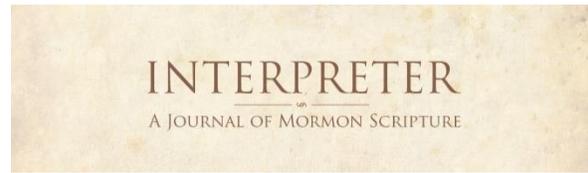




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“Arise from the Dust”: Insights from Dust-Related Themes in the Book of Mormon (Part 1: Tracks from the Book of Moses)

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Part 1: Tracks from the Book of Moses

Jeff Lindsay

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“ARISE FROM THE DUST”: INSIGHTS FROM DUST-RELATED THEMES IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

PART 1: TRACKS FROM THE BOOK OF MOSES

Jeff Lindsay

Abstract: In light of Noel Reynolds’ hypothesis that some material in the Book of Moses may have been present on the brass plates that Nephi used, one may wonder if Nephi or other authors might also have drawn upon the use of chains in the Book of Moses, particularly Satan’s “great chain [that] veiled ... the earth with darkness” (Moses 7:26) and the “chains of darkness” (Moses 7:57). Though the phrase “chains of darkness” is not used in the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 1:23, quoting Lehi, combines chains and obscurity, where obscurity can have the meaning of darkness. In fact, there may be a Hebraic wordplay behind Lehi’s words when he tells his wayward sons to “come forth out of obscurity and arise from the dust,” based on the similarity between the Hebrew words for “obscurity” and “dust.” The association between dust and chains and several other newly found linkages to Book of Moses material is enriched by a study of Walter Brueggemann on the covenant-related meanings of “rising from the dust” and “returning to the dust” in the Bible, a topic we explore in Part 2.¹ Then, after showing how dust-related themes in the Book of Mormon can enhance our understanding of several important passages, we build on that knowledge in Part 3 to “dust off” the most famous chiasmus in the Book of Mormon, where we will show that some apparent gaps and wordy regions in the complex chiastic structure of Alma 36 are more compact and meaningful than we may have realized. Both dust-related themes and themes from the Book of Moses assist in better

¹ Walter Brueggemann, “From Dust to Kingship,” *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 84/1 (1972): 1–18; available with first page only visible at <http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/zatw.1972.84.issue-1/zatw.1972.84.1.1/zatw.1972.84.1.1.xml>.

appreciating the richness of that masterpiece of Hebraic poetry. Overall, a small amount of exploration motivated by Reynolds' work may have led to several interesting finds that strengthen the case for Book of Moses content on the brass plates and deepen our appreciation of the use of ancient Near Eastern dust themes in the Book of Mormon, that majestic "voice from the dust."

Background: Dusting off a Hypothesis from Noel Reynolds

The Book of Mormon's use of dust as a theme strengthens its covenant-related message and highlights the role of the Redeemer. Christ the Redeemer created us from dust, came to earth in a tabernacle of dusty clay, and humbly wiped the dust from the feet of others before breaking the chains of sin and death to cleanse and liberate us. Through His Atonement, He offers power to come out of obscurity and rise from the dust, thereby sharing in the blessings of resurrection and eternal life, with our feet established on Mount Zion, the cosmic mountain, the Temple of the Lord. Such themes blend together in many ways to convey the covenant-based message of the "voice from the dust," the Book of Mormon.

Some tentative insights on this complex of themes began when a previously obscure verse in 2 Nephi caught my eye while exploring a hypothesis from Noel Reynolds about the relationship between the Book of Moses and the brass plates used by Nephi.² Reynolds suggests that the relationships in language and themes between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses can best be explained if at least some of the material in the Book of Moses were known to Nephi and his people, as if something similar to our Book of Moses were on the brass plates that Nephi took to the New World.

Reynolds argues that the relationship between the two texts is not just one of using a lot of the same terms and concepts in both, the way that would be natural if they had a common author. Rather, the relationship appears to be one-way: the Book of Mormon appears to rely upon content in the Book of Moses and not the other way around. Some incidents and passages are strongly enriched when we add knowledge from the

² Noel Reynolds, "The Brass Plates Version of Genesis," in John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks, eds., *By Study and Also by Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh W. Nibley on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday, 27 March 1990*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City and Provo, UT: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990), 2:136–173; <http://publications.maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=1129&index=6>.

Book of Moses, while there is no sign of the Book of Moses depending on information in the Book of Mormon. This is noteworthy because the Book of Moses was revealed to Joseph well after he completed the Book of Mormon. Book of Mormon translation was primarily done from April to June of 1829, while the Book of Moses was given by revelation between June and December of 1830.

We will review a few of the examples Reynolds discusses and then introduce several new finds that seem to be part of the pattern that Reynolds has identified. One of these appears to involve a Hebraic wordplay in Nephi’s writings that may not have been noted before. These new connections lead to several more tentative insights presented below. First, though, we must note some complexities with the Book of Moses text itself.

The Complex Documents of the Book of Moses

The Book of Moses passages discussed herein come from the current LDS printing of the Pearl of Great Price. The Book of Moses has a complex history with multiple documents involved, some of which had multiple corrections made at various times, as discussed by Kent P. Jackson in *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*.³ Jackson notes that Joseph Smith’s Genesis translation began on a manuscript known as Old Testament Manuscript 1 (OT1), in which the Book of Moses is found on the first twenty-one pages written by four different scribes from Joseph’s dictation. This was later copied by John Whitmer into a new document, now known as Old Testament Manuscript 2 (OT2), with many changes in wording, including many simple errors, introduced by Whitmer. Joseph would later come back to the previously dictated text of the Book of Moses and make further changes and corrections, working with OT2 rather than OT1. It is likely that the changes to OT2 were made by the fall of 1833.⁴ However, what we have today as the canonized Book of Moses is largely based on the 1867 Committee Manuscript (CM) prepared by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which employed both OT1 and OT2. However, its editor, Joseph Smith III, removed many of the corrections and additions made by Joseph Smith to OT1. “The consequence was that his editing reverted many

3 Kent P. Jackson, “History of the Book of Moses,” in *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2005), 1–52; <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/book-moses-and-joseph-smith-translation-manuscripts/history-book-moses>.

4 Ibid., section “Old Testament Manuscript 2.”

OT2 readings back to those found in OT1, thereby overruling much of his father’s work on the text,” especially in chapters 1 and 7.⁵ This issue in general does not appear to significantly affect the examples discussed in this paper. Relevant verses with noteworthy differences relative to OT2 will be noted below.

The Devil’s in the Details?

Reynolds introduces about twenty concepts or phrases in the Book of Moses that could be sources for Book of Mormon material, though some of them can also be found in the Bible. Reynolds fairly observes the cases of possible biblical dependence, which only partially weakens the argument.

One example involves the description of Satan in the Book of Moses. Reynolds explains how one sentence in the Book of Moses appears to have been used in a variety of ways throughout the Book of Mormon:

One sentence from Moses seems to have spawned a whole family of formulaic references in the Book of Mormon: “And he became Satan, yea, even *the devil, the father of all lies*, to deceive and to blind men, and to *lead them captive at his will*, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice” (Moses 4:4). This language is echoed precisely by both Lehi and Moroni, who, when mentioning the devil, add the stock qualification: “who is *the father of all lies*” (cf. 2 Nephi 2:18; Ether 8:25), while Jacob says the same thing in similar terms (2 Nephi 9:9). Incidentally, the descriptive term *devil*, which is used frequently to refer to Satan in both Moses and the Book of Mormon, does not occur at all in the Old Testament. New Testament occurrences do not reflect this context.

The Book of Mormon sometimes separates and sometimes combines the elements of this description of the devil from Moses and portrays Satan as one deliberately engaged in “*deceiving* the hearts of the people” and in “*blinding their eyes*” that he might “*lead them away*” (3 Nephi 2:2). Particularly striking is the repeated statement that the devil *will lead* those who do not hearken to the Lord’s voice “*captive at his will*” (Moses 4:4). In Alma we find that those who harden their hearts will receive “the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and

5 Ibid., section “The 1866–67 RLDS Committee Manuscript.”

then they are *taken captive by the devil*, and *led by his will down to destruction*" (Alma 12:11). Much later, Alma invokes the same phrasing to warn his son Corianton of the plight of the wicked who, "because of their own iniquity," are "*led captive by the will of the devil*" (Alma 40:13). In the passage discussed above, Lehi taught his son Jacob that men "are free to choose liberty and eternal life, . . . or to choose *captivity* and death, according to the *captivity and power of the devil*; for he seeketh that [all] men might be miserable" (2 Nephi 2:27).

A remarkable passage in the first part of the Book of Mormon pulls all these book of Moses themes about Satan together — to describe someone else. The implication is unmistakable when Laman characterizes his brother Nephi as one who *lies* and who *deceives our eyes*, thinking to *lead us away* for the purpose of making himself "*a king and a ruler over us*, that he may do with us *according to his will and pleasure*" (1 Nephi 16:38). Laman insinuates that Nephi, who chastises his wayward brothers, is himself like the devil. And resistance against him is not only righteous but required. This account has the added complexity that it is a speech of Laman, who is quoted here in a record written by the very brother he attacks. If we accept the possibility that this text is dependent on a passage in the ancient book of Moses, we then recognize a major new dimension of meaning, not only in Laman's speech but also in Nephi's decision to preserve the speech, thus showing his descendants and any other readers familiar with the Moses text the full nature of the confrontation between the brothers as well as the injustice of the attacks he suffered. The full irony is revealed when we reflect on the facts reported in Nephi's record and realize that Laman's false accusation against Nephi is an accurate self-description.⁶

Laman's complaint about Nephi becomes far more meaningful and more ironic when one realizes that he is referring to a specific and apparently well-known scriptural depiction of Satan not found in the Old Testament but found in the Book of Moses, as if that description were in the brass plates. In this instance, the relationship between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses illustrates an unexpected one-way nature.

6 Reynolds, "The Brass Plates Version of Genesis," 142.

The speech from Laman illustrates some of the reasons Reynolds gives for the one-way relationship between the two books:

[I]t is clearly Moses that provides the unity and coherence to a host of scattered Book of Mormon references. It is the story of creation and subsequent events that supplies meaning to Book of Mormon language connecting (1) the transgression, fall, and death; (2) explaining the origins of human agency; (3) describing the character and *modus operandi* of Satan; (4) explaining the origins and character of secret combinations and the works of darkness — to mention only a few of the most obvious examples. The Book of Mormon is the derivative document. It shows a number of different authors borrowing from a common source as suited their particular needs — Lehi, Nephi, Benjamin, and Alma all used it frequently, drawing on its context to give added meaning to their own writings.

Perhaps most significantly, we have at hand a control document against which to check this hypothesis. A few years after receiving Moses, Joseph Smith translated an Abrahamic text. In spite of the fact that this new document contained versions of some of the same chapters of Genesis that are paralleled in the book of Moses, and in spite of the fact that the Book of Mormon has a large number of direct references to the Abraham, the person, detailed textual comparison demonstrates that this second document does not feature any of the phrases and concepts that have been reported above linking Moses to the Book of Mormon textual tradition. Nor does the distinctive, non-Old Testament phraseology of the book of Abraham show up in the Book of Mormon. The logic that would lead skeptics to conclude that these common concepts and expressions provide evidence that Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon and the book of Moses runs aground on Abraham, as the skeptical hypothesis would seem to require a similar pattern there. But such a pattern is not even faintly detectable.

It is also impressive that most of the influence from the book of Moses in the Book of Mormon shows up early in the small plates and the writings of the first generation of Book of Mormon prophets — significantly, those who had custody

and long-term, firsthand access to the brass plates. Many of the later passages that use book of Moses terminology and concepts tend to repeat earlier Nephite adaptations of the original materials.⁷

Reynolds discusses many more parallels. However, based on further exploration, it appears that his case may be stronger than he realized. Even more terms and concepts may be relevant to his thesis, which we will now explore in laying the foundation for the dust-related themes to be treated more fully in Parts 2 and 3 of this work.

Table 1 lists the parallels identified by Reynolds, split between two groups. Group 1 contains parallels between the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon that are not found in the KJV Bible. Group 2 comprises parallels that also have potential KJV sources.

Table 2 lists proposed new parallels identified in the present study. They will be discussed in more detail below.

**Table 1. Summary of Reynolds’ Concepts
in the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon**

Group 1: Concepts not directly found together in the KJV Bible		
Concept	Book of Moses	Book of Mormon
transgression-fall, fall-death	Moses 6:59	2 Nephi 9:6
order-days-years-eternity	Moses 6:67	Alma 13:7
Lord-from all eternity-to	Moses 7:29	Mosiah 3:5; Mosiah 8:18
God-gave-man-agency	Moses 7:32	2 Nephi 2:16
Lord’s Spirit-withdraws-from-man	Moses 1:15	Alma 34:35; Helaman 4:24, 6:35, 13:8; Mosiah 2:36
children-whole-from foundation	Moses 6:54	Moroni 8:8, 12
only name-given-salvation*	Moses 6:52	Mosiah 3:17
devil-father-of all lies	Moses 4:4	2 Nephi 2:18; Ether 8:25; 2 Nephi 9:9
devil-lead-captive-his will	Moses 4:4	2 Nephi 2:27; Alma 12:11, 40:13;
devil-deceive-blind-lead	Moses 4:4	3 Nephi 2:2
lies-lead-well-deceive-eyes	Moses 4:4	1 Nephi 16:38
* This Group 2 item is listed here because it is linked to the preceding item in the text.		

⁷ Ibid., 146.

Group 2: Concepts that also have KJV connections		
Concept	Book of Moses	Book of Mormon
earth-groans; rocks-rend	Moses 7:56	1 Nephi 12:4, 19:12; 3 Nephi 10:9
plan of salvation	Moses 6:62	Jarom 1:2; Alma 24:14, 34:16, 42:5;
eternal life	Moses 1:39	2 Nephi 2:27,28, 10:23, 31:18,20; Jacob 6:11; Enos 1:3; Mosiah 5:15,23–25, 18:9,13, 26:20, 28:7; Alma 1:4, 5:28, 7:16, 11:40, 13:29, 22:15; Helaman 5:8; 3 Nephi 9:14, 15:9; Moroni 9:25
unclean-dwell-presence-God	Moses 6:57	1 Nephi 10:21, 15:34; Alma 7:21
call on-all men-to repent	Moses 6:23	2 Nephi 2:21; Alma 12:33; 3 Nephi 11:32; Moroni 7:31
nowise-inherit-kingdom of God	Moses 6:57	Mosiah 27:26; Alma 5:51, 9:12, 39:9; 3 Nephi 11:38
things-temporal-spiritual	Moses 6:63	1 Nephi 15:32, 22:3; 2 Nephi 9:11–12; Mosiah 2:41; Alma 7:23, 12:16, 37:43; Helaman 14:16
people-dwell-in righteousness	Moses 7:16	1 Nephi 22:26
mine Only Begotten Son	Moses 6:52	Jacob 4:5, 11; Alma 12:33
works of darkness	Moses 5:55	2 Nephi 25:2, 26:10,22, 9:9, 10:15; Alma 37:21,23, 45:12; Helaman 6:28,30, 8:4, 10:3; Mormon 8:27
secret combination(s)	Moses 5:51	2 Nephi 26:22; Alma 37:30,31; Helaman 2:8, 3:23, 6:38; 3 Nephi 4:29, 5:6, 7:6,9, 9:9; 4 Nephi 1:42; Mormon 8:27; Ether 8:18,19,22,24,27, 9:1, 11:15, 13:18, 14:8,10
wars and bloodshed	Moses 6:15	Jacob 7:24; Omni 1:3,24; Alma 35:15, 62:35,39; Mosiah 29:36; Alma 45:11, Alma 60:16; Helaman 6:17, Mormon 8:8; Ether 14:21
shut out-from presence-God	Moses 6:49	2 Nephi 9:9
murder-get gain	Moses 5:31	Helaman 2:8, 7:21; Ether 8:16

Concept	Book of Moses	Book of Mormon
seeking for power	Moses 6:15	Alma 46:4
carnal, sensual, devilish	Moses 5:13	Mosiah 16:3; Alma 41:13, 42:10
hearts-wax-hard	Moses 6:27	Alma 35:15
lifted up-imagination-his heart	Moses 8:22	Alma 1:6
natural man	Moses 1:14	Mosiah 3:19; Alma 26:21
Omner	Moses 7:9	Mosiah 27:34
Shum	Moses 7:5	Alma 11:5
and thus-it was (is)-Amen	Moses 5:59	1 Nephi 9:6, 14:30, 22:31; Alma 13:9; Helaman 12:26

**Table 2. Additional Concepts in the Book of Moses
and the Book of Mormon**

Concept	Book of Moses	Book of Mormon
The strength of Moses	Moses 1:20–21,25	1 Nephi 4:2
Chains of darkness, chains of hell, chains of the devil	Moses 7:26,57	1 Nephi 1:13, 23; 2 Nephi 9:45, 28:19, 22; Alma 5:7,9,10, 12:6, 11, 17, 13:30, 26:14–15, 36:18
Song of redeeming love/ everlasting joy, contrasted with chains of darkness/ hell	Moses 7:53–57	Alma 5:7,9,26, 26:13–15, 36:18,22
Misery as fate of the wicked (those in Satan’s power)	Moses 7:37,41	2 Nephi 2:5, 11, 13, 18, 23, 27, 9:9,46; Mosiah 3:25; Alma 3:26, 9:11, 26:20, 40:15,17,21, 41:4, 42:1,26; Helaman 3:29, 5:12, 7:16, 12:26; Mormon 8:38
Enoch’s “heart swelled wide as eternity” and his “bowels yearned” in tasting the grief of human wickedness / Christ’s “bowels of mercy” and infinite atonement	Moses 7:28–41, particularly 41	Bowels of mercy: Mosiah 15:9; Alma 26: 37, 34:15. Infinite atonement: 2 Nephi 9:7; Alma 34:10,14
Satan’s power over the hearts of men (e.g., dominion over men’s hearts and raging in their hearts)	Moses 6:15	1 Nephi 12:17, 13: 27,29, 14:7, 22:15,26, 30:18; Mosiah 3:6, Alma 8:9, 10:24,25, 12:11, 27:12; Helaman 6:21, 16:22,23; 3 Nephi 1:22, 2:2–3, 6:15–16, 11:29; 4 Nephi 28,31; Ether 8:15–26, 15:19; Moroni 9:3–4

Concept	Book of Moses	Book of Mormon
Shaking, trembling of heavens, earth, Satan, and the wicked / shaking off of Satan's chains, bands, and sin	Moses 1:21, 6:47-49, 7:41, 61	2 Nephi 1:13,23, 9:44-45, 28:19
Word returning void, in context of the Garden of Eden and the Fall	Moses 4:30	Alma 12:22-23,26, 42:2-5
"esteeming" scripture as a thing of "naught"	Moses 1:40-41	1 Nephi 19:6-9; 2 Nephi 3:2-3
Compound parallels 1: (A) the captivity of Satan, (B) the concept of "eternal life" and (C) the combination of "temporal" and "spiritual," describing God's creation	(A) Moses 4:4, (B) Moses 1:39; and (C) Moses 6:63	1 Nephi 14:7
Compound parallels 2: (A) hardening of hearts and (B) blinding of men	(A) Moses 6:15, 27, (B) Moses 4:4, 6:27	1 Nephi 7:8, 13:27, 17:30; Jarom 3; Mosiah 11:29; Alma 13:4, 48:3; 3 Nephi 2:1-2, 7:16; Ether 4:15, 15:19
Compound parallels 3: (A) Devil as father of lies, (B) shut out from the presence of God, and (C) secret combinations, (D) works of darkness, and (E) misery for the wicked	(A) Moses 4:4, (B) Moses 5:4, 41, 6:49, (C) Moses 5:51, (D) Moses 5:51, 55, and (E) Moses 7:37,41	2 Nephi 9:9
Compound parallels 4: (A) Satan's fall and his angels, (B) plan of salvation / merciful plan of God, (C) temporal vs. spiritual, (D) clothed with glory/purity/robe of righteousness	(A) Moses 4:3-4, 7:26, (B) Moses 6:62, (C) Moses 6:63, (D) Moses 7:3	2 Nephi 9:6-14: (A) vv. 8-9, (B) vv. 6, 13, cf. v. 28, (C) vv. 10-12, (D) v. 14
Compound parallels 5: (A) Satan will "rage in the hearts" of men, (B) chains of hell/destruction, (C) Satan leading men into captivity	(A) Moses 6:15, (B) Moses 7:26, 57, (C) Moses 4:4	2 Nephi 28:18-23

Concept	Book of Moses	Book of Mormon
Compound parallels 6: (A) the workmanship of God’s hands and (B) counsel	(A)+(B): Moses 1:4, 7:32–40	(A)+(B): Jacob 4:9–10

The Strength of Moses: Discovering a New Connection

Reynolds’ article was encountered while searching for material related to the role of the Pentateuch’s Exodus account in the Book of Mormon. This came in the course of responding to a skeptic who had argued that the Arabian Peninsula evidence for the Book of Mormon could be dismissed since the Book of Mormon uses Exodus themes from the Old Testament that allegedly come from a “Priestly” source written after the Exile, making it impossible for Nephi to have used such material. While allusions to the Exodus and the apparent Priestly material in the Book of Mormon can be justified by the possibility of much earlier dates for the sources of those portions of the Old Testament,⁸ something seemed odd about Nephi’s wording in one of the key verses pointed to by the skeptic:⁹ “Therefore let us go up; let us be *strong* like unto Moses; for he truly spake unto the waters of the Red Sea and they divided hither and thither, and our fathers came through, out of captivity, on dry ground, and the armies of Pharaoh did follow and were drowned in the waters of the Red Sea” (1 Nephi 4:2; emphasis added).

Nephi seems to be making an allusion to a text or tradition about the strength of Moses that would be readily recognized by his brethren, but nothing from the Old Testament directly supported the use of that specific term for Moses.¹⁰ A search in the KJV for the words *strength* or

8 Jeff Lindsay, “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Map: Part 1 of 2,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, 19 (2016): 153–239; <http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/joseph-and-the-amazing-technicolor-dream-map-part-1-of-2/> and “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Map: Part 2 of 2,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, 19 (2016): 247–326; <http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/joseph-and-the-amazing-technicolor-dream-map-part-2-of-2/>.

9 Jeff Lindsay, “The Strength of Moses,” *Mormanity*, Oct. 22, 2015; <http://mormanity.blogspot.com/2015/10/the-strength-of-moses.html>.

10 The term “*be strong*” is used in the Old Testament to encourage warriors in a military context, consistent with Nephi’s reference to armies at the end of this verse. See David E. Bokovoy and John A. Tvedtnes, “Let Us Be Strong,” *Testaments: Links Between the Book of Mormon and the Hebrew Bible* (Tooele, UT: Heritage Distribution, 2003), 39–42.

strong associated with Moses shows that the Pharaoh was strong (would use a “strong hand” in Exodus 6:1), that Joshua was commissioned to be strong (Deuteronomy 31:7, 23; Joshua 1:6–7), that the sea was strong (Exodus 14:27) as well as the wind (Exodus 10:19) — but not Moses. In fact, Moses is getting on in years, and in Exodus 17 the aging man needs the physical support of two other men to hold his staff up in the air during a battle. It is difficult to picture him as physically strong as the Exodus begins, so where did Nephi come up with the concept of Moses being strong? Further searching at this point led to Reynolds’ article, which motivated a look in the Book of Moses as a possible source (or rather, a text that might have common material with the brass plates).

Two references to Moses receiving strength from the Lord were found in Moses 1:20–21. Then came a surprise in Moses 1:25: “And calling upon the name of God, he beheld his glory again, for it was upon him; and he heard a voice, saying: Blessed art thou, Moses, for I, the Almighty, have chosen thee, and *thou shalt be made stronger than many waters*; for they shall obey thy command as if thou wert God” (emphasis added).

Moses, who had received strength from the Lord, would later be made even stronger than the many waters that he would cross. If something like the Book of Moses were on the brass plates, here we may have a possible source for Nephi’s allusion to the strength of Moses. This may strengthen the case Reynolds made in his publication, which did not include any aspect of *strength* in the many parallels he discussed. If the strength of Moses was found on the brass plates and in the Book of Moses, might there be other connections?

Incidentally, a notable change in Moses 1:25 relative to OT2 involves the phrase “as if thou wert God” which in OT2 was changed by Joseph to “as my commandments,”¹¹ though this does not affect the application of this verse herein.

Chains of Darkness, Chains that Veil

After exploring the issue of strength, we turn our attention to the dramatic imagery of chains in the Book of Moses. This concept from a vision of Enoch was not covered by Reynolds. In Moses 7:26 Enoch sees Satan with “a great chain”: “And he beheld Satan; and he had a great

11 Kent P. Jackson, “Moses 1,” in *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2005), 57–66; <https://rsc.byu.edu/pt-pt/archived/book-moses-and-joseph-smith-translation-manuscripts/moses-1>

chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.”

Here the current LDS text has a noteworthy difference from OT2, which tells us that Satan “had a great chain in his hand, and he veiled the whole face of the earth.” Satan does the veiling in OT2, but the reading may still imply that Satan uses a chain to do so. In any case, Satan’s chain and the veiling of the earth are parallel in both versions. The text originally had “it” but that was later struck out and corrected to “he.”¹² Could the change have been because a chain that veils does not seem logical?

A little later in Moses 7:57 we read of spirits in prison, held captive in “chains of darkness” until the judgment day (this follows the heavens being “veiled” in v. 56).

In light of Reynolds’ work, the possibility of a connection between Enoch’s mention of chains and references to chains in the Book of Mormon might be worth exploring. While chains and the captivity of Satan are frequent Book of Mormon themes, the Book of Moses phrase *chains of darkness* does not occur in the text.

If there were a connection to chains of darkness, it might be helpful in exploring influences on Nephite writers but need not be significant in terms of LDS apologetics, since the New Testament also mentions chains and the obvious link to captivity. Revelation 20:1 mentions a “great chain” associated with the bottomless pit, and “chains of darkness” are mentioned in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6, though possibly connected back to the Book of Enoch cited in Jude 14. First Enoch, published in 1912 from a text in the Ge’ez language, often called “Ethiopic,”¹³ mentions great iron chains¹⁴ and has been supposed to be tied to the source of the passages from Peter and Jude,¹⁵ especially since Jude explicitly refers to an ancient

12 Ibid.

13 “1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” trans. E. Isaac, in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983) 1:5–90; https://books.google.com/books?id=Z8cyt_SM7voC&pg=PA5. Also see *The Book of Enoch or First Enoch*, transl. by R.H. Charles (Escondido, CA: The Book Tree, 2000); <https://books.google.com/books?id=wQpjn26o60C&pg=PA106>.

14 1 Enoch, 53:4, 54:3–4, 69:28 in E. Isaac’s translation in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:37–38, 49. Further, 1 Enoch 56:1 at 39 speaks of iron nets in E. Isaac’s translation but “iron chains” in that of Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, 108 (see other mentions of chains at 105–106, 141).

15 Frederic Huidekoper, *Judaism at Rome: B.C. 76 to A.D. 140*, in *The Works of Frederic Huidekoper*, vol. 1, 7th ed. (New York: D. G. Francis, 1887), 483–484;

Book of Enoch. Both Peter and Jude write of angels who sinned and are held in chains of darkness until the judgment day, aligning well with the discussion of Satan's rebellion in heaven in the Book of Moses and also with Moses 7:57 and the spirits in prison in "chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day."

In the KJV Old Testament, the connection between chains and darkness does not seem present, so if Nephi or others used a similar term, perhaps it was known from the brass plates. However, Psalm 107:10 could be relevant, considering the context of vv. 9–11. In the KJV this speaks of rebellious souls who "sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron." But several other translations use "chains," such as the NIV:

10 Some sat in darkness, in utter darkness,
prisoners suffering in iron chains,

11 because they rebelled against God's commands
and despised the plans of the Most High.

While the phrase *chains of darkness* does not occur in any single verse of the Book of Mormon, Lehi's speech to his sons in 2 Nephi 1 may be relevant:

21 And now that my soul might have joy in you, and that my heart might leave this world with gladness because of you, that I might not be brought down with grief and sorrow to the grave, arise from the dust, my sons, and be men, and be determined in one mind and in one heart, united in all things, that ye may not come down into captivity;

22 That ye may not be cursed with a sore cursing; and also, that ye may not incur the displeasure of a just God upon you, unto the destruction, yea, the eternal destruction of both soul and body.

23 Awake, my sons; put on the armor of righteousness. Shake off the *chains* with which ye are bound, and come forth out of *obscurity*, and arise from the dust.

24 Rebel no more against your brother, whose views have been glorious, and who hath kept the commandments from the time that we left Jerusalem; and who hath been an instrument in the hands of God, in bringing us forth into the land of

promise; for were it not for him, we must have perished with hunger in the wilderness; nevertheless, ye sought to take away his life; yea, and he hath suffered much sorrow because of you. [emphasis added]

In v. 23, a connection between chains and darkness is provided, though not verbatim. In the entry for obscurity in the 1828 dictionary of Noah Webster, the first definition listed for obscurity is “Darkness; want of light.”¹⁶ Perhaps this is another link in the chain.

In that verse, chains are contrasted with the armor of righteousness. Obscurity and dust are linked, and possibly contrasted with Lehi’s following mention of Nephi, “whose views have been glorious” (2 Nephi 1:24). Thus, vision and glory (light) are in contrast with obscurity (darkness) and dust.

Dust and Obscurity: A Possible Wordplay in 1 Nephi 1:23?

The Hebrew word most commonly used for dust in the Bible is ‘*aphar* (עָפָר¹⁷), which comes from the primitive root ‘*âphar* (עָפַר¹⁸), “meaning either to be gray or perhaps rather to pulverize.” The gray aspect of this word would seem to go well with obscurity.

Obscurity and dust are both mentioned in Isaiah 29, a part of Isaiah that Nephi quotes heavily, so it is reasonable to assume that similar Hebrew words were used in Nephi’s statement. In Isaiah 29:4, the speech that whispers from the “dust” (actually occurring twice there) is from ‘*aphar* (עָפַר), mentioned above. This word occurs 15 times in Isaiah where it is always translated in the KJV as “dust” except in Isaiah 2:19, where it is “earth.” Most occurrences of “dust” in Isaiah and elsewhere in the Old Testament are from the same root (accounting for 15 of the 17 cases in Isaiah), though “dust” in Isaiah 5:24 and 29:5 is taken from a

16 Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, 2 vols. (New York: S. Converse, 1828), vol. 2 (unpaged); available at *Archive.org*, <https://archive.org/stream/americandictionaryoftheenglishlanguage/page/196/mode/2up>. For the same results from an online search engine, see “1828 Edition of Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language*,” *Mschaffer.com*; <http://1828.mshaffer.com/d/search/word,obscurity>.

17 Ludwig Köhler, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden and New York: E.J. Brill, 1994), 861–862. Hereafter abbreviated as *HALOT*. See also Strong’s H6083, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong’s=H6083>.

18 Strong’s H6080, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong’s=H6080>. For comparison purposes, 2 Samuel 16:13 has both H6080 and H6083 in the same verse, both at the end.

less common root, *'abaq* (אֲבַק¹⁹), referring to an especially fine powder. It occurs 6 times and accounts for fewer than 5% of the occurrences of “dust” in the KJV Old Testament.²⁰ Another Hebrew word, *'epher* (אֶפֶר), related to *'aphar* (אֶפָר), can mean “loose soil crumbling into dust.”²¹ It uses aleph (א) instead of ayin (ע) as the first letter. Its 22 occurrences are always translated as “ashes” in the KJV but is rendered as “dust” in the NIV in Lamentations 3:16 and in Jonah 3:6.

The KJV word “obscurity” in Isaiah 28 is tied to אֶפֶל,²² which can be transliterated as *'ophel*: “*ôphel*, *o'fel* (from H651,²³ *'âphêl* [אֶפֶל]); meaning ‘dusk:—darkness, obscurity, privily;: while *'âphêl* is “from an unused root meaning to set as the sun; dusky:—very dark.”²⁴

This word may also have a relationship to a place name, Ophel, spelled slightly differently (עֶפְלָה).²⁵ It is also related to אֶפְלָה, *'aphelah*, meaning darkness or gloominess.²⁶

So “obscurity” could be *'ophel* / *'âphêl*, while “dust” may be from *'aphar*. Perhaps this combination formed a wordplay in Lehi’s original words reflected in 2 Nephi 1:23. The transliterated forms look similar but the initial letter in Hebrew differs: aleph in *'ophel* versus ayin in *'aphar*. However, if *'epher* (אֶפֶר) or a form of it were used in this case, the wordplay might be stronger and still plausible.

Either *'epher* or *'aphar* as a word for “dust” would seem to offer a potential wordplay with *'ophel* / *'âphêl* for “obscurity” in 2 Nephi 1:23. This potential wordplay may not have been noted before. This seems to

19 HALOT, 9, and Strong’s H80, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H80&t=Kjv>.

20 Analysis done using the Blue Letter Bible app, BlueLetterBible.org.

21 HALOT, 80, also see Strong’s H665, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H665&t=Kjv>.

22 HALOT, 79.

23 Strong’s H651, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H651&t=Kjv>.

24 Strong’s H652, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H652&t=Kjv>.

25 HALOT, 861. See also Strong’s H6077, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H6077&t=Kjv>.

See also Norma Franklin, “Dispelling the Fog (אֶפֶל) Around the Ophel (עֶפְלָה),” in *Exploring the Narrative: Jerusalem and Jordan in the Bronze and Iron Ages: Papers in Honour of Margreet Steiner*, ed. Noor Mulder, Jeannette Boertien, and Eveline van der Steen (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 286–296; available at Academia.edu via the shortcut <http://tinyurl.com/fog-ophel>.

26 HALOT, 79. See also Strong’s H653, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H653&t=Kjv>.

add to the parallelism and poetry of Lehi’s words in a passage that draws from Isaiah 52 and, perhaps, a touch of the Book of Moses or related content on the brass plates.

There may be a relationship between *’epher* and *’aphar*. Abarim Publications’ *Biblical Dictionary* notes that linguists see two separate roots in אפר (*’pr*), though “upon close inspection, these two may have been experienced as quite related by a Hebrew audience.”²⁷ The first occurs in the Bible only as the masculine noun אפר (*’eper / ’epher*), meaning ashes. “This decidedly negative word indicates worthlessness (Isaiah 44:20), disgust (Job 30:19), misery (Psalm 102:9), shame (2 Samuel 13:19) or humiliation (Genesis 18:27). Ashes in the Bible also serve as a symbol of mourning (Isaiah 61:3, Job 2:8).” The other root “occurs in cognate languages in the meaning of to enclose or envelop” and occurs as *’apher* (אפר) in 1 Kings 20:38, meaning covering or bandage.²⁸ Given the practice in ancient Israel of people mourning by wrapping themselves in sackcloth and covering themselves with ashes, these “two roots are obviously related.”²⁹

A fascinating instance of *’epher* coupled with *’aphar* is found in Job 42:6 in the phrase “repent in dust and ashes,” a difficult verse that is analyzed in detail by Charles Muenchow, showing that it emphasizes the symbol of dust in the sense of a person’s being humbled and brought to shame.³⁰ Muenchow argues that *’epher* here should not be “ashes” but “dirt” or “dust,” being a “by-form” of *’aphar*.³¹

Regarding *’epher* (ashes) and its close relationship to dust, the *Jewish Encyclopedia* states:

[“Ashes” is the] usual translation of the Hebrew “efer” which occurs often in expressions of mourning and in other connections. It is a symbol of insignificance or nothingness in persons or words (Genesis xviii. 27; Isaiah xlv. 20; Malachi iii. 21 [iv. 3]; Job xiii. 12, xxx. 19). In the Red Heifer ritual,

27 “The Hebrew word: עפר,” *Abarim Publications’ Biblical Dictionary*, Abarim-publications.com; <http://www.abarim-publications.com/Dictionary/ay/ay-p-r.html#.Vn8mXMB95AY>.

28 Strong’s H666, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong=H666&t=NASB>.

29 “The Hebrew word: עפר,” *Abarim Publications’ Biblical Dictionary*.

30 Charles Muenchow, “Dust and Dirt in Job 42:6,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 108/4 (Winter, 1989): 597–611; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3267182>.

31 *Ibid.*, 608. See also footnote 49 at 608 (noting that “Staub” is German for “dust”).

for purification from defilement by contact with a corpse (Numbers xix.), the Ashes of the offering are to be put into water, some of which is then to be sprinkled on the unclean person; their virtue is, of course, derived from the sacred material of the offering.

A mourner cast Ashes (or dust) on his head (II Sam. xiii. 9) or sat (Job ii. 8; Jonah iii. 6) or lay (Esther iv. 3) or rolled himself (Jeremiah vi. 26; Ezekiel xxvii. 30) in Ashes (or dust). The rendering “ashes” for the Hebrew word in question is, however, in some cases doubtful. In a number of passages in which it occurs (in all, indeed, except those relating to the Red Heifer), it might as well or better be translated “dust”; so where a person is said to eat, feed on, sit in, lie, or wallow in the “efer”; or put it on his head; or where it is used to represent finely attenuated matter (Psalms cxlvii. 16). Its use appears to be substantially identical with that of the word “afar,” commonly rendered “dust.” The sense of humiliation is expressed by sitting or rolling in the “afar” or dust (Isaiah xlvi. 1; Micah i. 7, vii. 17; Psalms lxxii. 9); grief and suffering by putting dust on the head (Joshua vii. 6; Job ii. 12). The word symbolizes attenuation and annihilation or extinction (Job xxx. 19; Psalms xviii. 43 [42]); it is even employed to designate the burnt remains of the Red Heifer (Numbers xix. 17). The two words are synonyms, and in the expression “dust and ashes” are combined for the sake of emphasis (with paronomasia: “afar we-efer.”). There is, however, a difference in the usage: in expressions of mourning it is only the latter (“efer”) that occurs in combination with “sackcloth” (Jeremiah vi. 26; Isaiah lviii. 5; Daniel ix. 3; Esther iv. 1, 3), while the former is used for the physical material of the soil (Genesis ii. 7; Job xx. 11, and elsewhere).³²

Thus, interesting dust-related themes can be pursued using both *’epher* and *’aphar*. We shall explore further links below, after considering the problem with Isaiah 52 and other material after Isaiah 40 being present in the Book of Mormon.

32 Morris Jastrow, Jr., Crawford Howell Toy, Marcus Jastrow, Louis Ginzberg, and Kaufmann Kohler, “Ashes,” *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, ed. Isidore Singer and Cyrus Adler, 12 vols. (New York and London: Funk and Wagnalls, 1907); <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/1944-ashes>.

A Note on the Book of Mormon and Deutero-Isaiah

One can easily object to the influence of Isaiah 52, noted above, as source for dust-related imagery and language in the Book of Mormon. The problem is that many scholars believe that Isaiah chapters 40–55 were written by a second author, called “Deutero-Isaiah” or “Second Isaiah,” during or after the Exile, and thus that part of the text could not have been on Nephi’s brass plates. A detailed treatment of this issue is beyond the scope of this paper, but there are reasonable grounds for accepting Isaiah as the author of those chapters commonly assigned to a much later source. Richard Schultz, Professor of Biblical Studies at Wheaton College, presents some of these reasons.³³

Kenneth A. Kitchen also makes a brief case for the unity of Isaiah in *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*,³⁴ pointing to evidence from an Isaiah manuscript in the Dead Sea scrolls in which the full book of Isaiah is written with a division at the end of chapter 33, as if it were viewed as a book with two related halves. The parallelism between these two halves was long ago analyzed by W.H. Brownlee and said to be indicative of an overarching literary structure pointing to unity.³⁵ Brownlee calls the structure the “Bifid” format of Isaiah, consisting of seven broad parallel sections in both halves. This approach was taken up and greatly refined by Avraham Gileadi in *The Literary Message of Isaiah*.³⁶ Gileadi provides a reworked “Bifid structure” of seven parallel elements and shows broad themes with detailed parallels that strongly unite the entire book of Isaiah in a work whose detailed scholarship has been praised by non-LDS and LDS scholars.³⁷

33 Richard L. Schultz, “Isaiah, Isaiahs, and Current Scholarship,” in James K. Hoffmeier and Dennis R. Magary, eds., *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith? A Critical Appraisal of Modern and Postmodern Approaches to Scripture* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), Kindle edition, chapter 10.

34 K.A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 378–380.

35. W.H. Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scrolls for the Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 247–253; as cited by Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, 582.

36. Avraham Gileadi, *The Literary Message of Isaiah* (New York: Hebraeus, 1994), Kindle edition.

37. See a discussion of the reception given to Gileadi’s book by several significant scholars in Marc Schindler, “Deutero-Isaiah in the Book of Mormon?,” *FAIRMormon*; <http://www.fairmormon.org/perspectives/publications/deutero-isaiah-in-the-book-of-mormon>.

The unity of Isaiah was apparently not questioned by the Qumran community in 200 BC nor by New Testament voices, Christ included, who quote from the latter portions of Isaiah as writings of Isaiah and not a later author (e.g., Matthew 12:17, quoting Isaiah 42:1–4, which Christ attributes to Isaiah; and Matthew 8:16–17, quoting Isaiah 53:4, which Christ attributes to Isaiah; see also John 12:37–41, which quotes from Isaiah 53:1 and then Isaiah 6:10, identifying both passages as from Isaiah).

A discussion of the issues for Book of Mormon students is provided by John W. Welch in *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*, concluding that portions of Isaiah quoted were probably on the brass plates and most likely authored by Isaiah.³⁸ Welch observes that there are reasonable grounds for accepting the unity of the version of Isaiah on the brass plates, though it may not have included the full book as we know it today. He also notes that the parts viewed as most strongly post-exilic by modern scholars, often ascribed to a “Tertio-Isaiah,” are not quoted in the Book of Mormon.³⁹

Some wordprint and other statistical or scientific studies have also pointed to unity in Isaiah or at least have not provided support for multiple authorship.⁴⁰

38. John W. Welch, “Authorship of the Book of Isaiah in Light of the Book of Mormon,” in Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch, eds., *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1998), 421–37, see especially 434; http://publications.mi.byu.edu/publications/bookchapters/Isaiah_in_the_Book_of_Mormon/23122%20Isaiah%20in%20BOM%20.pdf.

39. *Ibid.*, 432–33.

40. For computer analysis in support of the unity of Isaiah, see L. Lamar Adams and Alvin C. Rencher, “A Computer Analysis of the Isaiah Authorship Problem,” *BYU Studies*, 15/1 (Autumn 1974): 95–102; <https://byustudies.byu.edu/content/computer-analysis-isaiah-authorship-problem> or <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43040541>. See also L. Lamar Adams, “A Scientific Analysis of Isaiah Authorship,” in *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1984), 151–64. Adams also discusses other wordprint studies claiming to show support for multiple authors, and explains that these fail basic tests and have seriously flawed methods. A later study showing different results without clear support for the Deutero-Isaiah theory, but with some stylistic differences among sections of Isaiah, is John L. Hilton, “Wordprinting Isaiah in the Book of Mormon,” in Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch, eds., *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1998), 439–44; http://publications.mi.byu.edu/publications/bookchapters/Isaiah_in_the_Book_of_Mormon/23122%20Isaiah%20in%20BOM%20.pdf.

I would further argue that the sophisticated application of dust-related themes in the Book of Mormon drawing heavily on Isaiah 52 — to be explored more fully in Parts 2 and 3 — is something far beyond Joseph Smith’s abilities or perhaps even the state of biblical scholarship in Joseph’s day and helps make the Book of Mormon itself a witness for the authenticity of the later Isaiah chapters quoted or relied upon in the Book of Mormon.

Chains and Darkness: Further Links

Second Nephi 1:23 ends an apparent chiasmus, as outlined in Donald R. Parry’s valuable *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon*.⁴¹ Parry identifies a seven-step chiasmus covering vv. 13–23, with the outer verses strongly connected by the themes of arising and shaking off chains. Significantly, the obscurity or darkness linked to dust and chains in v. 23 is also parallel to “a deep sleep” in v. 13. There Lehi urges his sons to awake from a “deep sleep, yea, even the sleep of hell, and shake off the awful chains with which ye are bound.” “Sleep” and “hell” here are related to darkness and juxtaposed with chains.

In the following verse, 2 Nephi 1:14, Lehi also invokes the imagery of dust in the context of sleep and death, urging his wayward sons to “Awake! and arise from the dust,” spoken by a trembling parent who will soon be laid in the grave. While detractors point to similarities in that verse with Shakespeare, Robert F. Smith points out that 2 Nephi 1:13–15 is actually solidly grounded in ancient Near Eastern concepts, especially Egyptian concepts, involving dust, the grave, and the bonds of death,⁴² a topic we will return to in Part 2.

Other sections of the Book of Mormon display related concepts. Further, based on Parry’s identification of poetic structures in the Book of Mormon, it appears that a majority of the references to chains occur in the form of chiasmus, with examples in 2 Nephi 1:13–23, 2 Nephi 9:44–46, 2 Nephi 28:16–20, Alma 5:7–9 and Alma 36. Metal chains, while

41. Donald W. Parry, *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon: The Complete Text Reformatted* (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute, Brigham Young University, 2007), 59–60; <http://publications.mi.byu.edu/book/poetic-parallelisms-in-the-book-of-mormon-the-complete-text-reformatted/>.

42 Robert F. Smith, “Evaluating The Sources of 2 Nephi 1:13–15: Shakespeare and the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture* 22/2 (2013): 98–103; <http://publications.mi.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=2891&index=8> or see PDF at http://publications.mi.byu.edu/publications/jbms/22/2/8Smith_Evaluating%20Sources%20of%20%20Nephi.pdf.

apparently not part of life in the New World for Book of Mormon peoples, long remained a part of Book of Mormon poetry.

Alma 5:7–9 is another example involving the chains of hell and darkness, shown here following Parry’s formatting:

- 7 Behold, he changed their hearts; yea, he awakened them out of a deep sleep, and they awoke unto God.
- A Behold, they were in the midst of darkness; nevertheless,
- B their souls were illuminated by the light of the everlasting word;
- C yea, they were encircled about
- D by the bands of death, and the chains of hell, and an everlasting destruction did await them.
- 8 E And now I ask of you, my brethren, were they destroyed?
- E Behold, I say unto you, Nay, they were not.
- 9 D And again I ask, were the bands of death broken, and the chains of hell
- C which encircled them about, were they loosed? I say unto you,
- B Yea, they were loosed, and their souls did expand, and they did sing redeeming love.
- A And I say unto you that they are saved.⁴³

This passage speaks of souls who were in a “deep sleep” and the “midst of darkness” in describing those who were “encircled about by the bands of death, and the chains of hell.” But they were liberated as the chains of hell were loosed, causing their souls to expand and thus they did “sing redeeming love,” a concept that is reiterated later in Alma 5 when Alma₂ contrasts those who are lost to the kingdom of the devil (v. 25) to those who experience a “mighty change of heart” and “feel to sing the song of redeeming love” (v. 26).⁴⁴

Incidentally, the contrast between the chains of hell or darkness and singing songs of redeeming love or joy is found in Moses 7:53–57 (see Table 2). In v. 53, the Lord tells Enoch that “whoso cometh in at the gate and climbeth up by me” (the arise/ascend theme) “shall come forth with songs of everlasting joy.” Enoch then asks when the Son of Man will come, and in vision is then shown the crucifixion of Christ (vv. 54–55), and the “heavens were veiled,” the earth groaned the rocks were rent

43 Parry, *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon*, 233.

44 Alma 5:25 concludes a chiasmus that begins with v. 20 according to Parry, *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon*, 235. However, I suggest that it should be extended to include Alma 5:26 and Alma 5:20. These are linked with a question to the audience: “can you think of being saved?” in v. 20 and “can you feel [to sing the song of redeeming love now]?” in v. 25.

(v. 56),⁴⁵ and then follows v. 57 which mentions spirits in prison "reserved in chains of darkness" until the judgment day. Shortly afterward, v. 61 describes the "veil of darkness" that will cover the earth. Singing is a common occurrence in the Bible, of course, but perhaps not with this particular contrast. In Isaiah 51, following the call for the Lord's arm to "awake, awake, put on strength" (v. 9), the redeemed of the Lord "come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head" (v.11). See also Isaiah 35:10.

Alma 26:13–15 provides another example of the redeemed being delivered from the chains of hell and darkness, coupled with singing redeeming love and contrasting uses of "encircled":

13 Behold, how many thousands of our brethren has he *loosed from the pains of hell*; and they are *brought to sing redeeming love*, and this because of the power of his word which is in us, therefore have we not great reason to rejoice? 14 Yea, we have reason to praise him forever, for he is the Most High God, and has *loosed our brethren from the chains of hell*. 15 Yea, they were *encircled about with everlasting darkness* and destruction; but behold, he has *brought them into his everlasting light*, yea, into everlasting salvation; and they are *encircled about with the matchless bounty of his love*; yea, and we have been instruments in his hands of doing this great and marvelous work. [emphasis added]

Here both the chains of hell and darkness encircle their victims.

Among other links between chains and darkness, when Alma₂ is converted and liberated from the "chains of death" (Alma 36:18), his liberation brings "marvelous light" (v. 20), in contrast to the darkness or obscurity linked to chains in 2 Nephi 1. Further, in the chiasmus proposed by Parry in 2 Nephi 9:44–46,⁴⁶ Jacob's plea for others to shake off the chains of the Adversary (v. 45) is paired with Jacob's shaking off their iniquities from his soul, which allows him to "stand with brightness" before God (v. 44).

In addition to the multiple links to darkness *per se*, chains in the Book of Mormon are also frequently associated with Satan or hell, captivity, destruction, and encirclement. As a basic example, in Alma 12:17,

45 The rending of rocks and the groaning of earth in Moses 7:56 are themes also found in the Book of Mormon that are explored by Reynolds, "The Brass Plates Version of Genesis," 149–150.

46 Parry, *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon*, 83.

those who suffer the second death are “*chained* down to an everlasting destruction, according to the power and captivity of Satan, he having subjected them according to his will,” a verse that seems to draw upon Moses 7:57 (“spirits ... in prison ... reserved in chains of darkness” until the day of judgment) and Moses 4:4 (Satan seeks to “lead them captive at his will”). Alma 12:11–17 appears to be part of another chain-related chiasmus heavy in Book of Moses themes. These are the major elements from Parry’s formatting:

- 11 And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries;
 A and then they are taken **captive by the devil**, and **led by his will** down to destruction.
 B Now this is what is meant by the **chains** of hell
- 12 C And Amulek hath spoken plainly concerning death, and being raised from this mortality to a state of immortality
 D and being **brought before** the bar of God to be judged according to our works. ...
 E then will our **state be awful for then** we shall be condemned.
- 14 F For our **words** will condemn us,
 G yea, all our works **will condemn us**; we shall not be found spotless;
 F and our **thoughts** will also condemn us.
 E and in this **awful state** we shall not dare to look up to our God...
- 15 D But this cannot be; we must come forth and **stand before him** in his glory, and in his power, and in his might, majesty, and dominion, acknowledge to our everlasting shame that his judgments are just
- 16 C And now behold, I say unto you then cometh a **death**, even a second death. ...
- 17 B Then is the time when their torments shall be as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever; and then is the time that they shall be **chained**
 A **down to an everlasting destruction**, according to the power and **captivity of Satan**, he having subjected them according to **his will**.⁴⁷ [emphasis original]

The connection between chains and Satan, hell, destruction, captivity, etc., is of course found in the previously discussed passages involving chains (2 Nephi 1; Alma 5:7–10, Alma 26:13–15 and Alma 36), but see also 2 Nephi 9:45; 2 Nephi 28:19, 22; and Alma 13:30. References to chains stop after the Book of Alma, possibly consistent with the generally heavier reliance on the brass plates by Nephi’s peers and Alma₂.

⁴⁷ Parry, *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon*, 256–57.

The encirclement aspect of chains in the Book of Mormon merits further attention. Alma 36:18 mentions Alma₂ having been “encircled about by the everlasting chains of death.” Earlier Alma₂ in Alma 5:7, 9 twice speaks of the “bands of death” and the “chains of hell” that “*encircled* [others] about.” Alma 12:6 speaks of the “snare of the adversary” to bring the people at Ammonihah “into subjection unto him, that he might *encircle* you about with his chains, that he might chain you down to an everlasting destruction. . . .” Shortly thereafter, Zeezrom, facing his own guilt, “began to be *encircled about* by the *pains* of hell” (Alma 14:6). The phrase “chains of hell” seems to fit the context better here as well as in Alma 26:13 (“loosed from the pains of hell,” followed by Alma 26:14, which has “loosed [these] our brethren from the *chains* of hell”), making it tempting to speculate that “chains of hell” may have been intended but could have been introduced as a scribal error. The possibility of “pains of hell” as a scribal error may also be contemplated in Jacob 3:11: “O my brethren, hearken unto my words; arouse the faculties of your souls; *shake yourselves* that ye may awake from the slumber of death; and *loose yourselves* from the *pains* [chains?] *of hell* that ye may not become angels to the devil, to be cast into that lake of fire and brimstone which is the second death.”

This involves the motifs of shaking, loosening, and captivity to the Devil where “chains” are used elsewhere in the Book of Mormon, including key passages drawing upon Isaiah 52:2. If Joseph might have dictated *chains* instead of *pains* in Alma 14:6 as well as Jacob 3:11 and Alma 26:13, this possibility has not been confirmed by the scholarship of Royal Skousen, whose *opus magnum*, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* proposes no such changes.⁴⁸ However, the Original Manuscript, which primarily has only “1 Nephi 2 through 2 Nephi 1, with gaps” and “Alma 22 through Helaman 3, with gaps” and a few other fragments, is apparently not extant for Jacob 3 nor Alma 14,⁴⁹ leaving us without some potentially useful data. It is extant for at least parts of Alma 26 and shows that “pains of hell” was written by Joseph’s scribe.⁵⁰ Thus there is support in the Original Manuscript that “pains of hell” at least

48 Royal Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 162 (Jacob 3:11), 330 (Alma 14:6), and 372 (Alma 26:13).

49 Royal Skousen, “Book of Mormon Manuscripts” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 185–186; http://eom.byu.edu/index.php/Book_of_Mormon_Manuscripts.

50 Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, 765. A minor change relative to our current printing has been made in *The Earliest Text* in Alma 26:14

in this case was not a copying error made in preparing the Printer's Manuscript. Weighing against the possibility of error is the use of "the pains of hell" in a clearly reasonable context in Alma 36:13 ("tormented with ..."). Further, Psalm 116:3 has "the pains of hell gat hold upon me" and the "sorrows of death compassed me," which are somewhat related to the encircling, binding action of chains, making the instances of "pains of hell" in question appear reasonable. Nevertheless, "chains" in the context for the three cases discussed above might seem more appropriate, though merely speculative.

As will be discussed in Part 3, the loosening of the pains of hell in Alma 26:13 brings the result of singing the song of redemptive love, a pairing that arguably enhances the chiasmus of Alma 36, where the "pains of hell" in v. 13 may be contrasted with the singing of angels in praising God in v. 22, after the pains and chains of hell have been loosed.

In addition to the use of "encircled about" with the chains (and pains) of hell, shaking, loosening, and awaking from slumber all are often associated with the chains of hell and with dust, as we explore more fully below.

While chains are not mentioned after Alma 36:18, where Alma₂ was "encircled about by the everlasting chains of death" and then liberated, Helaman 13:37 gives a prophecy of Samuel the Lamanite, who says that the wicked Nephites will find themselves "surrounded by demons" and "encircled about by the angels of him who hath sought to destroy our souls."

The negative instances of encirclement with the chains (or pains) of hell and death are contrasted with the redemptive encirclement in the arms of God's love or in the protective encirclement of God's robes or the robes or righteousness (2 Nephi 1:15; 2 Nephi 4:33; Alma 34:16; cf. Isaiah 61:10) or even the glorious fire of God (Helaman 5:23–24, 43–44), like the pillar of fire Lehi experienced (1 Nephi 1:6) or the combination of glorious fire and angels (3 Nephi 17:24; 19:14), in contrast to the demons surrounding wicked Nephites in Helaman 13.

Hugh Nibley has spoken about the significance of encirclement for the righteous as a temple-related symbol of God's love, blessing, and even ritual embrace as a member of God's family,⁵¹ and Jeffrey Bradshaw

based on the Original Manuscript, the insertion of "these" to give "loosed these our brethren from the chains of hell."

51 Hugh Nibley, "The Atonement of Jesus Christ, Part 1" *Ensign* (July 1990): 18; <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1990/07/the-atonement-of-jesus-christ-part-1>.

has added more as he discusses the Hebrew word for atonement, *kippur*, related to the Hebrew root *kaphar*:

At a first level of understanding, the Hebrew term for atonement, *kippur*, can be thought of as roughly approximating the English word “cover.” In the Mosaic temple, the idea of *kippur* related to the *kapporet* that formed the lid of the ark of the temple where Jehovah stood to forgive — or cover — the sins of the people. The veil of the temple, also a *kapporet*, covered the entry of the Holy of Holies. Besides the notion of “covering of sin” implied by the term *kippur*, however, there appears to have been the additional concept of “union,” a “covering with glory,” in the ancient temple cult. After the priest and the people had completed all the rituals and ordinances of the atonement, the veil was opened so that so the Lord could tell the people that their sins had been forgiven, symbolically welcoming them into His presence.⁵²

Following a study of the term *kippur*, Nibley concluded that:

[T]he literal meaning of *kaphar* and *kippurim* is a close and intimate embrace, which took place at the *kapporeth* or the front cover or flap of the Tabernacle or tent. The Book of Mormon instances are quite clear, for example, “Behold, he sendeth an invitation unto all men, for the arms of mercy are extended towards them, and he saith: Repent, and I will receive you.” [Alma 5:33] “But behold the Lord hath redeemed my soul from hell; I have beheld his glory, and I am encircled eternally in the arms of his love” [2 Nephi 1:15] ... From this it should be clear what kind of oneness is meant by the Atonement — it is to be received in a close embrace of the prodigal son, expressing not only forgiveness but oneness of heart and mind that amounts to identity.⁵³

Nibley, in explaining the “covering” aspects related to the Hebrew terms *kaphar* and *kippurim*, cites a portion of Lehi’s speech in 2 Nephi 1:5, where Lehi states that he is redeemed, that he has seen God’s glory and is “encircled eternally in the arms of his love.” (Compare Mormon 5:11, 6:17; Doctrine and Covenants 6:20; and Isaiah 61:10.) The righteous, encircled

⁵² Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, “The Meaning of the Atonement,” *Meridian Magazine*, May 30, 2012; <http://ldsmag.com/article-1-10925/>.

⁵³ Nibley, “The Atonement of Jesus Christ, Part 1.”

with the arms of God’s love in a sacred embrace, and encircled in the robes of righteousness, are redeemed and enter into God’s family — into His presence — as sons and daughters, joining the heavenly choirs who surround God’s throne. In contrast, the wicked are encircled as well, but with the chains of darkness, the bands of death, and a shroud of dust. To escape, they must shake off the chains and the bands, shake off the dust, and arise. (The theme of shaking is further discussed below.)

Related to “covering,” several Hebrew words might also be considered for the concepts of encircling and surrounding. While the most commonly used root for this may be Strong’s H5437, *sābab* (סָבַב), another word, Strong’s H3803, *kāthar* (כָּתַר), may offer the potential for wordplays with Strong’s H3772, *kārath* (כָּרַת), meaning to “cut,” as in to “cut a covenant”⁵⁴ (to make a covenant) or to be cut off. On the other hand, Strong’s H661, *’āphaph* (אָפַף)⁵⁵, used five times in the KJV and always translated as “compassed,” might be close enough to words for dust (*’aphar*: אֶפֶר, H6080 or H6083), obscurity (*’ophel*: אֶפְלָה, H652), darkness (*’aphelah*: אֶפְלָה, H653, or *’āphêl*: אֶפְלָה, H651), and ashes (*’epher*: אֶפֶר, H665) to offer interesting wordplays in dust-related passages.

The positive sense of encirclement, with its relationship to being covered, is an appropriate contrast to the negative encirclement of chains, where the chains of hell, death, and darkness not only enslave and lead to destruction but also “veil the earth with darkness.” The ritual embrace at the veil for those entering God’s presence and the parting of the veil for entry into majestic light are contrasted with the “great chain” in Satan’s hand that “veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness” (Moses 7:26), related to the subsequent mention in the Book of Moses of the heavens being veiled at the death of Christ (Moses 7:56) and the “veil of darkness” Enoch saw covering the earth in the last days when the “heavens shall shake” and will be darkened (Moses 7:61).

In the Book of Mormon, those who once were encircled with the chains of hell but are freed may be described as “encircled” with God’s love, according to Alma 26:15 above, or encircled with the robes of righteousness, as Nephi writes in his psalm (2 Nephi 4:33, after asking that he may “shake” at the appearance of sin in v. 31). They are to be

54 Jared T. Parker, “Cutting Covenants,” in *The Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament: The 38th Annual BYU Sidney B. Sperry Symposium* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2009); <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/gospel-jesus-christ-old-testament/7-cutting-covenants>.

55 Strong’s H661, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/lexicon.cfm?strongs=H661&t=Kjv>.

lifted up (the “arise” theme) at the last day and also tend to break out into song. In addition to Alma 26:13–15 above, see also Alma 12:5–6, 11, 17, Alma 5:6–11; Alma 13:29–30; and the last place where chains are mentioned in the Book of Mormon, Alma 36:18: “Now, as my mind caught hold upon this thought, I cried within my heart: O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who am in the gall of bitterness, and am encircled about by the everlasting chains of death.”

Interestingly, “encircled about by the chains of death” is how Alma₂ sums up his miserable state as he turns to the Lord. This is at the heart, the pivot point, of the Book of Mormon’s most famous chiasmus in which he describes his miraculous encounter with the power of the Atonement. Could it be related to Lehi’s words and the themes associated with dust? Could there be more to Alma 36 than previously recognized? I think so. To explain, though, I need to share further information here to lay a foundation for Part 1, and then in Part 3, we will examine some often-overlooked content that adds richness to Alma 36.

How Can a Chain Veil the Earth? Another Possible Wordplay

The verse in the Book of Moses that launched an exploration of dust themes in the Book of Mormon, Moses 7:26, poses a puzzle: “And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.”

How does a chain veil the earth with darkness (or how might it help Satan in veiling the earth, if “it” in Moses 7:26 should be “he,” based on Joseph’s correction in OT⁵⁶)? Chains are not especially opaque. A search for “veil” and “chain” in the Old Testament yielded these possibilities:

- Candidate for “chain”: *rābiyd* (רַבִּיד⁵⁷), a necklace, neck chain or collar, used in Genesis 41:42 (Pharaoh gives Joseph “a gold chain about his neck”) and Ezekiel 16:11 (“I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put ... a chain on thy neck”). From *rābad* (רַבַּד⁵⁸), meaning to spread or bedeck.

⁵⁶ Jackson, “History of the Book of Moses,” in *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*.

⁵⁷ HALOT, 1191. See also Strong’s H7242, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?strongs=H7242&t=Kjv>.

⁵⁸ Strong’s H7234, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/lexicon.cfm?strongs=H7234&t=Kjv>.

- Candidate for “veil”/“vail”: *rādiyd* (רִדִּיַד⁵⁹), a “veil” in Song of Songs 5:7 and “vails” in Isaiah 3:23, a word which can mean a “thin outer garment” or a shawl, headcloth, or large veil.⁶⁰

If these words were actually used in a Hebrew document (say, on the brass plates), then Satan’s chain, a *rābiyd*, wouldn’t necessarily be something that looks frightening but could be ornamental and attractive, the kind we might gladly receive and wear around our necks with pride, only to realize too late that, like the golden handcuffs we speak of in the business world, it limits our freedom. Satan’s pretty chains are chains of slavery. They connect us to his crushing yoke and lead us captive into bitter servitude. We like fools are happy to clasp them around our necks. Perhaps that is not an intended meaning in the original but one we might find as we liken the text to our modern situation. Perhaps Satan’s chains blind us not with their opacity but with their deceptive attractiveness, bringing us into spiritual darkness. While here in mortality, his chains can easily be shaken off by something as simple as turning our heart to Christ and taking His light yoke instead. This is why Satan must resort to constant deception and flattery in order to lead us “carefully down to hell” (2 Nephi 28:21–22).

Second, the veil as some form of *rādiyd* would seem appropriate, for it would be a cloak, spread out widely over the earth. This would seem to provide a wordplay with *rābiyd*. Four letters are involved, three of which are identical, and the “b” and “d” sounds are not that distant phonetically.⁶¹

⁵⁹ HALOT, 1190–1191.

⁶⁰ Strong’s H7289, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/Lexicon/Lexicon.cfm?strongs=H7289&t=Kjv>.

⁶¹ In personal correspondence Robert F. Smith (email received March 8, 2016, cited with permission), while noting that this could be a plausible wordplay, Smith also observed that other Hebrew words could still fit and provide some related meaning involving the attractive tools of Satan:

Jeff, it is at least conceivable that such a wordplay was intended, just as you suggest in the Mormanity blog [Jeff Lindsay, “The Chain that Veils: A Word Play in Moses 7:26?,” *Mormanity*, March 7, 2016, <http://mormanity.blogspot.hk/2016/03/the-chain-that-veils-word-play-in-moses.html>]. Especially since *rabid* can mean “necklace, ornament, chain,” from *rabad* “spread out, lay out,” while *radid* is “scarf, veil, mantle; light summer garment” — the pun being more important than making good sense.

It is also possible that the two words applied were *paroket* and *sharsheret*, which appear near each other in II Chronicles 3:14,16, where the first

In examining further elements related to Noel Reynolds’ hypothesis regarding the brass plates, we have explored many links to the concept of chains in the Book of Moses, and have also considered the “strength” of Moses as another concept that may have been on the brass plates and the Book of Moses. There are still a few others to consider.

Further Links Between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses

As an illustration of further correspondences between the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon beyond those detailed by Reynolds, consider 1 Nephi 14:7. This verse contains at least three of the parallels from his list: (1) the description of Satan, (2) the concept of “eternal life” in Moses 1:39 (though found frequently in the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, it is not used in the Old Testament), and (3) the combination of “temporal” and “spiritual,” describing God’s creation (Moses 6:63; cf. 1 Nephi 15:32; 22:3; Mosiah 2:41; Alma 7:23; Alma 12:16; and Alma 37:43):⁶²

For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men; a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other — either to the convincing of them unto peace and *life eternal*, or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the *blindness of their minds* unto their being brought down into captivity, and also into destruction, *both*

refers to the “veil” of the temple as a tapestry decorated with cherubim, while the second is a “chain” or kind of filigree work of pomegranates or rosettes festooned around the capitals of the columns — it is the decor in each case which gets the attention (cf. Exodus 26:31, 28:14, Leviticus 16:2, I Kings 7:17).

Smith also points out that while Hebrew sources could be reflected as puns in the Brass Plates, “that would have to be mediated via Egyptian, and only the bilingual scribe would fully understand it,” complicating the analysis of potential word plays. Absent an ancient text, of course, we have only guesswork when it comes to potential word plays in the Book of Moses. But it may be worth observing that the somewhat puzzling imagery of the chain in Enoch’s vision may have been more fitting in Hebrew.

Kevin Tolley in personal correspondence (received July 1, 2016) stated that there “might be a connection between the Egyptian “ššš3t” “Necklace” (Faulkner, 261) and the Hebrew “šaršrah” (חרשרש). See 2 Chronicles. 3:16.”

⁶² Reynolds, “The Brass Plates Version of Genesis,” 142–44, 150–52.

temporally and spiritually, according to the *captivity* of the *devil*, of which I have spoken (1 Nephi 14:7) [emphasis added].

Recall the key elements of Moses 4:4: “And he became Satan, yea, even the *devil, the father of all lies, to deceive* and to *blind* men, and to *lead them captive at his will*, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.”

In 1 Nephi 14:7, the devil and related concepts of deception (hardness of hearts, perhaps, as treated above in discussing Satan’s dominion), blindness, and being delivered (brought) into captivity are included, as is the pairing of “temporally and spiritually,” and the concept of “life eternal,” all with connections to the Book of Moses. Reynolds wrote that the first occurrence of “eternal life” (a Book of Moses concept not found in the Old Testament) was in 2 Nephi 2:27, “life eternal” is essentially equivalent.⁶³

This clustering of concepts in the writings of Nephi is characteristic of his approach to Isaiah also, where he pulls together verses from different portions of the text to bring out new meaning.⁶⁴ While Isaiah 29:14 with its “marvelous work among this people” is tied to the opening phrases of 1 Nephi 14:7, references to “work” and “life eternal” could be building upon a text related to Moses 1:39 (“my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man”). In addition to the other Book of Moses concepts noted in this passage, the “hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds” might have some relationship. Satan’s blinding of men has been noted in Moses 4:4, and Satan’s influence of the hearts of men in Moses 6:15 will be discussed below. Moses 6:27 also has Enoch speaking for the Lord in telling the people that their “hearts have waxed hard” and “their eyes cannot see afar off,” suggestive of blindness. Perhaps these concepts have been pulled together by Nephi to give “hardness of their hearts” coupled with “blindness of their minds,” or perhaps it comes from another possibly related source or is Nephi’s own wording.

The pairing of “hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds” strikes me as possibly a formulaic construction based on how Nephi uses it elsewhere. For example, in drawing lessons from the

⁶³ Ibid., 150.

⁶⁴ See, for example, the technique of “Gezera Shawa” as discussed in Matthew L. Bowen, “Onomastic Wordplay on *Joseph* and *Benjamin* and *Gezera Shawa* in the Book of Mormon,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 18 (2016): 255–273; <http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/onomastic-wordplay-on-joseph-and-benjamin-and-gezera-shawa-in-the-book-of-mormon/>.

Exodus in 1 Nephi 17:30, Nephi says the rebellious Israelites “*hardened their hearts and blinded their minds*, and reviled against Moses and the true and living God.” Perhaps that phrasing was derived from an Exodus-related text. It actually first occurs in 1 Nephi 7:8, where Nephi is describing his family’s exodus from Jerusalem to the promised land and in the wilderness is now coping with the rebellion of his brothers. In his account, rich in subtle Exodus themes,⁶⁵ he condemns his brothers for the “hardness of their hearts” and asks “how is it that ye are so hard in your hearts and so blind in your minds?” Hardening of hearts and blinding of eyes also occurs in 1 Nephi 13:27, Mosiah 11:29, Jarom 3, and continues with Alma 13:4 in a discussion of ancient priesthood concepts apparently taken from the brass plates. The pairing also occurs in Alma 48:3; 3 Nephi 2:1–2, 7:16; Ether 4:15, and 15:19. While the Bible does speak of hearts being hardened (e.g., Exodus 4:21; Deuteronomy 10:16; Psalm 95:8) and minds being blinded (2 Corinthians 3:14, 4:4), those concepts are not paired as they are frequently in the Book of Mormon. The possible connection to the Book of Moses via a hypothesized brass plates linkage is speculative but may merit further exploration and consideration of other ancient texts.

Misery and Its Cure at an Infinite Price

Another possible link to consider is the *misery* which Satan brings upon his followers. *Misery* or *miserable* occurs several times in the KJV but not in the context of the fate of the wicked who yield to Satan, as is taught in ominous language in Moses: “Satan shall be their father, and misery shall be their doom” (Moses 7:37) — a perfect anti-parallel to the Gospel message for those who follow Jesus Christ. The occurrences in the Book of Mormon are much more common than in the Bible and much more consistent with the Book of Moses’s usage.⁶⁶

65 Terrence L. Szink, “Nephi and the Exodus,” in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1991), 39–42; <http://publications.mi.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=1111&index=6>.

66 The word *misery* occurs much more often in the Book of Mormon than it does in the KJV Bible: there are eleven instances in the Bible versus twenty-four instances in the Book of Mormon, and the latter usually applies the term in the related context of the state of the wicked after death, associated with Satan. For “miserable,” there are four occurrences in the Book of Mormon and six in the KJV but again lacking the Book of Mormon’s rather consistent focus on the state of souls who fall into Satan’s power. Incidentally, in Moses 7:37, the OT2 had a change in which “father” was changed by Joseph to “master,” which does not affect the

Heavy use of *misery* is found in Lehi's speech in the portion given in 2 Nephi 2, where misery is involved in several contrasts (vv. 11, 13, 23) and being miserable is part of the punishment of the wicked (v. 5). Misery is also presented as a goal of Satan for all mankind, for "because he had fallen from heaven, and had become miserable forever, he sought also the misery of all mankind," (v. 18), a goal reiterated in v. 27. Second Nephi 9, discussed below, also twice associates Satan with misery (vv. 9, 46). King Benjamin warns the wicked that they face a "state of misery" (Mosiah 3:25). A large number of references to misery come from the words of Alma₂, a man who was a student of the brass plates, and his references include the misery of those who inherit the kingdom of the devil (Alma 41:4), building on the principle of opposition that Lehi introduced. Alma 3:26 speaks of those fallen in war going to "eternal happiness or eternal misery, according to the spirit which they listed to obey." Other relevant examples include Alma 9:11, 26:20, 40:15, 17, 21; 42:1,26; Helaman 3:29, 5:12, 7:16, 12:26, and Mormon 8:38.

The misery-related aspect of the Book of Enoch may involve yet another Book of Mormon issue.

After the doom of misery is mentioned in Moses 7:41, Enoch saw the wicked with a touch of God's perspective and compassion as he "looked upon their wickedness, and their misery, and wept and stretched forth his arms as wide as eternity, and his heart swelled wide as eternity; and his bowels yearned, and all eternity shook."⁶⁷

Here, in an imitation of God's love and perhaps even His Son's offering, Enoch stretches out his arms as body and soul yearn for the welfare of others. Terry L. Givens and Fiona Givens describe this scene as "plumb[ing] the mystery of the weeping God" in which Enoch "is raised to a perspective from which he sees the world through God's eyes."⁶⁸ His heart swells (in the canonized version that we have), perhaps like Christ's

analysis of "misery" here. See Kent P. Jackson, "Moses 7," in *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2005), 117–136; <https://rsc.byu.edu/pt-pt/node/2135>.

⁶⁷ In OT2, Joseph had changed the original "his heart swelled wide as eternity" to "he beheld eternity" (Jackson, "Moses 7"), a change that was dropped in the 1867 Committee Manuscript that would be the basis for the current LDS version of the Book of Moses (Jackson, "History of the Book of Moses," in *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*). Whether Enoch's heart swelled wide as eternity or he otherwise beheld eternity, he appears to obtain a view or taste of eternity in this experience.

⁶⁸ Terry L. Givens and Fiona Givens, *The God Who Weeps: How Mormonism Makes Sense of Life* (Salt Lake City: Ensign Peak, 2012), 105.

who appears to have literally died from a “broken heart.”⁶⁹ The yearning of Enoch’s bowels also points to Christ’s suffering in the Atonement that gave Him the “bowels of mercy” that are mentioned several times in the Book of Mormon (Mosiah 15:9; Alma 26:37; and Alma 34:15).

If something similar to this passage were present on the brass plates, it could have served as a basis for a few parts of the Book of Mormon that are linked to the brass plates. The Book of Mormon’s first reference to an “infinite atonement” occurs in 2 Nephi 9:7, a passage surrounded by other material that appears to be rich in Book of Moses themes. Those connections include Reynolds’ concept of “transgression-fall, fall-death” in Moses 6:59 reflected in 2 Nephi 9:6 (see Table 1) and multiple concepts in 2 Nephi 9:9 (see Table 2, discussed further below). There are also references to the plan of salvation (Moses 6:62) in 2 Nephi 9:6, 13; the fall of Satan and his angels (Moses 4:3–4, 7:26) in 2 Nephi 9:8–9; “temporal” versus “spiritual” death (related to Moses 6:63) in 2 Nephi 9:11–12; and the chains of Satan (Moses 7:26, 57) in 2 Nephi 9:45. Enoch was “clothed upon with glory” in Moses 7:3 as he saw the Lord in a theophany on a mountain, and in 2 Nephi 9:14, the righteous who enter the Lord’s presence will be “clothed with purity, yea, even with the robe of righteousness,” also suggestive of Isaiah’s beautiful garments (Isaiah 52:1). (A possible connection involving 2 Nephi 9:44 will be discussed later.) Given the abundance of possible links to Book of Moses material in 2 Nephi 9, is it possible that the concept of an infinite atonement was on the brass plates, and possibly tied to Enoch’s vision?

It is significant that the richest allusions to Book of Moses material occur among the early Nephite writers, especially Lehi and his righteous sons, but also the great orator and student of the brass plates, Alma₂. These allusions often seem to cluster together, especially in the writings of early prophets presumably most familiar with the brass plates. An example of such clustering, again mentioning the devil, is 2 Nephi 9:9, a verse cited by Reynolds but without the emphasis that it may deserve:

And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become *devils, angels to a devil*, to be *shut out from the presence of our God*, and to remain with *the father of lies*, in *misery*, like unto himself; yea, to that being who beguiled our first parents,

⁶⁹ The water rather than blood that was released when the spear struck Christ in the side while on the cross has been understood as a symptom of a medical condition from what can be called “a broken heart.” See W. Reid Lichfield, “The Search for the Physical Cause of Jesus Christ’s Death,” *BYU Studies* 37/4 (1997-98); <http://byustudies.byu.edu/content/search-physical-cause-jesus-christs-death>.

who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto *secret combinations* of murder and all manner of *secret works of darkness*. [emphasis added]

This single verse in 2 Nephi involves the Book of Moses themes of the devil as the “father of all lies” (Moses 4:4), being “shut out from the presence of God” (Moses 5:4, 41, 6:49), “secret combinations” (Moses 5:51), “works of darkness” (Moses 5:51, 55), and the concept of *miser*y for those who follow Satan (Moses 7:37, 41). It also refers to the beguiling of Adam and Eve, a theme in common with the Book of Moses and Genesis, and Satan’s ability to make impressive appearances in his efforts to deceive, possibly related to his appearance to Moses wherein he commanded Moses to worship him, though clearly lacking the majestic glory of God. In Moses 6:49, just before a mention of being “shut out from the presence of God” and following a reference to *miser*y in the preceding verse, we also read that “Satan hath come among the children of men, and tempteth them to worship him.” The detail of appearing as an angel of light is not given here but may be related. Satan appearing as an angel of light to Adam and Eve is also a theme in the pseudepigraphal *First Book of Adam and Eve*⁷⁰ and is mentioned, of course, in 2 Corinthians 11:14.

The infinite atonement is also mentioned in Alma 34. Amulek mentions Alma₂’s preaching in Alma 33 based upon brass plates material (Zenos, Zenock, and Moses, mentioned in Alma 34:7), then describes the need for an “infinite and eternal sacrifice” (Alma 34:10, 14). It is the suffering of the Messiah in completing his infinite atonement that brings about the “bowels of mercy” in Alma 34:15, perhaps reminiscent of the yearning of Enoch’s bowels. As a result of this infinite atonement, “mercy ... encircles [the redeemed] in the arms of safety” as part of the “great and eternal plan of redemption” (Alma 34:16), similar to the plan of salvation in Moses 6:62. Another Book of Moses concept identified by Reynolds, the withdrawal of the Lord’s Spirit from men (Moses 1:15), is also present in Alma 34:35 (see Table 1).

The Book of Mormon’s doctrine of an infinite atonement has been said to betray nineteenth century origins for the book, an argument that

⁷⁰ *First Book of Adam and Eve*, 9:1 [Vita], in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments*, 2 vols. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983), 2:260; https://books.google.com/books?id=RU77ekrD_vIC&pg=PA260.

has been rebutted in several ways.⁷¹ As a further consideration, given the abundant material possibly related to the Book of Moses found near the Book of Mormon’s references to the infinite atonement, could that concept draw upon brass plate material? Enoch’s experience with God’s cosmic perspective caused eternity to shake as his heart swelled as wide as eternity, suggestive of the eternal, infinite scope of Christ’s love and of His atoning sacrifice. Could the imagery in Enoch point to the infinite, cosmic scope of God’s compassion and the Atonement?⁷²

Rage and Satan’s Dominion Over the Hearts of Men

Another important teaching about Satan in the Book of Moses is how he influences men. Reynolds points to Moses 6:15 as a possible source for three important Book of Mormon concepts: Satanic *secret works* (related to “secret combinations” in Moses 5:51), *seeking for power*, and *wars and bloodshed*, a phrase frequently used in the Book of Mormon, though sometimes with slight variations.⁷³ Two more concepts in this verse may merit consideration: Satan’s “dominion” over men and his ability to “rage in their hearts”: “And the children of men were numerous upon all the face of the land. And in those days Satan had great *dominion* among men, and *raged in their hearts*; and from thenceforth came wars and bloodshed; and a man’s hand was against his own brother, in administering death, because of secret works, seeking for power” (Moses 6:15) [emphasis added].

The theme of dominion over men is akin to Satan’s quest for power over men, which Reynolds views as a theme related to Moses 4:3, where Satan “sought to destroy the agency of man” and sought God’s own power.

71 Jeff Lindsay, “Mercy, Justice, and the Atonement in the Book of Mormon: Modern or Ancient Concepts?,” *Mormon Answers*, JeffLindsay.com; <http://www.jefflindsay.com/LDSFAQ/mercy.shtml>.

72 There is more to Enoch’s vision and to the many themes in the brief Book of Moses that show connections to ancient temple themes and other ancient traditions, possibly including the brass plates. Jeffrey Bradshaw, for example, has detailed many noteworthy ancient connections in the Book of Moses that merit further consideration. See Jeffrey Bradshaw, *Temple Themes in the Book of Moses* (Salt Lake City, UT: Eborn Publishing, 2010). Bradshaw has also noted parallels with other ancient Jewish texts in Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, “The LDS Story of Enoch as the Culminating Episode of a Temple Text,” *BYU Studies Quarterly* 53/1 (2014), 38–73; <http://byustudies.org/content/lds-story-enoah-culminating-episode-temple-text>.

73 Jacob 7:24; Omni 1:3, 24; Alma 35:15; 62:35, 39. Cf. also Mosiah 29:36; Alma 45:11; 60:16; Helaman 6:17; Mormon 8:8; Ether 14:21, as listed by Reynolds, “The Brass Plates Version of Genesis,” 167–68.

Satan’s “dominion” over man may be equally relevant, and that word may be used to reflect Satan’s corruption of the dominion that God has, a tiny portion of which God delegated to Adam and Eve (Moses 2:26, 28). Moses 6:15 adds a dimension to Satan’s power over men by showing that his dominion has a relationship to anger, for his dominion is manifest as he “rage[s] in their hearts,” leading to wars, bloodshed, etc.

In light of Moses 6:15 and the link between Satan’s dominion/power/hold over men and his anger-inducing influence over the hearts of men, a persistent pattern in the Book of Mormon becomes interesting, for most Book of Mormon references to Satan’s power over men also mention their hearts. Indeed, one of the first examples of this is 1 Nephi 14:7, our first example above of additional links between the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon. It relates the “hardness of [men’s] hearts” to “the captivity of the devil” — Satan’s influence over the hearts of men again being a key tool toward achieving his aim of gaining dominion and making us his captives.

Further examples include:

- 1 Nephi 12:17, where “the mists of darkness are the temptations of the *devil*, which blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the *hearts* of the children of men, and *leadeth them away*” to be lost.
- 1 Nephi 13:27, 29, were “*Satan* hath great *power* over them” who were deceived by the great and abominable church, acting to “blind the eyes and harden the *hearts* of the children of men.”
- 1 Nephi 22:15, where “the time cometh speedily that *Satan* shall have no more *power* over the *hearts* of the children of men.”
- 1 Nephi 22:26, where in the great Millennium, “*Satan* has no *power*; ... for he hath no *power* over the *hearts* of the people.”
- 2 Nephi 30:18: “*Satan* shall have *power* over the *hearts* of the children of men no more.”
- Mosiah 3:6: “And he shall cast out *devils*, or the evil spirits which dwell in the *hearts* of the children of men.”
- Alma 8:9: “*Satan* had gotten great *hold upon the hearts* of the people of the city of Ammonihah.”
- Alma 10:24, 25: The people in Ammonihah are *angry* because of *Satan’s* “*great hold upon*” their *hearts*. (He also blinds their eyes.)
- Alma 27:12: “*Satan* has great *hold on the hearts* of the Amalekites [or Amlicites⁷⁴], who do stir up the Lamanites to *anger* against

74 J. Christopher Conkling, “Alma’s Enemies: The Case of the Lamanites, Amlicites, and Mysterious Amalekites,” *Journal of Book of Mormon*

- their brethren to slay them.” (Moses 6:15 indicates that as a result of Satan’s dominion, “a man’s hand was against his own brother.”)
- Helaman 6:21: “*Satan* did stir up the *hearts* of the more part of the Nephites, insomuch that they did unite with those bands of robbers, and did enter into their covenants and oaths [secret combinations, with “secret murders” nearby in Helaman 6:17, and “secret signs” and “secret words” in the following verse, Helaman 6:22], ... that they should not suffer for their murders, and their plunderings, and their stealings.” V. 22 speaks three times of “brothers” in those evil covenants.
 - Helaman 16:22: the people had foolish and vain imaginings “in their hearts ... and they were much disturbed, for *Satan did stir them up* ... that he might *harden the hearts* of the people against that which was good”
 - Helaman 16:23: “*Satan* did get *great hold upon the hearts* of the people.”
 - 3 Nephi 1:22: lies were “sent forth among the people by *Satan*, to *harden their hearts*” and deceive them.
 - 3 Nephi 2:2–3: The people were “imagining up some vain thing in their *hearts*” due to the “*power of the devil*,” who sought to “deceive the *hearts* of the people; and thus did *Satan get possession of the hearts* of the people again, insomuch that he did blind their eyes and lead them away” Thus “*Satan* did go about, *leading away the hearts* of the people.”
 - 3 Nephi 6:15–16: “*Satan had great power*, unto the stirring up of the people ... tempting them to seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world. And thus *Satan* did *lead away the hearts* of the people” The result of this power over men’s hearts is that “many of the people were exceedingly *angry*” (v. 21) at inspired teachers of righteousness (v. 20). “Angry” occurs 3 times in v. 21, and there follows a secret scheme in which the angry priests and lawyers secretly put prophets to death (vv. 22–24). The wicked murderers secretly “combine” in a wicked covenant that originally “was given and administered by the devil” (vv. 27–28). This secret combination results in the destruction of the government in 3 Nephi 7:5–6, as they “yield themselves unto the *power of Satan*.”

- 3 Nephi 11:29: Christ warns that “the devil ... stirreth up the hearts of the children of men to content with anger, one with another.”
- 4 Nephi 28: An apostate “church did multiply exceedingly because of iniquity, and because of the *power of Satan* who did *get hold upon their hearts*.” Then in v. 31, “the people did harden their hearts, and did seek to kill” the disciples of Christ.
- Ether 8:15–26: Moroni describes the rise of a Satanic secret combination among the Jaredites. “And they were kept up by the *power of the devil* to administer these oaths unto the people, to keep them in darkness, to help such as sought power to gain power, and to murder” (v.16, cf. v. 23). Moroni warns us to oppose a similar combination in our day that will seek massive power, for “it is built up by the *devil*, who is the father of all lies; even that same liar who beguiled our first parents, yea, even that same liar who hath caused man to commit murder from the beginning; *who hath hardened the hearts of men* that they have murdered the prophets ... ” (v. 25). Moroni was commanded to write about it “that evil may be done away, and that the time may come that *Satan* may have no *power upon the hearts* of the children of men” (v. 26).
- Ether 15:19: “*Satan* had *full power over the hearts* of the people; for they were given up unto the *hardness of their hearts*, and the blindness of their minds that they might be destroyed; wherefore they went again to battle.” Thus they fight (vv. 20–23), “drunken with *anger*” (v. 23).
- Moroni 9:3–4: Mormon fears the Nephites will be destroyed, for “*Satan stirreth them up* continually to *anger* one with another.” When he preaches the word of God “they tremble and *anger* against me; and when I use no sharpness they *harden their hearts* against it.”

In fact, the majority of Book of Mormon references to Satan’s power or influence involve his influence over the hearts of men and his ability to stir them up to anger, consistent with influence from possible content on the brass plates overlapping with the Book of Moses. Other somewhat related examples could be cited, such as Alma 12:11, where those who harden their hearts are taken captive by the devil. Hearts, Satan, and his power to captivate, often involving anger, are a persistent thread in the Book of Mormon.

The Hebrew word for “heart,” *leb* (לֵב, Strong’s H3820⁷⁵) should not be confused with the modern medical understanding of heart, as Marjorie O’Rourke Boyle explains.⁷⁶ The heart is related to the will, the intellect, and the choice to walk in the law of God or against the law. When “broken,” it can be a sign of deformity and walking improperly before God, akin to broken bones, and the broken heart can then be bound up like a wound in order to be healed and restore the injured party to health in the covenant.⁷⁷ We could therefore say a heart that is hardened or, in the case of Book of Mormon themes, controlled by Satan, is one that leads a person to walk perversely, contrary to the law of God and in violation of the covenant. Satan’s dominion over a heart expresses his power to lead the person along Satan’s paths toward hell. The actions and paths taken, ultimately leading to captivity, may be far more important here than any emotions *per se*.

Turning back to the concept of Satan’s “rage” in the hearts of men in Moses 6:15, rage is not frequently used in the KJV Bible. It can refer to the anger of ordinary mortals, including those who are angry at the righteous (Psalm 2:1[רגש]; Psalm 46:6 [המה]; Daniel 3:13 [Aramaic: [רגז]); or to natural elements such as waters and floods that rage (Ether 3:3; Psalm 89:9 [גאות]; Proverbs 6:34 [המה]; and Jonah 1:15 [זעף]). The Book of Moses concept of rage as a tool of Satan does not appear to be explicitly in the KJV Bible, and no form of *rage* occurs in any verse with *heart* in the KJV. But it is in the Book of Mormon in 2 Nephi 28:20, where the devil rages in the hearts of men in a passage dealing with shaking, chains, anger, and being lead by Satan into captivity — all Book of Moses themes that appear to be strongly connected to the Book of Mormon. Here is the context from 2 Nephi 28:18–23, taken from Skousen’s *The Earliest Text*, which has some slight differences from the current LDS printing:

18. But behold, that great and abominable church,
the whore of all the earth,
must tumble to the earth;
and great must be the fall thereof.

19. For the kingdom of the devil must shake.
And they which belong to it must needs be stirred up unto

⁷⁵ Strong’s H3820, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=H3820&t=Kjv> .

⁷⁶ Marjorie O’Rourke Boyle, “Broken Hearts: The Violation of Biblical Law,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 73/3 (Sept. 2005): 731–757; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/413991>.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

repentance,
 or the *devil* will grasp them with his *everlasting chains*,
 and they be *stirred up to anger* and perish.

20. For behold, at that day shall he *rage in the hearts* of the
 children of men
 and *stir them up to anger against* that which is good.

21. And others will he pacify and lull them away into carnal
 security,

that they will say:
 All is well in Zion;
 yea, Zion prospereth.
 All is well!

And thus the devil cheateth their souls
 and *leadeth them* away carefully down to *hell*.

22. And behold, others he flattereth away and telleth them:
 There is no hell.

And he saith unto them:
 I am no devil,
 for there is none.

And thus he whispereth in their ears
 until he *grasps* them with his *awful chains*,
 from whence there is no deliverance.

23. Yea, they are *grasped* with death and hell and the devil;
 and all that have been *seized* therewith must stand before the
 throne of God
 and be judged according to their works,
 from whence they must go into the place prepared for them,
 even a lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment⁷⁸
 [emphasis added].

Satan's raging in the hearts of men in this context provides a fascinating potential connection between the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon, one that possibly may have been mediated via the ancient brass plates. Such connections do not seem randomly scattered

⁷⁸ Royal Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, 142–144. The current LDS printing has an apparently duplicate occurrence of “and death, and hell,” in v. 23 and some minor punctuation differences. Skousen also provides line breaks to better assist the reader in seeing the flow of the text.

but most closely align with the writers who explicitly show strong familiarity with the brass plates.

Shaking and Trembling

Many Book of Mormon passages involving dust, chains, and related motifs seem to invoke shaking and trembling. Some of this symbolism involves apparel such as in 2 Nephi 9:44, where Jacob gives a possible variation on Isaiah’s shaking off of dust (Isaiah 52:2) when he says, “I take off my garments, and I shake them before you” as a witness that he “shook your iniquities” from his soul, showing his discharge of the prophetic responsibility to warn sinners. Here he symbolically removes the iniquity of others from his garments, shaking it off like dust. In addition to the parallel to Isaiah 52:2, there may also be a more specific connection to the shaking off of dust from one’s feet as a witness (Matthew 10:14, Mark 6:11, Luke 9:5, 10:11, and Acts 13:51; cf. Doctrine & Covenants 24:15), a ritual which Daniel L. Belnap sees as derived from ancient hospitality practices that included the washing of feet when guests were properly received.⁷⁹ Another connection to dust and feet is the removal of shoes or sandals by ancient priests before entering the temple and Moses’s removal of his shoes before the burning bush (Exodus 3:4–5; also see Acts 7:33 and Joshua 5:15), as discussed by John Tvedtnes. “Removal of street shoes enabled the temple to remain ritually pure from the ground, which was cursed because of the Fall of Adam (see Genesis 3:17–18).”⁸⁰

Chains and the captivity of Satan are sometimes directly associated with shaking and trembling, as in 2 Nephi 1:13 (“shake off the awful chains,” spoken by Lehi the “trembling parent” in v. 14 who also urges his sons to “arise from the dust”); 2 Nephi 1:23 (“shake off the chains”); 2 Nephi 9:44–45 (“shake off the chains” in parallel to shaking of garments and shaking off iniquities in v. 44), 2 Nephi 28:19 (the great and abominable church “must tumble to the earth” in v. 18, and then

79 Daniel L. Belnap, “Those Who Receive You Not?: The Rite of Wiping Dust Off the Feet,” in *By Our Rites of Worship: Latter-day Saint Views on Ritual in History, Scripture, and Practice*, ed. Daniel L. Belnap (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2013), 209–260; <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/our-rites-worship-latter-day-saint-views-ritual-history-scripture-and-practice/those-who>.

80 John A. Tvedtnes, “Priestly Clothing in Bible Times,” in Donald Parry (ed.), *Temples of the Ancient World* (Salt Lake City: Deseret and FARMS, 1994) 649–704; text at <http://publications.mi.byu.edu/fullscreen/?pub=2246&index=25> or see the PDF at this shortcut: <http://tinyurl.com/priestlyclothing>.

in v. 19 “the kingdom of the devil must shake ... the devil will grasp them with his everlasting chains”). The Book of Mormon blends dust and chains as symbols of captivity and death and offers shaking as a path to liberation from both. Isaiah 14 is also quoted in 2 Nephi 24, where Lucifer/the King of Babylon, now overthrown and brought to down to the pit, in v. 16 is identified as the one who “made the earth to tremble” and “did shake kingdoms.”

In the Book of Moses, shaking also plays a role. Here the connection to the Book of Mormon is weaker than in other cases explored here and may not have been a likely source for Nephite expressions, although the relationship may still be considered. In the last days, the “heavens shall shake, and also the earth” as the heavens are “darkened, and a veil of darkness” covers the earth (Moses 7:61). “Satan began to tremble, and the earth shook” as Moses withstood him (Moses 1:21). When Enoch gets a taste of the Lord’s perspective and understands the misery that wicked humans face, “his heart swelled wide as eternity [or “he beheld eternity,” per the OT²⁸¹], and his bowels yearned, and all eternity shook” (Moses 7:41). The people also tremble as Enoch teaches them, warning of Satan’s temptations and explaining that through the fall, we are made “partakers of misery and woe” (Moses 6:47–49). This, however, does not directly involve the liberating motifs of shaking off dust or chains found in some Book of Mormon passages (which are more aligned with Isaiah 52:2) but have some commonality with passages describing the fall of Satan’s dominion and the Lord’s power. We will consider other aspects of shaking and trembling in Parts 2 and 3.

Avoiding the Voiding of God’s Word

The Book of Moses, Isaiah, and the Book of Mormon all use the concept of God’s “word” returning (or becoming) “void,” a concept not found elsewhere in the scriptures. The context of use in the Book of Mormon corresponds most closely to that of the Book of Moses. First consider Moses 4:30: “For as I, the Lord God, liveth, even so *my words cannot return void*, for as they go forth out of my mouth they must be fulfilled” [emphasis added],

Similar language involving “void” is found in Isaiah 55:11: “So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: *it shall not return unto me void*, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it” [emphasis added].

81 Jackson, “Moses 7.”

Now compare the use of “void” in Alma 12:22–23, 26:

22 Now Alma said unto him: This is the thing which I was about to explain, now we see that Adam did fall by the partaking of the forbidden fruit, according to *the word of God*; and thus we see, that by his fall, all mankind became a lost and fallen people.

23 And now behold, I say unto you that if it had been possible for Adam to have partaken of the fruit of the tree of life at that time, there would have been no death, and *the word would have been void*, making God a liar, for he said: If thou eat thou shalt surely die. ...

26 And now behold, if it were possible that our first parents could have gone forth and partaken of the tree of life they would have been forever miserable, having no preparatory state; and thus the plan of redemption would have been frustrated, and *the word of God would have been void*, taking none effect. [emphasis added]

It is entirely possible that Isaiah was the source behind the use of *void* in Alma 12 (and may have provided the language for Joseph’s choice of wording in Moses 4:30). What is interesting, though, is that the idea of the word of God being *voided* is introduced in Moses 4, not merely in the general context of the Creation account but in the specific context of the Garden of Eden and the fall of Adam.

The only other use of the word *void* in the Book of Mormon occurs later in the Book of Alma, chapter 42, and in a context even more closely aligned with the Book of Moses, specifically referring to the expulsion from the Garden of Eden:

2 Now behold, my son, I will explain this thing unto thee. For behold, after the Lord God sent our first parents forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground, from whence they were taken — yea, he drew out the man, and he placed at the east end of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the tree of life —

3 Now, we see that the man had become as God, knowing good and evil; and lest he should put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever, the Lord God placed cherubim and the flaming sword, that he should not partake of the fruit —

4 And thus we see, that there was a time granted unto man to repent, yea, a probationary time, a time to repent and serve God.

5 For behold, if Adam had put forth his hand immediately, and partaken of the tree of life, he would have lived forever, according to the word of God, having no space for repentance; yea, and also *the word of God would have been void*, and the great plan of salvation would have been frustrated. [emphasis added]

All three occurrences of *void* with respect to the word of God in the Book of Mormon involve the precise scene where it is present in the Book of Moses, and come from Alma₂, a keeper and careful student of the brass plates who discusses them explicitly (Alma 37) and quotes from them several times (e.g., Alma 33).

The Workmanship of God's Hands

Another potential link to the brass plates is the phrase *the workmanship of his hands* found in Jacob 4, in the context of urging us to take counsel from the Lord:

9 For behold, by the power of his word man came upon the face of the earth, which earth was created by the power of his word. Wherefore, if God being able to speak and the world was, and to speak and man was created, O then, why not able to command the earth, or *the workmanship of his hands* upon the face of it, according to his will and pleasure?

10 Wherefore, brethren, seek not to *counsel* the Lord, but to take *counsel* from his hand. For behold, ye yourselves know that he *counseleth* in wisdom, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works. [emphasis added]

In Moses 1:4, God tells Moses that he is about to show him “the workmanship of mine hands.” More noteworthy, however, is Moses 7, where right after Enoch asks how God can weep and right before Enoch’s heart swells as wide as eternity, God answers Enoch by referring to “the workmanship of [his] hands” four times. He also affirms that “Man of Counsel” is his name:

32 The Lord said unto Enoch: Behold these thy brethren; they are *the workmanship of mine own hands*, and I gave unto them

their knowledge, in the day I created them; and in the Garden of Eden, gave I unto man his agency;

33 And unto thy brethren have I said, and also given commandment, that they should love one another, and that they should choose me, their Father; but behold, they are without affection, and they hate their own blood;

34 And the fire of mine indignation is kindled against them; and in my hot displeasure will I send in the floods upon them, for my fierce anger is kindled against them.

35 Behold, I am God; Man of Holiness is my name; *Man of Counsel is my name*; and Endless and Eternal is my name, also.

36 Wherefore, I can stretch forth mine hands and hold all the creations which I have made; and mine eye can pierce them also, and among all *the workmanship of mine hands* there has not been so great wickedness as among thy brethren.

37 But behold, their sins shall be upon the heads of their fathers; Satan shall be their father, and misery shall be their doom; and the whole heavens shall weep over them, even all *the workmanship of mine hands*; wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer? ...

38 But behold, these which thine eyes are upon shall perish in the floods; and behold, I will shut them up; a prison have I prepared for them.

39 And that which I have chosen hath pled before my face. Wherefore, he suffereth for their sins; inasmuch as they will repent in the day that my Chosen shall return unto me, and until that day they shall be in torment;

40 Wherefore, for this shall the heavens weep, yea, and all *the workmanship of mine hands*. [emphasis added]

The OT2 as written by Joseph's scribes had "man of council" instead of "Man of Counsel," the change to the latter introduced in the 1878 printing of the Pearl of Great Price.⁸² Why the change was made is unclear, and given the relationship in the both the sound and meaning of the words, it may be difficult to make firm conclusions about what was intended, though an intended "council" in Moses 7:35 would weaken

82 Ibid. See also Jackson, "History of the Book of Moses."

but not eradicate a connection to “counsel” in the Book of Mormon.⁸³ In fact, which word was intended may be not be important given that both “council” and “counsel” may be related to the same Hebrew word *çôwd* (סוּד, Strong’s H5475), which can mean “council” or “counsel.” The root refers to a couch or pillow on which people recline, and thus can mean a sitting-together, such as an assembly of friends in conversation (a council) or deliberation and counsel, as in Jeremiah 23:18 (“who hath stood in the counsel of the LORD”?) or secret, which is how it is translated in Amos 3:7 (“the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets”).⁸⁴

“Workmanship” occurs six times in the Old Testament, always describing a mortal’s handiwork, and once in the New Testament in a more relevant sense, where Paul states that we are God’s workmanship (Ephesians 2:10). However, the phrase “workmanship of [God’s] hands” does not occur in the KJV Bible. Its only instance outside of Jacob and the Book of Moses is in Doctrine and Covenants 29:25, given in September 1830, after the Book of Mormon had been published and the Book of Moses work was underway, not surprisingly suggesting that the phrase had entered Joseph’s own vocabulary.

Jacob uses noun and verb forms of *counsel* three times in a passage also mentioning “the workmanship of mine hands,” and then, similar to Moses 7:38, follows with an appeal to be reconciled with Christ through his Atonement. This occurs immediately before Jacob gives the lengthy allegory of the tame and wild olive trees in Jacob 5, where he quotes directly from Zenos on the brass plates. Could his language regarding the workmanship of God’s hands and God’s counsel have been influenced by something similar to Moses 7:32–40 on the brass plates that he knew so well? This example again fits the pattern of correspondences between the two books being strongest among the earlier authors of the Book of Mormon who were most familiar with the brass plates.

Tying the “Naught” Between Moses and the Brass Plates?

Yet another tentative tie between the brass plates and the Book of Moses involves the concept of “esteeming” scripture as a thing of “naught.”

⁸³ Other noteworthy changes in the OT2 that are not found in our current Book of Moses include replacing “knowledge, in the day I created them” with “intelligence” and in the Garden of Eden context replacing “gave I unto man his agency” with “man had agency.”

⁸⁴ Strong’s H5475, *Blue Letter Bible*; <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=H5475&t=kjv> .

Naught and *nought* both occur in the King James Bible but not in the context given in Moses 1:40–41:

40 And now, Moses, my son, I will speak unto thee concerning this earth upon which thou standest; and thou shalt write the things which I shall speak.

41 And in a day when the children of men shall *esteem my words as naught* and take many of them from the book which thou shalt write, behold, I will raise up another like unto thee; and they shall be had again among the children of men — among as many as shall believe.

Compare that to 1 Nephi 19:6–9 below which mentions things which some men esteem of great worth that others set at naught and trample under their feet. Nephi then begins quoting from Zenock and Zenos after this, showing that he is in “brass plates mode.” Also compare 2 Nephi 33:2, in which those who harden their hearts “cast away many things which are written and esteem them as things of naught.”

6 Nevertheless, I do not write anything upon plates save it be that I think it be sacred. . . . 7 For the things which some men *esteem* to be of great worth, both to the body and soul, others set at *naught* and trample under their feet. Yea, even the very God of Israel do men trample under their feet but I would speak in other words — they set him at *naught*, and hearken not to the voice of his counsels 9 And the world, because of iniquity, shall judge him to be a thing of *naught*. . . .
[emphasis added]

This passage begins with a reference to writing upon plates, then follows in v. 10 with a reference to other prophets on the brass plates, specifically citing Zenoch, Zenos, and Neum who made prophecies of the ministry and sufferings of Christ. Thus, it is interesting that as Nephi was thinking about the word of God as recorded in plates, right before quoting from the brass plates, that he would use language similar to what is found in the Book of Moses and in the same context, esteeming the word of God as naught.

Moses 1:41 also relates to 2 Nephi 3 and prophecies of Joseph and the Restoration.

2 Nephi 33 also uses “esteem” and “naught” in the context of sacred writings:

2 But behold, there are many that harden their hearts against the Holy Spirit, that it hath no place in them; wherefore, they cast many *things* away *which are written* and *esteem* them *as things of naught*. 3. But I, Nephi, have written what I have written, and I *esteem* it as of great worth, and especially unto my people. ... [emphasis added].

Once again, the connections to the Book of Moses come from one of the writers most reliant on the brass plates.

It is interesting that the Book of Moses came forth in a day when secular scholars were laying the foundation for theories that the Exodus never happened and that Moses was fictional, brought forward most forcefully a few decades later by Julius Wellhausen in the 1880s with the Documentary Hypothesis⁸⁵ and now manifested as full-blown minimalism today. It truly is a day when the words of God are esteemed as naught, not even crudely historical in many cases, just pious fiction and fraud.

The topic of biblical “minimalism” and the loud modern scholars who declare much of the Bible to be fiction are treated in more depth in my recent discussion of scholarly attacks on the evidences for Lehi’s Trail in “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Map” at *The Interpreter*.⁸⁶ More useful LDS treatments of the Documentary Hypotheses are provided by Kevin Barney,⁸⁷ John Sorenson,⁸⁸ and David Bokovoy,⁸⁹ though these authors will disagree on some points. Among non-LDS scholars, the work of Richard Elliott Friedman in *Who Wrote*

85 Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (Berlin, 1882; 3rd ed., 1886; first published in 1878 as *Geschichte Israels*), English translation *Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel*, trans. by J. Sutherland Black and Allan Menzies (Edinburgh, 1883); available at *Gutenberg.org*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/4732/pg4732-images.html>.

86 Jeff Lindsay, “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Map: Part 1 of 2,” and “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Map: Part 2 of 2.”

87 Kevin L. Barney, “Reflections on the Documentary Hypothesis,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 33/1 (Spring 2000): 57–99; https://www.dialoguejournal.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi/articles/Dialogue_V33N01_79.pdf.

88 John L. Sorenson, “The ‘Brass Plates’ and Biblical Scholarship,” *Dialogue* 10/4 (1977): 31–39; https://dialoguejournal.com/wp-content/uploads/sbi/articles/Dialogue_V10N04_33.pdf.

89 David Bokovoy, “The Death of the Documentary Hypothesis,” *When Gods Were Men*, Patheos.com, Jan. 26, 2014; <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/davidbokovoy/2014/01/the-death-of-the-documentary-hypothesis/>. See also David E. Bokovoy, *Authoring the Old Testament: Genesis-Deuteronomy* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2014).

*the Bible?*⁹⁰ is best known and quite useful in explaining why Wellhausen was wrong in assigning a late, post-exilic date to the so-called priestly source that is said to be a source for much of the account of the Exodus and the wilderness phase of Israel. Other non-LDS scholars whose work challenges the modern “minimalists” by offering evidence that can support such things as an ancient Exodus tradition or the reality of Moses or David include Kenneth Kitchen,⁹¹ James K. Hoffmeier,⁹² and Yosef Garfinkel.⁹³ Regarding new evidence for the reality of an ancient Exodus, I also recommend Joshua Berman’s article, “Was There an Exodus?” published in *Mosaic Magazine* with responses from other scholars, both for and against.⁹⁴

There are loud voices that set sacred scripture as a thing of naught. They are countered by some scholars, but some of the most valuable evidence for the historical reality of many aspects of ancient scripture may be the witness that comes from the Book of Mormon, with its use of the brass plates buttressed not only by, say, evidence from the Arabian Peninsula for the reality of Nephi as an ancient writer who made that journey but also by the witness of the revealed Book of Moses, which appears to corroborate the reality of the brass plates and its language that is woven throughout the Book of Mormon, but especially in the writings of those clearly most familiar with the brass plates. The Book of Mormon, coupled with the evidence from the Book of Moses and other sources, may be exactly what the world needs in this era when the words of Moses and Moses himself are esteemed as a fictional thing of naught.

90 Richard Elliott Friedman, *Who Wrote the Bible*, 2nd edition (New York: HarperCollins, 1997).

91 K.A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003).

92 James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidences for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1996); James K. Hoffmeier, *Ancient Israel in Sinai: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Wilderness Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); and James K. Hoffmeier and Dennis R. Magary, editors, *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith? A Critical Appraisal of Modern and Postmodern Approaches to Scripture* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014).

93 Yosef Garfinkel, “The Birth & Death of Biblical Minimalism,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 37/3 (May/June 2011): 46–53, 78; <http://members.bib-arch.org/publication.asp?PubID=BSBA&Volume=37&Issue=3&ArticleID=6> (subscription required), accessed Feb. 25, 2016.

94 Joshua Berman, “Was There an Exodus?,” *Mosaic Magazine*, March 2, 2015; <http://mosaicmagazine.com/essay/2015/03/was-there-an-exodus/>.

What This Means So Far

Much of the content in the Book of Moses overlaps with material in Genesis, which was the source for Joseph's inspired translation that led to the Book of Moses. However, the presence of unique material in the Book of Moses that is also found or applied in the Book of Mormon provides support for Noel Reynolds' intriguing hypothesis about common material that could have been on the brass plates. In addition to the many examples Reynolds has provided, several new ones have been presented here that suggest there may be even more support for Reynolds' proposal.

Reynolds argued that the relationship appeared to be one-way, and that is consistent with what we observe in the new examples provided above. An important concept from the Book of Moses such as Satan's influence over hearts appears to be expanded and built into multiple phrases and formulae that suggest influence and derivation, and that influence is consistently strongest among those who were obviously keen students of the brass plates, especially Nephi and his family and then Alma₂. That kind of relationship is not one we would expect if the Book of Moses and Book of Mormon were all from the same author.

Interestingly, while the writings of Nephi and Alma₂ are somewhat adjacent chronologically, coming from the early days of the Nephites before the coming of Christ, they were widely separated in the translation process, since the small plates of Nephi were apparently at the end of Mormon's record, having been providentially added to make up for the loss that would occur with the lost 116 pages. Thus, for the text as we have it, the translation process apparently began with the Book of Mosiah, coming back to the writings of Nephi only at the end.⁹⁵ The consistency in brass plates usage and strong links to the not-yet-revealed Book of Moses between those writers raises another interesting challenge for

95 Abundant evidence supports the idea that Joseph and Oliver began their work with the Book of Mosiah, translated to the end of the book of Moroni in May, and then translated the Title Page, and at the end of the translation process, translated the small plates of Nephi (1 Nephi–Omni) and the Words of Mormon. The Title Page, "the last leaf" of the plates of Mormon (*HC* 1:71), was used in filing the copyright form on June 11, 1829. See John W. Welch, "The Miraculous Translation of the Book of Mormon," in *Opening the Heavens: Accounts of Divine Manifestations, 1820–1844*, ed. John W. Welch (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2005), 76–213; also available at <https://byustudies.byu.edu/content/opening-heavens-miraculous-translation-book-mormon-chapter-only>.

those seeking to explain the Book of Mormon as purely Joseph's Smith fabrication.

The theme of chains of darkness and Satan's power, briefly present in the Book of Moses but with dramatic imagery, appears to have been applied in a variety of ways in the Book of Mormon that connect the two texts time and time again in what appears to be a natural one-way relationship, with the Book of Moses connected to a proposed brass-plates source and not appearing to be derived from or dependent on the Book of Mormon.

Sometimes the connection between the two texts is almost hidden in the Book of Mormon, as with the obscure reference to chains of darkness in 2 Nephi 1:23, where *chains* and *obscurity* begin to forge a link connecting Nephi to the Book of Moses. The wordplay between *obscurity* and *dust* forges yet another link that opens up another interesting vista in Book of Mormon exploration, the persistent but often subtle use of dust-related themes in the Book of Mormon, which we explore in Part 2, leading us to also identify new structures in a famous Book of Mormon chiasmus with some long-overlooked possibilities, as we will explore in Part 3.

Meanwhile, we may do well to pay more attention to the significance of the brass plates as part of the Book of Mormon's ancient background. In an era when many deny that Moses even existed or that the writings of the Old Testament are largely fabrications concocted long after the Exile,⁹⁶ the Book of Mormon may be just the thing the world needs as another testament of Christ and a witness of the reality of some aspects of the ancient accounts that provide a foundation for the Gospel message. The relationship between the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon may be one small piece of the story that helps us appreciate the reality of the Book of Mormon as an ancient book, and the reality of Joseph Smith's role as a prophet of God able to bring forth both works.

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96. See, for example, Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* and Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*.

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