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## Isaiah 29

This is one of the most glorious chapters in Holy Writ. It declares the coming forth of *that book of books*, as Elder Parley P. Pratt called the Book of Mormon. The Lord, in His mercy, made provisions for the descendants of the Lamanites to hear the *word* in the last days (see Enos 1:12–13). The writings of the Nephite prophets—as well as the Jaredites—were to come forth as the Book of Mormon many centuries after these prophets lived upon the earth. This book, together with the Bible, bears the most solemn witness of the divinity of Christ. To really understand ISAIAH 29 one must ponder and study 2 Nephi 25–33.

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The following verses are intimately associated with ISAIAH 29, and are found in 2 Nephi 26:14–20. In them we see the setting of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. There are many others also found in 2 Nephi 25–33.

**14** But behold, I [Nephi] prophesy unto you concerning the last days [the time when the Church of Jesus Christ would once again be restored upon the earth]; concerning the days when the Lord God shall bring these things [the Book of Mormon] forth unto the children of men.

**15** After my seed [the Nephites] and the seed of my brethren [the Lamanites] shall have dwindled in unbelief [as both the Nephites and Lamanites would turn away from the Lord and the Church of Jesus Christ], and shall have been smitten by the Gentiles [after the European colonists conquer the American continent and subdue the Lamanites]; yea, after the Lord God shall have camped against them [the Nephite nation] round about, and shall have laid siege against them with a mount, and raised forts against them; and after they shall have been brought down low in the dust, even that they are not [the Nephite nation shall be extinguished], yet the words of the righteous shall be written [the Book of Mormon will contain the words of the righteous prophets], and the prayers of the faithful shall be heard [such as the prophet Enos and others], and all those who have dwindled in unbelief [the Lamanite nation] shall not be forgotten.

**16** For those who shall be destroyed [the Nephites] shall speak unto them out of the

ground [representing the Book of Mormon, that would be buried and brought forth out of the ground], and their speech shall be low out of the dust, and their voice shall be as one that hath a familiar spirit [all of these are various ways of representing the Holy Ghost, speaking forth and bearing witness of the truth spoken by the Nephite Prophets long buried as well as the words of the Plates of Brass or the Bible]; for the Lord God will give unto him power [to the Prophet Joseph Smith, in terms of being able to translate the words into English so they transmit the message with power], that he may whisper concerning them, even as it were out of the ground; and their speech shall whisper out of the dust [through the Book of Mormon that will be unburied and the testimonies of the prophets of the Book of Mormon].

**17** For thus saith the Lord God: They shall write the things which shall be done among them, and they shall be written and sealed up in a book [the Book of Mormon<sup>1</sup>], and those who have dwindled in unbelief [the Nephite and Lamanite nations of old] shall not have them, for they seek to destroy the things of God.

**18** Wherefore, as those who have been destroyed have been destroyed speedily [both those at time of crucifixion and final battles around Cumorah]; and the multitude of their terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away—yea, thus saith the Lord God: It

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<sup>1</sup> Not just the sealed portion of the plates is considered ‘sealed.’ Nephi also uses this word when describing the return of the Book of Mormon plates to the Lord after its translation: “For after the book of which I have spoken shall come forth, and be written unto the Gentiles, and sealed up again unto the Lord, there shall be many which shall believe the words which are written; and they shall carry them forth unto the remnant of our seed” (2 Nephi 30:3b).

shall be at an instant, suddenly—[both those at time of crucifixion and final battles around Cumorah] 19 And it shall come to pass, that those who have dwindled in unbelief [the remnant of the Lamanite nation at the time that the European settlers arrive in America] shall be smitten by the hand of the Gentiles [the European settlers]. 20 And the Gentiles are lifted up in the pride of their eyes [the European settlers], and have stumbled, because of the greatness of their stumbling block [pride and blindness so they could not recognize Christ], that they have built up many churches; nevertheless, they put down the power and miracles of God, 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 [thus requiring that the Lord re-establish the Church of Jesus Christ once again, rather than reform any of the existing churches of the time].

Nephi prophecies of the last days when the Book of Mormon shall come forth. This will happen after both the Nephites and Lamanites will have fallen away from the true Church. The Nephites will have been surrounded by the Lamanites and conquered despite all their former strength. The Nephite nation will be destroyed speedily about 400 BC and the inhabitants of the continent will also suffer great upheavals at the time of the crucifixion of the Savior. It will be after the European colonists conquer the American continent and subdue the Lamanites that the Book of Mormon will come forth. The Book of Mormon will contain the words of the righteous prophets and these words will testify to the descendants of the Lamanites and of the whole earth. The prayers of the faithful—such as Enos of whom we have already mentioned in ISAIAH 28:5—will be fulfilled in that the descendants of the Lamanites will receive this book and be moved by the Spirit. The words of the Book of Mormon shall “speak from the ground.” The Prophet Joseph Smith would play a key role in bringing forth these words in the last days. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, the words of the book will testify to all: Lamanite, Jew and Gentile. The Book of Mormon will be published at the last day (1) after the Nephites and Lamanites will have apostatized, (2) after the remaining Lamanites will have been humbled by the Gentile nations; and (3) at a time when the Gentile nations will be full of pride—at a time when they will have built many churches, but none unto God; at a time when they shall deny that God has any intercourse with man; at a time when miracles will be

denied; and at a time when churches take advantage of the poor to build themselves up. At the last days all nations shall gather against Jerusalem. They will no more succeed than a hungry person can quench thirst or hunger in a dream.

vv. 1–8. Ariel (אֲרִיאֵל), or Jerusalem (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם), or the City of David (עִיר דָּוִד), to include the Temple Mount, would be destroyed. One like Ariel, that is, the Nephite people, would likewise be destroyed. The people would continue to offer sacrifices upon the temple altar even after Christ would give His life for us. As a consequence, distress would come upon both of these Ariels (Jerusalem and the Nephite cities). After the destruction of the Nephites, in the latter days, the voice of the righteous prophets would come forth, as it were, from the ground (as the Book of Mormon plates were so buried).

1 ¶ WOE to Ariel, to Ariel, the city [where] David dwelt! add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.

✓ or, O Ariel, that is, the lion of God      ✓ ✓ or, of the city  
✓ ✓ ✓ cut off the heads

The Targum (ܬ) has, “Woe to the altar, the altar which is built in the city in which David dwelt; because of the assembly of the armies which are gathering themselves together against her year by year, because the festivals shall cease.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “Hold consultation; exalt vain comfort. Ah city Ariel, against which David fought! collect provisions year after year; eat; for you shall eat with Moab.” Instead of *kill sacrifices*, the Peshitta (ܣ) has *keep festivals* (Lamsa) / *celebrate the feast [days]* (BPE). The BPE footnotes explain that Ariel means Ari-El, or Ari of El (that is, Lion of Elohim or Abode/Home of Elohim). The Douay-Rheims (ϛ) has, “Woe to Ariel, to Ariel the city which David took: year is added to year: the solemnities are at an end.” Ariel is spelled a bit different so that the Masoretic text (מ) has אֲרִיאֵל, as also DSS 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> (א), אֲרִיאֵל, while the DSS 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (א) has replaced the *yod* for a *vav*, אֲרִיאֵל.<sup>2</sup> ¶ הוֹי, *Woe, greetings, or oh!* Jennings says, “Nor is it without tenderness that He here cries, ‘O Ariel, Ariel,’ for the interjection will bear equally well the rendering ‘O’ as ‘Woe.’ Thus we ought to be well prepared to see judgment and mercy mingled in what follows.” See also ISAIAH 18, where הוֹי is given as a greeting rather than a warning. ¶ Ariel, אֲרִיאֵל. There are a number of interpretations for the meaning of this

<sup>2</sup> This would be pronounced Aruel or Aroel.

word. In Ezekiel 43:15, **וְהָאֵרֶל אֵיל** it clearly refers to the altar of burnt offerings (see Gesenius, HAL) or an “altar hearth” (WZAT<sup>3</sup>) from **אָרַרְהָה**, to burn or kindle (Delitzsch); or **אָרַר**, light (Lowth). Since Jerusalem was burnt in 70 AD, it would be easy to think that this is what was meant. The Targum (Ⓢ) follows this perspective. Others also follow the margin || (e.g., Rawlinson, Barnes, Gill), i.e., the lion of God, for **אֵיל אֵרֶל**. Gill suggests: “... it seems better to understand it of the city of Jerusalem, in which David encamped, as the word [dwelt, **וַיִּדְוַל**] signifies; or ‘encamped against’, as some; which he besieged, and took from the Jebusites, and fortified, and dwelt in; and which may be so called from its strength and fortifications, natural and artificial, and from its being the chief city of Judah, called a lion, Genesis 49:9 whose standard had a lion on it, and from whence came the Messiah, the Lion of the tribe of Judah...” [Regarding *encamped* also see notes on ISAIAH 29:3.] Gill adds, “...the words may be considered as of one calling to Jerusalem, and lamenting over it, as Christ did, ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,’ &c. Matthew 23:37 and the mention of David’s name, and of his dwelling in it, is not only to point out what city is meant, and the greatness and glory of it; but to show that this would not secure it from ruin and destruction.” A second very interesting point about Ariel is that a number of exegetes believe that reference is made to two Ariels. For instance, Gill suggests: “The words are rendered by Noldius, ‘woe to Ariel, to Ariel: to the city in which David encamped’; and he observes, that some supply the copulative ‘and; woe to Ariel, and to the city’, &c.” Clarke also speaks of two Ariels: “In the second verse it is said, I will distress Ari-el, and it shall be unto me as Ari-el. The first Ari-el here seems to mean Jerusalem, which should be distressed by the Assyrians: the second Ari-el seems to mean the altar of burnt offerings.” ¶ Three LDS Apostles explain that two Ariels are meant (we will relate Elder Orson Pratt’s narrative under our ISAIAH 29:2 notes). Elder LeGrand Richards frequently reiterated: “Not only did Isaiah see the destruction of the great city of Jerusalem, but he also saw the destruction of another great center here in America eleven hundred years after he made that prophecy.”<sup>4</sup> Elder Bruce R. McConkie speaks of the multiple attacks on Jerusalem or Ariel and says: “This proclamation [against Ariel] is the setting for like woes that shall come upon another people, a people who went out from Jerusalem to become a great nation, but who,

in turn, through sin fell from grace and became ‘as Ariel.’ Those who are to be ‘as Ariel’ are the Nephites, as we learn from chapter 3 of Second Nephi, Nephi’s paraphrase of ISAIAH 29.”<sup>5</sup> ¶ *Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices.* The idea of adding *year upon year* (**שָׁנָה עַל-שָׁנָה**) here is similar to that of ISAIAH 30, adding *sin upon sin* (**חַטָּאת עַל-חַטָּאת**). Lowth has, “Ironically: Go on year after year; keep your solemn feasts; yet know, that God will punish you for your hypocritical worship, consisting of mere form destitute of true piety.” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt has this to say, “... the Lord threatens Ariel, or Jerusalem, with judgment: he says, ‘woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the city where David dwelt! Add ye year to year; let them kill sacrifices; yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow.’ After the Messiah came and was sacrificed for the sins of the world, the Jews continued to ‘kill sacrifices’ when they should have been done away; they added ‘year to year’ to the law of Moses, until they brought down ‘heaviness and sorrow,’ and great ‘distress’ upon their beloved city. The Roman army encompassed the city—cast a trench about it and finally brought it down ‘even with the ground.’ The principal part of the Jews perished, and a remnant was scattered among the nations where they have wandered in darkness unto this day.”<sup>6</sup> Barnes similarly has: “That is, ‘go on year after year, suffer one year to glide on after another in the course which you are pursuing.’ This seems to be used ironically, and to denote that they were going on one year after another in the observance of the feasts; walking the round of external ceremonies...” Lowth writes: “Go on year after year, keep your solemn feasts: yet know, that God will punish you for your hypocritical worship, consisting of mere form destitute of true piety.” Gill writes, “...the sense is, go on from year to year in your security and vain confidence; or keep your yearly feasts, and offer your yearly sacrifices; ... let the people bring them, and the priests offer them, for the time is coming when an end will be put to them; ‘the feasts shall be cut off’: so the words may be rendered; the festivals shall cease, and be no more observed; and so the Targum, ‘the festivities shall cease.’” ¶ *Let them kill sacrifices.* Barnes has, “Margin ||, ‘Cut off the heads.’ The word here rendered ‘kill’ (**נִקְוָה**) may mean to smite; to hew; to cut down ISAIAH 10:34; Job 19:26. But it has also another signification which better accords with this place. It denotes to make a circle, to revolve; to go round a place Joshua 6:3, 11; to surround 1Kings 7:24; 2Kings 6:14;

<sup>3</sup> Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament.

<sup>4</sup> Elder LeGrand Richards, A Testimony, *Ensign* (CR), November 1980, p.63. Also see Elder LeGrand Richards, *Conference Report*, April 1967, First Day-Morning Meeting, p.21–22.

<sup>5</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, pp.430–436.

<sup>6</sup> Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 87.

Psalms 17:9; 22:17; 88:18. The word rendered ‘sacrifices’ (זָבַח) may mean a sacrifice Exodus 23:18; Psalm 118:27; Malachi 2:3, but it more commonly and properly denotes feasts or festivals Exodus 10:9; 12:14; Leviticus 23:39; Deuteronomy 16:10, 16:16; 1 Kings 8:2, 65; 2 Chronicles 7:8–9; Nehemiah 8:14; Hosea 2:11, 13. Here the sense is, ‘let the festivals go round;’ that is, let them revolve as it were in a perpetual, unmeaning circle, until the judgments due to such heartless service shall come upon you. The whole address is evidently ironical, and designed to denote that all their service was an unvarying repetition of heartless forms.” Compare to ISAIAH 1:11; and 66:3.

**2 Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow; for thus hath the Lord said unto me, and it shall be unto me as Ariel;**

The Targum (T) has, “And I will distress the city, in which the altar is, and she shall be desolate and empty; and she shall be surrounded before me with the blood of the slain, as the altar is surrounded round about with the blood of the holy sacrifices in the day of the festival.” The LXX (G) reads, “For I will bring distress upon Ariel, and her strength and her riches shall be for me.” Instead of *heaviness* the Peshitta (S) renders it, *lamentation*. The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And I will make a trench about Ariel, and it shall be in sorrow and mourning, and it shall be to me as Ariel.” ¶ *Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow*. Gill says, “... this he would do, notwithstanding their yearly sacrifices, and their observance of their solemn feasts, and other ceremonies of the law, in which they placed their confidence, and, neglected weightier matters.” Cheyne translates, תַּאֲנִיחַ תַּאֲנִיחַ, instead of *heaviness and sorrow*, as *moaning and bemoaning*, thus retaining the paronomasia. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt talks about the second Ariel (on this topic, also see ISAIAH 29:1): “The latter part of the second verse [of ISAIAH 29:2] speaks of another event that should be similar to the one which was to happen to Ariel, or Jerusalem: it reads thus; And it shall be unto me as Ariel’ [ISAIAH 29:2]. This cannot have reference to Ariel itself, but it must refer to something which should be ‘As Ariel.’ It would be folly to say that Ariel shall be as Ariel. Therefore the word ‘it’ must refer to a nation that should suffer similar judgments to those which should befall Jerusalem. In the three following verses the Lord describes more fully the second event; he says, ‘And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee. And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the

dust, and thy voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust. Moreover, the multitude of thy strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away; yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.’ These predictions of Isaiah could not refer to Ariel or Jerusalem because their speech has not been ‘out of the ground, or low out of the dust’ but it refers to the remnant of Joseph who were destroyed in America upwards of fourteen hundred years ago. The Book of Mormon describes their downfall, and truly it was great and terrible. At the crucifixion of Christ, ‘the multitude of their terrible ones,’ as Isaiah predicted ‘became as chaff that passeth away,’ and it took place, as he further predicts, ‘at an instant suddenly.’ Many of their great and magnificent cities were destroyed by fire, others by earth thereby buried in the depths of the earth. This sudden destruction came upon them because they had stoned and killed the prophets sent among them. Between three and four hundred years after Christ they again fell into great wickedness, and the principal nation fell in battle. Forts were raised in all parts of the land, the remains of which may be seen at the present day. Millions of people perished in battle and they suffered just as the Lord foretold by Isaiah—And I will camp against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee, and thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground,’ etc. This remnant of Joseph in their distress and destruction, became unto the Lord as Ariel. As the Roman army lay siege to Ariel, and brought upon her great distress and sorrow, so did the contending nations of ancient America bring upon each other the most direful scenes of blood and carnage. Therefore, the Lord could, with the greatest propriety, when speaking in reference to this event, declare that, ‘It shall be unto me as Ariel.’”<sup>7</sup> ¶ LDS Scholar Philip Reynolds explains: “...remember that the Lamanites, about 100 B.C., built a city which they called Jerusalem (Alma 21:2), which was destroyed at the time of the crucifixion (3 Nephi 9:7).”<sup>8</sup> We also need to turn our attention to 3 Nephi 8 in regards to the destruction of much of the Nephite civilization associated with that time period: “And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land. And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide

<sup>7</sup> Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 87.

<sup>8</sup> Reynolds, Philip C., ed. *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City, Utah. 4:289–290.

asunder. And there were exceedingly sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land” (3 Nephi 8:5–7) and “And there was a great and terrible destruction in the land southward. But behold, there was a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward; for behold, the whole face of the land was changed, because of the tempest and the whirlwinds, and the thunderings and the lightnings, and the exceedingly great quaking of the whole earth” (3 Nephi 8:11–12).

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**3 And That I the Lord will camp against thee her round about, and will lay siege against thee her with a mount, and I will raise forts against thee her.**

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The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And I will encamp against thee with armies; and I will build a fortified camp (מִצְרָה<sup>9</sup>) against thee, and I will cast up a mound against thee.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “I will indeed encompass thee as David did; and surround thee with a rampire (i.e., ‘mount’ or ‘rampart’); and erect towers around thee.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) renders it much like the Masoretic text (Ⓜ), “And I will encamp against thee &c.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “And I will make a circle round about thee, and will cast up a rampart against thee, and raise up bulwarks to besiege thee.” The whole notion of encamping around (ISAIAH 29:3, 1) is very interesting to us as LDS, as we turn to 2 Nephi 26:15, 18 and read about the many fortifications to be built, to no avail, by the peoples in the American continent whose fall would be as abrupt as that of Jerusalem in 70 AD. ¶ *That I the Lord will.* Faussett, Gill, Barnes and many others agree with the Book of Mormon and the JST in making these the words of the Lord. ¶ *... camp against her round about, and will lay siege against her with a mount, and I will raise forts against her.* Gill says, “This cannot be understood of Sennacherib’s siege, for he was not suffered to raise a bank against the city, nor shoot an arrow into it (ISAIAH 37:33) but well agrees with the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, as related by Josephus (Joseph. de Bello Jud. 1. 5. c. 7. sect. 1. &c. 12. sect. 1, 2.)” Faussett also suggests that the prophecy was more fully fulfilled by the “Roman siege (Luke 19:43; 21:20).” As we have said, this attack would take place not only against Jerusalem but also against the Nephites in the final battle. ¶ *Mounts and forts.* AMP translates as “and I will hem you in with siege works and I will set up fortifications against you.” LHI assigns to both צָרְתִּי and מִצְרָה the idea of *siege works* or apparatus that were used to overcome or destroy the fortified walls. ASV has “And I will encamp

<sup>9</sup>According to the Targum Lexicon, ‘Siege works.’

against thee round about, and will lay siege against thee with posted troops, and I will raise siege works against thee.” Regarding the מִצְרָה (siege) we read in the ISBE<sup>10</sup> a number of related operations. The process of besieging included (1) surrounding the city, (2) placing archers on forts to discharge their weapons, (3) an inclined road made of packed soil and other matter was constructed so battering rams could be brought against the walls of the city, (4) battering rams could now be used to tear down or breach the walls, and (5) finally rushing the breach through which the attacking armies could enter the surrounded cities.

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**4 And thou she shalt be brought down, [and] shalt speak out of the ground, and thy her speech shall be low out of the dust; and thy her voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy her speech shall whisper out of the dust.**

✓ peep, or, chirp

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*And she shalt be brought down.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And thou shalt be brought low.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “But when thy words shall be brought down to the ground.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “Thou shalt be brought down.” Gill writes, “To the ground, and laid level with it, even the city of Jerusalem, as it was by the Romans.” And no doubt Jerusalem was also intended as one that would be brought down. But the idea here is more correctly in line with the peoples of ancient America that were brought down after the great and last battle of the Nephites and the Lamanites around Hill Cumorah as well as the disasters that took place in the American continent at the time of the crucifixion of Christ. ¶ *And shalt speak out of the ground, and her speech shall be low out of the dust; and her voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and her speech shall whisper out of the dust.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And shalt speak from beneath the earth, thy words shall gibber from the dust; and thy voice shall come like a necromancer out of the ground; yea, thy words shall gibber from the dust.” Chilton’s Targum (Ⓣ) translation has: “From the earth you will speak and from the dust your utterances will *whine*, and your voice will be like a ghost from the ground, and from the dust your utterances will whine.” Stenning’s (Ⓣ) translation renders it, “Out of the ground shalt thou speak, and out of the dust shall thy words whisper; and thy voice shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit

<sup>10</sup> See *SIEGE* in ISBN for a very interesting and thorough article on this subject—in terms of the actions of both the attackers and the defenders.

coming out of the ground, and out of the dust shall thy words whisper.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “And shall be as if they sounded out of the earth; and thy voice on the ground shall be feeble.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “Thou shalt speak out of the earth, and thy speech shall be heard out of the ground: and thy voice shall be from the earth like that of the python, and out of the ground thy speech shall mutter.” Nägelsbach writes: “<sup>11</sup>שָׁחַח is used by Isaiah with tolerable frequency (ISAIAH 2:9, 11, 17; 5:15; 25:12; 26:5). The word is used especially of a suppressed voice (Ecclesiastes 12:14)... The voice will, like that of the spirit of one dead, come forth out of the earth.” And if we follow Gesenius, not just *come forth*, but *spring forth* with the force of a wild beast who is *low*, ready to leap with much energy. ¶ The words of Elder Orson Pratt fill my eyes with tears of joy: “One of the most marvelous things connected with this prediction is that after the nation should be brought down, they should ‘speak out of the ground.’ [ISAIAH 29:4.] This is mentioned or repeated four times in the same verse. Never was a prophecy more truly fulfilled than this in the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith took that sacred history ‘out of the ground.’ It is the voice of the ancient prophets of America speaking ‘out of the ground’; their speech is ‘low out of the dust’; it speaks in a most familiar manner of the doings of by gone ages; it is the voice of those who slumber in the dust. It is the voice of prophets speaking from the dead, crying repentance in the ears of the living. In what manner could a nation, after they were brought down and destroyed, ‘speak out of the ground?’ Could their dead bodies, or their dust, or their ashes speak? Verily, no: they can only speak by their writings or their books that they wrote while living. Their voice, speech or words, can only ‘speak out of the ground,’ or ‘whisper out of the dust’ by their books or writings being discovered.”<sup>12</sup> I wish to testify of the tremendous force with which the Spirit of the Holy Ghost will affirm the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon and of the divinity of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ... permitting the ancient Nephite and Lamanite prophets to *whisper out of the dust*. See my conversion story in the introduction to this book, as well as in the January 1992 *Ensign*, and February 1993 *Liahona* magazines, entitled “On Sacred Ground.” In ISAIAH 1:15, I speak of *the perfect pattern of prayer* wherein you may come to know that the Book of Mormon is true.

<sup>11</sup> Gesenius has, “To sink down, Habakkuk 3:6; used of beasts of prey couching down and lying in wait in their lairs, Job 38:40,” and LHI has *low*.

<sup>12</sup> Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 87.

5 Moreover the multitude of ~~thy~~ *her* strangers shall be like small dust, and the multitude of the terrible ones [*shall be*] as chaff that passeth away; yea, it shall be at an instant suddenly.

The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Moreover the multitude of those scattering thee shall be like a small dust, and the tumultuous assembly of the mighty as chaff that passeth away; and there shall be a tumult suddenly.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Then shall the riches of the wicked be as the dust of a wheel, and the multitude of thine oppressors as chaff blown away: and this shall be as in a moment, suddenly.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *oppressors* (Lamsa) / *oppress thee* (BPE) instead of *strangers*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “And the multitude of them that fan thee, shall be like small dust: and as ashes passing away, the multitude of them that have prevailed against thee.” In the DSS 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (Ⓚ) we have *presumptuous*,

*rebellious* or *arrogant* (BDB, for roots זָרַח and זָרַח),

*thy insolent* (Swanson) or *thy enemies* (DSSB), זָרַח,

while in the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) we have *thy strangers* (זָרַח, for root זָרַח). The JST has *her* instead of *thy*.

¶ *Moreover the multitude of her strangers shall be like small<sup>13</sup> dust* (זָרַח זָרַח). Gill says “... the simile of ‘small dust,’ to which they are compared, is not used to express the weakness of them, but the greatness of their number.” Rawlinson says: “In primitive societies every stranger is an enemy; and hence language the formation of primitive men often has one word for the two ideas. In Latin *hostis* is said to have originally meant ‘foreigner’ (Cic., ‘De Off,’ 1:12).” Barnes writes, “The multitude of the strangers that shall besiege thee; called ‘thy strangers,’ because they besieged, or oppressed thee.” The Nephites, in the last battle in Cumorah were surrounded by an innumerable enemy or *strange* people. ¶ *And the multitude of the terrible ones shall be as chaff that passeth away*. Rawlinson says, “‘Chaff,’ in Scripture, is always a metaphor for weakness.” This clause refers not to the attackers (those were described as *small dust* because of their great numbers), but rather to the attacked, the Nephite nation who at one time had been great. Now, they were consumed as chaff. While a few were indeed scattered, most were killed on Hill Cumorah. Those who were left were hunted down and killed by the Lamanites. Moroni was the only Nephite who lived to tell the story (Moroni 1). ¶ *It shall be at an instant suddenly*. Elder Mark E. Peterson wrote:

<sup>13</sup> HCSB, LHL, ISV, LBP, LITV, NASB, and RV use *fine*. Most others use *small*.

“Isaiah’s words were fulfilled to the letter. The people who wrote the Book of Mormon were indeed destroyed ‘at an instant suddenly’ (ISAIAH 29:5). The book was sealed and placed in the ground for safekeeping by the last survivor of the Nephite nation—Moroni.”<sup>14</sup>

But, behold, in the last days, or in the days of the Gentiles—yea, behold all the nations of the Gentiles and also the Jews, both those who shall come upon this land and those who shall be upon other lands, yea, even upon all the lands of the earth, behold, they will be drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations--\*

6 And when that day shall come\*\* Thou shalt they shall be visited of the LORD of hosts, with thunder and with earthquake, and with a great noise, and with storm, and with tempest, and with the flame of devouring fire.

\* Verse 6 in the KJV is verse 2 in the Book of Mormon version of this chapter, except that the Book of Mormon introduces the text of Isaiah with this verse, which is very important in terms of the time frame of the fulfillment of the revelation, and thus is included here.

\*\* JST: The clause, “And when that day shall come” is replaced by the prophetic “for” in the JST.

*But, behold, in the last days, or in the days of the Gentiles—yea, behold all the nations of the Gentiles and also the Jews, both those who shall come upon this land and those who shall be upon other lands, yea, even upon all the lands of the earth, behold, they will be drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations.* This speaks of the total apostasy that would prevail before the coming of the Book of Mormon (as indicated by the idea of being *drunken with iniquity and all manner of abominations*, as we also saw in ISAIAH 28). ¶ *And when that day shall come they shall be visited of the LORD of hosts, with thunder and with earthquake, and with a great noise, and with storm, and with tempest, and with the flame of devouring fire.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Thou shalt be visited with thunder from (Chaldee, ‘from before’) the Lord of hosts, and with earthquake, and with a great noise; with storm, and tempest, and a flame of devouring fire.” The LXX (Ⓣ) reads, “For from the Lord of Hosts there will be a visitation—a hurricane and a devouring flame of fire with thunder and an earthquake and a mighty noise.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “And it shall be at an instant suddenly. A visitation shall come from the Lord

of hosts in thunder, and with earthquake, and with a great noise of whirlwind and tempest, and with the flame of devouring fire.” Faussett well says that these verses refer to the last days, a time where neither Jew nor Gentile shall be possessed of the truth. (Also see D&C 88:88–90.)

7 And ~~the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel Zion, even all that fight against her and her munition,~~ and that distress her, shall be as a dream of a night vision;

The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “And the multitude of all the nations, that are gathered together against the city, and the altar which is in her, and all their camps and their armies, that are oppressing her, shall be like a phantom (literally, as a dream of the imagination) of the night.” The LXX (Ⓣ) reads, “And the wealth of all the nations which encamped against Ariel, and all they who are warring against Jerusalem, and all who have been assembled against her, and those distressing her, shall be like one dreaming dreams by night.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ), instead of *munition*, has *all the armies and multitudes*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓣ) has, “And the multitude of all nations that have fought against Ariel, shall be as the dream of a vision by night, and all that have fought, and besieged and prevailed against it.” The DSS 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (Ⓣ) has **רַמְצֵרְתָּה**, spelled with a *rosh* (fortification) while the DSS 1QIsa<sup>b</sup> (Ⓣ) has *stronghold*, spelled with a *dalet*, **רַמְצֵרְתָּה**, as does also the Masoretic text (Ⓜ), **רַמְצֵרְתָּה**. The LXX (Ⓣ) uses Ἀριελ (Ariel) in the first instance but Ἱερουσαλημ (Jerusalem) instead of *her* in the same verse. The Book of Mormon has Zion (**צִיּוֹן**) here, rather than the Ariel (**אַרְיֵל**) found in the Masoretic text, which makes the comments by Nägelsbach particularly interesting: “The concluding words of this verse ‘the multitude of all the nations that fight against Mount Zion,’ which correspond exactly to what we find in ISAIAH 29:7, except that there instead of ‘Mount Zion’ the name ‘Ariel’ occurs, furnish the key to the understanding of the enigmatical word Ariel. Can it be deemed accidental that the Prophet in ISAIAH 29:8 repeats those words of ISAIAH 29:7 with the sole change of substituting for ‘Ariel’ the words ‘Mount Zion?’” The Book of Mormon does have a small difference, *Zion* (**צִיּוֹן**) vs. *Mount Zion* (**הַר צִיּוֹן**). ¶ Govett, while also speaking of the early verses of this chapter, makes suggestions that fit well here: “These characteristics [i.e., dream of a night vision] point out that time as the day of the Saviour’s

<sup>14</sup> Mark E. Petersen, *Isaiah for Today*, p.108.

second advent. Moreover, as the enemies of Jerusalem are in the 7<sup>th</sup> verse stated to be ‘a multitude of *all nations*,’ this proves that the siege here spoken of will take place at the time of the Great Confederacy, so often alluded to. If the reader will compare this chapter with the twelfth and fourteenth chapters of Zechariah, he will discover the most evident harmony in the siege of Jerusalem there predicted; in its besiegers being ‘all nations,’ in the issue,—their utter discomfiture; and that too, after they have taken the city...” Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: “In the day when all nations are gathered at Jerusalem to fight against the chosen people; in the day when the house of Judah accepts Him in whose hands and feet are the nail marks of Calvary; when they look upon him whom they have pierced and ask, ‘What are these wounds in thine hands?’ (Zechariah 13:6); and when he identifies himself as their God—in that day, the Lord of Hosts, the ancient God of battles, shall again fight their battles. Israel shall triumph. Their enemies shall be destroyed.”<sup>15</sup> Elder McConkie also says: “Let us be reminded that most of the wars fought from the fall of man to this hour have been religious wars. It was so before the flood; it was so in ancient Israel... and it will be so—a thousand times over—in the coming Armageddon. The nations that distress Jerusalem in that day will be in opposition to the Lord Jehovah. They will be fighting against Mount Zion.”<sup>16</sup> Elder Orson Pratt has: “The kingdom of God, with its inspired prophets and Apostles, was rooted out of the earth, also the Priesthood with all its powers; and instead thereof churches, creeds and governments have been reared and built up by human wisdom; but the kingdom of God that is to be established in these last days, instead of being overcome and destroyed out of the earth, is to stand forever; it was not to be delivered to another people (Daniel 2:44), that is, it is never to change hands, but once established, once organized on the earth, it is to continue from that time henceforth and forever, while the kingdoms of this world will vanish away like the dream of a night vision.”<sup>17</sup>

**8 Yea, it shall be unto them, even be as when an unto a hungry [man] which dreameth, and, behold, he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty: or as when like unto a thirsty man which\* dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh, but he awaketh,**

<sup>15</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, pp.430–436.

<sup>16</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, pp.435–436.

<sup>17</sup> Pratt, Elder Orson, “The Restoration of the Jews, Etc.” *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 14, No. 9, May 26, 1871, pp. 58–70.

and, behold, [he is] faint, and his soul hath appetite; Yea, even so shall the multitude of all the nations be that fight against mount Zion.

\* JST: uses “who” instead of “which.”

*Yea, it shall be unto them, even as unto a hungry man which dreameth, and, behold, he eateth, but he awaketh and his soul is empty.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth, behold, he eateth; but he awakes, and he (Chaldee, ‘himself’) is in want.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “And like men who in sleep are eating and drinking, but when they awake the dream is vain.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) instead of *soul is empty*, has *not satisfied* (BPE) / *weary and famished* (Lamsa). Have we not all experienced similar dreams at one time or another? Those who fight against the Lord will no more have power over Israel than to satisfy their hunger or thirst while they dream. The natural man may be ever searching to dictate to God but no satisfaction can be obtained—no enduring happiness—unless we align our desires with those of God. ¶ *Or like unto a thirsty man which dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh, but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Or as a thirsty man dreameth, and behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold, he (Chaldee, ‘himself’) is spent.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Even as a thirsty man dreameth that he drinketh, and when he waketh he is still athirst, his soul having trusted in a shadow.” Rawlinson explains, “The entire host of the ‘terrible ones’ would melt away and disappear, as a night vision before the light of day it would dissolve into nothing, vanish, leave no trace.” This whole experience, although many of the exegetes attach it to a different historical point, speaks of the feelings of impotence that the enemies of Israel shall experience at not being able to conquer Jerusalem in that great battle when the nations shall surround her and the Son of Man shall come to her protection. ¶ *Yea, even so shall the multitude of all the nations be that fight against mount Zion.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “So shall the multitude of all the nations be, that gather themselves together against the mountain of Zion.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “So shall be the wealth of all the nations, who have warred against mount Sion.” Once again, this has reference to the nations who in the last days will surround Jerusalem and will even succeed to some degree before the triumphal entry by the Lord of hosts who will stand in the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem and the mount will then split in two making possible the refuge and escape of the Lord’s people. A nation will be born in a day as they are converted to the Lord and recognize Jesus Christ as the Holy One of Israel (ISAIAH 66:8).

vv. 9–16. A sense of complete spiritual darkness will prevail before the Book of Mormon comes to light. This apostasy was born of the rejection of the prophets that the Lord had sent through the ages until they were finally removed from the earth. The Book of Mormon would be translated by a humble unlearned boy rather than by the self-proclaimed wise and prudent. It would come at a time when the precepts of men are given more weight than those of God. The coming forth of this book and the subsequent establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints would constitute a marvelous work and a wonder.

9 ¶ For behold, all ye that doeth iniquity, stay yourselves, and wonder; ~~ery ye for ye shall cry out, and cry;~~ <sup>✓</sup> they are ye shall be drunken, but not with wine; they ye shall stagger, but not with strong drink.

✓ or, take your pleasure and riot

*For behold, all ye that doeth iniquity, stay yourselves, and wonder; for ye shall cry out, and cry; ye shall be drunken, but not with wine; ye shall stagger, but not with strong drink.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Be astounded, wonder, be ye terrified, and muse, and marvel. They are drunk, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with old wine.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “Be sunk in dejection and stand astonished; be drunk and reel, not with wine nor strong drink.” The BPE (Ⓢ) has, “Be astonished and amazed, shake and wonder, because they are drunken, but not with wine; because they stagger, but not on account of intoxicating drink.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “Be astonished, and wander, waver, and stagger: be drunk, and not with wine: stagger, and not with drunkenness.” The JST and the Book of Mormon give it the future—*shall be*—rather than present tense. The Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ, wine, while 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (Ⓞ) has וַיִּשְׁכְּרוּ, from wine. Also, the Masoretic text (Ⓜ) has *and not strong drink* וְלֹא שִׁכָּר, while DSS 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (Ⓞ) has *and to strong drink*, וְלִשְׁכָּר. ¶ Regarding this drunkenness, Barnes says: “It is a moral and spiritual intoxication and reeling. They err in their doctrines and practice; and it is with them as it is with a drunken man that sees nothing clearly or correctly, and cannot walk steadily. They have perverted all doctrines; they err in their views of God and his truth, and they are irregular and corrupt in their conduct.” Elder Bruce R. McConkie explained: “In a spiritual sense drunkenness means apostasy” (ISAIAH 29:9–10; Revelation 17:2; 18:3).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed., p.209.

Also from Elder McConkie we have: “How shall the night of awful darkness that covers the earth come to an end? What light will pierce the enshrouding gloom? How shall those who are drunken but not with wine and who stagger but not with strong drink, be reclaimed? What will bring spiritual sobriety into their souls? Again the answer is a book—a book that contains the mind and will and voice of the Lord, a book that whispers from the dust. And so Isaiah speaks of the glorious restoration of the everlasting gospel, which is to take place in the last days, and he introduces that restoration by speaking of the book so long sealed and even now only partially opened.”<sup>19</sup>

10 For behold, the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have ~~and hath~~ closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; \* and your rulers, <sup>✓</sup> the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity.

\* JST: uses semi-colon after “rulers,” rather than after “prophets.”

✓ heads

(See also ISAIAH 6:10; and Romans 11:8.) *For behold, the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep. For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers, the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “Because the Lord shall cast among you a spirit of error; and He shall hide the prophets from you, and he shall hide the scribes, and the teachers, who teach you the instruction of the law.” The LXX (Ⓞ) reads, “For the Lord hath drenched you with a spirit of stupefaction, and will close up the eyes of them and of their prophets and their rulers.” The Peshitta (Ⓢ) has the seers seeing hidden things. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “For the Lord hath mingled for you the spirit of a deep sleep, he will shut up your eyes, he will cover your prophets and princes, that see visions.” Barnes explains: “The word rendered ‘hath poured out’ (נִסְךְ) is usually referred to the act of pouring out a libation, or drink-offering in worship Exodus 30:9; Hosea 9:4; ISAIAH 30:1. Here it means that Yahweh had, as it were, ‘drenched them’ (Septuagint, πεπότικε) with a spirit of stupefaction.” A spirit of deep sleep has a perfect translation into Spanish, *un espíritu de aturdimiento*, something to the effect of being in a daze, confused and disoriented. When people reject the prophets or the Book of Mormon it is as if they have shut their eyes to the truth and thus walk in this *espíritu de aturdimiento*.

<sup>19</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p. 442.

¶ In John we read: “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19). The Savior said: “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?” (John 5:46–47). Likewise, those who truly believe the Bible will believe in the Book of Mormon, for the Bible speaks of the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 33:10). Anyone who reads the Book of Mormon with a sincere heart will know that this book is full of light and truth and will feel of the influence of the Holy Ghost bearing witness of its truthfulness. ¶ Nägelsbach notes: “Where a capacity to receive the divine word is wanting, there it works an effect the very opposite of what it should properly produce; it hardens, blinds, stupefies. It is as if the spirit of understanding had become in those who do not desire the knowledge of the truth, a spirit of stupefaction, of stupidity. תרדמה<sup>20</sup>, which is found only here in Isaiah, has this ... sense.” ¶ In speaking about ISAIAH 29:9–10, Elder Orson Pratt says, “Here we perceive the dark and benighted condition of the multitude of all the nations ... they were to be drunken and stagger, but not with wine nor with strong drink; the prophets and seers were to be covered from them; and ‘the vision of all,’ that is, the revelations of all the holy prophets and seers, contained either in the Bible or any other place were to become as the words of the sealed Book of Mormon ... they are covered; they are not understood any more than the words of the sealed book were understood by the learned. When the events of the scripture prophecy are so clearly fulfilled before their eyes, they will not even then perceive it ... because they are drunken with every species of wickedness and abominations, and because they, draw near to the Lord with their mouths, and with their lips, while their hearts are removed far from Him, and because they are taught by the precepts of men they will reject it, and in so doing, they will reject the Lord’s great and last warning message to man, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”<sup>21</sup> ¶ *For behold, ye have closed your eyes, and ye have rejected the prophets; and your rulers [i.e., your heads, רִאשֵׁיכֶם], the seers hath he covered because of your iniquity.* Many exegetes believe that the *prophets* and *seers* are a latter gloss or addition, but the Book of Mormon greatly clarifies this passage to make it clear that the Lord would cover or remove the prophets and seers from the presence of the people as they would no longer heed their words but had rejected them. Nyman well says, “The KJV reads as

<sup>20</sup> Deep sleep.

<sup>21</sup> Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, pp. 89–90.

though the Lord were responsible for these problems, but the Book of Mormon shows that that it was the people’s choices which had brought upon them their conditions.”

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We turn again to materials found in the Book of Mormon and Inspired Version not contained in today’s other ancient texts. But first, this from Church history: “Sometime in this month of February [1828], the aforementioned Mr. Martin Harris came to our place, got the characters which I had drawn off the plates, and started with them to the city of New York. For what took place relative to him and the characters, I refer to his own account of the circumstances, as he related them to me after his return, which was as follows: ‘I went to the city of New York, and presented the characters which had been translated, with the translation thereof, to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments. Professor Anthon stated that the translation was correct, more so than any he had before seen translated from the Egyptian. I then showed him those which were not yet translated, and he said that they were Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic; and he said they were true characters. He gave me a certificate, certifying to the people of Palmyra that they were true characters, and that the translation of such of them as had been translated was also correct. I took the certificate and put it into my pocket, and was just leaving the house, when Mr. Anthon called me back, and asked me how the young man found out that there were gold plates in the place where he found them. I answered that an angel of God had revealed it unto him. He then said to me, “Let me see that certificate.” I accordingly took it out of my pocket and gave it to him, when he took it and tore it to pieces, saying that there was no such thing now as ministering of angels, and that if I would bring the plates to him he would translate them. I informed him that part of the plates were sealed, and that I was forbidden to bring them. He replied, “I cannot read a sealed book.” I left him and went to Dr. Mitchell, who sanctioned what Professor Anthon had said respecting both the characters and the translation”<sup>22</sup> Note that Anthon was so convinced that these characters were authentic that he desired to see the plates even though he did not believe the angel narrative.

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**And it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall bring forth unto you the words of a book, and they shall be the words of them which have slumbered.**

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<sup>22</sup> JS—History 1:63–65.

The words that the Lord God would bring forth are those of the Book of Mormon. These will be the words of ancient prophets who lived in the American continent more than a millennia ago. We read that they have *slumbered* as a poetical way of saying that they have long since passed from their mortal existence into the world of spirits.

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And behold, the book shall be sealed; and in the book shall be a revelation from God, from the beginning of the world to the ending thereof.

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Besides the Book of Mormon there would be additional plates—plates that were sealed and that are to come forth at a future date. We understand that these words were seen by the brother of Jared and were also known to John the revelator (see Ether 4:4–7).

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Wherefore, because of the things which are sealed up, the things which are sealed shall not be delivered in the day of the wickedness and abominations of the people. Wherefore, the book shall be kept from them.

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Only the Book of Mormon would be delivered to the Prophet Joseph Smith for translation but not the sealed portion of the plates. The sealed portion of the plates would be kept from this undeserving generation.

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But the book shall be delivered unto a man, and he shall deliver the words of the book, which are the words of those who have slumbered in the dust, and he shall deliver these words unto another;

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The Book of Mormon would be delivered to Joseph Smith, the Prophet. The Prophet would, in turn, write some of the words found in the plates and hand them to another man, that is, to Martin Harris. Note that the Prophet would not hand the book or plates to Martin Harris, but rather, words from the plates. The words of the Book of Mormon represent the words of the ancient prophets of the American continent who are no longer living, but *slumber*.

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But the words which\* are sealed he shall not deliver, neither shall he deliver the book. For the book shall be sealed by the power of God, and the revelation which

was sealed shall be kept in the book until the own due time of the Lord, that they may come forth; for behold, they reveal all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof.

\* JST: uses “that” instead of “which.”

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Elder Orson Pratt explains: “Mark this prediction; the book itself was not to be delivered to the learned, but only ‘the words of a book’; this was literally fulfilled in the event which has already been described [Martin Harris and Professor Anthon incident], as clearly testified of, not only by the ‘plain-looking countryman,’ namely Martin Harris, but by the learned professor Anthon himself. But Isaiah informs us in the next verse [ISAIAH 29:12] that the book itself should be delivered to the unlearned; he says, ‘and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, read this, I pray thee: and he said, I am not learned.’ This was fulfilled when the angel of the Lord delivered the book into the hands of Mr. Smith; though unlearned in every language, but his own mother tongue, yet he was commanded to read or translate the book. Feeling his own incapability to read such a book, he said to the Lord in the words of Isaiah, ‘I am not learned.’”<sup>23</sup> The sealed portion of the book, on the other hand, shall come forth at a time that the Lord has set and contains “all things from the foundation of the world unto the end thereof.”

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And the day cometh, that the words of the book which were sealed shall be read upon the house tops; and they shall be read by the power of Christ; and all things shall be revealed unto the children of men which ever have been among the children of men, and which ever will be, even unto the end of the earth.

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At this future date the words from the sealed plates “shall be read from the house tops... through the power of Christ.” At that time these things shall be revealed to all humankind—past, present and future. Recall that housetops described the houses with a terrace on top of the houses (ISAIAH 22:1). This is to be fulfilled either literally or symbolically, the meaning being that all shall have these words.

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<sup>23</sup> Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 88.

Wherefore, at that day when the book shall be delivered unto the man of whom I have spoken, the book shall be hid from the eyes of the world, that the eyes of none shall behold it save it be that three witnesses shall behold it, by the power of God, besides him to whom the book shall be delivered; and they shall testify to the truth of the book and the things therein.

So—returning to the time when the Book of Mormon would be delivered to the Prophet Joseph Smith—these plates would not be shown to many others. Among these there would be three special witnesses and an additional eight witnesses. These witnesses would testify that indeed they had seen the plates and of the truthfulness of what they contained.

And there is none other which shall view it, save it be a few according to the will of God, to bear testimony of his word unto the children of men; for the Lord God hath said that the words of the faithful should speak as if it were from the dead.

Only a few individuals, besides the Prophet Joseph Smith and these three witnesses and eight witnesses would have the privilege of viewing the plates and bear testimony to the children of men based on this witness. Mary Whitmer (at times she is called the 4<sup>th</sup> witness and at others the 12<sup>th</sup> witness) was among them. The remainder of the children of men could obtain a witness of its authenticity through the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost has poured out upon me a sure witness of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to bring forth the words of the book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good will he establish his word; and woe be unto him that rejecteth the word of God!

The Lord God, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, would bring forth the words of these ancient prophets. He would establish the truthfulness of the words of the book through “as many witnesses as seemeth him good.” This includes not only those who were to see the plates but of each one of us who has received a witness of the Holy Ghost of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon—to which I rejoice to be counted. I have

received countless manifestations of the Spirit, most of them through the sweet comfort of the Spirit. Only a few times in my life has that manifestation been so very strong—I describe it as almost *falling of my horse or of my bicycle!* One such occasion took place when I opened the Book of Mormon and read Moroni’s promise in my home in Asturias 400, Santiago, Chile, before I turned 16. I have never tired of telling and retelling my conversion story (see introduction and ISAIAH 3:1 footnote).

~~11 And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book<sup>v</sup> that is sealed, which [men] deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee. And he the learned saith, shall say: Bring hither the book, and I will read them. And now, because of the glory of the world and to get gain will they say this, and not for the glory of God. And the man shall say: I cannot bring the book, for it [is] sealed. Then shall the learned say, I cannot read it.~~

<sup>v</sup> or, letter

Chilton’s Targum (Ⓢ) translation has, “And all prophecy has become to you like the words of a book that is sealed. When men give it to one who knows the book, saying, ‘Read this,’ he will say, ‘I cannot, for it is sealed.’” Similarly, Stenning’s Targum (Ⓢ) translation reads, “And all prophecy is become unto you as the words of a book which is sealed, so that if they give it to one that is learned, saying, Read this now, he will say, I cannot for it is sealed.” The LXX (Ⓠ) reads, “As for your seers of hidden things, all these prophesies will be to you like the words of a book which is sealed: which when they give to a man skilled in letters, saying, Read this: He will say, I cannot read it, for it is sealed.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓡ) has, “And the vision of all shall be unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which when they shall deliver to one that is learned, they shall say: Read this: and he shall answer: I cannot, for it is sealed.” Whitehouse says, “Cheyne appropriately translates by ‘a man who is a scholar’”<sup>24</sup> ¶ And says, *I cannot for it is sealed* &c. The DSS 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (Ⓢ) has *and*

<sup>24</sup> But not in my version of Cheyne.

he says (וַיֹּאמֶר) while the Masoretic text (מס) renders it *and says* (וַיֹּאמֶר) where the *he* is implied. ¶ Philip Reynolds well says, “Isaiah makes the meaning of this vision so clear that it need not be misunderstood. He speaks of a book, or rather **the book**, for the Hebrew text has the definite article, to which the translators have not given the full force”<sup>25</sup> And so it is, as we have **the book**<sup>26</sup> סֵפֶר in the Masoretic text (מס) and **a book** סֵפֶרָא in the Targum (ת). Various exegetes (Rawlinson, Gill, Delitzsch) explain that *learned* (אֵל-יָדַע, to *know*, or *one knowing*) has to do with being literate or knowing how to read. This fits in very well with the idea of being able to know the ancient characters. ISAIAH 29:11 was among the scriptures that Angel Moroni quoted to Joseph Smith according to the Oliver Cowdery narrative (see note to ISAIAH 1:7). “Yet,” said he, “the scripture must be fulfilled before it is translated, which says that the words of a book, which were sealed, were presented to the learned; for thus has God determined to leave men without excuse, and show to the meek that his arm is not shortened that it cannot save.”<sup>27</sup> ¶ *But behold, it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall say unto him to whom he shall deliver the book: Take these words which are not sealed and deliver them to another, that he may show them unto the learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee. And the learned shall say: Bring hither the book, and I will read them. And now, because of the glory of the world and to get gain will they say this, and not for the glory of God. And the man shall say: I cannot bring the book, for it is sealed. Then shall the learned say, I cannot read it.* The Lord God would say to Joseph Smith, the person to whom the plates had been delivered to, and ask him to take some of the words from the plates—from the section that was not sealed—that these words might be shown to the learned. Charles Anthon was that learned professor to whom these words or characters would be shared with. Anthon asked that the plates be brought to him so he could read them—but he did this not because he believed in God or cared about the Book of Mormon, but because he cared about his scholarly status or the glory and riches of the world. Martin Harris told Anthon that he could not bring him the book because it

was sealed. Professor Anthon responded that he could not read a sealed book. ¶ *Non-LDS exegetes*. A large number of commentators have spoken about the sealed book as being either the Book of Revelation or the book of Isaiah, or the Old Testament, or all of the Bible, suggesting that to many people these books are so difficult to read or understand—or of so little interest—that for all practical purposes they remain sealed.

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12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, that the Lord God ~~And the book is delivered~~ will deliver again the book and the words thereof ~~to him~~ and the man that is not learned; ~~saying,~~ shall say: ~~Read this, I pray thee: and he saith,~~ I am not learned.

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*Wherefore it shall come to pass, that the Lord God will deliver again the book and the words thereof and the man that is not learned; shall say: I am not learned.* At the end, it would not be the learned who would translate the ancient plates but the unlearned young man through the power of God. The Prophet Joseph Smith did not remain unlearned long. ¶ Chilton’s Targum (ת) translation has, “And the book *will* be given to one who does not know the book, saying, ‘Read this,’ and he *will* say, ‘I do not know the book.’” Stenning’s Targum (ת) translation reads, “And should the book be given to one that is not learned, saying, Read this now, he will say, I am not learned.” The LXX (ס) reads, “And should the book be put in the hands of an illiterate man, and they say to him, Read that, he will say, I do not know letters.” The Douay-Rheims (ב) has, “And the book shall be given to one that knoweth no letters, and it shall be said to him: Read: and he shall answer: I know no letters.” Rawlinson says, regarding the person who is not learned: “i.e. ‘that cannot read writing.’ Even in our Lord’s day the ordinary Jew was not taught to read and write. Hence the surprise of the rulers at his teaching the people out of the Law (John 7:15, ‘How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?’).” Gill, in part says this of the unlearned: “He does not excuse himself on account of its being sealed, but on account of his want of learning.”

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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; wherefore thou shalt read the words which I shall give unto thee.

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<sup>25</sup> Reynolds, Philip C., ed. Commentary on the Book of Mormon. 6 vols. Salt Lake City, Utah. Vol. IV, pp. 289–290.

<sup>26</sup> It is interesting to note that the Ketib has סֵפֶר; the Qere סֵפֶרָא, but compare to verse 12, were we have סֵפֶרָא.

<sup>27</sup> Cowdery, Oliver, et al., eds. *Messenger and Advocate: The Latter Day Saints’ Messenger and Advocate*. Kirtland, Ohio: Letter to W. W. Phelps from Oliver Cowdery, February 1835 and continued April 1835. Electronic text prepared by the Department of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University (pp. 78–80, 108–112), 1991, p.80.

In summary, then, the Lord God not lean on the learned—the professors of religion and the scholars<sup>28</sup>—to read and translate the plates. Instead He would make use of the weak things of the earth to accomplish His purposes.

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Touch not the things which are sealed, for I will bring them forth in mine own due time; for I will show unto the children of men that I am able to do mine own work.

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The Lord instructed the Prophet Joseph Smith not to touch the sealed portion of the plates. These would be brought forth in the Lord's due time.

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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.

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When the Prophet Joseph Smith would be done translating, and after the witnesses would be invited to view the plates, the time would come when the Prophet would be instructed to return the plates to the angel for safekeeping, and this is what is meant here by “seal up the book again.” The sealed portion of the plates that the Prophet Joseph Smith was not permitted to read would be revealed in the Lord's due time.

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For behold, I am God; and I am a 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.

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The Lord God makes it clear that He is a God of miracles and unchangeable—and that humankind can only have intercourse with God according to their faith.

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<sup>28</sup> Elder McConkie taught: “When there were no longer apostles and inspired men to give the Lord's message and word to living men, the world turned to interpreters—to scholars, to doctors of divinity, to theologians, to professors of religion—to set forth what they thought or imagined the divine word of former days meant.” Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, pp.251–252.

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13 And again it shall come to pass ~~Wherefore the Lord said,~~ that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him: Forasmuch as this people draw near unto [me] with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men--

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*And again it shall come to pass that the Lord shall say unto him that shall read the words that shall be delivered him:* The Lord would speak to the Prophet Joseph Smith. ¶ *Forasmuch as this people draw near unto me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “Wherefore the Lord hath said: Because I am magnified by the mouth of this people, and with their lips they do honor me, but their heart is far from my fear, and their fear towards me is as the commandment of men teaching them.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “The Lord hath indeed said, ‘This people draw near to me with their mouth; and with their lips they honour me; but their heart is far from me: and in vain do they worship me, teaching the commands and doctrines of men.’” The Peshitta (Ⓟ) has reverence rather than fear, and not only precepts but also doctrines of men. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓛ) has, “And the Lord said: Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips glorify me, but their heart is far from me, and they have feared me with the commandment and doctrines of men.” ¶ Rabbi Rosenberg writes, “According to *Rashi*, the reading of **נִשְׁמַע** is with a ‘shin,’ meaning ‘came near’ or ‘approached,’ which he explains to mean that they raise themselves up to speak, as though approaching heaven.” Gill has, “Kimhi observes, there is a double reading of the word **נִשְׁמַע**, rendered ‘draw near’: in one reading of it, it signifies to be ‘afflicted’; and then the sense is, ‘when this people are afflicted, with their mouth, and with their lips, they honour me’; that is, when they are in distress, they pray unto him, and profess a great regard for him, speak honourably of him, and reverently to him, hoping he will help and relieve them; see ISAIAH 26:16 but the other reading of the word, in which it has the signification of ‘drawing near,’ is confirmed, not only by the Masora on the text, but by the citation of it in Mathew 15:7 and designs the approach of these people to God, in acts of religion and devotion, in praying to him, and praising of him, and expressing great love and affection for him, and zeal for his cause

and interest; but were all outwardly, with their lips and mouths only... their worship of God was not according to the prescription of God, and his revealed will; but according to the traditions of the elders, which they preferred to the word of God, and, by observing them, transgressed it, and made it of no effect; see Matthew 15:3.” Regarding *precepts of men*, Barnes has: “That is, their views, instead of having been derived from the Scriptures, were drawn from the doctrines of mankind. Our Saviour referred to this passage, and applied it to the hypocrites of his own time Matthew 15:8–9. The latter part of it is, however, not quoted literally from the Hebrew, nor from the Septuagint, but retains the sense: ‘But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.’” Skinner writes: “Religion, being personal fellowship with God, cannot be ‘learned’ from men, but only by revelation (Matthew 16:17).” Regarding these verses, Jennings says, “And the most serious charge is that people set aside the revelation that God has given, and substitute for the revealed will of God their own precepts.” ¶ Oliver Cowdery, recounting what Moroni shared with the Prophet Joseph Smith included these words: “Wherever the sound shall go it shall cause the ears of men to tingle, and wherever it shall be proclaimed, the pure in heart shall rejoice, while those who draw near to God with their mouths, and honor him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him, will seek its overthrow, and the destruction of those by whose hands it is carried. Therefore, marvel not if your name is made a derision, and had as a by-word among such, if you are the instrument in bringing it, by the gift of God, to the knowledge of the people.”<sup>29</sup> ¶ The Prophet Joseph Smith shared this about angel Moroni’s visit: “I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: ‘they draw near to me with their lips,<sup>30</sup> but their hearts are far from

<sup>29</sup> Cowdery, Oliver, et al., eds. *Messenger and Advocate*, 1835, p. 80. See note on ISAIAH 1:7.

<sup>30</sup> Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught: “The Book of Mormon applies this principle [of priestcraft] to those who seem to be serving the Lord but do so with a hidden motive to gain personal advantage rather than to further the work of the Lord: ‘Priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion’ (2 Nephi 26:29; see also Alma 1:16). Priestcraft is the sin committed by the combination of a good act—such as preaching or teaching the gospel—and a bad motive. The act may be good and visible, but the sin is in the motive. On earth, the wrong motive may be known only to the actor, but in heaven it is always known to God ... The sin of priestcraft is a grievous one. Time after time the Lord has condemned those who appear to men to be his servants, but who, though they draw near to him with their lips, have removed their hearts far from him. This description of those who have no true motive to serve the Lord appears in ISAIAH (29:13), in Matthew (15:8), in 2 Nephi (27:25), and in Joseph Smith’s History (JSH 1:19). In modern as in

me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.”<sup>31</sup>

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14 Therefore, ~~behold~~, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, [even] yea, a marvellous work and a wonder, for the wisdom of their wise [men] and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent [men] shall be hid.

✓ add

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YLT renders the Masoretic text (M) as “Therefore, lo, I.” The Targum (C) has, “Therefore, behold, I shall again (Chaldee, ‘adding to strike’) strike this people with wonderful strokes; the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hidden.” The LXX (G) reads, “Therefore, behold, I will proceed to the removal of this people and I will remove them; and destroy the wisdom of the wise, and darken the understanding of the prudent.” The Peshitta (S) has, for the first “marvellous work,” *create a division* (BPE) / *set apart* (Lamsa). The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Therefore behold I will proceed to cause an admiration in this people, by a great and wonderful miracle: for wisdom shall perish from their wise men, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.” ¶ Regarding the *wonderful wonder among these people* see Psalm 72:18, and our notes under ISAIAH 29:17. Faussett well notes that the *marvellous work and a wonder* was associated with the *strange work* mentioned in ISAIAH 28:21. Govett quotes John 9:39: “And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.” While Jennings goes on to speak of “God giving His own Son” his words also certainly fit perfectly to the Book of Mormon that was sent forth for the very purpose of testifying of Christ, the Son of God, and the confounding of false teachings, and together with the Bible the Lord’s tool for the gathering of Israel in the last days: “[God] will add to all His marvellous works by another still more marvellous. So wonderful is this—so superhumanly wonderful—that when it comes, it shall destroy all

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ancient times, those who appear to be servants of the Lord and present themselves to labor in his vineyard are subject to the prophetic principle: ‘The laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish’ (2 Nephi 26:31) ... The commandment to avoid priestcraft is a vital challenge to religious persons in every age of time. It is easier to have clean hands than to have a pure heart. It is easier to control our acts than to control our thoughts.” Oaks, Dallin H. *Pure in Heart*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988, pp. 16–18.

<sup>31</sup> JS-H 1:19.

man's boasted wisdom, and so eclipse his prudence as to render it invisible, as the noon-day sun extinguishes the light of a taper." ¶ *Therefore, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, yea, a marvellous work and a wonder.* It is interesting that in the Talmud tradition (Seder Mo'ed, Shabbath 138b) these words are applied to the Torah, its neglect and future study: "For Rab said: The Torah is destined to be forgotten in Israel, because it is said, Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful: now, I do not know what this wonder is, but when it is said, Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a wonderful work among this people, even a wonderful work and a wonder [and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish], it follows that this wonder refers to Torah" (Talmud, Soncino). As LDS we certainly understand this verse to be associated with Scripture, and more specifically, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, which was written for the "convincing of both Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ." ¶ Elder LeGrand Richards had much to say about this glorious verse, including: "Could you imagine living upon the earth when the God of Heaven fulfills that promise made by the Prophet Isaiah and not wanting to know what that 'marvellous work and a wonder' is all about? No boy or girl or man or woman in this world, if they understood fully what God has done in restoring His truth to the earth in our day, could call it anything but 'a marvellous work and a wonder.' When the God of Heaven says that it will be a 'marvellous work and a wonder' in His eyes, then what ought it to be to those of us who are privileged to be partakers of it?"<sup>32</sup> ¶ *For the wisdom of their wise and learned shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid.* Elder Marion G. Romney explained: "Until we come to a knowledge of God, we will continue in our distraction, regardless of how much other knowledge we acquire. The Lord, knowing all things, foresaw our present state of confusion; and long ago, speaking about us through His prophets, Isaiah and Nephi, declared, 'The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid' (ISAIAH 29:14; 2 Nephi 27:26). Confirming the fact, He has said in our day that the wisdom of men has perished and their understanding has come to naught. And He has specified as the reason for their loss of wisdom their forsaking of Him. His words are, 'They have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant; They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world' (D&C

1:15–16)."<sup>33</sup> Elder LeGrand Richards spoke at General Conference, "I am going to tell you one more experience. A few years ago two of the major churches on the west coast, including California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Nevada, were holding a convention here in Salt Lake. Their leader wrote a letter to President McKay and asked if he would send one of the General Authorities to attend their convention and talk for two hours in the morning session and tell them the story of Mormonism... I explained the restoration of the gospel, the difference between a restoration and a reformation... Then I held up the Bible. I said, 'Here is the Lord's blueprint. Isaiah said the Lord had declared the end from the beginning. It is all here. Now,' I said, 'you could take this, the Lord's blueprint, and try to fit it to every church in this world, but there is only one church that it will fit, and that is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Now,' I said, 'I will proceed to illustrate to you what I mean.' I said that in Canon Frederick William Farrar's work *Life of Christ* (Cassell, 1902), he said there were two passages in the New Testament for which he could find no excuse. The first is John 10:16, where Jesus said, 'And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.' ... The other passage they couldn't understand was the one where Paul said, 'Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?' (1 Corinthians 15:29). [After explaining the meaning of these two scriptures Elder LeGrand Richards said] ... you can't look for the coming of the Savior as was promised by Peter and the prophets until there has been a restitution, and not a reformation.' When I concluded, the man in charge said, 'Mr. Richards, this has been one of the most interesting experiences of my entire life.' That is what Isaiah meant when he said, 'the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.' (ISAIAH 29:14)."<sup>34</sup>

**15 And woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD! And their works are in the dark; and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?**

*And woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD!* The LXX (5) reads, "Alas! for them, who deeply form a design, but not by the Lord." The

<sup>32</sup> Elder LeGrand Richards in 1960, Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1960–1966, pp. 6–7

<sup>33</sup> Romney, Marion G. Brigham Young University Speeches of the Year. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, February 11, 1964, p. 8.

<sup>34</sup> Elder LeGrand Richards, He Has Sent His Messenger to Prepare the Way, *Ensign* (CR), July 1973, p.76.

Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Woe to you that are deep of heart, to hide your counsel from the Lord.” ¶ *And their works are in the dark; and they say, Who seeth us and who knoweth us?* The LXX (G) reads, “Alas! for them, who form designs in secret, that their works may be in darkness; and who will say, ‘Who hath seen us, and who can find out us, or what we do?’” The Masoretic text (M) has *and who knoweth us* (וְיִדְעֵנּוּ). The Peshitta (S), for *who knoweth us*, has *Who knows what we do corruptly?* (Lamsa) / *Who knows we have been perverted?* (BPE) ¶ Nyman writes: “The Book of Mormon retains the word ‘and’ in introducing the verse, which indicates that it refers back to what has been said. The warning is to those who refuse the message of the ‘marvelous work and a wonder’—the Book of Mormon—which would come forth to correct the precepts of men...” Spencer W. Kimball taught: “Isaiah warned: ‘Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?’ (ISAIAH 29:15). Likewise our Lord suggested that men ‘loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light’ (John 3:19–20).”<sup>35</sup>

**16 And they also say:** Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay. **But behold, I will show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works.** For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not? Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?

(Also see ISAIAH 45:9) *And they also say: Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter’s clay.* The Targum (T) has, “Why do ye seek to pervert your works? Behold, as the clay in the hand of the potter, thus are ye accounted before me.” The LXX (G) reads, “Are not you to be considered as the potter’s clay?” The BPE (S) has, for the first clause, “*You are considered as the potters clay.*” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “This thought of yours is perverse: as if the clay should think against the potter.” ¶ Barnes explains: “The sense of the passage seems to be this: ‘Your “changing of things” is just as absurd as it would be for the thing formed to say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? It is as absurd for you to find fault with the government of God as it would be for the clay to complain of want of skill in the potter. You complain of God’s laws, and worship Him according to the

commandments of people. You complain of his requirements, and offer to him the service of the mouth and the lip, and withhold the heart. You suppose that God does not see you, and do your deeds in darkness. All this supposes that God is destitute of wisdom, and cannot see what is done, and it is just as absurd as it would be in the clay to complain that the potter who fashions it has no understanding.” ¶ *But behold, I will show unto them, saith the Lord of Hosts, that I know all their works.* Nothing is hid from the Lord. ¶ *For shall the work say of him that made it, he made me not?* The Targum (T) has, “Is it possible that the clay should say to its maker, Thou hast not made me?” The LXX (G) reads, “Shall the thing formed say to the former of it, thou hast not made me.” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “And the work should say to the maker thereof: Thou madest me not.” ¶ *Or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, he had no understanding?* The Targum (T) has, “Or should the creature say to its creator, Thou dost not understand me?” The LXX (G) reads, “Or shall the work say to the workman thou hast not made me wisely?” The Douay-Rheims (D) has, “Or the thing framed should say to him that fashioned it: Thou understandest not.”

vv. 17–24. Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field. The Book of Mormon will be searched by the deaf and by the blind. The poor and the humble will embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Those who oppose the restored Gospel will make the Brethren and the Church an offender by a word—especially because they will twist these words. At the end, however, the house of Israel will no longer feel humiliated and ashamed. Those who had been blinded by the false traditions of the fathers will find understanding through the Book of Mormon and the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**17 ¶ But behold, saith the Lord of Hosts: I will show unto the children of men that [Is] it is not\* yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field; and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? .**

\* JST: restores “not” deleted in Book of Mormon.

*But behold, saith the Lord of Hosts: I will show unto the children of men that it is not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field; and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest.* The Targum (T) has, “Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall turn into (Chaldee, ‘to be’) a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be inhabited by many cities.” The LXX (G) reads, “Is it not a little while, ere Libanus shall be changed to a likeness of mount Carmel? And

<sup>35</sup> Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p.213.

Carmel be accounted a forest?” The Lamsa Peshitta (S) has, *reared as a forest*, instead of *esteemed as a forest*. The BPE (S) is essentially the same as the KJV: *considered as a forest*. The Douay-Rheims (V) has, “Is it not yet a very little while, and Libanus shall be turned into charmel, and charmel shall be esteemed as a forest?” Alexander explains regarding **הַלְוָא-עוֹד** (*not yet?*): “The negative interrogation is one of the strongest forms of affirmation.” Barnes suggests that the uncultivated Lebanon would turn fruitful: “This is evidently a proverbial expression, denoting any great revolution of things. It is probable that in the times of Isaiah the whole chain of Lebanon was uncultivated, as the word is evidently used here in opposition to a fruitful field. The word which is rendered ‘fruitful field’ (כַּרְמֶל) properly denotes ‘a fruitful field,’ or a finely cultivated country.” ¶ *Literal meaning*. Cheyne says, “Most commentators prefer to take ISAIAH 29:17 figuratively. But a comparison of the parallel passage favors a combined literal and symbolical interpretation.” Most LDS speak of the literal fulfillment of these promises associated with a period close to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explains: “As another evidence that the book of which Isaiah speaks was to come forth in latter times, he says in the seventeenth verse, is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as the forest?’ 18<sup>th</sup> verse: And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.’ This book could not mean the New Testament, for when that was written it was about the time that Lebanon was to be forsaken by the Jews and become a desolation, a forest, or wilderness for many generations. ‘Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers.’ (ISAIAH 32:13.) Hence the land of Palestine, which includes Lebanon, was, when the New Testament was written, about to be cursed. But immediately after the unlearned should read the book, ‘Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as the forest.’ The book, therefore, that Isaiah prophesies of’ is to come forth just before the great day of the restoration of Israel to their own lands; at which time Lebanon and all the land of Canaan is again to be blessed, while the fruitful field occupied by the nations of the Gentiles, ‘will be esteemed as a forest;’ the multitude of the nations of the Gentiles are to perish, and their lands which are now like a fruitful field, are to be left desolate of inhabitants and become as Lebanon has been for many generations past; while Lebanon shall again be occupied by Israel, and be turned into a fruitful field. These great events could not take place

until the Lord should first bring forth a book out of the ground.”<sup>36</sup> In Conference, Elder Mark E. Peterson testified: “A sacred book was to come forth... Where is that book? It is one of the signs of the times. Not only did the prophets predict its appearance, but Isaiah set a limit on the time of its publication. That time limit was related to the period when fertility would return to Palestine. Isaiah said that the book would come forth first, and then added that in ‘a very little while . . . Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest’ (ISAIAH 29:17). The time limit has expired. This new volume of scripture must have come forth before now or Isaiah was not a true prophet, for Palestine is fruitful again.”<sup>37</sup> ¶ Simeon asks, “What is that book to which the attention of all men shall be called—” and we as LDS answer: the attention of men shall be called to the Book of Mormon together with the Bible as shown in Ezekiel 37.

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**18 And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.**

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*And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book.* The Targum (T) has, “And at that time those who are like the deaf shall hear the words of the book.” The LXX (G) reads, “And in that day the deaf shall hear the words of a book.” Rawlinson says: “The spiritually deaf shall have their ears opened, many of them, and shall not only hear, but understand, the words of Scripture addressed to them by God’s messengers.” Delitzsch also has: “The people that are now blind and deaf, so far as the word of Jehovah is concerned, are changed into a people with open ears and seeing eyes.” ¶ Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote: “The gathering of Israel in the last days shall consist in bringing together ‘the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears,’ that is, the spiritually blind and deaf shall come to a knowledge of the things of God and they shall see and hear (ISAIAH 43). In large part the opening of the eyes of the blind and the unstopping of the ears of the deaf shall take place by means of the Book of Mormon. ‘And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness’ (ISAIAH 29:18).”<sup>38</sup> I am one who was blind to the things of God until I read the Book of Mormon.

<sup>36</sup> Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 90.

<sup>37</sup> Elder Mark E. Petersen, *Conference Report*, October 1965, Second Day-Morning Meeting, p.61.

<sup>38</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., p.184.

¶ There is also a more literal fulfillment. Elder Orson Pratt explained, “‘In that day shalt the deaf hear the words of the book, the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.’ A great many people, perhaps, would want this spiritualized; but, whether it is spiritualized or not, I can bear testimony to one thing which I have seen with my own eyes, and that is that those who were deaf, so deaf that they could not hear the loudest sound, have been instantaneously restored by the administrations of the Elders of this Church and thus the deaf, the literally deaf, have been enabled to hear the words of the book. The eyes of the blind, not those alone who are spiritually blind, but of those who are blind physically, should see out of obscurity and out of darkness, when that book was revealed. Now I know that this, too, has been the case, and many in this congregation know it and have seen it; some have seen those who were born blind restored to their sight by the power of God since this book came forth. Thus have been fulfilled, literally, the words of our text.”<sup>39</sup> My daughter Andrea has *retinitis pigmentosa* and my wife got her a copy of the Book of Mormon in Braille. So it is yet another way that this prophecy is fulfilled, as not all the blind or all of the deaf will be healed in this lifetime. ¶ *And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.* The KJV does not include the *double-and* that appears in the Hebrew. A good translation might be: “**And** out of obscurity, **and** out of darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see.” Both the DSS 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (א) ומאפלה ומחושך, and the Masoretic text (מ) ומאפל ומחושך, retain this *double-and* construction. The Targum (ܬ) has, “And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “And they in darkness, even they in thick darkness—the eyes even of the blind shall see.” Nägelsbach wrote: “Is not the purport of these two verses, 18 and 19, reproduced in the saying of Christ, ‘The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them’ (Matthew 11:5; Luke 7:22)?” Bruce R. McConkie explained: “Jesus, as he ‘targumed’<sup>40</sup> Isaiah’s meaning from Hebrew to Aramaic, did what only inspired interpreters can do: he expanded the words and interpreted the meaning of the original utterance. ‘I am sent by the Father—not only to proclaim how deliverance from sin may be found, but to preach the recovering of spiritual sight to those who are blind spiritually.’<sup>41</sup> Through me they shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.’ If a parallel passage for these added words is needed, it may be found in Isaiah’s

prophecy about the latter-day coming forth of the Book of Mormon, for the promise is that through ‘the words of the book . . . the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness’ (ISAIAH 29:8).”<sup>42</sup>

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19 And the meek also shall increase,<sup>✓</sup>  
and [their] joy shall be in the LORD, and  
the poor among men shall rejoice in the  
Holy One of Israel.

✓ add

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The Targum (ܬ) has, “And those that have suffered affliction on account of the Word of the Lord shall increase *their* joy, and the poor of the sons of men shall rejoice in the Word of the holy One of Israel.” The LXX (Ϛ) reads, “And the distressed shall exult with joy because of the Lord; and the disconsolate among men shall be filled with joy.” The meek (עֲנָוִים) are the “poor afflicted, humble” (DBD). Rawlinson says, “The ‘evangelical prophet’ anticipates the gospel in this, among other points that he promises his choicest blessings, not to the rich and mighty, but to the poor and meek (compare ISAIAH 57:15; 61:1).” Elder Orson Pratt writes, “Now during the long night of darkness there have been some humble, meek persons who have had a degree of light; but as the Church of Christ had fled from the earth there was no one that had authority to baptize or administer the ordinances of the gospel to those meek persons; therefore their joy was imperfect: but Isaiah says, when the book is revealed, ‘the meek shall increase their joy in the Lord.’ This is what the book is calculated to produce; for by its contents the meek learn that the time is at hand for them to inherit the earth, according to the blessings of our Savior on the Mount: ‘Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.’ This will be fulfilled after all the wicked nations are destroyed. ‘And the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.’ This also is promised as a result of the revelation of the book, and the means by which it is to be effected is by a general overthrow of the wicked; as, says Isaiah: ‘For the terrible one is brought to naught, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off; that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of naught.’ O how plainly it is declared that judgment was soon to fall upon all the wicked after the appearance of this book, this marvelous work and a wonder! And O how plainly it is also declared that the

<sup>39</sup> Pratt, Orson. July 18, 1875; Journal of Discourses, Vol. 4, p. 165.

<sup>40</sup> That is, paraphrased from Hebrew to Aramaic.

<sup>41</sup> See Luke 4:18 ff.

<sup>42</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, pp.22–23.

deaf, the blind, the meek and the poor among men were to be greatly benefited by the book.”<sup>43</sup>

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**20 For assuredly as the Lord liveth they shall see that the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off;**

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*For assuredly as the Lord liveth they shall see that the terrible one is brought to nought.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “For the oppressor is come to an end, and the plunderer is made to cease.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “The lawless one hath failed.” Instead of the *terrible one* the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has the *oppressor*. The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “For he that did prevail hath failed.” ¶ *And the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And all that rose up early to act violently have come to an end.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And the haughty one is destroyed, and these are utterly cut off who maliciously commit iniquity.” Those who watch for iniquity, says Faussett, are those who “watch for opportunities of committing it.” Gill agrees and adds: “[These are those who] cannot sleep unless they commit it, and seek for and take all opportunities of doing it; or watch for iniquity in others, in Christ, and the professors of his religion [i.e., the Saints or followers of Christ]; or for anything they could call so, that they might have something to accuse them of.” Or, as we see in the next verse, those who *make a man an offender for a word*. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt wrote: “However much you may have erred, because you have been taught by the precepts of men; however much you may have walked in darkness and blindness, with the Prophets, seers, and revelations of God covered, and no voice of inspiration in your midst; however much you may have groped in outer darkness, yet if you have been meek before the lord, you will come to understanding when [the Book of Mormon] makes its appearance... when a certain book should come forth it should bless the meek and lowly in heart, for their joy should increase in the Lord. And the poor among men be gathered out from the nations.”<sup>44</sup>

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**21 And they that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.**

*And they that make a man an offender for a word.* The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “All that declare the sons of men guilty on account of their words.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And who by reasoning cause men to err.” Brenton’s Ⓛ renders it “And they that cause men to sin by a word.” The Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓢ) has, “Those who cause men to sin by the word.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓟ) has, “That made men sin by word.” ¶ In New Testament times the Savior was constantly made an offender for a word. After the coming forth of the Book of Mormon the Prophet Joseph Smith was likewise made an offender for a word: so also today the Brethren are often accused. Ibn Ezra explains that to *make a man an offender for a word* means one who will “watch the words of man, and accuse him, in order to see him punished.” Alexander writes: “Ewald... takes נִדְבָר in the same sense with the English and many other early versions, which explain the clause to mean accusing or condemning men for a mere error of the tongue or lips.” Or better, for what the wicked believe is an error. The Geneva Bible notes correctly have: “They who went about to find fault with the prophets words, and would not abide admonitions, but would entangle them and bring them into danger.” The Prophet Joseph Smith wrote: “...our souls were vexed from day to day. We refer you to Isaiah, who considers those who make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate. We believe that the old Prophet told the truth: and we have no retraction to make. We have reproveth in the gate, and men have laid snares for us. We have spoken words, and men have made us offenders. And notwithstanding all this, our minds are not yet darkened, but feel strong in the Lord.”<sup>45</sup> Elder Dallin H. Oaks explained: “The Lord acts through his servants. That is the pattern he has established to safeguard our agency in mortality. His servants are not perfect, which is another consequence of mortality. But if we act against them, we are working against the Lord and his cause and will soon find ourselves without the companionship of his Spirit. There are other such teachings in ancient and modern scriptures. The prophet Isaiah denounced those who ‘make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate’ (ISAIAH 29:21; see also 2 Ne. 27:32). This modern revelation from the Doctrine and Covenants is to the same effect: ‘Cursed are all those that shall lift up the heel against mine anointed, saith the Lord, and cry they have sinned when they have not sinned before me, saith the Lord, but have done that which was meet in mine eyes, and which I commanded them. But those who cry transgression do it because they are the servants of sin, and are the children of disobedience themselves’” (see

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<sup>43</sup> Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 90.

<sup>44</sup> Elder Orson Pratt, July 18, 1875; *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 166.

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<sup>45</sup> TPJS, p. 124.

D&C 121:16–22.)<sup>46</sup> Elder Neal A. Maxwell warned us against fault finding, “In a church established, among other reasons, for the perfecting of the Saints—an ongoing process—it is naive to expect, and certainly unfair to demand, perfection in our peers. A brief self-inventory is wise before we ‘cast the first stone.’ Possessing a few rocks in our own heads, it is especially dangerous to have rocks too ready in our hands. (‘Not My Will, But Thine’, p. 74.)”<sup>47</sup> ¶ *And lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of naught.* The Targum (Ⓢ) has, “The court of justice that is in the gate seeks to ensnare him, who reproves them with the words of the law (the Royal Polyglot omits **בְּיַת דִּינָא**, and reads, ‘They lay a snare for him who reproves them in the gate with the words of the law,’ &c.). They turn aside the just by false judgment.” The LXX (Ⓣ) reads, “But as for all them who reprove in the gates they will indeed lay a stumbling block, because of their having turned aside the righteous one for the unrighteous.” Brenton Ⓣ renders the last clause, “because they have unjustly turned aside the righteous,” while NETS Ⓣ has “and they have turned aside the just among the unjust.” Lamsa Peshitta (Ⓛ) has, “And lay a snare for him that reproves, and turn aside the righteous into darkness.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓜ) has, “And supplanted him that reproved them in the gate, and declined in vain from the just.” ¶ Rawlinson explains: “‘The gate’ was the place where judgment was given and public assemblies held.” Cheyne writes regarding the *gate*: “In the chief place of concourse, where, too, the judges sat. So Amos, ‘They hate him that reproveth in the gate’ (Amos 5:10).” Regarding the second half of this clause Delitzsch writes: “And thrust away the righteous, i.e., forced him away from his just rights (ISAIAH 10:2), **בְּיַת דִּינָא**, [for *thing of naught*—also see Genesis 1:2, without form], i.e., accusations and pretences of the utmost worthlessness; for these would all have been swept away... for with Isaiah **יַת דִּינָא** is the synonym for all such words as signify nothingness, groundlessness, and fraud.”

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**22 Therefore, thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.**

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<sup>46</sup> Dallin H. Oaks, *The Lord’s Way*, p.197–198.

<sup>47</sup> Maxwell, Cory H., ed. *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1997.

*Therefore, thus saith the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob:* The LXX (Ⓣ) reads, “Therefore, thus saith the Lord respecting the house of Jacob, whom he set apart from Abraham.” Ironside says of ISAIAH 29:22–24, “Never, in times past, have these words had their fulfillment, but we may be assured that nothing that God has spoken will ever come to naught.” Barnes says, “The connection ... would seem to imply that there was a reference to the promise which was made to Abraham that he should have a numerous posterity (see ISAIAH 29:23).” ¶ Elder Orson Pratt makes this scripture clear: “After Isaiah had foretold the great change that was to happen to Lebanon, to the deaf, etc., when the book should be revealed, he then describes more particularly the great benefit the book should be to the house of Jacob. He says, ‘Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.’ The house of Jacob has been made ashamed, and his face has waxed pale, ever since he was driven away from Lebanon or Canaan, but the Lord has now brought forth out of the ground book which shall, accompanied by His power, restore the tribes of Jacob from the four quarters of the globe, and establish them in the land of Palestine and Lebanon forever; and His holy name they shall no more profane, but shall be a righteous people throughout all their generations, while the earth shall stand, and they shall possess their promised land again in eternity, nevermore to pass away; therefore, they shall never again be made ashamed. It is in vain for the Gentiles to seek the conversion of Jacob, and to bring about their great redemption, only in the way that the Lord God of Israel hath predicted and appointed: they may call meetings and conventions to convert the Jews, but let them know assuredly that the book spoken of by Isaiah is to accomplish the salvation of the house of Jacob, and bring about the restoration of all Israel, while the Gentiles who will not receive it and be numbered and identified with the house of Jacob, must surely perish, yea and they shall be utterly wasted with storm and tempest, with earthquakes and famine, with the flame of devouring fire, and their fruitful lands shall be esteemed as a forest, while Jacob shall dwell in safety for ever.”<sup>48</sup> Philip Reynolds explains, “Commentators note that there is no reference in the Old Testament to any incident in the life of the Patriarch [Abraham] to which this redemption can refer specially, but that there is a

<sup>48</sup> Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 90–91.

tradition that he, at some time, was threatened with the fire of a burning furnace. In the Book of Abraham, Pearl of Great Price, I think, we find the story of the redemption of Abraham to which ISAIAH (29:22) and Nephi here refer ... a time came, when the priests of Pharaoh seized Abraham, intending to take his life on the altar. But when he lifted up his voice to God, the ‘Angel of his (God’s) Presence’ appeared, unloosened the bands of the intended victim, promised him the Priesthood, and declared that: ‘Through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God’ ... It was thus that God redeemed Abraham by almighty power ...”<sup>49</sup> ¶ *Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “They of the house of Jacob shall not henceforth be confounded, neither shall their faces henceforth look dismayed (literally, ‘be changed’).” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Jacob will not be ashamed now, nor will he now change his countenance.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has, “Jacob shall not now be confounded, neither shall his countenance now be ashamed.”

¶ Alexander correctly explains לֹא-עַתָּה: “The Hebrew phrase *not now* does not imply that it shall be so hereafter, but on the contrary, that it shall be so no more. Redak has, “Since all Jews are descendants of Jacob, if there are wicked among them, it is as though Jacob is ashamed, as he would be were he alive, for a father is embarrassed if his son abandons the faith” (in Rabbi Rosenberg). Not just the Jews, but all of the house of Israel. ¶ Elder Orson Pratt explained, “Now how is this book to affect the house of Israel? Is it for their benefit particularly? They have been a long time scattered, a long time abroad among the nations; are they to be affected by this book that is spoken of by Isaiah? Yes. Read the 22<sup>nd</sup> verse, which I have already once read before you—‘Therefore, thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob, shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale.’ Why? Because this book [has] come forth to bring the house of Jacob from all the nations and kingdoms of the earth; and this will commence just as soon as the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled; not until then. We must be warned first; we Gentiles must hear the word first; and when we count ourselves unworthy of eternal life, and fight against the book, and against the Zion and people of God, behold the Lord will then remember the house of Jacob, and they will no longer be ashamed.”<sup>50</sup> Why will Jacob not be ashamed? We find the answer in ISAIAH 29:23, because the children of Israel will turn to the Lord God.

<sup>49</sup> Reynolds, Philip C., ed. *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*. 6 vols. Salt Lake City, Utah, vol. I, pp. 400–401.

<sup>50</sup> Elder Orson Pratt, July 18, 1875; *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 166–168.

23 But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.

*But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “But when *they of the house of Jacob* shall see (literally, ‘in his seeing’) the mighty deeds which I shall do for their children, the kindness *which I have promised* Abraham, and his posterity after him in their own land.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “But when his children shall see my works.” So also that the Peshitta (Ⓔ) has the children seeing the work of the hands of the Lord, and as a result, sanctifying of glorifying the Lord. Redak has “When Jacob sees his children, who are truly his children by following the ways of God” (in Rabbi Rosenberg). ¶ Elder Orson Pratt continues: “The lord says, in the 23<sup>rd</sup> verse, that Jacob, when he shall see his children, the work of his hands, in the midst of him, that is, gathered out from among the nations, they shall sanctify my name, and shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. Where will this work commence among the house of Israel? Among the remnant that we call the American Indians, who are the literal descendants of Israel.”<sup>51</sup> ¶ *They shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob,*<sup>52</sup> *and shall fear the God of Israel.* The Targum (Ⓒ) has, “They shall sanctify my name among them; they shall say, **Holy** (Ⓔ) after קדוש is omitted in the Royal Polyglot) is the holy One of Jacob; and concerning the God of Israel they shall say, He is mighty.” The LXX (Ⓔ) reads, “Because of me they will hallow my name. They will hallow the Holy One of Jacob, and tremble before the God of Israel.” The Douay-Rheims (Ⓓ) has *glorify* instead of *fear*. Delitzsch well says, “The end of Israel will correspond to the holy root of its origin. Just as Abraham was separated from the human race that was sunk in heathenism, to become the ancestor of a nation of Jehovah, so would a remnant be separated from the great mass of Israel that was sunk in apostasy from Jehovah; and this remnant would be the foundation of a holy community well pleasing to God.” Elder Dallin H. Oaks said: “When Isaiah condemned the critics of his

<sup>51</sup> Elder Orson Pratt, July 18, 1875; *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, p. 166–168.

<sup>52</sup> Delitzsch, in defending the unity of Isaiah says, “There is the same interchange of Jacob and Israel here which we so frequently met with in chapters 40ff. And, in fact, throughout this undisputedly genuine prophecy of Isaiah, we can detect the language of chapters 40–66. Through the whole of the first part, indeed, we may trace the gradual development of the thoughts and forms which predominate there.”

day, he concluded with a prophecy. He said that in time the children of God would ‘fear the God of Israel’ and ‘sanctify [his] name.’”<sup>53</sup>

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**24 They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, ✓ and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.**

✓ know understanding

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The Targum (Ⓣ) has, “And they who were not taught by the spirit of understanding shall have knowledge; and they who said, All these things are nothing, shall receive instruction.” The LXX (Ⓛ) reads, “And they who have erred in spirit will gain knowledge, and the murmurers shall be taught obedience, and the trifling tongues will learn to speak peace.” Instead of *they that murmured shall learn doctrine*, the Peshitta (Ⓢ) has *those who lack wisdom will learn obedience*. The Douay-Rheims (ⓓ) has, “And they that erred in spirit, shall know understanding, and they that murmured, shall learn the law.” Who are those who murmured? The clear answer: the descendants of Israel. Barnes says, “All that the prophet teaches is, that at some future period in the history of the Jews, there would be such a reform that they should be regarded as the worthy descendants of the pious patriarch Jacob.” Gill explains, “The *doctrine* of the Messiah... which Christ ‘received’ from his Father, as the word (לקח) used signifies, and his disciples received from him, and the church has received from them, and has been transmitted to [the] Gentiles, and will be to the Jews in the latter day, who

will learn the true knowledge of it.” And indeed, the Book of Mormon is given “... to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD.” Elder Orson Pratt testimony feels me with joy: “Oh, How precious must be the contents of a book which shall deliver us from all the errors taught by the precepts of uninspired men! Oh, how gratifying to poor, ignorant, erring mortals who have murmured because of the multiplicity of contradictory doctrines that have perplexed and distracted their minds, to read the plain, pure and most precious word of God, revealed in the Book of Mormon! It is like bread to the hungry, like the cool refreshing fountain to him that is ready to perish with thirst.”<sup>54</sup>

11 October 2012

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<sup>53</sup> Dallin H. Oaks, *The Lord’s Way*, p.207.

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<sup>54</sup> Pratt, Orson. *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, number 6, Prophetic evidence in favor of the Book of Mormon, Latter-day tracts, p. 91.

