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The Newsletter of
the Foundation for
Ancient Research
& Mormon Studies

INSIGHTS

AN ANCIENT WINDOW

August 1996

"by study and also by faith" D&C 88:118

New Issue of Journal Has Something for Everyone

The latest issue of the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* is now available and promises to be a fascinating read. Featured articles deal with connections between Hebrew and Native American languages, the mingling of historical and literary narrative and the ways each strengthens the other, a literary analysis of a complex short passage in Alma, and an exploration of the extent to which Nephite ecclesiastical practices were based on the example of the resurrected Savior.

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Brian Darrel Stubbs, "Looking Over vs. Overlooking Native American Languages: Let's Void the Void."

Alan Goff, "Historical Narrative, Literary Narrative—Expelling Poetics from the Republic of History."

James T. Duke, "The Literary Structure and Doctrinal Significance of Alma 13:1–9."

John W. Welch, "From Presence to Practice: Jesus, the Sacrament Prayers, the Priesthood, and Church Discipline in 3 Nephi 18 and Moroni 2–6."

Philip A. Allred, "Alma's Use of *State* in the Book of Mormon: Evidence of Multiple Authorship."

John A. Tvedtnes, "The *Iliad* and the Book of Mormon."

Matthew Roper, "Eyewitness Descriptions of Mesoamerican Swords."

John A. Tvedtnes, "Knowledge of Christ to Come."

John Gee, "Two Notes on

Egyptian Script."

With treatments of language, literature, history, physical artifacts, doctrine, and practice, this Spring 1996 issue has something for virtually every interest.

Dead Sea Scroll Scholars Discuss Progress and New Technologies

In July members of the international team of scholars working on the Dead Sea Scrolls held a conference in Provo to discuss the progress of their research and to examine new technologies that may assist them. The conference was hosted by the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) and Brigham Young University. It was organized and chaired by Eugene Ulrich of the University of Notre Dame and Donald W. Parry of Brigham Young University.

During the three-day conference forty-six scroll scholars from throughout the United States, Europe, and the Near East brought each other up to date on their work on the scrolls. They also discussed the implications of their research for understanding Judaism, early Christianity, and Near Eastern history.

While in Provo the scholars also listened to presentations from researchers from BYU and elsewhere on technological innovations that could improve scroll scholarship: remote sensing technologies that may help locate undiscovered repositories of scrolls and give archaeologists other information without excavation; DNA fingerprinting of parchment fragments that may help in putting scrolls back together; and electronic reference libraries that will give translators instant access to all of the scrolls, so that they can compare the use of words in various contexts and improve their translations.

That the scroll scholars held their conference in Provo points to the growing contributions being made by FARMS and BYU to scroll scholarship. Next year, on the fiftieth anniversary of the discovery of the scrolls, these scholars will meet in Jerusalem.



The Foundation for
Ancient Research
& Mormon Studies

FARMS UPDATE

A Report on Research in Progress

Number 107

Emma and the Joseph Smith Translation

RECENTLY RESEARCHERS EXAMINING the original "New Translation" or Joseph Smith Translation (JST) manuscripts discovered evidence of a scribe whose work on the manuscripts had previously only been supposed.¹ Emma Smith, the Prophet's wife, recorded more than two pages of the JST document on a certain day during the first months of the translation. Although only a small percentage of the overall content, Emma's scribal contribution tangibly displays the realization of an earlier revelatory assignment given her by the Lord.

Three months after the publication of the Book of Mormon and the organization of the Church, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery began "studying the scriptures," that is, the Book of Mormon and the King James Version of the Bible, to restore many "plain and most precious parts of the gospel" taken from the Old and New Testaments since the meridian of time. Their labor commenced with the inspired preface to the books of Moses (Moses 1) and continued through the early chapters of Genesis.

Sometime during the next month, in July 1830, the Lord called Emma Smith an "elect lady" (D&C 25:3). In the same revelation, Emma was told that she would help her husband and "be unto him for a scribe, while

there is no one to be a scribe for him" (D&C 25:6).

Earlier in their marriage, during 1828–29, after Martin Harris was relieved of his scribal duties on the Book of Mormon and before the arrival of Oliver Cowdery, Emma wrote the Prophet's dictation from the Book of Mormon translation. Joseph affirmed her assistance as his scribe.² Unfortunately none of Emma's handwriting has been found in the surviving portions of the original manuscript.

The initial JST scribes, Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer, served until the Lord called them to other responsibilities. Oliver relinquished scribal duties by mid-October 1830 when he departed on the Lamanite Mission. John Whitmer replaced Oliver on 21 October. On 1 December 1830, Whitmer stopped writing and again the scribe changed. At this point, on the eleventh page of the earliest JST manuscript, Emma took the pen. She wrote more than two full pages, recording the material now published in Moses 6:19–52a (JST Genesis 6:17–53a), thus fulfilling the earlier charge given her by the Lord.

Robert J. Matthews and Scott H. Faulring made the first tentative identification of her handwriting on the manuscript in July 1995, while analyzing the JST manuscript's physical characteristics at the archives of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter Day Saints in Independence, Missouri. After returning from Missouri, Faulring compared the handwriting in the JST manuscript with known handwriting from Emma Smith. He worked with Richard Lloyd Anderson, a leading expert on Emma's personal writings, who provided handwriting samples.

"As I compared the Emma handwriting samples with the JST manuscript," Faulring says, "I noticed one, then two, then more than a dozen similarities in the writing characteristics and letter formations." To verify the discovery, Faulring reviewed his work with Dean C. Jessee, of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History, an authority on early Mormon handwriting. Jessee confirmed the comparisons and supports the finding.

"This new discovery shows that Emma's deep faith in Joseph's calling was based on personal knowledge of the Spirit and the methods of his prophetic work," Anderson observes.

NOTES

1. More than a decade ago Robert J. Matthews surmised that Emma "may have served as scribe for some of the New Translation, although identification is uncertain." See Matthews, "A Plainer Translation" (1985), 95.
2. Joseph Smith, "A History of the Life of Joseph Smith Jr.," in *Papers of Joseph Smith*, ed. Dean C. Jessee (1989), 1:10.

Based on research by Scott H. Faulring.

New FARMS publications

Additional FARMS Video Lectures Available on the Messages of Book of Mormon Prophets

Adding to the lecture series focusing on *The Prophets of the Book of Mormon and Their Messages*, videos, audiotapes, and transcripts are now available for lectures on Samuel the Lamanite and on the resurrected Christ.

Helaman 13–15

Stanley A. Johnson, associate professor of Ancient Scripture at Brigham Young University, offers a two-part lecture on Samuel the Lamanite's warnings and prophecies to the wicked Nephites.

The main purpose of prophets, seers, and revelators is to call people to repentance, teaches Johnson, and this was one of the main things Samuel did. In part one of his lecture, Johnson outlines the process of repentance, emphasizing the need to humble oneself and "be quiet inside" in order to listen to the promptings of the Spirit. He testifies that if we listen to the Spirit and follow the counsel given by the Lord's prophets, we will prosper in our tests of life.

The prophet Samuel's other purposes in speaking to the Nephites were to testify of Christ and to prophesy of his coming. In part two of his lecture on the prophet Samuel, Johnson explains that the prophets teach us to have faith in Christ's manner of living. By living simple principles, we can find the freedom only Christ offers.

The majority of the wicked Nephites chose to become angry and reject the Lamanite

prophet's warnings rather than to listen and follow his counsel; thus, the prophecies that the Nephites would be destroyed if they did not repent were fulfilled.

All the prophets' prophecies will be fulfilled. Their messages apply to us in the latter days as well, and we must also choose to accept or reject their inspired counsel.

3 Nephi 12–14

Robert L. Millet, dean of Religious Education at Brigham Young University, presents a three-part lecture on "The Doctrine of the Risen Christ." In the first lecture, Millet discusses the message of the law of witnesses contained in the Book of Mormon account of Christ's visit to the Nephites in the New World after his resurrection.

The account in 3 Nephi tells how Christ called twelve Nephite apostles to lead his church in the New World and then began to give essentially the same sermon he gave to his apostles in the Old World. Millet's first lecture covers 3 Nephi 12, including the Beatitudes dealing with meekness, peacemakers, and being a light unto the world.

Christ's message to the Nephites is that he has fulfilled the law of Moses and is now giving them a higher law. Millet's discussion of this call to a higher righteousness continues into the second lecture. Discussing the passages dealing with marriage and divorce laws, oath-taking, prayer and fasting,

servicing one master, and judging, Millet shows how Christ teaches a higher law to the more righteous of his people. Special emphasis is placed on having a firm foundation in Christ so one can judge righteously and keep an eye single to the glory of God. Millet ends this lecture with a discussion on the power of the Word of God in the scriptures, showing how Christ and other heavenly messengers quote scripture when they appear to mortal men.

Part three of these lectures on the resurrected Lord focuses on the gospel of Christ—what it is and how it is manifest in the teachings of the prophets and in Christ's church on earth. The scriptures tell us that the principles of the gospel, or the "good news" of Christ, are faith, repentance, baptism, receiving the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end—and all are part of the two-way covenant between us and God. But Millet also teaches that the gospel is truth, particularly all saving truths. Only the gospel draws men unto Christ and causes good works to abound.

Millet finishes this discussion of the Savior's ministry to the Nephites with a discussion of translated beings, the destiny of the house of Israel, and the role the Book of Mormon plays in accomplishing God's work and in fulfilling the prophecies concerning Israel.

New FARMS publication

Lectures Highlight Connections between Scrolls and Mormonism

Selections from the March conference entitled "LDS Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls" are now available for purchase on video and audiotape. The presentations teach about the ancient scrolls and how they contribute to LDS understanding of gospel teachings, the Bible, and other aspects of biblical life.

Videos and audiotapes are available for four of the presentations. In his presentation, entitled "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Book of Mormon," Stephen D. Ricks, professor of Hebrew and Semitic Languages at Brigham Young University, compares the Dead Sea Scroll people to the Book of Mormon peoples, pointing out similarities between the groups and their beliefs.

David Rolph Seely, assistant professor of Ancient Scripture at Brigham Young University, discusses beliefs and practices of the Qumran community that give us clues about life in a Jewish community of that time in "Praise, Prayer, and Worship in the Dead Sea Scrolls."

Donald W. Parry, assistant professor of Hebrew Language and Literature at Brigham Young University, speaks on "The Contribution of the Dead Sea Scrolls to Biblical Understanding." Parry points out corrections, spelling variations, changes in ink and writing surfaces, possible transmission errors, and other peculiarities introduced by record keepers.

"Is the 'Plan of Salvation' Attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls?" asks Dana M. Pike, assistant professor of Ancient Scripture at Brigham Young University. Although the phrase is not found in the scrolls, Pike believes that hints of the concept of salvation, or "corrupted echoes of true doctrine," can be detected that help us understand the thinking of the Qumran community and other Jewish communities of the day.

For more detailed descriptions of these lectures, see the article in the June 1996 issue of *Insights*. See the enclosed order form for information on obtaining these presentations.

Research update

Nibley Letters Wanted

FARMS is pleased to report that Boyd Petersen is collecting material for possible inclusion in future volumes of the *Collected Works of Hugh Nibley*. He is gathering and preparing Brother Nibley's correspondence and other personal writings, as well as biographical materials such as photographs, memorabilia, and personal reminiscences. If you happen to have in your possession any letters or biographical materials that might be useful for this project, please contact Peterson through the FARMS office or directly by e-mail at bpetersn@burgoyne.com.

INSIGHTS AN ANCIENT WINDOW

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The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) encourages and supports research about the Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ, and other ancient scriptures.

FARMS is a nonprofit educational foundation, independent of all other organizations. Its main research interests include ancient history, language, literature, culture, geography, politics, and law relevant to the scriptures. Although research on such subjects is of secondary importance when compared with the spiritual and eternal messages of the scriptures, solid research and academic perspectives alone can supply certain kinds of useful information, even if only tentatively, concerning many significant and interesting questions about the scriptures.

The Foundation works to make interim and final reports about this research available widely, promptly, and economically. As a service to teachers and students of the scriptures, research results are distributed in both scholarly and popular formats.

It is hoped that this information will help all interested people to "come unto Christ" (Jacob 1:7) and to understand and take more seriously these ancient witnesses of the atonement of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

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Opportunity to Tour Israel and Egypt with LDS Group

John W. Welch, past president of FARMS and a major contributor to its research and publications, will accompany a tour to Israel and Egypt departing Christmas day, 1996. This is not a FARMS tour, but FARMS materials will be used. This tour that will emphasize locations and history pertinent to the New Testament, Book of Mormon, and the Dead Sea Scrolls. It will include 9 days in Israel and an optional 3 days in Egypt. Cost will depend on the point of origin in the U.S., but will range from \$1850 to \$1960 for Israel only and from \$2400 to \$2500 to include the trip to Egypt. For more information, call the FARMS office. Space is limited.

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PMT-96s	Donald W. Parry, Jeanette W. Miller, and Sandra A. Thorne, eds., <i>A Guide to Publications on the Book of Mormon</i> , paperbound, FARMS		\$19.95	
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