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***An Insider's View of Mormon Origins* Statement from the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History**

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Title Statement regarding Grant Palmer's Book *An Insider's View of Mormon Origins*

Author(s) Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History

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Abstract This statement addresses the implication that Smith Institute scholars agree with Grant Palmer's opinions concerning Latter-day Saint origins.

STATEMENT REGARDING GRANT PALMER'S
BOOK *AN INSIDER'S VIEW OF MORMON ORIGINS*

January 2004

Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History

In the preface to his book, *An Insider's View of Mormon Origins*, Grant Palmer speaks approvingly of historical work done by the faculty of the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Latter-day Saint History (pp. vii–viii). To some readers, this has suggested that Smith Institute faculty are among Palmer's category of "historians and religion teachers like myself" who share his views of Latter-day Saint origins (p. x). In subsequent remarks to audiences Palmer has encouraged this view.

Smith Institute scholars are unified in rejecting Palmer's argument that Mormon foundational stories are largely inaccurate myths and fictional accounts.

Palmer writes of a "near-consensus on many of the details" (p. ix) regarding early Church origins, as if most scholars see them in much the same way that he does. We and many other historians take issue with a substantial portion of Palmer's treatment of such details. We encourage and participate in rigorous scholarly investigation and discussion of the historical record, and from our perspective acceptance of Joseph Smith's foundational religious claims remains compatible with such investigation. Our publications, past and present, which are readily available to the public, speak for themselves on these matters.