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Paradigms Regained: A Survey of Margaret Barker's Scholarship and Its Significance for Mormon Studies

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I have long believed that Barker’s books deserved to be more widely known and read by Latter-day Saints. Kevin Christensen’s “Paradigms Regained,” the second in the ongoing series of FARMS Occasional Papers, is an excellent introduction to Barker’s works and their possible implications for Latter-day Saints.



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WILLIAM J. HAMBLIN, SERIES EDITOR

PARADIGMS REGAINED

A SURVEY OF MARGARET BARKER'S SCHOLARSHIP AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR MORMON STUDIES

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Some years ago I bought Margaret Barker's *The Great Angel* on the last day of an annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. (On the last day of each conference, hundreds of booksellers—Cambridge and Brill being notable exceptions—sell their display copies at a fifty-percent discount, creating the *Bookanalia*, a book-buying frenzy among otherwise staid and boring academics that is a wonder to behold.)

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INTRODUCTION

The life and work of Jesus were, and should be, interpreted in the light of something *other* than Jerusalem Judaism. This *other* had its roots in the conflicts of the sixth century B.C. when the traditions of the monarchy were divided as an inheritance amongst several heirs. It would have been lost but for the accidents of archaeological discovery and the evidence of pre-Christian texts preserved and transmitted *only by Christian hands*.¹

Margaret Barker's seven books of biblical scholarship should be of great interest to Mormon studies. Her own purpose has been to illuminate the origins of Christianity. In that ongoing effort, she has attracted increasing attention and respect for her contributions. Her central theme is the importance of the preexilic traditions of the first temple period for understanding Christianity. She finds evidence for the persistence of

the old traditions in recently discovered texts, such as the *Book of Enoch*, that had been valued by the first generation of Christians but subsequently fell out of favor and were lost. From these kinds of texts and her close readings of the Bible, she begins her reconstruction of the conceptual background of Christianity as something "other" than Jerusalem Judaism. My purpose is to survey the lost and rediscovered *other* that she has explored and to point out the relevance that her reconstruction has for Mormon scripture and scholarship. Her reference to Jerusalem and the "sixth century B.C." as the crucial time and place should attract the attention of Mormons. For us it brings the Book of Mormon into the arena. The thesis of this paper is that the overall picture that she presents—her overall paradigm—has a profound significance for Mormon studies.

I would like to thank William Hamblin, George Mitton, Shauna Christensen, Matthew Copeland, and Sharon Nielsen for helpful comments and criticisms.

1. Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1987), 6–7, emphasis in original.

WHO IS MARGARET BARKER?

Educated at Cambridge, Margaret Barker is a math and religion teacher at the Ockbrook School in England. She is a Methodist preacher, the mother of two children, and she acts as a trustee for a refuge for battered women. She has been a member of the Society for Old Testament Study and recently served a term as the president of that society. While she remains outside the university world in order to “keep [her] academic freedom,”¹ she states that “it has been my ambition to redraw the map of biblical studies.”² At this writing, she has published seven books and several journal articles. A survey of her titles introduces her themes: *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*; *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity*; *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple In Jerusalem*; *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel’s Second God*; *On*

Earth as It Is in Heaven: Temple Symbolism in the New Testament; *The Risen Lord: The Jesus of History as the Christ of Faith*; and *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. Her works exhibit exhaustive readings of both primary and secondary sources, thinking that is both rigorous and imaginative, and impressive mastery of these materials in terms of both the overall picture and in the significance of small details. She demonstrates bold vision in suggesting hypotheses and challenging preconceptions, and she displays an uncanny ability to trace thematic connections between texts. She shows familiarity with original languages and textual variants for key passages and occasionally suggests plausible explanations and alternate readings for those variations based on underlying Hebrew or Aramaic. As I read her books, I get a sense of immense learning and a continuing progression, with each book growing from and building on the foundation of the earlier ones.

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1. Notice the simplicity of her solution.
 2. Biographical material formerly at the Barnes & Noble Web site at <http://www.bn.com>.

In her work Barker writes not as a dispassionate scholar but as one deeply involved and committed not just to understanding but to living Christianity and persuading others to commitment and action. Her faith commitments do not handicap a notable ability to think outside the boxes of both Christian and secular orthodoxy and to make startling suggestions based on rigorous reading. She expresses concern that

scholarship is often viewed with suspicion and felt to be destructive and irrelevant. The concerns of scholars are seen as remote from those who actually read and use the Bible. . . . The business of building bridges between scholarship and Christian teaching is one which has concerned me for many years. If the present gulf continues the results could be disastrous; we shall have Churches divorced from specialist knowledge of Christian tradition, and scholars with no concern for the tradition whose texts they study.³

So why do churches need specialist knowledge of Christian traditions? Her answer is that

the images and pictures in which the ideas of the Bible are expressed . . . are specific to one culture, that of Israel and Judaism, and until they are fully understood in their original setting, little of what is done with the writings and ideas that came from that particular setting can be understood. Once we lose touch

with the meaning of biblical imagery, we lose any way into the real meaning of the Bible.

It is folly to approach the Bible with a twentieth-century mind, completely unaware of the codes in which it was written. Such a reading of scripture . . . does nothing to build up the faith of the churches. Rather, it leads to a trivialisation of the scriptures and then confusion.⁴

This statement resonates with 2 Nephi 25:5: “There is none other people that understand the things which were spoken unto the Jews like unto them, save it be that they are taught after the manner of the things of the Jews.”

Notice of Barker’s Work Among Mormon Scholars

Barker’s work has already attracted notice among several LDS scholars. Most notably, her fourth book, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel’s Second God*, has been quoted in two significant discussions of Book of Mormon Christology in the *FARMS Review of Books*.⁵ Additionally, Barry Bickmore’s *Restoring the Ancient Church* quotes her when he compares early Christian teachings to Mormonism, and an essay on his Web site relies on *The Great Angel* to illuminate ancient traditions that identify the Angel of the Lord’s Presence as Jehovah, as reflected in the Book of Abraham 1:15–16.⁶ Barker has also been cited for

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3. Margaret Barker, *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1988), 3.
 4. Margaret Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Temple Symbolism in the New Testament* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1995), 2–3.
 5. Reviews of Melodie Moench Charles: “Book of Mormon Christology,” in *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 81–114; Martin S. Tanner, “Review of Melodie Moench Charles, ‘Book of Mormon Christology,’” *FARMS Review of Books* 7/2 (1995): 6–37; and Ross David Baron, “Melodie Moench Charles and the Humanist Worldview,” *FARMS Review of Books* 7/1 (1995): 91–119.
 6. Barry Bickmore, *Restoring the Ancient Church: Joseph Smith and Ancient Christianity* (Ben Lomond, Calif.: Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research, 1999), 106–7, 109, 309, 339–41. See <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Parthenon/2671/EC.html>.

her expertise on the Hebrew wisdom traditions in Daniel Peterson's important essay "Nephi and His Asherah"⁷ and by John Tvedtnes in the *FARMS Review of Books*.⁸ Peterson also refers to her work in his study of the "ye are gods" passages in John 10 and Psalm 82:10.⁹ Mark Thomas makes a passing reference to a journal essay of hers on "The Secret Tradition" by way of explaining the Gnostic phenomenon.¹⁰ William Hamblin refers to her book, *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity*, in the syllabus for his course on celestial ascent traditions in the Ancient Near East at Brigham Young University. Beyond these references in publications, there is a growing word-of-mouth awareness. Still, if anything, her work has been underused in LDS circles. While her works make fascinating reading for anyone interested in Christian origins, I find it remarkable that *all* of her writings, indeed her overall paradigm, burst with information and insight of peculiar interest to Mormons.

Barker's Vision of an Older Testament

In her books, Barker builds a strong argument that the key to understanding the New Testament

comes from ideas rooted in the first temple. The subtitle of her first book, *The Older Testament*, is "The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity." A passage in *The Great Angel* expresses one of the most important themes.

There were many in first-century Palestine who still retained a world-view derived from the more ancient religion of Israel [that of the First Temple] in which there was a High God and several Sons of God, one of whom was Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel. Yahweh, the Lord, could be manifested on earth in human form, as an angel or in the Davidic king. *It was as a manifestation of Yahweh, the Son of God, that Jesus was acknowledged as Son of God, Messiah and Lord.*¹¹

Barker says that this worldview was largely suppressed from the Old Testament as we have it and from first-century Judaism as scholars had understood it before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other early writings such as *1 Enoch*. But while old temple traditions were largely suppressed in the canon, and obscured further by modern translations,¹² she argues that temple traditions were known and understood by contemporaries

7. Daniel C. Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah: A Note on 1 Nephi 11:8–23," in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World: Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson*, ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 191–243.
8. John A. Tvedtnes, "A Much-Needed Book That Needs Much," review of *One Lord, One Faith: Writings of the Early Christian Fathers as Evidences of the Restoration*, by Michael T. Griffith, *FARMS Review of Books* 9/1 (1997): 36–37.
9. Daniel C. Peterson, "'Ye Are Gods': Psalm 82 and John 10 as Witnesses to the Divine Nature of Humanity," in *The Disciple as Scholar: Essays on Scripture and the Ancient World in Honor of Richard Lloyd Anderson*, ed. Stephen D. Ricks, Donald W. Parry, and Andrew H. Hedges (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2000), 471–594.
10. Mark D. Thomas, *Digging Into Cumorah: Reclaiming Book of Mormon Narratives* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2000), 32 n. 27 referring to Barker's "The Secret Tradition," in *The Journal of Higher Criticism* 2/1 (spring 1995): 31–67.
11. Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 3, emphasis in original. Both Ross David Baron and Martin Tanner cite this passage in their essays in *FARMS Review of Books* (see n. 6): Baron, 102 and Tanner, 29–30.
12. See Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, xi.

of Jesus, and provided the *mythos*¹³ in which he was known and in which he came to know himself. Barker's books explore the evidence and implications of this temple background for understanding the New Testament and the origins of Christianity.

The life and work of Jesus were, and should be, interpreted in the light of something *other* than Jerusalem Judaism. This *other* had its roots in the conflicts of the sixth century B.C. when the traditions of the monarchy were divided as an inheritance amongst several heirs. It would have been lost but for the accidents of archaeological discovery and the evidence of pre-Christian texts preserved and transmitted *only by Christian hands*.¹⁴

In *The Older Testament* Barker asks, "was there more, far more, in the religion of preexilic Jerusalem, than the later writers wished to perpetuate?"¹⁵ Her seven published books constitute her exploration of available evidence and the development of her hypothesis. Referring to the state of the evidence, she puts into perspective her efforts to understand the developments during and after the exile:

Enormous developments took place in the wake of enormous destruction, and these two factors make certainty quite impossible. They make *all* certainty impossible, and this too

must be acknowledged, for the customary descriptions of ancient Israel's religion are themselves no more than supposition. What I shall propose . . . is not an impossibility, but only one possibility to set alongside other possibilities, none of which has any claim to being an absolutely accurate account of what happened. Hypotheses do not become fact simply by frequent repetition, or even by detailed elaboration. What I am suggesting does, however, make considerable sense of the evidence from later periods.¹⁶

The Book of Mormon describes itself as rooted in the period just before the exile.¹⁷ As such, it offers us an unexpectedly apt testing ground for Barker's hypothesis, and vice versa. In the final chapter of *The Older Testament*, Barker reads Job to see "whether or not my theory about exilic developments is compatible with the Book of Job. Such an exercise can *prove* nothing, but the more material which can be illuminated by the hypothesis, the more it deserves consideration."¹⁸ In that chapter, she plots similarities between Job and the exilic situation as she reconstructs it. Likewise, this paper plots similarities between the Book of Mormon (and other LDS scripture and scholarship) and her reconstruction. While the exercise does not constitute proof, I suggest that the amount of illumination is remarkable and deserves consideration.

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13. By *mythos*, I mean the overarching context, the theological narrative that provides the context for the rituals, symbols, interpretations, and expectations, with the implicit roles for all concerned, both human and divine. We might say the overall plan of salvation set forth at the council in heaven, the symbolic structures and narrative background in which it is expressed, and the prophetic unfolding of that plan in history. A *mythos* is a paradigm, a conceptual framework that defines relationships and provides the meaning to the elements it contains.
 14. Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1987), 6–7, emphasis in original.
 15. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 13, as a statement of the theme of *The Older Testament*.
 16. *Ibid.*, 12.
 17. 1 Nephi 1:4.
 18. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 261, emphasis in original.

LOOKING BEFORE AND AFTER THE EXILE

Barker's work as a whole invites us to reexplore the situation in Jerusalem before the exile, and to examine the conflicts that resulted from the exile and return, particularly as they relate to the transmission of sacred writings. The theme of suppressed traditions that reemerge with the rise of Christianity is a central theme in all of Barker's works. Who suppressed the traditions and when? What was suppressed and why? How does her picture of these suppressed traditions compare with what we have in the Book of Mormon? And what is different and why? To answer these questions, we have to look closely at the events that occurred before, during, and after the exile.

King Josiah and the Book of the Law

One key event for understanding the conflicts in Jerusalem before the exile was the discovery of

the "Book of the Law" during a renovation of the Jerusalem temple during the reign of King Josiah.¹ In our Bible, 2 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 34 give slightly differing accounts of the discovery of the Book of the Law and the partially violent, ten-year reform that Josiah launched in response to that discovery. Barker writes that during Josiah's reform

all the temple vessels associated with Baal, the goddess or the angels were removed. Priests who had burned incense at high places to the sun, the moon, the stars and host of heaven, i.e., to the angels, were deposed. The sacred tree symbol of the goddess was removed and burnt, and the places where the women wove robes for her were broken down. The king also removed horses and chariots dedicated to the sun and the roof altars of the upper chamber.²

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1. Cyrus Gordon and Gary A. Rendsburg date this to 621 B.C. See *The Bible and the Ancient Near East* (New York: Norton, 1977), 268–69.
 2. Margaret Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Which God Gave to Him to Show to His Servants What Must Soon Take Place (Revelation 1.1)* (Edinburgh: Clark, 2000), 16.

Most scholars believe that the Book of the Law that was discovered included at least part of Deuteronomy. Hence Josiah's reform has been associated with the book of Deuteronomy. On the other hand, Barker observes that only the Deuteronomic version of the story, in 2 Kings, invites the association of Josiah's reform with Deuteronomy. The Chronicles account has the document discovered six years after the reform was underway. For her, a possible implication is that the Deuteronomist historians wanted Josiah's reform to be associated with the rediscovery of the Law.³ Still, the distinctive values associated with the book of Deuteronomy also characterize the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings to the extent that collectively they are called the Deuteronomist History. Richard Elliott Friedman's book *Who Wrote the Bible?* (a popular explanation of the Documentary Hypothesis) and William Doorly's

Obsession With Justice: The Story of the Deuteronomists present arguments that the first edition of the Deuteronomist History was produced during Josiah's lifetime. Indeed, both Friedman and Doorly argue that an edition was produced specifically to celebrate King Josiah.⁴ Friedman cites the verse in 2 Kings 23:25 that says of Josiah, "there was no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to the law of Moses."⁵

Later Deuteronomist editors provided editing and additions to the original text after Josiah's unexpected death, and the subsequent events leading to the fall of Jerusalem during the reign of Zedekiah, the loss of the temple, the destruction of the monarchy, and the start of the Babylonian captivity.⁶ Recall that Jeremiah's writings preserve evidence of his conflicts with different groups of priests and scribes over sacred writings⁷ and with

3. Alternatively, perhaps the Chronicler wanted to weaken the association.

4. See William Doorly, *Obsession with Justice: The Story of the Deuteronomists* (New York: Paulist, 1994), 49–53; and Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), 114–16. Doorly sees the Deuteronomists as a school. Friedman thinks Jeremiah (or perhaps Baruch) worked alone (see *Who Wrote the Bible?* 146–49). Jeremiah wrote a lamentation for Josiah and witnessed the failure of Josiah's reform (2 Chronicles 35:25). For Doorly, the Deuteronomists are the great theologians, freeing Israel from the vagaries of inspiration to the stability and reason of books of law. For Barker, they are the villains for the same reason. Compare Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), which surveys issues in current scholarship, noting that Pentateuchal criticism is more unsettled now than it has been for many years. Friedman blames this on a crisis in methodology rather than of evidence. See Friedman, *The Hidden Book in the Bible* (San Francisco: Harper, 1998), appendixes 2 and 3. For comparisons of the Book of Mormon with the "E" source and Northern Kingdom traditions, see John L. Sorenson, "The Brass Plates and Biblical Scholarship," in *Nephite Culture and Society* (Salt Lake City: New Sage Books, 1997), 31–39; and Steven St. Clair, "The Stick of Joseph: The Book of Mormon and the Literary Tradition of Northern Israel," at <http://members.aol.com/stclairst/stick.html>.

5. The Chronicler was not as flattering. See Alan Goff, "Uncritical Theory and Thin Description: The Resistance to History," review of "Apologetic and Critical Assumptions about Book of Mormon Historicity," by Brent Lee Metcalfe, *Dialogue* 26/3 (fall 1993): 153–84, *FARMS Review of Books* 7/1 (1995): 196.

6. See Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* 136–49; and Doorly, *Obsession with Justice*, 69–88.

7. Jeremiah's opponents burned some of his writings (Jeremiah 36:17–32), and Jeremiah himself accused others of producing a "lying Torah" (Jeremiah 8:8). Friedman even suggests that the lying Torah was the "P" source. See Friedman's *Who Wrote the Bible?* 167–73. See also p. 188 for arguments for having the "P" source available before the fall of Jerusalem.

the populace over religious practices.⁸ Remember too that although there were versions of scriptural books in existence before the fall of Jerusalem, the final selection and editing of the canon as we have it in our Bible took place after the return from the exile.

Josiah's Reform and the Book of Mormon

Lehi would have been a contemporary of the events associated with Josiah's reform, either as a youth or a young man.⁹ It would be surprising if the early phases of the Deuteronomist reform, which left such a distinctive imprint on much of

the Bible, did not make an equally profound impression on Lehi. Indeed, the conspicuous use of the Exodus theme in the Book of Mormon¹⁰ and the emphasis on Moses and on blessings or cursings depending on Israel's obedience to the Law are all consistent with the Deuteronomist program.¹¹ Several LDS scholars have explored other distinctive Deuteronomist themes and influences throughout the Book of Mormon. In a recent article, Noel Reynolds observes that "Lehi's last address to his people appears to consciously invoke at least 14 important themes and situational similarities from the final address of Moses as recorded in Deuteronomy."¹² Reynolds also refers to several

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8. Jeremiah 44:15–19, 21–27.
 9. See John L. Sorenson, *Nephite Culture and Society* (Salt Lake City: New Sage Books, 1997), 3–4, 23. Estimates of Lehi's age during the reform depend on whether one assumes a 597 B.C. date or a 587 B.C. date for the departure from Jerusalem.
 10. See Alan Goff, "Boats, Beginnings, and Repetitions," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 1/1 (fall 1992): 67–84, and George S. Tate, "The Typology of the Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon," in *Literature of Belief* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1981), 245–62. See also S. Kent Brown, "The Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon," in *From Zarahemla to Jerusalem: Literary and Historical Studies of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1998), 75–99.
 11. From Daniel H. Ludlow, ed., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1:378: "Deuteronomic Teachings in the Book of Mormon. The Jerusalem emigrants who became a Book of Mormon people retained a copy [it would be more accurate to say 'a version'] of the five books of Moses on plates of brass (1 Nephi 4:38; 5:11–16). They were taught the Law of Moses and were promised security and happiness if they obeyed it (e.g., 2 Nephi 1:16–20). Retention of their Promised Land depended upon continued obedience (e.g., 1 Nephi 2:20–23; 4:14; 7:13; 14:1–2; cf. Deuteronomy 18:9–13). Just as deuteronomic teachings were a stimulus for righteous commitment in King Josiah's Jerusalem (2 Kings 23:2–8), so were they in the Book of Mormon (e.g., 1 Nephi 17:33–38; 2 Nephi 5:10; Omni 1:2; Mosiah 1:1–7; Alma 8:17). Certain summary statements in the Book of Mormon may also reflect deuteronomic law (e.g., Alma 58:40; Helaman 3:20; 6:34; 15:5; 3 Nephi 25:4). Further, the prophecy of God's raising up a prophet in Deuteronomy 18:15–19 is declared by the Book of Mormon to be fulfilled in Jesus Christ (1 Nephi 22:20; 3 Nephi 20:23; cf. John 6:14; Acts 3:22; 7:37). Book of Mormon writers observed that the prophet Alma, may have been taken up by God as Moses was, reflecting a possible variant in their copy of Deuteronomy 34:5–6: 'The scriptures saith the Lord took Moses unto himself' (Alma 45:19)." These affinities to Deuteronomic teachings all relate to the first phase of the reform. We will observe that the differences all relate to the exilic phase. It is of note that the Book of Mormon takes pains not to oversimplify the experience of suffering, misfortune, and evil, in striking contrast to the Deuteronomist tone of Job's comforters (for example, Mosiah 13:9; 23:18–23; Alma 14:7–13; 17:11; and Alma 24). I intend to compare these and other Book of Mormon passages to Barker's chapter on Job in *The Older Testament*.
 12. Noel Reynolds, "Lehi as Moses," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9/2 (2000): 35.

unpublished studies that suggest Deuteronomistic influence throughout the Book of Mormon.¹³ Taking an approach to Deuteronomistic political themes, Alan Goff remarks that

The book of Mosiah carries on a complex conversation with the “Biblical Politeia.” (Biblical scholars often call 1 Samuel the Biblical Politeia because it is the founding document of the Israelite monarchy, but most scholars recognize that the work of the Deuteronomistic historian—Joshua through 2 Kings and the book of Deuteronomy itself—is filled with a sophisticated discussion of politics. The first few books in the Book of Mormon—Mosiah and the first few chapters of Alma in particular—constantly allude to the Biblical Politeia in a way that directs the reader back to a biblical examination of human society. I propose, consequently, that we refer to Mosiah as the Book of Mormon Politeia to emphasize its dialectical relationship with the Deuteronomistic History.)¹⁴

Mosiah 29 in the Book of Mormon describes how King Mosiah proposes to “newly arrange the affairs of this people” by appointing “judges, that will judge this people according to the commandments of God.”¹⁵ This action overturns the tran-

sition to kingship from judges that occurred in 1 Samuel 8. Goff’s fascinating studies of literary allusion and type-scene in the Book of Mormon most frequently point back to the stories in the Deuteronomist History.¹⁶ This awareness on the part of Book of Mormon authors of the Deuteronomist History, the main themes, subtleties of the law, the festivals, the politics, and the brilliant use of allusion and type-scenes is as it should be, given the time and place of origin it claims for itself, with Nephi beginning his account by referring to the first year of the reign of Zedekiah.¹⁷

John Welch of Brigham Young University recently suggested that the brass plates that Nephi acquired would plausibly fit as a royal set of scriptures commissioned during Josiah’s reform.¹⁸ The discovery of a significant but lost writing would certainly raise awareness of the need to recover, read, and preserve the sacred records. It is noteworthy that the late seventh- to early sixth-century Middle East is associated with the rise of interest in writing on metal plates.¹⁹ Also, the oldest known Bible text, a priestly blessing from Numbers 6:24–26 written on a rolled-up strip of silver, actually comes from Jerusalem and dates to about 600 B.C.²⁰

13. *Ibid.*, 81–82, especially notes 5 and 12.

14. Alan Goff, “Scratching the Surface of Book of Mormon Narratives,” review of *Digging in Cumorah: Reclaiming Book of Mormon Narratives*, by Mark D. Thomas, *FARMS Review of Books* 12/2 (2000): 57.

15. Mosiah 29:11.

16. For example, see Goff’s comparison of the Ammon and David narratives in “Reduction and Enlargement: Harold Bloom’s Mormon,” *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 5 (1993): 96–108, especially 104–7. Also Goff’s comparison of the story of Abinadi to “disguise narratives” in the Deuteronomist histories in his “Uncritical Theory and Thin Description,” 170–207, especially 194–204.

17. 1 Nephi 1:4.

18. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch, eds., *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 430–31.

19. For example, William J. Hamblin, “Sacred Writings on Bronze Plates in the Ancient Mediterranean,” (FARMS, 1984).

20. John W. Welch and Melvin J. Thorne, eds., *Pressing Forward With the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999), 23–28. See also Hamblin, “Sacred Writings on Bronze Plates,” 4–5.

All of this demonstrates that the Book of Mormon shows an appropriate interest in themes and sacred writings that emerge during Josiah's reform.

The Deuteronomist Response to the Fall of Jerusalem and the Exile

Barker credits the suppression of many significant ideas to the Deuteronomist Reform. The prominence of many Deuteronomist themes in the Book of Mormon might lead us to expect a contrast between her picture and ours. But remember that the discovery of the Book of the Law and the reemphasis on the Law in Israel predates Lehi's departure and the fall of Jerusalem by as much as thirty-seven years. And there is evidence that the version of the Books of Moses on the plates of Laban differed in several respects from the Pentateuch as we have it in our Bible.²¹ We must closely examine the specific timing, themes, and circumstances involved in the work of the Deuteronomist school.

Barker treats the activities of the Deuteronomists from the discovery of the Book of the Law through the exile collectively because her concern is the final outcome of their effort, as she looks back from the time of the first Christians. Nevertheless, she usually discusses the work of the Deuteronomists as we have it more as a product of the exile than of Josiah's time.²² For our purposes, we should not imagine a single period of activity based on a static program. The first wave of activity came with Josiah's decade of reform, the composition of the Deuteronomist edition of the history, and the reemphasis on Moses and the Law in Israelite religion.²³ This reform effort was interrupted by Josiah's death. Second Kings 24:35–37 records that Josiah's successor, Jehoiakim, reigned eleven years and “did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.” After Jehoiakim, Zedekiah reigned for eleven years, another king whom the Deuteronomists depict as doing evil in the sight of the Lord as Jehoiakim had done (2 Kings 24:19).

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21. See John L. Sorenson, “The Brass Plates and Biblical Scholarship,” in *Nephite Culture and Society*, 25–39, and Steven St. Clair, “The Stick of Joseph.” See also discussions of the Isaiah variants by Nibley, *Since Cumorah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988), 113–18 and John A. Tvedtnes, “Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon,” in *Isaiah and the Prophets*, ed. Monte S. Nyman (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1984), 165–77.
 22. Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1987), 143: “[T]he experience of exile is a possible explanation for the differences between the histories and the book of Deuteronomy itself” (emphasis in original). Also, p. 144: “All we know is that these writings had an established status before the Deuteronomists became influential, because they were *edited* by the Deuteronomists. They were assimilated and redefined . . . they were transmitting something which they modified and which, in their hands, became something other than it had originally been.”
 23. Barker observes that some scholars question the existence of any reference to Moses or the Law in any genuine preexilic writing (e.g., *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* [London: SPCK, 1992], 16–17). This presumes that passages that do refer to Moses in writings attributed to preexilic texts were added later. Lacking actual manuscripts dating to the time, everyone's theories involve a certain amount of self-reference in interpreting data. What does not fit a theory can be explained by saying it was added later. (The preexilic silver scroll mentioned previously is more difficult for these theories.) This sort of thing has a lot to do with the current unsettled state of Pentateuch scholarship. In *The Great Angel*, Barker cites John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (New

The negative picture of these two kings in their writings does not imply royal support for scribal efforts during the period leading up to the exile. In their studies of the activities of the Deuteronomists, both William Doorly and Richard Friedman describe secondary waves of Deuteronomist editing and additions to the records to describe the death of Josiah and the fates of his successors, and to describe and interpret the situation in Jerusalem and into the exile. The successive waves of composition and editorial efforts attempt both to assert the values of the Deuteronomists and to reconcile those values with the crises caused by the death of Josiah, the fall of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the temple and the monarchy. Their effort involves variations on a theme, reacting to changing situations.

William Doorly's book *Obsession with Justice: The Story of the Deuteronomists* surveys current scholarship on the Deuteronomists from the perspective of one who sees them as Israel's greatest theologians. Doorly's title summarizes one of the Deuteronomists' main themes: the notion of blessings for obedience and cursing for disobedience. Their equation of blessings with obedience also provides the fodder for the crisis that the Deuteronomists faced after the death of Josiah, their perfect king. Why wasn't he blessed? It also provides fodder for the crisis facing the exiles. Given that possession of the Promised Land was conditioned on obedience, what was the status of the exiles? Given that the king and the temple had been central to their faith, what were they to do when the monarchy and the temple had been destroyed?

Haven and London: Eisenbrauns, 1983) and, with more emphasis and respect, R. N. Whybray, *The Making of the Pentateuch* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987), who compare the Pentateuch with the fifth-century works of Herodotus. While she mentions their books (e.g., in *The Great Angel*, 16–17, 21–22), these particular arguments are convenient for, but not central to, her overall thesis. The Book of Mormon, on the other hand, does require a preexilic Pentateuch of some kind to account for the story and description of the brass plates (1 Nephi 5:10–16). Cyrus Gordon and Gary Rendsburg note that “throughout the ancient Near East, law codes were disregarded in actual life. The judges regularly omit any reference to the codes in their court decisions in Mesopotamia. They are instead guided by tradition, public opinions, and common sense” (*The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, 269). Hence, from their perspective, the dearth of references to the Law before Josiah's time lacks decisive significance regarding the date of composition. Further, they argue that “to be effective in Josiah's program, the Book embraced in 621 should have included the Patriarchal narratives and the Exodus, because it is those traditions on which the unity of the tribes is based. . . . Aside from cultic matters, the actual enforcement of the Law came as a result of the Exile, and we find it in effect only after the Exile when it becomes a part of Judaism down to the present times” (ibid., 271). The Book of Mormon also emphasizes the Exodus and cultic matters, rather than the details of the Law. However, several stories in the Book of Mormon do reflect an implicit awareness of the law. For examples, see John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 62–64, 158–61, 176–79, 189–92, 242–44, 248–52. Friedman provides useful arguments that most of the sources of the current Pentateuch existed while Jeremiah prophesied and wrote in Jerusalem (see *Who Wrote the Bible?* 208–10). See also Friedman, “The Antiquity of the Work,” appendix 2 in *The Hidden Book in the Bible*, 350–60, for a defense of the age of the sources of the Torah, and “Late for a Very Important Date,” appendix 3 in *The Hidden Book in the Bible*, 361–89, for arguments for a preexilic composition. It is not necessary to agree with Friedman on everything (see Robert J. Alter's review of Friedman, “The Genius of J,” *New York Times, Sunday Book Review Desk*, 15 November 1998), but he does raise issues that should be addressed.

If this model is accurate, much of the editorial program associated with the Deuteronomist school occurred after Lehi's group left.²⁴ We shall see that it is in respect to the exilic efforts of the Deuteronomists that the Book of Mormon diverges from their efforts and matches closely with Barker's reconstruction.

The Ancient Royal Cult and the Deuteronomists of the Exile

The subtitle of Barker's first book is *The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*. Barker spends much effort reconstructing a picture of the role of the monarchy and of the wisdom traditions in the rites and practices of the temple in the days of David and Solomon and Isaiah. Evidently, the king not only acted in the role of the high priest in the temple, but in that role, he represented the visible presence of Yahweh, the son of the Most High God, El.

Central to the myths was belief in the human manifestation of God. A human figure occupied the divine throne and came to bring judgement. The presence of the figure also brought renewed life and fertility. The human figure was probably once the king who was also the high priest.²⁵

We get glimpses of the old royal cult in the Psalms. Barker says that the ancient kingmaking is described in Psalm 89:

“Of old thou didst speak in a vision to thy faithful one and say:
I have set the crown upon one who is mighty,
I have exalted one chosen from the people.
I have found David, my servant;
With my holy oil I have anointed him . . .”
(Psalm 89:19–20)

Psalm 2 has the king set on the LORD's holy hill and declared to be his son: “Today I have begotten you . . . I will make the nations your heritage . . . you shall break them with a rod of iron” (Psalm 2:7–9). It has also been suggested that Psalm 74 gives a glimpse of the kingmaking:

“Thou didst break the heads of the dragons
on the waters;
Thou didst crush the heads of Leviathan”
(Psalm 74:13–14)

The King then reestablished the cosmic covenant.²⁶

This aspect of Israelite kingship appears in the Psalms but not in the histories of the Kings. Barker explains why.

The Deuteronomists had not favoured the monarchy, as can be seen from their surviving

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24. See “Deuteronomy,” chapter 5 in *The Older Testament*, 142–60. For Book of Mormon dates, see Randall P. Spackman, “Introduction to Book of Mormon Chronology: The Principle Prophecies, Calendars, and Dates,” (FARMS, 1993), 71. Also compare David Rolph and Jo Ann Seely, “Lehi and Jeremiah: Prophets, Priests, and Patriarchs,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 8/2 (1999): 28, which disputes Spackman's initial dating of Lehi's departure based on the possibility of an earlier imprisonment for Jeremiah. However, their essay does not offer an alternative overall correlation. Spackman's correlation of internal and external dates works out plausibly, based on a lunar calendar (Spackman, 33). An earlier departure would require a solar calendar. Spackman shows that the Book of Mormon authors kept both lunar and solar calendars.
25. Margaret Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (London: SPCK, 1991), 180.
26. Margaret Barker, *The Risen Lord: The Jesus of History as the Christ of Faith* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1996), 52. Compare the year-rite and 3 Nephi 8–11. See Kevin Christensen, review of *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon*, by Dan Vogel, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 2 (1990): 248–49.

writings; they said that the wickedness of a king had caused the destruction of Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:3).²⁷ They were to reformulate Israel's religion in such a way that the monarch was no longer central to the cult. In addition, the exile of so many people to Babylon meant that they were physically separated from the temple which had been the centre of their life. These two circumstances combined to alter radically the perception of the presence of God in the temple. The events of history necessitated an idea of God not located in the one holy place, but rather of God travelling with his people, and the Deuteronomists rejected all the ancient anthropomorphisms of the royal cult. Theirs was to be a God whose voice was heard and obeyed, but who had no visible form.²⁸

Clearly, this aspect of the Deuteronomist reform responds to the destruction of the monarchy and the loss of the temple. That dates these specific efforts to the exilic phase of the reform and this is where we see an immediate contrast with the picture in the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon begins with Lehi's vision of an anthropomorphic God on the throne,²⁹ and 2 Nephi shows Nephi building a temple and accepting kingship.³⁰ Just as the presence of Deuteronomic themes is accounted for in Lehi's Jerusalem background and the story of the brass plates, so we shall see that the contrasts between the Book of Mormon picture and the final work of the Deuteronomists find a specific historical context in the exile.

The Deuteronomists suppressed the anthropomorphism of the older tradition and any

idea of the visible presence of God was abandoned. There were two reasons for this: they were the heirs to the monotheism of the Second Isaiah who had identified El Elyon and Yahweh and therefore 'relocated' Yahweh in heaven rather than in the temple in Jerusalem; and they were constructing from the ruins of the monarchy a faith for Israel which no longer had the king at its centre and therefore no longer had his presence as a visible sign of Yahweh with his people. The old concept of a human form present in the temple was no longer tenable, and the ancient descriptions of theophanies derived from temple ceremonial were no longer acceptable. The Deuteronomists rewrote the tradition: "Then Yahweh spoke to you out of the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of the words but saw no form; there was only a voice" (Deuteronomy 4:12). With this one should compare the contemporary Ezekiel, a temple priest who was able to describe "one like a man" on the fiery throne (Ezekiel 1:26), or the tradition that Moses was permitted to see the "form" of the Lord (Numbers 12:8).³¹

Notice that Barker here associates the development of monotheism with the Second Isaiah. This presents both interesting possibilities and the single most arresting tension in comparing her work with the Book of Mormon. On the one hand, the Book of Mormon prophets show much in common with the preexilic teachings on all these points. On the other hand, the Book of Mormon prophets quote several passages associated with the Second Isaiah, who, according to Barker's

27. According to Doorly, this assessment of King Manasseh is one stage in a searching process, not the final conclusion of the Deuteronomist school. Also, note that a century later, the Chronicler claims that Manasseh had repented (2 Chronicles 33:15–16; see Doorly, *Obsession With Justice*, 62–64).

28. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven*, 134–35.

29. 1 Nephi 1:8.

30. 2 Nephi 5:16–19.

31. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 99–100.

reading and the authorities she accepts, dates to the exile in Babylon.³² I shall return to this issue after first surveying the overall fit in the shared picture.

Barker's Preexilic Judaism and the Book of Mormon

We should now look at Barker's view of what the Deuteronomists suppressed. She cites the "preface to Deuteronomy"—now chapter 4 of that book—as showing what this group set out to remove from the religion of Israel:

First, they were to have the Law instead of Wisdom (Deuteronomy 4:6). . . . [W]hat was the Wisdom which the Law replaced? Second, they were to think only of the formless voice of God sounding from the fire and giving the Law (Deuteronomy 19:12). Israel had long had a belief in the vision of God, when the glory had been visible on the throne in human form, surrounded by the heavenly hosts. What happened to the visions of God? And third, they were to leave the veneration of the host of heaven to peoples not chosen by Yahweh (Deuteronomy 4:19–20). Israel had long regarded Yahweh as the Lord of the hosts of heaven, but the title Yahweh of Hosts was not used by the Deuteronomists. What happened to the hosts, the angels?³³

In her most recent book, Barker adds references to two other Deuteronomic proscriptions. The Jews were not to "enquire after secret things which belonged only to the LORD (Deuteronomy 29:29). Their duty was to obey the commandments bought down from Sinai and not to seek someone who would ascend to heaven for them to discover remote and hidden things (Deuteronomy 30:11)."³⁴

Lehi's vision in the first chapter of the Book of Mormon contains most of the elements that these Deuteronomy passages explicitly reject.

And being thus overcome with the Spirit, he was carried away in a vision, even that he saw the heavens open, and he thought he saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God. And it came to pass that he saw One descending out of the midst of heaven, and he beheld that his luster was above that of the sun at noon-day. And he also saw twelve others following him, and their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament. And they came down and went forth upon the face of the earth; and the first came and stood before my father, and gave unto him a book, and bade him that he should read. And it came to pass that as he read, he was filled with the Spirit of the Lord. And he read, saying: Wo, wo, unto Jerusalem, for I have seen thine abominations! Yea, and many things did my father read concerning Jerusalem—that it should be destroyed, and the inhabitants thereof; many should perish by the sword, and many should be carried away captive into Babylon.³⁵

Lehi has the vision, sees God on a throne, sees the hosts of heaven, and reads from a heavenly book. Since these elements appear in spite of the deep affinity that the Book of Mormon shows for Deuteronomy, this reinforces Barker's association of these elements with the response of the Deuteronomist school to the exile. Barker writes that against the efforts of the Deuteronomists, "Many of the older traditions did survive, however, and can be traced in the apocalypses, texts

32. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 161.

33. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 13.

34. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 17.

35. 1 Nephi 1:8–12.

preserved only by Christian hands.”³⁶ Notice that Latter-day Saint scholars have extensively compared Lehi’s vision to visions in the apocalypses.³⁷ They have shown that the affinity between Lehi’s vision and the apocalypses and related biblical passages is deep and profound.

The Wisdom Tradition in Ancient Israel

The story of the acquisition of the brass plates shows the importance of the Law in the Book of Mormon, which might seem a contrast with Barker’s picture, where the Law supplants wisdom.³⁸ We should now ask, What is wisdom, and how do the Book of Mormon prophets depict wisdom in relation to the Law? We need to follow Barker in asking, What was the wisdom that the Law attempted to replace?

Daniel Peterson provides a useful description of “wisdom” literature:

Biblical scholars recognize a genre of writing, found both in the canonical scriptures (e.g., Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon) and beyond the canon, that they term “wisdom literature.” Among the characteristics

of this type of writing, not surprisingly, is the frequent use of the term *wisdom*. But also common to such literature, and very striking in texts from a Hebrew cultural background, is the absence of typically Israelite or Jewish themes, such as the promises to the patriarchs, the story of Moses and the exodus, the covenant at Sinai, and the divine promise to David. There is, however, a strong emphasis on the teaching of parents, and especially on the instruction of the father.³⁹

Barker works to extend the standard definition, building a case that “wisdom was an older form of communication between God and his people. Wisdom was something which the Deuteronomists reformed. This possibility is crucial for my argument.”⁴⁰

Regarding the wisdom in Proverbs as it now appears, she observes that it “represent[s] neither threat nor contradiction to the Deuteronomic position.”⁴¹ Therefore, she argues, “the reasons for the changes to wisdom must lie elsewhere, perhaps in those very aspects of wisdom which are no longer extant in the biblical texts as a result of

36. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven*, 135.

37. In addition to Blake Ostler, “The Throne Theophany and Prophetic Commission in 1 Nephi: A Form-Critical Analysis,” *BYU Studies* 26/4 (fall 1986): 67–95, see discussions in Hugh Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1989), 391–92; and John W. Welch, “The Calling of a Prophet,” in *The Book of Mormon: First Nephi, The Doctrinal Foundation*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1988), 35–54. Compare also John W. Welch, “The Narrative of Zosimus (History of the Rechabites) and the Book of Mormon,” in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1987), 323–74. See also Stephen D. Ricks, “Heavenly Visions and Prophetic Calls in Isaiah 6 (2 Nephi 16), the Book of Mormon, and the Revelation of John,” in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 171–90.

38. 1 Nephi 3–6.

39. Daniel C. Peterson, “Nephi and His Asherah: A Note on 1 Nephi 11:8–23,” in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World: Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson*, ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 209. Peterson also says that “careful readers will note that all of these characteristics are present in the accounts of the vision of Lehi and Nephi as they are given in the Book of Mormon.”

40. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 83.

41. *Ibid.*, 85.

the alterations.”⁴² Barker’s primary guide for reconstructing the lost traditions is the *Book of Enoch*, a book that originated in Jewish tradition, was used extensively, copied and preserved by the earliest Christians, but which fell into disrepute beginning in the second century.⁴³ She traces the Enoch connections through many other texts, both back in time to Isaiah⁴⁴ and forward to the New Testament.⁴⁵ She observes that those who transmitted the Enoch text “kept a role for wisdom . . . they kept a tradition of the heavenly ascent and the vision of God, . . . they were astronomers⁴⁶ who had a complex theology of heavenly hosts and angels.”⁴⁷ That is, the Enoch texts and others related to them describe the very things that the Deuteronomists attempted to suppress. The Enoch texts also appear to describe the returning exiles as apostate in passages that criticize a group that suppresses these particular themes.⁴⁸

As Barker reviews the wisdom elements suppressed by the reformers, she again cites their re-appearance in Christianity:

The reform of Josiah/the Deuteronomists, then, reconstructed as best we can from both

biblical and non-biblical sources, seems to have been a time when more than pagan accretions were removed from the Jerusalem cult. Wisdom was eliminated, even though her presence was never forgotten, the heavenly ascent and the vision of God were abandoned, the hosts of heaven, the angels, were declared to be unfit for the chosen people, the ark (and the presence of Yahweh which it represented) was removed, and the role of the high priest was altered in that he was no longer the anointed. All of these features of the older cult were to appear in Christianity.⁴⁹

The reappearance of these suppressed elements in Christianity stands behind Barker’s fascination with them and underlies her insistence on their significance. And since these same themes reappear in Christianity, she concludes that “*the simplest, and most likely idea of wisdom to underlie the New Testament is that of the Enoch tradition.*”⁵⁰ She observes that

what Deuteronomy forbade and what the “reformers” removed is what exactly appears in works such as the Book of Revelation and *1 Enoch*. These tell how certain chosen people

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid., 8–9, 12–16; and Margaret Barker, *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1988), 5–13. See also Hugh Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1986), 95–99.

44. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 125–37.

45. For example, Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 91–104.

46. Compare the reference to astronomy and wisdom with Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, 551: “In keeping with the [wisdom] genre, this particular piece is the only part of the Book of Mormon which considers *cosmology*, an indispensable element of ancient wisdom literature, and one which abounds in the book of Moses (published at the same time as the Book of Mormon) and the book of Abraham. It takes the form of the well-known apostrophe on the obedience of all nature to the eternal laws and even includes a sensational discovery that had been made back in Lehi’s day, ‘for surely it is the earth that moveth and not the sun’ (Helaman 12:15).”

47. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 14.

48. Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 18–19.

49. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 15. See also Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 16–17.

50. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 99, emphasis in original.

ascended to heaven to learn secret things from the LORD, they tell of angels who were the host of heaven, and of the cherubim who were the graven images at the very heart of the temple in the holy of holies. Above all, they keep an honoured place for the goddess, Wisdom, and they describe visions of the LORD on the heavenly throne.⁵¹

With the understandable exception of the specific temple artifacts kept in the holy of holies, the ark of the covenant (which disappears from the Bible record after the time of King Manasseh,⁵² many decades before Lehi's group left) and the cherubim,⁵³ all of these features of the older cult also appear in the Book of Mormon. As we have seen, the Book of Mormon begins with Lehi's ascent, the knowledge he gains, the hosts of angels, and the LORD on the throne.⁵⁴ We shall see that Lehi's and Nephi's visions turn out to have extensive ties to the wisdom tradition and that the vision of Nephi shows much in common with Revelation and *Enoch*. We shall also observe that the temple is central to the Book of Mormon. This circumstance may bear on some criticisms

of the Book of Mormon, particularly claims that it contains Christianized concepts that are out of place in preexilic Israel.⁵⁵ Many preexilic ideas traveled with Lehi and his people, even though specific artifacts, such as the ark and cherubim, evidently did not.⁵⁶

The final editors of the Old Testament as we have it came after the return from exile, probably at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, and the Chronicler.⁵⁷ They had a different agenda than the Deuteronomists,⁵⁸ but many of the writings that the succeeding groups had to work with had already passed through the hands of the Deuteronomists. Regarding the dominant interpretations of the Bible, Barker adds this comment:

The reforming Deuteronomists with their emphasis on history and law have evoked a sympathetic response in many modern scholars who have found there a religion after their own heart.⁵⁹ Thus we have inherited a double distortion; the reformers edited much of what we now read in the Hebrew Bible, and modern interpreters with a similar cast of mind have told us what the whole of that Hebrew Bible was saying. The fact that most ancient

51. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 17.

52. Ian Wilson, *The Bible Is History* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery, 1999), 168.

53. Although the Book of Mormon text that we have never directly refers to the cherubim in the holy of holies, Alma does refer to the Eden cherubim in a discourse that is rich in temple themes (Alma 42:2–3).

54. 1 Nephi 1.

55. A friendly example is Blake Ostler, "The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source," *Dialogue* 20 (spring 1987): 66–123.

56. Although, we must remember here that Joseph Smith translated only a third of the plates. What was in the sealed portion? See 2 Nephi 27:10; Ether 4:5–17.

57. Friedman presents arguments for Ezra being the final redactor of the Old Testament. See *Who Wrote the Bible?* 159.

58. This is most apparent in comparing Kings and Chronicles. For example, see Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible?* 211–12.

59. Compare this passage with Doorly: "For the first time, Yahweh had spoken to his people through writings on a scroll. Previously Yahweh had spoken in other ways" (*Obsession with Justice*, 1). Compare and contrast Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet*, 138–54. Nibley argues for a long-standing tradition of preserving and transmitting records by burying and hiding them to come forth in their purity. See also John A. Tvedtnes, *The Book of Mormon and Other Hidden Books* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2000), 9–25.

readers of the texts read them very differently is seen as a puzzle.⁶⁰

Barker attempts to solve the puzzle of the difference in reading by recovering the context in which ancient readers lived and thought.

Wisdom in the Book of Mormon

The word *wisdom* occurs fifty-five times in the Book of Mormon. Several places in the Book of Mormon include examples of the distinct genre of wisdom literature. Daniel Peterson's "Nephi and His Asherah" essay draws many connections between the Book of Mormon and wisdom literature, particularly, but not exclusively, in comparing Proverbs 1–9 to the vision of the tree of life.⁶¹ Peterson observes such elements as the shared concern with plain language versus flattering words, the association of justice and prosperity, wisdom as a "tree of life," the importance of staying on the right path, and the opposition to wisdom in the form of the whorish woman. Nibley cites

Helaman 12 as a splendid example of the wisdom genre,⁶² and he often compares passages in the Enoch literature to the Book of Mormon.⁶³ Book of Mormon authors consistently endorse the seeking and applying of wisdom.

O how marvelous are the works of the Lord, and how long doth he suffer with his people; yea, and how blind and impenetrable are the understandings of the children of men; for they will not seek wisdom, neither do they desire that she should rule over them!⁶⁴

Notice here that the Book of Mormon also retains the feminine aspect of the ancient wisdom traditions and sides with those who would embrace wisdom.⁶⁵ The picture in the Book of Mormon, then, strikes a balance between the Law and the wisdom traditions. The Law in the Book of Mormon never closes the door on revelation but rather promises more.⁶⁶ The Law in the Book of Mormon is never seen as an end in itself, but as a type and shadow of Christ.⁶⁷

60. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 28.

61. See Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," especially 209–18. Compare Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 53: "In the earliest strata of the gospels, we are told, Jesus was presented as the child of Wisdom." Barker's discussion of the "woman clothed with the sun" from Revelation 11:19 and 12:1–2, 5 in *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 199–211, contains much that should be compared with Peterson's work on the connections between the tree of life visions and the Asherah/Wisdom traditions.

62. See Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, 551, for a discussion of wisdom themes of lamentation and cosmology in Helaman 12:1–15.

63. For example, Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 159: "Lehi's appeal to his sons must have sounded like that of the *Odes of Solomon*: 'Come and take water from the living fountain of the Lord. . . . Come and drink and rest by the fountain of the Lord!' 'he that refuses the water shall not live!' says the *Zadokite Fragment*. 'I saw the fountain of righteousness,' says *1 Enoch*, telling of *his* vision, 'and around it were many springs of wisdom, and all the thirsty drank from them and were filled. . . . But woe unto ye who . . . have forsaken the fountain of life!'" For other Enoch comparisons, see also Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1989), 317, 338 n. 18.

64. Mosiah 8:20.

65. See especially Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah," 211–18. For the centrality of the vision in the Book of Mormon, compare Bruce W. Jorgensen, "The Dark Way to the Tree: Typological Unity in the Book of Mormon," in *Literature and Belief* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1981), 217–31. Also consider the possible implications of Doctrine and Covenants 1:26: "Inasmuch as they sought wisdom, they might be instructed."

66. Ether 4:11; Moroni 10:4–5.

67. 2 Nephi 2:5–7; 2 Nephi 11:4; Alma 25:15–16.

Nephi and Barker's Reconstruction of the Ancient Wisdom

I believe this balance between the Law and wisdom comes from Nephi. This becomes evident as we look more closely at Barker's reconstruction of what the ancient wisdom was. Referring to the book of Daniel, Barker notes that "the text itself claims to be about a *wise man* who predicts the future, interprets dreams and functions at court."⁶⁸ She observes that

Joseph, our only other canonical model [of a wise man], is very similar; he functions at court, interprets dreams and predicts the future . . . Daniel is sufficiently Judaized to observe the food laws, but how are we to explain his dealings with heavenly beings, and his use of an inexplicable mythology? The elaborate structures of the book suggest that it was using a known framework, and not constructing imagery as it went along, but there is no hint of such imagery in Proverbs, *except in passages where the text is now corrupt*. This suggests that the wisdom elements in the non-canonical apocalypses which have no obvious roots in the Old Testament may not be foreign accretions, but elements of an older wisdom which the reformers have purged.⁶⁹

While Nephi does not interact with Zedekiah's court in the manner of Joseph or Daniel, he does accept kingship in the New World.⁷⁰ Nephi also interprets dreams and predicts the future.⁷¹ Like Daniel, he shows commitment to the Law,⁷² has dealings with angels,⁷³ recognizes the need to seek interpretation of symbols,⁷⁴ and speaks of the need to understand the cultural context behind prophetic writing.⁷⁵ Lehi discovers his descent from Joseph in the brass plates,⁷⁶ and the Book of Mormon shows access to Joseph traditions that do not survive in the present Bible.⁷⁷ What else might Nephi have in common with the wisdom tradition? Starting from the observations of the common ground between Daniel and Joseph, Barker attempts to fill in other details of the lost tradition:

This was a mythology of angels and of scenes of a great judgement . . .

The exaltation to the stars appears as the wise who turn many to righteousness shining like the stars for ever . . . The wise man has *knowledge* of God, is a child/servant of the Lord, has God as his father and, as God's son, will receive help (Wisdom 2:12ff). At the great judgement he will be exalted and take his place with the sons of God, the Holy Ones.⁷⁸

68. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 91.

69. *Ibid.*, 91–92, emphasis in original.

70. 2 Nephi 5:18. Although see Noel B. Reynolds, "Nephi Kingship Reconsidered," in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World: Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson*, ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 151–89.

71. 1 Nephi 10–15.

72. 1 Nephi 4:14–17; 2 Nephi 5:10.

73. 1 Nephi 3:29–30; 11:21, 30; 12:1; 2 Nephi 4:24.

74. 1 Nephi 11:11.

75. 2 Nephi 25:1–5.

76. 1 Nephi 5:14–16; 2 Nephi 3:4.

77. See 2 Nephi 3 and Alma 46:23–27. The material in 2 Nephi 3 has been compared to the Messiah Ben Joseph traditions in Joseph F. McConkie, "Joseph Smith as Found in Ancient Manuscripts," in *Isaiah and the Prophets*, ed. Monte S. Nyman (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1984).

78. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 92.

The pattern of the “lost” tradition therefore included, as well as the angels and the great judgement, the stars and the foreign kings, the kingship of Yahweh, the Holy Ones, exaltation, sonship and wisdom.⁷⁹

In *Jubilees* 4:17, . . . Enoch learns the forbidden art of writing *and* the calendrical calculations which *1 Enoch* includes amongst the revealed secrets of heaven.⁸⁰

Wisdom was the secrets of creation, learned in heaven and brought to earth, the recurring theme of the apocalypses. There must have been some way in which the king, and the wise men, “went” to heaven like the prophets in order to learn these secrets by listening in the council of God.⁸¹

Another of the angelic arts was metal-working, and we find wisdom attributed to a variety of craftsmen in the Old Testament . . . *1 Enoch* 8 links this skill to the arts of war, and in Isaiah 10:13 we do find that the king of Assyria’s military prowess is called wisdom. Job 28 implies that wisdom extended to the techniques of mining, damming and irrigation. Ezekiel 27:8–9 says that the navigators and shipwrights were also wise. The knowledge of mathematics required for these skills is also presupposed by the later astronomical material in *1 Enoch*, and by the calendrical calculations.⁸²

Beyond Nephi as a king, a dreamer, an interpreter of apocalyptic visions, a forth-teller who prophesies a great judgment to come,⁸³ who claims personal knowledge of the mysteries of God,⁸⁴ and who knows of both the heavenly hosts of angels and the fallen ones,⁸⁵ he demonstrates his knowledge of writing,⁸⁶ and his writings show extensive ties to the known and surmised wisdom literatures.⁸⁷ He also demonstrates wisdom in relation to mining and metalworking,⁸⁸ shipbuilding,⁸⁹ navigation,⁹⁰ and the arts of war.⁹¹ He is likely the source of the means of calendrical calculations that his descendants used to determine the holy days and the passage of years related to Lehi’s 600-year prophecy of the Messiah.⁹² Nephi qualifies remarkably well as a representative of the wisdom tradition as Barker reconstructs it, but one who operates in harmony, rather than in conflict, with the Law. The harmony may be possible because of a preexilic understanding of the law. We will look at some other aspects of the treatment of wisdom/knowledge in the Book of Mormon farther on.

The Vision of God

Vision is the notion that human beings can see God. Barker contrasts the attitudes of those who accepted the notion of throne theophanies of an

79. *Ibid.*, 93.

80. *Ibid.*, 94.

81. *Ibid.*, 95. Compare Moses 1 and Abraham 3–4.

82. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 95.

83. 1 Nephi 11:36; 22:12–19.

84. 1 Nephi 11; 2 Nephi 4:23–25.

85. 1 Nephi 1:8–10; 11:1, 30–31; 2 Nephi 2:17.

86. 1 Nephi 1:2.

87. See especially Peterson, “Nephi and His Asherah,” 209–18.

88. 1 Nephi 17:9–10.

89. 1 Nephi 17:8–9; 18:1–8.

90. 1 Nephi 18:12–13, 22–23.

91. 2 Nephi 5:14, 34.

92. 1 Nephi 10:4.

anthropomorphic God (such as in Isaiah 6 and Moses' face-to-face visions) with those Deuteronomic editors who insisted that such things were impossible and always had been.⁹³ She cites the contradictory attitudes apparent in the Bible as we have it.

This can be demonstrated most easily by comparing Exodus 24:10 and Deuteronomy 4:12. The Exodus text describes the events on Mount Sinai; the elders saw the God of Israel on his throne, presumably in a vision. This is a vision of God exactly like that seen by Isaiah (Isaiah 6), Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1) and John (Revelation 4).⁹⁴ The Deuteronomy text wants

none of this, and emphasises that there was only a voice at Sinai. The presence of the LORD was not a vision to inspire them, but a voice giving commands that had to be obeyed.

This tension between the word and vision was also a tension between new and old, between the law-based religion and the temple-based religion. It can be traced all through the Bible.⁹⁵

The Book of Mormon directly affirms the reality and importance of vision, starting, as we have seen, with Lehi's vision of the throne of God, and the "one descending out of heaven" and others like stars following him.⁹⁶ This corresponds

93. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 30, and *On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Temple Symbolism in the New Testament* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1995), 4, cited below.

94. Barker notes that Isaiah, Ezekiel, and John are all temple priests and knew the ancient tradition (for Isaiah, see *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 124. For Ezekiel, see *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 67. For John, see *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 10, 79, 124).

95. Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 4; see also *The Lost Prophet*, 52. Compare Barker's distinction between the law and wisdom with Nibley's discussion of "horizontal and vertical" Judaism and Christianity in *Since Cumorah*, 89–90: "Recently Professor Goodenough of Yale, after long years of searching among the earliest archaeological remains of Judaism, has been able to show that there has existed through the centuries not one but two distinct types of Judaism, the one following what he calls 'the horizontal path,' the other 'the vertical path.' The former type, variously designated as rabbinic, halachic, normative, or Talmudic Judaism, is the only Judaism known to our histories today. This is because its representatives have, by years of determined struggle, either stamped its rival out entirely where they could, or forced it underground. 'The final victory of rabbinic Judaism over its ancient mystic rival,' writes Goodenough, 'makes it hard to convince modern Jews of . . . mystical tradition.' The old submerged Judaism has been called Hasidic, cabbalistic, *ma'asimic*, and Karaitic, but none of these terms is very satisfactory since each designates only some particular underground movement in Judaism. Seeking an overall term, Goodenough refers to the 'vertical' tradition (i.e., seeking direct as against historical contact with heaven), and cautiously uses the word 'mystic' to describe it. It is not surprising that, in order to survive, 'later teachers of this tradition developed a "secret teaching" (I dare not say Mystery) . . . characterized by a succession of heavens, thrones of triumph, blessed meals with the Messiah.' This preliminary glimpse should suffice to indicate that what all 'vertical' Jews had in common was secrecy and emphasis on Messianic and prophetic teachings—teachings which the doctors of the schools (the 'horizontal' tradition) disliked intensely and opposed with all their might. Just as Goodenough distinguished between two conflicting traditions of Judaism on the basis of recent archaeological findings, so H. J. Schoeps, on the basis of new manuscript discoveries, distinguished between two like levels of Christianity and even goes so far as to suggest that the old original Christianity was actually stamped out by the latter type, which was intellectually oriented and strongly opposed to the old Messianic-millennialist tradition. The resemblance between the corresponding schools of Jewish and Christian thought is not accidental."

96. 1 Nephi 1:6–16.

extraordinarily well to Barker's picture. Lehi's and Nephi's subsequent visions of the tree of life⁹⁷ add more correlation, and this continues with Alma the younger,⁹⁸ Lamoni,⁹⁹ his queen,¹⁰⁰ the servant Abish,¹⁰¹ the mixed multitude of Lehites who experienced the visit of the risen Lord,¹⁰² and later, Mormon¹⁰³ and Moroni.¹⁰⁴ Visions come to men and women, office holders and laypersons, believers and, at times, unbelievers. But the correlation between Barker's picture and the Book of Mormon goes beyond the belief in visions to include many interrelated notions.

The Lord and the Heavenly Hosts

In a sharp contrast with the Deuteronomists, the Book of Mormon not only often describes the vision of God in human form, but its prophets affirm the existence of the heavenly hosts. So a point of interest in the Book of Mormon is that the title "Lord of Hosts" occurs fifty-four times in the Book of Mormon. John Welch observes that

outside of numerous Book of Mormon occurrences of this phrase in passages that are quoted from Isaiah and Malachi, only Nephi, Jacob, [both quite early in the Nephite record] and Samuel [in the generation before the Lord's appearance] used this title. They

usually did so in condemning or cursing the wicked. "A curse shall come upon the land, saith the Lord of Hosts . . . then shall ye weep and howl in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Helaman 13:17, 32).¹⁰⁵

Both Lehi and Alma report visions of the hosts as "numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God."¹⁰⁶ The heavenly manifestations of angels in Helaman 5:26–52 and 3 Nephi 17:15–24 also invite comparisons with the notion of heavenly hosts. Who were these hosts?

In the biblical texts that retain them, these are the sons of God mentioned in Genesis, Deuteronomy, Job, and the Psalms,¹⁰⁷ those present at the divine council witnessed by Jeremiah and Amos,¹⁰⁸ the good angels who serve God, those who come to fight on the Day of the Lord,¹⁰⁹ and the fallen angels who oppose him.¹¹⁰

It is significant that the texts which deal with the kingship of Yahweh are also those which deal with the heavenly hosts and the angel mythology (Exodus 15:8; Numbers 23:21; Deuteronomy 33:5). In later texts the king and his Holy Ones appear in 1QapGen 2 and *1 Enoch* 9:12; cf. Matthew 25. It is the king and his host of Holy Ones which gives us the title Lord of Hosts, common in Isaiah, but absent

97. 1 Nephi 8:2–36; 11:1–36.

98. Mosiah 27:18–31; Alma 36.

99. Alma 19:11–13.

100. Alma 19:29–30.

101. Alma 19:16–17.

102. 3 Nephi 11:1–13.

103. Mormon 1:15.

104. Ether 12:39.

105. John W. Welch, "10 Testimonies of Jesus Christ in the Book of Mormon," (FARMS, 1991), 16.

106. 1 Nephi 1:8 and Alma 36:22.

107. See Barker, *The Great Angel*, 6–7 for references and discussion.

108. Ibid. See also Joseph F. McConkie, "Premortal Existence, Foreordinations, and Heavenly Counsels," in *Apocryphal Writings and the Latter-day Saints*, ed. C. Wilfred Griggs (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1986), 185–86.

109. 1 Thessalonians 1:8.

110. Luke 4:1–12, 33–34.

from the texts which describe Israel's early histories. If these histories were themselves early texts, this absence would be significant, and it would be possible to conclude that Isaiah had invented the title himself. But since the Deuteronomists have had a hand in the composition of these histories, the absence may be significant for another reason.¹¹¹

Notice that Barker says the title "Lord of Hosts" does not appear in the Deuteronomist writings.¹¹² We will consider the reasons for this circumstance.

The Monotheism of the Exilic Deuteronomists

Barker observes that the Deuteronomist theology, at least the Exilic school, was strictly monotheistic. Barker cites their application of Deuteronomy 4:19 in rejecting the hosts of heaven. She also cites parallel passages in Isaiah 37:17 and 2 Kings 19:15 as an example of the "relationship between Isaiah and the Deuteronomic editors" where "the D passage omits the title 'Lord of Hosts.'"¹¹³ She observes that "*the idea of*

a procreator God with sons seems to have fallen out of favour among those who equated Yahweh and El. (Those who retained a belief in the sons of God, e.g., the Christians, as we shall see, were those who continued to distinguish between El and Yahweh, Father and Son. This cannot be coincidence.)"¹¹⁴ In her view, this distinction is key:

The Deuteronomists were fervent monotheists, which has led us to believe that all the Old Testament describes a strictly monotheistic religion. They also said that God could not be seen, only heard. There were, however, ancient traditions which said otherwise in each case; there was, as we shall see, a belief in *a second divine being who could have human form* and this became the basis of Christianity.¹¹⁵

The Book of Mormon expressly describes a belief in the second divine being. See 1 Nephi 10:17 and 11:6 for the first of several explicit indications,¹¹⁶ which occur in the context of the heavenly ascent practice of the older tradition. The Book of Mormon prophets also declare that this second divine being takes human form.¹¹⁷ Compare

111. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 127.

112. Friedman makes a case that Jeremiah was the Deuteronomist based on similar language and themes (see *Who Wrote the Bible?* 146). However, Jeremiah does use the title Lord of Hosts eighty-one times. This suggests that either he was not the Deuteronomist or not the only or final Deuteronomist. Deuteronomy does not contain the title. 1 Kings does so three times. 2 Kings does so one or two times. 1 Samuel does so five times, often in connection with Shiloh, the Northern Shrine (compare Shilom in the Book of Mormon). 2 Samuel does so six times in prayers of David. Isaiah 1–39 does so 54 times. Isaiah 40–63 does so six times, three of them in chapters quoted in the Book of Mormon.

113. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 138 n. 11.

114. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 19, emphasis in original.

115. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven*, 7, emphasis in original.

116. The first implicit expression of the notion may be the name Sariah. This name is nonbiblical but is authentically ancient. One suggested meaning for the name is "Jehovah is my prince." See John W. Welch and Melvin J. Thorne, eds., *Pressing Forward with the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999), 8, and Paul Y. Hoskisson, "Lehi and Sariah," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9/1 (2000): 30. See also the discussions in *Farms Review of Books* 7/1 and 7/2, as cited in note 6.

117. See Lehi's initial vision of the tree of life in 1 Nephi 8; Nephi's subsequent vision, particularly 1 Nephi 10:10 and 11:11–36; the brother of Jared's vision in Ether 3; Moroni's testimony in Ether 12:39; and 3 Nephi 11–26.

Barker's comment, "The vision of God and anthropomorphism are seen, time and again, as evidence of the older ways."¹¹⁸ We should discuss for a moment just how well that Book of Mormon theology reflects the older ways.

A Word about Book of Mormon Theology and Paradigms

Margaret Barker's work first came to my attention in quotations from *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* that were used as defenses of reading the Book of Mormon theology as consistent with contemporary Latter-day Saint Temple theology.¹¹⁹ What about the few passages in the Book of Mormon where someone says there is only one God or that the Father and Son are one?¹²⁰ Context matters. Thomas Kuhn provides a comment about how a "reorientation by paradigm change" can be described as "'picking up the other end of the stick,' a process that involves 'handling the same bundle of data as before, but placing them in a new system of relations with one another by giving them a different framework.'"¹²¹ Readers of the Book of Mormon bring different paradigms that involve assumed contexts that influence decisions about which passages to take literally and which to take symbolically. And the context decision may come by default, based on the preconceptions of the reader, or by

a decision about whether to read the Book of Mormon as a nineteenth-century text or an ancient text. Recall that Barker said it is "folly" to read the Bible in ignorance of the ancient context. May not the same apply to the Book of Mormon?

The evidence that the first Christians identified Jesus with the God of the Jews is overwhelming; it was their customary way of reading the Old Testament. The appearances of Yahweh or the angel of Yahweh were read as manifestations of the pre-existent Christ. The Son of God was their name for Yahweh. This can be seen clearly in the writings of Paul who applied several 'Lord' texts to Jesus. . . . Now Paul, though completely at home in the Greek world, claimed to have been the strictest of Jews, educated in Jerusalem and zealous for the traditions of his people. How is it that he, of all people, could distinguish between God and Lord as he did in 1 Corinthians, if this was not already a part of first century Jewish belief? He emphasized that this distinction was fundamental to his belief: "there is one God, the Father . . . and one Lord, Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 8:6). This is, to say the least, a remarkable contradiction of Deuteronomy 6:4, *if he understood that verse in the way that we do, as a statement of monotheism*. If, on the other hand, it was a statement of the unity of Yahweh as the one inclusive summing

118. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 30.

119. See Martin S. Tanner, "Review of Melodie Moench Charles, 'Book of Mormon Christology,'" *FARMS Review of Books* 7/2 (1995): 6–37; and Ross David Baron, "Melodie Moench Charles and the Humanist Worldview," *FARMS Review of Books* 7/1 (1995): 91–119. Probably the most influential commentary on the topic among the general Latter-day Saint community is James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1969). Another touchstone for academic controversy on the topic is Thomas G. Alexander, "The Reconstruction of Mormon Doctrine," recently reprinted with a new afterword in *Sunstone* 22/3–4 (June 1999): 15–29. Compare *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 1:393–97, s.v. "Meaning, Source, and History of Doctrine," by M. Gerald Bradford and Larry E. Dahl, and 2:552–53, s.v. "Godhead," by Paul E. Dahl.

120. 2 Nephi 31:21 on oneness follows distinctions made in 2 Nephi 31:7–15. Abinadi refers to "one" in Mosiah 15:4. Amulek discusses "one" in Alma 11:26–29, 44, and more than one in Alma 12:31, 33. Jesus prays about oneness in 3 Nephi 19:23.

121. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1970), 85.

up of all the heavenly powers, the *'elohim*, then it would have been compatible with belief in God Most High also.¹²²

If we take the Book of Mormon at face value and accept the time and place that it asserts for itself, read in light of Barker's work, the context presupposes a reading in which Jehovah is Jesus, the Son of the Most High. And that is what the Book of Mormon clearly says:

And when I had spoken these words, the Spirit cried with a loud voice, saying: Hosanna to the Lord, the most high God; for he is God over all the earth, yea, even above all. And blessed art thou, Nephi, because thou believest in the Son of the most high God; wherefore, thou shalt behold the things which thou hast desired.¹²³

And now it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these sayings he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and said unto them: Behold, ye have heard the things which I taught before I ascended to my Father; therefore, whoso remembereth these sayings of mine and doeth them, him will I raise up at the last day . . . Behold, I am he that gave the law, and I am he who covenanted with my people Israel; therefore, the law in me is fulfilled, for I have come to fulfil the law; therefore it hath an end.¹²⁴

Nephi's discourse on the gospel in 2 Nephi 31:5–8 makes clear distinctions between the Father and the Son. Also, in 3 Nephi 11, we have the visit of the Son, being witnessed by the Father:

And behold, the third time they did understand the voice which they heard; and it said unto them: Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him. And it came to pass, as they understood they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a Man descending out of heaven; and he was clothed in a white robe; and he came down and stood in the midst of them; and the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what it meant, for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them. And it came to pass that he stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people, saying: Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from

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122. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 192–93, emphasis in original. Contrast Charles "Book of Mormon Christology," 109: "The use of the divine names Jehovah and Elohim in the Old Testament *never* supports the twentieth-century Mormon doctrine that Elohim is the father of Jehovah, that Jehovah, not Elohim, is the God of the Old Testament, or that Jehovah is Jesus Christ." Barker's work contradicts Charles's views and favorite authorities so consistently and effectively that tracking them all would be a major project.
123. 1 Nephi 11:6. Charles, "Book of Mormon Christology," cites four passages in 1 Nephi where the 1837 edition adds "the son of" to the text (107). This reference is one of several passages where "the son of" does occur in the 1830 edition of 1 Nephi. See the review of her essay by Robert L. Millet in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/1 (1994), 187–99, particularly 193–94. Where Charles believes that the editing changes meaning and does not discuss the "son of God" passages in the 1830 text, Millet suggests they are clarifications that do not change the meaning. In light of Barker's work, I suggest that the changes to 1 Nephi 11:19 and 1 Nephi 11:32 do not alter the meaning, and that the changes to 1 Nephi 11:21 and 1 Nephi 13:40, both adding "son of" to Eternal Father, do alter the meaning. The overall picture, however, remains intact and fits the ancient context.
124. 3 Nephi 15:1, 5.

the beginning. And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words the whole multitude fell to the earth; for they remembered that it had been prophesied among them that Christ should show himself unto them after his ascension into heaven. And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto them saying: Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.¹²⁵

With this in mind, Nephi's reference to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost as "one God" should be read in light of Jesus' explanation of the metaphor of oneness in 3 Nephi 19:23. They are one just as we should be one, the subject of the intercessory prayer in John 17. Abinadi's,¹²⁶ Amulek's,¹²⁷ and Ether's¹²⁸ explanations of Jesus' roles as Father and Son should be read in light of Barker's observation that the Bible text describes

those called sons of El Elyon, sons of El or Elohim, all clearly heavenly beings, and there

are those called sons of Yahweh or the Holy One who are human. This distinction is important for at least two reasons; Yahweh *was* one of the sons of El Elyon; and Jesus in the Gospels was described as a Son of El Elyon, God Most High.¹²⁹

Those who covenant with Jehovah in the Book of Mormon are told that they can become his sons and daughters.¹³⁰ So Jehovah/Jesus in the Book of Mormon is clearly described as God and as the Son of the Most High God. He clearly has roles as both Father (through covenants with mortals and as the creator) and Son.¹³¹ As the representative of the Father, he reveals the Father in his own person.¹³² (Since I am both a father and a son myself, I do not see this as a difficult concept.) Clearly, the Son is also a Father to the degree that he can say to Philip:

Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak

125. 3 Nephi 11:6–14.

126. Mosiah 13–17. Welch, "10 Testimonies of Jesus Christ," observes that "Abinadi strongly emphasized the fatherhood and sonship of Christ, seeing Christ as the 'very Eternal Father of heaven and earth' (Mosiah 15:5). Interestingly, the words of Abinadi contain the word 'Father' exactly eight times, 'Son' eight times, and 'Christ' eight times, as if to signal Christ's fatherhood and sonship equally." Welch also notes that "God the Father is clearly present in Abinadi's theology" (p. 10), citing the implicit presence in the passage, "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant" (Mosiah 14:2) and the explicit in his statement about Christ "having subjected the flesh to the will of the Father" (Mosiah 15:2, 5).

127. Alma 11:39.

128. Ether 3:14.

129. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 4. Note also that in the Book of Mormon, "unmistakable El (E source) names do occur in the *Book of Mormon*, notably 'Most High God' (Hebrew 'El Elyon') and 'Almighty God' (the Septuagint's term for 'El Shaddai'), the former six times and the latter eleven." (Sorenson, "The Brass Plates and Biblical Scholarship," 33.) This is further evidence of the Book of Mormon's distinction between the Father and the Son.

130. Mosiah 5:7; Mosiah 27:25; 3 Nephi 9:17; Moroni 7:26, 48.

131. Isaiah 9:6.

132. John 14:6–12.

not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me.¹³³

Amulek's negative answer to Zeezrom as to whether there is more than one God,¹³⁴ in the context of a discourse that also discusses the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,¹³⁵ presumes the same implications of countering the diverse gods of idolatry as does Paul's remark in 1 Corinthians 8:4–6:

[W]e know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

These few Book of Mormon passages are only difficult for those who choose to make them so, frankly by picking up “the other end of the stick.” Those who do so always presume a different set of interrelationships in the passages, and a difference in whether “oneness” can be a metaphor and whether a son can also be a father. They presume different contexts in which to read.

I am personally comfortable with the idea that there are differences of emphasis and opinion on

the part of the prophetic writers. My own understanding changes over time, so I am not inclined to insist on perfect consistency from anyone else. Welch's article on divine titles in the Book of Mormon makes a well-reasoned case that the titles favored by different Book of Mormon prophets reflected their personal experiences and circumstances.¹³⁶ Before reading Barker's work, I was inclined to accept suggestions that Abinadi, for example, might have had a different understanding than most Mormon readers do now. After reading Barker, I am inclined to say that the context that the Book of Mormon claims for itself, one rooted in preexilic understandings, presupposes the approach we should take. My reading has changed because of the context I now bring to the text. If these passages have been read differently by some in the early days of the Church or today, their readings are not binding.¹³⁷

The Transmission of Sacred Records

Whereas Barker looks to the exile to emphasize the suppression of materials from the canon by Deuteronomist reformers, Nephi looks ahead to the time when “many parts which are plain and most precious”¹³⁸ are taken away, presumably by second-century Hellenistic Christians and Jews.¹³⁹

133. John 14:9–11.

134. Alma 11:26–29.

135. Alma 11:44; 12:31, 33–34; 13:5–12.

136. Welch, “10 Testimonies of Jesus Christ.”

137. See Doctrine and Covenants 1:24–28. This also applies to the 1832 account of Joseph Smith's first vision, which has been supposed to refer only to the appearance of the Son, but which seems actually to refer to both the Father and the Son. A parallel presentation of all the accounts shows that Joseph likely used Lord to refer to the Father in describing the action as “the Lord opened the heavens to me” and then used the same title, Lord, in describing the subsequent appearance of the Son—“and I saw the Lord.” The presentation of this case is particularly informative at <http://www.math.byu.edu/~smithw/Lds/LDS/History/HTMLHistory/v1c1history.html>. See also Milton V. Bachman, “Joseph Smith's Recitals of the First Vision,” *Ensign* 15/1 (1985): 13.

138. 1 Nephi 13:26.

139. Stephen E. Robinson, “Early Christianity and 1 Nephi 13–14,” in *The Book of Mormon: First Nephi, the Doctrinal Foundation*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1988), 177–91.

At first glance, it may seem that Barker and Nephi differ on the timing, but remember that according to Barker, the materials suppressed by the Deuteronomists during the exile did survive in significant circles in Palestine until the time of the first Christians.

When the exiles returned, it was a time of divided loyalties. The new ideas from Babylon found their opponents formed from two strata of tradition. The southern restoration involved the rejection of the people of the north, and the rejection of certain elements in the south who retained links with the temple cult. They kept alive the older myths of Jerusalem. . . . In *1 Enoch* and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs there is a curious mixture of pro-northern and old Jerusalem material which cannot be explained with an oversimple opponents-of-the-Jerusalem-Temple theory for the origin of the sectarian groups.¹⁴⁰

John Sorenson and Steven St. Clair have noted that the Book of Mormon is pro-northern, favoring Joseph, ignoring Aaron, ignoring the Davidic covenant, referring negatively to David, Solomon, and the “Jews at Jerusalem.”¹⁴¹ Two nonbiblical prophets cited in the Book of Mormon, Zenos and Zenock, are both probably northern kingdom prophets.¹⁴² And we are finding much evidence of

old Jerusalem material in the course of this paper. So Nephi’s focus on the apostasy that would occur after the death of the apostles, rather than on the efforts of the exilic reformers, is both historically plausible and consistent with Barker’s picture. And while Barker does not use the term *apostasy* for what happened after the death of the apostles, she clearly insists that much significant knowledge was lost at that time, and only recently recovered.

Who distorted the tradition? Recent work on the transmission of the New Testament has shown convincingly that what is currently regarded as “orthodoxy” was constructed and imposed on the text by later scribes, “clarifying” difficult points and resolving theological problems. . . . It may be that those traditions which have been so confidently marginalized as alien to Christianity on the basis of the present New Testament text, were those very traditions which later authorities and their scribes set out to remove.¹⁴³

What was assumed by the New Testament writers was a traditional understanding of the temple rituals and myths of atonement. When the rituals had ceased and the myths were no longer recognised for what they really were, the key to understanding the imagery of atonement was lost.¹⁴⁴

140. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 187.

141. Sorenson, “The Brass Plates and Biblical Scholarship,” and St. Clair, “The Stick of Joseph.”

142. See Sorenson, “The Brass Plates and Biblical Scholarship,” 29–30.

143. Margaret Barker, “The Secret Tradition,” *Journal of Higher Criticism* 2/1 (1995): 50. For other evidence, see Hugh Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 84–104, and *Mormonism and Early Christianity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1987), 168–322; John A. Tvedtnes, *The Most Correct Book* (Salt Lake City: Cornerstone, 1999), 99–103; and Barry Bickmore, *Restoring the Ancient Church*, 25–62.

144. Margaret Barker, “Atonement: The Rite of Healing,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 49/1 (1996): 2. Compare John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple and the Sermon on the Mount* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999), 23: “Does the Sermon on the Mount have a single theme or logic, or is it a haphazard collection of disjointed sayings? To this question, the Sermon at the Temple [in 3 Nephi 12–14] offers clues to a most remarkable answer. Simply stated, the Sermon at the Temple is a temple text.” Where Barker answers questions about the meaning of the atonement by introducing a temple context, Welch observes that the Book of Mormon does the same thing with the Sermon on the Mount: it introduces a meaningful and unifying temple context.

Nephi includes a prophetic description of the Bible's transmission and value which, as it happens, compares to Barker's reconstruction.

The book that thou beholdest is a record of the Jews, which contains the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; and it also containeth many of the prophecies of the holy prophets; and it is a record like unto the engravings which are upon the plates of brass, save there are not so many; nevertheless, they contain the covenants of the Lord, which he hath made unto the house of Israel; wherefore, they are of great worth unto the Gentiles . . . Wherefore, these things go forth from the Jews in purity unto the Gentiles, according to the truth which is in God. And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the foundation of a great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.¹⁴⁵

The picture is the same. Many writings of the earlier Jews and Christians were altered and suppressed.

The Authorship and Content of Revelation

Barker credits John as the principal author of many parts of the Book of Revelation, although she

sees him as writing within a contemporary school of priestly oracles, writing in a long-standing tradition associated with the temple ascent. She notes that Revelation is the only New Testament book that explicitly claims divine inspiration,¹⁴⁶ and she believes parts of Revelation originated with Jesus. For her, Revelation is early and central to Christianity rather than late and peripheral. So it is another point of interest that Revelation is central in Nephi's perspective of the writings that pass to the gentiles from the early Christians. Nephi closes his account of his apocalyptic¹⁴⁷ vision by observing that "the Lord God hath ordained the apostle of the Lamb of God that he should write" the remainder of the vision.¹⁴⁸

Most of Barker's reading of Revelation concerns Jesus as the Lamb, the expectations of the tenth Jubilee, and the events in Palestine in response to the preaching of the gospel up to the destruction of Jerusalem. Much of Nephi's vision concerns the ministry of Jesus as the Lamb, the preaching of his apostles, and the response of the world to that preaching. Concerning the authorship and content of the book of Revelation, Nephi writes:

And I looked and beheld a man, and he was dressed in a white robe. And the angel said unto me: Behold one of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Behold, he shall see and write the remainder of these things; yea, and also

145. 1 Nephi 13:23, 25–26. On the specifics of the "great and abominable church," see Robinson, "Early Christianity and 1 Nephi 13–14," 177–191.

146. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 63.

147. Some critics (Mark Thomas, for example) see the presence of an "apocalyptic" vision in 1 Nephi as anachronistic, citing scholars who date the noncanonical apocalypses to the intertestamental period (see Thomas, *Digging in Cumorah*, 100, citing Klaus Koch, *The Rediscovery of the Apocalyptic* [London: SCM, 1972].) Barker connects the apocalyptic genre with the First Temple tradition. See Margaret Barker, "Beyond the Veil of the Temple: The High Priestly Origins of the Apocalypses," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51/1 (1998): 1–21. See also Avraham Gileadi, who finds reason to title his important commentary and translation, *The Apocalyptic Book of Isaiah* (Provo, Utah: Hebraeus, 1982).

148. See 1 Nephi 14:18–29.

many things which have been. And he shall also write concerning the end of the world . . . And I, Nephi, heard and bear record, that the name of the apostle of the Lamb was John, according to the word of the angel.¹⁴⁹

Barker agrees with Nephi that John's final chapters describe the end of the world. She writes *thus far, the Book of Revelation has been a reflection on history; the remaining chapters depict the future. . . . The vision of the future which forms the remaining chapters of Revelation depicts Wisdom returning to her city and the priests returning to the Garden of Eden.*¹⁵⁰

Again, the pictures run parallel. One difference with respect to John is that Barker does not accept the tradition that John the Beloved would tarry until the Lord came, something the Book of Mormon seems to accept.¹⁵¹ She sees John 21:22–23 as implicitly refuting the idea, although the language is ambiguous.¹⁵² But this difference on one point should not mask the overall fit, particularly since the description of the change that comes upon the three Nephites matches the transformation to angelic status that she expresses elsewhere.¹⁵³

Plain, Precious, and Easy to the Understanding

Barker shows that Isaiah, Enoch, Ezekiel, and John in Revelation all write using the mythos of the first temple. She writes, "the Book of Revelation has many similarities to the prophecies of Ezekiel, not because there was a conscious imitation of the earlier prophet, but because both books were the product of temple priests (Ezekiel 1:3) and stood

in the same tradition."¹⁵⁴ Barker's method of reading is to approach the symbolism of Revelation in terms of what is known about temple ideas in first-century Palestine and to search widely through other Jewish writings which show familiarity with the same set of symbols.¹⁵⁵ Indeed, she approximates Nephi's keys for understanding Isaiah in exploring the manner of prophecy among the Jews.¹⁵⁶

I had long been puzzled at Nephi's description of John's book as "precious and easy to the understanding of all men." How is it that Nephi, writing about 600 years before John, can insist that John's vision would be "easy to the understanding?"

Wherefore, the things which he shall write are just and true; and behold they are written in the book which thou beheld proceeding out of the mouth of the Jew; and at the time they proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, or, at the time the book proceeded out of the mouth of the Jew, the things which were written were plain and pure, and most precious and easy to the understanding of all men.¹⁵⁷

Consider Nephi's approach to Isaiah, based on his knowledge of the manner of prophesying among the Jews, plus his own "ascent" and knowledge of the wisdom traditions. Consider Nephi building a temple, and consecrating his brother Jacob as a temple priest. Nephi clearly knows the mythos of the First Temple. In this context, it makes perfect sense that a prophet from preexilic Jerusalem who has experienced the ascent and who knows the old temple traditions can declare that John's visions are plain.

149. 1 Nephi 14:19–22, 27.

150. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 301, emphasis in original.

151. See 3 Nephi 28:6.

152. Contrast *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 73, 180, 190, and 3 Nephi 28:6.

153. For example, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 61–72.

154. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 67.

155. *Ibid.*, 57–67.

156. 2 Nephi 25:1–5.

157. 1 Nephi 14:23.

Other Witnesses to the Vision

Barker writes that “the visions of Jesus had not been entrusted to John alone; others ‘had’ them.”¹⁵⁸ Barker relies on such other temple visions among both the biblical prophets and on recently discovered accounts to put her readings into context. This agrees with Nephi’s prophecy:

And behold, the things which this apostle of the Lamb shall write are many things which thou hast seen; and behold, the remainder shalt thou see. 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. And also others who have been, to them hath he shown all things, and they have written them; and they are sealed up to come forth in their purity, according to the truth which is in the Lamb, in the own due time of the Lord, unto the house of Israel.¹⁵⁹

Nephi’s vision and Barker’s reconstruction run parallel to the end. For both, the primary author is John, but “others” have seen and written accounts that will come forth in the due time of the Lord.

Theologies of Suffering in Job and the Book of Mormon

In the final chapter of *The Older Testament*, Barker uses the book of Job as a test of her notions about what happened to the religion of Israel during the exile. Specifically, she sees the prose preface as describing a Job who simply accepts what is

happening to him. What causes him to rebel is the arguments of the comforters, which Barker sees as representing exilic perspectives. “Job’s rebellion was prompted not by suffering but by the *explanation of suffering*.”¹⁶⁰ She sees the poetic passages of Job as a debate between two systems of wisdom with similar standards of behavior, yet different standards as to what constitutes righteousness—satisfying cultic proprieties or meeting standards of social conduct—and different explanations for evil—the malice of heavenly beings or human disobedience. “One system makes man, by his own action, responsible for human suffering; the other attributes it to the movements within heaven.”¹⁶¹

Rather than exclusively favoring “cultic proprieties” or claims of appropriate “social conduct,” the Book of Mormon recognizes the legitimate claims that each set of standards holds for believers, and warns of the abuses possible at either extreme.¹⁶²

With respect to the experience of adversity, consider that Nephi begins his own account by saying that he has “seen many afflictions in the course of my days, nevertheless having been favored of the Lord in all my days; yea, having had a great knowledge of the goodness and mysteries of God.”¹⁶³ This perspective presents an immediate contrast with the arguments of Job’s comforters, and it continues throughout the Book of Mormon. There is a striking balance shown in the book of Mosiah in the stories of the communities of Alma at the Waters of Mormon and of Limhi’s people. Both groups of people become captives, and both suffer. Yet the book of Mosiah expressly states that

158. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 71. See also 64, 67.

159. 1 Nephi 14:24–26.

160. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 261.

161. *Ibid.*, 265.

162. For example, for cultic proprieties, see 3 Nephi 1:24–25; 9:19–20. For social conduct, see Mosiah 3:21–27; 3 Nephi 14:12, 26.

163. 1 Nephi 1:1.

while Limhi's people understood their captivity as due to their own wickedness,¹⁶⁴ Alma's people understood their captivity as a trial of faith.¹⁶⁵ At the center of the book of Mosiah is the story of Abinadi, who stands as a type of the suffering innocent, one who faces his ordeal with the attitude that after he fulfills his mission, even death at the hands of his enemies "mattereth not . . . if it so be that I am saved."¹⁶⁶ In the Book of Mormon, the innocent can suffer, even unto death,¹⁶⁷ or can be rescued from ordeals by divine intervention.¹⁶⁸ The wicked can appear to prosper, or they can face judgment for their crimes. The Book of Mormon gives attention to the suffering of innocents, suggesting divine perspectives that help understand those situations. It also includes stories of divine deliverance and protection, but not without poignant reminders that such protections may be delayed or even may not be forthcoming. Even though the Book of Mormon clearly links obedience with blessings and disobedience with cursing, it just as clearly illustrates other temporal circumstances and accounts for them in ways that contrast with the legalistic notions of Job's comforters.

Regarding the ultimate explanation for evil and suffering, as we have seen, the Book of Mormon shows affinities with the older traditions. Barker sketches the presence of the old ways that Job claims:

The friends know of the heavenly council, of a claim to true wisdom, and of the attempt to ascend into heaven. The way in which these are used suggests that they were a part of

Job's own view, being turned against him. The friends claim for themselves another wisdom, and an ancient tradition, in a manner which shows that Job accepted neither. . . .

The heart of Job's dilemma is that there is only one God. He has been asked by the friends to reconcile the all too obvious evil in creation with his confidence in a God who will punish evil. The Job dialogue thus represents the struggles of a man coming to terms with monotheism, and being deprived of the more ancient polytheistic view.¹⁶⁹

Compare this with Bruce Pritchett's discussion of Job in comparison to 2 Nephi 2:

The book of Job shows that Yahweh allowed Satan to afflict Job (Job 1:9–11) to test his righteousness. This idea that God allows affliction in order to test humanity is very similar to Lehi's teaching that there must be opposition in all things (2 Nephi 2:11–18, especially verse 16: "Wherefore, man could not act for himself save it should be that he was enticed by the one or the other [good and evil]"), and even the doctrine taught elsewhere in Mormon scripture that the primeval council decided, "And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them" (Abraham 3:25). In the book of Job, Job's righteousness appears through his suffering. Satan's premise, which God accepts, is that Job has not been sufficiently tested—therefore God allows Job's suffering. Likewise, Lehi's theology calls for opposition in order to make true righteousness possible.¹⁷⁰

164. Mosiah 21–22.

165. Mosiah 23:21–24.

166. Mosiah 13:9.

167. Alma 14:8–11.

168. Alma 14:12–29.

169. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 266–67.

170. Bruce M. Pritchett, Jr., "Lehi's Theology of the Fall in Its Preexilic/Exilic Context," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3/2 (fall 1994): 67–68.

The Book of Mormon's explanation for the experience of adversity is akin to the older traditions of Israel.

Conclusion: A Shared Paradigm of History

The picture that Barker constructs of the reform of the religion of Israel by the exilic Deuter-

onomists, of the transmission of sacred records to the time of the earliest Christians and the subsequent losses, and of the significance of recent discoveries, is largely consistent with the picture in the Book of Mormon. Because the temple traditions were the focus of the reform efforts, we will next compare her picture of the temple traditions with the Book of Mormon.

TEMPLE TRADITIONS AFTER THE DEUTERONOMIST REFORM

Barker's works have earned her recognition as an authority on the history and symbolism of the temple. This section discusses some of her observations of survival of the first temple traditions as evidenced by the Enoch literature preserved by the Christians and compares these traditions to the Book of Mormon.

Temple Traditions in the Old World and the New

Despite the efforts of the Deuteronomists, Barker finds much evidence that many in Palestine preserved the older teachings that the reformers suppressed. Indeed, she argues that the *Book of Enoch*, Isaiah, and Revelation share the same temple-based mythos, quite distinct from the Law-based Moses traditions. (This will be a point of emphasis in her forthcoming commentary on Isaiah.) We need to remember that not all

of the Jews were taken to Babylon as exiles. 2 Kings 24:15–16 lists nobility, soldiers, and craftsmen, and notes that the poor were left behind. After Zedekiah rebelled, more were taken, and 2 Kings 25:12 again describes the poor of the land being left. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah record some of the tensions between these poor and those who returned from Babylon to build a temple with financial and political backing from Cyrus. But notice that those books record the tensions from the perspective of the returnees, at the expense of the people who remained behind. Richard Elliot Friedman's *Who Wrote the Bible?* explores the traditions that Ezra, one of the returning exiles,¹ was a redactor of the Old Testament text that has come down to us. In Barker's view, *1 Enoch* preserves the perspective of those who remained, and who saw the returning exiles as apostates.²

Furthermore, she observes that the suppressed ideas center on the temple. In her books, she builds

1. Ezra 7:6.

2. For example, Margaret Barker, *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1988), 19.

a picture of the preexilic religion centered on the old atonement rites in the temple.

Temple theology is the original context of the New Testament insofar as the hopes, beliefs, symbols and rituals of the temple shaped the lives of those who came to be called Christians. Temple theology knew of incarnation and atonement, the sons of God and the life of the age to come, the day of judgement, justification, salvation, the renewed covenant and the kingdom of God. When temple theology is presented, even in its barest outline, its striking relevance to the New Testament becomes clear.³

The relevance to the Book of Mormon is just as clear, particularly in light of recent studies that highlight the centrality of the temple in the Book of Mormon.⁴ When the themes of the day of judgment, incarnation, the sons of God, atonement, the kingdom of God, and the age to come appear in the Book of Mormon, they often do so in temple contexts.⁵ Concerning atonement in the Book of Mormon, Hugh Nibley writes:

The word *atonement* appears only once in the New Testament, but 127 times in the Old Testament. The reason for this is apparent when we note that of the 127 times, all but 5 are in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and

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3. Margaret Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Temple Symbolism in the New Testament* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1995), ix. Compare this passage in Barker to observations and quotations by Hugh Nibley in *An Approach to the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988), 202, which further support the notion that Christianity was a fulfillment of Palestinian traditions and expectations. He writes, "The center and pivot of the whole plan of history is, of course, the Messiah in the Book of Mormon: 'None of the prophets have written, nor prophesied, save they have spoken concerning this Christ' (Jacob 7:11). 'All the prophets . . . ever since the world began—have they not spoken more or less concerning these things?' (Mosiah 13:33). Compare this with the teaching of the Talmud: 'All the prophets have prophesied of nothing save the days of the Messiah, that is, of the eternal order to come.' Gunkel, before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, found in the *pre-Christian* apocryphal writings frequent reference to a divine redeemer, a new heaven and a new earth, the millennial rule of the Lord in person on earth, a Messiah who is to come as a human being and yet be more than human, a carefully cultivated 'Wisdom' literature, the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh, the practice of baptism in water, the belief that the eighth day rather than the seventh is the holiest of days, the reports of a Lord who is meek and humble, despised and put to death, resurrected, ascended to heaven, and who visits the spirits in prison. Also he found in the apocalyptic writings the use of such baffling code-words as 'water of life,' 'second death,' 'first Adam,' etc., and a conception of cosmology and world history totally at variance with that of the official schools of the Jews and Christians. All this sort of thing has been brought to light by the studies of the past two generations."
 4. See John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple and the Sermon on the Mount* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999), and "The Temple in the Book of Mormon: The Temples at the Cities of Nephi, Zarahemla, and Bountiful," in *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism*, ed. Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1994), 297–387. See also Hugh Nibley, "Christ Among the Ruins," in *The Prophetic Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1989), 407–34. The word *judgment* occurs over 100 times in the Book of Mormon; *salvation* occurs 85 times; *covenant* occurs 89 times; and *kingdom of God* occurs 44 times.
 5. For the *day of judgment*, see 2 Nephi 9:15–16. For *incarnation*, see 1 Nephi 11:13–36 and Ether 3:9–16. For *atonement*, see 2 Nephi 9; Mosiah 4:1–3; Alma 34. For *sons of God*, see Mosiah 5:7 and 3 Nephi 9:17. For *kingdom of God*, see 2 Nephi 9:18–23. For *the age to come*, see 3 Nephi 28; Alma 39–42.

Numbers, where they explicitly describe the original rites of the tabernacle or temple on the Day of Atonement; moreover the sole appearance of the word in the New Testament is in the epistle to the Hebrews, explaining how those very rites are to be interpreted since the coming of Christ . . . atonement (including related terms, atone, atoned, atoneth, atoning) appear . . . 39 times in the Book of Mormon. This puts the Book of Mormon in the milieu of the old Hebrew rites before the destruction of Solomon's Temple.⁶

When the theme of atonement appears in the Book of Mormon, it typically does so in temple contexts.⁷ Barker writes:

It is widely agreed that the three autumn festivals of the postexilic period, (New Year, Day of Atonement and Tabernacles) were derived from an earlier royal festival held every autumn to celebrate the renewal of the year and the enthronement of the king. Nothing can be proved, but Isaiah 40–55 is thought to be based on the liturgies of this festival.⁸

Several studies have shown that King Benjamin's coronation discourse at the temple comprehensively combines the themes of the preexilic autumn festivals. Terrance Szink and John Welch write that

King Benjamin's speech was delivered in the fall, at the time of year when all ancient Israelites, including peoples of the Book of Mormon, would have been celebrating their great autumn festival season, which included many ancient elements that later became en-

during parts of the Jewish holidays of Rosh ha-Shanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot. Most of the known or surmised ancient elements of these festivals are represented in the text of the Book of Mormon. . . . Benjamin's speech contains numerous elements pertinent to the New Year holy day, the Day of Atonement observances, the Feast of Tabernacles and the sabbatical or jubilee year.⁹

Also, it should be of interest for the Isaiah problem that a text which many scholars ascribe to a second Isaiah writing during the exile is said to point back to the liturgy of a preexilic festival. (Keep this in mind when we come back to the Isaiah problem.)

The Old Temple Traditions in *1 Enoch* and the Book of Mormon

In *The Lost Prophet*, Barker identifies several key themes from the first temple traditions that were preserved in the Enoch literature:

We can now add to our pattern of vision, knowledge, judgement, ascent and angelic status several more elements: the royal figure called "a son of man," the Eden temple setting with the river of life-giving water, the lamp representing both the presence of God and the Tree of Life whose fruits made man immortal (Genesis 3:22), and the clouds which took a son of man figure to heaven.¹⁰

This summary passage deserves a close look because these themes have conspicuous counterparts in the Book of Mormon, as will be shown

6. Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1989), 566–67.

7. See Welch, "The Temple in the Book of Mormon."

8. Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 46.

9. Terrence L. Szink and John W. Welch, "King Benjamin's Speech in the Context of Ancient Israelite Festivals," in *King Benjamin's Speech: "That Ye May Learn Wisdom,"* ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 199–200.

10. Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 56.

below. I have already discussed vision in the previous section, so we will move on to each of the other themes.

Knowledge: Is Knowledge Good or Evil?

Barker writes:

Now Wisdom in the Old Testament was regarded in two very different ways; the reformers were suspicious of Wisdom but the older religion of Israel seems to have recognised that Wisdom, i.e., the Spirit, transformed human beings and made them like God. Paul said the same thing in Romans 8:14–17: if the Spirit of God dwells in you, you are sons of God. The serpent in Eden was right; knowledge, that is, Wisdom *did* make human beings god-like. The problem was: was it a good thing for human beings to be god-like, to be sons of God? Those who reformed Israel's religion set themselves against all these ideas, and that is the real root of the difference between Christianity and Judaism. The Christians were not afraid to describe themselves as sons of God.¹¹

This attitude is explicit in the Book of Mormon in the covenant discourse in Mosiah. Acting as king and as high priest, Benjamin asserts that “I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom,”¹² and continues unfolding the temple mysteries.¹³ The mysteries culminate in a moment when the people have accepted the atoning blood of Christ,¹⁴ as a result of which Benjamin can say that “ye are born of him and have become his

sons and daughters.”¹⁵ Abinadi declares that the redeemed of the Son of God become “his seed . . . they are heirs of the kingdom of God.”¹⁶ These doctrines also appear in the statements of the Lord in 3 Nephi 9:17 preparatory to his visit to the temple in Bountiful: “As many as have received me, to them have I given to become the sons of God.”¹⁷ Not only is the doctrine appropriate, but so are the covenant/temple contexts in which these teachings are given.

With respect to knowledge, the Lord's teaching in the Book of Mormon includes admonitions to study, that the multitude “prepare their minds.”¹⁸ The sons of Mosiah are particularly good examples:

Alma did rejoice exceedingly to see his brethren; and what added more to his joy, they were still his brethren in the Lord; yea, and they had waxed strong in the knowledge of the truth; for they were men of a sound understanding and they had searched the scriptures diligently, that they might know the word of God.

But this is not all; they had given themselves to much prayer, and fasting; therefore they had the spirit of prophecy, and the spirit of revelation, and when they taught, they taught with power and authority of God.¹⁹

Of the ancient wisdom, Barker writes what it was and how it could be corrupted:

Wisdom was . . . a body of knowledge and practices which gave power over creation when used in conjunction with supernatural forces.

11. Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 31.

12. Mosiah 2:17.

13. Mosiah 2:9.

14. Mosiah 4:2.

15. Mosiah 5:7.

16. Mosiah 15:11.

17. Also see the explicit private teaching in 3 Nephi 28.

18. 3 Nephi 17:3.

19. Alma 17:2–3.

It was the essence of all that had been corrupted through pride and rebellion.²⁰

The Book of Mormon tells the story of the brother of Jared, who gained great wisdom through his ascent experience and who demonstrated faith enough to remove a mountain.²¹ Likewise, the Book of Mormon contains conspicuous cautions about pride.²² Specifically, Nephi's brother Jacob says regarding knowledge, "to be learned is good, if they hearken unto the counsels of God."²³ Not only is Jacob's sentiment here consistent with the angel mythology of Enoch, in which the fallen angels are those who pervert knowledge, but the whole passage is permeated with imagery, language, and divine titles from the temple background that Barker describes.²⁴

The fallen angels are corruptors, a problem for the creation that requires a solution. The solution in the New Testament is the birth of the Messiah, but Barker believes that we require the additional context from the Enoch literature to show where wisdom and premortal existence come in:

One of the problems faced by New Testament scholars is how wisdom and pre-existence can relate to the idea of the virgin birth; but read in the light of the Enochic wisdom, this is no problem at all.²⁵ The birth of a son of God would have marked the beginning of a new era, when the old decay and corruption were reversed, and wisdom in an uncorrupted form brought into creation. Thus sonship and obedience belong naturally together, since the agents of the first corruption were rebel sons of God. The evil spirits which they left to torment the earth were those which Jesus encountered in the miracles, who feared that they were being destroyed *before the time* (Matthew 8:29). It is these demons who recognized Jesus as the Son of God, and they knew that this affected them.²⁶

In these matters, the Enoch texts restore a lost context to the New Testament. Barker also discusses significant losses from the Old Testament. She says

the question we cannot answer is: How is it that *Jubilees* and *Job* have an account of the creation which includes the angels, which

20. Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1987), 82.

21. Ether 12:39.

22. 1 Nephi 11:36.

23. 2 Nephi 9:29.

24. This same passage is one that Blake Ostler reads as a pastiche of New Testament language superimposed on a complex structure called "ascending synthetic inclusion"; see Blake T. Ostler, "The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source," *Dialogue* 20 (spring 1987): 66–123. In my review of Dan Vogel, *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon*, 141–46, I show that there are Old Testament and Enoch precedents for nearly all of Ostler's New Testament examples. To that I would now add the impressive correlation to the preexilic context proposed by Barker.

25. Compare this statement with Daniel C. Peterson, "Nephi and His Asherah: A Note on 1 Nephi 11:8–23," in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World: Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson*, ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), which draws connections between wisdom, Mary, the tree of life, and a prophecy of the birth of the son of God.

26. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 82, emphasis in original. On the explicit appearance of these ideas in the Dead Sea Scrolls, see John A. Tvedtnes, "The Messiah, the Book of Mormon, and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *The Most Correct Book* (Salt Lake City: Cornerstone, 1999), 328–43.

Genesis does not mention, even though it does have an evil serpent figure of whose origin we are told nothing? Later traditions knew that an elaborate heavenly world had been created before the material world and this heaven was totally integrated with the earth.²⁷

Correspondingly, the Book of Mormon includes information about the fallen angels and their role that is missing from the Genesis creation account.²⁸

And I, Lehi, according to the things which I have read, must needs suppose that an angel of God, according to that which is written, had fallen from heaven; wherefore, he became a devil, having sought that which was evil before God. And because he had fallen from heaven, and had become miserable forever, he sought also the misery of all mankind.²⁹

The Book of Moses 3:5–7; 4:1–4, the Book of Abraham 3:22–28, 5:1–5, and the Doctrine and Covenants 29:36–40 contain information about the spirit creation preceding the physical creation. A spirit creation is also implicit in Alma 13:3. Many

Book of Mormon passages refer to the devil and his angels in opposition to Christ.³⁰ For example, Mormon explains

For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him.³¹

Barker notes “wisdom was not inherently evil, but became so with misuse.”³² Jacob’s caution against the abuse of knowledge comes with an endorsement of the value of gaining knowledge. “To be learned is good if they hearken unto the

27. Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel’s Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 7.

28. For example, 2 Nephi 2:17–18; 24:11–14; Mosiah 4:14; Alma 34:34–41; Moroni 7:17.

29. 2 Nephi 2:17–18.

30. The Book of Mormon contains eighty-nine references to the devil. I am impressed by Robert Alter’s suggestions about the use of “type-scenes” in the Bible (see Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* [New York: Basic Books, 1981], 51), and by Alan Goff’s and Richard Rust’s studies on “type-scenes” in the Book of Mormon: Alan Goff, “Uncritical Theory and Thin Description: The Resistance to History,” review of “Apologetic and Critical Assumptions about Book of Mormon Historicity,” by Brent Lee Metcalfe, *Dialogue* 26/3 (fall 1993): 194–206; and Richard Rust, *Feasting Upon the Word* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1997), 23–24. So I recently realized that the story of Amulon and the other wicked priests of Noah might be emphasized in the Book of Mosiah because they are types of the fallen angels of the Enoch stories. Described from the start as “prideful” (Mosiah 11:5–13), they pervert sacred knowledge for gain (Mosiah 11:5–6; 12:28–29), and they take wives that they should not have (Mosiah 20:1–5). Amulon’s priests teach the Lamanites to be cunning and wise “as to the wisdom of the world” (Mosiah 23:31–35; 24:1–7). Finally, their descendants from the union with the stolen wives become “hardened” and meet with destruction (Alma 25:4, 7–9).

31. Moroni 7:16–17.

32. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 91.

counsels of God.”³³ As Barker says, obedience and sonship go together.

Judgment

Barker describes the ancient context of the judgment traditions in ways that illuminate the Book of Mormon:

The Enochic tradition has, however, a distinctive attitude to fertility which could throw light on the situation in the time of the monarchy. Fertility followed the destruction of the evil angels, and the establishment of the rule of the great Holy One. Perverted knowledge was removed from the earth. The pattern was judgement, true knowledge and then fertility (*1 Enoch* 10; 80.2–8). It derived, I believe, from the sequence of the autumn festival, where the renewal of fertility was bound up with the renewal of kingship after the enactment of the great judgement which gave rise to the biblical imagery of judgement as harvest.³⁴ . . . In every case where Isaiah mentions fertility, it is in such a context of judgement.³⁵

Even though the Book of Mormon never uses the word *fertility*, the idea is present in the covenant promise that through obedience, the Nephites should “prosper in the land.” This phrase occurs thirty-five times in the Book of Mormon, clearly embodying fertility,³⁶ and is consistently associated with judgment via the obligations of the covenant. In the case of Benjamin’s discourse, we find all these ideas expressed during the autumn festival, during the renewal of kingship:

Therefore, as I said unto you that I had served you, walking with a clear conscience before God, even so I at this time have caused that

ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might be found blameless, and that your blood should not come upon me, when I shall stand to be judged of God of the things whereof he hath commanded me concerning you. I say unto you that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together that I might rid my garments of your blood, at this period of time when I am about to go down to my grave, that I might go down in peace, and my immortal spirit may join the choirs above in singing the praises of a just God. And moreover, I say unto you that I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together, that I might declare unto you that I can no longer be your teacher, nor your king; For even at this time, my whole frame doth tremble exceedingly while attempting to speak unto you; but the Lord God doth support me, and hath suffered me that I should speak unto you, and hath commanded me that I should declare unto you this day, that my son Mosiah is a king and a ruler over you. And now, my brethren, I would that ye should do as ye have hitherto done. As ye have kept my commandments, and also the commandments of my father, and have prospered, and have been kept from falling into the hands of your enemies, even so if ye shall keep the commandments of my son, or the commandments of God which shall be delivered unto you by him, ye shall prosper in the land, and your enemies shall have no power over you. But, O my people, beware lest there shall arise contentions among you, and ye list to obey the evil spirit, which was spoken of by my father Mosiah. For behold, there is a wo

33. 2 Nephi 9:29.

34. Note that Alma 26:7 uses the title “Lord of the harvest.”

35. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 132–33.

36. See Mosiah 9:9: “And we began to till the ground, yea, even with all manner of seeds, with seeds of corn, and of wheat, and of barley, and with neas, and with sheum, and with seeds of all manner of fruits; and we did begin to multiply and prosper in the land.”

pronounced upon him who listeth to obey that spirit; for if he listeth to obey him, and remaineth and dieth in his sins, the same drinketh damnation to his own soul; for he receiveth for his wages an everlasting punishment, having transgressed the law of God contrary to his own knowledge.³⁷

The allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5–6 also contains striking images of harvest as judgment:³⁸

And when the time cometh that evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard, then will I cause the good and the bad to be gathered; and the good will I preserve unto myself, and the bad will I cast away into its own place. And then cometh the season and the end; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire.³⁹

In discussing the efforts of the sons of Mosiah among the Lamanites, Ammon says:

Behold, the field was ripe, and blessed are ye, for ye did thrust in the sickle, and did reap with your might, yea, all the day long did ye labor; and behold the number of your sheaves! And they shall be gathered into the

garners, that they are not wasted. Yea, they shall not be beaten down by the storm at the last day; yea, neither shall they be harrowed up by the whirlwinds; but when the storm cometh they shall be gathered together in their place, that the storm cannot penetrate to them; yea, neither shall they be driven with fierce winds whithersoever the enemy listeth to carry them. But behold, they are in the hands of the Lord of the harvest, and they are his; and he will raise them up at the last day.⁴⁰

The judgment themes in the Book of Mormon occur in the correct context. We will continue to see that each thread of agreement in these comparisons is woven into a fabric that touches the others.

Ascent

Barker observes that the throne theophanies such as in Isaiah 6 were widespread in preexilic Israel. She cites evidence that the kings of Israel as well as the prophets participated in the heavenly ascent.⁴¹ Further, she shows that the imagery of

37. Mosiah 2:27–33.

38. Also Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 100–1: “If we look at other references to judgement in the biblical texts, we find the recurring theme of a great harvest. . . . We cannot say that one judgement passage with harvest imagery has been copied by another, because there are so many different aspects of harvest represented. We can only conclude that it was the whole theme of harvest which was associated with judgement . . . [T]he great harvest festival of Israel, the feast of Sukkoth (also called Booths, Tabernacles, and Tents) was celebrated by building leafy shelters and carrying branches in a great procession The second stage of the reconstruction shows how the harvest/judgement festival was associated with the royal figure and his ascending the throne.”

39. Jacob 5:77.

40. Alma 26:5–7.

41. See Margaret Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (London: SPCK, 1991), 134, 145–54. See especially 146–47, where she quotes Psalms that seem to point to the year rite in the autumn of the New Year, in which “the Lord was enthroned as King. . . . The question is: Did someone represent the Lord in these ceremonies? The most likely answer is that it was the king.” Also, in *The Older Testament*, 28, Barker observes that in several of the Psalms, “we also find a king who is more than a mere mortal (Psalms 2; 79; 82; 110), one who had a role in both worlds, to protect his people from heavenly powers which manifested themselves as foreign rulers and other threats to the wellbeing of his people.” See also Barker, *The Older Testament*, 118: “Philo describes Moses as god and king whose ascent of Sinai was an ascent

the ascent used by Enoch, Ezekiel, and others was conditioned by the temple practices and symbols.

In the visionary texts . . . the holy of holies is vividly described, suggesting not only that the visionaries knew the holy of holies, but also that they had a particular interest in it. Isaiah saw the throne in the temple with heavenly beings beside it; Enoch entered a second house within the first house, a place of fire where there was a lofty throne surrounded by the hosts of heaven (*1 Enoch* 14). The undateable Similitudes of Enoch have the same setting: the throne of glory and the hosts of heaven. These images were memories of the cult of the first temple and it was the visionaries who kept the memory alive: Enoch is depicted as a priest, burning the incense of the sanctuary (*Jubilees* 4:25) and Ezekiel, who saw the chariot, was also a priest (*Ezekiel* 1:3).⁴²

Accordingly, Lehi's vision in *1 Nephi* 1 turns out to be a perfect example of a throne theophany.⁴³ Nephi too, claims this kind of experience:

Behold, he hath heard my cry by day, and he hath given me knowledge by visions in the nighttime. And by day have I waxed bold in mighty prayer before him; yea, my voice have I sent up on high; and angels came down and ministered unto me. And upon the wings of his Spirit hath my body been carried away

upon exceedingly high mountains. And mine eyes have beheld great things, yea, even too great for man; therefore I was bidden that I should not write them.⁴⁴

In his essay "The Meaning of the Atonement,"⁴⁵ Hugh Nibley has shown that Nephi's Psalm is ripe with atonement imagery, which ties it closer to the temple.

3 Nephi 10–29 also places ascent in a temple context. The multitude begins in the darkness of the destruction that precedes a recreation, encounters a messenger at the temple, who provides instruction and covenants through which some pass through a veiling cloud, and are transfigured in order to return to the presence of the Father. *Ether* 2:14; 3:1–21 describes the experience of the brother of Jared in a similar way.⁴⁶

Remember too, King Benjamin's assertion that the words of his discourse were provided by an angel, with the implication that Benjamin, too, experienced the ascent prior to acting as the high priest during the atonement rites.⁴⁷

Putting a context to this starting image of "ascent to heaven," Barker writes that

it makes a great deal of difference to our picture of the Messiah in the New Testament, if the name had formerly meant the anointed one who enjoyed the presence of God and

to heaven. Samaritan traditions are similar. These texts do not just refer to a man who became king; they refer to a man who became *divine*. There was therefore a pattern in some traditions, widely attested (and this is important, since it argues against this being a minority or sectarian view) of a divine royal figure who ascended to meet God."

42. Margaret Barker, "Beyond the Veil of the Temple: The High Priestly Origins of the Apocalypses," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51/1 (1998): 2.
43. In addition to Blake Ostler, "The Throne Theophany," 67–95, see discussions in Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, 391–92; and Welch, "The Calling of a Prophet," 35–54. Compare also Welch, "The Narrative of Zosimus," 323–74.
44. *2 Nephi* 4:23–25.
45. Nibley, *Approaching Zion*, 554–614.
46. See M. Catherine Thomas, "The Brother of Jared at the Veil," in *Temples of the Ancient World*, 388–98.
47. See *Mosiah* 3:2–27.

had the status of an angel. In the pattern beginning to emerge, the vision of God was linked to knowledge, to judgement, to ascent, and to angelic status, and all these were linked to the anointed one. All these come through as a pattern in early Christian thought.

The ascent visions were associated with the temple and its rituals.⁴⁸

The same association of ideas appears in the Book of Mormon. We have seen that ascent visions such as Lehi's conform to the details of an ancient pattern and have seen the connections to wisdom, judgment, angelic status, and the temple. Who is the anointed one who ascends to heaven? In her reconstruction of the role of the king in the first temple period, Barker suggests that the anointed one is the king, in his role as the high priest, who represents the Lord. Stephen D. Ricks describes the practice of anointing and consecration of kings and priests in the Book of Mormon:

Following Benjamin's [temple] address and the renewal of the covenant by the people, Benjamin "consecrated his son Mosiah to be a ruler and a king over his people" (Mosiah 6:3). In the Book of Mormon the verb *to consecrate* occurs mostly in connection with priests or teachers (see 2 Nephi 5:26; Mosiah 11:5; 23:17; Alma 4:4, 7; 5:3; 15:13; 23:4), but also appears in three instances in association with kings. (1) Benjamin says that he was "consecrated" to be king by his father (Mosiah 2:11), (2) Mosiah was "consecrated" by Benjamin his father (Mosiah 6:3), and (3) Amlici was "consecrate[d]" by his followers to be their king (Alma 2:9).

The verb *to anoint* is more commonly used in the Book of Mormon record with the setting apart of kings. Nephi "anointed" his successor

(Jacob 1:9) . . . *To anoint* means to set apart by applying oil to the body, specifically the head, and *to consecrate*, a more general term, means to make holy. Consecrating could be done by anointing, but is not limited to it.⁴⁹

That is, in the Book of Mormon, the kings and priests are anointed ones who report ascent experiences, and this ordinance occurs in association with the rituals of the temple. For example, Nephi's brother Jacob is an anointed one who has beheld the glory of the Lord,⁵⁰ who teaches at the temple, using language suggestive of the Day of Atonement.

And we also had many revelations, and the spirit of much prophecy; wherefore, we knew of Christ and his kingdom, which should come . . . Wherefore I, Jacob, gave unto them these words as I taught them in the temple, having first obtained mine errand from the Lord. For I, Jacob, and my brother Joseph had been consecrated priests and teachers of this people, by the hand of Nephi. And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking upon us the responsibility, answering the sins of the people upon our own heads if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore, by laboring with our might their blood might not come upon our garments; otherwise their blood would come upon our garments, and we would not be found spotless at the last day.⁵¹

Yet the clearest example of the anointed figure and ascent in the Book of Mormon is the Lord himself. His title *Christ* means "the anointed." The first use of "ascended" occurs in Abinadi's discourse:

And thus God breaketh the bands of death, having gained the victory over death; giving the Son power to make intercession for the

48. Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 54.

49. Stephen D. Ricks, "Kingship, Coronation, and Covenant in Mosiah 1–6," in *King Benjamin's Speech: "That Ye May Learn Wisdom,"* 249–50.

50. 2 Nephi 2:3–4.

51. Jacob 1:6, 17–19.

children of men—Having ascended into heaven, having the bowels of mercy; being filled with compassion towards the children of men; standing betwixt them and justice; having broken the bands of death, taken upon himself their iniquity and their transgressions, having redeemed them, and satisfied the demands of justice.⁵²

This passage touches on much of the pattern that Barker sees: Christ as the anointed, justice implying judgment, and the reference to “taking upon himself their iniquity,” implying the high priestly function on the Day of Atonement. All but one of the subsequent references occur in the accounts of the resurrected Christ in 3 Nephi.⁵³ We have already noted that the ascent experience appears in several places in the Book of Mormon, including the temple experience with the risen Lord in 3 Nephi 18.

And now I go unto the Father, because it is expedient that I should go unto the Father for your sakes . . . And it came to pass that when Jesus had touched them all, there came a cloud and overshadowed the multitude that they could not see Jesus. And while they were overshadowed he departed from them, and ascended into heaven. And the disciples saw and did bear record that he ascended again into heaven.⁵⁴

Here we have the clouds and the ascent by the consecrated figure in the temple context.

The final reference to ascent is in Mormon’s epistle included by Moroni,⁵⁵ and that epistle

touches on the ideas that Barker discusses in relation to “angelic status.”

Angelic Status

Angels permeate the Book of Mormon. The word *angel* appears eighty-five times in the text. The correlation with Barker is not just in the appearance of good and evil angels in the story, but in that Barker writes about the angels transitioning to human status (such as the change to Adam and Eve being represented by their being clothed in garments of skins) and the reverse, humans being transfigured to angelic status.⁵⁶ Enoch and other writings describe how humans can become angels.

We find that acquiring angel status, i.e., eternal life, is symbolized by putting on white garments, and sometimes by anointing with oil, thus linking the angels to the royal figure. The righteous, says Enoch, will wear garments of glory, garments of life (*1 Enoch* 62:16).⁵⁷

Barker cites a passage from *2 Enoch* to show that the transformation that the white garments symbolize can actually occur:

‘And I looked down,’ he said, ‘looking at myself, and I was as one of the glorious ones and there was no difference. And the terror and trembling went away from me and the LORD with his mouth summoned me and said: “Have courage Enoch; fear not to stand before my face to eternity.”’⁵⁸

Compare this with the passage describing the promise of the transformation of the three Nephites in 3 Nephi 28:6–17 and the subsequent

52. Mosiah 15:8–9.

53. 3 Nephi 11:21; 15:1; 18:39 (twice); 19:1; and 26:15 (twice).

54. 3 Nephi 18:35, 38–39. See also Helaman 5:42–48.

55. Moroni 7:27. The three references to the “condescension” of God are also important, as the complement of the ascent (1 Nephi 11:16, 26; 2 Nephi 4:26).

56. Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 65–66.

57. Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 27. Compare Blake Ostler, “Clothed Upon: A Unique Aspect of Christian Antiquity,” *BYU Studies* 22/1 (winter 1982): 31–45; and Hugh Nibley, “Sacred Vestments,” in *Temple and Cosmos: Beyond This Ignorant Present* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992), 91–138.

58. *2 Enoch* 22, cited in Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 66.

transfiguration of the Nephite twelve. This passage combines ascent and angelic status in a temple setting:

And for this cause ye shall have fulness of joy; and ye shall sit down in the kingdom of my Father; yea, your joy shall be full, even as the Father hath given me fulness of joy; and ye shall be even as I am, and I am even as the Father; and the Father and I are one; And the Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and me; and the Father giveth the Holy Ghost unto the children of men, because of me. And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words, he touched every one of them with his finger save it were the three who were to tarry, and then he departed. And behold, the heavens were opened, and they were caught up into heaven, and saw and heard unspeakable things. And it was forbidden them that they should utter; neither was it given unto them power that they could utter the things which they saw and heard; And whether they were in the body or out of the body, they could not tell; for it did seem unto them like a transfiguration of them, that they were changed from this body of flesh into an immortal state, that they could behold the things of God.⁵⁹

Notice too that the Book of Mormon frequently discusses white garments in connection with atonement and judgment.⁶⁰

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. And the angel said unto me: Look! And I looked, and beheld three

generations pass away in righteousness; and their garments were white even like unto the Lamb of God. And the angel said unto me: These are made white in the blood of the Lamb, because of their faith in him.⁶¹

Likewise in Alma:

Now, as I said concerning the holy order of this high priesthood, there were many who were ordained and became high priests of God; and it was on account of their exceeding faith and repentance, and their righteousness before God, they choosing to repent and work righteousness rather than to perish; Therefore they were called after this holy order, and were sanctified, and their garments were washed white through the blood of the Lamb. Now they, after being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, having their garments made white, being pure and spotless before God, could not look upon sin save it were with abhorrence; and there were many, exceedingly great many, who were made pure and entered into the rest of the Lord their God.⁶²

Finally, during the appearance of Christ in the New World:

And it came to pass that Jesus blessed them as they did pray unto him; and his countenance did smile upon them, and the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold they were as white as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus; and behold the whiteness thereof did exceed all the whiteness, yea, even there could be nothing upon earth so white as the whiteness thereof.⁶³

The emphasis on the garments of glory and the explicit descriptions of the transformation of

59. 3 Nephi 28:10–15. Compare Barker, “The Secret Tradition,” 57.

60. This may apply to some passages that we have read in other ways. We are all too apt to forget that *skins can be garments*, and that can change how we interpret certain Book of Mormon passages (e.g., Jacob 3:5–12), particularly when read in light of Day of Atonement imagery.

61. 1 Nephi 12:10–11. See also Alma 5:14–62.

62. Alma 13:10–12.

63. 3 Nephi 19:25.

the three Nephites fits closely with the picture that Barker has constructed.

The Royal Figure Called the Son of Man

For Barker, the Son of Man sayings from the *Book of Enoch* illuminate the ways Jesus used the title in reference to himself. In *The Lost Prophet*, she writes:

In the Similitudes [of Enoch] we see three separate memories of the ancient ceremony of enthronement, with the angelic figure of the king acting as agent of God's judgement. It was ideas of the Son of Man like these which were in the minds of the New Testament writers as they wrote. We cannot say that the Similitudes were their source, because there is no proof of this, but the Son of Man imagery was so widely used, and in such a variety of ways, that it would be very difficult to imagine how Jesus could not have known it.⁶⁴

Except in a quote from Isaiah, the phrase "Son of Man" does not appear in the Book of Mormon and does not seem to be a title there. However, the title does appear several times in the Enoch passages of our Book of Moses. Nibley writes:

In the Old Testament, the expression "Son of Man" is found only in four poetic passages, in which it is hardly more than an expression for an ordinary human. In the New Testament, it is not, as anyone would naturally expect, the unassuming title of one who would depict himself humbly as a common mortal "delicately and modestly," or even in "self-depreciation." For in all the occurrences of the title in the New Testament, it refers to the Lord in his capacity as the exalted one from on high whose real nature and glory are hidden from men. Aside from these occurrences, the title "Son of Man" is never used as a title in

the intertestamental literature *except* in the Similitudes of Enoch. Here is a very neat test for Joseph Smith: the "Son of Man" title does not occur once in the Book of Mormon, either, and in the Pearl of Great Price it is confined to one brief section of the *Book of Enoch* where it is used no fewer than seven times—again the prophet is right on target.⁶⁵

The Book of Mormon does show the Nephite kings and even some of the Lamanite kings enacting the appropriate Messianic roles, including Benjamin's apparent acting as the high priest during the atonement rites and King Lamoni (Alma 18:41–43; 19:1–16) prefiguring the death and ascent of the Messiah. Lamoni's story is particularly resonant in this connection. Nibley has suggested that the feast to which he had been summoned by his father, for which he was absent during his near-death conversion experience, would have been the Year Rite.⁶⁶ This explains his father's extreme anger at his absence. And if so, it means that rather than attending a ritual dramatization of the descent of the king into the underworld, being mourned and sought by his consort, and then raised up again, Lamoni experienced the reality that the ritual depicted.

Edenic Temple Setting with a River of Life-Giving Water and a Tree of Life

Barker writes that

in the traditions of the ancient Near East there is 'a garden of paradise where a gardener supervises the Tree of Life growing at the Water of life . . . The *Testament of Judah* describes the Messiah as, 'This Branch of God Most High, And this fountain giving life unto all' (*Testament of Judah* 24:4). Note that the royal figure is both Tree and Fountain.⁶⁷

64. Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 102–3.

65. Hugh Nibley, *Enoch the Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1986), 37.

66. Nibley, *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, 307–8.

67. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven*, 93.

Accordingly, in the Book of Mormon, in answer to a question about the meaning of the tree of life,⁶⁸ Nephi is granted a vision of “the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!”⁶⁹ After viewing this, Nephi realizes that (among other things) the tree represents “the love of God”⁷⁰ along with the “fountain of living waters, or . . . the tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God.”⁷¹

Barker also observes several contrasts between the Mountain Eden of Ezekiel, which derives from the imagery of the first temple, with the Eden of Genesis as the Bible shows it.⁷² She also writes critically of the Bible garden story as an explanation of evil that asserts that “human disobedience is the cause of evil.”⁷³ She not only sees unanswered questions in the Bible story, such as its failure to explain the presence of the serpent, but serious problems for Christianity in its adoption.

How many people who come apart and need expert help are the victims of their own religious system, destroyed by the feelings of guilt, inadequacy and dependence which have been implanted by a religious upbringing? In women this is particularly so, as their status

in society has for so long been determined by the ‘Christian view’ of their proper role.⁷⁴

In contrast, she not only cites the story told in the Enoch books about the rebel angels and the fall from heaven as a theologically stronger account, but she also explains that the New Testament seems to assume the influence of the fallen angels. She believes that the fallen angel story “has only the remotest link to the Adam and Eve story.”⁷⁵ However, the Book of Mormon (and the books of Abraham and Moses, and the Latter-day Saint temple drama) weaves the fallen angel stories together with a variant Adam and Eve story, one which has a much stronger theodicy and a far more optimistic view of the potential of human kind in general and women in particular than the traditional Genesis account.⁷⁶

And I, Lehi, according to the things which I have read, must needs suppose that an angel of God, according to that which is written, had fallen from heaven; wherefore, he became a devil, having sought that which was evil before God. And because he had fallen from heaven, and had become miserable forever, he sought also the misery of all mankind. Wherefore, he said unto Eve, yea, even that old serpent, who is the devil, who is the father

68. 1 Nephi 11:1–11.

69. 1 Nephi 11:21.

70. 1 Nephi 11:22. Compare Proverbs 3:13–18.

71. 1 Nephi 11:25.

72. For example, *The Gate of Heaven*, 57, 68–69 and *The Lost Prophet*, 33–48.

73. Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 37.

74. *Ibid.*, 36. Pages 38–39 contain her personal comments on the rationale behind contemporary Christian priesthood. Compare and, I think, contrast Doctrine and Covenants 132:20 and, for future potentials, the vocabulary in the Latter-day Saint temple experience.

75. Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 36.

76. See 2 Nephi 2, Alma 12–13, and Moses 5:6–12. See also Bruce M. Pritchett Jr., “Lehi’s Theology of the Fall in Its Preexilic/Exilic Context,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3/2 (fall 1994): 49–83. This is a point of contrast, since Barker sees the garden story as an exilic composition (see *The Lost Prophet*, 37). Compare also Richard Elliott Friedman, *The Hidden Book in the Bible* (San Francisco: Harper, 1998), appendixes 2 and 3, for arguments on the antiquity of the Pentateuch sources.

of all lies, wherefore he said: Partake of the forbidden fruit, and ye shall not die, but ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.⁷⁷

Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy. And the Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day, according to the commandments which God hath given.⁷⁸

And in that day Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God. And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient.⁷⁹

Lehi's exposition in 2 Nephi 2 does not discuss the other fallen angels, but the Book of Mormon frequently refers to them in the context of judgment passages. For example, Samuel the Lamanite's prophecy of the signs of the coming of the Messiah includes these warnings:

And in the days of your poverty ye shall cry unto the Lord; and in vain shall ye cry, for your desolation is already come upon you, and your destruction is made sure; and then shall ye weep and howl in that day, saith the Lord of Hosts. And then shall ye lament, and

say: O that I had repented, and had not killed the prophets, and stoned them, and cast them out. Yea, in that day ye shall say: O that we had remembered the Lord our God . . . Behold, we are surrounded by demons, yea, we are encircled about by the angels of him who hath sought to destroy our souls. Behold, our iniquities are great. O Lord, canst thou not turn away thine anger from us? And this shall be your language in those days.⁸⁰

Jacob's temple discourse on atonement includes a reference to the evil angels:

Wherefore, we shall have a perfect knowledge of all our guilt, and our uncleanness, and our nakedness; and the righteous shall have a perfect knowledge of their enjoyment, and their righteousness, being clothed with purity, yea, even with the robe of righteousness. And it shall come to pass that when all men shall have passed from this first death unto life, inasmuch as they have become immortal, they must appear before the judgment-seat of the Holy One of Israel; and then cometh the judgment, and then must they be judged according to the holy judgment of God. And assuredly, as the Lord liveth, for the Lord God hath spoken it, and it is his eternal word, which cannot pass away, that they who are righteous shall be righteous still, and they who are filthy shall be filthy still; wherefore, they who are filthy are the devil and his angels; and they shall go away into everlasting fire, prepared for them; and their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever and has no end.⁸¹

Starting from similar understandings of the tree of life in the Book of Mormon and Barker,

77. 2 Nephi 2:17–18.

78. 2 Nephi 2:25–26.

79. Moses 5:1–11.

80. Helaman 13:32–33, 37.

81. 2 Nephi 9:14–16.

we here move to a different understanding of the Eden story. But we find that pursuing that divergence quickly leads us back to a shared picture.

Jerusalem and the Rival Temples

A significant part of the Deuteronomist reform was the promotion of Jerusalem as the only cult center, the only temple.⁸² One of Alexander Campbell's criticisms of the Book of Mormon in 1831 was that it showed Nephi building a temple in the New World.⁸³ Furthermore, subsequent generations built other temples in other cities.⁸⁴ No Jew, Campbell and others claimed, would dream of building a temple outside of Jerusalem.⁸⁵ Nibley has observed that the discoveries at Elephantine in Egypt showed that there were groups of Jews who neither believed nor acted as though Jerusalem was the only place a temple could be built.⁸⁶ The Bible does record that other places had been shrines with temples. Steven St. Clair observes that

major cultic sites existed in the North at Shechem, Bethel, and Shiloh, among others. After

the split between the two kingdoms, the Ephraimite King Jeroboam built alternate temples at Bethel and Dan, the extreme northern and southern limits of their territory. Thenceforth, the descendants of the northern Israelite tradition had a distrust of the temple at Jerusalem, and had no objection to the building of a temple at another site or the existence of more than one temple.⁸⁷

Lehi's ancestry goes back to Joseph, which is one of many telling connections to the northern kingdom traditions.⁸⁸

Temple Themes: Conclusion

Barker's reconstruction of first temple themes in the Enoch texts agrees with the picture we find in the Book of Mormon. The timing of Lehi's departure from Jerusalem and the evidence associating the Nephites with the northern traditions accounts for both the presence of first temple themes and wisdom traditions in the Book of Mormon and for the temple building tradition among the Nephites.

82. See William Doorly, *Obsession with Justice: The Story of the Deuteronomists* (New York: Paulist, 1994), 147, discussing 1 Kings 11:36.

83. 2 Nephi 5:16.

84. 3 Nephi 11:1.

85. Francis W. Kirkham, *A New Witness for Christ in America*, 2 vols. (Independence: Zion's, 1951), 2:105–6: “[Smith in the Book of Mormon] represents the temple worship as continued in his new land of promise contrary to every precept of the Law, and so happy are the people of Nephi as never to shed a tear on account of the excision, nor to turn an eye toward Jerusalem or God's temple.” Quoting “Delusions” by Alexander Campbell in 1831 on the Book of Mormon.

86. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 53.

87. Steven St. Clair, “The Stick of Joseph: The Book of Mormon and the Literary Tradition of Northern Israel,” at <http://members.aol.com/stclairst/stick.html>.

88. See 1 Nephi 5:14; Sorenson, “The Brass Plates and Biblical Scholarship,” in *Nephite Culture and Society* (Salt Lake City: New Sage Books, 1997), 31–34; and St. Clair, “The Stick of Joseph.”

THE MESSIAH IN BARKER'S WORK AND MORMON SCRIPTURE

Barker examines the first temple traditions not only because they provide the background of expectation of the early Christians regarding the Messiah, but they also provide the context for Jesus' own self-understanding. This section will highlight a few of her key observations regarding significant divine titles and Messianic expectations and will show how these are reflected in the Book of Mormon. It will then sketch some of Barker's interpretations of the life of Jesus and show how these compare with Mormon scripture and scholarship. Finally, this section will close by looking at the Day of the Lord expectations.

Divine Titles and Messianic Expectations

Here we look at the significance of the divine titles of the "Holy One of Israel," the "Servant"

and the "Lamb," and "Melchizedek," and show how these tie into Messianic expectations.

The Holy One of Israel

Besides the title "Lord of Hosts," discussed previously, another title that Barker cites as important is "Holy One of Israel."¹ She notes that the title "Holy One" is

hardly used outside of Isaiah, and may, therefore have had a special significance in his theology. If I am to establish links between Isaiah and *1 Enoch*, this cannot be done simply by comparing the two works. I shall therefore establish a possible set of associations for the title Holy One, using material from other sources to provide a control and prevent circular argument. If any picture emerges from texts associated with the title Holy One, these should provide the context of Isaiah's and *1 Enoch's* usage *if the occurrence of the title is significant.*²

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1. Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1987), 112.
 2. *Ibid.*, 105, emphasis in original.

She surveys passages in Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and the Psalms, and concludes that

there is a pattern clearly associated with the title *Holy One*. Many of its elements are of the later apocalypses, such as visions, heavenly tablets, theophany, and angelic judgement, but the royal figure is also prominent, dependent for his power upon the might of the Holy One. The royal figure faces threats and enemies, but, we assume, overcomes them. Judgement upon foreign nations is also part of the pattern, and there are associations with the Temple.³

We have seen much of the pattern associated with the Holy One already in her picture of the first temple themes in the Enoch literature. She emphasizes this pattern because Isaiah is the best source of information on the first temple period. The connection between the Enoch literature and Isaiah shows again that the first temple ideas continued to the time of the first Christians.

The title “Holy One of Israel” appears forty-one times in the Book of Mormon. Some of these occur in the Isaiah quotations. Jacob uses the title seventeen times. Lehi and Nephi account for fourteen other instances among Book of Mormon prophets. The same themes that show the connections between the Enoch literature and the Holy One in Isaiah also occur in the Book of Mormon. Lehi’s initial vision includes a theophany, angels, his reading a heavenly book, and judgments.⁴

Nephi becomes a royal figure, dependent on the Holy One for deliverance from his enemies.⁵ Welch observes that Jacob serves as a temple priest and that his temple discourse in 2 Nephi 6–10 centers on the atonement made by the Holy One.⁶

Barker observes that “the most important elements in this setting for the Holy Ones are the creation and covenant motifs.”⁷ Compare 2 Nephi 1:10, which combines the creation and covenants:

But behold, when the time cometh that they shall dwindle in unbelief, after they have received so great blessings from the hand of the Lord—having a knowledge of the *creation of the earth*, and all men, knowing the great and marvelous works of the Lord from *the creation of the world*; having power given them to do all things by faith; *having all the commandments* from the beginning, and having been brought by his infinite goodness into this *precious land of promise*—behold, I say, if the day shall come that they will reject the *Holy One of Israel*, the true Messiah, their Redeemer and their God, behold, the judgments of him that is just shall rest upon them.

Welch comments that “after the time of the small plates, this title [Holy One of Israel] drops out of Nephite usage.”⁸ Yet the later Book of Mormon prophets who use the shortened title of the Holy One⁹ do so in the proper contexts and with the associated judgment themes.

3. *Ibid.*, 106, emphasis in original.

4. 1 Nephi 1:8–14.

5. 1 Nephi 1:20.

6. John W. Welch, “10 Testimonies of Jesus Christ in the Book of Mormon,” (FARMS, 1991), 7–8.

7. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 112.

8. Welch, “10 Testimonies of Jesus Christ,” 8. Much later, Mormon uses the “Holy One” in Helaman 12:2, a chapter that Nibley identifies as “wisdom literature.” For more on divine names in the Book of Mormon, see Susan E. Black, “Christ in the Book of Mormon,” (FARMS, 1994); Black refers to 101 names of Christ used in the Book of Mormon, always in the proper context (p. 8).

9. Alma 5:52–57; Helaman 12:2; 3 Nephi 22:5 (the risen Christ quoting Isaiah 54); Mormon 9:14.

Servant Songs and the Lamb in Barker and the Book of Mormon

Barker also places emphasis on the figures of the servant in the Old Testament and the Lamb of God in the New Testament.

Wordplay was characteristic of the prophets and visionaries. The Aramaic word *tly*' can mean either 'Lamb' or 'Servant.' . . . John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29), by which he must have meant the Servant.¹⁰

Most of the evidence for the Servant is found in the prophecies of Isaiah. There are four passages, usually known as the Servant Songs, which describe him (Isaiah 42:1–4; 49:1–4; 50:4–9 and 52:13–53:12).¹¹

The Lamb is the key figure in the Book of Revelation and the Servant is the key figure in other parts of the New Testament. Jesus is depicted as the Servant. At the baptism, Jesus heard the voice from heaven speaking the words of the first Servant Song: 'Thou art my beloved son, with thee I am well pleased' (a version of Isaiah 42:1, quoted in Mark 1:11). *John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Lamb, but Jesus himself heard the words of the Servant Song. . . .*

A glance at these examples will show that they come from Matthew, Mark, Luke, John,

Paul and Peter, that is, from all the major authors of the New Testament. *Jesus as the Servant was not a minority viewpoint, but the original claim of the Christians.*¹²

The Book of Mormon authors also see the central importance of the Lamb and Servant titles, and apply them to Jesus. The Book of Mormon quotes three of the four Servant Songs from Isaiah.¹³ We should also look carefully at the role of the servant as advocate in the allegory of the tame and wild olive trees in Jacob 5 and 6.

And it came to pass that the Lord of the vineyard said unto the servant: Let us go to and hew down the trees of the vineyard and cast them into the fire, that they shall not cumber the ground of my vineyard, for I have done all. What could I have done more for my vineyard? But, behold, the servant said unto the Lord of the vineyard: Spare it a little longer.¹⁴

Nephi's vision of the tree of life makes frequent reference to Jesus as the Lamb. In an article discussing arguments that the Lamb title is pre-Christian, Welch comments that "Forty-four references to 'the Lamb' appear in Nephi's vision in 1 Nephi 11–14 alone."¹⁵ Barker sums up the significance of the Lamb and Servant titles by saying:

the Lamb was central to this vision and whatever the Lamb was, Jesus believed himself to be. The Servant Lamb is central not only to the

10. Margaret Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Which God Gave to Him to Show to His Servants What Must Soon Take Place (Revelation 1.1)* (Edinburgh: Clark, 2000), 133.

11. *Ibid.*, 134.

12. *Ibid.*, 136, emphasis in original.

13. Isaiah 42:1–4 is not included. Isaiah 49:1–4 is quoted in 1 Nephi 21:1–4. Isaiah 50:4–9 is quoted in 2 Nephi 7:4–9. Isaiah 52:13–15 is quoted in 3 Nephi 20:43–45 and 53:1–12 is quoted in Mosiah 14:1–12.

14. Jacob 5:49–50.

15. John W. Welch, "The Lamb of God' in Pre-Christian Texts," in *Pressing Forward with the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch and Melvin J. Thorne (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999), 40. Welch compares 1 Nephi with the *Testament of Joseph* 19, and an article by J. C. O'Neill, "The Lamb of God in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 2 (1979): 2–30, which argues that the phrase "Lamb of God" existed prior to Christianity. Barker's reading presumes that the Lamb is an important part of the pre-Christian Messianic expectation.

understanding of Revelation . . . the Servant Lamb is central to any understanding of Jesus, since it is what he believed himself to be.¹⁶

The Servant Lamb is also central to the Book of Mormon understanding of Jesus.

The Importance of Melchizedek

In looking to establish the background context for the origins of Christianity, Barker observes that since “Psalm 110, the Melchizedek Psalm, is the most frequently used text in the New Testament, it seemed the obvious place to start.”¹⁷ She also observes that the Qumran Melchizedek text exemplifies a set of ideas regarding “a heavenly priest figure from the cult of the first temple who would bring salvation and atonement in the last days.”¹⁸ Despite his being mentioned only briefly in the Old Testament, Barker observes that

Melchizedek was central to the old royal cult. We do not know what the name means, but it is quite clear that this priesthood operated

within the mythology of the sons of Elyon, and the triumph of the royal son of God in Jerusalem. We should expect later references to Melchizedek to retain some memory of the cult of Elyon . . . The role of the ancient kings was that of the Melchizedek figure in 11QMelch. This accounts for the Melchizedek material in Hebrews, and the early Church’s association of Melchizedek and the Messiah. The arguments of Hebrews presuppose a knowledge of the angel mythology which we no longer have.¹⁹

Without presuming to offer a new commentary on the Melchizedek passages in the Book of Mormon,²⁰ we should first note that the Alma 13 discussion is crowded with themes that recur in Barker’s books as signs of the preexilic tradition—the Father God,²¹ his begotten Son as the atoning one,²² the council in heaven at the foundation of the world,²³ the Day of Atonement imagery of garments being “washed white in the blood of the Lamb,”²⁴ angels being sent to “all nations,”²⁵

16. Margaret Barker, *The Risen Lord: The Jesus of History as the Christ of Faith* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1996), 138.

17. *Ibid.*, xii.

18. *Ibid.*

19. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 257.

20. The most important discussions are John W. Welch, “The Melchizedek Material in Alma 13:13–19,” in *By Study and Also By Faith*, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, 2:238–272 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990), and David Wright’s skeptical reading, “‘In Plain Terms that We May Understand’: Joseph Smith’s Transformation of Hebrews in Alma 12–13,” in *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 165–230. Two significant responses to Wright are John A. Tvedtnes, review of “‘In Plain Terms that We May Understand’: Joseph Smith’s Transformation of Hebrews in Alma 12–13,” by David P. Wright, in *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon, Explorations in Critical Methodology*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe, 165–230, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/1 (1994): 19–23, and John W. Welch, “Approaching New Approaches,” review of *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon, Explorations in Critical Methodology*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe, *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 6/1 (1994): 168–81.

21. Alma 13:9. Compare Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel’s Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 4–8.

22. Alma 13:5. Compare Barker, *The Great Angel*, 3, 219.

23. Alma 13:3. Compare Barker, *The Great Angel*, 6–7.

24. Alma 13:11. Compare Margaret Barker, *The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple in Jerusalem* (London: SPCK, 1991), 113–14.

25. Alma 13:22. Compare Barker, *The Great Angel*, 6.

judgment,²⁶ hell, and the second death.²⁷ This puts the Melchizedek passage in the Book of Mormon in tune with the angel mythos presupposed by Hebrews.

Barker suggests that the Melchizedek expectations at the time of Jesus tie directly to the quotation of Isaiah 61:1–2 with which Jesus began his ministry:

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.²⁸

Barker's talent shines impressively as she makes associations between a wide range of primary sources to recover the larger implications of Jesus making this particular citation. She notes that

Daniel's prophecy of the Great Atonement, which would put an end to sin and destroy both Jerusalem and the temple, reckons

seventy weeks of years from 'the going forth of the word to restore and rebuild Jerusalem' (Daniel 9:25). Seventy weeks of years, 490 years, can also be reckoned as ten Jubilees, and in the Melchizedek text (11QMelch) there is a similar expectation of the Great Atonement and judgement after ten Jubilees. . . . Throughout the Melchizedek text there is allusion to Isaiah 61, the one anointed by the Spirit 'to proclaim liberty,' the Jubilee prescription in Leviticus 25:10.

Reckoning from Ezra's Jubilee in 424 B.C.E. gives the date 66 C.E. for the end of the tenth Jubilee, and so the first week of that Jubilee would have fallen between 18 and 24 C.E. Now if Jesus was born between 12 and 6 B.C.E. . . . , then his baptism at the age of thirty (Luke 3:23) would have occurred, *during the first week of the tenth Jubilee*. Jesus believed himself to be the Melchizedek high priest, the anointed one who was to appear in the tenth Jubilee. . . . The Book of Revelation records the prophecies of the tenth Jubilee, when the kingdom of God was at hand and the Day of the LORD was expected.²⁹

I have already mentioned that the Melchizedek material in Alma 13 contains much that stands out in high relief in comparison to Barker's work. Notice the central importance that she puts to the Qumran Melchizedek text and the allusions in that text to Isaiah 61. While the Book of Mormon does not quote Isaiah 61, Alma 13 contains a number of shared themes: priesthood,³⁰ "garments of salvation" compared to "garments washed white

26. Alma 13:29–30. Compare Barker, *The Great Angel*, 44–5.

27. Alma 13:29–30. Compare Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 312–13.

28. Luke 4:16–21.

29. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 48–49, emphasis in original. Also Barker, "The Time Is Fulfilled: Jesus and Jubilee," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 53/1 (2000): 22–32. Also Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 93: "Jesus as Melchizedek is the major theme of the Letter to the Hebrews, and Psalm 110, the Melchizedek Psalm, is the most frequently used text in the New Testament."

30. Isaiah 61:6 and Alma 13:6.

through the blood of the Lamb,”³¹ and a calling to preach the good news and repentance.³²

In Barker’s work, the temple themes embodied in the titles of the Holy One, the Servant/Lamb, and the Melchizedek figure provide a context for interpreting the life of Jesus.

The paradigm I am proposing answers several questions. It shows the link between Christology and Soteriology and roots both in first-century Palestine, interpreting what is there within the resources of available tradition. . . . The paradigm I am proposing also shows that what Jesus believed about himself was identical with what the young church preached about him, even though he had been imperfectly understood at times. It makes Jesus himself the author and finisher of the faith, rather than the early communities, a supposition which has been fashionable for some time. The great message of atonement was not just a damage limitation exercise on the part of a traumatized group of disciples who could find no other way of coming to terms with the death of their leader.³³

Barker uses her background research and this foreground premise as a means to show that Christianity springs from the self-understanding of the historical Jesus and that Christianity is best explained if Jesus knew who he was, and knew what his life was for. Her arguments in *The Risen Lord* show her disagreement with scholars who prefer to imagine that Christianity originated with the despair of the apostles in trying to come to

terms with the unexpected death of Jesus. She marshals an impressive range of evidence to back up her assertions.

Barker’s Interpretations of the Life of Jesus

Barker uses the background expectations of first-century Palestine to support suggestions that are startling and interesting by themselves, but which also turn out to have unexpected support in Mormon scripture.

The Risen Lord and Doctrine and Covenants 93

As we have seen, the Holy One texts, the Melchizedek texts, and the first temple cult all have associations with the high priest figure who ascends to the presence of God. The foreground assertion in *The Risen Lord* is that Jesus had an ascent experience at his baptism that, against the conceptual background of the first temple, served to provide his self-understanding.

All the gospels agree that the baptism of Jesus marked the beginning of his ministry. I want to explore the possibility that for Jesus this was the moment at which he ‘became’ son of God. His baptism was a merkavah³⁴ ascent experience when he believed he had become the heavenly high priest, the LORD with his people.³⁵

Note that the passage from Isaiah 61 that Jesus quoted to start his ministry begins with the declaration that “the spirit of the Lord is upon me,”

31. Isaiah 61:10 and Alma 13:11.

32. Isaiah 61:1–2, 8 and Alma 13:27–30.

33. Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 109.

34. “Merkavah” refers to the chariot throne in the temple and also to Ezekiel’s vision of the chariot. There is a tradition in Judaism of merkavah mysticism. See Gershom Gerhard Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkavah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1960).

35. Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 27.

and this comes after his baptism by John. Barker believes that when the Gospel of Mark says that after his baptism,

Jesus was with the beasts and that the angels served him, [Mark] may well have been revealing the true nature of this desert experience. . . . Beasts would be a normal experience for a man in the desert, but angels suggest something more. I suspect that the beasts and angels were around the throne of God and that the experience in the desert resembled that in Revelation 5. . . .

The prophetic word: 'Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world' (John 1:29) was the moment of revelation for Jesus, who then found himself caught up in the vision recorded in Revelation 4–5.³⁶

In Barker's reading, then, first John the Baptist received the inspiration to identify Jesus as the Lamb. Then when he was baptized, Jesus was visited by the Holy Ghost, heard the voice of the Father, and had an experience where the heavens opened and he had a vision of himself as the Lamb.³⁷ John the Revelator describes the Lamb ascending to the divine throne in a book that begins with the explanation that it is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants."³⁸

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes,

which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;³⁹

Barker notes that after Jesus' visionary experience with the beasts and angels came the temptations, all of which began with the probing question, "If you are the Son of God . . ." I find the Gospel story becomes more poignant and moving, and Jesus' experience more real to me, the better I understand what Barker has done to put these passages in a first-century context.

Her emphasis in *The Risen Lord* is on what the concept of a baptismal "ascent" experience does to illuminate Jesus' life and ministry. However radical her claim might seem, we, of all Christians, should be keenly interested in her ideas. This is not only because Nephi's vision includes a suggestive mention of Jesus' baptism:

And I looked and beheld the Redeemer of the world, of whom my father had spoken; and I also beheld the prophet who should prepare the way before him. And the Lamb of God went forth and was baptized of him; and after he was baptized, I beheld the heavens open, and the Holy Ghost come down out of heaven and abide upon him in the form of a dove.⁴⁰

36. Ibid., 50–51.

37. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 129–30.

38. Revelation 1:1.

39. Revelation 5:5–10.

40. 1 Nephi 11:27.

That the Book of Mormon mentions the event in this context of the vision of the tree of life, which touches the Book of Revelation at so many points, becomes more interesting the better we understand Barker's work. But more than this, we should consider Doctrine and Covenants 93:11–19, a revelation that Joseph Smith received and wrote on May 6, 1833 in Kirtland, Ohio:

And I, John, bear record that I beheld his glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, even the Spirit of truth, which came and dwelt in the flesh, and dwelt among us. And I, John, saw that he received not of the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace; And he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness; And thus he was called the Son of God, because he received not of the fulness at the first. And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and sat upon him, and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son. And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father; And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him. And it shall come to pass, that if you are faithful you shall receive the fulness of the record of John. I give unto you these sayings that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time receive of his fulness.

Joseph Smith provided no commentary on what prompted this revelation. Passages from Doctrine and Covenants 93 are frequently quoted for

key statements on truth, faith, preexisting intelligences, epistemology, ontology, and the responsibility of parents to raise up children in light and truth. However, little has been done with the idea that Jesus received the “fulness of the glory of the Father” at the time of his baptism. Barker's *The Risen Lord* provides a significant commentary on and contextualization of just these ideas. The impressive research into primary materials is so well grounded that if we want to discuss these Doctrine and Covenants passages at all, we should take a serious and respectful look at what she has to say. The context that Barker develops in her commentary not only enhances our appreciation of the New Testament and the Doctrine and Covenants, but has arresting parallels with the Book of Mormon.

For example, Barker describes Jesus' ascension experience as a *merkavah* mystic experience (where *merkavah* refers both to the chariot throne in the temple and the vision of the chariot reported by Ezekiel). Mormon scholars have already observed similarities in the descriptions of *merkavah* mysticism and the temple.⁴¹ An impressive number of the other texts that Barker uses to contextualize the claim that Jesus had a profound revelatory experience at his baptism should already be familiar territory to informed Mormons. For example, besides the Bible, she refers to the *Gospel of Philip*, the *Pistis Sophia*, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, the *Book of Enoch*, the *Hymn of the Pearl* (which she suggests may have actually come from Jesus),⁴² and many others.

The arresting parallels between her ideas and Doctrine and Covenants 93 do not occur in isolation, but call for close attention to a web of inter-related themes. We will need to further discuss the

41. For example, William J. Hamblin, “Temple Motifs in Jewish Mysticism,” in *Temples of the Ancient World*, 440–76.

42. Barker writes, “it describes perfectly the baptism experience of Jesus as I am reconstructing it; whether a sequence such as this was known in first-century Palestine and whether the *Hymn* is a vestige of Jesus' own experience is beyond our knowing” (*The Risen Lord*, 39, n. 25; see also p. 106).

seven seals and the Day of the Lord expectations, but must first examine a few other ideas related to the ascent.

The Baptism Ascension as Resurrection

Another of Barker's interpretations in *The Risen Lord* is that Jesus' ascension experience was his resurrection. That is, during his precrucifixion ministry, he was the "risen" Lord. For example, she cites the *Gospel of Philip*, which says:

Those who say that the LORD died first and then rose up are in error for he rose up first and then he died.⁴³

Within the canon, she observes that texts quoted in the scriptures for Jesus' resurrection were "ascension" texts rather than "resurrection" texts.⁴⁴ Is she asserting that there was no resurrection from the dead after the crucifixion? At times in *The Risen Lord* it may seem that way and may make readers nervous about her intent,⁴⁵ but I do not believe so. Her point is that it was not his being raised from the dead that established that Jesus of Nazareth was Jehovah, the Son of the High God. She notes that neither Lazarus, nor Jairus's daughter, both of whom were raised from death, became Messianic figures. Rather, Barker claims that the visions accompanying his baptism and the transfiguration established who Jesus was. For example, she says:

Far from being a misplaced resurrection experience, the Transfiguration could prove to be important evidence for what I am proposing. The experience of the transfigured LORD was given to some of the disciples before the crucifixion; they had not fully understood what was happening, but the memory of these experiences later enabled them to proclaim that Jesus had been raised beyond physical death. This raising had originally taken place at the start of the ministry. Jesus had spoken of it and how he had become the Messiah. The post-crucifixion appearances proved to the disciples that what he had claimed was true: he had been raised up and he was the Messiah.⁴⁶

The Old World post-resurrection narratives have affinities with 3 Nephi 8–29, and, therefore, the Old World accounts and the Book of Mormon tend to support one another, particularly since most of these accounts have emerged since the translation of the Book of Mormon.⁴⁷ So with Barker's suggestions, it is not a matter of excluding one concept of resurrection for another, but a matter of adding to our understanding. That affinity between the Book of Mormon and the Old World postresurrection accounts permits us not only to view the Book of Mormon in light of Barker's work, but also to offer the Book of Mormon's witness as significant towards understanding these accounts.

43. *Gospel of Philip* 56, quoted in Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 55; see also 110.

44. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 340.

45. A Jesus who had a mystic experience that persuaded him that he was God might be brimming with profound spiritual insight, but if he was mistaken in his interpretation, his most important claims cannot be as binding as those of a Jesus who was literally Jehovah incarnate. Was Jesus who he thought he was? The answer we give makes the difference between (1) a binding religious appreciation of Jesus as the Son of God; (2) a spiritual appreciation of Jesus as one who experienced and taught profound things—things that may not be any more binding than the teachings of countless others who have had powerful mystic or numinous experiences; or (3) a secular understanding of how one frenzied Nazarene came to start a religious movement. The Book of Mormon provides more grist for the mill in considering what to believe.

46. Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 96; see also 105.

47. See Hugh Nibley, "Christ among the Ruins," in *The Prophetic Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1989), 407–34.

The Messiah's Power over the Evil Angels

In discussing the angel mythology, Barker provides another insight about the Messianic expectations that casts significant light on the Book of Mormon:

There are significant word patterns in [Isaiah] 35:5–6: the blind, the deaf, the lame and the dumb are healed in the renewal of the creation, but the names of these four are also those of four types of angel. . . . How these supernatural beings were connected to these disabilities is not clear, but it is surely no coincidence that Jesus used the curing of these four types as his sign. John the Baptist asked if Jesus was the one expected (Luke 7:20ff), and the reply was an amalgam of these verses and Isaiah 61:1. . . . In the Gospels, the defeat of what these creatures represented is seen as a sign of the kingdom of God.⁴⁸

Barker's point is that there was a specific expectation that the Messiah should demonstrate his power over these specific manifestations of evil. John's disciples asked, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"⁴⁹ By way of response Luke says that "in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight."⁵⁰ Then, after performing these particular miracles, "Jesus . . . said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are

raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."⁵¹ The answer through specific action shows rather than tells, and therefore makes sense only in light of a preexisting expectation. Recall that John the Baptist had identified Jesus as "the Lamb of God," so the title that Nephi uses in his prophecy of these events may be significant:

And he spake unto me again, saying: Look! And I looked, and I beheld the Lamb of God going forth among the children of men. And I beheld multitudes of people who were sick, and who were afflicted with all manner of diseases, and with devils and unclean spirits; and the angel spake and showed all these things unto me. And they were healed by the power of the Lamb of God; and the devils and the unclean spirits were cast out.⁵²

Notice, too, how appropriate it is that in the Book of Mormon, Benjamin not only reports an angelic visitation during which he was told of these miraculous demonstrations of the power of the Messiah over evil spirits, but he does so in the proper temple context, during the autumn festival:

And the things which I shall tell you are made known unto me by an angel from God. And he said unto me: Awake; and I awoke, and behold he stood before me. And 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 Omnipotent⁵³ who

48. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 133.

49. Luke 7:20.

50. Luke 7:21.

51. Luke 7:22.

52. 1 Nephi 11:31.

53. Welch notes that "so holy was the Day of Atonement that on this day the ineffable name of God, YHWH, could be pronounced . . . Later Jewish tradition seems to have the priest utter this name ten times during the Yom Kippur liturgy, and to a similar degree, Benjamin employs the expanded names *Lord God* and *Lord Omnipotent* seven and three times, respectively," (Terrence L. Szink and John W. Welch, "King

reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases. And he shall cast out devils, or the evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men. And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people . . . And he shall rise the third day from the dead; and behold, he standeth to judge the world; and behold, all these things are done that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men. For behold, and also his blood atoneth for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam, who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned.⁵⁴

In fulfillment of this prophecy, 3 Nephi 26:15 duly notes these specific signs of the Messiah:

And it came to pass that after he had ascended into heaven—the second time that he showed himself unto them, and had gone unto the Father, after having healed all their sick, and their lame, and opened the eyes of their blind and unstopped the ears of the deaf, and even had done all manner of cures among them, and raised a man from the dead, and had shown forth his power unto them, and had ascended unto the Father—

The expectation that Barker sees for the Messiah to demonstrate his power over the fallen angels is demonstrated in Book of Mormon prophecies and in the record of their fulfillment.

The Cosmic Covenant

Barker writes:

In the Hebrew scriptures there are several covenants: with Noah, with Abraham, with Moses and with David, and Jeremiah looked forward to a new covenant. The Eternal Covenant was the oldest and most fundamental of all and was envisaged as the system of bonds which restrained cosmic forces and maintained an ordered creation where people could live in peace and safety. Nowhere in the Hebrew Scriptures is the establishing of this covenant described, but there are many places where it is assumed.⁵⁵

While the use of the term *covenant* in the Book of Mormon does have some resonance with Barker's ideas, it does not strike me as describing the underlying cosmic covenant that she suggests. This is not necessarily a problem, since she says that the establishment of that covenant is not described in the Hebrew scripture. Garold Davis recently examined the Book of Mormon use of the term *covenant*:

The term *covenant* appears in the same Book of Mormon sections in which the Isaiah passages and the term *house of Israel* occur. In the Book of Mormon the term *covenant* most frequently refers to God's covenant promises, given through Abraham to the house of Israel, of an "infinite atonement" (see 2 Nephi 9). The Book of Mormon further teaches that the law of Moses and "all the prophets who have

Benjamin's Speech in the Context of Ancient Israelite Festivals," in *King Benjamin's Speech: "That Ye May Learn Wisdom,"* 179).

54. Mosiah 3:2–3, 5–7, 10–11.

55. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 41.

prophesied ever since the world began” (Mosiah 13:33) have pointed to the fulfillment of this covenant promise (see Mosiah 13, 15) and, more specifically, that God has not forgotten “scattered” Israel but will remember and restore them “in the last days.” . . . [T]he word [covenant] appears prominently in the small plates [Nephi to Words of Mormon] and then disappears until 3 Nephi, when the Savior reintroduces the concept to the people in connection with his reintroduction of the theme of the house of Israel and his citation of the prophet Isaiah.⁵⁶

If the cosmic covenant is not described in the Book of Mormon and other Mormon scripture, might it be implied? This passage from *The Risen Lord* suggests places for us to look:

*1 Enoch 10 describes the judgement; the four archangels are sent out to bind Azazel and imprison him and then to destroy the fallen angels and their children. They then heal the earth, purify it from all defilement, oppression and sin and inaugurate an era of righteousness and fertility: ‘And he will proclaim life to the earth that he is giving life to her’ (1 Enoch 10:7). Here, at last, is a text which gives the meaning of atonement; it was the process by which the effects of sin were removed so that the earth could be healed and restored. It was a rite of recreation when the LORD came forth from his holy place and established his kingdom.*⁵⁷

Mormon readers should immediately discern numerous parallels between this paragraph and the Enoch passages in Moses 7:45–67. These match Barker’s notions very well.

And it came to pass that Enoch looked upon the earth; and he heard a voice from the bowels thereof, saying: Wo, wo is me, the mother of men; I am pained, I am weary, because of the wickedness of my children. When shall I rest, and be cleansed from the filthiness which is gone forth out of me? When will my Creator sanctify me, that I may rest, and righteousness for a season abide upon my face?⁵⁸

And it came to pass that Enoch cried unto the Lord, saying: When the Son of Man cometh in the flesh, shall the earth rest? I pray thee, show me these things. And the Lord said unto Enoch: Look, and he looked and beheld the Son of Man lifted up on the cross, after the manner of men; And he heard a loud voice; and the heavens were veiled; and all the creations of God mourned; and the earth groaned; and the rocks were rent; and the saints arose, and were crowned at the right hand of the Son of Man, with crowns of glory; And as many of the spirits as were in prison came forth, and stood on the right hand of God; and the remainder were reserved in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day. And again Enoch wept and cried unto the Lord, saying: When shall the earth rest? And Enoch beheld the Son of Man ascend up unto the Father; and he called unto the Lord, saying: Wilt thou not come again upon the earth? . . . And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah; And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day

56. Garold N. Davis, “Pattern and Purpose of the Isaiah Commentaries in the Book of Mormon,” in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World: Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson*, ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 280. Also see Cynthia L. Hallen’s fascinating “The Lord’s Covenant of Kindness: Isaiah 54 and 3 Nephi 22,” in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 430–31.

57. Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 71, emphasis in original.

58. Moses 7:48.

the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve;⁵⁹

And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest. And it came to pass that Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man, in the last days, to dwell on the earth in righteousness for the space of a thousand years.⁶⁰

This fits with Barker's notion of "recreation" as the "LORD [comes] forth from his holy place and establishe[s] his kingdom."⁶¹ And once we start thinking in these terms, we can see that 3 Nephi 9–28 follows the same pattern: a renewal of the creation, the appearance of the Lord, and the establishment of his kingdom. Doctrine and Covenants 1:15, 22 describes the past "breaking" and current effort in "establishing the everlasting covenant." Recall that Barker describes this covenant as "the system of bonds which restrained cosmic forces and maintained an ordered creation where people could live in peace and safety."⁶² Doctrine and Covenants 88:7–13 may give the best description of those bonds:

This is the light of Christ. . . . Which light proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space—The light which is in all things, which giveth life to all things, which is the law by which all things are governed, even the power of God who sitteth upon his

throne, who is in the bosom of eternity, who is in the midst of all things.⁶³

Barker's picture of a cosmic covenant casts a valuable light on Latter-day Saint scriptures as well as upon the Bible.

Bridging the Gulf between the Sacrifice of Animals and the Sacrifice of a God

Barker's *The Risen Lord* proposes to answer an important set of questions regarding the atonement:

Where in the traditions available to the original disciples in Palestine do we find a belief or a hope that it was a divine being or even the LORD himself who was the atonement sacrifice? The priestly laws of the Old Testament are both complex and obscure on the matter of atonement; the details about lambs and goats are clear enough, but the theology which the rituals expressed is still largely unknown. This must be a major obstacle in any attempt to understand Christian origins because it is a very big step indeed from goats and lambs in the temple to the human sacrifice of one declared to be the LORD, the Son of God. *This step is unacknowledged in any account I have read of atonement in the New Testament.*⁶⁴

Barker attempts, in *The Risen Lord*,⁶⁵ to answer these questions, to describe the theology behind the atonement ritual, and to show from that theology the necessity for the atonement of the Son of God. Her answers do make for fascinating reading. But I wish to note here simply that the

59. Moses 7:54–57.

60. Moses 7:64–65.

61. Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 71.

62. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 41.

63. Doctrine and Covenants 88:7, 12–13.

64. Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 9, emphasis in original.

65. Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 57–84, 111–38.

Book of Mormon treats exactly these issues in discussing the atonement.⁶⁶

After I read this passage in Barker's book, I read through all of the chapters in the Book of Mormon that discuss the atonement. Personally, I found this to be a powerful and moving experience and I recommend doing so in light of the situation that Barker describes and the questions that she poses. While I will quote only a few of them here, I must also say that every discourse contributes to the overall picture, and that the text repays close and careful study. The Book of Mormon always treats the sacrifices required of the law of Moses as being types, in the similitude of the coming sacrifice of Christ:

Yea, and they did keep the law of Moses; for it was expedient that they should keep the law of Moses as yet, for it was not all fulfilled. But notwithstanding the law of Moses, they did look forward to the coming of Christ, considering that the law of Moses was a type of his coming, and believing that they must keep those outward performances until the time that he should be revealed unto them.⁶⁷

The Book of Mormon prophets explain in detail why it is that the Son of God must perform the atonement:

For it is expedient that an atonement should be made; for according to the great plan of the Eternal God there must be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish; yea, all are hardened; yea, all are fallen and are lost, and must perish except it be through the atonement which it is expedient should be made. For it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of

any manner of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice; but it must be an infinite and eternal sacrifice. Now there is not any man that can sacrifice his own blood which will atone for the sins of another. Now, if a man murdereth, behold will our law, which is just, take the life of his brother? I say unto you, Nay. But the law requireth the life of him who hath murdered; therefore there can be nothing which is short of an infinite atonement which will suffice for the sins of the world. Therefore, it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice, and then shall there be, or it is expedient there should be, a stop to the shedding of blood; then shall the law of Moses be fulfilled; yea, it shall be all fulfilled, every jot and tittle, and none shall have passed away. And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law, every whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God, yea, infinite and eternal. And thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name; this being the intent of this last sacrifice, to bring about the bowels of mercy, which overpowereth justice, and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance. And thus mercy can satisfy the demands of justice, and encircles them in the arms of safety, while he that exercises no faith unto repentance is exposed to the whole law of the demands of justice; therefore only unto him that has faith unto repentance is brought about the great and eternal plan of redemption.⁶⁸

Atonement in the Book of Mormon includes, but involves much more than the satisfaction of an objective legal requirement, a paying of justice:

Yea, even so he shall be led, crucified, and slain, the flesh becoming subject even unto death,

66. For example, 1 Nephi 11; 2 Nephi 2, 9, 11, 25, 31; Jacob 4; Mosiah 3–5, 12–17, 27; Alma 7, 9, 11–13, 19, 22, 34, 36, 42; Helaman 6, 8, 11, 14; 3 Nephi 1, 8–29; Mormon 9; Ether 3–4, 12; Moroni 7, 10.

67. Alma 25:15.

68. Alma 34:9–16.

the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father. And thus God breaketh the bands of death, having gained the victory over death; giving the Son power to make intercession for the children of men—Having ascended into heaven, having the bowels of mercy; being filled with compassion towards the children of men; standing betwixt them and justice; having broken the bands of death, taken upon himself their iniquity and their transgressions, having redeemed them, and satisfied the demands of justice.⁶⁹

And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people. And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities. Now the Spirit knoweth all things; nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh that he might take upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions according to the power of his deliverance.⁷⁰

It is characteristic of the Book of Mormon that at-one-ment is accomplished very literally in both the physical sense of the Lord's condescension (his descent with us, literally becoming one among the children of men, suffering physical experience), and in the spiritual sense of his suffering anguish "for the wickedness and abomination of his people" such that "blood cometh from every pore."⁷¹ This anguish must have been felt so

deeply because of his complete empathy and awareness of all that in us is unholy and contrary to his nature. The pain of atonement beyond the physical trial of the crucifixion is direct consequence of him becoming at one with us. As a result of that oneness, the light of Christ has entered in all of us to "invit[e us] and entic[e us] to do good" and "persuade [us] to believe in Christ."⁷² When we accept the atonement and repent of our sins, we are filled with his love, with the promise that we can be transfigured to become like him.

Again, in that it contains specific answers to the questions that Barker poses, and does so within the paradigm of the role of the high priest who performs sacrifices in the temple on the Day of Atonement, the Book of Mormon picture dovetails beautifully with the picture Barker describes.

Day of the Lord Expectations

Next we look at Barker's picture of the Day of the Lord expectations that provide the background to interpret the experiences of both the people of Jerusalem and of the Land Bountiful in the Book of Mormon.

Jehovah as Warrior: The Day of the Lord and 3 Nephi 8–10

The Holy One texts, the Melchizedek texts, and the Servant Lamb texts all point to the role of the high priest who ascends to the presence of God, who performs the atonement rite, and who emerges from the holy place to give the judgment. In *The Risen Lord* and in *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Barker describes the Day of the Lord expectations in Palestine at the time of Christ:

The earliest text recoverable from the first chapter of the Book of Revelation is a temple

69. Mosiah 15:7–9.

70. Alma 7:11–13.

71. Mosiah 3:7.

72. Moroni 7:13, 16.

vision of the angel high priest emerging from the holy of holies on the Day of the LORD. This is what was enacted every year on the Day of Atonement and many non-biblical texts describe what the ritual represented. The *Assumption of Moses*, a text whose present form dates from the first century C.E. also describes the emerging high priest:

“Then his kingdom will appear throughout his whole creation

And the Satan shall be no more . . .

Then the hands of the angel shall be filled

Who has been appointed chief

And he shall forthwith avenge them of their enemies

For the heavenly one will arise from his royal throne

And he will go forth from his holy habitation
With indignation and wrath on account of
his sons.” (*Assumption of Moses* 10:1–3)

This priest figure is a warrior who emerges from his holy place to bring the Judgement.⁷³

On the other hand, Barker explains that among those who understood the role of the atoning high priest, there were different expectations for the city of Jerusalem when the Day of the Lord came. She says

the most ancient belief had been that the LORD would defend Jerusalem against her enemies, but there were others who believed that the greatest enemy of the LORD’s people was the wicked city herself. The sacrifice on the Day of the LORD would be Jerusalem, as prophesied by Daniel (Daniel 9:26). . . . These two incompatible themes stand side by side in the Book of Revelation: the invading army is destroyed by The Word of God and the armies of heaven, and yet the same army appears elsewhere as the sixth bowl of wrath

poured out to destroy Jerusalem ([Revelation] 16:12–16).

Jesus predicted the destruction of the city and warned the scribes, Pharisees and lawyers that the blood of the prophets would bring judgement on their generation (Luke 11:50).⁷⁴

This passage shows a tension that runs through *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*. The roles and the expectations that Jesus claimed by quoting Isaiah 61 in the synagogue point to an imminent return of the Lord to complete the atonement by bringing judgment and defeating the enemies of Israel. Yet Barker sees conflicting expectations towards Jerusalem both in Revelation and in Jesus’ warning prophecy of destruction in Matthew 23. Her reading of Revelation records the fulfillment of the Jubilee prophecies up to a crucial point.

The six seals on the scroll which the Lamb opened were prophecies of events in Palestine during the Jubilee and as each happened, so a seal was believed to have opened. The third seal was the great famine of 46–48 C.E., prophesied by Agabus (Acts 11:28) whose enigmatic words were preserved (Revelation 6:6). The fifth was the martyrdom of James the Righteous who was murdered in the temple in 62 C.E. and buried where he fell, and the sixth was Nero’s persecution which followed the great fire of Rome in 64 C.E., the great tribulation (Revelation 7:14). The seventh seal would bring the return of the heavenly high priest to complete the great atonement at the end of the tenth Jubilee which was, by that time, imminent. In August 66 C.E., the nationalists gained entrance to the temple area and burned all records of debt, the start of the Jubilee.⁷⁵

Six seals have been opened and their prophecies fulfilled. Following the sequence in the

73. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 87.

74. *Ibid.*, 311.

75. Margaret Barker, “The Time is Fulfilled: Jesus and Jubilee,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 53/1 (2000): 29–30.

Synoptic Apocalypse, the seventh seal was to bring the Son of Man in clouds with great power and glory (Mark 13:26). He did not appear. . . . Eventually the Man did return, but only to John his seer and only in a vision to give him a further commission.⁷⁶

The new interpretation that Barker describes is that the Parousia (that is, the return of the Lord in Glory, the second coming) would be delayed, but that the Lord would be present with his people through the eucharist (the bread and wine of the sacrament).⁷⁷ Barker reads this passage from Revelation as describing this change in expectations and a further commission to John to escape from Jerusalem:

And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.⁷⁸

Barker's focus throughout her work has been on literal expectations and happenings, interpreting the accounts of Jesus' life and ministry and the symbols of Revelation in terms of first temple imagery and the events in Palestine leading to the destruction of Jerusalem. Yet in the very end, she must turn to a "spiritualized" interpretation of the Lord's return. A reader of her book on Revelation comes away impressed and uplifted, feeling a solidity in her portrait of Jesus and his times, and yet a little uneasy, wondering if a Jesus who expected to return to enact the Day

of the Lord after making the atonement can be worshipped as God. The Jesus that the gospels describe claims both a Messianic role and prophetic foreknowledge:

And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.⁷⁹

Barker does emphasize that Jesus prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and warned that the blood of the prophets would be required of that generation, and she documents the ways in which Jerusalem at the time fulfills the description of the harlot in Revelation.⁸⁰ Still, against the terrible destruction at the fall of Jerusalem, and the frustrated expectations in that defeat, the new interpretation at a late date may not seem enough to balance the agonies, particularly in light of Jesus' own declarations of his role. This is where Mormon scripture and scholarship may be able to resolve the tension. In a survey of commentaries on Revelation, Thomas MacKay observes that

the early writers follow Papias, Tertullian, and Hippolytus in a literal approach to the Millennium, resurrection, and judgment. . . . Following the lead of Clement, the Alexandrian school developed an allegorical method of interpretation and applied it systematically to all scriptures, including the Apocalypse.⁸¹

If the oldest understandings involved literal readings, where can the literal expectations of the Lord's role as the Shepherd, Servant Lamb, and High Priest have been fully met?

76. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 180.

77. *Ibid.*, 372.

78. Revelation 10:10–11.

79. John 14:29.

80. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 279–98.

81. Thomas MacKay, "Early Christian Millenarianist Interpretation of the Two Witnesses in John's Apocalypse 11:3–13," in *By Study and By Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh Nibley*, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, 1:222–331 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990), 245.

Who Expected What at the End of the Aeon?

Mormons are fond of saying that the reason that the Jews did not recognize Jesus as the Christ is that they were expecting a different kind of Messiah, one who would free Israel from the Roman oppressors. This overlooks the circumstance that the earliest Christians were Jews, and that the evidence suggests that both Jews and Christians alike expected their Messiah to fight their battles in specific ways, demonstrating his power over earth, water, air, and fire. As Barker shows, many people at the time had not only had a specific expectation of when things would happen (the end of the tenth Jubilee), but what would happen on the Day of the Lord.

In *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Barker makes a compelling case that the revolt against Rome was fueled by the Palestinian expectations (both Jewish and Christian) of the return of the Lord at the end of the tenth Jubilee.⁸² She cites correspondences between the events described in Revelation and those described in Josephus' account of the Jewish Wars. She points out that Josephus had been of a priestly family, and that he switched sides in the war after having been captured by the Romans. Josephus ingratiated himself with the Romans by claiming that he had the gift of prophecy. Barker sees Josephus as the False Prophet of Revelation. Indeed, she argues that "*the prophecies in the Book of Revelation were a significant factor in the war against Rome.*"⁸³

Barker herself recognizes the tension in Revelation in which the sixth bowl of wrath seems to be ready to destroy the armies surrounding Jerusalem, and in which the armies may also be the wrath poured on Jerusalem as the harlot city. She notes Jesus' taking the role of the anointed one

who was expected to bring atonement and then to emerge from the holy place and bring the judgment. She cites 1 Thessalonians as describing an expectation for an imminent return:

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.⁸⁴

While 1 Thessalonians insists that the Day of the Lord comes as a thief in the night, that is, that no one knows the day or hour, it plainly indicates a belief that the day would come in the very near future. Barker also cites Peter's remarks to show that not everyone expected an immediate Parousia:

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night . . . ;⁸⁵

Second Thessalonians paints a different picture than 1 Thessalonians, insisting that the time is not yet, and citing specific conditions that should be met before anyone should expect the event:

Now we beseech you, brethren . . . That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled,

82. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 49.

83. *Ibid.*, 188, emphasis in original.

84. 1 Thessalonians 4:15–18.

85. 2 Peter 3:8–10.

neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.⁸⁶

Barker does mention this passage, but she does not read it the same way Mormons do. Mormons think in terms of a prediction of general apostasy. While she describes the historical evidence of the loss of significant teachings, and the corruption and suppression of scripture in the generations after the destruction of Jerusalem, she does not tie these events to prophecy. Hugh Nibley gives the perspective that a general apostasy was foreseen by Jesus from the beginning:

(I) Jesus announced in no uncertain terms that his message would be rejected by all men, as the message of the prophets had been before, and that he would soon leave the world to die in its sins and seek after him in vain. The Light was soon to depart, leaving a great darkness "in which no man can work" while "the prince of this world" would remain, as usual, in possession of the field. (II) In their turn the disciples were to succeed no better than their Lord: "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" Like him they were to be "hated of all men," going forth as sheep among wolves, "sent last as it were appointed unto death," with the promise that as soon as they completed their mission the end would come.

(III) But what of the church? Those who accepted the teaching were to suffer exactly the same fate as the Lord and the apostles; they

were advised to "take the prophets for an example of suffering affliction and patience," and to "think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try" them, but rejoice rather to suffer as Christ did "in the flesh . . . that we may also be glorified together." After them too the prince of this world was waiting to take over; they too were to be lambs among wolves, rejected as were the Master and the disciples: "The world knoweth us not because it knew him not." Knowing that "whosoever will save his life must lose it," they openly disavowed any expectation of success, individual or collective, in this world. (IV) As for the doctrine, it was to receive the same rough treatment, soon falling into the hands of worldly men who would "pervert the gospel of Christ" from a thing the world found highly obnoxious to something it was willing to embrace, for such has always been the fate of God's revelations to men.

(V) All this bodes ill for the "interval" between the Ascension and the Parousia; the *Zwischenzeit* was to be a bad time and a long one. What is more, it begins almost immediately, the apostles themselves calling attention to all the fatal signs, and marveling only that it has come so soon. As soon as the Lord departs there comes "the lord of this world, and hath nothing in me"; in the very act of casting out the Lord of the vineyard the usurpers seize it for themselves, to remain in possession until his return; no sooner does he sow his wheat than the adversary sows tares, and only when the Lord returns again can the grain be "gathered together," i.e., into a church, the ruined field itself being not the church but specifically "the world." After the sheep come the wolves, "not sparing the flock," which enjoys no immunity (Acts 20:29); after sound doctrine come fables; after the charismatic gifts only human virtues (1 Corinthians 13:8, 13).

86. 2 Thessalonians 2:1–2.

The list is a grim one, but it is no more impressive than (VI) the repeated insistence that *there is to be an end*, not the end of the world, but “the consummation of the age.” It is to come with the completion of the missionary activities of the apostles, and there is no more firmly rooted tradition in Christendom than the teaching that the apostles completed the assigned preaching to the nations in their own persons and in their own time, so that the end could come in their generation.⁸⁷

Mormons view most of the urgency in the message of the Old World apostles as based on their awareness that their time was short, rather than upon a belief that the Lord’s return was imminent. This picture calls for a much longer span of time for the arrival of the Parousia than would be implied from 1 Thessalonians alone. The passages from Peter and Paul in 2 Thessalonians demonstrate that key authorities had to actively resist the belief of an immediate return of the Lord. Barker’s identification of the Jubilee expectations in Israel at that time explains the source of that hope. Yet despite the explicit prophesies and declarations that Nibley documents, we should recognize that a significant part of the hope for an imminent Parousia comes from Jesus’ own declaration of his filling a role that in turn suggests a pattern of expectation. For example, Barker explains the significance of the Shepherd

image that Jesus takes for himself. A larger picture appears in the Book of Dreams in *1 Enoch* 83–90, where the history of Israel

is divided into periods, as in Daniel, and each is in the charge of a shepherd, an angel figure. Angels, especially guardian angels, are often called shepherds in this tradition . . . The Lord was regarded as the guardian angel of his people. This is what is meant by the name ‘the Holy One of Israel.’ . . . When Jesus says, ‘I am the good shepherd,’ we have to remember what a shepherd represented. It did not mean just a gentle rustic figure with a lamb on his shoulders, familiar to us from our childhood Sunday School pictures.⁸⁸

She writes that “the Lamb on the throne . . . is not a meek and gentle figure, despite all the sermons to that effect; this is a warrior, a conqueror who controls and reveals the destiny of the creation and is worshiped by the hosts of heaven and the redeemed of the earth.”⁸⁹ Barker frequently returns to the image of Jehovah as the Holy One of Israel, the shepherd, the guardian, the warrior, the Destroying Angel who defends Israel and brings judgment, who “treads the wine press.” Further, “The LORD, the God of Israel was a warrior. . . . The LORD fights for his people on a cosmic scale; the floods congeal, the earth swallows their enemies.”⁹⁰ In *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, Barker observes:

87. Hugh Nibley, “The Passing of the Primitive Church: Forty Variations on an Unpopular Theme,” in *Mormonism and Early Christianity* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1987), 169–70, emphasis in original. See original for footnotes. See also Nibley, “The Way of the Church,” in *Mormonism and Early Christianity*, 288–89, for an important discussion of the implied meanings of “the end of things” and of “aeon” as “the age in which we live.” Also Nibley, “Evangelium Quadraginta Dierum: The Forty-day Mission of Christ—The Forgotten Heritage,” in *Mormonism and Early Christianity*, 13–14, discusses other prophesies of the apostasy. Note that the forty-day teaching was secret, and that Paul was not there. This may account for the difference between 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians.

88. Barker, *The Lost Prophet*, 29–30.

89. Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 111. Compare Barker’s understanding of the Shepherd of Israel with the discourse in Alma 5:41–62.

90. Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 50.

The Hebrew Scriptures show that when the LORD came to rescue his people he came in a storm. Psalm 18 is one of the oldest storm theophany texts. . . . When 'David' was in danger he called on the LORD to help him.

"From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears.
Then the earth reeled and rocked;
the foundations also of the mountains
trembled
and quaked because he was angry . . .
Out of the brightness before him
there broke through his clouds
hailstones and coals of fire.
The LORD also thundered in the heavens,
and the Most High uttered his voice,
hailstones and coals of fire.
And he sent out his arrows and scattered
them;
he flashed forth lightnings, and routed them"
(Psalm 18:6–7, 12–14)

All the phenomena are here: thunder, lightning, voices, earthquake and hail. Psalm 77:16–21 described the Exodus in a similar way: thunder, whirlwind, lightning and earthquake.⁹¹

With respect to the shepherd image, we should also mention John 10:16:

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: Them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

This passage opens up the possibility that the role that Jesus declared for himself could be fulfilled in a way that is consistent with his prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem. The closer we look at the expectations surrounding the notion of Jehovah as the Shepherd of Israel, a warrior in connection with the ritual dramatizations of this role in the autumn festivals and specifically,

the Day of the Lord, the more remarkably apt the 3 Nephi account becomes.

The Shepherd and the Sheep of Another Fold

The very things that some readers of the Book of Mormon find troubling in 3 Nephi 8–10 are exactly the events that were expected of the Shepherd, the Holy One of Israel, the Servant Lamb, the Melchizedek high priest. These include not only the terrifying scenes of destruction, but the way that during the darkness that succeeds the destruction, the survivors hear the voice of the Lord, taking full responsibility for the violent upheavals:

And it came to pass that there was a voice heard among all the inhabitants of the earth, upon all the face of this land, crying: Wo, wo, wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth **except they shall repent**; for the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice, because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people; and it is because of their iniquity and abominations that they are fallen! Behold, that great city Zarahemla have I burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof. And behold, that great city Moroni have I caused to be sunk in the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof to be drowned. And behold, that great city Moronihah have I covered with earth, and the inhabitants thereof, to hide their iniquities and their abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come any more unto me against them. And behold, the city of Gilgal have I caused to be sunk, and the inhabitants thereof to be buried up in the depths of the earth; Yea, and the city of Onihah and the inhabitants thereof, and the city of Mocom and the inhabitants thereof, and the city of Jerusalem and the inhabitants thereof; and waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof, to hide their

91. Ibid., 276.

wickedness and abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come up any more unto me against them.⁹²

In discussing the symbolism of the Old World festivals, Barker writes:

The destruction was part of the creation, or rather the preliminary to the recreation. This was the most ancient pattern of the autumn festivals, where the judgement enacted by Yahweh/the King preceded the renewal of the earth with the autumn rains. Thus the Memra, the creating presence of Yahweh, was revealed in destruction wrought by the avenging angel, as well as in creation.⁹³

Some years ago, my understanding of 3 Nephi 8–10 changed when I saw the ancient festival pattern underlying the events. I had long wondered why the Lord would address the survivors of the destruction the way he did. For several years I kept that question on the mental back burner I use for such issues. Then after having had my paradigm shifted by John Welch's illumination of the temple context of 3 Nephi 11–28,⁹⁴ I saw the possibility for a ritual context and mythic significance in the events in 3 Nephi 8–10. As a consequence I saw apt parallels between observations by Mircea Eliade in his classic work, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, on the Year Rite, and passages in 3 Nephi.⁹⁵

The Rites of the New Year

The destructions described in 3 Nephi become especially striking, not just as perils,

but as potent symbols when considered against the pattern of the New Year Temple rites current throughout the ancient world. Mormon tells us that this all happens “in the ending of the thirty and fourth year.” Eliade informs us that “. . . in the expectation of the New Year there is a repetition of the mythical moment of passage from chaos to cosmos.”⁹⁶

In my review, I then cited the following passages from Eliade and from 3 Nephi:

Regression to Chaos

The first act of the ceremony . . . marks a regression into the mythical period before the Creation; all forms are supposed to be confounded in the marine abyss of the beginning, . . . overturning of the entire social order. . . . Every feature suggests universal confusion, the abolition of order and hierarchy, “orgy,” chaos. We witness, one might say, a “deluge” that annihilates all humanity in order to prepare the way for a new and regenerated human species.⁹⁷

There arose a great storm . . . also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder. . . . The city of Moroni did sink into the depths of the sea.⁹⁸

The Sacred Combat

The ritual combats between two groups of actors reactualize the cosmogonic moment of the fight between the god and the primordial dragon . . . for the combat . . . presupposes the

92. 3 Nephi 9:1–7.

93. Barker, *The Great Angel*, 149.

94. John W. Welch, *Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple and the Sermon on the Mount* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999).

95. The following quotes are excerpted from a longer comparison by Kevin Christensen, review of Dan Vogel, *Indian Origins and the Book of Mormon*, 248–53.

96. Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 54.

97. *Ibid.*, 57.

98. 3 Nephi 8:5–6, 9.

reactualization of primordial chaos, while the victory . . . can only signify . . . the Creation.⁹⁹

That great city Zarahemla have I burned. . . .
That great city Moroni have I caused to be sunk in the depths of the sea. . . . And many great destructions have I caused to come upon this land, and upon this people, because of their wickedness and abominations.¹⁰⁰

I continued by saying:

The ritual/mythic context shows that by speaking in this way, the Lord may be ritually casting the destroyed cities in the role of the dragon, the leviathan, the representation of chaos which he must defeat in order to bring forth a new creation. 3 Nephi agrees with Barker's picture in that the destruction is judgment and the vengeance of the Lord as well as a preliminary to a new creation.

I quoted the following passages, again from Eliade and 3 Nephi, to continue the comparison:

The Symbolism of Light Coming into Darkness

Renewal of the world through rekindling of the fire, . . . a renewal that is equivalent to a new creation. . . . It is at this period that fires are extinguished and rekindled; and finally, this is the moment of initiations, one of whose essential elements is precisely this extinction and rekindling of fire.¹⁰¹

I am the light and the life of the world. . . .
The light of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.¹⁰²

Coronation

This triumph was followed by the enthronement of Yahweh as king and the repetition of the cosmogonic act.¹⁰³

They did cry out with one accord, saying: Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him.¹⁰⁴

The comparisons fit well with Barker's picture. After the destruction the voice of the Lord declares "I am the light and life of the world," evoking the image in Genesis of light coming into darkness. It is a new creation, where Jesus expressly declares that "Old things are done away, and all things have become new."¹⁰⁵

In an essay in the *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, Richard Rust offered some convergent perspectives about the meaningful combination of high priest and creation imagery used in the 3 Nephi 10 passages on the destruction:

For example, faith in Jesus Christ the Creator, the Son of God, is shown in the contrast of light and dark and in reference to the four major elements of earth, air, fire, and water. These are brought together in the section of the Book of Mormon that prefigures the Second Coming of Christ. The chaos of things splitting apart and intense darkness—the opposite of creation—is associated with the death of the creator. Cities are sunk in the sea, Zarahemla is burned, and Moronihah is covered with earth. We are told:

"It was the more righteous part of the people who were saved. . . . And they were spared and

99. Eliade, *Cosmos and History*, 69, 60.

100. 3 Nephi 9:3–4, 12.

101. Eliade, *Cosmos and History*, 67.

102. 3 Nephi 9:18; 13:22–23.

103. Eliade, *Cosmos and History*, 60.

104. 3 Nephi 11:16–17.

105. 3 Nephi 12:47.

were not sunk and buried up in the earth; and they were not drowned in the depths of the sea; and they were not burned by fire, neither were they fallen upon and crushed to death; and they were not carried away in the whirlwind; neither were they overpowered by the vapor of smoke and of darkness.” (3 Nephi 10:12–13)

Those elements that had been destructive before now bring great uplifting and salvation at the coming of “the Son of God, the Father of heaven and of earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning” (Helaman 14:12). Water is represented by baptism by immersion, air and fire by the Holy Ghost, and earth by people being instructed to build on the solidity of Christ’s rock.

The Savior’s coming to the Nephites out of darkness and great destruction is a miracle of light, establishing order where previously there had been chaos: After the earth “did cleave together again, that it stood” (3 Nephi 10:10), a Man descends out of heaven “clothed in a white robe” (3 Nephi 11:8) and declares, “I am the light and the life of the world” (3 Nephi 11:11).¹⁰⁶

Rust emphasizes the motifs of earth, fire, water, and air as symbols of the cosmos, and of the creation and destruction. Recall that in ancient Israel, the high priest wore the sacred name on his head to show that he represented Jehovah.¹⁰⁷ Initially, the high priest passes from behind the veil dressed in linen clothing that was dyed in four colors to represent the four elements and signify his visible

incarnation.¹⁰⁸ The veil through which the high priest passed to enter into the holy of holies to perform the atonement sacrifice also represents the four elements of the creation, this physical world. Discussing Philo’s commentaries on the role of the high priest, Barker explains that

when he went through the veil he divested himself of the multicoloured garb of the material world and put on the glorious robe of the angels, of which he was the chief. “To his Logos, his archangel, the Father of all has given the special prerogative to stand on the border and separate the creature from the creator. This same Logos both pleads with the immortal as suppliant for afflicted mortality and acts as ambassador of the ruler to the subject.”¹⁰⁹

Jesus’ prayers in 3 Nephi demonstrate his role as supplicant:

And now Father, I pray unto thee for them, and also for all those who shall believe on their words, that they may believe in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one.¹¹⁰

Barker writes that “when certain people were granted access to the throne, they were transformed into heavenly beings and given a garment of light and eternal life. The transfigured Jesus was one such: ‘His face shone like the sun and his garments became white as light’ (Matthew 17:2).”¹¹¹ She continues: “The implication of this is that the transforming effect of the glory is now available to all; those who have seen the glory have been changed from this life to the life of heaven. They

106. Richard Dilworth Rust, “The Book of Mormon, Designed for Our Day: Annual FARMS Lecture 27 February 1990,” *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 2 (1990): 14–15.

107. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven*, 117.

108. Barker, *The Risen Lord*, 64, and *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 39.

109. Barker, *The Gate of Heaven*, 116.

110. 3 Nephi 19:23.

111. Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 66.

112. *Ibid.*, 69.

have become angels, or, in the language of the visionaries, they have become sons of God.”¹¹²

And it came to pass that Jesus blessed them as they did pray unto him; and his countenance did smile upon them, and the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold they were as white as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus; and behold the whiteness thereof did exceed all the whiteness, yea, even there could be nothing upon earth so white as the whiteness thereof.¹¹³

Everything that occurs in 3 Nephi 8–28 fits perfectly with the Messianic expectations and high priestly roles that Barker describes. And, therefore, the Book of Mormon resolves the tension of unfilled expectation that underlies Barker's discussion. For believers of the Book of Mormon, the Day of the Lord did occur according to prophecy among the sheep of another fold. That event in the Book of Mormon prefigures the Parousia yet to come.

113. 3 Nephi 19:25.

OPEN QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS REGARDING ISAIAH IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

Much in Barker's work contradicts the assumptions and claims of various critical scholars regarding the nature of preexilic Judaism and consequently undermines their perception of conflicts with the picture in the Book of Mormon. If Barker is correct, how did a youthful, unlettered, Joseph Smith manage to produce so much the same picture?

Certain of Barker's interpretations clash with the usual Latter-day Saint readings to be sure, most notably her acceptance on the dating of Isaiah chapters 40 to 55 to a Second Isaiah writing during the Babylonian exile. She devotes individual chapters in *The Older Testament* to her readings of Isaiah based on each of these divisions. This is not unusual. Most biblical scholars see the authorship

of the Book of Isaiah deriving from two or three sources. According to this loose but respectable consensus, an original Isaiah wrote in Jerusalem during the reign of King Hezekiah (chapters 2–39), a later prophet wrote during the exile in Babylon (chapters 40–55), and, according to some, including Barker, a third prophet wrote after the return from exile (chapters 56–66). (Chapter 1 was added later as a summary.) The scholarly dating of Isaiah 40–55 to the exile is based on such things as the assumption that there is no real prophecy, the name of the Persian king Cyrus appearing in chapter 45, and themes in the text that seem to point to concerns and situations of the exile.¹ That the Book of Mormon contains quotations of Isaiah 2–14 and a quotation and paraphrase of Isaiah

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1. And, as shown in note 132, the title "Lord of Hosts" is common in Isaiah 1–39 and rare in Isaiah 40–66. There may be contextual reasons for this difference in use, such as the association of this title with judgment. For a general summary of the arguments for the multiple authorship of Isaiah, see John L. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 20 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1968), xv–xxiii.
 2. See John Gee, "Choose the Things That Please Me': The Selection of the Isaiah Sections in the Book of Mormon," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 67–91, John W. Welch, "Authorship of the Book of Isaiah," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 423–43.

28–29 poses no difficulties for these theories, but it also contains Isaiah 48–51, part of 52, all of 53–54, and verses or allusions from 40 and 43.² The Book of Mormon presumes that these passages (with the possible exception of Isaiah 54) were composed by Isaiah of Jerusalem and recorded on the brass plates that Nephi obtained from Laban.

A number of relevant studies on the so-called “Isaiah Problem” in the Book of Mormon often anticipate points of tension with Barker’s readings.³ In *Since Cumorah*, Nibley points out some ways that we can reconcile the Isaiah quotations with multiple authorship theories.⁴ He notes that the Book of Mormon does not quote any passages ascribed to the Third Isaiah (chapters 56–66), nor does it quote Isaiah 1, a chapter that many scholars think was written as a late summary of the book. While Welch observes that most Mormon commentaries simply take Isaiah at face value and attribute greater authority to the Book of Mormon than to the non-Mormon Isaiah scholars,⁵ he also points to Avraham Gileadi⁶ and Victor Ludlow⁷ as

Latter-day Saint scholars who have made some potent arguments for the unity of Isaiah.⁸

We are not necessarily stuck in an “all-or-nothing” situation here, having to choose between Barker’s reading of authorship and concerns and the Book of Mormon’s attribution to preexilic authorship. The numerous points of interest in the big picture are sufficiently promising that I believe we can tolerate a degree of unresolved tension. Furthermore, even this apparent point of conflict with Barker’s perspective has tantalizing aspects. I have mentioned her key claim that the idea of strict monotheism was first asserted during the Babylonian exile by the Second Isaiah. However the Isaiah authorship and text transmission issue may eventually be resolved, most of the specific Isaiah passages and chapters that Barker cites to demonstrate the strict monotheism of the Second Isaiah do not appear in the Book of Mormon.

Barker says, “the prophecies of the Second Isaiah were, I believe, an interpretation of the ancient cult myth, and it was the experience of the

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3. Sidney B. Sperry, “The ‘Isaiah Problem’ in the Book of Mormon,” reprinted in *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4/1 (spring 1995): 129–52.
 4. Nibley, *Since Cumorah*, 113–15, 121–34.
 5. Welch, “Authorship of the Book of Isaiah,” 423–24.
 6. Avraham Gileadi, *The Apocalyptic Book of Isaiah* (Provo, Utah: Hebraeus, 1982), and *The Literary Message of Isaiah* (New York: Hebraeus, 1994). Note that regarding the Pentateuch, Barker says, “the complex patterns in the Pentateuch, both in small units and in the extended compositions, are now recognized as evidence of a literary artistry far beyond anything that can be called ‘compilation.’ The scissors and paste methods of the earlier hypotheses are now seen to be unrealistic. The Pentateuch as we now have it is probably the product of one mind, that of a genius” (*The Great Angel*, 23). That mind would use existing sources and reflect a particular point of view. Gileadi’s arguments for the unity of Isaiah are similar, based on his identification of complex patterns in small units and extended compositions. One wonders what Barker might make of them. We should note that the book of Mosiah demonstrates complex overlapping literary structures overall (e.g., the chiasmic patterns running over the entire book [see John W. Welch, “Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon,” *BYU Studies* 10/1 (1969): 69–84], chiasmic patterns running through King Benjamin’s discourse, and chiasmic passages within the discourse [see Welch, “Parallelism and Chiasmus in Benjamin’s Speech,” in *King Benjamin’s Speech: “That Ye May Learn Wisdom,”* ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 315–410]), and the evident use of multiple sources within.
 7. Victor L. Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982).
 8. See Welch, “Authorship of the Book of Isaiah.”

exile which prompted the reinterpretation in terms of actual historical events.”⁹ Barker’s line of interpretation is fresh and fascinating:

The message of the prophet was that the divine word, as depicted in the myths and rituals of the old cult, had been fulfilled in history. The First Isaiah had interpreted the events of his own time in terms of that myth; the Second Isaiah completed this interpretation by showing that the lesser deities, the sons of the gods and all that they represented, really had been defeated and judged. They had ceased to exist . . .

The final defeat and destruction of the old gods, however, left several aspects of the original scheme adrift. The defeated beings had formerly borne the burden of the origin of evil, a necessary function in any theological scheme; they had been the opposing forces in the struggle to establish order in creation.¹⁰

Barker sees a “distinct pattern of association” running through verses in Isaiah 41 through 48:

[Isaiah] 41:21 introduces the former things.

[Isaiah] 42:8–9 says the former things have happened.

43:9ff challenges other nations to demonstrate their power by showing the former things and bringing their *witnesses*. . . . The powerlessness of these witnesses is part of a complex declaration of monotheism.

44:6–8 and 45:20–1 have the theme of the former things, but not the actual phrase. Both emphasize that power to know the future is proof of divinity.

46:8–10 demands that transgressors remember the former things.

48:3–5 says the former things were declared by Yahweh long ago, and have happened.

The climax of two passages (Isaiah 43:13; 46:9), and the emphasis elsewhere at Isaiah 40:18 and 45:14, shows that the other great shift which formed the theology of the Second Isaiah was that Yahweh the Holy One of Israel was also El. Israel was therefore no longer at the mercy of contending angelic forces, of which her Yahweh was but one. If Yahweh was El, the others were nothing.

In contrast to these passages, we find one other, Isaiah 43:16–19, which follows upon the court scene where the gods are declared to be nothing. Here, and only here, the prophet exhorts to forget the former things, and a whole new understanding of Yahweh is outlined.¹¹

For me, a most intriguing aspect of Barker’s line of argument here is that only one of these passages, from Isaiah 48 about fulfillment of prophecy, appears in the Book of Mormon.¹² None of the rest of the argument appears, and that passage by itself does not sustain it. Therefore, the possibility remains that these passages, which are key to Barker’s argument, could have been composed, edited, or reinterpreted after Lehi’s departure from Jerusalem. That said, I should point out that a few other Isaiah passages that she discusses to suggest exilic editing in Isaiah do appear in the Book of Mormon. For example, in *The Great Angel*, she cites as exilic a passage from Isaiah 51:13, which we have as 2 Nephi 8:13. She sees this passage as an example of a fusion/transformation of an ancient El title as the progenitor of the earth with Yahweh taking the creative role and becoming a maker rather than a progenitor: “Yahweh your

9. Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1987), 162.

10. *Ibid.* Compare and contrast 2 Nephi 2 on the need for “opposition in all things.”

11. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 165–66.

12. 1 Nephi 20.

maker, who stretched out *the heavens* and laid the foundations of *the earth*.' (Isaiah 51:13)."¹³ Yet, in this case, I think there is no real cause for concern. In Latter-day Saint theology, Yahweh is the creator, rather than the progenitor. Or perhaps this could be an instance where the translation is "sufficient to suit my purposes as it stands."¹⁴

Another example of a Book of Mormon Isaiah quotation that Barker sees as exilic appears when she asks "how does [Second Isaiah's] Abraham (Isaiah 51:2), who symbolizes the exiles, relate to the Abraham of Genesis who carries the royal promises, and the patriarch who does not recognize the indigenous Yahweh worshippers (Isaiah 63:16)?"¹⁵ Isaiah 51:2 is part of the Isaiah quotation in 2 Nephi 8, which has an interesting context. In *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, John Thompson has an article called "Isaiah 50–51, the Israelite Autumn Festivals, and the Covenant Speech of Jacob in 2 Nephi 6–10." He writes that "from the structure and themes of 2 Nephi 6–10, one may conclude that Jacob's speech was given in connection with a covenant-renewal celebration that was most likely performed as part of the traditional Israelite autumn festivals required by the law of Moses."¹⁶

Recent studies like Thompson's make it plain that it is not just a matter of Isaiah scholarship

raising issues for the Book of Mormon, but that the Book of Mormon should be recognized as raising issues for Isaiah scholarship. Remember that Barker cites authorities that believe that these Isaiah passages were based on the liturgy of a pre-exilic festival, and here we find that the Book of Mormon quotes them in that context. Why should that be so if the passages were entirely exilic?

The story of Abinadi in Mosiah 11–17 contains a quotation of Isaiah 53 and a discourse that shows an understanding of Isaiah 52.¹⁷ Of this passage, a trio of researchers concluded, "no other day on the Israelite calendar fits the message, words, and experience of the Prophet Abinadi more precisely than does the ancient Israelite Festival of Pentecost."¹⁸

During the postresurrection ministry in 3 Nephi, Jesus quotes Isaiah 54 about his role as the bridegroom and Israel as the forgiven bride. Welch points out that since Jesus was there to quote these passages, the chapter might not have been on the brass plates that Nephi obtained from Laban in Jerusalem.¹⁹

The quotation of Isaiah 48 and 49 in 1 Nephi 20 and 21 seems to resonate deeply with the experience of Nephi in the Arabian desert²⁰ and is also apt because "no chapters in all of scripture teach this faith and hope in Israel's future redemption

13. Margaret Barker, *The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God* (London: SPCK, 1992), 19. Compare 2 Nephi 8:13.

14. Doctrine and Covenants 128:18.

15. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 170.

16. John S. Thompson, "Isaiah 50–51, the Israelite Autumn Festivals, and the Covenant Speech of Jacob in 2 Nephi 6–10," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 143.

17. See John W. Welch, "Isaiah 53, Mosiah 14, and the Book of Mormon," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 295–97.

18. John W. Welch, Gordon C. Thomasson, and Robert F. Smith, "Abinadi and Pentecost," in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 138.

19. See also Cynthia L. Hallen, "The Lord's Covenant of Kindness: Isaiah 54 and 3 Nephi 22," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998).

20. S. Kent Brown, "What is Isaiah Doing in 1 Nephi?" in *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, 1998), 9–27. Compare Barker's discussion of Isaiah 49 in *The Revelation of Jesus Christ:*

better than Isaiah 48 and 49. Similarly, no chapters more forcefully address Israel's rebellious hypocrites . . . than do Isaiah 48 and 49."²¹

Mormon scholarship has shown that the Isaiah quotations in the Book of Mormon are not mere "filler" but have a meaningful place and purpose in the text. Critics to date have passed on explaining why this should be so, in favor of the much more manageable task of asserting a simple dependence of the Book of Mormon Isaiah quotations on the King James Bible and to contrast the Book of Mormon with the multiple Isaiah authorship hypothesis. The Book of Mormon, however, insists that different versions of scriptural books existed²² and presumes that existing books have been edited. And what exactly are the

parameters of an inspired translation, given in Joseph Smith's language and weakness, according to his understanding?²³ No one knows. If the Isaiah issue cannot be said to be decisively resolved, there is, as Thomas Kuhn observes, something to be said for "tolerating crisis." He comments that "like artists, creative scientists [and I presume to add, scholars and laypersons] must occasionally be able to live in a world out of joint." Kuhn describes this situation as an "essential tension."²⁴ Despite the current irresolution of the Isaiah situation, the Book of Mormon's use of Isaiah has been tantalizingly fruitful, and remains, in my view, very promising. Personally, I think Barker's overall views can be reconciled with the Book of Mormon.

Which God Gave to Him to Show to His Servants What Must Soon Take Place (Revelation 1.1) (Edinburgh: Clark, 2000), 164.

21. Andrew C. Skinner, "Nephi's Lessons to His People: The Messiah, the Land, and Isaiah 48–49 in 1 Nephi 19–22," in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 119.
22. 1 Nephi 13:23, 25–29.
23. See Doctrine and Covenants 1:24–29.
24. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1970), 79.

CONCLUSION: PARADIGMS REGAINED

A paradigm is a model that is defined by “standard examples of scientific work that embody a set of conceptual, methodological, and metaphysical assumptions.”¹ As Kuhn shows, a paradigm establishes by *example*, the methods, problem field, and standards of solution for a research field.² A religious paradigm is established by means of a set of sacred narratives. Our sacred narratives embody a set of conceptual and metaphysical assumptions and demonstrate a set of methods, a problem field, and standards of solution for the problem of life.

For example, Joseph Smith’s testimony is paradigmatic for Mormon believers. Mormons agree with his description of the problem field regarding the inadequacy of settling religious questions by appealing to the Bible alone; they individually follow his example of study, pondering, and

prayer; and they use the same standards of solution in building their lives on the foundation of personal study and individual testimony.

A few years ago I wrote a long article called “Paradigms Crossed” in which I showed how Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* illuminates the structure of the debates about the Book of Mormon.³ Critics and defenders of the book quite obviously have different methods, problem fields, and standards of solution. We work in different paradigms.

In paradigm debates, the key questions are not those which ask “is the paradigm true?” but “which paradigm is better? Which problems are more significant to have solved? Which paradigm should we adopt in approaching the problems that we have not yet solved?” There can be no asking which is better without a comparison.

1. Ian Barbour, *Myths, Models and Paradigms* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), 8.

2. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1970), 10.

3. Kevin Christensen, “Paradigms Crossed,” review of *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe, *FARMS Review of Books* 7/2 (1995): 144–218.

Simply observing that an opponent has made assumptions that conflict with yours is not enough.

The proponents of competing paradigms are always at least slightly at cross-purposes. Neither side will grant all the non-empirical assumptions that the other needs to make its case.⁴

Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.⁵

We need, at times, to be willing to risk our assumptions. Risking them does not mean uncritical capitulation whenever someone points and mocks.

If a paradigm is ever to triumph it must gain some first supporters, men [and women] who will develop it to the point where hardheaded arguments can be produced and multiplied.⁶

All paradigms leave unsolved problems, so it should not bother anyone that we have unsolved problems in Book of Mormon studies. Kuhn describes how scientists make comparisons and make a tentative faith decision based on values, rather than rules, which means that conclusions among individuals will differ. This is fine, since it distributes risks. The most significant values that Kuhn observes are accuracy of key predictions, comprehensiveness and coherence, simplicity and aesthetics, fruitfulness, and future promise. I have long been impressed that Alma 32 describes exactly that same process: we experiment on key issues, and find mind-expanding enlightenment.

We discover just how delicious the gospel can be, we learn things that we never would have seen had we not tried the experiments, and we taste through personal testimony the brightest of all future promises.

Speaking of her own “experiment” of comparing her views of exilic developments and the book of Job, Barker writes, “as this exploration progressed, I realized that in the Book of Job there is a degree of compatibility with my theory which seems inexplicable as coincidence.”⁷ What then, should we think of the unexpected and extensive compatibility of Barker’s thought with the Book of Mormon?

One thing that becomes more and more obvious to me year by year is that if I had adopted the paradigms of the critics of the Book of Mormon, I would never have seen the kinds of correspondence that have emerged in this paper. For example, Harold Bloom said of the Book of Mormon that “I cannot recommend that the book be read either fully or closely, because it scarcely sustains such reading.”⁸ The few things that he says about the Book of Mormon make it embarrassingly obvious that he has followed his own recommendation. The refusal to read closely guarantees his unimpressive harvest. Mark Thomas’ *Digging Into Cumorah* does attempt a close reading of the Book of Mormon and claims to be “setting aside the issue of authorship” and focusing on the “internal literary features of the text and how these forms address his [Joseph Smith’s] original nineteenth-century audience.”⁹ Yet it is painfully

4. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 148.

5. Matthew 9:17.

6. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 158.

7. Margaret Barker, *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1987), 261.

8. Harold Bloom, *The American Religion: The Emergence of the Post-Christian Nation* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 86. This casts an ironic light on his diatribe against biblically illiterate “Know-Nothings” on p. 222.

9. Mark D. Thomas, *Digging Into Cumorah: Reclaiming Book of Mormon Narratives* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2000), 2. Thomas is well intentioned and does make some notable observations. However, I still

transparent that Thomas' assumption of "an original nineteenth-century audience" is also an assumption about authorship that defines his "methods, problem field, and standards of solution." And as I interrupted my work on Barker last fall to prepare for a panel discussion on *Digging Into Cumorah*, I could not help but notice that had I been using Thomas' methods, nothing of what I have described in this paper could ever have emerged. Remember that Barker writes concerning the Bible that "it is folly to approach the Bible with a twentieth-century mind, completely unaware of the codes in which it was written. Such a reading of scripture . . . does nothing to build up the faith of the churches. Rather, it leads to a trivialisation of the scriptures and then confusion."¹⁰ Cannot the same be said of approaching the Book of Mormon with either a nineteenth- or twentieth-century mind? And if no one makes the test of reading in the ancient way, how can we ever know whether it is what it claims to be? The kind of "hardheaded arguments" that Kuhn describes can best be multiplied by those who attempt comparisons in the ancient contexts.

In conducting this survey, we should have at least glimpsed the scope of Margaret Barker's reading and her dedication over many years in order to recover the picture that she offers us. We should take a moment to consider how remarkable a thing it is that we have any comparison with the Book of Mormon to discuss at all. In 1829, Joseph Smith was an unlettered young man twenty-four years old, and he produced the translation of the Book of Mormon in sixty-five to

seventy-five days, dictating to scribes.¹¹ Emma Smith's memories are worth reflecting upon:

Joseph Smith . . . could neither write nor dictate a coherent and well-worded letter; let alone dictating a book like the Book of Mormon. And, though I was an active participant in the scenes that transpired, and was present during the translation of the plates, and had cognizance of things as they transpired, it is marvelous to me, "a marvel and a wonder," as much so as to any one else.¹²

Remember the quote from *The Older Testament* that set the agenda for Barker's work:

The life and work of Jesus were, and should be, interpreted in the light of something *other* than Jerusalem Judaism. This *other* had its roots in the conflicts of the sixth century B.C. when the traditions of the monarchy were divided as an inheritance amongst several heirs. It would have been lost but for the accidents of archaeological discovery and the evidence of pre-Christian texts preserved and transmitted *only by Christian hands*.¹³

The "other" is a rediscovered mythos, a paradigm regained. Barker's work reestablishes a lost mythos by exploring a wide range of lost and neglected texts and questions. Her work is exemplary. Based on Kuhn's criteria, the paradigm regained through Margaret Barker's efforts presents us with a set of key predictions that happen to relate directly to Mormon concerns. While there is a striking degree of overlap between her scholarship and the sort pioneered by Hugh Nibley and continued by FARMS, the most potent contribution that her scholarship adds to ours is

disagree with his methods and conclusions overall. Despite his citation of a Barker essay, it is clear that he did not see the significance of her work.

10. Margaret Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Temple Symbolism in the New Testament* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1995), 3.
11. See John W. Welch and Tim Rathbone, "The Translation of the Book of Mormon: Basic Historical Information" (FARMS, 1985).
12. "Last Testimony of Sister Emma," *The Saints' Herald*, 1 October 1879, 290.
13. Barker, *The Older Testament*, 6–7, emphasis in original.

the comprehensive big picture in which so many details fit. There are differences in the details at various points, but I trust that as more specialized scholars examine those differences that such issues can be resolved. There are more correspondences that I have not explored and questions I have not asked.¹⁴ Someone may wish to compare her picture of the “woman clothed with the sun” in Revelation 12 to the vision of Mary in 1 Nephi 11:13–36, particularly in light of Daniel Peterson’s work.¹⁵ Another might pursue the image of the “Servant” in Barker’s work with the role of the servant in the elaborate allegory of the olive tree in Jacob 5.¹⁶ Perhaps someone else will compare her chapter on “The Light” in *On Earth as It Is in Heaven* with Doctrine and Covenants 88:4–68. Yet another may wish to compare her picture of the “resurrected” in the early church, those who have experienced the “heavenly ascent” in this life, with Joseph Smith’s doctrine of having one’s “calling and election made sure.”¹⁷ I hope that someone may consider the significance of the Jubilee expectations during Jesus’ ministry and examine Alma 13 and 3 Nephi 8–29 for Jubilee themes. All I have done is to conduct a preliminary survey. Much more could be done. I hope more will be done. Yet, clearly, Barker’s overall

picture holds a simple beauty that elegantly accounts for much complexity. My comparisons to the Book of Mormon have been fruitful, and most importantly, I find them wonderfully promising. I believe Barker’s work may contribute to the fulfillment of a prophecy:

And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren. And after it had come forth unto them I beheld other books, which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the convincing of the Gentiles and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true. And the angel spake unto me, saying: These last records, which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb

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14. For instance, Margaret Barker, *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity* (London: SPCK, 1988), 68: “We often think of ‘the prophets’ as a particular group of people who spoke in the distant past, and then somehow ceased to exist.” Compare Mormon 9:7–9 and Doctrine and Covenants 1:17–18.
 15. Margaret Barker, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Which God Gave to Him to Show to His Servants What Must Soon Take Place (Revelation 1.1)* (Edinburgh: Clark, 2000), 200–211. Compare Daniel C. Peterson, “Nephi and His Asherah: A Note on 1 Nephi 11:8–23,” in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World: Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson*, ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998).
 16. Margaret Barker, “The Servant in the Book of Revelation,” *The Heythrop Journal* 36/4 (Oct. 1995): 493–511.
 17. Compare Barker, *On Earth as It Is in Heaven*, 61–72, with *The Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, ed. Joseph F. Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 150.
 18. Note that the prophecy is not just that books shall come forth, but that one of the consequences of their appearance is the establishment of the particular doctrinal point that is central to all of Barker’s work: the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father.

of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world;¹⁸ and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved. And they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; and the words of the Lamb shall be made known in the records of thy seed, as well as in the records of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; wherefore they

both shall be established in one; for there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth.¹⁹

I am deeply grateful to Margaret Barker for publishing the fruit of her labors. I expect to be feasting here for a long time. There is much to discover and discuss. Speaking on behalf of those of us who have discovered this remarkable body of work, I invite you to join us.

19. 1 Nephi 13:38–41.

Appendix A

PUBLISHED WORKS BY MARGARET BARKER

The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity. London: SPCK, 1987. (Out of print. Best to check a good university library.)

The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and Its Influence on Christianity. London: SPCK, 1988. (Out of print, but findable in libraries and sometimes via the web. I recommend searching <http://www.bookfinder.com> or the English Internet Book Shop at <http://www.bookshop.co.uk/>.)

The Gate of Heaven: The History and Symbolism of the Temple. London: SPCK, 1991. (Also out of print, but obtainable in university libraries or via the web.)

The Great Angel: A Study of Israel's Second God. London: SPCK, 1992 and Louisville: John Knox Press, 1992.

On Earth as It Is in Heaven: Temple Symbolism in the New Testament. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995.

The Risen Lord: The Jesus of History as the Christ of Faith. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996 and

Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1996.

The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Which God Gave to Him to Show to His Servants What Must Soon Take Place (Revelation 1.1). Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000.

"The Secret Tradition." *Journal of Higher Criticism* 2/1 (1995): 31–67. (Back issues are available at <http://www.depts.drew.edu/jhc/>.)

"The Servant in the Book of Revelation." *The Heythrop Journal* 36/4 (Oct 1995): 493–511. (The same basic material appears in *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*.)

"Atonement: The Rite of Healing." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 49/1 (1996): 1–20. (The web page is at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/~div054/sjt/>.)

"Beyond the Veil of the Temple: The High Priestly Origins of the Apocalypses." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 51/1 (1998): 1–21.

"The Time is Fulfilled: Jesus and Jubilee." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 53/1 (2000): 22–31.

"The Book of Enoch and Cosmic Sin." *The Ecologist* 30/1 (Jan/Feb 2000): 30–34. (This essay is based on ideas in *The Lost Prophet*.)

Appendix B

REVIEWS OF MARGARET BARKER'S BOOKS

The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity

Barton, John. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *New Blackfriars* 70 (June 1989): 301–2.

Campbell, J. G. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Journal of Jewish Studies* 43 (spring 1992): 143–45.

Chester, Andrew. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Journal of Theological Studies* 44 (April 1993): 214–16.

Coggins, Richard J. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Theology* 91 (September 1988): 427–28.

Collins, John J. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Theological Studies* 49 (June 1988): 335–36.

Davies, Philip R. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Expository Times* 99 (April 1988): 214.

Frizzell, Lawrence E. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 21 (summer 1991): 76–77.

Hall, Robert G. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Religious Studies Review* 15 (July 1989): 273.

Hanson, K. C. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Interpretation: A*

- Journal of Bible and Theology* 43 (April 1989): 196–97.
- Nickelsburg, George W. E. Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109 (summer 1990): 335–37.
- Porter, J. R. “Loyal to God and King.” Review of *The Older Testament: The Survival of Themes from the Ancient Royal Cult in Sectarian Judaism and Early Christianity*, by Margaret Barker. *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 April 1988, 350.
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