



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

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Volume 30 | Number 4

Article 4

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January 2010

## Latest FARMS Review Tidies Garden of Book of Mormon Studies

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### Recommended Citation

(2010) "Latest FARMS Review Tidies Garden of Book of Mormon Studies," *Insights: The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship*: Vol. 30: No. 4, Article 4.

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## Latest FARMS Review Tidies Garden of Book of Mormon Studies

A trio of essays in the current issue of the Review (vol. 22, no. 1) concerns John W. Welch's *The Sermon on the Mount in the Light of the Temple*, which makes a highly original and important contribution to biblical studies by revealing the "temple register" and organic unity of Jesus's famous sermon. George L. Mitton's introductory remarks call attention to two scholarly reviews of Welch's study that find his thesis intriguing and plausible. A substantial excerpt from Welch's preface to his book follows, as does a review by Gaye Strathearn that offers a helpful summary of Welch's approach and argument and of the book's importance for Latter-day Saints.

The current issue also provides an exhaustive review of Rodney L. Meldrum's controversial book *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon Remnant through DNA*. This book attempts to use DNA science to argue that the prophesied surviving remnant of Lehi's seed is now genetically detectable among Native Americans living near the Great Lakes in the United States (a region that Meldrum calls the "Heartland"). Physician Gregory L. Smith shows that Meldrum's facile interpretation of population genetics and DNA evidence is fatally flawed in virtually every particular. In a related essay, geneticist Ugo A.

Perego further clarifies many of the complex scientific issues bearing on efforts to genetically determine the origin of Native Americans.

Also included is John Gee's essay on grace, showing that Jesus did not teach the concept of grace as it is taught in Protestant traditions. In addition, he demonstrates that the term has a broad and often-overlooked range of meaning, the earliest being "good works." Gee explains that the New Testament (as well as the Book of Mormon) teaches that grace comes as the result of people's actions. Other contributions are Steven L. Olsen's exploration of the concept of prospering as utilized by Book of Mormon prophets, John Tvedtnes's response to critics who allege that Joseph Smith plagiarized from the Bible and elsewhere, and reviews by Ben McGuire and Robert Boylan that expose the failings of the critique of the Book of Mormon found in Ross Anderson's *Understanding the Book of Mormon*. The editor's introduction, by Louis Midgley, sets out the role of the FARMS Review in seeding and weeding the garden of Book of Mormon studies. Several Book Notes introduce worthwhile books.

The FARMS Review can be accessed on the Maxwell Institute website at [maxwellinstitute.byu.edu](http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu). ♦



### From Elder Neal A. Maxwell

Gospel truths about life and the human condition stand in stark contrast to the world's view; the world's solutions so often lead

mankind into conceptual cul-de-sacs. Without gospel truths, man's efforts to reach his goals are like the northbound explorer who drove his dog sled feverishly northward on an ice pack that was flowing southward—only to find himself farther from his destination at the end of a hard day's journey than he had been at dawn! —*The Smallest Part* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 36, as quoted in *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*, ed. Cory H. Maxwell (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1997), 352–53

# INSIGHTS

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

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