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## PAPYRI PROVE BOOK OF ABRAHAM UNTRUE

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It was just a little over six months ago that the Metropolitan Museum of Art presented to the Mormon Church a collection of papyri which once belonged to Joseph Smith. Before this transaction, it was generally believed that this collection had been completely destroyed in the Chicago fire of 1871.

Joseph Smith had used part of the papyri as the basis for a work he called "The Book of Abraham." He claimed that Abraham had written this book on papyrus thousands of years ago. In 1842 he published his translation of this book, and the Mormon people accepted it as scripture. It is now published as a part of the *Pearl of Great Price*—one of the four standard works of the Mormon Church.

When the Mormon leaders announced that the papyri had been found, many members of the Church felt that Joseph Smith's work had been vindicated. Those who knew the most about the situation, however, advised their people to be cautious. Dr. Sidney B. Sperry, of the Brigham Young University, stated: "... as members of the Church we ought not to overrate the importance of this discovery" (*Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology*, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, March 1, 1968, page 8). Dr. James R. Clark gave a similar warning on page 8 of the same publication:

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 of 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 this statement 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. (*Daily Universe*, Brigham Young University, December 1, 1967)

In an article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Dr. Nibley stated:

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: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer 1968, page 102)

### A Devastating Blow

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!

At first the Mormon leaders were only willing to admit that one fragment of the papyri had any direct connection with the Book of Abraham. This was the piece that has the picture found on Facsimile No. 1 in the *Pearl of Great Price*. 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).

In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for March, 1968, we announced that the "piece of papyrus from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Abraham" had been located among the papyri. We quoted Dr. James R. Clark, of the Brigham Young University, as stating that *Joseph Smith's Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* contained two separate handwritten manuscripts. These manuscripts contain the text of part of the Book of Abraham, and they show the Egyptian characters Joseph Smith used to make this text. In the same *Messenger* we furnished photographic proof that these characters were taken from the fragment of papyrus which the *Improvement Era* labeled: "XI. 'Sensen' text (unillustrated)" (*Improvement Era*, February, 1968, page 41). The evidence which we presented could not be refuted, and Dr. Nibley has now had to admit that the "Sensen" text is related to the Book of Abraham. He began breaking the news in 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*:

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### \* \* NEW BOOKS \* \*

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#### Is the Book of Abraham True?

By Jerald and Sandra Tanner. A 23-page pamphlet which proves beyond all doubt that the Book of Abraham is a spurious translation. This pamphlet contains some of the latest and most important information ever compiled on this subject. It shows how Grant Heward found the key to the Book of Abraham text in Papyrus No. 3284 which is located in the Louvre in France. Price: 50¢ — 3 for \$1.00 — 10 for \$3.00 — 20 for \$5.00

#### The Joseph Smith Papyri — A Translation & Preliminary Survey

by Dee Jay Nelson. A 48-page booklet which contains a translation and vital information concerning the Mormon Papyri. This work proves that the papyri have absolutely nothing to do with Abraham. Although this booklet is written in a very scientific and unemotional manner, the *Deseret News* would not allow it to be advertized. We highly recommend this booklet. Price: 75¢ — 3 for \$2.00 — 5 for \$3.00 — 10 for \$4.50.

#### The Mormon Papyri Question

by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. A 32-page pamphlet dealing with the recent discovery of the Mormon papyri. Proves that Joseph Smith was not able to translate Egyptian and that the Book of Abraham was a work of his own imagination. What the Mormon leaders claimed were the writings of Abraham and Joseph in Egypt turn out to be nothing but parts of Egyptian funerary texts. Very revealing. Price: 50¢ — 3 for \$1.00 — 10 for \$3.00 — 20 for \$5.00.

#### The Negro in Mormon Theology

by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. A 58-page pamphlet. Most important material which appeared in *Joseph Smith's Curse Upon the Negro* is included in this pamphlet. Also contains new material. Alvin R. Dyer's speech, which was "hot" meant for the investigator, is printed in full. Price: 50¢ — 3 for \$1.00 — 10 for \$3.00 — 20 for \$5.00.

#### New Light on Mormon Origins From The Palmyra (N.Y.) Revival

by Rev. Wesley P. Walters. A devastating blow to the First Vision story. One of the best works on Mormonism. A 26-page pamphlet. Price: 15¢ — 7 for \$1.00 — 15 for \$2.00

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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**. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1968, page 102)

At a meeting held at the University of Utah on May 20, 1968, Dr. Nibley admitted that the “Sensen” fragment seemed to supply the characters for the Book of Abraham:

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 mindreaders. (Speech given by Hugh Nibley, University of Utah, May 20, 1968)

In the *Salt Lake City Messenger* for March, 1968, we stated that Grant Heward felt that the piece of papyrus Joseph Smith used as a basis for his “Book of Abraham” was in reality a part of the Egyptian “Book of Breathings.” His identification has now been confirmed. Dee Jay Nelson, a Mormon philologist, who worked independently on the Joseph Smith Papyrus, came to exactly the same conclusion. He made this comment concerning this fragment of papyrus:

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.). (*The Joseph Smith Papyrus—A Translation and Preliminary Survey of the Ta-shert-Min and Ter Papyri*, by Dee Jay Nelson, Salt Lake City, 1968, page 41)

Two of the most prominent Egyptologists in the United States have also confirmed this identification. John A. Wilson, who is 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 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)

The editors of *Dialogue* persuaded Dr. Parker to translate “the important ‘sensen’ text.” His translation reads as follows:

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 breathe like the soul[s] of the gods] for ever and
8. ever. (*Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*, Summer, 1968, page 98)

The reader will see that Richard Parker’s translation bears no resemblance to Joseph Smith’s purported translation of the same text. Thus we see that the Book of Abraham has been proven untrue because the original papyrus contains no reference to Abraham or his religion. Richard Parker translates only 83 English words from this text, whereas Joseph Smith’s rendition contained thousands of words.

Dr. Hugh Nibley had a copy of Richard Parker’s translation 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.

Strange as it may seem, Dr. Nibley admits 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)

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*, 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, 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 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 did 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.

## FACING REALITY

In an article written for the *Brigham Young University Studies*, Dr. Nibley 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.” (*Brigham Young University Studies*, Spring, 1968, page 249)

While Dr. Nibley is willing to admit that the “Sensen” text contains the characters Joseph Smith used in his Book of Abraham manuscript and that this text may be from the Book of Breathings, he is not willing to face reality and admit that the Book of Abraham is a forgery. He is willing to admit that the Richard Parker has made a “fine” translation of the “Sensen” fragment, but he is unable to face the implications of this translation. Dr. Nibley has now gone so far as to claim 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 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.”

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 about as ridiculous as claiming that the world is flat in this day of space travel. When Marvin Cowan asked Professor Richard Parker if that papyri could have a second meaning, he replied that he knew of “no Egyptologist who would support such a claim” (Letter from Richard Parker, dated January 9, 1968).

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 doing his best to make the issue as confused as possible. In the speech he gave at the University of Utah 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.”

Evidently, Dr. 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 states:

... 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**. ... 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. ... the Abraham literature is of course a great hodge-podge of stuff coming from 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. ... let’s not get ahead of the game, or overlook any possibility that there might be something there 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 102-105)

It appears that 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. What better evidence could there be than that furnished by the original text? To ignore this evidence is to ignore the truth entirely. The evidence is very clear. The Book of Abraham is a spurious translation. It has no historical basis, and it is plain that it is a work of Joseph Smith’s imagination! Truth now demands that the Mormon people repudiate this book and the anti-Negro doctrine that is contained in its pages.

We have prepared a 23-page booklet on this subject entitled, *Is the Book of Abraham True?* In this booklet we go into these matters in far greater detail than we have room to do here. We urge all of our readers to order it. We feel that it contains some of the best material we have ever compiled. Price: 50¢ — 3 for \$1.00 — 10 for \$3.00 — 20 for \$5.00. ■

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## NIBLEY ENDORSES NELSON’S WORK

In the last *Messenger* we told that Dee Jay Nelson, a Mormon Egyptologist, was given photographs of the Mormon Papyri by special permission of N. Eldon Tanner (a member of the First Presidency) before they were published in the *Improvement Era*. Mr. Nelson translated the papyri, but he felt that the Church leaders would not print it. Therefore, he turned his work over to us for publication. On April 1, 1968, we submitted the following ad to the Newspaper Agency Corporation:

**“THE JOSEPH SMITH  
PAPYRI”**  
A Translation & Preliminary Survey  
**BY DEE JAY NELSON**

Price: 75¢  
3 for \$2.00 — 5 for \$3.00 — 10 for \$4.50

**MODERN MICROFILM CO.**  
Box 1884 — Salt Lake City, Utah 84110  
Utah mail orders add sales tax — we pay postage

The *Salt Lake Tribune* ran the ad, but the editor of the *Deseret News* informed us that they would not run it. We asked N. Eldon Tanner if he did not feel a moral obligation concerning the matter. He replied that he did not. We asked the editor of the *Deseret News* why the ad was rejected. He stated that he did not believe it was a correct translation. He claimed that he had a conversation with Dr. Nibley concerning Nelson’s work, and that Nibley had told him that he did not believe 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 that he did, other than this man’s word), he seems to have now changed his mind. Dr. Nibley wrote the following for the *Brigham Young University Studies*:

The publication to 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

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## Everyone Welcome!

We are now holding a Bible study in our home at 1350 S. West Temple, every Thursday evening at 8:00 pm. Everyone is welcome. This is not connected with any particular group or church. Attendance is open to everyone. ■

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## A PERSONAL GOD?

To all those who will send us their address and zip code we will send a FREE COPY of *Is There a Personal God?* This is a 56-page pamphlet by Jerald Tanner. ■

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. Nelson's statements concerning Dee Jay Nelson's work will, no doubt, come as a great shock to the editor of the *Deseret News*. Dr. Nibley claims that Nelson's work is a "reliable translation" and that "the Latter-day Saints owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Dee Jay Nelson" for giving them this translation. It would appear, then, that the Mormon leaders 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 Dee Jay Nelson is a skilled Egyptologist at the time he allowed this ad 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 Nibley's knowledge of Egyptian philology is "superficial," and that he is "not qualified to present an honest evaluation of the papyri." He is very disturbed by Dr. Nibley's articles in the *Improvement Era*.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Nibley only attacks the Egyptologists who are now dead and cannot retaliate. He does not dare attack those who are living today. Both John A. Wilson and Richard Parker have stated that Joseph Smith's interpretations are incorrect (*Salt Lake City Messenger*, February 1968), but Dr. Nibley does not attack their character as he does the Egyptologists who lived in 1912. Instead, he tries his best to stay in their favor by praising them in every way that he can. He makes this statement concerning them in *Dialogue*: "... they are among the **ablest and most honorable scholars who ever lived** ..." (*Dialogue*, Summer, 1968, page 105). Dr. Nibley knows that he must not offend these men. He knows that he does not have the ability to fight against them. Therefore, he spends his time picking on the dead. We hope that these Egyptologists will not be fooled by Dr. Nibley's flattery. ■

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## A REAL DIALOGUE

In the Spring of 1966 a group of Mormons published the first issue of a publication entitled, *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. The editors of this journal claimed that they would present both sides of an issue, but we were rather skeptical and felt they might eventually be controlled by the Mormon leaders and become like the *Improvement Era*. We felt that they would not accept an article from us. This spring, however, we worked with Grant Heward and prepared an article which we submitted to them. This article included some material which we have never printed before. In this article we produced photographic proof that Facsimile No. 2 of the Book of Abraham was altered before it was first published. We could hardly imagine that they would print this article since it dealt such a devastating blow to the authenticity of the Book of Abraham. To our great delight, however, they published it in the Summer 1968 issue. We understand that they printed 8,000 copies! This will reach many of the Mormon people who do not read our *Messenger*.

Just before the article appeared, one of the editors wrote us a letter in which he stated: "Actually it's hard for me to believe that we're actually going to publish your article. . . . I think that you can't really say that we aren't a forum any more. At least, we've tried hard to move in that direction." We must admit that the editors of *Dialogue* have made a courageous move in the last issue. They have given us a chance to present our views, and they have allowed Dr. Nibley to make a rebuttal. This is certainly fair. We must admit that this is a real dialogue. More important than this, however, is the fact that they have submitted photographs of the papyri to some of the most qualified Egyptologists in the world and have printed their translations and interpretations concerning the papyri. We must congratulate them for this move. It shows both honesty and courage.

We plan to sell copies of this particular issue (Summer 1968), since it contains so much material which is related to our work. The price for this issue is \$2.00 for each copy. We cannot give any discount to dealers, and those who want back issues will have to write directly to the publishers. ■

## MORE HARM THAN GOOD?

After the papyri were presented to the Mormon Church they were "turned over to Dr. Hugh Nibley, . . . for further research and study" (*Improvement Era*, January 1968, page 13). On page 19 of the same issue 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" (*Ibid.*, page 40-H). Dr. Nibley gave a "demonstration" of his "Egyptology at work" which was printed in the *Brigham Young University Studies*. This was a rendition of a name that appeared in the papyri. Dr. Nibley's rendition was accepted by the *Improvement Era*:

The writings on the recently recovered fragments show that all of these Book of the Dead papyri belonged to the Lady Taimin Mutninesikhonsu. (*Improvement Era*, February 1968, page 40)

It soon became obvious that Dr. Nibley had made a mistake. Dee Jay Nelson stated that Dr. Nibley's work was "incorrect." He showed that Nibley had "combined the name 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) (*The Joseph Smith Papyri*, page 48).

John A. Wilson also rendered this as two different 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 . . ." (*Dialogue*, Summer, 1968, page 71). Richard A. Parker also rendered this as two separate names (page 87).

After Dr. Nibley made this mistake, he seemed to give up the idea of unfolding "the meaning of the hieroglyphics and illustrations." He has written the following 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 thing others are far better equipped to do the job than we are, and some of those others 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*, Summer, 1968, page 251)

It would appear, then, that Dr. Nibley was 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 B.Y.U. for six 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?" Why did John A. Wilson and the other Egyptologist have to work from photographs while Dr. Nibley kept possession of the papyri? ■

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## PRAY FOR US

We are very thankful for those who have been praying for us and for our work. The Lord has really been blessing the work. The developments with regard to the papyri have been nothing short of miraculous. Many people's eyes have been opened to the truth by this matter. With the Lord's help we hope to see even more results. Please continue to pray for us.

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## A DELAY

Because of the importance of the papyri we have spent a great deal of time studying the Egyptian language and religion. Although this will help us in our writing concerning this subject, it has caused a delay in our two works, *The Case Against Mormonism* and *The Mormon Kingdom*. So far we have completed 112 pages of vol. 2 of *The Case Against Mormonism*, and hope to be mailing out more pages soon. This work will contain our best material concerning the Book of Abraham. The price for volumes one and two is \$7.90—this includes a beautiful vinyl loose-leaf binder. We have completed 84 pages of the first volume of *The Mormon Kingdom*. This work sells for \$4.95.