"And he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word . . ."   Alma 9:18

HEBRAISMS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

וַיְהִי
(and it came to pass)

וְ
(and)

הִבֵּה
(behold)

מִלְּפְנֵי
(from before)

By Angela Crowell

My special interest in the Hebrew language probably began when I read in Church History that Joseph Smith and other priesthood members had studied biblical Hebrew in 1835-36 at Kirtland, Ohio in "The School of the Prophets." Joseph stated in Volume 2 concerning his Hebrew studies: "My soul delights in reading the word of the Lord in the original."[1]

In making preparation to teach the Book of Mormon to my church school class in the fall of 1980, I read Verneil Simmons' book, **Peoples, Places and Prophecies**, a Study of the Book of Mormon. This excellent book provided me with valuable resource material and new enthusiasm to begin the class. However, something else was needed— my own personal testimony of the truthfulness of the Nephite record. I began to pray for this testimony. Within a few weeks it was brought to my attention that the Book of Mormon contained Hebraisms (i.e., the literal translation into English of Hebrew words, parts of speech, and language pecularities). I was stirred by this knowledge and felt that I should enroll at the University of Wisconsin to study Hebrew. I believed this direction came in answer to prayer. In addition to searching out many remarkable proofs concerning the Book of Mormon, I was motivated to study Hebrew to help me understand the message of the Old Testament prophets, particularly Isaiah and Daniel.

The study of Hebrew has been richly rewarding to me, and it has enlarged my understanding of scripture. (I am now in my third year of Hebrew studies.) My knowledge of Hebrew has given me a new appreciation for the Book of Mormon and the testimony I was seeking. Finding the evidences presented in this article has been thrilling. A major change has taken place concerning my attitude. I used to believe that the Book of Mormon sentence structure was so awkward that I had to rewrite study passages for a simpler text. Now, I much prefer the original work. As I read the book and study the sentence structure, I realize the very words I stumbled over are Hebraisms. There has come to me firm evidence that the book's authors wrote as Nephi said, "in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of Jews and the language of the Egyptians." (I Nephi 1:1)

Moroni, who wrote in the Book of Mormon about 400 A.D., tells us that the book's authors wrote in reformed Egyptian; but if the plates had been large enough, they would have written them in Hebrew to eliminate imperfections in the record (Mormon 4:98-99). It is not surprising that we find Hebrew idioms and syntax (i.e., the way words are put together to form phrases, clauses, or sentences) in the English translation. The following article gives only a sampling of Hebraisms found in the Book of Mormon; many more could be cited.

"AND"

One prominent peculiarity of biblical Hebrew is the frequent use of the conjunction **and**, both in beginning a sentence and in the listing of a series within a sentence. In A. B. Davidson's, **An Introductory Hebrew Grammar** the author states:

Hebrew syntax, though it has many subtleties of its own, is broadly speaking, extremely simple, as a glance at any literal translation of the Old Testament, with its ever recurring **and**, will show. The Hebrew habit to express thoughts is to coordinate clauses rather than to subordinate them, with one principal verb following another with a regularity that reminds one of the simple speech of children.[2]

There is a dislike to begin a sentence without **and**; even books begin with **and**—such as Ruth, Esther, Jonah, Joshua, Judges, Ezekiel and Exodus.[3]

In the 22nd chapter of Genesis, **and** begins the verse in 21 of the 28 verses. A similar pattern is found throughout the Book of Mormon. In the 11th chapter of Alma, **and** begins the verse in 20 of 23 verses.

In Gesenius', **Hebrew Grammar**, the author states: "Contrary to English usage, which in lengthy enumerations uses the **and** to connect only the last member of the series, in Hebrew **polysyndeton** is customary."[4] (i.e., **and** stands before each word or phrase in a series)

A perfect example is found in Genesis 24:35 of the Old Testament:

And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly, **and** he is become great, **and** he hath given him flocks, **and** herds, **and** silver, **and** gold; **and** men servants, **and** maid servants, **and** camels, **and** asses.

Notice the structure of Enos 1:34 from the Book of Mormon:

And it came to pass that the people of Nephi did till the land, **and** raise all manner of grain, **and** of fruit, **and** flocks of herds, **and** flocks of all manner of cattle, of every kind, **and** goats, **and** wild goats, **and** also many horses.

In Hebrew when several nouns are joined by **and**, the possessive pronoun must be repeated with each.[5]

Examples from the Old Testament:

"And Esau took **his** wives, and **his** sons, and **his** daughters, and all the persons of **his** house, and **his** cattle, and and all **his** beasts, and all **his** substance." (Genesis 36:6)

"Thou, and **thy** children, and **thy** children's children, and **thy** flocks, and **thy** herds." (Genesis 45:10)

"Jacob **their** father, and **their** little ones, and **their** wives . . . . **their** cattle, and **their** goods." (Genesis 46:5-6)

Examples from the Book of Mormon:

"And he left **his** house, and the land of **his** inheritance, and **his** gold, and **his** silver, and **his** precious things." (I Nephi 1:29)

"To leave the land of **their** inheritance, and **their** gold, and **their** silver, and **their** precious things." (I Nephi 1:38)

"**Our** gold, and **our** silver, and all **our** precious things." (I Nephi 1:87)

According to Green's **Handbook to Old Testament Hebrew**, the chief connective of words and sentences is the conjunction ן . The Hebrew language to a great extent discards the links which, in Western languages, unite words and clauses, leaving the reader to supply the connection of thought. The ן most often translated **and** also includes the meaning of many particles, such as "or," "then," "certainly," "perhaps," "in order to," "for the sake of," and "therefore,"[6]

These particles were reserved for cases in which special emphasis or distinctness was desired: their frequent use was felt instinctively to be inconsistent with the lightness & grace of movement which the Hebrew ear loved; and thus in the A.V., R.V., words like "or," "then," "but," "notwithstanding," "howbeit," "so," "thus," "therefore," "that," constantly appear, where the Hebrew has simply ן (Gesenius' **Lexicon**, new edition by Brown, Driver, and Briggs, part iii, p. 252.)[7]

Old Testament:

"Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, **and** of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Genesis 2:19-20) (English usage: "**but** of the . . .")

"In the day of your eating thereof, **and** your eyes shall be opened." (Genesis 3:10) (English usage: "**then** your eyes . . ."

"There is no beauty, **and** we should desire Him." (Isaiah 53:2) (English usage: "**that** we should desire Him.")

Book of Mormon:

"For there is nothing which is good, save it comes from the Lord; **and** that which is evil, cometh from the devil." (Omni 1:45) (English usage: "**but** that which . . .")

"And it came to pass that when he had said these words, he could say no more; **and** he gave up the ghost." (Jacob 5:35) (English usage: "**then** he gave . . .")

"And ye shall not clear away the bad thereof, all at once, lest the roots thereof should be too strong for the graft, **and** the graft thereof shall perish, and I lose the trees of my vineyard." (Jacob 3:131) (English usage: **that** the graft . . .")

"AND IT CAME TO PASS"

"And it came to pass" is probably the most frequently used phrase in the Book of Mormon. This phrase in the idiom of King James English is a rendering of the Hebrew word "vayehee" (וַיְהִי). Its frequent use in the Book of Mormon is consistent with the frequent use of "vayehee" in the Old Testament Hebrew text. In J. Weingreen's **A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew**, the author comments concerning the meaning of this phrase: "This, rather than implying a continuation with what has preceded, has little more force (when translated) then 'now it happened.' "[8] This phrase, "and it came to pass" and the frequent use of "and" are two of the most important proofs of Hebrew language structure found in the Book of Mormon.

"BEHOLD"

"Hinneh" (הִנֵּה) is the Hebrew word for "lo," "behold," or "see." It is used for pointing out persons, things, places, and actions. A second type of meaning is either "here" or "there." "Hinneh" occurs over a thousand times in the Old Testament Hebrew text. In English usage we consider it unnecessary. "Behold" is used frequently in the Book of Mormon and can be found on almost any page. Its common use gives evidence of a literal rendering of Hebrew into English.

Examples from the **Old Testament** are:

"Thou, O king, sawest, and **behold** a great image." (Daniel 2:31)

"**Behold**, a watcher and a holy one came." (Daniel 4:13)

In the **Book of Mormon** there are over 79 references in III Nephi alone. For example:

"**Behold** I am Jesus Christ, the son of God." (III Nephi 4:44)

"**Behold**, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin:" (III Nephi 4:51)

"EVEN"

In Hebrew personal pronouns not only are used as subjects in noun clauses, but they can be used also to give emphasis to the subject.[9] Examples are given below where the pronoun is introduced by the word "even." The first example given is "My heart shall rejoice, even mine." In English we consider this redundant and feel it is sufficient to say: "My heart shall rejoice."

Old Testament:

"My heart shall rejoice, **even** mine" (Prov. 23:15);

"So it happeneth **even** to me" (Eccl. 2:15);

"But with us, **even** us" (Deut. 5:3);

"But are there not with you, **even** with you." (II Chron. 28:10)

Book of Mormon:

"And **even** I, myself" (Mosiah 1:46);

"And I, **even** I" (Mosiah 1:62);

"And **even** I could not" (Alma 5:3);

"A blessing, yea, **even** my first blessing" (II Nephi 1:53);

"Yea, **even** he commanded them." (Mosiah 9:53)

THE CONSTRUCT STATE

The construct state is used in biblical Hebrew to show possession or other relationships which we express in English with the word "of."

The following example illustrates the construct state as designating possession: He is the **son of David.**" The word "son" (in Hebrew translation) is dependent upon the words "**of David**" in such a way that the words together form a compound idea—"son of David." The dependent word "son" is said to be in the construct state.[10]

In English usage we would say, "He is David's son." Only a few possessive forms are found in the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon, but the construct state appears consistantly.

Old Testament:

"children of Israel"	"daughter of Zion"
"tribe of Reuben"	"land of Egypt"
"city of David"	"Book of Daniel"
"king of Israel"	"law of Moses"
"Kingdom of God"	"word of God"

Book of Mormon:

"sword of Laban"	"record of Jared"
"people of Ammon"	"Brother of Jared"
"language of Jacob"	"descendants of Zarahemla"
"plates of Nephi"	"words of Isaiah"
"army of Moroni"	"Book of Mormon"

A succession of constructs, such as "the **days of the years of the life of my fathers**," constitutes a unity and is perfectly normal in Hebrew.[11] A succession of constructs that occurs in the Book of Mormon is the phrase: "**many of the kings of the isles of the sea.**" (I Nephi 5:250)

The number of adjectives is very limited in Hebrew, their place often supplied picturesquely by a noun in the construct state. For example, in the Hebrew text in Psalm 23 we find "pastures of greenness" and "waters of rest." Here we have nouns used for adjectives. An English rendition would have used an adjective.

In Hebrew a quality or attribute of a person or thing is often found in the construct form.

Old Testament:

"children of wickedness" for "wicked children" (II Sam. 7:10);

"children of pride" for "proud children." (Job 41:34)

Book of Mormon:

"words of plainness" for "plain words" (Jacob 3:22);

"mark of red" for "red mark." (Alma 1:111)

Hebrew uses the construct state to describe the material of which something is made:

Old Testament:

"altar of stone" for "stone altar" (Exodus 20:25);

"ark of wood" for "wooden ark" (Deut. 10:1);

"helmet of brass" for "brass helmet." (I Samuel 17:5)

Book of Mormon:

"rod of iron" for "iron rod" (I Nephi 2:62);

"idol of silver" for "silver idol" (II Nephi 8:36);

"plates of gold" for "gold plates." (Mosiah 12:16)

THE NUMERALS

In English we hyphenate all compound numbers between 21 and 99; e.g., "seventy-seven." In Hebrew, when using numbers composed of tens and units, they are connected by the conjunction "and"; i.e., "seventy-seven" is "seventy and seven."[12] This form of correct Hebrew translation is used throughout the Book of Mormon.

Old Testament:

"And Abram was **seventy and five** years old when he departed" (Genesis 12:3);

"Jehoram was **thirty and two** years old when he began to reign." (II Chron. 21:5);

Book of Mormon:

"And when Corihor was **thirty and two** years old" (Ether 3:41);

"Therefore after that ye are **seventy and two** years old." (III Nephi 13:14)

COMPOUND SUBJECT

In biblical Hebrew, when the compound subject consists of different persons, the first person—i.e., the person speaking—precedes any others.[13] In proper English usage, the order is reversed: the speaker always comes last. We say, "My father and I" instead of "I and my father," as in Hebrew. This phenomenon in Hebrew is a literal translation, i.e., "I" is written in Hebrew before "and my father."

Old Testament:

"**I** and the lad" (Genesis 22:6);

"**I** and my son" (I Kings 1:21);

"**I** and this woman" (I Kings 3:17);

"**I** and Jonathan my son." (I Sam. 14:40)

Book of Mormon:

"**I** and my brethren did consult" (I Nephi 1:68);

"**I** and my father" (I Nephi 1:172);

"**I** and my brethren will go forth" (Alma 15:15);

"**I**, and my people." (Mosiah 6:21)

REPETITION OF THE PREPOSITION

Usually in Hebrew syntax when a preposition governs more than one object, it is normal to repeat the preposition before each object.[14] In ordinary English usage we avoid repeating the preposition unless it is for emphasis.

Old Testament:

"And will save them **by** the Lord their God, and will not save them **by** bow, nor **by** sword, nor **by** battle, **by** horses, nor **by** horsemen." (Hosea 1:7)

"And Pharoah was wroth **against** two of his officers, **against** the chief of the butlers, and **against** the chief of the bakers." (Genesis 40:2)

"Even **on** harps, and **on** psalteries, and **on** timbrels, and **on** cornets, and **on** cymbals." (II Samuel 6:5)

Book of Mormon:

"Exceeding rich **in** gold, and **in** silver, and **in** precious things, and **in** fine workmanship of wood, **in** buildings, and **in** machinery, and also **in** iron." (Jarom 1:19)

"**By** tempest, **by** fire, and **by** smoke, and vapor of darkness, and **by** the opening of the earth, and **by** mountains." (I Nephi 5:247)

"In all manner **of** wood, and **of** iron, and **of** copper, and **of** brass, and **of** steel, and **of** gold, and **of** silver, and **of** precious ores." (II Nephi 4:21)

COGNATE ACCUSATIVE

Hebrew belongs to the family of closely allied Semitic languages. A principal peculiarity of this family is three root-letters (consonantal letters e.g. מצא) for almost all verbs and nouns. When a verb has as its objective a noun taken from the same Hebrew root, it is called a cognate accusative.[15] When this usage appears, the verbal idea is strengthened. An intensifying attribute is very frequently added to the object, e.g. "He cried (with) an **exceeding great and bitter** cry." (Genesis 27:34) In English we would consider this form repetitious and avoid its use. Many examples of the cognate accusative are found in the Old Testament Hebrew text, some of which have been translated literally and carried over into the English versions. Many examples of this Hebrew language structure are found in the Book of Mormon also.

Old Testament:

"we have dreamed a dream" (Genesis 40:8);

"cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry" (Genesis 27:34);

"thundered with a great thunder" (I Samuel 7:10);

"vowed a vow" (Judges 11:30);

"lamented with this lamentation" (II Samuel 1:17);

"feared a fear" (they are in great fear) (Psalms 14:5);

"sinned a sin" (grievously sinned) (Lam. 1:8);

"fasted a fast." (David fasted) (II Samuel 12:16)

The last three examples are in the Hebrew text, but they are not carried over literally into the English versions of the Bible.

Book of Mormon

"curse them with a sore curse" (I Nephi 1:57);

"I have dreamed a dream" (I Nephi 1:60);

"yoketh them with a yoke" (I Nephi 3:140);

"work a great and marvelous work" (I Nephi 3:214);

"desire which I desired" (Enos 1:19);

"taxed with a tax" (Mosiah 5:20);

"feared exceedingly with fear" (Alma 12:72);

"succor those that stand in need of your succor." (Mosiah 2:28)

COMPOUND PREPOSITIONS

Hebrew syntax calls for compound prepositions rather than the single preposition common in English. This usage is traced back to the literal translation of the Hebrew text. Compound prepositions are used to indicate the locale and direction of the action as well as the action itself.[16] Sometimes two prepositions are expressed, and at other times only one is expressed and a second implied in the verb.

Examples in the **Old Testament** of a double preposition with one implied in the verb would be:

"Abram went **down into** Egypt" (Genesis 12:8);

"Our fathers went **down into** Egypt." (Numbers 20:15)

Examples from the **Book of Mormon** are:

"The servant went **down into** the vineyard" (Jacob 3:50);

"They went **down into** the land of Nephi." (Mosiah 5:7)

Examples of double prepositions, one of which is originally a noun found in the Old Testament are:

"if a man did flee **from before** a lion" (in Hebrew text only) (Amos 5:19);

"hath dispossessed the Amorites **from before** his people Israel." (Judges 11:23)

Examples from the Book of Mormon are:

"did not flee **from before** the Lamanites" (Mormon 1:52);

"they fled **from before** my presence." (I Nephi 1:132)

The example "from before" is a literal translation of the Hebrew words mippene (מפני) and milliphene (מלפני). The writer found that it was used twenty-three times in the Old Testament Hebrew text, but that it was translated into English (KJV & IV) only four times (e.g., Genesis 23:4, Exodus 4:3, I Chron. 11:13, Judges 11:23). The other verses all translate it "from", giving us a more precisely worded English sentence, even though in the Hebrew text it reads, "from before." It would have been quite difficult for Joseph Smith to have copied this Hebraism from the King James Version of the Bible when the construct only appears four times in the entire English text. Yet there are at least ten instances where the combination "from before" is found in the Book of Mormon, (e.g., I Nephi 3:51, 79, II Nephi 6:20, Alma 20:83, Mosiah 9:6, and Mormon 2:22). In this instance, the Book of Mormon contains a Hebraism "more literally" translated than its counterpart from the King James Version of the Bible.

How can we account for this? It is remote that Joseph Smith on his own would have been able to identify this construct as a Hebraism. Rather, we see original Hebraic authorship and a correct translation through divine aid.

PROPHETIC PERFECT

In Hebrew thinking, an action is regarded as being either "completed" or "incompleted." Hebrew, therefore, knows no past, present, or future tenses, but has instead a Perfect and an Imperfect (which in context lend themselves to a variety of shades of meaning). The Hebrew Perfect may be taken to represent action in the past. The equivalent of the English present tense is supplied by the participle, and the English future tense (with other varieties) by the Imperfect.[17]

The Prophetic Perfect is a common usage in the language of the prophets. The prophet so transports his mind ahead that he describes a future event as if it had been already seen or heard by him.[18] This happens often in making promises or threats, and also in the language of contracts.

The following are three Old Testament examples spoken by the prophet Isaiah in the latter half of the eighth century before Christ:

"Therefore my people **are gone** into captivity." (occurred 586 B.C.) (Isaiah 5:13)

"The people that walked in darkness **have seen** a great light" (spiritual enlightenment brought about by Christ's Galilean ministry; Matt. 4:12-16) (Isaiah 9:2);

"For unto us a child is born" (literally translated, "for a child **has been** born to us") (refers to birth of Christ) (Isaiah 9:6)

Book of Mormon:

"But behold **I have obtained** a land of promise"; (spoken while in the wilderness before they left on their journey) (I Nephi 1:150)

"After **he was baptized** with water, the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove"; (spoken 559-545 B.C.) (II Nephi 13:10)

"These are they whose sins **he has borne**; these are they for whom **he has died**, to redeem them from their transgressions." (spoken 148 B.C.) (Mosiah 8:44)

PLURAL FORMS

One usage of the Hebrew plural form is called the "plural of amplification." These plural forms are used to intensify or heighten the idea of the singular.[19] In English we would use the singular form.

Old Testament:

"**visions** of the night" (meaning an important vision) (Genesis 46:2);

"sure **dwellings**" (full confidence) (Isaiah 32:18);

"bitter **things**" (extreme bitterness) (Job 13:26)

Book of Mormon:

"and great **slaughters** with the sword" (I Nephi 3:99);

"I did exhort them with all the **energies** of my soul" (I Nephi 4:42);

"and by **bloodsheds**, and by pestilence" (II Nephi 5:39);

"and did reap with your **mights**." (Alma 14:84)

Words such as "hand," "head," "mouth," "tongue," and "voice" are generally used in Hebrew in the singular form when the word is common to a number of persons.[20] In English we would use the plural form.

Old Testament:

"put the trumphets into the **hand** of them all" (Judges 7:16);

"the **head** of Oreb and Zeeb" (Judges 7:25);

"saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair of their **head** singed." (Daniel 3:37)

Book of Mormon:

"by the **voice** of his angels" (Alma 8:29);

"by the **mouth** of his holy prophets" (II Nephi 6:2);

"with the **tongue** of angels." (II Nephi 13:17)

REPETITION

In English usage, repetition of the same word is usually avoided. The reverse is true in Hebrew. Repetition was commonly used in biblical Hebrew for emphasis, or to intensify an attribute, or express a continuous progress (e.g., higher and higher, lower and lower). This is readily seen in the Hebrew text but it is not as discernable in the English versions, since the translators do not carry this over.

Old Testament:

"That which is altogether just shalt thou follow"—literally

translated from Hebrew text: "Justice, justice shalt thou pursue" (Deut. 16:20);

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord" (highest degree of holiness ascribed to the Lord) (Isaiah 6:3);

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace"—literally translated from the Hebrew text: "peace, peace." (much peace, great peace) (Isaiah 26:3)

Book of Mormon:

"Wo, wo, wo be unto them" (II Nephi 12:18);

"A bible, a bible, we have got a bible, and there can not be any more bible." (II Nephi 12:45)

"Repent ye, repent ye and be baptized" (II Nephi 13:14);

"O remember, remember that these things are true." (Mosiah 1:91)

HEBREW IDIOMS

An idiom is defined as a word or group of words used in a language which has a different meaning in a literal word-for-word translation. For instance an English idiom would be, it is "raining cats and dogs," which of course actually means "raining very hard".

The following are some identical Hebrew idioms found in both the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon:

Idiom	Old Testament	Book of Mormon
"before my face" (literally, "to the face of")	Psalm 5:8	III Nephi 4:30
"burned with fire"	Jer. 38:23	III Nephi 4:28
"eye to eye"	Isaiah 52:8	Alma 17:23
"in the eyes of" (before)	Isaiah 49:5	I Nephi 6:35
"day to day"	II Samuel 13:4	Mosiah 2:40
"give ear"	Joel 1:2	Helaman 4:55
"in their ears"	Genesis 20:9	II Nephi 12:28
"face to face"	Deut. 34:10	Alma 18:8
"upon the face of"	Genesis 1:4	Ether 1:1
"face of the earth"	Exodus 10:5	Ether 4:103
"generation to generation" (for all eternity)	Exodus 17:16	Mosiah 12:19
"by the hand of"	Genesis 16:6	I Nephi 1:151
"right hand" (sometimes means strength, justice, righteousness)	Exodus 15:12	I Nephi 6:20
"harden thy heart"	Deut. 15:7	I Nephi 3:170
"hearken to the voice of" (means he obeyed)	Job 34:16	Alma 3:105
"in presence of"	I Kings 8:22	Alma 13:63
"lift up thine eyes" (looked)	Genesis 13:12	I Nephi 6:48
"lift up the voice" (cry, shout, begin speaking)	I Chron. 15:16	Mosiah 7:78
"lift up your head"	Psalm 24:7	Mosiah 5:27
"stiff-necked" (obstinate)	Exodus 32:9	II Nephi 11:52
"my soul, your soul, their souls" (myself, yourself, yourselves)	Jer. 18:20	II Nephi 3:51
"a man of words" (eloquent)	Exodus 4:10	Mosiah 11:160
"by the mouth of"	II Chron. 36:22	I Nephi 3:194
"open the mouth" (speaking at length or with great solemnity, liberty, freedom)	Dan. 10:16	Mosiah 8:46
"from the mouth of"	II Chron. 35:22	Mosiah 9:170

LITERAL TRANSLATIONS

The following are two examples of accurate literal Hebrew translation found in the Book of Mormon. In Exodus 20:13 and Deut. 5:17, the commandment is given "thou shalt not **kill**" in the King James Version, and also in the Inspired Version of the Bible.

There are 10 different Hebrew words translated for the English word "kill" in the Old Testament; some mean "slaughter," "slay," "pierce," "put to death," "smite."[21] The Hebrew word used in both of these scriptures is "ratsach," which means (in the literal sense) "to **murder**," "to **slay**."[22]

Translated more strictly the verse would read "thou shalt not **murder**"—as all English Jewish translations do record this verse and also new Bible translations like the **Holy Bible, New International Version**[23] and the **Good News Bible**.[24] In the newly published scholarly work of the **Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament**, the author states: "You shall not **murder** is a more precise reading than the too-general KJV of 'thou shalt not kill.'"[25]

II Nephi 11:110 is in total agreement with Hebrew scholars of today. It reads "and, again, the Lord God hath commanded that men should not **murder**; that they should not lie; that they should not steal."

The second example of an accurate literal translation found in the Book of Mormon is a reference to Isaiah 53:3-4. The King James Version and Inspired Version both read:

He is despised and rejected of men;
a man of **sorrows**, and acquainted with **grief**;
and we hid as it were our faces from him;
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
Surely he hath borne our **griefs**, and carried our **sorrows**,
Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

The key words here are "sorrows" and "griefs." There are 26 different Hebrew words translated for the English word "sorrow" in the Old Testament; some meaning "wo," "grief," "fear," "pain," "affliction," "sadness," "evil," and "labour." The Hebrew word used in these verses is "makob" which means (literally) "pain."[26]

There are 10 different Hebrew words translated for the English word "grief" in the Old Testament; some meaning "sickness," "weakness," "pain," "sadness," "anger," "bitterness," and "evil." The Hebrew word used in this scripture is "holi," which means (literally) "sickness."[27]

In the **Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament**, the author writes that "the word is translated 'grief' in Isaiah 53:3-4, although it may be better translated 'sickness' (Margin of ASV and RSV), whether physical or spiritual."[28]

Notice the closer literal translation of the same verse in the 1955 Jewish Publication Society's English translation of the Old Testament, **The Holy Scriptures:**

He was despised, and forsaken of men,
A man of **pains**, and acquainted with **disease**,
and as one from whom men hide their face;
He was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely our **diseases** he did bear, and our **pains** he carried
Whereas, we did esteem him stricken,
smitten of God and afflicted.[29]

The key words here are "pains" and "disease."

In the Jewish Publication Society's most recent (1978) English translation, **The Prophets**, the verse reads:

He was despised, shunned by men,
As man of **suffering**, familiar with **disease**,
As one who hid his face from us.
He was despised, we held him no account.
Yet it was our **sickness** that he was bearing,
Our **suffering** that he endured.
We accounted him plagued, smitten and afflicted
by God;[30]

The key words here are "suffering," "disease" and "sickness". The verse in the Book of Mormon which totally agrees with Hebrew scholars of today is Alma 5:21.

And he shall go forth, suffering **pains**, and **afflictions**,
and temptations of every kind;
And this that the word might be fulfilled which saith,
He will take upon him the **pains** and the **sicknesses** of his people;
and he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people;

The key words here are "pains," "afflictions" and "sicknesses," which are correct literal translations from the Hebrew text.

How can we account for a Book of Mormon translation which is more precise than the King James Version in both of the previous examples? Joseph Smith used the King James translation of the Bible for his personal study yet that version rendered these words differently. The accurate translation of these passages indicates that Joseph Smith did indeed translate an ancient record of Hebrew authorship by the "gift and power of God."

HEBRAISMS ILLUSTRATED

Figure 1 has shaded the Hebraisms found on pages 626-627 of the Book of Mormon (1908 edition). These pages were selected for illustration because they contain the Hebrew idiom "burned with fire" (literally in Hebrew, "burned with **the** fire"). The day my Hebrew instructor brought this to our class's attention I looked this idiom up to see if it was used in the Book of Mormon. To my utter delight I found that indeed it was there, and I proceeded to find 25 other Hebraisms on those pages. After a year and a half, I can now identify another 86.
(The vocative "O," the hiphil form of the verb which uses the word "cause," and the words "saying" and "great" are Hebraisms but were not discussed in this article).

CONCLUSIONS

Let me begin this section with some questions. How could a young man, who did not have the knowledge of Hebrew or any other Semitic language, produce such a work? How did so many literal translations of Hebrew

words and Hebrew grammatical structures get into the record? We have seen that many Hebraic usages have not even been translated into English in the King James Version of the Bible. Mere copying of the words and style of the King James Version of the Bible would not produce the vast number of Hebraisms used correctly in the Book of Mormon. Only by translating from the Hebrew text can one see all these illustrations. Joseph Smith did not study Hebrew until 1835-36. The Book of Mormon was published in 1830, five years prior to his study of Hebrew.

Joseph Smith stands with other prophets, like Isaiah and Daniel, who have received severe criticism for their writings. Critics down through the ages have "stoned the prophets." Today they continue to "stone them" with their criticism. Yet, over 2,700 years later, the words of Isaiah and Daniel stand firm in testimony of our Savior and of His future kingdom. Since publication 152 years ago, the Book of Mormon still stands firm, amidst the criticism, as a second witness in its testimony that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah, the Holy One of Israel.

The main research for this paper took five months. It only took Joseph Smith a little over twice that length to translate the entire book of 777 pages (1908 edition). For Joseph to have studied the Hebrew language and then to have produced a Hebraic writing as harmonious and as extensive as the Book of Mormon all in his own power, takes on the proportion of a physical impossibility in that length of time.

My study leads me to conclude that the Book of Mormon is what it claims to be—an authentic Semitic record—written by men thoroughly versed in Hebrew and translated by the "gift and power of God." There has come to me firm evidence that the book's authors wrote as Nephi said, "in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians." (I Nephi 1:1)■

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22 Yea, great were the groanings of the people, because of the darkness and the great destruction which had come upon them.

23 And in one place they were heard to cry, saying, O that we had repented before this great and terrible day, and then would our brethren have been spared, and they would not have been [1]burned in that great city Zarahemla.

24 And in another place they were heard to cry and mourn, saying, O that we had repented before this great and terrible day, and had not killed and stoned the prophets, and cast them out;

25 Then would our mothers, and our fair daughters, and our children have been spared, and not have been buried up in that great city [2]Moronihah; and thus were the howlings of the people great and terrible.

26 And it came to pass that there was a [2]voice heard among all the inhabitants of the earth upon all the face of this land, crying, Wo, wo, wo unto this people; wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth, except they shall repent,

27 For the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice, because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people; and it is because of their iniquity and abominations that they are fallen.

28 Behold, that [3]great city Zarahemla have I [3]burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof.

29 And behold, that great [4]city Moroni have I caused to be [3]sunk in the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof to be drowned.

30 And behold, that grea[t] [3]city Moronihah have I covered with earth, and the inhabitants thereof, to hide their iniquities and their abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and of the saints shall not come up any more unto me against them.

31 And behold, the city of Gilgal have I caused to be sunk, and the inhabitants thereof to be buried up in the depths of the earth;

32 Yea, and the city of Onihah, and the inhabitants thereof, and the city of Mocum, and the inhabitants thereof, and the

A VOICE HEARD   627

[1]city of Jerusalem, and the inhabitants thereof, and waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof,

33 To hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come up any more unto me against them.

34 And behold, the city of Gadiandi, and the city of Gadiomnah, and the city of Jacob, and the city Gimgimno, all these have I caused to be sunk, and made [2]hills and valleys in the places thereof,

35 And the inhabitants thereof have I buried up in the depths of the earth, to hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints should not come up any more unto me against them.

36 And behold, that great city Jacobugath, which was inhabited by the people of the king of Jacob, have I caused to be [3]burned with fire, because of their sins and their wickedness, which was above all the wickedness of the whole earth, because of their [4]secret murders and combinations;

37 For it was they that did destroy the [5]peace of my people and the government of the land: therefore I did cause them to be burned, to destroy them from before my face, that the [6]blood of the prophets and the saints should not come up unto me any more against them.

38 And behold, the city of Laman, and the city of Josh, and the city of Gad, and the city of Kishkumen, have I caused to be [3]burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof, because of their wickedness in casting out the prophets, and stoning those whom I did send to declare unto them concerning their wickedness and their abominations;

39 And because they did cast them all out, that there were none righteous among them, I did send down [3]fire and destroy them, that their wickedness and abominations might be hid from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints whom I sent among them, might not cry unto me from the ground against them;

40 And many great destructions have I caused to come upon this land, and upon this people, because of their wickedness and their abominations.

1. Verse 8; Helaman 5: 15-19.   2. Helaman 5: 15-19; I Nephi 5: 245-247.   3. Verses 8, 9.   4. Alma 22: 4.

Figure 1—III Nephi, pages 626-627 of the Book of Mormon (1908 edition)

1. Alma 13: 1.   2. I Nephi 5: 245-247.   3. Verse 38; I Nephi 3: 108; III Nephi 4: 11.   4. II Nephi 7: 22.   5. III Nephi 3: 44-51.   6. III Nephi 3: 28, 29.
A.D. 34

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2. Andrew B. Davidson, **An Introductory Hebrew Grammar,** Charles Schriber's Sons, New York, 1954, p. 2.

3. Andrew B. Davidson, **Hebrew Syntax,** Charles Schriber's Sons, New York, 1950, p. 184.
4. William Gesenius, **Hebrew Grammar,** The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1956, p. 484.
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ANOTHER ANCIENT PATTERN:
CHIASTIC STRUCTURE IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

By Raymond C. Treat

Much linguistic evidence has come to light since 1830 supporting the Book of Mormon as an authentic ancient document. One of the more recent such discoveries (Welch 1969) is the recognition that some writers in the Book of Mormon used an ancient literary form known as chiasmus or chiasm.

CHIASM DEFINED

A chiasm is a statement containing two or more parts followed by a restatement in reverse order (ABC C'B'A'). The word chiasm is derived from the Greek letter **chi** (X) and the Greek word **chiazeim** (to mark with an x) because a two part chiastic statement may be diagrammed in the form of an X: a   b

$$\times$$

b'   a'

A Handbook of Literary Terms (Yelland et al 1950:32) defines chiasm as, "A passage in which the second part is inverted and balanced against the first."

TYPES OF CHIASMS

David Noel Freedman, Ph. D., Director of Program on Studies in Religion, University of Michigan and General Editor of the **Anchor Bible** and **Biblical Archaeologist** discusses two kinds of chiasms in his preface to **Chiasmus in Antiquity**. One kind deals with words and the other with ideas. The type dealing with words is easily identified. There is generally no argument as to the existence of this type of chiasm. The words which are inverted or balanced can either be the same, synonyms or antonyms. An example from the Book of Mormon is found in Mosiah 1:118-120: "But men drink damnation to their own souls, except

a   they **humble** themselves,
  b   and become as little **children**,
    c   and believe that salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the **atoning blood of Christ**, the Lord Omnipotent:
      d   for the **natural man**
        e   is an enemy to **God**
          f   and **has been**, from the fall of Adam,
          f'   and **will be**, for ever and ever;
        e'   but if he yields to the enticings of the **Holy Spirit**,
      d'   and putteth off the **natural man**,
    c'   and becometh a saint, through the **atonement of Christ**, the Lord,
  b'   and becometh as a **child**,
a'   submissive, meek and **humble** . . ."

The last six points parallel or repeat the first six points in reverse order, therefore, chiasm is also defined as an inverted parallelism.

The type of chiasm dealing with ideas is more difficult to identify because there may be disagreement over which ideas form the foundation of the chiastic structure. The author of this type of chiasm may use it to focus the attention of the reader (or hearer) on the central idea or turning point. A good example of this from the Book of Mormon is found in the First Book of Nephi (Fig. 1).

LEADING BOOK ON CHIASM

John Welch, the leading authority on the chiastic structure of the Book of Mormon has edited a book titled **Chiasmus in Antiquity** which is providing a unique witness of the Book of Mormon. Book of Mormon scholarship is usually prepared by and for Book of Mormon believers and is rarely, if ever, seen by others. This book, however, represents a major exception to this trend. **Chiasmus in Antiquity**, containing a chapter on Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon by Welch, was written by and for the international community of scholars specializing in ancient languages and literature and as such will have wide exposure to a non-Book of Mormon believing audience. For example, three of the articles are written by Israeli scholars:

"Chiasmus in Talmudic-Aggadic Narrative" by Jonah Fraenkel, Ph.D., Senior Lecturer for Hallakhic and Aggadic Literature, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

"Structure and Chiasm in Aramaic Contracts and Letters" by Bezalel Porten, Ph.D., Senior Lecturer of Hebrew and Aramaic Ancient Literature, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

"Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative" by Yehuda T. Radday, Ph.D., Associate Professor Bible and Hebrew, Technion, Israel Institute of Technology, Haifa.

No doubt the publication of this book represents a major step toward the day when the Book of Mormon will be taken seriously by the world. Freedman states in the preface, "The editor is to be commended for his catholicity and courage, and for his own original contributions in several domains including a unique treatment of the Book of Mormon." Welch, now an Associate Professor of Law at Brigham Young University, obtained his training in ancient literature at BYU through an MA in Latin and Philosophy. His master's thesis was on chiasmus.

HISTORY OF CHIASM

"Most of the essential features of chiastic form and function" have been detected as early as late third millenium B.C. (2500-2000 B.C.) (Smith 1981). However, it appears that the usage of chiasm reached its peak in Hebrew writing—the Bible, especially the Old Testament, being the outstanding example. Welch comments that "Chiasmus remained a common literary form in the Hebrew world until the first century after Christ, when it and most Jewish institutions were destroyed (1969:72)."

It has only been in the last fifty years that there has been a growing awareness of the existence of this form. According to Welch (1981:9):

> The early trickle of chiastic commentary, beginning with some initial observations by Johannes Bengel, **Gnomon Novi Testamenti** (Tubingen, 1742, John Jebb, **Sacred Literature** (London, 1820), Thomas Boys, **Tactica Sacra** (London, 1824), and then by John Forbes, **Symmetrical Structure of Scripture** (Edinburgh 1854), first grew to a steady flow of productive commentary through the efforts of Nils Lund from 1930 to 1955, and recently has increased dramatically, in both quantity and diversity.

When Nils Lund was first introduced to chiastic structure in 1908, known then as "the inverted order," he was skeptical about the validity of the form since the work to that point was not sufficiently advanced. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that Joseph Smith Jr. knew anything about chiastic structure. Welch (1981:208) comments:

> No one seriously contends that Joseph Smith or anyone associated with him knew or could have known of chiasmus or had the training to discover this principle for himself. The evidence is overwhelming against such a claim. And even if he had known in theory of chiasmus, there would still have remained the formidable task of composing the well-balanced, meaningful chiastic structures (combined with other structures unknown or unanalyzed in his time) which are found in precisely those portions of the Book of Mormon in which one would logically and historically expect to find them. Accomplishing all of this would have been an especially imposing task, since the Book of Mormon was Joseph Smith's first work, which, at age 24, he dictated without notes mostly inside of six months and rarely revised the only draft which the manuscript ever saw.

PURPOSE AND EXAMPLES OF CHIASMS

In addition to being evidence for the historical authenticity of the Book of Mormon, the presence of chiastic structure is also helpful in gaining a better understanding of the spiritual message of the book. Chiastic writing will characteristically have the most important point at the center or cross over point. Once a chiastic pattern has been discovered in the Book of Mormon we have a clue to what the writer was trying to emphasize. An excellent example of this is the First Book of Nephi (Fig. 1). This outline is based on an unpublished manuscript by Wallace King (n.d.). The central point of the First Book of Nephi according to King's analysis is found in verse 28 of Chapter 3: "And the way is prepared from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him;". Another chiastic analysis of the First Book of Nephi by Robert F. Smith (1977 manuscript) places I Nephi 3:38 as the center: ". . . I was caught away in the Spirit of the Lord, yea, into an exceeding high mountain . . ." There is always some minor difference of interpretation when working with chiastic structure based on ideas rather than words as mentioned earlier. However, there does not seem to be any disagreement that the First Book of Nephi is chiastically arranged. Both verse 28 and verse 38 make good central points since both lead to the celestial level life style. King (n.d.:5) points out that the theme of repentance, the message of every prophet, is emphasized by being placed at the opening" (B), at the closing (B') and at the center.

Robert F. Smith has prepared an index of all the known chiasms in the Book of Mormon discovered to date by various authors. This index shows that in addition to the entire book of First Nephi being a chiasm, there are 61 smaller chiasms within the book. Smith discovered this short one for example:

a . . . they were made manifest unto the **prophet**,
  b by the voice of the **Spirit**:
  b' for by the **Spirit**
a' are all things made known unto the **prophets** . . . (I Nephi 7:3-4)

In addition to his other achievements we must add that Nephi was an accomplished writer. "His use of parallelism, balance, and particularly chiasmus is that of a sophisticated literary technician (Welch 1981:199)." Welch also points out that Nephi divided his writings into two books because "Both books are independent chiastic units, centrally focused and symmetrically organized (1981:100)." Welch's brief outline of the chiastic arrangement of the Second Book of Nephi is as

follows:

A   The Testaments of Lehi, his death (Chs. 1-3:23)
  B   Jacob's Commentary on Isaiah 50-51 (Chs. 5-7)
    C   Isaiah 2-14 as "third witness" (Chs. 8-10)
  B' Nephi's Commentary on Isaiah (Chs. 11-12)
A' The Testament of Nephi (Chs. 13-15)

Smith's index indicates that there are 66 other chiasms in the Second Book of Nephi. Welch has identified this short one:

a   And others will he pacify, and lull them **away** into carnal security
  b   that they will say, All is **well** in **Zion**
  b' yea, **Zion** prospereth, all is **well**
a' And thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them **away** carefully down to hell. (II Nephi 12:25-26)

A   Introduction (1:1-2)
  B   Repentance (1:3)
    C   God reigns (1:5-7)
      D   Lehi comes to know Christ (1:8-10)
        E   Testimony of Christ (1:11-20)
          F   God protects the chosen (1:21-23)
            G   A part of the House of Israel is being scattered (1:24-25)
              H   Obtaining the Plates of Brass (1:59-174)
                I   Keeping records (2:1-6)
                  J   A narrative about: the family of Ishmael, a journey, and rebellion against Nephi (2:8-33)
                    K   Nephi exhorts his brothers and they turn to the Lord (2:34-36)
                      L   The Tree of Life (2:41-92)
                        M   Two sets of records (2:93-102)
                          N   Prophecy of coming of Christ and other events (3:1-21)
                            O   "... (Lehi) spake by the power of the Holy Ghost ..." (3:24)
                              P   Nephi desires righteousness "I, Nephi, was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things ..." (3:26)
                                Q   (a) "... the power of the Holy Ghost ... is the gift of God unto all those who diligently seek him ..."
                                  (b) "... in times of old as in the time that he should manifest himself ..." (3:26)
                                  (c) "For he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." (3:27)
                                  R   "And the way is prepared from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him;" (3:28)
                              Q' (a) "For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them by the power of the Holy Ghost," (3:29-30)
                                  (b) "as well in this time as in times of old; and as well in times of old as in times to come;" (3:30-31)
                                  (c) "Wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round." (3:32)
                              P' Those who desire wickedness "... if ye have sought to do wickedly in the days of your probation," (3:34)
                          O' "And the Holy Ghost giveth authority that I (Nephi) should speak these things and deny them not." (3:36)
                      N' Prophecy of coming of Christ and other events (3:37-237)
                    M' Two sets of records (3:246-256)
                  L' The Tree of Life (4:1-64)
                K' Nephi exhorts his brothers, they humble themselves before the Lord (5:1-5)
              J' A narrative about: the family of Ishmael, a journey, and rebellion against Nephi (5:7-54)
            I' Keeping records (5:218-231)
           H' Information from the Plates of Brass (5:239-7:4)
         G' The House of Israel is to be scattered (7:6-12)
        F' God protects the righteous (7:35-37)
      E' Testimony of Christ (7:43-46)
    D' All the righteous will know Christ (7:55-57)
  C' The Holy One of Israel reigneth (7:62)
 B' Repentance (7:64)
A' Conclusion (7:65-69)

Fig. 1—A chiastic outline of the First Book of Nephi.

The entire Book of Mosiah is also chiastically arranged. The following outline is based on Welch (1969):

A   King Benjamin exhorts his sons (1:1-13)
  B   Mosiah chosen to succeed his father (1:15,16)
    C   Mosiah receives the records (1:23)
      D   Benjamin's speech and the words of the **angel** (1:36-2:50)
        E   People enter into a covenant (3:6)
          F   Priests consecrated (4:4)
            G   Ammon leaves **Zarahemla** for the land of **Lehi-Nephi** (5:4-8)
              H   People in bondage. Ammon put in prison (5:9)
                I   The **24 gold plates** (5:64)
                  J   The record of Zeniff begins as he leaves Zarahemla (6:1)
                    K   Defense against the Lamanites (6:14-57)
                      L   Noah and his priests (7:1-15)
                        M   Abinadi persecuted and thrown into prison (7:69)
                          N   **Abinadi** reads old law to priests (7:70-99)
                          N' **Abinadi** makes his own prophecies (7:106-8:91)
                        M' Abinadi persecuted and killed (9:1-27)
                      L' Noah and his priests (9:100-112)
                    K' Lamanites threaten the people of Limhi (9:113-139)
                  J' Record of Zeniff ends as he leaves the land of Lehi-Nephi (10:19)
                I' The **24 gold plates** (9:169)
              H' People of Alma in bondage (11:54-64)
            G' Alma leaves the land of **Lehi-Nephi** for **Zarahemla** (11:65)
          F' The church organized by Alma (11:97-104)
        E' Unbelievers refuse to enter covenant (11:105-120)
      D' The words of Alma and the words of the **angel** of the Lord (11:116-176)
    C' Alma the Younger receives the records (13:1-2)
  B' Judges chosen instead of a king (13:7-62)
A' Mosiah exhorts his people (13:7-62)

According to Welch's analysis, the theme of repentance, as delivered by the prophet Abinadi, is the chiastic center of the Book of Mosiah. Welch has also analyzed the chiastic structure of Benjamin's proclamation. His 1973 version (manuscript) divided the speech into six parts, each part being a chiasm in itself. If the main theme of each part was further arranged, the pattern would turn out something like this (Welch's parts III and IV have been combined into a single part—"C"):

A   Humble yourselves (serve) (Mosiah 1:38-66)
  B   Be obedient (accountable) (1:70-91)
    C   Christ is your example (1:95-130)
  B' Believe in Christ (2:8-23)
A' Repent (2:24-50)

The following chiasm from the Third Book of Nephi is a modification of a pattern discovered by Robert F. Smith (manuscript):

A   Gentiles trodden down (7:40)
    Land of inheritance (7:42)
  B   Isaiah 52:8-10 (Zion) (7:43-45)
    C   Sick restored-circle of fire (Zion) (8:4-26)
      D   Bread and wine (8:28-43)
        E   Prayer (8:47-57)
          F   Baptism, the twelve disciples, the Holy Ghost (8:62, 70-71)
            G   Ascent of Jesus (8:73-75)
          F   Baptism, the twelve disciples, the Holy Ghost (9:4-16)
        E' Prayer (9:17-39)
      D' Bread and wine (9:40-45)
    C' Restoration of the House of Israel (Zion) (9:46-69)
  B' Isaiah 52:8-10 (Zion) (9:70-73)
A' Gentiles trodden down (9:99-106)
    Land of inheritance (10:1)

The central element here is the ascent of Jesus. Ascent or going to a high place would correspond to a mountain which is a common central element of Biblical chiastic structures. Smith has also worked out a preliminary outline of the chiastic structure of the entire Third Book of Nephi with the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount as the central element.

Twenty-four shorter chiastic patterns have also been discovered in Third Nephi including 21 also found in the New Testament. The following example, first discovered by Lund (Matt. 5:12-14), is from III Nephi 5:57-59:

a   And blessed are all they who are **persecuted** for my name's sake
  b   For theirs is the kingdom of **heaven**
    c   And blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and **persecute**, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake
  b'   For ye shall have great joy and be exceeding glad, for great shall be your reward in **heaven**;
a'   For so **persecuted** they the prophets who were before you.

Smith lists a possible 229 chiastic patterns in the Book of Mormon including five entire books–I, II, III Nephi, Mosiah and Ether. The Book of Mormon is one of the world's outstanding examples of chiastic writing thus providing another parallel between it and the Bible.

CONCLUSION

This has been a very brief review of chiastic structure and its occurrence in the Book of Mormon. Everyone should be aware of this aspect of the Book of Mormon to strengthen their understanding of its historical authenticity and to provide a means to better understand its spiritual message. Some of the arguments against the Book of Mormon have mentioned its awkward style and frequent repetition. The discovery of the chiastic nature of the Book of Mormon helps turn this argument into support for the Book of Mormon.

The chiastic form of writing therefore, takes its place along with other ancient patterns, such as the many examples of Hebraisms and the many archaeological patterns, to show that the Book of Mormon is exactly what it claims to be, an ancient document.

God's creation is orderly. There is no doubt a balance and a symmetry throughout the divine plan for this earth. The abundant use of chiastic writing among God's chosen people, the Hebrews, seems to be evidence of this fact.

For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. Job 33:14

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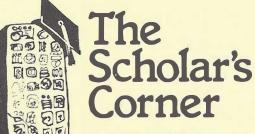Smith, Robert F.
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The Scholar's Corner

By Verneil Simmons
(See answers below)

Lamoni:
  a. Was converted by Mosiah's son, Ammon
  b. Was king over all the Lamanites
  c. Was nearly buried while in a trance
  d. Converted all his people to Christ

Moroni:
  a. Was a Nephite commander of the army at 25.
  b. Developed a new defense system
  c. Conquered the land of Nephi
  d. Raised the banner of liberty

Alma II:
  a. Was visited by an angel
  b. His missionary traveling companion was Zeezrom
  c. Praised the Rameumpton as a place for worship
  d. Disappeared from the land

The sons of Mosiah:
  a. Contended for the throne
  b. Saw the angel of the Lord
  c. Persecuted the church
  d. Converted thousands of Lamanites

Cumorah:
  a. Where Ammoron hid the records
  b. Where Mormon hid the records
  c. Where the Jaredites fought their final battle
  d. Where Mormon died

Answers to Scholar's Corner

Lamoni: a. Alma 12:111-175; c. Alma 12:126

Moroni: a. Alma 20:17-19; b. Alma 22:1-6, Alma 21:157; d. Alma 21, 42, 71

Alma II: a. Mosiah 12:162-181; d. Alma 21:20-22

The sons of Mosiah: b. Alma 12:2; c. Mosiah 11:159-162; d. Alma 14:7-17, 78-83

Cumorah: b. Mormon 3:7-8; c. Ether 6:83

"Lead Us Not Into Temptation"

A HEBREW IDIOM

By Angela Crowell

Many readers have wondered why the Lord's prayer is worded differently in the Book of Mormon and the Inspired Version of the Bible. In III Nephi 5:105 the verse reads "**lead us not** into temptation", and in Matthew 6:14 the verse reads "**suffer us not to be led** into temptation."

Various authors in the church have sought to explain this apparent contradiction. Some have suggested that the scribe erred in writing from memory and thus gave us the wording of the King James Version[1]. However, even though Joseph Smith revised the Book of Mormon manuscript in 1837, he did not change the wording to agree with the Inspired Version of the Bible[2]. Perhaps the Seer did not consider this difference to be a mistake.

In E. W. Bullinger's book, **Figures of Speech Used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated**,[3] the author gives reference to this New Testament scripture. Bullinger is a scholar of high standing. Since the original date of publication in 1898, this classic work has been considered by many scholars to be the foremost authority on the subject; and it is still in print. According to Bullinger, while the language of the New Testament is Greek, the men who recorded it were Hebrews: the words are Greek, the thoughts and idioms are Hebrew. The New Testament abounds with Hebraisms; i.e., expressions conveying Hebrew usages and thoughts in Greek words. This has a significant bearing on the interpretation and understanding of many passages in the New Testament. Bullinger stresses the importance of the idiomatic expression of words and phrases (the exact reproduction, not of the words, but of the thought and meaning of the phrase). Unless the translation is idiomatic, serious mistakes can be made; if a translation is absolutely literal, many errors will also appear.[4]

In his chapter on idioms and idiomatic usages of verbs, the author presents several rules and examples of active verbs including the following: "Active verbs were used by the Hebrews to express, not the doing of the thing, but the permission of the thing which the agent is said to do." Two examples from the Old Testament are Exodus 4:21 and Jeremiah 4:10. In Exodus 4:21 we read in the King James Version: "I will harden his heart (i.e., I will permit or suffer his heart to be hardened), that he shall not let the people go." In Jeremiah 4:10: "Lord God, surely thou hast greatly deceived this people": i.e., "Thou hast suffered this people to be greatly deceived, by the false prophets, saying: Ye shall have peace, etc."[4]

The most important example of this idiomatic usage in the New Testament is Matthew 6:13 (14 I.V.). Bullinger interprets the passage this way: "Lead us not (i.e., suffer us not to be led) into temptation."[5] Numerous Bible commentaries support Bullinger's statement on this

scripture. J.R. Dummelow explains in his book, **One Volume Bible Commentary**: "God does not Himself tempt (James 1:13) but He allows us to be tempted, and what God permits is often spoken of in scripture as His act."[6] Adam Clark's **Commentary on the Bible** agrees: "Bring us not in, or lead us not into. This is a mere Hebraism. God is said to do a thing which He only permits or suffers to be done."[7] In **Barnes' Notes on the New Testament** the author gives the same interpretation. "This phrase, then must be used in the sense of permitting. Do not suffer us, or permit us, to be tempted to sin. In this it is implied that God has such control over us and the tempter, as to save us from it if we call on him."[8] Finally, in William Hendriksen's **New Testament Commentary, Expositions of the Gospel according to Matthew**, the author comments: "Though it is true that God himself never tempts man to sin (James 1:13), it is also true that there is good reason to ask him not even to permit us voluntarily to run into temptation."[9]

Bullinger's interpretation of the idiomatic use of the verb in this scripture—supported by other scholars in the field—thus offers the most plausible explanation concerning the difference in wording between the two books of scripture. "Lead us not into temptation" is a Hebrew idiom strictly translated in the Book of Mormon. "Suffer us not to be led into temptation" is correctly interpreted into English in the Inspired Version of the Bible. Obviously Joseph was a Seer in the truest sense of the word.

In summary, both are correct: the wording in the Inspired Version is (in a sense) an explanation of the Hebrew idiom which clarifies the meaning for us. The wording in the Book of Mormon is the Hebrew idiom itself. We take comfort in the words: "I, Nephi . . . make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians." (I Nephi 1:1)

Footnotes:
1. **Question Time**, Vol. 2, Herald House, Independence, Mo., 1967, p. 66.
2. Ibid.
3. E. W. Bullinger, **Figures of Speech used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated**, Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1898, pp. 819-20.
4. Ibid, p. 823.
5. Bullinger, p.824.
6. J. R. Dummelow, (ed.), **The One Volume Bible Commentary**, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1936, p. 647.
7. Adam Clark, **Commentary on the Bible**, abridged by Ralph Earle, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1979, p. 778.
8. **Barnes' Notes on the New Testament**, edited by Ingram Cobbin, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, 1980, p. 30.
9. William Hendriksen, **New Testament Commentary, Exposition of the Gospel according to Matthew**, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, 1973, p. 337.

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6. Samuel G. Green (ed.), **A Handbook to Old Testament Hebrew**, The Religious Tract Society, London, 1901, p. 162.
7. Ibid., p. 162-3.
8. J. Weingreen, **A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew**, 2nd ed., The Clarendon Press, 1959, p. 92.
9. Gesenius, pp. 437-8.
10. Weingreen, p. 44.
11. Davidson, **Grammar**, p. 61.
12. Weingreen, p. 244.
13. Davidson, **Syntax**, p. 159. .
14. Ronald J. Williams, **Hebrew Syntax**, 2nd ed., University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1976, p. 44.
15. Gesenius, pp. 366-7.
16. Ibid., p. 377.
17. Weingreen, p. 56.
18. Gesenius, pp. 312-3.
19. Ibid., p. 397.
20. Davidson, **Syntax**, p. 20.
21. Robert Young, **Analytical Concordance to the Bible**, 22nd ed., Funk & Wagnalls Co., New York, 1936, p. 563.
22. Francis Brown, et al., **A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament**, Based on the Lexicon by William Gesenius as translated by Edward Robinson, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1951, p. 953.
23. **Holy Bible, New International Version**, Zondervan Bible Publishers, Grand Rapids, 1978, pp. 70 & 167.
24. **Good News Bible, The Bible in Today's English Version**, American Bible Society, New York, 1976, pp. 87 & 197.
25. R. Laird, Harris, et al., **Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament**, Vol. 1 & 2, Moody Press, Chicago, 1980, p. 860.
26. Youngs, p. 916.
27. Youngs, p. 437.
28. Harris, p. 287.
29. **THE HOLY SCRIPTURES** according to the Masoretic text, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1955, p. 605.
30. **The Prophets**, a new translation of THE HOLY SCRIPTURES according to the Masoretic text, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1978, p. 477.

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