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Frank F. Judd Jr.

Terrence L. Szink

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Author(s)  Frank F. Judd Jr. and Terrence L. Szink


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Reviewed by Frank F. Judd, Jr., and Terrence L. Szink

The Restoration of Israel in the Book of Mormon

Interaction of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints with the Jewish people in general, and with the state of Israel in particular, has been in the news for the past decade. With the construction of the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies, the Church signed an agreement with the state of Israel that students participating in the study abroad program would not proselyte in Israel. More recently, there has been concern over performing vicarious temple ordinances for victims of the Holocaust, which has led the Church to agree to cease such ordinances unless they are requested by direct relatives of the Holocaust victims.1 Therefore, the topic of *Mormons and Jews* is both important and timely.

*Mormons and Jews* attempts to illustrate the doctrines of the Book of Mormon and the attitudes and beliefs of early Latter-day Saints regarding the destiny of the house of Israel and the Jewish people. *Mormons and Jews* also contrasts the teachings of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, Orson Hyde, and the Book of Mormon with other key Latter-day Saint leaders, and with the prevailing “triumphalism” and “anti-Judaic theology” (p. 33) of mainstream early nineteenth-century Christianity. However, in our opinion, the methodology employed in *Mormons and Jews* is not

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carried out in a way that lends confidence to the conclusions that Prof. Epperson reaches. In this review we will for the most part limit ourselves to the book’s treatment of Book of Mormon theology contained in chapter 2. Portions of Mormons and Jews which deal with the early history of the Church have been examined elsewhere.2

Presuppositions

Mormons and Jews asserts from the outset of chapter 2 that regardless of what “a reader believes about the origin of the Book of Mormon, the text itself can be considered as a self-contained literary unit, as a world in its own right” (p. 22). Without such an approach, it asserts, the critical reader “obscures attention to what one scholar [Lawrence Foster] has called ‘the fascinating question of the content and meaning’ ” (p. 22).3 Given this presupposition, Mormons and Jews rightly observes that “fidelity to context in interpretation means considering the Book of Mormon’s consistent focus on Jesus Christ” (p. 23). In spite of this observation, however, the explanations given by Mormons and Jews for this christological focus are not themselves contained in the Book of Mormon.

Mormons and Jews contends that “as editor of the book, Mormon has abundantly marbled into the text, both in its ante- and post-Christian chapters, veins of his own post-resurrection belief” (p. 23). It further says that “The unwary reader may be jarred by resulting anachronisms, including placing explicitly christological details and formulations in pre-Christian settings” (p. 23). The Book of Mormon, however, does not support this claim that Mormon contaminated his pre-Christian source material with his own Christian beliefs. Mormons and Jews attempts to support this idea not by citing the words of the prophet Mormon, nor any other person in the Book of Mormon, but by quoting Dr. James H. Charlesworth, a prestigious non-Latter-day Saint scholar

in Bible, Pseudepigrapha, and Dead Sea Scrolls studies. Mormons and Jews says,

Like the pseudepigraphical writings with which it shares certain similarities, the Book of Mormon contains, according to one scholar [Charlesworth], "lengthy sections that look very Jewish and others that look peculiarly Christian. The Pseudepigrapha and the Book of Mormon preserve some passages that prophecy [sic] the future coming of an ambiguously described messiah, and others that describe his advent in a singularly descriptive and particularistic way."4 Mormon is untroubled by anachronism and never disguises his literary and theological purposes. Narratives are arranged and earlier texts emended according to his doctrinal aim. (p. 23)

It is disappointing that Mormons and Jews relies upon Charlesworth’s assertions rather than evidence from the Book of Mormon text. Charlesworth’s own conclusions on this particular topic are bound by predetermined assumptions. According to Charlesworth, “Much more frequent in the Book of Mormon are the sections in which it seems evident that we have later Christian influence because the precise description of the Messiah’s life and activity is distinguishable from the reserved generic nature of what is usually recognized as pre-Christian prophecy.”5 Thus, according to Charlesworth, pre-Christian passages in the Book of Mormon that contain detailed information about Jesus must be later post-Christian interpolations, because, as Charlesworth says, “the description is so precise that it is evident it was added after the event.”6 As Mormons and Jews subscribes to these presuppositions, it is putting words into Mormon’s mouth, which is exactly what it suggests Mormon does with pre-Christian Book of Mormon prophets who testify in detail concerning Jesus Christ.

5 Ibid.
6 Ibid., 125.
**Mormons and Jews** never explicitly addresses the issue of specific source material used by Mormon. Mormon definitely claims to have abridged the large plates of Nephi along with other records in his possession. But what about the small plates of Nephi? Does the author of *Mormons and Jews* think that Mormon’s interpolating hand stretched to the small plates as well? If we rely on what the text of the Book of Mormon says, there is no evidence for this, for Mormon says that he simply “put” the small plates with his “abridgment” of the large plates (Words of Mormon 1:3–7). And if Mormon is so “untroubled by anachronism and never disguises his literary and theological purposes” (p. 23), as *Mormons and Jews* claims, why does Mormon state very plainly that the reason he “put” the small plates with his “abridgment” of the large plates is because “the things which are upon these plates pleas[e] me, because of the prophecies of the coming of Christ,” which are already contained in them (Words of Mormon 1:4)? Why does *Mormons and Jews* assert that interpolation is Mormon’s methodology, when Mormon never says anything to support such an idea?

Next, following in the steps of the above claim that the Book of Mormon and the Pseudepigrapha have similar anachronistic tendencies, *Mormons and Jews* also tells us that the Book of Mormon shares these same tendencies with apocryphal accounts of Jesus’ forty-day ministry because of “the Christian commitments” of the abridger Mormon. *Mormons and Jews* alleges that

The explicit messianism of the text, the stated time frame of its production, and its intended, distant audience are obviously crucial elements of the Book of Mormon. Jesus’ post-resurrectional activity is portrayed similarly to apocryphal renditions of the “Evangelium Quadraginta Dierum” (the forty-day period of the resurrected Christ’s ministry to his disciples in Palestine [cf. Acts 1:3]).

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of the text thus requires first considering the stories of earlier generations included in the Book of Mormon and then considering the explicitly Christian commitments of the books’ editors which frame them. (p. 24)

Is Hugh Nibley’s “Evangelium Quadraginta Dierum” being cited as support for the assertion or just as a reference to information on the forty-day ministry? If the author of Mormons and Jews is using Nibley in support of his argument he is mistaken, because Nibley never even mentions the Book of Mormon in that article. If he is not using Nibley as support, from where does he derive support for his assertion that Jesus’ visit to the Nephites is an anachronistic apocryphal account derived from “the explicitly Christian commitments of the books’ editors which frame them” (p. 24)? Is there any basis for the claim of Mormons and Jews that,

According to the records received and edited by Mormon and Moroni, Christ confirmed the covenantal faith and aspirations of the early writers when he visited the Americas. Thus the final editors reaffirmed this inherited messianic tradition and devotion to covenant and wed it textually to the words and deeds of the exalted Lord. They record that their Holy One promises an end to Israel’s exile and bondage. (pp. 31–32)

The issue here is not what the resurrected Jesus said, but who put the words into his mouth. Mormons and Jews claims that Mormon and Moroni took these ideas and “wed [them] textually to the words and deeds of the exalted Lord.” If there is any support for Mormon’s and Moroni’s tampering with and tainting the actual words of Jesus or the earlier prophets, it certainly does not come from the text of the Book of Mormon. Mormon himself says,

And now there cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did truly teach unto the people;

But behold the [large] plates of Nephi do contain the more part of the things which he taught the people.
And these things have I written, which are a lesser part of the things which he taught the people; and I have written them to the intent that they may be brought again unto this people, from the Gentiles, according to the words which Jesus hath spoken.
(3 Nephi 26:6–8)

To suggest that Jesus’ words did not originate with Jesus, but with later editors, is similar to that which the “Jesus Seminar” has done with the majority of the sayings of Jesus in the canonical Gospels. And it raises the question, If Jesus’ words originated with Mormon and Moroni, where did they get them? As the above discussion demonstrates, these types of methodological presuppositions lead Mormons and Jews to conclusions which are both careless scholarship and dangerous Latter-day Saint theology.

What about those who do not accept the methodology used in Mormons and Jews? Most Latter-day Saints would tend to accept the evidence which is actually given in the text of the Book of Mormon. The prophet Jacob (c. 544 B.C.) gave the following clear and simple explanation for including pre-Christian passages about the coming of Jesus Christ:

We labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates, hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive them with thankful hearts, and look upon them that they may learn with joy and not with sorrow, neither with contempt, concerning their first parents.

For, for this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming; and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us.

Behold, they believed in Christ and worshipped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his name. (Jacob 4:3–5)

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8 See Michael J. Wilkins and J. P. Moreland, eds., Jesus under Fire: Modern Scholarship Reinvents the Historical Jesus (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995).
Why the Law of Moses?

*Mormons and Jews* says that “the status of the law of Moses is similarly affected by the messianism of the Nephites” (p. 27). The Nephite knowledge of the coming Messiah certainly affects their outlook on the law of Moses. However, while outlining the Nephites’ positive view of keeping the law of Moses, *Mormons and Jews* states:

The leaders and prophets of the Nephite people acknowledge its [the brass plates’] essential role in preserving their language, institutions, religious belief, and practice (Om. 1:17; Mos. 12:25–29). Its [the law of Moses’] “performances and ordinances . . . keep them in remembrance of God and their duty towards him” (Mos. 13:30). As they affirm: “salvation did come by the law of Moses” (Mos. 12:31–33). (p. 27)

But in context, the above affirmation of salvation by the law of Moses is from the wicked priests of king Noah, not from “the leaders and prophets of the Nephite people”! In stark contrast, the prophet Abinadi explicitly states that those priests of Noah were wrong in asserting that salvation came by the law of Moses alone:

And now ye have said that salvation cometh by the law of Moses. I say unto you that it is expedient that ye should keep the law of Moses as yet; but I say unto you, that the time shall come when it shall no more be expedient to keep the law of Moses.

And moreover, I say unto you, that *salvation doth not come by the law alone; and were it not for the atonement, which God himself shall make for the sins and iniquities of his people, that they must unavoidably perish, notwithstanding the law of Moses.* . . .

But behold, I say unto you, that all these things were types of things to come.

And now, did they [the children of Israel] understand the law? I say unto you, Nay, they did not all understand the law; and this because of the hardness of their hearts; for they understood not that *there could*
not any man be saved except it be through the redemption of God. (Mosiah 13:27–28, 31–32)

Israel’s Complete Restoration

One reviewer of Mormons and Jews has noticed the following concerning its use of terms for the Abrahamic covenant’s relationship to literal descendants of Israel.

The underlying understanding of the Abrahamic covenant in this book, though never clearly detailed, appears to be that it was unilateral and unconditional. God initiated the covenant, and despite a history of Israelite infidelities, he never disowned it.9

However, the Book of Mormon does not define the covenant in this way. The Book of Mormon states that the actual seed of Jacob may be excluded from being the covenant people for rejecting Jesus Christ, the great Jehovah who gave the Abrahamic covenant (3 Nephi 15:5).

For behold, I say unto you that as many of the Gentiles as will repent are the covenant people of the Lord; and as many of the Jews as will not repent shall be cast off; for the Lord covenanteth with none save it be with them that repent and believe in his Son, who is the Holy One of Israel. (2 Nephi 30:2)10

Salvation does not come because of one’s bloodline, but because of one’s devotion to the covenant of the Savior.11 But Mormons and Jews asserts the following, which it claims is supported by the Book of Mormon text:

In the penultimate days leading to the messianic kingdom, two great gatherings of scattered Israel were

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10 See also 1 Nephi 14:1–2; 3 Nephi 16:13, 21:6, and 30:2.
to occur. First, the “remnants” or “seed” of the families of the Nephites would gather to Zion, the “New Jerusalem,” to be reared in the Americas. Then Judah along with those of Israel long since scattered in the “north countries” (Eth. 13:11) would again be established and restored in Israel with Jerusalem as their capital. The Book of Mormon repeatedly asserts that Israel’s restoration depends on realizing the territorial terms of the covenant not in its conversion to, or identity with, the church. (p. 30, emphasis in original)

The use of Ether 13:11 by the author of Mormons and Jews to assert that the restoration of Israel does not include conversion to the true Church of Jesus Christ is problematic. The full passage, of which Mormons and Jews only quotes two words, reads as follows:

And then also cometh the Jerusalem of old; and the inhabitants thereof, blessed are they, for they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb; and they are they who were scattered and gathered in from the four quarters of the earth, and from the north countries, and are partakers of the fulfilling of the covenant which God made with their father, Abraham. (Ether 13:11)

Neither does the rest of the text of the Book of Mormon confirm that which Mormons and Jews claims. Just a quick glance through the passages which deal with this issue reveals that, according to the Book of Mormon, the complete restoration of the house of Israel in the latter days does indeed include recognition of Jesus Christ as the true Messiah and conversion to both the gospel and the Church of Jesus Christ. In response to the previous claims of Mormons and Jews, the reader must consider the following pre-Christian Book of Mormon passages:

Nevertheless, when that day cometh, saith the prophet, that they no more turn aside their hearts against the Holy One of Israel, then will he remember the covenants which he made to their fathers.
Yea, then will he remember the isles of the sea; yea, and all the people who are of the house of Israel, will I gather in, saith the Lord. (1 Nephi 19:15–16)\(^\text{12}\)

They at Jerusalem . . .

. . . shall be scattered among all nations.

But behold, thus saith the Lord God: When the day cometh that they shall believe in me, that I am Christ, then have I covenanted with their fathers that they shall be restored in the flesh, upon the earth, unto the lands of their inheritance. (2 Nephi 10:5–7)

And it shall come to pass that the Jews which are scattered also shall begin to believe in Christ; and they shall begin to gather in upon the face of the land; and as many as shall believe in Christ shall also become a delightsome people.

And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth. (2 Nephi 30:7–8)

And as he [the Lord] hath covenanted with all the house of Jacob, even so shall the covenant wherewith he hath covenanted with the house of Jacob be fulfilled in his own due time, unto the restoring all the house of Jacob unto the knowledge of the covenant that he hath covenanted with them.

And then shall they know their Redeemer who is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (3 Nephi 5:25–26)\(^\text{13}\)

The resurrected Jesus himself stated the following to the Nephites concerning the restoration of Israel:

And I command you that ye shall write these sayings after I am gone, that if it so be that my people at Jerusalem . . . do not ask the Father in my name, that they may receive a knowledge of you by the Holy

\(^\text{12}\) The Book of Mormon repeatedly says that Jesus Christ is the Holy One of Israel; see 2 Nephi 25:29; 30:2; and Omni 1:27.

\(^\text{13}\) See also 1 Nephi 10:14; and 2 Nephi 6:11, 14.
Ghost, . . . that through the fulness of the Gentiles, the remnant of their seed, who shall be scattered forth upon the face of the earth because of their unbelief, may be brought in, or may be brought to a knowledge of me, their Redeemer.

And then will I gather them in from the four quarters of the earth; and then will I fulfill the covenant which the Father hath made unto all the people of the house of Israel. (3 Nephi 16:4–5)

Then is the fulfilling of the covenant which the Father hath made unto his people, O house of Israel.

And then shall the remnant, which shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth, be gathered in from the east and from the west, and from the south and from the north; and they shall be brought to the knowledge of the Lord their God, who hath redeemed them. (3 Nephi 20:12–13)

And Mormon echoed the statements of the resurrected Jesus toward the end of the Book of Mormon:

And behold, they [the Gentiles] shall go unto the unbelieving of the Jews; and for this intent shall they go—that they may be persuaded that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that the Father may bring about, through his most Beloved, his great and eternal purpose, in restoring the Jews, or all the house of Israel, to the land of their inheritance, which the Lord God hath given them, unto the fulfilling of his covenant. (Mormon 5:14)

Simply believing in Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Redeemer, however, is not the only requirement for the complete restoration of Israel in the latter-days. According to the Book of Mormon, this conversion is explicitly associated with acceptance of the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, his doctrine, his atonement, the New Testament (the book of the Lamb of God and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb), and latter-day scripture.

14 See also 3 Nephi 28:24–29.
And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, that it came forth from the Gentiles unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren.

And after it had come forth unto them I beheld other books, which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, unto the convincing of the Gentiles and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, that the records of the prophets and of the twelve apostles of the Lamb are true.

... and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved.

And they must come according to the words which shall be established by the mouth of the Lamb; ...

... and after he has manifested himself unto the Jews and also unto the Gentiles, then he shall manifest himself unto the Gentiles and also unto the Jews, and the last shall be first, and the first shall be last. (1 Nephi 13:38-42)

And now, the thing which our father meaneth concerning the grafting in of the natural branches through the fulness of the Gentiles, is, that in the latter days, when our seed shall have dwindled in unbelief, ... then shall the fulness of the gospel of the Messiah come unto the Gentiles, and from the Gentiles unto the remnant of our seed—

And at that day shall the remnant of our seed know that they are of the house of Israel, and that they are the covenant people of the Lord; and then shall they know and come to the knowledge of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer, which was ministered unto their fathers by him; wherefore, they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved.
Wherefore, our father hath not spoken of our seed alone, but also of all the house of Israel, pointing to the covenant which should be fulfilled in the latter days; which covenant the Lord made to our father Abraham, saying: In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. (1 Nephi 15:13–14, 18)

Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to make bare his arm in the eyes of all the nations, in bringing about his covenants and his gospel unto those who are of the house of Israel. Wherefore, he will bring them out of captivity, and they shall be gathered together to the lands of their inheritance; and they shall be brought out of obscurity and out of darkness; and they shall know that the Lord is their Savior and their Redeemer, the Mighty One of Israel. (1 Nephi 22:11–12)

Wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered by other nations. And after they have been scattered, and the Lord God hath scourged them by other nations for the space of many generations, yea, even down from generation to generation until they shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God, and the atonement, which is infinite for all mankind—and when that day shall come that they shall believe in Christ, and worship the Father in his name, with pure hearts and clean hands, and look not forward any more for another Messiah, then, at that time, the day will come that it must needs be expedient that they should believe these things [the Book of Mormon]. (2 Nephi 25:15–16)

Once again, Jesus, following his resurrection, declared to the Nephites in plain terminology:

And I will remember the covenant which I have made with my people; and I have covenanted with them that I would gather them together in mine own due time, that I would give unto them again the land of

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15 See also 2 Nephi 25:17–19; and Ether 13:11.
their fathers for their inheritance, which is the land of Jerusalem, which is the promised land unto them forever, saith the Father.

And it shall come to pass that the time cometh, when the fulness of my gospel shall be preached unto them;

And they shall believe in me, that I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and shall pray unto the Father in my name. (3 Nephi 20:29–31)

Mormons and Jews contends that "The conversion of the Jewish people to the church is never mentioned nor advocated in the Book of Mormon.... [N]owhere is this hope [of Israel's salvation] then linked to conversion to the gentile church" (p. 36). But such a claim must be rejected in light of the above Book of Mormon passages. With unmistakable language the prophet Jacob tells us that the complete restoration of the house of Israel includes not only gathering to the lands of promise, but also conversion to the true church of their Redeemer, who is Jesus Christ.

And now, my beloved brethren, I have read these things that ye might know concerning the covenants of the Lord that he has covenanted with all the house of Israel—

That he has spoken unto the Jews, by the mouth of his holy prophets, even from the beginning down, from generation to generation, until the time comes that they shall be restored to the true church and fold of God; when they shall be gathered home to the lands of their inheritance, and shall be established in all their lands of promise. (2 Nephi 9:1–2)

Obviously, something is wrong with the way the author of Mormons and Jews interprets the Book of Mormon. Indeed, contrary to what Mormons and Jews implies, the Book of Mormon repeatedly teaches that salvation comes through Jesus Christ and in no other way. There are not two legitimate roads to salvation—only one.

O remember, remember, my sons, the words which king Benjamin spake unto his people; yea, remember
that there is no other way nor means whereby man can
be saved, only through the atoning blood of Jesus
Christ, who shall come; yea, remember that he cometh
to redeem the world. (Helaman 5:9)\textsuperscript{16}

In summary, President Spencer W. Kimball has clearly echoed
the above teachings of the Book of Mormon concerning the law
of the gathering of Israel in the latter days.

Now, the gathering of Israel consists of joining the
true church and their coming to a knowledge of the
true God. Any person, therefore, who has accepted the
restored gospel, and who now seeks to worship the
Lord in his own tongue and with the Saints in the
nations where he lives, has complied with the law of the
gathering of Israel and is heir to all of the blessings
promised the saints in these last days.\textsuperscript{17}

Some Final Observations

A danger in the methodological errors outlined above is that
they misrepresent to non-Latter-day Saints what the Book of
Mormon and early Latter-day Saint authorities taught about the
Jews. For example, in a previous review of this book, the highly
regarded Jewish scholar Jacob Neusner praises Mormons and Jews
which, in his view, "uncovers Joseph Smith's, Orson Hyde's and
Brigham Young's hitherto unappreciated, affirmative conception
of the enduring validity of Israel's vocation."\textsuperscript{18} From Mormons and Jews, Neusner has gotten the idea that early LDS Church
authorities like Joseph Smith taught that Judaism is a "valid road
to God" in and of itself, without the need to be "superceded by
Christianity."\textsuperscript{19} Neusner restates a Brigham Young quotation
cited in Mormons and Jews: "Brigham Young took a position that

\textsuperscript{16} See also 2 Nephi 9:41, 25:20, 31:20–21; Mosiah 3:17, 4:8, 5:8; and
Alma 38:9.

\textsuperscript{17} Spencer W. Kimball, The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, ed. Edward
L. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 439.

\textsuperscript{18} Jacob Neusner, "Toward a Common Goal," Sunstone 17/3 (December

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., 71.
Christianity in general would attain only in the aftermath of the Holocaust: ‘Jews and gentiles will not be obliged to belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.’”

Had the author of *Mormons and Jews* expanded the quotation from Brigham Young a scant two lines earlier, Neusner might not have decided to use it. The expanded quotation reads as follows: “When the kingdom of God triumphs, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ, to the glory of the Father. *Even the Jews will do it then*, but will the Jews and Gentiles be obliged to belong to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? No; not by any means.”

In this discourse, Brigham Young was first speaking of the conditions which will prevail at the beginning of the millennium, not to any final condition of mankind.

Later in the discourse, President Young does refer to the final condition of man and uses the phrase from John 14:2, “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” Neusner, noting the quotation of Brigham Young, states that *Mormons and Jews* “describes Young’s construction of human, religion [sic], and cosmic orders as ‘eternally pluralistic.’” But in fact, Brigham Young speaks of “many mansions” to explain the Latter-day Saint doctrine of differing kingdoms of glory, not of any idea that a multitude of different religious denominations would dwell together in heaven without receiving the saving ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is understandable that Neusner would misunderstand this point, since he is not a Latter-day Saint. Most likely, Neusner simply trusted the interpretation of Latter-day Saint doctrine given in *Mormons and Jews* and its use of the sources. Unfortunately, Neusner’s trust was misplaced.

Either the author of *Mormons and Jews*—who has a Ph.D. from Temple University, is a current BYU History Department faculty member, and is also a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—is guilty of careless scholarship stemming from a limited understanding of the Book of Mormon, or he is guilty of dishonest scholarship. We sincerely hope it is the former.

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20 Ibid., 72 quoting Epperson, 200.
21 *JD* 11:275, emphasis added.
A comment on the back cover of Mormons and Jews may allude to a third possibility. Paul M. van Buren suggests that Mormons and Jews "raises the question whether Latter-day Saints might not have something to share with [the] ecumenical movement." Increased ecumenical dialogue among all religions is certainly a noble desire, if this is indeed the objective of Mormons and Jews. However, is there not a better way to arrive at an ecumenical dialogue with other religions, especially the majority of the Jewish people with whom the Latter-day Saints already have a wonderful relationship,23 than to misrepresent the teachings of the Book of Mormon? Does the end justify the means?

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