



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

Volume 27 | Number 4

Article 4

January 2007

Research in the Arabian Peninsula Continues

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/insights>



Part of the [Mormon Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(2007) "Research in the Arabian Peninsula Continues," *Insights: The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship*: Vol. 27: No. 4, Article 4.

Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/insights/vol27/iss4/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Insights: The Newsletter of the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship* by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Book of Mormon Critical Text Project

continued from page 1


One difficulty was whether the word was *rites* or *rights*, especially in the phrase “rights of worship” (which occurs twice in the text, in Alma 43:35 and Alma 44:5). In both cases, Oliver Cowdery spelled the word as *rites* in the manuscripts, and the printed editions have retained this interpretation of the homophone. Usage elsewhere in the text argues that *rights* is the correct interpretation for this phrase.

- At Alma 49:5 in the original manuscript, Oliver Cowdery initially wrote “in preparing their places of security”, but this was a mistake. He immediately corrected the word *preparing* (spelled as *prepairing*) by erasing the initial *p*, thus giving the correct reading: “in **repairing** their places of security”. But when Oliver copied the text into the printer’s manuscript, he ended up writing *preparing* once more (again spelled as *prepairing*). This time he did not correct his error. All the printed editions have therefore maintained the word *preparing* here, but *repairing* is correct since this passage is referring to how Moroni had had the city of Ammonihah rebuilt in advance of the attack of the Lamanites. For this city the Nephites had repaired their places of security.

In 2004, FARMS published part 1 of volume 4 (which analyzes the text from the title page of the Book of Mormon through 2 Nephi 10). Subsequent

installments of volume 4 have been published each year, with completion of the final part expected in 2009.

Volumes 1 and 2 of the Critical Text Project were published in May 2001. Volume 1 contains a detailed transcription of the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon (the manuscript written down by scribes as Joseph Smith dictated the text). Volume 2 contains a transcription of the printer’s manuscript, the copy made from the original manuscript and taken to Grandin’s print shop in Palmyra, New York, for typesetting the first edition of the Book of Mormon (1830). Volume 3 will describe in detail the history of the text of the Book of Mormon, including the editing of the text into standard English. Volume 3 will also provide a description of the original English-language text of the book. Volume 5 will feature a computerized collation of the two manuscripts and 20 printed editions from 1830 to 1981. Volumes 3 and 5 will appear after volume 4 has been completely published.

Part 4 of *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon* is available from the Maxwell Institute Web site (maxwellinstitute.byu.edu). 

Notes

1. Terryl L. Givens, “The Book of Mormon Critical Text Project,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 15/1 (2006): 35.
2. Grant Hardy, “Scholarship for the Ages,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 15/1 (2006): 50–51.

Research in the Arabian Peninsula Continues

In July 2007, David Johnson, professor of anthropology, Kent Brown, director of FARMS, and Revell Phillips, emeritus professor of geology, all of BYU, were joined by Sidney Rempel of Arizona State University in an archaeological excavation on the southern coast of the Sultanate of Oman.

One of the chief interests of the excavation was to establish when people inhabited an area in and around Mughsayl, which lies 45 kilometers west of Salalah. Mughsayl stands at the mouth of the largest drainage in southern Oman, a wadi called Wadi Ashawq. For hundreds of years, camel caravans traveled up this wadi carrying goods west toward Yemen.

The archaeologists hoped to establish whether the settlements at Mughsayl participated both in the land trade, via caravans, and in the waterborne trade along the coast, and whether it was inhabited as early as the early Iron Age (1,000 to 300 BC). Initial pottery finds indicate an occupation in one place about 700 BC, but it requires further study. The presence of an enormous number of seashells may point to trade in shells as far away as Petra where such shells were used as wind chimes and as decorations on veils of temples.

An archaeological team will return to Oman, likely in 2008, to continue work at Mughsayl and to plan future work in Wadi Sayq. They see their work contributing both to an overall picture of early civilizations in that region as well as to learning about the world into which Lehi and Sariah walked when they emerged from the desert. 