



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

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## Special Book Offer

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invention. Latin Catholics and Protestants will learn of a doctrine of salvation that, while relatively foreign to their ears, is nevertheless part of the heritage of the undivided Catholic Church of the first millennium. Members of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholic Churches will discover on the American continent an amazing parallel to their own belief that salvation in Christ involves our becoming ‘partakers of the divine nature.’”

In his concluding paragraph, alluding to a piece of inflammatory anti-Mormon propaganda from the early 1980s, Father Vajda observes that “the Mormons are truly ‘godmakers’: as the [LDS] doctrine of exaltation explains, the fullness of human salvation means ‘becoming a god.’ Yet what was meant to be a term of ridicule has turned out to be a term of approbation, for the witness of the Greek Fathers of the Church . . . is that they also believed that salvation meant ‘becoming a god.’ It seems that if one’s soteriology cannot accommodate a doctrine of human divinization, then it has at least implicitly, if not explicitly, rejected the heritage of the early Christian church and departed from the faith of first millennium Christianity. However, if that is the case, those who would espouse such a soteriology also believe, in fact, that Christianity, from about the second century on, has apostatized and ‘gotten it wrong’ on this core issue of human salvation. Thus, ironically, those who would excoriate Mormons for believing in the doctrine of exaltation actually agree with them that the early church experienced a ‘great apostasy’ on fundamental doctrinal questions. And the supreme irony is that such persons should probably investigate the claims of the LDS Church, which proclaims that within itself is to be found the ‘restoration of all things.’”

**By Daniel C. Peterson**

#### SPECIAL BOOK OFFER

For a limited time, FARMS subscribers can obtain at special discount the first two volumes of the Book of Mormon critical text: *The Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Extant Text* and *The Printer’s Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Entire Text in Two Parts*, published by FARMS in 2001 (see the order form). For a full report on these essential resources for serious study of the Book of Mormon text, see the lead article in *INSIGHTS* 21/5 (2002).

Mailed with this newsletter is *Uncovering the Original Text of the Book of Mormon: History and Findings of the Critical Text Project*. This expanded report of the 20 October 2001 FARMS symposium on the Book of Mormon Critical Text Project replaces one of this year’s two planned issues of the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*. Well illustrated and informative, this special report serves as a primer for the critical text project.

# Insights

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**Institute for the Study and  
Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts**  
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FARMS is part of Brigham Young University’s Institute for the Study and Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts. As such, it encourages and supports research on the Book of Mormon, the Book of Abraham, the Bible, other ancient scripture, and related subjects. Under the FARMS imprint, the Institute publishes and distributes titles in these areas for the benefit of scholars and interested Latter-day Saint readers.

Primary research interests at FARMS include the history, language, literature, culture, geography, politics, and law relevant to ancient scripture. Although such subjects are of secondary importance when compared with the spiritual and eternal messages of scripture, solid research and academic perspectives can supply certain kinds of useful information, even if only tentatively, concerning many significant and interesting questions about scripture.

FARMS makes interim and final reports about this research available widely, promptly, and economically. These publications are peer reviewed to ensure that scholarly standards are met. The proceeds from the sale of these materials are used to support further research and publications. As a service to teachers and students of the scriptures, research results are distributed in both scholarly and popular formats.

It is hoped that this information will help all interested people to “come unto Christ” (Jacob 1:7) and to understand and appreciate more fully the scriptural witnesses of the divine mission of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

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