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Abstract One approach to reconstructing the Prophet Joseph Smith's pronunciation of the proper names in the Book of Mormon is to determine how his close associates in the early days of the church later pronounced the names. In the Deseret Alphabet we have a record of the pronunciation in vogue in 1869. It is plausible that pronunciation of the names did not change much between 1830, when the scripture first appeared in English, and the publication of the Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon in 1869. This article includes a table of pronunciation of eighteen names from the Book of Mormon according to the phonetic Deseret Alphabet characters compared with the sounds recommended in the "Pronouncing Guide," which appears in all English-language editions today.

THE DESERET ALPHABET AS AN AID IN PRONOUNCING BOOK OF MORMON NAMES

Frederick M. Huchel

Study of the proper names in the Book of Mormon does not entirely depend upon how Joseph Smith pronounced them, yet knowing that is of interest. One approach to reconstructing the Prophet's pronunciation is to determine how his close associates in the early days of the church later pronounced the names. In the Deseret Alphabet we have a record of the pronunciation in vogue in 1869.

It is plausible that pronunciation of the names did not change much between 1830, when the scripture first appeared in English, and the publication of the Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon in 1869.

Preparation of this "alphabet" was begun in 1852 by a committee called by Brigham Young under the auspices of the "University of Deseret" in Salt Lake City. President Young hoped to simplify English spelling in order to speed literacy learning by immigrants and children. The committee consisted of Parley P. Pratt,

Orson Pratt, Heber C. Kimball, George D. Watt, and others. (Watt had learned shorthand in England, which proved influential.) After two years, the group came up with a set of thirty-eight characters. Every character had "a fixed and unalterable sound and every word is spelled with reference to given sounds."¹ A type font was manufactured in St. Louis and used in Salt Lake to publish a few items during the 1850s and 1860s. Despite lack of enthusiastic response from the public, the project crept along, culminating in 1869 in the printing of the entire Book of Mormon.

I have examined a sample of the names in the Book of Mormon to discover whether the phonetic transcription of them printed in the 1869 Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon is different from today's sounds. Of the sample of eighteen names, only six reveal changes.

It must be noted that the Deseret Alphabet text fails to mark which sounds were accented, neither does it show us syllable divisions. Nevertheless, I have separated syllables by reference to present-day usage.

PRONUNCIATION OF SELECTED BOOK OF MORMON NAMES

Text Word	Deseret Alphabet	Pronunciation	Reference	Guide Pronunciation
Abish	ḂḂID	ā-bīsh	Alma 19:16	ā-bīsh
Aha	ḂḂḂ	ā-hā	Alma 16:5	ā-hā
Alma	ḂḂḂ	āl-ma	Mosiah 17:2	āl-ma
Chemish	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	shēm-īsh	Omni 1:8	kēm-īsh
Deseret	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	dēs-ē-rēt	Ether 2:3	dēz'-a-rēt
Hagoth	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	hā-gāth	Alma 63:5	hā'-gāth
Himni	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	hīm-nī	Mosiah 27:34	hīm'-nī
Isabel	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	īs-a-bēl	Alma 39:3	īz'-a-bēl
Jarom	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	jā-rum	Jarom 1:1	jē'-rum
Josh	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	jāsh	3 Nephi 9:10	jāsh
Lehi	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	lē-hī	1 Nephi 1:4	lē'-hī
Luram	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ	lūr-um	Moroni 9:2	lūr'-um
Mathoni	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ	ma-thō-nī	3 Nephi 19:4	ma-thō'-nī
Mathonihah	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ	mā-thō-nī-hā	3 Nephi 19:4	mā-thō-nī'-hā
Muloki	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ	mu-lō-kī	Alma 20:2	myū'-la-kī
Nephi	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ	nē-fī	1 Nephi 1:1	nē'-fī
Sam	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ	sām	1 Nephi 2:5	sām
Sariah	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ	sā-rī-ā	1 Nephi 2:5	sā-rī'-ā

- Museum Aramaic Papyri* (New Haven: Yale, 1953), adds 9:25 to the list.
- 46 Avigad, *Hebrew Bullae from the Time of Jeremiah*, 42–43, 59; Deutsch and Heltzer, *New Epigraphic Evidence*, 56–57; Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals*, 184, 202–3.
- 47 Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals*, 760.
- 48 Walter Franklin Prince, "Psychological Tests for the Authorship of the Book of Mormon," 380.
- 49 Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, 388.
- 50 Robert Deutsch and Michael Heltzer, *Forty New Ancient West Semitic Inscriptions* (Tel Aviv: Archaeological Center Publications, 1994), 23.
- 51 Ruth Amiran and A. Eiten, *Qedem 3* (1970): 65; Avigad, "Two Seals of Women," 92f.; P. Bordreuil, *Catalogue des Sceaux Ouest-Sémitiques Inscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale du Musée du Louvre et du Musée biblique de Bible et Terre Sainte* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1986), 54; P. Bordreuil and A. Lemaire, "Nouveau sceaux hébreux, araméens et ammonites," *Semitica* 26 (1976), 49, pl. IV-9, 11; A. Lemaire, "Nouveaux sceaux nord-ouest sémitiques," *Semitica* 33 (1983): 17f., pl. 1.1; Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals*, 83, 92, 126–27, 130, 138, 142, 148, 187, 196, 216–17.
- 52 Avigad, *Hebrew Bullae from the Time of Jeremiah*, 38, 81–82; Deutsch, *Hebrew Bullae from the Time of Isaiah*, 107–8; Deutsch and Heltzer, *New Epigraphic Evidence*, 52–53; K. G. O'Connell, "An Israelite Bulla from Tell el-Hesi," *Israel Exploration Journal* 27 (1977): 197–99, pl. 26G.
- 53 Fritz and Kempinski, *Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen*, 134, pl. 78C.
- 54 Avigad, *Festschrift Reuben R. Hecht*, 122f.; Nahman Avigad, "Titles and Symbols on Hebrew Seals" (in Hebrew), *Eretz-Israel* 15 (1981), 303, pl. 57; Nahman Avigad, "Another Group of West Semitic Seals from the Hecht Collection," *Michmanim* 4 (1989b): 10; Bordreuil and Lemaire, "Nouveaux sceaux hébreux," 51, pl. IV-16; P. Bordreuil and A. Lemaire, "Nouveau groupe de sceaux hébreux, araméens et moabites," *Semitica* 29 (1979): 72f., pl. III-2; P. Bordreuil and A. Lemaire, "Nouveaux sceaux hébreux et araméens," *Semitica* 32 (1982): 22f., pl. V-2; Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals*, 59, 69, 121, 125–26, 162, 193, 205, 215–16, 223.
- 55 Avigad, *Hebrew Bullae from the Time of Jeremiah*, 53, 62, 79–81, 90; Deutsch, *Hebrew Bullae from the Time of Isaiah*, 66.
- 56 See Mosiah 25:2; Alma 51:26; 52:2, 16–17, 19–20, 22, 26, 28, 34; 53:2, 6; Helaman 5:15; 6:10; 8:21.
- 57 See Alma 8:3–4, 6; 31:6; 35:13; 45:18.
- 58 See the discussion in Robert F. Smith, "New Information about Mulek, Son of the King," in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1992), 142–44. This identification has been challenged on the grounds that the vocalization of Mulek would not allow it to be hypocoristic for Hebrew *Malkiyahū*. See David Rolph Seely in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 5 (1993): 311–15.
- But similar vowel changes are acknowledged by scholars for other hypocoristic names in the Bible (Baruch for Berechiah, Nahum for Nehemiah, Shallum for Shelmiah, and Zaccur for Zechariah). See John A. Tvedtnes, "What's in a Name? A Look at the Book of Mormon Onomasticon," *FARMS Review of Books* 8/2 (1996): 39 n. 7.
- 59 Shiloh, "Bullae from the City of David," 28f.; Shoham, "A Group of Hebrew Bullae from Yigal Shiloh's Excavation."
- 60 Israel Museum No 68.35.199; Israel Museum, 1979, 108; Ruth Hestrin and Michal Dayagi-Mendels, *Inscribed Seals* (Jerusalem: Israel Museum, 1979), 111; Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals*, 69.
- 61 For a discussion of the hypocoristic nature of names ending in aleph, with an extensive listing of examples, see Avigad and Sass, *West Semitic Stamp Seals*, 471.
- How the Guide to English Pronunciation of Book of Mormon Names Came About**
Mary Jane Woodger
- The illustration at the beginning of this feature is *Joseph Smith Translating* by Dale Kilbourn. © *Courtesy Intellectual Reserve, Inc. Used by permission.*
- 1 Joseph Smith, in a letter to John Wentworth, Editor of the *Chicago Democrat*, 1 March 1842, *History of the Church*, 4:537.
- 2 Royal Skousen, "How Joseph Smith Translated the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," *JBMS* 7/1 (1998): 24.
- 3 Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert, The World of the Jaredites, There Were Jaredites* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1988), 31.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Truman G. Madsen, "B. H. Roberts and the Book of Mormon," in *Book of Mormon Authorship: New Light on Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 13.
- 6 B. H. Roberts, *Defense of the Faith and the Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1907), 1:277–78.
- 7 Skousen, "How Joseph Smith Translated," 27.
- 8 John L. Sorenson, "The Mulekites," *BYU Studies* 30/3 (1990): 8, citing *Book of Mormon Critical Text: A Tool for Scholarly Reference* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1986), 2:483.
- 9 Donald W. Parry, "How Was the Book of Mormon Pronouncing Guide Developed, and What Is Its Chief Purpose?" *Ensign*, July 1996, 60.
- 10 See JS—H 1:33; John Taylor in *Journal of Discourses* 17:374; 21:94, 161; Parry, "How Was the Book of Mormon Pronouncing Guide Developed?" 60.
- 11 *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother, Lucy Mack Smith*, ed. Preston Nibley (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1979), 83.
- 12 Robert G. Patch, "Does the 'Pronouncing Vocabulary' in the Book of Mormon Represent the Way the Nephites and Lamanites Actually Pronounced Their Names? Was the 'Pronouncing Vocabulary' Part of the Original Book of Mormon?" *Ensign*, February 1980, 68.
- 13 John Gee, "A Note on the Name Nephi," *JBMS* 1 (1992): 191 n. 15. Note: "the spelling of 'Lehi' as 'Lehigh' in M. J. Hubble's interview of David Whitmer, 13 November 1886, in Lyndon W. Cook, ed., *David Whitmer Interviews: A Restoration Witness* (Provo, Utah: Grandin, 1992), 210. Hubble was a non-Mormon and apparently had never seen the name spelled and thus spelled what he heard. As David Whitmer had 'cut loose from [Joseph Smith and the Church] in 1837' (Cook, *David Whitmer Interviews*, 6) likely his pronunciation of the names had not altered from the initial period and thus the present American pronunciations of the names Nephi and Lehi were set within the first decade of the Church" (Gee, "A Note," 191 n. 15).
- 14 "Book of Mormon Students Meet," *Deseret Evening News*, 25 May 1903, 3–4.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Sidney B. Sperry, *Problems of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), 190.
- 19 George Reynolds, *A Dictionary of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Philip C. Reynolds, 1954), 338.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 "New Issue of the Book of Mormon," *Relief Society Magazine*, February 1921, 97.
- 22 Anthony W. Ivins, *General Conference Reports* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1921), 20.
- 23 Lavina Fielding Anderson, "Church Publishes First LDS Edition of the Bible," *Ensign*, October 1979, 9.
- 24 Daniel H. Ludlow, conversation with the author, October 1999.
- 25 Edward J. Brandt, "Using the New LDS Editions of Scripture—As One Book," *Ensign*, October 1982, 43.
- 26 Bruce T. Harper, "The Church Publishes a New Triple Combination," *Ensign*, October 1981, 10.
- 27 George Horton, conversation with the author, November 1999.
- 28 Harper, "The Church Publishes a New Triple Combination," 10; Parry, "How Was the Book of Mormon Pronouncing Guide Developed?" 61. There is no evidence that any research on pronunciation by church members was undertaken.
- 29 Soren Cox, conversation with the author, November 1999.
- 30 Harper, "The Church Publishes a New Triple Combination," 15.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Parry, "How Was the Book of Mormon Pronouncing Guide Developed?" 60–61.
- 33 Harper, "The Church Publishes a New Triple Combination," 18.
- 34 Parry, "How Was the Book of Mormon Pronouncing Guide Developed?"
- 35 Hugh Nibley, *The Prophetic Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book), 96.
- 36 Brian D. Stubbs, "Looking Over vs. Overlooking Native American Languages: Let's Void the Void," *JBMS* 5/1 (Spring 1996): 1.
- 37 Daniel H. Ludlow, conversation with the author, November 1999.
- 38 Daniel H. Ludlow, "List of Suggestions to Help with Your Personal Study of the Book of Mormon," *Deseret News Church News*, 2 January 1988, 12.
- The Deseret Alphabet as an Aid in Pronouncing Book of Mormon Names**
Frederick M. Huchel
- 1 Albert L. Zobell Jr., "Deseret Alphabet Manuscript Found," *Improvement Era* 70, July 1967, 11. See also Glen N. Rowe, "Can You Read Deseret?" *Ensign*, March 1978, 60–61.
- From Distance to Proximity: A Poetic Function of Enallage in the Hebrew Bible and the Book of Mormon
David Bokovoy
- 1 Kevin L. Barney has published two important articles dealing with apparent examples of enallage in the Book of Mormon (though approaching this convention from a different perspective): "Enallage in the Book of Mormon," *JBMS* 3/1 (1994): 113–47, and "Divine Discourse Directed at a Prophet's Posterity in the Plural: Further Light on Enallage," *JBMS* 6/2 (1997): 229–34.
- 2 Biblical passages cited in this essay are the author's own translation of the Hebrew text in Rudolf Kittel, ed., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1990).
- 3 Not every instance of enallage in the Hebrew Bible conforms to this specific model (e.g., third person to second person). Examples of the shift from second to third person include Genesis 49:4; Isaiah 22:16; 31:6; 42:20; 47:8; 48:1; 52:14; 54:1, 11; 61:6; Jeremiah 22:18; Malachi 2:15; Psalm 22:9. For shifts from first to third person see Lamentations 3:1 and Isaiah 22:19. For an interpretation of the intentional switch from second to third person, see Barney, "Divine Discourse."
- 4 This literary tool is witnessed in several forms, including the shift from completed to noncompleted aspects that preserves the original notion of either a past or future tense. See, for example, Moshe Held, "The YQTL-QLT (QTL-YQTL) Sequence of Identical Verbs in Biblical Hebrew and in Ugaritic," in *Studies and Essays in Honor of Abraham A. Neuman Meir*, ed. Meir Ben-Horin, Bernard D. Weinryb, and Solomon Zeitlin (Leiden: Brill, 1962), 281–90.
- 5 It is hardly surprising to find the poetic use of enallage opening the Song of Songs since this book has long been recognized as the most highly poetic work in the Hebrew Bible. The term *Song of Songs* (Song of Solomon in the KJV) is an example of the superlative in biblical Hebrew. The title means "the choicest or best" song; see E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley, eds., *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1910), 431.
- 6 Marvin H. Pope, *Song of Songs* (New York: Doubleday, 1977), 297.
- 7 The last two examples of *you* in Jeremiah 22:24–26 are second-person masculine plural forms. In this passage, the progres-

The *Journal* regrets that the table published in volume 9, number 1 (2000), page 58, contains errors. The table on the right corrects those errors.

PRONUNCIATION OF SELECTED BOOK OF MORMON NAMES				
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Ammonihah	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	am-a-nī-hā	Alma 8:6	ām-a-nī'-hā
Chemish	ḂḂḂḂḂ	shēm-īsh	Omni 1:8	kēm-īsh
Deseret	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	dēs-ē-rēt	Ether 2:3	dēz'-a-rēt
Hagoth	ḂḂḂḂḂ	hā-gāth	Alma 63:5	hā'-gāth
Himni	ḂḂḂḂ	hīm-nī	Mosiah 27:34	hīm'-nī
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Jarom	ḂḂḂḂḂ	jā-rum	Jarom 1:1	jē'-rum
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Nephi	ḂḂḂḂ	nē-fi	1 Nephi 1:1	nē'-fi
Sam	ḂḂḂḂ	sām	1 Nephi 2:5	sām
Sariah	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ	sā-rī-ā	1 Nephi 2:5	sā-rī'-ā