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### Robert E. and Sandra L. Hales, *How to Hiss Forth with the Book of Mormon*

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**Title**

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**Abstract** Review of *How to Hiss Forth with the Book of Mormon* (1989), by Robert E. and Sandra L. Hales.

Robert E. and Sandra L. Hales, *How to Hiss Forth with the Book of Mormon*, illustrated by Susan Curtis. n.p.: 7 Up Publishing, 1989. Chief volume, 238 pp., \$9.95; activity supplement, 61 pp., \$4.95; scripture and concept summary booklet, 20 pp., \$2.95.

Reviewed by Donald W. Parry

*How to Hiss Forth with the Book of Mormon* consists of a principal volume, a supplemental activity workbook, and a ready reference booklet designed with adhesive to be placed in the back of the reader's personal copy of the Book of Mormon. The three softcover books receive their name from a verse of scripture in 2 Nephi where the Lord states, "And my words shall hiss forth unto the ends of the earth, for a standard unto my people, which are of the house of Israel" (2 Nephi 29:2; cf. Isaiah 5:26).

The main volume in this set contains four sections, entitled "Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Savior," "The Book of Mormon and the Bible," "Our Personal Responsibilities," and "The Latter-Days." Each section is divided into subsections. A typical subsection includes several lengthy quotations from the Book of Mormon, interpretive commentary by the authors, self-examinations, and learning activities. The self-tests (consisting of multiple choice, essay, and fill-in-the-blank questions) are designed to determine if the reader understood the concepts presented within the chapter. However, after the reader takes the examinations, there is no simple method for the person to check his score—the authors failed to provide answers. For instance, one of the multiple choice questions reads:

Because of Adam

- A. We all die a physical death
- B. We all were born
- C. All mankind is in a lost and fallen state
- D. All of the above

The answer to the statement "Because of Adam" is far from simple. Evidently, "D" is the intended answer. In what manner the reader is able to determine the correct answer to the multiple choice questions and essay exercises is often unclear.

The learning activities consist of an assortment of rudimentary exercises, such as matching expressions from two columns, crossword puzzles, solve the maze, unscramble the words, find the hidden words, and the like.

The acknowledgment, preface, and introduction explain the indebtedness the authors have to Reid Bankhead and Glenn L. Pearson. "The concepts in the 'Hiss' book did not originate with the authors. The concepts in this book represent the authors' attempt to expand two great volumes . . . written by Reid E. Bankhead and Glenn L. Pearson" (introduction). In what manner did the authors expand the writings of Bankhead and Pearson? Outside of the addition of the learning activities and exercises, the remainder of the work appears to be several lengthy paraphrases of ideas and concepts introduced in the volumes written by Bankhead and Pearson.

While the title of the set apparently sums up the chief concern of the work, the authors delineate, with a sweeping circumference, the goal of the work. According to the authors, the

mission of this book . . . is to assist the reader in approaching the gospel concepts in the Book of Mormon in a logical and conclusion-based manner such that the missionary, the parent, the home teacher, the visiting teacher, and the Sunday School teacher can recall to memory and teach through the power of the Holy Ghost, gospel principles in such a way as to provide solutions to problems and answers to questions which the participant cannot solve or learn for themselves. (preface)

This sweeping stated goal of *How to Hiss Forth with the Book of Mormon* is both lofty and utopian. The question must be asked, "Will *How to Hiss Forth with the Book of Mormon* aid missionaries, parents, and teachers in teaching gospel principles as it claims it will?" The youth of the Church may benefit from the expository sections, and Primary age children may spend some fruitful moments working through the activities and exercises, but in my opinion all age groups of the Church would be better advised to spend their time within the pages of the Book of Mormon itself.