

The Lord's Prayer(s) in Jacob 7

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The plot of Jacob 7 is fairly well-known among Latter-day Saints, at least in its broad contours: a meddlesome anti-Christ confronts the Nephite prophet and is fatally struck down by a sign from heaven, delivering with his dying breath a confession so stirring that it overwhelms the attendant crowds, who devote themselves once more to peace and righteous living. The vividness of this narrative, combined with its straightforwardly moralistic assessment of its primary characters, render Jacob 7 a particularly attractive resource for didactic purposes—a use evident in devotional treatments of this chapter but also witnessed in the way the Book of Mormon redeploys elements of Jacob 7 in its later narrative, thus fashioning the concluding chapter of Jacob's record into a kind of type scene for subsequent portions of Nephite history.²⁵

But behind the scenes, backstage to the compelling drama of Sherem's confrontation with Jacob and the ecstatic collapse of the Nephite audience, we find the more subdued and generally neglected figure of a praying priest. Twice in this chapter Jacob prays and twice in response a person or group of people falls to the earth. In the course of this double supplication it also seems that Jacob learns something vital about prayer, since his two prayers are marked by a certain tension in how each treats the role of the will. Crucially, the chapter illustrates this tension by the way it incorporates, recontextualizes, and reorders two of Jesus's prayers from the New Testament. What follows in this paper, then, is an extended comparison of Jacob 7:14 with Jacob 7:22 in order to illustrate the way in which Sherem's collapse calls Jacob to repentance and fundamentally alters his approach to prayer.

Jacob's two prayers are found at the core of the chapter, framing Sherem's confession and death, and each is tied to the unfolding drama as a kind of causal force. In the first instance, the heaven-sent sign that ultimately sends Sherem to his death occurs pointedly *not* after Sherem's snide demand ("Show me a sign by this power of the Holy Ghost, in the which ye know so much" [Jacob 7:13]), but after Jacob's petitioning response in the following verse:

What am I that I should tempt God to show unto thee a sign in the thing which thou knowest to be true?
Yet thou wilt deny it because thou art of the devil. Nevertheless, not my will be done; but if God shall smite thee, let that be a sign unto thee that he has power, both in heaven and in earth; and also, that Christ shall come. And thy will, O Lord, be done, and not mine. (Jacob 7:14)

With these words, Sherem immediately "fell to the earth" and required "nourish[ment] for the space of many days" (Jacob 7:15). He eventually rallies, gathers a group of Nephites around his deathbed, and recants point by point his earlier assertions (Jacob 7:17, 19), after which the group of onlookers was so "overcome" at the power of Sherem's final words that they, too, "fell to the earth" (Jacob 7:21).

Although Jacob had been oddly absent from the confession narrative to this point, the resulting collective experience of the people is not something he can let pass without comment, and so Jacob reemerges as a named and active character precisely in order to take credit for the people's response:

"Now, this thing was pleasing unto me, Jacob, for I had requested it of my Father who was in heaven; for he had heard my cry and answered my prayer" (Jacob 7:22).

The fact that Jacob narrates this prayer only retroactively is significant because it demonstrates the careful construction of the confession scene. Mentions of prayer both begin and end this pericope, a frame which would

have been interrupted had Jacob narrated his second prayer in its proper chronological order. Viewed in this light, the scene of Sherem's confession appears deliberately structured, clearly placing each of Jacob's prayers on the outer edge of a chiasmic setting:

A – Jacob's first prayer (Jacob 7:14)

B – Sherem falls to the earth (Jacob 7:15)

C – Sherem anticipates his death (Jacob 7:16) D – Confession (Jacob 7:17–19)

C' – Sherem dies (Jacob 7:20)

B' – The people fall to the earth (Jacob 7:21) A' – Jacob's second prayer (Jacob 7:22)

This parallel structural position is not the only commonality between the two prayers, however. These verses are also linked verbally in the way they echo phrases from Jesus' most famous prayers recorded in the New Testament.²⁶ Jacob's first prayer reiterates Jesus's words in Gethsemane immediately prior to his betrayal and arrest when he pled with God to "remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). In a parallel too overt to miss, Jacob likewise sacrifices his preference with the words "nevertheless, not my will be done" and then repeats this sentiment a few lines later, this time also incorporating a positive affirmation of God's will: "thy will, O Lord, be done, and not mine" (Jacob 7:14). Perhaps more subtly, Jacob's second prayer echoes another famous moment of Jesus in conversation with the Father, this time drawn from the model prayer presented in the Sermon on the Mount, in which Jesus begins "Our Father which art in heaven" (Matthew 6:9). Likewise, Jacob includes in his second prayer specific reference to God's location: "I had requested it of my Father who was in heaven" (Jacob 7:22). In the two instances in this chapter where Jacob narrates his prayers, the text invokes clear liturgical and theological echoes for its Christian readers by quoting key wording from the New Testament.

In some ways, putting the Gethsemane Prayer in conversation with the Lord's Prayer is hardly a surprising move, since at least one of the gospels seems to stage the comparison already. Matthew grants these prayers structural significance by using them to bookend Jesus's ministry and also stresses their semantic resemblance. Jesus declares "thy will be done" only twice in Matthew's gospel—once in the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:10) and once in the Gethsemane Prayer ("Matthew 26:42)—and this point of commonality is amply noted in academic commentary on these verses.²⁷ By placing these two prayers in parallel, Jacob 7 is picking up on a close relationship already signaled within the New Testament. And yet there seem to me two primary oddities about Jacob 7's incorporation of Jesus's prayers.

First is the way the chapter seems to deliberately mute their most obvious parallel. The structure of the confession scene encourages us to compare verse 14 and verse 22 side by side, yet when verse 22 quotes the Lord's Prayer, rather than highlighting the already inherent commonality of the source texts behind these two verses (the phrase "thy will be done"), it echoes the fairly banal opening line about "my Father which was in heaven." If Jacob 7 wants to suggest a comparison of these two New Testament prayers, why does it drop their most overt point of commonality? The second oddity is the inverted order of the Lord's Prayer and the Gethsemane Prayer within Jacob 7. The storyline of the gospels, which traces an arc from Jesus's early ministry to his betrayal and death, seems poised to privilege the climactic events surrounding the end of Jesus's life, including his last recorded prayer uttered in Gethsemane. If, as many readers have assumed, the New Testament thus implicitly privileges the

Gethsemane Prayer, what significance might we find in the fact that Jacob 7 seems to trace the opposite arc, beginning instead with the Gethsemane Prayer in verse 14 and moving toward the Lord's Prayer in verse 22 as the climactic instance of supplication? If we want to posit an implicit theology of prayer in Jacob 7, these seem to be the primary questions to keep in mind.

There are thus three main parallels between the prayers in Jacob 7:14 and Jacob 7:22: both frame the central drama of Sherem's confession, both echo Jesus's most famous prayers from the New Testament, and, as already noted above, both incite an identical result (the respective collapses of Sherem and the people). But if the several commonalities between these two verses justify examining them side by side, close comparison also reveals a series of tensions that are just as significant as their earlier points of convergence.

We might first note the opposing portrayal of God in each prayer. In verse 14 God is a figure of smiting and power, someone Jacob is concerned about "tempt[ing]" or provoking, and in the face of whose sovereignty Jacob takes on an abject, creaturely posture by asking not "*who* am I that I should tempt God," but, rather, "*what* am I?" By verse 22, however, God is given the title "Father" (the only familial designation out of fifteen total references to God in this chapter) and moreover is a father to whom Jacob feels free to make entreaties which are then heard and answered. There is a striking shift, then, from a tone of servility in verse 14 to a tone of intimacy with God in verse 22, and this shift—from a sovereign "God" to a listening "Father," from worries about tempting God to straightforwardly entreating him—accompanies a second shift in how Jacob treats the topic of the will.

In verse 14, Jacob is particularly anxious about the place and role of his will. He moves from denying it ("not my will be done") to affirming God's will ("thy will, O Lord, be done") before returning once again to negate his own desires a second time ("not mine"). It is as if Jacob is caught in an iterative wrestle with his own will, anxiously trying to delineate boundaries between the various desires that want to have sway in this situation. Jacob wants to ensure that there is space here for God's will to direct the possible outcomes that follow from Sherem's demand for a sign, but it seems that he has difficulty suppressing his own potentially opposing will. He no sooner affirms God's will than his own desires emerge a second time and must be wrestled back again. By verse 22, however, Jacob no longer appears conflicted. Although the Lord's Prayer, to which this verse alludes, does contain discussion of the will, it does so only by affirming "thy will be done" without any corresponding negation of the disciple's desire. And since this affirmation of God's will is only distantly implied and never explicitly invoked in verse 22, Jacob seems to have overcome certain anxieties he felt earlier about the role of his will. Indeed, Jacob has been so completely reconciled to his will that he actively issues a "request" and admits to its outcome as "pleasing," a behavior and an affect which imply a commitment to one's own desires.

Or, to frame this shift in the treatment of "will" from another angle, we might also compare the frustrated tone of Jacob's prayer in verse 14 with the relative sincerity on display in verse 22. Jacob begins his response in verse 14 by describing unilaterally what he takes to be the stakes of Sherem's demand for a sign. He refuses to "tempt God to show unto thee a sign" because he is convinced that Sherem's request is insincere—a heavenly portent would only signify "the thing which thou knowest to be true" and, in any case, "thou wilt deny it, because thou art of the devil" (Jacob 7:14). It is only here, after having laid out what he takes to be the unambiguous reality of the situation, that Jacob begins to echo Jesus's words: "Nevertheless, not my will be done." Read in context, this echo is less a sincere attempt to find out God's will and rather functions as Jacob's exit from the conversation. He is, in effect, throwing up his hands in frustration and absolving himself of any responsibility for the outcome.

Although Jacob echoes Jesus's words, he seems to lack the intent associated with the Gethsemane prayer, instead replacing the sincerity of Jesus's original pronouncement with the detachment of Pilate's infamous hand-washing

(Matthew 27:24). “If God shall smite [Sherem],” that’s well and good, but Jacob wants no part of it. By the time we reach verse 22, however, Jacob is praying sincerely and actively, a far cry from the frustration and self-willed passivity of his first prayer. Instead of simply absenting himself by attempting to remove his will, Jacob here issues a straightforward “request,” and instead of leaving the outcome up to God to do whatever he pleases, in verse 22 Jacob makes a specific entreaty that requires his careful attention to and engagement with the situation in which he finds himself.

We might then summarize the shifts between Jacob 7:14 and Jacob 7:22 as follows. Where Jacob is in the first prayer abject before God and anxious about his own will, he appears in the second prayer to be in a much more intimate relationship with God as “Father” and not at all conflicted regarding his own desires. Additionally, where the first prayer demonstrates Jacob’s frustrated wish to be uninvolved— he negates his will in order to absolve himself of responsibility—the second prayer shows him actively concerned, attending to his will as what allows him specific engagement with the situation at hand. In the space of less than ten verses, it seems that something fundamental has changed Jacob’s orientation to God and to his own will. What, then, has changed Jacob, and how?

The most dramatic moment in the intervening verses between these prayers, and thus the most likely place to look for answers, is of course the sign given to Sherem and his immediate collapse. We can speculate about what that moment revealed to Jacob and then trace the shifts between his two prayers back to what he learned from this sign. Recall that when Jacob initially refused Sherem’s demand for a sign, he did so on two grounds: first, his confidence in Sherem’s duplicity and second, his conviction that a sign would be ineffectual since Sherem would simply deny it. That early self-assurance, however, must have been abruptly shattered as soon as Jacob spoke the words “thy will, O Lord, be done” and witnessed his opponent’s collapse. In an instant, Jacob comes to the dreadful realization that God *did* intend to smite Sherem after all, that Sherem *would* repent after receiving a sign, and that the only thing standing in the way of that sign’s occurrence had been Jacob’s unwillingness to invoke it. In short, Jacob is shown in dramatic fashion how he had misunderstood the stakes of his confrontation with Sherem.

I want to suggest that Jacob also came to a realization about his will in the course of this profoundly humbling moment. At a first, too-hasty glance, it would seem that Sherem’s collapse drives home to Jacob the problematic status of his will, since the event demonstrates how Jacob’s desires had run counter to God’s wish to smite Sherem with a sign. But it is just as clear from verse 14 that Jacob had already recognized this problematic tension—after all, this is precisely the disparity he was trying to resolve by saying “not my will be done.” Jacob *already* knew that his will and God’s will were likely at odds or he would never have attempted to negate his will in the first place. Thus, what Jacob learns at this moment is not something about the problematic status of his will (a fact already tacitly knew) but realizes rather that he had sought to resolve that tension in the wrong way.

Jacob’s solution to the disparity between his will and God’s will was to assume a self-imposed passivity, to negate his desires and effectively get out of God’s way. Taking this approach, he too-hastily resolved the ambiguity between his will and God’s by endeavoring to subtract his own. What he may have realized, however, is that negating his own will was an insufficient gesture. If simply disavowing one’s wishes was adequate to enact God’s will, we might have expected the sign to occur midway through verse 14 when Jacob said “nevertheless, not my will be done.” In actual fact, however, it was not until Jacob had additionally *affirmed* God’s will that the sign occurred. The moment that finally invoked God’s power was the same moment that Jacob switched from referring to God in the third person (“if God shall smite thee”) to directly addressing him (“O Lord”), the moment when he was at his most active and prayerful. As Sherem hit the ground, Jacob recognized that something about his words and active involvement proved crucial to accomplishing God’s will.

In sum, Jacob had misapprehended the nature of prayer. He seemed to understand prayer in verse 14 to be an arena for wresting his will out of the way, turning prayer into a conflict between his will and God's will and inadvertently rendering God as his opponent. It was this conception of prayer that introduced the distance and servility noted above ("what am I that I should tempt God?"). Jacob realizes, however, that he is more than just a potential obstruction to God's will and that in fact his prayer can be a vital medium for realizing divine power. Although there may indeed be a disparity between Jacob's will and God's will, prayer is not primarily intended to address that discrepancy.

According to Jacob 7, there is instead an entirely different disparity that prayer attempts to address, and this is demonstrated in a curious convergence between verse 14 and verse 22. Although the chapter deliberately mutes the original resonance of the phrase "thy will be done" between the Lord's Prayer and the Gethsemane Prayer, it appears to have done so in order to replace it with a different resonance. When these prayers are incorporated in Jacob 7, the chapter adds one small phrase that dramatically reconfigures the way Jacob's two prayers interact. After admitting that God may intend to smite Sherem despite Jacob's own pessimism about the effectiveness of such a gesture, Jacob outlines what he hopes this portent would communicate: "let that be a sign unto thee that [God] has power, both in heaven and in earth" (Jacob 7:14). Although easily overlooked because of the more obvious echoes of the

Gethsemane Prayer on either side, Jacob's mention of "heaven and ... earth" seems to anticipate the reference in the Lord's Prayer to God's will having sway "in earth, as ... in heaven" (Matthew 6:10), and this may help explain why verse 22 quotes such an oddly prosaic portion of the Lord's Prayer rather than one of its more familiar and seemingly more potent lines. When Jacob says that he prays to "my Father who was in heaven" (Jacob 7:22), the emphasis on God's location "in heaven" directs the reader's attention back to the "heaven and ... earth" reference in verse 14.²⁸ The chapter thus seems to indicate that, although there is a disparity at the heart of prayer, it is not the disparity between divine and mortal wills, as Jacob had initially assumed. Rather, the disparity that prayer most fundamentally addresses is a disparity of *location*.

As it turns out, Jacob is no stranger to the importance of this division. The discrepancy between heaven and earth is, in fact, absolutely crucial to his broader theology. Like so much of his theology, Jacob's interest in the heaven/earth divide seems to have its genesis in the parting words of his father,

Lehi, whose teachings on mortality and redemption are recorded in 2 Nephi 2. Midway through the chapter, Lehi testifies to his sons that "there is a God, and he hath created all things, both the heavens and the earth" (2 Nephi 2:14), an assertion that, on its surface, seems entirely straightforward. Just a few verses later, however, Lehi's assertion is recast in dramatically spatial terms when he describes "an angel" who "had fallen from heaven" (2 Nephi 2:17). In Lehi's final sermon to his family, an event that is formative for Jacob's later theology, the devil is introduced as someone who has traversed the divide between heaven and earth and remains confined to the mortal world. That same devil, Lehi goes on, entices the first humans to follow a similar course when, as a consequence of partaking the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve are cast out of the divine garden "to till the earth" (2 Nephi 2:18). This earth-bound mortality then gives rise to one of Jacob's principal theological obsessions: the status of the flesh.

Nothing seems to strike existential horror in Jacob like the thought that "this flesh must ... crumble to its mother earth, to rise no more" (2 Nephi 9:7), and although we typically hear in this "rising" little more than the standard scriptural image for resurrection, it may also articulate an interest in actual vertical movement. For Jacob, the problem of the flesh is precisely its restriction to the earth: how can something mortal and corruptible ever regain

a share in the divinity and perfection that redemption seems to require? What are we to do, in other words, in the face of the disparity between heaven and earth?

The solution to this dilemma is the coming Christ, a being who quite literally incorporates elements of both divinity and mortality in order to overcome the division between them. In fact, articulating the soteriological role of Christ in terms of this discrepancy may explain why Jacob designates God's "power... in heaven and in earth" as the primary information a sign would communicate to Sherem, relegating the testimony "that Christ shall come" to second place (Jacob 7:14). Sherem must first fathom the spatial backdrop in which God's power operates in order to understand the salvific trajectory of the coming Christ. It is safe to say, at the very least, that for Jacob the divide between heaven and earth is vital, and forms perhaps the central question of his entire theology.

And yet despite all the importance he ascribes to the heaven/earth disparity and his commitment to the coming messiah as its primary solution, Jacob seems ironically to have missed certain practical implications of this theology for his own discipleship and ministry. There is perhaps no role more suited to reflecting about one's responsibility to mediate heavenly power on earth than the role of Israelite temple priest, and yet Jacob appears to have problematically withdrawn from certain components of his earthly ministry.²⁹ There are clues in Jacob's record, for instance, that he gradually retreated from the public sphere and understood his role to be oriented primarily around his record and its future audience, rather than around his contemporary Nephite brethren. After recording one of his public sermons in Jacob 1–3, the fourth chapter of his record opens with an extended reflection on the nature of engraving on metal plates (Jacob 4:1–2) and his purpose in writing (Jacob 4:3–4), followed by direct exhortation to his readers (Jacob 4:10–18). Jacob seems to have shifted rather suddenly from a public project of direct preaching to a written project, no longer recording his sermons or his public ministry, but instead reflecting on the purpose of the plates, his hopes for his future readers, and copying over the allegory of Zenos like a dutiful scribe (Jacob 5). Perhaps the reason Sherem must "[seek] much opportunity" (Jacob 7:6) to find Jacob is because Jacob has, in some sense, retreated from his public role among the people.³⁰ Even when he reemerges into the public sphere in the narrative of chapter 7, Jacob seems marginal, difficult to find, and his posture remains almost entirely passive—so passive, in fact, that during Sherem's repentance and confession (arguably the most important scene in the chapter)

Jacob is so far removed from the event that he narrates his own pivotal prayer outside the pericope altogether! Jacob's record has subtly communicated his steady retreat from among the people, who presumably did not take kindly to the stern rebuke of his opening sermon, and it is not hard to imagine that Jacob may have decided to confine himself to his somewhat-sequestered role as temple priest (Jacob 1:18). Has Jacob tried to confine himself to heavenly things? Has he misunderstood his priestly role as primarily a question of holy aloofness from his people instead of atoning for and reuniting with them through the rituals of the Israelite temple—rituals that were intended, after all, to mediate Jehovah's heavenly holiness to his chosen people on earth? Perhaps the moment of the sign in verse 15 convicts Jacob as much as it had convicted Sherem, reminding him that discipleship is not a question of ascetically removing oneself to contemplate heaven but of making God's will and power incarnate on earth. By confining himself to the heavenly role of temple priest and reifying the distance between himself and his people, Jacob may have inadvertently denied his relationship with and responsibility for the messy and even profane situation on earth.

This brings us full circle to a reflection on how Jacob approaches himself and his will in prayer. In light of his broader theology and what we have seen in this chapter about the role of the will, Jacob may see his earthly embodiment as, at root, a *problem*. Seeing his embodiment as a problem, prayer may then be seen as the solution. In this light, we might reconfigure what Jacob learned at Sherem's collapse as follows: although he had previously

affirmed that God “has power, both in heaven and in earth” (Jacob 7:14), Jacob comes to see that God’s possession of that power is somehow insufficient to equally accomplish the divine will in both realms. The full expression of God’s power requires Jacob’s prayer in order to be accomplished, and writing himself out of the situation by negating his will hadn’t helped. In fact, by praying with a focus on his will as part of the problem, praying as an abject creature tentatively estimating the claims of a distant sovereign, Jacob would have inadvertently reified the very disparity that prayer was meant to address. If the project of prayer is to overcome the distance between heaven and earth, it was not Jacob’s opposing will that had nearly obstructed the miraculous sign but the distance he had imposed between earth and heaven by refiguring the relationship of creature and creator as a contest of wills.

When Jacob’s prayer focused on the problem of negating his own will, it was ultimately motivated by a self-centered anxiety that ironically reinforced the very difficulty he hoped to resolve. By taking prayer to be a question of negating his will, prayer became an internal, affective project rather than an external, spatially oriented task. What Jacob comes to learn and enact by verse 22 is that his desires are not the point of prayer, whether he takes a positive or negative stance toward those desires. Jacob’s task is not to save himself by praying perfectly, but rather to assume a certain mediating role on earth in order to help enact God’s will “in earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10), and that mediation is only possible when he views himself more as God’s colleague than God’s vassal. After all, mankind was formed from “the dust of the ground” and given stewardship over the world (Genesis 2:7, 15; Moses 2:28)—made out of earth in order to tend the earth. By fretting over the status of his mortal will and retreating from his earthly stewardship over his people, Jacob may have misunderstood the individual and practical stakes of the heaven/earth divide.

In this respect, Jacob’s second prayer is a far cry from his earlier aloofness and frustration. Here we find him actively and sincerely involved in the circumstance at hand, attending to the ways God might leverage the potential of this situation to manifest his divine power, and then submitting that idea to God in the form of a specific “request” (Jacob 7:22). God is no longer a distant and terrifying sovereign, but instead a “Father” and a partner. And although the full text of the Lord’s Prayer is only echoed in verse 22 rather than quoted, we might reflect at least briefly on how that prayer treats the will. In the Lord’s Prayer, the disciple affirms only “thy will be done” without explicitly negating his own will and this affirmative, tranquil attitude toward desire seems to match Jacob’s general disposition in verse 22.

God’s will has been removed from any relation of dialectical antagonism with Jacob’s, as was the case in verse 14. By verse 22 “thy will be done” is now something Jacob can seek in its own right. Jacob is content to let his will be checked in his pursuit of the larger project: prayer as a means to close the distance between heaven and earth. Jacob thus figures a type of prayer that acts as a conduit to convey God’s will down to earth, rather than conveying his will (positive or negative) up to heaven.

With this in mind, we may have also arrived at an explanation for the chronological inversion of the two New Testament prayers in Jacob 7, an inversion which places the Lord’s Prayer after the Gethsemane Prayer. Although there is something unquestionably vital about Jesus’s words in Gethsemane for what they teach about the potentially obstructive character of the human will, it may be significant that the model of prayer Jacob finally comes around to in verse 22—and thus the model of prayer which the chapter ultimately privileges—is the very same model which Jesus himself explicitly privileged with the command “after *this* manner ... pray ye” (Matthew 6:9). The New Testament gives us the Lord’s Prayer as the explicit model we should follow, perhaps because the Lord’s Prayer more clearly models the stance a disciple must take toward his or her own will.

Jacob 7 shows not only that Christ came to heal the gap between heaven and earth (Jacob 7:11–12, 14), but that we can obstruct that healing through a misconceived notion of prayer. The sign from heaven in Jacob 7 forced not only Sherem to the ground, but recommitted Jacob to the earth as well.

NOTES

25. I have in mind primarily Alma 30, which contains a host of verbal allusions to Jacob 7, and 3 Nephi 1, in which Nephite multitudes fall to the earth after witnessing a sign. The similarities between Jacob 7 and Alma 30 are usually treated thematically rather than verbally as part of the triple comparison of Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor. See Brigham D. Madsen, “B.H. Roberts’s Studies of the Book of Mormon,” *Dialogue* 26.3 (1993): 77–86; Mark D. Thomas, “Dying Heretics,” in *Digging in Cumorah: Reclaiming Book of Mormon Narratives* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Signature Books, 1999), 161–171; John W. Welch, “Comparing Sherem, Nehor, and Korihor,” in *The Legal Cases in the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, Maxwell Institute, 2008).

26. This is not the first time Jacob’s record alludes to the New Testament. Elizabeth Fenton notes that Jacob 5 seems to develop imagery drawn from Romans 11:24 such that “the parable of the olive tree not only describes grafting but also operates as a kind of grafting itself.” Elizabeth Fenton, “Open Canons: Sacred History and American History in *The Book of Mormon*,” *The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists* 1 (2013), 344.

27. W.C. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, International Critical Commentary 26 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 1:605, 3:500; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14–28*, Word Biblical Commentary 33B (Dallas, Tex.: Word Books, 1995), 784; John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Greek Testament Commentary 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 288, 1103; R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007), 1006; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew*, Hermeneia (trans. James E. Crouch; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 44:319, 46:397.

28. This same allusion also highlights the double emphasis on “earth” in the intervening confession scene in which Sherem’s collapse sends him specifically “to the earth” and in which the attendant Nephite crowds are similarly so “overcome” that they “fell to the earth,” in particular (Jacob 7:14, 21).

29. Jacob’s priestly appointment is mentioned in 2 Nephi 5:26 and Jacob 1:18. John W. Welch speculates about the added legal and ritual resonance that a temple setting would afford to the confrontation between Jacob and Sherem. See “The Case of Sherem” in *The Legal Cases of the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, Maxwell Institute, 2008) and “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, Utah: Deseret Book, 1994), 309, 339.

30. Sherem’s odd admission that he “sought much opportunity” to find Jacob is also a key feature of the discussion surrounding Sherem’s ethnic identity. See Kevin Christiansen, “The Deuteronomist De-Christianizing of the Old Testament,” *FARMS Review* 16.2 (2004): 59–90; Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness* (Draper, Utah: Greg Kofford Books, 2007), 2B:565–66; A. Keith Thompson, “Who Was Sherem?” *Interpreter* 14 (2015): 1–15.