



# BOOK OF MORMON CENTRAL

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FOUNDATION FOR  
ANCIENT RESEARCH &  
MORMON STUDIES

# INSIGHTS

## AN ANCIENT WINDOW

"...by study and also by faith." D & C 88:119

### AN APPROACH TO THE BOOK OF MORMON: VOLUME 6 IN THE NIBLEY COLLECTED WORKS IS PUBLISHED

*An Approach to the Book of Mormon* was first published by the Council of the Twelve Apostles to be used as the course of study for the Melchizedek Priesthood quorums in 1957. The Foreword assured that "everyone who reads this manual will find new material in it," information "of vital importance" and "important vision." Joseph Fielding Smith stated, "It will appeal to every sincere student and should be studied by every member of the church."

Thus, it is with great pleasure that we announce the publication of the third edition of this book which has remained highly popular over the years. It is one of the best books ever written about the Book of Mormon.

In this book Nibley treats the Nephite record more broadly than in his other two volumes about the Book of Mormon, "in a world setting," reflecting conditions in Israel and around the eastern Mediterranean, especially at the time of Lehi. It also draws powerful moral lessons from the truths contained in the scripture. For these reasons, many consider this work to be Nibley's most relevant and poignant assessment of the Book of Mormon.

Intriguing portions of the book are titled "Lehi's World," "Lehi as a Representative Man," "The Doomed City," "Politics in Jerusalem," "Qumran and the Waters of Mormon," "A Strange Order of Battle," "Lehi the Poet: A Desert Idyll," "Ties Between the Old World and the New," "A Lost and a Fallen People," and "The Nature of Book of Mormon Society." Copious footnotes enrich the text, and as the Foreword to the first edition encouraged, "should not be neglected."

This book belongs on everyone's bookshelf. As Joseph Fielding Smith said, "It is to be hoped that all the brethren holding the Melchizedek Priesthood will...take a deep interest in these lessons."

See the attached Order Form for information about the F.A.R.M.S. Spring Book Sale. Order soon to take advantage of the best prices available on this and other volumes about the Book of Mormon.

### MASSIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY ON PRE-COLUMBIAN TRANSOCEANIC CONTACTS NOW AVAILABLE

A working edition of John Sorenson and Martin Raish's 900-page bibliography, *Transoceanic Culture Contacts Between the Old and New Worlds in Pre-Columbian Times: A Comprehensive Annotated Bibliography*, is now available. Funded by a F.A.R.M.S. grant, the work ultimately will include accurate bibliographical information on all serious published works on transoceanic cultural transmissions before 1492, each with an abstract of relevant contents.

This working version, in preparation for a later definitive version, contains nearly 6000 citations, of which about one-third already include abstracts. Copies have been sent to a score of non-LDS scholars around the world for improvements.

Topics range widely through both well-known and obscure literature. A dozen sources show pre-Columbian presence of human parasites which could not have arrived via the cold Bering Strait; a list of words used in eastern Polynesia is specifically paralleled in South America; details of the Mayan "nine lords of the night" have close Chinese and Hindu similarities. Critiques, both pro and con, are included, along with hundreds of references to early boats and sailing (Polynesian, Chinese, Viking, Ecuadorian, etc.), from which it is clear that several types of vessels capable of crossing oceans

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies is a nonprofit research and educational organization dedicated to the study of ancient scripture. Your tax-deductible contributions enable F.A.R.M.S. to sponsor and coordinate a wide range of research projects that enhance our understanding of these sacred writings.

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were available long ago. Further, the opinions, and biases of "experts" on all sides of the issue are documented, ranging from Harvard anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn's surprising closet diffusionism, to H.G. Spinden's bluster against voyages. Serious Book of Mormon studies are also abstracted.

A working edition is available now as F.A.R.M.S. Study Aid S&R-88; later this year the bibliography will also be issued on computer disc. Using Creative Index's Fast Find™ program, the 2-megabyte file can be searched for any desired data: by topic (e.g., what has been said about the sweet potato as evidence for transoceanic travel, or about Old World languages in America), by author, by publication date, etc. Eventually a hard-print edition is planned.

While the bibliography is not yet complete, already it provides scholars concerned with questions of transoceanic movements, including the voyages recorded in the Book of Mormon, an unprecedented trove of data and insights into a complex and controversial subject.

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## THE BOOK OF MORMON AS LITERATURE

**Three interpretive essays on the Book of Mormon from a literary point of view are now available.**

Bruce Jorgensen's literary analysis in "The Dark Way to the Tree: Typological Unity in the Book of Mormon" identifies a "structurally unified verbal whole" in the Nephite record. The key to grasping this unity, he suggests, is in Lehi's vision of the Tree of Life and the explication of it given to Nephi where we are presented a "figural interpretation" of Nephite history. Later historical events are seen as manifestations of "types" pointed out in the dream. Central is transformation: "from dark and barren waste by means of the Word to a world fruitful and filled with light." This transformation is repeated at both individual and group levels: Enos, dark himself in the wilderness, discovers light and salvation; younger Alma, an idolatrous rebel, is snatched from darkness to light; the three days of darkness and dismay at the time of the great destruction turns to comfort with sudden communication from "the light and the life of the world." The piece, first published in *Encyclia* (the Journal of the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters), together with a 1980 postscript in *The Literature of Belief* (BYU Religious Studies Center), is available as Reprint JOR-77.

"The Psalm of Nephi: A Lyric Reading," by Stephen P. Sondrup, first published in *BYU Studies*, takes a different approach from that of Jorgensen: he holds that literarily the Book of Mormon is best seen by looking at specific portions rather than trying to identify a generic whole. In this intensive treatment of 2 Nephi 4:16-35, Sondrup discusses the nature and extent of the poetic qualities the segment shows. He also points out some implications for interpretation of the lyricism it displays. Among them is that Nephi intended this text to be read as a poem, hence the most profound understanding of its meaning depends upon our reading it as an "inward striving for heightened reality." The article can be ordered as Reprint SON-81.

In "Beowulf and Nephi: A Literary View of the Book of Mormon," Robert E. Nichols, Jr., writing in 1969 in *Dialogue*, takes yet a third approach. He examines the characters in the Book of Mormon, their complexity and consistency. They are impressive individuals. Nephi, for example, is shown as a hero sharing a number of characteristics with the early English literary figure Beowulf. Even though the Nephite record has yet to be examined seriously as literature, it remains "a challenging critical prize," for future study, "perhaps the chief prize of the literature we call English."

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## AUDIO TAPES OF NIBLEY BOOK OF MORMON CLASS AVAILABLE

Those interested in an additional resource for study of the Book of Mormon in 1988 will be rewarded by the audio tapes of Dr. Hugh Nibley's upper division Book of Mormon class at BYU. Russell Peek and a team of recording technicians have captured on cassette tape more than 50 hours of lectures from fall semester 1987 and winter semester 1988, one hour of lecture per cassette.

These tapes are rough and unrehearsed in spots. The inevitable background noises, partially audible student questions, classroom business, and other interruptions are all here. But so is Nibley—at his spontaneous best, talking effusively and effulgently about the meaning, importance, and eternal truthfulness of the scripture.

For those who have never attended a Nibley course, perhaps these tapes will transmit some of that electric force that is generated in his classes, where potentially good minds rub against a great one. These tapes are available in two sets: Part I (fall semester) and Part II (winter semester).

## TWO MORE AUDIO TAPES AVAILABLE

All year, Russell Peek has been organizing the F.A.R.M.S. Hugh Nibley tape archive. Several hundred recordings of firesides, Sunday School lessons, and talks have been gathered. Many of these recordings have been transferred to archive quality master, thanks especially to Gordon H. Peck in Las Vegas and Michael K. Jensen in Provo. The tapes are now being cataloged. Copies will be made available in the future. Ready now are cassettes of "But What Kind of Work," a talk given to the Cannon-Hinckley Club in Salt Lake City, with introductions by Leonard Arrington and Bill Pope, and of "The Goods of First and Second Intent," an address presented to the Utah Retired Teachers Association in the Salt Palace, with the plight of modern education spawned by John Dewey. See the attached order form for details.

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## PUBLICATIONS REVIEW BOARD NOW OPERATIVE

The instituting of a formalized system of reviewing articles considered for possible F.A.R.M.S. publication was mentioned in the Fall 1987 Newsletter. The procedure operates under the aegis of the Evaluation Committee, whose members are Wilford Hess (BYU, microbiology), Douglas Phillips (BYU, classics), Harold Miller (BYU psychology), and Jay Todd (*The Ensign*). Committee chairman John Sorenson, the acting Evaluation Editor, is assisted by members of a new Publications Review Board, including Gerald Bradford (UC-Irvine, religious studies), John Clark (BYU-NWAF, anthropology), James Faulconer (BYU, philosophy), Stanley Kimball (So. Illin., history), Dan Peterson (BYU, Near Eastern languages), John Robertson (BYU, linguistics), Kent Robson (USU, philosophy), Richard Rust (NC, English), and John Tvedtnes (Salt Lake City, Semitics).

The purpose of the board is to help assure that items in the Papers and Reprints series meet full professional standards of peer review. The board will be aided by many other reviewers on a case-by-case basis.

Those who have written scholarly research papers involving the Book of Mormon which could be evaluated for distribution by the Foundation are invited to submit their work. Just send a final manuscript to the Publications Review Board at the F.A.R.M.S. office.

**BOOK REVIEW EDITOR NAMED**

We are pleased to announce that commencing with year 1988 F.A.R.M.S. will begin publishing an Annual Review of Book of Mormon Books. Dan Peterson, in the Department of Asian and Near Eastern Languages at BYU, has agreed to serve as editor of the series. Peterson is finishing his Ph.D. from U.C.L.A.'s Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, in Arabic and Persian, and has published numerous papers on a variety of issues.

Peterson hopes the reviews will inform

many readers of the strengths and weaknesses of books being published about the Book of Mormon. As more books are published, the need increases for candid assessment and constructive commentary. Researchers will be aided in their evaluation of current studies; general readers should find the review helpful in locating books for desired purposes.

One of the new editor's first tasks will be to prepare a statement of policies, procedures, and guidelines. Some books will be reviewed by a single appraiser; others will be approached by several people who

have differing perspectives and areas of expertise. Anyone interested in being asked to submit a review may contact Peterson at 4054 JKHB, BYU, Provo, UT 84602.

Over the years, a scattering of reviews of Book of Mormon books has appeared. An updated collection of them has been compiled which discusses such books as Hugh Nibley's *Since Cumorah*, Sidney Sperry's *Our Book of Mormon*, Ernest Taves' *Trouble Enough*, and B.H. Roberts' *Studies in the Book of Mormon*. The set can now be ordered on the form below.

**SPRING BOOK SPECIAL: Up to 35% Off**

Cat. No.	Book Titles	Qty.
N-1	Nibley, Hugh W., Collected Works, Vol. I: <i>Old Testament and Related Studies</i> (reg. \$15.95)	
N-2	Nibley, Hugh W., Collected Works, Vol. II: <i>Enoch the Prophet</i> (reg. \$15.95)	
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N-4	Nibley, Hugh W., Collected Works, Vol. IV: <i>Mormonism and Early Christianity</i> (reg. \$16.95)	
N-5	Nibley, Hugh W., Collected Works, Vol. V: <i>Lehi in the Desert</i> (reg. \$16.95)	
N-6	Nibley, Hugh W., Collected Works, Vol. VI: <i>An Approach to the Book of Mormon</i> (reg. \$17.95)	
SOR-85	Sorenson, John L., <i>An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon</i> (reg. \$16.95)	

**Total Books Price** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sale Prices:** 1 book = \$12.50, any 2 books = \$12.25 each, any 3 = \$12.00 each, any 4 = \$11.75 each, any 5 = \$11.50 each, any 6 = \$11.25 each, any 7 or more = \$11.00 each. Offer valid until July 15, 1988. Afterwards, all books return to regular price.

Cat. No.	New Titles	Qty.	Price	Total
JOR-77	Jorgensen, Bruce W., "The Dark Way to the Tree," ( <i>BYU Studies</i> ), 14 pp.		\$ .50	
N-TC1	Nibley, Hugh W., "Part I: Fall Semester Book of Mormon Class," 28 audio tapes.		\$69.95	
N-TC2	Nibley, Hugh W., "Part II: Winter Semester Book of Mormon Class," 28 audio tapes.		\$69.95	
N-T13	Nibley, Hugh W., "But What Kind of Work," audio tape.		\$3.50	
N-T14	Nibley, Hugh W., "The Goods of First and Second Intent," audio tape.		\$3.50	
N-V1	Nibley, Hugh W., "Leadership and Managers," 1983 BYU commencement speech on VHS video (allow 4 weeks for delivery).		\$19.00	
NIC-69	Nichols, Robert E., Jr., "Beowulf and Nephi," ( <i>Dialogue</i> ), 4 pp.		\$ .50	
SON-81	Sondrup, Steven P., "The Psalm of Nephi: A Lyric Reading," ( <i>Encyclical</i> ), 16 pp.		\$ .75	
STF-88	F.A.R.M.S. Staff, "Book of Mormon Book Reviews," 84 pp.		\$4.25	
S&R-88	Sorenson, J. & M. Raish, "Transoceanic Culture Contacts ...Bibliography," 900 pp.		\$20.00	

**Tax-Deductible Contributions:**

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## MEMBERSHIP DRIVE SETS GOAL AT 20,000

This year, the Foundation's directors have launched a drive to raise the F.A.R.M.S. membership list to 20,000 by December 31, 1988. To reach this goal, your help is needed. We urge you to fill in the blanks below and send us the names and addresses of people who might be interested in F.A.R.M.S.' work.

This Foundation exists primarily as a service organization, to make scriptural research available worldwide as inexpensively as possible. For example, items are offered at break-even prices, with no additional handling or shipping costs. A healthy membership list is essential in providing this service.

Currently, the Foundation's membership stands at 13,500. Members receive our catalogs and quarterly newsletters. Already, the 1988 membership drive has

seen great results. One introductory mailing to 12,000 people, that was funded entirely by Jared Brown at Living Scriptures, has produced a phenomenal response from 2,550 people. Another project directed by Les Campbell and F.A.R.M.S. volunteers has generated 3,000 new members, plus many more to whom introductory packets have been sent.

A special introductory offer is available to new members joining F.A.R.M.S. this year. Each new person added to the maillist will receive the next four newsletters free. Those who remain active will, at the end of the year, be added to the regular maillist. Last month, the *LDS Sentinel*, a local newspaper circulated in Arizona and Southern California, donated space to the Foundation for a column announcing this introductory offer. About a hundred replies were received from this publicity.

To handle the increased data entry necessitated by this membership drive, Lori Rogers has been hired to serve as our Maillist Coordinator. Lori comes to us with high clerical and computer qualifications and is a welcome addition to our office staff. If you would like to help Lori in your area, please drop her a note. As administrator of our membership drive, she will appreciate any help you can give her. Names of friends, relatives, Gospel Doctrine teachers, and early morning seminary teachers are particularly helpful.

## NIBLEY COMMENCEMENT SPEECH VIDEO

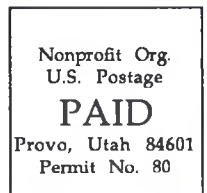
BYU Broadcast Services has announced that Hugh Nibley's 1983 BYU commencement speech "Leadership and Managers," is now available on VHS video. This provocative speech appeared in 1983 in *BYU Today*, *Dialogue*, and *BYU Fireside and Devotional Speeches*.

Please add the following individuals to the F.A.R.M.S. maillist:

Name _____	Name _____	Name _____
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