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Textual Analysis of Book of Mormon Continues

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Paulsen shows that “the loss of this knowledge . . . resulted from the attempt of early Christian apologists to reconcile their beliefs with their dominantly Greek culture.”

Readers will be interested in the insights the contributors provide regarding such questions as why there was an apostasy, how it came about, what it means, and what the significance is of new discoveries.

According to Reynolds, *Early Christians in Disarray* is “designed to support and encourage further systematic research on [the apostasy]. It is not designed to be a comprehensive or final treatment of any of [the] issues. The goals of the authors and editor will be achieved if Latter-day

Saints find its contents helpful for understanding this important topic and if it provokes some of them to pursue these and related questions with further research.”

Toward that latter end, the book provides a variety of reference materials in the form of four appendixes that treat important Christian documents and writers, Christian councils, New Testament evidences of apostasy in the first-century church, and LDS writings on the apostasy.

To order a copy of *Early Christians in Disarray*, go to the FARMS Web site (farms.byu.edu) and, at the bottom of the notice for this book, click on the link to the BYU Bookstore. 

Textual Analysis of Book of Mormon Continues

FARMS and Brigham Young University are pleased to announce the release of part 2 of volume 4 of the Book of Mormon Critical Text Project, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon*. Part 2 analyzes the text from 2 Nephi 11 through Mosiah 16.

Volume 4 represents the central task of the project—the attempt to recover the original English-language text of the Book of Mormon. Royal Skousen, the author, is an internationally respected linguist at BYU and has been the editor of the Book of Mormon Critical Text Project since 1988.

Grant Hardy, professor of history at the University of North Carolina, calls the project “perhaps the most important study of the Book of Mormon ever done. Two hundred years from now—long after people have stopped reading anything on the Book of Mormon now in print—students of the Book of Mormon will still be poring over Skousen’s work. What he has accomplished is nothing short of phenomenal.”

Part 2 of volume 4 includes a definitive treatment of the one passage that has caused more debate than any other in the history of the Book of Mormon text—namely, should 2 Nephi 30:6 read “a **white** and a delightsome people” or “a **pure**

and a delightsome people”? Skousen proposes an explanation for why Joseph Smith emended this instance of the word *white* to *pure* for the 1840 edition but left unchanged all other references to skin color in the text.

This second part also provides striking evidence that the vocabulary of the original text of the Book of Mormon dates from the 1500s and 1600s, not from the 1800s. For instance, Enos 1:18 has the Lord saying to Enos, “Thy fathers have also **required** of me this thing”. Here *required* means ‘requested’, which was the meaning of this verb until the late 1600s. Another example is the original occurrence of *but if* in Mosiah 3:19: “the natural man is an enemy to God . . . **but if** he yieldeth to the enticings of the Holy Spirit”. The 1920 LDS edition replaced the conjunctive *but if* with *unless*, which was actually the meaning of *but if* from about 1200 to 1600.

Part 2 of volume 4 examines 898 cases of variation (or potential variation). For 388 of these cases, the critical text proposes a change from the standard text (the current edition). Of these proposed changes, 66 have never appeared in any standard edition, while 23 would make a difference when translating the Book of Mormon. For 13 cases, the proposed changes make the entire text fully consistent in phraseology or word choice, but there are 5 readings that restore a unique phrase or word to the text.

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In August 2004, part 1 of volume 4 (which analyzes the text from the title page of the Book of Mormon through 2 Nephi 10) was published by FARMS. Subsequent parts of volume 4 will be published at the approximate rate of one part per year, with completion of the last part scheduled for 2008.

Volumes 1 and 2 of the critical text 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. This volume will appear after volume 4 has been completely published.

Some of the major findings of the critical text project are: (1) the Book of Mormon text is much more consistent and systematic in expression than has ever been realized; (2) there are a number of errors in the text that have never been corrected in any standard edition, although none of these fundamentally alter the narrative or message of the text; and (3) the original text contains unique kinds of expressions that appear to be uncharacteristic of English in any time and place; some of these expressions are Hebraistic in nature.

To order a copy of part 2 of *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon* (covering 2 Nephi 11 through Mosiah 16), go to the FARMS Web site (farms.byu.edu) and, at the bottom of the notice for this book, click on the link to the BYU Bookstore. 

Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibit Tours United Kingdom and Europe

Since their initial discovery in 1947, the Dead Sea Scrolls have drawn the interest of people worldwide. FARMS has been fortunate to play a part in bringing the scrolls to the world, and that effort continues. The FARMS Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit, sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and managed by full-time missionaries Wayne and Janet Chamberlain, completed its tour of the United Kingdom and western Europe in May and is now making its way through central Europe.

Traveling through such cities as London, Cardiff, Brussels, Paris, Rome, and Madrid, the tour has been very well received. In Bordeaux, France, the local government cosponsored the exhibit in a downtown art venue, drawing some 3,500 visitors to the exhibit during its week there. Other venues have been similarly successful. The exhibit is usually hosted at Latter-day Saint meetinghouses, visitors' centers, and CES institute buildings. Many notable visitors have attended the exhibit

in various cities, including local leaders of Jewish, Muslim, and Protestant groups.

Donald W. Parry, a professor of Hebrew Bible at Brigham Young University and a member of the international team of Dead Sea Scrolls translators, has given over 25 lectures in conjunction with this exhibit during the last three years to members of the press and to dignitaries at VIP receptions. The receptions included both community and religious leaders. Parry has also presented a number of lectures to Latter-day Saint congregations on the topic of "LDS Perspectives on the Dead Sea Scrolls." "The response to the exhibit is always one of great interest," he said.

John W. Welch, the Robert K. Thomas Professor of Law at BYU, greeted the press and gave a guided tour of the exhibit in the Stuttgart Stake Center and similarly in the Salzburg First Ward cultural hall. Several articles in German newspapers resulted. In Stuttgart, he spoke to over 150 people at the VIP reception and lectured to 200 as the opening speaker in a four-part lecture series during the duration of the exhibit in Stuttgart. The local rabbi was one of the lecturers. About