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The plan and measurements of the ancient temple are revealed by  
God

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Source: *The Book of Mormon as an Ancient Israelite Temple: Nineteen Classic Temple  
Characteristics of the Book of Mormon*

Published: Salt Lake City: Eborn Books, 2012

Page(s): 82-88

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**8. “The plan and measurements of the temple are revealed to the king or prophet, and the plan must be carefully carried out...”<sup>60</sup>**

When God is going to meet his children somewhere, then it is he who sets the time and place. Men may not presume to create a space, call it sacred, and invite God to come, without first receiving directions from him. If people are going to build a temple, it is God who must initiate its construction. When he does that, he always gives explicit instructions. When a prophet builds a temple, the Lord tells him its plan as well as its measurements.<sup>61</sup>

This was true, also, of the Book of Mormon. The book matches this criterion in that part of the typology as closely as did Moses's Tabernacle or Solomon's temple, and it meets it in two separate ways.

The prophets who wrote the Book of Mormon testified that the decisions about which ideas would be included in which parts of the book were not their decisions to make. Rather, the book's outline, structure, and content were carefully supervised by the

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60Lundquist, “Common Temple Ideology,” 58

For discussions on God's instructions to build temples see Marion D. Hanks, “Christ Manifested to His People,” *Temples of the Ancient World*, 7-11; Carol L. Meyers, “Jachin and Boaz in Religious and Political Perspective,” *Temple in Antiquity*, 143-45; Stephen D. Ricks and Michael A. Carter, “Temple-Building Motifs: Mesopotamia, Ancient Israel, Ugarit, and Kirtland,” *Temples of the Ancient World*, 152-76.

61God told Noah the dimensions of the ark (Genesis 6:14); he told Moses the dimensions of the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:10), and of the tabernacle (Exodus 26-27), and described the clothes the High Priest should wear (Exodus 28). He gave Solomon the pattern for his Temple (2 Chronicles 3). He gave Joseph Smith the measurements of the Kirtland Temple (D&C 94) He is equally explicit about future temples. Ezekiel gives us precise measurements of a temple yet to be built (Ezekiel 40-43), and John gives us the measurements of a temple in the celestial world (Revelation 21).

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Lord.

“Measurement” is a good word, if by it we mean the doctrinal length, breadth, and height, to which each segment of the book would reach. A few quotes from Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni will suffice:

25. But the things which thou shalt see hereafter thou shalt not write; for the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should write them (1 Nephi 14:25).

11. Behold, I was about to write them, all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbade it, saying: I will try the faith of my people (3 Nephi 26:11).<sup>62</sup>

26. Wherefore, I, Moroni, am commanded to write these things that evil may be done away, and that the time may come that Satan may have no power upon the hearts of the children of men, but that they may be persuaded to do good continually, that they may come unto the fountain of all righteousness and be saved (Ether 8:26).

12. Therefore I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord. And now I, Mormon, make an end of my sayings, and proceed to write the things which have been commanded me (3 Nephi 26:12).

There is no more dramatic example of that than Nephi’s:

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<sup>62</sup>See also 1 Nephi 14:28; 2 Nephi 4:25; 3 Nephi 26:11; Ether 5:1, 13:13.

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4. Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark.

5. For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do.

6. Behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and there will be no more doctrine given until after he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh. And when he shall manifest himself unto you in the flesh, the things which he shall say unto you shall ye observe to do

7. And now I, Nephi, cannot say more; the Spirit stoppeth mine utterance, and I am left to mourn because of the unbelief, and the wickedness, and the ignorance, and the stiffneckedness of men; for they will not search knowledge, nor understand great knowledge, when it is given unto them in plainness, even as plain as word can be (2 Nephi 32:4-7).

Nephi had been writing about faith, repentance, baptism and the power of the Holy Ghost, so his words could be read within the context of the first principles of the gospel. Now he wished to go on and say more, but the Lord told him he could not. If he had been more explicit or talked about other things they would have seemed out of sequence in the overall structure of the book.

For example, charity and the law of consecration are essentially the same thing: Charity is what one is, when the law of consecration is what one does. Faith [*pistis*], hope, and charity<sup>63</sup> are such a powerful triumvirate that the explanation of the concept

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<sup>63</sup>For a discussion of faith [*pistis*], hope, and charity see Baker and Ricks, *Who Shall Ascend into the Hill of the Lord* (2011 edition), 696-722.

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belongs at the conclusion of the Book of Mormon where it is repeated three times: Ether 12, Moroni 7, and Moroni 10. Nephi mentioned it, but if he had written a major essay about the overriding importance of charity, it would have disrupted not only the order of the ideas the Book of Mormon teaches, but by altering the sequence, would have called into question the overall message of the encoded sacred language of the Book of Mormon temple itself.

The Lord not only told the prophets what to and what not to write, but even as early as the original writings of Nephi, the Lord directed the development of the perfectly sequential outline to which the Book of Mormon authors—especially to Mormon who selected the sermons and quoted them in their appropriate order—so carefully adhered to the outline of the sacred story.

Even the authors of the Book of Mormon, did not assume responsibility for the veracity of their own work. Nephi, wrote, “And the Holy Ghost giveth authority that I should speak these things, and deny them not” (1 Nephi 10:22). And again,

I bid you an everlasting farewell, for these words shall condemn you at the last day. For what I seal on earth, shall be brought against you at the judgment bar; for thus hath the Lord commanded me, and I must obey. Amen” (2 Nephi 33:10-15).

Moroni testified the same thing by quoting conversations between himself and the Savior about what should go into the book and how it should be written (Ether 12:23-29). He concluded his work with,

27. And I exhort you to remember these things; for the time speedily cometh that ye shall know that I lie not, for ye shall see me at the bar of God; and the Lord God will say unto you: Did I not declare my

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words unto you, which were written by this man  
(Moroni 10:27-29).

Thus, the authors of the Book of Mormon testify that the Lord revealed to them the plan, outline, internal boundaries and other matters relating to the content of the Book of Mormon. In verification of that, the Lord himself testified that the words of the book are so sacred that a prophet/angel now holds the priesthood keys to the Book of Mormon, just as one might hold the sealing keys of the Nephite temple.

5. Behold, this is wisdom in me; wherefore, marvel not, for the hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you on the earth, and with Moroni, whom I have sent unto you to reveal the Book of Mormon, containing the fulness of my everlasting gospel, to whom I have committed the keys of the record of the stick of Ephraim (D&C 27:5).

On judgement day, just as Moroni wrote, the eternal salvation of each individual will be in accordance to his knowing and adhering to those same principles that are taught in the Book of Mormon. Referring to the Prophet Joseph, the Lord said,

8. And gave him power from on high, by the means which were before prepared, to translate the Book of Mormon;

9. Which contains a record of a fallen people, and the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and to the Jews also;

10. Which was given by inspiration, and is confirmed to others by the ministering of angels, and is declared unto the world by them—

11. Proving to the world that the holy scriptures are true, and that God does inspire men and call them to

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his holy work in this age and generation, as well as in generations of old;

12. Thereby showing that he is the same God yesterday, today, and forever. Amen (D&C 20:8-12).

The second way the Book of Mormon fits that criterion, is that its English translation is entirely a revelation from the Lord to the Prophet Joseph Smith who said he translated it “by the gift and power of God.” Joseph told only his closest friends the precise mechanism by which he received that complex revelation, but the precision of his translation is demonstrable. We can move from Job to Nephi, back to Isaiah, to 3rd Nephi, to Paul, to Moroni, to John, and the code words of the Elizabethan translation of the Bible's sacred language are the same, and are used in the same way as the code words of the Book of Mormon's sacral language.

Moroni was very aware of the problems inherent in any translation. He was equally aware that his own words must be chosen and placed with great precision. He prayed to the Lord:

25 Thou hast also made our words powerful and great, even that we cannot write them; wherefore, when we write we behold our weakness, and stumble *because of the placing of our words*; and I fear lest the Gentiles shall mock at our words (Ether 12:25).

The placement of the words is critical to their meaning. For example, when I was young they said to me, “You are good looking.” Now I am old and walk with a cane they say, “You’re lookin’ good!” The translation of the latter is something like: “Aren’t you dead yet?” The words are the same, but it is their placement that makes all the difference.

I am absolutely convinced that the placement of the English

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words in the Book of Mormon is as perfect as it is in the original. Yet, Moroni warned in his introduction to the Book of Mormon,

And now, if there are faults they are the mistakes of men; wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment-seat of Christ.

That, like much else in the Book of Mormon, has a second meaning. He says, “if there are faults they are the mistakes of men.” What men? The authors? No. The readers! “Wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment-seat of Christ.”

Joseph could never have learned the Bible’s sacred temple code from his contemporary back-country New England neighbors. But the interrelationships between the sacral languages of the Book of Mormon and Bible are nearly perfect. (Where it is not perfect, we can trace it to transmission or translation errors in the Bible)

The precision of the Book of Mormon language asks the question: How was it done? The answer has to do with the use of the Urim and Thummim, but perhaps not entirely that. There is good evidence that some of the original authors of the Book of Mormon were at least partly responsible for the word choices in the English translation of the Book of Mormon.<sup>64</sup>

This criterion, that “the plan and measurements of the temple are revealed to the king or prophet, and the plan must be carefully carried out,” is met with exactitude by the prophets who brought us the Book of Mormon.

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<sup>64</sup>Joseph also received assistance from the original authors in the Book of Mormon. See LeGrand L. Baker, *Joseph and Moroni*, 89-95.