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Abstract While Jacob records 15,000 words in the Book of Mormon, he is often underappreciated, perhaps living in the shadow of his older brother Nephi. This study illustrates how Nephi, King Benjamin, and Moroni used Jacob's words and expanded the influence of his literary legacy.

JACOB'S TEXTUAL LEGACY

JOHN HILTON III

Today, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints know what texts are considered authoritative—namely, the standard works. As members, we recognize a formal process for canonization; for example, at the Saturday afternoon session of general conference in April 1976, President N. Eldon Tanner announced that the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve had approved two revelations for inclusion in the Pearl of Great Price and called for a sustaining vote.¹ This concept of canonization in the restored church has echoes from earlier Christian practices and councils.²

But what of earlier times? How did people in Old Testament and Book of Mormon times know which texts were authoritative? We may not know how they decided what was normative and what was not, but we can perhaps determine if a text was treated as authoritative. This paper will explore the likelihood that Jacob's words, both in 2 Nephi 9 as well as in the book that bears his name, were employed by other prophets as an authoritative source. Specifically, I will identify phrases that are unique to Jacob (or nearly so)³ and discuss how Nephi, King Benjamin, and Moroni utilized these words in their own unique ways. The consistent use of Jacob's teachings in the Book of Mormon demonstrates that he was a powerful literary figure. His words influenced not only future generations of modern readers, but also prophets⁴ and others⁵ of his own time.

Three Cases of Textual Echoes from Jacob

Jacob and Nephi

While we will see that prophets who lived centuries after Jacob often drew on his words, it appears that he also influenced Nephi's teachings. It may seem strange to think of Nephi's public sermons as having been influenced by his younger brother, yet the tight relationships between 2 Nephi 9 (Jacob's sermon)⁶ and 2 Nephi 28 (part of a later sermon given by Nephi) lead one to believe that this is in fact the case (see table 1).

Jacob said, "Because they are rich they despise the poor, and *they persecute the meek*, and their hearts are upon their treasures" (2 Nephi 9:30). In 2 Nephi 28:13, Nephi states that the proud "rob the poor because of their fine sanctuaries" and "fine clothing" and that "*they persecute the meek*" because of their pride. In this instance, we find both conceptual and textual echoes from Jacob's earlier words. In both instances, the proud (wealthy) rob (or despise) the poor and *persecute the meek* because of their own pride (wealth). Nephi further states that "*the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up* in the pride of their hearts, and all those who preach false doctrines, and *all those who commit whoredoms*, and pervert the right way of the Lord, *wo, wo, wo* be unto them, saith the Lord God Almighty, *for they shall be thrust down to hell!*" (2 Nephi 28:15).⁷ Each italicized

The prophet Jacob at the top is quoted in succession (counterclockwise) by Nephi, King Benjamin, and Moroni. "That They May Learn" (Jacob 4:3). © Annie Henrie 2013. Used by permission.

FROM THE EDITOR:

The Church today has a clear mechanism for determining what is accepted by the members as scripture. The Book of Mormon, however, never defines how earlier Nephite written records became normative for later generations. John Hilton, through careful analysis, has been able to trace the influence of an early Nephite writer, Jacob (Nephi's brother), through a succession of later prophets and thus document the authoritative character of Jacob's writings.

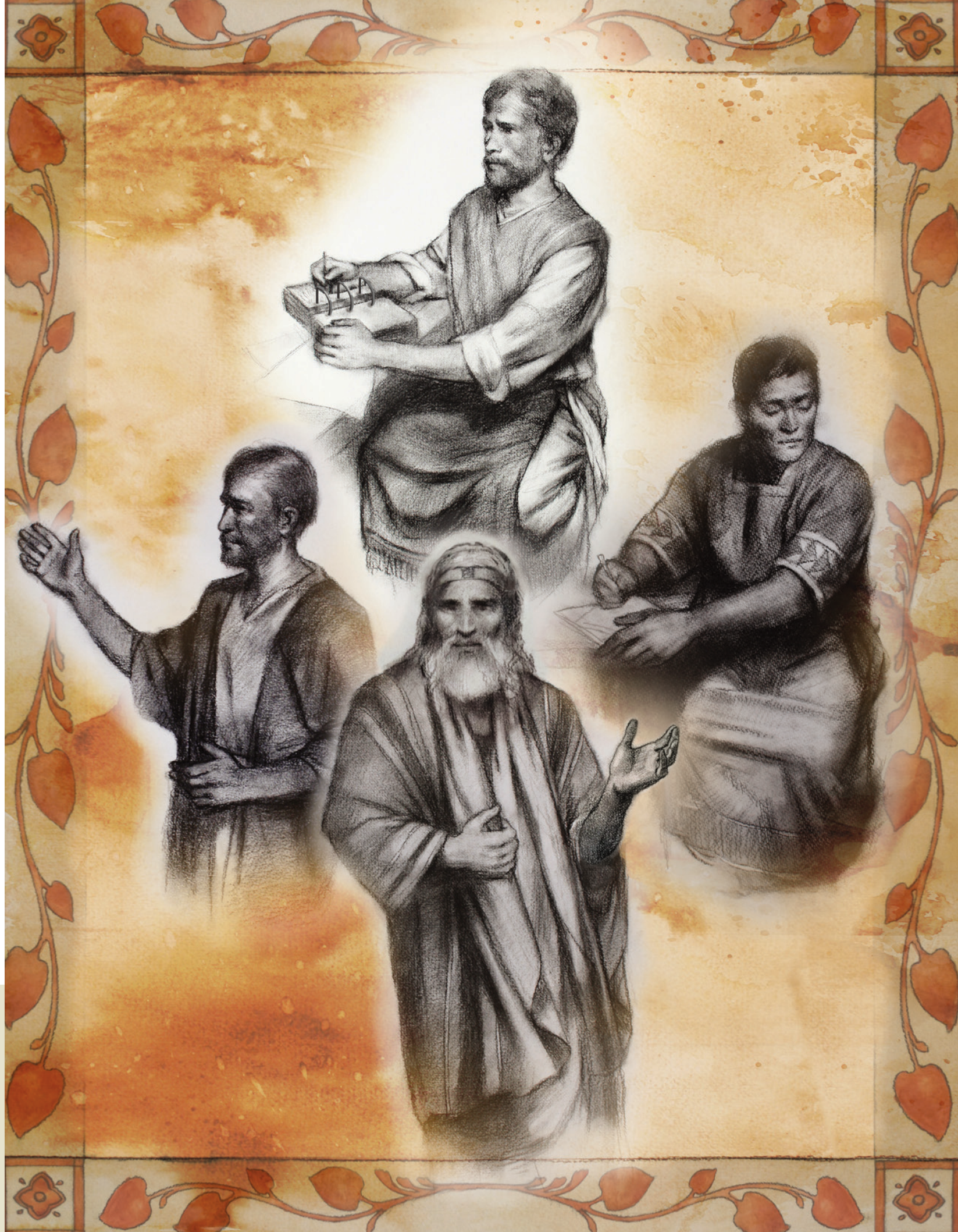


Table 1. Nephi’s allusions in 2 Nephi 28 to Jacob’s words in 2 Nephi 9

Allusion	Jacob’s Words	Nephi’s Words	Text	Times Exact Phrase Is Used Elsewhere in Scripture
1	2 Nephi 9:30	2 Nephi 28:13	<i>they persecute the meek</i>	0 (but JST Luke 16:21 is similar)
2	2 Nephi 9:42	2 Nephi 28:15	<i>the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up</i>	0
3	2 Nephi 9:36	2 Nephi 28:15	<i>who commit whoredoms</i>	0
4	2 Nephi 9:19, 26	2 Nephi 28:23	<i>death, and hell; and the devil</i>	0
5	2 Nephi 9:19, 26	2 Nephi 28:23	<i>lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment</i>	0
6	2 Nephi 9:38	2 Nephi 28:28	<i>and in fine, wo unto all those who . . .</i>	0

phrase or word in the preceding verse repeats Jacob’s words in 2 Nephi 9:36 or 42. Jacob taught, “*Wo unto them who commit whoredoms, for they shall be thrust down to hell*” (v. 36), and Nephi expands this fate to “*the wise, and the learned, and the rich, that are puffed up*” (2 Nephi 28:15; compare 9:42). These words that appear first in Jacob’s sermon and later in Nephi’s occur nowhere else in scripture, even though the concept they describe is fairly universal.

Jacob stated that “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, which is endless torment*” (2 Nephi 9:26; compare 9:19). In 2 Nephi 28:23, Nephi again utilizes this phraseology seemingly borrowed from Jacob to warn both those who are pacified and those who are angry with the truth that “they are grasped with . . . *death, and hell; and the devil,*⁸ and all that have been seized therewith must stand before the throne of God, and be judged according to their works, from whence they must go into the place prepared for them, even a *lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment.*” While Jacob employs these phrases to illustrate the majesty of the Savior’s atonement, Nephi applies them differently—to warn those who are pacified and are “at ease in Zion . . . and are angry because of the truth of God” (vv. 24, 28).

In 2 Nephi 9:27–38, Jacob pronounces ten woes, or warnings, on the rich. John W. Welch sees this as significant, observing that Jacob’s “‘ten woes’ function as the equivalent of a contemporaneous Nephite set of ten commandments.”⁹ There are



Nephi, in 2 Nephi 28, was apparently alluding to his brother Jacob’s words in 2 Nephi 9. © Annie Henrie 2013. Used by permission.

several similarities between Jacob's woes and a series put forth by Nephi in 2 Nephi 28, including specific statements about "the rich" and those "who commit whoredoms" (compare 28:15; 9:30, 36).

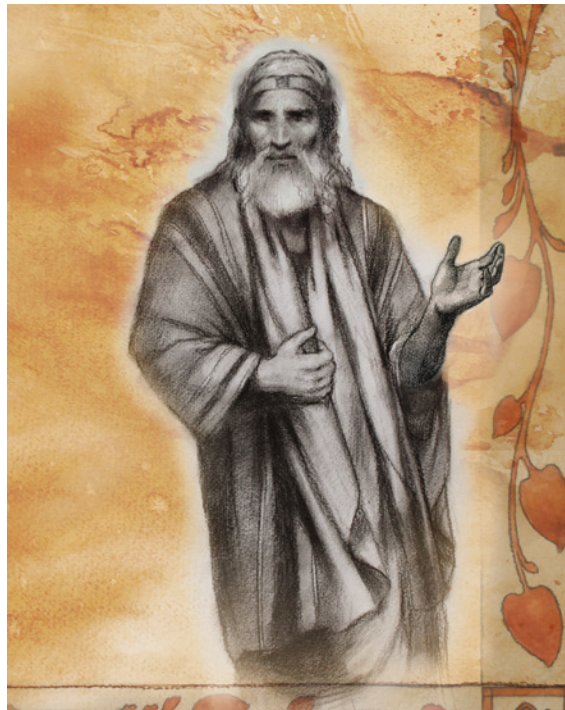
Jacob capped his list of woes by stating, "*And, in fine, wo unto all those who die in their sins; for they shall return to God, and behold his face, and remain in their sins*" (2 Nephi 9:38). Nephi's final allusion to Jacob in 2 Nephi 28 may refer back to this tenth wo. Nephi states, "*And in fine, wo unto all those who tremble, and are angry because of the truth of God!*" (2 Nephi 28:28). While the phrase *in fine* appears throughout the Book of Mormon, it is only combined with the word *wo* in 2 Nephi 9 and 28. Given the textual and conceptual similarities between Nephi's woes and Jacob's, it is possible that Nephi utilized the phrase *and in fine, wo unto all those* as a merism in order to more comprehensively refer back to the woes stated previously by Jacob.¹⁰

Jacob's sermon in 2 Nephi 9 is a stern one; it contains more references to hell than any other chapter in all of scripture.¹¹ Thus it seems natural that when Nephi needed to sternly rebuke prideful people he would turn to this text. Rebuking others is never easy; perhaps by utilizing words similar to those of Jacob, Nephi was in a sense communicating to the people that his message was not his alone, but that of other prophets.

A key reason people quote from others is to bolster their authority for a particular position. But why would Nephi, the senior leader of the Nephites, quote from his younger brother? Nephi is already in a strong position and does not need Jacob to reinforce his words. In this instance, I believe Nephi used Jacob's words in order to prepare the people for the eventual transfer of ecclesiastical authority to Jacob. Just as an outgoing leader might quote from or praise an incoming leader in order to transfer some of that leader's power to the new leader, so too could Nephi have quoted from Jacob. By referring to Jacob's words, Nephi demonstrates the high regard he has for Jacob's teachings.

Jacob's Words and King Benjamin's Address

The likelihood that King Benjamin would have been interested in Jacob's words is easy to establish.¹² Amaleki, the last writer on the small plates (which contained Jacob's words) delivered the small plates to King Benjamin (see Omni 1:25). To receive



In his sermon, King Benjamin used Jacob's words and phrases from 2 Nephi 9. © Annie Henrie 2013. Used by permission.

new records is certainly not a regular occurrence, and it seems probable that King Benjamin would have carefully studied them. But even if King Benjamin did not peruse the small plates, Jacob's words could have been recorded on the large plates.

Textual evidence suggests that King Benjamin's people could have been familiar with Jacob's words. King Benjamin tells his people, "ye . . . have been taught concerning the records which contain the prophecies which have been spoken by the holy prophets, even down to the time our father, Lehi, left Jerusalem; And also, *all* that has been spoken by our fathers until now" (Mosiah 2:34-35). But whether King Benjamin's people were familiar with Jacob or not, King Benjamin demonstrated that he was conversant with these words—at least ten times he echoes Jacob's words from 2 Nephi 9. These allusions are outlined in table 2; it is significant to note that none of the phrases are biblical, and all of the additional references within the Book of Mormon are post-Jacob and also could be references to Jacob's (or King Benjamin's) words.¹³

Jacob had described a time when "this flesh must have laid down to rot and to crumble to *its mother earth*" (2 Nephi 9:7). While Jacob speaks of

mortality generally, King Benjamin uses Jacob's language to describe his own particular impending death. He states, "I am also of the dust. And ye behold that I am old, and am about to yield up this mortal frame to *its mother earth*" (Mosiah 2:26). The phrase *mother earth*¹⁴ appears only three times in all of scripture (see also Mormon 6:15). But King Benjamin does not simply lift the idea of a universal death with Jacob's unique phrase. Rather, he employs Jacob's phrase to emphasize that he, although a king, faces the same issues of mortality as everyone else.

During Jacob's important discourse on pride, he told them he had come to teach them "*that I might rid my garments of your sins*" (Jacob 2:2). This is not a biblical phrase, but appears for the first time in Jacob's speech. King Benjamin employs Jacob's words to explain that he has discharged his responsibility

to teach his people and therefore cannot be held accountable for their sins. King Benjamin states, "I have caused that ye should assemble yourselves together *that I might rid my garments of your blood*" (Mosiah 2:28). While Jacob uses the word *sins* in Jacob 2:2, on another occasion he spoke of becoming rid of the blood of the people.¹⁵ It may be that Nephites saw blood and sin as related ideas; clearly these two words are connected in an Old Testament context (see, for example, Exodus 30:10 and Leviticus 4:25, 34). In any event, it is clear that both King Benjamin and Jacob wished to ensure they had clearly taught their people so they would not be held responsible for the people's sins.

In his tenth wo, Jacob declared, "And, in fine, wo unto all those who *die in their sins*; for they shall return to God, and behold his face, and *remain in*

Table 2. King Benjamin's allusions to Jacob's words in 2 Nephi 9

Allusion	Jacob's Words	King Benjamin's Words	Text	Times Exact Phrase Is Used Elsewhere in Scripture
1	2 Nephi 9:7	Mosiah 2:26	<i>its mother earth</i>	0 (but Mormon 6:15 is very close)
2	Jacob 2:2; cf. 2 Nephi 9:44	Mosiah 2:28	<i>rid . . . garments</i>	2 (Mormon 9:35; D&C 61:34)
3	2 Nephi 9:38	Mosiah 2:33	<i>wo . . . remaineth and dieth in . . . sins</i>	0
4	2 Nephi 9:16	Mosiah 2:38	<i>whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever</i>	1 (Alma 12:17)
5	2 Nephi 9:16	Mosiah 2:27	<i>and their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone</i>	0 (but Almas 12:17 is very similar)
6	2 Nephi 9:24	Mosiah 2:41	<i>to the end . . . the Lord God hath spoken it</i>	0
7	2 Nephi 9:39	Mosiah 3:19	<i>yeilds to the enticings</i>	0
8	2 Nephi 9:40	Mosiah 4:11	<i>remember . . . the greatness of God</i>	0
9	2 Nephi 9:42	Mosiah 4:11	<i>in the depths of humility</i>	2 (Mosiah 21:14; Alma 62:41)
10	2 Nephi 9:30	Mosiah 4:23	<i>who are rich as . . . to the things of this world.</i>	0

their sins” (2 Nephi 9:38). No other scriptural passages repeat these phrases exactly this way. But King Benjamin appears to refer to this *wo*, saying, “There is a *wo* pronounced upon him who listeth to obey that spirit; for if he listeth to obey him, and *remaineth and dieth in his sins* the same drinketh damnation to his own soul” (Mosiah 2:33). Note that King Benjamin refers to a *wo* that had been previously issued. Jacob speaks about people remaining and dying in their sins, while King Benjamin reverses the order of these two words. Why would King Benjamin reverse the order? One possibility is that it is a manifestation of Seidel’s law, in which later authors, when quoting from previous ones, reverse the order of some or all of the previous material to indicate their dependence on the previous author.¹⁶

Jacob taught, speaking of the wicked, that “*their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever and has no end*” (2 Nephi 9:16).¹⁷ He also wrote regarding unrepentant sinners, “according to the power of justice, for justice cannot be denied, ye must go away into that *lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever, which lake of fire and brimstone is endless torment*” (Jacob 6:10). King Benjamin likewise speaks of specific consequences for those who die in their sins. He states that they will receive pain “like an *unquenchable fire, whose flame ascendeth up forever and ever*” (Mosiah 2:38). In speaking of the wicked, King Benjamin, quoting the Lord, also says that they will have a state of “*endless torment,*” and that “*their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone, whose flames are unquenchable, and whose smoke ascendeth up forever and ever*” (Mosiah 3:25, 27). Jacob uses the concept of God’s justice to explain why the wicked will receive endless torment.¹⁸ Unlike other instances in which King Benjamin uses Jacob’s phrases in differing contexts, in this case he employs them exactly as Jacob does (see Mosiah 3:26). This demonstrates that King Benjamin was not simply trying to be creative in his use of Jacob’s material. Rather, he was willing to accept the content, wording, and intent of Jacob’s words. We, as readers, are thereby treated to an interesting textual and doctrinal cohesion, even though these discourses are separated by centuries.

In two instances King Benjamin utilizes Jacob’s own words to contrast points Jacob had made. Jacob said, “*If they will not repent and . . . endure to the end,*

they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has spoken it” (2 Nephi 9:24). King Benjamin used similar words, although he represents the opposite end of the spectrum, saying, “Consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God. . . . *If they hold out faithful to the*

Yielding to the devil’s enticings leads to death. Both Jacob and Benjamin speak of yielding to enticings. . . . Thus everyone is enticed; yielding to the enticings of the Spirit leads to becoming a saint.

end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness. O remember, remember that these things are true; *for the Lord God hath spoken it*” (Mosiah 2:41). By using antonyms, King Benjamin may have been juxtaposing the happiness that awaits the righteous with the damnation Jacob spoke of that awaits those who do not repent. Where King Benjamin speaks of the righteous, Jacob speaks of those who will “not repent.” King Benjamin refers to those who “hold out faithful to the end,” while Jacob talks about those who will “not . . . endure to the end.” King Benjamin speaks of “a state of never-ending happiness” in contrast to Jacob’s reference to the “damned.”

A second example of what appears to be textual contrasting involves two key words: *yield* and *entice*. While *yield* and its variants occur ninety-nine times in the scriptures and *entice* twenty-three times, these two words only appear together in 2 Nephi 9:39 and Mosiah 3:19. Jacob teaches, “Remember . . . the awfulness of *yielding to the enticings of that cunning one*” (2 Nephi 9:39). In contrast, King Benjamin¹⁹ explains, “For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he *yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit*, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord” (Mosiah 3:19). By *yielding to the enticings of the Holy Spirit*, one can overcome the natural man.

Jacob taught that yielding to the devil’s enticings leads to death. Both Jacob and Benjamin speak of *yielding to enticings*. Lehi had previously taught that “man could not act for himself save it should be that he was *enticed* by the one or the other” (2 Nephi 2:16).

Thus everyone is *enticed*; yielding to the enticings of the Spirit leads to becoming a saint. Yielding to the enticings of Satan leads to death. Jacob refers to the “awfulness” of yielding to the devil, while Benjamin employs words and phrases such as *patient* and *full of love* in connection with yielding to the Spirit.

Benjamin extends Jacob’s statement in one important sense. Jacob says that we receive death if we yield to the devil. Benjamin teaches that we will forever be enemies to God unless we yield to the enticings of the Spirit. So it is not enough to avoid the enticings of the devil; we must proactively yield to the enticings of the Spirit. Thus Benjamin turns Jacob’s statement about the awful consequences of *yielding to the enticings* of the devil into a positive statement about *yielding to the enticings* of the Spirit. The differences in audience may drive the different ways in which Jacob and King Benjamin teach these concepts. Jacob speaks to a people who appear to be seriously struggling with sin (see 2 Nephi 9:46–48). He is warning a group of people who are making bad choices. In contrast, King Benjamin is addressing individuals prepared to take upon them the name of Christ (see Mosiah 5:7). Thus King Benjamin focuses on being preventive, affirming that if his people continue to yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, they will become like Christ.

Benjamin echoes not only the sterner portions of Jacob’s message but also those pertaining to the atonement’s reach to those who know not the law.

Jacob told his people to “*remember the greatness of the Holy One of Israel*” and states that those who “*come down in the depths of humility*” will receive answers to their prayers (2 Nephi 9:40, 42). As King Benjamin explains to his people how they can avoid the lake of fire and retain a remission of their sins, he exhorts them to “*remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and . . . humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily*” (Mosiah 4:11).²⁰ In these cases, echoing Jacob could provide a familiar feel to the words King Benjamin is speaking.

King Benjamin later refers to another of Jacob’s woes. Jacob had stated, “*Wo unto the rich, who are rich as to the things of the world*” (2 Nephi 9:30). Many

prophets have had to struggle against the effects of wealth among the people. Yet King Benjamin not only describes the same problem, but he also uses words that tightly link to Jacob’s: “*Wo be unto that man, for his substance shall perish with him; and now, I say these things unto those who are rich as pertaining to the things of this world*” (Mosiah 4:23). King Benjamin follows Jacob’s clarification about riches in terms of *worldly* as opposed to *heavenly* riches.

In addition to the textual allusions noted above, additional echoes, while lacking specific textual similarities, demonstrate important doctrinal parallels between 2 Nephi 9 and Mosiah 2–5. Jacob was the first Book of Mormon prophet to explicitly teach that “the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them” (2 Nephi 9:26). This doctrine is not stated before or after in the Book of Mormon until King Benjamin states that Christ’s “blood atoneth for the sins of those . . . who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them” (Mosiah 3:11).²¹ Thus Benjamin echoes not only the sterner portions of Jacob’s message but also those pertaining to the atonement’s reach to those who know not the law.

The correlation between the discourses of Jacob and King Benjamin on this theologically important point—redemption for those who had not received the law—is strengthened when we see that in these two cases, after teaching this principle, both Jacob and Benjamin provide a warning for those who know better. Jacob asserts, “Wo unto him that has the law given, yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us, and that transgresseth them, and that wasteth the days of his probation, for awful is his state!” (2 Nephi 9:27). Similarly, King Benjamin says, “But wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God! For salvation cometh to none such except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Mosiah 3:12).

From the foregoing, it is evident that King Benjamin employed Jacob’s teachings in crafting his speech. In a modern setting regarding academic studies, Nigel Gilbert argued that researchers utilize the words and findings of others in order to “persuade readers of the validity and significance of [their] arguments.”²² It seems probable that a similar function is at work with King Benjamin. The multiple similarities between King Benjamin’s words and Jacob’s

indicate that Jacob was viewed by King Benjamin and his people as an authoritative source.²³

Jacob and Moroni²

Moroni, the final author of the Book of Mormon, frequently employs phrases similar, and in some cases identical, to ones stated by Jacob; at least nine phrases are exclusively used (or nearly so) by Jacob and Moroni. These allusions are summarized in table 3.

Jacob taught, “Ye will seek [riches] for the intent to do good—to *clothe the naked*, and to *feed the hungry*, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to *the sick and the afflicted*” (Jacob 2:19). Moroni uses Jacob’s words to chastise future readers, asking, “Why do ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer *the hungry*, and the needy, and *the naked, and the sick and the afflicted* to pass by you, and notice them not?” (Mormon 8:39). Perhaps Moroni intentionally provides modern-day readers with an allusion to Jacob’s words to illustrate that latter-

day readers are similar to former-day Nephites. Perhaps Moroni wanted us to see that Jacob’s counsel regarding riches still applies.

Jacob also discussed the dread that would come to those who had to stand before God in their sins. He said, “O my brethren, I fear that unless ye shall repent of your sins that their skins will be *whiter* than yours, *when ye shall be brought* with them *before* the throne of *God*” (Jacob 3:8).²⁴ Moroni similarly stated, “*When ye shall be brought* to see your nakedness *before God* . . . it will kindle a flame of unquenchable fire upon you. O then . . . cry mightily unto the Father in the name of Jesus, that perhaps ye may be found spotless, pure, fair, and *white*” (Mormon 9:5-6). Moroni’s reversal of *being brought* and *whiteness* may be a manifestation of Seidel’s law, which, as described earlier, can signal a quotation. Moroni also expands on Jacob’s words to make clear that the issue is not skin color, but purity.

Moroni follows Jacob in outlining a series of events—death, resurrection, and final judgment.

Table 3. Moroni’s allusions to Jacob’s Words

Allusion	Jacob’s Words	Moroni’s Words	Text	Times Exact Phrase Is Used Elsewhere in Scripture
1	Jacob 2: 19	Mormon 8:39; cf. 37	<i>the naked, and the sick and the afflicted</i>	0 (but Alma 34:28 is nearly identical)
2	Jacob 3:8	Mormon 9:2, 5	<i>when ye shall be brought . . . before . . . God</i>	0
3	2 Nephi 9:15	Mormon 9:14	<i>and then cometh the judgment</i>	0
4	2 Nephi 9:16	Mormon 9:14	<i>filthy shall be filthy still . . . righteous shall be righteous still</i>	0 (but Revelation 22:11 is very similar)
5	Jacob 4:9	Mormon 9:17	<i>by the power of his word man</i>	0
6	2 Nephi 9:9	Ether 8:25	<i>who beguiled our first parents</i>	0
7	2 Nephi 9:38	Moroni 10:26	<i>wo . . . die in their sins</i>	1 (Mosiah 2:33)
8	2 Nephi 9:13	Moroni 10:34	<i>the paradise of God . . . spirit . . . body</i>	0
9	Jacob 6:13	Moroni 10:34	<i>meet you before the pleasing bar</i>	0

Table 4 demonstrates how multiple relationships (both conceptual and textual) within two verses appear between Moroni's words and Jacob's.

Both prophets testify that because of Christ all men will be resurrected and "then cometh the judgment." Just prior to this passage, Jacob says, "we shall have a perfect knowledge of all our guilt, and our uncleanness, and our nakedness" (2 Nephi 9:14). Similarly, Moroni states that we "shall be brought to see [our] nakedness before God" (Mormon 9:5). Both Jacob and Moroni teach that the judgment will be a restoration of what we already are.²⁵ By employing Jacob's vivid phraseology, Moroni adds a second witness to his own and shifts Jacob's testimony forward in time, reiterating its relevance to modern readers. Jacob spoke to a hardened people; it may be that Moroni saw in his latter-day readers those who similarly struggled and thus employed Jacob's words in reaching out to them.

As Moroni turns his attention toward the miraculous power of God, he again alludes to Jacob's

teachings. Moroni uses Jacob's teachings and the power of God to illustrate that miracles can continue in the present time. Table 5 illustrates several connections between Moroni's words and Jacob's.

Jacob spoke of God's power in creating the earth (Jacob 4:9) in order to persuade readers to "despise not the revelations of God" (Jacob 4:8). In the pericope surrounding the passages quoted in table 5, Jacob specifically was concerned with those who sought to counsel God, thinking that they knew better than deity. Moreover, Jacob referenced Jews who "despised the words of plainness" (Jacob 4:14). In the nearby verses, Moroni followed Jacob's pattern (both thematically and textually), encouraging readers to "despise not . . . but hearken unto the words of the Lord" (Mormon 9:27).²⁶ Both Moroni and Jacob teach that God's might compels us to humble ourselves and take counsel from his hand (see Jacob 4:10, compare Mormon 9:27). While Jacob looked backwards at the Jews as a "stiffnecked people" (Jacob 4:14), Moroni looked forward and saw the people of the latter days

Table 4. Relationships between 2 Nephi 9:15-16 and Mormon 9:13-14

2 Nephi 9:15-16	Mormon 9:13-14
<p>And it shall come to pass that <i>when all men shall have passed from this first death unto life</i>, insomuch as they have become immortal, <i>they must appear before the judgment-seat of the Holy One of Israel; and then cometh the judgment . . .</i> <i>And then must they be judged according to the holy judgment of God. And . . . they who are righteous shall be righteous still, and they who are filthy shall be filthy still.</i></p>	<p>The death of Christ . . . bringeth to pass a redemption from an endless sleep, <i>from which sleep all men shall be awakened by the power of God</i> when the trump shall sound; and they shall come forth, both small and great, and <i>all shall stand before his bar . . .</i> <i>And then cometh the judgment of the Holy One upon them; and then cometh the time that he that is filthy shall be filthy still; and he that is righteous shall be righteous still.</i></p>

Table 5. Relationships between Jacob 4:9 and Mormon 9:17

Jacob 4:9	Mormon 9:17
<p>For behold, <i>by the power of his word man came upon the face of the earth, which earth was created by the power of his word. Wherefore, if God being able to speak and the world was, and to speak and man was created, O then, why not able to command the earth, or the workmanship of his hands upon the face of it, according to his will and pleasure?</i></p>	<p>Who shall say that it was not a miracle that <i>by his word the heaven and the earth should be; and by the power of his word man was created of the dust of the earth; and by the power of his word have miracles been wrought?</i></p>

(see Mormon 8:35). Moroni utilizes Jacob's words in order to urge modern-day readers to avoid the mistakes spoken of by Jacob.

Jacob was the first Book of Mormon author to speak of *secret combinations*. He stated that the wicked "become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God, and to remain with the *father of lies*, in misery, like unto himself; yea, to that being *who beguiled our first parents*, who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto *secret combinations of murder*" (2 Nephi 9:9). Jacob speaks of *secret combinations* in terms of evidence of Satan's degree of depravity. Jacob points out that were it not for Christ, all mankind would be under the rule of the devil, the founder of secret combinations. As Moroni warns latter-day readers of the evils of secret combinations, he echoes Jacob's phrases. Moroni states that "*secret combinations*" are "built up by *the devil*, who is the *father of all lies*;²⁷ even that same liar *who beguiled our first parents*, yea, even that same liar who hath caused man to commit *murder* from the beginning" (Ether 8:24-25).

Moroni introduces the concept of secret combinations as he discusses the story of Akish and the daughter of Jared. Perhaps Moroni alludes to Jacob's stern words in order to highlight the wickedness of Akish and his followers. While Jacob taught about the general theory of secret combinations, Moroni provided a specific example. Employing Jacob's words provides a literary connection between Jacob's global discussion of secret combinations and the specific instance that Moroni described. Moreover, it provides an important warning to modern readers. Jacob's words regarding secret combinations include the context of dwelling eternally with Satan. Moroni thus warns modern readers of the serious consequences of participating in secret combinations.

Three final allusions to Jacob appear in Moroni's last words. As stated previously, Jacob's tenth wo was "and, in fine, *wo* unto all those who *die in their sins*; for they shall return to God, and behold his face, and remain in their sins" (2 Nephi 9:38). Moroni similarly writes, "*Wo* unto them who shall do these things away and die, for they *die in their sins*, and they cannot be saved" (Moroni 10:26). As with Nephi and King Benjamin, Moroni alludes to the tenth of Jacob's ten woes; this may be a merism, reminding readers of all ten. As mentioned earlier in this paper,

it may be that Jacob's woes had become a traditional Nephite expression. It seems as if Moroni is quoting Jacob as both an authoritative and traditional source.

Speaking of death and resurrection generally, Jacob had taught, "O how great the plan of our God! For on the other hand, *the paradise of God* must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and *the spirit and the body is restored to itself again*" (2 Nephi 9:13). In his final verse, Moroni says, "And now I bid unto all, farewell. I soon go to rest in *the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite*" (Moroni 10:34). Moroni's imminent death must have made these words from Jacob increasingly relevant. I envision Moroni finding comfort in Jacob's words as he faces the prospect of his own mortality.

One last allusion to Jacob's words is found in Moroni's final phrase. Jacob bade farewell to readers by saying, "I shall meet you *before the pleasing bar of God . . . Amen*" (Jacob 6:13). Moroni says, "[I will] *meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah . . . Amen*" (Moroni 10:34). The phrase *pleasing bar* appears only in these two scriptures and nowhere else in English literature. Therefore it has been the subject of intense debate. In essence, Royal Skousen



In all of scripture, only Moroni and Jacob used the phrase *the pleasing bar of God*. © Annie Henrie 2013. Used by permission.



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has argued that this phrase should be emended to read the *pleading bar*, while John S. Welch rejects this claim.²⁸ However, for my present purposes, it perhaps matters less whether it is a *pleasing* or *pleading* bar of God; the point is that in either case Moroni and Jacob both use a phrase that appears nowhere else in scripture. In this case, Moroni does not change Jacob's context—this is a situation in which two righteous men speak of judgment and how they will meet us at that day.

Note that Moroni echoes Jacob twice in his final words. As I have stated thus far, Moroni may be establishing the authority of Jacob's words and commending them to future readers. In addition, I believe that Moroni felt a special relationship with Jacob. Just as Jacob seemed to stand in the shadow of his priesthood leader and older brother Nephi, perhaps Moroni felt inadequate compared to Mormon and looked to Jacob for guidance on how to play the role of the junior author. Moreover, Moroni likely identified with Jacob's words in Jacob 7:26—"We being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers, cast out from Jerusalem, born in tribulation, in a wilderness, and hated of our brethren"—in ways that Jacob might not have fully foreseen.

Grant Hardy, who has noted Moroni's propensity to quote from previous prophets (not just Jacob), makes an argument regarding Moroni's reasons for alluding to other prophets that could be applied specifically to his echoes of Jacob. Hardy declares, "By employing the words of others, Moroni shifts the notion of authorship and makes himself the self-effacing inheritor, or spokesman, for an entire literary tradition. He is able to appeal to the authority of past prophets and record keepers (while at the same time reinforcing the respect due them)."²⁹

It would seem, then, that by frequently quoting from Jacob, Moroni more fully moves Jacob's words into the consciousness of modern readers. Jacob originally spoke to the Nephites, and it isn't clear that his words were specifically intended for the present day. But by using phrases such as *the naked and . . . the sick and the afflicted, the righteous shall be righteous still . . . [and the] filthy shall be filthy still*, Moroni applies images from the sermons in Jacob 2 and 2 Nephi 9 directly to latter-day readers. It may be that these consistent echoes are Moroni's way of urging his readers to go back to the beginning and read Jacob's words more carefully. Thus Moroni utilizes them not

only to establish his authority but to demonstrate the authoritative nature of Jacob's words to modern-day readers.

Conclusion

Throughout this article I have demonstrated multiple textual similarities between Jacob's words and those of other Nephite prophets. These layers of intertextuality may add insight into the transmission and translation processes. Royal Skousen has argued that the "consistency of phraseology in the original text" provides "substantial evidence within the text itself for tight control over specific words, phrases, and sentences of English."³⁰ Precise textual matches between Jacob and Nephi, King Benjamin, and Moroni may indicate intentionality in the specific English words used in the translation of the Book of Mormon.

Moreover these textual connections establish Jacob as a key figure in the Book of Mormon and illustrate that his words had a lasting impact—not only in their original form, but also in how later Book of Mormon prophets echoed his words. Jacob's stern address in 2 Nephi 9, including phrases such as *their torment is as a lake of fire and brimstone*, is later alluded to by Nephi, King Benjamin, and Alma.³¹ His ten woes, also appearing in that same chapter, are echoed by Nephi, King Benjamin, and Moroni, suggesting that they had become a well-known feature of Nephite theological discourse.

Jacob's words are not simply used as filler. Those who echo his words appear to do so for their own purposes. Nephi used Jacob's words to underscore the serious consequences of sin. He may also have emphasized Jacob's words to pave the way for Jacob's succession as the spiritual leader of his people and to provide a second witness for his teachings. King Benjamin appears to have employed Jacob's words to provide both doctrinal and structural underpinnings for his address. It may be that he saw similarities between the needs of his audience and those originally addressed by Jacob. Moroni frequently quotes from Jacob, perhaps out of feelings of a shared but not identical circumstance, and also with a desire to shift Jacob's words forward in time, urging us to carefully return to Jacob's words.

In this article I have focused on Jacob's textual legacy in terms of how Nephi, King Benjamin, and Moroni relied on his words, but they are not the only ones who employed Jacob's phrases. Taken

together, these multiple allusions to Jacob suggest that his words were well-known and used among the Nephites for centuries after his death, likely demonstrating that he was viewed as an authoritative source. This study underscores the fact that, while often standing in Nephi's shadow, Jacob was a powerful literary figure in his own right. His words influenced not only future generations of modern readers, but also the prophets and people of his own dispensation. ■



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NOTES

1. See Robert L. Millet, "The Vision of the Redemption of the Dead (D&C 138)," in *Sperry Symposium Classics: The Doctrine and Covenants*, ed. Craig K. Manscill (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2004), 314-31. Millet also points out that while these revelations were initially added to the Pearl of Great Price, they were, in 1979, moved to the Doctrine and Covenants.
2. See F. F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1988).
3. Determining whether a phrase is uniquely Jacobean is not necessarily an easy task. Biblical scholars have put forth various ideas about how to tell whether any two texts are connected. In his classic work, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, Richard B. Hays provides seven criteria that can be used to distinguish between real and illusory allusions: "(1) Availability. Was the proposed source of the echo available to the author and/or original readers? (2) Volume. The volume of an echo is determined primarily by the degree of explicit repetition of words or syntactical patterns. . . . (3) Recurrence. How often does [the author] elsewhere cite or allude to the same scriptural passage? (4) Thematic Coherence. How well does the alleged echo fit into the line of argument that [the author] is developing? (5) Historical Plausibility. Could [the author] have intended the alleged meaning? (6) History of Interpretation. Have other readers, both

- critical and pre-critical, heard the same echoes? (7) Satisfaction. With or without clear confirmation from the other criteria listed here, does the proposed reading make sense?" Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993), 29-31.
4. For additional information on Jacob's literary legacy, see John S. Tanner, "Jacob and His Descendants as Authors," in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1991), 59; and John A. Tvedtnes, "The Influence of Lehi's Admonitions on the Teachings of His Son Jacob," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 3/2 (1994): 35. The present article deals with allusions made by Nephi, King Benjamin, and Moroni. These are not the only prophets who share a connection with Jacob. For example, Joseph M. Spencer points out connections between Jacob and Abinadi, stating, "Abinadi is Jacob's unquestionable doctrinal heir." Spencer, *An Other Testament: On Typology* (Salem, OR: Salt Press, 2012), 134. Samuel the Lamanite and Amulek both draw on Jacob (and others) in their speeches, a topic I will explore on another occasion.
5. In making this assertion, I assume that the passages in the Book of Mormon can correctly be attributed to the person recorded as having given them. Admittedly, it is possible such passages were originally said by somebody else. For example, S. Kent Brown asserts that Jacob and Nephi used Lehi's words in their teachings. Brown, "Lehi's

Personal Record: Quest for a Missing Source," *BYU Studies* 24/1 (1984): 19-42.

6. Nephi explicitly tells us that he is quoting from Jacob in 2 Nephi 6-10 (see 2 Nephi 6:1).
7. The phrase *thrust down to hell* appears in Luke 10:15; 2 Nephi 9:34, 36; 28:15; and Doctrine and Covenants 76:84. The words *cast* and *hell* appear together more frequently (one time in the Old Testament, eight in the New Testament, five in the Book of Mormon, and four in the Doctrine and Covenants).
8. Italicized text and associated punctuation follow Royal Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009). The 2013 edition of the Book of Mormon reads, "They are grasped with death, and hell; and death, and hell, and the devil . . ." For Skousen's discussion of his conjectural emendation, see his *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon, Part Two: 2 Nephi 11-Mosiah 6* (Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 2005), 873-74.
9. "Jacob's Ten Commandments," in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, ed. John W. Welch (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 72.
10. A merism is a statement in which one key phrase can be employed to represent a longer statement. For example, in a general conference address, President Dieter F. Uchtdorf said, "Our second key relationship is with our families. Since 'no other success can compensate for failure' here, we must place high priority on our families" ("Of Things That

- Matter Most,” *Ensign*, November 2010, 19). While President Uchtdorf does not provide the full statement, “No other success can compensate for failure in the home,” the portion he provides is enough for Latter-day Saints to recognize his meaning. In perhaps a similar way, Nephi employs the unique phrase *and in fine, wo unto all those* as a rhetorical device to link his woes with Jacob’s and to reemphasize all the warnings issued by Jacob.
11. *Hell* appears eight times in 2 Nephi 9, followed by five times in 2 Nephi 28, indicating a possible statistical connection between the chapters. In addition, only one chapter in all scripture (Alma 12) has as many references to death. For more information on the use of the word *hell* in the Book of Mormon, see Larry E. Dahl, “The Concept of Hell,” in *A Book of Mormon Treasury: Gospel Insights from General Authorities and Religious Educators* (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2003), 262–79.
 12. Several scholars have suggested that Joseph Smith translated 1 Nephi–Omni last. If this is the case, Jacob’s words (both in 2 Nephi 9 and the book of Jacob) and King Benjamin’s address are nearly as far apart from each other as possible in terms of the order in which they were translated. This, coupled with the evidence that Joseph never referred to notes or what he had previously translated, argues for a textual integrity that would have been nearly impossible for Joseph to create out of thin air.
 13. Later references to the phrase in the Book of Mormon may be allusions to Jacob or King Benjamin (or both).
 14. *Earth* is a feminine noun in Hebrew.
 15. There is another possible connection to 2 Nephi 9:44, in which Jacob shook his “garments” before the people, saying, “I shook your iniquities from my soul . . . and am *rid of your blood*” (2 Nephi 9:44).
 16. Welch stated that “repetition in the opposite order of the original is thought by scholars to be a strong sign . . . [of] a conscious form of quotation.” John W. Welch, “Echoes from Sermon on the Mount,” in *The Sermon on the Mount in Latter-day Scripture: The 39th Annual Brigham Young University Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*, ed. Gaye Strathearn, Thomas A. Wayment, and Daniel L. Belnap (Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center, 2010), 315.
 17. While the words *fire* and *brimstone* occur in various pericopes, the connections between Jacob and King Benjamin are much stronger than those between King Benjamin and (for example) the book of Revelation. Note that both Jacob and King Benjamin speak of *flame (smoke) ascending up forever and ever*, a textual phrase not found in the Bible.
 18. The phrase *endless torment* occurs seven times in the Book of Mormon and once in the Doctrine and Covenants. Jacob is the first to utilize this phrase; perhaps when the Lord says “it is written endless torment” (D&C 19:6), he refers to Jacob!
 19. At this point in the text, King Benjamin may be quoting the angel who spoke to him.
 20. The phrase *retain in remembrance* in this verse may be an allusion to Jacob 1:11.
 21. Abinadi (who likely spoke before King Benjamin chronologically) also alludes to this principle in Mosiah 15:24–25).
 22. G. Nigel Gilbert, “Referencing as Persuasion,” *Social Studies of Science* 7 (February 1997): 117–18.
 23. King Benjamin alludes several times to Jacob’s words in 2 Nephi 9. Aside from utilizing Jacob as an authoritative source, why might Jacob’s words in 2 Nephi 9 be of particular interest to King Benjamin? Welch has written that “the key function achieved by Benjamin’s speech was to bring the entire population—both Nephites and Mulekites—under a single covenant of loyalty to God and to Mosiah, the new king.” John W. Welch, “Benjamin, the Man: His Place in Nephite History,” in *King Benjamin’s Speech: “That Ye May Learn Wisdom,”* ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1998), 48–49. King Benjamin faced the difficult task of unifying two groups of people—the Nephites and Mulekites. It may be that he felt Jacob’s speech set a precedent for unifying disparate groups of people. While the exact circumstances of Jacob’s address in 2 Nephi 6–10 are unknown, Brant Gardner speculates that Jacob was teaching a combined group of people, some of whom were Nephites, others who were indigenous people with whom the Nephites had come in contact. See Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 2 (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2007). Gardner believes that the way Jacob structured his speech can be seen to include indigenous peoples as part of the Nephite covenant people. While this theory is speculative, if it were in fact the case, it would add relevance to King Benjamin’s finding meaning in Jacob’s word. It could be that King Benjamin saw himself faced with the task of devising a speech intended to unify two distinct groups and thus turned to Jacob, who had done the same thing.
 24. In addition to this citation, Moroni’s words in Mormon 9:4–6 may also be related to 2 Nephi 9:14–16.
 25. Alma also makes this point in Alma 41 (perhaps alluding in part to Jacob).
 26. Moroni may also be referring to the words of other prophets, as mentioned in Acts 13:40–41.
 27. The phrase *father of all lies* appears in 2 Nephi 2:18 and Moses 4:4. The statement *father of lies* is used only by Jacob, in 2 Nephi 9:9.
 28. See Royal Skousen, “The Pleading Bar of God,” *Insights* 24/4 (2004): 2–3; and John S. Welch. “Keep the Old Wine in Old Wineskins: The Pleading (Not Pleading) Bar of God,” *FARMS Review* 18/1 (2006): 139–47.
 29. Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 267.
 30. Royal Skousen, “How Joseph Smith Translated the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7/1 (1998): 29.
 31. While the words *torment*, *fire*, and *brimstone* appear together in the book of Revelation (14:10, 20:10), their use by Nephi, King Benjamin, and Alma₂ are more closely related to Jacob than to Revelation.