

# Where Did The Book of Mormon Come From?

Shane Fisher

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**If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions  
concerning this book, please contact the author at:  
worldevangelism1962@gmail.com**

**World Evangelism Publications  
P.O. Box 72  
Winona, MS 38967**

**662-283-1192**

**www.worldevangelism.org  
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## **Author's Statement**

### **Shane Fisher**

This book is the fruitition of many hours of research. However, I stand upon the shoulders of giants who came before me who paved the way. I am very thankful for their contributions. Without them, this book would have never seen the light of day. Unfortunately, this book will have to remain unpublished. But I give this unpublished book freely to the world. I wrote it because I love Latter-Day Saints and want them to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4).



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# Introduction

I have read the **Book of Mormon** (hereafter **BOM**) many times, and it is important to give my critical analysis as to where and how it *most probably* originated. I have conducted research off and on for almost two decades on this book. It all began when I was in high school and I became good friends with a Latter-Day Saint whose name was Kyle. He and I ate lunch together many times and we had several studies about our belief systems. We decided to invite some LDS missionaries to come have a study at his home. The study did not lead to any progress, but as far as I can remember we did go our separate ways without holding any animosity towards one another.

This started my journey of wanting to learn more about the **BOM**. If it was indeed the word of God just as the Bible is, then we ought to accept it. However, if it is not the word of God, then we ought to reject it. I decided to investigate it and here are the fruits of my research.

The official LDS account claims that the origin of the **BOM** is due to some golden plates being hidden in the hill Cumorah for 1,400 years (400 A.D. - approx. 1800 A.D.). Prophets such as Nephi, Mormon, Moroni, and others wrote upon the plates in the reformed Egyptian language. Moroni, who was the last prophet, was the one to have hidden the plates in the hill Cumorah until the appointed time should come for Joseph Smith to retrieve and translate them.

The first theory on the human origin of the **BOM** was what was known as the Solomon Spalding-Sidney Rigdon theory. Solomon Spalding (sometimes spelled “Spaulding”) was a Revolutionary War veteran, who studied law for a little while under Zephaniah Swift, then turned to entering Dartmouth College to study ministry. While studying there, he most likely came across the idea that the Native Americans originated from the lost tribes of Israel. He graduated from there and preached for several years as a Congregationalist minister. He then joined his younger brother, Josiah, in the mercantile business. Eventually, he came to Conneaut, Ohio where he was in the process of purchasing tracts of land from creditors, which was divided into parcels by survey, and then selling land to newcomers on the frontier. He also was in the process of constructing an iron forge. There were several tragedies in his life that led him to be in debt to his creditors and he turned to his hobby of writing to explain how the first settlers of America came there and the origin of the mounds that were found

all around that region where he lived. Most of this biographical information is derived from relatives of Spalding such as his widow, his daughter, Matilda, his older brother, John, and John's wife, Martha.

It is posited he produced at least *two* manuscripts from eyewitness accounts who either had read his manuscripts and/or heard them read by Spalding himself.

The **first manuscript** was the Roman voyage during the time of Constantine where Romans reached the American shores. The story was never finished. The ending is abrupt thus showing its discontinuation. It was discovered in Honolulu, Hawaii in the 1880s and the story's title was *Manuscript Story-Conneaut Creek*. It was turned over and placed at Oberlin College.

The **second manuscript** he wrote was entitled *Manuscript Found*. Spalding went back further in time and wanted to make the story appear more ancient. He journeyed to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to have his book published so that he could make a great sum of money to pay off the creditors and have a decent living. He went to *R. & J. Patterson* book publishing firm, but there were still some necessary arrangements to be made to the second manuscript such as money up front to be paid to the publisher and more edits needed to be made that would make it fit for publication.

Pittsburgh became an expensive place for the Spalding family to live. It also was apparent that the manuscript was not going to be published anytime soon. The Spalding family moved outside to Amity, Pennsylvania where Solomon continued to work on it and he also owned a tavern. Unfortunately, Spalding passed away in October of 1816 and the second manuscript never did see the light of publication (*or did it reach publication under an alternative title that included expanded theological material years later?*).

There are questions as to how Sidney Rigdon came to know about the manuscript, as to whether he copied it, stole it, or did both. Or did he cooperate alongside Solomon Spalding in helping to edit his manuscript (see possible inference in Redick McKee's testimony), but when Spalding died, did Rigdon decide that he would do something else with it? He would deny that he ever had anything to do with the manuscript in a newspaper account he wrote in 1839 in response to the allegations of Solomon Spalding's widow (to be shown later).

Did Rigdon ever meet Joseph Smith before his "conversion" to the Latter-Day Saint faith in November 1830 (or even before March 1830 when the **BOM** was published)? Did they together devise a plan of turning it into a religious book that has come down to us known as *The Book of Mormon*? I think you

will come away with the conviction after reading this book that this indeed is the truth of how the **BOM** originated.

Are there weaknesses to the Spalding/Rigdon theory? Certainly, there are.

**Weakness # 1:** We have never found a novel that has a title named *Manuscript Found* to which we can compare the **BOM** for its similarities.

**Weakness # 2:** There is not a substantial amount of evidence between the connection of Sidney Rigdon and *Manuscript Found*.

**Weakness # 3:** There is not a substantial amount of evidence between the connection of Sidney Rigdon and meeting Joseph Smith, Jr. before his alleged conversion in November 1830.

*This is why it will always remain a theory.* It will never be 100% certain. However, it does remain by far **the best explanation** for the **BOM**'s existence.

### **The Inference To The Best Explanation**

Robert Bowman, a philosopher for the Christian worldview, has written on the inference to the best explanation which he applied in his book as to why the resurrection of Jesus rising bodily from the grave remains the best historical explanation for the data, but Joseph Smith's first vision was a fraud. Bowman's words also apply to the human origin of the **BOM**.

Here is what Bowman stated about the *inference to the best explanation*:

"Our examination of the foundational claims of Christianity and Mormonism employs a form of reasoning that is commonly called inference to the best explanation. **The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy** defines inference to the best explanation as 'the procedure of choosing the hypothesis or theory that best explains the available data.' This type of reasoning compares competing explanations for a particular situation or set of facts to determine which of those explanations best accounts for the available evidence. This evidence-based reasoning may broadly be described as hypothetical reasoning, in which hypotheses, or proposed accounts of what took place, are examined to see how well they explain the available evidence.

Inference to the best explanation is used in various types of inquiries or investigations. Philosophers Kevin McCain and Ted Poston observe that this method of reasoning is 'used pervasively in the sciences' and indeed constantly 'in everyday life.' For example, criminal detectives seek to determine how best to explain the evidence pertaining to a specific crime. J. Warner Wallace, a



cold-case homicide detective in the Los Angeles Police Department, applied the same methodology he used to solve homicide cases when as an atheist he studied the issue of whether Jesus rose from the dead. Wallace explains that as a detective he would make ‘a list of the possible explanations that might account for the scene’ of the crime. He then ‘compared the evidence to the potential explanations and determined which explanation was, in fact, the most reasonable inference in light of the evidence.’ When Wallace applied this method to the Gospels, he was surprised to discover that their ‘testimonies’ to the Resurrection held up, and as a result he became a Christian.

In the courtroom, the prosecuting attorney seeks to persuade the jury that the evidence shows that the defendant committed the crime. The jury typically hears conflicting claims from the prosecution and the defense, often involving testimonies that appear to conflict with one another, and must weigh the arguments both sides presented in light of the material evidence. Historians’ work is much like that of lawyers, since both historians and lawyers seek to persuade others of their accounts of what happened in the past on the basis of the evidence. There is a long, venerable tradition of the application of legal reasoning in the defense of the Christian faith, especially with regard to the evidence for the reliability of the Gospels and the historicity of Jesus’ resurrection. Two classic works in this genre were Thomas Sherlock’s **The Tryal of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus** (1729) and Simon Greenleaf’s **The Testimony of the Evangelists** (1874), both of which have been reprinted in recent years. That tradition has continued in the work of legal scholar and Christian apologist John Warwick Montgomery, who popularized a legal-evidences model of apologetics in such works as **Faith Founded on Fact** (1978) and **History, Law and Christianity** (2003). Montgomery advocates a ‘juridical’ defense of Christianity in which the apologist applies legal reasoning and the law of evidence to contested historical claims of the Christian faith.

Inference to the best explanation does not mean choosing whichever explanation subjectively feels ‘best’ to the person doing the study. The explanation or hypothesis must account for the available evidence in a way that is objectively better than other proposed explanations. What makes an explanation a good one is that it accounts for more of the evidence, and especially different kinds of evidence (such as personal testimonies and physical objects of relevance, not just one or the other), and does so without

strain or speculative assumptions. Ian Ramsey's memorable analogy is that the best explanation, whether in science, theology, or some other type of inquiry, is the one that 'fits' the evidence the way the right shoe best fits one's foot. The shoe must be the right length and width, neither pinching nor falling off the foot.

In this type of reasoning, one puts forth a hypothesis or theory and then asks what sorts of facts we would expect to find if the hypothesis were true. Let's use a simple example. You go outside and find that your car, which is sitting in the driveway, is wet. You immediately consider four possible explanations: it rained, the sprinklers came on, someone washed the car in the driveway, or someone took the car through a car wash. Each of these explanations is a hypothesis that, if true, would have resulted in the car being wet. In order to determine which of these explanations is the best, you consider what sorts of facts you would expect to find for each hypothesis. For example, if the car was wet due to the sprinklers, you would expect part of the driveway around the car as well as the grass near the driveway to be wet. If the car was wet due to rain, you would expect the whole yard, the driveway, and the street to be wet. And so on. Whichever hypothesis most naturally or reasonably accounts for all of the relevant observations is the best explanation.

Philosophers have identified some criteria that we can use as a kind of checklist to test competing hypotheses to see which of them is the best explanation. Here are the criteria philosophers most commonly propose:

**1. Explanatory scope.** The hypothesis accounts for a greater variety of observations. For example, if the driveway is almost completely dry but the car is wet, and there is a receipt from the car wash inside the car with today's date, these different sorts of evidences constitute great explanatory scope. Textual and physical evidences supporting the same hypothesis are far better than just textual or just physical evidences.

**2. Explanatory power.** The hypothesis makes the observations more probable or more likely. If the car, the grass by the driveway, and the driveway around the car are wet, it is possible that someone washed the car and sprayed water on the grass, but the hypothesis that the sprinklers were on is a more likely explanation because the pattern of wetness is what one would expect if the sprinklers were responsible.

**3. Fewer defeaters.** The hypothesis has few or no "defeaters," meaning observations or evidences that seem to contradict or disprove it. In our

example, finding that the driveway and grass are dry is a defeater of the hypothesis that the car is wet due to rain.

**4. Less ad hoc.** The hypothesis is less dependent on extraneous assumptions or speculations for which there is no evidence. The Latin expression *ad hoc* (literally, ‘for this’) means an assumption that someone makes for no other reason than to support the conclusion he favors. For example, if a car wash receipt with today’s date is found in the car, denying that the car got wet in a car wash by speculating that the receipt was for a different car (without any evidence specifically supporting that suggestion) is *ad hoc*. Sometimes philosophers say that the best explanation is the simplest one (e.g., that one car was washed is a simpler explanation than that two cars were washed).

**5. More plausible.** The hypothesis fits more consistently or coherently with what we know about the larger context of the evidence we are trying to explain. For example, if your property is in the desert where there has been no rain in almost a year, the hypothesis that the car got wet in the rain will be less plausible than the other explanations.

A hypothesis qualifies as the ‘best explanation’ if it does much better on these criteria overall than any of the other hypotheses. This does not mean that it must rate highly on all five criteria to be considered the best explanation. For example, the hypothesis that the car got wet in the rain may have a low plausibility in the desert and yet all of the specific observations clearly support that explanation (e.g., the driveway, the grounds, and the house are all wet; a weather report announces that it rained today). Surprising things do happen.”<sup>1</sup>

*I am writing this book to show why the **BOM** has a natural origin from man as the inference to the best explanation rather than having a supernatural origin from God.*

As we think about the five factors that Bowman just mentioned, when the Spalding-Rigdon theory applies these five factors, I believe you will come away convinced just as I was that the natural origin remains the best explanation as to the origin of the **BOM**.

First, consider the *explanatory power and scope* that there is a list of eyewitnesses that has *circumstantial* connections to connect Solomon Spalding’s

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Bowman, Jr., *Jesus’ Resurrection and Joseph’s Visions: Examining The Foundations of Christianity and Mormonism*. (Deward Publishing: Tampa, FL, 2020). Kindle edition, 34-37.

*Manuscript Found* to be similar in many details to the **BOM**; there are a list of eyewitnesses who connect Sidney Rigdon to *Manuscript Found*; there are a list of witnesses who state that Rigdon knew about the **BOM** before its first publication in the newspaper of the summer of 1829; there are also eyewitnesses who connect Sidney Rigdon to Joseph Smith before Rigdon's LDS conversion in November 1830.

There are several places in the **BOM** itself where I think you can see Solomon Spalding's "fingerprints" as the author and you can also see where Sidney Rigdon had an editorial hand in it.

C.E. Henry, who gave second-hand testimony from George Wilbur, offered this statement: "The Book of Mormon contains many internal evidences that Sidney Rigdon was the author of at least a good portion of it. How many others had a hand in it, or what other manuscripts, if any, assisted in the work, it would be difficult now to determine."<sup>2</sup>

Is this statement correct? Later on in this book, we will prove Mr. Henry's assertion to be correct.

Second, consider there are *fewer defeaters* as already previously mentioned: (a) *defeater* # 1: there has never been found a novel that has a title named *Manuscript Found* to which we can compare the **BOM** for its similarities; (b) *defeater* # 2: there is not a substantial amount of evidence between the connection of Sidney Rigdon and the theft of *Manuscript Found*; (c) *defeater* # 3: there is not a substantial amount of evidence between the connection of Sidney Rigdon and meeting Joseph Smith, Jr. before his alleged conversion in November 1830.

Third, please consider that there will be *ad hoc* assumptions that are made.

Fourth, recognize that this hypothesis fits within the larger context of historical data that we have. As I discussed in my book, *Questions About Mormon Doctrine*, I conducted an examination of the **BOM** and **Doctrine & Covenants** (hereafter **D & C**) and showed how they were contradictory with one another, how they were contradictory with previous revelation - the Bible, and how it contained absurdities that show that it cannot have come from God. If it is the case that we may never know exactly where the **BOM** came from, it is at least certain that we can know that it did not come from God.

There have been other books who are vastly superior to mine who have written on this topic. One book has gone through three editions and the third

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<sup>2</sup> "The Spalding Manuscript and Book of Mormon." *The Cleveland Leader and Morning Herald*, Vol. 39, No. 73, March 14, 1886.

edition is called *The Spalding Enigma: Investigating the Mysterious Origin of The Book of Mormon - Scholars' Edition* by Wayne Cowdery, Howard A. Davis, and Arthur D. Vanick. It is well worth getting if you want a more scholarly approach to the theory.

The old classic book by Charles Shook entitled *The True Origin of the Book of Mormon* is also worth getting and you should be able to locate it for free on the online public domain.

There are also some websites from which I have derived some great information such as [www.mormonleaks.com](http://www.mormonleaks.com) and [www.solomonspalding.com](http://www.solomonspalding.com). Craig Criddle has done an extensive amount of research and I stand on his shoulders for the research he has brought. I am also indebted to Dale Broadhurst who has also done so much research and I would urge you to go through those websites that have such an extensive amount of research.

What makes my book different is that I am writing it from a Christian worldview approach. My desire is like my Lord's desire in that I want everyone to come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved (1 Timothy 2:4). Latter-Day Saints have asked me in the past: "Where did the **BOM** come from if it did not come from God?" Well, here is the long answer to that question.

I also write it from the perspective that I include my own insights and research into what I believe to be the internal evidence for the **BOM** to be Sidney Rigdon and company, which will be covered in the latter-half of the book.

I thought it would be better that those who are doing research on this topic can benefit from the arrangement from the material because when you do go to the websites I just previously mentioned, there is so much there that I thought I might take some of that information and try to arrange it in a way that is easy and consistent to follow.

The first half of this book will not require much of my writing because I want you to see the original sources for yourself. I want you to see how the Spalding-Rigdon theory for the **BOM** is illuminating enough to open your eyes to the truth.

**Shane Fisher**  
**February 2023**

**SECTION ONE:**  
**The Circumstantial Evidence For**  
**The Spalding-Rigdon Theory**



## **Chapter 1:**

### **Did Solomon Spalding Exist?**

Was there a person such as Solomon Spalding who *actually* existed? Did eyewitnesses make him up? What does the historical evidence show us?

There are several sources of historical evidence that show Solomon Spalding did exist although this will *not* be an exhaustive list of all the historical sources.

#### **(1) Biographical Sketch For Solomon Spalding**

“SPAULDING, Solomon, clergyman, born in Ashford, Connecticut, in 1761; died in Amity, Washington County, Pennsylvania, 20 October, 1816. After serving in his youth in the Revolutionary army, and beginning to study law. he was graduated at Dartmouth in 1785, studied for the ministry, and preached in New England. In 1795 he settled in Cherry Valley, New York, where he entered into business with his brother, and four years later in Richfield, New York In 1809 he removed to New Salem (now Conneaut), Ohio, and established an iron-foundry with Henry Lake. This enterprise proving unprofitable, on account of the war with Great Britain, he went to Pittsburg, and afterward to Amity, Pennsylvania, where he died.

While residing at Conneaut, he wrote a romance entitled “The Manuscript Found,” purporting to be an account of the original people of this continent, their customs, and conflicts between the different tribes. It pretended to be taken from a manuscript that had been discovered in an ancient mound. Mr. Spaulding read his manuscript to some of his friends in 1811-’12, and tried to get it published, but without success. In 1830 Mormon elders preached in northeastern Ohio, and their account of how the golden plates, from which the “Book of Mormon “ was made, had been found, brought to mind the story written by Spaulding twenty years before. A suspicion was raised that the “Book of Mormon “ might have been an outgrowth from the latter. This suspicion ripened into a general belief, and in time became the accepted theory of the origin of the “Book of Mormon.” It is alleged that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, compiled the “Book of Mormon” from Spaulding’s manuscript story, Rigdon having stolen it, or a copy of it, from a printing-office in which he worked in Pittsburg.

In 1834 (**1833-SF**) Dr. P. Hurlbut, who had been expelled from the Mormon

church, obtained from the widow of Solomon Spaulding, Mrs. Matilda Davison, of Monson, Massachusetts, what was supposed to be the original copy of the Spaulding story, and the same year Eber D. Howe, editor of the Painesville "Telegraph," compiled a book entitled "Mormonism Unveiled," which was a severe criticism on the "Book of Mormon" and its believers. This book was reproduced in 1840. Upon the title-page and in the last chapter is suggested the "probability that the historical part of the 'Golden Bible' was written by Solomon Spaulding." From the time Mr. Hurlbut obtained the manuscript story in 1834 up to 1884 its whereabouts was unknown to the world.

In 1884 President James H. Fairchild, of Oberlin college, visited his old anti-slavery friend, Lewis L. Rice, of Honolulu, Hawaiian islands. Mr. Rice in 1839-'40 succeeded Mr. Howe in the office of the Painesville "Telegraph," and the books and manuscripts came into his possession. President Fairchild asked Mr. Rice if he had among his old papers anything relating to the early anti-slavery movement which he would contribute to the Oberlin library. When examining for these he came upon "an old worn and faded manuscript of about 175 pages of small quarto," which proved to be the long-lost manuscript of Solomon Spaulding. Comparisons were made with the "Book of Mormon," and President Fairchild says: "The manuscript has no resemblance to the 'Book of Mormon' except in some very general features. There is not a name or an incident common to the two." A verbatim copy of the manuscript has been issued by the Mormons at Lamoni, Iowa (1885)."<sup>3</sup>

## **(2) An Historical Account of the Presbyterian Church at Cherry Valley, N.Y.**

"In the summer of 1784 the place was honored by the advent of a party of highly distinguished visitors. A few families had already begun to rebuild, when Gen. Washington, who was on a tour of observation through the frontier districts in company with Gen. Geo. Clinton, (who had some connections here) and several others, stopped at the place, to view the scene of the massacre, and call upon those who had served as officers in the war.

The corporate body was kept up from this time onward, but in the first years the church was left to care for itself without assistance of a regular

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<sup>3</sup> *Appeltons' Cyclopaedia of American Biography*. eds. James Grant Wilson and John Fiske. Vol. V - Pickering - Sumter. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1900), 624.



minister: worship being maintained with such temporary help as could from time to time be procured in a region so isolated. By 1790 a Meeting House had been erected, but from subsequent records the post revolutionary church seems for many years to have been without regular furniture, and in the barest possible condition. In 1796 the names of 54 others are entered as "members of the first Presbyterian Congregation." Among these is that of the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, a man whose literary labors subsequently became an instrument in supporting the most scandalous imposture our country has produced. We read in the Scripture of an old prophet at Bethel, who preferred dwelling among the 10 tribes to ministering to the faithful people, and whose preference therein ultimately led to deplorable mischief. -- Mr. Spaulding doubtless anticipated no such results, but having abandoned the ministry, he devoted his leisure to some unprofitable speculations about those same lost Tribes of Israel. On this subject he wrote a romance, detailing an imaginary history, and identifying them with the Aborigines of this Continent, whom he describes as coming to this country by a long journey through various lands from Jerusalem, under two leaders, Nephi and Lehi, and giving rise to the traces of art and civilization which exist in the mounds and other relics which still are so perplexing a problem to scholars. The MS. of this work being sent to a printing office, where its absurdity caused it to be refused, it was copied by one Rigdon and thence into the hands of Joseph Smith, the pretended prophet of the "Latter Day Saint[s]," became the source of the pretended revelations of the "Golden Leaves," and now survives, with a few additions from Scripture, as the Book of Mormon.

Sometime before this time an energetic effort was made in behalf of education, and a handsome building was erected for an Academy, which long exerted the happiest influence on the culture of the neighborhood, and sent out numbers of men who became prominent throughout the country. Mr. Spaulding appears to have taught in this institution, and, doubtless, he occasionally preached in the church, and baptized the children. But in this year, both church and school were to secure the services of a man whose labors in the latter soon raised it to great efficiency, and who himself rapidly rose to eminence as an eloquent divine, and efficient supporter of education. An entry in the record, August 15, 1796, states that the question "whether this Society will give the Rev. Eliphalet Nott a call to settle as our minister," was carried in the affirmative,

and a subscription opened to raise money for his support.”<sup>4</sup>

### **(3) Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America**

“For seven years the place remained a desolation, and without a human denizen. In 1784-5, the old inhabitants began to return, and soon after a meeting was called to reorganize the society. But no Mr. Dunlap came back. It took till 1790 to erect another house of worship, and that stood in the barest plight, and only now and then, as some passing preacher stopped, did it echo a minister’s voice. Mr. Solomon Spaulding, who amused himself by the writing of a fiction which with no thought of the kind on his part was adopted as the Mormon Bible, occasionally filled the pulpit, but no regular services were held until Rev. Eliphalet Nott, afterwards the distinguished President of Union College, established them in 1795. In 1798 he was called to Albany, and the church was again left to casual supplies until 1802, when they were statedly enjoyed for a year, and also again in 1806, and still again in 1810, when the Rev. Eli F. Cooley entered on the charge and remained in it for ten years; and, up to 1883, twenty-two pastors and stated supplies have served the church. The Rev. H.U. Swinnerton, Ph.D. who is the present pastor, has prepared an “Historical Account” of the church which is full of interest. It must be added that frequent showers of the Spirit have fallen upon Cherry Valley, some of them of great copiousness, and that made it a “well watered garden.”<sup>5</sup>

### **(4) Records of the First Presbyterian Church of Cherry Valley, New York**

“SOLOMON SPALDING, 1796. He was a member of the congregation when the names were registered, Aug. 15, 1796; see page 134. He was one of a Committee of three, appointed at a meeting of the congregation on Nov. 14, 1796, to request from the Presbytery, the ordination of the Rev. Eliphalet Nott. Mr. Spalding remained in the congregation after Mr. Nott’s

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<sup>4</sup> Harry U. Swinnerton, *An Historical Account of the Presbyterian Church at Cherry Valley, N.Y.*, (Cherry Valley, NY, Gazette News, 1876), 12-13.

<sup>5</sup> *Encyclopedia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*. ed. Alfred Nevin. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Encyclopedia Publishing Co., 1884), 139.

labors commenced, being chairman of a meeting held on Jan. 4, 1797.”<sup>6</sup>

### **(5) History of Cherry Valley (1740-1898) - John Sawyer**

“The decade ending with 1795 was a prosperous one for the now flourishing village. The tide of emigration was sweeping westward and the country for fifty miles beyond the borders of the county of Otsego was dotted with rude farm houses. while here and there settlements were springing up Cherry Valley, as yet the largest village, profited by the increased emigration, not only from the trade that flowed to it from all the country to the west, but also because of the benefits derived from its being on the main thoroughfares to the regions beyond.

During this time the Academy was re-established and a commodious building, forty by sixty feet, was erected. In 1795 the Academy had about sixty students, a remarkably large number for those times and a proof of the extended reputation which it must already have acquired. It was during this time that the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, the principal of the Academy, wrote the Biblical romance, which afterwards fell into the hands of Joseph Smith, and was adopted by him as the basis of the Mormon Bible. Soon after this the Trustees of the Academy called for Mr. Spaulding’s resignation.

In 1795 the population of Cherry Valley, which then included the present Worcester towns, Springfield and Roseboom, was little short of 3000, yet the population of the village itself, although it was still the most important village west of Schenectady, was less than 350, and contained only 36 houses. From this time on, the growth of the village was proportionately more rapid than that of the surrounding country. Business men and storekeepers rushed in to supply the growing trade of the country, while lawyers, doctors, and other professional men, sought this as a central location in which to follow their professions. More hotels were needed to accommodate the ever increasing stream of travel and blacksmiths could hardly be found in sufficient numbers to supply the demand. Shoemakers, wheel-wrights, carpenters, and artisans of various kinds, made their way here and added to the growth and prosperity of the place. The Academy, too, increased greatly in members, from 1796 to 1798, under the direction of the renowned Dr. Nott, who in later years, as President of Union College, left the stamp of his individuality on so many

<sup>6</sup> *Records of the First Presbyterian Church of Cherry Valley, in Otsego County, N.Y. Transcribed by The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society. Edited by Royden Woodward Vosburgh. New York City, May, 1920.*

generations of “Old Union’s” sons.”<sup>7</sup>

## **(6) History of Otsego County, New York**

“The following year, 1785, was rendered memorable by the reorganization of the Presbyterian church, which had been founded by the Rev. Samuel Dunlop forty-five years before. The village itself was prosperous as a pioneer settlement could be, and the people not only manifested an interest in religious matters, but early agitated the founding of a school, and in 1796 was established the Cherry Valley Academy. This institution was the first of the kind west of Schenectady, and the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, the reputed author of the Book of Mormon was the first principal.

The corporate body was kept up from this time onward; but in the first years the church was left to care for itself without the assistance of a regular minister, worship being maintained with such temporary help as could from time to time be procured in a region so isolated. By 1790 a meeting-house had been erected but from subsequent records of the post-revolutionary church, seems for many years to have been without regular furniture, and in the barest possible condition. In 1796 the names of fifty-four others are entered as “members of the first Presbyterian congregation.” Among these is that of Rev. Solomon Spaulding, a man whose literary labors subsequently became an instrument in supporting the most scandalous imposture our country has produced. We read in Scripture of an old prophet at Bethel who preferred dwelling among the ten tribes to ministering to the faithful people, and whose preference therein ultimately led to deplorable mischief. Mr. Spaulding doubtless anticipated no such results, but having abandoned the ministry, he devoted his leisure to some unprofitable speculations about those same lost Tribes of Israel. On this he wrote a romance, detailing an imaginary history, and identifying them with the aborigines of this continent, whom he describes as coming to this country by a long journey through various lands from Jerusalem, under two leaders, Nephi and Lehi, and giving rise to the traces of art and civilization which exist in the mounds and other relics which still are so perplexing a problem to scholars. The MS of this work being sent to a printing office, where its absurdity caused it to be refused, it was copied by one Rigdon and thence came into the hands of Joseph Smith, the pretended prophet of the “Latter-Day Saints,” became the

<sup>7</sup> John Sawyer, *History of Cherry Valley From 1740 to 1898* (Cherry Valley, N. Y. Gazette Print. 1898), 56-57.

source of the pretended revelations of the “Golden Leaves,” and now survives, with a few additions from Scripture as the Book of Mormon.

Somewhere before this time an energetic effort was made in behalf of education and a handsome building was erected for an academy, which long exerted the happiest influence on the culture of the neighborhood, and sent out numbers of men who became prominent throughout the country. Mr. Spaulding appears to have taught in this institution, and doubtless he occasionally preached in the church, and baptized the children. But in this year both church and school were to secure the services of a man whose labors in the latter soon raised it to great efficiency, and who himself rapidly rose to eminence as an eloquent divine and efficient supporter of education. An entry in the Record, Aug. 15, 1796, states that the question: “whether this society will give the Rev. Eliphalet Nott a call to serve as our minister,” was carried in the affirmative, and a subscription opened to raise money for his support.

Dr. Nott came from Connecticut in the summer of 1795 as a licentiate missionary to these parts, being then at the age of twenty-one and recently married; reaching the place by the great turnpike from Albany, by which this country was soon to be opened up to rapid development, but which was then only recently cut through and passable only on horseback. He himself describes the pleasing emotions with which he gazed down upon the smiling valley with its nestling village and waving cultivated fields after the rough uninhabited country which intervened for long distances between it and the more easterly settlements. \* Filled with melancholy thoughts at his lonely situation in a region so distant, and where he supposed all would be entire strangers, he stopped at a house to ask for some refreshment, when to his surprise, he was greeted by name. It was an old Connecticut acquaintance, Mr. Ozias Waldo, who received him most cordially, and at once urgently besought that he would tarry and take charge of the church, of which [he] himself long after continued an active and useful member. Engagements further on required Mr. Nott’s attention; but the call was made out, and after some hesitation he returned and took up his labors as both preacher in the church and teacher in the academy, which was soon thronged with pupils. In his letter of acceptance, a characteristic document recorded in his own hand, he dwells on the “distance from ministerial assistance and advice” as making him hesitate, but speaks of the prevalence of infidelity and the “destitute and broken state” of the society, which he calls a “solitary Zion,” not as deterring but as the reason for not “deserting” it.



A proposal that the call should require Mr. Nott to “put himself under the direction and inspection of the presbytery of this State,” seems to have led to the appointment of Mr. Spaulding to present the call to presbytery; but apparently nothing was done, for the young preacher was not ordained till he became pastor at Albany. He himself, however, in one of his letters, relates the circumstances under which he was led to become a Presbyterian. On his way to the west he stopped at Schenectady, and going into a prayer-meeting was asked to preach by Dr. John Blair Smith, the president of Union college. In a long conversation afterwards he explained the object of his journey, which was as a missionary of the Congregational church. But he was deeply impressed with the views of his host, that as the New England people and the Presbyterians in the new region were so much in accord on points and doctrines, it seemed unwise and unchristian to encourage them in sustaining a profitless division of their strength, that they sought to be induced to unite and join efforts in the Master’s cause. These arguments gave a new direction to the young man’s life; he abandoned Congregationalism, and lent his influence to form that “plan of union” which led to the building up of so many large and prosperous churches. There is no record of the results of his labors as the supply of the little congregation and his stay extended to but two years. But he here first established his household, made ties of friendship which lasted as long as his extended life and formed that attachment for the place which caused it ever to dwell in his memory among his most pleasing associates. He loved to revisit the beautiful valley which had been the scene of his early endeavors, and in his old age he resolved plans for giving it lasting benefit by aiding in the establishment of its ancient academy on the basis of a substantial endowment.

In 1798 his young wife was conveyed for her health to Ballston Springs, whose waters were already becoming famous. There is some obscurity in the accounts, but it appears to have been at this time that he tarried at Schenectady, being on his way to see his wife, and to attend a meeting of the presbytery of Albany at Salem, when Dr. Smith, after hearing him preach, urged him to return by way of Albany, and occupy the pulpit of the Presbyterian church there which was then vacant. Whether he was then already a member of the presbytery, as his Memoirs state (in which case we could expect that he would have been ordained and installed, on being received by it, over his Cherry Valley charge), or whether he made his journey

for the purpose of connecting himself with the presbytery, with installation then in view, is not clear. At all events the journey lost him to Cherry Valley; he preached at Albany, was immediately called to that important charge, and a few years later had become famous among the clergymen of the country. In 1804 he became president of Union college, where for an extended period he filled that sphere of eminence and usefulness, whose events are a part of the history of our progress during the past century.

By loss of its minister the little church was again left to its own meagre resources in its difficult struggle, and several years elapsed before it secured the services of a regular pastor. Trustees were regularly elected each year, but no minister is mentioned, except Mr. Spaulding, till 1802, when Rev. Thos. Kirby Kirkham was employed for at least one year, one-quarter of his time to be devoted to Middlefield. In Dr. Nott's time efforts had been made to furnish the church, and the proposal started to erect a better one. It seems to have been greatly needed, for so unattractive was its appearance that it is related that a traveler on passing it exclaimed, "that he had many times seen the house of God, but never before had he beheld the Lord's barn!" It stood on the site of the previous one in the grave-yard, a plain building, fifty feet square, without steeple or ornament. Within was a gallery on three sides, and on the fourth was a round, barred pulpit mounted on a post, the pews being of the high-backed, square, uncomfortable pattern usual at the period, neither padded nor cushioned. For many years there was neither chimney nor stove, any more than the old Covenanters had when they met in conventicle on the Scotch hillsides. The feeble warmth of the foot-stoves carried by the women barely sufficed to keep the congregation from freezing as they listened to Dr. Nott's young and fervid oratory in the keen air of winter. The writer has more than once preached in Cherry Valley when the thermometer outside was at eighteen or twenty degrees below zero; and when it was at that stage inside, what must not have been the devotion that could keep a congregation together! We do not wonder at finding a record that there should be but one service at that season of the year. Mr. Kirkham's labors seem to have led to little fruit, and he appears not to have been re-engaged."<sup>8</sup>

### **(7) HENRY LAKE'S MARCH 1811 CONTRACT (Original in the New York Public Library)**

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<sup>8</sup> D. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Otsego Co. 1740-78*, (Philadelphia: Everts & Fariss, 1878), 127-128.

Articles of agreement entered into between  
Solomon Spalding of Salem in the county of  
Ashtabula & state of Ohio of the first part  
& Henry Lake of Buffalo in the county of  
Niagara -- & state of New York of the second  
part Witnesseth that for the consideration  
of Four hundred & Eighty Dollars that the  
said Spalding hath sold unto the said Lake  
the one half of a certain tract of Land adjoining  
his Forge Dam, together with the one  
half of sd. Dam & the Pond & the priviledge  
of joining him in equal partnership to  
erect a forge & other water works thereon  
for their mutual benefit & the benefit of  
their heirs & assig[n]s, & also doth by these  
presents bargain and sell to him an equal &  
undevided right to the frame for the  
Forge as now fixed which may be used for  
another & the whole floom & the Running  
geers, & the hammer & anvil & plates &  
all the Irons that are now fixed for a  
forge -- & the parties do mutually agree  
with each other for themselves, their heirs & assigns  
that they will immediately engage & under-  
take to erect a Forge near where sd. Forge  
dam now is & will be at equal expence  
in building & finishing sd. Forge & in  
procuring all the Implements necessary  
to carry it on & that they their heirs &  
assigns, shall after it is fixed for Business  
have an equal chance & priviledge to  
work & manage sd. Forge for their  
own benefit. -- & that after four months  
shall expire from the time it shall  
start & do business, if Either party shall



omit to work his turn, or the fine he shall take that the other shall have the priviledge to take his chance until he is ready to work again. & as to the priviledge of procuring Oar each party shall have an equal chance of obtaining any oar that is or may be found, so that neither party shall make a bargain which shall exclude the other from the same priviledge that he has himself as it respects said Oar. -- In witness whereof we hereunto set our hands and seals this 8th day of March 1811

In presence of  
Linus Scovil

Joel Woodin

Solomon Spalding (SL)

Henry Lake (SL)<sup>9</sup>

**(8) A transcript of Granger and Spalding's agreement  
with Harper and Bond**

RELEASE Solomon Spalding & G. Granger to S. Bond & J. Harper  
Know all men by these presents that we Solomon Spalding of Otsego County in the State of New York and Gideon Granger of the City of Washington in the District of Columbia by Calvin Pease of Warren in the County of Trumbull, and State of Ohio his Attorney for the consideration of James Harper of said Trumbull County and Solomon Bond of Enfield in the County of Hartford and State of Connecticut, having this day released and quit-claimed to us all their right title claim interest and estate in and to our several shares of a certain tract of land being the east part of Township number fourteen in the first range of townships in said County of Trumbull upon a partition this day made of said land and also for the consideration of one dollar to us in hand paid by the said James Harper and Solomon Bond

<sup>9</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab3.htm#1811forge>.

the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged do hereby remise release and forever quit-claim to the said James Harper and Solomon Bond all our right title claim interest and estate in and unto lot number one containing two hundred and thirteen acres, lot number five containing one hundred and forty nine acres and an half, lot number seven containing two hundred and eleven acres and lot number eight containing two hundred and seventeen acres and an half, making in all one thousand eight acres which lots are included in the aforesaid tract which tract is bounded north on Lake Erie; east on the State of Pennsylvania; south on township number thirteen in the first range and west on the Conneaut Creek.

To have and to hold the above remised and released premises with the appurtenances there-of unto them the said James Harper and Solomon Bond their heirs and assigns forever to their own proper use benefit and behoof in the proportions following: that is to say to the said James two hundred and seventy acres and to the said Solomon Bond seven hundred and thirty one acres. And we the said Solomon Spalding and Gideon Granger do hereby each one severally for himself and his heirs executors and administrators covenant with the said James Harper and Solomon Bond their heirs and assigns that he has not sold pledged or in anyway encumbered the premises.

In testimony whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seals at Richfield in said Trumbull County the ninth day of September in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and three. For a more particular description of the lots by this deed released reference is had to a survey and plan of said tract made by Amos Spafford, Esquire in the year eighteen hundred and three.

Signed sealed and delivered in the presence of

James Montgomery

Marry Montgomery

STATE OF OHIO

TRUMBULL COUNTY (SL)

Solomon Spalding (SL)

Gideon Granger, by his Att'y:

### **(9) The 1805 Indenture Document**

“This Indenture made the fourth day of April in the year one thousand eight hundred and five Between John Rudd of Richfield County of Otsego State of New York [exutleman &] C[h]loe his wife of the first part and Solomon and Josiah Spalding of Richfield County of Otsego State aforesaid of the second part Witnesseth that the said party of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of one thousand two hundred dollars in hand by the party of the second part where with the said party of the first part doth hereby declare himself satisfied and paid [h]ath and by these presents doth grant bargain sell [ alien ] release convey and confirm unto the said party of the second part their heirs and assigns all the tract or lot of land lying [ & being ] in Richfield aforesaid and is part of lot no. thirty in [Schuyler’s] Patent and is bounded as follows Beginning at the south westerly corner of lot thirty at stake & stones from thence running south fifty four degrees east thirty chains fifty links then north thirty six degrees east nineteen chains at stake and stones in the center of the highway then along sd highway north thirty five degrees east eight chains eighty links then along sd highway north ten degrees west twenty seven chains [a] stake and stones then north eighty six degrees west four chains to the westerly line of sd lot a stake and stones then south thirty six degrees west thirty seven chains twelve links to the first mentioned corner containingninty acres of land together with all singular the rights members andprivileges to the same belonging [ & ] in any wise appertaining and the [reversion] and [reversions] remainder and remainders rents issues and profits thereof and all the estate right title interest property possession claim and demand both in law and equity of the said party of the first part of in and to the same to have and to hold the said tract or parcel of land and premises with the appurtenances unto the said Solomon & Josiah heirs and assigns to them and their only proper use benefit and behoof forever and the said party of the first doth for his executors and administrators covenant and agree to and with the party of the second part their heirs and assigns that I am the true and lawful owner of the said tract of land and premises with the

<sup>10</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab4.htm>.

appurtenances and hath in my good right full power and lawful authority to grant and convey the same in manner aforesaid and that I the said party of the first part and my heirs the said parcel of land and premises unto the said party of the second part their heirs and assigns shall and will warrant and forever by these presents De[f]end - In witness whereof the party of the first part hath here unto set our hand and seal the day and year first above written.

the word links being interlined between 13th and 14th  
lines noted before signed

Sealed & delivered in presents of

Jacob Brewster	John Spalding	John Rudd (L.S.)
Thomas Brooks	Ebenezer Jackson	Chloe Rudd (L.S.)

Be it remembered that on the thirteenth day of May in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred & five before me Thomas Brooks one of the judges of the court of Common Pleas in & for the county of Otsego personally appeared John Rudd a person well known to me who acknowledged that he signed [ & sealed & ] delivered the [ within ] instrument or deed of his own free voluntary act and deed for the uses and purposes therein contained and his wife Chloe Rudd a person known to me and being examined by me separate & apart from her husband & shee acknowledged that she signed sealed and delivered the within instrument or deed of her own free voluntary act and deed for the [uses] and purposes therein contained without either fear threat or compulsion of her husband. I having examined the same and finding no erasures obli[-]teration or interlination except that noted before signed do allow the same to be recorded

Recorded [2]9th July 1814 [7] oclock [P.]M. Thomas Brooks”<sup>11</sup>

## **(10) The Recorded Document, from Geauga County Records**

“Transcribed Records of Geauga County, p. 76; (transcribed June 24, 1837 from Geauga County Record Book A, pp. 191-192), reads as follows:

Know ye that I, Solomon Spalding of Ritchfield, County Otsego, State of N.Y. in consideration of \$500 received in full satisfaction of Josiah Brown,

<sup>11</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab4.htm>.

of County Geauga, State of Ohio, in 14th range of townships in Lot No. 1, being lot no. 1, in said Lot No. 1, as surveyed by Amos Spafford, Esq., and being bounded, north by James Harper's land, east by land owned by Gideon Granger, south by land owned by James Harper, west by Conneaut Creek, containing in all, 149 acres and 3/4 acre.

Signed by: Solomon Spalding  
At County of Geauga, State of Ohio before Nathan King.”

**Here are the notes provided by Dale Broadhurst:**

“Following his 1803 visit to the Ohio Western Reserve, Solomon Spalding returned to Richfield, Otsego Co., New York, where his brother (and silent partner in western land speculation) Josiah was still running the family store. Apparently Solomon made his second journey to Ohio three years later, when he recorded his first big land sales there on Oct. 21-22, 1806. In the first of these transactions, Solomon disposed of what was probably his potentially most valuable piece of property on Old Section One: this was Lot 6, with 211 acres and a long border fronting on the east bank of Conneaut Creek. Spalding was able to get \$500 from the buyer, Josiah Brown -- the only problem was that he had to take payment in grain and stock. Perhaps Solomon did not agree to these terms until he arrived at New Salem and found that Brown was unable to pay him in any other way. Even so, Solomon accepted the offer and Brown's payment was spread over three years, with installments due the first of the year in 1807, 1808 and 1809.”<sup>12</sup>

**(11) 1813 Affidavit Certifying judgement against Spalding and transfer of deed to his Conneaut lands back to William F. Miller.**

(Ashtabula Co. Records: Record of Deeds Volume A, p. 304.)

Received for record 24 March, 1813 -- Recorded April 20, 1813 -- James Warner for James A. Harper, Recorder for Ashtabula County, State of Ohio.

DEED                      QUINTUS F. ATKINS to WILLIAM F. MILLER.

To all people to whom these presents shall come: Greetings: Whereas at

<sup>12</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab4.htm#ohioland>.

a court of Common Pleas holden at Jefferson, within and for the county of Ashtabula on fourth Monday, November 1812, William F. Miller of Windsor, County of Hartford, State of Connecticut, by the consideration of said court recovered a judgment against Solomon Spalding of Salem, in county of Ashtabula aforesaid for the sum of \$3,046.11 cents upon a mortgage deed executed by said Solomon Spalding, to said William Miller, bearing date of 3 day of March, 1803, upon said record as appears by the record of said court, upon which judgment on execution was issued on the 8 day of January A.D. 1813, directed to sheriff of the county of Ashtabula, commanding him that of the following tracts of land, to-wit Lot #2, containing 214 acres, Lot #4, containing 149 3/4 acres, Lot #6 containing 211 acres, Lot #9, containing 211 1/2 acres, and Lot #10, containing 211 1/2 acres, all situate and being in tract #1, twp. #14, in 1st Range of twps in said Ashtabula county, he caused to be levied and collected, the debt and costs aforesaid which said execution was duly delivered to me Quintus F. Atkins, sheriff of said county of Ashtabula, to execute according to law.

Whereas, in obedience to said executive order on 1 day of February 1813, I levied and executed upon the land, advertised same for sale agreeable to law at Public Vendue at courthouse in said Jefferson 22 day March A.D. 1813, to highest bidder whereupon was offered several times for sale. On 22 day March sold to highest bidder William F. Miller, all right, title, claim, interest and estate which said Solomon Spalding had in and to the following parcels of land to-wit, Lot #2, containing 214 acres, bounded north by Lake Erie, East on lot #1, South, partly on lot #4, and partly on lot #11, and west on lot #3. Also lot #4, containing 149 3/4 acres bounded north partly on lot #2, and partly on lot #3, East on lot #11, South on lot #5 and West on Conneaut Creek. then lot #6 containing 211 acres bounded North by Lot #5, East by Lot #10, South on lot #7, and west by Conneaut Creek. Also Lot #9, of 211 acres and 1/2 acre, bounded North on lot #10, East on west line of State of Pennsylvania, south on South line of twp and West partly on lot #7, and partly on lot #8; also lot #10, 211 1/2 acres bounded north by lot #11, East on West line of Pennsylvania, South on lot #9, West partly on lot #5, and partly on lot #6, and partly on lot #7, all of said lots situate and being in tract #1, twp. #14, 1st Range in said county of Ashtabula and being same interest conveyed by said Miller by virtue of said mortgage deed. To have and to hold above premises with appurtenances thereof unto him, the



said William F. Miller and his heirs and assigns forever, so that said Solomon Spalding, his heirs and all persons claiming any share, forever be debarred and precluded therefrom.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal at Jefferson, this 23rd day of March, the year of our Lord, 1813.

Signed, sealed and delivered

In presence of:

Signed, Quintus F. Atkins, Sheriff

T.R. Hawley

Samuel W. Phelps

Affidavit for Quintus F. Atkins, was sworn to by Aaron Wheeler, 24 day March A.D. 1813.<sup>13</sup>

## **(12) Oberlin Manuscript**

This was the manuscript called *Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek* that was discovered by D.P. Hulburt in the trunk (which will be discussed later in more detail).

## **(13) The Witnesses**

There were witnesses who were actually relatives of Solomon Spalding and they were John Spalding (older brother), Josiah Spalding (younger brother), etc., whom I think would be capable of confirming whether or not he actually existed.

There were other historical documents that could be shown to prove the existence of Solomon Spalding such as post office letters that needed to be picked up that were placed in lists in newspapers, but these are sufficient to certainly establish the conclusion that Solomon Spalding existed.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab4.htm>.

## Chapter 2: The Links Between Solomon Spalding, Dartmouth College, and Learning About The Idea of Israelites Becoming American Indians

Where might Solomon Spalding have gotten his ideas about the ancestors of the American Indians being from the Israelites? He most likely picked them up when he went to college at Dartmouth. The president, Eleazar Wheelock, certainly believed in that idea (see below). There was another man, named Ethan Smith, who came to Dartmouth, who would write an influential book called *View of the Hebrews* (the first edition came out in 1823 and the second edition in 1825). There are some interesting similarities between the **BOM** and *View of the Hebrews* as even B.H. Roberts, an LDS apologist, noticed.<sup>14</sup> Spalding and Ethan Smith would have learned under the feet of John Smith and you will see that in his notes that John Smith subscribed to the theory.

It is also to be recognized that this was a widely held theory among many Americans during that time in history.

As Clark Braden argued: “A stock argument of Mormons in proof of the inspiration of Imposter Joe, and that the Book of Mormon is true and a revelation, is stated, “The Book of Mormon based on the idea that the aborigines of America were Israelites. Such an idea was not thought of or advocated, until years after the Book of Mormon appeared. Some years after its appearance, scientific research demonstrated the truth of the basic idea of the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith was an unlearned man. He could have obtained such an idea by revelation, and in that way alone.” Young men who were as great readers as Joseph Smith was, have originated as startling ideas, without inspiration. But we will now utterly explode this impudent falsehood. I have here two books.

One is “The Wonders of Nature and Providence,” written by Josiah Priest, and copyrighted by him June 2d. 1824, in the office of R. R. Lansing, Clerk of the District of Northern New York, and printed in Rochester in 1824 The

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<sup>14</sup> Consult B.H. Roberts, *Studies of the Book of Mormon*. Second Edition with a New Afterword. Edited and with an introduction by Brigham D. Madsen, (Signature Books: Salt Lake City, UT, 1992).



other is the ‘Book of Mormon,’ copyrighted by Joseph Smith in the office of the same R. R. Lansing, Clerk of me same district, June 10th 1829 printed in Palmyra, twenty miles from Rochester, in 1830 On the 297th page of “The Wonders of Nature and Providence,” begins an article by Mr. Priest, the author, in which he argues at great length, that the Indians are descendants of the Israelites. Not only so, but he quotes from Clavigero. a Catholic Missionary, who advocated the same idea in the seventeenth century. From Wm. Penn, who advocated it in 1788. From a work published by Mr. Adair of New Jersey who advocated this theory in 1774. From a sermon of Dr. Jarvis preached before the American Historical Society in 1811. Jarvis quotes from books of Sewall, Willard and several New England historians. Priest quotes further from Menasses Ben Israel, from Dr. Boudinot, from Dr. Edwards, from Charlevoix, Du Pratz’s History of Louisiana, from Lock and Escarbotus. Dr. “Williams, Governor Hutchison, Dr. Beatty McKenzie, Maraez, Col. Smith’s History of New Jersey, and many others. Priest quotes in all from over forty writers, of whom over twenty were Americans, who advocated the idea that the aborigines of America were Israelites. Most of these lived and wrote before Smith was born. He proves that it was the almost universal opinion of the ministers of New England and the Middle States. That it had been, from the time of Elliott until Priest’s own day. Not only is this true, but Priest, in his argument, quotes nearly all of the passages of scripture quoted by Mormons to prove the theory.”<sup>15</sup>

### **(1) Eleazar Wheelock - Founder and First President of Dartmouth College**

“The celebrated Apostle Eliot, and other good men have been stimulated to great zeal in spreading the gospel among the Indians, from a belief or hope that they are the descendants of Abram. Several plausible reasons encouraged such an opinion... As the people of Israel were separated from all others and the tribes kept distinct; so is it with the American Indians. Each nation has its symbol, or each tribe its badge, by which it is denominated... The Indians, like the Israelites, reckon time by sleeps and moons, or lunar months and days.

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<sup>15</sup> Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *The Braden-Kelley Debate* (Redistributed and Distributed by Old Path Books Club, Rosemead, CA: 1955), 52.

The Indians have their high priest and prophets. In every tribe is a high priest and several, who are subordinate... Going to war, or suffering any calamity, the Indians, like the Israelites, observe seasons of fasting and prayer. These seasons are sometimes continued seven or eight days... As among the tribes of Israel, when a person is murdered, the nearest relation is the man-slayer; but the guilty may fly to the “white towns,” which are certain places of refuge, where blood is never shed.”<sup>16</sup>

## **(2) The Spalding Memorial**

“2855. SOLOMON, (Josiah, Ephraim, Edward, Benjamin, Edward), b. Feb. 20, 1761, at Ashford, Conn.; d. Sept. 10, 1816, aged 55, in Pittsburg, Pa.; other authority says Amity, Washington Co, Pa.

Solomon Spalding served in the Revolutionary war as a private in Capt. John William’s Co., Col. Obadiah Johnson’s Regt.; entered service Jan. 8, 1778. He read law with Judge Zephaniah Swift, of Windham, Conn., but on change of religious views, sought the ministry, and entered the sophomore class at Dartmouth College at the age of twenty-one. Graduating there in 1785, he studied divinity, and became a licentiate of the Windham, Conn., Cong. Association, Oct. 9, 1787; preached eight or ten years, and, being in this time ordained an evangelist, received several offers to settle, that were declined, owing to ill health.”<sup>17</sup>

## **(3) Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College - Solomon Spalding**

“SOLOMON SPALDING, A. M., was born at Ashford, East Ashford Society, Ct., in 1761, and died at Amity, Washington Co., Pa, in 1816 AE. 55. In youth, he was a soldier in the Rev. army, and, leaving it, read law with Judge Zephaniah Swift, of Windham, Ct., but on change of religious views, sought the ministry, and entered the sophomore class at Dart. at the age of 21. Graduating there, he studied divinity and became a licentiate of the Windham, Ct., Cong. Association, Oct. 9, 1787; preached 8 or 10 years and,

<sup>16</sup> David M’Clure and Elijah Parish, *Memoirs of the Rev. Eleazar Wheelock* (Newburyport: Published by Edward Little & Co. and Sold At Their Bookstore, Market-Square. C. Norris & Co. Printers, 1811), 106-107.

<sup>17</sup> Charles Warren Spalding, *The Spalding Memorial* (Chicago: American Publishers’ Association, 1897), 253.

being in this time ordained an evangelist, received several offers to settle that were declined, owing to ill health. In 1795, he was married, and soon after went, into business with his brother, Josiah, at Cherry Valley, N.Y. but both removed the store to Richfield, N.Y., in 1799. Here they purchased large tracts of land in Pa and Ohio, to superintend which Solomon moved to Salem, Ohio, but the war of 1812 deranged their plans and caused great losses. Josiah, then visiting his brother found him in poor health and low spirits, writing a work of fiction, suggested by the opening of a mound, in which was discovered human bones and some relicks indicative of a former civilized race. He entitled his work a "Manuscript Found," and in it imagined the fortunes of the extinct people. Josiah left him thus employed. Not long after, probably in 1814, Solomon went to Pittsburgh, Pa., where he was followed by Sidney Rigdon, then a printer and afterwards a noted Mormon. He told his employer of Spalding's novel, who borrowed the manuscript, and offered to print it. This was refused, and the author wandered to Amity, the place of his death. His widow returned to New York with the manuscript, and while absent from home, a stranger called on her and desired to examine it, that he might confirm or refute a report current in the West, that it had become the Mormon bible. She permitted him to visit her house and obtain it from a certain chest. He went and reported that he could not find it. Mrs. Spalding never saw it after this. The probability is, that Rigdon copied the work at Pittsburgh and that the stranger purloined the original to avoid a future exposure. The uniform testimony of those who read the work is, that the basis and in great part the form thereof, now constitute the Mormon bible. And thus a clergyman was most unwittingly and innocently the medium of a delusion, whose dimensions have become so large, and its impostures so monstrous. The above facts are chiefly imbodyed from a letter written by the brother in question and dated at Eastford, Jan. 6, 1855. Mr. Spalding, though married, had no children (had an adopted daughter - SF)..."<sup>18</sup>

#### **(4) Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College - Ethan Smith**

"ETHAN SMITH, the son of Dea. Elijah and Sybil (Worthington) Smith, was born at Belchertown, Ms, Dec. 19, 1762, and died at Boylston, Ms, Aug.

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<sup>18</sup> George T. Chapman, *Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College* (Cambridge: Printed at the Riverside Press, 1867), 39.

29, 1849, A.E. 86. He studied divinity with Rev. Dr Eden Burroughs of Hanover and the Rev. Dr Asa Burton, D. C. 1777, of Thetford, Vt; was ordained pastor of the Cong. Ch. at Haverhill, Jan. 25, 1792; dismissed Dec. 16, 1817; had pastral charge of the Presb. Ch. at Hebron, N. Y. in 1818; installed pastor at Hanover, Ms, May 16, 1827; dismissed Jan. 12, 1832; was then City Missionary at Boston, Ms, till old age suspended his labours. He published, "A view of the Hebrews;" "A key to the Revelation;" "Prophetick Catechism;" "A view of the Trinity;" "A key to the figurative language of the Prophecies;" "Memoirs of Mrs. Abigail Bailey;" "Four lectures on the Subjects and Modes of Baptism," and 10 occasional discourses. He married Bathsheba, dau of the Rev. David Sanford of Medway, Ms, Feb. 4, 1793. Lyndon Arnold Smith, D. C. 1817, was his son..."<sup>19</sup>

### **(5) Dartmouth Alumni Magazine - "Forgotten Dartmouth Men"**

"There is a possiblty, however, that the connection of Dartmouth with early Mormonism goes back even earlier than Joseph Smith's birth. Delvers into the problematical have frequently asked whether or not Joseph Smith is the sole author of that sine qua non of Mormon belief, the Book of Mormon. This question involves Solomon S. [sic] Spaulding who graduated from Dartmouth in 1785. After finishing college, this man followed well-fashioned grooves in his career. He studied divinity, moved westward to Ohio and went into business. But, in one respect, his career was unusual. He had a vivid enthusiasm in finding out all he could about the ancestors of Samson Occom, the primitive Alcazar, and other aboriginal inhabitants of North America. His imagination lingered over the life of these people and he finally wrote a fictitious history of the early red men, calling his work, *The Manuscript Found*. This work connects the Indians with the lost ten tribes of Ancient Israel.

One of the mooted questions in Mormon historiography is whether or not Joseph Smith had access to the product of Solomon Spaulding's mind. If Joseph Smith did see Spaulding's work or know of its thesis, one might trace the chain of cause and effect back to the Indian surroundings of Hanover in 1785, or perhaps to some college instructor or preacher who had set Spaulding's imagination on fire. Ninty-nine years after Spaulding's commencement a manuscript was found in Hawaii which may be the

<sup>19</sup> Chapman, *Sketches of the Alumni of Dartmouth College*, 56-57.

Spaulding original of The Manuscript Found. This manuscript is now in the possession of the Oberlin College library at Oberlin Ohio. It has been pointed out, particularly by the followers of Joseph Smith, that the story in this manuscript can have no connection with the Book of Mormon. But are the two stories the same? Several people who had heard Spaulding read his version of the lost ten tribes of Israel claim this Oberlin manuscript is a different story entirely. In other words there is the possibility that the original story of The Manuscript Found is still lost. The weight of evidence is strong on both sides, but present opinion seems to be that the charge of plagiarism against Joseph Smith is not proved and the probability is that the question will never be settled definitely. Spaulding died in 1816 but the struggle over the authorship and the authenticity of the Book of Mormon still marches on...”<sup>20</sup>

### **(6) John Smith’s Notes**

“Cf. Dartmouth College Library, Re: Vault 4, Smith, John, “John Smith’s Lectures on Natural Philosophy,” Hanover NH: A portion of the last of Rev./ Professor John Smith’s 13 hand-written lecture notes -- No 13, is not written on the sheet. It is very likely that both Solomon Spaulding and Ethan Smith [probably every student at Dartmouth during that period of time] heard this lecture: “No. 12 Dartmouth College 6 Janry 1779... [pp] 77-80... My dear Class... According to my engagement, I shall, in the epistolary may, attempt something further for your entertainment and emprovement. I am not induced to such an exercise to promote any sinister design. A desire to serve you, young gentlemen, is my only motive... divine grace, will qualify you for eminent utility to mankind... the history of our own country is commonly too much neglected, although absolutely requisite to be understood by every gentleman of letters, I trust, you will not esteem it improper for the subject of a number of letters... the opinion that our Indians did not descend from the sons of Noah is now, and deservedly, universally discarded... very probable... that this new world was peopled both from Africa and Asia... almost certain the aboriginal inhabitants of America are not the descendants of Jews, Christians, or Mahometans... As the Carthaginians (above called Phoenicians) were very early expert in sailing... it is not improbable that South America was peopled by them. The

<sup>20</sup> Charles Edwards Widmayer, ed. *Dartmouth Alumni Magazine*, “Forgotten Dartmouth Men,” October 1943 (Brattlesboro, VT), 36.



Carthaginian ships carried sometimes a thousand people, and were crowded with men, women and children, when they sent colonies to those islands; & doubtless, as they had not the advantage of the mariner's compass, some of them missed those islands, and were driven beyond their intended ports... they must of necessity be carried to... South America... but three weeks sail to the westward... The north part of America might be settled by the [barbarious] Scythians... [who] after they had filled all... Asia, might ramble into America... If we compare the manners and customs of these northern nations, with those of the Indian Savages, we shall find such an agreement between them, as will incline us to think them to be of one original. Tacitus relates "that the ancient Fenni [Finlanders] were a wild people, & miserably poor, whose clothing consisted of the skins of beasts; -- that their arms were nothing but a bow & arrow, which, for want of iron, they sharpened with bones; -- and that they lived by hunting; and sometimes fed on human flesh." Ammianus Marcellinus gives the same account... Before I conclude... I would just observe that it is probable China joins to the Continent of America. If this is the case, we may suppose that some of our Indian tribes came from that part of the world... ."21

### **(7) Ted Chandler's Notes on Ethan Smith**

"In 1832 a Mormon missionary read passages from the Book of Mormon at a public meeting in Conneaut, Ohio. Present at the meeting were the brother and friends of Solomon Spalding, who had lived in Conneaut between 1809 and 1812. Spalding had been educated at Dartmouth College and was ordained as a Congregational minister, but had retired from the ministry. Because of a failing business and ill health, he had turned to writing an historical romance about the origins of the American Indians, which he frequently read to acquaintances. Solomon's relatives and friends claimed that when they heard the Book of Mormon being read and later read the book themselves, they immediately recognized that the names and story were the same as those found in Solomon's manuscript. In August 1833, Philastus Hurlbut, who had been excommunicated from the Mormon church in June, traveled to Conneaut and collected statements from eight people, testifying to similarities between Spalding's manuscript and the Book of Mormon. The people who made statements included John and Martha Spalding,

21 Byron Marchant, *Mormon Roots* (Salt Lake City: Metamorphosis Publishing, 1994), 15, f84.

the brother and sister-in-law of Solomon; Henry Lake, Solomon's business partner; John Miller, who was employed by Solomon and boarded at his home; Aaron Wright, the justice of the peace at Conneaut; Nahum Howard, the town doctor; Artemus Cunningham, a friend of Solomon; and Oliver Smith, with whom Solomon boarded when he first arrived in Conneaut. E. D. Howe obtained the statements from Hurlbut and published them in 1834 in his book *Mormonism Unveiled*. Over the years, other people were interviewed and added their recollections of Spalding's manuscript.

Hurlbut also visited Matilda Spalding Davison, Solomon's widow, and obtained her permission to search through Solomon's papers for his manuscript, which, according to the witnesses, was entitled "Manuscript Found." Hurlbut did find a manuscript, but when it was shown to the eight Conneaut witnesses, they said that it was not the story that they remembered. It proved to be an account narrated by a Roman named Fabius, whose ship had encountered a storm at sea and was blown to the coast of North America. The manuscript remained in the possession of E. D. Howe, who never made it public, although he did include a very brief summary in *Mormonism Unveiled*. In 1884 it was discovered by L. L. Rice, who succeeded Howe as editor of the *Painesville Telegraph*. On the cover of the manuscript, Rice wrote in ink "Solomon Spaulding's Writings." The words "Manuscript Story -- Conneaut Creek" also appear in pencil, but Rice said that he did not add this title and that the words were already on the cover when he found the story. Rice gave the manuscript to James H. Fairchild, president of Oberlin College, who examined it and declared that he could find no resemblance between it and the Book of Mormon.

The testimony of the Conneaut witnesses now seemed to be discredited, and they were accused of having combined their dim recollections of the Fabius story with the Book of Mormon, producing in their minds a second book called "Manuscript Found." Memory substitution was one of the primary arguments used by Fawn Brodie against the Spalding theory in her biography of Joseph Smith, *No Man Knows My History*.

Brodie embraced another hypothesis, which had been proposed by Brigham H. Roberts, an official of the Mormon church. Roberts had recognized similarities between the Book of Mormon and *View of the Hebrews*, published by Ethan Smith in 1823. Roberts argued that Joseph Smith had a sufficient amount of imagination and intelligence to use *View of the Hebrews* as the

basis for the Book of Mormon. This also became the position of Fawn Brodie, and most other scholars have followed her opinion, without examining her reasons for accepting the hypothesis and rejecting the Spalding theory.

B. H. Roberts compiled a list of eighteen parallels between the Book of Mormon and View of the Hebrews. The first three are not really parallels, but provide other circumstantial evidence. Ethan Smith was the minister of the Congregational Church in Poultney, Vermont, from 1821 to 1826. Roberts noted that the Smith family had lived in Sharon, Vermont, from 1805 to 1811 and that Sharon and Poultney were in adjoining counties. Further research has shown that Oliver Cowdery lived in Poultney until 1825 and that his stepmother and three sisters attended Ethan Smith's church. Roberts also noted that the first edition of View of the Hebrews was published in 1823 and that Joseph Smith claimed that Moroni first visited him and told him about the gold plates in 1823. Ethan Smith enlarged and reprinted his book in 1825, and Joseph Smith stated that he finally obtained the gold plates in 1827.

In his parallels, Roberts recorded similarities between the Book of Mormon and View of the Hebrews. However, it is misleading to say that these similarities are parallels between the two books, because Ethan Smith's book is largely a compilation of material from the works of other writers, particularly James Adair and Elias Boudinot. James Adair's book History of the American Indians was published in 1775, nearly fifty years before View of the Hebrews, and Boudinot's book, printed in 1816, also made generous use of Adair's work. In his parallels, B. H. Roberts acknowledged at least three times that Adair was being cited. We should therefore view Roberts's fifteen parallels in relation to Adair's book.

Beginning with parallel number four, Roberts made the following comparisons between the Book of Mormon and View of the Hebrews:

(4) Both books argue that the American Indians are descendants of the Hebrews. The Hebrew origin of the American Indians was also Adair's major thesis, and his book is devoted to citing evidence to support twenty-three arguments in favor of the theory.

(5) Both books relate the discovery of buried records. To illustrate this parallel, Roberts quoted three passages from Ethan Smith's book, which center around the discovery of the Pittsfield parchments. In 1815, a man named Joseph Merrick said that after ploughing some ground, he found what looked like a black strap. A closer examination revealed that it was



pieces of thick rawhide sewed together, which contained four folded leaves of old parchment of a dark yellow color. The parchments were taken to Cambridge, where it was determined that the writing consisted of verses of Deuteronomy and Exodus in Hebrew characters. Roberts speculated that this account could have been the inspiration for Joseph Smith's discovery of the gold plates. However, Adair's book contains a much closer parallel. Adair relates reports which he heard of five copper and two brass plates in the possession of an Indian tribe, which were kept closely guarded and used only in ceremonial activities. An Indian named Old Bracket stated that "he was told by his forefathers that those plates were given to them by the man we call God; that there had been many more of other shapes, some as long as he could stretch with both his arms, and some had writing upon them which were buried with particular men; and that they had instructions given with them, viz. they must only be handled by particular people" (Adair [1775] 1986, 188).

(6 & 7) Both books refer to inspired prophets and describe objects resembling the Urim and Thummim and the breastplate of the Hebrew high priest. Roberts's evidence for these two parallels utilizes quotations from Adair's book.

(8) Both books refer to written characters similar to Egyptian hieroglyphs. Adair also suggests that some Indian words may have been derived from the Egyptians and refers to the conjectures of some people that Indian words are "hieroglyphical characters, in imitation of the ancient Egyptian manner of writing their chronicles." He also states that Choktah symbols seem "to argue, that the ancients and thicker-settled countries of Peru and Mexico had formerly, at least, the use of hieroglyphic characters; and that they painted the real, or figurative images of things, to convey their ideas" (Adair [1775] 1986, 66, 83).

(9 & 17) Both books claim that the Indians were separated into civilized and barbarous cultures and that the civilized people were exterminated by the barbarous Indians. And both books attest to a high level of civilization in ancient America. It must be admitted that parallel nine is much more clearly stated by Ethan Smith than by Adair. Nonetheless, Adair does argue for the primacy of the highly developed cultures of Mexico and Peru, stating that the further people migrated from those centers, the more they degenerated. He also paraphrases the descriptions of the Spanish friar Hieronimo Roman

of the temple complexes in Peru, as well as Acosta's reports of Mexican religious rites. One passage in Adair's book suggests protracted warfare and the extermination of one tribe by another: "The Muskoghe who have been at war, time out of mind, against the Indians of Cape-Florida, and at length reduced them to thirty men, who removed to the Havannah along with the Spaniards . . . the constant losses they suffered, might have highly provoked them to exceed their natural barbarity" (Adair [1775] 1986, 142).

(10, 11, 12 & 13) Both books emphasize the destruction of Jerusalem, refer to the scattering and restoration of Israel, quote frequently from Isaiah, and claim that American Gentiles are to play an important role in restoring the Indians back into the house of Israel. Adair was trying to prove the Hebrew origins of the Indians, but he had no particular religious purpose in advancing his theory. Ethan Smith, on the other hand, was interested in the prophecies of Isaiah concerning the scattering and restoration of the lost tribes and the role of Gentiles in bringing the gospel to the Indians. These four parallels are therefore the strongest link between Ethan Smith's book and the Book of Mormon. Nonetheless, Ethan Smith's views were not unique, and there are some points which we should note about these parallels. View of the Hebrews discusses the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, while the Book of Mormon is concerned with the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the sixth century B.C. In addition, both B. H. Roberts and Fawn Brodie greatly overstated the Isaiah parallel. Roberts wrote: "Ethan Smith's 'View' quotes copiously and chiefly from Isaiah in relation to the scattering and gathering of Israel" (Roberts 1985, 335). Apparently relying upon Roberts, Brodie stated that "both quoted copiously and almost exclusively from Isaiah." She said further: "Thus about twenty-five thousand words in the Book of Mormon consisted of passages from the Old Testament -- chiefly those chapters from Isaiah mentioned in Ethan Smith's View of the Hebrews . . ." (Brodie 1971, 47, 58). This certainly is not true, however. Ethan Smith does quote Isaiah often, but most passages involve only a couple of verses. Ethan did not neglect the other prophets, however; he quotes verses from six chapters of Zechariah, six chapters of Jeremiah, five chapters of Ezekiel, and five chapters of Hosea, as well as verses from Amos, Zephaniah, Joel, and Micah. After compiling a list of verses quoted by Ethan Smith from nineteen chapters of Isaiah, I found that only five of those chapters were also quoted in the Book of Mormon, which reproduces chapter after chapter of

Isaiah. Moreover, chapter four of Ethan Smith's book is largely a commentary on the seven verses of Isaiah 18, but Isaiah 18 is not one of the chapters found in the Book of Mormon, which would be a curious omission, if the Book of Mormon was inspired by Ethan Smith's book.

(14 & 16) Both books condemn pride and seeking of riches, and both praise the virtues of the Indians. Adair again expresses the same views. Concerning the Indians, he wrote: "I have observed with much inward satisfaction, the community of goods that prevailed among them, after the patriarchal manner, and that of the primitive christians; especially with those of their own tribe. Though they are become exceedingly corrupt, in most of their ancient commendable qualities, yet they are so hospitable, kind-hearted, and free, that they would share with those of their own tribe, the last part of their provisions even to a single ear of corn . . . . An open generous temper is a standing virtue among them; to be narrow-hearted, especially to those in want, or to any of their own family, is accounted a great crime, and to reflect scandal on the rest of the tribe" (Adair [1775] 1986, 18).

(15) Both books condemn polygamy. Adair also refers to polygamy among the Indians, although he does not condemn it. However, his comments are of interest: "The grandeur of the Hebrews consisted pretty much in the multiplicity of their wives to attend them, as a showy retinue . . . . The Indians also are so fond of variety, that they ridicule the white people, as a tribe of narrow-hearted, and dull constituted animals, for having only one wife at a time . . . ." In another passage, he states: "By the Spanish authorities, the Peruvians and Mexicans were Polygamists, but they had one principal wife to whom they were married with certain solemnities" (Adair [1775] 1986, 145, 226).

(18) Both books describe the appearance of an important person on the American continent -- Christ and Quetzalcotl. However, Ethan Smith did not identify Quetzalcotl with Christ; he suggested instead that the legend of Quetzalcotl is a dim representation of the account of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt. He probably would have rejected any implication that Christ personally appeared to the Indians. However, the visit of Christ to the American continent could have been suggested by a passage in Adair's book. Speaking of the French Canadians, Adair said: "Then they infected the credulous Indians with a firm belief, that God once sent his own beloved son to fix the red people in high places of power, over the rest of mankind; that he passed through various countries, to the universal joy of the inhabitants,

in order to come to the beloved red people, and place them in a superior station of life to the rest of the American world; but when he was on the point of sailing to America, to execute his divine embassy, he was murdered by the bloody monopolizing English” (Adair [1775] 1986, 160). This also suggests, as does the Book of Mormon, that the Indians were to hold a special place among the Gentiles in America.

At most, we could grant Roberts that seven of his parallels argue for the influence of Ethan Smith on the Book of Mormon, but the other eleven could equally prove the influence of Adair. In fact, we should take note of two parallels between the Book of Mormon and Adair’s book. The Book of Mormon is sometimes preoccupied with the changing skin color of the Indians; it says that the skins of the Lamanites turned dark because of their wickedness, but at a later date the skins of some righteous Lamanites turned white. Ethan Smith notes that Quetzalcotl was supposed to be a bearded white man, and he refers to another tradition which said that the ancestors of the Indians were white, but he does not attempt to explain the causes which produced a change in Indian skin color. At the outset of his book, Adair observes that some tribes of Indians are fairer than others and concludes that this variation is due to living habits: “Many incidents and observations lead me to believe, that the Indian colour is not natural; but that the external difference between them and the whites, proceeds entirely from their customs and method of living, and not from any inherent spring of nature . . .” (Adair [1775] 1986, 3).

In addition, Ethan Smith discusses only one theory about the migration of people to the Americas. He holds that they took a northward journey across Asia to the Bering Strait and then spread southward. Adair mentions this theory once, but consistently argues that civilization originated in the New World in Central and South America and that people then migrated north and east across North America. Although the Book of Mormon covers all bases, Adair’s theory seems to accord better with the landing site of Lehi’s group in South America and the subsequent movement of people first into Central America and later into areas northward.

If Roberts’s parallels applied uniquely and exclusively to Ethan Smith’s book, we would have to believe that Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon, since *View of the Hebrews* was published after Spalding’s death. But the parallels actually testify to the fact that the Book of Mormon agrees with many of the popular theories and speculation of the day.

David Persuitte has shown that some of the religious ideas and language of the Book of Mormon are similar to those of Ethan Smith, and he concludes that Joseph Smith used *View of the Hebrews* as a major source in writing the Book of Mormon. However, he also notes that there are differences in style and viewpoint between the two books, since the Book of Mormon was written as a Nephite bible, and that Joseph Smith would have had to invent characters and a story to supplement the basic framework supplied by Ethan Smith. Persuitte portrays Joseph as not merely using material from Ethan's book, but as actually analyzing and musing over it, reaching conclusions which contradicted Ethan Smith on some key points. Persuitte traces rather intricate and sophisticated lines of reasoning by which Joseph might have arrived at these ideas. But he has not demonstrated that Joseph was knowledgeable and intelligent enough to reason in this manner. Furthermore, he finds it necessary to bring in other writers as sources, such as Francisco Clavigero, an eighteenth century Mexican historian. Finally, Persuitte claims that inconsistencies between the Book of Ether and the rest of the Book of Mormon demonstrate that the Jaredite history was an early version of the book, which Joseph later decided to revise. Thus although Persuitte argues that Joseph used Ethan's book as a major source, he attributes a great deal to Joseph, allowing him time not only to invent characters and events to flesh out Ethan's meager story line, but also to ponder theological points and to make major revisions of his book.

However, in an appendix, Persuitte admits that there may be something to the Spalding theory. He quotes an article, which appeared in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* (24 April 1887). The author of the article claims that he got his information from a grandson of Ethan Smith, who lived in Cleveland. This unnamed grandson stated that Ethan Smith had himself written a story about the migration of the Lost Tribes of Israel to Central America, where they established a great empire, which was destroyed through bloody wars, leaving the survivors to relapse into barbarism. He said further that Solomon Spalding and Ethan Smith were friends and that Ethan allowed Solomon to look at his manuscript, which Ethan did not intend to publish, fearing that it would injure his reputation. Spalding, it is theorized, used Ethan's story as the basis for his own book, which then fell into the hands of Joseph Smith. Persuitte notes that both Solomon Spalding and Ethan Smith attended Dartmouth College; Solomon graduated in 1785, and Ethan entered in 1786.



Therefore, it is at least possible that the two men might have known each other. However, the story about Ethan Smith's historical romance is doubtful at best, and there is no other evidence to support it.

An anecdote related by Emma Smith suggests that Joseph did not use *View of the Hebrews* in writing the Book of Mormon. Newell and Avery relate the following: "The schoolteacher in Emma recognized Joseph's struggle with written English. 'He could not pronounce the word Sariah,' she said. Although Joseph's own reading of the scriptures had been sporadic at best, Emma knew the Bible well and read it often. Once, as he translated, the narrative mentioned the walls of Jerusalem. Joseph stopped. 'Emma,' he asked, 'did Jerusalem have walls surrounding it?' Emma told him it did. 'O, I thought I was deceived,' was his reply" (Newell and Avery 1984, 25-26). Joseph was probably "translating" 1 Nephi 4:4, in which Nephi says that his brothers "did follow me up until we came without the walls of Jerusalem." If, as the proponents of the Ethan Smith theory hold, Joseph was so impressed by *View of the Hebrews* that he resolved to write a book based upon it, he would have known that Jerusalem was surrounded by walls. On page fifteen of his book, Ethan Smith writes: "Most of this city was surrounded with three walls. In some places, where it was deemed inaccessible, it had only one. The wall first built was adorned and strengthened with sixty towers. Fourteen towers rested on the middle wall. The outside one, (most remarkable for its workmanship) was secured with ninety towers" (Ethan Smith 1825, 15). This description occurs in the chapter dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem, and both Roberts and Brodie stressed the destruction of Jerusalem as a parallel with the Book of Mormon. If Joseph wrote the Book of Mormon using Ethan Smith as a primary source, how could he have not known that Jerusalem was a walled city? Moreover, how could Joseph be questioning a passage from the Book of Mormon which he had written himself? It might be argued that Joseph was actually questioning Ethan's description, but this is not likely, if Joseph accepted Ethan as an authority.

Emma's anecdote raises another serious problem with the Ethan Smith theory. Both Roberts and Brodie asserted that Joseph Smith had the imagination and intelligence to write the Book of Mormon. Brodie rejected "the untenable assumption that Joseph Smith had neither the wit nor the learning to write the Book of Mormon . . . ." She also stated that the Book of Mormon was the product of "an audacious and original mind. Joseph



Smith took the whole Western Hemisphere as the setting for his book and a thousand years of history for his plot. Never having written a line of fiction, he laid out for himself a task that would have given the most experienced novelist pause” (Brodie 1971, 442, 49). But if Emma’s story is true, we must believe that Joseph was so ignorant of the Bible that he did not know that Jerusalem had walls. 1 Kings 3:1 states that Solomon built a wall around Jerusalem. 2 Kings 14:13 records that Jehoash “came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.” 2 Chronicles 36:19 states that the Babylonians “burnt the house of God and brake down the wall of Jerusalem . . . .” And Nehemiah says that the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt by the Jews who returned from the Babylonian captivity. How can we possibly believe that Joseph Smith was ignorant of these facts and yet possessed the wit, learning, and originality which would enable him to write the Book of Mormon?

Emma was not the only one to comment on Joseph’s lack of education. According to M. T. Lamb, David Whitmer repeated Emma’s story: “David Whitmer confesses that Joseph Smith was ‘but little versed in Biblical lore . . . did not even know that Jerusalem was a walled city’” (Lamb 1887, 93). Emma said that Joseph did not know how to pronounce the word Sariah. David Whitmer stated in the Deseret Evening News: “In translating the characters Smith, who was illiterate, and but little versed in Biblical lore, was oftentimes compelled to spell the words out, not knowing the correct pronunciation . . . . Cowdry, however, being a school-teacher, rendered invaluable aid in pronouncing hard words, and giving them their proper definition” (Lamb 1887, 58). According to Anthony Metcalf, Martin Harris said, “I wrote a great deal of the Book of Mormon myself, as Joseph Smith translated or spelled the words out in English” (Tanner 1968, 2:40). Hiram Page also stated that Joseph did not know how to pronounce the word Nephi (Hill 1977, 92). On another occasion, Emma told her son Joseph III that when Joseph was translating the Book of Mormon, he “could neither write nor dictate a coherent and well worded letter” (Bushman 1984, 96). Orson Pratt gave this appraisal of Joseph’s abilities: “Now in regard to Joseph Smith’s qualifications or attainments in learning, they were very ordinary. He had received a little education in the common country schools in the vicinity in which he had lived. He could read a little, and could write, but it was in such an ordinary hand that he did not venture to act as his own scribe” (Peterson 1987, 371).

Lucy Smith said that in 1823, when Joseph was first visited by Moroni, he “had never read the Bible through in his life: he seemed much less inclined to the perusal of books than any of the rest of our children, but far more given to meditation and deep study” (Lucy Smith 1880, 87).

The proponents of the Ethan Smith theory must also explain how it is possible that Joseph Smith did not know to pronounce names which he had himself invented.

Little evidence has been presented to demonstrate that Joseph Smith had the imagination and intelligence to write the book of Mormon. B. H. Roberts cited a passage from Lucy Smith’s history, which he thought testified to Joseph’s powers of imagination. Lucy said that following Moroni’s first visit, Joseph continued to receive instructions from the Lord, which Joseph related to his family in the evenings: “During our evening conversations, Joseph would occasionally give us some of the most amusing recitals that could be imagined. He would describe the ancient inhabitants of this continent, their dress, mode of traveling, and the animals upon which they rode; their cities, their buildings, with every particular; their mode of warfare; and also their religious worship. This he would do with as much ease, seemingly, as if he had spent his whole life among them” (Lucy Smith 1880, 87). However, no one has ever pointed out that Lucy’s account does not describe the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon tells us that the Lamanites went almost naked, except for skins girded around their loins, and that the Nephites wore armor into battle, but it says nothing about the everyday dress of the various groups of people who inhabited the Americas. The Book of Mormon refers several times to horses and chariots, but most of the people seem to travel on foot; no one is ever described as riding upon any animal. The Book of Mormon does not discuss the layout of cities, the types of buildings that people lived in, or their manner of construction. It does say that people who migrated into northern territories constructed their buildings of cement, because of a scarcity of timber, and one passage says that Nephi, the son of Helaman, had a tower in his garden. These unusual features would certainly have deserved further elaboration. The Book of Mormon gives us a few details about the temple in Lehi-Nephi and a Zoramite synagogue, but otherwise provides no information about the design of religious buildings. Aside from a few references to burnt offerings, the Book of Mormon does not describe religious ceremonies in temples and churches; baptisms sometimes occur outdoors.

If the passage from Lucy's history is proof that Joseph's imagination was so highly developed that he could have written the Book of Mormon, why did he not include the information which he had related to his family?

Jerald and Sandra Tanner, who also reject the Spalding theory, have offered another document as proof that Joseph Smith had the ability to write the book of Mormon. They cite a history which Joseph began in 1832, claiming that if he could have written the history in 1832, he could have written the Book of Mormon in 1829. However, Joseph admits in his history that "we were deprived of the bennifit of an education suffice it to say I was nearly instructid in reading writing and the ground rules of Arithmatic which constuted by whole literary acquirements" (Joseph Smith 1984, 4). The whole history fills only five printed pages and covers a period only up to the appearance of Oliver Cowdery. The document is partly in the handwriting of Joseph Smith and partly in that of Frederick G. Williams. Obviously, this small history does not demonstrate that Joseph had the discipline to write a complex book, nearly six hundred pages in length. Furthermore, the Tanners do not consider the possibility that Joseph was adapting material written by someone else. This possibility is suggested by one long passage in the history which describes the majesty and sublimity of creation as proof for the existence of an omnipotent and omnipresent eternal Being. It is doubtful that this came from the mind of Joseph.

Granted that Joseph Smith could read and write imperfectly and had a vivid imagination, where is the proof that he had the intelligence, learning, and discipline to write the Book of Mormon? And even if we were to allow that Joseph had the ability to write the Book of Mormon, where is the evidence that he had any interest in theories about the Hebrew origins of the Indians or that he would have read Ethan Smith's book, if given the opportunity? The evidence that we have suggests that Joseph was primarily interested in convincing other people that he could locate buried treasure by gazing into his peep stone.

The proponents of the Ethan Smith theory seem to be drawn in two different directions. On the one hand, they stress Joseph's original and creative imagination. B. H. Roberts said that Joseph's imagination was "a remarkable power which attended him through all his life. It was as strong and varied as Shakespeare's and no more to be accounted for than the English Bard's" (Roberts 1985, 244). Fawn Brodie also said that the Book of Mormon

is “not formless, aimless, or absurd. Its structure shows elaborate design, its narrative is spun coherently, and it demonstrates throughout a unity of purpose” (Brodie 1971, 69). On the other hand, after stating his case for Joseph’s remarkable imagination, Roberts wrote: “In the first place there is a certain lack of perspective in the things the book relates as history that points quite clearly to an undeveloped mind as their origin. The narrative proceeds in characteristic disregard of conditions necessary to its reasonableness, as if it were a tale told by a child, with utter disregard for consistency” (Roberts 1985, 251). And this comment comes immediately after Roberts’s comparison of Joseph Smith to Shakespeare! The fact is that the Book of Mormon seems to reveal two different minds at work: one is intelligent, learned, and imaginative; the other is young, undeveloped, and inconsistent. These contrary indications in the Book of Mormon can be reconciled if Joseph Smith did not write the Book of Mormon, but did make clumsy and inconsistent revisions of some other person’s text.

The other studies in this series have demonstrated that the writings which have been attributed to Joseph Smith were written by someone who had a thorough knowledge of the Bible and Roman history. The author was familiar with such writers as Livy, Caesar, Plutarch, Cicero, Virgil, and Herodotus; he knew the philosophies of Plato, the Atomists, Philo, Descartes, and Rousseau; he not only had an intimate knowledge of the Bible, but also knew Jewish legends and was familiar with the works of Josephus, Eusebius, Augustine, Bede, and Geoffrey of Monmouth; he also knew Irish myths and the legends concerning the Lia Fail and the Holy Grail. In other words, the author had probably received an education in the classics, typical of programs offered in colleges of the day, and he obviously was interested in theories about the origins and history of the American Indians.

Joseph Smith certainly does not fit this profile of the author of the Mormon scriptures, but let us consider the testimony of Matilda Spalding Davison concerning Solomon’s abilities and interests.

Rev. Solomon Spalding . . . was a graduate of Dartmouth college, and was distinguished for a lively imagination and a great fondness for history. . . . In the town of New Salem [Conneaut] there are numerous mounds and forts, supposed by many to be the dilapidated dwellings and fortifications of a race now extinct. . . . Numerous implements were found, and other articles, evincing great skill in the arts. Mr. Spalding being an educated man and passionately

fond of history, took a lively interest in these developments of antiquity, and in order to beguile the hours of retirement and furnish employment for his lively imagination, he conceived the idea of giving an historical sketch of this long lost race. Their extreme antiquity of course would let him to write in the most ancient style; and as the Old Testament is the most ancient book in the world, he imitated its style as nearly as possible. . . . . He was enabled from his acquaintance with the classics and ancient history to introduce many singular names . . . . (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 43-44)

It is apparent that Solomon Spalding possessed all of the requirements to be the author of the Book of Mormon: he was a graduate of Dartmouth College, was acquainted with the classics and ancient history, had a lively interest in the curious mounds which were found near Conneaut, possessed a good knowledge of the Bible, and had the time to write a lengthy book.”<sup>22</sup>

### **Conclusion**

It seems more likely that Solomon Spalding and Ethan Smith, who received their education at Dartmouth, both likely derived the ideas (the American Indians being the descendants of the “lost tribes of Israel” that would later be found within their books.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20071012130324/http://mormonstudies.com/author1.htm>

### **Chapter 3:**

## **The Link Between *Manuscript Found* and the Book of Mormon (Part 1)**

The second link in the chain of strong circumstantial evidence are the eyewitnesses who read what was known as *Manuscript Found* and/or it was read to them by Solomon Spalding himself.

I will now provide the personal eyewitness testimonies of those who were acquainted with Solomon Spalding and his manuscript that were placed into E.D. Howe's book, *Mormonism Unveiled (sic)*, in 1834. These statements were written down and collected by D.P. Hulburt from August 1833 to October 1833.

### **(1) The Eyewitness Testimony of John Spalding (Solomon Spalding's older brother)**

"Solomon Spalding was born in Ashford, Conn. in 1761, and in early life contracted a taste for literary pursuits. After he left school, he entered Plainfield Academy, where he made great proficiency in study, and excelled most of his classmates. He next commenced the study of Law, in Windham county, in which he made little progress, having in the mean time turned his attention to religious subjects. He soon after entered Dartmouth College, with the intention of qualifying himself for the ministry, where he obtained the degree of A. M. and was afterwards regularly ordained. After preaching three or four years, he gave it up, removed to Cherry Valley, N. Y., and commenced the mercantile business in company with his brother Josiah.

In a few years he failed in business, and in the year 1809 removed to Conneaut, in Ohio. The year following, I removed to Ohio, and found him engaged in building a forge. I made him a visit in about three years after; and found that he had failed, and considerably involved in debt. He then told me had he been writing a book, which he intended to have printed, the avails of which he thought would enable him to pay all his debts. The book was entitled the 'Manuscript Found,' of which he read to me many passages. -- It was an historical romance of the first settlers of America, endeavoring to show that the American Indians are the descendants of the Jews, or the lost tribes. It gave a detailed account of their journey from Jerusalem, by land



and sea, till they arrived in America, under the command of NEPHI AND LEHI. They afterwards had quarrels and contentions, and separated into two distinct nations, one of which he denominated Nephites and the other Lamanites. Cruel and bloody wars ensued, in which great multitudes were slain. They buried their dead in large heaps, which caused the mounds so common in this country. Their arts, sciences and civilization were brought into view, in order to account for all the curious antiquities, found in various parts of North and South America. I have recently read the Book of Mormon, and to my great surprize I find nearly the same historical matter, names, &c. as they were in my brother's writings. I well remember that he wrote in the old style, and commenced about every sentence with "and it came to pass," or "now it came to pass," the same as in the Book of Mormon, and according to the best of my recollection and belief, it is the same as my brother Solomon wrote, with the exception of the religious matter. -- By what means it has fallen into the hands of Joseph Smith, Jr. I am unable to determine. JOHN SPALDING."<sup>23</sup>

## **(2) The Eyewitness Testimony of Martha Spalding (the wife of John Spalding)**

"I was personally acquainted with Solomon Spalding, about twenty years ago. I was at his house a short time before he left Conneaut; he was then writing a historical novel founded upon the first settlers of America. He represented them as an enlightened and warlike people. He had for many years contended that the aborigines of America were the descendants of some of the lost tribes of Israel, and this idea he carried out in the book in question. --

The lapse of time which has intervened, prevents my recollecting but few of the leading incidents of his writings; but the names of Nephi and Lehi are yet fresh in my memory, as being the principal heroes of his tale. They were officers of the company which first came off from Jerusalem. He gave a particular account of their journey by land and sea, till they arrived in America, after which, disputes arose between the chiefs, which caused them to separate into different lands, one of which was called Lamanites and the

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<sup>23</sup> Eber D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville, Ohio: Printed and Published by the Author, 1834), 278-280.

other Nephites. Between these were recounted tremendous battles, which frequently covered the ground with the slain; and their being buried in large heaps was the cause of the numerous mounds in the country. -- Some of these people he represented as being very large.

I have read the Book of Mormon, which has brought fresh to my recollection the writings of Solomon Spalding; and I have no manner of doubt that the historical part of it, is the same that I read and heard read, more than 20 years ago. The old, obsolete style, and the phrases of 'and it came to pass,' &c. are the same. MARTHA SPALDING."<sup>24</sup>

**(3) The Eyewitness Testimony of Henry Lake  
(the business partner of Spalding who worked  
with him on the iron forge)**

"Conneaut, Ashtabula Co. O. September, 1833.

I left the state of New York, late in the year 1810, and arrived at this place, about the 1st of Jan. following. Soon after my arrival, I formed a co-partnership with Solomon Spalding, for the purpose of re-building a forge which he had commenced a year or two before. He very frequently read to me from a manuscript which he was writing, which he entitled the 'Manuscript Found,' and which he represented as being found in this town. I spent many hours in hearing him read said writings, and became well acquainted with its contents. He wished me to assist him in getting his production printed, alleging that a book of that kind would meet with a rapid sale. I designed doing so, but the forge not meeting our anticipations, we failed in business, when I declined having any thing to do with the publication of the book. This book represented the American Indians as the descendants of the lost tribes, gave an account of their leaving Jerusalem, their contentions and wars, which were many and great. One time, when he was reading to me the tragic account of Laban, I pointed out to him what I considered an inconsistency, which he promised to correct; but by referring to the Book of Mormon, I find to my surprise that it stands there just as he read it to me then. --

Some months ago I borrowed the Golden Bible, put it into my pocket, carried it home, and thought no more of it. -- About a week after, my wife found the book in my coat pocket, as it hung up, and commenced reading it

<sup>24</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 280-281.

aloud as I lay upon the bed. She had not read 20 minutes till I was astonished to find the same passages in it that Spalding had read to me more than twenty years before, from his “Manuscript Found.” Since that, I have more fully examined the said Golden Bible, and have no hesitation in saying that the historical part of it is principally, if not wholly taken from the ‘Manuscript Found.’ I well recollect telling Mr. Spalding, that the so frequent use of the words ‘And it came to pass,’ ‘Now it came to pass,’ rendered it ridiculous. Spalding left here in 1812, and I furnished him the means to carry him to Pittsburgh, where he said he would get the book printed, and pay me. But I never heard any more from him or his writings, till I saw them in the Book of Mormon. HENRY LAKE.”<sup>25</sup>

**(4) The Eyewitness Testimony of John N. Miller  
(a co-worker who also worked with Spalding and Henry Lake)**

“Springfield, Pa. September, 1833. In the year 1811, I was in the employ of Henry Lake and Solomon Spalding, at Conneaut, engaged in rebuilding a forge. While there, I boarded and lodged in the family of said Spalding, for several months. I was soon introduced to the manuscript of Spalding, and perused them as often as I had leisure. He had written two or three books or pamphlets on different subjects; but that which more particularly drew my attention, was one which he called the ‘Manuscript Found.’ From this he would frequently read some humorous passages to the company present. It purported to be the history of the first settlement of America, before discovered by Columbus. He brought them off from Jerusalem, under their leaders; detailing their travels by land and water, their manners, customs, laws, wars, &c. He said that he designed it as a historical novel, and that in after years it would be believed by many people as much as the history of England. He soon after failed in business, and told me he should retire from the din of his creditors, finish his book and have it published, which would enable him to pay his debts and support his family. He soon after removed to Pittsburgh, as I understood.

I have recently examined the Book of Mormon, and find in it the writings of Solomon Spalding, from beginning to end, but mixed up with scripture and other religious matter, which I did not meet with in the ‘Manuscript Found.’

<sup>25</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 281-282.

Many of the passages in the Mormon Book are verbatim from Spalding, and others in part. The names of Nephi, Lehi, Moroni, and in fact all the principal names, are bro't fresh to my recollection, by the Gold Bible. When Spalding divested his history of its fabulous names, by a verbal explanation, he landed his people near the Straits of Darien, which I am very confident he called Zarahemla, they were marched about that country for a length of time, in which wars and great blood shed ensued, he brought them across North America in a north east direction.

JOHN N. MILLER”<sup>26</sup>

**(5) The Eyewitness Testimony of Aaron Wright  
(a judge who knew Solomon Spalding in Conneaut, OH)**

“Conneaut, August, 1833.

I first became acquainted with Solomon Spalding in 1808 or 9, when he commenced building a forge on Conneaut creek. When at his house, one day, he showed and read to me a history he was writing, of the lost tribes of Israel, purporting that they were the first settlers of America, and that the Indians were their decendants. Upon this subject we had frequent conversations. He traced their journey from Jerusalem to America, as it is given in the Book of Mormon, excepting the religious matter. The historical part of the Book of Mormon, I know to be the same as I read and heard read from the writings of Spalding, more than twenty years ago; the names more especially are the same without any alteration. He told me his object was to account for all the fortifications, &c. to be found in this country, and said that in time it would be fully believed by all, except learned men and historians. I once anticipated reading his writings in print, but little expected to see them in a new Bible. Spalding had many other manuscripts, which I expect to see when Smith translates his other plate. In conclusion, I will observe, that the names of, and most of the historical part of the Book of Mormon, were as familiar to me before I read it, as most modern history. If it is not Spalding's writing, it is the same as he wrote; and if Smith was inspired, I think it was by the same spirit that Spalding was, which he confessed to be the love of money.

AARON WRIGHT”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 282-283.

<sup>27</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 284.

**(6) The Eyewitness Testimony of Oliver Smith  
(a person who let Spalding board with him for six months)**

“Conneaut, August, 1833.

When Solomon Spalding first came to this place, he purchased a tract of land, surveyed it out and commenced telling it. While engaged in this business, he boarded at my house, in all nearly six months. All his leisure hours were occupied in writing a historical novel, founded upon the first settlers of this country. He said he intended to trace their journey from Jerusalem, by land and sea, till their arrival in America, give an account of their arts, sciences, civilization, wars and contentions. In this way, he would give a satisfactory account of all of the old mounds, so common to this country. During the time he was at my house, I read and heard read one hundred pages or more. Nephi and Lehi were by him represented as leading characters, when they first started for America. Their main object was to escape the judgments which they supposed were coming upon the old world. But no religious matter was introduced, as I now recollect. Just before he left this place, Spalding sent for me to call on him, which I did. --

He then said, that although he was in my debt, he intended to leave the country, and hoped I would not prevent him, for, says he, you know I have been writing the history of the first settlement of America, and I intend to go to Pittsburgh, and there live a retired life, till I have completed the work, and when it is printed, it will bring me a fine sum of money, which will enable me to return and pay off all my debts -- the book, you know will sell, as every one is anxious to learn something upon that subject. This was the last I heard of Spalding or his book, until the Book of Mormon came into the neighborhood. When I heard the historical part of it related, I at once said it was the writings of old Solomon Spalding. Soon after, I obtained the book, and on reading it, found much of it the same as Spalding had written, more than twenty years before.

OLIVER SMITH.”<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 284-285.

**(7) The Eyewitness Testimony of Nahum Howard**  
**(a physician who knew Solomon Spalding in Conneaut, OH)**

“Conneaut, August, 1833.

I first became acquainted with Solomon Spalding, in Dec. 1810. After that time I frequently saw him at his house, and also at my house. I once in conversation with him expressed a surprise at not having any account of the inhabitants once in this country, who erected the old forts, mounds, &c. He then told me that he was writing a history of that race of people; and afterwards frequently showed me his writings, which I read. I have lately read the Book of Mormon, and believe it to be the same as Spalding wrote, except the religious part. He told me that he intended to get his writings published in Pittsburgh, and he thought that in one century from that time, it would be believed as much as any other history.

NAHUM HOWARD”<sup>29</sup>

**(8) The Eyewitness Testimony of Artemas Cunningham**  
**(a debt collector who came to visit Solomon Spalding in Conneaut, OH)**

“Artemas Cunningham, of Perry, Geauga county, states as follows:

In the month of October, 1811, I went from the township of Madison to Conneaut, for the purpose of securing a debt due me from Solomon Spalding. I tarried with him nearly two days, for the purpose of accomplishing my object, which I was finally unable to do. I found him destitute of the means of paying his debts. His only hope of ever paying his debts, appeared to be upon the sale of a book, which he had been writing. He endeavored to convince me from the nature and character of the work, that it would meet with a ready sale. Before showing me his manuscripts, he went into a verbal relation of its outlines, saying that it was a fabulous or romantic history of the first settlement of this country, and as it purported to have been a record found buried in the earth, or in a cave, he had adopted the ancient or scripture style of writing. He then presented his manuscripts, when we sat down and spent a good share of the night, in reading them, and conversing upon them. I well remember the name of Nephi, which appeared to be the principal hero of the story. The

<sup>29</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 285-286.



frequent repetition of the phrase, ‘I Nephi,’ I recollect as distinctly as though it was but yesterday, although the general features of the story have passed from my memory, through the lapse of 22 years. He attempted to account for the numerous antiquities which are found upon this continent, and remarked that, after this generation had passed away, his account of the first inhabitants of America would be considered as authentic as any other history.

The Mormon Bible I have partially examined, and am fully of the opinion that Solomon Spalding had written its outlines before he left Conneaut.”<sup>30</sup>

### ***Objections Made To The Conneaut Witnesses by Fawn Brodie***

What we will do for this part is that I will insert my rebuttal with a [ ] to those who made objections. Fawn Brodie left the LDS church and believed that Joseph Smith was the sole author behind the **BOM**. Here is what she wrote concerning what she thought were the weaknesses of the Spalding-Rigdon theory:

(1) **Fawn Brodie:** “It can clearly be seen that the affidavits were written by Hurlbut, since the style is the same throughout. It may be noted also that although five out of the eight had heard Spaulding’s story only once, there was a surprising uniformity in the details they remembered after twenty-two years.”<sup>31</sup>

[**Rebuttal # 1:** I do not know where Brodie is coming up with five out of the eight witnesses who had heard Spalding’s story **once**. Below you can see that there were five witnesses who *read or heard Solomon’s writings frequently*.]

**John Spalding:** “He then told me had he been writing a book, which he intended to have printed, the avails of which he thought would enable him to pay all his debts. The book was entitled the ‘Manuscript Found,’ of which he read to me many passages.”<sup>32</sup> [**Author’s note:** I am making the assumption for John Spalding’s testimony that it would have taken more than once to have been read many passages.]

**Henry Lake:** “He very frequently read to me from a manuscript which he was writing, which he entitled the ‘Manuscript Found,’ and which he represented as being found in this town. I spent many hours in hearing him

<sup>30</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 286-287.

<sup>31</sup> Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976, 2nd ed.), 446-447.

<sup>32</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 279.

read said writings, and became well acquainted with its contents.”<sup>33</sup>

**John N. Miller:** “I was soon introduced to the manuscript of Spalding, and perused them as often as I had leisure. He had written two or three books or pamphlets on different subjects; but that which more particularly drew my attention, was one which he called the ‘Manuscript Found.’ From this he would frequently read some humorous passages to the company present.”<sup>34</sup>

**Oliver Smith:** “While engaged in this business, he boarded at my house, in all nearly six months. All his leisure hours were occupied in writing a historical novel, founded upon the first settlers of this country... During the time he was at my house, I read and heard read one hundred pages or more.”<sup>35</sup>

**Nahum Howard:** “He then told me that he was writing a history of that race of people; and afterwards frequently showed me his writings, which I read.”<sup>36</sup>

**[Rebuttal # 2:** The reason there is surprising uniformity among the witnesses is because it is easy to remember the major storyline. Think about, for example, the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, by J.R.R. Tolkien. I think everyone who has ever read those books could come up with the exact same story plot, even though it is full of immense details. It is about a young hobbit named Frodo Baggins who finds out, through Gandalf, that his uncle, Bilbo Baggins, had in his keeping for many years a master ring that was forged by the Dark Lord Sauron. Frodo must destroy the ring by taking it to Mount Doom in Mordor where it must be cast into the fire from whence it came. Frodo, the ring-bearer, sets out with other companions that include a wizard, three hobbits, a dwarf, an elf, and two men, to complete this quest.

It is also interesting that there are details that are given by the eyewitnesses that do not contradict the overall narrative of the story.

In chapter 7, we will study whether or not the Spalding witnesses were accurate in their details. This is relevant to answering Brodie’s charge that there is “surprising uniformity.”<sup>37</sup> We will be adding the list of witnesses who testified after Hulburt’s eight witnesses in 1833. It is reasonable to me that a lot of these witnesses could give the same generic storyline and the details associated with it,

33 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 281.

34 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 283.

35 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 284-285.

36 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 286.

37 Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 447.

which would be uniform since the story does not change in its major plot points.

But please take note how some of them remember details that the others did not provide, yet as we will see, produce a consistent, big picture, as if we were fitting the pieces into a jigsaw puzzle. Since we will dive deeper into this list of details that will be presented in chapter 7, it will be abbreviated here. We will offer two examples (one example from Henry Lake and Robert Patterson, Jr. and one example from Artemas Cunningham). It is also to be noted that I am including other witnesses besides the Conneaut witnesses in this list below.

### **Details:**

- (1) The title “Manuscript Found” (8 witnesses)**
- (2) Historical novel (12 witnesses)**
- (3) First settlers (6 witnesses)**
- (4) Descendants - Native Americans (5 witnesses)**
- (5) Journey from Jerusalem (8 witnesses)**
- (6) Nephi & Lehi - main characters (8 witnesses)**
- (7) Quarrels & contentions (6 witnesses)**
- (8) Two nations (4 witnesses)**
- (9) Bloody wars (6 witnesses)**
- (10) Arts & sciences (4 witnesses)**
- (11) “and it came to pass” (6 witnesses)**
- (12) No religious matter (Scriptural quotations/references/heavy theological content) (5 witnesses)**
- (13) Forts & mounds (10 witnesses)**
- (14) Obsolete style (KJV style/Elizabethan English) (5 witnesses)**
- (15) “the judgments which they [Lehi’s company -SF] supposed were coming on the old world” (Oliver Smith)**
- (16) Account of Laban (Henry Lake)**
- (17) Humorous passages (John N. Miller)**
- (18) Moroni (John N. Miller)**
- (19) Straits of Darien (John N. Miller)**
- (20) “I, Nephi” (Artemas Cunningham)**
- (21) Verbal alterations/additions (Abner Jackson)**
- (22) Red mark on foreheads (Joseph Miller)**

(1) **Henry Lake:** “One time, when he was reading to me the tragic account of Laban, I pointed out to him what I considered an inconsistency,

which he promised to correct; but by referring to the Book of Mormon, I find to my surprise that it stands there just as he read it to me then.”<sup>38</sup>

Notice how Henry Lake was the only eyewitness to mention *this* detail concerning this character - Laban. His account is found in 1 Nephi 3-7. It is interesting to me what Robert Patterson, Jr. (not an eyewitness) discovered concerning a tiny detail that was a grammatical mistake that Henry Lake had discovered, but also saw the *same* grammatical mistake many years later ended up in the Book of Mormon (1 Nephi 3:28-29).

**Robert Patterson, Jr. states:** “Also that an incongruity occurs in the story of Laban, ..., where Nephi says they “did speak many hard words unto us, their younger brothers, and they did smite us even with a rod.” Whereupon an angel appears and says, “Why do ye smite your younger brother with a rod?” Consistency would require that the number, whether plural or singular, should be the same in both sentences. The oversight is in itself a trifle, but its occurrence in both the Spaulding manuscript and the Book of Mormon is an unanswerable proof of identity.”<sup>39</sup>

(2) Artemas Cunningham: was one of the eyewitnesses who was able to view the Spaulding manuscript only once. He mentions one detail that none of the other eyewitnesses gave and that was the reoccurring statement - “I, Nephi.” It is found **84 times**. Out of 84 times, it is found 60 times in 1st Nephi alone (1st Nephi 1:1,16,20; 2:16; 3:1,7,9; 4:5,14,31; 6:1; 7:2,3,8,16; 8:29; 10:1,17(x2); 11:33; 12:12; 13:16,19,20,23; 14:14,27,28; 15:1,4,19,25; 16:1,4,7,8,18,21,22,23,28,30; 17:7,11,15,19,23,49,52; 18:2,3,10(x2),22; 19:3,4,18,22; 22:1,2,21,27,28,29).

Here are the other 24 times (2nd Nephi 1:1; 4:1,14; 5:1,6,12,14,16,17, 18,26,29,31; 11:2; 25:1,2,6; 26:7; 30:1; 31:1; 32:7; 33:1,3; Helaman 9:36).

It can be easily seen why Cunningham would remember this phrase since it occurs frequently in 1 Nephi.

**Fawn Brodie:** “Six recalled the names Nephi, Lamanite, etc.; six held that the manuscript described the Indians as descendants of the lost ten tribes; four mentioned that the great wars caused the erection of the Indian mounds; and four noted the ancient scriptural style. The very tightness with which Hurlbut here was implementing his theory rouses an immediate

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<sup>38</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 282.

<sup>39</sup> Robert Patterson, Jr., *Who Wrote The Book of Mormon?*, 4.

suspicion that he did a little judicious prompting. John Miller had spoken of “humorous passages” in Spaulding’s work, which would certainly apply to the “Manuscript Story,” but not to the utterly humorless Book of Mormon.”<sup>40</sup>

[**Rebuttal:** Humor is, in a sense subjective, but I find funny what the Jaredites built as barges as the length of a tree and tight unto a dish as quite humorous in Ether 2. I find it quite humorous that they are going to plug in the holes in those barges. Shiz, somehow, struggles for breath, after he is decapitated in Ether 15:29-31. The names - “Moron, Moroni, Moronihah” are humorous.]

**Fawn Brodie:** “Other features, like the scriptural style, the expression “it came to pass,” and the proper names, seem too definite to be questioned.”<sup>41</sup>

[**Rebuttal:** The scriptural style is a very important feature of *Manuscript Found*, but NOT *Manuscript Story*. The **BOM** does indeed express many “and it came to pass” statements, but NOT *Manuscript Story*.]

**Fawn Brodie:** “But it should be remembered, as President Fairchild pointed out in his analysis of the problem, that “the Book of Mormon was fresh in their minds, and their recollections of the ‘Manuscript Found’ were very remote and dim. That under the pressure and suggestion of Hurlbut and Howe, they should put the ideas at hand in place of those remote and forgotten, and imagine that they remembered what they had recently read, would be only an ordinary example of the frailty of memory.”\*

It is significant that five of Hurlbut’s witnesses were careful to except the “religious” matter of the Book of Mormon as not contained in the Spaulding manuscript, and the others stated that “the historical parts” were derived from the Spaulding story. The narrative Hurlbut found had no religious matter whatever, but the Book of Mormon was permeated with religious ideas. It was first and foremost a religious book. The theology could not have been wrought by interpolation, since practically every historical event was motivated either by Satan or the Lord.”<sup>42</sup>

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40 Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 447.

41 *Ibid*.

42 Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 449.



[**Rebuttal:** It is important to define what is meant by “religious matter” in which some did offer what was meant and that it contained many scriptural quotations from the Bible that were inserted into it unlike *Manuscript Story* (which does contain some scriptural quotations from the Bible) but it does not even begin to compare with the amount the **BOM** has.]

## **Ted Chandler’s Article**

### **“Criticism of the Spalding Theory**

The testimony which has been produced to support the Spalding theory has been severely criticized by such people as Fawn Brodie and Lester E. Bush, Jr. Brodie claimed that the statements of the eight Conneaut witnesses were suspect because of a uniformity of style and detail, which suggested that they had been written by Hurlbut. She accused Hurlbut of “judicious prompting” to aid the memories of the witnesses: “The very tightness with which Hurlbut here was implementing his theory rouses an immediate suspicion that he did a little judicious prompting” (Brodie 1971, 447). However, Brodie does not explain why we are required to believe that the alleged uniformity was due to Hurlbut’s influence. It should be noted first that two of the witnesses, John and Martha Spalding, were husband and wife, and it is not surprising to find that their statements agree in many details, although there are also differences. All of the witnesses were acquainted with each other and undoubtedly discussed what they remembered. These facts alone are sufficient to explain any uniformity, without dragging in some hypothesis about a plot implemented by Hurlbut. Furthermore, Hurlbut learned about the witnesses after they had made their accusations, and it is unreasonable to assume that they would have allowed Hurlbut to manipulate their testimonies or that they would sign statements which did not accord with what they remembered. Nonetheless, Brodie persists with her theory, claiming that it was “the frailty of memory” and “the pressure and suggestion of Hurlbut and Howe” which produced the statements of the witnesses (Brodie 1971, 449).

Lester Bush also complains about the uniformity of names mentioned by the witnesses: “Of some 300 potential names, Hurlbut’s witnesses all used the same handful of specific examples” (Bush 1977, 44). Bush does not explain why he finds this suspicious. Isn’t this what we would expect, that the witnesses would remember only the principal names? If they claimed



to remember a host of specific names from the Book of Mormon, we would have reason to be suspicious. Here is how the supposed uniformity actually breaks down. Artemas Cunningham mentioned only the name Nephi, and particularly the repetition of the phrase “I, Nephi.” The names Nephi and Lehi were remembered by four people (John and Martha Spalding, John Miller, and Oliver Smith). John and Martha Spalding added the names Nephites and Lamanites. John Miller was the only person to list the names Moroni and Zarahemla, while Henry Lake was the only one to name Laban. Aaron Wright did not mention any specific names, but made a general statement, saying that the names in the Book of Mormon were the same as those in Spalding’s manuscript. Nahum Howard did not refer to any names. Thus we have seven names: Nephi, Lehi, Nephites, Lamanites, Moroni, Zarahemla, and Laban. Of these seven, three were mentioned by only one person. It is difficult to find any suspicious uniformity here. If Hurlbut was manipulating the witnesses, why didn’t he succeed in getting the others to remember the names Moroni, Zarahemla, and Laban?

Here is another example of the use of innuendo by the opponents of the Spalding theory. John Miller made this statement: “When Spalding divested his history of its fabulous names, by a verbal explanation, he landed his people near the Straits of Darien, which I am very confident he called Zarahemla, they were marched about that country for a length of time, in which wars and great blood shed ensued, he brought them across North America in a north east direction” (Howe 1834, 283). Lester Bush comments: “One of Hurlbut’s sources recalled the group landing near the ‘Straits of Darien’ (now Panama), reflecting an early interpretation of Book of Mormon geography shared by Eber D. Howe, among others. (Joseph Smith reportedly placed the landing near Valparaiso, Chile.)” (Bush 1977, 44). Bush will not allow us to believe that Miller might have actually received his information from Spalding. This would prove that Miller was not remembering the Fabius story, which takes place in North America. No, the idea must have been planted in Miller’s mind by Howe, although Howe did not interview Miller, and Bush provides no evidence that Howe made any reference to the Straits of Darien prior to receiving Miller’s statement from Hurlbut. John Miller must have been a very impressionable and imaginative man, if he not only accepted a hint from Howe and Hurlbut, but also invented an entire conversation with Spalding around this hint. If this is Bush’s position, it is not believable. Two

years after *Mormonism Unveiled* was published with Miller's statement and one reference to the Straits of Darien by Howe, Joseph Smith and Orson Pratt were toying with the idea that Lehi had landed near Valparaiso, Chile. If Miller knew in 1833 that Lehi landed near the Straits of Darien, why didn't Joseph Smith publish this information before 1842?

The critics have simply ignored the unique elements and personal anecdote in the statements of the witnesses. John Spalding said that Solomon's story was meant "to account for all the curious antiquities, found in various parts of North and South America," which implies that the story dealt with more than just North America. Martha Spalding stated that some of the people in Solomon's story were "represented as being very large." Henry Lake said that he spent many hours listening to Spalding read from the "Manuscript Found," and he commented: "One time, when he was reading to me the tragic account of Laban, I pointed out to him what I considered an inconsistency, which he promised to correct; but by referring to the Book of Mormon, I find to my surprise that it stands there just as he read it to me then" (Howe 1834, 282). John Miller said that he perused the "Manuscript Found" as often as he had leisure, and he also related his conversation with Spalding, in which Solomon explained that Lehi landed near the Straits of Darien. Aaron Wright said that he had "frequent conversations" with Spalding about the history that he was writing, showing that the Indians were the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. Oliver Smith stated that he "read and heard read one hundred pages or more" of Spalding's manuscript. Nahum Howard stated that Spalding "frequently showed me his writings, which I read." Artemas Cunningham said that Spalding first outlined his story, and then they "sat down and spent a good share of the night, in reading them, and conversing upon them." But, we are required to believe that the Conneaut witnesses did not know what they were talking about and that they not only imagined that there was a second story called the "Manuscript Found," but also that they imagined having specific conversations with Spalding about this nonexistent manuscript.

Having convinced themselves that the eight Conneaut witnesses were confused, mindless sheep, who obediently followed Hurlbut's lead, the critics turn next to the testimony of Spalding's wife and daughter. Matilda Spalding Davison was interviewed in 1839 by a Mr. Austin, and her statement was published in the *Boston Recorder* in an article written by the Rev. John Storrs. Mrs. Davison was later interviewed again by Jesse Haven, a Mormon. When

asked if she had sent a letter to Storrs, Mrs. Davison answered, no. Haven then asked her if she had signed the letter, and she again replied, no. Austin and Storrs admitted that this was correct, but insisted that Mrs. Davison had signed a statement of facts, based upon the notes which Austin took during the interview. When asked if the contents of the published statement were true, Mrs. Davison answered, "In the main." She did not object to any of the details of the statement.

Mrs. Davison has been accused by the critics of an enlargement of memory. This accusation is based upon Howe's account in *Mormonism Unveiled* of what Mrs. Davison reportedly told Hurlbut: "She states that Spalding had a great variety of manuscripts, and recollects that one was entitled the 'Manuscript Found,' but of its contents she has now no distinct knowledge" (Howe 1834, 287). In her 1839 statement, Mrs. Davison said that Solomon's story "claimed to have been written by one of the lost nation, and to have been recovered from the earth, and assumed the title of 'Manuscript Found'" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 44). She also said that Solomon imitated the style of the Old Testament and introduced many "singular names," and that the neighbors often came in to hear Spalding read his manuscript. This seems to be more than she told Hurlbut, although she did not provide a great many details. However, the accusation of an enlargement of memory rests on the fact that Howe did not publish a signed statement by Mrs. Davison, but gave only a brief, secondhand summary. Mrs. Davison's daughter, Mrs. McKinstry, was interviewed in 1880 by Ellen Dickinson, and her statement was published in *Scribner's Magazine* (August 1880). She stated that as a young girl, she frequently heard her father read his manuscript to friends: "Some of the names that he mentioned while reading to these people I have never forgotten. They are as fresh to me today as though I heard them yesterday. They were Mormon, Maroni, Lamenite, Nephi" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 52). This too seems to be more information than was given to Hurlbut. However, Mrs. McKinstry also said: "My mother was careful to have me with her in all the conversations she had with Hurlburt, who spent a day at my house. She did not like his appearance and mistrusted his motives" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 54). Thus it appears that Spalding's wife and daughter simply did not want to volunteer any information to Hurlbut. Their lack of cooperation is demonstrated by Hurlbut's failure to obtain a statement from either woman, as he had done with the Conneaut witnesses.

If Hurlbut had been such a powerful influence on the Conneaut witnesses, these two women should have been no match for his wiles. (See also *Matilda Spalding Revisited*)

Having done their best to undermine the testimonies of Spalding's wife and daughter, the critics perform a surprising turnabout, appealing to this same testimony to prove that the Spalding theory is false. Their argument is based upon statements made about what happened to Spalding's manuscript after it was taken to the printer. According to E. D. Howe, Mrs. Davison said: "While they lived in Pittsburgh, she thinks it was once taken to the printing office of Patterson & Lambdin; but whether it was ever brought back to the house again, she is quite uncertain: if it was, however, it was then with his other writings, in a trunk which she had left in Otsego county, N. Y." (Howe 1834, 287-88). In her 1839 statement, Mrs. Davison said that Mr. Patterson kept the manuscript for a long time "and informed Mr. S. that if he would make out a title page and preface, he would publish it, and it would be a source of profit." For some reason, Spalding failed to accomplish this: "At length the manuscript was returned to its author, and soon after we removed to Amity, Washington County, Pa., where Mr. S. deceased in 1816. The manuscript then fell into my hands, and was carefully preserved. It has frequently been examined by my daughter, Mrs. McKinstry, of Monson, Mass., with whom I now reside, and by other friends." In her 1880 interview, Mrs. McKinstry stated that, according to her mother, Patterson returned the "Manuscript Found" to Solomon and said, "Polish it up, finish it, and you will make money out of it." After Solomon died, she and her mother moved to the home of her uncle, William H. Sabine, at Onondaga Valley, New York: "We carried all our personal effects with us, and one of these was an old trunk, in which my mother had placed all my father's writings which had been preserved." The contents of the trunk included sermons and other papers, including a story called "The Frogs of Wyndham" and the "Manuscript Found." Concerning the latter, Mrs. McKinstry said, "I did not read it, but looked through it and had it in my hands many times, and saw the names I had heard at Conneaut, when my father read it to his friends. I was about eleven years of age at this time." She remained at Sabine's house while her mother went to her father's home, but her mother did not take the trunk with her. In 1820 her mother married Mr. Davison of Hartwicks, New York, and sent for the trunk. After marrying Mr. McKinstry in 1828, she was joined by her mother at Monson, Massachusetts, but the

trunk was left in the care of Jerome Clark in Hartwicks, until it was inspected by Hurlbut. (See Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 44-45, 52-54) Thus the critics claim that Patterson returned Spalding's manuscript, which remained in the family trunk until it was removed by Hurlbut, who delivered it to Howe. And since the manuscript in Howe's possession was the Fabius story, there could not have been a second story called the "Manuscript Found."

Robert Patterson originally denied knowing anything about Spalding or his manuscript, but in 1842 he stated that Silas Engles, the foreman printer, "informed R. P. that a gentleman, from the East originally, had put into his hands a manuscript of a singular work, chiefly in the style of our English translation of the Bible." Patterson said that he read only a few pages, but "said to Engles, he might publish it, if the author furnished the funds for good security. He (the author) failing to comply with the terms, Mr. Engles returned the manuscript, as was supposed at that time, after it had been some weeks in his possession with other manuscripts in the office" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 66). The ambiguous wording of this statement leaves open the question of whether the manuscript was actually returned. It is also curious that the critics have not questioned Patterson's original lack of knowledge and subsequent enlargement of memory.

The critics have largely ignored the testimonies of Joseph Miller and Redick McKee, who give further information about what happened after the Spaldings moved to Amity. In an 1869 statement, Miller said that Spalding read portions of the "Manuscript Found" to him in Amity and that he specifically remembered that the Amalekites placed a red mark on their foreheads. In an 1879 statement published in the Pittsburgh Telegraph, Miller said that he heard Spalding read most of his manuscript to friends and had frequent conversations with him about it: "My recollection is that Mr. S. had left a transcript of the manuscript with Mr. Patterson, of Pittsburgh, Pa., for publication, that its publication was delayed until Mr. S. would write a preface . . . ." In another statement dated 20 January 1882, Miller said that Spalding "took his manuscript to Mr. Patterson, then engaged in a publishing house. Mr. Patterson told him if he would write a title page he would publish it. He left a copy and moved to Amity. He afterwards went back to have his MS. published, but it could not be found." Miller repeated this information in another statement in February 1882. In 1886 Redick McKee stated that he had boarded with the Spaldings in Amity and that Solomon had told him that



he “had prepared a copy of his manuscript for the printer and left it with Mr. Patterson for examination.” However, Engles, the manager of the print shop, wanted Spalding to make a deposit, which Solomon was unable to do, and “the manuscript was laid aside in the office for further consultation.” Spalding then moved to Amity: “While the question of printing was in abeyance Mr. S. wrote to Mr. P. that if the document was not already in the hands of the printer he wished it to be sent out to him in order that he might amend it by the addition of a chapter on the discovery of valuable relics in a mound recently opened near Conneaut. In reply Mr. P. wrote him that the manuscript could not then be found, but that further search would be made for it.” In another statement, McKee said: “Mr. Spaulding told me that he had submitted the work to Mr. Patterson for publication, but for some reason it was not printed, and afterwards returned to him. I also understood he was then occasionally re-writing, correcting, and he thought improving some passages descriptive of his supposed battles.” (See Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 67-85, 102) The statements of Miller and McKee do not contradict those of Mrs. Davison and Mrs. McKinstry. Before the Spaldings moved to Amity, Patterson returned the manuscript with instructions for Solomon to write a title page, or to polish it up and finish it. However, Miller says that Patterson had a copy of the manuscript at the same time that Spalding was reading the manuscript to friends in Amity. And McKee also says that Patterson had a copy, while Spalding was rewriting and adding material to the manuscript in Amity. Therefore, it seems obvious that the copy which Mrs. Davison preserved in the trunk was not the printer’s copy.

Jerald and Sandra Tanner castigated Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey for suggesting that there were two copies of Spalding’s manuscript: “We have a difficult time accepting that there was more than one manuscript . . . We feel that it is much more reasonable to believe there was only one manuscript” (Tanner 1977, 30). How do the Tanners back up their position? They accuse Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey of deliberately omitting a portion of Redick McKee’s 1886 statement, which “is very damaging to their argument that Rigdon actually stole and retained Spalding’s manuscript.” As quoted above, McKee stated that Spalding wrote to Patterson, requesting that the manuscript be returned to him, so that he could add a chapter: “In reply Mr. P. wrote him that the manuscript could not then be found, but that further search would be made for it. This excited Mr. Spaulding’s suspicions that Rigdon had



taken it home. . . .” The Tanners point out that the following passage was omitted: “In a week or two it was found in the place where it had originally been deposited, and sent out to him. The circumstances of this finding increased Mr. S’s suspicions that Rigden had taken the manuscript and made a copy of it with a view to ultimately publishing the story as the product of his own brain” (Tanner 1977, 30). The Tanners claim that since the manuscript was returned to Spalding, Rigdon could not have stolen the original manuscript. But, of course, this does not prove anything. What happened after the manuscript was returned to Spalding? Presumably, Spalding would have made changes to the manuscript and then sent it back to Patterson. Wasn’t that the whole point of Spalding’s request? In a final twist of logic, the Tanners destroy their own argument by stating: “In any case, Mr. McKee’s statement is probably not too reliable anyway” (Tanner 1977, 30).

If a copy of the manuscript remained in the trunk, why didn’t Hurlbut find it? Ellen Dickinson interviewed George Clark and his wife in 1880, who claimed that Mrs. Davison gave Spalding’s manuscript to Mrs. Clark to read in 1831. Mrs. Clark said that she found it dry reading, returned the manuscript to Mrs. Davison, and could not remember any of the contents of the story. Critics claim that this proves that the manuscript remained in the trunk. But what it actually proves, if it proves anything, is that the manuscript had been removed from the trunk. What happened to it after Mrs. Clark returned it? Did Mrs. Davison place it back in the trunk, or did she store it in another location? Did she take it with her to Monson? Did she give it to another friend to read? Or, was the manuscript either accidentally or intentionally thrown out? All that we know is that when Hurlbut spoke with Mrs. Davison, she was noncommittal, but gave him permission to look inside the trunk in Hartwicks. And Hurlbut claimed that the only manuscript he found was the Fabius story. Furthermore, if Mrs. Clark’s story is true, it proves that Mrs. Davison had knowledge of her husband’s manuscript just two years before Hurlbut arrived. Therefore, the critics have no sound reason to accuse her of an enlargement of memory.

Both Fawn Brodie and Lester Bush complained that none of the witnesses issued a signed statement affirming that Spalding had written two separate stories having different subjects. Technically, this is correct. However, after Hurlbut found the Fabius story, he wrote on the cover: “The Writings of Sollomon Spalding. Proved by Aron Wright Oliver Smith John Miller and others. The testimonies of the above Gentlemen are now in my possession.”

And Howe stated that the Fabius story “has been shown to several of the foregoing witnesses, who recognise it as Spalding’s, he having told them that he had altered his first plan of writing, by going farther back with dates, and writing in the old scripture style, in order that it might appear more ancient. They say that it bears no resemblance to the ‘Manuscript Found’” (Howe 1834, 288). Furthermore, several witnesses stated that they were aware that Spalding had written more than one manuscript. John Miller said that Spalding “had written two or three books or pamphlets on different subjects; but that which more particularly drew my attention, was one which he called the ‘Manuscript Found.’” Aaron Wright said: “Spalding had many other manuscripts, which I expect to see when Smith translates his other plate” (Howe 1834, 283-84).

None of the Conneaut witnesses implicated Sidney Rigdon as an accomplice in the production of the Book of Mormon. But their statements carry us only to 1812, when the Spaldings moved to Pittsburgh. E. D. Howe was apparently the first person to make a public accusation concerning Rigdon. Howe noted that Rigdon had lived in Pittsburgh in 1823 or 1824: “We have been credibly informed that he was on terms of intimacy with Lambdin, being seen frequently in his shop” (Howe 1834, 289). He speculated that Lambdin had given Spalding’s manuscript to Rigdon, who then altered it and handed it over to Joseph Smith. Mrs. Davison said that Rigdon “was at this time connected with the printing office of Mr. Patterson, as he is well known in that region, and as Rigdon himself has frequently stated. Here he had ample opportunity to become acquainted with Mr. Spalding’s manuscript, and to copy it if he chose.” In his 1879 statement, Joseph Miller stated that Spalding’s manuscript could not be found at the print shop: “Mr. S. told me that Sidney Rigdon had taken it, or that he was suspicioned for it. Recollect distinctly that Rigdon’s name was used in that connection.” Miller repeated this in his two 1882 statements. Redick McKee said in 1886: “Mr. Spaulding told me that while at Pittsburg he frequently met a young man named Sidney Rigdon at Mr. Patterson’s bookstore and printing-office, and concluded that he was at least an occasional employee.” When Spalding’s manuscript could not be found at the print shop, Spalding suspected that Rigdon had taken it home, but it was later found. Ellen Dickinson interviewed Mrs. Ann Treadwell Redfield in 1880, who had been the principal of the Onandaga Valley Academy in 1818. She lodged with William Sabine and said that she frequently heard

Mr. Sabine and Mrs. Spaulding talk about Solomon's manuscript: "Mrs. Spaulding believed that Sidney Rigdon had copied the manuscript while it was in Patterson's printing office, in Pittsburgh. She spoke of it with regret. I never saw her after her marriage to Mr. Davison of Hartwick (1820)." (See Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 45, 71, 83, 86)

Mrs. William Eichbaum, who had worked as a clerk in the Pittsburgh post office from 1811 to 1816, stated: "I knew and distinctly remember Robert and Joseph Patterson, J Harrison Lambdin, Silas Engles, and Sidney Rigdon, I remember Rev. Mr. Spaulding, but simply as one who occasionally called to inquire for letters. I remember there was an evident intimacy between Lambdin and Rigdon. They very often came to the office together. . . . I do not know what position, if any, Rigdon filled in Patterson's store or printing office, but am well assured he was frequently, if not constantly, there for a large part of the time when I was clerk in the post office. I recall Mr. Engles saying that 'Rigdon was always hanging around the printing office.' He was connected with the tannery before he became a preacher, though he may have continued the business whilst preaching" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 96). Lambdin died in 1825, but his widow was contacted in 1879 by Robert Patterson. She was asked if she remembered Rigdon and some other people, but Mrs. Lambdin replied: "I am sorry to say I shall not be able to give you any information relative to the persons you name. They certainly could not have been friends of Mr. Lambdin" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 99). Fawn Brodie claimed that this proved that Mrs. Eichbaum's statement was false. However, Lambdin was only eighteen in 1816, when Spaulding died, and probably was not yet married. In 1819 Rigdon left his family farm and resided with Rev. Andrew Clark in Beaver County, Pennsylvania. He received his minister's license in March 1819 and went to Ohio in May, where he lived with Adamson Bentley. In 1821 he and Bentley traveled to Bethany, West Virginia, where they met with Alexander Campbell and discussed "the ancient order of things." Through Campbell's influence, Rigdon became pastor of a Baptist church in Pittsburgh in 1822. In 1824 the Baptist Communion was split between reformists and conservatives; Rigdon lost his position and obtained employment for two years as a tanner. He then moved to Ohio as a Campbellite preacher. Therefore, Mrs. Lambdin probably could not have known Rigdon while Spaulding was alive, and her statement indicates that she did not even have any recollection of Rigdon as either a Baptist minister or as

a tanner, when they were both living in the same city. Mrs. Eichbaum, on the other hand, did remember both Spalding and Rigdon and knew that Rigdon held positions as both a preacher and a tanner. Therefore, her memory seems to be much more reliable than Mrs. Lambdin's.

Peter Boyer, Rigdon's brother-in-law, stated that Sidney never lived in Pittsburgh before 1822, but this does not preclude the possibility that Sidney traveled to Pittsburgh, since the Rigdon farm was not more than fifteen miles from that city. Robert Du Bois stated that he began working at Patterson and Lambdin's print shop in 1818, when he was twelve, and left in 1820. He said that he knew nothing of Spalding, or of his book, or of Rigdon. But, of course, Spalding was dead, and Rigdon was living elsewhere during this time period.

John Winter declared that when Rigdon was a minister in Pittsburgh, Sidney showed him Spalding's manuscript in the church office and stated: "A Presbyterian minister, Spalding, whose health had failed, brought this to the printers to see if it would pay to publish it. It is a romance of the Bible" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 105). Winter's daughter and stepson both stated that Winter related this information to them.

At least two years before the Book of Mormon was translated by Joseph Smith, Rigdon made a statement in the presence of Adamson Bentley and Alexander Campbell concerning the discovery of gold plates and a new book that was to be published. Bentley reported in 1841: "I know that Sidney Rigdon told me there was a book coming out (the manuscript of which had been found engraved on gold plates) as much as two years before the Mormon book made its appearance in this country or had been heard of by me." Campbell said that Bentley's recollections "accorded with mine in every particular, except the year in which it occurred, he placing it in the summer of 1827, I in the summer of 1826, Rigdon at the same time observing that in the plates dug up in New York, there was an account, not only of the aborigines of this country, but also it was stated that the Christian religion had been preached in this country during the first century" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 110-12). Critics point out that Rigdon was on bad terms with both Bentley and Campbell. Furthermore, they claim that Campbell is involved in a contradiction, since in 1831 he had stated firmly that the Book of Mormon was the sole production of Joseph Smith, but now he was asserting that Rigdon was involved. However, if Bentley and Campbell were conspiring to malign Rigdon, why did they disagree about the year in which

the conversation took place? This seems to be an honest admission that their memories differed on this one point. In addition, the statement attributed to Rigdon by Bentley and Campbell is neutral with regard to the authorship of the Book of Mormon. It does not claim that Rigdon wrote the Book of Mormon, but only that Rigdon was aware that the book was going to be published several years before Sidney and Joseph supposedly met each other for the first time. Since Campbell accepted the Spalding theory, wouldn't he and Bentley have made up a conversation in which Rigdon clearly confessed his connection with Solomon's manuscript, if they were simply lying?

In 1885 Lorenzo Saunders, who had been a neighbor of the Smiths, stated: "I saw Sidney Rigdon in the Spring of 1827, about the middle of March. I went to Smiths to eat maple sugar, and I saw five or six men standing in a group and there was one among them better dressed than the rest and I asked Harrison Smith who he was and he said his name was Sidney Rigdon, a friend of Joseph's from Pennsylvania. I saw him in the Fall of 1827 on the road between where I lived and Palmyra, with Joseph. I was with a man by the name of Jugegsah, (sp.?) [Ingersoll]. They talked together and when he went on I asked Jugegsah (sp.?) who he was and he said it was Rigdon. Then in the summer of 1828 I saw him at Samuel Lawrence's just before harvest. I was cutting corn for Lawrence and went to dinner and he took dinner with us and when dinner was over they went into another room and I didn't see him again till he came to Palmyra to preach" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 128). Brodie and Bush complain that it took Saunders thirty years to recall this information. However, Rodger Anderson has demonstrated that the allegation that Saunders had to mull this question over in his mind, before he came to a decision, is a complete fabrication, and that in fact Saunders did not hesitate in affirming that he had seen Rigdon at the Smith residence (Anderson 1990, 78-89). [For more on this topic, see Solomon Spalding and Revisionist History.] Saunders's memories of the circumstances in which he saw Rigdon seem to be quite specific, and two other people made similar statements. In 1879 Abel Chase reported: "During some of my visits at the Smiths, I saw a stranger there who they said was Mr. Rigdon. He was at Smith's several times, and it was in the year of 1827 when I first saw him there, as near as I can recollect." Mrs. S. F. Anderick said that Joseph Smith "was from home much summers. Sometimes he said he had been to Broome County, New York, and Pennsylvania. Several times while I was visiting Sophronia



Smith at old Jo's house, she told me that a stranger who I saw there several times in warm weather and several months apart, was Mr. Rigdon. At other times the Smith children told me that Mr. Rigdon was at their house when I did not see him" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 126, 134). In all three cases, these people did not claim that they had merely surmised that the stranger was Rigdon, but that they had been specifically informed by members of the Smith family that it was Ridgon.

It is doubtful that Rigdon had much influence on the revision of Spalding's manuscript, after giving it to Joseph Smith. Fawn Brodie published an itinerary, covering Rigdon's official duties as a minister between November 1826 and November 1830. However, the itinerary contains large gaps in the Spring and Fall of 1827 and the Summer of 1828, when Lorenzo Saunders said that he saw Sidney and Joseph together. Still, since Rigdon could not be there a large part of the time, he could have had little control over what Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery did with the manuscript. Rigdon always denied any involvement with the Book of Mormon, but Oliver Cowdery seemed almost to take pride in emphasizing his role. Years after being excommunicated, Oliver stated at Council Bluffs, Iowa: "I wrote, with my own pen, the entire Book of Mormon (save a few pages) as it fell from the lips of the Prophet Joseph Smith . . . . Sidney Rigdon did not write it; Mr. Spaulding did not write it. I wrote it myself as it fell from the lips of the Prophet" (Ludlow 1976, 26-27). It is as if Oliver were guardedly asserting that he was largely responsible for the final form of the Book of Mormon.

Jerald and Sandra Tanner ask "why the affidavits collected by Hurlbut in Palmyra in 1833 do not mention Rigdon being with Joseph Smith before the Book of Mormon appeared? Since these early affidavits by Joseph Smith's neighbors are silent regarding this, we can only conclude that they knew nothing about the matter. Any statements given at a later date, therefore, carry very little weight" (Tanner 1977, 28). Well, one obvious reason comes to mind to explain why Rigdon was not mentioned: Joseph and Sidney did not want anyone to know about Rigdon's involvement, because he could be connected with Spalding's manuscript. Apparently, however, the Smith children were not very guarded in giving information to their friends.

Fawn Brodie quoted the testimony of James Jeffries (or Jeffery) as an example of the faulty memory of witnesses who tried to link Rigdon with the Spalding manuscript. On 20 January 1884, Jeffries wrote: "Forty years



ago I was in business in St. Louis. The Mormons then had their temple in Nauvoo. I had business transactions with them. I knew Sidney Rigdon. He told me several times that there was in the printing office with which he was connected, in Ohio, a manuscript of the Rev. Spaulding, tracing the origin of the Indians from the lost tribes of Israel. This M.S. was in the office several years. He was familiar with it. Spaulding wanted it published, but had not the means to pay for the printing. He [Rigdon] and Joe Smith used to look over the M.S. and read it on Sundays. Rigdon said Smith took the MS. and said, 'I'll print it,' and went off to Palmyra, New York" (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 104). Brodie objected: "Forty years previous to 1884 would have been the year of Smith's assassination. Rigdon never lived in St. Louis, nor did Joseph Smith ever visit Ohio before 1831" (Brodie 1971, 453). Lester Bush consigns Jeffries's testimony to a note and says that the conversation took place "about 1840," instead of 1844. Jeffries was obviously confused about the location of the print shop; it was in Pennsylvania, rather than Ohio, but Rigdon had been a preacher in Ohio. Brodie has no basis for saying that Joseph Smith never visited Ohio before 1831; the truth is that his whereabouts cannot be accounted for. For example, Richard Bushman states that Joseph was not listed as a resident at the Smith farm by the census taker in 1820, the same year in which Joseph had his first vision, "probably because he lived elsewhere during the growing season" (Bushman 1984, 59). In his statement, Jeffries does not assert that Rigdon lived in St. Louis, as Brodie implies; he says only that he talked with Rigdon in St. Louis in 1844. And there is good evidence that Rigdon was in St. Louis in 1844 and was in a frame of mind to reveal the true origins of the Book of Mormon.

After Joseph Smith's death in 1844, Rigdon attempted to assert his right to lead the church, but was rejected. On 3 September 1844 Rigdon told Brigham Young that he had more power and authority than the apostles. The apostles then demanded Rigdon's license; he refused to give it up and said that "he should come out and expose the secrets of the church" (Joseph Smith 1976, 7:267). Rigdon was excommunicated on 8 September 1844. Before returning to Pittsburgh on 15 October 1844, he went to St. Louis. Apparently, Rigdon also attempted to obtain the manuscript of Joseph's translation of the Bible from Emma Smith. Robert J. Matthews records this entry in the Journal History of the Church, citing a statement written by Orson Hyde in St. Louis on 12 September 1844: "He [Sidney Rigdon] said .

. . that Emma came to him on the morning of his leaving [Nauvoo] and told him that it was her intention . . . that the new translation and other important and sacred things, she should deliver up to him” (Matthews 1975, 48). Since Rigdon’s leadership had been rejected by the church and he was trying to obtain documents from Emma, he might very well have made the statement to Jeffries, fulfilling his threat to expose the secrets of the church. In order to discredit Jeffries, we must believe both that he was a friend of Rigdon and that forty years later, for no apparent reason, he made up a malicious lie about Rigdon’s confession. It is significant that Rigdon did not allege that Joseph wrote the Book of Mormon, but confirmed that Spalding was the author and admitted his own role in obtaining the manuscript.

R. W. Alderman stated that, while snowbound in a hotel in Mentor, Ohio, in February 1852, he had a conversation with Martin Harris, who told him: “Rigdon had stolen a manuscript from a printing office in Pittsburgh, Pa., which Spaulding, who had written it in the early part of the century, had left there to be printed, but the printers refused to publish it, but Jo and Rigdon did, as the ‘Book of Mormon’” (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 145). John C. Bennett also wrote in his *History of the Saints* that he had been told “that the Book of Mormon was originally written by the Rev. Solomon Spalding . . . .” (Bennett 1842, 123).

Fawn Brodie offered a further objection to the Spalding theory: “Protagonists of the theory do not explain why, if Rigdon wrote the Book of Mormon, he was content to let Joseph Smith found the Mormon Church and hold absolute dominion over it throughout the years, so secure in his position that he several times threatened Rigdon with excommunication when Rigdon opposed his policies” (Brodie 1971, 442). The founding of a church by Joseph may not have been part of the original intention of either Sidney or Joseph. But once Sidney had handed over Spalding’s manuscript and Joseph had assumed the mantle of a prophet, there was little that Sidney could do, without revealing his own involvement. In any case there is evidence that Sidney did much more than oppose Joseph’s policies. In 1842 Joseph accused Rigdon of secretly plotting with John C. Bennett and Governor Carlin to have Joseph arrested. Rigdon had in fact received a rather incriminating letter from Bennett, which Orson Pratt handed over to Joseph. Rigdon denied any involvement in the plot, and Carlin seemed to absolve him of any responsibility, but Rigdon was adamantly opposed to

Joseph's introduction of the practice of polygamy. For various reasons, both Joseph and Sidney reached the conclusion that it was best for Rigdon to move his family to Pittsburgh, not long before Joseph's death. After Joseph's murder, Rigdon rushed back to Nauvoo to proclaim himself as guardian of the church. It is apparent that Rigdon wanted to head the church, but could not dislodge Joseph. And Brodie might well have asked, if Joseph wrote the Book of Mormon without Rigdon's involvement, why did he keep Rigdon at his side, even after accusing Sidney of treachery?

Brodie gave another reason for identifying Joseph Smith as the author of the Book of Mormon. She thought that the Gadianton band, with their secret oaths, revealed an anti-Masonic strain in the book. Since anti-Masonic feeling was aroused in 1827 by the disappearance of William Morgan, who was writing an exposé of Freemasonry, it seemed natural to assume that the Gadianton band was a caricature of Masonry. However, I have shown that the Gadianton band has other historical precedents, for example, the robber bands described by Josephus, such as the Sicarii and Zealots, as well as the conspiracy of Catiline. In any case, E. D. Howe also thought that he saw anti-Masonry in the Gadianton band and reported that Solomon's widow had said "that Mr. Spalding, while living, entertained a strong antipathy to the Masonic Institution, which may account for its being so frequently mentioned in the Book of Mormon" (Howe 1834, 288).

The testimony of the eight Conneaut witnesses does pose one problem. Five of the witnesses specifically said that they did not remember the religious matter contained in the Book of Mormon. For example, John Miller said, "I have recently examined the Book of Mormon, and find in it the writings of Solomon Spalding, from beginning to end, but mixed up with scripture and other religious matter, which I did not meet with in the 'Manuscript Found.' Many of the passages in the Mormon Book are verbatim from Spalding, and others in part" (Howe 1834, 283). Fawn Brodie believed that this proved that the witnesses were really remembering the "Manuscript Story," which according to Brodie "had no religious matter whatever" (Brodie 1971, 449). And if they were confused on this point, they were probably wrong in claiming that there was a second story called the "Manuscript Found."

E. D. Howe incorrectly stated that the Fabius story takes place "a short time previous to the Christian era" (Howe 1834, 288). Amazingly, Brodie repeats this error: "It was an adventure story of some Romans sailing to Britain before

the Christian era” (Brodie 1971, 447). In his article, Lester Bush states twice that Howe’s description of the “Manuscript Story” is “accurate” (Bush 1977, 46, 53). Apparently, neither Brodie nor Bush recognized Howe’s blatant error. In reality, the story takes place in the reign of Constantine, and Fabius and his companions were already Christians. And the story does contain religious matter, contrary to Brodie’s assertion that it “had no religious matter whatever.” On page five, a mariner acting as a prophet, delivers a divine prediction, saying, “A voice from on high hath penetrated my soul & the inspiration of the Almighty hath bid me proclaim . . . .” On page eight, after landing in America, Fabius states, “As we all professed to believe in the religion of Jesus Christ we unanimously chose Trojanus the mate of the Ship, a pious good man, to be our minister, to lead our devotions morning & evening & on the Lords day.” They also built a church. On page ten, a seaman vows to make an Indian maiden “as good hearted a christian as any of your white damsels.” Chapter III states that a tribe called the Deliwans believed in “the great & good Spirit, who resides in the Sun, who is the father of all living creatures . . . .” They also believed in a great, malignant Spirit and in a dark, miry swamp, into which the wicked would be cast. In addition, the chapter describes a sacred Indian ceremony, in which a holy sacrifice involving black and white dogs symbolized the cleansing of sin. On page nineteen, a man named Crito says that the Delawans had been so kind and generous that they had “fulfilled the law of Christian charity.” Chapter VII is wholly devoted to expounding the theology of the Ohons, which the narrator learned by reading their Sacred Roll. Page forty-four describes the institution of the hereditary office of high priest, with four assistant priests.

This is sufficient to prove that the “Manuscript Story” does contain religious matter. Therefore, if the witnesses were claiming that there was absolutely no religious matter in the “Manuscript Found,” they could not have been thinking of the “Manuscript Story” instead. Henry Lake did not object to the religious matter in the Book of Mormon and specifically remembered the “tragic account of Laban.” According to the Book of Mormon, Lehi was instructed by the Lord in a dream to send his sons back to Jerusalem to obtain from Laban the plates of brass, which contained a history of the Jews, prophecies, and genealogies. When Nephi found Laban, the Spirit told him to kill Laban. Thus, the account of Laban itself contains religious matter. Martha Spalding and Artemas Cunningham also did not object to the religious matter in the

Book of Mormon, and all three of these witnesses asserted that Spalding wrote in a scriptural style.

Those witnesses who said that they did not remember the religious parts in the Book of Mormon probably did not mean to say that there was no religious matter at all in the “Manuscript Found,” and it is difficult to believe that Spalding would have written a story with no religious content. The witnesses probably meant merely that they did not remember Solomon quoting chapter after chapter of Isaiah, as the Book of Mormon does. The chapters of Isaiah are found in the first part of the Book of Mormon, comprising the “small plates of Nephi,” which was the last part of the book to be written. Joseph and Oliver had to revise the beginning, because Martin Harris had lost the first 116 pages of manuscript. Therefore, it is likely that the chapters of Isaiah were inserted as filler. John Miller acknowledged that Spalding’s manuscript had been altered. Inserting scripture into the first section of the book could have been part of the revision. In addition, Solomon had a period of three or four years after moving from Conneaut to Pennsylvania, in which he could have added material to his manuscript, which people in Conneaut might not have known about. None of the witnesses who knew Spalding in Amity objected to the religious matter.

Critics of the Spalding theory have made misleading statements, suggesting that Spalding wrote the Fabius story, recovered by Hurlbut, in one distinct style and that since the Book of Mormon was written in a different style, Spalding was not the author. Brodie stated: “Spaulding was heir to all the florid sentiment and grandiose rhetoric of the English Gothic romance. He used all the stereotyped patterns -- villainy versus innocent maidenhood, thwarted love, and heroic valor -- thickly encrusted with the tradition of the noble savage” (Brodie 1971, 450). Certainly, this florid style is found in the “Manuscript Story,” but it comprises only a fraction of the book. Many sections of the manuscript are written in a simple, straightforward style, in the manner of an observer recording the customs of a foreign culture. Spalding went into great detail, describing the physical traits of groups of people, the type of clothing they wore, the crops they cultivated, the animals they raised, their pottery, houses, writing, religion, government, military training, fortifications, athletic competition, games, and courtship and marriage customs. Consider the style of this passage, describing the houses of the Ohons:

Their houses were generally but one story high -- built of wood, being framed & covered with split clapboards or shingles & in the inside the walls



were formed of clay, which was plastered over with a thin coat of lime. Their houses seldom consisted of more than three apartments. As to their chimnies, they construt a wall of stone about five feet high against which they build their fire -- from the top of this wall they construct their chimney with thin pieces of split timber on the inside of which they plaister wet, dirt or clay -- which compleatly covers & adheres to the timber & prevents the fire from having any operation upon it. The inside of their houses, as the women generally practiss neetness makes a much better appearance than the outside. (Spalding 1910, 23-24)

There is nothing gothic or florid about the style of this description. But, of course, Spalding varied his style according to his subject matter. Some sections of his manuscript reproduce the speeches of military leaders in councils of war, much like the rhetorical speeches which Greek and Roman writers preserved in their histories. When recording the conversation of mariners, Spalding even imitates the salty language of seamen. Incidentally, it should be noted that Spalding's story fits more closely than does the Book of Mormon Lucy Smith's description of the information which Joseph related to his family about the customs of the Nephites. Spalding covered many of the topics which Lucy listed, which suggests that the Book of Mormon originally included such detailed accounts.

What Brodie identifies as Spalding's florid style is really only one of a number of different styles which Solomon used in the "Manuscript Story." Therefore, it is not impossible to believe that Spalding might have adopted a different style in writing the "Manuscript Found," upon which the Book of Mormon is based. After all, the "Manuscript Story" takes place in the time of Constantine in the fourth century A.D., and Spalding was not attempting to write a Nephite bible, in imitation of the Hebrew Bible. If Spalding used the very same style in writing both books, critics would be able to complain, but they should not object, if Spalding adapted his style to the story.

Witnesses testified that Solomon wrote the "Manuscript Found" in a scriptural style. John Spalding said, "I well remember that he wrote in the old style, and commenced about every sentence with 'and it came to pass,' or 'now it came to pass,' the same as in the Book of Mormon" (Howe 1834, 280). Henry Lake stated, "I well recollect telling Mr. Spalding, that the so frequent use of the words 'And it came to pass,' 'Now it came to pass' rendered it ridiculous" (Howe 1834, 282). In 1880 Abner Jackson said that when the



Book of Mormon “was brought to Conneaut and read there in public, old Esq. Wright heard it, and exclaimed, ‘Old Come to Pass has come to life again’” (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 64). In 1882 Joseph Miller wrote: “The words ‘Moreover,’ ‘And it came to pass,’ occurred so often that the boys about the village called him ‘Old Come to Pass’” (Davis, Scales, and Cowdrey 1977, 72). Since the Fabius story does not contain the repetition of “And it came to pass,” it does not seem possible that these witnesses could have confused this story with the “Manuscript Found,” written in a scriptural style. Therefore, the “Manuscript Found” must have been a separate and distinct book.

The argument from style is a two-edged sword. Here is an example of the florid style used by Spalding in his Fabius story:

Amazement & terror seized the minds of the whole multitude of citizens; [they] were unprepared to defend the fort against such a formidable force. Lamock however placed himself at the head of about one thousand warriors & attempted to beat them back from the walls & prevent their making a breach. But it was imposible with his small band to withstand the strength of such a mighty army -- They broke down part of the palasadoes & entered the fort thro’ the break -- & immediately began the massacre of the defenceless multitude without regard to age or sex -- Sambal being anxious to find Lamesa rushed forward with a small band & surrounded a block house -- He then broke down the door & entered -- Here he beheld all the Ladies of the imperial family & many other Ladies of distinction -- He instantly sprang towards Lamesa in order to seize her -- but was prevented by Heliza who stepped between them & falling upon her knees implored him to spare the life of Lamesa -- Scarce had she spoken when the cruel monster buried his sword in her bosom & she fell lifeless before the eyes of her dearest friend -- Lamesa gave a scream, & looking fiercely on Sambal she exclaimed. Thou monster of vilany and cruelty, could nothing sacciate your revenge but the death of my dear friend, -- the amiable, the innocent Heliza Here is my heart -- I am prepared for your next victim. (Spalding 1910, 107)

Now let us compare a passage from Oliver Cowdery’s history, which appeared in the Messenger and Advocate. Oliver is describing the scene of the great battle of Cumorah:

Here may be seen where once sunk to nought the pride and strength of two mighty nations; and here may be contemplated, in solitude, while nothing but the faithful record of Mormon and Moroni is now extant to inform

us of the fact, scenes of misery and distress -- the aged, whose silver locks in other places and at other times would command reverence; the mother, who in other circumstances would be spared from violence; the infant, whose tender cries would be regarded and listened to with a feeling of compassion and tenderness; and the virgin, whose grace, beauty and modesty, would be esteemed and held inviolate by all good men and enlightened and civilized nations, alike disregarded and treated with scorn! -- In vain did the hoary head and man of gray hairs ask for mercy; in vain did the mother plead for compassion; in vain did the helpless and harmless infant weep for very anguish, and in vain did the virgin seek to escape the ruthless hand of revengeful foes and demons in human form -- all alike were trampled down by the feet of the strong, and crushed beneath the rage of battle and war! (Latter Day Saints' Messenger and Advocate, July 1835)

The ideas and sentiments in this passage and the style in which they are expressed are very similar to those of Spalding. Was Oliver utilizing material from Solomon's manuscript? The Book of Mormon is strangely sanitized of all but a few female characters, but there is one passage in one of Mormon's epistles which resembles the accounts given by Solomon and Oliver. Mormon is describing atrocities which occurred at the tower of Sherrizah and at the city of Moriantum: "For behold, many of the daughters of the Lamanites have they taken prisoners; and after depriving them of that which was most dear and precious above all things, which is chastity and virtue -- and after they had done this thing, they did murder them in a most cruel manner, torturing their bodies even unto death" (Moroni 9:9-10). After the battle of Cumorah, Mormon also laments: "And my soul was rent with anguish, because of the slain of my people, and I cried: O ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord! O ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you! Behold, if ye had not done this, ye would not have fallen. But behold, ye are fallen, and I mourn your loss. O ye fair sons and daughters, ye fathers and mothers, ye husbands and wives, ye fair ones, how is it that ye could have fallen! But behold, ye are gone, and my sorrows cannot bring your return" (Mormon 6:16-20). Such melodramatic sentiment could have been written by Spalding. And there are other passages which could be cited, such as the scenes of religious conversion in the Book of Mormon.

The "Manuscript Story" could not have been the book which Spalding took

to Patterson's print shop, because it certainly was not ready to be published. For example, Spalding began chapter eight using Baska as the name of the mythical founder of the Ohons' religion and government. Baska is said to have two little sons. Spalding stopped in mid-sentence and started chapter eight over again, this time stating that the character's name was Lobaska and that he had four sons, the eldest being about eighteen years old. In fact Spalding frequently changed the spelling of names in his manuscript: Siota becomes Sciota, Hambock is changed to Rambock, Bombal becomes Bambo, Galanga is also called Talanga, Hamkien becomes Hamkoo, and Mammoons are designated as Mammouths. Furthermore, the "Manuscript Story" is unfinished, ending just before a confrontation between the Sciotan and Kentuck armies. Spalding could not have intended to print the "Manuscript Story" in this condition.

Lester Bush provided one new bit of evidence in the Spalding debate. He stated that Dean Jessee informed him that page 135 of Spalding's manuscript was written on the back of an unfinished letter which Solomon wrote to his parents, "referring to correspondence dated January 1812 -- almost certainly penned prior to the narrative text on the other side of the same sheet" (Bush 1977, 55). Since the manuscript continues for another thirty-six pages, Spalding must have still been working on his story after January 1812, but he had supposedly set it aside at least two years earlier to work on the "Manuscript Found." Unfortunately, Bush did not reproduce the text of the letter, and in fact did not even say that he saw it himself. The text of the letter has since been made public and reads as follows:

### **Fond Parents**

I have receivd 2 letters [--] jun 1812. the last mentiond Mr Kings dismission from you -- wich no doubt is great trial to you -- Christian Minnister is great loss to any [to any] people -- teaches us the uncertainty of all Sublinary enjoyments & where to place our better trust & happiness

However, this only proves that Spalding had not discarded the Fabius story. Undoubtedly, he was still fond of the idea that a group of Romans had reached America before Columbus, and he may have contemplated using the story as a sequel to the "Manuscript Found." There is little overlap in time between the final destruction of the Nephites in the Book of Mormon and the arrival of Fabius and his group in the New World in the "Manuscript Story."

The fact that Solomon wrote on the back of an unfinished letter also indicates that this could not have been the manuscript which he took to the printer. In addition, Bush does not mention that the manuscript leaves containing pages 133 to 134 and 143 to 144 are missing. Therefore, it really is not clear what Spalding was doing with this section of the manuscript.

A more recent discussion of the Spalding theory is Matthew Roper's article "The Mythical 'Manuscript Found.'" He endeavors to prove that Spalding's "Manuscript Story" and "Manuscript Found" are one and the same manuscript, not two different and distinct stories. Primarily, Roper tries to show that statements made about "Manuscript Found" apply to "Manuscript Story." The first issue is whether the manuscript that Spalding took to the printer was unfinished. This is relevant because "Manuscript Story" clearly is not finished. Roper discusses the statements by Spalding's wife and daughter and Redick McKee, who all said that when Spalding took his manuscript to the printer, he was told that he needed to polish it up, finish it, and make additions to the story, such as a title page, a preface, and perhaps two chapters describing the mounds in Ohio. Roper remarks that these statements indicate that "the manuscript in question was incomplete, not ready for publication, and in need of 'polish,' a description consistent with the state of the document recovered in 1884 known as 'Manuscript Found.'" However, this is not accurate. The statements under discussion refer to Patterson's instructions to Spalding. Patterson may have thought that Spalding's story needed more polish, a title page, a preface and maybe more material relating to Indian mounds, but this does not indicate that the story was in a rough draft state with material crossed out and the spelling of names changing from one page to another, or that it was incomplete or had no ending. "Manuscript Story," on the other hand, is clearly a rough draft and ends abruptly just before a major battle.

Roper's next effort is to prove his thesis that the 1833 testimony about Spalding's manuscript is best explained as a compound of several factors. These include genuine but vague memories of "Manuscript Story," recalled after twenty years. Encrusted upon these memories, however, are popular and somewhat inaccurate ideas that some of Spalding's former neighbors had come to associate with the Book of Mormon, but that are not found in the Book of Mormon itself. Additional elements such as the names Nephi or Lehi and the structure of the statements themselves are largely due to coaching by Philastus Hurlbut ...."

Roper begins with Artemus Cunningham's recollection that Spalding's story was supposed to be a record found buried in the earth or in a cave, which matches "Manuscript Story." However, Roper does not discuss similarities with Joseph Smith's description of finding the gold plates buried in the earth or with Oliver Cowdery's account of a cave that contained many records. (On this topic, see the next page in this section.)

Roper next notes John Miller's reference to humorous passages in Spalding's story, which matches "Manuscript Story," but not the Book of Mormon. However, Miller does not say whether the humorous passages were deliberate humor on Spalding's part, or whether Miller simply found them to be humorous, even if Spalding did not intend them to be. One can certainly find passages in the Book of Mormon which seem to be ridiculous and perhaps even humorous.

Henry Lake said that he remembered "the tragic account of Laban." Roper says that there is nothing tragic about this episode and that Lake was most likely remembering the death of Labanko in "Manuscript Story." However, Lake may have been using the word "tragic" in the sense that the story had an element of tragedy. In any case, the story of Laban is very different from the account of Labanko. and there is no similarity in the characters or in the manner of their deaths. Laban was beheaded by Nephi at the urging of the Spirit while he was passed out drunk on the ground near his house. Labanko was killed in battle by a sword thrust into his side and was greatly lamented. It is difficult to see how Lake could have confused the two episodes or how he could declare concerning an inconsistency that he noted, "I find to my surprise that it stands there just as he [Spalding] read it to me then."

Roper also finds that the statements of John and Martha Spalding "have many elements that correspond well to the language and themes found in 'Manuscript Story.'" He lists references to contentions and bloody wars and battles, bodies buried in large heaps and mounds, separation into two nations, the arts and sciences of civilized people, and the large stature of some people. But, of course, Roper does not extend his comparison to include the Book of Mormon, which contains the same language and themes. The one exception to this is his acknowledgment that the Book of Mormon does parallel Joseph Miller's recollection that the Amlicites marked their foreheads with red.

Roper next tries to show that the 1833 Spalding testimonies reflect inaccurate, popularized perceptions of the Book of Mormon. A number of the



witnesses described Spalding's manuscript as showing that the American Indians are descendants of the lost tribes of Israel, while the Book of Mormon is about a small remnant of the tribe of Manasseh. However, since Manasseh was one of the lost tribes, it is not completely inaccurate to say that the Indians are descendants of the lost tribes. Moreover, "Manuscript Found" might have contained at least some account of the fate of the lost tribes. The Book of Mormon is not entirely without knowledge of the lost tribes, as the following passages indicate.

1 Nephi 19:10-12: according to the words of Zenos, which he spake concerning the three days of darkness, which should be a sign given of his death unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea, more especially given unto those who are of the house of Israel. For thus spake the prophet: The Lord God surely shall visit all the house of Israel at that day, some with his voice, because of their righteousness, unto their great joy and salvation, and others with the thunderings and the lightnings of his power, by tempest, by fire, and by smoke, and vapor of darkness, and by the opening of the earth, and by mountains which shall be carried up. And all these things must surely come, saith the prophet Zenos. And the rocks of the earth must rend; and because of the groanings of the earth, many of the kings of the isles of the sea shall be wrought upon by the Spirit of God, to exclaim: The God of nature suffers.

1 Nephi 22:4: And behold, there are many who are already lost from the knowledge of those who are at Jerusalem. Yea, the more part of all the tribes have been led away; and they are scattered to and fro upon the isles of the sea; and whither they are none of us knoweth, save that we know that they have been led away.

2 Nephi 10:20-21: nevertheless, we have been driven out of the land of our inheritance; but we have been led to a better land, for the Lord has made the sea our path, and we are upon an isle of the sea. But great are the promises of the Lord unto them who are upon the isles of the sea; wherefore as it says isles, there must needs be more than this, and they are inhabited also by our brethren.

3 Nephi 17:4: But now I go unto the Father, and also to show myself unto



the lost tribes of Israel, for they are not lost unto the Father, for he knoweth whither he hath taken them.

Although no specific information is provided, these passages indicate that according to the Book of Mormon the lost tribes were scattered upon the isles of the sea, and that Lehi's group was only a part of this larger dispersion.

Roper asserts that the witnesses' emphasis on fortifications, mounds, and antiquities is consistent with Spalding's story, but is "in a manner extraneous to the Book of Mormon text itself." I really don't know what Roper means by this. The Book of Mormon contains many passages that describe fortifications and the arts and sciences of civilization. For example, this description of the Jaredites proclaims:

And they did work in all manner of ore, and they did make gold, and silver, and iron, and brass, and all manner of metals; and they did dig it out of the earth; wherefore, they did cast up mighty heaps of earth to get ore, of gold, and of silver, and of iron, and of copper. And they did work all manner of fine work. And they did have silks, and fine-twined linen; and they did work all manner of cloth, that they might clothe themselves from their nakedness. And they did make all manner of tools to till the earth, both to plow and to sow, to reap and to hoe, and also to thrash. And they did make all manner of tools with which they did work their beasts. And they did make all manner of weapons of war. And they did work all manner of work of exceedingly curious workmanship. (Ether 10:23-27)

John Miller stated that Spalding explained to him that his characters landed near the Straits of Darien and called their land Zarahemla. Roper maintains that Miller did not actually receive this information from Spalding, but got the idea from public descriptions of the Book of Mormon by missionaries who apparently followed the geographical views of Orson Pratt. Pratt did not publish his views until 1840, but Roper cites an 1832 newspaper article that recounts a missionary meeting held by Orson Pratt and Lyman Johnson, which states that the last battle in the Book of Mormon "commenced at the Isthmus of Darien and ended at Manchester." However, there are definite problems with Roper's thesis. Roper provides quotes from the 1832 and 1840 accounts that state that Lehi's group landed on the coast of South America, but he conveniently omits an important detail. Pratt never held that Lehi landed near the Straits of Darien. He placed Lehi's landing hundreds

of miles south in Chile. In the quotes provided, there also is no reference to Zarahemla. In fact, Pratt held that the people of Zarahemla landed in North America and then moved into northern South America. Miller did not indicate whether Zarahemla was in South or Central America, but only that it was near the landing site near the Straits of Darien. Miller also used "Straits of Darien," while Pratt and the newspaper account used "Isthmus of Darien." Miller's statement, rather than reflecting a popularized version of Pratt's views, is quite different. It is also absurd to suggest that Miller picked up ideas and then claimed that he had a personal conversation with Spalding which never took place, during which Spalding revealed this information to him.

Roper also compares the 1832 and 1840 accounts of Pratt's views with the statements of John and Martha Spalding and claims that it "suggests the borrowing of themes and language from the former for the latter." These correspondences include references to Lehi, Jerusalem, landing in America, dividing into two nations, the names Nephites and Lamanites, the ancestry of the Indians, and bodies piled in large heaps. But, again there are problems. The 1832 account contains no parallels for the names Nephites and Lamanites or for bodies piled in large heaps. However, the Book of Mormon contains this description: "And the bodies of many thousands are laid low in the earth, while the bodies of many thousands are moldering in heaps upon the face of the earth" (Alma 28:11). This is very similar to the wording of "Manuscript Story": "Many hundreds of their enemies they pierced with their deadly weapons & caused heaps of them to lie prostrate in the narrow passage" (p. 100) Both the 1832 and 1840 accounts say that Lehi's landing site was in South America, but John and Martha Spalding say only that it was in America. The 1840 account says three times that the Indians are the "remnant of Joseph" or the "remnant of Israel," but the Spaldings said that they were the descendants of the lost tribes. The 1840 account contains these words: "separated themselves into two distinct nations." John Spalding's statement says: "separated into two distinct nations." However, the 1832 account has these words: "divided into two parties." The question then arises of who was borrowing from whom? It is at least possible that Pratt was influenced in his choice of words by John Spalding's statement. Moreover, if John and Martha Spalding had genuine memories of "Manuscript Story," why would they borrow the names Lehi, Nephites and Lamanites, and any reference to Jerusalem or lost tribes? Spalding's "Manuscript Story" contains none of these references and is silent

on the origins of the various peoples in the story.

Roper devotes a great deal of space to examining the character of Hurlbut, but in a refreshing admission, he concedes: “While the evidence above paints an unflattering picture of Hurlbut, it does not prove that he invented the Spalding theory itself. As already noted, it appears that at least some of Spalding’s former neighbors had already come to associate his unpublished tale with the Book of Mormon before Hurlbut arrived on the scene.” However, Roper still thinks that Hurlbut exerted a strong influence on “the structure and language of the statements themselves, and in the choice of names and phrases attributed to ‘Manuscript Found.’” To prove this, Roper compares the wording of the two statements of John and Martha Spalding with the statements of the other witnesses and finds various parallels, which, he claims, shows the influence of Hurlbut. But, why does the comparison lead us to this conclusion? Doesn’t it rather show the influence of John and Martha Spalding on the statements of the other witnesses? Roper admits that the Spaldings “were possibly the first to be interviewed” by Hurlbut. Isn’t it possible that their statements were used as a sort of template, to which the other witnesses added their own recollections?

Three of the witnesses said that many of the names in the Book of Mormon were the same or nearly the same as those in Spalding’s story. Roper asks, why then did all of the witnesses mention only seven specific names? Aaron Wright may have been exaggerating when he said, “the names of, and most of the historical part of the Book of Mormon, were as familiar to me before I read it, as most modern history.” But, I think that the general intent of the witnesses’ statements was to affirm that they had no doubts whatever about the seven names that they listed as being the same as those in Spalding’s story, and that when they read the Book of Mormon, they were reminded of other names that Spalding had invented. If, as Roper claims, Hurlbut strongly influenced the selection of names, why wouldn’t he have included more names such as Alma, Mosiah, Helaman, and Coriantumr?

Roper ridicules the testimony of Matilda Spalding McKinsty and her recollection of names, but on this subject see *Matilda Spalding Revisited*.

In an 1855 statement, Josiah Spalding, Solomon’s brother, described the story that Solomon was writing. Roper declares, “Josiah Spalding also speaks only of one manuscript, which matches the content of ‘Manuscript Story.’ He also called it ‘Manuscript Found.’” But, in fact, Josiah’s description differs in

many respects from “Manuscript Story.” He stated that the story takes place “before the Christian Era,” and that the characters landed “near the mouth of the Mississippi River.” “Manuscript Story” takes place during the fourth century A.D., and the characters land on the east coast of North America. He also said that the main character “makes some lengthy remarks on astronomy and philosophy, which I should think would agree in sentiment and style with very ancient writings.” Musings on these subjects do occur in “Manuscript Story,” but they certainly are not written in an ancient style. “Manuscript Found,” on the other hand, was said to be written in an ancient style. Most significantly, Josiah stated that the story was about a civilized nation at war with savages, and that the savages destroyed the civilized people. “Manuscript Story” does distinguish between savages and two empires of civilized people, but the wars are between the two empires and not between the civilized people and the savages. Nor is there any suggestion that the savages would destroy the civilized people. It appears that Josiah mixed together elements of both of Solomon’s stories, thus providing evidence not of just one manuscript but of two different stories.

John Spalding said that he did not remember the religious matter in the Book of Mormon, and John Miller and Matilda Spalding declared that Solomon’s story had been changed with the addition of scripture and other religious matter. The first part of the Book of Mormon contains whole chapters of Isaiah. Roper correctly points out that the entire Book of Mormon is permeated with religious language and themes, which could not have been merely tacked on to the historical narrative. But “Manuscript Story” is also permeated with religious material, so if the witnesses were not referring to scripture, what was their objection? In addition, there is evidence that the Book of Mormon contains passages that reflect Sidney Rigdon’s theological views. On this latter topic, see Sidney Rigdon: Creating the Book of Mormon.

Despite Roper’s efforts, there is no evidence that the testimony of the witnesses was manipulated by Hurlbut or that the witnesses “encrusted” their memories of “Manuscript Story” with popularized ideas about the Book of Mormon derived from someone like Orson Pratt. The real manipulators are people like Roper, who make their arguments by ignoring contrary evidence and by instilling suspicion in the minds of their readers.

The supporters of the Spalding theory have been criticized for proposing that there were two copies of the “Manuscript Found.” The critics insist that

there was only one copy, the copy which Hurlbut found, the Fabius story, which is clearly unfinished. But if the critics maintain that the Fabius story was the only one that Spalding wrote, they must also believe that he polished it up and provided it with an ending. It follows then that there must have been a second copy of the manuscript which Spalding took to the printer. However, since Hurlbut did not find the finished copy in the trunk, the printer must not have returned it to Spalding. Thus, by the logic of their own argument, the critics are forced to admit what they deny to the supporters of the Spalding theory.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20071016190303/http://mormonstudies.com/author2.htm>

## **Chapter 4:** **The Link Between *Manuscript Found*** **and the Book of Mormon (Part 2)**

The witness statements that will now be given were written and collected by various newspaper editors, authors, etc., throughout the next several decades from the 1830s even on into the early 1900s that were published in various books, newspaper accounts, etc.

### **(1) Matilda Davidson** **(Solomon Spalding's widow) on April 19, 1839:**

“Origin of the ‘Book of Mormon,’ or ‘Golden Bible.’

As this book has excited much attention and has been put by a certain new sect, in the place of the sacred Scriptures, I deem it a duty which I owe to the public, to state what I know touching its origin. That its claims to a divine origin are wholly unfounded, needs no proof to a mind unperverted by the grossest delusions. That any sane person should rank it higher than any other merely human composition, is a matter of the greatest astonishment; yet it is received as divine by some who dwell in enlightened New England, and even by those who have sustained the character of devoted Christians. Learning recently, that Mormonism had found its way into a church in Massachusetts, and has impregnated some of its members with its gross delusions, so that excommunication has become necessary, I am determined to delay no longer doing what I can to strip the mask from this monster of sin, and to lay open this pit of abominations.

Rev. Solomon Spaulding, to whom I was united in marriage in early life, was a graduate of Dartmouth College, and was distinguished for a lively imagination and a great fondness for history. At the time of our marriage, he resided in Cherry Valley, N.Y. From this place we removed to New Salem, Ashtabula county, Ohio; sometimes called Conneaut, as it is situated upon Conneaut Creek. Shortly after our removal to this place, his health sunk, and he was laid aside from active labors. In the town of New Salem, there are numerous mounds and forts, supposed by many to be the dilapidated dwellings and fortifications of a race now extinct. These ancient relics arrest the attention of the new settlers,



and become objects of research for the curious. Numerous implements were found and other articles evincing great skill in the arts. Mr. Spaulding being an educated man and passionately fond of history, took a lively interest in these developments of antiquity; and in order to beguile the hours of retirement and furnish employment for his lively imagination, he conceived the idea of giving an historical sketch of this long lost race. Their extreme antiquity of course would lead him to write in the most ancient style, and as the Old Testament is the most ancient book in the world, he imitated its style as nearly as possible. His sole object in writing this historical romance was to amuse himself and his neighbors. This was about the year 1812. Hull's surrender at Detroit, occurred near the same time, and I recollect the date well from that circumstance. As he progressed in his narrative, the neighbors would come in from time to time to hear portions read, and a great interest in the work was excited among them. It claimed to have been written by one of the lost nation, and to have been recovered from the earth, and, assumed the title of 'Manuscript Found.' The neighbors would often inquire how Mr. S. progressed in deciphering "the manuscript," and when he had sufficient portion prepared he would inform them, and they would assemble to hear it read. He was enabled from his acquaintance with the classics and ancient history, to introduce many singular names, which were particularly noticed by the people and could be easily recognized by them. Mr. Solomon Spaulding had a brother, Mr. John Spaulding residing in the place at the time, who was perfectly familiar with this work and repeatedly heard the whole of it read.

From New Salem we removed to Pittsburgh, Pa. Here Mr. Spaulding found an acquaintance and friend, in the person of Mr. Patterson, an editor of a newspaper. He exhibited his manuscript to Mr. P. who was very much pleased with it, and borrowed it for perusal. He retained it a long time and informed Mr. S. that if he would make out a title page and preface, he would publish it and it might be a source of profit. This Mr. S. refused to do for reasons which I cannot now state. -- Sidney Rigdon,\* who has figured so largely in the history of the Mormons, was at this time connected with the printing office of Mr. Patterson, as is well known in that region, and as Rigdon himself has frequently stated. Here he had ample opportunity to become acquainted with Mr. Spaulding's manuscript and to copy it if he chose. It was a matter of notoriety and interest to all who were connected with the printing establishment. At length the manuscript was returned to its author, and soon after we removed to Amity,

Washington county, Pa., where Mr. S. deceased in 1816. The manuscript then fell into my hands and was carefully preserved. It has frequently been examined by my daughter, Mrs. McKenstry, of Monson, Mass., with whom I now reside, and by other friends. -- After the 'Book of Mormon' came out, a copy of it was taken to New Salem, the place of Mr. Spaulding's former residence and the very place where the 'Manuscript Found' was written. A woman preacher (**sic - should be "Mormon preacher" - SF**)<sup>44</sup> appointed a meeting there, and in the meeting read and repeated copious extracts from the 'Book of Mormon.' The historical part was immediately recognized by all the older inhabitants, as the identical work of Mr. S., in which they had been so deeply interested years before. Mr. John Spaulding was present, who is an eminently pious man, and recognized perfectly the work of his brother. He was amazed and afflicted, that it should have been perverted to so wicked a purpose. His grief found vent in a flood of tears, and he arose on the spot, and expressed to the meeting his deep sorrow and regret, that the writings of his sainted brother should be used for a purpose so vile and shocking. The excitement in New Salem became so great, that the inhabitants had a meeting and deputed Dr. Philastus Hurlbut, one of their number to repair to this place and to obtain from me the original manuscript of Mr. Spaulding, for the purpose of comparing it with the Mormon Bible, to satisfy their own minds, and to prevent their friends from embracing an error so delusive. This was in the year 1834. Dr. Hurlbut brought with him an introduction and request for the manuscript, signed by Messrs. Henry Lake, Aaron Wright and others, with all whom I was acquainted, as they were my neighbors when I resided in New Salem.

I am sure that nothing would grieve my husband more, were he living, than the use which has been made of his work. The air of antiquity which was thrown about the composition, doubtless suggested the idea of converting it to the purposes of delusion. Thus an historical romance, with the addition of a few pious expressions and extracts from the sacred Scriptures, has been construed into a new Bible and palmed off upon a company of poor deluded fanatics, as divine. I have given the previous brief narration, that this work of deep deception and wickedness may be searched to the foundation, and its

<sup>44</sup> Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *The Braden-Kelley Debate*, 118. Braden states: "The truth is, a Mormon preacher visited Conneaut and preached his first sermon and read extracts from the Book of Mormon. John Spaulding and others arose and exposed the theft of the Manuscript Found. It was in a meeting of citizens of Conneaut and not in a Mormon church meeting. It was a Mormon preacher, and not a woman preacher. That is a misprint in Schmucker's book—as other books, that I have, show."

author exposed to the contempt and execration he so justly deserves.

MATILDA DAVISON.

Rev. Solomon Spaulding was the first husband of the narrator of the above history. Since his decease, she has been married to a second husband by the name of Davison. She is now residing in this place; is a woman of irreproachable character and an humble Christian, and her testimony is worthy of implicit confidence.

A. ELY, D. D. Pastor Cong. Church, in Monson.

D. R. AUSTIN, Principal of Monson Academy.

MONSON, MASS. April 1st, 1839.”<sup>45</sup>

**(2) The first testimony of Joseph Miller  
(an acquaintance who knew Solomon Spaulding  
when he lived in Amity, PA)  
May 18, 1868**

“For the Reporter.

More About Solomon Spaulding.

Messrs. Editors: -- Having noticed in your paper of the 13th inst., a communication in reference to Solomon Spaulding, I thought it might be interesting to your readers to hear something more in respect to the death of a man who has unintentionally deceived many persons.

I was well acquainted with Solomon Spaulding. He came to Amity, I think, in the summer of 1815. He lived in the house now occupied by Obadiah Clutter, and kept a public house. He told me that he had formerly lived at or near New Lisbon, Ohio; that while there he had lost his health and had written what he called his “manuscript.” It was in the style of a novel, well written, and I and others would frequently set and listen to his reading of it. His manuscript was written on loose sheets of paper with a pen.

I nursed him in his last sickness, made his coffin, and Thomas Venum and myself bailed his wife Matilda in the administration of his estate, as will appear by the records of the Orphans’ Court for the winter of 1817.

JOSEPH MILLER, SR.

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<sup>45</sup> “Origin of the “Book of Mormon,” or “Golden Bible.” *Boston Recorder* - No. 16; Vol. XXIV; April 19, 1839, no. 1216.

Ten Mile, May 18, 1868.”<sup>46</sup>

**The second testimony of Joseph Miller**  
**March 26, 1869**

“For the Reporter.

Book of Mormon.

Some time since, I became the owner of the book of Mormon. I put it into the hands of Mr. Joseph Miller, Sr., of Amwell Township. After examining it, he made the following statement concerning the connection of Rev. Solomon Spalding with the authorship of the book of Mormon.

Mr. Miller is now in the seventy-ninth year of his age. He is an elder in the Cumberland Presbyterian church. His judgment is good and his veracity unimpeachable. He was well acquainted with Mr. S. while he lived at Amity. He waited on him during his last illness. He made his coffin, and assisted to bury his remains where they now lie, in the Presbyterian graveyard at Amity. He also bailed Mr. S.’s wife when she took out letters of administration on his estate.

Mr. Miller’s statement may be relied upon as true.

J. W. HAMILTON.

When Mr. Spalding lived in Amity, Pa., I was well acquainted with him. I was frequently at his house. He kept what was called a tavern. It was understood that he had been a preacher, but his health failed him and he ceased to preach. I never knew him to preach after he came to Amity.

He had in his possession some papers which he said he had written. He used to read select portions of these papers to amuse us of evenings.

These papers were detached sheets of foolscap. He said he wrote the papers as a novel. He called it the “Manuscript Found,” or “the Lost Manuscript Found.” He said he wrote it to pass away the time when he was unwell; and after it was written he thought he would publish it as a novel, as a means to support his family.

Some time since, a copy of the Book of Mormon came into my hands. My son read it for me, as I have a nervous shaking of the head that prevents me from reading. I noticed several passages which I recollect having heard Mr.

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<sup>46</sup> “For the Reporter. More About Solomon Spaulding.” *The Washington Reporter*. Vol. LIX. Washington, Pa., Wednesday, May 20, 1868. No. 41.

Spalding read from his "Manuscript." One passage, on page 148 (the copy I have is published by J. O. Wright & Co., New York) I remember distinctly. He speaks of a battle, and says the Amalekites had marked themselves with red on their foreheads to distinguish them from the Nephites. The thought of being marked on the forehead with red, was so strange, it fixed itself in my memory. This together with other passages, I remember to have heard Mr. Spalding read from his "Manuscript."

Those who knew Mr. Spalding will soon all be gone and I among the rest. I write that what I know may become a matter of history; and that it may prevent people from being led into Mormonism, that most seductive delusion of the devil.

From what I know of Mr. Spalding's "Manuscript" and the Book of Mormon, I firmly believe that Joseph Smith, by some means, got possession of Mr. Spalding's "Manuscript," and possibly made some changes in it and called it the "Book of Mormon."

March 26, 1869.

JOSEPH MILLER, SR.<sup>47</sup>

**(3) Redick McKee**  
**(an acquaintance of Solomon Spalding when he lived in**  
**Amity, PA - April 14, 1869)**

"For the Reporter. SOLOMON SPALDING AGAIN."

Washington, D. C. April 14, '69.

Messrs. Editors: -- Here on business with the Government, I have accidentally found, in the Wheeling Intelligencer of the 8th inst., an article copied from your paper, under the caption, "Who wrote the book of Mormon?" The statement of Joseph Miller, Sr., enclosed in the communication of your correspondent, J. W. Hamilton, carries me back in memory, to scenes and occurrences of my youth, at the pleasant old village of Amity, in your county, and are corroborative in some measure, of their conjecture as to the real author of that curious production, the "Mormon Bible."

With a view to throw some additional light upon a subject, which in the future, if not at present, may possess historical importance, I have concluded

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<sup>47</sup> "For The Reporter. The Book of Mormon." *The Washington Reporter*. Vol. LX. Washington, Pa., Wednesday, April 7, 1869. No. 25.

to employ a leisure hour in giving you some of my recollections, touching the "Lost history found," and its author.

In the fall of 1814 I arrived in the village of "good will," and for 18 or 20 months, sold goods in the store previously occupied by Mr. Thomas Brice. It was on the Main street, a few rods West of Spalding's tavern, where I was a boarder.

With both Mr. Solomon Spalding and his wife, I was quite intimately acquainted. He was regarded as an amiable, inoffensive, intelligent old gentleman, of some sixty winters; and as having been formerly a teacher or professor in some eastern Academy or College, but I was not aware of his having been a preacher or called "Reverend." He was afflicted with a rupture, which made locomotion painful, and confined him much to his house. They possessed but little of this world's goods; and, as I understood, selected Amity as a residence, because it was a healthy and inexpensive place to live in.

I recollect quite well Mr. Spalding spending much time in writing on sheets of paper (torn out of an old book), what purported to be a veritable history of the nations or tribes who inhabited Canaan when, or before, that country was invaded by the Israelites, under Joshua. He described, with great particularity, their numbers, customs, modes of life; their wars, stratagems, victories, and defeats, &c. His style was flowing and grammatical, though gaunt and abrupt; very like the story of the "Maccabees" and other apocryphal books, in the old bibles. He called it "Lost History Found," -- "Lost Manuscript," or some such name; not disguising that it was wholly a work of the imagination, written to amuse himself, and without any immediate view to publication.

I read, or heard him read, many wonderful and amusing passages from different parts of his professed historical records; and was struck with the minuteness of his details and the apparent truthfulness and sincerity of the author. Defoe's veritable Robinson Crusoe, was not more reliable!

I have an indistinct recollection of the passage referred to by Mr. Miller, about the Amalekites making a cross with red paint on their foreheads, to distinguish them from their enemies in the confusion of battle; but the manuscript was full of equally ludicrous descriptions. After my removal to Wheeling, in 1818, I understood (from Dr. Cephas Dodd, perhaps), that Mr. Spalding had died, and his widow had returned to her friends in northern Ohio, or western New York. She would naturally take the manuscript with her. Now, it was in northern Ohio, probably in Lake or Ashtabula County, that



the first Mormon prophet, or impostor, Jo. Smith, lived and published what he called the “Book of Mormon,” or the “Mormon Bible.” It is quite probable therefore, that, with some alterations, the “Book of Mormon” was in fact the “Lost Book,” or “Lost History Found,” of my old landlord, Solomon Spalding, of Amity, Washington county, Pennsylvania.

I have also a recollection of reading in some newspaper, about the time of my removal to California in 1850, an article on this subject, charging Jo. Smith, directly, with purloining or, in some improper way, getting possession of a certain manuscript which an aged clergyman had written for his own amusement, as a novel, and out of it making, up his pretended Mormon bible. Smith’s converts or followers were challenged to deny the statement. Both the date and the name of the paper I have forgotten. Possibly, in your own file of the Reporter, some notice of the matter may be found to verify my recollection.

Many changes have occurred in old “Cat Fish’s Camp,” as well as in “Amity,” since I first knew them. Mr. Joseph Miller, Sr., is I presume, my old friend Jo. Miller, with whom, in 1815, I had many a game of house ball, at the east side of Spalding’s tavern. If so, and this article meets his eye, he will recollect the stripling who sold tape and other necessities in the frame house, nearly opposite good old Tibba Cook’s residence, in Amity. He was then in the prime of life, always in good humor; told a story well; a good shot with a rifle; and the best ball player in the crowd. When he and I happened to be partners, we were sure to win. I wish him many happy days in a green old age.

If any of these desultory recollections of the olden time, can aid in any way the truth of history and the suppression of a miserable imposter [sic - imposture?], use them as you deem proper, either in print or in the waste basket. Respectfully,

REDICK M’KEE.”<sup>48</sup>

**The third statement by Joseph Miller  
on February 6, 1879**

“THE BOOK OF MORMON. A NEW CLAIM OF AUTHORSHIP.

Important Researches at Amity Authorized From Utah -- The Story of Rev. Solomon Spaulding -- Some New Facts.”

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<sup>48</sup> “For The Reporter. Solomon Spalding Again. *The Washington Reporter*, Vol. LX. Washington, Pa., Wednesday, April 21, 1869. No. 27.

The little town of Amity, a few miles up the Monongahela River, was the birth place of Mormonism. For many years Sidney Rigdon was thought to have written the Book of Mormon, afterward elaborated by Joe Smith, and made the basis of the faith or system of the Utah Colony, but some investigations lately made at Amity by Dr. W. W. Sharp, under authority from Salt Lake City, have brought out a new story about the origin of the book. Dr. Sharp writes as follows to the Reporter of Washington, Pa.

The author of the "Manuscript Found," which doubtless suggested the Book of Mormon, and occupied so important a position in its conception, design and execution, lived and died in Amity, Pa. The old frame house he occupied is still tenable, and his grave in the old cemetery attracts many a curious visitor. A stone still marks the foot of the grave with one of its bold initials obliterated. Time has reduced the headstone to small particles of dust, while many a fragment of it adorns the cabinets of the antiquarians. About eighteen years ago, the writer, by carefully replacing the broken pieces, obtained a fragmentary copy of its inscription, a part of which was a four-line stanza, commencing as follows: "A seraph tuned his sweetest lay."

But we have a living witness -- Joseph Miller -- a veteran of the war of 1812. A Christian gentleman of undoubted veracity, with mind and memory remarkable for their prolonged preservation, and singularly free from any signs of senility. I had an interview with Mr. Miller two days ago. Found him well and hearty barring some muscular disability, and as ready to crack a joke or fling a repartee as ever. He said, if he lived till to-day, (Feb. 1, 1879) he would be 88 years old.

I asked him to give me all the information he could from his personal knowledge of Rev. Solomon Spaulding and his family, his recollections and impressions, from association with him, with reference especially to his object in writing the "manuscript found," and its subsequent misuse by the founders of the Mormon sect. Prefacing his reply with the remark that he would not intentionally say one word that he did not believe to be strictly true, he proceeded deliberately to make, in substance, the following statement:

I was well acquainted with Mr. Spaulding while he lived in Amity, Pa. I would say he was 55 to 60 years of age; in person, tall and spare, and considerably stooped, caused in part, I think, from a severe rupture. His hair was quite gray. He was chaste in language and dignified in manner, becoming his profession. I never heard him preach, think he never preached at A.; said he had quit

preaching on account of ill health. He kept a public house or tavern of the character common to that day. He died of dysentery in 1816 (in the Fall, I think), after an illness of six or eight weeks. Dr. Chephas Dodd attended him.

I watched with him many nights during this illness. After he died I made his coffin and superintended his burial. One night when he was near his end, he told me he thought he should die, and requested me to assist his wife in settling his estate; accordingly I, with Col. Thos. Venom went on her bond as administratrix, and I helped her close it up.

Mrs. Spaulding was intelligent and of pleasing manners, with fair complexion, and say, from 35 to 40 years of age.

A child of fair complexion and about fourteen years of age, lived with them here, think she was their daughter as she bore the Spaulding name.

Mr. S. was poor but honest. I endorsed for him twice to borrow money. His house was a place of common resort especially in the evening. I was prosecuting my trade (carpenter) in the village and frequented his house. Mr. S. seemed to take delight in reading from his manuscript (written on foolscap) for the entertainment of his frequent visitors, heard him read most, if not all of it, and had frequent conversations with him about it.

Some time ago I had in my possession, for about six months, the book of Mormon, and heard most of it read during the time. I was always forcibly struck with the similarity of the portions of it which purported to be of supernatural origin to the quaint style and peculiar language that had made such a deep impression on my mind when hearing the manuscript read by Mr. S. For instance, the very frequent repetition of the phrase, "and it came to pass." Then on hearing read the account from the book of the battle between the Amalekites and the Nephites, in which the soldiers of one army had placed a red mark on their foreheads to distinguish them from their enemies, it seemed to reproduce in my mind not only the narrative, but the very words, as they had been impressed on my mind by the reading of Spaulding's manuscript.

The object of Mr. S. in writing the "Manuscript Found," as I understood, was to employ an invalid's lonely imagination, and to support a romantic history of those [o]st races or tribes, whose true history remains buried with their dust beneath those mysterious mounds so common in a large portion of our country.

Its publication seemed to be an afterthought, most likely suggested by pecuniary embarrassment. My recollection is that Mr. S. had left a transcript of the manuscript with Mr. Patterson, of Pittsburgh, Pa., for publication, that

its publication was delayed until Mr. S. would write a preface, and in the meantime the transcript was spirited away and could not be found. Mr. S. told me that Sidney Rigdon had taken it, or that he was suspicioned for it. Recollect distinctly that Rigdon's name was used in that connection.

The longer I live the more firmly I am convinced that Spaulding's MS. was appropriated and largely used in getting up the Book of Mormon. I believe, that leaving out of the book the portion that may be easily recognised as the work of Joe Smith and his accomplices, that Solomon Spaulding may be truly said to be its author. I have not a doubt of it."<sup>49</sup>

**(4) Matilda McKinstry**  
**(adopted daughter of Solomon Spaulding)**  
**April 3, 1880**

"MRS. MATILDA SPAULDING MCKINSTRY'S STATEMENT REGARDING THE "MANUSCRIPT FOUND": WASHINGTON, D. C., April 3d, 1880.

So much has been published that is erroneous concerning the "Manuscript Found," written by my father, the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, and its supposed connection with the book, called the Mormon Bible, I have willingly consented to make the following statement regarding it, repeating all that I remember personally of this manuscript, and all that is of importance which my mother related to me in connection with it, at the same time affirming that I am in tolerable health and vigor, and that my memory, in common with elderly people, is clearer in regard to the events of my earlier years, rather than those of my maturer life.

During the war of 1812, I was residing with my parents in a little town in Ohio called Conneaut. I was then in my sixth year. My father was in business there, and I remember his iron foundry and the men he had at work, but that he remained at home most of the time and was reading and writing a great deal. He frequently wrote little stories, which he read to me. There were some round mounds of earth near our house which greatly interested him, and he said a tree on the top of one of them was a thousand years old. He set some of his men to work digging into one of these mounds, and I vividly remember

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<sup>49</sup> "The Book of Mormon. A New Claim of Authorship." *Pittsburgh Telegraph*. No. 1797. Pittsburgh, Thurs. Evening, Feb. 6, 1879.

how excited he became when he heard that they had exhumed some human bones, portions of gigantic skeletons, and various relics. He talked with my mother of these discoveries in the mound, and was writing every day as the work progressed. Afterward he read the manuscript which I had seen him writing, to the neighbors and to a clergyman, a friend of his, who came to see him. Some of the names that he mentioned while reading to these people I have never forgotten. They are as fresh to me to-day as though I heard them yesterday. They were "Mormon," "Maroni," "Lamenite," "Nephi."

We removed from Conneaut to Pittsburgh while I was still very young, but every circumstance of this removal is distinct in my memory. In that city my father had an intimate friend named Patterson, and I frequently visited Mr. Patterson's library with him, and heard my father talk about books with him. In 1816 my father died at Amity, Pennsylvania, and directly after his death my mother and myself went to visit at the residence of my mother's brother William H. Sabine, at Onondaga Valley, Onondaga County, New York. Mr. Sabine was a lawyer of distinction and wealth, and greatly respected. We carried all our personal effects with us, and one of these was an old trunk, in which my mother had placed all my father's writings which had been preserved. I perfectly remember the appearance of this trunk, and of looking at its contents. There were sermons and other papers, and I saw a manuscript, about an inch thick, closely written, tied with some of the stories my father had written for me, one of which he called, "The Frogs of Wyndham." On the outside of this manuscript were written the words, "Manuscript Found." I did not read it, but looked through it and had it in my hands many times, and saw the names I had heard at Conneaut, when my father read it to his friends. I was about eleven years of age at this time.

After we had been at my uncle's for some time, my mother left me there and went to her father's house at Pomfret, Connecticut, but did not take her furniture nor the old trunk of manuscripts with her. In 1820 she married Mr. Davison, of Hartwicks, a village near Cooperstown, New York, and sent for the things she had left at Onondaga Valley, and I remember that the old trunk, with its contents, reached her in safety. In 1828, I was married to Dr. A. McKinstry of Monson, Hampden county, Massachusetts, and went there to reside. Very soon after my mother joined me there, and was with me most of the time until her death in 1844. We heard, not long after she came to live with me -- I do not remember just how long -- something of Mormonism, and the



report that it had been taken from my father's "Manuscript Found;" and then came to us direct an account of the Mormon meeting at Conneaut, Ohio, and that, on one occasion, when the Mormon Bible was read there in public, my father's brother, John Spaulding, Mr. Lake and many other persons who were present, at once recognized its similarity to the "Manuscript Found," which they had heard read years before by my father in the same town. There was a great deal of talk and a great deal published at this time about Mormonism all over the country. I believe it was in 1834 that a man named Hurlburt came to my house at Monson to see my mother, who told us that he had been sent by a committee to procure the "Manuscript Found" written by the Reverend Solomon Spaulding, so as to compare it with the Mormon Bible. He presented a letter to my mother from my uncle, William H. Sabine, of Onondaga Valley, in which he requested her to loan this manuscript to Hurlburt, as he (my uncle) was desirous "to uproot" (as he expressed it) "this Mormon fraud." Hurlburt represented that he had been a convert to Mormonism, but had given it up, and through the "Manuscript Found," wished to expose its wickedness. My mother was careful to have me with her in all the conversations she had with Hurlburt, who spent a day at my house. She did not like his appearance and mistrusted his motives; but, having great respect for her brother's wishes and opinions, she reluctantly consented to his request. The old trunk, containing the desired "Manuscript Found," she had placed in the care of Mr. Jerome Clark of Hartwicks, when she came to Monson, intending to send for it. On the repeated promise of Hurlburt to return the manuscript to us, she gave him a letter to Mr. Clark to open the trunk and deliver it to him. We afterwards heard that he had received it from Mr. Clark, at Hartwicks, but from that time we have never had it in our possession, and I have no present knowledge of its existence, Hurlburt never returning it or answering letters requesting him to do so. Two years ago I heard he was still living in Ohio, and with my consent he was asked for the "Manuscript Found." He made no response although we have evidence that he received the letter containing the request. So far I have stated facts within my own knowledge. My mother mentioned many other circumstances to me in connection with this subject which are interesting, of my father's literary tastes, his fine education and peculiar temperament. She stated to me that she had heard the manuscript alluded to read by my father, was familiar with its contents, and she deeply regretted that her husband, as she believed, had innocently been the means



of furnishing matter for a religious delusion. She said that my father loaned this "Manuscript Found" to Mr. Patterson, of Pittsburgh, and that when he returned it to my father, he said: "Polish it up, finish it, and you will make money out of it." My mother confirmed my remembrances of my father's fondness for history, and told me of his frequent conversations regarding a theory which he had of a prehistoric race which had inhabited this continent, etc., all showing that his mind dwelt on this subject. The "Manuscript Found," she said, was a romance written in Biblical style, and that while she heard it read she had no especial admiration for it more than for other romances he wrote and read to her. We never, either of us, ever saw, or in any way communicated with the Mormons, save Hurlburt, as above described, and while we had no personal knowledge that the Mormon Bible was taken from the "Manuscript Found," there were many evidences to us that it was, and that Hurlburt and others at the time thought so. A convincing proof to us of this belief was that my uncle, William H. Sabine, had undoubtedly read the manuscript while it was in his house, and his faith that its production would show to the world that the Mormon Bible had been taken from it, or was the same with slight alterations. I have frequently answered questions which have been asked me by different persons regarding the "Manuscript Found," but until now have never made a statement at length for publication.

(Signed) M. S. MCKINSTRY.

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 3d day of April, A. D. 1880, at the city of Washington, D. C.

CHARLES WALTER, Notary Public.<sup>50</sup>

**(5) Abner Jackson**  
**(remembered Spalding coming to visit his father and sharing the**  
**manuscript with him - statement taken December 20, 1880;**  
**published January 7, 1881)**

"THE BOOK OF MORMON.

The interest attaching to the question, Who wrote the "Book of Mormon?" leads us to publish the following correspondence and communication of Abner Jackson, of Canton, Ohio, through Mr. John Aiken in behalf of the

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<sup>50</sup> Ellen E. Dickinson, "The Book of Mormon," *Scribner's Monthly* XX: 4 Aug. 1880, (NYC: Scribner & Co.), 615-616.

Washington County Historical Society.

CANTON, OHIO, Dec. 20, 1880.

Mr. John Aiken, Esq.: -- I here send you the document you solicited so long ago. You see, though a long time coming, that it is poorly written: but I am too old to do it very well. I hope you will be able to read it. You probably have seen Mrs. McKinstry's statement in Scribner's Monthly (already published in the Washington Reporter -- Eds.) for August, 1880. I wish to say that I have not seen her or had any intelligence from her, since they left Conneaut. If any should think we have conferred in any way to make out a case of plagiarism against Joseph Smith, let them know that so far as we are concerned, we are now perfect strangers. I did not know that she was living until I heard, as stated in the accompanying paper. If so many errors had not been published there would be no necessity for this statement. When contradicting statements are published, people often say, one is wrong, maybe neither is right, and so ignore both. Mrs. McKinstry says that her father's iron works was a foundry. This was the little girl's view of it. It was a forge of the older type. Iron was made from ore under a trip hammer, as there were no rollers in this country at that time. But this is not essential, and has nothing to do with Mormonism.

If my statement is not published, please return it to me as soon as convenient. Please inform me if you receive this. I am not anxious for myself at all, but if you can do anything for those entangled by the delusion, it cannot be published too quickly. I hope your Historical Society may prosper and do much good.

Yours truly, ABNER JACKSON.

#### ABNER JACKSON'S STATEMENT.

It is a fact well established that the book called the Book of Mormon, had its origin from a romance that was written by Solomon Spaulding, in Conneaut, a small village in Ashtabula County, Ohio, about A. D. 1812. Spaulding was a highly educated man about six feet high, of rather slender build, with a dark complexion, black eyes, black hair, rather slow of speech, never trifling, pleasant in conversation, but seldom laughing aloud. His deportment was grave and dignified in society, and he was much respected by those of his acquaintance. He was a clergyman of the Presbyterian order, and for a time a settled pastor in the city of New York. So said his brother John Spaulding and

others in the neighborhood, who heard him preach. It was said that failing health caused him to resign the pastorate. He then came to Richfield, Otsego County, New York, and started a store, near where my father lived, about the beginning of the present century.

Spaulding contracted for large tracts of land along the shore of Lake Erie, on each side of the State line, in both Pennsylvania and Ohio. My father exchanged with him the farm on which he lived in Otsego County, New York, for land in Erie county, Pa., where the town of Albion now stands, and moved on it A.D. 1805. It was then a dense forest. Shortly after my father moved, Spaulding sold his store in Richfield, and moved to Conneaut, Ashtabula county, Ohio, and built a forge on Conneaut Creek, two miles from Conneaut Harbor and two miles from the State line. In building this he failed, sold out, and about the beginning of the year 1812, commenced to write his famous romance called by him "The Manuscript Found."

This romance, Mr. Spaulding brought with him on a visit to my father, a short time before he moved from Conneaut to Pittsburgh. At that time I was confined to the house with a lame knee, and so I was in company with them and heard the conversation that passed between them. Spaulding read much of his manuscript to my father, and in conversation with him, explained his views of the old fortifications in this country, and told his Romance. A note in Morse's Geography suggested it as a possibility that our Indians were descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. Said Morse, they might have wandered through Asia up to Behring's Strait, and across the Strait to this continent. Besides there were habits and ceremonies among them that resembled some habits and ceremonies among the Israelites of that day. Then the old fortifications and earth mounds, containing so many kinds of relics and human bones, and some of them so large, altogether convinced him that they were a larger race and more enlightened and civilized than are found among the Indians among us at this day. These facts and reflections prompted him to write his Romance, purporting to be a history of the lost tribes of Israel.

He begins with their departure from Palestine or Judea, then up through Asia, points out their exposures, hardships, and sufferings, also their disputes and quarrels. especially when they built their craft for passing over the Straits. Then after their landing he gave an account of their divisions and subdivisions under different leaders, but two parties controlled the balance. One of them was called the Righteous, worshipers and servants of God. These organized with

prophets, priests, and teachers, for the education of their children, and settled down to cultivate the soil, and to a life of civilization. The others were Idolaters. They contended for a life of idleness; in short, a wild, wicked, savage life.

They soon quarreled, and then commenced war anew, and continued to fight, except at very short intervals. Sometimes one party was successful and sometimes the other, until finally a terrible battle was fought, which was conclusive. All the Righteous were slain, except one, and he was Chief Prophet and Recorder. He was notified of the defeat in time by Divine authority; told where, when and how to conceal the record, and He would take care that it should be preserved, and brought to light again at the proper time, for the benefit of mankind. So the Recorder professed to do, and then submitted to his fate. I do not remember what that fate was. He was left alone of his party. I do not remember that anything more was said of him.

Spaulding's Romance professed to find the Record where the Recorder concealed it, in one of those mounds, one of which was but a few rods from Spaulding's residence. Soon after this visit, Spaulding moved to Pittsburgh, and took his manuscript to the Pittsburgh Gazette office, intending to have it printed, but in this he failed. My brother, J. J. Jackson, was a recruiting officer in the U. S. Army, and stationed at Pittsburgh at that time. Being well acquainted with Spaulding and his lady he soon found them, and in his letters home would inform us how they were getting along. The last account he gave us of them was that he was selling pictures and she was sewing up clothing for the soldiers. The next we heard of them was by report. Spaulding moved to Amity, Washington County, Pa., and soon after died and was buried there. His wife and daughter went to her brother, Lawyer Sabine, Onondago Valley, Onondago, Co., N.Y. When I was returning from Clarksburg, W.Va., to my home in New Brighton, Beaver Co., Pa., A. D. 1840, I passed through Amity, hunted the grave of Spaulding and copied from the headstone the following inscription:

IN MEMORY OF

Solomon Spaulding, who departed this life Oct. 20th, A.D., 1816, aged 55 years.

"Kind cherubs guard the sleeping clay,  
Until the great decision day.  
And saints complete in glory rise,  
To share the triumphs of the skies."

Spaulding frequently read his manuscript to the neighbors and amused them as he progressed with his work. He wrote it in Bible style, "And it came to pass" occurred so often that some called him "old come to pass."

So much for Spaulding's Romance; now for the Book of Mormon.

The first account of the Book of Mormon that I saw, was a notice in my father's newspaper, stating that Joseph Smith, Jr., professed having dreamed that an angel had appeared to him and told him to go and search in a place he named in Palmyra, N. Y., and he would find a gold-leaf Bible. Smith was incredulous and did not go until the second or third time he dreamed the same dream. Then he said he went and, to his surprise, he found the golden Bible, according to his dreams. But it was written in a language so ancient that none could be found able either to read it or tell in what language it was written. Sometime after another statement appeared, that an angel had consented to read and interpret it to Joseph Smith, and he should report it to a third person who should write it in plain English, so that all might read the new Bible and understand its import. Some time after, in 1830, the book was published at Palmyra, N. Y., called a "New Revelation: the Book of Mormon." This purports to be a history of the lost tribes of the Children of Israel. It begins with them just where the romance did, and it follows the romance very closely. It is true there are some verbal alterations and additions, enlarging the production somewhat, without changing its main features. The Book of Mormon follows the romance too closely to be a stranger. In both, many persons appear having the same name; as Maroni, Mormon, Nephites, Moroni, Lama, Nephe, and others.

Here then we are presented with Romance, second, called the Book of Mormon, telling the same story of the same people, traveling from the same plain, in the same way, having the same difficulties and destination, with the same wars, same battles, and same results, with thousands upon thousands slain. Then see the Mormon account of the last battle, at Cumorah, where all the righteous were slain. They were called the Nephites, the others were called Lamanites (see Moroni's account of the closing scene) "and it came to pass that a great battle was fought at Cumorah. The Lamanites slew all the Nephites" (except Moroni), and he said "I will write and hide up the Recorder [sic] in the earth, and whither I go it mattereth not." Book of Mormon, page 344, third American edition. How much this resembles the closing scene in the "Manuscript Found." The most singular part of the whole matter is, that it follows the Romance so closely, with this difference: the first claims to be a



romance; the second claims to be a revelation of God, a new Bible! When it was brought to Conneaut and read there in public, old Esq. Wright heard it, and exclaimed, "'Old come to pass' has come to life again." Here was the place where Spaulding wrote and read his manuscript to the neighbors for their amusement and 'Squire Wright had often heard him read from his Romance. This was in 1832, sixteen years after Spaulding's death. This 'Squire Wright lived on a farm just outside of the little village. I was acquainted with him for twenty-five years. I lived on his farm when I was a boy and attended school in the village. I am particular to notice these things to show that I had an opportunity of knowing what I am writing about.

After I commenced writing this article, I heard that an article in Scribner's Monthly, for August, 1880, on the "Book of Mormon," contained a note and affidavit of Mrs. Matilda S. McKinstry, Solomon Spaulding's only child, stating that she remembered her father's Romance. I sent at once for the Monthly, and on the 613, 614, 615 and 616 pages, found the article and her testimony. Her statement from the commencement, until they moved to Pittsburgh, in all essential particulars I know to be true. She relates those acts as they occurred to my own personal knowledge, though she was then a little girl. She is now about seventy-five years of age.

I stated before that I knew nothing of Spaulding after he moved to Pittsburgh, except by letters and newspapers. He soon moved to Amity, Washington County, Pa., and shortly after this he died and his wife went to her brother's. His daughter's account of the deceitful method by which Hurlburt gained possession of and retained Spaulding's manuscript, is, I think, important and should not be lost sight of. She was no child then. I think she has done her part well in the vindication of the truth by her unvarnished statement of what she remembered of her father's Romance. I have not seen her since she was a little girl, but I have seen both of these productions, heard Spaulding read much of his Romance to my father and explain his views and reasons for writing it. I also have seen and read the Book of Mormon, and it follows Spaulding's romance too closely to be anything else than a borrowed production from the romance. I think that Mrs. McKinstry's statement fills a gap in my account from Spaulding's removal to Pittsburgh, to the death of his wife in 1844. I wish, if my statement is published that hers also be published with it, that the truth may be vindicated by the truth beyond any reasonable doubt.

(Signed) ABNER JACKSON.

Canton, Ohio, Dec. 20, 1880.<sup>51</sup>

**The fourth statement of Joseph Miller  
given to Thomas Gregg on January 20, 1882:**

“TEN MILE, Washington Co., Pa.,  
Jan. 20, 1882.

“DEAR SIR: In answer yours, I would state that I was familiar with Solomon Spaulding. I worked in Amity, where he lived, and as the fashion was at that day, we all assembled at his house in the evenings (as he kept tavern), and he frequently would read from his manuscript. The work was very odd. The words ‘Moreover,’ ‘And it came to pass,’ occurred so often that the boys about the village called him ‘Old Came to Pass.’ He told me he lived in Ohio when he wrote his manuscript. He said he lost his health, and he commenced writing a history of the mounds near where he lived, or of the people who built them. He afterwards removed to Pittsburgh, and kept a little store to support his family, and while there he took his manuscript to Mr. Patterson, then engaged in a publishing house. Mr. Patterson told him if he would write a title page he would publish it. He left the copy and moved to Amity. He afterwards went back to have his MS. published, but it could not be found. He said there was a man named Sidney Rigdon about the office, and they thought he had stolen it. The passage you refer to, on page 148, as Cooper has it, in his reference to being marked with red in their foreheads.

“Nephites,” I recollect distinctly, as occurring very often; as to ‘Lamanites’ it is not so distinct, -- and a great many other names that were very odd.

“The MS that I saw, would not, I think, make as large a book as the Book of Mormon.

“Spalding was a very poor man; during his stay at Amity, I was very familiar with him, bailed him for money at least twice; and by request of Spalding, assisted his wife in settling up his little business -- made his coffin and helped lay him in his grave.

“JOSEPH MILLER.”<sup>52</sup>

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51 “The Book of Mormon.” *The Daily Evening Reporter*. “N.S. Vol. IV. Washington, Pa., Friday, Jan. 7, 1881. Whole 1383.

52 Thomas Gregg, *The Prophet of Palmyra* (NYC: J.B. Alden, 1890), 442.

**The fifth statement of Joseph Miller  
that was placed in Ellen Dickinson's book**

“TEN MILE, Pa., February 13, 1882.

Mrs. Ellen E. Dickinson:

I rec. yours of the 1st of Feb., contents duly noted you state you wished to get all the information in my possession in regard to Solomon Spaulding. I knew the man very well, was intimately acquainted often heard him read from what he called his MS., he came to our house and wanted me to go with him and bail him for 50 Dollars as he needed the money and while on the road he told some of his history, he said while living in Ohio he lost his health and in looking over the Country where he lived he discovered some mounds, they appeared to be the work of an ancient race of people and he concluded he would write their history or a fictitious novel of the people that built the mounds, after living there, he told me he moved to Pittsburg and while there he applied to Mr. Patterson to have his novel printed for the purpose as he stated to help him take care of his family. Patterson said he, Patterson would publish it, if he, Spaulding, would write a title page. He told me he kept a little store in Pittsburg, he then moved to Amity, leaving a copy of the manuscript in Patterson's hands, after being at Amity some time he went back to Pittsburg, took his title page, he called it the lost manuscript found, when he went to Pittsburg the manuscript could not be found, he said there was or had been a man by the name of Sidney Rigdon had stole it, Spaulding did not die at my house as you have it but died at a house he had rented in Amity and kept as a Public house or tavern, he was a man fully six feet high rather stooped forward a little of sober visage, very reserved in conversation and very candid apparently in all his dealings and I think a very good man, it used to be very common at that day for to gather in at the Public house in the evenings and often Mr. Spaulding would read from his MS, to entertain us. I had the Book of Mormon in my house for about six months for the purpose of comparing it with my recollection of the 'Lost Manuscript found,' and I unhesitatingly say that a great part of the historical part of the Book of Mormon is identical with the MS. and I fully believe that the MS. is the foundation of the whole concern.

Yours truly,

Joseph Miller.

TEN MILE, Washington Co. Pa.  
To Mrs. Ellen E. Dickinson.”<sup>53</sup>

**The second statement of Redick McKee  
given on November 15, 1882:**

“FROM A VETERAN RULING ELDER.

Redick McKee, Esq., well known to many of our older readers in Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia, writes for us, Nov. 6th, from Washington, D. C., where he has been residing for a few years past, a private letter, from which we make the following extracts which have a general interest.

THE DAUGHTER OF SOLOMAN SPAULDING.

“On Tuesday last (Oct. 31st) I visited Mrs. McKinstry at the house of her son-in-law, Col. Seaton, and found her an intelligent, active, healthy woman, now in her 77th year. She appeared highly gratified at meeting with me after a separation of 66 or 67 years. Her recollections of early incidents at Amity, where we met daily during the almost two years I boarded in her father’s family, are very fresh in her mind, and she recalled many little occurrences which have escaped my memory. Once was my giving her her first horseback ride, sitting behind me, &c.

“The only thing in relation to the lost ‘Manuscript’ within her recollection of which you have not already learned is her remembering to have heard her mother say that, before they left Pittsburgh, she accompanied her husband to the store of Mr. Patterson and heard a conversation in relation to the publication of the ‘Manuscript.’ There were two Mr. Pattersons present, one an elderly gentleman, with a remarkably mild, pleasant countenance, and much more robust than the other. The more slender Mr. Patterson told Mr. Spaulding that he had read several chapters of the ‘Manuscript’ and was struck favorably with its curious descriptions and its likeness to the ancient style of the Old Testament Scriptures. He thought it would be well to publish it, as it would attract attention and meet with a ready sale. He suggested, however, that Mr. Spaulding should write a brief preface, and perhaps a chapter or two in concluding the romance, giving a little more elaborate description of the Indian mounds in Ohio. Her mother thought he was engaged in doing that at the time I was living with the family at Amity. This is confirmatory of my own

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<sup>53</sup> Ellen E. Dickinson, *New Light on Mormonism* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), 240-241.

recollections.”

The above reminiscence is important on account of its clearing up one of the difficulties connected with the history of the Spaulding manuscript. The widow of Mr. Spaulding, in a letter published in 1839, had stated that “Mr. Patterson was very much pleased with it (the story) and borrowed it for perusal; he retained it for a long time and informed Mr. Spaulding that if he would make out a title page and preface, he would publish it and it might be a source of profit.” Rev. R. Patterson, in a brief certificate published in 1842, states that he “read only a few pages,” and appears to have had no very definite knowledge of the story. At the time of Mr. Spaulding’s residence in Pittsburgh, the two brothers were carrying on the bookselling and publishing business under the firm name R. & J. Patterson. The description given above of the one who had read several chapters and advised its publication shows that it was Joseph Patterson, Esq., who did this, and the seeming inconsistency in the statements of Mr. Spaulding’s widow and Mr. R. Patterson is accounted for.”<sup>54</sup>

**The third statement of Redick McKee  
given on January 25, 1886:**

“1753 Rhode Island Avenue.

WASHINGTON, D. C. Jan 25, ‘86

A. B. DEMING, ESQ.

CHICAGO, Ill.,

Dear Sir:

When in this city a few days ago, you informed me that you were en route to Pittsburg, Washington County, &c., to collect some additional testimony about the origin of the Mormon Bible for a book you were intending to publish on the subject; that you had seen old Mrs. McKinstry -- the daughter of Solomon Spaulding -- and obtained a statement of her recollections and now called to request a similar statement from me, to include incidents of my early and later life, leading to my present matured opinion about Mormonism. I sympathize in your design, but to comply fully with your request would extend this communication to an undesirable length and require more time than I can at present command.

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<sup>54</sup> Redick McKee, “Daughter of Solomon Spaulding.” *Presbyterian Banner*. Vol. LXVIII - Pittsburgh, Nov. 15, 1882 - no. 12.



Besides the bulk of said incidents would be more in the line of autobiography, than that of direct testimony on the points which you wish me to prove. I shall therefore cite only a few incidents of my early life, unexpected removal from Pittsburg, and acquaintance with Solomon Spaulding, of whom more anon.

I was born at McKeesport, Pa., Dec. 7, 1800. My father, who was the founder and proprietor of that town, died in February 1807, and soon afterwards my mother and family removed to Pittsburg. Until eight or nine years of age I was in very delicate health and not expected to reach maturity. Having had only about four months of school education, I acquired, principally, the first rudiments of education in reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic &c., at my mother's knee. She was a lady well educated in her youth and a devoted Christian: a prominent member of the Presbyterian Church.

A few years residence in the country with an uncle, named McCoy, and the exposure and labor of farm life gave me with God's blessing, good health and a vigorous constitution, which prepared me for the diversified events of subsequent life. In my 12th year I returned from the country and was employed in the extensive mercantile establishment of Messrs. Hugh and James Jelley. I had a taste for the business and made rapid progress in becoming familiar with the quality, purchase, and sale of general merchandise. At the end of the first year I was advanced to a third clerkship with increased salary. I felt then and still feel under many obligations to two of the senior clerks for their kindness in giving me instruction in arithmetic, book-keeping &c. My experience has proved that a good practical business education may be acquired otherwise than by going to a regular school. What knowledge I have, has been acquired chiefly by reading books of travel, history &c. behind the counter; from observation, attendance at Sunday school, and in public lectures and from the newspapers of the day.

Early in 1814, upon the urgent advice of Messrs. John and Wm. [Chambers] my employers determined to establish a branch or country store in the village of Amity, Washington County, Pennsylvania. For several months they were, however, unable to fix upon a suitable man to take charge of it, Neither of the older clerks wished to leave the city; and, finally, a wholly unlooked for proposition was made to me to take charge of the adventure.

This occasioned very serious consideration and consultations with my mother, my brother, his partner -- Mr. Peebles -- and other friends of the family, as to my assuming the responsibility. At first we all agreed that the risk

and responsibility was too great to be assumed by one so young. At length, however, I was advised to accept the position, and, towards the end of October selected from the stock on hand, and goods purchased from other houses, making a very complete assortment for a country store; amounting in value to some \$5000 or \$6000.

Late in November the goods were sent off in two large wagons. A day or two after I followed by stage to Washington (Pa.), spent the night with the family of my Aunt Redick, and the next day, in company with Mr. Wm. Chambers, proceeded to Amity, a village ten miles from Washington on the road to Waynesburg in Greene County. It was near the 10 mile Creek, surrounded by rich farming lands, occupied chiefly by a sober and industrious population, mostly from New Jersey. I was introduced by Mr. Chambers to a number of citizens; confirmed the arrangement, made for a store-house; then went to the hotel or public-house and was introduced to the landlord who proved to be Mr. Solomon Spaulding. He received us courteously; expressing the hope that I would find the little [town] a pleasant residence, and that while the store would be a great convenience to the town and neighborhood, it would prove profitable to its owners. There I spent my first night in Amity. Next day the wagons having arrived, the heavy packages were stowed away and some of the boxes containing dry goods &c., opened. In the evening Mr. Chambers returned to his farm a few miles distant, and I was left alone among strangers. My sleeping-room was at the rear of the store; and that night ( a few days before I had completed my 14th year) a feeling of loneliness and responsibility came over me which lasted not a little while. Though but a boy in age, my stature, manners, and general knowledge of business led the public to suppose I was 18 or 20 years old; and I took especial pains not to undeceive them.

I had frequent calls from the Messrs. Chambers, Mr. Spaulding and Ziba Cook, Esq.; and through them became acquainted with many others, who called from curiosity or to make purchases.

My business increased and continued to increase during the whole time of my stay in Amity -- nearly two years. During all of this time I was a boarder in the family of Mr. Spaulding, and became quite intimate with him.

He was afflicted with a serious rupture which prevented him from taking much exercise in the open air, but in good weather he called at the store almost every afternoon. I regarded him as a gentleman of the old school; affable in manners, and very instructive in conversation. He was about six feet in height, with a large frame

though much reduced in flesh, and weighing only about 150 pounds. He was well posted in the current news of the day, in Europe as well as our own country. He gave me much interesting information about our late war with Great Britain, its causes and its progress until happily concluded by the treaty of Ghent. He deprecated the cowardly surrender of Detroit by General Hull; applauded the bravery and success of our fleets on the northern lakes, and particularly the brilliant victory of General Jackson at New Orleans. This battle was fought after the treaty had been signed. There were no steamships or telegraph wires at that day to bring the news earlier.

I have since learned that Mr. Spaulding was considered the most learned man in Ashtabula County, Ohio, and that he was both a versatile and a prolific writer. In Amity I know he was a moral man, a strict observer of the Sabbath, and an attendant upon public worship; and I had no cause to doubt his being a true believer. As an evidence of my confidence in his integrity, I invariably left the store in his charge when I was absent a day or two from the village at Washington or elsewhere. On my return he gave me a detailed account of his transactions, but, with the exception of a few presents made by me to his wife or daughter, would take nothing in the way of remuneration for his services.

When the weather was inclement I occasionally visited him in his room, and almost always found him at his table, reading or writing. One day when I called he was writing upon foolscap paper, taken from some old account book. My curiosity was excited, and I said to him, that if he was writing letters I could furnish him with more suitable paper. He replied that he was not writing letters, but at another time when I had leisure he would tell me more about it.

Shortly after this I called again and the conversation about his writing was renewed. First, he told me of his removal from Western New York to Conneaut, Ashtabula County, Ohio, (where his brother John had property and afterwards resided) expecting to engage in some active business. He said that in connection with Mr. Henry Lake he built a furnace for the manufacture of iron or iron wares. This proved unprofitable and resulted in a failure, which left him liable for debts to a large amount. After the failure he had much leisure time, he said, which he had employed in examining the Indian Mounds that abound in that neighborhood; and it was about them he was writing when I first called. He told me also about his other engagements at this time.

But touching these I will give below his daughter's (Mrs. McKinstry's) recollections, recently narrated by her to me, which I think more full and explanatory than my own. This lady is still residing in Washington, D. C., with the

family of her late son-in-law, Col. Seaton of the Census Bureau, in remarkably good health for a lady of her age. She corroborated her father's statement about his removal to Conneaut in 1809, his examining the Indian mounds &c., and distinctly recollected that he wrote two or more stories in support of the theory that the Indians of North America were lineal descendants of the Jews from Palestine. In the first of these he brought the Jews from Palestine to America via Italy during the reign of Constantine, and set forth that at Rome they engaged shipping to convey them to some place in Great Britain, but encountered stormy weather and were finally wrecked somewhere on the coast of New England. What became of the manuscript of this story she did not know with certainty but understood that it was published in some Eastern review or magazine.

This romance he afterwards abandoned and set about writing a more probable story founded on the history of the ten lost tribes of Israel. She thought her father must have had wonderful powers of imagination and memory, great command of language and facility of description. Many of his descriptions were of a historical and religious character. Others were grotesque and ludicrous in the extreme.

She remembered that in one of them, touching the mode of warfare in that day, (being hand to hand or man with man) he represented one of the parties having streaks of red paint upon their cheeks and foreheads to distinguish them from enemies in battle. This story he called "The Manuscript Found." It purported to give a history of the ten tribes, their disputes and dissensions concerning the religion of their fathers, their division into two parties; one called Nephites the other Lamanites; their bloody wars, followed by reunion and migration via the Red Sea to the Pacific Ocean; their residence for a long time in China; their crossing the ocean by Behrings Straits in North America, thus becoming the progenitors of the Indians who have inhabited or now live on this continent. This was the story which her Uncle John, Mr. Lake, Mr. Miller and other neighbors heard him read at Conneaut on different occasions. They were all much interested in it and advised him strongly to have it published. Such was not his intention at first, but he finally acceded to their advice, in the hope that from its sale he might obtain money to pay, at least, a portion of his indebtedness. He revised it accordingly.

Hearing that there was a publishing house in Pittsburg he made preparations for removing to that city. To effect this he sold his furniture and some of his books,

and, further assisted by his brother, made the journey, arriving she thought, early in 1812. She also recollected that he wrote for her own amusement and instruction, a story called: "Frogs of Wyndham," which she retained for some years, but afterwards lost. She reminded me of many incidents that occurred at Amity and afterwards, which had escaped my memory. For the first year or two after arriving at Amity her father seemed to be benefitted in health, but in the last year of his life was occasionally very ill and confined to the house. He was fond of reading and writing; was a strict observer of the Sabbath; was intimate with Dr. Dodd -- our minister -- and had frequent conversation[s] with him on religious subjects. Both were well acquainted with the Greek language of the New Testament as spoken in the days when our Saviour was on earth. She also remembered Mr. Joseph Miller who lived near the village, as a frequent visitor, who attended her father in his last illness and was with him at his death; very kindly superintending his funeral and afterwards assisted her mother in settling up the business preparatory to their return[ing] to Western New York.

Mr. Spaulding told me that at Pittsburg he became acquainted with the Rev. Robert Patterson who, then in advanced life, was keeping a bookstore with a publishing department attached. He had prepared a copy of his manuscript for the printer and left it with Mr. Patterson for examination. About its publication they had frequent conversation. Mr. P. thought favorably of the printing, but his manager of the publishing department -- a Mr. Engles or English -- had doubts about its being remunerative and thought the author should either deposit some money to pay the expenses, or, at least, give security for their payment. This was a damper, as he was unable at the time to meet either of the requirements, and the manuscript was laid aside in the office for further consultation.

About this time he was informed by a friend that Amity was a healthy and inexpensive place to live in; that a public-house there would shortly be vacated and be for rent at a moderate rate. After consideration and further inquiry he concluded to remove his family to that village, and did remove in October 1814, rented the hotel and opened it, as a public-house, but without a bar. Mr. Spaulding told me that while at Pittsburg he frequently met a young man named Sidney Rigdon at Mr. Patterson's bookstore and printing-office, and concluded that he was at least an occasional employee. He was said to be a good English and Latin scholar and was studying Hebrew and Greek with a view to a professorship in some college. He had read parts of the manuscript and expressed the opinion that it would sell [readily].



While the question of printing was in abeyance Mr. S. wrote to Mr. P. that if the document was not already in the hands of the printer he wished it to be sent [out] to him in order that he might amend it by the addition of a chapter on the discovery of valuable relics in a mound recently opened near Conneaut. In reply Mr. P. wrote him that the manuscript could not then be found, but that further search would be made for it. This excited Mr. Spaulding's suspicions that Rigdon had taken it home. In a week or two it was found in the place where it had originally been deposited, and sent out to him. The circumstance of this finding increased Mr. S's suspicions that Rigdon had taken the manuscript and made a copy of it with a view [to] ultimately publishing the story as the product of his own brain. Whether the manuscript was amended and returned to Mr. P. he did not tell me, but it probably was.

A few days after Mr S's death the firm of Patterson & Lambdin failed in business and it may have been purchased by Rigdon at the public sale of their assests, or, by some printer who removed it with the other appurtenances of the office to some town in the neighborhood; or, it may have been destroyed with other rubbish in cleaning up the room. It was certainly not the document discovered by Mr. Rice at Honolulu, nor the one found by Mrs. Davidson after her return to New York in an old trunk containing his manuscripts or sermons, essays, &c. For, this must have been the original or rough draft of the story. The Mormons at Conneaut, a year or two after the publication of the Book of Mormon, heard of the discovery made by Mrs. D. and immediately determined, if possible, to get possession of the document so found, lest its publication might expose their theory. To effect this they employed the talented money-loving and unscrupulous D.P. Hurlbut to go to Monson, Mass., to obtain, if possible, the document referred to. He made the journey and by subtlety and lying obtained an order from Mrs. D. on her brother -- Mr. Sabine -- for it, promising that it should be returned to her in a short time. This promise was never fulfilled. Returning to Conneaut, he obtained a certificate from several gentlemen that it was in the handwriting of Mr. Spaulding, delivered it to the Mormons, got his pay -- some \$400 or \$500 -- and went his way. What eventually became of this manuscript is not known, but it was probably destroyed. So the whole matter remains to a great extent a mystery yet unsolved.

It was during my residence in Virginia and on the Pacific Coast, (many years after I left Amity) that Mormonism was invented and had its growth, but until my return to the East in 1867, I paid little or no attention to the

subject, and for some time considered it a harmless delusion, like other heresies which have sprung up, had their day, and passed away. Seeing in the newspapers frequent reference to the names of Solomon Spaulding, Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Miller revived my recollections of early life at Amity, my intimate acquaintance with Mr. Spaulding and Mr. Miller, and what the former told me about his having written in Ohio a romance or historical novel called "The Manuscript Found," his suspicions about Rigdon &c., I was thus led to examine the publications made at that time, particularly, a work written by Prof. Turner, letters of Mrs. Davidson -- formerly Mrs. Spaulding -- and by Mrs. McKinstry -- her daughter -- the testimony of John Spaulding, Henry Lake and others, all tending to prove that the Mormon Bible was a fraud and imposture, not a second revelation of the Will of God, as claimed, but taken from or founded upon a romance or novel written by Solomon Spaulding. This was public sentiment at the time and I believed it to be correct.

About this time also my attention was called to a letter or statement of Joseph Miller published in the Washington Reporter, and in 1869 I wrote to the editor [of that paper] that Mr. Miller was an old friend of mine at Amity in 1815-16, and corroborated his statement in relation to what Mr. Spaulding told him about his book, his suspicions of Sidney Rigdon &c.; for, I had heard from Mr. S. myself, many of the same things. I wrote also to Mr. Patterson at Pittsburg to the same effect. After this I read in the History of Washington County, an able and impartial paper on the Mormon controversy by Mr. P., entitled "Who Wrote the Book of Mormon?" I see by my diary, that on August 28, 1879, I left McKeesport for Washington, Pa., and on the 29th by special invitation of the Historical Society attended the Centennial Anniversary of the origin of the Presbyterian Churches of Upper and Lower Ten Mile Creek.

Much has been written on the subject of lost manuscripts, "Who wrote the Book of Mormon?" &c.; but I think conjectures on these points are not of any vital importance in forming an opinion as to the true character and intent of the Mormon combination. "A tree is known by its fruit." The organization of the Church of Latter Day Saints in Western New York; the publication of the Mormon Bible; and the belief in the miraculous endowment of Joe Smith as a prophet of the Lord, were followed by their belief in the doctrines of polygamy, or free love &c. Their subsequent history in Missouri, at Nauvoo, Council Bluffs, Mountain Meadow[s], and their final settlement in what is now the Territory of Utah, satisfied me that it was a dangerous element, not only in the population

and civilization of the West, but in direct opposition to the Constitution and laws of the whole country, and should therefore be suppressed.

The weather was very fine and this great meeting of 2000 or more, was held in a beautiful grove near the upper church. Addresses were made by Dr. Brownson, Dr. Allison, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Hayes -- President of the Allegany Seminary -- and others. Reference was made to S. Spaulding as a member of the Amity church, and I was called upon to give my recollections about him and the book he had written called "Manuscript Found," or some such name, and believed to have been the origin of the Mormon Bible. In compliance I addressed the meeting in a short speech.

At the close I was driven in the carriage by J. F. Miller to the residence of his father -- my old friend, Joseph Miller -- on the road to Amity. I found Mr. Miller to be in remarkably good health for a man in his 88th year (some eight or nine years my senior), and spent the evening and most of the next day in pleasant conversation about our intercourse and occurrences at Amity 64 years before. He had read the Book of Mormon carefully and was convinced that it was founded substantially upon the work written by Mr. Spaulding in Ohio. He was a particular friend of Mr. Spaulding, who died in October 1816 -- a month or two after I had left the village. He told me that he attended Mr. S. in his last illness in company with Dr. Dodd -- the pastor of the church; superintended his funeral, and afterwards settled up his business. He said that Mr. S. suffered greatly at times by reason of the rupture, but appeared submissive, and peacefully passed away; that he thought him a sincere Christian and his death a great loss to the community.

Mr. Miller had been a ruling elder in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church for over forty years, and what is remarkable, three of his sons were also ruling elders, one in Pennsylvania, one in Ohio and one in Indiana. All three had come now to visit their father and to be present at the Centennial meeting. I mention this that you may judge of the character and credibility of Mr. Miller as a witness.

In the afternoon we bade each other an affectionate farewell, not expecting to meet again this side of the river, and I was driven by his son some three or four miles to Amity, where we were kindly entertained by Dr. Sharpe. The village was improved in appearance by several brick houses, but my old storehouse and the Spaulding tavern were still standing. I met several old gentlemen who recollected Mr. Spaulding and myself when they were young; but, all of my old acquaintances had passed away and gone to join the great majority beyond

the flood. We went to the meeting-house and visited the grave of Mr. S. Several pieces loosened by time from his headstone I secured, and have them now. It was expected that the Historical Society of Washington County would, ere long, erect a monument over the grave.

The Mormon Bible was published in 1830 or '31 and had a wide circulation in northeastern Ohio. After reading it, John Spaulding, John R. Miller, Henry Lake and others at Conneaut unanimously agreed that it was a fraud and imposture, and publicly denounced it as such, finding in it whole chapters but little altered from what they had heard Mr. Spaulding read from his story of the ten tribes some twenty years before. In short, that it was really founded upon Mr. Spaulding's romance. Many striking passages had so impressed them that they could not be mistaken.

Their exposure and the reasons that justified them in making it, were considered truthful and satisfactory by all who knew them. A number who had joined the Mormon Church withdrew from it, acknowledging that they had been deluded, and the newspapers of that day,

Having already given you the incidents which led to my unexpected removal to Amity and intimacy with Mr. Spaulding in 1814, I will now parenthetically and briefly remark that I removed from that village in 1816, unexpectedly, under the following circumstances. Mr. Hugh Jelley -- senior partner at Pittsburg -- died in the summer of 1816, and knowing that a settlement of the firm's business would be necessary, and having learned all that pertained to the management of a country store, I wrote the surviving partner that I wished to resign as soon as he could find a suitable successor. In about a month I was relieved by Mr. Wm. Douglass -- a nephew of Mr. Jelley's -- and, bidding farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding, Mr. Miller and other friends, returned to my old city. I may be pardoned for adding that I was congratulated by my friends on my healthy and improved appearance, and, especially on the success of my administration at Amity, which they said was profitable and highly satisfactory to my employers, and creditable to myself. Refraining from any further details of a biographical nature, I will make no mention of the events of my subsequent busy life, but merely remark, with gratitude to the Almighty, that in all my varied experiences and exposures "by flood and field" during the more than seventy years since I lived at old Amity, a kind of Providence has preserved me in good health, free from any serious illness or bodily disaster.

I am told, report that at least nine-tenths of the people [of ----- read]

[the] statements of the gentlemen above named and held, with them, that the whole Mormon theory was a cunningly devised scheme of Satan, the Father of Lies, to delude and ruin the many, and afford a sort of refuge for the more enlightened few, who were ambitious to acquire wealth or notoriety, as the public advocates of the new theory of religious belief.

In the late publication by Mrs. E. E. Dickinson, I have found much that is interesting, both as to the past history and present status of Mormonism, and recommend its perusal. On the other side I have read the studied vindication of Mormonism by President John Taylor and ex-Congressman George Q. Cannon.

Also the argument, by Joseph Smith Jr. (III) about the reformation of the Church (leaving out polygamy); and the pamphlet printed at Lamoni, Iowa, containing (together with several letters from Dr. Fairchild and others), a copy of the manuscript found by L. L. Rice in Honolulu, and by him transmitted to the college at Oberlin. This only proves that the story now published was not the one on which the friends of Mr. Spaulding relied as the foundation of the Mormon Bible, but one founded upon an entirely different subject. On an early page there is written "Manuscript Story -- Conneaut Creek," not "Manuscript Found." If this is deemed important testimony by the Mormons, they must, I think, be thankful for "small favors." I have seen nothing in any of these papers to change my opinion on the general question as expressed above.

I have recently read a letter of Dr. Hyde of Honolulu addressed to the Boston Congregationalist, July 30, 1885. In this he reviews what had been written by others about Mormonism and refers to the manuscript lately found by Mr. Rice. The way in which it was found after forty years seclusion may be interesting to your readers. A friend of his -- Dr. Fairchild -- had compared it with the Mormon Bible and concluded that it could not possibly be the foundation of that book. In this conclusion Dr. Hyde coincides, but goes further in assuming that it was the only story written by Mr. Spaulding, and the one on which his friends relied. In this he was wrong, as well as in two other matters. First: In pronouncing unworthy of belief -- "wholly unreliable" -- the testimony of John Spaulding, Henry Lake, Mr. Miller and others, respecting their public assertion that the Mormon Bible was a fraud and imposture, and the reasons which led them to that conclusion. In this he does great injustice to gentlemen, who in their days, were considered as credible as himself.

He was evidently ignorant of [the] high opinion which the public entertained of these gentlemen at the time and of the fact that the Mormons, realizing the state



of public opinion consequent upon their exposure, soon afterward sold off their property, shook off the dust of Ohio from their feet and left the state to seek a new home in Missouri. And, second, he was wrong in assuming that Sidney Rigdon -- then a Campbellite preacher -- had no acquaintance with Joe Smith till after the publication of the Mormon Bible, though living in the same neighborhood.

This [ --- ] could not be true if the history of their lives in the 4th chapter of Mrs. Dickinson's "New Light on Mormonism" is reliable. No one acquainted with Smith when he was a young man believed him to possess native talent or education sufficient to qualify him for composing or compiling such a work as the Mormon Bible, unassisted. His deluded followers believed his impious assertions that he acted under Divine inspiration in translating the hieroglyphics found on the alleged golden plates and writing them out at length. The anti-Mormons held this to be unreasonable, and knowing Sidney Rigdon as a highly educated man, thought he was really the author of, or, at least, the assistant of Smith in compiling the Bible. In doing this they assumed he had used the copy made by him of the Spaulding manuscript found in the printing-office at Pittsburg.

At an early day Joe Smith alleged that he had a vision which foretold the great increase of the Church in numbers and piety, which would enable its members to control the municipal, political and religious affairs of towns, counties and states, where they might reside

After their settlement in Utah, having greatly increased in numbers, they supposed they had gained their final destination, and looked for the fulfillment of this prediction at an early day.

For many years they have tyrannically ruled the Territory of Utah in almost utter disregard of the rights of their Gentile neighbors. Brigham Young also had visions at various times and announced authoritatively that Heaven approved their doctrine of polygamy, and that although the privilege had hitherto been conferred only upon the high officers of the Church and of the military, it was from this time the privilege of every member of the Church to marry as many women as he thought he could support. Brigham had at this time nineteen wives himself. He also announced, that women feeling concerned about the salvation of their souls, could obtain peace in this world and happiness in the next, by uniting in marriage with any saint who might offer them love and protection. Marriages, or, as they were called "spiritual unions," now greatly increased in number, and these immoral doctrines are still believed, and the

practice continued. There is no cause for wonder therefore, that the public opinion of all Christendom condemns Mormonism.

Many of our politicians seem to have been afraid to commit themselves, but public opinion at last required that the subject should be no longer ignored. The last Congress thought it imperative to take some action in the matter, and passed the law known as the Emunds Act, as a remedial measure. While it was under consideration the Mormon leaders and the newspapers under their control in Utah evinced the most violent opposition to the bill, stigmatizing it as a cruel and tyrannical attempt to interfere with their religious belief and their right to manage their own domestic affairs.

As soon as the President had signed the bill and appointed commissioners to administer the law, their wrath broke out anew in the use of most vituperative language, declaring their determination to resist it to the bitter end. The commissioners were not, however, intimidated, but organized and proceeded to administer the law in regard to registration of voters &c. Meanwhile proceedings were begun in the United States court against some of the most prominent violators of the law prohibiting polygamous cohabitation. Several of these had secreted themselves or left the territory, but others were apprehended, and after a fair, open trial, were found guilty and sentenced to pay small fines and suffer light imprisonment. At the end of their imprisonment some of them were escorted to their homes by Mormon friends, who honored them as martyrs that had suffered in a righteous cause. Although the law has not been entirely successful, some good has been done and the present Congress will probably amend it so as to reach them down to the root of the evil.

Many of the Mormons are said to be sober, quiet and industrious citizens, and not polygamists; who, if they desire to remain without obstructing the enforcement of the law against its violators, will doubtless remain undisturbed, the Government leaving it to time, the influence of our free school system, and the preaching of correct doctrines to cure their prejudice and fanatical ideas. But the leaders, remaining incorrigible offenders against the law can expect nothing less than to be arrested, tried, and if found guilty, sentenced to imprisonment until they obey the law or are forced to leave the country. To this result I think public sentiment is rapidly tending.

In dictating this letter to my amanuensis, I fear I have exceeded the ordinary bounds of length, and been somewhat discursive in its style and arrangement; but the interest of the general subject and the value you have

been pleased to place upon my reminiscences and investigations and upon my long-matured opinions derived therefrom, must be my apology for the unexpected volume of this response to your pressing request.

Yours truly,

REDICK MCKEE.<sup>55</sup>

### **The Connection Between Manuscript Found & BOM Recap**

- |                       |                    |                     |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. John Spalding      | 2. Martha Spalding | 3. Nahum Howard     |
| 4. Artemas Cunningham | 5. Aaron Wright    | 6. John Miller      |
| 7. Henry Lake         | 8. Oliver Smith    | 9. Matilda Davidson |
| 10. Matilda McKinstry | 11. Abner Jackson  | 12. Joseph Miller   |
| 13. Redick McKee      |                    |                     |

### **The Article of Ted Chandler In Regards To Matilda Spalding (Former Wife of Solomon Spalding) and Matilda McKinstry (adopted daughter of Solomon Spalding)<sup>56</sup>**

“Critics of the Spalding theory have paid scant attention to the testimony of Solomon’s daughter, Matilda Spalding McKinstry. Fawn Brodie disposed of Mrs. McKinstry in three brief passages. Brodie’s argument rests on four points, each of which we will examine here.

Matilda and her mother were interviewed by Jesse Haven, a Mormon, in 1839. Brodie wrote: “Both Spaulding’s widow and daughter admitted in this interview that the manuscript they knew was an ‘idolatrous’ not a religious story” (Brodie 1985, 451). Several points should be noted here. First, Haven did not explain what he meant by “idolatrous” and “religious.” Second, the form of the question which he put to Mrs. Davison and Mrs. McKinstry - “Does the manuscript describe an idolatrous or a religious people?” - forced them to choose one or the other alternative. If allowed to express themselves in their own words, they might have chosen a different descriptive term. In any case, the Spalding manuscript and the Book of Mormon describe both idolatrous and religious people. The Book of Mormon describes the Lamanites as “idolatrous” (Enos 1:20; Mosiah 9:12), as worshipping idols (Alma 17:15), and as sacrificing humans to their idol gods (Mormon 4:14, 21). The term “idolatrous” is applied

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<sup>55</sup> Arthur B. Deming, “Redick McKee: 1885,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, pgs. 1-2, col. 6.

<sup>56</sup> <https://mormonthink.com/mormonstudiesmatilda.htm>.

to the people of Noah (Mosiah 11:6, 7), and the younger Alma (Mosiah 27:8). Wicked Nephites practice “idolatry” (Alma 1:32), and “build up unto themselves idols of their gold and silver” (Helaman 6:31). The followers of Zoram also “bow down to dumb idols” (Alma 31:1), and when Alma addressed the people of Gideon, he said, “I trust that you do not worship idols” (Alma 7:6). On the other hand, Spalding’s Ohons were a civilized people, who accepted the religious teachings of Lobaska, which included a belief in an intelligent, omnipotent, self-existent Being, who is infinitely good and benevolent. Also Fabius states that he and his companions all believed in “the religion of Jesus Christ” (Spalding 1910, 8, 28). If Fawn Brodie had considered this question more carefully, she would have realized that Haven’s dichotomy between “idolatrous” and “religious” is artificial, forced, and meaningless. Furthermore, the published report of Haven’s interview was not written by Jesse, but by John Haven in a letter to his daughter, and John’s letter was copied within another letter written by A. Badlam, which was published in the Quincy Whig. This letter was again published in the Times and Seasons. At the end of the letter, these words appear: “I do not say that the above questions and answers were given in the form that I have written them, but these questions were asked, and these answers given” (Times and Seasons, January 1840). However, when Benjamin Winchester also printed the letter in his 1840 book, these words appear as: “I do not say, that the above questions and answers were given in the form that I have written them, but these are the substance of the questions asked, and the answers given” (Winchester 1840, 17). Given the fact that the report of Jesse Haven’s interview traveled from Jesse to John, from John to his daughter Elizabeth, and from Elizabeth to A. Badlam, and considering that two published versions of the letter show different wording, there is considerable concern about how accurate and complete the report actually is.

Matilda was interviewed by Ellen Dickinson, and her statement was published as an article entitled “The Book of Mormon” in Scribner’s Monthly (August 1880). On the basis of this interview, Brodie protests that Matilda was only six years old when she heard her father read his manuscript, the implication being that the memories of a six year old are not reliable. It is true, as Matilda states, that she was six years old in 1812, when the Spaldings were living in Conneaut, Ohio, but the matter can’t be dropped there. Matilda was eight years old, when the Spaldings moved to Amity, Pennsylvania from Pittsburgh in 1814, and she was ten years old when her father died in 1816.

We know from statements made by Joseph Miller and Redick McKee that Solomon continued to work on his manuscript in Amity and read his story to friends. Matilda could hardly have failed to hear her father's story being read and discussed over a period of four years.

Brodie's next point is to reject Matilda's claim that she frequently accompanied her father to the home of Mr. Patterson, a printer in Pittsburgh. Robert Patterson originally denied knowing Solomon Spalding, but later admitted a dim recollection of Spalding's manuscript. However, Robert Patterson had a brother named Joseph, who joined him in the printing business. Matilda may not have known the Patterson brothers by their first names, but she clearly described them to several people. In a letter to James Cobb dated 31 August 1880, Matilda wrote: "I distinctly recollect visiting a library with my father, which my mother told me was 'Mr. Patterson's.' . . . I distinctly remember seeing in a chair in the center of the room, a large, heavy man of florid complexion. There was an other person in the room, and my father had a long conversation with him" (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 711). In 1882 Redick McKee visited Matilda, and he recounted their conversation in a letter to Robert Patterson, Jr. Matilda related a remembrance of her mother telling about a meeting at the Patterson print shop. She gave an accurate description of the two brothers, one "more robust," and the other "more slender." She also stated that it was the more slender Patterson, who had read several chapters of Solomon's manuscript and wanted to publish it (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 223-25). This indicates clearly that it was not Robert, but Joseph Patterson, who was primarily involved with Spalding.

Finally, Brodie acknowledges Matilda's statement that she had seen her father's manuscript after Solomon died in 1816: "Spaulding's daughter remembered seeing the manuscript in her father's trunk after his death, and stated that she had handled it and seen the names she had heard read to her at the age of six. She admitted, however, that she had not read it" (Brodie 1985, 451). This is not quite an accurate report of what Mrs. McKinstry actually said. Her statement reads: "I did not read it, but looked through it and had it in my hands many times, and saw the names I had heard at Conneaut, when my father read it to his friends. I was about eleven years of age at this time." What Matilda was probably trying to convey was that she had not read the entire manuscript from start to finish, but had looked through it and had read various passages, enough to impress on her mind the names which she later



recalled having heard and read. Ellen Dickinson also wrote about her 1880 interview with Matilda: “Mrs. McKinstry, Mr. Spaulding’s daughter, says that she perfectly remembers this trunk and its contents; that it was in the garret of the house, that she and her cousins (one of them the mother of the writer) had access to it and frequently looked it through” (Dickinson 1885, 20).

Another point to note is that Matilda listed the names that she remembered from her father’s story as “Mormon, Maroni, Lamenite, Nephi.” There is reason to believe that the misspelled names Maroni and Lamenite are not due to Dickinson, but to Mrs. McKinstry and therefore indicate that names were not merely being taken from the Book of Mormon, as critics have charged. Ellen Dickinson stated, “I wrote this statement at Mrs. McKinstry’s dictation, and was obliged to change it and copy it four times before she was satisfied so anxious was she that no word nor expression should occur in it to which she could not solemnly make oath” (Scribner’s Monthly, August 1880, 616). Dickinson also must have believed that this was the actual spelling of the names in Spaulding’s manuscript, because she wrote a letter to George Clark asking if his wife, who had read a portion of the manuscript, could remember any of the names. Clark replied, “My wife does not remember the words Mormon, Maroni, etc., nor anything else of the contents of the manuscript in question” (Dickinson 1885, 244). This demonstrates that Dickinson spelled the names exactly as they occurred in the McKinstry statement. Dickinson also spelled these names in the same way in the accounts of her interviews with D. P. Hurlbut and E. D. Howe (see note 2 below). It appears then that Matilda was drawing upon her own memory and was not being influenced either by the Book of Mormon or by Dickinson. Ellen Dickinson surely knew how “Moroni” and “Lamanite” were spelled in the Book of Mormon.

There are a couple of other peculiarities about the name Maroni. When Joseph Smith dictated his 1832 history to Frederick G. Williams, Williams used the same spelling: “there was plates of gold upon which there was engravings which was engraven by Maroni & his fathers” (Jessee 1984, 6). Also Elijah Abel gave his son the name Maroni. Elijah Abel was one of the early black converts to Mormonism. He was baptized in 1832, ordained to the rank of Seventy in 1836, and received a patriarchal blessing from Joseph Smith, Sr. Abel had close contact with the Smith family in Nauvoo and may have lived in the Nauvoo House. It is difficult to determine whether these are simply misspellings (despite the fact that the Book of Mormon had been

published in 1830 with the spelling of “Moroni”), or if they have some deeper significance. The Spalding manuscript demonstrates that Solomon had a penchant for varying the spelling of names, frequently by a single letter. A question which we might pose is: Was Moroni the chief captain of the Nephite armies, while Maroni was the son of Mormon? Did both Williams and Abel derive the spelling of Maroni from Joseph Smith, who in turn derived the spelling from Spalding’s manuscript?

Mrs. McKinstry was interviewed on 4 April 1882 by E. L. Kelley, who was a counselor to the presiding bishop of the Reorganized Church. Kelley asked, “How do you come to remember any of the names that were in the manuscript?” Matilda replied, “Well, I suppose I should not, but Mr. Spaulding had a way of making a very fancy capital letter at the beginning of a chapter and I remembered the name Lehi, I think it was, from its being written this way.” Kelley: “When did you first think about the names in the Book of Mormon and the manuscript agreeing?” McKinstry: “My attention was first called to it by some parties who asked me if I did not remember it, and then I remembered that they were” (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 1004). Lester Bush cited Matilda’s responses in his 1977 article, intimating that she was not really remembering names in her father’s manuscript, but was influenced by others to “remember” names from the Book of Mormon (Bush 1977, 51). The irony is that in all probability it was Jesse Haven who sparked Matilda’s memory. During his 1839 interview, Haven asked Matilda, “Does the manuscript and the Book of Mormon agree?” To which Matilda replied, “I think some of the names agree.” She also said that she was not certain about the agreement of names and that she had not read the Book of Mormon. Perhaps Haven himself listed a number of names from the Book of Mormon and asked Matilda and her mother if they remembered any of them. Upon reflection, Matilda may have recalled seeing the name Lehi spelled with a fancy capital letter.

Kelley’s interview also included this exchange with Mrs. McKinstry.

Q. Could you identify the manuscript, was it now produced?

A. I don’t think I could.

Q. Have you any of the old writings and manuscripts of Mr. Spaulding?

A. Yes, I have some leaves of his sermons.

Q. And with these you think you could not identify the manuscript?

A. No, sir, I think not.

(Mrs. Col. Stanton, who is present at the interview): Why yes, mother, if you have his writing you ought to identify it.

Mrs. McKinstry: Well, perhaps I could. (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 1003)

It appears from this exchange that what Kelley meant when he said “identify the manuscript,” and what Matilda understood him to mean, was “identify Spalding’s handwriting.” Matilda, not being a handwriting expert, was of course uncertain that she could tell the difference between Spalding’s authentic writing and a forgery. She wisely refrained from claiming that she could make such a determination.

In her 1880 statement, Mrs. McKinstry stated that after Solomon died in 1816, his writings were stored in a trunk: “I perfectly remember the appearance of this trunk, and of looking at its contents. There were sermons and other papers, and I saw a manuscript, about an inch thick, closely written, tied with some of the stories my father had written for me, one of which he called, ‘The Frogs of Wyndham.’ On the outside of this manuscript were written the words, ‘Manuscript Found.’ I did not read it, but looked through it and had it in my hands many times, and saw the names I had heard at Conneaut, when my father read it to his friends. I was about eleven years of age at this time” (Cowdrey et al. 1977, 52-53). According to Ellen Dickinson, Matilda remembered “The Frogs of Wyndham” well enough to recite it: “she repeated it to the writer recently, giving an imitation of her father’s comic recitation of it” (Dickinson 1885, 20). In an 1886 statement, Redick McKee recalled his conversation with Matilda: “She also recollected that he wrote for her own amusement and instruction, a story called: ‘Frogs of Wyndham’, which she retained for some years, but afterwards lost. She reminded me of many incidents that occurred at Amity and afterwards, which had escaped my memory” (Cowdrey et al. 1977, 82). Although the manuscript copy of “The Frogs of Wyndham” was lost, and we do not know any of the details, it nonetheless can serve as a factor in evaluating the accuracy of Mrs. McKinstry’s memory.

There really was a story called “The Frogs of Windham,” apparently based on a true incident, which was published by Samuel Peters in 1781 as a part of his General History of Connecticut, by a Gentleman of the Province (Peters lived from 1735-1826). The text of the story is given here.

Strangers are very much terrified at the hideous noise made on summer evenings by the vast number of frogs in the brooks and ponds. There are about thirty different voices among them; some of which resemble the bellowing of a bull. The owls and whippoorwills complete the rough concert, which may be heard several miles. Persons accustomed to such serenades are not disturbed by them at their proper stations; but one night, in July, 1758, the frogs of an artificial pond, three miles square, and about five from Windham, finding the water dried up, left the place in a body, and marched, or rather hopped, towards Winnomantic [Willimantic?] river. They were under the necessity of taking the road and going through the town, which they entered about midnight.

The bull frogs were the leaders, and the pipers followed without number. They filled a road 40 yards wide for four miles in length, and were for several hours in passing through the town, unusually clamorous. The inhabitants were equally perplexed and frightened; some expected to find an army of French and Indians; others feared an earthquake, and dissolution of nature. The consternation was universal. Old and young, male and female, fled naked from their beds with worse shriekings than those of the frogs. The event was fatal to several women. The men, after a flight of half a mile, in which they met with many broken shins, finding no enemies in pursuit of them, made a halt, and summoned resolution enough to venture back to their wives and children; when they distinctly heard from the enemy's camp these words, 'Wight, Helderken, Dier, TStS.' This last they thought meant treaty; and plucking up courage, they sent a triumvirate to capitulate with the supposed French and Indians. These three men approached in their shirts, and begged to speak with the General; but it being dark, and no answer given, they were sorely agitated for some time betwixt hope and fear; at length, however, they discovered that the dreaded inimical army was an army of thirsty frogs, going to the river for a little water.

There is no doubt that this story would have appealed to Solomon Spalding, and his imagination could very well have expanded it into a tale to amuse his daughter. In fact Spalding's "Manuscript Story" may contain an allusion to this frog tale. Fabius relates that after his group shared a meal with the Deliwans, a group of forty men and women "began a song with such discordant and hedious modifications of sounds and such frantic jesticulations of body, that it seemed that chaos had bro't her furies to set the world in an uproar. . . . They then took their places in a circle & at a signal given gave three most tremendous

whoops; they then instantly dispersed, playing many antike capers -- & making such a confused medly of sound by skreaming, whooping screaching like owls, Barking like dogs & wolvs & croaking like Bull frogs, that my brains seemed to be turned topse turvy -- & for some time could scarce believe that they belonged to the human species" (Spalding 1910, 6-7). It is evident from incidents like this in the early chapters of the Spalding manuscript that Solomon began writing for the amusement of himself and his family, just as various people claimed. Matilda remembered "The Frogs of Wyndham" so clearly that she could recite it to Ellen Dickinson and imitate her father. However, Matilda was also just as clear about the fact that her father's manuscript, which contained the names Mormon, Maroni, Lamenite, and Nephi, bore the title "Manuscript Found," not "Manuscript Story." In a letter to James Fairchild dated 18 February 1886, A. B. Deming wrote: "I was in Washington D.C. 10 days Dec. and Jan. and gave Spaulding's daughter L. L. Rice's Story as Pub[lished] at Lamoni. She says it is not Manuscript Found." This was confirmed by Matilda in a letter to Deming in November 1886: "I have read much of the Manuscript Story Conneaut Creek which you sent me. I know that it is not the Manuscript Found which contained the words 'Nephi, Mormon, Maroni, and Laminites.' Do the Mormons expect to deceive the public by leaving off the title page - Conneaut Creek - and calling it Manuscript Found and Manuscript Story?" (See Cowdrey et al. 1977, 157-58.)

These letters written by A. B. Deming and Mrs. McKinstry assume even more significance when compared to another letter dated 25 January 1886 from Redick McKee to Deming. McKee's letter begins with this sentence: "When in this city a few days ago, you informed me that you were en route to Pittsburg, Washington County, &c, to collect some additional testimony about the origin of the Mormon Bible for a book you were intending to publish on this subject, that you had seen old Mrs. McKinstry - the daughter of Solomon Spaulding - and obtained a statement of her recollections and now called to request a similar statement from me, to include incidents of my early and later life, leading to my present matured opinion about Mormonism." After relating what he knew of Solomon Spalding while living at Spalding's public house in Amity between 1814 and 1816, McKee provided this information:

But touching these I will give below his daughter's (Mrs. McKinstry's) recollections, recently narrated by her to me, which I think more full and explanatory than my own. This lady is still residing in Washington, D.C., with the family of her late son-in-law, Col. Seaton of the Census Bureau, in remarkably



good health for a lady of her age. She corroborated her father's statement about his removal to Conneaut in 1809, his examining the Indian mounds &c;, and distinctly recollected that he wrote two or more stories in support of the theory that the Indians of North America were lineal descendants of the Jews from Palestine. In the first of these he brought the Jews from Palestine to America via Italy during the reign of Constantine, and set forth that at Rome they engaged shipping to convey them to some place in Great Britain, but encountered stormy weather and were finally wrecked somewhere on the coast of New England. What became of the manuscript of this story she did not know with certainty but understood that it was published in some Eastern review or magazine.

This romance he afterwards abandoned and set about writing a more probable story founded on the history of the ten lost tribes of Israel. She thought her father must have had wonderful powers of imagination and memory, great command of language and facility of description. Many of his descriptions were of a historical and religious character. Others were grotesque and ludicrous in the extreme.

She remembered that in one of them, touching the mode of warfare in that day, (being hand to hand or man to man) he represented one of the parties having streaks of red paint upon their cheeks and foreheads to distinguish them from enemies in battle. The story he called "The Manuscript Found." It purported to give a history of the ten tribes, their disputes and dissensions concerning the religion of their fathers, their division into two parties; one called Nephites the other Lamanites; their bloody wars, followed by reunion and migration via the Red Sea to the Pacific Ocean; their residence for a long time in China; their crossing the ocean by Behrings Straits in North America, thus becoming the progenitors of the Indians who have inhabited or now live in this continent. This was the story which her uncle John, Mr. Lake, Mr. Miller and other neighbors heard him read at Conneaut on different occasions. (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 798-99)

The chronology of these letters raises an interesting question. McKee was addressing Deming after Deming's visit with Mrs. McKinstry, during which he gave Matilda a copy of the Spalding manuscript published in 1885 by the Reorganized Church in Lamoni, Iowa. However, McKee also says that he met with Matilda "recently," and she stated at that time that "she did not know with certainty but understood that it [Spalding's manuscript] was published

in some Eastern review or magazine.” It appears then that McKee spoke with Matilda before Deming’s visit, because by that time she knew with certainty that her father’s story had been published and by whom. It would be tempting to argue, therefore, that Matilda’s account of Solomon’s two stories was drawn from her own memory. However, there is reason to doubt that her description of Spalding’s first story is entirely her own, because she refers specifically to Constantine. It is not credible to believe that after so many years Matilda suddenly remembered the story’s reference to Constantine, at just the same moment that the story was published for the first time. I think that it would be fair to assume that Deming sent a letter to Mrs. McKinsty prior to his visit, which stated that her father’s manuscript had been published and gave a very brief summary of the story. When Matilda talked to McKee, she would have had only Deming’s letter and would have been uncertain about all the details of the publication of the story. Nonetheless, Matilda’s statement to McKee is not a mere repetition of what Deming or someone else might have told her about the story. Deming certainly would not have said that the story was about Jews traveling from Palestine to Italy. Before she had the opportunity to actually read the published story, Matilda may have merely assumed that, like her father’s second story, his first tale also gave an account of Jews migrating from Palestine. The Spalding manuscript does not in fact state the origin of the Deliwans and Ohons, two distinct groups living in America.

Matilda’s description of the “Manuscript Found” certainly seems to be garbled, but that is easily accounted for. First, Matilda acknowledged that she had not read the manuscript from start to finish, but had only looked at select passages. Second, Solomon continued to revise and expand his story, even after he and his family moved to Amity, which certainly might have produced some confusion in Matilda’s mind. And, if the “Manuscript Found” described the migration of several different groups to America, as the Book of Mormon does, these accounts may not have been very distinct in Matilda’s memory.

The important point to note here is that in discussing the matter with McKee, Matilda was still certain that her father had set aside his first tale and had started writing “a more probable story.” It appears that she was contrasting and clarifying the features that distinguished the two stories. In the first story, the characters traveled from Italy, crossed the Atlantic and landed on the coast of New England. In the second story, the migration (or perhaps more than one migration) proceeded from the Red Sea to the Pacific Ocean,

and included a long stay in China, followed by passage across the ocean near Bering's strait. Even after reading the copy of the "Manuscript Story" given to her by Deming, Matilda continued to maintain that it was not the "Manuscript Found." Incidentally, when Deming stated in his February 1886 letter to James Fairchild that he had given the published story to Matilda and she said that it was not "Manuscript Found," Matilda could have made this statement at this time only on the basis of a cursory examination of the book, but her opinion did not change after a more thorough perusal. When the Reorganized Church published Spalding's manuscript in 1885, they prefaced it with statements from James Fairchild and L. L. Rice, expressing their opinion that the Spalding manuscript could not have been the basis for the Book of Mormon. It is undoubtedly these statements that prompted Matilda's angry letter to Deming, denouncing the deception of naming the document "Manuscript Found." (Mormons still employ this device. When Kent Jackson published his edition of the Spalding manuscript in 1996, he gave it the title *Manuscript Found: The Complete Original "Spaulding Manuscript."*)

Matilda's statements to Deming and McKee certainly challenge the critics who hold the "memory substitution" theory. Even after being confronted with a published copy of her father's manuscript, Matilda continued to make strong declarations that it was not the story that she and others had heard Solomon read. She remembered the "Manuscript Found" as a very different story. In response to a question from Jesse Haven, asking if they had ever read the Book of Mormon, Mrs. Davison answered, "I have read some of it," but Mrs. McKinstry replied, "I have not." It would be difficult for Matilda to meld memories of Spalding's manuscript with the Book of Mormon, if she never read the latter book. Matilda never made any later statement saying that she had read the Book of Mormon.

In a letter to James Cobb dated 31 August 1880, Mrs. McKinstry wrote, "I never before heard or understood that my father assumed to have found metal plates from which he translated 'Manuscript Found' or that he was guided by a vision" (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 711). We have become so accustomed to associating Joseph Smith's account of visions and metal plates with the Book of Mormon that Matilda's statement seems quite incredible. Our first inclination is to think that Mrs. McKinstry surely must have been mistaken. However, there are reasons to believe that her statement may be correct. According to the prophecy of Lehi, the Lord told Joseph of Egypt, "But a seer will I raise up

out of the fruit of thy loins; and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins . . . . I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins; and I will make for him a spokesman. And I, behold, I will give unto him that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins; and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it” (2 Nephi 3:11, 18). This prophecy does not seem to require a visit from an angelic Moroni in a vision. It would suggest instead that in Spalding’s original story, his protagonist met a real Indian prophet, a descendant of Nephi, and the “choice seer” predicted by Lehi. Even David Whitmer in 1887 acknowledged that Joseph Smith could not be the seer in Lehi’s prophecy. Spalding’s protagonist may have discovered the ancient record by accident and then acted as scribe and spokesman for an Indian prophet, who had the means to translate the record. The Book of Mormon hints at another possibility. When the resurrected Jesus appeared on the American continent, three of his new disciples were translated. Mormon states that he has actually seen them and that they would minister to both Gentiles and Jews (3 Nephi 28). Again, an encounter with any or all of the three Nephites would not require a visionary experience; they would be seen as ordinary men. Nonetheless, the accounts written by Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith use the same type of language found in the Book of Mormon and could easily have been constructed from various passages in the book, as I have demonstrated in “Joseph Smith’s Visions.”

The Book of Mormon refers to the plates of brass, the plates of Nephi, a small set of plates made by Nephi, the plates of Jacob, the gold plates containing a history of the Jaredites, and plates made by Mormon for his abridgment. Scholars have argued from several kinds of evidence that after Martin Harris lost the manuscript that he wrote as Joseph Smith’s scribe, Joseph and Oliver Cowdery continued on from Mosiah through Ether and then went back to 1 Nephi and wrote the books through the Words of Mormon. Concerning the first part of the Book of Mormon, Joseph received a revelation (D&C; 10) instructing him to replace the lost material with the plates of Nephi, apparently meaning the set of small plates. When the Book of Mormon is examined for references to metal plates, some patterns emerge. The plates of brass and the plates of Nephi are mentioned in both halves of the book. In the first half (1 Nephi to Words of Mormon) there are numerous references to the small plates, but in the last half (Mosiah to Ether) there are none. Although Mormon says in the Words of Mormon that he discovered

and specifically decided to add the small plates to his abridgment, neither he nor Moroni mention the small plates in the books that they added at the end of the history. Furthermore, there is no mention of the plates that Mormon made for his abridgment in the first half of the Book of Mormon - not even in the Words of Mormon. Mormon mentions his set of plates for the first time at 3 Nephi 5:11; a few other references to these plates, made primarily by Moroni, occur in Mormon and Ether. Following the order in which the Book of Mormon was written, it appears that by the time Joseph and Oliver reached 3 Nephi, they had decided that the records found by Joseph would include not just one history written by Mormon, but at least two sets of plates. This was necessitated by the loss of the first manuscript. When they went back to the first part of the book, they inserted numerous explanatory references to the small plates. These passages are notable because of the awkwardness of the writing style. The question remains whether Mormon actually made plates out of ore for his abridgment. It must be pointed out that when Mormon was writing his history, the Nephites were being pursued by the Lamanites from city to city, and when Moroni added material, he was alone and was trying to avoid being detected by the Lamanites. It is doubtful that Mormon and Moroni would have had the time to carefully engrave their histories on metal plates. So again Mrs. McKinstry may have been right when she said that the record discovered in Solomon's story was not written on metal plates. Ellen Dickinson prefaced Matilda's statement in *Scribner's Monthly* by saying, "Mr. Spaulding's book purported to be a translation from some metal plates found in the earth-mound to which he had been guided by a vision." However, Matilda's published statement makes no reference to either metal plates or a vision. Joseph Smith would have had a reason for preferring metal plates. By concealing some metal sheets under a cloth or inside a box, warning people not to look at the plates, he could deceive at least a few people into believing that he had discovered an ancient history, because they would be impressed by the feel and weight of the metal. Joseph's money-digging partners would also have been more interested in metal (possibly gold) plates.

If anyone was in a position to know the truth, it certainly was Matilda Spaulding McKinstry. She had heard her father read and discuss his manuscript over a four-year period; she had accompanied her father on visits to Joseph Patterson; she had looked through the story stored in the family trunk after her father's death; and most importantly she lived long enough to



see Solomon's first story rediscovered and published. Matilda did read the published manuscript. In a final communication to A. B. Deming dated 31 October 1887, she wrote, "I have carefully read the Rice Spalding manuscript ('Manuscript Story') you gave me. It is not the 'Manuscript Found,' which I have often seen. It contained the words 'Lehi,' 'Lamonia,' 'Nephi,' and was a much larger work" (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 821). (Although the name "Lamonia" does not occur in the Book of Mormon, the name "Lamoni" does.) If indeed this was the same story that she heard her father read and discuss for four years, and the same story that she took from the trunk and looked through, she could not possibly have failed to recognize it. Reading the same words that her father had read would have been a profound revelatory experience, purging her mind of any false memories. Instead Matilda's response was to categorically deny on three separate occasions that this story was what she remembered as the "Manuscript Found." It is regrettable that Matilda did not have more to say about the "Manuscript Found," but interviews are generally guided by the interests of the interviewer. In the case of the 1880 interview, Matilda's longest statement, it is clear that Ellen Dickinson was more interested in tracing the history of Spalding's manuscript than in learning the details of the story itself. Perhaps she felt that the details were already clear enough. It is also likely that Matilda was very uncomfortable being thrust into the center of controversy and disliked being interrogated by complete strangers, who may have sometimes treated her as if she were not telling the truth. Nonetheless the details that Matilda did provide are valuable. Critics have grasped at any excuse to discredit Matilda Spalding McKinsty, but their objections have proven to be baseless. They have maintained that Solomon Spalding wrote one and only one manuscript, but Matilda knew this to be false. Although Matilda said that she had not read the Book of Mormon, her testimony coupled with statements from other witnesses, who knew both the "Manuscript Found" and the Book of Mormon, establishes the fact that Spalding did write a second story, which bore remarkable similarities to the Book of Mormon and contained some of the same names. Given her unique position, Matilda's statements deserve far more respect from scholars and should be given greater weight as evidence in determining the authorship of the Book of Mormon.

## Notes

1. The authors of *The Spalding Enigma* found a later poetic version of “The Frogs of Windham,” published in 1857 in a book by James Walden, with an introduction by William Weaver. The poem was originally published in a Rhode Island newspaper, and the author used the pseudonym “Arion.” Weaver did not know the identity of the author or the original date of publication. Cowdrey et al. were able to determine only that the newspaper ceased publication in October 1825, but they speculate that Solomon Spalding may have been the author, since he studied law at Windham, Connecticut after the Revolutionary War (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 133, 1080-85). This is possible, but doubtful. In any case, the poetic version must have been different from the story that Spalding wrote for Matilda, since neither Matilda nor Ellen Dickinson, to whom Matilda recited the story, gave any indication that the story was in poetic form.

2. Ellen Dickinson, accompanied by Oscar Kellogg, interviewed D. P. Hurlbut in November 1880, after the August publication of the McKinstry statement. While interrogating Hurlbut about the manuscript that he gave to E. D. Howe, Dickinson was shown a letter from Howe, in which he said that he thought that the manuscript had been burned. Dickinson asked, “Was it Spalding’s manuscript that was burned?” Hurlbut replied, “Mrs. Davison thought it was; but when I just peeped into it here and there, and saw the names Mormon, Maroni, Lamenite, Nephi, I thought it was all nonsense; why if it had been the real one, I could have sold it for \$3000; but I just gave it to Howe because it was of no account” (Dickinson 1885, 67). Of course, the manuscript that Hurlbut gave to Howe does not contain any of the names mentioned in this statement, so how can Hurlbut’s reference to the names be explained? The authors of *The Spalding Enigma* assumed that due to some error or oversight the statement had been printed incorrectly and should have read, “but when I just peeped into it here and there, and didn’t see the names . . . .” However, this explanation can’t be correct, because in October 1881, Dickinson published a second article in *Scribner’s Monthly*, in which she stated, “In the conversation I had with Hurlburt at his house, and before Mr. Kellogg, he admitted that he ‘just peeped into the manuscript, and saw the names Mormon, Maroni, Nephi and Lamenite’” (Dickinson 1881, 946). Further into the article, Dickinson again wrote, “My interview with Hurlbut is too long to be inserted here. The gist of it is that he admitted before Mr. Kellogg and myself that he obtained a manuscript at Hartwick, Otsego County, New

York, through an order from Mrs. Davison, in 1834, which he believes was written by Solomon Spaulding, that it was called ‘Manuscript Found,’ etc., that he peeped into it and saw the words Mormon, Maroni, Nephi, Lamenite, etc.” (Dickinson 1881, 947). If Dickinson is to be believed, this is what Hurlbut actually said. Hurlbut then was admitting that he had seen the names in a manuscript, but was also trying to imply that at the time he did not believe that it was an authentic Spalding manuscript. In other words, it could have been a story written by someone else after the publication of the Book of Mormon, and Hurlbut thought that “it was all nonsense.” He still maintained that he gave this manuscript to Howe, but since Hurlbut, relying on Howe’s letter, thought that the story in Howe’s possession had been burned, there was, of course, no way to check his story, and Spalding’s first manuscript had not yet been rediscovered and published.

There is one aspect of Hurlbut’s statement that is suspicious. The names mentioned are the same and in the same order as those in the McKinstry statement. Dickinson admitted that her description of the interview came from notes written immediately after her conversation with Hurlbut, and she might have relied on her August article for the names. However, early in the interview Hurlbut acknowledged that he knew about “an article in a magazine published last summer,” and that as a result of that article, he had received letters from three different men about Spalding’s manuscript. Hurlbut could have read the Dickinson article himself, or one of the letters that he received could have listed the names from the article. Furthermore, when Dickinson interviewed E. D. Howe, also in November 1880, she said, “I asked if he would make a sworn statement that the words ‘Mormon, Maroni, Nephi, and Lamenite’ were not in the manuscript which Hurlburt gave him by agreement” (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 721). (Howe’s reply was, “No, I will not swear to it; but I’ll answer questions, and my word is as good as Hurlburt’s any day.”) It is possible that Dickinson asked Hurlbut a similar question, but omitted it from the account of her interview, which would explain Hurlbut’s reference to the names, but it is not likely that the exact spelling of the names was derived from Hurlbut. However, regardless of how the names were spelled, it is doubtful that Dickinson could have influenced Hurlbut to remember seeing names that he had not in fact seen, because according to Dickinson, Hurlbut was uncooperative and acted suspiciously during their conversation.

It is curious that Hurlbut mentioned that he could have sold the “real”

Spalding manuscript for a substantial sum, because Dickinson did not refer until later in the interview to rumors that Hurlbut had indeed sold the manuscript for three or four hundred dollars. In fact, James A. Briggs, who was a member of a committee that sent Hurlbut to collect evidence, declared in a number of statements in 1886 that when Hurlbut returned from his travels in Ohio and New York, he had both the Conneaut Creek story and a copy of the “Manuscript Found,” which the committee compared with the Book of Mormon. Although Briggs had also made a statement in 1875, it is difficult to understand why he and the other men, who had sent Hurlbut on his mission, were silent for so long, especially after E. D. Howe published Hurlbut’s affidavits with only a brief description of the Conneaut Creek story and no reference at all to a copy of the “Manuscript Found.” However, Briggs did state that he had written a letter to Hurlbut, asking what he had done with the manuscript, but received no reply. This seems to have been Hurlbut’s steadfast policy. Mrs. McKinsty complained that she and her mother had not received replies to their letters to Hurlbut, and during his interview with Dickinson, Hurlbut admitted that he had not answered letters from Isaac Craig, James Cobb, and Robert Patterson, Jr. Hurlbut did send an affidavit to Dickinson, apparently recanting what he said in his interview. He did not mention seeing any names and stated that the manuscript that he obtained from Mrs. Davison was not the “Manuscript Found” and that he gave it to Howe. Was Hurlbut’s interview with Dickinson a roundabout way of admitting, without incriminating himself, that he had found a copy of the “Manuscript Found”?

Hurlbut was clearly shaken by the publication of the McKinsty statement. He allowed Dickinson to copy E. D. Howe’s letter, and the first sentence states, “Just received your line, calling my attention to an article in Scribner, on the origin of that old Mormon Bible” (Dickinson 1885, 259). The date of Howe’s letter was 7 August 1880, which indicates that Hurlbut reacted immediately to Dickinson’s article. But another letter written by Howe to A. B. Deming, dated 8 April 1885, provides further information. Howe stated, “About five years ago he [Hurlbut] wrote me for Manuscript Found” (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 790). Evidently, Hurlbut’s motive in writing to Howe was not merely to notify him of Dickinson’s article, but to retrieve the Spalding manuscript that he had given to Howe. After so many years, why was he suddenly so anxious to get his hands on the manuscript? He must have known what was coming - inquiries from people wanting to know why he had not found the story that

Mrs. McKinstry said was stored in the trunk, or if he had found it, what had he done with it. It is not clear what he planned to do with the manuscript, if he could persuade Howe to send it to him, but Howe's supposition that the story had been burned relieved him of having to take any further action. Howe's letter to Hurlbut also suggests that Hurlbut was trying to find out if Howe continued to believe and would state that Hurlbut had not found any other manuscript than the one in Howe's possession. Howe wrote, "Hardly a year passes by that I do not receive more or less inquiries, some of which seem to reflect on your honesty in regard to the manuscript obtained from that wonderful old trunk, that was all explained truthfully in the book I published, as I then believed, and have ever since, that Spaulding's 'Manuscript Found' was never found or received by you, I have no manner of doubt, but altogether a different manuscript on a very different subject" (Dickinson 1885, 259). Howe may have been trying to reassure Hurlbut, but he apparently harbored some doubts three months later when he told Ellen Dickinson, "I believe he [Hurlbut] had two manuscripts - the original one and another - the one he gave me, which had no resemblance to the 'Book of Mormon'" (Dickinson 1885, 73). However, Howe's suspicions were only temporary, because in a letter dated 26 July 1881, he told Thomas Smith that the manuscript that he received from Hurlbut "was not the original 'Manuscript Found,' and I do not believe Hurlbut ever had it" (Cowdrey et al. 2000, 738). Howe also stated, concerning the Spalding theory, "I think it all folly to try to dig out anything more." Howe was simply tired of the whole matter and, as he told Hurlbut, never wanted to hear about it again. If Hurlbut had discovered a copy of the "Manuscript Found," why would he have disposed of it, after taking a prominent role in collecting evidence? There are several possible motives. Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon were stirring up trouble. Hurlbut was brought to trial for allegedly threatening Joseph Smith's life and was forced to pay a fine. But perhaps more importantly, Hurlbut wanted to marry and buy a farm. In fact, he did marry Maria Woodbury on 27 April 1834 and then went first to Elk Creek Township in Pennsylvania, followed by a move to Michigan and final residence in Gibsonburg, Ohio. After selling his collection of affidavits to Howe and marrying, Hurlbut made a determined effort to avoid the Spalding controversy. However, Hurlbut's reaction to the McKinstry statement assuredly is not what we would expect from someone who had found just one Spalding manuscript, which he believed had nothing to do



with the Book of Mormon. His anxiety over Dickinson's article, his desire to retrieve the Spalding manuscript, and his apparent relief that the story had been destroyed do not inspire confidence in his claim that there was only one manuscript in the trunk.

## Appendix: Statements and Letters of Matilda Spalding McKinstry

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## Chapter 5: The Chain of Custody

We have had two chapters dedicated to the witnesses who either read or had read to them Solomon Spalding's *Manuscript Found*. The question that rises to the surface is: "How do we know that the witness statements are genuine? How do we really know that they originated from them?" This is what leads us to what is known as the chain of custody principle.

J. Warner Wallace, who has been a detective for many years, wrote a book entitled *Cold-Case Christianity*. In chapter eight, he discusses the chain of custody.

He starts off his chapter with a discussion of how that principle is applied when he was working on a homicide cold case that went back to 1985. The defense attorney was questioning Wallace on some key aspects of the case in the trial:

"The attorney asked this question:

"Detective Wallace, isn't it true that there isn't a single crime-scene photograph of the alleged button you say was left at the murder scene in 1985?" He stood a little straighter and adjusted the waist of his pants, revealing the suspenders he wore underneath his suit jacket. He was sporting the finest suit I had seen in a courtroom in quite some time, and he occasionally strutted back and forth behind the podium to model it for the jury."

"Sir, I do believe there was one photograph taken by the original crime-scene investigators," I responded. While this was true, I knew my response would not satisfy him; I could see where this was headed. The button was a key piece of evidence that pointed to the defendant. It was torn from his shirt during the murder and was discovered at the scene. Detectives later executed a search warrant and retrieved a shirt in the defendant's apartment that was missing a button. Forensic comparisons made it clear that the button at the crime scene matched the defendant's shirt. But we had a problem.

The CSI officers were using a 35mm camera in 1985, and they were limited by their technology. They would typically use rolls of film that had twelve, twenty-four, or thirty-six exposures each. As a result, I had fewer photographs than I would have liked (today our criminalists take hundreds of digital photographs with cameras that can store thousands of images). To make matters worse, photographers in 1985 had no way to preview the images they shot. They had to wait until the photographs were developed to know if they had images that were clear and focused. As it turned out,

one of the most important photographs taken in this crime scene was the photograph taken of the button, and it was one of three photographs that were out of focus. The CSI officers shot only forty-eight photographs in total, and none of them displayed a clear image of the button.

“Come now, Detective Wallace, you know as well as I do that there isn’t a single image of the button at the crime scene. You continue to point to these blurry images and expect the jury to believe that they contain your most important piece of evidence?” He had a good point. We didn’t have a clear image of the button from the crime-scene photographs. In spite of this, we knew with certainty that the button was part of the murder scene. The first responding officers reported seeing it, and the detectives who arrived later also documented the button in their notes. CSI officers collected the button and booked it into evidence later in the day, along with other items from the scene and a number of items collected in the search warrant.

“Isn’t it true that the first time this button was mentioned in a formal police report was in the property report completed by CSI officers after the search warrant was served?”

His implication was clear. If the button was not photographed at the scene, there was no way to be certain that officers didn’t collect it at the search warrant, pull it from the defendant’s shirt, and later claim that it first appeared at the murder scene. The attorney was carefully making the case that detectives had lied about the button in an effort to tamper with the evidence and frame his client. I was concerned that the jury might accept this devious explanation of the button, but my fears were misplaced. After convicting the defendant, the jurors later told us that they believed the testimony of the responding patrol officers, CSI officers, and detectives who mentioned the button in their notes. The jury was unwilling to believe that a conspiracy of this size (involving seven different officers from three divisions) came together to frame the defendant. They convicted him, in spite of the fact that we didn’t have a clear image of the button at the scene.

### **Establishing A “Chain of Custody”**

Detectives quickly learn the importance of documenting and tracking key pieces of evidence. If the evidence isn’t carefully handled, a number of questions will plague the case as it is presented to a jury. Was a particular piece

of evidence truly discovered at the scene? How do we know it was actually there? How do we know that an officer didn't "plant" it there? These kinds of questions can be avoided if we respect and establish the "chain of custody." Every crime scene contains important pieces of evidence, and these items of evidence must eventually be delivered to a jury for consideration when the case is brought to trial...Each step in this process is a link in the chain that connects the crime scene to the courtroom. If I can demonstrate that the links are all connected and well documented, the jurors will come to trust the fact that the button I am showing them in court is the same button we discovered at the crime scene. In an ideal investigation, the officer at the scene, after discovering the button, would document the discovery in his notes and ask a CSI officer to photograph the item. The CSI officer would then collect the button and book it into evidence, carefully packaging it and documenting his or her efforts in a report. The property room would then accept the button into evidence, citing the date and time it was booked in, along with the name of the officer who booked it. Each and every time the button was then removed from property to be examined by an expert, those handling it would document the movement of the button. Reports would be written and property logs would be maintained to track the button's movement from the point when it was first booked into property until it was finally checked out for trial. If this is done properly, the defense will not be able to claim that the button was planted."<sup>57</sup>

Can a "chain of custody" be firmly established to link the witness' statements of Solomon Spalding's *Manuscript Found* to them being transferred and written down so as to not have been tampered?

The answer is "Yes."

Eight witness statements were gathered by D.P. Hurlburt in which he interviewed and wrote down what they said in 1833. D.P. Hurlburt eventually gave the statements over to be printed in E.D. Howe's book, *Mormonism Unveiled*, which would be printed in November of 1834.

**E.D. Howe was interviewed by A.B. Deming in 1885 and this was Howe's statement to him:**

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<sup>57</sup> J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels*, (David Cook: 2012), 119-121.

"I began to live on the 9th day of June 1798 in Clifton Park near where Burgoyne surrendered in Saratoga Co. NY. I was the fifth of six children. At six I found myself in Ovid, N. Y. In May 1814 I enlisted in Col. Swifts Regiment headqua[r]ters at Batavia. July 4th we started for Buffalo. My father who was a Physician was detailed for Hospital duty and had charge of 50 wounded British prisoners many of whom were injured when the Magazine at Fort Erie exploded. I assisted father in the Hospital. By act of Congress passed Feb 14 1871 I received a pension of \$8.00 per month. I had read the life of Ben Franklin and decided to become a printer and apprenticed myself to the Gazett Office in Buffalo. I later worked in several towns including Freedonia NY & Erie Pa. Mr. Willes of the Erie Gazett and myself established the Herald in Cleveland O., Oct 19th 1819. I put my knowledge of the business against his press and printing materials, which were valued at \$250. We commenced without a single subscriber and advance payment was unknown. We soon had 300 subscribers. I delivered my papers on horseback from Cleveland to Painesville thirty mile distant. Cleveland contained about 400 population then. At the end of two years I sold my interest in the Herald to my partner and started the Painesville Telegraph July 16th 1822 with five advertisements and about 150 subscribers. I continued its publication until early in Jan 1835 when I sold it to my brother for \$600, and have since been engaged in partnership with my son-in-law Mr. Rogers in Wollen Manufactures and Merchantdizeing.

In the fall of 1830 Oliver Cowdry, David Whitmer, Ziba Peterson, and P P Pratt introduced Mormonism in Kirtland nine miles South west of Painesville. Sidney Rigdon who had been a Baptist and Di[sci]ple preacher soon joined them. In Feb 1831 I saw Prophet Jo Smith when he first came to Painesville with two horses and sled. He inquired for Edward Partridge. I then thought Jo tried to look sanctimoneous. By Mormon immigration Kirtland soon became an important village They built a large stone Temple and prospered for a time. Rigdon who was very boastful said in a sermon that the Mormons governed Kirtland and would soon the County and elect the Member of Congress. Many of our citizens feared his prediction would prove true. In 1833 and 34 Grandison Newel Orri[s] Clapp Nathan Corning of Mentor and many leading citizens of Kirtland and Geuaga Co employed and defrayed the expenses of Doctor Philastus Hurlbut who had been a Mormon preacher and sent him to Palmyra NY and Penn to obtain affidavits showing the bad character of the Mormon Smith Family.



In some way Hurlbut learned of Solomon Spaulding who wrote a Fiction at Conneaut O., in 1810 and 11 which he called Manuscript Found. John Spaulding a brother of Solomon directed him to Pittsburgh Pa where Solomon had taken his manuscript to have it printed. He learned Mrs Spaulding was in Mass and went there and obtained an order from her to go to Hartwick NY for another copy. Hurlbut returned to Ohio and lectured about the county on the Origin of Mormonism and the Book of Mormon. I heard him lecture in Painesville. **He finally came to me to have this evidence he had obtained published** (emp. mine). I bargained to pay him in books which I sent to him at Conneaut O. **Before publishing my book I went to Conneaut and saw most of the witnesses who had seen Spauldings Manuscript Found and had testified to its identity with the Book of Mormon as published in my book and was satisfied they were men of intelligence and respectability and were not mistaken in their statements. I published only a small part of the statements Hurlbut let me have** (emp. mine). Among them was a Manuscript written by Solomon Spaulding which he called Conneaut Story. It was written on or about two quires of paper and was a Romance of Indian wars along the shore of Lake Erie between various tribes one of which he called Erie another Chicago. It is now in the possession of a former editor of the Telegraph L L Rice of Honolulu S. I. **I was not acquainted with Hurlbut until he came to me to have his evidence published** (emp. mine). He was good sized fine looking and full of ga[b] but illiterate and had lectured on many subjects.

About five years ago he wrote me for Manuscript Found. I thought he was very forgetful or demented, I had been informed he had a pyralitic attack. **I published my book Nov 28th 1834** (emp. mine) and supposed I had included enough evidence to fully satisfy all reasonable persons that the Mormon Smith Family were a set of liars and hypocrites and that the Lord was not a party to Mormonism.”<sup>58</sup>

**Here is the statement of D.P. Hulburt that was made to Ellen Dickinson in regards to the chain of custody:**

“Statement of D. P. Hurlbut.

Gibsonburg, Ohio, August 19, 1879.

I visited Mrs. Matilda (Spaulding) Davison at Munson, Mass., in 1834, and never saw her afterward. I then received from her a manuscript of her

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<sup>58</sup> Arthur B. Deming, “Eber D. Howe: 1885,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, pg. 3, col. 1.

husband's, which I did not read, but brought home with me, and immediately gave it to Mr. E. D. Howe, of Painseville, Ohio, who was then engaged in preparing his book -- "Mormonism Unveiled." I do not know whether or not the document I received from Mrs. Davison was Spaulding's "Manuscript Found," as I never read it entire, and it convinced me that it was not the Spaulding manuscript; but whatever it was, Mr. Howe received it under the condition on which I took it from Mrs. Davison -- to compare it with the "Book of Mormon," and then return it to her. I never received any other manuscript of Spaulding's from Mrs. Davison, or any one else. Of that manuscript I made no other use than to give it, with all my other documents connected with Mormonism, to Mr. Howe. I did not destroy the manuscript nor dispose of it to Joe Smith, or to any other person. No promise was made by me to Mrs. Davison that she should receive any portion of the profits arising from the publication of the manuscript, if it should be published. **All the affidavits procured by me for Mr. Howe's book, including all those from Palmyra, N. Y., were certainly genuine** (emp. mine)."

D. P. Hurlburt.<sup>59</sup>

**A third piece of evidence for the chain of custody would be Aaron Wright's December 1833 letter.**

This piece shows that Hurlburt was going around interviewing and writing the affidavits of the witnesses. This piece helps us to understand many matters. So it will be mentioned again in the particular context in which it will be addressed.

**Dale Broadhurst wrote concerning this piece of evidence:**

"In 1914 Mrs. Hiram Lake of Conneaut, Ashtabula Co., Ohio donated some old family papers to the New York Public Library. Since two of these handwritten documents mention Solomon Spaulding, the Library's Manuscript Division catalogued that portion of the donation with its "Solomon Spaulding Miscellaneous Papers." The two documentations from the Lake family are the original of an 1811 business agreement signed by Solomon Spaulding and Henry Lake (father-in-law of Mrs. Hiram Lake) and an unsigned 1833 draft letter dictated by the Hon. Aaron Wright (1775-1855). Aaron Wright's daughter married the brother-in-law of Mrs. Hiram Lake and it is supposed that the latter document came into the possession of the Lake family following Mr. Wright's death.

<sup>59</sup> Dickinson, *New Light on Mormonism*, 260.

The Aaron Wright draft letter is a most interesting document. It is dated Conneaut, Ohio, Dec. 31, 1833 and it appears to have been addressed to a prominent member of the "Anti-Mormon Committee" then active in Geauga County, where the Mormon headquarters of Kirtland was located. The unidentified "Sir" was possibly Josiah Jones, Grandison Newell or Warren Corning, all of whom were apparently major sponsors of D. P. Hurlbut in his 1833 anti-Mormon investigations. Aaron Wright made out a statement for D. P. Hurlbut in August of 1833 which generally resembles the content of the Dec. 31, 1833 document -- in fact, the latter paper makes specific mention of the August 1833 statement.

### The Problem of the Handwriting

Significant internal and external evidence identifies the author of this letter as the Hon. Aaron Wright of New Salem. The handwriting on the letter, however, does not match up with known samples of Wright's penmanship. Indeed, it bears a very strong resemblance to writing presumed to have come from D. P. Hurlbut. When the letter's and words of the 1833 draft letter are compared to those in the informal 1833 certificate Hurlbut penned into the back pages of Solomon Spalding's "Oberlin" manuscript, the match is nearly a perfect one.

The document itself more or less explains how an Aaron Wright letter came to be written down in D. P. Hurlbut's handwriting, since it mentions that Hurlbut is there (in New Salem) where the letter is being composed. In fact, there is every reason to believe that the document is a draft for an Aaron Wright letter, which he dictated to the anti-Mormon investigator while the latter man was visiting Wright in New Salem, on or about Dec. 31, 1833. At that time Mr. Wright was a partner with Zaphna Lake (1799-1858) -- the son of Henry Lake -- in managing a retail store in the village of New Salem and Hurlbut's unannounced visit may have caught him late on the last evening of the year, while he was closing out his year's accounts and taking inventory. Presumably the busy Mr. Wright consented to provide D. P. Hurlbut with a letter certifying the handwriting of a manuscript Hurlbut had recently obtained as being that of his old associate Solomon Spalding -- however, Hurlbut had to act as scribe for one reason or another. Probably once Hurlbut had written down the draft letter, Wright looked it over, made the few corrections visible in the draft, and then signed his name to

Hurlbut's second production of the communication, once a clean copy had been written out.

Being a "rough draft," even with its corrections, the contents may not be a totally accurate representation of what Wright intended to convey to the unnamed addressee. What additional corrections Wright may have made in the final draft will never be known. It is a minor miracle that the rough draft ever survived to convey to the modern reader as much information as it does. The paper includes in its margin the later addition of Wright's copy of a cash receipt for what was then a large amount of money. This receipt was written on the reverse side of the letter, upside down from the body of the letter, as though Mr. Wright hurriedly provided the receipt writer with first scrap of paper he could lay his hands upon -- the recently discarded sheet for his draft letter. The short note is presumably Aaron Wright's copy of a receipt given to him by Roger Miller on Dec. 31, 1833, shortly after D. P. Hurlbut solicited the letter of certification from Mr. Wright. The paper with its receipt (at the bottom of discarded draft letter) was then almost certainly preserved among the records of Messrs. Lake & Wright's retail store. After Oct. 1, 1834 the paper was worthless. It should have been returned to Mr. Miller when he fulfilled his part of the agreement, but it may have been lost track of until it came into the possession of either Aaron's daughter, Harriet Wright Lake (1805-1877) or her husband Zaphna.

### How the Document got to New York City

Harriet Wright married the Henry Lake's son Zaphna on Aug. 22, 1824. Zaphna was Hiram Lake's brother and it is likely that Harriet and Zaphna eventually passed the 1833 document on to Mr. and Mrs. Hiram Lake. At the time the receipt and draft letter were written, Zaphna Lake was just entering upon his duties as the Sheriff of Ashtabula Co., where New Salem (now Conneaut) is located. Zaphna's wife apparently worked in the retail store and Zaphna himself no doubt frequented the business occasionally, even while serving his term as Sheriff. At some subsequent date, Zaphna or his wife must have noticed the old document in the company files, removed the outdated paper, and eventually turned over to brother Hiram, a fellow known for his interest in the Solomon Spalding authorship claims (see the report of his 1880 meeting with Ellen E. Dickinson). The paper remained within the Lake

family papers until 1914 when Mrs. Hiram Lake donated it to the New York Public Library.

### Information from the Spalding Enigma

On page 71 of their 2000 CD-ROM book, the Spalding Enigma have to say:

‘...in the 1980s, New York researcher Phyllis Farkas made an astounding discovery which we publish here for the first time. In a 1914 bulletin from the New York Public Library under a section entitled “News of the Month: Gifts” the following notice appeared:

“Of the gifts received by the library during the month of May, the two following are especially worthy of mention: From Mrs. Hiram Lake of Conneaut, Ohio came two manuscripts of interest in connection with the history of Mormonism, an agreement between Solomon Spalding and Henry Lake dated: Conneaut, Ohio, 8 March 1811, and an unsigned letter dated: Conneaut, 31 December 1833, relating to the recognition by the writer of the identity between entries of the Book of Mormon and the Solomon Spalding manuscript.”

Upon obtaining this material, it was at first believed that the so-called unsigned letter had probably been written by Henry Lake, Mrs. Hiram Lake’s father-in-law; but careful and extensive examination leads to the logical and virtually inescapable conclusion that it is actually a draft or working copy of a statement personally dictated by Aron Wright to Hurlbut.”

Although these authors may be correct in their calling the 1833 Aaron Wright an “astounding discovery,” they error in saying that the document was practically unknown prior to the limited publication of their CD-book. In fact an 1981 transcript of the document has been on-line at the Spalding Studies web-site since 1998, at the following URL: <http://home1.gte.net/dbroadhu/RESTOR/Lib/HoweHL2.htm>. As stated on that web-page, the on-line document was “copied from a photostat found in a file in the Conneaut Public Library in 1980.” The current writer’s copy of that photostat (along with the 1981 transcript he prepared from it) was donated the University of Utah Marriott Library in 1984 and has been available there for study for nearly two decades, located in the Manuscripts Section of Special Collections in Accession 913, boxes 9 and 10. Mr. Howard David (one of the four “Enigma”



authors”) subsequently communicated to this writer that he had gone through the Accession 913 papers (the Dale R. Broadhurst Papers), reading every page in the collection. The “Enigma” authors laconically admit their knowledge of the 1981 transcript at the end of note 18, page 91, in their 2000 CD-book. With the 2002 posting of this “Ohio Sources: Part Three” web-page, a new typescript of the 1833 Aaron Wright draft letter is being made available -- an updated text that incorporates 2 or 3 minor corrections discernable from the “Enigma” authors’ own transcription efforts.

The same Spalding Studies web-page mentioned above has also long featured a reproduction of the May 1914 “New of the Month” notice from the Bulletin of the New York Public Library, Vol. 18, p. 538). As the “Enigma” researchers say, this notice was first brought to the attention of a few researchers of the “Spalding theory” in about 1982-83 by Phyllis Farkas. She provided a photostat to Mr. Howard Davis of California and a copy of his photostat was obtained by this writer and placed in Accession 913 at the Marriott Library not long afterwards. So, despite the inaccuracy of the “Enigma” researchers’ statements on the matter, a copy of the 1833 letter, its typescript, and associated documentation have long been available for consultation by serious students of Mormon history.

The authors of the Spalding Enigma go on to say:

it is actually a draft or working copy of a statement personally dictated by Aron Wright to Hurlbut and written down by Hurlbut for Wright’s approval prior to its being recopied for Wright’s signature... Having recopied the document and Wright having signed it, Hurlbut left the unsigned draft copy with Wright, who then appears to have stuck it in the pages of his account book... the blank portion of it was quickly recycled for an entirely different purpose which, quite inadvertently, led to its coming into either Henry or Hiram Lake’s hands and subsequently to its preservation among other of that family’s miscellaneous business papers. One may presume that it was ultimately discovered, along with the above-mentioned 8 March 1811 Henry Lake-Solomon Spalding partnership agreement, amidst Hiram Lake’s papers following his death in 1885 and carefully preserved by his widow until her donation of it to the library in 1914. (pp. 71-72)

This appears to be a correct statement of the facts -- so far as they can be determined nowadays. The 1833 document is not a pre-1914 forgery nor

a hoax concocted by D. P. Hurlbut and never shown to Aaron Wright. It is an authentic relic of the times and may be relied upon as presenting a message Mr. Wright intended to convey to an associate of D. P. Hurlbut just before Hurlbut was arrested and tried in a Painesville justice court at the beginning of 1834. The authors of the Spalding Enigma go on to say. "This letter is an extremely important discovery in that it clears up a number of points which have been hotly disputed by the Mormons... it proves beyond reasonable doubt that Hurlbut did in fact return to Conneaut with 'Manuscript Story' in hand in order to obtain the witnesses' assessment of it, just as Howe says he did.

Again, the authors are probably correct here, generally speaking. The 1833 draft letter, along with the certificate D. P. Hurlbut added to the "Oberlin Spalding manuscript," shows that he did bring this particular manuscript to New Salem in order to have its handwriting authenticated by persons who had known Solomon Spalding -- persons who very likely still retained old documents of their own containing samples of Spalding's handwriting. It is less certain that the Spalding holograph Hurlbut carried with him to New Salem was ever entitled "Manuscript Story." The fictional story now on file in the Oberlin College Archives does not bear that title and its wrapper (which did) has long since been discarded. It is entirely possible that the words "Manuscript Story -- Conneaut Creek" were penciled upon the paper jacket of the old Spalding manuscript by Mr. Hurlbut himself. No matter what the story was called, it seems indisputable that D. P. Hurlbut brought this particular unfinished work of fiction to New Salem at the end of 1833 and not the more important "Manuscript Found," a longer, probably finished Spalding work, reportedly written in the style of the King James Bible. The "Enigma" authors are therefore correct in stating that the 1833 draft letter "confirms" the "long-standing claims of pro-Spalding researchers" who have firmly maintained "That 'Manuscript Story' and 'Manuscript Found' were not one and the same... [and] That 'the particulars' of this... [were] provided to Hurlbut by Wright in his first statement dated August, 1833."

**Dale R. Broadhurst's Corrected Typescript (2001)  
of the Dec. 31, 1833 Aaron Wright Draft Letter:**

Dear Sir

Whereas I have been informed that you have been appointed with others to investigate the subject of mormonism and a resolution has been past to ascertain the real orrigin of the sd Book **this is therefore to inform you that I have made a statement to D P Hurlbut** (emp. mine) relative to writings of S Spalding Esq sd Hurlbut is now at my store I have examined the writings which he has obtained from sd Spaldings widowe I recognise them to be the writings hand writing of sd Spalding but not the manuscript I had refferance to in my statement before alluded to as he informed me he wrote in the first place he wrote for his own amusement and then altered his plan and commenced writing a history of the first Settlement of America the particulars you will find in my testimony Dated Sept 1833 August 1833 -- for years before he left this place I was quite intimate with sd S Spalding we had many private interviews the history he was writing was the topic of his conversation relating his progress and Contemplating the avails of the same I also contemplated reading his history but never saw it in print untill I saw the Book of Mormon where I find much of the history and the names verbatim the Book of mormon does not contain all the writings sd Spladings I expect to see them if Smith is permitted to go on and as he says get his other plates the first time that Mr Hyde a mormon Preacher from Kirtland preached in the centre School house in this place the Hon Nehmiah King attended as soon as Hyde had got through King left the house and said that Hide had preached from the writings of S Spalding

In conclusion I will observe that the names and most of the historical part of the Book of Mormon is as familiar to me as Most modern history if it is not Spaldings writings copied it is the same as he wrote and if Smith was inspired I think it was by the same Spirit that Spalding possessed which he confessed to be the love of money \_\_

Coneaut Dec 31 1833 Ashtabula Co NY

Due the bearer on demand one hundred and fifty dollars in good merchantable [lotte?] [upon?] the first day of Oct next [witness?] Ro[gar] Mill[ar]"<sup>60</sup>

We have focused mainly on the “chain custody” of the witnesses who lived in Conneaut, OH and its surrounding area as well as the family members of Solomon Spalding.

What about the other witnesses whose statements were taken down in 1839 and beyond that date? In this case, we have to rely on the principle that unless a person can prove the newspaper article or book to be a forgery, then it stands on its own merit as genuine. We have no reason to cast doubt on the genuineness of the witness’ statements that were interviewed and written down by those journalists and authors.

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<sup>60</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab3.htm#1833ltr>.

## Chapter 6: Four Questions To Ask In Regards To Reliable Eyewitness Testimony (Part 1)

We must always ask four questions to ascertain whether or not these statements that have been made are reliable eyewitness testimonies or not.

(1) **Were they present?** Were they in the right time and place to have heard and/or read Spalding's manuscript?

(2) **Were they corroborated?** Is there additional support to back what they said in their statements?

(3) **Were they accurate?** What did they say and how well were their words preserved? Were they correct in the details they gave? Were they consistent with the other eyewitnesses' testimonies?

(4) **Were they biased?** What would their ulterior motive be for lying - sexual lust, fame/power, money, etc.? Was there overwhelming prejudice given by the witness?

We want to give a satisfactory answer to each of these four questions concerning the witnesses examined from earlier chapters.

### Were The Witnesses Present?

Were these witnesses in the right time/place as Spalding? Did they have the opportunity to read and/or hear his manuscript? To give an example, were the witnesses whose statements that were taken down living in Conneaut, OH the same time as Mr. Spalding? If not, then they could not be deemed reliable eyewitnesses since they neither lived in the same place and time.

To give a quick recap of Solomon Spalding's timeline, this is where he lived and the time period in which he lived in these places. Look carefully at the statements made:

**Matilda Davidson:** "...The manuscript then fell into my hands and was carefully preserved...It has frequently been examined by my daughter, Mrs. McKenstry, of Monson, Mass., with whom I now reside, and by other friends."<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> "Origin of the "Book of Mormon," or "Golden Bible." *Boston Recorder* - No. 16; Vol. XXIV; April 19, 1839, no. 1216.



**Matilda McKinstry:** “My mother confirmed my remembrances of my father’s fondness for history, and told me of his frequent conversations regarding a theory which he had of a prehistoric race which had inhabited this continent, etc., all showing that his mind dwelt on this subject. The “Manuscript Found,” she said, was a romance written in Biblical style, and that while she heard it read she had no especial admiration for it more than for other romances he wrote and read to her... He talked with my mother of these discoveries in the mound, and was writing every day as the work progressed. Afterward he read the manuscript which I had seen him writing, to the neighbors and to a clergyman, a friend of his, who came to see him. Some of the names that he mentioned while reading to these people I have never forgotten. They are as fresh to me to-day as though I heard them yesterday. They were “Mormon,” “Maroni,” “Lamenite,” “Nephi.”<sup>62</sup>

**John Spalding:** “In a few years he failed in business, and in the year 1809 removed to Conneaut, in Ohio. The year following, I removed to Ohio, and found him engaged in building a forge. I made him a visit in about three years after; and found that he had failed, and considerably involved in debt. He then told me he had been writing a book,...of which he read to me many passages.”<sup>63</sup>

**Martha Spalding:** “I was personally acquainted with Solomon Spaulding, about twenty years ago. I was at his house a short time before he left Conneaut; he was then writing a historical novel...and I have no manner of doubt that the historical part of it, is the same that I read and heard read, more than 20 years ago.”<sup>64</sup>

**Matilda Davidson:** “Mr. Solomon Spaulding had a brother, Mr. John Spaulding residing in the place at the time, who was perfectly familiar with this work and repeatedly heard the whole of it read.”<sup>65</sup>

**Aaron Wright:** “I first became acquainted with Solomon Spaulding in 1808

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62 Dickinson, “The Book of Mormon,” *Scribner’s Monthly* XX: 4, 615-616.

63 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 278-280.

64 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 280-281.

65 “Origin of the “Book of Mormon,” or “Golden Bible.” *Boston Recorder* - No. 16; Vol. XXIV; April 19, 1839, no. 1216.

or 9, .... When at his house, one day, he showed and read to me a history he was writing...The historical part of the Book of Mormon, I know to be the same as I read and heard read from the writings of Spalding, more than twenty years ago.”<sup>66</sup>

**Nahum Howard:** “I first became acquainted with Solomon Spalding, in Dec. 1810. After that time I frequently saw him at his house, and also at my house...and afterwards frequently showed me his writings, which I read.”<sup>67</sup>

**Oliver Smith:** “While engaged in this business, he boarded at my house, in all nearly six months... During the time he was at my house, I read and heard read one hundred pages or more.”<sup>68</sup>

**Henry Lake:** “Soon after my arrival, I formed a co-partnership with Solomon Spalding,...He very frequently read to me from a manuscript which he was writing,...I spent many hours in hearing him read said writings, and became well acquainted with its contents...was astonished to find the same passages in it that Spalding had read to me more, than twenty years before...”<sup>69</sup>

**John Miller:** “While there, I boarded and lodged in the family of said Spalding, for several months. I was soon introduced to the manuscript of Spalding, and perused them as often as I had leisure. He had written two or three books or pamphlets on different subjects; but that which more particularly drew my attention, was one which he called the “Manuscript Found.”... From this he would frequently read some humorous passages to the company present.”<sup>70</sup>

**Artemas Cunningham:** “In the month of October, 1811, I went from the township of Madison to Conneaut, for the purpose of securing a debt due me from Solomon Spalding. .... He then presented his manuscripts, when we sat down and spent a good share of the night, in reading them, and conversing upon them...”<sup>71</sup>

**Abner Jackson:** “This romance, Mr. Spaulding brought with him on a visit to my father, a short time before he moved from Conneaut to Pittsburgh. At that time I was confined to the house with a lame knee, and so I was in company with them and heard the conversation that passed between them.”<sup>72</sup>

66 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 283-284.

67 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 285-286.

68 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 284-285.

69 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 281-282.

70 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 282-283.

71 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 86-287.

72 “The Book of Mormon.” *The Daily Evening Reporter*. N.S. Vol. IV. Washington, Pa., Friday, Jan. 7, 1881. Whole 1383.

D.P. Hulburt visited these witnesses and wrote down their statements in 1833 that were later to be published in *Mormonism Unveiled* by E.D. Howe in 1834.

Notice that each of these witnesses were living who were able to give their affidavits. These are the dates when the presumed witnesses lived and died. You can visit online and put in the information on some of these people where they are buried on [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com).

**Aaron Wright** (1775-1853)

[Settled in Conneaut, OH c. 1799]<sup>73</sup>

**Nahum Howard** (1773-1841)

[Arrived in Conneaut, OH 1810]<sup>74</sup>

**John Miller** (1782-1866)

[Lived in Erie Co., PA]

**Oliver Smith** (1761-1838)

[Shown as living in Springfield Twp., Erie Co., PA in the 1810, 1820, and 1830 Federal Census returns]

**Henry Lake** (1772-1850)

[Settled in Conneaut c. Jan. 1, 1811]

**Artemas Cunningham** (1782-1839)

[Lived in Perry, Geauga Co., OH]

**John Spalding** (1774-1857)

**Martha Spalding** (est. between 1746 & 1802-1864)

[Lived close to John Miller]

**John and Martha Spalding living close to John Miller is based on the testimony of Rachel Derby - daughter of John Miller (1884):**

“...John Spaulding, Solomon’s brother, lived half a mile from our house and

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<sup>73</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/97935151/aron-wright>

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/129710356/nahum-howard>

our families were quite intimate...”<sup>75</sup>

A person can look up and gather the information on when they lived and died based on the tombstones.

A person can gather pieces of evidence from some family heirlooms such as the Zaphna Lake family Bible that gives genealogical information of the birth and death dates of the Lake family.<sup>76</sup>

The Conneaut, OH witnesses did live during the right time period and right location as Solomon Spalding. The witnesses were living in 1833 when the witness statements were written down by Hulburt. But Spalding also lived in Amity, PA (1814-1816), which is located a little bit outside of Pittsburgh, PA. There he interacted with several who came in contact with him and his manuscripts.

### **Amity, PA witnesses:**

**Joseph Miller:** “It was in the style of a novel, well written, and I and others would frequently set and listen to his reading of it. His manuscript was written on loose sheets of paper with a pen. I nursed him in his last sickness, made his coffin,...”<sup>77</sup>

**Redick McKee:** “I read, or heard him read, many wonderful and amusing passages from different parts of his professed historical records; and was struck with the minuteness of his details and the apparent truthfulness and sincerity of the author. Defoe’s veritable Robinson Crusoe, was not more reliable!”<sup>78</sup>

The Amity, PA witnesses did live during the right time period and right location as Solomon Spalding. Their statements were taken down several decades later while they were still living.

### **Were The Witnesses Corroborated?**

*Is there additional support to back up their statements?*

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<sup>75</sup> Arthur B. Deming, “Rachel Derby,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 1, (Jan. 1888), pg. 1, col. 7

<sup>76</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab3.htm#LakeBib>.

<sup>77</sup> “For the Reporter. More About Solomon Spaulding.” *The Washington Reporter*. Vol. LIX. Washington, Pa., Wednesday, May 20, 1868. No. 41.

<sup>78</sup> “For The Reporter. Solomon Spalding Again.” *The Washington Reporter*, Vol. LX. Washington, Pa., Wednesday, April 21, 1869. No. 27.

(A) **Matilda Davidson:** “His sole object in writing this historical romance was to amuse himself and his neighbors. This was about the year 1812. Hull’s surrender at Detroit, occurred near the same time, and I recollect the date well from that circumstance.”<sup>79</sup>

**(1) Hull’s surrender occurred on August 16, 1812.**

“In the month of August, 1812, an express arrived in the northwest part of Washington County from Gen. Beal, of Wooster, Ohio, stating that the British and Indians had landed in large numbers at the mouth of Huron River, and were marching on Pittsburg. A number of riders set out and alarmed the inhabitants of the surrounding townships. On the second day a large meeting was held in Burgettstown; a battalion formed of about three hundred volunteers. Ladies sat up the whole night making knapsacks, tents, &c. This battalion was composed of four companies commanded respectively by Capt. Thomas Patterson, Capt. Wm. Vance, Capt. Samuel Rankin, and Capt. Robert Withrew’s light dragoons, who rendezvoused at the Briceland Cross Roads. After all were in readiness, the first day they marched to the edge of Beaver County, the second day they held an election, and John Vance was elected major. The battalion on the third day took up the line of march, crossed the Ohio River at Georgetown, and encamped on the bottom at the mouth of Dry Run. On the fourth day, being Saturday, they arrived at New Lisbon a little before sunset. During this day’s march they met a number of Gen. Hull’s soldiers, and among the rest Gen. Lucas, who was afterwards Governor of Ohio, who informed us that Hull had surrendered his army at Detroit (emp. mine); that the men were taken to Maiden, U. C, where they were dismissed on parole and sent to the mouth.”<sup>80</sup>

(2) D.P. Hulburt visited the right person who knew where Spalding’s writings were exactly located, which would be the first manuscript called *Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek*, which was also verified by the Conneaut witnesses as Spalding’s handwriting, but it was not the same manuscript as *Manuscript Found*.

(3) She lived with her adopted daughter (Matilda McKinstry) in Monson,

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<sup>79</sup> “Origin of the “Book of Mormon,” or “Golden Bible.” *Boston Recorder* - No. 16; Vol. XXIV; April 19, 1839, no. 1216.

<sup>80</sup> *History of Washington County*. ed. Alfred Creigh. (Washington, PA, 1870), 294.



MA (who also could identify her as Spalding's former wife).

(B) **Matilda McKinstry**: "During the war of 1812, I was residing with my parents in a little town in Ohio called Conneaut... He frequently wrote little stories, which he read to me... There were sermons and other papers, and I saw a manuscript, about an inch thick, closely written, tied with some of the stories my father had written for me, one of which he called, "The Frogs of Wyndham."<sup>81</sup>

Cowdery, et al. found a book entitled: "The Battle of the Frogs at Windham, 1758, with Various Accounts and Three of the Most Popular Ballads on the Subject, with Introduction by William L. Weaver and published by James Walden of Willimantic, CT, in 1857.

It contained various poems and stories about the supposed battle that took place in 1758 that were written down later.

There is a poem on pgs. 13-17 called: "The Frogs of Wyndham" - An Old Colony Tale, Founded on Fact, by Arion.

(1) Pseudonym/Pen name - derives from Arion of Methymna (625 BC) - it shows that a person had a classical education just as Spalding did.

(2) The "Arion" version employs the exact title as Matilda stated.

(3) Source was "from an old Providence Gazette" (in Rhode Island - it ceased publication in Oct. of 1825).

(4) Revolutionary War connection - Phrase: "Good clothing, pay, and rations" [Spalding was a Revolutionary War veteran.]

(5) Spalding went to Windham, CT, where he studied law under Swift for some time [Speculation: possibly published in CT, but it was also circulated in Providence, Rhode Island where the piece was found."<sup>82</sup>

### (C) **John Spalding**

If you did not come to pick up the mail, then your name was put in the newspaper. Notice that Solomon Spalding and John Spalding did retrieve their same mail in the same city together - Pittsburgh, PA. It is a very strong possibility that John Spalding living in close proximity to his brother would have been able

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81 Dickinson, "The Book of Mormon," *Scribner's Monthly* XX: 4, 615-616.

82 Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma: Investigating the Mysterious Origin of the Book of Mormon - Scholars' Edition* (St. Polycarp Publishing House, 2018), Appendix VI - 1-9. Kobo edition.

to have contact with the manuscript.

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. IX, No. 45. Pittsburgh, PA: May 5, 1813. Whole no. 455.:

**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. IX, No. 45. Pittsburgh, PA: Nov. 10, 1813. Whole no. 455.:

**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. X, No. 36. Pittsburgh, PA: September 7, 1814. Whole no. 495.:

**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. I. No. 19. Pittsburgh, PA: Saturday, February 4, 1815:

**John Spalding**

**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. I. No. 20. Pittsburgh, PA: Saturday, February 11, 1815:

**John Spalding**

**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. I. No. 22. Pittsburgh, PA: Saturday, February 25, 1815:

**John Spalding**

**Solomon Spalding**

(D) **Oliver Smith**: “When Solomon Spalding first came to this place, he purchased a tract of land, surveyed it out and commenced selling it. While engaged in this business, he boarded at my house, in all nearly six months. All his leisure hours were occupied in writing a historical novel, ... During the time he was at my house, I read and heard read one hundred pages or more.”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 284-285.

(1) Spalding probably boarded with him in late 1809-early 1810.

(2) Oliver Smith witnessed a transaction Spalding made on a land transaction agreement between Spalding and Hanannaiah Brooks - Oct. 22, 1806.<sup>84</sup>

(3) **Anna H. Taking**: “Father, Oliver Smith, came to Springfield, Pa., 1798. Well remember S. Spaulding, who frequently came to our house and remained several days. There was but few settlers, and the latch string always hung out. Often heard father, McGee, Dr. Howard and others talk about Spaulding reading his writings years before the B. of M. came out. And when the Mormon preacher came along they all knew S. Spaulding wrote the history part of the Book of Mormon.”<sup>85</sup>

He was also mentioned along with some of the other Conneaut witnesses.

**(E) Nahum Howard, Henry Lake, and Aaron Wright:**

(1) 1811 voter list in Salem (Conneaut), OH: “A list of the Number and Name of the free White Male Inhabitants above twenty one years of Age in the township of Salem in the county of Ashtabula and State of Ohio.”

Nahum Howard, Nehemiah King, Henry Lake, John Spalding, Solomon Spalding, and Aaron Wright are on the list.

1819 voter list in Salem (Conneaut), OH:

**Nahum Howard**

**Nehemiah King**

**Henry Lake**

**Aaron Wright**

1820 Census of Ashtabula Co.:

**Nahum Howard**

**Nehemiah King**

**Aaron Wright**

1823 voter list in Salem (Conneaut), OH:

**Nahum Howard**

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<sup>84</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/sagawt05.htm>.

<sup>85</sup> *Independent Patriot*, “Braden-Kelley Debate,” Vol. 6, Lamoni, Decatur Co., Iowa, July 2, 1891, no. 32.

**Nehemiah King**  
**Henry Lake**  
**Aaron Wright**

1830 Census of Ashtabula Co.:

**Nahum Howard**  
**Nehemiah King**  
**Henry Lake**  
**Aron [sic] Wright**

1840 Federal Census: Ohio  
Ashtabula Co., Conneaut twp.:

**Naham [sic] Howard**  
**Aaron Wright**  
**Hirwin Lake [Hiram Lake - son of Henry Lake?]**  
**Henry Lake**  
**Hiram Lake**  
**Aaron Wright<sup>86</sup>**

**(2) The testimony of Hiram Lake (son of Henry Lake):**

“Conneaut, Ashtabula Co., Ohio, December 23, 1880.

I am sixty-nine years of age, and have lived all my life in Conneaut, Ashtabula Co., Ohio. My father, Henry Lake, was partner with Solomon Spaulding in 1811 and 1812, in a forge in Conneaut (then Salem). About 1834, when I was about twenty-three years of age, I remember that there was a great excitement concerning Mormonism in Conneaut. My father read the “Book of Mormon,” or heard it read, and was familiar with its contents, and he told me it was unquestionably derived from a manuscript written by his former partner, Solomon Spaulding, called “Manuscript Found; or, the Lost Tribes.” I believe my father, about this time, made an affidavit to the same effect, which was published. Since 1834 I have conversed with Aaron Wright, John N. Miller, and Nathan Howard, old residents here, now deceased, all of whom lived here in 1811 and 1812, and who had heard Spaulding’s manuscript read, and they told me they believed the “Book of Mormon” was derived from Spaulding’s “Manuscript Found.” Some or all these persons made affidavits

<sup>86</sup> <http://solomonspaulding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab2.htm>.

to this effect, which were published in a book called “Mormonism Unveiled, edited by E. D. Howe, of Painesville, Ohio. HIRAM LAKE”<sup>87</sup>

**(3) The testimony of Lorin Gould:**

“Conneaut, Ashtabula Co., Ohio, December 23, 1880.

I have resided in the neighborhood of Conneaut, Ashtabula Co., Ohio. sixty-six years. During all that period I have known Hiram Lake, whose statement [given above], dated December 23d, 1880, I have read. This statement I believe to be true. I was acquainted with Henry Lake, Aaron Wright, John N. Miller, and Nathan Howard, the persons named in Hiram Lake’s statement, and about 1834-35, the time of the excitement concerning Mormonism, I heard them all say that the Book of Mormon” was undoubtedly taken from a manuscript written by Solomon Spaulding, which they had heard Spaulding read in 1811 or 1812, called “The Manuscript Found; or, the Lost Tribes.”

LORIN GOULD.<sup>88</sup>

**(4) The testimony of Daniel Bacon:**

“Conneaut, Ashtabula Co., Ohio, December 23, 1880.

The editor of the Boise City (Idaho) Republican [Daniel Bacon] copies Mrs. Davison’s account of the Spaulding manuscript, which originally appeared in the Boston Recorder, April 19th, 1839, and adds this corroborative testimony:

We spent our early childhood in Springfield, Pennsylvania, only four miles from New Salem, where Mr. Spaulding wrote the “Manuscript Found,” and heard the old settlers that were conversant with the facts as stated in this history, relate them time and again, all through. We never have seen it in print before. We have seen several men who saw and read the original manuscript, and can say that their relation of the facts corresponds in every particular with the history as given by the widow Spaulding and we recognize the names of Lake, Wright, Spaulding and Miller as gentlemen with whom our father did business -- gentlemen of veracity, and some of them men of wealth.”<sup>89</sup>

**(5) William W. Williams’ *History of Ashtabula Co., Ohio*:**

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<sup>87</sup> Dickinson, *New Light on Mormonism*, 257-258.

<sup>88</sup> Dickinson, *New Light on Mormonism*, 258.

<sup>89</sup> *The Salt Lake City Tribune*, Vol. XVII. Salt Lake City, Utah, Friday, April 25, 1879), No. 9.



“June 5th, 1841.

Rev. John A. Clark, D.D. Dear Sir:

The above letter I have obtained in answer to several questions respecting Mormons and Mormonism, transmitted by the Rev. Mr. Quinan to Dr. Hawley, of this county, from you. This letter of Dr. Rosa's, together with the book, “Mormonism Unveiled” which accompanies it, I send as the best answers to your questions, and the best expositions of Mormonism, which can be obtained. It is believed by candid and respectable people in the vicinity of the Mormon Temple, that Mr. Howe's book -- “Mormonism Unveiled” -- is very correct. As to the deponents in reference to [the] Spalding manuscript, at New Salem (now Conneaut), I have been acquainted with them for thirty years (excepting Miller), and believe them to be credible and respectable persons.

It is indeed astonishing that so low an imposture should ever have been countenanced at all; much more so that hundreds of English converts should recently have come over to it, and that four hundred more should now be daily expected to take shipping at Buffalo, in order to pass up our Lakes to join the Western Mormons! JOHN HALL.

Rector of St. Peter's, Ashtabula, Ohio.

“The year 1798 marks the date of the first permanent settlement in the township. The names of these pioneers were Thomas Montgomery, with his family, and Aaron Wright. They removed in this year from Harpersfield, in the State of New York, intending to settle in Harpersfield township, where some of their friends had taken up their abode the previous year; but arriving at Conneaut, they were so delighted with the country, and the facilities it afforded for getting in crops, that they decided to make this township their home.”<sup>90</sup>

#### **(6) Aaron Wright's 1841 Historical Sketch:**

“SKETCH OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF CONNEAUT,  
ASHTABULA COUNTY, OHIO

As related by Aaron Wright, Esq., in 1841; Reported by S. F. Taylor  
[President of the Ashtabula Co. Historical Society in 1841]

The “Mannasaugas,” a small tribe of Indians, possessed the country until 1796-7, and it was quite certain that their headquarters were, where Conneaut

<sup>90</sup> William W. Williams, *History of Ashtabula Co., Ohio* (Philadelphia, Williams Bros., 1878), 156.

Village now stands. Five huts were standing where the "Mansion House" is erected, in 1798, and a little northeast of the present site of the Presbyterian Church, between it and the Ridge road, was an extensive Burying Ground, laid out in lots with great regularity. There was but one small tree standing on the area of more than an acre. There must have been several hundred, and perhaps some thousands of graves. To satisfy myself, I opened a number of what appeared to be graves and found human bones in every instance. Either from age or some other cause, these bones soon crumbled to dust on exposing them to the atmosphere. What is now called Harmon's Island near the mouth of the Conneaut Creek, was cleared, and had been planted to corn. There were other clearings of less extent.

The most remarkable Indian antiquity is "Fort Hill" in the form of a Delta, located a little below the center road on the southeastern side of the Creek, which now washes its Northern base.

It is of the same height as the surrounding country, but cut off on the south and east by a ravine nearly of equal depth with the bed of the Creek -- This fort is very difficult of ascent, except at its eastern point of termination, where it is easy. It contains about four acres, and was covered with brushwood about six or eight feet high. It was inclosed by an embankment of earth about six feet high, with only one opening at its southern point and one on the northeast. It must once have been a fortification of no mean importance in Indian warfare.

The Indians disappeared entirely in 1796 or 7, from the following occurrence, viz., -- A man travelling from Detroit to Erie, Pa., (then Presque-Isle) was killed by the Indians for the sake of two rifles which he possessed, and a small detachment of soldiers came up from Presque Isle to demand the murdered. "Bear's Oil" the Chief of the Mannasaugas" agreed to deliver him by a given day, but before the day arrived, the Indians all fled. The settlers never had any trouble from them.

#### SETTLEMENT:

The first permanent settlement was in the year 1799. Thomas Montgomery and myself visited it in 1798, and settled in the spring of 1799. Robert Montgomery and family, Levi and John Mt. Gomery, Nathan and John King, and Samuel Bemus and family, came the same season. All that now remained of these, in the township, are Samuel Bemus and myself and wife.

James Harper, Seth Herrington and James Montgomery, came in 1800,

with their families. No more came for some years. Two log cabins, built by the surveyors in 1796 or 7, one at the mouth of the creek and the other about half way to the present site of the village, were standing, and were occupied by the settlers. The first house built by settlers, was one by Nathan King on the Ridge Road where John Brown now lives, and the next was built by myself on the farm on the Ridge Road, where Chester Sandord now lives. I once lived sixteen days without seeing a human face, except my own in a pail of water which I used for a looking glass, when compelled to shave; and this was the extent of my toilette for a long time.

#### A SOCIAL VISIT, ENTERTAINMENT:

After my sixteen days exclusion, a friend called upon me, and of course I was anxious to receive him hospitably and entertain him in good style. My larder was wanting in one very important article, viz., meat -- the of my last porcupine having been already picked.

While in this dilemma two other friends providentially called, and one of them had killed a fine turkey. I set him to stripping off the feathers, while I prepared my kettle and some dough, wherewith to make a "Pot Pie" by simply putting flour and water together.

I soon got supper in readiness, and my friend has often informed me that it was the best meal of victuals to which he ever sat down, made of my "Pot Pie," Bread, Pepper and Salt. At bed time, I spread my straw bed upon the floor, as usual, and by lying crosswise, four of us enjoyed a comfortable night's rest.

#### ORIGINAL NAME:

The present County of Ashtabula was then called the Township of Richfield.

#### PROVISIONS:

We had always an abundance of grain, and for meat we ate Bear, Elk, Raccoon and Porcupine, which were abundant.

#### MILLS:

The nearest mill from 1799 to 1808 was sixteen miles, at Elk Creek, Pa., where I have often carried a bushel and a half of wheat on my back, and if

on my return my provisions failed, I struck a fire, sipped some water into the mouth of my bag with my hands, and mixed my bread, and then spread it on a basswood bark pulled for the purpose, and baked it before my fire. I began a mill in 1808, and finished it in 1809 -- the first in the settlement.

#### ROADS:

There were no roads except "Indian Trails." The travel was upon the beach of the Lake, fording the streams with difficulty.

In 1800, Nathan King, Seth Harrington and myself, marked the present Ridge Road to Ashtabula, west of the village, where we met the people from Harpersfield similarly engaged.

We then began to cut the road, I was the first Supervisor, and my District extended from the State line to the "ten mile stake" at the forks of the road at Fobe's farm in Kingsville.

#### COMMERCE:

There was then no boats on the lake except four and six cared boats, owned principally by the settlers for their private accommodation. The first in our settlement was built by John Montgomery, just before the war of 1812. All the goods we procured, were from settlers who brought them in to exchange for provisions.

#### SCHOOLS:

Our houses were "Log Cabins" cobbled off covered with clap boards split out live staves (commonly called Gourd Seed Shingle) with puncheon floors. We used no nails nor iron of any kind.

#### LAWS:

For some time we were "a law unto ourselves." There was no necessity for them, except of the criminal order. The Government was a pure Democracy, and the proceedings of our Judiciary will give a tolerable idea of the method of trial, passing sentence and of administering punishment.

One of the settlers sometimes misused his wife. On such occasion the Court assembled by common consent -- (Nathan King usually presiding), and the back of the offender was the only Record of their doings. The first Magistrate under the Territorial Government, was Noah Cowles of the

Austinburg Settlement, and I was the first Constable in Richfield. The first Magistrate appointed in our settlement was James Harper, who declined serving, and Nathan King was appointed in his place.

#### MAILS:

The first mail ever brought into our settlement, was, I think in 1808, by John Metcalf, now of Ashtabula, on horseback. John Rudd was the first Postmaster.

Six weeks from New York City to Conneaut was not very slow traveling in those times.

The first carriage employed in the mail service was, I think, in 1811, by Anan Harmon. It was a rude sort of Dug Out, bearing about the same comparison to our present coaches, as our "Log Cabins" did to the best buildings of the present day.

Its appearance, however, created as great an excitement as did the first Steam Boat on the Hudson River.

Ordered for record April 9, 1841.  
and recorded May 1st, 1841.

P. R. Spencer,  
Recording Secretary"<sup>91</sup>

#### **(7) Aaron Wright's Docket Book:**

##### **AARON WRIGHT'S DOCKET of SALEM (NOW CONNEAUT) OHIO, 1813-17**

It mentions Nehemiah King, Henry Lake, Nahum Howard, and Oliver Smith.<sup>92</sup>

#### **(8) Aaron Wright's personal copy of the Book of Mormon.<sup>93</sup>**

(9) "In 1809, David, Joseph, James, and Stephen Hicks, brothers, arrived

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<sup>91</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/sagawt01.htm#1841>.

<sup>92</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab3.htm#docket1a>.

<sup>93</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab3.htm#1830page>.



in Conneaut, and settled in the western portion of the township, near the present site of the Amboy cheese-factory. They also came from Canada, though natives of Vermont. In 1810, Henry Lake and Dr. Nahum Howard and family settled in Conneaut. Dr. Howard was from Kennebec county, Maine. He settled near the site of the present residence of P. M. Darling, on Harbor street. Mr. Lake was a native of Vermont. He started the first furnace in Conneaut, on the flats of the creek, a short distance above the paper-mills. He was afterwards landlord of the old Mansion House.”<sup>94</sup>

(10) “At a recent meeting of the Medical Society of the 20th District, Drs. Philo Tilden, **Nahum Howard**, Dennis Cooley, and Samuel L. Fenton were admitted members... Censors: Anson Hotchkiss, Storm Rosa, Evert Denton...”<sup>95</sup>

### **(11) Harvey Nettleton, Esq. - History of Ashtabula County - The Geneva Times**

Conneaut is situated in the northwest corner of the State of Ohio, and is bounded north by Lake Erie, east by Pennsylvania line, south by Monroe and west by Kingsville. Two miles of its territory has been run off from the south side of the township and annexed to Monroe, but it has a large gore or fractional township attached on the north, and is supposed at present to contain an area equal to a full township, or five miles square. The face of the ground is agreeably diversified, and the soil principally adapted to fruit and grain culture, although many portions produce excellent grass. It is abundantly watered by the Conneaut and its tributary rills, and likewise by numerous springs, which afford supplies of the best quality.

The original proprietors of this township, as appears by deeds executed as far back as 1606, were Benjamin Talmadge, Frederick Wolcott, Uriah Holmes Jr., Rodger Skinner, Ezra Wadsworth, and Col. Storrs. The latter owned the whole or a principal part, of the gore situated west and north of the Conneaut Creek.

Conneaut is said to be a Seneca word, signifying, literally, the river of many fish.

At what time it first became known to the whites is not certain, but it

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<sup>94</sup> William W. Williams, *History of Ashtabula Co., Ohio*, (Philadelphia, Williams Bros., 1878), 157.

<sup>95</sup> *Painesville Telegraph*, Vol. V. Painesville, Ohio, June 8, 1827.

is evident that the location has long been favorably known to the Indians. The number and extent of their mounds and burying places afford evidence that it had been inhabited for ages, and that at some remote period the population had been numerous. The place itself seemed to combine many of the advantages which are deemed desirable by uncivilized man. The forest afforded plenty of game, the stream that flowed at their feet, as its name signifies, produced an abundant supply of fish, while the alluvial lands along the bottoms furnished a soil well adapted to their rude method of cultivation. But their numbers were diminished by the encroachments of the whites, they were despoiled of their hunting grounds, which had been wrested from them by the treaty of Greenville, and were ultimately compelled to evacuate the country. The last of these people who have resided permanently at Conneaut was a remnant of the Massasauga tribe, under a chief of the name of Macqua Medah, or Bear's Oil. His village was situated about the head of the spring immediately in the rear of the spot where the Conneaut House now stands, and consisted of some thirty or forty families. This fountain affords a supply of pure water, and produces a little rill, which empties into the main stream at the foot of the hill near the bridge.

On the arrival of the first settlers their cabins to the number of thirty or forty were still standing, and it is said presented an appearance of neatness and comfort seldom seen among the Indians. They were of rude structure from twelve to fifteen feet square, built of logs and covered with bark. Their door casings and partitions were likewise of bark, displaying a good degree of skill and ingenuity in their construction.

The settlers, not being very deeply impressed with the dignity of their public edifices. converted their council house into a barn, and their king's palace into an aviary, or hen roots.

They found a square post eight or ten feet high and painted red, which was planted in the ground on the margin of the creek, near where the bridge now stands that was supposed to indicate that the lands between it and the creek, where their cornfields were situated, were not to be intruded upon by the whites...

The mounds that were situated in the eastern part of what is now the village of Conneaut and the extensive burying ground near the Presbyterian Church, appear to have had no connection with the burying places of the Indians. They doubtless refer to a more remote period and are the relics of an

extinct race, of whom the Indians had no knowledge. These mounds were of comparatively small size, and of the same general character of those that are widely scattered over the country. What is most remarkable concerning them is that among the quantity of human bones they contain, there are found specimens belonging to men of large stature, and who must have been nearly allied to a race of giants. Skulls were taken from these mounds, the cavities of which were of sufficient capacity to admit the head of an ordinary man, and jaw-bones that might be fitted on over the face with equal facility. The bones of the arms and lower limbs were of the same proportions, exhibiting ocular proof of the degeneracy of the human race since the period in which these men occupied the soil which we now inhabit. These mounds were, doubtless, held in great veneration in the ages to which they refer, not only as the depositories of their dead, but probably as the altars where their religious rites and sacrifices were performed, which may account for the origin of the custom which so universally prevails among christian nations, of burying their dead under or in the immediate the immediate vicinity of the churches. It is certain that, on opening the mounds, they are found to contain a quantity of charcoal, which may be the remains of the sacrificial wood, and fragments of a strong earthen ware, which may be the remnants of the vessels in which their incense was offered.

The ancient burying grounds referred to, situated a little west of the site where the brick church now stands, presents an object of deeper interest perhaps than any other relic remaining in the neighborhood. It occupied an area of about four acres of land, extending northward from the bank of the creek, near the brick church, to Main street, and westward to the present residence of Mr. Horatio Thurber, and cresting, with the exception of an angle in the south line, in compliance with the course of the bank, the form of an oblong square. It appeared to have been accurately surveyed into lots, running from the north to the south, and to exhibit all the order and propriety of arrangement deemed requisite to constitute christian burial.

If the observation be just that the character of a people may be estimated by the order and taste displayed in their places of sepulchre, we shall be led to judge favorably of that people whose remains have long mouldered beneath these graves. On the first examination of the ground by the settlers they found it covered with trees not distinguishable from the surrounding forest, except an opening near the center containing a single butternut, which still remains

to mark the spot. The graves were distinguished by slight depressions in the surface of the earth disposed in straight rows, with the intervening spaces, or alleys, cover[ing] the whole area within the boundaries before specified, which was estimated to contain from two to three thousand graves. These depressions, on a thorough examination made by **Esq. Aaron Wright** (emp. mine), as early as 1800, were found invariably to contain human bones, blackened with time, which on exposure to the air soon crumbled to dust.

The imagination is pained in endeavoring to penetrate the mystery in which the history of this people is shrouded. That the multitude whose mortal remains people these mansions of the dead, once existed, that they lived, died and were buried, is sufficiently obvious; but, of their origin, language, religion, or political and social condition, we can know absolutely nothing.

It will naturally be inferred that a burying ground of the character above described, must have been located amidst a populous district, and that the surrounding country has once been filled with a multitude of human inhabitants.

Evidence in confirmation of this fact is likewise obtained from the traces of ancient cultivation observed by the first settlers on the lands in the vicinity, which although covered with forest, exhibited signs of having once been thrown up into squares and terraces, and laid out into gardens.

Some idea of the changes produced within the last half century, may be formed from the vague notions entertained at the time, of the country situated on the borders of Lake Erie. The man is now living who recollects having heard the question asked, in presence of a number of intelligent men in a town in Connecticut, what lake lay immediately west of Lake Ontario, and there was not an individual present who could give the desired information. One man observed, however, that he believed it was Lake Erie. It was regarded as [a] distant, solitary lake, situated far toward the setting sun, and its name immediately associated with that of the West Sea...

**Aaron Wright** (emp. mine) and Nathan King, two young men, arrived in the country [in 1799]... who afterwards married and settled in the township...

Among the events that signalize the history of this township it has obtained the distinction of having given birth to the Golden Bible.... written by Solomon Spaulding (emp. mine), a graduate of Dartmouth College, some twenty years before it made its appearance in the world...

To place the subject in its true light we shall here introduce the statement of

John Spaulding, brother of Solomon, now [in 1844] residing at Conneautville, Pa...

... The surrender of General Hull's army in August, 1812, and the territory of Michigan, left the whole northern frontier of Ohio exposed to the incursions of the British, enemy... the British seemed to derive great satisfaction in sailing along our shores, firing cannon and making other demonstrations of hostility calculated to annoy and alarm the inhabitants.

They had in two or three instances effected a landing from their vessels in small parties, killed some cattle and possessed themselves of some other articles of plunder of little value. Expresses were frequently arriving with tidings from the seat of war, and it was not uncommon for the people to be called out of their beds at the dead of night to hear exaggerated accounts of the murders and brutalities of the Indians.

It was during this period of excitement that the great alarm experienced by the people of Conneaut and vicinity occurred, to wit: on the night of the 11th of August, 1812: Two British vessels had been observed off shore during the day previous... (A British landing party having been discovered near New Salem) almost every house in the settlement was deserted, and a large portion of the population had taken refuge in the woods...

The inhabitants of the upper part of the settlement principally fled across the creek and retired to Fort Hill, where amidst its ancient ruins, then covered with a thick forest, they hoped to find a place of temporary security. Before reaching this place of refuge, however, a variety of disasters, more or less serious, had occurred, principally occasioned by the necessity of fording the Conneaut.

In the absence of other means of conveyance, the younger children, and some of the women, were obliged to be carried over on the shoulders of the men. One rather portly lady was being thus transported on the back of her husband, who happened to be a small man, when by missing his footing on a slippery rock in the middle passage, they were both precipitated into the stream, and before he could shift his ballast so as to shake his head fairly above water, it is said he was in danger of being drowned. Within the dilapidated walls of the old fort, hid among the bushes, they passed a tedious and uncomfortable night...

But the night, with all its inquietude and alarm, passed away, and as the morning with its calm and peaceful light broke upon the scene, the cheering sound of "all's well!"... gave assurance that the danger was averted... The boats which the excited imagination of the sentry had filled with British and



Indians, belonged to Captain Dobbins of Erie [Pa.]...<sup>96</sup>

**(12) “March 1811 Agreement Between  
Solomon Spalding & Henry Lake**

“Articles of agreement entered into between  
Solomon Spalding of Salem in the county of  
Ashtabula & state of Ohio of the first part  
& Henry Lake of Buffalo in the county of  
Niagara -- & state of New York of the second  
part Witnesseth that for the consideration  
of Four hundred & Eighty Dollars that the  
said Spalding hath sold unto the said Lake  
the one half of a certain tract of Land adjoining  
his Forge Dam, together with the one  
half of sd. Dam & the Pond & the priviledge  
of joining him in equal partnership to  
erect a forge ... .. In witness  
whereof we hereunto set our hands  
and seals this 8th day of March 1811  
In presence of  
Linus Scovil  
Joel Woodin  
Solomon Spalding (SL)  
Henry Lake (SL)<sup>97</sup>

**(13) Jno. Brown, attested by his son:** “I was intimately acquainted with  
Henry Lake, Oliver Smith, Dr. Nahum Howard. They were among our best  
citizens. Often talked with Lake about S. Spaulding’s MSS. years before B. of  
M. came out. After it came out he claimed the two were identical.”<sup>98</sup>

**(14) E. Edward:** “Often heard Rigdon preach in ‘19 and ‘20. Fluent  
Speaker. Often heard H. Lake, N. Howard, A. Wright, who were among the

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<sup>96</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab1.htm#1844genev1>.

<sup>97</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab3.htm#1811forge>.

<sup>98</sup> *Independent Patriot*, “Braden-Kelley Debate,” Vol. 6, (Lamoni, Decatur Co., Iowa, July 2, 1891), no. 32.

best citizens and held responsible positions, say that Spaulding wrote the history part of the B. of M.”<sup>99</sup>

(15) **Mr. Gibson, Dec. 4, ‘84:** “Have read Howe’s book on Mormonism, and have often heard H. Lake, N. Howard and A. Wright state that Spaulding often read his MSS. to his neighbors; and also that the history part of B. of M. is the same as that Manuscript.”<sup>100</sup>

(16) **N. B. Keyes:** “Conneaut, O., Dec. 8, ‘84. I have heard nearly all the witnesses whose testimony is in Howe’s book, (the witness names them) state the same in conversation. They claimed that the history part of B. M. and Spaulding’s manuscript were the same. All these persons were among our most highly respected citizens.”<sup>101</sup>

(17) **T. B. Howard:** “Have read the statements of H. Lake, O. Smith and my father, Dr. N. Howard in Howe’s book, and have often heard them make the same statements in conversation. They said the history part of Spaulding’s MSS. was the same as B. of M.”<sup>102</sup>

(18) **E.D. Howe:** “...Before publishing my book I went to Conneaut and saw most of the witnesses who had seen Spauldings Manuscript Found and had testified to its identity with the Book of Mormon as published in my book and was satisfied they were men of intelligence and respectability and were not mistaken in their statements...”<sup>103</sup>

(19) **James Barr Walker:** “A short digression will here be necessary for tracing out more particularly the true origin of this book. -- Some years ago there was a clergyman by the name of Solomon Spaulding, in the township of Salem in the North-Eastern part of this State, who wrote much, for his own diversion, about the origin of the Aborigines of this country -- he believed them to be the Ten Tribes -- adopting fictitious names, and giving his writings

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<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> Arthur B. Deming, “Eber D. Howe: 1885,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, pg. 3, col. 1.

the shape of a history. A short time previous to his death, being in straitened circumstances, he determined to have his manuscripts published, and took them to Pittsburgh for that purpose, where he died. The manuscripts fell into the hands of his relatives, it is supposed, some of whom live near Palmyra, Smith's former residence. Though this cannot now be obtained, there are several persons in Salem, now Conneaut, who have seen it, and recollect distinctly the character of the fiction. They were intimate with Mr. Spaulding, and used frequently to converse familiarly about his story, and to read it, or hear it read to them. **One man with whom I conversed, said he recollected the names of the characters and places, and that in general they remained the same in the Book of Mormon, as in the manuscript of Spaulding. He feels not the least hesitation in testifying to this, and to the identity of the works so far as relates to the narrative, or historical part. Indeed the resemblance is so striking, that it was detected the first evening the Mormonites preached in that place, merely from the passages read in the Book during service. There is all the certainty on the subject, in the minds of those who have seen the manuscript, that could be felt in any case, unless the two books could be laid side by side and compared. One man especially, by the name of Miller, who worked for Mr. Spaulding several weeks, perhaps months, states that the manuscript lay on a shelf in the room where he slept, and that he spent many of his leisure hours in reading it, so long as he worked at the house.** (emp. mine)

These particulars will be stated at length, and in the form of written testimony over responsible names, in the work to which I have already referred, which it is not doubted will contain a full exposure of this gross imposture."<sup>104</sup>

(20) **Jesse J. Moss to James T. Cobbs:** "Dallas, Polk Co. Or. Dec. 17" / 78

J. T. Cobb. -- Sir. Yours of Nov. 3" per favor of A. S. Hayden came to hand in my absence from home & came first to my notice last week & it is with pleasure that I comply with your request but I am not pleased with your making Rigdon 'the connecting link between the two systems Mormonism & Campbellism.' There is no system of Campbellism & never was see Webster's New ed Please dont nickname us. That Rigdon forms the connecting link between Spaulding's book & the Bible & put all the Judaism & Christianity

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<sup>104</sup> "From the Junior Editor. Mormonism. No. 4." *The Ohio Observer* - Vol. VIII - Hudson, Ohio, Thurs. June 12, 1834 - no. 15.

there is in Mormonism into it there is not a shadow of a doubt in my mind That 'he stole (not all but the best part) of his thunder from the Disciples' by taking their plea for the restoration of primitive Christianity & if the Disciples could be successful in bringing the people back to the old Apostolic doctrine of faith repentance & baptism for the conversion of sinners so could the Mormons. With this he coupled the common expectation of Many in almost all the churches that before the Millennium began we should have faith & purity enough & miracles would be restored This coupled with the other constituted the elements of their success. -- My wife was a niece of E. D. Howe & his wife and her mother were Mormons. Myself & wife were immersed by Rigdon before he publicly espoused Mormonism. I taught school at Kirtland Flats five months & the first week of my school three Mormon missionaries came from New York to this place It was here Rigdons common stock community the Morley family was located & it was in this family that they made their first converts in Ohio & it was here they stuck their first stake their Zion & it was here that I began the battle in opposition w. Br. Moore making the first speech & I the second the same evening in one of their meetings & the battle once begun we never ceased firing & our lives were threatened so much so that our friends were afraid for us to be out at night alone & if the Danites had then been in existence I have no doubt we would both have been assassinated. -- The Morley family would invite strangers from abroad & citizens of the immediate vicinity to stay with them all night & every one that stayed however strong their opposition before were baptized the next morning. Having studied in my boyhood the Black Art Ledgerdeman & jugling I had my suspicions aroused & I confess I acted the hypocrite so as to deceive them & obtained an invitation to stay all night circumstances prevented & again I was invited the next night & again circumstances were unpropitious both times on their part & before the third night a good brother was so distressed through fear that I was going to join them & so worked upon my sympathies that to relieve him I told him what I was doing & he to relieve others told them & it got to their ears & I got no further invitation. As soon as I found my secret was out I made a publick statement of my design & the object I had in view & my suspicions & I told how Angels could be manufactured & strange wonders made to appear in the night & from that time forth invitations to stay over night ceased to be given & no more converts were made in that way. -- They partook of the Lords supper at night with darkened win-dows &

excluded from the room all but their own till they got through & then opened the doors & called the outsiders in to witness a scene far exceeding the wildest scene ever exhibited among the Methodists. They had some wild & strange scenes at their ordinary meetings but none to compare with this. Myself & a young companion were the first to remain. He had fallen asleep & could not be wakened & I was deaf & dumb & after considerable deliberation they finally concluded to proceed with the administration without carrying us out. My companion soon waked & we witnessed the administration & became fully satisfied that the wine was medicated & I tried to steal the bottle with the balance of wine left & came near doing it & when I told my suspicions & how near I came to getting the wine those performances ceased & soon after they got a revelation from Joseph that all those things were from the Devil. -- Martin Harris one of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon in the course of the winter came to this place with a revelation from Joseph to the saints & they were commanded not to let the Gentiles see it or know anything of its purport. One evening he was in a large social circle in deep conversation when I discovered the revelation in his hat pocketed it & with a young man by the name of Taneur withdrew unobserved from the company copied it & returned it to his hat before the company broke up & in a few days copies of it were circulating among the Gentiles very much to their consternation & mystification. -- My wife's mother being a Mormon she was naturally very anxious to have her daughter go with her & believing that if she married me she would never be a Mormon she was therefore bitterly opposed to the match & never gave her consent till Joseph got a revelation that I was to be a bright & shining light in the Mormon church & told her to let me have the girl & so I got the girl & afterwards converted the mother & she died in the Christian faith. The bait did not take & Joseph's prophecy is not yet fulfilled & I guess it is now too late for I am in my seventy third year. -- I cannot give you Walter Scott's estimate of Rigdon & know of no one that can give it. Your estimate of Rigdon is true to life & your judgment of his motives & his disappointment in his endeavor to lead the Disciples into Communism is correct but I can add no facts & can only evaluate the truth of what you have said. **One fact I will give you. I met an ex-judge of the Co. Court of Ashtabula Co. Ohio at Conneaut in that Co. who told me that he read Spalding's romance in manuscript week by week & day by day as it was written & that the book of Mormon was the same except the religious element that had been added to it & I had the**



clerk's office in connection with an Iron Smelting Works pointed out to me where it was written & where the judge read it, he being one of the owners of said works (emp. mine).

I had heard Joseph spoken of as green & squash looking. The first time I saw him was in a Mormon meeting at Kirtland he was acting as door keeper & seating the people. I told my wife that the door keeper was the smartest keenest & the largest headed man in the crowd judge my surprise then after what I had heard to learn that that was Joseph Smith. I concluded that my judgment or that of others was erroneas & I think after events proved mine the most correct. I knew nothing of Mermerism Biology Clairvoyance or Spiritualism then but I have since been pretty familiar with them all & I should say emphatically that Smith was not nor could not be made a Clairvoyant but that he had great Mesmeric power & could make Clairvoyants of others. I have no doubt Rigdon thought to make a tool of Smith but Smith was too sharp for him and turned the tables upon him and made a tool of him. I advise you to get one more book 'The Portrait -- A Romance of the Cuyahoga Valley' By A. G. Riddle a lawyer of Cleveland Ohio I suspect the author is the 1/2Fred1/2 of the novel but whether he is or no I think you could get much valuable information by communicating with him. The Book was published by Nichols & Hall Boston and by Cobb, Andrews & Co. Cleveland 1874. -- Now for your P.S.

Your first question is already answered. 2" qu. With Harris (not Martin the witness to the book) at Braddock's field Pa. in the Spring of 1833. 3" qu. already answered. I can tell you nothing about Hyde only that he was a Disciple preacher & joined the Mormons, neither can I answer your question about Pratt. If I could give any other facts that would be of use to you would be of use to you I would do so with plesure I do not think you speculate over much or that your speculations are so verry wild but rather that they are reasonable deductions from the facts & premises, at any rate they are the same that I drew long ago. Respectfully Yours

J. J. Moss<sup>105</sup>

(F) **Abner Jackson:** "He then came to Richfield, Otsego County, New York, and started a store, near where my father lived, about the beginning of the

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105 Dec. 17, 1878. Jasper Jesse Moss Letter. Theodore Albert Schroeder Papers: Box 2, folder 1. Wisconsin State Historical Society Library, Madison, WI Partial Catalog: Theodore A. Schroeder Papers. <http://solomonspalding.com/docs/Wil1878a.htm>.

present century. Spaulding contracted for large tracts of land along the shore of Lake Erie, on each side of the State line, in both Pennsylvania and Ohio. My father exchanged with him the farm on which he lived in Otsego County, New York, for land in Erie county, Pa., where the town of Albion now stands, and moved on it A.D. 1805. ... Shortly after my father moved, Spaulding sold his store in Richfield, and moved to Conneaut, Ashtabula county, Ohio,... This romance, Mr. Spaulding brought with him on a visit to my father, a short time before he moved from Conneaut to Pittsburgh. At that time I was confined to the house with a lame knee, and so I was in company with them and heard the conversation that passed between them. Spaulding read much of his manuscript to my father, and in conversation with him, explained his views of the old fortifications in this country, and told his Romance.”<sup>106</sup>

(1) “The Rev. J. J. Jackson, a minister in good standing in the East Ohio Conference, writes us under date of Feb. 11, from Cambridge, O., as follows:

Concerning the Solomon Spaulding authorship of a large part of the Book of Mormon I have had opportunity to know something. I once heard my father say more than once that he had heard Solomon Spaulding read from The Manuscript Found in his own father’s house. I was on the Pine River Circuit of the Washington District of the Pittsburg Conference, West Elizabeth, Allegheny, Pa., and I was placed in charge of that work in 1864-66. My father came for a rather longer visit than usual. There was a small body of local Mormons in that place. While my father was with us I borrowed a copy of the Book of Mormon for him to compare it with his remembrance fully, as he wished to do; and he said that the Book of Mormon, with some alterations, and those by no means material, was identical with what he heard Mr. Spaulding read.”<sup>107</sup>

(G) **John Miller:** Rachel Derby’s testimony - “SPRINGFIELD, Pa., Dec. 9. 1884

My father, John N. Miller, settled in Springfield, Erie County, Pa., near Conneaut, Ohio, in 1800. He was an elder of the Presbyterian Church over thirty years, and his father was before him. I have many times heard father say that

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106 “The Book of Mormon.” *The Daily Evening Reporter*. N.S. Vol. IV. Washington, Pa., Friday, Jan. 7, 1881. Whole 1383.

107 *The Christian Advocate*, Whole No. 4,905, New York, Thursday, February 23, 1905, Vol. LXXX. No. 8.

in 1811 he and Andrew Cochran helped build a forge or furnace for General Keyes at Conneaut, Ohio, and that they boarded with Solomon Spaulding, who had been a preacher, but his wife was not religious. She was high-strung, a frolicker, fond of balls and parties, and drove him out of the ministry. He said he liked Spaulding. While they were at their meals Spaulding would lie on the bed and read to them his manuscripts. Father also frequently read them himself. I have often heard him tell about the Nephites and Zarahemlites before the “Book of Mormon” was published. I well remember D.P. Hurlbut coming to our house about fifty years ago and his telling father that he was taking evidence to expose Mormonism, and hearing him read from the “Book of Mormon.” Frequently father would request Hurlbut to stop reading and he would state what followed and Hurlbut would say that it was so in the “Book of Mormon.” He expressed great surprise that father remembered so much of it. Father told him that the “Manuscript Found” was not near all of Spaulding’s writings and that probably there would soon be another prophecy out. Father said he had no doubt the historical part of the “Book of Mormon” was Spaulding’s “Manuscript Found.” John Spaulding, Solomon’s brother, lived half a mile from our house and our families were quite intimate. I saw father sign a statement and give Hurlbut. He had statements from Henry Lake, Aaron Wright and Dr. Howard, of Conneaut. Hurlbut stayed two nights with a Mormon woman of very bad character, who lived alone. Several of the lowest families in Springfield became Mormons. Mr. Hartshorn, a Mormon, whose wife was a Methodist, did not go West, but he insisted and she hung herself on the way.

[Signed] RACHEL DERBY

Witnessed by LEE DERBY A. B. DEMING.<sup>108</sup>

### **(H) Artemas Cunningham:**

Dale Broadhurst was able to compile the tax lists for 1810-1816 tax list for Ashtabula Co.

10-11-14-16 = name appears on 1810, 1811, 1814, and 1816 lists.

10-11-14-00 = Geauga Co. landholder.

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<sup>108</sup> Arthur B. Deming, “Rachel Derby,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 1, (Jan. 1888), pg. 1, col. 7.

10-11-00-16 = Ashtabula Co. landholder.

00-00-14-00 = name appears only on the 1814 Geauga list.

00-00-00-16 = name appears only on the 1816 Ashtabula list.

Cunningham	Artemus	00-00-14-00
Howard	Nahum	00-00-00-16
King	Nehemiah	10-11-00-16
Spalding	Solomon	10-11-00-00
Wright	Aaron	10-11-00-16 <sup>109</sup>

### **Dale Broadhurst's notes:**

"Note 1: Of the eight "Conneaut Witnesses" professing the Solomon Spalding authorship for the Book of Mormon in 1833, four lived in northern Ohio between 1810 and 1816: Dr. Nahum Howard, Henry Lake, Artemus Cunningham, and Aaron Wright. Henry Lake's name does not appear on tax lists for this period, but he is listed on the New Salem township voter lists for 1811 and 1819. He apparently did not own land in Geauga/Ashtabula counties during this period. Since Mr. Lake operated the first hotel in the village of New Salem, the question arises as to when he first became the owner of the land on which his "Mansion House" was located. Possibly Mr. Lake rented his property from Aaron Wright at this time.

Note 2: A fourth person involved with those authorship claims was Nehemiah King, the man who initiated those same claims in January of 1832. King died in late 1832 or early 1833 before his statement could be taken. His name appears in the early lists, as does that of Solomon Spalding himself. Spalding left Ohio in 1812 and paid no land taxes that year."<sup>110</sup>

(3) "W. H. Payne, attested by his daughter: No person who knew Cunningham would question the truth of his statement in Howe's book about the Spaulding MSS. His family was as highly respected as any in this part of the state."<sup>111</sup>

(4) "T. W. Crane: Knew Cunningham, who was regarded as one of our

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109 <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab2.htm>.

110 <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab2.htm>.

111 *Independent Patriot*, "Braden-Kelley Debate," Vol. 6, Lamoni, Decatur Co., Iowa, July 2, 1891, no. 32.

best citizens.”<sup>112</sup>

(5) “E. B. Haskell: A, Cunningham was one of our best neighbors. I after heard him make the same statements about Spaulding’s MSS as are contained in Howe’s book. Dated Nov. 4, 1884.”<sup>113</sup>

**(I) Joseph Miller:**

(1) Mr. Miller helped with the casket of Spaulding.

“Spaulding was a very poor man; during his stay at Amity, I was very familiar with him, bailed him for money at least twice; and by request of Spaulding, assisted his wife in settling up his little business -- made his coffin and helped lay him in his grave.”

“JOSEPH MILLER.”<sup>114</sup>

(2) They have his hatchet that he used to construct the casket in possession of Amwell Township Historical Society, Amity, PA.<sup>115</sup>

(3) “The village of Amity, in all coming time, will be regarded as the Mecca of Mormonism. It was in the year 1816 that the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, a graduate of Dartmouth College, settled in this rural village, with a view to banish ennui. He was (what is familiarly known as) an antiquarian, and travelled far and near to investigate, scientifically, Indian mounds, and everything else connected with American antiquities, for the purpose of tracing the aborigines to their original source, a portion of one of the lost tribes of ancient Israel. While pursuing these investigations, and to while away the tedious hours, he wrote a romance, based upon fiction ; his investigations and history at the same time leaving the reader under the impression that it was found in one of these mounds, and through his knowledge of hieroglyphics he had deciphered it. As time and circumstances would permit, he would often read to his friends in Amity portions of his fabulous and historical romance.

Rev. Spaulding resolved to publish it under the name of “The Manuscript Found,” and actually entered into a contract with a Mr. Patterson, of Pittsburg, to publish the same, but from some cause the contract was not fulfilled. The

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> Thomas Gregg, *The Prophet of Palmyra*, 442.

<sup>115</sup> Cowdery, et al., *The Spaulding Enigma*, Ch. 4 - The Letter - page 50. Kobo edition.



manuscript remained in the possession of Mr. Patterson between two and three years before Mr. Spaulding reclaimed and recovered it. In the mean time a journeyman printer of the name of Sidney Rigden copied the whole of the manuscript, and hearing of Joseph Smith, Jr.'s, digging operations for money through the instrumentality of necromancy, resolved in his own mind that he would turn this wonderful manuscript to good account and make it profitable to himself. An interview takes place between Rigden and Smith, terms are agreed upon, the whole manuscript undergoes a partial revision, and in process of time, instead of finding money, they find curious plates, which, when translated, turn out to be the Golden Bible, or Book of Mormon, which was found under the prediction of Mormon in these words (see Mormon Bible, p. 504): "Go to the land Antura, unto a hill which shall be called Shin, and there have I deposited unto the Lord all the sacred engravings concerning this people." Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, certify that they have seen these selfsame plates which were deposited by Mormon—that they were faithfully translated by the gift and power of God, because God's voice declared it unto them, that the work was true, and to place the testimony of its truthfulness beyond a peradventure, eight witnesses, viz: Christian Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, John Whitmer, Hiram Page, Joseph Smith, Sr., Hiram Smith, and Samuel H. Smith (almost all of the witnesses belonging either to the Whitmer or Smith family), testify that Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator, showed them the plates of gold, that they handled them with their own hands, saw the curious engravings, and that the plates were of curious workmanship. Such is the account of the most stupendous imposture which has been perpetrated for many centuries, but more especially upon so intelligent a nation as the American people. An imposture, at which the religious world stands amazed, paralyzing the marriage vow, and defying the power of the general government. To place this question beyond the possibility of a doubt, and to demonstrate the fact that the Book of Mormon was originally written in Amity, Washington County, Pa., I shall take the testimony of living witnesses, whose characters are beyond reproach, and beloved by the entire community as persons whose veracity cannot be questioned, and whose intelligence has no superior. The testimony I shall offer is a letter from the Rev. J. W. Hamilton, pastor of the Presbyterian church in Amity, Pa. —a letter from Joseph Miller, Sr., the intimate and confidential friend of Rev. Solomon Spaulding, and lastly, a letter

from the wife of Rev. Spaulding, which was originally published thirty-one years since, or in 1839.

1. Letter of Rev. J. W. Hamilton. BOOK OF MORMON. Some time since I became the owner of the book of Mormon. I put it into the hands of Mr. Joseph Miller, Sr., of Amwell township. After examining it he makes the following statement concerning the connection of Rev. Solomon Spaulding with the authorship of the book of Mormon.

**Mr. Miller is now in the seventy-ninth year of his age** (emp. mine). He is an elder in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. His judgment is good and his veracity unimpeachable. He was well acquainted with Mr. S. while he lived at Amity. He waited on him during his last illness. He made his coffin, and assisted to bury his remains where they now lie, in the Presbyterian graveyard at Amity. He also bailed Mr. S.'s wife when she took out letters of administration on his estate. Mr. Miller's statement may be relied on as true. J. W. Hamilton."<sup>116</sup>

(4) "Joseph Miller, Esq., an old and highly respected citizen of Amwell township, sends us by hand of Rev. J. W. Hamilton, of Amity, the following communication, which originally appeared in a magazine entitled the Evangelist of the True Gospel, published at Carthage, Ohio, in 1839. Mr. Miller has, on various occasions heretofore, furnished us with many interesting incidents connected with the career of Solomon Spaulding, and the origin of the so-called Mormon Bible. The present contribution, which consists of a statement from the wife of Mr. Spaulding, seems to furnish conclusive evidence that the "Manuscript Found," written by her husband, and the "Book of Mormon," are one and the same."<sup>117</sup>

(5) "Time would fail me, as well as the patience of my readers would become exhausted, were I to recount and recapitulate the battles in which the officers and soldiers of Washington County have been engaged since the organization of this county ; I shall, therefore, leave this interesting question to the student of history to consult other general historical works, and give the names and present ages of the survivors of the war of 1812 residing in Washington County in 1870.

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<sup>116</sup> *History of Washington County* ed. Alfred Creigh, 89-90.

<sup>117</sup> *History of Washington County*. ed. Alfred Creigh, 91.

John Conlin, 90 years ; George Howe, 89 years ; James McClelland, 86 years ; Hon. John Grayson, 87 years ; John Urie, 86 years; Amos Pratt, 84 years ; James Edgar, 83 years; James White, 83 years; Benjamin Bennett, 83 years ; Jonathan Hixon, 83 years ; Jacob Jordan, 83 years ; Allen Thompson, 80 years ; Alexander McConnell, 80 years ; John McCombs, 80 years ; **Joseph Miller, 79 years** (emp. mine); Samuel Cole, 78 years ; George Spence, 78 years; James Boon, 78 years; John Fitzwilliams, 76 years; Horatio Molden, 76 years; James McDermot, 75 years; John Ritter, 75 years; Jacob Dimit, 74 years ; Joseph Henderson, 72 years.”<sup>118</sup>

### **(J) Redick McKee:**

“Having already given you the incidents which led to my unexpected removal to Amity and intimacy with Mr. Spaulding in 1814, I will now parenthetically and briefly remark that I removed from that village in 1816, unexpectedly, under the following circumstances. Mr. Hugh Jelley -- senior partner at Pittsburg -- died in the summer of 1816, and knowing that a settlement of the firm’s business would be necessary, and having learned all that pertained to the management of a country store, I wrote the surviving partner that I wished to resign as soon as he could find a suitable successor. In about a month I was relieved by Mr. Wm. Douglass -- a nephew of Mr. Jelley’s -- and, bidding farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding, Mr. Miller and other friends, returned to my old city. I may be pardoned for adding that I was congratulated by my friends on my healthy and improved appearance, and, especially on the success of my administration at Amity, which they said was profitable and highly satisfactory to my employers, and creditable to myself. Refraining from any further details of a biographical nature, I will make no mention of the events of my subsequent busy life, but merely remark, with gratitude to the Almighty, that in all my varied experiences and exposures “by flood and field” during the more than seventy years since I lived at old Amity, a kind of Providence has preserved me in good health, free from any serious illness or bodily disaster.”<sup>119</sup>

**(1) McKee’s Obituary:** “Redick McKee, Esq., well known to many of the older readers of the BANNER, died at Berkeley Springs, West Virginia,

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118 *History of Washington County*. ed. Alfred Creigh, 296-297.

119 Arthur B. Deming, “Redick McKee: 1885,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, pgs. 1-2, col. 6.

on Monday evening, Sept. 13th, in the 86th year of his age. His death was sudden and unexpected. A private letter from him, of Sept. 9th, was received at the BANNER office Sept. 11th, relating to work which he had then in contemplation. Mr. McKee was born Dec. 7, 1800, at McKeesport, Alleghany County, Pa., of which town his father was the proprietor and founder. In early life he was in such delicate health that he was not expected to reach maturity, and for the same reason his school education was limited to about four months. His mother, however, well fulfilled at home the office of a teacher. A few years of life on the farm of an uncle so far invigorated his health that in his 12th year he entered the employment of Messrs. Hugh and James Jelley, who conducted an extensive mercantile business in Pittsburgh. So rapidly did he develop a faculty for business that two years afterwards and whilst in his 14th year, he was entrusted by his employers with the management of a branch store which they established at Amity, Washington Co., Pa., with a stock of assorted goods amounting to \$5,000 or \$6,000. Here he remained nearly two years, during the whole of which time he boarded with Rev. Solomon Spaulding, whose name has been so often mentioned in connection with the authorship of "The Book of Mormon."<sup>120</sup>

(2) "John McKee married Sally Redick, sister of Judge David Redick, of Washington County, Pa., whose pedigree is traceable back through the Hoges or "Hoags," Humes, Stewarts, "Redochs," and Douglasses to the dawn of Scottish history, about the year 1100. Two of her grandnieces, Mrs. Jacob Burket and Mrs. John Merrington are still living and were recently residents of this city. A grandnephew, R.F. Ramsey, Esq., is living in Pittsburgh.

Redick McKee, after a long life of great activity and usefulness (largely passed in Wheeling, Va., where in its early days he was prominent alike in establishing manufactories and other business enterprises and in founding religious and educational institutions, died at the home of his son, David R. McKee, in Washington City, September 13th 1886.

The latter is now the only survivor of Redick McKee's family; and his sons are the last born lineal descendants of the first settler of McKeesport."<sup>121</sup>

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120 Arthur B. Deming, "McKee's Obituary," *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, (Dec. 1888), pg. 2, col. 7.

121 *The First One Hundred Years of McKeesport*, eds. Abbott, Walter S. Abbott and William E. Harrison (McKeesport, PA: Press of McKeesport Times, 1894), 16.

## **Chapter 7:**

### **Four Questions To Ask In Regards To Reliable Eyewitness Testimony (Part 2)**

#### **Were They Accurate In Their Details?**

*Were they accurate in the description that they gave of the Book of Mormon (if “Manuscript Found” was transformed into it)?*

#### **Details:**

##### **(1) The title “Manuscript Found”**

(John Spalding, Henry Lake, John Miller, Matilda Davidson, Matilda McKinstry, Joseph Miller, Abner Jackson, Redick McKee)

##### **(2) Historical novel**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, John Miller, Aaron Wright, Oliver Smith, Nahum Howard, Artemas Cunningham, Matilda Davidson, Matilda McKinstry, Joseph Miller, Abner Jackson, Redick McKee)

##### **(3) First settlers**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, John Miller, Aaron Wright, Oliver Smith, Artemas Cunningham)

##### **(4) Descendants - Native Americans**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, John Miller, Abner Jackson, Redick McKee)

##### **(5) Journey from Jerusalem**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, Henry Lake, John Miller, Aaron Wright, Oliver Smith, Abner Jackson, Redick McKee)

##### **(6) Nephi & Lehi - main characters**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, John Miller, Oliver Smith, Artemas Cunningham, Matilda McKinstry, Abner Jackson, Redick McKee)

##### **(7) Quarrels & contentions**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, Henry Lake, Oliver Smith, Abner Jackson,



Redick McKee)

**(8) Two nations**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, Abner Jackson, Redick McKee)

**(9) Bloody wars**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, Henry Lake, John Miller, Oliver Smith, Abner Jackson)

**(10) Arts & sciences**

(John Spalding, John Miller, Oliver Smith, Matilda Davidson)

**(11) “and it came to pass”**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, Henry Lake, Oliver Smith, Joseph Miller, Abner Jackson)

Cowdery, et al., state: “(21) It is interesting to note that the Mormons have systematically removed more than 1,000 instances of the phrase “And it came to pass” (or some variation thereof) from published versions of The Book of Mormon over the years, allegedly for the sake of improving clarity and continuity. ... Of the 1,147 paragraphs in the original 1830 edition, 771, or just over two-thirds, begin with some form of the phrase “and it came to pass.” (Of course the phrase occurs within the text of paragraphs, as well, thus accounting for the “more than 1,000 incidences” referred to above.) Certainly such extensive use of this phrase does not derive from the Old or New Testaments, wherein the phrase “It came to pass” or variants thereof appear only seventy-three times in the entire King James version of the Bible. Neither does it occur with such frequency in any other of Joseph Smith’s extensive writings, nor in Solomon Spalding’s Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek.”<sup>122</sup>

**(12) No religious matter (Scriptural quotations/references/heavy theological content)**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, Henry Lake, John Miller, Oliver Smith)

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<sup>122</sup> Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma*, endnotes for Chapter 1, 9 of 33. Kobo edition.

### **(13) Forts & mounds**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, Aaron Wright, Oliver Smith, Nahum Howard, Artemas Cunningham, Matilda Davidson, Matilda McKinstry, Joseph Miller, Abner Jackson)

### **(14) Obsolete style (KJV style/Elizabethean English)**

(John Spalding, Martha Spalding, Artemas Cunningham, Matilda Davidson, Redick McKee)

Hardy, an LDS author, states this in regards to the **BOM**: “3. *It imitates the style of the King James Bible*. Even a cursory glance reveals that the Book of Mormon wants to be seen as a companion to the Bible. It is divided into books named after prophets; biblical phrases and even chapter-length quotations are scattered throughout; and it is written in the diction of the Authorized Version, including the general use of archaic words such as thou, doth, hath, and all manner of verbs ending in -eth. This style of English marked the Book of Mormon immediately as “scripture,” but the KJV set a very high literary standard, and the Jacobean forms are not always employed consistently, even after the many additional changes that sought to regularize these forms. The Bible-like impression of the text was enhanced in the first edition of 1830, published in binding modeled on mass-distribution Bibles of the time. Since 1830, the LDS Church has further emphasized the biblical nature of the Book of Mormon by dividing it into numbered verses with cross-references (1879) and double columns (1920) and adding brief summaries at the beginning of chapters (1920 ; revised in 1981), extensive cross references (1981), and a new subtitle: Another Testament of Jesus Christ (1982).”<sup>123</sup>

### **(15) “Judgment on the old world” (probable allusion to the siege of Babylon against Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar) (Oliver Smith)**

### **(16) Account of Laban (Henry Lake)**

**(a) Henry Lake:** “One time, when he was reading to me the tragic account of Laban, I pointed out to him what I considered an inconsistency,

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<sup>123</sup> Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide* (Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2010), 5-6.

which he promised to correct; but by referring to the Book of Mormon, I find to my surprise that it stands there just as he read it to me then.”<sup>124</sup>

The account of Laban is found in 1 Nephi 3-7.

**(b) Robert Patterson, Jr.:** “Also that an incongruity occurs in the story of Laban, ..., where Nephi says they “did speak many hard words unto us, their younger brothers, and they did smite us even with a rod.” Whereupon an angel appears and says, “Why do ye smite your younger brother with a rod?” Consistency would require that the number, whether plural or singular, should be the same in both sentences. The oversight is in itself a trifle, but its occurrence in both the Spaulding manuscript and the Book of Mormon is an unanswerable proof of identity.”<sup>125</sup>

### **(17) Humorous passages (John Miller)**

Ether 2 is a humorous story to me that is quite ridiculous on the barges of the brother of Jared. Some of the names of the *BOM* are pretty funny when you had the suffixes: Moron, Moroni, Moronihah, etc..

### **(18) Moroni (John Miller)**

### **(19) Straits of Darien (John Miller)**

**John Miller:** “When Spalding divested his history of its fabulous names, by a verbal explanation, he landed his people near the Straits of Darien, which I am very confident he called Zarahemla.”<sup>126</sup>

(1) The straits of Darien are not located in the *BOM*. Interesting enough, when I put this into Google Maps, it pointed to the narrow strip of land of what is known as Panama.

(2) “An obsolete definition of an isthmus is a ‘strait’.”<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 282.

<sup>125</sup> Robert Patterson, Jr., *Who Wrote The Book of Mormon?*, 4

<sup>126</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 282-283.

<sup>127</sup> Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma*, Ch. 3 - Synchronicities - pg. 30. Kobo edition.

## (20) “I, Nephi” (Artemas Cunningham)

“I, Nephi” - Artemas Cunningham remembered the reoccurring statement - “I, Nephi.” It is found **84 times**. Out of 84 times, it is found 60 times in 1st Nephi alone (1st Nephi 1:1,16,20; 2:16; 3:1,7,9; 4:5,14,31; 6:1; 7:2,3,8,16; 8:29; 10:1,17(x2); 11:33; 12:12; 13:16,19,20,23; 14:14,27,28; 15:1,4,19,25; 16:1,4,7,8,18,21,22,23,28,30;17:7,11,15,19,23,49,52;18:2,3,10(x2),22; 19:3,4,18,22; 22:1,2,21,27,28,29).

Here are the other 24 times (2nd Nephi 1:1; 4:1,14;5:1,6,12,14,16,17,18,26,29,31; 11:2; 25:1,2,6; 26:7; 30:1; 31:1; 32:7; 33:1,3; Helaman 9:36).

This name is *not* found in *Manuscript Story*.

## (21) Verbal alterations/additions (Abner Jackson)

### (22) Red mark on foreheads

(Joseph Miller; Matilda McKinsty; Redick McKee)

**(1) This account is located in Alma 3:1-4:** “And it came to pass that the Nephites who were not a slain by the weapons of war, after having buried those who had been slain—now the number of the slain were not numbered, because of the greatness of their number—after they had finished burying their dead they all returned to their lands, and to their houses, and their wives, and their children. Now many women and children had been slain with the sword, and also many of their flocks and their herds; and also many of their fields of grain were destroyed, for they were trodden down by the hosts of men. And now as many of the Lamanites and the Amlicites who had been slain upon the bank of the river Sidon were cast into the waters of Sidon; and behold their bones are in the depths of the sea, and they are many. And the Amlicites were distinguished from the Nephites, for they had **marked themselves with red in their foreheads after the manner of the Lamanites** (emp. mine); nevertheless they had not shorn their heads like unto the Lamanites.”

**(2) Joseph Miller:** “.... on hearing read the account from the book of the battle between the Amalekites and the Nephites (Book of Alma, chapter i.), in which the soldiers of one army had placed a red mark on their foreheads to distinguish them from their enemies, it seemed to reproduce in my mind not only the narration but the very words, as they had been impressed on my

mind by the reading of Spaulding's manuscript....”<sup>128</sup>

**(3) Redick McKee:** “She [Matilda McKinstry - SF] remembered that in one of them, touching the mode of warfare in that day, (being hand to hand or man with man) he represented one of the parties having streaks of red paint upon their cheeks and foreheads to distinguish them from enemies in battle.”<sup>129</sup>

**(4) Grant Hardy gave an excellent overview and introduction to the BOM:** “The Book of Mormon tells the story of a Hebrew prophet named Lehi (unknown in the Bible) who is warned by God to take his family and flee from Jerusalem at about the time of the Babylonian invasion in 597 B.C. After wandering through the Arabian Desert for several years, he and his family build a ship and sail to the New World. There the group quickly divides along religious lines, with one brother, Nephi, leading the more righteous members deeper into the wilderness, and two older brothers, Laman and Lemuel, retaining control of the majority of the family. The Nephites are eventually joined by another larger, more secular colony from Jerusalem, a group that had coalesced around Mulek, one of the sons of King Zedekiah. There the group quickly divides along religious lines, with one brother, Nephi, leading the more righteous members deeper into the wilderness, and two older brothers, Laman and Lemuel, retaining control of the majority of the family. The Nephites are eventually joined by another larger, more secular colony from Jerusalem, a group that had coalesced around Mulek, one of the sons of King Zedekiah. In the meantime, the Lamanites possibly merge with other indigenous peoples, for their numbers are always greater than the combined Nephites and Mulekites. The Book of Mormon chronicles the continuing conflicts between the Nephites and the Lamanites and gives particular attention to the last 150 years before the birth of Jesus, when a Christian church of anticipation is set up among those Nephites who believe the prophecies of the coming Messiah. The basic historical narrative is supplemented by records of wars, migrations, missionary journeys, sermons, letters, prophecies, and quotations from the Hebrew Bible. Finally, after his death in Jerusalem, the resurrected Jesus appears to the Nephites at a time

128 “The Book of Mormon. A New Claim of Authorship.” *Pittsburgh Telegraph*. No. 1797. Pittsburgh, Thurs. Evening, Feb. 6, 1879.

129 Arthur B. Deming, “Redick McKee: 1885,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, pgs. 1-2, col. 6.



of political and environmental upheaval to affirm his church, clarify doctrine, and preach a version of the Sermon on the Mount. A 200-year period of peace, prosperity, and unity ensues (which is recounted in fewer than three pages), followed by the resurgence of the ancient divisions of Nephites and Lamanites and the complete destruction of the corrupt Nephite society around a.d. 385. The last Nephite prophet, Moroni, closes the book with the addition of a brief record of an earlier, pre-Nephite people—the Jaredites—who sailed from the Old World to the New World at the time of the Tower of Babel and were destroyed by the factional fighting caused by their wickedness. “In the early 1800s, Joseph Smith, was troubled by all the denominations around him. He wanted to know if he could discover the true church. He supposedly had a vision in which he saw two Persons – the Father and the Son, who told that he would be the one to help prepare the restoration of the original church. On September 21, 1823, Moroni appeared as an angel to Joseph Smith. He told Smith about the plates and showed him where they were located. The next day Smith went to the hill Cumorah where they were located and opened up the stone box to see the plates, but he was not allowed to take them. After four years, Smith was allowed to take the plates and scribes helped Smith as he dictated the translation. The story is presented as the work of the prophet-general Mormon (Moroni’s father), who took time from his military campaigns to compose a book-length summary of records originally written by a long line of Nephite prophets—a sequence of texts known collectively as the Large Plates of Nephi. At some point, Mormon added to his own abridgment the Small Plates of Nephi, another early text that covered the events of the first generation of Nephites from a more religious perspective. All of these records, including those of the Jaredites, were said to have been written on thin sheets of metal. In addition, Lehi’s family had also brought from Jerusalem a complete set of Hebrew scriptures engraved on metal, which they called the Plates of Brass. ... The last Nephite record keeper, Moroni, buried his father’s plates, with a few of his own comments and the abridgment of the Jaredite records, sometime around A.D. 421.”<sup>130</sup>

Look at how many of the details the eyewitnesses gave that do connect between *Manuscript Found* and the **BOM**. It is very astonishing how one can make a sketched outline using the details they gave that formulate the structure of the **BOM**.

130 Hardy, *The Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Edition*, ix-x.

## Were The Witnesses Biased?

*What would the ulterior motive be for lying by the Solomon Spalding witnesses - sexual lust, fame/power, money, etc.? Was there overwhelming prejudice given by the witnesses?*

When a person cross examines the affidavits made by these witnesses, and the examiner finds them to be hiding something or being deceitful in some manner, then one must examine the motive as to why these witnesses would lie in the first place concerning the statements they made.

J. Warner Wallace, being a detective for many years, proposes that many people commit a crime for the same three reasons - sexual lust/illicit relationship, to gain fame and/or power, prestige, and/or for the love of money.

Would the Spalding witnesses lie in order to have illicit sexual relationships? The answer would be no because many of them, but not all, claimed to believe in the Christian worldview and that worldview establishes the proper rules for sexual conduct (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Revelation 21:8).

Would the Spalding witnesses lie in order to have some kind of power and prestige? Yes, it is true that they most likely created a lot of buzz in their day when their statements were written down in books and newspaper articles and read by the masses. Yet remember that these people knew they were committing perjury and would have to stand before God to give an account of their deceitfulness.

Would the Spalding witnesses lie in order to make some kind of money on the deal? My question would be: "How did they get rich?" Do we have any evidence that they gained any greater financial status for doing that?

But let us put up Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith before the jury and look at their history. Would they have any ulterior motives for lying? Knowing that at some point according to **D & C** 132, there was a time when a supposed "revelation" was given that sanctioned polygamy for a time.

Knowing at some point in their history that Smith was a charismatic leader and certainly gained a following, could it not be said that he gained power and prestige among his followers?

Knowing at some point in their history that Smith was a treasure hunter and there were certain financial escapades that he ventured upon (such as the bank in Kirtland), could it not be said that he did it for financial gain?

**Who indeed stands to lose so much if indeed the secret was unleashed? In fact, there are several times throughout history that the secret was let**

**out several times, even by one of Sidney Rigdon's own grandsons.**

J.H. Beadle had an interview with Walter Sidney Rigdon, the son of the fifth child of Sidney Rigdon - Algernon Rigdon:

“EDITOR TRIBUNE: -- In the intervals of my literary labors here I have many talks with men who were in Utah at a very early day, and occasionally with original Mormons or their sons, which would be interesting had I the time to detail them. But my chance talks with one of these are so agreeable that I report him briefly for you. Mr. Walter Sidney Rigdon is a citizen of Carrolton, Cattaraugus County, N. Y., and a grandson of Sidney Rigdon, the partner of Joe Smith. He talked with old Sidney hundreds of times about the “scheme of the Golden Bible,” and his father still has many of the old Sidney's documents.

“Grandfather was a religious crank,” says Mr. Rigdon, “till he lost money by it. He started in as a Baptist preacher, and had a very fine congregation for those days, in Pittsburg. There was no reason at all for his leaving, except that he got ‘cracked.’ At that time he had no ideas of making money. Indeed, while he was with the Mormons, his chances to make money were good enough for most men; but he came out of it about as poor as he went in.”

B. -- “But how did he change first?”

“Well, he tried to understand the prophecies, and the man who does that is sure to go crazy. He studied the prophets and baptism, and of course he got ‘rattled.’ Daniel and Ezekiel and Revelations will ‘rattle’ any man who gives his whole mind to ‘em -- at any rate they did him, and he joined Alexander Campbell. Campbell then believed that the end of the world was nigh --his Millennial Harginger shows that they ‘rattled’ all who listened to them in Ohio and other places; then grandfather got disgusted and decided on a new deal. He found Joe Smith and they had a great many talks together before they brought out the plates. None of us ever doubted that they got the whole thing up; but father always maintained that grandfather helped get up the original Spaulding book. At any rate he got a copy very early and schemed on some way to make it useful. Although the family knew these facts, they refused to talk on the subject while grandfather lived. In fact, he and they took on a huge disgust at the whole subject.

Grandfather died at Friendship, Alleghany County, N. Y. in 1876, over eighty years old. His son Sidney, my father, was born at Mentor in 1827 and remembers the stirring times of Mormonism. He lives where I do. Grandfather had preached to his old neighbors in Alleghany and taken converts to Nauvoo,

so after the break up in 1844, he returned to live at Friendship. For a while he spoke of Mormonism as an attempt to improve Christianity; but the later phases of the thing in Utah were totally different from what he had taught. His daughter Nancy Rigdon is now Mrs Ellis of Pittsburg, and her husband is a journalist in that city. Her testimony against Joe Smith is very strong. The Prophet was no doubt a thoroughly bad man, etc.”

I only report that part of Mr. Rigdon’s talk which shows the history of the “Golden Bible,” as accepted in the family. Of course, if Sidney Rigdon had wanted the world to believe the Smith story of the plates, he would have told them so. But, though the family do not care to ventilate it, he evidently taught them to treat the whole thing as a fraud.

J. H. BEADLE.

NEW YORK, April 7, 1888.”<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> “The “Golden Bible.” Sidney Rigdon’s Grandson Says Their Family Understood it to be a Fraud.” *The Salt Lake Daily Tribune*. Salt Lake City, Utah, Sunday, April 15, 1888 - Vol. XXXIII - No. 155.

## **Chapter 8:** **Other Eyewitness Accounts**

### **(1) Cephas Dodd:**

“Amity, March 2nd 1857

Col. T. Ringland.

Dear Sir, It has been some time since I received your letter, but owing to bad health, and other circumstances, I have not been able to reply until now. I have no knowledge on the subject which would be of any avail. Solomon Spaulding came to Amity with his wife and a little daughter about A. D. 1814 as nearly as I can recollect. He was accompanied by a certain Robert Collins who was a batchelor [sic]\* and from some of the Eastern States. They had little property and rented a tavern stand and kept a public house. After some months Collins left for parts unknown. He so represented himself but it was reported that he had left a wife in New England. Mr. and Mrs. Spaulding usually attended Church one part of the day. I understood from him that he had formerly lived at Cherry Valley in the State of New York, where he had met with some losses and had then removed to Western Reserve where he had erected Iron works & failed. Being one day in Amity, I noticed that Redick McKee (then a lad and employed in keeping store for Mr. Jelly) was reading Virgil. On enquiring who was his teacher, he said “Mr. Spaulding.”

So it appeared that he had some knowledge of Latin. He afterwards read to me at different times some short pieces which he proposed to send for publication to the County newspaper but I believe none of them if sent were ever published. With me he always seemed shy and reserved about his former history. Understanding that he had lived [at Cherry Valley] I endeavoured to draw him out by enquiring about Rev. Dr. Nott. He only said that Dr. Nott had used him very ill. I think it was in Oct 1816 that Dysentery was prevailing and I attended Redick McKee who boarded with Mr. S. Calling one day [I] found Mr. S. quite ill and advised him to take some medicine but he preferred taking his own way. After an absence of a few days I was called to see him. He sometimes took my prescriptions and sometimes his own or Mrs. Spaulding’s -- under which treatment the disease was protracted and terminated in his death. When he appeared to be sinking under his disease I endeavoured to converse closely with him, but there was the same reserv[e] as to any disclosure of his manner of life.



Some time after his death an old Yankee man by the name of Hubbel who went about selling wooden bowls told me that he had known him in the state of [N]ew York and had often heard him preach and also called him "Esquire Spaulding." "It is probable that he was a Congregationalist -- and it is likely not ordained [i.e. while at Amity -- ed.] [as] that denomination only gives licenses which expire by their own limitation as to time; so that there is no evidence of his being deposed for immorality. The few scraps of writing above mentioned were all that I knew anything about, till some years after his death when the Mormons took their rise. Having received a letter of enquiry on the subject from some person in the State of Ohio, I found that Mr. S had been more communicative to some other persons and that Messrs John Thomson an[d] J. Van Seaman had read his novel or some parts of it. Seaman was then dead. I enquired of Mr. Thomson. He could [not] give much account of it -- but said that he remembered the names of Neri [sic] and Lehi which he understood were used in the Mormon Bible. I was referred to Miss Sarah Thomson (now Mrs. Day). She had read some of his writings, but not the one in question.

I have understood that Mr. S. had submitted his manuscript to Revd. R. Patterson of Pittsburg [who] was connected in a printing office & Bookstore with a view of having it published -- and of course that must have been before he came to Amity as he still had it [i.e. the manuscript] here. Mrs. S. went after his death to N[ew] York State and I suppose carried the M. S. with her; and that being the neighborhood where Joe Smith resided -- it by some means fell into his hands. Such I think has been the impression of Mrs. S. though she [sic] knows not how he obtained it. You will thus perceive that I have no personal knowledge that would have any bearing on the subject as I have never seen either the Manuscript or the Mormon bible. My impression however is that is of little consequence. I have no doubt that Spaulding's novel was used by Joe Smith. But it was only used as a kind of substratum and did not contain anything of the essence of the Mormon faith -- All [of] that is contained in pretended revelations made to him and his successors, and added afterwards. I do not suppose that any testimony that could be offered in this case would convince a Mormon of his error and Congress will not undertake to decide as to the truth or falsehood of any religion. Nor does it belong within their province.

Respectfully Yours, Cephas Dodd"<sup>132</sup>

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132 Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma*, Ch. 4 - The Letter - pg. 56-58. Kobo edition.

## **(2) Cephas Dodd (second-hand testimony - George French):**

“4. Rev. Cephas Dodd, who died Jan. 16, 1858, was long the pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Amity. He also practiced as a physician, and in this capacity, attended Mr. Spaulding in his last illness. Of his testimony Mr. George M. French, now in his eighty-third year, residing near Amity, and whose wife was a relative of Sidney Rigdon, retains a vivid impression. Shortly after Mr. French’s removal from Fayette County, Pa., to Amity in 1832, when the Mormon delusion was beginning to excite remark, Dr. Dodd took Mr. French to Spaulding’s grave, and there told him his positive belief that Rigdon was the agent in transforming Spaulding’s manuscript into the Book of Mormon. The conviction thus expressed within two years after the publication of the Book of Mormon, and three years before the appearance of Mr. Howe’s book, which attributed the plagiarism to Rigdon, shows that Dr. Dodd’s judgement was formed independently of any of the testimonies cited above. As to the plagiarism, it must have been based on his own knowledge of Spaulding’s romance and comparing it with the Book, of Mormon; and as to the agent, his attention, like Mr. Miller’s, may first have been directed to Rigdon by Spaulding himself. Mr. French has no personal knowledge of Rigdon’s connection with the printing-office.”<sup>133</sup>

## **(3) Robert Harper (second-hand testimony - Hollis)**

Mr. Editor:

I was reading quite lately in the papers the oft repeated story of the origin of the Book of Mormon. I have long believed that it was substantially true. It is said it was written by one Solomon Spaulding a disabled or retired Congregational minister, as a sort of romance founded on the evidence afforded that our country had once been inhabited by a race of people more civilized, and distinct, from the Indian tribes found on its discovery by Columbus. It being a popular theory about that time, these were the lost tribes of Israel, and the probable Mound Builders. This manuscript, it is said, either before or after Mr. Spaulding’s death, was taken to a printing office at Pittsburg, where Sydney Rigdon got hold of it and with Joseph Smith and others, published it as found in a miraculous manner in Palmyra, New York. This Mr. Spaulding, it is said, lived at an early day at Conneaut, and had a forge or trip hammer in the valley on the creek.

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<sup>133</sup> Robert Patterson, Jr., *Who Wrote The Book of Mormon?*, 10.

This was confirmed to the present writer some years ago by the late Col. Robert Harper, of Harpersfield. He said, when a young man, he spent some time at Conneaut, and well remembered Mr. Spalding and his wife. He spoke of him as somewhat singular, living in a long, low, shanty-like building of boards. In one end was his forge, while in the other he lived with his wife, and kept a kind of grocery store. He said, in common with other young men, he often spent his evenings there. He distinctly remembered one night -- they had been playing cards for amusement; when about to leave he needed something to wrap up his cards, when Mrs. Spalding brought to him a leaf of some manuscript. Upon making some remark about the propriety of his using it, she remarked it was only a piece of the Doctor's novel. This led him to ask if her husband was writing a novel; when she said yes; upon the first inhabitants who lived upon this continent. And upon examination he found this to be the character of the scrap of the manuscript she had given him. All this in connection with what has been published before, and the fact of such remarkable remains in the neighborhood of Conneaut, leads to the probable conclusion that Solomon Spalding wrote the Book of Mormon in substance at least, & probably while living at Conneaut.

I have written in the hope that there were persons still living at Conneaut, or in the vicinity, that knew Mr. Spalding; who can confirm the above, and more than this, can affirm they knew Mr. Spalding to be the author of the book, such as it is.

If there are any such persons, I think it would be promotive of the truth to publish it; at least it would serve to preserve and establish a historical fact. Therefore I am prompted to ask that all such communications shall appear in your columns, or in the Conneaut paper, from which no doubt you would cheerfully copy. Hoping that both the editor of the TELEGRAPH and Conneaut Reporter will feel an interest in the matter, I am yours truly,

H. HOLLIS.

Greencastle, Indiana.<sup>134</sup>

Even though this is second hand testimony, it might show that Spalding had laid aside his first manuscript because he allowed someone to use paper from the manuscript.

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<sup>134</sup> "Solomon Spalding and the Book of Mormon," *Ashtabula Weekly Telegraph*, Ashtabula, Ohio, Saturday, February 22, 1873, Vol. XXIV - No. 8.

#### **(4) The testimony of Daniel Spencer:**

“A correspondent of the Ashtabula Telegraph, writing from Greencastle, Indiana says in support of the belief that one Solomon Spalding who once lived in Conneaut was the author of the Book of Mormon, that the late Col. Robert Harper, when a young man was frequently at the said Spalding’s, in Conneaut; that Harper told him (the correspondent) that he, Harper, had seen a page of manuscript, admitted by Spalding’s wife to have been written by him, remarking farther that her husband was engaged upon a novel, the subject of which was the first inhabitants of this continent, &c. The correspondent seeks farther information upon this subject.

Not long after the appearance of the Book of Mormon, Dr. Daniel M. Spencer, a resident of Kingsville, in a conversation of our hearing, and at our father’s house, in this town, said that he was well acquainted with Spalding when he lived in Conneaut; had been at his house often and had read manuscripts written by Spalding; that the matter contained in said manuscripts was touching the lost tribes of Israel, their wanderings and final settlement on this continent; that he saw and read the pages of Spalding’s fanciful writings at different times and read much of them. He declared that not only the subject matter of Spalding’s novel was incorporated in the Book of Mormon, but much of it was a literal transcript, to the best of his knowledge, after reading the contents of both. His declarations were made when Mormonism first made its monstrous pretensions when the public mind was stirred upon the subject and they made a very formidable impression upon our mind. Dr. Spencer had a decided taste for antiquarian research and speculation, and those who knew him will not wonder that he was interested in Spalding’s vagaries about the “lost tribes,” Mound Builders &c. -- As the correspondent suggests, some of the older citizens of Conneaut must have some knowledge upon this subject not yet made public.”<sup>135</sup>

#### **(5) The testimony of William Leffingwell:**

“The venerable Col. Wm. H. Leffingwell, accompanied by an old Mormon friend from Utah, was met by a Republican reporter yesterday afternoon on Olive street. The colonel’s friend remarked to the reporter: “Did you know that Leffingwell corrected the manuscript of the Mormon Bible alleged to have

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<sup>135</sup> “The Book of Mormon.” *Ashtabula Weekly Telegraph*. Ashtabula, Ohio, Saturday, March 8, 1873, Vol. XXIV - No. 10.

been written by Rev. Solomon Spalding?” This was something like a new revelation, and on Col. Leffingwell stating that it was a fact, and as all parties knowing the circumstances are now dead, except Mr. Leffingwell, he was asked to add to the truth of history by telling what he knew about the origin of the Mormon bible. The colonel readily consented but his Mormon friend, observing his readiness to do so, walked on and beckoned to the colonel to come along, evidently objecting to having the story told for publication. Col. Leffingwell commenced by saying: “Long ago in the past, I have forgotten the year, Mr. Spalding wrote a drama called ‘the Book of Mormon,’ in a hotel at Conneaut, Ashtabula county, O., where I had been teaching school. I was known through the country as a good grammarian and possessing an accurate knowledge of the English language.

My father had been principal of the Meadville school, at Meadville, Pa., for eight years, a position which I subsequently filled on my father retiring to a farm. Mr. Spalding was a lawyer by profession and had taught school. He had never been a reverend, as some accounts give that prefix to his name. He was about [35] years of age when I first fell in with him, was very poor, and sick with consumption, and towards the last nearly lost his voice, so that he could not plead at the bar. He said he wanted to make some money, and wrote the drama, which he handed me for correction. It was full of Bible expressions, and as I had read the Bible from lid to lid I knew the proper phraseology to use. I corrected the grammar, and had to reconstruct and transpose entries to make good English out of it. I was engaged three months, and my notes and pencil marks may be found on every page.

#### NEVER PAID FOR IT.

“He wanted it to conform to Bible language. He never paid me a cent for my labor. It was entitled the Book of Mormon, and he told me he was going to Pittsburg to sell the manuscript. I afterwards learned that he got hold of Sidney Rigdon, and I knew within six months that Spalding sold it, and that Rigdon got it. Rigdon was a preacher in the Cumberland Presbyterian church. He was a scholar and a smart fellow. I had seen him baptizing converts in Mahoning county, Ohio. Some years afterward I was on a lecture tour in Ohio, lecturing on grammar and the construction of English language. I went to Kirtland in a buggy accompanied by a young lawyer, to see Joe Smith



and the Mormon leaders. We drove up in front of a large tent and Sidney Rigdon came out. I told him that I corrected the Mormon Bible when it was Spalding's manuscript. I assured him I gave it the proper construction and what grammar it had. He smiled and said that was all right, but requested me to say nothing about it.

I told Rigdon that we came over there to see him and Joe Smith. He said, 'It is just our dinner time; you can't see Joe Smith because he is marking goods at the store.' they having received forty wagon-loads from the lake shore the day before. Afterwards we were introduced to the prophet. Joe Smith had a round face, and his hair was cut short down on his forehead. The color of his hair was between a deep brown and dark red. He sent a young man with us into the temple, which was but newly finished. The front had a projecting roof, supported by pillars. We entered the portico, when the young man, our guide, said: "Take off your hats!" I replied; "Our hats are already off, sir. We've a long ways to drive, and want you to hurry up, sir!"

#### THE TEMPLE DIVIDED.

"We were then conducted into the interior of the temple. A broad aisle ran through the middle of the temple with a cross aisle in the centre, above which a curtain hung, dividing the temple into two parts, Sidney Rigdon occupying, we were told, the eastern portion and Joe Smith the western portion, which included the grand altar. The arrangement seemed to be thus made in consequence of the incomplete conditions of the temple. By mounting on one another's shoulders, we were enabled to pull ourselves up through a hole in the attic where we were shown several mummies including that of Joseph and other patriarchs mentioned in the Bible. After visiting the temple we were invited into the tent where we were provided with a good dinner, and taking leave of the saints we drove out of Kirtland well satisfied with our visit."

The above chat with Leffingwell left the impression that his statement of the part taken by him in the correction of Spalding's manuscript is undeniable, but the other fact that said manuscript was the original of the Mormon Bible is rather a matter of inference than supported by direct and incontrovertible testimony. Col. Leffingwell, however, asserts that so far as he has compared his recollections of the Spalding manuscript with the Mormon Bible they are

identical. That is his belief.”<sup>136</sup>

**Dale Broadhurst’s notes concerning this testimony:**

“Note 1: This article was reprinted in the RLDS Saints’ Herald of June 13, 1885. The William H. Leffingwell mentioned in the above article was perhaps a relative of Hiram W. Leffingwell, a mid-19th century St. Louis real estate agent and developer. Leffingwell Avenue in that city was named in memory of Hiram. The William in the article was perhaps also related to “Captain” William Leffingwell (b. Oct. 31, 1805, New London, CT) one of the LDS pioneer emigrant company leaders who took the Mormons to Utah in 1847.

Note 2: William H. Leffingwell was apparently born in Connecticut in about 1790. He was quite likely the son of the Andrew Leffingwell whom the 1830 Census reported living in Mead Twp., Crawford Co., Pennsylvania. By 1811 or 1812 William H. Leffingwell was living in Conneaut Twp., Ashtabula Co., Ohio, where he married Polly Morse on June 15, 1816. Perhaps Leffingwell left the area soon after marrying, for he is not listed as a teacher in the first public school opened in Conneaut Twp. later that same year. Lewis L. Rice, a long time resident of the Ohio Western Reserve recalled Leffingwell as being “a well-known teacher in Northern Ohio” in his March 4, 1886 letter to a Honolulu newspaper. If Leffingwell truly assisted Solomon Spalding, while teaching at “a hotel at Conneaut,” it could only have been at Henry Lake’s “Mansion House,” located in New Salem, the same village in Conneaut Twp. where Spalding lived between 1809 and late 1812. It is not known when Henry Lake began taking in guests at his “hotel,” but a likely date would have been in the second half of 1812, after he and Solomon Spalding abandoned operation of their iron forge, just east of New Salem.

Note 3: Given what appear to be errors in Leffingwell’s memory concerning the layout of the Kirtland Temple and the physical appearance of Joseph Smith, Jr. in late 1835 or early 1836, it is likely that the rest of his account contains similar errors. For example, it is difficult to imagine that Sidney Rigdon would have listened to a stranger relate the Spalding authorship claims for the Book of Mormon without registering a loud and hostile rebuttal. It is also difficult to imagine the young Leffingwell, in about 1812 or 1813 could have known Sidney Rigdon as being a “preacher in the Cumberland Presbyterian church”

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<sup>136</sup> “The Mormon Bible,” *Daily Missouri Republican*, St. Louis, Friday, May 29, 1885, Vol. LXXVII - May 29, 1885 - No. 20,084.

-- a man whom Solomon Spalding was then involved with in one way or another. Rigdon was never known to associate with the Presbyterians and is not known to have engaged in any preaching until 1818 at the very earliest. Possibly the "Cumberland Presbyterian church" Leffingwell mentions here was the one in Amwell Twp., Washington Co., Pennsylvania -- but Rigdon is not known to have been connected with that congregation at any time. It is possible that Sidney Rigdon occasionally held meetings in the Brookfield Presbyterian Church, a few miles North of Youngstown, in Trumbull Co., Ohio, while he lived in that area in 1820-21. If so, perhaps Leffingwell incorrectly recalled Rigdon, the Calvinist preacher, as being a Presbyterian rather than a Baptist. Brookfield is only a few miles north of what is today the Mahoning-Trumbull Co. Line; so perhaps it was somewhere in the greater Youngstown region that Leffingwell recalled seeing Rev. Rigdon "baptizing converts" in his pre-Mormon says. Leffingwell's memory of seeing the Mormon mummies in a yet unfinished Kirtland Temple may not square well with the fact that the mummies were first purchased and displayed after the Temple construction was largely finished.

Note 4: Leffingwell's identification of Spalding as having been "a lawyer by profession" and having previously "taught school," is not inconsistent with what people knew of Spalding while he was living on the Western Reserve. Spalding had some legal training, which he applied to his land sales work, no doubt. He had also once been a school teacher and the headmaster of the Cherry Valley Academy when he lived in Otsego Co., New York. Spalding's early occupation as a Congregational evangelist and occasional Presbyterian preacher may have not been well known to his neighbors in Ohio. His own nephew, Daniel, in 1888 recalled Solomon Spalding as "not" having been "a minister" and added: "neither did he belong to any church." Leffingwell's recollection of Spalding having been "about 35 years of age" when the two first met, is obviously a faulty one. Solomon Spalding was already at least 48 years old by the time he settled in Ohio, and could have been no younger than 50 when Leffingwell first met him. Still, it is possible that Spalding looked somewhat younger than his true age in those days and Leffingwell's error in this matter may not be too large a one. It is also possible that the type-setter for the article mistook a handwritten "55" for "35." Leffingwell's description of Spalding as being "sick with consumption" is likely a true one, though it seems that the would-be writer also suffered a severe rupture at about this time in his life and was probably partly incapacitated by that malady as well.

The report that Spalding had “nearly lost his voice” is an interesting one. Since loud voices were practically mandatory for pulpit preachers of that day, a partial loss of his oratory powers may have helped bring an early end to his ministerial career. Presumably he retained enough of his voice to still effectively read stories to a small audience gathered about him in Ohio or Pennsylvania, however.

Note 5: Leffingwell’s assertion that Spalding was writing a story “full of Bible expressions” is consistent with the testimony of several other eyewitnesses. What may be less believable is his saying that already, in Ashtabula Co., Ohio in about 1812, that Spalding had entitled a manuscript with the name “Book of Mormon.” If Leffingwell’s memory is correct on this point, it stands as important testimony in support of the Spalding authorship claims. But, given the other seeming errors in Leffingwell’s account, the careful student will place little credence upon this particular allegation. Leffingwell’s memory of the penniless Spalding never paying him for his proof-reading work is perhaps more likely to be an accurate recollection of the affair.”<sup>137</sup>

It seems like a very strong case with all the witnesses that have been shown thus far.

We want to be fair though and present what seem to be contradictory and/or weak witnesses.

**(6) The testimony of Daniel Spalding (1807-1892?)**  
**[son of John Spalding]:**

Q. -- What is your given name, Mr. Spaulding?

A. -- Daniel D. Spaulding

Q. -- How old are you?

A. -- I am eighty-two years old.

Q. -- How long have you lived in this vicinity?

A. -- About sixty years.

Q. -- How closely were you related to Solomon Spaulding?

A. -- He was my father’s brother.

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<sup>137</sup> <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/MO/Misr1850.htm#052985>.

Q. -- How old were you the last time you saw your uncle?

A. -- Between ten and eleven years of age.

Q. -- Then you remember him well?

A. -- Oh yes. He was a very sickly man, and the last time I saw him was at Conneaut Creek, just before he went to Pittsburg, where he died shortly afterwards.

Q. -- What did your uncle do for a living?

A. -- He was a land agent, and my father said he was a scoundrel and used to cheat the people out of their money and property.

Q. -- Was he much of a scholar?

A. -- No. He had some natural talent, but he was not very smart; but very lazy. Then he wrote the manuscripts that the Mormons call the Book of Mormon to make money out of it.

Q. -- How did the Mormons get the manuscripts?

A. -- I don't know. (Here his daughter, a lady of about fifty years, replied, "His widow gave them to Joseph Smith, jun.")

Q. -- Is there not a story afloat that Sidney Rigdon stole them?

A. -- I had not heard that before.

Q. -- Mr. Spalding, did you ever see the manuscripts? or the Book of Mormon?

A. -- No.

Q. -- What did Mr. Spalding write about?

A. -- I heard my father say it was a story about the Indians.

Q. -- Was your uncle a minister?

A. -- He was not; neither did he belong to any church.

Q. -- Then you do not know whether the Book of Mormon and the manuscript are the same or not?

A. -- No. Only what I have heard people say; have not seen either.<sup>138</sup>

### **Dale Broadhurst's notes concerning this testimony:**

"Note 1: Daniel Denison Spalding (1807-1892?) was the son of Solomon

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<sup>138</sup> "Solomon Spaulding's Nephew." *The Saints' Herald*, Lamoni, Iowa, December 22, 1888, Vol. 35, no. 51.



Spalding's younger brother John Spalding (1774-1857) and his wife, Martha Denison Spalding (1779-1864). In 1810 he moved with his father's family from Connecticut to the Ohio-Pennsylvania border, just south of the shore of Lake Erie. In about 1842 John Spalding and his family moved to Illinois, leaving behind in Crawford Co., Pennsylvania only Daniel D. Spalding, his wife and three children. The following entry is found on p. 837 in the 1885 History of Crawford County, Pennsylvania, Vol. II.:

DANIEL D. SPALDING, farmer, P. O., Linesville, was born in Oxford County, Conn., October 3, 1807; son of John and Martha (Denison) Spalding. John Spalding was an educated man and a school teacher, also a singing teacher in an early day in Connecticut. He was a brother of Solomon Spaulding, who, it is asserted, wrote a religious tale corresponding with Joseph Smith's (the founder of Mormonism) "Book of Mormon," and entitled "The Manuscript Found." After Spalding's death, the manuscript fell into the hands of one Sidney Rigdon, an intimate acquaintance of Joseph Smith. Our subject's mother, while living in Springfield Township, Erie Co., Penn., was attacked by Indians in her home, but she managed to escape into the woods with her four small children, leaving the Indians to pillage the house. Daniel D. Spalding came to this county in 18[17], and settled in Conneaut Township when there were only three houses by the road, between his place and Conneautville. He took up seventy-five acres of land which he cleared, and at one time owned 175 acres, all of which he accumulated by hard work and industry. Mr. Spalding was married in 1832 to Miss Alathear Whaley, a native of Schuyler, Herkimer Co., N. Y., and daughter of Thomas Whaley, who came to Crawford County in 1817, settling in Conneaut Township. He was a soldier in the war of 1812, a shoe-maker and farmer. To Mr. and Mrs. Spalding were born three children, two now living: Mrs. Eunice A. Barnum and Lemuel D. Our subject is member of no church, although brought up a Baptist...

Note 2: The most questionable part of Daniel's statement is the part where he says he last saw his uncle, Solomon Spalding, when Daniel was "Between ten and eleven years of age." This would have been in 1817. However, Solomon Spalding died in 1816. More reasonable is Daniel's saying that the last time he saw his uncle was "just before he went to Pittsburg." This was in the fall of 1812, when Daniel was barely five years old. Thus,

Daniel's latest recollections of his uncle Solomon would have been those of a young child. At that time Solomon Spalding was indeed "a land agent," and his sales promotions may have involved more "sharp Yankee trading" than the trustworthy dealings of an honest clergyman. In fact, Solomon Spalding probably never admitted to being in the clergy after he was removed from his position as Headmaster of the Cherry Valley Academy just prior to the year 1800. The licenses for unordained Congregational and Presbyterian preachers expired in time, and Spalding probably never took the trouble to renew his. All in all, Daniel D. Spalding's statement furnishes practically no useful information about Solomon Spalding and his writings."<sup>139</sup>

**(7) The testimony of Josiah Spalding (Solomon Spalding's younger brother) [1765-1859]:**

EASTFORD, Jan. 6 1855.

REV. SIR: -

I received your letter of the 21st of December requesting me to give you a sketch of my brother Solomon's life. I should be pleased to oblige you satisfactorily, but my recollection and faculty of mind is so much impaired with age and infirmity, being within two months of ninety years of age, I can give but a broken narrative.

He was born 1761. In the first part of the Revolutionary war he was in the army or at work on the farm. I do not recollect when he commenced study for education at High School, nor how long he continued there; but when he left there he went to study with the celebrated Zephaniah Swift to prepare for the practice of law. How long he studied with him I do not recollect; but before he got through, his mind changed from law to gospel and he left and went to college; but when I do not recollect. I believe he was in college about three years. He did not study theology at any public school after he left college.

When he left college he was out of health, and was so for years. He was approbated to preach as a Congregationalist, and followed that calling a number of years, but never settled, on account of his health, though often urged. In 1795 he married. I went to Cherry Valley and commenced merchandising. I had no wife. He followed soon after with his wife and joined me in partnership.

<sup>139</sup> <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/IA/sain1887.htm#122288>.

He left the store to my care. He took the charge of an academy and preached occasionally for a while. We continued in Cherry Valley about four years, and then we moved our store sixteen miles, to Richfield. We soon after went into a large speculation in new land in Pennsylvania and Ohio, and after a few years he moved out there with his wife; she never had any children. He sold a large amount of land on credit, principally to people in Ohio.

The war that broke out with England seriously affected that country. That circumstance, with some other misfortunes that happened, placed us in difficult circumstances. We were under the necessity to make great sacrifices to pay our debts. I went to see my brother and staid with him some time. I found him unwell, and somewhat low in spirits. He began to compose his novel, which it is conjectured that the Mormons made use of in forming their bible. Indeed, although there was nothing in it of Mormonism or that favored error in any way, yet I am apprehensive that they took pattern from it in forming their delusion. You may find my reason in what follows. In the town where he lived, which I expect is now called Salem, Ohio, there is the appearance of an ancient fort, and near by a large mound, which, when opened, was found to contain human bones. These things gave it the appearance of its being inhabited by a civilized people. These appearances furnished a topic of conversation among the people. My brother told me that a young man told him that he had a wonderful dream. He dreamed that he himself (if I recollect right) opened a great mound, where there were human bones.

There he found a written history that would answer the inquiry respecting the civilized people that once inhabited that country until they were destroyed by the savages. This story suggested the idea of writing a novel merely for amusement. The title of his novel, I think, was "Historical Novel," or "Manuscript Found." This novel is the history contained in the manuscript found. The author of it he brings from the Old World, but from what nation I do not recollect; I think not a Jew; nor do I recollect how long since, but I think before the Christian Era. He was a man of superior learning suited to that day. He went to sea, lost his point of compass, and finally landed on the American shore; I think near the mouth of the Mississippi River. There he reflects most feelingly on what he suffered, his present condition and future prospects; he likewise makes some lengthy remarks on astronomy and philosophy, which I should think would agree in sentiment and style with very ancient writings.

He soon after moved to Pittsburg, in Pennsylvania, where he lived awhile

and then moved farther, to a place where he died. His widow then returned to the State of New York, and lived there awhile and then came to Connecticut. She informed me, if I recollect right, that my brother continued his history of the civilized nation and the progress of the war until the triumph of the savages to the destruction of the civilized government. Likewise she informed me that soon after they arrived at Pittsburg a man followed them, I do not recollect his name, but he was afterwards known to be a leading Mormon. He got into the employment of a printer, and he told the printer about my brother's composition. The printer called and requested the privilege of taking it home to read. He, my brother, let him take it; he kept it some time, and then he urged him, my brother, to let him print it. He, my brother, would not consent, but took it back, and she said that she brought it to New York and put it into a chest where she lived. And at a time when she was from home a stranger called upon her and requested her to let him see the novel that her husband composed. He said that he lived at the West, and it was reported there that it gave rise to Mormonism; if not true he wished to counteract the report. She told him that he might go to the house; it was in a chest, he might take it and examine it.

He went to the chest, and I think she told me that he said that he could not find it, but it has never been found since, But what use could they make of it? I never saw the Mormon bible but once, and then only for a minute, no time to examine it. I have but little knowledge of Mormonism; I have been out of the way of it. You, sir, no doubt, have more knowledge; but if I have been rightly informed, there is a striking resemblance between the first start and introduction of the Mormon bible and my brother's novel. They both claimed that the manuscripts from which they pretend they copied were of very ancient date and written by men that came here from the old world. The Mormon bible was not published until after my brother's death.

Yours respectfully,  
JOSIAH SPALDING.<sup>140</sup>

It seems to be clear that Josiah was familiar with the first manuscript that he composed - *Manuscript Story*. We see that he gets some details mixed up.

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<sup>140</sup> Dickinson, *New Light on Mormonism*, 254-255.

## **(8) Robert Patterson, Sr. (1773-1854)**

(1) “R. Patterson had in his employment Silas Engles at the time a foreman printer, and general superintendent of the printing business. As he (S. E.) was an excellent scholar, as well as a good printer, to him was entrusted the entire concerns of the office. He even decided on the propriety or otherwise of publishing manuscripts when offered -- as to their morality, scholarship, &c., &c. In this character he informed R. P. that a gentleman, from the East originally, had put into his hands a manuscript of a singular work, chiefly in the style of our English translation of the Bible, and handed the copy to R. P., who read only a few pages, and finding nothing apparently exceptionable, he (R. P.) said to Engles, he might publish it, if the author furnished the funds or good security. He (the author) failing to comply with the terms, Mr. Engles returned the manuscript, as I supposed at that time, after it had been some weeks in his possession with other manuscripts in the office.

“This communication written and signed 2d April, 1842,

“ROBERT PATTERSON.”<sup>141</sup>

(2) “While I was living in Pittsburgh in 1841, at the time so much was said of the Book of Mormon, and in connection with the Solomon Spaulding Story. It was stated that the Spaulding manuscript was placed in Mr. Patterson’s hands for publication, and that Sidney Rigdon was connected with him at the time. In connection with John E. Page I called upon General Patterson, the publisher, and asked him the following questions, and received his replies as given:

Q. -- Did Sidney Rigdon have any connection with your office at the time you had the Solomon Spaulding manuscript?

A. -- No.

Q. -- Did Sidney Rigdon obtain the Spaulding story at that office?

A. -- No.

He also stated to us that the Solomon Spaulding manuscript was brought to him by the widow of Solomon Spaulding to be published, and that she offered to give him half the profits for his pay, if he would publish it; but after it had laid there for some time, and after he had due time to consider it, he determined not to publish it. She then came and received the manuscript

<sup>141</sup> Samuel Williams, *Mormonism Exposed* (Pittsburgh, self-published, 1842), 16



from his hands, and took it away. He also stated that Sidney Rigdon was not connected with the office for several years afterwards. Gen. Patterson also made affidavit to the above statement.

Your brother in Christ,  
WILLIAM SMALL.”

Philadelphia, Sept. 13th, 1876.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> “Spaulding Story Refuted.” *The True Latter Day Saints’ Herald*, Plano, Ill., October 15, 1876, Vol. 23, no. 20.

## Chapter 9: The Discovery of *Manuscript Story*

We want to return to the manuscript that was discovered by Hurlbut in the trunk. Some LDS apologists would have us believe that THIS manuscript was “Manuscript Found.” But as we will see, this does not back up their case.

### **Arthur Deming’s interview with E.D. Howe (1885):**

“In some way Hurlbut learned of Solomon Spaulding who wrote a Fiction at Conneaut O., in 1810 and 11 which he called Manuscript Found. John Spaulding a brother of Solomon directed him to Pittsburgh Pa where Solomon had taken his manuscript to have it printed. He learned Mrs Spaulding was in Mass and went there and obtained an order from her to go to Hartwick NY for another copy. Hurlbut returned to Ohio and lectured about the county on the Origin of Mormonism and the Book of Mormon. I heard him lecture in Painesville. He finally came to me to have this evidence he had obtained published. I bargained to pay him in books which I sent to him at Conneaut O. Before publishing my book I went to Conneaut and saw most of the witnesses who had seen Spauldings Manuscript Found and had testified to its identity with the Book of Mormon as published in my book and was satisfied they were men of intelligence and respectability and were not mistaken in their statements.

I published only a small part of the statements Hurlbut let me have. Among them was a Manuscript written by Solomon Spaulding which he called Conneaut Story. It was written on or about two quires of paper and was a Romance of Indian wars along the shore of Lake Erie between various tribes one of which he called Erie another Chicago. It is now in the possession of a former editor of the Telegraph L L Rice of Honolulu S. I. I was not acquainted with Hurlbut until he came to me to have his evidence published. He was good sized fine looking and full of ga[b] but illiterate and had lectured on many subjects.”<sup>143</sup>

March 28th, 1885

L.L. Rice to Joseph Smith III:

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<sup>143</sup> Arthur B. Deming, “Eber D. Howe: 1885,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, pg. 3, col. 1.

MR. JOSEPH SMITH:

The Spaulding Manuscript in my possession came into my hands in this wise. In 1839-40 my partner and myself bought of E. D. Howe the Painesville Telegraph, published at Painesville, Ohio. The transfer of the printing department, types, press, &c., was accompanied with a large collection of books, manuscripts, &c., this manuscript of Spaulding's among the rest. So, you see, it has been in my possession over forty years. But I never examined it, or knew the character of it, until some six or eight months since. The wrapper was marked, "Manuscript Story -- Conneaut Creek." The wonder is, that in some of my movements, I did not destroy or burn it with a large amount of rubbish that had accumulated from time to time.

It happened that Pres't Fairchild was here on a visit, at the time I discovered the contents of it, and it was examined by him and others with much curiosity. Since Pres't Fairchild published the fact of its existence in my possession, I have had applications for it from half a dozen sources, each applicant seeming to think that he or she was entitled to it. Mr. Howe says when he was getting up a book to expose Mormonism as a fraud at an early day, when the Mormons had their head-quarters at Kirtland, he obtained it from some source, and it was inadvertently transferred with the other effects of his printing office. A. B. Deming, of Painesville, who is also getting up some kind of a book I believe on Mormonism, wants me to send it to him. Mrs. Dickinson, of Boston, claiming to be a relative of Spaulding, and who is getting up a book to show that he was the real author of the Book of Mormon, wants it.

She thinks, at least, it should be sent to Spaulding's daughter, a Mrs. Somebody -- but she does not inform me where she lives. Deming says that Howe borrowed it when he was getting up his book, and did not return it, as he should have done, &c. This Manuscript does not purport to be "a story of the Indians formerly occupying this continent;" but is a history of the wars between the Indians of Ohio and Kentucky, and their progress in civilization, &c. It is certain that this Manuscript is not the origin of the Mormon Bible, whatever some other manuscripts may have been. The only similarity between them, is, in the manner in which each purports to have been found -- one in a cave on Conneaut Creek -- the other in a hill in Ontario county, New York. There is no identity of names, of persons, or places; and there is no similarity of style between them. As I told Mr. Deming, I should as soon think

the Book of Revelations was written by the author of Don Quixotte, as that the writer of this Manuscript was the author of the Book of Mormon. Deming says Spaulding made three copies of "Manuscript Found," one of which Sidney Rigdon stole from a printing office in Pittsburg. You can possibly tell better than I can, what ground there is for such an allegation.

As to this Manuscript, I can not see that it can be of any use to any body, except the Mormons, to show that it is not the original of the Mormon Bible. But that would not settle the claim that some other manuscript of Spaulding was the original of it. I propose to hold it in my own hands for a while, to see if it can not be put to some good use. Deming and Howe inform me that its existence is exciting great interest in that region. I am under a tacit, but not a positive pledge to President Fairchild, to deposit it eventually in the Library of Oberlin College. I shall be free from that pledge, when I see an opportunity to put it to a better use.

Yours, &c.,                      L. L. RICE.

P. S. -- Upon reflection, since writing the foregoing, I am of the opinion that no one who reads this Manuscript will give credit to the story that Solomon Spaulding was in any wise the author of the Book of Mormon. It is unlikely that any one who wrote so elaborate a work as the Mormon Bible, would spend his time in getting up so shallow a story as this, which at best is but a feeble imitation of the other. Finally I am more than half convinced that this is his only writing of the sort, and that any pretence that Spaulding was in any sense the author of the other, is a sheer fabrication. It was easy for any body who may have seen this, or heard anything of its contents, to get up the story that they were identical.

L. L. R

May 14th, 1885

L.L. Rice to Joseph Smith III

MR. JOSEPH SMITH; Dear Sir: --

I am greatly obliged to you for the information concerning Mormonism, in your letters of April 30th and May 2d. As I am in no sense a Mormonite, of course it is a matter of curiosity, mainly, that I am interested in the history of Mormonism.

Two things are true concerning this manuscript in my possession: First, it is a genuine writing of Solomon Spaulding; and second. it is not the original of the Book of Mormon.L. L. R

My opinion is, from all I have seen and learned, that this is the only writing of Spaulding, and there is no foundation for the statement of Deming and others, that Spaulding made another story, more elaborate, of which several copies were written, one of which Rigdon stole from a printing office in Pittsburgh, &c. Of course I can not be as certain of this, as of the other two points. One theory is, that Rigdon, or some one else, saw this manuscript, or heard it read, and from the hints it conveyed, got up the other and more elaborate writing on which the Book of Mormon was founded. Take that for what it is worth. It don't seem to me very likely.

You may be at rest as to my putting the manuscript into the possession of any one who will mutilate it, or use it for a bad purpose. I shall have it deposited in the Library of Oberlin College, in Ohio, to be at the disposal for reading of any one who may wish to peruse it; but not to be removed from that depository. My friend, President Fairchild, may be relied on as security for the safe keeping of it. It will be sent there in July, by a friend who is going there to "take to himself a wife." Meantime, I have made a literal copy of the entire document -- errors of orthography, grammar.

I have had an idea, sometimes, that it is due to the Mormons to have a copy of it, if they took interest in it enough to publish it. As it is only of interest as showing that it is not the original of the Book of Mormon, no one else is likely to wish it for publication. Miss Dickinson, whom you call a granddaughter of Solomon Spaulding, represents herself to me as his grandniece: "My great uncle, Rev. Solomon Spaulding," she writes.

Rev. Dr. Hyde, President of the Institution, in this place, for training Native Missionaries for Micronesia, (a very prominent and successful institution), has written an elaborate account of this manuscript, and of Mormonism, and sent it for publication in the Congregationalist, of Boston. I presume it will be published, and you will be interested in reading it.

Very respectfully, yours, L. L. RICE."<sup>144</sup>

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144 *The "Manuscript Found." ---Or ----"Manuscript Story." Of the Late Rev. Solomon Spaulding, From a Verbatim Copy of the Original. Now In the care of Pres. James H. Fairchild of Oberline College, Ohio. Including Correspondence touching the manuscript, its preservation and transmission until it came into the hands of the publishers. Lamoni, Iowa: Printed and Published by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1885), 6-9.*



### **James Fairchild's Diary:**

"Sunday, Aug 31, Preached in the morning in the Fort St. Church contrary to my intention. The preaching had been announced without my knowledge, -- a warm day, 80 degrees indeed every day is warm, At noon went home with the Whitneys to dinner. -- Father Rice had been looking over his papers to see what Anti-Slavery documents he had for [our] library & came upon an old manuscript story [-----] [-----] to [have] been written by Solomon Spaulding. Probably the one which has been supposed to be transformation of the Mormon Bible, -- unquestionably a genuine document, Mr. Rice must have had it 40 years, but can not tell how it came to him -- had never looked [----- ---] -- had utterly forgotten it, I spent an hour in looking it through, It bears no resemblance to the book of Mormon, except that it is a rambling story of about the same literary merit, manifestly written by a man of limited education, but some thought, purporting to give the history of the Indians of New York, Kentucky & Ohio -- their wars &c, The book would be a gratification to the Mormons as putting an end to the story that their book is a reprint of Solomon Spaulding's manuscript. I do not think they have any thing to do with each other, Went to Mr. Wm. Castles & stayed with them over night, --"<sup>145</sup>

J. R. Hindley, Esq.,

DEAR SIR: -- We have in our college library an original manuscript of Solomon Spaulding -- unquestionably genuine.

I found it in 1884 in the hands of Hon. L. L. Rice, of Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands. He was formerly state printer at Columbus, Ohio, and before that, publisher of a paper in Painesville, whose preceding publisher had visited Mrs. Spaulding and obtained the manuscript from her. It had lain among his old papers forty years or more, and was brought out by my asking him to look up anti-slavery documents among his papers.

The manuscript has upon it the signatures of several men of Conneaut, Ohio, who had heard Spaulding read it and knew it to be his. No one can see it and question its genuineness. The manuscript has been printed twice at least-once by the "Mormons" of Salt Lake City, and once by the "Josephite Mormons" of Iowa. The Utah "Mormons" obtained the copy of Mr. Rice, at

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<sup>145</sup> Albert Temple Swing, *James Harris Fairchild* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1907), 117-119.

Honolulu,, and the “Josephites” got it of me after it came into my possession.

This manuscript is not the original of the Book of Mormon. Yours very truly, JAMES H. FAIRCHILD.<sup>146</sup>

#### FAIRCHILD’S LAST STATEMENT.

Since this essay was placed in the printer’s hands, I am through the kindness of the Rev. J. D. Nutting enabled to add the following recent [1900] statement from Ex-president Fairchild:

“With regard to the manuscript of Mr. Spaulding now in the Library of Oberlin College, I have never stated, and know of no one who can state, that it is the only manuscript which Spaulding wrote, or that it is certainly the one which has been supposed to be the original of the Book of Mormon. The discovery of this Ms. does not prove that there may not have been another, which became the basis of the Book of Mormon. The use which has been made of statements emanating from me as implying the contrary of the above is entirely unwarranted.

JAMES H. FAIRCHILD.”<sup>147</sup>

*Did Solomon Spalding write only one manuscript or did he write more than one?*

(1) **Aaron Wright:** “Spalding had many other manuscripts, which I expect to see when Smith translates his other plate.”<sup>148</sup>

(2) **John Miller:** “I was soon introduced to the manuscript of Spalding, and perused them as often as I had leisure. He had written two or three books or pamphlets on different subjects; but that which more particularly drew my attention, was one which he called the “Manuscript Found.”<sup>149</sup>

(3) **Matilda McKinstry:** “Mr. A. B. Deming,  
Dear Sir,

I have read much of the Manuscript Story Conneaut Creek which you

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146 *The Latter-Day Saints’ Millennial Star* - Vol. LX - Mon. - Nov. 3, 1898. Link: <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/LDS/ldsnews2.htm#110398>.

147 A. Theodore Schroeder, *Origin of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City, S.L.C. Min. Assoc. 1901), 2.

148 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 284.

149 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 283.

sent me. I know that it is not the Manuscript Found which contained the words “Nephi, Mormon, Maroni, and Lamanites.” Do the Mormons expect to deceive the public by leaving off the title page -- Conneaut Creek and calling it Manuscript Found and Manuscript Story.

Mrs. M. S. McKinstry.”<sup>150</sup>

(4) **L.L. Rice (May 30, 1885):** “there is no outcome of the quarrel, as the story is evidently unfinished, and stops abruptly.”

**[Is this a book fit for publication?]**

(5) **Eber Howe to T.W. Smith (July 26, 1881):** “The manuscript you refer to was not marked on the outside or inside Manuscript Found...it was not the original Manuscript Found.”

**[This was stated three years before the discovery made in 1884; those are two different titles - “Manuscript Found” and “Manuscript Story.”]**

**Full article:**

“Bro. Thomas W. Smith, now at Chicago, had the curiosity to write to Mr. E. D. Howe, who so long ago published a book against the “Mormons.” making some inquiry respecting the “Manuscript Found,” &c. The following is the reply, which we are permitted to present to the readers of the HERALD, by Bro. Smith.

PAINESVILLE, Ohio, July 26th, 1881.

Sir:-- Your note of 21st is before me, -- and I will answer your queries seriatim.

1st. -- The manuscript you refer to was not marked on the outside or inside “Manuscript Found.” It was a common-place story of some Indian wars along the borders of our Great Lakes, between the Chicagoes and Eries, as I now recollect -- not in Bible style, but purely modern.

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<sup>150</sup> Arthur B. Deming, “Mrs. McKinstry,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, (Dec. 1888), pg. 1, col. 5.

2d. -- It was not the original "Manuscript Found," and I do not believe Hurlbut ever had it.

3d. -- I never saw or heard read the "Manuscript Found;" but have seen five or six persons who had, and from their testimony, concluded it was very much like the Mormon Bible.

4th. -- Never succeeded in finding out any thing more than was detailed in my book of exposure published about fifty years ago.

5th. -- The manuscript was destroyed by fire forty years ago.

I think there has been much mist thrown around the whole subject of the origin of the Mormon Bible and the "Manuscript Found," by the several statements that have been made by those who have been endeavoring to solve the problem after sleeping quietly for half a century. Every effort was made to unravel the mystery at the time, when nearly all the parties were on earth, and the result published at the time, and I think it all folly to try to dig out anything more.

Yours, &c.,

E. D. HOWE."<sup>151</sup>

(6) **L.L. Rice to James Fairchild (June 12, 1885):** "P. S. -- The words "Solomon Spaulding's Writings" in ink on the wrapper were written by me, after I became aware of the contents. The words "Manuscript Story -- Conneaut Creek," in faint penciling, were as now when it came into my possession."<sup>152</sup>

(7) **Robert Patterson, Jr. to James Fairchild, Sept. 22, 1885:**

"When so many hearers of the story in different places concur in their recollections of names constantly recurring in the story, and when some of them heard it read again and again, it seems impossible that, after twenty years, they should confound it with a story [i.e. Manuscript Story]... in which not one of these familiar and unique names of persons and places did once occur. The memory of people who, at that period, read or heard very few

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<sup>151</sup> "Questions And Answers." *The Saints' Herald*. Plano, Ill., September 1, 1881, Vol. 28, no. 17.

<sup>152</sup> *The "Manuscript Found."*, 9.

romances, would be all the more tenacious of the few (it might be the only one) they did hear. But there is one circumstance that seems to settle the absolute independence of the two Mss beyond a doubt.... [Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek] is not sham Hebraistic but in ordinary English... whereas every witness who heard Spalding read his Manuscript Found so far as I now recall, testifies to the fact that in that document he carried his Biblical imitation to an absurd excess. They laughed at him for it, and nicknamed him from it. And now, if... [Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek] is the real one to which they listened, it turns out that every one of these witnesses, in Ohio and Pennsylvania, were utterly at fault. They actually styled him - "Old Come To Pass" and yet he never used the phrase! Crudat Judacas Apella! ["Let him believe it who will!"]

When so many hearers of the story in different places concur in their recollections of names constantly recurring in the story, and when some of them heard it read again and again, it seems impossible that, after twenty years, they should confound it with a story [i.e. Manuscript Story]... in which not one of these familiar and unique names of persons and places did once occur. Moreover, it is unitedly testified by these witnesses that before Spalding became a bankrupt, and when he wrote only to while away the hours of his illness, without any thought of making money by publishing his book, his purpose in the story they heard him read was to show (seemingly) that our Indians were descended from the ten lost tribes. He therefore started the colonists from Jerusalem. This was the *raison d'être*-- the very foundation-- of the whole fiction. How is it possible that such a story in 20 years became confused in the memory of those who heard it with a story which left the Jews out altogether?" The memory of people who, at that period, read or heard very few romances, would be all the more tenacious of the few (it might be the only one) they did hear.

The trunk referred to by the widow, was subsequently examined, and found to contain only a single M. S. book, in Spalding's hand-writing, containing about one quire of paper. This is a romance, purporting to have been translated from the Latin, found on 24 rolls of parchment in a cave, on the banks of the Conneaut Creek, but written in modern style, and giving a fabulous account of a ship's being driven upon the American coast, while proceeding from Rome to Britain, a short time previous to the Christian era, this country then being inhabited by the Indians. This old M. S. has been



shown to several of the foregoing witnesses, who recognise it as Spalding's, he having told them that he had altered his first plan of writing, by going farther back with dates, and writing in the old scripture style, in order that it might appear more ancient. They say that it bears no resemblance to the "Manuscript Found."<sup>153</sup>

### *What Happened To Manuscript Found?*

#### **(1) James Briggs (1838):** "To the Editor of the Berkshire Advocate:

Dear Sir: -- In your paper of January 22d, I observed a short notice of the sect called Mormons. I have thought that a sketch of the history of Mormonism would not be uninteresting to your readers.

For more than a year past, I have resided in the vicinity of the "head quarters" of the Mormons, and have become somewhat acquainted with the leading characters of the sect; and have learned, from an authentic source, the character and the standing standing which its originators held in society, previous to their engaging in the "Mormon Book" speculation.

The family of Smiths have, from their earliest history, been individuals who have made no claim to respectability or honesty. The father of Joseph Smith, Jr. the Mormon Prophet, used to be a man, who spent most of his time in digging for money. The Prophet served a long apprenticeship in the same business. He used to tell fortunes, in his younger days. But, finding that he could not make money fast enough by digging after money and telling fortunes -- he entered into the Mormon speculation, believing that he could, in this manner, make a fortune, and immortalize his name. He has deceived the ignorant, and imposed upon the credulous. He has supported himself upon the property of the deluded mortals, who have become his disciples. He has caused many people to sell their farms, and other property, and go to Missouri, the promised land -- where they are now without homes -- without any means of subsistence -- wandering about from place to place, "among strangers, in a strange land." Many of the Mormons who went to Missouri, were men who had considerable property, but now they are poor and destitute. They have sold themselves to a hard master, and to a wicked and depraved man. Mr. Joseph Smith, Jr. is a man wholly destitute of moral character --

<sup>153</sup> Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma*, Ch. 3 - Synchronicities - pg.32-33. Kobo edition.

governed by no principles of moral rectitude -- actuated by no motives, save those of gain -- and he possesses a heart black and corrupt as the fiends of darkness. His character will soon be held up to the inspection of mankind, and the execration of the world.

It is a matter of wonder and astonishment, that in this enlightened era of the world, and especially in our own country, that so large a number of persons could have been made to believe in the divine authority of the Book of Mormon. Never was there a more wicked and abominable imposition, issued forth to the world, clothed in the same or garb of religion, than that of Mormonism! Never was there a more false delusion! Never a more base deception!

The historical part of the Book of Mormon was written by Solomon Spaulding, Esq., a graduate of Dartmouth College. More than twenty years ago, Mr. S. resided in Salem, Ashtabula county, in this state. He was a gentleman of very respectable talents, and a man of excellent character. When he first commenced writing, it was merely for his own gratification. But having met with some pecuniary losses, he copied and altered his original manuscript, and intended to publish the work in the form of an historical novel, under the title of the "Manuscript Found;" giving account of the first settlement of this continent, and of the people who made the Forts and Mounds, now remaining in different parts of our western country. Mr. S. went to Pittsburgh, with the intention of having the work published, but he died, and the manuscript was left with a bookseller in that place. It is believed, and it is undoubtedly true, that Sidney Rigdon added the pretended religious character to the work, as it is supposed he got in possession of the manuscript of Mr. S. in Pittsburgh, as he used to reside there, and during the latter part of his residence there, spent much of his time in writing. -- Rigdon is an artful, cunning, wicked, and unprincipled man; and he is the only one among the Mormons, whom I have ever seen, who can be accused of possessing any talent. The Prophet is entirely destitute of talent; he may have some low cunning, but it is too low to be mentioned.

Mormonism must and will go down. It cannot stand the light of investigation and truth. Since Mr. Hurburt has made his facts public, many have left the society, and many more will undoubtedly leave the false Prophet, and Mormonism, with its wickedness and abominations, will be scattered to the four winds of Heaven. The angel of humanity, as she broods o'er the earth

with her outspread wings, will hail its downfall with shouts of joy and gladness! The deluded victims who have been rescued from its thralldom, will raise their fervent orisons to God for their deliverance, and its vile originators will be more guilty, than those who throw themselves beneath the life-destroying wheels of the car of Juggernaut, and leave their bones to bleach upon its desolating path. Yours Respectfully,

J. ALFRED BRIGGS.”<sup>154</sup>

**(2) James Briggs (1875):** “ 71 COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN, N. Y.,  
March, 1875

MY DEAR SIR, -- I regret that I have not been successful in obtaining for you a copy of “Mormonism Unveiled,” -- a book written and published by Mr. Howe, of Painesville, Ohio, some forty years ago, and written when the headquarters of Mormonism were at Kirtland, Ohio. In the winter of 1833-34, a self-constituted committee of citizens of Willoughby, Mentor, and Painesville met a number of times at the house of the late Mr. Warren Corning, of Mentor, to investigate the Mormon humbug. At one of the meetings we had before us the original manuscript of the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, who came to Ashtabula County, Ohio, from Monson, Mass. It was entitled, “The \_\_\_\_\_; or, The Manuscript Found.” It was obtained from Mr. Patterson, or Peterson, a publisher of Pittsburg, Pa., with whom negotiations had once been made towards its publication. From this work of the Rev. Mr. Spaulding the Mormon Bible was constructed. I do not think there can be any doubt of this. It was the opinion of the committee after comparing the Mormon Bible with the manuscript. The style of composition, the names, etc., were the same.

In 1833 Joseph Smith was prosecuted by a man by the name of Hurlbut, I think, for assault and battery. I was a law student at the time in Willoughby, and was for the prosecution. The case was before a Justice of the Peace in Painesville, Ohio. The matter attracted a great deal of curiosity. The court was held in the old Methodist Church in Painesville, and the Justice who issued the warrant against the Mormon Prophet invited another Justice of the Peace to sit with him. Judge Bissell was the attorney for the Prophet. The

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<sup>154</sup> “To the Editor of the Berkshire Advocate,” *The Hudson River Chronicle* - Vol. I. Sing-Sing, Westchester Co., Feb. 20, 1838. No. 18.

trial lasted three days, and the church was filled to overflowing. During the examination of Smith, he gave the history of the finding of the golden plates of the Mormon Bible, how he was kicked by the Devil when he uncovered the plates and stooped down to get them. It was an interesting story; and, although it had nothing to do with the case under investigation, the Court, his own attorney, and the people all desired to hear the narration, and it came out under oath. Smith, Hyde, Pratt, and all the leaders of the faithful were there, except the ablest and most eloquent man among them all, -- the Rev. Sidney Rigdon. He had been a Baptist minister, and was a man of great natural eloquence. He is yet living, and, I think, could tell something about how the Mormon Bible was manufactured, if he would.

I guess, in my speech to the Court in the case, I must have been rather hard on the Prophet and his testimony and Mormonism, as I was told that one of his brethren said, "If it was not for his religion, he would whip that young Briggs." I sent word to him "he could for the once lay down his religion, and try it." I was not whipped. Smith was bound over; and Mormonism, persecuted, mobbed, turned out, has flourished.

Yours truly,

JAMES A. BRIGGS."<sup>155</sup>

**(3) James Briggs (1883):** "69 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn.

January 19. -- I am indebted to my old friend, Mr. Harvey Rice, of your city, for a copy of his book, "Pioneers of The Western Reserve," published by Lee & Shepard, Boston, Charles E. Dillingham, New York....

Mr. Rice refers to Joe Smith and Sidney Rigdon and the temple the Mormons built at [Kirtland]. Rigdon was a man of very much intellect. He was a natural orator, had fine command of words, and was a very impressive speaker. He was once a Baptist minister. In the winter of 1833-'34 several gentlemen in Willoughby, Painesville, and Mentor formed themselves into a committee to inquire into the origin of the Mormon Bible. Of the members of the committee in Willoughby were Judge Allen, Dr. and Samuel Wilson, Jonathon Lapham, and myself. The committee held several meetings at the house of Mr. Corning, in Mentor. The place is now owned by Mr. Garfield. They employed a man by the name of Hulbut [sic - Hurlbut?], who was once a Mormon, to help in the investigation. He went to Pittsburgh and found a printer there for the manuscript

<sup>155</sup> John Codman, *The International Review* XI:3 (NYC: A. S. Barnes & Co., Sept. 1881), 222-223.

of the book written by the Rev. Solomon Spalding, “The Manuscript Found.”

We compared it with the Mormon Bible, and the names and language and style of the Bible were so like the manuscript that all were convinced that the “Mormon Bible” was made out of this manuscript of Spalding. A number of letters were received from those who had known Mr. Spalding, and from all the facts obtained tended to convince the committee that Sidney Rigdon, when he lived in Pittsburg, copied “The Manuscript Found” and from it made the Mormon Bible.

In the winter of 1833-34, Joe Smith made an assault upon Hulbut, and was arrested on a warrant, and the trial was in the old Methodist Church, on the southeast corner of the square in Painesville. It lasted for three days. Judge Bissell was the attorney for Joe Smith, and I was employed by Hulbut, having been admitted to the bar in October, 1833. If there had been reporters in those days the verbatim report of that trial for assault and battery would be a curiosity. I said to Judge Bissell: Now let us have an account of the finding of the gold plates of the Mormon Bible. The finding has nothing to do with the case, but let me ask Smith all about it. The Judge interposed an objection to the question, but withdrew it, and he got out the whole history from Smith under oath. He testified that when he dug into the earth, and reached the plates “that he was kicked out of the hole he had dug and lifted into the air by some unseen power.” The whole trial was exceedingly rich, and the old church was crowded with delighted spectators. In my speech I paid my respects to one of the leaders of the Kirtland Mormons in such a manner that he said, “if it was not for his religion he would whip that young lawyer Briggs.” Perhaps I am the only one that ever escaped a flogging on account of a man being a Mormon....

This volume has called up and mentions the names of very many whom I have known in the fifty years now gone, and bring to mind many incidents of pioneer life that I would like to record. But I must close, with thanks again to my good old friend, he classmate of President Hopkins and David Dudley Field, on Williams College, Mr. Rice, for his very interesting volume. It should be read by all people of “the Western Reserve.” It will teach them lessons they ought to know, and ever to remember. Yours truly, JAMES A. BRIGGS.”<sup>156</sup>

#### **(4) James Briggs (1886): “THE SPAULDING ROMANCE.**

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156 “WESTERN RESERVE. A Book on Pioneer Life and Early Settlers in Northern Ohio. Which Calls Out Some Interesting Reminiscences of James A. Briggs.” *The Cleveland Leader*. Vol. XXXVI. Cleveland, Ohio, Monday, January 29, 1883. No. 29.



## HOW IT CAME INTO THE POSSESSION OF L. L. RICE, NOW OF HONOLULU.

To the Editor of the Tribune:

SIR: A special dispatch in your paper from Chicago says that the manuscript written by Rev. Solomon Spaulding, who was born in Ashford, Conn., in 1761, graduated at Dartmouth in 1785, and who in 1809 moved to Conneaut, Ashtabula County, Ohio, had been found by L. L. Rice, of Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, formerly of Ohio. In 1840 Mr. Rice was the Editor of The Painesville Telegraph, a Whig paper, formerly owned by E. D. Howe, the author of the book "Mormonism Unveiled," printed in 1835 by him. In a letter to me dated Honolulu, Dec. 4, 1885, Mr. Rice says: "After the death of my wife in 1877, at Oberlin, I came out here to be with my daughter Mary (Mrs. Dr. Whitney). I have a pleasant home here -- am in good health for a man now eighty-five." This is the Mr. Rice from whom the news comes to you of the manuscript of Spaulding.

In the winter of 1833-34, a self-constituted committee, consisting of Judge Allen, Dr. Card, Samuel Wilson, Judge Latham, W. Corning and myself, met at Mr. Corning's house, in Mentor, now known as the Garfield Farm, to investigate Mormonism and the origin of the Mormon Bible. Dr. D. P. Hurlbut, whose name is mentioned in the article in your paper this morning, was employed to look up testimony. He was present with the committee and had Spaulding's original manuscript with him. We compared it, chapter by chapter with the Mormon Bible. It was written in the same style; many of the names were the same, and we came to the conclusion, from all the testimony before us, that the Rev. Sidney Rigdon, the eloquent Mormon preacher, made the Mormon Bible from this manuscript. Of this the committee had no doubt whatever.

About this time Dr. Hurlbut had some trouble with the Mormons at Kirtland, where they had built a temple and he had the prophet, Joseph Smith, arrested on a warrant of a justice of the peace for assault and battery. He had an examination before two justices in the Old Methodist Church in Painesville. It lasted three days. Judge Benjamin Bissell was the attorney for Smith and I was the attorney for Dr. Hurlbut. The examination produced much interest. Cowdery, Hyde and Pratt, Mormon leaders, were there with "Joe" Smith. I said to Mr. Bissell, "let us get from 'The Prophet' his history of the finding of the 'golden plates.'" Mr. B. consented and for two days we



had The Prophet, “Joe” Smith, on the witness stand. He swore, that is, under oath, that he found the golden plates buried in the earth in a field in Palmyra, N. Y., and when he found them he was kicked by an unseen foot out of the hole in which they were placed. All present knew that it was a Mormon lie.

Rigdon was a natural orator, and had much native genius. He got the manuscript in Pittsburg at the printing office of Mr. Robert Patterson, the father of the present Mr. Robert Patterson, who has published an interesting history of Mormonism, showing without a doubt that the Rev. Sidney Rigdon was the compiler of the Book of Mormon.

In 1879, Dr. Hurlbut was living at Gibbsonburgh, Ohio. In a letter to Mr. Patterson, of Pittsburg, he says: “I gave the manuscript with all my other documents connected with Mormonism to Mr. Howe.” Mr. Rice was the successor of Mr. Howe in The Telegraph, and this accounts for his possession of the “manuscript found” at this late day in an island in the Pacific Ocean.

L. L. Rice was well known on the Western Reserve, Ohio, as one of the earliest and ablest of the anti-slavery Whigs. He has lived to see the “incurable injustice,” slavery, abolished in the land of his birth, and to bring at this late date to light the Spaulding manuscript. Yours truly,

JAMES A. BRIGGS.

Brooklyn, Jan. 29. 1886.”<sup>157</sup>

(5) **James Briggs (1886):** “The manuscript of Rev. Solomon Spaulding, Conneaut, Ohio, found by Mr. L. L. Rice, of Honolulu, Sandwich Islands, and now in the archives in the Library of Oberlin, Ohio, and published by the reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Lamoni, Iowa, throws no more light upon the authorship or origin of the “Mormon Bible” or “Book of Mormon” or the “Golden Bible” than it does upon the real authorship of the Letters of Junius.

The manuscript came in the possession of Mr. Rice legitimately being among the effects of the Painsville Telegraph, bought by him of its former owner, Mr. E. D. Howe, who published, in 1834, a book “Mormonism Unveiled.” Now, Mr. Joseph Smith of Lamoni, Iowa, you assume altogether too much when you say the newly found missing link completes the chain of evidence which proves that the “Manuscript Found” never was, and never could be

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<sup>157</sup> “THE SPAULDING ROMANCE. HOW IT CAME INTO THE POSSESSION OF L. L. RICE, NOW OF HONOLULU. *The New York Tribune*. New York City, Sunday, January 31, 1886.

made the occasion, cause or germ of the "Book of Mormon." I have just read the Manuscript Story you sent me a few days ago, by request of my old and much valued friend, Mr. L. L. Rice, of Honolulu, and in my opinion it settles nothing, save that the author of the story was a very weak brother, and if written by Rev. Solomon Spaulding, he was a man of indigent talents, and the money paid for his college expenses was wasted. Allow me to doubt if he wrote it. You must get some better and more positive link in the chain of evidence than this story, recently printed, to convince the world that the original "Manuscript Found," written by Solomon Spaulding, was not the basis for the historical portion of your Mormon Bible. Let me state some stubborn facts, not only from my own memory, but substantiated by witnesses; from Oct., 1832, until the first of April, 1834, I lived in the village of Willoughby, some two and one-half miles from the village of Kirtland, where your first Mormon temple was built, and yet stands. I heard much of Mormonism, heard its most eloquent champion, Rev. Sidney Rigdon, preach.

In the winter of 1833-34, or in the early spring of 1834, a number of gentlemen in Willoughby who felt an interest in the Mormon question appointed themselves a committee to look into the matter. They were Judge Nehemiah Allen, who had been an associate Judge of the county of Cuyahoga, a representative in the Legislature; Dr. George W. Card, an intelligent physician, Samuel Wilson, an active and energetic business man; Jonathan Lapham, a lawyer of many years at the bar, and myself, a very young lawyer. We met at the house of Mr. W. Corning, in Mentor, now the Garfield place, a well-to-do and independent farmer. Dr. P. Hurlbut also met with us. He lived in Kirtland and during the winter and spring had given much time in looking up evidence and documents to prove that Mormonism was a delusion. He had much of the evidence that he had collected with him. Now I am very sure he had the identical story that you have printed with him. I remember about the ancient fort at Conneaut Creek, the mound, and the statement of finding the manuscript about the Indians. I have no doubt that Hurlbut, as he says, gave the story to Mr. E. D. Howe. But I believe he had also with him, and we had before us in that investigation, the original "Manuscript Found" written by Rev. Solomon Spaulding. I have said and believed for more than fifty years that I have seen and had in my hands the original "Manuscript Found" from which the Mormon Bible was made.

I have no doubt we had the "Manuscript Found" before us, that we compared it with the Mormon Bible, that the style in which the "Manuscript

Found” was written was the same as that of the Mormon Bible. The names -- peculiar -- were the same, not to be forgotten. The names Lehi, Nephi, Maroni, etc., and the expression “and it came to pass” often repeated. This manuscript did not go to Mr. Howe. What did Hurlbut do with it? Some few years ago I wrote to him and asked him who had it -- what he did with it. He did not answer my letter. He received it, as it was not returned to me. Dr. Hurlbut died in Ohio two years ago last June. He is silent now, the grave closed over him. Of Dr. Hurlbut and this “Manuscript Found” the Rev. D. R. Austin, of Munson, Mass, writes in a letter to Rev. Dr. Clark, June 28, 1841. “He, Dr. Hurlbut, stated some time after he had received it, the Manuscript, he had made four hundred dollars out of it.” Whether Dr. H. sold the Manuscript in question or not, it is certain he did not give it to Howe with the other documents, and the Manuscript Story is not the “Manuscript Found” of Spaulding. Was there more than one Manuscript of Spaulding? John N. Miller writes in 1833, as follows: “In 1811 I was in the employ of Henry Lake and Solomon Spaulding at Conneaut. I boarded and lodged in the family of Spaulding for several months. I was soon introduced to the Manuscript of Spaulding and perused it as I had leisure. He had written two or three books or pamphlets on different subjects, but that which particularly drew my attention was one which he called “Manuscript Found.” I have recently examined the “Book of Mormon” and found in it the writings of Solomon Spaulding from beginning to end.” Several of the witnesses who knew Spaulding intimately and well and heard him read, and had read themselves, the “Manuscript Found,” certify that they recognized the names of the Manuscript in the “Book of Mormon.” They are positive; they admit of no doubt. The statements of Mr. Robert Patterson, of Pittsburgh, Pa., the son of Mr. R. Patterson, the printer with whom Spaulding left his “Manuscript Found,” in his history of the “Book of Mormon” shows how the Rev. Sidney Rigdon was mixed up with it.

## RIGDON AND THE MORMON BIBLE

The Rev. John Winter, D. D., says in Pittsburgh in 1822 and 1823, when Rigdon was the pastor of the Baptist Church there, he was well acquainted with Rigdon and upon one occasion when in Rigdon’s study R, took from his desk a large Manuscript and said in substance: ‘A Presbyterian minister, Spaulding, whose health had failed, brought this to the printer to see if it would pay to publish it. It is a romance of the Bible.’ To confirm this, Mrs. Mary W. Irvine,

a daughter of Dr. Winter, writes: "I have frequently heard my father speak of Rigdon's having Spaulding's Manuscript, and that he had gotten it from the printers to read it as a curiosity." Rev. J. A. Bonsall a step-son of Dr. Winter indorses the above statement. Mr. Z. Rudolph, the father of Mrs. President Garfield, knew Sidney Rigdon very well, and has stated that during the winter previous to the appearance of the "Book of Mormon," Rigdon was in the habit of spending weeks away from his home, going no one knew where. Rigdon at this time made his visits to Jo Smith at Palmyra, N. Y. At last the "Book of Mormon" was published at Palmyra and then this renegade Baptist and Campbellite turns up as the first regular Mormon preacher in Palmyra. Sidney Rigdon was the mysterious stranger at various times in Palmyra. The Rev. Adamson Bentley, to my own personal knowledge a man of very high character and a brother-in-law of Rigdon, in writing Rev. Walter Scott, an old and cherished champion of Rigdon says: "I know that Sidney Rigdon told me that there was a book coming out, the manuscript of which had been found engraved on golden plates, as much as two years before the Mormon Book made its appearance, or had been heard of by me." The Rev. Alexander Campbell, one of the very able and learned men of his day, who had great reputation, says: "This conversation of Brother Bentley with Rigdon was in my presence, Rigdon observing at the same time that in the plates due up in New York there was not only an account of the aborigines of the country, but also it was stated that the Christian religion had been preached in this country during the first century, just as we were preaching it on the Western Reserve." These sentiments connect Rigdon with a knowledge of Spaulding's "Manuscript Found."

In 1834, early in the spring, Dr. P. Hurlbut had Jo Smith, of Kirtland, the Mormon prophet, arrested on a warrant of a justice of the peace in Painesville, Ohio, for assault and battery. The examination was in the old Methodist Church on the southeast corner of the public square. The matter excited great interest. The late Judge Benjamin Bissel was the attorney for Smith; I was the attorney for Hurlbut. The examination lasted three days. During the examination I said to Bissel, "Let us get a statement from Smith of how he found the golden plates of the Mormon Bible." Bissel at first objected to my question, but then withdrew the objection, and then Prophet Smith told us the whole story of digging for and the finding of the plates in Palmyra, N.Y. Smith testified that in digging he touched the plates. He was kicked by an unseen power out of the hole in the earth. From these plates the Mormon

Bible was translated. He did not tell where the plates were .

It was a great legal farce. Pratt, Hyde and other leading Mormons were there. Now what is the result of the whole matter? First, the manuscript found by Mr. Rice, and now in the possession of the Oberlin Library, is not the "Manuscript Found" written by Solomon Spaulding. Second, that Spaulding wrote more than one story, as we have positive knowledge of two. Third, that Hurlbut obtained possession of the original "Manuscript Found," that we had to compare with the Mormon Bible before the committee at Mentor. Fourth, that Hurlbut stated that he had made four hundred dollars by selling it, and I believe he did or he would have answered my letter. Fifth, that the testimony of numerous reliable witnesses states that when they heard read and read it themselves, the Mormon Bible, they at once recognized the peculiar phraseology and the names as those in the "Manuscript Found." Sixth, that Rigdon, by his own statements, is proved as having read Spaulding's "Manuscript Found." Seventh, that he visited Jo Smith at Palmyra, and he is identified with the first appearance of the Mormon Bible, as well as the first preacher of Mormonism. I have ever believed since the meeting at Mr. Corning's, at Mentor, that Rigdon was the compiler of the Mormon Bible. He had the brains of the concern. Smith had not the capacity, natural or acquired, to do it. He was cunning but not intellectual. Brigham Young became a power. Mormonism is a cheat, a delusion, and a fraud. It is too bad that so many have been so badly deceived, and been turned from the faith of the gospel of Jesus Christ, he who brought life and immortality to light and teaches that all who put their trust in him shall inherit a life that is upward and onward and eternal, in the peace and glory and happiness of Heaven.

[Signed] JAMES A. BRIGGS,

No. 177 Washington Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., March 22, 1886."<sup>158</sup>

**(6) James Briggs (1886): "THE BOOK OF MORMON**

**Additional Light on the Question, Who Wrote It?**

**Competent Testimony from a Leading Citizen of Brooklyn, N.Y.,**

**that the Rev. Sidney Rigdon "Got Up" the Mormon Bible --**

**Spaulding's "Manuscript Found" the Basis of Its Historical Portion --**

**Rigdon and Joe Smith -- interesting connecting links.**

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<sup>158</sup> Arthur B. Deming, "HON. JAS. A. BRIGGS' STATEMENT," *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 1, (Jan. 1888), pg. 4, col. 4-6.



Editor of the Watchman:

In the year 1833-'34 I was one of a self-appointed committee that met in the home of Mr. W. Coming, Mentor, O., for the purpose of investigating the origin of the Book of Mormon. Dr. D. P. Hurlburt had been in New York and Massachusetts looking up testimony; we had the manuscript of the Rev. Solomon Spaulding before us, that we compared with the Mormon Bible, and we had no doubt that from Spaulding's writings the Rev. Sidney Rigdon got up the Mormon Bible. I am convinced of it now. Here are some of the reasons:

The "Manuscript Found," written by the Rev. Solomon Spaulding in Conneaut, Ashtabula County, O., in 1809-'12 was the basis of the historical portions of the Mormon Bible, if any credibility is to be given to positive human testimony. Now what is this testimony? John Spaulding, a brother of Solomon, of Conneaut, says: I visited my brother, and he told me he had been writing a book; it was entitled "Manuscript Found," of which he had read to me many pages. It was a historical romance, endeavoring to show that the American Indians are the descendants of the Jews, or the Lost tribes. It detailed their journey from Jerusalem by land and sea till they arrived in America, under the command of Nephi and Lehi . . . I have recently read the Book of Mormon, and, to my great surprise, I find nearly the same historical matter, names, etc., as they were in my brother's writings . . . He commenced about every sentence with "and it came to pass" or "now it came to pass," the same as in the Book of Mormon, and, according to the best of my recollection and belief, it is the same as my brother Solomon wrote, with the exception of the religious part."

Mrs. Martha Spaulding, wife of John Spaulding, says: "I have read the Book of Mormon, which has brought to my recollection the writings of Solomon Spaulding, and I have no manner of doubt that the historical part of it is the same that I read and heard read more than twenty years ago. The old obsolete style, and the phrases of 'and it came to pass,' &c. are the same."

Henry Lake, the partner of Spaulding, from Conneaut in September, 1834 [sic.]: "He, Spaulding, frequently read [to] me from a manuscript which he was writing, which he entitled "Manuscript Found,"... I spent many hours in hearing him read said writings, and became well acquainted with its contents... One time when he reading to me the tragic account of Laban, I pointed out to him what I considered an inconsistency, which he promised to correct; but by referring to the Book of Mormon, I find to my surprise that it stands just as he

read it to me then... I have no hesitation in saying that the historical part of the Golden Bible is principally if not wholly taken from the "Manuscript Found."

In the story of Laban in the first book of Nephi, where Nephi says, "They did speak many hard words unto us their younger brothers, and they did smite us even with a rod," whereupon an angel appears and says: "Why do ye smite your younger brother with a rod?" Consistency would require that the number, whether plural or singular, should in both cases be the same. The oversight is in itself a trifle, but its occurrence in both the Spaulding Manuscript and the Book of Mormon is an unanswerable proof of identity.

John N. Miller in 1833 says: In the year 1811 I was in the employ of Henry Lake and Solomon Spaulding at Conneaut, engaged in rebuilding a forge. While there I boarded in the family of said Spaulding several months. I was soon introduced to the manuscript of Spaulding and perused it as often as I had leisure. He had written two or three books or pamphlets on different subjects, but that which more particularly drew my attention was one which he called the "Manuscript Found,"... I have recently examined the Book of Mormon, and find in it the writings of Solomon Spaulding from beginning to end, but mixed up with Scripture and other religious matter... Many of the passages of the Mormon Book are verbatim from Spaulding, and others in part. The names of Nephi, Lehi, Moroni... are brought to my recollection by the Golden Bible.

Aaron Wright, Oliver Smith and Nahum A. Ward [sic] of Conneaut testify in the same manner and to the same things as being in the "Manuscript" as in the Mormon Bible. Some eight or ten other persons of irreproachable character testify as to the identity of the "Manuscript Found," as they had read it and heard it read, with the Mormon Bible. And their testimony has never been impeached or denied

I have believed since the spring of 1834 that Rigdon got up the Mormon Bible out of the "Manuscript Found," and there are many persons who have testified to Rigdon's connection with the manuscript. They have testified to the intimate acquaintance of Rigdon with Lambdin of Pittsburg, the partner of Patterson, printer, with whom Spaulding left his manuscript. The Rev. John Winter, D. D., says in 1822-'23, upon one occasion he was in Rigdon's study, when he (R.) took from his desk a large manuscript, and said in substance: "A Presbyterian minister, Spaulding, whose health had failed, brought this to the printer to see if it would pay to publish it. It is a romance of the Bible."

Mary W. Sevine [sic] a daughter of Dr. Winter, writes: "I have frequently

heard my father speak of Rigdon having Spaulding's manuscript, and that he got it from the printers to read as a curiosity; as such he showed it to father; and at that time Rigdon had no intention of using it as he afterwards did; for father always said Rigdon helped Smith in his scheme by revising and making the Mormon Bible out of the Rev. Spaulding's manuscript." The Rev. J. A. Bonsall of Rochester, Pa., a stepson of Dr. Winter, says he "repeatedly heard Dr. Winter say that Rigdon had shown him the Spaulding manuscript romance... which manuscript he had received from the printers."

Mrs. Amos Dunlap of Warren, O., writes: "When I was quite a child I visited in Mr. Rigdon's family. He married my aunt. During my visit he went into his bedroom and came out with a certain manuscript, seated himself by the fire, and commenced reading it. His wife came into the room and exclaimed "What! you studying that thing again? I mean to burn that paper." "No! indeed, you will not. This will be a great thing someday."

Mr. Z. Rudolph, father of Mrs. Gen. Garfield, knew Sidney Rigdon very well, and says: "During the winter previous to the appearance of the Book of Mormon Rigdon was in the habit of spending weeks away from his home, going no one knew where... When the Book of Mormon appeared Rigdon joined in the advocacy of the new religion, and suspicion was at once aroused that he was not ignorant of the authorship of the Book of Mormon.

The Rev. Adamson Bentley, a very intimate friend of Rigdon, their wives were sisters, writing to the Rev. W. Scott, another friend of Rigdon of many years, says that "Rigdon told me there was a book coming out, the manuscript of which had been found engraved on gold plates, as much as two years before the Mormon book made its appearance." The Rev. Alexander Campbell, one of the strong and learned men of his time, known all over the land, confirms the truth of the conversation between "Father Bentley," as he was well known on the 'Western Reserve,' and Sidney Rigdon. These witnesses prove that Rigdon had the "Manuscript Found" of Solomon Spaulding, without any doubt. Now as to Rigdon's acquaintance with Joe Smith, "the Prophet."

Mrs. D. Horace Eaton of Palmyra, N.Y, in a sketch on the "Origin of Mormonism," says: "Early in the summer of 1827 a 'mysterious stranger' seeks admittance to Joe Smith's cabin. The conference of the two is most private. This person, whose coming immediately preceded a new departure in the faith, was Sidney Rigdon, of Mentor, O." Mrs. Eaton is confirmed in her statement by P. Tucker, Esq., of Palmyra. Rigdon was the first Mormon

preacher in Palmyra.

Joseph Smith of Lamoni, Ia., has sent me a copy of the “manuscript” found by Mr. L. L. Rice of Honolulu and published by the Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints. This is not a copy of the “Manuscript Found” of Solomon Spaulding. Mr. Joseph Smith of Lamoni assumes too much when he says: “This newly-found ‘missing-link’ completes the chain of evidence that the ‘Manuscript Found’ never was and never could be made the occasion, cause, or germ of the ‘Book of Mormon.’”

The “manuscript” published at Lamoni is another one of Spaulding’s, and has no more to do with the authorship of the Book of Mormon than it has with the authorship of that most wonderful of all poems, the Book of Job, or the authorship of Junius’ Letters. It proves nothing.

At the meeting at Mr. J. Corning’s in Mentor, in 1834, I have no doubt we had this very identical “manuscript” now published among the papers submitted by Dr. Hurlburt. We also had a copy of the “Manuscript Found,” that was compared with the Mormon Bible and satisfied the committee that it was the basis of the Mormon Bible. I have said and believed since 1834 that I had seen and examined the original “Manuscript Found” of Solomon Spaulding, out of which Sidney Rigdon got up the Mormon Bible. I believe, as Dr. Hurlburt stated, that he “sold the manuscript for \$400.” It is certain that he had it, and who but the Mormons would buy it? Three years ago I wrote to Hurlburt and asked him about the “Manuscript Found.” He did not answer my letter. He is now dead. He was once a Mormon.

For some reason in 1833 he had some difficulty with “the Saints” in Kirtland. The last known of the “Manuscript Found” it was in Hurlburt’s hands. It was not given to Mr. Howe of Painesville, O.

Now there is no doubt that the Rev. Solomon Spaulding wrote the “Manuscript Found”: that the historical part of the Book of Mormon was taken from that manuscript, if human testimony is to be relied on as of any validity. That Sidney Rigdon had the original manuscript in his possession, read it first as a curiosity, and then used it to get up the Book of Mormon, a sham, a fraud, and a deception, and that he was the first to preach the delusion -- are facts. This fact should not be lost sight of -- that Solomon Spaulding wrote two or more pamphlets on different subjects.

JAMES A. BRIGGS.

No. 177 Washington Street, Brooklyn.”<sup>159</sup>

**(7) James Briggs (1887):** “Book of Mormon.

To the Editor of THE EVENING STAR:

The article in the Evening Star of a recent date, referred to by John Irvine, is full of errors. “The Manuscript Found,” written by the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, and from which the “Book of Mormon” or “Mormon Bible,” was made, is not in the possession of Hiram College.

“The Manuscript,” found by the late Mr. L. L. Rice at Honolulu among his papers when President Fairchild, of Oberlin College, was there on a visit, and now in the library of Oberlin College, is not “The Manuscript Found” written by Mr. Spaulding. In a letter to me, written by Mr. Rice, a friend of fifty years, at Honolulu, February 26, 1886, says: “I should as soon think that the book of Revelations was written by the author of Don Quixote, as that this ‘Manuscript’ and the Book of Mormon were written by the same author. The package containing the ‘Manuscript’ was in my possession from 1839 to 1884 -- forty-five years -- without my having ever examined it. \* \* \* At President Fairchild’s request, I was overhauling my pamphlets and manuscripts to find anti-slavery documents for presentation to the Oberlin library, when, for the first time I examined this package. The words ‘Manuscript Found’ do not occur on the wrapper, or in the manuscript at all. The wrapper was marked in pencil ‘Manuscript Story’ -- Conneaut Creek.”

This manuscript story was printed by the Mormons at Lamoni, Iowa, of which I have a copy, and it is no more like the Book of Mormon than it is like Homer’s Iliad.”

Mr. Lewis L. Rice died at Honolulu, April 14, 1886. He was for many years publisher and editor of several papers on the Western Reserve, and when he bought the Painesville Telegraph in 1839, of Mr. E. D. Howe, the manuscript in question came into his possession, among other papers.

Of this “manuscript” Mr. Rice in his letter to me wrote: “It is not of much importance except it may be useful to the Mormons to show that it is not the original of the book of Mormon. But that does not prove that some other writing of Spaulding was not used in getting up the Mormon Bible.”

Yours truly, JAMES A. BRIGGS.

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<sup>159</sup> “THE BOOK OF MORMON. Additional Light on the Question, Who Wrote It?” *The Watchman*. Thursday, September 9, 1886.



177 Washington st., Brooklyn, N. Y., April 16, 1887.”<sup>160</sup>

**(9) James Briggs (1888): “THE MORMON BIBLE.**

To the Editor of the New-York Times:

The article in your paper of yesterday on Mormonism contains some errors. The Rev. S. Rigdon, who unquestionably compiled the Mormon Bible from “The Manuscript Found” of the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, a graduate of Dartmouth College, never was an “apostate” from his Mormon faith. He was a man of much native eloquence. If the testimony of credible witnesses is to be believed, he got up the Mormon Bible. “The Manuscript Found,” said to have been found in the possession of Mr. L. L. Rice, who died at Honolulu on the 14th of April, 1886, is no more like the Mormon Bible than the Book of Job is like “Pope’s Essay on Man.” I have a copy of the “Manuscript” that Mr. Rice had in his possession, and it came to him when he bought the printing office of the Painesville (Ohio) Telegraph of the late E. D. Howe, author of “Mormonism Exposed.” It was among the papers of the office, and on the wrapper was written, “A Manuscript Story.” When President Fairchild of Oberlin College was on a visit to his old friend, Mr. Rice, in Honolulu, a few years ago, he asked Mr. Rice to examine his documents, to see if he could not find some anti-slavery pamphlets for the library of Oberlin College. Mr. Rice was one of the first anti-slavery editors in Ohio. Among them Mr. Rice found this “Manuscript Story.” It was copied “verbatim et literatim,” and printed by Joseph Smith, a son of the Prophet; and I have now a copy of the little book, also a letter from Mr. Rice, telling how it was found, and of his giving it to President Fairchild to be presented to the library of Oberlin College, where it is now for safe keeping, and of no special value. Mormonism was a great fraud. I lived for some eighteen months in Willoughby, Ohio, in 1832-4, within two and a half miles of the Mormon Temple in Kirtland; knew Jo Smith, Cowdery, Pratt, and Hyde, leaders of the faithful; heard Jo Smith in a justice court, where he was before it on a charge of assault and battery, testify as to his finding the “Golden Plates” of the “Mormon Bible,” and how he was kicked out of the hole in the earth where he was digging, when he struck the plates, by an unseen power. If there had been a newspaper reporter at that three days’ hearing, in the old Methodist church in Painesville, it would have

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<sup>160</sup> “Book of Mormon.” *The Evening Star*. No. 10,583. Washington, D. C., Monday April 18, 1887. Two Cents.

been one of the interesting and curious chapters in history. What a blessing reporters are! We cannot be too thankful for them. JAMES A. BRIGGS.

115 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, Monday,  
Feb. 27, 1888.”<sup>161</sup>

So far if we were to place the “big picture” of how **Manuscript Found** evolved into the Book of Mormon, it might have gone something like this:

- 1809 - Spalding begins **MS # 1-Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek**.
- Josiah Spalding (younger brother) visits Solomon Spalding during winter of 1811-1812.
- Josiah seems to have seen Solomon working on **MS # 1**.
- Josiah left the spring of 1812.
- Solomon Spalding lays **MS # 1** aside at some point after Josiah leaves.
- **MS # 1** remains incomplete.
- Solomon Spalding begins **MS #2 - Manuscript Found** in the spring of 1812.
- **MS # 2** is incomplete prior to moving to Pittsburgh, PA.
- Throughout the spring, summer, and early fall of 1812, Solomon Spalding read it to his friends and neighbors and some of them read it themselves.
- Solomon Spalding’s family moved to Pittsburgh in the fall of 1812.
- Solomon Spalding submits **MS #2** to *R. & J. Patterson* for possible publication.
- Solomon Spalding most likely dealt with Joseph Patterson out of the two brothers.
- Solomon Spalding needed to polish it up, finish it, and provide the financial earnest money (which he was unable to do).
- Pittsburgh was getting to be very expensive and so in 1814, the Spalding family moved 10 miles south to Amity, PA.
- It seems probable that Spalding may have continued to work on the manuscript to polish it up (based on the witness testimonies of Matilda Davidson, Redick McKee, and Joseph Miller).
- In 1815-1816, he submits **MS #2** again to the publishing firm.
- Spalding just so happens to leave the manuscript at the publishing firm, but

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<sup>161</sup> “The Mormon Bible.” *The New York Times*. No. 11,392. New-York, Monday, March 5, 1888. Vol. 37. No. 2.

it turns up missing.

- In 1815-1816, Spalding tells John Miller, his wife (Matilda Davidson), and Cephas Dodd whom he suspects to be the thief - Sidney Rigdon.

- It might have been the case that Rigdon had copied and quietly returned the manuscript and nothing else was said.

- The death of Solomon Spalding occurred in October of 1816.

- The widow may have sought out the manuscript and it was put in the trunk with other manuscripts (We will discuss the hypothetical fate of that manuscript later on).

Solomon Spalding does seem to be an author that would be fit to write a historical novel that contained war material, etc., biblical allusions because of the following:

### **Solomon Spalding:**

#### **(1) War experience/education**

*[Mosiah, Alma, and Helaman have a lot to do with war material.]*

#### **(2) Law education - learned from Zephaniah Swift**

*[There are parts in the **BOM** that deal with matters of law, judges, etc., and so the legal contribution of Spalding fits for the time he was educated under Zephaniah Swift.]*

#### **(3) Classics education - Dartmouth College**

*[It is a strong possibility that he learned about the Israelite-Native American theory there.]*

#### **(4) Curiosity about first inhabitants/mounds**

*[He lived in Conneaut, Ohio where there were mounds and there are mounds discussed in the **BOM**.]*

#### **(5) Biblical knowledge (“old style”)**

*[Several witnesses stated that he used this style and it is used in the **BOM**.]*

#### **(6) “Ole’ Come To Pass”**

*[Several witnesses such as Henry Lake attribute that he used the phrase “and it came to pass” too many times and it is found in the **BOM**. It is **NOT** found in **MS # 1 - Manuscript Story**.]*

#### **(7) Spalding had the ability to write**

*[**MS # 1 - Manuscript Story** - was discovered in Honolulu, HI in 1884.]*

### **Stark differences between the manuscripts:**

- (1) Different title: **MS # 1 - *Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek***
- (2) Different people who journeyed to America: Romans
- (3) It was never finished, contains missing pages, and has an abrupt ending.

**That is not a book fit for publication.**

**(1) MS # 2 - *Manuscript Found***

- (2) Different people who journeyed to America: Israelites
- (3) It was sent to *R. & J. Patterson* in Pittsburgh, was almost ready for publication, but it ended up going missing.
- (4) The phrase “and it came to pass” occurred many times (which is not found in the first manuscript).
- (5) Character names: Nephi, Lehi, Moroni, Lamanites, Nephites, etc.

**Historical markers that are important:**

There are witnesses who have come forward stating that *Manuscript Found* and the Book of Mormon are connected by stating that Solomon Spalding had written a manuscript entitled *Manuscript Found*.

**In the summer/autumn 1833, these affidavits were gathered:**

- |                   |                        |                  |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| (1) John Spalding | (2) Martha Spalding    | (3) Oliver Smith |
| (4) Nahum Howard  | (5) Aaron Wright       | (6) Henry Lake   |
| (7) John Miller   | (8) Artemas Cunningham |                  |

In the *Cleveland Advertiser* - Feb. 15, 1831, Rigdon and the **BOM** had been connected together (**two years before the affidavits were collected**). *There was no connection at that time made to Solomon Spalding.*

Here is the full article:

“MORMONISM -- or Grand Pugilistic Debate. The Painesville Telegraph of this morning has the particulars of the acceptance of a challenge by Thomas Campbell, given by a noted mountebank by the name of Elder Rigdon, who has flourished in and about the “openings,” for the last few years, and to the no small wonderment of all the old women round about that country, to test the validity of the doctrine contained in the Book of Mormon! It is something singular that this subject should have created such a stir. The Editor of the Telegraph has opened his paper to a discussion of its merits and demerits!

Rigdon was formerly a disciple of Campbell's and who it is said was sent out to make proselytes, but is probable he thought he should find it more advantageous to operate on his own capital, and therefore wrote, as it is believed the Book of Mormon, and commenced his pilgrimage in the town of Kirtland, which was represented as one of the extreme points of the Holy Land.

The good people of that country were wont to take a different notice of nuisances, by placing them a-stride a rail, accompanied with the music of kettle drums, tin pans, and pumpkin vines to the tune of "Over the hills, and far a-way."<sup>162</sup>

James Gordon Bennett released two articles connecting Rigdon and the Book of Mormon as well on August 31 and September 1, 1831 (**two years before the Conneaut, OH affidavits were collected**). *There was no connection at that time made to Solomon Spalding.*

Arrington provides some background to these diary entries and how they were used for publication in the newspaper:

"Three separate entries in Bennett's diary are of interest to Mormon historians. Collectors may be surprised that an entry for June 29, 1831, describing his journey by canal boat from Utica to Syracuse, indicates that on the book table in the canal-boat reading room were three newspapers and two books: Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* and the Book of Mormon. The entries for August 7 and 8, 1831, were made at Geneva, a picturesque village situated about sixteen miles southeast of the Joseph Smith farmstead near Palmyra. Internal evidence suggests that Bennett discussed Mormonism with E. B. Grandin, whose firm had printed the Book of Mormon; Charles Butler, the lawyer-philanthropist from whom Martin Harris attempted to borrow money to pay for printing the Book of Mormon; and others.<sup>2</sup> Here are those entries:

Geneva, August 7, 1831:

Mormonism. Old Smith [Joseph Smith, Sr. ] was a healer—a grand storyteller—very glib—was a vender [?—made gingerbread and buttermints&c&c—Young Smith [Joseph Smith, Jr.] was careless, idle, indolent fellow—22 years old—brought up to live by his wits—which means a broker of small wants—Harris [Martin] was a hardy industrious farmer of Palmyra—with

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<sup>162</sup> "Mormonism - or Grand Pugilistic Debate." *Cleveland Advertiser*, Cleveland, OH, Tuesday, February 15, 1831. no. 5.



some money—could speak off the Bible by heart—Henry [Sidney] Rigdon—a parson in general—smart fellow—he is the author of the Bible—they dig first for money—a great many hills—the Golden Bible Hill [Cumorah] where there is a hole 30 or forty feet into the side—6 feet diameter dug among and the chest fled his approach—turned into a religious plot and gave out the golden plates—the Hill a long narrow hill which spreads out broad to the South—covered with Beech, Maple, Basswood and White Wood—the north end quite naked—the trees cut off in the road from Canandaigua to Palmyra between Manchester & Palmyra—several fine orchards on the east—and fine farms on the west—here the ground is hilly—but small hills—very uneven—the [Lake Canandaigua] outlet runs past part of it—Mormonites went to Ohio because the people here would not pay any attention to them—Smith's wife [Emma] looked into a hole and the chest fled into a trunk and he lost several of them—[William W.] Phelps of the Phoenix was converted to Mormonism and is now a teacher or elder —

August 8, 1831:

Mormonism—C[harles]. Butler saw Harris they wanted to borrow money to print the Book—he told him he carried the engravings from the plates to New York—showed them to Professor Anthon who said that he did not know what language they were—told him to carry them to Dr. Mitchell—Doctor Mitchell examined them—and compared them with other hieroglyphics—thought them very curious—and they were the characters of a nation now extinct which he named—Harris returned to Anthon who put some questions to him and got angry with Harris.

Although the reader will note important inaccuracies, these notes nevertheless demonstrate Bennett's intense interest in the controversial new religion. Certainly, the notes reflect myths about the coming forth of the Book of Mormon which were already in the process of formation in 1831. While at Canandaigua (located at the head of Lake Canandaigua, ten miles south of the Joseph Smith farm) on August 15, 1831, Bennett used the above notes to write a two-part feature story which appeared in the Morning Courier and Enquirer on August 31 and September 1, 1831. Having been written "on the spot," this early report on "Mormonism" as a species of "religious fanaticism" and as a "Church and State Party" suggests not only contemporary attitudes toward "the Mormonites," but also the rapidity with which misinformation

was conveyed by the press. The charges of “roguery,” of Joseph Smith’s “shiftlessness,” of Sidney Rigdon’s authorship of the Book of Mormon, and of the pretensions of the new faith are all mentioned and deplored. The articles also contain a graphic, and perhaps firsthand, description of the Hill Cumorah as it looked in 1831.

The two articles, which were “discovered” by Nancy Richards in a New York library in 1969 and photo-stated for the use of Professor Richard L. Anderson of Brigham Young University, are here reproduced in their entirety through the generosity of Dr. Anderson.”<sup>163</sup>

### “MORMONISM -- RELIGIOUS FANATICISM -- CHURCH AND STATE PARTY.

Canandaigua, Aug. 15th, 1831.

New York has been celebrated for her parties -- her sects -- her explosions -- her curiosities of human character her fanaticism political and religious. The strangest parties and wildest opinions originate among us. The human mind in our rich vales -- on our sunny hills -- in our crowded cities or thousand villages -- or along the shores of our translucent lakes bursts beyond all ordinary trammels; throws aside with equal fastidiousness the maxims of ages and the discipline of generations, and strikes out new paths for itself. In politics -- in religion -- in all the great concerns of man, New York has a character peculiarly her own; strikingly original, purely American -- energetic and wild to the very farthest boundaries of imagination. The centre of the state is quiet comparatively, and grave to a degree; but its two extremities, Eastern and Western; the city of the Atlantic, and the continuous villages of the Lakes, contain all that is curious in human character -- daring in conception -- wild in invention, and singular in practical good sense as well as in solemn foolery.

You have heard of MORMONISM -- who has not? Paragraph has followed paragraph in the newspapers, recounting the movements, detailing their opinions and surprising distant readers with the traits of a singularly new religious sect which had its origin in this state. Mormonism is the latest device of roguery, ingenuity, ignorance and religious excitement combined, and acting on materials prepared by those who ought to know better. It is one

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<sup>163</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, “James Gordon Bennett’s Report on “The Mormonites,” *BYU Studies* 10:3, 2-3.

of the mental exhalations of Western New York.

The individuals who gave birth to this species of fanaticism are very simple personages, and not known until this thrust them into notice. They are the old and young Joe Smith's Harris a farmer, Ringdon a sort of preacher on general religion from Ohio, together with several other persons equally infatuated, cunning, and hypocritic. The first of these persons, Smith, resided on the borders of Wayne and Ontario counties on the road leading from Canandaigua to Palmyra. Old Joe Smith had been a country pedlar in his younger days, and possessed all the shrewdness, cunning, and small intrigue which are generally and justly attributed to that description of persons. He was a great story teller, full of anecdotes picked up in his peregrinations -- and possessed a tongue as smooth as oil and as quick as lightning. He had been quite a speculator in a small way in his younger days, but had been more fortunate in picking up materials for his tongue than stuff for the purse. Of late years he picked up his living somewhere in the town of Manchester by following a branch of the "American System" -- the manufacture of gingerbread and such like domestic wares. In this article he was a considerable speculator, having on hand during a fall of price no less than two baskets full, and I believe his son, Joe, Junior, was at times a partner in the concern. What their dividends were I could not learn, but they used considerable molasses, and were against the duty on that article. Young Joe, who afterwards figured so largely in the Mormon religion, was at that period a careless, indolent, idle, and shiftless fellow. He hung round the villages and strolled round the taverns without any end or aim -- without any positive defect or as little merit in his character. He was rather a stout able bodied fellow, and might have made a good living in such a country as this where any one who is willing to work, can soon get on in the world. He was however, the son of a speculative Yankee pedlar, and was brought up to live by his wits. Harris also one of the fathers of Mormonism was a substantial farmer near Palmyra -- full of passages of the scriptures -- rather wild and flighty in his talk occasionally -- but holding a very respectable character in his neighborhood for sobriety, sense and hard working.

A few years ago the Smith's and others who were influenced by their notions, caught an idea that money was hid in several of the hills which give variety to the country between the Canandaigua Lake and Palmyra on the Erie Canal. Old Smith had in his pedling excursions picked up many stories of men getting rich in New England by digging in certain places and stumbling upon chests of

money. The fellow excited the imagination of his few auditors, and made them all anxious to lay hold of the bilk axe and the shovel. As yet no fanatical or religious character had been assumed by the Smith's. They exhibited the simple and ordinary desire of getting rich by some short cut if possible. With this view the Smith's and their associates commenced digging, in the numerous hills which diversify the face of the country in the town of Manchester. The sensible country people paid slight attention to them at first. They knew them to be a thriftless set, more addicted to exerting their wits than their industry, readier at inventing stories and tales than attending church or engaging in any industrious trade. On the sides & in the slopes of several of these hills, these excavations are still to be seen. They would occasionally conceal their purposes, and at other times reveal them by such snatches as might excite curiosity. They dug these holes by day, and at night talked and dreamed over the counties' riches they should enjoy, if they could only hit upon an iron chest full of dollars. In excavating the grounds, they began by taking up the green sod in the form of a circle of six feet diameter--then would continue to dig to the depth of ten, twenty, and sometimes thirty feet. At last some person who joined them spoke of a person in Ohio near Painesville, who had a particular felicity in finding out the spots of ground where money is hid and riches obtained. He related long stories how this person had been along shore in the east -- how he had much experience in money digging -- how he dreamt of the very spots where it could be found. "Can we get that man here?" asked the enthusiastic Smiths. "Why," said the other, "I guess as how we could by going for him." "How far off?" "I guess some two hundred miles -- I would go for him myself but I want a little change to bear my expenses." To work the whole money-digging crew went to get some money to pay the expenses of bringing on a man who could dream out the exact and particular spots where money in iron chests was hid under ground. Old Smith returned to his gingerbread factory -- young Smith to his financing faculties, and after some time, by hook or by crook, they contrived to scrape together a little "change" sufficient to fetch on the money dreamer from Ohio.

After the lapse of some weeks the expedition was completed, and the famous Ohio man made his appearance among them. This recruit was the most cunning, intelligent, and odd of the whole. He had been a preacher of almost every religion -- a teacher of all sorts of morals. -- He was perfectly au fait with every species of prejudice, folly or fanaticism, which governs the mass of enthusiasts. In the course of his experience, he had attended all sorts

of camp-meetings, prayer meetings, anxious meetings, and revival meetings. He knew every turn of the human mind in relation to these matters. He had a superior knowledge of human nature, considerable talent, great plausibility, and knew how to work the passions as exactly as a Cape Cod sailor knows how to work a whale ship. His name I believe is Henry Rangdon or Ringdon, or some such word. About the time that this person appeared among them, a splendid excavation was begun in a long narrow hill, between Manchester and Palmyra. This hill has since been called by some, the Golden Bible Hill. The road from Canandaigua to Palmyra, runs along its western base. At the northern extremity the hill is quite abrupt and narrow. It runs to the south for a half mile and then spreads out into a piece of broad table land, covered with beautiful orchards and wheat fields. On the east, the Canandaigua outlet runs past it on its way to the beautiful village of Vienna in Phelps. It is profusely covered to the top with Beech, Maple, Bass, and White-wood -- the northern extremity is quite bare of trees. In the face of this hill, the money diggers renewed their work with fresh ardour, Ringdon partly uniting with them in their operations.

(To be continued.)”<sup>164</sup>

“MORMON RELIGION -- CLERICAL AMBITION --  
WESTERN NEW YORK -- THE MORMONITES GONE TO OHIO  
(Concluded from yesterday’s paper.)

About this time a very considerable religious excitement came over New York in the shape of a revival. It was also about the same period, that a powerful and concerted effort was made by a class of religionists, to stop the mails on Sunday to give a sectarian character to Temperance and other societies -- to keep up the Pioneer lines of stages and canal boats, and to organize generally a religious party, that would act altogether in every public and private concern of life. The greatest efforts were making by the ambition, tact, skill and influence of certain of the clergy, and other lay persons, to regulate and control the public mind -- to check all its natural and buoyant impulses -- to repress effectually freedom of opinion--and to turn the tide of public sentiment entirely in favor of blending religious and worldly concerns

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<sup>164</sup> “Mormonism - Religious Fanaticism - Church and State Party.” *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer for the Country*. Wednesday, August 31, 1831. Vol. VII - no. 562.



together. Western New York has for years, had a most powerful and ambitious religious party of zealots, and their dupes. They have endeavored ever since the first settlement of Rochester, to organize a religious hierarchy, which would regulate the pursuits, the pleasures, and the very thoughts of social life. This organization was kept up by banding churches and congregations together -- by instituting laws similar to those of excommunication -- by a species of espionage, as powerful and as terrible as that of a Spanish Inquisition. Every occupation in life -- every custom of the people -- every feeling and every thought, from the running of a stage or of a lady's tongue up to the legislation of the state, or of Congress, was to be regularly marked and numbered like so many boxes of contraband or lawful merchandise, by these self-created religious censorships and divines. Rochester is, and was the great headquarters of the religious empire. The late Mr. Bissell, one of the most original and talented men in matters of business, was equally so in religious enthusiasm, and all measures calculated to spread it among the people.--The singular character of the people of western New York--their originality, activity, and proneness to excitement furnished admirable materials for enthusiasts in religion or roguery to work upon. Pure religion -- the religion of the heart and conduct -- the religion that makes men better and wiser -- that makes woman more amiable and benevolent--that purifies the soul -- that represses ambition -- that seeks the private oratory and not the highway to pour forth its aspirations: such a religion was not that of the party of which I speak. Theirs is the religion of the pomp and circumstance of glorious controversy -- the artificial religion of tracts. Magdalen Reports, lines of stages -- the religion of collecting money from those who should first pay their debts -- of sending out missionaries to spend it, and of letting the poor and ignorant at home starve and die. Such mistaken principles and erroneous views must when attempted to be carried into effect, breed strange results. Men's minds in this age will not submit to the control of hypocrisy or superstition or clerical ambition. They may be shackled for a day through their wives and daughters -- for a month -- a year, but it cannot be lasting; when the first die or the last get husbands, independence will be asserted.

This general impulse given to religious fanaticism by a set of men in Western New York, has been productive among other strange results of the infatuation of Mormonism. This piece of roguery, folly and frenzy (for it partakes of all) is the genuine fruit of the same seeds which produced the

Sunday Mail movement--the Pioneer line of stages -- the Magdalen Reports &c. &c. It is religion run into madness by zealots and hypocrites.

It was during this state of public feeling in which the money diggers of Ontario county, by the suggestions of the Ex-Preacher from Ohio, thought of turning their digging concern into a religious plot, and thereby have a better chance of working upon the credulity and ignorance of the [their] associates and the neighborhood. Money and a good living might be got in this way. It was given out that visions had appeared to Joe Smith -- that a set of golden plates on which was engraved the "Book of Mormon," enclosed in an iron chest, was deposited somewhere in the hill I have mentioned. People laughed at the first intimation of the story, but the Smiths and Rangdon persisted in its truth. They began also to talk very seriously, to quote scripture, to read the bible, to be contemplative, and to assume that grave studied character, which so easily imposes on ignorant and superstitious people. Hints were given out that young Joe Smith was the chosen one of God to reveal this new mystery to the world; and Joe from being an idle young fellow, lounging about the villages, jumped up into a very grave parsonlike man, who felt he had on his shoulders the salvation of the world, besides a respectable looking sort of a blackcoat. Old Joe, the ex-preacher, and several others, were the believers of the new faith, which they admitted was an improvement in christianity, foretold word for word in the bible. They treated their own invention with the utmost religious respect. By the special interposition of God, the golden plates, on which was engraved the Book of Mormon, and other works, had been buried for ages in the hill by a wandering tribe of the children of Israel, who had found their way to western New York, before the birth of christianity itself. Joe Smith is discovered to be the second Messiah who was to reveal this word to the world and to reform it anew.

In relation to the finding of the plates and the taking the engraving, a number of ridiculous stories are told. -- Some unsanctified fellow looked out the other side of the hill. They had to follow it with humility and found it embedded beneath a beautiful grove of maples. Smith's wife, who had a little of the curiosity of her sex, peeped into the large chest in which he kept the engravings taken from the golden plates, and straightway one half the new Bible vanished, and has not been recovered to this day. Such were the effects of the unbelievers on the sacred treasure. There is no doubt but the ex-parson from Ohio is the author of the book which was recently printed

and published in Palmyra and passes for the new Bible. It is full of strange narratives -- in the style of the scriptures, and bearing on its face the marks of some ingenuity, and familiar acquaintance with the Bible. It is probable that Joe Smith is well acquainted with the trick, but Harris the farmer and the recent converts, are true believers. -- Harris was the first man who gave credit to the story of Smith and the ex-preacher. He was their maiden convert -- the Ali of the Ontario Mahomet, who believed without a reason and without a murmur. They attempted to get the Book printed, but could not raise the means till Harris stept [sic] forward, and raised money on his farm for that purpose. Harris with several manuscripts in his pocket, went to the city of New York, and called upon one of the Professors of Columbia College for the purpose of shewing them to him. Harris says that the Professor thought them very curious, but admitted that he could not decypher them. Said he to Harris, "Mr. Harris you had better go to the celebrated Doct. Mitchell and shew them to him. He is very learned in these ancient languages, and I have no doubt will be able to give you some satisfaction." "Where does he live," asked Harris. He was told, and off he posted with the engravings from the Golden Plates to submit to Doc. Mitchell -- Harris says that the Doctor received him very "purlitely," looked at his engravings--made a learned dissertation on them -- compared them with the hieroglyphics discovered by Champollion in Egypt -- and set them down as the language of a people formerly in existence in the East, but now no more.

The object of his going to the city to get the "Book of Mormon" printed, was not however accomplished. He returned with his manuscript or engravings to Palmyra -- tried to raise money by mortgage on his farm from the New York Trust Company -- did raise the money, but from what source -- whether the Trust Company or not I am uncertain. At last a printer in Palmyra undertook to print the manuscript of Joe Smith, Harris becoming responsible for the expense. They were called translators, but in fact and in truth they are believed to be the work of the Ex-Preacher from Ohio, who stood in the background and put forward Joe to father the new bible and the new faith. After the publication of the golden bible, they began to make converts rapidly. The revivals and other religious excitements had thrown up materials for the foundation of a new sect, they soon found they had not dug for money in vain -- they began to preach -- to pray -- to see more visions -- to prophesy and perform the most fantastic tricks -- there was now no difficulty in getting a living and the gingerbread factory was

abandoned. They created considerable talk over all this section of the country. Another Revelation came upon them, and through Joe and some other of these prophets, they were directed to take up their march and go out to the promised land -- to a place near Painesville, Ohio. Money was raised in a twinkling from the new converts. Their principles -- their tenets -- their organization -- their discipline were as yet unformed and unfashioned, and probably are so to this day. Since they went to Ohio they have adopted some of the worldly views of the Shakers and have formed a sort of community system where everything is in common. Joe Smith, Harris, the Ex-pedlar and the Ex-parson are among their elders and preachers -- so also now is Phelps one of Mr. Granger's leading anti-masonic editors in this village.

Such is a brief view of the rise and progress of the Mormon Religion one of the strangest pieces of fanaticism to which the ill-advised and the worst regulated ambition and folly of certain portions of the clergy in Western New York ever gave birth. What a lesson it ought to teach us!"<sup>165</sup>

On February 13, 1832, Orson Hyde and Samuel Smith, LDS missionaries, made their way to Conneaut, Ohio. Based on the December 1833 letter of Aaron Wright, it was Nehemiah King, a friend of Solomon Spalding, who pointed out the connection between Solomon Spalding and the Book of Mormon. **Notice that this was one year before the affidavits were collected.** *There was no connection at that time made to Sidney Rigdon from the Conneaut witnesses.*

### **Dec. 31, 1833 Aaron Wright Draft Letter:**

Dear Sir

Whereas I have been informed  
that you have been appointed with others  
to investigate the subject of mormonism and a  
resolution has been past to ascertain the real  
origin of the sd Book this is therefore to  
inform you that I have made a statement  
to D P Hurlbut relative to writings of S Spalding  
Esq sd Hurlbut is now at my store I have

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<sup>165</sup> "Mormon Religion - Clerical Ambition - Western New York - The Mormonites Gone To Ohio." *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer for the Country*. Thursday, September 1, 1831. Vol. VII - no. 563.

examined the writings which he has obtained from sd Spaldings widowe I recognise them to be the writings hand writing of sd Spalding but not the manuscript I had refferance to in my statement before alluded to as he informed me he wrote in the first place he wrote for his own amusement and then altered his plan and commenced writing a history of the first Settlement of America the particulars you will find in my testimony Dated Sept 1833 August 1833 -- for years before he left this place I was quite intimate with sd S Spalding we had many private interviews the history he was writing was the topic of his conversation relating his progress and Contemplating the avails of the same I also contemplated reading his history but never saw it in print untill I saw the Book of Mormon where I find much of the history and the names verbatim the Book of mormon does not contain all the writings sd Spladings I expect to see them if Smith is permitted to go on and as he says get his other plates **the first time that Mr Hyde a mormon Preacher from Kirtland preached in the centre School house in this place the Hon Nehmiah King attended as soon as Hyde had got through King left the house and said that Hide had preached from the writings of S Spalding** (emp. mine)

In conclusion I will observe that the names and most of the historical part of the Book of Mormon is as familiar to me as Most modern history if if is not Spaldings writings copied it is the same as he wrote and if Smith was inspired I think it was by the same Spirit that Spalding possessed which he confessed to be the love of money \_\_

Coneaut Dec 31 1833 Ashtabula Co NY



Due the bearer on demand one hundred  
and fifty dollars in good merchantable  
[lotte?] [upon?] the first day of Oct next  
[witness?] Ro[gar] Mill[ar]"<sup>166</sup>

Notice how these connections are brought together from **INDEPENDENT** sources.

Later on, there were others who also made the connection that Solomon Spalding had written what had become the Book of Mormon, which was formerly known as *Manuscript Found* (without the religious/theological material) and some witnesses even implicated Rigdon as the one who stole the manuscript. The list below shows the witnesses who implicated Rigdon as being responsible for transforming it into the Book of Mormon. Here is the list below:

- Matilda Davidson (1839) - Rigdon
- Joseph Miller (1869/1879/1882) - Rigdon
- Redick McKee (1869/1882/1886) - Rigdon
- Matilda McKinstry (1880)
- Abner Jackson (1881)
- Cephas Dodd (1857)
- George French [2nd-hand testimony] (1882) - Rigdon
- Robert Harper [2nd-hand testimony] (1873) - Rigdon
- Daniel Spencer (1873)
- William Leffingwell (1885) - Rigdon

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<sup>166</sup> <http://solomonspalding.com/SRP/saga2/Ashtab3.htm#1833ltr>.

## **Chapter 10:** **The Connection Between Sidney Rigdon and Solomon Spalding's** *Manuscript Found*

Under a court of law, a man is assumed innocent unless there is evidence that is brought forth that indicates otherwise that would flip him to the side of being charged guilty. We want to bring several witnesses who claim that Sidney Rigdon never could have stolen the manuscript because he did not live in Pittsburgh at the time. He, therefore, would not have had the opportunity to steal the manuscript. It is true that Sidney Rigdon may not have lived there, but this does not shoot down the fact that he could have frequently visited the city many times. We can know this because he picked up his mail from the Pittsburgh post office.

### **(1) Samuel Cooper**

Samuel Cooper, of Saltsburg, Pa., a veteran of three wars, in a letter to the present writer, dated June 14, 1879, stated as follows: "I was acquainted with Mr. Lambdin, was often in the printing-office; was acquainted with Silas Engles, the foreman of the printing-office; he never mentioned Sidney Rigdon's name to me, so I am satisfied he was never engaged there as a printer. I was introduced to Sidney Rigdon in 1843; he stated to me that he was a Mormon preacher or lecturer; I was acquainted with him during 1843-45; never knew him before, and never knew him as a printer; never saw him in the book-store or printing office; your father's office was in the celebrated Molly Murphy's Row."<sup>167</sup>

### **(2) Issac Craig:**

"Alleghany, Oct. 14, 1882.

Rev. Robt. Patterson,

Dear Sir:

I have received the History of Washington county sometime ago, but had not, on account of the condition my eyes are in, read your account of the origin of the Book of Mormon.

To comply with your request I had it read to me last night, and I think you have made good use of the materials at hand, and I believe the spirit in which

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<sup>167</sup> *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Founders and Prominent Men.* Edited by Boyd Crumrine. Illustrated Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co. 1882, 432.

it is written is the proper one to command the attention of honest Mormons.

Mrs. Eichbaum's statement to you is a surprise to me for two reasons.

I. Because I called on her to learn if she could throw any light on the matter and she could give me none.

This was a year or two before the date you assign for her statement -- Sept. 18, 1879.

II. The intimacy she says existed between Lambdin and Rigdon.

In all my investigation I never found any one who knew of this. All impressed me with the belief that it was Silas Engles with whom Rigdon was intimate. That Rigdon had a small tannery on Penn street, near Hand, for the manufacture of bookbinders sheep-skins, and supplying these to the office brought him in contact with Engles. This impression I obtained from John Sandersen, an old time butcher, who sold sheep pelts to Rigdon. I am sorry you used Redick McKee's statement, for the reason that he subsequently made another, which conflicts with that you use; and the Mormons can use it with considerable effect to show how unreliable he is.

Samuel Cooper's statement that "your father's office was in the celebrated Molly Murphys Row" otherwise "Clapboard Row" is new to me. I never heard of it being any other place than 4th street. Cooper whom you say was "a veteran of three wars" never smelled powder. The nearest he ever came to it was at Black Rock where they all showed the white feather. I knew him well, and was fond of listening to his yarns; but when I grew older I discovered that he was good at pulling the long-bow.

I agree with you that Parley P. Pratt was the man who brought Rigdon & Smith together. I think you might have used the statements of Isaac and Alva Hale in your closing remarks with good effect.

I had some correspondence with Alva and he sent me a book containing some matter relating to Joe Smith operations before and after he married Emma Hale, that are quite interesting. Alva moved to Northern Illinois, within 30 miles of Plano, where his sister Emma Smith lived and died; but he did not know, until I told him, where she lived. He wrote me that Emma never forgave him for testifying against Joe. I supposed Alva is now dead -- as he was very old when he wrote to me.

Did Geo. Plumer Smith ever tell you of his interview with Emma Smith? It is very important, but he imparted it to me in confidence. Perhaps, now that Emma is dead, he might feel relieved from bond of silence, for the public good.

I think you should have mentioned that Hurlbut had been a Mormon. It is my impression that he and Mrs. Rigdon could tell all that is to be told in regard to the origin of the Mormon Bible. The silence of Mrs. Rigdon is very significant to me; but that old scamp Hurlbut is such a liar that anything he would say unless corroborated would have little weight.

I was glad to learn that Rev. Ehrenfeld enabled you to so satisfactorily clear up the charge against John Canon. I had a friend at Harrisburg, who was going to investigate that very point, when he found friend Ehrenfeld was a head of him. I am very much astonished at Albert's conduct in the matter; the positiveness of his statement induced me to believe he must have had good authority for his statement. His letter in the History of Washington Co. seems to me to be a very contemptable way of creeping out of the affair, for he really has no foundation for his charge. The article he mentions does not in any manner implicate John Canon.

I confess I was too hasty when I wrote that I would not be surprised if it was true. The fact is nearly all the prominent old settlers in Washington county have some queer antics in their records, and I am never surprised at anything said of them. Your good old father was one of the few of whom nothing out of the proper line could be said. If my eyes get better this winter I am going to make a point to find that matter regarding John Canon for my own, as well as your, satisfaction.

Please excuse the appearance of this note as I can hardly see.

Very truly, Isaac Craig

If you have two or three more copies of your article I would be glad to buy them for friends interested in the matter.”<sup>168</sup>

### **(3) Robert DuBois:**

“Rev, Robert P. Du Bois, of New London, Pa., under date of Jan. 9; 1879, writes: “I entered the book-store of R. Patterson & Lambdin in March, 1818, when about twelve years old, and remained there until the summer of 1820, The firm had under its control. the bookstore on Fourth Street, a book-bindary, a printing office (not newspaper, but job-office, under the name of Butler & Lambdin), entrance on Diamond Alley, and a steam paper-mill on the Allegheny (under the name of R. & J. Patterson). I knew nothing of Spaulding

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<sup>168</sup> <http://www.solomonspaulding.com/docs/Eich1879.htm#1882a>.

(then dead) or of his book, or of Sidney Rigdon.”<sup>169</sup>

**(4) Issac King:**

“Isaac King, a highly-respected citizen of Library, Pa., and an old neighbor of Rigdon, states in a letter to the present writer, dated June 14, 1879, that Sidney lived on the farm of his father until the death of the latter in May, 1810, and for a number of years afterwards, farming with very indifferent success; “it was said he was too lazy and proud to make a good farmer:” received his education in a log school-house in the vicinity; “began to talk in public on religion soon after his admission to the church, probably at his own instance, as there is no record of his licensure:” went to Sharon, Pa., for a time, and was there ordained as a preacher, but soon returned to his farm, which he sold (June 26, 1823) to James Means, and about the time of the sale removed to Pittsburgh.”<sup>170</sup>

**(5) Carvil Rigdon:**

“Rigdon’s relatives at Library, Pa., Carvil Rigdon (his brother) and Peter Boyer (his brother-in-law), in a written statement dated Jan. 27, 1843, certify to the facts and dates as above stated in regard to his birth, schooling, uniting with the church, Licensure, ordination, and settlement in Pittsburgh in 1822. Mr. Boyer also, in a personal interview with the present writer in 1879, positively affirmed that Rigdon had never lived in Pittsburgh previous to 1822, adding that “they were boys together and he ought to know.” Mr. Boyer had for a short time embraced Mormonism, but became convinced that it was a delusion and returned to his membership in the Baptist Church.”<sup>171</sup>

**Carvil Rigdon:**

“He (S. Rigdon) was born on his father’s farm. Piny Fork of Peter’s Creek, St. Clair township. Alleghany Co., Pa., Feb., 19, 1793, where he lived till the winter of 1818 and 1819,\* and followed farming and received a common English education. In the fall of 1817 he professed religion, and joined the regular Baptist Church of that place, and in the winter of 1818 and ‘19 he went to Beaver Co., Pa., where he studied divinity with a Baptist preacher

<sup>169</sup> *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Founders and Prominent Men.* Edited by Boyd Crumrine. Illustrated Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co. 1882, 431-432.

<sup>170</sup> *History of Washington County*, 431.

<sup>171</sup> *History of Washington County*, 431.



by the name of Clark, and was licensed to preach by the Conoquenessing Church (time not recollected) and went from there to Warren, Ohio, and was ordained a regular Baptist preacher, and returned to Pittsburgh in the winter of 1821 and '22, and took the care of the First Regular Baptist Church, and there continued to preach till the Baptist Association met in Pittsburgh, (precise time not recollected, but we think about the fall of 1824) at which time they brought some charges against him for not being sound in the faith; brought him to trial, but denied him the liberty of speaking in self-defence, and he declared a non-fellowship with them, and began to preach Campbellism. And he, and they that joined with him got the liberty of the Court House, there they held their meetings, and he and his brother-in-law, Mr. Brooks, followed the tanning business till the winter of 1827-'28, when he (S. Rigdon) moved somewhere into the Western Reserve, in Ohio, and there continued to preach till the Latter Day Saints came to that part of the country, and he joined them, and continues to be an elder in that church (of Latter Day Saints, called Mormons. In confirmation of the above statements, we hereby subscribe our names.

CARVIL RIGDON,  
PETER BOYER.”<sup>172</sup>

**(6) John W. Rigdon:**

“About 1832, while my father was preaching at Mentor, O., Martin Harris [sic] and Oliver Cowdery called upon him and presented to him the Book of Mormon, and told him it was found by Joseph Smith engraved on gold plates, and that Smith translated the engravings, and the book was a true translation. That they had seen the plates, that Harris had written the translation given by Joseph Smith. They asked him to read it and give them his opinion of it. He gave them permission to preach in his church, and went to hear them. At the close he told the congregation that they had listened to some strange doctrine, but it was their duty to investigate. Cowdery and Harris left next morning, but returned in about six weeks [sic]. They asked my father if he had read the book, and he said he had. They asked what he thought of it. He asked if Joseph Smith was a man of intelligence. Cowdery said Smith had

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<sup>172</sup> John E. Page, *The Spaulding Story, Concerning The Origin of the Book of Mormon, Duly Examined, And Exposed To the Righteous Contempt of A Candid Public* (Republished by the Reorganized Church of J.C. of L.D.S., Plano, IL., 1866, 7-8.

about as much knowledge as he had. Father replied if that was the case Smith was not the author of the book. Sometime after this father met Joseph Smith for the first time in the state of New York. After being in Smith's company for sometime, he joined the Mormon Church, removed to Kirtland, and began preaching Mormonism. He afterward went to Missouri, thence to Nauvoo, Ill. After Smith's death, my father claimed it was his right to lead the church, but B. Young was chosen. In 1847, father removed to Friendship, N. Y., where he remained until his death. July 14, 1876, aged 84. He retired to private life after removing to Friendship. Would occasionally lecture. Large crowds always came out when it was announced he would speak. By his calm and dignified demeanor he gained the respect of all.

In answer to the statements of Clark Braden in "Saints' Herald," under "Christianity vs. Mormonism," I have only to quote Horatio Seymour who pronounced Rigdon a very eloquent man; Martin Grover, one of New York's greatest jurists, who said Sidney Rigdon's knowledge of the history of the world, and the political history of our country, was perfectly surprising to him, and that he was a very learned and eloquent man. Prof. Hatch frequently said Rigdon was the best historian he ever saw and one of the most eloquent men he ever listened to. Also Rev. Braden's statements about Rigdon's extravagant yarns, highfalutin rant, his visions, the power while speaking, and falling in trances in the pulpit, have no truth in them whatever. Sidney Rigdon was a devout Christian from his youth to his grave. He preached and talked the Bible on all occasions when necessary, to his children and all. He died having a firm belief in the Christian religion. I never knew one who was a stronger believer in the Christian religion than he. I therefore pronounce such assertions as positively untrue. I am probably better acquainted with S. Rigdon than any living person.

Had better opportunities through business and family relations to know the character, history, and religious belief than any one else. Religion was his favorite theme. On returning from Salt Lake City in 1865, where I had interviews with the leading dignitaries of the Mormon Church at that place on the subject of Mormonism and the Book of Mormon, I asked my father to tell me the facts as to the production of this book. My father stated that all he knew of the origin of the book was what Harris, Cowdery and J. Smith told him. That Smith during the fifteen years he was intimate with him, never stated anything else than that he found it engraven on gold plates which he

found in a hill in New York. He said after investigation he was confident that the story about Spaulding writing the Book of Mormon was untrue. He said the same story about his writing the book was false. That he never saw the book until it was presented to him by Oliver Cowdery at Mentor, O. Knowing my father as I do, I am confident he told me the truth. My father never saw Solomon Spaulding in his life, nor did he steal any of his MSS. as stated by Rev. Braden.

My mother survived my father about ten years. After father's death, in conversation with her about the Book of Mormon, she always told me that my father obtained it from Cowdery and Harris [sic] at Mentor, O., and that the stories about father having written it were untrue. Father and mother told me this same story in my youth and manhood, and they told me in their old age, and they never told any other. I am not a member of any religious denomination, and do not pretend to say how that book came into existence. But I am as certain as that I exist, that S. Rigdon never wrote any part of the Book of Mormon, and that he never saw it until Harris [sic] and Cowdery presented it to him at Mentor, O.”<sup>173</sup>

#### **(7) Nancy Rigdon:**

“Learning that a daughter of Rigdon was living in Pittsburg, a reporter called on her yesterday, and at first she declined to say anything at all on the subject, but finally, on the scribe promising not to use her name -- she is married -- she said: “I have never had the honor of seeing this so-called Rev. Coover, who of late has been so free in his use of dead men's names, but I understand he parts his hair in the middle of his head, a fact which, from what I have heard and read of him, is no surprise to me. Now, while I most emphatically decline to be drawn into any controversy over that story of Coover, which if there was any foundation for it, I can not for the life of me, see why it was allowed to remain quiet for years after all the actors are laid in their graves; yet I will say this, that my father, who had the respect of all who knew him, and at a time when he had but little hope of living from one day to another, said to the clergymen around him, of which there was a number belonging to various denominations: these were his words: “As I expect to die and meet my Maker, I know nothing about where the manuscript of the Mormon Bible came from.” The lady said further that she believed as firmly as she “believed anything, that Joseph Smith

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<sup>173</sup> Rudolph Etzenhouser, *From Palmyra to Independence*. (Independence: Ensign Pub., 1894), 389-392.

(who was, she believed, at one time a good man) had a revelation, and that the Mormon Bible was founded on that revelation. But she was satisfied the Rev. Coovert had never seen a copy of it and consequently did not know what he was talking and writing about.”<sup>174</sup>

### **The Life Portrait of Sidney Rigdon**

He was born in St. Clair Township, Pennsylvania, Allegheny Co., Pennsylvania on February 19, 1793.<sup>175</sup> It is located 10 miles south of Pittsburgh in an area known as Library, Pennsylvania today. He was “the youngest son of William and Nancy Rigdon.”<sup>176</sup> He had a limited education,<sup>177</sup> due to the lack of funds to pay for it by his parents.<sup>178</sup> But he would educate himself by staying up at night by the fire reading the Bible and other books.<sup>179</sup> His family’s religious background was Baptist and went to Peter’s Creek Baptist Church.<sup>180</sup>

In 1817-18, he left the farm to join Andrew Clark of the Providence Baptist Church in Beaver County, Pennsylvania.<sup>181</sup> Later, in 1819, he came to Warren, Ohio.<sup>182</sup> He joined in the ministry of Adamson Bentley, his future brother-in-law,<sup>183</sup> because he was to be wedded to his sister, Phebe Brooks, on June 12, 1820.<sup>184</sup> Rigdon most likely came into contact for the first time with the American Restoration Movement when he read a pamphlet of the Alexander Campbell and John Walker debate on the subject of baptism.<sup>185</sup>

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174 *The Leader* - Pittsburgh - May, 18, 1884 - “What Sidney Rigdon’s Daughter, Now A Resident of Pittsburgh, Says of the Mormon Bible”

175 Jon Jaques, “The Life and Labors of Sidney Rigdon,” *Improvement Era* 3, no. 2 (December 1899): 97.

176 Jaques, “The Life and Labors of Sidney Rigdon,” 97.

177 Joseph R. Jeter, Jr., “Some We Lost: A Study of Disaffections From The Disciples of Christ,” *Discipliana* 61, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 7.

178 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 5.

179 John Wycliffe Rigdon, “I Never Knew A Time When I Did Not Know Joseph Smith: A Son’s Record of the Life and Testimony of Sidney Rigdon,” *Dialogue* 1 no. 4 (Winter 1966): 20.

180 Thomas Cushing, *History of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania*, 2 vols. (Chicago, IL: A. Warner & Co., 1889), 1:368.

181 F. Mark McKiernan, “The Conversion of Sidney Rigdon to Mormonism,” *Dialogue* 5, no. 2 (Summer 1970): 73.

182 Richard McClellan, “Sidney Rigdon’s 1820 Ministry: Preparing The Way for Mormonism in Ohio,” *Dialogue* 36, no. 4 (Winter 2003): 152.

183 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 17.

184 Davis Bitton and Thomas G. Alexander, “Rigdon, Sidney (1793–1876),” *The A to Z of Mormonism* (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2009), 197.

185 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 17.

Knowles writes: “Later on, after Campbell’s first debate with John Walker, is when Sidney Rigdon will meet Alexander Campbell for the first time and start to implementing the ideas of restoration:

“In August of the same year as the Campbell-Walker Debate, the Mahoning Baptist Association was organized by ten churches in the town of Nelson, located in the Western Reserve area of Portage County, Ohio. A minister named Adamson Bentley, one of its founders and perhaps its most influential authority, having read a published copy of the debate, decided to visit Mr. Campbell in the summer of 1821. He had been hearing that Campbell was being criticized and opposed by the Redstone Association for some of his views, though he personally expressed the conviction that, “Mr. Campbell had done more for the Baptists than any man in the west.” Hence, he determined to journey to Campbell’s home at Bethany, along with his brother-in-law Sidney Rigdon, for the ultimate purpose of enticing him to join the more liberal Mahoning Association.”<sup>186</sup>

Bentley (a long-time acquaintance of Campbell) wanted Rigdon to meet Campbell.<sup>187</sup> They met and were able to strike up a long conversation about a variety of religious subjects, and even Rigdon readily admitted that “if he had within the last year taught and promulgated from the pulpit one error, he had a thousand.”<sup>188</sup>

Campbell desired to use Rigdon because of his exceptional abilities and secured him a position at the First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1822, adhering to restoration principles.<sup>189</sup> He gained much momentum in popularity as a preacher in that area.<sup>190</sup> Rigdon propagated Campbell’s restoration principles entitled “Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things” that were published in the *Christian Baptist* from 1825 to 1829.<sup>191</sup>

In 1825-26, Rigdon moved to Bainbridge, Ohio where he became a very popular preacher in the restoration movement from 1827 to 1830 for the Mentor Baptist Church.<sup>192</sup> During his time at Mentor, Rigdon opposed Campbell on some doctrinal differences such as: “(1) divine authorization for church

186 Lloyd Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church*, 70.

187 McClellan, “Sidney Rigdon’s 1820 Ministry,” 153.

188 McKiernan, “The Conversion of Sidney Rigdon to Mormonism,” 74.

189 Knowles, “Sidney Rigdon: The Benedict Arnold of the Restoration Movement?”, 6.

190 *Ibid*.

191 McKiernan, “The Conversion of Sidney Rigdon to Mormonism,” 75. Knowles, “Sidney Rigdon: The Benedict Arnold of the Restoration Movement?”, 8.

192 Jaques, “The Life and Labors of Sidney Rigdon,” 99.



leadership; (2) the re-emergence of the manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; (3) the communal koinonia in which they “had all things in common,” [Acts 2:44].”<sup>193</sup>

In 1830, Rigdon advocated his ideals of communitarianism at the Austintown meeting of the Mahoning Association, but they were crushed by Campbell.<sup>194</sup> This is plausibly the turning point where Rigdon turned his back on the American Restoration Movement.<sup>195</sup>

In October 1830, four Mormon missionaries came,<sup>196</sup> due to Parley Pratt, to see Rigdon, who was Pratt’s former mentor.<sup>197</sup> At first, Rigdon did not believe their message of the Book of Mormon, but then he examined the Book of Mormon and discovered doctrines he already believed to be true<sup>198</sup> and claimed to receive a sign from God that the LDS religion was true.<sup>199</sup> He gave his newly found testimony to the congregation and many of them were convinced of his testimony and became Mormons.<sup>200</sup> There was a successful Mormon conversion rate of about 1,000 souls over the next few weeks.<sup>201</sup> In December of 1830, Rigdon departed from Mentor to Palmyra, New York to visit Joseph Smith, the “prophet” of this new religion.<sup>202</sup>

Rigdon was established very early on in the leadership of the Mormon church and served in various capacities over the next decade from 1830 to 1844.<sup>203</sup>

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193 Lloyd Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church* (Deer Park, NY: Linus Publications, 2007), 141.

194 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 53-54.

195 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 54. Van Wagoner states: “Regardless of his reasons, Rigdon was deeply crushed by Campbell’s rejection, and he was not the type to feel no rancor. Scorned and infuriated him and left him with the urge to retaliate. En route to his home in Mentor, he stopped at a friend’s house and commented: “I have done as much in this reformation as Campbell or Scott, and yet they get all the honor.”

196 Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, Peter Whitmer, and Ziba Petersen

197 Amos Hayden, *History of the Disciples on the Western Reserve* (Cincinnati: Chase & Hall, 1875), 209–211.

198 McKiernan, “The Conversion of Sidney Rigdon to Mormonism,” 76. McKiernan points that some of these were baptism for the remission of sins, a perpetuation of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, and a literal return of the Jews to their homeland.

199 Amos Hayden, *History of the Disciples*, 211–212.

200 McKiernan, “The Conversion of Sidney Rigdon to Mormonism,” 77.

201 *Ibid.*

202 *Ibid.*

203 Davis Bitton and Thomas G. Alexander, “Rigdon, Sidney (1793–1876),” 197. They state: “During the Ohio Period, Missouri Period, and Illinois Period of Mormon history, Rigdon was a prominent figure. He participated with Joseph Smith in the great revelation on the graded salvation of souls after death (Doctrine and Covenants, section 76). He became a counselor in the First Presidency. He taught classes in Kirtland, Ohio, and assisted in preparing a lecture series, “Lectures on Faith.” In Illinois he

Throughout Mormon history, Rigdon was involved with: (1) the Kirtland Bank incident,<sup>204</sup> (2) attacking the characters of those who left the Mormon church,<sup>205</sup> (3) his famous “Salt Sermon,” on July 4, 1838,<sup>206</sup> “advocating Mormon retaliation,”<sup>207</sup> (4) one of the conditions of the treaty of Far West, Missouri was for the arrest of Sidney Rigdon and other Mormon leaders in 1838,<sup>208</sup> and many other events.

In 1844, Rigdon tried to seize power as the new President of the church when Joseph Smith was killed by a mob in Carthage, Illinois.<sup>209</sup> Both Rigdon and Young gave their speeches on why each of them should fulfill the position, but the audience was influenced more by Brigham Young.<sup>210</sup>

Rigdon was excommunicated by the LDS church for not complying with the leadership.<sup>211</sup> Rigdon left for Pittsburgh and started a LDS splinter group in that city.<sup>212</sup> In 1845, the Rigdon family moved to Antrim Township, Pennsylvania<sup>213</sup> where “he did make one more serious attempt to “gather” the Saints at a new “Zion.”<sup>214</sup> Knowles explains: “In May of 1846 the Rigdon family, along with some of his followers, left Pittsburgh to establish “Adventure Farm” near Greencastle, accompanied by Rigdon’s visionary apocalyptic promises. But when “Christ delayed his coming,” Rigdon’s few followers became discouraged, his church dissolved, and the farm property was foreclosed upon because the balance could not be paid to it’s creditor.”<sup>215</sup> The Rigdon family was financially poor and had to move in with his son-in-

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served on the Nauvoo City Council and as postmaster. When Joseph Smith declared his candidacy for president of the United States, Rigdon became the vice presidential candidate.”

204 Richard Abanes, *One Nation Under Gods: A History of the Mormon Church* (New York: Thunder’s Mouth Press, 2003), 136–138.

205 Richard Abanes, *One Nation Under Gods: A History of the Mormon Church*, 150.

206 Richard Abanes, *One Nation Under Gods: A History of the Mormon Church*, 155-156.

207 Ed Breslin, *Brigham Young: A Concise Biography of the Mormon Moses* (Washington, D.C.: Regenery History, 2013), 114.

208 Breslin, *Brigham Young*, 166.

209 Breslin, *Brigham Young*, 107. Breslin states: “Rigdon now sought to take over leadership of the church, claiming that the Saints needed to choose a new “guardian” for their church — and that he was just the man for this new role. Nauvoo High Council president William Marks backed Rigdon’s bid for power.”

210 Breslin, *Brigham Young*, 107–108.

211 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 352–360.

212 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 376.

213 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 388.

214 Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church*, 232.

215 Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church*, 232.

law, George Robinson, near Cuba, New York.<sup>216</sup> In 1850, Robinson put up his property for sale and had the Rigdon family move in with him again in Friendship, New York.<sup>217</sup>

In 1856, Rigdon received a letter from Stephen Post, “a one-time Latter-Day Saint who until recently had been a Strangite. Post, then living in Centerville, Pennsylvania, was like Rigdon a fervent seeker of the redemption of Zion.”<sup>218</sup> Their correspondence back and forth would last for twenty-five years.<sup>219</sup> Post “attempted another Mormon restoration movement on Sidney’s behalf, but it was never really successful.”<sup>220</sup> In 1863, he was given the chance by Brigham Young to live in Utah, but he declined.<sup>221</sup> As Knowles states: “As Sidney grew older, his private religious statements and beliefs became more bizarre.”<sup>222</sup> Sidney Rigdon died on July 14, 1876 after experiencing a number of strokes and was buried in the Friendship Village graveyard.<sup>223</sup>

## The Character of Sidney Rigdon

Rigdon could be described as:

1. **A person who loved to read.** Wickcliffe Rigdon (Sidney’s son): “[Sidney] was never to play with the boys; reading books was the greatest pleasure he could get.”<sup>224</sup> Sidney Rigdon himself said he had: “an insatiable thirst for reading.”<sup>225</sup>

2. **He believed he was called of God.** Sidney Rigdon (referencing himself) once wrote to Stephen Post: “From his earliest infancy my fear saith the Lord was the ruling principle in his heart...I the Lord called him from his plow as I did Amos from among the herdsmen of Tekoa.”<sup>226</sup>

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216 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 399. Lloyd Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church*, 242.

217 Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church*, 232.

218 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 402.

219 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 403.

220 Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church*, 232.

221 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 408.

222 Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church*, 233.

223 *Ibid.*

224 Karl Keller, ed., “I Never Knew a Time When I Did Not Know Joseph Smith’: A Son’s Record of the Life and Testimony of Sidney Rigdon,” *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* I:4 (Winter 1966): 15-42.

225 A.W. Cowles, *THE MORMONS: Pen and Pencil Sketches Illustrating their Early History*. II. (Rochester: Moore’s Rural NY, 1869).

226 July 1, 1868 - Post Collection, Box 1, fd16.

**3. He was devoted to studying the Bible.** From his “earliest infancy” [The fear of God] “was the ruling principle in his heart in consequence of this he was devoted to the study of the bible.”<sup>227</sup>

**4. He had made up his own conversion “experience.”** Wagoner states: “Years later, as a Latter-Day Saint, he reports on his former Baptist “conversion”: “When I joined the church I knew I could not be admitted without an experience: so I made up one to suit the purpose, but it was all made up, and was of no use.”<sup>228</sup>

**5. He was an orator.** Amos Hayden stated: “On my visits to Pittsburgh in those days, being a member and minister of the Redstone Baptist Association, I spoke to the Baptist church in that city. The result was, that, with the exception of some twelve persons, the whole church, over a hundred members, were theoretically reformers. In 1822 I induced Sidney Rigdon, then a Baptist minister of Ohio, to accept a call to the church in Pittsburgh.”<sup>229</sup>

David Whitmer stated: “Rigdon was a thorough Bible scholar, a man of fine education, and a powerful orator. He soon worked himself deep into Brother Joseph’s affections, and had more influence over him than any other man living. He was Brother Joseph’s private counsellor, and his most intimate friend and brother for some time after they met. Brother Joseph rejoiced[,] believing that the Lord had sent to him this great and mighty man Sidney R[i]gdon, to help him in the work.”<sup>230</sup>

**6. His character was unreliable.** Alexander Campbell stated: “[Rigdon was] “petulant, unreliable, and ungovernable in his passions, and his wayward temper, his extravagant stories and his habit of self-assertion...prevented him from attaining influence as a religious teacher among the disciples.”<sup>231</sup>

**7. He was a Bible scholar.** A.W. Cowles stated: “He found in himself an insatiable thirst for reading. He read history, divinity, and general literature, without much method or aim, except to gratify his intense love of reading. He gave great attention to the Bible, and made himself very familiar with all parts of it. He readily committed to memory and thus stored up large portions

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<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>228</sup> Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon: A Portrait of Religious Excess* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), 8.

<sup>229</sup> Alexander Campbell, *Millennial Harbinger* 5 (Oct. 1848): 553.

<sup>230</sup> David Whitmer, (Richmond, MO: self-published, 1887), 35.

<sup>231</sup> Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell: embracing a view of the origin, progress and principles of the religious reformation which he advocated* (vol. 2) , 344-45.

of the most attractive portions of the Bible.”<sup>232</sup> Alexander Campbell wrote: Rigdon was a “flaming literalist of the school of Elias [Smith], a Millenarian of the first water.”<sup>233</sup>

**8. The different mood swings he experienced throughout his life maybe due to an accident early in his childhood.** Loammi Rigdon (brother of Sidney Rigdon who became a doctor) wrote: “he received such a contusion of the brain as ever afterward seriously affected his character, and in some respects his conduct. His mental powers did not seem to be impaired, but the equilibrium of his intellectual exertions seems thereby to have been sadly affected. He still manifested great mental activity and power, but was to an equal degree inclined to run into wild and visionary views on almost every question.”<sup>234</sup>

Alexander Campbell said that he had a “peculiar mental and corporeal malady.”<sup>235</sup> W. Wyl wrote: [Sidney Rigdon] “spoke very rapidly, and used to get tremendously excited, so that he foamed at the mouth.”<sup>236</sup>

Newell Whitney wrote: “I was well acquainted with Elder Rigdon a number of years before he came into this church...He was always either in the bottom of the cellar or up in the garret window.”<sup>237</sup>

Jedediah Grant stated: “Elder R. would not only soar as it were to the highest Heaven in raptures of delight, but when dark clouds overspread his horizon he would also sink into the lowest state of despondency.”<sup>238</sup>

**9. He thought of himself as a prophet.** Rigdon once said about himself: “I am going to fight a real bloody battle with sword and with gun...I will fight the battles of the Lord. I will also cross the Atlantic, encounter the queen’s forces, and overcome them - plant the American standard on English ground, and then march to the palace of her majesty, and demand a portion of her riches and dominions, which if she refuse, I will take the little madam by the nose and lead her out, and she shall have no power to help herself. If I do not do

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232 A.W. Cowles, *The Mormons: Pen and Pencil Sketches Illustrating their Early History*. II. (Rochester: Moore’s Rural NY, 1869).

233 Alexander Campbell, “Extra,” *Millennial Harbinger*, 1.1, n.s. (December, 1837), 578.

234 Baptist Witness, 1 Mar. 1875, in J.H. Kennedy, *Early Days of Mormonism* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1888), 62.

235 Alexander Campbell, *Millennial Harbinger* 1 (1831): 100-101.

236 W. Wyl, *Mormon Portraits or the Truth About the Mormon Leaders from 1830 to 1886* (Salt Lake City: Tribune Printing and Publishing Co., 1886), 122.

237 *Times and Seasons* 5 (15 Sept. 1844): 686.

238 Jedediah M. Grant, *Collection of Facts Relative to the Course Taken by Elder Sidney Rigdon in the States of Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, and Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Brown, Bicking & Gulbert, 1844), 6.



this, the Lord never spake by mortal.”<sup>239</sup>

In a “revelation” on March 17, 1856<sup>240</sup> to Stephen Post, he said: “And now I the Lord...call [thee] to a great work in assisting my servant Sidney Rigdon in preparing the way before me, and Elijah which should come, and I say unto thee, as my servant Sidney Rigdon assisted my servant Joseph Smith with all his might mind and strength... I [have] called thee to assist my servant Sidney Rigdon...Thine eyes shall see mine elect gathered and Zion redeemed, and thou shalt shout Hosannahs in the midst of my people while Babylon shall shake and tremble, and the inhabitants thereof shall quake with fear, and howl, and weep, and mourn for anguish of soul, even so, amen.”

In a “revelation” to Sidney’s wife on March 10, 1864,<sup>241</sup> he said: “The word of the Lord which came to Phebe his prophetess saying to his servant Stephen [:] Beware [,] beware of pride saith the Lord in writing for thou art in danger of falling under condemnation by reason of it [:] Do all things that thou doest in relation to Zion in great meekness and humility before me. I send you this as delivered to me by her whom the Lord has chosen and ordained to warn the sons of Zion when they are in danger.”

He would go on to write:“For I the Lord have decreed a consumption on all the regions of this country laying between what you call the Atlantic on the east and the Mississippi on the west and between the gulf of Mexico on the south and the great lakes on the north as it is named among you...And I would further say to you my servants that it will be to your advantage when you go to such a home that you go as far west as the place known as Council Bluffs in Iowa.”<sup>242</sup>

**10. He was certainly capable of writing something akin to Scripture.** It has been said that Walter Scott and Sidney Rigdon wrote a satirical piece called “The Third Epistle of Peter” when he lived in Pittsburgh. It can be found in two books, which will be given in the footnote below.<sup>243</sup>

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239 *Speech of Elder O. Hyde upon the Course & Conduct of Mr. S. Rigdon* (Nauvoo: Times & Seasons Press, 1845), 16.

240 Sidney Rigdon to Stephen Post, 17 Mar. 1856, Post Collection, box 3, fd. 12.

241 Sidney Rigdon to Stephen Post, Post Collection, box 1, fd. 9

242 26 June 1864 revelation in Post Collection, listed in section 7 in Copying Book A, box 1, fd. 19.

243 A REPLY, To a series of iniquitous “Letters to Alexander Campbell, by a Regular Baptist,” alias, the Rev. Mr. Greatrake. TOGETHER WITH AN ADDRESS, TO THE SAINTS IN PITTSBURGH. AND The Third Epistle of Peter, OR A Looking Glass, TO THE PRESENT HIRED MINISTERS. (Pittsburgh: Printed For The Publisher by John McFarland, 1824). Link: <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/1824Scot.htm>.

When we understand the description again, we see that Sidney was someone who (1) loved reading, (2) believed he was called of God, (3) devoted himself to a study of the Bible, (4) made up his own “conversion” experience, (5) an orator, (6) had a unreliable character, (7) a Bible scholar, (8) had different mood swings, (9) thought of himself as a prophet who could easily make up “Scriptures” that fit the style of the Bible.

It is certainly possible when we place all of this together that the pieces that form together can fit the profile of someone who made *Manuscript Found* transformed into the *Book of Mormon*.

The LDS argument is that Rigdon did not have the opportunity nor was he at the right time/place to steal the manuscript because of the timeline gap of 1812-1816 when Spalding lived in Pittsburgh, PA (1812-1814) and then moved to Amity, PA (1814-1816).

John Page certainly made that one of his main arguments. He states: “2nd. I will present an extract from a pamphlet published by the Rev. Samuel Williams, Pastor of the First Regular Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, entitled “Mormonism Exposed,” to prove that Mr. Sidney Rigdon did not reside in the City of Pittsburgh till 1822, six years after the romance fell into the safe keeping of Mr. Spaulding’s widow.”<sup>244</sup>

If it can be shown that Sidney Rigdon was not living in Pittsburgh when Spalding was, then the theory does not work. But if there is circumstantial evidence that does place the two persons together, then the link becomes stronger in the chain. Is there a connection between Solomon Spalding and Sidney Rigdon?

### **(1) Rebecca Johnston Eichbaum**

“My father, John Johnson, was postmaster at Pittsburgh for about eighteen years, from 1804 to 1822. My husband, William Eichbaum, succeeded him, and was postmaster for about eleven years, from 1822 to 1833. I was born August 25, 1792, and when I became old enough, I assisted my father in attending to the post-office, and became familiar with his duties. From 1811 to 1816, I was the regular clerk in the office, assorting, making up, dispatching, opening

“The Third Epistle of Peter, to the Preachers and Rulers of Congregations. A Looking-Glass For The Clergy.” ed. Alexander Campbell, The Christian Baptist, Vol. II, No. 12. Buffaloe, Brooke Co., Va., July 4, 1825, 280-288. Link: <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/VA/harb1830.htm#070425>.

<sup>244</sup> John E. Page, *The Spaulding Story* (expanded 2nd edition, Plano, IL: Reorganized Church of J.C. of L.D.S., 1866), 1.

and distributing the mails. Pittsburgh was then a small town, and I was well acquainted with all the stated visitors at the office who called regularly for their mails. So meagre at that time were the mails that I could generally tell without looking whether or not there was anything for such persons, though I would usually look in order to satisfy them. I was married in 1815, and the next year my connection with the office ceased, except during the absences of my husband. I knew and distinctly remember Robert and Joseph Patterson, J Harrison Lambdin, Silas Engles, and Sidney Rigdon, I remember Rev. Mr. Spaulding, but simply as one who occasionally called to inquire for letters. I remember there was an evident intimacy between Lambdin and Rigdon. They very often came to the office together. I particularly remember that they would thus come during the hour on Sabbath afternoon when the office was required to be open, and I remember feeling sure that Rev. Mr. Patterson knew nothing of this, or he would have put a stop to it.

I do not know what position, if any, Rigdon filled in Pattersons's store or printing office, but am well assured he was frequently, if not constantly, there for a large part of the time when I was clerk in the post-office. I recall Mr. Engles saying that "Rigdon was always hanging around the printing office." He was connected with the tannery before he became a preacher, though he may have continued the business whilst preaching."<sup>245</sup>

We will proceed with asking the same four questions that we asked of the other witnesses earlier in the book. First, was she present to have seen Sidney Rigdon and Solomon Spalding living during the same time period?

**Eichbaum:** "I was married in 1815, and the next year my connection with the office ceased, except during the absences of my husband."<sup>246</sup>

The newspaper, *The Commonwealth*, certainly supports her statement: "Married - On the 12th Inst. by the Rev. Joseph Stockton, Mr. William Eichbaum to the amiable Miss Rebecca Johnston, daughter of John Johnston, P.M., in this place."<sup>247</sup>

Second, is her account corroborated in any way?

She testified: "I remember there was an evident intimacy between Lambdin

<sup>245</sup> *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Founders and Prominent Men.* Edited by Boyd Crumrine. Illustrated Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co. 1882, 433.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>247</sup> *The Commonwealth*, Pittsburgh, PA. October 28, 1815.

and Rigdon. They very often came to the office together. I particularly remember that they would thus come during the hour on Sabbath afternoon when the office was required to be open...”<sup>248</sup>

**There is this rule that is found on the laws of the post office:**

Section Nine of the Post Office Law of April 30, 1810:

“At Post offices where the mail arrives on Sunday the office is to be kept open for the delivery of Letters &c for one hour after the arrival & assorting of the Mail, but in case that would interfere with the hours of public worship, then the office is to be kept open for one hour after the usual time of dissolving the meetings for that purpose.”<sup>249</sup>

Another corroborative piece of evidence is where the newspaper would place your name in the column if you did not come to pick up your mail. Here is what we find throughout various newspaper issues of the Commonwealth and other newspapers:

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. IX, No. 45. Pittsburgh, PA: May 5, 1813. Whole no. 455.:

**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. IX, No. 45. Pittsburgh, PA: Nov. 10, 1813. Whole no. 455.:

**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. X, No. 36. Pittsburgh, PA: September 7, 1814. Whole no. 495.:

**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. I. No. 19. Pittsburgh, PA: Saturday, February 4, 1815:

**John Spalding**

**Solomon Spalding**

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<sup>248</sup> *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Founders and Prominent Men*, 433.

<sup>249</sup> Robert J. Stets, *Postmasters and Post Offices of the United States, 1782-1811* (Lake Oswego, OR: LaPosta Publications, 1994), pp. 15-17.

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. I. No. 20. Pittsburgh, PA: Saturday, February 11, 1815:

**John Spalding**  
**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. I. No. 22. Pittsburgh, PA: Saturday, February 25, 1815:

**John Spalding**  
**Solomon Spalding**

*The Commonwealth*, Vol. I. New Series, No. 15. Pittsburgh: July 9, 1816:

**Sidney Rigdon**  
**Solomon Spalding**

*The Statesman*, Vol. I. No. 21. Pittsburgh: Saturday, September 5, 1818.

**Sidney Rigdon**

*The Statesman*, Vol. I. No. ?? . Pittsburgh: Saturday, November 7, 1818

**Sidney Rigdon**

Is it not interesting that we actually find both names mentioned in the July 9, 1816 issue of the *Commonwealth*? While it does not prove that they knew each other, what we are trying to prove is that both men lived during the same time period in Pittsburgh.

Samuel Williams corroborates Mrs. Eichbaum's statement. He wrote: "Mr. Patterson stated to me that Mr. Spaulding brought the Manuscript to the Office and of course it came under the charge of Engles, and at or about that time Engles spoke to Mr. Patterson about it. That time must have been 1814 or 15. **All of the old men of our Church knew about Rigdon hanging about that Printing Office, and whether he spent his time there in copying it or concocting his schemes while conversing with Engles and others, or at length procured the Manuscript by purchase or otherwise, makes not the smallest difference** (emp. mine). If it is true that Mrs. Spaulding had the Manuscript returned to her, then unless Mr. Spaulding had duplicate copies leaving one in the office, Rigdon must have copied it.

The identification of the Mormon Bible with the Novel of Mr Spaulding I



consider complete and placed beyond cavil.

Now I wish to write about J. Patterson. He was Mr. Joseph Patterson who I suppose was in with his brother Robert before Lambden came into the firm. He married a very wealthy lady, built a long block of buildings on one of the principal business streets 6th producing high rents, retired from active business, and finally moved to Philadelphia to enjoy his fortune. I knew him well. I have no doubt you are right in the matter of Mrs. Spaulding's statement concerning the interest Jos. P. had taken in the Manuscript. But Mr. Spaulding not being able to furnish the money for its publication -- there it remained. I have never supposed that Rigdon ever saw Mr. Spaulding for at that time he had not as yet come on the stage, but finding such a document there shown to him by Engles in 1822 or 3. But I do not think he ever wished Patterson to publish it, thinking he might turn it to account in making a fortune. And suppose the Novel was returned to Mrs. Spaulding -- it being a strange production, Engles might during his leisure hours have copied it with the intention of making something out of it and perhaps not being able to publish it, sold it to Rigdon. Any one of these Lambden, Engles, Joseph Patterson, or Rigdon might have taken a copy.

I think Rigdon had his plan of a community formed, { indeed the old members told me that when in Pittsburgh he often broached the subject to them of a common-stock system as he then called it } before he met Joe Smith, and at first expected to use him as a tool to carry out his plans. So that it may be that Rigdon had a little community begun at Kirtland before he met Joe Smith. But I remember well the report that Parley Pratt the tin pedlar told Rigdon of Smith and was the means of bringing them together, and I suppose it was 1829 or '30. Another thing I learned that about the time they published the first edition of the Mormon Bible they established a Bank at Kirtland without a basis issued notes, and the Elders put them into circulation. I saw one of the notes.

I hope you will persevere and collect all of the facts and publish an authentic history of that huge imposture. You will see by my pamphlet that you can get nowhere else the first facts in the history. I feel thankful that I can help a mite toward the object.

I was sick for three or four weeks but have recovered. If I can aid you any further I shall be glad to do it. Judge Cobb. Very respectfully, S. Williams."<sup>250</sup>

250 Dec. 14, 1878 Samuel Williams Letter. Theodore Albert Schroeder Papers: Box 2, folder 1.

Mrs. Eichbaum was certainly very accurate in her details of her account.

Was she biased? Is there some hidden motive she had? It certainly does not seem that she is hiding on why she would lie about this matter.

This is the third piece of corroborative evidence - **Joseph Miller**. He was a resident of Amity, PA. He was very close to Solomon Spaulding and helped nurse him when he was ill.

Miller states: “My recollection is that Spaulding left a transcript of the manuscript with Patterson for publication. The publication was delayed until Spaulding could write a preface. In the meantime the manuscript was spirited away, and could not be found. Spaulding told me that Sidney Rigdon had taken it, or was suspected of taking it. I recollect distinctly that Rigdon’s name was mentioned in connection with it.”<sup>251</sup>

We have already dealt with Joseph Miller as a witness in a previous chapter.

The fourth piece of corroborative evidence was **John Winter**.

“Rev. John Winter, MD, was one of the early ministers of the Baptist Church, laboring in Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio. During a portion of the time when Sidney Rigdon was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Pittsburgh, Dr. Winter was teaching a school in the same city and was well acquainted with Rigdon. Upon one occasion during this period, 1822-23, Dr. Winter was in Rigdon’s study, when the latter took from his desk a large manuscript, and said in substance, “A Presbyterian minister, Spaulding, whose health had failed, brought this to the printer to see if it would pay to publish it. It is a romance of the Bible.

Dr. Winter did not read any part of it, and paid no more attention to it until after The Book of Mormon appeared, when he heard that Mr. Spaulding’s widow recognized in it the writings of her husband. The authority for the above important statement is the Rev. A.G. Kirk, to whom Dr. Winter communicated it in a conversation at New Brighton, PA, in 1870-71. Dr. Winter died at Sharon, PA ...[November 5] 1878. Mr. Kirk conveyed this information to the present writer by letter, March 23, 1879.”<sup>252</sup>

The statement above actually reported to A.G. Kirk from Dr. Winter at New

Wisconsin State Historical Society Library, Madison, WI. Partial Catalog: Theodore A. Schroeder Papers. <http://solomonspaulding.com/docs/Wil1878c.htm>

251 *Pittsburgh Telegraph*, February 6, 1879, p. 1, “The Book of Mormon.”

252 *History of Washington County, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Founders and Prominent Men*. Edited by Boyd Crumrine. Illustrated Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co. 1882, 434.

Brighton, PA, in 1870-71. Winter died seven years later in 1878.<sup>253</sup>

**Mary Irvine**, the daughter of Winter, attests that her father relayed this information to her before his passing (Apr. 5, 1881):

“I have frequently heard my father speak of Rigdon having Spaulding’s manuscript, and that he had gotten it from the printers to read it as curiosity; as such he showed it to my father; and that at that time Rigdon had no intention of making the use of it that he afterwards did; for father always said Rigdon helped Smith in his scheme by revising and making the Mormon Bible out of Rev. Spaulding’s manuscript.”

**A.J. Bonsall**, who was the preacher of the Baptist church at Rochester, PA, and also the stepson of Dr. John Winter confirmed Dr. Winter’s statement:<sup>254</sup>

“Some few years ago a Mr. Winters (I am sorry that I am compelled to mention his name,) said to be a Regular Baptist preacher from England or Wales, was sent or came from Philadelphia to Pittsburg, in the depth of winter, with a large family, in the most abject circumstances. Brother Sidney Rigdon was then Bishop of the Baptist Church in Pittsburg; and, as a christian Bishop ought to do, he took pity upon his brother Winters; took him into his house, with all his family. say seven or eight children, and sustained them for some weeks, I know not how many; and finally rented, upon his own responsibility, a house for his brother Winters, and stirred up the brethren to minister to his wants. He was also invited into the pulpit and occasionally proclaimed his tenets to the congregation. After he had got warmed and filled he began to make a faction in the church by insinuating that his brother Rigdon was not sound in the faith, (though he had been very round in charity towards him.) He said that the church had departed from the faith once delivered to the Welsh saints, and was no longer built upon the foundation of John Gill and Andrew Fuller and the Philadelphia Confession.

By creeping into houses, and leading captive silly women, and some two or three men, he made a faction, amounting, I think, to 12 out of from 80 to 100 members. These Mr. Winters called “the church;” and at the next Association which met in that city an effort was made, which I labored to defeat, to make the twelve the church. Thus I became obnoxious to the wrath and resentment

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<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>254</sup> Robert Patterson, Jr., *Who Wrote The Book of Mormon?*, 1882, 11.

of Mr. Winters and his party. They were defeated at that time. Finally, Mr. Winters left the city and went into the bounds of the Beaver Association. Mr. Rigdon also, some two or three years afterwards, left the city, and went out into the country bordering on the Mahoning Association. Mr. Winters' party fell for a time under the episcopacy of the celebrated pedestrian Lawrence Greatrake, but he and they not being able long to hold on their way, a young man from Somerset, called Mr. Williams, took them under his episcopacy, and he also, instigated by the same faction, wrote a letter to the "Columbia Star," setting forth various libels and slanders against me, for which I called him to an account. He then, and his brother Winters, both joined the Beaver Association; and not unfrequently since have these gentlemen, especially Mr. Winters, endeavored to sow discord in the neighboring churches. Mr. Winters got into some two or three churches which once belonged to the Mahoning Association, and there played the same game which he played in Pittsburg. One or more of these churches were divided by his instrumentality; and since I left home I learned from the Minutes of the Beaver Association they had joined them. This narrative I know is substantially correct in all its prominent parts, though I write it from my own recollections only. And if pressed, I know I can make it out more fully and circumstantially. But enough is told to show how, and why, this anathema came out in the Minutes of the Beaver Association."<sup>255</sup>

**Was John Winter present with Sidney Rigdon in Pittsburgh and is there any corroboration?**

Bausman states: "Rev. John Winter was born in Wellington, England, July, 1794. He entered the Theological College of the Baptist Church at Bradford, where he was graduated in 1820. His first charge was in South Shields. He married Eliza Wilson in 1819, and they, with one child, came to America in 1822. He preached and taught school at Pittsburgh, and preached in various places in Allegheny and Beaver counties, including Rigdon's home church, the Peter's Creek Baptist, which he served as pastor in 1825. He wrote much for the religious and secular papers."<sup>256</sup>

"Some few years ago a Mr. Winters (I am sorry that I am compelled to mention his name,) said to be a Regular Baptist preacher from England or

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<sup>255</sup> *The Christian Baptist*, Vol. VII, No. 8. "The Beaver Anathema." Bethany, Brook Co., VA, Monday, March 1, 1830, 199-200.

<sup>256</sup> A.M. Bausman, *History of Beaver County, PA* (NY: Knickerbocker, 1904), 466.

Wales, was sent or came from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, in the depth of winter, with a large family, in the most abject circumstances. **Brother Sidney Rigdon was then Bishop of the Baptist Church in Pittsburgh; and, as a christian Bishop ought to do, he took pity upon his brother Winters; took him into his house, with all his family, say seven or eight children, and sustained them for some weeks, I know not how many (emp. mine);** and finally rented, upon his own responsibility, a house for his brother Winters, and stirred up the brethren to minister to his wants. He was also invited into the pulpit and occassionally proclaimed his tenets to the congregation. After he had got warmed and filled he began to make a faction in the church by insinuating that his brother Rigdon was not sound in the faith, (though he had been very sound in charity towards him.) He said that the church had departed from the faith once delivered to the Welsh saints, and was no longer built upon the foundation of John Gill and Andrew fuller and the Philadelphia Confession.

By creeping into houses, and leading captive silly women, and some two or three men, he made a faction, amounting I think, to 12 out of from 80 to 100 members. These Mr. Winters called “the church;” and at the next Association which met in that city an effort was made, which I labored to defeat, to make the twelve the church. Thus I became obnoxious to the wrath and resentment of Mr. Winters and his party. They were defeated at that time. Finally, Mr. Winters left the city and went into the bounds of the Beaver Association. **Mr. Rigdon also, some two or three years afterwards, left the city (emp. mine),** and went out into the country bordering on the Mahoning Association.”<sup>257</sup>

Alexander Campbell came to recognize his mistake of misspelling and wrote later: “Since my notice of the Beaver Anathema I have learned that I was misinformed in some statements concerning Mr. Winter. I hasten to correct them. His name is Winter, not Winters. In the second place his family was quite small when he came to Pittsburg. In the third place he is said to have landed at Baltimore in the year 1822, and commenced his tour in the United States from that port. These corrections I make lest they should mislead as to the person intended. -- Ed. C. B.”<sup>258</sup>

It is interesting to point out what McGaffey wrote: “This testimony brings out the fact that while Rigdon was going forward and upward in the Baptist church he was tolerably well contented, and had not yet conceived of the

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<sup>257</sup> *The Christian Baptist*, Vol. VII, No. 8. Bethany, Brook Co., VA, Monday, March 1, 1830, 199.

<sup>258</sup> *The Christian Baptist*, Vol. VII, No. 12. Bethany, Brook Co., VA, Monday, July 5, 1830, 295.



necessity which finally arose for his establishing a new religion. Hence, in this unguarded moment with his friend, he exhibited and commented upon the Spalding manuscript. In a short time after this, however, upon being expelled from the Baptist church, he was confronted with an emergency which set him to thinking seriously; but inasmuch as he had betrayed his opportunity by so free an exhibition of the manuscript, he contented himself with helping to establish that new religion now known as “Disciples” or “Campbellites.” This he did doubtless, for the sake of having further preparatory employment until some of his old associates should die out, and a more favorable opportunity for the launching of his new faith should arise.”<sup>259</sup>

**Redick McKee** was a fifth piece. He said: “Mr. Spaulding told me that he had submitted the work to Mr. Patterson for publication, but for some reason it was not printed, and afterwards returned to him. I also understood he was then occasionally re-writing, correcting, and he thought improving some passages descriptive of his supposed battles. In this connection he spoke of the man Rigdon as an employee in the printing or book-binding establishment of Patterson & Lambdin, in Pittsburgh; but about him I made no special inquiries.”<sup>260</sup>

#### **A.B. Deming’s interview with McKee (1886):**

“After consideration and further inquiry he [Spalding -SF] concluded to remove his family to that village, and did remove in October 1814, rented the hotel and opened it, as a public-house, but without a bar. Mr. Spaulding told me that while at Pittsburg he frequently met a young man named Sidney Rigdon at Mr. Patterson’s bookstore and printing-office, and concluded that he was at least an occasional employee. He was said to be a good English and Latin scholar and was studying Hebrew and Greek with a view to a professorship in some college. He had read parts of the manuscript and expressed the opinion that it would sell [readily].”<sup>261</sup>

**Amarilla Dunlap (niece of Sidney Rigdon)** was the sixth piece when she testified: “When I was quite a child I visited Mr. Rigdon’s family, He married

<sup>259</sup> James Ervin Mahaffey, *Found at Last: Positive Proof* (Augusta, GA: Chronicle, 1902), 27-28.

<sup>260</sup> Letter from Redick McKee to Robert Patterson, Jr., *Who Wrote The Book of Mormon?*, 1882, 10. Link: <https://www.solomonspalding.com/docs/1882PatA.htm#pg432f>.

<sup>261</sup> Arthur B. Deming, “Redick McKee,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, (Dec. 1888), pg. 2, col. 2.

my aunt. They at that time lived in Bainbridge, Ohio. During my visit Mr. Rigdon went to his bedroom and took from a trunk, which he kept locked, a certain manuscript. He came out into the other room, and seated himself by the fireplace and commenced reading it. His wife at that moment came into the room and exclaimed "What! You're studying that thing again?" or something to that effect. She then added "I mean to burn that paper." He said "No, indeed, you will not. This will be a great thing some day." Whenever he was reading this he was so completely occupied that he seemed entirely unconscious of anything passing around him."<sup>262</sup>

Was Amarilla Dunlap present when this could have taken place? Yes. She was the niece of Sidney Rigdon's wife - Phoebe. Her statement is corroborated because Cowdery, et al. have a picture of Sidney Rigdon's tax signature in the Bainbridge 1826-1827 tax records.<sup>263</sup>

Is she accurate? As you can see for yourself, she does not give many details, except Sidney's obsession with an unnamed manuscript, which Phoebe was willing to burn!

Was she biased? It would have taken a lot of courage to speak in this manner about family members.

What is fascinating to me is that as we go along we can see the evolution of what is happening. Sidney Rigdon had this manuscript that was from a dead author. He most likely had no idea on what he wished to do with it in 1822. That is why he would not have mind showing it to the man who boarded with him - John Winter. When we go four years into the future (1826), it seems to be the case that Rigdon was studying the Spalding manuscript to see how he might use it for something great some day.

**George French stated that Cephas Dodd had told him:** "Rev. Cephas Dodd, who died Jan. 16, 1858, was long the pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Amity. He also practiced as a physician, and in this capacity, attended Mr. Spaulding in his last illness. Of his testimony Mr. George M. French, now in his eighty-third year, residing near Amity, and whose wife was a relative of Sidney Rigdon, retains a vivid impression. Shortly after Mr. French's removal from Fayette County, Pa., to Amity in 1832, when the Mormon delusion was beginning to excite remark, Dr. Dodd took Mr. French

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<sup>262</sup> Robert Patterson, Jr., *Who Wrote The Book of Mormon?*, 12.

<sup>263</sup> Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma*, Ch. 5 - Red Herring- pg. 80 out of 96. Kobo edition.

to Spaulding's grave, and there told him his positive belief that Rigdon was the agent in transforming Spaulding's manuscript into the Book of Mormon. The conviction thus expressed within two years after the publication of the Book of Mormon, and three years before the appearance of Mr. Howe's book, which attributed the plagiarism to Rigdon, shows that Dr. Dodd's judgement was formed independently of any of the testimonies cited above. As to the plagiarism, it must have been based on his own knowledge of Spaulding's romance and comparing it with the Book, of Mormon; and as to the agent, his attention, like Mr. Miller's, may first have been directed to Rigdon by Spaulding himself. Mr. French has no personal knowledge of Rigdon's connection with the printing-office."<sup>264</sup>

We recognize that this is second-hand testimony. Also, it is interesting that George French's wife was a relative of Sidney Rigdon.

**Harvey Baldwin and Deacon Clapp:** "HARVEY BALDWIN, of Aurora, Portage County, Ohio, says that over thirty years ago he heard his father say that he belonged to the Baptist Church in Bainbridge, Portage County, Ohio, when Sidney Rigdon preached there, and that several times when he called to see Rigdon he found him in a room by himself, and that he each time hurriedly put away books and papers he had as though he did not wish him to see them. Deacon Clapp, of the church Garfield attended in Mentor, says he was eighteen years old when Rigdon came to Mentor to live, and that he had a large chair with a leaf on the arm to write on with a drawer underneath with a lock and key. The chair was covered with spots of ink. Rigdon told him he had much use for it."<sup>265</sup>

These testimonies do not offer a lot, but it is interesting that Rigdon was working on something with the use of ink. Notice that Baldwin places Rigdon in Bainbridge, OH where we will see other witnesses who testified that he was working on something in writing.

**Ann Redfield (second hand testimony):**

"In the year 1818 I was principal of the Onondaga Valley Academy, and resided in the house of William H. Sabine, Esq. I remember Mrs. Spaulding,

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<sup>264</sup> Robert Patterson, Jr., *Who Wrote The Book of Mormon?*, 10.

<sup>265</sup> Arthur B. Deming, "Career of Sidney Rigdon," *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 1, (Jan. 1888), pg. 2, col. 3.

Mr. Sabine's sister perfectly, and hearing her and the family talk of a manuscript in her possession, which her husband, the Rev. Mr. Spaulding, had written somewhere in the West. I did not read the manuscript, but its substance was so often mentioned, and the peculiarity of the story, that years afterward, when the Mormon Bible was published, I procured a copy, and at once recognized the resemblance between it and Mrs. Spaulding's account of 'The Manuscript Found.' I remember also to have heard Mr. Sabine talk of the romance, and that he and Mrs. Spaulding said it had been written in the leisure hours of an invalid, who read it to his neighbors for their amusement. Mrs. Spaulding believed that Sidney Rigdon had copied the manuscript while it was in Patterson's printing office, in Pittsburgh. She spoke of it with regret. I never saw her after her marriage to Mr. Davison of Hartwick.

(Signed) Ann Treadwell Redfield."<sup>266</sup>

### **Josiah Spalding (second hand testimony)**

"Likewise she [Matilda Davidson - S. Spalding's widow] informed me that soon after they arrived at Pittsburg a man followed them, I do not recollect his name, but he was afterwards known to be a leading Mormon. He got into the employment of a printer, and he told the printer about my brother's composition."<sup>267</sup>

### **C.E. Henry (second hand testimony):**

"Other engagements prevented my hearing President Fairchild's lecture last evening upon the Book of Mormon and its relation to the Spalding manuscript. It has been the popular belief among the older citizens of the Reserve, and especially among those who had personal observation and contact with early Mormonism, that the Book of Mormon was compiled or rewritten, or at least made up in part from the Spalding document, and yet there was no direct or positive evidence to prove it. From some facts and incidents connected with the career of Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon when they were in Geauga and Portage counties preaching their alleged new gospel I came to the conclusion some years ago that the Book of Mormon was the work of Sidney Rigdon, with perhaps some changes or additions by Smith or others. So far as I know these facts and circumstances have never been published.

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<sup>266</sup> *Deseret Evening News*, Vol. XIV, Sept. 28, 1881, no. 259 - "The Spaulding Story Killed Again"

<sup>267</sup> Charles W. Spalding, *Spalding Memorial*, 255.

George Wilber, one of the early pioneers of Geauga County, taught school in the winter following the alliance of Smith and Rigdon, in a log schoolhouse a mile south of the centre of Bainbridge. Rigdon lived in a log house about two hundred yards from the schoolhouse, and young Wilber, who has heard Rigdon preach before his alliance with Smith, often called on him during the noon hour of recess and sometimes in the evening. Rigdon had acquired the reputation of being something of a biblical scholar among the pioneers, and was also a very persuasive and eloquent preacher. Some of the keen-sighted people, however, had lost confidence in him. They discovered that he had a strong religious ambition that was not tempered by Christian grace and humility. For a year or more before the advent of Smith they saw that Rigdon was bent on devising some new dogma; in short, to start a new church or sect that he could call his own or whose leadership he would share with only a few.

It may be proper to state that George Wilber was at that time a young man of high character and good education, and for more than forty years no one in Geauga or Portage had a better reputation for truth and moderation. He was the father of Prof. C. D. Wilber, now of Nebraska, who was a room-mate of General Garfield at Williams College. He died about four years ago at Aurora, Ill. Wilber's statement, moreover, of the work and conduct of Rigdon that winter, was corroborated by some of the neighbors in the school district. Rigdon did not preach that winter, but was almost constantly engaged upon a manuscript that he was writing or revising. Wilber noticed that towards the close of the term there was much more of it than there was the first time he saw it.

Rigdon had before that time been free and communicative, especially upon religious topics; he now appeared reserved and at times reticent. Whenever any reference about his manuscript he seemed disposed to parry inquiry by some general explanation that he was making notes or preparing some papers to throw light upon some portions of the Gospel. The following spring Smith appeared and he and Rigdon went off together and were gone some months. It was reported that they had gone to Pittsburgh, but whether true or not no one could say. It was generally believed, however, that Smith at least visited Western New York before either returned to Ohio. Soon after their return the Book of Mormon was announced. Smith was mysterious and silent, assuming familiarity with the supernatural. It was difficult to measure or discover his powers or qualities, because of his silence and professions as a prophet.

It did not take long, however, to see that he had failed to measure properly



those masterly powers of his companion in acting the part of the prophet. In a few months he saw that he must take a subordinate part and from that time onward his zeal flagged. He drifted along, though still a leader, until the death of Smith, when he found that Brigham Young, a natural leader of the class of men who composed their followers, held the reins of power with a strong hand. Rigdon became disgusted and disheartened. He soon left them forever, and died some years ago in Pennsylvania. Ten years ago this winter I spent two weeks in Salt Lake City. Elder Orson Pratt had been for many years the historian [sic - theologian?] of the Mormon Church. As my father had been acquainted with him in his younger days, I called upon him and made myself known. He was then an old man of about eighty years. During our conversation I inquired of him why it was that his people crossed what was called the Great Desert and settled at Salt Lake.

He replied that they had Fremont's narrative, and that he carried a copy during their journey over the plains and mountains. In the history of the Mormon Church it is stated that Pratt was with the advance guard, and on their arrival at Salt Lake Pratt made observations, and found the latitude and longitude. Soon after the interview I examined a copy of Fremont's narrative, and found the latitude and longitude given. Now, Pratt was not scholar enough to take an observation of that kind, so he must have announced their locality from the information given by Fremont. It is due to Elder Pratt to say that I do not believe he wrote this statement. He was more of a custodian of Mormon records than a historian, and probably permitted the statement to be made."

The Book of Mormon contains many internal evidences that Sidney Rigdon was the author of at least a good portion of it. How many others had a hand in it, or what other manuscripts, if any, assisted in the work, it would be difficult now to determine.

C. E. HENRY. Geauga Lake, O., March 9."<sup>268</sup>

Cowdery, et al. state: "There are a lot of blunders Henry makes and we ought to point them out:

(1) Rigdon only lived in Bainbridge, OH between 1826-1827. Wilbur teaching in the winter following the alliance of Smith and Rigdon would make it 1831.

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<sup>268</sup> *The Cleveland Leader and Morning Herald*, Vol. 39, No. 73, March 14, 1886 - "The Spalding Manuscript and Book of Mormon."

(2) Henry says Rigdon did not preach that winter, but Rigdon did as historical information is available for those facts.

(3) Henry says Smith arrived in Bainbridge to see Rigdon in the spring of 1827, but Rigdon had moved to Mentor, OH in the March 1827.

(4) Henry says Smith and Rigdon went off together for several months, and that soon after their return, the BOM was announced. (a) Rigdon took a preaching job at Mentor which involved him taking over duties as the preacher and (b) the earliest accounts of the BOM's forthcoming would be in the spring of 1829 (which is two years away from Henry's statement).<sup>269</sup>

### **George Wilber (second-hand testimony)**

It is corroborated that George Wilber did live in Bainbridge, Ohio. The *Painesville Telegraph* reported: "George Wilber, of Auburn, and Orrin Henry, of Bainbridge, were appointed Geauga Co. School Inspectors last week."<sup>270</sup>

George Wilber taught school in Bainbridge, OH, near Sidney Rigdon's residence, during the winter of 1825-1826. He claimed that Rigdon was working over a religious writing during the years 1826-1827.

### **Dencey Thompson**

"We are in receipt of a letter from Mr. O. P. Henry, an Astoria subscriber, who says, in reference to an article in the Oregonian of recent date concerning the origin of the Mormon Bible, that his mother, who is yet alive, lived in the family of Sidney Rigdon for several years prior to her marriage in 1827; that there was in the family what is now called a "writing medium," also several others in adjacent places, and the Mormon Bible was written by two or three different persons by an automatic power which they believed was inspiration direct from God, the same as produced the original Jewish Bible and Christian New Testament. Mr. H. believes that Sidney Rigdon furnished Joseph Smith with these manuscripts, and that the story of the "hieroglyphics" was a fabrication to make the credulous take hold of the mystery; that Rigdon, having learned, beyond a doubt, that the so-called dead could communicate to the living, considered himself duly authorized by Jehovah to found a new church, under

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269 Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma*, Ch. 5 - Red Herring- pgs. 91-92 out of 96. Kobo edition.

270 *Painesville Telegraph and Geauga Free Press*, Vol. I, No. 21, 2nd Series, Painesville, Ohio, Tuesday, Nov. 3, 1829, Whole No. 373.

a divine guidance similar to that of Confucius, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Swedenborg, Calvin, Luther or Wesley, all of whom believed in and taught the ministration of spirits...”<sup>271</sup>

Orrin Henry’s wife-to-be (Dencey Adeline Thompson) was the nursemaid of Rigdon’s children. She claimed that Rigdon was working over a religious writing during the years 1826-1827.

Could Dencey Adeline Thompson been present at the right time and place to have witnessed this strange phenomenon?

She was born in 1805 and died in 1887. As the account states: “[Thompson] lived in the family of Sidney Rigdon for several years prior to her marriage in 1827.” She served as a nursemaid to the Rigdon children.

Can her statement be corroborated? Her wedding took place in Chardon, OH on March 16, 1827. Cowdery, et al. have a picture of the marriage license and record of marriage for Dencey Thompson dated March, 1827.<sup>272</sup>

Was her statement accurate? It states: “that there was in the family what is now called a “writing medium,” also several others in adjacent places, and the Mormon Bible was written by two or three different persons by an automatic power which believed was inspiration direct from God...”

Certainly, the details are strange, but if it is the case that he is using and editing the Spalding manuscript, then the picture becomes clearer.

Unfortunately, she does not provide us any more details as to who could have been there with Sidney Rigdon.

Does she have any bias? What would promote her to lie about this matter? Also, it is interesting that she lived there with the family for a time.

### **R.W. Alderman (second-hand testimony)**

“In February, 1852, I was snow-bound in a hotel in Mentor, Ohio all day. Martin Harris was there, and in conversation told me he saw Jo Smith translate the “Book of Mormon” with his peepstone in his hat. Oliver Cowdery, who had been a school teacher, wrote it down. Sidney Rigdon, a renegade preacher, was let in during the translation. Rigdon had stolen a manuscript from a printing office in Pittsburgh, Pa., which Spaulding who had written it in the early part of the century, had left there to be printed, but the printers refused to publish it, but Jo and Rigdon did, as the “Book of Mormon.” Martin

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<sup>271</sup> *The New Northwest*, Vol. X - Sept. 9, 1880 - No. 1 - “The Mormon Bible.”

<sup>272</sup> Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma*, Ch. 5 - Red Herring- pg. 84 out of 96. Kobo edition.

said he furnished the means, and Jo promised him a place next to him in the church. When they had got all my property they set me out. He said Jo ought to have been killed before he was; that the Mormons committed all sorts of depredations in the towns about Kirtland. They called themselves Latter-day Saints, but he called them Latter-day Devils.

Claridon, Geauga Co., Ohio, Dec. 25, 1884.

[Signed] R. W. ALDERMAN.”<sup>273</sup>

### **William Smith (second-hand testimony)**

“William Smith [brother of J.S.] told Joseph if he did not give him some money he would tell where the Book of Mormon came from; and Joseph accordingly gave him what he wanted. G. B. FROST.”<sup>274</sup>

### **John C. Bennett**

“I will remark here, in confirmation of the above, that the BOOK OF MORMON was originally written by the Rev. SOLOMON SPALDING, A.M., as a romance, and entitled the “MANUSCRIPT FOUND.” and placed by him in the printing-office of Patterson and Lambdin, in the city of Pittsburg, from whence it was taken by a conspicuous Mormon divine, and RE-MODELLED, by adding the religious portion, placed by him in Smith’s possession, and then published to the world as the testimony exemplifies. This I have from the CONFEDERATION, and of its perfect correctness there is not the shadow of a doubt. There never were any plates of the Book of Mormon, excepting what were seen by the SPIRITUAL, and not the natural, eyes of the witnesses. The story of the plates is all CHIMERICAL.”<sup>275</sup>

### **John C. Bennett (1804-1867):**

**Was he present to have obtained such information from the LDS leadership?** He joined the LDS church in the summer of 1840.<sup>276</sup> He was elevated

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273 Arthur B. Deming, “R.W. Alderman’s Statement,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 1, (Jan. 1888), pg. 3, col. 1.

274 John C. Bennett, *History of the Saints*, (Boston: Leland & Whiting, 1842), 87.

275 John C. Bennett, *History of the Saints*, 123.

276 Link: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/doctrine-and-covenants-historical-resources-2025/people/bio-john-c-bennett?lang=eng>.

to certain positions such as Assistant Counselor to the President, Spokesman for the President of the Church, and mayor at Nauvoo, IL.<sup>277</sup> After less than two years, he was withdrawn fellowship from the church in the summer of 1842.<sup>278</sup> He wrote a book called *History of the Saints*.

Can his statements be corroborated?

*The Wasp* recorded: “New election of Mayor, and Vice Mayor, of the City of Nauvoo, on the resignation of General Bennett.

On the 17th Instant General John C. Bennett resigned the office of Mayor of the City of Nauvoo, and on the 19th General Joseph Smith, the former Vice Mayor, was duly elected to fill the vacancy -- and on the same day General Hyrum Smith was elected Vice Mayor in place of General Joseph Smith elected Mayor.

The following vote of thanks was then unanimously voted to the Ex Mayor, General Bennett, by the City Council; to wit: Resolved by the City Council of the City of Nauvoo, that this Council tender a vote of thanks to General John C. Bennett, for his great zeal in having good and wholesome laws adopted for the Government of this city; and for the faithful discharge of his duty while Mayor of the same.

Passed May 10th 1842.

JOSEPH SMITH, Mayor.

JAMES SLOAN, Recorder.”<sup>279</sup>

John Bennett is discussed in various passages of the *History of the Church* such as *History of the Church* 4:170, 172, 179, 249, 270.

Was he accurate? He was indeed accurate in regards to the Spalding manuscript and the details surrounding it. He most likely is implying the “conspicuous Mormon divine” to be Sidney Rigdon.

Was he biased? Toward the front of his book, his aim was to expose the church.

### **James Jeffrey:**

“I know more about the Mormons than any man east of the Alleghenies, although I have given no attention to the matter for twenty-five years. I did not

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<sup>277</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>278</sup> Link: <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/person/john-cook-bennett>.

<sup>279</sup> *The Wasp*, Vol. I. - No. 6. Nauvoo, Hancock Co., Sat., May 21, 1842. Whole No. 6.



know I was in possession of any information concerning the Book of Mormon unknown to others. I supposed that as Rigdon was so open with me, he had told others the same things.

Forty years ago I was in business in St. Louis. The Mormons then had their temple in Nauvoo, Ill. I had business transactions with them. Sidney Rigdon I knew very well. He was general manager of the affairs of the Mormons.

Rigdon, in hours of conversation told me a number of times there was in the printing office with which he was connected in Ohio, a manuscript of Rev. Spaulding, tracing the origin of the Indian race from the lost tribes of Israel; that this manuscript was in the office for several years; that he was familiar with it; that Spaulding had wanted it printed, but had not the money to pay for the printing; that he (Rigdon) and Joe Smith used to look over the manuscript and read it over Sundays.”<sup>280</sup>

Could Jeffery have been in the right time and place to have heard this from Sidney Rigdon? Notice the detail that it was “forty years ago” - 1844 - the year Joseph Smith died. After Smith died, the leadership was either to be taken over by Brigham Young and The Twelve or Sidney Rigdon. Young and The Twelve succeeded in their endeavor and Young received the nomination. This made Rigdon very bitter and angry Rigdon threatened to expose the secrets of the church.

Notice what it states in *History of the Church*:

“Rigdon’s License Demanded.

Tuesday, 3. [Sept. 3, 1844]—I had an interview with Brother Sidney Rigdon. He said he had power and authority above the Twelve Apostles and did not consider himself amenable to their counsel. In the evening, the Twelve had an interview with Brother Rigdon, who was far from feeling an interest with the Twelve. His license was demanded, which he refused to give up, and said the church had not been lead by the Lord for a long time, **and he should come out and expose the secrets of the church** (emp. mine).”<sup>281</sup>

Sidney, what exactly might you have been hiding? Some might point to the issue of polygamy, but it is possible it could have been something else. Sidney certainly revealed a secret to James Jeffrey.

Can his statement be corroborated? Cowdery, et al., show historical records of St. Louis a merchant by that name James Jeffrey at 54 North First St., with

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<sup>280</sup> *Presbyterian Banner*, Vol. LXX - Feb. 13, 1884 - No. 25 - “The Book of Mormon.”

<sup>281</sup> *History of the Church*, Vol. 7, ch. 21 (p. 267).

residence at 46 South Fifth in 1840-41; and in 1845 at 12 North Sixth.<sup>282</sup>

Jedediah M. Grant wrote: “Mr. Rigdon, while on his journey from Nauvoo to Pittsburgh, stopped at St. Louis...”<sup>283</sup>

Is his statement accurate? Jeffrey gets a detail wrong such as a printing office with which he was connected in Ohio. Otherwise, he is spot on.

Was he biased? What did he have to gain from these lies if he was lying? Why the wait for over forty years? As he stated he thought that since Rigdon was so open to him about everything, then he assumed that Rigdon had most likely told others also.

### **Matilda Davidson:**

“This Mr. S. refused to do for reasons which I cannot now state. -- Sidney Rigdon,\* who has figured so largely in the history of the Mormons, was at this time connected with the printing office of Mr. Patterson, as is well known in that region, and as Rigdon himself has frequently stated. Here he had ample opportunity to become acquainted with Mr. Spaulding’s manuscript and to copy it if he chose.”<sup>284</sup>

We have already considered the reliability of Matilda Davidson as a witness in a previous chapter.

It is very interesting when we plot out those who connect Sidney Rigdon to Solomon Spalding’s *Manuscript Found*.

**First**, we have **where** the theft took place, which was in Pittsburgh, PA. Rebecca Eichbaum states that Sidney Rigdon and Solomon Spalding received their mail there. John Winter boarded with Rigdon sometime in 1822 in **Pittsburgh, PA** and it was said that he saw a copy of *Manuscript Found* that Rigdon told him belonged to Spalding.

**Second**, we know that Spalding and his family moved down to **Amity, PA**. Joseph Miller and Redick McKee, who were residents of Amity, made statements that Rigdon was the thief. Matilda Davidson, Spalding’s widow, also made the same accusation.

**Third**, Rigdon moved to **Bainbridge, OH** and Amarilla Dunlap (his niece) and Dencey A. Thompson (a nursemaid) both boarded with the Rigdon family for a time. Both connect Rigdon to some type of manuscript he was working

282 Jedediah M. Grant, *A collection of facts, relative to the course taken by Elder Sidney Rigdon, in the states of Ohio, Missouri, Illinois and Pennsylvania*, (Philadelphia Brown, Bicking, 1844), 45.

283 Grant, *A collection of facts*, 38.

284 *Boston Recorder* - No. 16 - Vol. XXIV - Apr. 19, 1839 - Whole No. 1216 - “Mormonism.”

on, but it is not named.

**Fourth**, in 1839, the Mormons moved to **Nauvoo, IL** and it was there that John C. Bennett moved higher up in the LDS hierarchy. He explains that he received from the Confederation itself that Rigdon had stolen the manuscript of Solomon Spalding in **Pittsburgh, PA** that had been transformed into the Book of Mormon.

**Fifth**, when Rigdon lost the leadership position to Brigham Young and the Twelve, he was so frustrated and evidently let the “cat out of the bag” when he decided to vent out all the secrets that had been kept to James Jeffrey in **St. Louis, MO**.

## Chapter 11: Rigdon's "Foreknowledge" of the Book of Mormon

Our next major piece of evidence is that Rigdon had foreknowledge of the **BOM** based on eyewitness testimony.

Some will argue that Rigdon knew the **BOM** was forthcoming because newspapers were publishing information about the forthcoming of the **BOM**.

Let's examine that claim closer. Here is what we know.

Cannon wrote: "As one would suppose, most news coverage originated in Palmyra or other neighboring cities. Although local newspapers paid a great deal of attention to the Book of Mormon, papers in other locations contained far fewer articles. In order to understand what these news articles discussed, let us first examine the New York newspapers...**The earliest article about the Book of Mormon appeared on June 26, 1829, in the Wayne Sentinel of Palmyra, New York** (emp. mine). The editor of the Wayne Sentinel was Egbert B. Grandin, who would later publish the Book of Mormon. This article covered the story of local gossip concerning the so-called "Golden Bible" and even included a sample title page from the forthcoming Book of Mormon... As one would suppose, most news coverage originated in Palmyra or other neighboring cities. Although local newspapers paid a great deal of attention to the Book of Mormon, papers in other locations contained far fewer articles. In order to understand what these news articles discussed, let us first examine the New York newspapers...The earliest article about the Book of Mormon appeared on June 26, 1829, in the Wayne Sentinel of Palmyra, New York. The editor of the Wayne Sentinel was Egbert B. Grandin, who would later publish the Book of Mormon. This article covered the story of local gossip concerning the so-called "Golden Bible" and even included a sample title page from the forthcoming Book of Mormon... Later that summer another Palmyra newspaper, the Palmyra Freeman, ran an article which included a brief history of the plates and described the forthcoming publication as "the greatest piece of superstition that has ever come within our knowledge." The author of this article has been identified as J. A. Hadley, publisher of the Palmyra Freeman... In 1829, The Reflector, another Palmyra paper, had published some items concerning the Book of Mormon. Early in 1830, The Reflector began publishing excerpts from the yet unpublished book."<sup>285</sup>

<sup>285</sup> Donald Q. Cannon (BYU) "In The Press: Early Newspaper Reports on the Initial Publication of the

### **June 26, 1829:**

The *Wayne Sentinel* of Palmyra, NY is the earliest account reported where anyone could have known that there was a forthcoming book in the future called the Book of Mormon.

**March 26, 1830:** Copies of *BOM* went on sale on this date.<sup>286</sup>

The latest when Sidney Rigdon could have known was only in June of 1829. However, this does not explain the next series of witnesses' statements.

### **(1) Adamson Bentley (1841):**

"Adamson Bentley to Walter Scott:

"Solon, [Ohio] January 22, 1841.

"Dear Brother Scott -- Your favor of the 7th December is received. I returned from Philadelphia, Pa., on the 10th, and the answer to your acceptable letter has been deferred. I was much gratified to hear from you and family, but would be much more so to see you once more in the flesh, and talk over our toils and anxieties in the cause of our blest Redeemer.

Your request that I should give you all the information I am in possession of respecting Mormonism. I know that Sydney Rigdon told me there was a book coming out (the manuscript of which had been found engraved on gold plates) **as much as two years before the Mormon book made its appearance in this country or had been heard of by me** (emp. mine). The same I communicated to brother A Campbell..."<sup>287</sup>

Before we read Rosa's statement, please bear in mind that the Book of Mormon was already published and it had been out for two or three months.

### **(2) Dr. Storm Rosa (June 3rd, 1841):**

"In the early part of the year -- either May or June [1830-SF] -- I was in company with Sidney Rigdon, and rode with him on horseback a few miles. Our conversation was principally upon the subject of religion, as he was at that time a very popular preacher of the denomination calling themselves 'disciples' or Campbellites. He remarked to me, that it was time for a new religion to

Book of Mormon," Vol. 16, no. 2, *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 5-6.

<sup>286</sup> Hardy, *The Book of Mormon: A Reader's Edition*, 647.

<sup>287</sup> Adamson Bentley to Walter Scott, January 22, 1841, in Alexander Campbell, "Mistakes Touching The Book of Mormon," *Millennial Harbinger* (Third Series) 1, no. 1 (1844), 1.



spring up; that mankind were all rife and ready for it. I thought he alluded to the Campbellite doctrine -- **he said it would not be long before something would make its appearance** (emp. mine) -- he also said that he thought of leaving for Pennsylvania, and should be absent for some months. I asked him how long -- he said it would depend upon circumstances. I began to think a little strange of his remarks, as he was a minister of the Gospel.

I left Ohio that fall, and went to the state of New York, to visit my friends, who lived in Waterloo -- not far from the mine of golden Bibles. In November I was informed that my old neighbor, E. Partridge, and the Rev. Sidney Rigdon were in Waterloo, **and that they both had become the dupes of Joe Smith's necromancies: it then occurred to me that Rigdon's new religion had made its appearance, and when I became informed of the Spalding manuscript I was confirmed in the opinion that Rigdon was at least accessory if not the principal in getting up this farce** (emp. mine). Any information that I can give shall be done cheerfully. Respectfully, your obedient servant, S. ROSA."<sup>288</sup>

There is an interesting tidbit between Rosa and Nahum Howard:

"At a recent meeting of the Medical Society of the 20th District, Drs. Philo Tilden, **Nahum Howard** (emp. mine), Dennis Cooley, and Samuel L. Fenton were admitted members... Censors: Anson Hotchkiss, **Storm Rosa** (emp. mine), Evert Denton..."<sup>289</sup>

Perhaps this person may have been acquainted with Nahum Howard (one of the original Spalding witnesses). However, we cannot know this for certain.

### **(3) Alexander Campbell (1844):**

"The conversion alluded to in Brother Bentley's letter of 1841, was in my presence as well as in his and my recollection of it led me some two or three years ago to interrogate Brother Bentley, touching his recollections of it, which accord with mine in every particular, except the year in which it occurred, he placing it in the summer of 1827 -- I, in the summer of 1826 -- Rigdon at the same time observing that in the plates dug up in New York there was an account, not only of the Aborigines of this country but also it was stated that the Christian religion had been preached in this country during the first

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<sup>288</sup> John A. Clark. *Gleanings by the Way* (Phila.: W. J. & J. K. Simmon, 1842), 316-317.

<sup>289</sup> *Painesville Telegraph*, Vol. V. Painesville, Ohio, June 8, 1827.

century just as we were preaching it in the Western Reserve...”<sup>290</sup>

**(4) Darwin Atwater (1873):**

“MANTUA STATION, April 26, 1873.

DEAR BRO. A. S. HAYDEN:

The infant church at Mantua was left small and inexperienced. I was the only one who had been accustomed to take an active public part. There were Bro. Seth Sanford, and Bro. Seth Harmon, both very young in the Christian profession, with a number of excellent sisters. In our weak state, in the midst of so much opposition, we were poorly prepared to take care of the church. March 21, 1830, I was ordained elder, (in my youth), and Bro. Seth Harmon was ordained deacon -- Adamson Bentley officiating.<sup>291</sup>

“At this time, Oliver Snow, an old member of the Baptist church, united with us. His talents, age and experience, ought to have been very useful to us, but they were more frequently exercised in finding fault with what we attempted to do, than in assisting us. This only increased our embarrassment. Soon after this, the great Mormon defection came on us. Sidney Rigdon preached for us, and notwithstanding his extravagantly wild freaks, he was held in high repute by many. For a few months before his professed conversion to Mormonism, it was noticed that his wild, extravagant propensities had been more marked. **That he knew before of the coming of the book of Mormon is to me certain, from what he said the first of his visits at my father’s, some years before. He gave a wonderful description of the mounds and other antiquities found in some parts of America, and said that they must have been made by the Aborigines. He said there was a book to be published containing an account of those things** (emp. mine). He spoke of these in his eloquent, enthusiastic style, as being a thing most extraordinary. Though a youth then, I took him to task for expending so much enthusiasm on such a subject, instead of things of the gospel. In all my intercourse with him afterward he never spoke of antiquities, or of the wonderful book that should give account of them, till the book of Mormon really was published. He must have thought I was not the man to reveal that to.”<sup>292</sup>

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290 Alexander Campbell, “Mistakes Touching The Book of Mormon,” Vol. I, No. 1 (Jan. 1844), 1.

291 Amos S. Hayden’s *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve*, 239.

292 *Ibid.*

**(5) Thomas Clapp (1879) [2nd-hand testimony]**

“Elder Adamson Bentley told me that as he was one day riding with Sidney Rigdon and conversing upon the Bible, **Mr. Rigdon told him that another book of equal authority with the bible, as well authenticated and as ancient, which would give an account of the history of the Indian tribes on this continent, with many other things of great importance to the world, would soon be published** (emp. mine). This was before Mormonism was ever heard of in Ohio, and when it appeared, the avidity with which Rigdon received it convinced him that if Rigdon was not the author of it he was at least acquainted with the whole matter some time before it was published to the world.”<sup>293</sup>

**(6) Zebulon Rudolph (1884):** “During the winter previous to the appearance of the Book of Mormon, Rigdon was in the habit of spending weeks away from home, going no one knew whither. He often appeared preoccupied and would indulge in dreamy, visionary talks, which puzzled those who listened. **When the Book of Mormon appeared and Rigdon joined in the advocacy of the new religion, the suspicion was at once aroused that he was one of the framers of the new doctrine** (emp. mine).”<sup>294</sup>

**(7) John Rudolph:** “For two years before the Book of Mormon appeared Rigdon’s sermons were full of declarations and prophecies that the age of miracles would be restored and more complete revelations than those in the Bible would be given. **When the Book of Mormon appeared all who heard him were satisfied that he referred to it** (emp. mine).”<sup>295</sup>

**(8) Almon B. Green:** “In the Annual Meeting of the Mahoning Association held in Austintown in **August, 1830, about two months before Sidney Rigdon’s professed conversion to Mormonism** (emp. mine), Rigdon preached Saturday afternoon. He had much to say about a full and complete restoration of the ancient gospel. He spoke in his glowing style of what the Disciples had accomplished but contended that we had not accomplished a complete restoration of Apostolic Christianity. He contended such restoration must include community of goods -- holding all in common stock, and a restoration

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293 Wilhelm Ritter von Wymetal, *Mormon Portraits I* (SLC: Tribune Printing & Pub., 1886), 242.

294 Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *Braden-Kelley Debate*, 45.

295 Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *Braden-Kelley Debate*, 45-46.

of the spiritual gifts of the apostolic age. **He promised that although we had not come up to the apostolic plan in full yet as we were improving God would soon give us a new and fuller revelation of his will** (emp. mine). After the Book of Mormon had been read by many who heard Rigdon on that occasion they were perfectly satisfied that Rigdon knew all about that book when he preached that discourse. Rigdon's sermon was most thoroughly refuted by Bro. Campbell, which very much offended Rigdon."<sup>296</sup>

**(9) Reuben P. Harmon:** "My parents came to Ohio from Vermont in 1815. I resided in Kirtland when the Mormons first arrived. **I was personally acquainted with Rigdon... I have heard [him] several times say in his sermons that before long the Indian mounds and forts about there would all be explained** (emp. mine). He caused a row of log houses to be built on Isaac Morley's farm, and established a Communistic Society before Mormonism was heard of. I heard Rigdon preach his first sermon at Kirtland Flats, and after he embraced Mormonism. He said that he had been preaching wrong doctrine and asked their forgiveness..."<sup>297</sup>

**(10) Samuel F. Whitney (1885):** "I heard Sidney Rigdon preach in Squire Sawyers' orchard in 1827 or '28. **He said how desirable it would be to know who built the forts and mounds about the country. Soon it would all be revealed** (emp. mine). He undoubtedly referred to the "Book of Mormon" which was published in 1830."<sup>298</sup>

**(11) Stephen Hart (1885):** "I came to Mentor, O., in 1826 and have since resided here. I was well acquainted with Sydney Rigdon and other Mormon leaders. Isaac Morley and his brother-in-law, Titus Billings, and others through Rigdon's influence, established a Communistic Society on Morley's farm and claimed to have all things in common. I attended Rigdon's preaching and heard him urge the church to put their property in the common fund and have all things common. I have heard Mrs. Mann and other members of Rigdon's church say that weeks before he joined the Mormons, he took the Bible and

296 Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *Braden-Kelley Debate*, 45-46.

297 Arthur B. Deming, "Reuben P. Harmon," *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 2, (Apr. 1888), pg. 1, col. 4.

298 Arthur B. Deming, "Statement of Rev. S.F. Whitney on Mormonism." *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, (Dec. 1888), pg. 3, col. 2.

slapped it down on the desk and said that in a short time it would be of no more account than an old almanac; **that there was to be a new Bible, a new Revelation, which would entirely do away with this** (emp. mine). It caused the church to distrust him and but few followed him into Mormonism.”<sup>299</sup>

**(12) Mrs. S.W. Hanson (1885):** “I resided in Kirtland all the time the Mormons were there. They claimed to receive revelations from Heaven on my husband’s farm, which with other farms adjoining, they bargained for and built upon them a large number of small wooden residences. When they went to Missouri, my husband regained possession of his farm, with the buildings they had erected, including the one that Brigham Young had occupied, they not completing the payments according to contract.

My father, Rev. E. A. Ward, a Methodist Minister, attended the funeral of Elder Warner Goodell, pastor of the Baptist Church in Mentor, in August, 1826. Sidney Rigdon preached the sermon. Father said he was greatly surprised at many strange and mysterious expressions in the sermon, conveying ideas wholly unwarranted by the Bible. Rigdon resided in Pittsburgh three years, and claimed he spent the time studying the Bible. **Soon after he left Pittsburgh he preached doctrines that afterwards appeared in the “Book of Mormon.”** (emp. mine)<sup>300</sup>

It most likely is the case that we should mark Zeb Rudolph off the list as the following will show.

### **Refutation of Zeb Rudolph:**

“Editors Willoughby Independent:

The articles appearing of late in the columns of your paper as Pioneer Reminiscences and signed C. G. C., contain so many false and ridiculous statements concerning the Latter Day Saints, as to require a reply, lest the unsuspecting and casual reader be deceived thereby...

The way the tales and stories start and are enlarged upon is well illustrated in the statement told by our enemies and published over the country of what Rev. Z. Rudolph, father of Mrs. Garfield, had said about his knowledge of

299 Arthur B. Deming, “Stephen H. Hart’s Statement,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 2, (Apr. 1888), pg. 3, col. 2-3.

300 Arthur B. Deming, “Mrs. S.W. Hanson’s Statement,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 2, (Apr. 1888), pg. 3, col. 6.



Sidney Rigdon and the Book of Mormon. On the 24th of July, 1885, I called upon Mr. Rudolph at his home in Mentor, with the statement, and he at once said that he had made no such statement. "I know nothing myself of Rigdon's whereabouts in 1827; all I got is second hand. I knew he was away from home in March, 1828, longer than we expected when he went away. He went to Mantua to hold a meeting and was to have been back in about a week, but did not come for a longer time, and we found out that Walter Scott was to be at Warren, and he went down there to see and hear him. That was the time that Scott was stirring up such an excitement by his preaching." "Well," we queried, "what did you say to Clark Braden or any one else that made them publish you as one of the witnesses to their assertion that Rigdon and Smith were acquainted before the publication of the Book of Mormon?" Ans.: "I said that Deacon Blish told me -- (he was a deacon in the Baptist church, that Rigdon left) -- after Smith and Rigdon got acquainted, that he was apprehensive that Smith and Rigdon were colloquing together.

If our friend has anything said or done by Joseph Smith that will justify his assertions, let him quote and give chapter and verse. We shall be interested in evidence, but have nothing in common with gossip and slander. In the spirit of "charity for all and malice toward none," we are ready at all times to seek the truth and pursue it; but in our investigation and strife for the right we demand justice to the dead as well as the living. Respectfully, E. L. KELLEY.

KIRTLAND, O., August 9th, 1890."<sup>301</sup> ...

How did Rigdon know about a new religious book coming forth (one or two years prior to its publication) if it had not been in newspapers until the latter part of 1829? There is a reasonable answer...he was involved in the production of it.

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301 *The Saints' Herald*, Vol. 37 - Sept. 13, 1890, No. 37 - "Kelley Refutes "C.G.C."

## **Chapter 12:**

### **Did Sidney Rigdon Know Joseph Smith Prior To His Conversion In November of 1830?**

As I stated in the introduction to this book, this is one of the defeaters of the theory since there is not much evidence for the link in the theory.

Fawn Brodie wrote: “But most important, there is no good evidence to show that Rigdon and Smith ever met before Rigdon’s conversion late in 1830. There is, on the contrary, abundant proof that between September 1827 and June 1829, when the Book of Mormon was being written, Rigdon was a successful Campbellite preacher in northern Ohio, who if conniving secretly with Joseph Smith, three hundred miles east, was so accomplished a deceiver that none of his intimate friends ever entertained the slightest suspicion of it.”<sup>302</sup>

J.N. Washburn wrote: “Another recent discussion of this time-worn theme, dealing, like that of Shook, with the possibility that Sidney Rigdon was the real author of the Book of Mormon, is that in *No Man Knows My History*, by Mrs. Fawn M. Brodie, in her Appendix B, pages 419-433. Mrs. Brodie takes the stand that there is insufficient evidence to show that Rigdon had any connection with the writing of the book. Unfortunately, she handles her material with such latitude that even when she is favorable to the prophet, Latter-day Saints are seriously inclined to take her views with reservations.

Of far greater significance to me personally than either of the above-mentioned works, or any other I know in print, is that of a young man in Los Angeles. His is still in the making (or was four or five years ago), and whether anything will come of it remains to be seen. This man, a good scholar and student, is convinced that Sidney Rigdon was the main agent in the coming forth of the American scripture and believes that, given time enough, he will be able to prove it.

I asked this man this question:

“How do you account for the fact that Rigdon, the main force in the production of the Book of Mormon, (according to your view), the man with the background and the ability, played second fiddle to young Joseph throughout their entire association?” He smiled a bit.

“I don’t know,” he answered. “The only suggestion I can make is that

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<sup>302</sup> Fawn Brodie, *No Man Knows My History*, 442.

Rigdon misjudged his man.”

During the course of our conversation, he made another extremely interesting statement. “I will grant,” he said, “that if it can’t be proved that Rigdon or somebody else did most of the writing, there is nothing left but to accept the statement of your people, for Joseph Smith at twenty-four did not write the Book of Mormon in four months.”<sup>303</sup>

James H. Fairchild (the person who had discovered the Honolulu manuscript) had a solid point when he was interviewed by Arthur Deming and this is what he said.

**(1) Fairchild to Deming (1887):**

“In another letter, dated August 2, 1887, he says: “The words, ‘Manuscript Story -- Conneaut Creek,’ are still on the paper in which the manuscript was wrapped when Mr. Rice first showed it to me in Honolulu, written with a pencil. Mr. Rice says these words were on the paper when he received it. **If you can obtain evidence that Rigdon was at Smith’s house in 1827 or ‘28, you will disprove the account of Rigdon’s conversion to Mormonism, at Mentor** (emp. mine), as given in Howe’s book, and also the statement in Pratt’s pamphlet, in the library of the Cleveland Historical Society, that he first introduced Smith and Rigdon to each other after the Mormons began preaching in Ohio. You will prove that a distinct effort was made in those early days to cover up the previous acquaintance of Smith and Rigdon. **You will prove that the conversion of Rigdon at Mentor was a device for deception, planned in advance** (emp. mine).

Yours very truly,

Jas. H. Fairchild.”<sup>304</sup>

**(2) Pomeroy Tucker (1867):** “A mysterious stranger now appears at Smith’s and holds intercourse with the famed money digger. For a considerable time no intimation of the name or purpose of this stranger transpired to the public, not even to Smith’s nearest neighbors. It was observed by some that his visits were frequently repeated. The sequel

303 J.N. Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, (Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1954), xii-xiii.

304 Arthur B. Deming, “Mormon Forgery,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 1, (Jan. 1888), pg. 4, col. 3.

of the intimacies of this stranger and the money digger, will sufficiently appear hereafter. There was great consternation when the 118 pages of manuscript were stolen from Harris for it seems to have been impossible, for some unaccountable reason, to retranslate the stolen portion. The reappearance of this mysterious stranger at Smith's at this juncture was again the subject of inquiry and conjecture by observers, from whom was withheld all explanations of his identity and purpose. When the Book of Mormon appeared Rigdon was an early convert. Up to this time he had played his part in the background and his occasional visits to Smith's had been observed by the inhabitants as those of the mysterious stranger. It had been his policy to remain in concealment until all things were in readiness for blowing the trumpet of the new gospel. He now came to the front as the first regular preacher in Palmyra."<sup>305</sup>

**(3) Mrs. Eaton (1881):** "Early in the summer of 1827 a mysterious stranger seeks admission to Joe Smith's cabin. The conferences of the two are most private. This person whose coming immediately preceded a new departure in the faith was Sidney Rigdon a backslidden clergyman, then a Campbellite preacher in Mentor, Ohio."<sup>306</sup>

**(4) Abel Chase (1879):** "I, Able D. Chase, now living in Palmyra, Wayne Co., N.Y., make the following statement regarding my early acquaintance with Joseph Smith and the incidents about the production of the so-called Mormon Bible. I was well acquainted with the Smith family, frequently visiting the Smith boys and they me. I was a youth at the time from twelve to thirteen years old, having been born Jan. 19, 1814, at Palmyra, N. Y. During some of my visits at the Smiths, **I saw a STRANGER there WHO THEY SAID WAS MR. RIGDON. He was at Smith's several times, and it was in the year of 1827 when I first saw him there, as near as I can recollect** (emp. mine). Some time after that tales were circulated that young..."

"Joe had found or dug from the earth a BOOK OF PLATES which the Smiths called the GOLDEN BIBLE. I don't think Smith had any such plates. He was mysterious in his actions. The PEEPSTONE, in which he was accustomed to look, he got of my elder brother Willard while at work for

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305 Pomeroy Tucker. *Origin, Rise, and Progress of Mormonism* (New York: D. Appleton, 1867), 28.

306 Anna Eaton, *The Origin of Mormonism* (NYC : W. E. C. of Home Missions, 1881), 2.

us digging a well. It was a singular looking stone and young Joe pretended he could discover hidden things in it. My brother Willard Chase died at Palmyra, N. Y., March 10, 1871. His affidavit, published in Howe's "History of Mormonism," is genuine. Peter Ingersoll, whose affidavit was published in the same book, is also dead. He moved West years ago and died about two years ago. Ingersoll had the reputation of being a man of his word, and I have no doubt his sworn statement regarding the Smiths and the Mormon Bible is genuine. I was also well acquainted with Thomas P. Baldwin, a lawyer and Notary Public, and Frederick Smith, a lawyer and magistrate, before whom Chase's and Ingersoll's depositions were made, and who were residents of this village at the time and for several years after."<sup>307</sup>

**(5) Orasmus Turner:** "The enlarging of original intentions [i.e., the transformation from a money-making scheme to a religious endeavor] was at the suggestion of Sidney Rigdon of Ohio, who made his appearance about the time the book was issued from the press. He unworthily bore the title of a Baptist elder, but had by some previous freak, if the author is rightly informed, forfeited his standing with that respectable religious denomination."<sup>308</sup>

**(6) S.F. Anderick (1888):** "I was born in New York State near the Massachusetts line, May 7, 1809. In 1812 my parents moved to a farm two miles from the village, and in the township of Palmyra, New York. In 1823 mother died, and I went to her sister's, Mrs. Earl Wilcox, where I lived much of the time until December, 1828, when I went to live with father who had again married and settled on a farm on the Holland Patent, twenty miles west of Rochester, New York. Uncle Earl's farm was four miles south of Palmyra village, and his house was nearly opposite old Jo Smith's, father of the Mormon prophet. Old Jo was dissipated. He and his son Hyrum worked some at coopering. Hyrum was the only son sufficiently educated to teach school. I attended when he taught in the log schoolhouse east of uncle's.

He also taught in the Stafford District. He and Sophronia were the most respected of the family, who were not much thought of in the community. They cleared the timber from only a small part of their farm, and never paid for the

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307 Wilhelm Ritter von Wymetal. *Mormon Portraits I*. (SLC: Tribune Printing & Pub., 1886), 230-31.

308 Orasmus Turner, *History of the Pioneer Settlement of Phelps and Gorham's Purchase and Morris Reserve* (Rochester, NY: William Alling, 1851), 212-217.



land. They tried to live without work. I have often heard the neighbors say they did not know how the Smiths lived, they earned so little money. The farmers who lived near the Smiths had many sheep and much poultry stolen. They often sent officers to search the premises of the Smiths for stolen property, who usually found the house locked. It was said the creek near the house of the Smiths was lined with the feet and heads of sheep. Uncle's children were all sons, and they played with Smith's younger children, I associated much with Sophronia Smith, the oldest daughter, as she was the only girl near my age who lived in our vicinity.

I often accompanied her, Hyrum, and young Jo Smith, who became the Mormon prophet, to apple parings and parties. Jo was pompous, pretentious and active at parties. He claimed, when a young man, he could tell where lost or hidden things and treasures were buried or located with a forked witch hazel. He deceived many farmers, and induced them to dig nights for chests of gold, when the pick struck the chest, someone usually spoke, and Jo would say the enchantment was broken, and the chest would leave.

Williard Chase, a Methodist who lived about two miles from uncle's, while digging a well, found a gray smooth stone about the size and shape of an egg. Sallie, Williard's sister, also a Methodist, told me several times that young Jo Smith, who became the Mormon prophet, often came to inquire of her where to dig for treasures. She told me she would place the stone in a hat and hold it to her face, and claimed things would be brought to her view. Sallie let me have it several times, but I never could see anything in or through it. I heard that Jo obtained it and called it a peep-stone, which he used in the place of the witch hazel. Uncle refused to let Jo dig on his farm. I have seen many holes where he dug on other farms.

When Jo joined the Presbyterian Church, in Palmyra village, it caused much talk and surprise, as he claimed to receive revelations from the Lord. He also claimed he found some gold plates with characters on them, in a hill between uncle's and father's, which I often crossed. Several times I saw what he claimed were the plates, which were covered with a cloth. They appeared to be six or eight inches square. He frequently carried them with him. I heard they kept them under the brick hearth.

He was from home much summers. Sometimes he said he had been to Broome County, New York, and Pennsylvania. Several times while I was visiting Sophronia Smith at old Jo's house, she told me that a stranger who I

saw there several times in warm weather and several months apart, was Mr. Rigdon. At other times the Smith children told me that Mr. Rigdon was at their house when I did not see him. I did not read much in the “Book of Mormon” because I had no confidence in Jo. Palmyra people claimed that Jo did not know enough to be the author of the “Book of Mormon,” and believed that Rigdon was its author. I was acquainted with most of the people about us, and with Martin Harris. On my way to California I stopped in Salt Lake City from July, 1852, until March, 1853. I received much attention from Mormon ladies because I was acquainted, and had danced with their prophet. [Signed.] MRS. S. F. ANDERICK. [Seal] Witnessed by: MRS. I. A. ROGERS (Daughter) OSCAR G. ROGERS (Grandson).”<sup>309</sup>

**(7) W.A. Lillie (1888) [second-hand testimony from Pearne]:** “I was born in Trumbull Co., Ohio, in 1815. Our family moved to Chester, the town adjoining Kirtland on the south, in 1822. About 1834 Mr. Pearne, of Chester, told me he used to live in the neighborhood of the Mormon Smith family in Palmyra, N. Y., and was well acquainted with all of them. He said they were a low family and of no account in the community. He told me the summer before Jo Smith, the Mormon prophet, first came to Ohio, he often saw Smith and Rigdon together. It was the first he knew of Rigdon, and it was before the “Book of Mormon” was published. He saw Smith and Rigdon start together in a buggy for Ohio. Mr. Pearne knew Rigdon well after coming to Ohio and said he believed he was at the bottom of Mormonism. My father borrowed the “Book of Mormon” and when he had finished reading it laughed and remarked Rigdon had done pretty well. W. A. LILLIE.

Witnessed by:

A. B. DEMING. & THOMAS B. PAGE.”<sup>310</sup>

**(8) Lorenzo Saunders (Oct. 14, 1879):**

*Statement #1 - Quoted from J. H. Gilbert:*

“...Last evening I had about fifteen minutes’ conversation with Mr. Lorenzo Saunders of Reading, Hillsdale County, Michigan. He has been gone about thirty years [from the Palmyra area]. He was born south of our village in 1811,

309 Arthur B. Deming, “Mrs. S.F. Anderick’s Statement,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 1, (Jan. 1888), pg. 2, col. 4.

310 Arthur B. Deming, “W.A. Lillie,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 2, (Apr. 1888), pg. 3, col. 4-5.

and was a near neighbor of the Smith family-- knew them all well; was in the habit of visiting the Smith boys; says he knows that Rigdon was hanging around Smith's for eighteen months prior to the publishing of the Mormon Bible...."<sup>311</sup>

**(9) Excerpt of Lorenzo Saunders interview with William H. Kelley (September 17, 1884):**

“Q. Did you ever see Sidney Rigdon in the neighborhood where you lived previous to 1830?

A. Yes. In March 1827. I went over to Joe Smith's to eat [maple] sugar, and as I went over I saw, about twenty rods from the house, five or six men standing and talking. One was well dressed.

Q. Did you know their names?

A. Yes. It was Peter Ingersol, Samuel Lawrence, George Proper, the old man Rockwell, Father of Porter Rockwell, and the well dressed man. They stood ten rods from the road. When I got to the house Harrison [Smith] told me that it was Sidney Rigdon, i.e. the well dressed man.

William H. Kelley Papers, RLDS Library-Archives, Independence, MO.

Q. Did you see him after that previous to 1830?

A. Yes. I saw him in the fall just before Joseph went to Pennsylvania [December 1827]. Peter Ingersol and I met him [Rigdon] in the Road between Palmyra and Ingersols. I never saw him any more until he came to Palmyra to preach to Mormon Bible.

Q. Are you acquainted with Maj. Gilbert of Palmyra?

A. Yes. Four years ago I went to Palmyra to see my Brothers, and I met Gilbert. He wanted to know if I remembered seeing Sidney Rigdon in that neighborhood previous to 1830 when he come preaching the Mormon Bible. He said Abel Chase testified that he thought he saw Rigdon before that time, but was not certain. Says I to Gilbert [,] Sidney Rigdon was about Smiths before 1830 in my opinion. Gilbert asked if I would make affadavit that I saw Rigdon at Smiths before that time? I told him that I would think the matter over. After a while I think I told him I would. After I got home a

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<sup>311</sup> John H. Gilbert to James T. Cobb, 14 Oct. 1879. Wilhelm Ritter von Wymetal. *Mormon Portraits I* (SLC: Tribune Printing & Pub., 1886), p. 230-31.

while I received a letter from Cobb of Salt Lake. Gilbert wrote to Cobb and give him my address. I wrote to Cobb the next Spring. Gilbert wrote to me I think in Nov. after I returned home, asking why I did not answer Cobb's letter. While I was writing an answer to Cobb's first letter my house caught fire and burnt. Burnt up every thing I had and there was no insurance. Lost a thousand dollars. I was some time thinking the matter over before writing to Cobb and during that time my house burnt. It had been a long time since those transactions and it was difficult to fix dates. But I have it now so I can tell it right now. I have read the statements of Peter Ingersol and Samuel Lawrence (signed) Lorenzo Saunders

"READING, January 28, 1885.

MISTER GREGG,

Dear Sir. I received your note ready at hand and will try (to) answer the best I can and give all the information I can as respecting Mormonism and the first origin. As respecting Oliver Cowdery, he came from Kirtland in the summer of 1826 and was about there until fall and took a school in the district where the Smiths lived and the next summer he was missing and I didn't see him until fall and he came back and took our school in the district where we lived and taught about a week and went to the schoolboard and wanted the board to let him off and they did and he went to Smith and went to writing the Book of Mormon and wrote all winter. The Mormons say it [want] wrote there but I say it was because I was there. I saw Sidney Rigdon in the Spring of 1827, about the middle of March. I went to Smiths to eat maple sugar, and I saw five or six men standing in a group and there was one among them better dressed than the rest and I asked Harrison Smith who he was (and) he said his name was Sidney Rigdon, a friend of Joseph's from Pennsylvania, I saw him in the Fall of 1827 on the road between where I lived and Palmyra, with Joseph. I was with a man by the name of Jugegsah (spelling doubtful, C. A. S.). They talked together and when he went on I asked Jugegsah (spelling doubtful, C. A. S.) who he was and he said it was Rigdon. Then in the summer of 1828 I Saw him at Samuel Lawrence's just before harvest. I was cutting corn for Lawrence and went to dinner and he took dinner with us and when dinner was over they went into another room and I didn't see him again till he came to Palmyra to preach. You want to know how Smith acted about it.

The next morning after he claimed to have got (the) plates he came to our

house and said he had got the plates and what a struggle he had in getting home with them. Two men tackled him and he fought and knocked them both down and made his escape and secured the plates and had them safe and secure. He showed his thumb where he bruised it in fighting those men. After (he) went from the house, my mother says, "What a liar Joseph Smith is; he lies every word he says; I know he lies because he looks so guilty; he can't see out of his eyes; how dare (he) tell such a lie as that." The time he claimed to have taken the plates from the hill was on the 22 day of September, in 1827, and I went on the next Sunday following with five or six other ones and we hunted the side hill by course and could not find no place where the ground had been broke. There was a large hole where the money diggers had dug a year or two before, but no fresh dirt. There never was such a hole; there never was any plates taken out of that hill nor any other hill in that county, was in Wayne county. It is all a lie. No, sir, I never saw the plates nor no one else. He had an old glass box with a tile (spelling doubtful, C. A. S.) in it, about 7x8 inches, and that was the gold plates and Martin Harris didn't know a gold plate from a brick at this time.

Smith and Rigdon had an intimacy but it was very secret and still and there was a mediator between them and that was Cowdery. The Manuscripts was stolen by Rigdon and modeled over by him and then handed over to Cowdery and he copied them and Smith sat behind the curtain and handed them out to Cowdery and as fast as Cowdery copied them, they was handed over to Martin Harris and he took them to Egbert Granden, the one who printed them, and Gilbert set the type. I never knew any of the twelve that claimed to have seen the plates except Martin Harris and the Smiths. I knew all of the Smiths, they had not much learning, they was poor scholars. The older ones did adhere (spelling doubtful, C. A. S.) to Joseph Smith. He had a peep stone he pretended to see in. He could see all the hidden treasures in the ground and all the stolen property. But that was all a lie, he couldn't see nothing. He was an impostor. I now will close. I don't know as you can read this. If you can, please excuse my bad spelling and mistakes. Yours With Respect,

From LORENZO SAUNDERS."

HILLSDALE COUNTY, State of Michigan.

Lorenzo Saunders being duly sworn deposes and says: That I reside in Reading, Hillsdale County, State of Michigan; that I was born in the town of



Palmyra, Wayne County, State of New York, on June 7, A. D. 1811, and am now seventy-six years of age. That I lived in said town of Palmyra until I was forty-three years of age. That I lived within one mile of Joseph Smith at the time said Joseph Smith claimed that he found the “tablets” on which the “Book of Mormon” was revealed. That I went to the “Hill Cumorah” on the Sunday following the date that Joseph Smith claimed he found the plates, it being three miles from my home, and I tried to find the place where the earth had been broken by being dug up, but was unable to find any place where the ground had been disturbed.

That my father died on the 10th day of October, A. D. 1825. That in March of 1827, on or about the 15th of said month I went to the house of Joseph Smith for the purpose of getting some maple sugar to eat, that when I arrived at the house of said Joseph Smith, I was met at the door by Harrison Smith, Jo’s brother. That at a distance of ten or twelve rods from the house there were five men that were engaged in talking, four of whom I knew, the fifth one was better dressed than the rest of those whom I was acquainted with. I inquired of Harrison Smith who the stranger was? He informed me his name was Sidney Rigdo[n] with whom I afterwards became acquainted and found to be Sidney Rigdon. This was in March, A. D. 1827, the second spring after the death of my father. I was frequently at the house of Joseph Smith from 1827 to 1830.

That I saw Oliver Cowdery writing, I suppose the “Book of Mormon” with books and manuscript laying on the table before him; that I went to school to said Oliver Cowdery and knew him well. That in the summer of 1830, I heard Sydney Rigdon preach a sermon on Mormonism. This was after the “Book of Mormon” had been published, which took about three years from the time that Joseph Smith claimed to have had his revelation.

[Signed.]    LORENZO SAUNDERS,  
[Seal.]

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 21st day of July, A.D. 1887.

LINUS S. PARMELEE,  
Justice of the Peace of Reading, Mich.<sup>312</sup>

### **Emily Coburn:**

“By this time my faith had grown weak in regard to changing her mind,

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312 Charles A. Shook, *True Origin of Book of Mormon* (Cincinnati: Standard Pub. Co., 1914), 132-133.

and I thought it best for me to go back to my brother's, and henceforth to let them alone. I considered it a deception and delusion; but as I was necessarily detained over the Sabbath, I attended services with my sister. The discourse was delivered by Oliver Cowdery, an elder of the Mormon church, and a witness to the gold plates. After preaching, several were baptized, and the converts were increasing rapidly. For some time, having meetings daily, and also evenings, the excitement was great, insomuch that many were overcome by the spirit, and were, seemingly, unconscious of all around them. On awakening from this trance, they would say they were happy, and had seen angels, and talked with them. However, I did not feel interested in this direction. It had hitherto appeared most simple of all things, and I was decidedly against such proceedings. I was still detained at my sister's. For some reason I could not get back to my brother's, in Sandford; and, at this time, I cannot remember the cause of my prolonged stay. While I tarried I attended church with my sister. Sidney Rigdon came into Colesville [and] preached to a numerous congregation. We did not class him as a Mormon, as we were informed that he was a Baptist minister, from Paynsville, Ohio. The words of his text -- "O foolish Gallatians, who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth?" It was, indeed interesting, and great attention and silence prevailed; and it was acknowledged by all to be the best sermon ever preached in that vicinity. He stayed several days, seeming to have special business with Joseph Smith and the leaders of the new Mormon church."<sup>313</sup>

**Are there any “gap windows” where Rigdon could have gone off to meet Smith in his timeline?**

Before we try to answer that question, I do wish to let E.L. Kelley, a Latter-Day Saint, give an article on this subject:

**“THE STORY OF SIDNEY RIGDON  
AND THE BOOK OF MORMON.**

EDITORS HERALD: -- Certain facts touching the old story connecting Sidney Rigdon in some mysterious way with the authorship of the Book of Mormon, I had expected to have published ere this, in connection with

<sup>313</sup> Emily Coburn Austin, *Life Among The Mormons* (Madison, WI: M. J. Cantwell, 1882), 37.

other matters in an “Examination of the Claims of the Book of Mormon,” but for want of time to perfect, the publication has necessarily been delayed. It will convenience many, however, to have a few of these now, and I offer the following extract for the columns of the Herald:--

The charge upon Sidney Rigdon of having been in league with Joseph Smith in projecting in any way the Book of Mormon, was treated by him as being so unreasonable and palpably false as to be undeserving of the notice of honorable men, not to say Christian gentlemen. From the first he treated the story with scorn and contempt, as did also his friends.

They did not take into consideration, at the time, however, that they were religious zealots who were circulating the story, and the avowed enemies of Elder Rigdon, as he had up to the very time of this new conversion long been the leading and most successful minister of the “reform” movement pioneered by Scott, Campbell, Rigdon, and others, in Pennsylvania and Northern Ohio. To change attitude all at once, as did Saul of Tarsus, and appear in the role of a convert to the gospel in its fullness, as preached by the apostles with all its powers and blessings, was more than his old associates could endure; and, although like Saul, he sought occasion to earnestly recount to them the reasons for his change, many who were wedded to the abandoned cause persisted in the cry:

Away with such a fellow from the earth:  
for it is not fit that he should live.

That old story, “His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept,” which has come down to us notwithstanding the contentions of eighteen centuries, and which is yet credited by the larger part of those who adhere to the faith of the people who started it, ought to be a warning to all lovers of truth to question critically and fairly, any and all tales circulated to the injury of a minister or church, by the religious partisans of a different faith and belief.

When Elder Rigdon and his friends gave their statement touching the Spalding story, they boldly and openly denounced it as being false in every particular; that he not only took no part in the getting up of the Book of Mormon, but that from the very surroundings and circumstances of the case it was impossible for him to have done so, granting for the purpose of the argument that the Book of Mormon was a gotten-up affair.

During the years immediately preceding, and at the time of the publication

of the Book of Mormon; that is, 1826-1830, Elder Rigdon was constantly engaged as a minister, as pastor of the church at Mentor, and as time permitted, preaching and proselyting in a score or more of the churches in the Western Reserve; while the scene of the translation and publication of the Book of Mormon was far away in the State of New York, with no railroads or speedy means of transportation to be used by him to further his schemes, did he have any.

Elder Rigdon claims that he not only made no visit to New York State, and had no acquaintance with Mr. Smith during such period, but knew nothing of any such man until late in the year 1830, about the time of his conversion to the gospel as taught by the Saints, and that he neither had time nor opportunity of meeting Mr. Smith, had he known of him.

The enemies of Elder Rigdon and of the claims of the Book of Mormon refused to accept his plain statements and those of his family and friends in this, and defiantly pushed the stories, and went as far as to fix certain dates at which some “mysterious stranger,” according to the story, was seen in the neighborhood of the Smiths in New York State, which “mysterious” personage, they were ready to conclude, for the story’s sake, was Elder Rigdon. Unfortunately, however, for the relished bit of gossip, the record proofs are of such character as to be competent evidence in any court, and show beyond question that Elder Rigdon’s whereabouts at the very times fixed for the “mysterious stranger” in New York, were, as claimed by himself, in the State of Ohio. This, with unbiased investigators, must not only settle the story of the appearance of Elder Rigdon in New York State at the time, but overcast that story of the “mysterious stranger” with such grave doubts as to place it in the category of work performed by those, who, through a misguided zeal, “set up false witnesses” to destroy Stephen of holy mien and blessed memory.

Whatever may have been the opinion of the enemies of Elder Rigdon touching his bold denunciation of the story implicating him in plotting or aiding in any wise in the production of the Book of Mormon, it must be admitted that all subsequently discovered facts corroborate the statements of the witness, Rigdon, and are at variance with the questionable yarns hawked about the world by the enemies of this man, who hoped to accomplish by these tales his overthrow, together with the new faith which he had espoused.

The times and places definitely settled by this corroborative evidence,

as to the whereabouts, occupation, and business of Elder Rigdon during the years mentioned, are as follows:--

1. November 2, 1826. Solemnized a marriage contract between John G. Smith and Julia Giles, in Geauga county, Ohio
2. December 13, 1826. Returns and record of marriage.
3. January, 1827. Held public meetings in Mantua, Ohio. ('Hayden's History of the Disciples of the Western Reserve." page 237.)
4. February, 1827. Preached funeral discourse of Hannah Tanner, Chester, Ohio.
5. March, April, 1827. Held protracted meetings at Mentor, Ohio; baptizing Nancy M. Sanford, William Dunson and wife, and others.
6. June 5, 1827. Solemnized Marriage between Theron Freeman and Elizabeth Waterman, Geauga county, Ohio.
7. June 15, 1827. Baptized Thomas Clapp, and others, Mentor, Ohio.
8. Solemnized marriage between James Gray and Mary Kerr, Mentor, Ohio
9. July 19, 1827. Solemnized marriage between Alden Snow and Ruth Parker, Kirtland, Ohio.
10. August 23, 1827. Meeting with the Ministerial Association, New Lisbon, Ohio. (Hist. Dis., pp. 55-57.)
11. October 9, 1827. Solemnized marriage of Stephen Sherman and Wealthy Matthews, Mentor, Ohio.
12. October 20, 1827. Ministerial Council at Warren, Ohio. (Hist. Dis., pp. 137.)
13. November, 1827. Preaching at New Lisbon, Ohio. (Hist. Dis., pp. 72-75.)
14. December 6, 1827. Solemnized marriage of Oliver Wait and Eliza Gunn, at Concord, Geauga county, Ohio.
15. December 13, 1827. Solemnized marriage of Roswell D. Cottrell and Matilda Olds, Concord, Ohio.
16. January 8, 1828. Return of marriage made at Chardon, Ohio.
17. February 14, 1828. Solemnized marriage between Otis Harrington, Lyra Corning, Mentor, Ohio.
18. March, 1828. Instructing class in theology at Mentor, Ohio, Zebulon Rudolph being a member; also held great religious meetings in Mentor and



Warren, Ohio. (Hist. Dis., p. 198.)

19. March 31, 1828. Returns made to Chardon, Ohio.

20. April, 1828. Holds great religious revival at Kirtland, Ohio. (Hist. Dis., p. 194.)

21. May, 1828. Meets Campbell at Shalerville, Ohio, and holds protracted meetings. (Hist. Dis., p. 155.)

22. June, 1828. Baptized Henry H. Clapp, Mentor, Ohio.

23. August, 1828. Attended great yearly association at Warren, Ohio.

24. September, 1828. Solemnized marriage between Luther Dille and Clarissa Kent.

25. September 18, 1828. Solemnized marriage between Nachore Corning and Phebe E. Wilson, Mentor, Ohio.

26. October 13, 1828. Returns made to Chardon, Ohio.

27. January 1, 1829. Solemnized marriage between Albert Churchill and Ana Fosdick, Concord, Ohio.

28. February 1, 1829. Solemnized marriage between Erastus Root and Rebecca Tuttle.

29. February 12, 1829. Returns made to Chardon, Ohio.

30. March, 1829. Protracted meeting, Mentor, Ohio.

31. April 12, 1829. Protracted meeting, Kirtland, Ohio.

32. July 1, 1829. Organized church at Perry, Ohio. (Hist. Dis., p. 346.)

33. August 13, 1829. Solemnized the marriage between John Strong and Ann Eliza Moore, Kirtland, Ohio.

34. September 14, 1829. Solemnized marriage between Darwin Atwater and Harriett Clapp, Mentor, Ohio.

35. September, 1829. Meeting at Mentor, Ohio; baptized J. J. Moss, disciple minister of note.

36. October 1, 1829. Solemnized marriage between Joel Roberts and Relief Bates, Perry, Ohio.

37. October, 1829. At Perry, Ohio. (Hist. Dis., pp. 207-409.)

38. November, 1829. Wait Hill, Ohio; baptized Alvin Wait. (Hist. Dis., pp. 204-207.)

39. December 31, 1829. Solemnized marriage between David Chandler and Polly Johnson, Chagrin, Ohio.

40. January 12, 1830. Returns to Cleveland, Ohio.

41. March, 1830. Mentor, Ohio.

42. June 1-30, 1830. Mentor, Ohio. (Millennial Harbinger, p. 389.)

43. July, 1830 Protracted meeting at Pleasant Valley, Ohio; baptized forty-five.

44. August, 1830. With Alexander Campbell at Austintown, Ohio. (His, Dis., p. 209.)

45. November 4, 1830. Solemnized marriage between Lewis B. Wood and Laura Cleveland, Kirtland, Ohio.

46. December, 1830. Was converted to the faith of and united with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, under preaching of P. P. Pratt and Oliver Cowdery.

The following certificates of the proper officers, touching the record -- evidence of the marriages, will show the correctness of transcript as to these dates:

The State of Ohio, } ss. Probate Court.

Geauga county. }

I, H. K. Smith, Judge of the Probate Court in and for said county, hereby certify that the above and foregoing certificates, numbering from one to sixteen were truly taken and copied from the record of marriages in this county, preserved in this office, where the same, by law, are required to be kept. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said court, at Chardon, this 27th day of April, A. D., 1891.

(Signed H. K. SMITH, Probate Judge.

(SEAL)

#### IN THE PROBATE COURT.

The State of Ohio, } SS.

Cuyahoga County. }

I, Henry C. White, judge of the said court, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript taken from the marriage records, in this office, where the same is by law required to be kept.

(Signed)

Henry C. White, Probate Judge.

By. H. A. Schwab, Dp. Clk.  
(SEAL)

The fact that one may, after the lapse of more than sixty years, by reference to the histories of the times, and an examination of official records, thus definitely locate Sidney Rigdon in his work and duties, should forever put at rest the unreasonable tales set afloat with a view of detracting from his work and casting discredit against the loyalty and faithfulness of the man to his convictions and people.

The foregoing citations of places and duties as a minister, however, are but mere drops to the great work accomplished at the time by this man. His converts were numbered by the thousands and his baptisms reached a total of eight hundred in a single year. Certainly, "the accuser of the brethren," has most malignantly followed Elder Rigdon in this world, and what is more strange in the case, is the lamentable work of Encyclopedias and pseudo religious histories, in accepting as true the tales of his enemies, when the proofs of their falsity were readily accessible.

The discovery of the old manuscript of Spalding a few years ago, under circumstances which precluded every doubt of the genuineness of the paper, identified beyond question as Spalding's work, and which failed to contain the slightest resemblance in any particular to the Book of Mormon, struck down the principal bulwark which the enemies of the Book of Mormon had builded to overthrow its claims.

Now that it is further shown that the association of Elder Rigdon as the "mysterious stranger" is also clearly unsupportable, those who have offered these as a reasonable solution for the production of the Book of Mormon must without any doubt face the consequences of placing their structure upon a very sandy foundation.

No worthy historian will, in the future, be so rash as to risk his reputation for truthfulness and fairness by attempting to account for the production of the Book of Mormon through the work of Sidney Rigdon and the "Spalding Romance." However false or pretentious the claims of the Book of Mormon may have been, one thing is evident, that the original statements put forth in behalf of the book are yet unmoved; while the theories and takes of its enemies have, as if hung about with a millstone, been plunged into the depths of darkness.

Very respectfully submitted,  
E. L. KELLEY.

LAMONI, Iowa, November 7, 1894.”<sup>314</sup>

Cowdery, et al., did a tremendous amount of work in trying to locate everything historically of the events of Sidney Rigdon’s timeline. They most likely built their work on Kelley and Shook. Here is the timeline with some comments inserted by myself:

**1821:**

# September 5-6: Rigdon attends meeting of the Mahoning Baptist Association at Palmyra, Portage county, Ohio.

# September 12-13: Rigdon preaches closing sermon at meeting of Grand River Baptist Association at Jefferson, Ohio.

**1822:**

January: Rigdon becomes pastor of the First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh.

# May: Preaches funeral sermon for Isaac Butts’ brother at Auburn, Ohio.

August 31-September 1: Rigdon attends the annual meeting of the Redstone Baptist Association at Washington, PA, and is appointed Redstone’s messenger to the Mohicken Baptist Association for the coming year.

**1823:**

June 28: Sidney sells his share of the Rigdon family farm in St. Clair township (100 acres) to James Means for about \$1200.

# July 11: Troubles begin with Rigdon’s ministry at First Baptist Church.

# September 5-7 (Friday-Sunday): The Redstone Baptist Association holds its annual meeting in Pittsburgh. It is unclear whether Rigdon is in attendance, although the minutes mention committee members of two opposing factions and cognizance is taken of a dispute then in progress within the church.

October 6 (Monday): Probable departure date for trip (by horse with Alexander Campbell) to Washington, Mason county, Kentucky, to attend the

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<sup>314</sup> “The Story of Sidney Rigdon and the Book of Mormon.” *The Saints’ Herald*. Lamoni, Iowa, November 14, 1894, Vol. 41, No. 46.

Campbell-McCalla debate. Mason county is 300 miles distant and the Ohio river is too low to take a steamboat.

October 11 (Saturday): Rigdon is condemned and excluded from First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh by adroit maneuvering of the minority faction led by Dr. Winter. Rigdon is out of town and on his way to Kentucky at the time.

# October 15-21 (Wednesday-Tuesday): The Campbell-McCalla Debate on "Christian Baptism" takes place in Kentucky.

"Bishop Sidney Rigdon of Pittsburgh" takes notes.

October 22 (Wednesday): Probable departure date for the return trip to Pittsburgh.

#October 31 (Friday): Probable date of Rigdon's return to Pittsburgh. He discovers he is now without a church.

November 2 (Sunday): Rigdon preaches to his followers in a rented room at the local courthouse.

# November-December: Rigdon petitions the Allegheny County Orphans' Court in Pittsburgh to grant him guardianship of a minor child named David Ferguson whom he has apparently brought back with him from Kentucky. The petition to the court would have had to be filed in November or December because the petition was heard by the court during its January, 1824, term.

## **1824:**

# 1824 Unknown date: Sidney Rigdon and Walter Scott publish a tract entitled "The 3rd Epistle of Peter to the Preachers and Rulers of Congregations" at Pittsburgh.

# 1824 Unknown date: Incident between Sidney Rigdon and Lawrence Greatrake in Pittsburgh

#1824-25: Rigdon & Brooks Tannery in operation in Pittsburgh. The partnership supplied leather book bindings to Pittsburgh printers during this period. (See entry under October 25, 1825 below.)

# January: "On petition of Mary, widow of James Ferguson, formerly of Allegheny County, but lately of Louisville, KY, deceased, the Orphans Court of Allegheny County, appoints Rev. Sidney Rigdon to be the guardian of one David Ferguson, a minor."

# May 4: Rigdon writes a preface (at Pittsburgh) to the published version



of Campbell-McCalla Debate proceedings.

# Spring: Rigdon and followers join Walter Scott's New Lights Presbyterian group, soon to become part of the growing Campbellite reform movement.

# August: Rigdon says he is determined "to withdraw from the [Baptist] church."

# Summer: Rigdon uses money from his inheritance to start a tannery in Pittsburgh with his brother-in-law William Brooks. (See entry for October 25, 1825, below...).

# Prior to November: Birth of Rigdon's daughter, Phebe Sarah, or possibly twins Phebe and Sarah. If the daughter subsequently referred to as "Sarah" was in fact "Phebe Sarah," then she ultimately married Edward B. Wingate c. 1841, moved to Friendship, New York, and outlived her father. If, in fact, Sarah and Phebe were twins, then Phebe has to have died prior to 1830. Information from various sources is conflicting. The suggestion of twins however is strongly reinforced by the fact that the Rigdon's 12th [?] child, born in 1836, was also named Phebe and was often referred to as "Phebe, Jr." possibly in remembrance of an elder sister of the same name who had died, or perhaps to avoid confusion with her mother. Some sources claim that the Rigdons had as many as sixteen children. Through careful research we have been able to document thirteen, assuming that Phebe and Sarah were twins.

# Fall: By the end of 1824, Alexander Campbell was saying that Rigdon had been invited to take over the pastorate of the Baptist church "nearest Pittsburgh." This was almost certainly the Peter's Creek congregation in St. Clair township where Rigdon had attended as a young man. Pastor Philips had retired near the end of 1824, and Rigdon expected to become the pastor, but something happened to thwart Rigdon's and Campbell's plans. Instead, John Winter moved over to Peter's Creek and kept it within the Redstone Association, and Rigdon's nemesis Lawrence Greatrake took Winter's place at Pittsburgh's First Baptist Church.

## **1825:**

January 5: Rigdon votes in the Pittsburgh city election.

# May 31-June 1: Likely, but not confirmed, that Rigdon was with Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott, and Adamson Bentley, at "a meeting of

sundry teachers of the Christian religion and brethren” held at Warren, Ohio, during which “the greater part of two days was occupied in discussing the ancient order of things” (meaning the nature of Christianity in its earliest days).

# August 1: Rigdon’s erstwhile young friend, Jonathan Harrison Lambdin, passes away in Pittsburgh, aged 26. He had been R. & J. Patterson’s clerk at the time Solomon Spalding was attempting to get that firm to publish his A Manuscript Found.

# October 25: Notice of dissolution of the Brooks & Rigdon Tannery appears in the Pittsburgh Allegheny Democrat, (21 September 1825).

November 11: On petition of Sidney Rigdon, the Orphans Court of Allegheny County discharges him from guardianship of David Ferguson.

## **1826:**

# Early spring (probably the last week of March): Rigdon moves his family to Bainbridge, Geauga county, in northeastern Ohio, and spends the next year preaching in Bainbridge and riding circuit around northeastern Ohio. During this time, he reportedly preaches once a month at Mantua Center “on a more or less regular basis,” usually on the last Saturday of the month (see entry for January 27, 1827 below).

April 4: Rigdon opens a credit account at the Kent family’s mercantile in Bainbridge.

# April 30 (Saturday): Probably at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed -- see above for explanation, and also entry for January 27, 1827 below. Based on the January 1827 entry, we have interpreted “regularly” to mean the last Saturday of each month, but there are other possibilities. For example, Rigdon may have preached at Mantua on Sundays during the growing season and switched to Saturdays after the harvest.)

# May 28: Possibly at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed)

# June 25: Possibly at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed)

# July 30: Possibly at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed)

August 24 (Thursday): Rigdon preaches the funeral of Rev. Warner Goodell in Mentor,\* about twenty-two miles north of Bainbridge. Other sources mistakenly give the date of Goodell’s death and funeral as having been in June 1826. The correct date derives from a handwritten notation on the envelope of letter from Arthur Deming to A.C. Williams postmarked

Painesville, January 13, [1892?] in A.C. Williams file, MS 593, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio. After the funeral, Rigdon probably stopped in Bainbridge before leaving for Canfield (see next 5 entries). Because Rev. Goodell had been the pastor at Mentor until his death, it does not seem likely that Rigdon did any preaching there prior to September.

\* NOTE: Mentor was located in Geauga county (county seat Chardon) until the formation of Lake county (county seat Painesville) on March 6, 1840.

# August 25 (Friday): Rigdon travels to Canfield, Ohio (about 55 miles), probably arriving towards evening."

August 25-27 (Saturday-Sunday): Meeting of the Mahoning Baptist Association at David Hays' barn near Canfield. On Sunday the 27th, Rigdon gives a sermon on John 16 at the local Congregational meeting house.

September 13-14: The annual meeting of the Grand River Baptist Association is held at Kingsville, Ohio. Rigdon does not appear to have been present as there is no mention of him in the minutes of that meeting.

# September 30: (Saturday) Probably at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed)

October 1 (Sunday): If the hypothesis presented in this volume is correct, then Oliver Cowdery's first encounter with Sidney Rigdon took place on or about this date during a tent meeting revival held at Greensburg, Ohio, about thirty miles east of Mantua Center. and only a mile or so north of the farm of Oliver's cousin Ambrose Cowdery, Jr.. If Cowdery was in Ohio at this time, he must have returned to New York soon thereafter because the school term began in late October and we have already demonstrated that Oliver taught during the 1826-27 school year.

Fall (after September 22): At some point "in the fall" Rigdon is offered Rev. Goodell's former pastorate at Mentor, which he accepts. His first documented presence there is for a wedding on November 2nd (see below), which suggests he was probably offered the position in October and began preaching regularly at Mentor that same month. Indications are that he continued to maintain his residence at Bainbridge throughout the fall and winter months before finally moving his family to Mentor around the 1st of April, 1827. Alternatively, it is possible (indeed, even likely) that he moved his family into temporary quarters in Mentor while his house was being built, and that he continued to maintain his cabin in Bainbridge for use as an occasional and convenient stop-over point in his regular travels between Mentor, Mantua, Warren, and other places in the area.

“The distance from Bainbridge to Mantua Center is approximately twelve miles. The distance from Bainbridge to Mentor is approximately twenty-two miles. The distance from Mantua Center to Mentor via Bainbridge is approximately thirty-four miles. Rigdon could easily have left for Mantua Center early every Saturday morning (about two hours travel by buggy or horse), preached there during the afternoons, and returned to Bainbridge by evening. On Sunday, he could have left again early in the morning, traveled to Mentor (about four hours), preached during the afternoon, and been home sometime after dark that night. (Or he could have stayed over in Mentor and gone home the following day.) Clearly he was preaching at both places during his 1826-27 residence at Bainbridge, and he continued to preach in both places after his move to Mentor, even though we are unable to produce a more specific schedule from the limited data available.

October 28: Possibly at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed)

# October 29: Probably at Mentor, considering an impending wedding on November 2.

# November 2 (Thursday): Marriage of John G. Smith and Julia Giles at Mentor.

# November 5 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor, based on his presence there for the above wedding.

November 25: Probably at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed)

# November 26: Probably at Mentor. (Unconfirmed)”

December 10 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor based on the fact that he records a marriage at Chardon a few days later (see next).

December 13 (Wednesday): Rigdon records the marriage of Smith and Giles Geauga county courthouse in Chardon, a distance of twelve miles from Rigdon’s home in Mentor. Marriages were supposed to be recorded within thirty days, but the rule was often ignored.

# December 16 (Saturday): Probably at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed)

# December 17 (Sunday): Almost certainly at Mentor based upon December 13, above.

December 23 (Saturday): Probably preaches a Christmas sermon at Mantua Center.

# December 24 (Sunday): Probably preaches at Mentor (Christmas).

# December 30 (Saturday): Probably at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed)

# December 31 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor. (Unconfirmed)”

## 1827:

# January 27 (Saturday): Rigdon's "regular, once-a-month, preaching" at Mantua Center leads to formal organization of a church there on this date. Rigdon becomes "their stated, though not constant, minister."

# January 28 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor based on above.

February ??: Funeral of Hannah Tanner, Chester, Ohio. Exact date unknown.

# February 24 (Saturday): Possibly at Mantua Center. (Unconfirmed)

# February 25 (Sunday): Possibly at Mentor. (Unconfirmed)

March 16 (Friday): Dency Thompson, the Rigdon family's live-in helper since 1824 in Pittsburgh, is married to Orrin Henry. The ceremony is apparently held at Chardon before Justice Canfield. It is not known why they did not have Rigdon perform the ceremony.

March 17 (Saturday): Date of the last entry for the Rigdon family in the ledgers of the Kent family mercantile, indicating the approximate date of their move to new residence at Mentor, twenty-two miles north. Although no records seem to exist, Rigdon's preaching at Mantua probably became more irregular after this. It seems possible that the Rigdon's sixteen year-old niece, Amarilla (or Amorilla) Brooks (later Mrs. Amos Dunlap), accompanied the family to Mentor and remained with them for a time as Dency Thompson's replacement.

# March / April (no specific dates given, but most likely at some point after his move to Mentor from Bainbridge): Rigdon allegedly holds "protracted meetings" at Mentor, during which he baptizes Nancy M. (Perkins) Sanford (Mrs. Seth Sanford, 1810-1887), William Dunson and wife, and others. According to Smith & Smith, History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, (1897) v.1, 145, 149, this information was provided to RLDS Elder Edmund L. Kelley by Nancy M. [Perkins] Sanford of Mantua, Ohio, during the time Kelley lived at Kirtland. As Kelley lived at Kirtland between 1884 and 1891, and as Mrs. Sanford died in February of 1887, the information dates from between 1884 and 1887. Unfortunately, either she failed to mention her maiden name (Perkins) and to provide him with the specific date of her baptism (which seems unlikely), or for some reason he deliberately chose to omit both from his report. This information occurs in



a chapter where Kelley seeks to demonstrate that Rigdon's responsibilities in Ohio between 1826 and 1831 were so great that there was no time in his schedule for him to have been running back and forth to New York, as alleged by supporters of the Spalding Enigma. This lack of specificity suggests Kelley (who seems to have had no qualms about distorting evidence) could well have been trying to cover-up something that went on during these very critical months. In this light, it is important that ALL mentions of Rigdon's supposed "protracted meetings" at Mentor during these two months derive from Kelley's reference as cited above.

[**Author's note:** Lorenzo Saunders claims to have seen Rigdon at this "window" in time. He saw Rigdon in the spring of 1827 about the middle of March during the maple sugar season at Smith's house in Manchester.]

Arbaugh states:

"Again about the middle of March, 1827, Rigdon was with Smith, making plans. Seeing a better-dressed man, Lorenzo Saunders asked who he was. Harrison Smith replied that it was Sidney Rigdon, a friend of Joseph's from Pennsylvania. The Mormons have tried to prove that Rigdon could not have been in New York then, or at any other time, but the attempt turned out to be the strongest substantiation of the reported visit. At just the period mentioned there is a gap of about a month in the record of his activities at home. Again, in May [1827], Rigdon seems to have gone to Palmyra for a conference, for he is reported to have been there "early in the summer," and at that time there is no record of his having been at home. He could make the trip to Palmyra and back in ten days."<sup>315</sup>

There was this statement made by Mrs. H. Eaton, a Palmyra resident. She said: "Early in the summer of 1827, a "mysterious stranger" seeks admittance to Joe Smith's cabin. The conferences of the two are most private. This person, whose coming immediately preceded a new departure in the faith, was Sidney Rigdon, a back-sliding clergyman, at this time a Campbellite preacher in Mentor, Ohio."<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> George Arbaugh, *Revelation in Mormonism* (University of Chicago, 1932), 32.

<sup>316</sup> Charles Shook, *The True Origin of the Book of Mormon* (Cincinnati: Standard Pub. Co., 1914), 130.

**We now return to the analysis of Cowdery, et al.:**

“As far as can be determined, there is no other supporting documentation for Kelley’s claim. Most likely Nancy Sanford and the others named were baptized at Mentor during this period, but it is not possible to be more specific based on extant records. If these baptisms occurred in March, then Rigdon’s activities for the remainder of that month and ALL of April cannot be accounted for.

April: Presuming that Rigdon’s alleged “protracted meetings” were held at Mentor in the closing days of March and the early days of April, then Rigdon’s whereabouts following these meetings are entirely unknown.

**# May: Rigdon’s whereabouts are unknown for entire month** (emp. mine).

# June 5 (Tuesday): Marriage of Theron Freeman and Elizabeth (or Eliza) Waterman at Painesville

June 7 (Thursday): Rigdon records the above marriage at Chardon.

# June 10 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor based on the above.

June 15 (Friday): Baptized Thomas Clapp “and others” at Mentor.”

# June 16-July 3: Rigdon is likely out of town based on “letters remaining” (see July 6).

# July 3 (Tuesday): Marriage of James Gray (of Pittsburgh) and Mary Kerr (of Mentor), at Mentor. The Painesville Telegraph, (6 July 1827), misprints this date as “31 instant” when it should read “3d instant,” there being no June 31. Geauga county records correctly give the date as July 3.”

[**Author’s note:** Abel Chase claims to have seen Rigdon at this possible “window” in time.]

July 4: Delivers 4th of July oration at Mentor; Painesville Telegraph, (6 July 1827).

# July 6: A list of letters remaining at the Mentor post office includes Sidney Rigdon; Painesville Telegraph, (6 July 1827; list as of June 30th).

# July 8 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor.

July 12 (Thursday): Marriage of Gray and Kerr recorded at Chardon.

# July 15 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor based on above.”

July 17: Silas Engles, R. & J. Pattersons’ printer, dies in Pittsburgh at the age of forty-five.

July 19 (Thursday): Marriage of Alden Snow and Ruth Parker at Kirtland.

# July 22 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor based on above wedding.

# July 23-August 9: Gap of eighteen days. Rigdon possibly out of town as he is tardy in recording above marriage (see next).

August 10 (Friday): Marriage of Snow and Parker recorded at Chardon.”

August 12 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor due to above.

August 19 (Sunday): Likely at Mentor due to impending trip.

# August 20-22 (Monday-Wednesday): Travels to New Lisbon, Ohio (about eighty-five miles).

# August 23-26 (Thursday-Sunday): Rigdon attends the annual meeting of the Mahoning Baptist Association at New Lisbon, Ohio.

[**Author’s note:** Abel Chase claims to have seen Rigdon at this possible “window” in time.]

Arbaugh states: “Lorenzo Saunders saw Rigdon and Smith together on the road between where he lived and Palmyra in the “Fall of 1827.” This visit is substantiated strikingly in the Mormon record of Rigdon’s whereabouts. It was in September that Joseph claimed to receive the golden Bible and at just this time appears another long gap in Rigdon’s ministerial activities. The Mormons could find no evidence of his presence in Ohio between Aug. 23 and Oct. 9 (1827-SF). In the early part of September Joseph asked Willard Chase to make a chest for him in which he could lock up the gold book, which he said he soon expected to get, but Chase refused to do so. Joseph claimed to have received the book the twenty-second of the month, so it is highly probable that on or about this date Rigdon turned over the manuscript to him.

On the following day he told Lorenzo Saunders that he had gotten the gold plates from the hill, and what a difficult time he had in getting them home.”<sup>317</sup>

August 27-28 (Monday-Tuesday): Probable return travel to Mentor.

# September 12-13 (Wednesday-Thursday): Rigdon, Orris Clapp, and B. Blish attend the meeting of the Grand River Baptist Association at Ashtabula.

September 14-16 (Friday-Sunday): Annual meeting of the Grand River Baptist Association held at Ashtabula, Ohio.

<sup>317</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelation In Mormonism*, 57.

# **September 17 (Monday) through October 8 (Tuesday): Rigdon's whereabouts are unknown during these twenty-two days** (emp. mine). Ashtabula is one day's travel along the road to New York. If Rigdon was planning to meet Joseph Smith on the night of September 22nd to deliver the reworked Spalding manuscript, this is a good beginning. A departure from Ashtabula on September 14th gets him to Manchester by the 17th via stagecoach and the Erie Canal. And if he stays there a week, he still gets back to Mentor in plenty of time for the following marriage

October 9 (Tuesday): Marriage of Stephen Sherman and Wealthy Mathews at Mentor.

# October 18-19 (Thursday-Friday): Travel to Warren, Ohio (about fifty miles).

# October 20-21 (Saturday-Sunday): Rigdon attends a Ministerial Council at Warren.

# October 22-23 (Monday-Tuesday): Probable return travel from Warren.

October 27 (Saturday): Marriage of Sherman and Matthews recorded at Chardon. Obviously he did not preach at Mantua Center this weekend.

# October 28 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor.

[**Author's note:** There is the statement of Mrs. H. Eaton, a Palmyra resident. Abel Chase saw Rigdon: 1827, before stories began to circulate about Joseph finding the plates (sometime in the summer of 1827) at Smiths' farm.

Lorenzo Saunders saw Rigdon just before Joseph Smith left for PA (thus Dec. 1827) on the road between Palmyra and Ingersoll's.]

November 18-??: Rigdon holds a series of revival meetings at New Lisbon, about eighty miles southeast of Mentor, at which seventeen persons were immersed. Allowing time for travel, the whole event probably consumed about two weeks.

December 6 (Thursday): Marriage of Alvin Wait to Sophia Gunn at Kirtland.

# December 9 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor based on above."

December 12 (Wednesday): Marriage of Wait and Gunn recorded at Chardon.

December 13 (Thursday): Marriage of Cottrell and Olds at Concord township, near Painesville.

# December 14-January 3: Rigdon may have remained in Mentor over

the holidays, although it is possible he was out of town. In any case, he does not record the above wedding at the Chardon court house until January 8th, see following. Perhaps the delay was due to bad weather, common along the lake front at that time of year.

### **1828:**

Unknown dates: Alexander Campbell is listed as pastor of Peter's Creek Church during this year. (See entry under fall of 1824 above.)

# January 4-5 (Friday-Saturday): Rigdon attends Grand River Bible Society meeting at Painesville.

January 6 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor.

January 8 (Tuesday): Rigdon records the marriage of Cottrell and Olds at Chardon.

# January 9-27: This period encompasses the eight (some sources say ten) days of the so-called "Siege of Warren" (probably held January 18-27) which involved Rigdon, Alexander Campbell, Adamson Bentley, Walter Scott, James G. Mitchell, and others. It was during this event that most of Adamson Bentley's congregation was converted to the Campbellite movement.

February 1-11: Quarterly meeting of the Mahoning Baptist Association at East Fairfield, Ohio. The meeting commenced at candlelight on the 1st and continued for ten days. (D.E. Stevenson, Walter Scott: Voice of the Golden Oracle, ch.8.)

February 14 (Thursday): Marriage of Herrington and Corning at Mentor. (Note: Rigdon did not record this marriage until March 31, see below.)

# February 17 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor based on above.

March: Rigdon travels to Steubenville, Ohio, (a distance of 140 miles) to visit fellow Campbellite Walter Scott, and remains with him for about a week. They preach in Nelson and Windham, Ohio. Afterwards, Rigdon, Adamson Bentley and Walter Scott apparently travel together to Bentley's home at Warren (85 miles north of Steubenville). Rigdon stays at Bentley's for a day or two, and persuades Bentley to return with him to Mentor, fully a day's travel (55 miles) distant. Although the exact dates are not recorded, all of this must have taken at least two weeks.

March: H.H. Luse assists Rigdon in moving a load of household goods from Deacon Brooks' (Rigdon's father-in-law) house in Warren to Rigdon's new brick house in Mentor. This probably occurred during the return trip from



the above event.

March: Rigdon instructs a theological class at Mentor. No additional details available.

# March 30 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor.

March 31 (Monday): Rigdon records the marriage of Herrington and Corning at Chardon.

April: Rigdon conducts revival (with Bentley) at Kirtland. Exact date not known.

# Up to May 1: Christian Baptist 5 (1828): 263, reports that “Bishops Scott, Rigdon and Bentley in Ohio within the last six months (November 1827-May 1828) have immersed about 800 people.”

May: Rigdon meets Alexander Campbell at Shalersville, Ohio, and holds “protracted meetings.” Exact dates not known.

June: Rigdon baptizes H.H. Clapp at Mentor. Exact date not known.

**Summer: Rigdon’s whereabouts are unknown. The 116-pages crisis occurs during this time** (emp. mine).

August 29-31 (Friday-Sunday): Rigdon attends the annual meeting of the Mahoning Baptist Association at Warren.

# September 1-2 (Monday-Tuesday): Probable travel from Warren to Mentor.

September 7 (Sunday): Marriage of Luther Dille to Clarissa Kent at Mentor. Palmyra area

[**Author’s note:** Sophronia Smith told her the stranger was Rigdon.

Mrs. S.F. Anderwick saw the “stranger” several times in warm weather several months apart, prior to December 1828.]

September 10-11 (Wednesday-Thursday): The Grand River Baptist Association meeting at Perry, Ohio, votes to withdraw fellowship from the Painesville and Mentor churches. According to Grand River Minutes, Rigdon was not present at this meeting.

September 18 (Thursday): Marriage of Nachor Corning to Phoebe Wilson at Mentor.

# September 19-October 11: Rigdon possibly out of town as he is tardy in recording marriages of September 7th and 18th. (see October 13)

October 12 (Sunday): Probably in Mentor due to his presence in Chardon

on October 13.

October 13 (Monday): Rigdon records the marriages of September 7 and 18 at Chardon.

**# October 14-December 31: Whereabouts unknown (79 days)** (emp. mine).

### **1829:**

1829 January 1 (Thursday): Marriage of Churchill and Fosdick at Concord township, near Painesville.

# January 2-31: Possibly out of town as he is tardy in recording the above marriage.

February 1 (Sunday): Marriage of Root and Tuttle at Mentor.

February 12 (Thursday): Marriages of January I and February I recorded at Chardon.

February 15 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor due to above.

March: Rigdon holds a protracted (3-day) revival meeting at Mentor. Dates not specified.

# March: Rigdon meets Parley P. Pratt near Amhurst, Loraine county.

April 2: Rigdon hosts a meeting at Kirtland. Although the date of this meeting is given in other sources (Smith & Smith, Shook) as April 12, such a date is clearly impossible in light of the following. The most reasonable assumption is that “12” is a typographical error and that “2” is the correct date.

April 3 (Friday): Rigdon travels to Mantua Center (see April 13-21 for refs.).

# April 4 (Saturday): Rigdon preaches at Mantua Center.

# April 5 (Sunday): Rigdon travels to the home of Rev. Walter Scott in Canfield.

# April 6-11 (Monday-Saturday): Rigdon and Scott travel to East Liverpool, and from there to Cincinnati via the Ohio river. Alexander Campbell probably joins them on the boat at Weirton, Virginia (today West Virginia) about twenty miles down river.

# April 13-21: Rigdon attends a debate between Robert Owen (communal society advocate) and Alexander Campbell, on “Evidences of Christianity” at Cincinnati.

# April 22-29?: Return trip to Mentor, probably via the same route.

May: Lyman Wight hears Rigdon preach and is baptized, apparently at Warrensville, Ohio. Exact date not given.

# June: Summer revivals conducted (sometimes independently and sometimes in concert) by Rigdon, M.S. Clapp, William Collins, and others in the north-central Ohio area. Churches were begun by Rigdon in Birmingham, Erie county; Elyria, Lorain county; and Hambden, Geauga county. Dates are uncertain because of the absence of church records. Hambden is located about fifteen miles SE of Mentor; Erie and Loraine counties are some distance west of Cleveland.

June: Rigdon holds a three day meeting at Mentor (or Chardon) with Collins and Bentley.

July 1 (Wednesday): Rigdon organizes a church (group) at Perry, Ohio.

# **July 2-August 6: Whereabouts unknown (35 days)** (emp. mine).

# August 7 (Friday): Official founding of the church at Perry, at which Rigdon is present.

August: Rigdon baptizes Mrs. Lyman Wight. Exact date and location not given.

August 13 (Thursday): Marriage of John Strong and Ann Eliza More at Kirtland.

# August 16 (Sunday): Rigdon probably at Mentor based on his presence there for the above wedding.

August 28-30 (Friday-Sunday): Rigdon attends the annual meeting of the Mahoning Baptist Association held at Sharon, Pennsylvania, just across the state line from Youngstown and Warren, Ohio, at which he delivers the opening prayer. More than 1,000 people assemble.

# September 1-2: Rigdon probably travels from Sharon to Mentor, perhaps stopping off for a few days at his in-laws' home at Warren.

# September 11-13: Rigdon holds a three-day revival meeting at Mentor. J.J. Moss is baptized.

[**Author's note:** W.A. Lillie saw Rigdon the summer before J. Smith came to Ohio and before the **BOM** was published (thus 1829) in Palmyra area. There was the second-hand testimony from Mr. Pearne.]

September 14 (Monday): Marriage of Darwin Atwater and Harriet Clapp performed at Mentor. Marriage of Strong and More recorded at Chardon.

# September 27: Possibly at Mentor based on his presence in the area several days later (see below). # October 1-5: Rigdon is at Perry, Ohio where he performs the marriage of Joel Roberts and Relief Bates on Thursday the 1st and preaches on Sunday the 4th.

October 7 (Wednesday): Marriages of Atwater-Clapp and Roberts-Bates are recorded.

# Autumn (probably the remainder of October through mid-November after the harvest and before the winter weather set in): Rigdon goes on a mission to Elyria in Loraine county, and on to Huron county (within seventy-five miles of Mentor). He is accompanied by Orson Hyde, who had been boarding at the Rigdon home during most of 1829.

November: Rigdon holds a meeting at Waite Hill, Ohio (a few miles west of Mentor on the road from Elyria). Baptism of Alvin White. Dates not given.

December 31: Marriage of Chandler to Johnson at Chagrin, about fifteen miles south of Mentor

### **1830:**

# January 3 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor based on presence in the area for above wedding.

# January 10 (Sunday): Probably at Mentor based on presence in the area.

January 12 (Tuesday): Marriage of Chandler and Johnson recorded in Cuyahoga county.

# February: Rigdon convinces Lyman Wight and Isaac Morley to begin a communal settlement experiment on Morley's farm near Kirtland.

March: Supposedly at Mentor, exact dates not given.

# March-June 18: **Rigdon's whereabouts are unknown during this extended period** (emp. mine). The Book of Mormon is published at Palmyra at the end of March. **Orsamus Turner says Rigdon made his appearance in Palmyra at about the same time as The Book of Mormon** (emp. mine). Joseph Smith founded his Church of Christ on April 6th. The first church conference is held. "Revelations" are received.

June 19-21 (Saturday-Monday): "A happy three days' meeting of disciples" in Mentor.

# June 22-26 (Tuesday-Saturday): In Mentor.

# June 27 (Sunday): Rigdon preaches over an hour at Mentor and baptizes

two.

August 13 (Friday, late in the day): Sidney Rigdon arrives in Colesville.

-August 14-15 (Saturday-Sunday): Meetings are held between Rigdon, Joseph Smith, and “the leaders of the new Mormon Church.”

-August 15 (Sunday): Rigdon preaches a Sabbath sermon attended by Emily Coburn and her sister.

August 16 (early Monday morning): Rigdon and Cowdery depart for Palmyra, from whence Oliver proceeds to the Whitmers at Fayette and Rigdon continues to Ohio. It is during this hasty journey that Rigdon may have stopped in Palmyra long enough to deliver an impromptu sermon (see statement of Lorenzo Saunders, July 21, 1887). If Rigdon returned to Ohio via fast stage and the Erie Canal, he could have arrived in Mentor late in the day on Saturday, August 21st. Presuming Rigdon arrived home on the 21st, it is likely he would have preached in Mentor on Sunday, the 22nd.

# August 25-26 (Wednesday-Thursday): Rigdon travels from Mentor to Austintown (about sixty miles south near Youngstown) to attend a meeting with Alexander Campbell.

August 27-29 (Friday-Sunday): Rigdon meets Alexander Campbell at Austintown, at the final meeting of the Mahoning Baptist Association. Rigdon preaches Saturday, August 28. Following this meeting, Rigdon dissociates himself from Campbell and his brethren.

# August 30-October 21: Rigdon’s whereabouts are unknown during this time (53 days).

October 22 (Friday): Rigdon preaches at the Town House in Ashtabula. Curiously, this announcement still refers to Rigdon as a “Campbellite” preacher, even though he had openly broken with Campbell more than six weeks earlier.

# c.November 1: Cowdery and P.P. Pratt arrives at Rigdon’s home and presents him with a copy of The Book of Mormon. (Note: Van Wagoner, Sidney Rigdon, 58, puts this date at October 28, probably based on Howe’s accounts in the Painesville Telegraph, (16 November 1830, which says “about two weeks hence,”) and (15 February 1831, which says about the last of October.”)

# November 2 (Tuesday): Rigdon visits Orris Clapp’s residence at Painesville and talks about The Book of Mormon.

November 4 (Thursday): Marriage of Louis B. Wood to Laura Cleveland



at Mentor.

November 7: Rigdon confesses his conviction (to his Mentor congregation) that The Book of Mormon may be true.

November 11: (Thursday) Rigdon records the marriage of Wood and Cleveland at Chardon.

November 13 (Probable date): Rigdon addresses congregation of friends and neighbors at Methodist hall in Kirtland and tearfully asks forgiveness of any he may have formerly offended. He says his soul has suddenly found peace in The Book of Mormon.

November 14 (Sunday): Rigdon is baptized into the Mormon faith by Oliver Cowdery. His friend Lyman Wight is baptized the same day.<sup>318</sup>

Since there are unknown gaps in Rigdon's timeline, and the witnesses got it right who claim they saw Rigdon and Smith together during those unknown gaps of time, then the Spalding-Rigdon theory becomes stronger.

I appreciate the historical information of the timeline of Sidney Rigdon supplied by Charles Shook, *The True Origin of the Book of Mormon*; Cowdery, et al. - *The Spalding Enigma* (2018 edition).

One of the major arguments used against the Spalding-Rigdon theory is that it is asserted that Rigdon did not know Joseph Smith prior to his conversion in November 1830. The LDS church began in April 1830. That is seven months prior to Rigdon's conversion. I want to present what two LDS scholars said.

Roper and Fields have stated: "Sidney Rigdon's introduction to the Book of Mormon and his public conversion to Mormonism long after the book's publication pose obvious challenges for proponents of the Spalding-Rigdon theory. In October 1830, Oliver Cowdery accompanied Parley P. Pratt, Ziba Peterson, and Peter Whitmer on a mission to Missouri, intending to preach to the Lamanites (Doctrine and Covenants 28:14; 32). While passing through northern Ohio, these missionaries stopped in Mentor, where they introduced Sidney Rigdon to the Book of Mormon. Rigdon, although initially resistant, eventually accepted the Book of Mormon and was baptized. Those who witnessed the reformist preacher's first encounter with early missionaries indicate that Rigdon at first had some difficulty accepting the book. In his own recollection of these events, Rigdon himself said he initially "felt very

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<sup>318</sup> Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma*, Ch. 11 - The Mysterious Stranger- pgs. 88-137 out of 162. Kobo edition.

much prejudiced at the assertion” that the Book of Mormon was a revelation from God. Pratt said that Rigdon “was much surprised, and it was with much persuasion and argument, that he was prevailed on to read it, and after he had read it, he had a great struggle of mind, before he fully believed and embraced it.” Rigdon’s daughter Nancy Rigdon Ellis was eight years old at the time of these events. In an interview with E. L. and W. H. Kelley in 1884, she said she remembered the event “because of the contest which soon arose between her father and Pratt and Cowdery, over the Book of Mormon.” She stated: “I saw them hand him the book, and I am as positive as can be that he never saw it before. He read it and examined it for about an hour and then threw it down, and said he did not believe a word in it.” Rigdon must have known that acceptance of the Book of Mormon would mean losing both the home recently built by his Mentor congregation and the support of many who had been his followers, friends, and religious associates for years. The life adjustment necessitated by his conversion seems to have been a difficult trial for the proud man.

“The connection between Mormonism and Ohio was furnished by Parley P. Pratt. True to traditions of his Puritan ancestry, Pratt was much absorbed as a youth in “soul searching.” He was conscious of the weight of sin and the need to be free from it and longed for some sign that his works were acceptable to God. He was intrigued by the idea that in ancient times, believers had been given some divine witness as a “gift of the Holy Ghost” following their conversion. Contemporary religions with which he was familiar taught that conversion and spiritual experience as an evidence of it must precede admission to church membership. Pratt believed that this procedure was wrong. He was not convinced that things should be different in his day than in the time of the ancient apostles. He joined the Baptist Church as the nearest approach to the truth as he saw it revealed in the Bible, but was satisfied that it was not complete.

Pratt ventured into farming near Oswego, New York, but crop failures, glutted markets and an incompetent partner, brought him to failure. He romantically determined to leave organized society with its troubles, sorrows and unrewarded toil and live among the Indians, teaching the the arts of peace and the will of God. He headed west, but stopped short of Indian territory, getting about only twelve miles west of Cleveland. Here he built a small hut and spent the winter in reading and meditation. When spring came

he cleared and planted some land, then returned to New York briefly, to wed a boyhood sweetheart. But marriage and farming did not absorb all of his time nor decrease his longing for religious satisfaction. When Sidney Rigdon visited Pratt's community on a preaching tour, he excited Pratt's old ideals and hopes. He joined the Campbellite movement and soon, encouraged by Rigdon, began to preach and prepare himself for a life in the ministry.

In the summer of 1830, Pratt made his break with the past, sold his farm and started east on his venture into the new life he had chosen. His immediate objective was his old home in New York, but launching, as he was, into a new career of unknown proportions, he was solicitous of spiritual guidance and alert for urges which seemed to furnish his direction. In response to such an urge, he got off the canal boat near Buffalo, leaving his wife to continue the journey along. It was here, at Newark, that he first learned of Mormonism and Joseph Smith and read a copy of the Book of Mormon. Not far distant was the Smith home near Palmyra. Joseph Smith was not in Palmyra at the time, but Pratt met Hyrum Smith, the Prophet's brother, and Oliver Cowdery. From them he learned at first hand the substance of the Mormon message. Convinced that he now had the full truth for which he had been seeking, he accepted baptism, then hurried on to join his wife and tell his message to his old friends.

In October, Pratt was back in Manchester, New York, where he met Joseph Smith for the first time. The sight of the prophet overwhelmed him with enthusiasm and assurance and he felt that here at last was a man called of God with authority to administer the true ordinances of the Gospel. He saw Smith as a combination of Daniel and Cyrus and placed himself fully at his disposal. During the next fourteen years of their association, his devotion to him scarcely ebbed and his conviction of the truth of the Mormon gospel never abated.

By the time Pratt made contact with Joseph Smith in early October of 1830, rather definite arrangements had already been made to remove the Church from its hostile New York environment to some new location in the far West. The Mormon affinity for the Indians (called Lamanites) suggested a location near where reservations were currently being established, west of the Missouri border, for tribes being removed from the eastern part of the United States. Oliver Cowdery, Smith's closest confidant, in the preparation of the Book of Mormon, who held a position second only to Smith in the earliest organization of the Church, had been designated to go west, preach

to the Lamanites, and to “spy out the land” near their reservations for a location suitable for a new Mormon homeland. The site to be chosen was to be nothing less than a place where the Mormons would build the holy city of Zion of in the scriptures, to which, they believed the righteous must flee to escape the wrath of God, shortly to be poured out upon the world. The first step toward locating the Church in Ohio was inadvertently taken when Pratt was included in the group named to accompany Cowdery on his mission.

The possibility that Mormonism might have come to Kirtland this early in the history of the Church without the influence of Pratt is quite remote, for Missouri was the place of destiny. Kirtland was not a logical stopping place for travelers en route to the West by any of the routes ordinarily used. The Mormon missionaries, without Pratt’s guidance, might have made their way to the Allegheny River, thence to the Ohio and the Missouri and had relatively easy journey by water. They might have gone by canal boat to Buffalo and taken a steamer to Detroit, where their journey by land would have been considerably lessened. If they had elected to go on foot and had chosen the logical route over the National Road, they would have missed Kirtland by one hundred miles. If they had elected to follow the lakeshore route to Cleveland and then make their way through central Ohio to the National Road, (the route actually taken) they would not, without Pratt’s guidance, likely have gone to Kirtland, for it was some two miles south of the usual road. Even if they had made the side trip to Kirtland they would not likely have gotten the warm reception afforded them at that place by Pratt’s old teacher and Minister, Sidney Rigdon, if Pratt had not been along.”<sup>319</sup>

Latter-Day Saints are going to take it on God’s providence and prophecy (2 Nephi 3) that this was going to happen. But if we are being honest with the data, it seems clear that Sidney Rigdon was preparing for the LDS religion to move into Ohio.

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<sup>319</sup> Matthew Roper and Paul J. Fields, “The Historical Case against Sidney Rigdon’s Authorship of the Book of Mormon,” *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon 1989–2011*: Vol. 23 : No. 1 , Article 9, 112.

## Chapter 13:

### The Power Struggle Between Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon

When you look back and examine the passage of history very closely, one can see that there was this partnership between Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon. They had to stay partners because they knew they were in this together.

Van Wagoner, Rigdon's biographer, states the differences between the two and how their strengths and weaknesses blended together.

Van Wagoner writes: "The window of opportunity, during which Rigdon achieved co-equal billing Joseph Smith, lasted from 1831-39. During this era he and the prophet, both gifted visionaries, jointly developed the church's infrastructure and its governing agenda. Retrospectively the duo seem mismatched. Rigdon was highly educated and well read while Smith possessed only a rudimentary education. Rigdon was pessimistic while Smith demonstrated a *joie de vivre*. Smith was remarkable for his charisma, Rigdon for his eloquence. But despite occasional friction, they were virtually inseparable. Their burdens, in fact, were their bonds."<sup>320</sup>

He also would write: "That Rigdon could have been merely "Sidney the Scribe," a penman whose sole function was to take down dictation [for the JST], is implausible. A Biblical scholar with a reputation for erudition, he was more steeped in biblical interpretation than any other early Mormon, despite his common school education."<sup>321</sup>

Steven Shields wrote an excellent article explaining their partnership: "For historical and theological purposes, then, I argue that the academic community should adopt the term **"Smith-Rigdon Movement"** (emp. mine) in their studies and publications<sup>322</sup>... Sidney Rigdon's importance to the movement cannot be overemphasized. When Smith and Rigdon met late in 1830, they formed a partnership, resulting in a merger of two independent movements. This had been several months in the making, from the time some of Rigdon's followers began to believe in the new revelation represented by the Book of Mormon. Smith's was a loosely organized collection of fewer than three hundred people scattered around the border area of upstate New York and Pennsylvania; Rigdon's was a network of several congregations and hundreds of members.

<sup>320</sup> Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 160.

<sup>321</sup> Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 73.

<sup>322</sup> Steven Shields, "Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon: Co-Founders of a Movement," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* (2019) 52 (3): 1.



**The Doctrine and Covenants and other sources clearly demonstrate that Sidney Rigdon was not second to Joseph Smith, but an equal partner** (emp. mine).<sup>323</sup>... The Smith-Rigdon partnership merged two distinct religious bodies and created a new one that contained features of both. They built on those foundations. Neither leader gave up cherished basic principles. Rigdon brought communalism and a fervent belief in gifts of the Spirit. Smith had the “new revelation” and oracles from God. Rigdon also brought a refined understanding of the Bible and theology. Each leader contributed to the newly shaped church body ideas and skills the other lacked. Sidney Rigdon was well-spoken, educated, and experienced as a church leader. He was appointed to be Smith’s principal adviser and spokesperson by revelation. He brought hundreds of his followers into the movement, including Orson Pratt, recognized as the first systematic theologian of the movement. **I believe that without Rigdon’s contributions, Joseph Smith’s church would likely not have developed its several distinct teachings and practices. Indeed, much of the theology was founded on Disciples doctrine, which Rigdon and his followers brought with them** (emp. mine). When Sidney Rigdon merged his faith community with that of Joseph Smith, the demographics of the movement shifted dramatically. Rigdon’s followers who were attracted to Smith’s message were at least double the New York and Pennsylvania membership to begin with, but within a few months, the newly merged church’s population in Ohio reached upwards of one thousand members. These new members were not new. Most of them had been members of the various congregations of Disciples under Rigdon’s bishopric in the Kirtland area and had followed him out of Campbell’s movement. Historian Mark Staker noted that former Disciples were the majority, had been taught by Sidney Rigdon, and that Smith built on that foundation.<sup>324</sup>...

Sidney Rigdon’s contributions to the original church and the overall movement need to be written back into the history of the movement, regardless of what happened to his relationship with Smith in succeeding years.

Rigdon delivered every major speech and sermon in the first decade of the church’s history, dealing with faith, repentance, baptism, spiritual gifts, the Millennium, and communitarianism...<sup>325</sup>

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323 Shields, “Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon: Co-Founders of a Movement,” 4-5.

324 Shields, “Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon: Co-Founders of a Movement,” 10-11.

325 Shields, “Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon: Co-Founders of a Movement,” 12.

Smith and Rigdon's first joint project was revising the Bible; although Smith had begun this a few months earlier, it had languished, but now consumed much of the attention of the partners. Not long after Smith and the New York/Pennsylvania group relocated to Kirtland, the Book of Abraham project began and continued concurrently with the Bible revision<sup>326</sup>...

Richard S. Van Wagoner has described Smith and Rigdon as equals. He noted that Smith "used the term 'having a revelation' when referring to the statements he issued in response to specific questions or crises. Rigdon was privy to the same epiphanies, and several early revelations were given to both men simultaneously." These include Doctrine and Covenants 34, 37, 40, 44, 71, 73, 76, 97/SLC 35, 37, 40, 44, 71, 73, 76, and 100. Doctrine and Covenants 76 (both editions), dated February 16, 1832, is important evidence of Rigdon's equal status with Joseph Smith...<sup>327</sup>

Further confirmation of Rigdon's equal status is found in Doctrine and Covenants 87/SLC 90, dated March 8, 1833. The text declares that both Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams "are accounted as equal with [Joseph Smith] in holding the keys of this last kingdom." Williams, as noted earlier, was also a former Disciple<sup>328</sup>...

Rigdon laid the foundation for educational pursuits that became a hallmark of the original church and for many of its successor denominations. Smith and Rigdon blended their views of communitarianism. Rigdon proposed ideas, and Smith confirmed them by revelation. Sidney Rigdon was responsible for the basic articulation of the church's identity, mission, message, and beliefs, with his Lectures of Faith having equal canonical standing with Smith's revelations. His influence was far-reaching and gave shape and longevity to what otherwise may have been a short lived religious experiment in upstate New York. Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon both had pivotal roles in shaping the movement that emerged from their partnership.<sup>329</sup>

Craig Criddle wrote: "The following written timeline summarizes three power struggles between Smith and Rigdon:

#### Conflict #1 Aug-Sep, 1831:

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326 Shields, "Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon: Co-Founders of a Movement," 13.

327 Shields, "Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon: Co-Founders of a Movement," 15.

328 *Ibid.*

329 Shields, "Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon: Co-Founders of a Movement," 18.

Aug. 1831 -- Smith received a revelation admonishing Sidney Rigdon for exalting himself.

Aug 15, 1831 -- Newspaper accounts begin to circulate naming Rigdon as the likely mastermind for The Book of Mormon. See earlier citations.

Sep 1831 -- Smith received a revelation that only he could receive revelations and commandments for the church.

Sep 1831 -- Rigdon preached that the “keys of the Kingdom were taken from us,” and said that he was going to expose Mormonism. Hyrum Smith disputed Rigdon’s claim and said the keys were not lost. Joseph Smith rebuked Sidney Rigdon. Rigdon was reportedly flung about a room by an unseen force and laid up for five or six weeks

See source: Philo Dibble’s Narrative

See also: <http://www.exmormon.org/mhistpart3.html>

It is not clear how advocates of the Smith-as-Sole-Author Theory explain Rigdon’s reported threat to “expose Mormonism” on this occasion and after Smith’s death.

Mar. 8 1832 -- Rigdon was appointed second counselor in the First Presidency.

Conflict #2 July, 1832:

5 July 1832 -- Rigdon tried to seize control of the church and was disfellowshipped.

28 July 1832 -- Rigdon was re-ordained a high priest.

28 July 1832 -- Smith ordained Rigdon to the high priesthood “the Second time” on 28 July after he had “repented like Peter of old.”

12 Oct. 1833 -- A revelation appointed Rigdon “a spokesman to my servant Joseph.”

19 Apr. 1834 -- Smith authorized Rigdon to preside over the church in his absence.

1838 -- Rigdon gave high profile sermons supporting Smith

In 1835, The Doctrine and Covenants was published. The new scripture included a revision of the Book of Commandments. Of interest is a revision to BC 4:2, which originally limited Smith's power:

I have commanded him that he shall pretend to no other gift, for I will grant him no other gift.

This above scripture was revised in 1835 to create D&C 5:4, which reads:

And you have a gift to translate the plates; and this is the first gift that I bestowed upon you; and I have commanded that you should pretend to no other gift until my purpose is fulfilled in this; for I will grant unto you no other gift until it is finished.

The above wording changes were clearly intended to expand Smith's power.

11 Apr. 1841 -Smith and Rigdon rebaptized each other for remission of sins and "renewal of covenants."

Conflict #3 Oct, 1843:

1 Oct. 1843 -- At a meeting of the anointed quorum, Smith anointed and ordained William Law as first counselor and Amasa M. Lyman as second counselor in anticipation of dropping Rigdon at the upcoming conference.

8 Oct. 1843 -- The general conference refused to sustain Smith's motion to drop Rigdon from the First Presidency

6 Apr. 1844 -- Rigdon told the general conference: 'There are men standing in your midst that you can't do anything with them but cut their throat & bury them.'

27 June 1844 -- Smith was murdered.

Sept 1844 -- After his rejection as leader of the Church, Rigdon threatened to “expose” the Church. This appears to be the second time that he issued this threat.

12 Oct. 1845 -- Rigdon’s supporters in Pittsburgh publicly sustained him as “first president of the church” which was formally organized as a new “Church of Christ” on 6 Apr. 1845.

The above timeline includes two conflicts in which Smith disempowered Rigdon then promptly re-empowered him. Such a see-saw relationship makes sense in the Spalding-Rigdon Theory considering the two men’s co-dependencies and vulnerabilities: Smith benefited from Rigdon’s prowess in formulating new scripture and in marshalling support through his oration; Rigdon benefited from Smith’s charisma and political savvy. Both needed the other to remain silent.<sup>330</sup>”

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330 <http://sidneyrigdon.com/criddle/rigdon1.htm#31>.



**SECTION TWO:**  
**The Internal Evidence For**  
**The Spalding-Rigdon Theory**

## **Chapter 14:** **Solomon Spalding's Hand In The Book of Mormon**

In the last chapter, we discussed that Sidney Rigdon knew Joseph Smith **before** November 1830. This is the cumulative case of external evidence that we have built the case up thus far although I admit that there are some weak links in the chain.

### **External Evidence for the Spalding-Rigdon Theory**

#### **The connection between the Book of Mormon and Solomon Spalding's "Manuscript Found":**

- |                       |                    |                     |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. John Spalding      | 2. Martha Spalding | 3. Nahum Howard     |
| 4. Artemas Cunningham | 5. Aaron Wright    | 6. John Miller      |
| 7. Henry Lake         | 8. Oliver Smith    | 9. Matilda Davidson |
| 10. Matilda McKinstry | 11. Abner Jackson  | 12. Joseph Miller   |
| 13. Redick McKee      |                    |                     |

#### **The connection between Sidney Rigdon and Solomon Spalding's "Manuscript Found":**

- |                     |                    |                     |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Rebecca Eichbaum | 2. Joseph Miller   | 3. John Winter      |
| 4. Redick McKee     | 5. Amarilla Dunlap | 6. Dencey Thompson  |
| 7. John C. Bennett  | 8. James Jeffrey   | 9. Matilda Davidson |

#### **The connection between Sidney Rigdon and his foreknowledge of the Book of Mormon:**

- |                    |                       |                     |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Adamson Bentley | 2. Alexander Campbell | 3. Darwin Atwater   |
| 4. Almon B. Green  | 5. John Rudolph       | 6. Reuben P. Harmon |
| 7. Dr. Storm Rosa  | 8. Samuel F. Whitney  |                     |

#### **The connection between Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith, Jr. prior to his conversion in November 1830:**

- |                      |                   |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Mrs. Horace Eaton | 2. Pomeroy Tucker | 3. Orasmus Turner |
| 4. Lorenzo Saunders  | 5. S.F. Anderwick | 6. Abel Chase     |
| 7. Emily Austin      |                   |                   |

We will turn our attention now to the INTERNAL EVIDENCE for the **BOM** originating from man, not God. This is what is known as a cumulative case. The more pieces of evidence there is that connect together that show it originated from man, the stronger the case will be.

The particular man in general who is the original author who most likely would never have thought it would become one of the most printed books, is Solomon Spalding. As of 2023, there are over 185 million copies that have been printed and the **BOM** has been translated into over 122 languages.<sup>331</sup>

Are there any “fingerprints” of Solomon Spalding in the **BOM**? Since we do have his extant manuscript - *Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek*, can we use that as our foundational “base text” to see if we can find any parallels between the two manuscripts? I am not the first person to come along and do this research. I stand on the shoulders of giants who have come before and I believe it is important to offer what they have found.

One of the main reasons that Latter-Day Saints believe the **BOM** originated from God is because it is a very complex book. They will state the following: (1) Joseph Smith had a very rudimentary education, (2) the small window of time of the translation process of the book which happened from around January 1828 to June 1829, and (3) this small window of time would include sometimes no translation for several months due to the lost 116 pages incident in June 1828.

I am in agreement that it is a complex book. Grant Hardy states concerning the **BOM**: “5. *It presents a complicated narrative*. Not only are there more than a thousand years of history involving some two hundred named individuals and nearly a hundred distinct places, but the narrative itself is presented as the work of three primary editors/historians— Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni. These figures, in turn, claim to have based their accounts on dozens of preexisting records. The result is a complex mix that incorporates multiple genres ranging from straightforward narration to inserted sermons and letters to scriptural commentary and poetry. It requires considerable patience to work out all the details of chronology, geography, genealogy, and source records, but the Book of Mormon is remarkably consistent on all this. The chronology is handled virtually without glitches, despite several ashbacks and temporally overlapping narratives; there are only two potential geographical discrepancies (at Alma 51:26 and 53:6); and the narrators keep

331 <https://wordsrated.com/religious-books-sales-statistics/>.

straight both the order and family connections among the twenty-six Nephite record keepers and forty-one Jaredite kings (including rival lines).”<sup>332</sup>

Some LDS apologists would wish to argue that because it is such a complex narrative then it requires that it is inspired by God. In fact, the evidence actually points to a very thoughtful, well-planned layout of a story that had to have taken several years to bring to fruition (which I would argue would be Solomon Spalding who had the right kind of background suitable for such a monumental task). Interesting enough, Hardy admits in the statement above that there are two potential geographical discrepancies in the narrative. ***An inspired book from God would not contain such errors!***

There are other people, the shoulders of giants we stand upon, who have come before us who have studied this issue in depth. It is interesting to see what they saw between the extant manuscript of Spalding and what is found in the ***BOM***.

### (1) Spalding themes

There are several storyline parallels between the ***BOM*** and *Manuscript Story*.

#### (a) James McGaffey

##### “SPALDING’S MANUSCRIPT EXAMINED AND COMPARED WITH THE BOOK OF MORMON.

The manuscript we are to examine is not the one from which the Book of Mormon was taken, nor the one of which the witnesses have testified, but is the first crude outline of the story written by Spalding, and was probably never exhibited to any one by him. The wonder is that this first crude block-out of the romance contains so many points of detailed identity with the final copy; and the fact that so many points of identity have been retained through all the revisions by the same author, then through a final revision by different authors (Smith and Rigdon), doubtless laboring to conceal as much as possible, -- all this is additional evidence that a later copy did furnish the basis for the Book of Mormon.

The witnesses who testified to Hurlburt in 1834 that this manuscript was

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<sup>332</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 6-7.

Spalding's writing, also testified that it was not the copy which they had heard him read. They further stated that Spalding had told them, of his original plot of the story, but that he had changed it by going further back with his dates and writing in the old Scripture style which they heard him read. This he did that his story might appear more ancient, he said. After reading the manuscript, Hurlburt himself affirmed that it was not the one he wanted, and was greatly disappointed in not being able to get the other.

According to Patterson's own statement, this is not the manuscript which was submitted to him for publication. It is incomplete, full of alterations, interliniations, etc., which a man with Spalding's learning would not submit to a publisher, and never was submitted to any publisher until a few years ago by the Mormons in the hope of refuting the Spalding origin of the Book of Mormon. Nobody that I know of has ever claimed that the Book of Mormon was founded on this copy of Spalding's romance; but the claim that it refutes the Spalding origin of the Book of Mormon displays either a criminal amount of ignorance on the part of those who make it, or what is worse, an attempt to play on the ignorance of others.

However others may view it, I am free to say that the accidental finding of this old skeleton manuscript in 1884, afforded the best opportunity that the truth has ever had to leap from its prison. But owing to the characteristic indifference of this materialistic age among those who ought to lend a hand, seventeen years have passed and very little use has been made of this opportunity. On the other hand, the Mormons hastened to the scene and have endeavored to bar the loosening doors, pull down the curtains, and raise the cry that there is nothing in it of conceivable value except "that it utterly dispels and demolishes a long existing error, and compels those who will not acknowledge the divinity of the Book of Mormon to seek in other directions plausible excuses for rejecting its truths."

Both branches of Mormonism, in publishing the manuscript, have had the audacity to label it "The Manuscript Found," though with what authority, no one can tell. No such title is discoverable anywhere on it or in it. It is marked: "Manuscript Story -- Conneaut Creek," in accordance with Spalding's first idea of the romance, and yet these heralds of truth (?) have concealed that title and substituted the one that scores of witnesses had seen on the later complete story. They published it under oath that it should be an exact copy, and yet the very first line is a lie. Verily, it still seems that "the children of



this world are wiser in their generations than the children of light,” and that the devil can run a mile barefooted with a lie while some of us are hunting slippers for truth to creep out in.

A Mormon paper, The Deseret News, in an editorial July 19, 1900, puts it this way: “The discovery of the manuscript written by Mr. Spalding and its deposit in the Library of Oberlin College, Ohio \* \* \* has so completely demolished the theory once relied upon by superficial minds that the Book of Mormon was concocted from that manuscript, that it has been entirely abandoned by all opponents of Mormonism except the densely ignorant or unscrupulously dishonest.” Then again on May 14, 1901: “It is only the densely ignorant, the totally depraved and clergymen of different denominations afflicted with anti-Mormon rabies who still use the Spalding story to account for the origin of the Book of Mormon.”

The Mormons boldly assert that “there is not one sentence, one incident, or one proper name common to both, and that the oft boasted similarity in matter and nomenclature is utterly false. No two books could be more unlike; in fact Mr. Spalding’s ‘Manuscript Story’ no more resembles the Book of Mormon than ‘Guliver’s Travels’ is like the Gospel of St. Matthew.” (See Preface to “Manuscript Found.”)

Additional deceptive force was given to these assertions by statements from President Fairchild in the New York Observer of February 5, 1885, immediately after his discovery of the manuscript in Honolulu. Mr. Fairchild was visiting there at the time and requested the search among Mr. Rice’s papers that resulted in its discovery, and without giving the matter as careful consideration as its importance demanded, he hastens to say:

“The theory of the origin of the Book of Mormon in the traditional manuscript of Solomon Spalding will probably have to be relinquished. \* \* \* Mr. Rice, myself and others compared it with the Book of Mormon, and could detect no resemblance between the two in general detail. \* \* \* Some other explanation of the Book of Mormon must be found, if an explanation is required.”

Of course, a statement like this coming from James H. Fairchild furnishes great “stock in trade” for the Mormons. They have made every possible use of it from that day to this, and it can scarcely be hoped that his latest and more mature statement will catch up with or counteract the reckless one that was first hurried to the press. His latest statement is as follows:

“With regard to the manuscript of Mr. Spalding now in the Library of

Oberlin College, I have never stated, and know of no one who can state, that it is the only manuscript which Spalding wrote, or that it is certainly the one which has been supposed to be the original of the Book of Mormon. The discovery of this MS. does not prove that there may not have been another, which became the basis of the Book of Mormon. The use which has been made of statements emanating from me as implying the contrary of the above is entirely unwarranted.

JAMES H. FAIRCHILD.”

### POINTS OF IDENTITY.

With reference to these sweeping statements made by Mr. Fairchild and the Mormons, I desire to say that through the kindness of the Librarian of Oberlin College I have been favored with the loan of a copy of the Spalding manuscript for comparison with the Book of Mormon. I have given as careful attention, and as much time as I could spare for several months, in reading and comparing the two works and the following are some of the items of similarity and identity which I have discovered:

1. THE GENERAL PLOT OF THE STORIES IS THE SAME.

2. Both pretend to be translator's of records found buried in the earth.

3. Both records pretend to be abridgments of older and more elaborate records.

4. Both records trace the ancestry of the American Indians from the old world, and give tragic accounts of their providential passage over the sea to the American Continent.

5. Both stories pretend to give a history of the settlements; the rise and fall of nations; the terrible wars, bloodshed, death and carnage that followed.

6. Both stories are interspersed with occasional outbreaks of appeal and exhortations on questions of morality and religion.

7. Both stories cater to the use of the little transparent stone through which sights could be seen, hidden treasures discovered, and ancient writings translated.

8. Both stories contain the same account of one army contending in battle, which painted their foreheads red in order to: distinguish themselves from their enemies in time of confusing excitement.

9. Both stories contain an account of a most disastrous war caused by the people of one nation stealing the daughters of another nation.

10. Both stories contain accounts of the discovery of other nation who had preceded them to America; that some of them were in a savage state; but were soon educated and restored to civilization.

11. Both stories contain a marvelous account of wonders wrought by one army while the other was lying asleep in camp after a night of revelry.

12. Both stories portray similar characters of prominent leaders and teachers who were believed to have held converse with celestial beings and whose teachings were said to be divinely revealed, or inspired.

13. Both stories contain an account of a battle in which, by stratagem, one army was divided up into four parts: East, west, north and south, and gained a glorious victory.

14. Both stories are characterized by the same tale of a “Sacred Roll,” believed to have been of divine origin, and which formed the basis of religious belief and teaching.

15. Both stories contain individual plots of stratagem, which are identical in motive, methods and results.

16. Both stories give an outline for plans of government, also the invention and coinage of money in its various denominations, uses, etc.

17. Both stories attribute times of peace and prosperity to fidelity in religious matters, and the retrograde in these respects to a neglect of religion.

18. Both stories, in portraying the extermination of the two great factions, describe the gathering of armies and slaughter which were a physical impossibility to a people without modern methods for the transportation of troops and army supplies.

19. The literary style of the “plates” described by the Smith-Rigdon Co., is identical with the literary style of a people discovered and described in the Spalding romance. The identity here is perfect in every respect.

20. The religious code in the Spalding romance teaches polygamy outright, while the Book of Mormon evasively leaves the matter open for some future time by saying: “I will command my people” (Book of Jacob 3:30) and the reference points us to the “Revelation on marriage given in 1843. Doc. & Cov. 132,” which provides that a man shall have as many wives as he wants.

21. Many of the places, and positions of nations and armies described are geographically identical in both stories.

22. Spalding's life was contemporaneous with anti-Masonic riots, and he harbored a sentiment against all secret societies. The Book of Mormon abounds with this same sentiment.

Now, when we remember that the Oberlin manuscript is probably Spalding's first attempt of his romance, the wonder is that so many points of identity have been retained throughout its numerous revisions. Any one addicted to the habit of writing can easily see, by the many erasures and changes which occur at different turns in the story, and also by the frequent insertion of words and phrases, that they are only suggestive of what the author will supply in making his next copy."<sup>333</sup>

## **(2) James D. Bales**

### **"BOOK OF MORMON AND SPAULDING MANUSCRIPTS JAMES D. BALES**

It has long been contended that there is a connection between the BOM and one of Solomon Spaulding's historical romances. The Mormons, of course, deny such a connection. They also maintain that a manuscript found in Honolulu, which was written by Spaulding, proves that his work did not constitute the foundation of the BM.

## **I. THE POSITION OF THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS**

(1) Spaulding could not have had any connection with the BM for he was a Presbyterian and the BM condemns certain tenets of the Presbyterian Faith.

"Solomon Spaulding, be it known, was a Presbyterian minister; but this fact has been carefully concealed by those who have advocated the theory that Mr. Spaulding was the author of the BM. Had they let this fact be known undoubtedly they would have aroused suspicion and greatly weakened their argument. For this reason: Presbyterian ministers do not write books condemning in strong terms certain tenets of their church. There is in the BM much that is at variance with doctrines taught by the Presbyterian church; indeed, there is very little in the BM that is compatible with Presbyterianism. There is not a Presbyterian church in the world that believes in the BM. On

<sup>333</sup> James Ervin Mahaffey, *Found at Last: Positive Proof* (Augusta, GA: Chronicle, 1902), 50-55.

the contrary, Presbyterian ministers have been the loudest in condemning the book. A Presbyterian minister could not write the BM if he would, and he would not write it if he could.” (William A. Morton, *Why I Believe the Book of Mormon*, Salt Lake City, 1918, p. 6).

(a) To my knowledge no one has attempted to hide the fact that Spaulding was once a Presbyterian minister. However, he did not remain one for he became an infidel (Charles A. Shook, *The True Origin of the Book of Mormon*, p. 62).

(b) It has never been contended that the Spaulding romance was a work on Presbyterianism. It was a historical novel concerning ancient America.

(c) It has not been maintained that all of the BM was written by Spaulding. Thus it has not been claimed that all of the theological portion[s] were put in by him. These portions bear the imprint of Smith and Sidney Rigdon (See the proof offered in Shook’s *The True Origin of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 126--). It is maintained, however, that some things, including some Scripture, were added to one of Spaulding’s manuscripts AND that his work was thus transformed into the BM (See the testimony of John Spaulding, Solomon’s brother; Martha Spaulding, John’s wife. They maintained that the historical po[r]tion of the BM was Spaulding’s. E. D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 1834, pp. 278--, Shook. *The True Origin of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 94--; Braden-Kelley).

(2) The Mormons contend that the discovery of one of Spaulding’s manuscripts demonstrates that it was not the basis of the BM.

“I will here state that the Spaulding manuscript was discovered in 1884, and is at present in the library of Oberlin College, Ohio. On examination it was found to bear no resemblance whatever to the BM. The theory that Solomon Spaulding was the author of the BM should never be mentioned again -- outside a museum.” (William A. Morton, *op. cit.*, p. 6).

There are three errors in the above paragraph: viz. that Spaulding wrote but one manuscript; that the manuscript discovered in 1884 is the same one which non-Mormons have claimed constituted the basis of the BM, that the manuscript in Oberlin bears NO RESEMBLANCE WHATEVER TO THE BM.

(a) Spaulding wrote more than one manuscript. This was maintained by D. P. Hurlbut and Clark Braden before the Honolulu manuscript was found (Charles A. Shook, *op. cit.*, p. 77); (Braden-Kelley Debate, p. 158). Spaulding’s daughter also testified that her father had written “other romances.” (Elder George Reynolds, *The Myth of the “Manuscript Found,”* Utah, 1883, p. 104).



(b) The manuscript found in Honolulu was called A Manuscript Story and not The Manuscript Found. The Honolulu manuscript, The Manuscript Story, was in the hands of anti-Mormons in 1834. However, they did not claim that it was the manuscript which was the basis of the BM. It was claimed that another manuscript of Spaulding was the basis of the BM (Charles A. Shook, op. cit., p. 77, 15, 185, “The Manuscript Found” or “Manuscript Story” of the Late Rev. Solomon Spaulding, Lamoni, Iowa: Printed and Published by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 1885, p. 10).

(c) Although the Manuscript Story has not been regarded as the Manuscript Found, which constituted the basis of the BM, there is a great deal of resemblance between the Manuscript Story and the BM. These points of similarity can be accounted for upon the basis that The Manuscript Story was the first, and rough, draft of one of Spaulding’s work[s] which he reworked into the Manuscript Found.

Howe in 1834, published a fair synopsis of the Oberlin manuscript now at Oberlin (Howe’s Mormonism Unveiled, 288) and submitted the original to the witnesses who testified to the many points of identity between Spaulding’s ‘Manuscript Found’ and the BM. These witnesses then (in 1834) recognized the manuscript secured by Hurlbut and now at Oberlin as being one of Spaulding’s, but not the one which they asserted was similar to the BM. They further said that SPAULDING HAD TOLD THEM THAT HE HAD ALTERED HIS ORIGINAL PLAN OF WRITING BY GOING FARTHER BACK WITH HIS DATES AND WRITING IN THE OLD SCRIPTURE STYLE, in order that his story might appear more ancient, (Howe’s Mormonism Unveiled, 288); (Theodore Schroeder, The Origin of the BM Re-Examined in its Relation to Spaulding’s ‘Manuscript Found,’ p. 5).

This testimony is borne out by the fact that there are many points of similarity between the manuscript in Oberlin College and the BM. The observant reader will discover the following similarities. Anyone who so desires may check on us by comparing the two themselves.”<sup>334</sup>

Later Bales would revise his points of comparison between Manuscript Story and the Book of Mormon. He introduced them in a book:

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<sup>334</sup>James D. Bales, “Book of Mormon and Spaulding Manuscripts,” *Christian Soldier*, Paso Robles, Calif., Fri., Aug. 14, 1942, Vol. IV, no. 9.

## “II. POINTS OF SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE OBERLIN COLLEGE MANUSCRIPT AND THE BOOK OF MORMON.

The page references which do not have the name of the book by them are references to the Manuscript Story.

(1) Both found under a stone. (11-12; F. W. Kirkham, A New Witness For Christ In America, 58).

(2) Both stones had to be lifted with a lever. (11; Kirkham, 58).

(3) Both found in a box. (12; Kirkham, 58).

(4) Both represent some of the inhabitants of this country as coming to it from across the waters. (14).

(5) Both represent these inhabitants as great, powerful, civilized peoples. (14:50).

(6) Both represent them as engaging in bloody battles, (12:100).

(7) Both claim to be a record of some of these peoples. (13).

(8) Both were written in a foreign language which had to be translated. (12-13).

(9) Both had a “translator.” (13).

(10) Both set forth “history of lost tribes.”

(11) Both mention “church.” (22, 1 Nephi 14:12, etc.)

(12) Both mention Jesus Christ. (19).

(13) Both had people who believe in the religion of Jesus Christ. (19).

(14) Both mentioned “ministers,” (19).

(15) The Manuscript Story mentioned the the Lord’s day and devotional services on that day. The Book of Mormon implies Lord’s day services, for it maintained that there were Christians on this continent then; and Christians meet upon the first day of the week, the Lord’s day. (19).

(16) Both represent the people, who came across the ocean to this country, as encountering a great storm at sea. (15; Nephi 18:13).

(17) Both indicate that the storm subsided after prayer. (15, 1 Nephi 18:21).

(18) Both refer to written records which were hidden so that future generations might discover them and thus learn of these people. (14).

(19) Both referred to a people who believed in an omnipotent, self existent, good and great Spirit. (42, 23; Alma 19:25; 18:2; 11, 5).

(20) Both believed in an evil spirit. (24).

- (21) Both referred to the revolutions of the earth. (29).
- (22) Both mention large animals which the people worked. (31; Ether 9:18-19).
- (23) Both mentioned the use of cotton cloth. (34).
- (24) Both mentioned the horse. (35, 85).
- (25) Both mentioned earthquakes. (38).
- (26) Both taught an eternal life with rewards and punishments. (61:43).
- (27) Both recognized the Great Spirit as the Maker of Man. (23).
- (28) Both spoke of white people. (47).
- (29) Both referred to great cities. (30, 49).
- (30) Both spoke of a great teacher who wrought wonders. (47, 48, 51).
- (31) Both spoke of people who were able to write. (39).
- (32) Both represented them as having some scientific knowledge.
- (33) Both knew something of mechanical arts.
- (34) Both used iron. (36, 51).
- (35) Both used coins. (61, 63).
- (36) Both constructed fortifications. (66, 73, 74).
- (37) Both had seer-stones, by means of which they could see many amazing things, (Smith used a seer-stone, Whitmer's Address, p. 12, Shook, op. cit., p. 52, 164, footnote) (98).
- (38) Both referred to a war of extermination. (104, 109, 110, 111, 123).
- (39) Both believed in providence. (114, 120).
- (40) Both speak of indescribable horrors as the result of war. (118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 132, 135).
- (41) some people in both held property in common. (20; 3 Nephi 26:19).
- (42) Both indicated that burnt offerings were made for sins.
- (43) Both referred to judges over the people.
- (44) Both indicated that there were at least three different peoples in this country,
- (45) Both said that "characters" were used to represent words. (39, 50; Mormon 9:32).
- (46) Both kept sacred writings separate from the other records. (40; 1 Nephi 9).
- (47) Both spoke of the people as receiving words of a certain man as divine. (46, 50, 51, 48).
- (48) Both taught that some sinners would be saved after death. (43). At

least modern Mormonism teaches it.

(49) Both had counselors. (63).

(50) Both purport to be the record of “people who far exceeded the present Indians in works of art and ingenuity.”

(51) Both present only a part of the total records.

(52) The Book of Mormon promises that more records will come forth and the Manuscript Story promised an additional publication contingent on the reception of this one.

(53) The Book of Mormon presents an “abridgement” of records and the Manuscript Story presents “extracts” and not a “translation of every particular mentioned by our author” of the particular record from which translations were made.

(54) Both attempt to get the reader to consider them in a certain frame of mind. (Moroni 10:4; MS 13).

(55) Both have authors in them who announced their intentions to write and deposit records concerning their people. (Mormon 8:4; MS 14).

(56) Both have authors who present extracts from other records. (Ether 1:2; MS 14).

(57) Both mention the number of days which the storm at sea lasted. (1 Nephi 18:14, 15, 21; MS 15).

(58) Both represent people on the ship as being in despair. (1 Nephi 18:14, 15, 21; MS 15).

(59) Both have an individual who seems to be in special favor with the Deity. (1 Nephi 19:21; MS 16).

(60) Both mention “Christians.” (21; Alma 46:13).

(61) Both have a number of occasions when men arise and make addresses.

(62) Both teach that prosperity of a people depends on obedience and goodness. (24; 73, 74).

(63) Both pronounce woe unto the wicked mortals. (24).

(64) Both have solemn sacred expiatory sacrifices and burnt offerings of animals. (24; Mosiah 2:3).

(65) Both had people whose ancestors migrated from the west. (30).

(66) Both use the term “elephant.” (31; Ether 9:18).

(67) Both mention milk. (31; 2 Nephi 26:25).

(68) The Latter-day Saints and the Manuscript Story both teach that

matter existed eternally. (42).

(69) Latter-day Saints and the Manuscript Story teach restorationism with reference to the wicked.

(70) Latter-day Saints and the Manuscript Story taught polygamy for when there was a larger number of women than men, those men who were able to support more than one wife were to have more than one wife at the permission of the king. The man was to spend his time equally with each one. (44).

(71) Adultery however, was a great crime (44).

(72) Both taught immortality of man or life beyond the grave. (62).

(73) Dancing, a leading form of amusement with both Latter-day Saints and Manuscript Story (66).

(74) Both represent this hemisphere as once supporting large populations. (73).

(75) Both speak of bands of robbers (31).

There are too many points of similarity for them to be without significance. Thus, the internal evidence, combined with the testimony of witnesses, as presented in Howe's book and reproduced in Shook's, show that Spaulding revised the Manuscript Story. The revision was known as the Manuscript Found, and it became the basis of the Book of Mormon in at least its historical parts. Also its religious references furnished in part the germs of the religious portions of the Book of Mormon.

There are too many points of similarity for them to be without significance. Thus the internal evidence, combined with the testimony of witnesses, as referred to by Schroeder, produces evidence to the effect that Spaulding revised and revamped the Manuscript Story and that the revision was known as the Manuscript Found and that this manuscript became the basis of the Book of Mormon in at least its historical parts; and that its religious references furnished the germs from which a part, at least, of the religious portion of the BM had its beginning. (1118 Colusa Ave., Berkeley, Calif.)"<sup>335</sup>

### **(3) Vernal Holley**

#### **Indian origins**

<sup>335</sup>James D. Bales, *The Book of Mormon?* (John Allen Hudson, Fort Worth, TX: 1958), 142-147.



“Both the Spaulding and Book of Mormon stories attempt to answer questions as to the origin of today’s American Indians and of the mound builder cultures that preceded them. This question of Indian origins was the subject of numerous writers prior to the publication of the Book of Mormon in 1830. In his *View of the Hebrews*, published in 1823 in New York [revised 2nd ed. 1825], Ethan Smith quoted many early writers who speculated that the first Americans were originally the Lost Tribes of Israel. Other writers had speculated that they were descended from the builders of the Tower of Babel or some other Old World people.”<sup>336</sup>

### **Finding the records**

“There are conspicuous parallels between Spaulding’s *Manuscript Story* account of the finding of the ancient records and the personal account of finding the Book of Mormon records told by Joseph Smith. Spaulding says the records were found in a box in an artificial cave, on the top of a mound near his home. Access to the cave was gained by using a “lever” to lift the “heavy stone” cover away from the cave opening. Joseph Smith claimed that he found the records in a stone box buried in the ground near the top of a hill not far from his home and that he gained access to them by using a “lever” to lift a “stone of considerable size” that covered the box... Both of the recovered records were said to contain an abridged history of the extinct inhabitants of ancient America. Both stories describe the construction of the depository in a mound or hill; both identify the ancient Old World language used in the record; both tell of some supernatural difficulty encountered in removing the record from the box; and, in each case, the finder of the record makes a translation of the abridged record... In both stories, it is acknowledged that the writer is taking his abridgment from other pre-existing civil and sacred records (*Manuscript Story* pp. 2-4; *Book of Mormon* Title Page). Both accounts state that the abridgement will be buried along with the original so that it will not be destroyed and will come forth in a future age when the Europeans [or] “gentiles” inhabit this land (*Manuscript Story* pp. 3-4; *1 Nephi* 13:35). Each author makes a statement about the truthfulness of his work and urges the reader to peruse the translated volume with a pure heart (*Manuscript Story*

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<sup>336</sup> Vernal Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship, Third Edition: Revised & Enlarged* (Roy, Utah: self-published 1992), 10.

pp. 2-3; Moroni 10:4).”<sup>337</sup>

### **Sea Voyage**

“The first ancient author for each record, (Nephi in the Book of Mormon and Fabius in Manuscript Story) begins his story by introducing himself in a short personal history. Each says he comes from a good family in the ancient Old World and that he had an excellent education for those times (Manuscript Story p. 4; 1 Nephi 19).

The Spaulding account proceeds immediately to a narrative of a sea voyage; the Book of Mormon account first tells stories of the Lehites and their travels in the wilderness before they sail. When the Book of Mormon account reaches the Lehites’ sea voyage, it again closely resembles the Spaulding story.

In each story, after “provision” is made for the voyage; the travelers set sail. Eventually, a great “storm arose” and the voyagers became lost at sea. Not knowing which way to steer, they became frightened lest they be buried in a “watery” grave [or a “watery” tomb]. Both parties then prayed to God for deliverance [and then were delivered]. Both mention the number of days (four and five) they were “driven” out of control by the storm (Manuscript Story pp. 4-5; 1 Nephi 18:8-15).

Some of these parallels might be thought by some to be common to many accounts of sea voyages. But [the parallelism takes on more significance] when we add to [it] the facts that both sailing parties were nearly the same size, that each party had aboard about the same number of women, who were or who became wives of the men aboard each ship, and that both parties sailed to the unknown New World under divine guidance”<sup>338</sup> (Holley, 12).

### **The Promised Land**

“In the Spaulding account, the voyagers land in America and find it infested with “wild beasts.” They appoint ruling judges; believe in Christ; have all things in common; and counsel each other that they should not intermarry with the “copper colored” savages; but, if they should, their children would be “fair and . . . white.” They build a Christian church in ancient America [along with the beginnings of a priesthood]. (Manuscript Story pp. 7-11).

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<sup>337</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 11-12.

<sup>338</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 12.

In the Nephite account, the Lehites find “wild beasts” in the forest; [come to] believe in Christ and build a Christian temple in ancient America; eventually appoint ruling judges; and, at one time in their subsequent development, have all things in common. They are counseled not to intermarry with their dark-skinned brethren, but instead of the possibility of the savages becoming “fair and white,” (as in Spaulding’s story) the Book of Mormon people originally were “white and fair” and those who intermarried were changed by the Lord into a dark-skinned, loathsome people (1 Nephi 18:25; 2 Nephi 5:16, 21-23; 3 Nephi 26:19).

It is important at this point to call attention to the fact that the Book of Mormon concepts concerning the dark- and light-colored people are exactly opposite to those in Spaulding’s story. Spaulding has descendants of dark-skinned people turning “fair and white” while the Book of Mormon writer has descendants of “white and fair” people turning dark. Many of the parallels between the Book of Mormon and Spaulding’s Manuscript Story are typified by a similar reversal of conceptual word order.

Spaulding continues his description of the savage natives, saying that they wore skins only on the middle parts of their bodies; shaved their heads and painted them red; and used slings and bows and arrows. The Book of Mormon says the savage Lamanites wore skins about their loins; shaved their heads and painted them red; and used slings and bows and arrows (Manuscript Story p. 11; Alma 3:4-5).<sup>339</sup>

### **Unusual Worship**

“Next in the Spaulding manuscript comes a remarkable account of the natives’ religion. “Their ceremonies were . . . different from any that were ever practiced.” They were “dressed and ornamented in the highest fashion.” According to Spaulding, when the people assembled, their leader in worship mounted a stage, extended his hands, addressed his people, and spoke of them as the “favorite children of the Great and Good Spirit” (Manuscript Story pp. 11-12).

The Book of Mormon tells a similar story. Its Zoramites “did worship after a manner which Alma and his brethren had never beheld.” They “ornamented” themselves with “costly apparel” and gathered together in their synagogue. The worshiper mounted a high stand, stretched forth his hands towards

<sup>339</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 13.

heaven, and spoke of the great God as being a spirit who “hast elected us to be thy holy children . . . a chosen and a holy people” (Alma 31:13-28).”<sup>340</sup>

### **The Solar System**

“The Spaulding story has more to say about the religious practices of the natives; then says the revolutions of the planets in our solar system display the “wisdom of its (the solar system’s) Almighty Architect” (Manuscript Story p. 16). In the chapter just preceding the Zoramite story, the Book of Mormon says that the revolutions of the planets “do witness that there is a Supreme Creator” (Alma 30:44)”<sup>341</sup>

### **The Exploration**

“In the Spaulding account, the “little society” of Roman colonists was trying to find a way back to Europe by traveling westward, knowing that the earth was round and that eventually they might return to their homeland. (This part of the account ignores the fact that such knowledge would have pre-dated Columbus.) Part of their group set out to explore the possible route and to seek other nations of people. They were accompanied by an “interpreter” to help in case they encountered unknown languages. Traveling to the other side of a mountain, they found a new people, who took them before their king. That ruler “asked a number of very pertinent questions and received answers to his satisfaction.” Having succeeded in the purpose of this journey, the party then returned to the Roman colony (Manuscript Story pp. 18-19).

The Nephite account says Ammon took a “small party” of men and wandered in the wilderness looking for some of their people, who had left Zarahemla previously to find their original homeland. Ammon’s party passed a hill, then came down into the land of Nephi. They were brought before the king and “commanded that they should answer the questions which he should ask them.” Ammon then answered the questions the king asked. The king later asked if Ammon could “interpret” unknown languages. Ammon and his party eventually returned to the land of Zarahemla in company with the king and his subjects (Mosiah 7:8, 8:6).

In this parallel, we find some small differences and reversals in the two accounts. The mountain in Spaulding’s story becomes a hill in the Book of

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<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>341</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 14.

Mormon. Instead of finding the king friendly, the Book of Mormon travelers find a hostile king who later becomes friendly. Instead of taking an interpreter to the king, Ammon takes the king back with him to the interpreter.

When Spaulding's Roman colonists migrated inland they encountered a people known as the "Ohons," who lived on the "banks of the Ohio River" in a "great city called Owhahon" (Manuscript Story p. 20). When the Book of Mormon Nephites first migrated inland, they came upon a civilization who called themselves the "people of Zarahemla," who lived on the "banks of a river" in the "great city of Zarahemla" (Omni 1:4; cf. George Reynolds, *Concordance of the Book of Mormon*, p. 849)<sup>342</sup>

### **Cultural Technology**

"In Manuscript Story, Spaulding describes the culture of the Ohon people. He tells of their dress, the crops they raised (including American corn and Old World wheat), and of [their] having domesticated mammoths and horses. He also tells of building a "forge," the working of iron and lead, the making of steel tools, and of keeping civil and sacred records (Manuscript Story pp. 22; 23, 26, 35)

The Book of Mormon tells of the crops the people raised (including American corn and Old World wheat), and of [their] having domesticated elephants and horses. In an earlier part of the book, Nephi says they made a "bellows;" refined "all manner of ore;" made steel tools; and that their records were both civil and sacred (Mosiah 9:9; Ether 9:19; 1 Nephi 17:9-16; Jacob 1: 2-4)...

The Spaulding account tells of the learning of the Ohons, saying that these Americans had "characters" representing words as did the people of "Egypt or Chaldea." It goes on to say: "They generally wrote on parchment and beginning at the right wrote from the top to the bottom, placing each character directly under the preceding one" (Manuscript Story p. 25).

The abridger of the Nephite record says: "... we have written this record according to our knowledge, in the characters which are called among us reformed Egyptian" (Mormon 9:32). Professor Charles Anthon of Columbia University described the Book of Mormon characters given to him by Martin Harris, for translation, as being arranged in columns, like the Chinese mode of writing."

<sup>342</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 14-15.



In both stories, the people were governed by kings who passed their kingdoms on to their sons. They both say that, in the times between wars, trade or commerce took place between nations (Manuscript Story pp. 43, 40; Mosiah 6:3, 24:7). Both accounts mention a system of taxation (Manuscript Story p. 44; Mosiah 11:3) and large, domesticated animals that are unknown today (Manuscript Story p. 18; Ether 9:19).

In the Spaulding story, their houses were “built of wood” and were “sufficiently spacious” with no “ornamental trumpery,” and their “palaces” were built with splendor and beauty (Manuscript Story pp. 23-24).

The Book of Mormon’s King Noah “built many elegant and spacious buildings; and. . . ornamented them with fine work of wood” and “he also built him a spacious palace” (Mosiah 11:8-9).

In both Spaulding’s Manuscript Story and the Book of Mormon, the story elements are the same in all of the above references -- different stories, but [made up of] the same story elements -- pointing to the possibility of both works having been written by the same author, or of the ideas of one author being used by another.”<sup>343</sup>

## **Theology**

“Chapter XII of Spaulding’s story tells of the Ohons’ religion. The similarities between the theological concepts described in this chapter and those given in an address by the Book of Mormon’s King Benjamin are conspicuous. Both accounts present numerous religious teachings to the people that are nearly identical in meaning and are listed in each account in exactly the same order.

In Spaulding’s story, the writer of the record says that he is taking the tenets of their theology from their scriptural “Sacred Roll.” King Benjamin takes his theology from their scriptural “plates of brass” (Manuscript Story p. 26; Mosiah 1:3).

The Sacred Roll denounces immorality saying “the seduction of thy neighbor’s wife would be a great crime,” but says that polygamy is permissible “with the permission of the King” (Manuscript Story p. 29). In the Book of Mormon, Jacob denounces immorality the same way. He says: “but the word of God burdens me because of your grosser crimes.” Then he goes on to say that polygamy is permissible if the Lord commands it (Jacob 2:23, 30).

Spaulding’s people formed “assemblies” to hear a learned holy man; then

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<sup>343</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 15-16.

a sacrifice for sin was commanded. The Book of Mormon people “assembled” to hear their great religious teacher; then they “took the firstlings of their flocks that they might offer sacrifice.” Spaulding’s exhortation ends with, “Be attentive, O man, . . . and pay respect to all the commandments” (Manuscript Story pp. 31-32). King Benjamin’s address ends with a warning to “observe the commandments of God . . . now, O man, remember and perish not” (Mosiah 2:3, 4:30).

All of Spaulding’s chapter on religion was written in chiastic style. He presents one set of ideas, then gives the same ideas again in reverse order. This style of writing is also found throughout the Book of Mormon. More will be said about writing style later in this study.

The theological similarities noted above are presented in the same place in the story outlines in both works, suggesting that the Book of Mormon writer followed the Spaulding outline.”<sup>344</sup>

### **A Divine Reformer**

“At this point, the Spaulding story tells of a great religious leader called Lobaska, whose birthplace was unknown and who caused the two warring kingdoms to unite under one government.

There were many traditions concerning this person “which have the complexion of the miraculous.” When he ascended into the air, “wisdom and knowledge was communicated to him.” He “had a wonderful faculty to intermix some wise sayings,” and “multitudes frequently assembled and importuned him to give them instruction.” They “generally believed that he held conversation with celestial beings and always acted under the influence of divine inspiration.” The people “received as sacred and divine truth every word which he taught them.” “They forsook their old religion, which was a confused . . . medley of idolatry (sic),” and followed his teachings which were taken from the Sacred Roll (Manuscript Story pp. 32-36).

This account of the great Lobaska, in Spaulding’s story, has a striking resemblance to the Book of Mormon story of Christ visiting America. Christ’s teachings united two nations, the Nephites and the Lamanites, who had been warring for many years. He taught the “multitudes” from the sacred words of Isaiah (3 Nephi 16:17), which were originally recorded on a great roll (Isaiah 8:1). They forsook their current religion (the law of Moses) to follow

<sup>344</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 16.

his teachings (3 Nephi 9:17-19). In an earlier part of the Book of Mormon record, “Nephi did seek diligently to restore the Lamanites unto the true faith in God. But our labors were vain,” they became “full of idolatry” (Enos 1:20).

After the visit of their divine teacher, the people of Spaulding’s two empires, Sciota and Kentuck, who were related to each other and called each other “brothers” and “cousins,” enjoyed a period of peace that lasted for a term of nearly five hundred years. During this time, their villages and cities were greatly enlarged, new settlements were formed in every part of the country, a great number of towns were built, and their population increased rapidly. They credited their prosperity and increase to their religion which presented powerful motives to restrain vice and impiety and encouraged virtue (Manuscript Story pp. 53-54).

The period of peace enjoyed by the Book of Mormon Nephite and Lamanite nations was similar to that of the Sciota and Kentuck empires. Peoples of these two nations were also related to each other, being descendants of brothers. After Christ’s visit to them, their peace lasted for three hundred and twenty years. “And the Lord did prosper them exceedingly in the land; yea insomuch that they did build cities again . . . The people had multiplied, insomuch that they were spread upon all the face of the land, and that they had become exceedingly rich, because of their prosperity in Christ” (4 Nephi 1:48; also 1:7, 23).

To prevent “frequent bickerings, contentions and wars” from taking place, the great Lobaska divided the Ohons into two empires, “one on each side of the Ohio River” (Manuscript Story p. 43). In the Book of Mormon, after the long period of peace, a war began again between the Nephites and the Lamanites: “and . . . we did get the land of our inheritance divided.” The Nephites were given the Land Northward and the Lamanites, the Land Southward (Mormon 2:28-29).<sup>345</sup>

## **Government**

“Lobaska formed a system of government designed to reform and civilize the Ohons. All controversies were heard by their judges, who held sittings annually, judged grievances, and determined punishment for oppression and injustice. Their “chiefs” met once each year to make laws for the good of the nation (Manuscript Story pp. 42-43). The Book of Mormon’s Nephiah was

<sup>345</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 17.

appointed “chief judge” to judge and govern the people. He was given the power to enact and enforce laws according to the crimes of the people (Alma 4:16-17).

Spaulding’s Lambson had the title of “high priest” and the office was handed down to each succeeding eldest male of his family (Manuscript Story p. 44). In the Book of Mormon, Alma was consecrated by his father to be “high priest” over the church of God (Alma 5:3). [King Mosiah exercised high priestly authority which he granted unto Alma; later Mosiah’s son, Ammon, became a high priest. (Mosiah 25:19; Alma 30:20.)”<sup>346</sup>

### **Money**

“Spaulding says of money: “It is therefore provided that certain small pieces of iron, stamped in a peculiar manner, shall be this circulating medium . . . Each piece according to its particular stamp shall have a certain value fixed upon it” (Manuscript Story pp. 44-45). The Book of Mormon says: “Now these are the names of the different pieces of gold, and of their silver, according to their value” (Alma 11:4). In the Spaulding story, the [“pieces” -- they are never called “coins” in either text] were made for the payment of the wages of their high councilors (judges). Care was to be taken, however, that no more money was given them “than an adequate compensation for their services,” according to the law given by Lobaska (Manuscript Story p. 45). In the Book of Mormon story their [metallic pieces] were also made for the payment of the wages of judges. “Every man who was a judge of the law . . . should receive wages according to the time which they labored . . . and this is according to the law which was given” (Alma 11:1-3).

The tone of this part of Spaulding’s story concerning the judges, rulers, and priests was that they were suspected of being dishonest insofar as compensation for their services was concerned. They were accused of “malconduct” and of being “offenders” of the law (Manuscript Story pp. 44-45). Dishonesty also existed among the Book of Mormon judges: “The foundation of the destruction of this people is beginning to be laid by the unrighteousness of your lawyers and your judges” (Alma 10:27, 11:20).

Notice that the above concepts of judges making laws, inherited succession of high priests, and the coining of money [especially] for payment of wages to corrupt judges are recorded in succession in both texts, suggesting that the

<sup>346</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 18.

earlier written Spaulding story served as an outline in the writing of the Book of Mormon.”<sup>347</sup>

### **Fortifications**

“During the long period of peace, Spaulding’s people continued to “fortify their country in every part . . . provided a war should take place. Near every village or city they constructed forts or fortifications. Those were generally of an oval form. The ramparts, or walls were formed of dirt. A deep canal or trench would likewise be formed. In addition to this they inserted a piece of timber on the top of the ramparts. These pieces were about seven feet in length from the ground to the top which was sharpened. The distance between each piece was about six inches, through which they could shoot their arrows against an enemy. A country thus fortified . . . might be well supposed as able to defend themselves against an invading enemy.” (Manuscript Story pp. 54-55).

A similar story is told in the Book of Mormon. During a period of peace, “Moroni did not stop making preparations for war, or to defend his people against the Lamanites; for he caused that his armies should commence . . . in digging up heaps of earth round about all the cities . . . and upon the top of these ridges of earth he caused that there should be timbers, yea, works of timbers built up to the height of a man . . . And he caused that upon these works of timbers there should be a frame of pickets built upon the timbers round about . . . he caused places of security to be built . . . that the stones and the arrows of the Lamanites could not hurt them . . . thus Moroni did prepare strongholds against the coming of their enemies . . .” (Alma 50:1-6).

The Spaulding account says: “. . . the Almighty is provoked to chastise them and to execute his vengeance in their overthrow and destruction” (Manuscript Story p. 55). The Nephite account says: “. . . the voice of the Lord came unto me saying: Vengeance is mine, and I will repay; and because this people repented not after I had delivered them, behold, they shall be cut off from the face of the earth” (Mormon 3:15).<sup>348</sup>

### **Stolen Daughters**

“In Spaulding’s story, the war ending the long peace was caused by the seduction of the king’s daughter, Lamesa, and her friend, Heliza. They were

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<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>348</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 18-19.



“stolen” and “carried off” by the young prince of Kentuck (Manuscript Story p. 69). In the Book of Mormon, a war was caused by the priests of King Noah, who “had stolen” and “did carry away” the daughters of the Lamanites (Mosiah 20:15-18). In both stories the seduced women married their seducers.”<sup>349</sup>

### **Descriptive titles**

“The terminology used to describe special people is the same in both records. Each had kings, queens, priests, rulers and teachers, holy prophets, high priests, holy men, chiefs, officers, captains, chief captains, priesthood, brethren, warriors, tribes, multitudes, little bands, judges, commanders, and different classes of people.”<sup>350</sup>

### **Tribes**

“There were many different tribes of people in both stories. Spaulding had Deliwans, Ohons, Sciotans, Kentucks, and various tribes living near the Sciotan empire (Manuscript Story pp. 45-46). The Book of Mormon writer had Nephites, Lamanites, Mulekites, Lemuelites, Josephites, Ammonites, Amalekites, Amlicites, Zoramites, Jaredites, etc. (Manuscript Story pp. 45-46; Book of Mormon, scattered throughout).”<sup>351</sup>

### **A Seer Stone**

“Spaulding’s prophet [or seer], Hamack, possessed a transparent stone through which he could “behold the dark intrigues” of his enemies and “discover hidden treasures” (Manuscript Story p. 75). Gazalem, the Book of Mormon’s servant of the Lord, was given a stone that shone in the dark, through which he could “discover unto them the works of . . . (their enemies), yea, their secret works, their works of darkness” (Alma 37:23). In both stories, the works of darkness had originated in ancient times (Manuscript Story p. 74; 2 Nephi 26:22, Alma 37:21). Again it seems as though a single mind produced the story concepts, presented both in Spaulding’s Manuscript Story and [in] the Book of Mormon.”<sup>352</sup>

### **The Wars**

349 Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 19.

350 Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 19.

351 Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 19-20.

352 Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 20.

“Many of the war stories in the Book of Mormon contain tactical stratagems and descriptions of battles that are almost identical to Spaulding’s battle narratives. In the Spaulding account, the war was fought to “avenge” their “country’s wrongs,” [Manuscript Story p. 79, 83]. In the Book of Mormon, “the war was waged to avenge” the “wrong[s]” [caused by] their enemies, [Alma 54:24; 61:6]. Warriors in both “died in the cause of their country and their God,” [Manuscript Story p. 79, cf. Alma 56:11]. Both records develop the theme of a small band of young, daring “warriors,” who were called “their sons” and who were “determined to conquer or die,” [Manuscript Story p. 91, cf. Alma 56:17] in the defense of their country. The terms used to describe this [very large “small band”] of young warriors are similar in both works. In Spaulding, they are described as a “chosen band of warriors,” “my brave warriors,” “my brave sons,” “young heroes,” a “band of about three thousand resolute warriors,” a “small band of valiant citizens,” and a “little band of desperate heroes” (Manuscript Story pp. 89, 90, 98, 100, 108). In the Book of Mormon, they are described as “two thousand stripling warriors,” “my two thousand sons,” “two thousand young men,” “my little army,” “my little band of two thousand,” “young men valiant for courage,” and “my little band (who) fought most desperately” (Book of Mormon: Alma Chapter 53 Heading [not in 1830 edition]; Alma 56:9,10, 33; 57:6; 53:20; 57:19).

In both stories, night-time stratagems were developed and given special importance. Each tells of enemies caught off guard while they were “in a profound sleep” [or sleeping in a profound silence. (Manuscript Story p. 98; cf. Mosiah 24:19; Alma 55:16-17)].

In the Spaulding account, the remains of the dead were secured from “the voracious jaws of carnivorous beasts” by “digging into the ground about three feet deep... they there deposited the bodies in it... and then placing others upon them until the whole were deposited, they then proceeded to throw dirt upon them, to raise over them a high mound” (Manuscript Story p. 95). A similar description is found in the Book of Mormon’s story of Zoram. It reads: “...in one day it (the city) was left desolate; and the carcasses (of the dead) were mangled by... wild beasts... Nevertheless after many days their dead bodies were heaped up upon the face of the earth, and they were covered with a shallow covering” (Alma 16:10,11). [The “heaped up” Book of Mormon battlefield dead parallel Spaulding’s “heaps” of battlefield dead (Manuscript

Story p. 100).]”<sup>353</sup>

### **The Helaman War**

“In the battle for the city of Gamba in Spaulding’s novel, a “band of about three thousand resolute warriors seized their arms, determined to risk their lives in defense of the city. The leader of this band was Lamock, the eldest son of Labanco” (Manuscript Story p. 100.)

In the Book of Mormon’s Helaman war, a “band of two thousand” stripling warriors “have taken their weapons of war, and would that I (Helaman, the eldest son of Alma) should be their leader; and have come forth to defend our country” (Alma 57:6, 56:5).

In the Spaulding story, “Rambock marched his whole army towards the city of Gamba ... to enter the city through that passage and to fall upon the rear of the Kentucks... These heroes now found the war to rage both in front and rear...” (Manuscript Story pp. 100-101).

In the Book of Mormon, “Helaman did march at the head of these two thousand young men to the city of Judea... We were desirous, if they should pass by us to fall upon them in their rear, and thus bring them up in the rear at the same time they were met in the front” (Alma 56:9, 23).

The Spaulding warriors delayed their attack until morning to prevent the enemy from making their escape in the “darkness of the night . . . and as soon as the morning light appeared they marched a small distance to a hill . . . they beheld Hamboon’s army marching towards them. He halted within about half a mile of the Sciotans... (then) ordered Hanock... (to) lie in ambush in their rear” (Manuscript Story pp.102-103).

In the Book of Mormon, Helaman’s army marched at night, but “when the light of the morning came we saw the Lamanites upon us, and we did flee before them . . . they did not pursue us far before they halted... that they might catch us in their snare” (Alma 56:41-43).”<sup>354</sup>

### **Battle at Hill Riplah**

“The description of the battle at the hill Riplah between the Nephites and the Lamanites in the Book of Mormon is very similar to that of a battle between the Sciotans and the Kentucks in Manuscript Story.

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<sup>353</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 20.

<sup>354</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 21.

“By using a little stratagem,” Spaulding’s Sciotans “marched down the river to a certain place where the army of the enemy must pass... At this place, the hill... came within less than a mile of the river.” The Sciotans divided their forces and ambushed the enemy as they crossed the canal. Having compassion for the trapped enemy, Lobaska “conjured the Sciotans not to shed one drop of blood” (Manuscript Story pp. 37-39).

The Book of Mormon’s Moroni [made the same defense] “by stratagem.” After discovering which course the enemy would take, he divided his army, concealed them by a hill, then ambushed the Lamanites as they were crossing the river. After subduing the Lamanites, Moroni said: “We do not desire to be men of blood... we do not desire to slay you” (Alma 43:30-36; 44:1).

In both stories, the losing army is more than double the number of the winning army, but the warriors are so struck with “terror” by the ambush that they “throw down” their arms and surrender. Then, in both stories, the losing commander has a personal conversation with the opposing commander, asking him to “spare their lives,” after which a treaty of peace is made and the losing warriors return to their own country (Manuscript Story pp. 38-39; cf. Alma 43:51, 44:15, 19). Warriors [among] the opposing nations in both stories were related -- being offspring of the same family -- and called each other “brother.”<sup>355</sup>

### **The Letters**

“In the Spaulding story, a number of letters were exchanged between Hamboon, the Emperor of Kentuck, and Rambock, the Emperor of Sciota, about a crime committed by the Prince of Kentuck. The offense of the prince “outraged the authority of their government and the rights of their Empire” (Manuscript Story p. 71). In the Book of Mormon, a number of “epistles” were exchanged between Ammoron, the Lamanite king, and Moroni, the Nephite prophet and commander. Their correspondence concerned “their rights to the government” (Alma 54:24). The [sets of] letters in both texts are located in about the same [relative] place in each story outline.

In the Spaulding text, a Sciottian commander “fabricated stories that were calculated to arouse prejudice and resentment” among his people to incite them to make war with the Kentucks (Manuscript Story p. 74). The Lamanite King Ammoron used the same “fraud” to arouse his people to make war with

<sup>355</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 21-22.

the Nephites. Ammoron told his people that their fathers had been “robbed of their right to the government” (Alma 54:17; 55:1). In both stories, God was said to have been on the side of the defenders and in their correspondence both commanders became “angry” and threatened to make war (Manuscript Story pp. 76, 74; cf. Alma 54:9-10, 13).

The wars that followed, in both stories, were fought to “avenge the wrongs” committed by the opposing nation. Both were “determined to conquer or die . . . in the cause of their country and their God” (Manuscript Story pp. 79, 86; cf. Alma 54:24, 56:17, 11).<sup>356</sup>

### **The Last Great Battle**

“In the Spaulding’s [penultimate] “the great battle of Geheno . . . near three hundred thousand” warriors fought in the battle. “Many valiant chiefs who commanded under their respective kings were overthrown.” The losing army retreated until the warriors came to a “hill” and camped “where they had the advantage of the ground” (Manuscript Story pp. 90-91, 94).

In the Book of Mormon’s “the great and tremendous battle at Cumorah,” more than two hundred and thirty thousand warriors were killed along with their “chiefs.” Their armies had retreated from city to city until they finally pitched their tents at the “hill Cumorah” where they “hoped to gain advantage over the Lamanites” (Mormon 6:4, 11-15; 8:2).

In the Manuscript Story account, the king of the Sciotans sent a letter to the king of the Kentucks informing him that war had been declared and that the Sciotans were about to exterminate “all the inhabitants of the empire of Kentuck.” The Sciotans began to gather in all their armies from their respective kingdoms for [the] battle (Manuscript Story pp. 80-82). In the Book of Mormon, the king of the Lamanites sent an “epistle” to Mormon, the Nephite leader, informing him that they were preparing to come to battle against them. Mormon then gathered his armies together to prepare for battle (Mormon 3:4-5).

The armies of the Sciotans, who gathered for the “great battle” were led by their respective “chiefs.” Habelon came with fifteen thousand warriors, Ulipoon with eighteen thousand, Numapoon with sixteen thousand, and Ramock with ten thousand. All of the Sciotan armies were under the command of Rambock, the “commander in chief,” whose son, Moonrod, was also a commander

<sup>356</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 22.



(Manuscript Story pp. 81, 83, 100). The armies of the Book of Mormon Nephites, who gathered for the “great battle” were led by their respective “chiefs:” Gidgiddonah, Lamah, Gilgal, Limhah, Joneam, Camenihah Moronihah, Antionum, Shiblom, Shem, and Josh. Each chief came with ten thousand men. All of these armies were under the command of Mormon, whose son, Moroni, also commanded ten thousand men (Mormon 6:11-14).

Unfortunately, pages 133 and 134 of the original Spaulding manuscript are missing, but page 135 begins with “Habelon, King of Chiango, was the next proud chief who appeared.” The statement suggests that the missing pages contained the names of other Sciotan chiefs who also led armies. Page 86 of the Millennial Star printing gives the total number of warriors in the Sciotan armies as being one hundred and fifty thousand. As many as thirteen Sciotan chiefs with eleven thousand five hundred men each may have participated in this battle of “extermination.” These numbers approximate the number of armies and warriors described in the Book of Mormon account. In both stories, [some] escaped the great slaughter, but [many] were hunted down and destroyed (Manuscript Story p. 105; cf. Mormon 6:15).

Ulipoon, the cowardly Sciotan commander, deserted the Sciotan armies on the eve of a great battle, but later relented, [briefly] took command, and was “mortally wounded.” After making a sorrowful dying statement about the war, “He spoke and deeply groaning, breathed no more” (Manuscript Story pp. 104-105). Mormon, the Nephite commander, also deserted his army on the eve of the great battle. He “utterly refused to go up against” his enemies, but later he “did repent of the oath which he had made” and again took command of his armies. Mormon also “fell (mortally) wounded” and made a sorrowful dying statement about the war (Mormon 3:16, 5:1, 6:16-22).

At the height of the battle, Hamboon, the commander of the losing army of Kentucks, “dispatched a messenger to Rambock, who agreed to an armistice for the term of two days,” Mormon, the commander of the Nephite army, who also was losing the battle, “wrote an epistle to the king of the Lamanites” asking him for time to gather his people at Cumorah for battle (Manuscript Story p. 95; cf. Mormon 6:2).

The writer of the [Manuscript Story] account describes the dead warriors as human bodies “widely strewn” on the field of battle, “mangled with the swords, spears, and arrows and besmeared with blood.” The writer of the Nephite account says “they did fall upon my people with the sword and with

the bow and with the arrow . . . and their flesh, and bones, and blood lay upon the face of the earth.” Both accounts report that those slaughtered were of any age and either sex (Manuscript Story pp. 96-97; cf. Mormon 7:9, 15). Both accounts say that the conquering army entered the “villages” and burned the houses. Both say that those who escaped were hunted down and destroyed (Manuscript Story pp. 100-101; cf. Mormon 5:5-7).

After the great battle, Spaulding’s story teller, who was [quoting] an eyewitness to the destruction, says “It is impossible to describe the horror of the bloody scene . . . the blood and carnage of so many brave warriors.” The Nephite writer, who was an eye-witness to the destruction, says: “And it is impossible for the tongue to describe . . . the horrible scene of the blood and carnage . . . of the Nephite and of the Lamanites” (Manuscript Story p. 105; cf. Mormon 4:11).

Spaulding now tells a story of personal combat between two surviving battle commanders: “Sambal . . . rushed upon him . . . and with his sword he struck Helicon’s head from his body” (Manuscript Story p. 109). The Book of Mormon Jaredite commanders also meet in personal combat. They “fought again with the sword” and Coriantumr “smote off the head of Shiz” (Ether 15:29-30).

Sambal, the Sciotan commander, then challenges Elseon, another commander, to personal combat. “Sambal eager for revenge . . . sprang forward . . . raising his sword . . . but Elseon sprang back and Sambal’s sword struck the ground with a prodigious force which broke in the middle.” A Book of Mormon story relates a similar account of personal combat between opposing army commanders: “Zarahemna . . . being angry with Moroni . . . rushed forward that he might slay Moroni; but as he raised his sword . . . one of Moroni’s soldiers smote it even to the earth, and it broke by the hilt” (Manuscript Story p. 110; cf. Alma 44:12).

Similarities to the battle segments in Spaulding’s great battle of Geheno are found in Book of Mormon accounts of four different wars: two in the book of Alma, the great battle of Cumorah, and the last battle in the book of Ether.”<sup>357</sup>

## **(2) Word parallels between *Manuscript Story* and the Book of Mormon**

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<sup>357</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 22-24.

Here is what Dale Broadhurst, the site host of [www.solomonspalding.com](http://www.solomonspalding.com), wrote: “Early in 1998, the late William A. Williams, jr., a computer programmer living in Bloomfield Hills, MI, began work on a series of textual computerization projects, several of which will be of interest to researchers of the “Solomon Spalding Authorship Theory” of the Book of Mormon. Among his several creations, Bill constructed a Master Index of all words occurring in the KJV biblical books, the books of the KJV Apocrypha, Rev. William Whiston’s annotated 1737 edition of the Works of Josephus, Ethan Smith’s 1825 edition of View of the Hebrews, an e-text of Solomon Spalding’s “Oberlin” Manuscript, and the 1830 Palmyra edition of the Book of Mormon.

Dale R. Broadhurst of Hilo, HI, assembled the “corrected” Spalding e-text from the 1885 and 1886 published editions of the Oberlin Ms., standardizing Spalding’s inconsistent spelling and grammar and making some other small corrections to bring the transcription into conformity with the Spalding holograph on file in the Oberlin College Archives.

Bill and Dale’s joint efforts provided some useful resources for students of the Book of Mormon who might wish to compare its vocabulary to that found in the pre-1830 works sometimes cited as sources for textual parallels and borrowings.”<sup>358</sup>

ObMs = Oberlin Manuscript - *Manuscript Story*

**01: abyss**

[ObMs 032:04-07; Mosiah 27:29 LDS; Alma 26:03 LDS]

**02: attitude**

[ObMs 025:10-11; ObMs 094:27-29; ObMs 095:09-10; ObMs 118:33-35; 1 Nephi 1:08 LDS; 1 Nephi 8: 27 LDS; Alma 24:21 LDS; Alma 36:22 LDS] Helaman 5:36 LDS]

**03: burthen**

[ObMs 030:05-06; Alma 62:29 LDS - 1830 ed. p. 403]

**04: burthens**

**(homophonic match)**

[ObMs 034:24-25; Jacob 2:23 LDS - 1830 ed. p. 126]

**05: clasped**

[ObMs 113:31-32][Alma 19:30 LDS; Mormon 5:11 LDS]

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<sup>358</sup> <http://www.solomonspalding.com/bomstudies/part1.htm>.

**06: crisis**

[ObMs 139:24-25; Alma 34:34 LDS]

**07: crossing**

[ObMs 038:09-10; Mosiah 10:12 LDS; Alma 2:27 LDS]

**08: defiance**

[ObMs 130:06-07; ObMs 130:10-11; Alma 5:18 LDS; Alma 61:07 LDS; 3 Nephi 6:30 LDS]

**09: depravity**

[ObMs 141:23; Moroni 9:18 LDS]

**10: dispelled**

[ObMs 141:03-05; ObMs 106:12-13; Alma 19:06 LDS]

**11: dormant**

[ObMs 100:21; Alma 32:34 LDS]

**12: dragged**

[ObMs 029:01-03; Helaman 6:28 LDS]

**13: encircle**

[ObMs 023:04-05; ObMs 111:15-16; 2 Nephi 4:33 LDS; Alma 12:06 LDS; Alma 17:33 LDS; Alma 48:08 LDS; Alma 55:29 LDS; Alma 34:16 LDS]

**14: encircled**

[ObMs 158:20-21; 2 Nephi 1:15 LDS; Alma 5:07 LDS; Alma 5:09 LDS; Alma 14:06 LDS; Alma 26:15 LDS; Alma 36:18 LDS; Alma 43:35 LDS; Alma 43:52 LDS; Alma 43:53 LDS; Alma 53:04 LDS; Alma 62:34 LDS; Helaman 5:23 LDS; Helaman 5:24 LDS; Helaman 5:43 LDS; Helaman 5:44 LDS; Helaman 13:37 LDS; 3 Nephi 17:24 LDS; 3 Nephi 19:14 LDS]

**15: energies**

[ObMs 120:17-18; 1 Nephi 15:25 LDS]

**16: explaining**

[ObMs 098:14-15; Mosiah 27:35 LDS]

**17: ferocious**

[ObMs 13:08-09; ObMs 166:16-17; Enos 1:20 LDS; Mosiah 10:12 LDS; Mosiah 17:17 LDS; Alma 17:14 LDS; Alma 47:36 LDS; Helaman 3:16 LDS]

**18: glut**

[ObMs 120:22-23; Mosiah 9:12 LDS; Alma 30:27 LDS; Alma 30:32 LDS; Alma 30:31 LDS]

**19: gushing**

[ObMs 140:20; ObMs 146:22-23; ObMs 168:22; 3 Nephi 4:33 LDS]

**20: hemmed**

[ObMs 105:20-21; Alma 22:33 LDS]

**21: impeded**

[ObMs 037:20; 3 Nephi 7:13 LDS]

**22: listened**

[ObMs 125:18; Mosiah 22:04]

**23: manifesting**

[ObMs 109:21; BoM Title Page; 2 Nephi 1:26 LDS]

**24: massacred**

[ObMs 165:21-23; ObMs 166:13-14; Alma 48:24 LDS]

**25: monster**

[ObMs 111:11-12; ObMs 116:23; ObMs 119:11-12; ObMs 137:06-07; ObMs 142:05-06; ObMs 148:06; ObMs 164:25-26; ObMs 164:28; ObMs 170:10]; 2 Nephi 9:10 LDS; 2 Nephi 9:19 LDS; 2 Nephi 9:26 LDS; Alma 19:26 LDS; Ether 6:10 LDS]

**26: movements**

[ObMs 095:09-10; ObMs 095:14-16; ObMs 106:28-29; ObMs 136:04; ObMs 136:18; ObMs 137:31-32; ObMs 156:14-15; Alma 56:22 LDS]

**27: plans**

[ObMs 111:28-29; ObMs 136:01-03; ObMs 136:04-05; ObMs 152:29-30] ObMs 153:21-22; Alma 2:21 LDS; Alma 10:18 LDS] [Alma 28:13 LDS] [Alma 37:29 LDS; Alma 37:32 LDS; Helaman 2:06 LDS; Helaman 6:30; Helaman 11:10 LDS; Helaman 11:26 LDS; Ether 8:09 LDS; Ether 9:26 LDS; Ether 10:33 LDS; Ether 13:15 LDS]

**28: pleasingly**

[ObMs 115:08-09; Jacob 2:13 LDS]

**29: puffing**

[ObMs 029:04-05; ObMs 100:14; 3 Nephi 6:15 LDS]

**30: regulations**

[ObMs 014:16-18; ObMs 039:15-17; ObMs 090:06-08; ObMs 094:01-02; Alma 6:07 LDS; Alma 51:22 LDS; Alma 62:47 LDS; 3 Nephi 7:06 LDS]

**31: shrink**

[ObMs 123:17-20; 2 Nephi 9:46 LDS; Jacob 2:06 LDS; Mosiah 2:38 LDS; Mosiah 3:25 LDS; Mosiah 27:31 LDS; Alma 43:48 LDS]

**32: spurn**

[ObMs 122:21-22; 3 Nephi 29:04 LDS; 3 Nephi 29:08 LDS; 3 Nephi 29:05



LDS]

**33: steadfastly** [ObMs 024:03-05; ObMs 126:12-13; Mosiah 4:11 LDS; Alma 5:48 LDS; 3 Nephi 1:08 LDS; 3 Nephi 11:05 LDS; 3 Nephi 17:05 LDS; 3 Nephi 19:30 LDS]

**34: tumbling** [ObMs 012:03-05; ObMs 148:13-14; 1 Nephi 12:04 LDS]

**35: waving** [ObMs 011:09-10; Alma 46:19 LDS]

**36: worried**

[ObMs 097:19-20; Alma 40:01,01; 61:19]

**37: wrestling**

[ObMs 021:09-10; 094:13-16; Alma 8:10 LDS]<sup>359</sup>

The site host goes on to write: “These “relatively unique” words form distinct patterns of occurrence both in Spalding’s book and in the Book of Mormon. As can be seen in the Occurrences Chart (below), these unique words appear mostly in the final chapters of the Oberlin Ms **and in the four-book span of “records” comprised by the books of Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, and 3 Nephi** (emp. mine).

About 40% of these word occurrences in Spalding appear in the final three chapters of his unfinished work. As can be seen in the Occurrences Chart and in the first set of tabulated data following the chart, Spalding was increasing his use of these unique words as he was developing his story and bringing its plot to a climax. The chart and second set of tabulated data indicate that the count of these same unique words also comes to a high point in the book of Alma. That book alone contains 45 percent of the appearance of these “Spaldingish” words in the Book of Mormon. Even after taking into consideration the relative lengths of the various Book of Mormon segments, the book of Alma stands out from its companion volumes as that portion of the “Nephite Record” which reads most like Spalding’s known writings.

The various patterns uncovered by the plotting of these unique word occurrence data correspond roughly to those found in charting the vocabulary, phraseology, and thematic parallels by various other means. Whether the Spalding / Book of Mormon parallels are charted by gross common word count for the two books, distribution of their common words, or distribution of their common word groupings, Alma remains the one Book of Mormon text most like Spalding. It seems rather obvious that anyone wishing to establish

<sup>359</sup> <http://www.solomonspalding.com/bomstudies/part2.htm>.

the nature and scope of textual parallels in these two works should take a careful look at the end of Spalding's story, comparing its contents closely with the accounts found in Alma."<sup>360</sup>

### **(3) Character names share unique word patterns, even though they are different patterns.**

Spalding used root words to construct the names of his characters: Ham-, Lam-, and Ram-.

#### **Character names in *Manuscript Story*:**

Baska	Hamock	Rameck
Bilhawan (Bithawan)	Hamook	Rankoff
Boakim (Boakin)	Hamul	Sabamah
Bombal	Hancoll	Sabulmah
Conco	Hanock	Sambul (Sambal)
Constantine	Helicon	Sciotians
Crito	Heliza	Taboon
Deliwah	Hedokam	Talanga
Drofalick (Drofolick)	Jeshurun	Tobaska
Droll Tom Hark	Jesus Christ	Trojanus
Elseon	Kadokam	Ulipoon
Fabius	Kalo	Wunapon
Gamba	Kamoff	
Gamanko (Gamasko)	Kelsock	
Habelan (Habolan)	Kentucks	
Hadocam (Hadokam)	Labamack	
Haloon (Haboos)	Labanco (Labanko)	
Hamack	Lakoonrod	
Hamback	Lamack	
Hambock	Lambon	
Hambolan	Lambul	
Hamboon	Lamesa	
Hamkien (Hamkon)	Lamoch	
Hamelick	Lobaska	

<sup>360</sup> <http://www.solomonspalding.com/bomstudies/part3.htm>.

Hamkol  
Hamack  
Hamboon  
Hamko  
Hamkon  
Hamkoo

Lucian  
Moonrod  
Nemapon (Nunapon)  
Ohons  
Platonic  
Rambock

lake Eri  
lake Michigan  
lake Ontario  
Cataraugus  
Chiauga  
Coneaught (river)  
Gamba  
Geheno  
Geneseo  
Golgona  
Golanga  
Michegan  
Owhahon  
Ramack  
Sciota  
Tolanga  
river Kentuck  
river Ohio  
river Owaho  
river Siota  
river Sciota  
river Suscowah

Mammoons  
Mammouth  
Suscowan

## Character Names in the *Book of Mormon*:

It is interesting there are *also* names from the **BOM** characters that are also reconstructed from root words, but they are not the *same* root words:

<b>Amm-</b>	<b>Hel-</b>
<b>Anti-</b>	<b>Mor-</b>
<b>Cor-</b>	<b>Shi-</b>
<b>G_d -</b>	<b>-ihah - hah</b>
<b>Z_r</b>	
<b>Zen</b>	
<b>Zee</b>	

Grant Hardy did a great job in gathering all the data of character names and locations and placed them in an appendix in his reader's edition on the **BOM**. I decided to put those words from his list that have these root words in them:

"Ahah: late Jaredite king; Ether 1:9, 11:10

Ammah: missionary companion of Aaron<sup>3</sup> (ca. 100 b.c.); Alma 20:2

Ammaron: Nephite record keeper, son of Amos<sup>1</sup> (ca. a.d. 300); 4 Nephi 1:47

Ammon<sup>1</sup>: territory and people hostile to the Israelites (Bible); 2 Nephi 21:14

Ammon<sup>2</sup>: Mulekite leader of the expedition to the Land of Nephi, (ca. 120 b.c.); Mosiah 7:3

Ammon<sup>3</sup>: son of Mosiah<sup>2</sup>, missionary to the Lamanites (ca. 100 b.c.); Mosiah 27:34

Ammon<sup>3</sup>, People of: converted Lamanites; also known as Anti-Nephi-Lehies or Ammonites; Alma 27:26

Ammonihah, City of: in the West, near the cities of Melek, Noah, and Aaron; Alma 8:6

Ammonihah, Land of: west of the River Sidon; Alma 8:7

Ammonihahites: people of the City of Ammonihah; Alma 16:9

Ammonites: see Ammon<sup>3</sup>, People of; Alma 65:57

Ammoron: Nephite traitor, brother of Amalickiah, descendant of Zoram<sup>1</sup>, king of the Lamanites (ca. 60 b.c.); Alma 52:3

Anti-Nephi-Lehi: brother of Lamoni, king of the converted Lamanites;

## Alma 24:3

Anti-Nephi-Lehies: see Ammon<sup>3</sup>, People of; Alma 23:17

Antiomno: Lamanite king (ca. 80 b.c.); Alma 20:4

Antion: Nephite monetary unit; Alma 11:19

Antionah: chief ruler in Ammonihah; Alma 12:20

Antionum: Nephite commander (ca. a.d. 380); Mormon 6:14

Antionum, Land of: south of the Land of Jershon, east of Sidon; Alma 31:3

Antiparah, City of: Nephite city in the West; Alma 56:14

Antipas, Mount: near Onidah; Alma 47:7

Antipus: Nephite commander (ca. 60 b.c.); Alma 56:9

Corianton: son of Alma<sup>2</sup> (ca. 70 b.c.); Alma 31:7

Coriantor: late Jaredite; Ether 1:6, 11:18

Coriantum<sup>1</sup>: early Jaredite king; Ether 1:27, 9:21

Coriantum<sup>2</sup>: late Jaredite; Ether 1:13, 10:31

Coriantumr<sup>1</sup>: early Jaredite; Ether 8:4

Coriantumr<sup>2</sup>: Jaredite king, last Jaredite survivor (died ca. 160 b.c.); Omni 1:21, Ether 12:1

Coriantumr<sup>3</sup>: apostate Nephite, Mulekite, commander of the Lamanite forces

(ca. 50 b.c.); Helaman 1:15

Corihor<sup>1</sup>: early Jaredite rebel; Ether 7:3

Corihor<sup>2</sup>: late Jaredite; Ether 13:17

Corihor, Land of: Jaredite area near the East Sea; Ether 14:27

Corihor, Valley of: Jaredite area near the East Sea; Ether 14:28

Corom: middle Jaredite king; Ether 1:19, 10:16

Gad, City of: probably in the Land Northward; 3 Nephi 9:10

Gadiandi, City of: probably in the Land Northward; 3 Nephi 9:8

Gadanton: leader of the robber bands (ca. 50 b.c.); Helaman 2:4

Gadiomnah, City of: probably in the Land Northward; 3 Nephi 9:8

Gid: Nephite military officer (ca. 60 b.c.); Alma 57:28

Gid, City of: near the East Sea; Alma 51:26

Giddianhi: chief of the Gadanton robbers (ca. a.d. 20); 3 Nephi 3:9

Giddonah<sup>1</sup>: father of Amulek (ca. 110 b.c.); Alma 10:2

Giddonah<sup>2</sup>: high priest in Gideon (ca. 70 b.c.); Alma 30:23

Gideon: Nephite leader (ca. 100 b.c.); Mosiah 19:4

Gideon, City of: east of the River Sidon; Alma 6:7



Gideon, Land of: east of the River Sidon; Alma 8:1  
 Gideon, Valley of: east of the River Sidon; Alma 2:20  
 Gidgiddonah: Nephite commander (ca. a.d. 380); Mormon 6:13  
 Gidgiddoni: Nephite commander (ca. a.d. 20); 3 Nephi 3:18  
 Helam: convert from among the people of Noah<sup>3</sup> (ca. 150 b.c.); Mosiah 18:12  
 Helam, City and Land of: inhabited by the people of Alma<sup>1</sup>, north of the Land of Lehi-Nephi; Mosiah 23:19–20  
 Helaman<sup>1</sup>: son of King Benjamin (ca. 130 b.c.); Mosiah 1:2  
 Helaman<sup>2</sup>: son of Alma<sup>2</sup>, prophet, military commander (ca. 70 b.c.); Alma 31:7  
 Helaman<sup>2</sup>, Sons of: children of converted Lamanites known as Ammonites (ca. 60 b.c.); Alma 53:16  
 Helaman<sup>3</sup>: son of Helaman<sup>2</sup>, record keeper, sixth chief judge (ca. 50 b.c.); Alma 63:11  
 Helem: brother of Ammon<sup>2</sup> (ca. 120 b.c.); Mosiah 7:6  
 Helorum: son of King Benjamin (ca. 130 b.c.); Mosiah 1:2  
 Mathonihah: one of the twelve Nephite disciples (ca. a.d. 30); 3 Nephi 19:4  
 Moriancumer, Land of: Jaredite area; Ether 2:13; see also Jared<sup>1</sup>, brother of  
 of  
 Morianton<sup>1</sup>: middle Jaredite king; Ether 1:22, 10:9  
 Morianton<sup>2</sup>: founder of Nephite city (ca. 70 b.c.); Alma 50:28  
 Morianton, City of: near the East Sea; Alma 51:26  
 Morianton, Land of: area settled by Morianton<sup>2</sup>; Alma 50:25  
 Moriantum: Nephite area in the Land Northward; Moroni 9:9  
 Mormon<sup>1</sup>: father of Mormon<sup>2</sup> (ca. a.d. 320); Mormon 1:5  
 Mormon<sup>2</sup>: Nephite prophet, general, record keeper, editor (ca. a.d. 350); Words of Mormon 1:1  
 Mormon, Forest of: near the Waters of Mormon; Mosiah 18:30  
 Mormon, Place of: near the City of Lehi-Nephi; Mosiah 18:4  
 Mormon, Waters of: fountain in the Place of Mormon; Mosiah 18:30  
 Moron: late Jaredite king; Ether 1:7, 11:14  
 Moron, Land of: Jaredite area near the Land Desolation; Ether 7:5  
 Moroni<sup>1</sup>: Nephite military commander (ca. 100 b.c.); Alma 43:16  
 Moroni<sup>2</sup>: son of Mormon<sup>2</sup>, last of the Nephites (ca. a.d. 400); Words of Mormon 1:1

Moroni, Camp of: near the Land of Jershon; Alma 50:27  
 Moroni, City of: near the East Sea; Alma 50:13  
 Moroni, Land of: near the East Sea; Alma 51:22  
 Moronihah<sup>1</sup>: Nephite general, son of Moroni<sup>1</sup> (ca. 60 b.c.); Alma 62:43  
 Moronihah<sup>2</sup>: Nephite general (ca. a.d. 380); Mormon 6:14  
 Moronihah, City of: Nephite city; 3 Nephi 8:10  
 Nephihah, Land of: between the cities of Aaron and Moroni; Alma 50:14  
 Nephihah, Plains of: near the City of Nephihah; Alma 62:18  
 Onihah, City of: Nephite city; 3 Nephi 9:7  
 Orihah: first Jaredite king; Ether 1:32, 6:27  
 Shiblom<sup>1</sup> (or Shiblon): late Jaredite king, son of Com<sup>2</sup>; Ether 1:12, 11:4  
 Shiblom<sup>2</sup>: Nephite commander (ca. a.d. 380); Mormon 6:14  
 Shiblon: see Shiblom<sup>1</sup>  
 Shiblon: son of Alma<sup>2</sup> (ca. 70 b.c.); Alma 31:7  
 Shiblon: Nephite monetary unit; Alma 11:15  
 Shiblum: Nephite monetary unit; Alma 11:16  
 Shiloah, Waters of: near Jerusalem<sup>1</sup> (Bible); 2 Nephi 18:6  
 Shilom, City of: in the Land of Shilom; Mosiah 7:21  
 Shilom, Land of: region bordering the Land of Lehi-Nephi; Mosiah 7:5  
 Shim, Hill: in the Land of Antum; Mormon 1:3  
 Shimnilom, City of: in the Land of Nephi; Alma 23:12  
 Shinar: another name for Babylonia (Bible); 2 Nephi 21:11  
 Shiz: late Jaredite military leader; Ether 14:17  
 Zeezrom: lawyer in Ammonihah (ca. 80 b.c.); Alma 10:31  
 Zeezrom, City of: Nephite city in the Southwest; Alma 56:14  
 Zemnariyah: captain of the Gadianton robbers (ca. a.d. 20); 3 Nephi 4:17  
 Zenephi: Nephite commander (ca. a.d. 400); Moroni 9:16  
 Zeniff: first king of a group of Nephites who returned to the Land of Lehi-Nephi (ca. 200 b.c.); Mosiah 7:9  
 Zenock: Hebrew prophet (not in the Bible), quoted by Nephi<sup>1</sup> at 1 Nephi 19:10, quoted by Alma<sup>2</sup> at Alma 33:15–16.  
 Zenos: Hebrew prophet (not in the Bible), quoted by Nephi<sup>1</sup> at 1 Nephi 19:10–17; quoted by Jacob<sup>2</sup> at Jacob 5; quoted by Alma<sup>2</sup> at Alma 33:3–11.  
 Zerahemnah: Lamanite commander (ca. 70 b.c.); Alma 43:5  
 Zeram: Nephite military officer (ca. 90 b.c.); Alma 2:22  
 Zerin, Mount: Jaredite place; Ether 12:30

Zoram1: servant of Laban (ca. 600 b.c.); 1 Nephi 4:20, named at 4:35

Zoram2: Nephite chief captain (ca. 80 b.c.); Alma 16:5

Zoram3: Nephite apostate (ca. 70 b.c.); Alma 30:59

Zoramites1: descendants of Zoram1; Jacob 1:13

Zoramites2: apostate sect of the Nephites, followers of Zoram3; Alma 30:59”<sup>361</sup>

Here is what Washburn, a LDS apologist, stated about the names in the **BOM**: “There are approximately 275 names in the Book of Mormon, not counting the numerous derivatives ending in *ite* or *ites*. Of this number something fewer than one hundred, perhaps not to exceed eighty-five or ninety, as nearly as I can determine, are also found in the Bible, according to the Columbia edition of the King James Version. Approximately twenty-five others are similar to Bible names, needing the change of but one or two letters to make them the same. Among these are Gilgah, Laman, Nahom, Rabbanah, Shurr. Some have only accidental similarities, however<sup>362</sup>....The mention of some of these reminds us of another repetitive design with an initial *G* and internal similarities<sup>363</sup>...Some of the most impressive of the Book-of-Mormon names, or families of names, can now be studied. The first noted are those in *i*...<sup>364</sup> Another pattern is seen in the following interesting names, with *Ani* and *Anti* initially...<sup>365</sup> Others are distinguished by *nah*, which may be a variant form.”<sup>366</sup>

Lars Nielsen is on the right track in understanding how Solomon Spalding developed his names from the classics (Virgil, Odyssey, etc.). Watch his Youtube video.<sup>367</sup>

#### (4) Indecision?

Holley wrote: “Both authors often used the word or between two words or phrases of similar but not identical meaning, leaving the reader confused

361 *The Book of Mormon's Reader Edition*. ed. Grant Hardy, 690-706.

362 Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 166.

363 Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 168.

364 *Ibid*.

365 *Ibid*.

366 J.N. Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 169.

367 Lars Nielsen, “But Who Will Monitor The Monitors?” Youtube channel: How The Book of Mormon Came To Pass. Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8boa0EOJVo>.

as to the intended meaning of the sentence.

Spaulding says: “At this place the hill or mountain came within a mile of the river.” (Manuscript Story p. 37) “Near every village or city they constructed forts or fortifications.” (Manuscript Story p. 54) “. . . he immediately assembled all the chiefs or princes within his kingdom. (Manuscript Story p. 45) “. . . the necromancers or juglers assembled on the great square . . .” (Manuscript Story p. 74)

And in the Book of Mormon, Lehi says: “. . . I beheld that the iron rod . . . led to the fountain of living waters, or to the tree of life . . .” (1 Nephi 11:25) “. . . they called the name of the city, or land, Nephihah.” (Alma 50:14) “. . . commence laboring in digging a ditch round about the land or the city, Bountiful.” (Alma 53:3) “The Lamanites, or the guards of the Lamanites, by night are drunken.” (Mosiah 22:6)”<sup>368</sup>

I decided to go through and try to provide all the passages that do this. However, It is a possibility that this was also a mistake in the translation process. Here are samples of Mosiah.

**Mosiah 1:10:** “among all this people, or the people of Zarahemla”

**Mosiah 3:11:** “who have died not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned”

**Mosiah 4:14:** “and serve the devil, who is the master of sin, or who is the evil spirit who hath been spoken of by our fathers”

**Mosiah 5:2:** “which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts”

**Mosiah 7:1:** “to dwell in the land of Lehi-Nephi, or in the city of Lehi-Nephi”

**Mosiah 7:15:** “our brethren will deliver us out of our bondage, or out of the hands of the Lamanites”

**Mosiah 7:22:** “and even one half of all we have or possess the king of the Lamanites doth exact of us, or our lives.”

**Mosiah 7:27:** “and it should be the image after which man was created in the beginning; or in other words, he said that man was created after the image of God”

**Mosiah 8:12:** “for, perhaps they will give us a knowledge of a remnant of the people who have been destroyed, from whence these records came; or, perhaps, they will give us a knowledge of this very very people who have been

<sup>368</sup> Holley, *Book of Mormon Authorship*, 34.

destroyed”

**Mosiah 8:17:** “and by them shall all things be revealed, or, rather, shall secret things be made manifest”

**Mosiah 9:1:** “a knowledge of the land of Nephi, or of the land of our fathers’ first inheritance”

**Mosiah 12:13:** “And now, O king, what great evil hast thou done, or what great sins have thy people committed”

**Mosiah 12:15:** “And behold, we are strong, we shall not come into bondage, or be taken captive by our enemies”

**Mosiah 15:11:** “I say unto you, that these are his seed, or they are the heirs of the kingdom of God”

**Mosiah 15:22:** “and all those that have believed in their words, or all those that have kept the commandments of God”

**Mosiah 15:24:** “and they have a part in the first resurrection, or have eternal life”

**Mosiah 16:7:** “And if Christ had not risen from the dead, or have broken the bands of death”

**Mosiah 18:17:** “And they were called the church of God, or the church of Christ”

**Mosiah 22:6:** “The Lamanites, or the guard of the Lamanites, by night are drunken”

**Mosiah 25:2:** “Now there were not so many of the children of Nephi, or so many of those who were descendants of Nephi”

**Mosiah 25:23:** “that whosoever were desirous to take upon them the name of Christ, or of God, they did join the churches of God”

**Mosiah 26:39:** “every one by the word of God, according to his sins, or to the sins which he had committed”

**Mosiah 29:5:** “Behold, O ye my people, or my brethren”

**Mosiah 29:16:** “that ye should have a king or kings to rule over you”

**Mosiah 29:41:** “judges to rule over them, or to judge them according to the law”

**Alma** 1:15; 2:11,34; 3:11; 4:19; 5:25,36; 9:1; 10:14,16; 11:1,46; 12:1,31; 13:10; 14:11; 16:16; 17:18,29; 18:14,19; 21:20; 22:19; 23:6; 25:15,19; 30:9; 32:16,28; 33:1; 34:11; 37:21,42; 39:19; 40:2; 43:16,19,29,38,44; 44:23; 47:2; 48:15; 49:9,13; 50:1,14; 53:3,10; 54:3,5,6; 57:8; 58:20; 59:3; 63:15

**Helaman** 4:22; 14:21

**3 Nephi** 1:8; 3:2,7; 6:20; 16:4

**Mormon** 2:1; 4:11; 5:14; Ether 14:1

**Moroni** 8:22,27

**1 Nephi** 8:2; 10:4,5,14; 11:25; 14:23; 15:17; 17:20,41

**2 Nephi** 2:5

**Jacob** 7:7

**Jarom** 1:7,14



## Chapter 15: The Restoration Principle - Valid Or Invalid?

We need to understand the historical context in which the **BOM** was created. In order to understand it, we need to understand what has been called the restoration principle.

Restoration. What is it? What is meant by the concept of it? Is the concept valid? Is the plea for it even attainable? Is it most importantly - found in the Bible?

Bales wrote: “The restoration principle maintains that we must plant the first century truth in today’s world in order to establish New Testament churches. The reformation principle--interpreted by some--maintains that we need not and cannot go back to the primitive church of the first century, but that when an apostate church exists today the need is to reform it and not to restore New Testament congregations.. The doctrine of continuous revelation maintains that one cannot have the New Testament church unless the miraculous gifts and continuous revelation are restored in the church today. This position maintains that one must restore certain things revealed in the first century but that **the final authority is to be found in the modern revelations of the Spirit (emp. bold org.)**. Of course, if there are inspired men today, their word would be as authoritative as the New Testament.”<sup>369</sup>

Members of the church of Christ seek to follow the restoration principle. There are many denominations, such as Lutherans and Presbyterians, who would adhere to what is known as the reformation principle. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints would adhere to the continuous revelation principle. Which of these principles are correct - if indeed any? Are any of these principles validated by Scripture? Before we try to answer that question, we are going to set some assumptions before us. These will not be covered in great detail in this book, but it is important they receive some attention.

Hawley wrote: “Our first assumption is that *God has revealed himself to man...* Second, we assume that *God’s revelation is made known to man through Jesus Christ...* Third, *Christians are bound by the authority of Christ in their faith and practice...* Fourth, *the Bible though written by man, is a divine document, inspired by God’s Holy Spirit...* Fifth, *the New Testament is the sole expression of spiritual authority for Christians today...* Sixth,

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<sup>369</sup>James D. Bales, *Restoration, Reformation, Or Revelation?* (Shreveport, LA: Lambert Book House, 1975), 4.

*primitive Christianity is a model for times to come...Seventh, the church is or has been apostate...Our final assumption relation to the restoration principle is that human beings are capable of understanding the Bible alike.*"<sup>370</sup>

Has God revealed Himself to mankind? While the agnostic and the atheist would argue "no" to this question, we affirm that the God of the Bible exists and that He has revealed Himself. He has shown sufficient evidence for His existence in what is known as the family of arguments known as the cosmological (cause and effect) arguments, the teleological (design) arguments, and the moral arguments.

God has also claimed that He inspired a book we call the Bible. If the Bible contains evidence beyond human production, then it is the word of God. I would argue that there are prophecies that were given with significant timing and specific details that were fulfilled, scientific foreknowledge, and the unity of the Bible (there are over 40 different writers from different places over different eras of time who contribute to this book that has the unifying themes of theology, etc., that cannot be accounted for by mere human means.

God was also revealed through His Son - Jesus of Nazareth. He performed great miracles that confirmed His identity (John 20:30,31; Acts 2:22-24). He fulfilled the prophecies of the Messiah such as Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.

God the Father told us to listen to His Son (Matthew 17:3; Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 1:1-2). His Son sent the Holy Spirit who would guide the apostles into all truth (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit worked through these inspired messengers and authenticated their message by miracles (Mark 16:20).

God claimed that He gave us the word (1 Thessalonians 2:13), but He also authenticated it through evidence. We accept by faith, based on the evidence, that it is inspired of God (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21).

The New Testament is the covenant that all men are under today and are expected to follow. This may seem shocking to some, but it is very clear from the New Testament itself. Read Romans 7:1-4; 1 Corinthians 9:20-22; 2 Corinthians 3:1-17; Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 2:13-17; Hebrews 8:1-13).

Christianity is a model that can be taught to the future generations (2 Timothy 2:2).

The Bible clearly teaches that in the first century A.D. that there were future predictions of those who would turn and depart from the faith (Acts 20:28-32; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12). While it could be argued as to when

370 Monroe Hawley, *The Focus of Our Faith: A New Look At The Restoration Principle* (Nashville, Tennessee: 20th Century Christian, 1985), 5-9.

these may have occurred, it is certain that it teaches it as a FACT. The question that ought to also be asked is: “Was there a total apostasy? Or was it partial? Did it happen in spurious places across the timeline?” Notice what the Bible says in 1 Timothy 4:1: “*Now the Spirit expressly says **SOME** will depart from the faith and give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons.*” If someone can depart from the faith, can they come back to the faith? If they can come back to the faith, then is it reasonable to conclude that God has some kind of standard or measurement by which we could ascertain such an objective standard?

It seems very clear from the Bible that God wanted us as His human creatures to understand His word alike.

## The Nature of God

In order to understand how the restoration principle is valid, we need to understand the nature of God Himself. Who is God? What is He like?<sup>371</sup>

Malachi reveals that God is changeless (Malachi 3:6) so does the writer of Hebrews (Hebrews 13:8). If God does not change and the nature of man has not changed, it is evident that there is no need for truth to change (truth relative to man’s salvation).

This changeless God works today as He once did (Hebrews 2:2-3). It is true that God is now operating through what is known as the new covenant (Hebrews 8:1-13), but He is still the same God who is gracious (Ephesians 2:4-6), merciful, kind (Titus 3:4-7), just (Romans 3:21-26), who always speaks the truth (Titus 1:2), and always keeps His promises (Hebrews 13:6).

The nature of both God and the Old Testament are important matters that help the Christian to understand the attitude of God towards apostasy. In addition the need to return to God is also evident from the Old Testament (as will be discussed soon).

The Old Testament can serve as a record of things that are examples to us (1 Corinthians 10:6,11). The Old Testament serves also as a negative example (of what not to do). The Old Testament also serves as a positive example (of what to do - Hebrews 11).

The logical conclusion of these points is that the things that pleased God in principle in the Old Testament, will still please God today, i. e. love, obedience, faith, etc. (This applies to all things not changed from the Old Testament to the

<sup>371</sup> Some of the material in this chapter is freely adapted on Marion Fox’s *Restoration of the Church* notes.

New Testament.) The Old Testament serves to teach us (Romans 15:4). The things that happened to the Old Testament people serve as examples to us to admonish us (1 Corinthians 10:11).

### **The Institution From, and Departure From Pure Religion In The Old Testament**

All things that God does are pure and flawless. When God instituted the Law of Moses, it was a pure religion, but God prophesied of an apostasy (departure from it). Moses revealed the pure religion of God (John 1:17). God cursed the Israelites if they changed the word of God (Deuteronomy 12:32).

God prophesied their departure from the word of God (Deuteronomy 31:27 and 29). He informed them that they would be punished for their departure from His Word.

The **first example** will be derived from the book of Judges. Note how they departed from the will of God as soon as their good leaders all died (Judges 3:7-11). Because of this departure God was forced to punish them (by withdrawing His protection of Israel). When they began to suffer, they repented and God forgave them (Judges 3:9-11). This was repeated many times in the book of Judges.

The **second example** is derived from the kings (in Hezekiah's days-2 Kgs. 18-20). The departure (apostasy) was realized (2 Kings 17:7, 18-19), but their good king (Hezekiah) brought them back to the will of God. When Judah returned to God, He forgave them and they received His blessings (2 Kings 18:4). Note the reaction of God to their return (2 Kings 18:7).

The **third example** is from the days of king Josiah (2 Kings 21-23). Again, the people go into apostasy (2 Kings 22:17). While Josiah was a very good king, the people did not return to God with all their heart and his restoration was ineffective. Their return was only half-hearted (2 Kings 22:17-20) and God's reaction to their half-hearted return was to punish them (2 Kings 23:26).

The **fourth example** is derived from the days after the return from Babylonian captivity (Nehemiah 8:8-9 and 13-16). Nehemiah gives an account of their numerous apostasies (Nehemiah 1:7-9). Their departure (apostasy) was from the truth (Nehemiah 1:7) and they must return to it in order to please God (Nehemiah 1:8-9). When they return, we see the reaction of a merciful God (Nehemiah 1:9).

This pure system was designed to end (Jeremiah 31:31-34) and to be replaced

by a better covenant (Hebrews 8:6-ff.). However a failure to obey the first covenant (the Law of Moses) brought punishment (Hebrews 2:2) and a failure to obey the better covenant (Hebrews 2:3) will bring about an even greater responsibility to obey (with a greater punishment for disobedience).

Notice Nehemiah 9:26-31: *“Nevertheless they were disobedient And rebelled against You, Cast Your law behind their backs And killed Your prophets, who testified against them To turn them to Yourself; And they worked great provocations. Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their enemies, Who oppressed them; And in the time of their trouble, When they cried to You, You heard from heaven; And according to Your abundant mercies You gave them deliverers who saved them From the hand of their enemies. But after they had rest, They again did evil before You. Therefore You left them in the hand of their enemies, So that they had dominion over them; Yet when they returned and cried out to You, You heard from heaven; And many times You delivered them according to Your mercies, And testified against them, That You might bring them back to Your law. Yet they acted proudly, And did not heed Your commandments, But sinned against Your judgments, “Which if a man does, he shall live by them.” And they shrugged their shoulders, Stiffened their necks, And would not hear. Yet for many years You had patience with them, And testified against them by Your Spirit in Your prophets. Yet they would not listen; Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. Nevertheless in Your great mercy You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them; For You are God, gracious and merciful.”*

The Israelites were first disobedient (verse 26), then they rebelled against God (verse 26), then they cast the law of God behind their backs (verse 26), then they slew the prophets (verse 26). The prophets had worked to turn them again to God (verse 26) and to bring them again to God’s law (verse 29).

When God speaks He does not want His will changed in any manner and when men change His will (either by perverting the doctrine, substituting a different doctrine, or keeping the people in ignorance of His will), he punished those who failed to work in their stewardship (keeping and teaching His will). When He punished them and they repented and returned to His will (were converted), He was merciful and forgave them.

There are many people who would chide and make fun of people who believe that someone cannot go back to the Bible to see what it says. God, throughout human history, is well-pleased with those who under the old covenant, sought



to “*stand in the old paths*” (Jeremiah 6:16).

Notice with me the logic:

**First Premise:** If (a) God is an unchangeable Being (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8), (b) the old covenant serves as a example for Christians (1 Corinthians 10:6) (c) the new covenant is greater than the old covenant (2 Corinthians 3; Hebrews 8) and (d) God is an unchangeable Being (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8) (e) under the old covenant there were “falling aways” that took place (2 Chronicles 28:1-2, 22-25) and (f) it was right to return to the Lord and the ways that He established when that covenant was binding (Jeremiah 6:16-21; 2 Kings 22:8-20 - Josiah), then according to the *a fortiori* (“greater than”) principle it would be right to return to the Lord and His ways established in the new covenant that is binding today (Hebrews 8; 2 Corinthians 3; Romans 7:1-4) when “falling aways” take place under the new covenant age (1 Timothy 4:1).

**Second Premise:** (a) God is an unchangeable Being (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8), (b) the old covenant serves as a example for Christians (1 Corinthians 10:6) (c) the new covenant is greater than the old covenant (2 Corinthians 3; Hebrews 8) and (d) God is an unchangeable Being (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8) (e) under the old covenant there were “falling aways” that took place (2 Chronicles 28:1-2, 22-25) and (f) it was right to return to the Lord and the ways that He established when that covenant was binding (Jeremiah 6:16-21; 2 Kings 22:8-20 - Josiah).

**Conclusion:** Therefore, according to the *a fortiori* (“greater than”) principle, it would be right to return to the Lord and His ways established in the new covenant that is binding today (Hebrews 8; 2 Corinthians 3; Romans 7:1-4) when “falling aways” take place under the new covenant age (1 Timothy 4:1).

**(a) God is an unchangeable Being. The nature of God and the Old Testament are important matters that help the Christian to understand the attitude of God toward apostasy. God is a changeless Being (Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8).**

**Malachi 3:6: “*For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.*”**

**Hebrews 13:8: “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*”**



(b) The new covenant is greater than the old covenant.

2 Corinthians 3:7-11: *“But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.”*

Hebrews 8:8-12: *“Because finding fault with them, He says: ‘Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah— not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”*

(c) There were falling away that took place during the time the old covenant was amenable to the Jews.

2 Chronicles 28:1-2: *“Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; and he did not do what was right in the sight of the LORD, as his father David had done. For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made molded images for the Baals.”*

2 Chronicles 28:22-25: *“And in every single city of Judah he made high places to burn incense to other gods, and provoked to anger the LORD God of his fathers. Now the rest of his acts and all his ways, from first to last, indeed they are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel. So Ahaz rested*

*with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, in Jerusalem; but they did not bring him into the tombs of the kings of Israel. Then Hezekiah his son reigned in his place.”*

**(d) It was right to return to the Lord and the ways that He established when the old covenant was binding.**

**Jeremiah 6:16:** *“Thus says the LORD: “Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’”*

**2 Kings 22:8-13:** *“Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. So Shaphan the scribe went to the king, bringing the king word, saying, “Your servants have gathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of those who do the work, who oversee the house of the LORD.” Then Shaphan the scribe showed the king, saying, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read it before the king. Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes. Then the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Achbor the son of Michaiah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, “Go, inquire of the LORD for me, for the people and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that has been found; for great is the wrath of the LORD that is aroused against us, because our fathers have not obeyed the words of this book, to do according to all that is written concerning us.”*

**(e) The Old Testament record is an example to us (1 Corinthians 10:6). The Old Testament serves as a negative example (of what not to do) and as a positive example (of what to do).**

**1 Corinthians 10:6:** *“Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.”*

The things that pleased God in principle in the Old Testament, will still please God today, i. e. love, obedience, etc. (This applies to all things not changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament.) The Old Testament serves to teach us (Romans 15:4). The things that happened to the Old Testament people serve as

examples to us to admonish us (1 Corinthians 10:11).

God had revealed the law through the prophet Moses. There were curses for changing the word of God (Deuteronomy 12:32).

**(f) The *a fortiori* (“greater than”) principle is a sound principle that is found numerous times throughout the Bible.**

The *a fortiori* principle that if  $A > B$  and something is true for B then it is true for A is used in several passages of Scripture to prove doctrinal points.

Jesus used this principle in his argument in the Sermon on the Mount to demonstrate the futility of anxiety over food and drink (Matthew 6:25-26), the futility of worry over our stature (Matthew 6:27), the futility of worry over our clothing (Matthew 6:28-30), to prove that He could heal on the Sabbath (Matthew 12:9-12; Luke 13:10-17; 14:1-6), to prove that the Jews were wrong in several of their traditions (Matthew 23:16-22).

Since God was pleased with people returning to His ways under the old covenant, and the new covenant is greater than the old covenant, then God would be pleased with those who return to Him and His ways established in the new covenant that is binding today (Hebrews 8:8-13; 2 Corinthians 3; Romans 7:1-4) when “falling away” takes place under the new covenant age (1 Timothy 4:1).

Paul did make it clear that some persons would depart from the faith system (1 Timothy 4:1). It is a noble goal to want to go back and/or restore principles that are found in the word of God.

### **Did Jesus Build One Universal Church In The First Century A.D.?**

**Matthew 16:17-19:** “*Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

**(1) It shows that the church belongs to Jesus. He is the Owner of it.**

**Ephesian 1:22-23:** *“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”*

**(2) The church is the body of Jesus Christ.**

**Ephesians 4:1-6:** *“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”*

**(3) Paul also affirmed there is one universal body of Jesus Christ because he states there is one body.**

Notice the logic:

**First Premise:** If the church is the body of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:22,23), and there is one universal body (Ephesians 4:4), then there is one, universal church.

**Second Premise:** The church is the body of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:22,23), and there is one universal body (Ephesians 4:4).

**Conclusion:** Therefore, there is one, universal church.

**Ephesians 5:22,23:** *“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.”*

**(4) Paul affirms that Jesus is the Savior of the body and thereby adds those who are saved to the church that belongs to Jesus.**

**(5) Would there be anyone that would be willing to admit that Jesus**

was a spiritual polygamist who is married to all sorts of different religious bodies that claim to have a connection with Him?

*Ephesians 1:7: “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”*

*Acts 20:28: “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.”*

(6) Jesus is the Owner of the church (which is composed of those who have been redeemed) because He bought it with His own blood.

(7) We do have the historical account of how the Ephesians did become Christians and were added by the Lord to His church (Acts 19:1-7).

*Acts 19:1-7: “And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.” And he said to them, “Into what then were you baptized?” So they said, “Into John’s baptism.” Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. Now the men were about twelve in all.”*

*Ephesians 2:1-10: “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been*



*saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”*

**(8) Water immersion is the culminating point of an obedient faith saved by grace for a sinner who is dead in trespasses and sins who will be buried with Christ in baptism and then raised up to be made alive with Christ.**

**Romans 6:3,4:** *“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

Another point to consider is that all who trusted and obeyed the same gospel taught by the apostles and prophets in the first century A.D. were those who were added to the one, universal body of the saved.

**Were the congregations that were started in the first century A.D. man-made denominations?**

How could this even be remotely suggested when one honestly looks at the historical data? We know that they were called “Christians” at Antioch of Syria (Acts 11:26).

There were religious factions that were happening inside the church at Corinth, but Paul the apostle wrote a letter to them stating that they should stop having these divisions! It was not right! (1 Corinthians 1-4)

Think about these questions with me:

(1) Would not God want the human family that He made in His image (Genesis 1:26,27) to be one spiritual family [i.e. one church- John 17]?

(2) Would not God want the husband and wife to become part of the same church instead of different divisions?



(3) Is denominationalism (“divisions”) something we can honestly affirm that God is pleased? In other words, is it scriptural? Is it something we honestly are to uphold?

(4) Is not denominationalism **foreign** to the New Testament?

(5) Is it possible to return to the New Testament and uphold the principles that it teaches?

## **Some Examples of Apostasies That Took Place Over Church History**

It would be reasonable for us to show that there are a number of ways in which there were various departures from the New Testament system that took place over church history. Let us show some of those examples now.

### **(1) Church Government**

It is important to understand that there were various offices in the church in the first-century A.D. The first office in the church was what were known as the apostles (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11). These were men who were eyewitnesses of the Lord’s resurrection (Acts 1:21-22), who were immersed in the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4) that equipped them to teach all things Jesus commanded (John 14:25,26), remember everything He had taught (John 14:25,26), bear witness of Him (John 15:26-27), guide them into all truth (John 16:13), were able to impart miraculous gifts to other Christians (Acts 8:14-26; Acts 19:1-7; 2 Timothy 1:6).

They had authority over all the churches (2 Corinthians 10:8). Their authority came directly from the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:37). They revealed what the Holy Spirit wanted them to reveal (Ephesians 3:3-4).

Then the next office were the prophets (1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11). They spoke forth the word of God by inspiration from the Holy Spirit. This was one of the nine miraculous gifts that was mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. The apostles (who were technically also prophets - mouthpieces for God) laid their hands on other Christians in the first century A.D. and made them to be prophets and prophetesses (Acts 2:17-18; 21:9). This prophesying would cease by the end of the age of miracles (1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:7-16; Jude 3).

The apostles and prophets were the temporary offices of the church. They were to lay the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:21-22). They did so. The church was in its infant stage and grew unto its maturity stage. God had brought

it along to where it needed to be.

A great example that has been used in the past is when construction workers are working on a building. They use scaffolding to erect the building. Once the building has been completed, then the scaffolding is no longer needed.

What are some other reasons these offices were temporary? There is no alive today who has seen the resurrection of Christ and thus can serve as an eyewitness. There are other reasons that can be seen in my other book.<sup>372</sup>

The next offices in the church were permanent. These were what were known interchangeably as elders/presbyters, bishops/overseers, pastors/shepherds, and/or stewards.

### **Argument 1:**

First Premise: If the word “for” (*gar*) means a connection word “to give previous reasons,” then “elder” and “bishop” are used interchangeably.

Second Premise: The word “for” (*gar*) means a connection word “to give previous reasons” - Titus 1:5 - “appoint elders in every city as I commanded you” and Titus 1:7 - “**For** a bishop must be blameless...”

Conclusion: Therefore, “elder” and “bishop” are used interchangeably.

### **Argument 2:**

First Premise: If (a) Paul was speaking to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:17) and (b) Paul called them bishops/overseers, then “elder” and “bishop” are used interchangeably (Acts 20:28).

Second Premise: (a) Paul was speaking to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:17) and (b) Paul called them bishops/overseers (Acts 20:17,28).

Conclusion: Therefore, “elder” and “bishop” are used interchangeably.

### **Argument 3:**

First Premise: If (a) Paul was speaking to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:17) and (b) Paul used language that was associated with pastors/shepherds, then

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<sup>372</sup> Shane Fisher, *Questions About Mormon Doctrine* (Winona, MS: World Evangelism Publications, 2022), 69-70.

“elder” and “pastor”/ “shepherd” are used interchangeably.

Second Premise: (a) Paul was speaking to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:17) and (b) Paul used language that was associated with pastors/shepherds - “flock”; “to shepherd” (Acts 20:28).

Conclusion: Therefore, “elder” and “pastor”/ “shepherd” are used interchangeably.

#### **Argument 4:**

First Premise: If (a) Peter was speaking to the elders in his letter (1 Peter 5:1-4) and (b) Peter used language that was associated with pastors/shepherds, then “elder” and “pastor”/ “shepherd” are used interchangeably.

Second Premise: (a) Peter was speaking to the elders in his letter (1 Peter 5:1-4) and (b) Peter used language that was associated with pastors/shepherds - “Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, ” (1 Peter 5:2).

Conclusion: Therefore, “elder” and “pastor”/ “shepherd” are used interchangeably.

#### **Argument 5:**

First Premise: If (a) Peter was speaking to the elders in his letter (1 Peter 5:1-4) and (b) Peter also called the elders - bishops/overseers, then “elder” and “bishop/overseer” are used interchangeably.

Second Premise: (a) Peter was speaking to the elders in his letter (1 Peter 5:1-4) and (b) Peter also called the elders - bishops/overseers - “Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, ” (1 Peter 5:2).

Conclusion: Therefore, “elder” and “bishop/overseer” are used interchangeably.

It is also seen that there were deacons in the church (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8-13). How do we know that the office of an elder/bishop/pastor and a deacon is still permanent today while we cannot have apostles and prophets?

It is because of the qualifications. Nobody can be an apostle today because nobody has been an eyewitness of the resurrection of Christ. Nobody is endowed with miraculous power as the apostles were and thus were able to pass on miraculous gifts to others. In regards to prophets, allow them to perform a miracle as were done in New Testament times. We are to test all things. Hold fast to that which is good (1 Thess. 5:21). Elders were permanently to abide in the church because they are needed to help guide, feed, and nurture the flock and guard the church from false doctrine (Acts 20:28). Deacons were equipped to help perform tasks that will help the church to carry out its functions such as benevolence, missions, Bible class curriculum, etc.

Each congregation was autonomous (self-governing). Elders have authority over the local congregation in which they reside (1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4). Their authority is in the area of expediency (the manner of fulfillment of generic instructions). They could not make doctrine or change doctrine, not even the apostles had this power, they preached what the Lord wanted preached (Matthew 18:18 NASB). The example of their delegated authority is to be seen that they were in charge of the finances (Acts 11:29-30). They were charged with overseeing the teaching in the church (Acts 20:17-32).

Also, notice in the Bible the pattern is that there was always a **plurality** (more than one) of elders, not just one in a local congregation. The apostle Paul ordained elders (plural) in every church (Acts 14:23). Titus was told to ordain elders (plural) in every city (Titus 1:5). In no instance does the New Testament even hint of there being only one elder in any church.

The government of the church was **NOT** changed prior to 100 A.D. The uninspired epistle written by Clement of Rome, in A.D. 95, to the church in Corinth, mentions a plurality of elders (presbyters). There is no hint of a bishop being over the elders (presbyters). The Didache [AD 130-150] (another uninspired document) makes no distinction between a bishop and an elder (Didache, 15).

In the second century one elder began to become dominant over the other elders. He chose the title of bishop for himself, exclusively.

The Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians, written about AD 160, seems to have a bishop over the church (I. E. 1, 2). The Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians (I. E. 6.) asserts that the bishop is the spokesman for God.

The Letter of the Smyrnaens on the Martyrdom of Polycarp, which occurred in AD 155 or 156, elevated the bishop above the other elders (16).

The Epistle of Polycarp spoke of the bishop and elders as a different group

(preface). The Epistle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians (I. P. 3 and 8) associates the bishop with division. It seems that the church was divided because of the bishop, not the elders.

The fact that Ignatius repeatedly tells various churches to submit to the bishop proves that there was something about the bishop that caused division. If there had not been a distinction between a bishop and an elder prior to this time this would explain why it caused division.

There should be a plea to return to the New Testament practice of church government. When you look at the modern religious world, you find titles such as: (1) pope, (2) patriarch, (3) cardinal, (4) archbishop, (5) president, (6) district superintendent. Where are those offices found in the Bible?

We should return to the following as the Scripture directs:

- (1) Each congregation is ruled by a plurality of elders.
- (2) Each congregation is being served by deacons.
- (3) Each congregation has an evangelist or evangelists.
- (4) No eldership ruling more than one church (one local congregation).
- (5) Recognize the interchangeability of elders, bishops, pastors, and/or stewards.

## **(2) Entrance Into The Church**

1. One must hear the gospel. One cannot be saved without faith in Jesus (John 3:16; Hebrews 11:6). One cannot obtain faith without hearing (Romans 10:14-17)

2. Faith involves (1) acceptance of facts (the involvement of our intellect), (2) trusting those facts (trust Jesus for salvation which requires the involvement of our emotion), and (3) acting on those facts. We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24). We must accept who He is and what He did while He was on the earth (John 20:30,31). We must believe that He died, was buried, and was risen again for our justification (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 4:25). Faith culminates in obedience (which involves our will). "Faith" is not counted as "faith" until it responds in doing what God requires (Romans 5:1).

3. This kind of faith involves us repenting of our past sins (Acts 2:38; 17:30). Repentance is a change of the mind that is produced by godly sorrow that leads to a reformation of a new life (2 Corinthians 7:9-10)

4. This kind of faith involves us confessing that Jesus is the Messiah - the

Son of God (Acts 8:37; Romans 10:9-10). A true confession is an acceptance that Christ has authority over us and we pledge our lives to live for Him the rest of our lives (Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2:10-11).

5. This kind of faith involves us being immersed in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21).

6. This kind of faith involves our continual commitment to live faithfully and walk in the light of Christ (1 John 1:7-10).

## **The mode of baptism as found in the New Testament is immersion.**

### **Argument 1:**

First Premise: If the requirements and/or actions of baptism are associated only with immersion, then to baptize in practice scripturally today would be to immerse someone.

Second Premise: The requirements and/or actions of baptism are associated only with immersion.

Conclusion: Therefore, to baptize in practice scripturally today would be to immerse someone.

### **Proof For Second Premise:**

- a. Requirement no. 1: Baptism requires “***much water***” (John 3:23)
- b. Requirement no. 2: Baptism requires a “***going to the water***” (Acts 8:38)
- c. Requirement no. 3: Baptism requires a “***coming out of the water***” (Acts 8:39)
- d. Requirement no. 4: Baptism requires a burial in water (Romans 6:3,4; Colossians 2:11,12)
- e. Requirement no. 5: Baptism requires a uniting (Romans 6:5-7)
- f. Requirement no. 6: Baptism requires a resurrection from the water (Romans 6:3,4)

## **2. Baptism is a burial (Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12).**

**What was the purpose of immersion?** It was for remission of sins (Acts 2:38), saves (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21), puts one into the kingdom of Jesus



(John 3:3-5), results in rejoicing (Acts 8:38-39; Acts 16:33-34), fulfills a command (Acts 10:48), washes away sins (Acts 22:16), gets one into the death of Christ (into His blood - Romans 6:3-4; Revelation 1:5), raises one with Christ to walk in a new life (Colossians 2:12), puts on Christ (Galatians 3:27).

**Who can be immersed?** Immersion was only administered to persons old enough to believe, repent, and confess. In order to be scripturally baptized one must hear and believe the gospel (Romans 10:14-17; Mark 16:15-16), one must repent of his/her past sins (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30), confess Jesus is the Christ (Acts 8:37).

**How was baptism changed over the centuries?** The mode was changed. Sprinkling and pouring were introduced in place of immersion after the close of the canon (Didache 7). Cyprian discusses sprinkling (Epist. 75, 12-13) (AD 195-268). Novatian's sprinkling was based upon the claim that he was too ill to be immersed, and it was substituted with the agreement that he would be immersed if he recovered. He argued that if his sprinkling was valid he did not need to be immersed. His fallacy was that an exception does not establish a general rule.

Infant baptism was introduced in the second century. Origen (Lev. Hom. viii, 3) connected the practice of infant baptism with the stain of inherited sin (inherited from Adam). (AD 185-254). The African bishop, Fidus, claimed that baptism replaced circumcision, and claimed that it should be performed on the eighth day. Cyprian opposed Fidus and taught that it should be performed immediately (Cypr. Ep. 58) (AD 195-268). Augustine defended infant baptism on the basis of the doctrine of original sin and then argued for the doctrine of original sin on the basis of infant baptism (AD 354-430).

The purpose was changed. It was severed from its connection to salvation.

We could provide many examples of departures from the faith that occurred over the centuries. There have always been those though who desired to go back to what the Bible teaches and such we see in the validity of the seed principle.

### **The Seed Principle**

It is important to recognize that along with studying the restoration principle that we also discuss what is known as the seed principle. The seed principle will

be argued as follows:

**First Premise:**

(a) If every seed produces after its kind (Genesis 1:11-13), (b) and the seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11), (c) God's word (and only God's word - not mixed with man-made error) can produce plants after its own kind [Christians] (1 Peter 1:22-25; James 1:21], (d) and the soil represents the different types of hearts that will receive or not receive the word (Matthew 13:18-23), (e) and the Father will uproot every plant that He did not plant (Matthew 15:13), then a person must sow the pure seed into his/her heart in order to become a Christian.

**Second Premise:**

(a) If every seed produces after its kind (Genesis 1:11-13), (b) and the seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11), (c) God's word (and only God's word - not mixed with man-made error) can produce plants after its own kind [Christians] (1 Peter 1:22-25; James 1:21], (d) and the soil represents the different types of hearts that will receive or not receive the word (Matthew 13:18-23), (e) and the Father will uproot every plant that He did not plant (Matthew 15:13)

**Conclusion:** Therefore, a person must sow the pure seed into his/her heart in order to become a Christian.

**Genesis 1:11-13:** *“Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth”; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the third day.”*

(1) It is a wonderful truth that only a watermelon seed can produce only a watermelon; an orange seed can only produce an orange. In the grand order of the laws of nature, this is what our great Creator established to be an enduring law that would last until time is no more.

**Luke 8:11:** *“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.”*

(2) The parable of the sower (Luke 8:4-8) is the most important parable that Jesus gave because He was teaching *how* we ought to hear. Whenever we have the opportunity to hear the word of God, let us take great notice of the kind of

attitude that we possess. Are we willing to receive it into our hearts if indeed it is the truth?

**1 Peter 1:22-25:** *“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, because “All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, But the word of the LORD endures forever.” Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.”*

(3) Peter’s audience had obeyed the truth and their souls were purified. They had the gospel preached to them, which was the truth they had obeyed.

(4) Peter’s audience was born again through the word of God (which is the incorruptible seed). It will never perish or pass away.

(5) An honest individual will see that the same individuals in the New Testament obeyed the same true gospel.

The church that started in Jerusalem in 30 A.D. were made up of individuals who had repented and were immersed for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38,41). The church continued to grow in Jerusalem (Acts 4:4). It even says that priests were obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7). It should not cross anyone’s mind that while the apostles were there in Jerusalem that they were continuing to preach the same message of Jesus, his crucifixion, resurrection, and justification by an obedient faith. The apostles planted the same pure seed - the gospel of Christ - into good and honest hearts.

Several months later, an inspired messenger named Philip goes and preaches in Samaria.

It states in Acts 8:12,13: *“But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.”* Philip planted the same pure seed - the gospel of Christ - into good and honest hearts.

Philip was directed by an angel to preach Jesus to the Ethiopian eunuch. Acts 8:34-39 states: *“So the eunuch answered Philip and said, “I ask you, of whom*

*does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."*

Philip planted the same pure seed - the gospel of Christ - into Samaria and the Ethiopian eunuch.

Ananias told Saul of Tarsus how to become a Christian (Acts 22:16) in Acts 9. Ananias planted the same pure seed - the gospel of Christ - into a good and honest heart.

Peter was directed by the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel to Cornelius and his household who became Christians in Caesarea about 3 1/2 years after the church started (Acts 10-11). The same pure seed of the word of God was being planted even *three and a half years later*.

Paul went on his missionary journeys and established various congregations in different localities (Acts 13-28). Over the next thirty years, Paul (along with other inspired writers) would write letters to these different congregations of the Lord's church as to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Hierapolians, Thessalonians, Pontusians, Cappadocians, Asians, Bythnians, Smyrnians, Pergamosians, Thyatirans, Sardisians, Philadelphians, and Laodiceans. Would it cross anyone's mind that each of these localities were taught a different gospel other than what the apostles taught?

It is true that some were being taught a false gospel by the Judaizers that was infiltrating some congregations (as found in Galatians) and thus were on the verge of falling away from grace (Galatians 5:1-4). But do we not see that the apostles and prophets were planting the same seed - the gospel of Christ - into various localities? Do we not see that all of these congregations made up the one, universal church (the one, universal body) in which all were baptized by one Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13), who purified their souls in obedience to the truth (1 Peter 1:22-23), who were born again (John 3:3-5; 1 Peter 1:22-23), who were justified by faith (Romans 5:1)?

**James 1:21:** *“Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”*

(6) Notice that the word of God is able to save souls.

(7) Notice that we must receive it - the implanted word - with strength under control.

What if we receive the Bible plus what is taught in the Baptist manuals (which contains error) concerning salvation?

Bible + Baptist manual = Baptist

What if we receive the Bible plus what is taught in the Book of Mormon (which contains error) which claims to be the word of God?

Bible + Book of Mormon = Latter-Day Saint

If we receive the Bible, and **only** what the Bible teaches (which is the truth - John 17:17), then we will only become Christians (Acts 11:26). The word of God (the incorruptible seed) will last forever. It can be implanted in a good and honest heart that is receptive to obey the truth that will save his/her soul.

**Matthew 13:18-23:** *“Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”*



(8) The soil represents the different types of hearts that will receive or not receive the word of God. Some will not receive it at all. Some will receive it, but it will only be for a short time. Some will receive it, but allow the spiritual life of the seed to be choked out of their lives because they allow worldiness to creep back and destroy them. Some will receive it and in the long run will produce fruit.

**Matthew 15:12,13:** *“Then His disciples came and said to Him, “Do You know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this saying?” But He answered and said, “Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.”*

(9) Many of the Pharisees refused to obey John’s baptism which was from heaven (Luke 7:29,30; Matthew 21:24-27). They refused to enter into the preparation phase of the kingdom of heaven while many tax collectors, harlots, and other sinners did enter in by obeying John’s baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Matthew 23:13; Mark 1:4; Luke 7:29,30). Many of the Pharisees, who did not receive the word of God, the implanted word, therefore had no root in their hearts filled with salvation. If they were not planted by God (did not receive the seed of His word), then they would be uprooted (Matthew 15:13). The modern application is that there are many who have adhered to man-made error and have not received the word of God, the implanted word, which is able to save their souls. They have not obeyed the truth and therefore their souls are not purified. If they have not obeyed the gospel, then they have not been born again, and one must be born again in order to enter the kingdom of God (John 3:3-5).

(10) When all of these truths are combined together, we see a clear, distinct picture that a person must sow the pure seed (the word of God - John 17:17) into his/her heart in order to become a Christian.

Paul did make it clear that some persons would depart from the faith system (1 Timothy 4:1). It is a noble goal to want to go back and/or restore principles that are found in the word of God. This is what we see happening in what was known as the American Restoration Movement. These men like Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, Walter Scott, even though they were very flawed



men, certainly had the right concept in mind - "Return to the Bible."

Let me provide an example of the seed principle. I believe it was through God's providence that we moved from Newport, Arkansas to McMinnville, Tennessee. My dad was a medical doctor. We moved there in 1991. We actually did not live too far away from the place that will be explained below. We grew up going to the Old Philadelphia congregation sometimes for a annual gospel meeting. I did not know the rich history behind it until years later. I came upon a book while living in South Korea where I was doing mission work (2014-2019) at Korea Christian University in Seoul. It was called *Restoration Movements Around The World* and I was very intrigued when bro. Wharton mentioned Warren County, Tennessee, the place where I was raised for nearly 23 years (1991-2014). It fascinated me how many congregations of the Lord's church there were in Warren County, Tennessee. There is a reason for that as you will read below from bro. Wharton:

"When the first white settlers came to that section of Tennessee now known as Warren County, they found Indian trails crossing the area in almost every direction. Many of the pioneers followed these trails to new homes.

One such trail ran from the present vicinity of Monticello, Ky., through Tennessee to near Huntsville, Ala. In its meanderings it followed the base of Ben Lomand Mountain to the proximity of the present Bonner Church of Christ; followed the route now taken by the Viola Road to cross Hickory Creek at Scott's Ford; and wandered onward into the south. It was so well worn that the early settlers had little difficulty driving their wagons over it. It came to be variously known as the Kentucky Road, the Elk River Road, or simply "the stage road."

A post road, following these Indian trails, was opened in 1805 from Washington, D.C., to New Orleans. According to a report of the Postmaster General in 1824, the route was then through Fredericksburg and Abingdon, Va., Knoxville, and McMinnville, Tenn., through Alabama and Mississippi, and ultimately to New Orleans. Covering 1,300 miles, it was a journey of twenty-four days.

The opening of this road brought large areas of Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi into communication with the rest of the yet infantile United States. When the territory of Alabama, largely occupied by the Cherokee Indians, was opened six years later to white settlers, among the first to arrive there and settle in northern Alabama was a group from McMinnville, Tenn. Some

of these located near the post road and built a community which they called Antioch. That name was chosen because the Bible says, "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." But what had scripture to do with the name of a settlement? And who were these people?

The first white settlers came into what is now Warren County, Tenn., about 1800. Some historians say that Elisha Pepper, from Virginia, was the very first. On August 6, 1806, there was filed with the Tennessee Legislature a petition from "the inhabitants of Smith County, south of the old Indian line and southwest of the Caney Fork," to create the county of Warren. By a legislative act of Nov. 26, 1807, Warren County was created; and in February of 1808 its organization was completed.

By 1810 the county had a population of 5,725. The only religious denominations represented were Presbyterian, Cumberland Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopal, and Methodist. The Methodists were still a new sect, members were small, and they were regarded by other denominations with suspicion, distrust, and sometimes hostility. According to Early History of Warren County by Will T. Hale, Lutherans came into the county in 1825 and Christians in 1826. However, it escaped the attention of that historian that an indigenous group of Christians had come into existence within the county in 1810. And it happened thus:

In 1808 a number of Presbyterian and Episcopalians, pioneers, had moved from North Carolina and Virginia into the Tennessee River Valley and adjoining areas of Tennessee, and some of them had founded a community in Warren County which became known as Philadelphia. They were religious people but without a preacher. This lack, far from being the handicap it may have seemed at the time, proved to be a blessing of great magnitude to them and to posterity.

Having no "Reverend" to lead them and to expound to them the scriptures as he saw them, they turned directly to the Bible itself for guidance. As they studied together, without the usual denominational interpretations, accepting the word of God at face value, they saw their denominational differences fade away until none was left. They had united in the one faith. They learned, contrary to former belief and practice, that baptism was "for the remission of sins" and a burial, and began to practice it in that manner and for that purpose. By 1810 these people were worshipping as one body, a church different from any they had known before, subscribing to one creed, and

wearing no distinctive name. They called themselves only Christians and the church only the church of Christ.

A building was erected in which to worship near Scott's Ford on Hickory Creek. Hammons Tavern stood nearby, just south of the church building, and was one of the first in the county. It was an important stop on the Kentucky Road and a change point for horses. Some time later, a Baptist community in Warren County also adopted the name of Philadelphia, and so the site of the church of Christ subsequently became known as Old Philadelphia.

Of special interest and significance is a letter of recommendation written in 1818 to the Antioch church in Alabama on behalf of Elizabeth Brown, as follows:

“State of Tennessee, Warren County

“Oct. 22, 1818

“The church of Christ at Philadelphia commends to the fellowship of the faithful in Christ Jesus our beloved sister Elizabeth Brown, as a faithful member in the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

“(SIGNED)

GEORGE STROUD

DAVID RAMSEY, BISHOPS”

The pure, undenominational character of the letter can hardly be overlooked. Elizabeth Brown is not identified as being the member of any human institution, nor is she linked with any human creeds, nor is she recommended to any group other than the “faithful in Christ Jesus.”

We shall later find an historian referring to these people as “Campbellites”; in the absence of any sign of prejudice or dishonorable intentions, we can attribute his error only to lack of information. This group of Christians came into existence not later than 1810, and too early to have come under the influence of Alexander Campbell. Campbell preached his first sermon at Washington, Pa., July 15, 1810, and did not cease to struggle to work within the framework of the Baptist Church until 1827. That was seventeen years after the church of Christ at Old Philadelphia had begun to worship according to the New Testament pattern, completely independent of any denominational ties.

It is also significant that while the early converts through Campbell's ministry called themselves “Disciples,” these at Old Philadelphia called themselves “Christians.” Furthermore it is made clear in the writings of

Campbell that he was completely dissociated from the people in this part of America known as Christians. On June 28, 1804, Barton W. Stone, at Cane Ridge, Ky., had broken with the Presbyterian Church, within which he had earlier begun a movement to restore New Testament Christianity. Stone's adherents were at first generally inclined toward Unitarianism, while those of Campbell were definitely Trinitarian. Concerning the difference in name and in this fundamental concept of the deity, Campbell wrote:

"In Kentucky and the Southwest (as this area was then called - WRW) generally, this (speculating about the modus of divine existence - WRW) is getting out of fashion, and many of the congregations called 'Christians' are just as sound in the faith of Jesus as the only begotten Son of God, in the plain import of these words, as any congregation with which I am acquainted."

Note well: He spoke of the comparative merits of the doctrines of two groups: (a) those with whom he was acquainted, necessarily excluding the Old Philadelphia congregation from among his acquaintances. His statement also acknowledged the regional difference between his own sphere of influence at the time and that which he had no connection: "Kentucky and the Southwest."

Reference has already been made to the fact that Barton W. Stone began preaching a return to New Testament Christianity, after breaking with Presbyterianism, in 1804. There is nothing known to indicate that the pioneers at Old Philadelphia, from North Carolina and Virginia, had any knowledge of his work, which had been done mainly in Ohio and later in Kentucky.

The church at Old Philadelphia grew, and its influence spread. Churches resulting from the work of Barton W. Stone also grew and expanded. In an entirely natural course of events, there was ultimately a meeting, blending, and confluence of these two restoration movements: that of Stone and that of Warren County pioneers. The Warren County phenomenon had no outstanding name of any individual as a founder to hand down to succeeding generations; in fact, not even one name of an original member has come down to posterity.

In time the distinction between the two movements became lost to historians of a later date, who mistakenly attributed the founding of the church at Old Philadelphia to Stone. His was the larger and more prominent of the two movements, and the mistake is natural. And so we read in *The Story of Tennessee*, by Joseph H. Parks, Ph.D., and S.J. Folmsbee, Ph.D.:

“In 1825 some 700 persons organized a new Baptist association known as the Bethel Association. Others later joined the group, and all in turn joined the ‘Christians.’ The Christians had been organized by Barton W. Stone in Kentucky in 1804.”

The restoration movement initiated by Stone (1804) and that by Alexander Campbell (1827) ultimately blended into one. Though, of the two, the Campbell movement was the newer, it was the more successful. Through vigorous use of the printed page, frequent appearance in monumental debates against giants of denominationalism, the founding of a college, traveling widely, and a powerfully convincing logic and personality, Campbell was the predominant of the two personages. Later historians, making the same mistake as mentioned earlier, often branded as “Campbellites” and all who had been converted to Christ (in the New Testament sense) through the ministry of Stone, Campbell, any of their associates, or anyone else. The idea of any group calling themselves only Christians was repulsive to some, who felt constrained to bestow upon them a human name, whether it fit or not, accepted or not.

Hence we read in Goodspeed’s History of Tennessee (1887): “Ivy Bluff meeting house, in the Eleventh District, was erected in about 1835 by the Christians or Campbellites.”

This was an age of religious unrest and of a seeking after truth, in which there were many such efforts, worldwide, to return to the Bible and to restore the Christianity of the first century. Some of these are covered elsewhere in this book. There may have been another, even in Tennessee, for we read in The Story of Tennessee:

“About 1807 Elder Reuben Ross, who was preaching in Stewart and Montgomery counties, created a great stir. It was reported that his views were not in keeping with those of the Baptist Church. Ross was ordered to stand a church trial for heresy, but the trial was never held.

“The Old Philadelphia Church of Christ at Vervilla is said to be the mother church of many congregations in the southern part of Warren County.” As settlers in and around Old Philadelphia spread out into other areas of Warren County, new congregations of the church sprang up. Some of these were later instrumental in establishing still others. From some of these the gospel has gone afar, even into foreign lands. **There is no escaping the conclusion: Had both Campbell and Stone whiled away their lives comfortably as acquiescent**



**sectarians, there still would be a church of Christ, widely spread, as a result of its indigenous restoration in Warren County, Tenn., in 1810 (emp. mine).**

“The Ivy Bluff Church of Christ in the Eleventh District was constituted in 1846. The church building was remodeled in 1959 and dedicated with appropriate ceremonies. The following entry was found in the minute book of the church: ‘At a meeting begun and held at Ivy Bluff in Warren County, Tennessee, on the 13th and 14th of December, 1846, during which time the following named persons gave themselves to the Lord and to each other, agreeing to constitute themselves into a church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to worship Him according to His will as contained in the scriptures, rejecting everything else as authoritative in religion: namely viz.’ (Eighty-five names followed this entry. Some of them were dated as late as 1858...Twenty-six... appear to be on the original roll.)”

The Smyrna Church of Christ in the Fifth District was organized in the old McGregor Schoolhouse in 1837 or 1857 by Elders John Meyers and Isaac Jones. In 1858 the congregation erected the church building which was replaced in recent years by a new building.” “Two churches are situated in Dibrell--the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Mt. Zion Church of Christ. The latter was moved from Old Holcomb to Dibrell in 1885 and given its present name.” A church building was erected at Viola, Warren County, in 1890, by a congregation which had come from the Old Philadelphia church some time earlier. “The Morrison Church of Christ (Morrison, Warren County) was organized from the Old Philadelphia Church of Christ at Vervilla in 1895.”

Good speed’s History of Tennessee (1887) included Philalephia Christians in a list of churches of the Ninth District of Warren year and recorded May 5, 1836, from Cleana D. Blevins to David Ramsay and Benjamin Garner, “to be used as a meeting site and no other”; and the original (May, 1962) is in possession of Royce Stubblefield, Viola, Tenn. Benjamin Garner was one of the 313 petitioners in creating Warren County in 1807. Royce Stubblefield was a descendant of Robert L. Stubblefield, who was appointed the first postmaster of Viola on August 23, 1858.

Eventually the area immediately adjacent to the Old Philadelphia meeting house became sparsely settled, roads made other communities accessible, new congregations were formed and new buildings erected, and the Old Philadelphia building was abandoned except for an “annual home coming and dinner on the ground.” After some years, this, too, was discontinued

by the white disciples, but was taken up by the colored disciples of Warren County, who continue this practice yet.

Adjacent to the Old Philadelphia Church building is a cemetery in which are interred the remains of many of the old members, along with other residents of the community. Except for memory of some of the old-timers, there is no distinction between members and non-members. The cemetery is unfenced and untended. Hidden among the scrub growth and weeds from the eyes of all but God, one is able to discover markers at the graves of:

L. Nix Murphree, born April 25, 1814, died Oct. 16, 1857

Elder Jesse L. Sewell, born May 25, 1818, died June 29, 1890

John McAfee, born Nov. 27, 1819, died Aug. 13, 1878

Matilda (Mrs. Wm.) Smoot, born Nov. 25, 1822, died Nov. 20, 1885

E.A. Darnell, born Dec. 8, 1844, died May 31, 1917

W.T. Darnell, born Feb. 28, 1848, died Dec. 26, 1926

Margaret (Mrs. W.T.) Darnell, born Jan. 22, 1857, died April 15, 1889

Just a few miles away is the Stroud Cemetery, in which are graves marking the resting places of Thomas Stroud, born March 15, 1778, died May 14, 1838; Hannah (Mrs. Thomas) Stroud, born Dec. 11, 1783, died Sept. 7, 1850 and C.W. Stroud, born Nov. 10, 1822, died Jan. 10, 1862.

In 1822, a considerable number of the members of the Old Philadelphia church of Christ moved some sixty miles south into northern Alabama, into the section which is now Jackson County. These are the people who saw a unique relationship between themselves and the ancient Syrian city of Antioch. And so they gave the name Antioch to their new home to emphasize that disciples of the Lord were called Christians and nothing more.

Among them were William J. Price (baptized in 1811 at Old Philadelphia), his wife, and a slave named Moses. Following a game trail, they came to a spring, selected a homesite there, and named the place Rocky Spring. This was a mile or so south of Antioch. Price was a prominent leader in the church until his death at a ripe old age in 1869.

Another eminent Alabama emigrant from Tennessee was Major William D. Gains, born 1774, baptized at Old Philadelphia in 1811. When Alabama was admitted to the Union in 1819, he became the first member of the Alabama State Senate from this district.

W.J. Hughes was for years an important figure in the church. He was born at Old Philadelphia in 1818, and moved to Antioch with his parents in 1820. When both parents died in 1831, he was taken to raise by an uncle, William J. Price. In 1847 he was appointed an elder in the church; died in 1882 at the age of 64.

On Feb. 12, 1827, the Antioch church issued what might be termed a "certificate of ordination" to James Clark Anderson, as follows:

"This may certify to all whom it may concern, that our beloved brother James Anderson is authorized to preach the word of truth wherever he may have opportunity by approbation of the congregation at Antioch, of which he is a faithful member. (SIGNED) ELISHA PRICE/WILLIAM KING ANDREW RUSSELL, Elders, Church of Christ at Antioch."

A community grew up around the home of William J. Price, on the post road at Rocky Spring. A post office was established there, along with an Indian trading post, a tavern, and stables for changing horses on the stage coaches. On June 12, 1847, the congregation moved into a new building at Rocky Spring, abandoning the old one at Antioch. At that time there were 82 members, including six colored.

In June, 1851, according to an extant copy of the minutes, the church listed 130 members, of whom 26 were colored. At that time they drew up a document dated as of June 12, 1847, the date it began worshipping at Rocky Spring, listing its enrollment with the following introduction (errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar noted):

"After a discourse adapted to the occasion the people who had previously given themselves to the Lord according to the form of sound words directed by the Apostles.

"Resolved to give themselves to each other in the feare of god, we solemnly covenant with each other to take the word of god for our system of government and regulate our lives, and conduct by the laws of Jesus Christ give to each the right hand of fellowship June 1851.

Where upon Brothers Joel B. Arendale & Thos. A. Hill was appointed Deacons. Brothers George Cloud & W.J. Hughes Bishops in church of Christ at Rocky Spring."

The early undenominational character of this church stands out strongly in the scriptural choice of words and phrases. As we have seen, they called themselves only Christians, also alluding to themselves as the "faithful in

Christ Jesus.” They called the church, the church of Christ. They employed words “church” and “kingdom” interchangeably, as also the words “elders” and “bishops,” as in the scriptures. In authorizing Anderson to preach, they named no denomination, specified no creed, but simply authorized him to preach “the word of truth.” And their covenant was no more or less than to “take the word of God.”...

SOURCES:

Early History of Warren County, Will T. Hall;

History of Tennessee, Goodspeed (1887)

McMinnville at a Milestone, Walter Womack, McMinnville, Tenn. (\$10.00)

The Story of Tennessee, Parke and Folmsbee;

Church Minute books and other published and unpublished papers in the possession of Howard A. Blazer, Sr., Anniston, Ala.;

Warranty deed in possession of Royce Stubblefield, Viola, Tenn.”<sup>373</sup>

If people could plant the same gospel in the first century A.D., whether it be by a few months, a few years, could the same gospel still be planted into good and honest hearts **two hundred years** later? Could it be planted **two thousand years** later? Peter states that the word of the Lord endures *forever* (1 Peter 1:25).

This was the historical context in which the Book of Mormon would be born. We know after Campbell’s first debate with John Walker is when Sidney Rigdon finally meets Alexander Campbell for the first time and started to implement the ideas of restoration:

Knowles writes: “In August of the same year as the Campbell-Walker Debate, the Mahoning Baptist Association was organized by ten churches in the town of Nelson, located in the Western Reserve area of Portage County, Ohio. A minister named Adamson Bentley, one of its founders and perhaps its most influential authority, having read a published copy of the debate, decided to visit Mr. Campbell in the summer of 1821. He had been hearing that Campbell was being criticized and opposed by the Redstone Association for some of his views, though he personally expressed the conviction that, “Mr. Campbell had done more for the Baptists than any man in the west.” Hence, he determined to journey to Campbell’s home at Bethany, along with his brother-in-law Sidney Rigdon, for the ultimate purpose of enticing him to

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373 W. Ralph Wharton, *Restoration Movements Around The World* (W. Ralph Wharton, 1980), 103-111.

join the more liberal Mahoning Association.”<sup>374</sup>

The Book of Mormon would be shaped by adding the ingredients of the American theory at the time that was held by Americans that Indians were descendants from the Israelites who desired to match it to the mounds found all over America (provided by Spalding), adding the restoration principles that were valid (Rigdon took an *extreme* form as will be discussed later), adding the theological portions to the book (provided by Rigdon), and then turning it over Smith to turn into a religious book that claimed inspiration.

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<sup>374</sup> Lloyd Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church*, 70.



## Chapter 16:

### The Book of Mormon Endorses Rigdon's Theological Views

If Sidney Rigdon is one of the real author(s) of the Book of Mormon, then there should be some of his “fingerprints” that are found within it. One of his “fingerprints” would be some of the peculiar religious views that he endorsed and decided to place them in there.

#### 1. **Christians should share everything and have everything in common.**

It is an abusive misuse of Acts 2:44-45, which states: “*Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.*”

Christians were **voluntarily** sacrificing to help their brethren who were from different foreign lands who had come there to Jerusalem for the festival of Pentecost. They were not originally from that area. So Christians helped to contribute and sacrifice to the beloved brethren who were in a difficult situation.

An application for today would be if there was a tornado that hit the area and destroyed a member's house, then we would get together to help that brother/sister in any way possible.

(a) **Richard Wagoner (biographer of Rigdon) states:** “Rigdon, taken with Owen's system of “family commonwealths,” returned to Mentor, convinced that a “common-stock” society, as outlined in Acts 2:44-45, should be implemented among parishioners. The two leaders he convinced in February 1830 to put his communitarian ideas in motion were future Mormons Lyman Wight and Issac Morley.”<sup>375</sup>

Here are some other statements:

(b) **Stephen Hart (1885):** “I came to Mentor, O., in 1826 and have since resided here. **I was well acquainted with Sydney Rigdon and other Mormon leaders. Isaac Morley and his brother-in-law, Titus Billings, and others through Rigdon's influence, established a Communistic Society on Morley's farm and claimed to have all things in common** (emp. mine). I attended Rigdon's preaching and heard him urge the church to put their property in the common fund and have all things common. I have heard Mrs. Mann and other members of Rigdon's church say that weeks before he joined the Mormons, he took the Bible and slapped it down on the desk and said that in a short time it would be

<sup>375</sup> Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 50.

of no more account than an old almanac; **that there was to be a new Bible, a new Revelation, which would entirely do away with this** (emp. mine). It caused the church to distrust him and but few followed him into Mormonism.”<sup>376</sup>

(c) **Reuben P. Harmon**: “My parents came to Ohio from Vermont in 1815. I resided in Kirtland when the Mormons first arrived. I was personally acquainted with Rigdon... I have heard [him] several times say in his sermons that before long the Indian mounds and forts about there would all be explained. **He caused a row of log houses to be built on Isaac Morley’s farm, and established a Communistic Society before Mormonism was heard of** (emp. mine). I heard Rigdon preach his first sermon at Kirtland Flats, and after he embraced Mormonism. He said that he had been preaching wrong doctrine and asked their forgiveness...”<sup>377</sup>

(d) **Amos Hayden** recalls the event that occurred in August 1830 in Austintown, Ohio. He writes: “On Saturday when Sidney Rigdon had the floor he introduced an argument “to show that our pretensions to follow the apostles in all their New Testament teachings, required a community of goods; that as they establish their order in the model church at Jerusalem, we were bound to imitate their example.”<sup>378</sup>

Wagoner provides some more context for this historical situation: “During the 1830 annual meetings of the Mahoning Baptist Association the differences between Rigdon and Campbell boiled over, dousing a considerable amount of Rigdon’s fervor. Members of the newly formed Austintown [Ohio] Church hosted the gathering. The village’s population of seven hundred was nearly one-fourth Reformed Baptist. With only a single tavern, Austintown saw many visitors sleeping on benches in the new meetinghouse, the first commodious house of worship built by Reformers in the Western Reserve.

The throng of people in attendance gave a convention-like atmosphere to the three-day conference. Friday was spent singing, fellowshiping, preaching, and giving reports. On Saturday when the Reverend Rigdon had the floor he introduced an argument “to show our pretensions to follow the apostles in all their New Testament teachings, required a community of

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376 Arthur B. Deming, “Stephen H. Hart’s Statement,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 2, (Apr. 1888), pg. 3, col. 2-3.

377 Arthur B. Deming, “Reuben P. Harmon,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. I, no. 2, (Apr. 1888), pg. 1, col. 4.

378 Amos Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve* (Cincinnati: Chase and Hall, 1875), 298-99.

goods; that as they establish their order in the model church at Jerusalem, we were bound to imitate their example.”

Campbell, in attendance, considered any attempt to introduce communal practices highly impractical. Furthermore, he was not a man who could share his “throne” with anyone, and those who challenged his leadership were quickly cut down. Not even best friends were spared if they assumed the prerogatives he felt belonged to him alone.

In a thirty-minute rejoinder Campbell opposed Rigdon, declaring New Testament communitarianism a “special circumstance, that the matter of Ananias and Sapphira put an end to it, and that it was always understood even then to be on a voluntary basis.” He quoted passages of later scripture which called for contributions for benevolence, showing that no such communal system prevailed in apostolic times. Rigdon made no rebuttal, and the matter never came up during the gathering.

That Rigdon would broach the subject of communitarianism at all is surprising, for Campbell’s opposition had been made known at least three years before his debate with Owen. Although Campbell technically did not oppose the principle, he believed it could result in confusion and ruin, and individuals that joined such experiments to avoid working for their own living. Perhaps Rigdon felt he could sway the group against Campbell, personally championing a cause he so strongly believed in. Or maybe he remembered Campbell’s 1814 interest in removing the Brush Run Church in a body to Zanesville, Ohio, to establish cooperative Christian colony with church, school, and other features.

Regardless of his reason, Rigdon was deeply crushed by Campbell’s rejection and he was not the type to feel no rancor. Scorn infuriated him and left him the urge to retaliate. En route to his home in Mentor, he stopped at a friend’s house and commented, “I have done as much in this reformation as Campbell and Scott, and yet they get all the honor.”<sup>379</sup>

Was this the last straw that broke the camel’s back for Rigdon when he turned his back on the restoration movement? Was he trying to win some over in order to bring forth the Book of Mormon soon? We most likely will never know the answers to those questions.

This doctrine is found in the ***BOM***.

**3rd Nephi 26:17-19** states: “And it came to pass that the disciples whom

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<sup>379</sup> Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 54-55.

Jesus had chosen began from that time forth to baptize and to teach as many as did come unto them; and as many as were baptized in the name of Jesus were filled with the Holy Ghost. And many of them saw and heard unspeakable things, which are not lawful to be written. And they taught, and did minister one to another; **and they had all things common among them** (emp. mine), every man dealing justly, one with another.”

**4th Nephi 1:3,25:** “And they **had all things common among them** (emp. mine); therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift... And from that time forth they did have their goods and their substance no more common among them.”

## **2. Miracles were to be continuous beyond the 1st century A.D.**

The Bible teaches that the age of miracles has passed away when the New Testament system was completed (1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:7-16; Jude 3).

In the Book of Mormon, it is evident in various passages that it asserts that miracles were to be continuous beyond the first century A.D.

(a) In the August 1824 edition of the *Christian Baptist*, Alexander Campbell had received various questions from “a diligent student of the Bible.” This was most likely Sidney Rigdon who asked these questions.

(b) “THE following QUERIES came from the pen of a diligent student of the Bible. We have no room to attend to them in the present number. We wish our readers to attempt, each, to answer them for himself. We shall attend to them hereafter:

**1st. The order of the first churches when supernatural gifts were abundant, being discovered; what, if any example, will it form to us who live in these last days when supernatural gifts have ceased?** (emp. mine)

2d. What duty or duties are peculiar to the Bishop and not common to the brethren?

3d. Was it the Bishops who chiefly spoke in the first churches where they presided, or did they commonly sit as judges (1 Cor. xiv. 29.) to correct, &c. while the brethren edified the body in love? Eph. iv. 16.

4th. What are the peculiar duties of a Deacon!

5th. Was it to the deaconship that those seven mentioned in Acts, 6th

chap. were appointed, or what were they?”<sup>380</sup>

(c) **Robert Richardson** (Campbell’s biographer) wrote: “Meanwhile, Rigdon had been for some time diligently engaged in endeavoring, by obscure hints and glowing millennial theories, to excite the imaginations of his hearers, and in seeking by fanciful interpretations of Scripture to prepare the minds of the churches of Northern Ohio for something extraordinary in the near future. He sought especially in private to convince certain influential persons that, along with the primitive gospel, **supernatural gifts and miracles ought to be restored, and that, as at the beginning, all things should be held in common** (emp. mine). From his want of personal influence, however, he failed in disseminating his views, except to a very limited extent. In Mentor, where he resided, he was quite unsuccessful, but was more fortunate in Kirtland, the adjoining town, where a flourishing church became much disturbed and unsettled by his plausible theories and brilliant declamations.

Immediately upon the publication of the “Book of Mormon,” Smith organized his dupes and abettors at Palmyra into the “Church of Latter-Day Saints,” and sent forth his “apostles” to convert the people. Two of these, Cowdery and Pratt, soon made their appearance in Mentor, and were received as old acquaintances by Rigdon, who at once publicly endorsed their claims, and, with several others, was immersed into the new faith, which he immediately endeavored to propagate at Palmyra. The people there, however, knowing too well the character of Smith to believe that he could be charged with a heavenly message, treated the whole affair with contempt and ridicule. It became necessary, therefore, to change the basis of operations to some region where Smith was unknown, and the point selected was Kirtland, **where the minds of the people had already become to some extent prepared by Rigdon** (emp. mine), and where about one-half of the members of the church were soon led away into the delusion and filled with the wildest fanaticism. Mormon “elders” and “apostles” were speedily sent forth, who traversed Northern Ohio and gained many proselytes among the ignorant and superstitious, and some even among persons of intelligence, who had been filled with vague expectations of a speedy millennium.”<sup>381</sup>

\_\_\_\_ Alexander Campbell had written about the duration of the miraculous gifts  
380 *The Christian Baptist*, Vol. II. Buffalo, Brooke Co., Va., August 2, 1824. No. 1. A FAMILIAR DIALOGUE Between the Editor and a Clergyman. Part II. 23

381 Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell : embracing a view of the origin, progress and principles of the religious reformation which he advocated* - Vol. 2 (Religious Book Service: Indianapolis, Indiana) , 345-47.



that they would not extend beyond the first century A.D. He wrote: "ESSAYS ON THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE SALVATION OF MEN. NO. III. SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

David the king and prophet foretold that when Messiah the Lord would ascend to his throne, he would bestow gifts upon men. This passage of Psalm lviii. 18. Paul (Eph. iv. 8.) applies to our Lord. When he ascended he saith, "he gave," and by spiritual gifts qualified "some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." Peter also, on the day of Pentecost, ascribed all the stupendous gifts vouchsafed on that day to the Lord Jesus. "Therefore," says he, (Acts ii. 33) "being exalted by the right hand of God, and having received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He hath poured out that which you now see and hear." These "distributions of the Holy Spirit," as Macknight renders Heb. ii. 4. issued in the perfect qualification of Apostles with "the word of wisdom;" Prophets with the "word of knowledge;" Evangelists with "tongues and miracles;" Pastors with an immediate possession of all the requisites to feeding the flock, and Teachers with the means necessary to instructing the novitiates in all the Christian doctrine. It may be necessary to remark, that the pastors and teachers mentioned in this passage are to be distinguished from the ordinary bishops or elders of a Christian church, inasmuch as the elders or bishops are to be qualified by ordinary means and to be selected by their brethren for the possession of those ordinary attainments mentioned by Paul in his epistles; whereas those pastors and teachers given on the ascension of the Lord, were as instantaneously prepared for their offices as Paul was made an Apostle; they were not only converted to the Christian faith, but, in an instant, by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, qualified to teach the whole religion. That this is no conjecture, but matter of fact, will appear from Eph. iv. 8-13. Three things are distinctly stated in this context to which we refer the reader, and these three must be distinctly noticed to understand the passage. The first is, that these apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, were gifts bestowed by Jesus the Lord on his receiving the throne of the universe. The second is, that they were given for an immediate exigency, or for a purpose which the infant state of the church required, that is, saith the apostle Paul, (v. 12.) "for the sake of fitting the saints for the work of the ministry, in order to the building of the body of Christ" -- (Macknight) -- for fitting the converted

Jews and Gentiles for the ordinary work of the ministry or service requisite to the building of the church. The third is, that these supernaturally endowed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, were to continue only for a limited time, marked by an adverb in Greek and English, which always denotes the time how long -- *mechri*, “until we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, even to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, that we, the church, be not always composed of *nepioi*, babes.” -- Dr. Macknight in the following words: “These supernaturally endowed teachers are to continue in the church until, being fully instructed by their discourses and writings, we all who compose the church, come through one faith and knowledge of the son of God, to perfect manhood as a church, even to the measure of the stature which when full grown it ought to have: so that the church thus instructed and enlarged, is able to direct and defend itself without supernatural aid.”

These three things being noticed, it is evident that these apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, were all supernatural characters, for a precise object, and for a limited time; that this object was answered by their discourses and writings, and, that this limited time has expired. For the benefit of those of weak understanding it may be observed, that although apostles were appointed before Pentecost, even from the commencement of the Lord’s ministry, yet they were not qualified fully for this peculiar work, until endowed with those supernatural gifts bestowed on Messiah’s sitting down on the throne of his Father, after his ascension into heaven; and consequently, it might be said, most justly, that on his ascension, “he gave apostles,” as well as “prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.” It may also be noticed for the benefit of the same class of readers, that while the word of wisdom was given to one -- the word of knowledge to another -- faith to work miracles to a third; to another the gifts of healing; to another the inworkings of powers, that is ability to produce or work in others the ability of working miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another diverse kinds of foreign tongues; [added in reprints: “to another the interpretation of foreign tongues”] by one and the same Spirit; yet some individuals possessed more than one of those gifts, and the apostles many, if not all of them; and one in particular, which distinguished them from, and elevated them above all others, viz. the ability of conferring some particular gift by the imposition of their hands.

These gifts differed both in their nature and dignity, and some envied

those possessed of the more splendid gifts, which gave rise to the apostle Paul's illustration of these gifts, in the 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of his first epistle to the Corinthians, where he shows that although there was a great diversity of gifts, yet the matter of those gifts, if I may so speak, was the same; for they were all distributions of the same Spirit; their object was the same, for they were ministries of the same Lord; and their origin or authority was the same, for the same God inworked them in all the spiritual men. And while some were eminent for the word of wisdom, which appears to have been the doctrine of the gospel communicated by inspiration; others for the word of knowledge, or an inspired knowledge of the types and prophecies in the ancient revelations; others for faith which, as a spiritual gift, "led the spiritual men, without hesitation, to attempt the working of miracles;" \* others for the gifts of healing, &c. &c. it was to be remembered that these distributions or these manifestations of the Spirit were given to every member of the church of Corinth; or a manifestation of the Spirit was given to every spiritual man to profit withal, not for his own honor or benefit, but for the good of the brotherhood; which the apostle in the subsequent context compares to a human body composed of many members -- no member created for itself, or for its own benefit, but for the service of the whole.

To shew more fully the nature and use of those gifts, it may be necessary to take a view of the church of Corinth, of which church the apostle says, "It came behind in no gift." "You," says he, speaking to the Corinthians, "are enriched with every gift by him, even with all speech and knowledge." "When the testimony of Christ was confirmed among you by the miracles which I wrought and the spiritual gifts I conferred on you, so that you come behind in no gift." In the history of this church, then, we may expect to learn the nature and use of those gifts, to as much advantage as from the history of any other.

Corinth at this time was the metropolis of the province of Achaia, and was as famous as Athens itself for the Grecian arts and sciences. Cicero calls it "totius Graeciae lumen," the light of all Greece; and Florus calls it "Graeciae decus," the ornament of Greece. Refined and intelligent as Corinth was by Grecian sciences and arts, it was, through its luxuries and wealth, the most dissolute, lascivious, and debauched city in its day. Here Paul preached and taught for 18 months the doctrine of Christ, and converted a very numerous church, composed of some distinguished Jews, but chiefly of the idolatrous and profligate Pagans. Luke tells us, "Many of the Corinthians, hearing,

believed and were baptized.” From the history of this church, gathered from the Acts of the Apostles and these epistles, it appears that there was a schism in it, envying, strife, and many irregularities; so that the presence of those gifts did not place the church out of the reach of those human corruptions, but were necessary to the illumination and confirmation of the disciples in the faith which purified the heart by its intrinsic influences. Indeed, we find that even the spiritual men themselves needed the word of exhortation and admonition for their imprudence in the management of those gifts; which at once teaches us that those gifts had no general influence, and were not necessarily productive of the appropriate effects of the saving and sanctifying truth in the minds of the subjects of them. No wonder, then, that the Apostle Paul commended the cultivation of brotherly love as a “more excellent way” than the coveting of the most splendid gifts. It is evident from the face of the first epistle, that even among the spiritual men there were blemishes and imprudences that required the castigation of the apostle. The apostle, indeed, settles the contest about the precedence of those gifts, and places them in due subordination to one another. A free and full translation of the 28th verse represents the matter thus: “The chief members of the church are thus to be ranked as God has distinguished them by gifts. First, apostles, who being endowed with the word of wisdom, from them all must receive the knowledge of the gospel. Secondly, the superior prophets, who, possessing the word of knowledge, are qualified to interpret the ancient revelations. Thirdly, teachers, embracing all who boldly declare the doctrine of Christ, illustrate it, and confirm it by miracles. Next, those who communicate to others the spiritual powers. Then, those who possess the gifts of healing diseases. Helpers, who, speaking by inspiration to the edification of the church, are fitted to assist the superior teachers, and to help the faith and joy of others. Directors, who, by the gift of discerning spirits, are fitted to direct the church. Lastly, persons who, having the gift of speaking different kinds of foreign languages, can preach to every nation in its own language.” But yet the church can never be composed of all such, no more than the body can be all eye or all ear; for, says the apostle, “Are all apostles? Are all prophets?” No, indeed. The nature of those gifts, however splendid, was evidently only adapted, and their use merely designed, to illustrate and confirm that doctrine, which in its primary and essential results, when received and understood, purges, purifies, elevates, and ennobles the mind of the recipient. Hence the Holy

One prayed, "Sanctify them through your truth."

Again, when the Lord spake of the Holy Spirit, (which was to proceed from his Father and himself, when he should be glorified,) he assured his disciples that this Monitor would testify of him, and would not only conduct them into all truth, but when he is come, "he will convince the world concerning sin, and concerning righteousness, and concerning judgment: concerning sin, because they believe not on me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the Prince of this World is judged. He will glorify me." The signs and wonders, and distributions of this Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul declared were the confirmations by which Jesus was glorified in the world, and the testimony of the witnesses rendered credible and omnipotent. So, on Pentecost, the unbelieving Jews were convinced of their sin in not believing that Jesus was Lord Messiah, by the Holy Spirit confirming their word by signs following or accompanying. They, were convinced of his righteousness, or of his being the righteous Messenger of Jehovah, by the proofs the Spirit gave of his having been well received in heaven by his Father; and they were convinced of judgment, because it was evident from the testimony of the apostles, confirmed by those splendid signs of the Holy Spirit, that, by his cross, Jesus had triumphed over principalities and powers, and had vanquished him that had the power of death. Thus the Saviour promised and thus it was performed, and thus the world, infidel.

Jews and infidel Gentiles, were convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. The Apostle Paul also declares in that same epistle, chapter xiv. that "foreign languages are for a sign, not to believers, but to unbelievers." Now the sign by which the Holy Spirit glorified Jesus on the day of Pentecost, was that of foreign tongues; diverse, or separated tongues of fire, appeared on the heads of the witnesses, and they spake in foreign tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. This, then, was such a sign to the unbelieving Jews as to convince three thousand of them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and hence they gladly received the word that announced to them the remission of their sins and the promise of the Holy Spirit. Thus the word came in "demonstration of the Spirit and with power," and their faith rested not on the wisdom of human reason, but on the power of God, thus exhibited with the word.

In our next essay this same topic will be further illustrated. As we promised to investigate this important subject with some degree of attention, we must



request the patience of our readers to be put into requisition; and we must also remind them, that our object is to present just what the scriptures teach on this subject, not attempting to support any system of divinity, however canonized or extolled. But in these things every disciple of Christ will suffer no man to judge for him while he is able to read the revelation of God in his own tongue -- at least such ought to be his determination. -- Ed.”<sup>382</sup>

In the *BOM*, there are a hosts of passages that assert that miracles were to be continuous:

**2 Nephi 26:20-22:** “And it shall come to pass, that those who have dwindled in unbelief shall be smitten by the hand of the Gentiles. And the Gentiles are lifted up in the pride of their eyes, and have stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block, that they have built up many churches; **nevertheless, they put down the power and miracles of God** (emp. mine), and preach up unto themselves their own wisdom and their own learning, that they may get gain and grind upon the face of the poor. And there are many churches built up which cause envyings, and strifes, and malice. And there are also secret combinations, even as in times of old, according to the combinations of the devil, for he is the founder of all these things; yea, the founder of murder, and works of darkness; yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever.”

**2 Nephi 27:22-23:** “Wherefore, when thou hast read the words which I have commanded thee, and obtained the witnesses which I have promised unto thee, then shalt thou seal up the book again, and hide it up unto me, that I may preserve the words which thou hast not read, until I shall see fit in mine own wisdom to reveal all things unto the children of men. **For behold, I am God; and I am God of miracles; and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today, and forever; and I work not among the children of men save it be according to their faith** (emp. mine).”

**Mormon 8:26:** “And no one need say they shall not come, for they surely shall, for the Lord hath spoken it; for out of the earth shall they come, by the hand of the Lord, and none can stay it; **and it shall come in a day when it shall be said that miracles are done away** (emp. mine); and it shall come even as if

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<sup>382</sup> Alexander Campbell, *The Christian Baptist*, Monday, Oct. 4, 1824, Vol. II, No. 3, “Essays On The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Salvation of Men. No. III. Spiritual Gifts.” (Gospel Advocate Co.: Nashville, TN, 1955), 296-301.

one should speak cfrom the dead.”

**Mormon 9:9-11,15,19:** “For do we not read that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing? And now, if ye have imagined up unto yourselves a god who doth vary, and in whom there is shadow of changing, then have ye imagined up unto yourselves **a god who is not a God of miracles. But behold, I will show unto you a God of miracles** (emp. mine), even the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and it is that same God who created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are... And now, O all ye that have imagined up unto yourselves a god who can do ano miracles, I would ask of you, have all these things passed, of which I have spoken? Has the end come yet? Behold I say unto you, Nay; **and God has not ceased to be a God of miracles** (emp. mine)... And if there were miracles wrought then, why has God ceased to be a God of miracles and yet be an unchangeable Being? And behold, I say unto you he changeth not; if so he would cease to be God; and he ceaseth not to be God, and is a God of miracles. And the reason why he ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men is because that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should trust”

**Moroni 7:27-29:** “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, have miracles ceased because Christ hath ascended into heaven, and hath sat down on the right hand of God, to claim of the Father his rights of mercy which he hath upon the children of men? For he hath answered the ends of the law, and he claimeth all those who have faith in him; and they who have faith in him will cleave unto every good thing; wherefore he advocateth the cause of the children of men; and he dwelleth eternally in the heavens. **And because he hath done this, my beloved brethren, have miracles ceased? Behold I say unto you, Nay; neither have angels ceased to minister unto the children of men** (emp. mine).”

**Moroni 7:35-36:** “And now, my beloved brethren, if this be the case that these things are true which I have spoken unto you, and God will show unto you, with a power and great glory at the last bday, that they are true, and if they are true has the day of miracles ceased? Or have angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he withheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them? Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved? **Behold I say unto you, Nay; for it is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased wo**

be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain (emp. mine).”

**3. Rigdon believed the Old Testament prophecies were ever to be continuous after they were fulfilled.**

Let me provide you with some examples of what I mean. Malachi 3:1 states: *“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.”* Anyone with a dose of Bible knowledge knows that this is referring in prophecy to John the Immerser, who was to prepare the way for Jesus.

Matthew 11:7-10 states: *“As they departed, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written: ‘Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.’”*

Rigdon would take Malachi 3:1 and apply it to himself as we shall read.

**(a) Look at what three followers of Rigdon stated concerning him:**

“That this servant or messenger is the same person, can admit of no doubt: gathering up the residue was the way to prepare for the coming of Christ. In searching after this person, we will do as we are required to do. “Turn to the Book of Mormon and the former commandments,” 8th section and 13th paragraph of Doctrine and Covenants, we read thus: “And now behold I give unto you (O. Cowdery), and also unto my servant Joseph, the keys of this gift, which shall bring to light this ministry.” What ministry? Surely the ministry which was to finish the work of bringing to pass the restoration of Israel, and through these means prepare the way for the coming of Christ. It is worthy of remark here, that the Spirit did not say, I give to you this ministry, but the keys to bring it to light. Did they bring it to light? In the 11th section and 2nd paragraph, the following things on this subject are found. Let us here state a fact in relation to this revelation. It was written the first time that Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon met; they had never seen each other till then. “Behold, verily, verily I say unto my servant Sidney, I have looked upon thee and thy works. I have heard thy prayers, and prepared thee for a greater

work. Thou art blessed, for thou shalt do great things. Behold thou wast sent forth even as John, to prepare the way before me and before Elijah which should come.”

Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith were told that they had the keys of this gift which should bring to light this ministry; and they say of Sidney Rigdon: “Thou art the man;” and who dare say they falsified? Here the great question is settled. Those to whom it was given to point out this ministry, have pointed to the very man, calling him by name. No dispute can ever exist among those who turn to the Book of Mormon and the former commandments about it. **Sidney Rigdon then is the messenger spoken of in Malachi: he is the one who is to gather up the residue, after all others are broken and scattered** (emp. mine).

It appears further that he was called to this work before he and Joseph ever saw each other, for the Spirit says: “Thou was sent forth even as John to prepare the way,” &c. It does not say, I will send thee forth, but thou wast sent forth before this time. Here is a great fact disclosed, -- that Joseph Smith was never called to gather Israel and prepare the way before Christ, but another man. He (Joseph) had the gift to make known who it was the Lord had chosen for this greatest of all works, but was not the man himself to do it;

To those who are seeking for an hereditary priesthood out of the family of Joseph Smith, we say they may get as many as their fancy may require, but they will never get one that will gather Israel and prepare the way before Christ, for Joseph Smith was never called to this work; nor never held the priesthood that was appointed for that purpose.

To this end let us call the attention of our readers to the 84th section, 3d paragraph, which gives the following important intelligence: “And again, verily I say unto thy brethren, Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams, their sins are forgiven them also, and they are accounted as equal with thee in holding the keys of this last kingdom; as through your administration the keys of the school of the prophets, which I have commanded to be organized, that thereby they may be perfected in their ministry for the salvation of Zion. and of the nations of Israel. and of the Gentiles, as many as will believe, that through your administration the word may go forth unto the ends of the earth, unto the Gentiles first and behold, and lo! they shall turn unto the Jews; and then cometh the day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations, the heathen nations, the house of Joseph, of the

gospel of their salvation.” 4th paragraph. “For it shall come to pass in that day, that every man shall hear the fulness of the gospel in his own tongue, and his own language, through those who are ordained unto this power, by the administration of the Comforter, and shed forth upon them for the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

The foregoing revelations are of vast import in understanding the purpose of God as manifesting itself in his economy with his Zion. In the 3d paragraph we get the fact, that in bringing to pass the redemption of Zion, and preparing the way for the coming of the Savior, there were to be two dispensations under which all things were to be accomplished. In proof of this, we have the following said to Joseph Smith: “That through your ADMINISTRATION, they may receive the word, and through their ADMINISTRATION, the word may go forth to the ends of the earth.”

Not only have we two administrations, but the work which belonged to each. Joseph Smith’s administration was to bring forth the word; the other was to send the word to the ends of the earth. Two very different operations. It is under the second administration that Israel is to be gathered, and the way prepared for the coming of Christ. This fact is so closely stated in the reference above as to leave no ground for cavil. In speaking of the priesthood which held the keys of the administration, the Spirit says: “And behold and lo! they shall turn unto the Jews.” It is an important item, in this place, that Joseph Smith is not connected in the priesthood of the second dispensation at all, consequently, his priesthood did not belong to the second dispensation.

As we are speaking of the identity of the priesthood which is to gather Israel and prepare for the coming of Christ, we will copy from the Book of Mormon, 2d chapter of the 2d Book of Nephi, speaking of the seer: “Yet I will not loose his tongue, that he shall speak much; for I will not make him mighty in speaking. **But I will write unto him my law, by the finger of mine own hand; and will make for him a spokesman. And I, behold I will give unto him, that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it** (emp. mine).”

One priesthood was to bring forth the word of the Lord, for the benefit of the Lamanites, and the other priesthood was to proclaim it to them, and thereby save them. Nothing can be plainer than the case here is. He who held the keys of the first administration, was to bring forth the word, and he who held the keys of the second, was to gather them by means of that word.



In connection with this, the 3d paragraph of the 95th section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants says: "And it is expedient in me that you, my servant Sidney, should be a spokesman unto this people; yea, verily, I will ordain you to this calling, even to be a spokesman unto my servant Joseph." **The Lord had said, in the Book of Mormon, that he would raise up to Joseph Smith a spokesman; and the Spirit said, in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, that Sidney Rigdon was that spokesman** (emp. mine). The case then stands thus: Joseph Smith was to translate the Book of Mormon, and Sidney Rigdon was to take it, and gather Israel.

**Here is the sum of the whole matter. The prophet Malachi had said that before Christ came, he would send his messenger, and he should prepare the way before him. Joseph Smith said that Sidney Rigdon was that messenger. The Spirit said that the Lord would raise up a spokesman to Joseph Smith, and Joseph Smith said that Sidney was that spokesman. The Lord said he would prepare a priesthood with which he would gather Israel. Joseph Smith said that Sidney Rigdon held that priesthood** (emp. mine)."<sup>383</sup>

Josiah Ells, a former follower of Rigdon, reviewed the book: "Bro. Isaac Sheen: -- In a former communication I apprized you **that Sidney Rigdon had published and sent forth a pamphlet entitled "An Appeal to the Latter-Day Saints."** (emp. mine) The names of J. H. Newton, W. Richards and W. Stanley, are set forth as its authors, yet to us who know the parties, and are familiar with the tone and style of Sidney's ringing of changes [sic - charges?] upon the same idea, **is conclusive to us of its authorship** (emp. mine). He has been trying for some time to form a nucleus as a starting point.... In the "Appeal" he assumes the right to the Presidency of the Priesthood, in virtue of sundry ordinations and certain prophecies in the B. of M. and D. and C...."<sup>384</sup>

Cobb wrote concerning this book: "There is a little, out-of-the-way pamphlet which Mormons should get, and which they should read, mark, and inwardly digest... to a work known as Rigdon's Appeal... This was published as late as 1863, and purports to have been written by three of Rigdon's friends. They may have written parts of it -- not all. The fierce and trampling "hoof" is too apparent here and there. If read with care (and, as the saying is, between the lines,) this Appeal tells who the fabricator of Mormonism was. The fact

<sup>383</sup> Joseph H. Newton, William Richards, and William Stanley, *An Appeal to the Latter-Day Saints* (Philadelphia: Printed for the Authors, 1863), 23-30.

<sup>384</sup> Josiah Ells, "First Review of "An Appeal To The Latter Day-Saints." *The True Latter-Day Saints' Herald*, Plano, Ill., January 15, 1864, Vol. 5, No. 2.

that Rigdon himself was this real, though hidden weaver and fabricator of Mormonism, has been an open secret among the more enlightened and discerning, inside as well as outside of Mormondom, from the very first.”<sup>385</sup>

Rigdon stated concerning himself in the third person: “Not only did the writings of the New Testament occupy his attention, **but occasionally those of the ancient prophets, particularly those prophecies which had reference to the present and to the future, were brought up to review and treated in a manner entirely new, and deeply interesting** (emp. mine). No longer did he follow the old beaten track, which had been travelled for ages by the religious world **but he dared to enter upon new grounds** (emp. mine); called in question the opinions of uninspired men; shewed the foolish ideas of many commentators on the sacred scriptures -- exposed their ignorance and contradictions -- threw new light on the sacred volume, particularly those prophecies which so deeply interest this generation and which had been entirely overlooked, or mystified by the religious world -- cleared up scriptures which had heretofore appeared inexplicable, and delighted his astonished audience with things “new and old” -- proved to a demonstration the literal fulfilment of prophecy, the gathering of Israel in the last days, to their ancient inheritances, with their ultimate splendor and glory; the situation of the world at the coming of the Son of Man -- the judgments which Almighty God would pour out upon the ungodly, prior to that event, and the reign of Christ with his saints on the earth, in the millenium.”<sup>386</sup>

If indeed it is the case that Rigdon believed that Old Testament prophecies were continuous even after they were fulfilled, then this is significant because Joseph Smith claimed in his 1838 personal history that the angel visitor Moroni quoted from the Book of Malachi in his 1823 visit:

“[Moroni] quoted part of the third chapter of Malachi and he quoted also the fourth or last chapter of the same prophecy, though with a little variation from the way it reads in our Bibles...”<sup>387</sup>

Here is an example where an OT prophecy, which clearly points to the coming of John the Immerser, the forerunner for Jesus (Mark 1:1-3), was used

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385 James T. Cobb, “Rigdon’s Part In Mormonism,” *The Salt Lake Daily Tribune*, Salt Lake City, Utah, Wednesday, September 17, 1879, Vol. XVII. No. 29.

386 Sidney Rigdon, “History of Joseph Smith (Continued).” *Times And Seasons*, Nauvoo, IL, June 1, 1843, Vol. IV, No. 14.

387 Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, Vol. 1:36. Link: <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/pgp/js-h/1?lang=eng&id=p2#subtitle1>

again to be used in the LDS system.

2nd Nephi 27 misuses Isaiah 29 to prophecy about the coming forth of the **BOM**, but if a person reads the historical context of Isaiah 29, it is referring to Jerusalem (Ariel) and how they were blinded spiritually during Isaiah's time.

Sections of the Old Testament that were copied almost verbatim include:

Isaiah 48-49 in 1 Nephi 20-21

Isaiah 50-51 in 2 Nephi 7-8

Isaiah 2-14 in 2 Nephi 12-24

Isaiah 54 in 3 Nephi 22

Malachi 3-4 in 3 Nephi 24-25.

## Chapter 17:

### The Book of Mormon Endorses The Disciples of Christ's Views

There is a particular reason why I had a desire to write this book. One of the main reasons is what we will find in this chapter. I wrote already about the foundational principles of the restoration principle and the seed principle. Both of these principles are valid and sound as already been demonstrated. We see that there were men who sought to go back to the Bible. Although they were flawed, I highly doubt anyone would be against the idea of seeking to go back to the ways of God in what He taught through His word.

If as we have argued throughout this book that Rigdon had Solomon Spalding's *Manuscript Found*, then perhaps it is worth quoting what Brian Ready wrote concerning this matter. Ready wrote a Master's thesis concerning William Whitsitt and his unpublished magnum opus on *Sidney Rigdon - The Real Founder of Mormonism*.

In Ready's thesis, he writes something retelling that I believe does fit within the framework of why Rigdon would try to justify himself in upgrading a novel to a "inspired" religious text to be used for later.

Ready writes: "Whitsitt has some extremely strong arguments supporting his position. These arguments need to be heard and addressed by the larger world of scholars engaged in Mormon studies. For if Whitsitt is correct, an alternative understanding of the origin of Mormonism is now available. For years only two alternatives have presented themselves: (1) Joseph Smith, Jr. and the early leaders of Mormonism were frauds intent on deceiving the faithful; or (2) Joseph Smith, Jr. was truly a prophet of God. **Whitsitt provides us with a third alternative to this long-standing prophet-fraud dichotomy -- early Mormon leaders were sincere men trying to restore the true Church of Christ. The Book of Mormon was a pseudepigraphal attempt to provide a foundation for their movement** (emp. mine). Joseph Smith, Jr. was merely a figurehead employed by Rigdon to lead the movement, but Smith's charisma overpowered the influence of Rigdon and eventually gave him total control of the movement."<sup>388</sup>

You may have noticed I titled this "the Disciples of Christ's views." Just because someone may hold a view does not make that view either true or false. It must be

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<sup>388</sup> Brian Eugene Ready, "William Heth Whitsitt: Insights Into Early Mormonism" (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, M.S. thesis, December 2001), 4.

based on the Word of God. What we need to understand in regards to this section is that the more views of the Disciples of Christ that are found and endorsed in the **BOM**, the stronger our case becomes. This is highly likely because of what Sidney Rigdon had learned from the Disciples (such as Alexander Campbell, Walter Scott, etc.) and had incorporated them into the **BOM**. However, we must be like the noble Bereans to search whether these views are the truth (Acts 17:1-3). We must use the Bible to test the teachings of what people have taught [even such men like Campbell and Scott] (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

While the early church in the first century had the miraculous gift of the “discerning of spirits” (1 Corinthians 12:4-11) for detecting false teachers and those who teach error (1 John 2:18-27; Revelation 2:2), we must investigate the whole written word of God to find whether or not it is the truth.

#### **a. Jesus is the Jewish Christ/Messiah.**

Almost every denomination believes this view. So this does not necessarily make it a strong case that Rigdon adopted this view when he was among the Disciples. I will admit this one is very weak. However, it is very interesting how this was a very strong view of Walter Scott that Rigdon partnered with for some time when they served together in Pittsburgh.

Toulouse wrote: “For Scott, the fundamental principle upon which all other propositions rested was the one declared by Peter in Matthew 16:16: Christ is “the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” He described it as a “first principle” within Christianity, “the fundamental proposition of the whole religion.” The first principle describes that which is entirely self-evident, the proposition upon which every other proposition is built. The declaration of Christ as Messiah, as Son of the living God, served, for Scott, as the first principle of Christianity, the one self-evident proposition that served as the foundation for both salvation and construction of the church. At the time of Christ’s baptism, God provided first-person confirmation of the truth of this proposition: “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well-pleased” (Matt. 3:17). Belief in the proposition asserting the “Messiahship” of Jesus formed the central “first principle” of the restored gospel. Or, as Scott put it in *The Gospel Restored* (1836), “This oracle is, therefore...the creed of Christianity, original Christianity; and he who believes the fact may become a Christian.”<sup>389</sup>

389 Mark G. Toulouse, “Walter Scott,” *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement*. Eds. Douglas A.



Walter Scott even acknowledged that the **BOM** used it. Whitsitt wrote: “Mr. Scott observed the similarity of the tenets set forth in the Book of Mormon, to those which he was himself engaged in proclaiming, He refers to the fact in the following terms: “But how the great revelation came to overflow in our present method of advocating the gospel, and how the Mormon impostor came into (furtive) possession of that method, and made to himself a numerous people, it avails not to depend. This last may be seen proven in the Evangelist (magazine)” (The Messiahship, p. 6).”<sup>390</sup>

**2 Nephi 26:12 states:** “And as I spake concerning the convincing of the Jews, that Jesus is the very Christ, it must needs be that the Gentiles be convinced also that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God;”

**Mormon 5:14 states:** “And behold, they shall go unto the unbelieving of the Jews; and for this intent shall they go—that they may be cpersuaded that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; that the Father may bring about, through his most Beloved, his great and eternal purpose, in restoring the Jews, or all the house of Israel, to the dland of their inheritance, which the Lord their God hath given them, unto the fulfilling of his covenant;”

**Moroni 7:44 states:** “If so, his faith and hope is vain, for none is acceptable before God, save the meek and lowly in heart; and if a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; for if he have not charity he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity.”

Another point to make from all this is why is the **BOM**, which was written in Reformed Egyptian, translating it into the Greek-English transliterated title - “Christ,” not Anointed One or Messiah? Also, sometimes what we see throughout the **BOM** is that it will have an interchangeability between “Messiah” and “Christ” (“Messiah” - 2 Nephi 25:14,16,18,19; 26:3; “Christ” - 2 Nephi 25 :16,19,20,23,24,25,26,27,28,29; 26:1,8,12; 27:11; 28:14; 30:5,7). That to me shows its man-made origin.

## **b. The millenium**

Many of the Disciples of Christ held the view of what is known as postmillennialism. It was a common view that was held by many during that Foster, Paul M. Blowers, Anthony L. Dunn, and D. Newell Williams, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 2004), 678.

390 William Heth Whitsitt, “Sidney Rigdon, The Real Founder of Mormonism,” (Unpublished MS., Library of Congress AC1158), 411. Link: <http://sidneyrigdon.com/wht/1891WhE6.htm#pg402>.

time period.

Van Wagoner (the biographer of Rigdon) quoted Amos Hayden: “There were many at that time who believed the millennium was at hand, and in 1830, there were many who were convinced it had dawned... the long expected day of gospel glory would be ushered in... These glowing expectations formed the staple of many sermons... they were the continued and exhaustless topic of conversation. They animated the hope and inspired the zeal to a high degree of the converts and many of the advocates of the gospel. Millennial hymns were learned and sung with joyful fervor and hope surpassing the conception of worldly and carnal professors. It was amid a people full of these expectations, and with hearts fired with these things, that Mormonism was brought, and small wonder that it found a welcome.”<sup>391</sup>

Benson wrote: “To characterize Campbell’s primary motives as restoration and Christian unity is to misinterpret him. In addition to defending Christianity, Campbell’s main goal was bringing forth the Millenium. In his mind, the “restoration of primitive Christianity would bring Christian unity, which, in turn, would bring the millennial dawn.” In other words, the purpose of his restoration was to unite Christians, and unity would bring the Millenium, the end objective. ...Campbell’s optimistic worldview “imagined that human progress would usher in the kingdom of God or rule of God (the Millenium) and that Jesus would return only at the conclusion of that golden age.”<sup>392</sup>

Even Sidney Rigdon held to this eschatological view.

Ridgon wrote concerning himself: “proved to a demonstration the literal fulfillment of prophecy, the gathering of Israel in the last days, to their ancient inheritances, with their ultimate splendor and glory; the situation of the world at the coming of the Son of Man-the judgments which Almighty God would pour out upon the ungodly, prior to that event, and the reign of Christ with his saints on the earth, in the millennium.”<sup>393</sup>

Alexander Campbell referred to Rigdon as “a flaming literalist of the school of [Elias] Smith a Millenarian of the first water.”<sup>394</sup>

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391 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 61.

392 RoseAnn Benson, *Alexander Campbell and Joseph Smith: 19th-Century Restorationists* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2017), 371-372.

393 <http://sidneyrigdon.com/Rigd1843.htm>

394 Alexander Campbell, *Millenial Harbringer* 1 (Dec. 1837): 578.

### **c. Apostasies in the early church**

I want to refer you back to the restoration principle argument found earlier in the book and re-read the chapter if need be. 1 Timothy 4:1 does say that **some** will depart from the faith. The LDS church teaches today that there was a COMPLETE, TOTAL apostasy of the early church.<sup>395</sup> When Joseph Smith came on the scene, it was said that he brought the COMPLETE restoration.

The fact of the matter is that anyone who desires and does return to what the Bible teaches can do so (just as was discussed in the seed principle). They did not have to wait for Joseph Smith or Alexander Campbell to come along.

It is the Bible, which is the ultimate standard, that shows us whether we have drifted away from its true teachings (Hebrews 2:1-4). We know that if we follow the restoration principle and the seed principle, then one can just become a Christian.

There have been falling aways that have taken place such as the formation of the Roman Catholic church and the divisions that were created in the Protestant Reformation. What is wonderful though is that one can go back to the Bible and **just be a Christian**.

Campbell did teach that there was a great apostasy that would necessitate a restoration of the doctrines and practices of New Testament Christianity. Campbell referred to this as a restoration of the “Ancient Order of Things,” which he wrote about in *The Christian Baptist* over many issues.

Campbell had greatly influenced Sidney Rigdon in this direction of the principle of restoration. Unfortunately, Rigdon had taken it to an illogical extreme of the restoration of miraculous gifts.

### **d. Rigdon *may* have believed that the name of the church ought to be called “the church of Christ.”**

In the Bible, we recognize that there are what is known as *descriptions* of the church.

For example, the church is called:

- (1) the church (Acts 2:47)
- (2) the church of God (Acts 20:28)
- (3) the churches of Christ (Romans 16:16)
- (4) the household of God (1 Timothy 3:15)
- (5) the Israel of God (Galatians 6:16)

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<sup>395</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lJnN2FkgD-g>.

- (6) the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27)
- (7) the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:16,17)
- (8) the field of God (1 Corinthians 3:9)
- (9) Christians (Acts 11:26)

There is technically no *official* name for the church.

White wrote: “One of the first problems which concerned the Disciples was the name they were to wear. Very early, the Campbells and others insisted upon a pure speech, i.e., “calling Bible things by Bible names.” They rejected such names as “Lutheran,” on the ground that honor was paid to a human being rather than to Christ. “Baptist,” “Episcopalian,” and the like, were undesirable because they called attention to some distinctive belief or type of organization. All sectarian names were divisive, while the body of Christ should be united...

The Mormons have followed the same pattern of thought. However, the matter of choosing a name was simplified for them, in that a revelation was received, not only naming the church, but giving the exact date of its inaugurations: The rise of the Church of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the flesh.

At a conference of the elders, May 3, 1834, the name of the church was changed to “The Church of the Latter-Day Saints.” Rigdon made the motion. The intent was to avoid the nickname Mormon, since the name “Christian” was not specific enough for the gentiles. The new name conformed to Rigdon’s view of an imminent millennium.

In Rigdon’s zeal over their being saints of the pre- millennial era, he completely forgot the name of Christ. The Lord noted the defect, so that on April 26, 1838, another revelation was received commanding that: “Thus shall my church be called in the last days, even the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.”

The Latter-Day saints were following in the footsteps of their predecessors, for the Book of Mormon tells of the same argumentation on this continent eighteen hundred years earlier. Rigdon pictures the Nephites much troubled, so that when Jesus asks their needs, they reply: “Lord, we will that thou wouldst tell us the name whereby we shall call this church; for there are disputations among the people concerning the matter. And the Lord said

unto them: “Have they not read the scriptures, which say ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name? For by this name shall ye be called at the last day.”

One needs to be versed in the period of Rigdon and Smith to appreciate this point.”<sup>396</sup>

Alexander Campbell wrote concerning these sectarian names: “Protestant bodies are all founded upon Protestant peculiarities. Indeed, there is but one radical and distinctive plea in any of them. That is their center of attraction and of radiation. They baptize themselves at the laver of that idea, and assume the name of it, whatever it may be, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Methodist, etc., etc. They build on what is peculiar, and thus, in effect, undervalue that which is common to them all. And yet, themselves being judges, that which is common is much more valuable than that which is peculiar. The sub-basis of all parties is the tenet which is their cognomen.”<sup>397</sup>

Certainly there is scriptural precedent to be made that we ought **not** to wear sectarian names. Do you remember how the church at Corinth sadly started to carve themselves up into four different groups and all held up a name after a teacher that had taught them?

**1 Corinthians 1:10-17:** *“Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe’s household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, “I am of Paul,” or “I am of Apollos,” or “I am of Cephas,” or “I am of Christ.” Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.”*

Even Martin Luther himself wrote: “I ask that men make no reference to my name; let them call themselves Christians, not Lutherans. What is Luther?

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396 Joseph Welles White, *The Influence of Sidney Rigdon Upon The Theology of Mormonism* (University of Southern California Graduate School of Religion, M.A. Thesis, 1947), 107-110.

397 Alexander Campbell, *Christian Baptism* (Bethany, [VA]: Alexander Campbell, 1851), 17.



After all, the teaching is not mine [John 7:16]. Neither was I crucified for anyone [I Cor. 1:13]. St. Paul, in I Corinthians 3, would not allow the Christians to call themselves Pauline or Petrine, but Christian. How then should I—poor stinking maggot-fodder that I am—come to have men call the children of Christ by my wretched name?”<sup>398</sup>

White further states: “Alexander Campbell preferred the term “Disciples of Christ,” because, he argued: it is more ancient; it is more descriptive; it is more scriptural; and it is had not been appropriated by any sect.

His father preferred the name “Christian,” as did Barton W. Stone. However, none of them was contentious, believing that any name sanctioned by the New Testament was permissible.”<sup>399</sup>

Murch wrote: “The name. In 1804, Stone and his group had settled on the name Christian as being the proper designation for the followers of Christ and the name of the church. He and other leaders believed that the name was of divine origin and often quoted Dr. Philip Doddridge’s translation of Acts 11:26, “The disciples were by divine appointment first named Christians in Antioch.”

Alexander Campbell preferred the name Disciples of Christ, and as late as 1839 he stated four reasons in the *Millennial Harbinger*:

1. It is more ancient. The disciples were first called disciples in Judea, Galilee, Samaria, and among the Gentiles before they were called Christians at Antioch.

2. It is more descriptive. A person may be named after a country or a political leader and feel it “an insult to be called the pupils or disciples of the person whose name they wear.” A stranger might imagine that Christian, like American or Roman, had some reference to a country, rather than a scholarship. Disciples of Christ is a more accurate designation than Christian.

3. It is more scriptural. In the Acts, the term “Disciple” is used 30 times and “Christian” but twice.

4. It is more unappropriated Unitarians and Arians use “Christian” but no other people use “Disciples of Christ.”

The Stone view, however, was favored by Thomas Campbell and by Walter Scott, and the name Christian prevailed over much of the nation. Disciples

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398 Martin Luther, (1999). *Luther’s Works, vol. 45 : The Christian in Society II*. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 45, p. 70). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

399 Joseph Welles White, *The Influence of Sidney Rigdon Upon The Theology of Mormonism*, 108.

or Reformers came to use the name Christian to designate the church and the name Disciple to designate the individual Christian. Those who saw the controversy as useless held that “any name that is a Scriptural name is a proper name for the church.”<sup>400</sup>

Toulouse wrote: “Walter Scott’s endorsement of premillennialism, and his openness to William Miller’s predictions of Christ’s return in 1844, contributed to a degree of estrangement that had begun to develop between Alexander Campbell and Scott. **Their feuding had other sources as well. The two of them had argued over whether the movement ought to use the name “Christian” or “Disciple.”** (emp. mine) Scott advocated the former, while Campbell stood for the latter.”<sup>401</sup>

The Book of Mormon does discuss this disputation that arises about the name of the church.

**3 Nephi 27:1-11:** “And it came to pass that as the disciples of Jesus were journeying and were preaching the things which they had both heard and seen, and were baptizing in the name of Jesus, it came to pass that the disciples were gathered together and were united in mighty prayer and fasting. And Jesus again showed himself unto them, for they were praying unto the Father in his name; and Jesus came and stood in the midst of them, and said unto them: What will ye that I shall give unto you? And they said unto him: Lord, we will that thou wouldst tell us the name whereby we shall call this church; for there are disputations among the people concerning this matter. And the Lord said unto them: Verily, verily, I say unto you, why is it that the people should murmur and dispute because of this thing? Have they not read the scriptures, which say ye must take upon you the name of Christ, which is my name? For by this name shall ye be called at the last day; And whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day. Therefore, whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name; therefore ye shall call the church in my name; and ye shall call upon the Father in my name that he will bless the church for my sake. And how be it a my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses’ name then it be Moses’ church; or if it be called in the name of a man then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel.

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400 James DeForest Murch, *Christians Only: A History of the Restoration Movement* (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Company, 1994), 115-116.

401 Mark G. Toulouse, “Walter Scott,” 678.

Verily I say unto you, that ye are built upon my gospel; therefore ye shall call whatsoever things ye do call, in my name; therefore if ye call upon the Father, for the church, if it be in my name the Father will hear you; And if it so be that the church is built upon my gospel then will the Father show forth his own works in it. But if it be not built upon my gospel, and is built upon the works of men, or upon the works of the devil, verily I say unto you they have joy in their works for a season, and by and by the end cometh, and they are hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence there is no return.”

#### **f. Rigdon went against the doctrine of infant baptism.**

Knowles writes: “The first step toward defining the doctrinal positions of the Restoration Movement was initiated by the birth of Alexander Campbell’s first daughter on March 13, 1812. Alexander had married Margaret Brown, the eighteen-year-old daughter of a carpenter named John Brown, on March 12, 1811. Since his wife and parents were still members of the Presbyterian Church, shortly after the birth the question of infant baptism presented itself. Up to this time Campbell does not seem to have given the subject of baptism a great deal of thought. So he gathered as many books as he could in favor of infant baptism and investigated the subject. However, studying the Greek New Testament along with these books, he came to the conclusion that infant baptism was an invention of men. In the Bible all the occasions of baptism seemed to involve only adult believers. Therefore, he decided to forgo the sprinkling of his young daughter Jane.

However, further reflection caused him to question the validity of his own experience in baptism, having himself been sprinkled as an infant in the Seceder Presbyterian Church. Some members of the Brush Run Church had already decided that the adult immersion of believers was a matter of significant importance, and Alexander Campbell began to consider the issue for himself.

Admitting that infant baptism was without warrant, the question began to assume quite a different aspect, and was no longer, “May we safely reject infant baptism as a human invention?” but, “May we omit the believer’s baptism, which all admit to be divinely commanded?”

Connecting the act of baptism as a part of the process of salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; et al.), Alexander went to visit his father and ask his opinion on the matter. Thomas does not seem to have had strong feelings one

way or the other, and made no significant objections to his son's plans for immersion. Alexander, having become acquainted with a Baptist preacher named Matthias Luce, requested that he perform the sacrament. At first Pastor Luce balked at performing the ceremony because Alexander insisted upon the omission of the "testimonial of religious experience," alleging that such a requirement was not to be found in the Bible. But eventually Luce consented and agreed to baptize him simply upon the confession that Jesus was the Son of God."<sup>402</sup>

John Rigdon, one of the sons of Sidney Rigdon, gave a lecture on the biography of his father. This happens during the time when Rigdon was able to get a preacher's position at the First Baptist Church in Pittsburgh: "When he got home, he told his father-in-law of the offer the church at Pittsburg had made him, and he, being a great Baptist, urged him by all means to accept it, as it was not very often a young minister received such an offer. It might be the making of him and give him a great reputation. He therefore informed the members of the church at Pittsburg that he accepted their offer and would soon come to Pittsburg and become their pastor. Soon after informing them of his acceptance, he returned to Pittsburg with his wife and became the pastor of the Baptist church. It was not long after he took charge of the church until he united the church, and he had the largest congregation in the city, and in less than one year he had the reputation of being one of the most eloquent preachers in the city. Everything went smoothly along; fame and fortune seemed to be within his grasp.

At length an old Scotch divine came to Pittsburg and wanted to know of **my father if he preached and taught the Baptist confession of faith [regarding] infant damnation. He told him that he did not, as he did not believe it and would not teach it. The Scotch divine replied to him that he would have to teach it, as it was part of the Baptist confession of faith. My father replied to him that he did not care if it was a part of the Baptist confession of faith. It was to him too horrible a doctrine for him to teach and he would have nothing to do with it** (emp. mine). His refusal to teach the Baptist confession of faith occasioned quite a stir among the congregation. The older members of the church thought he ought to teach it, as it was a part of their confession of faith, while the younger members thought he acted wisely in refusing to teach the doctrine. My father, seeing there was to be a division in the church,

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<sup>402</sup> Knowles, *In Pursuit of the True Church*, 61-62.

tendered his resignation and the church got another minister.”<sup>403</sup>

Moroni 8:4-16 states: “And now, my son, I speak unto you concerning that which grieveth me exceedingly; for it grieveth me that there should disputations rise among you. For, if I have learned the truth, there have been disputations among you concerning the baptism of your little children. And now, my son, I desire that ye should labor diligently, **that this gross error should be removed from among you** (emp. mine); for, for this intent I have written this epistle. For immediately after I had learned these things of you I inquired of the Lord concerning the matter. And the word of the Lord came to me by the power of the Holy Ghost, saying: Listen to the words of Christ, your Redeemer, your Lord and your God. Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore, little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them; and the law of circumcision is done away in me. And after this manner did the Holy Ghost manifest the word of God unto me; wherefore, my beloved son, I know that it is solemn mockery before God, that ye should baptize little children. Behold I say unto you that this thing shall ye teach—repentance and baptism unto those who are accountable and capable of committing sin; yea, teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little children, and they shall all be saved with their little children. And their little children need no repentance, neither baptism. Behold, baptism is unto repentance to the fulfilling the commandments unto the remission of sins. But little children are alive in Christ, even from the foundation of the world; if not so, God is a partial God, and also a changeable God, and a respecter to persons; for how many little children have died without baptism! Wherefore, if little children could not be saved without baptism, these must have gone to an endless hell. Behold I say unto you, that he that supposeth that little children need baptism is in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity; for he hath neither faith, hope, nor charity; wherefore, should he be cut off while in the thought, he must go down to hell. For awful is the wickedness to suppose that God saveth one child because of baptism, and the other must perish because he hath no baptism. Wo be unto them that shall pervert the ways of the Lord after this manner, for they shall perish except they repent. Behold, I speak with

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<sup>403</sup> John Wycliffe Rigdon, “I Never Knew A Time When I Did Not Know Joseph Smith: A Son’s Record of the Life and Testimony of Sidney Rigdon.” *Dialogue* 1 (Winter 1966): 21-22.



boldness, having authority from God; and I fear not what man can do; for perfect clove casteth out all fear.”

The Bible does not teach that the sin of Adam passed through all mankind; it teaches that we each sinned by breaking the law of God ourselves (Ephesians 2:1-2 - “your transgressions.” Ezekiel 18:20 makes it plain that the soul that sins shall die. 1 John 3:4 states that “sin is a transgression of the law.”

An infant has not committed sin; It cannot hear or have faith, nor repent of sin (because it has no sin); and therefore, it does not have to be immersed because there are no sins it has to be forgiven.

**g. Water immersion is an act of faith that is necessary for salvation/connected to the remission of sins.**

We have already dealt with this subject when we discussed the restoration principle. Is water immersion “for (unto/with a view to) the remission of sins?” (Acts 2:38; 22:16) The Bible gives a “yes.” Whatever the purpose of repentance was, baptism is also for, which was the remission of sins (Matthew 26:28. Christ’s blood washes away our sins in baptism (Acts 22:16; Revelation 1:5; Romans 6:3,4; 1 Peter 3:20,21). Baptism is a passive faith-obedient step in God’s working of salvation (Colossians 2:12-13). The Bible already taught the truth on the purpose of baptism - for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; etc.).

**While the *BOM* contains some of Rigdon’s former Baptist theological views, after the 116 pages incident, he inserted the new theological views he learned such as water immersion unto the remission of sins.**

It is very important, before we move on, that we establish that the apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit into all truth (John 16:13). God’s word is truth (John 17:17). God’s word is everlasting (1 Peter 1:22-23). There have been those in the first century A.D. and beyond that who have obeyed the truth of the gospel that set them free from sin (John 8:31-32; Galatians 3:1; 1 Peter 1:22; Romans 10:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Peter 4:17). The Bible is very clear on the plan of salvation. There is nothing so to speak **new** that is going to be shown here. It has been there in the Bible all along. There will always be men who come back and rediscover the truth just as many others have done before them.

William Baxter was a biographer for Walter Scott. Baxter wrote this in the introduction that is very timely: “Every religious Reformation has brought before the public some great, pure, and unselfish men; **men who loved the**

**truth** (emp. mine) not only more than lucre, but more than the praise of men, than place, than title, and we doubt not had they been put to the test, more than life itself. Who doubts that the intrepid Luther would have sealed his testimony with his blood, had the sacrifice been demanded, or that Wesley, who again and again serenely looked into the faces of the infuriated throngs that raged and howled around him, would have died as calmly and nobly as Polycarp, if not as triumphantly as he who said, "I am ready to be offered; I have fought the good fight?" There is equally good reason for believing that many who are yet living, and especially the venerated dead who have been prominent in the great religious Reformation of the present century, would not have counted their lives dear to themselves had they lived in an age when violent death was the proof of fidelity. The true martyr spirit has been displayed by many whose blood never was shed, as really as by those who have died at the stake, or whose life current stained the sands of the arena. Long lives of patient toil, amid scoff and scorn, of glorious labor amid privation and neglect; of poverty while bearing to others the true riches, point out the men of whom the world was not worthy, and whom God will crown, as truly and clearly as Stephen's early painful, triumphant death. The long trial proves the heart as well as the short, sharp pang; and long endurance, as well as short fiery trial, makes the man of God perfect through suffering. It is true that the reformer of our times has not to brave the anger of a Nero as did Paul, or of a Pope as did Luther; and yet for a man of pure and elevated feelings, desiring the highest good of his race, the brand of heresy, religious ostracism by complacent orthodoxy, and misrepresentation akin to that which attributed the kind deeds of the merciful Christ to Satanic power, are neither easy nor pleasant to bear. The circle of Luther's and Wesley's influence is still widening; both are now better known and appreciated than in their own times, or at any period since then; and though the snows of few winters have rested on the grave of Walter Scott, his works are widely known and his memory fondly cherished. As truly as Wesley and Luther he forsook all for Christ; a man of as pure life, of as brilliant genius, as abundant in labors; as true a lover of God and man as they. "Though dead he still speaks;" and he will be one of the remembered ones in all succeeding time.

But to understand his life and work, it is necessary to know something of the times in which he lived, and the religious views then prevalent; a brief review of these, we doubt not, will demonstrate the necessity and magnitude

of the reformation in which he acted so distinguished a part. In addition to this, our very prosperity as a people affords a strong reason for such a retrospect; for as the Israelites, who fed their flocks in the vale of Jordan, or sat under the vines and fig-trees of the land which God had given to their fathers, knew nothing, save by tradition, of the Egyptian yoke or the journey through the desert, so the Disciples of Christ of the present day, rejoicing in their religious liberty and unexampled prosperity, know little of the conflict through which a generation, almost departed, has passed; or the price which was paid for the spiritual freedom and blessings which they enjoy. Fifty years ago the people known as Christians, or Disciples of Christ, were unknown. **Here and there a few individuals in the various religious parties, by a slow and painful process, had, in a measure, thrown off the yoke of creed and sect, and committed themselves to the word of God as their sole guide in matters pertaining to the soul's welfare** (emp. mine). In most cases, however, this was done in utter ignorance of the fact that there were others in almost precisely the same condition with themselves; and, without any sympathy, concert, or even acquaintance with one another, each one felt somewhat as did Elijah in the day of Israel's apostasy, when he cried out, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars, and I am left alone."

This did not originate in a spirit of fancied superiority in knowledge or holiness; **but having drunk deep into the spirit of the Holy Scriptures, by making them their exclusive authority in religion, they could not but perceive that there had been numerous and sad departures from their teachings, and that in following human reason and earthly guides, vast multitudes had forsaken, or been led away from, the fountain of living water, and were vainly striving to quench the thirst of their souls from cisterns, broken cisterns, that could hold no water** (emp. mine). Looking into the word of God, they saw the way of life clearly, simply, and beautifully set forth; looking over the religious world, they beheld darkness, mystery, conflict, and contradiction everywhere. **When they looked at the primitive church walking in the fear of God and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and being greatly multiplied; and then at the differences, discords, and divisions of those claiming to be followers of the meek and lowly One, the contrast was sad and striking** (emp. mine), and the questions would rise unbidden: Are these the fruits of the teachings of him who came to save a lost world? Did he intend that his followers should pursue such different paths? Did he not teach that a house divided against itself can not

stand? Is what we see right, and the word of God false? These questionings were sore trials to their faith; they were not anxious to find their religious friends and neighbors wrong, and themselves right; on the contrary, the love of souls led them to desire that the multitude should be found right; those whom they held most dear were attached to the views they felt compelled to question; many learned and godly men had believed and taught them; the early friends and guides of their youth had gone to the grave cherishing as true what they felt obliged to reject; nay, they had themselves once held the same views without any question or misgiving; **but now the clear and solemn teachings of the word of God would rise before them and condemn so plainly much of the religious teaching and practice of the day, that there was no other alternative but to say, "Let God be true though every man be found a liar," or to abandon their own faith in God** (emp. mine)."<sup>404</sup>

With all that beautifully said, it is very important that we recognize that water immersion is necessary for salvation as taught in the New Testament. The Scriptures are very clear on this matter (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; John 3:3-5; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16; Romans 6:3,4; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 12:13; Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 4:4; 5:23-25; Colossians 2:12-13; Hebrews 10:19-22; 1 Peter 3:20,21). Through faith (which is always expressed in obedience - Romans 1:5; 16:25,26), a sinner is immersed into water where he contacts the blood of Jesus that washes away his sins. For a more scholarly book on this topic, I highly recommend Dave Miller - *Baptism and the Greek Made Simple*.

It took some time for Campbell, Scott, and others to come to this conclusion.

William Baxter goes on to show how Walter Scott discovered the truth (or, in fact, rediscovered it!): "The scene of his first practical and successful exhibition of the gospel, as preached in primitive times, was at New Lisbon, Columbiana County, Ohio, the place at which he was appointed as traveling evangelist a few months before. The Baptist Church at that place had become acquainted with him at the Association, and received with pleasure an appointment from him for a series of discourses on the ancient gospel; and the citizens were glad to have a visit from the eloquent stranger. On the first Sunday after his arrival every seat in the meeting-house was filled at an early hour; soon every foot of standing room was occupied, and the doorway blocked up by an eager throng; and, inspired by the interest which prevailed,

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<sup>404</sup> William Baxter, *The Life of Elder Walter Scott* (Cincinnati: Bosworth, Chase & Hall, Publishers, 1874), 11-14.

the preacher began. His theme was the confession of Peter, Matt. xvi: 16: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," and the promise which grew out of it, that he should have intrusted to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The declaration of Peter was a theme upon which he had thought for years; it was a fact which he regarded the four gospels as written to establish; to which type and prophecy had pointed in all the ages gone by; which the Eternal Father had announced from heaven when Jesus came up from the waters of Jordan and the Spirit descended and abode upon him, and which was repeated again amid the awful grandeur and solemnity of the transfiguration scene. He then proceeded to show that the foundation truth of Christianity was the divine nature of the Lord Jesus -- the central truth around which all others revolved, and from which they derived their efficacy and importance -- and that the belief of it was calculated to produce such love in the heart of him who believed it as would lead him to true obedience to the object of his faith and love. To show how that faith and love were to be manifested, he quoted the language of the great commission, and called attention to the fact that Jesus had taught his apostles "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." He then led his hearers to Jerusalem on the memorable Pentecost, and bade them listen to an authoritative announcement of the law of Christ, now to be made known for the first time, by the same Peter to whom Christ had promised to give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which he represented as meaning the conditions upon which the guilty might find pardon at the hands of the risen, ascended, and glorified Son of God, and enter his kingdom.

After a rapid yet graphic review of Peter's discourse, he pointed out its effect on those that heard him, and bade them mark the inquiry which a deep conviction of the truth they had heard forced from the lips of the heart-pierced multitudes, who, in their agony at the discovery that they had put to death the Son of God, their own long-expected Messiah, "cried out, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" and then, with flashing eye and impassioned manner, as if he fully realized that he was but re-echoing the words of one who spake as the Spirit gave him utterance, he gave the reply, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." He then, with great force and power, made his application; he insisted that the conditions were unchanged, that the Word of God meant what it said, and that to receive and



obey it was to obey God and to imitate the example of those who, under the preaching of the apostles, gladly accepted the gospel message. His discourse was long, but his hearers marked not the flight of time; the Baptists forgot, in admiration of its scriptural beauty and simplicity, that it was contrary to much in their own teaching and practice; some of them who had been, in a measure, enlightened before, rejoiced in the truth the moment they perceived it; and to others, who had long been perplexed by the difficulties and contradictions of the discordant views of the day, it was like light to weary travelers long benighted and lost.

The man of all others, however, in that community who would most have delighted in and gladly accepted those views, so old and yet so new, was not there, although almost in hearing of the preacher, who, with such eloquence and power, was setting forth the primitive gospel. This was Wm. Amend, a pious, God-fearing man, a member of the Presbyterian Church, and regarded by his neighbors as an "Israelite indeed." He had for some time entertained the same views as those Mr. Scott was then preaching in that place for the first time, but was not aware that any one agreed with him. He was under the impression that all the churches -- his own among the number -- had departed from the plain teachings of the Word of God. He had discovered, some time before, that infant baptism was not taught in the Bible, and, consequently, that he was not a baptized man; the mode of baptism seemed also to him to have been changed, and he sought his pastor, and asked to be immersed. He endeavored to convince him that he was wrong, but finding that he could not be turned from his purpose, he proposed to immerse him privately, lest others of his flock might be unsettled in their minds by his doing so, and closed by saying that baptism was not essential to salvation. Mr. Amend regarded every thing that Christ had ordained as being essential, and replied that he should not immerse him at all; that he would wait until he found a man who believed the gospel, and who could, without any scruple, administer the ordinance as he conceived it to be taught in the New Testament.

He was invited a day or two before to hear Mr. Scott, but knowing nothing of his views, he supposed that he preached much as others did, but agreed to go and hear him. It was near the close of the services when he reached the Baptist church and joined the crowd at the door, who were unable to get into the house. The first sentence he heard aroused and excited him; it sounded like that gospel which he had read with such interest at home, but never

had heard from the pulpit before. He now felt a great anxiety to see the man who was speaking so much like the oracles of God, and pressed through the throng into the house. Mr. Dibble, the clerk of the church, saw him enter, and knowing that he had been seeking and longing to find a man who would preach as the Word of God read, thought within himself, "Had Mr. Amend been here during all this discourse I feel sure he would have found what he has so long sought in vain. I wish the preacher would repeat what he said before he came in." Greatly to his surprise the preacher did give a brief review of the various points of his discourse, insisting that the Word of God meant what it said, and urging his hearers to trust that Word implicitly. He rehearsed again the Jerusalem scene, called attention to the earnest, anxious cry of the multitude, and the comforting reply of the apostle, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." He invited any one present who believed with all his heart, to yield to the terms proposed in the words of the apostle, and show by a willing obedience his trust in the Lord of life and glory. Mr. Amend pressed his way through the crowd to the preacher and made known his purpose; made a public declaration of his belief in the Lord Jesus Christ and his willingness to obey him, and, on the same day, in a beautiful, clear stream which flows on the southern border of the town, in the presence of a great multitude, he was baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

This event, which forms an era in the religious history of the times, took place on the 18th of November, 1827, and Mr. Amend was, beyond all question, the first person in modern times who received the ordinance of baptism in perfect accordance with apostolic teaching and usage...

Some years after this event, Mr. Scott was called upon to give the circumstances which attended this restoration of the ordinance of baptism to its primitive place; with rare wisdom he called upon Mr. Amend to relate the circumstances which led to his baptism. He introduces Mr. Amend's letter with the following remarks:

"Dear Sir: The republication of the gospel in the style and terms of the apostles was attended with so extraordinary an excitement as to cause us to forget and sometimes overlook matters and things, which, on common occasions, would have been accounted very singular.

"It was thought, sir, it might minister to your pleasure to read a letter from

a person who first obeyed the faith as now preached in the Reformation. It is inserted here accordingly. After vexations not to be mentioned, it was resolved to make a draft upon the audience, that it might be known why the preacher spoke and wherefore they came to hear. Accordingly, bursting away from prejudices and feelings almost as strong as death, and thinking of nothing but the restoration of the gospel, it was proposed to ascertain immediately who would obey God and who would not. The confusion of all, the preacher not excepted, was indescribable. A person whom I had seen come into the meeting-house about fifteen minutes before the end of the discourse came forward. This, as often as I thought of it, had always appeared to me wholly unaccountable, for it was most certain the man could not have been converted to Christianity by any thing which he heard during the few minutes he was present. His letter explains the matter, and will enable you, sir, to judge whether this whole business, as well on the side of the hearer as on the side of the preacher, is not resolvable into the good providence of our Heavenly Father, to whom be the glory through Jesus Christ:

“BELOVED BRO. SCOTT: I received your letter of the 21st, and was happy to hear you were well; myself and family are in good health at present, our youngest child excepted. I should be very happy to see you. You request me to write the time of my baptism, my feelings, and the causes why I accepted the invitation. In order to show these things aright, I must go back a piece. I was at that time a member of that strait sect called Presbyterians; taught many curious things, as election, fore-ordination, etc.; that belief in these matters was necessary; that this faith resulted from some secret impulse; and worse, that I could not believe; and finally, that I must hope and pray that God would have mercy upon me! In this wilderness I became wearied, turned about and came home to the Book of God; took it up as if it had dropped down from heaven, and read it for myself just one year.

“This inquiry led me to see that God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed on him might not perish but have eternal life. I then inquired how I must believe. Paul said faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God; also that faith was the substance of things hoped for -- the evidence of things not seen. Peter spoke of election, saying, Save yourselves. Paul said I must be dead to sin and buried, and raised with Christ Jesus to newness of life. The Savior said I must be born again if I would enter the kingdom of God.

“Now, here it was I discovered myself to stand in the garden of nature and not in the kingdom of heaven, but I learned that of this kingdom Peter received the keys, and I was anxious to see what he would do with them. Jesus said proclaim the gospel to all the nations; **he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, etc.** I then moved a little forward till I found these words: ‘Now when they heard this they were pricked to the heart, and said to Peter and to the other apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Peter said, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,’ etc. To this scripture I often resorted; I saw how Peter had opened the kingdom, and the door into it, but, to my great disappointment, I saw no man to introduce me (emp. mine), though I prayed much and often for it.

“Now, my brother, I will answer your questions. I was baptized on the 18th of Nov., 1827, and I will relate to you a circumstance which occurred a few days before that date. **I had read the 2d of the Acts** (emp. mine) when I expressed myself to my wife as follows: ‘Oh, this is the gospel -- this is the thing we wish -- the remission of our sins! Oh, that I could hear the gospel in these same words -- as Peter preached it! I hope I shall some day hear it; and the first man I meet who will preach the gospel thus, with him will I go.’ So, my brother, on the day you saw me come into the meeting-house, my heart was open to receive the Word of God, and when you cried, ‘The Scriptures no longer shall be a sealed book. God means what he says. Is there any man present who will take God at his word, and be baptized for remission of sins?’ -- at that moment my feelings were such that I could have cried out, ‘Glory to God! I have found the man whom I have long sought for.’ So I entered the kingdom where I readily laid hold of the hope set before me.

“Let us, then, dear brother, strive so to live as to obtain an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming -- there to join with the heavenly throng in a song of praise to God and to the Lamb forever and ever. Amen.

“I remain yours, etc.                      WILLIAM AMEND.”

Here are some interesting points to keep in mind. First, notice that William Amend was reading the word of God. The seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11). Notice that Amend was looking for a preacher who would preach just like Peter did. Peter, the inspired apostle, lived long before Scott or Amend ever did

and Peter preached the same truth that has been there all those years - water immersion is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Technically speaking, Scott did not find anything new! **He rediscovered the truth!**

It must be noted that Campbell nor Scott were not perfect men or had a perfect understanding of the Scriptures. They were certainly very intelligent when a person reads his writings and debates. It took time for many of these men such as Walter Scott, Alexander Campbell, and others to come to the knowledge of the truth on certain subjects such as it pertained to the purpose of water immersion.

Interestingly enough, if a person were to do a sketch of the theological history of some doctrines that have been taught over the centuries, I believe the person would be quite surprised what they would learn about what had been taught about baptism. Now just because a doctrine has been taught for such a long period of time does not necessarily make it true. It is only true if it is what the Bible teaches.

In the book, *Baptism and The Remission of Sins*, Jack Cottrell argues there is a historical connection for over fifteen-hundred years of scholarship between water immersion and salvation until it was severed by Ulrich Zwingli.

Cottrell then argues from a number of New Testament passages (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3,4; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 Peter 3:21)<sup>405</sup> that shows baptism “is a saving work which only God can perform.”<sup>406</sup>

Cottrell also mentions witnesses (Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Gregory of Nyssa) of the early church that believed baptism had a connection to salvation.<sup>407</sup>

We all recognize that the seed is the word of God (Luke 8:11). If you plant the pure seed of the word of God into a good and honest heart, a Christian will be produced.

Some have had the mistaken view that the church **totally** apostatized after the first century A.D. and it was not restored until the 1800s A.D. The seed has always been there and if a person trusts and obeys what the word of God teaches by planting the truth in his good and honest heart, then that person can become

405 Jack Cottrell, “The Biblical Consensus: Historical Backgrounds To Reformed Theology.” *Baptism and the Remission of Sins: A History of Baptismal Thought in the American Restoration Movement*. Ed. David W. Fletcher (Henderson, TN: Hester Publications, 2009), pgs.19-27.

406 Cottrell, “The Biblical Consensus: Historical Backgrounds To Reformed Theology,” 19.

407 Cottrell, “The Biblical Consensus: Historical Backgrounds To Reformed Theology,” 28-35.



a Christian. He does not have to become a part of a man-made denomination.

It took time for these men such as Walter Scott who was excited about what he had learned. **The truth had been there all along though.** It was no hidden secret. There was no secret knowledge to be gained. In fact, people had understood for the first century A.D. even all the way up to the 1500s A.D. when Martin Luther was living. Were there people after Luther and before Campbell who understood baptism and its connection to salvation? **Yes!**

Walter Scott, a few months later, also relayed this rediscovered truth to Sidney Rigdon. Van Wagoner wrote: “Rigdon visited Scott on a trip to Warren in March 1828. Although Rigdon had been with Scott on former occasions and had fully adopted his method of calling awakened and penitent believers to an immediate obedience of their faith for the remission of sins, **he held to the Calvinist assertion that baptism, a symbol of acceptance of Christ, did not remit sins: such remission was connected to faith alone** (emp. mine). Scott accepted converts on a simple confession of repentance to God and faith in the Lord Jesus after which they were baptized for an immediate acquittal from sins through the blood of Christ and for the Holy Spirit. His baptismal formula was: “For the remission of your sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit, I immerse you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!” “The missing link between Christ and convicted sinners seemed now happily supplied,” Hayden added, “Rigdon was transported with this discovery.”

Rigdon persuaded Bentley to return to Mentor with him where they besieged Rigdon’s own congregation. Nearly the entire membership accepted the new doctrines. According to a Disciples historian, they “exchanged their ‘articles’ for the new covenant as the only divine basis for Christ’s church, and abandoned unscriptural titles and church names, choosing to be known simply as disciples of Christ.”

Rigdon and Bentley received a similar reception in Kirtland, Ohio, where twenty souls entered the waters of baptism, and a separate organization became an immediate necessity. The 2 June 1828 Christian Baptist reported that “Bishops Scott, Rigdon, and Bentley, in Ohio, within the last six months have immersed about eight hundred persons.” During 1827-29 Rigdon established Reformed congregations at Mantua Center, Perry, Euclid, and Birmingham in Erie County, Waite Hill (the vicinity of Willoughby), and Elyria in Lorain County, and the church at Hamden in Geauga County.

Parley P. Pratt, a Reformed Baptist who would later accompany Rigdon

into the Mormon fold, wrote that when he first heard Rigdon preach he was “astonished.” He found he “preached faith in Jesus Christ, repentance towards God, and baptism for remission of sins, with the promise of the gift of the Holy Ghost to all who would come forward, with all their hearts, and obey the doctrine!”<sup>408</sup>

Sidney Rigdon would have already delivered the reworked Spalding manuscript to Joseph Smith (most probable before April 12, 1828 because that is the date when Martin Harris starts translating for Joseph Smith).<sup>409</sup> Before Harris, Emma Smith and Reuben Hale had helped with the translation a little bit.<sup>410</sup> It also would have been either March/April 1827, June 16-July 3, 1827, or July 3-August 9, 1827 because that is where the “gap windows” take place). Most likely it would have been the last gap window.

### **Chronology of Sidney Rigdon and *Manuscript Found*:**

Sidney Rigdon allegedly stole/copied it (1814-1816) based on the testimonies of other eyewitnesses in previous chapters.

Sometime after 1816 Rigdon started to re-edit the manuscript, which would have included his Baptist theological beliefs. As Wagoner stated what occurred in March 1828: “Although Rigdon had been with Scott on former occasions and had fully adopted his method of calling awakened and penitent believers to an immediate obedience of their faith for the remission of sins, **he held to the Calvinist assertion that baptism, a symbol of acceptance of Christ, did not remit sins: such remission was connected to faith alone** (emp. mine).”<sup>411</sup>

Hayden reported how Rigdon learned the truth about the purpose of baptism in March of 1828. Hayden wrote: “In the winter of 1827-8, Bro. [Walter] Scott opened, at Simmons Sackett’s, the plea of the ancient gospel. The second chapter of Acts, the opening of the kingdom was his subject. He simplified, and enforced it so pointedly that all saw, and most, on examination, accepted the truth. He showed that all parties have the elements of the gospel but differently arranged; and that as the same letters would spell different words, according to the arrangement of them, so these gospel themes, set forth in one order, formed one theory on which one sect was built; in another order

408 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 46.

409 Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 644.

410 *Ibid*.

411 Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 46.

arose another sect. He contended ably for the restoration of the true, original, apostolic order of them, which would restore to the church the ancient gospel as preached by the apostles.”<sup>412</sup>

From April 12 - June 14, 1828, Joseph Smith was translating while Martin Harris served as the scribe.

In June 1828, the 116 pages crisis occurred.

Rigdon has the opportunity now to insert new theological views he had learned into replacement texts of the Book of Mormon.

Several months go by.

Smith resumes the beginning of Mosiah and continues translation up to Mormon 6.

Because 1 Nephi contains a lot of Spalding’s material, either part of 1 Nephi was not lost (1 Nephi 1-5,7,16-18) or it is possible that Rigdon had another unedited version copy from Spalding known as 1 Nephi, but now most of the story up to the reign of Benjamin had been lost. It would be up to Rigdon now to restore the storyline the best that he could from part of 1 Nephi to the beginning of Mosiah.

It seems to be the case that Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi, Mormon, and Ether remained intact. We know that Smith would start near the beginning of Mosiah to translate again. There is another interesting part to this though that these books (Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, part of 3 Nephi) contain Rigdon’s pre-1828 understanding of baptism and salvation. You can see this in the various texts that will be listed:

**Mosiah 4:1-3:** “And now, it came to pass that when king Benjamin had made an end of speaking the words which had been delivered unto him by the angel of the Lord, that he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and behold they had fallen to the earth, for the fear of the Lord had come upon them.

And they had viewed themselves in their own carnal state, even less than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying: O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified; for we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who created heaven and earth, and all things; who shall come down among the children of men. And it came to pass that after they had spoken these words the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, and they were filled with joy,

<sup>412</sup> Hayden, *Early Disciples on the Western Reserve*, 120-121.

having received a remission of their sins, and having peace of conscience, because of the exceeding faith which they had in Jesus Christ who should come, according to the words which king Benjamin had spoken unto them.”

**Mosiah 5:7:** “And now, because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the a children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for be hold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters.”

**Mosiah 18:5-17:** “Now, there was in Mormon a fountain of pure water, and Alma resorted thither, there being near the water a thicket of small trees, where he did hide himself in the daytime from the searches of the king. And it came to pass that as many as believed him went thither to hear his words. And it came to pass after many days there were a goodly number gathered together at the place of Mormon, to hear the words of Alma. Yea, all were gathered together that believed on his word, to hear him. And he did a teach them, and did preach unto them repentance, and redemption, and faith on the Lord And it came to pass that he said unto them: Behold, here are the waters of Mormon (for thus were they called) and now, as ye are a desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light; Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be re deemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life—Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you? And now when the people had heard these words, they clapped their hands for joy, and exclaimed: This is the desire of our hearts. And now it came to pass that Alma took Helam, he being one of the first, and went and stood forth in the water, and cried, saying: O Lord, pour out thy Spirit upon thy servant, that he may do this work with holiness of heart.

And now it came to pass that Alma took Helam, he being one of the first, and went and stood forth in the water, and cried, saying: O Lord, pour out thy Spirit

upon thy servant, that he may do this work with holiness of heart. And after Alma had said these words, both Alma and Helam were buried in the water; and they arose and came forth out of the water rejoicing, being filled with the Spirit.

And again, Alma took another, and went forth a second time into the water, and baptized him according to the first, only he did not bury himself again in the water. And after this manner he did baptize every one that went forth to the place of Mormon; and they were in number about two hundred and four souls; yea, and they were baptized in the waters of Mormon, and were filled with the grace of God.”

**Mosiah 21:33-35:** “And it came to pass that king Limhi and many of his people were desirous to be baptized; but there was none in the land that had a authority from God. And Ammon declined doing this thing, considering himself an unworthy servant. Therefore they did not at that time form themselves into a church, waiting upon the Spirit of the Lord. Now they were desirous to become even as Alma and his brethren, who had fled into the wilderness.

They were desirous to be baptized as a witness and a testimony that they were willing to serve God with all their hearts; nevertheless they did prolong the time; and an account of their baptism shall be a given hereafter.”

**Mosiah 27:23-27:** “And it came to pass after they had fasted and prayed for the space of a two days and two nights, the limbs of Alma received their strength, and he stood up and began to speak unto them, bidding them to be of good comfort: For, said he, I have repented of my sins, and have been redeemed of the Lord; behold I am born of the Spirit. And the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be a born again; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his e sons and daughters; And thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in a nowise inherit the kingdom of God. I say unto you, unless this be the case, they must be cast off; and this I know, because I was like to be cast off.”

This is a sample of the texts although more could be given.

What would need to be done to replace the lost pages? Rigdon would work from more Spalding material that he must have had in his possession and he



would add theological content. We know this because the account of Laban was mentioned by Lake and “I, Nephi” by Cunningham.

If our predictions are correct, then the Spalding material remains intact after the 116 pages. This is the case.

For example, in Mosiah, Alma especially chapters 43-63, parts of Helaman, parts of 3rd Nephi, Ether, & Mormon contain some **strong** Spalding material.

We need to distinguish between the religious/scriptural/theological content/sermon-type material and situate it from the historical sections.

Since Rigdon now had some time to revisit the manuscripts, Rigdon realized he could put some more theological material after Helaman through Moroni. So we see baptism for the remission of sins being taught in part of 3 Nephi, Mormon, Moroni. Then when it came to the replacement of 116 pages, he taught baptism for the remission of sins in 2 Nephi.

Rigdon had learned this truth and incorporated this truth into the **BOM**. Here is Walter Scott making the claim in regards to Rigdon:

“When “Mormonism” made its appearance in Ohio, we threw ourself into our saddle, and in company with our son in the common faith Dr. Richardson, rode 100 miles in the dead of winter to examine it, and to defend the churches which groaned under or lay in the immediate vicinity of its baleful, blighting influence. **Rigdon the shameless impostor, spoken of in the above letter, had anterior to this been a Baptist minister, but hearing by his relative Mr. B[entley], of the true gospel of Christ, he visited our field of labor, and voraciously seized upon my reasonings of the gospel of Christ, and engrafted them on the abominable imposition to which soon after he joined himself** (emp. mine). This accounts for the success of the ministers of Mormonism, for the Golden Bible, the book in question, is never once spoken of till the very statement of the gospel for which our own Reformation is now remarkable, is first submitted. The converts being thus made by a veritable proclamation of the gospel, are then taken and declaratively immersed for the remission of their sins and the spirit of Christ; that these people first state the gospel in its original terms, and afterwards introduce their imposition of the Book of Mormon, is known to every one who has attended with care to their procedure, and that Rigdon filched from us that elementary method of stating the gospel, I will cite for witnesses Rigdon’s Brother-in-Law, the excellent Mr. Bentley, also Wm. Hayden, Dr. Thomas Wright, and the brethren of Warren, Trumbull Co., Ohio, who probably will as long as they live recollect

Rigdon's visit to their town.”<sup>413</sup>

Later on, in LDS theology, we see this idea of polytheism that starts to be taught among the Latter-Day Saints. It is so tragic that they are **not** following the true God of the Bible.

Also the LDS church also teaches things in regards to the restoration principle in which they go to the extreme to supposedly restore. An example would be apostles. The original apostles were eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Christ (Acts 1:25,26), but the LDS apostles do not fit this qualification. They also cannot pass on miraculous gifts as we see occurring in Acts 8 and 19. The church was built on the foundation of the original apostles and prophets (Ephesians 2:19-22). But there is no reason to rip up the foundation when it has already been laid down. We could also say the same for the age of miracles that it had a temporary purpose which was fulfilled - the confirmation of the new covenant Scriptures (1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:7-16).

**e. Missionaries of the church should provide their own support** (1 Nephi 22:23; Mosiah 18:24-26; Mosiah 27:4-5; Alma 1:3, 26; Alma 30:31-32; 35:3; 2 Nephi 26:31).

In September 1824, Campbell publicly commended Walter Scott and Sidney Rigdon, the “two bishops” of a church in Pittsburgh, in which he states:

“There is a church in Pittsburgh that would rejoice much more in being a regular church of Christ, than a regular Baptist church; which church has two bishops, **who, while they watch over and labour among the saints, labour working with their own hands according to the apostolic command** (emp. mine); and not only minister to their own wants, but are ensamples to the flock in beneficence and hospitality. This church, by walking in the fear of God and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, is edified and enlarged by regular accessions -- and their example in that city is a dangerous one to those who would maintain themselves by maintaining such opinions as will maintain them.”<sup>414</sup>

**f. Partaking of the Lord's Supper as a weekly memorial on the first day of the week (Moroni 4:3, 5:2, 6:6)**

This is one of the doctrines that Alexander Campbell wrote upon in what is known as his articles on the “ancient order of things.”<sup>415</sup> However, once again,

413 “The Mormon Bible.” *The Evangelist*. Carthage, Ohio, July 1, 1839. Vol. VII, No. 7.

414 Alexander Campbell, *The Christian Baptist*, Vol. II. Buffalo, Brooke Co., Va., August 2, 1824. No. 2. Address to the Public., 39.

415 Alexander Campbell, *The Christian Baptist*, Vol. III. “A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things, No. VI: On The Breaking of Bread - No. 1.” (pgs. 11-15). “A Restoration of the Ancient Order of

I want to clarify that this was a truth that was *rediscovered*. It was already there in the Bible. In Acts 2:42, the breaking of the bread was done frequently. In Acts 20:7, we learn that this purpose of why they gathered together for the first day of the week assembly was to remember what Jesus had done. Further, there is early church history confirmation that the Lord's Supper was taken weekly on the first day of every week such as in the Didache and Justin Martyr.

Before embarking further, it will be important to identify several major points that will play an essential role in establishing the evolution of the **BOM** later on in this study. The loss of the 116 pages was a major impact on the translation process of the BOM and there needs to be more emphasis placed on it. This bears worth repeating.

**First**, it is important to recognize that a great crisis occurred during the translation phase of the **BOM** in June 1828.

**Second**, this crisis would constitute in re-editing and reshaping the **BOM** through the hands of Rigdon, Smith, and company as it will be shown through the remainder of this book.

Grant Hardy provides some useful information on the chronology of the translation of the **BOM**:

“21-22 September 1823 - Moroni appears three times to Joseph Smith during the night at his home near Palmyra, New York. Joseph is seventeen years old.

22-23 September 1823 - Moroni appears yet again, and Joseph first uncovers the gold plates in a hill (that he will later call Cumorah) in Manchester township, about three miles south of the Smith farm. He is forbidden to take the plates home but is told to return to the hill in a year to meet Moroni again. In each of the next three years he meets Moroni on 22 September and each time is refused the plates.

18 January 1827 - Joseph marries Emma Hale in South Bainbridge, N.Y.

22 September 1827 - Emma accompanies Joseph to the Hill Cumorah, where Moroni gives him the plates and the interpreters (two seer stones set in eyeglass-like frames that could be attached to a breastplate; the whole device is sometimes referred to as the Urim and Thummim). Joseph is forbidden to show others the plates, but his mother, Lucy Mack Smith, handles the Things, No. VII: On The Breaking of Bread - No. 2.” (pgs. 29-33). “A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things, No. VIII: On The Breaking of Bread - No. 3.” (pgs. 52-55). “A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things, No. IX: On The Breaking of Bread - No. 4.” (pgs. 76-78). Buffalo, Brooke Co., Va., 1825. Reprinted by Gospel Advocate Company: Nashville, TN, 1955.

interpreters and the metal breastplate, each wrapped in a thin handkerchief. Farm work and schemes by others to steal the plates prevent any attempts at translation for the next few months.

December 1827 - Persecution and concern for the safety of the plates force Joseph and Emma to move to Harmony (now Oakland), Pennsylvania, to live with her parents. Harmony is about 135 miles southeast of Palmyra. Martin Harris, a well-to-do farmer from Palmyra, gives Joseph fifty dollars to help with expenses, and Joseph hides the box containing the plates and the interpreters in a barrel of beans for the trip.

February 1828 - Martin Harris visits Joseph in Harmony. Joseph copies some characters from the plates and Martin takes them, along with a few lines of translation, to New York City, where he shows them to several scholars, including Charles Anthon of Columbia University. Though Anthon has reservations about angels and gold plates, Martin returns to Palmyra convinced of their authenticity. Joseph interprets this event as a fulfillment of Isaiah 29:11–12 (see also 2 Nephi 27:6–23).

12 April, 1828 - Martin moves to Harmony to write for Joseph. (Translating with the Urim and Thummim, or the seer stone, required a scribe to take Joseph's dictation.) Prior to Martin's arrival in April, Emma had apparently written a few pages of translation, as did her brother, Reuben Hale.

June 1828 - After Joseph, with Martin's assistance, had translated the book of Lehi—116 handwritten pages of Mormon's abridgment of the Large Plates of Nephi (covering the first 500 years of Nephite history)—Martin asks if he can take the manuscript back to Palmyra to show his unbelieving wife. When Joseph asks the Lord for permission, he is refused. At Martin's insistence, he asks twice more and finally receives authorization, but only if Martin agrees to stringent conditions limiting his showing of the manuscript to five family members.

14 June, 1828 - Martin takes 116 pages to Palmyra, breaks his promise, and loses the pages.

15 June, 1828 - Joseph and Emma's first child is born but dies a few hours later. For the next few weeks Joseph nurses his wife back to health, until she asks him to travel to Palmyra to see what has become of Martin and the manuscript.

July 1828 - Joseph travels to Palmyra, where he discovers that Martin has lost the manuscript. He receives a revelation chastising him (Joseph) for

his irresponsibility (Doctrine and Covenants 3), and Moroni takes back the plates and the interpreters.

Summer 1828 - Joseph receives a revelation extending forgiveness and informing him that the translation process will eventually continue (Doctrine and Covenants 10). He is warned, however, not to retranslate the lost material because the 116 pages have been stolen and altered by persons wishing to discredit him. Instead, he is to substitute the Small Plates of Nephi (1 Nephi through Omni) for the portion of Mormon's abridgment of the Large Plates that was on the lost manuscript.

22 September 1828 - Moroni once again entrusts the plates and interpreters to Joseph. Over the next few months, work at translation is sporadic with Emma and perhaps Samuel H. Smith (Joseph's brother) serving as scribes. Joseph continues translating where he left off—at the beginning of the book of Mosiah—but only a few pages are completed.

March 1829 - Joseph is commanded to stop translating for a while (Doctrine and Covenants 5).

5 April 1829 - Oliver Cowdery, a twenty-two-year-old schoolteacher from Palmyra who boarded with the Smith family and became curious about the translation, arrives at Harmony to meet Joseph and offer his services. (According to Joseph's 1832 history, the Lord had shown Oliver the plates in a vision while he was still in Palmyra.)

7 April 1829 - The translation begins in earnest, with Joseph using a seer stone (different from the Nephite interpreters, but also referred to as the Urim and Thummim) and Oliver taking dictation. The translation moves forward at the rate of about eight printed pages per day. Nearly the entire Book of Mormon as we now have it is produced within the next three months. Given what we know of Joseph's activities during this period—work, travel, visitors, moving back to New York, revelations received, preaching, baptisms, making arrangements for the copyright and publication, and so on—it is clear that the Book of Mormon was translated in about sixty-five working days. When it is published, it essentially appears as Joseph dictated it, with almost no revisions.

April 1829 - Oliver tries to translate himself, but fails (Doctrine and Covenants 8 and 9).

15 May 1829 - By this point Joseph and Oliver have translated Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, and a good portion of 3 Nephi. References to baptism in the translation



lead them to ask God for clarification, and on this day the resurrected John the Baptist appears and bestows upon them the Aaronic Priesthood (Doctrine and Covenants 13).

May 1829 - After Joseph translates 4 Nephi, Mormon, Ether, Moroni, and the title page (the last leaf in plates), he applies for the copyright. The copyright, which incorporates the title page as a description of the work, is granted on June 11.

June 1829 - Joseph, Emma, and Oliver move to Fayette, New York (about twenty-five miles southeast of Palmyra), where they finish the translation at the Whitmer home (an angel transports the plates). Though Joseph has now translated all of Mormon's abridgment, he still has to make up for the pages lost by Martin Harris and so goes back to the beginning of Nephite history and translates 1 Nephi—Omni from the Small Plates, thus avoiding the need to retranslate the book of Lehi (Mormon had been inspired to add the Small Plates to his abridgment of the Large Plates, though this duplicated his account; see Words of Mormon). Most of the writing is done by Oliver, but John Whitmer, Christian Whitmer, and Emma help on occasion. The mention of witnesses at 2 Nephi 27:12 leads to the calling of the three witnesses—Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris—who are shown the plates by an angel (Doctrine and Covenants 17), as is Mary Whitmer. Joseph himself shows the plates to an additional eight witnesses. Despite the fact that many of these witnesses fall out with Joseph Smith and leave the church, none ever deny their testimony of the Book of Mormon.

June 1829 (?) - Joseph returns the gold plates to Moroni.

July 1829 - Egbert B. Grandin, a printer in Palmyra, reluctantly contracts to print 5,000 copies of the book for the sum of \$3,000. (He had at first refused the job, but when Joseph found a willing printer in Rochester, Grandin reconsidered, seeing that the book would be published one way or another.) Martin Harris promises to mortgage his farm to come up with the money.

August 1829 - Typesetting begins, with John H. Gilbert, Grandin's typesetter, providing nearly all the punctuation and paragraphing to a manuscript that consisted simply of word after word. Joseph, remembering his earlier disaster and prompted by a revelation, has Oliver make a second copy of the manuscript for the printer's use. Joseph goes back to Harmony, and the printing process is overseen by Oliver and by Hyrum Smith (Joseph's older brother).

January 1830 - Abner Cole illegally publishes a few short excerpts from the Book of Mormon. Joseph returns from Pennsylvania to assert his rights as the copyright holder and Cole is forced to stop. Inhabitants of Palmyra and the surrounding region pledge not to purchase any copies of the new scripture.

26 March 1830 - The Book of Mormon is available for purchase. Copies sell for \$1.25.”<sup>416</sup>

Hardy notes after the crisis of the lost 116 pages that Joseph Smith resumed dictation near the beginning of Mosiah sometime a little bit after September 22, 1828 and then would proceed on to Alma, Helaman, 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi, Mormon, Ether, Moroni, Title Page, 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, Omni, and finally the Words of Mormon. There is evidence to suggest that this was the case.

**First**, we have the recounting of the translation of the **BOM** from Joseph Smith, Jr.’s sister, Catherine Smith Salisbury:

“The angel came and took the Urim and Thummim from him. He fasted and prayed several days, and the angel returned them again and told him that his sins were forgiven, and for him to go ahead and translate, **but not to translate that that was lost, but to begin where he had left off** (emp. mine). He commenced, and when he got the record partly translated, persecution rose there, and he wrote for David Whitmer to come and take him to his house. David came, and he asked how he should carry the plates, and he was told they would be there when he got there, in the garden.

When he got to Father Whitmer’s he found the records, as he had been told he would, and there he finished translating the Book of Mormon, and there is where the three witnesses were showed the plates by the angel, that turned the leaves over one by one. And the angel told them that when the church became pure, the rest of the record (some of the plates were sealed) would be translated and brought to the church. After that the eight witnesses saw the book, and turned it over leaf by leaf and saw the characters that were on them. From that time on they commenced printing the Book of Mormon, and soon after the book was printed there were six that met together and organized the Church of Jesus Christ as it now exists in these last days.”<sup>417</sup>

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<sup>416</sup> Hardy, ed., *The Book of Mormon’s Reader Edition*, 643-647.

<sup>417</sup> *The Kansas City Times*. Vol. L. Kansas City, Mo., Thursday, April 11, 1895. No. 101. AN ANGEL

Some of this further evidence will be presented by the article Metclafe wrote who believes the priority of Mosiah fits the best explanation as to where Smith resumed translation after the loss of the 116 pages.

**Second**, Metclafe writes: “That Smith began with Mosiah also seems confirmed by reports of his and Oliver Cowdery’s 15 May 1829 baptisms. The stimulus for baptizing each other, according to Smith, was information “found mentioned in the translation of the plates” (Smith et al. 1978, 1:39). Cowdery corroborates Smith’s story, noting that they performed the baptisms “[a]fter writing the account given of the Savior’s ministry to the remnant of the seed of Jacob, upon this continent” (Messenger and Advocate 1 [Oct. 1834]: 15). Cowdery writes that he and Smith were inspired by “the directions given to the Nephites, from the mouth of the Savior, of the precise manner in which men should build up his church” (ibid.). This means the narrative of Christ’s visitation in 3 Nephi was dictated before 15 May 1829...The Mosian model more reasonably accounts for an average number of pages transcribed per day. From 7 April to 15 May Smith’s dictation of Mosiah-3 Nephi would have averaged 9.25 published pages per day. From 16 May to 1 July he dictated almost 5 pages per day for 4 Nephi-Moroni and 1 Nephi-Words of Mormon. If most of Mosiah had been transcribed prior to Cowdery’s arrival, the numbers would be closer still.”<sup>418</sup>

**Third**, Metclafe points out that the title page of the Book of Mormon fits the priority of Mosiah because Smith who was applying for a copyright for the book had to include the title of their work, which was done on June 11, 1829 and a local journalist had printed the front cover of the title page in the newspaper *Wayne Sentinel* on June 26, 1829 that stated that the translation was not yet completed.<sup>419</sup>

**Fourth**, Metclafe writes: “Smith resumed dictateing at Mosiah can be deduced from a revelation Smith issued in March [March 1829-SF], the month before Cowdery began serving as scribe (now D&C 5). Before Cowdery arrived, Smith’s wife, Emma, and his younger brother Samuel had been transcribing (Faulring 1989, 3; Jessee 1984, 8). The March revelation instructed Smith to dictate a “few more pages” and then stop “for a season” (D&C 5:30; note esp. the emphasis “a few more pages”). This implies that Emma and Samuel TOLD HIM. Joseph Smith’s Aged Sister Tells About Moroni’s Talk.”

418 Brent Lee Metclafe, “The Priority of Mosiah: A Prelude to Book of Mormon Exegesis,” *New Approaches To The Book of Mormon*, ed. Brent Lee Metclafe, (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 402-403

419 Metclafe, “The Priority of Mosiah: A Prelude to Book of Mormon Exegesis,” 403.

or others transcribed some pages before and after the date of this revelation. We would expect then to find multiple leaves containing their handwriting before Cowdery's handwriting first appears in the manuscript...If Smith had recommenced dictation at 1 Nephi, Emma and Samuel would have transcribed at most one leaf prior to Cowdery. Writing so little cannot account for their work as described in D&C 5, which assumes multiple pages before Cowdery's involvement."<sup>420</sup>

**Fifth**, Metclafe follows the work of Glen Foster, Jr., who also believed in the priority of Mosiah. Metclafe writes: "He [Foster, Jr.-SF] investigated the frequency of the potentially interchangeable terms "whosoever" and "whoso."

	"whosoever"	"whoso"
Mosiah	20	0
Alma	34	0
Hel.	9	1
3 Ne.	15	17
Morm.	1	3
Ether	0	11
Moro.	0	2
1 Ne.	0	5
2 Ne.	0	3
Jacob	0	1

Metclafe states: "On the basis of this pattern, Foster concluded that Smith favored "whosoever" in the early stage of dictation and then substituted "whoso" mid-way through the project in Helaman, 3 Nephi, and Mormon."<sup>421</sup>

**Sixth**, Metclafe points out another piece of a stylistic pattern that fits better with the priority of Mosiah and it is "therefore" and "wherefore."

I did not include the "therefore" and "wherefore" from *Doctrine & Covenants* in Table 3 chart from Metclafe's article.

A person can easily see after examination that if one starts with Mosiah, then the frequent usage of "therefore" decreases while the frequent usage of "wherefore" continues to rise.

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<sup>420</sup> Metclafe, "The Priority of Mosiah: A Prelude to Book of Mormon Exegesis," 404.

<sup>421</sup> Metclafe, "The Priority of Mosiah: A Prelude to Book of Mormon Exegesis," 409.

**Table 3: Mosian Priority (revised)****1. July 1828 - May 1829; Harmony, Pennsylvania**

	<b>“therefore”</b>	<b>“wherefore”</b>
Mosiah	122	0
Alma	289	3
Hel.	63	0
3 Ne.	86	1
4 Ne.	5	0
Morm.	22	0
Ether	25	63
Title Page	0	2
Total.	<b>612</b>	<b>69</b>

**2. June-July 1829; Fayette, New York**

Moro.	0	38
1 Ne.	13	101
2 Ne.	5	137
Jacob	1	52
Enos	0	6
Jarom	0	3
Omni	0	6
W of M	0	4

**3. August 1829 - March 1830**

Three Witness'

Testimony	0	2
1830 Ed.		
Preface	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>350<sup>422</sup></b>

**Seventh**, Metclafe makes an interesting point in regards to the birth date of Jesus in the *BOM*. He states: “Enveloping is particularly evident in discussion of the advent of Jesus. For example, early in the narrative Nephi relates that Lehi (1 Ne. 10:4), an angel (19:8), and “the prophets” (2 Ne. 25:19) had all predicted that Jesus **would be born 600 years from the time Lehi left**

<sup>422</sup> Metclafe, “The Priority of Mosiah: A Prelude to Book of Mormon Exegesis,” 413.



**Jerusalem** (emp. mine). However, subsequent Book of Mormon prophets seem unaware of these extraordinary oracles.”<sup>423</sup>

Metclafe goes on to give evidence of this point such as Mosiah 3:5 where king Benjamin states: “For behold, **the time cometh, and is not far distant (emp. mine)**, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases.” *The event of the incarnation would not occur for 120 years.*

Alma 13:24,25 states: “For behold, angels are declaring it unto many at this time in our land; and this is for the purpose of preparing the hearts of the children of men to receive his word at the time of his coming in his glory. And now we only wait to hear the joyful news declared unto us by the mouth of angels, of his coming; for the time cometh, **we know not how soon. Would to God that it might be in my day; but let it be sooner or later, in it I will rejoice** (emp. mine).”

As Metclafe states: “Thus Alma, Benjamin, and their audiences did not know what Lehi, Nephi, an angel, anonymous Old World prophets, and their sacred literature had known with certainty: that Jesus would be born 600 years after the Lehtes departed for the Americas.”<sup>424</sup>

There is more though. As Metclafe states: “When Samuel the Lamanite subsequently enters the scene, in contrast to Benjamin’s and Alma’s imprecision, he boldly specifies “for five years more cometh... then cometh the Son of God” (Hel. 14:2). Absent is any indication that Samuel merely echoes the inspired utterances of his forebears, Lehi and Nephi, or other prophets, including an angel. This particular point is paramount, for the potency of Samuel’s oracle lies in its absolute uniqueness. If Samuel’s prophecy is simply a repetition of earlier prophecies, it could scarcely be used to authenticate his prophetic calling. (16:4-5). When Samuel’s followers are sentenced to death prior to Jesus’ advent, it is because his prophecy did not appear to be true, excluding any mention of Lehi or Nephi (3 Ne. 1:5).

The enveloping is obvious: Lehi and Nephi explicitly preach the date of

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<sup>423</sup> Metclafe, “The Priority of Mosiah: A Prelude to Book of Mormon Exegesis,” 416.

<sup>424</sup> *Ibid.*

Jesus' birth; Benjamin and Alma speak only in generalities; Samuel, like Nephi, is explicit. But when we analyze the passages in the order they were dictated, the enveloping pattern is replaced with a linear pattern. Prophets in the earliest part of the dictation lack specific knowledge of Jesus' birth date. However, with Samuel a date of five years is given. At the expiration of the allotted time, the signs appear as prophesied. In this context the narrative explains: (1) that "father Lehi...Nephi...almost all of our fathers...have testified of the coming of Christ" (Hel. 8:22); and (2) that the year Jesus was born "was six hundred years from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem" (3 Ne. 1:1)."<sup>425</sup>

Edwin Firmage, Jr. also makes a great point in a similar manner. He wrote: "The Book of Mormon is a collection of three distinct compositions: the so-called "small plates" of Nephi (1 Nephi-Words of Mormon), Mormon's abridged history of the Nephites (Mosiah-Mormon), and the history of the Jaredites (Ether). It is from the second of these that the Book of Mormon gets its name. Mormon, we are told, chose to include Nephi's record with his abridgment in order to preserve Nephi's extensive prophecies about the coming of Christ (Words of Mormon 4). In 1 Nephi 11ff., for example, Nephi foretells Jesus' birth to a virgin in Nazareth, his miracles, the appearance of John the Baptist, Jesus' baptism, and Jesus' death. Nephi reveals that the Messiah's name will be Jesus Christ (2 Ne. 25:19), that he will be crucified and rise after three days (v. 13). He predicts the natural disasters preceding the coming of the resurrected Christ to America, as described in 3 Nephi. He sees Jesus' visit to the survivors of the cataclysms in America and to the twelve new-world apostles whom Jesus selects (1 Ne. 12; 2 Ne. 26). These last prophecies are of special importance. There could be no doubt for anyone who read Nephi's record that the resurrected Jesus would appear in America.

It is therefore surprising that in the early part of Mormon's abridged history, prophecies about the coming of Jesus say nothing about the latter's coming to America (see Mos. 3:5ff.; 7:27; 15:Al. 4:13; 5:50; 6:8; 7:7ff). Not until Alma 16:20 is it clearly stated that Christ would appear there. "Many of the people did inquire concerning the place where the Son of God should come; and they were taught that he would appear unto them after his resurrection" (*italics org.*). The people's uncertainty, shared significantly by Alma himself (7:8), implies that nothing was known about Christ's promise to visit America, as described in such detail by Nephi. The discrepancy between the prophetic

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<sup>425</sup> Metcalfe, "The Priority of Mosiah: A Prelude to Book of Mormon Exegesis," 416-417.

material in 1-2 Nephi and that in Mosiah-Alma 16 calls for explanation.

As in the case of the Egyptian connection, the explanation is found in the story of how the Book of Mormon was translated. In June 1828 some 116 pages of translation, virtually everything that had been completed up to that point, mysteriously disappeared after being lent to Martin Harris. For sometime thereafter, Joseph Smith was forbidden to translate, and though perfunctory efforts began again in the autumn, nothing substantial was produced until the arrival of Oliver Cowdery in April 1829. When translation began again in earnest, instead of re-doing what had been lost, Smith continued from the point where the 1828 translation had stopped--with Mosiah--and then translated 1 Nephi to Words of Mormon last of all. This reconstruction of the order of translation is confirmed by the handwriting analysis carried out by Dean Jessee. Jessee tentatively identified the handwriting of John Whitmer and of an additional unknown scribe in the first fifteen chapters of 1 Nephi where, had Smith and his scribe at the time (Oliver Cowdery) begun there, we should have expected to find Cowdery's handwriting. However, we know that towards the end of the translation in June 1829, John Whitmer briefly acted as scribe. Mosiah and Alma, then, antedate 1-2 Nephi in order of dictation.

With this in mind, it is not difficult to explain why prophecies of Jesus in Mosiah and Alma 1-16 evidence no awareness of Nephi's prophecies of Jesus' American ministry. The explanation is simply that during the initial stages of the new 1829 translation (Mosiah to Alma 16), Joseph Smith himself had not yet conceived the notion of Christ's visit to America. The ignorance of Nephi's prophecies manifested by the characters in Mosiah and Alma 1-16 reflects the fact that Smith, the creator-translator, did not yet himself know the turn his narrative was to take. Nephi's unambiguous prophecies reflect the fact that they were translated, or as I would now prefer to say, composed, after the events they claimed to foretell."<sup>426</sup>

Firmitage, Jr. also wrote: "LDS readers who have noticed the two different genres that characterize 1 Nephi-Words of Mormon and Mosiah-Ether will perhaps observe that one need not resort to historical criticism to explain the difference; the Book of Mormon itself tells us that the so-called "small plates" of Nephi were deliberately written to preserve prophetic rather than historical

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426 Edward Firmitage, Jr. "Historical Criticism and the Book of Mormon: A Personal Encounter." *American Apocrypha: Essays on the Book of Mormon*. eds. Dan Vogel and Brent Lee Metcalfe (Salt Lake City, UT: Signature Books, 2002), 6-7.

detail (cf. 1 Ne. 9:1ff). But this only indicates that the early Book of Mormon's turn to prophecy was intentional. The existence of a separate set of plates devoted to matters prophetic is, I think, demonstrably a fictional explanation of how new source material turned up to replace the lost 116 pages and why this new material focused on prophecy at the expense of history. The Book of Mormon itself provides the strongest reason for regarding the small plates as a fiction: nowhere in Mosiah to Mormon is reference ever made to a separate set of small plates. What the record keepers pass from generation to generation is called simply the plates of Nephi without ever a hint of a separate prophetic collection. There is a single set of plates called the plates of Nephi which is maintained to the end of the Book of Mormon history (e.g., Mos. 28:11,20; Al. 37:2; 44:24; 3 Ne. 5:10; 26:11; 4 Ne. 19,21; Morm. 1:4; 2:17,18) and which is valued for its sacred as well as historical content (Mos. 1:2 with vv. 6-7; Al. 37:2; 3 Ne. 26:7,11).<sup>427</sup>

“Another reason for regarding the existence of the small plates as literary fiction is the peculiar way in which they are linked via the Words of Mormon to the rest of the Book of Mormon. The most striking thing about the Words of Mormon is that it is supposed to be Mormon's last words: “And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making in to the hands of my son Moroni...wherefore, I chose these things to finish my record upon them. ...And now I, Mormon, proceed to finish out my record...” (1,5,9). What, then, is this editorial instruction doing in the middle of the Book of Mormon? If, indeed, the Words of Mormon is a valedictory, then it belongs at the end of Mormon's abridgement and not in the plates of Nephi. If, as Mormon says, his own abridgement had already been completed, what need was there for these transitional verses they link not his abridgment of Lehi's record but Nephi's self-contained account to the beginning of Mosiah? In my opinion, there seems little choice but to accept the “Words of Mormon” as Smith's attempt to knit two parts of his translation together while explaining how he providentially happened to have something like a duplicate of the lost portion.”<sup>428</sup>

There is an excellent article written by Quinn Brewster entitled: “The Structure of the Book of Mormon: A Theory of Evolutionary Development.”<sup>429</sup>

427 Edward Firmitage, Jr. “Historical Criticism and the Book of Mormon: A Personal Encounter,” 7-8.

428 Edward Firmitage, Jr. “Historical Criticism and the Book of Mormon: A Personal Encounter,” 8.

429 Link: <https://www.dialoguejournal.com/articles/the-structure-of-the-book-of-mormon-a-theory-of-evolutionary-development/>.

When reading through this article, a person needs to read between the lines so to speak through the perspective of the Spalding-Rigdon theory. If it is read in that manner, then it will make more sense.

**First**, if it is the case that 116 pages were lost, then it would take time to tell Rigdon what had happened in June 1828. Someone would have to go to Rigdon in Ohio where he lived and bring him the sad news.

**Second**, after telling Rigdon what had happened, it would take time for Rigdon to “replace” the lost pages. It makes sense now why Joseph Smith “lost” his gift of translating for a while because he did not have the revised Spalding manuscript to work from that Rigdon had given to him.

Rigdon would have to consider an alternative plan that would not disrupt the beginning of the **BOM** narrative, it would also have to connect all the way down to the reign of king Benjamin (which is near the beginning of Mosiah), and it would have to somehow be able to counteract the false accusation that there are differences made from the original 116 pages if they should come to light - thus the “light” turned on to make what was known as the “small plates” of Nephi which are found from 1 Nephi-Words of Mormon. This is why it took several months until Joseph Smith could finally resume translating the “plates.”

**Third**, Rigdon also had the opportunity to update the revised manuscript with theological beliefs that he learned and wanted to have them incorporated into the manuscript.

**Fourth**, Metclafe’s comments concerning the specific prophecies made by Lehi and Nephi and the less explicit prophecies of Mosiah and Alma concerning the first coming of Jesus make more sense in the light of the loss of the 116 pages. When Rigdon first revised the Spalding manuscript, he was very vague concerning the coming of Jesus. When Rigdon had to revise the manuscript again, and he decided to make it more spiritual, then Rigdon got **more specific** concerning the prophecies of Jesus.

There is another piece of evidence that also points toward the priority of Mosiah. This comes from a website.<sup>430</sup>

**“after that”**

**1 Nephi** 1:17; 3:18,23,30,31; 4:5,19,20; 5:10; 7:21,22;8:8,25,28,33,38;10:10,11(x2),14;11:7,19,24,27,34; 13:26,29,34(x3),35,42; 15:13,17,20;

<sup>430</sup> <http://www.mormonleaks.com>.



16:14,17,18,33,38,39; 17:11; 18:5,9,15,21; 19:3,4; 22:1,6,8 - **52 times**

**2 Nephi** 2:19,22; 4:10; 5:7; 6:8,10; 25:13,16,20,27; 26:1,3,15; 31:8,14,19;  
32:1,4,6

**Jacob** 2:19; 6:2,7,8

**Enos** 1:11

**Words of Mormon** 1:3

**Alma** 2:20; 5:5; 25:3; 31:37

**Mormon** 3:15; 5:20

**3 Nephi** 12:1(x2); 16:4; 18:37; 20:15,27; 26:13; 27:14; 28:1,3

**Ether** 4:1,2,3; 6:1,21; 7:9; 9:15,22; 10:10,16,17; 12:7,21,30,31; 15:5,16,31)

**Moroni** 2:2; 6:4; 7:26; 9:10(x2); 10:2

**“before that”**

**1 Nephi** 13:14; 19:1

**2 Nephi** 7:16

**Enos** 1:2,8

**Mormon** 6:22

**3 Nephi** 28:6,32

**“because that”**

**1 Nephi** 2:11; 16:22; 2 Nephi 2:18,26; 4:32; 6:5; 9:30; 25:4; 29:8,9,10

**Jacob** 2:13 (x2), 20; 5:37(x2),45,48,60,75; 7:19

**Omni** 1:14

**Mosiah** 10:13

**Alma** 18:16; 32:12; 46:25

**Mormon** 4:4; 9:20,34

**Moroni** 7:27,29

**“since that”**

**1 Nephi** 22:5

**Table 1: “\_\_\_\_\_ + that” phrases**

**“after that” “before that” “because that” “since that”**

Mosiah	0	0	1	0
Alma	4	0	3	0
Hel.	0	0	0	0
3 Ne.	0	2	0	0
4 Ne.	0	0	0	0
Morm.	2	1	3	0
Ether	18	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>
Moro.	6	0	2	0
1 Ne.	52	2	2	1
2 Ne.	19	1	10	0
Jacob	4	0	10	0
Enos	1	2	0	0
Jarom	0	0	0	0
Omni	0	0	1	0
W of M	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>

There are several other points that could be made to show Mosiah priority, but how does Sidney Rigdon fit into all this in regards to the loss of the 116 pages that occurred in June 1828?

If it is the case that Sidney Ridgdon had stolen the manuscript of the deceased Spalding sometime before 1816 and he had held onto the manuscript for a number of years, then it might at some point come to be useful in some manner.

Examining the trajectory of religious beliefs held by Sidney Rigdon, we know he held to the Baptist faith and he most likely came into contact for the first time with the American Restoration Movement when he read a pamphlet of the Alexander Campbell and John Walker debate on the subject of baptism.<sup>431</sup> Adamson Bentley (a long-time acquaintance of Campbell) wanted Rigdon to meet Campbell.<sup>432</sup> They met and were able to strike up a long conversation about a variety of religious subjects, and even Rigdon readily admitted that “if

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<sup>431</sup> Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 17.

<sup>432</sup> McClellan, “Sidney Rigdon’s 1820 Ministry,” 153.

he had within the last year taught and promulgated from the pulpit one error, he had a thousand.”<sup>433</sup>

Campbell desired to use Rigdon because of his exceptional abilities and secured him a position at the First Baptist Church of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1822, adhering to restoration principles.<sup>434</sup> He gained much momentum in popularity as a preacher in that area. Rigdon propagated Campbell’s restoration principles entitled “Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things” that were published in the *Christian Baptist* from 1825 to 1829.<sup>435</sup>

It must be noted that Campbell was by no means a perfect man or had a perfect understanding of the Scriptures. He was certainly very intelligent when a person reads his writings and debates. It took time for many of these men such as Walter Scott, Alexander Campbell, and others to come to the knowledge of the truth on certain subjects such as it pertained to the purpose of water immersion.

Interestingly enough, if a person were to do a sketch of the theological history of some doctrines that have been taught over the centuries, I believe the person would be quite surprised what they would learn about what had been taught about baptism. Now just because a doctrine has been taught for such a long period of time does not necessarily make it true. It is only true if it is what the Bible teaches.

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433 McKiernan, “The Conversion of Sidney Rigdon to Mormonism,” 74.

434 Knowles, “Sidney Rigdon: The Benedict Arnold of the Restoration Movement?,” 6.

435 McKiernan, “The Conversion of Sidney Rigdon to Mormonism,” 75. Knowles, “Sidney Rigdon: The Benedict Arnold of the Restoration Movement?,” 8.

## Chapter 18: The Evolution of The Book of Mormon

We are now going to probe through the **BOM** and use our detective skills to see whether or not we do find Solomon Spalding's "fingerprints" and Sidney Rigdon's "fingerprints" throughout it. I will bring some of the information from the two former publications - *Questions About The Book of Mormon* and *Questions About Mormon Doctrine* (which was the expanded edition). I have added some new material electronically. I placed it in Appendix A so that you might go and check out all the problems that can be found in the **BOM** and return here.

Building upon the other chapters, let us now proceed forth through the **BOM** starting with the book of Mosiah since that would be the book that Joseph Smith would have been working through "translating" after the missing 116 pages crisis of June 1828.

Here is an overview of the evolutionary development of the **BOM**.

### The Evolutionary Development of the Book of Mormon

**Date:** pre-June 1828

**Hypothesis:** Rigdon had delivered to Smith the edited Spalding MS that contained Rigdon's Baptist theological views.

**Historical fact:**

The scribe was primarily Martin Harris in April 1828.<sup>436</sup>

**Date:** post-June 1828

**Historical fact:** 116 pages of the manuscript that had been transcribed by Martin Harris were taken and evidently met their demise since they were never recovered.<sup>437</sup>

**Hypothesis:** The manuscript was most likely destroyed by Lucy Harris, Martin Harris' wife. Rigdon had to be notified about this unfortunate incident. Who was sent to tell Rigdon concerning this matter remains unknown.

**Historical fact:** Rigdon had learned a new theological truth on the purpose of water baptism in March of 1828.

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<sup>436</sup> Hardy, *Book of Mormon: A Reader's Edition*, 644.

<sup>437</sup> Van Wagoner, *Sidney Rigdon*, 46.

“In March, 1828, he [Rigdon - SF] visited Scott in Warren. He had been with him on former occasions, and had adopted fully his method of preaching Christ, and of calling the awakened and penitent believer to an immediate obedience of his faith for the remission of sins. The missing link between Christ and convicted sinners seemed now happily supplied by the restoration of the way of bringing converts into the knowledge of pardon, which was established by Christ himself in the commission. Rigdon was transported with this discovery.”<sup>438</sup>

**Hypothesis:** Since Rigdon would have to re-work the manuscript, this would now grant Rigdon the opportunity to update the manuscript with the theological truth about the purpose of water baptism and other truths he might have learned along the way.

Not all the pages that had been transcribed by Harris had been lost. Harris must have taken pages that were done after what is known as 1 Nephi 18 and before the reign of king Benjamin (which is near the beginning of Mosiah). He must also not have taken some that have to do with 1 Nephi 1-5. This is based on the testimony of Henry Lake who remembered the account of Laban which is found in 1 Nephi 3-7 and the grammatical inconsistency pointed out by Lake is specifically noted in Robert Patterson’s book.<sup>439</sup> Here is hypothetically the status of the manuscript right after the loss of the 116 pages. I should let you know that primarily 1 Nephi 6 and 1 Nephi 8-22 (with the exceptions of 1 Nephi 16-18 being original Spalding material) most likely were additions that were made by Rigdon and his company.

### **1N1-5,16-18, (loss of 116 pgs.), Mos., Alma, Hel., 3N, 4N, Mor., Eth.**

Rigdon needed to repair the “big gap” between 1 Nephi and Mosiah. He and his company needed to come up with a plan to replace the lost pages. The first scenario is that Rigdon may have taken back with him 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi, Mormon, and Ether, but left Mosiah, Alma, and Helaman with Smith. The second scenario is that Rigdon took all of the manuscripts back with him. The second scenario is more likely.

This explains several matters:

(1) It explains the contradictory views on the purpose of water baptism in

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<sup>438</sup> Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve*, 192.

<sup>439</sup> Robert Patterson, Jr., *Who Wrote The Book of Mormon?*, 4.



3 Nephi 7:23-26 and 3 Nephi 30:1-2 and other books. It would certainly be a Herculean task to try to make everything consistent after the loss of the 116 pages. Rigdon seems to have been careless in this instance when he had, near the beginning of 3rd Nephi, the Baptists' view of the plan of salvation that a person is saved before baptism (which is false - Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16) and then to have added the truth about baptism in 3 Nephi 30:1-2 **in the same book!**

(2) It explains the contradiction in Ether 4:1 (1830 edition) because of the first scenario possibility in that Smith still had Mosiah, but Rigdon had the book of Ether with him. According to the second scenario, Rigdon just passed over the mistake. It may be the case that Spalding had made this mistake in his writing and it was never recognized by Rigdon and company as a historical error.

(3) It explains the new truths on water baptism in the latter part of 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi, Mormon, and Ether.

(4) It explains why Smith could not or would not continue the translation for several months since he did not have access to the rest of the edited manuscript that Rigdon now had to re-edit.

One among the company came up with the idea that there would be what is known as the "large plates of Nephi" and "the small plates of Nephi." The "small plates" would cover and fill in the big gap of 1 Nephi 6 to the beginning of Mosiah. The Words of Mormon book was created by Rigdon and company in order to show that as Mosiah was abridging his record from the plates of Nephi that he discovered what is known as the small plates of Nephi (Words of Mormon 1:1-9). It so happened to cover the timeline of Lehi and Nephi all the way down to the reign of king Benjamin (***how convenient it was to come to the place where the end of loss of the 116 pages occurred!***). Since the small plates contained material that was spiritual that related to ministry, Mormon thought it best to incorporate the small plates into his abridged record. Once again, how convenient! Rigdon went back to Ohio and must have worked on the manuscript for several months.

Did Rigdon work on the replacement for the lost pages first that would cover 1 Nephi- Words of Mormon or did he work on 3 Nephi-Moroni? It is most likely the case that he worked on 3 Nephi-Moroni first. This is based on the usage of "wherefore" and "therefore" pattern as Metclafe points out. Please look back on that study.

Throughout 3 Nephi, it is evident that there are contradictory views of baptism that are taught.

In **3 Nephi 1:23**, it seems that both views of baptism were taught: "And it

came to pass that Nephi went forth among the people, and also many others, baptizing unto repentance, in the which there was a great remission of sins. And thus the people began again to have peace in the land.”

**3 Nephi 7:23-26:** “Thus passed away the thirty and second year also. And Nephi did cry unto the people in the commencement of the thirty and third year; and he did preach unto them repentance and remission of sins. Now I would have you to remember also, that there were none who were brought unto repentance who were not baptized with water. Therefore, there were ordained of Nephi, men unto this ministry, that all such as should come unto them should be baptized with water, and this as a witness and a testimony before God, and unto the people, that they had repented and received a remission of their sins. And there were many in the commencement of this year that were baptized unto repentance; and thus the more part of the year did pass away.”

**3 Nephi 11:33,34:** “And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God. And whoso believeth not in me, and is not baptized, shall be damned.”

**3 Nephi 12:2:** “And again, more blessed are they who shall believe in your words because that ye shall testify that ye have seen me, and that ye know that I am. Yea, blessed are they who shall believe in your words, and come down into the depths of humility and be baptized, for they shall be visited with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and shall receive a remission of their sins.”

**3 Nephi 19:13:** “And it came to pass when they were all baptized and had come up out of the water, the Holy Ghost did fall upon them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

**3 Nephi 30:2:** “Turn, all ye Gentiles, from your wicked ways; and repent of your evil doings, of your clyings and deceivings, and of your whoredoms, and of your secret abominations, and your idolatries, and of your murders, and your priestcrafts, and your envyings, and your strifes, and from all your wickedness and abominations, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, that ye may receive a remission of your sins, and be filled with the Holy Ghost, that ye may be numbered with my people who are of the house of Israel.”

**4 Nephi 1:1:** “And it came to pass that the thirty and fourth year passed away, and also the thirty and fifth, and behold the disciples of Jesus had formed a church of Christ in all the lands round about. And as many as did come unto them, and did truly repent of their sins, were baptized in the name of Jesus; and they did also receive the Holy Ghost.”

**Mormon 3:2:** “And it came to pass that the Lord did say unto me: Cry unto this people—Repent ye, and come unto me, and be ye baptized, and build up again my church, and ye shall be spared.”

**Mormon 7:8:** “Therefore repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, and lay hold upon the gospel of Christ, which shall be set before you, not only in this record but also in the record which shall come unto the Gentiles from the Jews, which record shall come from the Gentiles unto you.”

**Ether 4:18:** “Therefore, repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and believe in my gospel, and be baptized in my name; for he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned; and signs shall follow them that believe in my name.”

**Moroni 8:25:** “And the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins.”

One of the other doctrines that Rigdon would add would be what is known as communal living.

**3 Nephi 26:19:** “And they taught, and did minister one to another; and they had all things common among them, every man dealing justly, one with another.”

**4 Nephi 1:3:** “And they had all things common among them; therefore there were not rich and poor, bond and free, but they were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift.”

**4 Nephi 1:24-25:** “And now, in this two hundred and first year there began to be among them those who were lifted up in pride, such as the wearing of costly apparel, and all manner of fine pearls, and of the fine things of the world. And from that time forth they did have their goods and their substance no more common among them.”

It most likely is the case that Rigdon, during the revisionist stage, after the loss of the 116 pages, came up with Moroni to be suitable as a theological handbook. One can see that he heavily drew from 3 Nephi.

Rigdon finished reworking and adding materials in 3 Nephi to Moroni. One can see the obvious examples of the edited materials - Mormon 7-9; Ether 3-5, 12-part of 13; Moroni. After finishing this part, Rigdon had to turn to replacing the lost pages (from 1 Nephi to the beginning of Mosiah) at the beginning of the book of Mormon.

1 Nephi 1-5 was original Spalding material and Rigdon must have rarely

touched it. He decided that he must have these **BOM** authors talking about the small plates and so introduces them in 1 Nephi 6:1-6. He also does not want us to forget about them so he writes about them again in 1 Nephi 9:1-6 and 19:1-6. It seems to me that 1 Nephi 8-15,19-22 (with chapters 20 and 21 from Isaiah 48-49 serving as filler material) is theological material that was made up by Rigdon.

Almost the whole book of 2 Nephi in my estimation is Rigdon's editorial hand. Nephi does not want us to forget that he is also writing on small plates (2 Nephi 4:15; 5:30-32). Notice the theological material that is packed in 2 Nephi 1-2, 4, 9-11, and 25-33. Rigdon, since he was partners with Joseph Smith now, could now in 2 Nephi 3 have Joseph of Egypt fortelling a supposed prophecy that from the fruit of his loins (**16 times** in total) would come Joseph Smith, Jr. and wait for it...a spokesman...which could be no other than Sidney Rigdon himself (2 Nephi 3:17-18). Then notice that Rigdon starts to use more filler material by using the book of Isaiah (**2 Nephi 7/Isaiah 50; 2 Nephi 8/Isaiah 51 and 52:1-2; 2 Nephi 12/Isaiah 2; 2 Nephi 13/Isaiah 3; 2 Nephi 14/Isaiah 4; 2 Nephi 15/Isaiah 5; 2 Nephi 16/Isaiah 6; 2 Nephi 17/Isaiah 7; 2 Nephi 18/Isaiah 8; 2 Nephi 19/Isaiah 9; 2 Nephi 20/Isaiah 10; 2 Nephi 21/Isaiah 11; 2 Nephi 22/Isaiah 12; 2 Nephi 23/Isaiah 13; 2 Nephi 24/Isaiah 14**. Rigdon also inserted new theological truths about baptism in 2 Nephi 9:23; 31:17.

**2 Nephi 9:22-23:** "And he suffereth this that the resurrection might pass upon all men, that all might stand before him at the great and judgment day. And he commandeth all men that they must arepent, and be bbaptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God."

**2 Nephi 31:5-8, 17:** "And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water, to fulfil all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water! And now, I would ask of you, my beloved brethren, wherein the Lamb of God did fulfil all righteousness in being baptized by water? Know ye not that he was holy? But notwithstanding he being holy, he showeth unto the children of men that, according to the flesh he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments. Wherefore, after he was baptized with water the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the aform of a dove... Wherefore, do the things which I have told you I have seen that your Lord and your Redeemer should do; for, for this cause have they been shown unto me, that ye might know the gate by which ye should

enter. For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire and by the Holy Ghost.”

Rigdon also had the opportunity to make 2 Nephi 27 which is taken mostly from Isaiah 29 and committed eisegesis into supposedly making it into a prophecy of when in February 1828, Martin Harris visited the college professors in New York in showing them whether the characters from the golden plates were genuine or not. Anthon, one of the professors, would write a letter later stating that the story was false.<sup>440</sup>

Rigdon also made up the whole book of Jacob. Jacob wants to remind us all that he is writing on the small plates (Jacob 1:1-3; cf. 3:13-14). Notice the very long parable of Zenos that is about eight pages long in Jacob 5 that served as filler material.

Rigdon probably was very rushed into completing the revised manuscript. In order to speed up the process of getting down to the date of king Benjamin’s reign, he wanted the plates to be passed along the way through Enos, Jarom (1:2-3,14-15), Omni (1:11), Chemish, Abinadom, Ameleki that would cover several hundred years. Notice when they get passed to Ameleki that the plates are full! **How convenient!**

**Omni 1:23:** “Behold, I, Amaleki was born in the days of Mosiah, and I have lived to see his death; and Benjamin, his son, reigneth in his stead.” How convenient that Amaleki lived in the days when Benjamin started to reign after his father, Mosiah, died!

Rigdon has done the patched work on replacing the lost pages. He must have had it returned sometime between September 1829-April 1829. Did he make a couple or several trips up to New York to give the revised manuscript? We know that there are a few gaps in Rigdon’s timeline in which he could make such trip(s). Please consult the chapter on Rigdon’s timeline.

Even if the Rigdon-Smith theory is incorrect, the **BOM** would still be false because it contains a series of blatant contradictions. One of the major contradictions would be found in 2 Nephi 26:4,5 and 3rd Nephi 25:1-6; 26:1,2.

**2 Nephi 26:4,5:** “Wherefore, all those who are proud, and that do wickedly, the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, for they shall be as stubble. And they that kill the prophets, and the saints, the depths of the earth shall swallow them up, saith the Lord of Hosts; and mountains shall cover them, and whirlwinds shall carry them away, and buildings shall fall upon them

440 Clark. *Gleanings by the Way*, 233-238.



and crush them to pieces and grind them to powder.”

**1 Nephi 22:15:** “For behold, saith the prophet, the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned.”

There are actually two problems. The first problem is that Nephi (600s B.C.) is quoting from the prophet Malachi even before Malachi was written (400s B.C.). The second problem is that it contradicts 3 Nephi 26:1-2. Notice that even the footnote in 1 Nephi 22:15 acknowledges that it comes from Malachi 4:1.

3 Nephi 25:1-6 comes from Malachi 4.

3 Nephi 26:1-2: “And now it came to pass that when Jesus had told these things he expounded them unto the multitude; and he did expound all things unto them, both great and small. And he saith: **These scriptures, which ye had not with you**, the Father commanded that I should give unto you; for it was wisdom in him that they should be given unto future generations.”

Jesus stated that the Nephites did not have these Scriptures (i.e., Malachi) with them. **But then how is that possible if Nephi quoted from Malachi years earlier?**

One cannot argue that somehow the transmission of the brass plates got lost. Here is the reason why. Malachi could not have been written down yet in the “prophecies of the holy prophets” on the plates of brass because it was written down in 400s B.C. However, the LDS must explain then how is it possible that Nephi is quoting from Malachi in 1 Nephi 22:15 then?

**1 Nephi 5:10-14:** “And after they had given thanks unto the God of Israel, my father, Lehi, took the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, and he did search them from the beginning. And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world, and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents; And also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah; And also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah; and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah.”

**3 Nephi 1:2:** “And Nephi, the son of Helaman, had departed out of the land of Zarahemla, giving charge unto his son Nephi, who was his eldest son, concerning the plates of brass, and all the records which had been kept, **and all those things which had been kept sacred from the departure of Lehi out of Jerusalem** (emp. mine).”

### **Further Explanations:**

5. It explains why the small plates of Nephi (1 Nephi - Words of Mormon) are **not** ever mentioned again after Words of Mormon. The small plates of Nephi are **NOT** mentioned from Mosiah through Moroni because the idea evidently had not been conceived until after the reworked edits from Mosiah through Moroni.

6. It explains the Words of Mormon that Rigdon had to have Mormon discover the small plates of Nephi.

7. It explains the new truths on water baptism that are found in 1st Nephi through Words of Mormon.

8. It explains why there are not many narrative details from 2 Nephi through Words of Mormon because the company would not want to contradict themselves.

9. It explains 2 Nephi 27 because it was written “after the fact” of the event of February 1828 with professor Anthon.

10. It explains Omni 12ff because it was originally part of Mosiah.<sup>441</sup>

11. It explains the contradiction of Malachi (2 Nephi 26:4,5 and 3rd Nephi 25:1-6; 26:1,2) because Rigdon and company forgot that they made Jesus to say that they did not have the writings of Malachi with them.

**Date:** April 1829

**Historical fact:**

Oliver Cowdery comes to be the replacement scribe for Joseph Smith.

**Hypothesis:**

After Rigdon delivered the edited parts of Mosiah through Moroni and then 1 Nephi through Words of Mormon, then Cowdery and Smith could concentrate heavily on putting the edited manuscripts into a new manuscript that would be fit for publication.

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<sup>441</sup> Jack M. Lyon and Kent R. Minson (2012) “When Pages Collide: Dissecting the Words of Mormon,” *BYU Studies Quarterly*: Vol. 51: Iss. 4, Article 10. Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/byusq/vol51/iss4/10>.

## Chapter 19: Examining The Book of Mormon In Light of The Theory

### Critique of Mosiah

We are now going to take a journey through the **BOM** to locate the editing of Rigdon in the Spalding manuscript. I believe that you will agree with me that there is an abundance of internal evidence to this part of the theory.

Why are we starting with the book of Mosiah? As we have already examined the chronology of translation, this would have been the first book to have been “translated” after the loss of the 116 pages in June of 1828.

- Arbaugh, who is a Spalding-Rigdon theory advocate, wrote: “The student of Mormonism naturally wants to know how much of the present volume is the work of Spaulding and how much is the result of editing. This problem cannot be solved to entire satisfaction but a great deal that is of importance and interest can be ascertained. There are several rules of analysis which, though limited, are positive: (1) All Disciple theology was inserted by Rigdon. (2) Passages prophetic of Mormonism have a Rigdon-Smith origin. (3) Passages largely historical are probably from Spaulding. (4) Passages in which “It came to pass” occurs frequently are from Spaulding. (5) Lengthy theological discussions are the work of Rigdon unless they are integral parts of the story. (6) Passages reflecting the anti-Masonic excitement are due to Rigdon-Smith editing since Rigdon got the novel in 1826 **(or before 1822 in respect to John Winter’s testimony, Dunlap’s testimony, and Thompson’s testimony - SF)**, some years before this movement began **(It could be the case that Solomon Spaulding had inserted the anti-Masonic material as will be explained later and possibly Rigdon expanded upon it - SF)**. (7) According to statements of those who heard the Manuscript Found read, lengthy passages of Scripture were added. These principles reveal the following facts concerning the consecutive books of the Book of Mormon.”<sup>442</sup>

- Hardy states: “Clearly Mormon shares some of Nephi’s concerns—deliverance, faith, revelation, and Christian theology— **but his narrative style is distinct** (emp. mine). Stories and sermons are set **within a thick historical framework and strict chronology** (emp. mine), with years ticking by like clockwork. He does not offer much scriptural exegesis, and he has

<sup>442</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelation In Mormonism*, 34-35.

little interest in House of Israel connections or messiah theology— the word messiah occurs twenty-three times in Nephi’s writings but only twice in Mormon’s work (and never in Moroni’s). Mormon is more attuned to narrative theology, that is, in showing how theological points are manifest or illustrated in particular events, and his fascination with prophecy is not so much reading himself into past revelations as using prophecies and their fulfillments to persuade his readers that God is directing history.”<sup>443</sup>

- Hardy also writes: “Mormon’s narrative style is characterized by three distinct impulses: as a historian, he needs to present an overview of Nephite history that is true to his sources; as a writer, he wants to construct a narrative that is aesthetically pleasing and compelling; and as a moralist, he takes responsibility for teaching correct doctrine and providing spiritual guidance. Unfortunately, the demands of historical accuracy, literary excellence, and moral clarity do not always fit well together, and if we read closely we can see Mormon struggling to reconcile them. Yet throughout his abridgment (and in contrast with the items added by his son)—whether he is borrowing from earlier records, summarizing, rewriting, or commenting directly— his basic orientation is one of persuasion. Mormon does not simply want to inform or delight or inspire; rather, he wants to convince his future readers to believe certain things and take particular actions. Through his use of historiographical conventions, he establishes his credentials as a reliable narrator, and then in his comments he tells us what lessons we should gain from our study of Nephite history. Yet these two functions do not exhaust his intentions; whether from his own artistic ambitions or for instrumental purposes (since a well-crafted narrative can keep people reading and even rereading), he arranges his stories in complex ways that highlight parallels and contrasts.”<sup>444</sup>

- Arbaugh writes: “Mosiah and Alma, constituting almost half of the entire work, are to all appearances very little changed. The doctrine of the blamelessness of little children was inserted in ch. 3 of Mosiah and it is likely that there has been some other editing as, for instance, in the insertion of passages from Exodus and Isaiah in chapters 12,13 and 14. In Alma certain anti-Masonic ideas were introduced in ch. 37 and the passages on the priesthood in ch. 13 appear to be insertions. On the whole however this great central part of the book is probably about the same as in the original

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<sup>443</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 91.

<sup>444</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 102.

Manuscript Found.”<sup>445</sup>

• Please remember that it would have been the case that a lot of the “came to pass” statements would have originated from Spalding and the new theological material that the Scriptures would have been added in by Rigdon and company.

### Outline of Mosiah

- **Chapter 1- “came to pass” - 1:2,9,15,18 (4 times)**
- **Mosiah 1:5/Galatians 1:14; 1:8/John 20:30; 1:13/Matthew 16:4; 1:17/2 Peter 3:2**
- **Chapter 2 - “came to pass” - 2:1,5,8 (3 times)**
- **2:15/Acts 23:1; 2:21/Acts 17:24; Luke 17:10; 2:34/Acts 3:21; 2:37/Acts 13:10; 17:24; 2:38/Matthew 3:12; 3:3/Luke 2:10**
- **Chapter 3**
- **3:5/Mark 7:37; Revelation 19:6; 3:9/John 1:11; Matthew 11:18; 3:12/Acts 20:21; 3:13/Acts 2:38; 3:17/Acts 4:12; 3:18/1 Corinthians 11:29; Matthew 18:3,4; 3:19/1 Corinthians 2:7,11,14; 3:21/Acts 20:21; 3:26/Revelation 14:10; 3:27/Revelation 20:10,14**
- **Chapter 4 - “came to pass” - 4:1,3 (2 times)**
- **4:7/Matthew 25:34; 4:8/Acts 4:12; 4:12/Acts 2:38; 4:14/Acts 13:10; 4:15/John 13:34,35; 4:20/Acts 2:38; 2:17; Titus 1:11; 4:21/Matthew 21:22; 4:26/Matthew 25:35,36; 4:27/1 Corinthians 9:24; 14:40**
- **Chapter 5 - “came to pass” - 5:1,9,10 (3 times)**
- **5:5/Revelation 14:10; 5:8/Ephesians 1:22,23; Galatians 5:1; Acts 4:12; 5:13/Hebrews 4:12; 5:15/1 Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 19:6**
- **Chapter 6 - “came to pass” - 6:2 [x2],6 (4 times)**
- **Chapter 7 - “came to pass” - 7:1,2,3,8,14,17,18 (7 times)**
- **Chapter 8 - “came to pass” - 8:1,4,5 (3 times)**
- **8:17/1 Corinthians 4:5**
- **Chapter 9 - “came to pass” - 9:5,11,13,15,16 (5 times)**
- **Chapter 10 - “came to pass” - 10:1,3,6,8,9,10(x2),20,21 (9 times)**
- **Chapter 11 - “came to pass” - 11:1,8,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,20,22,23,24, 26 (14 times)**
- **Chapter 12 - “came to pass” - 12:1,2,3,4,6,8,9,17,18,20,31 (11 times)**
- **12:26/Acts 13:10**

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<sup>445</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelation In Mormonism*, 38-39.



- **Chapter 13 - “came to pass” - 13:5 (1 time)**
- **13:1/Acts 22:22; 13:3/Acts 23:3; 13:4/Galatians 4:16; 13:10/Hebrews 10:1; 13:12-24/Exodus 20; 13:31/Colossians 2:17**
- **Chapter 14**
- **14/Isaiah 53**
- **Chapter 15**
- **15:11/Acts 3:21; 2:38; 15:13/Acts 3:21; 15:19/Matthew 25:34; 15:21,22,24/Revelation 20:5-6; 15:26/John 8:24; 15:28/Revelation 5:9**
- **Chapter 16**
- **16:2/Matthew 8:12; 16:3/Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 11:3; James 3:15; 16:7/1 Corinthians 15:20,55; 16:8/1 Corinthians 15:54-55; 16:9/John 1:4; 8:12; 16:10/1 Corinthians 15:53-54; 16:11/John 5:29; 16:14/Hebrews 10:1**
- **Chapter 17 - “came to pass” - 17:1,5,13,15,16 (5 times)**
- **17:19/Acts 7:59**
- **Chapter 18 - “came to pass” - 18:1,4,6,7,8,12,17,18,30,32,34 (11 times)**
- **18:8/Galatians 6:2; 18:9/Romans 12:15; Revelation 20:5,6; 18:10/Acts 2:17; 18:12/Acts 2:17; 18:13/Matthew 25:34; 18:14/Acts 8:39; 2:4; 18:17/Acts 20:28; 2:47; 18:18/Acts 1:3; 18:19/Acts 3:21; 18:20/Acts 20:21; 18:21/Ephesians 4:5; Colossians 2:2**
- **Chapter 19 - “came to pass” - 19:1,5,10,11,13,14,18(x2),22,24,25,27 (12 times)**
- **19:3/Acts 9:1**
- **Chapter 20 - “came to pass” - 20:2,6,9,10,11,12,24,25 (x2) [9 times]**
- **Chapter 21 - “came to pass” - 21:1,2,6,8,11,16,22,33 (8 times)**
- **21:13/Galatians 5:1**
- **Chapter 22 - “came to pass” - 22:1,2,3,9,10,11,14,15 (8 times)**
- **Chapter 23 - “came to pass” - 23:3,5,6,17,19,20,24,25,26,29,33,34,36, 37 (14 times)**
- **23:13/Galatians 5:1; 23:15/Mark 12:33; 23; 23:22/John 6:40; 23:23/Galatians 2:4**
- **Chapter 24 - “came to pass” - 24:1,8,10,11,12,13,15,16,18,20,24,25 (12 times)**
- **Chapter 25 - “came to pass” - 25:5,12,14,15,17,19,23 (7 times)**
- **25:15/Acts 20:21; 25:18/Acts 20:28; 25:24/Acts 2:17**
- **Chapter 26 - “came to pass” - 26:1,6,7,9,14,25,33,34,37 (9 times)**
- **26:21/John 10:27; 26:22/Matthew 16:18; 3:11; 26:27/Matthew**

7:23; 25:41; **26:31**/Matthew 6:14-15; **26:37**/Ephesians 5:15; **26:39**/1 Thessalonians 5:17-19

- **Chapter 27 - “came to pass” - 27:1,2,10,17,23,32 (6 times)**
- **27:11-23**/Acts 9:3-18; **27:10**/Galatians 1:13; **27:13**/Acts 9:4; **27:14**/1 Timothy 2:4; **27:24**/John 3:7; **27:26/2** Corinthians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; **27:29**/Acts 8:22-23; **27:31**/John 12:48; Philippians 2:10-11; **27:36**/1 Timothy 2:4
- **Chapter 28 - “came to pass” - 28:1,5,6,8 (4 times)**
- **Chapter 29 - “came to pass” - 29:2,37,39,41,42,43,45,46 (8 times)**

• Washburn, an LDS scholar, asked some good questions about Mosiah. I thought I would incorporate them here. He writes: “Why is so much of the Isaiah text identical with the King James Version. And of equal importance, why is so much of it different? And what of the differences? These range from a word to sentences. (Punctuation is not considered here). Why are some portions quoted at great length and without comment while others are evaluated and explained as they run along? Why do textual changes seem more apparent in some chapters than in others? How did the prophet Abinadi happen to be quoting the prophecies of Isaiah way up in the land of Nephi when the Brass Plates were almost certainly down in the land of Zarahemla?”<sup>446</sup>

• Hardy admits that there are many phrases that come from the Bible. He writes: “Many of the Book of Mormon’s distinctive phrases (especially those borrowed from the Bible) occur throughout the text in unrelated contexts and seem simply to be part of its generic vocabulary. For instance, “pervert the right ways of the Lord” (Acts 13:10) shows up, with variations, some 12 times, and “the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10) appears 18 times; “as the Lord liveth” occurs 27 times in the Old Testament and 17 times in the Book of Mormon; “from the foundation of the world” is used 6 times in the New Testament and 22 times in the Book of Mormon; and there are 22 uses of “the children of men” in the Old Testament and 129 in the Book of Mormon.”<sup>447</sup>

• I thought this was an enlightening comment made by Hardy. I believe that the editor ought to be identified as Rigdon. He writes: “As noted above, from Mosiah to Fourth Nephi there are over a hundred passages in which Mormon interrupts his narrative to speak directly to his readers. Most of these are

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<sup>446</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 187.

<sup>447</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 108-109.

relatively brief comments explaining his editorial decisions and sources or noting the fulfillment of prophecies, but he also provides summaries, adds explanatory details, offers explicit judgments, and points out universal moral principles. Longer comments appear more frequently as his history proceeds, and consequently we get a sense of gradual self-disclosure. When we finally come to Mormon's autobiographical book, we can return to the beginning of his record to compare his persona as editor with his persona as memoirist. Given the disappointments and tragedy of his own life, it is easy to read a larger background into comments such as that at Alma 46:8, where he reacts on a sudden turn in Nephite history by noting, "Thus we see how quick the children of men do forget the Lord their God, yea, how quick to do iniquity, and to be led away by the evil one."<sup>448</sup>

### Critique of Alma

- If the theory is correct that Spalding's manuscript was almost ready and fit for publication, then we should be able to see a very polished, edited text. I think so when it comes to the *chronological markers*. Spalding seemed to have provided a certain timeline to his historical novel. However, if Rigdon did some editing, then it may be possible to detect where those edited insertions were.

- Hardy wrote a good summary to Alma: "Mormon's abridgment of Nephite history covers a great many people and years, but for the most part his narratives focus on one major event after another. For instance, the longest book— that of Alma— divides fairly neatly into seven sections: the Amlicite Rebellion (Alma 2:1 – 3:19), the Nephite Reformation (4:6 – 16:21), the Missionary Journeys of the Sons of Mosiah (17:5 – 27:15), the Mission to the Zoramites (31:1 – 35:14), Alma's Testimony to His Sons (35:15 – 42:31), the Zoramite War (43:1 – 44:24), and the Amalickiahite Wars (46:1–62:41). These lengthy, coherent, fairly discrete narrative blocks represent a rather advanced style of storytelling, one that is cognizant of readers' needs for interconnections, explanations, and followability, and in addition incorporates several primary sources."<sup>449</sup>

- Washburn wrote: "The book is somewhat less complex, or diverse, than is the record of Mosiah, but its scope is far broader, not only because of its

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<sup>448</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 111.

<sup>449</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 106.

greater length. Its teachings are deep and beautiful; its literature, truly fine. It is here that we find much of the Book-of-Mormon “pre-Christian Christianity,” that source of so much criticism of the American scripture. The book also provides the best material on the subject of geography to be found anywhere in the record. Its stories, big and small—are often masterful. One would look long to find more engaging narratives than are offered in its pages.”<sup>450</sup>

## Outline of Alma

- **Chapter 1: “came to pass” - 1:1 (1 time)**
- **Alma 1:4/John 6:44; 1:25/1 Corinthians 15:58; 7:19; 1:30/Galatians 3:28**
- **Chapter 2 - “came to pass” - 2:5,7,9,14,15,19,20,23,26,29,30,35,38 (13 times)**
- **2:1/1 Corinthians 1:20; 2:4/Galatians 1:13**
- **1:1 - “Now it came to pass that in the first year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi,”**
- **Comment:** Alma 1:2-6: “And it came to pass that in the first year of the reign of Alma in the judgment seat, there was a man brought before him to be judged; a man which was large, and was noted for his much strength; and he had gone about among the people, preaching to them that which he termed to be the word of God, bearing down against the church; declaring unto the people that every priest and teacher had ought to become popular; and they ought not to labor with their own hands, but that they had ought to be supported by the people; and he also testified unto the people that all mankind should be saved at the last day, and that they need not fear nor tremble, but that they might lift up their heads and rejoice: **for the Lord had created all men, and had also redeemed all men; and in the end, all men should have eternal life** (emp. mine). And it came to pass that he did teach these things so much, that many did believe on his words, even so many that they began to support him and give him money; and he began to be lifted up in the pride of his heart, and to wear very costly apparel; yea, and even began to establish a church, after the manner of his preaching.”
- **Dan Vogel states:** “That the Book of Mormon referred to Universalism was recognized by Mormons and non-Mormons alike.

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<sup>450</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 40.

Alexander Campbell, well-known founder of the Disciples of Christ, mentioned in his 1831 critique of the Book of Mormon that it “decides all the great controversies,” including “eternal punishment” (Millennial Harbinger, Feb. 1831, 93). When interpreting the first chapter of Alma, E. D. Howe, editor of the Painesville [Ohio] Telegraph, said, “The name of our ancient Universalist is called Nehor” (Howe 1834, 70). Howe’s identification was not simply an outsider’s view, for in References to the Book of Mormon, a four-page Mormon work probably published in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1835, references were also made to “Nehor the Universalian” and “Amlici the Universalist” (see Underwood 1985, 77). When debating a Universalist in 1832, Orson Hyde quoted a passage from Alma’s letter to what he called Alma’s Universalist son Corianton (Hyde, Journal, 4 Feb. 1832; cf. Alma 41:3-4).<sup>451</sup>

- **Vogel writes about how universalism gained a traction in the early nineteenth century America in several areas:** “The early nineteenth-century movement best fitting the Book of Mormon’s description was Universalism, which first convened as a body in Oxford, Massachusetts, in 1785 and advocated that regardless of earthly performance, all humanity would be saved in the end. Universalism flourished among the uneducated in rural northern New England and by the early nineteenth century had spread to New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, where it became a growing concern for the more “orthodox” churches. By 1823 Universalism had established nearly ninety congregations in the lower Black River Valley, along the Finger Lakes, and in the Genesee River counties (Cross 1950, 17-18; Miller 1979, 161). In addition to denominational Universalism, the orthodox were concerned about the spread of “heretical” Universalist doctrine among the unchurched. Orthodox concern for Universalism was such that Buffalo’s Gospel Advocate complained in 1823 that “the doctrine of Universal Salvation is at the present moment making unparalleled inroads upon superstition in this village and vicinity, and such unchristian conduct will only aid its promulgation” (20 June 1823, 184). David Millard reportedly said in 1818 that in Mendon, New York, less than fifteen miles southwest of Joseph Smith Sr.’s farm in Manchester, “Universalism, was a

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<sup>451</sup> Dan Vogel, “Anti-Universalist Rhetoric in the Book of Mormon,” *New Approaches To The Book of Mormon*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe, (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 23.



predominant opinion in the place, and a neglect of Christian duties, with a corruption of morals, the fruit it bore” ([Portsmouth, NH] *Christian Herald*, July 1818, 40). In 1835 the orthodox Boston Recorder declared that “Universalism is the reigning heresy of the day. It is spreading itself far and wide. It is poisoning more minds, and ruining more souls, than any, if not all other heresies among us” (in *Trumpet*, 17 May 1834, 186; see also 24 Apr. 1830, 170).” [Vogel, 25-26].

- **Vogel states:** “Universalism began in eighteenth-century New England with the teachings of John Murray (1741-1815), an Englishman who landed in New Jersey in 1770. To be sure there were others before Murray who taught various versions of Universalism, but Murray is usually credited with laying the foundation for Universalism as a denomination (see Miller 1979, 40-44; see also Dodge 1911; Murray 1812-13; 1816). Although Murray was a Calvinist in many respects, he discarded the notion that Jesus Christ had suffered only for the elect. Christ atoned for the sins of all humankind, Murray argued. While humans were no longer to be punished for their sins, Murray nevertheless believed that some would be punished for their unbelief. However, Murray held that every human would ultimately be redeemed and reconciled to God, thus making a “restitution of all things.”<sup>452</sup>
- **It should be noted that the *BOM* does take a stand against the false doctrine of universalism. Vogel writes:** “Nephi’s characterization of a latter-day group with the motto, “eat, drink, and be merry” (cf. 1 Kgs. 4:20; Eccl. 8:15; Isa. 22:13; Luke 12:19; 1 Cor. 15:32), is typical anti-Universalist rhetoric. For example, John Cleaveland (1722-99), pastor of the second church in Ipswich, attacked Murray’s teachings as only a step away from atheism, stating in 1776: “Follow this scheme but a little farther and you will deny a future state of reward as well as punishment, and then join issue with the atheistical and swinish Epicures, saying. Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die” (1776, 29). Addressing Murray directly, Cleaveland continued: “You must know. Sir, that drunkards, profane swearers, whoremongers, and the most abandoned sinners, feel no opposition to, no quarrelling in their sinful inclinations, affections, and lusts, with such doctrine and preaching. ... They do not say, it is a hard saying who can bear it? [John 6:60] No,

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<sup>452</sup> Vogel, “Anti-Universalist Rhetoric in the Book of Mormon,” 27.

for it encourages them to bless themselves in their hearts, saying, we shall have peace, though we walk in the imaginations of our hearts to add drunkenness to thirst! And the little boys in your streets are already caught in the snare and say, ‘We may swear and curse and lie and quarrel and do what we will that is bad without any danger of going to the devil in everlasting burnings; for Mr. Murray] preaches that all men will be saved and be happy forever’” (ibid., 26).<sup>453</sup>

- Read Alma 11:36-45; 12:1-18; 39-41 for more anti-Universalist material.
- It is tough to determine from the research conducted whether Rigdon was for or against universalism. It seems like he most likely was against it because of the sections in 2 Nephi which I believe were written by him which lend support to the denial of universalism. Nevertheless, it can be said that the **BOM** was produced in a nineteenth-century religious context.
- As Campbell eloquently put it: “This prophet Smith, through his stone spectacles, wrote on the plates of Nephi, in his book of Mormon, every error and almost every truth discussed in New York for the last ten years. He decides all the great controversies; -- infant baptism, ordination, the trinity, regeneration, repentance, justification, the fall of man, the atonement, transubstantiation, fasting, penance, church government, religious experience, the call to the ministry, the general resurrection, eternal punishment, who may baptize, and even the question of free-masonry, republican government, and the rights of man. All these topics are repeatedly alluded to. How much more benevolent and intelligent this American apostle, than were the holy Twelve, and Paul to assist them!!! He prophesied of all these topics, and of the apostacy, and infallibly decided, by his authority, every question. How easy to prophecy of the past or of the present time!!”<sup>454</sup>
- Later on, when given the evidence, Campbell would change his mind that Rigdon was the mastermind behind the **BOM**.
- **1:33 - “therefore, there was much peace among the people of Nephi, until the fifth year of the reign of the judges.”**
- **Chapter 3 - “came to pass” - 3:1,9,11,20,21 (5 times)**

<sup>453</sup> Dan Vogel, “Anti-Universalist Rhetoric in the Book of Mormon,” 29.

<sup>454</sup> Alexander Campbell, “Delusions,” *The Millennial Harbinger*, Vol II, No. 2, Bethany, VA: Feb. 7, 1831, 93..

- **3:27/Revelation 19:10**
- **Alma 3:1-5:** “And it came to pass that the Nephites, which were not slain by the weapons of war, after having buried those which had been slain: now the number of the slain were not numbered, because of the greatness of their number; and after they had finished burying their dead, they all returned to their lands, and to their houses, and their wives, and their children. Now many women and children had been slain with the sword, and also many of their flocks and their herds; and also many of their fields of grain were destroyed, for they were trodden down by the hosts of men. And now as many of the Lamanites and the Amlicites which had been slain upon the bank of the river Sidon, were cast into the waters of Sidon; and behold, their bones are in the depths of the sea, and they are many. **And the Amlicites were distinguished from the Nephites, for they had marked themselves with red in their foreheads, after the manner of the Lamanites; nevertheless they had not shorn their heads like unto the Lamanites** (emp. mine). Now the heads of the Lamanites were shorn; and they were naked, save it were skin, which was girded about their loins, and also their armour, which was girded about them, and their bows, and their arrows, and their stones, and their slings, &c.”
- **Joseph Miller’s testimony:** “Some time since, a copy of the Book of Mormon came into my hands. My son read it for me, as I have a nervous shaking of the head that prevents me from reading. I noticed several passages which I recollect having heard Mr. Spalding read from his “Manuscript.” One passage, on page 148 (the copy I have is published by J. O. Wright & Co., New York) I remember distinctly. **He speaks of a battle, and says the Amalekites had marked themselves with red on their foreheads to distinguish them from the Nephites** (emp. mine). The thought of being marked on the forehead with red, was so strange, it fixed itself in my memory. This together with other passages, I remember to have heard Mr. Spalding read from his “Manuscript.”<sup>455</sup>
- **Redick McKee’s testimony:** “She [Matilda McKinstry - SF] remembered that in one of them, touching the mode of warfare in that day, (being hand to hand or man with man) he represented one of the parties having streaks of red paint upon their cheeks and foreheads to distinguish

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<sup>455</sup> Joseph Miller, Sr., “For The Reporter. The Book of Mormon.” *The Washington Reporter*. Vol. LX. Washington, Pa., Wednesday, April 7, 1869. No. 25.

them from enemies in battle.”<sup>456</sup>

- **Comment:** Alma 2 and 3 are certainly Spalding material with a little bit of editing by Rigdon.
- **3:25** - “Now all these things were done, yea, all these wars and contentions was commenced and ended, in the **fifth** year of the reign of the Judges;”
- **Comment:** This was certainly one of the Rigdon edits (Alma 3:25-26). Notice he ended up stating **twice** the ending of the fifth year of the reign of the judges. The blue represents Rigdon’s editing and the red part represents Spalding.
- **Alma 3:25-26:** “Now all these things were done, yea, all these wars and contentions was commenced and ended, in the **fifth year of the reign of the Judges**; and in one year was thousands and tens of thousands of souls sent to the eternal world, that they might reap their rewards according to their works, whether they were good or whether they were bad, to reap eternal happiness or eternal misery, according to the spirit which he listed to obey, whether it be a good spirit or a bad one; for every man receiveth wages of him who he listeth to obey, and this according to the words of the spirit of prophecy; therefore let it be according to the truth. **And thus ended the fifth year of the reign of the Judges.**”
- **3:27** - “And thus ended the **fifth** year of the reign of the Judges.”
- **Chapter 4 - “came to pass” - 4:1,5,6,11,15 (5 times)**
- **4:13/Revelation 19:10; 4:14/Acts 2:38; 4:16/Acts 20:17; 4:19/2 Peter 3:2; 4:20/Revelation 19:10**
- **4:1** - “Now it came to pass in the **sixth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi, there was no contentions nor wars in the land of Zarahemla”
- **4:5** - “And it came to pass in the **seventh** year of the reign of the Judges”
- **4:6** - “And it came to pass in the **eighth** year of the reign of the Judges,”
- **4:9** - “And thus in this **eighth** year of the reign of the Judges”
- **4:10** - “And thus ended the **eighth** year of the reign of the Judges”
- **4:20** - “And thus in the commencement of the **ninth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”

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<sup>456</sup> Arthur B. Deming, “Redick McKee: 1885,” *Naked Truths About Mormonism*, Berkeley, California: A.B. Deming Society, Vol. II, no. 1, pgs. 1-2, col. 6.

## • Chapter 5 - “came to pass” - 5:1 (1 time)

• Hardy wrote: “Take, for instance, “only Begotten of the Father, full of grace . . . and truth.” The expression is derived from John 1:14 and occurs only three times in the Book of Mormon, each time in the words of Alma (the additional reference is Alma 13:9). “Sit down . . . in the kingdom of God/heaven” originates with Matthew 8:11 and Luke 13:29, but the phrase is not pervasive in the Book of Mormon; rather, it seems to have been a favorite of Alma’s (Alma 5:24, 7:25, 29:17, 38:15). “Bands of death” (not in the Bible) appears twelve times in the Book of Mormon: once in Mormon’s account of why Alma began his preaching journey (Alma 4:14), four times in Alma’s sermons, once in Amulek’s defense of Alma (Alma 11:41), and five times in Abinadi’s words. This means that “bands of death” is almost exclusively associated with Alma and Abinadi, who was the prophet Alma cited at 5:11 : “[D]id not my father Alma believe in the words which were delivered by the mouth of Abinadi?” This close connection between the two prophets (which we have already noted above) makes sense in terms of the story, in which recalling Abinadi and his words is precisely what Alma is encouraging his listeners to do.”<sup>457</sup>

- **5:7/2** Thessalonians 1:9; **5:13/1** Thessalonians 1:9; **5:14/1** John 3:9; **5:15/1** Corinthians 15:51-53; **5:16**/Matthew 25:34; Titus 3:5; **5:21**/Revelation 7:14; **5:24**/Matthew 8:11; Revelation 7:14; **5:25**/John 8:44; **5:27**/Revelation 7:14; **5:28**/Matthew 3:1,2; **5:34**/Revelation 21:6; **5:35**/Matthew 3:10; **5:37**/Matthew 9:36; **5:38-41**/John 10:11,14; **5:42**/Romans 6:23; **5:46**/Ephesians 1:17; **5:47**/Revelation 19:10; **5:48**/John 1:14,29; **5:49**/John 3:1-8; **5:50**/Matthew 3:2; **5:52**/Matthew 3:10; **5:53**/Hebrews 10:29; **5:54**/Matthew 3:8; **5:56**/Luke 3:9; **5:57/2** Corinthians 6:17; John 10:11; **5:58**/Philippians 4:3; **5:59**/Matthew 12:11; **5:60**/Matthew 7:15; **5:62**/Matthew 3:11; Revelation 2:7
- **Comment:** Chapter 5 is certainly Rigdon’s theological material inserted for several reasons. **First**, there is the absence of “came to pass.” I recognize, however, that the genre here is not historical narrative. So there would not be a reason for the “came to pass” phrase.
- **Second**, notice some of the religious terminology that is used that would reflect Rigdon’s Baptist theological views: “And now behold, I say unto you, my brethren, you that belong to this Church, have you sufficiently retained in remembrance the captivity of your fathers? Yea, and have you

<sup>457</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 135.



sufficiently retained in remembrance his mercy and long-suffering towards them? And moreover, have ye sufficiently retained in remembrance that he hath delivered their souls from hell? Behold, he changed their hearts; yea, he awaked them out of a deep sleep, and they awoke unto God. Behold, they were in the midst of darkness; nevertheless, their souls were illuminated by the light of the everlasting word; yea, they were encircled about by the bands of death, and the chains of hell, and an everlasting destruction did await them And now I ask of you my brethren, were they destroyed? Behold, I say unto you, nay, they were not. And again I ask, was the bands of death broken, and the chains of hell which encircled them about, were they loosed? I say unto you, yea, they were loosed, and their souls did expand, and they did sing redeeming love. And I say unto you, that they are saved. And now I ask of you on what conditions are they saved? Yea, what grounds had they to hope for salvation? What is the cause of their being loosed from the bands of death? Yea, and also, the chains of hell? Behold, I can tell you: did not my father Alma believe in the words which was delivered by the mouth of Abinadi? And was he not a holy prophet? Did he not speak the word of God, and my father Alma believed them? And according to his faith there was a mighty change wrought in his heart. Behold I say unto you, that this is all true. And behold, he preached the word unto your fathers, and a mighty change was also wrought in their hearts; and they humbled themselves, and put their trust in the true and living God. And behold, they were faithful until the end; therefore they were saved. And now behold, I ask of you, my brethren of the Church, have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your own<sup>6</sup> countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts? Do ye exercise faith in the redemption of him who created you? Do you look forward with an eye of faith, and view this mortal body raised in immortality, and this corruption raised in incorruption, to stand before God, to be judged according to the deeds which hath been done in the mortal body?” (Alma 5:6-16).

- It is important to read the whole chapter of Alma 5. **Third**, please recognize that Rigdon is quoting heavily from the New Testament that had not been written down yet. Please view the verse section of Alma 5.
- Notice he brings up the “good shepherd” motif from John 10 (Alma 5:37-41).

- **Fourth**, notice how Rigdon places in the mouth of Alma that the “kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Alma 5:28,50). This was supposedly prophesied eighty-three years before Christ was born! That is stretching the phrase of “at hand!” Both Jesus and John the Immerser told the truth when they proclaimed the truth that the kingdom of heaven was at hand and it was ushered in about 3 years later! (Matthew 3:1,2; 4:17).

• Hardy wrote: “(2) In both Alma 5 (his speech at Zarahemla) and 7 (at Gideon), Alma uses the familiar phrase “born again.” He is the only person in the Book of Mormon to do so. Similarly, the term “born of God” appears nine times in the Book of Mormon, and eight of those are in quotations from Alma. 29 Although several Nephite prophets preach about becoming children of God, these particular terms are nearly unique to Alma. (3) All three sermons share the idea that the wicked cannot “inherit the kingdom of God/heaven,” phrasing that is found in both First Corinthians and Galatians. In the Book of Mormon the expression occurs nine times, six of which are spoken by Alma (and two other occurrences— within a single sentence— are in the words of his missionary companion Amulek).”<sup>458</sup>

- **Chapter 6 - “came to pass” - 6:1,2,3,7 (4 times)**
- **6:2/Acts 2:38; Matthew 3:11; 6:8/Revelation 19:10**
- **Chapter 7 - none**
- **7:6/Acts 2:38; 7:9/Matthew 3:2; 7:14/John 1:29; John 3:3; 1 John 1:9; 7:15/Hebrews 12:1; 7:20/James 1:17; 7:21/Acts 17:24; 7:24/1 Corinthians 13:13; 7:25/Acts 3:21; Matthew 8:11; Revelation 7:14**
- **Comment: First**, notice that Rigdon continues the error of stating that the “kingdom of heaven is at hand” in Alma 7:9.
- **Second**, notice there is a contradiction with the Bible in that the *BOM* places Jesus’ birthplace in Jerusalem, not Bethlehem!
- **Alma 7:10**: “And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem, which is the land of our forefathers, she being a Virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed, and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God.”
- **Chapter 8 - “came to pass” - 8:1,3,5(x2),8,14(x2),18(x2),19,21,22,27,28,30,32 (16 times)**
- **8:10/Matthew 3:11; 8:24/Ephesians 1:17; Revelation 19:10; 8:30/Luke 1:15**
- **8:2- “And thus ended the ninth year of the reign of the Judges over**

<sup>458</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 136.

the people of Nephi.”

- 8:3 - “And it came to pass in the commencement of the **tenth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”
- **Chapter 9 - “came to pass” - 9:1,31,33,34 (4 times)**
- 9:2/Matthew 24:35; 9:3/Matthew 24:35; 9:8/Matthew 17:17; 9:15/Matthew 11:22; 9:16,17/Galatians 1:14; 9:21/Acts 2:38; 9:23/Matthew 10:15; 9:25/Matthew 3:2; 9:26/John 1:14; 9:28/Mark 1:3; 9:30/Matthew 3:8
- **Comment:** **First**, notice Rigdon continues the error of stating that the “kingdom of heaven is at hand” in Alma 9:25. **Second**, notice the allusion of Jesus’ statement that He had made concerning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah that it would be more tolerable for them than for some of the places in Galilee (Matt. 11:22-24). **Third**, Rigdon affirmed the continuation of miraculous gifts and it seems to be brought up here in Alma 9:21.
- **Chapter 10 - “came to pass” - 10:8,16,17,24,28,31 (6 times)**
- 10:12/Revelation 19:10; 10:17/Matthew 17:17; 10:20/Matthew 3:2; 10:22,23/James 5:16
- 10:6 - “nevertheless, I did harden my heart, for I was called many times, and I would not hear; therefore I knew concerning these things, yet I would not know; therefore I went on rebelling against God, in the wickedness of my heart, even until the fourth day of this seventh month, which is in the **tenth** year of the reign of our Judges.”
- **Comment:** Notice Rigdon continues the error of stating that the “kingdom of heaven is at hand” in Alma 10:20.
- **Chapter 11 - none**
- 11:41/Revelation 20:12; 11:44/Luke 21:18; Galatians 3:28; 11:45/John 5:24
- **Comment:** **First**, this monetary system laid out in Alma 11:1-20 certainly would seem to be original Spalding material. **Second**, chapters 12 and 13 were certainly done by Rigdon who speaks about several theological themes. Also, see the section below of where he quotes verses from the New Testament (that had not been written down yet). **Third**, notice how Rigdon uses the book of Hebrews in the writing of these chapters (Alma 12:27/Heb. 9:27; Alma 9:34-36/Heb. 3-4 - not entering God’s rest; Alma 13:1-31/Hebrews 7:1-10).<sup>459</sup> **Fourth**, take note of Alma 13:1.

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<sup>459</sup> David P. Wright, “In Plain Terms that We May Understand”: Joseph Smith’s Transformation of Hebrews in Alma 12-13,” *New Approaches To The Book of Mormon*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe, (Salt Lake City:

Alma 13:1 states: “And again: My brethren, **I would cite your minds forward to the time which the Lord God gave these commandments unto his children**; and I would that ye should remember that the Lord God ordained Priests, after his holy order, which was after the order of his Son, to teach these things unto the people.” *How do you help cite people’s minds forward?* I can understand if you want to remind people of certain things that were taught in the past, but how do you cite people’s minds forward?

- **Chapter 12 - “came to pass” - 12:19 (1 time)**
- **12:3/Acts 5:4; 12:9/1 Corinthians 4:1; 12:11/2 Timothy 2:26; 12:12/1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 12:14/Matthew 12:37; 12:15/Matthew 3:8; 12:16/John 8:24; 12:17/Revelation 14:11; 12:27/Hebrews 9:27; 12:30/Ephesians 1:4; 12:34/John 3:16; Acts 2:38; Hebrews 4:3; 12:35/Hebrews 3:11; 12:36/Hebrews 4:3**
- **Chapter 13 - “came to pass” - 13:21,31 (2 times)**
- **13:3/Acts 2:23; 13:5/Matthew 25:34; 13:6/Hebrews 4:3; 13:7/Hebrews 7:3; 13:9/Hebrews 7:3; John 1:14; 13:11/Revelation 7:14; 13:13/Matthew 3:8; 13:14-18/Hebrews 7:1-10; 13:20/2nd Peter 3:16; 13:22/Luke 2:10; 13:26/Revelation 19:10; 13:28/Matthew 26:41; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 13:29/John 6:54; 13:30/Revelation 2:11; 13:31/John 20:30**
- **Chapter 14 - “came to pass” - 14:1,4,5,6,7(x3),9,10,14,17,18,19,20,23,25,27 (17 times)**
- **Comment:** Chapter 14 heavily relies on the arrest of Paul and Silas and them being kept in the prison in Philippi (Acts 16:23-27).
- **14:1/John 5:39; 14:3/Matthew 1:19; 14:11/John 6:54; 14:14/Revelation 20:10; 14:19/John 19:10; 14:22,26-28/Acts 16:23-27**
- **14:23 - “And it came to pass after they had thus suffered for many days, (and it was on the twelfth day, in the tenth month, in the tenth year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi,)”**
- **14:27/Matthew 27:51; 15:11/Acts 3:7-10; 15:14/Matthew 3:5-6**
- **Chapter 15 - “came to pass” - 15:1,5,6,11,14,16 (6 times)**
- **15:19 - “And thus ended the tenth year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi.”**
- **Chapter 16 - “came to pass” - 16:1,3,4,6,7,12 (6 times)**
- **16:1 - “And it came to pass in the eleventh year of the reign of the**

**Judges over the people of Nephi, on the fifth day of the second month,”**

- **16:9** - “And thus ended the **eleventh** year of the Judges,”
- **16:21** - “and thus ended the **fourteenth** year of the reign of the Judges, over the people of Nephi.”
- **16:5**/Revelation 19:10; **16:15**/Matthew 3:5-6; **16:17**/John 15:1-6
- **Comment:** Chapters 17-25 seems to be original Spalding material with Rigdon editing here and there along the way.
- **Chapter 17** - “came to pass” - **17:1,9,10,12,13,24,25,26,31,32** (10 times)
- **17:2**/Acts 17:11; 1 Timothy 2:4; **17:3**/Revelation 19:10; Ephesians 1:17; **17:4**/1 Timothy 2:4; **17:31**/John 16:33
- **Chapter 18** - “came to pass” - **18:1,8,12,15,16,40,43** (7 times)
- **18:32**/Hebrews 4:12
- **Chapter 19** - “came to pass” - **19:1,3,11,12,16,24,25,29,33,35** (10 times)
- **19:5**/John 11:39; **19:8**/Luke 8:52; **19:10**/Matthew 8:10
- **Chapter 20** - “came to pass” - **20:1,2,3,8,11,28(x2)** (7 times)
- **20:23**/Mark 6:23
- **Chapter 21** - “came to pass” - **21:4,10,12,17,18,23** (6 times)
- **21:16**/Luke 4:1; **21:17**/1 Timothy 2:4
- **Chapter 22** - “came to pass”- **22:2,12,15,17,19,25,26,27,33** (9 times)
- **22:1**/Luke 4:1; **22:6**/John 6:54; **22:14**/1 Corinthians 15:54-55,58; **22:15**/Mark 10:17; **22:18**/John 6:54
- **Chapter 23** - “came to pass”- **23:1,4,16,17** (4 times)
- **23:6,15**/1 Timothy 2:4
- **Chapter 24** - “came to pass”- **24:1,17,20,21,25,26** (6 times)
- **24:15,16**/John 6:54; **24:30**/Hebrews 6:4; 2 Peter 2:20-22
- **Chapter 25** - “came to pass”- **25:1,7,13** (3 times)
- **Chapter 26** - “came to pass”- **26:10** (1 time)
- **26:6**/John 6:54; **26:7**/John 6:40,44; **26:12**/Philippians 4:13; **26:20**/Luke 16:26; **26:21**/1 Corinthians 2:11-14; **26:24**/1 Timothy 2:4; **26:30**/1 John 1:4; **26:35**/John 1:12
- **Comment:** Ch. 26 is certainly filled with Rigdon’s theological material.
- **Chapter 27** - “came to pass”- **27:1,2,11,13,14,15,16,20(x2),21,22,25,26(x2)** (14 times)

• Grant Hardy wrote: “The doctrine of resurrection, again as explained by Abinadi. In Mormon’s narration, the newly converted Lamanites had a “hope . . . of . . . the resurrection; therefore, death was swallowed up to them by



the victory of Christ over it” (Alma 27:28). In Abinadi’s language: “there is a resurrection, therefore the grave hath no victory, and the sting of death is swallowed up in Christ ” (Mosiah 16:8 ; with an echo of 1 Cor. 15:54 – 55).”<sup>460</sup>

- 27:4/Matthew 18:27; 27:26/2 Corinthians 5:17; 27:28/1 Corinthians 15:54

- **Chapter 28 - “came to pass” - 28:1 (1 time)**

• Washburn wrote: “Chapters 28-44 of the Book of Alma tell of the doings of the Nephites over a period of about twenty years. It is mostly devoted to missionary work, and I know of no account of such work that is more instructive, or more satisfying. It compares favorably in every respect with the immortal story of Paul’s missions except that the territory was much smaller, and the Book-of-Mormon peoples involved lacked the cosmopolitan flavor of the Bible peoples to whom Paul went. This section contains matter that is of vast significance but which contributes less than some others to the discussion of organization...

Chapters 45-62 advance the history through a number of years of exhausting warfare but belong to a time later than the life of Alma. Helaman, Alma’s eldest son, was high priest at the time, and this portion of the record could, and probably should, be called a book of Helaman. Interestingly, this man appears very briefly in the book that bears his name.”<sup>461</sup>

- 28:7 - “and thus ended the **fifteenth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”
- 28:9 - “And this is the account of the wars and contentions among the Nephites, and also the wars between the Nephites and the Lamanites; and the **fifteenth** year of the reign of the Judges is ended”
- **Comment:** I believe one can see Rigdon’s editorial addition added in Alma 28:10-14.
- **Chapter 29 - none**
- 29:3/Philippians 4:11; 29:17/Matthew 8:11
- **Comment:** I believe one can see Rigdon’s editorial addition added in Alma 29. Note the allusion to Matthew 8:11 in Alma 29:17.
- **Chapter 30 - 30:1,2,5,6,20(x2),21,22,30,46,56,58,59 (13 times)**
- 30:22/Acts 13:10; 30:43,49-50/Luke 1:18-20
- 30:2 - “But it came to pass that after they had buried their dead, and also after the days of fasting, and mourning, and prayer, (and it was

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<sup>460</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 146.

<sup>461</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 41.

in the **sixteenth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi,)”

- **30:4** - “and thus the people did have no disturbance in all the **sixteenth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi.”
- **30:5** - “And it came to pass in the commencement of the **seventeenth** year of the reign of the Judges, there was continual peace.”
- **Please take note of the gap** - There are theological treatises found between chapters 30-35. So we are not going to expect to find “came to pass” since it is not a historical narrative. An argument could be made nonetheless that it is Rigdon who is responsible for these upcoming theological treatises.
- **Chapter 31** - “came to pass” - **31:1,19,36 (3 times)**
- **31:10**/Luke 22:46; **31:11**/Acts 13:10; **31:17**/Hebrews 13:8; **31:37**/Matthew 6:31
- **Chapter 32** - “came to pass” - **32:1,2 (2 times)**
- **32:8**/Matthew 11:29; **32:13,15**/Matthew 10:22; **32:17**/Matthew 16:1; **32:21**/Hebrews 11:1; **32:28**/Luke 8:11; **32:38**/Matthew 13:6; **32:41**/John 4:14
- **Chapter 33** - none
- **33:2**/John 5:39; **33:19**/John 3:14; **33:23**/John 4:14
- **Chapter 34** - “came to pass”- **34:1 (1 time)**
- **34:13**/Matthew 5:18; **34:23**/Acts 13:10; **34:29**/Matthew 5:13; **34:30**/Luke 3:8; **34:31**/2 Corinthians 6:2; **34:33**/John 9:4; **34:36**/Matthew 8:11; Revelation 7:14; Acts 17:24; **34:37**/Philippians 2:12; **34:38**/John 4:14
- **Chapter 35** - “came to pass” - **35:1,3,6,7 (4 times)**
- **35:12** - “And thus ended the **seventeenth** year of the reign of the Judges, over the people of Nephi.”
- **35:13** - “and thus commenced a war betwixt the Lamanites and the Nephites, in the **eighteenth** year of the reign of the Judges; and an account shall be given of their wars hereafter.”
- **Please take note of the gap** - It is true that these are theological treatises that are found between ch. 36 through ch. 42. So we are not going to expect to find “came to pass” since it is not a historical narrative. One can see how the argument could be made nonetheless that it is Rigdon who is responsible for these upcoming theological treatises.
- **Chapter 36** - “came to pass” - **36:10,17 (2 times)**
- **Comment:** I believe one can see Rigdon wanted to make Alma’s conversion

similar to the story of Saul of Tarsus (Alma 36; Acts 9). **Second**, we can see Rigdon's Baptist view of salvation is being brought up here (Alma 36:17-24). **Third**, chapters 37-42 comprise a series of lessons that Alma gives to his sons that are packed with theological material concerning the resurrection and other theological themes. It makes sense that if there is no historical narrative, then the "came to pass" phrases will not occur as you can see below with one exception (38:8). But a person can see how Rigdon would have authored this theological material to insert based on the Bible passages he uses. See the next green sections (36:3-42:47).

- **36:3**/John 6:54; **36:18**/Acts 8:23; **36:23**/John 1:13; **36:24**/Luke 1:15; **36:26**/John 1:13; **36:28**/John 6:54
- **Chapter 37 - none**
- **37:15**/Luke 22:31; **37:19**/1 Timothy 2:4; **37:33-34**/Matthew 11:29; **37:37**/John 6:54
- **Chapter 38 - "came to pass" - 38:8 (1 time)**
- **38:2**/Matthew 10:22; **38:5**/John 6:54; **38:6**/Mark 3:28-29; **38:8**/Acts 2:38; **38:9**/Matthew 11:29
- **Chapter 39 - none**
- **39:8**/John 6:54; **39:9**/1 John 2:16; **39:15**/John 1:29
- **Chapter 40 - none**
- **40:2**/1 Corinthians 15:51-53; **40:13**/Matthew 13:42-43; **40:14**/Hebrews 10:27; **40:15-17**/Revelation 20:6; **40:21**/Revelation 20:12; **40:22**/Acts 3:21; **40:23**/Luke 21:18; **40:24**/Acts 3:21; **40:25-26**/Matthew 13:42-43
- **Chapter 41 - none**
- **41:1**/Acts 3:21; **41:3**/Revelation 20:12; **41:4**/1 Corinthians 15:51-53; **41:11**/Acts 8:22-23; Ephesians 2:12
- **Chapter 42 - none**
- **42:6**/Hebrews 9:27; **42:23**/Revelation 20:12; **42:26**/Ephesians 1:4; **42:27**/Revelation 22:17; **43:2**/Revelation 19:10; Ephesians 1:17
- **Chapter 43 - "came to pass"- 43:1,4,5,15,18,19,22,23,24,27,34,35,36,39,41(x2),42,48,49 (18 times)**
- **Comment:** Chapters 43-63 contain the *purest* Spalding material. There are a few Rigdon editorial additions. Notice there are hardly any scriptural references that were taken from the New Testament (with some exceptions such as Galatians 5:1). Solomon Spalding was a Congregationalist preacher and he knew the Bible. He also was a Revolutionary War veteran. We see

both of those characteristics shine forth in these last twenty chapters. He uses Galatians 5:1, for example, to link to the idea of liberty. Spalding spends a lot of time discussing battles, military strategies, and so forth. Someone with that kind of military experience would have been able to incorporate that war-like material into these sections. Take special notice of the *lack* of theological material here.

- Sidney Sperry wrote: “It is significant that practically all of Chapters 42-62 of the Book of Alma deal with wars and contentions among the Nephites. Those who like war narratives should read these chapters, because they contain the best of the kind in the Book of Mormon. We shall not spend much time in dealing with the details of these wars of the Nephites among themselves and with the Lamanites.”<sup>462</sup>
- This came from the chatGPT website which I thought to be quite intriguing: “There are notable thematic parallels between the **BOM** and the American Revolutionary War.
- **1. Defense of Liberty and Family:** In Alma 46, Captain Moroni creates the “Title of Liberty,” inscribing it with the words: “In memory of our God, our religion, and freedom, and our peace, our wives, and our children.” This rallying standard was meant to inspire the Nephites to defend their freedoms and families. Similarly, during the American Revolutionary War, General George Washington, in a 1775 proclamation, stated: “We have taken up Arms in defence of our Liberty, our Property; our Wives and our Children. We are determined to preserve them or die.”
- Both leaders emphasized the protection of personal freedoms and the well-being of their families as central motivations for their respective causes.
- **2. Internal Dissent and Its Consequences:** In the Book of Mormon, the Nephites face internal strife with the rise of the “king-men,” a faction desiring a monarchy over the existing judge system. This internal division weakens their unity, making them vulnerable to external threats. Similarly, during the American Revolution, colonies experienced internal conflicts between Patriots, who sought independence, and Loyalists, who remained faithful to the British Crown. These internal divisions posed challenges to colonial unity and efforts toward independence.

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<sup>462</sup> Sidney B. Sperry, *Book of Mormon Studies* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Sunday School Union Board, 1947), 85.

- **3. Divine Providence in Warfare:** The Nephites often attributed their successes and failures in battles to their righteousness and adherence to God's commandments. In Alma 50:20-22, it's noted that when the Nephites kept the commandments, they prospered; otherwise, they faced adversity. Similarly, many American colonists believed that their cause was divinely sanctioned. This belief in divine providence provided moral justification and motivation for their struggle against British rule.
- **4. Leadership and Morale:** Captain Moroni is portrayed as an inspirational leader who bolstered the morale of his people, leading them through difficult times with strategic prowess and unwavering commitment. General George Washington played a comparable role during the American Revolution, providing steadfast leadership, strategic insight, and serving as a symbol of resilience and hope for the Continental Army.
- While these parallels are thematic and not direct correlations, they highlight common elements in struggles for freedom, the impact of internal divisions, the role of perceived divine support, and the importance of strong leadership in times of conflict."<sup>463</sup>
- This makes sense that Solomon Spalding would draw from his personal war experience since he served in Obadiah Johnson's regiment in the Revolutionary War.<sup>464</sup>
- He also seemed to admire George Washington and named a character after him in the novel - Captain Moroni.
- **43:3 - "And now I return to an account of the wars between the Nephites and the Lamanites, in the **eighteenth** year of the reign of the Judges."**
- **43:10/John 4:24**
- **Chapter 44 - "came to pass" - 44:1,8,13,16,17,20(x2),22 (8 times)**
- **44:23 - "And thus ended the **eighteenth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi."**
- **Chapter 45 - "came to pass" - 45:1,2,15,18,20,22,23 (7 times)**
- **45:2 - "And it came to pass in the **nineteenth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi"**

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<sup>463</sup> <http://www.chatgpt.com>.

<sup>464</sup> Spalding, *The Spalding Memorial*, 253. See also Henry P. Johnston, ed., *Record of Service of Connecticut Men in the War of the Revolution*, (Hartford, CT, 1889), 526.



- 45:20 - “And now it came to pass in the commencement of the **nineteenth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”
- Chapter 46 - “came to pass” - 46:1,11,12,17,21,28,29,31,32,33,35,36,39 (13 times)
- 46:37 - “And they began to have peace again in the land; and thus they did maintain peace in the land, until nearly the end of the **nineteenth** year of the reign of the Judges.”
- Chapter 47 - “came to pass” - 47:2 (x2),3,7,9,10,11(x3), 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 23, 24, 27,28, 31, 32, 34, 35 (24 times)
- Chapter 48 - “came to pass” - 48:1,6,7 (3 times)
- 48:1-2 - “that in the latter end of the **nineteenth** year of the reign of the Judges, he having accomplished his designs thus far; yea, having been made king over the Lamanites, he sought also to reign over all the land”
- Chapter 49 - “came to pass” - 49:1,9,17,21,25,(x2),26,28 (8 times)
- 49:7,26/Galatians 5:1
- 49:29 - “And thus ended the **nineteenth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”
- 49:7,26/Galatians 5:1
- Chapter 50 - “came to pass” - 50:1,7,9,13,24,25,28,31,34,35,37,39 (12 times)
- 50:1 - “for he caused that his armies should commence in the commencement of the **twentieth** year of the reign of the Judges, that they should commence in digging up heaps of earth round about all the cities, throughout all the land which was possessed by the Nephites;”
- 50:17 - “And in these prosperous circumstances were the people of Nephi, in the commencement of the **twenty and first** year of the reign of the Judges, over the people of Nephi.”
- 50:23 - “yea, even at this time, in the **twenty and first** year of the reign of the Judges.”
- 50:24 - “And it came to pass that the **twenty and second** year of the reign of the Judges, also ended in peace; yea, and also the **twenty and third** year.”
- 50:25 - “And it came to pass that in the commencement of the **twenty and fourth** year of the reign of the Judges,”
- 50:35 - “And thus ended the **twenty and fourth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi.”

- **Chapter 51 - “came to pass” - 51:1,5,7 (x2), 13, 14, 15 (x2), 17, 18, 19, 22, 23 (x2), 25, 28, 29, 30, 32 (x2), 33, 34 (22 times)**
- **51:1 - “And now it came to pass, in the commencement of the **twenty and fifth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”**
- **51:37 - “And thus ended the **twenty and fifth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi; and thus ended the days of Amalickiah.”**

• Grant Hardy wrote: “Although it is difficult to make concrete correlations with modern maps, the internal geography of the Book of Mormon is almost perfectly consistent, even to the extent that travel to certain places is always “up” or “down.” (The only two geographical mistakes occur at Alma 51:26, where “city of Nephihah” seems to be an error for “city of Moroni,” and Alma 53:6 , which places the city of Mulek in the southern land of Nephi while Alma 51:22–27 implies that it was actually on the eastern coast).”<sup>465</sup>

- **Chapter 52 - “came to pass” - 52:1,3,4,7,15,16,17,18,20,21,23,24,27,31,33,35,38 (17 times)**
- **52:1 - “And now it came to pass in the **twenty and sixth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”**
- **52:14 - “And thus were the Nephites in those dangerous circumstances, in the ending of the **twenty and sixth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi.”**
- **52:15 - “But behold, it came to pass in the **twenty and seventh** year of the reign of the Judges”**
- **52:18 - “And it came to pass that Moroni did arrive with his army to the land of Bountiful, in the latter end of the **twenty and seventh** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi.”**
- **Chapter 53 - “came to pass” - 53:1,3,6,7,8,13,16,22 (8 times)**
- **53:23 - “And thus ended the **twenty and eighth** year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi, &c.”**
- **Chapter 54 - “came to pass” - 54:1,2,15 (3 times)**
- **54:1 - “And now it came to pass in the commencement of the **twenty and ninth** year of the Judges, that Ammoron sent unto Moroni, desiring that he would exchange prisoners.”**
- **Chapter 55 - “came to pass” - 55:1,4,5,8,13,14,25,26,27,28,33 (11 times)**
- **55:35 - “And thus ended the **twenty and ninth** year of the reign of the**

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<sup>465</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 103.

**Judges over the people of Nephi.”**

- **Chapter 56 - “came to pass” - 56:1,18,22,27,32,33,35,36,39,41,42,49,52,54,55 (15 times)**
- **56:1 - “And now it came to pass in the commencement of the thirtieth year of the reign of the Judges, in the second day, on the first month”**
- **Chapter 57 - “came to pass” - 57:1,6,7,9,12,13,17,18,24,25,28,30,32,33 (x2),36 (16 times)**
- **57:4-5 - “and thus the city of Antiparah fell into our hands. And thus ended the twenty and eighth year of the reign of the Judges.”**
- **57:6 - “And it came to pass that in the commencement of the twenty and ninth year”**
- **57:21/Matthew 9:29; 58:40/Galatians 5:1**
- **59:1 - “Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”**
- **Chapter 58 - “came to pass” - 58:1, 4 (x2), 7, 8, 11, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23 (x2), 26, 28, 29, 30 (18 times)**
- **Chapter 59 - “came to pass” - 59:1,3,4,5,13 (4 times)**
- **Chapter 60 - “came to pass” - 60:1 (1 time)**
- **60:23/Matthew 23:26; 60:26/2 Thessalonians 1:4; 61:9,12,21/Galatians 5:1**
- **Chapter 61 - “came to pass” - 61:1 (1 time)**
- **Chapter 62 - “came to pass” - 62:1,3,5,7,12,13,14,15,16,18(x2),21,22,23,27,28,30,31,32,34,36,37,38,42,46,52 (26 times)**
- **62:11 - “And thus ended the thirtieth year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”**
- **62:39 - “And thus ended the thirty and first year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”**
- **62:45/Acts 2:38; 62:46/Acts 20:28**
- **62:52 - “And it came to pass that all these things were done. And Helaman died, in the thirty and fifth year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi.”**
- **Chapter 63 - “came to pass” - 63:1,3,4,5,8(x2),9,10,14 (9 times)**
- **63:1 - “And it came to pass in the commencement of the thirty and sixth year of the reign of the Judges over the people of Nephi”**

## A Critique of Helaman

### • Comment:

Arbaugh states: “The work of the editors comes out prominently again with Helaman. In all the sixteen chapters except 4,5,12,14,15 and 16 there has been a large amount of anti-Masonic material inserted. There may have been some other changes too although the basis of the book seems to be the work of Spaulding.”<sup>466</sup>

It is very interesting that if the hypothesis is correct that Spaulding’s manuscript was almost ready for publication, then we should be able to see a very polished, edited text. I think we do see that when it comes to the chronological markers. Spaulding wanted to give a certain timeline to his historical novel. But what is very intriguing is if Rigdon did edit the text, then we ought to see where those edits were made. I think we can detect them. Please examine the next two pages.

Using the black font, there are the *chronological markers*. You will see some are marked in green. The reason they are marked in green is because Rigdon filled up the material with biblical passages (especially from the New Testament that had not been written down yet according to the timeline).

Notice that 4:18-6:3 takes up the 62nd year yet it covers half of chapter 4, all of chapter 5, and a little bit of chapter 6. Look what we discover. If you look between the chronological markers, then you will see the Bible verses that Rigdon inserted into that section of 4:18-6:3. I marked the 62nd year in a brown color.

Hardy wrote: “Given the comprehensive chronological framework of the Book of Mormon, it is always interesting when Mormon presents things out of sequence. For instance, at Helaman 5:5–13, Mormon quotes a speech by Helaman 3 not at the time it was originally given but instead by having his two sons remember it many years later (perhaps not coincidentally, the subject of that discourse was remembrance). The regular march of time is also interrupted when the same event is told more than once, as in Helaman 4:10 and 17, where the sixty-first year of the judges ends twice. This might seem like a mistake, but verses 11 – 17 offer a recapitulation or summary in which the military achievements of the year are reinterpreted in spiritual terms— one of the examples of Mormon commenting directly when he felt that the religious meaning of a story was insufficiently clear. (Alternatively, the connection between vv. 10 and 16 – 17 could be regarded as an example

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<sup>466</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelation in Mormonism*, 39.

of resumptive repetition.)”<sup>467</sup>

Washburn writes: “Chapters 13-15 bring something entirely new, something idyllic and strange, even for the Book of Mormon, the mission of Samuel the Lamanite. This might with perfect propriety be designated the Book of Samuel. The reported career of this unusual man was meteoric. He came suddenly out of nowhere. His exceedingly short ministry was brilliant. And he disappeared abruptly.”<sup>468</sup> I believe that it is strongly the case that this character was most likely created by Sidney Rigdon.

- **Ch. 1: “came to pass” - 1:1,5,6,8,14,18,21(x2),30,33 - 10 times**
- **1:1 - 40th 1:13 - 40th 1:14 - 41st 1:34 - 41st**
- **Ch. 2 - “came to pass” - 2:1,6,7,8,10 - 5 times**
- **2:1 - 42nd 2:12 - 42nd**
- **Ch. 3 - “came to pass” 3:1,3,8,10,12,19,21,22,23,24,26,32,36,37(x2) - 15 times**
- **3:1 - 43rd 3:2 - 44th 3:3 - 46th 3:18 - 46th 3:19 - 47th-48th 3:22 - 48th 3:23 - 49th 3:32 - 49th 3:33- 51st 3:37 - 53rd**
- **Helaman 3:29/Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 6:11; Matthew 7:13,14; 3:30/ Luke 16:26; Matthew 8:11**
- **Ch. 4 - “came to pass” - 4:1,3,4,9,10,15,18,20 - 8 times**
- **4:1 - 54th 4:4 - 56th 4:5 - 57th 4:8 - 58th-59th 4:9 - 60th 4:10 - 61st 4:17 - 61st 4:18 - 62nd**
- **4:12,24/Revelation 19:10; 4:24/Acts 17:24**
- **Ch. 5 - - “came to pass” - 5:1,4,13,17,18,20,21,22,26,28,29,30,32,34,36,37,40,42,43,46,50,52 - 22 times**
- **5:8/Matthew 6:20; 5:9/Acts 4:12; 5:19/Galatians 1:14; 5:32/Matthew 3:2; 5:44/1 Peter 1:8; 5:47/1 Peter 1:20; 5:48/Mark 1:10,13**
- **Ch. 6 - - “came to pass” - 6:1,4,6,8,9,15(x2),18,20,22,32,37,38,41 - 14 times**
- **6:1/Matthew 5:20; 6:8/James 4:13; 6:39/Matthew 7:6**
- **6:1 - 62nd 6:6 - 63rd 6:13 - 64th 6:14 - 65th 6:15 - 66th 6:16 - 67th 6:32 - 67th 6:33 - 68th 6:41 - 68th**

<sup>467</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 103-104.

<sup>468</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 46.



- **Ch. 7 - “came to pass” - 7:1,10,11,13 - 4 times**
- 7:1- 69th
- 7:4/Mark 7:8; 7:10/Matthew 21:33; 7:18/John 10:11,27
- **Ch. 8 - “came to pass” - 8:1,7(x2),10 - 4 times**
- 8:14,15/John 3:14,15; 8:17/John 8:56; 8:24/Ephesians 1:10; 8:25/Matthew 6:19,20; Romans 2:5
- **Ch. 9 - “came to pass” - 9:1,3,9,10,12,13,16,18,37 - 9 times**
- 9:2/Acts 12:11
- **Ch. 10 - “came to pass” - 10:1,2,3(x2),10,12,15,17,18 - 10 times**
- 10:19 - 71st
- 10:7,8/Matthew 16:19; 18:18; 10:9/Matthew 21:21
- **Ch. 11-“came to pass”- 11:1,3,7, 9 (x2), 17(x2),20,21,23,24,28,29,30,32, 37 (x2) - 17 times**
- 11:1 - 72nd      11:2 - 73rd      11:5 - 74th      11:6 - 75th      11:17 - 76th      11:21- 77th      11:22 - 78th      11:23 - 79th  
11:24 - 80th      11:29 - 80th      11:30 - 81st      11:35 - 81st  
11:36 - 82nd      11:37- 85th      11:38 - 85th
- **Ch. 12**
- 12:13,17/Matthew 17:20; 12:24/John 1:16; 12:26/John 5:29
- **Ch. 13 - 13:1,2(x2),4,18 - 5 times**
- 13:1 - 86th
- 13:6/Acts 20:21; 13:25/Matthew 23:30,31; 13:29/Matthew 17:17; 23:16; John 3:19; 13:33/Matthew 23:30,31
- **Ch. 14 - 14:1,7,8,28 - 4 times**
- 14:2/John 1:12; 14:18/Matthew 3:10; Revelation 21:8; 14:25/Matthew 27:52
- **Ch. 15**
- 15:1-4/Matthew 23:38; Luke 23:28-29; 13:3; 15:5/Ephesians 5:15; 15:6,7/1 Timothy 2:4; 15:8/Galatians 5:1; 15:11/1 Timothy 2:4; 15:15/Matthew 11:21
- **Ch. 16 - 16:1,13,16,20 - 4 times**
- 16:9 - 86th, 87th      16:11 - 88th      16:12 - 89th  
16:24 - 90th
- 16:10/Ephesians 5:15; 16:14/Luke 2:10
- **Comment:** It is very intriguing to me after you look at this chart, you can see how 11:38 is the 85th year and 13:1 is the 86th year. Notice the fewer “and it came to pass” phrases than it found in chapters 1,3,5,6,9,10,11.

Also take note of the Bible verses in green under chapters 12,13,14, and 15. To me that shows the editing of Rigdon in action.

- **Comment:** Howe wrote: “Freemasonry is here introduced and is said to have originated with a band of highwaymen. This institution is spoken of in very reproachful terms, in consequence of the members having bound themselves by secret oaths to protect each other in all things from the justice of the law. The Nephites are represented as being Anti-masons and Christians, which carries with it some evidence that the writer foresaw the politics of New York in 1828-29, or that work was revised at or about that time.”<sup>469</sup>
- Howe also wrote: “Our next object was to ascertain, if possible, the disposition Spalding made of his manuscripts. For this purpose, a messenger was dispatched to look up the widow of Spalding, who was found residing in Massachusetts. From her we learned that Spalding resided in Pittsburgh, about two years, when he removed to the township of Amity, Washington Co. Pa. where he lived about two years, and died in 1816. His widow then removed to Onondaga county, N Y, married again, and lived in Otsego county, and subsequently removed to Massachusetts. She states that Spalding had a great variety of manuscripts, and recollects that one was entitled the “Manuscript Found,” but of its contents she has now no distinct knowledge. While they lived in Pittsburgh, she thinks it was once taken to the printing office of Patterson & Lambdin; but whether it was ever brought back to the house again, she is quite uncertain: if it was, however, it was then with his other writings, in a trunk which she had left in Otsego county, N.Y. This is all the information that could be obtained from her, except that Mr. Spalding, **while living, entertained a strong antipathy to the Masonic Institution, which may account for its being so frequently mentioned in the Book of Mormon** (emp. mine). The fact also, that Spalding, in the latter part of his life, inclined to infidelity, is established by a letter in his hand-writing, now in our possession.”<sup>470</sup>
- Here is some more information given on Masonry and its relationship to the **BOM**: “**MASONRY.**

“How many spirits born to bless,

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<sup>469</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 81.

<sup>470</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 287-288.

Have sunk beneath that worthless name.”

We present to our readers this week, extracts from one of the unpublished degrees of masonry. In this degree the whole story of masonry is told. It is a solemn, sad and sickening tale. We can now see the primary object of an institution, which has claimed to be the quintessence of morality -- the handmaid of religion, and even the immaculate fountain, from whence.

“Rising floods of knowledge roll,  
And pour and pour upon the soul..”

We can now discover, as the powerful arm of public opinion “lifts the veil that shades them o’er,” the reckless monster armed with a thousand darts, dipped in the venom of destruction, ready to enter the vitals of freedom, and pierce the bosom of religion!. Yes, the object of masonry is to destroy the Christian religion, notwithstanding she has claimed to be its hand-maid -- take her own words -- “Behold, my dear brethren, what you must fight against and destroy, before you can come to the knowledge of the true good and sovereign happiness! -- behold this monster which you must conquer -- a serpent which we detest as an idol which is adorned by the idiot and vulgar under the name of RELIGION!!!” This is the cap stone of iniquity -- the climax of abomination and wickedness. John the Revelator “saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his head the blasphemy.” Masonry may be likened unto this horned beast. He fought against the saints, masonry against religion. In the disclosures of this degree, it is conclusively proved, that the murder of Morgan was in strict conformity with the principles of masonry, from the following sentence -- “and if so indiscreet as to divulge their obligation, we are bound to cause their death, and take vengeance on the treason, by the destruction of the traitor!” We think all honest and good men who have advocated the purity of masonic principles, will, on reading this degree, pause and reflect. Yea more, we think they will speedily abandon and forsake, forever, an institution whose precepts teach its members to violate the laws of the land -- and raise an impious hand against the laws of Heaven. -- And as they respect themselves, and regard the cause of religion and the harmony of society -- raise their voice against the demon -- and leave him to sicken in the stench of his own pollution. -- Ontario Phoenix.”<sup>471</sup>

**Here was another article written:**

<sup>471</sup> *Painesville Telegraph*, Vol. ? Painesville, Ohio, April 3, 1829. No. ?

- “Antimasonic Religion. -- The Mormon Bible is anti-masonic, and it is a singular truth that every one of its followers, so far as we are able to ascertain, are anti-masons. Now, probably we are to know what is meant by “Church and State” ...
- ... [Martin Harris says the Book of Mormon is] the Anti-masonick Bible, and that all who do not believe in it will be damned ...”<sup>472</sup>
- **Comment:** After examining the chronological markers of Helaman, I think you would probably have a good idea as to where Rigdon most likely edited this book based on the Scriptures that were used from the New Testament that were not to have even been written down yet. Helaman was supposedly written at least *five to two years prior to the birth of Jesus*.
- One can see some great editorial additions made by Rigdon in regards to Helaman 12-16. In Helaman 12:25,26, it is John 5:28,29 that is being alluded to, not Daniel 12:2. We are then introduced to Samuel the Lamanite who prophesies in a like manner as Jesus when He gave His “woe” sermon to the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23 (see Helaman 13:25).
- Even if it is the case that Rigdon did not turn the Spalding book into the **BOM**, the **BOM** would still be false because it affirms that from Jesus’ death to His resurrection that there will be three days of darkness, but that cannot coincide with the gospels’ accounts which clearly teaches there was three hours of darkness.

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<sup>472</sup> *The Geauga Gazette*, Vol. III. No. ? Painesville, Ohio, Tuesday, March 15, 1831. Whole No. 124.

## A Critique of 3rd Nephi

• **Comment:** 3rd Nephi is very hard to determine where the Rigdon editorial parts are in the first ten chapters. It seems to be a heavy mixture of Spalding and Rigdon. After chapter ten, it seems to be totally Rigdon who also added the Sermon on the Mount. I could not really determine where the Spalding material was. I am only going to make available where the Bible was quoted:

### 3 Nephi

- **3 Nephi 1:13**/John 16:33, Acts 3:21; **1:25**/Matthew 5:18; **3:19**/Matthew 6:19; **5:1**/Acts 3:21; **5:5**/Acts 9:1; **5:8**/John 21:25; **6:14**/1 Corinthians 15:58; **7:16**/Mark 3:5; **7:19**/Matthew 10:1; **9:15**/John 14:10,11; 17:5-6; **9:16,17**/John 1:11,12; **9:20**/Matthew 3:11; **9:22**/Mark 10:14,15; John 10:17; **10:4,5,6**/Matthew 23:37; **10:7**/Matthew 23:38; **10:13**/Acts 2:19; **11:7**/Matthew 17:5; **11:11**/John 8:12; 18:11; **11:14**/John 20:27; **11:17**/Matthew 28:9; **11:25**/Matthew 28:19; **11:27**/John 17:21; **11:32**/John 7:16; Acts 17:30; **11:33-34**/Mark 16:16; **11:37**/Matthew 18:3; **11:38**/Acts 2:38; **11:39**/Matthew 16:18; **11:40**/Matthew 7:24-27; 16:18; **12:1**/Matthew 3:11; **12:2**/Acts 2:38; **12-14**/Matthew 5-7; **15:1**/John 6:54; **15:17**/John 10:16; **16:3**/John 10:3,4; **16:15**/Matthew 5:13; **17:10**/Luke 7:38; **17:12,21**/Mark 10:13,16; John 11:35; **18:6-11**/Luke 22:17-20; **18:11-16**/Acts 2:38; Matthew 7:24-27; **18:18**/Matthew 26:41; Luke 22:31; **18:20**/John 16:23; **18:28,29**/1 Corinthians 11:27-29; **19:18**/John 20:28; **19:20**/John 17:6; **19:23**/John 17:20-22; **19:25**/Matthew 17:2; **19:28-29**/John 17:9; **19:35**/Matthew 8:10; **20:8**/1 Corinthians 11:23-25; **21:6**/Acts 2:38; **23:9**/Matthew 27:52-53; **26:3**/2 Peter 3:10; **26:5**/John 5:29; **26:17**/Acts 2:38; Luke 1:15; **26:18**/2 Corinthians 12:1-3; **26:19**/Acts 2:44; 26:21; **27:1**/Acts 2:38; **27:11**/Matthew 3:10; **27:13**/John 6:38; **27:14**/John 12:32; **27:17**/Matthew 3:10; **27:22**/John 6:54; **27:28**/John 15:16; **27:29**/Matthew 7:8; **27:32**/Matthew 6:19; John 17:12; **27:33**/Matthew 7:13,14; **28:7**/Matthew 16:28; **28:8**/1 Corinthians 15:51-53; **28:10**/Matthew 8:11; Luke 13:29; **28:13-15**/2 Corinthians 12:2-4; **28:31**/Romans 14:10; **28:35**/Matthew 26:24; **29:7**/John 17:12.

• Arbaugh states: “It may possibly be that the Manuscript Found did make Christ appear to the Nephites although this is quite doubtful. In either case, most of 3 Nephi, which gives this account, was written by the revisers. Even in the first seven chapters, which seem to be a genuine part of the Manuscript Found, there is a considerable amount of unquestionable editing. In the subsequent chapters there is so much clearly from the revealers’ pens that it seems doubtful if any of



chapters 8 to 11 was written by Spaulding, and there is scarcely a possibility of his having written anything of the last nineteen chapters.”<sup>473</sup>

- Grant Hardy wrote: “With such a buildup, it is easy for readers to be disappointed in what follows. If archaeologists in Palestine discovered a previously unknown account of Jesus’ teachings dating back to the first or second century, the world would hardly be able to contain its excitement (such was the case with the Gospel of Thomas in 1945), yet our desire for novelty and fresh insight is thwarted in the Book of Mormon when Jesus delivers a lightly revised version of the Sermon on the Mount to the Nephites, followed by extended quotations from Isaiah, Micah, and Malachi. True, he instructs his twelve disciples, heals the sick, prays, administers the Eucharist, and blesses children, but the narrative is very repetitive— each of these actions occurs more than once— and, at least at first glance, it appears that there is not much in Third Nephi that we have not already seen in the New Testament. Latter-day Saints will recognize the importance of making it absolutely clear that the Jesus who visited the Nephites was the same figure who ministered to the Jews, and that he taught the same gospel in both the Old and New Worlds. To non-Mormons, however, it may seem as if Joseph Smith’s scripture-creating hubris reached its limit when it came to writing lines for the Lord himself, and instead he fell back into plagiarism and filler.”<sup>474</sup>

- Hardy writes: “After the discussion of the Book of Mormon as a sign in the last days, Jesus again cites Micah 5:8 –9 (this time continuing the quotation to verse 15), and he quotes both Isaiah 54 and Malachi 3 – 4, the latter being new to the Nephites since it had not been included in the Brass Plates that Nephi and his brothers had brought from Jerusalem (3 Ne. 26:2).”<sup>475</sup>

Let me recommend two scholarly works<sup>476</sup> that I believe show that Rigdon was heavily dependent on the King James translation of the Bible for the “Sermon on the Mount” (3 Nephi 12-14).

Hardy writes: “Third Nephi often amplifies the miraculous aspects of the gospels, but it never reaches the fantastic heights of Buddha’s sermon in the

<sup>473</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelation in Mormonism*, 39.

<sup>474</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 181.

<sup>475</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 202.

<sup>476</sup> Robert M. Bowman, Jr. “The Sermon At The Temple In The Book of Mormon: A Ciritical Examination of Its Authenticity through a Comparison with the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew.” (South African Theological Seminary, Ph.D. dissertation, October 2014), 1-762. Stan Larson, “The Historicity of the Matthean Sermon on the Mount in 3 Nephi,” *New Approaches To The Book of Mormon*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe, (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 115-163.

Lotus Sutra— when before an audience of hundreds of thousands of both mortal and heavenly beings, showers rained down from heaven, perfume filled the air, the earth shook, and the Buddha emitted a ray of light that illuminated eighteen thousand worlds, in each of which another Buddha was preaching. Instead, the Book of Mormon generally stays close to the parameters of biblical supernaturalism as it literalizes and expands upon familiar stories. For instance:

Jesus persuaded doubting Thomas by allowing him to touch the wounds on his hands and side; at Bountiful he invited twenty-five hundred Nephites to do the same (John 20:24–29; 3 Ne. 11:13–17, 17:25). John the Baptist promised that his successor would “baptize with the Holy and with fire”; when the Nephite disciples were “filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire,” they “were encircled about as if it were by fire, and it came from heaven, and the multitude did witness it” (Matt. 3:11, Luke 3:16; 3 Ne. 19:13–14).

- At the Transfiguration, Jesus’ “face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light”; in the New World, this heavenly glow was transferred to his twelve disciples as well: “the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold they were as white as the countenance and also the garments of Jesus” (Matt. 17:2, Mark 9:2–3, Luke 9:29; 3 Ne. 19:25).

- Jesus said of one Roman centurion, “I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel”; but of the entire Nephite multitude he marveled, “so great faith have I never seen among all the Jews” (Matt. 8:10, Luke 7:9; 3 Ne. 19:35).

- In Palestine, Jesus miraculously multiplied five loaves to feed five thousand people; in the Americas he fed even greater numbers by producing bread out of nothing (Matt. 14:15–21, Mark 6:30–44, Luke 9:10–17, John 6:1–14; 3 Ne. 20:1–8).

- The New Testament reports that Jesus once thanked the Father because “thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes”; in Bountiful Jesus “loosed [the] tongues” of Nephite infants, so that “even babes did open their mouths and utter marvelous things” (Matt. 11:25, 21:16; 3 Ne. 26:14–16).

There is a hint in the gospel of John about Jesus granting one apostle an extraordinary life span; at the end of Third Nephi three disciples were unambiguously transformed so that they would “never taste of death” (John 21:20–23; 3 Ne. 28:1–40).

- In the Bible Jesus alludes to several Old Testament verses; in the Book

of Mormon he recites entire chapters.”<sup>477</sup>

## A Critique of 4 Nephi

- **Comment:** My hypothesis concerning this book are twofold. I hold the latter to be more likely.

- **First**, it could be possible that Spalding did not have a detailed timeline, story, and characters and sought to “skip” in time so that he could get to Moroni in the 400s A.D. who would deposit the plates in their specific location. Therefore, Rigdon took the short timeline and revamped it in such a way that he wanted to include his theological views of the continuation of miraculous gifts (1:3,5,30,32) and communal living (1:3,25).

- **Second**, it could be possible that Spalding did have a detailed timeline, story, and characters and Rigdon decided to shrink and delete much of the material because he did not want to edit that much. This to me would explain why there are the awkward timelines found within the text such as 1:6,14.

- Hardy wrote: “So also, events that follow the book of Third Nephi lack detailed connection with what transpired at the time of the Savior’s visit. It appears that there was an astonishing social transformation, for Mormon reports that the next two centuries were a time of miracles when everyone joined the church, shared their possessions, and prospered. There was no crime, no economic inequality, no ethnic divisions, and no contention. But Mormon recounts all this in just twenty-three verses (4 Ne. 1:1–23), which makes it assertion rather than history—and with no narrative or causal analysis, it is hard to understand what happened. There is little in Mormon’s report of Jesus’ teachings that points the way. Christ establishes a church, but the organizational details are missing. He offers no critique of social conventions, customs, or government (despite serious problems in the system established by Mosiah, which included a susceptibility to corruption and apparently no outlet for dissent except violence).”<sup>478</sup>

### Chronological Markers of 4 Nephi:

- **“came to pass” - 13 times**

- **1:1:** “And it came to pass that the thirty and fourth year passed away, and

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<sup>477</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 181-182.

<sup>478</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 183.

also the thirty and fifth...”

- **4 Nephi 1:1/Acts 8:15; 2:38**
- **1:2:** “And it came to pass in the thirty and sixth year,...”
- **1:3/Acts 2:44; 4:32; Hebrews 6:4**
- **1:4:** “And it came to pass that the thirty and seventh year passed away also...”
- **1:5/Matthew 11:5; Mark 7:37**
- **1:6:** “And thus did the thirty and eighth year pass away, and also the thirty and ninth, and the forty and first, and the forty and second; yea, even until forty and nine years had passed away, and also the fifty and first, and the fifty and second; yea, and even until fifty and nine years had passed away;...”
- **1:11/Matthew 22:30**
- **1:14:** “And it came to pass that the seventy and first year passed away, and also the seventy and second year; yea, and in fine until the seventy and ninth year had passed away; yea, even an hundred years had passed away,...”
- **1:18:** “And how blessed were they, for the Lord did bless them in all their doings; yea, even they were blessed and prospered, until an hundred and ten years had passed away: And the first generation from Christ had passed away, and there was no contention in all the land.”
- **1:19,20:** And it came to pass that Nephi, he that kept this last record, (and he kept it upon the plates of Nephi,) died, and his son Amos kept it in his stead; and he kept it upon the plates of Nephi also; and he kept it eighty and four years, and there was still peace in the land, save it were a small part of the people, which had revolted from the church, and took upon them the name of Lamanites; therefore there began to be Lamanites again in the land.
- **1:21:** “And it came to pass that Amos died also, (and it was an hundred and ninety and four years from the coming of Christ,) and his son Amos kept the record in his stead...”
- **1:22:** “And it came to pass that two hundred years had passed away: And the second generation had all passed away save it were a few.
- **1:24:** “And now in this two hundred and first year...”
- **1:27:** “And it came to pass that when two hundred and ten years had passed away there were many churches in the land...”

- **1:34:** “... And thus they did dwindle in unbelief and wickedness, from year to year, even until two hundred and thirty years had passed away.”
- **1:30/Matthew 27:51; 1:32/Daniel 3; 1:33/Daniel 6**
- **1:35:** “And now it came to pass in this year, yea, in the two hundred and thirty and first year, there were a great division among the people.”
- **1:40:** “And it came to pass that two hundred and forty and four years had passed away, and thus were the affairs of the people.”
- **1:41:** “... And thus did two hundred and fifty years pass away, and also two hundred and sixty years.”
- **1:45:** “And it came to pass that when three hundred years had passed away,...”
- **1:47:** “And it came to pass that after three hundred and five years had passed away...”
- **1:48:** “And it came to pass that when three hundred and twenty years had passed away, Ammaron, being constrained by the Holy Ghost, did hide up the records which were sacred; yea, even all the sacred records which had been handed down from generation to generation, which were sacred, even until the three hundred and twentieth year from the coming of Christ.”

## A Critique of Mormon

• Arbaugh states: “The late narrative of the Manuscript Found concluded with 4 Nephi (only 4 pages) and The Book of Mormon. Although they also contain a little anti-Masonic alteration they are practically unchanged except for the conclusion which Rigdon tacked on. Mormon apparently originally ended with 8:13, “Behold, I make an end of speaking concerning this people. I am the son of Mormon, and my father was a descendant of Nephi.” Rigdon’s added conclusion, 8:14 to the end of the book, 9:37, blesses him who shall dig the records up “out of the earth,” and warns those who oppose the work, telling them that “if there be faults (in the book) they be faults of a man.” After arguing heatedly against those who have built up churches to get gain, Rigdon realized that he had been a little incautious so he added, “Behold, I speak unto you as if ye were present, and yet ye are not. But behold, Jesus Christ hath shown you unto me.”<sup>479</sup>

<sup>479</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelations In Mormonism*, 39-40.



## Chronological Markers in Mormon:

- **Mormon 1:15/1 Pet. 2:3**
- **2:2:** “Three hundred and twenty-six years had passed away”
- **2:3:** “that in the three hundred and twenty and seventh year”
- **2:9:** “and three hundred and thirty years had passed away”
- **2:15:** “And thus three hundred and forty and four years had passed away”
- **2:16:** “that in the three hundred and forty and fifth year”
- **2:19/John 6:44**
- **2:22:** “And it came to pass in the three hundred and forty and sixth year,”
- **2:28:** “And the three hundred and forty and ninth year had passed away. And in the three hundred and fiftieth year,...”
- **3:1:** “And it came to pass that the Lamanites did not come to battle again until ten years more had passed away.”
- **3:2/Acts 2:38**
- **3:4:** “And it came to pass that after this tenth year had passed away, making, in the whole, three hundred and sixty years **from the coming of Christ**” [possibly bold part added by Rigdon]
- **3:7:** “And it came to pass that in the three hundred and sixty and first year,”
- **3:8:** “And in the three hundred and sixty and second year,..”
- **3:12/Hebrews 11:6; 3:15/Romans 12:19; 3:18/Matthew 19:28; Revelation 20:13; 3:19/Matthew 19:28; 3:20/2 Corinthians 5:10; 3:22/2 Corinthians 5:10**
- **4:1:** “And now it came to pass that in the three hundred and sixty and third year...”
- **4:7:** “And it came to pass in the three hundred and sixty and fourth year,...”
- **4:10:** “And it came to pass that the three hundred and sixty and sixth year had passed away...”
- **4:15:** “And it came to pass that in the three hundred and sixty and seventh year...”
- **4:16,17:** “and the Lamanites did not come again against the Nephites, until the three hundred and seventy and fifth year. And in this year they did come down...”
- **5:5:** “and thus the three hundred and seventy and nine years passed away.”
- **5:6:** “And it came to pass that in the three hundred and eightieth year,...”

- **5:14**/Matthew 16:16; Ephesians 3:11; **5:16**/Ephesians 2:12; **5:21**/James 5:16
- **6:5**: “And when three hundred and eighty and four years had passed away...”
- **6:21**/1 Corinthians 15:53; **7:5**/1 Corinthians 15:54,56; **7:6**/2 Corinthians 5:10; **7:8**/Acts 2:38; **7:10**/Matthew 3:11
- **8:6**: “Behold, four hundred years have passed away **since the coming of our Lord and Saviour... [possibly bold part added by Rigdon]**”
- **8:17**/Matthew 5:22; **8:20**/Romans 12:19; **8:21**/Matthew 3:10; **8:24**/Matthew 17:20; **8:30**/Matthew 24:6-7; **8:31**/Acts 8:23; **8:34**/Revelation 1:1; **8:41**/Revelation 16:6; **9:2**/2 Peter 3:10; **9:5**/Matthew 3:12; **9:6**/Revelation 7:14; **9:7**/1 Corinthians 12:10; **9:9**/Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17; **9:12-13**/1 Corinthians 15:21-22; **9:13**/1 Corinthians 15:52; **9:14**/Revelation 22:11; **9:21**/John 16:23; **9:22**/Mark 16:15; **9:23**/Mark 16:16; **9:24**/Mark 16:17; **9:27**/Philippians 2:12; **9:28**/James 4:3; **9:29**/1 Corinthians 11:27.
- It can be seen that Moroni quotes Hebrews 13:8 and James 1:17 in 9:9. Notice carefully that it says: “Do we not **read** that God is the same yesterday, to-day and forever, and that in him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” Did he have access to a copy of the book of Hebrews and James?

• **Comment**: What I can state about this section is that it contains a number of New Testament passages (see section on **Chronological Markers in Mormon**) and thus indicates to me that Rigdon added this section.

• **Comment**: Please note **Mormon 8:13,14**, which was most likely the original ending to Spalding’s *Manuscript Found*. Notice how Rigdon adds on to it his theological view of the defense of the continuation of miracles in Mormon 8:15-9:37. First, he makes the argument that God does not change. Mormon 9:19 states: “And if there was miracles wrought, then why has God ceased to be a God of miracles, and yet be an unchangeable being. And behold I say unto you, He changeth not: if so, he would cease to be God; and he ceaseth not to be God, and is a God of miracles.” The problem is that Rigdon mixes up God’s nature with God’s will, which is a huge category error.

God once made Adam from the dust of the ground, which was a miracle. Now it is the case that it takes a male and female to make a human being.

Jesus once was able to take five loaves and two fishes and multiply them so that at least 5,000 men could eat. Yet, people today must farm and labor in order to make food.

As Michael Hatcher states: “If God’s not changing means that He always does the same thing in the same way, then He **must** be doing these things today. Yet, He is not. Instead of dealing with God’s actions, Malachi was dealing with God’s nature. His nature does not change. God will always be holy, righteous, loving, etc.”<sup>480</sup>

The second argument Rigdon proposes is that miracles continue not to occur because of unbelief. Mormon 9:20 states: “And the reason why he ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men, is because that they dwindle in unbelief, and depart from the right way, and know not the God in whom they should trust.” Rigdon continues this argument all the way up to verse 27. He cites Mark 16:17-20 as alleged proof. Rigdon evidently did not understand the purpose of miracles.

One of the purposes of miracles was to confirm the word of God (Mark 16:20). The faith had once for all been delivered to the saints (Jude 3). This cannot be restored because only the apostles could impart miraculous gifts unto Christians in the first century A.D. as noted by Brumback and Fox.

Brumback states: “The New Testament reveals that the Holy Spirit was only received directly from heaven by two groups: the apostles, all Jews (Acts 2:1–4; 9:17); and Cornelius, along with those gathered in his home, all Gentiles (Acts 10:1–48; 11:15–18). There was no human intermediary in either case, a fact demonstrating that this action was accomplished by God’s sovereign will and not subject human approval or instrumentality. Outside of these two situations, no person received the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit without having apostles lay hands upon them in order to impart these miraculous gifts; we see this in Acts 8:12–17 and 19:1–7”<sup>481</sup>

Marion Fox states: “Several passages plainly state that the apostles had the power to impart miraculous gifts by the laying on of their hands (Acts 8:17-19; 19:1-7, and 2 Tim. 1:6). The apostle Paul desired to go to Rome to impart gifts to the church in Rome (Rom. 1:11). If gifts would be imparted by a direct means, why did Paul need to go to Rome to impart them?”<sup>482</sup>

Since there are no apostles today to impart miraculous gifts, then this

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480 Michael Hatcher, “Arguments For Miracles,” *Defender*, Vol. L, No. 1, January 2021, 3

481 Rick Brumback, “How Did Timothy Receive Miraculous Gifts?” in *Entrusted with the Faith: Multigenerational Mission in Timothy and Titus*, ed. Douglas Y. Burleson (Delight, AR: Gospel Light Publishing Co., 2018), 413.

482 Marion R. Fox, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, Vol. 2 (Oklahoma City, OK: Five F Publishing, 2005), 442.

practice cannot be restored.

Apostles were eyewitnesses to the resurrected Christ. There is no one today who has seen the resurrected Jesus.

**Second**, there are Scriptures hinting at the temporal nature of the apostolic office (Jude 3,17,18; 2 Timothy 2:2; Revelation 21:14; 2 Peter 1:12-15).

**Third**, early Christians (such as Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Hippolytus, Lactonius) recognized the temporal nature of the apostolic office.<sup>483</sup>

The Bible claims for itself in giving four arguments on the superiority of love over miraculous gifts and that the partial (which represent the categories of miraculous gifts of 1 Cor. 12:4-11 - speaking in tongues, miraculous knowledge, and prophecy) would cease when that which is mature would come. Miracles were to confirm the word of God and when the word of God was completed (the new covenant), then miracles would no longer be needed.

Fox states: “Paul sets forth four arguments that miraculous gifts were inferior to love (1 Cor. 12:31). His first argument is that love is more important than any other aspect of Christianity (1 Cor. 13:1-3). His second argument is that love includes all the other aspects of Christianity and the whole is greater than the parts (1 Cor. 13:4-7). His third argument is that faith, hope, and love abide longer than the miraculous gifts. His fourth argument is that love is greater than faith and hope because love abides forever but faith and hope will cease at the second coming of the Lord (1 Cor. 13:13). It is evident that Paul is arguing that miracles ceased when “that which is perfect” came (1 Cor. 13:8-13).”<sup>484</sup>

## A Critique of Ether

• **Comment:** After putting away his first manuscript, *Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek*, which Spalding did not finish, I believe the eyewitnesses of Spalding as Howe states that he started working on another manuscript: “This old M.S. [*Manuscript Story- Conneaut Creek -SF*] has been shown to several of the foregoing witnesses, who recognise it as Spalding’s, he having told them that he had altered his first plan of writing, by going farther back with dates, and writing in the old scripture style, in order that it might appear more

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483 James D. Bales, *Apostles or Apostates?* (Dallas, TX: Gospel Broadcast Bookstore, 1944), 38-42.

484 Fox, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, Vol. 2, 351.

ancient. They say that it bears no resemblance to the “Manuscript Found”<sup>485</sup> This is certainly what occurred since Ether begins at the tower of Babel.

It seems that Spalding probably wrote this book - Ether - first as a part of his second manuscript. Then he wrote what is called 1 Nephi through Mormon (although not all of the books within that range come from Spalding as was demonstrated in other sections of the book). The reason I believe that maybe the case is because the account of this story was written on twenty-four gold plates that were discovered by Limhi (Mosiah 8:7-10). The subjects of king Limhi were not able to translate the twenty-four plates (Mosiah 8:11). It is translated by king Mosiah (Mosiah 21:25-28; 28:10-13; Alma 37:21). So it seems very likely that Spalding wanted to interweave this account of the first migration to America that began several thousand years ago to the second migration that would include Lehi and his clan.

Ether can be outlined from its first chapter in that it gives a long genealogy (Ether 1:6-33) and then discusses several characters from the genealogy throughout the book. Since this is the case, then we can see the historical outline that Spalding wrote and achieved. Therefore, we should be able to detect any significant alterations throughout the book. In fact, we can.

- Arbaugh wrote: “All but chapters 1,2,3 and 15 have alterations and 4,5 and 13 are entirely or in greater part insertions. The conclusion of the book was in all probability the conclusion of the Manuscript Found, though the late narrative ended with the preceding book.”<sup>486</sup>

- One of the significant Rigdon insertions I believe is found in Ether 12 and part of 13 as will be discussed soon.

- Washburn, an LDS writer, wrote: “The Book of Ether alone would prove the volume in which it is found to be a unique, if not a divine, record. It is a whole study in itself, neglected for the most part by those who should be well acquainted with it. There is not in all the rest of the Book of Mormon another division so different from all the rest.”<sup>487</sup> Although I disagree with Washburn’s comment about it being a divine record, I agree with him that it is a different division from all the rest because I believe it was composed **first** by Spalding.

- What most likely happened is that Ether was a part of this original batch that was delivered to Joseph Smith before the crisis of the 116 pages (June

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485 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 288.

486 Arbaugh, *Revelation In Mormonism*, 40.

487 Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 60.



1828). Since Ether was **not** part of the 116 pages that was destroyed, Rigdon having learned new theological truths between June 1828 and December 1828 (or some other month), he decided to reinsert more material that he had learned such as baptism for the remission of sins (Ether 4:18,19) which he had learned in March 1828 from Walter Scott.<sup>488</sup>

- Rigdon most likely forgot to make some necessary editorial changes to Ether if the overall story of the **BOM** was to be consistent.

- **First**, Moroni seems to have neglected the former translation of Mosiah (Ether 1:1-2).

- **Second**, Mormon (Moroni's father) hid all the plates in Cumorah except the few plates for Moroni (Mormon 6:6).

- **Third**, remember that Moroni only had a few plates given to him by his father by which he could write. This begs the question how did Moroni, based on Mormon 8:5, not only finish the last two chapters of Mormon (Mormon 8 & 9), but was also able to make an abridgement to the book of Ether and the book of Moroni (**a total of 51 pages**) if he had only a few plates and not any material to make plates?

- **Chronological Markers in Ether:** When a person reads through Ether, he is not going to find exact chronological markers as is found in Mosiah, Alma, and Helaman. A person will find the “come to pass” phrase many times which is a significant Spalding signal indicator. Keep your eye out on the sections that are marked in pink so that you can see how many times that phrase occurs within the sections that have been designated. Normally, it is one of the stronger pieces of evidence for the Spalding signal.

- **Ether 1:1-2:10 - Spalding**

- **“came to pass” - 10 times**

- **Ether 2:11,12 - Rigdon**

- **Comment:** The reasons that I believe this was added was because it serves as sermon material. Notice the usage of the 2nd person plurals - “you” and “ye.” There is the mention of Jesus Christ. Remember “Christ” is *Christos* in Greek. How did that come about from a Reformed Egyptian text? Notice also verse 13: “And now I proceed with my record.” Also, could the text flow smoothly without the Rigdon (blue) portion? Yes.

- **Ether 2:13-3:12 - Spalding**

- **“and it came to pass” - 6 times**

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<sup>488</sup> Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve*, 192.

- **Ether 3:13-5:6 - Rigdon**
- **“and it came to pass” - 3 times**

• **Comment:** I can only say that 3:13-5:6 was heavily edited by Rigdon. It is hard to tell which is Spalding and which is Rigdon. But I can tell it was heavily edited.

• In the 1830 edition in 4:1, it is **Benjamin**; in the 1837 edition and onward, it was changed to **Mosiah** in order to reconcile the discrepancy. Could it be that if this is a Rigdon portion, then that is why the contradiction existed? Or could it be that Spalding made a mistake? Either way, it shows that the book cannot have been inspired by God.

• Clark Braden points out some significant contradictions in regards to Ether 4:1 in the original 1830 edition. He said: “We will now ask your attention to a conglomeration of contradictions and absurdities, as incapable of being untied as the Gordian knot; and no Mormon can cut it either, not even with the wonderful sword of Laban. Page 507: The plates of Jared’s brother are to be sealed and buried, and are not to go forth until the Gentiles repent of their iniquity, have faith and are clean before the Lord. According to the Book of Mormon that time has not come. Page 523: Ether hides up his plates of gold, and they are afterwards found by Limhi. Not Jared’s brother’s plates, but Ether’s plates, who never had or saw the plates of Jared’s brother. Page 158: Servants of Limbi find twenty-four gold plates, said to be Ether’s plates, not the plates of Jared’s brother. Page 156: King Benjamin lived only three years after Mosiah began to reign in his stead. Three years after Mosiah ascended the throne, or just after his father’s death, he sent men out who first learned of Limhi and his people. Limhi told them of the gold plates of Ether, found by his people. Page 507: Jared’s brother was to write and seal up what he had seen, and bury it, and his two stone interpreters, and they were not to come forth until after the death of Christ, and until the Gentiles were converted, and this time has not come yet. Then occurs this sentence: “For this cause did King Benjamin keep the plates of Jared’s brother, that they should not come to the world till after the death of Christ.” Page 200: King Mosiah translates the plates found by Limhi’s people, with the interpreters handed down from generation to generation from the beginning, that the people might know concerning the people that had been destroyed.

Now, then, let us point out a portion of the contradictions.

1. The plates of Jared’s brother were hid up, and were not to go forth

until the Gentiles were converted, and yet King Benjamin had them.

2. Here it is represented that the servants of Limhi found the plates of Jared's brother, and they came into King Benjamin's hands. In another place it is the gold plates of Ether that they find.

3. King Benjamin had the plates found by Limhi's people, yet he died before his people knew any thing about Limhi's people, or the plates they had found.

4. King Benjamin had these plates found by Limhi's people, yet Limhi gave them to King Benjamin's people after the king's death.

5. If the plates in King Benjamin's possession were the plates of Jared's brother, they could not be translated without the two stone interpreters he buried with them—at least the Lord said so. Those interpreters were never found, yet Mosiah translated the plates without these interpreters, with a pair his ancestors had handed down for generations.

6. If they were the plates of Jared's brother they were not to go forth until after the death of Christ and the conversion of the Gentiles, yet Mosiah gave their contents to his people before the death of Christ, and the Gentiles are not converted yet.

7. Jared's brother buried his interpreters with his plates. If King Benjamin had his plates where were those interpreters that were so all-important to an understanding of the plates.

8. Mosiah interpreted these plates with stone interpreters handed down for generations, from the beginning. From the beginning must mean since Lehi left Jerusalem. We hear of Laban's sword, Laban's breastplate, Lehi's compass, but nothing of these all important instruments, interpreters until now.

9. Mosiah's grandfather translated the stone of Coriantimur without any interpreter; but his grandson must use interpreters that his grandfather did not have, or did have and did not use, and yet could not translate without using them. If they were the plates of Jared's brother we have in the Book of Mormon, at least all their important features, in the Jaredite portion, yet the Lord said they should not go farther until the Gentiles were converted, and that has not been done yet. Well, there we will stop, though we are by no means done with the contradictions.<sup>489</sup>

- Notice the usage of the Scriptures that are used (see below).

- Notice in Ether 4:18,19 that the truth concerning the necessity of baptism for salvation has been added. This must have been one of the books that Rigdon

489 Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *The Braden-Kelley Debate*, 148.

took back with him to re-edit and inserted the new theological truth he had learned.

Chapter 5 is about the three witnesses for the plates and most likely Rigdon wanted Smith to find those who would be three witnesses for the golden plates.

- **Ether 3:14**/Matthew 25:34; John 1:12; **3:21**/1 John 1:3; **4:7**/Acts 26:18; **4:10**/John 6:44; **4:12**/John 12:44; John 8:12; 1:4; **4:13-15**/Matthew 11:28; Matthew 25:34; **4:16**/Revelation 1:1; **4:18**/Mark 16:16,17; **4:19**/John 6:44; Matthew 25:34; **5:3**/Acts 12:11; **5:4**/Matthew 18:16; John 6:44.

- **Ether 6:1-8:19- Spalding**

- **“and it came to pass” or a derivative - 42 times**

- **Comment:** In Ether 6:11, the Jaredite voyage to the Americas took 344 days. 344 days seems to be a very long time. Even in ancient times, it would have taken several months, but not approximately a year.

- In Ether 8:1-19, I think it is likely the case that Spalding may have used the story outline of John the Baptist’s beheading in Mark 6:14-29 to be used in this story. This also occurs in Mosiah 20:1-5 where the Judges 21 account was used.

- **8:7-15/Mark 6:14-29**

- **Ether 8:20-26 - Rigdon**

- **Comment:** The reason I believe this was added was because it serves as sermon material. Notice the usage of the 2nd person plurals - “you” and “ye.” “Gentiles” and “children of men” (Ether 8:26) is mentioned also.

Even though Spalding is most likely the one who wrote anti-Masonic material in the **BOM** for some sections, it seems here that Rigdon drew upon that material and commented upon it. The first reason I would say that is because it says in Ether 8:25: “that same liar who beguiled our first parents.” This is in reference to Satan and the first couple - Adam and Eve - in the garden of Eden. Notice though that the **BOM** contradicts 1 Timothy 2:13,14: “***For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression.***”

- Ether 11:4 states: “And he [Com-SF] lived to a good ole age, and began Shiblom; and Shiblom reigned in his stead. And the brother of Shiblom rebelled against him, and there began to be an exceeding great war in all the land.”

- Compare this to Ether 1:12: “And Shiblom was the son of Com.” There is no doubt that this is referring to the same person, yet it gets spelled wrong. Joseph Smith once said that this was the most correct book on earth and that it was translated by the gift and power of God. Why then the misspelling?

- **Ether 9:1-12:2a - Spalding**
- **“and it came to pass” or a derivative - 53 times**

- **Comment:** Washburn states: “Another interruption, though a much longer and more significant one, is that splendid declaration on faith by Moroni in Ether 12, verses 7-18. It is in some respects quite as good as Paul’s memorable eleventh chapter of Hebrews.”<sup>490</sup> Notice that Washburn admits there is an interruption to the flow of the text of Ether, which to me shows re-editing.

- Hardy comments on the outline of the chapter: “The chapter can be divided into four sections, as follows:

I. (vv. 1–5) The final Jaredite prophet, Ether, urges the people to believe in God and repent, warning of impending destruction and noting that faith can lead to hope for a better world. His listeners refuse to believe, because they did not see the “great and marvelous things” of which he had prophesied.

II. (vv. 6–21) Moroni expands on this teaching of Ether’s, explaining that faith is based on things that are hoped for and not seen. He then gives a dozen examples the Book of Mormon of miracles or blessings that had resulted from faith. last of these is that through faith, his fathers obtained a promise from the Lord record of the Nephites (in the form of the Book of Mormon) would go to the descendants of the Lamanites, by way of the Gentiles.

III. (vv. 22 – 37) At this moment, recognizing that he is putting the final touches on that same record, Moroni worries that the Gentiles will mock his efforts “because of our weakness in writing.” A conversation with the Lord ensues, in which Jesus assures Moroni that he will bless all those who humble themselves because of their weakness, a promise that extends both to Moroni and to the Gentiles (i.e., both the writer and readers of the text). Within this dialogue, Moroni speaks of the virtues of faith, hope, and charity and of the Lord’s role in fostering those traits, with Christ’s atonement put forward as the preeminent example of charity.

IV. (vv. 38 – 41 ) Moroni bids farewell to the Gentiles and his brethren (the Lamanites) until he meets them again at the judgment day, and he urges everyone “to seek this Jesus of whom the prophets and apostles have written.” This all seems sufficiently clear and cogent, yet in writing this chapter Moroni will again follow the strategies he employed in Mormon 8–9 : incorporating

<sup>490</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 93.



clusters of distinctive phrases as well as argumentative structures from several thematically and verbally linked source texts, and then integrating these varied allusions into a coherent whole. **The writings of Nephi and Mormon will again figure prominently, as will a couple of glaringly problematic chapters from the New Testament's Epistle to the Hebrews** (emp. mine). Any quotations in the Book of Mormon from biblical writings composed after 600 BC are anachronistic, potentially challenging both the book's historicity and its credibility. This is all the more so when the borrowed expressions appear in the exact words of the King James Version of 1611. Nonbelievers simply view the English Bible as one of Joseph Smith's sources, while Latter-day Saints look instead for more apologetic explanations. Although a case can be made, for example, for the resurrected Jesus' knowledge of the contents of the gospels, and even perhaps more tenuously for Nephi's citations of Second Isaiah (as we saw in Chapter 2), **it is difficult to explain how it is that Moroni and his father before him had access to writings attributed to the apostle Paul** (emp. mine). Believers might assume that some of the "things" Jesus himself shared with Moroni when he spoke with him "face to face, in plain humility" (Ether 12:39), included the contents of particular New Testament epistles. But regardless of the explanation, Ether 12 is written as if Moroni is as fully familiar with the text of Hebrews as he is with Nephi's or Mormon's writings."<sup>491</sup>

- There is a small Rigdon insertion in Ether 9:22: "which seems to allude to Malachi 4:2: ***“But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings; And you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves.”*** Notice the homonic play-on words - "Son of Righteousness" - used in 9:22. Also, there is an allusion to John 8:52: ***“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad”*** in 9:22.

- Hardy states: **“Ether 12 and 2 Nephi 33 share similar themes and several common phrases, but they also display a parallel structure** (emp. mine). Nephi, picking up the idea in Joseph's prophecies that weak things could be made strong (2 Ne. 3:13,21), frames his concluding remarks within two corresponding comments: "the words which I have written in weakness will be made strong unto them [his brethren]" (2 Ne. 33:4) and "ye shall know that I have been commanded of him [Christ] to write these things, notwithstanding my weakness" (2 Ne. 33:11). In between he presents a self-reflective meditation that features references to faith, hope, and charity— though the latter two terms

<sup>491</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 258.

appear very infrequently in Nephi's writings. Moroni appears to have adapted Nephi's model: he sandwiches his own observations on faith, hope, and charity between two admissions of "weakness in writing" (Ether 12:23–25, 40), and he broadens the Lord's promise so that not just weak writing will be made strong but all sorts of weaknesses can be overcome through faith in Christ. This discussion of the three Christian virtues also signals a simultaneous allusion to Mormon, the only other Book of Mormon figure to discuss the three together (again in his sermon at Moro. 7, which itself closely—and anachronistically—reflects Paul's eloquent statement on the same at 1 Cor. 13)."<sup>492</sup>

It is interesting that Ether 12 was translated by Moroni, yet 2 Nephi 33 is supposedly written by Nephi. Might it be the case that both books were written by the same author - Rigdon?

- **Ether 12:2b-13:12 - Rigdon**

- **"and it came to pass" or a derivative - 1 time**

- **Comment:** "Children of men" is mentioned **4 times** in this section (Ether 12:12, 29, 33, 34). Notice the abundance of Biblical references that are made in chapters 12 and 13 (see below).

- Rigdon certainly tries to come up with the lamest of excuses stating that Gentiles will mock Moroni's weakness in writing (Ether 12:23). The response is made by God here to Moroni that fools mock (Ether 12:26). However, the true fool is the one who is beguiled in believing that this book is from the God of the Bible.

- Rigdon's speech betrays him when he uses the KJV wording of "mansions" from John 14:1-3 in Ether 12:34, 37.

- There is the doctrine of the millenium that was widely held in the nineteenth century that finds its way being discussed in Ether 12:1-12. Rigdon was very fond of the millenium doctrine.

- Hayden wrote: "Some of the leaders in these new discoveries, advancing less cautiously as the ardor of discovery increased, began to form theories of the millennium. The fourteenth chapter of Zechariah was brought forward in proof—all considered as literal—that the most marvelous and stupendous physical and climatic changes were to be wrought in Palestine; and that Jesus Christ the Messiah was to reign literally "in Jerusalem and in Mr. Zion, and before his ancients, gloriously." The glory and splendors of that August millennial kingdom were to surpass all vision, as the light of the moon was to be made equal to the light of the sun, and the light of the sun

<sup>492</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 259.

would be augmented “sevenfold.” William Hayden went to new Lisbon to fill an appointment. Calling at Bro. Jacob Campbell’s, we found Bro. Scott. Mrs. Campbell was a Christian lady of much brilliancy of talent, and intelligent in the Holy Scriptures. Salutations over, she broke forth in an animated strain: “Bro. Scott and I have just been contemplating how joyful it will be in the millennium—mortals and immortals dwelling together!” Bro. Scott then, with great fluency, discanted upon the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, relating to the return of the Jews and their re-establishment in the Holy Land, the coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the saints, and the gathering together unto him on the Mount of Olives. Scott had a vein of enthusiasm, to which these millennial prospects were very congenial. He was led on in the brilliant expectations by the writings of Elias Smith, of new England, whose works had fallen into his hands. In a letter to Dr. Richardson, written in new Lisbon, April, 1830, he says the book of Elias Smith, on the prophecies, is the only sensible work on that subject he had seen. He thinks this and Croly on the Apocalypse all the student of the Bible wants. He strongly commends Smith’s book to the doctor. **This seems to be the origin of millennial views among us. Rigdon, who always caught and proclaimed the last word that fell from the lips of Scott or Campbell, seized these views, and with the wildness of his extravagant nature, heralded them everywhere** (emp. mine).<sup>493</sup>

- **Comment:** Notice how Ether draws from Hebrews 6 in 12:4. Then Moroni, the editor, decides to comment and basically quotes from Hebrews 11. Notice then in verses 13-17 how he imitates the great hall of faith from Hebrews 11 in appealing to those in the *BOM*.

- Grant Hardy states something of interest concerning Ether 12:23-25 which reads: “And I said unto him: Lord, the Gentiles will mock at these things, because of our weakness in writing; for Lord thou hast made us mighty in word by faith, but thou hast not made us mighty in writing; for thou hast made all this people that they could speak much, because of the Holy Ghost which thou hast given them; And thou hast made us that we could write but little, because of the awkwardness of our hands. Behold, thou hast not made us mighty in writing like unto the brother of Jared, for thou madest him that the things which he wrote were mighty even as thou art, unto the overpowering of man to read them.”

- Hardy states: “The first thing to notice in this passage is the abundance of first-person plural pronouns (fourteen), which is unexpected from someone who

<sup>493</sup> Hayden, *Early History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve*, 185-186.

has spent more than a decade utterly alone.”<sup>494</sup> I thought he made a good point here because Moroni is supposed to be a lone survivor. **Why then these pronouns?**

- Hardy then writes: “After this famous definition of faith, the author of Hebrews provides a long list of things accomplished by faith, including the creation of the world and specific actions taken by Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses’ parents, Moses, the children of Israel, Rahab, Gideon, and others. Moroni begins section II of Ether 12 with almost identical language and then proceeds to offer a parallel list of how faith made possible the appearance of Christ among the Nephites, the giving and fulfilling of the law of Moses, the prison escape of Alma 2 and Amulek, the receiving of the Holy Ghost by the Lamanite guards of Nephi 2 and Lehi 4 , the missionary successes of Ammon and the other sons of Mosiah, the death-defying transformation of the three Nephites, and the vision the brother of Jared had of the pre-mortal Christ. Both Hebrews 11 and Ether 12 also include numerous repetitions of the expression “by faith” (sixteen times in Hebrews, eleven in Ether). **There can be little doubt that Moroni’s discourse on faith at Ether 12 is, in some way, based on the Epistle to the Hebrews** (emp. mine), but it is more than simply an imitation; it is a creative adaptation. If Moroni seems to have an uncanny knowledge of the New Testament, he also has a firm grasp of his Book of Mormon predecessors, and he relies heavily upon their ideas and phrases as he thoroughly and deftly integrates their voices with that of the author of Hebrews.”<sup>495</sup>

- **12:4/Hebrews 6:19; 12:6/Hebrews 11:1; 12:7/John 7:4; 12:8/Hebrews 6:4; 12:10/Hebrews 7:11; 12:11/1 Corinthians 12:31; 12:14/Matthew 3:11; 12:17/Mark 9:1; 12:19/Hebrews 6:19; 12:26,27/2 Corinthians 12:9; 12:28/1 Corinthians 13:13; 12:30/Matthew 17:20; 12:32/John 14:2,3; 12:33/John 10:17; 14:2,3; 12:35/Matthew 25:28-29; 12:37/1 Corinthians 13:1; John 14:2,3; 12:38/2 Corinthians 5:10; 12:41/John 14:16; 13:3,4/Revelation 21:2; 13:8,9/2 Peter 3:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 13:10-11/Revelation 7:14; 13:12/Matthew 19:30.**

- **Ether 13:13b-15:34-Spalding**

- **“and it came to pass” or a derivative - 46 times**

- It is quite an interesting account in Ether 15:19-32. There was the army of Coriantumr versus the army of Shiz. It dwindled down to 52 soldiers of

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<sup>494</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 220.

<sup>495</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 221.

Coriantumr versus 69 soldiers of Shiz. They fought the next day and it dwindled between 32 soldiers of Shiz versus 27 soldiers of Coriantumr. Then it finally came down to the showdown between Shiz and Coriantumr and the death of Shiz is found to be interesting as well.

- Grant Hardy wrote: “Perhaps most surprisingly, he includes Ether’s dramatic prophecy that unless King Coriantumr repented he would be the last survivor of his people (Ether 13:20–22, 14:24)—even pausing to register Coriantumr’s growing awareness that such an outcome appeared more and more likely (15:1–3)—yet Moroni ends his account of the Jaredites ambiguously: “And it came to pass that Coriantumr fell to the earth, and became as if he had no life” (Ether 15:32). So is he still alive or not? This is a rather inconclusive conclusion, and it is hard to believe that Mormon would not have made much, much more of this incident (particularly given the additional details of fulfillment provided by Omni 1:20–22, where we learn that Coriantumr had not, in fact, died).”<sup>496</sup>

### A Critique of Moroni

- **Comment:** There is no doubt that Rigdon wanted to make this book a theological handbook. It seems to have been made totally by Rigdon (with a few exceptions of using a little bit of Spalding material).

- Arbaugh wrote: “Moroni (Rigdon) writes that he “had supposed not to have written any more” but wrote the final Book of Moroni containing a few instructions since “perhaps they may be of worth...in some future day.” These matters are chiefly directions for the bestowal of the Holy Ghost, ordination of priests, mode of administering the Lord’s Supper, and baptism, and some sundry rules of discipline. To this is added a discourse on “faith, hope, and charity,” which, though it cannot honestly have known Paul, contains 1 Cor. 13:4-13 in slightly condensed form. In D.C. 18:19 this is boiled down to what might appropriately be called the verse of love, “And if you have not faith, hope, and charity, you can do nothing.”<sup>497</sup>

- “Children of men” is mentioned **15 times** in the whole book, which is a strong piece of evidence for the Rigdon signal. The argument for the continuation of miracles is made, which was one of the theological views held by Rigdon.

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<sup>496</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 222.

<sup>497</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelation In Mormonism*, 40.



There is the mentioning of the truth of necessity of water immersion for the remission of sins found in:

(a) **Moroni 7:34**: “And he hath said: Repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, and have faith in me, that ye may be saved.”

(b) **Moroni 8:11**: “And their little children need no repentance, neither baptism. Behold, baptism is unto repentance to the fulfilling the commandments unto the remission of sins.”

(c) **Moroni 8:25-26**: “And the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins; And the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God.”

Hardy writes: “In 1831, Alexander Campbell, one of the book’s first critics (and certainly the first one to read it carefully), famously observed that it seemed to weigh in on all the popular religious questions of the day, including “infant baptism, ordination, the trinity, regeneration, repentance, justification, the fall of man, the atonement, transubstantiation, fasting, penance, church government, religious experience, the call to the ministry, the general resurrection, eternal punishment, who may baptize, and even the question of freemasonry, republican government, and the rights of man.” This is a fair list, and references to these topics— or their analogous counterparts— can be found throughout the Book of Mormon.”<sup>498</sup>

Certainly, many of these topics are located in Moroni. We discussed the issue of infant baptism and saw how Sidney Rigdon was against that doctrine and incorporated it into Moroni.

- Grant Hardy writes: “The last chapter in the Book of Mormon, Moroni 10, is a complex literary creation in which several of the writing strategies we have come to associate with Moroni are in evidence. The first thing many readers will notice is a discussion of gifts of the spirit that again follows an anachronistic New Testament text, this time based on Paul’s similar list in 1 Corinthians 12 (Moro. 10:8–17; 1 Cor. 12:4–11). The presence of this passage, though, is more easily attributable to translator intervention than

<sup>498</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 184.

the adaptations from Hebrews 6 and 11 in Ether 12 because it is much less integrated into the surrounding argument. It still, however, occupies a specific place within a broader structure.”<sup>499</sup>

- Grant Hardy writes: “The borrowings here are not random: all of Nephi’s come from the final chapters of his second book, with most (again) deriving from his prophecies of the latter days in 2 Nephi 25–28, while Mormon’s are taken from his own late writings (3 Ne. 29–30; Morm. 5) and from his one extant sermon (included later by Moroni in Moro. 7). Again, it appears that Moroni is not so much composing this conclusion as constructing it, extracting phrases from particular texts by Nephi and Mormon in order to weave them together and thereby unify the voices of these two illustrious predecessors.”<sup>500</sup> Here is the point to make again that both Nephi and Moroni come from the same author - Rigdon.

- **Moroni 2:3**/Acts 8:15-17; 10:45; 11:15; **3:1**/Acts 20:17; **4:3**/Luke 22:17-20; **5:1,2**/Luke 22:17-20; **6:1**/Luke 3:8; **6:4**/Hebrews 12:2; **6:6**/Luke 22:17-20; **7:1**/1 Corinthians 13:13; **7:6**/1 Corinthians 13:3; **7:7**/Romans 4:3; **7:9**/1 Corinthians 13:3; **7:11**/James 3:11; **7:18**/Matthew 7:2; **7:25**/Matthew 4:4; **7:26**/John 15:16; 16:23; Matthew 21:22; **7:27**/Hebrews 1:3; **7:31**/Acts 9:15; **7:34**/Acts 2:38; **7:35**/Matthew 24:30; John 6:44; **7:43,44**/Matthew 11:29; 1 Corinthians 13:3; **7:45**/1 Corinthians 13:4-7; **7:46**/1 Corinthians 13:8,13; **7:47**/1 Corinthians 13:7; John 6:44; **7:48**/John 3:2,3; **8:8**/Mark 2:17; **8:12**/Acts 2:38; Matthew 18:3; **8:14**/Acts 8:23; 1 Corinthians 13:13; **8:16**/1 John 4:18; Acts 13:10; **8:25**/Acts 2:38; **9:6**/Acts 13:10; **9:16**/Mark 8:2-3; **10:8-17**/1 Corinthians 12:4-11; **10:19**/Hebrews 13:8; **10:26**/John 8:24; **10:32**/Titus 2:12; Matthew 22:37; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Colossians 1:28; **10:33**/Matthew 26:28; 2 Peter 3:14.

## A Critique of 1 Nephi

- **Comment:** It should be emphasized again that you be reminded of the loss of the 116 pages that occurred in June of 1828.

- Hardy states: “After Joseph and his scribe Martin Harris had translated 116 pages of Mormon’s abridgment of the Large Plates, Martin asked for and received permission to take the manuscript home to show his skeptical wife.

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<sup>499</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 261.

<sup>500</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 253-254.

The manuscript was stolen and Joseph was commanded not to retranslate the lost pages, but rather to translate the Small Plates of Nephi in its stead. Latter-day Saints, following hints in the Book of Mormon itself (1 Ne. 9:5 , 19:3 ; W. of M. 1:6 –7), interpret this as an example of God’s foreknowledge. Critics since Fawn Brodie have seen this incident much less providentially, as a personal crisis that became a pivotal moment in Joseph Smith’s progression from village seer to prophet. In either case, the basic structure of the Book of Mormon is as follows:

Small Plates of Nephi— 1 Nephi through Omni (150 pages)

Mormon’s explanatory comments— Words of Mormon (2 pages)

Mormon’s abridgment of the Large Plates of Nephi— Mosiah through ch. 7 of Mormon (380 pages)

Moroni’s additions to his father’s records— ch. 8 of Mormon through Moroni (50 pages)

It appears that after the loss of the first part of the manuscript, Joseph continued his dictation with the book of Mosiah, worked his way to the end of Moroni, and then produced 1 and 2 Nephi, the books that now stand at the beginning of the text. This means that the Book of Mormon narrative was produced out of chronological order, with Words of Mormon being the last section dictated.”<sup>501</sup>

- Rigdon had come to the rescue by taking the manuscript home and re-editing it by adding theological truths to it. Because of the crisis, there was a huge vacuum that needed to be filled where 1 Nephi through Words of Mormon are located today. It was important to replace them in some way after editing Helaman through Moroni.

- Some of the storyline of what is known as 1 Nephi remained intact. We know this because we have the testimony of Henry Lake who stated that he remembered the story of Laban which is still there (1 Nephi 3-7) and the grammatical inconsistency remains there that had not been corrected.

- It could also have been the case that possibly Rigdon still had an unedited manuscript of Spalding that he could return to that contained that account as a possibility.

- It was the storyline between Lehi’s family to the appearance of king Benjamin that needed to be replaced.

- There are several points that need to be made so that Rigdon could keep

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501 Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 10.

the consistency of the storyline intact.

- **First**, Rigdon should not mention very many geographical places, cities, names, directions, etc. *He must keep the storyline as simple and vague of detail as possible.* We see that this is the case in regards to 1 Nephi to Words of Mormon when a person examines those books closely. In fact, the best cure for Rigdon is to invent sermonic material so he does not have to deal with matters of historical narrative. We see this in 1st Nephi.

- If you examine the chapters I have placed in blue, it either has to do with theological material, sermons, “prophecies,” or the purpose of creating two sets of plates. As you can see, it is in the blue sections where most of the Scripture references from the Bible are located.

- **1st Nephi 1 - Nephi begins the record; Lehi sees a vision.**
- **1 Nephi 1:1**/1 Corinthians 4:1; **1:3**/Galatians 6:11; **1:14**/Revelation 15:3; **1:18**/1 John 1:3; **1:20**/Matthew 21:33-46
- **1st Nephi 2 - Lehi takes his family into the wilderness as told in a dream**
- **2:10**/1 Corinthians 15:58; **2:18**/Mark 3:5; **2:24**/2 Peter 3:2
- **1st Nephi 3 - Lehi's sons return to Jerusalem to get the plates of brass**
- **3:21**/1 Corinthians 7:19; **3:27**/Revelation 12:6
- **1st Nephi 4 - Nephi slays Laban, and Zoram joins Lehi's family**
- **4:6**/Luke 4:1; **4:13**/John 11:50
- **1st Nephi 5 - Lehi's sons return with the plates of brass**
- **5:8**/Acts 12:11; **5:13**/Acts 3:21; **5:18**/Revelation 14:6
- **1st Nephi 6 - Nephi writes to persuade men to come unto God (the mentioning of the “small plates”)**
- **6:4**/John 17:14; **6:8**/Mark 3:5
- **1st Nephi 7 - Lehi's sons return to Jerusalem to get Ishmael and his family**
- **7:8**/Mark 3:5
- **1st Nephi 8 - Lehi sees a vision of the tree of life**
- **8:20**/Matthew 13:38
- **1st Nephi 9 - Nephi explains he is making two sets of plates**
- **1st Nephi 10 - Nephi tells of the coming of the Messiah**
- **10:4**/Acts 3:22-23; John 4:42; **10:7**/Matthew 3:3; **10:8**/John 1:23,26-27; Luke 3:16; **10:9**/John 1:28; **10:10**/John 1:29; **10:12**/Romans 11:17-19; **10:14**/Romans 11:24; Hebrews 11:6; **10:21**/Romans 14:10; 13:8;

Matthew 25:34; **10:19**/Hebrews 11:6; **10:21**/Romans 14:10

- **1st Nephi 11 - Nephi sees the vision of the tree of life and its interpretation**
- **11:1**/Matthew 4:8; **11:7**/John 1:34; **11:19**/Revelation 17:3; **11:21**/John 1:29; **11:22**/Romans 5:5; **11:27**/John 1:24; **11:30**/John 1:51; **11:31**/Matthew 10:1; **11:35-36**/Revelation 21:14; 14:6
- **1st Nephi 12 - Nephi sees the vision of the future of his seed**
- **12:1**/Revelation 20:8; **12:2**/Matthew 24:6; **12:7**/John 15:16; Acts 10:44; **12:9**/Revelation 21:14; Matthew 19:28; **12:10,11**/Revelation 7:14; **12:18**/Luke 16:26; **12:21**/Matthew 24:6
- **1st Nephi 13 - Nephi sees in vision: Americas, the Bible, Zion, etc.**
- **13:7**/Revelation 13:2; 17:4; **13:27**/Acts 13:10; **13:34**/Revelation 17:5; **13:37**/Matthew 10:22; Luke 2:10; **13:42**/Matthew 19:30
- **1st Nephi 14 - There are only two churches**
- **14:10**/Revelation 17:5; **14:11**/Revelation 17:1; **14:15**/Matthew 24:6; **14:16**/Revelation 17:5
- **1st Nephi 15 - Nephi is given more interpretation of the tree of life**
- **15:3/2** Peter 3:16; **15:11**/Matthew 21:22; **15:13**/Romans 11:24-25; **15:15**/John 15:1; **15:18**/Luke 1:73; **15:24**/Ephesians 6:16; **15:30**/Revelation 14:11
- **1st Nephi 16 - The Liahona; the broken bows**
- **16:2**/John 6:40; **16:38**/Matthew 4:11
- **1st Nephi 17 - Nephi is commanded to build a ship**
- **17:30/2** Corinthians 4:4
- **1st Nephi 18 - Lehi's family travels to the land of promise**
- **1st Nephi 19 - Talks about the two sets of plates; Nephi tells of Christ**
- **1st Nephi 20 - The Lord reveals his purposes for Israel (see Isaiah 48)**
- **20**/Isaiah 48
- **1st Nephi 21 - Israel shall be gathered (see Isaiah 49)**
- **21**/Isaiah 49
- **1st Nephi 22 - the house of Israel shall be scattered and later gathered**
- **22:5**/Matthew 10:22; **22:13**/Revelation 19:2; **22:14**/Acts 13:10; **22:15**/Malachi 4:1; **22:17/1** Corinthians 3:15; **22:18**/Acts 2:19; **22:25**/John 10:16; **22:31**/Matthew 10:22; 24:13

• **Second**, Rigdon must be able to connect the storyline from Lehi's family to king Benjamin (which is about a timespan of 500 years).



• **Third**, Rigdon must be able to explain why it is the case that there are two sets of plates on why there is one set that is secular and why there is one set that is more spiritual (1 Nephi 6:1-6; 9:1-10:1; 19:1-6; 2 Nephi 4:13-15; 5:26-34; Jacob 1:1-5; 3:12-14; 4:1-3; 7:26,27; Jarom 1:1,2,13-15; Omni 1:1-3, 8-11, 23-25; Words of Mormon 1:1-11). Then Rigdon has to have Mormon discover the small plates of Nephi so that Mormon will include an abridged record of them in his record (Words of Mormon 1:1-9). Look at how these two sets of plates are mentioned from 1 Nephi to Omni.

• **1 Nephi 6:1-6**: “And now I, Nephi, do not give the genealogy of my fathers in this part of my record; neither at any time shall I give it after upon these plates which I am writing; for it is given in the record which has been kept by my father; wherefore I do not write it in this work. For it sufficeth me to say, that we are a descendant of Joseph. And it mattereth not to me that I am particular to give a full account of all the things of my father, for they cannot be written upon these plates, **for I desire the room, that I may write of the things of God** (emp. mine). For the fulness of mine intent is that I may persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and be saved. **Wherefore the things which are pleasing unto the world, I do not write, but the things which are pleasing unto God and unto them which are not of the world** (emp. mine). Wherefore I shall give commandment unto my seed, that they shall not occupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto **the children of men** (emp. mine).”

• **1 Nephi 9:1-10:1**: “And all these things did my father see, and hear, and speak, as he dwelt in a tent, in the valley of Lemuel; and also a great many more things, which cannot be written upon these plates. **And now, as I have spoken concerning these plates, behold, they are not the plates upon which I make a full account of the history of my people; for the plates upon which I make a full account of my people, I have given the name of Nephi; wherefore, they are called the plates of Nephi, after mine own name; and these plates also, are called the plates of Nephi** (emp. mine). Nevertheless, I have received a commandment of the Lord, that I should make these plates, for the special purpose that there should be an account engraven of the ministry of my people. **Upon the other plates should be engraven an account of the reign of the Kings, and the wars, and contentions of my people; wherefore, these plates are, for the more part, of the ministry; and the other plates are, for the more part, of the reign of the Kings, and the wars, and contentions**

**of my people** (emp. mine). Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me to make these plates, for a wise purpose in him; which purpose, I know not. But the Lord knoweth all things, from the beginning; wherefore, he prepareth a way to accomplish all his works among **the children of men** (emp. mine); for behold, he hath all power unto the fulfilling of all his words. And thus it is. Amen. And now I, Nephi, proceed to give an account upon these plates, of my proceedings, and my reign and ministry; wherefore, to proceed with mine account, I must speak somewhat of the things of my father, and also of my brethren.”

• **1 Nephi 19:1-6:** “And it came to pass that the Lord commanded me, wherefore I did make plates of ore, that I might engraven upon them the record of my people. And upon the plates which I made, I did engraven the record of my father, and also our journeyings in the wilderness, and the prophecies of my father; and also, many of mine own prophecies have I engraven upon them. **And I knew not at that time when I made them, that I should be commanded of the Lord to make these plates; wherefore, the record of my father, and the genealogy of his forefathers, and the more part of all our proceedings in the wilderness, are engraven upon those plates of which I have spoken; wherefore, the things which transpired before that I made these plates, are, of a truth, more particularly made mention upon the first plates. And after that I had made these plates by way of commandment, I, Nephi, received a commandment, that the ministry, and the prophecies, the more plain and precious parts of them, should be written upon these plates; and that the things which were written, should be kept for the instruction of my people, which should possess the land, and also for other wise purposes, which purposes, are known unto the Lord; wherefore, I, Nephi, did make a record upon the other plates, which gives an account, or which gives a greater account, of the wars, and contentions, and destructions of my people. And this have I done, and commanded my people that they should do, after that I was gone, and that these plates should be handed down from one generation to another, or from one prophet to another, until further commandments of the Lord** (emp. mine). And an account of my making these plates shall be given hereafter; and then, behold, I proceed according to that which I have spoken; and this I do, that the more sacred things may be kept for the knowledge of my people. Nevertheless, I do not write any thing upon plates, save it be that I think it be sacred. And now, if I do err, even did they err of old. Not that I would excuse myself because of other men, but because of the weakness which is in

me, according to the flesh, I would excuse myself.”

• **2 Nephi 4:13-15:** “And it came to pass that not many days after his [Lehi’s - SF] death, Laman and Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael, were angry with me, because of the admonitions of the Lord: for I, Nephi, was constrained to speak unto them, according to the word. For I had spake many things unto them, and also my father, before his death; **many of which sayings, are written upon mine other plates: for a more history part are written upon mine other plates. And upon these, I write the things of my soul** (emp. mine), and many of the Scriptures which are engraven upon the plates of brass: For my soul delighteth in the Scriptures; and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children.”

• **2 Nephi 5:26-34:** “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did consecrate Jacob and Joseph, that they should be priests and teachers over the land of my people. And it came to pass that we lived after the manner of happiness. And thirty years had passed away from the time we left Jerusalem. **And I, Nephi, had kept the records upon my plates, which I had made of my people thus far. And it came to pass that the Lord God said unto me, Make other plates; and thou shalt engraven many things upon them which are good in my sight, for the profit of thy people.— Wherefore, I, Nephi, to be obedient to the commandments of the Lord, went and made these plates upon which I have engraven these things. And I engravened that which is pleasing unto God. And if my people be pleased with the things of God, they be pleased with mine engravings which are upon these plates. And if my people desire to know the more particular part of the history of my people, they must search mine other plates** (emp. mine). And it sufficeth me to say, that forty years had passed away, and we had already had wars and contentions with our brethren.”

• **Jacob 1:1-5:** “For behold, it came to pass that fifty and five years had passed away, from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem; wherefore, Nephi gave me, Jacob, a commandment **concerning these small plates, upon which these things are engraven. And he gave me, Jacob, a commandment that I should write upon these plates, a few of the things which I considered to be most precious** (emp. mine): that I should not touch, save it were lightly, concerning the history of this people which are called the people of Nephi. For he said that the history of his people should be engraven upon his other plates, **and that I should preserve these plates, and hand them down unto my seed, from generation to generation. And if there were preaching which was sacred,**

or revelation which was great, or prophesying, that I should engraven the heads of them upon these plates, and touch upon them as much as it were possible, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of our people (emp. mine): for because of faith and great anxiety, it truly had been made manifest unto us concerning our people, what things should happen unto them."

• **Jacob 3:12-14:** "And now I, Jacob, spake many more things unto the people of Nephi, warning them against fornication, and lasciviousness, and every kind of sin, telling them the awful consequences of them; and a hundredth part of the proceedings of this people, which now began to be numerous, cannot be written upon these plates; but many of their proceedings are written upon the larger plates, and their wars, and their contentions, and the reigns of their kings. **These plates are called the plates of Jacob; and they were made by the hand of Nephi** (emp. mine). And I make an end of speaking these words."

• **Jacob 4:1-3:** "Now behold, it came to pass, that I, Jacob, having ministered much unto my people, in word, (and I cannot write but little of my words, because of the difficulty of engraving our words upon plates,) and we know that the things which we write upon plates, must remain; but whatsoever things we write upon any thing save it be upon plates, must perish and vanish away; but we can write a few words upon plates, which will give our children, and also our beloved brethren, a small degree of knowledge concerning us, or concerning their fathers. Now in this thing we do rejoice; and we labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates, hoping that our beloved brethren, and our children, will receive them with thankful hearts, and look upon them, that they may learn with joy, and not with sorrow, neither with contempt, concerning their first parents:"

• **Jacob 7:26-27:** "And it came to pass that I, Jacob, began to be old; and the record of this people being kept on the other plates of Nephi, wherefore, I conclude this record, declaring that I have written according to the best of my knowledge, by saying, That the time passed away with us, and also our lives passed away, like as it were unto us a dream, we being a lonesome and a solemn people, wanderers cast out from Jerusalem; born in tribulation, in a wild wilderness, and hated of our brethren, which caused wars and contentions; wherefore, we did mourn out our days. And I, Jacob, saw that I must soon go down to my grave; wherefore, I said unto my son Enos, Take these plates. And I told him the things which my brother Nephi had commanded me; and he promised obedience unto the commands. **And I make an end of my writing upon these plates, which writing hath been small**

(emp. mine); and to the reader I bid farewell, hoping that many of my brethren may read my words. Brethren, adieu.”

• **Jarom 1:1-2:** “Now behold, I, Jarom, write a few words, according to the commandment of my father Enos, that our genealogy may be kept. **And as these plates are small, and as these things are written for the intent of the benefit of our brethren, the Lamanites, wherefore, it must needs be that I write a little** (emp. mine); but I shall not write the things of my prophesying, nor of my revelations. For what could I write more than my fathers have written? For have not they revealed the plan of salvation? I say unto you, Yea; and this sufficeth me.”

• **Jarom 1:13-15:** “And it came to pass that two hundred and thirty and eight years had passed away, after the manner of wars, and contentions, and dissensions, for the space of much of the time. **And I, Jarom, do not write more, for the plates are small. But behold, my brethren, ye can go to the other plates of Nephi: for behold, upon them the record of our wars are engraven, according to the writings of the kings, or that which they caused to be written. And I deliver these plates into the hands of my son Omni, that they may be kept according to the commandments of my fathers** (emp. mine).”

• **Omni 1:1-3:** “Behold, it came to pass that I, Omni, being commanded by my father Jarom, that I should write somewhat upon these plates, to preserve our genealogy; wherefore, in my days, I would that ye should know that I fought much with the sword, to preserve my people, the Nephites, from falling into the hands of their enemies, the Lamanites. But behold, I, of myself, am a wicked man; and I have not kept the statutes and the commandments of the Lord, as I ought to have done. And it came to pass that two hundred and seventy and six years had passed away, and we had many seasons of peace; and we had many seasons of serious war and bloodshed. Yea, and in fine, two hundred and eighty and two years had passed away, **and I had kept these plates according to the commandments of my fathers; and I conferred them upon my son Amaron** (emp. mine). And I make an end.”

• **Omni 1:8-11:** “And it came to pass that I did deliver the plates unto my brother Chemish. Now I, Chemish, write what few things I write, in the same book with my brother: for behold, I saw the last which he wrote, that he wrote it with his own hand; and he wrote it in the day that he delivered them unto me. And after this manner we keep the records: for it is according to the commandments of our fathers. And I make an end. Behold, I, Abinadom, I am the son of Chemish. **Behold, it came to pass that I saw much war and contention between my**



people, the Nephites, and the Lamanites; and I, with mine own sword, have taken the lives of many of the Lamanites, in the defence of my brethren. And behold, the record of this people is engraven upon plates which is had by the kings, according to the generations; and I know of no revelation, save that which has been written, neither prophecy; wherefore, that which is sufficient, is written (emp. mine). And I make an end.”

• **Omni 1:23-25**: “Behold, I, Amaleki, was born in the days of Mosiah; and I have lived to see his death; and Benjamin, his son, reigneth in his stead. And behold, I have seen in the days of king Benjamin, a serious war, and much bloodshed, between the Nephites and the Lamanites. But behold, the Nephites did obtain much advantage over them; yea, insomuch that king Benjamin did drive them out of the land of Zarahemla. **And it came to pass that I began to be old; and, having no seed, and knowing king Benjamin to be a just man before the Lord, wherefore, I shall deliver up these plates unto him** (emp. mine), exhorting all men to come unto God, the Holy One of Israel, and believe in prophesying, and in revelations, and in the ministering of Angels, and in the gift of speaking with tongues, and in the gift of interpreting languages and in all things which is good: for there is nothing which is good, save it comes from the Lord; and that which is evil, cometh from the Devil.”

• **Words of Mormon 1:1-11**: “And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making, into the hands of my son Moroni, behold, I have witnessed almost all the destruction of my people, the Nephites. And it is many hundred years after the coming of Christ, that I deliver these records into the hands of my son; and it supposeth me that he will witness the entire destruction of my people. But may God grant that he may survive them, that he may write somewhat concerning them, and somewhat concerning Christ, that perhaps some day it may profit them. **And now, I speak somewhat concerning that which I have written: for after that I had made an abridgment from the plates of Nephi, down to the reign of this king Benjamin, of which Amaleki spake, I searched among the records which had been delivered into my hands, and I found these plates, which contained this small account of the Prophets, from Jacob, down to the reign of this king Benjamin; and also, many of the words of Nephi. And the things which are upon these plates pleasing me, because of the prophecies of the coming of Christ; and my fathers knowing that many of them have been fulfilled** (emp. mine); yea, and I also know that as many things as have been prophesied concerning us down

to this day, has been fulfilled; and as many as go beyond this day, must surely come to pass; **wherefore, I chose these things, to finish my record upon them, which remainder of my record I shall take from the plates of Nephi; and I cannot write a hundredth part of the things of my people. But behold, I shall take these plates, which contain these prophesyings and revelations, and put them with the remainder of my record, for they are choice unto me; and I know they will be choice unto my brethren** (emp. mine). And I do this for a wise purpose; for thus it whispereth me, according to the workings of the spirit of the Lord which is in me. And now, I do not know all things; but the Lord knoweth all things which is to come; wherefore, he worketh in me to do according to his will. And my prayer to God, is concerning my brethren, that they may once again come to the knowledge of God; yea, the redemption of Christ; that they may once again be a delightsome people. **And now I, Mormon, proceed to finish out my record, which I take from the plates of Nephi; and I make it according to the knowledge and the understanding which God hath given me. Wherefore, it came to pass that after Amaleki had delivered up these plates into the hands of king Benjamin, he took them and put them with the other plates, which contained records which had been handed down by the kings, from generation to generation, until the days of king Benjamin; and they were handed down from king Benjamin, from generation to generation, until they have fallen into my hands** (emp. mine). And I, Mormon, pray to God that they may be preserved, from this time hence forth. And I know that they will be preserved: for there are great things written upon them, out of which my people and their brethren, shall be judged at the great and last day, according to the word of God which is written.”

- *What is intriguing is what we find after this.* Please read **Mosiah 1:1-4,15-16; 10:11-18; 21:27-31; 28:8-16; 28:20; 37:1-5,9; 37:21; 44:24; 3rd Nephi 5:7-12; 26:6-13; 4th Nephi 1:19-21; Mormon 1:4,5; 6:6; 8:1-5, 12-15; 9:32-34; Ether 1:1-6; 4:4,5a**. There is **no mention** of the small plates after the Words of Mormon. Is that not interesting?

- **Comment:** I most likely did not get all the references to the plates that were to make up the **BOM**. I also went to the LDS website to try to look up where all the references to the small plates of Nephi. From all the information gathered, it does seem to be the case that 1 Nephi through Words of Mormon are where the mentioning of the small plates are located. This fits our hypothetical model though that if Rigdon and company came up with the “small plates of

Nephi” idea after the loss of the 116 pages, then we are bound to only find the small plates mentioned in the places where they are being passed down and they will **not** be mentioned in the book of Mosiah and onward.

Washburn writes: “The Large Plates, as we all know, were devoted to the recording of the wars and contentions, the travels, political affairs, all things secular. The Small Plates, on the other hand, dealt with the preachings and prophesyings, the religious matters. **It is a strange commentary that there were more wars and contentions than preachings and prophesyings** (emp. mine).”<sup>502</sup>

- These are the sections in 1 Nephi that I believe are edited by Rigdon.

- **1 Nephi 1:1-3:19-Spalding**
- **1 Nephi 3:20 - Rigdon and company**
- **1 Nephi 3:21-5:22- Spalding**
- **1 Nephi 6:1-6 - Rigdon and company**
- **1 Nephi 7:1-7:22 - Spalding**
- **1 Nephi 8:1-15:36 - Rigdon and company**
- **1 Nephi 16:1-18:25 - Spalding**
- **1 Nephi 19:1-24- Rigdon and company**
- **1 Nephi 20 & 21 - Isaiah**
- **1 Nephi 22:1-31 - Rigdon and company**

### 1st Nephi 1:1

- **Comment: “I, Nephi”** - Several witnesses who read *Manuscript Found* claim that one of the details that link Spalding’s manuscript to the **BOM** was one of the main characters - Nephi [John Spalding (Solomon Spalding’s brother), Oliver Smith, and John N. Miller.]

- One of the eyewitnesses - Artemas Cunningham - remembered the reoccurring statement - “I, Nephi.”<sup>503</sup>

- Artemas Cunningham stated: “He [**Spalding - SF**] then presented his manuscripts, when we sat down, and spent a good share of the night in reading them, and conversing upon them. I well remember the name of Nephi, which appeared to be the principal hero of the story. **The frequent repetition of the phrase “I, Nephi,” I recollect as distinctly as though it was but yesterday** (emp. mine), although the general features of the story have

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<sup>502</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 75.

<sup>503</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 286-287.

passed from my memory through the lapse of twenty-two years.”<sup>504</sup>

- In the **BOM** in its totality, this phrase is found **84 times**. Out of 84 times, it is found 60 times in 1st Nephi alone (1st Nephi 1:1,16,20; 2:16; 3:1,7,9; 4:5,14,31; 6:1; 7:2,3,8,16; 8:29; 10:1,17(x2); 11:33; 12:12; 13:16,19,20,23; 14:14,27,28; 15:1,4,19,25; 16:1,4,7,8,18,21,22,23,28,30; 17:7,11,15,19,23,49,52;18:2,3,10 (x2),22; 19:3,4,18,22; 22:1,2,21,27,28,29).

- Here are the other **24 times** (2nd Nephi 1:1; 4:1,14; 5:1,6,12,14,16,17,18,26,29,31; 11:2; 25:1,2,6; 26:7; 30:1; 31:1; 32:7; 33:1,3; Helaman 9:36).

## 1st Nephi 1:2

- **Comment:** One of the most unusual statements is that Nephi, a Jew, is making a record “in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians.” This is highly odd and improbable in that Lehi, Nephi’s father, lived in Jerusalem all of his days (1st Nephi 1:4). The native language they would have known was Hebrew. Why would Nephi want to compose this record in reformed Egyptian? Why would he not desire to compose it in Hebrew - his mother language?

- To show how absurd this idea of a Jew writing in reformed Egyptian, the Bible was written in three languages - Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Primarily the Old Testament was written in Hebrew because that was the language that the Israelites’ native tongue was and thus God communicated through the prophets to them in that language.

- In Daniel 2:4 through the end of chapter 7, it is written in Aramaic while the bookends (1:1-2:3 and 8:1-12:13) are written in Hebrew. Some people have struggled to understand why Daniel was written this way. This Aramaic was known as Imperial Aramaic, which was known as the common language at that time.<sup>505</sup> Another interesting point is that Daniel 2:4 through the end of chapter

504 Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 278-280.

505 Justin Rogers, “The Date of Daniel: Does It Matter?,” *Reason and Revelation* 36 no. 12 (2016): 137. Rogers wrote: “While the book utilizes an admittedly strange literary feature, the Hebrew-Aramaic-Hebrew structure does not require a late date. More recent discoveries of so-called “Imperial” Aramaic texts prove that the Aramaic of Daniel actually fits more closely the Aramaic of the fifth century B.C. than the much later Aramaic texts preserved among the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Dead Sea Scrolls have also assisted us in determining that the Hebrew sections of Daniel are far closer to the Hebrew of the biblical prophets than that of the later Hebrew compositions preserved among the Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>19</sup> The Hebrew and Aramaic sections of Daniel are certainly at home in the late sixth century.” See Edwin M. Yamauchi

7 primarily concerns the Gentile kingdoms (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome) and so the target language (Imperial Aramaic) and audience would be exactly right if Gentiles who desired to read Daniel wanted to know something about Daniel's prophecies concerning them. The bookends that contain the Hebrew language are targeted toward Jews and they would want to know the events and prophecies concerning their nation.

- The New Testament was written in Koine Greek because by that time Greek was the common language of the day due to the spread of Hellenism by Alexander the Great. It would help the gospel to launch and to spread on a grander scale because it was for an international audience - both Jew and Gentile.

- So the Bible makes perfect sense in its historical context in why it used the languages that it was written. In regards to the **BOM**, does it make any sense as to why Nephi, a Jew, would want to write Egyptian to his Jewish posterity?

### 1st Nephi 1:4

- **“For it came to pass”** - This is the first “came to pass” statement that is found in the **BOM** and the phrase is found many times. In fact, a whole lot more than you think (especially if you were to read the original 1830 edition which can be read online because many of the “come to pass” phrases were removed after the 1830 edition). Some of the eyewitnesses who had read Spalding's manuscript - (John Spalding, Marth Spalding [John Spalding's wife], and Henry Lake) - claimed they read that phrase frequently throughout his writings. Some of his friends and neighbors gave Solomon Spalding the nickname - “Ole' Come To Pass” due to him using it so much.

- Abner Jackson stated: “Spaulding frequently read his manuscript to the neighbors and amused them as he progressed with his work. He wrote it in Bible style, “And it came to pass” occurred so often that some called him “old come to pass.” **When it was brought to Conneaut and read there in public, old Esq. Wright heard it, and exclaimed, “Old come to pass’ has come to life again”** (emp. mine). Here was the place where Spaulding wrote and read his manuscript to the neighbors for their amusement and ‘Squire Wright

(1967), Greece and Babylon: Early Contacts Between the Aegean and the Near East (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker); Zdravko Stefanovic (1992), The Aramaic of Daniel in the Light of Old Aramaic (Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement 129) and R.K. Harrison (1979), Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), p. 1125; Gleason L. Archer Jr. (1985), Daniel (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), pp. 23-24 for further information.



had often heard him read from his Romance. This was in 1832, sixteen years after Spaulding's death."<sup>506</sup>

- Interesting enough, Mark Twain made some comical, accurate statements concerning this phrase in his book *Roughing It* at the beginning of chapter 16: "The book seems to be merely a prosy detail of imaginary history, with the Old Testament for a model; followed by a tedious plagiarism of the New Testament. The author labored to give his words and phrases the quaint, old-fashioned sound and structure of our King James's translation of the Scriptures; and the result is a mongrel--half modern glibness, and half ancient simplicity and gravity. The latter is awkward and constrained; the former natural, but grotesque by the contrast. Whenever he found his speech growing too modern--which was about every sentence or two--he ladled in a few such Scriptural phrases as "exceeding sore," "and it came to pass," etc., and made things satisfactory again. **"And it came to pass" was his pet. If he had left that out, his Bible would have been only a pamphlet** (emp. mine)."<sup>507</sup> Twain was certainly exaggerating on his last statement though.

- This phrase is evident as one of the strong indicators that Spaulding wrote this portion (but not always as I will show later). I would urge you to highlight this phrase just to see for yourself how many times it is used and why Spaulding's readers would have remembered it since he used it so often.

- Cowdery, et al., state: "(21) It is interesting to note that the Mormons have systematically removed more than 1,000 instances of the phrase "And it came to pass" (or some variation thereof) from published versions of The Book of Mormon over the years, allegedly for the sake of improving clarity and continuity. In the most modern editions, the phrase has been retained only in places where it has been deemed to reflect a significant passage of time. Of the 1,147 paragraphs in the original 1830 edition, 771, or just over two-thirds, begin with some form of the phrase "and it came to pass." (Of course the phrase occurs within the text of paragraphs, as well, thus accounting for the "more than 1,000 incidences" referred to above.) Certainly such extensive use of this phrase does not derive from the Old or New Testaments, wherein the phrase "It came to pass" or variants thereof appear only seventy-three times in the entire King James version of the Bible. Neither does it occur with such frequency in any other of Joseph Smith's extensive writings, nor

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506 Abner Jackson to Washington County (PA) Historical Society, December 20, 1880.

507 Mark Twain, *Roughing It* (Hartford, CT: American Publishing Company, 1872), ch. 16.

in Solomon Spalding's Manuscript Story - Conneaut Creek. For further discussion, see Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of their Textual Development*, (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1969), 38. In addition, close comparison of modern versions of The Book of Mormon with the original 1830 edition shows that the Church has arbitrarily made hundreds of other changes in the text as well, ranging from minor editorial corrections to major alterations in both the wording and meaning of significant doctrinal passages; see J. & S. Tanner, *3,913 Changes in The Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm Co., 1965), and *Mormonism -- Shadow or Reality?*, 89ff.<sup>508</sup>

- Hardy states: “*It [the Book of Mormon - SF] is written in a somewhat awkward, repetitious form of English.* Nearly every page contains examples of archaic English constructions, phrases that reappear several times in quick succession, and locutions such as “and it came to pass” and “for behold” that are annoyingly pervasive. (Indeed, the constant refrain of “and it came to pass” was so offensive to Gallic sensibilities that the French translation for many decades replaced the phrase with an asterisk wherever it appeared.) Similarly, much of the grammar was awkward in the original edition, and despite several thousand minor revisions— for example, *is to are, them which to those who, and had fell to had fallen* —there are still sentence fragments, misplaced prepositional phrases, pronouns with unclear antecedents, and verses in which the subject changes midsentence.”<sup>509</sup>

### 1st Nephi 3:3

- **Comment:** Another unusual and improbable statement is that Laban holds in his possession the genealogical list of Lehi's forefathers that are written on plates of brass. Why would Lehi not know his own genealogy prior to this time? Were not genealogical lists important to the Jews? The Jews kept very good genealogical records as reflected in 1st Chronicles 1-9, Ezra 2, Nehemiah 7, Matthew 1, and Luke 3.

Wayne Jackson provides some insightful information on the purpose of genealogies in his article *The Importance of Messianic Genealogy*.<sup>510</sup> It would

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508 Cowdery, et al., *The Spalding Enigma*, endnotes for Chapter 1, 9 of 33. Kobo edition.

509 Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 5.

510 <https://christiancourier.com/articles/the-importance-of-messianic-genealogy>.

be important in regards to establishing (1) the genealogical line of the Messiah, (2) the priests were to show that they descended from the tribe of Levi, and (3) the property rights of the Jews.

Jackson wrote: “R.K. Harrison observed that: “Records of descent were an extremely important part of Hebrew tradition from the very beginning...” (Bromiley, 2.425). Noted scholar Joachim Jeremias has discussed at length the necessity of preserving the genealogical heritage of the post-exile Jews. Note the following.

1. In view of a special lineage that Jehovah had chosen, through whom the promised Messiah would descend, the Hebrews were prohibited from contracting marriages with Gentiles (Deuteronomy 7:1-3; Ezra 10:2)—though there were rare exceptions, e.g., Ruth, Rahab and Bathsheba. Due to Israel’s dispersal among the nations, Jews who made pilgrimages back to Jerusalem, and wished to marry, were “required to have the genealogy of their future wife checked according to [the] requirements” (69). How could this be if no written records were available?

2. Under the Old Testament law, the offices of the priests and Levites were hereditary. This position could be obtained in no other way than by inheritance. It was extremely important, therefore, that the “purity of the line” remain intact. Accordingly, “great care was taken in tracing genealogy.” “[I]f a priest could not prove his legitimate descent, he lost his rights to priestly office, both for himself and for his descendants, and [also] to priestly revenues” (214). Induction into the priesthood was not a matter of “orality” alone!

3. During the time of Christ’s earthly sojourn, certain families of Hebrew nobility were granted the privilege of “carrying wood to the Temple on certain days; this fact shows that the genealogical tradition was well preserved among the lay nobility.” An Israelite woman “who wished to marry into a priest’s family had to produce her genealogy for five generations (p. 216; M. Kidd. iv.4)...” (Jeremias, 276).

## **Property Rights**

When the Hebrews conquered the territory on the eastern side of the Jordan River, and then likewise that between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, by divine edict they were assigned various tribal allotments. Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh settled east of the Jordan

(Numbers 32). After the initial victories to the west, Judah, Ephraim, and the other half-tribe of Manasseh were given their regions (Joshua 15-17). Finally, after considerable delay, the remaining tribes, by “lot,” received their portions of the land (Joshua 18-19), with the Levites receiving priestly cities.

Years passed and a gradual apostasy from the faith by Israel resulted. As a divine judgment the entire land eventually was ravaged by foreigners. Assyria conquered the northern kingdom of “Israel.” According to Assyrian records, 27,290 souls were taken into captivity—never to return as a body of people. “Judah,” in the south, progressively degenerated spiritually until finally, after three invasions between 606-536 B.C., some 70,000 Hebrews were taken to Babylon as captives, where they were to remain for seventy years (Jeremiah 25:8-11).

Finally, beginning with the reign of Cyrus the Persian (who had conquered Babylon), the Jews, some 125,000 strong by then, were permitted to return to Canaan. Many of their ancestors were now gone—into Assyria, Egypt, and various other places. In the return to Canaan, the problem was this: who should inherit what land assignment? How could any Jew prove his “right” to a certain property inheritance? Was such to be accomplished by verbal jousting? Did one person’s “say so” trump another’s contention? How might a Jew prove his right to settle in a certain tribal territory—if there were no genealogical documents to establish his ancestral history?”<sup>511</sup>

In regards to property rights, in 1st Kings 21, we find the account of King Ahab and Naboth the Jezreelite. Ahab wanted to have Naboth’s vineyard and was willing to pay for it. Naboth replied in 1st Kings 21:3: “But Naboth said to Ahab, “The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!”

Naboth was not going to sell! By implication, Naboth could back up his right to the vineyard because of the written genealogical records that were available at the time.

It seems so very odd and improbable a Jew such as Lehi, who had lived all of his days in Jerusalem (1st Nephi 1:4), did not know his own genealogy. **How did he know the land of inheritance that belonged to him was his land if he did not know his genealogy?**

### **1st Nephi 3:20**

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<sup>511</sup> Wayne Jackson, *The Importance of Messianic Genealogy*, <https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1556-the-importance-of-messianic-genealogy>. Accessed January 2, 2021.

- We first come across what I call the non-Spaulding portion (most likely being Sidney Rigdon). Some of the eyewitnesses (such as John Spalding) who heard Spalding's manuscript stated that it did not contain any religious material in it. What that statement should be interpreted to mean is that there are several distinctive sections, with a heavy religious overtone that contain quotations or allusions from both the Old and New Testament being used as sermon material (aside from the lengthy parts taken verbatim from the King James Version). The first suspicion is because it is taken from Acts 3:21, which was written in the first century A.D. **1st Nephi was supposedly written around 600 years before Jesus was born!**

**1st Nephi 3:20:** "And also that we may preserve unto them the words which have been **spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets** (emp. mine), which have been delivered unto them by the Spirit and power of God, **since the world began** (emp. mine), even down unto this present time."

**Acts 3:19-21:** "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, **which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began** (emp. mine)."

- It is very interesting if you do remove what I believe to be Rigdon's edit (1st Nephi 3:20) - see how the text flows smoothly without it.

**1 Nephi 3:18:** For behold, they have rejected the words of the prophets. Wherefore if my father should dwell in the land after that he hath been commanded to flee out of the land, behold he would also perish. Wherefore it must needs be that he flee out of the land. And behold, it is wisdom in God that we should obtain these records, that we might preserve unto our children the language of our fathers. [**removal of text - SF**] And it came to pass that after this manner of language did I persuade my brethren, that they might be faithful in keeping the commandments of God. And it came to pass that we went down to the land of our inheritance, and we did gather together our gold, and our silver, and our precious things. And after that we had gathered these things together, we went up again unto the house of Laban."

Then we pick back up with Spalding's portion in 1st Nephi 3:21.

**1st Nephi 4:16**



- Another unusual statement is that the law of Moses had been engraved on plates of brass. If this is taken to mean the Pentateuch, can you imagine what those plates of brass must have weighed in order to incorporate all the words of the law of Moses (Genesis - Deuteronomy) on those plates? My case is not against the material it was written, but the number of plates needed for such a monumental task and also in regards to carrying them around (see note on 1 Nephi 5:10-16).

### **1st Nephi 4:26**

- We see this unusual statement where Nephi states: “And he, supposing that I spake of the brethren of the church.” Whether that be non-Spaulding or Spaulding is hard to tell. Because it uses “church,” it creates suspicion. The church of Christ was not built until the day of Pentecost after the Lord’s ascension (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:1-47). Even Jesus said in Matthew 16:18 during His personal ministry, “Upon this rock, I will build My church.” It had **not** been built prior to that time. What exactly does Nephi mean by “the church”?

### **1st Nephi 4:28-29:**

- Clark Braden states: “I want to call the reader’s attention to a singular coincidence here. Mr. Lake, Spaulding’s partner testifies that when Spaulding read to him his romance, Mormon Manuscript No. 1, he pointed out an inconsistency in the story of Laban which Spaulding promised to correct, but the same blunder is in the Book of Mormon. That can be explained. Spaulding no doubt did correct it in the manuscript prepared for the press, but when Mrs. Harris destroyed the 118 pages, Rigdon had to restore the stolen portion from an older manuscript, in which the blunder had not been corrected, hence we have it in the Book of Mormon. It took Rigdon some months to remodel another manuscript to replace the stolen portion, and translation did not begin till the next June or the three I’d, Joseph says it began in March.”<sup>512</sup>

### **1st Nephi 5:10-16**

- It reads: “And after they had given thanks unto the God of Israel, my father, Lehi, took the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, and he did search them from the beginning. And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world,

<sup>512</sup> Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *The Braden-Kelley Debate*, 56.

and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents; And also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah; And also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah; and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah. And it came to pass that my father, Lehi, also found upon the aplates of brass a genealogy of his cfathers; wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph; yea, even that Joseph who was the son of Jacob, who was sold into Egypt, and who was preserved by the hand of the Lord, that he might preserve his father, Jacob, and all his household from perishing with famine.”

The plot gets more interesting as Nephi and the rest of the sons were able to acquire the genealogical plates of brass that were in Laban’s hands and to show their father what tribe he descended from - he was a descendant of Joseph who was sold as a slave in Egypt (Genesis 39-50)! We find out later a little more detail that he comes from Joseph’s son - Manasseh (Alma 10:3). This will pose a huge problem for the **BOM** for they state they are following the commandments of the Law of Moses, but they are disobedient because they set up priests from an **unauthorized tribe** when the law of Moses taught that the authorized tribe for the priesthood was the tribe of Levi (2nd Chronicles 26:16-23; Hebrews 7:14). We will see the same blunder yet again in 2 Nephi 5:26. 2 Nephi 5:26 states: “And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did consecrate Jacob and Joseph, that they should be priests and teachers over the land of my people.” **How could Jacob and Joseph (from the tribe of Manesseh - Alma 10:3) be ordained priests if they were not from the authorized priesthood of Israel - Levi?** See 2 Chronicles 26:16-23 for the incident where Uzziah trespassed against God because he, not being a son of Aaron, was not authorized to burn incense.

Alexander Campbell wrote: “Smith, its real author, as ignorant and impudent a knave as ever wrote a book, betrays the cloven foot in basing his whole book upon a false fact, or a pretended fact, which makes God a liar. It is this: -- With the Jews, God made a covenant at Mount Sinai, and instituted a priesthood, and a high priesthood. The priesthood he gave to the tribe of Levi, and the high priesthood to Aaron and his sons for an everlasting priesthood. He separated Levi, and covenanted to give him this office irrevocably while ever the temple stood, or till the Messiah came. “Then, says God, Moses shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest’s office, and the stranger, (the person of another family,) who cometh nigh, shall be put to

death.” Numbers iii.10. “And the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near; for them the Lord thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the Lord, and by their word shall every controversy and every stroke be tried.” Deut. xxi. 5. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with 250 men of renown, rebelled against a part of the institution of the priesthood, and the Lord destroyed them in the presence of the whole congregation. This was to be a memorial that no stranger invade any part of the office of the priesthood. Num. xvi. 40. “Fourteen thousand and seven hundred of the people” were destroyed by a plague for murmuring against this memorial.

In the 18th chapter of Numbers the Levites are again given to Aaron and his sons, and the priesthood confirmed to them with this threat -- “The stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.” “Even Jesus,” says Paul, “were he on earth, could not be a priest, for he was of a tribe concerning which Moses spake nothing of priesthood.” Heb. vii.13. So irrevocable was the grant of the priesthood to Levi, and of the high priesthood to Aaron, that no stranger dare approach the altar of God which Moses established. Hence, Jesus himself was excluded from officiating as priest on earth according to the law.

This Joseph Smith overlooked in his impious fraud, and makes his hero Lehi spring from Joseph. And just as soon as his sons return with the roll of his lineage, ascertaining that he was of the tribe of Joseph, he and his sons acceptably “offer sacrifices and burnt offerings to the Lord.” -- p. 15. Also it is repeated, p. 18 -- Nephi became chief artificer, ship-builder and mariner; was scribe, prophet, priest and king unto his own people, and “consecrated Jacob and Joseph, the sons of his father, priests to God and teachers -- almost 600 years before the fulness of the times of the Jewish economy was completed. p. 72. Nephi represents himself withal as “under the law of Moses,” p. 105. They build a temple in the new world, and in 55 years after they leave Jerusalem, make a new priesthood which God approbates. A high priest is also consecrated, and yet they are all the while “teaching the law of Moses, and exhorting the people to keep it!!” p.146, 209. Thus God is represented as instituting, approbating and blessing a new priesthood from the tribe of Joseph, concerning which Moses gave no commandment concerning priesthood. Although God had promised in the law of Moses, that if any man, not of the tribe and family of Levi and Aaron, should approach the office of priest, he would surely die; he is represented by Smith as blessing, approbating, and sustaining another family in this approbated office. The

God of Abraham or Joseph Smith must then be a liar!! And who will hesitate to pronounce him an imposter? This lie runs through his records for the first 600 years of his story.”<sup>513</sup>

After Howe’s *Mormonism Unveiled* book was released in 1834, Campbell would change his mind to the recognition that his old colleague, Sidney Rigdon, was the mastermind behind the **BOM**.<sup>514</sup>

There is another detail we need to scrutinize. Because of the volume of literature described, would that not require many plates of brass? And how could they have carried all those plates?

- Braden said it best: “(A.) The books of Moses on metallic plates. (B.) The records of the Jews from the beginning. That is, all who spoke Hebrew were called Jews, from the beginning...This would take an enormous pile of plates, (C.) The writings of all of the prophets and writers of Israel from the beginning. All the Old Testament written before Zedekiah. All the books it mentions that were used in writing the Books of Kings and Chronicles. All the works of the prophets mentioned in the Book of Mormon, but not mentioned in the Bible. Doubtless many prophetic writings never mentioned. (D.) Genealogical tables from Joseph to Laban. **All this voluminous literature, which would have made a wagon-load if on parchment, was engraved on plates and not on papyrus, the only material then in use, and was carried off by five men, who were dodging round to save their lives, when it must have required a caravan of teams to have hauled it** (emp. mine)... This enormous load of plates was carried by Lehi in all his journeyings.”<sup>515</sup>

## 1st Nephi 6:1-6

### a. The Purpose of the Small Plates

- Notice we have Nephi giving the introduction to the “small plates.” If we understand the background in regards to the loss of the 116 pages, then we receive greater insight why Rigdon and company had to conjure up this idea of the small plates.

- We have already written about this several times so I will not comment

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513 Alexander Campbell, “Delusions” *Millennial Harbinger* (Bethany, Virginia, Monday, February 7, 1831, Vol. II, no. 2). 91-92.

514 Alexander Campbell, “The Mormon Bible” *Millennial Harbinger* (Bethany, Virginia: June, 1839, Vol. III, no. 6). 91-92. Link: <http://www.sidneyrigdon.com/dbroadhu/VA/harb1838.htm#060039>.

515 Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *Braden-Kelley Debate*, 108-109.

upon it again. Chapter six is certainly **not** from Spalding.

**b. “Children of Men”**

- Please note this phrase “the children of men.” It is found **123 times** in totality throughout the **BOM** 2013 edition. It seems to be a signature phrase used by Rigdon. Why is that the case?

- Craig Criddle states: “Those sections of The Book of Mormon that espouse Rigdon’s pre-1830 theological views are connected by more than shared theology. **They also share word usage patterns** (emp. mine). As just noted, Walter Scott’s phrase “Jesus is the Christ” appears in the same locations within The Book of Mormon as the doctrines that Scott espoused and Rigdon adopted in 1828. Another example is the phrase “children of men,” which is used with exceptional frequency in parts of The Book of Mormon that advocate Rigdon’s pre-1830 views, such as his beliefs in a divine calling, miracles, gifts of spirit -- such as the gift of tongues -- and spiritual rebirth after baptism by immersion for the remission of sins. This particular phrase does not appear in the New Testament, but does appear in the Old Testament, especially in Psalms, where it appears 14 times. Rigdon frequently preached from the Old Testament, and he gave sermons based on Psalms. The phrase “children of men” also appears in Rigdon’s autobiography and in the biography of Joseph Smith, which was apparently also written by Rigdon.

In the 1830 version of The Book of Mormon, the phrase “children of men” appears 130 times. Excluding passages copied from the Bible, there are 251,204 words in The Book of Mormon, so the frequency of appearance of this phrase within these sections is  $130 / 251,204 \times 1000 = 0.52$  per 1,000 words. In those sections of The Book of Mormon that have theological content reflecting Rigdon’s pre-1830 views, the frequency of occurrence is considerably higher. For example, 2 Nephi 25-33 endorses spiritual rebirth after baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, as well as other beliefs that Rigdon is known to have held prior to 1830. Within these chapters, the phrase “children of men” appears at a frequency of 3.45 per 1,000 words (26 times out of 7,530 words total) -- nearly seven times the average rate for The Book of Mormon overall (excluding sections copied from the Bible).

Many witnesses reported that, in writing Manuscript Found, Spalding made frequent use of the phrase “came to pass”. It is useful to compare the



frequency of the phrase “children of men” to the frequency of the phrase “came to pass”. In the 1830 version of The Book of Mormon, the phrase “came to pass” appears at an average frequency of 5.6 times per 1000 words (1,402 appearances in 251,204 words, excluding those chapters copied from the Bible in which it appears just once). 2 Nephi 25-33 contains 7,530 words, so the phrase “came to pass” would be expected to appear  $7,530 \times 5.6 / 1000 = 42$  times if it occurred at the same average frequency in these chapters as it does in The Book of Mormon overall. But in these chapters, the phrase “came to pass” does not appear even once. This is evidence against Spalding authorship of 2 Nephi 25-33. Conversely, the high frequency of appearance of the “children of men” phrase is evidence of Rigdon authorship or authorship of someone who shared Rigdon’s theological views.”<sup>516</sup>

In response to Criddle, it could be argued that it depends upon the *genre*. Certainly, in the historical narrative of the **BOM**, the “came to pass” will be found frequently, but it will not be found so much when it comes to a person giving religious/spiritual material. However, it is true that the phrase “came to pass” is used in religious/spiritual material also such as 1 Nephi 10:1-16:3.

“Children of men” is used in 1st Nephi (1830 edition) - 1st Nephi 3:7; 6:6; 7:12; 9:6; 10:17; 11:22,24,30,31; 12:17,18; 13:27,29; 14:7; 15:4,13; 17:3,51; 19:9; 22:2,15,16,22.

It is also known that Rigdon helped Smith with the supposed translation of the *Book of Moses*. That book contains the “children of men” frequently (**13 times** - Moses 1:8,23,41 (x2),42; 3:5; 6:23,49,52; 7:41,61; 8:19,20).

### 1 Nephi 9:1-6

I would ask you to go back and read the 1 Nephi 6:1-6 section and those same comments would be applied here. Notice “children of men” is used in 9:6.

Hardy states: “Then in chapter 9 he mentions that he has already written a longer, more detailed history of his family, and that the text we are currently reading is a second version, commanded by God “for a wise purpose in him, which purpose I know not” (1 Ne. 9:5). It is left to readers to make the connection that this purpose was to provide a substitute narrative for the 116 pages of translation that would be lost by Martin Harris in 1828.”<sup>517</sup> Certainly,

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516 Craig Criddle, *Sidney Rigdon: Creating the Book of Mormon*, 2009. <http://sidneyrigdon.com/criddle/rigdon1.htm#19>. Accessed January 2, 2021.

517 Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 12.

Rigdon and company do not want us to forget this “wise purpose.”

**1st Nephi 10:1-16:3**

- **a. The mystery revealed in the sixth century B.C. rather than the first century A.D.**

Of the major contradictions between the Bible and the **BOM** has to do with the theological theme of the mystery of God. Please read these verses below.

**Romans 16:25-27:** *“Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.”*

**1st Corinthians 2:7:** *“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”*

**Ephesians 3:1-10:** *“For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

**Colossians 1:24-2:3:** *“I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His*

*body, which is the church, of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily. For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”*

*1st Pet. 1:10-12: “Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.”*

Throughout this major prophecy that Nephi presents, he lets the “cat out of the bag.” In 1st Nephi 10:7-9, he discusses specific details concerning the ministry of John the Baptist (which are directly taken from the gospel accounts). Nephi (1st Nephi 10:12-14) then prophesies about the Gentiles receiving the “fulness of the Gospel” just like Israel has and thereby steals from Paul’s imagery of Romans 11 of the olive tree and the wild-olive tree. Nephi then prophesies more about the virgin conception, the miracles of Jesus, and in 11:33 saw that Jesus was crucified upon the cross. He then prophesies about the resurrection and that Jesus had twelve apostles. I am going to skip to chapter 13 where he prophesies about the formation of the great and abominable church dressed like a harlot that persecutes the saints of God which Rigdon obtained from Revelation 17. Nephi even prophesies about one of the twelve apostles who wrote the book of Revelation named John (1st Nephi 14:27). Nephi covers an immense amount of chronological territory designated as the New Testament period. The mystery

of God was kept hidden says the inspired apostle Paul until the first century A.D. Yet, it is very obvious that Nephi contradicts Paul. The angels that Peter writes about should have just read 1st Nephi and they would have known the gospel revealed six-hundred years before Jesus was born!

• **b. The skeletal outline of the New Testament (especially Revelation) in these particular chapters**

• Another major point to make in regards to 1 Nephi 10-15 is that Rigdon and company are heavily relying on the New Testament as a skeletal outline (and in particular - the book of Revelation). Knowing that Rigdon was very familiar with the Bible, it would not have been hard for him to come up with this material after the loss of the 116 pages in June 1828 (the range existing from August 1828 unto at least the end of March 1829 - approximately 8 months).

• **First**, Rigdon and company makes allusions near to the beginning of Matthew's gospel and John's gospel in regards to the ministry of John the Baptist (1 Nephi 10:7-9; Matthew 3:3; John 1:28-29). Then Rigdon uses the illustration Paul uses in Romans 11 of the olive tree and the wild olive tree representing the Jews and Gentiles (1 Nephi 10:12-14).

• **Second**, there is an emphasis again to the ministry of John the Baptist using the gospel accounts (1 Nephi 11:27).

• **Third**, Jesus is called the "Lamb" many times throughout this section (1 Nephi 11:27,32,34,35,36; 12:6,8,10,11 (x2), 18; 13:24,25 (x2),28,29(x2),32,33,34(x3),35(x2),36,37,38,39(x2),40(x2),41(x3),42; 14:1(x2),6,7,10,12(x2),13,14(x2),20,24,25,26,27). John the apostle uses this concerning Jesus to refer to Him as the ultimate antitype of animal sacrifices in the gospel of John and Revelation (John 1:29,36; Revelation 5:6,8,12,13; 6:1,3,5,7,9,12,16; 7:9,14,17; 8:1; 12:11; 13:8,11; 14:1,4,10; 15:3; 17:14; 19:7,9; 21:9,14,22,27; 22:1,3).

• **Fourth**, there is the "twelve apostles of the Lamb" (1 Nephi 11:34,35,36; 13:26; 14:20), which is also used in Revelation 21:14. The phrase "made white in the blood of the Lamb" (1 Nephi 12:11) is in Revelation 7:14. The phrase "the great and abominable church" (1 Nephi 13:4-6; 14:9,11,13,16,17) definitely corresponds to the great harlot - "Babylon the great" in Revelation 17. A common view held in the nineteenth century is that "Babylon the great" was the Roman Catholic church and Rigdon seems to have adopted this view into the **BOM**. Rigdon formerly worked with Alexander Campbell who would debate Purcell, a Roman Catholic in 1837.



- **Fifth**, Nephi “prophesies” that John, an apostle of the Lamb, is going to write the book of Revelation (1 Nephi 14:24-27).

- **Sixth**, Nephi is “carried away in the spirit” just like John was in Revelation (1 Nephi 14:30; Revelation 17:3).

- **c. The specific timing of Nephi’s prophecy of the arrival of the Messiah**

Another point I want to make is the specific timing of Nephi’s prophecy of knowing the arrival of the Messiah unlike Benjamin, Mosiah, and the other prophets who came after him.

- 1 Nephi 10:2-6 states: “Yea, **even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem** (emp. mine), a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews—even a Messiah, or, in other words, a Savior of the world. And he also spake concerning the prophets, how great a number had testified of these things, concerning this Messiah, of whom he had spoken, or this Redeemer of the world. Wherefore, all mankind were in a lost and in a fallen state, and ever would be save they should rely on this Redeemer.”

1 Nephi 19:8: “And behold, he cometh, according to the words of the angel, in **six hundred years** (emp. mine) from the time my father left Jerusalem.”

2 Nephi 25:19: “For according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah **cometh in six hundred years** (emp. mine) from the time that my father left Jerusalem; and according to the words of the prophets, and also the word of the angel of God, his name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”

- Mosiah 3:5: “**For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant** (emp. mine), that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases.”

- Alma 7:7: “For behold, I say unto you there be many things to come; and behold, there is one thing which is of more importance than they all—**for behold, the time is not far distant that the Redeemer liveth and cometh among his people** (emp. mine).”

- Helaman 14:1-3: “And now it came to pass that Samuel, the Lamanite, did prophesy a great many more things which cannot be written. And behold, he said unto them, “**Behold, I give unto you a sign; for five years more cometh, and**



**behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on his name** (emp. mine). And behold, this will I give unto you for a sign at the time of his coming; for behold, there shall be great lights in heaven, insomuch that in the night before he cometh there shall be no darkness, insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day.”

- Why is it the case that Nephi specifically knew when the Messiah was due to arrive (in six hundred years), but the prophets (Alma and Mosiah) who come after are more generic (“not far distant”)? Could they not have read the plates that had been passed down? Yes. This would fit the hypothesis better that when the crisis of the pages occurred, then Mosiah would continue to be translated in which the prophets were generic about the coming of Christ then it got more specific as the time drew near as is seen with Samuel the Lamanite (Helaman 14:1-3 - “five more years”). When Rigdon finished Mosiah through Moroni, then when he went back to 1 Nephi he forgot to let Nephi be generic in the prophecy of the coming of Christ, but instead he let Nephi be more specific thus allowing this awkwardness of specific timing, generic timing, and then specific timing of the first coming of Christ.

## **1 Nephi 19**

- God commands Nephi to make new plates made from ore. This presents a problem though. Braden states: “While they were in the wilderness before building the ship Nephi was told to make brass plates. One of two things is certain, either he had to dig up copper and zinc, smelt them and manufacture brass plates, and that without tools to do it, for they had fled from Jerusalem with nothing but tents and provisions, or he wrote on nothing or made the plates out of nothing.

On landing in America, the Mormon God is so careful about having Impostor Joe get these plates that he orders Nephi to make some more plates—gold, silver and copper are mentioned, but no zinc; but Nephi has got used to making things out of nothing, and it was no trick at all for him to make copper without zinc, build furnaces, work mines and make machine shops without tools, and nothing to do it with.”<sup>518</sup>

- Hardy, an LDS author, stated: “Some thirty years after the family left Jerusalem (and probably twenty years after their arrival in the Promised Land), Nephi was surprised by a new commandment from God to write yet

<sup>518</sup> Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *Braden-Kelley Debate*, 110.

another history of the family, one that would highlight “the ministry and the prophecies, the more plain and precious parts of them” (1 Ne. 19:3), that is, the things that were particularly “pleasing unto God” (1 Ne. 6:5 ; 2 Ne. 5:32). Nephi believed this record would be valuable for the instruction of his descendants and also perhaps for some other, unknown purpose (which turned out to be replacing the first 116 pages of the Book of Mormon manuscript lost by Martin Harris).<sup>519</sup> Rigdon and company have now brought this to our attention three times. I think it will have sunk in our minds by now.

## **1 Nephi 20-22**

### **• a. Filler material of Isaiah**

Rigdon put some “filler” material by adding Isaiah 49 and 50. He is doing this for a purpose in discussing the regathering of the house of Israel and so repurposes those two chapters in that manner.

### **b. The contradiction of Malachi**

1 Nephi 22:15 states: “‘For behold,’ saith the prophet, ‘the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned.’”<sup>520</sup>

• 1 Nephi 22:23 states: “For the time speedily shall come that all churches which are built up to get gain, and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and tremble, and quake; they are those who must be ‘brought low in the dust’; they are those who must be consumed ‘as stubble’; and this is according to the words of the prophet.”<sup>521</sup>

• What prophet is being discussed? No doubt, it is Malachi. Even Grant Hardy, in his footnotes, recognizes 1 Nephi 22:15 as referencing Malachi 4:1 and 1 Nephi 22:23 as referencing Malachi 4:1.<sup>522</sup>

• **The first major problem to recognize is that Malachi had not been written down yet.** Malachi was written down around the 400s B.C., which is 200 years later than Nephi.

519 Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 45.

520 Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 59.

521 Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 60.

522 *Ibid.*

- **The second major problem is actually found in 3 Nephi.** When Jesus visited the Nephites in America, he expounded on Malachi to them in 3rd Nephi 25. In 3rd Nephi 26:1-2, it says: “And now it came to pass that when Jesus had told these things he expounded them unto the multitude; and he did expound all things unto them, both great and small. And he saith: **These scriptures, which ye had not with you** (emp. mine), the Father commanded that I should give unto you; for it was wisdom in him that they should be given unto future generations.”

Sidney had forgotten after he finished 3rd Nephi that when it came to revisiting the lost pages, he forgot that he allowed Nephi to quote Malachi in 1 Nephi and 2 Nephi (as will be seen later). The plates were passed down from generation to generation. So the claim cannot be made that the plates were lost over the centuries when they were passed down.

- **c. Three days of darkness at Jesus’ crucifixion?**

1 Nephi 19:10 states: “And the God of our fathers who were led out of Egypt, out of bondage, and also were preserved in the wilderness by him—yea, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—yieldeth himself, according to the words of the angel, “as a man, into the hands of wicked men,” “to be lifted up,” according to the words of Zenock, and “to be crucified,” according to the words of Neum, and “to be buried in a sepulchre,” according to the words of Zenos, **which he spake concerning the three days of darkness** (emp. mine), which should be a sign given of his death unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea, more especially given unto those who are of the House of Israel.”

- 3 Nephi 8:3 states: “And the people began to look with great earnestness for the sign which had been given by the prophet Samuel, the Lamanite, yea, **for the time that there should be darkness for the space of three days over the face of the land** (emp. mine). And there began to be great doubtings and disputations among the people, notwithstanding so many signs had been given.”

- This clearly contradicts the Bible in that at Jesus’ crucifixion there was darkness for three hours, not three days (Matthew 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44).

- It is interesting this contradiction is found in BOTH places of the timeline of the translation process that 3 Nephi would have been translated first, then when the “small plates” section was being translated, the same error was repeated.

## **A Critique of 2 Nephi**

- Hardy summarizes 2 Nephi quite well in my opinion. He states: **“The tale of Lehi’s family and their journey to the New World ends abruptly at 1 Nephi 18** (emp. mine); of the remaining thirty-seven chapters of First and Second Nephi, **only one consists primarily of narrative (2 Ne. 5)** (emp. mine). The rest are made up of quotations from discourses of Lehi and Jacob (Nephi’s younger brother), **whole chapters borrowed from Isaiah, Nephi’s own reections and interpretations of scripture** (emp. mine), and original prophecies. Aside from the single chapter of 2 Nephi 5, Nephi tells us nothing of life in the Americas. Even though we know that he was made king over his people (2 Ne. 5:18), he provides no information about his reign, policies, challenges, or successes. **For the entire period of his kingship, no specific events are mentioned, no individuals are described, and no interactions are reported** (emp. mine). The only dates in the last thirty-seven chapters occur in that one anomalous section, where Nephi notes that sometime between the thirtieth and fortieth year after their flight from Jerusalem he was commanded to write a second version of his personal history, one that highlighted spiritual matters (2 Ne. 5:28–34). As a result, most of his record consists of undated, contextless excerpts, along with reections on how his religious experiences relate to the remote past and the distant future. **(The contrast with the strict chronological march through Nephite history in the portion of the book narrated by Mormon is striking** (emp. mine), though one wonders what Nephi’s original account from the Large Plates— in the pages lost by Martin Harris— might have looked like.)”<sup>523</sup>

- Hardy also states this in regards to the lack of details in 2 Nephi. He states: **“In the revised version of his autobiography, Nephi appears oddly disconnected from the present. He is willing to share details of two or three decades earlier** (emp. mine), when Lehi was leading the family through the wilderness, but he shows little interest in more recent events, the people he rules over, or even his own family members. As mentioned earlier, his wife and children are virtually absent from his account, much to the frustration of those who would like to read modern Mormon family values back into the Book of Mormon. **Nephi seems obsessed with the past** (emp. mine). We have already observed how he uses allusions to link his personal history to the biblical stories of Joseph and Moses; indeed, he sees Lehi’s clan as reenacting sacred history as they deal with sibling rivalries and are led by God to the Promised Land. Yet Nephi, as portrayed in the Book of Mormon, is not so much a storyteller

<sup>523</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 58-59.

as a writer. He allows us to observe him composing, editing, and revising as he tries to imagine who his future audience might be.”<sup>524</sup>

- Washburn summarized the book in this manner: “The Book of 2 Nephi is somewhat less direct than 1 Nephi though easy to follow. Chapters 1-3 are made up of the teachings of Lehi, given both directly by Lehi himself and by his son Nephi. Chapter 4 contains Nephi’s comments on his father’s ministry, and direct quotations are used. It also contains some words of Nephi. Chapter 5 is also from Nephi.

Chapters 6-11 bring a new development, the teachings of Nephi’s younger brother, Jacob, though it is still the Book of Nephi. Chapters 7-8 are quotations from the Brass Plates, following closely Isaiah 50-51. Chapters 12-24 are practically the same as Isaiah 2-14. Chapters 25-33 are made up of the prophecies and testimony of Nephi.”<sup>525</sup>

- Arbaugh writes: “2 Ne. (**2 Nephi - SF**) is almost entirely a Rigdonian production although there are a few elements which are characteristic of Spaulding. It gives detailed prophecies of Christ, of America being the land of the Gentiles who shall have no kings, of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon in a day of Masonic abominations, and Is. 2-14 and 29 are inserted and distorted predictions of Mormonism.”<sup>526</sup>

- **Comment:** My hypothesis concerning 2nd Nephi is that almost all of the book was made by Rigdon and company. Here are the reasons why I believe so:

- **First**, notice the number of Scriptural references as you can see below that are taken from the New Testament that had not been written down yet.

- **2 Nephi 1:1**/Mark 5:19; **1:18**/2 Timothy 2:26; **1:23**/2 Corinthians 6:7; **1:26**/Hebrews 4:12; **2:3**/Galatians 4:4-5; **2:5**/Galatians 2:16; **2:6**/John 1:14-16; **2:8**/John 10:17-18; **2:13**/Romans 4:15; **2:14**/Romans 15:4; **2:26**/Galatians 4:4-5; **2:30**/Luke 10:42; **3:5**/1 Corinthians 4:5; **3:13**/Hebrews 11:34; **4:17**/Romans 7:24; **4:18**/Hebrews 12:1; **4:35**/James 1:5; **9:2**/Acts 3:21; **9:7**/1 Corinthians 15:51-53; **9:9**/2 Corinthians 11:14; **9:15**/John 5:24; 2 Corinthians 5:10; **9:16**/Matthew 24:35; 25:41; Revelation 22:11; 14:11; **9:18**/Hebrews 12:2; Matthew 25:34; **9:22**/Matthew 10:22; **9:23**/Acts 2:38; **9:34**/Luke 10:15; **9:38**/John 8:24; **9:39**/Romans 8:6; **9:41**/Matthew 7:13,14; **9:42**/Matthew 7:8; **9:43**/Matthew 11:25; **10:4**/Matthew 11:21; **10:16**/Galatians 3:28; **12-24**/Isaiah 2-14; **25:4**/Revelation 19:10;

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524 Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 59.

525 Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 21.

526 Arbaugh, *Revelations In Mormonism*, 38.



25:12/Matthew 24:6-7; 25:13/Malachi 4:2; 25:14/Acts 5:39; 25:18/John 12:48; 25:20/Acts 4:12; 25:23/Ephesians 2:8-9; 25:25/Romans 7:4; 25:29/Matthew 22:37; John 6:37; 26:4/Malachi 4:1; 26:5/Matthew 21:44; 26:10/John 3:19; 26:13/Revelation 14:6; 26:24/John 12:32; 26:27/Acts 17:30; 26:30/1 Corinthians 13:2; 26:33/Galatians 3:28; 27/Isaiah 29; 27:23/Hebrews 13:8; 28:7,8/1 Corinthians 15:32; Luke 12:48; 28:11/Romans 3:12; 28:15/Luke 10:15; Acts 13:10; 28:23/Revelation 20:13; 28:26/Acts 2:38; 28:28/Matthew 7:24-27; 28:30/Matthew 13:12; 30:1/Luke 13:5; 30:6/Acts 9:18; 30:17/Matthew 10:26; Ephesians 5:11,13; 31:4/John 1:29; 31:5,6/Matthew 3:15,16; 31:9/Matthew 7:13,14; 31:11/Acts 2:38; 31:13/Matthew 3:11; 1 Corinthians 13:2; 31:14/Mark 16:17; Matthew 3:11; 31:15/Matthew 10:22; 31:18/Matthew 7:13,14; 31:19/Colossians 2:5; 31:21/Acts 4:12; 32:1/Mark 2:8; 32:4/Matthew 7:7; 32:6/1 Timothy 3:16; 32:9/Luke 18:1; 33:9/Matthew 7:13,14.

- **Second**, notice the theological material given throughout these chapters (2 Nephi 1:1-4:35; 9:1-11:8; 25:1-33:15). There is **not** much historical narrative as already admitted by pro LDS writers such as Hardy.

- **Third**, notice the “filler” material by inserting a lot of chapters of Isaiah together to take up space (2 Nephi 7-8; 12-24, 27).

- **Fourth**, there is the key phrase “children of men” (36 times) that is found many times throughout 2 Nephi that could be a possible link to Rigdon.

- **Fifth**, notice there is not much new characters, places, etc. added. There is Ishmael, Jacob, Jerusalem, Joseph, Laban, Laman, Lehi, Lemuel, Nephi, Sam, and Zoram. However, in its defense, this book’s main focus is on Lehi and his family. So there should not be any expectations of new places or characters. But as Hardy states that Nephi seems “obsessed with the past” and does not want to deal with the present. Why is that the case?

In my opinion, Rigdon and company did not want to contradict themselves. The less vague details one gives, the harder it will be to detect a falsehood.

- Hardy makes a very interesting insight on chapter 3. He states: “Even more telling is **Nephi’s missing blessing** (emp. mine). At the end of his life, following the pattern of the biblical patriarch Jacob, Lehi gathered his kin around him to give counsel and blessings. The recipients included Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and the sons of Ishmael (2 Ne. 1:28–29), Zoram (2 Ne. 1:30–32), Jacob (2 Ne. 2:1–13), Joseph (2 Ne. 3:1–25), the children of Laman (2 Ne. 4:3–7), the children of Lemuel (2 Ne. 4:8–9), again the sons of Ishmael (2 Ne. 4:10), and Sam (2 Ne. 4:11). Nephi concludes, “And it came to pass after

my father, Lehi, had spoken unto all his household, according to the feelings of his heart and the Spirit of the Lord which was in him, he waxed old. And it came to pass that he died, and was buried” (2 Ne. 4:12). Nephi’s blessing is conspicuous for its absence, despite his admission that Lehi “had spoken to all his household” and precedents in the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 27,49). Why doesn’t Nephi report what his father said to him?”<sup>527</sup>

## 2nd Nephi 3:17-18 - Sidney Rigdon Is the Spokesman!

- Hardy states this about 2 Nephi 3: “In the third chapter of Second Nephi, he records Lehi’s last words to his youngest son, Joseph. This is an important chapter whose significance is highlighted by its anomalous nature: this is the only time that Lehi quotes from the Brass Plates, and it is also the only passage in the Book of Mormon in which Nephi’s brother Joseph receives direct attention (or is even mentioned apart from his brother Jacob). Lehi tells his son that the biblical Joseph saw their day and their family, and that the plates contained a prophecy in which the Lord had promised him that the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines . . . and bringing them to the knowledge of their fathers in the latter days, and also to the knowledge of my covenants. (2 Ne. 3:12 –13)

Most of this prophecy actually concerns the seer— always understood by Mormons to be Joseph Smith— who would bring forth this record in the last days, but here again is a prediction of a scripture, written by some of Joseph of Egypt’s descendants (in this context clearly referring to the Nephites), that would at some future date stand alongside the Bible.”<sup>528</sup>

- Rigdon also decides to insert himself and we know that in later history that Rigdon does become the spokesman on behalf of Smith. History bears this truth out repeatedly. Rigdon has been caught! See also **D & C** 100:9-12 where Rigdon is stated to be the spokesman. It states: “And it is expedient in me that you, my servant Sidney, should be a spokesman unto this people; yea, verily, I will ordain you unto this calling, **even to be a spokesman unto my servant Joseph** (emp. mine). And I will give unto him power to be mighty in testimony.

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<sup>527</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 50-51.

<sup>528</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 77-78.

And I will give unto thee power to be mighty in expounding all scriptures, that thou mayest be a spokesman unto him, and he shall be a revelator unto thee, that thou mayest know the certainty of all things pertaining to the things of my kingdom on the earth.”

- Arbaugh stated: “Before Rigdon came on the scene Joe (**Joseph Smith - SF**) had achieved some prestige among a certain class of people; he had proved himself a fitting person for the role of prophet, and his ignorance led Rigdon to believe that he would be a pliable tool. But the very characteristics which led to his selection as prophet worked contrary to Rigdon’s plans.

Even in theory Rigdon attempted to establish for all time his own office. While he delegated the office of prophet to another, he formed another office - that of spokesman for himself, believing that through it he could exercise the real determining influence. Showing conclusively that he was the author of this idea and responsible for its formal doctrinal adoption is the following revealing statement made by him when he was eighty years old, “For the existence of that church there had to be a revelator, one who received the word of the Lord; a spokesman, one inspired of God to expound all revelation, so that the church might all be of one faith.”...This idea Rigdon put into the Book of Mormon: “And the Lord said unto me also: I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins, and I will make for him a spokesman, And I, behold, I will give unto him that him that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins (Joe Smith), unto the fruit of thy loins; and the spokesman of thy loins (Rigdon) shall declare it.”

This division of labor was suggested by that of Moses and Aaron and in fact Joseph is promised as “a Moses” in the Book of Mormon passage which refers to him having a “spokesman.” In Mormon history this comparison of Joseph Smith and Moses appears repeatedly and once Joseph gave this very interesting expression of the theory of offices: “Moses was a stammering sort of a boy like me...God said (to him), ‘Thou shalt be a God unto Aaron, and he shall be thy spokesman.’” Joseph was no stammerer. This was simply a recognition of the fact that he was a Moses, slow of speech, while Rigdon was an oratorical spokesman like Aaron...

For a year or so this division of office was acceptable. God even confirmed this division of labor by telling Sidney: “I will give unto thee power to be mighty in expounding all scriptures, that thou mayest a spokesman unto him (Joseph) and he shall be a revelator unto thee, that thou mayest know the

certainty of all things.” Rigdon had failed to reckon with the personality of his prophet however, and he had great difficulty in even maintaining the theory of his office, for Joseph got in the habit of announcing from the pulpit at Kirtland: “The truth is good enough without dressing up, but brother Rigdon will now proceed to dress it up.”<sup>529</sup>

- Paul Nolan Hyde wrote: “One of the major functions of the seer of the latter days would be to “write” the writing of the fruit of Joseph’s loins. Perhaps the better word would have been “print” or “publish”, had Joseph been aware of the process by which the record of his family would be promulgated in the world. The first “spokesman” to declare the published writings of the seed of Joseph was Oliver Cowdery who in the fall of 1830 traveled with his companions to the Unorganized Indian Territory west of Missouri. There the Book of Mormon was presented to the descendants of the Lamanites. Sidney Rigdon was chosen in the fall of 1833, by revelation, to serve as spokesman for Joseph the seer. Others held a similar relationship with Joseph Smith during his mortal ministry.”<sup>530</sup>

- Hyde is most likely referring to what is known as ***D & C* 28** for Oliver Cowdery, but if you read it carefully, it does not use the word “spokesman” for him in ***D & C* 28:3**: “And thou shalt be obedient unto the things which I shall give unto him, even as Aaron, to declare faithfully the commandments and the revelations, with power and authority unto the church.” It does use the term - “spokesman” - for Sidney Rigdon though as seen earlier in ***D & C* 100**.

- There is further historical evidence that we ought to see Rigdon as the “spokesman” identified here. Three followers of Rigdon attributed to him the “spokesman” for Joseph Smith: “As we are speaking of the identity of the priesthood which is to gather Israel and prepare for the coming of Christ, we will copy from the Book of Mormon, 2d chapter of the 2d Book of Nephi, speaking of the seer: “Yet I will not loose his tongue, that he shall speak much; for I will not make him mighty in speaking. **But I will write unto him my law, by the finger of mine own hand; and will make for him a spokesman. And I, behold I will give unto him, that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it** (emp. mine).”

One priesthood was to bring forth the word of the Lord, for the benefit

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<sup>529</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelations in Mormonism*, 48-50.

<sup>530</sup> Paul Nolan Hyde, *A Comprehensive Commentary of the Second Book of Nephi* (Orem, UT: Parrish Press, 2015), 44-45.

of the Lamanites, and the other priesthood was to proclaim it to them, and thereby save them. Nothing can be plainer than the case here is. He who held the keys of the first administration, was to bring forth the word, and he who held the keys of the second, was to gather them by means of that word. In connection with this, the 3d paragraph of the 95th section of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants says: "And it is expedient in me that you, my servant Sidney, should be a spokesman unto this people; yea, verily, I will ordain you to this calling, even to be a spokesman unto my servant Joseph." **The Lord had said, in the Book of Mormon, that he would raise up to Joseph Smith a spokesman; and the Spirit said, in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, that Sidney Rigdon was that spokesman** (emp. mine). The case then stands thus: Joseph Smith was to translate the Book of Mormon, and Sidney Rigdon was to take it, and gather Israel.

**Here is the sum of the whole matter. The prophet Malachi had said that before Christ came, he would send his messenger, and he should prepare the way before him. Joseph Smith said that Sidney Rigdon was that messenger. The Spirit said that the Lord would raise up a spokesman to Joseph Smith, and Joseph Smith said that Sidney was that spokesman. The Lord said he would prepare a priesthood with which he would gather Israel. Joseph Smith said that Sidney Rigdon held that priesthood** (emp. mine)."<sup>531</sup>

Linn wrote: "One person succeeded in drawing out from Rigdon in his later years a few words on his relations with the Mormon church. This was Charles L. Woodward, a New York bookseller, who some years ago made an important collection of Mormon literature. While making this collection he sent an inquiry to Rigdon, and received a reply, dated May 25, 1873. After apologizing for his handwriting on account of his age and paralysis, the letter says: --

"We know nothing about the people called Mormons now.<sup>1</sup> The Lord notified us that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints were going to be destroyed, and for us to leave. We did so, and the Smiths were killed a few days after we started. Since that, I have had no connection with any of the people who staid and built up to themselves churches; and chose to themselves leaders such as they chose, and then framed their own religion.

"The Church of Latter-Day Saints had three books that they acknowledged as Canonical, the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Commandments. For

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<sup>531</sup> Joseph H. Newton, William Richards, and William Stanley, *An Appeal to the Latter-Day Saints* (Philadelphia: Printed for the Authors, 1863), .23-30.



the existence of that church there had to be a revelater, one who received the word of the Lord; a spokesman, one inspired of God to expound all revelation, so that the church might all be of one faith. Without these two men the Church of Latter-Day Saints could not exist. This order ceased to exist being overcome by the violence of armed men, by whom houses were beaten down by cannon which the assailants had furnished themselves with.

“Thus ended the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and it never can move again till the Lord inspires men and women to believe it. All the societies and assemblies of men collected together since then is not the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, nor never can there be such a church till the Lord moves it by his own power, as he did the first.

“Should you fall in with one who was of the Church {of} Christ, though now of advanced age, you will find one deep red in the revelations of heaven. But many of them are dead, and many of them have turned away, so there are few left.

“I have a manuscript paper in my possession, written with my own hands while in my 80th. year, but I am too poor to do anything with it; and therefore it must remain where it {is}. During the great fight of affliction I have had, I have lost all my property, but I struggle along in poverty to which I am consigned. I have finished all I feel necessary to write.” Respectfully, “SIDNEY RIGDON.”<sup>532</sup>

- Gardner, an LDS scholar, wrote: “Verse 18 seems to be deliberately parallel to verse 17, requiring a second “Moses” and therefore a second “spokesman.” Grammatically, “I will raise up” seems to require a direct object, perhaps “another” before it continues, “unto the fruit of thy loins.” According to Daniel H. Ludlow, “Many members of the Church believe that Sidney Rigdon is the ‘spokesman’ referred to in this prophecy. It appears that Joseph Smith is the prophet mentioned in this verse, and the Lord promised Sidney Rigdon that he should ‘be a spokesman to my servant Joseph’ (D&C 100:9).” Joseph had not met Sydney Rigdon before the Book of Mormon’s publication.”<sup>533</sup>

- George Q. Cannon wrote: “Another most remarkable prediction is given in this same chapter; showing how plainly the Lord revealed to His ancient servants who wrote this Book, that which should take place in the last times. Lehi in speaking about Moses, said, that the Lord had revealed to Joseph the

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532 William A. Linn, *The Story of the Mormons*, (New York: MacMillan: 1902), 320-321.

533 Brant A. Gardner, *Second Witness: Analytical and Contextual Commentary on the Book of Mormon: Volume 2 - Second Nephi* (Salt Lake City, UT: Greg Kofford Books, 2007), Loc. 1482-1491.

Patriarch, that He would raise up a mighty prophet named Moses, and that He should raise up for him a spokesman; that Moses would not be mighty in word, but in deed. Here is what the Lord said unto Joseph the Patriarch, as quoted by Lehi: “And the Lord said unto me also:” [that is, Joseph the Patriarch], “I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins; and I will make for him a spokesman. And I, behold, I will give unto him that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins; and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it.”

After the church had been organized some months, Oliver Cowdery, Parley P. Pratt, Peter Whitmer, and Ziba Petersen were appointed by the prophet of God to visit the western boundaries of Missouri. On their journey westward, they passed through the western part of Ohio, where Parley had formerly lived and labored in connection with the Reformed Baptists. They called upon one of the founders of that sect, Sidney Rigdon. They found him in the town of Kirtland, gave him a Book of Mormon, and bore their testimony to him of the restoration of the Gospel. Sidney Rigdon said to them: “You tell me a strange tale. I will examine this book;” and he commenced to do so. They were all young men, Sidney Rigdon was many years their senior. Rigdon examined the book, and became convinced that it was the word of God. He was baptized in the town of Kirtland, and the foundation of a great work was laid there. God afterwards revealed that this man was to be a spokesman, and he became the spokesman to this people and to the world for the prophet Joseph. Those who knew Sidney Rigdon, know how wonderfully God inspired him, and with what wonderful eloquence he declared the word of God to the people. He was a mighty man in the hands of God, as a spokesman, as long as the prophet lived, or up to a short time before his death. **Thus you see that even this which many might look upon as a small matter, was predicted about 1,700 years before the birth of the Savior, and was quoted by Lehi 600 years before the same event, and about 2,400 years before its fulfillment, and was translated by the power of God, through his servant Joseph, as was predicted should be the case, and at a time, as I have said, when there was not a man upon the earth who was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints** (emp. mine). The church had not yet been organized, and Joseph did not know, unless he knew by the spirit of revelation, whether any man would receive the Gospel. I doubt whether he knew as to how the church would be organized. He had some idea, doubtless; but there were

many things which he himself did not know, till he wrote this translation.”<sup>534</sup>

• **William Whitsitt made an interesting point concerning this matter:** “It is hardly necessary that Sidney and Joseph should have taken the public so unreservedly into their confidence as they have several times done in the progress of their work. One instance is the famous reference to Sidney as Joseph’s spokesman at 2 Nephi 3:17-18: “And the Lord hath said, I will raise up a Moses; and I will give power unto him in a rod; and I will give judgment unto him in writing. Yet I will not loose his tongue that he shall speak much; for I will not make him mighty in speaking. But I will write unto him my law by the finger of mine own hand; and I will make a spokesman for him. And the Lord said unto me also, I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins and I will make for him a spokesman. And I will give unto him that he shall write the writings of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins; and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it.”

This was the division of labor which had been adopted by the two associates at the early period here in question, owing to the circumstance that Mr. Smith had not yet acquired any experience in public address and was unconscious of his powers that way: but it was a careless oversight performed (at) a later date to reveal their secret, and by this means add a new argument to the many that already existed to show that Mr. Rigdon was from the beginning connected with the business. In the course of a “Revelation given in, N.Y. to Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon, Oct. 12th, 1833”, the Lord ordains as follows: “And it is expedient in me that you, my servant Sidney, should be a spokesman unto this people; yea verily I will ordain you unto this calling, even to a spokesman unto my servant Joseph; and (I) will give unto him power to be mighty in testimony; and I will give unto thee power to be mighty in expounding all scriptures, that thou mayest be a spokesman unto him, and (he) shall be a revelator unto thee” (D&C, 100:9-11).

If the fact that Sidney was the spokesman who was provided in the Book of Mormon had been kept under cover, instead of parading it thus abroad, in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants it might have been possible to exercise a larger degree of respect for (the) mental agility of the parties engaged.

<sup>534</sup> George Q. Cannon, “Predictions in the Book of Mormon - Evidence of its Divinity - Proof Joseph Smith Was Inspired - Predictions Concerning The Indians Fulfilled - Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon Foretold - Plainness of Its Teachings - Prediction Relating To Sidney Rigdon - Only Two Churches - Other Prophecies Being Fulfilled,” *Journal of Discourses*, Volume 25, (Liverpool: Printed and Published by John Henry Smith, 1884), 126.

Another mishap of this kind occurs at 2 Nephi 8:19-20. Sidney has introduced at this point the whole of the 51st chapter of Isaiah, by way of quotation. In the authorized version, Isaiah 51:19-20 is given in the following terms: "These two things are come unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee? desolation and destruction and the famine and the sword: by whom shall I comfort thee? Thy sons have fainted, they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net." In the version which the Book of Mormon supplies of the same two verses Joseph and Sidney show their own faces in the following style: "These two SONS are came unto thee; who shall be sorry for thee: thy desolation and destruction and the famine and the sword: and by whom shall I comfort thee? Thy sons have fainted SAVE THESE two; they lie at the head of all the streets, as a wild bull in a net."

The faith of Mormon believers might be confirmed by the enactment of a change like this, but it is not calculated to help the faith of other people, since it lets them into a secret which does not go far to promote belief. The well known early Mormon antithesis between the East and the West, New York being the East and Kirtland the West is unnecessarily displayed at 1 Nephi 21:13. The entire chapter is quoted from the 49th chapter of Isaiah of which King James' revisers set forth the thirteenth verse in the following language: "Sing, O heavens, and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people and will have mercy upon his afflicted."

On the other hand, Joseph renders it: "Sing, O heavens, and be joyful O earth: FOR THE FEET OF THOSE WHO ARE IN THE EAST SHALL BE ESTABLISHED; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for they shall be smitten no more; for the Lord hath comforted his people and will have mercy upon his afflicted."

If proofs should be required of the existence of the alleged antithesis between the East and the West in early Mormon history, they are well supplied by the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. Such passages as D&C, 26:1, 45:64, 48:2-5 may be consulted.

The above prophetic expedient by which the success of the eastern part of the enterprise was assured to the minds of the faithful, and the existence of the western part of it was suggested, might have been very useful (in) the circumstances where Joseph was situated in the spring time of the year 1829, but it must be apparent that on the whole it would have been a wise thing to abstain from employing it, inasmuch as it offers to criticism a hint and

handle which it must be entirely undesirable that it should now possess.”<sup>535</sup>

## **2 Nephi 5:16-17 - The Temple of Solomon Built By Several!**

- 2 Nephi 5:16,17 states: “And I, Nephi, did build a temple; and I did construct it after the manner of the temple of Solomon save it were not built of so many precious things; for they were not to be found upon the land, wherefore, it could not be built like unto Solomon’s temple. But the manner of the construction was like unto the temple of Solomon; and the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did cause my people to be industrious, and to labor with their hands.” **How could Nephi and his company construct a building like the temple of Solomon when the population size they had was very small?**

- It had been 30 years since the family came from Jerusalem (2 Nephi 5:28). Remember there is Lehi and his wife Sariah, the sons of Lehi — Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi — and we are told that Lehi had daughters, but are not given the number (2 Nephi 5:6). Lehi had two more sons — Jacob and Joseph — in the wilderness (1 Nephi 18:7). Ishmael’s family joins them, which consists of Ishmael and his wife, two sons (who already were married and had families) and five daughters, who would go on to marry the descendants of Lehi (1 Nephi 7:6; 16:7). The former slave Zoram was part of the group and married the eldest daughter of Ishmael (1 Nephi 16:7). Given the accelerated birth rate if each family had a child each year, it would not begin to compare with the number of workers needed to build a temple likened to that of Solomon’s which took seven and a half years to build.

- 1 Kings 5:13-16 states: “*Then King Solomon raised up a labor force out of all Israel; and the labor force was **thirty thousand men**. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts: they were one month in Lebanon and two months at home; Adoniram was in charge of the labor force. Solomon had **seventy thousand who carried burdens, and eighty thousand who quarried stone in the mountains, besides three thousand three hundred from the chiefs of Solomon’s deputies, who supervised the people who labored in the work.***”

- Braden states: “The largest estimate that we can possibly put on this company, will not make it more than ten married couples—all of whom, except Lehi, are married after leaving Jerusalem; yet, already they are divided into two nations, and Nephi teaches one of these mighty nations how to make weapons and defend themselves against the mighty nation of Lamanites,

<sup>535</sup> Whitsitt, *Sidney Rigdon - The Real Founder of Mormonism*, 480-483.



two men, two women, and their children born during twenty years. This mighty nation of Nephites composed of not more than eight adults, four men and four women, and their children born during twenty years, erect in the wilderness of America a temple like unto the temple of Solomon.”<sup>536</sup>

- **Also, how did these Jews have authority to build a place for God’s name and His dwelling place if the rightful place was already in Jerusalem?**

- Deuteronomy 12:5-7 states: “*But you shall seek the place where the Lord your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go. There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. And there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the Lord your God has blessed you.*” Also see 1 Kings 8:12-21, 29; 9:3; 11:36; 2 Chronicles 6:5-6; 12:13; John 4:19-24.

## 2 Nephi 9:9 - Contradiction

- **Comment:** “And our spirits must have become alike unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God, and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself; yea, to that being **who beguiled our first parents**, who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret works of darkness.”

- It is not very surprising if Rigdon was the *same authorial voice* behind Nephi, Mosiah, and Ether where the same contradiction on Mosiah 16:3 and Ether 9:22 can be demonstrated. **Adam was not beguiled** (1 Timothy 2:14)!

- Notice also the key phrase “children of men” is used. This shows to me that Rigdon most likely worked on Ether first, then when he had to replace the lost “book of Lehi,” then he committed the same blunders again when he was re-working 2 Nephi.

## 2nd Nephi 9:22,23 - Baptism For Salvation

- “And he suffereth this that the resurrection might pass upon all men, that

all might stand before him at the great and judgment day. And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God.”

- The Bible teaches water immersion is the culminating point of an obedient faith in the salvific process from sin (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3,4; Galatians 3:26-28; 1 Peter 3:20,21; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16). Rigdon had been taught correctly that water immersion is the point where one comes into contact with the blood of Christ that washes away one’s sins (Acts 22:16). This is an everlasting truth and we must remember that the seed is the everlasting word of God (Luke 8:11; 1 Peter 1:22-25). However, Rigdon contradicts himself after Mosiah for a while because he had placed his Baptist view of baptism before he learned the truth in February 1828. The contradiction on the views of baptism in the **BOM** have been shown already and here is one of those references.

## 2nd Nephi 12-24

- Hardy summarizes why Nephi incorporates these chapters of Isaiah into his text. He states: “The significance of the phrases, however, has shifted, for the context is no longer Sennacherib’s invasion of Judah in 701 BC (as it was for Isaiah); instead, Nephi is using the ancient words as a framework for his own prophecy of the eventual destruction of the Nephites and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon in the early nineteenth century. He does not deny the validity of the original, historic meaning of Isaiah’s warnings (“I have made mention unto my children concerning the judgments of God, which have come to pass among the Jews, unto my children, according to all that which Isaiah hath spoken, and I do not write them,” 2 Ne. 25:6), but he virtually ignores the original setting in favor of reinterpreting the words so that they apply to his own predictions of the distant future (“but behold, I proceed with mine own prophecy, according to my plainness, in the which I know that no man can err,” 2 Ne. 25:7). So even though he has just quoted chapters concerning Assyria’s attack on Israel and Judah— warnings that had been fulfilled more than a century earlier— he still believes that in some sense Isaiah’s visions are as yet unrealized (“in the days that the prophecies of Isaiah shall be fulfilled, men shall know of a surety, at the time when they shall come to pass,” 2 Ne. 25:7).”<sup>537</sup>

<sup>537</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 64-65.

- This fits Rigdon's style because he would "reinterpret" prophecies to fit his own theological framework.

## 2nd Nephi 12-24 - Quoting from the KJV?

- Hardy states: "Before we continue, though, there is another issue that needs to be addressed: the Book of Mormon's long quotations from Isaiah inevitably raise questions about the translation/writing process. As we imagine Joseph looking into his seer stone and dictating to his scribes Nephi's autobiography, it is reasonable to ask why there is so much Isaiah in this part of the Book of Mormon, **and in particular why it appears in the language of the King James Bible** (emp. mine).

- For readers who see Smith as the author, **the easiest explanation is that the eighteen chapters of Isaiah in First and Second Nephi are filler** (emp. mine), employed when his creativity agged or because he felt the need to pad the narrative so that its size was roughly equivalent to the 116 pages lost by Martin Harris."<sup>538</sup>

- It is most probable that Rigdon needed a lot of "filler material" and this is one of those major sections he used to insert a lot of the book of Isaiah.

## 2nd Nephi 26:3

- One question I would like to have answered is in 2 Nephi 26:1-3: "And after **Christ** (emp. mine) shall have risen from the dead he shall show himself unto you, my children, and my beloved brethren; and the words which he shall speak unto you shall be the law which ye shall do. For behold, I say unto you that I have beheld that many generations shall pass away, and there shall be great wars and contentions among my people. And after the **Messiah** (emp. mine) shall come there shall be signs given unto my people of his birth, and also of his death and resurrection; and great and terrible shall that day be unto the wicked, for they shall perish; and they perish because they cast out the prophets, and the saints, and stone them, and slay them; wherefore the cry of the blood of the saints shall ascend up to God from the ground against them."

- Why is it that "Christ" and "Messiah" are used interchangeably? How did a Greek word - Christos - come to be translated from a Reformed Egyptian text?

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<sup>538</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 66.

## 2nd Nephi 26:4-9

• 2 Nephi 26:4: “**Wherefore, all those who are proud, and that do wickedly, the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, for they shall be as stubble** (emp. mine). And they that kill the prophets, and the saints, the depths of the earth shall swallow them up, saith the Lord of Hosts; and mountains shall cover them, and whirlwinds shall carry them away, and buildings shall fall upon them and crush them to pieces and grind them to powder. And they shall be visited with thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and all manner of destructions, for the fire of the anger of the Lord shall be kindled against them, **and they shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall consume them, saith the Lord of Hosts** (emp. mine). O the pain, and the anguish of my soul for the loss of the slain of my people! For I, Nephi, have seen it, and it well nigh consumeth me before the presence of the Lord; but I must cry unto my God: Thy ways are just. But behold, the righteous that hearken unto the words of the prophets, and destroy them not, but look forward unto Christ with steadfastness for the signs which are given, notwithstanding all persecution—behold, they are they which shall not perish. **But the Son of Righteousness shall appear unto them** (emp. mine); and he shall heal them, and they shall have peace with him, until three generations shall have passed away, and many of the fourth generation shall have passed away in righteousness... Behold, they will crucify him; and after he is laid in a sepulchre for the space of three days he shall rise from the dead, **‘with healing in his wings’** (emp. mine); and all those who shall believe on his name shall be saved in the kingdom of God. Wherefore, my soul delighteth to prophesy concerning him, for I have seen his day, and my heart doth magnify his holy name.”

• Now look closely at Malachi 4:1-2: “For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, **And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up,**” Says the LORD of hosts, (emp. mine) “That will leave them neither root nor branch. But to you who fear My name **The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings** (emp. mine); And you shall go out and grow fat like stall-fed calves.”

• Even Grant Hardy recognizes in the footnotes that 2 Nephi 26:13 references Malachi 4:2.<sup>539</sup>

• When Jesus visited the Nephites in America, he expounded on Malachi to

<sup>539</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 118.

them in 3rd Nephi 25. In 3rd Nephi 26:1-2, it says: “And now it came to pass that when Jesus had told these things he expounded them unto the multitude; and he did expound all things unto them, both great and small. And he saith: **These scriptures, which ye had not with you** (emp. mine), the Father commanded that I should give unto you; for it was wisdom in him that they should be given unto future generations.

- Sidney had forgotten after he finished 3rd Nephi that when it came to revisiting the lost pages, he forgot that he allowed Nephi to quote Malachi and thus contradict himself!

- Even Hardy recognized that Nephi was stating “in terms that appear in the book of Malachi”: “When Nephi 1 prophesied that Christ would show himself among the Nephites, **he did so in terms that appear in the book of Malachi** (emp. mine): After the Messiah shall come there shall be signs given unto my people of his birth, and also of his death and resurrection; and great and terrible shall that day be unto the wicked for they shall perish . . . Wherefore, all those who are proud, and that do wickedly, the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, for they shall be as stubble . . . but the Son of righteousness shall appear unto them; and he shall heal them , and they shall have peace with him until three generations shall have passed away, and many of the fourth generation shall have passed away in righteousness. (2 Ne. 26:3–9; emphasis added).”<sup>540</sup>

## 2nd Nephi 27 - Taken Out of Context

- This has been used as a proof-text to validate as a prophecy of the February 1828 visit of Martin Harris to New York. Actually, it was made after the loss of the 116 pages in June of 1828 to act as a supposed “prophecy.”

- Arbaugh wrote: “In editing the Book of Mormon Rigdon had inserted many chapters from Isaiah as prophetic of Mormonism and in Is. 29:11-12 he saw a peculiar possibility for fortelling the Book of Mormon itself. When a book is presented to “one that is learned,” with the request that he read it, he replies: “I cannot, for it is sealed.” Then the book is presented to one “that is not learned” and he replies simply: “I am not learned.” In 2 Ne. 27 this is expanded as part of the Book of Mormon. God says to him to whom the book will be delivered (Smith): “Take these words which are not sealed and deliver them to another (Harris), that he may show them unto the learned

<sup>540</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, 207.



(Anthon), saying: Read this I pray thee. And the learned (Anthon) shall say: I cannot bring the book, for it is sealed. Then shall the learned (Anthon) say: I cannot read it. Wherefore it shall come to pass, that the Lord God will deliver the book...to him that is not learned (Smith); and the man...shall say: I am not learned. Then shall the Lord God say unto him: The learned shall not read them, for they have rejected them, and I am able to do mine own work (without any learned); wherefore thou shalt read the words which I shall give unto thee (with a seer stone).”

Undoubtedly the Mormons were hoping that Anthon would not live to too ripe an old age for they refrained until 1842 from publishing the version of the interview as prophesied in the Book of Mormon. Unfortunately Antohon lived until 1867 and vigorously denied having thus fulfilled the Hebrew prophecy.”<sup>541</sup>

Charles Anthon wrote to E.D. Howe and Howe included the letter in his *Mormonism Unveiled* (1834) book: “Dear Sir -- I received this morning your favor of the 9th instant, and lose no time in making a reply. The whole story about my having pronounced the Mormonite inscription to be “reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics” is perfectly false. Some years ago, a plain, and apparently simple-hearted farmer, called upon me with a note from Dr. Mitchell of our city, now deceased, requesting me to decypher, if possible, a paper, which the farmer would hand me, and which Dr. M. confessed he had been unable to understand. Upon examining the paper in question, I soon came to the conclusion that it was all a trick, perhaps a hoax.

When I asked the person, who brought it, how he obtained the writing, he gave me, as far as I can now recollect, the following account: A “gold book,” consisting of a number of plates of gold, fastened together in the shape of a book by wires of the same metal, had been dug up in the northern part of the state of New York, and along with the book an enormous pair of “gold spectacles”! These spectacles were so large, that, if a person attempted to look through them, his two eyes would have to be turned towards one of the glasses merely, the spectacles in question being altogether too large for the breadth of the human face. Whoever examined the plates through the spectacles, was enabled not only to read them, but fully to understand their meaning. All this knowledge, however, was confined at that time to a young man, who had the trunk containing the book and spectacles in his sole possession. This young man was placed behind a curtain, in the garret

<sup>541</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelations in Mormonism*, 64-65.

of a farm house, and, being thus concealed from view, put on the spectacles occasionally, or rather, looked through one of the glasses, decyphered the characters in the book, and, having committed some of them to paper, handed copies from behind the curtain, to those who stood on the outside. Not a word, however, was said about the plates having been decyphered “by the gift of God.” Everything, in this way, was effected by the large pair of spectacles. The farmer added, that he had been requested to contribute a sum of money towards the publication of the “golden book,” the contents of which would, as he had been assured, produce an entire change in the world and save it from ruin. So urgent had been these solicitations, that he intended selling his farm and handing over the amount received to those who wished to publish the plates. As a last precautionary step, however, he had resolved to come to New York, and obtain the opinion of the learned about the meaning of the paper which he brought with him, and which had been given him as a part of the contents of the book, although no translation had been furnished at the time by the young man with the spectacles.

On hearing this odd story, I changed my opinion about the paper, and, instead of viewing it any longer as a hoax upon the learned, I began to regard it as part of a scheme to cheat the farmer of his money, and I communicated my suspicions to him, warning him to beware of rogues. He requested an opinion from me in writing, which of course I declined giving, and he then took his leave carrying the paper with him. This paper was in fact a singular scrawl. It consisted of all kinds of crooked characters disposed in columns, and had evidently been prepared by some person who had before him at the time a book containing various alphabets. Greek and Hebrew letters, crosses and flourishes, Roman letters inverted or placed sideways, were arranged in perpendicular columns, and the whole ended in a rude delineation of a circle divided into various compartments, decked with various strange marks, and evidently copied after the Mexican Calender given by Humboldt, but copied in such a way as not to betray the source whence it was derived. I am thus particular as to the contents of the paper, inasmuch as I have frequently conversed with my friends on the subject, since the Mormonite excitement began, and well remember that the paper contained any thing else but “Egyptian Hieroglyphics.” Some time after, the same farmer paid me a second visit. He brought with him the golden book in print, and offered it to me for sale. I declined purchasing. He then asked permission to leave the

book with me for examination. I declined receiving it, although his manner was strangely urgent. I adverted once more to the roguery which had been in my opinion practised upon him, and asked him what had become of the gold plates. He informed me that they were in a trunk with the large pair of spectacles. I advised him to go to a magistrate and have the trunk examined. He said the “curse of God” would come upon him should he do this. On my pressing him, however, to pursue the course which I had recommended, he told me that he would open the trunk, if I would take the “curse of God” upon myself. I replied that I would do so with the greatest willingness, and would incur every risk of that nature, provided I could only extricate him from the grasp of rogues. He then left me.

I have thus given you a full statement of all that I know respecting the origin of Mormonism, and must beg you, as a personal favor, to publish this letter immediately, should you find my name mentioned again by these wretched fanatics. Yours respectfully, CHAS. ANTHON.<sup>542</sup>

Another letter was written later: “New York, April 3d, 1841.

Rev. and Dear Sir:

I have often heard that the Mormons claimed me for an auxiliary, but, as no one, until the present time, has ever requested from me a statement in writing, I have not deemed it worth while to say anything publicly on the subject. What I do know of the sect relates to some of the early movements; and as the facts may amuse you, while they will furnish a satisfactory answer to the charge of my being a Mormon proselyte, I proceed to lay them before you in detail.

Many years ago, the precise date I do not now recollect, a plain looking countryman called upon me with a letter from Dr. Samuel L. Mitchell requesting me to examine, and give my opinion upon, a certain paper, marked with various characters, which the Doctor confessed he could not decypher, and which the bearer of the note was very anxious to have explained. A very brief examination of the paper convinced me that it was a mere hoax, and a very clumsy one too. The characters were arranged in columns, like the Chinese mode of writing, and presented the most singular medley that I ever beheld. Greek, Hebrew and all sorts of letters, more or less distorted, either

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<sup>542</sup> Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, 270-272.

through unskilfulness or from actual design, were intermingled with sundry delineations of half moons, stars, and other natural objects, and the whole ended in a rude representation of the Mexican zodiac. The conclusion was irresistible, that some cunning fellow had prepared the paper in question for the purpose of imposing upon the countryman who brought it, and I told the man so without any hesitation. He then proceeded to give me the history of the whole affair, which convinced me that he had fallen into the hands of some sharper, while it left me in great astonishment at his simplicity.

The countryman told me that a gold book had been recently dug up in the western or northern part (I forget which), of our state, and he described this book as consisting of many gold plates, like leaves, secured by a gold wire passing through the edges of each, just as the leaves of a book are sewed together, and presented in this way the appearance of a volume. Each plate, according to him, was inscribed with unknown characters, and the paper which he handed me, a transcript of one of these pages. On my asking him by whom the copy was made, he gravely stated, that along with the golden book there had been dug up a very large pair of spectacles! so large in fact that if a man were to hold them in front of his face, his two eyes would merely look through one of the glasses, and the remaining part of the spectacles would project a considerable distance sideways! These spectacles possessed, it seems a very valuable property, of enabling any one who looked through them, (or rather through one of the lenses,) not only to decypher the characters on the plates, but also to comprehend their exact meaning, and be able to translate them!! My informant assured me that this curious property of the spectacles had been actually tested, and found to be true. A young man, it seems, had been placed in the garret of a farm-house, with a curtain before him, and having fastened the spectacles to his head, had read several pages in the golden book, and communicated their contents in writing to certain persons stationed on the outside of the curtain. He had also copied off one page of the book in the original character, which he had in like manner handed over to those who were separated from him by the curtain, and this copy was the paper which the countryman had brought with him. As the golden book was said to contain very great truths, and most important revelations of a religious nature, a strong desire had been expressed by several persons in the countryman's neighbourhood, to have the whole work translated and published. A proposition had accordingly been made to my informant, to

sell his farm, and apply the proceeds to the printing of the golden book, and the golden plates were to be left with him as security until he should be reimbursed by the sale of the work. To convince him more clearly that there was no risk whatever in the matter, and that the work was actually what it claimed to be, he was told to take the paper, which purported to be a copy of one of the pages of the book, to the city of New York, and submit it to the learned in that quarter, who would soon dispel all his doubts, and satisfy him as to the perfect safety of the investment. As Dr. Mitchell was our “Magnus Apollo” in those days, the man called first upon him; but the Doctor, evidently suspecting some trick, declined giving any opinion about the matter, and sent the countryman down to the college, to see, in all probability what the “learned pundits” in that place would make of the affair. On my telling the bearer of the paper that an attempt had been made to impose on him and defraud him of his property, he requested me to give him my opinion in writing about the paper which he had shown to me. I did so without hesitation, partly for the man’s sake, and partly to let the individual “behind the curtain” see that his trick was discovered. The import of what I wrote was, as far as I can now recollect, simply this, that the marks in the paper appeared to be merely an imitation of various alphabetical characters, and had, in my opinion, no meaning at all connected with them. The countryman then took his leave, with many thanks, and with the express declaration that he would in no shape part with his farm, or embark in the speculation of printing the golden book.

The matter rested here for a considerable time, until one day, when I had ceased entirely to think of the countryman and his paper, this same individual, to my great surprise, paid me a second visit. He now brought with him a duodecimo volume, which he said was a translation into English of the “Golden Bible.” He also stated, that notwithstanding his original determination not to sell his farm, he had been induced evidently to do so, and apply the money to the publication of the book, and had received the golden plates as a security for payment. He begged my acceptance of the volume, assuring me that it would be found extremely interesting, and that it was already “making great noise” in the upper part of the state. Suspecting now that some serious trick was on foot, and that my plain looking visitor might be in fact a very cunning fellow I declined his present, and merely contented myself with a slight examination of the volume while he stood by. The more I declined receiving it, however, the more urgent the man became in offering the book,



until at last I told him plainly, that if he left the volume, as he said he intended to do, I should most assuredly throw it after him as he departed. I then asked him how he could be so foolish as to sell his farm and engage in this affair; and requested him to tell me if the plates were really of gold. In answer to this latter inquiry, he said, that he had never seen the plates themselves, which were carefully locked up in a trunk, but that he had the trunk in his possession. I advised him by all means to open the trunk and examine its contents, and if the plates proved to be of gold, which I did not believe at all, to sell them immediately. His reply was, that. if he opened the trunk, the “curse of heaven would descend upon him and his children.” “However,” added he, “I will agree to open it, provided you take the ‘curse of Heaven’ upon yourself, for having advised me to the step.” I told him I was perfectly willing to do so, and begged he would hasten home and examine the trunk, for he would find that he had been cheated. He promised to do as I recommended, and left me, taking his book with him. I have never seen him since.

Such is a plain statement of all I know respecting the Mormons. My impression now is, that the plain looking countryman was none other than the prophet Smith himself, who assumed an appearance of great simplicity in order to entrap me, if possible, into some recommendation of his book. That the prophet aided me by his inspiration, in interpreting the volume, is only one of the many amusing falsehoods which the Mormonites utter relative to my participation in their doctrines. Of these doctrines I know nothing whatever, nor have I ever heard a single discourse from any of their preachers, although I have often felt a strong curiosity to become an auditor, **since my friends tell me that they frequently name me in their sermons, and even go so far as to say that I am alluded to in the prophecies of Scripture!** (emp. mine)

If what I have here written shall prove of any service in opening the eyes of some of their deluded followers to the real designs of those who profess to be the apostles of Mormonism, it will afford me satisfaction equalled, I have no doubt, only by that which you yourself will feel on this subject.

I remain, very respectfully and truly, your friend,  
CHAS. ANTHON.

Rev. Dr. Coit, New Rochelle, N. Y.”<sup>543</sup>

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<sup>543</sup> John A. Clark, *Gleanings by the Way*, 233-238.

## 2nd Nephi 28:6 - Miracles?

### • The Biblical Definition of Miracles

When it comes to defining a miracle, it can be difficult since the Bible does not give an explicit dictionary term of the word. I know the term “miracle” is tragically used in a modern-day context to refer to giving birth to a baby or surviving a death-defying car collision. People will say it was a miracle they survived it! This term is sadly abused over and over again. If we want a proper and true definition, then we must seek to discover for ourselves what a miracle was. How does the Bible define a miracle? In order to discover a true definition, we must use the synthetic method of Bible study. This means that we must look at each passage in its context that discusses miracles and we have to put all of the passages together to discover what it is teaching us.

- **First**, miracles were observed by the human senses (like sight and hearing). In Matthew 8:1-3, a leper wanted to be cleansed and Jesus was followed by “great multitudes.” They could observe that Jesus immediately healed the leper. In Matthew 8:16,17, a group brought to Jesus many who were demon-possessed and Jesus cast out those demons. They could observe that these people were healed.

- **Second**, miracles do occur when God, in accordance with His will, permits them to occur. In Luke 9:51-56, James and John wanted fire to come down upon the Samaritan village just as Elijah had done in the past (2 Kings 1:9-18). Jesus rebuked them for this attitude because Jesus’ mission was to save people’s lives, not to destroy them. Jesus always did the will of His Father (John 6:38) and His Father’s will was that He would not destroy the Samaritan village. In Luke 23:8-9, Jesus would not perform miracles in the sight of Herod just to amuse him.

- In Hebrews 2:1-4, the Bible states: *“Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?”* We must remember that the Jews in the first-century A.D. had been living under an authorized and true religion for the past

1,500 years. How were the Jews to know that God was working to change in accordance to His will that a new authorized and true religion - Christianity - had been the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament prophets? God worked miracles through His new people - Christians (Acts 2:17-21,39).

- **Third**, notice back in Hebrews 2:4 that miracles are called “signs,” “wonders,” “miracles,” and “gifts of the Holy Spirit.” Notice what Peter states about Jesus in Acts 2:22: “*Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know.*”

- Miracles are mighty works that superseded the laws of nature (such as walking on the Sea of Galilee [John 6:16-21], feeding 5000 with 5 barley loaves and two small fish [John 6:1-14]). Signs have a purpose in that they point to something beyond themselves. Let us go back to the accounts of Jesus feeding the 5000. This event serves as a sign (John 20:30,31).

- Vern S. Poythress states: “Jesus thus indicated that both the manna from the time of Moses and the miracle of feeding the 5,000 have symbolic significance. The manna came in a miraculous way, but even its miraculous character did not make it a source of eternal life; it served only to sustain temporal life. Similarly, the bread that multiplied to feed the 5,000 men sustained physical life (vv. 26–27), but Jesus indicated that both point to something deeper, namely to eternal life. Jesus himself is the one who supplies eternal life. Eternal life belongs to those who “feed on” him: “Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day” (v. 54). Thus the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 has a symbolic significance beyond the fact that it displays divine power. Its significance goes beyond confirming and testifying to the fact that Jesus is an authentic messenger of God, like one of the Old Testament prophets. The miracles shows in symbolic form what Jesus is doing through his life, death, and resurrection—he is bringing eternal life, and giving lasting spiritual nourishment to everyone who comes to him in faith.”<sup>544</sup>

Miracles were called wonders because they have a tremendous effect upon those who observed them. Take for example the audience on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. They were amazed that these Galilean preachers were preaching fluently in their own native languages that they had never studied

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<sup>544</sup> Vern S. Poythress, *The Miracles of Jesus: How the Savior's Mighty Acts Serve as Signs of Redemption* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway), 2016. Loc. 413-424. Kindle edition.

before (Acts 2:1-12).

- **Fourth**, since God is perfect, then God never wastes His efforts. He is all-wise in everything He does and accomplishes. His plan and purposes are always perfect in their intended design, even though as finite humans we may not fully understand what He is doing. Miracles had several purposes, but for our study, one of those purposes was that they were designed to authenticate/notarize/seal with His approval the message that God was issuing through His messengers and to prepare hearts to be receptive to the message that was being taught. Mark 16:15-20 states: *“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.”*

- In Acts 2, the crowd on the day of Pentecost heard the apostles preaching in their native languages they had never studied before and their hearts would have been more receptive because they knew a true genuine miracle had been performed before their very eyes that they could not deny. The Holy Spirit had authenticated the apostles as true messengers because of what they were able to do (John 3:1,2; Hebrews 2:1-4; 2nd Corinthians 12:12).

- In Acts 3, Peter healed the lame man at the Beautiful Gate in Jerusalem. In Acts 3:9-11, the Bible states: “And all the people saw him walking and praising God. Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon’s, greatly amazed.” The crowd were ready to receive God’s message because once again Peter and John had been sealed with God’s approval because they were able to perform genuine miracles. Peter preached the gospel to them in Acts 3:12-26.

- When we put all of this together, a miracle as “is an extraordinary act of God, observable to human senses, which is performed by the will of God, and is at once a mighty work, sign, and wonder, one of the designs of which

is to prepare man for the deliverance and reception of the message of God and confirm the authenticity of the message and the messenger.”<sup>545</sup>

### **One of the Purposes of Miracles**

- Although the purpose was already given in the definition, it is important to repeat it again. One of the purposes of a miracle was to establish and authenticate a messenger of God. God performed through His messengers in the presence of foes or friends (Matthew 12:22-37; Acts 4:13-33).

- Steve Williams wrote: “In order to properly understand miracles in the Bible, we must realize that the chief purpose of miracles was one of confirmation. This is true in Matthew (Mt. 9:4-5; 12:28-29), Mark (Mk. 2:10-11; 16:17-18,20), Luke (Lk. 5:24), John (Jn. 21:24-25), Acts (Acts 2:32-33), and the epistles (2 Cor. 12:12). This is made very plain by the writer of the letter to the Hebrews: “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? It was declared at the first by the Lord, and was attested to us by those who heard him, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to His own will” (Heb. 2:3-4). Miracles were to “accompany” the believers as evidence or proof that their message was true (Mk. 16:17). The ultimate goal of miracles was to produce faith (Jn. 20:30-31).”<sup>546</sup>

### **2nd Nephi 29 - False Claim Made About the Bible**

- Notice that Rigdon anticipates that the objection will be used that the Bible is the all-sufficient, final revelation of God. It is indeed the final revelation of God to man! Rigdon gave himself away when he used the term “Bible,” which is a Greek transliterated term. How did that term get translated there from a reformed Egyptian text?

### **2nd Nephi 31 - Baptism For The Remission of Sins**

- 2 Nephi 31:4-13: “Wherefore, I would that ye should remember that I have spoken unto you concerning that prophet which the Lord showed unto me, that should baptize the Lamb of God, which should take away the sins of the world. And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be

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<sup>545</sup> Keith McCaslin, *What The Bible Says About Miracles*, (Joplin, MO: College Press, no date), 23-24.

<sup>546</sup> Steve Williams, *The More Excellent Way: Studies in 1 Corinthians 13* (J.C. Choate Publications, Winona, MS, 1993), 73.



baptized by water, to fulfil all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water! And now, I would ask of you, my beloved brethren, wherein the Lamb of God did fulfil all righteousness in being baptized by water? Know ye not that he was holy? But notwithstanding he being holy, he showeth unto the children of men that, according to the flesh he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be aobedient unto him in keeping his commandments. Wherefore, after he was baptized with water the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove. And again, it showeth unto the children of men the straitness of the path, and the narrowness of the gate, by which they should enter, he having set the example before them. And he said unto the children of men: Follow thou me. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father? And the Father said: Repent ye, repent ye, and be baptized in the name of my Beloved Son. And also, the voice of the Son came unto me, saying: He that is baptized in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto me; wherefore, follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me do. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall follow the Son, with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism—yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word, behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost; yea, then cometh the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost; and then can ye speak with the tongue of angels, and shout praises unto the Holy One of Israel.”

- This was covered in our section on 2nd Nephi 9:22,23.

### **A Critique of Jacob**

- Washburn summarized Jacob in this manner: “The Book of Jacob, chapters 1-4, contains the preaching of the prophet of that name. The fifth chapter is that striking allegory, a gem in its own right. Here Jacob quotes from the prophet Zenos, apparently one whose writing in part made up the record of the Brass Plates. Chapter 6 is the explanation of the allegory, and contains other material as well. Chapter 7 is entirely different, the narrative of Sherem.”<sup>547</sup>

<sup>547</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 22.

- Jacob is another book I believe that was mostly created by Rigdon to fill the time gap from Lehi to king Benjamin.

- Arbaugh stated: “Jacob also is largely the work of Rigdon, containing a lengthy discussion of the relation of the Jews and Gentiles which is based on Rom. 11:16-24. Three of the next four books, all very short, were apparently little changed by the editors. Enos who was the son of Jacob (who wrote the preceding book) continues the record in his generation, and his son Jarom and grandson Omni likewise write books which are known by their names. The other of these four books, “The Words of Mormon,” has been thought to be the first book of the Manuscript Found but this is incorrect. It contains Mormon’s account of his abridgment of the whole Book of Mormon shortly before it was buried in the earth, and was written by Rigdon to explain that there was another set of plates containing the same material up to this point. During the process of translation this opening part was stolen and by inserting this book Rigdon explained how he could produce another account similar to what had been stolen but not identical with it.”<sup>548</sup>

- As we have said before, Rigdon must be as vague as possible so as to not give himself away. An example of this is found in Jacob 1:9: “Now Nephi began to be old, and he saw that he must soon die; wherefore, he anointed a man to be a king and a ruler over his people now, according to the reigns of the kings.” **What was the name of this man?**

- Hardy, an LDS author, shares the same sentiment: “Now Nephi began to be old, and he saw that he must soon die; wherefore, he anointed a man to be a king and a ruler over his people now, according to the reigns of the kings. The people having loved Nephi exceedingly . . . wherefore, the people were desirous to retain in remembrance his name. And whoso should reign in his stead were called by the people “Second Nephi,” “Third Nephi,” and so forth, according to the reigns of the kings; and thus they were called by the people, let them be of whatever name they would. And it came to pass that Nephi died.” (Jacob 1:9–12)

- Note that even at the end of his life, **Nephi does not yet have a clear successor** (emp. mine). He anoints “a man” who will then take on his name, perhaps as a sort of formal adoption. Elsewhere in the Book of Mormon father/son successions are clearly noted both among the Nephites (Omni 1:23; Mosiah 6:4) and the Lamanites (Mosiah 10:6), and this follows the pattern in

<sup>548</sup> Arbaugh, *Revelation in Mormonism*, 38.

the books of First and Second Kings in the Bible. **The description of the next king after Nephi is an anomaly** (emp. mine).<sup>549</sup>

- Another interesting tidbit is that Sam and his descendants are nowhere to be found after this.

- Hardy states: “We know that Nephi had children and descendants (Mormon lays claim to this distinction as late as the fourth century AD; Morm. 1:5), but perhaps he only had daughters, in which case the next king may have been a son-in-law or even a grandson. It is curious that at exactly this moment, when Nephi died, the descendants of Sam disappear entirely from the record. Jacob reports, “Now the people which were not Lamanites were Nephites; nevertheless, they were called Nephites, Jacobites, Josephites, Zoramites, Lamanites, Lemuelites, and Ishmaelites” (Jacob 1:13). Every male of that generation is accounted for except one— there are never any “Samites” in the Book of Mormon. At his deathbed, Lehi had blessed Sam that his progeny would be combined with Nephi’s: Blessed art thou [Sam], and thy seed; for thou shalt inherit the land like unto thy brother Nephi. And thy seed shall be numbered with his seed; and thou shalt be even like unto thy brother, and thy seed like unto his seed; and thou shalt be blessed in all thy days. (2 Ne. 4:11).

It may be that Sam’s sons married Nephi’s daughters (nearly everyone would have married cousins in that generation) and then adopted the label of “Nephites” as they dropped their own father’s name.<sup>550</sup>

### **Jacob 3:13**

- Jacob 3:13 states: “And a hundredth part of the proceedings of this people, which now began to be numerous, cannot be written upon these plates; but many of their proceedings are written upon the larger plates, and their wars, and their contentions, and the reigns of their kings.”

- Braden had a point when he said: “On page 118 King Jacob tells us that a hundredth part of the wars, contentions and exploits of the Nephites could not be engraved on his plates. About forty years before this, six women left Jerusalem—but one was then married. Their posterity, in about forty years, have divided into two nations, and one nation has built a temple like Solomon’s,

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<sup>549</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 47-48.

<sup>550</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 48.

built cities, and even the inspired Jacob can not engrave one hundredth part of their exploits on his plates. Sidney never did things by halves when he mounted King Ahasuerus' horse.”<sup>551</sup>

## **Jacob 5**

- Jacob 5 gets the reward for the longest allegory which is a mixture of the parable of Luke 13:5-9, the olive tree/wild olive tree from Romans 11:11-36, and Jesus as the true vine from John 15:1-8.

- Braden stated: “King Jacob, alias Sidney, now gives a parable from the Mormon prophet Zenos. The terse, beautiful parables of our Savior concerning the unfruitful tree, the husbandman and his vineyard, and Paul’s parable of the olive tree, that would cover not a page of the Book of Mormon, are diluted, caricatured, and mixed and spread over eight pages, as only hifalutin Sidney could do it. In his awkward attempts to imitate the authorized version in style, he begins thirty sentences on these 8 pages with “and it came to pass,” thirty-one with “Behold.” “Beheld” and “Beholdest” occur nearly a score of times each. “Wherefore” and “thereof” nearly as many times. These cant words of the writer compose a large portion of the parable from Zenos.”<sup>552</sup>

## **Jacob 7:27 - “Adieu”**

- How did a French word come to be translated from a reformed Egyptian text?

**Jacob 2:10/Matthew 5:8; 3:1-3/Matthew 5:8; 3:11/Revelation 21:8 ; 4:8/Romans 11:33; 4:15-17/Matthew 21:42; 5:9/Luke 13:7-8; Romans 11:17; 5:20,22,23,32/John 12:24; 5:32,35/1 Corinthians 13:2; 5:39/Luke 6:43; 5:42,46,49/Matthew 3:10; 5:47/Luke 13:7-8; 5:63/Matthew 19:30; 5:64/Luke 13:8; 5:66/Matthew 3:10; 5:76/Luke 13:8; 6:3/2 Peter 3:10; 6:6/Hebrews 3:7-8; 6:7/Matthew 3:10; 6:8/Acts 2:38; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-19; 6:10/Revelation 14:11; 21:8; 6:11/Matthew 7:13-14; 7:5/Matthew 4:11; 7:14/Luke 22:42; 7:19/Matthew 12:31-32; 7:24/1 Timothy 2:4.**

## **A Critique of Enos, Jarom, Omni, & Words of Mormon**

### **• Comment:**

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<sup>551</sup> Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *Braden-Kelley Debate*, 120.

<sup>552</sup> Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *Braden-Kelley Debate*, 120.

Washburn summarizes Enos in this manner: “The Book of Enos, one chapter of twenty-seven verses, is a thoroughly connected record of events that covered a period of many years, fragmentary in the extreme, a departure in its scarcity of detail from the wealth of information in the preceding books. This is autobiographical throughout, a moving record of a man’s faith in God.”<sup>553</sup>

- Washburn summarized Jarom in this manner: “The Book of Jarom, like that of Enos, has but one chapter, this time of only fifteen verses. It too gives the history of an extended period, many years certainly, and is devoted to ministry and narrative, told in the first person.”<sup>554</sup>

- I think if someone is honest they can see that these three books (Enos, Jarom, and Omni) were there to fill up the space of time down to the reign of king Benjamin.

- Hardy summarizes Words of Mormon very well: “Jacob is an interesting figure but not a major narrator— at least not compared with Nephi. His book consists of just seven chapters, which include a sermon (Jacob 2–3), an address to modern readers incorporating Zenos’ extended allegory of the olive tree (taken from the Brass Plates; Jacob 4–6), and a confrontation with a heretic named Sherem (Jacob 7). From there the Small Plates rapidly trail off; three narrators write about two pages each, and the other four write only single paragraphs. And then, suddenly, we find ourselves at the Words of Mormon. For someone reading the Book of Mormon for the first time, this brief section comes as something of a surprise. After nearly 150 pages of narrative— in which attentive readers will have learned to distinguish between Nephi the character and Nephi the memoirist— it turns out that there is another mind at work in the text. In this two-page editorial interruption, we discover that everything up to this point was part of a relatively brief document— the Small Plates of Nephi— that was specially chosen for inclusion by Mormon, a prophet/historian who lived nearly a thousand years after Nephi. The Book of Mormon will soon resume its chronological advance through Nephi history, but the Words of Mormon is an urgent time capsule from the future dropped into the narrative at about 200 BC. With no warning, we read, “And now I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making into the hands of my son Moroni, behold, I have witnessed almost all the

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<sup>553</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 22.

<sup>554</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 22.



destruction of my people, the Nephites. And it is many hundred years after the coming of Christ” (W. of M. 1:1–2).

Mormon goes on to explain that after he had written the history of his people from Lehi to King Benjamin (that is, from ca. 600 to 120 BC), he discovered the Small Plates among the many records in his possession. He was so taken by its prophecies of Christ (many of which had been fulfilled) that he incorporated those plates into his own history as an addendum of sorts. From the Words of Mormon on, most of the text is Mormon’s edited abridgment of the primary record of the Nephites, the Large Plates of Nephi.”<sup>555</sup>

- Washburn summarized Omni in this way: “The Book of Omni is in size alone like this immediately preceding. It is another one-chapter book, composed of thirty verses.

From the point of view of content the first eleven verses belong with the Book of Enos and Jarom; they are the same in spirit, style, and tone. They differ in one regard: these eleven verses are the contribution to the record of four men, Omni, Amaron, Chemish, and Abinadom, our only account of something like 225 crowded years, a long time in any case, an astoundingly long time to be reported in eleven paragraphs.

It is worth repeating that from the point of view of style and content, the Book of Jarom might as well have twenty-six verses and include the first part of the Book of Omni.

The last nineteen verses of the Book of Omni provide a different kind of study altogether. They constitute a unit quite unlike anything else in the entire Book of Mormon. They could very well, and perhaps should, be called the Book of Amaleki...

These last nineteen verses (the Book of Amaleki) give the account of the affairs of the Nephite people between the approximate dates 175 and 124 B.C. But it is not these affairs which give the record its distinctive flavor and value. The foremost feature of Amaleki’s contribution is in those happenings which do not belong to that period at all. Few paragraphs go together chronologically. Their material makes them parts of other widely separated portions of the Book of Mormon. Of no other section may this be said.”<sup>556</sup>

“We have here the mention of king Mosiah I who led a group of faithful Nephites from the land of Nephi northward. It was these who discovered

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<sup>555</sup> Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader’s Guide*, 89-90.

<sup>556</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 23-24.

Zarahemla and the Mulekites. The date is not given for this migration, nor is it possible to approximate it with any assurance of accuracy. Let us say it was between 250 and 225 B.C. Thus it falls outside of the period of Amaleki.

Something more may be said here. In Jacob 1:11 we read: Wherefore, the people were desirous to retain in remembrance his (Nephi's) name. And whoso should reign in his stead were called by the people, second Nephi, third Nephi, and so forth, according to the reigns of the kings; and thus they were called by the people, let them be of whatever name they would."

Was Mosiah one of these kings? If so, why was he not called Nephi X or Nephi XI or whatever he would happen to be? If he was not a king at all, but one of the prophets, we face another question just as puzzling: why did he not have the Small Plates? Maybe the practice of calling the kings by the name Nephi had been discontinued, or Mosiah could have been a prominent man without official position, though this is doubtful.<sup>557</sup>

- Braden states: "On page 137 we have another miracle. Mosiah, a Nephite, discourses to the people of Zarahemla— Judahites—who left Jerusalem eleven years after Lehi's departure. They had lost all knowledge of God, and were atheists, for they denied his existence, and their language had become so changed that they could not understand Mosiah, yet these atheists, who could not understand Mosiah, rejoiced exceedingly when he told them what they did not believe, and what they could not understand. Now we will call attention to one of the most gigantic of blunders in this bundle of blunders, the Book of Mormon. We are told, on page 137: "And it came to pass that after the people were taught the language of Mosiah Zarahemla (their chief) gave a genealogy of his fathers according to his memory, as they were written, (what the fathers!) but not on these plates. And it came to pass that the people of Zarahemla (the chief) and Mosiah (the chief) did unite together, and Mosiah (the chief) was appointed to be their King. And it came to pass in the days of Mosiah there was a large stone brought unto him with the engravings on it, and he did interpret the engravings by the gift and power of God. And they gave on account of one Coriantamur and the slain of his people. And Coriantamur was discovered by the people of Zarahemla (the Chief) and he dwelled with them (the subject of the chief Zarahemla) for the space of nine moons." If this language means anything it means that Coriantamur died among the subjects of the chief Zarahemla in Zarahemla's

<sup>557</sup> Washburn, *The Contents, Structure, and Authorship of the Book of Mormon*, 24.

time. That was about 150 years before Christ, Turn to the Book of Ether and we learn, that Coriantamur was the last of the Jaredites, who were all slain but Coriantamur 600 B. C. Mormons may take which horn of the dilemma they please. If the Jaredites were slain before Lehi came to America, Coriantamur was 500 years old when he came among the subjects of King Zarahemla. Or the Jaredites and the Nephites inhabited the same country for 450 years, living together, knowing nothing of each others existence!”<sup>558</sup>

• Braden also argued: “The gross contradiction which makes Coriantumur the last Jaredite, die among the people of King Zarehemla about 200 years B. C., when the battle of which he was sole survivor occurred more than 600 years B. C. Either he was over 400 years old or the Jaredites were not exterminated until 200 B. C. instead of 600.”<sup>559</sup>

• **Enos 1:1**/Ephesians 6:4; **1:2**/Acts 10:43; **1:5**/Luke 5:20; **1:6**/Titus 1:2; **1:8**/Matthew 9:22; **1:14**/Galatians 1:14; **1:15**/James 1:6; **1:26**/Romans 9:1; **1:27**/1 Corinthians 15:53-54; Matthew 25:34; John 14:2-3. **Jarom 1:4**/2 Corinthians 13:14. **Omni 1:25**/1 Corinthians 12:4-11; **1:26**/Matthew 10:22. **Words of Mormon 1:15**/Matthew 24:34; Titus 1:11; **1:16**/2 Peter 2:1.

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<sup>558</sup> Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *Braden-Kelley Debate*, 121.

<sup>559</sup> Clark Braden and E.L. Kelley, *Braden-Kelley Debate*, 65.

## Chapter 20: Summing It All Up

### **There are two alternatives:**

**Either** in 1814-1816, Sidney Rigdon stole and/or copied Solomon Spalding's *Manuscript Found* (based on the testimonies of Joseph Miller, Redick McKee, and Matilda Davidson) or Miller, McKee, and Davidson were mistaken and possibly Sidney Rigdon obtained the manuscript after the bookstore went bankrupt in 1822 or he obtained it from there before the year 1822. Another possibility, based on what McKee testified, is that Rigdon served as a consultant in helping Solomon Spalding with his manuscript. It is then highly probable that Rigdon felt that since Spalding had died and it was not going to be printed, then Rigdon felt justified to keep this manuscript under his care.

In the summer of 1821, Rigdon along with his father-in-law, Adamson Bentley, met Alexander Campbell and they discussed theological ideas. Some of the ideas are valid and scriptural and can be proven from the Scriptures. Rigdon joins the Disciples of Christ (based on the testimony of Alexander Campbell).

In 1822, while being pastor of the First Baptist church in Pittsburgh, Rigdon had revealed to John Winter (who was boarding with him at the time) that he had Spalding's manuscript (based on the second-hand testimony of John Winter).

What did Sidney Rigdon do with Solomon Spalding's manuscript after having told Winter about it? Possibly, it would seem looking in hindsight that Rigdon at this time did not think in any way of trying to hide or cover up something since he openly showed it to John Winter and even told him that the novel once belonged to Solomon Spalding.

Did he re-write his own portions into it hoping that he could sell it himself one day? We don't know.

In the range of 1822-1825, it is possible that either Sidney Rigdon met Oliver Cowdery who introduced Joseph Smith to him or Parley Pratt introduced Rigdon to Joseph Smith, or by chance, Rigdon met Smith personally. This is speculation and we just do not know. For some reason, Sidney Rigdon decided to collaborate and start working with Smith and Cowdery. Why would he do that?

It is a well-known fact that Joseph Smith was known for his money-digging

activities.<sup>560</sup> He was also known for being a kind of magician.<sup>561</sup>

Tucker stated: “A word in regard to the origin of Mormonism, whose advent has furnished so marked an illustration of the susceptibilities of human credulity even at the present age of boasted enlightenment, may not be without interest in this connection, now after the lapse of some thirty years. As early as 1820, Joe Smith, at the age of about 19 years, began to assume the gift of supernatural endowments, and became the leader of a small party of shiftless men and boys like himself who engaged in nocturnal money-digging operations upon the hills in and about Palmyra. These labors were always performed in the night, and during their continuance, many marvellous accounts and rumors in regard to them were put afloat in the neighborhood. Joe professed from time to time to have “almost” secured the hidden treasure, which, however, just at the instant of attempting to grasp it, would vanish by the breaking of the spell of his magic power. -- Numbers of men and women, as was understood, were found credulous enough to believe “there might be something in it,” who were induced by their confidence and cupidity to contribute privately towards the cost of carrying on the imposture, under the promise of sharing in the expected gains; and in this way the loaferly but cunning Smith, who was too lazy to work for his living, (his deluded followers did all the digging,) was enabled to obtain a scanty subsistence for himself without pursuing any useful employment.”<sup>562</sup>

Rigdon, at some point, must have written his Baptist theological beliefs into it and what he learned from being with Walter Scott, Alexander Campbell, etc., of which some truths were from the Bible.

As Arbaugh states: ““In the year 1823-24 Rigdon apparently conceived a practical use for the story. He was now preaching a new religion, a restored primitive Christianity, so why not use a new Bible containing the restored gospel? But to stand sponsor for such a tremendous undertaking was too much for a man of Rigdon’s character, for if he had a brilliant intellect he was likewise lacking in force of personality and bravado. In this situation he adopted Smith as a tool, a figure-head prophet.

But Rigdon’s decision meant first of all a considerable amount of literary

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560 Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Joseph Smith and Money Digging*, (Utah Lighthouse Ministry: Digital version, 2015).

561 D. Michael Quinn. *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, 2nd edition, 1998, 59.

562 Pomeroy Tucker, “Mormonism and Joe Smith -- The Book of Mormon or Golden Bible.” *Wayne Democratic Press*, (Lyons, NY, Wed., May 26, 1858, Vol. III, No. 2.



work. The Spaulding story which he had acquired did not fully satisfy him as a new Bible. Spaulding had certainly been no Campbellite and Rigdon's passion for sectarian argument necessitated the incorporation, as a final answer to all opponents, of the tenets which he was then championing. He soon began this work which was not completed until four years later."<sup>563</sup>

In the range of 1822-1825, it is possible that either Sidney Rigdon met Oliver Cowdery who introduced Joseph Smith to him or Parley Pratt introduced Rigdon to Joseph Smith, or by chance, Rigdon met Smith personally. This is speculation and we just do not know.

In 1826-1827 in Bainbridge, Ohio, Rigdon and several others were working on turning *Manuscript Found* into what would become the Book of Mormon (based on the testimonies of Dencey Adeline Thompson and Amarilla Dunlap).

Based on the testimonies of Darwin Atwater (1827), Dr. Storm Rosa (early 1830), Adamson Bentley, Thomas Clapp, Samuel Whitney, John Rudolph, Reuben P. Harmon, and Almon B. Greene, Rigdon had told them about either a new religion and/or book that would come out as much as two years before the Book of Mormon was published.

In the middle of March of 1827, based on the eyewitness testimony of Lorenzo Saunders, Rigdon had visited Joseph Smith. What this visit was about is mere speculation, but could it be Rigdon handing over some re-worked portions of the Spaulding manuscript to him.

In the fall of 1827, based on the eyewitness testimony of Lorenzo Saunders, Rigdon had visited Joseph Smith again. What the visit was about is mere speculation.

In the summer of 1828, the crisis of the loss of the first 116 pages occurred.

It is assumed that Oliver Cowdery and/or Parley Pratt would need to contact Rigdon to tell him of the bad news.

In the summer of 1828, based on the eyewitness testimony of Lorenzo Saunders and Pomeroy Tucker, Rigdon had visited Joseph Smith again. Certainly, an inference could be drawn that it had something to do with the loss of the 116 pages.

Rigdon must have come up with an idea that Joseph Smith would continue to translate where he left off, which would presently be somewhere close to the beginning of Mosiah. Smith would slowly dictate using the Spaulding source

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<sup>563</sup> George B. Arbaugh, "Revelation In Mormonism: Its Character And Changing Form" (Department of Philosophy, University of Iowa, Ph.D. thesis, 1931). 13.

material (along with Rigdon's rewrites) that did not end up missing.

Rigdon saw this as a grand opportunity to add his new theological views to the mix that he had learned.

Most likely due to the time factor because Smith would need to have more access to the dictation of "translating," Rigdon (and Pratt) used Spalding's source material.

Rigdon also went back to using some more Spalding source material and he may have been working on it before the loss of the 116 pages. Due to the 116 pages, Rigdon could add some more. So he and Cowdery worked on 3rd Nephi 8 - 30 (along with some "filler material" from Isaiah and Malachi), 4th Nephi [which contains doctrines of communal living (4th Nephi 1:4,25)] and baptism for salvation (4 Nephi 1:1) and also Mormon 7,8, and 9.

Rigdon also worked on Ether (which is mostly Spalding material). It goes up to Ether 3:5, then Rigdon adds the brother of Jared meeting Jesus along with theological content that stretches from chapter 3 to chapter 4. In chapter 5, Rigdon is introducing the three witnesses that would be used - Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer. This was probably written with the purpose in mind of gaining Martin Harris' trust so that he would mortgage his farm in order to pay for the publication. Some more Spalding material is used in chapters 6 through 11 with a few rewrites. In chapter 12 and half of chapter 13, there is some theological content expounded. Rigdon then returns to the Spalding material that lasts until the end.

Rigdon also decided to write one more book called Moroni to express more doctrinal matters. There are NO "came to pass" phrases in the entire book which contributes to the evidence that it is NOT Spalding material.

Part of the beginning of 1st Nephi (which was original Spalding material) must not have suffered damage. There are great reasons to believe that 1 Nephi 1-5 survived.

In re-writing 1st Nephi, Spalding's source material was 1st Nephi 1-7. Rigdon then wrote chapters 6 and 9 to incorporate the idea of the "small plates." The interpretation of the dream would be Rigdon's theological content that he would re-work that covers 1 Nephi 9-15. Then Rigdon used Spalding's source material again for 1st Nephi 16, 17, and 18 with a few touches to add to it. Rigdon returns again to his theological content for chapter 19 and adds Isaiah 48 for 1 Nephi 20 and Isaiah 49 for 1 Nephi 21. Rigdon then put more theological content in for 1 Nephi 22.

In re-writing 2nd Nephi, Rigdon decides to add more theological content for

2nd Nephi chapters 1-4. For chapter 3, Rigdon decides to add in a “prophecy” that Joseph Smith, Jr., actually is a descendant from Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 39-50) to make him look legitimate. Rigdon also adds himself in as the spokesman for this new “legitimate” prophet Joseph Smith, Jr. (2nd Nephi 3:17-18; *D & C* 100). Rigdon proceeds with more Spalding source material in chapter 5 stating that Nephi was following the Law of Moses and built a temple that was likened to Solomon’s temple. He even consecrated his younger brothers as priests! Rigdon returns to his own theological content for chapter six. From this point, he decides to add “filler material” such as Isaiah, which would be found in 2nd Nephi 7-8, returns to more theological content of his own for chapters 9-11, returns back to Isaiah for 2nd Nephi 12-24, goes back to more theological content for 2 Nephi 25-26, and returns back to Isaiah 29 in 2nd Nephi 27.

There are two alternatives in regards to 2nd Nephi 27. First, it is very probable that 2nd Nephi 27 had already been written down before February 1828 as a possible catalyst disguised as a supposed “prophecy” in order to get Martin Harris to go to New York to meet professor Charles Anthon to substantiate that the letters that were translated as “legitimate.” Rigdon decided that this was the appropriate place to insert that “prophecy” since he had been working on earlier Isaiah material to be used as filler material. Rigdon then promotes more theological content in 2nd Nephi 28-33 of which he adds new theological truths that he had learned while being part of the Disciples. The second alternative to 2nd Nephi 27 was written down **after** February 1828 as a supposed prophecy. I believe the latter-view to be correct.

In coming up with Jacob, Rigdon decides to insert more theological content into it. Rigdon seems to have left out the Spalding source material and just proceeds with a few names like Sherem in Jacob 7. Being the Biblical “scholar” Rigdon was, it is very highly probably that he decided to make a long parable that incorporated several themes from the Bible such as the parable of Luke 13, John the Baptist, the olive tree (representing the Jews) and wild-olive tree (representing the Gentiles) from Romans 11.

In coming up with Enos, Jarom, Omni, and the Words of Mormon, which was getting to the tail end of the 116 pages, it seems that Rigdon mixed some Spalding source material along with his own theological content into it.

In 1831, Rigdon was identified as the author of the Book of Mormon by the *Cleveland Advertiser* and James Gordon Bennett. In February 1832, Orson Hyde and Samuel Smith, attempted to convert the townspeople of Conneaut,

Ohio. Nehemiah King (among others) were convinced that the writings of Solomon Spalding for the source of the Book of Mormon. Later on there are these connections as we see listed below:

**The connection between the Book of Mormon and Solomon Spalding's "Manuscript Found":**

- |                       |                    |                     |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. John Spalding      | 2. Martha Spalding | 3. Nahum Howard     |
| 4. Artemas Cunningham | 5. Aaron Wright    | 6. John Miller      |
| 7. Henry Lake         | 8. Oliver Smith    | 9. Matilda Davidson |
| 10. Matilda McKinstry | 11. Abner Jackson  | 12. Joseph Miller   |
| 13. Redick McKee      |                    |                     |

**The connection between Sidney Rigdon and Solomon Spalding's "Manuscript Found":**

- |                     |                    |                     |
|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Rebecca Eichbaum | 2. Joseph Miller   | 3. John Winter      |
| 4. Redick McKee     | 5. Amarilla Dunlap | 6. Dencey Thompson  |
| 7. John C. Bennett  | 8. James Jeffrey   | 9. Matilda Davidson |

**The connection between Sidney Rigdon and his foreknowledge of the Book of Mormon:**

- |                    |                       |                     |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Adamson Bentley | 2. Alexander Campbell | 3. Darwin Atwater   |
| 4. Almon B. Green  | 5. John Rudolph       | 6. Reuben P. Harmon |
| 7. Dr. Storm Rosa  | 8. Samuel F. Whitney  |                     |

**The connection between Sidney Rigdon and Joseph Smith, Jr. prior to his conversion in Nov. 1830:**

- |                      |                   |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Mrs. Horace Eaton | 2. Pomeroy Tucker | 3. Orasmus Turner |
| 4. Lorenzo Saunders  | 5. S.F. Anderwick | 6. Abel Chase     |
| 7. Emily Austin      |                   |                   |

We have also examined the Book of Mormon internally and found the Spalding-Rigdon theory to be supportive of the details the eyewitnesses gave to it.

**Conclusion**

The argument that is usually given to those who do not believe in the Book of Mormon can be summarized by Thorne.

Melvin J. Thorne wrote: “Ultimately, it (the Book of Mormon - SF) appears to be too complex to have been written by Joseph or any of his contemporaries in the early nineteenth century under any conceivable set of circumstances other than the one Joseph describes - the translation by miraculous means of an authentically ancient document.”<sup>564</sup>

I am in agreement that it is complex. But complexity does not necessarily mean that it is inspired by God. In fact, when you examine **Appendix 1**, you will see that there are contradictions with the Bible and contradictions within itself. There are so many other problems with it. It is shown to be a man-made book and I believe we have produced a plausible case for where it most probably came from.

There is also the case to where there are doctrines that come later on that contradict the Bible such as God the Father having a body of flesh and bones, the Aaronic priesthood being restored, God was once a man, there are many gods, polygamy, and many other false doctrines that arose that contradict the Bible.

Perhaps you are a Latter-Day Saint and realize that your whole world has been turned upside down. Maybe you believe that there are only two alternatives: it is either that the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints is the true church or it is atheism/agnosticism. May I humbly state that there is a third alternative: **true Christianity**.

True Christianity is backed up by many kinds of evidences: (1) the existence of God from the cosmological, teleological, and moral arguments, (2) the fine-tuning of the universe for His existence, (3) the unity and consistency of the Bible that claims to be God’s word in its themes, doctrine, types and antitypes, (4) the purity of its ethics, (5) the Bible’s relevance in human needs to solve problems such as addiction, aloneness, a guide for marriage and family, principles of wisdom to live a life that is truly abundant (John 10:10), provides comfort in trials, cancels the fear of death, fits into man’s complex psychology (6) the historical trustworthiness and reliability of the Bible in archaeology, (7) the scientific accuracy of the Bible, (8) prophecies fulfilled concerning Israel’s history and the nations around her (such as Tyre), (10) prophecies concerning the Messiah and how Jesus fulfills them, (11) the identity of Jesus as the Son of God, His heartwarming character, His moral glory, His perfect methods of teaching, His miracles that He performed that confirmed His identity, and (12) His resurrection from the dead and the reliable eyewitness testimonies of the apostles and many others.

<sup>564</sup> <http://maxwellinstitute.byu.edu/publications/books/?bookid=41&chapid=186>.



You see, the Bible teaches that there would be false prophets (Matthew 7:1-5; 2 Peter 2). Now you realize you have been led by false prophets for a long time. May I humbly speak to you the truth in love that there is the true Jesus Christ that is found in the true word of God - the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16,17). The Bible is the inspired, inerrant, authoritative word of God (2 Peter 1:20,21; John 17:17; Colossians 3:17). It will not lead you astray. You can read about the church that Jesus established (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:1-47). You can become a member of the true church that Jesus established two thousand years ago. We, as members of the church of Christ (a designation that the church belongs/owned by Jesus Christ [Ephesians 1:22,23; Acts 20:28; Romans 16:16]), seek to just return to what the Bible teaches.

Unfortunately, you can read about in church history the rise of the Roman Catholic church and the division that occurred from it. Do you realize they introduced many foreign doctrines - prayers to the saints, purgatory, mechanical instruments of music into Christian worship, the Mass, the separated priesthood, the pope, etc.? Do you realize that the Reformation also introduced some false teachings as like water immersion is not necessary for salvation, faith alone, etc.?

Do you remember the seed principle (Luke 8:11)? If you plant the true word of God in your heart, you can become a **true Christian**. I want you to come to Jesus because He is seeking you. He loves you so much. He wants to be forgiven by believing on Him as the Son of God (John 8:24; 20:30,31), have the faith to repent of your sins (Acts 2:38), have the faith to confess Him as the Son of God (Romans 10:9,10) and have the faith to be immersed in baptism so your sins can be washed away by the blood of the Lamb (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:20,21). He said in Matthew 11:28-30: ***“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*** We must also continue to walk in the light as He is in the light (1 John 1:7-9). This is a great assurance! We can look forward to spending eternity with Him forever!

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## Appendix 1

### Questions About The Book of Mormon Shane Fisher

**The Book of Mormon** (hereafter **BOM**) is claimed to be another book inspired by God in addition to the Bible. If the **BOM** is from God, then we ought to accept it. However, if it did not originate from God, then it ought to be rejected. We need to be like the Bereans and investigate whether these claims are true or false (Acts 17:10-12). I have read through it several times and have many questions for Latter-Day Saints.

**(1) Why did God choose to reveal directly to Joseph Smith the BOM in Elizabethan English rather than nineteenth-century English (the era in which he lived)?**

The story starts with Lehi, a Jew, who lives in Jerusalem, during the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah (1 Nephi 1:2-4). It is said Lehi's family line had learned Egyptian (1 Nephi 3:19).

**(2) Why did they learn the language of the Egyptians?**

**(3) Why would the BOM authors write the record in the Egyptian language instead of the Hebrew language?**

Here is the reasoning given in Mormon 9:32,33 (401-423 A.D.): **“And now, behold, we have written this record according to our knowledge, in the characters which are called among us the reformed Egyptian, being handed down and altered by us, according to our manner of speech. And if our plates had been sufficiently large we should have written in Hebrew; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us also; and if we could have written in Hebrew, behold we would have no imperfection in our record. But the Lord knoweth the things which we have written, and also that none other people knoweth our language; and because that none other people knoweth our language, therefore he hath prepared means for the interpretation thereof** (emp. mine).”

**(4) Is Moroni claiming imperfections since it was not written in Hebrew?**

**(5) If so, how is that consistent with true inspiration that requires inerrancy since God is the author of perfection (John 10:35; Titus 1:2)?**

Furthermore, three Nephites (living in the first century A.D.) were to tarry on

the earth carrying out the ministry until the second coming of Jesus Christ (See Mormon 8:10,11; Ether 12:17; 3 Nephi 28:4-10).

**(6) Why were the three Nephites not informed where the records were hidden and why did God not give them the task of translating the reformed Egyptian record?**

**(7) Why the wait for Joseph Smith, Jr. to come?**

**(8) If the native Americans did originate from the Lamanites, then why did not these Native American tribes speak and/or write in the Egyptian or Hebrew languages that would have been taught to them at some point?**

We also learn Lehi is a prophet who foretells the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (1 Nephi 1:4). God tells Lehi in a dream to get his family out of the city because there are Jews who seek to kill him (1 Nephi 2:1) and go into the wilderness.

1 Nephi 2:4-5 states: ***“And it came to pass that he departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance (emp. mine), and his gold and silver, and his precious things, and took nothing with him, save it were his family, and provisions, and tents, and departed into the wilderness. And he came down by the borders near the shore of the Red Sea; and he traveled in the wilderness in the borders which are nearer the Red Sea...”***

One LDS researcher has claimed to have identified the Wadi Tayyib al-Isim as the location of the river of Laman (1 Nephi 2:8-10) [Potter 1999]. From Jerusalem to the Gulf of Aqaba, the distance is about 155 miles. From there to the Wadi Tayyib al-Isim is about 74 miles. **That is 229 miles, one way!**

The narrative continues with God coming to Lehi in a dream in 1 Nephi 3:2-4: ***“And it came to pass that he spake unto me, saying: Behold I have dreamed a dream, in the which the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brethren shall return to Jerusalem (emp. mine). For behold, Laban hath the record of the Jews and also a genealogy of my forefathers, and they are engraven upon plates of brass. Wherefore, the Lord hath commanded me that thou and thy brothers should go unto the house of Laban, and seek the records, and bring them down hither into the wilderness.”***

**(9) Why did the Lord not command Lehi to retrieve the genealogical plates of brass in Jerusalem before they ventured out into the wilderness (1 Nephi 2:1-6; 3:1-10)?**

In 2 Kings 24:10-18, the Bible states: ***“At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was***

*besieged. ... Also he carried into captivity all Jerusalem: all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths. **None remained except the poorest people of the land.** And he carried Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. The king's mother, the king's wives, his officers, and the mighty of the land he carried into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. All the valiant men, seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths, one thousand, all who were strong and fit for war, these the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. Then the king of Babylon made Mattaniah, Jehoiachin's uncle, king in his place, and changed his name to Zedekiah."*

The events of the **BOM** supposedly took place in the first year of king Zedekiah (1 Nephi 1:4) **after** 2 Kings 24:10-18. Laban is very rich because he had a treasury.

1 Nephi 4:20 states: "**And after I had done this, I went forth unto the treasury of Laban. And as I went forth towards the treasury of Laban** (emp. mine), **behold, I saw the servant of Laban who had the keys of the treasury. And I commanded him in the voice of Laban, that he should go with me into the treasury."**

**(10) Why was Laban not taken off into captivity earlier since he was one of the rich?** The Bible says that only the poorest people of the land remained.

In 1 Nephi 2:4, it states: "**And it came to pass that he [Lehi-SF] departed into the wilderness. And he left his house, and the land of his inheritance** (emp. mine), **and his gold and silver, and his precious things..."**

When Nephi and his brothers returned to Lehi, they showed Lehi the genealogical plates and Lehi discovers he is a descendant of Joseph (specifically Manasseh - 1 Nephi 5:14; cf. Alma 10:3).

**(11) Why did Lehi - a Jew who had dwelt his whole life in Jerusalem (1 Nephi 1:4) not know his genealogy?**

**(12) How did Lehi know the land of inheritance that belonged to him was his land if he did not know his genealogy?**

It was very important for Israelites to have known genealogical information.

**First**, each tribe had received a land inheritance (Joshua 21-22). For an Israelite to inherit land in a specific tribal area would have required evidence that he descended from that particular tribe. **Second**, genealogies were important because they confirmed whether or not a Jewish male could serve in the priesthood (Numbers 3:8-15). **Third**, genealogies were kept meticulously for tracing out the line of the Messiah who would come from David (2 Samuel 7:12-14; Matthew 1; 22:42).\*

1 Nephi 4:38; 5:10b-14a states: “And it came to pass that we [Nephi, Sam, Laman, Lemuel - SF] took the plates of brass and the servant of Laban, and departed into the wilderness, and journeyed unto the tent of our father... my father, Lehi, took the records which were engraven upon the plates of brass, and he did search them from the beginning. And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world, and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents; And also a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah; And also the prophecies of the holy prophets, from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah; and also many prophecies which have been spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah. And it came to pass that my father, Lehi, also found upon the plates of brass a genealogy of his fathers; wherefore he knew that he was a descendant of Joseph.”

**(13) Is this not a vast amount of literature that would have required a lot of plates of brass?**

1 Nephi 4:22-26 states: “And he [Zoram - Laban’s servant - SF] spake unto me [Nephi - SF] concerning the elders of the Jews, he knowing that his master, Laban, had been out by night among them. And I spake unto him as if it had been Laban. *And I also spake unto him that I should carry the engravings, which were upon the plates of brass, to my elder brethren, who were without the walls (emp. mine). And I also bade him that he should follow me. And he, supposing that I spake of the brethren of the church (emp. mine), and that I was truly that Laban whom I had slain, wherefore he did follow me.*”

**(14) Do you really expect one man - Nephi - to have carried all these plates out of the city of Jerusalem?**

**(15) What does Nephi mean by “the brethren of the church?”**

1 Nephi 5:17-19 states: “And now when my father [Lehi-SF] saw all these things, he was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed — That these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people who were of his seed. *Wherefore, he said that these plates of brass should never perish (emp. mine);* neither should they be dimmed any more by time. And he prophesied many things concerning his seed.”

**(16) Where are these non-perishable plates of brass today?**

According to 1 Nephi 7:1-5, Nephi and his brethren were commanded to go up to Jerusalem a second time to find wives in order to raise families in the land of promise.

**(17) Why did the Lord not command Nephi and his company to complete that task while they were in Jerusalem earlier?** Keep in mind this is another round trip of around 400 miles.

1 Nephi 7:14 states: “**For behold, the Spirit of the Lord ceaseth soon to strive with them; for behold, they have rejected the prophets, and Jeremiah have they cast into prison. And they have sought to take away the life of my father, insomuch that they have driven him out of the land.**”

Jeremiah 32:1,2 states: “*The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. For then the king of Babylon’s army besieged Jerusalem, and Jeremiah the prophet was shut up in the court of the prison, which was in the king of Judah’s house.*”

Jeremiah 37:15 states: “*Therefore the princes were angry with Jeremiah, and they struck him and put him in prison in the house of Jonathan the scribe. For they had made that the prison.*” (credited to Walters, 10).

**(18) If Lehi’s company left Jerusalem in the first year of king Zedekiah (597 B.C.), and Jeremiah’s imprisonment did not occur until the tenth year of Zedekiah’s reign (587 B.C.) [Jeremiah 32:1,2; 37:15], then why does Nephi say that “Jeremiah have they cast into prison” if it has not happened yet for another decade?**

1 Nephi 7:22-8:2 states: “**And it came to pass that we did come down unto the tent of our father. And after I and my brethren and all the house of Ishmael had come down unto the tent of my father, they did give thanks unto the Lord their God; and they did offer sacrifice and burnt offerings unto him. And it came to pass that we had gathered together all manner of seeds of every kind, both of grain of every kind, and also of the seeds of fruit of every kind. And it came to pass that while my father tarried in the wilderness (emp. mine) he spake unto us...**”

**(19) How could Nephi and company have “gathered together all manner of seeds of every kind”, both of grains and of fruit in the wilderness?**

**(20) Why does Lehi reveal the mystery of Christ before it was to be made known according to the apostle Paul in the first century A.D. (Ephesians 3:1-7; Colossians 1:24-2:3; 1 Corinthians 2:7-8; Romans 16:25-27)?**



Lehi “prophesied” in 1 Nephi 10:11-14 (supposedly written between 600-570 B.C.): **“And it came to pass after my father had spoken these words he spake unto my brethren concerning the gospel which should be preached among the Jews, and also concerning the dwindling of the Jews in unbelief. And after they had slain the Messiah, who should come, and after he had been slain he should rise from the dead, and should make himself manifest, by the Holy Ghost, unto the Gentiles. Yea, even my father spake much concerning the Gentiles, and also concerning the house of Israel, that they should be compared like unto an olive tree, whose branches should be broken off and should be scattered upon all the face of the earth. Wherefore, he said it must needs be that we should be led with one accord into the land of promise, unto the fulfilling of the word of the Lord, that we should be scattered upon all the face of the earth. And after the house of Israel should be scattered they should be gathered together again; or, in fine, after the Gentiles had received the fulness of the Gospel, the natural branches of the olive tree, or the remnants of the house of Israel, should be grafted in, or come to the knowledge of the true Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer.”**

Gary Summers stated it well: “The Bible tells us that there are some things that were not made known until Jesus and the apostles made them known. We must remember that, although the prophets spoke of future things, they did not understand them. They searched diligently to try to figure out WHEN the things they prophesied of would be fulfilled, as well as what their words did “signify” (1 Peter 1:10-11). They testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, but they did not comprehend their own message (1 Peter 1:12). So how can we explain that the Book of Mormon can summarize the whole process of salvation and even preaches “a remission of sins” (a description used only in the New Testament)?” (Summers 413). This same argument can be applied to many other chapters of the *BOM*.

Nephi has grand visions of the future given to him by God. He foresees Jesus being born of a virgin (1 Nephi 11:19-21), being baptized by John (11:27), His miracles (11:31), the crucifixion (11:33), etc. Further down the stream of time, Nephi sees “among the nations of the Gentiles the formation of a great church... an abominable church” (1 Nephi 13:4,6). **Who is this great and abominable church?** Its identity can be discovered based on later details in this “prophecy.”

**First**, Nephi foretells **“a man among the Gentiles, who was separated from the seed of my brethren by the many waters... and he went forth upon the**

**many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land”** (1 Nephi 13:12). This has been identified as Christopher Columbus.

**Second**, verses 17-19 foretell of the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783). The “great and abominable church” had to have been formed sometime after the first century A.D. because of the story found in 3 Nephi that after Jesus’ ascension (Acts 1:9-11) He descended into the Americas and appeared to the Nephites. Jesus ordained twelve apostles in America (1 Nephi 12:6-10; 3 Nephi 19:1-30). Therefore, the “great and abominable church” had to have formed between the second and fifteenth centuries. This must be either referring to Roman Catholicism or some generic apostasy. Earlier LDS writings claims it is Roman Catholicism while the modern LDS church’s interpretation claim that it is a generic apostasy. Either way, notice that “the great and abominable church”: **“[they] have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away”** (1 Nephi 13:26).

**(21) Did Roman Catholicism/a generic apostasy corrupt the Scriptures?**

**(22) When and where did this corruption take place in the history of its transmission?**

We have thousands upon thousands of copies of the New Testament and there is no evidence of corrupting any of the fundamental doctrines. The **BOM** makes a false assertion that cannot back up its claim! Thus, it is not inspired of God!

**(23) What were the “precious things” in the Bible that were taken away by the corrupted church/a generic apostasy?**

**(24) What one superior truth has the *BOM* revealed that was not given by the Bible that “*thoroughly equips man unto every good work*” (2 Timothy 3:17)?**

Was it: (a) the self-existent, independent, self-sustaining, eternal and absolute Being who is known as God, (b) the Trinity, (c) the spirit of man and his immortality, (d) angels, (e) freedom of choice, (f) the moral law that shows us what is good and evil, (g) the standard of truth that reveals what is true and false, (h) accountability and responsibility to God, (i) the day of judgment and rewards for the righteous and punishment for the wicked, (j) God’s providence, (k) the avenue of prayer, (l) revelation from God of which man could not have attained unless God wanted him to know, (m) the inspiration of chosen men for revealing God’s will, (n) miracles as evidence for confirmation of new revelation, (o) prophecy, (p) sacrifice for sin, (q) the atonement of Christ for

all men, (r) Christ serving as the one Mediator between God and man, (s) the ultimate Leader in redemption from sin, (t) Christ giving us the perfect body of teaching for spiritual growth, (u) Christ as the ultimate example to follow, (v) Christ as the object of our faith, love, and full, dedicated devotion, (w) the incarnation of Jesus in the flesh, (x) regeneration and sanctification, (y) terms and conditions of salvation - faith, repentance, confession, water immersion for the remission of sins, faithfulness, (z) a life of righteousness, (aa) the life of each individual, family, nation, and mankind to be molded and shaped by the will of God, (bb) the regulation of all thought, action, and life, in every relation of life, and sphere of action, such as marriage and family, (cc) each person elevates himself in love, righteousness, and self-sacrifice, (dd) endless growth, (ee) the resurrection and glorification of man's body, (ff) the system of absolute truth to be believed, worship to be performed, rules of life to be lived, (gg) and the church of Christ as the perfect organization that Christ built throughout endless generations until Christ's return?\*

One of the most perplexing peculiarities of the **BOM** is that it contains Biblical quotations that would not have yet been written down. 1 Nephi was supposedly written around 600-570 B.C.

**(25) Why does it contain quotations from the Bible (specifically the New Testament written between 40 - 100 A.D.) that had not been recorded yet?**

One such example is found in 1 Nephi 10:7-10: *“And he spake also concerning a prophet who should come before the Messiah, to prepare the way of the Lord—Yea, even he should go forth and cry in the wilderness: **Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight**; for there standeth one among you whom ye know not; and he is *mightier than I, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose*. And much spake my father concerning this thing. And my father said he should baptize in Bethabara, beyond Jordan; and he also said he should baptize with water; even that he should baptize the Messiah with water. And after he had baptized the Messiah with water, he should behold and bear record that he had baptized *the Lamb of God, who should take away the sins of the world*”* (emp. mine).

Compare this to such passages as Matthew 3:3, Luke 3:16, and John 1:23, 26-29. **For the complete list of references from the Bible, please consult the appendix 2 on page 688.**

There are several chapters of Isaiah that are quoted in the **BOM**. Washburn, a LDS author, posed some good questions: “Why is so much of the Isaiah text

identical with the King James Version? And of equal importance, why is so much of it different? And what of the differences? These range from a word to sentences. (Punctuation is not considered here). Why are some portions quoted at great length and without comment while others are evaluated and explained as they run along? Why do textual changes seem more apparent in some chapters than in others? How did the prophet Abinadi happen to be quoting the prophecies of Isaiah way up in the land of Nephi when the Brass Plates were almost certainly down in the land of Zarahemla?” (Washburn, 187).

1 Nephi 22:15 states: **“‘For behold,’ saith the prophet, ‘the time cometh speedily that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men; for the day soon cometh that all the proud and they who do wickedly shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned.’”**

1 Nephi 22:23 states: **“For the time speedily shall come that all churches which are built up to get gain, and all those who are built up to get power over the flesh, and those who are built up to become popular in the eyes of the world, and those who seek the lusts of the flesh and the things of the world, and to do all manner of iniquity; yea, in fine, all those who belong to the kingdom of the devil are they who need fear, and tremble, and quake; they are those who must be ‘brought low in the dust’; they are those who must be consumed ‘as stubble’; and this is according to the words of the prophet.”**

What prophet is being discussed? No doubt, it is Malachi. 1 Nephi 22:15 and 23 references Malachi 4:1.

2 Nephi 26:4: ***“Wherefore, all those who are proud, and that do wickedly, the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, for they shall be as stubble (emp. mine). And they that kill the prophets, and the saints, the depths of the earth shall swallow them up, saith the Lord of Hosts; and mountains shall cover them, and whirlwinds shall carry them away, and buildings shall fall upon them and crush them to pieces and grind them to powder. And they shall be visited with thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and all manner of destructions, for the fire of the anger of the Lord shall be kindled against them, and they shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall consume them, saith the Lord of Hosts (emp. mine). O the pain, and the anguish of my soul for the loss of the slain of my people! For I, Nephi, have seen it, and it well nigh consumeth me before the presence***

of the Lord; but I must cry unto my God: Thy ways are just. But behold, the righteous that hearken unto the words of the prophets, and destroy them not, but look forward unto Christ with steadfastness for the signs which are given, notwithstanding all persecution—behold, they are they which shall not perish. *But the Son of Righteousness shall appear unto them* (emp. mine); and he shall heal them, and they shall have peace with him, until three generations shall have passed away, and many of the fourth generation shall have passed away in righteousness... Behold, they will crucify him; and after he is laid in a sepulchre for the space of three days he shall rise from the dead, *‘with healing in his wings’* (emp. mine); and all those who shall believe on his name shall be saved in the kingdom of God. Wherefore, my soul delighteth to prophesy concerning him, for I have seen his day, and my heart doth magnify his holy name.”

Malachi 4:1-2 states: *“For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.”*

**(26) Is there not a problem in that Malachi had not been written down yet?** Malachi was written down around the 400s B.C., which is 200 years later than 1st and 2nd Nephi.

Hardy summarizes 2 Nephi quite well in my opinion. He states: **“The tale of Lehi’s family and their journey to the New World ends abruptly at 1 Nephi 18** (emp. mine); of the remaining thirty-seven chapters of First and Second Nephi, **only one consists primarily of narrative (2 Ne. 5)** (emp. mine). The rest are made up of quotations from discourses of Lehi and Jacob (Nephi’s younger brother), **whole chapters borrowed from Isaiah, Nephi’s own reections and interpretations of scripture** (emp. mine), and original prophecies. Aside from the single chapter of 2 Nephi 5, Nephi tells us nothing of life in the Americas. Even though we know that he was made king over his people (2 Ne. 5:18), he provides no information about his reign, policies, challenges, or successes. **For the entire period of his kingship, no specific events are mentioned, no individuals are described, and no interactions are reported** (emp. mine). The only dates in the last thirty-seven chapters occur in that one anomalous section, where Nephi notes that sometime between the thirtieth and fortieth year after



their flight from Jerusalem he was commanded to write a second version of his personal history, one that highlighted spiritual matters (2 Ne. 5:28–34). As a result, most of his record consists of undated, contextless excerpts, along with reactions on how his religious experiences relate to the remote past and the distant future. **(The contrast with the strict chronological march through Nephite history in the portion of the book narrated by Mormon is striking (emp. mine),** though one wonders what Nephi’s original account from the Large Plates— in the pages lost by Martin Harris— might have looked like).” (Hardy, 58-59).

**(27) Do you think there might be a reason as to why there is a lack of biographical details? Could it not be due to the loss of the 116 pages?**

Hardy also states this in regards to the lack of details in 2 Nephi. He states: “**In the revised version of his autobiography, Nephi appears oddly disconnected from the present. He is willing to share details of two or three decades earlier** (emp. mine), when Lehi was leading the family through the wilderness, but he shows little interest in more recent events, the people he rules over, or even his own family members. As mentioned earlier, his wife and children are virtually absent from his account, much to the frustration of those who would like to read modern Mormon family values back into the Book of Mormon. **Nephi seems obsessed with the past** (emp. mine). We have already observed how he uses allusions to link his personal history to the biblical stories of Joseph and Moses; indeed, he sees Lehi’s clan as reenacting sacred history as they deal with sibling rivalries and are led by God to the Promised Land. Yet Nephi, as portrayed in the Book of Mormon, is not so much a storyteller as a writer. He allows us to observe him composing, editing, and revising as he tries to imagine who his future audience might be.” (Hardy, 59).

**(28) Why does the BOM adhere to the Calvinistic false doctrine of total hereditary depravity?**

2 Nephi 2:21-23 states: “**For he gave commandment that all men must repent; for he showed unto all men that they were lost, because of the transgression of their parents. And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end. And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy for they knew no misery;**

*doing no good, for they knew no sin.”*

The Bible teaches that sin entered the world through Adam, but all men are lost because all men have sinned against God.

Romans 5:12 states: *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—.”*

**(29) Why does the BOM promote that Adam and Eve could not have had children unless they sinned?** (2 Nephi 2:23). Re-read 2 Nephi 2:21-23. This is absurd because one of the commands of God to Adam and Eve was to be fruitful and multiply in Genesis 1:26,27.

**(30) Why does it say that Adam and Eve were “doing no good, for they knew no sin”?**

**(31) If a person does not sin, is that not good? Jesus did not sin (Hebrews 4:15). Did He not do good?**

**(32) Is the spokesman referring to Sidney Rigdon (2 Nephi 3:17,18)?** It states: *“And the Lord said unto me also: I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins; and I will make for him a spokesman...”*

Doctrine & Covenants 100:9 states: *“And it is expedient in me that you, my servant Sidney, should be a spokesman unto this people; yea, verily, I will ordain you unto this calling, even to be a spokesman unto my servant Joseph.”*

Even the footnote refers back to 2 Nephi 3:17,18.

George Q. Cannon, an LDS apostle, stated: “Another most remarkable prediction is given in this same chapter; showing how plainly the Lord revealed to His ancient servants who wrote this Book, that which should take place in the last times. Lehi in speaking about Moses, said, that the Lord had revealed to Joseph the Patriarch, that He would raise up a mighty prophet named Moses, and that He should raise up for him a spokesman; that Moses would not be mighty in word, but in deed. Here is what the Lord said unto Joseph the Patriarch, as quoted by Lehi: “And the Lord said unto me also:” [that is, Joseph the Patriarch], “I will raise up unto the fruit of thy loins; and I will make for him a spokesman. And I, behold, I will give unto him that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins; and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it.”

After the church had been organized some months, Oliver Cowdery,

Parley P. Pratt, Peter Whitmer, and Ziba Petersen were appointed by the prophet of God to visit the western boundaries of Missouri. On their journey westward, they passed through the western part of Ohio, where Parley had formerly lived and labored in connection with the Reformed Baptists. They called upon one of the founders of that sect, Sidney Rigdon. They found him in the town of Kirtland, gave him a Book of Mormon, and bore their testimony to him of the restoration of the Gospel. Sidney Rigdon said to them: "You tell me a strange tale. I will examine this book;" and he commenced to do so. They were all young men, Sidney Rigdon was many years their senior. Rigdon examined the book, and became convinced that it was the word of God. He was baptized in the town of Kirtland, and the foundation of a great work was laid there. God afterwards revealed that this man was to be a spokesman, and he became the spokesman to this people and to the world for the prophet Joseph. Those who knew Sidney Rigdon, know how wonderfully God inspired him, and with what wonderful eloquence he declared the word of God to the people. He was a mighty man in the hands of God, as a spokesman, as long as the prophet lived, or up to a short time before his death. **Thus you see that even this which many might look upon as a small matter, was predicted about 1,700 years before the birth of the Savior, and was quoted by Lehi 600 years before the same event, and about 2,400 years before its fulfillment, and was translated by the power of God, through his servant Joseph, as was predicted should be the case, and at a time, as I have said, when there was not a man upon the earth who was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints** (emp. mine). The church had not yet been organized, and Joseph did not know, unless he knew by the spirit of revelation, whether any man would receive the Gospel. I doubt whether he knew as to how the church would be organized. He had some idea, doubtless; but there were many things which he himself did not know, till he wrote this translation" (Cannon 126).

This is internal evidence suggesting strongly that Sidney Rigdon was involved in the transformation of turning Solomon Spalding's *Manuscript Found* into the *BOM*.

2 Nephi 5:16,17 states: **"And I, Nephi, did build a temple; and I did construct it after the manner of the temple of Solomon save it were not**

built of so many precious things; for they were not to be found upon the land, wherefore, it could not be built like unto Solomon's temple. But the manner of the construction was like unto the temple of Solomon; and the workmanship thereof was exceedingly fine. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did cause my people to be industrious, and to labor with their hands."

**(33) How could Nephi and his company construct a building like the temple of Solomon?**

It had been 30 years since the family came from Jerusalem (2 Nephi 5:28). Remember there is Lehi and his wife Sariah, the sons of Lehi — Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi — and we are told that Lehi had daughters, but are not given the number (2 Nephi 5:6). Lehi had two more sons — Jacob and Joseph — in the wilderness (1 Nephi 18:7). Ishmael's family joins them, which consists of Ishmael and his wife, two sons (who already were married and had families) and five daughters, who would go on to marry the descendants of Lehi (1 Nephi 7:6; 16:7). The former slave Zoram was part of the group and married the eldest daughter of Ishmael (1 Nephi 16:7). Given the accelerated birth rate if each family had a child each year, it would not begin to compare with the number of workers needed to build a temple likened to that of Solomon's temple which took seven and a half years to build.

1 Kings 5:13-16 states: *"Then King Solomon raised up a labor force out of all Israel; and the labor force was **thirty thousand men**. And he sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month in shifts: they were one month in Lebanon and two months at home; Adoniram was in charge of the labor force. Solomon had **seventy thousand who carried burdens, and eighty thousand who quarried stone in the mountains, besides three thousand three hundred from the chiefs of Solomon's deputies, who supervised the people who labored in the work.**"*

**(34) How did these Jews have authority to build a place for God's name and His dwelling place if the rightful place was already in Jerusalem?**

Deuteronomy 12:5-7 states: *"But you shall seek the place where the Lord your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go. There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. And there you shall eat before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the Lord your God has blessed you."* Also see 1 Kings 8:12-21, 29; 9:3; 11:36; 2 Chronicles

6:5-6; 12:13; John 4:19-24.

2 Nephi 5:26 states: “**And it came to pass that I, Nephi, did consecrate Jacob and Joseph, that they should be priests and teachers over the land of my people.**”

**(35) How could Jacob and Joseph (from the tribe of Manesseh - Alma 10:3) be ordained priests if they were not from the authorized priesthood of Israel - Levi?** See 2 Chronicles 26:16-23 for the incident where Uzziah trespassed against God because he, not being a son of Aaron, was not authorized to burn incense.

2 Nephi 5:34 states: “**And it sufficeth me to say that forty years had passed away, and we had already had wars and contentions with our brethren.**”

**(36) Since the population sizes were small as we have already seen, then how does that fit into this idea that within a forty-year time frame that there were already wars and contentions? Having such a small population size already, wouldn't these wars have decreased the population sizes on both sides dramatically?** (credited to Lamb, 99)

**(37) Why does 2 Nephi 9:9 (c.f. Ether 8:25; Mosiah 16:3) contradict 1 Timothy 2:11-14 in affirming that both Adam and Eve were beguiled when only Eve was beguiled?**

2 Nephi 9:9 states: “**And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God, and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself; yea, to that being who *beguiled our first parents*, (emp. mine) who transformeth himself nigh unto an angel of light, and stirreth up the children of men unto secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret works of darkness.**”

The first parents are identified in the *BOM* as Adam and Eve (1 Nephi 5:11). It states: “**And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world, and also of Adam and Eve, *who were our first parents*** (emp. mine).”

1 Timothy 2:11-14 (ASV of 1901) states: “*Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression.*”

**(38) Why does the *BOM* bring over the KJV copyists' errors if God was directly inspiring the process in which each word was corrected before Joseph**



### Smith commenced with the final translation?

**James Tolle states:** “There is no more emphatic proof of the modern origin of the Book of Mormon than its extensive use of quotations from the Bible. It is a plain fact that many hundreds of passages in the Book of Mormon are taken directly from the Bible; e.g., large portions of Isaiah (see 2 Nephi 12 through 24), the Sermon on the Mount (according to Matthew), several verses from the writings of Paul, etc.

“The remarkable thing about these Bible quotations in the Book of Mormon is that they have all been taken from the King James Version, translated by bishops of the Church of England centuries after the last part of the original Book of Mormon was supposed to have been written. Think of it! Here is a book of which the greater part was supposedly written originally in the pure Egyptian language (1 Nephi 1:2) on plates brought by Nephi from the city of Jerusalem six hundred years before Christ, later to undergo one transcription, and that by the prophet Mormon in reformed Egyptian (Mormon 9:32), and then in the nineteenth century purportedly to be infallibly translated into English through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith by ‘the gift and power of God,’ with all its Bible quotations agreeing either exactly or essentially with an English translation of the sacred scriptures made in the seventeenth century from Hebrew and Greek texts, which in the case of the Hebrew text had been handed down from generation after generation, copied and recopied hundreds of times! If we accept the claim that the direct Bible quotations in the Book of Mormon which are either exactly or essentially the same as in the King James Version were infallibly translated by “the gift and power of God,” then we are driven to the conclusion that the bishops of the Church of England infallibly translated these quotations into English from the Hebrew and Greek texts. But the scholarship of the world concurs that these bishops did make mistakes in their translation, not serious ones which change any basic Bible doctrine or practice, but mistakes nevertheless. And it is undeniably a fact that some of these mistakes were brought over into the Book of Mormon proving beyond all reasonable doubt that the author of this book simply copied quotations from the King James Version, and that the ‘gift and power of God’ had nothing to do with it” (Tolle 15-17).

Isaiah 2:8-9 (KJV) states: “*Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made: And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not.*”

In the *BOM*, 2 Nephi 12:9 states: “**Their land is also full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made. And the mean man boweth, not down, and the great humbleth not, therefore, forgive him not.**”

**(39) Examine how the text is changed from the Bible. Since this is in the context of idolatry, then should not we forgive the man who refuses to bow down and does not humble himself toward idols?\*\*\***

Isaiah 9:1 (KJV) states: “*Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.*” In the *BOM*, 2 Nephi 19:1 reads: “**Nevertheless, the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali, and afterwards did more grievously afflict by the way of the Red Sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations.**”

**(40) Examine how the text is changed from the Bible. Since this is referring to the Red Sea, why is the geography wrong since the Red Sea is over 200 miles away from Galilee?\*\*\***

**(41) Why does the *BOM* seem to be environmentally influenced by the Freemasonry controversy which fits into the nineteenth century American historical context?** 2 Nephi 10:11-15; 26:14-22; Helaman 6:22,23; 3 Nephi 3:9; 6:28-30; 7:6-10; Mormon 8:27-41; Ether 8:15-25; 10:33.

2 Nephi 10:3 states: “**Wherefore, as I said unto you, it must needs be expedient that Christ—for in the last night the angel spake unto me that this should be his name** (emp. mine)—**should come among the Jews, among those who are the more wicked part of the world; and they shall crucify him—for thus it behooveth our God, and there is none other nation on earth that would crucify their God.**”

**(42) Why does Nephi state that the name of the Savior would be Christ when it is the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew title - Messiah?**

One of the marks of inspiration for the Bible is its *brevity*.

**Dave Miller explains:** “There are any number of proofs which document that the Bible is inspired of God. But the Book’s uncanny brevity is one obvious proof of its divine origin. Throughout history, humans have been quite verbose in articulating their ideas and thoughts—from multi-volume encyclopedias, history books, and biographies, to the pronouncements of religious authorities via their councils, disciplines, and sundry theologies.

In stark contrast to this human inclination, the books of the Bible are incredibly brief. Consider, for example, that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were given the weighty responsibility of reporting to the world for all ages the momentous events surrounding the life of Christ while He was on Earth. John even admitted that there were so many activities that occurred during Jesus' life that, ***'if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written'*** (John 21:25). So what should be included, and what should be excluded in such a critical literary endeavor?

"In reporting the events in the life of an extremely eminent figure in world history, what human writer would omit the birth—as Mark and John did? What author would skip over the first thirty years of the person's life—as all four of the Gospel writers did (with Luke's one exception of an incident in Jesus' life at the age of twelve)? The baptism of Jesus is told in twelve lines by Matthew, and in six lines by Mark and Luke. Of the twelve post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, two are noted by Matthew, three each by Mark and Luke, and four by John. In Acts, Luke provided the only inspired report of the first thirty years of the history of the church and the spread of Christianity—and he did it in just twenty-eight chapters! The untimely death of the first apostle, James, which must have been a tremendous blow to the early church (on the order of, say, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy to Americans), is recorded in a short eleven words. With such cataclysmic, earthshaking subject matter, how did these authors produce such succinct, condensed, concise histories consisting of only a few pages? The answer? They wrote under the overruling influence (in this case, restraint) of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21)" (Miller 1).

**(43) Does not 2 Nephi 31:1,2 violate this principle of brevity?** It states: ***"And now I, Nephi, make an end of my prophesying unto you, my beloved brethren. And I cannot write but a few things, which I know must surely come to pass; neither can I write but a few of the words of my brother Jacob. Wherefore, the things which I have written sufficeth me, save it be a few words which I must speak concerning the doctrine of Christ; wherefore, I shall speak unto you plainly, according to the plainness of my prophesying."*** Many other examples could be cited.

2 Nephi 25:10 states: ***"Wherefore, it hath been told them concerning the destruction which should come upon them, immediately (emp. mine) after***

my father left Jerusalem; nevertheless, they hardened their hearts; and according to my prophecy they have been destroyed, save it be those which are carried away captive into Babylon.” Considering that 1 Nephi supposedly took place during the first year of the reign of Zedekiah (1 Nephi 1:2) and the destruction of Jerusalem did not happen until the eleventh year of the reign of Zedekiah. See Jeremiah 1:3; 39:2; 52:5.

2 Kings 25:1-2 states: “*Now it came to pass in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and encamped against it; and they built a siege wall against it all around. So the city was besieged until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.*”

**(44) Is not nine to eleven years a far stretch for the word “immediately”?**

**(45) Why are the terms “Messiah” and “Christ” used interchangeably in a few short verses (2 Nephi 25:14-16)?**

Nephi prophesies about the arrival of the Messiah in 2 Nephi 25:19: “**For according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah cometh in six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem; and according to the words of the prophets, and also the word of the angel of God, his dname shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**”

Benjamin (124 B.C.) prophesies about the arrival of the Messiah in Mosiah 3:5: “**For behold, the time cometh, and is *not far distant*, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay...**”

Alma 7:8-9 (83 B.C.) states also a prophecy concerning Jesus’ first arrival: “**For behold, I say unto you there be many things to come; and behold, there is one thing which is of more importance than they all—for behold, the a time is *not far distant* that the Redeemer liveth and cometh among his people. Behold, I do not say that he will come among us at the a time of his dwelling in his mortal tabernacle; for behold, the Spirit hath not said unto me that this should be the case. Now as to this thing I do not know; but this much I do know, that the Lord God hath power to do all things which are according to his word.**”

**(46) How is it the case that Nephi knows the exact arrival date of the Messiah (600 years from the time his father, Lehi, left Jerusalem), but five hundred years later the prophets, Benjamin and Alma, were very generic in**



**their prophecy of when Jesus would arrive? In other words, how does Nephi specifically predict the Messiah's arrival when the later *BOM* prophets are also predicting the Messiah's arrival very generically (even though they had the plates passed down from Nephi)?**

2 Nephi 25:19 states: **“For according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah cometh in six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem; and according to the words of the prophets, and also the word of the angel of God, his name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God.”**

**(47) Is there not a contradiction between 2 Nephi 25:19 and Matthew 1:22,25 because the name - Jesus - was not given until the announcement of the angel Gabriel to Mary?**

2 Nephi 25:24,25 states: **“And, notwithstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the law of Moses, and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ, until the law shall be fulfilled. For, for this end was the law given; wherefore *the law hath become dead unto us* (emp. mine), and we are made alive in Christ because of our faith; *yet we keep the law* (emp. mine) because of the commandments.”**

One of the primary objectives of Jesus was to fulfill the Law of Moses and thereby render it obsolete (Matthew 5:17-18; Ephesians 2:14-16; Colossians 2:14-16; Hebrews 10:9-10).

Paul writes in Romans 7:1-4: ***“Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.”***

It is important to realize that until Jesus died on the cross, the law of Moses was still active. When Jesus fulfilled the law by His death, then the Jews were no longer bound to it. They were bound to the new covenant - the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2; Hebrews 8:8-13; 10:1-9). Paul was stating a great theological truth that the two covenants could not be in force at the same time or else the Jews would be committing spiritual adultery.



**Bales notes:** “If they [the Jews - SF] had been under His covenant, before the law was dead, and before they were dead to the law, they would have been in spiritual adultery. For as long as they were married to the law, they could not be married to Christ. After illustrating his point by the relationship in marriage, he concluded **‘wherefore’** [**‘therefore’** - NKJV- SF] the relationship to the old law had been broken in order that they might be joined to Christ. Yes, they **‘became dead to the law by the body of Christ; “that” they might be** joined to, or **married to Christ’** (7:4). So it is evident that as long as the law was alive, and they were alive to it - living under it - that they could not be delivered from the law (7:4,6). And as long as they were not delivered from the law, they could not be joined to Christ” (Bales 150).

**(48) How then could Nephi have said that the law of Moses had become dead to them since Jesus had not yet died?**

**(49) Also, how could they still keep the law of Moses and the gospel at the same time without committing spiritual adultery?**

2 Nephi 33:1-2 states: “**And now I, Nephi, cannot write all the things which were taught among my people; neither am I mighty in writing, like unto speaking; for when a man speaketh by the power of the Holy Ghost the power of the Holy Ghost carrieth it unto the hearts of the children of men. But behold, there are many that harden their hearts against the Holy Spirit, that it hath no place in them; wherefore, they cast many things away which are written and esteem them as things of naught.**”

**(50) Why are these terms “Holy Spirit” and “Holy Ghost” being used interchangeably when Smith was translating the plates (2 Nephi 33:1-2)? Was he seeing a distinction between the two terms when he was translating?**

Jacob 1:9 states: “**Now Nephi began to be old, and he saw that he must soon die; wherefore, he anointed a man to be a king and a ruler over his people now, according to the reigns of the kings.**”

Jacob 1:15 states: “**And now it came to pass that the people of Nephi, under the reign of the second king, began to grow hard in their hearts, and indulge themselves somewhat in wicked practices, such as like unto David of old desiring many wives and concubines, and also Solomon, his son.**”

**(51) Why did Jacob not record the name of the king who reigned after his brother, Nephi?**

Jacob 2:27,28; 3:5 states: “**Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken**

to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; For I, the Lord God, delight in the chastity of women. And whoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts...Behold, the Lamanites your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness and the cursing which hath come upon their skins, are more righteous than you; for they have not forgotten the commandment of the Lord, which was given unto our father—that they should have save it were one wife, and concubines they should have none, and there should not be whoredoms committed among them.”

**(52) Why was the revelation Jacob gave concerning having one wife and no concubines abrogated by *Doctrine & Covenants* 132 (recorded in 1843) which made polygamy lawful?**

**(53) Why was the law of polygamy repealed in 1890?**

**(54) Does the long allegory of Jacob 5 copy a mixture of the parable of Luke 13:5-9, the olive tree and wild olive tree from Romans 11:11-36, and Jesus as the true vine from John 15:1-8?**

In Jacob 3:12-13 (supposedly between 544 and 421 B.C.), it states: “**And now I, Jacob, spake many more things unto the people of Nephi, warning them against fornication and lasciviousness, and every kind of sin, telling them the awful consequences of them. *And a hundredth part of the proceedings of this people, which now began to be numerous, cannot be written upon these plates* (emp. mine); but many of their proceedings are written upon the larger plates, and their wars, and their contentions, and the reigns of their kings.**”

Jacob was one of the sons of Lehi that was born in the wilderness. In 2 Nephi 5:34, we learn that 30-70 years have passed.

**(55) Taking the total number of people they list who came to the new world, would we really conclude this to be a “numerous” people?** A hundredth part of their chronicles could not be recorded because there was so much history in seventy years plus the years that Jacob was living.

**(56) Really?**

Jacob 7:27 states: “**And I, Jacob, saw that I must soon go down to my grave; wherefore, I said unto my son Enos: Take these plates. And I told him the things which my brother Nephi had commanded me, and he promised obedience unto the commands. And I make an end of my writing upon these plates, which writing has been small; and to the reader I bid farewell,**

hoping that many of my brethren may read my words. *Brethren, adieu* (emp. mine).”

**(57) How did the French word “adieu” come from this reformed Egyptian text?**

Lehi had two sons, Jacob and Joseph, during his eight-year journey in the wilderness after leaving Jerusalem in approximately 600 B.C. (2 Nephi 2:1; 3:1). Because the family left Jerusalem in 600 B.C., according to the *BOM*, and Jacob was born during the eight-year sojourn, then he had to be born by at least 592 B.C. 600 B.C. minus 8 years equals 592 B.C. However, we need to recall that Joseph was also born in the wilderness during this eight year period so we can estimate that Jacob was born one or two years before Joseph, which would actually place his birth at 594/593 B.C.

According to Jacob 7:27, Jacob handed the plates to his son, Enos. According to Enos 1:25, it states: “**And it came to pass that I began to be old, and an hundred and seventy and nine years had passed away from the time that our father Lehi left Jerusalem. And I saw that I must soon go down to my grave...**”

If Jacob was 20 years old when Enos was born, then that would place him at 574/573 B.C. Enos would be 153/152 years old. If Jacob was 25 years old when Enos was born, then that would place him at 569/568 B.C. Enos would be 148/147 years old. If Jacob was 30 years old when Enos was born, then that would place him at 564/563 B.C. Enos would be 143/142 years old. If Jacob was 40 years old when Enos was born, then that would place him at 554/553 B.C. Enos would be 133/132 years old. If Jacob was 60 years old when Enos was born, then that would place him at 534/533 B.C. Enos would be 113/112 years old.

In the Bible, it is true that mankind lived for very long years as shown in Genesis 5. After the global flood, man’s ages began to deteriorate very rapidly. For example, Abraham lived to be 175 years old (Genesis 25:7-8), Issac - 180 years old (Genesis 35:28-29), Joseph - 110 years old (Genesis 50:26), Moses - 120 years old (Deuteronomy 34:7), and Joshua - 110 years old (Joshua 24:29). The years of men continued to decline.

**(58) If Enos lived approximately 800 years after the death of Joshua, do you believe that Enos lived to be at least 113 to 153 years old depending on when Jacob became his father (574-533 B.C.)?**

There were seven generations between Jacob to King Mosiah II that passed

on the plates: (1) Enos (Jacob 7:27), (2) Jarom (Jarom 1:1), (3) Omni (Omni 1:1), (4) Amaron (Omni 1:3) and Chemish [brother of Amaron] (Omni 1:9), (5) Abindadom (Omni 1:10), (6) Amaleki (Omni 1:12) who handed them off to (7) King Benjamin (Omni 1:25), who finally gave them to King Mosiah II.

We know that Mosiah II came to the throne in 124 B.C. Mosiah 6:4 states: **“And Mosiah began to reign in his father’s stead. And he began to reign in the thirtieth year of his age, making in the whole, about four hundred and seventy-six years from the time that Lehi left Jerusalem.”** 600 years minus 476 years would make it 124 B.C. Mosiah II would have been born around 154 B.C. since 124 B.C. plus 30 years old was when he began to reign.

If Jacob was born around 594/593 B.C., then the time between Jacob and Mosiah II would be 594/593 B.C. minus 154 B.C. (the birth of Mosiah II) equals 440/439 years. This would mean that there are seven generations that comprise 440/439 years. If the average length of a generation were 25 years, then that would be 25 years times seven generation, which would be 175 years. If the average length of a generation were 30 years, then that would be 30 years times seven generation, which would be 210 years. If the average length of a generation were 40 years, then that would be 40 years times seven generation, which would be 280 years. We would still have 440/439 (the time span between the births of Jacob and Mosiah II minus 280 years (the highest estimate of an average length of a generation for seven generations) , which leaves **160 missing years unaccounted** (credited to Radio Free Mormon podcast).

Birth of Jacob - 594 B.C. - birth of Mosiah II - 154 B.C. =  
440 years

7 generations x 25 years (per generation) = 175 years

7 generations x 30 years (per generation) = 210 years

7 generations x 40 years (per generation) = 280 years

**440 (timespan of Jacob’s birth to Mosiah’s birth - 280 (seven generations every 40 years) = 160 missing years**

**(59) How do you account for the 160 missing years (if the seven generations had to be at least 40 years apart - a total of 280 years)?**

Mosiah 2:3 states: **“And they also took of the firstlings of their flocks, that**

**they might offer sacrifice and burnt offerings, according to the Law of Moses.”**

**Tolle remarks:** “In the law of Moses, the firstlings of the flocks were never to be offered as burning offerings and sacrifices. All firstlings belonged automatically to the Lord and were never counted as a man’s personal property. But all burnt offerings had to be selected from one’s own personal property, or be purchased with his own money for that purpose, while all the firstlings of the flock, being peculiarly the Lord’s property, came into the hands of the high priest, not be used as burning offerings or sin offerings, but the flesh to be eaten by himself and family. Read Exodus 13:2,12; 22:29,30; Number 3:13; 2 Samuel 24:24; Numbers 18:15-18” (Tolle 18).

**(60) Why does it say they offered sacrifices according to the Law of Moses when, in fact, they did not observe the Law of Moses in this matter?**

Mosiah 20:1-5 states: “Now there was a place in Shemlon where the daughters of the Lamanites did gather themselves together to sing, and to dance, and to make themselves merry. And it came to pass that there was one day a small number of them gathered together to sing and to dance. And now the priests of king Noah, being ashamed to return to the city of Nephi, yea, and also fearing that the people would slay them, therefore they durst not return to their wives and their children. And having tarried in the wilderness, and having discovered the daughters of the Lamanites, they laid and watched them; And when there were but few of them gathered together to dance, they came forth out of their secret places and took them and carried them into the wilderness; yea, twenty and four of the daughters of the Lamanites they carried into the wilderness.”

**(61) Is Mosiah 20:1-5 taken from Judges 21:16-24?**

Mosiah 18:16,17 (147-145 B.C.) states: “And after this manner he did baptize every one that went forth to the place of Mormon; and they were in number about two hundred and four souls; yea, and they were baptized in the waters of Mormon, and were filled with the grace of God. And they were called the church of God, or the church of Christ, from that time forward. And it came to pass that whosoever was baptized by the power and authority of God was added to his church.”

**(62) How had the church already started in Mosiah 18:16,17 (147-145 B.C.) if Jesus had not built it yet according to Matthew 16:18?**

**(63) Is Mosiah 27 (100-92 B.C.) a plagiarized account of Paul’s conversion**



### from Acts 9?

Mosiah 21:28, in the 1830 edition, read: “**And now Limhi was again filled with joy on learning from the mouth of Ammon that king Benjamin had a gift from God, whereby he could interpret such engravings.**” “King Benjamin” was changed to read “king Mosiah.” in the 1837 edition. Similarly, Ether 4:1 originally read “king Benjamin” where it now reads “king Mosiah.”\*

**(64) If Joseph Smith was translating this text by the “gift and power of God,” then why did he get this part wrong and why did this change have to be made in a future edition?**

Alma 5:3 states: “**I, Alma, having been consecrated by my father, Alma, to be a high priest over the church of God, he having power and authority from God to do these things, behold, I say unto you that he began to establish a church in the land which was in the borders of Nephi; yea, the land which was called the land of Mormon; yea, and he did baptize his brethren in the waters of Mormon.**”

**(65) Why is there a high priest in the church (that is not yet supposed to be in existence - Matthew 16:18) when Jesus serves as the high priest (Hebrews 7)?**

Alma 7:10 states: “**And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God.**”

**(66) Why does Alma 7:10 state that Jesus would be born in Jerusalem, *not* Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1-6)?**

Alma 5:28 (83 B.C.) states: “**Behold, are ye stripped of pride? I say unto you, if ye are not ye are not prepared to meet God. Behold ye must prepare quickly; *for the kingdom of heaven is soon at hand*, and such an one hath not eternal life.**”

Alma 5:50 states: “**Yea, thus saith the Spirit: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, *for the kingdom of heaven is soon at hand*; yea, the Son of God cometh in his glory, in his might, majesty, power, and dominion...**”

Helaman 5:32 (30 B.C.) states: “**And behold the voice came again, saying: Repent ye, repent ye, *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*; and seek no more to destroy my servants. And it came to pass that the earth shook again, and the walls trembled.**”

Both John the Immerser (Matthew 3:1) and Jesus (Matthew 4:17) stated that

the kingdom of heaven was at hand because it came forth in three and a half years. That does make sense.

**(67) However, does it make any sense that the *BOM* writers proclaim the kingdom of heaven is at hand when it is 113 years away (Alma) and 60 years away (Helaman)?**

Alma 46:14,15 (73-72 B.C.) states: “For thus were all the true believers of Christ, who belonged to the church of God, called by those who did not belong to the church. And those who did belong to the church were faithful; yea, all those who were true believers in Christ took upon them, gladly, the name of Christ, or Christians as they were called, because of their belief in Christ who should come.”

**(68) Is this not a contradiction with Acts 11:26?** It states: “*So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.*”

**(69) Is it not the case that the book of Hebrews (written in the first century A.D.) is heavily used in the writing of these chapters (Alma 12:27/Hebrews 9:27; Alma 12:34-36/Hebrews 3-4 - not entering God’s rest; Alma 13:1-31/Hebrews 7:1-10)?**

Alma 51:22-27 states: “Behold, it came to pass that while Moroni was thus breaking down the wars and contentions among his own people, and subjecting them to peace and civilization, and making regulations to prepare for war against the Lamanites, behold, the Lamanites had come into the land of Moroni, which was in the borders by the seashore. And it came to pass that the Nephites were not sufficiently strong in the city of Moroni; therefore Amalickiah did drive them, slaying many. And it came to pass that Amalickiah took possession of the city, yea, possession of all their fortifications. And those who fled out of the city of Moroni came to the city of Nephihah; and also the people of the city of Lehi gathered themselves together, and made preparations and were ready to receive the Lamanites to battle. But it came to pass that Amalickiah would not suffer the Lamanites to go against the city of Nephihah to battle, but kept them down by the seashore, leaving men in every city to maintain and defend it. And thus he went on, taking possession of many cities, the city of Nephihah, and the city of Lehi, and the city of Morianton, and the city of Omner, and the city of Gid, and the city of Mulek, all of which were on the east borders by the seashore. And thus had the Lamanites obtained, by the cunning of

**Amalickiah, so many cities, by their numberless hosts, all of which were strongly fortified after the manner of the fortifications of Moroni; all of which afforded strongholds for the Lamanites.”**

Alma 53:6 states: **“And it came to pass that Moroni had thus gained a victory over one of the greatest of the armies of the Lamanites, and had obtained possession of the city of Mulek, which was one of the strongest holds of the Lamanites in the land of Nephi; and thus he had also built a stronghold to retain his prisoners.”**

Grant Hardy, a LDS member, wrote: “Although it is difficult to make concrete correlations with modern maps, the internal geography of the Book of Mormon is **almost perfectly consistent** (emp. mine), even to the extent that travel to certain places is always “up” or “down.” (The **only two geographical mistakes** (emp. mine) occur at Alma 51:26, where “city of Nephihah” seems to be an error for “city of Moroni,” and Alma 53:6, which places the city of Mulek in the southern land of Nephi while Alma 51:22–27 implies that it was actually on the eastern coast)” (Hardy 103).

**(70) If the BOM is inspired by God, then why does it contain geographical mistakes?**

**(71) Do you find it interesting that there is a lack of theological material that stretches from Alma 43-63, except very few verses such as Galatians 5:1?**

**(72) Do the phrases “standard of liberty,” (Alma 46:36; 62:4) fighting for their families (Alma 43:9,45; 44:5), the “cause of our liberty” (Alma 58:12) and other similiar phrases in Alma 43-63 remind you in some way of allusions to the American Revolutionary War? Did you know that Solomon Spalding served as a private in Obadiah Johnson’s regiment? (Spalding, 283).**

This section has to do with Question 61. Sometime between 145-123 B.C., the priests of Noah had taken twenty-four wives for themselves. In 74 B.C. (at least 71 years later), Alma 43:13,14 states: **“And the people of Ammon did give unto the Nephites a large portion of their substance to support their armies; and thus the Nephites were compelled, alone, to withstand against the Lamanites, who were a compound of Laman and Lemuel, and the sons of Ishmael, and all those who had dissented from the Nephites, who were Amalekites and Zoramites, and the descendants of the priests of Noah. Now those descendants were as numerous, nearly, as were the Nephites** (emp.

mine); and thus the Nephites were obliged to contend with their brethren, even unto bloodshed.”

**(73) Is it honestly possible for the priests of Noah who married twenty-four Lamanite wives in 71 years to bring forth a population as nearly as numerous as the Nephites (which would have approximately been in the number of hundreds of thousands)?** (credited to Lamb, 113).

**(74) Why does Helaman 12:26 (supposedly written in 6 B.C.) quote John 5:28,29 which had not been written yet?** It states: “Yea, who shall be consigned to a state of endless misery, fulfilling the words which say: They that have done good shall have everlasting life; and they that have done evil shall have everlasting damnation. And thus it is. Amen.”

Interesting enough, the footnotes attempt to salvage this error by stating that it is from Daniel 12:2-3. You be the judge on deciding which passage is being quoted: (a) Daniel 12:2 - “*And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.*” (b) John 5:28-29: “*Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth - those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*”

Helaman 14:20 states concerning the crucifixion of Jesus: “**But behold, as I said unto you concerning another sign, a sign of his death, behold, in that day that he shall suffer death the sun shall be darkened and refuse to give his light unto you; and also the moon and the stars; and there shall be no light upon the face of this land, even from the time that he shall suffer death, for the space of three days, to the time that he shall rise again from the dead** (emp. mine).”

**(75) How can you reconcile Helaman 14:20 - darkness for three days occurring with the crucifixion of Jesus with the gospel accounts of darkness for three hours?** Also see 3 Nephi 8:3.

In 3 Nephi 9:18, Jesus states to the Nephite multitude (Remember: according to the **BOM** these are supposedly early peoples of the Americas that spoke Hebrew or Egyptian): “**I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega** (emp. mine), **the beginning and the end.**”

**(76) What would be the point of Jesus communicating the first and last letter of the Greek alphabet to this audience?**

In 3 Nephi 11:13-17, it states: “**And it came to pass that the Lord spake**

unto them saying: ‘Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.’ And it came to pass that the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into his side, and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet; *and this they did do, going forth one by one until they had all gone forth* (emp. mine), and did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands, and did know of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come. And when they had all gone forth and had witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord, saying: ‘Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God!’ And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him.”

Later on we learn the approximate number of the multitude in 3 Nephi 17:25: “And the multitude did see and hear and bear record; and they know that their record is true for they all of them did see and hear, every man for himself; and they were in number *about two thousand and five hundred souls* (emp. mine); and they did consist of men, women, and children.”

**(77) Are we to honestly believe that over 2,500 people thrust their hands into the wounds of Jesus?** Even if each person took 30 seconds to examine Jesus, then it would have taken about 21 hours in total! Also, it must be pointed out that this is supposed to remind us of Thomas (John 20:24-29). Another problem that rises surrounding this story in 3 Nephi is that the multitude had never even seen Jesus nor known him personally before this event. However, the reason why Thomas asked to see the wounds of Jesus is because he had known Him personally for three years and sought evidence that would convince him that this was the real body of the Lord and not a ghost.

3 Nephi 18:8-13 states: “And it came to pass that when he said these words, he commanded his disciples that they should take of the *wine of the cup* (emp. mine) and drink of it, and that they should also give unto the multitude that they might drink of it... And when the disciples had done this, Jesus said unto them: Blessed are ye for this thing which ye have done, for this is fulfilling my commandments, and this doth witness unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you. And this shall ye always do to those who repent and are baptized in my name; *and ye shall do it in remembrance of my blood* (emp. mine), which I have shed for you, that ye may witness unto the



Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you. And I give unto you a commandment that ye shall do these things. And if ye shall always do these things blessed are ye, for ye are built upon my rock. *But whoso among you shall do more or less than these are not built upon my rock, but are built upon a sandy foundation; and when the rain descends, and the floods come, and the winds blow, and beat upon them, they shall fall, and the gates of hell are ready open to receive them* (emp. mine).”

**(78) Since the LDS denomination changed the element from wine to water in the Lord’s Supper, are they not disobeying God according to 3 Nephi 18:13?**

3 Nephi 20:23-26 states: “Behold, I am he of whom Moses spake, saying: A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul who will not hear that prophet shall be cut off from among the people. Verily I say unto you, yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have testified of me. And behold, ye are the children of the prophets; and ye are of the house of Israel; and ye are of the covenant which the Father made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham: And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.”

**(79) Does Jesus quote from Peter’s sermon in Acts 3 (Acts 3:23-25)?**

3 Nephi 28:4-12 states: “And when he had spoken unto them, he turned himself unto the three, and said unto them: ‘What will ye that I should do unto you, when I am gone unto the Father?’ And they sorrowed in their hearts, for they durst not speak unto him the thing which they desired. And he said unto them: ‘Behold, I know your thoughts, and ye have desired the thing which John, my beloved, who was with me in my ministry, before that I was lifted up by the Jews, desired of me. Therefore, more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death; but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory with the powers of heaven. *And ye shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in my glory ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality; and then shall ye be blessed in the kingdom of my Father* (emp. mine). And again, ye shall not have pain while ye shall dwell in the flesh, neither sorrow save it be for the sins of the world; and all this will I

do because of the thing which ye have desired of me, for ye have desired that ye might bring the souls of men unto me, while the world shall stand. And for this cause ye shall have fulness of joy; and ye shall sit down in the kingdom of my Father; yea, your joy shall be full, even as the Father hath given me fulness of joy; and ye shall be even as I am, and I am even as the Father; and the Father and I are one; And the Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and me; and the Father giveth the Holy Ghost unto the children of men, because of me.' And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words, he touched every one of them with his finger save it were the three who were to tarry, and then he departed."

**(80) Where are these three Nephites that are supposed to tarry until the second coming of Jesus Christ? Also see Mormon 8:10,11; Ether 12:17.**

**(81) Do you find it interesting that there is heavy theological content found in Mormon 7,8, and 9 (that contain numerous New Testament passages) after the final battle sequence takes place?**

Mormon 8:1-5 states: "Behold I, Moroni, do finish the record of my father, Mormon. Behold, I have but few things to write, which things I have been commanded by my father. And now it came to pass that after the great and tremendous battle at Cumorah, behold, the Nephites who had escaped into the country southward were hunted by the Lamanites, until they were all destroyed. And my father also was killed by them, and I even remain alone to write the sad tale of the destruction of my people. But behold, they are gone, and I fulfil the commandment of my father. And whether they will slay me, I know not. Therefore I will write and hide up the records in the earth; and whither I go it mattereth not. Behold, my father hath made this record, and he hath written the intent thereof. And behold, I would write it also *if I had room upon the plates, but I have not; and ore I have none, for I am alone* (emp. mine). My father hath been slain in battle, and all my kinsfolk, and I have not friends nor whither to go; and how long the Lord will suffer that I may live I know not."

Moroni claims he is alone, he has no ore (the material to make the plates), and that he would continue to make the record if he had more room on the plates. He then proceeds to record what is known as Mormon 8-10, the book of Ether (Ether 1:1-5), and the book of Moroni (a total of 51 pages).

**(82) How is it that he continues to write after stating the space on the plates is limited and there is no material to make the plates?**

This next idea actually came from Grant Hardy. Mormon 8:22-25 states: “For the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, **until all his promises shall be fulfilled**. Search the prophecies of Isaiah. Behold, I cannot write them. Yea, behold I say unto you, that those saints who have gone before me, who have possessed this land, shall **cry**, yea, **even from the dust** will they cry unto the Lord; and as the Lord liveth he will **remember the covenant which he hath made with them**. And he knoweth their prayers, that they were in behalf of their brethren. **And he knoweth their faith**, for in his name could they remove mountains; and in his name could they cause the earth to shake; and by the power of his word did they cause prisons to tumble to the earth; yea, even the fiery furnace could not harm them, neither wild beasts nor poisonous serpents, because of the power of his word. And behold, **their prayers were also in behalf of him that the Lord should suffer to bring these things forth**. And no one need say they shall not come, for they surely shall, for the Lord has spoken it; **for out of the earth shall they come, by the hand of the Lord**.”

2 Nephi 3:14-21: “And thus prophesied Joseph, saying: Behold, that seer will the Lord bless; and they that seek to destroy him shall be confounded; **for this promise**, which I have obtained of the Lord, of the fruit of my loins, **shall be fulfilled**. Behold, I am sure of the fulfilling of this promise; And his name shall be called after me; and it shall be after the name of his father. And he shall be like unto me; **for the thing, which the Lord shall bring forth by his hand**, by the power of the Lord shall bring my people unto salvation. Yea, thus prophesied Joseph: I am sure of this thing, even as I am sure of the promise of Moses; for the Lord hath said unto me, I will preserve thy seed forever. ...And I, behold, I will give unto him that he shall write the writing of the fruit of thy loins, unto the fruit of thy loins; and the spokesman of thy loins shall declare it. And the words which he shall write shall be the words which are expedient in my wisdom should go forth unto the fruit of thy loins. And it shall be as if the fruit of thy loins had **cried unto them from the dust**; **for I know their faith**. And they shall **cry from the dust**; yea, even repentance unto their brethren, even after many generations have gone by them. And it shall come to pass that their cry shall go, even according to the simpleness of their words. **Because of their faith their words shall proceed forth out of my mouth unto their brethren** who are the fruit of thy loins; and the weakness of their words will I make strong in their faith, unto the **remembering of my covenant which I made unto thy fathers**.” (cf. Hardy 249-251).

**(83) Is it not interesting that there are similar parallels between Mormon 8:13-16 and 2 Nephi 3:14-21? Aren't these supposed to be two different prophets? Could it be that Sidney Rigdon was the true voice of these prophets who inserted similar theological material in both places?**

Mormon 9:7-10 (401-421 A.D.) states: “And again I speak unto you who deny the revelations of God, and say that they are done away, that there are no revelations, nor prophecies, nor gifts, nor healing, nor speaking with tongues, and the interpretation of tongues; Behold I say unto you, he that denieth these things knoweth not the gospel of Christ; yea, he has not read the scriptures; if so, he does not understand them. For do we not read that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and in him there is no variableness neither shadow of changing? And now, if ye have imagined up unto yourselves a god who doth vary, and in whom there is shadow of changing, then have ye imagined up unto yourselves a god who is not a God of miracles.”

**(84) Why does Mormon 9 (as well as Moroni 7:25-29) claim that miracles have not ceased when the New Testament affirms that the age of miracles did cease in the first century A.D. (1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Ephesians 4:7-16; Jude 3)?**

Ether 1:11-12 states: “And Seth was the son of Shiblon. And Shiblon was the son of Com.”

Ether 11:3-5 states: “And they prophesied unto Com many things; and he was blessed in all the remainder of his days. And he lived to a good old age, and begat Shiblom; and Shiblom reigned in his stead. And the brother of Shiblom rebelled against him, and there began to be an exceedingly great war in all the land. And it came to pass that the brother of Shiblom caused that all the prophets who prophesied of the destruction of the people should be put to death.”

**(85) In Ether 1:11, why is Shiblon spelled wrong in Ether 11:4-5 (Shiblom)? Isn't Joseph Smith supposed to be translating “the most correct book on earth” by the gift and power of God?**

Ether 2:16 states: “And the Lord said: ‘Go to work and build, after the manner of barges which ye have hitherto built.’ And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did go to work, and also his brethren, and built barges after the manner which they had built, *according to the instructions of the Lord* (emp. mine). And they were small, and they were light upon the water, even like unto the lightness of a fowl upon the water. And they were built

after a manner that they were exceedingly tight, even that they would hold water like unto a dish; and the bottom thereof was tight like unto a dish; and the sides thereof were tight like unto a dish; and the ends thereof were peaked; and the top thereof was tight like unto a dish; and the length thereof was the length of a tree; and the door thereof, when it was shut, was tight like unto a dish.”

**(86) If the Lord did give instructions on how to build the barges, then why does the brother of Jared have to inquire about imperfections in the design such as the ventilation and lighting system in the following verses?**

Ether 2:18-25 states: “And it came to pass that the brother of Jared cried unto the Lord, saying: ‘O Lord, I have performed the work which thou hast commanded me, and I have made the barges according as thou hast directed me. And behold, O Lord, in them there is no light; whither shall we steer? And also we shall perish, for in them we cannot breathe, save it is the air which is in them; therefore we shall perish.’ And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: ‘Behold, thou shalt make a hole in the top, and also in the bottom; and when thou shalt suffer for air thou shalt unstop the hole and receive air. And if it be so that the water come in upon thee, behold, ye shall stop the hole, that ye may not perish in the flood.’ And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did so, according as the Lord had commanded. And he cried again unto the Lord saying: ‘O Lord, behold I have done even as thou hast commanded me; and I have prepared the vessels for my people, and behold there is no light in them. Behold, O Lord, wilt thou suffer that we shall cross this great water in darkness?’ And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared: ‘What will ye that I should do that ye may have light in your vessels? For behold, ye cannot have windows, for they will be dashed in pieces; neither shall ye take fire with you, for ye shall not go by the light of fire. For behold, ye shall be as a whale in the midst of the sea; for the mountain waves shall dash upon you. Nevertheless, I will bring you up again out of the depths of the sea; for the winds have gone forth out of my mouth, and also the rains and the floods have I sent forth. And behold, I prepare you against these things; for ye cannot cross this great deep save I prepare you against the waves of the sea, and the winds which have gone forth, and the floods which shall come. Therefore what will ye that I should prepare for you that ye may have light when ye are swallowed up in the depths of the sea?’”



**(87) Why does God tell the brother of Jared to make a hole in the bottom of the barge? How will that help with getting air for them to breathe? How will they be able to keep the barges from sinking with holes in the bottom? Even if the barge revolves on its side from time to time, would that not be a lot of work to plug and unplug the holes?** The text states it took 344 days to travel to America (Ether 6:11).

In the 1830 text of Ether 4:1, it read: **“And the Lord commanded the brother of Jared to go down out of the mount from the presence of the Lord, and write the things which he had seen; and they were forbidden to come unto the children of men until after that he should be lifted up upon the cross; and for this cause did king Benjamin keep them, that they should not come unto the world until after Christ should shew himself unto his people.”**

**(88) Why was “Benjamin” changed to “Mosiah” in the 1837 edition if Joseph Smith was translating by the gift and power of God?**

3 Nephi 7:23-26 states: **“Thus passed away the thirty and second year also. And Nephi did cry unto the people in the commencement of the thirty and third year; and he did preach unto them repentance and remission of sins. Now I would have you to remember also, that there were none who were brought unto repentance who were not baptized with water. Therefore, there were ordained of Nephi, men unto this ministry, that all such as should come unto them should be baptized with water, and this as a witness and a testimony before God, and unto the people, that they had repented and received a remission of their sins.”**

Ether 4:18-19 states: **“Therefore, repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and believe in my gospel, and be baptized in my name; for he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned; and signs shall follow them that believe in my name. And blessed is he that is found faithful unto my name at the last day, for he shall be lifted up to dwell in the kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world. And behold it is I that hath spoken it. Amen.”**

**(89) Why does Ether 4:18-19 state that water immersion is necessary for salvation when it contradicts 3 Nephi 7:23-26? The same can also be said for 3 Nephi 30:2, Mormon 7:8, and Moroni 8:10-11.**

Ether 8:1-15 states: **“And it came to pass that he begat Omer, and Omer reigned in his stead. And Omer begat Jared; and Jared begat sons and daughters. And Jared rebelled against his father, and came and dwelt in the**

land of Heth. And it came to pass that he did a flatter many people, because of his cunning words, until he had gained the half of the kingdom. And when he had gained the half of the kingdom he gave battle unto his father, and he did carry away his father into captivity, and did make him serve in captivity; And now, in the days of the reign of Omer he was in a captivity the half of his days. And it came to pass that he begat sons and daughters, among whom were Esrom and Coriantumr; And they were exceedingly angry because of the doings of Jared their brother, insomuch that they did raise an army and gave battle unto Jared. And it came to pass that they did give battle unto him by night. And it came to pass that when they had slain the army of Jared they were about to slay him also; and he led with them that they would not slay him, and he would give up the kingdom unto his father. And it came to pass that they did grant unto him his life. And now Jared became exceedingly sorrowful because of the loss of the kingdom, for he had set his heart upon the kingdom and upon the glory of the world.

“Now the daughter of Jared being exceedingly expert, and seeing the sorrows of her father, thought to devise a plan whereby she could redeem the kingdom unto her father. Now the daughter of Jared was exceedingly fair. And it came to pass that she did talk with her father, and said unto him: ‘Whereby hath my father so much sorrow? Hath he not read the record which our fathers brought across the great deep? Behold, is there not an account concerning them of old, that they by their secret plans did obtain kingdoms and great glory? And now, therefore, let my father send for Akish, the son of Kimnor; and behold, I am fair, and I will dance before him, and I will please him, that he will desire me to wife; wherefore if he shall desire of thee that ye shall give unto him me to wife, then shall ye say: I will give her if ye will bring unto me the head of my father, the king.’ And now Omer was a friend to Akish; wherefore, when Jared had sent for Akish, the daughter of Jared danced before him that she pleased him, insomuch that he desired her to wife. And it came to pass that he said unto Jared: ‘Give her unto me to wife. And Jared said unto him: I will give her unto you, if ye will bring unto me the head of my father, the king.’

“And it came to pass that Akish gathered in unto the house of Jared all his kinsfolk, and said unto them: ‘Will ye swear unto me that ye will be faithful unto me in the thing which I shall desire of you?’ And it came to pass that they all sware unto him, by the God of heaven, and also by the heavens,

and also by the earth, and by their heads, that whoso should vary from the assistance which Akish desired should lose his head; and whoso should divulge whatsoever thing Akish made known unto them, the same should lose his life. And it came to pass that thus they did agree with Akish. And Akish did administer unto them the oaths which were given by them of old who also sought power, which had been handed down even from Cain, who was a murderer from the beginning.”

**(90) Is Ether 8:1-15 taken from the historical account of John the Immerser, and Herodias from Mark 6:14-29?**

**(91) Does it not seem like Ether 12 and part of 13 were edited insertion of theological material in a narrative?**

Hardy states: “Ether 12 and 2 Nephi 33 share similar themes and several common phrases, but they also display a parallel structure (emp. mine). Nephi, picking up the idea in Joseph’s prophecies that weak things could be made strong (2 Ne. 3:13,21), frames his concluding remarks within two corresponding comments: “the words which I have written in weakness will be made strong unto them [his brethren]” (2 Ne. 33:4) and “ye shall know that I have been commanded of him [Christ] to write these things, notwithstanding my weakness” (2 Ne. 33:11). In between he presents a self-reflective meditation that features references to faith, hope, and charity— though the latter two terms appear very infrequently in Nephi’s writings. Moroni appears to have adapted Nephi’s model: he sandwiches his own observations on faith, hope, and charity between two admissions of “weakness in writing” (Ether 12:23–25 ,40), and he broadens the Lord’s promise so that not just weak writing will be made strong but all sorts of weaknesses can be overcome through faith in Christ. This discussion of the three Christian virtues also signals a simultaneous allusion to Mormon, the only other Book of Mormon figure to discuss the three together (again in his sermon at Moro. 7, which itself closely—and anachronistically— reflects Paul’s eloquent statement on the same at 1 Cor. 13).” (Hardy, 259).

**(92) Is it possible and reasonable, because of the 116 pages loss, that Rigdon, who would have been reworking the manuscript after Mosiah, would have incorporated similar religious themes such as Ether 12, which would have been worked on first and then later on in 2 Nephi 33?**

It is interesting that Ether 12 was translated by Moroni, yet 2 Nephi 33 is supposedly written by Nephi.

Hardy said something else of interest concerning Ether 12: “After this famous definition of faith, the author of Hebrews provides a long list of things accomplished by faith, including the creation of the world and specific actions taken by Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses’ parents, Moses, the children of Israel, Rahab, Gideon, and others. Moroni begins section II of Ether 12 with almost identical language and then proceeds to offer a parallel list of how faith made possible the appearance of Christ among the Nephites, the giving and fulfilling of the law of Moses, the prison escape of Alma 2 and Amulek, the receiving of the Holy Ghost by the Lamanite guards of Nephi 2 and Lehi 4 , the missionary successes of Ammon and the other sons of Mosiah, the death-defying transformation of the three Nephites, and the vision the brother of Jared had of the pre-mortal Christ. Both Hebrews 11 and Ether 12 also include numerous repetitions of the expression “by faith” (sixteen times in Hebrews, eleven in Ether). **There can be little doubt that Moroni’s discourse on faith at Ether 12 is, in some way, based on the Epistle to the Hebrews** (emp. mine), but it is more than simply an imitation; it is a creative adaptation. If Moroni seems to have an uncanny knowledge of the New Testament, he also has a firm grasp of his Book of Mormon predecessors, and he relies heavily upon their ideas and phrases as he thoroughly and deftly integrates their voices with that of the author of Hebrews.” (Hardy, 257).

**(93) Was Moroni influenced by the epistle of the Hebrews?**

Ether 15:30-31 states: **“And it came to pass that when Coriantumr had leaned upon his sword, that he rested a little, he smote off the head of Shiz. And it came to pass that after he had smitten off the head of Shiz, that Shiz raised up on his hands and fell; and after that he had struggled for breath, he died.”**

**(94) How could Shiz struggle for breath after being decapitated?**

Moroni 7:45 states: **“And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not *easily* provoked** (emp. mine), **thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things”**

**(95) Why does Moroni 7:45 use the word “easily” which is found in the King James Version, but not found in the original Greek text?**

## Conclusion

In conclusion, after investigating the **BOM**, can it honestly be the word of God when it contains:

(a) contradictions with the Bible on the timing of the revelation of the mystery of Christ, the timeframe of the miraculous age, the timeframe of the darkness when Jesus was crucified, etc.,

(b) many quotations from the New Testament Scriptures that had not yet been written down,

(c) the perpetuation of the King James Version' copyists' errors,

(d) historical anachronisms such as the church of Christ starting before the first century A.D., the name "Christian" given before Acts 11:26, etc.,

(e) nineteenth-century theological discussions over infant baptism, universalism, etc.,

(f) unhistorical oddities such as Jews learning to write reformed Egyptian on metallic plates, Jews from the tribe of Manasseh serving as priests and claiming they were observing the law of Moses, building a temple constructed like Solomon's temple with a small population size, a great multitude who all touched the wounds of Jesus one by one that would have taken several hours to complete, and believing the ancestors of Native Americans were Jews who came from the old world in 600 B.C. **The answer is a resounding NO!**

You can see from this analysis that **The Book of Mormon** that it originated from man, not from God.

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- \* These ideas were taken and summarized from <https://www.gotquestions.org/genealogies-Israel.html>.
- \*\* These ideas predominantly came from the *Braden-Kelley Debate*. The Old Paths Book Club, Rosemead, California, 1955, 22-23.
- \*\*\*Credit to Nathan Franson for the two questions.

## Appendix 2

**This appendix contains a list of the references from the Bible that I personally believe were incorporated into the *BOM*. Some references are quotations, allusions, or copied from an account in the Bible. I have tried to be fair and accurate. The *BOM* reference will be on the left of the backlash “/” in bold, with the Bible verse on the right from which it originated.**

## 1 Nephi

**1 Nephi 1:1**/1 Corinthians 4:1; **1:3**/Galatians 6:11; **1:14**/Revelation 15:3; **1:18**/John 1:3; **1:20**/Matthew 21:33-46; **2:10**/1 Corinthians 15:58; **2:18**/Mark 3:5; **2:24**/2 Peter 3:2; **3:21**/1 Corinthians 7:19; **3:27**/Revelation 12:6; **4:6**/Luke 4:1; **4:13**/John 11:50; **5:8**/Acts 12:11; **5:13**/Acts 3:21; **5:18**/Revelation 14:6; **6:4**/John 17:14; **6:8**/Mark 3:5; **7:8**/Mark 3:5; **8:20**/Matthew 13:38; **10:4**/Acts 3:22-23; John 4:42; **10:7**/Matthew 3:3; **10:8**/John 1:23,26-27; Luke 3:16; **10:9**/John 1:28; **10:10**/John 1:29; **10:12**/Romans 11:17-19; **10:14**/Romans 11:24; Hebrews 11:6; **10:18**/Hebrews 13:8; Matthew 25:34; **10:19**/Hebrews 11:6; **10:21**/Romans 14:10; **11:1**/Matthew 4:8; **11:7**/John 1:34; **11:19**/Revelation 17:3; **11:21**/John 1:29; **11:22**/Romans 5:5; **11:27**/John 1:24; **11:30**/John 1:51; **11:31**/Matthew 10:1; **11:35-36**/Revelation 21:14; 14:6; **12:1**/Revelation 20:8; **12:2**/Matthew 24:6; **12:7**/John 15:16; Acts 10:44; **12:9**/Revelation 21:14; Matthew 19:28; **12:10,11**/Revelation 7:14; **12:18**/Luke 16:26; **12:21**/Matthew 24:6; **13:7**/Revelation 13:2; 17:4; **13:27**/Acts 13:10; **13:34**/Revelation 17:5; **13:37**/Matthew 10:22; Luke 2:10; **13:42**/Matthew 19:30; **14:10**/Revelation 17:5; **14:11**/Revelation 17:1; **14:15**/Matthew 24:6; **14:16**/Revelation 17:5; **15:3**/2 Peter 3:16; **15:11**/Matthew 21:22; **15:13**/Romans 11:24-25; **15:15**/John 15:1; **15:18**/Luke 1:73; **15:24**/Ephesians 6:16; **15:30**/Revelation 14:11; **16:2**/John 6:40; **16:38**/Matthew 4:11; **17:30**/2 Corinthians 4:4; **20**/Isaiah 48; **21**/Isaiah 49; **22:5**/Matthew 10:22; **22:13**/Revelation 19:2; **22:14**/Acts 13:10; **22:15**/Malachi 4:1; **22:17**/1 Corinthians 3:15; **22:18**/Acts 2:19; **22:25**/John 10:16; **22:31**/Matthew 10:22; 24:13.

## 2 Nephi

**2 Nephi 1:1**/Mark 5:19; **1:18**/2 Timothy 2:26; **1:23**/2 Corinthians 6:7; **1:26**/Hebrews 4:12; **2:3**/Galatians 4:4-5; **2:5**/Galatians 2:16; **2:6**/John 1:14-16; **2:8**/John 10:17-18; **2:13**/Romans 4:15; **2:14**/Romans 15:4; **2:26**/Galatians 4:4-5; **2:30**/Luke 10:42; **3:5**/1 Corinthians 4:5; **3:13**/Hebrews 11:34; **4:17**/Romans 7:24; **4:18**/Hebrews 12:1; **4:35**/James 1:5; **9:2**/Acts 3:21; **9:7**/1 Corinthians 15:51-53; **9:9**/2 Corinthians 11:14; **9:15**/John 5:24; 2 Corinthians 5:10; **9:16**/Matthew 24:35; 25:41; Revelation 22:11; 14:11; **9:18**/Hebrews 12:2; Matthew 25:34; **9:22**/Matthew 10:22; **9:23**/Acts 2:38; **9:34**/Luke 10:15; **9:38**/John 8:24; **9:39**/Romans 8:6; **9:41**/Matthew 7:13,14; **9:42**/Matthew 7:8; **9:43**/Matthew 11:25; **10:4**/Matthew 11:21; **10:16**/Galatians 3:28; **12-24**/Isaiah 2-14; **25:4**/Revelation 19:10; **25:12**/Matthew 24:6-7; **25:13**/Malachi 4:2; **25:14**/Acts 5:39; **25:18**/John 12:48;

**25:20**/Acts 4:12; **25:23**/Ephesians 2:8-9; **25:25**/Romans 7:4; **25:29**/Matthew 22:37; John 6:37; **26:4**/Malachi 4:1; **26:5**/Matthew 21:44; **26:10**/John 3:19; **26:13**/Revelation 14:6; **26:24**/John 12:32; **26:27**/Acts 17:30; **26:30**/1 Corinthians 13:2; **26:33**/Galatians 3:28; **27**/Isaiah 29; **27:23**/Hebrews 13:8; **28:7,8**/1 Corinthians 15:32; Luke 12:48; **28:11**/Romans 3:12; **28:15**/Luke 10:15; Acts 13:10; **28:23**/Revelation 20:13; **28:26**/Acts 2:38; **28:28**/Matthew 7:24-27; **28:30**/Matthew 13:12; **30:1**/Luke 13:5; **30:6**/Acts 9:18; **30:17**/Matthew 10:26; Ephesians 5:11,13; **31:4**/John 1:29; **31:5,6**/Matthew 3:15,16; **31:9**/Matthew 7:13,14; **31:11**/Acts 2:38; **31:13**/Matthew 3:11; 1 Corinthians 13:2; **31:14**/Mark 16:17; Matthew 3:11; **31:15**/Matthew 10:22; **31:18**/Matthew 7:13,14; **31:19**/Colossians 2:5; **31:21**/Acts 4:12; **32:1**/Mark 2:8; **32:4**/Matthew 7:7; **32:6**/1 Timothy 3:16; **32:9**/Luke 18:1; **33:9**/Matthew 7:13,14.

### **Jacob**

**Jacob 2:10**/Matthew 5:8; **3:1-3**/Matthew 5:8; **3:11**/Revelation 21:8 ; **4:8**/Romans 11:33; **4:15-17**/Matthew 21:42; **5:9**/Luke 13:7-8; Romans 11:17; **5:20,22,23,32**/John 12:24; **5:32,35**/1 Corinthians 13:2; **5:39**/Luke 6:43; **5:42,46,49**/Matthew 3:10; **5:47**/Luke 13:7-8; **5:63**/Matthew 19:30; **5:64**/Luke 13:8; **5:66**/Matthew 3:10; **5:76**/Luke 13:8; **6:3**/2 Peter 3:10; **6:6**/Hebrews 3:7-8; **6:7**/Matthew 3:10; **6:8**/Acts 2:38; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-19; **6:10**/Revelation 14:11; 21:8; **6:11**/Matthew 7:13-14; **7:5**/Matthew 4:11; **7:14**/Luke 22:42; **7:19**/Matthew 12:31-32; **7:24**/1 Timothy 2:4.

### **Enos, Jarom, Omni, & Words of Mormon**

**Enos 1:1**/Ephesians 6:4; **1:2**/Acts 10:43; **1:5**/Luke 5:20; **1:6**/Titus 1:2; **1:8**/Matthew 9:22; **1:14**/Galatians 1:14; **1:15**/James 1:6; **1:26**/Romans 9:1; **1:27**/1 Corinthians 15:53-54; Matthew 25:34; John 14:2-3. **Jarom 1:4**/2 Corinthians 13:14. **Omni 1:25**/1 Corinthians 12:4-11; **1:26**/Matthew 10:22. **Words of Mormon 1:15**/Matthew 24:34; Titus 1:11; **1:16**/2 Peter 2:1.

### **Mosiah**

**Mosiah 1:5**/Galatians 1:14; **1:8**/John 20:30; **1:13**/Matthew 16:4; **1:17**/2 Peter 3:2; **2:15**/Acts 23:1; **2:21**/Acts 17:24; Luke 17:10; **2:34**/Acts 3:21; **2:37**/Acts 13:10; 17:24; **2:38**/Matthew 3:12; **3:3**/Luke 2:10; **3:5**/Mark 7:37; Revelation 19:6; **3:9**/John 1:11; Matthew 11:18; **3:12**/Acts 20:21; **3:13**/Acts 2:38; **3:17**/Acts 4:12; **3:18**/

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**3:26**/Revelation 14:10; **3:27**/Revelation 20:10,14; **4:7**/Matthew 25:34; **4:8**/Acts 4:12;  
**4:12**/Acts 2:38; **4:14**/Acts 13:10; **4:15**/John 13:34,35; **4:20**/Acts 2:38; 2:17; Titus  
 1:11; **4:21**/Matthew 21:22; **4:26**/Matthew 25:35,36; **4:27**/1 Corinthians 9:24; 14:40;  
**5:5**/Revelation 14:10; **5:8**/Ephesians 1:22,23; Galatians 5:1; Acts 4:12; **5:13**/Hebrews  
 4:12; **5:15**/1 Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 19:6; **8:17**/1 Corinthians 4:5; **12:26**/Acts  
 13:10; **13:1**/Acts 22:22; **13:3**/Acts 23:3; **13:4**/Galatians 4:16; **13:10**/Hebrews 10:1;  
**13:12-24**/Exodus 20; **13:31**/Colossians 2:17; **14**/Isaiah 53; **15:11**/Acts 3:21; 2:38;  
**15:13**/Acts 3:21; **15:19**/Matthew 25:34; **15:21,22,24**/Revelation 20:5-6; **15:26**/John  
 8:24; **15:28**/Revelation 5:9; **16:2**/Matthew 8:12; **16:3**/Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians  
 11:3; James 3:15; **16:7**/1 Corinthians 15:20,55; **16:8**/1 Corinthians 15:54-55; **16:9**/  
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**17:19**/Acts 7:59; **18:8**/Galatians 6:2; **18:9**/Romans 12:15; Revelation 20:5,6; **18:10**/  
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**25:24**/Acts 2:17; **26:21**/John 10:27; **26:22**/Matthew 16:18; 3:11; **26:27**/Matthew 7:23;  
 25:41; **26:31**/Matthew 6:14-15; **26:37**/Ephesians 5:15; **26:39**/1 Thessalonians 5:17-  
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**27:29**/Acts 8:22-23; **27:31**/John 12:48; Philippians 2:10-11; **27:36**/1 Timothy 2:4.

## Alma

**Alma 1:4**/John 6:44; **1:25**/1 Corinthians 15:58; 7:19; **1:30**/Galatians 3:28; **2:1**/  
 Corinthians 1:20; **2:4**/Galatians 1:13; **3:27**/Revelation 19:10; **4:13**/Revelation 19:10;  
**4:14**/Acts 2:38; **4:16**/Acts 20:17; **4:19**/2 Peter 3:2; **4:20**/Revelation 19:10; **5:7**/  
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 15:51-53; **5:16**/Matthew 25:34; Titus 3:5; **5:21**/Revelation 7:14; **5:24**/Matthew 8:11;  
 Revelation 7:14; **5:25**/John 8:44; **5:27**/Revelation 7:14; **5:28**/Matthew 3:1,2; **5:34**/  
 Revelation 21:6; **5:35**/Matthew 3:10; **5:37**/Matthew 9:36; **5:38-41**/John 10:11,14;  
**5:42**/Romans 6:23; **5:46**/Ephesians 1:17; **5:47**/Revelation 19:10; **5:48**/John 1:14,29;  
**5:49**/John 3:1-8; **5:50**/Matthew 3:2; **5:52**/Matthew 3:10; **5:53**/Hebrews 10:29; **5:54**/  
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**7:14**/John 1:29; John 3:3; 1 John 1:9; **7:15**/Hebrews 12:1; **7:20**/James 1:17; **7:21**/  
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**9:16,17**/Galatians 1:14; **9:21**/Acts 2:38; **9:23**/Matthew 10:15; **9:25**/Matthew 3:2;  
**9:26**/John 1:14; **9:28**/Mark 1:3; **9:30**/Matthew 3:8; **10:12**/Revelation 19:10; **10:17**/  
Matthew 17:17; **10:20**/Matthew 3:2; **10:22,23**/James 5:16; **11:41**/Revelation 20:12;  
**11:44**/Luke 21:18; Galatians 3:28; **11:45**/John 5:24; **12:3**/Acts 5:4; **12:9**/1 Corinthians  
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**12:15**/Matthew 3:8; **12:16**/John 8:24; **12:17**/Revelation 14:11; **12:27**/Hebrews 9:27;  
**12:30**/Ephesians 1:4; **12:34**/John 3:16; Acts 2:38; Hebrews 4:3; **12:35**/Hebrews 3:11;  
**12:36**/Hebrews 4:3; **13:3**/Acts 2:23; **13:5**/Matthew 25:34; **13:6**/Hebrews 4:3; **13:7**/  
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Revelation 19:10; **13:28**/Matthew 26:41; 1 Corinthians 10:13; **13:29**/John 6:54; **13:30**/  
Revelation 2:11; **13:31**/John 20:30; **14:1**/John 5:39; **14:3**/Matthew 1:19; **14:11**/John  
6:54; **14:14**/Revelation 20:10; **14:19**/John 19:10; **14:22,26-28**/Acts 16:23-27; **14:27**/  
Matthew 27:51; **15:11**/Acts 3:7-10; **15:14**/Matthew 3:5-6; **16:5**/Revelation 19:10;  
**16:15**/Matthew 3:5-6; **16:17**/John 15:1-6; **17:2**/Acts 17:11; 1 Timothy 2:4; **17:3**/  
Revelation 19:10; Ephesians 1:17; **17:4**/1 Timothy 2:4; 17:31/John 16:33; **18:32**/  
Hebrews 4:12; **19:5**/John 11:39; **19:8**/Luke 8:52; **19:10**/Matthew 8:10; **20:23**/Mark  
6:23; **21:16**/Luke 4:1; **21:17**/1 Timothy 2:4; **22:1**/Luke 4:1; **22:6**/John 6:54; **22:14**/1  
Corinthians 15:54-55,58; **22:15**/Mark 10:17; **22:18**/John 6:54; **23:6,15**/1 Timothy  
2:4; **24:15,16**/John 6:54; **24:30**/Hebrews 6:4; 2 Peter 2:20-22; **26:6**/John 6:54; **26:7**/  
John 6:40,44; **26:12**/Philippians 4:13; **26:20**/Luke 16:26; **26:21**/1 Corinthians 2:11-  
14; **26:24**/1 Timothy 2:4; **26:30**/1 John 1:4; **26:35**/John 1:12; **27:4**/Matthew 18:27;  
**27:26**/2 Corinthians 5:17; **27:28**/1 Corinthians 15:54; **29:3**/Philippians 4:11; **29:17**/  
Matthew 8:11; **30:22**/Acts 13:10; **30:43,49-50**/Luke 1:18-20; **31:10**/Luke 22:46;  
**31:11**/Acts 13:10; **31:17**/Hebrews 13:8; **31:37**/Matthew 6:31; **32:8**/Matthew 11:29;  
**32:13,15**/Matthew 10:22; **32:17**/Matthew 16:1; **32:21**/Hebrews 11:1; **32:28**/Luke  
8:11; **32:38**/Matthew 13:6; **32:41**/John 4:14; **33:2**/John 5:39; **33:19**/John 3:14; **33:23**/  
John 4:14; **34:13**/Matthew 5:18; **34:23**/Acts 13:10; **34:29**/Matthew 5:13; **34:30**/Luke  
3:8; **34:31**/2 Corinthians 6:2; **34:33**/John 9:4; **34:36**/Matthew 8:11; Revelation 7:14;  
Acts 17:24; **34:37**/Philippians 2:12; **34:38**/John 4:14; **36:3**/John 6:54; **36:18**/Acts  
8:23; **36:23**/John 1:13; **36:24**/Luke 1:15; **36:26**/John 1:13; **36:28**/John 6:54; **37:15**/



Luke 22:31; **37:19**/1 Timothy 2:4; **37:33-34**/Matthew 11:29; **37:37**/John 6:54; **38:2**/Matthew 10:22; **38:5**/John 6:54; **38:6**/Mark 3:28-29; **38:8**/Acts 2:38; **38:9**/Matthew 11:29; John 8:12; **39:8**/John 6:54; **39:9**/1 John 2:16; **39:15**/John 1:29; **40:2**/1 Corinthians 15:51-53; **40:13**/Matthew 13:42-43; **40:14**/Hebrews 10:27; **40:15-17**/Revelation 20:6; **40:21**/Revelation 20:12; **40:22**/Acts 3:21; **40:23**/Luke 21:18; **40:24**/Acts 3:21; **40:25-26**/Matthew 13:42-43; **41:1**/Acts 3:21; **41:3**/Revelation 20:12; **41:4**/1 Corinthians 15:51-53; **41:11**/Acts 8:22-23; Ephesians 2:12; **42:6**/Hebrews 9:27; **42:23**/Revelation 20:12; **42:26**/Ephesians 1:4; **42:27**/Revelation 22:17; **43:2**/Revelation 19:10; Ephesians 1:17; **43:10**/John 4:24; **49:7,26**/Galatians 5:1; **57:21**/Matthew 9:29; **58:40**/Galatians 5:1; **60:23**/Matthew 23:26; **60:26**/2 Thessalonians 1:4; **61:9,12,21**/Galatians 5:1; **62:45**/Acts 2:38; **62:46**/Acts 20:28.

### Helaman

**Helaman 3:29**/Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 6:11; Matthew 7:13,14; **3:30**/Luke 16:26; Matthew 8:11; **4:12,24**/Revelation 19:10; **4:24**/Acts 17:24; **5:8**/Matthew 6:20; **5:9**/Acts 4:12; **5:19**/Galatians 1:14; **5:32**/Matthew 3:2; **5:44**/1 Peter 1:8; **5:47**/1 Peter 1:20; **5:48**/Mark 1:10,13; **6:1**/Matthew 5:20; **6:8**/James 4:13; **6:23**/Romans 6:23; **6:39**/Matthew 7:6; **7:4**/Mark 7:8; **7:10**/Matthew 21:33; **7:18**/John 10:11,27; **8:14,15**/John 3:14,15; **8:17**/John 8:56; **8:24**/Ephesians 1:10; **8:25**/Matthew 6:19,20; Romans 2:5; **9:2**/Acts 12:11; **10:7,8**/Matthew 16:19; 18:18; **10:9**/Matthew 21:21; **12:13,17**/Matthew 17:20; **12:24**/John 1:16; **12:26**/John 5:29; **13:6**/Acts 20:21; **13:25**/Matthew 23:30,31; **13:29**/Matthew 17:17; 23:16; John 3:19; **13:33**/Matthew 23:30,31; **14:2**/John 1:12; **14:18**/Matthew 3:10; Revelation 21:8; **14:25**/Matthew 27:52; **15:1-4**/Matthew 23:38; Luke 23:28-29; 13:3; **15:5**/Ephesians 5:15; **15:6,7**/1 Timothy 2:4; **15:8**/Galatians 5:1; **15:11**/1 Timothy 2:4; **15:15**/Matthew 11:21; **16:10**/Ephesians 5:15; **16:14**/Luke 2:10.

### 3 Nephi

**3 Nephi 1:13**/John 16:33, Acts 3:21; **1:25**/Matthew 5:18; **3:19**/Matthew 6:19; **5:1**/Acts 3:21; **5:5**/Acts 9:1; **5:8**/John 21:25; **6:14**/1 Corinthians 15:58; **7:16**/Mark 3:5; **7:19**/Matthew 10:1; **9:15**/John 14:10,11; 17:5-6; **9:16,17**/John 1:11,12; **9:20**/Matthew 3:11; **9:22**/Mark 10:14,15; John 10:17; **10:4,5,6**/Matthew 23:37; **10:7**/Matthew 23:38; **10:13**/Acts 2:19; **11:7**/Matthew 17:5; **11:11**/John 8:12; 18:11; **11:14**/John 20:27; **11:17**/Matthew 28:9; **11:25**/Matthew 28:19; **11:27**/John 17:21; **11:32**/John 7:16; Acts 17:30; **11:33-34**/Mark 16:16; **11:37**/Matthew 18:3; **11:38**/Acts 2:38;

**11:39**/Matthew 16:18; **11:40**/Matthew 7:24-27; 16:18; **12:1**/Matthew 3:11; **12:2**/Acts 2:38; **12-14**/Matthew 5-7; **15:1**/John 6:54; **15:17**/John 10:16; **16:3**/John 10:3,4; **16:15**/Matthew 5:13; **17:10**/Luke 7:38; **17:12,21**/Mark 10:13,16; John 11:35; **18:6-11**/Luke 22:17-20; **18:11-16**/Acts 2:38; Matthew 7:24-27; **18:18**/Matthew 26:41; Luke 22:31; **18:20**/John 16:23; **18:28,29**/1 Corinthians 11:27-29; **19:18**/John 20:28; **19:20**/John 17:6; **19:23**/John 17:20-22; **19:25**/Matthew 17:2; **19:28-29**/John 17:9; **19:35**/Matthew 8:10; **20:8**/1 Corinthians 11:23-25; **21:6**/Acts 2:38; **23:9**/Matthew 27:52-53; **26:3**/2 Peter 3:10; **26:5**/John 5:29; **26:17**/Acts 2:38; Luke 1:15; **26:18**/2 Corinthians 12:1-3; **26:19**/Acts 2:44; 26:21; **27:1**/Acts 2:38; **27:11**/Matthew 3:10; **27:13**/John 6:38; **27:14**/John 12:32; **27:17**/Matthew 3:10; **27:22**/John 6:54; **27:28**/John 15:16; **27:29**/Matthew 7:8; **27:32**/Matthew 6:19; John 17:12; **27:33**/Matthew 7:13,14; **28:7**/Matthew 16:28; **28:8**/1 Corinthians 15:51-53; **28:10**/Matthew 8:11; Luke 13:29; **28:13-15**/2 Corinthians 12:2-4; **28:31**/Romans 14:10; **28:35**/Matthew 26:24; **29:7**/John 17:12.

#### **4 Nephi**

**4 Nephi 1:1**/Acts 8:15; 2:38; **1:3**/Acts 2:44; 4:32; Hebrews 6:4; **1:5**/Matthew 11:5; Mark 7:37; **1:11**/Matthew 22:30; **1:30**/Matthew 27:51; **1:32**/Daniel 3; **1:33**/Daniel 6.

#### **Mormon**

**Mormon 1:15**/1 Peter 2:3; **2:19**/John 6:44; **3:2**/Acts 2:38; **3:12**/Hebrews 11:6; **3:15**/Romans 12:19; **3:18**/Matthew 19:28; Revelation 20:13; **3:19**/Matthew 19:28; **3:20**/2 Corinthians 5:10; **3:22**/2 Corinthians 5:10; **5:14**/Matthew 16:16; Ephesians 3:11; **5:16**/Ephesians 2:12; **5:21**/James 5:16; **6:21**/1 Corinthians 15:53; **7:5**/1 Corinthians 15:54,56; **7:6**/2 Corinthians 5:10; **7:8**/Acts 2:38; **7:10**/Matthew 3:11; **8:17**/Matthew 5:22; **8:20**/Romans 12:19; **8:21**/Matthew 3:10; **8:24**/Matthew 17:20; **8:30**/Matthew 24:6-7; **8:31**/Acts 8:23; **8:34**/Revelation 1:1; **8:41**/Revelation 16:6; **9:2**/2 Peter 3:10; **9:5**/Matthew 3:12; **9:6**/Revelation 7:14; **9:7**/1 Corinthians 12:10; **9:9**/Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17; **9:12-13**/1 Corinthians 15:21-22; **9:13**/1 Corinthians 15:52; **9:14**/Revelation 22:11; **9:21**/John 16:23; **9:22**/Mark 16:15; **9:23**/Mark 16:16; **9:24**/Mark 16:17; **9:27**/Philippians 2:12; **9:28**/James 4:3; **9:29**/1 Corinthians 11:27.

#### **Ether**

**Ether 3:14**/Matthew 25:34; John 1:12; **3:21**/1 John 1:3; **4:7**/Acts 26:18; **4:10**/John

6:44; **4:12**/John 12:44; John 8:12; 1:4; **4:13-15**/Matthew 11:28; Matthew 25:34; **4:16**/Revelation 1:1; **4:18**/Mark 16:16,17; **4:19**/John 6:44/Matthew 25:34; **5:3**/Acts 12:11; **5:4**/Matthew 18:16; John 6:44; **8:7-15**/Mark 6:14-29; **12:4**/Hebrews 6:19; **12:6**/Hebrews 11:1; **12:7**/John 7:4; **12:8**/Hebrews 6:4; **12:10**/Hebrews 7:11; **12:11**/1 Corinthians 12:31; **12:14**/Matthew 3:11; **12:17**/Mark 9:1; **12:19**/Hebrews 6:19; **12:26,27**/2 Corinthians 12:9; **12:28**/1 Corinthians 13:13; **12:30**/Matthew 17:20; **12:32**/John 14:2,3; **12:33**/John 10:17; 14:2,3; **12:35**/Matthew 25:28-29; **12:37**/1 Corinthians 13:1; John 14:2-3; **12:38**/2 Corinthians 5:10; **12:41**/John 14:16; **13:3,4**/Revelation 21:2; **13:8-9**/2 Peter 3:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17; **13:10-11**/Revelation 7:14; **13:12**/Matthew 19:30.

## **Moroni**

**Moroni 2:3**/Acts 8:15-17; 10:45; 11:15; **3:1**/Acts 20:17; **4:3**/Luke 22:17-20; **5:1,2**/Luke 22:17-20; **6:1**/Luke 3:8; **6:4**/Hebrews 12:2; **6:6**/Luke 22:17-20; **7:1**/1 Corinthians 13:13; **7:6**/1 Corinthians 13:3; **7:7**/Romans 4:3; **7:9**/1 Corinthians 13:3; **7:11**/James 3:11; **7:18**/Matthew 7:2; **7:25**/Matthew 4:4; **7:26**/John 15:16; 16:23; Matthew 21:22; **7:27**/Hebrews 1:3; **7:31**/Acts 9:15; **7:34**/Acts 2:38; **7:35**/Matthew 24:30; John 6:44; **7:43,44**/Matthew 11:29; 1 Corinthians 13:3; **7:45**/1 Corinthians 13:4-7; **7:46**/1 Corinthians 13:8,13; **7:47**/1 Corinthians 13:7; John 6:44; **7:48**/1 John 3:2,3; **8:8**/Mark 2:17; **8:12**/Acts 2:38; Matthew 18:3; **8:14**/Acts 8:23; 1 Corinthians 13:13; **8:16**/1 John 4:18; Acts 13:10; **8:25**/Acts 2:38; **9:6**/Acts 13:10; **9:16**/Mark 8:2-3; **10:8-17**/1 Corinthians 12:4-11; **10:19**/Hebrews 13:8; **10:26**/John 8:24; **10:32**/Titus 2:12; Matthew 22:37; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Colossians 1:28; **10:33**/Matthew 26:28; 2 Peter 3:14.

## **Appendix 3**

### **Baptism – What Is The Mode?**

#### **Ben Bailey and Shane Fisher**

The religious world confuses every aspect of the clear teachings of the Scriptures on baptism. One of those aspects is the mode. The word “mode” refers to the method by which baptism is performed. A person who surveys the religious landscape will find that Christendom practices three modes of baptism: (1) sprinkling, (2) pouring, (3) and/or immersion. While there are many who claim the proper mode may be sprinkling or pouring, it is not the majority vote that decides, but only the Bible is to be our guide of religious authority

(Acts 17:11, John 12:48, Exodus 23:2; Colossians 3:17). The question is then, “Is there any word from the Lord” on the subject of the baptismal mode (Jeremiah 37:17)? Yes!

There are four pieces of evidence that demonstrate that baptism is the mode of immersion only: (1) the lexical definition, (2) the requirements of baptism are associated only with immersion, (3) the usages of the word - baptism - in various NT contexts, and (4) church history.

## 1. Lexical Definition

If the word “baptize/baptism” means “to immerse” then to baptize in practice scripturally today would be to immerse someone. Though the modern-day English dictionary word “baptism” gives the meaning, “pouring, sprinkling, or immersion,” such is **not** the case when a person honestly examines the New Testament. A person can discover what the word meant during the period when the Greek New Testament was written.

One additional note to make before investigating the lexical evidence is that the word “baptism” is a transliteration of a Greek word. Transliteration is taking the Greek letters and translating them into its English letter equivalent. You can see this clearly when the Greek words are placed beside the English transliteration.

### **Greek word; Transliteration; Meaning; Times Found In The New Testament:**

**βαπτίζω (baptizo):** “to dip, immerse”; 77 times (Mounce, *Mounce Analytical Lexicon*, paragraph 2760).

**βάπτισμα (baptisma):** “immersion, baptism, ordinance of baptism”; 19 times (Mounce, *Mounce Analytical Lexicon*, paragraph 2762).

**βαπτισμός (baptismos):** “an act of dipping or immersion; a baptism; 4 times (Mounce, *Mounce Analytical Lexicon*, paragraph 2766).

**βαπτιστής (baptistes):** “one who baptizes, a baptist”; 12 times (Mounce, *Mounce Analytical Lexicon*, paragraph 2769).

**βάπτω (bapto):** “to dip, John 13:26; Luke 16:24; to dye, Revelation 19:13\*”; 4 times (Mounce, *Mounce Analytical Lexicon*, paragraph 2771).

**Here is a list of various scholarly works showing what the word means:**

- (1) **Bullinger** (A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament, 90). **βαπτίζω**: “To make a thing dipped or dyed. To immerse for a religious purpose.”
- (2) **Danker, et al.** (A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, 164). **βαπτίζω**: “Dip, immerse, mid. Dip oneself, wash (in non-Christian lit. also ‘plunge, sink, drench, overwhelm. . . .’)”
- (3) **Thayer** (A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 94). **βαπτίζω**: “immersion, submersion.”
- (4) **Abbott-Smith** (A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, 74). **βαπτίζω**: “to dip, immerse, sink.”
- (5) **Perschbacher** (The New Analytical Greek Lexicon, 66). **βαπτίζω**: “to dip, immerse; to cleanse or purify by washing.”
- (6) **Richards** (Expository Dictionary of Bible Words, 100-101). **βαπτίζω**: “Bapto is the basic verb. It means ‘to dip in’ or ‘to dip under.’ It is often used of dipping fabric in a dye. Baptizo is an intensive form of bapto. From early times it was used in the sense of immersing.”
- (7) **McReynolds** (Word Study Greek-English New Testament, 907). **βαπτίζω**: “Baptizo, immerse.”
- (8) **Vine** (An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, 1:96-97): “**ΒΑΠΤΙΣΜΑ**, baptism, consisting of the processes of immersion, submersion and emergence (from bapto, to dip). **ΒΑΠΤΙΖΩ**, to baptize, primarily a frequentative form of bapto, to dip, was used among the Greeks to signify the dyeing of a garment, or the drawing of water by dipping a vessel into another, etc.”

All of the lexical evidence shows that the original meaning of baptism was to immerse, dip, engulf, and/or submerge. Nowhere will a person find any evidence from the original language to prove that **βαπτίζω** means to sprinkle and/or pour.

The Greek language had a word for sprinkling, which was **ῥαντίζω** (rhan-tidzo). This word is used several times in the NT. Baptism is associated with “washing” (Hebrews 10:22; Ephesians 5:25-26; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5) since it is through water immersion that we contact the blood of Jesus that washes away our sins (Acts 22:16). Sprinkling is connected with the blood of Jesus



because it represents the ultimate fulfillment of what the Old Testament animal sacrifices were pointing towards when the blood was sprinkled on the altar (Hebrews 10:1–4, 22; 12:22–24; 1 Peter 1:2). In Hebrews 10:22, the heart of a sinner is sprinkled with the blood of Christ, which washes away sins when the physical body has been lowered underneath the water and raised up out of it.

The Greek language also had a word for pouring, which was χέω (cheo). In the NT, there are prepositions that are attached in front of this word such as: (1) καταχέω (katacheo) [Matthew 26:7; Mark 14:3]; (2) ἐκχέω (ekcheo) [Revelation 16:1,2,3; Matthew 9:17; 26:28; Mark 14:24; John 2:15; Acts 1:18; 2:17,18,33; 10:45; Jude 11; (3) ἐπιχέω (epicheo) [Luke 10:34]; (4) συγχέω (suncheo) [Acts 2:6; 9:22; 19:32; 21:27,31], but it is also not associated with water baptism. If the Greeks had a word for sprinkling and pouring, and yet the NT writers chose to use the **distinctive** word for immersion, how can anyone say there is biblical authority for sprinkling and/or pouring as the proper mode of baptism? The fact is, a person must go beyond the authority of the New Testament to hold to sprinkling/pouring as baptism (1 Corinthians 4:6).

## **2. The Requirements of Baptism Are Associated Only With Immersion**

**a. Requirement no. 1: Baptism requires “much water” (John 3:23).** In this passage the Bible records that “...John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there...” (John 3:23). This is a powerful incidental detail that John the apostle just so happens to write down by the inspiration of the Spirit. It is a fact that “much water” is not needed for sprinkling or pouring. When reading this passage one must honestly ask himself, “Why did John need to be baptizing where there was much water?” The best evidence points to the fact that he was baptizing where there was “much water” because he **needed enough water to administer immersion**.

**Requirement no. 2: Baptism requires a “coming up from the water” (Mark 1:10).** This is in regards to Jesus being baptized by John. Mark records, “And immediately coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove” (Mark 1:10). Mark records that Jesus came up from the water. Question: “What do you first have to do in order to come up out of the water?” You must **first** go down into the water! It is clear from this passage that Jesus was immersed, which plainly teaches us that one must be engulfed in water and then come up out of it to be baptized. There

is no way anyone can say this is anything else but the act of immersion.

**Requirement no. 3: Baptism requires a “going down to the water” (Acts 8:38).** This passage is in regards to the Ethiopian eunuch’s conversion. Luke records, “And he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him” (Acts 8:38). The mode of baptism required both Philip (the administrator) and the eunuch to go down into the water. Why was this necessary? If sprinkling or pouring were the mode, then they could stand along the bank and Philip could grab some water to sprinkle or pour upon the eunuch’s head. However, if baptism is immersion, it was necessary for both Philip and the eunuch to go down into the water.

**Requirement no. 4: Baptism requires a burial in water (Romans 6:3,4; Colossians 2:11,12).** In the context of Romans 6, baptism is likened to a burial. Everyone understands that in a burial the body is completely covered. Remember, Jesus was laid in a new tomb owned by Joseph of Arimathea, and the tomb was sealed by a large stone (Matthew 27:57-61). The body of Jesus was covered on all sides. Likewise the linking of baptism with the idea of a burial clearly shows that Paul, the inspired voice of God, recognized that baptism was by immersion.

**Requirement no. 5: Baptism requires a uniting (Romans 6:5-7).** Romans 6:5 states: “For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.” How does sprinkling and/or pouring show us uniting with the death of Christ?

**Requirement no. 6: Baptism requires a resurrection from the water (Romans 6:3,4).** Sprinkling and/or pouring are not immersion because they do not fit the picture of being identified with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection. Unless a sinner has been buried with Christ in the waters of baptism, he cannot claim to have been buried with Jesus or to be raised in newness of life (Romans 6:2-4).

### **3. The Usages Of “Baptism” In Various New Testament Contexts**

The usage of the word “baptism” in a figurative sense is Matthew 20:20–28. The sons of Zebedee clearly had a mistaken view about the nature of the kingdom of Jesus. Jesus reveals to them that if they are to be partakers of the blessings of the kingdom, then they will have to undergo suffering, just as He suffered. This is why He stated in Matthew 20:22-23: “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” They said to Him, “We are able.”

So He said to them, “You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father.” We know that Jesus was not referencing His water baptism by John the prophet (Matthew 3:13–17) because the death of John had occurred six chapters earlier in Matthew 14:1–12. You cannot be baptized by a dead administrator!

Secondly, Jesus had already made a reference to His death using this same type of language in Luke 12:50: “But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!” Who would dare promote the ridiculous notion that Jesus only suffered a little? Since He used the imagery of baptism in regard to His suffering, it is obvious that He was engulfed (or overwhelmed) in pain when He hung on the cross!

The next usage of “baptism” is the phrase “baptized into Moses” in a figurative sense in 1 Corinthians 10:1–4. If you read the historical account of the Israelites passing through the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21–31), you will discover that they were covered by walls of water on each side and the cloud of glory overshadowed them (cf. Exodus 14:18). They were covered on all sides! Who would ever suggest the ridiculous idea that when the sea divided, the Israelites passed through water that was no more than a few millimeters high?

The next usage of the word “baptism” is an antitype of the universal flood of Noah’s day in 1 Peter 3:21. Read the historical account of Noah and his family who were saved by the overwhelming water that covered all the pre-Flood mountains (Genesis 8:17–20), lasted a little over a year, and killed all the animals and human beings that were outside the ark that could not survive in water (Genesis 8:21–23). With that description of the flood, the farthest idea from your mind should be to suggest that the mountains were covered with a few millimeters of water or that animals and human beings drowned in a little bit of water!

#### **4. Church History**

Although church history in and of itself is not the authority, it does help us to understand what the church did directly after the death of the apostles (who were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit and preserved the message in the writings of the New Testament – John 16:13; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Jude 3), and it helps us understand how some departed from the original pattern.

During the first three centuries after the establishment of the church, it is clear that Christians recognized that immersion was the proper mode of baptism.

John D. Castelein states:

“Finally, we can trace the emergence in church history of sprinkling as a secondary mode of baptizing that eventually replaced immersion in Roman Catholic practice. The Didache, a second-century Christian document, allows for pouring — but not sprinkling — of water but only when immersion (preferably in cold flowing water) is just not possible. For example, a man named Novatian (ca. AD 251) received an emergency baptism by having water poured all over him while he lay in bed, since it was feared he would soon die. Such an emergency baptism is called a “clinical” baptism (from the Greek word for “bed”). When Novatian was later elevated to the priesthood, there was much protest due to his unorthodox and incomplete baptism.

By the middle of the third century, the church father Cyprian was still reluctant to declare that sprinkling was as valid a mode as immersion. Even by AD 753, Pope Stephen II, while in France, was being asked by monks from Cressy in Brittany whether it was valid to sprinkle an infant on the head. There are later councils (e.g., Calcuith, AD 816) that insist that even infants must be immersed. For a long time in church history, people who experienced only this provisional “clinical” baptism could not partake of the Lord’s Supper until they were fully immersed. In fact, it is universally acknowledged that sprinkling and pouring did not become officially recognized as alternative modes to immersion until the Council of Ravenna in 1311.” (Nettles et al., **Understanding Four Views on Baptism**, 140-141).

Church history teaches us two clear lessons. First, early Christians considered baptism to be full body immersion, and departure from this teaching was a direct result of man-made teaching (Jeremiah 10:23).

Secondly, if we desire to become New Testament Christians, we must abandon the doctrines of men and return to the ancient order of the apostles and prophets who were inspired by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22).

Is the mode of baptism really that important? Should we sprinkle today if people request it? When all the evidence has been weighed, it is clear that the Scriptures teach baptism is by immersion. The Greek language overwhelmingly affirms that its original meaning was immersion and early Christians practiced immersion until the doctrines of man intervened and intercepted in the church.

In order to be pleasing unto God, we must practice only the true mode of baptism - **immersion**.

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