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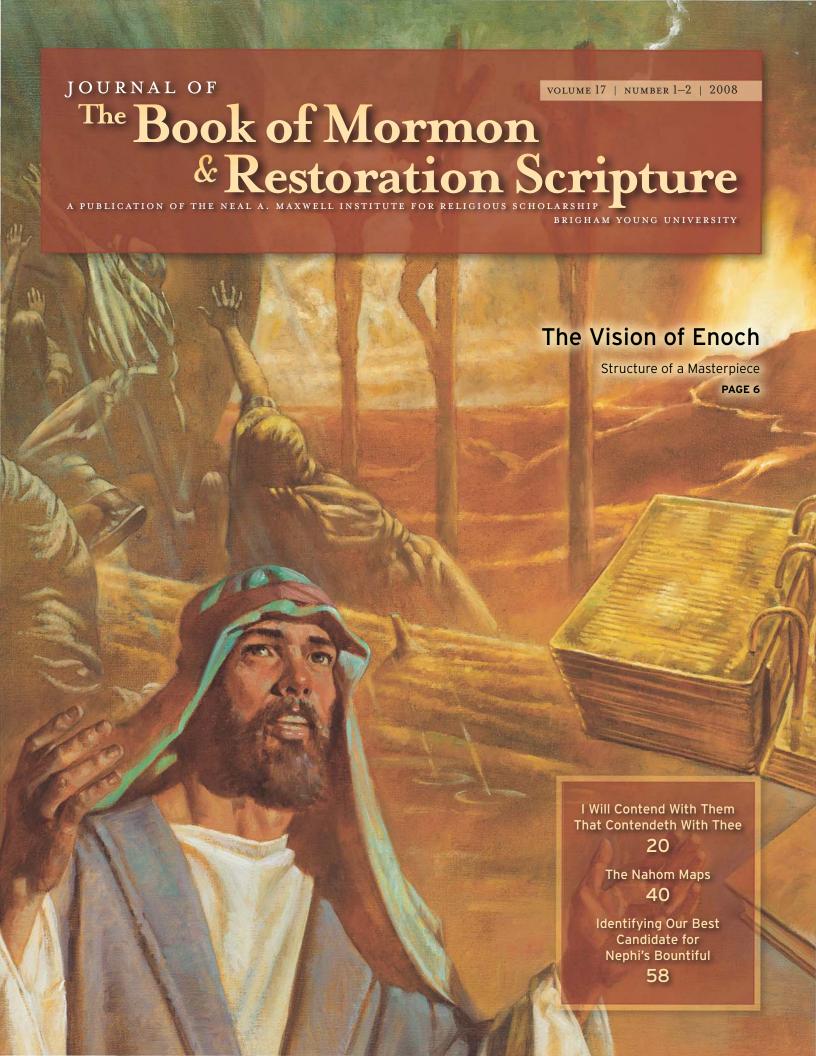
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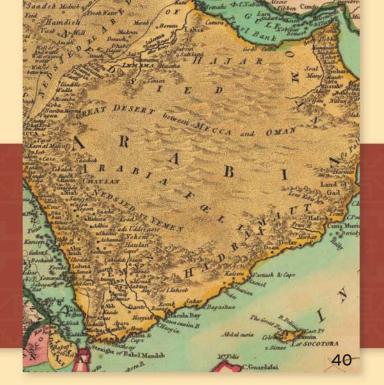
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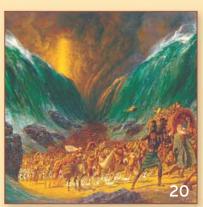
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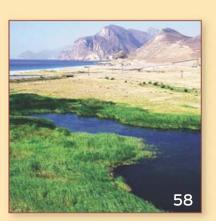




ON THE COVER: The Vision of Enoch, by Robert T. Barrett. Oil on canvas.







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The Book of Moses contains a remarkable account of Enoch's vision of the history and future of the world. Understanding the deliberate and artistic literary structure of the vision can provide greater appreciation for Enoch and his important revelation.

"I Will Contend With Them That Contendeth With Thee": The Divine Warrior in Jacob's Speech of 2 Nephi 6-10 DANIEL BELNAP

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VOLUME 17 | NUMBER 1-2 | 2008

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A PUBLICATION OF THE NEAL A. MAXWELL INSTITUTE FOR RELIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY



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The Journal of the Book of Mormon and Restoration Scripture is a peer-reviewed publication dedicated to promoting understanding of the history, meaning, and significance of the scriptures and other sacred texts revealed through the Prophet Joseph Smith. These include the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible.

Back issues of the *Journal* are on the Internet at jbmrs.byu.edu.

Submitting Articles

Contributions dealing with all aspects of these texts and their contents are invited, including textual, historical, cultural, archaeological, and philological studies. Submissions must be consistent with a faithful Latter-day Saint perspective, and make a significant contribution to our understanding, to be considered for publication. Only completed manuscripts will be considered for publication. Manuscripts should be submitted electronically to jbmrs@byu.edu.

Editor's Notebook

he Journal of Book of Mormon Studies was first published sixteen years ago, under the editorial direction of Stephen D. Ricks. Seven years later John L. Sorenson, as the Journal's new editor, changed its format to make the contents more accessible to specialist and nonspecialist readers alike. Under the direction of Sorenson's successor, S. Kent Brown, the Journal has continued to feature first-rate scholarship on the Book of Mormon, often accompanied by beautiful visual aids and images. Thanks to these scholars' vision and editorial skills, thousands of people now enjoy the Journal either as subscribers or through the Internet, where they are able to stay abreast of the best that scholarship has to offer on the Book of Mormon.

Partly as a result of the Journal's success, and partly in answer to the apparent need for a scholarly, faithful venue in which other Latter-day scriptures can regularly be discussed, the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship has decided to expand the Journal's scope to include all of what might be termed "Restoration Scripture"—those books of Latter-day Saint scripture and related texts that were revealed through the ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith. These include the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. With this issue, accordingly, the title of the Journal has been changed to the Journal of the **Book of Mormon and Restoration Scripture—"the** Book of Mormon" being retained in the title not only to help provide a sense of continuity with the former title but also in recognition of that book's continuing role as the keystone of the Mormon faith. Highlighting the Book of Mormon also seems appropriate in light of the recent establishment of the Laura F. Willes Center for Book of Mormon Studies at the Institute.

With the retirement of Kent Brown from Brigham Young University, the Institute has asked Andrew Hedges to assume the editorship of the expanded *Journal*. Grant Hardy, Steven Harper, Jennifer Lane, and Kerry Muhlestein have agreed to serve as associate editors. The editors would like to thank Kent Brown and his predecessors, as well as the staff at FARMS and the Maxwell Institute, for all that they have done over the years to make the *Journal* what it is today. We would also like to thank BYU's and the Maxwell Institute's administration for their encouragement and support of scholarship in the foundational scriptures of the restoration.

Our hope is that the expanded *Journal* will be a venue where scholars from a variety of backgrounds can explore, discuss, and even debate important topics relating to the texts, contexts, and meaning of latter-day scripture. We believe that part of this includes reexamining and unpacking familiar assumptions and arguments—even those that have found their best expression in past issues of the *Journal* and related publications. We believe, too, that there are many topics yet to be explored in both the Book of Mormon and other restoration scriptures, and hope contributors and readers alike will consider the *Journal* a fitting venue for introducing new subjects and directions for study.

As we revisit old arguments and pursue new lines of inquiry, readers will quickly see that in many cases scholars disagree—sometimes strongly—in their assumptions, the relative weight they place on different pieces of evidence, and

their conclusions. This is the nature of academic discourse. It takes time and patience, but it is through this critiquing, reviewing, and offering alternative explanations that we advance our understanding of the issues raised through a study of the meaning, history, and contexts of texts. We hope our readers will be open to the idea that final answers are not yet available for many interesting and important questions related to the scriptures of the restoration, and that they will be patient with scholars' efforts to work through the issues leading to those answers.

One might argue that if there has been a weakness in LDS scholarship in the past—especially regarding the Book of Mormon—it has been a tendency on the part of some to base their acceptance of a given explanation on its apologetic tone rather than on the relative strength of its argument and the evidence that can be adduced in its favor. To be sure, maintaining scholarly standards when dealing with questions that are related to one's faith can be difficult, but both faith and knowledge are the ultimate beneficiaries of doing so. Through quality peer review, source-checking, and dialogue with the

authors we hope to make each paper's argument as sound and rigorous as possible, and ask contributors to be patient with the reviewing and editing of their manuscripts.

Longtime readers of the *Journal* will notice a change in how we have cited the sources used in the articles. Rather than being placed in the back of the *Journal*, the sources for each article are cited in endnotes immediately following the article. We have also adopted a larger font for the references. All this has been done in an effort to make the references more accessible to readers interested in examining an author's sources for themselves.

Without further ado, then, we are pleased to present our readers with this issue of the *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Restoration Scripture*, and at the same time issue a standing call for papers on the background, context, history, development, language, and meaning of latter-day scripture. The field, we believe, is wide-open, and we look forward to exploring it with you through the best efforts that faithful scholarship has to offer.

—The Editors

EDITORS



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Steven C. Harper



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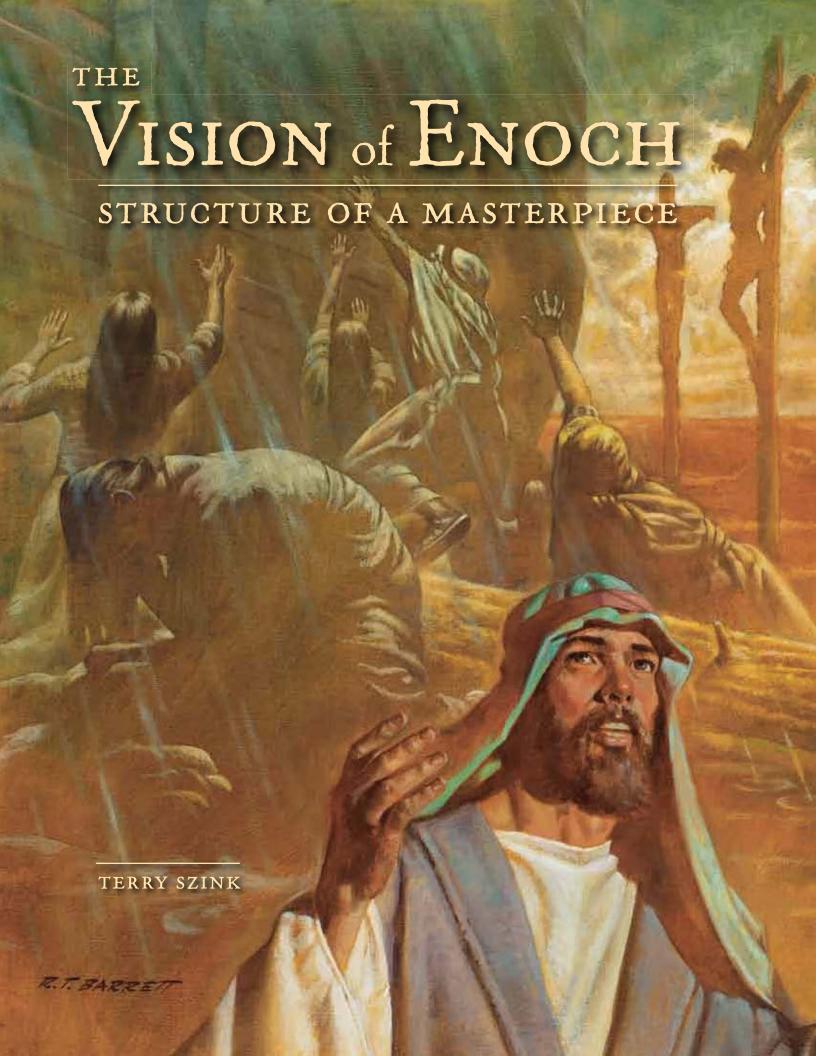
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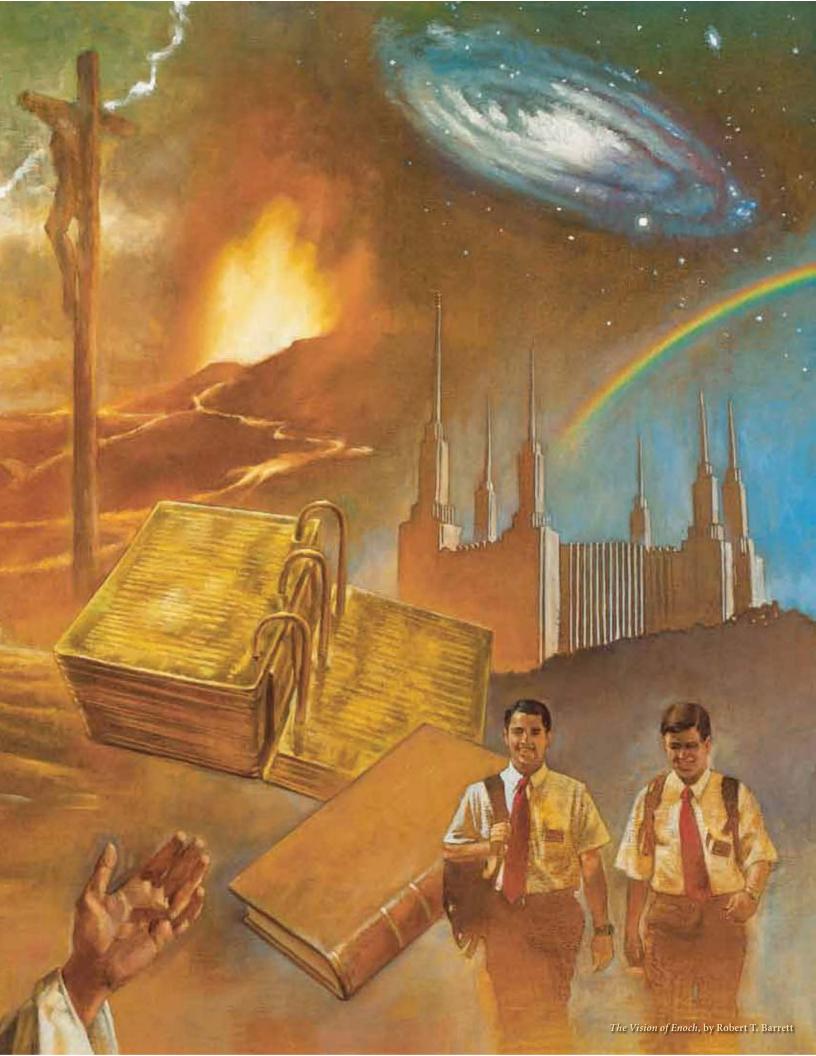
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Steven C. Harper joined the BYU faculty in 2002 after teaching religion and history at BYU—Hawaii. He has a BA in history from BYU and a PhD in early American history from Lehigh University. He and his wife Jennifer are the parents of five children. His publications include *Making Sense of the Doctrine and Covenants: A Guided Tour Through Modern Revelations*. He is currently an editor for the Joseph Smith Papers Project.

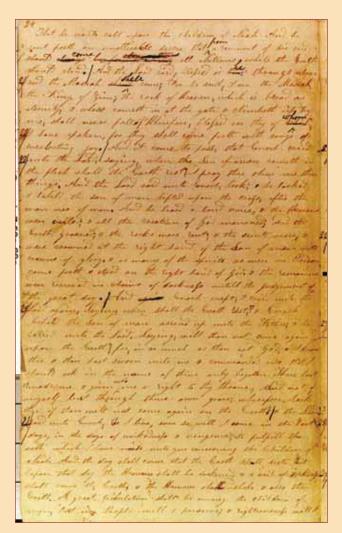
Jennifer C. Lane is an assistant professor of Religious Education at Brigham Young University—Hawaii. She received her PhD in religion with an emphasis in history of Christianity from Claremont Graduate University in 2003. Her master's and bachelor's degrees, both from BYU, are in Ancient Near Eastern Studies and history with a minor in philosophy. In addition to work on LDS doctrine and New Testament context, Lane has written widely on adoptive redemption in scripture, including in *Sperry Symposium Classics: The Old Testament*. She and her husband Keith live and work in Laie, Hawaii.

Kerry Muhlestein received his bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University in psychology with a Hebrew minor. He spent time at the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies in the intensive Hebrew program. He received an MA in ancient Near Eastern studies from BYU and a PhD from UCLA in Egyptology. Muhlestein's research focuses on the texts and iconography of Egyptian religion, international contact between ancient Egypt and her neighbors, the Egyptian juridical process, Egyptian literature, and the overlap of the Biblical and Egyptian worlds, including the ancient and modern history of the Pearl of Great Price, among other things. He and his wife Julianne have six children.





HE SEVENTH CHAPTER OF THE BOOK OF MOSES in the Pearl of Great Price contains an account of an important vision of the history and future of the world given to the prophet Enoch. I will demonstrate that the author presented the vision in a very deliberate and artistic way, using a literary structure. Understanding the framework will give the reader a greater appreciation for the vision. I will also compare the vision with nonbiblical materials that cover the same events. While the Bible presents precious little information about Enoch (six verses in Genesis [5:18–24], one verse each in Luke [3:37], Hebrews [11:5], and Jude [1:14]) quite a bit of Enoch material appears in the Pseudepigrapha and other nonbiblical sources. Certainly the pseudepigraphical sources in no way date back to the time of Enoch; most were written between 200 BC and AD 200, yet occasionally interesting parallels with Enoch in the Book of Moses can be discovered.



This page from the Joseph Smith Translation features a portion of Enoch's vision. Courtesy Community of Christ Archives, Independence, Missouri.

THE TEXT

The text of the Book of Moses comes from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. The Book of Moses corresponds to Genesis 1:1–6:13.² The text of Moses 7 was first published in the newspaper the *Evening and Morning Star* in August 1832. As Kent Jackson has pointed out, that publication was based on the first of two manuscripts that Joseph produced as part of the JST, and thus it did not contain all the Prophet's corrections.³ Franklin D. Richards included that version of the text in the first edition of the Pearl of Great Price published in 1851.⁴ The current text is based in part on a better manuscript and thus contains most, but not all, of Joseph Smith's corrections.⁵

THE STRUCTURE

Enoch's vision deals with three periods of time: (1) the days of Noah, (2) the meridian of time, and (3) the last days. With a carefully crafted literary framework, the author portrayed each of these time periods using similar characteristics:

- God described each of the three time periods as days of wickedness and vengeance.
- There was weeping because of the wickedness and vengeance.
- Enoch asked "When will the earth rest?" or a similar question.
- There was great destruction, often caused by seismic activity.
- While the seismic activity destroyed the wicked, the righteous were "lifted up" and preserved.

The author wove these different characteristics and time periods to produce a beautiful, complex tapestry. The following chart illustrates this structure. The numbers in the chart refer to the verse numbers in Moses 7 in which the different characteristics appear:

	Days of Noah	Meridian of Time	Last Days
Wickedness and vengeance	25, 26, 33, 34, 41	46	60
Weeping	28, 29, 31, 44	49	58
When will the earth rest	45	48, 54	58, 61, 64
Destruction— seismic activity	34, 38	56	61
Righteous lifted up	21, 23, 27	47, 55, 56, 59	63

Noah's day

The vision begins with the narrator noting that Zion was taken into heaven. After the translation of Zion, "Enoch beheld, and lo, all the nations of the earth were before him" (Moses 7:23). Enoch saw that not only had his city been removed from the earth but that other people who accepted the message of the gospel preached by angels sent from heaven were also translated. The result was that all those remaining upon the earth were wicked and under the control of Satan, who "had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced" (Moses 7:26).

Weeping. While Satan and his angels laughed at the darkness that covered the face of the earth, Enoch saw that God and the heavens wept because of this wickedness, and asked, "How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the

rain upon the mountains?" Later he continued the question "And thou hast taken Zion to thine own bosom, from all thy creations, from all eternity to all eternity; and naught but peace, justice, and truth is the habitation of thy throne; and mercy shall go before thy face and have no end; how is it thou canst weep?" (Moses 7:31, emphasis added).

As Enoch saw the destruction of the wicked in the flood, he also wept: "And as Enoch saw this, he had bitterness of soul, and *wept* over his brethren, and said unto the heavens: I will refuse to be comforted" (Moses 7:44, emphasis added).

God's weeping over the wickedness and destruction of his children shows Him to be different from how some have viewed Him. For example, one author has written that God was "merciless" in his determination to exterminate humankind.7 As portrayed in the Book of Moses, the decision to destroy humankind was not reached lightly. God was sad that he had to send the flood, and the heavens wept over the wickedness of humankind and its destruction. In fact, Latter-day Saints can understand the flood to be an act of mercy. While the flood destroyed the wicked, it also stopped them from continuing to sin. Furthermore, with an understanding of the premortal existence, we can see that the flood was also merciful to the spirits waiting to come to earth; they would thus not be born into a world full of rebellion and violence. Enoch spoke the truth when he proclaimed to God, "thou art just; thou art merciful and kind forever" (Moses 7:30).

While weeping is associated with the flood in Enoch's vision in the Book of Moses, there is no mention of it in Genesis. However, weeping *is* linked with the flood in nonbiblical accounts. In the eleventh tablet of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*,⁸ the gods who sent the flood were disconcerted by it and wept:

The gods were frightened by the deluge, And, shrinking back, they ascended to the heaven of Anu.

The gods cowered like dogs crouched against the outer wall.

Ishtar cried out like a woman in travail, The sweet-voiced mistress of the [gods] moans aloud:

'The olden days are alas turned to clay, Because I bespoke evil in the Assembly of the gods. How could I bespeak evil in the Assembly of the gods, Ordering battle for the destruction of my people, When it is I myself who give birth to my people! Like the spawn of the fishes they fill the sea!' The Anunnaki gods weep with her, The gods, all humbled, sit and weep, Their lips *drawn tight*, [. . .] one and all.⁹

As Hugh Nibley first pointed out, there is weeping associated with the flood in the pseudepigraphal book of *1 Enoch* as well.¹⁰ In *1 Enoch* 65:1–5, Noah wept to his grandfather about the coming flood:

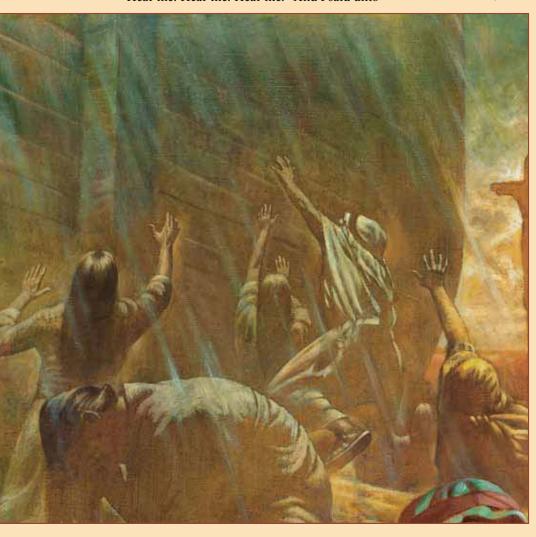
In those days, Noah saw the earth, that she had become deformed, and that her destruction was at hand. And (Noah) took off from there and went unto the extreme ends of the earth. And he cried out to his grandfather, Enoch, and said to him, three times, with a bitter voice, "Hear me! Hear me! Hear me!" And I said unto

him, "Tell me what this thing is which is being done upon the earth, for the earth is struggling in this manner and is being shaken; perhaps I will perish with her in the impact." At that moment, there took place a tremendous turbulence upon the earth; and a voice from heaven was heard, and I fell upon my face. Then Enoch, my grandfather, came and stood by me, saying to me, "Why did you cry out so sorrowfully and with bitter tears?" 11

As we will see, this weeping by God, the heavens, and Enoch continues through the vision.

Wickedness and Vengeance. God answered Enoch and explained that he had given the commandments to men "that they should love one another, and that they should choose (him)" (Moses 7:33). Note that these two commandments are those that Jesus would later identify as the "great

commandments," which serve as the basis for the "law and prophets," meaning the whole of the Bible (Matthew 22:34-40).12 Humankind's rejection of these commandments to love was effectively a rebellion against the whole of God's plan. Because of this, humankind became "without affection, and they hate their own blood" (Moses 7:33). Clearly great wickedness characterized Enoch and Noah's day. Later on, the narrator further describes the wickedness of this period: "And God saw that the wickedness of men had become great in the earth; and . . . the imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually" (Moses 8:22). This depraved state of man was the reason that the heavens wept. "Wherefore, for this shall the heavens weep, yea, and all the workmanship of mine hands. And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Enoch, and told Enoch all the doings of the children of men; wherefore Enoch knew, and looked upon their wickedness, and their misery, and



wept and stretched forth his arms, and his heart swelled wide as eternity; and his bowels yearned; and all eternity shook" (Moses 7:40-41, emphasis added).13

This wickedness of humankind brought a strong reaction from God: "And the fire of mine indignation is kindled against them; and in my hot displeasure will I send in the floods upon them, for my fierce anger is kindled against them" (Moses 7:34).

Seismic Activity. Destruction in Noah's day was caused by the flood: "I send in the floods upon them" (Moses 7:34). "But behold, these which thine eyes are upon shall perish in the floods" (Moses 7:38). In literature depicting the flood, an extended heavy downpour of rain was not the only cause. For example, the author of Genesis explained that "in the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened" (Genesis 7:11, emphasis added). When the destruction had been accomplished, the author described the end of the flood in similar terms: "The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained" (Genesis 8:2, emphasis added). So there were two sources for the flood: the opening of the floodgates of heaven from above and the breaking up of the earth, perhaps through seismic activity, releasing the subterranean waters of the deep. Ed Noort has explained, "The Deluge occurs because the large springs of the deep-lying underworld ocean break to the surface at the same time as heaven's sluice gates are opened and the heavenly ocean is allowed to return to the earth."14

In essence, the work of the creation had been reversed. During the creation, God had said: "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters. and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven." And later: "Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so" (Genesis 1:6–9). With the flood, the waters of the earth were no longer gathered together, and those of the heavens were no longer held back by the firmament.15

In some nonbiblical accounts, the flood also seems to be associated with seismic activity. The eleventh tablet of the Epic of Gilgamesh is similar in attributing its flood not only to rain but also to the breaking up of the earth.

With the first glow of dawn, A black cloud rose up from the horizon. Inside it Adad thunders, While Shullat and Hanish go in front, Moving as heralds over hill and plain. Erragal tears out the posts; Forth comes Ninurta and causes the dikes to follow. The Anunnaki lift up the torches, Setting the land ablaze with their glare. Consternation over Adad reaches to the heavens, Who turned to blackness all that had been light. [The wide] land was shattered like [a pot]!¹⁶

In this account, the god Adad thundered within the black cloud while the gods Erragal and Ninurta destroyed the dikes and released the subterranean waters, leaving the land "shattered like a pot."

The dual source of the flood waters appears in the Pseudepigrapha as well. In 1 Enoch 54:7, we read: "And in those days, the punishment of the Lord of the Spirits shall be carried out, and they shall open all the storerooms of water in the heavens above, in addition to the fountains of water which are on earth."17

Righteous Lifted Up. While the flood destroyed the wicked, who had rejected God's plan, the righteous were preserved by being lifted up. The narrator explained that Enoch and his city, "Zion," were "taken up into heaven" (Moses 7:21, 23). As noted above, not only did God lift up Enoch, but angels descended and proclaimed the gospel, and those who accepted their teachings were "caught up by the powers of heaven into Zion" (Moses 7:27). Although Noah and his family remained on the earth, God also preserved them in the ark. In Genesis the theme of the righteous being lifted up is extended to Noah and his family: "And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth" (Genesis 7:17, emphasis added).18 The narrator of Enoch's vision explained that "Noah built an ark; and that the Lord smiled upon it, and held it in his own hand" (Moses 7:43). This passage is similar to one in 1 Enoch 67:1–2: "In those days, the word of God came unto me, and said unto me, 'Noah, your

lot has come up before me—a lot without blame, a lot of true love. At this time the angels are working with wood (making an ark) and when it is completed, I shall place my hands upon it and protect it, and the seed of life shall arise from it; and a substitute (generation) will come so that the earth will not remain empty." 19

When will the earth rest? After viewing the destruction of the wicked, Enoch was distraught: "And it came to pass that Enoch looked; and from Noah, he beheld all the families of the earth; and he cried unto the Lord, saying: When shall the day of the Lord come? When shall the blood of the Righteous be shed, that all they that mourn may be sanctified and have eternal life?" (Moses 7:45). This question about the fate of the earth and those who live upon it, along with the weeping, will continue to drive the vision forward.

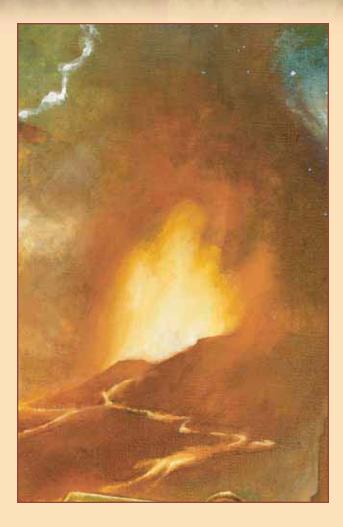
MERIDIAN OF TIME

The second period of time that the author of the vision addresses is the meridian of time. The term *meridian* means the highest point and refers to the fact that Christ was born and had his mortal existence during this period.²⁰ The author of the vision described this period of time in terms similar to ones he used in discussing Noah's day.

Wickedness and Vengeance. In Enoch's vision the Lord described the meridian of time as "days of wickedness and vengeance" (Moses 7:46). Certainly this is an accurate description of the era. The Book of Mormon prophet Jacob described those who crucified Jesus as "the more wicked part of the world" and went on to say that there was "none other nation on earth that would crucify their God" (2 Nephi 10:3).

Not only was there wickedness in the Old World that resulted in the crucifixion of Jesus, but there was great wickedness among the Nephites and Lamanites in the New World at that time. Third Nephi describes the rise of the secret combinations, the collapse of the government, the murder of prophets, and general wickedness that characterized the age (see 3 Nephi 7:5–7).

Because of this wickedness, vengeance was swift in coming. According to Nephi, "the Jews shall be scattered among all nations; yea, and also Babylon shall be destroyed; wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered by other nations" (2 Nephi 25:15). The Jewish historian Josephus described in graphic detail



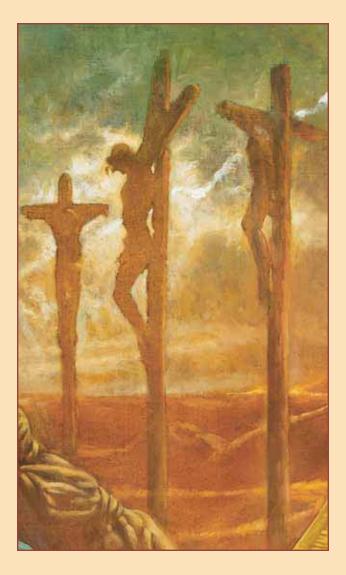
the Roman siege and capture of Jerusalem.²¹ Jesus, while prophesying of this destruction, identified the era as days of vengeance: "For these be the *days of vengeance*, that all things which are written may be fulfilled" (Luke 21:22, emphasis added).

The vengeance in the New World was no less destructive. Third Nephi 8 recounts the many natural disasters that took place at the time of the death of Christ and destroyed the more wicked part of the Nephites and Lamanites.

Seismic Activity. One of the ways in which the author of the vision characterized each of the three periods treated in the vision is seismic activity. As Enoch saw in vision the crucifixion of the Savior, "he heard a loud voice; and the heavens were veiled; and all the creations of God mourned; and the earth groaned; and the rocks were rent; and the saints arose, and were crowned at the right hand of the Son of Man, with crowns of glory" (Moses 7:56, emphasis added). This groaning of the earth

and the rending of the rocks may be descriptions of the seismic activity that certainly took place in the meridian of time at the time of the death of Christ. The Gospel of Matthew describes it:

Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God. (Matthew 27:50-54)



Perhaps better known to Latter-day Saints is the destruction in the New World that took place at the time of the death of the Savior:

But behold, there was a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward; for behold, the whole face of the land was changed, because of the tempest and the whirlwinds, and the thunderings and the lightnings, and the exceedingly great quaking of the whole earth; And the highways were broken up, and the level roads were spoiled, and many smooth places became rough. And many great and notable cities were sunk, and many were burned, and many were shaken till the buildings thereof had fallen to the earth, and the inhabitants thereof were slain, and the places were left desolate. (3 Nephi 8:12-14)

Nephi, quoting the prophet Zenos, prophesied the destruction in the New World which would take place at the time of the death of Jesus. "And all these things must surely come, saith the prophet Zenos. And the rocks of the earth must rend; and because of the groanings of the earth, many of the kings of the isles of the sea shall be wrought upon by the Spirit of God, to exclaim: The God of nature suffers" (1 Nephi 19:12). Here the "groaning of the earth" is directly connected with destruction in the New World. The source of this destruction was almost certainly seismic activity, consisting of earthquakes with accompanying tsunamis and explosive volcanic activity.22

When will the earth rest? As Enoch witnessed the terrible scenes of wickedness and vengeance, he heard the voice of the personified earth speaking: "Wo, wo is me, the mother of men; I am pained, I am weary, because of the wickedness of my children. When shall I rest, and be cleansed from the filthiness which is gone forth out of me? When will my Creator sanctify me, that I may rest, and righteousness for a season abide upon my face?" (Moses 7:48, emphasis added). Enoch then saw the coming of the Messiah and forwarded the earth's request: "And it came to pass that Enoch cried unto the Lord, saying: When the Son of Man cometh in the flesh, shall the earth rest?" (Moses 7:54, emphasis added). After seeing the death of the Savior, Enoch repeated the plea: "When shall the earth rest?" (Moses 7:58). In writing this question, the author may have been making a subtle reference back to Noah. The personal name *Noah* comes from the

Hebrew verb *nwh*, which means to "settle down," "rest," "repose."23 This possible wordplay in Hebrew did not come from Enoch, who did not speak Hebrew, but from a later author or editor. Not only did the author use the wordplay on Noah's name to refer back to the patriarch, but he also mentioned Noah three times in this section: "Wilt thou not bless the children of *Noah*? And it came to pass that Enoch continued his cry unto the Lord, saying: I ask thee, O Lord, in the name of thine Only Begotten, even Jesus Christ, that thou wilt have mercy upon Noah and his seed, that the earth might never more be covered by the floods. And the Lord could not withhold; and he covenanted with Enoch, and sware unto him with an oath, that he would stay the floods; that he would call upon the children of Noah" (Moses 7:49–51, emphasis added). Not only is there possible wordplay, but by specifically mentioning the name Noah the author also reminds the reader of the previous section.

Weeping. The theme of weeping continues in the section on the meridian of time. We read in Moses 7:49: "And when Enoch heard the earth mourn, he wept, and cried unto the Lord" (emphasis added).

Righteous Lifted Up. In the first period of time examined in the vision, the righteous who were living in Zion were translated, while Noah and his family were saved from the destructive flood in the ark, which the waters lifted up. In an ironic twist in the meridian of time, the "lifting up" did not save the righteous directly; rather, the lifting up of the Righteous One saved all others. Enoch saw in vision the crucifixion of Jesus, and the author used the phrase "lifted up" to report it: "The Righteous is lifted up, and the Lamb is slain from the foundation of the world; and through faith I am in the bosom of the Father, and behold, Zion is with me" (Moses 7:47). The author used this phrase not just once but twice: "And the Lord said unto Enoch: Look, and he looked and beheld the Son of Man lifted up on the cross, after the manner of men" (Moses 7:55). Later, this phrase would appear several times in the Gospel of John referring to the death of the Son of Man: "And as Moses *lifted up* the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be *lifted up*" (John 3:14, emphasis added); "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things" (John 8:28, emphasis added); "And I, if I be lifted up from the

After seeing the events of the meridian of time, Enoch again repeated the question that drove the account of the vision forward: "When shall the earth rest?" (Moses 7:58).

The answer was that after the vengeance and destruction,

Christ would return and finally the earth would find rest:

"And the day shall come that the earth shall rest"

(Moses 7:61).

earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (John 12:32–33, emphasis added). This phrase is also included in the Book of Mormon by various speakers and writers. Nephi wrote: "And I, Nephi, saw that he was lifted up upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world" (1 Nephi 11:33, emphasis added). It may be that Nephi's use of these words is based on the writings of the prophet Zenock, for he reported that Christ would be "lifted up, according to the words of Zenock" (1 Nephi 19:10). Another prophet named Nephi wrote that just as the brazen serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, Christ would be lifted up (Helaman 8:14). Moroni used it in his abridgement of the plates of the Jaredites in the book of Ether (Ether 4:1). The risen Christ himself also used this phrase: "And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be *lifted up* by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—And for this cause have I been *lifted up*; therefore, according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their works" (3 Nephi 27:14-15, emphasis added; see 28:6).

The author of the vision of Enoch noted that this lifting up of the Son of Man would make possible the lifting up of many who believed in him: "And he heard a loud voice; and the heavens were veiled; and all the creations of God mourned; and the earth groaned; and the rocks were rent; and the saints arose, and were crowned at the right hand of the Son of Man, with crowns of glory" (Moses 7:56, emphasis added). This fact was also witnessed in the Gospel of Matthew: "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose" (Matthew 27:52, emphasis added). This fact had been prophesied by Samuel the Lamanite (see 3 Nephi 23:9-10).

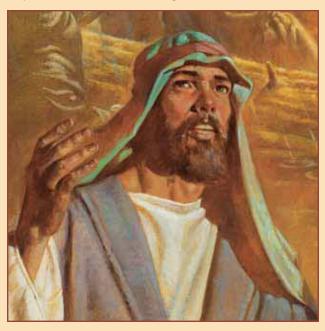
Finally, Enoch also saw Christ taken up into heaven: "And Enoch beheld the Son of Man ascend up unto the Father" (Moses 7:59, emphasis added).

LAST DAYS

The final period of time which the author of the vision addressed is the last days. The author used the same terminology that he previously used in describing Noah's day and the meridian of time.

Weeping. The final section depicting the last days begins with Enoch continuing his weeping: "And again Enoch wept and cried unto the Lord, saying: When shall the earth rest?" (Moses 7:58, emphasis added).

Wickedness and Vengeance. Again the Lord described the final period discussed in the vision as days of wickedness and vengeance: "And the Lord



said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfil the oath which I have made unto you concerning the children of Noah" (Moses 7:60, emphasis added).

Later he added that the "heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness" would cover the earth (Moses 7:61). Notice how this last statement echoes the description of the earth at the beginning of the vision: "And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced" (Moses 7:26).

Certainly many prophecies of the last days decry the wickedness that characterizes that time period. For example, Matthew 24 in the New Testament and Joseph Smith—Matthew in the Pearl of Great Price²⁴ contain a prophecy of Christ that states that "because iniquity shall abound, the love of men shall wax cold" (JS-Matthew 1:30). Compare this to the description of the wickedness in the days of Noah where the author describes humankind as being "without affection, and they hate their own blood" (Moses 7:33).

Speaking to those who would live in the last days, Mormon proclaimed: "Turn, all ye Gentiles, from your wicked ways; and repent of your evil doings, of your lyings and deceivings, and of your whoredoms, and of your secret abominations, and your idolatries, and of your murders, and your priestcrafts, and your envyings, and your strifes, and from all your wickedness and abominations, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name" (3 Nephi 30:2). These types of prophecies abound in the scriptures, most often accompanied by predictions of vengeance that will befall the wicked.

Modern prophets have even compared the wickedness of the last days to that of previous times. Joseph Smith is reported to have said, "I prophecy in the name of the Lord God anguish & wrath . . . & tribulation and the withdrawing of the spirit of God await this generation. until they are visited with utter destruction. this generation is as corrupt as the generation of the Jews that crucified Christ. and if he were here today & should preach the same doctrine he did then why they would crucify him."25

Seismic Activity. Enoch saw that earthquakes would be part of the vengeance inflicted upon the wicked: "The heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens

shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve" (Moses 7:61). Other prophets have also indicated that earthquakes will be prevalent in the last days. John wrote in Revelation: "And there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great" (Revelation 16:18, emphasis added). In discussing the last days, when the record of the Nephites would come forth, Moroni wrote: "And there shall also be heard of wars, rumors of wars, and earthquakes in divers places" (Mormon 8:30, emphasis added). There are many other examples of prophets foretelling seismic activity in the last days (see Joel 3:14–16; D&C 29:13; 43:18; 84:118; 88:89).

When will the earth rest? After seeing the events of the meridian of time, Enoch again repeated the question that drove the account of the vision forward: "When shall the earth rest?" (Moses 7:58). The answer was that after the vengeance and destruction, Christ would return and finally the earth would find rest: "And the day shall come that the earth shall rest" (Moses 7:61, emphasis added). This answer is repeated a few verses later. The rest that the earth would find is that of the millennium: "And there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years the earth shall rest" (Moses 7:64, emphasis added).

Righteous Lifted Up. As was the case with the righteous of the two previous time periods discussed, the days of Noah and the meridian of time, the righteous of the last days would also be preserved from the destruction by being lifted up. In this case, Enoch saw that the righteous of the last days would arise and join his city as they descend at the time of the coming of the Son of Man: "And the Lord said unto Enoch: Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there, and we will receive them into our bosom, and they shall see us; and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other" (Moses 7:63). This doctrine appears in the Bible in 1 Thessalonians 4:17: "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:17, emphasis added). It is also confirmed by other Latter-day scripture: "And the saints that are upon the earth, who are alive, shall be quickened and be caught

up to meet him. And they who have slept in their graves shall come forth, for their graves shall be opened; and they also shall be caught up to meet him in the midst of the pillar of heaven" (D&C 88:96–97).

A SECOND FLOOD

Near the end of the vision, there is a return to the flood motif that first appeared in Noah's day. The Lord spoke to Enoch and promised that he would fulfill the oath which he had made "concerning the children of Noah" (Moses 7:60). The oath mentioned is recorded in verse 51: "And the Lord could not withhold; and he covenanted with Enoch, and sware unto him with an oath, that he would stay the floods; that he would call upon the children of Noah" (Moses 7:51). The Lord swore two things: that he would "stay the floods"—that is, he would not send a destructive flood of waters—and that he would "call upon the children of Noah." Accordingly, after "great tribulations" the earth would rest, and God would preserve his people (Moses 7:61). Ironically, this time the "children of Noah" would be preserved by a flood: "And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, . . . and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood" (Moses 7:62). In the original manuscript of the Joseph Smith Translation, from which the Book of Moses was taken, the tie with the flood of Noah's day is even stronger. Verse 62 reads: "And righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with the flood."26 In the prophet's original words, the use of the definite article points back directly to the flood of Noah's day.

Strengthening the tie between the two floods, this latter-day flood, like the one in the days of Noah, has two sources: (1) righteousness sent down out of heaven, and (2) truth sent forth out of the earth. These two floods, the destructive one in Noah's day and the salvific latter-day flood of righteousness, serve as bookends to Enoch's vision. President Ezra Taft Benson understood the prophecy of "truth sent forth out of the earth" to be a reference to the Book of Mormon: "The Book of Mormon is the instrument that God designed to 'sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out [his] elect.' (Moses 7:62.) This sacred volume of scripture needs to become more central in our preaching, our teaching, and our missionary work."²⁷

Furthermore, this flood of righteousness would "gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem" (Moses 7:62). This gathering is reminiscent of the way that Noah brought two of every sort of living creature into the ark and also gathered of all food that is eaten (Genesis 6:19-21). The city of Zion or New Jerusalem will become the new ark and those who are gathered to it will be lifted up just as the ark was lifted up.

The author could have described the latterday restoration of truth and righteousness in any number of ways. I believe he chose to present it as a flood to purposely hark back to the flood with which he began his account of Enoch's vision. Fur-

thermore, the mention of Zion as the gathering place strengthens this echoing of Enoch and Noah's day.

Isaiah used a similar metaphor, comparing righteousness to rain: "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it" (Isaiah 45:8).

This vision is not the only scripture that draws a connection between Noah's flood and the latter days. In the apocalyptic chapter 24 of Matthew, we read: "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:37-39).

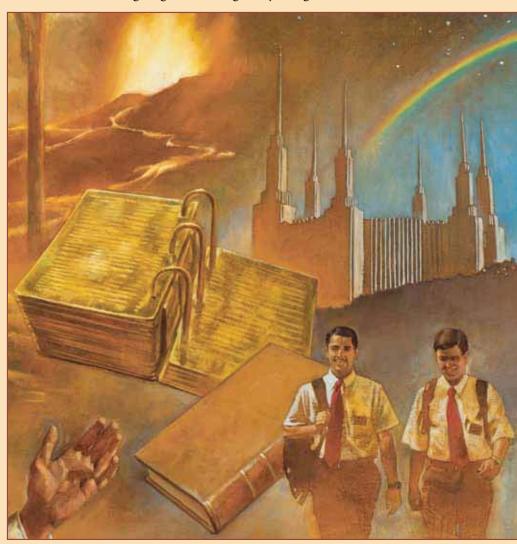
Conclusion

We have seen that there is a definite literary framework to the account of the visions of Enoch.

Noted biblical scholar Robert Alter has demonstrated that literary art plays a crucial role in presenting the stories in the Bible. He has explained:

I have tried throughout to focus on the complexly integrated ways in which the tale is told, giving special attention to what is distinctive in the artful procedures of biblical narrative, what requires us to learn new modes of attentiveness as readers. Such attentiveness, I think, is important not only for those curious about matters of narrative technique, whether ancient or modern, but also for anyone who wants to come to terms with the significance of the Bible.²⁸

In the case of the vision of Enoch, the author uses a number of devices to present his ideas in an artistic way: First, note the contrast between Satan laughing and his angels rejoicing at the condition



of the inhabitants of the earth with the weeping of God, the heavens, and Enoch. This sets the scene for the ultimate battle of good verses evil that the vision addresses.

Second, there is possible wordplay with the name Noah which means "rest" or "repose" and the question "when will the earth rest?" As noted above, this wordplay did not come from Enoch, who did not speak Hebrew, but may have come from a later author or editor. The repetition of the name Noah ties the first and second sections together.

Third, the author purposefully repeated the same characteristics in describing the three periods of time. By repeating these characteristics, the author creates a unity across the different time periods. While the vision moves forward chronologically, the reader is shown the same themes again and again. The author identified a pattern that God follows in dealing with His children and used this pattern in presenting the vision: Humans rebel against God and become wicked; God and his prophets are distressed by this wickedness and attempt to overcome it through teaching the gospel. They long for a time when wickedness will end. The rebellious wicked are destroyed while the righteous are protected and saved. This pattern has been repeated in almost every gospel dispensation in time throughout the world, and the vision's structure reflects it. Nephi understood the repetitive nature of God's dealings with his children and commented on it:

For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them, by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in these times as in times of old, and as well in times of old as in times to come; wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round. (1 Nephi 10:19)

The author of Enoch's vision presented God's dealings with humankind in the three time periods in a repetitive way to mirror the "one eternal round" that Nephi identifies as God's economy. Robert Alter has noted patterns of repetition in the Bible, has labeled them "type-scenes," and views them as a "central organizing convention of biblical narrative." The vision of Enoch is organized using these "type-scenes."

Fourth, the author used language to describe the restoration of the gospel in the last days in a way

that would call to mind the flood of Noah's day. As mentioned above, this creates a pair of bookends: Noah's destructive flood that destroys the wicked and the flood of truth in the last days that saves the righteous. These two floods serve to begin and end the vision. They tie the ends together to make it a nice unit.

Much like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other scriptural prophets, the author of the visions of Enoch wrote an account that was artistic as well as prophetic. As Nephi stated above, "he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them." A careful reading of the text reveals its complex beauty. The author has woven a number of themes together to form a wonderful tapestry that is worthy of the prophetic ideas presented within. The telling of the visionary experience reflects and reinforces what the prophet saw.

Finally, the fact that many of the themes found in the vision of Enoch appear in later accounts, both scriptural and nonscriptural, of the same time period speaks strongly of the power of Enoch's vision. Truly "the Lord spake unto Enoch, and told Enoch all the doings of the children of men" (Moses 7:41).

Notes

- See James H. Charlesworth, "Pseudepigrapha, OT," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:537–40.
- 2. The best source for the text of the Joseph Smith Translation (hereafter referred to as JST) is Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible* (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2004).
- Kent P. Jackson, The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2005), 14.
- 4. For a brief history of the Pearl of Great Price, see Richard D. Draper, S. Kent Brown, and Michael D. Rhodes, *The Pearl of Great Price: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 1–11.
- See Jackson, Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts, 29–52.
- In Moses 7:28 in the Pearl of Great Price, not only did the heavens weep but God himself wept: "And it came to pass that the God of heaven looked upon the residue of the people, and he wept; and Enoch bore record of it, saying: How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the mountains? And Enoch said unto the Lord: How is it that thou canst weep, seeing thou art holy, and from all eternity to all eternity?" (Moses 7:28-29, emphasis added). In Joseph Smith's final revision of the text, Old Testament Manuscript 2 of his translation, it is Enoch and the heavens that weep: "And it came to pass, that the God of Heaven < Enock > look = ed upon the residue of the people & wept. And Enoch bore record of it Saying how is it the heavnes weep <he beheld and <lo!> the heavens wept also> & shed forth <t>h[er]<eir> tears as the rain upon the Mountains And Enoch Said unto the heavens how is it that thou canst weep Seeing Thou art holy & from all eternity to all eternity" (Moses 7:28-29 Old Testament Manuscript 2). Faulring, Jackson, and

- Matthews, Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible, 618. It may be argued that in saying that "the heavens wept," the author was implying that God himself also wept.
- "Yahweh . . . is just as merciless, just as determined to exterminate mankind." Norman Cohn, Noah's Flood: The Genesis Story in Western Thought (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 16. Jerome M. Segal has suggested that God's response to the events surrounding the flood portrays "not an image of divine, balanced, and omniscient judgment. Rather we are being told of a mood, a darkness that has come over God. What we have here resembles depression, an emotional darkness that will lead God toward destruction." Joseph's Bones: Understanding the Struggle between God and Mankind in the Bible (New York: Riverhead, 2007), 50.
- Gilgamesh is one of the earliest examples of epic literature. It was written in Akkadian and had a wide distribution throughout Mesopotamia. Scholars have long noted a literary connection between the Epic of Gilgamesh and Genesis. See Alexander Heidel, The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), and Jack M. Sasson, "Gilgamesh Epic," in Anchor Bible Dictionary, 2:1024-27.
- Epic of Gilgamesh XI:113-26, trans. E. A. Speiser, in Ancient Near Eastern Texts Related to the Old Testament, ed. James B. Pritchard (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 94 (emphasis and brackets in original).
- 10. First Enoch is one of three books attributed to but certainly not written by Enoch. It is a composite work with different parts being written by different authors at different times, probably during the intertestamental period. The original language may have been either Hebrew or Aramaic while the surviving text is written in ancient Ethiopic. See Hugh Nibley, Enoch the Prophet (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1986), 5-7; and George W. E. Nickelsburg, "Enoch, First Book of," in Anchor Bible Dictionary, 2:508-16.
- 11. First Enoch 65:1-5, trans. E. Isaac, in The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1983 and 1985), 1:45.
- 12. By the time of Christ, the phrase law and prophets was used to indicate the whole of what we now call the Old Testament. See, for example, Matthew 5:17; 7:12; 11:13; 22:40; Luke 16:16; 24:44.
- 13. The wording of this passage is different in Joseph Smith's final

- corrected manuscript: "Wherefore, Enoch knew, & looked upon their wickedness, & their misery, & wept, & stretched forth his arms, and he beheld eternity, & his bowels yearned, & all eternity shook." Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible, 619.
- Ed Noort, "Stories of the Great Flood," in Interpretations of the Flood, ed. Florentino García Martínez and Gerard P. Luttikhuizen (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 7.
- Noort, "Stories of the Great Flood," 7.
- Epic of Gilgamesh XI:96-107, in Ancient Near Eastern Texts, 94 (brackets in original).
- First Enoch 54:7, in Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, 1:38.
- The Hebrew verbs here are forms of the roots *nasa*³ meaning "to lift, lift up" and ram meaning "to be high above." See Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 2:724 and 3:1202.
- First Enoch 67:1-2, in Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, 1:46.
- The Oxford English Dictionary defines meridian as "the point or period of highest development or perfection, after which decline sets in; culmination, full splendour." The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), s.v. "meridian."
- For an English translation, see Paul L. Maier, Josephus: The Essential Writings (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1988), 339-78.
- See Russell H. Ball, "An Hypothesis concerning the Three Days of Darkness among the Nephites," JBMS 2/1 (1993): 107-23.
- Koehler and Baumgartner, Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament, 1:679.
- Just as the Book of Moses is taken from the JST of Genesis, Joseph Smith—Matthew is the JST version of Matthew 24.
- Recorded in Joseph Smith Diary, by Willard Richards (15 October 1843, Sunday morning), in The Words of Joseph Smith, ed. Andrew F. Ehat and Lyndon W. Cook (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1980), 256.
- Faulring, Jackson, and Matthews, Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible, 109, emphasis added.
- Ezra Taft Benson, "Flooding the Earth with the Book of Mormon," Ensign, November 1988, 4.
- Robert Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 179.
- Alter, Art of Biblical Narrative, 181.

"I WILL CONTEND WITH THEM THAT CONTENDETH WITH THEE"

THE DIVINE WARRIOR IN JACOB'S SPEECH OF 2 NEPHI 6–10

DANIEL BELNAP

T IS UNCLEAR FROM THE TEXT EXACTLY WHERE OR WHEN JACOB OFFERED HIS MAGNIFICENT DISCOURSE RECORDED IN 2 NEPHI 6–10, BUT WHILE SUCH DETAILS ARE MISSING, THE DISCOURSE ITSELF STANDS AS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE IN THE BOOK OF MORMON.¹ The purpose of the speech was to answer an ongoing concern of the Nephites. Since their departure from Jerusalem it appears that the Nephites had felt cut off and isolated from God's promises because they lacked a permanent land of inheritance. By the time of Jacob's speech, the Nephites had been driven from two lands of inheritance and thus it seems that questions had arisen as to whether or not the covenant made to Israel was still in force with this community who had been broken off and scattered from both the greater house of Israel and their own family in the New World.



Jacob answers this by teaching and expounding on the covenantal relationship that exists between Israel and their God, itself made possible by God acting as the Divine Warrior who provided peace and security to Israel even in their scattered state. Though God as warrior is not imagery familiar to us in our day, it was commonly used throughout the scriptures to describe God's power and therefore was a perfect symbol to represent his ability to care for and defend Israel-indeed all mankindfrom the forces of chaos that sought to overwhelm the people no matter where they were.² Utilizing divine warrior imagery in Isaiah, which comprises chapters 6-8 and makes up the first part of the speech, and then in his own commentary, comprising chapters 9–10, Jacob was able to teach his people "concerning the covenants of the Lord that he has covenanted with all the house of Israel" (2 Nephi 9:1), so that "[they] may rejoice, and lift up [their] heads forever" (v. 3).

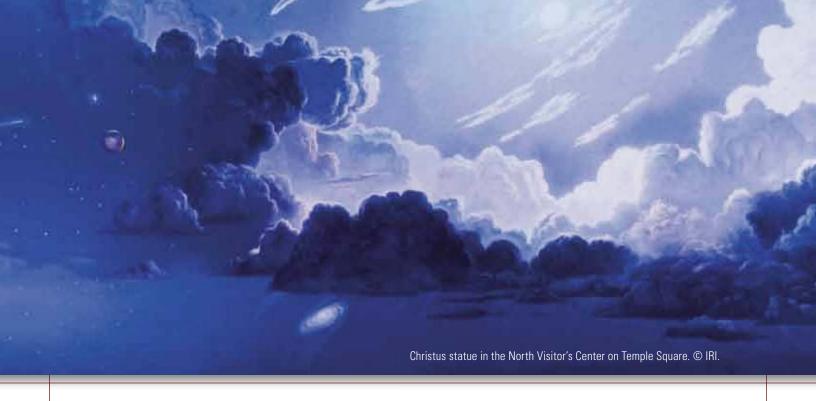
THE DIVINE WARRIOR AND THE PURPOSE BEHIND JACOB'S SPEECH

In the first chapter of his discourse, Jacob tells the congregation that "the Lord God will fulfil his covenants . . . wherefore, they that fight against Zion and the covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet" (2 Nephi 6:12–3). Jacob then comments on this promise stating that the Messiah "will manifest himself unto [Israel] in power and

great glory, unto the destruction of their enemies" (v. 14). Finally, in verses 17 and 18, Jacob quotes Isaiah, who provides the words of God himself: "I will contend with them that contendeth with thee-and I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine; and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob." Though gruesome, this imagery of God as the warrior who will slaughter the enemies of Israel would have been familiar, even comforting, to those who were the covenant people. God as Redeemer and Savior meant he was their warrior delivering them as he delivered their forefathers in the great salvific act of the Exodus, which itself was a type of the creative act in the beginning when God as the Divine Warrior defeated the forces of chaos, engendering the cosmos.

Creation and the Divine Warrior

In many cultures of the ancient Near East, the creation narrative was used as a foundation to their own specific cultural narratives. In brief, the creation narrative describes the process by which God, or the Gods, took preexisting element, or chaos, and organized it into a cosmos, or state of order and organization. The precosmic state was conceptualized as an ocean of primal water, dark and fathomless. It was from this "sea" that God established the world in Genesis 1:2: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of



the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Throughout the ancient Near East, a common variation on this narrative was to personify the precosmic ocean, characterizing it as a serpent or monster, transforming the creation process into a battle between God, the creator, and chaos, the monster.3 Following the "death" of the monster, the warrior deity then took the carcass and fashioned the cosmos from it, thereby imposing "order" onto chaos. Though more descriptive and vivid, the same meaning is present in the two variations—chaos is organized into the cosmos.4 Of course, this general narrative was tailored to reflect specific cultural identities. Thus, for example, while the Babylonian creation story and the biblical version are similar, the narrative was used differently to define each individual culture's relationship to the divine. As we shall see, Israel's use of the narrative was applied to their historical experience, unique in the ancient Near East.5

The conflict between God as the Divine Warrior who brings about the cosmos and the forces of instability, darkness, and chaos can also be used to describe the creation of a community. In Deuteronomy 32:10, the words used to describe where Jehovah found his people are the waste howling wilderness. The Hebrew for this "waste howling wilderness" is *tohu*, or the primeval chaos in Genesis 1:2. Thus, the founding of Israel was associated with the creation of the world, in that both emerged from chaos. Elsewhere, this creation is associated with

God as the Divine Warrior. According to the Old Testament, immediately following the Red Sea experience, Moses offered a hymn of thanksgiving to God, known as the Song of the Sea, which extolled God's act of deliverance in his role as the warrior:

The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name. . . . Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. (Exodus 15:2-3, 6)

Though in the song God delivered Israel from the Egyptian, in Psalm 106:9 it is the Sea that feels God's martial power: "He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness."6 This "blending" of the concepts of the enemy and the sea, arise because both are destructive, one of the physical cosmos, the other of the social cosmos, and thus can be placed on the same continuum of the primordial chaos conquered by God.⁷ For instance, in Psalm 18:16-17, the sea and the enemy are paralleled one to another with God delivering the psalmist from both:

He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters

He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them which hated me.

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Similarly, in Isaiah 59:19, we read: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Thus God, who defeated the forces of the primal chaos at the creation, did so again during the Exodus, "creating" his people Israel, and and for later Israelites continuing in this role as their defender against any force seeking their destruction; not coincidently all three scenarios have covenantal implications.⁸

The Covenant and the Divine Warrior

According to Deuteronomy 7:19–23, the covenant between Israel and God stipulates that if Israel is obedient to the covenantal obligations then God will "deliver [your enemy] unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed" (v. 23), for "the Lord thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible" (v. 21). Later, in Deuteronomy 28:7, the Lord reiterates this theme: "the Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways." Deuteronomy 32:41–43 is even more explicit: "If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgement; I will render vengeance to mine enemies . . . I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh . . . rejoice, O ye nations, with people, for he will avenge the blood of his servants." This covenantal promise lies behind Israel's plea recorded in Isaiah 51:9–10 (repeated by Jacob in 2 Nephi 8:9–10):

Awake, awake,

Put on strength, O arm of the Lord;

Awake, as in the ancient days,

in the generations of old.

Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?

Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep;

that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

Similar pleas are found in the communal lament psalms. In Psalm 44 the plea is found in verses 23–24, 26:

Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise, cast us not off for ever.

Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression? Arise for our help, and redeem us for thy mercies' sake.

In Psalm 74:20, following a description of God's enemies "roaring" in the midst of his congregations, Israel pleads with God to: "Have respect unto the covenant! . . . Arise! . . . Remember!" (vv. 20, 22). That God can do this is explained in an earlier passage (vv. 12–13, 15):

For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth. Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: Thou brakest the heads of the dragons in the waters.

Thou didst cleave the fountain and the flood: Thou driedst up mighty rivers.

Jeremiah 20:11 speaks specifically of God's fighting the enemy of Israel: "But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail." Habakkuk 3:12–14 is a particularly descriptive passage concerning God as the Divine Warrior defeating the enemy of the covenant people:

Thou didst march through the land in indignation,
Thou didst thresh the heathen in anger.
Though wentest forth for the salvation of thy people,
Even for salvation with thine anointed;
Thou woundest the head out of the house of the
wicked.

By discovering the foundation unto the neck. . . . Thou didst strike through with staves the head of his villages. 9

In all of these cases, Israel understood that God as warrior would deliver them from their enemies, just as he had against the earlier forces of chaos at the creation and during the Exodus, for God as warrior was one of the stipulations that he agreed to in the covenant.

The promise of God's martial power in defense of Israel was directly associated with the covenantal promise of a land of inheritance since it is the inhabitation of Israel that requires God's defense. Deuteronomy 4:37–38 describes God as the warrior giving them the promised land because of the covenant: "And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them . . . driving

out nations from before thee greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give their land for an inheritance." Yet the keeping of the promised land, like the other elements of the covenant, was contingent on Israel's personal righteousness. 10 The loss of the promised land and the wandering motif following the loss of homeland would have been understood as emblematic of being cut off from the covenant relationship with God, as Jon Levenson has pointed out, "Adversity—drought, famine, epidemic, defeat, or whatever—could be accounted for by reference to a violation of covenant obligations."11

This was certainly understood within the covenant relationship itself as Israel is warned if they forget the covenant:

The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust . . . the Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thy enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them: and shalt be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth . . . and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. (Deuteronomy 28:24-25, 63)

ual and God has been broken. Moreover, the loss of land would have meant that God was either unwilling or unable to act as the Divine Warrior.

The Nephites and the Broken Covenant

It is at this point that our discussion returns to the Book of Mormon, since the Nephites experience a loss of covenanted land, not once but three times over their first four hundred years in the New World. The first loss is the original journey into the wilderness, leaving behind the lands of inheritance in the area around Jerusalem. Though we are told this loss is not the result of their unrighteous behavior, the murmurings and rebellions of the small group meant a journey that could have taken at most months ended up taking over eight years to accomplish. Later, after reaching the New World, it appears the newness and foreign nature of the promised land left them feeling lost, forgotten, and broken off. At least this is what Nephi suggests in his speech recorded in 1 Nephi 19-21, which he delivered so that his people "may have hope as well as your brethren from whom ye have been broken off" (1 Nephi 19:24).

AS WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN THE OLD WORLD, THE reassurance that God as warrior still watched over THEM, AND THAT THEREFORE THE COVENANT PROMISES WOULD STILL BE MET. WOULD HAVE PROVIDED THE COMMUNITY THE FAITH NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH A NEW HOME IN THIS WILDERNESS.

This is reiterated in Deuteronomy 29:28: "And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land." Jeremiah, a contemporary of Lehi, understood the impending invasion by Babylon to be the result of broken covenants: "Your fathers have forsaken me . . . and have not kept my law and ye have done worse than your fathers . . . therefore will I cast you out of this land into a land that ye know not" (Jeremiah 16:11-13). Thus, being cast out of one's land of inheritance becomes a sign that the covenant relationship between the individ-

As this clause suggests, Nephi is concerned that his people do not possess hope because of their "broken off" status from the rest of Israel. Though Nephi never tells us explicitly what that hope is, earlier in the chapter he had spoken of a time in which God would remember "the covenants" and the "isles of the sea" (vv. 15, 16). Later, in chapter 21, verse 1 (Isaiah 49), this awareness of scattered Israel by God is made on an individual level:

Hearken, O ye house of Israel, all ye that are broken off and are driven out because of the wickedness of the pastors of my people; yea, all ye that are broken off,

that are scattered abroad,

... the Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

As these verses indicate, the message was given to all who claim the name of Israel, especially to those who were broken off, scattered, and driven out of their lands of inheritance, a message particularly suited to the Nephites. The rest of chapter 21 (Isaiah 49) relates the manner in which God remembers



Not long before Jacob gave his sermon, the people of Nephi left the land where Lehi had settled in the New World to find a new home in the wilderness. *Into the Wilderness*, by Jorge Cocco Santangelo. May not be copied. For information see www.jorgecocco.com.

all of his covenant people, ending with the promise that God as warrior would "contend with him that contendeth with thee . . . and I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh," the same Isaianic promise that Jacob quotes in 2 Nephi 6.

Jacob's Speech

Jacob's discourse is also delivered during a time of crisis for the Nephites. Second Nephi 5 recounts the Nephites leaving the land of first inheritance in the New World and traveling again into the wilderness. This would have been the second loss of a land of inheritance and would have further accentuated

the feelings of loss the Nephites felt earlier. In fact, Jacob, describing the overall mood of his people, confessed:

Our lives passed away like as it were unto us a dream, we being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers, cast out from Jerusalem, born in tribulation, in a wilderness, and hated of our brethren, which caused wars and contentions; wherefore we did mourn out our days. (Jacob 7:26)

From the above description, it would seem clear that the Nephites felt abandoned and lost, cast out into a wilderness, and therefore forgotten by God. It is this aura of depression that Jacob seeks to address in his speech, as he himself states: "Let us remember him, and lay aside our sins, and not hang down our heads, for we are not cast off; nevertheless, we have been driven out of the land of our inheritance" (2 Nephi 10:20).

This same image of the Nephites with heads hanging down was mentioned earlier in chapter 9: "Behold, my beloved brethren, I speak unto you these things that ye may rejoice, and lift up your heads forever" (2 Nephi 9:3). As will be discussed later, this image begins and ends Jacob's commentary and is associated with the concept of the Divine Warrior. For now it is enough to know that it reinforces Jacob's central message—that while they may have driven out and broken off from their lands of inheritance, the promise of God as their Deliverer remains valid, contingent, of course, on their personal righteousness. In doing this, Jacob presents God as warrior who has power over death and over the enemy. 12 As with their counterparts in the Old World, the reassurance that God as warrior still watched over them, and that therefore the covenant promises would still be met, would have provided the community the faith necessary to establish a new home in this wilderness.

THE DIVINE WARRIOR IN JACOB'S ISAIAH

The Isaiah passages used by Jacob in the first three chapters of this discourse are replete with divine warrior imagery, depicting God as the warrior defeating the sea monster and as the warrior defeating the mortal enemy. Yet it is the manner in which Jacob integrates this imagery into the Nephite understanding of the covenants that makes his use of Isaiah particularly interesting as certain themes are emphasized by additions to the text, made by Jacob, which enhance the specific points he is addressing. As we shall see, his conflation of the Isaianic material, coupled with his own commentary, uniquely tailors the divine warrior imagery so Jacob can respond to the Nephite concern.

Chapters 6-7 and Jacob's Additions

After his introductory material in 2 Nephi 6:1-5, Jacob begins his discourse by quoting from Isaiah 49:23–24 in verses 6–7, which is then followed by commentary on those verses. What is covered in the commentary is a quick summary of Israel's future. Prominent in the commentary is the conflict that will arise between Israel and the Gentiles and their eventual restoration to the covenantal promises:

And the day cometh that they shall be smitten and afflicted . . . they shall be scattered, and smitten, and hated . . . and blessed are the Gentiles, they of whom the prophet has written; for behold, if it so be that they shall repent and fight not against Zion, and do not unite themselves to that great and abominable church, they shall be saved. (2 Nephi 6:10-12)

With this, Jacob has already begun to establish his message: that the Nephite experience may not be that different from general Israelite experience, and therefore the promises made to the general Israelite community still apply to them as well.

With this brief commentary Jacob now repeats Isaiah 49:23–24, coupled with his own commentary equating God's promise of covenantal fulfillment with his role as Divine Warrior:

Wherefore, they that fight against Zion and the covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet. . . . He will manifest himself unto the power and great glory, unto the destruction of their enemies . . . and they that believe not in him shall be destroyed . . . and they shall know that the Lord is God. $(2 \text{ Nephi } 6:13-15)^{13}$

This meaning is reinforced in the next set of verses as Jacob continues quoting from Isaiah 49:24–26, adding his own words to provide the explicit context of these verses and their imagery he wished his people to understand.¹⁴ To fully recognize what Jacob is doing, comparing his version of

this specific Isaiah passage with the biblical version and Nephi's version quoted in 1 Nephi is useful. The biblical version reads as follows:

But thus saith the Lord;

Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee.

and I will save thy children. (Isaiah 49:25)

Nephi, who uses the same passage of Isaiah in his discourse, quotes it exactly the same:

But thus saith the Lord,

even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. (1 Nephi 21:25)

But Jacob's version reads:

But thus saith the Lord:

Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered;

for the Mighty God shall deliver his covenant people.

For thus saith the Lord:

I will contend with them that contendeth with thee. (2 Nephi 6:17)

As can be seen from the above comparison, Nephi's use of a version identical with the biblical passage suggests that the biblical form is correct and that Jacob is not revealing lost Isaiah clauses, but is instead adding his own commentary to emphasize the link between God as warrior and his covenantal obligations to defend and deliver Israel from the enemy.

A similar addition can be seen in the next chapter as Jacob quotes from Isaiah 50. Whereas Isaiah simply begins with the clause:

Thus saith the Lord:

Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement? (Isaiah 50:1)

Jacob's version begins:

Yea, for thus saith the Lord:

Have I put thee away, or have I cast thee off forever?

For thus saith the Lord:

Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement? (2 Nephi 7:1)

In this instance, we do not have another version of this verse in the Book of Mormon and therefore cannot determine whether Jacob's addition is material lost from the original Isaiah and restored to us by the brass plates, or if it is Jacob again providing his own words. 15 Either way, it is clear that it provides context for the rest of the chapter. The first word, "yea," suggests continuity from the concepts at the end of 2 Nephi 6 (that the Mighty God will deliver his covenant people from those who would contend with them) to the opening question of chapter 7, how one is cast off from God. The very existence of the question suggests that Israel had asked at times whether God was still acting on their behalf or standing back without mercy, perhaps even unable to do anything. God provides the answer in 7:2-3, beginning with a rhetorical question of his own:

O house of Israel,
is my hand shortened at all that it cannot redeem,
or have I no power to deliver?
Behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea,
I make their rivers a wilderness
and their fish to stink because the waters are
dried up,
... I clothe the heavens with blackness,

God's hand was often used to describe his martial prowess, ¹⁶ and here his power to redeem or deliver is the same power that he uses to demonstrate his utter control over the sea. The fourth and fifth lines emphasize this theme as God is often found rebuking the sea and other nations, as in Psalm 106:9–10:

and I make sackcloth their clothing.

He rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them through the depths, as through the wilderness.

And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.¹⁷

Thus, the question asked in 2 Nephi 7:2 is answered by the confluence of divine warrior imagery: because he is able to control the sea, he is able to redeem his people and it is by virtue of his mastery over the waters that Jehovah can remind his servant that he hasn't forgotten them (see Isaiah 50:2).¹⁸

Later in Jacob's version of Isaiah 50 (2 Nephi 7) an unnamed individual representing Israel recognizes this, and can therefore declare after his humiliation at the hand of the enemy:

And the Lord is near, and he justifieth me.
Who will contend with me? Let us stand together.
Who is mine adversary? Let him come near me,
and I will smite him with the strength of my
mouth.

For the Lord God will help me. (vv. 8-9)

As emphasized by the bold print, Jacob has again included material not found in the biblical version, specifically the martial power of the word. The imagery of the word of God as a weapon is found elsewhere in Isaiah. Isaiah 11:4 describes God as warrior in the following manner: "And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

This smiting by the strength of the mouth relates back to the power of God in rebuking his enemies, vet Jacob's additional phrase adds a new aspect to the divine warrior imagery, for it is not God who will do the smiting but the individual himself. He becomes a type of divine warrior through the power of *the* Divine Warrior. Similarly, Zechariah 10:10-12 describes God's deliverance of Israel by giving them the power in which they shall "pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up . . . and I will strengthen them in the Lord." Like the reference in Zechariah, 2 Nephi 7:8-9 describes an individual who had been helpless against the enemy, but now, through the aid of the Divine Warrior, will himself participate in the conflict. This personal transformation reflects the creative power of God, as the individual becomes a new creature—a divine warrior himself.¹⁹ It is this theme of personal transformation that lies at the heart of the divine warrior imagery in the next chapter.

Chapter 8 and the Divine Warrior's Exhortation

While there is no major change or textual addition in Jacob's version of Isaiah 51 and 52, divine warrior imagery is even more prevalent and centers around the imagery found in 2 Nephi 8:9–11:

Awake, awake! Put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in the ancient days. Art thou not he that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?

Art thou not he who hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep;

that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?

Therefore, the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion;

and everlasting joy and holiness shall be upon their heads;

and they shall obtain gladness and joy, sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

This imagery is tied directly into the restoration of the promised land, for when the Divine Warrior comes, the covenant is fulfilled. The word therefore, beginning verse 11, suggests that because God is the warrior, those who have been lost and scattered will eventually attain everlasting joy, exchanging sorrow and mourning for gladness and joy. In fact, by personifying these negative qualities, Isaiah has made them another form of the enemy that God battles. As noted above, these appear to be the same feelings the Nephites themselves were experiencing. The mention of these emotions lying upon the heads of Israel will work as a device used later in Jacob's own commentary.

Yet, it is God's answer to Israel's exhortation in verses 9–11 that makes up the majority of the chapter. Beginning in verse 12 and ending in verse 25 God responds, repeating language used by the plea itself. He begins his answer by announcing himself: "I am he; yea, I am he that comforteth you" (v. 12). As before the bold text represents material not found in the biblical version. In this case it emphasizes the nature of God as the I AM, the title with which God announced himself to Moses immediately prior to the Exodus (Exodus 3:14), the great salvific act of Israel's history. God then asks a series of questions beginning with "Behold, who art thou?" This question is the crux of the problem for the Nephites. Israel is defined by its covenant. It was created through the covenantal experience. Therefore, if the covenant is broken, then their identity is also called into question. No doubt this is part of the Nephite predicament, as both 2 Nephi 5:6 and Jacob 1:13 describe the family of Lehi breaking apart, the role of each in the greater family structure now being threatened.

God's second question emphasizes that it is their lack of knowledge, not his, that has caused the problem: "Forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth . . . ?" (2 Nephi 8:13)²⁰ This, in turn, has led to their feelings of helplessness as noted in the next question: "hast [thou] feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy?" (v. 13) Like the first half of chapter 7, these questions point out that Israel's shortcomings, not God's, have kept them in the fearful state they are in. More importantly, their "forgetting" of God, or not understanding what exactly the Divine Warrior does in the covenantal context, has led them to not recognize the works of

GOD DOES NOT EXPECT ISRAEL TO MERELY STAND BY WAITING FOR DELIVERANCE: HE EXPECTS THEM TO STAND UP AND PARTICIPATE IN THE CONFLICT.

the Divine Warrior. As the rest of the chapter will demonstrate, God does not expect Israel to merely stand by waiting for deliverance; he expects them to stand up and participate in the conflict.

In verse 16 God provides an answer to the question "Behold, who art thou"? he himself asked in verse 12:

And I have put my words in thy mouth, ... that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion: Behold, thou art my people.

The answer is a simple one, "Behold, thou art my people," but it acts as a reminder to Israel that God has not abandoned them, nor forgotten them. The verse also connects this chapter to chapter 7, since the first line corresponds to the promise made by the unnamed individual against his enemies: "I will smite him with the strength of my mouth" (2 Nephi 7:8). Moreover, the entire verse suggests

the reason as to why Israel has experienced hardship: so that God could make them his people, his divine army to battle against the adversary.

This declaration is followed by a series of commands that reflects Israel's plea in verses 9 and 10 and emphasizes the personal transformation of the individual from helpless creature to divine warrior. In chapter 8, verse 17, God commands Israel to: "Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem," and in verses 24 and 25 he commands:

Awake, awake,
put on thy strength, O Zion;
put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem.
... Shake thyself from the dust;
arise, sit down, O Jerusalem;
loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive
daughter of Zion.

This imagery emphasizes the obligations Israel has to awake and arise on her own, even if God has defeated their enemies. Like the unnamed individual in chapter 7, Zion and Jerusalem themselves are to become agents of action through the great might of the Divine Warrior. Israel must be part of the restoration by doing works of righteousness, not merely waiting on the Lord, which is exactly the theme Jacob teaches in his commentary.

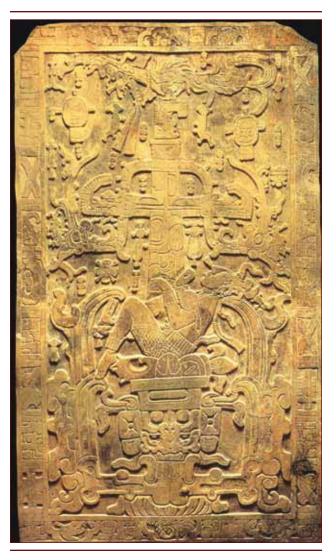
THE DIVINE WARRIOR IN 2 NEPHI 9

It is in his commentary, comprising chapters 9 and 10, that Jacob brings all of his themes together to provide an answer for his people. As he himself states in 9:1: "And now, my beloved brethren, I have read these things that ye might know concerning the covenants of the Lord." As we have suggested, central to those Isaiah passages is the promise of the Divine Warrior who will deliver his people from affliction not only on his own, but also by giving them the power and knowledge to become "warriors" themselves. Similarly, the divine warrior imagery used by Jacob in his own commentary performs the same function.

"That Awful Monster . . . "

Perhaps the most striking and explicit example of Jacob's use of the divine warrior imagery begins in 9:10:

O how great the goodness of our God, who prepareth a way for our escape from the grasp of



This Mesoamerican sarcophagus lid shows what could be a representation of the "awful monster" that Jacob references. © Merle Greene Robertson. Used with permission.

this awful monster; yea that monster, death and hell.

The personification of death as a monstrous entity is not unique to the Book of Mormon, but found throughout the Bible. Isaiah mentions covenants made with Death (see Isaiah 28:15, 18), and in Job, personified Death is seen with his attendants, Pestilence and Sickness (see Job 18:11, Psalm 91:6) hunting down and destroying the wicked. Elsewhere its voracious appetite is highlighted (Isaiah 5:14). Similar descriptions of death are found in areas adjacent to ancient Israel, for instance the Ugaritic deity Mot (lit., "death") also possessed a limitless

appetite and was one of the primary enemies of Baal (the other being Yamm, or "sea").21 Even the compound name of the monster, Death-and-Hell, is not unique. Hosea 13:14 parallels the two terms: "I will ransom them from the power of the Grave [literally, "from the hand of Sheol"]; I will redeem them from death. O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction," and a late text by Philo of Byblos, recounts the Phoenicians naming the god of the underworld as "Death and Pluto."22 Thus, the description of God fighting Death would have been one which Jacob's people would most likely have recognized.

It also highlights the ultimate form of being cast off and experiencing chaos: death without the mediation of the atonement.²³ As Jacob himself states, if it were not for God who prepared the way:

Man must needs have remained to an endless duration . . . our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell . . . to rise no more. And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils . . . to be shut out from the presence of our God . . . in misery. (2 Nephi 9:7–9)

In such a state, there was no way in which any of the covenantal promises could have been kept. Israel, indeed all mankind, would have been cut off, cast out, and helpless in the face of such. Death is a monster that must be defeated by God for salvation and deliverance to even be possible; all other

GOD MAY HAVE SPLIT THE SEA. BUT IT IS UP TO THE INDIVIDUAL TO WALK FORWARD ON THAT DRY GROUND. SIMILARLY, WHILE ONLY GOD CAN DEFEAT DEATH, IT IS UP TO THE INDIVIDUAL TO MAKE THAT VICTORY MEANINGFUL.

creative, martial endeavors are but types of this battle.²⁴ Similarly, the covenants of the promised land are also types of God's victory over death: "they shall inherit the kingdom of God, which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and their joy shall be full forever" (9:18).

This last verse concerning the true land of inheritance is followed by another exclamation of God's power:

O the greatness of the mercy of our God, the Holy One of Israel! For he delivereth his saints from that awful monster the devil, and death, and hell, and that lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment. (v. 19)

In this verse, the monster has become the devil, an association commonly found in the scriptures.²⁵ In light of the above, the atoning event can be described as a martial act, as Jacob does in verses 25 and 26:

for they [those who knew not the law] are delivered by the power of him. For the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them, that they are delivered from that awful monster, death and hell, and the devil and the lake of fire and brimstone.

In each one of these references, Jacob increases our understanding of the Divine Warrior by adding elements not found in the preceding passages. In verse 10, God prepared a way, another exodus for his people to escape the monster; in verse 11 this way is God's deliverance for his people; and in verse 26 the deliverance is the act of the atonement.

There is one more element in verse 10 that must be pointed out. Whereas in verses 19 and 26 God delivers his people, in verse 10 he prepares a "way" for our escape. This reminds us of Israel's plea in 8:10, in which God is remembered as having rebuked and split the sea providing a "way" for Israel to cross over during the Exodus. Throughout Isaiah one can read of the future promise in which God as the Divine Warrior will provide a "way" for his people to be delivered like the way he made for them in the Red Sea.²⁶ Verse 10 is not the only mention by Jacob of the "way." In verse 41, the invitation to "come unto the Lord, the Holy One" includes entering into "the way" and at the end of the discourse, Jacob reminds his people that they are: "free to . . . choose the way of everlasting death or the way of eternal life" (2 Nephi 10:23), made possible by the Divine Warrior. Yet, in each one of these references, Israel is asked to be an active participant in the process. God may have split the sea, but it is up to the individual to walk forward on that dry ground. Similarly, while only God can defeat death, it is up to the individual to make that victory meaningful.

"Lift Up Your Heads"

This meaning also lies behind the imagery of the "lifting of the heads" mentioned throughout this paper. In 2 Nephi 9:3, Jacob states that he has spoken "these things that ye may rejoice, and lift up



When God's people are freed from captivity, they may choose to "rejoice, and lift up [their] heads." Illustration by Glen S. Hopkinson.

your heads forever." Later, in 10:20, Jacob ends his discourse in the following manner: "And now, my beloved brethren . . . let us remember him, and lay aside our sins, and not hang down our heads, for we are not cast off." While we associate the bowed head with humility, in the ancient Near East it was commonly used to demonstrate the utter power over another. Depictions of successful battles often presented captives with bowed heads, bound together.²⁷ Thus, the act of lifting the head was associated with release from captivity and deliverance.²⁸

Elsewhere this image is related to the actions of the Divine Warrior. Psalm 3 includes it, along with a host of others that should now be familiar to the reader:

Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me.

... But thou O Lord are a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. ... Arise, O Lord,

Save me, O my God:

for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone;

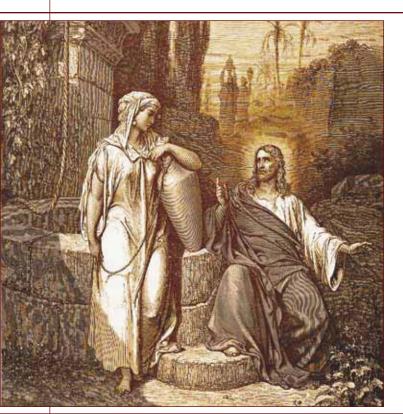
thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. (vv. 1, 3, 7)

Here, the lifter of the head is the same who smites the enemy. In Mosiah 7:18–19, King Limhi says:

O ye, my people, lift up your heads and be comforted; for behold, the time is at hand . . . when we shall no longer be in subjection to our enemies. . . . Therefore, lift up your heads, and rejoice, and put your trust in God . . . who brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

Later, in Mosiah 24:13, the Lord speaking to Alma the Elder concerning their captivity, commanded: "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."

In each of these cases, God as the warrior-deliverer will free his people from the oppression of their captors, therefore they are to "lift up their heads." Yet the term also refers to release from the depression and sorrow that may bind one as well.²⁹ Earlier, in 2 Nephi 8:11, we are told that the Divine Warrior will place joy and holiness upon the heads





In the New Testament, Jesus teaches about the bread and water of life, part of a spiritual feast celebrating the victory of the Savior over death and hell. Left: Jesus and the Woman of Samaria, by Gustave Doré. Right: Photography by Christina Smith, © IRI.

of his people, replacing sorrow and mourning. Jacob is also combating a sorrow among his people, thus his message of the Divine Warrior who will deliver them allows them to lift up their heads and not hang them down.

But, as before, this is wholly dependent upon the individual who must choose to lift his head, and thus the theme of the imagery is the same as that of 9:10. Just as God prepared the way, so he has made it possible to lift their heads, but whether they enter into the way, or lift their heads is entirely up to them. Like the Isaiah passages earlier, God as Divine Warrior ultimately demonstrates his power by making it possible for others to become such as well. It is no wonder, in light of this theme, that the bulk of chapter 9 is concerned with the personal worthiness of the Nephites. Having demonstrated that God as warrior has made it possible for them to have such power, Jacob now exhorts his people to be righteous, to be worthy of attending, and actually accept the invitation to the victory feast.

"Come . . . and Feast"

Not as explicit as the imagery of God waging battle, the victory feast of God is an important part of the overall divine warrior imagery.³⁰ The victory feast of the Divine Warrior manifests itself it two forms: the feast of good things for the victor and his people, and the feast for the animals made up of the flesh of the defeated enemy. Though gruesome, the last form is found in the Old and New Testaments. Ezekiel 39:17-20 describes the feast consisting of the enemy following their battle with the Divine Warrior:

Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel. that ve may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty,

and drink the blood of the princes of the earth ... and ye shall eat fat till ye be full and drink blood till ye be drunken. ... thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war.

Revelation 19:17–21 gives a similar invitation and subsequent feast:

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper



The Great Day of his Wrath, by John Martin (1789–1854). Tate, London/Art Resource, NY.

of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them . . . and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

It is this form of the victory feast that is found in 2 Nephi 6:18:

And I will feed them that oppress thee, with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood as with sweet wine;

all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Savior and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

But the invitation in 2 Nephi 9:50–51 is the victory feast for the righteous. The invitation to the feast repeats the exhortation to "come", thereby relating this invitation and feast to the invitation in verse 41, to "come unto Christ":

Come, my brethren, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come buy and eat ... come unto the Holy One of Israel and feast upon that which perisheth not, neither can be corrupted, and let your soul delight in fatness.

This type of the feast is mentioned in Isaiah 25:6–9, where, following the battle in which God would trod on the enemy, spreading forth his hands to bring down their pride, and "swallow[ing] up death in victory," he would "wipe away tears from off all faces" and prepare a feast:

The Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things,

a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. (v. 6)

A similar feast was provided following Israel's emergence from the chaotic wilderness:

He [Jehovah] made him [Israel] ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; . . . Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape. (Deuteronomy 32:13–14)

While everything offered is of good quality, two items are noteworthy: the "fat of the kidneys of wheat" and the "pure blood of the grape." Both of these expressions are metaphorical of course, but the metaphor relies on the imagery of the sacrifice to have meaning since both fat of the kidneys and blood were specifically mentioned in the peace offering to be made to God, while the rest of the carcass was to be eaten by the person making the offering and his guests. Leviticus 3:16 records that all fat was the Lord's and in Ezekiel 44:7, 15, blood

and fat are the "bread" of God, the altar being his table.31 Thus, even though wheat does not have kidneys, and grape juice is not blood, the metaphor suggests that this divinely offered meal should be associated with ritual of sacrifice. That the imagery reflects the elements of the peace offering is significant in that it was this particular form of sacrifice that was associated with gratitude for God's deliverance, which in turn, renewed the person making the offering's fellowship with God.³² Jacob's invitation to come and partake, then, fits a pattern of divine warrior imagery found in the Old Testament. But, as elsewhere in 2 Nephi 9, the invitation emphasizes the participation of the guest. Though God has defeated the monster and now provides a feast to celebrate his deliverance, it is up to the guest to accept and come unto God.

THE DIVINE WARRIOR IN 2 NEPHI 10

Unlike chapter 9, there is no mention of a monster or even deliverance in 2 Nephi 10. Instead chapter 10 is concerned with the reclamation of the lands of inheritance by the scattered covenant people. Yet the Divine Warrior does make an appearance:

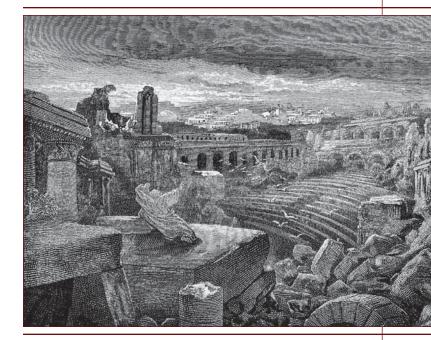
Wherefore, for this cause, that my covenants may be fulfilled . . . I must needs destroy the secret works of darkness, and of murders, and of abominations. Wherefore, he that fighteth against Zion, both Jew and Gentile, both bond and free, both male and female, shall perish; for they are they who are the whore of all the earth; for they who are not for me are against me, saith our God. (vv. 15-16)

While it is true that the chapter delineates some wonderful blessings to the Gentiles, these blessings are contingent upon the Gentiles softening their hearts and turning to the Lord; if they do not, then they remain the enemy. This was the exact same teaching delivered earlier in 2 Nephi 6:12-13 where the Divine Warrior first made his appearance in this discourse:

And blessed are the Gentiles: . . . for behold, if it so be that they shall repent and fight not against Zion, and do not unite themselves to that great and abominable church, they shall be saved; for the Lord God will fulfil his covenants which he has made unto his children. . . . They that fight

against Zion and the covenant people of the Lord shall lick up the dust of their feet.

Thus the Gentile, the outsider, now becomes the enemy that fights against God. Yet Jacob also suggests that the Jew can be an enemy. Though an Israelite would be by genetics of the house of Israel, it is not genetics alone that determines whether or not one is Israel.³³ In fact, it is the individual's personal righteousness that defines one in the covenantal relationship with God. Equating one who fights against Zion with one who does works of darkness, murder, and abominations places these on the same



Isaiah's Vision of the Destruction of Babylon, by Gustave Doré.

continuum of enemy as the monster, death and hell. All three of these actions actively work against the purposes of God. Moreover, they work directly with the whore of all the earth, the great and abominable church, the enemy of God in Nephi's apocalyptic vision of 1 Nephi 14.

In Nephi's abbreviated version of the apocalypse, the great whore of the earth is: "the church of the devil . . . the mother of abominations . . . and she sat upon many waters" (1 Nephi 14:10-11). The same imagery is described in Revelation 17–19, where some have suggested she represents elements of the chaos monster.³⁴ According to Nephi, she will wage war against the righteous by bringing to pass a gathering of her own:

And it came to pass that I beheld that the great mother of abominations did gather together multitudes upon the face of all the earth, among all the nations of the Gentiles, to fight against the Lamb of God. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face

of God is what Jacob suggests can be his own people: individuals empowered by God who can thus smite the enemy by the word of God.

Finally, chapter 10 ends with the promise of a land of inheritance, the sign of the covenant, much as chapter 9 ends with the invitation to the victory feast. Thus, the Nephite concerns of loss of identity with the loss of the lands of inheritance are placed into an eternal perspective. It is in this perspective that the true power of the Divine Warrior is witnessed. By delivering them from the monster, he gives them the power to act, to become warriors

CHAPTER 10 ENDS WITH THE PROMISE OF A LAND OF INHERITANCE, THE SIGN OF THE COVENANT, MUCH AS CHAPTER 9 ENDS WITH THE INVITATION TO THE VICTORY FEAST. THUS, THE NEPHITE CONCERNS OF LOSS OF IDENTITY WITH THE LOSS OF THE LANDS OF INHERITANCE ARE PLACED INTO AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE. IT IS IN THIS PERSPECTIVE THAT THE TRUE POWER OF THE DIVINE WARRIOR IS WITNESSED.

of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness, and with the power of God in great glory. . . . And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots . . . then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel. (1 Nephi 14:14, 17)

Nephi's vision allows us to catch sight of the true meaning of Jacob's passage. The language used by Nephi that the work of the Father "prepareth a way" is reminiscent of Jacob's later words to describe the work of the Savior who "provideth a way." This way, described in both the Isaianic passages and Jacob's commentary, includes giving God's people power themselves to battle the enemy, in whatever form it manifests itself. Nephi's vision of a people armed with righteousness and the power

themselves, to attain their true land of inheritance, the kingdom of God, and thus the ability to create their cosmos in the New World. It is with these promises in mind that Jacob can now claim:

We are not cast off; nevertheless, we have been driven out of the land of our inheritance; but we have been led to a better land, for the Lord has made the sea our path . . . And now behold, the Lord remembereth all them who have been broken off, wherefore he remembereth us also. (2 Nephi 10:20, 22)

and end with his prayer, reflecting the might of the Divine Warrior:

May God raise you from death by the power of the resurrection, and also from everlasting death by the power of the atonement, that ye may be received into the eternal kingdom of God. (v. 25)

CONCLUSION

While we may never know the exact circumstances that led to Jacob's delivering this discourse, his use of the divine warrior imagery not only gives us a glimpse into the manner in which this community of scattered Israelites found hope and assurances in their new environments, but when we recognize the meaning behind this imagery it also becomes a source of assurance for us today. While we may never have to experience the trauma of losing a land of inheritance, the feelings of loss, of being driven out, or of helplessness experienced by the Nephites are all too real experiences today. Our hope, too, lies in the promises made by the Divine Warrior. Like the Nephites, we too can trust in his delivering power; like the Nephites we must participate and become divine warriors ourselves. At the beginning of his discourse, Jacob stated that he read to his people the words of Isaiah that "they may be likened unto you, for ye are the house of Israel" (2 Nephi 6:5). Today, the same advice could be given of Jacob's speech. Though separated by 2,600 years, we can liken his words to us and in so doing "cheer up" our hearts, remembering that, thanks to the Divine Warrior, we too "are free to act for ourselves."

Notes

- While this discourse is one of the longer discourses in the Book of Mormon and is as complex as King Benjamin's speech or Alma's discourse to the Zoramites, it has received much less attention by scholarship. Outside of John S. Thompson's study, "Isaiah 50-51, the Israelite Autumn Festivals, and the Covenant Speech of Jacob in 2 Nephi 6-10," in Isaiah in the Book of Mormon, ed. Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998), 123-50, no one has devoted an entire study to the speech. Others have discussed the text within larger contexts, such as John W. Welch who mentioned the speech in his study, "The Temple in the Book of Mormon: The Temples at the Cities of Nephi, Zarahemla, and Bountiful," in Temples of the Ancient World, ed. Donald W. Parry (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1994), 297-387. Garold N. Davis, "Pattern and Purpose of the Isaiah Commentaries in the Book of Mormon," in Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World: Studies in Honor of John L. Sorenson, ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998), 277-303, discusses the Isaianic passages of the discourse briefly, as does Victor L. Ludlow, Unlocking Isaiah in the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003), and Hoyt W. Brewster Jr., Isaiah Plain and Simple: The Message of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995). But because of their focus on the Isaianic texts, they do not provide a good analysis of Jacob's own words, nor do they develop the manner in which the Isaianic texts and Jacob's commentary work together for thematic continuity.
- Martin Klingbeil, Yahweh Fighting from Heaven: God as Warrior and as God of Heaven in the Hebrew Psalter and Ancient Near Eastern Iconography (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 309: "God as the warrior fighting from heaven remains one of the less comfortable Gottesbilder regarded from a modern

- theological perspective. Nevertheless, it appears to constitute an important part of the imagery associated with Yahweh throughout the Hebrew psalter. Even more so, because it reappears in the literature of the New Testament as part of the apocalyptic vision given to John in Rev 19:11-15."
- In the Babylonian creation liturgy, the Enuma Elish, it was Tiamat, the "sweet waters" that had to be defeated for creation to continue, see Richard J. Clifford, Creation Accounts in the Ancient Near East and in the Bible (Washington DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 1994), 82-93. A similar battle is described in the Ugaritic Baal cycle, though there is a question whether this text reflects a true cosmogony or is a physical creation narrative, see ibid, 119-26. See also Richard J. Clifford, "Cosmogonies in the Ugaritic Texts and in the Bible," Orientalia 53/2 (1984): 183-201. Whether or not a physical cosmogony is described, certainly the social cosmology of the divine realm is. As will be shown later, the creation of society is as much a part of the creative process as the physical creation.
- See Psalms 24:2; 29:10; 74:12–16; 77:16–19; 89:9–11; 93:3; 95:3–5; 104:6-7; Job 7:12; 26:10-13; Isaiah 51:9-10; 59:19; Jeremiah 5:22; Habbakuk 3:8. See also Norman Cohn, Cosmos, Chaos and the World to Come: The Ancient Roots of Apocalyptic Faith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 131-39; C. L. Seow, Myth, Drama, and the Politics of David's Dance (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 112-16; Frank Moore Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973), 112-44. See also N. Wyatt, Myths of Power: A Study of Royal Myth and Ideology in Ugaritic and Biblical Tradition (Munster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1996), 89-95. There is also an interesting connection between the practice of the sacrificial system and the creation. The Hebrew verb used both in Genesis 1, describing the separating of water from water, and in Leviticus, describe the cutting and separating of the different body parts of the animal sacrifice, is the same, suggesting that the two acts were to be viewed as different in scale not in type; both were acts of cosmos-making.
- Richard S. Hess, Israelite Religions: An Archaeological and Biblical Survey (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007), 155: "The story of the exodus, repeated again and again in Israel's Scriptures, represents the key historic act of redemption that formed a unique contribution to the religious identity of this people. Although Ugaritic and other ancient Near Eastern sources contain a triumph of the chief god over the divine Sea, there is no parallel to this anywhere in the ancient Near Eastern sources.
- Bernard F. Batto, Slaying the Dragon: Mythmaking in the Biblical Tradition (Louisville, KY: Westminster, 1992), 113, 119: "In a series of spectacular battles Yahweh overwhelms and finally kills Pharaoh-Egypt in the midst of the sea. Through this same battle Israel emerges from out of the midst of the defeated enemy as God's newly fashioned people, the final 'work' of the Creator who brings forth life out of the midst of the unruly sea." "In the second act of creation Yahweh went on to found his people Israel as his covenanted people and establish his 'resting place'—the place from which he rules the cosmos—in their midst.... The exodus, no less than the creation in Genesis, is an 'event' of cosmic proportions, a story of origins through which the cosmic order is established and actualized." The relationship between the creation account and the deliverance of Israel is also explored in Cross, Canaanite Myth, 87-88: "The overthrow of the Egyptian host in the sea is singled out to symbolize Israel's deliverance, Yahweh's victory. Later, an equation is fully drawn between the 'drying up of the sea' and the Creator's defeat of Rahab or Yamm (Isaiah 51:9-11); the historical event is thereby given cosmic or primordial meaning. . . . It is highly likely that the role of the sea in the Exodus story was singled out and stressed precisely because of the ubiquitous motif of the cosmogonic battle between the creator god and the Sea." See also Bernhard W. Anderson, From Creation to New Creation: Old Testament Perspectives (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 37, 80-81: "The theme of the new creation dominates the message of Second

- Isaiah, who grasps profoundly the interrelation of creation and history. . . . It is the exodus tradition that especially fires the prophet's imagination, prompting a poetic identification of the passage through the Sea of Reeds with the Divine Warrior's triumph over the powers of chaos. Isa. 51:9–11. In this respect, the prophet stands in a tradition that accords with Israel's earliest poetry, wherein cosmological language functions to portray the creation (or re-creation) of a people. Creation and redemption belong together, as the obverse and reverse of the same theological coin."
- 7. Secondary literature discussing this theme is numerous. Beyond the sources mentioned above, see also Mary K Wakeman, God's Battle with the Monster: A Study in Biblical Imagery (Leiden: Brill, 1973); also Patrick D. Miller Jr., The Divine Warrior in Early Israel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973); Millard Lind, Yahweh Is a Warrior: The Theology of Warfare in the Ancient Israel (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1980); John Day, God's Conflict with the Dragon and the Sea: Echoes of a Canaanite Myth in the Old Testament (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). For both an excellent review of this imagery and material on the influence of this imagery beyond the Hebrew Bible, see Michael A. Fishbane, Biblical Myth and Rabbinic Mythmaking (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- 8. The creation account in Genesis is very much a covenant experience as creation was not complete until the creation of a social cosmos as well. The language used to describe Adam and Eve's relationship "bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23) is similar to language found in 2 Samuel to describe the creation and ongoing covenantal relationship between David as king and Israel (2 Samuel 5:1; 19:2). The Exodus experience was understood as a covenantal experience throughout the Old Testament and is often referred back to in the seven recognized communal laments of the psalter (Psalms 44, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 89).
- 9. Theodore Hiebert, God of My Victory: The Ancient Hymn in Habakkuk 3 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 118–19: "The form of Habakkuk 3 may best be identified as a song of victory, a song celebrating an Israelite military victory as a triumph of Yahweh, the divine warrior. . . . His armies are made up of cosmic and human forces, his enemy is at once the primeval enemy of God, River/Sea, and the primeval enemies of his people, the Egyptians at the Reed Sea and the Canaanites at the Jordan River." Also Miller, Divine Warrior, 164: "In Israel the creator god was the war god who marched forth to save his people. . . . At the center of Israel's faith . . . lay the battle for Israel's deliverance, a conflict involving the theophany of Yahweh and his mighty armies to fight with and for Israel. This encounter took place on a definitely historical level, but the forces of the cosmos were involved."
- 10. See Exodus 12:25; Deuteronomy 6:3; 19:8-9, 27:3; Joshua 23:5-6.
- 11. Jon D. Levenson, Sinai & Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible (New York: HarperCollins, 1985), 55. Also, Stephen L. Cook, The Social Roots of Biblical Yahwism (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 39: "The ultimate consequence of defiling the land is that God will stop protecting it and allow the people's removal from the land. When the Canaanites had previously defiled the land, God expelled them. If Israel follows suit, their fate could well be the same: eviction."
- 12. Though no specific enemy is mentioned, the traditional enemy of the Nephites was the Lamanites. Conflict broke out soon after the separation of the two groups and the Nephites' second journey into the wilderness (Jacob 1:10). The Lord himself explains that the Lamanites, "shall be a scourge to they seed . . . even unto destruction." Jacob's son, Enos, describes the Lamanites as "wild, and ferocious, and a blood-thirsty people . . . feeding upon beasts of prey . . . wandering about in the wilderness with . . . their heads shaven. . . And many of them did eat nothing save it was raw meat; and they were continually seeking to destroy us" (Enos 1:20). These descriptions depict the Lamanites as a chaotic force, at home in the wilderness, and continually seeking to tear apart the "cosmos" the Nephites attempt to establish. Interest-

- ingly, later in the Book of Mormon, when the Lamanites are converted to the gospel and become part of the covenant people, this description is then applied to the Gadianton Robbers: "And [the Gadianton Robbers] had a lamb-skin about their loins, and they were dyed in blood, and their heads were shorn, and they had headplates upon them; and great and terrible was the appearance of the armies of Giddianhi, because of their armor, and because of their being dyed in blood" (3 Nephi 4:7). Not surprisingly, this description is followed by a Nephite plea to the Divine Warrior: "And it came to pass that the armies of the Nephites, when they saw the appearance of the army . . . did lift their cries to the Lord their God, that he would spare them and deliver them out of the hands of their enemies" (v. 8). See Hugh W. Nibley, *Teachings of the Book of Mormon Semester 3* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1988–1990), 301–2.
- 13. It is possible that the last clause of this line also suggests the Divine Warrior. The Hebrew term for "god" is el, most likely from the root meaning "to be strong, to be powerful." Thus the declaration that the Lord is God, would be emphasizing the attribute of his power. See W. Herrmann, s.v. "El," Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 2nd rev. ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 274–80.
- 14. Nephi also adds text to the Isaiah passages he quotes to emphasize the reason for the specific Isaiah passage. The first half of 1 Nephi 21:1, mentioned earlier, does not appear in the biblical Isaiah.

And again, Hearken, O ye house of Israel,
All ye who are broken off
And are driven out because of the wickedness of the
pastors of my people;
Yea, all ye that are that are broken off,
That are scattered abroad,
Who are of my people, O house of Israel.
Listen, O isles, unto me,

Listen, O isles, unto me,
And hearken ye people from far;
The Lord hath called me from the womb;

From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.

The additional material is either original Isaianic material missing from the biblical version or Nephi's own words, emphasizing the scattered and broken off nature of the subject. Either way, the additional material applies directly to the Nephite situation at the time.

- 15. It is possible that the first clause of line two, "have I put thee away?" is originally Isaianic since the rest of the verse uses this verb repeatedly: "To whom have I put thee away? . . . for . . . For your transgressions is your mother put away." Yet the second clause of the line, "or have I cast thee off forever" appears to be Jacob's words since the verb never shows up again in the chapter. If this is so, we again have Jacob clarifying and highlighting the meaning of the Isaianic passage to fit his specific usage.
- 16. Exodus 15:6: "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy." See also Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalms 21:8; 44:3; 60:5; 74:11; 77:10; 78:54; 89:13; 91:7; 108:6; 118:15–16; Isaiah 62:12, Lamentations 2:3. A raised right arm holding a weapon of some kind was often depicted in ancient Near Eastern statuary to represent the deity's martial aspect. Interestingly, it is also associated with Moses, see Isaiah 63:12: "That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them." Moses was given divine warrior power in Moses 1:25: "I, the Almighty, have chosen thee, and thou shalt be made stronger than many waters; for they shall obey thy command as if thou wert God."
- 17. See Psalms 18:15; 104:7; Isaiah 17:13; 66:15; Nahum 1:4.
- 18. Elements of 2 Nephi 7 remind us of the psalm of Nephi in 2 Nephi 4:15–35, especially the plea for the Lord to deliver the sufferer from chaotic forces. There are three references to chaos within that pericope. The first is mentioned in 2 Nephi 4:20 with the Lord supporting Nephi through "the wilderness" and "the

- waters." In verse 22, Nephi survived his "enemies" and finally in verse 26 he is confronted with death, "why should my heart weep and my soul linger in the valley of sorrow, and my flesh waste away and my strength slacken?" This same pattern of confrontation is found in Psalm 89. In fact, much of the language of Nephi's psalm is similar to, if not exactly the same as, that found in the Psalms.
- Textually, this addition adds to the poetic nature of the chapter, as the creation of new warrior, reflects the same power of God as found in the earlier imagery. Thus, Jacob has made Isaiah even more poetic, even more chiasmic in theme, than the biblical version.
- Though not as explicit as other passages, this question may also reflect divine warrior imagery as the stretching out the heavens may have referred to the concept of Jehovah making a tent or a creation out of the skin of the chaos monster. See Wyatt, Myths of Power, 215: "In Job 26:7 we saw that the allusion is specifically related to the Chaoskampf motif. The same is true of the couplet in Job 9:8: (Yahweh) stretching out (the) heavens by himself and striding on the back of Sea. This more fully expounded version of the tradition provides the real clue to understanding the tentpitching allusions. Here we can imagine Yahweh striding back and forth triumphantly on the cadaver of the dead Yam, pulling his skin into shape. It is Yam's skin that forms the fabric of the tent." Norman C. Habel connects this motif to the cultic tent of Israel in his article, "He Who Stretches Out the Heavens," Catholic Biblical Quarterly 34/4 (1972): 417-30. See also Peter J. Kearney. "Creation and Liturgy: The P Redaction of Ex 25-40," Zeitschrift für Altestamentliche Wissenschaft 89/3 (1977): 375-87. Frank Cross saw a similar connection in the tahas covering of Moses's tabernacle. "The outermost curtain is made of táḥaš skins. . . . It [táḥaš] has a perfectly simple etymology, being cognate with Arabic tuhas, a word applied to small cetaceans, notably the dolphin." Cross, "The Priestly Tabernacle in the Light of Recent Research." in The Temple in Antiquity: Ancient Records and Modern Perspectives, ed. Truman G. Madsen (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984), 95-96. Though he differs slightly in his analysis (Cross explains the skin, not in terms of the skin of the chaos monster, but in terms of El's tent abiding at the "fountains of the double-deep" and in the "midst of the sea"), he too places the establishment of the tabernacle at the triumph over the waters.
- Nicholas Wyatt, Religious Texts from Ugarit: The Words of Ilimilku and His Colleagues (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 116-17: "Message of divine Mot, word of the Beloved of El, the hero: My appetite is the appetite of the lion in the wasteland, as the desire of the shark is in the sea."
- 22. Philo of Byblos 1.10.34. Philo of Byblos: The Phoenician History, trans. Harold W. Attridge and Robert A. Oden Jr. (Washington DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1981), 57.
- Nicholas J. Tromp, Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969), 122: "Death is a return to chaos, the situation of disorder preceding creation."
- For biblical parallels see Habakkuk 1:12; Isaiah 25:8. See also, Tromp, Primitive Conceptions of Death, 202-5.
- Satan as the enemy monster is the primary meaning of the serpent/dragon imagery found throughout the Book of Revelation, see Rev. 12:9: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan," also 20:2; 2 Nephi 2:18;

- Mosiah 16:3; Doctrine and Covenants 76:28; 88:110. The early conflict between the serpent and God at the creation may be a reflection of this elemental conflict.
- Isaiah 11:16; 19:23; 35:8; 40:3; 49:11; 62:10. 26.
- 27. For textual examples, see Judges 8:28; see also Job 10:15.
- In the story of Joseph, the butler who is imprisoned with Joseph is promised that in three days: "shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place" (Genesis 40:13). Some dark humor follows as the baker, who also has a dream and is imprisoned, is told: "within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee" (v. 19).
- In Alma 8:14-15, Alma is told to "lift up thy head and rejoice" having been, "weighed down with sorrow, wading through much tribulation and anguish of soul." Use of the verb wading carries with it reflexes of chaos imagery as it is often used to describe traversing through a watery, marshy place, thus the image of the Divine Warrior making it possible to lift one's head is used. See "wade," OED-online version (www.oed.com), def. 3a: "to walk through water or any liquid or soft substance that impedes motion." Earlier in the entry it is pointed out that: "The mod. Eng. specific sense, 'to walk in water', though prominent in the other Teut. langs., is not recorded in OE."
- Dennis E. Smith, "Messianic Banquet," in The Anchor Bible Dictionary, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 4:788-91; also Dennis E. Smith, "The Messianic Banquet Reconsidered," in The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester, ed. Birger A. Pearson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 64-73; J. Priest, "A Note on the Messianic Banquet," in The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 222-38, 237: "The immediate background of the theme is to be derived from a number of Old Testament texts which depict the slaughter of God's enemies on the day of his triumph and/or which speak of the festal meal of the redeemed on that
- See also Ezekiel 29:3-5; 32:2-8, where the meal is made up of the corpse of the chaos monster. See J. Priest, "A Note," in The Messiah, 235: "The first two passages in Ezekiel contain an element which requires attention (29:3-5; 32:2-8). In them the food of the sacrificial feast is the flesh of the dragon (tannin). Ps 74:13-14 reflects this motif: The dragons (tanninim = Leviathan), crushed by YHWH, are the food which will be eaten by the creatures in the wilderness."
- Richard D. Nelson, Raising Up a Faithful Priest: Community and Priesthood in Biblical Theology (Louisville, KY: Westminster/ John Knox, 1993), 67-68: "Those sharing the sacrificial meal would have seen it as a way of strengthening family and group associations, but also as a way of making personal contact with Yahweh."
- See Romans 2:28, 29; 9:6-8. 33.
- J. Massyngberde Ford, Revelation (New York: Doubleday, 1975), 277 n. 17:1: "The picture is well known from ancient iconography: a city represented as a goddess, enthroned on the shore of the river which suggests its richness and power. . . . They may also be reminiscent of the primeval watery chaos."



NAHOM MAPS



JAMES GEE

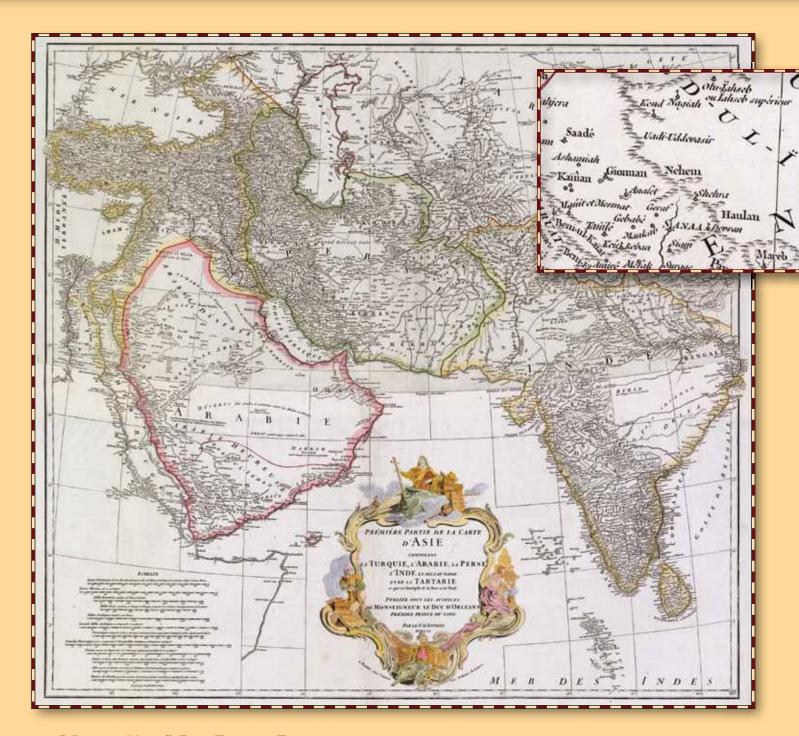
or so, the hostile terrain of the Arabian Peninsula deterred explorers and cartographers from thoroughly investigating and recording the area on maps. Thus, Lehi—traveling the land around 600 BC—is not likely to have had a map of Arabia to which he could refer while journeying across the region. However, later travelers and explorers made maps that would support the details of his journey as they are recorded in the Book of Mormon.

In the August 1978 *Ensign*, Ross T. Christensen, professor of archaeology at BYU, was the first to suggest that Nephi's *Nahom* might correspond to *Nehhm* on a 1771 map of Yemen. After reading Christensen's article, I began a quest to find an original 1771 copperplate print of the map. It took me many years to find

what I was seeking. In the end, I found not only the map Ross Christensen referenced but also many more maps which made mention of a place called *Nahom*.

Behind each of these maps lies the intricate story of its creation. Who contributed the information? Who outlined, engraved, or printed the map? Who published or sold it? Did the cartographer know more about Nahom than what is visible in his work? Some of these questions are unanswerable, but there is a certain amount of information that we can learn about the mapmakers. The 1771 map to which Ross Christensen referred was made by German-born Carsten Niebuhr, a member of the Danish expedition of 1761. His map was not, however, the first to make mention of Nahom. This honor belongs to a French cartographer named D'Anville.

54 Long. E. From Greenwich 58



MAP 1. "Asia," Jean Baptiste Bourguignon D'Anville (Paris, 1751). 30" x 40"

Jean Baptiste Bourguignon D'Anville was born in Paris on July 11, 1697. D'Anville was immersed in the study of geography at an early age, and he engraved his first map at the age of fifteen. D'Anville would become the greatest cartogra-

pher of his time.1 He was appointed geographer to the king of France in 1719. His maps were highly respected: The French navigator Bougainville used D'Anville charts when exploring the East Indies and remarked on their accuracy and detail,2 and both Thomas Jefferson and Meriwether Lewis sought to obtain D'Anville maps prior to the Lewis and Clark expedition.3

D'Anville published his first map of Asia in 1751. This map extended across southwestern Asia from the Bosphorus and the Mediterranean, to the Gulf of Bengal including Turkey, Persia, Arabia, and India. On this large-scale map of Asia, D'Anville prominently locates Nehem in the Arabian Peninsula, just above and to the east of Sana. Although spelled differently than the Nahom in the Book of Mormon, it is pronounced the same. D'Anville's location of Nehem seems to match Nephi's description. The fact that D'Anville had Nahom engraved on his map shows that it was important information to those traveling in that area of Arabia because D'Anville had a reputation for providing only important details on his maps.⁴

D'Anville created his map of Arabia based on the records and writings of classical geographers, Arabs, and European travelers. This map excited the European community to learn more about Arabia, and it marks D'Anville "as the last and most important landmark in the old era of Arabian cartography." D'Anville's map of Arabia inspired the Danish to lead an expedition to the area in 1761 to learn more about it and to fill in the details that D'Anville left out.

MAP 2. "Yemen," Carsten Niebuhr (Denmark, 1771). 15" x 23"

Carsten Niebuhr was born March 17, 1733, in Ludingworth, Germany. He worked as a peasant farmer in his early years, but he later went to school and learned surveying, mathematics, and astronomy. In 1758, Niebuhr was invited to join a scientific expedition to Arabia. The team included Friedrich Christian von Haven (a Danish linguist and ethnologist), Peter Forsskål (a Swedish botanist and zoologist), Christian Carl Kramer (a Danish physician and zoologist), Georg Wilhelm Baurenfeind (an artist and engraver from South Germany), and Berggren (a Swedish ex-soldier employed as a servant on the expedition). Frederick V, the king of Denmark, financed the expedition hoping that the team would make scientific and religious discoveries on behalf of Denmark. In particular, he hoped the expedition's religious discoveries would substantiate portions of the Bible.⁷

The expedition sailed from Denmark in early 1761 aboard the man-o'-war *Greenland*. The members of the party spent a year studying in Egypt and then sailed down the coast of the Red Sea to Yemen

in the Arabian Peninsula. After a long delay and the deaths of von Haven and Forsskål from malaria, the team reached Sana. There, Niebuhr explored the area around the capital in order to make his map.

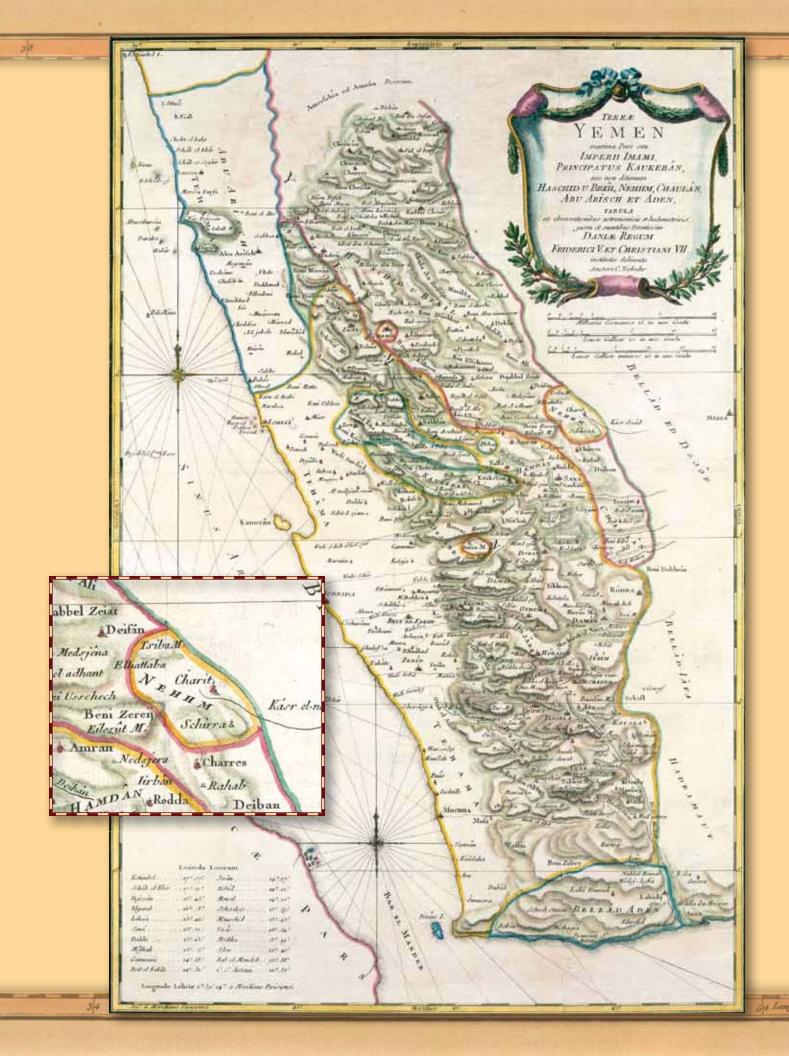
In his journal, Niebuhr mentions Nahom, which he spells as *Nehhm*.⁸ This differed from the spelling D'Anville used on his map, a copy of which Niebuhr had with him on this expedition.⁹ Niebuhr explained in his book: "I have had no small difficulty in writing down these names; both from the diversity of dialects in the country, and from the indistinct pronunciation of those from whom I was obliged to ask them."¹⁰

Niebuhr gives a description and location of this place called Nahom. He describes it as a small district between Dsjof and Haschid-u-bekil, and he describes the present Schiech as a "warlike character, and often troublesome to the Imam" of Sana and also as "an independent prince." On the cartouche of his map, Niebuhr lists Nehhm, Hashchid u Bekil, Chaulan, Abu Arisch, and Aden as independent districts from that of Yemen ruled by the Imam of Sana.¹² Niebuhr circles the boundaries of this area of Nehhm on the map; it covers an area of approximately 2,394 square miles. The map shows that the district consists of a few small towns, Charit the largest and Schirra and Elhattaba. Niebuhr writes of a very fertile mountain in Nahom named Tsiba, 13 which has many villages on it. The information provided by Niebuhr establishes that Nahom was more then just a tribe or a burial place. During Lehi's travels in 600 BC Nahom may even have been larger than what Niebuhr encountered in 1761.

Niebuhr was the sole survivor of the Danish expedition. He confirmed D'Anville's map by being an eyewitness to the area, and especially to the location and existence of Nahom. He returned home to Denmark and published his journals and maps of Arabia in 1771.

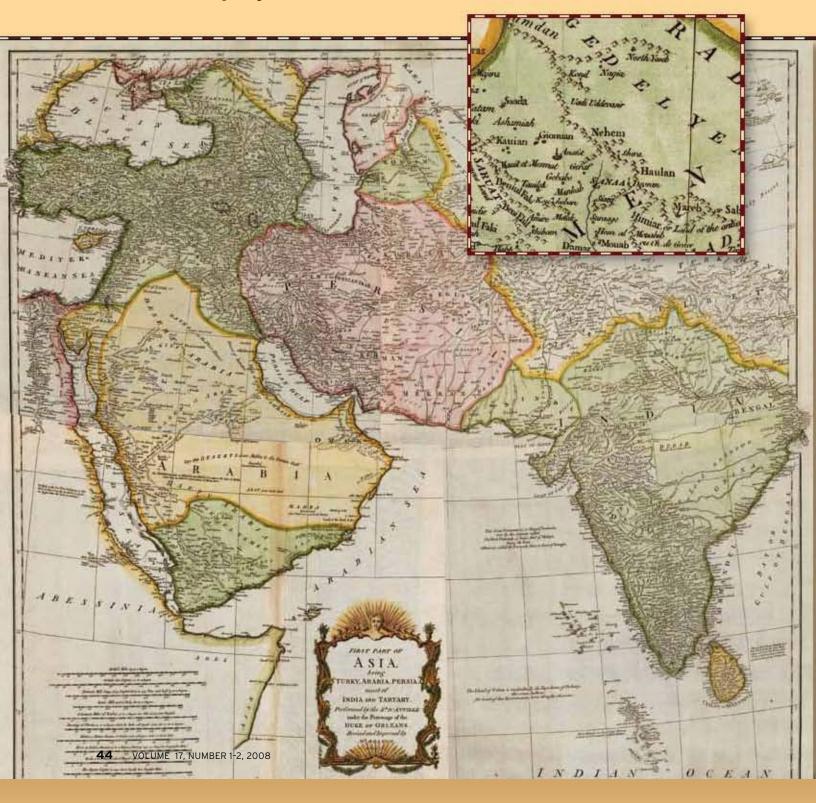
D'Anville's 1751 map of Asia and Niebuhr's 1771 map of Yemen are the basis for most of the accurate maps of Arabia from 1751 to 1814. With D'Anville's indisputable reputation for accuracy and with Niebuhr's firsthand experience and use of scientific instruments, in addition to the difficulty in mapping Arabia, most reputable cartographers relied on D'Anville and Niebhur in publishing maps of Arabia. Bonne, Cary, Darton, and Thomson, however, all seemed to have their own sources for information on Arabia and Nehem.

54 Long. E. from Groenwich



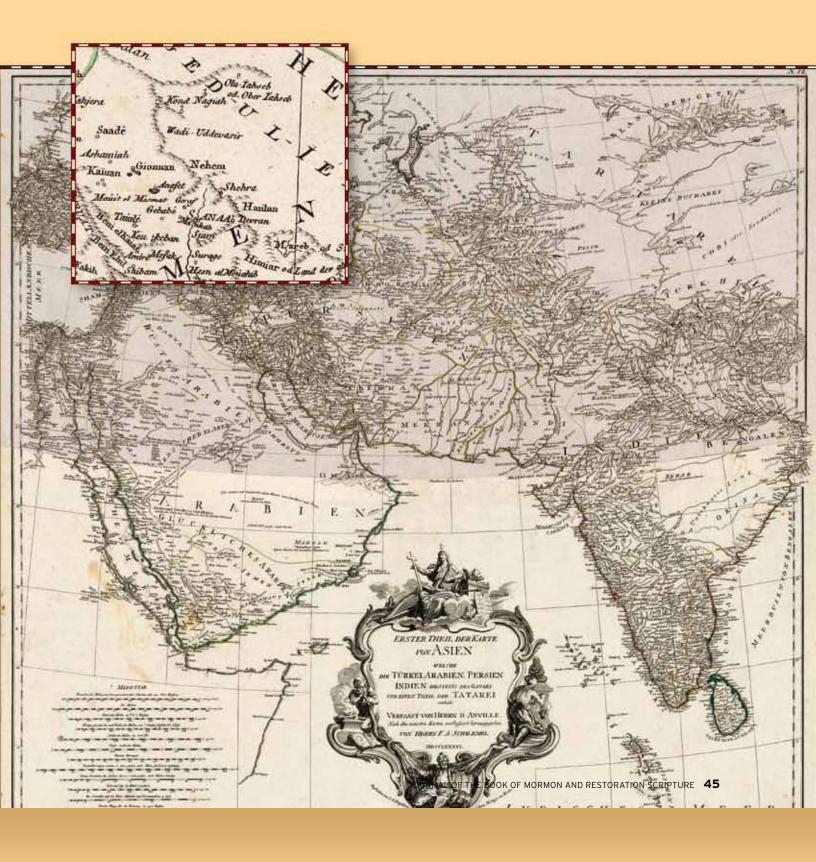
MAP 3. "Asia," D'Anville, Revised and Improved by Mr. Bolton (London, 1755). 31" x 30"

The first Arabian map to follow D'Anville's 1751 map of Asia was a map published in London by cartographer Solomon Bolton in 1755, before the Danish expedition ever set sail. Bolton published a set of five maps referencing D'Anville. This is the earliest English version of D'Anville I have been able to find. It is used in place of the rare 1751 French D'Anville in many books on maps of Arabia. The spelling of Nahom matches D'Anville's spelling, *Nehem*.



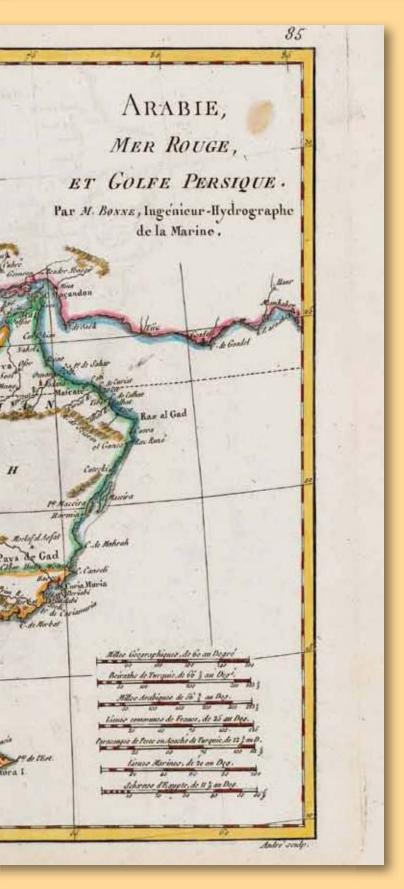
MAP 4. "Asia," D'Anville, F. A. Schraembl (Austria, 1786). 30" x 40"

In 1786 the Austrian publisher and cartographer Franz Anton Schraembl published his version of the famous D'Anville map of Asia. Schraembl's spelling of Nahom is in the French, even though he had earlier published Carsten Niebuhr's map with the spelling of Nahom in the Niebuhr way, *Nehhm*.



Longitude du Méridien de l'île de Fer.





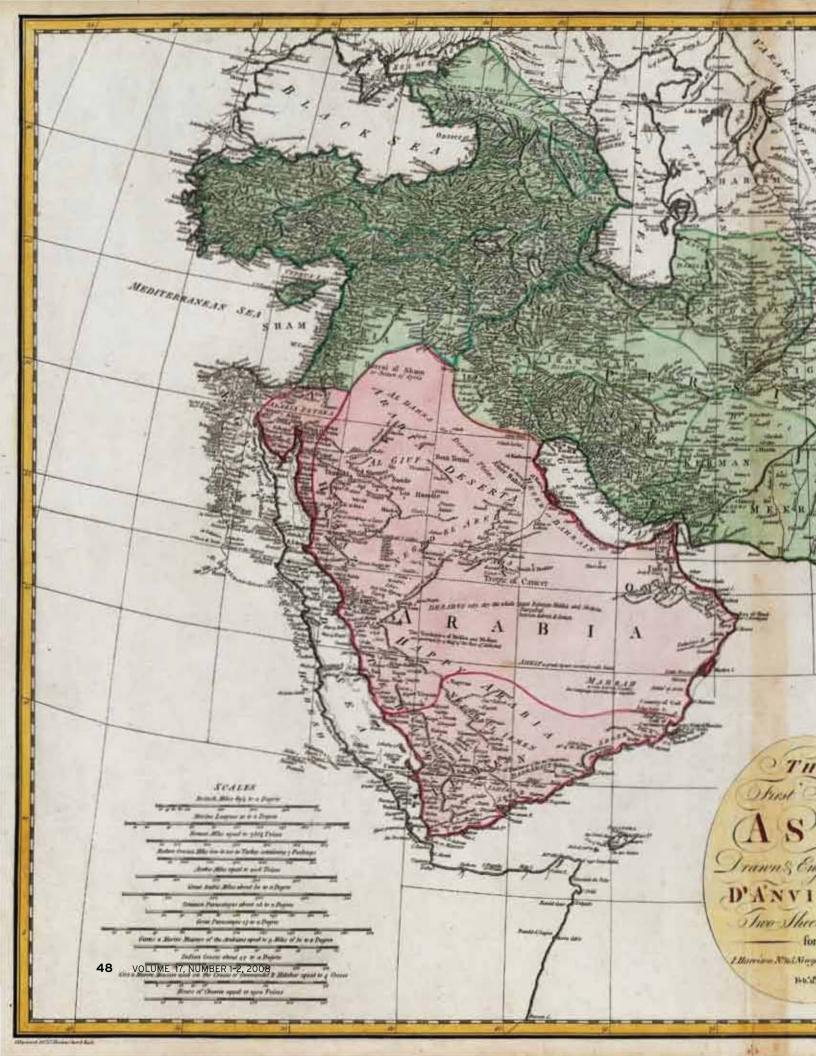
MAP 5. "Arabia," Rigobert Bonne (Paris, 1787). 14" x 10"

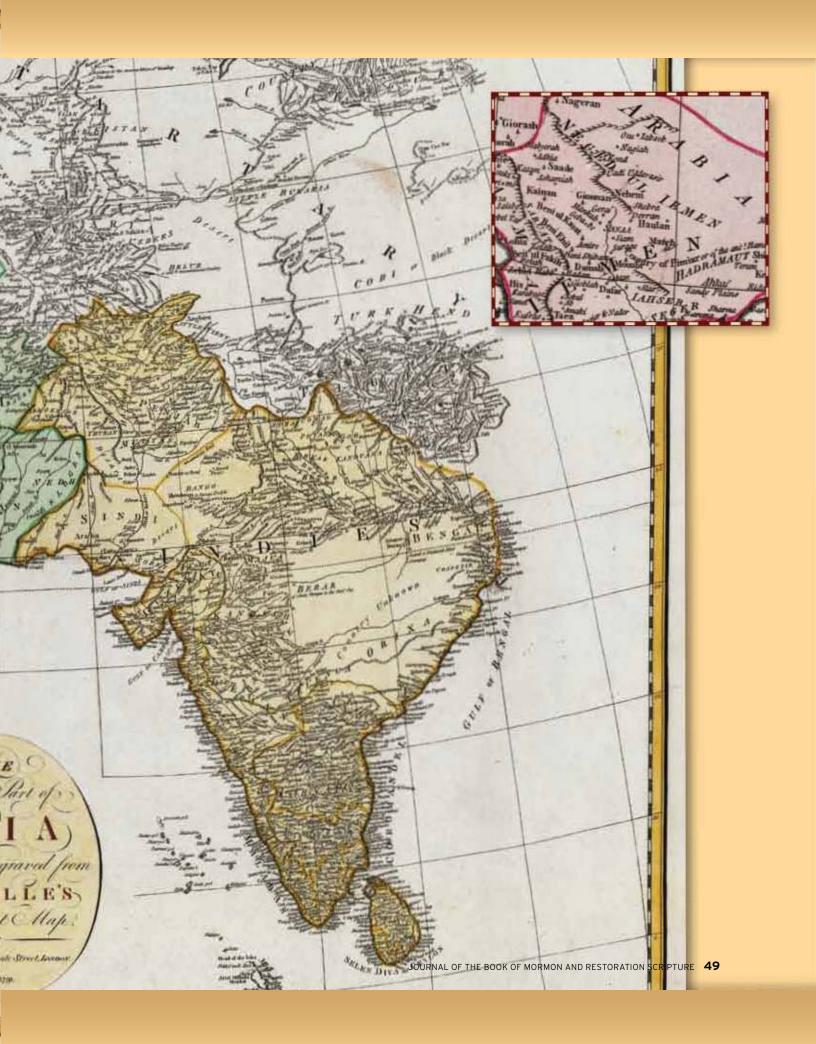
In 1787, engineer, mathematician, cartographer, and Royal Hydrographer Rigobert Bonne published "Atlas encyclopedique" with Nicolas Desmaret. This was a much smaller collection of maps than what was currently being published. In this atlas one of the several maps was entitled "Arabia." Since the Danish expedition, more attention was now on Arabia itself and this famous cartographer is the first I have found with Arabia as its focus, not just a part of a larger map of Asia. Nehem is of course in the French Nehem, but in this smaller map Bonne also shows Shehra, one of the towns Niebuhr placed in the principality of Nahom. Bonne did not however show boundaries of the different principalities like Haulan and Nehem as Niebuhr did on his maps. Bonne does not cite his sources, so it is not clear whether or not he used D'Anville's or Niebuhr's maps.

FOLLOWING SPREAD:

MAP 6. "Asia," D'Anville, J. Harrison (London, 1791). 32" x 30"

The next map I uncovered was a map of Asia, published in London in 1791 by John Harrison, a famous engraver, printer, and publisher. Forty years after D'Anville published his famous map of Asia, cartographers, engravers, and publishers were still referencing D'Anville's work because his maps were accurate. Thus, even over time, D'Anville's maps were still the standard by which all other work was measured.





MAP 7.

"New Modern Map of Arabia," D'Anville, with Improvements by Niebuhr, Published by Laurie & Whittle (London, 1794).

24.5" x 19.5"

Robert Laurie and James Whittle bought the publishing house and mapmaking business of Robert Sayer in 1790. They formed a new company called "Laurie & Whittle." In 1794 they published a guide for travelers in the Middle East called "The Oriental Navigator." In that publication they printed a beautiful map of Arabia entitled "New Modern Map of Arabia." This map used both of the foundation influences and created one great map of Arabia. Laurie & Whittle used D'Anville's spelling of Nahom while also locating the towns or cities within the region referenced by Niebuhr.



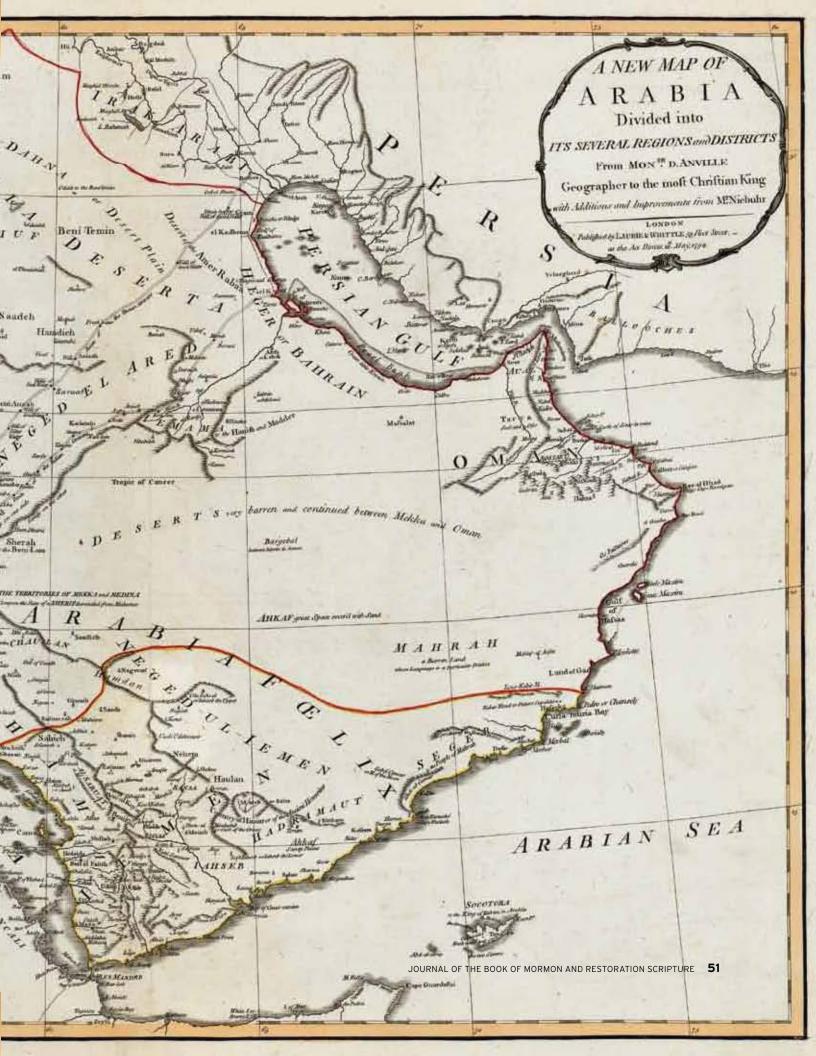
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MAP 8. "New Map of Arabia," John Cary (London, 1804). 25" x 26"

Many writers regard John Cary as one of the finest of English cartographers.¹⁴ He came on the scene at a time when accurate geographical information from distant countries was being received in greater and greater detail. His fine craftsmanship and ability as an engraver enabled him to make the fullest use of these sources and from them he produced a wide range of maps that are accurate and clear. In his New Universal Atlas he published a fine map entitled "New Map of Arabia," which included a region called *Nehem*. Cary makes no reference to Niebuhr or D'Anville for the sources of his information, so he may have used D'Anville's maps for this spelling or he may have had his own sources.

Uadi Uddevasir

MAP 9. "Arabia," W. Darton (London, 1811). 11.5" x 10"

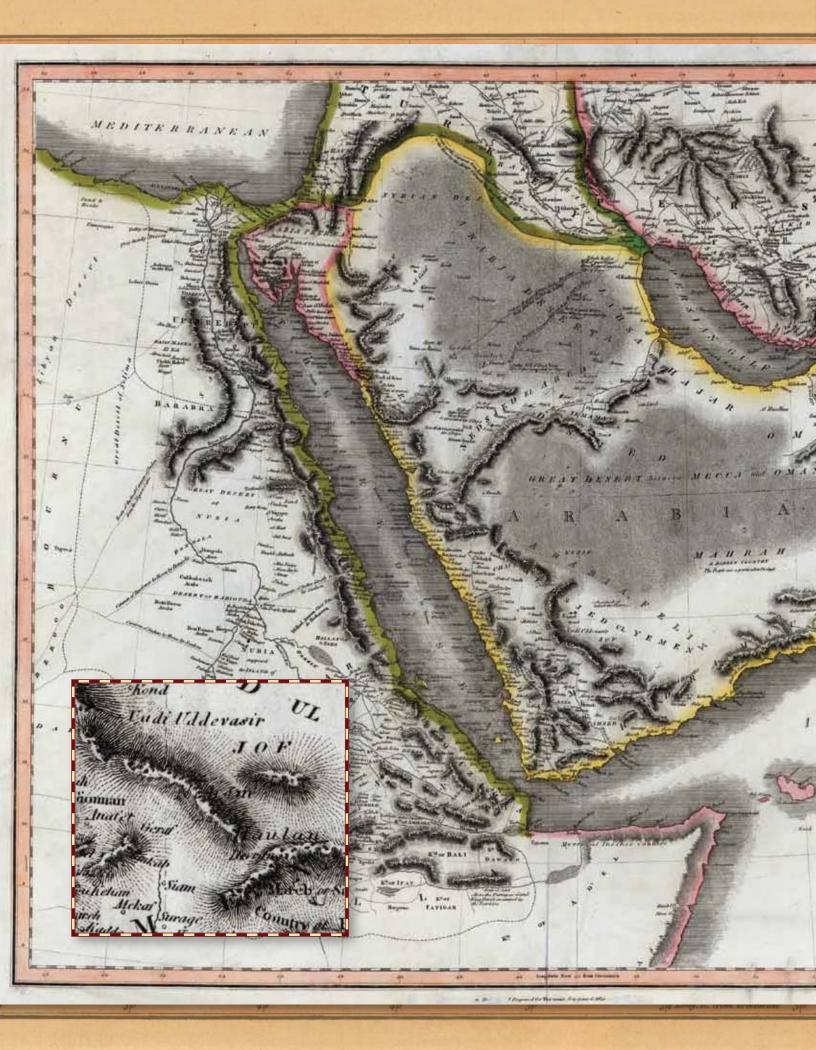
The Darton family had a long history in the mapmaking business. William Darton Sr. published maps from 1755 to 1819. His son, William Darton Jr., published his map of Arabia in 1811, following in his father's footsteps. This is only the second small-scale map of Arabia I have found that mentions Nahom, again spelled *Nehem*. Most small-scale maps have very little detail, but this engraved map was an exception. It is very beautiful and very detailed. This highly respected family in the mapmaking industry does not reference D'Anville or Niebuhr and must have had their own sources.

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MAP 10. "Arabia," John Thomson & Co. (Edinburgh, Scotland, 1814). 24.5" x 21"

John Thomson published "A New General Atlas of the World" with a map of Arabia.

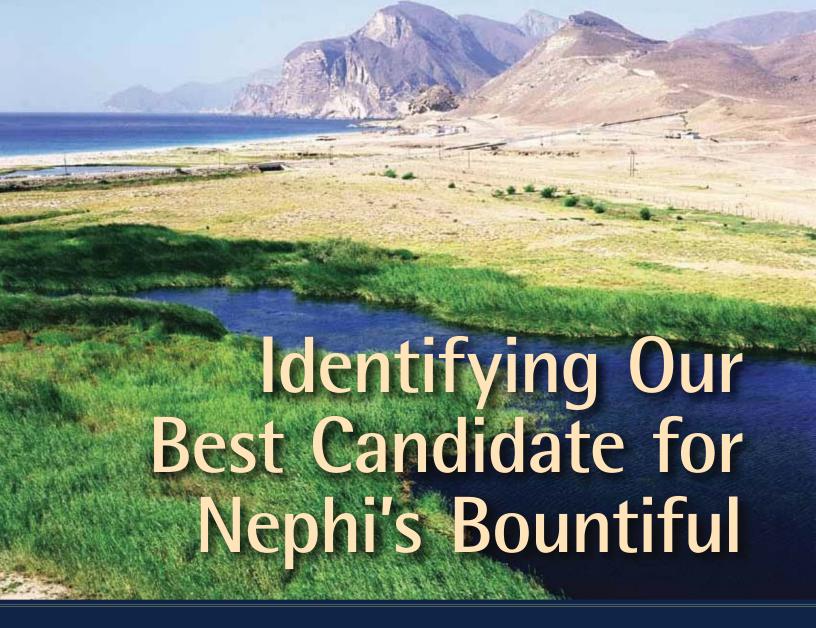
This is the latest map I have been able to find which mentions Nehem. I have not been able to find maps with *Nahom*, or any of its variant spellings, in the Arabian Peninsula after 1814, even on maps published by cartographers who had printed the district on their earlier maps of Arabia. From the information Niebuhr gives in his journals one could conclude that the Imam of Sana conquered the area, but I could find no information to verify this conjecture.

Conclusion

Of course, not all maps of Arabia between the years 1751 and 1814 recorded the location of Nahom. In fact, it is generally found only on the finest and most expensive maps created by the best cartographers and published by the finest printers. In my searches I found countless maps of Arabia with no reference to Nahom or anything like it. Thus, it is somewhat amazing that the first modern map of the Arabian Peninsula, created by D'Anville in 1751, did record the location of this often ignored or unrecognized district. Furthermore, that same map inspired the Danes to send an expedition to the region to fill in the missing information, and the only survivor was the cartographer, Carsten Niebuhr. Not only did he engrave a place called Nahom on his map but he also gave us more details of the area in his journal. These two maps and the ones that followed all give testimony to Lehi's epic journey almost two thousand years earlier.

Notes

- Carl Moreland and David Bannister, Antique Maps (Oxford: Phaidon Christie's, 1983),
- Robert Kerr, A General History of Voyages and Travels to the End of the 18th Century (London: J. Ballantyne, 1815), 13:507.
- William Clark, Letters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition with Related Documents, 1783-1854 (Champaign: University of Illinois, 1978), 28.
- Moreland and Bannister, Antique Maps, 133.
- G. R. Tibbetts, Arabia in Early Maps: A Bibliography of Maps Covering the Peninsula of Arabia Printed in Western Europe from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1751 (Naples: Falcon, 1978), 30-31.
- Thorkild Hansen, Arabia Felix: The Danish Expedition, trans. James and Kathleen McFarlane (London: Collings, 1964), 32-34.
- Hansen, Arabia Felix. The primary members of the expedition are listed on pp. 14-15, though Berggren isn't mentioned until pp. 52–53. The entire first chapter (pp. 13–57) elaborates on each of the members of the expedition and the administrators (king and other royal appointees) of the expedition.
- Carsten Niebuhr, Travels through Arabia and Other Countries in the East, performed by M. Niebuhr, trans. Robert Heron, 2nd ed. (Perth: Printed by and for R. Morison Jr.,
- Hansen, Arabia Felix, 310.
- Niebuhr, Travels through Arabia, 1:35.
- Niebuhr, Travels through Arabia, 2:50.
- 12. Niebuhr, Travels through Arabia, 2:47.
- Niebuhr, Travels through Arabia, 2:62.
- 14. Moreland and Bannister, Antique Maps, 174.



Warren P. Aston

EDITORIAL NOTE: This article is a response to Richard Wellington and George Potter, "Lehi's Trail: From the Valley of Lemuel to Nephi's Harbor," JBMS 15/2 (2006): 26–43, and W. Revell Phillips, "Mughsayl: Another Candidate for Land Bountiful," JBMS 16/2 (2007): 48–59.

Above: Reeds line the sea inlet at Khor Mughsayl, a candidate location for Nephi's "place Bountiful" in southern Oman. All photographs in this article by Warren P. Aston.

the Journal of Book of Mormon Studies was a landmark event in Old World studies of the Book of Mormon. Encouragingly, it illustrates what Daniel McKinlay's article calls the "brightening light" being shed on Lehi and Sariah's odyssey. Just thirty years ago the most optimistic of us could not

have imagined how much of that journey can now

be plausibly situated in the real world.

Researchers generally agree that Nephi's Bountiful must lie somewhere on the fertile southern coast of Oman, which stretches a short distance into Yemen. Wellington and Potter discuss the most promising specific locations identified to date: Khor (inlet) Rori and Khor Kharfot. W. Revell Phillips proposes a third possibility, Khor Mughsayl, which lies between the other two.¹

Having explored the entire east coast of Yemen and Oman, I could claim, I suppose, that at some stage I must certainly have been in the original Bountiful. However, at no time since completing that survey in 1992 have I ever claimed that any particular location was Bountiful. My interest remains what it has always been—to demonstrate that the Book of Mormon's claimed origins are completely *plausible*. I have no expectation that research will ever demonstrate more than that.

The Book of Mormon deserves to be understood using the best data available. We need to bring accuracy and clarity to our studies, especially when discussing geography, because most Church members rely on others for information of distant places. Nephi's account is far more sophisticated and informative than it first appears, and if we ignore its plain statements the waters are indeed muddied.

Journal articles have already made arguments for each viewpoint concerning the Lehite journey, and they need not be repeated. However, where factual errors exist, as I believe they do in these articles, they must be pointed out. I offer the following corrections toward that end.

Nahom

Nahom, Ishmael's burial place, also marked the major change in travel direction in the journey to Bountiful (see 1 Nephi 17:1). Although the discovery of the Bar'an altar texts means that Nahom's location is now archaeologically attested, Wellington and Potter assert that there are no less than five places in Yemen bearing the name (p. 32). Nihm, however, is a large (modern) administrative area of northwest Yemen named after its principal tribe. It includes a large chunk of desert land in the Wadi Jawf as well as a high plateau. Although Wellington and Potter point out various sites bearing the name NHM (as well as variant spellings using the consonants), it is a mistake to conclude that there are separate places called NHM. They are all simply features of one tribal area—only one south Arabian location has the name NHM.2

Wellington and Potter also use a preliminary version of the altar text that incorrectly designates the altar donor and his tribe as the "tribe Naw', from Nihm" (p. 33). The correct translation states that the donor was the son of Naw'um, who was of Nihm.³ It is also confusing to state that the first altar was found at the "Bar'an temple" and the second at the

"Temple of the Moon Goddess" (p. 33), thus implying different locations. The authors do not mention the third altar, but, in any event, all three were recovered at the same location—the Ilmaqah temple of Bar'an at Marib. Finally, the dating given for the second altar is incorrect: all the altars date between the seventh and sixth centuries BC.4

Bountiful

Access from Nahom

Wellington and Potter, as well as S. Kent Brown, posit a route to Bountiful through *Shisr*, an oasis widely trumpeted some years ago as the fabled lost city of Ubar. Archaeologist Juris Zarins, however, long ago backed away from this claim,5 and other scholars remain convinced that there was never any substantial overland trade route from Dhofar at any time.⁶ Although highly relevant, these revised and opposing scholarly viewpoints are not noted by any of the authors.

Accounting for All Possibilities

Wellington and Potter make no attempt to assess all possibilities for Bountiful. After stating that they visited nine inlets besides Khor Rori (their candidate), the authors admit that the most westerly was only six miles west of Salalah (p. 41). Driving only 20 minutes farther west would have brought them to Mughsayl and, 90 minutes farther, to Wadi Sayq and Khor Kharfot, all on paved roads. Yet they do not even consider Kharfot-demonstrably the most fertile coastal location in Arabia—a candidate for Bountiful (p. 42).7

Fertility

Bountiful was named for "its much fruit and also wild honey" (1 Nephi 17:5 and again in v. 6). And, since the Lord led the Lehites there primarily to build a ship, availability of suitable timber is surely no small factor. However, the trees we would expect to see at Khor Rori and at Mughsayl are nowhere to be found. These candidates thus lack the fertility described by Nephi, and Wellington and Potter seem to downplay the scriptural basis for the name Bountiful in several ways. First, in a previous publication, they apparently used a green filter to enhance the photo of a site.8 Next, they use a photo of an inland wadi (rather than of Khor Rori itself) to suggest trees, vegetation, and wildlife (p. 43). They also maintain that the modern plantations

of such species as banana, coconut, mango, and papaya in Salalah could account for the "much fruit" Nephi mentions. (Phillips argues likewise.)

Unfortunately, most of these fruits are modern imports and are not native to the area. In 21 years of visiting Salalah, I have seen these irrigated plantations grow in size and variety. But Nephi's text must be approached from the perspectives of an ancient inhabitant of Jerusalem concluding a long, difficult desert journey. "Much fruit" does not necessarily require the great *variety* of modern, colorful species found in the local supermarket. Moreover, anyone visiting Khor Kharfot today can indeed



see "much fruit" still growing wild: an abundance of figs, one of the most important ancient fruits in the Near East, with tamarinds, dates, and a variety of edible nuts, berries, and vegetables. I therefore believe that repeated assertions that only Salalah is fertile (Phillips, pp. 53, 55) are not accurate. Indeed, I continue to maintain that Kharfot is the most naturally fertile location on the eastern Arabian coast.

Timber for Nephi's Ship

All three authors claim that Nephi must have purchased imported timber to construct his ship. Teak timber from India was used in distant northern Oman since ancient times; however, the authors fail to mention that there is no evidence of shipbuilding in *southern* Oman at any time. ¹⁰ Phillips claims that Oman has no trees suitable for planking (p. 55), and Wellington and Potter speculate that "Nephi would have needed to haul all of these heavy imported goods [such as timber] to Khor Kharfot" (p. 42) over the mountains from Salalah. This makes no sense given the timber trees already extant at Kharfot. The authors ignore the extensive photography of tall native hardwood trees and fruits growing at Kharfot, published in my 1994 book and in my IBMS article, both of which they themselves reference. (See Wellington and Potter, pp. 113-16 nn. 3, 49, 71, 111 and Phillips, p. 97 n. 2.)

Nephi's Port

In discussing Nephi's preparation for a sea voyage, Wellington and Potter examine the "maritime resources" needed, defined by them as a harbor, materials and labor needed to build a ship, and "seamanship skills" required to sail it. The authors reveal their approach in this quote: "Even with the inspiration of the Lord, it was *simply impossible* for Nephi to have sailed to the New World without training" (p. 42, emphasis added). Thus, they have Nephi helped by local shipbuilders and taught by experienced sailors who perhaps joined the crew.

Wellington and Potter intimate that because Khor Kharfot is presently closed to the ocean by a sandbar, it cannot be Bountiful, although they acknowledge that Khor Rori is also closed. They then state that Kharfot, a place I know intimately,

Timber trees grow beside the sea inlet a short distance from the beach at Khor Kharfot.



Khor Rori's large sea inlet viewed from the ruins of the city-port of Sumhurum, which dates to the third century BC.

is "very narrow and the floor is strewn with huge boulders" (p. 42). Phillips also speaks about the Kharfot inlet as the smallest of the three sites, although he does not explain why that would be significant. Such claims make no sense to me. Kharfot's inlet is not strewn with huge boulders; its width of a hundred or so feet is surely adequate to maneuver a ship, and its depth of about 30 feet is plenty for even a deep draft. Additionally, most of these assumptions fail if a raft-style craft were built rather than a conventional ship, a point that Phillips recognizes (p. 56). Wellington and Potter summarize their candidate's strength as being "the only established large port in Dhofar in Nephi's time." (p. 43). They do not, however, discuss the fact that Khor Rori is believed not to have been a port in Nephi's day, which would invalidate their claims.11

Readers must decide if these assertions find any echoes in Nephi's straightforward account telling us that his brothers worked with him, in a place almost certainly uninhabited, 12 that he was instructed of the *Lord* often, that he neither worked the timbers nor built his vessel "after the manner of men," and that he was directionally and spiritually led by the Liahona (1 Nephi 18:2; see also 1 Nephi 17:7, 8; 18:1-4, 12, 21-22).¹³

Nephi's Mount and Coastal Access

Although Khor Rori lacks a mount where Nephi could have prayed "oft" (1 Nephi 18:3), Wellington and Potter claim that the "slopes of the highest peak in southern Oman are only two miles to the north" (p. 37). This is misleading because Mount Samhan is actually more than 25 miles distant and is not even



Khor Kharfot is overlooked by a peak with a small plateau at its base. Opposite: The original sea inlet at Khor Kharfot is defined by the greenery on the wadi floor extending inland.

visible from the Khor Rori area, ¹⁴ requiring Nephi to walk 50-plus miles round-trip to pray often ("*in* the mountain" incidentally, not merely on a distant slope—see 1 Nephi 17: 7; 18:3).

In rejecting Kharfot as the possible site of Bountiful, Phillips claims that it "has truly difficult access from the interior," with "huge boulders and vegetation that block the canyon floor" (p. 55) of Wadi Sayq ("River Valley"), which leads from the interior desert. While it is true that Latter-day Saint tour groups wishing to see all Bountiful possibilities reach Kharfot by sea simply because it is easier than going by land, walking in to Kharfot is nevertheless quite possible. I have done so several times. Even after the 2600-plus monsoonal floods that have occurred since Lehi's time, choke-points of accumulated boulders and abundant vegetation do not deter exploration by serious researchers any more than they would have turned away a prophet-led group long ago.

I believe the most accurate comparison of the three inlets in Nephi's day is as follows:

- Khor Rori was well populated at the beginning of the incense trade, thus offering a source of local labor, but likely lacking fruit and certainly lacking a nearby mountain. Shipbuilding timber would have to have been imported from elsewhere.
- Khor Mughsayl likely had at least a small population and may have been involved in the trade routes. It has small, nearby hills, but lacks both fruit and timber, which would have to have been imported from elsewhere.
- *Khor Kharfot* was removed from the trade route and thus almost certainly *un*populated. Timber trees and wild fruit grow near the sea, and a distinct mountain overlooks the bay. It remains the most fertile coastal location in Arabia.

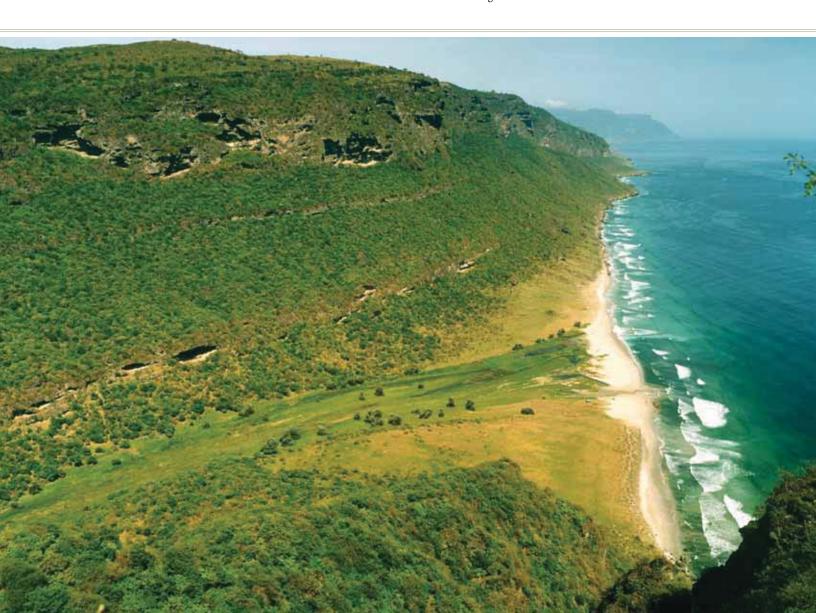
Conclusion

No reader should feel that errors or differences in opinion in any way diminish the significance of what has been found in Arabia; such differences are to be expected in any scholarly effort. One can even see that *several* locations (all within a few miles of each other) being proposed as Bountiful actually strengthens the Book of Mormon's claims. None of these places was known in Joseph Smith's 1829 environment; indeed, we are only now investigating them with the tools of science.

I leave the final word with the Prophet Joseph Smith. Writing in 1844 of evidences for the work restored through him, he stated that their truth would be made manifest by "proving contraries." ¹⁵ As we sift sometimes contrary but always *factual* data into the future, indications of the Book of Mormon's divine origin will continue to unfold. ■

Notes

- Aware of Phillips' forthcoming article, I made another extended examination of Mughsayl for two days in February 2008 to ensure that I had not overlooked anything with respect to its qualities as a candidate for Bountiful. I found nothing new.
- 2. At least one of the four "new" locations listed is merely a colloquialism: Jabal Naham ("Mt. Naham") is actually Mt. Harim, located in the Nihm tribal area next to Mele, the ancient capital of Nihm. Because the mountain lies within the NHM area, local people can quite easily refer to it as Mt. NHM, and that name can find its way onto a map. Arabian mapping in some areas, including Yemen, is notoriously inconsistent and often hard to follow. The bottom line, however, is that the name NHM is found only once in southern Arabia, even though a mountain, a valley, and a hill within the area also have NHM in their name, formal or otherwise. The site of Provo offers a useful analogy: even though people speak of Provo Canyon, the Provo River, Provo city, and the Provo cemetery, for example, there is still only one place called Provo, not several.
- Warren P. Aston, "Newly Found Altars from Nahom," JBMS 10/2 (2001): 59.
- 4. Institut du monde arabe, Yémen au pays de la reine de Saba' (Paris: Flammarion, 1997), 144. The editor of the volume, Christian Robin, is a professional archaeologist who has dated the temple site and altars to between the seventh and sixth centuries Bc. I therefore believe that Yusuf Abdullah, the source cited by Wellington and Potter (p. 114 n. 41), is either mistaken or misquoted—or perhaps simply generalizing—in mentioning the seventh or eighth centuries Bc.



- 5. Zarins eventually concluded that Shisr does not represent Ubar. See his "Atlantis of the Sands" in Archaeology 50/3 (1997): 51–53. In his more recent "Environmental Disruption and Human Response," in Environmental Disaster and the Archaeology of Human Response, Anthropological Papers, ed. Garth Bawden and Richard M. Reycraft (Albuquerque: Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, University of New Mexico, 2000), 7:35–49, Zarins suggests that modern Habarut may be Ubar.
 - H. Stewart Edgell contends that Ubar is essentially mythical and makes arguments against any significant historical role for Shisr beyond that of a small caravansary. See "The Myth of the 'Lost City of the Arabian Sands" in *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* (2004), 34:105–20.
- 6. For carefully reasoned examinations of the issues involved, see Nigel Groom's "Oman and the Emirates in Ptolemy's Map," in Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy 5 (1994): 198–214, and "'The Road to Ubar'—Pros and Cons," in Bulletin of the Society for Arabian Studies 5 (2000): 42–43. Groom concludes that the Shisr site provides no new evidence of overland trade routes from Dhofar
- 7. As an aside, this is somewhat ironic because I examined Khor Rori on my first visit to Oman in 1987 and was unable to reconcile it with Nephi's description. Seeing the site triggered my ground survey of the entire eastern Arabian coast made from 1988 to 1992. Khor Kharfot is the last remnant of deciduous tropical woodland remaining in Oman. It's unique fertility drew the attention of botanists years before any Latter-day Saint knew of the site. See Anthony Miller and Miranda Morris, "The Scientific Results of the Oman Flora and Fauna Survey—1977 (Dhofar)" in Journal of Oman Studies (Muscat: Ministry of National Heritage & Culture, 1980): Special Report 2, which includes photography of Kharfot.

- 8. The rocks look green in some pictures. See especially the picture of Khor Rori lagoon in Potter and Wellington, *Lehi in the Wilderness* (Springville, UT: Cedar Fort, 2003), 131.
- 9. See Shahina Ghazanfar, A Vernacular Index of the Plants of Oman (Muscat, Oman: Al Roya, 2001), which documents native flora. Dr. Ghazanfar is an Omani national currently serving as a curator at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, England.
- See Alessandra Avanzini, ed., A Port in Arabia between Rome and the Indian Ocean (3rd C. BC - 5th C. AD): Khor Rori Report 2 (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2008). This title reflects the archaeological team's firm dating—and the team has worked at Khor Rori since 1997.
- 11. See Avanzini, Khor Rori Report 2. Additionally, Juris Zarins notes in his seminal The Land of Incense: Archaeological Work in the Governorate of Dhofar, Sultanate of Oman, 1990–1995 (Muscat, Oman: Sultan Qaboos University, 2001), 134, that Dhofar graffiti depicting ships may simply record observations of passing ships. He also notes that, in any case, the graffiti likely dates no earlier than 300 BC.
- 12. I briefly outline my position in my article "Across Arabia with Lehi and Sariah: 'Truth Shall Spring out of the Earth,'" *JBMS* 15/2 (2006): 8–25.
- 13. Commentators have often neglected the significance of the sacred "writing" appearing on the Liahona from time to time (see 1 Nephi 16:27–29), something that was separate from the directions indicated by the pointers.
- 14. Mt. Samhan is situated at 17° 24' N and 54° 53' E and Khor Rori at 17° 2' N and 54° 27' E, separated by a distance of more than 25 miles in a straight line. Of course, the distance would be considerably farther when walking and climbing.
- 15. History of the Church, 6:428.

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In many cultures of the ancient Near East, the creation narrative was used as a foundation to their own specific cultural narratives. In brief, the creation narrative describes the process by which God, or the Gods, took preexisting element, or chaos, and organized it into a cosmos, or state of order and organization.



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