
> Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and **bound him.** (John 18:12)

3. Both Abinadi and Jesus were accused of not being loyal to the king.

> . . . **and began to accuse him saying:** He has reviled the king. (Mosiah 17:12)
>
> And they **began to accuse him**, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. (Luke 23:2)

4. In both cases the ruler of the people questioned the prisoner and began to be afraid.

> . . . he feared his word; for he feared that the judgments of God would come upon him. (Mosiah 17:11)
>
> When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid; (John 19:8)

5. In both cases the ruler decided he wanted to release the prisoner.

> And now king Noah was about **to release him**, . . . (Mosiah 17:11)
>
> And from thenceforth Pilate sought **to release him:** . . . (John 19:12)

6. In both cases the people cried out against the prisoner.

> But the priests lifted up their voices against him, . . . (Mosiah 17:12)
>
> And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. (Luke 23:23)

7. In both cases the voice of the people prevailed.

> . . . he delivered him up that he might be slain.
> And it came to pass that they took him . . . (Mosiah 17:12-13)
>
> Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. (John 19:16)

8. In both cases the prisoner died asking God to receive his spirit.

> O God, receive my soul. (Mosiah 17:19)
>
> . . . Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: . . . (Luke 23:46)

One of the most striking parallels is the beheading of John the Baptist in the Bible and the attempted beheading of Omer in the Book of Mormon. The following is a comparison between those two incidents:

BOOK OF MORMON

> And now, therefore, let my father send for Akish, the son of Kimnor; and behold, I am fair, and I will dance before him, and I will please him, that he will desire me to wife; wherefore if he shall desire of thee that ye shall give unto him me to wife, then shall ye say: I will give her if ye will bring unto me the head of my father, the king.
> . . . the daughter of Jared danced before him that she pleased him, insomuch that he desired her to wife. . . .
> And Jared said unto him: I will give her unto you, if ye will bring unto me the head of my father, the king. (Ether 8:10-12)

BIBLE

> But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.
> Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.
> And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.
> And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.
> And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.
> And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother. (Matthew 14:6-11)

While the incident in the Bible happened during Christ's lifetime, the incident in the Book of Mormon was supposed to have occurred many hundreds of years before Christ.

Like Paul

Wesley M. Jones makes this statement concerning the Book of Mormon:

> Joseph's chief source of material by all odds, was the Bible, in which he was exceptionally versed (as were many people of his day). . . . St. Paul, too, was most helpful to Joseph; his unique phrases became a part of Joseph's literary vocabulary and shine out on most any page in Joseph's work—though Paul was not yet born when the "Nephite Record" was allegedly written. And more, the ministry of St. Paul is duplicated almost exactly in the ministry of Alma, one of Joseph's characters—even in manner of speech and travels. (*A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources*, by Wesley M. Jones, pages 14-15)

Below is a list of parallels between the Apostle Paul and Alma.

1. Both Alma and Paul were very wicked men before their conversion.

> . . . he became a very wicked and an idolatrous man. (Mosiah 27:8)

> . . . I . . . was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, . . . (1 Timothy 1:12-13)

2. Both Alma and Paul traveled about trying to destroy the church of God.

> For I went about with the sons of Mosiah, seeking to destroy **the church of God**, . . . (Alma 36:6)

> For I am the least of the apostles, . . , because I persecuted **the church of God.** (1 Corinthians 15:9)

3. Both Alma and Paul were vigorous in their persecution of the church.

> Yea, and I had murdered many of his children, or rather led them away unto destruction; . . . (Alma 36:14)

> And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. (Acts 22:4)

4. Both Alma and Paul were out on one of their missions of persecution on the day of their conversion.

> And now it came to pass that while he was going about to destroy the church of God, for he did go about secretly with the sons of Mosiah seeking to destroy the church, and to lead astray the people of the Lord, contrary to the commandments of God, or even the king—
>
> And as I said unto you, as they were going about rebelling against God, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto them; . . . (Mosiah 27:10-11)

> And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them. I persecuted them even unto strange cities.
>
> Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,
>
> At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. (Acts 26:11-13)

5. In both cases the people present fell to the earth.

> . . . they fell **to the earth** . . . (Mosiah 27:12)

> . . . we were all fallen **to the earth**, . . . (Acts 26:14)

6. The companions of both Alma and Paul were unable to understand the voice that spoke.

> . . . they . . . understood **not** the words which he spoke unto them. (Mosiah 27:12)

> . . . they heard **not** the voice of him that spake to me. (Acts 22:9)

7. In the vision which followed both Alma and Paul were asked why they fought against the work of the Lord.

> . . . Alma, . . . **why persecutest thou** the church of God? (Mosiah 27:13)

> . . . Saul, **why persecutest thou** me? (Acts 9:4)

8. Both Alma and Paul became helpless after the vision and had to be helped by their friends.

> And now the astonishment of Alma was so great that he became dumb, that he could not open his mouth; yea, and he became weak, even that he could not move his hands; therefore he was taken by those that were with him, and carried helpless, even until he was laid before his father. (Mosiah 27:19)

> And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. (Acts 9:8)

9. Both went without food for a period of time.

> And it came to pass after they had fasted and prayed for the space of two days and two nights, the limbs of Alma received their strength, . . . (Mosiah 27:23)

> And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. (Acts 9:9)

10. Both Alma and Paul were converted to the Lord.

> . . . he stood up and began to speak . . . I am born of the Spirit. (Mosiah 27:23-24)

> . . . he . . . arose, and was baptized. (Acts 9:18)

11. After their conversion both Alma and Paul traveled about preaching the word of God.

> . . . Alma began from this time forward to teach the people, . . . traveling round about through all the land, . . . (Mosiah 27:32)

> And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. (Acts 9:20)

12. Both Alma and Paul labored with their own hands for their support.

> . . . I have labored **with** mine **own hands** . . . (Alma 30:32)

> And labour, working **with** our **own hands**: (1 Corinthians 4:12)

13. Both Alma and Paul performed a similar miracle.

> . . . Zeezrom **leaped** upon his feet, and began to walk; . . . (Alma 16:11)

> And he **leaped** and walked. (Acts 14:10)

14. Both Alma and Paul were put in prison.

> . . . they were bound with strong cords, and confined in prison. (Alma 14:22)

> And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: (Acts 16:23)

15. In both cases they prayed to the Lord.

> And Alma cried, saying: How long shall we suffer these great afflictions, O Lord? (Alma 14:26)

> And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. (Acts 16:25)

16. In both cases there was a great earthquake.

> . . . the earth shook mightily, and the walls of the prison. were rent in twain, . . . (Alma 14:27)

> And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, . . . (Acts 16:26)

17. In both cases the prisoners' bands were loosed.

> . . . and they were **loosed** from their **bands**; . . . (Alma 14:28)

> . . . and every one's **bands** were **loosed.** (Acts 16:26)

400 Parallels

As we have already shown, the Nephites were not supposed to have had the books of the New Testament because they were written hundreds of years after they left Jerusalem. Nevertheless, we find many New Testament verses and parts of verses throughout the Book of Mormon. In the following list of parallels between the Book of Mormon and the New Testament we have tried to eliminate verses that also appear in the Old Testament. We did not use all of the New Testament verses which we found parallel to the Book of Mormon, but this should be enough to give the reader a good sample. The first part of this list will include verses from the Book of Mormon that were supposed to have been written between 600 B.C. and 33 A.D. The second part includes verses that were supposed to have been written between 34 A.D. and 421 A.D. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts made this statement:

> 1. The Unknown states the fact that Nephi wrote between 600 and 500 B.C. and then presents what he calls the first difficulty that I am to overcome. "How can a writer," he asks, "claiming to live at that time make repeated quotations from the writings of Christ's Apostles who were not born until 600 years after the time when Nephi wrote?" He then charges that Nephi quotes "passage after passage" from the writings of Christ's apostles, Matthew, John, Paul, Luke, Peter, etc.; and gives what he calls just "two or three examples" of such quotations. The gentleman very much overstates the difficulty he presents, by making it appear that the alleged quotations are very numerous, when the fact is that the **two or three cases** he cites **virtually exhaust** the alleged quoted passages so far as the New Testament is concerned. (*Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, by B. H. Roberts, Salt Lake City, 1907, page 329)

The list which follows will prove that B. H. Roberts has misrepresented the facts. We have found well over a hundred quotations from the New Testament in the first two books of Nephi alone. These two books were supposed to have been written between 600 and 545 B.C.

Part One

The verses or parts of verses from the Book of Mormon which follow were supposed to have been written between 600 B.C. and 33 A.D.

1. the mysteries of God (1 Nephi 1:1)
   the mysteries of God (1 Corinthians 4:1)
2. to declare unto them concerning the things which he had both seen and heard (1 Nephi 1:18)
   That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you (1 John 1:3)

3. steadfast, and immovable (1 Nephi 2:10)
   stedfast, unmoveable (1 Corinthians 15:58)
4. the mysteries of God (1 Nephi 2:16)
   the mysteries of God (1 Corinthians 4:1)
5. being grieved because of the hardness of their hearts (1 Nephi 2:18)
   being grieved for the hardness of their hearts (Mark 3:5)
6. with lowliness (1 Nephi 2:19)
   With all lowliness (Ephesians 4:2)
7. that one man should perish than that a nation should . . . perish in unbelief (1 Nephi 4:13)
   that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not (John 11:50)
8. kindreds, tongues, and people (1 Nephi 5:18)
   people and kindreds and tongues (Revelation 11:9)
9. who are not of the world (1 Nephi 6:5)
   they are not of the world (John 17:14)
10. a river of water; and it ran along, and it was near the tree of which I was partaking the fruit (1 Nephi 8:13)
    a pure river of water . . . and on either side of the river was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits (Revelation 22:1-2)
11. mist of darkness (1 Nephi 8:23)
    mist of darkness (2 Peter 2:17)
12. there standeth one among you whom ye know not (1 Nephi 10:8)
    there standeth one among you, whom ye know not (John 1:26)
13. he is mightier than I (1 Nephi 10:8)
    one mightier than I (Luke 3:16)
14. whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose (1 Nephi 10:8)
    whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose (John 1:27)
15. in Bethabara, beyond Jordan; . . . he should baptize (1 Nephi 10:9)
    in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing (John 1:28)
16. the Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world (1 Nephi 10:10)
    the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)
17. branches should be broken off (1 Nephi 10:12)
    branches were broken off (Romans 11:19)
18. the natural branches (1 Nephi 10:14)
    the natural branches (Romans 11:24)
19. should be grafted in (1 Nephi 10:14)
    shall be grafted in (Romans 11:23)
20. by the power of the Holy Ghost (1 Nephi 10:17)
    through the power of the Holy Ghost (Romans 15:13)
21. all those who diligently seek him (1 Nephi 10:17)
    of them that diligently seek him (Hebrews 11:6)
22. the same yesterday, to-day, and forever (1 Nephi 10:18)
    the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8)
23. he that . . . seeketh shall find (1 Nephi 10:19)
    he that seeketh findeth (Luke 11:10)
24. by the power of the Holy Ghost (1 Nephi 10:19)
    through the power of the Holy Ghost (Romans 15:13)
25. I was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord (1 Nephi 11:1)
    the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip (Acts 8:39)
26. into an exceeding high mountain (1 Nephi 11:1)
    into an exceeding high mountain (Matthew 4:8)
27. bear record that it is the Son of God (1 Nephi 11:7)
    bare record that this is the Son of God (John 1:34)
28. Behold the Lamb of God (1 Nephi 11:21)
    Behold the Lamb of God (John 1:36)
29. the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men (1 Nephi 11:22)
    the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts (Romans 5:5)
30. led to the fountain of living waters (1 Nephi 11:25)
    lead them unto living fountains of waters (Revelation 7:17)
31. the Lamb of God (1 Nephi 11:27)
    the Lamb of God (John 1:29)
32. the Holy Ghost come down out of heaven and abide upon him in the form of a dove (1 Nephi 11:27)
    the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him (Luke 3:22)
33. heavens open again, and I saw angels descending upon the children of men (1 Nephi 11:30)
    heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man (John 1:51)
34. the Lamb of God (1 Nephi 11:31)
    the Lamb of God (John 1:29)

35. multitudes of people (1 Nephi 11:31)
    multitudes of people (Matthew 4:25)
36. who were sick, and who were afflicted with all manner of diseases, and with devils (1 Nephi 11:31)
    all sick people that were taken with divers diseases . . . and those which were possessed with devils (Matthew 4:24)
37. the Lamb of God (1 Nephi 11:32)
    the Lamb of God (John 1:29)
38. the sins of the world (1 Nephi 11:33)
    the sin of the world (John 1:29)
39. the twelve apostles of the Lamb (1 Nephi 11:35)
    the twelve apostles of the Lamb (Revelation 21:14)
40. wars, and rumors of wars (1 Nephi 12:3)
    wars and rumours of wars (Matthew 24:6)
41. mist of darkness (1 Nephi 12:4)
    mist of darkness (2 Peter 2:17)
42. lightnings, and I heard thunderings, and earthquakes (1 Nephi 12:4)
    thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake (Revelation 8:5)
43. the earth and the rocks, that they rent (1 Nephi 12:4)
    the earth did quake, and the rocks rent (Matthew 27: 51)
44. Behold they are they who shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel (1 Nephi 12:9)
    ye may . . . sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22:30)
45. their garments are made white in his blood (1 Nephi 12:10)
    their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14)
46. made white in the blood of the Lamb (1 Nephi 12:11)
    made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:14)
47. depths of hell (1 Nephi 12:16)
    depths of Satan (Revelation 2:24)
48. mists of darkness (1 Nephi 12:17)
    mist of darkness (2 Peter 2:17)
49. a terrible gulf divideth them (1 Nephi 12:18)
    a great gulf fixed (Luke 16:26)
50. wars and rumors of wars (1 Nephi 12:21)
    wars and rumours of wars (Matthew 24:6)
51. gold, and silver, and silks, and scarlets, and fine-twined linen, and all manner of precious clothing (1 Nephi 13:7)
    gold, and silver, . . . and fine linen, . . . and silk, and scarlet, . . . and all manner vessels of most precious wood (Revelation 18:12)
52. gold, and the silver, and the silks, and the scarlets (1 Nephi 13:8)
    gold, and silver, . . . and silk, and scarlet (Revelation 18:12)
53. the praise of the world (1 Nephi 13:9)
    the praise of men (John 12:43)
54. pervert the right ways of the Lord (1 Nephi 13:27)
    pervert the right ways of the Lord (Acts 13:10)
55. blind the eyes and harden the hearts (1 Nephi 13:27)
    blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart (John 12:40)
56. the power of the Holy Ghost (1 Nephi 13:37)
    the power of the Holy Ghost (Romans 15:13)
57. endure unto the end . . . shall be saved (1 Nephi 13:37)
    endureth to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22)
58. tidings of great joy (1 Nephi 13:37)
    tidings of great joy (Luke 2:10)
59. last shall be first, and the first shall be last (1 Nephi 13:42)
    first shall be last; and the last shall be first (Matthew 19:30)
60. the mother of abominations (1 Nephi 14:9)
    THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS (Revelation 17:5)
61. the whore of all the earth, and she sat upon many waters; and she had dominion over all the earth, among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people (1 Nephi 14:11)
    the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: . . The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues (Revelation 17:1 and 15)
62. the whore who sat upon many waters (1 Nephi 14:12)
    the great whore that sitteth upon many waters (Revelation 17:1)
63. wars and rumors of wars (1 Nephi 14:15)
    wars and rumours of wars (Matthew 24:6)

64. wars and rumors of wars (1 Nephi 14:16)
    wars and rumours of wars (Matthew 24:6)
65. ask me in faith, believing that ye shall receive (1 Nephi 15:11)
    whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive (Matthew 21:22)
66. the fiery darts of the adversary (1 Nephi 15:24)
    the fiery darts of the wicked (Ephesians 6:16)
67. an awful gulf (1 Nephi 15:28)
    a great gulf (Luke 16:26)
68. prepared for the wicked (1 Nephi 15:29)
    prepared for the devil (Matthew 25:41)
69. ascendeth up unto God forever and ever (1 Nephi 15:30)
    ascendeth up for ever and ever (Revelation 14:11)
70. judged of their works (1 Nephi 15:32)
    judged every man according to their works (Revelations 20:13)
71. to be judged of their works (1 Nephi 15:33)
    were judged every man according to their works (Revelations 20:13)
73. if their works have been filthiness they must needs be filthy; and if they be filthy it must needs be that they cannot dwell in the kingdom of God (1 Nephi 15:33)
    He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still (Revelation 22:11)
74. there cannot any unclean thing enter into the kingdom of God (1 Nephi 15:34)
    nor unclean person, . . . hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ (Ephesians 5:5)
75. be lifted up (1 Nephi 16:2)
    be lifted up (John 12:32)
76. swift to do iniquity but slow (1 Nephi 17:45)
    swift to hear, slow to speak (James 1:19)
77. were past feeling (1 Nephi 17:45)
    being past feeling (Ephesians 4:19)
78. be lifted up (1 Nephi 19:10)
    be lifted up (John 12:32)
79. all scripture unto us, that it might be for our profit and learning (1 Nephi 19:23)
    All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (2 Timothy 3:16)
80. shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire (1 Nephi 22:17)
    shall be saved; yet so as by fire (1 Corinthians 3:15)
81. blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke (1 Nephi 22:18)
    blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke (Acts 2:19)
82. A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that all those who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people (1 Nephi 22:20)
    A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you . . . like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people (Acts 3:22-23)
83. the lusts of the flesh (1 Nephi 22:23)
    the lust of the flesh (1 John 2:16)
84. the things of the world (1 Nephi 22:'23)
    the things that are in the world (1 John 2:15)
85. his sheep, and they know him (1 Nephi 22:25)
    his own sheep, . . . they know his voice (John 10:4)
86. and there shall be one fold and one shepherd (1 Nephi 22:25)
    and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd (John 10:16)
87. shall find pasture (1 Nephi 22:25)
    and find pasture (John 10:9)
88. endure to the end, ye shall be saved (1 Nephi 22:31)
    endureth to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22)
89. put on the armor of righteousness (2 Nephi 1:23)
    Put on the whole armour of God, . . . the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 6:11 and 14)
90. the same yesterday, today, and forever (2 Nephi 2:4)
    the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8)
91. by the law no flesh is justified (2 Nephi 2:4)
    by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Galatians 2:16)
92. full of grace and truth (2 Nephi 2:6)
    full of grace and truth (John 1:14)

93. who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit (2 Nephi 2:8)
    I lay down my life, that I might take it again (John 10:17)
94. the firstfruits unto God (2 Nephi 2:9)
    the firstfruits unto God (Revelation 14:4)
95. they that believe in him shall be saved (2 Nephi 2:9)
    He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:16)
96. that old serpent, who is the devil (2 Nephi 2:18)
    that old serpent, which is the Devil (Revelation 20:21)
97. who is the father of all lies (2 Nephi 2:18)
    he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44)
98. have chosen the good part (2 Nephi 2:30)
    hath chosen that good part (Luke 10:42)
99. O wretched man that I am (2 Nephi 4:17)
    O wretched man that I am (Romans 7:24)
100. I am encompassed about (2 Nephi 4:18)
    we also are compassed about (Hebrews 12:1)
101. the sins which do so easily beset me (2 Nephi 4:18)
    the sin which doth so easily beset us (Hebrews 12:1)
102. I know in whom I have trusted (2 Nephi 4:19)
    I know whom I have believed (2 Timothy 1:12)
103. give place no more for the enemy of my soul (2 Nephi 4:28)
    Neither give place to the devil (Ephesians 4:27)
104. Yea, I know that God will give liberally to him that asketh (2 Nephi 4:35)
    If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally (James 1:5)
105. I ask not amiss (2 Nephi 4:35)
    ye ask amiss (James 4:3)
106. this corruption could not put on incorruption (2 Nephi 9:7)
    this corruptible must put on incorruption (1 Corinthians 15:53)
107. with the father of lies (2 Nephi 9:9)
    he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44)
108. transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light (2 Nephi 9:9)
    Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14)
109. death and hell must deliver up their dead (2 Nephi 9:12)
    death and hell delivered up the dead (Revelation 20:13)
110. the paradise of God (2 Nephi 9:13)
    the paradise of God (Revelation 2:7)
111. men become incorruptible (2 Nephi 9:13)
    the dead shall be raised incorruptible (1 Corinthians 15:53)
112. they must appear before the judgment seat of the Holy One (2 Nephi 9:15)
    we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ (Romans 14:10)
113. his eternal word, which cannot pass away (2 Nephi 9:16)
    my words shall not pass away (Matthew 24:35)
114. they who are righteous shall be righteous still, and they who are filthy shall be filthy still (2 Nephi 9:16)
    he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still. (Revelation 22:11)
115. the devil and his angels; and they shall go away into everlasting fire; prepared for them (2 Nephi 9:16)
    Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41)
116. a lake of fire and brimstone (2 Nephi 9:16)
    the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone (Revelations 21:8)
117. ascendeth up forever and ever (2 Nephi 9:16)
    ascendeth up for ever and ever (Revelation 14:11)
118. endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame (2 Nephi 9:18)
    endured the cross, despising the shame (Hebrews 12:2)
119. the kingdom of God, which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world (2 Nephi 9:18)
    the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34)
120. their joy shall be full (2 Nephi 9:18)
    that your joy might be full (John 15:11)

121. that lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment (2 Nephi 9:19)
    the lake of fire and brimstone, . . . and shall be tormented day and night for ever (Revelation 20:10)
122. commandeth all men that they must repent (2 Nephi 9:23)
    commandeth all men every where to repent (Acts 17:30)
123. if they will not repent and believe in his name, and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned (2 Nephi 9:24)
    He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (Mark 16:16)
124. where there is no law given there is no punishment (2 Nephi 9:25)
    where no law is, there is no transgression (Romans 4:15)
125. their wisdom is foolishness (2 Nephi 9:25)
    the wisdom of this world is foolishness (1 Corinthians 3:19)
126. But wo unto the rich (2 Nephi 9:30)
    But woe unto you that are rich (Luke 6:24)
127. hearts are upon their treasures (2 Nephi 9:30)
    where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Matthew 6:21)
128. shall be thrust down to hell (2 Nephi 9:34)
    shalt be thrust down to hell (Luke 10:15)
129. die in their sins (2 Nephi 9:38)
    die in their sins (John 8:21)
130. to be carnally-minded is death, and to be spiritually-minded is life (2 Nephi 9:39)
    to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life (Romans 8:6)
131. And whoso knocketh, to him will he open (2 Nephi 9:42)
    and to him that knocketh it shall be opened (Matthew 7:8)
132. For should the mighty miracles be wrought among other nations they would repent (2 Nephi 10:4)
    for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented (Matthew 11:21)
133. Jew and Gentile, both bond and free, both male and female (2 Nephi 10:16)
    Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female (Galatians 3:28)
134. they who are not for me are against me, saith our God (2 Nephi 10:16)
    He that is not with me is against me (Luke 11:23)
135. lay aside our sins (2 Nephi 10:20)
    lay aside . . . the sin (Hebrews 12:1)
136. reconciled unto God (2 Nephi 10:24)
    we were reconciled to God (Romans 5:10)
137. through the grace of God that ye are saved (2 Nephi 10:24)
    by grace are ye saved (Ephesians 2:8)
138. the power of the resurrection (2 Nephi 10:25)
    the power of his resurrection (Philippians 3:10)
139. wars, and rumors of wars (2 Nephi 25:12)
    wars and rumours of wars (Matthew 24:6)
140. the Only Begotten of the Father (2 Nephi 25:12)
    the only begotten of the Father (John 1:14)
141. my heart doth magnify his holy name (2 Nephi 25:13)
    My soul doth magnify the Lord (Luke 1:46)
142. as many as will believe on his name (2 Nephi 25:14)
    to them that believe on his name (John 1:12)
143. there is none other name given under heaven save it be this Jesus Christ, . . . whereby man can be saved (2 Nephi 25:20)
    there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12)
144. it is by grace that we are saved (2 Nephi 25:23)
    by grace are ye saved (Ephesians 2:8)
145. made alive in Christ (2 Nephi 25:25)
    in Christ shall all be made alive (1 Corinthians 15:22)
146. in nowise be cast out (2 Nephi 25:29)
    in no wise cast out (John 6:37)
147. grind them to powder (2 Nephi 26:5)
    grind him to powder (Matthew 21:44)
148. darkness rather than light (2 Nephi 26:10)
    darkness rather than light (John 3:19)
149. layeth down his own life (2 Nephi 26:24)
    lay down my life (John 10:17)

150. he may draw all men unto him (2 Nephi 26:24)
I . . . will draw all men unto me (John 12:32)

151. bond and free, male and female (2 Nephi 26:33)
bond nor free, . . , male nor female (Galatians 3:28)

152. the same yesterday, today, and forever (2 Nephi 27:23)
the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8)

153. will beat us with a few stripes (2 Nephi 28:8)
be beaten with few stripes (Luke 12:48)

154. shall be thrust down to hell (2 Nephi 28:15)
shalt be thrust down to hell (Luke 10:15)

155. his everlasting chains (2 Nephi 28:19)
in everlasting chains (Jude, verse 6)

156. stand before the throne of God (2 Nephi 28:23)
stand before God (Revelation 20:12)

157. judged according to their works (2 Nephi 28:23)
judged every man according to their works (Revelation 20:13)

158. a lake of fire (2 Nephi 28:23)
the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14)

159. built upon the rock (2 Nephi 28:28)
built his house upon a rock (Matthew 7:24)

160. built upon a sandy foundation (2 Nephi 28:28)
built his house upon the sand (Matthew 7:26)

161. for unto him that receiveth I will give more; and from them that shall say, We have enough, from them shall be taken away even that which they have (2 Nephi 28:30)
For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath (Matthew 13:12)

162. the same yesterday, today, and forever (2 Nephi 29:9)
the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8)

163. out of the books which shall be written I will judge the world, every man according to their works (2 Nephi 29:11)
out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works (Revelation 20:12)

164. ye shall all likewise perish (2 Nephi 30:1)
ye shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:3)

165. scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes (2 Nephi 30:6)
fell from his eyes as it had been scales (Acts 9:18)

166. There is nothing which is secret save it shall be revealed (2 Nephi 30:17)
for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed (Matthew 10:26)

167. made manifest in the light (2 Nephi 30:17)
made manifest by the light (Ephesians 5:13)

168. the Lamb of God, which should take away the sins of the world (2 Nephi 31:4)
the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)

169. to fulfil all righteousness (2 Nephi 31:5)
to fulfil all righteousness (Matthew 3:15)

170. the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove (2 Nephi 31:8)
the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him (Luke 3:22)

171. baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost (2 Nephi 31:13)
baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire (Matthew 3:11)

172. better for you that ye had not known me (2 Nephi 31:14)
better for them not to have known the way (2 Peter 2:21)

173. He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved (2 Nephi 31:15)
he that endureth to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22)

174. straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life (2 Nephi 31:18)
strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life (Matthew 7:14)

175. there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved (2 Nephi 31:21)
there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12)

176. of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (2 Nephi 31:21)
of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19)

177. with the tongue of angels (2 Nephi 32:2)
with the tongues . . . of angels (1 Corinthians 13:1)

178. because ye ask not (2 Nephi 32:4)
because ye ask not (James 4:2)

179. ye must pray always, and not faint (2 Nephi 32:9)
men ought always to pray, and not to faint (Matthew 18:1)

180. But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God (Jacob 2:18)
But seek ye first the kingdom of God, . . . and all these things shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:33)

181. hope in Christ (Jacob 2:19)
hope in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:19)

182. lake of fire and brimstone which is the second death (Jacob 3:11)
lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death (Revelation 21:8)

183. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways (Jacob 4:8)
how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out (Romans 11:33)

184. I will unfold this mystery unto you (Jacob 4:18)
I shew you a mystery (1 Corinthians 15:51)

185. wither away, and we will cast them into the fire that they may be burned (Jacob 5:7)
withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned (John 15:6)

186. the branches of the wild olive-tree, and graft them in (Jacob 5:9)
the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in (Romans 11:17)

187. cumber the ground (Jacob 5:9)
cumbereth it the ground (Luke 13:7)

188. hewn down and cast into the fire (Jacob 5:42)
hewn down, and cast into the fire (Matthew 3:10)

189. I have digged about it, . . . and I have dunged it (Jacob 5:4 7)
I shall dig about it, and dung it (Luke 13:8)

190. quench the Holy Spirit (Jacob 6:8)
quench not the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19)

191. Nevertheless, not my will be done (Jacob 7:14)
nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done (Luke 22:42)

192. thy faith hath made thee whole (Enos 8)
thy faith hath made thee whole (Matthew 9:22)

193. Whatsoever thing ye shall ask in faith, believing . . . ye shall receive it (Enos 15)
whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive (Matthew 21:22)

194. mortal shall put on immortality (Enos 27)
mortal must put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:53)

195. Come unto me, ye blessed (Enos 27)
Come, ye blessed (Matthew 25:34)

196. in the mansions of my Father (Enos 27)
In my Father's house are many mansions (John 14:2)

197. grievous to be borne (Mosiah 2:14)
grievous to be borne (Matthew 23:4)

198. a clear conscience before God (Mosiah 2:15)
a good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:21)

199. Behold, ye have called me your king; and if I, whom ye call your king, do labor to serve you, then ought not ye to labor to serve one another (Mosiah 2:18)
Ye call me Master and Lord: . . . If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet (John 13:13-14)

200. if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants (Mosiah 2:21)
when ye shall have done all those things . . . say, We are unprofitable servants (Luke 17:10)

201. drinketh damnation to his own soul (Mosiah 2:33)
drinketh damnation to himself (1 Corinthians 11:29)

202. glad tidings of great joy (Mosiah 3:3)
good tidings of great joy (Luke 2:10)

203. he cometh unto his own (Mosiah 3:9)
He came unto his own (John 1:11)

204. there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come (Mosiah 3:17)
there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12)

205. he judgeth, and his judgment is just (Mosiah 3:18)
I judge: and my judgment is just (John 5:30)

206. drink damnation to their own souls (Mosiah 3:18)
drinketh damnation to himself (1 Corinthians 11:29)

207. become as little children (Mosiah 3:18)
become as little children (Matthew 18:3)

208. natural man is an enemy to God (Mosiah 3:19)
the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:14)

209. putteth off the natural man (Mosiah 3:19)
put off the old man (Colossians 3:9)

210. judged, every man according to his works (Mosiah 3:24)
judged every man according to their works (Revelation 20:13)

211. the cup of the wrath of God (Mosiah 3:26)
the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath (Revelation 16:19)

212. believe that he is, and that he (Mosiah 4:9)
believe that he is, and that he (Hebrews 11:6)

213. enemy to all righteousness (Mosiah 4:14)
enemy of all righteousness (Acts 13:10)

214. whatsoever ye ask that is right, in faith, believing that ye shall receive (Mosiah 4:21)
whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive (Matthew 21:22)

215. the thoughts and intents of his heart (Mosiah 5:13)
the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12)

216. steadfast and immovable, always abounding in good works (Mosiah 5:15)
stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work (1 Corinthians 15:58)

217. grievous to be borne (Mosiah 7:15)
grievous to be borne (Matthew 23:4)

218. a leathern girdle about their loins (Mosiah 10:8)
a leathern girdle about his loins (Matthew 3:4)

219. Are you priests, . . . and yet desire to know of me what these things mean (Mosiah 12:25)
Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things (John 3:10)

220. have part in the first resurrection (Mosiah 15:26)
hath part in the first resurrection (Revelation 20:6)

221. weep, and wail, and gnash their teeth (Mosiah 16:2)
weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:12)

222. the grave should have no victory, and that death should have no sting (Mosiah 16:7)
O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory (1 Corinthians 15:55)

223. the grave hath no victory, and the sting of death is swallowed up (Mosiah 16:8)
O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory (1 Corinthians 15:55)

224. He is the light . . . of the world (Mosiah 16:9)
I am the light of the world (John 8:12)

225. this mortal shall put on immortality (Mosiah 16:10)
this mortal shall have put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:54)

226. this corruption shall put on incorruption (Mosiah 16:10)
this corruptible shall have put on incorruption (1 Corinthians 15:54)

227. If they be good, to the resurrection of endless life and happiness; and if they be evil, to the resurrection of endless damnation (Mosiah 16:11)
they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:29)

228. one faith and one baptism (Mosiah 18:21)
one faith, one baptism (Ephesians 4:5)

229. their hearts knit together in unity and in love (Mosiah 18:21)
their hearts might be . . . knit together in love (Colossians 2:2)

230. stand fast in this liberty wherewith ye have been made free (Mosiah 23:13)
Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free (Galatians 5:1)

231. And then I will confess unto them that I never knew them; and they shall depart (Mosiah 26:27)
And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me (Matthew 7:23)

232. depart into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Mosiah 26:27)
Depart from me, . . . into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41)

233. forgive one another your trespasses (Mosiah 26:31)
forgive men their trespasses (Matthew 6:14)

234. walking circumspectly (Mosiah 26:37)
walk circumspectly (Ephesians 5:15)

235. pray without ceasing (Mosiah 26:39)
Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

236. should labor with their own hands (Mosiah 27:5)
labour, working with our own hands (1 Corinthians 4:12)

237. born of the Spirit (Mosiah 27:24)
born of the Spirit (John 3:8)

238. Marvel not that all mankind . . . must be born again (Mosiah 27:25)
Marvel not that . . . Ye must be born again (John 3:7)

239. they become new creatures (Mosiah 27:26)
he is a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17)

240. the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity (Mosiah 27:29)
the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity (Acts 8:23)

241. every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess before him (Mosiah 27:31)
every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God (Romans 14:11)

242. having warred a good warfare (Alma 1:1)
have fought a good fight (2 Timothy 4:7)

243. stand fast in the faith (Alma 1:25)
stand fast in the faith (1 Corinthians 16:13)

244. steadfast and immovable (Alma 1:25)
stedfast, unmoveable (1 Corinthians 15:58)

245. sit down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob (Alma 5:24)
sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 8:11)

246. shall be cast out (Alma 5:25)
shall be cast out (Matthew 8:12)

247. for his wages he receiveth death (Alma 5:42)
the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23)

248. the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace, and mercy, and truth (Alma 5:48)
the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14)

249. take away the sins of the world (Alma 5:48)
taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)

250. Repent, all ye . . . for the kingdom of heaven is soon at hand (Alma 5:50)
Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 3:2)

251. the ax is laid at the root of the tree, therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire (Alma 5:52)
the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire (Matthew 3:10)

252. bring forth works which are meet for repentance (Alma 5:54)
Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance (Matthew 3:8)

253. come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things (Alma5:57)
come out from among them, and be ye separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing (2 Corinthians 6:17)

254. the book of life (Alma 5:58)
the book of life (Revelation 22:19)

255. if ye are not born again ye cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven (Alma 7:14)
Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3)

256. the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world (Alma 7:14)
the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world (John 1:29)

257. and to cleanse from all unrighteousness (Alma 7:14)
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9)

258. lay aside every sin, which easily doth beset you (Alma 7:15)
lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us (Hebrews 12:1)

259. neither doth he vary from that which he hath said; neither hath he a shadow of turning (Alma 7:20)
with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James 1:27)

260. he who is filthy shall remain in his filthiness (Alma 7:21)
he which is filthy, let him be filthy still (Revelation 22:11)

261. faith, hope, and charity (Alma 7:24)
faith, hope, charity (1 Corinthians 13:13)

262. the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace, equity, and truth (Alma 9:26)
the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14)

263. bring forth works which are meet for repentance (Alma 9:30)
Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance (Matthew 3:8)

264. Repent ye, . . . for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Alma 10:20)
Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 3:2)

265. that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom (Alma 11:37)

    that no . . . unclean person, . . . hath any inheritance in the kingdom (Ephesians 5:5)

266. thou hast not lied unto men only but thou hast lied unto God (Alma 12:3)

    thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God (Acts 5:4)

267. the thoughts and intents of his heart (Alma 12:7)

    the thoughts and intents of the heart (Hebrews 4:12)

268. resurrection of the dead, . . . both the just and the unjust (Alma 12:8)

    resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust (Acts 24:15)

269. the rocks and the mountains to fall upon us to hide us from (Alma 12:14)

    the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from (Revelation 6:16)

270. must die; and after death, they must come to judgment (Alma 12:27)

    to die, but after this the judgment (Hebrews 9:27)

271. this same Melchizedek to whom Abraham paid . . . of one-tenth part of all (Alma 13:15)

    this Melchisedec, . . . To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all (Hebrews 7:1-2)

272. this Melchezedek was a king over the land of Salem (Alma 13:17)

    this Melchizedec, king of Salem (Hebrews 7:1)

273. Behold, the scriptures are before you; if ye will wrest them it shall be to your own destruction (Alma 13:20)

    which they that are . . . unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16)

274. not be tempted above that which ye can bear (Alma 14:28)

    not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able (1 Corinthians 10:13)

275. And it came to pass that the judge stood before them, and said: Why do ye not answer the words of this people? Know ye not that I have power to deliver you up unto the flames (Alma 14:19)

    And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus. Whence art thou? . . . Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee (John 19:9-10)

276. Whether he be the Great Spirit or a man, we know not; but this much we do know (Alma 18:3)

    Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know (John 9:25)

277. Rabbanah, which is . . . powerful or great king (Alma 18:13)

    Rabboni; which is to say, Master (John 20:16)

278. being wise yet harmless (Alma 18:22)

    be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves (Matthew 10:16)

279. Great Spirit, who is God (Alma 18:22)

    God is a Spirit (John 4:24)

280. I say unto thee, woman, there has not been such great faith among all the people of the Nephites (Alma 19:10)

    I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel (Luke 7:9)

281. prayeth continually without ceasing (Alma 26:22)

    Pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

282. they may go no more out (Alma 29:17)

    he shall go no more out (Revelation 3:12)

283. the devil . . . appeared unto me in the form of an angel (Alma 30:53)

    Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14)

284. the same yesterday, today, and forever (Alma 31:17)

    the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8)

285. And again we thank thee, O God, that we are a chosen and a holy people (Alma 31:18)

    The Pharisee . . . prayed . . . God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are (Luke 18:11)

286. my heart is exceeding sorrowful (Alma 31:31)

    My soul is exceeding sorrowful (Matthew 26:38)

287. taking no thought for themselves what they should eat, or what they should drink, or what they should put on (Alma 31:37)

    take no thought saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed (Matthew 6:31)

288. poor in heart (Alma 32:4)

    poor in spirit (Matthew 5:3)

289. if ye have faith ye hope for things which are not seen (Alma 32:21)

    Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1)

290. springing up unto everlasting life (Alma 32:41)
springing up into everlasting life (John 4:14)

291. will become a tree, springing up in you unto everlasting life (Alma 33:23)
shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:14)

292. it shall be all fulfilled, every jot and tittle, and none shall have passed away (Alma 34:13)
one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled (Matthew 5:18)

293. against the devil, who is an enemy to all righteousness (Alma 34:23)
child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness (Acts 13:10)

294. cast out, . . . and is trodden under foot of men (Alma 34:29)
cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men (Matthew 5:13)

295. behold now is the time and the day of your salvation (Alma 34:31)
behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2)

296. workout your salvation with fear (Alma 34:37)
work out your own salvation with fear (Philippians 2:12)

297. worship God, . . . in spirit and in truth (Alma 34:38)
worship him . . . in spirit and in truth (John 4:24)

298. and learn of me; for I (Alma 36:3)
and learn of me; for I (Matthew 11:29)

299. Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me (Alma 36:18)
Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me (Mark 10:47)

300. meek and lowly in heart; for such shall find rest to their souls (Alma 37:34)
meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls (Matthew 11:29)

301. no other way or means whereby man can be saved, only in and through Christ (Alma 38:9)
none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12)

302. he is . . . the light of the world (Alma 38:9)
I am the light of the world (John 8:12)

303. Do not pray as the Zoramites do, . . . they pray to be heard of men (Alma 38:13)
thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray . . . that they may be seen of men (Matthew 6:5)

304. God, I thank thee that we are better than our brethren (Alma 38:14)
God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men (Luke 18:11)

305. the lusts of your eyes (Alma 39:9)
the lust of the eyes (1 John 2:16)

306. I unfold unto you a mystery (Alma 40:3)
I shew you a mystery (1 Corinthians 15.51)

307. shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth (Alma 40:13)
shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall he weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 8:12)

308. state of awful, fearful looking for the fiery indignation of the wrath of God (Alma 40:14)
a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries (Hebrews 10:27)

309. restoration of those things of which has been spoken by the mouths of the prophets (Alma 40:22)
restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets (Acts 3:21)

310. then shall the righteous shine forth in the kingdom of God (Alma 40:25)
Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matthew 13:43)

311. mortality raised to immortality, corruption to incorruption (Alma 41:4)
mortal must put on immortality. . . . corruptible shall have put on incorruption (1 Corinthians 15:53-54)

312. are in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity (Alma 41:11)
art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity (Acts 8:23)

313. without God in the world (Alma 41:11)
without God in the world (Ephesians 2:12)

314. it was appointed unto man to die (Alma 42:6)
it is appointed unto men once to die (Hebrews 9:27)

315. whosoever will come may come and partake of the waters of life freely (Alma 42:27)
whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely (Revelation 22:17)

316. according to their faith it was done unto them (Alma 57:21)
According to your faith be it unto you (Matthew 9:29)

317. stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has made them free (Alma 58:40)

    Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hash made us free (Galatians 5:1)

318. the inward vessel shall be cleansed first, and then shall the outer vessel be cleansed also (Alma 60:23)

    cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also (Matthew 23:26)

319. lay up for yourselves a treasure in heaven (Helaman 5:8)

    lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20)

320. fadeth not away (Helaman 5:8)

    fadeth not away (1 Peter 1:4)

321. from the foundation of the world (Helaman 5:47)

    from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8)

322. it shall be better for the Lamanites than for you (Helaman 8:23)

    it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Go-morrha . . . than for that city (Matthew 10:15)

323. except ye repent ye shall perish (Helaman 8:28)

    except ye repent, ye shall . . . perish (Luke 13:5)

324. And as he lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, even so shall he be lifted up who should come (Helaman 8:14)

    And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up (John 3:14)

325. Abraham saw of his coming, and was filled with gladness and did rejoice (Helaman 8:17)

    Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad (John 8:56)

326. laying up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where nothing doth corrupt (Helaman 9:25)

    lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt (Matthew 6:20)

327. heaping up for yourselves wrath against the day of judgment (Helaman 8:25)

    treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment (Romans 2:5)

328. O ye fools, ye uncircumcised of heart (Helaman 9:21)

    O fools, and slow of heart (Luke 24:25)

329. how long the Lord your God will suffer you (Helaman 9:21)

    how long shall I suffer you (Mark 9:19)

330. pondering in his heart (Helaman 10:3)

    pondered them in her heart (Luke 2:19)

331. Blessed art thou (Helaman 10:4)

    Blessed art thou (Luke 1:42)

332. be done unto thee according to thy word (Helaman 10:5)

    be it unto me according so thy word (Luke 1:38)

333. whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven (Helaman 10:7)

    whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven (Matthew 16:19)

334. ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou cast down and become smooth (Helaman 10:9)

    ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place (Matthew 17:20)

335. They that have done good shall have everlasting life; and they that have done evil shall have everlasting damnation (Helaman 12:26)

    they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:29)

336. he testifieth that your deeds are evil (Helaman 13:26)

    I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil (John 7:7)

337. darkness rather than light (Helaman 13:29)

    darkness rather than light (John 3:19)

338. graves shall be opened, and shall yield up many of their dead; and many saints shall appear unto many (Helaman 14:25)

    graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, . . . and appeared unto many (Matthew 27:52-53)

339. he chastened them because he loveth them (Helaman 15:3)

    whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth (Hebrews 12:5)

340. angels did appear unto men, wise men, and did declare unto them glad tidings of great joy (Helaman 16:14)

    the angel said . . . behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy (Luke 2:10)

341. I come unto my own (3 Nephi 1:14)

    He came unto his own (John 1:11)

342. the dog to his vomit, or like the sow to her wallowing in the mire (3 Nephi 7:8)

    The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire (2 Peter 2:22)

Part Two

The verses or parts of verses from the Book of Mormon which follow were supposed to have been written between 34 A.D. and 421 A.D.

In 34 A.D. Jesus was supposed to have appeared to the Nephites and given them the Sermon on the Mount (see 3 Nephi, chapters 12-14). Since it is possible that Jesus could have given the same sermon to the Nephites we will not bother to list these verses. There are many other verses which Jesus was supposed to have given to the Nephites which are parallel to verses found in the four Gospels. Except for a parallel between John 1:11-12 (see parallel number 343) we will not list these quotations.

In 3 Nephi 20:23-26 there is a very important quotation from the Book of Acts, but we will not deal with this until after we have completed the list of parallels.

343. I came unto my own, and my own received me not. . . . as many as have received me, to them have I given to become the sons of God; and even so will I to as many as shall believe on my name (3 Nephi 9:16-17)

    He came unto his own, and his own received him not. . . . as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name (John 1:11-12)

344. Old things are done away, and all things have become new (3 Nephi 12:47)

    old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new (2 Corinthians 5:17)

345. For whoso eateth and drinketh my flesh and blood unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to his soul (3 Nephi 18:29)

    For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself (1 Corinthians 11:29)

346. the elements should melt with fervent heat, and the earth (3 Nephi 26:3)

    the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth (2 Peter 3:10)

347. and heard unspeakable things, which are not lawful to be written (3 Nephi 26:18)

    and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter (2 Corinthians 12:4)

348. caught up into heaven, and saw and heard unspeakable things. And it was forbidden them that they should utter (3 Nephi 28;13-14)

    caught up to the third heaven. . . . and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter (2 Corinthians 12:2 and 4)

349. whether they were in the body or out of the body, they could not tell (3 Nephi 28:15)

    whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell (2 Corinthians 12:3)

350. sorrowing was not unto repentance (Mormon 2:13)

    sorrow worketh repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10)

351. the elements shall melt with fervent heat (Mormon 9:2)

    the elements shall melt with fervent heat (2 Peter 3:10)

352. God is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Mormon 9:9)

    Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8)

353. no variableness neither shadow of changing (Mormon 9:9)

    no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James 1:17)

354. they shall come forth, both small and great, and all shall stand before his bar (Mormon 9:13)

    And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God (Revelation 20:12)

355. he that is filthy shall be filthy still; and he that is righteous shall be righteous still (Mormon 9:14)

    he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still (Revelation 22:11)

356. work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (Mormon 9:27)

    work out your own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12)

357. that ye may consume it on your lusts (Mormon 9:28)

    that ye may consume it upon your lusts (James 4:3)

358. a better world (Ether 12:4)

    a better country (Hebrews 11:16)

359. an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast (Ether 12:4)

    an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast (Hebrews 6:19)

360. always abounding in good works (Ether 12:4)

    always abounding in the work (1 Corinthians 15:58)

361. faith is things which are hoped for and not seen (Ether 12:6)

    faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1)

362. partakers of the heavenly gift (Ether 12:8)
partakers of the heavenly calling (Hebrews 3:1)

363. by faith was the law of Moses (Ether 12:11)
By faith, Moses (Hebrews 11:24)

364. a more excellent way (Ether 12:11)
a more excellent way (1 Corinthians 12:31)

365. it was the faith of Alma and Amulet that caused the prison to tumble (Ether 12:13)
By faith the walls of Jericho fell down (Hebrews 11:30)

366. by faith that the three disciples obtained a promise that they should not taste of death (Ether 12:17)
By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death (Hebrews 11:5)

367. by faith . . . obtained the promise (Ether 12:22)
through faith . . . obtained promises (Hebrews 11:33)

368. the Lord spake unto me, saying: . . . my grace is sufficient for the meek, that they shall take no advantage of your weakness (Ether 12:26)
he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9)

369. I make weak things become strong (Ether 12:27)
for when I am weak, then am I strong. (2 Corinthians 12:10)

370. faith, hope and charity (Ether 12:28)
faith, hope, charity (1 Corinthians 13:13)

371. old have passed away, and all things have become new (Ether 13:9)
old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new (2 Corinthians 5:17)

372. better things of you (Moroni 7:39)
better things of you (Hebrews 6:9)

373. have not charity he is nothing (Moroni 7:44)
have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (1 Corinthians 13:3)

374. charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, . . . is not puffed up, . . . seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things (Moroni 7:45)
Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; . . . is not puffed up, . . . seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, . . . hopeth all things, endureth all things (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

375. if ye have not charity, ye are nothing (Moroni 7:46)
and have not charity, I am nothing (1 Corinthians 13:2)

376. charity never faileth (Moroni 7:46)
Charity never faileth (1 Corinthians 13:8)

377. things must fail (Moroni 7:46)
they shall fail (1 Corinthians 13:8)

378. that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is (Moroni 7:48)
that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2)

379. that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure (Moroni 7:48)
that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure (1 John 3:3)

380. the name of his Holy Child, Jesus (Moroni 8:3)
the name of thy holy child Jesus (Acts 4:30)

381. the enemy of all righteousness (Moroni 9:6)
thou enemy of all righteousness (Acts 13:10)

382. whatsoever thing is good is just (Moroni 10:6)
whatsoever things are of good report (Philippians 4:8)

383. the same today and tomorrow, and forever (Moroni 10:7)
the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8)

384. the gifts of God, . . . are many; and they come from the same God (Moroni 10:8)
there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4)

385. there are different ways that these gifts are administered (Moroni 10:8)
there are differences of administrations (1 Corinthians 12:5)

386. but it is the same God who worketh all in all (Moroni 10:8)
but it is the same God which worketh all in all (1 Corinthians 12:6)

387. the manifestations of the Spirit of God unto men, to profit them (Moroni 10:8)
the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal (1 Corinthians 12:7)

388. For behold, to one is given by the Spirit of God, that he may teach the word of wisdom (Moroni 10:9)
For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom (1 Corinthians 12:8)

389. to another, that he may teach the word of knowledge by the same Spirit (Moroni 10:10)

    to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8)

390. to another, exceeding great faith (Moroni 10:11)

    To another faith (1 Corinthians 12:9)

391. to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit (Moroni 10:11)

    to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:9)

392. to another, that he may work mighty miracles (Moroni 10:12)

    To another the working of miracles (1 Corinthians 12:10)

393. to another, that he may prophesy (Moroni 10:13)

    to another prophecy (1 Corinthians 12:10)

394. to another, the beholding of angels and ministering spirits (Moroni 10:14)

    to another discerning of spirits (1 Corinthians 12:19)

395. to another, all kinds of tongues (Moroni 10:15)

    to another divers kinds of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10)

396. to another, the interpretation of languages and of divers kinds of tongues (Moroni 10:16)

    to another the interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10)

397. all these gifts come by the Spirit of Christ; and they come unto every man severally, according as he will (Moroni 10:17)

    all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will (1 Corinthians 12:11)

398. every good gift cometh of Christ (Moroni 10:18)

    Every good gift . . . cometh down from the Father (James 1:17)

399. the same yesterday, today, and forever (Moroni 10:19)

    the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:8)

400. the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead (Moroni 10:34)

    the Judge of quick and dead (Acts 10:42)

The Dilemma

Besides the 400 parallels listed here we have previously shown many others which we feel are important. We have also indicated that there are other parallels which we have not listed.

According to the Book of Mormon, Christ appeared to the Nephites after his crucifixion and told them he was going to quote the words of Moses. The words which Christ should have quoted are found in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18, and 19:

> The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of the brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; . . .
>
> I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.
>
> And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

Instead of quoting these words from Deuteronomy, however, he quoted from Peter's paraphrase of Moses' words found in Acts 3:22-26. Verses 24-26 are quoted which are not part of Moses' prophecy in Deuteronomy. Below is a comparison between Peter's paraphrase of Moses' words and the words Christ was supposed to have quoted to the Nephites:

3 NEPHI 20:23-26

> Behold, I am he of whom Moses spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people.
>
> Verily I say unto you, yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have testified of me.
>
> And behold, ye are the children of the prophets; and ye are of the house of Israel; and ye are of the covenant which the Father made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham: And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.
>
> The Father having raised me up unto you first, and sent me to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities; . . .

ACTS 3:22-26

> For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.
>
> And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.
>
> Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have wise fortold of these days.
>
> Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed.
>
> Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

It would almost appear that Christ was reading from the book of Acts, even though it was not yet written. George B. Arbaugh made the following statement concerning this:

> "Christ" in Book of Mormon
> Quotes Material Not Yet Written
>
> Christ quotes to the Indians the following statement supposedly made by Moses. Actually, these are not Moses' words, but a paraphrase of them made by Peter. . . .
>
> Simon Peter here paraphrases and condenses Moses' lengthy statement in Deuteronomy 18:15-19. The wording is quite different from that in Deuteronomy, but the writers of the Book of Mormon failed to check on the original statement and assumed that Peter's report of it was a verbatim quotation. Therefore the Book of Mormon quotes Acts. (*Gods, Sex, and Saints*, by George B. Arbaugh, page 36)

It is interesting to note that Nephi—who was supposed to have written between 600 and 545 B.C.—also quoted this portion of the Book of Acts (see parallel number 82). For other instances where the author of the Book of Mormon followed the New Testament wording of texts that are also found in the Old Testament see parallels 81 and 241.

Wesley M. Jones made these statements concerning Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon:

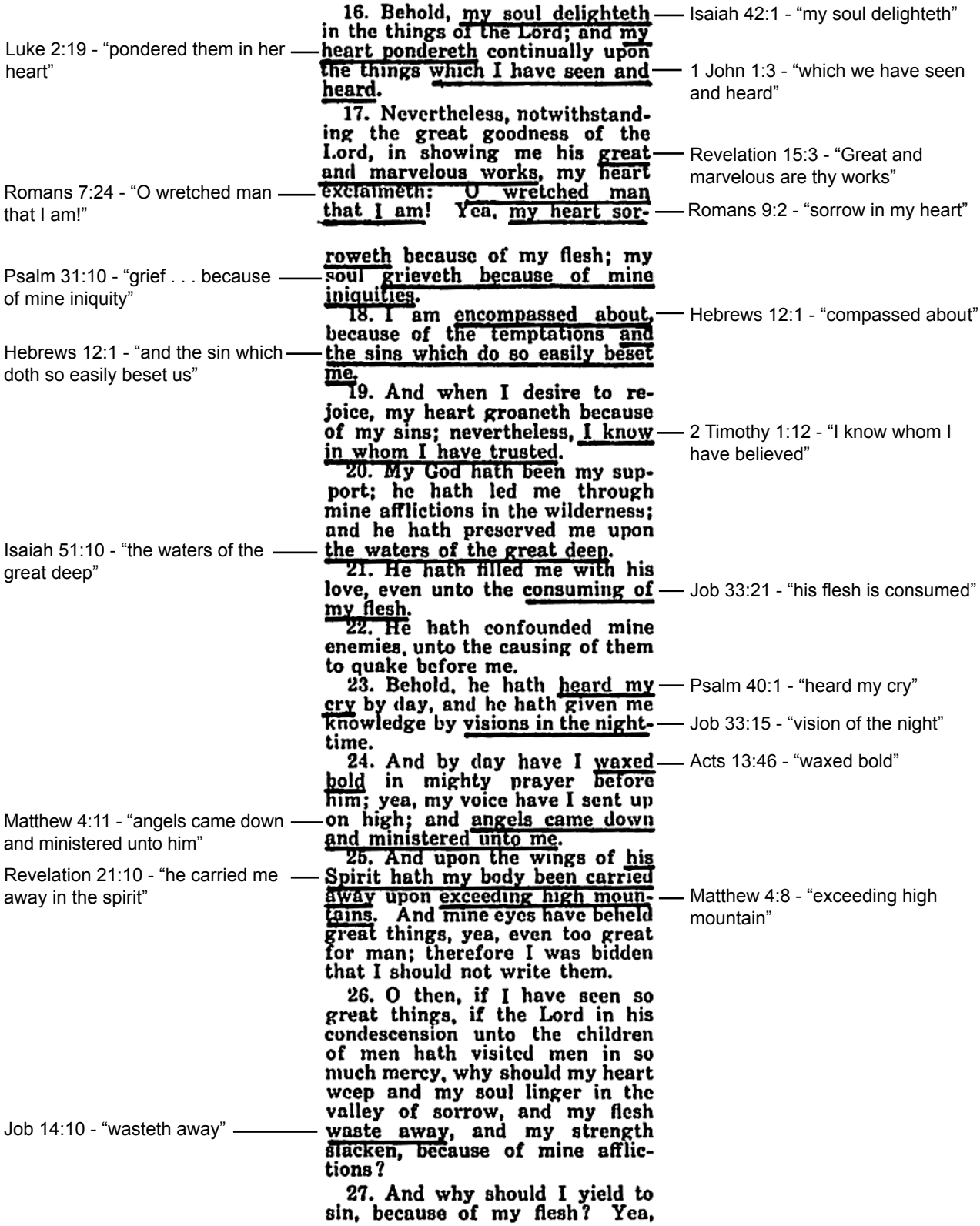
> He admired St. Paul and seems to have taken him as a pattern—sometimes identifying himself with that master. . . .
>
> Joseph's greatest urge was to write scripture and like the school-boy who placed pebbles in his mouth to become an orator, he would use gems instead! And what gems! The best he could find in the Bible—the exalted allegorical phrases of Isaiah and the mystical phrases of Paul. Whatever he dished up, whether sayings of Moses or instructions to the Saints, contained generous helpings of both. . . .
>
> Joseph with all his cunning overlooked something most damaging of all. Here is Joseph plagiarizing a sermon of Paul. His puppet, Moroni, lives on a distant continent, 4000 miles from Paul with no communication, yet they **use the same words!** (*Joseph Smith: Scripture-Maker*, by Wesley M. Jones, Oakland, California, 1966, pages 1, 2 and 4)

Mormon writers find it difficult to answer this problem. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, makes this statement:

> Critics will say that Mormon's words were simply hi-jacked by Joseph Smith from Paul's words in the New Testament. It is true that the text in verse 45 is almost word for word the same as its parallel in 1 Corinthians. Now I am going to speak as a higher critic. I do **not believe that Paul was the original author of the words in question.** I think that the original author was the Savior. Paul had access to them and used our Lord's words to suit himself when writing to the Corinthians. In his time he would not be accused of plagiarism. When our Lord came to this continent as a resurrected, glorified person, he gave the same sermon on faith, hope, and charity. Mormon had access to that sermon just as Paul did and used it as he pleased. He was unaware that Paul had used the sermon on the other continent at an earlier time. We cannot accuse the Prophet Joseph Smith of being stupid, whatever else we may accuse him of. He told the truth and made an interesting contribution to our knowledge of Paul and his famous sermon. (*Book of Mormon Institute*, December 1959, Extension Publications, Brigham Young University, 1964 edition, page 8)

Dr. Sperry also stated:

> Chapters seven and ten of the Book of Moroni contain teachings which so closely parallel passages in 1 Corinthians 12, 13 that they constitute a literary problem. . . .
>
> That there is more than a casual connection between these two scriptures is apparent to everyone. To be sure, there are great differences between the two texts, but great likenesses also exist. It is but natural that critics of the Book of Mormon should call our attention to these facts, and explain them by saying that Joseph Smith simply "lifted" the ideas from the New Testament and used them to suit himself. The concept that Moroni, living on this continent about A.D. 420 (Moroni 10:1), and far removed from copies of the New Testament, would have access to Paul's writings seems unworthy of their serious consideration.
>
> That there is a problem we grant readily enough, and we shall attempt a reasonable explanation of it. . . . We cannot, of course, force men to believe anything, whether fact or fancy. But we can point to the strong, **possibility that Paul was NOT the exclusive author** of the ideas contained in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 concerning spiritual gifts. Isn't it reasonable to believe that the great apostle adapted an important body of teachings common to the early Christian Church to suit his needs in dealing with the Corinthians? It would seem to the writer that Jesus was far more likely to have been the original author of the doctrines concerning spiritual gifts than was Paul. According to this view the latter simply drew on the teachings of Jesus in much the same way that Moroni did. Paul and Moroni were expositors and teachers of a gospel common to both. Moroni, like Paul, might well have said, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." (1 Cor. 11:1.) It should be emphasized that we are attempting here to give only a reasonable answer to the problem raised; **absolute proof is wanting.** We cannot prove beyond doubt that Jesus preached a sermon on spiritual gifts either to the Nephites or to His Palestinian followers, records of which could be drawn on by Moroni and Paul. However, it is very attractive and reasonable presumption that he did. . . .
>
> Now let us turn to the literary problem raised by the presence of extracts from 1 Corinthians 13 in Moroni 7:46-47. Nearly all of Chapter 7 in the Book of Moroni is presented as a sermon by Moroni's father, Mormon, as he taught in a synagogue. The sermon deals with faith, hope, and charity. Most persons, we are sure, would be willing to admit that the bulk of it is as original as one could reasonably expect of a preacher dealing with a familiar subject. However, verses 45 and 46 parallel 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 so closely in some respects that they



The next two pages show a psalm which was supposed to have been written by Nephi between 588 and 570 B.C. In the *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 1, page 264, it is called "a remarkable piece of poetry." Actually this psalm is filled with quotations from both the Old and New Testaments. We have tried to show some of the similarities at the side of the printed text. The author of the psalm was obviously familiar with the King James Version of the Bible. This psalm is found in 2 Nephi 4:16-35.

why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my soul? Why am I angry because of mine enemy?

28. Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin. Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul.

29. Do not anger again because of mine enemies. Do not slacken my strength because of mine afflictions.

30. Rejoice, O my heart, and cry unto the Lord, and say: O Lord, I will praise thee forever; yea, my soul will rejoice in thee, my God, and the rock of my salvation.

31. O Lord, wilt thou redeem my soul? Wilt thou deliver me out of the hands of mine enemies? Wilt thou make me that I may shake at the appearance of sin?

32. May the gates of hell be shut continually before me, because that my heart is broken and my spirit is contrite! O Lord, wilt thou not shut the gates of thy righteousness before me, that I may walk in the path of the low valley, that I may be strict in the plain road!

33. O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness! O Lord, wilt thou make a way for mine escape before mine enemies! Wilt thou make my path straight before me! Wilt thou not place a stumbling block in my way—but that thou wouldst clear my way before me, and hedge not up my way, but the ways of mine enemy.

34. O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever. I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh; for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh. Yea, cursed is he that putteth his trust in man or maketh flesh his arm.

35. Yea, I know that God will give liberally to him that asketh. Yea, my God will give me, if I ask not amiss; therefore I will lift up my voice unto thee; yea, I will cry unto thee, my God, the rock of my righteousness. Behold, my voice shall forever ascend up unto thee, my rock and mine everlasting God. Amen.

Psalm 143:12 - "afflict my soul"

Ephesians 4:27 - "Neither give place to the devil"

Psalm 52:9 - "I will praise thee for ever"

Psalm 9:2 - "rejoice in thee"

Psalm 89:26 - "my God and the rock of my salvation"

Psalm 49:15 - "redeem my soul"

Psalm 31:15 - "deliver me from the hand of mine enemies"

Matthew 16:18 - "gates of hell"

Psalm 34:18 - "broken heart . . . a contrite spirit"

Psalm 117:19 - "the gates of righteousness"

Isaiah 2:3 - "walk in his paths"

Isaiah 61:10 - "the robe of righteousness"

1 Corinthians 10:13 - "make a way to escape"

Matthew 3:3 - "make his paths straight"

Romans 14:13 - "a stumbling block . . . in his brother's way"

Hosea 2:6 - "hedge up thy way"

Psalm 31:14 - "I trusted in thee, O Lord"

Psalm 56:3 - "I will trust in thee"

Jeremiah 17:5 - "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm"

James 1:5 - "ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally"

James 4:3 - "ye ask amiss"

Psalm 143:8 - "I will lift up my soul unto thee"

Psalm 4:1 - "O God of my righteousness"

Genesis 21:33 - "everlasting God"

This psalm, found in 2 Nephi 4:16-35, is filled with quotations from both the Old and New Testaments. We have tried to show some of the similarities at the side of the printed text.

must be accounted for . . . **many phrases are word for word** the same as in the King James version. Here the author frankly admits the possibility that Joseph Smith **used the familiar version as he translated Mormon's words;** whenever the two versions differed substantially he inserted the Nephite reading. And, again, we point to the probability that Paul and a Nephite prophet had access to a common body of teaching. Christ was the original author of the great teachings on faith and charity; Mormon and the great apostle to the Gentiles simply adapted the teachings of our Lord common to the Nephites and Jews as seemed good to them. Many sincere persons may be shocked at the suggestion that Paul was not the author of the great ideas underlying 1 Corinthians 13. The writer recognizes that Paul may be credited with a certain originality in presenting them but believes that much, even of the exact phraseology, is due to our Lord who taught the same great doctrines in America and Palestine.

. . . Christianity was in the world from the beginning. Consequently, many of the teachings of inspired men were bound to be similar to those of Christ in the New Testament. Certain early scriptures containing Christian teachings were apparently available to Paul which we do not at present have. . . .

We emphasize here the fact that **different prophets may have somewhat similar inspiration** in dealing with a given subject. This inspiration may be expressed in **very similar language.** In considering the Book of Mormon we have to take the translator into account. When the prophet Joseph Smith came to a passage which contained statements which reminded him of similar ones in the New Testament, he was doubtless **influenced by their wording** and used them whenever it was possible to do so. (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City, 1964, pages 113-118, 120-121)

On pages 206-207 of the same book, Dr. Sperry states:

It is true that the Book of Mormon does contain many verses of scripture, other than those in Isaiah, which agree **verbatim** with their parallels in the King James Version. . . .

Budvarson claims that "at least twenty-seven thousand words from the King James translation of the Bible are contained in the Book of Mormon." Our own estimate is about **seventeen thousand words**, an estimate we think is much more accurate.

The Mormon writer J. N. Washburn made those statements concerning this problem:

One thing appears to be beyond doubt: Joseph knew his Bible. All the way through the Book of Mormon (true seemingly less in the Book of Ether than elsewhere) are words and expressions that could hardly have come from any other source. (This has no reference at all to the hundreds of quotations from Isaiah, Malachi, Matthew, and other writers of Holy Writ. It means rather that the language of the Book of Mormon is frequently **Bible language**, sometimes almost **word for word, and often exactly the same.**) One explanation for this is that in the process of translation Joseph used such terms as he could command for what he desired to say, and Bible language appears to have come readily to him.

There seems only one other explanation for this phenomenon. It is that the Nephite prophets in their own teaching and preaching and writing, employed the **very same terms** used by Bible leaders for whatever reason, and quite independently of them. The likeness of the two texts in many places is **too striking**, it seems to me, **to be accidental**, whatever the real reason is. (*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City, 1954, pages 4-5)

We feel that neither Dr. Sperry or Mr. Washburn have given a satisfactory explanation as to why so much of the New Testament appears in the Book of Mormon. Dr. Sperry's explanation seems to be wishful thinking, for he admits that "absolute proof is wanting." The only reasonable explanation, we feel, is that the author of the Book of Mormon had the King James Version of the Bible. And since this version did not appear until 1611 A.D., the Book of Mormon could NOT have been written prior to that time. The Book of Mormon, therefore, is a modern composition, not a "record of ancient religious history." M. T. Lamb made these observations concerning this matter:

Well, now, reader, the Book of Mormon has this very serious objection to its divinity: It is not original enough to have come from God. **It is made up largely of borrowed material.** Outside of the mere framework of the book, its thread of history, the filling in is largely borrowed. We mean the religious part of the book; its sermons, exhortations and addresses are either repetitions of the exact language of the Bible, or they are constructed as gospel sermons of the present day are constructed, filled in with a large amount of Bible phraseology, Bible allusions, illustrations, etc.

For instance, we find that the Lord Jesus, when he first appeared to the Nephites, as recorded on pp. 455-464, after saying a few words (more than one-half of which are selections from His various words as recorded in the four Gospels), began to repeat the sermon on the Mount, as recorded by Matthew in the 5th, 6th and 7th chapters, and repeated the entire sermon word for word. Then followed this, with about as much more material filled in constantly with short phrases or whole sentences taken from other portions of the Bible. When He came back the second time and addressed them at some length, he quotes verbatim nearly two whole chapters from the Book of Isaiah, and closes up his speech with a repetition of the two last chapters of the Book of Malachi.

In the second Book of Nephi, beginning with p. 78 (N. Ed., 87), the author quotes from Isaiah, the prophet, and fills up sixteen pages, . . . and occasional selections from the other prophets, are thus incorporated into the Book of Mormon, with the major portion of Christ's words as found in the four evangelists, and a generous sprinkling from all the epistles and the Book of Revelation. (*The Golden Bible, or, The Book of Mormon, Is It From God?* by Rev. M. T. Lamb, New York, 1887, pages 186-188)

On page 213 of the same book we find the following:

> Reader, What must be the moral make up of the author of such a book as this? Borrowing every one of its good things from the Bible, and then lifting itself up above the Bible. Like a robber who enters by stealth the house of a great prince, and, after donning the prince's clothing, and appropriating his gold and his diamonds, immediately attempts to pass himself off as a veritable prince—a brother of the robbed man, forsooth! A brother, too, of richer blood and nobler mien and more costly treasures, and deserving higher consideration than the victim he has plundered!

On page 239 we find this statement:

> But why need we specify words, single words, or now and then an isolated passage, when there are sentences by the thousand, and whole chapters, whose very presence in the Book of Mormon, in the form in which they are found, **settles the question of the modern origin of the book beyond the possibility of dispute.** Reference is had to all the quotations from the Bible, embracing, as has already been shown, so large a part of the book. They are every one of them, with scarcely an exception, made verbatim from our modern English version, the King James' version of the Bible, made a little over 200 years ago.

M. T. Lamb also states:

> As they proceed with their work of translating, behold there appears underneath an Egyptian character, a passage from our Bible; and it is in the language of our King James' version, precisely as it was translated by the English bishops 200 years ago.
>
> Now that Bible passage appearing underneath those Egyptian characters, is either a translation of those characters, or it is not. If it is a translation made under the authority and by the direction of an angel of God, then we are confronted with this wonderful phenomenon, that the angel should translate exactly as those English bishops, not varying in a single word, although there are several thousand whole verses of this character, thus stamping, as you see, with heaven's seal the work of those grand old bishops, proving that they were infallible, absolutely so, never having made a single mistake, the angel agreeing with them in every instance, even to the wording of their thoughts.
>
> But the scholarship of the world has over and over again declared that those men were not infallible; that they did make a large number of mistakes; no very serious ones it is true, nothing that changes any great doctrine of the Bible; but, nevertheless, faults enough to keep them humble, and show that they were only human. (*The Golden Bible*, pages 243-244)

Alpha And Omega

Perhaps one of the most serious mistakes made by the author of the Book of Mormon was that of having Jesus quote part of Revelation 21:6 to the Nephites. Below is a comparison of the way the words appear in the book of Revelation and the way they are found in the Book of Mormon.

> 3 NEPHI 9:18 — I am the light and the life of the world, **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.**
>
> REVELATION 21:6 — And he said unto me, It is done. **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.**

The words "Alpha" and "Omega" are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. The Mormon writer Bruce R. McConkie gives this definition of "Alpha and Omega":

> These words, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, are used figuratively to teach the timelessness and eternal nature of our Lord's existence, . . . (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966 ed., page 31)

The Greek language was used throughout the Roman Empire at the time of Christ. Therefore, the New Testament was written in Greek and the words *Alpha* and *Omega* were well understood. The Nephites, however, were supposed to have left Jerusalem 600 years before the time of Christ, and therefore they could not have been familiar with these words. If Jesus had told the Nephites that he was "Alpha and Omega," it would have had absolutely no meaning to them. When the author of the Book of Mormon took these words from the book of Revelation he evidently did not realize that they were from the Greek language. On May 15, 1843, Joseph Smith wrote a letter in answer to the charge that he had used a Greek word in the Book of Mormon:

> SIR:—Through the medium of your paper, I wish to correct an error among men that profess to be learned, . . . The error I speak of, is the definition of the word "Mormon." It has been stated that this word was derived from the Greek word *mormo*. This is not the case. There was **no Greek** or Latin upon the plates from which I, through the grace of God, translated the Book of Mormon. (*Times and Seasons*, Vol. 4, page 194)

J. N. Washburn makes this statement concerning the findings of another Mormon writer:

> The Book of Mormon, he finds, does not contain any of the numerous words in the New Testament that are of **Greek** origin. (*Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, by J. N. Washburn, Salt Lake City, 1954, page 161)

This statement is certainly untrue. As we have already shown, the words *Alpha* and *Omega* are definitely of Greek origin. The Book of Mormon also contains the name Timothy (3 Nephi 19:4). Timothy is a Greek name and never appears in the Old Testament. In the same verse that we find the name Timothy in the Book of Mormon we also find the name "Jonas." Jonas is the New Testament name for Jonah and is found in Matthew 12:39.

The appearance of Greek words in the Book of Mormon—especially the words *Alpha* and *Omega*—is another evidence that it is not an ancient record, but rather a modern composition.

From Shakespeare

Since William Shakespeare was not born until 1564, we would not expect the Book of Mormon to quote from his words. Anti-Mormon writers, however, feel that they have identified a quotation from his works in the Book of Mormon. This is a statement made by Lehi almost 600 years before Christ (see 2 Nephi 1:14). Below is a comparison of the statement in the Book of Mormon with the words of Shakespeare.

> 2 NEPHI 1:14 — **From** whence **no traveler** can **return;** . . .
>
> SHAKESPEARE — . . . **From** whose bourn **no traveller returns** . . . (*Hamlet*, Act 3. Scene 1, as quoted in *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 1, page 237)

The reader will note that three words are identical and another word is almost the same. It would appear, then, that the author of the Book of Mormon has plagiarized these words from Shakespeare. Mormon writers, however, have pointed out that the book of Job has two verses (Job 10:21 and 16:22) that are similar to the statement by Shakespeare. They claim that the Nephites would have had the words of Job on the brass plates, and that the book of Job was the source for both Shakespeare and Lehi. While the words in Job are similar to both Shakespeare's words and the words found in the Book of Mormon, the quotation in the Book of Mormon appears to be much closer to Shakespeare than it is to Job. Both verses in Job contain the words "whence I shall not return." Notice, however, that the words "no traveler" do not appear in these verses from Job, and that there are only two words that are identical to the Book of Mormon reference—i.e., "whence" and "return."

It is interesting to note that the Wayne Bookstore in Palmyra advertized in 1825 that they had the following books for sale: "Shakespeare's works, 10 vols. (*Wayne Sentinel*, January 26, 1825). It is very likely that Joseph Smith heard this quotation from Shakespeare's writings before he wrote the Book of Mormon. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, has done a good deal of research on this problem. He feels that the parallel between Shakespeare and the Book of Mormon may just be a coincidence, but he is willing to concede that Shakespeare's words may have had some influence on Joseph Smith when he translated the Book of Mormon:

> Joseph Smith has been charged by many of his critics as being an impostor and an ignoramus, but strange to say, some of them, . . . claim that he quotes words of Shakespeare in a passage of the Book of Mormon which we know is credited to Father Lehi. And, indeed, it would seem a bit strange to learn that Lehi could quote Will Shakespeare about 2140 years **before** the Bard of Avon was born!
>
> . . . The Mormon people have **no** objections to scholars finding parallels to Shakespeare in the Book of Mormon if such parallels are fairly used. We hold that Joseph Smith translated the Nephite text of the Book of Mormon and that he used the best vocabulary at his command. If such a vocabulary demonstrated a knowledge of works of Shakespeare, so much the better. But we suggest that it would be very difficult to prove that Joseph Smith was familiar with the works of Shakespeare; . . . To be sure, like other young people of his time, he may have heard Shakespeare quoted at times by different speakers coming into his community. . . .
>
> In these lines, *death*, as with Father Lehi in the Book of Mormon passage, is uppermost in the writer's mind. Now, the question arises, was Shakespeare clearly dependent upon Job for the essence of his thoughts here or upon some other source? . . .
>
> If, now, it be conceded for argument's sake that Shakespeare was dependent upon Job, the problem arises as to whether Father Lehi was dependent upon him also. Did the Brass Plates (as of 600 B.C.) upon which the Nephites depended for their knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures contain the text of Job? If they did, then it may be considered reasonable to assume that President Roberts' second explanation, which we have cited above, is substantially correct. But as we have already pointed out, some Old Testament scholars have held that the Book of Job was written late, that is, long after 600 B.C. If so, Lehi could not have been acquainted with Job's writings. On the other hand, we hasten to point out that many Old Testament scholars have held that Job was written prior to 600 B.C. . . .
>
> In fairness to critics, and in anticipation of future discussions of the problem, we wish to call attention to a particular word used in the quotations by both Lehi and Shakespeare. Let us quote it in the phrases in which it occurs side by side.
>
> Lehi—*From whence no traveller can return*.
>
> Shakespeare—*From whose bourn no traveller returns.*
>
> The word we have in mind is "traveller." It stands out **like a sore thumb** as far as Lehi is concerned. . . .
>
> We are led to the conclusion that the **only word** that Joseph Smith might have **put into Lehi's mouth from Shakespeare**, assuming he was exposed to the lines from Hamlet, is "traveller." (*The Problems of the Book of Mormon*, by Sidney Sperry, pages 123, 124, 126-129)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts argued that the quotation in the Book of Mormon was not from Shakespeare, but he stated that even if Joseph Smith had used Shakespeare's words to express the thought it would not reflect upon the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon:

> When Joseph Smith came to this thought in Nephi, the thought, mark you, he translated it into English, and being familiar with the book of Job, his translation followed somewhat the phraseology of Job in our English version. Shakespeare nowhere appears in all this, and **if he did**, if Joseph Smith had expressed this old Hebrew and Nephite thought **in Shakespeare's exact phraseology** instead of that of our English version of Job, it would have been **no valid objection** to the Book of Mormon, . . . (*Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, by B. H. Roberts, Vol. 1, page 367)

We cannot agree with the views expressed by B. H. Roberts and Sidney Sperry. Our feelings on this subject were well expressed in a letter printed in the *Salt Lake Tribune* on December 6, 1903:

> The only way, therefore, to lift Nephi out of this fatal situation is for Elder Roberts to show that he had, in addition to the Jewish Scriptures, a copy of our English Bible with him back there in the wilderness 600 B.C., or else a copy of Shakespeare. Or else let Mr. Roberts agree with me according to the evidence, that Mr. Nephi was simply a very modern gentleman from New York or Pennsylvania, having in his possession both the Bible and Shakespeare, and then the difficulty is solved.
>
> . . . . .
>
> . . . if Joseph Smith turned aside to quote from our English Bible, as Elder Roberts admits that he did, then what was to prevent him from putting into the Book of Mormon, when it suited him, quotations from other English books, from Shakespeare, from books on geography and history? . . . What prevented him from putting in his own views? Undoubtedly, that is just what he did, for the book, gives abundant evidence of being a modern compilation, and the evidence that it is an ancient book **utterly fails.** The statement and admission of Elder Roberts give us all the light we need as to its modern origin and spurious character. (*Salt Lake Tribune*, December 6, 1903, as quoted in *Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, Vol. 1, pages 347 and 351)

Book of Martyrs

Wesley M. Jones felt that Fox's *Book of Martyrs* may have had some influence upon the Book of Mormon:

> The important point is: did young Joseph have access to the book during his formative years? There is considerable evidence that he did. The many persecutions of "Christians" mentioned in the Book of Mormon, and, incidentally, a century or more before the Christian Era, suggests an acquaintance with Fox's work. A typical example is Abinadi, a preacher of Christ, 148 B. C. (an obvious anachronism, see p. 310), who was the first "martyr by fire" in the Book of Mormon. When ordered by the wicked king to retract his words, that, "God himself shall come down among the children of men" or be burned, he chose death in the same manner and with the same fortitude as did Fox's martyrs. "And when the flames began to scorch him, he cried unto them, saying: '. . . O God receive my soul.' . . . And they scourged his skin with faggots, yea, unto his death."
>
> Quite understandably the details of Abinadi's death do not run precisely parallel with any individual martyr as related by Fox, but rather, they are a combination of many. For example, Bishop Ridley's last words were, "O Lord, receive my spirit"; Bishop Latimer's were, "O Father of heaven, receive my soul." (*History of the Martyrs*, p. 334). The last words of the illustrious Archbishop Cranmer, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (p. 345) are typical of a host of lesser martyrs. Again, the general use of faggots as fuel for the fires of execution as in Fox's book may be significant as used in the Book of Mormon parallel. (*A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources*, by Wesley M. Jones, Detroit, Mich., 1964, page 13)

Edward Stevenson related the following:

> I very well remember the Prophet on one occasion dining at our house, and recollect some of his conversation. He was looking over a copy of the *Book of Martyrs*, which was in the house. In doing so he remarked, "Many of those who suffered death at the fiery stake were honest, true Christians according to the light they possessed, and God will reward them according to their integrity, for it could not be required of them to live up to more light than that which they possessed." He requested to have the loan of the *Book of Martyrs*, which he said he would return to us in Zion. He did return it at Far West, Missouri, remarking as he did so, "I have seen those martyrs by aid of the Urim and Thummim; God has a salvation for them." (*The Juvenile Instructor*, September 15, 1894 page 570)

This incident apparently occurred after the Book of Mormon was printed, but it is possible that Joseph Smith could have seen this book before. It is of interest to note that the word "faggots" which is used in both the *Book of Martyrs* and the Book of Mormon does not appear in the Bible.

Family Influence

Both Joseph Smith's father and Nephi's father (in the Book of Mormon) are reported as having had many dreams. Joseph Smith's mother, Lucy Smith, tells several dreams that her husband had in a book which was first published in 1853. This book is entitled *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet and His Progenitors for many Generations*, by Lucy Smith, Mother of the Prophet. One of the dreams of Joseph Smith's father is recorded on pages 58-59 of this book. Lucy Smith stated that her husband had this dream in 1811.

> In 1811, we moved from Royalton, Vermont, to the town of Lebanon, New Hampshire. Soon after arriving here, my husband received another very singular vision, which I will relate: . . . (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith*, page 58)

Upon reading this dream one is struck by the similarity between it and Lehi's dream in the Book of Mormon. Lehi's dream is recorded in chapter 8 of 1 Nephi, and in chapter 11 of 1 Nephi his son, Nephi, has the same dream but expounds it in more detail. The following is a list of parallels between Joseph Smith's father's dream, as related in *Biographical Sketches*, and Lehi's dream as related and further expounded by his son Nephi:

LEHI'S DREAM	JOSEPH SMITH'S FATHER'S DREAM
1. Both Joseph Smith's father and Lehi state they were traveling.	
And after I had traveled for the space of many hours . . . (1 Nephi 8:8)	"I thought," said he, "I was travelling. . . ." (page 38)
2. Both dreams compare the field to a world.	
. . . I saw in my dream, a dark and dreary wilderness. . . . I beheld a large and spacious field. (1 Nephi 8:4 and 9)	". . . I was traveling in an open, desolate field which appeared to be very barren." (page 58)
3. Both dreams compare the field to a world.	
And I also beheld . . . a large and spacious field, as if it had been a world. (1 Nephi 8:20)	". . . an open, desolate field, . . . My guide . . . said, 'This is the desolate world: . . .' " (page 58)
4. Both Joseph Smith's father and Lehi have a guide.	
And it came to pass that I saw a man, and he bade me follow him. (1 Nephi 8:5-6)	"My guide, who was by my side, . . ." (page 58)
5. Both mention a broad road or roads.	
. . . leadeth them away into broad roads, that they perish and are lost. (1 Nephi 12:17)	"The road was so broad and barren. . . 'Broad is the road, and wide is the gate that leads to death . . .' " (page 58)
6. Both mention a narrow path.	
And I also beheld a straight and narrow path, . . . (1 Nephi 8:20)	"Traveling a short distance further, I came to a narrow path. This path I entered, . . ." (page 58)
7. Both mention a stream of water.	
. . . I beheld a river of water; . . . (1 Nephi 8:13)	". . . I beheld a beautiful stream of water . . ." (page 58)
8. Both mention something extending along the bank of the stream.	
And I beheld a rod of iron, and it extended along the bank of the river . . . (1 Nephi 8:19)	". . . but as far as my eyes could extend I could see a rope, running along the bank of it, . . ." (page 58)
9. Both mention a tree.	
And it came to pass that I beheld a tree, . . . (1 Nephi 8:10)	". . . a tree, such as I had never seen before." (page 58)
10. Both mention the beauty of the tree.	
And I looked and beheld a tree; and it was like unto the tree which my father had seen; and the beauty thereof was far beyond, yea, exceeding of all beauty; . . . (1 Nephi 11:8)	"It was exceedingly handsome, insomuch that I looked upon it with wonder and admiration. Its beautiful branches . . ." (page 58)
11. Both trees bore fruit.	
. . . whose fruit was desirable to make one happy. (1 Nephi 8:10)	". . . it bore a kind of fruit, . . ." (page 58)
12. Both compared the whitness of the fruit with snow.	
. . . the whitness thereof did exceed the whitness of the driven snow. (1 Nephi 11:8) . . . the fruit thereof was white, to exceed all the whitness that I had ever seen. (1 Nephi 8:11)	". . . as white as snow or if possible, whiter. . . . the fruit which they contained, which was of dazzling whitness." (page 58)

LEHI'S DREAM	JOSEPH SMITH'S FATHER'S DREAM
13. Both Joseph Smith's father and Lehi ate of the fruit.	
. . . I did go forth and partake of the fruit . . . (Nephi 8:11)	"I drew near, and began to eat of it, . . ." (page 58)
14. Both found the fruit very delicious.	
. . . it was most sweet, above all that I ever before tasted. (1 Nephi 8:11)	". . . and I found it delicious beyond description." (page 58)
15. Both wanted their families to partake of the fruit.	
I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also; . . . (1 Nephi 8:12)	"As I was eating, I said in my heart, 'I cannot eat this alone. I must bring my wife and children, that they may partake with me." (page 58)
16. Both families came and partook of the fruit.	
. . . they did come unto me and partake of the fruit also. (1 Nephi 8:16)	". . . I went and brought my family, . . . and we all commencd eating . . ." (page 58)
17. After eating the fruit both experienced great joy.	
And as I partook of the fruit thereof it filled my soul with exceeding great joy; . . . (1 Nephi 8:12)	"We were exceedingly happy, insomuch that our joy could not easily be expressed." (pages 58-59)
18. Both mention a spacious building.	
And I also cast my eyes round about, and beheld, on the other side of the river of water, a great and spacious building; . . . (1 Nephi 8:26)	". . . I beheld a spacious building standing opposite the valley which we were in, . . ." (page 59)
19. Both indicate the building reached high into the air.	
. . . it stood as it were in the air, high above the earth. (1 Nephi 8:26)	"it appeared to reach to the very heavens." (page 59)
20. Both buildings were filled with people.	
And it was filled with people, . . . (1 Nephi 8:27)	"It was full of doors and windows, and they were all filled with people . . ." (page 59)
21. In both buildings the people were finely dressed.	
. . . their manner of dress was exceeding fine; . . . (1 Nephi 8:27)	". . . who were finely dressed." (page 59)
22. In both cases the people in the building pointed the finger of scorn at those partaking of the fruit.	
. . . they did point the finger of scorn at me and those that were partaking of the fruit also; . . . (1 Nephi 8:33)	"When these people observed us . . . under the tree, they pointed the finger of scorn at us, . . ." (page 59)
23. Both state they ignored the people in the building.	
. . . but we heeded them not. (1 Nephi 8:33)	"But their contumely we utterly disregarded." (page 59)
24. Both state the meaning of the fruit is the pure love of God.	
Knowest thou the meaning of the tree which thy father saw? And I answered him, saying: Yea, it is the love of God, which sheddeth itself abroad in the hearts of the children of men; . . . (1 Nephi 11:21-22)	"I . . .inquired . . .the meaning of the fruit that was so delicious. He told me it was the pure love of God, shed abroad in the hearts of all those who love him . . ." (page 59)
25. Both state two members of the family aren't present.	
. . . I was desirous that Laman and Lemuel should come and partake of the fruit also: . . . (1 Nephi 11:36)	". . . look yonder, you have two more, and you must bring them also." (page 59)
26. Both mention the fall of the building.	
. . . the great and spacious building . . . fell, and the fall thereof was exceeding great. (1 Nephi 11:36)	". . . I asked my guide what was the meaning of the spacious building which I saw. He replied, 'It is Babylon, it is Babylon, and it must fall.' " (page 59)
27. Both infer that pride was connected with the building or its inhabitants.	
. . . the great and spacious building was the pride of the world; . . . (1 Nephi 11:36)	"The people in the doors and windows are the inhabitants thereof, who scorn and despise the Saints of God because of their humility." (page 59)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the Brigham Young University, admits that the two dreams are similar:

> It is interesting that Joseph Smith, Sr., had almost the same dream, according to his wife, who took comfort in comparing the wanderings of her own family with those of "Father Lehi." (*Lehi in the Desert and The World of the Jaredites*, page 49)

In a footnote on the same page Dr. Nibley states:

> The dream is not to be minutely examined, since it is only Mother Smith's memory of a dream reported to her 34 years before.

The non-Mormon writer Hal Hougey made this statement about Joseph Smith's father's dream:

> It is here proposed that Lehi's vision in 1 Nephi 8 of the Book of Mormon is not original at all, but had an earlier source. This source is a dream or vision which Joseph Smith, Sr., father of Joseph Smith the Prophet, experienced at Lebanon, New Hampshire, in 1811, when Joseph Smith, Jr., was but five or six years old. Lucy Smith, the Prophet's mother, undoubtedly told this dream many times to the family and friends, and finally recorded it in her book, *Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, which was published at Liverpool in 1853. Having heard the dream recounted during his youth, Joseph simply incorporated it with a couple of minor changes into the Book of Mormon as a vision of Lehi. (*The Truth About the "Lehi Tree-of-Life" Stone*, by Hal Hougey, Concord, California, 1963, page 19)

M. Wells Jakeman, a Mormon writer, made this statement in rebuttal to Mr. Hougey:

> Now I agree with Mr. Hougey that the similarities between Joseph Smith, Sr.'s, dream and Lehi's dream of the tree of life found in the Book of Mormon are too many of an undisputed and arbitrary nature—as he points out in his booklet, p. 24—to allow for any other explanation than that they are connected. But that Joseph Smith, Sr.'s, dream is necessarily, in view of this connection, the origin of Lehi's vision, is only an assumption that Hougey makes. For he assuredly has not succeeded, in his critique, in disposing of the many and often arbitrary correspondences which I have brought out between the Lehi story and the ancient Izapa carving.
>
> In other words it is just as logical to assume the reverse of his postulate, namely that Lehi's vision in the Book of Mormon is the origin of Joseph Smith, Sr.'s, dream; that is (as one possible explanation), that Joseph Smith, Sr., actually did not have his dream until after the publication of the Book of Mormon in 1830 and his reading therein the vivid account of Lehi's vision of the tree of life, and that his wife Lucy misdated his dream in her book. (After all, she did not publish her book until 1853 or approximately forty-two years after the date she gives her husband's dream of the tree of life. This is a long period of time for the retention in memory of the date of a dream someone had had. In fact, many writers similarly working from memory have wrongly dated such a particular event more badly than may have happened here.)
>
> In the previously quoted letter of Dr. Christensen of the BYU archaeology faculty he also gives his reaction to Hougey's theory of the origin of Lehi's vision (and mentions another possible explanation of Joseph Smith, Sr.'s, similar dream of the tree of life), as follows: "I have not had the opportunity to check on Mr. Hougey's assertions with regard to this matter, but even so, what he has done is not to explain the Stela 5 - Book of Mormon parallels but merely to divert the attention of the reader. I suppose it is possible for the Lord to give Tree of Life visions to as many different persons as he might wish, including the father of the Prophet Joseph Smith." (*The Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, Newsletter no. 104, November 29, 1967, page 9)

Although Lucy Smith's book was not actually printed until 1853—as Dr. Jakeman indicates—it was written before October 8, 1845 (see *History of the Church*, Vol. 7, page 471).

Since we know that a great deal of the Book of Mormon is plagiarized from the Bible, it should not surprise us to find that Joseph Smith would borrow from his father's dream. Fawn Brodie made this statement:

> In his first chapters Joseph borrowed from his own family traditions. His mother for many years had cherished the details of several of her husband's dreams, and one of these the youth incorporated wholesale into his narrative. Lehi, father of the hero Nephi, was made to have a vision that paralleled the dream of Joseph's father in minute detail. (*No Man Knows My History*, by Fawn M. Brodie, page 58)

On page 43 of the same book, Mrs. Brodie made this interesting observation:

> Like Joseph himself, Nephi had two elder brothers, Laman and Lemuel, and three younger, Sam, Jacob, and Joseph.

It is also interesting to note that Joseph Smith's grandfather wrote a book which may have had some influence upon the Book of Mormon. It was published about 1810 and was entitled, *A Narraitve* [sic] *of the Life of Solomon Mack, Containing An Account of the Many Severe Accidents He Met With During a Long Series of Years, Together With the Extraordinary Manner in Which He Was Converted to the Christian Faith*. Solomon Mack begins his book with the words "I, Solomon Mack, was born in Connecticut, . . ." The Book of Mormon begins in a similar manner: "I, Nephi, having been born of goodly parents, . . ." Solomon Mack goes on to state: ". . . I literally watered my pillow with tears that I prayed eagerly that God would have mercy on me, . . ." (page 19). In the Book of Mormon Nephi states: "For I pray continually for them by day, and mine eyes water my pillow by night, . . ." (2 Nephi 33:3). Both books use the words "eternal

bliss" (compare page 3 with Alma 37:44). Both books contain the words "sing redeeming love" (compare page 40 with Alma 26:13). The conversion of Solomon Mack reminds us of the account of Alma's conversion. Although we have already listed parallels between Alma and Paul, we feel that Solomon Mack's story could also have had an influence. (Compare *A Narrative of Solomon Mack*, pages 20-25 with Alma, chapter 36.)

Conclusion

Dr. Hugh Nibley made this statement:

> The fundamental rule of the comparative method is, that if things resemble each other there must be some connection between them, and the closer the resemblance the closer the connection. (*The Improvement Era*, "The Comparative Method," by Hugh Nibley, October, 1959, page 744)

In this chapter we have used "the comparative method" to show that the Book of Mormon is a product of the nineteenth century. We have shown that there are parallels to the Book of Mormon in the newspaper to which Joseph Smith's father subscribed. We have demonstrated that the Book of Mormon contains parallels to the Westminster Confession, which was not written until 1646 A. D. We have shown that the Apocrypha contains the word "Nephi" and other important parallels. We have shown that the Book of Mormon contains hundreds of parallels to the New Testament. It appears that the Book of Mormon also quotes from Shakespeare, who was not born until 1564 A. D. The Book of Mormon also contains many parallels to a dream which Joseph Smith's father had.

Dr. Hugh Nibley states: "To the trained eye every document of considerable length is bound to betray the real setting in which it was produced" (*Since Cumorah*, page 261). We feel that the Book of Mormon has revealed the true setting in which it was produced. That setting was not the ancient world, as Dr. Nibley maintains, but rather the nineteenth century.

4. The Book of Abraham

We had originally intended to deal only with the Book of Mormon in this volume, but an important development with regard to the Book of Abraham has caused us to change our plans.

The Book of Abraham was supposed to have been written on papyrus by Abraham about 4,000 years ago. According to Mormon writers, this same papyrus fell into Joseph Smith's hands in 1835. He translated the papyrus and published it under the title "The Book of Abraham." The Book of Abraham was accepted as scripture by the Mormon Church and is now published as part of the *Pearl of Great Price*—one of the four standard works of the Mormon Church.

If the papyrus was really written by Abraham, as the Mormons claim, its discovery was probably one of the most important finds in the history of the world. To say that the papyrus would be worth a million dollars would be greatly underestimating its value, for it would be older than any portion of the Bible. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, states:

> The Mormon people are especially blessed with scriptures that have a very interesting archaeological background. Aside from the Bible the Book of Mormon is the best-known of these, but the Book of Abraham will run it a close second. If a manuscript were to be found in the sands of Egypt written in Egyptian characters with the title of "The Book of Abraham," it would cause a sensation in the scholarly world. Our people do profess to have such a scripture containing but five chapters which was written by Abraham who came from Ur of the Chaldees and eventually went down into the land of Egypt. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, 1938, Salt Lake City, page 39)

On page 83 of the same book Dr. Sperry makes these comments:

> The little volume of Scripture known as the Book of Abraham will some day be reckoned as **one of the most remarkable documents in existence.**
>
> It is apparent at the outset that the author or editors of the book we call Genesis lived after the events recorded therein took place. Our text of Genesis can therefore not be dated earlier than the latest event mentioned by it. It is evident that the writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, of which our printed Book of Abraham is a copy, must of necessity **be older than the original text of Genesis.** I say this in passing because some of our brethren have exhibited surprise when told that **the text of the Book of Abraham is older than that of Genesis.**

If, on the other hand, the papyrus was not written by Abraham then Joseph Smith was guilty of misrepresentation, and a shadow of doubt is cast upon the Book of Mormon and other writings which he claimed were scripture.

Finding the Papyri

For many years Joseph Smith's collection of papyri were lost, but on November 27, 1967, the *Deseret News* (a Mormon-owned newspaper) announced:

> NEW YORK—A collection of pa[p]yrus manuscripts, long believed to have been destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871, was presented to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints here Monday by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
>
> . . . .
>
> Included in the papyri is a manuscript identified as the original document from which Joseph Smith had copied the drawing which he called "Facsimile No. 1" and published with the Book of Abraham. (*Deseret News*, November 27, 1967, page 1)

Dr. Hugh Nibley, of the BYU, made this comment concerning the papyri:

> On November 27, 1967, the Metropolitan Museum of Art presented to the Church as a gift certain Egyptian papyri once owned and studied by the Prophet Joseph Smith. This was a far more momentous transaction than might appear on the surface, for it brought back into play for the first time since the angel Moroni took back the golden plates a tangible link between the worlds. What we have here is more than a few routine scribblings of ill-trained scribes of long ago; at least one of these very documents was presented to the world by Joseph Smith as offering a brief and privileged insight

> into the strange world of the Patriarchs. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, page 171)

The importance of this find cannot be overemphasized, for now Joseph Smith's ability as a translator of ancient Egyptian writing can be put to an absolute test.

The pages which follow contain the color photos of all eleven pieces of papyri which were given to the Mormon Church by the Metropolitan Museum and published in the *Improvement Era*, February, 1968.

Photo No. 1 — This is a photograph of the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used for Facsimile No. 1 in the Book of Abraham found in the *Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 40.

Photo No. 2 — Dr. Hugh Nibley labels this "II. Plowing scene" in the *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-A.

Photo No. 3 — Dr. Nibley labels this "V. The sepent with legs."
(See *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-E.)

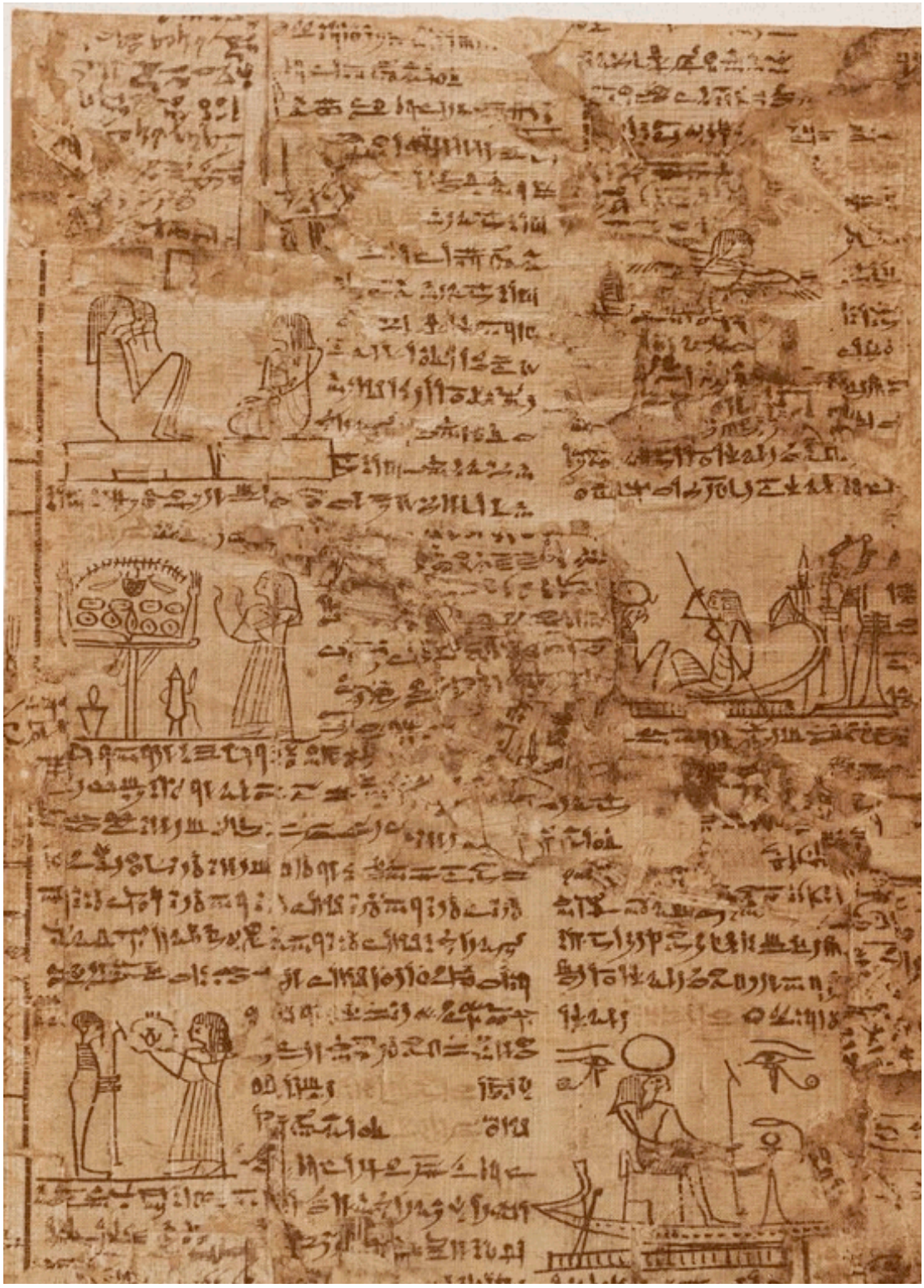


Photo No. 4 — Dr. Nibley labels this "IV. Framed ('Trinity') papyrus."
(See *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-D)

Photos No. 5 and 6 are two fragments of the same scene.
Dr. Nibley labels this one "III A. Court of Osiris (on thone)."
(*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-B)

Photo No. 6. Dr. Nibley labels this one as “III B. Court of Osiris (Thoth recording).”
(*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-C)

Photo No. 7 — Dr. Nibley labels this “VII. Man with staff (entering into glory).”
(*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-G)

Photo No. 8 — Dr. Nibley labels this “VI. The swallow.”
(*Improvement Era,* February, 1968, page 40-F)

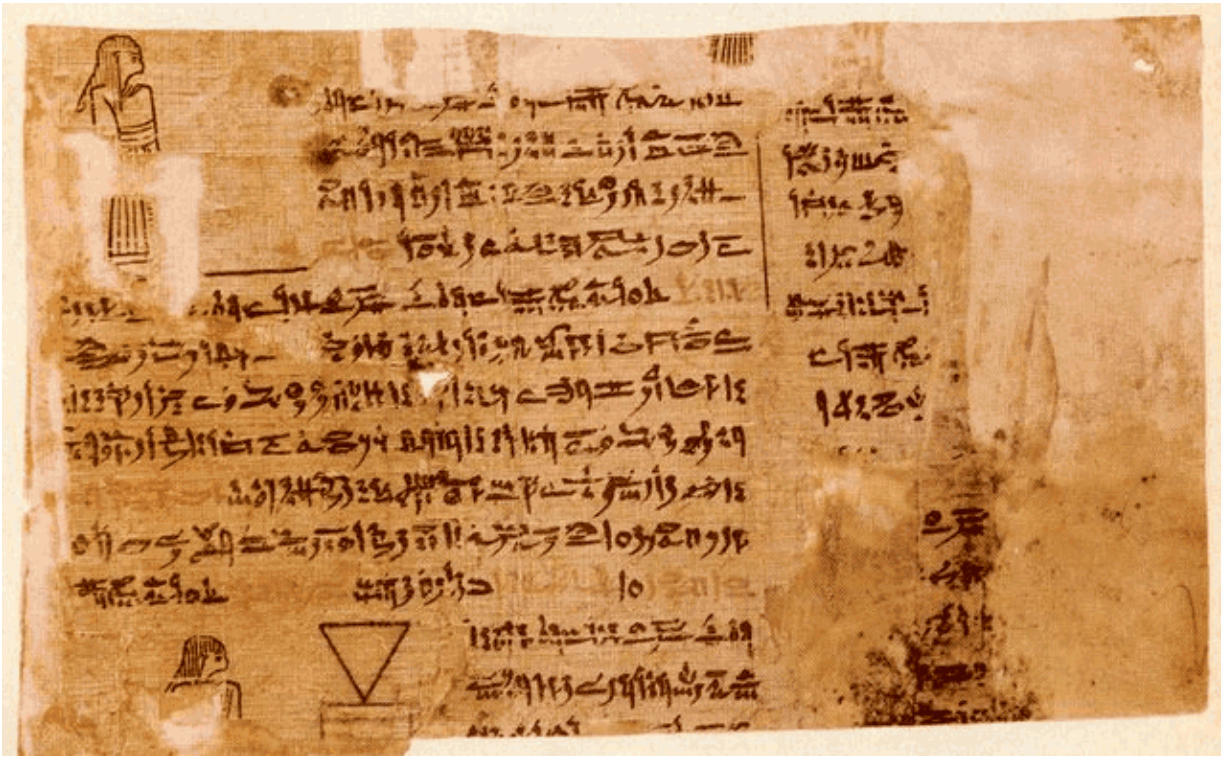


Photo No. 9 — Dr. Nibley labels this "VIII. Inverted triangle."
(*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-G)

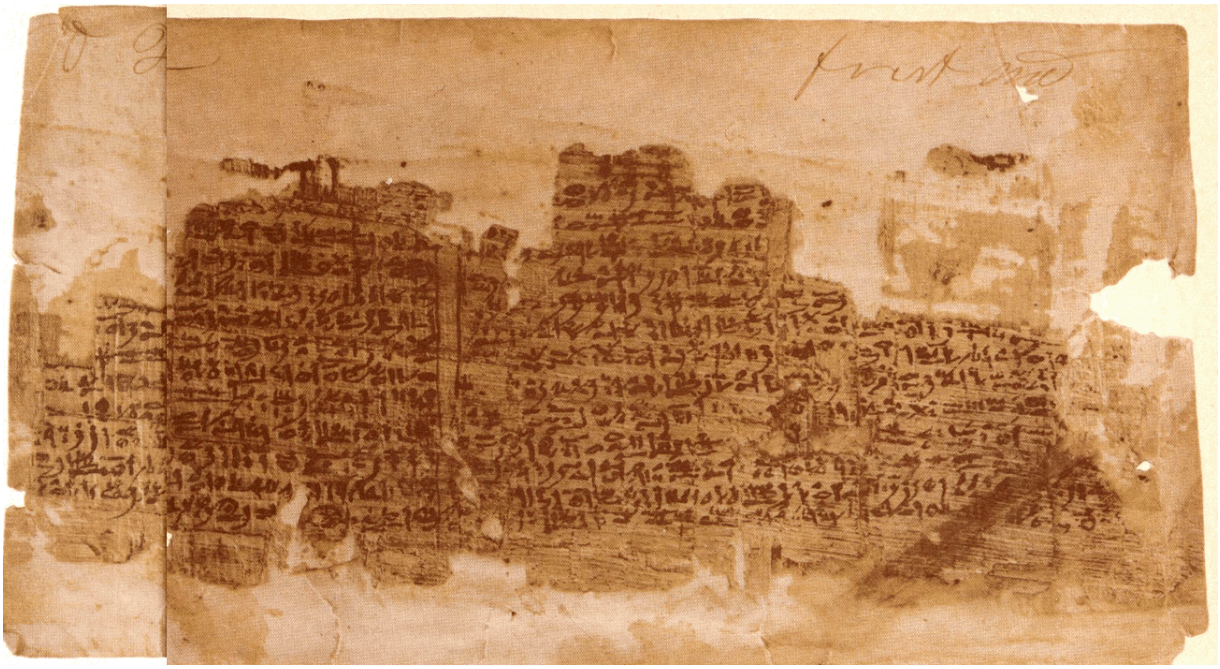


Photo No. 10 — Dr. Nibley labels this "X. Hieratic text, the 'Sensen' papyrus, labeled 'first one' (unillustrated)." (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 41)

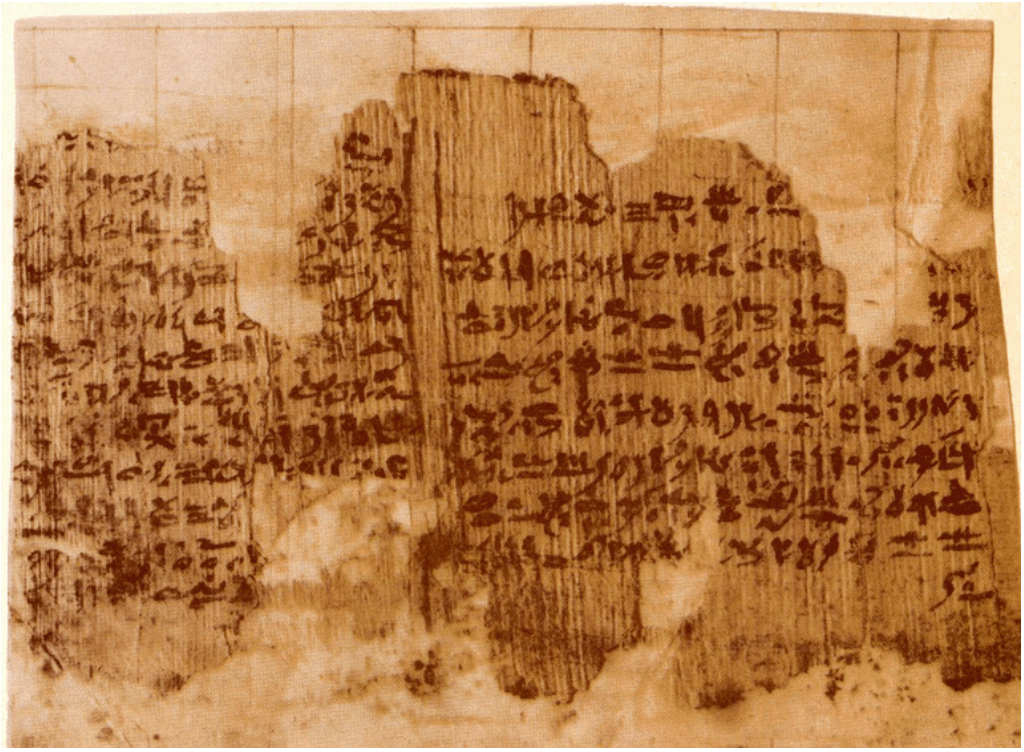


Photo No. 11 — This is by far the most important fragment, because Joseph Smith used it as the basis for the text of the Book of Abraham. Dr. Nibley labeled it "XL. Small 'Sensen' text (unillustrated)." (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 41)

In February, 1968, the *Improvement Era* announced that there was an "unprecedented interest generated throughout the Church by the recovery of 11 pieces of papyrus that were once the property of the Prophet Joseph Smith." Many members of the Mormon Church felt that Joseph Smith's work had been vindicated. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, however, warned his people to be cautious:

> We ought to be very careful in our estimation of these things. I[t] would be better for us to take a conservative view now, than to go out on a limb and say they prove more than they actually do.
>
> . . . . .
>
> I should like to emphasize again that as members of the Church we ought not to overrate the importance of this discovery. It would be better to be conservative, than to be overly expansive in our estimate of the value of the papyrus sheets. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, BYU, Provo, Utah, March 1, 1968, pages 6 and 8)

Dr. James R. Clark gave a similar warning on page 8 of the same publication:

> DR. CLARK: I agree with that point of view, Dr. Sperry. If there is anything we should stress here tonight, it is that conclusions should not be drawn at this point. We might even set ourselves up as a committee of three to serve as a warning voice to alert members of the Church to the great danger of claiming too much at this stage. The new materials have not yet been studied, and it would be better to reserve judgment for a time.

Dr. Hugh Nibley, who is supposed to be the Mormon Church's top authority on the Egyptian language, warned his people that there was trouble ahead. On December 1, 1967, the *Daily Universe*, published at the Brigham Young University, reported these statements by Dr. Nibley:

> "The papyri scripts given to the Church **do not prove the Book of Abraham is true**," Dr. Hugh Nibley said in an Academics Office-sponsored assembly Wednesday night. "LDS scholars are **caught flat footed** by this discovery," he went on to say.
>
> According to Dr. Nibley, Mormon scholars should have been doing added research on the *Pearl of Great Price* years ago. Non-Mormon scholars will bring in questions regarding the manuscripts which will be **hard to answer** because of lack of scholarly knowledge on the subject.
>
> In the speech delivered primarily on the attitude of Brigham Young on education, Dr. Nibley said worldly discoveries are going to "bury the Church in criticism" if members of the Church don't take it upon themselves to become a people of learning. . . . Mormons ought to know as much or more as others, "but they don't," Dr. Nibley said, quoting Brigham Young. (*Daily Universe*, Brigham Young University, December 1, 1967)

Dr. Nibley also made this statement:

> . . . a few faded and tattered little scraps of papyrus may serve to remind the Latter-day Saints of how sadly they have neglected serious education. . . . Not only has our image suffered by such tragic neglect, but now in the **moment of truth** the Mormons have to face the world **unprepared**, after having been given a hundred years' fair warning. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pages 171-172)

Although these are strange words to be coming from the man whom the Mormon leaders have chosen to defend the "Book of Abraham," they are certainly the truth.

In order to understand the problems involved it is necessary to give a history of the papyri.

History of the Papyri

Joseph Smith's *History of the Church* contains the following account of the discovery of the papyri:

> The records were obtained from one of the catacombs in Egypt, near the place where once stood the renowned city of Thebes, by the celebrated French traveler, Antonio Sebolo, in the year 1831. . . . He entered the catacomb June 7, 1831, and obtained eleven mummies. . . . On his way from Alexandria to Paris, he put in at Trieste, and, after ten days' illness, expired. This was in the year 1832. Previous to his decease, he made a will of the whole, to Mr. Michael H. Chandler, (then in Philadelphia, Pa.,) his nephew, whom he supposed to be in Ireland. Accordingly, the whole were sent to Dublin, and Mr. Chandler's friends ordered them to New York, where they were received at the Custom House, in the winter or spring of 1833. In April, of the same year. Mr. Chandler paid the duties and took possession of his mummies. Up to this time, they had not been taken out of the coffins, nor the coffins opened. On opening the coffins, he discovered that in connection with two of the bodies, was something rolled up with the same kind of linen, saturated with the same bitumen, which, when examined, proved to be two rolls of papyrus, previously mentioned. Two or three other small pieces of papyrus, with astronomical calculations, epitaphs, &c., were found with others of the mummies. When Mr. Chandler discovered that there was something with the mummies, he supposed or hoped it might be some diamonds or valuable metal, and was no little chagrined when he saw his disappointment. (*History of the Church*, by Joseph Smith, Vol. 2, pages 348-349)

Although there are some errors in this account with regard to dates, it gives us some idea of the origin of the papyri.

After receiving the mummies, Mr. Chandler traveled about exhibiting them. Milton R. Hunter states:

> Since Mr. Chandler did not receive any valuable treasures in the coffins with his mummies, it seems that he decided to make the best use of his new gift by going from town to town and from city to city, exhibiting them to the public at a nominal charge. (*Pearl of Great Price Commentary*, by Milton R. Hunter, Salt Lake City, 1964, page 9)

According to the *History of the Church*, Mr. Chandler arrived in Kirtland, Ohio, on July 3, 1835. Joseph Smith became interested in the papyri, but Mr. Chandler refused to sell the manuscripts unless he could also sell the mummies. The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

> The Prophet Joseph having learned the value of these ancient writings was very anxious to obtain them, and expressed himself wishful to purchase them. But Mr. Chandler told him that he would not sell the writings, unless he could sell the mummies, for it would detract from the curiosity of his exhibition; Mr. Smith inquired of him the price which was a considerable sum, and finally purchased the mummies and the writing, all of which he retained in his possession for many years; . . . (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 20, page 65)

Milton R. Hunter gives this information:

> Just how much money was paid for these valuable antiquities is not known, but a statement appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette* that they were purchased at the suggestion of Joseph Smith "for a large sum of money." (*Pearl of Great Price Commentary*, pages 10-11)

A letter signed by Emma Smith (Joseph Smith's widow) stated that the mummies and papyri were "purchased by the Mormon Prophet Joseph Smith at the price of twenty four hundred dollars in the year eighteen hundred thirty five . . ." (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968, page 16)

After the Mormons purchased the papyri, Joseph Smith examined them and declared that they were the writings of Abraham and Joseph of Egypt:

> Soon after this, some of the Saints at Kirtland purchased the mummies and papyrus, a description of which will appear hereafter, and with W. W. Phelps and Oliver Cowdery as scribes. I commenced the **translation** of some of the characters or hieroglyphics, and much to our joy found that **one of the rolls contained the writings of Abraham, another the writings of Joseph of Egypt**, etc.,—a more full account of which will appear in its place, as I proceed to examine or unfold them. Truly we can say, the Lord is beginning to reveal the abundance of peace and truth. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 236)

In 1842 Joseph Smith published his translation of the "Book of Abraham" in the *Times and Seasons*. Three drawings from the Book of Abraham were included in this work.

While Joseph Smith had the papyri many people were allowed to see them. On February 19, 1843, Charlotte Haven wrote the following to her mother:

> From there we called on Joseph's mother, . . . She is a motherly kind of woman of about sixty years. She receives a little pittance by exhibiting The Mummies to strangers. When we asked to see them, she lit a candle and conducted us up a short, narrow stairway to a low, dark room under the roof. On one side were standing half a dozen mummies, to whom she introduced us, King Onitus and his royal household,—one she did not know. Then she took up what seemed to be a club wrapped in a dark cloth, and said "This is the leg of Pharaoh's daughter, the one that saved Moses." Repressing a smile, I looked from the mummies to the old lady, but could detect nothing but earnestness and sincerity on her countenance. Then she turned to a long table, set her candle-stick down, and opened a long roll of manuscript, saying it was "the writing of Abraham and Isaac, written in Hebrew and Sanscrit," and she read several minutes from it as if it were English. It sounded very much like passages from the Old Testament—and it might have been for anything we knew—but she said she read it through the inspiration of her son Joseph, in whom she seemed to have perfect confidence. Then in the same way she interpreted to us hieroglyphics from another roll. One was Mother Eve being tempted by the serpent, who—the serpent, I mean—was standing on the tip of his tail, which with his two legs formed a tripod, and had his head in Eve's ear. I said, "But serpents don't have legs."
>
> "They did before the fall," she asserted with perfect confidence.
>
> The Judge slipped a coin in her hand which she received smilingly, with a pleasant, "Come again," as we bade her goodby. (*Overland Monthly*, December, 1890, pages 623-624)

Josiah Quincy, who also saw the papyri, gave this information:

> The prophet referred to his miraculous gift of understanding all languages, and took down a Bible in various tongues, for the purpose of exhibiting his accomplishments in this particular. Our position as guests prevented our testing his powers by a rigid examination, and the rendering of a few familiar texts seemed to be accepted by his followers as a triumphant demonstration of his abilities. . . .
>
> "And now come with me," said the prophet "and I will show you the curiosities." So saying, he led the way to a lower room, where sat a venerable and respectable-looking lady. "This is my mother, gentlemen. The curiosities we shall see belong to her. They were purchased with her own money, at a cost of six thousand dollars;" and then, with deep feeling, were added the words, "And that woman was turned out upon the prairie in dead of night by a mob." There were some pine presses fixed against the wall of the room. These receptacles Smith opened, and disclosed four human bodies, shrunken and black with age. "These are mummies," said the exhibitor. "I want you to look at that little runt of a fellow over there. He was a great man in his day. Why, that was Pharaoh Necho, King of Egypt!" Some parchments inscribed with hieroglyphics were then offered us. They were preserved under glass and handled with great respect. "That is the handwriting of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful," said the prophet. "This is the autograph of Moses, and these lines were written by his brother Aaron. Here we have the earliest account of the Creation, from which Moses composed the First Book of Genesis." The parchment last referred to showed a rude drawing of a man and woman, and a serpent walking upon a pair of legs. I ventured to doubt the propriety of providing the reptile in question with this unusual means of locomotion. "Why, that's as plain as a pikestaff," was the rejoinder. "Before the Fall snakes always went about on legs, just like chickens. They were deprived of them, in punishment for their agency in the ruin of man." We were further assured that the prophet was the only mortal who could translate these mysterious writings, and that his power was given by direct inspiration.
>
> The exhibition of these august relics concluded with a similar descent into the hard modern world of fact. Monarchs, patriarchs, and parchments were very well in their way; but this was clearly the nineteenth century, when prophets must get a living and provide for their relations. "Gentlemen," said this bourgeois Mohammed, as he closed the cabinets, "those who see these curiosities generally pay my mother a quarter of a dollar." (*Among the Mormons*, edited by William Mulder and Russell Mortensen, New York, 1958, pages 136-137)

Henry Caswall was another man who saw the papyri. He made these comments:

> The storekeeper now proceeded to redeem his promise of obtaining for me access to the curiosities. He led me to a room behind his store, on the door of which was an inscription to the following effect: "Office of Joseph Smith, President of the Church of Latter Day Saints." Having introduced me, together with several Mormons, to this sanctum sanctorum, he locked the door behind him, and proceeded to what appeared to be a small chest of drawers. From this he drew forth a number of glazed slides, like picture frames, containing sheets of papyrus, with Egyptian inscriptions and hieroglyphics. These had been unrolled from four mummies, which the prophet had purchased at a cost of twenty-four hundred dollars. By some inexplicable mode, as the storekeeper informed me, Mr. Smith had discovered that these sheets contained the writings of Abraham, written with his own hand while in Egypt. Pointing to the figure of a man lying on a table, he said, "That is the picture of Abraham on the point of being sacrificed. That man standing by him with a drawn knife is an idolatrous priest of the Egyptians. Abraham prayed to God, who immediately unloosed his bands, and delivered him." Turning to another of the drawers, and pointing to a hieroglyphic representation, one of the Mormons said, "Mr. Smith informs us that this picture

> is an emblem of redemption. Do you see those four little figures? Well, those are the four quarters of the earth. And do you see that big dog looking at the four figures? That is the old Devil desiring to devour the four quarters of the earth. Look at this person keeping back the big dog. That is Jesus Christ keeping the devil from devouring the four quarters of the earth. Look down this way. This figure near the side is Jacob, and those are his two wives. Now do you see those steps?" "What," I replied, "do you mean those stripes across the dress of one of Jacob's wives?" "Yes," he said, "that is Jacob's ladder." "That is indeed curious," I remarked; "Jacob's ladder standing on the ground, and only reaching up to his wife's waist." (*The City of the Mormons; or, Three Days at Nauvoo, in 1842*, by Rev. Henry Caswall, M.A., London, 1842, pages 22 and 23)

The reader will note that the two fragments of papyri which the *Improvement Era* calls the "Court of Osiris" fit the description published in Henry Caswall's book. In this drawing a person can see what was described as "four little figures," the "big dog," and the "person keeping back the big dog." The three persons on the lower right-hand side may have been the ones described as "Jacob" and "his two wives." (See photos No. 5 and 6 on page 116 of this book)

On October 17, 1840, the following appeared in *The Quincy Whig*:

> After he had shown us the fine grounds around his dwelling, he conducted us, at our request, to an upper room, where he drew aside the curtains of a case, and showed us several Egyptian Mummies, which we were told that the church had purchased, at his suggestion, some time before, for a large sum of money.
>
> "The embalmed body that stands near the centre of the case," said he, "is one of the Pharaohs, who sat on the throne of Egypt, and the female figure by it was probably one of the daughters."
>
> "It may have been the Princess Thermutis," I replied, "The same that rescued Moses from the waters of the Nile."
>
> "It is not improbable," answered the Prophet, "but time has not yet allowed fully to examine and decide that point.
>
> "Do you understand the Hebrew language," said he, raising his hand to the top of the case, and taking down a small Hebrew grammar of Rabbi Seixas.
>
> "That language has not altogether escaped my attentions," was the reply.
>
> He then walked to a secretary, on the opposite side of the room, and drew out several frames, covered with glass, under which were numerous fragments of Egyptian papyrus, on which, as usual, a great variety of hieroglyphical characters had been imprinted.
>
> "These ancient records," said he, "throw great light on the subject of Christianity. They have been unrolled and preserved with great labor and care. My time has been hitherto too much taken up to translate the whole of them, but I will show you how I interpret certain parts. There," said he, pointing to a particular character, "that is the signature of the patriarch Abraham."
>
> "It is indeed a most interesting autograph," I replied, "and doubtless the only one extant. What an ornament it would be to have these ancient manuscripts handsomely set, in appropriate frames, and hung up around the walls of the temple which you are about to erect at this place.
>
> "Yes," replied the Prophet, "and the translation hung up with them." (*The Quincy Whig*, October 17, 1840, as quoted in *Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, Salt Lake City, 1938, pages 51 and 52)

Deciphering Egyptian

In Joseph Smith's time the science of Egyptology was in its infancy. Therefore, Joseph Smith's work as a translator could not he adequately tested. The knowledge of hieroglyphic, hieratic and demotic Egyptian writing had been lost many centuries before, and it was not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that there appeared much hope of deciphering these strange writings. Just before the turn of the century (1799) some French soldiers found a stone with Greek, demotic and hieroglyphic writings upon it. Alan Gardiner makes this statement concerning it:

> Such a clue was at last provided when some French soldiers, working on the foundations of a fortress at Rosetta, came across a trilingual inscription in Greek, demotic, and hieroglyphic (1799). This inscription, ever since famous under the name of the Rosetta stone, proved from its Greek portion to be a decree in honour of the young king Ptolemy Epiphanes, which the priests of Egypt caused to be erected in all the temples of the land (196 B.C.). (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Sir Alan Gardiner, London, 1964, page 12)

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry makes this comment concerning the Rosetta stone:

> A knowledge of Greek has never been lost to mankind and for that reason scholars could easily decipher the Greek portion of the stone. . . . It was soon recognized by scholars that what was said in Greek was also repeated in the hieroglyphic and demotic columns just above it. Thus it was thought that the Egyptian characters could be compared with the Greek and the general sense of them made out. In other words it was recognized that the Greek portion of the Rosetta Stone was a key which could help unlock the meaning of the Egyptian characters. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, pages 32-33)

Dr. Thomas Young began to study the Rosetta stone in 1814. Alan Gardiner makes this statement concerning Mr. Young:

> The next great advance was due to an Englishman, . . . Thomas Young, . . . he quickly realized that demotic teemed with signs that could not possibly be explained as alphabetic. Further, he grasped the fact that the demotic and hieroglyphic systems of writing were intimately related. Noticing that the Greek section was full of words which repeated themselves, he used these as a basis for dividing up all three sections into their component words, and it was not long before his Greek-demotic vocabulary amounted to eighty-six groups, most of them correct, though his attempts to indicate the sounds of which they were composed and to adduce Coptic equivalents were as a rule mistaken. (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Alan Gardiner, pages 12 and 13)

Although others had worked with the Rosetta stone, Jean Francois Champollion was the man who was "destined to win immortal fame as the decipherer of the hieroglyphs" (*Egyptian Grammar*, page 13). Alan Gardiner gives the following information regarding Champollion:

> Long before his death he had acquired a deep instinctive knowledge of the old Egyptian language; he could elicit with ease the meaning of most simple inscriptions and texts on papyri, and the whole perspective of Egyptian history lay clear before him. The posthumous grammar and dictionary appeared between 1836 and 1844, . . . (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Alan Gardiner, page 16)

E. A. Wallis Budge gives us this information:

> The progress of Egyptology suffered a severe set-back by the death of Young on May 10th, 1830, and by the death of Champollion on March 4th, 1832, and there was no scholar sufficiently advanced in the science to continue their work. (*An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, E. A. Wallis Budge, New York, Vol. 1. page xii)

On page xvii of the same book we find the following statement:

> In 1837, the year in which Lepsius published his famous Letter to Rosellini. Birch revised his slips carefully, and decided to attempt to publish a "Hieroglyphical Dictionary." In those days no fount of hieroglyphic type existed, and lithography was expensive, and publishers were not eager to spend their money on a dictionary of a language of which scarcely a dozen people in the whole world had any real knowledge.

From the information given above it is plain to see that there was little chance of Joseph Smith's work coming into conflict with the science of Egyptology during his lifetime. There was one purported test of Joseph Smith's ability in 1835. B. H. Roberts states:

> The Prophet translated some of the hieroglyphics Mr. Chandler submitted to him, whereupon that gentleman certified as to the agreement of the Prophet's translation with that which had been made by scholars in other places where the mummies and papyrus rolls had been exhibited. (*A Comprehensive History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, by B. H. Roberts, Vol. 2, page 126)

Dr. Hugh Nibley makes this comment concerning this test:

> Moreover, it was Joseph Smith himself who first proposed and submitted to the test. When the papyri of the Book of Abraham first came into his hands, the Prophet, having learned that their owner, Michael H. Chandler, had gone out of his way to solicit the opinions of the experts in the big cities where he had exhibited his mummies, went into a room by himself and wrote out his interpretation of some of the symbols; then he invited Mr. Chandler to compare what he had written with the opinions of "the most learned." Chandler did so, and was properly impressed, voluntarily giving Joseph Smith a signed statement:
>
> ". . . to make known to all who may be desirous, concerning the knowledge of Mr. Joseph Smith, Jun., in deciphering the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic characters in my possession, which I have, in many eminent cities, showed to the most learned; and, from the information that I could ever learn, or meet with, I find that of Mr. Joseph Smith, Jun., to correspond in the most minute matters. (Signed:) Michael H. Chandler." (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 17)

This statement by Michael H. Chandler does not amount to much when we consider the fact that he was not an Egyptologist himself. It is very unlikely that he had any reliable information concerning the meaning of the Egyptian hieroglyphs. Dr. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, makes this interesting comment about Chandler's certificate:

> Now I do not know how Mr. Chandler could possibly know whether the Prophet's translation was correct or not. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, BYU, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., page 4)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt admitted that Mr. Chandler could not have known much about the Egyptian language:

> Mr. C. had also obtained from learned men the best translation he could of some few characters, which however, was not a translation, but more in the shape of their ideas with regard to it, their acquaintance with the language not being sufficient to enable them to translate it literally. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 20, page 65)

Thus we see that Chandler's endorsement of Joseph Smith's work does not amount to much, especially when we consider the fact that he was the man who sold the Mormons the mummies and papyri for "a large sum of money."

Deveria

Joseph Smith was murdered in 1844, and within a few years the Mormons came out west. Joseph Smith's mother as well as his widow refused to go west, and therefore the Mormon Church lost control of the collection of papyri. Nevertheless, Joseph Smith had included three drawings in his Book of Abraham, and also gave an interpretation of much of the material which appeared in these drawings.

By the year 1860 the science of Egyptology had advanced to the point where some people felt that it could be used to test Joseph Smith's ability as a translator. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts related the following:

> It is due to the reader to say that fragments of the Book of Abraham, the facsimiles published with this chapter, were submitted to a young French savant in 1860, . . . The young French savant of the Museum of the Louvre, to whom the facsimiles of the fragments of the Book of Abraham were submitted, was M. Theodule Deveria. **His explanations differ from the translations made by Joseph Smith**, but of the merits of M. Deveria's translation the writer can form no judgment. . . . In any event we do not think the pronunciamiento of M. Deveria is to be regarded as the last word upon the subject. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, B. H. Roberts, Vol. 2, page 130, footnote)

Deveria not only accused Joseph Smith of making a false translation, but he accused him of altering the scenes shown in the facsimiles.

In 1879 George Reynolds published a rebuttal to Deveria in which he stated:

> Joseph the Prophet says Fig. 1 represents "the angel of the Lord." M. D. states that it is "the soul of Osiris under the form of a hawk (which should have a human head)." Fig. 3, the Prophet states, is "the idolatrous priest of Elkenah." M. D. says it is "the god Anubis (who should have a jackal's head)," and in other places he makes substantially the same statement, that a certain figure represents somebody or something, or would do so if it were different. . . . So M. Deveria wants to put a head or a tail on some of these characters and then call them Osiris, Anubis, or some other god! Anything to beat revelation. (*Are We of Israel? and The Book of Abraham*, by George Reynolds, 1931, pages 129-130)

On pages 67-68 of the same book, George Reynolds stated:

> It is our intention, as we pass along, to take up the various subjects treated in the Book of Abraham, and demonstrate the exact truthfulness of the record, by the writings of historians, ancient and modern, by the discoveries by archaeologists, Egyptologists, astronomers and other scientists, and prove, we believe, beyond the possibility of successful contradiction, that no element of fraud enters into its composition. So remarkable have been the confirmatory evidences that we have met in our investigations into this subject, that we are of the opinion that there is not a book in existence whose genuineness can be more easily proven than can that of the record of the Father of the Faithful.

Actually, Deveria must have done a good job, for an Egyptologist made this statement in a letter dated August 29, 1967: ". . . I made a translation of as much as I could read of the facsimiles in the *PGP*; it is no great improvement on that published by Deveria about 100 years ago."

Spalding's Attack

Deveria's work on the Book of Abraham seemed to have little influence on the Mormons. In 1912, however, another attack was made on the Book of Abraham. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts explains:

> In 1912 a widespread interest was awakened in the Book of Abraham by the publication of a brochure, by Rt. Rev. F. S. Spalding, D. D. Episcopal Bishop of Utah, under the title *Joseph Smith, Jun., as a Translator*. The bishop submitted the facsimiles of some of the parchment pages from which the Book of Abraham had been translated, . . . to a number of the foremost of present day Egyptian scholars. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, Vol. 2, page 138)

B. H. Roberts frankly admitted that Spalding had contacted some of the world's greatest Egyptologists:

> The bishop has applied the test. That is to say, Bishop Spalding sent the facsimiles of the Egyptian records with Joseph Smith's translation of the Book of Abraham, with the Prophet's partial translation and explanations of these facsimiles, to certain American, English, and German Egyptologists for their opinion of the accuracy of the translation, with the result that they all—and there are eight of them—give judgment against the Prophet.
>
> "THE JURY" IN THE CASE.
>
> These scholars, world renowned, are: Dr. A. H. Sayce of Oxford, England; Dr. W. M. Flinders Petrie, London university; James H. Breasted, Ph.D., Haskell Oriental museum, University of Chicago; Dr. Arthur C. Mace, assistant curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, department of Egyptian art; Dr. John Peters, University of Pennsylvania, in charge of expedition to Babylonia, 1888-1895; the Rev. Prof. C. A. B. Mercer, Ph.D., Western Theological seminary, custodian Hibbard collection Egyptian reproductions; Dr. Edward Meyer, University of Berlin; Dr. Friedrich Freiheer Von Bissing, professor of Egyptology in the University of Munich.

> Quite a formidable list of learned men, truly; and I give it, because I think the bishop is entitled to have it known by those reading these "remarks" how eminent is the jury pronouncing on the case against the "Mormon" Prophet. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, February, 1913, pages 310-311)

Dr. Hugh Nibley made this comment concerning Spalding's attack on the Book of Abraham:

> The Appeal to Authority—Of all attacks on Mormonism undertaken beneath the banners of science and scholarship, the great campaign of 1912 conducted by the Right Reverend F. S. Spaulding, Episcopal bishop of Utah, was the one that should have succeeded most brilliantly. Carefully planned and shrewdly executed, it enlisted the services of the most formidable roster of scholars that have ever declared against Joseph Smith as a prophet, . . . (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968, page 20)

On page 23 of *Joseph Smith, Jr., As A Translator*, F. S. Spalding reproduced a letter from Dr. A. H. Sayce of Oxford, England. In this letter Dr. Sayce stated:

> It is difficult to deal seriously with Joseph Smith's impudent **fraud**. . . . Smith has turned the Goddess into a king and Osiris into Abraham.

Dr. W. M. Flinders Petrie of the London University stated:

> To any one with knowledge of the large class of funeral documents to which these belong, the attempts to guess a meaning for them, in the professed explanations, are to absurd to be noticed. It may be safely said that there is **not one** single word that is **true** in these explanations.
>
> . . . None but the ignorant could possibly be imposed on by such ludicrous blunders. (*Joseph Smith, Jr., As A Translator*, page 24)

James H. Breasted, Ph.D., Haskell Oriental Museum, University of Chicago, stated:

> To sum up, then, these three fac-similes of Egyptian documents in the "Pearl of Great Price" depict the most common objects in the mortuary religion of Egypt. Joseph Smith's interpretation of them as part of a unique revelation through Abraham, therefore, very clearly demonstrates that he was **totally unacquainted** with the significance of these documents and **absolutely ignorant** of the simplest facts of Egyptian writing and civilization. (*Joseph Smith, Jr., As A Translator*, pages 26-27)

Dr. Arthur C. Mace, who was the Assistant Curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Department of Egyptian Art, stated:

> I return herewith, under separate cover, the "Pearl of Great Price." The "Book of Abraham," it is hardly necessary to say, is a **pure fabrication**. . . . Joseph Smith's interpretation of these cuts is a farrago of nonsense from beginning to end. Egyptian characters can now be read almost as easily as Greek, and five minutes' study in an Egyptian gallery of any museum should be enough to convince any educated man of the clumsiness of the **imposture.** (*Joseph Smith, Jr., As A Translator*, page 27)

Rev. Prof. S. A. B. Mercer, Ph.D., Western Theological Seminary, Custodian Hibbard Collection, Egyptian Reproductions, stated:

> 3. That the author knew neither the Egyptian language nor the meaning of the most commonplace Egyptian figures; neither did any of those, whether human or Divine, who may have helped him in his interpretation, have any such knowledge. . . . the explanatory notes to his fac-similes cannot be taken seriously by any scholar, as they seem to be undoubtedly the work of **pure imagination.** (*Joseph Smith, Jr., As A Translator*, page 29)

Dr. Friedrich Freiheer Von Bissing, Professor of Egyptology at the University of Munich, stated:

> A careful study has convinced me that Smith probably believed seriously to have deciphered the ancient hieroglyphics, but that he utterly failed.
>
> What he calls the "Book of Abraham" is a funeral Egyptian text, probably not older than the Greek ages.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Fig. 2 is copied from a hypocephalus of the ancient Egyptians, . . . None of the names mentioned by Smith can be found in the text, and he has misinterpreted the signification of every one figure: . . .
>
> I hope this will suffice to show that Jos. Smith certainly never got a Divine revelation in the meaning of the ancient Egyptian Script, and that he never deciphered hieroglyphic texts at all. (*Joseph Smith, Jr., As A Translator*, pages 30-31)

After Spalding's book appeared Mormon writers wrote many rebuttals to it. N. L. Nelson stated:

> The more I contemplate this gigantic assumption on your part, my dear reverend sir, the more astounded I am at your lapse of mental values. What! are my spiritual intuitions, which are the voice of God to me—nay, are the testimonies of the Spirit to half a million souls—to be counted fact or fiction, according as a certain historical incident shall be passed upon by a jury of Gentiles, prejudiced, ill-tempered and mad with the pride of human learning? (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, April, 1913, page 606)

The issue became so heated that even the *New York Times* entered into the controversy. The magazine section of the *New York Times* for December 29, 1912, carried this headline:

MUSEUM WALLS PROCLAIM
FRAUD OF MORMON PROPHET.

In the article which followed these statements appeared:

> Within three months the only one of these sacred writings to which the test of scholarship could be applied has been submitted to such a test, and **its authenticity has been destroyed completely.** The walls of the Egyptian rooms of the Metropolitan Museum proclaim it to be **a fraud.** Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, Curator of the Egyptian department, voices unequivocally the condemnatory evidence of the mute Egyptian drawings and hieroglyphics. Two eminent scholars in England, two scholars in Germany, and four of the most noted Egyptologists in this country join, without a dissenting paragraph, in the condemnation.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Much of Bishop Spalding's work was done in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in this city. The ten rooms of the Egyptian collection yielded proof in such abundance that any layman, even in Egyptology, can take the drawings as published in the sacred Mormon record, and reproduced on this page of *The Times*, and find dozens of duplicates of certain figures in them on the walls of the Museum and in its cases of Egyptian objects.
>
> . . . . .
>
> When Bishop Spalding was obtaining data as to the real significance of the papyrus obtained by the Mormons Dr. Lythgoe was absent from the Metropolitan Museum on an Egyptian expedition. He was found at the Museum last week, and a copy of the Mormon work, with drawings from the original of the Mormon papyrus was shown him.
>
> Palpable Mistakes.
>
> "Sad copies of very familiar papyrus," he said, "and a sadder, a much sadder, translation. Come upstairs with me and I will show you several pictures that duplicate the figure that the Mormon prophet says is Abraham sitting on the throne of Pharaoh. It is merely Osiris, god of the underworld. And I will show you more duplicates of the figure the Mormons declare to be Pharaoh. It is Isis, wife of Osiris, who is always with him. And when it comes to the Mormon picture of 'God on His Throne, signifying the Grand Key-Words of the Holy Priesthood as revealed to Adam in the Garden of Eden,' why that is a sad joke.
>
> "The representation is the most common of all in Egyptian papyri. It is the view of the 'Sun god in his boat.' . . ."
>
> . . . The third piece of writing published with the Mormon "Pearl of Great Price" was on a circular disk, and this disk Dr. Lythgoe went over carefully.
>
> "Egyptian scholars give this particular disk a name," he said. "They call it a 'hypocephalus,' which means literally 'under the head.' Like the length of garment on the figures and the kind of lids on the stone jars this disk shows that the Mormons gained possession of a mummy and papyrus from the **comparatively late Egyptian period.** During our work in Egypt last Winter we obtained some of those disks that were nothing but slabs of Nile mud.
>
> "Here is a disk of exactly the same sort," Dr. Lythgoe remarked, as he turned to a volume on Egyptian religion by Adolf Erman.
>
> On page 188 of this volume a drawing was found of a circular disk, which was almost exactly a duplicate of the disk from which the Mormon prophet took a record of Abraham in the act of receiving God's word. (*New York Times*, Magazine Section, Part Five, Sunday, December 29, 1912)

In 1913 Dr. Samuel A.B. Mercer wrote a letter in which he claimed that Joseph Smith would not get more than zero in an examination in Egyptology:

> All the scholars came to the same conclusion, viz: that Smith could not possibly correctly translate any Egyptian text, as his interpretation of the facsimiles shows. Any pupil of mine who would show such absolute ignorance of Egyptian as Smith does, could not possibly expect to get more than zero in an examination in Egyptology.
>
> The science of Egyptology is well established as any one knows who is acquainted with the great *Grammar of Erman* a 3rd Ed. of which appeared in 1911.
>
> I speak as a linguist when I say that if Smith knew Egyptian and correctly interpreted the facsimiles which you submitted to me, then I don't know a **word** of Egyptian, and *Erman's Grammar* is a **fake**, and **all** modern Egyptologists are **deceived.** (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 615)

In the *Utah Survey* for September, 1913, Dr. Mercer wrote:

> In the judgment of the scholarly world, therefore, Joseph Smith stands condemned of self-deception or imposition. (*Utah Survey*, September, 1913, page 36)

The Mormon apologist Hugh Nibley points out that Dr. Mercer was "a young man who had just got his degree" at the time of this controversy. Then, he makes a point of the fact that his degree was "not in Egyptology" (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968, page 20). While it is true that Dr. Mercer did not receive his degree in Egyptology, he became one of the world's greatest Egyptologists. In 1912 he was "custodian of the Hibbard Collection of Egyptian reproductions" (*Utah Survey*, Vol. 1, no. 1, page 3). On November 3,

1952, *Time Magazine* made this comment concerning Dr. Mercer's work in the Egyptian language:

> Born the very year that the pyramids were discovered, soft-spoken Samuel Mercer has spent a lifetime studying ancient languages. He has specialized in cuneiform and hieroglyphics, has compiled grammars in Assyrian, Ethiopic and Egyptian, written a definitive study of the tablets of Tell-el-Amarna, been professor of Semitic languages and Egyptology at the University of Toronto. Since 1946 he has devoted his full time and energies to working on the pyramid texts. (*Time Magazine*, November 3, 1952, page 66)

After reading this article LaMar Petersen wrote a letter to Dr. Mercer in which he stated:

> Recently at the Salt Lake Public Library I read your analysis of the Book of Abraham controversy in the *Utah Survey Magazine* for September 1913. Imagine my surprise upon laying down the *Survey* and picking up *Time Magazine* for November 3, 1952 to find the article on page 66 telling of your latest work in the translation of Egyptian hieroglyphics.
>
> Would you mind telling me if in the intervening thirty-nine years since 1913 you have altered your opinion in any way concerning Joseph Smith's purported translation of the facsimiles appearing in the Book of Abraham? (Letter by LaMar Petersen to Dr. Mercer, December 16, 1952)

In a letter dated February 19, 1953, Dr. Mercer replied that he had not changed his mind concerning Joseph Smith's purported translation:

> I do indeed remember my work on the "Book of Abraham," although it is many years now since I have had occasion to think much about it, although I am sure that my views on the subject have not changed, because the question of translation was so clear-cut. (Letter by Dr. Samuel A.B. Mercer to LaMar Petersen, February 19, 1953)

Dr. Hugh Nibley claims that the Egyptologists who examined Joseph Smith's translation in 1912 "never intended to do any real work," and that they did not take the matter seriously:

> Dr. Mercer frankly admits that he and the other scholars "did not seem to take the matter very seriously," and devoted very little time to it indeed: . . . (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968.

The way Dr. Nibley uses this reference the reader might get the impression that the Egyptologists did not give Joseph Smith's work a fair trial. When Dr. Mercer's statement is restored to its context the meaning becomes plain:

> It has been observed by Mormon critics that the scholars did not seem to take the matter very seriously, and did not seem to devote the time to their examination which the great subject demanded. This is an important observation, and, in a way, a true one. It shows clearly the scholars' attitude. They examined the Prophet's interpretations and translations only from a scientifically linguistic standpoint. That was their task. That is what the Bishop had requested. True, some of them made historical remarks, but only as based upon their linguistic examination. Every one of the eight scholars, as far as can be discovered from their replies, judged the Prophet as a translator. There was absolutely no religious bigotry, . . . the scholars did not condemn the Prophet's translations because of religious prejudices—for some of the same scholars have very little interest in religion as dogma anyway—they condemned it purely on linguistic grounds. Their condemnation was unanimous and independent. The present writer can testify that no one scholar knew what the others had written till the pamphlet appeared. The reply of each scholar was brief, very little time being devoted to a study of the Prophet's work in general. Any and every Egyptologist would most likely have acted in the same way, for it required only a glance to find out that the interpretation and translation were absolutely wrong in every detail. . . . (*Utah Survey*, Vol. 1, no. 1, September 1913, pages 7-8)

When Spalding's pamphlet first appeared the Mormon leaders were very upset. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry relates:

> . . . it was during those years of 1912 and 1913 that a prominent clergyman in Salt Lake, the Reverend Mr. Spaulding, came out with an attack on the *Pearl of Great Price*, more specifically the little book of Abraham. His method was to send out a copy of the book of Abraham material (particularly its hypocephalae) to certain Egyptologists and ask them to give their opinion regarding the Prophet Joseph Smith's translation.
>
> I well remember when that attack came out, and to say that it stirred up our general authorities is to put it mildly. The brethren were very much concerned about the faith of our young people, because it was probably the first major attempt, in a technical way, to throw doubt and confusion about the Mormon scriptures. I well remember at the time how, in my religion class, Dr. John A. Widtsoe's brother, Osborne J. B. Widtsoe—a great man—tried to tell the young people about the situation, and attempted to save us from leaving the Church. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 1, 1960, Brigham Young University, 1964 ed., pages 1-2)

Dr. Sperry also gave this information concerning Spalding's pamphlet:

> When the latter appeared it literally produced a sensation in the Church. The writer well remembers how as a student then in high school all the teachers and brethren generally were talking about it. In the excitement many of them stated that they felt it was impossible to answer

> Mr. Spalding because he had made out such a good case against Joseph Smith as a translator. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, 1938, page 73)

Dr. Webb

The Mormon leaders did not know how to deal with Spalding's pamphlet. It is claimed that there was not an Egyptologist in the Church who could answer the attack. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts said:

> There were no Egyptian scholars in the church of the Latter-day Saints who could make an effective answer to the conclusions of the eight scholars who in various ways pronounced against the correctness of Joseph Smith's translation of the Egyptian parchments that so strangely fell into his hands; . . . (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, Vol. 2, page 139)

The Mormons, however, did receive help from a man who called himself "Robert C. Webb, Ph.D." On January 18, 1913, an article in defense of the Mormon position appeared in the *Deseret News*. It was supposed to have been written by "Dr. Webb." In the introduction to this article the editors of the *Deseret News* stated:

> The author is a non-resident of Utah, and is not a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The article as received by *The News* was accompanied by the statement that the author had written it upon his own initiative, without request or suggestion from any member of the Church, and solely because of his interest in the subject, to which his attention had been drawn by the publication of the pamphlet by Episcopal Bishop F. S. Spalding, and comments thereon. (*Deseret News*, as quoted in the *Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, March 1913, page 435)

Fawn M. Brodie claimed that Robert C. Webb's real name was "J. E. Homans," and that he was "neither an Egyptologist nor a Ph.D" (*No Man Knows My History*, page 175). It is rather obvious that if Mrs. Brodie is correct in this matter, the Mormon leaders were guilty of deception. Strange as it may seem, Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, confirmed the fact that Robert C. Webb was "no Ph.D." At a "Pearl of Great Price Conference" held December 10, 1960, Dr. Sperry answered a number of questions. At one point in the discussion he was asked about Robert C. Webb:

> Question: What did Mr. Webb do for the Church? He was not a member?
>
> Answer: He was not a member of the Church. We had him at Brigham Young University to lecture, in old Room 260 in the Joseph Smith building. I might state that that man was converted to the Church. However, there were certain things that held him back. The elders in New York on one occasion were going to baptize him on a Saturday afternoon. Dr. Talmage arrived in town on Wednesday, and he told the elders: "You leave him alone." So, he did not come into the Church, but he did do a great job of defending our cause. I think in many respects that he did the best job of any one in defending the Church's interests at that particular time.
>
> He wrote a wonderful book, *Case Against the Mormons*, under the name of Robert C. Webb, Ph.D. I regret that the brethren let him put down Robert C. Webb, PhD., because he was no Ph.D. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., page 9)

On pages 6 and 7 of the same publication, Dr. Sperry gives this information:

> Dr. Talmage told me an interesting story, and in fact, talked to me very earnestly for five hours one day in his office. He told me things that are not known to the public generally and were not known to any of the Church authorities at that time except himself and his son, Sterling. I guess I am the only one living today that knows certain details about this attack [Reverend Spaulding's] that had been made upon the Church. So let me tell you briefly about it.
>
> Dr. Talmage told me that in 1910, there came a gentleman to President Joseph F. Smith, representing himself as a writer who was going to write an article on the Mormons in one of the large magazines, and he wanted first-hand material about the Church. So President Smith turned the man over to Dr. Talmage, . . . Dr. Talmage told me that he showed this man even the records where the tithing money went, which is something even you cannot get, except for your own accounts, . . .
>
> In two or three years, the Reverend Mr. Spaulding of Salt Lake was scheduled to give a talk before the Ministerial Association of New York City, and he went back there and met this gentleman. You older folk will remember Robert C. Webb as he was known in these articles that were written about the *Pearl of Great Price*, after the attack had been made on it. He had been a ministerial student and had had some training in Biblical languages and also dabbled considerably in Egyptology. Robert C. Webb happened to be present at this meeting, and when Mr. Spaulding was introduced he (Spaulding) told the audience, composed mainly of ministers of course, that he was contemplating making an attack on the Mormon people through the medium of the *Pearl of Great Price*. Throughout his talk he emphasized this body blow to be made upon the book of Abraham. Remembering the kindness with which the Church authorities had treated him when he was getting material for his article about the Mormon people, Mr. Webb (his real name was J. C. Homans) wrote a letter to President Joseph F. Smith in which he made known the impending attack upon the Church and on the *Pearl of Great Price*.

A man who was on the faculty at the Brigham Young University related the following to us: At one time "Dr. Webb" attended a meeting at the BYU. After the meeting was over, this man asked "Dr. Webb" if he would like to see the fine collection of books in the Brigham Young University Library. "Dr. Webb," however, indicated that he was much more interested in having a smoke. Since smoking frowned upon at the BYU, they had to take a walk away from the campus. This man was able to learn a good deal about "Dr. Webb." He learned that "Dr. Webb" was a professional writer who was hired to defend various causes. One of his books was in defense of the liquor industry. This book was written under another assumed name.

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts admitted that "Dr. Webb" was an assumed name, but he defended his work:

> Finally a volunteer champion appeared outside the church in the person of "Robert C. Webb, Ph.D.," who wrote a review of the whole controversy in three articles which appear in the *Improvement Era* for March and September, 1913, and for February, 1914. "Dr. Webb" was an assumed name because, doubtless, the author did not wish to appear in his own personal character as champion of the "Mormon" side of the controversy and expose himself to undesirable notoriety. And while the desire to escape such notoriety may not to some justify the assumption of a name other than his own in such a controversy, still if the argument of "Dr. Webb" be considered apart from who wrote it, but judged upon its merits, its effectiveness will not be doubted. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, Vol. 2, page 139)

F. S. Spalding was anxious to know who "Robert C. Webb, Ph.D." was, but the Mormons seemed unwilling to give out the information:

> We feel that we should be in a better position to judge of the value of the opinions of Robert C. Webb, Ph.D., the most ambitious of the critics of the pamphlet, if we were told definitely who he is. All we have been able to discover about him is that he is a non-resident of Utah, is not a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and that "Robert C. Webb" is not his real name. It is, we believe, most unusual to place a scientific degree like Ph.D. after an assumed name. If Dr. Talmage, through whom, we are informed, the *Deseret Evening News* received the Webb articles, would inform us what the author's real name is, where he received his degree, and what academic position he holds, we should be better able to estimate the value of his opinions. — Franklin S. Spalding. (*Utah Survey*, September 1913, page 3)

The Mormon apologist Hugh Nibley makes this statement concerning Spalding's questions about "Dr. Webb:"

> Here it is again: The bishop is not interested in Webb's arguments and evidence, but in his status and rank—considerations that are supposed to bear no weight whatever with honest searchers after truth—*Nullus in verba*! What on earth have a man's name, degree, academic position, and, of all things opinions, to do with whether a thing is true or not? (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, page 22)

We feel that Dr. Nibley is being very unfair about this matter, for in his book, *Sounding Brass*, Dr. Nibley criticizes Irving Wallace for referring to M. Wilford Poulson as "Dr. M. Wilford Poulson." This book contains a section entitled "How to Write an Anti-Mormon Book (A Handbook for Beginners)." This section, which is written in a very sarcastic manner, is an attempt to show that anti-Mormon writers are very dishonest. The following statement by Dr. Nibley appears in "Rule 13":

> RULE 13: Wave your credentials! Remind the reader from time to time of your "years of intensive research." If you need high authorities you can always promote your helpers to meet the demand. Note with what easy dominion Mr. Wallace not only bestows the doctorate on one Wilford Poulsen, M. A., for his welcome gossip, but with it the title of "Foremost living authority on Mormonism," heading the parade of the "host of scholars" (unnamed) who instructed Mr. W. "on various aspects of the Mormon past." (*Sounding Brass*, by Hugh Nibley, page 77)

Mormon writers have always criticized non-Mormons for using tactics similar to the one the Church leaders used in the Spalding controversy. George Reynolds, for instance, made this statement concerning the anti-Mormon writer Philastus Hurlburt:

> Doctor Philastus Hurlburt was the originator or inventor of the "Spaulding Story."
>
> He was not a doctor by profession, but his mother gave him that name because he was the seventh son, a very common custom in some parts at the time he was born.
>
> Those who adopt his fabrication with regard to the authorship of the Book of Mormon would have people believe that he really was a doctor. It gives an air of respectability to their tale, and tends to make the public think that he must have been a man of good education, though he really was not. (*The Myth of the "Manuscript Found,"* by George Reynolds, 1883, page 13)

Although "Dr. Robert C. Webb" was able to quote from several different languages and make a great display of knowledge, from the standpoint of an Egyptologist his arguments are very weak. Samuel A. B. Mercer made this statement concerning one of "Dr. Webb's" interpretations: "His whole symbolical statement is full of errors and is its own refutation. To the layman it is unintelligible and to the expert it is ridiculous" (*Utah Survey*, September 1913, page 27).

It is interesting to note that Hugh Nibley is still using R. C. Webb's material. He refers to him as "the outsider, R. C. Webb" (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, page 20). In just five articles published in the *Improvement Era* (January to May, 1968) Hugh Nibley refers to R. C. Webb or his work at least 23 times.

The Mormon Church was able to survive Spalding's attack upon the Book of Abraham because the Mormon people felt that "Dr. Webb" had answered the critics. Prof. N. L. Nelson made these statements in a letter to Spalding:

> The fog your critics spread did not hang long. Dr. Robert C. Webb's masterly explication of these plates restored to me more than your destructive criticisms took away. . . .
>
> Dr. Webb has, indeed, vindicated the prophet better than he knew himself. . . . (*Improvement Era*, April, 1913, pages 604-605)

The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts stated:

> "Mormonism" was not moved a peg by the critique. So far as known there were not a score of Latter-day Saints whose faith was affected by the Spalding brochure. (*A Comprehensive History of the Church*, by B. H. Roberts, Vol. 2, pages 138-139)

Osborn J. P. Widtsoe wrote:

> What came to the younger men and women of Zion as a shock, has passed harmlessly by. The source of strength has been sapped—the bishop's battery is wrecked, the force of his cunningly wrought argument is broken. Really, there remains little to be done except to clean away the wreckage of another unsuccessful attack upon the stronghold of "Mormon" faith, and to proceed triumphantly on our way. (*Improvement Era*, April, 1913, page 593)

Dr. Nibley claims that Spalding's attack failed because his argument was weak:

> Bishop Spalding's grand design had all the ingredients of quick and sure success but one, and if in spite of it the *Pearl of Great Price* is still being read, it is because the bishop failed to include in his tremendous barrage a single shell containing an item of solid and relevant evidence. (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968, page 20)

We feel, however, that the failure of Spalding's work in 1912 had nothing to do with the nature of his evidence. Actually, he had a very good case, but there were at least three things that prevented it from succeeding:

One, there was a lack of interest among the Mormon people. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry states:

> The brethren were very much concerned about the faith of our young people, . . .
>
> Well as I look back on this experience, I have to smile quite a little, because frankly we were more interested in the girl we were going to date the next Friday night for the dance than we were about losing our faith. I think very few of us lost our faith for a moment because of that attack made upon the *Pearl of Great Price*. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., page 2)

Two, the Mormon leaders had a professional writer handle their case and allowed him to use the assumed name "Robert C. Webb, Ph.D.," when "he was no Ph.D.," which caused the Mormon people to believe that the scholars were wrong.

Three, since many of Spalding's supporters did not realize how good his work was and did not continue to support it after his death, his work almost died out.

Nevertheless, we feel that there is a real revival of interest in F. S. Spalding's work, and his work may now get the serious attention that it deserves.

In 1964 we reprinted F. S. Spalding's pamphlet in a work titled *Why Egyptologists Reject the Book of Abraham*. Wallace Turner, a correspondent for the *New York Times*, examined this work and came to the following conclusion:

> . . . I am convinced by very simple direct evidence that the Book of Abraham is a spurious translation. (*The Mormon Establishment*, by Wallace Turner, 1966, page 233)

The January 1968 issue of the *Improvement Era*, a Mormon publication, announced:

> Recent challenges that question the authenticity of many statements in one of the standard works of the Church, the *Pearl of Great Price*, have reopened an old discussion . . . Brother Hugh Nibley, . . . presents in this fascinating series some of the material that must be considered in the reappraisal of certain Egyptological aspects of the *Pearl of Great Price*, for which the time is now ripe. (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, pages 18-19)

In the first article Dr. Nibley makes this statement concerning our photo-reprint of the Spalding book:

> The recent reissuing of Bishop Franklin S. Spalding's little book, *Joseph Smith, Jr.. As a Translator*, though not meant to revive an old discussion but rather to extinguish any lingering sparks of it, is nonetheless a welcome invitation, or rather challenge, to those who take the *Pearl of Great Price* seriously, for long experience has shown that the Latter-day Saints only become aware of the nature and genius of their modern scriptures when relentless and obstreperous criticism from the outside forces them to take a closer look at what they have, with the usual result of putting those scriptures in a much stronger position than they were before. We have all neglected the *Pearl of Great Price* for too long, and should be grateful to those who would now call us to account.
>
> In this introductory study we make no excuse for poking around among old bones, since others have dug them up to daunt us; but we should warn them that if they

> insist on bringing up the ghosts of the dead, they may soon find themselves with more on their hands than they had bargained for. . . . it is others who have conjured up the ghostly jury to testify against the Prophet; and unless they are given satisfaction, their sponsors can spread abroad, as they did in Bishop Spalding's day, the false report that the Scholars have spoken the final word and "completely demolished" (that was their expression) for all time the *Pearl of Great Price* and its author's claim to revelation. (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, pages 18-19)

We feel that Dr. Nibley's attack on F. S. Spalding's work is very unfair, and we will have more to say about it later.

Tragic Neglect

After the excitement over Spalding's pamphlet died down, the Mormons took very little interest in the science of Egyptology. Jean Capheart, an Egyptologist who visited Salt Lake City, noticed this lack of interest:

> Dr. Capheart lauded the Latter-day Saints for their study of Egyptian, wondering at the same time why there is not a greater study of the science as a result of the foundation that their religion has in the authenticity of their Book of Abraham. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., page 60)

Mormon writers admit that their people should have a great interest in this subject. Milton R. Hunter made this comment:

> **No people should be more interested in the story of the language and writings of ancient Egypt** than members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, because the Book of Abraham and also the Book of Mormon records were written in certain types of Egyptian characters. The former writings were recorded in those characters that were used in Father Abraham's day, while the Nephites wrote their records in what they termed reformed Egyptian. (*Pearl of Great Price Commentary*, Salt Lake City, 1964, page 18)

Dr. Sidney B. Sperry stated:

> There are few Western peoples whose religion is of such a nature as to create more interest in the land of Egypt than that of the Latter-day Saints. . . . the Latter-day Saints have a unique scripture called the Book of Abraham which purports to be the very writings of that patriarch and which may have been written while he was in Egypt, and presumably in Egyptian. . . . another of our scriptures, the Book of Mormon, has an Egyptian connection that is very interesting. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, 1938, page 23)

The Mormon people have had a strange attitude about the science of Egyptology. There has been much pretense, but very little attempt to get down to the basic issues involved. Even Dr. Nibley admits that this is true:

> To this day no one has engaged in the type of study necessary to come to grips with the *Pearl of Great Price*, though that great book openly invites such study: "If the world can find out these numbers so let it be. Amen."
>
> Up to the present, all studies of the *Pearl of Great Price* without exception have been in the nature of auxiliary studies—compendiums, historical background, etc.—or preliminary surveys. . . . Even the extensive labors of James R. Clark, valuable as they are, are all of an introductory nature, clearing the decks as it were for the real action to come.
>
> Full-scale college and extension courses, graduate seminars, Churchwide lecture series, stately public symposiums, books, pamphlets, monographs, newsletters, and articles, all done up in fancy bindings usually adorned with reproductions of the Facsimiles from the *Pearl of Great Price* or with faked Egyptian symbols to intrigue and beguile the public, have all failed to get beyond the starting point of the race, which after all must be run on the long hard obstacle course of Egyptian grammar and epigraphy and not on the lecture platform. The Mormons, it seems, have gone all out for the gimmicks and mechanics of education, but have never evinced any real inclination to tackle the tough, basic questions of evidence raised by the *Pearl of Great Price*. (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968, page 24)

On page 20 of the same publication, Dr. Nibley stated:

> The situation today is essentially the same as it was on all those occasions, with the Mormons, untrained in Egyptology, helpless to question on technical grounds the assertions of such experts as Deveria and E. A. W. Budge, who grandly waved their credentials for all to see, . . .

In an article published in the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Dr. Nibley stated:

> It is almost certain that having the papyri waved under our noses will have somewhat the same effect on LDS educators that the success of the first Sputnik had on American education in general. . . . In the same way a few faded and tattered little scraps of papyrus may serve to remind the Latter-day Saints of how sadly they have neglected serious education. There is no shortage of people publishing books and articles, holding learned symposiums, and giving classes and lectures in the mysteries of the *Pearl of Great Price*, but the precious papyri themselves, the subject of so much wise discourse through the years, are greeted with an abashed silence. It is said that when the Chinese in their first naval encounters with Europeans found their ships no match for steamboats, they proceeded to erect funnels on the decks of their junks, in which they would burn straw,

> thus rivaling the formidable appearance of the enemy. The mock steamboats no doubt satisfied the Chinese and made a fine impression as long as they did not have to come up against real steamboats, and such has been the way of our Mormon scholarship, assiduously aping the learning of the world in its safe and comfortable isolation. It would have been possible through the years to have obtained from time to time the services of the world's best Egyptologists and archaeologists for but a fraction the cost of, say, a local billboard campaign to add luster to the image of the University. Not only has our image suffered by such tragic neglect, but now in the moment of truth the Mormons have to face the world unprepared, after having been given a hundred years' fair warning. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter, 1968, pages 171-172)

It is interesting to note that the Brigham Young University has had copies of "Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" for about thirty years. This work includes pages of Egyptian characters copied from the original papyrus. Yet, strange as it may seem, no one from the BYU has published a translation of this material! On December 11, 1967, Dr. Sidney B. Sperry made this comment about this work:

> DR. SPERRY: One of the things that strikes me about this whole business is the importance of our discover, some 30 years ago, of *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. When we first opened it we found numerous pages of Egyptian material. (I notice Dr. Clark has brought some photographs of it with him.) There must be a hundred times more material in this volume than there is in the whole of the *Pearl of Great Price*.
>
> I am curious as to just what the relationship is between the content of these newly-found papyri and that of the Prophet's grammar. I have the feeling we are going to find that this Egyptian material in the grammar is much more important than we may have thought. Why would the Prophet have had it copied unless it seemed to him to be of great importance? Nor can the relationship between the two be fully defined until we know just what this new material is about. (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, BYU, March 1, 1968, page 8)

At the *Pearl of Great Price Conference* held December 10, 1960, Dr. Sperry stated:

> Now, my time is up and you may want to ask a few questions. We have a hundred times more Egyptian material than you have in the entire book of Abraham as it is presently printed. Here is another piece of translation. Notice this page, a whole page of Egyptian material. Some of this material may be from the book of Joseph. Here Eve is apparently talking to the serpent. Notice, the serpent is on legs! Well, I am sure Dr. Clark can bring out more of this material.
>
> . . . . .
>
> So, we have an exciting job, brethren and sisters, ahead of us in translating, if it is possible, these characters, part of which are hieratic and part hieroglyphic. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., pages 8-9)

On pages 10 and 11 of the same book Dr. Sperry answered a number of questions. Some of his answers are very revealing:

> Question: Is there any of this "one hundred times more material" translated, and if so, who has it?
>
> Answer: Well, Dr. Clark and I have it. We have not translated it. That is going to be a terrific job, believe me.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Question: Does it seem at all likely to you, after the searches you have already conducted, that the manuscript of Joseph and Abraham may still be somewhere, or may still be found?
>
> Answer: That is quite a problem. I think that the record of Joseph, or at least parts of it, are in this material. What a thrill it would be if we could get it translated!
>
> . . . . .
>
> Question: What is the current attitude of the Church leaders toward the translating of this additional information you have found?
>
> Answer: I do not know. I suppose the brethren might let it be published, but that is doubtful at the present time.

If Dr. Sperry really felt that these texts supported Joseph Smith's work, why did he not devote himself to the work of translating them? Dr. Sperry and Dr. Nibley have spent years working upon books and articles in defense of the Mormon church. Why have they not invested this time in working upon these important documents? Could it be that they suspected that this material would not vindicate Joseph Smith's work?

Dr. Sperry claims that he studied enough Egyptology "to appreciate the nature of our problem in the Book of Abraham":

> In time I went back to the University of Chicago and took courses in Egyptology. And I might state here, brethren and sisters, that Egyptology is very difficult. I would like to see in the future, some young men in the Church, with a flair for linguistic work, become specialists in this thing. I got enough of it, however, to be able to appreciate the nature of our problem in the book of Abraham, and to help me in my Old Testament and New Testament studies. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 edition, page 3)

We feel that this is the whole problem in a nutshell. Too often Mormon scholars have started to study Egyptology, but when they begin to get an idea of the problems involved they give up in despair.

Some Mormons believe that Egyptologists have changed their minds regarding Joseph Smith's work. In a letter to the editor of the *Deseret News*, Julian R. Durham stated:

> There has been some comment regarding the recently discovered Book of Abraham papyri, that the Church submit them to the foremost scholars in the field of Egyptology. That same procedure was carried out by the Rt. Rev. Spalding, Episcopal Bishop of Utah in 1912. He submitted the three facsimiles to several renowned Egyptologists. Their snap judgement (which would haunt them now) can be summed up in the words of one of them, Flinders Petrie, who said "There is not one single word that is true in his (Smith's) explanations!"
>
> They could not conceive how anyone in the rural America of 1830's could know anything about Egyptian, or in fact, know more Egyptian than they. They simply refused to devote any serious study to the facsimiles. Their "snap" conclusions have boomeranged on them under recent high level investigation by competent scholars.
>
> Today the papyri are in the hands of one of the best qualified Egyptologists in the world, Hugh Nibley, a foremost church scholar who has demonstrated on an intellectual basis the capabilities of Joseph Smith in language studies. — JULIAN R. DURHAM (*Deseret News*, December 27, 1967, Letters to the Editor)

As we have already shown, Dr. Mercer did not change his mind regarding Joseph Smith's work, and we doubt that there is any non-Mormon Egyptologist who would agree with Joseph Smith's translations.

Marvin Cowan, a Baptist missionary working among the Mormons, was told by different Mormons that the pamphlet by F. S. Spalding was out-dated and that the Egyptologists today would probably give a different opinion concerning Joseph Smith's translation. After obtaining the names of prominent Egyptologists from the Smithsonian Institute, he sent them the facsimiles from the *Pearl of Great Price* along with a letter in which he asked if the Egyptian language was "completely decipherable," also if the facsimiles enclosed were "true Egyptian writing or characters?" He also asked if Joseph's explanations were "true interpretations of the pictures if they are Egyptian" and if the explanations are incorrect, "what do the three pictures mean?"

In a letter dated March 16, 1966, John A. Wilson, Prof. of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, replied as follows:

> We have had previous occasion to comment on the illustrations in Joseph Smith, "The Pearl of Great Price." Two or three documents are in question as the two oblong illustrations show pictures from the Egyptian Book of the Dead. Whether this is one papyrus or two is immaterial. In illustration No. 1, the god Anubis is preparing a mummified body on a bed. The head of the god has been miscopied as human and should be that of a jackal. Beside the head of the mummy there is a flying bird which represents the Egyptian's soul. Under the bed there are four jars into which the soft inner parts of the body were placed by the ancient Egyptians. Figure 3 is even more common, showing the dead Egyptian led into the presence of the god Osiris for judgment as to his moral character in life. In these the hieroglyphs have been very sketchily copied, and probably could have been read on the original.
>
> Figure 2 is a round disk made of cloth and jesso to be placed under the head of a mummy in the late period of Egyptian culture (after 900 BC). It shows the scene customarily on such magical protection for the dead. In this the hieroglyphs can in part be checked and do correspond to those on such pieces as known in various museums. In fact the name of the dead appears as the same as that of Shishak in the Bible.
>
> From the standpoint of the Egyptologist the explanations given with these illustrations are **incorrect.** The Egyptian language on such documents is decipherable and has appeared in translation in various books. If these copies were more accurate, one could probably read connected texts from them. (Letter from Prof. John A. Wilson, University of Chicago, March 16, 1966, to Marvin Cowan)

In a letter dated March 22, 1966, Richard A. Parker, of the Dept. of Egyptology at Brown University, replied:

> To answer your questions: (1) The ancient Egyptian language can be called completely decipherable. There are some words in the vocabulary whose specific meaning is still undetermined but there are very few whose general meaning remains uncertain. We can read almost any text with a high degree of confidence.
>
> (2) (a) The pictures you sent me are based upon Egyptian originals but are poor or distorted copies. Many of the hieroglyphs are recognizable but so many others have been so poorly copied that the illustrations cannot be read. (b) The explanations are **completely wrong** insofar as any interpretation of the Egyptian original is concerned.
>
> (c) Number 1 is an altered copy of a well known scene of the dead god Osiris on his bier with a jackal-god Anubis acting as his embalmer. The four jars beneath the couch are four canopic jars with the heads of a human, baboon, jackal and falcon. The bird over Osiris is a ba or soul-bird. There are many variations of this scene in Egyptian monuments.
>
> Number 3 is a poor copy from a scene from some funerary papyrus in which the dead person is conducted by the goddess of truth and another unknown figure into the presence of Osiris seated on his throne with presumably Isis standing behind him. The hieroglyphs are so badly copied that nothing can be made out but this also is a very common scene. (Letter by Richard A. Parker, Dept. of Egyptology at Brown University, March 22, 1966)

After the papyri were turned over to the Mormon Church by the Metropolitan Museum, Marvin Cowan sent pictures from the *Deseret News* to these same Egyptologists and asked if the photographs of the original papyri would cause them to change their opinions.

In a letter dated January 5, 1968, John A. Wilson, of the University of Chicago, stated:

> . . . as far as I am concerned I see pieces of two or possibly three different papyri and **everyone of them looks like a traditional *Book of the Dead*.**

Marvin Cowan asked Dr. Parker these questions concerning the papyrus Joseph Smith reproduced as Facsimile No. 1 in the Book of Abraham:

> 1. On page seven of the enclosed article is a picture of the papyrus from which Joseph Smith drew facsimile #1. (a) Would you still say this is the god Anubis preparing a mummified body? (b) Do you see anything in the picture that would change what you previously told me?

In a letter dated January 9. 1968, Dr. Parker replied:

> 1. (a) YES.
> (b) NO.

John A. Wilson also continued to maintain that the picture showed "Anubis and the corpse" (Letter dated January 5, 1968).

Marvin Cowan asked Richard A. Parker this question: "3. The papyrus pictured at the top of page seven has what appears to be three columns of writing on the right hand side. Smith did not put these on his facsimile. Can you tell me what they are?" Professor Parker replied:

> 3. The fragments of hieroglyphic texts are clearly funerary. Study of them could no doubt identify their source in the *Book of the Dead*.

Thus we see that the Egyptologists have not changed their opinions concerning this matter.

Papyri Located

For years Mormon writers have claimed that the original papyri Joseph Smith used in his production of the Book of Abraham had been destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871. William E. Berrett stated:

> They were considered as the property of the Smith family and, after the Prophet's martyrdom, were retained by his wife, Emma. They were later sold by her to a museum at St. Louis, from whence they found their way into the Museum of Chicago. In the great Chicago fire the museum was totally destroyed and with it the precious ancient manuscripts. (*The Restored Church*, Salt Lake City, 1956, page 144)

It now appears that after Joseph Smith's death his widow sold his collection to Mr. A. Combs. Eleven pieces from the collection eventually ended up in the Metropolitan Museum. Dr. Fischer, of the Metropolitan Museum, explains how this happened:

> FISCHER: Our first knowledge of them goes back to 1918 when our first curator, Dr. A. M. Lythgoe, was shown these fragments by a Mrs. Alice Heusser, a woman who lived in Brooklyn. . . . Her mother had been housekeeper to a person named Combs, and Combs had bought them from the family of Joseph Smith. It is that sale which is mentioned in the letter I referred to. On the death of Mr. A. Combs, they were left to Mrs. Heusser's mother. . . . they were offered to us by the widower of Mrs. Heusser, Mr. Edward Heusser. We acquired them then in 1947. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1967, page 56)

According to the *Improvement Era*, the Church became aware that Joseph Smith's papyri were still in existence in 1966. Dr. Aziz S. Atiya, a non-Mormon, was supposed to have discovered the papyri at the Metropolitan Museum in the spring of 1966. Dr. Atiya states:

> "I was writing a book at the time, . . . It must have been in the early spring of 1966. I really forget the date. My book was ready for the press, and I was looking for supplementary material.
>
> "While I was in one of the dim rooms where everything was brought to me, something caught my eye, and I asked one of the assistants to take me behind the bars into the storehouse of documents so that I could look some more. While there I found a file with these documents. I at once recognized the picture part of it. When I saw this picture, I knew that it had appeared in the *Pearl of Great Price*." (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968, page 13)

Dr. Fischer, however, made it sound like Dr. Atiya's "discovery" was planned. In an interview with *Dialogue*, he stated:

> FISCHER: Frankly, we didn't know what the Mormon Church's wishes were. It wasn't until we discussed the matter with Professor Atiya, who teaches in Salt Lake City at the University of Utah, that we had a possibility of finding out how they felt about it. Then it became possible to transfer the documents from us to them.
>
> DIALOGUE: At what time did Dr. Atiya become aware of the existence of the scrolls?
>
> FISCHER: I would say about a year ago. We know him well; he is a gentleman we have been associated with through the American Research Center in Egypt

> and so on. He had come to our department and was looking for illustrations for one of his books. This matter came up in the course of giving him this help. We knew, since he worked in Salt Lake City and was acquainted with leaders of the Mormon Church, that he might very tactfully find out how they felt about it. So we simply informed him about this in confidence, and I think he handled the matter very nicely. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1967, pages 56-58)

In a letter dated April 5, 1968, Henry G. Fischer stated:

> The moment I found, in Professor Atiya, a means of determining the Church's interest in our papyri, we explored the possibilities of transferring them. I cannot speak for my predecessors, but the reason I "suppressed" information concerning the papyri prior to their transference was simply to avoid involving my institution in doctrinal controversy.

However this may be, Dr. Atiya contacted the Church leaders. Glen Wade gives this information:

> Dr. Atiya obtained photographs of the material in the file and returned to his home in Salt Lake City. He immediately got in touch with his good Mormon friend, Taza Peirce, and told her in confidence what he had discovered. A few days later the two of them met with President N. Eldon Tanner and the photographs were displayed. Later, the photographs were sent to Brigham Young University for inspection by Professor Hugh Nibley, who confirmed that the papyri were from the Mormon collection. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1967, page 53)

Although the Mormon leaders tried to keep it secret, the fact that the papyri were still in existence began to leak out. In a letter dated August 9, 1966, an Egyptologist stated:

> . . . there is good reason to think that some, at least, of the papyri are still in existence, despite the persistent stories about their having been destroyed in a fire around 1871.

A year later this same Egyptologist revealed the following in a letter:

> As usual, reality was improved somewhat in the retelling of facts. Joseph Smith's collection of papyri (I would guess it at about 30 items, including the three from which the woodcuts in the *Pearl of Great Price* were made) was disposed of after his death. The official version, that the whole lot was destroyed in a fire in a private museum in the 1870's is certainly false (I suspect consciously so). I do not know what happened to about two thirds of the collection, though I would not be surprised if they are in the LDS archives in Salt Lake (or at BYU?), but obviously no one will ever know. About 10 or 11 pieces passed through several hands and eventually ended up in a museum, which, however, has never put them on exhibit, though a few professionals have been told about them in confidence and have been shown photographs, but not sufficiently long to study and translate them. In the summer of 1966, Prof. Nibley showed me enlargements of the photographs; they had been obtained by a third party and passed on to Prof. Nibley, who was evidently interested in purchasing the papyri, which included the embalming scene reproduced (with many imaginative restorations since the original is badly damaged) in the *PGP*. The published woodcuts are execrable, but the handwriting on the originals is bad enough, though there is no question that they are late (probably Roman Period) MSS of the Book of the Dead and similar funerary literature, and Prof. Nibley, who had already had the time to study the photographs, had identified several chapters of the BD (unfortunately I can't remember the numbers off hand). (Letter dated August 29, 1967)

Dr. Nibley claims that it is the non-Mormons who have suppressed the truth about the papyri:

> At no time have the manuscripts not been just as available to Egyptologists as they are now to members of the Church. Since the Church obtained them, they have been made available to everyone. It is not the Mormons who have kept the documents out of the hands of the scholars but the other way around. (*Improvement Era*, April, 1968, page 65)

As far as we can determine, the Egyptologists who knew about the papyri seemed to feel that they were doing the Mormons a favor by keeping the facts about the papyri secret. When one Egyptologist was pressed for information on this subject, he wrote:

> If it keeps the Mormons happy to hide a few papyri that are probably of interest to none but themselves, why not? . . . I regret that my position in this matter must be essentially frustrating and seem stubbornly pigheaded to those to whom combatting the Mormons is a matter of great importance. (Letter dated September 2, 1967)

A man who talked with this Egyptologist claimed that he "does not like to talk about the Mormons and claims that for the last year will not even talk about the subject since everyone wants to quote him. This he absolutely refuses to have happen, since Nibley is a close friend" (Letter dated October 10, 1967). This Egyptologist had apparently been aware of the existence of the papyri even prior to the time Dr. Atiya made his purported "discovery." In a letter written in January, 1968, he stated: "You must understand that the photographs are not new to me. I saw them originally a number of years ago in the Metropolitan Museum, then again in the summer of 1965. . . . The newspaper article contains little that is new and a number of details about the discovery and donation that I am a little suspicious of."

Dr. Nibley has made this statement concerning the papyri:

> . . . **no** Latter-day Saint was even aware of their existence until about two years ago. . . . If it had not been for Professor Aziz S. Atiya, we should still know nothing about the papyri; he is in a very real sense their discoverer. (*Improvement Era*, April, 1968, page 65)

While we have no proof that Dr. Nibley knew about the papyri prior to 1966, we do have evidence that some of the Mormons were aware of their existence prior to Dr. Atiya's "discovery." One Mormon now admits that he knew of the papyri as early as 1962. In the book, *From the Dust of Decades*, we find the following information:

> One student persisted in searching on into the nineteen-sixties, checking every possible location of the papyri. Then one day in 1962 he found what he had been seeking. He did little with his discovery and is now at a loss as to why.
>
> For five years he let this remarkable information virtually rest in his study. Then one day, nearly five years later, another man, not a member, nor a student of Church history, hit the front pages of even the Egyptian capital's greatest daily newspaper, through his discovery of the same documents in the same museum. (*From the Dust of Decades*, Salt Lake City, 1968, page 104)

On pages 113-114 of the same book, we find the following:

> The Museum certainly kept an accurate file on the papyri and their origin, for in 1962 it was one of the authors of this book (Whipple) who wrote to the Museum in search of the papyri or information pertaining to parts of the Joseph Smith collection. He quickly received word that the Museum **did** have some papyri from the Smith collection.
>
> This was the first major breakthrough since the Chicago fire. He asked the Museum for a photo of the material they had. They photographed the now famous original to facsimile No. 1 and sent it to his home in southern California. He opened the manila envelope to discover a copy of the same papyrus Dr. Atiya was to see four years later. The author compared the photo of the Museum original with that in the book of Abraham and declared it authentic. For some inexplicable reason, and perhaps because of a "stupor of thought," he did not feel to contact the proper authorities.
>
> Actually he hoped to go to New York and confirm his find further before announcing it to the general public. **It was never a secret.** On a number of occasions he **showed** the slick photo to fireside and seminary groups **throughout the Southern California region**, mentioning only that he had found it in an eastern museum. Excitement resulted at each showing, but no one pressed him for the exact location of the record. He later came to realize that the finding of the materials by Dr. Atiya, who is a **non-Mormon** and a known scholar, gave more meaning and better **publicity** to the discovery than would have been generated on the basis of the author's discovery. (*From the Dust of Decades*, by Keith Terry and Walter Whipple, pages 113-114)

The more we learn about this whole transaction the more suspicious we become of Dr. Atiya's purported discovery. We know now that some members of the Mormon Church knew of the papyri prior to 1966. We know that at least one Egyptologist had seen the papyri or photographs of it a number of years ago. Although this man is a friend of Dr. Nibley's, we do not know whether he informed Dr. Nibley of the existence of the papyri. We do know that after Nibley obtained the photographs in 1966 he discussed the matter with this man, although he was reluctant to reveal much about it to others. Glen Wade relates the following:

> At a meeting I attended in the Tustin Ward Chapel of Santa Ana, California, on August 11, 1967, Professor Hugh Nibley stated that the papyrus text for the Book of Abraham and the Book of Joseph were not destroyed in the fire but were still in existence. He indicated that he personally did not know their location or ownership but that he was quite certain of their preservation. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, page 54)

Glen Wade wrote to John A. Wilson, Professor of Egyptology, University of Chicago, but Dr. Wilson had given his word that he would not reveal the location of the papyri. In a letter dated August 31, 1967, Dr. Wilson stated:

> . . . I was told verbally and in confidence that they [the papyri,] were still in existence, recently bought by an American museum from a private source. I have been asked not to reveal their present location, and I have to keep my word on that. (Letter from Prof. John A. Wilson, as quoted in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter 1967, page 54)

By October, 1967, a number of people were searching for the papyri. Finally, one of Dr. Nibley's friends revealed some numbers that had to do with an indexing system to a friend of ours. This information was sent to us in a letter dated October 10, 1967. According to this same letter, Dr. Nibley's friend claimed that "Nibley got these photos about two years ago through the intermediary of a Prof. Aryah (?), Arabic Studies, at the U. of Utah." It did not take long to figure out that "Prof. Aryah" was probably Dr. Atiya. A friend of ours called Dr. Atiya, read him the numbers and asked him if he knew where the papyri were located. Dr. Atiya pretended that he did not. He stated that a university in the eastern part of the United States might be able to help us. This statement was evidently an attempt to throw us off the track. The university, of course, answered that they knew nothing about the papyri.

We do not know whether Dr. Atiya told the Mormon leaders that we had access to the numbers, but by this time they must have been well aware that we were about to find out where the papyri were located. We turned the numbers over to Wesley P. Walters—one of the best authorities on Mormon history. It did not take him long to figure out that the indexing numbers were those of a large museum. By November 23, 1967, Wesley P. Walters had written to the Metropolitan Museum. On November 28, 1967, Henry G. Fischer answered his letter:

> In reply to your letter of November 23, the first column of numbers (155434-44) refers to our photograph negatives, while the others (47.102.1-11) are accession numbers.
>
> It is curious that you should inquire about these fragments just now, for they were turned over to the Mormon Church yesterday. As you probably know, they once belonged to Joseph Smith and the vignette of one of them appears in his *Pearl of Great Price*. (Letter from Henry G. Fisher, dated November 28, 1967)

By November 27, 1967, even a reporter from the *New York Times* had become aware that the papyri were still in existence. The time for secrecy had past, and the *Deseret News*, a Mormon-owned newspaper, announced:

> NEW YORK — A collection of pa[p]yrus manuscripts, long believed to have been destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871, was presented to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints here Monday by the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
>
> Included in the papyri is a manuscript identified as the original document from which Joseph Smith had copied the drawing which he called "Facsimile No. 1" and published with the Book of Abraham. (*Deseret News*, November 27, 1967, page 1)

Many people have wondered how the Church leaders were able to persuade the Metropolitan Museum of Art to give them the papyri. Although the whole transaction is shrouded in secrecy, a few clues have begun to leak out.

Dr. Atiya states that after he learned of the papyri he met with N. Eldon Tanner, a member of the First Presidency of the Mormon Church. According to Atiya, President Tanner stated that the Church "would do anything or pay any price for them" (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, page 14). In a speech delivered at the University of Utah on May 20, 1968, Dr. Atiya stated: " . . . I tried to persuade the Egyptian people, the Egyptologists, in the Museum of Art to accept a nice little statue which I would buy for them—$15,000, $25,000, whatever the price." In the same speech, Dr. Atiya admitted that "the whole discovery was kept in secret." Glen Wade made this statement concerning Dr. Atiya's attempt to get the papyri from the Metropolitan Museum:

> His approach included avoiding publicity at all costs. Only Mrs. Peirce had been told of the actual location of the papyri, and she kept the secret well. In the course of the next year and a half, Dr. Atiya made seven trips to New York City and numerous telephone calls to the museum. He first suggested to museum officials that an exchange of gifts might be appropriate, the Church giving to the museum an object of art and antiquity in return for the papyrus pieces. The museum officials soon agreed that the proper home for the collection was with the Church and that even an exchange of gifts would be unnecessary. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1967, page 53)

Henry G. Fischer, Curator of Egyptian Art at the Metropolitan Museum, stated that someone made "an anonymous donation" to the Museum, and because of this donation they were able to give the papyri to the Church:

> DIALOGUE: Is this a standard practice to give such documents to interested private institutions such as the Church?
>
> FISCHER: I am glad you asked that question, since, technically, we **have not given the documents to the Church.** As far as the Church is concerned, it is a gift, of course, but it was made possible by **an anonymous donation which covered the cost** to the Museum. We have not set a precedent for giving away an object; we cannot be in that position.
>
> DIALOGUE: Would you say that the Church does not have complete ownership? Is there a way by which these documents could be called back?
>
> FISCHER: No, absolutely not. They are a gift from the Museum, but the gift was made possible because of an **anonymous donation** from a friend of ours. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Winter, 1967, page 64)

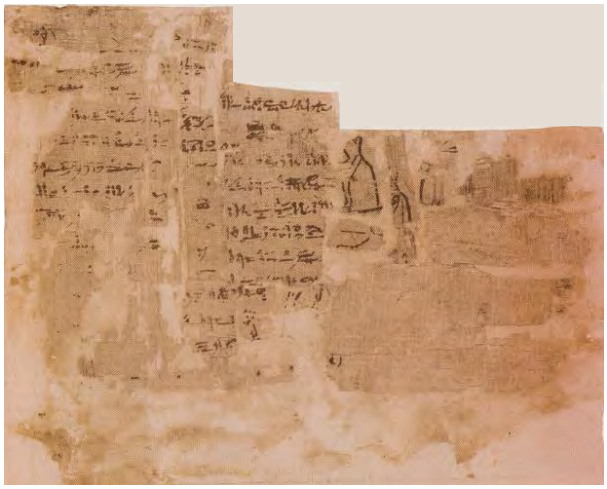
We feel that there is probably much more to this story. The whole matter needs to be clarified.

Another 'Find"

It is interesting to note that the Mormon Church has an actual piece of papyrus from Joseph Smith's collection which they suppressed for 130 years. In 1966 we printed *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*, which included a photograph of this fragment. Grant Heward identified it as an actual fragment of papyrus, and in the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for April, 1966, we stated that the *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* included "a photograph of an actual piece of papyrus which may be part of the 'Book of Abraham' or the 'Book of Joseph!'" After suppressing the fragment for so many years the Mormon leaders have finally decided to make it available. Dr. Nibley made this comment concerning it:

> This fragment has been preserved in the Church Historian's Office through the years among Joseph Smith's papers, including the so-called *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar.* (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, article by Hugh Nibley)

On the next page is a photograph of this fragment as it appeared in the *Brigham Young University Studies*.



A photograph of this fragment was also published in the *Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-H. Jay M. Todd has written an article concerning this fragment for the *Improvement Era*. In this article he states:

> As to the background of the Church Historian's fragment, this is most puzzling. Two members of the historian's office, A. William Lund and Earl E. Olson, assistant Church historians, do not recall any information surrounding the fragment—only that it has been there throughout their service. Brother Lund has been assistant Church historian since 1911, and has worked since September 1908 in the historian's office. They believe that the fragment has been a part of the manuscript of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar prepared by Joseph Smith preparatory to the translation of the Book of Abraham and that it apparently has always been in the Church's hands. (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40-A.

The LDS Church Section of the *Deseret News* carried this statement on February 10, 1968:

> An interesting development in the work going on at BYU by Dr. Hugh Nibley on the papyri fragments turned over to the Church by the New York Museum of Art is the locating of another fragment in the vaults at the Church Historian's office.
>
> The latest fragment "find" has been in the vaults as long as A. William Lund and Earl E. Olson, assistant Church historians, can remember. Mr. Lund has been in his post since 1911 and worked in the office since 1908. Mr. Olson has been in the historian's office since 1934.
>
> The fragment is part of a collection the Church has regarding the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar prepared by the Prophet Joseph Smith. (*Deseret News*, Church Section, February 10, 1968, page 5)

It is strange that the Mormon leaders had to wait for almost two years after we published a photograph of this fragment to announce their important "find." The reader may wonder why the Church leaders did not announce this "find" at the time of the Spalding controversy. The answer now becomes rather obvious, it is in reality a fragment from the Egyptian "Book of the Dead" and has nothing to do with Abraham or Joseph. According to Jay M. Todd, Dr. Nibley admits that it is from the Book of the Dead:

> . . . Hugh Nibley asserts that the Church Historian's fragment is from the Book of the Dead. (*Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 40-B)

It is possible that the LDS Church may be suppressing other fragments of the papyri. The following information is found in the book *From the Dust of Decades*:

> At least most of the papyri was held by the prophet's widow. A recent article in the *Era* tells of one papyrus fragment held in the Church Historian's office for longer than anyone can remember. A few years ago one visitor to the Church Historian's office was shown two or three other fragments of hieroglyphic drawings. What relationship they have with the one spoken of in the *Era* is unknown. These fragments, with the other one, have a very obscure history. (*From the Dust of Decades*, by Keith Terry and Walter Whipple, Salt Lake City, 1968, page 86)

In a footnote on page 177 of this book we learn that it was "Walter Whipple" who "viewed these." On page 116 of the same book we find this statement:

> Confident that only a portion of the original Smith collection had been retrieved with the Atiya find, scholars have kindled much enthusiasm to search out the remainder of the papyri. Some feel there are possibly 19 pieces, others maintain there are 22 fragments yet to be found.

After the papyri were presented to the church on November 27, 1967, the Mormon leaders allowed four or five photographs to be published. The remaining photographs (there were 11 in all) were suppressed for a time. In a letter dated December 30, 1967, James D. Wardle wrote: "We have made more than four different tries to obtain copies of all eleven [photographs] but have been unable to get them." An instructor at the LDS Institute of Religion at the University of Utah called us about this time and asked if we could furnish photographs of all eleven pieces of papyri. We replied that we did not have copies, and we wondered why he was not able to obtain them from his own Church. He stated that he had contacted the *Deseret News*—the Mormon newspaper—and they had told him that they had made a large number of copies of all the papyri, but that they were ordered not to release them. This instructor was unable to obtain the photographs even though he wanted them for the library at the Institute of Religion.

The editors of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* stated that they had "through independent sources obtained photographs of all eleven papyri (*Dialogue*, Winter, 1967, page 51). The Church, however, would not allow them to publish any of the photographs that had not already been published. Therefore, they were unable to publish all of the photographs until a later issue.

Grant Heward was also able to obtain photographs from another source after being refused by the Mormon Church. These photographs were not as clear as the ones the *Deseret News* were suppressing. Mr. Heward tried to talk the *Deseret News* into selling him copies of their photographs. He showed them the copies he had obtain from independent sources. This caused a great deal of excitement, and they wanted to know how he had obtained these photographs. Although the *Deseret News* still refused to sell copies of their photographs, the word went out that photographs of the papyri had fallen into the hands of the enemies of the Church. The Mormon leaders knew that if they did not release the photographs we would print them. Toward the end of January, 1968, the *Deseret News* was given permission to sell photographs of all eleven fragments of papyri, and the *Improvement Era* printed color photographs in the February, 1968, issue.

No Gift to Translate

After receiving the papyri from the Metropolitan Museum, the Mormon leaders turned them over "to Dr. Hugh Nibley, scholar, linguist at Brigham Young University, . . . for further research and study" (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 13). This turned out to be one of the most serious mistakes that the Mormon leaders have ever made.

To begin with, the fact that the papyri were turned over to Dr. Nibley is almost an admission that the Church leaders are not led by revelation as they have claimed. The Mormon Church is led by a man who is sustained by the people as "Prophet, **Seer**, and Revelator." The Book of Mormon states that a "seer" can translate ancient records: ". . . he has wherewith that he can look, and translate all records that are of ancient date; and it is a gift from God. And the things are called interpreters, . . . And whosoever is commanded to look in them, the same is called **seer**" (Mosiah 8:13). According to the Mormon Historian Joseph Fielding Smith, the "seer stone which was in the possession of the Prophet Joseph Smith in early days is now in the possession of the Church" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 3, page 225). John A. Widtsoe, who was a Mormon Apostle, stated that if records appear needing translation, the President of the Church may at any time be called, through revelation, to the special labor of translation" (*Evidences and Reconciliations*, Vol. 1, page 203). Since the Church claims to have the "seer stone" and is supposed to be led by a "Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, we might expect a translation by this means. Instead, however, the papyri were sent to Dr. Nibley to be translated by "the wisdom of the world." Thus, it appears that the Church does not have the gift to translate languages as they have claimed. It is interesting to note that the Mormon leaders have criticized other churches because they did not have this gift. In 1878 the Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt stated:

> The Prophet **translated** the part of these writings which, as I have said is contained in the *Pearl of Great Price*, and known as the Book of Abraham. Thus you see one of the first gifts bestowed by the Lord for the benefit of His people, was that of **revelation—the gift to translate**, by the aid of the Urim and Thummim, the **gift of bringing to light old and ancient records**. Have any of the other denominations got this gift among them? Go and inquire through all of Christendom and do not miss one denomination. Go and ask the oldest Christian associations that are extant; go to Italy, headquarters, and ask the man that holds the greatest power and authority in the Romish Church, "Can you translate ancient records written in a language that is lost to the knowledge of man?" "No," he would say, "we cannot, it is out of my power to do it.". . . the universal reply of the Christian denominations, numbering some 400,000,000, would be that they have not the power to do it. . . . you must give us credit of at least professing to have these great and important gifts, gifts which all the other religions of the world do not even profess to be in possession of. . . . Now, any consistent religious man will give his testimony on religious affairs independent of the traditions of his fathers, and would say in his own mind, it is more consistent for us to have Revelators Prophets, Seers and Translators . . . than to depend upon Revelators and Seers of former ages. (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 20, pages 65-67)

Since the Mormon leaders did not seem to have the gift to translate the papyri themselves, they should have turned the job over to qualified Egyptologists. Instead of doing this, however, they turned it over to Dr. Nibley. Both Dr. Sperry and Dr. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, recommended that the Church get a noted Egyptologist to work with the papyri. Dr. Sperry stated:

> It would be wise for us to get a world-famous Egyptologist to translate them first if possible, then let our own scholars follow him in that work. (Of course he can also be checked by other scholars as well.) (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, March 1, 1968, page 8)

Dr. Clark made a similar statement on the same page:

> In my personal opinion it would be a fine thing if a papyrologist and Egyptologist of international reputation might be asked to examine them.

The Mormon leaders did not follow the recommendation of Dr. Clark and Dr. Sperry. Instead, they turned the whole matter over to Dr. Nibley. Now, there is little doubt that Dr. Nibley is a brilliant man, and that he knows several different languages. The Editor of the *Improvement Era* stated that he "actively uses the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Babylonian, Russian, French, German, Arabic, and Coptic languages" (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968, page 19). It may be true that Dr. Nibley knows several different languages, but this does not qualify him to deal with the Egyptian language. Samuel A. B. Mercer, who knew several different languages, stated that "Egyptian is difficult (*An Egyptian Grammar*, New York, 1961, Preface). It takes many years of experience for a person to become skilled in working with the Egyptian language. Dr. Nibley has taken some classes in the Egyptian language. In fact, after he received photographs of the papyri, he went back to the University of Chicago to study under Dr. Wilson. He was evidently trying to get a lead over his opponents before the existence of the papyri became generally known. Unfortunately for the Mormon position, however, even this special training was not sufficient to qualify him for the job of translating the papyri.

Taimin Mutninesikhonsu

In the *Improvement Era* for February, 1968, page 40, the Editor stated that Dr. Hugh Nibley "has been assigned by the Church to direct the investigation and research being done on the material." In the January issue (page 19) we were assured that Dr. Nibley "is eminently qualified for the project he has undertaken. In the February issue of the same publication we were told that Dr. Nibley was going to unfold "the meaning of the hieroglyphics and illustrations on these valuable manuscripts" (page 40-H). In a letter to the Editor of the *Deseret News*, Julian R. Durham stated:

> There has been some comment regarding the recently discovered Book of Abraham papyri, that the Church submit them to the foremost scholars in the field of Egyptology. . . .
>
> Today the papyri are in the hands of one of the **best qualified Egyptologists in the world**, Hugh Nibley, a foremost church scholar who has demonstrated on an intellectual basis the capabilities of Joseph Smith in language studies. (*Deseret News*, December 27, 1967)

Before we published Dee Jay Nelson's translation of the Mormon Papyri, Dr. Nibley gave only one public demonstration of his ability to unfold the meaning of the Egyptian writing on the papyri. It appears in the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter, 1968:

> This fragment, which has been badly fitted together like some of the others, belongs to the same roll as the other hieratic papyri, as is apparent from recurring elements of the owner's name, that appears a number of times in full in the other fragments . . . Which may be "translated" as something like "The Osiris Daughter of Min, true of word (or justified, deceased, triumphant, etc., i.e., tested and found true and faithful), declared blessed (as a dead person, the word being written merely by a stroke, since the proper hieroglyph was considered magically dangerous), belonging to Khons (or in the company of Khons, the moon-god), justified." Or, **simply as a name, something like Taimin Mutninesikhonsu.**

Dr. Nibley's work is used in a short article in the *Improvement Era*:

> The writings on the recently recovered fragment show that all of these Book of the Dead papyri belonged to **the lady Taimin Mutninesikhonsu.** (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 40)

Dee Jay Nelson makes this statement concerning Dr. Nibley's work:

> On page 40 of the February 1968 issue of the *Improvement Era* is a brief article describing color photographs of the new papyrus fragments. The article names the beneficiary for whom one of the papyri was written. She is called, "the lady Taimin Mutninesikhonsu." I presume that this name was supplied by Dr. Hugh Nibley. It is incorrect. . . . Dr. Nibley, whom I know to be a skilled and capable scholar, has inadvertently combined the names of the beneficiary of the papyrus and her mother. . . . Taimin Mutninesikhonsu is a transliteration combining the name *Ta-shert-Min* with the connecting phrase meaning "daughter of," *mes en* and *Nes-Khensu* (the mother's name). This error was quite natural, particularly considering that the connecting phrase, *mes en* is abbreviated whenever it appears in the Ta-shert-Min Papyrus. *Ta-shert-Min* and *Nes-Khensu* are the correct transliterations. I have been substantiated in my transliteration by several of the world's most renowned Egyptian philologists (mentioned by name in the introduction to this study) though in small variations even they did not agree exactly. One rendered the names *Tai-shery-Min* and *Nes-Khonsu* and another transliterated them *Ta-shert-Men* and *Nes-Khensu*. I find no argument with either. Both scholars were examining poor hand-copied versions of the names which appear in one of Joseph Smith, Jr's notebooks (done in the 1830's). The so-called Metropolitan Papyrus Fragments came to my attention several months after I consulted with these experts and serve to substantiate my original findings. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 48)

John A. Wilson, of the University of Chicago, also rendered this as two separate names:

> Document B is a Book of the Dead composed for a lady named Ta-shere-Min, ("the Daughter of the god Min"), born to the lady Nes-Khonsu ("She Belongs to the god Khonsu"). (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1968, page 71)

Richard A. Parker, Chairman of the Dept. of Egyptology at Brown University, gives a similar rendering:

> These are all fragments of the Book of the Dead belonging to the woman *Ta-sherit-Min*, daughter of *Neskhons*. (*Dialogue*, Summer, 1968, page 87)

It appears that Dr. Nibley is now willing to admit that there are two names involved instead of one. The following appeared in *The Instructor*:

> According to Dr. Nibley, the princess' actual given name was *Ta-Sherit-Min*; she was a daughter of *Nesikhonsu*. (*The Instructor*, an LDS Church magazine, June 1968, page 248, footnote)

In a letter dated February 8, 1968, Dr. Nibley wrote:

> The papyri are not difficult to translate, and two of my professors at Chicago have agreed to translate them. Last month in the presence of witnesses I made a translation of some of the papyrus which has been duly dated and notorized, so that when my betters (and they are infinitely my betters) come out with their translation you can see whether I am totally inept or only nearly so. (Letter dated February 8, 1968)

In the April 1968 issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger* we stated:

> We do not feel that "one of the best qualified Egyptologists in the world" would follow such a procedure. Instead of having his translation "dated and notorized" Dr. Nibley should have published it in the *Improvement Era*.

So far Dr. Nibley has not published this translation which he made "in the presence of witnesses." It seems that after Dr. Nibley made the mistake on the names he evidently gave up the idea of unfolding "the meaning of the hieroglyphics." Now, if Dr. Nibley is "one of the best qualified Egyptologists in the world," why has he not completed a translation of all the papyri. He has had two years to work on it. Dee Jay Nelson completed his "Translation and Preliminary Survey" in less than two months. Grant Heward also did his work on the text concerning the swallow in less than two months. Dr. Nibley, however, has had the papyri for about two years and has given us nothing but the name **Taimin Mutninesikhonsu**, which is in reality two separate names. In the February 1968 issue of the *Improvement Era* we find this statement:

> With our readers, the staff of the *Improvement Era* will be looking forward with eager anticipation to additional developments in this fascinating story, and to the unfolding of the meaning of the hieroglyphics and illustrations on these valuable manuscripts as they are given by Dr. Nibley in his articles.

The March issue of the *Improvement Era* appeared, but Dr. Nibley did not unfold the meaning of any of the hieroglyphics and illustrations. Then the April issue came out, and Dr. Nibley chose to still remain silent concerning the meaning of the Egyptian writing. It is in this issue that we find the statement:

> The first draft of this series of articles was written some years before the Church came into possession of the recently acquired papyri, . . . Since the new problems could not be dealt with **instantly**, and the preliminary material was already at hand, it was decided to release the historical background material while working on the other. (*Improvement Era*, April 1968, page 65)

Dr. Nibley's attempt to explain why he has not unfolded the meaning of the "hieroglyphics and illustrations" may satisfy those who do not know the facts concerning this matter, but those who are aware that he has had photographs of the papyri for about two years find his explanation rather ridiculous. Dr. Nibley gave this excuse for not translating the papyri in an article in the *Brigham Young University Studies*:

> We have often been asked during the past months why we did not proceed with all **haste** to produce a translation of the papyri the moment they came into our possession. Well, for one thing others are far better equipped to do the job than we are, and some of those early expressed a willingness to undertake it. But, **more important**, it is doubtful whether any translation could **do as much good as harm.** (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring, 1968, page 251)

In a meeting held at the University of Utah on May 20, 1968, Dr. Nibley finally admitted that he was not qualified to make an accurate translation of the papyri:

> . . . I would make mistakes like mad . . . I studied just a year ago with Dr. Wilson. Now, of course, he's the master, and so when I heard that he was going to translate it, [I] let him do it, of course, because if I did it he'd just have to correct what I did anyway.

These are very strange words to be coming from a man who stated that the performance of "Dr. Spalding's panel" (some of the greatest Egyptologists who ever lived) was "abyssmally inept" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter, 1968, page 172).

Dr. Nibley was evidently preparing to make a great display of his knowledge of the Egyptian language until he learned that qualified Egyptologists were going to translate the papyri for publication. He apparently did not want his work to be compared with theirs and therefore gave up the idea of translating the Mormon papyri. Dr. Nibley condemned the "Spalding jury" for not translating the poorly copied material on the facsimiles in the Book of Abraham:

> "Scholars should not shrink from translating difficult texts," Sir Allan H. Gardiner admonishes his colleagues. "At the best they may be lucky enough to hit upon the right renderings. At the worst they will have given the critics a target to tilt at." But to set themselves up as targets was the one thing that the Spalding jury was determined to avoid. (*Improvement Era*, March 1968, page 21)

Dr. Nibley condemned Spalding's jury for not setting themselves up as targets, yet he was unwilling to set himself up as a target even when he had the original papyri.

Dr. Nibley condemns Samuel A. B. Mercer for passing up his "first great chance" to translate a text:

> Shortly after the Spalding affair Dr. Mercer made his first solid contribution to Egyptology. . . . The prize piece was a long inscription, which had been known from another but damaged fragment that had been translated in 1905 by A. B. Kemal.
>
> Mercer's great discovery allowed him to supply the complete text, which Kemal did not have. But in furnishing the missing lines Mercer simply sent in a photograph, without any translation or commentary. This is remarkable. He had understandably begged off where the poorly copied hieroglyphics of the *Pearl of Great Price* were concerned, but here was his first great chance to shine as a linguist and a scholar . . . But never a word of translation or commentary from Mercer. He had room for a long description of the document and a picturesque account of how the inscription was found, with the usual pompous references to science and scholarship, but as to the linguistic aspects of the thing—complete silence. . . . Indeed, we have been unable to find a translation by Mercer of any Egyptian writing that had not already been translated and published by someone else. (*Improvement Era*, June 1968, page 18)

This is almost a perfect description of Dr. Nibley's own situation. Dr. Nibley has had all the advantages. He has had classes in Egyptology at the University of Chicago. He has had photographs of the papyri for two years, and has even had the original papyri to work with. Yet, with all these advantages, he has not contributed anything except a name which is wrong. In the June 1968 issue of the *Improvement Era*, Dr. Nibley gives us a "pompous" display of his ability to translate the German language, but as to the papyri themselves "complete silence."

It would appear, then, that Dr. Nibley is not qualified to give a translation of the papyri. If it had not been for *Dialogue*, Dee Jay Nelson, and Grant Heward we would still be in the dark concerning the meaning of the papyri. Dr. Nibley has had the papyri down at the Brigham Young University for months, yet he has not given us a translation. Strange as it may seem, this is the same man who mocked the Egyptologists of 1912 for not taking Joseph Smith's work seriously: "If such individuals could not take the thing seriously they should have turned the assignment over to others who would be willing to do so if only for the sake of argument" (*Improvement Era*, April, 1968, page 66). We feel that Dr. Nibley's words fit his own situation. If he "could not take the thing seriously," why did he not turn "the assignment over to others who would be willing to do so?"

The Mormon leaders evidently did not want non-Mormon Egyptologists to translate the papyri. They could have sent the original papyri to the University of Chicago so that Dr. Wilson could have worked with them, but instead they brought them to the Brigham Young University. In a letter written December 4, 1967, Henry G. Fisher, of the Metropolitan Museum, stated:

> We have not been commissioned to translate the papyri, nor do I know of anyone else who has been asked to do so. (Letter dated December 4, 1967)

The translations of the papyri by John A. Wilson and Richard A. Parker were not requested by the Mormon leaders, but rather by the editors of *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*—which is NOT controlled by the Church. On January 5, 1968, John A. Wilson made the following statement in a letter to Marvin Cowan:

> For the time being I do not wish to answer the general questions in your letter about the Mormon papyri. A Mormon magazine on the Pacific coast has promised me a photograph of these documents and I should prefer to make my reading on the basis of better reproductions than those in a newspaper.

In his article John A. Wilson stated:

> No Egyptologist is happy at studying either photographs or copies made by someone else. He wants to see the original. The present photographs are not particularly good: they are small scale and blurred around the margin. Further, although they pick up the black ink, they often fail completely on the red ink (the "rubrics"). (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. Summer 1968, page 69)

Concerning one photograph Dr. Wilson stated:

> Careful study of the original would extract more of this than my photograph shows. (*Dialogue*, Summer 1968, page 76)

Richard A. Parker made this statement concerning one of the photographs:

> . . . the poor photography precludes easy reading of the whole. (*Dialogue*, Summer 1968, page 86)

It is strange that Dr. Nibley (who did not translate the papyri) should keep possession of the papyri while the Egyptologists that did all the work had to struggle to translate from photographs. Dr. Nibley has wasted six issues of the *Improvement Era* criticizing Bishop Spalding's pamphlet and has not contributed anything concerning the meaning of the original papyri. Many people are beginning to realize that he is stalling. In the April 1968 issue of the *Era* Dr. Nibley wrote:

> The critics of the *Pearl of Great Price*, like those of the Book of Mormon, have always had a weakness for

> instant solutions. As soon as anyone starts putting a long equation on the blackboard or begins to demonstrate the steps in the solution of an involved problem, these students cry out, "Never mind all that—you are only stalling; give us the answer!" . . . No one is more eager than this writer to get out of the critical Slough of Despond and start discussing the wonderful discoveries that are now casting a strange new light on the Book of Abraham. But before we can do that, we must deal with a lot of preliminary questions that others have raised.—H. N. (*Improvement Era*, April 1968, pages 66-67)

In the May 1968 issue of the *Era* Dr. Nibley made this apology for not getting down to business with the papyri:

> At this point of the journey some footsore tourists are asking their amateur guide why he insists on leading the party through the Dismal Swamp instead of taking them right to the Giant Redwoods. It is because the Book of Abraham criticism has never gotten out of the bog; we must become familiar with its depressing terrain because we and all the other critics of that book are still stuck in it. (*Improvement Era*, May, 1968, page 54)

In the June 1968 issue Dr. Nibley did NOT even mention the papyri. In fact, he used all of his space to criticize Dr. Mercer. In *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1968, page 105, Dr. Nibley admitted that his "own efforts have until now been confined to the affair of 1912, . . ." Dr. Nibley seems to feel that by attacking Spalding and his book he can create a great smoke screen to cover up the fact that he is not able to defend Joseph Smith's translations of the Egyptian language. Dr. Nibley has been extremely unfair in this attack. He even criticizes F. S. Spalding for the Church's dishonesty. Speaking of the facsimiles that Spalding sent to the Egyptologists, Dr. Nibley states:

> . . . the **miserable copies** that Bishop Spalding circulated among his jury of experts made a very poor impression, and their **raw clumsiness** was in every case attributed to the Prophet himself. . . . It makes all the difference in the world what particular text a scholar has to work with, as a comparison of the recently discovered original of Facsimile 1 with the copies of it that Spalding sent to the critics should make clear to anyone. (*Improvement Era*, February 1968, pages 20-21)

Because Dr. Nibley does not make this matter clear, the reader would get the impression that Spalding altered the copies that he sent to the Egyptologists. Now, what was it that Spalding sent to the Egyptologists anyway? It was the *Pearl of Great Price*—the official publication of the Church—which contains the facsimiles. After Dr. Arthur C. Mace (Assistant Curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Dept. of Egyptian Art) examined the facsimiles, he wrote a letter to Spalding in which he stated:

> "I return herewith, under separate cover the 'Pearl of Great Price.' The 'Book of Abraham,' it is hardly necessary to say, is a pure fabrication." (*Joseph Smith, Jr.. As A Translator*, page 27)

This statement proves that it was the church's printing of the *Pearl of Great Price* which was submitted to the Egyptologists. Dr. James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, states that it was the "1907 printing" of the *Pearl of Great Price* that the Egyptologists examined (*Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, page 61).

Now, why should Dr. Nibley make a point out of the fact that Spalding submitted "miserable copies" to the Egyptologists, when it was the Mormon leaders themselves who made the changes and alterations in the facsimiles?

In the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Dr. Nibley admits that the facsimiles which the church now publishes in the *Pearl of Great Price* are not accurate:

> The *Pearl of Great Price* itself admirably illustrates the issue. The Facsimiles now in use are **extremely bad reproductions, far inferior** to the first engravings published in 1842. Am I, then, as a member of the Church bound to consult the present official edition and that only, and regard it as flawless, **bad as it is**, because it is the official publication of the Church? (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, page 177)

We are glad that Dr. Nibley has made this statement, for it is certainly the truth. But, we ask, why did he not include it in his article in the *Improvement Era*? As his article stands in the *Improvement Era* the reader would get the impression that F. S. Spalding made the changes, whereas the truth is that the Mormon leaders are responsible.

In the April 1968 issue of the *Improvement Era* Dr. Nibley stated:

> But when Bishop Spalding sent by far the worst copies of all to his eight judges with the announcement they were in a position to criticize "the original text," he was way out of bounds. (*Improvement Era*, April 1968, page 65)

If Bishop Spalding was "way out of bounds" when he submitted these copies to Egyptologists, weren't the Mormon leaders "way out of bounds" when they allowed them to be printed?

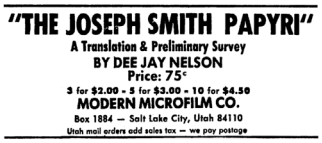
Nelson's Work

Although Dr. Nibley was not able to translate the papyri, there was a man in the Church who was qualified—i.e., Dee Jay Nelson. Mr. Nelson is a nationally known explorer naturalist. He is a member of the Adventures Club and has given lectures on the Dead Sea Scrolls. In 1957 he was invited by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion to make the first motion picture of the Dead Sea Scrolls. He has studied the Egyptian language and religion for over 20 years. Reed J. Neuberger, Dee Jay Nelson's Business Manager, gives this interesting information concerning Mr. Nelson:

> Dee Jay Nelson is an internationally-known lecturer on archaeological and natural history subjects and has presented just over 4,000 lectures in four countries and 46 states. . . .
>
> In the past ten years the Nelsons have made six trips to the Middle East to film historic relics and to conduct archeological excavations. Two of these have been in Egypt, one at Giza and the second at Saggara. Among their discoveries were a set of bronze plates inscribed with ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics dating from about 1,400 B. C. These are now a part of their own private collection of antiquities.
>
> Mr. Nelson, an Egyptian philologist by avocation, reads, writes and speaks ancient Egyptian, being skilled in reading hieroglyphics, hieratic and Coptic. His original researches include the first translations of the "The Egyptian Book of Life,". . . (*Montana Arts*, Vol. 20, no. 1, page 21)

When Dr. Nibley learned of Dee Jay Nelson's ability as an Egyptologist, he wanted Mr. Nelson to help defend the Church. On January 4, 1968, Mr. Nelson visited with Dr. Nibley at the Brigham Young University and examined the papyri. Dr. Nibley agreed that Mr. Nelson should translate the papyri, and he sent a note to N. Eldon Tanner (a member of the First Presidency) stating that "it would be a good idea to let Prof. Dee J. Nelson have copies" of the papyri. This was before the Mormon leaders allowed photographs of all the papyri to be published. Mr. Nelson translated the papyri, but he was unable to find any mention of Abraham or his religion in any portion of the papyri. He found the names of many pagan gods who were worshipped by the Egyptians but nothing concerning the God of Abraham. After completing his translation, Mr. Nelson contacted us and asked if we wanted to print it. We felt honored, but we asked him why he did not have the Church print it. He replied that his translation came out unfavorable for the Church, and he felt that they would not print it. He stated that Dr. Nibley seemed to be stalling, and he felt that his people should know the truth about the papyri. Therefore, he decided to let us publish his findings.

After we had finished the printing on Mr. Nelson's book, we tried to advertize it in the papers in Salt Lake City. On April 1, 1968, we submitted the following ad to the Newspaper Agency Corporation:



They accepted our money, and we were given the understanding that the ad would appear in both the *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Tribune*. The ad did appear in the *Tribune*, but the *Deseret News* later informed us that they had decided not to run the ad. It would appear, then, that the Mormon leaders are NOT willing to let their people know both sides of this issue. Dr. Nibley claims that it is the non-Mormons that will not print both sides of the issue. Speaking of Spalding's work, he stated:

> . . . the Mormons proved their good faith and sincerity by printing in the pages of *The Improvement Era* the letters of Bishop Spalding and his supporters, . . . There was no such dialogue in the non-Mormon periodicals in which Dr. Spalding published, . . . only his own and like opinions ever appeared there. (*Improvement Era*, January, 1968, page 21)

While it maybe true that publications controlled by the Mormon Church allowed some dialogue fifty years ago, it is certainly not true today. The fact that the Mormon leaders will not even allow us to advertize Nelson's work proves that they do NOT want their people to know the truth about the papyri. We asked N. Eldon Tanner (of the First Presidency) if he did not feel a moral obligation concerning this matter. He replied that he did not. The Editor of the *Deseret News* stated that he did not believe Nelson's work was accurate. He claimed that he had had a conversation with Dr. Nibley concerning Nelson's work, and that Nibley told him that he did not believe that the translation was correct. If Dr. Nibley made the statements that the Editor of the *Deseret News* attributed to him (and we have no evidence he did, other than the Editor's word), he seems to have changed his mind, for he wrote the following for the *Brigham Young University Studies*:

> The publication of the Joseph Smith Egyptian Papyri has now begun to bear fruit. Two efforts at translation and commentary have already appeared, the one an example of pitfalls to be avoided, the other a conscientious piece of work for which the Latter-day Saints owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Dee Jay Nelson. . . . This is a conscientious and courageous piece of work . . . Nelson has been careful to consult top-ranking scholars where he has found himself in doubt. He has taken the first step in a serious study of the Facsimiles of the *Pearl of Great Price*, supplying students with a usable and reliable translation of the available papyri that once belonged to Joseph Smith. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring, 1968, pages 245 and 247)

Dr. Nibley's statements concerning Nelson's work will, no doubt, come as a great shock to the Editor of the *Deseret News*. Notice that Nibley claims that Nelson's work is a "reliable translation" and that the Mormons owe him a "debt of gratitude." It would appear, then, that the leaders of the Church deliberately suppressed this publication because they did not want their people to have a "reliable translation" of the papyri. N. Eldon Tanner must have been well aware of the fact that Nelson's work was accurate at the time he allowed it to be suppressed.

Actually, we were rather surprised that Hugh Nibley would publicly endorse Nelson's work after the Mormon leaders had suppressed it. Mr. Nelson feels that the Book of Abraham is a false translation and that the Church must give it up. He feels that Dr. Nibley is a "skilled and capable scholar" in some areas, but he believes that his knowledge of Egyptian philology is "superficial;" and that he is "not qualified to present an honest evaluation of the papyri." Mr. Nelson is very disturbed by Dr. Nibley's articles in the *Improvement Era*.

5. Papyri Not About Abraham

In the last chapter we stated that when the papyri were located many members of the Mormon Church felt that Joseph Smith's work had been vindicated. We quoted Dr. Nibley, however, as stating that the papyri "do not prove the Book of Abraham true" and that LDS scholars are "caught flat footed" by the discovery. In an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Dr. Nibley made this statement:

> When I first saw photos of the papyri I made myself disagreeable by **throwing a great deal of cold water around.** For publicity they were great, and as far as I can see their main value is still in calling the attention of Latter-day Saints to the existence of scriptures which they have studiously ignored through the years. (*Dialogue*, Summer, 1968, page 102)

While Dr. Nibley and a few others may have realized that the papyri could not be used to prove Joseph Smith's work true, they evidently were not aware of the devastating blow that the papyri were about to deal to the "Book of Abraham." Within six months from the time the Metropolitan Museum gave the papyri to the Church, the Book of Abraham had been proven untrue!

The fall of the Book of Abraham has been brought about by the identification of the fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham. Below is a photograph of the right side of this fragment of papyrus.

The identification of this fragment as the original from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham has been made possible by a comparison with *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*—a document published by Modern Microfilm Co. in 1966. Dr. James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, gives this information:

> . . . there are in existence today in the Church Historian's Office what seem to be two separate manuscripts of Joseph Smith's translations from the papyrus rolls, presumably in the hand writing of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery; . . . One manuscript is the Alphabet and Grammar . . . Within this Alphabet and Grammar there is a copy of the **characters**, together with **their translation** of Abraham 1:4-28 only. The second and separate of the two manuscripts contains none of the Alphabet and Grammar but is a manuscript of the text of the Book of Abraham as published in the first installment of the *Times and Seasons* March 1, 1842. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, Salt Lake City, 1962, pages 172-173)

The Mormon leaders were either not aware of the fact that the gift of papyri included the fragment which was the basis for the text in the Book of Abraham, or they hoped no one else would notice it. The following statement appeared in the Mormon paper, *Deseret News*: "As far as has yet been determined, the papyri do NOT contain any of the original material translated as the Book of Abraham itself" (*Deseret News*, November 28, 1967).

When the Mormon magazine, *Improvement Era*, printed color photographs of the papyri, the fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham was printed as the very last photograph. It is found on page 41 of the February, 1968, issue, and is labeled: "XI. Small 'Sensen' text (unillustrated)."

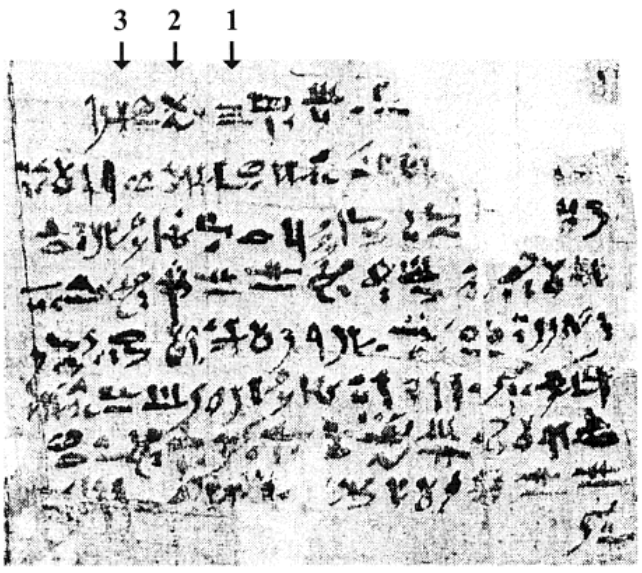
All of the first two rows of characters on the papyrus fragment can be found in the manuscript of the Book of Abraham that is published in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. Below (to the left) is a photograph of the original fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith was supposed to have translated the Book of Abraham. To the right is a photograph of the original manuscript of the Book of Abraham as it appears in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. We have numbered some of the characters on the first line of the fragment of papyrus so that the reader can compare them with the characters found in the handwritten manuscript.

The reader will probably be startled at the large number of Egyptian words which Joseph Smith "translated" from each Egyptian character. We will more to say about this later.

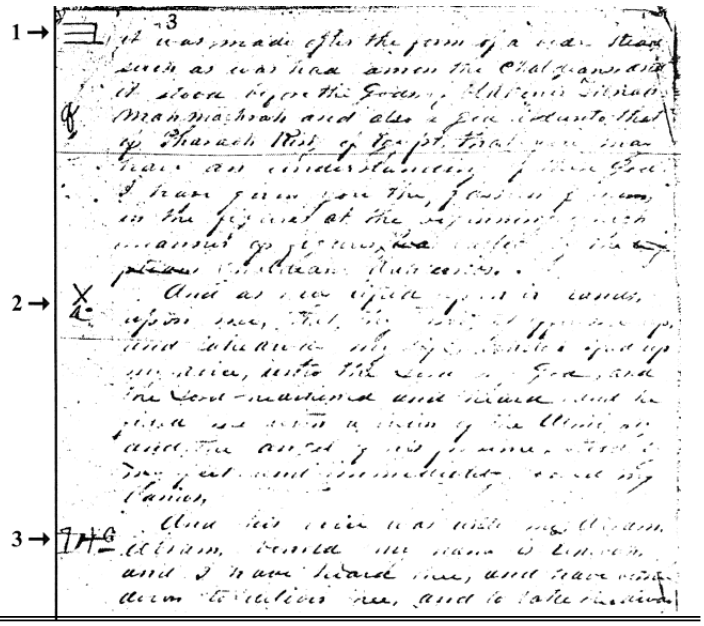
As James R. Clark indicated, there is another copy of the Book of Abraham manuscript in the Church Historian's Office. Dr. Clark has made the following statement about this manuscript.

> I have in my possession a photostatic copy of the manuscript of the Prophet Joseph Smith's translation of Abraham 1:1 to 2:18. This manuscript was bought by Wilford Wood in 1945 from Charles Bidamon, son of the man who married Emma after the death of the Prophet. The original of this manuscript is in the Church Historian's Office in Salt Lake City. The characters from which our present book of Abraham was translated are down the left-hand column and Joseph Smith's translation opposite, so we know approximately how much material was translated from each character. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., pages 60-61.

The Brigham Young University Library had photographs of this manuscript which Grant Heward was able to examine and copy by hand. This manuscript goes further than the one in the "Alphabet and Grammar," and Mr. Heward has found that the characters on this manuscript continue in consecutive order into the fourth line of the papyrus. In the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, Issue No. 17, we stated that this would bring the text to Abraham 2:20 in the *Pearl of Great Price*. This was an error. A more careful check reveals that it brings the text to Abraham 2:18. This is very interesting because when Joseph Smith printed the first installment of the Book of Abraham in the *Times and Seasons* he ended it at this point. Since publishing the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, Issue No. 17, we have been able to obtain photographs of this manuscript and can confirm Grant Heward's statements concerning it. Although a photograph of the first page of this manuscript was published in the *Improvement Era*, September 1937, page 543, the remaining pages have been suppressed, and we had a hard time obtaining photographs of them. Because of the importance of these photographs we are including them in the pages which follow.



Photograph of the original fragment of papyrus from which Joseph Smith was supposed to have translated the Book of Abraham.



Photograph of the original manuscript of the Book of Abraham as it appears in *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*.

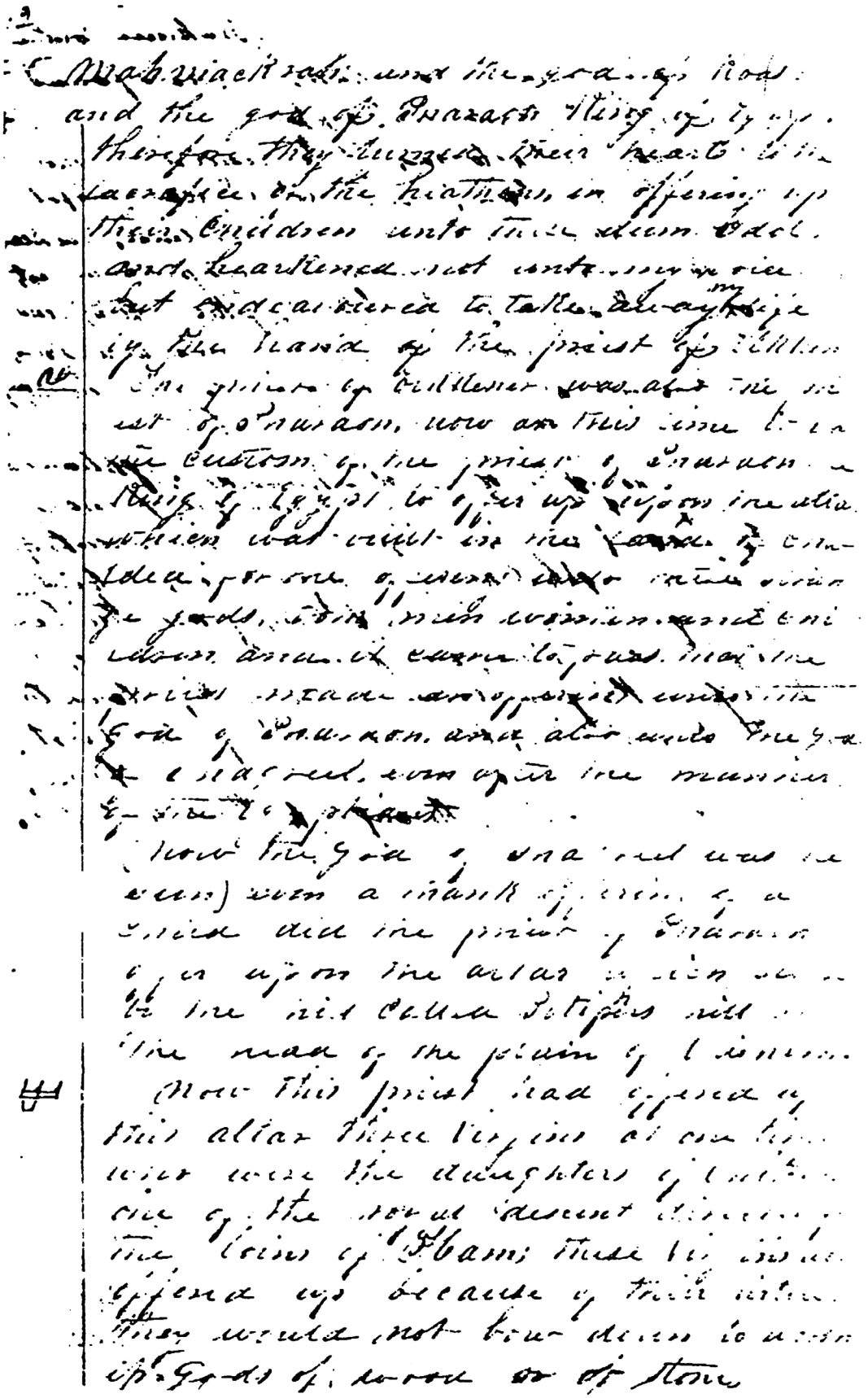
Translation of the Book of Abraham written by his own hand upon papyrus and found in the Catacombs of Egypt

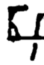
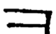
In the land of the Chaldeans, at the residence of my fathers, I, Abraham, saw, that it was needful for me to obtain another place of residence, and seeing there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same: Having been a follower of righteousness, desiring ~~to be~~ one who possessed great knowledge, & to be a greater follower of righteousness; a possessor of greater knowledge; a father of many nations; a prince of peace; one who keeps the commandments of God; a rightful heir; a high priest, holding the right belonging to the fathers, from the be-beginning of time; even from the beginning, or before the foundation of the earth, down to the present time; even the right of the first born, or the first man, who is Adam, or first father, through the fathers, unto me.

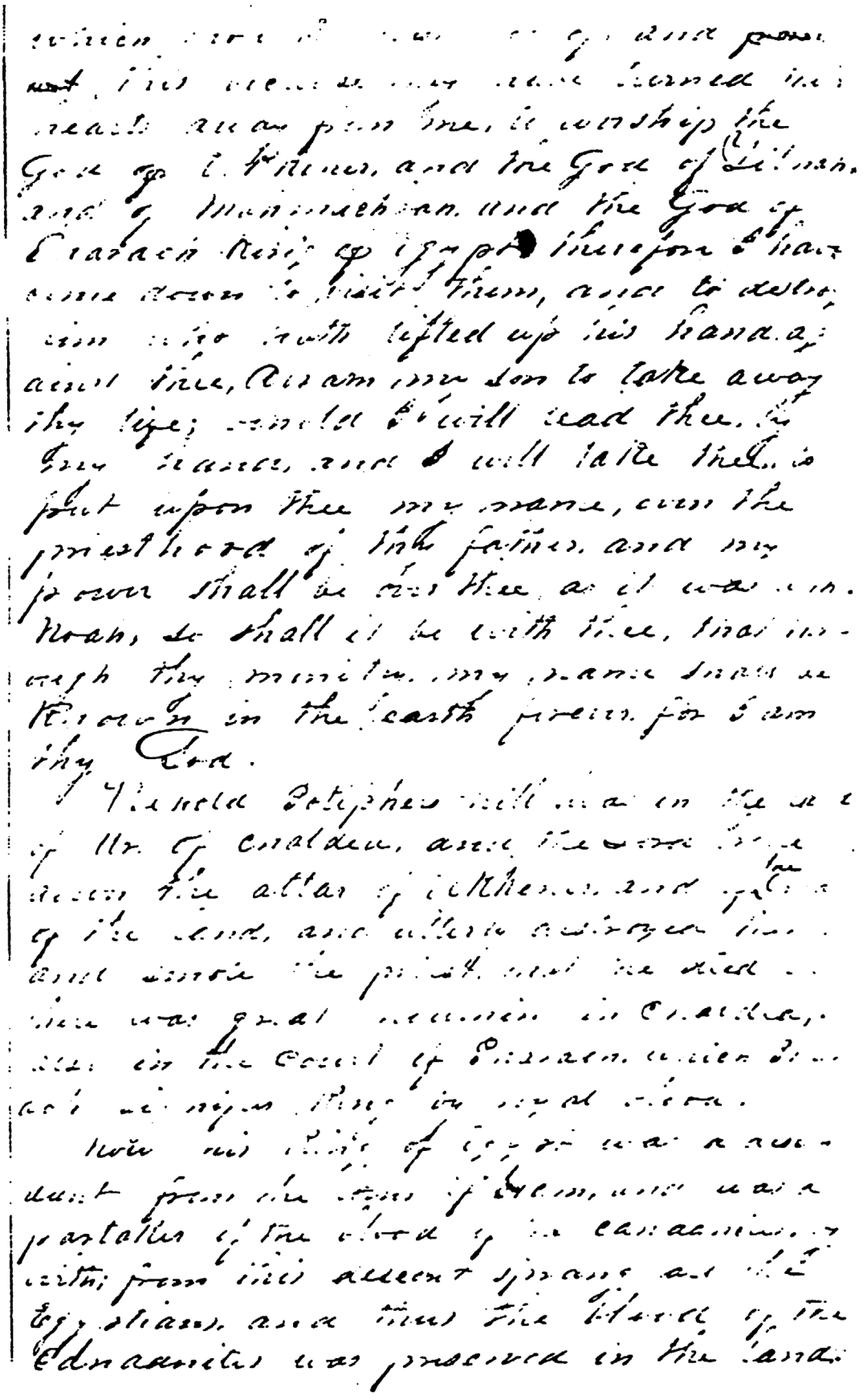
I sought for mine appointment unto the priesthood according to the appointment of God, unto the fathers concerning the seed.

My fathers having turned from their righteousness, and from the holy commandments, which the Lord their God had given unto them, unto the worshiping of the gods of the heathens.

Utterly refused to hearken to my voice for their hearts were set to do evil, and were wholly turned to the god of Elkenah and the god of Libnah and the god of



therefore they were killed upon this altar
 And it was done after the manner of the
Egyptians, and it came to pass, that the pri-
ests, laid violence upon me, that they
might slay me also, as they did those
virgins, upon this altar, and that you m-
ight have a knowledge of this altar. I will
refer you to the representation, at the commen-
cement of this record.
 It was made after the form of a bedstead
such as was had among the Chaldeans,
and it stood before the Gods. of Elkkenah
Libnah Mahmachrah and also a god
like unto that of Pharaoh King of Egypt
that you may have an understanding
of these Gods, I have given you the fas-
hion of them, in the figures at the beginn-
ing. which manner of figures is called by
the Chaldeans Rahleenos.
 And as they lifted up their hands up-
on me, that they might offer me up, and
take away my life, behold I lifted up my
voice, unto the Lord my God, and the
Lord hearkened and heard, and he
filled me with a vision of the Almighty
and the angel of his presence, stood
by me, and immediately loosed
my bands.
And his voice was unto me, Abram.
 Abram, behold my name is Jehovah, and
I have heard thee, and have come down
to deliver thee, and to take thee away
from thy fathers house, and from all
thy kinsfolks into a strange land,



ΔϽŦ The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of Zeptan, which in the Chaldea signifies Egypt, which signifies that which is forbidden. When this woman discovered the land it was under water, who after settled her sons in it; and thus from Ham, sprung that race, which preserved the curse in the land.

HÝ Now the first government of Egypt was established by Pharaoh, the eldest son of Egyptes, the daughter of Ham, and it was after the manner of the government of Ham, which was patriarchal, Pharaoh being a righteous man established his kingdom and judged his people wisely and justly all his days, seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first patriarchal reign, even in the reign of Adam, and also Noah his father, who blessed him with the blessings of the earth and with the blessings of wisdom, but cursed him as pertaining to the priesthood

ᑕH. Now Pharaoh being of that lineage by which he could not have the right of priesthood, notwithstanding the Pharaohs, would fain claim it from Noah, through Ham, therefore my father was led away by their idolitry, but I shall endeavor hereafter to delineate the chronology, running back

from myself to the beginning of the
creation, for the records have come
into my hands which I hold unto
this present time.
[illegible] Now after the priest of Elkkener was
smitten that he died there came a
fulfillment of those things which were
spoken unto me, concerning the land
of Chaldea that there should be a
famine in the land, and accordingly
a famine prevailed throughout all
the land of Chaldea, and my father
was sorely tormented, because of
the famine, and he repented of
the evil which he had determined
against me, to take away my life,
but the records of the fathers, even
the patriarchs concerning the right
of priesthood, the Lord my God
preserved in mine own hands.
Therefore a knowledge of the beg-
inning of creation, and also of the
planets and of the stars, as it was
made known unto the fathers, have
I kept even unto this day.
[illegible] And I shall endeavor to write some
one of these things upon this record
for the benefit of my posterity that
shall come after me.
[illegible] Now the Lord God caused the fam-
ine to wax sore in the land of Ur in
somuch that Haran my brother died
but Terah my father yet lived in
the land of Ur of the Chaldees and

it came to pass that I Abram took
Sarai to wife and Nahor my brother took
Milcah to wife.
Who was the daughter of Haran.

Now the Lord had said unto me
Abram, get thee out of thy country,
and from thy kindred, and from
thy fathers house, unto a land that
I will shew thee, therefore I left the
land of Ur of the Chaldees, to go into
the land of Canaan. and I took Lot
my brothers son, and his wife, and
Sarai my wife. and also my father
followed after me, unto the land
which we denominated Haran.
and the famine abated, and my
father tarried in Haran. and dwelt
there, as there were many flocks
in Haran. and my father turned
again unto his Idolitry therefore
he continued in Haran.
But I Abram and Lot my brothers
son, prayed unto the Lord. and the
Lord appeared unto me. and
said unto me. arise and take Lot
with thee. for I have purposed
to take thee away out of Haran,
and to make of thee a minister
to bear my name ~~unto~~ a prayer
which I will give in a strange
land which I will give unto
seed after thee. for an ~~everl~~
everlasting possession,

unto my voice.
150bMo For I am the Lord thy God
I dwell in heaven, the earth is
my foot-stool. I stretch my hand
over the sea, and it obeys my voice
I cause the wind and the fire
to be my chariot, I say to the mo-
untains depart hence and behold
they are taken away by a whirl-
wind in an instant suddenly,
my name is Jehovah. and I kno-
w the end from the beginning.
the beginning. Therefore my hand
shall be over thee, and I will make
of thee, a great nation and I will
bless thee, above measure, and make
thy name great among all nations
04:13 And thou shall be a blessing un-
to thy seed after thee, that in their hands
they shall bear this ministry and
priesthood unto all nations, and I will
bless them, through thy name for as
many as receive this Gospel shall
be called after thy name, and
shall be accounted thy seed, and shall
rise up and bless thee, as unto their
father and I will bless them that
bless thee, and curse them that curse thee
and in thee and in (that is in thy
priesthood) and in thy seed, that is thy
priesthood, for I give unto thee a prom-
ise that this right shall continue in
thee, and in thy seed after thee, that
is to say the literal seed, or the seed

9

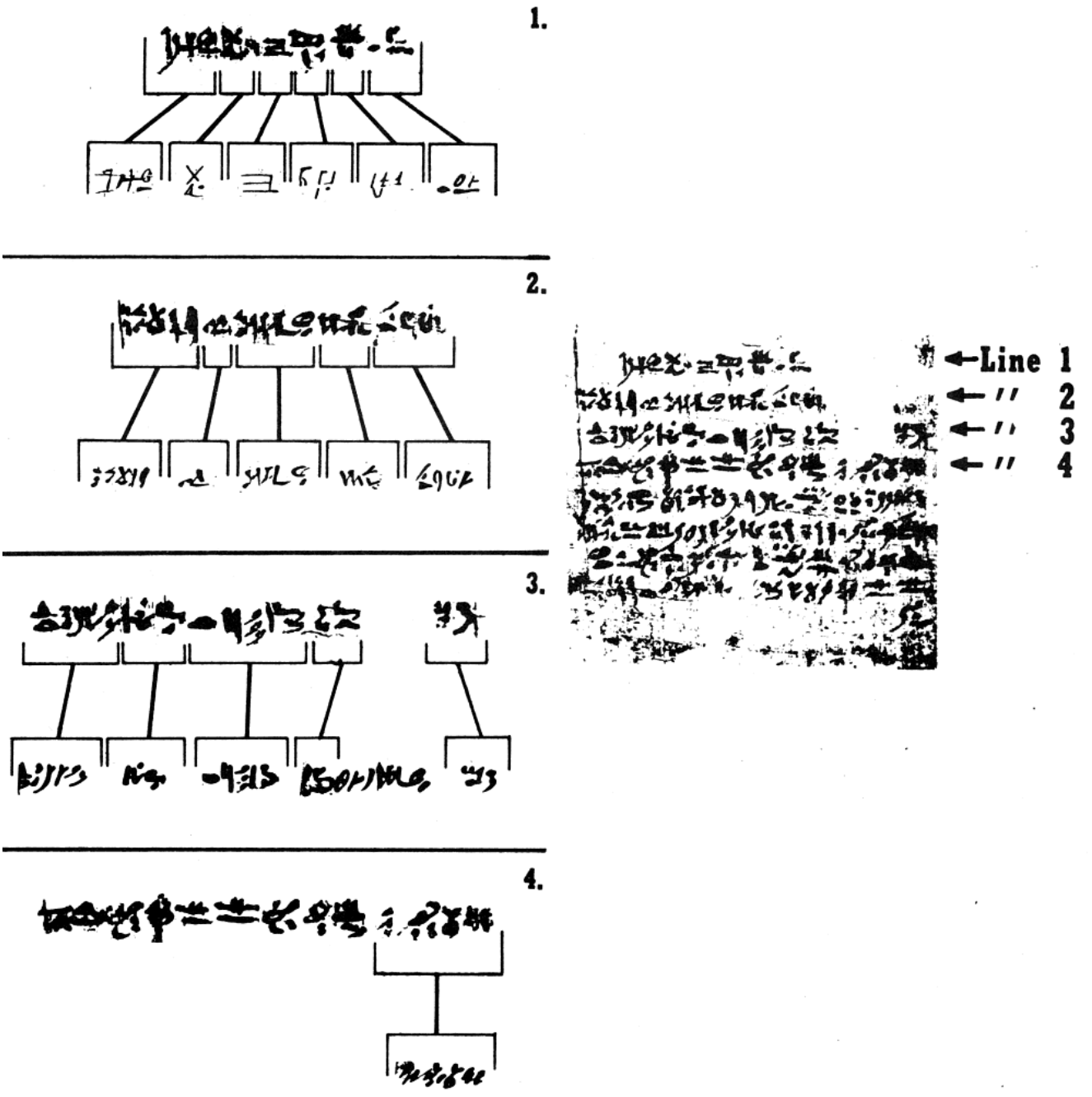
of thy body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal.

Now after the Lord had withdrawn from speaking to me, and withdrawn his face from me, I said in my heart, thy servant has sought thee earnestly, now I have found thee, thou didst send thine angel to deliver me from the gods of Elkkenah, and I will do well to hearken unto thy voice, therefore let thy servant arise up and depart in peace. So I Abram departed, as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me. And I Abram was sixty and two years old, when I departed out of Haran.

And I took Sarai whom I took to wife when I was in Ur, in Chaldea, and Lot my brothers son, and all our substance, that we had gathered, and the souls that we had won in Haran, and came forth in the way to the land of Canaan, and dwelt in tents, as we came on our way, therefore eternity was our covering, and our rock, and our salvation, as we journeyed from Haran by the way of Jershon, to come to the land of Canaan.

[illegible] Now I Abram built an altar un
the Lord, in the land of Jershon
and made an offering unto the Lord
and prayed ~~that~~ the famine might
be turned away from my fathers
house, that they might not perish;
and then we passed from Jershon through
the land unto the place of Sech-
em. it was situated in the plains of
Moreh, and we had already come
into the ~~land~~ borders of the land of the Canaanites, and
I offered sacrifice there, in the plains
of Moreh and called on the Lord devou-
tly because ~~[illegible]~~ we had already come into
the land of this idolatrous nation

In the illustration below we have taken the characters from the handwritten manuscripts of the Book of Abraham and compared them with the characters which appear on the actual papyrus. The first two lines of the papyrus are compared with characters from *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. The third and part of the fourth line are compared with characters from the longer manuscript which we have printed on pages 147-151 of this book. This illustration proves beyond all doubt that Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham from this fragment of papyrus.



(The longer manuscript ends at this point.)

The reader will note that Joseph Smith used less than four lines from the papyrus to make 49 verses in the Book of Abraham. These 49 verses are composed of more than 2,000 English words! In his book, *Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, page 79, Dr. Sperry informs us that there are "5,470 words" contained in the text of the Book of Abraham. If Joseph Smith continued to translate the same number of English words from each Egyptian character, then the text for the entire Book of Abraham is probably contained on this one fragment of papyrus.

The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson confirms the fact that the small "Sensen" fragment was the piece of papyrus which Joseph Smith used as the basis for his Book of Abraham:

> What do the newly discovered "Metropolitan Papyri" have to do with the Book of Abraham? The original ancient Egyptian text from which Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham has been found! A substantial part of it can be seen in column 1 (right hand) on the smaller Hor Sensen Papyrus Fragment (unillustrated). . . .
>
> How do we know that Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham from column 1 of the Hor Sensen Fragment No. 1? Joseph Smith tells us that it is so in the most positive of ways by supplying a list of the ancient characters and attaching to it the "translation." This list of characters, though crudely copied, precisely matches the first two lines of hieratic characters in column 1 on the Hor Papyrus Fragment No. l. Joseph Smith's character list and the attached "translation" is found in the notebook entitled *Grammar and Alphabet of the Egyptian Language*. Before the disclosure that the Joseph Smith Papyri had been found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, I had succeeded in identifying the characters accompanying Joseph Smith's "translation" as traditional hieratic and had, in spite of the poor quality of the copy, identified several individual characters, but it was Grant Heward who later pointed out to me that the characters drawn by Joseph Smith in the left hand margin of the Grammar and Alphabet were the same as in the original Hor Sensen text. **The fact is indisputable.**
>
> The "translation" starts on page J of the *Grammar and Alphabet* and almost exactly matches the published version of the Book of Abraham beginning with Chapter 1, verse 4 and ending with Chapter 2, verse 5. We can be absolutely sure that Joseph Smith intended the "translation" to match the characters written down the left margin because beginning on page S (there is some inconsistency in his page numbering) he again lists the characters in the margin and repeats the "translation" almost word-for-word. The groups of marginal characters are in each instance represented by the same "translations." If the characters were irrelevant and independent of the "translation," as some have suggested, they would not have been so meticulously placed and identically oriented in each of the two "translations." This fact proves without a doubt that the "translation" relates to the marginal characters and to no others. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, Salt Lake City, 1968, pages 13-14)

Klaus Baer, Associate Professor of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, makes this statement concerning the "Sensen" fragment:

> Joseph Smith thought that this papyrus contained the Book of Abraham. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Fall 1968, page 111)

In footnote 11 of the same article Klaus Baer states that "This identification is now certain."

Dr. Hugh Nibley, who at first felt that the papyri turned over to the Mormon Church did NOT contain the source of the text for the Book of Abraham, has now had to retreat from that position. He wrote the following for the *Improvement Era*:

> . . . the presence on the scene of some of the original papyri, **including those used by the Prophet in preparing the text of the Book of Abraham** and the Facsimiles with their commentaries, has not raised a single new question, though, as we shall see, it has solved some old ones. (*Improvement Era*, May, 1968, page 54)

Dr. Nibley made this admission in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*:

> But after all, what do the papyri tell us? That Joseph Smith had them, and that the smallest and most insignificant-looking of them is connected **in some mysterious way** to the *Pearl of Great Price*. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1968, page 102)

At a meeting held at the University of Utah, Dr. Nibley stated:

> Within a week of the publication of the papyri students began calling my attention, in fact, within a day or two, I think it was Witorf [?], called my attention to the fact that, **the very definite fact that, one of the fragments seemed to supply all of the symbols for the Book of Abraham.** This was the little "Sensen" scroll. Here are the symbols. The symbols are arranged here, and the **interpretation** goes along here and this interpretation turns out to be the Book of Abraham. Well, what about that? Here is the little "Sensen," because that name occurs frequently in it, the papyrus, in which **a handful** of Egyptian symbols was apparently expanded in translation to the **whole Book of Abraham.** This raises a lot of questions. It doesn't answer any questions, unless we're mind readers. (Speech given by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

Book of Breathings

In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for March, 1968, we stated that Grant Heward felt that the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used as the basis for his Book of Abraham was in reality a part of the Egyptian "Book of Breathings." This identification has now been confirmed by several prominent Egyptologists.

In order to understand what the "Book of Breathings" is about we must have some understanding of the Egyptian "Book of the Dead." E. A. Wallis Budge, who was Keeper of the Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities in the British Museum, gives us this interesting information:

> From first to last throughout the Book of the Dead, with the exceptions of Kings Semti and Men-kau-Ra, and . . . the son of Khufu, the name of no man is mentioned as the author or reviser of any part of it. Certain Chapters may show the influence of the cult of a certain city or cities, but the Book of the Dead cannot be regarded as the work of any one man or body of men, and it does not represent the religious views and beliefs of any one part only of Egypt; on the contrary, the beliefs of many people and periods are gathered together in it. As a whole, the Book of the Dead was regarded as the work of the god Thoth, the scribe of the gods, and thus was believed to be of divine origin; it was Thoth who spoke the words at the creation which were carried into effect by Ptah and Khnemu, and as advocate and helper of the god Osiris, and therefore of every believer in Osiris, the ascription of the authorship to him is most fitting. This view was held down to a late period, for in the Book of Breathings, in an address to the deceased it is said, "Thoth, the most mighty god, the lord of Khemennu (Hermopolis), cometh to thee, and he writeth for thee the Book of Breathings with his own fingers." Copies of the Book of the Dead, and works of a similar nature, were placed either in the coffin with the deceased, or in some part of the hall of the tomb, or of the mummy chamber, generally in a niche which was cut for the purpose. Sometimes the papyrus was laid loosely in the coffin, but more frequently it was placed between the legs of the deceased, either just above the ankles or near the upper part of the thighs, before the swathing of the mummy took place. (*The Book of the Dead, An English Translation of the Chapters, Hymns, Etc., of the Theban Recension, with Introduction, Notes, Etc.*, London, 1901, Vol. 1, pages 50-51 of Introduction)

James Henry Breasted made this statement about the Book of the Dead:

> The magical formulae by which the dead are to triumph in the hereafter become more and more numerous, so that it is no longer possible to record them on the inside of the coffin, but they must be written on papyrus and the roll placed in the tomb. As the selection of the most important of these texts came to be more and more uniform, the "Book of the Dead" began to take form. **All was dominated by magic;** by this all-powerful means the dead might effect all that he desired. (*A History of Egypt*, New York, 1967, pages 205-206)

In his book, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, Breasted gives this information:

> A tendency which later came fully to its own in the Book of the Dead is already the dominant tendency in these Coffin Texts. It regards the hereafter as a place of innumerable dangers and ordeals, most of them of a physical nature, although they sometimes concern also the intellectual equipment of the deceased. The weapon to be employed and the surest means of defence available to the deceased was some magical agency, usually a charm to be pronounced at the critical moment. This tendency then inclined to make the Coffin Texts, and ultimately the Book of the Dead which grew out of them, more and more a collection of charms, which were regarded as inevitably effective in protecting the dead or securing for him any of the blessings which were desired in the life beyond the grave. There was, therefore, a chapter of "Becoming a Magician," addressed to the august ones who are in the presence of Atum the Sun-god. It is, of course, itself a charm and concludes with the words, "I am a magician." (*Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, New York, 1959, pages 281-282)

On pages 293-296 of the same book, James Henry Breasted makes these comments:

> Each roll contained a random collection of such mortuary texts as the scribal copyist happened to have at hand, or those which he found enabled him best to sell his rolls; that is, such as enjoyed the greatest popularity. There were sumptuous and splendid rolls, sixty to eighty feet long and containing from seventy-five to as many as a hundred and twenty-five or thirty chapters. . . . No two rolls exhibit the same collection of charms and chapters throughout, . . . The entire body of chapters from which these rolls were made up, were some two hundred in number, although even the largest rolls did not contain them all. . . . the Book of the Dead itself, as a whole, is but a far-reaching and complex illustration of the increasing dependence on magic in the hereafter.
>
> The benefits to be obtained in this way were unlimited, and it is evident that the ingenuity of a mercenary priesthood now played a large part in the development which followed. . . . The dangers of the hereafter were now greatly multiplied, and for every critical situation the priest was able to furnish the dead with an effective charm which would infallibly save him. Besides many charms which enabled the dead to reach the world of the hereafter, there were those which prevented him from losing his mouth, his head, his heart, others which enabled him to remember his name, to breathe, eat, drink, avoid eating his own foulness, to prevent his drinking-water from turning into flame, to turn darkness into light, to ward off all serpents and other hostile monsters, and many others. The desirable transformations, too, had now increased, and a short chapter might in each case enable the dead man to assume the form of a falcon of gold, a divine falcon, a lily, a Phoenix, a heron, a swallow, a serpent called "son of earth," a crocodile, a god, and, best of all, there was a chapter so potent that by its use a man might assume any form that he desired.
>
> It is such productions as these which form by far the larger proportion of the mass of texts which we term the Book of the Dead. To call it the Bible of the Egyptians, then, is quite to mistake the function and content of these rolls.

On page 308, Breasted tells us that the "Book of the Dead" is "chiefly a book of magical charms." Those who have studied the "Book of the Dead" know that it was written by a very superstitious people, and is quite different from the religion taught in the Bible. Mormon writers have admitted that this is the case. Michael L. Rammell, for instance, made this statement:

> From the length of the famous Book of the Dead and the **number of gods** and charms that these people believed in, we know that theirs was a highly superstitious culture. (*Fourteenth Annual Symposium of the Archaeology of the Scriptures*, Brigham Young University, 1963, page 27)

On page 9 of the *Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, March 1, 1968, we find this statement:

> The Book of the Dead is a collection of ancient Egyptian funerary texts consisting of spells and incantations understood to assist the soul of the departed dead during his perilous journey through the afterlife. It would thus presumably be pagan in spirit and have **nothing to do with any scripture written by Abraham.**

The "Book of Breathings" is an outgrowth of the Egyptian "Book of the Dead." It did not appear until the later stages of Egyptian history—just a few centuries before the time of Christ. E. A. Wallis Budge gives this information concerning the "Book of Breathings":

> The "Book of Breathings" is one of a number of short funeral works, like the "Lamentations of Isis and Nephthys" and "The Festival Songs of Isis and Nephthys." Unlike the Chapters of the Book of the Dead, it was addressed to the deceased by the chief priest conducting the funeral service. . . . It seems as if the old Book of the Dead, with its lengthy Chapters and conflicting statements, had in the latest times become unacceptable to the Egyptians who lived under the rule of the Greeks and Romans; and, besides, it is tolerably certain that few people understood it. The "Book of Breathings" represents the attempt to include all essential elements of belief in a future life in a work shorter and more simple than the Book of the Dead. . . . The beautiful hymns and prayers found in the old texts are wanting in the "Book of Breathings," and no reference whatever is made to the spiritual life of the beatified as described in the Pyramid Texts; in short, no passage which does not immediately conduce to the well-being of the natural body and soul, and assure the growth of the spiritual body from them, has any place in it. To give the work an enhanced value it was declared to be the production of Thoth, the scribe of the gods. (*The Book of the Dead, Facsimiles of the Papyri of Hunefer, Anhai, Kerasher and Netchemet*, by E. A. Wallis Budge, London, England, 1899, page 33)

Speaking of the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used as the basis for his Book of Abraham, the Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson makes these comments:

> This piece is clearly a part of the same papyrus as the other unillustrated fragment. It is a part of a Ptolemaic text known as the Shait en Sensen or *Book of Breathings*. This fact is established by the appearance of the name of the book in column 1, line 4. . . .
>
> 1. This papyrus is a traditional copy of the Shait en Sensen, *Book of Breathings* and is of a **late origin.** It most probably was written in the Ptolemaic Period (after 332 B.C.). Both Fragments are damaged to the extent of at least half of their original area. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, pages 40-41)

Two of the most prominent Egyptologists in the United States have also confirmed this identification. John A. Wilson, Professor of Egyptology at the University of Chicago, made this statement:

> Document D is a related mortuary text of **late times**, the so-called *Book of Breathings*, in a hieratic hand coarser than that of Document B. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1968, page 68)

Richard A. Parker, of Brown University, also confirmed the fact that what Joseph Smith claimed was the Book of Abraham was in reality the Book of Breathings. The editors of *Dialogue* stated:

> Richard A. Parker is the Wilbour Professor of Egyptology and Chairman of the Department of Egyptology at Brown University. His primary interest is in the later stages of Egyptian language and history. He remarks that the **Book of Breathings** is a **late** (Ptolemaic and Roman periods) and greatly reduced version of the **Book of the Dead.** No comprehensive study of it has yet been undertaken and no manuscript has yet been published adequately. He would provisionally date the two **Book of Breathings**, fragments in the Church's possession to the last century before or the first century of the Christian era; . . . (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1968, page 86)

Written in Hieratic

Before we speak of the actual translation of the "Sensen" fragment, it might be helpful to explain a few things about Egyptian writing.

The "Sensen" fragment is written in a script known as hieratic. Hieratic is a very common form of Egyptian writing which Egyptologists are able to translate. The hieratic writing evolved out of a more ancient system of writing known as hieroglyphic. Hieroglyphic writing was a beautiful method of writing, but it took a great deal of time to make each character and was therefore rather impractical

In his book, *Egyptian Grammar*, pages 442-543, Alan Gardiner shows hundreds of hieroglyphs which the Egyptians used in their system of writing. Some of them are very difficult to draw, and it must have required a great deal of patience to chisel them into stone. Because the hieroglyphic system was so difficult to use the hieratic system began to evolve. Barbara Mertz gives this information concerning this matter:

> The hieroglyphs looked handsome on the walls of tombs and temples, but they were just as unwieldy for a busy Egyptian scribe as they are for us. Just as we simplify the hieroglyphic pictures, in order to write them more quickly, the ancient scribes began to use cursive forms. Over the years—and the process began very early, almost as soon as writing itself appeared—the forms became more and more cursive, until eventually the hieratic signs bore only a distant resemblance to their hieroglyphic ancestors. (*Temples, Tombs and Hieroglyphs*, page 266)

James Henry Breasted gives this information:

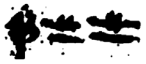
> The elaborate hieroglyphic with its numerous animal and human figures, such as the reader has doubtless often seen on the monuments in our museums, or in works on Egypt, was too slow and labourious a method of writing for the needs of everyday business. The attempt to write these figures rapidly with ink upon papyrus had gradually resulted in reducing each sign to a mere outline, much rounded off and abbreviated. This cursive business hand, which we call "hieratic," had already begun under the earliest dynasties, and by the rise of the Old Kingdom, it had developed into a graceful and rapid system of writing, which showed no nearer resemblance to the hieroglyphic than does our own hand-writing to our print. (*A History of Egypt*, page 83)

At the bottom of this page are examples of how some of the letters of the Egyptian alphabet were written in hieroglyphs. Directly below each we have shown how they would appear in hieratic, and below this we show how an Egyptologist would transliterate them. The Egyptian letters read from right to left.

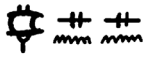
The reader will note that there is a definite relationship between hieroglyphic and hieratic writing. When Egyptologists are working with hieratic writing they convert it into hieroglyphs before attempting to translate. Alan Gardiner states:

> Hieratic was nothing more, in the beginning, than hieroglyphic in the summary and rounded forms resulting from the rapid manipulation of a reed-pen as contrasted with the angular and precise shapes arising from the use of the chisel . . . In the latest period, as already said, hieratic was generally employed by the priests when writing religious texts on papyrus. . . . Individual hieratic hands differ as all handwriting is apt to differ; for this reason Egyptologists, before translating a hieratic text, habitually transcribe it into hieroglyphs, just as the modern printer sets up a modern author's manuscript in type. (*Egyptian Grammar*, page 10)

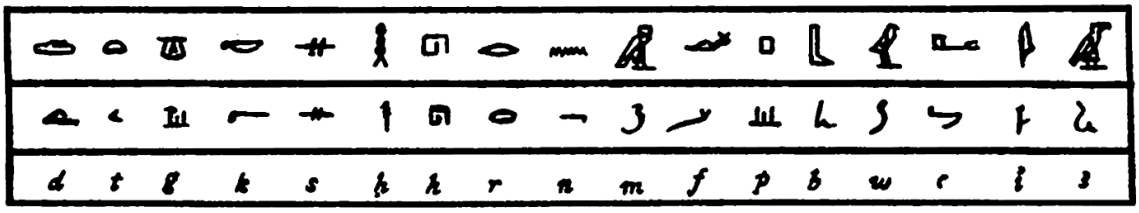
Egyptian writing is composed of both phonograms and ideograms. Phonograms are "sound-signs," and ideograms are "signs that convey their meaning pictorially" (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Alan Gardiner, pages 25 and 30). Usually a word is composed of one or more phonograms (sound-signs) followed by an ideogram. Alan Gardiner states that in such cases the ideogram "is called a determinative, because it appears to determine the meaning of the foregoing sound-signs and to define that meaning in a general way" (*Egyptian Grammar*, page 31). The word "sensen" which appears in the text Joseph Smith used for his "Book of Abraham" will serve to illustrate this matter. The following is a photograph of it as it appears in the fourth line of this fragment of papyrus.



When this word is converted to hieroglyphs it appears as follows.



In order to read this word we must start at the right side and work to the left. The first letter we find is written in this manner:  An Egyptologist would transliterate this as *s*. The next letter is found directly below the first and is written as follows:  This is transliterated as *n*. Next we find another *s* and below it another *n*. Thus we have *snsn*. The Egyptians did not write the vowels, and therefore we have to supply them. Egyptologists usually insert the English vowel *e* in these areas. When the vowels are inserted we have the word "sensen," which means "breathe." In line four of the fragment of papyrus it is used as part of the name of the book, i.e., "Book of Breathings."



The last part of this word is the "determinative." In this case it is a sail. Although it does not enter into the sound of the word, it shows that the word has something to do with wind, breath or air.

While some Egyptian words do not have a determinative, many contain more than one. In fact, there are some words that have three determinatives. Although hieratic writing was easier to use than hieroglyphic, it was still inferior to Greek or Hebrew writing.

Finding the Key

After Mr. Heward identified the "Sensen" fragment as part of the "Book of Breathings," he began to translate some of the words found in the text. This was a difficult task because the writing is coarse and somewhat damaged. Nevertheless, he was rather successful in his endeavor. In a letter to Henry G. Fischer, dated March 5, 1968, Grant Heward stated:

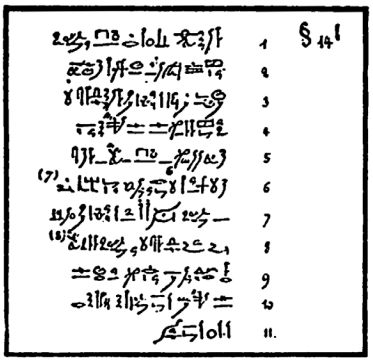
> On the right side of the fragment . . . I seem to find what my dictionary calls "Lake of Honsu" plus??! Perhaps "born to" on the right end of the second; "Limbs, heart and funerary wrappings" on the third, and going on to the forth; It looks like the *Book of Breathings* in the forth; I think I see "royal linen and give" in the fifth; "Heart" again on the sixth; "Funerary wrapping and book" on the next; and eternity on the last.

We tried to find the exact location of the text in the Papyrus of Kerasher, but we were unsuccessful. Although Dr. Nibley has had photographs of the Mormon Papyri since 1966, he was unable to find the location of the text. He stated:

> It has long been known that the characters "interpreted" by Joseph Smith in his *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* are treated by him as **super-cryptograms;** and now it is apparent that the source of those characters is the unillustrated fragment on which the word **sen-sen** appears repeatedly. This identifies it as possibly belonging to those writings known as the **Book of Breathings**, though that in turn is merely "compilations and excerpts from older funerary spells and burial formulas." This particular excerpt, if it is such, has still **not been located** among known versions of the mysterious book. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, page 249)

After quoting some of Dee Jay Nelson's "preliminary" work on this fragment, Dr. Nibley states: "And that is the story—still **a lock without a key**" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring, 1968, page 249).

Fortunately, the key to this story has now been found. It was not long after Grant Heward started working on this text that he was able to identify enough of the words that we began to get some idea of what the papyrus is about. A man who was familiar with Mr. Heward's work, found a rendition of a text which contained words similar to the ones Mr. Heward had translated from the Mormon Papyrus. Encouraged by this find, Mr. Heward went to the Brigham Young University Library and found a facsimile of a text which closely resembles the Book of Abraham fragment. He found this text in *Bibliothèque Égyptologique publiée sous la Direction de G. Maspero*, Vol. 17, plate XI. Below is a photograph of this facsimile.



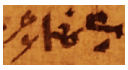
After examining this text we were confident that Mr. Heward had found the key to the Book of Abraham fragment. We worked with Mr. Heward and prepared an article which we submitted to *Dialogue*. In this article we stated:

> We are now aware of a similar papyrus located in the Museum of the Louvre in Paris. It is registered under the No. 3284. . . . Anyone familiar with hieratic—i.e., cursive Egyptian writing—will immediately recognize that the Book of Abraham Papyrus and Papyrus No. 3284 are versions of the same basic text. We would like to include a translation of Papyrus No. 3284. This translation was made by M. J. de Horrack.
>
> > He is towed (like) Osiris into the Great Pool of Khons. When he has retaken possession of his heart, the Book of Respirations is concealed in (the coffin). It is (covered) with writing upon Suten, both inside and outside (and) placed underneath his left arm, evenly with his heart; . . .
> >
> > When the Book has been made for him then he breathes with the souls of the gods for ever and ever.
>
> The similarities between this text and the one Joseph Smith used as the basis for the Book of Abraham are **too numerous to be explained away.** (There are, of course, differences in the two texts. The most outstanding being in the second line of the Mormon document, where we read something like this: "born to that Benu Bird.")
>
> The following are a list of similarities between the two versions. The Egyptian words as they appear in the Mormon Papyrus will follow each parallel.

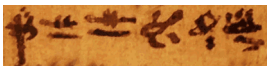
l. In both cases the Egyptian word meaning "pool" or "lake" appears in the first part of the text. We find it in line one of Joseph Smith's Papyrus and at the beginning of line two in Papyrus No. 3284.

2. On the same line in both texts we find the Egyptian word "Khons." This is the name of the Egyptian moon-god.

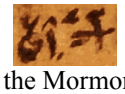
3. On line three of both texts we find the words meaning "his heart."



4. On the fourth line of both texts we find the words meaning "Book of Breathings." (In the translation of Papyrus No. 3284 the Egyptian word "sensen" is rendered "Respirations." It should be obvious to the reader, however, that this means the same as the word "Breathings.")



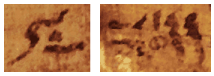
5. On line six of Papyrus No. 3284 we find the word which M. J. de Horrack transliterates "Suten." This same word appears on line five of the Mormon Papyrus. When this word is translated it means "royal linen."



6. On line six of the Mormon Papyrus we find the words "his heart." These same words are found in line seven of Papyrus No. 3284.

7. The word "breathes" is found on line eight of the Mormon Papyrus. This same word appears on lines nine and ten of Papyrus 3284.

8. On line eleven of Papyrus 3284 we find the words "forever and ever." These same words appear in lines eight and nine of the Mormon Papyrus.



We could furnish more parallels, but these should be sufficient to convince the reader that the Book of Abraham is in reality an appendage to the Egyptian "Book of Breathings."

We mailed this material to *Dialogue* on April 15, 1968. Instead of using this material, the editors of *Dialogue* decided to get Richard Parker, a noted Egyptologist, to make a detailed translation of the "Sensen" fragment. We felt that this was a good idea, since we were not able to furnish an actual translation of the entire text. But, be this as it may, the article was prepared prior to the time Richard Parker translated the "Sensen" fragment. We feel that Dr. Parker's translation confirms the fact that Grant Heward knows something about the Egyptian language, and that he does NOT need pictures to guide him, as Dr. Nibley has implied.

Before beginning our parallels we stated that in the second line of the Mormon Papyrus "we read something like this: 'born to that Benu Bird.'" Dr. Parker, however, rendered it this way: "born of Taykhebyt." Dr. Parker is no doubt correct in rendering this as a name. Both Dee Jay Nelson and Klaus Baer did likewise.

In our first parallel we stated that on line one of the Mormon Papyrus we find the Egyptian word "meaning 'pool' or 'lake.'" Richard Parker also found this word. He renders it "pool."

In parallel no. 2 we stated that in line one "we find the Egyptian word 'Khons.'" Richard Parker renders this name "Khonsu." Either spelling is acceptable. Klaus Baer uses the spelling "Khons." This is the name of an Egyptian moon-god. (See *An Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary*, E. A. Wallis Budge, Vol. 1, page 553)

In parallel no. 3 we stated that the words meaning "his heart" are found in line 3. Professor Parker renders these words "his breast." Both Klaus Baer and Dee Jay Nelson, however, render these words as "his heart." The Egyptian word for "heart" can also mean "breast."

In parallel no. 4 we stated that we found the words "Book of Breathings" in the fourth line. Richard Parker likewise finds the words "Book of Breathings." Klaus Baer prefers the translation "Breathing Permit" because it is closer to the literal meaning of the Egyptian words. He states, however, that it is usually called the "Book of Breathings." Dee Jay Nelson uses the words "Book of Breathings," but he states that it may also be translated literally as "Writings of Inhalations."

In parallel no. 5 we stated that the word "Suten" appeared on line five of the Mormon Papyrus. We explained that when this word is "translated it means 'royal linen.'" Richard Parker uses these same words.

In parallel no. 6 we said that the words "his heart" are found on line six of the Mormon Papyrus. Richard Parker also used the words "his heart."

In parallel no. 7 we stated that the word "breathes" is found in line eight of the Mormon Papyrus. Richard Parker renders it "breath." Both Nelson and Baer use the word "breathe."

In parallel no. 8 we claimed that we found the words meaning "forever and ever." Richard Parker also used these words. Nelson and Baer also used these words in their renditions.

In looking over our work we find fourteen words which are exactly the same as those used by Richard Parker, and there are one or two others that are very close. Grant Heward had also identified a number of other words which we did not include in this study. We feel that this is an amazing demonstration of Mr. Heward's ability.

From the information which we have presented it should be obvious that the key to the "Sensen" fragment has been located, and that the story has nothing to do with Abraham or his religion.

Three Witnesses

In the Book of Mormon we find this statement: "And in the mouth of three witnesses shall these things be established; . . ." (Ether 5:4). Joseph Smith's witnesses to the Book of Mormon were not trained in the science of Egyptology, and therefore they could not possibly know whether Joseph Smith's gold plates were authentic or whether he translated them correctly. In the case of the Book of Abraham, however, we have a different story. Three men who have been trained in the science of Egyptology have examined the text Joseph Smith used as a basis for the Book of Abraham and have declared that it is in reality the instructions for wrapping up the Book of Breathings with the mummy and that it has nothing to do with Abraham or his religion. These three men have translated the text and their renditions have been published.

The first witness against the authenticity of the Book of Abraham is Professor Richard A. Parker, Chairman of the Department of Egyptology at Brown University. Dr. Hugh Nibley had a copy of Richard Parker's translation of the "Sensen" text before it appeared in *Dialogue*, and in a speech delivered May 20, 1968, he stated:

> . . . Professor Parker has translated that controversial little thing called the "Sensen" papyrus, the little section, that text that **matches up with some of the Book of Abraham**. (Speech by Dr. Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

Instead of attacking Professor Parker's translation, as we might have expected him to do, Dr. Nibley stated that Richard Parker is "the best man in America" for this particular text, and that he did a "nice" job:

> . . . here is Parker's translation of the "Sensen" papyrus. . . . Parker being the **best man** in America for this particular period and style of writing. And Parker agreed to do it and he's done it. So it's **nice** . . . it will be available within a month, I'm sure, in the next issue of the *Dialogue*. (Speech by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

The second witness is Klaus Baer. *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* gives this information concerning Klaus Baer:

> Klaus Baer is Associate Professor of Egyptology at the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute, and was one of Professor Hugh Nibley's primary tutors in the art of reading Egyptian characters. (*Dialogue*, Autumn, 1968, page 109)

The third witness against the Book of Abraham is Dee Jay Nelson. Reed Neuberger gives this information concerning Dee Jay Nelson:

> Dee Jay's research in Egyptology began more than twenty years ago . . . After making a superficial study of ancient languages in the States he decided to add some dimension to his scant knowledge, so he traveled . . . to Egypt where he attached himself to the fallahin crew of Hussein Ibrahim, excavation foreman working under Zakaria Goneim, at Memphis. The late Zakaria Goneim was for many years keeper of antiquities at the Necropolis of Saqqara. Dee Jay studied three forms of the ancient language under this famous Egyptian Egyptologist. . . . His discoveries inspired King Farouk to present him with a small collection of Egyptian antiquities which he has added to over the years. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, Salt Lake City, 1968)

When Dr. Nibley learned of Mr. Nelson's abilities he felt that he would be "enormously useful to the Church." Although Mr. Nelson is an Elder in the Mormon Church, he has refused to compromise concerning the Book of Abraham.

At this point we will present the three different translations of the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used as the basis for his Book of Abraham.

Richard A. Parker
1. [. . . .] this great pool of Khonsu
2. [Osiris Hor, justified], born of Taykhebyt, a man likewise.
3. After (his) two arms are [fast]ened to his breast, one wraps the Book of Breathings, which is
4. with writing both inside and outside of it, with royal linen, it being placed (at) his left arm
5. near his heart, this having been done at his
6. wrapping and outside it. If this book be recited for him, then
7. he will breath like the soul[s of the gods] for ever and
8. ever.
(*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1968, page 98)

Klaus Baer
Osiris shall be conveyed into the Great Pool of Khans —and likewise Osiris Hor, justified, born to Tikhebyt, justified—after his arms have been placed on his heart and the Breathing Permit (which [Isis] made and has writing on its inside and outside) has been wrapped in royal linen and placed under his left arm near his heart; the rest of his mummy-bandages should be wrapped over it. The man for whom this book has been copied will breathe forever and ever as the bas of the gods do.
(*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn, 1968, pages 119-120)

Dee Jay Nelson
. . . . . the pool of The Traveler, Khensu . . . . . [Osiris Hor, who is true of word], born of Tai-khebit, who is true of word likewise. After . . . seized, the two arms with his heart are wrapped up with the Book of Breathings made by [Isis] and which is with writing on the inside and outside of royal linen. It is placed near and wrapped up on his left side in alignment with his heart. This having been done at his final wrapping for burial. If this book is made for him then he (will) breathe like the soul[s of the gods] for ever and ever.
(*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, Salt Lake City, 1968, page 21)

The reader will see that these three translations bear absolutely no resemblance to Joseph Smith's purported translation of the same text. The Book of Abraham, therefore, has been proven to be a spurious work. The Egyptologists find no mention of Abraham or his religion in this text. The average number of words used to convey the message in this text is 92, whereas Joseph Smith's rendition contained thousands of words.

The three renditions of the text are essentially in agreement, although there are a few minor variations.

Some of these variations can be explained. For instance, when speaking of the deceased Dee Jay Nelson says that he is "true of word." Both Parker and Baer, however, say that he is "justified." To an Egyptologist there is no contradiction. The words literally mean "true of word," but they imply that the deceased is found to be righteous at the judgment. Therefore, he is "justified." James Henry Breasted states: "The verdict rendered in favor of Osiris, which we translate 'justified,' really means 'true, right, just, or righteous of voice'" (*Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, New York, 1959, page 35).

Both Nelson and Parker speak of the "souls" of the gods, but Baer speaks of the "bas of the gods:' James Henry Breasted explains that the word ba "has commonly been translated as 'soul' and the translation does indeed roughly correspond to the Egyptian idea. It is necessary to remember, however, in dealing with such terms as these among so early a people, that they had no clearly defined notion of the exact nature of such an element of personality" (*Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt*, page 56). Klaus Baer feels that it is best to leave the word untranslated, though he states that "it is often used in contexts where we would say 'soul'" (*Dialogue*, Autumn, 1968, page 117). The Egyptologist sometimes has to decide whether to leave a word untranslated or to use an English word which may not convey the exact meaning that it did to the Egyptian scribe who wrote it.

As we examine the three translations we find that they are basically in agreement with each other. It is almost impossible to escape the conclusion that the Book of Abraham is a false translation. The Egyptologist Klaus Baer makes this comment:

> This is as far as an Egyptologist can go in studying the document that Joseph Smith considered to be a "roll" which "contained the writings of Abraham." The **Egyptologist interprets it differently**, relying on a considerable body of parallel data, research, and knowledge that has accumulated over the past 146 years since Champollion first deciphered Egyptian—none of which had really become known in America in the 1830's. At this point, the Latter-day Saint historian and theologian must take over. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn, 1968, page 133)

As we stated earlier, Dee Jay Nelson is an Elder in the Mormon Church. Dr. Nibley has made this statement concerning him: "It would now seem that the Latter-day Saints are being pushed by force of circumstances through the door they have so long been reluctant to enter. And to Mr. Dee Jay Nelson goes the credit of being the first to make the plunge" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring, 1968, page 254). Dee Jay Nelson's "plunge" into the study of Egyptology and the Book of Abraham, however, has forced him to reject the book. After many years of study, Mr. Nelson has come to the conclusion that the Mormon Church must give up the Book of Abraham. In a letter dated July 13, 1968, he stated:

> I have been swamped lately by letters and long distance telephone calls from troubled people. Almost every one of them asks if I really believe that the Book of Abraham is untrue and each seems almost pleadingly eager for me to defend it. To each I have said that **I do not believe it.**

Mr. Nelson informed us that in one week he "received 33 letters and 19 long distance calls about the Book of Abraham & the papyri." Previous to this he had counted 40 letters in a "two month period." In his Introduction to *The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, Mr. Nelson states: "My views are as sympathetic to the Latter-day Saint Church teachings as they can be without compromising the accepted and proven principles of Egyptology. . . . I find myself standing precariously between two poles. Truth will triumph in the end." After trying to reconcile some of Joseph Smith's work with the science of Egyptology, Dee Jay Nelson stated:

> I have expended considerable effort to bring the two conflicting viewpoints to a single focus. As an elder of the Church and an Egyptologist nothing would please me more than to succeed, but I fear that the differences far outweigh the points of agreement. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, page 9)

Dr. Nibley Confused

It is now becoming rather obvious that Dr. Nibley is unprepared to deal with the problems related to the translation of the Book of Abraham, and that he has no real answers to give his people. In an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, he stated:

> Since the Sen-Sen business makes very little sense to anybody, while the Book of Abraham makes very good sense, one might suppose that Smith could have produced the latter without any reference to the former—that he could have written the Book of Abraham more easily, in fact, without having to bother himself with those meaningless squiggles. But if the Sen-Sen symbols are expendable, **why does he use them at all?** His only purpose would have been to impress others, but he keeps the whole operation strictly to himself and never circulates the Sen-Sen papyrus as he did the Facsimiles. And why on earth would he fasten on this particularly **ugly** little piece and completely bypass the whole collection of handsome illustrated documents at his disposal? Did he really think he was translating? If so he was acting in good faith. But was he **really** translating? If so, it was by a process which **quite escapes the understanding of the specialists and lies in the realm of the imponderable.**

> No one has begun to look into the Sen-Sen problem seriously. . . .
>
> Today nobody claims that Joseph Smith got his information through ordinary scholarly channels. In that case one wonders how any amount of checking along ordinary scholarly channels is going to get us very far. (*Dialogue*, Summer, 1968, page 101)

When Dr. Nibley spoke at the University of Utah on May 20, 1968, he admitted that if Joseph Smith was "really translating the papyri" he did it in a way that is unknown to Egyptologists:

> By what process could the Book of Abraham have been **squeezed** out of a few dozen brief signs? **Nobody has told us yet.** Was Joseph Smith **really translating** the papyri? If so, **it was not in any way known to Egyptology.** Was he then merely pretending to translate them? But he never really put these symbols forth as his source. He published the facsimiles, but these always remained among his **private papers**. These were **not for circulation**. He's not pretending to be doing anything here. He's not seeking to impress anyone at all. Nobody knew about this little work he was carrying on. He never published them as he did the facsimiles. Did he really need these symbols? This is a funny thing. Are they actually the source upon which he depended? Well, if he really depended on them, he must really have been translating them. But, you say, he couldn't possibly have been translating. Could he have used this as a source at all? These questions arise. If he was merely faking, of course, pretending to be translating them, well, he wouldn't need the Egyptian text at all. Yet **he used one, and he used it secretly.** Why would he secretly make use of a text he didn't need at all? This was just a nuisance, really, all these symbols. Let's just forget about them, and just write the story. Why did he need to tie up with these, and how does he tie up? Why does he ignore the wealth of handsome illustrated texts at his disposal to concentrate only on the shortest and ugliest and most poorly written of the lot? Why does he choose just this particular one when he had all these beautiful manuscripts. And they were all [just as?] meaningless to everybody. Why would he do that? Well, all sorts of questions arise. (Speech by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

Hugh Nibley made these statements in the *Improvement Era*:

> . . . there is no case to be made out against the Book of Abraham on linguistic grounds for the simple reason that Joseph Smith did not commit himself beyond the interpretation of the Facsimiles. We cannot pretend to understand how the Book of Abraham was translated, but that should not seriously disturb us, since nobody understands the method by which some of the greatest scholars were able to translate texts that no one else could read . . . In their case, it was the result that justified the intuition, and not the other way around. So let it be with Joseph Smith: we must still **take his word** for it that he was actually translating, but the result of his efforts is a different matter—could such a monument be the result of trickery and deceit? (*Improvement Era*, August, 1968, page 56)

In a footnote on page 64 of the same article, Dr. Nibley stated: ". . . the connection between the Book of Abraham and the 'Sen-sen' papyrus remains **a mystery**: . . ." To give the reader an idea of just how confused Dr. Nibley has become on this issue we have only to compare two statements which he has made. In the *Improvement Era* he wrote:

> . . . the presence on the scene of some of the original papyri, including those used by the Prophet in preparing the text of the Book of Abraham . . . **has not raised a single new question**, though, as we shall see, it has **solved some old ones**. (*Improvement Era*, May, 1968, page 54)

It was only a few weeks after this statement was printed that Dr. Nibley stated:

> Here is the little "Sensen," . . . the papyrus, in which a handful of Egyptian symbols was apparently expanded in translation to the whole Book of Abraham. **This raises a lot of questions. It doesn't answer any questions**, unless we're mind readers. (Speech given by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

Dr. Nibley's conflicting statements caused one Mormon to write the following in a letter to the editors of *Dialogue*:

> Dr. Nibley is indeed walking a tightrope, praising conscientious scientific work of scientists on the one hand and accepting their conclusions, and upholding the contradictory beliefs of the Church on the other by looking for explanations in the field of "translated" revelation. Whatever the answers may be, he is either becoming a "split personality" or he is unsuccessfully trying to "serve two masters." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn, 1968, page 9)

A Second Meaning?

In 1879 the Mormon writer George Reynolds tried to refute Deveria's work against the Book of Abraham by claiming that the Egyptian characters had two or three different meanings:

> . . . the Egyptian hieroglyphics had at **least two** (but more probably **three**) **meanings**, the one understood by the masses—the other comprehended only by the initiated, the priesthood and others; which latter conveyed the true though hidden intent of the writer. (*Are We of Israel? and The Book of Abraham*, 5th edition, page 128)

That George Reynolds would make such a suggestion in 1879 is not too surprising, but when we find Dr. Nibley using the same reasoning in 1968 we are rather amazed. In his desperation to save the Book of Abraham, Dr. Nibley has gone so far as to state that the "Sensen" text may have a second meaning unknown to Egyptologists:

> . . . you very often have texts of **double meaning**. . . . it's quite **possible**, say, that this **"sensen" papyrus**, telling a straight forward innocent little story or something like that, should contain also a totally **different text concealed within it** . . . they [the Egyptians] know what they're doing, but we don't. We don't have the key. (Speech by Dr. Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

In the same meeting Dr. Nibley was asked "if the key to this concentrated language, is not had by the Egyptologists, do we have any hope of having the Book of Abraham ever translated?" Dr. Nibley replied:

> **I don't know.** That's an interesting thing. We don't know what may turn up in another manuscript or something like that.

Dr. Nibley states that Joseph Smith treated the characters as super-cryptograms:

> It has long been known that the characters "interpreted" by Joseph Smith in his Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar are treated by him as **super-cryptograms;** and now it is **apparent** that the source of those characters is the unillustrated fragment on which the word **sen-sen** appears repeatedly. This identifies it as possibly belonging to those writings known as the **Book of Breathings**, . . . (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, page 249)

Dee Jay Nelson shows that Dr. Nibley's suggestion that the Sensen text might have a "different text concealed within it" is absolutely ridiculous:

> Some say Joseph Smith did not translate the literal meaning of those two Hor Sensen lines but rather the crypto-meaning. This is NOT even remotely possible. Cryptograms invariably had meanings allied to the literal meanings. In any case, the complex ideas in Joseph Smith's "translation" out-number the elements in the hieratic characters which could contain the cryptogram code. It is mathematically **impossible** to express the total complexities of Joseph Smith's "translation" with the characters involved. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, page 14)

We feel that Dr. Nibley is guilty of deception when he claims that the Mormon Papyri may have a second meaning unknown to Egyptologists. This is almost as ridiculous as claiming that the world is flat in this day of space travel. When Marvin Cowan asked Professor Richard Parker if the papyri could have a second meaning, he replied that he knew of "no Egyptologist who would support such a claim" (Letter dated January 9, 1968).

Abraham's Signature

To begin with the Mormon leaders claimed that Joseph Smith had the original papyri which Abraham and Joseph wrote upon. Egyptologists, however, claimed that the facsimiles proved that the papyri were of a later date. Dr. Nibley tries to bring the Church's position into line with the opinions expressed by Egyptologists by stating:

> The commonest objection to the authenticity of the Facsimiles is that they are of too late a date to have been drawn by Abraham. But **Joseph Smith never claimed that they were autographic manuscripts** or that they dated from the time of Abraham. (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 20)

Dr. Nibley is certainly wrong about this matter. Joseph Smith did claim that they were autographic manuscripts. Josiah Quincy claimed that Joseph Smith told him the following:

> "That is the **handwriting of Abraham**, the Father of the Faithful," said the prophet. "This is the autograph of Moses, and these lines were written by his brother Aaron." (*Figures of the Past*, as quoted in *Among the Mormons*, pages 136-137)

In 1840 Joseph Smith was quoted as making this statement:

> "These ancient records," said he, "throw great light on the subject of Christianity. . . . I will show you how I interpret certain parts. There," said he, pointing to a particular character, "that is the **signature** of the patriarch Abraham." (*Quincy Wig*, October 17, 1840, page 1, as quoted in *Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, by Sidney B. Sperry, page 52)

At the beginning of the Book of Abraham manuscript (see photograph on page 147 of this book) we find this statement by Joseph Smith: "Translation of the Book of Abraham Written by his **own hand** upon papyrus and found in the catacombs of Egypt." In the introduction to the Book of Abraham as it is now published by the Mormon Church we find this statement: "A Translation of some ancient Records, . . . The writings of Abraham while he was in Egypt, called the Book of Abraham, written **by his own hand** upon papyrus" (*Pearl of Great Price*, page 29). The following statement appears in *Progress in Archaeology*. Brigham Young University, 1963, pages 24-25:

> To assign a date to the scroll of Abraham is a difficult problem. For one thing, the patriarch himself is believed to have lived in the twentieth century B.C. . . . although the original composition of the Book of Abraham may date to the twentieth century B.C., the final deposition

> of the mummies in connection with which his scroll was found apparently dates to some 1400 years later (sixth century B.C.) and possibly as much as 1900 years later (first century B.C.).
>
> Evidently what happened was that the scroll was passed from Abraham through a line of persons who respected its sanctity, including his descendants Joseph, Moses, and Aaron, who added their own writing to it. Later possessors of the scroll, . . . need not have been able to read its script nor understand its contents, but only desired to own it and be buried with it for the supposed magical power of so ancient an object.

Ross T. Christensen, of the Brigham Young University, wrote:

> Abraham wrote in the **twentieth century B.C.**; his scroll was added to in the seventeenth and thirteenth centuries B.C. . . .
>
> Apparently after Abraham wrote on his scroll, **it was handed down through a line of successors**. I do not know who they were, though some of them were his descendants, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, December 10, 1960, 1964 Edition, page 23)

Wilford Woodruff, who later became President of the Church, made this statement in his journal:

> The Lord is blessing Joseph with power to reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, to translate through the Urim and Thummim ancient records and hieroglyphics as old as Abraham and Adam. Joseph the Seer has presented us some of the book of Abraham . . . which was written upon his **own hand** but hid from the knowledge of man for the last **four thousand years**, but has now come to light through the mercy of God. (Personal Diary of Wilford Woodruff, as quoted by James R. Clark in *Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 Edition, page 58)

George Q. Cannon made this statement:

> This book was written by the **hand of Abraham** while he was in Egypt, and was preserved by the marvelous dispensation of Providence through all the mutations of time and the dangers of distance, to reach the hand of God's Prophet in this last dispensation. (*The Life of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, Salt Lake City, 1888, pages 187-188, as quoted in *Joseph Smith, Jr., As A Translator*, by F. S. Spalding, page 17)

Now that we have the original papyrus Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham from we can be absolutely certain that it was NOT written by Abraham's "own hand." In fact, it probably was not written until about the time of Christ, which would be almost two thousand years after Abraham's time. Mr. Heward has done some work on the dating of the "Sensen" papyrus by comparing it with other samples of hieratic writing. He told us some time ago that he felt that it probably was not written until about the time of Christ, or even later. Richard A. Parker has come to the same conclusion. According to the editors of *Dialogue*, Professor Parker stated that he "would provisionally date the two Book of Breathings fragments in the Church's possession to the last century before or the first century of the Christian era; . . ." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 86) Klaus Baer, of the University of Chicago, also on the dating of this fragment:

> The handwriting is of the late Ptolemaic or early Roman Period, **about the time of Christ**. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 111)

Dr. Hugh Nibley seems willing to admit that the papyri do not date back to the time of Abraham, but he is not willing to face the implications of this matter:

> . . . we have learned that the papyri are of relatively **late date**—but the Mormons have always known that; . . . (*Dialogue*, Summer 1968, page 105)

Dr. Nibley would have us believe that Joseph Smith claimed that the papyri were only copies and not the original documents. We have shown, however, that Joseph Smith claimed that the papyri contained the "handwriting of Abraham." In fact, he showed one man "a particular character" and told him that it was "the signature of the patriarch Abraham."

The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson shows that even if "one conceeds to the viewpoint" that the "Sensen" text "was a copy and not the original" he is still faced with the fact that it is a pagan text:

> Biblical experts believe that Abraham lived sometime around 1800 B.C., but the calligraphy, spelling and contents of the Hor Sensen Papyrus give every indication that it was not written until **nearly the time of Christ** (possibly shortly after). Egyptologists believe that the Sensen texts (Book of Breathings) were **not even composed** until about the Seventh Century B.C. There are inconsistencies here. To compound the divergency, the traditional translation of the Sensen funerary text deals with matters unrelated to the subject matter of Joseph Smith's "translation." I have read several publications by learned members of the Church who insist that the papyrus found in the Egyptian catacomb was not actually written by the hand of Abraham but that it was a copy of an original work by him. I can not read this meaning into the statement which I repeat for your consideration. . . . "Translation of the Book of Abraham written by his own hand upon papyrus and found in the catacombs of Egypt." Even if one conceeds to the viewpoint that the papyrus possessed by

> Joseph Smith in the early Nineteenth Century was a copy and not the original, one is faced with the unmistakable fact that this ancient document deals with **pagan gods and pagan beliefs** without mentioning Abraham or anything even remotely associated with him. I have already given reasons why it is unlikely that a hidden message or cryptogram is in this text. Certainly it could not convey such an irrelevant account as is contained in the Book of Abraham. The title of this longer manuscript is quite explicit in stating that this "translation" which Joseph Smith did had been taken from "writing(s)" which were "upon papyrus." This leaves no doubt as to where the Book of Abraham message reposed. The specific papyrus referred to is the Hor Sensen Papyrus which had been "found in the catacombs of Egypt." . . . If we accept Joseph Smith's claims we are forced to the conclusion that the Hor Sensen Papyrus in addition to conveying a normal Book of Breathings message also tells in cipher a part of the history of Abraham. If the many other papyri which have been found inscribed with this text contain the same coded history of Abraham and he was the author of the first of these from which all others were copied this would be a very real **condemnation of the ancient patriarch** because religious meanings of the Book of Breathings (Sensen) **are as pagan as can be** and flaunt religious practices which were **most abhorrent to Abraham**. (*Joseph Smith's "Eye of Ra,"* Salt Lake City, 1968, page 25)

Dr. Hugh Nibley is trying very hard to bring the Church's position into line with the opinions expressed by Egyptologists. This reconciliation, however, is impossible.

A False Translation

More than fifty years ago the Egyptologist Samuel A. B. Mercer made this statement concerning Joseph Smith's work in the Egyptian language:

> All the scholars came to the same conclusion, viz: that Smith could not possibly correctly translate any Egyptian text, as his interpretation of the facsimiles shows. Any pupil of mine who would show such absolute ignorance of Egyptian as Smith does, could not possibly expect to get more than zero in an examination in Egyptology.
>
> The science of Egyptology is well established as any one knows who is acquainted with the great *Grammar* of Erman a 3rd Ed. of which appeared in 1911.
>
> I speak as a linguist when I say that if Smith knew Egyptian and correctly interpreted the facsimiles which you submitted to me, then I don't know **a word** of Egyptian, and Erman's *Grammar* is a **fake**, and all modern Egyptologists are **deceived**. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 615)

Mormon writers claimed that the original papyrus from which the Book of Abraham had been translated was destroyed in the Chicago fire, and since Egyptologists only had the facsimiles which were published in the *Pearl of Great Price*, they were not in a position to judge the text of the book itself even if Joseph Smith's work on the facsimiles was incorrect. John Henry Evans, for instance, made these comments in 1913:

> Bishop Spalding submits to eight Egyptologists the three fac-similes . . . The scholars answer substantially that they were not correctly translated. That is the fact. What is the inference drawn from the fact? That the Book of Abraham as a whole was not translated correctly! Is this leap in the logical process warranted?
>
> . . . let me say that this leap is not made by the eight learned men. They tell us only that the figures submitted to them were not translated correctly. Before they would be warranted in saying that the entire Book of Abraham was not properly translated, they would have to examine the **original papyrus**, or a copy of it, from which the Book of Abraham was translated. . . . Now, as a matter of fact, the hieroglyphics submitted to the scholars constitute less than one-seventh of the Book of Abraham and that only an accompaniment of the text. The question therefore, becomes, "Is any one justified in drawing a conclusion respecting an entire manuscript from a statement which was made with respect only to a very small part of that manuscript?" (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 343)

Osborn J. P. Widtsoe wrote:

> Instead of the Abrahamic manuscript's being available, it is entirely unavailable—as much so as the original plates of the Book of Mormon. In fact, the original manuscript of the Book of Abraham has been destroyed, so far as we know. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 599)

Robert C. Webb made this comment:

> The latest manifestation of anti—"Mormon" enthusiasm has been Dr. Spalding's symposium on the merits of Joseph Smith's claims as a translator of ancient languages. . . .
>
> Sadly for him no part of the original text of the book, whatever that original may have been, is available for examination by scholars, or any other persons. (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 691)

In 1938 the Church leaders allowed Dr. Sperry to publish two pages of the original manuscript of the Book of Abraham which is found in the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. The photographs are so poor, however, that the Egyptian characters are not readable. Dr. Sperry made this comment concerning these pages:

> Many persons have supposed that it was impossible to get back of the *Times and Seasons* text. We are now glad to say that we can go back of that source to a limited degree and produce what seem to be the original copies made of the Prophet's translation. The finding of several pages of "copy" in different handwritings is an important announcement that we can make for **the first time**. For the benefit of our readers we are

> presenting in this chapter photographs of two pages of the original text. The reader may note with considerable interest certain characters on the left-hand side of the manuscript. The paper upon which the translation was written is rough, of a poor quality and has many deep stains that make the manuscript at times hard to read. The dimension of the sheets are approximately eight by twelve inches. (*Ancient Records Testify in Papyrus and Stone*, Salt Lake City, 1938, pages 69-72)

In 1945 Wilford Wood purchased the longer manuscript of the Book of Abraham from Charles Bidamon (see photographs on pages 147-151 of this book). The most surprising event of all, however, was when the original papyrus was found in the Metropolitan Museum. Mormon writers can no longer claim the original papyrus is not available. Actually, we now have everything necessary to test Joseph Smith's ability as a translator of ancient Egyptian writings. We have the original papyrus from which Joseph Smith "translated" the text of the Book of Abraham, and we also have the original handwritten manuscripts which show the characters Joseph Smith used to make different portions of the Book of Abraham.

Since the original papyrus has been located, it has been suggested that perhaps Joseph Smith obtained the Book of Abraham "by way of direct revelation" and not from the papyrus. The person who tries to use this escape will find himself trapped by the words of Joseph Smith. At the beginning of the handwritten manuscript Joseph Smith stated that it was a "**translation** of the Book of Abraham written by his own hand upon papyrus and found in the catacombs of Egypt." The introduction to the Book of Abraham still maintains that it was "**translated from the papyrus**, by Joseph Smith" (*Pearl of Great Price*, page 29). Joseph Smith not only claimed that he translated it from the papyrus, but he also stated that his translation was correct. The following statement is attributed to him in the *History of the Church*:

> Thus I have given a brief history of the manner in which the writings of the fathers, Abraham and Joseph, have been preserved, and how I came in possession of the same—a **correct translation** of which I shall give in its proper place. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, pages 350-351)

As we look at Joseph Smith's translation we note that he read the papyrus in the correct direction—i.e., from right to left. Since Joseph Smith was a student of Hebrew (which also reads in this direction) and since the last line in the first column ends on the right side, he probably did not have much difficulty figuring this out.

The most startling thing about Joseph Smith's purported translation is that he made so many English words out of such a small number of Egyptian characters. The reader can see this for himself by looking at the photographs of the handwritten manuscript on pages 147-151 of this book. We find that in one instance one set makes 71 words in English, another set makes 121, another set makes 177, and still another set makes 234 words. One simple looking character makes 76 words in the Book of Abraham. Below is a photograph of this character as it appears in one of the handwritten manuscripts set to the side of the words it makes in the Book of Abraham 1:13-14.

13. It was made after the form of a bedstead, such as was had among the Chaldeans, and it stood before the gods of Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and also a god like unto that of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

14. That you may have an understanding of these gods, I have given you the fashion of them in the figures at the beginning, which manner of the figures is called by the Chaldeans Rahleenos, which signifies hieroglyphics.

Notice that the Egyptian character is not much more complex than our letter *E*, yet it makes 76 words in English. These 76 words are composed of 334 letters. Now, is it really possible to imagine that one character (almost as simple as the English letter *E*) could be translated to make 76 words containing 334 letters? Dr. Nibley states that a person "does not have to be a meteorologist to report that the sky is clear or that it is snowing." We feel that this is true, and we also believe that a person does not have to be an Egyptologist to know that it would be impossible to translate thousands of words from a few Egyptian characters. Just common sense should tell a person that this would be absolutely impossible. James F. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, states that the characters Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham from were very condensed:

> These symbols, judging from their translation, were a highly specialized type of ideograph where a **few strokes** of the pen or brush conveyed **an entire concept**. (*Progress in Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, 1963, page 32)

Dee Jay Nelson shows that it is absolutely impossible to convey the Book of Abraham message in the number of characters involved:

> It was determined by a careful count that in current printed editions of the *Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, Chap. l, verse 4 through Chap. 2, verses there are precisely 1,125 English words. These were derived from 46 margin characters accompanying the two *Grammar and Alphabet* "translations." This last figure is only approximately correct . . . If 46 is the correct number, the ratio of English words to Egyptian characters is 25 to 1. I have **never** heard of a written

> language, ancient or modern, which was this compact. Is this ratio realistic? It is possible to convey simple thoughts with a veritable mountain of words. I was sure that the message in the "translation" could be expressed more simply and this might make the ratio more feasable. To test this theory a computer was what I needed so I went to the Landa Data Center in California and put my problem to them. They agreed to program a computer to the task of calculating the mathematical possibility that the first two lines of column 1 of the Hor Sensen Fragment could produce the required minimum number of words to convey the message in the Book of Abraham, Chapter 1, verse 4 through Chapter 2, verse 5. The machine used was a Sigma 7 multi-use time sharing environment computer manufactured by the Scientific Data Systems Corporation, Los Angeles, California.
>
> I asked the operator to simplify the thoughts in the 1,125 word Book of Abraham "translation" without sacrificing any of the basic meanings. The computer answer was 482 words which means that each Egyptian character is supposed to translate into just over 10 English words. **The ratio is still fantastic though we have given Joseph Smith's claim the benefit of the doubt** by reducing the English translation to its simplest form. This 10:1 ratio includes the proper nouns in the Book of Abraham. Between Chapter 1, verse 4 and the end of Chapter 2, verse 5 there are 65 of them. These contain approximately 296 English vocables excluding those least audible connecting vowels. The only reasonable way to represent proper names in a translation is to transliterate them. The name of the god Mahmackrah has 10 letters representing 7 vocables and it is repeated three times in the "translation." Shagreel, a proper name with 8 letters, has 6 vocables. Elkenah [h]as 5 vocables and it is repeated in the 33 verses five separate times. The 46 marginal *Grammar and Alphabet* characters **can not duplicate the vocables in the proper names** in the "translation" and even if they could **that would leave 1,060 words unaccounted for.** (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, pages 16-17)

Dr. Hugh Nibley admits that there is a disproportion between the Egyptian characters and the number of English words derived from them

> Even the **astonishing disproportion** between the bulk of the Book of Abraham and the **brevity** of the text from which Joseph Smith seems to have derived it was noted as long ago as 1915 . . . (*Improvement Era*, May 1968, page 57, footnote 1)

In an article which was published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, we stated:

> . . . the small piece of papyrus pictured in illustration No. 1 appears to be the whole Book of Abraham!
>
> This evidence raises several problems. One is that the Egyptian characters cannot conceivably have enough information channels (component parts) to convey the amount of material translated from them. Another is that the papyrus fragment in question dates from long after Abraham's time, much nearer, in fact, to the time of Christ. But most important, the Egyptian has been translated, and it has no recognizable connection with the subject matter of the Book of Abraham. . . . the papyrus fragment has been identified by reputable Egyptologists as a portion of the "Book of Breathings," a funerary text of the late Egyptian period. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, pages 95-96)

In Dr. Nibley's rebuttal to this article he stated:

> Take the Sen-Sen papyrus itself, for instance. Messrs Heward and Tanner raise three objections to it while completely overlooking their significance. The first is the **comical disproportion** between the Egyptian symbols and the English text which they suppose to be derived from them. **They have left the phenomenon completely unexplained.** The second is that the papyrus is too late to belong to Abraham, but we have already shown that the expression "by his own Hand" was understood to mean that Abraham and no other wrote the book, and cannot serve as a criterion for dating the papyrus . . . (*Dialogue*, Summer 1968, page 103)

On page 101 of the same article Dr. Nibley states:

> Those who insist that "the Egyptian characters cannot conceivably have enough information . . . to convey the amount of material translated from them," are the very parties who do conceive of just that, and insist that Joseph Smith **did derive all that stuff from them. They can't have it both ways.**

We feel that Dr. Nibley is trying to transfer his own problem onto us. We did not mean to imply that Joseph Smith actually translated any of the characters. Our contention is that he only pretended to translate the characters on the "Sensen" papyrus, and that the text of the Book of Abraham is a work of his own imagination. How could we make our position clearer?

Actually, Joseph Smith was just one of a number of people who claimed to be able to read Egyptian before it was deciphered or before it was generally known that it had been deciphered. E. A. Wallis Budge gives this information:

> . . . the ancient inscriptions had become absolutely a dead letter, and until the beginning of the last century there was neither an Oriental nor a European who could either read or understand a hieroglyphic inscription. Many writers **pretended** to have found the key to the hieroglyphics, and many more professed, with a shameless impudence which it is hard to understand in these days, to translate the contents of the texts into a modern tongue. Foremost among such pretenders must be mentioned Athanasius Kircher who, in the XVIIth century, declared that he had found the key to the hieroglyphic inscriptions; the translations which he

> prints . . . are utter nonsense, but as they were put forth in a learned tongue many people at the time believed they were correct. More than half a century later the Comte de Pahlin stated that an inscription at Denderah was only a translation of Psalm C., and some later writers believed that the Egyptian inscriptions contained Bible phrases and Hebrew compositions. (*Egyptian Language—Easy Lessons in Egyptian Hieroglyphic*s, London, 1966, page 15)

In a letter dated August 8, 1968, an Egyptologist gives us this information:

> Joseph Smith was working in the belief quite generally held at the time that Egyptian writing was mystic and symbolic, each sign having a profound meaning that would require many words to express. . . . what he produced was just about what American opinion at the time would have expected Egyptian hieroglyphs to contain, . . .

Alan Gardiner gives this information concerning Athanasius Kircher:

> . . . the theories of Kircher as to the content of the hieroglyphic inscriptions exceed all bounds in their imaginative folly. The cartouche of the Pharaoh Apries, encountered on a Roman obelisk, signifies to Kircher that "the benefits of the divine Osiris are to be procured by means of sacred ceremonies and of the chain of the Genii, in order that the benefits of the Nile may be obtained." (*Egyptian Grammar*, 3rd edition pages 11-12)

Although Joseph Smith was born about 200 years after Kircher, he came no closer to finding out the real meaning of the Egyptian writing than Kircher. While Dr. Nibley condemns Kircher's work, he defends Joseph Smith;

> Kircher, to be sure, was, like Joseph Smith, deeply religious, but again with a diametrically opposed orientation; . . .
>
> The example of Kircher is less significant for the light it throws on Joseph Smith than the warning it provides for the youth of Zion, who have been only too prone to follow Kircher instead of Smith both in their scholarly and their religious procedures. . . .
>
> Even more dangerous was Kircher's habit of giving heartfelt thanks to God for inspiring him in the perpetration of his philological horrors. This kept him going for years—but it was really a form of cheating. . . . Kircher used the appeal to divine aid as a shortcut, to spare him the work he could have done himself but didn't. . . . Joseph Smith, our greatest prophet, in his short lifetime exerted himself strenuously to learn what he could of Hebrew, Greek, and German. If he was not immune from studying the hard way, why should his present-day followers seek religious shortcuts to omniscience as did Athanasius Kircher? (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pages 174-176)

How Dr. Nibley could condemn Kircher and then turn right around and defend Joseph Smith is almost beyond our understanding. He goes to great lengths to cover up the fact that the Book of Abraham is a false translation. He even goes so far as to say that the Egyptian characters may have a second meaning unknown to the Egyptologists. Why does he not defend Kircher in this manner?

Grant Heward has written a paper in which he shows that the character from which Joseph Smith "translated" Abraham 1:13-14 could not possibly have contained enough component parts to convey the 76 word message:

> Let's start with an illustration. Supposing someone showed you a round black dot on a piece of paper and said that it was writing. That it told the story of "Little Red Riding Hood"; the whole story of Little Red Riding Hood, her mother, her grandmother, the wolf, the woodcutter, the forest, the basket of cookies and all—everything! The whole story was there! Could a single round dot carry that much meaning? Wouldn't you have to already know the story and the dot simply be a reminder? Each thought requires at least one mark to express it. Other wise, the thought isn't written. Any writing must contain enough symbols to reveal the meaning of each and every thought. Writing must be able to bring forth the meaning of a story one hasn't heard before. . . .
>
> No one need understand Egyptian, however, to realize something is wrong with Joseph's translations. Apply the "little-black-dot" method to the translated material found in the Grammar. (It's part of the Book of Abraham included in the *Pearl of Great Price*.) If you're willing to allow honesty and truth to determine the results instead of your own personal desires and fears, you will find you run out of Egyptian marks long before you run out of English thoughts. Take for example  In Egyptian, this could be no more than a single Egyptian word. However, we will number the strokes and divide up the character thus:  Giving more than the benefit of the doubt, we will assign thoughts to the dissected strokes. Of course, it is too much to hope this character could carry the meaning of even one-half of the first line, let alone the remaining lines. 1.  It, 2.  was made, 3.  after--.

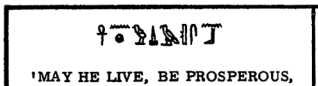
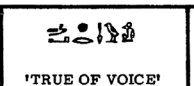
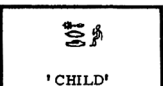
Mr. Heward distributed this paper at the April, 1967, Conference of the Mormon Church. Because of this "offense" he found himself in trouble with the Church, and on June 21, 1967, he was excommunicated from the Mormon Church.

Dr. Hugh Nibley made this statement concerning Mr. Heward's paper:

> The attempt to give one's own interpretation to picture writing is hard to resist. At the general conference in April 1967, for example, somebody

> circulated a mimeographed document bearing the frank and forthright title, "Why Would Anyone Want to Fight the Truth?" The "truth" in this case consisted of the author's common-sense observations on the nature of Egyptian, such as, that an Egyptian symbol written with four elements "could be no more than a single Egyptian word." But ancient languages have a way of ignoring our modern common-sense rules; the Egyptian in particular had an incurable weakness for **abbreviations**, omissions, transpositions, puns, and cryptograms, and their writings are full of signs which, even when we know their meaning (which is by no means always the case), require at least a sentence or two to explain them. Anyone is free to guess at the meaning of any Egyptian phrase, and one of the most picturesque aspects of the discipline is a process that never ceases, day and night, year in and year out, by which Egyptologists are constantly altering and improving on each other's translations. But one is not free to present his interpretation as "The Truth," and then ask in hurt and accusing tones, "Why Would Anyone Want to Fight the Truth?" (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, pages 14-15)

Although the Egyptians did use some abbreviations, we do not know of any case where one Egyptian word could be expanded to make 76 English words. Below are a few examples of words that are sometimes abbreviated in Egyptian writing.

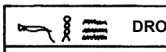
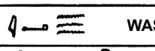
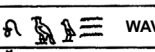
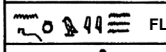
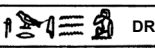
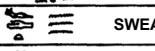
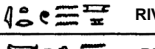
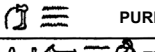
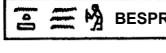
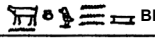
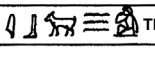
 'MAY HE LIVE, BE PROSPEROUS, BE HEALTHY' abbrev. –	 'TRUE OF VOICE' abbrev. –	 'CHILD' abbrev.–

Alan Gardiner informs us that abbreviations "are commonest in monumental inscriptions, stereotyped phrases, formulae, titles, and the like" (*Egyptian Grammar*, page 50). He also points out that "In all languages greetings and the like are apt to be cut down to the briefest form, ex. "morning!" for "I wish you a good morning!" (*Egyptian Grammar*, page 239). The fact that the words "may he live, be prosperous, be healthy!" can be written with just three characters is not really too surprising, for, according to Gardiner, it is an "exceedingly common expression" (page 239). It is so common, in fact, that Gardiner does not like to write out the English words every time he translates a text in which it appears. Therefore, in his translations it is "conveniently abbreviated" as "1. p. h." It would appear, then, that while the Egyptians used some abbreviations, we are able to do about the same thing in the English language. The words "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People" are composed of 51 letters, yet we can abbreviate them with just 5 letters: NAACP. Many other examples could be cited.

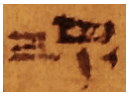
Dr. Nibley's statement that the Egyptians had "an incurable weakness for abbreviations" does not explain how 76 words can be derived from one character. Now that we have the original papyrus that Joseph Smith used as a basis for his Book of Abraham, the meaning of the character Dr. Nibley chooses to argue about is clear. It means "water" and in hieroglyphic writing is as follows:

In hieratic writing the Egyptians did not take the time to make the lines wavy. Sometimes the lines curved down at the end of the stroke so that the character had the appearance of a backwards *E*.

While this character means water when it stands alone, it can also be used as a "generic determinative." This means that in many cases it is used as only a part of one word. Its presence helped the Egyptians to know that the words it appeared in had some relationship to water. Below are some examples—written from left to right.

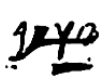
 DROWN	 WASH	 WAVE
 FLOOD	 DRINK	 SWEAT
 IRRIGATE	 RIVER	 PURE
 BESPRINKLE	 BROOK	 THIRST

In the fragment of papyrus Joseph Smith used for his Book of Abraham this character is only a part of an Egyptian word which means "pool" or "lake." Below is a photograph of it as it appears on the first line of the papyrus.



Thus we see that Joseph Smith translated 76 words out of an Egyptian character which is only a part of one word. The other part of the word was used to make 59 additional words (*Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham, 1:11-12). This makes a total of 135 words from just one Egyptian word!

In another case Joseph Smith translated 177 words from just one Egyptian word. At the top of the next page is a photograph of this word (as it appears in one of the handwritten manuscripts) and the words Joseph Smith "translated" from it. The words are taken from the *Pearl of Great Price*, Book of Abraham 1:16-19.



16. And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, behold, my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee, and to take thee away from thy father's house, and from all thy kinsfolk, into a strange land which thou knowest not of;

17. And this because they have turned their hearts away from me, to worship the god of Elkenah, and the god of Libnah, and the god of Mahmackrah, and the god of Korash, and the god of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; therefore I have come down to visit them, and to destroy him who hath lifted up his hand against thee, Abraham, my son, to take away thy life.

18. Behold, I will lead thee by my hand, and I will take thee, to put upon thee my name, even the Priesthood of thy father, and my power shall be over thee.

19. As it was with Noah, so shall it be with thee; but through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God.

The Egyptian word which Joseph Smith pretended to translate 177 words from (found in the first line of the papyrus) is "Khons"—the name of an Egyptian moon-god. The fact that Joseph Smith would make 177 English words from one Egyptian word is absolutely astounding! It shows very clearly that he did not understand the Egyptian language and that the Book of Abraham is a work of his own imagination.

Dee Jay Nelson gives this information concerning the moon-god, Khons:

> He is called "The Traveler" and was associated with medicine in the capacity of a healer. In Ptolemaic and Roman times his center of worship was Thebes. This is significant because the gallery tomb (catacomb) where the several Joseph Smith Papyri were found was reported to be near Thebes. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, page 17)

In the other papyri which are not related to the Book of Abraham we find the name Nes-Khonsu. Klaus Baer states that this name means "'She Belongs to Khons,' the Theban moon god, son of Amon and Mut" (*Dialogue*, Autumn 1968, page 111). Before the "Sensen" text had been identified as the fragment Joseph Smith 'translated" the Book of Abraham from, Dr. Hugh Nibley had worked with the fragments from the Book of the Dead. Although he combined the names of the mother and her daughter into one name, he was correct in stating that the last part of the name (actually the name of the mother) meant "belonging to Khons (or in the company of **Khons, the moon-god**" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968). Below (to the left) we have taken the name Nes-Khonsu from the Book of the Dead papyri in the Mormon collection and have put a box around the portion of the name which reads "Khons." To the right we show the name "Khons" as it appears in the "Sensen" papyrus. Directly below this on each side we show the name "Khons" written in hieroglyphs.

A person does not have to be an Egyptologist to see that the characters are the same. Since Dr. Nibley has already admitted that these characters make the name of the moon-god, Khons, we feel that we have established the fact that the name of this pagan god appears on the "Sensen" papyrus and that Joseph Smith's 177 word "translation" of these characters is incorrect.

There is another word on the first line of the "Sensen" papyrus from which Joseph Smith "translated" most of Abraham 1:11 in the *Pearl of Great Price*. Below is a photograph of this word as it appears in the handwritten manuscript set to the side of the words it makes in the Book of Abraham 1:11.

11. Now, this priest had offered upon this altar three virgins at one time, who were the daughters of Onitah, one of the royal descent directly from the loins of Ham. These virgins were offered up because of their virtue; they would not bow down to worship gods of wood or of stone, therefore they were killed upon this altar,

An Egyptologist would translate this as either "the" or "this." Joseph Smith, however, makes 59 words out of this one Egyptian word.

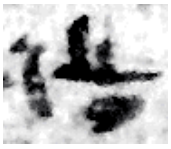
Abraham 1:20-22 also seems to have been translated out of one Egyptian word. Below is a photograph of this word as it appears in the handwritten manuscript set to the side of the words it makes in the Book of Abraham.

20. Behold, Potiphar's Hill was in the land of Ur, of Chaldea. And the Lord broke down the altar of Elkenah, and of the gods of the land, and utterly destroyed them, and smote the priest that he died; and there was great mourning in Chaldea, and also in the court of Pharaoh; which Pharaoh signifies king by royal blood.

21. Now this king of Egypt was a decendant from the loins Ham, and was a partaker of the blood of the Canaanites by birth.

22. From this descent sprang all the Egyptians, and thus the blood of the Canaanites was preserved in the land.

Unfortunately, the papyrus appears to have been damaged since this word was copied from it in Joseph Smith's time. Klaus Baer, however, believes that It is "Osiris." We are inclined to agree for two reasons: One, it resembles the word "Osiris," although it may be somewhat miscopied (many of the characters were poorly copied in the handwritten manuscripts). It is written as follows on the left side of the same fragment of papyrus.



Two, the word "Osiris" fits logically into the context of that which follows after a break in the papyrus on line two. The first word after the break is an Egyptian word meaning "born to" or "born of,' and then follows the name of the parent. It is logical to assume that just before the word which means "born to" we would find the name of the son or the daughter. In this case it would be the name "Hor." Now, in funerary texts it was customary to place the word "Osiris" (the name of the Egyptian god of the dead) before the name of the deceased. Dee Jay Nelson explains the reason for this:

> In ancient Egyptian funeral texts the word Osiris usually prefixes proper names of the deceased person for whom the inscription was made. This indicates that the dead person is one with Osiris, of his kingdom and that he has assumed some of the after-life characteristics of this, their most supreme God of the Dead. In a very real sense it specifies that the individual named is dead. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, page 2)

It would appear, then, that Joseph Smith has made 103 words out of the name of the Egyptian god of the dead!

Abraham 1:29, 30 and most of verse 31 were also "translated" from a few characters. Below is a photograph of these characters as they appear in the handwritten manuscript set to the side of the words which they make in the Book of Abraham.

29. Now, after the priest of Elkenah was smitten that he died, there cam a fulfilment of those things where were said unto me concerning the land of Chaldea, that there should be a famine in the land.

30. Accordingly a famine prevailed throughout all the land of Chaldea, and my father was sorely tormented because of the famine, and he repented of the evil which he had determined against me, to take away my life.

31. But the records of the fathers, even the patriarchs, concerning the right of Priesthood, the Lord my god preserved in mine own hands; therefore a knowledge of the beginning of the creation, and also of the planets, and of the stars, as they were made known unto the fathers, have I kept even unto this day,

These characters appear on the second line of the papyrus. When they are translated they make two English words, "born to" or "born of" (as we explained above). The Mormon Egyptologist Dee Jay Nelson makes this comment concerning Joseph Smith's work with regard to these characters:

> This is a substantial "translation" (130 words) to be represented by 4 perfectly normal hieratic characters which to any trained Egyptian philologist transliterate **ms n** (mes en) and mean "offspring of" or "born of." (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, page 14)

The next word to the left on the papyrus is the name of one of the parents of the deceased. Dee Jay Nelson renders it as "Tai-Khebit" Klaus Baer renders it "Tikhebyt," and Richard Parker renders it "Taykhebyt." Alan Gardiner makes this interesting statement about the transcription of Egyptian names:

> The absence of vocalization in the hieroglyphic writing has the irritating consequence that there can be no fixed norm for the transcription of proper names. . . . the owner of a famous tomb at El-Bershah, is called Tehutihetep by one scholar, Thuthotep by a second, Thothotpou by a third, . . . Other personal names are still less recognizable; a Theban noble . . . appears in Egyptological books variously as Anna, Anena, Enne, and Ineni. (*Egyptian Grammar*, 3rd edition, page 434)

When we consider the problems involved in the transcription of proper names, we see that the three Egyptologists who translated the "Sensen" text are basically in agreement concerning this name. Joseph Smith, however, broke this name into three different parts and translated a number of words from each part. The first part of this name he used to make part of Abraham 1:31.

and I shall endeavor to write some of these things upon this record, for the benefit of my posterity that shall come after me.

The second part of the name he used to make Abraham 2:1 and most of verse 2.

1. Now the Lord God caused the famine to wax sore in the land of Ur, insomuch that Haran, my brother, died; but Terah, my father, yet lived in the land of Ur, of the Chaldees.

2. And it came to pass that I, Abraham, took Sarai to wife, and Nehor, my brother, took Milcah to wife,

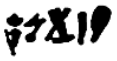
The last part of the name Joseph Smith used to make the rest of Abraham 2:2.

who were the daughters of Haran.

The fact that Joseph Smith uses the last part of the name to make six words is especially interesting, for it does not have any phonetic value in the name itself. Klaus Baer states that it is a "Sign indicating a woman's name" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 132).

When we count the total number of words which Joseph Smith "translated" from this one Egyptian name we find that it amounts to 85. Among these 85 words we find all kinds of proper nouns: Ur (twice), Haran (twice), Terah, Chaldees, Abraham, Sarai, Nehor, Milcah and Lord God.

The last few characters on the left side of the second line were used by Joseph Smith to make Abraham 2:3-5. Below is a photograph of these characters as they appear in the handwritten manuscript (we are using one of the manuscripts in the *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* in this case because the longer manuscript is not as clear at this point) set to the side of the words which they make in the Book of Abraham.



3 Now the Lord had said unto me: Abraham, get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee.

4 Therefore I left the land of Ur, of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and I took Lot, my brother's son, and his wife, and Sarai my wife; and also my father followed after me, unto the land which we denominated Haran.

5 And the famine abated; and my father tarried in Haran and dwelt there, as there were many flocks in Haran; and my father turned again unto his idolatry, therefore he continued in Haran.

Joseph Smith made 109 English words out of these Egyptian characters. The first two characters are poorly written on the original papyrus, but they probably mean "justified" or "true of word." The last characters make the word "likewise."

Abraham 2:12-14 is made from less than one Egyptian word which is found on line 3 of the papyrus. Below is a photograph of the characters as they appear in the handwritten manuscript set to the side of the words which they make in the Book of Abraham.

12 Now, after the Lord had withdrawn from speaking to me, and withdrawn his face from me, I said in my heart: Thy servant has sought thee earnestly; now I have found thee;

13 Thou didst send thine angel to deliver me from the gods of Elkenah, and I will do well to hearken unto thy voice, therefore let thy servant rise up and depart in peace.

14 So I, Abraham, departed as the Lord had said unto me, and Lot with me; and I, Abraham, was sixty and two years old when I departed out of Haran.

To an Egyptologist this word means "heart" or "breast." When Joseph Smith or his scribe copied these characters from the papyrus the last part of this word was left off. It is a representation of a "piece of flesh." It helped the Egyptian to know that this word was in someway connected with one of the "parts of the body" (*Egyptian Grammar*, by Allan Gardiner, 3rd edition, page 467). It is written as follows: 

This character was included with the next set of characters which Joseph Smith "translated," but this left the word "heart" incomplete. Thus, we find that Joseph Smith "translated" 95 words from a group of characters which did not even make one complete word!

The Negro Doctrine

The Mormon Church leaders teach that the Negroes are "cursed" with "a black skin," and therefore they cannot hold the priesthood or receive equal treatment in the Church. The Mormon position concerning the Negro was clearly stated in a letter written by the First Presidency of the Church in 1947. In this letter we read the following:

> From the days of the Prophet Joseph even until now, it has been the doctrine of the Church, never questioned by any of the Church leaders, that **the Negroes are not entitled to the full blessings of the gospel**. (Letter from the First Presidency of the Mormon Church, July 17, 1947, as quoted in *Mormonism and the Negro*, by John J. Stewart, pages 46-47)

The basis for this anti-Negro doctrine is found in the pages of the Book of Abraham. The Mormon historian B. H. Roberts states:

> This work is rich both in doctrine and in historical incidents. . . . the descent of the black race (Negro) from Cain, the first murderer; the preservation of that race through the flood by the wife of Ham— "Egyptus,". . . "which signifies that which is forbidden"—the descendants of "Egyptus" were cursed as pertaining to the priesthood-that is, they were barred from holding that divine power; . . . (*Comprehensive History of the Church*, Brigham Young University Press, 1965, page 128)

In the book, *From the Dust of Decades*, we find this statement:

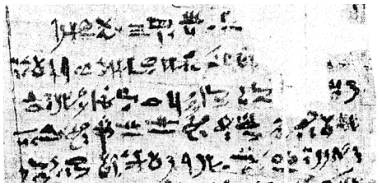
> Those fragile fragments of papyrus, from the deserts of Egypt, were part of the same record that had enlarged Mormonism's pre-earth life concept, as it was revealed to Father Abraham by the Lord; from those pages came Mormon scripture concerning the Negro and the priesthood; on those parched pages was recorded the oldest known document attesting to the origin of man. (*From the Dust of Decades*, by Keith Terry & Walter Whipple, Salt Lake City, 1968, page 9)

The Book of Abraham, chapter 1, verses 21-27 all seem to relate to the Negro doctrine, but verse 26 seems to be the most important. David O. McKay, President of the Mormon Church, has stated that this verse is the only "scriptural basis" for the anti-Negro doctrine. In a letter dated November 3, 1947, he said:

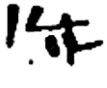
> I know of **no scriptural basis** for denying the Priesthood to Negroes other than **one verse** in the Book of Abraham (1:26); however, I believe, as you suggest, that the real reason dates back to our pre-existant life. (*Mormonism and the Negro*, by John J. Stewart and William E. Berrett, Part 2, page 19)

A Hole In Papyrus

One man who spent a good deal of time examining this question stated that "Abr. 1:26 corresponds to what now and was in 1835 a hole in the papyrus." It is obvious that the characters from which the Negro doctrine was "translated" are not now on the papyrus. They should appear on the right side of line 2, but the reader will see from the photograph below that the papyrus has been damaged and that this area is entirely missing.



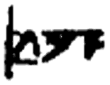
In the handwritten manuscripts of the Book of Abraham there are four sets of characters used by Joseph Smith to establish the anti-Negro doctrine. Below is a photograph of these characters set to the side of the words they make in the Book of Abraham.



20. Behold, Potiphar's Hill was in the land of Ur, of Chaldea. And the Lord broke down the altar of Elkenah, and of the gods of the land, and utterly destroyed them, and smote the priest that he died; and there was great mourning in Chaldea, and also in the court of Pharaoh; which Pharaoh signifies king by royal blood.

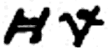
21. Now this king of Egypt was a decendant from the loins Ham, and was a partaker of the blood of the Canaanites by birth.

22. From this descent sprang all the Egyptians, and thus the blood of the Canaanites was preserved in the land.



23. The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of Egyptus, which in the Chaldean signifies Egypt, which signifies that which is forbidden.

24. When this woman discovered the land it was under water, who afterward settled her sons in it; and thus, from Ham, sprang that race which preserved the curse in the land.



25. Now the first government of Egypt was established by Pharaoh, the eldest son of Egyptus, the daughter of Ham, and it was after the manner of the government of Ham, which was patriarchal.

26. Pharaoh, being a righteous man, established his kingdom and judged his people wisely and justly all his days, seeking earnestly to imitate that order established by the fathers in the first generations, in the days of the first patriarchal reign, even in the reign of Adam, and also of Noah, his father, who blessed him with the blessings of the earth, and with the blessings of a wisdom, but cursed him as pertaining to the Priesthood.

27. Now, Pharaoh being of that lineage by which he could not have the right of Priesthood, notwithstanding the Pharaohs would fain claim it from Noah, through Ham, therefore my father was led away by their idolatry;

28. But I shall endeavor, here-after, to delineate the chronology running back from myself to the beginning of the creation, for the records have come into my hands, which I hold unto this present time.

The fact that the original papyrus is damaged in the area from which these characters were supposed to have been taken raises a number of questions. Was the papyrus damaged in Joseph Smith's time? Are the characters which appear in the handwritten manuscript the same ones which were written on the original papyrus? Could it be possible that these characters are the work of Joseph Smith's own imagination or that they were derived from another source?

Dee Jay Nelson, the Mormon Egyptologist, who spent a good deal of time examining these characters, has stated that they are "not any form of ancient Egyptian now known to science" (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, page 15). On page 14 of the same book, he makes this statement:

> On the Hor Fragment a portion of the beginning of line 2 is missing after word No. 4. Characters filling this gap are found in the *Grammar and Alphabet Notebook* so one would assume that this portion was intact at the time Joseph Smith copied the lines. I have marked this section x on my drawing. It is interesting to find that all of Joseph Smith's characters are common Egyptian hieratic through word 4 at which point they are no longer hieratic or any other form of Egyptian known to me. At this point in the *Grammar and Alphabet* which I have labeled words 5 and 6 (Plate 8, line I) the text again becomes normal hieratic, In other words, that portion marked x is not hieratic and the rest is. This is not only very strange but the alien characters coincide precisely with the missing portion on the original Sensen

> Fragment. **One wonders where Joseph Smith found these "characters"**. . . . certainly not in the Hor Sensen Papyrus. (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, page 14

The Egyptologist Klaus Baer also feels that the papyrus was damaged when Joseph Smith worked with it and that three of the four groups of characters are "Incorrectly restored" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pages 131-132). He feels that the first group forms the name "Osiris" and that it is still visible in traces" at the start of line two. On page 170 of this book, we stated that we are inclined to agree with Klaus Baer concerning this matter because the characters copied in the handwritten manuscript do resemble the name "Osiris" (even though they are poorly written) and because the word "Osiris" would fit logically into the context of that which follows. However this may be, Klaus Baer feels that the other three groups of characters in the handwritten manuscript are not copies of the characters which appeared on the original papyrus. He states:

> . . . the three mounted pieces of the papyrus (P. JS I, X, XI) are probably in about the same condition as in Joseph Smith's time, except that the places where the surface is now rubbed away, leaving only a more or less blank stretch of papyrus, and sometimes only the bottom layer, were still in better condition. The photographs (especially of P. JS X) also show places where papyrus have parted company with the paper backing; at least two such pieces were then framed with P. JS IV (see pages 112 and 116). But apart from this, the lacunae [gaps in the papyri] **evidently existed at the time the papyri were mounted**, and Joseph Smith's copies indicate that they were already damaged at these points when he began to study them. . . . Joseph Smith drew four groups, of which the first . . . has the expected shape and is still visible in traces at the beginning of the line, while the remaining three (**including the one corresponding to Abraham 1:26**) are clearly proposed restorations that **bear no resemblance to the signs that certainly were on the papyrus** before it was damaged; note also the difference in general appearance or style. Our conclusion is essentially the same as before: The papyrus was slightly better preserved at the beginning of the line but otherwise broke off at the same point it does now. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pages 127-130)

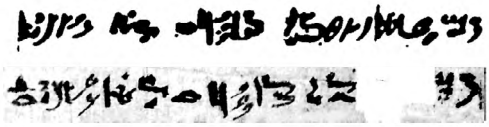
Dr. Nibley claims that there "is ample evidence that all the papyri though very fragile were in excellent condition when Joseph Smith worked with them" (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968). We feel, however, that there is evidence to show that there were gaps in the papyri when they were in Joseph Smith's possession. William S. West, for instance, made this comment in 1837—just two years after Joseph Smith obtained the papyri:

> These records were torn by being taken from the roll of embalming salve which contained them, and **some parts entirely lost**, but Smith is to translate the whole by divine inspiration and that **which is lost**, like Nebuchadnezzar's dream, can be interpreted as well as that which is preserved. (*A Few Interesting Facts Respecting the Rise, Progress and Pretensions of the Mormons*, as quoted in *Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., page 55)

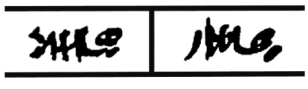
James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, made this comment concerning the statement by William West:

> West represents, in his pamphlet, that in the process (and this very often happens) of unrolling these papyrus rolls, in order to get them out of the embalming sap or the bitumin, there were little parts torn and perhaps lost. This has happened with the Dead Sea Scrolls, incidentally, and many others, but he represents that the claim was made that it would not make any difference that part of the record was lost, that Joseph Smith could get that part by direct revelation, whereas he would get the rest of it by translation. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., pages 55-56)

We feel that we can show that the "Sensen" papyrus was damaged at the time Joseph Smith worked with it and that the missing portion extended down into the third lime of the papyrus by comparing the characters on the third line with the ones that appear in the handwritten manuscript. Below we have placed the characters from the handwritten manuscript directly above a photograph of the third line of the papyrus.



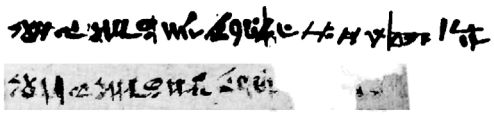
The reader will note that as we go from left to right the characters line up with each other until we arrive at the break in the papyrus. At this point, however, there is a problem; there are too many characters in the handwritten manuscript to fit in the space from which they were supposed to have been taken. We feel that this shows that the gap in the papyrus existed in Joseph Smith's day and that he tried to supply some characters to fill the gap but misjudged the distance across and supplied too many. Klaus Baer states that part of these characters were taken from the second line of the papyrus. He is undoubtedly correct, for when we compare them we see that they are remarkably alike. Below is a comparison of these characters as they appear on the second line of the papyrus (to the left) with the way they appear in the handwritten manuscript.



Klaus Baer also demonstrates from the handwritten manuscripts in the "Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar" that there was also a gap in the first line of the papyrus at the time Joseph Smith worked with it. He makes this comment concerning Joseph Smith's "proposed restoration":

> He gives three groups of which no trace now exists. Are they a copy or a proposed restoration of an already existing lacuna? There can be little doubt that they are the latter, since the parallel manuscripts of the Breathing Permit tell us what the missing signs were: . . . this is not what Joseph Smith drew, and it follows that the three groups in question are only his suggested restoration. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, page 129)

Since part of lines 1 and 3 were apparently missing in Joseph Smith's time, it is logical to assume that part of line two—the line which was supposed to have contained the portion concerning the Negro—was also missing. We feel that this can be verified by comparing the characters on the second line of the papyrus with the characters from the handwritten manuscript. In the illustration below we have placed the characters from the handwritten manuscript above the characters which are found on the papyrus.

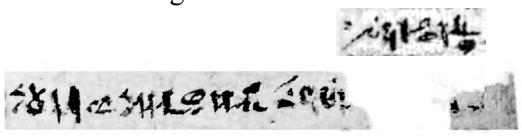


The reader will note that we obtain the same result as we did in line 3, As we go from left to right the characters line up with each other until we arrive at the break in the papyrus. At that point there are too many characters to fit into the space from which they were supposed to have been taken. Thus, it appears that Joseph Smith's proposed restoration is incorrect. We do not know where Joseph Smith derived these characters, but they are not the characters which appeared upon the original papyrus. We must remember that he had manuscripts with hieratic, hieroglyphic and Arabic writing on them. He could have derived the characters from -any of these manuscripts, or it is possible that they are the work of his own imagination. At any rate, they certainly were not found in this area of the "Sensen" papyrus.

Dee Jay Nelson shows what should be written in the area that is missing on line 2:

> Because the connecting phrase "born of" and the name of the beneficiary's mother immediately follow the damaged part of line 2 and because the expected form in funeral papyri is so well established the philologist can supply the missing part. It would be, "Osiris Hor, who is true of word (justified) . . . ." Prof. Richard Parker in his fine translation of the Hor Sensen text has supplied the missing part (*Dialogue*, Summer, 1968, page 98). (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, Part 2, page 14)

Both Klaus Baer and Richard A. Parker fill in the missing area with the words "Osiris Hor, justified." Thus, all three of the Egyptologists are in agreement regarding this matter. There is very good reason to believe that their restoration is correct, for not only does it fit the context of the words which follow, but the characters which form the words "Osiris Hor, justified" fit exactly in this area. Below we have taken these words as they appear on the left side of the fragment and put them above the damaged area on the second line of the right side of the fragment.



The reader will see that the characters would fit perfectly into this area. Thus, it would appear that the Egyptologists are correct with regard to this matter. The statement that "Abr. 1:26 corresponds to what now and was in 1835 **a hole in the papyrus**" seems to have been established, and the Mormon doctrine concerning the Negro has been proven untrue.

An Unfinished Work

The Mormon writer James R. Clark states:

> . . . Joseph Smith did not translate all of the record of the Book of Abraham and he did not publish all he translated. (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, Salt Lake City, 1962, page 113)

On page 98 of the same book, James R. Clark states:

> This point of view that we do not have at present the records in their complete form is born out by a published statement of John Taylor. . . .
>
> The conclusion seems fairly obvious that Joseph Smith not only translated more of the records of Abraham and Joseph than we now have in print, but that he fully intended to continue the publication of his translations in the *Times and Seasons*.

The statement by John Taylor which James R. Clark refers to is found in the *Times and Seasons*, Vol. 4, page 95:

> We would further state that we had the promise of Br. Joseph, to furnish us with further extracts from the Book of Abraham.

This statement was printed February 1, 1843, but

the last extract from the Book of Abraham was printed May 16, 1842. Therefore, the Book of Abraham as it is presently printed in the *Pearl of Great Price* is incomplete. James R. Clark stated:

> To the question of whether these records are lost forever or whether they will some day be re-discovered and the translation completed, as Joseph Smith intended, we can only answer "God's ways are not man's ways." (*The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*, page 99)

Since Joseph Smith was working on the right side of the fragment, it would seem logical that if he had continued he would have "translated" the left side of the small "Sensen" papyrus (see photograph on page 119 of this book) and then started on the larger "Sensen" papyrus (pictured on bottom of page 118).

These fragments have now been translated by Egyptologists, and their translations give additional proof that Joseph Smith was working with a pagan document.

Richard Parker has translated the left side of the small "Sensen" papyrus. His translation includes restorations from the Louvre Papyrus 3284. These restorations are marked with brackets. His translation reads as follows:

> 1. The beginning [of the Book of Breathings made by Isis for her brother Osiris, to make his soul live, to make his body live, to make young his members]
>
> 2. again, [so that he may attain the] horizon with his father Re' (the sun), [so that his soul may appear in glory in the sky in the disk of Yah (the moon), so that his body may shine as Sah (Orion) on the body of Nut (the sky) and to]
>
> 3. cause [the like of th]is to happen to the Osiris Hor, justified, [born of Taykhebyt . . . . . Hide (it), hide (it)!]
>
> 4. Don't [allow] any man to read it. [It] is profitable [for a man in the necropolis. He truly lives anew millions of times. Words to be recited]:
>
> 5. Hail, [Osiris H]or, justified, born of Tay[khebyt . . . . . You are pure; your heart is pure, your front is purified; your back is]
>
> 6. cleansed; your middle is in bd-natron [and hsmn-natron. There is no bad member of yours. Purified is the Osiris Hor, justified, born of Taykhebyt, engendered by]
>
> 7. Remenykay, justified, with the sdyt-water [of the Field of Offerings, north of the Field of Locusts. Have purified you Edjo and]
>
> 8. Nekhbet at the fourth hour of the night and the fourth hour [of the day. Come thou, Osiris Hor, justified, born of Taykhebyt, that you may enter the Broad Hall of the]
>
> 9. Two Goddesses of Righteousness, you being purified from [all] baseness [and all wrongdoing. Stone of Righteousness is your name. Hail, Osiris Hor, justified, born of Taykhebyt! You enter]
>
> 10. [the Otherworld] very pure. Have purified you [the Two Goddesses of Righteousness in the great Broad Hall. A cleansing has been made for you in the Broad Hall of Geb and your members have been purified in]
>
> 11. [the Broad Hall of Shu. You] see Re' when he sets [as Atum in the evening. Amon is with you, giving you well-being and Ptah]
>
> 12. [fashions your limbs]. You enter into the horizon with Re' [. . . . . .] (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, pages 98-99)

Klaus Baer has translated the same text, and his rendition is basically the same. His translation is published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pages 120-121. Dr. Hugh Nibley seems to want us to believe that this has some connection to the Book of Abraham:

> . . . the main point the critics wish to make is that, "most important, the Egyptian has been translated, and it has no recognizable connection with the subject matter of the Book of Abraham." With what subject matter does it have recognizable connection, bearing in mind that ". . . the underlying mythology . . , must be largely inferred"? (e. g. B. D., p. 6.). Even the casual reader can see that there is cosmological matter here, with the owner of the papyrus longing to shine in the heavens as some sort of physical entity along with the sun, moon and Orion; also he places great importance on his patriarchal lineage and wants to be pure, nay baptized, so as to enter a higher kingdom, to achieve, in fact, resurrection and eternal life. And these teachings and expressions are secret, to be kept scrupulously out of the hands of the uninitiated. And all these things have nothing to do with the subject matter of the *Pearl of Great Price*? . . . let's not get ahead of the game, or overlook any possibility that there might be something there after all—"If it looks like an elephant," Professor Popper used to say, "call it an elephant!" (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 103-104)

The fact that Dr. Nibley would try to make parallels between this pagan text and the Book of Abraham shows how desperate he is to make a case for the Book of Abraham.

Both Dee Jay Nelson and Klaus Baer have translated the larger "Sensen" fragment. We published Dee Jay Nelson's rendition in April 1968, and therefore we will use it in this work. We highly recommend Klaus Baer's rendition, also, for he is very precise in his work and has spent a great deal of time with this fragment. His translation is published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Autumn 1968, pages 121-124.

The following is taken from Dee Jay Nelson's pamphlet, *The Joseph Smith Papyri*:

> Missing portions and questionable words have been filled in from my knowledge of Ptolemaic examples of the Book of Breathings. I can reasonably assume that an incomplete phrase or passage follows traditional lines when the words which appear on the papyrus are as expected. I take the liberty of filling in gaps only when

the existing portions of the passage or phrase are exactly as found in known museum specimens of the text. The wording is entirely as expected except in a few limited cases and these exhibit little variation with no change in meaning. My translation is somewhat paraphrased to clarify the meaning by modern standards.

I must project the beginning of my translation a few words into the missing area ahead of the first damaged line on the fragment in order to give meaning and continuity to it. These words are reconstructed from the Kerasher Papyrus, Book of Breathings, in the British Museum. I find the ends of the passages in question identical.

Translation:

"Hail, Osiris Ter [Hor], who is true of word (found truthful in the final judgement). Thy name is perpetuated. Thy corpse is made whole again. Thy spiritual body sprouts like a new plant. Thy way is not barred in heaven or upon the earth. Thy face shineth before Ra and thy soul liveth before Amen. Thy body is youthful before Osiris and thou dost breathe for all eternity. There shall be made for thy soul holy food offerings of bread, ale, beef, fowl and drink each day. It cometh to thee because thou art judged true of word. Thy flesh is upon thy bones and thy faculties are with thee as they were upon earth. Thou dost partake of drink and thou dost eat cakes with the souls of the gods. Anubis protects thee and he prepares for thee charms so that ye may not be stopped at the doors of the Underworld. Thoth, the great one, the great lord of Khemennu (Hermopolis) cometh to thee. He has written for thee the Book of Breathings with his own hand that thy soul may be provided with breath for all eternity. Thy living form is re-established upon earth. Thou art deified among the gods. Thy heart is one with the heart of Ra and thy body is one with the body of the Great God. Hail, Osiris Ter [Hor], who is true of word, Amen is with thee to renew thy life. A good pathway is opened for thee by Apuat (a messenger god). Thy eyes can see, thy ears can hear, thy mouth can speak and thy legs can walk. Thy soul is deified in the Underworld and it accomplishes thy transformation according to thy pleasure. Thou art the wind which blows through the holy sycamore fig (Persian tree) in Annu (Heliopolis). Each day thou dost awaken and dost look upon the rays of Ra. Amen cometh unto thee bringing the breath of life. He giveth thee breath as thou dost lie in thy coffin. Thou cometh forth upon earth each day. The Book of Breathings by Thoth is thy protection and thou dost breathe each day because of it and thy eyes dost see the Sun because of it. The goddess Maat speaks for thee in the presence of Osiris and the writings of Maat are upon thy tongue. Horus, who avenged his father, is the protector of thy body. He deifies thy soul like the company of gods. The soul of Ra gives life to thy soul and the souls of Shu (the air god) unite with thee in thy nostrils. Hail, Osiris Ter [Hor], who is true of word, daughter of ? ? ? ? (name of parent untranslatable). Thy soul dost breathe wherever thou dost please."

. . . .

The following is my translation of column 2 (left hand column) on the Ter [Hor] Papyrus Fragment No. 1.

A portion of text is missing between the end of column 1 and the first line appearing in column 2 but it would undoubtedly have read: "Thou art like Osiris. Thy name is Osiris, Chief of Amenti (western land of the dead). The Nile cometh to thee from Abu (Elephantine) and provides an abundance of holy food for thy offering table. Hail, Osiris Ter [Hor], who is true of word. The gods of the North and South (two lands of Egypt) come to thee and bring thee to the land at the end of millions of years. Thy soul, which follows Osiris, liveth."

(At this point column 2 begins, line one): "Thou dost breath in Restau (the Underworld beneath Memphis). Thou art protected and hidden in the domain of the lord of Setet and the Great God. Thy corpse lives again in Tattu and Nefertet (parts of the city of Abydos). Thy soul liveth again in heaven each day. Hail, Osiris Ter [Hor], who is true of word, Sekemet (a lion-headed goddess, consort of Ptah) hath prevailed against those who have spoken evil against thee. Horus, the great hearted, is thy protector. Horus, who ties up his enemies, maketh strong thy heart. Horus, of the two eyes who sees all, watches over thy speech. Thy life, health and strength is made firm. Thou art permanently established upon thy throne in Ta-tchertet (the Holy Land, Egypt). Come, Osiris Ter [Hor], who is true of word, thou art crowned in thy image and thou art clothed in thy decorations. Thou dost possess life and thou doest pass thy days in health. Thou dost breathe wherever thou art. Ra shines upon thy house as he does upon Osiris. Thou dost have breath and thou dost have life because of his light. Amen-Ra-Aakhuti (the triad Amen, Ra and Hormachis) nurtures thy ka (loosely soul) and he maketh thee prosper by means of the Book of Breathings. Thou dost accompany Osiris-Horus who is lord of the Hennu Boat (the sacred death boat). Thou art like the Great God who is chief of the gods. Thy face liveth and good is thy birth. Thy name flourished daily. Thou dost enter the highest counci1 chamber in Dattu (Busiris and Mendes). Thou dost see him who is chief of the beings in Amenti (the world of the dead) at the festival of Uga. Sweet is thy odor to the honorable ones. Thy name is great among the dead nobles. Hail, Osiris Ter [Hor], who is true of word, thy soul liveth by virtue of the Book of Breathings. Thou dost attain thy objectives by means of the Book of Breathings and thou dost enter the Underworld without enemies opposing thee. Thou art a living soul in Dattu and thou dost possess thy heart which has not departed from thee." (Column 2 actually ends with the word "soul" in the last sentence above). (*The Joseph Smith Papyri, A Translation and Preliminary Survey of the Ta-shert-Min and Ter Papyri*, Salt Lake City, 1968, pages 37-39)

The names of at least fifteen Egyptian gods or goddesses are mentioned on the two "Sensen" fragments, but not a word about Abraham.

Attack From Within

Wallace Turner wrote the following for the *New York Times*:

> SAN FRANCISCO, July 14—Papyrus fragments about 2,300 years old have created bitter wrangling among intellectuals of the Mormon world. The argument is theological and archeological, but it could turn sociological by undermining the scriptural basis for the Mormons' discrimination against Negroes.
>
> Since the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York gave the fragments to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints last November, the ancient documents have reopened old disputes about the divinity of the inspiration of Joseph Smith Jr., the Mormon Prophet.
>
> The papyri are part of an Egyptian scroll acquired by the Mormons in 1835 and translated by Smith as the Book of Abraham, one of the Mormons' sacred works. . . .
>
> It had been assumed for decades that all of the original papyri were destroyed in the Chicago fire. The discovery last year that 11 papyrus fragments in the Metropolitan Museum had been involved in the production of the Book of Abraham was an electrifying event for Mormon intellectuals. . . .
>
> The attack **has come from within** the Mormon community, from scholars who were born into Mormonism but who no longer believe. Most of the 2.5 million Mormon church members have paid scant attention.
>
> "Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought," now in its third year as the single nonchurch-controlled publication aimed at Mormons, devotes a section of its summer issue to examining the papyri controversy. The editors are devout Mormon scholars.
>
> But one article in "Dialogue" was written by two heretics notorious to the church establishment in Salt Lake City. They are Jerrald Tanner, who left the church several years ago, and Grant S. Heward, recently excommunicated.
>
> They maintain that one of the fragments, when compared with the Smith manuscript of the Book of Abraham, shows this:
>
> "Joseph Smith apparently translated many English words from each Egyptian character. The Characters from fewer than four lines of the papyrus make up 49 verses of the Book of Abraham, containing more than 2,000 words."
>
> They argue that "the Egyptian characters cannot conceivably have enough information channels (component parts) to convey the amount of material translated from them."
>
> The church's answer, also in "Dialogue," came from Dr. Hugh Nibley, a faculty member of the church's Brigham Young University.
>
> In the working paper used by the Prophet Joseph, Dr. Nibley wrote, the Egyptian symbols were only headings. "Today nobody claims that Joseph Smith got his information through ordinary scholarly channels," he said. (*New York Times*, Monday, July 15, 1968)

Wallace Turner's statement that the attack "has come from within the Mormon community" is certainly the truth. Grant Heward was excommunicated from the Church because he challenged "the validity of the translation" of the Book of Abraham. He gives this account of the events that led to his excommunication:

> It was toward the end of my fourth local mission for the church that I received the shock that changed my entire life. The occasion appeared to be an opportunity to prove to the doubter once and for all that Joseph Smith was in fact a prophet of God. It was a thrilling challenge, because about half a century before, the world's greatest Egyptologists declared that Joseph Smith could not have understood the ancient Egyptian language. In fact, *The New York Times* printed a full page spread (with headlines) boldly calling Joseph Smith a fraud. Two of our investigators were giving us many difficult questions, but the challenge that the Egyptian problem offered, particularly caught my eye. James Wardle, a local supplier of hidden, forbidden, and unusual Mormon documents, told me that Joseph Smith himself had written an Egyptian Grammar—and that he had a copy—and that I might use it! What a windfall! Fortified with the Egyptian Grammar that Joseph Smith had written ought to make the job as certain as taking candy from a baby. My elated enthusiasm was born of complete confidence in Joseph Smith's claims to frequent revelation from God. Certainly God can read Egyptian, and the English He brought forth would, without a doubt, match the meaning of the Egyptian it was taken from. Just such a testing spot was to be found with the Egyptian Grammar: A scripture—The Book of Abraham—in English with the Egyptian to match! Everything pointed to success. The strength of the Mormon position to me was comparable to the strength of a huge bull among young calves. My job was simply to gather up the proof.
>
> I started studying the grammar, but to my utter dismay, I soon found it was full of nonsense and double-talk. Among my first reactions was the thought that it must not be authentic. Perhaps someone was trying to make Joseph Smith look bad. Most certainly the Lord and Joseph Smith could do better than this! I decided to check with the Church Offices and the Brigham Young University Library. I called the Church Offices and asked one of the highest officials in the Historian's Office about Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. **He denied ever having heard of it;** In fact, when I told him I was studying a copy of it, he said I knew more about it than he did—it was all brand-new to him! I found that a professor at the BYU had written about it in his book: *The Story of the Pearl of Great Price*; So I called him up by long distance telephone. He told me that there was indeed such a document and that it was authentic. He named the goodly brother, who had denied any knowledge of it, as one of two who brought it to the Brigham Young University for photographing. I told him of the denial, but it didn't seem to surprise him. He merely suggested that I might possibly have obtained better results had I gone to the Church Historian's Office and talked to him in person. So I did just that. I asked

a clerk there about seeing the document. He replied that I wouldn't be able to see the original, but they might let me look at a copy (microfilmed). First, I'd have to get permission from brother _____ (the one who denied ever having heard of it). As fate would have it, he was standing directly behind me. Under these circumstances he would have found it somewhat awkward to deny it again. In any event, **he manifest a full knowledge of the document.** However, he said I'd have to get permission from the Church Historian—who (according to him) happened to be out of town—in Chicago! At any rate, I met with both of them early the next morning. After a session of interrogation, I was granted the permission I sought; But their cynical questions left me with a dismal impression that they had no confidence in Joseph Smith's translating ability and **a fear of honest, open research.**

The Church Office's copy of the Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar proved to me that the copy Mr. Wardle had was absolutely authentic. Authentic, yes—but nonsense nonetheless. It was difficult for me to believe that anything Joseph Smith did on Egyptian could be absurd. Yet, I knew it was so.

The intensive questioning of the brethren left me with the unavoidable conclusion that **they were afraid that the contents of the Grammar might be made public.** I realized then, that if they had near the confidence in Joseph Smith they pretended to have, **they would have proudly published it years before instead of keeping it quietly hidden away.** Obviously, I had just found out what they had already known for years. Their authoritarianism had a respectibility that was above and beyond any facts. It was as though they had a correct and proper "righteous indignation" toward any truth that made them uncomfortable. The thought of having to face my friends and relatives with what I learned horrified me. However, the stifling opposition and deliberate misrepresentation from official sources made me feel obliged to try to bring what I learned out into the open. I therefore wrote up the facts as carefully and charitably as I knew how, and had it printed. Then I passed it out at the April Conference of 1967. That was probably the most difficult task I had ever tried to do in my life. The memory of it still makes me cringe.

As most everyone knows who grows up in the church, those out of harmony with the established thought are considered in a state of wickedness—just like that! It is apparently a sin to talk about such wrongs or perhaps even know about them until officially informed of them by those who have the "authority" to understand such matters. The church's official spokesman has reluctantly admitted everything I stated about the Book of Abraham and Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar. On June 21, 1967, I was excommunicated from the church for holding such views.

The following is a photograph of the letter Mr. Heward received from the Church. Notice that he was to stand trial for "alleged circulation of literature challenging the validity of the translation of a standard work" of the Mormon Church.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
THE OFFICE OF THE STAKE PRESIDENT
296 Pioneer Street
Midvale, Utah 84047 REPLY TO:

June 14, 1967

IN THE MIDVALE STAKE OF ZION

TO: GRANT STAURT HEWARD, 124 West 7065 South, Midvale, Utah.

Dear Brother Heward:

"You are hereby requested to appear before a Stake High Council court of the Midvale Stake at the Midvale Stake Office, 425 Jackson Street, Midvale, Utah on Wednesday the 21st day of June, 1967 at 8:00 p.m. for investigation of alleged circulation of literature challenging the validity of the translation of a standard work of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints."

"You should be present, with witnesses, if you desire them, at the place and time specified. If there is any good reason why you cannot be present, please notify the undersigned in due time. In the event of your absence, without excuse, action must necessarily be taken in accordance with the evidence and established procedure of the Church in such matters."

S. A. HUTCHINGS, President

LLOYD GARDNER, First Counselor

R. KENT KING, Second Counselor

SAH:gat

Mr. Heward wants us to point out that the men who signed that letter were following orders that came from higher up. Joseph Fielding Smith, a member of the First Presidency, apparently was the man who gave the order that Mr. Heward be excommunicated. Mr. Heward has made this statement concerning his trial:

> . . . the court was very kind and courteous. There was not so much as an unkind word spoken during the entire proceedings. The Stake President proved to be a kind and loving man. The Bishop, who held an inquiry some weeks previous, was also warm and friendly. I am grateful for their kindness. Both stated that the charge came from the office of Joseph Fielding Smith.
>
> When asked if I had any witnesses, I replied that I brought none, but that truth itself and God were my witnesses. I later thought that if they really investigated the testimony of "Truth," they would find him a very faithful witness indeed. Most people simply refuse to examine the evidence.

In this case the truth did not seem to count. Mr. Heward was excommunicated from the Mormon Church on June 21, 1967.

The fact that Mr. Heward was excommunicated from the Mormon Church, however, did not stop Dee Jay Nelson from doing his work. Although he thought that the Church might excommunicate him also, he felt that he owed his people the truth concerning this matter. So far the Church has not taken any action against him.

Naomi Woodbury, another Mormon who has studied Egyptology, has also come out against the divinity of the Book of Abraham. In a letter published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, she states:

> I myself studied Egyptian hieroglyphics at UCLA several years ago in the hope of resolving some of the problems connected with the "Book of Abraham" in Joseph Smith's favor. Unfortunately, as soon as I had learned the language well enough to use a dictionary I was forced to conclude that Joseph Smith's translation was mistaken, however sincere it might have been. Facsimile No. 2 in the *Pearl of Great Price* contained enough readable writing to convince me that it had purely Egyptian significance. This was a disappointment to me, but the discovery has given me more time to restructure my thinking about Joseph Smith and the Book of Abraham than most of your readers will yet have had. My faith in the Church rests on personal feelings, but it has to find a place for historical facts as well.
>
> After the appearance of the photographs of the papyri . . . I made some attempt to translate the "Book of Breathing[s]" text, with the help of . . . a book which included . . . a fairly good text of the "Book of Breathings" (Berlin P. 3135). . . . I had no such guide to the lower section now translated by Richard Parker, except for an old English translation by De Horrack. This was enough, however, to enable me to translate a number of key words . . . It belongs to a kind of literature which is alien to Christianity and to our Church. . . .
>
> Let us not lose sight of what I think is the primary importance of this papyri find. It can **free us** from our dilemma about excluding Negroes from the Priesthood. Perhaps our Father in Heaven intended the papyri to come to light now for just this purpose. (*Dialogue*, Autumn 1968, page 8)

Dodging the Issue

Before the papyrus from which Joseph Smith "translated" the Book of Abraham was located, Mormon writers were very bold in their statements concerning this book:

> We hold, and we have confidence that **we can prove, by history, science,** and in various ways, that the Book of Abraham is exactly what it claims to be, and that **it was translated by the wisdom and power of God** for the benefit of the human family by the Prophet Joseph Smith. (*Commentary on the Pearl of Great Price*, by George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, Salt Lake City, 1965, page 238)

On page 285 of the same book we find the following:

> . . . we feel fully assured, that every day as it passes and every new discovery that has a bearing on its statements, will **increasingly vindicate its truthfulness** and bear united testimony that Joseph Smith was indeed a Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, inspired by the Spirit of Jehovah, the Mighty God of Abraham.

We have also quoted George Reynolds (see page 124 of this book) as stating: ". . we are of the opinion that there is not a book in existence whose genuineness can be more easily proven than can that of the record of the Father of the Faithful."

When Spalding submitted the Facsimiles to Egyptologists, the Mormons claimed that this was "less than one-seventh of the Book of Abraham and that only an accompaniment to the text" (*Improvement Era*, Vol. 16, page 343). They stated that before Egyptologists "would be warranted in saying that the entire Book of Abraham was not properly translated, they would have to examine the original or a copy of it, . . ." Dr. Hugh Nibley states that Spalding's jury "never did get around to testing Joseph Smith as a translator" (*Improvement Era*, March, 1968, page 22). Dr. Webb, who defended the Mormon position, stated: ". . . the truth or fallacy of his claims may be judged best by the standards established in the course of erecting the science of Egyptology" (*Joseph Smith as a Translator*, page 3).

Now that the original papyrus has been located, some Mormons maintain that Joseph Smith's work cannot be tested by the science of Egyptology. After we published Issue no. 19 of the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, we received a letter in which the following appeared:

> Ive read your articles and in spite of everything you said I testify I know the Book of Abraham is the Word of God. If I was President McKay I would order Grant S. Heward be **assassinated.**

In a letter dated July 20, 1968, this same man stated: "God knows I dont really want the murder of Mr. Heward." Instead, he had another solution. He felt that the President of the Church should order that the papyrus be destroyed:

> Ive come to the conclusion that the manuscript found was **not** the manuscript the Prophet Joseph Smith used. I think it is a **forgery to force the church to give the Negroes the priesthood.** If I was President McKay I would have the **manuscript destroyed.**

We do not feel that this man is typical of the Mormon people. In fact, his letters show evidence that he is not a well adjusted person. Nevertheless, his thinking concerning the Book of Abraham is somewhat similar to that of many other Mormons. They would not go so far as to suggest that the papyrus or Grant Heward be destroyed, but they feel that the Book of Abraham is the "Word of God" and that any evidence to the contrary must be ignored. Some of Dr. Nibley's suggestions concerning this matter are almost as ridiculous as the idea that the papyrus is a "forgery."

Although Dr. Nibley states that the papyri "do not prove the Book of Abraham is true," he states that "The presence of the papyri now shows beyond a doubt that Joseph Smith did possess genuine Egyptian Documents . . . (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring 1968, page 248). Some Mormon writers have made quite a point of the fact that the papyri were genuine. In the book, *From the Dust of Decades*, page 9, we find this statement: "The news was electrifying to the entire Church. The discovery of such rare and priceless pieces of ancient scripture was tangible proof that Joseph Smith had indeed worked from genuine relics of ancient writings." The following appeared in the *Improvement Era*:

> The fact that Dr. Atiya made the discovery and so energetically attests to the manuscript's authenticity as that which Joseph Smith used in part in the translation of the Book of Abraham is of no little importance. Dr. Atiya is a world-recognized scholar and researcher of Egyptian and Arabic manuscripts. . . .
>
> Thus the stage was set for the remarkable discovery of Dr. Atiya. These pieces of papyrus, only part of the ones Joseph Smith had in his possession, are now back in the hands of the Church. They are a remarkably powerful and tangible testimony to the truthfulness of the Prophet's clear and simply told story that he had in his hands some original papyri documents, some of which he used in producing the Book of Abraham in the *Pearl of Great Price*. (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, pages 15-16)

Dr. Atiya, did state that "papyri documents are not fakes," but this does not mean that he endorsed Joseph Smith's translation of them. He could not make such an endorsement, for he is not an Egyptologist. In a meeting held at the University of Utah, May 20, 1968, Dr. Atiya stated that he did "not read either hieroglyphics or hieratic." The Church's newspaper, *Deseret News*, has admitted that Dr. Atiya is not an Egyptologist: "His work in ancient documents is in Coptic and Islamic fields and he is **not** an Egyptologist" (*Deseret News*, December 2, 1967, Church Section, page 7). Dr. Atiya's statement, therefore, only proves that the papyri were genuine Egyptian documents. It does not prove that they were written by Abraham or Joseph. To our knowledge, no Egyptologist has ever questioned the fact that the facsimiles were in some way derived from genuine Egyptian papyri. In fact, this statement appeared in the *New York Times* in 1912:

> The Egyptian mummy and the papyrus inside of it were genuine enough, as is well attested through scores of duplications of it which the Metropolitan and other museums contain. . . . as Dr. Albert M. Lythgoe, head of the Department of Egyptian Art of the Metropolitan Museum, pointed out to a *Times* reporter, there is nothing so certain as that the Mormon prophet got hold of pictures showing the common mortuary ritual of the Egyptians and that these pictures recur time and time again throughout the whole period of Egyptian burials. (*New York Times*, Magazine Section, December 29, 1912)

The problem confronting believers in the Book of Abraham has nothing to do with the authenticity of the papyri. The papyri are genuine; it is Joseph Smith's interpretations of that papyri that are in question. He claimed that the papyri were concerning Abraham and his religion. Egyptologists state that they have nothing to do with Abraham, and that they are nothing but common funerary texts.

We have quoted Samuel A.B. Mercer as stating that any pupil of his "who would show such ignorance of Egyptian as Smith does, could not possibly expect to get more than zero in an examination in Egyptology." He also stated that if there was as much evidence against Jesus Christ as there is against Joseph Smith he would be forced to reject him. With this we must agree. Suppose that the scholars examined the Greek manuscripts from which the New Testament has been translated and found that they did not tell the story of Jesus, but rather the story of the Greek philosopher Aristotle. Would we not be forced to reject the story of Jesus? Of course we would! To our knowledge, however, all scholars agree that the manuscripts contain the story of Jesus, although they may sometimes differ as to the best way to translate certain words. But at least they all agree that it is the story of Jesus. In Joseph Smith's case, however, the scholars do not agree with him at all. They claim that he did not know anything about translating the Egyptian language, and that the Book of Abraham is a spurious work.

Bushels of Nonsense

It would appear that Dr. Hugh Nibley wants us to forget about the papyri and judge the Book of Abraham by its similarity to a number of old apocryphal writings. He wrote the following in an article which was published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*:

> But after all, what do the papyri tell us? That Joseph Smith had them, that he studied them, and that the smallest and most insignificant-looking of them is connected in some **mysterious way** to the *Pearl of Great Price*. There is really very little new here to shed light on the Book of Abraham. We must look **elsewhere** for further light and knowledge. For after all, the Book of Abraham does have something to say, and that should be the point of departure in any serious investigation of its authenticity. Here we have an instructive parallel with the Book of Mormon.
>
> There is nothing in the circumstances surrounding the production of the Book of Mormon to give one the least confidence in the authenticity of the book. But what a book! . . .
>
> So it is also with the *Pearl of Great Price*. We are completely **in the dark** as to how it was produced, but we are anything but helpless with the wealth of detailed material it offers us to test it by. The strange history, the strange rites, the strange doctrines all meet us again and again in ancient sources far removed from Egypt but all connected with the name of Abraham. . . . No Egyptian evidence, perhaps, but then Egyptian sources are not the only sources, and it is folly to come out with a verdict about the Book of Abraham until we have studied fully and carefully the great and growing corpus of ancient Abrahamic literature, even if it takes us years to get through it.
>
> For after all, the Book of Abraham itself is a **book of legends**, about Abraham which can only be tested in the light of **other such legends**, which can at least give us hints as to whether Joseph Smith was making it all up or not. . . .
>
> Now the Abraham literature is of course **a great hodge-podge** of stuff coming from many different sources and many different centuries. But because of the ways in which legends and traditions were swapped around anciently, with very ancient and authentic bits sometimes turning up in the most unlikely places, often buried in **bushels of nonsense**, we cannot escape the obligation of reading everything. . . .
>
> So now it is time to hear the other side of the story, for after all it is just possible that there are things that might be said in favor of the Book of Abraham. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, pages 102, 103 and 105)

It is becoming very obvious to many people that Dr. Nibley is just stalling. He has no answers to give his people, and he is trying to make the issue as confused as possible. In the speech he gave at the University of Utah, May 20, 1968, he made this statement concerning his critics: ". . . why are they in such a hurry for rushing to judgement? What's all the hurry about? People say I keep dragging my feet; of course I have been dragging [my feet]. There is no hurry here. Professor Atiya says, 'Learn to be patient with the Egyptians.'"

Dr. Nibley wants us to ignore the evidence which the "Sensen" fragment furnishes and wait for "years" while he searches through "bushels of nonsense"and "legends" hoping that he may find something that may be used as evidence for the Book of Abraham. Such a suggestion is absurd. Why should we ignore the evidence furnished by the original papyrus and judge the Book of Abraham by its similarity to a number of old Apocryphal writings? The Mormon people cannot afford to wait for "years" while Dr. Nibley searches through this "great hodge-podge of stuff." Now is the time to face this problem. The evidence furnished by the original papyrus is very clear. The Book of Abraham is a spurious work. It has no historical basis. It is plain to see that it is the work of Joseph Smith's own imagination!

The Moment of Truth

The Mormon people cannot accuse the Egyptologists of prejudice against them. Dee Jay Nelson is himself an Elder in the Church. Besides, Dr. Nibley has stated that the Egyptologists "are among the **ablest and most honorable scholars who ever lived** . . ." (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 105). He has stated that Professor Parker is "the best man in America" for this particular text, i.e., the "Sensen" text, and that he did a "nice" job.

The Mormons accused Spalding's jury of making "snap" judgements against the Book of Abraham. This excuse cannot be used with regard to the scholars who have worked with the papyri found in the Metropolitan Museum. Klaus Baer spent at least a month with the "Sensen" material. Dee Jay Nelson has also spent a great deal of time with this text. Even the Book of the Dead fragments have received a great deal of attention. Hugh Nibley admits that John A. Wilson has done an excellent job of translating these fragments:

> . . .[the] excellent work of John Wilson will be coming out in the next issue of *Dialogue*. He has translated the Book of the Dead sections . . . He spent **many weeks** on it. He's done a marvelous piece of work . . . (Speech by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

Dr. Nibley seems to completely endorse the translations given by the Egyptologist, but he refuses to accept the fact that the Book of Abraham has been proven untrue. He stated:

> When I . . . said the papyri do not prove the Book of Abraham, silly people announced that I declared that the papyri disprove the Book of Abraham. And, of course, that's not the same thing at all. . . . I've said many times, the evidence to prove or disprove the Book of Mormon or the Bible or the *Pearl of Great Price* simply **doesn't exist.** (Speech by Hugh Nibley, Univ. of Utah, May 20, 1968)

We feel that if any person will honestly examine this matter he will see that the evidence to disprove the Book of Abraham does exist. When Dr. Nibley states that the evidence "doesn't exist," he is simply refusing to face reality. The evidence is conclusive. We have shown that the original papyrus fragment Joseph Smith used as the basis for the Book of Abraham has been identified and that this fragment is in reality a part of the Egyptian "Book of Breathings." It is a pagan text and contains absolutely nothing concerning Abraham or his religion.

Perhaps one reason the Mormon leaders refuse to face the facts concerning the Book of Abraham is that to do so would cast a serious doubt upon the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Samuel A. B. Mercer made this statement: ". . . both books were translated from the same Egyptian language, and if the translator failed in the translation of the one book, our faith in his translation of the other must necessarily be impaired . . ." (*The Utah Survey*, September, 1913, page 5). Some Mormons have maintained that Joseph Smith did not use the Urim and Thummim when he translated the Book of Abraham, and therefore any mistakes found in it would not reflect upon the Book of Mormon. Actually, early Mormon leaders claimed that Joseph Smith did use the Urim and Thummim. Wilford Woodruff, for instance, made this statement in his journal in 1842:

> The Lord is blessing Joseph with power to reveal the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, to translate through the **Urim and Thummim** ancient records and hieroglyphics as old as Abraham and Adam. Joseph the Seer has presented us [with] some of the book of Abraham . . . (*Wilford Woodruff's Journal*, February 19, 1842, as quoted in *Pearl of Great Price Conference,* December 10, 1960, 1964 ed., page 58)

On July 1, 1842, the following statement appeared in the Mormon publication, *Millennial Star*:

> The record is now in course of translation by the means of the **Urim and Thummim**, and proves to be a record written partly by the father of the faithful, Abraham, and finished by Joseph when in Egypt. (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 3, page 47)

James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, makes this statement concerning the Book of Abraham:

> Well, Wilford Woodruff said he translated with the Urim and Thummim. Parley P. Pratt said he translated with the Urim and Thummim. Orson Pratt said he translated with the Urim and Thummim. He translated with a divine instrument. That was the only way he could translate this. (*Pearl of Great Price Conference*, 1964 ed., page 62)

The Mormon Apostle Orson Pratt claimed that the Book of Abraham was "translated from Egyptian Papyrus through the gift and power of the Holy Ghost by Joseph the Seer" (*The Seer*, page 68). Orson Pratt also made this statement: "By this great gift of the Spirit, he translated the Book of Mormon . . . By this gift, he translated the Book of Abraham from Egyptian papyrus, taken out of one of the catacombs of Egypt" (*Pamphlets by Orson Pratt*, page 71). Thus we see that the Mormon leaders cannot repudiate the Book of Abraham without casting serious doubt upon the validity of the Book of Mormon.

On page 120 of this book we quoted Dr. Hugh Nibley as making this statement:

> . . . a few faded and tattered little scraps of papyrus may serve to remind the Latter-day Saints of how sadly they have neglected serious education. . . . Not only has our image suffered by such tragic neglect, but now in the **moment of truth** the Mormons have to face the world **unprepared**, after having been given a hundred years' fair warning. (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Winter 1968, pages 171-172)

It appears that Dr. Nibley himself is unprepared to face this problem. The Book of Abraham has been proven untrue, and the anti-Negro doctrine can no longer be supported from its pages.

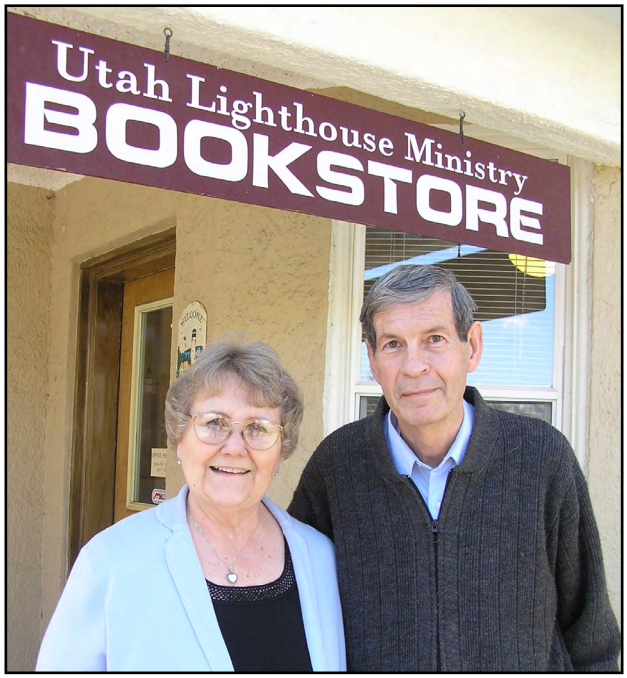
Stewart L. Udall, who is Secretary of the Interior, has made this statement concerning the anti-Negro doctrine:

> We Mormons cannot escape persistent, painful inquiries into the sources and grounds of this belief. Nor can we exculpate ourselves and our Church from justified condemnation by the rationalization that we support the Constitution, believe that all men are brothers, and favor equal rights for all citizens.
>
> This issue must be resolved . . . It must be resolved because **we are wrong**, and it is past the time when we should have seen the right. A failure to act here is sure to demean our faith, damage the minds and morals of our youth, and undermine the integrity of our Christian ethic. . . . We violate the rights and dignity of our Negro brothers, and for this we bear a measure of guilt; but surely we harm ourselves even more. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1967, pages 5-6)

Stewart L. Udall's words might be applied with equal force to the Book of Abraham, which is the real source of the anti-Negro doctrine. Truly, this is the moment of truth for the Mormon people.

NOTE ADDED JUNE 15, 1983. In this volume we have quoted extensively from the writings of Dee Jay Nelson. We are sad to report that about ten years after Nelson finished his translation, he claimed to have a doctor's degree from Pacific Northwestern University. Nelson furnished us with a diploma from the school, but after a great deal of investigation we finally learned that the "university" was only a "diploma mill." Although we still feel that Mr. Nelson has made an important contribution to the Book of Abraham issue, we believe he has dishonored himself. At any rate, our case against the Book of Abraham is certainly not based on any one man but stands firmly on the science of Egyptology and on the work of some of the world's greatest Egyptologists—i.e., Professors Parker, Baer and Wilson.

For a complete report on the Nelson affair see *Mormonism—Shadow or Reality?* and *Can the Browns Save Joseph Smith?*



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