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## Preface

Alma instructs his sons Helaman, Shiblon, and Corianton on specific doctrines and practices relative to each of their individual situations and challenges in chapters 36–42 of the book of Alma. These deeply personal writings contain some of the most informative doctrinal discussions in scripture. Originating out of the love and concern of a parent, these chapters present salient teachings on key gospel principles, proper behaviors, and correct theology, and here the pure doctrines of God’s merciful plan of redemption through his Son, Jesus Christ, are laid plain.

The doctrines found within Alma 36–42 were addressed in the essays delivered at the 2019 Sidney B. Sperry Symposium held at Brigham Young University. This volume, titled *Give Ear to my Words: Text and Context of Alma 36–42*, compiles those essays. The chapters are organized into four primary sections: (1) doctrine, (2) historical content, (3) parents and children, and (4) literary structure, devices,

and techniques. The keynote speaker was Tad R. Callister, who was recently released as the General President of the Sunday School of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Drawing on both academic training and dedicated study of the scriptures, the authors in this volume provide valuable new contexts to understand Alma's doctrinal expositions. While the material in the majority of the chapters is generally accessible, some chapters engage their topic with additional expertise and detail. In this way, the volume will speak to different people at different levels, but in all cases, we hope it will expand the minds and understanding of the readers.

We have many people to thank for their efforts both in organizing the symposium and in the publication of this volume. To the many reviewers who gave of their time and expertise to help shape and improve each of the papers, we express our appreciation. We are also grateful to the editors and staff at the Religious Studies Center at Brigham Young University. We appreciate the editorial oversight of Shirley S. Ricks and the assistance of her interns Emily Cook and Abigail Crimm. We thank Emily V. Strong for her design and typesetting skills, which have greatly enhanced the volume. Finally, we want to express our thanks to the authors in this volume and the speakers at the symposium who enlightened and inspired through their knowledge and faith.

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