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Title Another Testament of Jesus Christ: Mormon's Poetics

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Abstract The Book of Mormon is clearly a didactic text, with its narrators using plainness, explicitness, and repetition to keep the message clear and straightforward. However, Hardy offers a more in-depth analysis of the text's rhetorical design that also reveals it as a literary text. The Book of Mormon is both a primer for judgment and a guidebook for sanctification. Parallel narratives are compared through clusters of similar narrative elements or phrasal borrowing between the multiple accounts. In Mosiah, Mormon tells the story of the bondage and delivery of Alma and his people after recounting the story of the bondage of the people of Limhi. Hardy explains that ambiguity, indirection, comparison, and allusions are all used to suggest the larger context of these two narratives. The ability to read the book as a guidebook for sanctification, rather than just as a straightforward didactic primer, will provide insight and guidance in the process of living a faithful life.
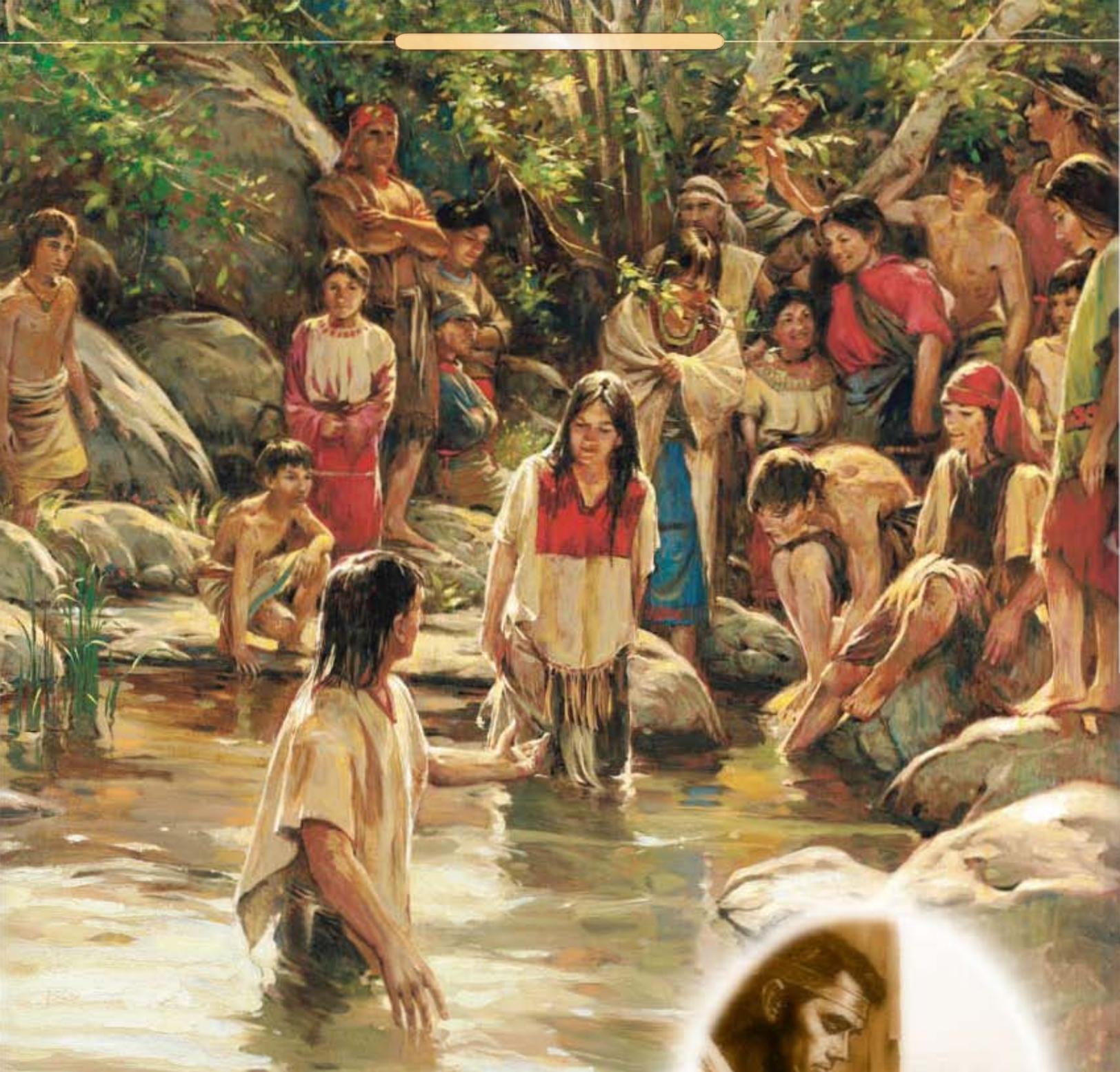
Another Testament of Jesus Christ

Mormon's Poetics
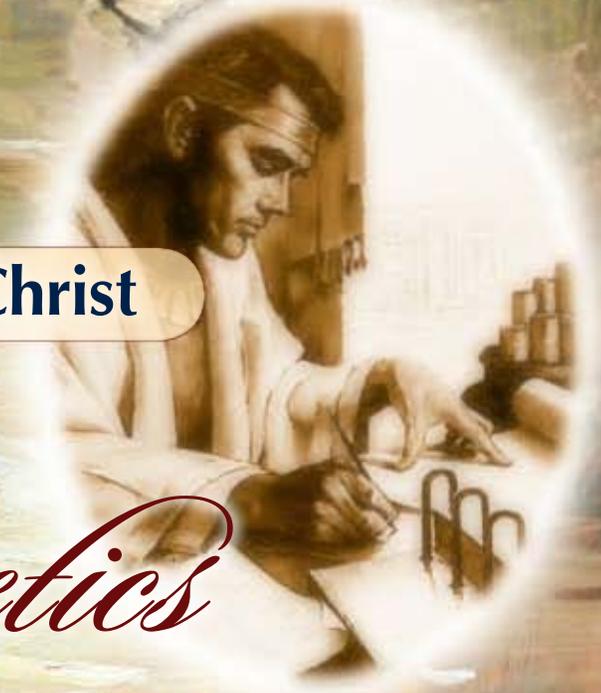
Heather Hardy

SCHOLARS OFTEN CATEGORIZE TEXTS AS being either didactic or literary. The didactic text features exhortation, narrator insertions, moral summaries, stark contrasts between good and evil, and plot lines with obvious ethical significance. The literary text, in contrast, is characterized by reticence, metaphor, ambiguity, and indirection; by suggesting rather than telling. The literary text, when done well, is deemed worthy of sustained attention and repeated readings, while the didactic is generally disparaged and dismissed as either simplistic, moralistic, or both.

At first glance, there is little doubt which category the Book of Mormon occupies. It is, undeniably, a remarkably didactic text, and there are reasons why this is so. The primary editors are all aware that their record will be read by a distant audience; they share a fundamental message—that mankind must put off the natural man and come to Christ in preparation for the last judgment; and they express a profound sense of urgency, since the salvation of readers depends upon their reception of the message. As a result, Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni aim to be so clear that their readers cannot misunderstand. To accomplish this, they apply their most unambiguous rhetorical skills: plainness, explicitness, and repetition. Certainly they are didactic; each intends his record as a primer for the judgment day.[1]

The narrators seem to have succeeded in their aim. One cannot read very far into the Book of Mormon without understanding the mission of Jesus Christ, the plan of salvation, the role of human agency, or the narrators' shared belief that those who keep the commandments will prosper while those who disobey will be cut off from God's presence. The point we seem to have missed as readers, though, is that this undeniable didacticism is not the entirety of the Book of Mormon's rhetorical design.

In addition to emphatically *telling* and *showing* a wide audience their most urgent message, Book of Mormon narrators are simultaneously reaching out to a narrower audience as well, *suggesting* more refined spiritual truths. Interwoven with the primer for judgment is an additional guidebook for spiritual growth that can be plumbed for insight and will reward repeated readings. The authors of this second book—which is embedded within the first— aim not only to save readers in the world to come but also to sanctify them in mortality. To this book, Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni bring a wider range of rhetorical skills than has typically been recognized. By noticing the particular writing strategies they employ—their individual poetics—we can learn to recognize the narrators' minds at work behind the text. Doing so can open up the Book of Mormon in intimate and remarkable ways.

We have largely missed the second book, this guidebook to assist the already-converted in becoming saints, because we do not expect it to exist. Knowing something of the narrators' biographies, we assume that they are men of action, composing on the run amidst dire circumstances, fortunate to get even first drafts laboriously engraved under the strain of other obligations. We take the ubiquity of "and it came to pass" and "behold" as evidence of quick composition, and we are appreciative at least for the consistency and intelligibility of the primer's tale. But in our generosity, we may have underestimated the care and literary ability that the narrators actually brought to their callings to write.[2]

We have also missed the sanctification guidebook because the didacticism of the primer has created a particular orientation within its receptive readers. As dwellers in a complex world, we respond positively to the refreshing plainness of the Book of Mormon's teachings and the clarity of its moral vision. Once we have embraced its message of salvation, we use the book didactically to remember our own change of heart as well as to share its message with others. The book's clarity, created in large measure by the mediating presence of the narrators, has the unintended consequence of turning us into complacent readers. We prefer to be told what to see in the text rather than to discover its meaning for ourselves. We become reluctant to look beyond what its narrators explicitly pronounce.

We have also tended to overlook the sanctification guidebook because, as Terryl Givens has observed, we generally regard the Book of Mormon as a sign of the restoration rather than as a text in its own right.[3] In doing so, we shift our focus from the narrators to the translator, gaining a testimony of Joseph Smith's prophetic calling but losing sight of (and even interest in) the book's particular content. In this manner of reading, the Book of Mormon serves as an invitation to individual "dialogic revelation," which is integral to the narrators' aims, although, again, not the totality of them.

Finally, we have missed the narrators' "second book" because we have largely ignored their editorial role in shaping the text's structure. The chapter and verse divisions we use today are not original to the dictated text but were added several decades later,[4] presumably to make the Book of Mormon consistent with contemporaneous editions of the King James Bible. While the versification enhances the book's didacticism, making it easier both to cite and to teach from, it also in large measure *dis*integrates the text, obscuring many of the narrators' deliberate strategies of coherence.[5] It is these very strategies that highlight the contours of the sanctification guidebook and greatly enrich the power of the book as a whole.

Unlike truisms from the primer for judgment (e.g., "wickedness never was happiness," Alma 41:10), insights from the "second book" are not usually found at the verse level or even within chapters. They most often emerge, instead, as readers recognize connections across larger portions of the text. Mormon, as we shall see, signals such readings

in three primary ways: by structuring the text to emphasize particular issues or themes, by organizing his history as a series of progressive parallel narratives, and by employing the extensive use of phrasal borrowing to allude to particular sources.[6] Through these rhetorical means, Mormon directs attentive readers to his sanctification guidebook just as deliberately as he points to his primer for judgment in his editorial insertions.

We can see Mormon working at both the primer and guidebook levels in Mosiah 23–24.[7] These chapters provide several examples of his characteristic methods, including the progression from telling to showing to suggesting. His moral guidance here moves from "I will show you" to "I will teach you to see for yourselves." By becoming alert to his methods, we can begin to recognize how Mormon attempts to enact the fulness of Jesus's gospel in both his text and his readers' lives.

Following an analysis of Mormon's presentation of the deliverance of Alma's people, I will offer a preliminary summary of his poetics, that is, of how, particularly, Mormon composes his two overlapping books to tell the Nephite story. I will conclude by considering why he may have chosen to write in the manner that he does.

Telling, Showing, and Suggesting

As Mosiah 23 opens, Mormon has just concluded the tale of the people of Limhi—how they were in bondage to the Lamanites, escaped from slavery, and then were led back to Zarahemla by Ammon (Mosiah 19–22). At this point Mormon inserts a heading: "An account of Alma and the people of the Lord, who were driven into the wilderness by the people of King Noah." In this way, Mormon tells his readers that he is disrupting the chronology by picking up a story he left off earlier, at Mosiah 18:33–34: "And now the king [Noah] . . . sent his army to destroy them. And it came to pass that Alma and the people of the Lord were apprised of the coming of the king's army; therefore they took their tents and their families and departed into the wilderness."[8]

As Mormon returns to the story of Alma and his people, it is not surprising that "they began to prosper exceedingly in the land" (Mosiah 23:19). This is exactly what we have come to expect in reading the "first book" as the consequence for those who follow the prophet, enter into covenants, and

keep the commandments; indeed, it is satisfying and reinforcing to see the righteous duly rewarded. But there is a problem coming, and Mormon tells us directly and ahead of time so that the clear moral of his tale is neither diluted nor confused by what happens next:

> Nevertheless the Lord seeth fit to chasten his people; yea, he trieth their patience and their faith. Nevertheless—whosoever putteth his trust in him the same shall be lifted up at the last day. Yea, and thus it was with this people. For behold, *I will show unto you* that they were brought into bondage, and none could deliver them but the Lord their God, yea, even the God of Abraham and Isaac and of Jacob. And it came to pass that he did deliver them, and he did show forth his mighty power unto them, and great were their rejoicings. (Mosiah 23:21–24)

In other words, "Don't be too concerned about what you are about to read. God is in control; he has his reasons and everything will turn out happily in the end."

rowing distinctive phrases from other authoritative teachings (either from his previous narrative or editorial comments, or from precepts and prophecies included in source texts). He expects careful readers to recognize both the allusions and the ideas he is *suggesting* by their larger contexts.

For example, in Mosiah 23:23, when Mormon tells us, "I will show unto you that they were *brought into bondage, and none could deliver them but the Lord their God*, yea, even the God of Abraham and Isaac and of Jacob," he expects his readers to recognize the nearly identical wording from Abinadi's recent prophecy: "Except this people repent and turn unto the Lord their God, they shall *be brought into bondage; and none shall deliver them, except it be the Lord the Almighty God*" (Mosiah 11:23). The connection between a specific prophecy and its fulfillment is made explicit by Mormon's choice of wording.[9]

Astute readers will recall that Abinadi did not include Mormon's identification of the Lord as "the God of Abraham and Isaac and of Jacob." With a little research, they will discover that this expression was first used when the Lord called Moses to

And none could deliver them but the Lord their God

This is one of Mormon's earliest editorial insertions. Significantly, he is demonstrating here his rhetorical strategies as well as establishing the expectations he has of his readers, not just for the forthcoming episode but for the entirety of his text. These strategies and expectations can be summarized as follows:

1. Mormon *tells* us universal moral principles and will subsequently use the narrative to *show* their enactment. He expects all his readers to recognize both.

2. Mormon *tells* us how the story is going to turn out beforehand so that we can recognize spiritual causation at work as the story unfolds. Mormon's storytelling is not about suspense but rather about *showing* his readers a way of seeing based on particular understandings.

3. Mormon establishes these understandings either by stating them directly—"the Lord seeth fit to chasten his people" (Mosiah 23:21)—or by bor-

deliver the children of Israel from Egypt (Exodus 3:6). By employing the phrase here, in combination with his usage of "tasks" and "task-masters" in the narrative which follows (Mosiah 24:9), Mormon likens the forthcoming deliverance of Alma's people to the exodus,[10] demonstrating, among other things, the Nephites' continuity with the house of Israel and the status of Alma's followers as the Lord's covenant people.

Truly astute readers (re-readers, actually, since the source has not yet been iterated) will further recognize that Mormon will be suggesting spiritual as well as physical deliverance in the forthcoming episode by recalling the similar wording in Alma the Younger's account of his own conversion:

> I would that ye should do as I have done, in remembering the captivity of our fathers; for they were *in bondage, and none could deliver them* except it was *the God of Abraham, and* the God of *Isaac, and* the God *of Jacob*; and *he*

surely *did deliver them* in their afflictions. . . . For I do know that *whosoever shall put their trust in God* shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles, and their afflictions, and *shall be lifted up at the last day.* (Alma 36:2–3, words in common with Mosiah 23:22–23 are in italics)

The extent of the phrasal borrowing here,[11] combined with the overlap of wording from Abinadi's prophecy, provides strong evidence that Mormon is intentionally alluding to the larger contexts of these other accounts as well as juxtaposing them for thematic ends.

True to his word, Mormon shows what he promised in Mosiah 23:21–24 by enacting the fore-
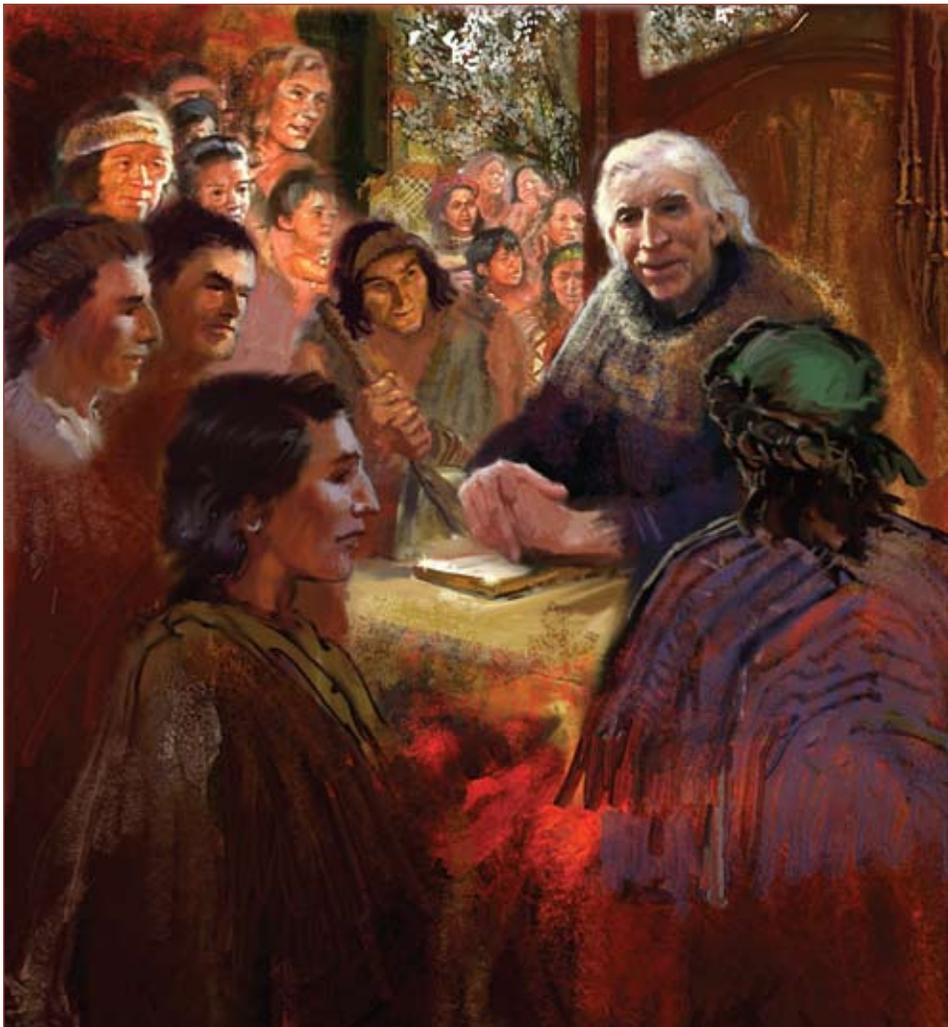

Mosiah received the people of Limhi "with joy." Illustration by Glen S. Hopkinson.

told trials, deliverance, and rejoicings in the narrative that follows. In his introductory comment, he noted that God would test the people's patience and faith. We are shown how they continue to trust in the Lord despite heavy burdens and afflictions, and then once again Mormon underlines his message: "And it came to pass that so great was their faith and their patience that the voice of the Lord came unto them again, saying: Be of good comfort, for on the morrow I will deliver you out of bondage" (Mosiah 24:16). Once the deliverance has occurred, Mormon repeats what he had formerly promised, providing maximal emphasis for the means of deliverance as well as a frame for the actual event:

In the valley of Alma they poured out their thanks to God because he had . . . *delivered them* out of bondage; for *they were in bondage, and none could deliver them except it were the Lord their God.* (Mosiah 24:21, words in common with Mosiah 23:23 are in italics)

It is hard to imagine a more didactic strategy than this "tell-show-tell" sandwich, and the meaning of the narrative is clear—the faithful will prosper under God's providential care, despite temporary setbacks. This is the message of salvation, and Mormon presents it in a manner not to be misunderstood.

Many readers will simply turn the page and move on, but Mormon, through one seemingly extraneous word, suggests that there is more to the story: "And after they had been in the wilderness twelve days they arrived in the land of Zarahemla; and king Mosiah did *also* receive them with joy"

(Mosiah 24:25). "Also?" Who else was involved? The answer is not difficult since the wording closely follows an earlier passage. When Mormon concluded the story of the deliverance of the people of Limhi, he wrote: "And after being many days in the wilderness they arrived in the land of Zarahemla, and joined Mosiah's people, and became his subjects. And it came to pass that Mosiah received them with joy" (Mosiah 22:13–14). By including the "also" in the second account, Mormon signals his intention to link the two stories and expects that readers will connect them as well.

On the surface, the two stories have a great deal in common. Both groups were remnants of Noah's kingdom, witnesses and heirs of Abinadi's prophecies. Both became subject to the Lamanites, as prophesied; both cried mightily to the Lord for deliverance, also as prophesied (Mosiah 21:14; 24:10; cf. 11:25); both gathered their flocks together by night and escaped into the wilderness (Mosiah 22:11; 24:18); and both, as we have seen, were warmly welcomed into Zarahemla.

These are the sorts of repetitions and recurrences that Richard Dilworth Rust has identified as "an important part of Mormon's method," which he uses "to teach, emphasize, and confirm."[12] But in addition to intending these didactic functions, Mormon also shapes his stories in parallel fashion to communicate more subtly. The stories, then, serve as reflections of each other, and their detailed comparison offers a multitude of potential meanings. What is it, here, that Mormon wants us to understand by connecting the deliverance of Limhi's and Alma's peoples?

By paying close attention to differences as well as similarities, we discover ambiguities in the narratives that call for further consideration. Mormon is hereby inviting the readers of his second book to reflect more deeply on the nature of bondage, deliverance, prophecy, agency, faith, and faithfulness—and all this from a single "also" explicitly linking the stories to each other. Both narratives depend on Abinadi's prophecies in Mosiah 11–12.

Mormon shapes the account of Limhi's people to demonstrate the fulfillment of Abinadi's prophecy, remarking explicitly at Mosiah 21:4 that "all this was done that the word of the Lord might be fulfilled." He employs the prophecy's distinctive language to describe the people's afflictions at the hands of the Lamanites: "they would smite them on their cheeks

. . . and began to put heavy burdens upon their backs, and drive them as they would a dumb ass" (Mosiah 21:3; compare 12:2, 5). We learn also that Limhi's people were driven and slain (Mosiah 21:7–8, 11–12; compare 12:2), and that although they cried mightily, "the Lord was slow to hear their cry" (Mosiah 21:15; compare 11:24). Most of these elements are not mentioned in the account of Alma's followers, suggesting that not only can prophecy be fulfilled multiple times, but also that some parts may find fulfillment only in particular enactments. A return to Abinadi's prophecies also demonstrates that several aspects of his dire warnings are never enacted in the narrative, including vultures devouring flesh, famine, pestilence, hail, and insects devouring grain, all of which were prophesied to occur within Alma's generation (Mosiah 12:2–6).

Although it could be argued that these unfulfilled events may have taken place but were not reported by Mormon, it seems unlikely that he would overlook them given his eagerness to point out the fulfillment of prophecy here and elsewhere (note, for instance, that as late as Alma 25:9–12 he is still telling us how Abinadi's words were fulfilled).[13]

If Mormon's intentions were purely didactic, he could have edited the problematic details out of the prophecies either by paraphrase or abridgment—especially since he indicates that what he has provided to us is only an abbreviated account of the proceedings (compare Mosiah 11:20–25 and 12:1–8b with Mosiah 12:8c, 10–12). It seems more probable that Mormon includes the ambiguities to make suggestions about the nature of prophecy, including the possibility that not all details need to be realized for a prophecy to be authentic; or, more specifically, that because of prophecy's contingency upon the subsequent activities of its recipients, we should anticipate that some aspects may in fact be unrealized. Indeed, although the people of Limhi suffered many of the predicted calamities, they apparently repented before the point when the Lord would "utterly destroy them from off the face of the earth" (Mosiah 12:8). Mormon does not explicitly tell us so, but reticence is precisely what we should expect when reading his "second book."

The ambiguity increases as we continue to contrast the deliverance of Limhi's and Alma's peoples in light of Abinadi's prophecies. In direct conflict with a central tenet of his message—that only God could deliver them—Limhi's people appear to

The people of Limhi escaped from the city by night, after the Lamanite guards became drunk on the Nephite's tribute of wine. Illustration by Glen S. Hopkinson.

deliver *themselves* from the hands of the Lamanites by getting their guards drunk with a tribute of wine (Mosiah 22:1–2, 4–11). The text makes clear that this successful stratagem—as well as several previous failures—came from their own design, rather than from relying upon the Lord. Ammon and Limhi consult with the people about "how they should deliver *themselves* out of bondage" (Mosiah 21:36; 22:1), and then Mormon tells us the name of the man who came up with the plan (Gideon) and has him present it to King Limhi in words that emphasize the theological difficulty: "*I* will be thy servant and deliver this people out of bondage" (Mosiah 22:4). "And it came to pass," we are told, "that the king hearkened unto the words of Gideon" (Mosiah 22:9). This should sound ominous—wasn't

the Lord supposed to deliver them? And didn't their afflictions only intensify when they tried to deliver themselves previously? (Mosiah 21:5–12). Are the vultures, hail, pestilence, and insects close at hand? Contrary to our expectations, all goes well with them. Gideon's plan works, and they make their way to Zarahemla where they are received with joy.

Yet the central tenet in Abinadi's prophecy *does* matter, and Alma sets the record straight after both groups are united in Zarahemla: "And he did exhort the people of Limhi . . . that they should remember that it was the Lord that did deliver them" (Mosiah 25:16), contrary to both their own experience and the narrative's naturalistic account of causation. And much later, when we meet Gideon again, Mormon recasts his role by describing him as "he who

was an instrument in the hands of God in delivering the people of Limhi out of bondage" (Alma 1:8). Mormon believes, although he does not explicitly tell his readers, "Although we may attribute our successes to our own intelligence and daring, we nevertheless owe everything to God." He is teaching us how to see here, suggesting that there is more to understand about how God operates in human lives.

When we examine the account of Alma's people and attempt to correlate their experiences with Abinadi's prophecies, an even more troubling discrepancy appears. Emphatically, Abinadi tells Noah's people twice, in the name of the Lord, "Except this

The Lord eased the burdens of the people of Alma during their bondage. Illustration by Glen S. Hopkinson.

people repent and turn unto the Lord their God, they shall be brought into bondage" (Mosiah 11:23, 21). As we learn, Alma's people *do* repent, stunningly. They believe the words of Abinadi and enter into a covenant at the waters of Mormon to serve the Lord and keep his commandments. They establish a church and flee at great peril from Noah's kingdom (Mosiah 18). When Mormon picks up their story again in Mosiah 23, we find that they are prospering in their new land (Mosiah 23:19–20), precisely as we would expect, given Lehi's promise to those who keep the commandments (2 Nephi 1:20). But again our expectations are overturned. If Abinadi's prophecy is reliable, why should Alma's people have been brought into bondage at all?

It is here that Mormon inserts the didactic editorial comment with which we began this discussion ("Nevertheless the Lord seeth fit to chasten his people" [Mosiah 23:21–24]), at precisely the point where the narrative diverges from readers' expectations. With Limhi's people, the dissonance was minimal because unexpected good fortune is much less distressing than seemingly undeserved affliction. Mormon's preemptive move diverts and refocuses casual readers, but careful ones are left trying to work out the reliability of prophecies, the nature of God's justice, and the sufficiency of moral truisms.

Mormon responds to these concerns, but with the same indirection that he brought them to his readers' attention. He shows and suggests but tells us nothing beyond the truisms of Mosiah 23:21–22: "Nevertheless the Lord seeth fit to chasten his people; yea, he trieth their patience and their faith. Nevertheless—whosoever putteth his trust in him, the same shall be lifted up at the last day." A miraculous deliverance will eventually restore moral order, just as Mormon promises, but in the meantime, he suggests, things may not be as they seem—Alma's people here are being tested rather than punished.[14]

Mormon proceeds to demonstrate the faithfulness of Alma and his people in the midst of their afflictions in remembering Abinadi's admonition to cry unto the Lord for deliverance (Mosiah 23:27; 24:10; cf. 11:24–25). The Lord responds directly to their prayers, alluding to both Abinadi's prophecy and the covenant the people have made at the waters of Mormon:

> Lift up your heads and be of good comfort, for I know of the covenant which ye have made unto

me; and I will covenant with my people and deliver them out of bondage.

And I will also ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs, even while you are in bondage; and this will I do that ye may stand as witnesses for me hereafter, and that ye may know of a surety that I, the Lord God, do visit my people in their afflictions. (Mosiah 24:13–14)

The two allusions are beautifully linked here by the common notion of burdens—in the case of Abinadi's prophecy, as a curse for disobedience ("It shall come to pass that this generation, because of their iniquities, shall be brought into bondage. . . . Yea, and I will cause that they shall have burdens lashed upon their backs" [Mosiah 12:2, 5]); and in
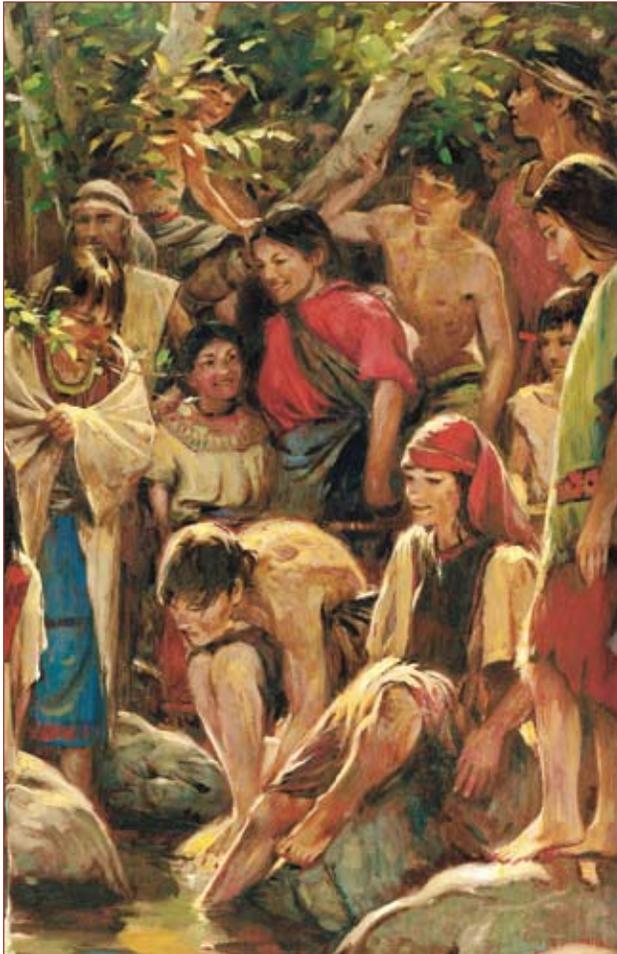
The people of Alma made covenants at the waters of Mormon. *Come into the Fold of God*, by Walter Rane. Copyright By the Hand of Mormon Foundation.

the case of the covenant at the waters of Mormon, as a mutual pledge of support ("As ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light . . . yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort" [Mosiah 18:8–9]). By so linking these allusions, the Lord is suggesting that because of the faithfulness of Alma's followers to their covenant in "stand[ing] as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in" (Mosiah 18:9)—even in seemingly unjustified bondage—He will intervene and ameliorate the harsh conditions of the prophecy, "that ye may stand as witnesses for me hereafter" (Mosiah 24:14). The Lord gives Alma's followers comfort and offers to bear their burdens, thereby becoming at-one with them by doing for them what they had promised to do for each other as members of a covenant community.

To emphasize the Lord's providential intervention, Mormon constructs a second frame in the midst of his tell-show-tell sandwich.[15] Here, it is the Lord who twice promises deliverance to Alma's people:

> A   Mormon: "I will show you that they were brought into bondage, and none could deliver them but the Lord their God." (Mosiah 23:23)
>> B   the Lord: "Be of good comfort, for . . . I will covenant with my people and deliver them out of bondage." (Mosiah 24:13)
>> B' the Lord: "Be of good comfort, for on the morrow I will deliver you out of bondage." (Mosiah 24:16)
> A' Mormon: "For they were in bondage, and none could deliver them except it were the Lord their God." (Mosiah 24:21)

Structurally, we should expect to find Mormon's central message for the episode between the Lord's two promises of deliverance, at the center of this double frame. And here we are not disappointed, although Mormon relates the point by indirection. He begins, confirming the Lord's reliability, by extending the waters-of-Mormon allusion: "And now it came to pass that the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light" (Mosiah 24:15; cf. 18:8). Thus, in a kind of verbal alchemy, Mormon transforms Abinadi's curse into a demonstration of the Lord's grace.

Next Mormon incorporates an echo of yet another prior text, "Yea, the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord" (Mosiah 24:15). The allusion is to King Benjamin's speech, unknown to Alma and his people but familiar by now to Mormon's readers, in which an angel urges becoming "submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict" (Mosiah 3:19). In making the connection, Mormon is following a didactic strategy—telling first by precept and then showing by example—but he is doing so in a nuanced manner. To begin with, his telling and showing are more than twenty chapters apart, and to make his point he must rely on readers recognizing the verbal similarity. Additionally, just as he did with "burdens" above, Mormon links the two by distinctive wording, in this case, of submitting with patience to the will of the Lord.[16]

In an address given at Brigham Young University in 2001, David A. Bednar recommends the connection between Mormon's narration here and King Benjamin's address:

> As we progress in the journey of mortality from bad to good to better, as we put off the natural man or woman in each of us, and as we strive to become saints and have our very natures changed, then the attributes detailed in this verse increasingly should describe the type of person you and I are becoming. We will become more childlike, more submissive, more patient, and more willing to submit. Now compare these characteristics in Mosiah 3:19 with those used to describe Alma and his people in the latter part of verse 15 in Mosiah 24: "and they did *submit* cheerfully and *with patience* to *all the will of the Lord.*"
>
> I find the parallels between the attributes described in these verses striking and an indication that Alma's good people were becoming a better people through the enabling power of the Atonement of Christ the Lord.[17]

The parallels are even more striking because this is not just creative reading; Mormon intended for us to see them. For readers of his "second book," Mormon is here reinforcing what he suggested earlier about how the people's faithfulness has brought them into relationship with God. He does so by drawing upon the larger context of the angel's words:

> For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father. (Mosiah 3:19)

As Elder Bednar recognizes, Mormon *suggests* at the high point of this deliverance account—at the center of his double frame—that the converted can become saints through the atonement of Christ. He *shows* us, beyond King Benjamin's *telling*, that the Lord was moved not only to try his people but also to intervene and become one with them because of their unwavering trust and their cheerful submissiveness in the affliction of both bondage and unmet expectations. This gracious assistance strengthened their faith, enabling them to "bear up their burdens with ease" (Mosiah 24:15). For those who have learned to read the sanctification guidebook, Mormon's account of Alma and his followers invites reflection and offers deep spiritual insight on remaining faithful in the face of substantial challenges to belief.

Mormon's Poetics

We have reviewed two chapters of Mosiah from the perspective of how Mormon presents his message to modern readers. In doing so, we have followed Meir Sternberg, author of the seminal work *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, who recommends seeing scriptural texts as "a means to a communicative end, a transaction between the narrator and the audience on whom he wishes to produce a certain effect by way of certain strategies."[18] We have considered the twofold effect Mormon wishes to produce: to make possible the salvation of readers in the world to come, as well as to sanctify them in mortality. His mode of transaction has been to write two books in one—a primer for judgment and a guidebook for sanctification. He has employed didactic strategies for the first book and more subtle methods for the second, in a progression from

telling, to showing, to suggesting. The totality of these rhetorical strategies may be regarded as Mormon's poetics.[19]

In explaining the nature of poetics, biblical scholar Adele Berlin offers an analogy:

> If literature is likened to a cake, then poetics gives us the recipe. . . . It is relatively easy to make a cake if you have the recipe. It is somewhat trickier to start with the cake and from that figure out how it is made. But that is exactly what poetics tries to do. It . . . seeks to abstract the general principles of literature from many different manifestations of those principles as they occur in actual literary texts.[20]

Showing: Here Mormon enacts principles and prophecies, reinforcing in the narrative precepts taught elsewhere. Sometimes this narrative showing follows closely on the heels of its moral telling, as we saw in Mosiah 23:21 and 24:10–15, where the Lord tries the faith of Alma's people. Elsewhere, the narrative showing is further removed, explicitly connected by phrasal borrowings, as when Mormon tells us that Alma's people "prospered" in the land of Helam (Mosiah 23:19–20; compare 2 Nephi 1:20), or that they later "cr[ied] mightily to God" in their afflictions (Mosiah 24:10; compare 11:25), or that as covenant keepers, their "burdens" were indeed made "light" (Mosiah 24:15; 18:8). Mormon also shows by repeated enactment principles that

And they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord.

What follows is a very preliminary summary of the ingredients of Mormon's recipe, incomplete as it is, with such detail as our consideration of Mosiah 23–24 has provided.

Telling: Mormon, at his most didactic, interrupts his narrative to make editorial comments that express universal truths or explicitly indicate what he expects his readers to understand from the stories he tells (as we saw in Mosiah 23:21–24). The placement of these insertions can be as significant as their content, as we saw again in Mosiah 23:21–24, where he deftly diverts his readers' attention away from potential problems. Mormon also explicitly communicates spiritual truths by inserting lengthy source documents that relate precepts, commandments, and prophecies from the mouths of the prophets themselves (e.g., King Benjamin's sermon and Abinadi's prophecies). In another didactic technique, he demarcates the narrative episode by providing a heading that summarizes the action to follow. He also eliminates narrative suspense by announcing what will transpire, showing what he has promised, and then articulating what he has demonstrated in the tell-show-tell structure of Mosiah 23:23–24:21. Each of these methods characterizes Mormon's first book, his primer for judgment, which values moral clarity above other literary concerns.

he expects his readers to understand without being explicitly told—like the fact that the Lord is faithful and will fulfill both his covenants and the words of his prophets.

Suggesting: Mormon employs more sophisticated literary techniques as he moves to his guidebook for sanctification. Here he communicates by indirection, acknowledging the challenges and ambiguities that accompany a life of faith. While never sowing doubt by explicitly articulating discrepancies between the narrative and its moral framework, Mormon nevertheless suggests avenues for responding to the difficulties he has chosen not to edit out.

The conflicts are most evident in closely examining Mormon's juxtaposition of parallel narratives. Often one episode is compared to several others, sometimes explicitly and other times as subtly as by a single common word. The deliverance of the people of Alma, for example, was compared in one way or another to Abinadi's prophecies, to the exodus story, to Alma the Younger's account of his conversion, to their prior deliverance from the hands of King Noah, to the parallel deliverance of the people of Limhi, to the covenant making at the waters of Mormon, and finally to the sermon of King Benjamin.[21] As we have seen, these comparisons are most frequently suggested either by a cluster of similar narrative elements or, again, by phrasal borrowings

between the two accounts. Mormon also suggests possible spiritual insights by alluding to the larger context of parallel borrowings (Mosiah 23:23, compare Alma 36:2–3; or Mosiah 24:15, compare 3:19); by shifting the original subject (as we saw in the Lord's assuming a position as a member of the waters-of-Mormon covenant community in Mosiah 24:13–14, compare 18:8–9); or by creating a framing structure that highlights its central element (Mosiah 23:23; 24:13, 14–15, 16, 21). These are narratives we can reread and ponder, where we can find connections and contrasts as we think through difficult issues and learn how to see God's hand and will—not only in the text but also in our own lives. This is a guidebook for sanctification, for making saints out of its readers and not just converts.

A Poetics of Atonement

Later in his work, Meir Sternberg offers a refinement on his theory of biblical poetics by asserting that a key task of the ancient writers was to find a way to "expound and inculcate" the text's most central doctrine into the structure of the narrative itself. "Not the premises alone," he tells us, "but the very composition must bring home the point in and through the reading experience . . . call[ing] into sacred play all the [aesthetic] choices and techniques" at the narrator's disposal.[22] There is no question about the Book of Mormon's most central doctrine; indeed, it is proclaimed beforehand, as a premise, in the subtitle "Another Testament of Jesus Christ." How might we expect the Book of Mormon to be structured if its narrator had deliberately expounded and inculcated *his* testament of Jesus Christ not only into the premises of the book but also into its "very composition"? Perhaps not so differently than it is.

In his BYU address quoted above, which highlights the deliverance of Alma's people, Elder Bednar distinguishes between two aspects of Christ's atonement, its "redeeming power" (transforming bad people into good) and its "enabling power" (making spiritual growth possible). He explains, again using terms from Mosiah 3:19:

> I am not trying to suggest that the redeeming and enabling powers of the Atonement are separate and discrete. Rather, these two dimensions of the Atonement are connected and complementary; they both need to be operational during all phases of the journey of life. And it is eternally important for all of us to recognize that *both* of these essential elements of the journey of life—both putting off the natural man and becoming a saint, both overcoming bad and becoming good—are accomplished through the power of the Atonement.[23]

So also do Mormon's two books reflect these two dimensions of the Atonement. The primer for judgment, by its premises and composition, calls the Atonement's redeeming power into play in the lives of its readers, just as the guidebook for sanctification invites its enabling power. And as Elder Bednar suggests, both books are crucial during all phases of the journey of life. By writing these two books in one, "connected and complementary," Mormon has created a Poetics of Atonement that brings home the point of "Another Testament of Jesus Christ" in and through the reading experience, mirroring the effects of Christ's sacrifice for all humankind.

The Book of Mormon is certainly a means by which we can repent, come to Christ, and become converted. But it is also more than that. Mormon and the book's other narrators anticipate many of the difficulties that accompany a life of faith, providing insight, guidance, and encouragement for the path from conversion to sanctification. By learning how to read their second book, we invite the enabling power of Christ's atonement to act in us through its words. ▩

Colombian Gazette; The American Argus; American Spectator; The Busy Body; Washington Expositor; The Globe; Daily National Journal; National Journal; Washington News; United Telegraph. None of these papers had anything on the Book of Mormon. (2) The Pennsylvania Historical Society in Philadelphia. The two newspapers for that area were: *The Philadelphia Price Current; Mechanics Free Press.* None had any information on the Book of Mormon. (3) The University of North Carolina, at Chapel Hill. These papers were consulted: *New Orleans Bee; The Texas Gazette; The Charleston Courier; The Raleigh Register; Hillsborough Recorder; Carolina Observer.* None had anything on the Book of Mormon. (4) New York Public Library included: *New York American: For the Country; New York Post; Morning Courier and Enquirer.* None of these had information concerning the Book of Mormon. Finally (5), in my research at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, I found some reference to the Book of Mormon. However, the only thing I discovered was a series of advertisements for the Book of Mormon placed in the *Boston Free Press* by Thomas B. Marsh. He ran six advertisements during the summer of 1830 in that paper. The purpose of describing my library research over a period of several years is to demonstrate that the Book of Mormon came forth in obscurity—with very little notice.

54. Terryl L. Givens, *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture that Launched a New World Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 60.

55. For a discussion of these and other critiques of the Book of Mormon, see Givens, *By the Hand of Mormon*, 155–84.

56. See the information in footnote 51. A citation from the article is on pages 11 and 12.

57. Louis Midgley, "The Challenge of Historical Consciousness: Mormon History and the Encounter with Secular Modality," in *By Study and Also by Faith*, *Essays in Honor of Hugh W. Nibley,* ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990), 2:510, 525–27.

Another Testament of Jesus Christ: Mormon's Poetics
Heather Hardy

1. The final words of each of the Book of Mormon's major editors includes the anticipation of the judgment day and the expressed hope that their readers will be appropriately prepared by heeding the book's counsel: Nephi (2 Nephi 33:10–15); Mormon (Mormon 3:17–22; 7:7–8); Moroni (Ether 12:38–41; Moroni 10:28–34).

2. From details provided in the text we have no reason to conclude that any of the Book of Mormon's editors lacked either time or motivation to direct his finest efforts to the writing task. Although Moroni tells us that ore was scarce (Mormon 8:5) and that he lacked confidence in his ability to write as eloquently as his predecessors (Ether 12:23–25), he certainly had time for solitary reflection (compare Mormon 8:6 and Moroni 10:1). Nephi's contribution was explicitly *not* his first draft, with decades transpiring between it and his final presentation (see 1 Nephi 9:2–5 and 2 Nephi 5:29–34).

   Mormon's situation requires a little more reconstruction, but careful attention to details suggests that he, too, had adequate time to compose carefully. He indicates that he took personal possession of the entire Nephite records in 375 CE (Mormon 4:16–23), after thirty years with just the Plates of Nephi (Mormon 2:16–18)—the last thirteen of which while he was without military obligation (see Mormon 3:8, 11 and 5:1). Mormon does not say when he began his abridgment of the Large Plates, though in light of his extensive use of primary source documents we may surmise that it was after he obtained all the records. Even if most of his writing occurred after he had resumed command of the Nephite armies, Mormon describes only a few episodes of active military engagement before the final battle nine years later (Mormon 5–6). While he explicitly attributes some of this reticence to sparing his readers the horrific details, we need not assume that the atrocities so preoccupied him as to preclude careful editing.

   It is not difficult to ascertain that the three editors also had the motivation to write as well as they could. Mormon, like Nephi before him, had been remarkably unsuccessful in persuading his contemporaries to embrace the gospel (Mormon 1:17; 3:2–3; Moroni 9:4). With the Lord's blessing, he turned his preaching efforts to his text (3 Nephi 5:13–16). For all three narrators, the text became their legacy to a distant posterity. We need look no further than the sincerity of each of the narrators' final plea to their readers (2 Nephi 33; Mormon 3; 5; 7; Moroni 10) to recognize their investment in the persuasive power of their writings.

3. See chapter three, on the Book of Mormon as sacred sign, and chapter eight, on dialogic revelation, in Terryl L. Givens, *By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture that Launched a New World Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 62–88, 209–39.

4. Royal Skousen, "Translating the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997), 85–87.

5. Grant Hardy has done a tremendous service to readers looking for Mormon's "second book" by highlighting the prominence of the Book of Mormon's narrator-designed structure in *The Book of Mormon: A Reader's Edition* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003). This edition retains the Book of Mormon's words but alters its format (which was not original to Joseph Smith's dictation), by adding paragraphs, quotation marks, and parallel lineation for poetry. It also clearly demarcates narrator colophons, original chapter breaks, changes in narrators, and the insertion of external source documents; as well as providing footnotes connecting interrupted narrative lines, intertextual quotations, and the fulfillment of prophecy, among other things. Remarkably, the edition has rendered the narrative of the Book of Mormon much more accessible while simultaneously demonstrating the coherency of its sophisticated composition.

6. Although I expect that few readers will take exception to my categorization of the first two of these, I recognize that more are likely to be skeptical about the third—Mormon's use of phrasal repetition as a deliberate rhetorical strategy. While phrasal similarities can certainly be demonstrated, proving that Mormon *intended* to include them is much more difficult since every culture has its tropes and characteristic expressions. I am also not arguing that all instances of Mormon's use of phrasal repetition are deliberate (many are undoubtedly coincidental), but my point is that noticing the practice may well provide insight into Mormon's intended meaning. My argument here for Mormon's intentionality in employing phrasal repetition also presumes that he did not compose as he engraved but rather transmitted to the plates a text previously written and carefully revised. This would have to have been the case in order for him to have included the many intricate interweavings separated by long passages of text that I have identified.

   I provide several examples of Mormon's use of phrasal borrowing in Mosiah 23–24 in the body of the paper. I can confidently assert, however, that these examples are not uncharacteristic of his methods. In studying Mormon's poetics across his oeuvre, I have identified over 200 occasions where he duplicates phrases from embedded documents, as well as many more instances in which characters in Mormon's writing similarly quote or allude to specific prior episodes or texts. From the many clear examples of intentionality that I have discovered, along with the sheer number of occurrences and

patterns of usage, I am convinced that Mormon employs phrasal repetition as a deliberate rhetorical strategy. Its widespread manifestation substantiates the notion of a text carefully composed and then divinely translated as opposed to one dictated by an uneducated farm boy at a rate of eight pages a day.

To my knowledge no one has yet systematically considered the use of intratextual phrasal repetition in the Book of Mormon, let alone as a deliberate narrative strategy. John W. Welch has identified subsequent allusions to King Benjamin's speech ["Benjamin, the Man: His Place in Nephite History," in *King Benjamin's Speech: "That Ye May Learn Wisdom,"* ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998), 42–48] and a couple of other extended, attributed quotations (Alma 36:22 quoting 1 Nephi 1:8, and Helaman 5:9 quoting Mosiah 3:17) ["Textual Consistency" in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1992), 21–23] without sorting out who makes use of prior texts and to what end.

7. Other scholars have discussed salvation as the essential meaning of these chapters, including Monte S. Nyman, "Bondage and Deliverance," in *Studies in Scripture, Volume 7: 1 Nephi to Alma 29*, ed. Kent P. Jackson (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987), 260–68; and Clyde J. Williams, "Deliverance from Bondage," in *Mosiah: Salvation Only through Christ*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1991), 261–74.

8. Mormon's use of colophons as a way to make transparent his editorial strategies has been commented on at length in Thomas W. Mackay, "Mormon as Editor: A Study in Colophons, Headers, and Source Indicators," *JBMS* 2/2 (1993): 90–109.

9. I realize that all the verbal repetitions and allusions noted in this paper are from an English translation of Mormon's record, and thus it is not clear how closely they might be correlated in the original language of Reformed Egyptian. Nevertheless, such connections appear to be deliberate and significant. Royal Skousen's work suggests that the wording of the Book of Mormon was revealed to Joseph Smith in a fairly exact form ("Translating the Book of Mormon," 87–90), so if the verbal connections are a phenomenon of translation rather than Mormon's editing, perhaps the inspired nature of the translation would account for them.

10. Although variations of "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" are not uncommon in scripture (18 total iterations), in the Old Testament the phrase occurs only in the Exodus story (Exodus 3:6, 15, 16; 4:5). "Task(s)" and "taskmasters" are much more distinctive—they are again found repeatedly in Exodus (1:11; 3:7; 5:6, 10, 13, 14, 19) but otherwise appear only at 1 Nephi 17:25; Jacob 2:10; and Mosiah 24:9, 19. The 1 Nephi verse is an explicit reference to the exodus story; the Jacob one, a generic usage of "task." Mormon's combination of these words at Mosiah 24 does seem to demonstrate his intentional allusion to the former deliverance.

Others have discerned echoes of the exodus in the deliverance stories of the peoples of Limhi and Alma. George S. Tate merely mentions the possibility in "The Typology of the Exodus Pattern in the Book of Mormon," in *Literature of Belief: Sacred Scripture and Religious Experience*, ed. Neal E. Lambert (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1981), 253. S. Kent Brown has a much more thorough discussion in *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla: Literary and Historical Studies of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1998), 77–80.

11. Mosiah 23:22–23 shares two distinctive formulations with Alma 36:2–3. The first, "whosoever putteth his trust in [God] . . . shall be lifted up at the last day," appears only in these two places in the Book of Mormon. The second, variations of being "in bondage, and none could deliver them except" the Lord, appears in four places—these two along with Abinadi's initial prophecy at Mosiah 11:23, and Mormon's reiteration of his Mosiah 23:23 explanation at 24:21. It may be worth noting that Mormon quotes these in reverse order from how they appear in Alma—a practice not uncommon in his poetics of phrasal borrowing.

12. Richard Dilworth Rust, *Feasting on the Word: The Literary Testimony of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1997), 21.

13. I generally assume that the unattributed narration from Mosiah 1 to Mormon 7 consists of Mormon's words, but the phrase "at this day" in Alma 25:9 may indicate that the observation was made in Mormon's original source, presumably by Alma the Younger.

14. This point has been recognized by Mark D. Thomas in *Digging in Cumorah: Reclaiming Book of Mormon Narratives* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1999), 86. After enumerating similarities between the deliverance narratives of Limhi's people and Alma's, he comments: "The similarities . . . of the two stories only reinforce the fundamental difference between the two groups: the reason for their enslavement. Limhi's group was being punished by God for their sins, while Alma's people, a righteous group, must interpret their captivity as a trial of their faith."

15. The identification of framing devices, and more specifically chiasms, has gained considerable currency among Latter-day Saint readers, but following John Welch, I believe passages should only be labeled as such cautiously (see John W. Welch, "Criteria for Identifying and Evaluating the Presence of Chiasmus," *JBMS* 4/2 [1995]: 1–14). Framing devices represent only one of many techniques used by Nephite authors to give structure to their writings. While I am not asserting that this passage is a chiasmus (because of the limited number of elements and the inconsistent spacing), it does seem clear from the patterned shifts in speakers, near identical wording, and similar themes that the repetition was deliberate on Mormon's part. Thus, it seems appropriate to look for "second book" insights at its center.

16. Forms of the verb "submit" appear only six times in the Book of Mormon: in Mosiah 3:19 and 24:15 as we have seen, and also at Mosiah 21:13 (in a reference to the people of Limhi submitting to the Lamanites after being defeated in battle), in Alma 7:23 and 13:28 (in Alma's sermons to the people at Gideon and Ammonihah respectively, both as allusions to King Benjamin's address), and in Alma 44:11 (in a speech by Captain Moroni to Zerahemnah regarding the conditions of a military surrender).

17. David A. Bednar, "In the Strength of the Lord (Words of Mormon 1:14; Mosiah 9:17; Mosiah 10:10; Alma 20:4)," a devotional address given at BYU on October 23, 2001, available in *Speeches: Brigham Young University 2001–2002* (Provo, UT: BYU Press, 2002), 125, or online at speeches.byu.edu/reader/reader.php?id=789&x=57&y=8 (accessed October 12, 2007); emphasis in original.

18. Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 1.

19. Although I am unaware of previous discussions of Mormon's poetics per se, several articles have addressed his editorial and compositional strategies, including Grant R. Hardy, "Mormon as Editor," and John A. Tvedtnes, "Mormon's Editorial Promises," both in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991), 15–28 and 29–31; Susan Taber, "Mormon's Literary Technique," *Mormon Letters Annual 1983* (Salt Lake City: Association for Mormon Letters, 1984), 117–25; and Thomas W. Mackay, "Mormon's Philosophy of History: Helaman 12 in the Perspective of Mormon's Editing Procedure," in *Helaman through 3 Nephi 8: According to Thy Word*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1992), 129–46; and Steven L.

Olsen, "Prophecy and History: Structuring the Abridgment of the Nephite Records," *JBMS* 15/1 (2006): 18–29.

20. Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield, England: Almond Press, 1983), 15.

21. Although I have used the phrases "people of Alma" or "Alma's people" for convenience, these terms never appear in the Book of Mormon. Mormon does refers to "Alma and his people" or even "his people," but at key transitions in the narrative, Mormon uses a slightly different—and significant—variation: "Alma and the people of the Lord" (Mosiah 18:34, 19:1, heading before chapter 23; cf. 23:21, 24:13–14). By contrast, "people of King Noah" and "people of King Limhi" each appear three times, and there are twenty-one occurrences of "people of Limhi." S. Kent Brown has suggested that possessive forms connecting leaders and their peoples in these chapters are reminiscent of the exodus. See *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla*, 111, n. 34.

22. Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 46–47.

23. Bednar, "In the Strength of the Lord," 123.

A Tale of Three Communities: Jerusalem, Elephantine, and (Lehi-)Nephi
Jared W. Ludlow

1. Special thanks to S. Kent Brown who envisioned the juxtaposition of these three communities, gave a lot of pointers to information related to these communities, and then invited me to write about them.

2. Bezalel Porten, probably the leading expert on Elephantine, proposes a date of settlement around 650 BC as a result of disaffected priests fleeing Jerusalem during wicked King Manasseh's reign. See "Settlement of the Jews at Elephantine and the Arameans at Syene," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, ed. Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 451–61.

3. S. Kent Brown and Richard Neitzel Holzapfel, *The Lost 500 Years: What Happened between the Old and New Testaments* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2006), 7–27.

4. Bezalel Porten, "The Jews in Egypt," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 1:386.

5. Karel van der Toorn, "Anat-Yahu, Some Other Deities, and the Jews of Elephantine," *Numen* 39/1 (1992): 80.

6. Shemaryahu Talmon, "The Emergence of Jewish Sectarianism in the Early Second Temple Period," in *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, ed. Patrick D. Miller Jr., Paul D. Hanson, and S. Dean McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 595.

7. The temple was usually designated ʿegora in the Elephantine texts, paralleling the Akkadian term ekurru.

8. Jena Jörg Frey, "Temple and Rival Temple—The Cases of Elephantine, Mt. Gerizim, and Leontopolis," in *Gemeinde ohne Tempel*, ed. Beate Ego and others (Tubingen: Mohr, 1999), 178–79.

9. The tetragrammaton YHWH is not found in any Elephantine documents. Instead, these documents use the trigrammaton like many initial or final elements in theophoric personal names. See Bezalel Porten, *Archives from Elephantine: The Life of an Ancient Jewish Military Colony* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 105–6.

10. Frey, "Temple and Rival Temple," 177.

11. There are of course later references to the temple in the Book of Mormon, especially with King Benjamin's discourse at the temple at the beginning of the Book of Mosiah, but I have focused only on the initial temple up until the time of Mosiah to keep it in a similar time frame with the other communities discussed and also to look primarily at the formations of these communities, not at their continuations.

12. Henry J. Flanders Jr., Robert W. Crapps, and David A. Smith, *People of the Covenant: An Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 438–39.

13. See Brown and Holzapfel, *The Lost 500 Years*, 12–15.

14. Of course, repentance from iniquity would remove any cursing from the Lord—see 2 Nephi 5:22.

15. Sami S. Ahmed, "The Jewish Colony at Elephantine," *Iliff Review* 22 (Spring 1965): 15.

16. Thomas M. Bolin, "The Temple of Yahu at Elephantine and Persian Religious Policy," in *The Triumph of Elohim: From Yahwisms to Judaisms,* ed. Diana V. Edelman (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos, 1995), 128.

17. Bolin, "The Temple of Yahu at Elephantine," 142.

18. Michael H. Silverman, "The Religion of the Elephantine Jews—A New Approach," in *Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, ed. Avigdor Shinan (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1977), 1:378.

19. Silverman, "The Religion of the Elephantine Jews," 385.

20. Porten, "The Jews in Egypt," 389.

21. Although there is little question that these festivals would have been celebrated, it does seem quite formulaic how they are described in Ezra, connected first with the rebuilding of the altar and later with the temple.

22. Flanders, Crapps, and Smith, *People of the Covenant*, 443.

23. For other passages related to the two sets of plates, see Jarom 1:14 and Omni 1:11. Note also Jacob's difficulty engraving on the plates but also his realization of their importance for future readers (Jacob 4:1–4).

24. See, for example, Hans Joachim Stoebe, "Überlegungen zum Synkretismus der jüdischen Tempelgemeinde in Elephantine," in *Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte Vorderasiens: Festschrift für Rainer Michael Böhmer*, ed. U. Finkbeiner, R. Dittmann, and H. Hauptmann (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1995), 619.

25. Ezra 2:61–62 and Nehemiah 7:63–65 list some sons of the priests whose names were not registered in the genealogy and who were consequently excluded from the priesthood by reason of being defiled.

26. Briefly, Bernhard Anderson raises an important point with regard to the priesthood at Jerusalem following Zerubbabel. After the temple was rebuilt and Zerubbabel left under somewhat mysterious circumstances, the high priest became the successor and henceforth Israel became a temple-centered community. See Bernard W. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 440.

27. President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote concerning the early priesthood among the Nephites: "There were no Levites who accompanied Lehi to the Western Hemisphere. Under these conditions the Nephites officiated by virtue of the Melchizedek Priesthood from the days of Lehi to the days of the appearance of our Savior among them. It is true that Nephi 'consecrated Jacob and Joseph' that they should be priests and teachers over the land of the Nephites, but the fact that plural terms *priests and teachers* were used indicates that this was not a reference to the definite office in the priesthood in either case, but it was a general assignment to teach, direct, and admonish the people." *Answers to Gospel Questions* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 1:124–26.

28. Silverman, "The Religion of the Elephantine Jews," 378.

29. An interesting piece on the importance of Jerusalem in the consciousness and teachings of the Book of Mormon peoples was recently published. See Joshua Michael Sears, "'We Came Out of Jerusalem': The Holy City's Influence on Book of Mormon Peoples," in *The 2007 Brigham Young University Religious Education Student Symposium* (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2007), 130–46.

Service and Temple in King Benjamin's Speech
Donald W. Parry

1. Previously published examinations of King Benjamin's speech include Hugh W. Nibley, "Old World Ritual in the New World," in *An Approach to the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1957), 243–56, a comparison of the speech with ancient year-rite festivals; Stephen D. Ricks, "Treaty/Covenant Patterns in King Benjamin's Address," *BYU Studies*