



# Insights: The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship

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Volume 32 | Number 3

Article 6

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January 2012

## Third Nephi: An Incomparable Scripture— Proceedings of a Willes Center Symposium

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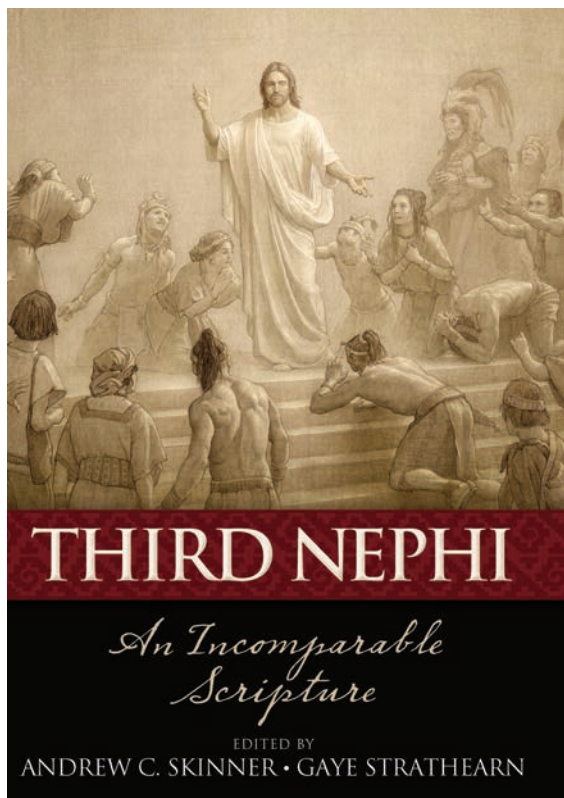
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### Recommended Citation

(2012) "Third Nephi: An Incomparable Scripture— Proceedings of a Willes Center Symposium," *Insights: The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship*: Vol. 32: No. 3, Article 6.  
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/insights/vol32/iss3/6>

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## *Third Nephi: An Incomparable Scripture*— Proceedings of a Willes Center Symposium



The personal appearance of Jesus Christ as recorded in the book of 3 Nephi constitutes the narrative and spiritual climax of the Book of Mormon. Although the sacred account repeats and reinforces many of the Savior’s Old World teachings, many aspects of his New World ministry have no parallel elsewhere in scripture. In this light, *Third Nephi: An Incomparable Scripture* is a fitting title for a new book published by the Maxwell Institute and Deseret Book.

Edited by Andrew C. Skinner and Gaye Strathearn (professors of ancient scripture at BYU), the book presents the proceedings of a BYU symposium held in September 2008 and hosted by the Laura F. Willes Center for Book of Mormon Studies. Fifteen essays offer fresh

perspectives on diverse topics that expand understanding of the sacred narrative that has been called the “fifth Gospel.”

In the opening essay, John W. Welch discusses how the temple setting of Christ’s teaching provides a key to understanding the parallel sermons in 3 Nephi 12–14 and Matthew 5–7. Both texts echo the temple with words such as *light, washing, anointing, garments, oaths, and seeing God*; and additional verbal cues allude to passages in Psalms and Exodus, which are temple-centered texts. Welch pictures 3 Nephi as the Holy of Holies of the Book of Mormon—a kind of inner sanctum where the God of Israel personally appears to invite us to enter into his presence.

Matthew L. Bowen explores the act and symbol of *proskynesis* (prostrating or bowing to the earth in worship) in the Book of Mormon. Beginning with those in Lehi’s vision who “fell down” before the tree of life and tasted its fruit (1 Nephi 8:30), many accounts tell of people falling or bowing to the earth upon tasting the sweet fruit of the atonement. This motif culminates in the Savior’s appearance at the temple in Bountiful. In those climactic moments, Lehi’s symbolic vision is fulfilled as the multitude “did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him” (3 Nephi 11:17).

Other contributors treat such themes as a broken heart, the hen metaphor, prayer, covenant promises, the Suffering Servant, the Godhead, Jesus as divine Lord, the writings of Malachi, Nephite peace, and the power of godliness. Also included in this volume is a transcript of the panel discussion that concluded the symposium. *Third Nephi: An Incomparable Scripture* is available at [byubookstore.com](http://byubookstore.com).