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Joseph Smith and the Past

John W. Welch

My thoughts on Joseph Smith's interest in past worlds cluster into three sections. The first deals with the challenge of evaluating and assessing Joseph Smith's recoveries of texts or views from past worlds or civilizations. The second develops a list of ways in which the past functioned in Joseph Smith's process of continuing revelation. The third focuses on the dynamic link between the past and the present in Joseph Smith's concept of priesthood authority and its restoration.

The Challenge of Evaluation

I am drawn to Givens's remark that the texts which Joseph Smith presented as translations must submit to "examination as the historical records they purport to be."¹ In my experience, these texts lend themselves to examination in many ways better than most people realize. But others disagree. The questions that go begging here are: who will judge between these views, and on what basis can people determine if these translations are what they purport to be?

I have been involved in Book of Mormon research now for forty years. Recently, the field seems to be moving farther away from any agreement on certain basic issues, such as which bits of evidence

are relevant, how evidence is to be weighed, and what amount of evidence is needed to prove or disprove a proposition. Full agreement on such evidentiary issues may still be lacking, but that does not excuse scholars from striving to state their evidence as clearly as possible and to seek to achieve such agreement.

Chiasmus may serve as an example. In 1967, I discovered a remarkable literary structure in Alma 36, which I see as one of the best examples of extended chiasmus anywhere in world literature.² I imagine that Joseph Smith would be quite amazed to be shown this phenomenon in the text of the Book of Mormon. While chiasmus is not an exclusively Hebraic style of writing, some biblical scholars have considered it to be highly characteristic of ancient Israelite literature. But opinions range from “chiasmus is solid evidence of the antiquity of the Book of Mormon,” to “chiasmus proves absolutely nothing about anything in the Book of Mormon.”³ Which assessment is correct? Who is making sense? Who is credible, if anyone?

Participants in these opinion matches are often intransigently predisposed to their points of view—as often occurs in biblical or religious studies generally—with believers or proponents of certain theories on the one side and skeptics or those who are disaffected on the other. Inquirers who listen in on these in-group volleys must often wonder, what is really going on? And, judging by the recent publications of the Book of Mormon by both the University of Illinois Press and Doubleday,⁴ it is clear that some people really want to know. But whose footnotes are reliable? Whose descriptions are not over- or understated?

Who can judge if the points made by Margaret Barker and others in glimpsing the world of Lehi’s Jerusalem succeed in situating the Book of Mormon in preexilic Israel?⁵ Who can judge if the naturalistic explanations for the Book of Mormon have fallen short? Who can confirm that the Gadianton robbers are much better understood in terms of ancient brigandage than nineteenth-century Masonry?⁶ Who can judge what is anachronistic, when our knowledge is incomplete and when we do not have Nephi’s or Benjamin’s prophetic BCE originals but only an English translation of Mormon’s much later AD

abridgement? Who can authoritatively declare the Spaulding theory finally dead and give it a proper burial?⁷

Regarding the Book of Abraham, many details mentioned in that text have also turned out to be more widely attested than anyone had previously suspected. Forty elements found in the Book of Abraham but absent in the Bible are found in obscure Jewish and Islamic traditions about the early life of Abraham.⁸ But who is to say if these forty points are significant?

Might one imagine a bureaucracy holding hearings on such questions? Impaneling officers in such a body would be far trickier than confirming Supreme Court nominees, and it is doubtful that such a process could ever be any less problematic than the Jesus Seminar has been. But, with Mormon Studies programs now being inaugurated in highly regarded universities, an unofficial peer panel may informally emerge. Yet, could such a panel of academicians be composed of highly informed but also disinterested observers? Not likely. Could they judge strengths and weaknesses according to disclosed assumptions and articulated criteria? Perhaps. Could they be methodologically savvy but not ideologically slavish? Could they produce responsible, cautious, written opinions? Or at least call preliminary attention to misleading statements and material omissions? That much one can hope for.

But then again, how will they determine what weight should be given to the book's complexity, profundity, and artistry, together with Joseph's lack of education, the testimonies of the Book of Mormon witnesses, and the rapidity of the dictation through which the book came forth? Chiasmus, for example, can be used as evidence of many things—from multiple authorship to meaningful composition.⁹ Going beyond and rightly avoiding simplistic parallelomania,¹⁰ the Book of Mormon's literary complexity is evidence that its texts were written in some way that normal dictation does not explain.

And who will finally say when enough evidence, one way or the other, has finally been heard? Many interesting things in support of the Book of Mormon have surfaced, but all the evidence still is not in yet. Pre-Columbian barley has been found;¹¹ will pre-Columbian

horses turn up next? The name of Alma has been found in Jewish and other Near Eastern texts;¹² will other Book of Mormon names also show up? While the authorship of some sections in the book of Isaiah remains debated, the Hebrew of Isaiah 48:11 in the Great Isaiah Scroll Dead Sea Scrolls (1Q Isa^a 14:32) has the verb in the first person, “I shall not suffer my name to be polluted,” which happens to agree in this respect with the Book of Mormon’s reading of that passage, which differs from the King James.¹³ Givens is correct that readers must “step back from a canvas as large as the one [Joseph] painted,”¹⁴ but looking closely at minute details is important too.

Regarding the unusual practice of writing on metal, a tiny silver amulet scroll has recently been authenticated, giving tangible evidence of Hebrew writing on metal from Lehi’s Jerusalem.¹⁵ Brass plates found in central Italy contain ancient religious laws of the Umbrians, written in their language but using the script of another language (that of the Etruscans),¹⁶ which seems to echo the linguistic description of the plates of Laban. Doubled, sealed, witnessed bronze Roman plates, bound together, with one part open and the other part sealed, may be reminiscent of the configuration of the plates of Mormon.¹⁷ As Lehi’s group traveled down the Arabian Peninsula, the Book of Mormon says that they came to a place that was called Nahom, where they turned east. An altar inscription from the seventh-century BC has recently been discovered in Yemen very significantly containing the name Nihm, linguistically close to the name Nahom, just where the ancient frankincense trail turned east.¹⁸

What more may come along? Good science takes time. Much careful work remains to be done. In the meantime, we will need to wait for conclusive answers that now evade us. Indeed, in all matters of faith, important evidence will always be lacking. The result will always be a hung jury, as arguments can be made on both sides. These are surely debatable subjects. One should not expect these examinations to be any more conclusive than the inconclusively arrayed approaches in biblical studies.

Would Joseph Smith be disappointed in this? Probably not. For one thing, he expected something less than direct proof, to be sure. He said, “It will be as it ever has been, the world will prove Joseph

Smith a true prophet by circumstantial evidence.”¹⁹ Conspicuous is his mention of circumstantial or indirect evidence. If evidence of all types were not such a complicated matter, many things in life, whether in historical studies, in the courtroom, or in religious persuasions, would be much simpler. But, this complexity itself allows evidence to combine with faith, precisely because evidence is both a product of data attractive to the mind and the result of human choices arising from values and beliefs.²⁰ Thus, while Joseph Smith would certainly welcome Givens’s expected examination of these revealed records as the historical texts they claim to be, everyone will want to bear in mind in this process that Joseph knew the element of personal faith and prayer would still be required. When asked how the translation process occurred, he always answered with the words, “By the gift and power of God.”²¹

Functions of the Past

Givens’s main point, that we should focus more on process than on the product of Joseph Smith’s thought, is well taken. Further development of this distinction will surely yield good academic insights. In particular, one will want to ask next, how did the recovery of the past function in Joseph’s process of continuing revelation? He could, after all, have introduced the principle of continuing revelation only with respect to the present and the future; revelation need not have involved the past.

Indeed, the past meant many things and served many functions for Joseph Smith. He was captivated by the idea of past visions, lost scriptures, ancient covenants, vanished civilizations, and former dispensations of the gospel. And, more than captivated, he was liberated and expanded by what he saw in the past. He never explained how this all worked, but we should attempt to detect the dynamics that drove his process. Here are ten such dynamics:

1. For Joseph Smith, the past is inviting, for what has happened before can happen again. It opens doors for all. If Moses and God spoke with each other, face to face, “as a man speaketh unto his friend” (Exodus 33:11), then others could do likewise today. If in times past

God revealed his plans to his prophets (Amos 3:7), then God could do likewise again, as unsettling as it might seem.²²

2. Joseph Smith certainly saw the past as instructive. On one occasion Joseph said that Jesus' "disciples, in days of old," were sorely afflicted because they "sought occasion against one another and forgave not one another in their hearts," and for this reason Joseph emphatically instructed his brethren "to forgive one another" absolutely (Doctrine and Covenants 64:8–10).

3. The past is pertinent to the present. For Joseph Smith, the words of past prophets were pertinent in the present precisely because he saw them as seeing this day. Not only had Isaiah seen the scholar who would say, "I cannot read a sealed book" (see Isaiah 29:11), but Jesus foresaw the Saints purchasing land in Missouri when he spoke of the man who found "a treasure hid in a field" and sold all that he had to buy it (Matthew 13:44). For Joseph, these were more epistemologically compelling than just historical attractions or "mythic reverberations."²³

4. The past is personal. This is another aspect of his collapse of the distance between the heavenly and the earthly. Joseph Smith saw himself prefigured in the past, in what Jan Shipps describes as a "recapitulation process" of restoring many elements from the biblical past, such as the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.²⁴ Whether he intentionally set out to recapitulate past events or simply realized after the fact what had happened, either way it was confirming that the past had reiterated itself in his life personally.

5. The past was better than the present, at least in certain ways. Joseph Smith yearned for the purity and goodness of the city of Enoch. Beyond that, he even revealed that "man was also in the beginning with God" (Doctrine and Covenants 93:29); a view of human origins does not get much better than that. But sometimes things devolve. Over time, religion had degenerated. This means that, for Joseph, evolution or agonistic struggle is not an iron law of improvement. Things get garbled. Apostasies occur. Civilizations die. Even at the euphoric dawn of a new American republic, Joseph Smith cried out sharp warnings from the past (as in Doctrine and Covenants 64:8–9).

6. The past is important. Another axiom in Joseph Smith's thought process was the realization that the losses of instructions and covenants which were "from the beginning" (Doctrine and Covenants 22:1) were serious losses. Without past knowledge—and, just as much, without records currently kept—rising generations are not just uninformed but are painfully lost, without a knowledge of the plan of salvation laid from the foundation of the earth.

7. Past truths are reaccessed through the spirit of revelation. The Book of Mormon states, "A seer can know of things which are past" (Mosiah 8:17). Quite remarkably, one usually thinks of a prophet as one who foresees the future; rarely have revelators also revealed the past. And, one might ponder, which is harder or more important: knowing the future or knowing the past?

8. Remembering is sacramental. Remembering is to the past as faith is to the future. Remembering the past covenants of the Lord and remembering progenitors were not just exercises in historiography for Joseph. Remembering is a stipulation required in covenants revealed by Joseph Smith (Mosiah 5:11–12; Doctrine and Covenants 20:77, 79).

9. The process seeks to recover whole worlds. Interestingly, as considerable research using numerous academic tools now shows, Joseph Smith's recovery of past worlds came complete with a large cast of individual characters, who act in various real-life settings, whose vocabularies are statistically and conceptually distinctive. These personalities are arrayed amidst multigenerational family feuds, well-crafted lineage histories, accurately sophisticated legal proceedings, military campaigns, guerrilla warfare, temple convocations, prophetic speech forms, and inspired world views. This completeness not only allowed Joseph and his followers to affirm these accounts but also to liken them ethically unto themselves (1 Nephi 19:23).

10. Ultimately, the goal for Joseph Smith was fullness. Above all, he sought expansively to embrace "all true principles," which must include things that have been, as well as things that are and will be. His goal was abundance, "wholeness" and "totalizing" "plenitude." Givens rightly uses such words,²⁵ for Joseph Smith strongly preferred

completeness over consistency, a distinction of profound importance in many ways. Over and over, his doctrines and attitudes relish fullness and multiplicity. Many words, traditionally singulars, appear as plurals in his teachings: he spoke of priesthoods, eternal lives, creations, worlds, degrees of glory, and even Gods.

Source of Authority

Finally, Joseph Smith claimed to get more from the past than information alone. Givens is not alone in speaking of the propositional content of Joseph's work, how he restored records from the past, how fragments of true gospel teachings were "scattered through time," and how "much instruction" given in the past had been lost.²⁶ All of that information was significant to Joseph, but the recovery of lost knowledge was not the vital force that impelled his grand project forward. In the minds of his followers, more potent than truth claims were Joseph Smith's power claims. Knowing of ancient orders is one thing; having the authority to revive those lost orders is something else.

Authority, of course, means different things to different traditions, as Richard Mouw has noted in *BYU Studies*.²⁷ To Evangelicals, the concept of authority is grounded in the words of the Bible as the authoritative source of truth. To Catholics, authority has to do with the right to speak as the "authentic organ to transmit and explain" God's revelations.²⁸ But for Joseph Smith, authority not only embraced the scriptures and the orthodox conveyance of interpretations, but also was rooted in actually conferred rights and powers to act and speak in the name of God. More than *words* from the past, Joseph relied upon *beings* from the past. Thus, he relied not only upon biblical *authority to recover the past*,²⁹ but upon *the past to recover authority*.

If we could ask Joseph Smith what he gained from the past, he would probably speak first and foremost of the restoration of divine keys, priesthood powers, and the authority to perform eternally binding ordinances according to the will of God and in the name of Jesus Christ, as is evident in his joyous listing of heavenly manifestations

in Doctrine and Covenants 128:20–21. It would seem that nothing was more important to Joseph Smith's perception of his own mission than the recovery of lost priesthood authority.

Thus, the version of Malachi 4:5, as quoted by Moroni, is interesting, not just because it seems to reflect an unknown heavenly Ur-Text³⁰ or a lost textual variant,³¹ but also because this version promises "Behold, I will reveal unto you the Priesthood, by the hand of Elijah" (Doctrine and Covenants 2:1), rather than just the familiar "Behold, I will send you Elijah." Thus, more than a visit, Joseph expected, apparently as early as 1823, the conferral of priesthood by the hand of an ancient prophet. Such a visitation goes beyond the normal visionary experience. Eventually, as Joseph Smith and others testified, came John the Baptist, Peter, James, John, Moses, Elijah, and others from Adam on down, as resurrected beings, not just to disclose knowledge of the past but to confer authority and to commit keys of all past dispensations "to introduce . . . the dispensation of the fullness of times, [as] it was known . . . by the ancient servants of God."³²

Consistent with this concept of authority, records from the past, such as the Book of Mormon, were significant to Joseph Smith not only for the histories and doctrines they offered, but especially for the priesthood powers and procedures they warranted and directed. What immediately struck Joseph and Oliver Cowdery as they translated 3 Nephi was not the human pathos or the divine presence depicted there, but their sudden realization that "none had authority from God to administer the ordinances of the Gospel" as was given by Christ in two increments to the twelve in that Nephite account.³³ That realization drove the translator and scribe to the banks of Susquehanna River to seek that authority. The most immediate use made by Joseph Smith of the Book of Mormon was to implement its priesthood instructions.

The priesthood focus of the Book of Abraham is similar: how Abraham became "a High Priest" (Abraham 1:2), opposed false priests who had no "right of Priesthood" (1:27, 31), and entered into a covenant to bear the "Priesthood unto all nations" (2:9). Priesthood threads run through the Book of Abraham, his altar (3:17), prayers

(3:19), approaching the throne of God (3:10–11), the opening of his eyes (3:12), and his premortal calling (3:23). Above all, Joseph saw in the Egyptian facsimiles depictions of priests (Book of Abraham, Facsimile 1, fig. 3), priesthood (Facsimile 2, figs. 3, 7), powers (Facsimile 2, fig. 5), grand priesthood keywords (Facsimile 2, fig. 7), and presidency (Facsimile 3, fig. 1).

In addition to ancient records, visions of the past also served to direct Joseph Smith's use of priesthood authority. The Kirtland High Council Minutes in 1834 report that "the order of councils in ancient days [was] shown to [Joseph] by vision,"³⁴ in which he learned the distinctive order of a president serving with two counselors. This recovery from the past legitimized the use of that same order in the present. In good restorationist form, his desire was that "all things pertaining to [this] dispensation should be conducted precisely in accordance with the preceding dispensations,"³⁵ but his manner of implementing that program was certainly unprecedented.

It is sometimes remarked that the world's view of Joseph Smith is shaped by the world's view of America. But Joseph Smith's concept of lines of authority attaches him in one more way to the past, more than to his contemporaneous American surroundings. His claim of priesthood from John the Baptist links him more to the River Jordan than the Potomac or the Mississippi. His assertion of priesthood from Peter, James, and John links him more to the eastern Mediterranean than to eastern New York. The receipt of keys of Elijah, Moses, and Abraham links him more to Mount Carmel, Mount Sinai, and Mount Moriah than to Mount Vernon. And his vision of personally returning all priesthood keys eventually to Adam through the order of the antediluvian prophet Enoch links him more to all the world than to any single nation or people.

Thus to Joseph Smith, knowing the past was as important as knowing the present or the future, and revealing the details and instructions of the past in their antiquity and fullness was offered as a sign of his calling as a prophet. But, perhaps above anything else, he saw the past as a repository of divine powers. Recovering that authority has everything to do with what the past meant to the essential Joseph Smith.

Notes

1. Terryl L. Givens, “Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude,” in this volume, 67.
2. For comparisons and analyses of chiasmus in several bodies of ancient literature, see John W. Welch and Daniel B. McKinlay, *Chiasmus Bibliography* (Provo, Utah: Research Press, 1999); John W. Welch, ed., *Chiasmus in Antiquity* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1981), with Alma 36 discussed on pages 206–7. See further, John W. Welch, “A Masterpiece: Alma 36,” in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1991), 114–31.
3. Comments such as these posted recently on blogs are not new. A degree of subjectivity, and hence a range of opinions, is inevitably involved in identifying and interpreting any meaningful feature of any literary composition, as I discuss in the introduction to *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 13–15. Regarding chiasms defined in terms of thoughts and themes, David Noel Freedman in the preface to *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 7, similarly stated, “A large subjective element enters into these discussions, and the presence or absence of chiasm on this level can become almost a voter’s choice. Scholars, therefore, may range between separated areas of research in their approach to chiasm.” For statistical evaluations of the objective features of these lengthy passages, however, see the methods employed and the results derived by Yehuda T. Radday, “Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative,” in *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, 50–115, and by Boyd F. Edwards and W. Farrell Edwards, “Does Chiasmus Appear in the Book of Mormon by Chance?” *BYU Studies* 43, no. 2 (2004): 103–30.
4. Grant Hardy, ed., *The Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Edition* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 2003); *The Book of Mormon* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 2004).
5. John W. Welch, David Rolph Seely, and Jo Ann H. Seely, eds., *Glimpses of Lehi’s Jerusalem* (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies [FARMS], 2004).
6. Regarding similarities between the Gadianton robbers and the complex phenomenon of ancient brigandage, see John W. Welch, *Reexploring the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 248–49, and John W. Welch, “Legal and Social Perspectives on Robbers in First-Century Judea,” in *Masada and the World of the New Testament*, ed. John F. Hall and John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: BYU Studies, 1997), 141–53.
7. For a candid assessment, see Lance D. Chase, “Spaulding Manuscript,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 4:1402–3, concluding that “since 1946, no serious student of Mormonism has given the Spaulding Manuscript theory much credibility. In that year Fawn Brodie . . . dismissed the idea of any connection between Spaulding and Smith or their writings.” Yet the notion lingers in some circles.

8. John A. Tvedtnes, Brian M. Hauglid and John Gee, comps., *Traditions about the Early Life of Abraham* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2001), 537–47.

9. For a discussion of these various prospects, see John W. Welch, “What Does Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon Prove?” in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1997), 199–224.

10. In my essay “Criteria for Establishing the Presence of Chiasmus,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4, no. 2 (1995): 1–14, reprinted in McKinlay and Welch, *Chiasmus Bibliography*, I propose fifteen useful criteria.

11. John L. Sorenson and Robert F. Smith, “Barley in Ancient America,” in *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, 130–32.

12. Observed by Hugh W. Nibley in Yigael Yadin, *Bar-Kochba* (New York: Random House, 1971), plate on p. 177, and reviewed in *BYU Studies* 14 (Autumn 1973): 115–26, reprinted as chapter 15 in *The Prophetic Book of Mormon*, Collected Works of Hugh Nibley (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1989), 8:274–88. See further Paul Y. Hoskisson, “Alma as a Hebrew Name,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7, no. 1 (1998): 72–73; and Terrence L. Szink, “The Personal Name ‘Alma’ at Ebla,” *Religious Educator* 1, no. 1 (2000): 53–56.

13. Donald W. Parry and Elisha Qimron, *A New Edition of the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsaa): Transcriptions and Photographs* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 81. The original manuscript of this passage in 1 Nephi 20:11 was emended by Oliver Cowdery but also had the verb in the first person: “for how should I suffer my name to be polluted.” See Royal Skousen, *The Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2001), 154–55; and Royal Skousen, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2004), 1:432–33.

14. Givens, “Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude,” 67.

15. Gabriel Barkay, “Excavations at Ketef Hinnom in Jerusalem,” in *Ancient Jerusalem Revealed*, ed. Hillel Geva (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 102–5; Dana M. Pike, “Israelite Inscriptions from the Time of Jeremiah and Lehi,” in *Glimpses of Lehi’s Jerusalem*, 213–15.

16. See Augusto Ancillotti and Romolo Cerri, *The Tables of Iguvium: Colour Photographs, Facsimiles, Transliterated Text, Translation and Comments* (Perugia, Italy: Jama Perugia, 1997).

17. John W. Welch, “Doubled, Sealed, Witnessed Documents: From the Ancient World to the Book of Mormon,” in *Mormons, Scripture, and the Ancient World*, ed. Davis Bitton (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1998), 391–444; the two Roman bronze plates from Mainz, Germany, are discussed on pages 398–99.

18. See Andrey Korotayev, *Ancient Yemen: Some General Trends of Evolution of the Sabaic Language and Sabaean Culture*, *Journal of Semitic Studies Supplement* 5 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 81–83; S. Kent Brown, “New Light from Arabia on Lehi’s Trail,” in *Echoes and Evidences*, 81–82.

19. Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 267.
20. John W. Welch, "The Power of Evidence in the Nurturing of Faith," in *Echoes and Evidences*, 30–42.
21. John W. Welch, "The Miraculous Translation of the Book of Mormon: Documenting the Translation Chronology," in *Opening the Heavens: Accounts of Divine Manifestations, 1820–1844*, ed. John W. Welch (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 2005), 121–29.
22. Givens, "Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude," 57, 59–60.
23. Givens, "Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude," 60.
24. Jan Shipps, *Mormonism: The Story of a New Religious Tradition* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1985), 58.
25. Givens, "Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude," 65, 66.
26. Givens, "Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude," 63, 64.
27. Richard Mouw, "What Does God Think of America? Some Challenges from Evangelicals and Mormons," *BYU Studies* 43, no. 4 (2004): 10–12.
28. See Jean Bainvel cited in David L. Paulsen, "Joseph Smith Challenges the Theological World," 183.
29. As Givens points out in "Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude," 61.
30. Givens, "Joseph Smith: Prophecy, Process, and Plenitude," 66.
31. Margaret Barker, "Joseph Smith and Preexilic Israelite Religion," in this volume, 70.
32. John Taylor in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 21:94, April 13, 1879.
33. Oliver Cowdery, "Letter VII," *Messenger and Advocate* 1 (October 1834): 14–16; quoted in Joseph Smith–History, note on p. 59.
34. Kirtland High Council Minutes, February 17, 1834, Church Archives, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.
35. Joseph Smith Jr., *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2d ed., rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1971), 4:204.