INTRODUCTION

The Book of Mormon . . . resonates with people who know the Old Testament, especially those who are conversant with its Hebrew language. The Book of Mormon is rich with Hebraisms—traditions, symbolisms, idioms, and literary forms. It is familiar because more than 80 percent of its pages come from Old Testament times.

—President Russell M. Nelson[1]

This present work—designed for laypersons—constitutes a brief presentation of Hebrew elements and other ancient peculiarities in the Book of Mormon, including

- Hebraisms and Hebrew-like idioms and expressions;[2]
- literary forms and configurations, including parallelisms and poetic structures;
- various Hebrew names, including designations that were unknown before the coming forth of the Book of Mormon;
- Hebrew grammatical forms, structures, and rules of language that evoke Biblical Hebrew grammar; and
- other Hebrew-like expressions and patterns.

This work comprises thirty brief chapters, with each chapter presenting a distinct topic. That there are at least thirty different Hebraic structures discoverable in the Book of Mormon despite its translation from an ancient language into English is astonishing! And this book of scripture with its rich yet subtle integration of ancient Hebraic elements came forth in a total of about twelve weeks of translation work by a twenty-three-year-old prophet of God who lacked the equivalence of a high school education! I find this fact astonishing as well.

In this book I have sought to avoid specialized terminology, technical analysis, and heavy documentation that will not serve the interests of general readers. In this way I hope to share with as large an audience as possible the surprisingly rich Old World linguistic inheritance underlying much of the Book of Mormon text. This book, then, is no more and no less than an *introduction* to Hebraisms and Hebrew-like structures in the Book of Mormon.

I have drawn from the work of scholars, linguists, and language experts who have previously explored this subject and made important contributions. Included in my sources are my own published writings. Shortened citations in the endnotes appear in full bibliographic form at the end of the book.

The Ancient Background of the Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon narrative begins squarely in the world of the Bible, specifically in the city of Jerusalem (see, for example, 1 Nephi 1:4, 7, 13, 18). Nephi's record refers to "the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah" (verse 4), so we can surmise that Lehi, Sariah, and their family spoke, read, and wrote in Hebrew, the language of daily discourse. In fact, Hebrew was the primary language of the Jews in Jerusalem, the broader kingdom of Judah, and the northern kingdom of Israel.[3] As Sáenz-Badillos writes, "The Israelite tribes that settled in Canaan from the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries BCE, regardless of what their language might have been before they established themselves there, used Hebrew as a spoken and literary language until the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE."[4]

The Hebrew language remained with the Nephites, in one form or another, throughout their history.[5] Nearly a thousand years after the prophet Nephi, Moroni wrote, "We have written this record according to our knowledge, in the characters which are called among us the reformed Egyptian, being handed down and altered by us, according to our manner of speech. And if our plates had been sufficiently large *we should have written in Hebrew*; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us also" (Mormon 9:32–33).

Because the Book of Mormon emerged from the world of the Old Testament and some form of Hebrew was used by the Nephites, it makes sense that, at least in part, the book would read like an ancient Hebrew book—even in its English translation. John Tvedtnes explained as much to a worldwide academic community: "Adherents of the Church . . . believe that the Book of Mormon, first published in 1830 by Joseph Smith, is an English translation of an ancient revealed scripture, apparently written in Hebrew. The Book of Mormon, accordingly, is replete with Hebraisms, that is, reflections of Hebrew idioms or words, which do not suit the translation language, but which are perfectly normal in Biblical Hebrew."[6] And Stephen Ricks adds, "Even in its English translation, the Book of Mormon reflects Hebrew speech and thought patterns."[7]

Over the past several decades, a number of scholars have identified specific expressions, phrases, and poetic forms in the Book of Mormon that evidently reflect Biblical Hebrew rather than nineteenth-century American English. These scholars include Thomas W. Brookbank, David E. Bokovoy, Matthew L. Bowen, David Calabro,[8] Jeffrey R. Chadwick, Angela M. Crowell, John Gee,[9] Paul Y. Hoskisson, Melvin D. Pack, Donald W. Parry, Stephen D. Ricks, Royal Skousen,[10] Sidney B. Sperry, John A. Tvedtnes, and John W. Welch. Most of these scholars have earned doctoral degrees in Hebrew Bible studies, ancient Near Eastern studies, or related fields and so are equipped to competently identify Hebraisms and Hebrew-like structures in the Book of Mormon. Although I draw on and note some of their work herein, readers desiring fuller, more technical treatments of the many facets of this subject are encouraged to consult the publications of these and other scholars listed in the bibliography.

Two Complexities for Scholars

As is true with any academic field of inquiry, scholars who study Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon are not of the same mind regarding certain aspects that for now must remain in the realm of scholarly conjecture. It will be helpful here to discuss two complexities that scholars and specialists confront in probing the Hebrew character of the Book of Mormon.

The first complexity is the lack of access to the original Book of Mormon text—that is, the engraved gold plates. Scholars rate highly the opportunity to examine texts in their original language because it facilitates analysis of grammatical structures and morphological, lexical, and syntactical values, among other areas of interest. Linguistic analysis of the Book of Mormon is greatly hindered by the necessity of dealing with the text in translation.

Of course, this fact of translation does not pose a disadvantage for readers seeking to understand the Book of Mormon's teachings or receive spiritual blessings that result from its study. After all, the original text was translated by a prophet and seer called by God—Joseph Smith, who translated the book by the "gift and power of God" (Book of Mormon title page; see Doctrine and Covenants 5:4; 20:8). Prophetic and apostolic blessings remain in force for those who cherish the Book of Mormon. President Marion G. Romney promised, "From almost every page of the book, there will come to [us] a moving testimony that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Redeemer and Savior. This witness alone will be a sustaining anchor in every storm."[11] And Elder Neil L. Andersen has assured us that "faith in Jesus Christ, when solidly anchored in our souls, brings true conversion, and in its wake come repentance, honest discipleship, miracles, spiritual gifts, and enduring righteousness. This is an important part of the divine mission of the Book of Mormon."[12]

The second complexity for scholars involves the words "a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians" (1 Nephi 1:2). Scholarly opinions on the meaning of this statement vary widely (see "Eight Preliminary Observations" below). This being the case, scholarly studies bearing on the original language of the Book of Mormon necessarily involve a certain degree of conjecture, leaving some questions unanswered.

To sum up, scholars continue to rigorously examine the Book of Mormon text in hopes of better comprehending its Hebrew-like structures, its connection to reformed Egyptian, and much more. Along the way, scholars have developed their own viewpoints and nuanced opinions concerning such topics.

A Modern Prophet's Perspective

Having examined instances of Book of Mormon Hebraisms, President Russell M. Nelson, writing in 1993, made this observation:

> I am intrigued that Joseph Smith—an unschooled young man in rural America—could have translated this Semitic language mix into the English language. That unlikely scenario relates to Isaiah's remarkable prophecy:

> "I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder." (Isa. 29:14.)

Continuing, he noted that "because the Book of Mormon is a translation of a modified Hebrew language, it contains many Hebraisms" and then provided several examples:

- Nouns followed by descriptive phrases—such as "altar of stones," "plates of brass," "mist of darkness."
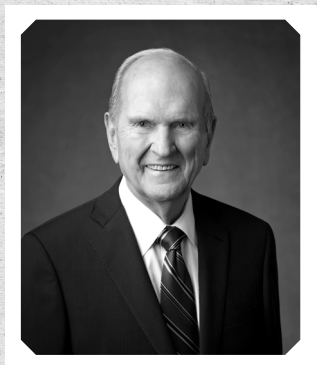
"Because the Book of Mormon is a translation of a modified Hebrew language, it contains many Hebraisms."

—President Russell M. Nelson

- Prepositional phrases used instead of adverbs—such as "with harshness," "with joy," "with gladness," "in diligence."
- Cognate accusative constructions—"dreamed a dream," "cursed with sore cursing," "work all manner of fine work."
- Hebrew words with double meaning—such as *Nahum*, meaning "mourning," and *Jershon*, meaning "inheritance." Events involving those specific actions took place at locations bearing those meaningful names.
- Many chiasms exist in the Book of Mormon as well as in the Bible.[13]

Eight Preliminary Observations

Before exploring specific examples of Hebraisms and other ancient literary forms in the Book of Mormon, the reader may appreciate knowing more about the import of this study. The points that follow concern two key takeaways—namely, how the Hebrew character of the Book of Mormon text both supports its claims to have originated in an ancient Near Eastern setting and affirms the accuracy of Joseph Smith's English translation.

1. The Hebraisms and other ancient literary forms in the Book of Mormon are consistent with its Hebrew background and antiquity. They are so numerous that they cannot be explained away as coincidence, nor could a modern writer have integrated them so naturally and correctly throughout the entire narrative. It is inconceivable that Joseph Smith had technical knowledge[14] of these various archaic Hebraisms, Hebrew-like configurations, literary forms, and other modes of expression, for many of them are subtle in their contexts and relatively inconspicuous in the Old Testament.

2. Joseph's level of education and familiarity with the Bible could not have given him the knowledge and skill to craft multiple and diverse Hebraisms so seamlessly and correctly into the Book of Mormon text.

As the restoration of the gospel unfolded, Emma Smith stood closer to Joseph Smith than anyone else. She knew him best and was familiar with his incredible strength of character and his unique spiritual gifts. She also was well aware of his lack of education and literary refinement. In her final testimony, expressed shortly before she died, she declared,

> Joseph Smith . . . could neither write nor dictate a coherent and well-worded letter; let alone dictating a book like the Book of Mormon. And, though I was an active participant in the scenes that transpired, and was present during the translation of the plates, and had cognizance of things as they transpired, it is marvelous to me, "a marvel and a wonder," as much so as to anyone else.[15]

Emma was not being unkind here. Joseph was so uneducated that the translation of the Book of Mormon was nothing less than "marvelous" to her.

On another occasion, Emma said that Joseph "had such a limited knowledge of history [of the Bible] at that time that he did not even know that Jerusalem was surrounded by walls."[16] Furthermore, the Prophet's mother, Lucy Mack Smith, revealed that by the time Joseph was eighteen years old, he "had never read the Bible through by course in his life."[17]

We also have a statement by Joseph Smith, in his own handwriting, that indicates his lack of formal education: "It required the exertions of all that were able to render any assistance for the support of the Family therefore we were deprived of the bennifit of an education suffice it to say I was mearly instructid in reading writing and the ground rules of Arithmatic which const[it]uted my whole literary acquirements."[18]

3. It is significant that many changes in the Book of Mormon—both from the original text to the first edition and from the first edition to subsequent editions—are changes made because of Hebrew literary styles. That is to say, Joseph Smith and others changed many awkward-sounding Hebraisms to smooth-flowing, idiomatic English readings. Royal Skousen, who has provided multiple examples of such changes, summarizes: "The original text of the Book of Mormon contains complex Hebrew-like constructions that have been subsequently removed from the text because of their non-English character."[19] This does not mean, however, that the meaning of the text has changed. In Moroni 10:4, for example, the passage originally read, "If ye shall ask with a sincere heart with real intent having faith in Christ *and* he will manifest the truth of it unto you." But the Hebrew-like *and* was later removed so that the verse now reads, "If ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you." Later in this section I will present other

examples of textual emendations in the Book of Mormon in which the awkward-sounding Hebraisms have been changed to idiomatic English.

4. The Hebrew elements discussed in this volume can enhance the readability of the Book of Mormon and heighten our understanding and appreciation of ancient scripture. For example, when we come upon a simile curse and recognize its form and function,[20] we can better understand both the cultural and religious worlds of both the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon. Similarly, when encountering a chiasm or Hebrew idiom in the Book of Mormon, we will recognize that it is an ancient Hebrew literary form; and rather than being distracted by the awkwardness of Hebraisms and Hebrew-like constructions persisting in the English text, we will be in a position to better appreciate the Book of Mormon's literary style and its Old Testament background.

5. Hebrew (and Hebrew-like) elements in the Book of Mormon reveal Joseph Smith to be a careful, faithful translator of the text inscribed on the gold plates. Because he was unfamiliar with Hebrew language and literature, the Hebraisms in the English text of the Book of Mormon support his claim about the translation: "The fact is, that by the power of God I translated the Book of Mormon from hieroglyphics; the knowledge of which was lost to the world: in which wonderful event I stood alone, an unlearned youth, to combat the worldly wisdom, and multiplied ignorance of eighteen centuries."[21] Centuries before, Moroni prophesied that the Book of Mormon would "come forth by the gift and power of God" rather than through man's learning and wisdom (Book of Mormon title page; see Doctrine and Covenants 5:4).

6. Joseph Smith's personal papers, teachings, journals, and letters lack the Hebraisms and other ancient literary forms that exist in the Book of Mormon and that are treated in this book.[22] One must search beyond his writings and beyond what was generally known or available in the nineteenth century for the origin of the Book of Mormon text.

7. At the beginning of his record, Nephi announced that he was making "a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians" (1 Nephi 1:2). The words "learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians" have perplexed many readers, perhaps because they have not accessed a number of exem-

plary articles that deal with the topic.[23] One such article, authored by Hebrew Bible experts Stephen D. Ricks and John A. Tvedtnes, is titled "Jewish and Other Semitic Texts Written in Egyptian Characters." Over the years, several other scholars—John Gee, John Thompson, David Calabro, and Neal Rappleye—have built on Ricks and Tvedtnes's study, adding refinements, supplemental materials, and their own declarations regarding the significance of Nephi's words in 1 Nephi 1:2.

Regarding Nephi's puzzling phrase, Tvedtnes writes, "There are a number of factors which support the idea that the language from which Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon was, in fact, Hebrew, though recorded in a 'reformed Egyptian' writing system."[24]

And President Russell M. Nelson has written about the "linguistic mix" the Nephites used:

> The inscriptions on the plates were written in a Semitic language, using a modified Egyptian type of script. Some critics have scoffed at such a linguistic mix. May I tell you of Doctor Moses Maimonides, one of the greatest rabbis and Jewish philosophers of the Middle Ages. He died in A.D. 1204. He served as a court physician in Cairo and is one of the most famous figures in the early history of medicine.

THE ENGLISH TEXT OF THE BOOK OF MORMON: FOUR KEY FINDINGS

Royal Skousen and Stanford Carmack have convincingly demonstrated the archaic nature of the original text of the English Book of Mormon. Specifically, they have shown that the Book of Mormon—

- is not a "pseudo-archaic text,"
- is not imitative of the King James Bible or King James language,
- has instances of nonstandard grammar not found in Joseph Smith's day, and
- has language and themes mostly set in the time when Early Modern English (1530s–1730s) was dominant.

Hospitals are named after him today. In Cairo he read and pondered the words of earlier Muslim thinkers and wrote his philosophical books in Arabic using the Hebrew alphabet. This is but one of many instances from ancient and medieval periods in which the script of one language has been used to write in another language. . . . Indeed, history confirms that such a linguistic mix was not unusual at all.[25]

8. In recent years, Royal Skousen[26] and Stanford Carmack have published a significant body of literature—both scholarly articles and large folio-type volumes—that deal with the original text of the Book of Mormon (and include the original and printer's manuscripts). Their findings have overturned almost two centuries of misinterpretations, falsehoods, and haphazard scholarship in several key subjects dealing with the Book of Mormon translation and what some perceive as authorship issues. In addition to other topics, Skousen and Carmack convincingly demonstrate the following:

a. The Book of Mormon is not a "pseudo-archaic text." Carmack compares four pseudo-biblical texts (such as Gilbert J. Hunt's *The Late War*, 1816) and examines "complex types of data, such as syntax and morphosyntax (grammatical features such as verb agreement and inflection), as well as data less obviously biblical and/or less susceptible to conscious manipulation. Those are the kinds of linguistic studies that have greater probative value in relation to authorship, and that can determine whether Joseph Smith might have been able to produce Book of Mormon grammar." Additionally, Carmack examines "nearly 10 kinds of syntax and morphosyntax that occur in the Book of Mormon and the King James Bible, comparing their usage with each other and with that of four pseudo-biblical texts."[27] His findings demonstrate that the Book of Mormon lacks the features of pseudo-archaic texts.

b. The Book of Mormon is not imitative of the King James Bible or King James language. When considering such features as "adjacency, inversion, and intervening adverbial" forms, the Book of Mormon is dissimilar to the King James Bible. In fact, "textual evidence and syntactic analysis argue strongly against both 19th-century composition and an imitative effort based on King James English."[28]

c. Joseph Smith's grammar is unlike the grammar of the Book of Mormon. Carmack examines Joseph's grammar in his 1832 history (typical of standard English of his time) and shows that "three archaic, extrabiblical features that occur quite frequently in the Book of Mormon are not present in the history," which "leads to the conclusion that Joseph's grammar was not archaizing in these three types of morphosyntax which are prominent in the earliest text of the Book of Mormon. This corroborating evidence also indicates that English words were transmitted to Joseph throughout the dictation of the Book of Mormon."[29]

d. The language of the Book of Mormon is set in the time when Early Modern English was dominant (1530s–1730s).[30] Carmack writes that "the linguistic fingerprint of the Book of Mormon, in hundreds of different ways, is Early Modern English,"[31] meaning that the Book of Mormon reads like a book from the mid to late 1500s, rather than a book written in 1829. Such evidence indicates that Joseph Smith did not author the Book of Mormon.[32]

How Much Did Joseph Know?

In view of the numerous Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon, some people might wonder how much Joseph Smith knew about Hebraisms when he was translating the record. For one thing, some categories of Hebraisms are not apparent in English translations of the Bible, and Joseph almost certainly lacked knowledge of them. For example, Seidel's law,[33] which pertains to reversed elements in Bible citations (see chapter 18), was not publicly known until the 1950s.

Other categories of Hebraisms are not generally apparent in English translations of the Bible. One example is the *if/and* conditional clause,[34] discussed in chapter 28. Moreover, several personal names found in the Book of Mormon but not in the Bible have been discovered in ancient Hebrew inscriptions from the Holy Land and surrounding areas. These names—including Aha, Alma, Chemish, Hagoth, Himni, Isabel, Jarom, Josh, Luram, Mathoni, Muloki, Sam, and Sariah[35]—were discovered on papyri, seals, ostraca, bronze arrowheads, and clay bullae decades *after* the publication of the Book of Mormon (see chapter 29). In addition, some ancient writers used plural-noun forms to highlight ideas that are normally

singular in number (see chapter 20). These forms signify important Hebraisms, but because the King James Bible translators rarely provided the literal plural readings, it is highly doubtful that Joseph Smith could have known of this rhetorical device when he translated the Book of Mormon. Yet these unexpected plural-noun forms appear in the Book of Mormon with regularity. The same holds true for many other instances of underlying Hebrew language covered in this book—they are simply too subtle, or even entirely unknown, in the Bible to have attracted Joseph's attention.

The Book of Mormon contains many expressions, including the Hebraisms featured in this book, that are not characteristic of Joseph Smith's English. Royal Skousen has observed, "One of the interesting complexities of the original English-language text of the Book of Mormon is that it contains expressions that appear to be uncharacteristic of English in all of its dialects and historical stages. These structures also support the notion that Joseph Smith's translation is a literal one and not simply a reflection of either his own dialect or the style of early modern English found in the King James Version of the Bible."[36]

It is highly doubtful that Joseph Smith knew anything about the Hebraic features in the Book of Mormon that have been identified by scholars long after his death. There are at least three hundred instances of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon alone! And to write more than five hundred pages of complex historical narrative and sublime doctrine deftly interwoven with subtle Hebraisms within twelve weeks? Impossible—without the help of the Lord. As Elder Jeffrey R. Holland noted, "If Joseph Smith—or anyone else, for that matter—created the Book of Mormon out of whole cloth, that, to me, is a *far* greater miracle than the proposition that he translated it from an ancient record by an endowment of divine power."[37]

The Book of Mormon Is a Significant Text

The Book of Mormon is a complex, significant text. Just as scholars and investigators over the years have developed tools and resources to facilitate the academic study of the Bible, similar energies in our generation have developed tools to access the Book of Mormon at higher levels. These include concordances, dictionaries, commentaries, bibliographies, search-

able databases, and text-critical studies of the earliest extant manuscripts. In addition, the Book of Mormon text is available in a variety of formats, including print, electronic, Braille, and audio. Scholars have even morphologically tagged the entire Book of Mormon text to allow complex corpus linguistic studies through the power of the computer. Of great significance, the Book of Mormon has been translated into 110 languages, with the Church's translation department presently working on additional languages, including Burmese, Efik, Navajo, Pohnpeian, and Tshiluba.[38]

Such tools and resources demonstrate that the Book of Mormon is indeed a consequential text—so much so that additional academic tools will likely be developed, enabling new kinds of engagement with it. And surely God will continue to reveal remarkable insights into the Book of Mormon, which Elder Neal A. Maxwell indicates is inexhaustible:

> The Book of Mormon will be with us "as long as the earth shall stand." We need all that time to explore it, for the book is like a vast mansion with gardens, towers, courtyards, and wings. There are rooms yet to be entered, with flaming fireplaces waiting to warm us. The rooms glimpsed so far contain further furnishings and rich detail yet to be savored, but decor dating from Eden is evident. There are panels inlaid with incredible insights, particularly insights about the great question [of the reality of Jesus Christ]. Yet we as Church members sometimes behave like hurried tourists, scarcely venturing beyond the entry hall.[39]

The following pages will demonstrate the richness of just one tantalizing aspect of the Book of Mormon's inexhaustible nature—its Hebraic elements, the impressive depths of which, to be sure, have not yet been fully plumbed.

Notes

1. Russell M. Nelson, "The Exodus Repeated," Church Educational System Fireside, 7 September 1997; quoted in Nelson, *Teachings of Russell M. Nelson*, 42.

2. Thomas W. Brookbank pioneered the study of Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon. Consult his multipart article "Hebrew Idioms and Analogies in the Book of Mormon." Other publications that deal with Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon include (in chronological order) Sperry, "Hebrew Idioms in the Book of Mormon," 703, 728–29; Bramwell, "Hebrew Idioms in the Small Plates of Nephi," 496, 517; Tvedtnes, "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon: A Preliminary Survey," 50–60; Crowell, "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon," 1–7, 16; Tvedtnes, "Since the Book of Mormon Is Largely the Record of a Hebrew People [. . .]," 64–66; Tvedtnes, "Hebrew Background of the Book of Mormon," 77–91; Parry, "Hebraisms and Other Ancient Peculiarities in the Book of Mormon," 155–89; Bokovoy and Tvedtnes, *Testaments*, especially 202–29; Pack, "Hebraisms," 321–25; Tvedtnes, "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon," 2:195–96; and Skousen, *History of the Text of the Book of Mormon: Part 1*, 361–409.

3. See Ben-Yosef, *Introduction to the History of the Hebrew Language*, 38.

4. Sáenz-Badillos, *History of the Hebrew Language*, 52.

5. Thom Wayment holds that "an altered form of Hebrew was in continual use as a spoken tongue throughout the Nephites' tenure in the Americas." See his article "Hebrew Text of Alma 7:11."

6. Tvedtnes, "Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon," 2:195. Because it was written and published for scholars and university libraries by E. J. Brill, this highly informative entry has escaped the notice of laypersons.

7. Ricks, "Converging Paths," 399.

8. The scholars listed in this paragraph have differing views on the exact meaning of "learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians" (1 Nephi 1:2) and "reformed Egyptian" (Mormon 9:32). For example, Calabro has informed me in a personal communication (13 September 2019) that he considers the original language of the Book of Mormon to be primarily Egyptian; in addition, he recognizes clear Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon text that he thinks may be the result of the writers slipping into the grammar of their native language.

9. Note Gee's careful observation, "All of the Hebraisms listed in Brian Stubbs's [*Encyclopedia of Mormonism*] article on 'Book of Mormon Language' are also true of Egyptian." Gee, review of *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 179.

10. One of Skousen's important contributions is his focus on Hebraisms that exist in the original Book of Mormon manuscript, the printer's manuscript, and the earliest editions of the Book of Mormon and have involved editing. He observes: "Sometimes the [Book of Mormon] editing has been inconsistently applied, with the result that examples of original Hebraistic construc-

tions remain in the current text. These non-English Hebraistic constructions are typically not found in the King James Bible translation (or other more recent translations) of the Old Testament, but they can be found in the original Hebrew underlying the English translation." Skousen, *History of the Text of the Book of Mormon: Part 1*, 361.

11. Romney, "Book of Mormon."

12. Neil L. Andersen, "The Book of Mormon—Strengthening Our Faith in Jesus Christ," *Ensign*, October 2011, 41.

13. Nelson, "Treasured Testament," 63.

14. See Paul Hoskisson's paper "Was Joseph Smith Smarter than the Average Fourth-Year Hebrew Student?," wherein he concludes, "I have to admit that the question [posed in the title] was a red herring. The translation of the Book of Mormon was not a product of Joseph's intellect or any other mortal skills. Whether he understood Hebrew grammar or not is totally irrelevant. Joseph Smith produced, by the gift and power of God, not by any native abilities he might have possessed, a unique reading of Isaiah that also contained a prediction of future Restoration events enclosed within a possible, obscure Hebraism, years before its fulfillment."

15. Smith III, "Last Testimony of Sister Emma."

16. Briggs, "Visit to Nauvoo in 1856."

17. Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, 111.

18. https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/site/documents-in-joseph-smiths -handwriting?p=1&highlight=mearly%20instructid. Original spelling and lack of punctuation preserved.

19. Skousen, "Original Language of the Book of Mormon: Upstate New York Dialect, King James English, or Hebrew?," 28. See Skousen, *History of the Text of the Book of Mormon: Part 1*, 361; and "Hebraic Conditionals in the Book of Mormon," 201–3.

20. On simile curses in the Book of Mormon and the Bible, consult Morrise, "Simile Curses in the Ancient Near East, Old Testament, and Book of Mormon," 124–38.

21. Joseph Smith, "Reply," *Times and Seasons*, 1 November 1843, 373. Joseph's letter, dated 13 November 1843, was a reply to a letter by James Arlington Bennet.

22. There is great evidence that Joseph Smith's personal writings and grammar were different from that of the Book of Mormon. For example, see Carmack, "How Joseph Smith's Grammar Differed from Book of Mormon Grammar: Evidence from the 1832 History," 239–59.

23. Several scholars have addressed the topic of the "language of the Egyptians." In fact, in "Learning Nephi's Language," Neal Rappleye notes "five different interpretations of the passage" (p. 151). For other investigations of "language of the Egyptians" and "reformed Egyptian," see Bokovoy and Tvedtnes, *Testaments*, 202; anonymous, "Did Ancient Israelites Write in Egyptian?," 18–19; Gee, "Two Notes on Egyptian Script," 162–76; Ricks, "Semitic Texts Written in Egyptian Characters," 237–43; Thompson, "Lehi and Egypt," 259–76; and Tvedtnes and Ricks, "Jewish and Other Semitic Texts Written in Egyptian Characters," 156–63. David Calabro, in "Hieratic Scribal Tradition in Pre-exilic Judah," 77, wrote, "From Moroni's words in Mormon 9:33, it is clear that the Nephites were still acquainted with the Hebrew language a thousand years after Lehi's family left Jerusalem. Though they employed a script they called 'reformed Egyptian' in place of the Hebrew alphabet, it is likely they employed this script to transcribe Hebrew words rather than Egyptian."

24. Tvedtnes, "Since the Book of Mormon Is Largely the Record of a Hebrew People [. . .]," 64. See also Tvedtnes's treatment of Semitic texts written in Egyptian script in his "Ancient Texts in Support of the Book of Mormon," 233–35.

25. Nelson, "Treasured Testament," 61.

26. For Royal Skousen's writings on the topics addressed in this section, consult especially *The Nature of the Original Language*; "How Joseph Smith Translated the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," 22–31; and "Original Language of the Book of Mormon," 28–38.

27. Carmack, "Is the Book of Mormon a Pseudo-Archaic Text?," 177.

28. Carmack, "Implications of Past-Tense Syntax in the Book of Mormon," 119.

29. Carmack, "How Joseph Smith's Grammar Differed from Book of Mormon Grammar," 239; see Carmack, "'Nonstandard' Book of Mormon Grammar," 209–62.

30. See Carmack, "More Part of the Book of Mormon Is Early Modern English," 33–40.

31. Carmack, "Joseph Smith Read the Words," 41.

32. For this evidence, see Carmack, "What Command Syntax Tells Us about Book of Mormon Authorship," 175–217.

33. See Bokovoy, "Inverted Quotations in the Book of Mormon," 2; and Bokovoy and Tvedtnes, *Testaments*, 56–60.

34. For more on conditional clauses, see Skousen, "Hebraic Conditionals in the Book of Mormon," 201–3; and *History of the Text of the Book of Mormon: Part 1*, 368–70.

35. See Tvedtnes, Gee, and Roper, "Book of Mormon Names Attested in Ancient Hebrew Inscriptions," 40–51, 78–79.

36. Skousen, "How Joseph Smith Translated the Book of Mormon," 28.

37. Holland, "Standard unto My People," 6.

38. "Church to Translate Scriptures in 34 More Languages; Will Release Portions Online," https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/church/news/church-to-translate-scriptures-in-34-more-languages-will-release-portions-online.

39. Maxwell, *Not My Will, but Thine*, 33.