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## Editors' Introduction

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**Title** Editors' Introduction

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**Abstract** Introduction to the current issue.

## EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

We are very pleased with the positive reception to our first two issues of *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity*. We appreciate the kind words from readers, the increase in submissions, and the adding of *Studies* to the Ancient World Online (AWOL) list of open-access journals in ancient studies, which will make *Studies* accessible to an even wider audience. We also thank those who have provided constructive criticisms to help us improve *Studies*. We are committed to make each issue the best we can by consistently publishing engaging, well-researched articles that illuminate various aspects of the Bible and the ancient world.

In this third issue of *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* we offer four excellent essays. Miranda Wilcox's "Constructing Metaphoric Models of Salvation: Matthew 20 and the Middle English Poem *Pearl*" provides an insightful study of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-6). This essay focuses on the remuneration of the eleventh-hour laborer and explores the question, Should payment to the laborer be viewed literally as a specific (and seemingly unmerited) wage or as a metaphor of salvation? As evidenced in a famous fourteenth-century Middle English poem, Wilcox shows that the "end of the parable ultimately explodes the teleology of the metaphorical model when the payment to the laborers defies human expectations of merit-based compensation" (p. 28).

This parable speaks more to divine grace and atonement than to human models of fairness and compensation.

David E. Bokovoy presents a “fresh interpretation of Isaiah 6 by illustrating some of the ways in which Isaiah’s prophetic call narrative can be understood to reflect the theme of Christ and covenants” (p. 32). In “On Christ and Covenants: An LDS Reading of Isaiah’s Prophetic Call,” Bokovoy shows that Isaiah functions as a messenger of the divine council in declaring the gospel and covenants of Christ. In Isaiah’s call, one can see that the people to whom Isaiah is sent have left Christ and broken their covenants through idolatry. Bokovoy aptly brings into the discussion pertinent material from the Book of Mormon that reinforces the close connection among Isaiah’s prophetic call, Christ, and covenants.

Mark Alan Wright analyzes from a cultural perspective manifestations of the sacred (hierophanies) and the appearances of deity (theophanies) in “According to Their Language, unto Their Understanding’: The Cultural Context of Hierophanies and Theophanies in Latter-day Saint Canon.” Wright examines the construction of hierophanies and theophanies first in the Old Testament and then considers unique Latter-day Saint scripture, particularly the Book of Mormon. Wright ably demonstrates that cultural differences exist between the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon in terms of the revelatory process. For example, the Old Testament prophetic call pattern that includes a vision and sacred book fits well with Lehi’s time but does not correspond to the “falling,” “near-death” call pattern exhibited later on in the Book of Mormon. In fact, the falling pattern actually fits comfortably within the Mesoamerican cultural context. Wright illustrates how cultural context may influence how revelation is received.

This year has been the four hundredth anniversary of the publication of the King James Version of the Bible. In “A Text-Critical Comparison of the King James New Testament with Certain Modern Translations,” Lincoln Blumell evaluates twenty-two readings found in the King James New Testament that are omitted or changed in most modern translations. Blumell introduces readers to the com-

plex world of textual criticism and then examines in detail each of these twenty-two variants. While Blumell is candid about the “text-critical shortcomings” of the KJV New Testament, he finds them to be “largely minor” and cautions that they “should not be over-exaggerated or allowed to overshadow [its] strengths” (p. 126). This thorough, double-length study is a significant contribution to LDS scholarship on both the KJV and the text of the New Testament.

We wish to thank the authors for these excellent papers and also the many others who have made this issue of *Studies* possible. We thank the reviewers of these papers for their helpful comments. We are deeply grateful to Shirley Ricks for her tireless production work on each issue of *Studies*, from submission to publication. We also thank Managing Editor Don Brugger for his editorial assistance, Daniel Friend for proofreading the articles, and Stetson Robinson for typesetting this issue.