

A COVER-UP REVEALED

Joseph Smith's Attempt to Save the Book of Mormon

In the July 1989 issue of the *Salt Lake City Messenger*, we announced the discovery of a large “black hole” in the first part of the Book of Mormon. We demonstrated that when the first 116 pages of Joseph Smith’s manuscript were stolen, he was unable to accurately reproduce the material he had “translated” from the plates of Lehi. Since he feared that his enemies had not destroyed the missing pages and would bring them forth and point out contradictions if he tried to duplicate the material, he was forced to claim that God ordered him to translate the first part of the Book of Mormon from a different set of plates. Mormons refer to these plates as the “small plates of Nephi.” These “gold plates” covered the same period as the plates of Lehi, but since they were written by another author, the story did not have to be identical to that found in the missing pages. Nevertheless, the evidence shows that even this solution did not completely solve the dilemma that confronted Joseph Smith. Smith apparently could not clearly remember many of the personal names, dates, cities, lands, kings, military leaders and other matters he had previously written about. Consequently, what Smith dictated to replace the missing pages of his book had to be as vague as possible. While these pages would have to cover the same period as the original pages from the book of Lehi and give some appearance of being history, they would actually have to be very obscure when it came to particulars which Joseph Smith could not clearly remember. Many important things, therefore, which had evaporated from Joseph Smith’s memory would also have to vanish into a rayless and indefinable “black hole” in the Book of Mormon.

Our theory with regard to this “black hole” now seems to be well established by the evidence. Not only have Mormon apologists remained silent in the face of the facts that have come forth, but new evidence has come to light which tends to confirm the research which was presented in the July 1989 issue of the *Messenger*.

One important development relates to a theory held by some prominent Mormon scholars for a number of years. These scholars maintain that the first part of the Book of Mormon was actually written last. They claim that after the 116 pages were stolen, Joseph Smith did not try to fill in the missing material at the start of the book. Instead, he picked up where he had left off and continued until he came to the

end of the book. Only after he completed the last part of the Book of Mormon (over two-thirds of the book), did he face the problem of restoring the beginning of his work. Therefore, the first six books in the Book of Mormon—1 Nephi through Omni—comprising 142 pages, were written last of all. When we originally did our work with regard to the “black hole,” we did not realize how well this theory coincided with our ideas. Fortunately, during the course of our research a Mormon scholar who has lost faith in the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon shared some of his research with us. We checked his work and found that he had irrefutable evidence that the first part of the book was, in fact, written last. Moreover, this evidence also conclusively proves that Joseph Smith himself was the author of the Book of Mormon.

In a new book we have just completed, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, we have combined this important information with our research on the “black hole.” In addition, we have added our computer work on plagiarism—74 pages of photographic proof that the author of the Book of Mormon lifted a great deal of material from the New Testament.

DELETING JESUS' NAME

The discovery that the first part of the Book of Mormon was actually written last opened up a plausible explanation as to why Joseph Smith felt he had to delete the words *Jesus Christ*

AN IMPORTANT NEW BOOK!

Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon, by Jerald and Sandra Tanner. A penetrating look at the Book of Mormon which conclusively demonstrates that it was written by Joseph Smith himself and did not come from a translation of gold plates written by ancient Jews. Contains 74 pages of photographic proof that Smith plagiarized extensively from the New Testament of the King James Bible.

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from an early portion of the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 12:18). We had noted this change years ago in our book, *3,913 Changes in the Book of Mormon*, but did not understand the weighty implications of the matter.

One of the most serious problems confronting believers in the Book of Mormon is the emphasis upon Jesus in the Old Testament portion of the Book of Mormon. Even the appearance of the name *Jesus Christ* in the story hundreds of years before his coming presents a problem. At the time Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon he must not have realized that the words *Jesus Christ* were derived from the Greek words *Iesous Christos*. When Smith was charged with using a Greek word in the Book of Mormon, he responded that this was an error: “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 . . . translated the Book of Mormon” (*Times and Seasons*, vol. 4, p. 194). Joseph Smith was aware of the fact that it would be incorrect to have a name derived from the Greek language in the Book of Mormon. He, therefore, argued against the idea put forth by his detractors.

Notwithstanding Joseph Smith’s firm denial, there are names in the Book of Mormon “derived from the Greek.” For example, the name *Timothy* (3 Nephi 19:4) comes from the Greek language, and the name *Jonas* (found in the same verse) is the Greek name for Jonah. Moreover, the Greek words *Alpha* and *Omega* are found in 3 Nephi 9:18. It is evident also that they have been plagiarized from the New Testament, Revelation 21:6. (The New Testament, of course, was written in Greek.) It is interesting to note that Mormon Apostle Bruce R. McConkie freely admitted that these words are from the Greek language: “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*, 1979, p. 31).

Even the Mormon Church’s own Bible Dictionary, included with the church’s printing of the King James Version of the Bible, acknowledges that *Jesus* is the “**Greek** form of the name Joshua or Jeshua” (page 713) and also states that the “English word *Christ* is from a **Greek** word meaning *anointed*, and is the equivalent of *Messiah*, which is from a Hebrew and Aramaic term meaning *Anointed*” (page 609).

If the Book of Mormon had used the words *Joshua the Messiah* instead of *Jesus Christ*, it would be far more impressive to scholars. It could be argued, of course, that these words were transliterated into “reformed Egyptian” characters so they could be engraved on the original gold plates, but that the translator chose to use the words *Jesus Christ* instead because they would be more easily understood by the reader. The problem with the Book of Mormon, however, goes much deeper than just the name of the Messiah. Mormon scholar S. Kent Brown, who seems to be an avid apologist for the Book of Mormon, acknowledges:

Nephi and Jacob use several titles which apparently go beyond what they could have found in the brass plates . . . The following titles and names used by Nephi seem to be more at home in a later era such as that of the New Testament or of early Christianity: *Beloved Son . . . Beloved . . . Son of the living God . . . Son of righteousness . . . Son of the most high God . . . Son of God . . . Only Begotten of the Father . . . Jesus Christ . . . Christ . . . true vine . . . light . . .* The following names from Jacob fit the same situation: *Only Begotten Son . . . Christ . . . Jesus . . .* (*BYU Studies*, Winter 1984, p. 35, n. 40)

A study of the text of the Book of Mormon reveals that although Joseph Smith may not have known that the words *Jesus Christ* were obtained from the Greek language, for some reason he was concerned about introducing them into the first part of the Book of Mormon between five and six hundred years before the birth of Christ. As we will show, this fear led Smith into producing some contradictory material in the Book of Mormon.

S. Kent Brown argued that Lehi did not know the words *Jesus Christ* and that they were not revealed until after Lehi’s death:

Did Lehi not know titles such as *Son of God* and *Christ*? Regarding both the term *Christ* and the name *Jesus*, the answer is **a definite no**. According to 2 Nephi 10:3, the title *Christ* was made known to Jacob by an angel only after Lehi’s death. And Nephi makes use of this title only after narrating this experience of Jacob (2 Ne. 11:4). In addition, Nephi mentions the name *Jesus* for the first time only near the end of his own writings (2 Ne. 26:12) . . . Therefore, we can safely conclude that Lehi did not know these names. (*Ibid.*, pp. 35-36)

Although S. Kent Brown’s statement is essentially correct as it relates to the current edition of the Book of Mormon, when we turn to the original 1830 edition, a serious problem comes to light that completely overthrows Brown’s thesis. The first edition, in fact, makes it clear that the name *Jesus Christ* was known not only before Lehi’s death, but it was used by Nephi himself before he came to the New World:

And a great and a terrible gulf divideth them; yea, even the word of the justice of the Eternal God, and **Jesus Christ**, which is the Lamb of God . . . (Book of Mormon, 1830 edition, p. 28)

Since the Book of Mormon later states that the name was first made known to Jacob years after Lehi’s death, in the second edition Joseph Smith had to change the words *Jesus Christ* to the *Messiah*. In the 1981 edition we read as follows:

And a great and a terrible gulf divideth them; yea, even the word of the justice of the Eternal God, and **the Messiah** who is the Lamb of God . . . (Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 12:18)

The printer’s manuscript of the Book of Mormon was also altered to reflect this serious change. From this it is obvious that a deliberate change was made to cover up an anachronistic and embarrassing portion of the Book of Mormon.

After examining the appearances of the words *Jesus* and *Christ* throughout the Book of Mormon, we saw some strange

BOOK OF MORMON

KING JAMES BIBLE

I Nephi 12

10 And these ^{*}twelve ministers whom thou beholdest shall judge thy seed. And, behold, they are righteous forever; for because of their faith in the Lamb of God their garments are made white in his blood.

Revelation 7

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

I Nephi 14

10 And he said unto me: Behold there are save ^{*}two churches only; the one is the church of the Lamb of God, and the ^{*}other is the church of the ^{*}devil; wherefore, ^{*}whoso belongeth not to the church of the Lamb of God belongeth to that great church, which is (the mother of abominations) and she is (the whore of all the earth)

Revelation 17

5 And upon her forehead was a name written, ^{*}MYSTERY, ^{*}BABYLON THE GREAT, THE ^{*}MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

Revelation 19

2 For true and righteous are his ^{*}judgments: for he hath ^{*}judged the great ^{*}whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

11 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld (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.

Revelation 17

AND there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the ^{*}judgment of the great ^{*}whore that sitteth upon many ^{*}waters:

12 And it came to pass that I beheld the church of the Lamb of God, and its numbers were ^{*}few, because of the wickedness and abominations of the whore who sat upon many waters; nevertheless, I beheld that the church of the Lamb, who were the saints of God, were also upon ^{*}all the face of the earth; and their dominions upon the face of the earth were small, because of the wickedness of (the great whore) whom I saw.

Revelation 13

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and ^{*}power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.

13 And it came to pass that I beheld that the great (mother of abominations) did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God.

Revelation 19

19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

Above is photographic proof that Joseph Smith plagiarized from the book of Revelation. On the left side of the page are verses from the 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon. the verses from the Bible (to the right) are taken from the Mormon church's own official 1987 edition of the King James Version.

patterns which could be explained by the theory that the first part of the Book of Mormon was written last. It seems, in fact, that Joseph Smith never intended to introduce the words *Jesus Christ* into the record of the Nephites until the reign of king Benjamin—just a little over a century before Christ was born. In the book of Mosiah, which would be the first book written after the 116 pages were stolen, king Benjamin gave a moving address to his people in “About 124 B. C.” Just before the address, he told his son Mosiah that he was going to “give this people **a name**, that thereby they may be distinguished above all the people which the Lord God hath brought out of the land of Jerusalem; and this I do because they have been a diligent people in keeping the commandments of the Lord. And I give unto them **a name** that never shall be blotted out, except it be through transgression” (Mosiah 1:11-12). In his address, king Benjamin seems to be saying that an angel revealed to him the words “Jesus Christ” and that his people should take upon themselves the name of Christ:

... the things which I shall tell you are made known unto me by an angel from God . . . he said unto me: Awake, and hear the words which I shall tell thee, for behold, I am come to declare unto you the glad tidings of great joy. . . . For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent . . . shall come down from heaven . . . and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay . . . And he shall be called Jesus Christ the Son of God . . . and his mother shall be called Mary. (Mosiah 3:2, 3, 5, 8)

In Mosiah 5:8 and 11, king Benjamin informed his people, “There is no other name given whereby salvation cometh; therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ . . . And I would that ye should remember also, that this is the name that I said I should give unto you that never should be blotted out, except it be through transgression . . .” Mosiah 6:2 goes on to state that after the address, “there was not one soul, except it were little children, but who had entered into the covenant and had taken upon them the name of Christ.”

This address raises a very serious question with regard to the material appearing in the book of 2nd Nephi which was supposed to have been written over 400 years earlier. Why would king Benjamin have to receive a special revelation informing him of the name of Christ if the plates of Nephi already contained this information? According to Mormon, “Amaleki had delivered up these plates [the small plates of Nephi] into the hands of king Benjamin” (Words of Mormon 1:10). Furthermore, king Benjamin also had the large plates of Nephi. Benjamin himself told his sons that the “plates of Nephi” were “true” and instructed them to “remember to search them diligently” (Mosiah 1:6-7). In the small plates alone, the name “Jesus” appears 10 times and the term “Christ” is found 82 times. In 2 Nephi 25:16 and 26, Nephi plainly wrote that “there is none other name given under heaven save it be this Jesus Christ, of which I have spoken, whereby man can be saved. . . . we talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may

know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.” In 2 Nephi 31:13 we find this: “. . . I know that if ye shall follow the Son . . . witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism . . . then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost . . .”

In light of these references, it seems highly unreasonable to believe that king Benjamin and his people would have been completely in the dark concerning the “name of Christ” before the angel visited Benjamin and revealed this information.

In the books Alma through Mormon the name *Jesus* is used 147 times and *Christ* appears 176 times. Ether, which is next to the last book in the Book of Mormon, uses the name *Jesus* 12 times, and the word *Christ* appears 1-4 times. The last book, Moroni, has *Jesus* 11 times and *Christ* 70 times. By the time Joseph Smith got around to replacing the missing portion of the Book of Mormon, he was thoroughly steeped in the use of the words *Jesus Christ*. He had, in fact, devoted many pages of his work to the visitation of Christ to the Nephites, and it became very difficult for him to suppress the Messiah’s name as he began replacing the material which was originally in the missing 116 pages.

One thing seems very clear; Joseph Smith knew that he should not include the words *Jesus Christ* in his “translation” of the small plates of Nephi because it would contradict the pages he had written in the book of Mosiah. (The reader will remember that in Mosiah he had claimed that an angel revealed these words to Benjamin.) Consequently, they should not appear before the reign of king Benjamin.

Once we have this understanding, it becomes obvious that Joseph Smith was trying very hard to suppress the words “Jesus Christ” in the first books of the Book of Mormon. An examination of the 1st book of Nephi shows the caution Joseph Smith was using with regard to this matter. Prior to the verse where he accidentally inserted the words *Jesus Christ* (1 Nephi 12:18), he attempted to use every other word he could think of to avoid using the name of Jesus. He used the word *God* 36 times; the words *the Lord* 99 times; the words *God of Israel* two times; *Messiah* nine times; *Savior* once; *Redeemer* four times; the words *the Lamb* or *the Lamb of God* 15 times; the words *Son of God* five times and *the Son* three times. The words *Jesus* or *Christ* never appear in any of the first 22 printed pages of the Book of Mormon.

The cover-up was working very well until Joseph Smith arrived at chapter 12, verse 18. At that point, however, he seems to have made a slip of the tongue and dictated the words *Jesus Christ*. He apparently did not even realize he had made an error and did not catch this serious mistake when he printed the first edition in 1830. Smith probably did not realize that he had made this Freudian slip until he reread the text of the Book of Mormon for the 1837 edition. As we have shown, at that time he removed the words *Jesus Christ* and the words *the Messiah* took their place in the editions which followed.

In any case, after Joseph Smith made his revealing blunder in 1 Nephi 12:18, he was able to dictate about 55 pages of text before he made a similar mistake. He filled these pages with all sorts of synonyms in his attempt to

BOOK OF MORMON

KING JAMES BIBLE

I Nephi 10

8 Yea, even he should go forth and cry in the wilderness: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight, for there standeth one among you whom ye know not, and he is mightier than I, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. And much spake my father concerning this thing.

9 And my father said he should baptize (in "Bethabara, beyond Jordan;) and he also said he should "baptize with water, even that he should baptize the Messiah with water.

10 And after he had baptized the Messiah with water, he should behold and bear record that he had baptized the "Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world.

I Nephi 22

20 And the Lord will surely "prepare a way for his people, unto the fulfilling of the words of Moses, which he spake, saying: 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.

II Nephi 9

39 O, my beloved brethren, remember the awfulness in "transgressing against that Holy God, and also the awfulness of yielding to the enticings of that "cunning one. Remember, to be "carnally-minded is "death, and to be "spiritually-minded is "life "eternal.

Matthew 3

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet "Esaias, saying, The "voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his "paths straight.

Luke 3

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall "baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

John 1

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with "water; but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not:

27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose "shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done (in "Bethabara beyond Jordan,) where John was baptizing.

John 1

29 ¶ The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the "sin of the world.

Acts 3

22 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.

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be "destroyed from among the people.

Romans 8

6 For to be "carnally minded is "death; but to be "spiritually minded is life and "peace.

Selected verses from the Book of Mormon compared with Bible verses which appear in the King James Version—first printed in 1611 A.D. The case for plagiarism is very convincing. For additional evidence see the 74 pages of photographic evidence in *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*.

avoid mentioning the words *Jesus Christ*. He used *the Lord* 204 times (actually more if we add on some pages of Isaiah quoted in this portion of the Book of Mormon). The word *God* is used 170 times: the words *the Lamb* or *Lamb of God* appear 59 times; *Messiah* is used ten times; *Redeemer* is found ten times and *Savior* appears twice. In this portion of the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith used some new synonyms. In 2 Nephi 9:5, for instance, we read that “it behooveth the **great Creator** that he suffereth himself to become subject unto man in the flesh . . .” Verse 6 also uses these same words. In the second chapter of the same book (verses 27 and 28), the Messiah is referred to twice as “the **great Mediator**.” From the book of Isaiah in the Bible, Joseph Smith derived the words *the Holy One of Israel*. This is used in 1 Nephi 22:21 as a substitute for *Jesus Christ*: “And now I, Nephi, declare unto you, that this prophet of whom Moses spake was **the Holy One of Israel** . . .” These same words are used in 26 other places in the section of the text we are discussing. When we add all of these references to deity in this section of the Book of Mormon, we obtain a total of 486. In this same portion, the computer failed to find a single mention of either *Jesus* or *Christ*.

Finally, after dictating 55 straight pages without letting the name of the Messiah escape from his mouth, Joseph Smith stumbled again. In 2 Nephi 10:3, the word *Christ* slipped out. This time, however, Smith was immediately aware of his mistake. Although this slip of the tongue was not as bad as the first mistake (1 Nephi 12:18, where he used both *Jesus* and *Christ*), this time Smith seems to have realized that his scribe had heard him use the word *Christ* and that “the cat was out of the bag.” He apparently did not want to admit that he had made a mistake. It appears, therefore, that he immediately attempted to correct the problem by claiming that Jacob had the word *Christ* revealed to him by an angel. The reader will notice how quickly Joseph Smith reacted in his attempt to smooth things over.

And now I, Jacob, speak unto you again . . . our children shall be restored, that they may come to that which will give them the true knowledge of their Redeemer. Wherefore, as I said unto you, it must needs be expedient that Christ—for in the last night the angel spake unto me that this should be his name—should come among the Jews . . . (2 Nephi 10:1-3)

It is interesting to note that the order of things is different than when king Benjamin had the name of the Messiah revealed to him. In that account, Benjamin first tells his people that an “angel of God” appeared to him and gave him an important message. He then says that the angel told him the Savior would “be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God . . .” (Mosiah 3:2 and 8). In Jacob’s account, however, he mentions the fact that an angel had given him the name *Christ* only after he had let the name slip out of his mouth. When all of the facts are considered, it is difficult to resist the idea that the angel’s message was an afterthought.

After Jacob first mentioned *Christ* in 2 Nephi 10:3, it did not take him long to use it again. Within two and a half

pages the word *Christ* appears five more times. It should be noted, however, that the word *Jesus* does not appear at all in Jacob’s address. Nephi first uses this word in 2 Nephi 25:19: “. . . the Messiah cometh . . . and according to the words of the prophets, and also the word of the angel of God, his name shall be **Jesus Christ** the Son of God.” It would appear that since Joseph Smith had already used the word *Christ*, he felt it would be pointless to continue to suppress the name *Jesus*. Like Jacob, Nephi claimed “the angel of God” revealed the Savior’s name. In this verse Nephi also makes a peculiar statement concerning the matter; he comments that the name was found in “the words of the prophets.” If this was the case, why were Nephi, Jacob and king Benjamin all ignorant of this important information until angels revealed it? Furthermore, why would an angel have to give a revelation concerning the matter if it was already found in “the words of the prophets.”

Joseph Smith not only had a very serious problem with regard to the name *Jesus Christ* in the Book of Mormon, but as Wesley P. Walters observed, he also “lost track of his time-frame” in some portions of the book. In his Master’s thesis, “The Use of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon,” page 79, Walters notes that there are “several passages in which Joseph had difficulty from time to time trying to have his Book of Mormon characters write about events as still in the future when from Joseph’s vantage point they were already in the past.” Pastor Walters gives some examples on pages 79-80 of his thesis, and H. Michael Marquardt has dealt with this subject in *The Use of the Bible In the Book of Mormon*, page 5.

A good example of the problem Joseph Smith had is found in the book of 2 Nephi, chapter 31, dated “Between 559 and 545 B.C.”:

And now, I would ask of you . . . wherein the Lamb of God **did** fulfill all righteousness in being baptized by water? Know ye not that he **was** holy? . . . Wherefore **after he was baptized** with water the Holy Ghost **descended** upon him . . . it showeth unto the children of men the straitness of the path . . . he **having set the example** before them. (2 Nephi 31: 6-9)

In one place in Mosiah, dated “About 148 B.C.,” Smith seems to have realized he was in the past tense and tried to correct the situation: “And now if Christ **had not come** into the world, speaking of things **to come as though they had already come**, there could have been no redemption” (Mosiah 16:6).

WHAT IS MISSING?

After we completed our research with regard to the black hole in the small plates of Nephi we became aware of the fact that the entire Book of Mormon is also lacking a significant number of important things that should be there if the book were really a history of ancient Jewish people in the New World. In our new book, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, we explored a number of important things that are either entirely missing or seldom mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

One thing that is strangely lacking in the Book of Mormon is a system of measurements. It appears, in fact,

that a black hole extends throughout the entire book. It is hard to understand why Joseph Smith did not bother to give the ancient Nephites, Lamanites and Jaredites some system of measurements. It is possible that he felt that he might in some way contradict Hebrew measurements, or he may have just been too lazy or preoccupied to design or follow any kind of a system. In Alma 11:4, this statement appears concerning measurement:

... they [the Nephites] did not reckon after the manner of the Jews . . . but they altered their reckoning and their measure, according to the minds and the circumstances of the people, in every generation, until the reign of the judges . . .

In any case, our reading of the text of the Book of Mormon produced no examples of the measurement of anything. In Alma 11:7 and 11, we read that “A senum of silver was equal to a senine of gold, and either for a measure of barley, and also for a measure of every kind of grain. . . . A shiblon is half of a senum; therefore, a shiblon for half a measure of barley.” We are left completely in the dark, however, as to how much grain is contained in a “measure.” We searched with the Mormon Church’s computer program to see if we could find something our reading of the text did not disclose. The words which we searched for were as follows: *measure, measured, measurement, measures, measuring, length, breadth, width, height, heights, stature, size, distance and depth*. These words, of course, produced a great many examples of measurement in the Bible, but the Book of Mormon produced nothing of any value. The closest thing we could find to measurement appeared in Alma 50:2. This verse spoke of “works of timbers built up to the **height of a man** . . .” The only other thing we found was in Ether 2:17, where a description of the barges used to bring the Jaredites to the New World is given: “. . . the length thereof was the **length of a tree** . . .” Since trees vary a great deal in their length, this does not give us too much to go on; some trees are only 20 or 30 feet high, whereas some of the giant sequoias in California grow to over 300 feet high. The description given of Jared’s barges certainly is not as precise as that given concerning the ark in the Bible: “. . . The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits” (Genesis 6:15). According to the computer, the Bible uses the words *cubit* and *cubits* 258 times, whereas the word *cubit* is only found once in the Book of Mormon. In 3 Nephi 13:27, we read: “Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?” It is interesting to note, however, that even this example was plagiarized from the Bible, Matthew 6:27.

As far as distance is concerned, the New Testament refers to *mile* and *furlongs*. The Nephites, on the other hand, seem to have never developed any accurate way to measure distance. Alma 22:32 says that “it was only the **distance of a day and a half’s** journey for a Nephite . . . from the east to the west sea . . .” It is true that the Book of Mormon does use the word *mile* once in 3 Nephi 12:41, but it is obvious that it is plagiarized from Matthew 5:41: “And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.”

The Bible has a great deal to say about the weight of various objects. The ancient Hebrews used a balance or scales to weigh their precious metals and other items.

For instance, in Numbers 7:13 we read: “And his offering was one silver charger, the weight thereof was an hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary . . .” The computer shows that the Bible mentions *shekel* or *shekels* 139 times, whereas the Book of Mormon never uses these words. *Gerahs* are mentioned in the Old Testament, and the words *pound* and *pounds* are found in both the Old and New Testaments. These words, however, are not found in the Book of Mormon. The words *talent* and *talents* (a talent of silver was equal to 3,000 shekels) appear 66 times in the two testaments of the Bible. The Book of Mormon, however, only has one place where the word *talent* is found: “. . . **take away their talent . . . and give unto** them who shall **have more abundantly**” (Ether 12:35). This seems to have been plagiarized from Matthew 25:28-29: “**Take** therefore the **talent** from him, **and give it unto** him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall **have abundance** . . .”

We searched for the following words in both the Bible and the Book of Mormon: *weigh, weighed, weigheth, weighing, weight, weightier, weights, weighty, scales, balance and balances*. The search in the Bible brought forth a great deal of information. The Book of Mormon, however, yielded six references, but none of these had anything to do with the weight or weighing of any object. For instance, Lehi exclaimed: “My heart hath been **weighed** down with sorrow . . .” (2 Nephi 1:17), and Nephi wrote: “And then they shall rejoice . . . and their **scales** of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes . . .” (2 Nephi 30:6) It is also interesting to note that in Joseph Smith’s other writings in the *Doctrine and Covenants* and the *Pearl of Great Price*—which includes the books of Abraham and Moses—we do not find any of the words mentioned above in any way that relates to weighing or the weight of any object. It seems obvious, then, that Joseph Smith had very little interest in any system of weights and this is reflected in his writings.

In an attempt to ascertain if anything was ever actually measured in the Book of Mormon, we searched for the following words: *measure, measured, measurement, measures and measuring*. While the Bible produced numerous references regarding measurement, other than the two indefinite references in the 11th chapter of Alma (mentioned above), we could find no evidence that people in the Book of Mormon actually measured anything.

While the Book of Mormon gives an abundance of details concerning military matters and some aspects of religion, it is very deficient in a number of important areas. In many respects it is virtually colorless in its description of events and people. Indeed, the word *colorless* could be applied almost in a literal sense to the Book of Mormon. We, in fact, did a study concerning eleven colors mentioned in the Bible and found the following: the Bible mentions these colors, or words derived from these colors (e. g., red, reddish; green, greenness, etc.), 382 times, whereas the Book of Mormon yielded only 56 instances where these words were used. Moreover, if we eliminate the words *black* and *white* from this total, there are only 18 places where we find any other colors. *Red* appeared the most frequently. It comprises

15 of the 18 instances mentioned. When we take a closer look at *red*, however, we find another amazing fact: of the 15 times it appears only two of these instances relate to anything in the New World. These refer to the fact that the Amlicites “marked themselves with red in their foreheads” (see Alma 3:4, 13). The other 13 places where this word is found relate to the sea which the Israelites passed through on their flight from the Egyptians—i. e., the Red Sea (see Exodus 10:19).

The other two colors which appear in the Book of Mormon are scarlet—actually *scarlets*—and *grey*. The word *scarlets* is found twice in 1 Nephi 13:7-8, and was apparently plagiarized from Revelations 18:12. The remaining color, *grey*, is found just once (1 Nephi 18:18) and seems to have been lifted from the Bible (see Genesis 42:38).

Of more importance, however, are the colors which are completely missing from the Book of Mormon: BLUE, BROWN, CRIMSON, GREEN, PURPLE and YELLOW. That all these colors would be absent from the book is astounding. It is also interesting to note that five of these colors—blue, brown, crimson, purple and yellow—are also missing in Joseph Smith’s writings in the *Doctrine and Covenants* and the *Pearl of Great Price*. The word *green* does appear one time in the *Doctrine and Covenants* and also once in the *Pearl of Great Price*, but both occurrences seem to have been taken from the Bible.

Our computer search of the Bible for the words *colour*, *coloured* and *colors*—note the British spelling in the King James Version—revealed that they were used 27 times. The same search in the Book of Mormon yielded only the word *colors* once (see 3 Nephi 22:11). This word, however, has been directly taken from a verse in the Bible (see Isaiah 54:11). The very limited use of colors throughout the Book of Mormon seems to show that it was written by one author who apparently did not pay much attention to colors. Furthermore, the fact that the *Doctrine and Covenants* and *Pearl of Great Price* completely omit five of the same colors as the Book of Mormon points to the conclusion that they were all the product of the same mind.

The ancient Israelites were a people who were very interested in music. This interest should certainly be reflected in the Book of Mormon. An examination of the book, however, shows that it was written by a person who had very little interest in music. We searched for the words *sang*, *sing*, *singed*, *singer*, *singers*, *singeth*, *singing*, *sings*, *song* and *songs* and found that they appeared 268 times in the Bible. These same words are only found 36 times in the Book of Mormon, and further research shows that most of these were derived through plagiarism from the Bible. We have identified 19 places where they were directly copied from the Bible, and of the remaining 17, there are eight cases where they only refer to singing in heaven or singing the song of “redeeming love”—i. e., becoming converted to Christ. We also searched for the words *hymn* and *hymns*. While we found four cases in the Bible, the Book of Mormon did not yield any examples of these words. We also searched for the words *music*, *musical*, *musician*, *musicians* and *musick*. (In this particular search we included headings found in the Psalms because they are found in the Hebrew text.) These words appeared 73 times in the Bible, but, again, the Book

of Mormon yielded no examples of these words being used. It is also interesting to note that Joseph Smith did not use any of these words in the *Pearl of Great Price* or his revelations printed in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. The word *music* appears once in the *Doctrine and Covenants* (Section 136:28), but it is in a revelation given to Brigham Young.

When it comes to musical instruments, the Book of Mormon is sadly deficient. We searched for the words *instrument* and *instruments* and found 24 places in the Bible where they are used with regard to musical instruments. Although the Book of Mormon uses these words, we did not find a single case where they refer to a musical instrument. We searched for the names of specific musical instruments the Israelites used. In the first search we looked for the following instruments: *organ*, *organs*, *psalteries*, *psaltery*, *sackbut*, *tabret*, *tabrets*, *timbrel*, *timbrels*, *trump*, *trumpet*, *trumpeters*, *trumpets*, *trumps* and *viol*. While these words appeared 174 times in the Bible, they are used only seven times in the Book of Mormon. The word *trump* appears three times, but in every case it is referring to the *trump of God*. While the word *trumpet* is found twice, one of these examples (3 Nephi 13:2) has been plagiarized from Matthew 6:2. The only example of any of these musical instruments actually being used is when a Jaredite by the name of Comnor “did sound a trumpet unto the armies of Shiz to invite them forth to battle” (Ether 14:28). It is really surprising that the author of the Book of Mormon, who obviously had a real interest in warfare, never had the Nephites or the Lamanites sound a trumpet.

We also searched for the following musical instruments or words related to them: *cornet*, *cornets*, *cymbal*, *cymbals*, *dulcimer*, *flute*, *harp*, *harped*, *harpers*, *harping*, *harps*, *pipe*, *piped*, *pipers* and *pipes*. The result was that we found these words used 102 times in the Bible. Only two of these words were found in the Book of Mormon, *harp* and *pipe*. They both appear in one verse found in 2 Nephi 15:12. An examination of this verse, however, shows that it was plagiarized from Isaiah 5:12 in the Bible. It is obvious, therefore, that the author of the Book of Mormon mentioned none of these musical instruments in his own writing. The same applies to Joseph Smith’s revelations in the *Doctrine and Covenants*. The *Pearl of Great Price* does use the word *harp* in one place (Moses 5:45), but it is obvious that even this is taken from Genesis 4:21.

JEW OR PROTESTANT?

An extremely important question concerning the Book of Mormon is whether it was actually written by Jewish writers who understood the laws and customs of ancient Israel or by someone who was raised in the Christian faith as a Protestant during the early part of the 19th century. The authenticity of the Book of Mormon stands or falls on this question.

The Book of Mormon presents what most Christians feel is a very unusual picture of religious life between 600 B.C. and the coming of Christ. It claims that the ancient Nephites actually worshipped Jesus Christ and established Christian churches during this long period before Christ died and

the New Testament was written. Bible scholars find it very hard to accept this claim, and they are even more puzzled when they learn that the Book of Mormon claims that the ancient Nephites also kept the law of Moses at the same time. Between “559 and 545 B.C.” Nephi was supposed to have written the following: “And, notwithstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the law of Moses, and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ, until the law shall be fulfilled. . . . the right way is to believe in Christ . . . And, inasmuch as it shall be expedient, ye must keep the performances and ordinances of God until the Law shall be fulfilled which was given to Moses” (2 Nephi 25:21, 29-30). In his Master’s thesis, Wesley P. Walters takes issue with this type of worship:

The transplantation of New Testament material into the Old disrupts the dispensations that God has established in the unfolding of redemption, and confuses the Old and New Covenants and their respective ordinances. The Book of Mormon is careful to point out that the American Hebrew colony “kept the law of Moses”. . . Yet Christian baptism was said to be taught among the Nephites five hundred years before Christ. . . Furthermore by 147 B.C. a Christian Church is depicted as flourishing, of which people become members through baptism. . . to introduce the New Testament practice of baptism in the name of Christ into the Old Testament period is to confuse the Old and New Covenants and the ordinances connected with each. The Book of Hebrews is very specific that while the Old Testament was in force, the New clearly was not. When the New Covenant had been established, the Old Covenant was abolished (Heb. 8:13, 10:1-9). To introduce the features of the New Covenant into the time period when the Old Covenant was in force is to confuse the two covenants to the extent of rendering them both meaningless. Yet Mormon teaching has followed this pattern first set out in the Book of Mormon. . . . Dr. James D. Bales has well expressed the Book of Mormon’s variance with the biblical teachings concerning the Old and New Covenants: “The two [covenants] could not exist together because he took away the first that he might establish the second. Furthermore, it is evident that the second could not be in force before the first had been taken away. This is evident because the purpose of the taking away of the first was to establish the second. It had to be taken away so the second could be established.” The Book of Mormon, by injecting the New Testament material into the Old Testament period, completely disrupts the biblical pattern so carefully set forth in the Old Testament itself and so faithfully guarded by the New. (“The Use of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon,” pp. 15-17)

Joseph Smith’s idea of having the Nephites practicing Christianity yet living the law of Moses for hundreds of years seems to be equivalent to a man trying to ride two horses at the same time over rough terrain. Eventually the horses part and the man comes crashing to the ground.

The fact that full-blown Christianity appears far too early in the Book of Mormon and continues to dominate throughout the entire book leads to the conclusion that it was written by someone who at least professed to be a Christian. That person’s familiarity with the New Testament is evident from the 1st book of Nephi until the concluding book of Moroni.

While the Book of Mormon shows a fair knowledge of biblical Christianity and a real interest in the religious topics that were being debated during Joseph Smith’s lifetime, it seems to be almost totally deficient when it comes to the issues which were of great importance to the Jews prior to the time of Christ. The church’s own computer program has helped us to pinpoint some of the areas where the Book of Mormon is sadly lacking with regard to Jewish customs and religion.

NO PASSOVER?

It is a well-known fact that one of the most important items in Judaism is the festival of the passover. While the Jewish people were held in slavery in Egypt, Moses told the elders to “take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin . . . For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you” (Exodus 12:21-23). The Egyptians did not do this, and consequently lost all their “firstborn.” This judgment upon the Egyptians, of course, convinced Pharaoh that he should let God’s people leave the land. In Exodus 12:14, the Lord told the Jewish people that “this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.”

The importance of the passover to the Jewish people cannot be overstated. Since the Nephites were supposed to have been Israelites who possessed “the five books of Moses” (1 Nephi 5:11), they should have celebrated the passover about six hundred times after they came to America. We would expect, therefore, to find a significant number of references to that festival in the Book of Mormon. A computer search for the words *passover* and *passovers* revealed that these words were used 77 times in the Bible. In the Book of Mormon, however, these words are never used at all. It is absolutely astounding that a book purported to have been written by ancient Jewish people would never refer to the passover.

At the time of the passover, the Israelites were supposed to “observe the feast of unleavened bread” (Exodus 12:17). In verse 15, the Lord tells the people that “Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.” The Bible yielded 43 places where *unleavened bread* was mentioned, but the Book of Mormon was completely silent about the matter. We also searched for the following words: *leaven*, *leavened*, *leaveneth* and *unleavened*. While the Book of Mormon never used any of these words, the Bible had 100 places where these words appeared.

Besides the passover with the accompanying feast of unleavened bread, the Jewish men were required to attend two other feasts or festivals—i. e., the feast of weeks (also known as the feast of harvest) and the feast of tabernacles (or feast of ingathering). When we searched in the Bible for the two words *feast of*, we found 41 places where they refer to Jewish feasts. We found the *feast of* passover, the *feast of* unleavened bread, the *feast of* harvest, the *feast of* weeks, the *feast of* tabernacles, the *feast of* the ingathering, the *feast of* the seventh month, the *feast of* dedication, the *feast of* the Lord and the *feast of* the Jews. Some of these names, of course, are just different names for the same feasts. In the New Testament we find the word *Pentecost* used three times. This is the Old Testament *feast of weeks*. We have, therefore, 44 cases in which Jewish feasts or festivals are mentioned in the Bible, and we feel that a search for just the word *feast* would bring forth more examples. In the Book of Mormon, however, there is not even one case where a Jewish feast or festival was celebrated in the New World!

The Book of Mormon even seems to be deficient with regard to the “sabbath day.” A search for the words *sabbath* and *sabbaths* revealed that they were used 171 times in the Bible, but appeared just five times in the Book of Mormon. It is also interesting to note that three of the five cases (Mosiah 13:16, 18, 19) are derived directly from the Bible, Exodus 20:8, 10, 11. It seems almost incredible that the Book of Mormon, which was supposed to have been written by Jewish people, would almost completely disregard the day which was held so sacred by the ancient Israelites.

Even before the Israelites received the law of Moses, they were practicing circumcision. It was a very important part of the Jewish religion. Genesis 17:14 makes it clear that “the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken the covenant.” The Book of Mormon should have many references to this practice if it is really a history of Jewish people. We searched for the words *circumcise*, *circumcised*, *circumcising*, *circumcision*, *uncircumcised*, *uncircumcision*, *foreskin* and *foreskins* and learned that the Bible uses these words 160 times. These same words only appeared five times in the Book of Mormon. Two of the places where they are found (2 Nephi 8:24 and 3 Nephi 20:36) are taken directly from the Bible, Isaiah 52:1. Two other references (2 Nephi 9:33 and Helaman 9:21) are only referring to the “uncircumcised of heart.” The only remaining reference (Moroni 8:8) is found in one of the very last chapters in the book. It says that after the coming of Christ, he told the Nephites that “the law of circumcision is done away in me.” This is a very strange statement because there seems to be no evidence in the Book of Mormon that it was ever practiced.

The Book of Mormon claims that “I, Nephi, did build a temple; and I did construct it after the manner of the temple of Solomon save it were not built of so many precious things . . .” (2 Nephi 5:16). After this verse, however, Nephi never mentions the temple again. His brother Jacob did use this temple to preach a sermon, but after that we find no mention

of any temple for hundreds of years. Mormon scholar John L. Sorenson observed: “Perhaps during the centuries of warfare . . . the original temple fell into disuse . . . At least we hear nothing about the temple between Jacob’s day and the time when the Zeniffites reoccupied the land, over 400 years later . . .” (*An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*, p. 145).

The ancient Israelites had two altars in their temple—the brazen altar for burnt offerings and the golden altar for burning incense. Altars played a very important role in the religious ceremonies of both the Jews and the people around them who worshipped other gods. Consequently, when we searched for the words *altar* and *altars* in the Bible, we found that they were mentioned 433 times. The Book of Mormon, however, only used these words four times. It is also interesting to note that two of these cases (Alma 15:17; 17:4) seem to have nothing to do with altars used in temples to offer sacrifices or burn incense. The word *altar* in these cases refers to the type of altar used in Christian churches where people pray and confess their sins. This is obvious from Alma 15:17: “. . . the people . . . began to assemble themselves together at their sanctuaries to worship God before the altar . . .” Of the two remaining verses which contain the word *altar*, one of them (2 Nephi 16:6) was obviously copied from the Bible, Isaiah 6:6. The last verse, 1 Nephi 2:7, does mention the fact that Lehi “built an altar of stones, and made an offering to the Lord . . .” This is the only verse where a Jewish type of altar is mentioned in the entire Book of Mormon. The reader will notice, however, that this *altar* was built when Lehi was traveling in the “wilderness in the borders which are nearer the Red Sea” (verse 5). It has nothing to do with any altar in the New World. Furthermore, it was only a temporary pile of stones, not an altar in a temple. It is plain, therefore, that the Book of Mormon never refers to either a brazen altar to offer sacrifices in the temple or a golden altar for burning incense.

The author of the Book of Mormon seems to have been almost completely in the dark with regard to the importance of sacrifices and offerings in the ancient Jewish religion. We used the computer to search for the following words *sacrifice*, *sacrificed*, *sacrificedst*, *sacrifices*, *sacrificeth*, *sacrificial* and *sacrificing*. The result was that the Bible yielded 298 cases where these words were used, but the Book of Mormon produced only twenty. Of these twenty, however, nine referred to Christ sacrificing his life, three were related to human sacrifice, two were concerning men sacrificing their own lives, one was concerning the sacrifice of “a broken heart and a contrite spirit” and two were specific instructions by Christ to the Nephites to cease making “sacrifices and your burnt offerings” after the law was fulfilled. There were, therefore, only three references that could relate to someone actually making a sacrifice according to the Jewish law.

We searched for the words *offering* and *offerings* and discovered that while they were used 989 times in the Bible, they only appeared 13 times in the Book of Mormon. Of the 13, only four could be linked in any way to the type of sacrifices the Jewish priests offered in their temple, four were directly copied from the Bible, two came from Christ’s

words to end sacrifices and burnt offerings. The last three were concerning the story of Isaac in the Bible, the offering of Christ and the teaching that people should offer their “whole souls” to God. A search for the words *burnt offerings* yields only five places in the Book of Mormon where these words appear together. All of these were previously found in our search for the words *offering* and *offerings*, and as we stated before, two of the five relate to *burnt offerings* being forbidden after the appearance of Christ to the Nephites. The Bible, on the other hand, has 86 places. The Book of Mormon never uses the words *burnt offering* (singular), but they do appear 184 times in the Bible.

The only verse in the Book of Mormon that relates to the inhabitants of the New World making burnt offerings is Mosiah 2:3: “And they also took of the **firstlings** of their flocks, that they might offer sacrifice and **burnt offerings according to the law of Moses**.” Instead of helping the case for the authenticity of the Book of Mormon, this verse actually shows that the author of the Book of Mormon really did not understand the law of Moses. M. T. Lamb points out:

According to the law of Moses the **firstlings** of their flocks were **never** offered as **burnt offerings or sacrifices**. All **firstlings** belonged to the Lord, *de jure*, and could not be counted as a man’s personal property—whereas, all burnt offerings, or sacrifices for sin of every kind, must be selected from the man’s own personal property, or be purchased with his own money for that purpose, while all **firstlings** of the flock, as the Lord’s property, came into the hands of the high priest, and by him could be offered up as a **peace offering**, not as a burnt offering or a sin offering, himself and family eating the flesh. (See Ex. 13:2, 12 and 22:29, 30; Numb. 3:13; 2d Sam. 24:24; Numb. 18:15-18 and other places.)

This one little blunder, then, proves beyond the chance of question that the Book of Mormon could not have been inspired by the Holy Spirit or by an angel of the Lord. This passage is precisely such a passage as Joseph Smith or any other ignorant man like him might have written; it could not have been found in the book if God, or any angel of the Lord, had had to do with its preparation. (*The Golden Bible*, pp. 109-110)

That the author of the Book of Mormon would make the serious mistake described above with regard to *burnt offerings* shows that he was unfamiliar with the biblical material on the subject. Moreover, it appears that he was not even aware of the other kinds of Jewish offerings commanded in the Bible. In the King James Version of the Old Testament we find the following: *trespass offerings, meat offerings, drink offerings, wave offerings* and *peace offerings* (see Exodus, chapter 29; Leviticus, chapters 2-5; Numbers, chapter 29; Chronicles, chapter 29). The computer showed that these offerings were mentioned 519 times in the Bible. The Book of Mormon, on the other hand, does not have a single place where any of these important offerings are mentioned!

The Book of Mormon not only fails the test with regard to Jewish sacrifices, but it is also deficient when it comes to the ancient laws concerning ceremonial uncleanness. Under the Mosaic law there were certain things people did that would make them unclean.” For instance, in Numbers

19:11-13, we read: “He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days. He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean . . . Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel: because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him . . .” That these laws concerning ceremonial uncleanness were still in effect when Jesus was born is clear from Luke 2:21-23: “And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS . . . And when the days of her [Mary’s] purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord . . . And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”

The Old Testament also gave the Jewish people strict laws concerning which type of food was clean or unclean. These instructions are still carefully observed by Jewish people today who only eat “kosher” food—i. e., food that is permitted by their dietary laws.

The author of the Book of Mormon seems to have been oblivious to these laws. While the Bible uses the words *clean* and *unclean* 327 times, they only appear in the Book of Mormon 25 times. Eleven of these, however, seem to relate to whether a person is going to heaven or to hell. For instance, in 1 Nephi 15:34, we read that “there cannot any unclean thing enter into the kingdom of God . . .” In six places the material has been taken directly from the Bible, three relate to unclean spirits and the last five are concerning other matters that have no relationship to the ceremonial laws concerning uncleanness in the Bible.

In our search to find if the Book of Mormon mentioned anything about these ancient laws, we searched for the following words: *purification, purifications, purified, purifier, purifieth, purify* and *purifying*. The Bible yielded 49 places where these words occurred. While the Book of Mormon had ten places, eight related to Christ’s purifying work in a person’s life and the other two were derived through plagiarism from the Bible.

Although the Book of Mormon has a great deal of material regarding Jesus Christ and Christianity, it has hardly anything that would relate to the early Jewish religion and customs. We have noted, for instance, that the Nephites never celebrated the passover or any of the other festivals or feasts that were so important to the ancient Israelites. Very little appears about the sabbath day and, as we show in our new book, nothing concerning sabbatical years or jubilee. There seems to be no evidence that circumcision was actually practiced. The Book of Mormon also seems to be sadly deficient with regard to material regarding both tithing and the temple. The author of the Book of Mormon seems to know nothing at all about the laws concerning unclean foods and practices, and sacrifices are almost completely absent. In fact, the only time that the author of the Book of Mormon speaks of *burnt offerings* he makes a serious mistake.

If Joseph Smith had said that the Nephites had totally changed their beliefs before they came to the New World,

these matters would be easier to understand. Instead, however, the Book of Mormon itself boasts that “the people did observe to keep the commandments of the Lord; and they **were strict** in observing the ordinances of God, **according to the law of Moses**, for they were taught to **keep the law of Moses** until it should be fulfilled” (Alma 30: 3).

All of this evidence leads to the inescapable conclusion that the Book of Mormon was written by someone raised as a Protestant who had very scanty knowledge with regard to Jewish history, religion and customs.

THE PLAGIARISM QUESTION

In the July 1989 issue of the *Messenger* we noted that the evidence we now have against the authenticity of the Book of Mormon is at least a thousand times as strong as the textual evidence we had against the Hofmann documents. Much material relating to plagiarism in the Book of Mormon was obtained prior to the time that we began working with the Mormon Church’s computer program, but since that time new and important evidence has come to light.

The idea that the author of the Book of Mormon plagiarized from the New Testament is not new. In his book, *Roughing It*, page 110, Mark Twain made this observation 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.

It is very clear from the contents of the Book of Mormon that while the author was not a trained Bible scholar, he was rather familiar with the contents of the King James Version of the Bible. Although Mormon apologists are reluctant to face the facts, the evidence shows that Joseph Smith had the ability and the biblical knowledge required to write the Book of Mormon. According to Smith’s earliest account of his life, written in 1832, he claimed he began studying the Bible when he was only about 12 years old:

At about the age of twelve years my mind become seriously imprest (page 1) with regard to the all important concerns for the welfare of my immortal Soul which led me to searching the scriptures . . . from the age of twelve years to fifteen I pondered many things in my heart concerning the situation of the world of mankind . . . My mind become exceedingly distressed for I become convicted of my sins and by searching the scriptures I found that . . . /mankind/ did not come unto the Lord but that they had apostatised from the true and living faith. (*An American Prophet’s Record: The Diaries and Journals of Joseph Smith*, pp. 4-5)

Since this document was written in Joseph Smith’s own hand, it shows that he had all the skill necessary to write a

book like the Book of Mormon and also that he had been studying the Bible since he was a child.

Joseph Smith’s mother later wrote that her son told her he could take his “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” (*Biographical Sketches of Joseph Smith the Prophet*, p. 90). If Joseph Smith began studying the Bible when he was about 12 years old, as his own statement indicates, he would have had about 10 or 11 years experience with the Bible prior to writing the Book of Mormon.

In his Master’s thesis, Wesley P. Walters made these observations about the text of the Book of Mormon:

When one begins to read the Book of Mormon, if he is well-acquainted with the Bible, he will at once be impressed with the large scale use of biblical materials in the book. Not only is there an unskilled mimicking of the style of the King James Version, but there is an artificial clarity added to that portion of the Book of Mormon that claims to date from the Old Testament period. This contrived clarity is the result of writing back into that Old Testament period New Testament words, phrases and quotations, as well as the introduction of New Testament concepts and teachings into that time-frame. . . .

The usual Mormon defense is that such knowledge was supernaturally made known to the people in America, just as God in a vision showed Ezekiel that Jerusalem was about to fall and the temple to be destroyed, or Peter given a vision of Cornelius before he met him in person. Such an explanation might be more readily accepted if the Book of Mormon had presented its material in the format of a vision. Instead it introduces its material in much the same way that a nineteenth century frontier preacher introduced biblical quotations into his sermons. The frequency with which the Book of Mormon introduces this chronologically misplaced material into its text would require that God supernaturally provided this American colony with virtually the entire New Testament text, as well as those portions of the Old Testament which postdated their departure for America. . . . passages from the New Testament . . . are sprinkled generously into the speeches and sermons of Book of Mormon characters in the same manner as one might find them in the sermons of a Methodist or Baptist preacher of Joseph Smith’s day. This type of usage implies an acquaintance with the New Testament books themselves. Only after knowing the entire work can one select from it appropriate words and phrases to employ in this sermonic manner. It is naive to suggest that in every one of those instances God made known each of those biblical phrases and quotations so that the Old Testament Book of Mormon speakers could work them into their message. It is far more reasonable to believe that the insertions of such phrases and quotes came from one who already had the New Testament in hand before him while composing the Book of Mormon. . . . The Book of Mormon is intentionally written by Smith in the King James style, ostensibly so that it would sound like the Bible and be more readily accepted as a companion to it. Moreover, for Joseph to have thrown in numerous biblical phrases so generously while making his “translation”, one can only conclude that he must have been much more conversant with the Bible than Mormons are generally prepared to admit. If he knew the Bible well enough to scatter biblical

phrases freely throughout the Book of Mormon, there is no reason why he could not have composed the book itself. In his revelations there also appears this same type of biblical quotation along with an employment of the King James style. The Book of Mormon's biblical phraseology, therefore, must be credited to Joseph Smith, and evidences a surprisingly good working knowledge of the Bible. . . .

The really fatal blow to the proposal that the New Testament material in the Old Testament portion of the Book of Mormon is due to Joseph Smith's employment of such phrases in the process of translating the book is that such material goes much deeper than the mere use of words and phrases. New Testament concepts, interpretations and theology are all worked into the text itself. ("The Use of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon," pp. 7, 10-13)

As Wesley Walters has pointed out, the problem with regard to the Book of Mormon is that it has the ancient Nephites making extensive quotations from works that were not even in existence at that time. In fact, in the 1st and 2nd books of Nephi, the writings of the New Testament are cited 600 years before they were written!

The following might help to illustrate the problem facing believers in the Book of Mormon: Suppose, for instance, someone were to come forth with a book which purported to be written by Moses entitled, *The Only True Sayings of Moses*, and in this book the following words were attributed to him: "Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Two problems instantly come to mind: One, the quotation is identical to the words of Jesus in Luke 12:27. Two, Solomon was not born until Moses had been dead for hundreds of years. Defenders of *The Only True Sayings of Moses* might argue that Moses was the true author of this saying and that Jesus merely borrowed it for his own use. With regard to the problem of Solomon being mentioned, these apologists might use Joseph Smith's defence that the author was really "speaking of things to come as though they had already come" (Mosiah 16:6). It is doubtful, however, that many people would be very impressed by either one of these arguments. As we see it, the case set forth by Mormon apologists in defence of the Book of Mormon seems to be just as unreasonable.

To those who really consider the matter, it should be obvious that the presence of many portions of the New Testament in the Book of Mormon is more out of place than to find the following words in a speech attributed to George Washington: "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." These words alone would be enough to prove the speech a forgery. While less than a century separated George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, in the Book of Mormon we have Lehi quoting from the New Testament book of Revelation almost seven centuries before it was written! (The first quotation appears on the second page of the Book of Mormon and is dated "About 600 B.C." The book of Revelation is believed to have been written about 90 A.D.)

It is clear that the author of the Book of Mormon was holding a King James Version of the Bible in his hand when he produced it. He, therefore, could not have lived in 600 B.C. When all the evidence is examined, it is evident that he actually lived in 1830—some 2,430 years after Lehi was supposed to have fled from Jerusalem.

The 74 pages we devoted to the study of plagiarism in the Book of Mormon in our new book, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, only deals with the small plates of Nephi from the book of 1st Nephi through Omni (the material used to replace the missing 116 pages). This material is dated between 600 B.C. and 130 B.C. All of it, therefore, was supposed to have been written before the time of Christ and also before the New Testament was produced. If we had made an extensive study of the entire Book of Mormon, it would have been at least twice as long.

The noted Mormon scholar Hugh Nibley has said that "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*, p. 160). The material we have published in the first part of our book, *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon*, and the parallels to the Bible which appear in the second part of that book furnish irrefutable proof that the Book of Mormon is not the ancient text it claims to be. Regardless of Joseph Smith's motives for producing the book, it cannot be accepted as a genuine document because it "was not produced in the time, place, and manner claimed by it or its publishers."



A SELFAHOLIC

At a church service we attended a few weeks ago, a member of our congregation told of attending a meeting of a group of people who were struggling to overcome addiction to drugs and alcohol. He was very impressed by their willingness to admit that their dependence on these items was only a symptom of greater problems within. The man who attended this meeting then told us that even though he was not addicted to alcohol or drugs, he was a recovering "selfaholic." He went on to explain that all of us are in reality selfaholics.

When we think about it, we realize that this is true and even those who are truly converted to Christ are still recovering selfaholics who are being transformed by God's power. It is, in fact, the dominating love of self which leads us into sin. Although some people can hide it better than others, none of us can escape the fact that we are by nature very selfish creatures. In Romans 3:23 we read that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (The New King James Version).

Speaking of Jesus, J. B. Phillips wrote: "It was pride and self-righteousness and the exploitation of others which called forth His greatest anger. **Self-love** in fact He saw as **the arch-enemy**. It was this which must be recognized

and deliberately killed if a man were to follow His way of constructive love” (*Your God Is Too Small*, page 91). Jesus made it very clear that the worst thing that can happen to people is for them to end up imprisoned eternally to sin and selfishness: “For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and **loses his own soul**? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26). Again, in Matthew 10:28, Jesus made the gravity of the situation very clear: “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to **destroy both soul and body in hell**.”

Thomas A. Kempis wrote: “Know that the love of yourself is more hurtful to you than anything else in the world” (*Of the Imitation of Christ*, p. 42). Because the love of self is more harmful to us than anything else, the Lord tells us to deny ourselves: “Then Jesus said to his disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, **let him deny himself**, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it’” (Matthew 16:24-25). Speaking concerning the 25th verse, Raymond L. Cramer made this observation:

The phrase, “save his life,” refers to saving it for a selfish purpose, utilizing ability in terms of self-gratification—a self-possessed, self-centered life. Jesus was not talking here about some distant future, but physical, down-to-earth, everyday living. He claimed that anyone who used his life in this way would lose it. The word “lose” means to become empty, void, useless and destructive. That which is capable of being useful becomes a source of insecurity, greed, and a vehicle of hostility if it is used for selfish purposes. Fear and anxiety result when man tries to hang onto his life. He loses what he is trying to save—life itself. (*The Psychology of Jesus and Mental Health*, page 126)

Charles L. Allen commented:

The best summary of the Ten Commandments is the one Jesus gave: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” (Matthew 22:37, 39). Put God and others first; get something into your mind greater than yourself. In so doing you lose yourself, selfishness is blotted out; instead of making ourselves miserable by what we do not have, we begin to gain the blessed thrill of giving what we can give. (*God’s Psychiatry*, page 80)

Many people feel that “sin” only occurs when we do wrong to others. The truth of the matter, however, is that our selfishness continually leads us into sins of omission. This is explained in James 4:17: “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.” In Matthew, chapter 25, Jesus declares that those who selfishly ignore the needs of others will be found on his “left hand” in the day of judgment (see verses 31-46). It is very easy for us to see the sins and selfishness of others and fail to comprehend our own wicked condition before God. Jesus expressed it in this way:

“And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck out of your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother’s eye.” (Matthew 7:3-5)

The Pharisees once asked why Jesus ate with “tax collectors and sinners.” Jesus responded as follows: “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance” (Mark 2:17). Since Jesus made it clear in other verses that the Pharisees themselves were spiritually blind, it is obvious that he was trying to tell them that people must realize their own sinful condition, repent and be born again before they can enter into the kingdom of heaven. The Pharisees simply refused to face this fact. Since they did not believe they were spiritually sick, they had no need of the Great Physician.

In Luke 18:9-14 we read a parable Jesus related the following:

. . . to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

It is very easy to condemn the alcoholic, drug addict, adulterer, murderer or those who commit other flagrant sins and yet refuse to see our own sinful and selfish condition before a holy God. If, however, we confess to God that we are truly selfaholics who are desperately in need of his mercy, we will be forgiven of all our sins. Those of us who have taken this step of faith must continue to remember that we are only recovering selfaholics who need God’s power to overcome this addiction to having our own selfish way. Besides trusting in the Lord’s strength, we need to find a support group of other recovering selfaholics who can encourage us to remain strong in times of temptations. This group is usually known as a “church.” If it is serving its true purpose, a church is actually like a hospital where the Great Physician is working through others to help treat our selfaholic condition. We, in turn, can encourage others to resist the temptations which selfaholics encounter.

Those of us who have come to God for healing must be careful that we do not think that we are better than other selfaholics who have not yet come to accept the truth about their condition. Apostle Paul wrote: “For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you glory as if you had not received it?” (1 Corinthians 4:7). It is only “by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

According to the Bible, those who refuse to acknowledge they are selfaholics and claim that they “have no need of a physician” will remain in that unhappy condition forever, whereas those who admit they have a problem and turn to God will receive His help in treating this condition and in the next life they will find total deliverance and eternal happiness.

IN THE MAIL

We receive a great deal of encouraging mail from our readers. The extracts from the letters which follow are just a brief sample.

We converted to Mormonism 16 years ago. . . . We subsequently married in the Temple in New Zealand . . . I became a Christian in October last year and my husband followed shortly after . . . two other families have left the Mormon Church which we attended after I witnessed to them that the truth can only be found through Jesus Christ and gave them literature to read. I believe another family who are also close friends of ours and who are currently reading your book "Mormonism—Shadow or Reality" will leave. . . . We are so grateful to you and other Christians like you who have dedicated their lives to seeking the truth. . . . We feel so full of the spirit of God and we love Jesus with all our hearts. (Letter from Australia)

My husband and I would like to thank both of you for your dedicated research and the enlightening facts regarding the Mormon Church. . . . It saved a marriage and . . . answered numerous questions. . . . we now have an inner peace which cannot be touched by those who would condemn and sadly shake their heads . . . (Letter from Nevada)

I was a very active LDS member for thirteen years; the Lord used your "Shadow or Reality" work to lead me to the point where I began challenging what I had been taught by the church. While I give the real glory and credit to Jesus & the Word of God, the Lord used your work to help in my personal discovery of Jesus and in my freedom from the error of Mormonism. (Letter from California)

Thanks for your help in leaving the Mormons and making the transition to Christianity. (Letter from Pennsylvania)

I was L.D.S. for 5 years . . . I had lots of serious questions that went unanswered until a friend loaned me your books. I am no longer L.D.S. and I am a lot happier. . . . Your works are certainly a light shining in the dark . . . (Letter from Georgia)

Thank you so much for all the literature! . . . The information provided helped me to share the truth with a Mormon family I know. They have now begun the journey out of Mormonism—Praise the Lord!! (Letter from California)

*** BOOKS ***

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Know What You Believe—A Practical Discussion of the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith, by Paul E. Little. **Price: \$7.00**

IMPORTANT VIDEO

Personal Freedom Outreach has produced a video on Mormonism which we highly recommend. It is entitled, *Mormonism: The Christian View*. The narration is done by Wesley P. Walters. It deals with Mormon history, doctrines, the claim to authority, changes in doctrine, false prophecies, and witnessing suggestions. It is available from Utah Lighthouse Ministry for \$24.00 (plus shipping)>

MEETING THE NEEDS

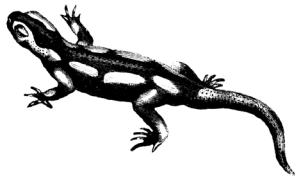
Book sales only cover half of the expenses of Utah Lighthouse Ministry. Besides the expenses of the work on Mormonism, we also provide support for 100 children through World vision. those who are interested in helping our ministry can send their tax-deductible contributions to **Utah Lighthouse Ministry**, PO Box 1884, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110.

A FREE BOOK!

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Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon, by Dan Vogel provides important evidence demonstrating that the Book of Mormon fits well into “the pre-1830 environment of Joseph Smith.” It shows that the idea that the Indians were descendants of the ancient Hebrews was discussed by many writers prior to the time Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon in 1830.



THE SALAMANDER THAT REFUSED TO DIE

As most of our readers are aware, the Mormon murderer Mark Hofmann fooled his church’s prophets with a batch of forged documents which included a letter about a white

salamander that revealed the Book of Mormon to Joseph Smith. Although Mr. Hofmann confessed to his crimes a few years ago, the church leaders cannot put the “salamander scandal” behind them. Since the Mormon leaders claim that they have prophetic powers, many members of the church cannot understand how they could have been fooled.

Hundreds of thousands of copies of books concerning the scandal have now been sold. The latest development is the publication of a paper-back edition of *Salamander: The Story of the Mormon Forgery Murders*, by Linda Sillitoe and Allen Roberts. This excellent study, which used to sell in hard-back binding for \$17.95, is now available for \$5.95. In addition, we have combined our books, *Tracking the White Salamander* and *Confessions of a White Salamander* into one volume and reduced the price to \$6.95. While the Sillitoe-Roberts book gives an excellent account of the Hofmann story, our two books add details that are not found in any of the other books available. For instance, we have a great deal of testimony from Hofmann’s preliminary hearing in the first volume and the most important parts of his confession are cited in the second volume. When these three books were first published, it would have cost the reader \$28.85 to obtain them. Because *Salamander* is now available in paper-back and our two books have been combined, we are offering all three for the following price if they are ordered before April 30, 1990:

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