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# CONCLUSION

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Given the introductory nature of this book and the fact that linguistic investigations of the Book of Mormon are yet in their early stages, my examination of each topic herein has been brief and the examples of scriptural passages are representative rather than comprehensive. On the topic of chiasmus, for example, I present a handful of instances when, in point of fact, there are at least three hundred cases of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon<sup>1</sup>—enough to fill an entire volume! And each one deserves to be studied contextually as well as intertextually. These numerous chiastic arrangements collectively make a powerful statement regarding the antiquity of the Book of Mormon, as does the aggregate of the other Hebrew-like features treated in this book.

Most of the topics herein can and should be researched and expanded in future studies, including the repetition of *and* and *the*, possessive pronouns, disjunctive *and*, prophetic speech forms, inverted quotations, and idea-amplifying plurals. Perhaps researchers in the future will better utilize existing computerized research tools or avail themselves of new ones in order to test and strengthen current findings or to generate new ones.

Certainly much more remains to be explored in the Book of Mormon. I believe we can expect new findings as we reconsider and heed Elder Neal A. Maxwell's counsel to behave less like "hurried tourists" and strive to see the "rich detail yet to be savored."<sup>2</sup>

Notwithstanding the intriguing work of uncovering Hebraisms and Hebrew-like elements in the Book of Mormon, I return as promised to the vital messages that I touched on in the preface but wish to elaborate on here since they have eternal, far-reaching significance.

President Russell M. Nelson declared, "The Book of Mormon reveals that Jesus of Nazareth, born of Mary, is literally the Son of God. No book of scripture bears more solemnly the weighty burden of that testimony than does the Book of Mormon. Its pages contain nearly four thousand references to Christ, using more than one hundred different titles for Him. His holy name is mentioned on the average of once per every 2.8 verses. No wonder this book has been designated 'Another Testament of Jesus Christ.'"<sup>3</sup>

Nephi's testimony is characteristic of numerous Book of Mormon statements about Jesus Christ: "We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins" (2 Nephi 25:26). *The Book of Mormon's focus on Jesus Christ reminds us to do the same and to appreciate the book's primary role as "another testament of Christ," as its subtitle proclaims.*

A well-known passage states, "[God] will manifest the truth of [the Book of Mormon] unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost" (Moroni 10:4). A New Testament verse adds this on the law of witnesses: "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established" (2 Corinthians 13:1). A statement by President Nelson references four witnesses—the Lord, Joseph Smith, Ezra Taft Benson, and President Nelson himself—in order to emphasize that the Book of Mormon is indeed a "treasured testament of truth":

The Book of Mormon truly is a treasured testament. There is no other book quite like it. Can you find any other book delivered by an angel? Can you think of any other book prepared for people to read centuries later? Its writers did not write it for readers of their day. . . . It is a

book that the Lord Jesus Christ has personally testified to be true. In the form of an oath, the Lord said—referring to the Prophet Joseph Smith's work:

“He has translated the book, even that part which I have commanded him, and as your Lord and your God liveth it is true.” (D&C 17:6.) . . .

The Prophet Joseph Smith declared—and his successor, President Ezra Taft Benson, has reaffirmed—that the Book of Mormon is the keystone of our religion. It is a treasured testament of truth. . . .

Solemnly, I add my witness to that of my Brethren. It is true!<sup>4</sup>

An initial witness of the Book of Mormon can come in a variety of ways. One remarkable account comes from Zina Diantha Huntington Young (1821–1901), a young woman who lived in Nauvoo during the formative years of the Church. Her commanding testimony of the Book of Mormon describes the immediacy of her spiritual witness: “When I entered the room and read the title of the book [the Book of Mormon] that was lying on the window sill, my whole soul was filled with joy. Without opening it I clasped it to my heart and exclaimed, ‘O Truth, Truth, Truth!’ I knew it had been brought forth by an angel’s hand and the feeling that possessed me was one of supreme ecstasy. From that moment until the present I have never had a doubt of its divinity.”<sup>5</sup> *Whatever the time frame involved, the crucial point to bear in mind is that it is the Holy Ghost who witnesses that the Book of Mormon is, verily, the word of God.*

The Book of Mormon is imbued with a miraculous power to convert people to become followers of Jesus Christ and to accept him as their Savior and Redeemer. The transformational power of the Book of Mormon is evident in numerous Latter-day Saint congregations throughout the world, as people share their testimonies from the pulpit again and again, over the years and decades, regarding the power of the Book of Mormon in their lives.

In his article “The Book of Mormon Will Change Your Life,” President Henry B. Eyring explains that the Book of Mormon “is a testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Atonement and how it may work in their lives. You [can experience] the change that comes by the power of the Atonement because of studying this book.”<sup>6</sup> And President Thomas S. Monson

provided this important witness: “The Book of Mormon changes lives. May each of us read it and reread it.”<sup>7</sup>

Note the life-changing influence of the Book of Mormon on Parley P. Pratt, an early convert to the Church:

I opened [the Book of Mormon] with eagerness, and read its title page. I then read the testimony of several witnesses in relation to the manner of its being found and translated. After this I commenced its contents by course. I read all day; eating was a burden, I had no desire for food; sleep was a burden when the night came, for I preferred reading to sleep. As I read, the spirit of the Lord was upon me, and I knew and comprehended that the book was true. . . . This discovery greatly enlarged my heart, and filled my soul with joy and gladness. I esteemed the Book, or the information contained in it, more than all the riches of the world.<sup>8</sup>

President Marion G. Romney shared this sacred experience:

I remember reading [the Book of Mormon] with one of my lads when he was very young. On one occasion I lay in the lower bunk and he in the upper bunk. We were each reading aloud alternate paragraphs of those last three marvelous chapters of Second Nephi. I heard his voice breaking and thought he had a cold, but we went on to the end of the three chapters. As we finished he said to me, “Daddy, do you ever cry when you read the Book of Mormon?”

“Yes, Son,” I answered, “Sometimes the Spirit of the Lord so witnesses to my soul that the Book of Mormon is true that I do cry.”

“Well,” he said, “that is what happened to me tonight.”<sup>9</sup>

*Such experiences underscore the role of the Holy Ghost in witnessing the truth of the Book of Mormon as well as the book’s remarkable power to transform lives—millions of lives, in fact.*

Latter-day Saints from all over the world experience tender moments when the power of the Holy Ghost is manifested in connection with the Book of Mormon. One such memorable experience of mine dates back to 1993. That year I taught an Old Testament honors course at Brigham

Young University. About twenty-five students attended the class. One day, about three minutes before the class was scheduled to close, one of my students innocently made a comment that brought a heavy feeling (or bad spirit) into the classroom. Not wanting to send my students into the world that way, I felt impressed to do something unusual: I asked two students to choose a number between one and ten. I then invited the class to turn to the book of Alma using the first number as the chapter number and the second as the verse number. We all read the verse together and immediately a light filled the room again and the heavy feeling departed. Immediately! As I looked into the eyes of my students, I knew that some of them understood clearly what had happened and recognized the power of a randomly selected Book of Mormon verse to bring light into our souls. Just then the bell rang. I left the class filled with gratitude that our loving Heavenly Father had given us the gift of the Book of Mormon and that this ancient scriptural record has such great power to bring us into his light.

## Notes

1. See Parry, *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon*.
2. Maxwell, *Not My Will, but Thine*, 33.
3. Nelson, "Treasured Testament," 64.
4. Nelson, "Treasured Testament."
5. As recorded by May Booth Talmage, "Past Three Score Years," 256.
6. Eyring, "Book of Mormon Will Change Your Life."
7. Monson, "Precious Promises," 5.
8. Pratt, *Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt*, 20.
9. Romney, "Book of Mormon," *Improvement Era*, 330.