T

he Journal of Book of Mormon Studies was first published sixteen years ago, under the editorial direction of Stephen D. Ricks. Seven years later John L. Sorenson, as the Journal’s new editor, changed its format to make the contents more accessible to specialist and nonspecialist readers alike. Under the direction of Sorenson’s successor, S. Kent Brown, the Journal has continued to feature first-rate scholarship on the Book of Mormon, often accompanied by beautiful visual aids and images. Thanks to these scholars’ vision and editorial skills, thousands of people now enjoy the Journal either as subscribers or through the Internet, where they are able to stay abreast of the best that scholarship has to offer on the Book of Mormon.

Partly as a result of the Journal’s success, and partly in answer to the apparent need for a scholarly, faithful venue in which other Latter-day scriptures can regularly be discussed, the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship has decided to expand the Journal’s scope to include all of what might be termed “Restoration Scripture”—those books of latter-day Saint scripture and related texts that were revealed through the ministry of the Prophet Joseph Smith. These include the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, the Pearl of Great Price, and the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. With this issue, accordingly, the title of the Journal has been changed to the Journal of the Book of Mormon and Restoration Scripture—“the Book of Mormon” being retained in the title not only to help provide a sense of continuity with the former title but also in recognition of that book’s continuing role as the cornerstone of the Mormon faith. Highlighting the Book of Mormon also seems appropriate in light of the recent establishment of the Laura F. Willes Center for Book of Mormon Studies at the Institute.

With the retirement of Kent Brown from Brigham Young University, the Institute has asked Andrew Hedges to assume the editorship of the expanded Journal. Grant Hardy, Steven Harper, Jennifer Lane, and Kerry Muhlestein have agreed to serve as associate editors. The editors would like to thank Kent Brown and his predecessors, as well as the staff at FARMS and the Maxwell Institute, for all that they have done over the years to make the Journal what it is today. We would also like to thank BYU’s and the Maxwell Institute’s administration for their encouragement and support of scholarship in the foundational scriptures of the restoration.

Our hope is that the expanded Journal will be a venue where scholars from a variety of backgrounds can explore, discuss, and even debate important topics relating to the texts, contexts, and meanings of latter-day scripture. We believe that part of this includes reexamining and unpacking familiar assumptions and arguments—even those that have found their best expression in past issues of the Journal and related publications. We believe, too, that there are many topics yet to be explored in both the Book of Mormon and other restoration scriptures, and hope contributors and readers alike will consider the Journal a fitting venue for introducing new subjects and directions for study.

As we revisit old arguments and pursue new lines of inquiry, readers will quickly see that in many cases scholars disagree—sometimes strongly—in their assumptions, the relative weight they place on different pieces of evidence, and