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The Deliberate Use of Hebrew Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon

Carl J. Cranney

The study of Hebrew poetry is a rich and productive field. Robert Alter’s popular Art of Biblical Poetry gives readers a profound understanding of the poetic techniques biblical authors used to make their writings more engaging.¹ In addition, the historical development of Hebrew poetry has been used to date certain texts.² The presence of poetry has been used as evidence of the careful construction of particular texts.³ Poetic structures have clued scholars into the possibility that entire books of the Bible were meant for use in public worship.⁴ As these studies suggest, scholars have proposed many styles and functions of Hebrew poetry.

In this paper I will focus on one particular kind of Hebrew poetry—that of parallelisms—as it appears in the Book of Mormon. A quick example of this form of poetry, drawn from the book of Proverbs, will suffice to make its nature clear. Proverbs 11:1 reads: “A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a just weight is his delight.”⁵ There are two

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5. I draw this example from Alter, Art of Biblical Poetry, 211.
elements at work here, a simple ABAB parallelism and an antithetical parallelism. Reformatted, the passage appears as follows:

A A false balance
   B is an abomination to the Lord
A but a just weight
   B is his delight.  

This visual reformatting highlights the antithetical elements. The two A lines represent the thing discussed, and the B lines describe the Lord’s reaction to them. Indeed, the rest of Proverbs 11 contains nothing but such antithetical pairings. Anciently, parallelisms were used in many ways, but perhaps the most significant was to aid memorization of complex texts. A significant percentage of parallelisms could aid a speaker in memorizing a text. The more parallelisms and the more patterns, the easier memorization would be.

This study focuses on the presence of poetic parallelisms in the Book of Mormon and argues that these parallelisms appear consistently in Book of Mormon texts intended for oral recitation (where poetic structure would presumably aid memorization and oral delivery), while they remain consistently absent in Book of Mormon texts intended to be circulated in written form.

Background

Before proceeding to my discussion of poetic parallelisms in the Book of Mormon, a review of related scholarship on the book’s poetic structures should prove helpful. The literature on poetic structures in the Book of Mormon most often focuses on chiasmus.  

6. I am using a formatting technique used by Donald Parry that will be introduced in more detail later in this paper.  

7. A good primer on the concept of chiasmus can be found in John W. Welch, ed., *Chiasmus in Antiquity* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1981), 9–15. Summarily put, chiasmus is reverse parallelism. Instead of the ABAB structure found in the proverb
have passed since John Welch first discovered chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. Since that time, doubters and believers have debated the validity and meaning of his arguments. Believers have seen the presence of chiasmus as an indication of the Book of Mormon’s ancient origins. Doubters have assailed the strength of specific examples of chiasmus, as well as of its usefulness in determining whether a text exhibits ancient Near Eastern influences.

An exemplary moment in this debate was an exchange between Earl Wunderli and Boyd and Farrell Edwards. Wunderli critiques Welch’s argument that Alma 36 contains a masterful example of chiasmus, arguing that the chiasm is forced onto the text and that Welch relies too much on parallels that do not hold up under close scrutiny. Edwards and Edwards respond that using statistically relevant criteria (drawn from Welch’s own criteria for identification of chiasmus) allows them to fix the probability of Alma 36 being an accidentally generated chiasm at 0.00018 (making it clearly intentional) and that Wunderli’s critique of their results is the consequence of using literary criteria to counter mathematical criteria.

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9. This back and forth on the intentionality of chiasmus is by far the largest portion of the previous related literature on the Book of Mormon and is simultaneously the most relevant for my project.


They state that “meaningful statistical results do not require adherence to the literary standards devised by Welch or Wunderli.”

Others have similarly cast doubt on identified Book of Mormon chiasms; they argue that it is possible to accidentally generate chiasms and point out that chiasms can be found in unlikely (and definitely modern) places. Brent Metcalfe, for instance, finds chiasmus in several revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants, in Joseph Smith’s diary, and in a passage from John Taylor. A letter from Joseph Smith to Emma Smith has also been identified as containing a chiasm, and one critic has even pointed out that he can find chiasmus in the INFORMIX-OnLine Database Administrator’s Guide. Perhaps most astonishingly, chiasmus appears to be replete in Dr. Seuss’s *Green Eggs and Ham*.

From such examples, one could well conclude that the mere presence of chiasmus does not necessarily determine the antiquity of a text. However, no scholar has suggested that just because one can accidentally generate chiasms that all chiasms are accidentally generated. What must be shown is whether or not a particular chiasm is intentional. As Welch states:

If, on the one hand, one should view Smith himself as being responsible for the book, this would initially imply that even extremely complex chiastic patterns have occurred here completely

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unintentionally and accidentally. Perhaps such chiastic incidences should then be explained as a product of something such as a general human literary sense of balance or symmetry. This, of course, would have broad implications with respect to one’s understanding of the many chiastic passages observed elsewhere in the Bible and in other ancient writings. It would not, however, explain why chiasmus is not, then, more universally observable and why it seems to occur in certain periods of a culture’s literary development but not in others.\textsuperscript{19}

Additionally, even though it is easy to see how one might accidentally generate simple chiasms (such as an ABBA-patterned chiasm), it is difficult to see how one might accidentally generate a chiasm of much greater complexity, such as that Welch claims to have found in Alma 36.\textsuperscript{20} Edwards and Edwards grant that “short chiasms are not uncommon in literature. In some cases, the authors undoubtedly intended to use that form for literary effect (that is, by design); in other cases, the elements fell into that form without author intent (that is, by chance).”\textsuperscript{21} They also point out that the examples of chiasmus put forward by critics (including many of those listed above) do not demonstrate intentionality, though the Book of Mormon’s chiasms do demonstrate intentionality.\textsuperscript{22}

Although much has been written about chiasmus in the Book of Mormon, chiasmus is not the only Hebrew poetic pattern found therein.


\textsuperscript{20} Welch’s analysis of Alma 36 indicates that, more than just a simple two-element ABBA chiasm, it is an eleven-element chiasm. Other scholars have attempted to revise Welch’s work. For example, Joseph Spencer argues that it “seems best to not force a chiasm onto the whole of Alma 36, but rather just to take verses 1–5 and 26–30 as a tightly structured chiastic framing that sets off the distinctly structured central conversion narrative of verses 6–25.” Joseph Spencer, \textit{An Other Testament: On Typology} (Salem, OR: Salt Press, 2012), 5.


Donald Parry, taking a cue from Welch’s discoveries, has scoured the Book of Mormon for all kinds of Hebrew poetic parallelisms. His *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon: The Complete Text Reformatted* lists twenty-five different types of poetic parallelism in the Book of Mormon. Hugh Pinnock lists twenty-seven forms of parallelism in his *Finding Biblical Hebrew and Other Ancient Literary Forms in the Book of Mormon*, some of which overlap Parry’s categories. Between incredibly complex chiastic patterns and a proliferating variety of parallelistic structures, there appears to be more going on poetically in the Book of Mormon than just a few possibly accidental chiasms.

Parry’s work is useful not only for its exhaustive scope, but because of the visual nature of the reformatted text that allows readers to easily see where parallelisms appear. Two quick examples will suffice. First, I present an extended alternate from 1 Nephi 12:9:

And he said unto me
A Thou rememberest the twelve apostles of the Lamb?
B Behold they are they who shall judge
C the twelve tribes of Israel;
A wherefore, the twelve ministers of thy seed
B shall be judged of them;
C for ye are of the house of Israel.

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23. For a richer discussion of such parallelisms by Parry, see Donald W. Parry, “Hebraisms and Other Ancient Peculiarities in the Book of Mormon,” in *Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002), 155–89.


26. I find Parry’s work on the variety of poetic parallelisms in the Book of Mormon compelling, so much so that the previous literature’s almost myopic focus on chiasmus seems lopsided to me.
Second, here is a chiasm from 2 Nephi 9:28:

O that cunning plan of the evil one!
   A  O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men!
   B  When they are learned they think they are wise,
   C  And they hearken not unto the counsel of God,
   C  for they set it aside,
   B  supposing they know of themselves,
   A  wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not.

Such visual reformatting exists for the twenty-three other kinds of parallelisms Parry discusses.

Parry’s formatting makes it easier to tell when sections frequently use parallelism and when such poetic structures are absent for long stretches of the text. A quick skim through Parry’s work shows that some pages exhibit many parallelisms, while others starkly lack such patterns and simply display a normal page of text. However else such reformatting can serve readers of the Book of Mormon, I want to show that we can statistically demonstrate that certain portions of the Book of Mormon are more likely to have Hebrew poetic parallelisms than not—mathematically demonstrating what the reader’s eye can take in at a glance. More precisely, if we take self-contained blocks of text that can be separated from the larger narratives in which they appear and then analyze the frequency of poetic parallelisms in those texts, we can show not only that the parallelisms exist (as Parry’s reformatting already makes clear), but also that they show up in texts apparently intended for oral recitation and are absent in texts intended primarily for written circulation. Much like the debates over whether or not a particular instance of chiasmus is accidental or deliberate, this paper seeks to answer the question of whether parallelisms themselves are accidental or deliberate throughout the entire Book of Mormon. Regardless of who authored the text, if poetic parallelisms—whether simple or complex—were accidental rather than intentional, we might expect them to be randomly strewn across the text of the Book of Mormon. But they are not.
Methodology

This section explains my methods for selecting the texts to analyze, dividing those texts into genres and categories, determining the percentage of parallelization of those texts, and concluding that the parallelisms are not accidentally generated based on their frequency in the different categories of texts.

**Text selection**

To select the texts for this analysis, I propose three rigorous criteria:

1. The texts are clearly self-contained relative to the larger narrative.
2. The texts are explicitly included in a larger narrative as an embedded document.
3. The authorship of the texts is clearly stated or implied.

These criteria separate a limited number of texts to analyze from the many available texts in the Book of Mormon. I will analyze the following twenty texts totaling 884 verses (according to the current versification of the Book of Mormon):

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27. Doubtless some will think that these criteria are too stringent. After all, this means that we will not be including the psalm in 2 Nephi 4:15–35, Benjamin’s address in Mosiah 3–5, or Alma’s lament in Alma 29. These three texts are probably the most prominent texts that do not meet the rigid criteria, so I address their exclusion in the appendix with hopes that the reader can extend my logic to other texts from the Book of Mormon that might, at first glance, warrant inclusion. The idea of selecting only the embedded documents for analysis comes from Grant Hardy’s discussion of such texts in his *Understanding the Book of Mormon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 121–51. Hardy lists fifteen documents embedded by Mormon and ten speeches likely reworked by Mormon; he also briefly discusses Jacob’s sermons and Mormon’s single recorded sermon and letters to Moroni. See Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon*, 122, 47, 81, 100. My criteria for determining which documents are embedded are more stringent than Hardy’s because our projects differ: mine is to analyze poetic parallelisms, while his is to discuss their use by the three major contributors to the Book of Mormon (Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni).
2 Nephi 6:2–10:25 (not including verses quoting Isaiah). “The words of Jacob₂, the brother of Nephi₁, which he spake unto the people of Nephi” (2 Nephi 6:1).²⁸

Jacob 2:2–3:11. “The words which Jacob₂, the brother of Nephi₁, spake unto the people of Nephi, after the death of Nephi₁ (Jacob 2:1).”

Mosiah 9–10. Zeniff’s personal record, the first part of “the record of Zeniff—An account of his people, from the time they left the land of Zarahemla until the time that they were delivered out of the hands of the Lamanites” (headnote to Mosiah 9–22).

Mosiah 29:5–32. “Therefore king Mosiah₂ sent again among the people; yea, even a written word sent he among the people. And these were the words that were written” (Mosiah 29:4).

Alma 5:3–62. “The words which Alma₂, the High Priest according to the holy order of God, delivered to the people in their cities and villages throughout the land. . . . And these are the words which he spake to the people in the church which was established in the city of Zarahemla, according to his own record” (headnote to Alma 5; Alma 5:2).

Alma 7. “The words of Alma₂ which he delivered to the people in Gideon, according to his own record” (headnote to Alma 7).


Alma 38. “The commandments of Alma₂ to his son Shiblon” (headnote to Alma 38).


²⁸ From this point on, I will use the standard way of differentiating individuals in the Book of Mormon if they share a common name. The first individual mentioned in the Book of Mormon will have his name marked with a subscript 1, the next with a subscript 2, etc. A list of individuals in the Book of Mormon can be found in appendix 8 of Grant Hardy’s The Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Edition (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 690–706, or in the more unwieldy index found in the standard-issued LDS scriptures triple combination.
• Alma 54:5–14. “Now these are the words which [Moroni₁] wrote unto Ammoron” (Alma 54:4).
• Alma 54:16–24. “[Ammoron] wrote another epistle unto Moroni₁, and these are the words which he wrote” (Alma 54:15).
• Alma 56:2–58:41. “Moroni₁ received an epistle from Helaman₂, stating the affairs of the people in that quarter of the land. And these are the words which he wrote” (Alma 56:1–2).
• Alma 60. “[Moroni₁] wrote again to the governor of the land, who was Pahoran₁, and these are the words which he wrote” (Alma 60:1).
• Alma 61:2–21. “[Moroni₁] received an epistle from Pahoran₁, the chief governor. And these are the words which he received” (Alma 61:1).
• Helaman 5:6–12. “For [Nephi₂ and Lehi₄] remembered the words which their father Helaman₃ spake unto them. And these are the words which he spake” (Helaman 5:5).
• 3 Nephi 3:2–10. “Lachoneus₁, the governor of the land, received an epistle from the leader and the governor of this band of robbers; and these were the words which were written” (3 Nephi 3:1).
• Moroni 7:2–48. “And now I, Moroni₂, write a few of the words of my father, Mormon₂, which he spake concerning faith, hope, and charity; for after this manner did he speak unto the people, as he taught them in the synagogue which they had built for the place of worship” (Moroni 7:1).
• Moroni 8:2–30. “An epistle of my father Mormon₂, written to me, Moroni₂” (Moroni 8:1).
• Moroni 9. “The second epistle of Mormon₂ to his son Moroni₂” (headnote to Moroni 9).

29. Third Nephi 23:9–13 indicates that this is an embedded text that Mormon₂ worked into the narrative. The author is likely Nephi₃ or someone under Nephi₃’s direction working from memory.
Determination of the presence of parallelisms

The criterion for determining the presence of intentional parallelism is simple: I take Parry’s findings at face value. Critics might assert that Parry is forcing the text to fit his criteria, attributing certain parallelisms to the text that are not there. However, it is implicitly an ad hominem attack against Parry to suggest that he forces nonexistent parallelisms onto the Book of Mormon text just to make a case that the Book of Mormon is an ancient document containing Hebrew poetry. Parry’s motivations are not relevant to the discussion, but whether the parallelisms he points out appear in significant patterns is. It is possible that he forced parallelisms where none were actually intended, sometimes simply assuming that his guess was close enough. It is just as possible, though, that he missed intended parallelisms. Given that we have roughly twenty texts to work with, for the purposes of this paper I will assume that Parry is accidentally forcing and missing parallelisms at a similar rate text by text—that any errors he has made in ascribing parallelisms to the text are statistically uniform and will not affect my calculations.30

Another criticism, more literary in nature, is that Parry overlooks certain nonparallelistic literary techniques. While Parry does discuss less mechanistic literary forms—metaphors, for instance—he does so in the context of their usefulness in discovering the more mechanistic literary features he attempts to uncover in the Book of Mormon.31 He also does not analyze characteristics unique to particular passages. For example, Parry does not treat the often-noted series of rhetorical questions in Alma 5 as an instance of Hebrew poetic form, yet the presence of such a series of rhetorical questions indicates that Alma2 carefully worked out the entirety of the text ahead of its public delivery, likely with oral

30. It is possible that Parry unconsciously attempts to find parallelisms in texts where one would expect to find them: texts for oral recitation. I find this unlikely. The process I have gone through in the development of this project required much consideration, discussion with others, and changing of initial ideas. To think that Parry uniformly, without deliberately trying, created this pattern accidentally might be true, but it seems a stretch to assume so.
31. See Parry, Poetic Parallelisms, xiv–xvi.
recitation in mind. However, although this is a valid criticism of the limits of Parry’s work, his focus is intentionally narrow and specific to the more mechanistic literary forms, and he does his job well. This paper’s focus will be similarly narrow and specific. I will concern myself only with those same mechanistic literary forms since they can most easily be dealt with in a statistical analysis.

Percentage of text with parallelisms

In order to statistically demonstrate what the reader’s eye can intuitively detect while reading Parry’s reformatted text of the Book of Mormon, it will be necessary to determine how much of each particular text is in parallelistic form. But how does one determine just how much of a text is parallelized? I am unaware of any precedent-setting analysis in this area. When analyzing biblical texts that use poetic parallelisms, I have not encountered a single scholar who considers the percentage of parallelisms in a text. This paper, then, attempts something new. Shall we go verse by verse (that is, asking whether a verse contains a parallelism, or perhaps is entirely parallelized)? Shall we go sentence by sentence (that is, asking whether a sentence contains a parallelism, or perhaps is entirely parallelized)? Shall we just count the number of different kinds of parallelisms present in the texts (that is, a simple alternate counts as one parallelism, as does one chiasm, regardless of its size or complexity)? And then how do we calculate frequency or percentages based on the determined criteria?

32. This rhetorical pattern of questions and its uselessness in analyzing Parry was pointed out to me by Grant Hardy. My thanks go to him for his thoughtful critique of Parry and for his help in selecting texts to analyze.

33. It would be ideal if there were a similar piece of scholarship from which to draw poetic structures in the text, but Parry is the only Book of Mormon scholar who has done such exhaustive work. The closest parallel would be Pinnock, but because he relies on Parry’s work they overlap substantially, though not entirely. For example, Pinnock thinks that Helaman 3:14 is a good example of polysyndeton—that is, the verse uses many “ands”—though Parry structures it as a chiasm (Pinnock, Finding Biblical Hebrew, 21–27; Parry, Poetic Parallelisms, 395).

34. Heil, already cited, might be the closest example. See Heil, Hebrews.
In the end, a simple test is sufficient. I perform a basic comparison-of-means test using the percentage of the passage that is parallelized as the dependent variable of interest. I determine the percentage according to whether or not Parry identifies a particular verse as having any portion of a parallelism in it. The score derives from the percentage of verses in the individual passage that have parallelized structures in them. In order to avoid potential problems with the (relatively) arbitrary versification (introduced into the text late in the nineteenth century), it would be prudent to use more than one way to determine the frequency of parallelisms in the text. Therefore, in the appendix I offer the results of a second calculation in which I track the frequency of parallelistic elements against the number of sense lines, which Royal Skousen breaks up “according to phrases and clauses” in his *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, rather than compare verses with parallelisms against verses without.\(^{35}\)

I also spot-checked to verify that the elements Parry uses to draw out the parallelisms are present in the original text according to Skousen.

*Calculations*

I have grouped the texts that meet the criteria into four genres: letters (8), proclamations (1), narratives (1), and sermons (10). The one proclamation (Mosiah 29:5–32) and the one narrative (Mosiah 9–10) have no comparative texts in their same genre, but both seem intuitively to fall, along with the letters, into a category of texts primarily composed to be circulated in written form (rather than delivered orally). It is thus possible to divide the selected texts into two broad categories: written texts (letters, proclamations, and narratives) and oral texts (sermons). This allows us, finally, to address several questions through statistical calculation. First, is there a relationship between the different genres of texts and the percentage of parallelized material in them? Second,

\(^{35}\) Royal Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007). Skousen’s project is “to reconstruct in large degree the original text of the Book of Mormon using the standard techniques of critical scholarship” (p. xvi). Sense lines are a way of breaking up the text “according to phrases and clauses,” which has various advantages for a project like Skousen’s (xlii–xliv).
looking at the percentages of parallelized verses, can we learn anything about the individual texts themselves? Third, can this help us determine intentionality concerning these parallel patterns at the level of the whole Book of Mormon?

I use a basic comparison-of-means test (or t-test) to determine whether texts intended for oral presentation have a statistically higher percentage of parallelized (that is, poetic) material than do texts meant to be read. (The t-test is a simple test that takes into account the averages of the scores and the variation in those scores between items within a single category.) The appendix includes results from a sensitivity analysis in which I repeated this test while including the three additional texts mentioned in note 27 above. A chart containing the results for the calculation using Skousen’s Earliest Text will also appear in the appendix, showing that the major findings are identical to those of the primary calculation.

Statistical results

The results of my calculation can be found in table 1. The mean represents the average percentage of parallelized verses, the standard error and standard deviation provide measures of the variation in the scores, and the 95% confidence interval indicates the range of likely values for the group mean (i.e., 95% of the time an oral text will have between 39% and 64.7% of its verses parallelized). The Pr(T > t) value shown below the table represents the probability that the difference between the two groups is attributable to chance.

I find a relationship that is statistically significant to the 0.000016 level. In other words, there is less than a 1 in 50,000 chance that this relationship occurred by chance. The oral texts have 38 percentage points more parallelized material than the written texts, with a 95% confidence

36. From note 27 above, the three texts are 2 Nephi 4:15–35, Mosiah 3–5, and Alma 29. The Stata-based statistical coding and the data used for calculation for both analyses are available on request. My thanks to Stephen T. Cranney for his help with this portion of the paper.
interval of 22 percent and 53 percent (that is, there is a 95% chance that the strength of the effect lies between 22 and 53 percent). Regarding the percentage of parallelized verses, the results appear in table 2, in order of lowest percentage of parallelisms to highest.

Findings

A few observations stand out immediately from the data in table 2. First, letters contain the lowest percentages of parallelisms (averaging 10.4% parallelized verses). It would make sense that letters back and forth that existed as written documents of some kind would have been quickly written with little regard to poetry and likely little need for memorization (which would be facilitated by parallelistic patterns). One would therefore expect to find that letters exhibit parallelistic structures less frequently than other genres. This is borne out by the data.

Second, it is fascinating that the two texts with 0% parallelisms come from Lamanite/Gadianon robber leaders—Ammoron (although he was raised among the Nephites) and Giddianhi specifically. However, other letter writers—Moroni₁ and Helaman₂—fare little better. In fact, of all the letters contained in the Book of Mormon, Pahoran₁’s in Alma 61 stands out as the most poetic, although it still has only 25% parallelized verses—comparatively underwhelming when set side by side with texts meant to be oral. (Besides, in context it seems reasonable that Pahoran₁ would have carefully crafted his reply to Moroni₁, as the latter

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**Table 1. T-test of oral and written texts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard error</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>95% confidence interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral Texts</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.519</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.390–0.647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Texts</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.061–0.210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.327</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.243</td>
<td>0.213–0.440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.383</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Difference = mean(0) – mean(1), \( t = 5.835 \); degrees of freedom = 18; \( Pr(T > t) < 0.001 \)
had just threatened him with a coup d'état!) But even Pahoran’s very politic response does not have the marks of a carefully crafted poetic text intended for oral delivery. For this, we must turn to those texts I have labeled sermons.

Table 2. Texts by percentage of parallelized verses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Percentage of parallelized verses</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Nephi 3:2–10</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Giddianhi</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 54:16–24</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Ammoron</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 56:2–58:44</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Helaman₂</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 54:5–14</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Moroni₁</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni 9</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Mormon₂</td>
<td>11.54%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni 8:2–30</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Mormon₂</td>
<td>13.79%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 60</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Moroni₁</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosiah 29:5–32</td>
<td>Proclamation</td>
<td>Mosiah₁</td>
<td>21.43%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 61:2–21</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Pahoran₁</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 38</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma₂</td>
<td>26.67%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 39–42</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma₂</td>
<td>27.47%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosiah 9–10</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Zeniff</td>
<td>31.71%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob 2:2–3:11</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Jacob₂</td>
<td>35.56%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni 7:2–48</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Mormon₂</td>
<td>42.55%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helaman 13:5–15:17</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Samuel₁ (Nephi?</td>
<td>54.88%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 5:3–62</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma₂</td>
<td>56.67%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Nephi 6:2–5, 8–15; 9:1–10:25</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>60.22%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 7</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma₂</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helaman 5:6–12</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Helaman₃</td>
<td>71.43%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 36–37</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma₂</td>
<td>76.62%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Third, it is clear that the sermons, as a whole, are remarkably diverse in frequency of parallelistic structures, but every one of them contains a higher percentage than any of the letters. (Some may be statistical outliers because of their brevity. This is surely the case with Helaman 5:6–12: a little bit of parallelism goes a long way in such short texts, which is why this seven-verse sermon is 71% parallelized.) Simply put: Book of Mormon sermons contain a greater percentage of verses with parallelisms than do the other genres. This makes intuitive sense since one major reason for poetic parallelism is to facilitate memorization for oral delivery—such as would be needed to deliver a sermon as well as to ensure that it would be memorable.

Fourth, Alma seemed to have written very different sermons for his three children, as evidenced by the fact that the speech to Helaman has a much higher percentage of parallelized verses. (Alma 38 might be an anomaly because of the brevity of the text, but Alma 39–42 does not have that excuse.) Alma apparently worked much harder to parallelize his speech to Helaman (77% parallelized verses) than to either of his other sons (26% for Shiblon and 27% for Corianton). Though the speech to Corianton arguably contains some of Alma’s greatest teachings on justice, atonement, resurrection, and other doctrines, Alma reserved the parallelized sermon for Helaman, the future record keeper. Perhaps the handing over of the records is to be taken as more of a public ritual than a simple father-to-son discussion with one of his children. Or maybe we are to understand that Alma worked harder at crafting his own personal narrative, which figures more prominently in the speech to Helaman, than either of the speeches to Shiblon or Corianton. Or perhaps Alma simply enjoyed using poetry more when telling a narrative than when discussing theology. Speculation aside, it is clear that Alma crafted very different sermons for his three sons.

Fifth, because we have only one example each from the genres of proclamation and narrative, we cannot draw definitive conclusions about those genres. The proclamation in Mosiah 29:5–32 was written down and distributed among the people, explicitly as “a written word” (verse 4). There would presumably have been no reason to include many parallelisms if it were written down, as it would not need to be memorized.
With 21% parallelized verses, it fits in with other texts explicitly created for readers. As we have no other proclamations that meet the rigid criteria to compare it to, it might just be that Mosiah, himself didn't include many parallelisms in his official proclamations or that Nephite kingly proclamations as a genre didn't tend to include many parallelisms. Thus the beginning of Zeniff’s narrative in Mosiah 9–10 is the only one of these written texts that overlaps with the sermons. Again, since we have no others of its genre for comparison and no other writings of Zeniff, we cannot perform a more exhaustive comparative analysis.37

Sixth, again with the exception of Zeniff’s record, all the texts that were primarily to be circulated in written form contain a lower percentage of parallelized verses than any of the texts intended mainly for oral delivery. A substantial statistical difference exists in the percentage of parallelized material between the different genres of which we have more than one example. The texts for oral delivery, in which we would intuitively expect to find higher percentages of parallelisms, are precisely where we find them. This strongly suggests that these parallelisms are not being generated accidentally.

Conclusion and future projects

The truth or authenticity of the Book of Mormon does not rest on the presence of any statement, Hebrew poetic pattern, or scholarly finding. The debate concerning Hebrew poetic patterns will continue. This paper has demonstrated only the following: not only do parallelistic structures exist in the Book of Mormon (deliberate or not, Parry has demonstrated their existence), they also significantly occur precisely where they contextually should occur and are absent where their presence would be surprising. The results of this analysis clearly indicate

37. Though we cannot perform a more exhaustive analysis, one quick note about Zeniff’s writings may be important. In his two chapters he uses “many ands” (3x), “synonymous words” (3x), “like sentence beginnings” (1x), and “like sentence endings” (1x), parallelisms that lend themselves to long lists (Parry, Poetic Parallelisms, 178–82). Perhaps we are to understand that Zeniff simply had a penchant for using lists, and that might account for the slightly higher frequency of parallelisms in his writing.
that these parallelisms are not accidental. If the parallelisms were accidentally generated, we would expect them to show up randomly. They do not.

This paper, however, takes only a first, tentative step toward a thorough analysis of the types of Hebrew poetic parallelisms Parry has found in the Book of Mormon. Indeed, even without statistical data, John Welch has suggested that the Book of Mormon displays a real variety of poetic skill: “Compared to the high chiastic style used by writers such as Benjamin and Alma during the flowering of Nephite culture during the late Second and early First Centuries B.C., the literary achievement of subsequent Book of Mormon authors pales noticeably.” Welch calls the two centuries before Christ in Nephite history a “renaissance” and speculates about why the frequency of chiasmus drops beginning with the book of Helaman. It might be fruitful to study the usage of parallelistic patterns by individual writers. Does Alma favor chiasmus? Does Mormon favor synonymy? These avenues are also worth exploring.

The questions I have raised here do not apply solely to the Book of Mormon. Although I am unaware of any exhaustive study of the Bible (or even of any of the individual books of the Bible) similar to Parry’s study of the Book of Mormon, similar studies could be done with biblical texts as well. Surely some insight into the frequency of Hebrew poetic patterns could be gained by such studies, insight that would in turn help to clarify the nature of the Book of Mormon text. What insights could be gleaned from a thorough study of Isaiah’s parallelisms? Could such a study indicate whether the Gospels were meant to be read out loud in worship services or perhaps in more private settings?

39. It should again be noted that this paper has focused only on the Hebrew poetic patterns Parry discusses in his Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon. Other criteria would have to be established for the more literary and less mechanistic devices employed in the rhetoric and writings of Book of Mormon authors.
40. Parry has already given us much to work with since he has already parallelized the twenty-one chapters of Isaiah that the Book of Mormon quotes—though obviously there are differences between the Book of Mormon text of Isaiah and the King James Version of the same. Parry’s work is nonetheless a significant start.
Regardless, this paper has demonstrated that valuable insights into the text of the Book of Mormon can be gained by taking Parry’s work at face value.

Appendix

By using the rigorous criteria for text selection outlined earlier, some seemingly embedded texts from the Book of Mormon have been excluded from this study. In this appendix I discuss three such excluded texts with the intent of clarifying those criteria more fully. I also perform a sensitivity analysis with these three texts (using the test from the body of the paper—that of percentage of verses parallelized) to demonstrate that, even taking a less rigid approach to which texts to analyze, the statistical findings between the different genres still exist. At the conclusion of the appendix, I include the cross-check I also mentioned in the body of the paper—that of tracking the frequency of parallel elements against Skousen’s sense lines.

Nephi’s psalm (2 Nephi 4:15–35) “constitutes one of the great lyric outbursts in the Book of Mormon.” Matthew Nickerson has used form-critical analysis to compare it to similar psalms of the Bible. At first glance, the scholarship surrounding this particular text seems to indicate that it is self-contained and that Nephi has intentionally attempted to write his own psalm. However, nothing directly indicates where the psalm begins, although it seems clear that it begins somewhere in the course of verses 15 through 17. In other words, no explicit or contextual marker

43. Grant Hardy has the psalm beginning in verse 15, Matthew Nickerson and John Tanner in verse 16, and Royal Skousen in verse 17, strengthening the argument that the beginning of the psalm is contextually unclear since different scholars have different opinions on the matter. See Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon*, 56; Tanner, “Two Hymns Based on Nephi’s Psalm,” 34; Nickerson, “Nephi’s Psalm,” 26; Skousen, *Earliest Text*, xlv.
in the text indicates which verse marks the beginning of a self-contained
text, so Nephi’s psalm fails to meet the second criterion for selecting
texts. For purposes of the sensitivity analysis, I have labeled this text the
one instance of the psalm genre, assuming therefore that it was meant
to be orally delivered. I will assume it begins in verse 15.

Benjamin’s sermon (parts of Mosiah 3–5) is another text that would
naturally seem to deserve inclusion but does not meet the criteria out-
lined in the paper. Contextually, it appears that the speech was written
out beforehand (see Mosiah 1:10–12, where Benjamin outlines the basic
goals of the speech to his son, Mosiah₂). Scholars indicate that Benja-
min’s speech should be understood as a year-rite festival with ties to
Israelite coronation rituals and even the biblical Day of Atonement.⁴⁴
If such an event were the occasion of Benjamin’s speech, it would be
odd if the speech had not been prepared in advance in some form or
another. But while there are textual clues that Benjamin’s speech was
prepared previously, it is not clearly an embedded document in a sur-
rounding narrative. Mosiah 2:9 does include a headnote (“and these are
the words which he spake and caused to be written, saying . . .”), but
there are third-person breaks in the speech at Mosiah 4:1, 3–4 and 5:1
and (perhaps ritualized) responses from the gathered crowd in Mosiah
4:2; 5:2–5. These interruptions blend Benjamin’s speech into the larger
narrative flow of the opening chapters of the book of Mosiah, distin-
guishing it from the other documents I analyzed. It is thus problematic
to discuss authorship and the self-contained nature of the text itself.
Should one reconstruct a text from just the first-person portions of the

⁴⁴. See John A. Tvedt, “King Benjamin and the Feast of Tabernacles,” in By
Study and Also by Faith, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City:
Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990), 2:197–221; Terrence L. Szink and John W. Welch,
“King Benjamin’s Speech in the Context of Ancient Israelite Festivals,” in King Benja-
min’s Speech: “That Ye May Learn Wisdom,” ed. John W. Welch and Stephen D. Ricks
Right or Left: Benjamin and the Scapegoat,” Insights (January 1995): 2; John W. Welch,
“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:
speech? Should one rather include all the intervening verses, assuming that they come from the same author? Although there are strong reasons to believe that Benjamin’s speech is a very carefully crafted text, it is not technically embedded as a self-contained document: there is not one clear author, and the speech is not self-contained relative to the larger narrative. For the sensitivity analysis here, however, it will be classified as a sermon. I use only the verses in the first-person voice of Benjamin (Mosiah 2:9–3:27; 4:4–30; 5:6–15).

Alma₂’s lament (Alma 29) is perhaps the one excluded text that comes closest to meeting the criteria for inclusion. Alma 29:1 is markedly different in tone and style from Alma 28:14 (the preceding verse), and the entire chapter is distinct in tone and style from what follows it (in Alma 30). It is clearly a self-contained text. The authorship is also contextually clear—it is written by Alma₂. Again, however, nothing clearly sets apart chapter 29 from the rest of the text. It seems as if Mormon₂ wanted to include this little lament from Alma₂ but didn’t include a headnote (something like “a prayer by Alma₂, according to his own record”). If Mormon₂ had included such a headnote, Alma 29 would have been included in the list of texts; however, since Mormon₂ did not include a headnote, the text is not definitively an embedded document. Concerning its classification, it is difficult to know what genre Alma 29 is. Is it a sermon? Was it intended as an oral recitation? Is it a written prayer? I will provisionally classify it as a lament because it is unclear textually whether this was meant primarily to be delivered orally or to be read. It therefore represents the only instance of its genre.

The preceding discussion should help clarify the criteria used in the body of the paper and therefore the reasons for excluding texts that might otherwise seem worthy of consideration. Still other texts that

45. John Welch says, “In my opinion, Benjamin prepared for many months or maybe even years to deliver this speech.” John W. Welch, “A Masterful Oration,” in King Benjamin’s Speech, 66.
46. There are no parallelisms that overlap both verses in the first-person voice of Benjamin and either the third-person breaks or the crowd’s responses. Parry does find one parallelism in Mosiah 5:2, an antithetical, but it is the only one in the verses that are not in Benjamin’s voice.
Table 3. Texts by percentage of parallelized verses, including the three additional texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Percentage of parallelized verses</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Nephi 3:2–10</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Giddianhi</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 54:16–24</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Ammoron</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 56:2–58:41</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Helaman\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>5.26%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 54:5–14</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Moroni\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni 9</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Mormon\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>11.54%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni 8:2–30</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Mormon\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>13.79%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 60</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Moroni\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosiah 29:5–32</td>
<td>Proclamation</td>
<td>Mosiah\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>21.43%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 61:2–21</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Pahor\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 38</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>26.67%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 39–42</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>27.47%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosiah 9–10</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Zeniff</td>
<td>31.71%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob 2:2–3:11</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Jacob\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>35.56%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni 7:2–48</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Mormon\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>42.55%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helaman 13:5–15:17</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Samuel\textsubscript{1} (Nephi\textsubscript{3}?)</td>
<td>54.88%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 5:3–62</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>56.67%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Nephi 4:15–35</td>
<td>Psalm</td>
<td>Nephi\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>57.14%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Nephi 6:2–5, 8–15; 9:1–10:25</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Jacob\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>60.22%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 7</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helaman 5:6–12</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Helaman\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>71.43%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 36–37</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>76.62%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 29</td>
<td>Lament</td>
<td>Alma\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
might be considered similarly fail to meet the rigorous criteria—for instance, Mosiah 13–15 (its authorship is unclear, and it is clearly not an embedded document), Alma 32–33 (its authorship is similarly unclear), and 2 Nephi 31, Helaman 12, or Ether 12 (none of these last three are identifiably self-contained documents).

Table 3 shows the results of including the three additional texts in the study, with the new texts indicated by italics.

Importantly, Benjamin’s speech fits appropriately with the other Book of Mormon sermons, and Nephi’s psalm fits well with other texts intended for oral delivery. Alma’s lament, however, is curious. It is, significantly, the sole text with 100% parallelized verses. If one were to regard it as a text intended for oral delivery, it follows the patterns already established. If, however, one were to decide that it was intended primarily to be circulated in written form, it turns out to be a (major) statistical outlier, along with, but even more drastically than, King Zeniff’s narrative. Perhaps this finding indicates that Alma’s lament was originally written for oral delivery. Or perhaps it was written in such a manner yet was never actually delivered in a public setting, a personal journal entry filled to overflowing with poetry and thus deemed worthy of inclusion by Mormon in his abridgment.

Table 4 includes the results of the sensitivity analysis, including the additional three texts. (For purposes of this test I include Alma 29 in the category of written texts, so as to give a worst-case scenario calculation.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard error</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>95% confidence interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral Texts</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.531</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>0.165</td>
<td>0.426– 0.636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Texts</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.213</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.026– 0.401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.380</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.274</td>
<td>0.261– 0.498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.317</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Difference = mean(0) – mean(1), $t = 3.355$; degrees of freedom = 21; $Pr(T > t) = 0.0015$
The results here are slightly different. I find a relationship that is statistically significant to the .0015 level. In other words, there is a chance of less than 3 in 2,000 that this relationship would have occurred accidentally. Even including these three additional texts and placing Alma 29 in a worst-case scenario category, we discover that texts originally intended for oral delivery still have a substantially higher percentage of verses with parallelisms than those texts originally intended to circulate primarily as written texts.

A second, simpler issue needs addressing in this appendix. As mentioned in the body of this essay, I cross-checked my calculations of percentage of parallelized verses against a second way of determining the frequency of parallelisms in a text. In table 5, I compared the number of parallel elements with the number of Royal Skousen's sense lines in his *Earliest Text* rather than with the sometimes arbitrarily divided verses.

My methodology for this additional test might be clarified by a quick analysis of the two examples given early in the background section of this paper (1 Nephi 12:9 and 2 Nephi 9:28). For 1 Nephi 12:9 (an extended alternate), the parallel elements are “twelve apostles,” “judge,” “twelve tribes of Israel,” “twelve ministers,” “judge,” and “house of Israel”—for a total of six elements. For 2 Nephi 9:28 (a chiasm), the parallel elements are “foolishness,” “think they are wise,” “they hearken not,” “they set it aside,” “supposing they know,” and “foolishness”—also for a total of six elements. Skousen has broken up 1 Nephi 12:9 into five sense lines. With six parallel elements and five sense lines the ratio is 120% for the single verse. Skousen has broken up 2 Nephi 9:28 into seven sense lines. With six parallel elements and seven sense lines the ratio is 85.7% for this single verse. This method is applied across all the texts discussed in the body of the paper.

The results are remarkably consistent, almost exactly identical with the test used in the body of the paper, where the percentage of the total number of verses in each text in which some parallelized element appears is calculated (see table 2). Again, the proclamation and the letters group together, and the sole narrative finds itself among the sermons.
Table 5. Texts by ratio of parallel elements to sense lines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Ratio of parallel elements to sense lines</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Nephi 3:2–10</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Giddianhi</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 54:16–24</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Ammoron</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni 9</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Mormon,</td>
<td>4.80%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 56:2–58:44</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Helaman,</td>
<td>7.04%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 54:5–14</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Moroni,</td>
<td>7.55%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 60</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Moroni,</td>
<td>15.51%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 61:2–21</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Pahoran,</td>
<td>15.91%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni 8:2–30</td>
<td>Letter</td>
<td>Mormon,</td>
<td>18.64%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosiah 29:5–32</td>
<td>Proclamation</td>
<td>Mormon,</td>
<td>21.14%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 38</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma,</td>
<td>25.35%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moroni 7:2–48</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Mormon,</td>
<td>33.03%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 39–42</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma,</td>
<td>33.12%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Nephi? 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob 2:2–3:11</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Jacob,</td>
<td>41.51%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 5:3–62</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma,</td>
<td>44.13%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Nephi 6:2–5, 8–15; 9:1–10:25</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Jacob,</td>
<td>46.81%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosiah 9–10</td>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Zeniff</td>
<td>46.86%</td>
<td>Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 7</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma,</td>
<td>51.23%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helaman 5:6–12</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Helaman,</td>
<td>55.10%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alma 36–37</td>
<td>Sermon</td>
<td>Alma,</td>
<td>67.36%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Carl J. Cranney is a PhD student in systematic theology at the Catholic University of America, where he specializes in theological anthropology and moral theology. He earned his MAR in philosophical theology and the philosophy of religion at Yale Divinity School.