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## Editor's Notebook

Paul Y. Hoskisson

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**Title** Editor's Notebook

**Author(s)** Paul Y. Hoskisson

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**Abstract** Summary of current issue and a letter to the editor.

# Editor's Notebook

With this issue we continue our Worthy of Another Look series. As with the last issue, we wanted to honor the 100th anniversary of Hugh Nibley's birthday with another seminal article from him, one that exemplifies his erudition, his attention to detail, his perspicacity, and his sensitivity to sacred ordinances. Because it is a "another look," you will have to turn to the back of this issue to find this somewhat long but fascinating foray into gospel aspects which were once hotly debated and quite controversial but which are now largely forgotten, except among Latter-day Saints. When you take in Another Look, notice the close tie-ins with David Paulsen's article on post-apostolic work for the dead.

Speaking of work for the dead, we continue the series by BYU Professor David Paulsen and company. In the last issue of the *Journal*, his article, entitled "The Harrowing of Hell," discussed early Christian accounts of Christ's postmortem mission to save the dead.<sup>1</sup> In this issue he continues this theme of salvation for those who have passed on without receiving the opportunity to accept Christ here in mortality, particularly baptism for the dead. The evidence is admittedly sparse, often tangential, and is at its most interesting when viewed through the lenses of the Restoration. Latter-day Saints have always realized that Restoration doctrine does not spring out of historical sources, but rather through the opening of the heavens in these latter days. Nevertheless, we seem to take particular delight in finding historical snippets of Restoration doctrine scattered near and far in historical sources. We hope you enjoy this hunt for treasure.

From time to time I find it profitable to reexamine many of the ideas and assumed bits of knowledge that have accumulated, like trusted old artifacts, in places of honor above the fireplace, as a centerpiece on the cadenza, or tucked away with dusty tomes on a library shelf of my mind. Occasionally, newer ideas have caused me to clean out a few of these older, trusted perceptions. We offer you just such a challenge in the piece by Clifford Jones.

His discussion of a great and marvelous Book of Mormon event may cause you to rethink some old ideas. Then again, maybe it won't.

Finally, the first shall be last, at least as I write about them, in this editor's notebook. The refined and well-spoken lecture given by Marilyn Arnold, retired BYU English teacher, as part of the lecture series to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Hugh Nibley's birth, appears here for the first time in print. I must confess, having been in attendance at her presentation, that her written words have even more depth and ken than I was able to take in from the spoken words. She has given us a learned discourse on the joys and thrills of reading Nibley that is worthy of her subject.

Also in this issue, we present what I hope will be a continuing feature: a letter to the editor. If you find something to write about after reading this or any issue, please pass it on to us at [jbms@byu.edu](mailto:jbms@byu.edu).

## Notes

1. David L. Paulsen, Roger D. Cook, and Kendel J. Christensen, "The Harrowing of Hell: Salvation for the Dead in Early Christianity," *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture* 19/1 (2010): 56–77.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Friends:

I received and greatly enjoyed the *Journal of the Book of Mormon and Other Restoration Scripture* 19/1 (2010) last week. I can't remember any number which was more interesting. Of course I'm 82 and don't have the best memory ever.

Thank you for the strength that the Maxwell Institute is adding to Zion. I used to know Sidney Sperry and his family well, and my first year at BYU coincided with the arrival of Hugh Nibley. I filled every empty hour in my class schedule by sitting in on his classes and after a while came to enjoy a personal acquaintance with him and his wife.

I am, respectfully, your servant,

William L. Knecht