



BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY • PROVO, UTAH

FARMS Paper

The following paper represents the views of the author and not the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, Brigham Young University, or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.



John W. Welch
An Unparallel

and

Spencer J. Palmer and William L. Knecht
View of the Hebrews
Substitute for Inspiration?

Summary:

During 1921 and 1922 B. H. Roberts wrote three papers that listed parallels between the Book of Mormon and the second edition (1825) of Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews* and constructed the possible argument that the Book of Mormon relied upon the latter. Welch responds to that claim by listing over eighty discrepancies between the two works, and Palmer and Knecht rebut Roberts's theory by using statistics to show that the passages of Isaiah quoted in both works do not lead to conclusions of plagiarism.

Paper and Reprint
Book of Mormon, Answers to Criticisms

FARMS
Brigham Young University
P.O. Box 7113
University Station
Provo, UT 84602
1-800-327-6715
(801) 373-5111
www.farmsresearch.com

\$3.00

WPK-85



7 14861 06080 5

F
A
R
M
S

For a complete listing of FARMS publications,
call 1-800-FARMS-15 for a FARMS catalog.

"An Unparallel" © 1985 by John W. Welch.

"View of the Hebrews: Substitute for Inspiration?" reprinted with permission from *BYU Studies* 5/2 (1964): 105-13.

"AN UNPARALLEL"

John W. Welch

The University of Illinois Press published in the fall of 1985 three papers written by B. H. Roberts in 1921-22, collectively titled Studies of the Book of Mormon. In the main part of these papers (pp. 149-250, 321-344), Roberts displays several general similarities and a few specific parallels between the Book of Mormon and the second edition (1825) of Ethan Smith's View of the Hebrews (VH). The purpose of this study is to examine the proposed parallels. The evidence suggests that they are neither as precise nor as significant as some have made them out to be. In fact, it will be shown that the Book of Mormon differs from VH far more than it resembles it, making it hard to believe that Joseph Smith relied on VH.

In his papers, Roberts writes relentlessly and bluntly, as he constructs the possible argument that the Book of Mormon relied upon VH, based on twenty-six similarities between these two books. He makes no effort to soften their impact, but rather intensifies the issue by frequent reference to the cumulative effect of these points.

There are several ways to respond to Roberts' construct:

- 1) If we are to believe that Joseph Smith knew VH well enough to follow it in the kind of detail that Roberts suggests, and if we are to believe that Joseph Smith accepted VH as authoritative enough to use it as the fundamental structural guide to his composition of the Book of Mormon, then why is the Book of Mormon inconsistent with or ignorant of so many of its most important details? In other words, if 26 vague similarities prove dependency, what do over 80 glaring differences prove?
- 2) How significant are the parallels anyway? Are they specific or general? If they are general, is there any reason to believe that Joseph Smith borrowed them specifically from Ethan Smith? Or from the many others in the 1820s who were making

similar general statements? Indeed, many people held some of the beliefs reflected in VH long before, during, and after the 1820s. Moreover, since the similarities turn out to be very general, it is easy enough to believe that he did not borrow them from anyone at all.

The preceding two points will be developed and demonstrated below. Differing approaches are viable, as others too have argued.

3) One should consider how likely it really is that Joseph Smith actually depended on VH. There is no concrete evidence that Joseph Smith ever read VH or that any of his associates had a copy or knew of the work or saw any connection between it (or similar writings) and the Book of Mormon (although it has been recently rumored that a copy of VH exists with Oliver Cowdery's name in it and although substantial portions of VH are quoted in Josiah Priest's The Wonders of Nature and Providence Displayed, which was in the Manchester library in 1826). Roberts' claim that VH was around "five to seven years" before the Book of Mormon is a bit of an exaggeration, for the initial translation of the Book of Mormon commenced in 1828 and was completed in July 1829. So the time span in which the connection must be made is shorter than Roberts allows for.

4) Nor is there evidence that any of Joseph and Ethan Smith's contemporaries saw any dependence. Gordon Thomasson has recently pointed out that, despite the immediate notoriety of Joseph Smith which caused such people as Charles Anthon to dissociate themselves publically from Joseph's movement, Ethan Smith made no such move. Yet it is just as likely (or more so) that Ethan Smith was aware of the Book of Mormon after its publication, as it is that Joseph was aware of VH. Furthermore, would 23 leading Protestant clergymen have endorsed Ethan Smith's book in 1833 in a widely distributed publication, Key to the Revelation of John (New York: J. & J. Harper) if they thought that it had been connected with, or exploited in any way by early Mormonism? Or would they have remained silent if they had seen a credible resemblance between the two books?

5) One can challenge fundamentally the comparative method. This is the approach taken by Hugh Nibley, "Just Another Book," "Grab Bag," and "The Comparative Method," Improvement Era (1959), F.A.R.M.S. Reprints N-MIX-2, 3 and 5. Of course, Roberts himself was aware that many of his "parallels" were extremely weak. On his suggestion that the name Ether in the Book of Mormon came from the name "Ethan Smith(!)" he himself cautions, "Do not take the idea too seriously" (p. 187). His claim is "What is sought in this study is not absolute identity of incidents, and absolute parallel of conditions and circumstances; but one thing here and another there, that may suggest another but similar thing in such a way as to make one a product of the other" (p. 187). This itself is an admission of very slippery methodology.

6) Another approach might be to list the hundreds of ways in which the Book of Mormon differs from VH. VH is merely a book presenting reports that support the idea that the Indians were descendants of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel. It contains no history, no narratives, no visions, no revelations, no personalities, no literature of these people themselves. Thus there are an enormous number of things which the Book of Mormon contains which VH does not. The reader can get a good idea of the meager contents of VH by reading the following summary of its main points. Anything beyond this is new material added by the Book of Mormon. Thus, even if VH is advanced as an explanation for some of the Book of Mormon, it does not explain very much.

7) A final test may be for people to read VH for themselves. It is a tedious volume, repetitious and redundant. A few of its main sources are quoted repeatedly and the author is argumentative and conclusory. To a modern reader, he seems very naive; even to his contemporary readers, Ethan Smith's points were not considered persuasive. As the Review discussed in the 1825 edition (p. 279) shows, the Reviewer found "nothing conclusive in all this." He was not impressed: "We have no evidence that the customs and institutions of the Hebrews . . . were peculiar to that people."

One should also notice that Roberts was not advancing an original thesis here. I. Woodbridge Riley, with whose work Roberts was familiar, and who wrote The Founder of Mormonism: A Psychological Study of Joseph Smith Jr. (Yale Ph.D. Dissertation, 1902), was apparently the first to discuss the parallel between VH and the Book of Mormon. See Richard Bushman, Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984), p. 191. Thus, in advancing the theory, Roberts knew that he was articulating the views of opponents of the Book of Mormon, not stating "conclusions" of his own, as he himself states in his unmailed letter to Heber J. Grant. See also Ariel Crowley, "Analysis of Ethan Smith's 'View of the Hebrews'--A Comparison with the Book of Mormon," in his About the Book of Mormon (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1961), pp. 110-133, with letter from Ben Roberts, July 22, 1939.

A. "An Unparallel"

The proposition before us regarding VH is this: Should we conclude that Joseph Smith specifically took the main structural aspects of the Book of Mormon story from VH? To find that he did, one must find that he knew VH well and respected it deeply. If so, he should have followed it--or at least not contradicted it--on its major points. But contradict it he does, over and over again. Since Roberts has pointed out some "parallels," consider, in this light, the following "unparallels."

(1) VH begins with a chapter (pp. 2-46) on the Destruction of Jerusalem. It has nothing to say, however, about the destruction in 586/7 B.C. by the Babylonians, but details at length the utter annihilation of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. The Jerusalem described by VH is that of the time of Christ, with a palace, towers on its three walls, a fort, etc. (p. 16). Had Joseph Smith followed this description, he might have unwittingly attributed these details to Jerusalem in Lehi's day. Moreover, David Whitmer remembers Joseph saying that he had not known that Jerusalem had walls until after he translated 1 Nephi, which refers to them. M. J. Hubble interview with David Whitmer, 13 Nov. 1886, in Stanley B. Kimball, "Missouri Mormon Manuscripts," BYU Studies 14 (1974), 486.

(2) Specific heavenly signs marked the destruction of Jerusalem: a meteor hung over the city in the sky for a year (p. 24); a heifer gave birth to a lamb (p. 25); chariots and armed men appeared in the air over Jerusalem (p. 25); a man walked the streets freely proclaiming woes for seven years (p. 26); famines, horrors, mass suicides, and prisoners starving to death are described (p. 34). Why does Joseph Smith overlook such singular and memorable details?

(3) Chapter 2 (pp. 47-66) describes "The Certain Restoration of Judah and Israel." One should note, at the outset, that the word "Restoration" means something entirely different to Joseph Smith than it does in VH, namely the Restoration of all things in a culminating dispensation.

(4) VH lists many prophecies about the Restoration of Israel, including Deut. 30; Isa. 11, 18, 60, 65; Jer. 16, 23, 30-31, 35-37; Zeph. 3; Amos 9; Hos. and Joel. Ezekiel's valley of dry bones is related to the restoration of the Ten Tribes too. These passages are discussed in detail and with enthusiasm as important, undeniable proof that a restoration of the lost tribes will occur. This is an essential premise in the logic of VH, yet with the sole exception of Isa. 11, none of these scriptures appear in the Book of Mormon. Ezek. 37:16-20 may be related to 2 Ne. 3:12, but the latter only says that the writings of the loins of Judah and the loins of Joseph shall "grow together unto the confounding of false doctrines." Since the word "stick" only appears once in the Book of Mormon (1 Ne. 16:23), G. Smith overstates this matter when he claims that "both VH and the Book of Mormon identify the American Indians as the 'stick of Joseph or Ephraim,'" Sunstone 6 (May/June 1981), p. 46.

(5) VH describes in precise detail the boundaries of the Holy Land (from Egypt to Mesopotamia) which must some day be given back to the tribes of Israel forever in order for God's prophecies to be fulfilled (pp. 49-50). The Book of Mormon is vague about what lands of inheritance will be occupied by the gathered Israelites.

(6) Chapter 3 (pp. 67-225) comprises most of the book. It produces evidence that the American Indians are the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel. Numerous details are given which in Ethan Smith's opinion are "distinguished Hebraisms" and traits given to Israel of old "designed to distinguish them from all other nations" (p. 154). Most of these "distinguished" points that seemed so obvious to Ethan Smith are not to be found in the Book of Mormon, as one would expect to find them if Joseph Smith were using VH or trying to make his book persuasive. For example:

(7) VH expects two groups, the Jews and the American Indians, to be restored (p. 71). The Book of Mormon expects three groups--the Jews and the Nephites and the Ten Tribes--to be restored (2 Ne. 29:13). Wherever the Ten Tribes are, they are not the same as the American Indians for the Book of Mormon (3 Ne. 17:4). This is a fundamental repudiation of the sole thesis of VH.

(8) VH dwells on Hos. 4:16, which states that the Lord will feed the tribes "as a lamb in a large place." For VH, this is important proof that they are in a vast territory (p. 72). There is no Book of Mormon use of this prophecy.

(9) VH asserts repeatedly that the Ten Tribes came to America via "Beering's (sic) Strait," which they crossed on "dry land" (pp. 76-78; see also 114, 153, 159, 168, passim). According to VH, this opinion is unquestionable, supported by Jarvis, Sewall, Israel, Adair, and Boudinot (of the American Bible Society). "They certainly found their way hither and no doubt over Beering's straits from the north to the east of Asia." (p. 168). Yet the Book of Mormon squarely and blatantly conflicts with this "learned" and in those days authoritatively accepted account.

(10) According to VH, the Indians spread over the land from North to East and from North to South. This is evidenced by several Indian accounts and is referred to repeatedly in VH (see pp. 81-83, 146, 182). This is a critical point, since Amos 8:11-12 prophesies that they will go from the north to the east, while sizeable population migrations in the Book of Mormon always move from the South to the North.

(11) The Indians are Israelites because they use the word "Hallelujah" (p. 87 and several other times). Here is one of VH's favorite proofs, a dead give-away, that the Indians are Israelites. Yet the word is never used in the Book of Mormon.

(12) The Indians are Israelites because they sacrifice and fast in preparation for war and purify themselves for battle. They also abstain from all "matrimonial intercourse three days before going to war . . . and for three days after they return" (p. 123). Such abstraction never occurs in the Book of Mormon. Rather, the Book of Mormon people fast after their battles as a part of mourning for their dead--an accurate pre-Exilic feature. See Stephen Ricks, "Fasting in the Old Testament and in the Book of Mormon," F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report RIC-83.

(13) The Indians are Israelites because Indian words resemble Hebrew. A table showing 34 Indian words or parts of sentences with Hebrew equivalents appears on pp. 90-91. No reader of the book could have missed this chart. VH also states that the Indian word for "spirit" is manito (p. 146). If Joseph Smith had wanted to make up names to use in the Book of Mormon that would substantiate his claim that these were authentic Western Hemisphere Hebrew words, he would have jumped at such a ready-made list! Yet none--not one--of these 34 Hebrew/Indian words has even the most remote resemblance to any of the 175 names that appear for the first time in the Book of Mormon. Had Joseph Smith put the slightest credence in VH, the names he would have fabricated for his own book would undoubtedly have resembled these VH words: e.g., **Keah, Lani, Uwoh, Phale, Kurbet**, etc.

(14) The Indians are Israelites because they know the flood story and call high mountains "ararat" (pp. 91, 115, 170 etc.) Since VH mentions this factor several times, it was significant evidence to Ethan Smith. But the flood story is never told in the Book of Mormon (Noah is mentioned once). In addition, VH claims that the Indians knew of a creation of woman from the ribs of two men (p. 143), yet ribs are never mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

(15) The Indians are Israelites because they have religious dances before going to war (pp. 92, 165). Beside the fact that the Book of Mormon never mentions dancing (except for the dancing maidens in Mosiah 20:5--which appears to be a celebration of the pre-Exilic festival of the 15th of Av; see F.A.R.M.S. Update February 1985), it is unclear in Biblical sources that the Israelites danced in preparation for war.

(16) The Indians are Israelites because they call God "Jah," and this is "exclusively Hebrew" (p. 92). They chanted "hal, hal, hal; le, le, le; lu, lu, lu; yah, yah, yah" (Studies, p. 237). Why then wouldn't Joseph Smith call God "Jah" at least once in the Book of Mormon? or use the word halleluyah? Jehovah appears only in 2 Ne 22:2 and Moro. 10:34.

(17) VH gives Abbamocko, an Indian name, as an example of a Hebrew name, "Abba" meaning "father" in Hebrew (p. 94). But if Joseph Smith had taken his cues from this shoddy kind of analysis, he would have blundered. The Hebrew "Abba-" does not appear as a prefix in the Israelite onomasticon. When "father" is used as a prefix in a Hebrew name, its form is simply "Ab-", as in Ab-raham. Book of Mormon names reflect this usage correctly, as in the names Abinadi and Abinadom.

(18) The Indians worshipped the sun (p. 95) and "saluted the dawn every morning," (p. 157) showing them to be pious and religious like the Israelites. Such a thing is never condoned in the Book of Mormon, undoubtedly because it was one of the very heresies which Lehi must have been fighting against, as Ezek. 8:15-16 makes clear: "Thou shalt see greater abominations than these . . . they worship the sun toward the east."

(19) The Indians are Israelites because they carry small boxes with them into battle. These are to protect them against injury. They are sure signs that the Indians' ancestors knew of the ark of the covenant! (pp. 95-96, 141, 162). How could Joseph Smith pass up such a distinguished and oft-attested Hebraism as this?! Yet in all the Book of Mormon battle scenes, there is not one hint of any such ark, box or bag serving as a military fetish or ceremonial artifact.

(20) The Indians are Israelites because they circumcise their boys (pp. 97, 170). One Indian could remember being held down while his father performed this rite on him. If Joseph Smith had understood that this Israelite practice persisted down to his day on the Western Hemisphere, why would he have "terminated" the practice in Mor. 8:8 ("the law of circumcision is done away") among the Nephites? He leaves no hint that the wicked Lamanites would carry on such a practice.

(21) The Indians are Israelites because they believe the air to be filled with spirits, good and bad (pp. 99, 156), just as the Hebrews believed in good and bad angels. This is absolutely not the angelology of the Book of Mormon. Rather the Book of Mormon has little angelology; it refers to the "angel of the Lord" but not much else. The good and bad angels with which VH is familiar, however, enter Hebrew theology only after the Exile in Babylonia, after VH's Ten Tribes and the Book of Mormon's Lehi had both left Palestine. Not only does the Book of Mormon not agree with VH here, but VH itself is off the mark.

(22) The Indians are Israelites because they are "intoxicated with religious pride" and call all other people "accursed," yet consider themselves God's peculiar people (p. 96). Beside being inconsistent with extensive evidence that VH later adduces to prove that the Indians are Israelites because they are hospitable and kind (pp. 174-77), this is hardly the attitude the Book of Mormon attributes to its Lamanite survivors.

(23) The Indians are Israelites because they called God "Providence" (p. 57), the "Great Chief Father" (p. 100), the "Great Man above" (p. 107), "Thunderer" (p. 159), the "Supreme Essence" and the "fountain of mystic medicine" (p. 159). The Book of Mormon never calls God any of these distinctive names, though Lamanite Lamoni comes close.

(24) While VH reports in some places that the Indians are Israelites because they have "the notion of there being but one great and true God" (pp. 102), it also reports Indians who believe that god is in the buffalo, the wolf, the bear, a bird or a rattlesnake (p. 102), and Indians who believe in 37 gods (p.

106). Does any of this have any bearing whatsoever on the theology in the Book of Mormon?

(25) The Indians are Israelites because they believed that the gods controlled man's destinies (p. 106). This looks more like VH is reading a little Calvinism into Indian lore. The Book of Mormon knows nothing of this idea of destinies.

(26) The Indians are Israelites because of "their dress and trinkets, as notable, like those of ancient Israel; their earrings, nose jewels, bracelets on their arms and legs, rings," etc. (p. 108). Little mention of jewelry is found in the Book of Mormon (the Zoramites had ringlets, bracelets and ornaments of gold, Alma 31:28), yet VH would have led Joseph Smith to believe that this was an important Israelite characteristic. More important to the Book of Mormon was "costly apparel," which is mentioned frequently.

(27) The Indians are Israelites because the Mohawk tribe was a tribe held in great reverence by all the others, to whom tribute was paid (p. 109). Obviously(!) the Mohawks are the vestiges of the tribe of Levi, Israel's tribe of priests. If Joseph Smith believed that such a tribe or priestly remnant had survived down to his day, he forgot to provide for anything to that effect in the Book of Mormon.

(28) The Indians are Israelites because their tribes had "animal emblems" (p. 111). In just the same way, Dan was symbolized by the serpent, Benjamin by the wolf. The Book of Mormon makes no such references, in fact Gen. 49 (where Jacob blesses his sons and mentions these animals) only associates animals with some of the tribes, contrary to VH.

(29) The Indians are Israelites because they had cities of refuge (p. 112). Blood was never shed in these towns, and Indian captives were allowed to flee to these cities of refuge (p. 167). Indeed, ancient Israelite law provided for cities of refuge (Ex. 21:13; Num. 35; Deut 19), but the Book of Mormon never mentions them. Surely the many killings in the Book of Mormon (i.e., Nehor slaying Gideon) present golden opportunities for a writer following VH to incorporate references about a place of refuge.

The answer may be found in the idea that the cities of refuge were unique to the Holy Land of Palestine, which was especially to be kept pure from blood guilt (I am unaware of any cities of refuge outside Palestine in the Diaspora). The Mosaic law established the six cities of refuge precisely in certain Israelite locations. It might have been considered inappropriate to supplant those cities with New World locations. Posts of refuge, of course, are not mentioned in the Book of Mormon either.

(30) The Indians are Israelites because they selected wise young men to carefully retain their traditions (p. 113). Had Joseph Smith been a devotee of VH, such selections would have been depicted in the Book of Mormon, but instead, all the transmitters of the Nephite records from Jacob to Amaleki, Mosiah I to Mosiah II, and Alma the Younger to Ammaron (4 Ne. 49), were fathers and sons. The process was essentially patriarchial and genealogical.

(31) The Indians are Israelites because they had traditions about ancient ancestors who lived "till their feet were worn out" (p. 115). Yet the patriarchs of Genesis are not described this way in the Book of Mormon. Rather, the "age of man" in 3 Ne. 28:2 is typically ancient. See John Welch, "Longevity in the Book of Mormon," Collegium Aesculapium (1984), F.A.R.M.S. Reprint WEL-84.

(32) The Indians are Israelites because they have a tradition about an ancestor with 12 sons (p. 116). This is never mentioned in the Book of Mormon, although it would have been easy to make reference to the 12 tribes or the 12 sons of Jacob.

(33) The Indians are Israelites because they have a tradition about a rod with buds (p. 116), obviously parallel to Aaron's rod. The only similar Book of Mormon reference to a rod is to one made of iron.

(34) Had the writer of the Book of Mormon relied on VH for his ideas about Jewish festivals, he would have thought of Pentecost in the following terms: "Dr. Beatty informs us of their feast, called the hunter's feast; answering, he thinks, to

the Pentecost in ancient Israel. He describes it as follows: They choose twelve men, who provide twelve deer. Each of the twelve men cuts a sapling with these they form a tent, covered with blankets. They choose twelve stones for an altar." Yet these practices have nothing to do with the ancient Israelite Pentecost. In contrast, the account of Abinadi in Mosiah 11-17 depicts an ancient Israelite Pentecost with stunning precision in its liturgical language and symbolism. See "Abinadi and Pentecost," F.A.R.M.S. Update September 1985. How did reliance on VH produce this?

(35) VH often refers to an Indian feast "in which no bone of their sacrifice may be broken," alluding to a central characteristic of Passover (p. 117). However, this idea, whether connected with Passover or with Jesus, is absent from the Book of Mormon. Likewise, the idea of drinking bitter liquids (pp. 120, 143) that is associated with Passover in VH is absent from the Book of Mormon. Instead, there is considerable evidence of subtle and intimate Passover practices in two places in the Book of Mormon; the Book of Mormon practices seem to have been unknown to Gentiles in the 1820s. See "The Sons of the Passover," F.A.R.M.S. Update September 1984.

(36) VH concludes that the Indians are Israelites because they sacrifice their "first fruits" to God (p. 118, 145). Yet outside of one place that mentions "firstlings" (Mos. 2:3), the idea of "first fruits" being sacrificed by the people in a harvest celebration is absent from the Book of Mormon. Only Jesus (2 Ne. 2:9, Jac. 4:11) and the fruits of repentance (Moro. 8:25) are called "first fruits." Moreover, a typical Indian feast, as described on pp. 142-43, has no bearing on any festival observed in the Book of Mormon.

(37) VH claims that the Indians "were never known to offer sacrifice to any god made with hands" (p. 105). But in the Book of Mormon, Mor. 4:14, the Lamanites were guilty of this very sin.

(38) The Indians are Israelites because they had a daily sacrifice of fat in the fire and passed their venison through the flame, cutting it into twelve pieces (p. 119). This great clue of "Israelitishness" is also absent from the Book of Mormon.

(39) The Indians are Israelites because their priests wore buttons, shells, antlers, feathers, bells, moccasins and rattles made of dried turkey spurs (p. 121) or porcupine quills (p. 166), which clothing VH connects with the High Priest's vestments described in the Hebrew Bible. Besides doubting the relevance of such attire either to ancient Israelite priestly robes or to Joseph Smith, one must also note that the Book of Mormon never describes the clothing worn by any Nephite priest. Similarly, the word "breastplate" appears in VH, but that does little in this context to establish a relationship with the Old Testament or the Book of Mormon.

(40) The Indians are Israelites because they considered their land to be one "flowing with milk and honey" (p. 121). In all the Book of Mormon descriptions of the Nephites' Promised Land, however, this singular phrase is never employed.

(41) The Indians are Israelites because their temples had "a holy of holies" (p. 124). The Book of Mormon is silent on this significant detail.

(42) The Indians are Israelites because they had dietary rules. For example, they would "never eat the hollow of the thigh of anything they kill," had manners for the use of knives, and would not break the bones of animals they ate. The Book of Mormon makes, however, no reference whatever to such eating practices, let alone Jewish dietary laws, perhaps because such rules took on primary significance in Jewish theology only after Lehi had left.

(43) The Indians are Israelites because they, like the Hebrews, mourned for the dead (p. 124). Of course, the Book of Mormon peoples (and all peoples) also mourn their dead; but VH tells how the Indians hired professional mourners. There is none of this in the Book of Mormon.

(44) VH says that the Indians, like the Hebrews, buried furniture with their dead (p. 125), a concept not present in the Book of Mormon.

(45) VH says that the Indians knew "a distinguished Hebraism," namely "laying the hand on the mouth, and the mouth in

the dust." No reference to this sure sign of Hebraism is employed in the Book of Mormon.

(46) The Indians are Israelites because they practiced levirate marriage (p. 125). Whether this is true or not, it is not mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

(47) VH claims that the Indians are Israelites because their women separated themselves during, and purified themselves after, their menstrual periods (p. 126, 143). No such rules are alluded to in the Book of Mormon.

(48) Did the Book of Mormon get the idea that monogamous marriage was a good idea because VH reports an Indian view that "tak[ing] a number of wives at a time and turn[ing] them away at pleasure" was a wicked thing? This seems unlikely. The Book of Mormon leaves the possibility of polygamy open, as was the case in ancient Israel, unlike VH. The Book of Mormon never reports cases where men had turned their wives out at pleasure; it speaks much rather of harlots and concubines.

(49) The Indians are Israelites because they keep an eternal fire burning in their temples (p. 134) and because they burn lamps all night before a new moon (p. 164). No such details appear in the Book of Mormon.

(50) The Indians are Israelites because they worship a God who controls nature and specifically "caused the sun to shine and dispersed the dark cloud" (p. 135). This characteristic of God is never mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

(51) Like the Hebrews who used incense, the Indians use a sweathouse and burn tobacco as a part of their prayers (p. 136). It would have been easy for Joseph Smith to build such practices into, for example, the perverted rites of the Zoramites, but he did not.

(52) The Indians are Israelites because they prayed to God that they might be "carried home in safety to our wives and children" as they departed on their long journeys (p. 138). The prayer of Alma in Alma 31:26-35 is ideally suited to lodge such an expression, but neither it nor anything like it appears.

(53) The Indians are Israelites because, in a manner which is "manifestly Hebrew," they were very suspicious of evil and started all their council meetings by smoking a peace pipe and choosing a speaker to express their views (p. 144). This is not the way such negotiations are conducted in the Book of Mormon. See Mosiah 9:6-7, where such a meeting is reported--one that follows Near Eastern tribal practices.

(54) VH considers it significant that the Indians "count time after the manner of the Hebrews. They divide the year into spring, summer, autumn, and winter. They number their year from any of those four periods, for they have no name for a year, and they subdivide these, and count the year by lunar months, like the Israelites, who counted by moons." (p. 149). Had Joseph Smith followed this, he would have blundered into error. Instead the Book of Mormon counts the years according to regnal years, and numbers the months in the manner of pre-Exilic Israel. See Jay Huber, "Lehi's 600 Year Prophecy and the Birth of Christ," F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report HUB-82. Moreover, VH takes it as a sign of Indian erudition that they intercalated their calendar every 104 years (p. 178). Such a practice is absent from the Book of Mormon.

(55) VH claims that Indians knew the Hebrew tetragrammaton or great four letter name, YHWH (p. 151). The Book of Mormon never draws attention to this name of God.

(56) The Indians are Israelites because they worked to earn their wives, as did Jacob (p. 155). This, however, is not the way Nephi and his brothers take their wives.

(57) The Indians are Israelites because they could easily divorce their wives, as under the Law of Moses (p. 155). The Book of Mormon, however, opposes divorce and encourages marital fidelity.

(58) VH refers to the Indians' practice of interpreting dreams and searching into futurity while their priests were in the process of curing diseases or healing wounds (p. 155). Specific disease is mentioned only once in the Book of Mormon (fevers in Alma 46:40); medicine is never associated with prophecy or spirituality.

(59) VH associates medicine and cleansing the heart with treaty making (p. 157). Treaty oaths in the Book of Mormon, however, follow with great precision the Near Eastern practices of the Eighth Century B.C. See Mark Davis and Brent Israelsen, "International Relations and Treaties in the Book of Mormon," F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report D&I-82; Stephen Ricks, "The Treaty/Covenant Pattern in King Benjamin's Address," BYU Studies 1983, F.A.R.M.S. Reprint RIC-83b.

(60) The Indians are Israelites because they ritually gather three bunches of grass, have sacred paintings, and ten dreamers (pp. 157-58). The paintings are "anointings and purifications;" and anytime VH finds a number three it is associated with the Trinity; anytime it finds the number 10 it is associated with the Ten Tribes. Beside being naive beyond description, these notions are irrelevant to the Book of Mormon, which never expressly numbers anything 10 except Mormon's age.

(61) The Indians are Israelites because they have their young boys fast on a hill, roll in white clay, while humming (p. 161). This, VH claims, is the legacy of the Israelite "dust and ashes." Had Joseph Smith believed this, why is the Book of Mormon silent on these aspects of "dust," "sackcloth," or "ashes"?

(62) The Indians are Israelites because they had sacred places (rocks, trees, fountains, etc.) where their assemblies were held (p. 165). Although the Book of Mormon speaks of many formal assemblies, they are always at a temple, synagogue or church; the "waters of Mormon" is only an impromptu assembly place.

(63) The Indians are Israelites because they allowed blood vengeance to be obtained only by relatives of the deceased (p. 166). A close examination of blood vengeance in the Book of Mormon, however, indicates its direct relationship with Old Testament ideas and not any relationship with VH. See James Rasmussen, "Blood Vengeance in the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon," F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report RAS-81. Indeed, the Indian practice would seem to be inconsistent with the account found in Alma 1 regarding Nehor's killing of Gideon.

a (64) The Indians are Israelites because they knew the mechanical arts of brickmaking, pottery, sculptures, implements of iron (p. 172), paintings, stone buildings, and carving in wood and stone (p. 182, 186). Brickmaking was learned during the Israelites' bondage in Egypt--a period of captivity often mentioned in the Book of Mormon--but brickmaking is never suggested. Nor is pottery, sculpting, painting, carving in wood, etc. Indeed, the Israelites avoided "graven images," although Lamanites and backsliders had "idols."

(65) The destruction of the more technically minded Israelites was God's way of putting the Israelites in "an outcast state" to fulfill specific prophecy (p. 172). This prophecy is never alluded to in the Book of Mormon.

(66) According to VH, the Indians quickly lost knowledge that they were all from the same family (p. 173). The Book of Mormon tells that family and tribal affiliations were maintained for almost 1000 years. See, e.g., 3 Ne. 7:2; 4 Ne. 1:36-39.

(67) According to VH, even the best of the Israelites were only "partially civilized" (p. 173). The Nephites of the Book of Mormon were fully civilized.

(68) The Indians are Israelites because they knew how to build dikes, canals and immense pyramids (p. 179). No dikes, canals or pyramids are specifically mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

(69) When VH says that the Indians' government was theocratic, it means something different from what the Book of Mormon means. For VH, government was begun by an "ancient mysterious founder" (read "Moses") and therefore is theocratic. This government was a "despotism concealed under the appearances of a gentle and patriarchal government" (p. 180). Contrast this facile generality with Benjamin's accurate description of the role of the King in Israel (Mos. 2) and his profound paraphrase of the Paragraph of the King from Deut. 17. See John Tvedtnes, "A Nephite Feast of Tabernacles," F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report TVE-78.

(70) The Indians are Israelites because the Indians and the rabbis called their deputy priests "sagan" (p. 181). The Book of Mormon not only never makes mention of such a name, it makes no reference to deputy priests.

(71) VH claims that Indians had a "constitution" (pp. 181-82). No such document is ever mentioned in the Book of Mormon, despite this open invitation. The Nephite "republic" was still a far cry from a modern republic. See John Welch, "Old World Perspectives on the Book of Mormon," Ensign, F.A.R.M.S. Reprint WEL-76.

(72) VH is adamant that the first settlers who moved from the north down into the south (Mexico) migrated there in 648 A.D. "All seem to agree," VH claims (p. 183). In the face of such widespread and absolute assertions, what devotee of this volume would dare to place inhabitants in the land southward hundreds and thousands of years before this time?!

(73) VH reports that early Christian missionaries were convinced that the "gospel had in very remote time, been already preached in America." (p. 187). They drew this conclusion, however, only from their "rites of religion," "ritual," and "mythology." (p. 187). Never is the claim made that they knew of Christ.

(74) VH claims that the righteous Indians were active "for a long time," well into recent times, and that their destruction occurred about 1400 A.D., as evidenced by tree rings near some of the mounds and fortifications (p. 188). The Book of Mormon implicitly rejects this notion by reporting the destruction of the Nephites in the fourth century A.D.

(75) VH describes a vast civilization all over the Mississippi valley and Eastern United States, with military works, walls, ditches, forts, cemeteries, temples, altars, camps, over 5,000 towns or villages, race grounds, places of amusement, habitations of chieftains, videttes, watchtowers, monuments and high places all over the place (p. 189). When seen as a whole picture, these many items provide only a very weak parallel for the isolated watchtower, discussed by Roberts, which the Nephites built in the land of Nephi.

(76) The Indians are Israelites because they know how to use circles, squares, octagons, and parallel lines (p. 190). No evidence of geometry is found in the Book of Mormon.

(77) The Indians are Israelites because they had wells, like Jacob's well, with stones at their mouth (p. 190). No wells are mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

(78) The Indians are Israelites because in their tombs people have found mirrors, stone axes, breastplates, crucibles, and scabbards (pp. 192-97). Most of these items are never mentioned, and none of them in connection with a burial in the Book of Mormon.

(79) The Indians are Israelites because they knew the legends of Quetzalcoatl (pp. 204-08). But the surprise for the modern reader here is that VH proves beyond doubt that Quetzalcoatl was none other than--not Jesus--but Moses! "Who could this be but Moses, the ancient legislator in Israel?" (p. 206, emphasis in original). He was white, gave laws, required penance (strict obedience), had a serpent with green plumage (brazen serpent in the wilderness), pierced ears (like certain slaves under the Law of Moses), appeased God's wrath (by sacrifices), was associated with a great famine (in Egypt), spoke from a volcano (Sinai), walked barefoot (removed his shoes), spawned a golden age (seven years of plenty in Egypt--which has nothing to do with Moses, by the way), etc. If VH provided the inspiration for the Book of Mormon, it did not provide much. Besides the fact that VH's explanation of Quetzalcoatl as Moses is inconsistent with the Book of Mormon, none of the hallmark-details associated with Quetzalcoatl according to VH (walking barefoot, speaking from a mountain, having feathers, etc.) are incorporated into the account of Christ in 3 Nephi.

(80) The Indians are Israelites because a Jewish phylactery was found wrapped in rawhide near Pittsburgh (pp. 217-25). Yet these prayers of the Jews are not mentioned, paraphrased or otherwise included in the Book of Mormon. Furthermore, it is doubtful that the Israelites in the Northern Kingdom would have worn phylacteries before the time of their destruction by the

Assyrians in 722 B.C., as VH baldly states that they did (p. 224).

(81) The final chapter (pp. 227-52) in VH is entitled "An Address of the Prophet Isaiah Relative to the Restoration of His People." After repeating most of the restoration prophecies discussed above, VH then offers a detailed exegesis of Isaiah 18 to prove that Isaiah saw the ten tribes on the Western Hemisphere. This chapter becomes the strongest prophecy in the VH arsenal. Although the Book of Mormon also draws heavily upon Isaiah, it is bewildering for any comparison that not so much as a whisper of this chapter is found in the Book of Mormon. For a detailed study of the fact that there is very little overlap between the Isaiah materials in VH and the Book of Mormon, see S. Palmer and W. Knecht, "View of the Hebrews: Substitute for Inspiration?" BYU Studies (1964), F.A.R.M.S. Reprint P&K-64. See also John Tvedtnes, "The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report TVE-81, for a thorough comparison of the Isaiah texts in the Book of Mormon in light of the textual variants in the Masoretic, Dead Sea and Septuagint texts.

(82) The Indians are Israelites because they, like the Jews, had harps (p. 184). As a matter of fact American Indian ethnology provides no evidence of such instrument in pre-Columbian times. No harp is mentioned in the Book of Mormon.

(83) VH mentions hieroglyphics. The Book of Mormon, on the other hand, speaks only of "reformed Egyptian," which appears to have good reference to hieratic or demotic. See "Martin Harris' Visit to Charles Anthon: Collected Documents on Short-hand Egyptian," F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report STF-85a.

(84) Unlike the Book of Mormon, VH mentions many distinctive biblical ideas and words, like "Gog" (p. 54), "Euphrates" (p. 89), or "Beelzebub" (p. 99). While the Book of Mormon uses several biblical names, they are different from those appearing in VH and reveal many interesting details about the language and mentality of the Nephites when studied collectively and closely.

Further differences between the Book of Mormon and VH are discussed by other authors. See, Spencer Palmer & William

Knecht, "View of the Hebrews: Substitute for Inspiration?" BYU Studies, 5 (1964), 105-113; Hugh Nibley, "The Comparative Method," Improvement Era, 62 (Oct-Nov 1959); Hugh Nibley, No Ma'am That's Not History (Bookcraft, 1946); Bruce Blumell, "I Have A Question," Ensign (September, 1976), each available as reprints from F.A.R.M.S. See also Ariel Crowley, "Analysis of Ethan Smith's 'View of the Hebrews': A Comparison with the Book of Mormon," in About the Book of Mormon (Deseret, 1961); William Riley, "A Comparison of Passages from Isaiah and Other Old Testament Prophets in Ethan Smith's View of the Hebrews and the Book of Mormon" (M.A. Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1971); Madison U. Sowell, "An Overview of the Arguments for and against View of the Hebrews as a Possible Source for the Book of Mormon," Sunstone 6 (May/June, 1981), 44, 50-54; Richard Bushman, Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism, pp. 134-39.

In sum, let us then review what it is that Roberts is asking us to consider. It is this: that Joseph Smith knew VH and drew upon certain sections of it (which are scattered throughout the book) for the basic structural ideas of the Book of Mormon. Anyone adhering to this view would have to believe that Joseph Smith knew all of the foregoing "powerful" and "distinctive" Hebrew traits demonstrably shown to exist among the Indians, but that he somehow did not choose to use any of them. Instead, he consciously chose to prove the Hebrew origins of his the Book of Mormon peoples by saying that they had knowledge of such (obviously!) distinguishing characteristics as "knowledge of one god," "iron," "shipping," and "writing" (these will be discussed below). Does Roberts really think that Joseph Smith was so foolish as that?

B. "A Parallel?"

According to the editors of Studies (but without any elaboration or documentation), Roberts seized "opportunities presented by his mission presidency" (p. 149) and incorporated the "latest scientific investigations" from 1922-27, to construct his "Parallel." In fact, nothing new is added to the Parallel (pp. 321-44) beyond what is contained in the 1922 paper (pp. 149-

319). Consider his points, which he summarizes (pp. 240-42), in a manner similar to the Conclusion of VH itself (VH pp. 267). According to Roberts, one might argue that VH is "parallel" to the Book of Mormon because of these points:

(a) VH suggests an Israelitish origin of the American Indians. No one will doubt that this was a common belief in the 1820s, as it had been for centuries before. This in no way indicates a specific dependency of the Book of Mormon on VH. Furthermore, the Book of Mormon has its people coming from the destruction of Jerusalem 587 B.C., not from the Ten Tribes who left Israel in 722 B.C. Roberts is, of course, aware of this difference, but discounts it as being of "slight importance" (p. 160). On the contrary, many historical points turn out to relate critically and accurately in the Book of Mormon to dating Lehi in the end of the seventh century B.C. See Hugh Nibley, Lehi in the Desert, and Approach; John Welch, "Old World Perspectives on the Book of Mormon," Ensign, F.A.R.M.S. Reprint WEL-76; Robert F. Smith, "Book of Mormon Event Structure: Ancient Near East," F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report SMI-84. The difference is, in fact, of great importance.

Furthermore, of all the "distinctive Hebraisms" VH offers, many of them are completely ignored or are contradicted by the Book of Mormon, as discussed above. Those that are there are not prominent or distinctive or uniquely Israelite (and a number are simply in error), namely a tribal society, prophets, punishing wrongdoers, and burying the dead. For example, if the Indians are Israelites because they had an annual expiation of sin (VH, p. 119), this practice is certainly not explicitly described in any Book of Mormon sermon or celebration account; only subtle references are found. And again, although the Hebrews, the Nephites, and the Indians (p. 124) all speak of death as a kind of "sleep," there is a closer connection here between certain Nephite phrases and Egyptian funerary texts. See Robert F. Smith, "Shakespeare and the Book of Mormon," F.A.R.M.S. Preliminary Report SMI-80a. Roberts' other "Israelitish features" are all discussed above.

(b) Both deal with the destruction of Jerusalem. See (1) above.

(c) Both deal with the gathering of Israel and restoration of the Ten Tribes. But the Book of Mormon does not use the same scriptures as VH; see (4) above.

(d) Both use Isaiah. But see (81) above.

(e) Both appeal to the Gentiles to help the Jews. But VH itself documents the fact that this movement was widespread. It was not set in motion by VH.

(f) Both speak of migrations into a country where "never man dwelt" (VH, p. 75) or "never had man been" (Eth. 2:5). But these expressions are not that similar; each book speaks of different migrations. The VH has the group travel between the Black and Caspian Seas (places not mentioned in the Book of Mormon), while Ether has them travel in boats over the water. Roberts claims that "both peoples enter a valley at the commencement of their journey" (p. 186), but VH never speaks of a valley--Roberts is fudging here; VH has the tribes leave through the "upper regions" of Mesopotamia, not the river valley. Moreover, we need not assume that Joseph Smith, in order to know of such phrases or accounts, had ever seen VH, since 2 Esdras 13:40-49 (which was right in the Old Testament Apocrypha known to all KJV family Bibles of Joseph Smith's day) tells the whole story: the Ten Tribes, wandering into another land, taking counsel among themselves, going forth "where never mankind dwelt," entering into Mesopotamia, etc. This point is important, for this detail is the only place that Roberts can point to in VH to suggest literal copying by the Book of Mormon. Yet the phrase is not so unusual, and the notion need not have come even from VH at all.

(g) Both speak of a long journey for religious motives, and both encounter seas. Of course the journey is long, but the peoples encounter seas in much different ways.

(h) Both divide their people into two groups, one good and the other bad. The picture here, however, is not so clear. In the Book of Mormon, the groups change, each becoming righteous and wicked, having their ups and downs, over a long period of

time. The Book of Mormon is far from a "good guys against the bad guys" story, as Nibley discusses in detail in Since Cumorah (Deseret, 1967), pp. 378-90. In VH, the picture is also mixed: sometimes the wicked group is described as ferocious and evil, but in other places VH spends several pages proving that the Indians are really smiling, hospitable, peaceable, moral, and gentle (e.g. VH pp. 174-78). VH is self-contradictory on this point.

(i) There are long wars in both. Roberts incorrectly sees the Book of Mormon as the most war-ridden history of all time (p. 168). War, of course, is a universal phenomenon, but one which receives very little attention in VH.

(j) The bad overpower the good. This, of course, has to be part of the explanation, otherwise the highly civilized people should still have been there when the Europeans arrived. But in fact, in the Book of Mormon, both the Nephites and Lamanites had become hopelessly wicked by the time of the Nephite destruction.

(k) Both speak of the civilized people knowing mechanical arts, written language, navigation, iron and other metals. Here it is important to note that Roberts asserts that these points are "just intruded into the narrative, and do not seem to rise from it." (p. 198). He claims that for example, because shipping, is mentioned only twice in the Book of Mormon, it was not a real part of an actual history--for had the Nephites really known about shipping they would have used it on other occasions (e.g., to escape from the Lamanites). Thus the claim is that Joseph Smith just stuck these points in to conform with what he had learned about the knowledge of the Indians from his reading of VH. As mentioned above, if Joseph Smith had wanted to prove the Israelitish or civilized origins of American Indians, he surely could have picked more significant points to throw in. Beside that, the encounter of the Nephites with shipping at the end of Alma and the beginning of Helaman fits logically into their history: before this time, they had lived in the interior Lands of Nephi and Zarahemla; only around 70 B.C. had they begun to colonize and control regions by the sea. They were not very successful in these regions.

(l) Both supposedly assume no other inhabitants in the Western Hemisphere. See Part I, "Finding Answers to B. H. Roberts Questions," F.A.R.M.S. WEL-85d.

(m) VH assumes that the whole of the American continents was occupied. But it does not see settlements moving south until after the Book of Mormon times.

(n) Both assume that the Indian languages came from Hebrew. This is a corollary of (a). Both are aware that languages change over time.

(o) VH describes an Indian breastplate, buttons and other items of clothing. See (39) above.

(p) VH mentions idolatry and human sacrifice. For idolatry, see (85) above. It was commonly known that the Aztecs had practiced human sacrifice.

(q) Both praise generosity and denounce pride. These are commonplace and biblical, if not universal, religious teachings.

(r) VH tells of a "lost book" once possessed by the Indians (i.e. the Law of Moses). While some Indians reportedly remembered a time when their ancestors had a book that gave them happiness (VH, p. 130), the book they had was "away in another country" (p. 130) and refers to the Law of Moses, which the Israelites left behind. The book was taken away before God "took pity on them and directed them to this country" (p. 115). The Book of Mormon presents a much different picture, with the Plates of Laban being brought to this hemisphere. Later in VH a second "book" is mentioned. After presenting evidences of Hebrew writing supposedly found in several Indian mounds, VH reports of an Indian who claimed that his tribe "had for a long time preserved" a book which they had "not long since" buried with an Indian chief (p. 223). The report gives no indication of the nature or contents of this second book. G. Smith conflates these two accounts and misrepresents the matter when he says that VH and the Book of Mormon both tell the same story about sacred records which were "handed down from generation to generation," Sunstone 6 (May/June, 1981), p. 46.

(s) The book was buried with a high priest. Of course, the Book of Mormon plates were not buried in a grave with Moroni. Indeed, a much closer parallel turns out to be the burial of sacred records at Qumran, at Nag Hammadi, and elsewhere in the ancient Near East. See, e.g., Curtis Wright, "Ancient Burials of Metal Documents in Stone Boxes," Journal of Library History (1981), F.A.R.M.S. Reprint WRI-81.

(t) Both talk about watchtowers. See (75) above.

(u) Both mention high places and towers as places of worship. But VH never calls the places of worship "towers," and the Hebrew Bible often speaks of "high places."

(v) Both speak of changing from a monarchy to a republic. See (69, 71) above and (w) below.

(w) Both have civil and religious power united in the same person. Besides the fact that this is not a very accurate description of the Book of Mormon (in which the line of kings is distinct from the religious record keepers from Nephi to Amaleki, and in which civil and religious powers are separated during almost all of the reign of the judges), the idea of a king with religious power is present in the model of the Davidic monarchy.

(x) VH speaks of "the union of the civil and ecclesiastical power in the same persons of the princes--the struggle between Quaulz and Matlax, the good and bad principle by which the world is governed" (p. 185). Somehow this is supposedly the source of Lehi's teaching about "opposition in all things." Evidence that Roberts himself did not take this (and perhaps many) of these arguments seriously is found in his article in the Deseret News, November 15, 1930, in which he says "emphatically no" to the idea that Joseph Smith got this idea from his New York informational environment. Furthermore, the idea of opposition has deep roots in pre-Socratic philosophy and ancient Near Eastern thought.

(y) Both say that the gospel was preached anciently in America. But see (73) above.

(z) VH details the story of Quetzalcoatl, "who in so many things is reminiscent of the Christ." But see (79) above, where it is clear that Quetzalcoatl is not an image of Christ for VH, but of Moses.

Other similarities might have been included in Roberts' summary of his lengthy discussion, but he has covered his main points. For example, he mentions that VH calls upon the people of the United States to convert the Indians (Studies, pp. 176-7) and to remember our debt to the sons of Jacob. So does the Book of Mormon. Also, VH states that "it is generally thought that the days of miracles are past" (p. 217) and that "we are to expect no new revelation from heaven," for the evidence we have is clear enough (pp. 168-9). Similarly, Mormon 8:26 prophesies that the Book of Mormon will appear "in a day when it shall be said that miracles are done away." However, according to VH itself, this general belief was widespread, thus not requiring any specific connection between VH and the Book of Mormon.

Roberts proposes VH as the source for Laman and Lemuel's question in 1 Ne. 22:1-2, whether the prophecies of Israel's restoration should be understood literally or spiritually (p. 210). This, however, has been an obvious and a common question facing those interpreting these prophecies back to the very beginning. Further research now underway will show the extent to which the prophets of the Exile themselves--Laman and Lemuel's contemporaries--asked this question as they pondered the specific judgments that had not been literally fulfilled. Were they not also faced with a crisis of faith, requiring them to think about reinterpreting their own literature with this very question in mind? Was this not the cause of Ezekiel and others turning to "eschatological" and "symbolic" modes of prophesying, to shift the domain of their prophetic tradition from the literal to the spiritual?

VH reports that rusted swords have been found in North American Indian burial grounds (p. 195), although modern archaeology finds no such weapons. This is a common enough notion as to have little bearing on Limhi's account of finding the bones of the destroyed Jaredites.

Roberts suggests (half-heartedly) that the name Ether comes from the name Ethan (p. 187). Roberts could not find the name Ether in the Bible, but it is there, Josh. 15:42, from the Hebrew

Ceter meaning "abundance", or "odor" or "prayer or supplication," thus an acceptable ancient word.

There are also a few other similarities between VH and the Book of Mormon which Roberts overlooked. For example, VH refers to the idea that the Israelites will be grafted back into their own olive tree, see Rom. 11:28 (p. 254), cf. Jacob 5. This idea is found in the Bible.

In sum, in the face of all the differences between VH and the Book of Mormon, these few slender similarities pale. If VH provided any inspiration for the Book of Mormon, it did not provide much. Even the position that Joseph Smith "could have used [VH] as a rich source of ideas for some structural and narrative aspects of the Book of Mormon," suggested as tenable by M. Sowell, Sunstone 6 (May/June 1981), p. 52, seems implausible in light of the fact that the Book of Mormon contradicts and ignores VH on so many important occasions.

This would seem to cover Roberts' issues from A to Z. A few other points might be dealt with, but I believe I have covered most of them. I conclude that Roberts would lose the case if he pressed these points today. I also conclude that this would not bother Roberts in the least. For him, debate was a means to an end--a path to better understanding for all, winner and loser alike. Would this embarrass so great and respected a man as Roberts? Not at all. He fervently hoped that "the generations who succeed us . . . will find that we have had some misconceptions and made some wrong deductions in our day and time. The book of knowledge is never a sealed book." New Witnesses for God, vol. 3, pp. 503-4.

It should also be pointed out that I have only summarized research which responds to Roberts' questions. There are, of course, other questions which can be asked about the Book of Mormon; answers to all of them are not always available. Other times such studies generate impressive support for the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon is not a simple matter academically either pro or con. It can neither be proven or disproven. As

Roberts himself stated, "The book of knowledge is never a sealed book. It is never 'completely and forever closed;' rather it is an eternally open book, in which one may go on constantly discovering new truths and modifying our knowledge of old ones." New Witnesses, vol. 3, pp. 503-4.

Roberts concluded his paper on VH (p. 242) with the question, "Can such numerous and convincing points of resemblance and suggestive contact be merely coincidence?" Clearly one can confidently answer "Yes." It is not hard to believe that what little resemblance we have here between VH and the Book of Mormon is a matter of coincidence. Roberts has produced neither numerous nor startling points of resemblance. In fact, the differences far outweigh the similarities, and most of the similarities dissolve upon simple examination. While some of the remaining similarities cause one to stop and think, most of them are very general, and therefore quite unremarkable.

View of the Hebrews: Substitute for Inspiration?

SPENCER J. PALMER AND WILLIAM L. KNECHT*

Recent imputations against Joseph Smith contain the charge that the Isaiah chapters of the *Book of Mormon* were purloined by the Prophet from a popular book first published in 1823 by a Protestant clergyman named Ethan Smith, under the title *View of the Hebrews: Exhibiting the Destruction of Jerusalem; the Certain Restoration of Judah and Israel; the Present State of Judah and Israel; and an Address of the Prophet Isaiah Relative to Their Restoration*.¹ Joseph Smith's detractors look upon this alleged act of plagiarism as a betrayal of his claim of a sacrosanct origin of the *Book of Mormon*.

Writers like Fawn M. Brodie and G. T. Harrison approach these "Isaiah parallels" with particular rejoicing and ridicule.² To quote Brodie:

... in writing the early portion of the book [The Book of Mormon] his [Joseph Smith's] literary reservoir frequently ran dry. When this happened he simply arranged for his Nephite prophets to quote from the Bible. Thus about twenty-five thousand words in the Book of Mormon consist of passages from the Old Testament—CHIEFLY THOSE CHAPTERS FROM ISAIAH MENTIONED IN ETHAN SMITH'S VIEW OF THE HEBREWS...³ (Emphasis added).

Fortunately this allegation can be tested empirically. In an effort to judge the validity of the charge, we have taken the so-called Isaiah portion of the *Book of Mormon* (i.e., II

*Spencer J. Palmer is assistant professor of history and religious instruction at Brigham Young University. William L. Knecht is an attorney at law in Berkeley, California.

¹Printed by Smith & Shute at Poultney, Vt., in two editions: 1823 and 1825.

²This is not to say that Harrison and Brodie are of the same scholastic stripe. Harrison's *Mormons Are Peculiar People* (New York: Vantage Press, Inc., 1954) often reaches the absurd. His tongue-in-cheek style is undisturbed by documentation. Brodie, on the other hand, takes her project seriously and uses footnotes regularly in her book: *No Man Knows my History; The Life of Joseph Smith the Mormon Prophet* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946). But see Hugh Nibley, *No Man's Land: That's Not History* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft Publishers, 1946).

³Brodie, 58.

Nephi) and recorded every identifiable reference, allusion, quotation, near (or partial) quotation in it, from Isaiah. Because Isaiah repeats himself (or rather repeats allusions) sometimes there is more than one Isaiah reference in any particular verse in II Nephi (e.g., II Nephi 7:2 is a quotation [Isaiah 50:2] and has identifiable reference to Isaiah 65:12 and 66:4.) We have limited the count to one identification unless it is in a verse common to both *View of the Hebrews* and to II Nephi. In that case, we have tabulated and counted all the references to see if any of the identifications or uses of a given verse are common.

We have attempted to carry an analysis of the common use of Isaiah beyond the broad brush technique of Mrs. Brodie. Table 1 lists the verses within each of the two works from Isaiah. A total of 459 identifiable references from Isaiah have been found in the book; 361 of that total are found in II Nephi; 116 in *View of the Hebrews*; 23 verses are common to both. It will be noted that there is no reference to Isaiah 66 in Table 1. This comes from the fact that although both *View of the Hebrews* and the *Book of Mormon* contain possible allusions or quotations from this chapter, the former uses verses 18, 20, and 21, while the latter refers only to verse 19.⁴

A total of 37 chapters of Isaiah are source for allusion, reference, quotation, near-quotation, or "mention" in the two works. Ethan Smith confined his "mentionings" to 24 chapters (giving credit for a "mention" when he simply makes a partial quotation from one verse even though he does not give credit for the quotation, e.g. see *View of the Hebrews*, 135 (232). The Prophets of II Nephi "quote" from 20 chapters and make allusions and/or references to (parts of) two more chapters, making a total of 22. There are nine Isaiah chapters commonly used in *View of the Hebrews* and the *Book of Mormon*.

Brodie bases her claim of plagiarism from *View of the Hebrews* upon the common use of Isaiah chapters. Does this existence of similar material in the two books damage the Latter-day Saint claim of the divine origin of the *Book of Mormon*?

Though it is proverbial that liars can figure, there is one test that can be applied to the statistics generated from this

⁴Typical examples of the use of Isaiah references by Ethan Smith and by the prophets of II Nephi are set forth in Table 3, in parallel columns.

Table No. 1
ISAIAH REFERENCE COMPARISON
(Resume of Verse by Verse Comparison)

References ^a , 1st Ed.	Book of Mormon		Isaiah Ch.	Verse	View of the Hebrews	
	Description				Description	Reference ^b
NR	235	Allusion	5	26	Allusion	2 Nephi 29: 2
NR	236	Part Quote	5	26	Quotation	13:26
NR	235	Allusion	7	8	Quotation	17: 8
NR	256	Quotation	10	18	"	17:18
NR	256	Quotation	10	20	"	20:20
NR	256	Quotation	10	21	"	21:21
NR	256	Quotation	10	22	"	20:22
NR	36	Quotation	11	11	"	21:11
NR	36	Quotation ^c	11	12	"	21:12
NR	70	Part Quote	11	12	"	21:12
143	242	Quotation	11	12	"	21:12
73	72	Part Quote	11	13	"	21:13
58	56	Quotation ^c	11	15	"	21:15
59	56	Quotation ^c	11	16	"	21:16
NR	63	Quotation	14	1	"	24: 1
NR	62	Allusion	14	25	"	24:25
159	260	Part Quote ^c	49	1	Allusion	10:21
65	63	Allusion	49	22	Quotation	6: 6
75	73	Allusion	49	22	"	
65	63	Allusion	49	23	Quotation	6: 7
161	261	Part Quote	51	3	"	8: 3
61	58	Quotation ^c	60	9	Allusion	10:21
136	233	Part Quote	60	9	"	

study which is valid in judging the claim of Brodie that Joseph Smith cribbed from another's work, when he could not find any other source of inspiration. Following a method of analysis widely accepted by statisticians—the test for hypergeometric distribution—we shall assume that the two authors worked independently, that there was no collusion. Under this method of analysis, the probability is that a certain number of chapters will appear in common.

By using the figures applicable in this case, one should assume that eight chapters should most frequently appear in common. As indicated in Table 2, our survey finds nine such common chapters: 5, 7, 10, 11, 14, 49, 51, 60 and 66. This is an insignificant variation from eight, and one which, statistically speaking, should be expected a large proportion of the time. In fact, nine or more chapters in common under the

data of this test should appear 46 percent of the time, or in other words, have a .46 probability.³

The validity of this test is suggested by the following analysis: If Joseph Smith had foreseen and tried to avoid an attack such as that Brodie lays to him, he might well have avoided *all* references to Isaiah which were quoted by Ethan Smith, since Ethan had already referred his reader to that text. The absence of any common Isaiah chapters would have been suspicious indeed, since this would strongly suggest a deliberate effort to avoid suspicion particularly if it is realized that the book of Isaiah is a primary source for anyone dealing with the subject of the dispersion and gathering of Israel. The odds are approximately one in one million against there being *no* common Isaiah chapters in the *Book of Mormon* and *View of the Hebrews*. Judged on the basis of this analysis, neither Brodie nor Harrison has yet solved the enigma of Joseph Smith's inspiration.

a. Parallel listing of pages from the two editions reflects the same reference, quotation, or allusion. In rewriting the text for the second printing, Reverend Smith made some additions and deletions; hence there are not always parallel references and the designation "NR" (no reference) appears.

b. All chapter and verse references are to editions of the *Book of Mormon* printed subsequent to 1920. The initial division into chapters and verses occurred in 1879. A revision of the footnotes was made in 1920. It is upon these notes that the writers relied in tabulating the Isaiah references.

³The writers are indebted to Melvin W. Carter, of the Brigham Young University faculty, for suggesting the application of the test for hypergeometric distribution to this problem and for working out the probability upon the basis of our tabulations. A discussion of this method of analysis is found in B. W. Lindgren & G. W. McElrath, *Introduction to Probability and Statistics*. The Macmillan Company, (New York: 1939) 146-147.

Our conclusions are based upon the following exercise:

- Classify each chapter of Isaiah as being in *View of the Hebrews* (Q) or as not appearing in *View of the Hebrews* (R).
- Q plus R equals N (the total number of Isaiah chapters).
- y equals the number of chapters common to both works.
- n equals the number of chapters used by II Nephi prophets.
- Solve the formula

$$P(y) = \frac{\binom{Q}{y} \binom{R}{n-y}}{\binom{N}{n}}$$

c. Quotation, but without verse reference; always true of *Book of Mormon* quotations.

Table No. 2
ISAIAH REFERENCE COMPARISON
(Chapter by chapter)

View of Hebrews*	Book of Mormon* (2 Nephi)
5	5
7	7
10	10
11	11
14	14
16	12
18	13
26	14
35	28
36	29
40	
41	
42	
43	
44	
49	49
51	50
56	51
58	52
59	55
60	
63	
65	
66	66

* The number indicates Isaiah chapter from which the respective works make mention, quotation, allusion, citation or reference.

Table No. 3
ISALAH REFERENCE COMPARISON
Textual Comparison

View of the Hebrews^a

But that it may appear that the prophetic writings unite to exhibit this as a great object of the christian's belief, I shall note some of the other predictions of it.

In Isaiah xi, the stem from the root of Jesse is promised. The Millennium follows, when the cow and the bear shall feed together, and the wolf and the lamb unite in love; and nothing more shall hurt or offend. 11. "And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again, the second time, to gather the remnant of his people, who shall be left, from Assyria and from Egypt, and from Patbros, and and from the isles of the sea.

Book of Mormon^b
(2 Nephi)

Isaiah his hand on the cockatrice's den.
9. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for ¹the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.
10. And in that day ¹there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall ¹stand for an ensign of the people; to it ¹shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious.
11. And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set his hand again ¹the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, ¹from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Patbros, and from Cusb, and from Elam, and from Sbinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.

12. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judab, from the four corners of the earth." Here just before the Millennium, the Jews and ten tribes are collected from their long dispersion, by the hand of Omnipotence, set a second time for their recovery.—

This standard of salvation at that period, is a notable event in the prophets. See Isai. xi. 12, where God sets his hand a second time to gather his Hebrew family from all nations and regions

11:12 12. And he shall ¹set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the ¹outcasts of Israel, and ¹gather together the dispersed of Judab from the four corners of the earth.

- a. 1825 Edition
- b. 1830 Edition

13; "The envy also of Ephraim shall depart; Ephraim shall not envy Judab, and Judab shall not vex Ephraim." Here the mutual jealousies between the two branches of the house of Israel, which before the expulsion of the ten tribes kept them in almost perpetual war, shall never again be revived; which passage assures us of the restoration of Israel as Israel.

In Jer. iii. those two branches are distinguished by "¹back-sliding Israel, and her treacherous sister Judab." Israel was already put away for

13. "The envy of Ephraim also shall depart, and the adversaries of Judab shall be cut off; Ephraim shall not envy Judab, and Judab shall not vex Ephraim.

11:13 14. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west; they shall spoil them of the east together; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

15. And the Lord ¹shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind he shall shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and ¹make men go over dry shod.

A body of the Jews, and some of several other tribes, were recovered from ancient Babylon. God is going, in the last days, to make a ¹second, and more effectual recovery from mystical Babylon, and from the four quarters of the earth. The prophet proceeds; 15. "And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall unite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry shod. 16. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." Mr. Scott, upon this passage, says; "For the Lord will then remove all obstacles by the same powerful interposition, that he vouchsafed in behalf of Israel, when He sep-

11:15

14. But they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines towards the west; they shall spoil them of the east together; they shall lay their hand upon Edom and Moab; and the children of Ammon shall obey them.

11:16

15. And the Lord ¹shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind he shall shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and ¹make men go over dry shod.

16. "And there shall be a highway for the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, ¹like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.

Upon this final restoration of his brethren, this prophet exults in lofty strains. Several of the many of these strains shall be here inserted. Isai. xlix. *Listen O isles unto me; (or ye lands away over the sea) hearken ye people from afar.* 11. I will make all my mountains a way; and my high way shall be exalted. 12. Behold these shall come from far; and lo, these from the north, and from

49: 1

ness in the latter days." Here is a description of the present dispersed state of Israel; and a prediction of their national restoration, "in the latter days."

This restoration is a great event in the prophets; and we find it in the New Testament. Paul (in his epistle to the Romans, chap. xi.) notes their being again grafted into their own olive tree, as a notable event of the last days, which shall be the "riches of the gentiles;" yea, "life from the dead" to them. See also *Isaiah, xlix. 18-23*. One passage more I will adduce from the writings of Moses; Deut. xxx. The long and doleful dispersion of this people had been predicted in the preceding chapters. Here their final restoration follows. "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, and thou shalt call them to mind

49:22

49:23

20. And now, my beloved brethren, seeing that our merciful God has given us so great knowledge concerning these things let us remember him, and lay aside our sins, and not hang down our heads, for we are not cast off; nevertheless, we have been driven out of the land of our inheritance; but we have been led to a better land, for the Lord has made the sea our path, and we are upon an isle of the sea.

21. But great are the promises of the Lord unto them who are upon the *isles of the sea*; wherefore as it says isles, there must needs be more than this, and they are inhabited also by our brethren.

22. For behold, the Lord God has ^oled away from time to time from the house of Israel, according to his will and pleasure. And now behold, the Lord remembereth all them who have been broken off, wherefore he remembereth us also.

5. And now, the words which I shall read are they which Isaiah spake concerning all the house of Israel; wherefore, they may be likened unto you, for ye are of the house of Israel. And there are many things which have been spoken by Isaiah which may be likened unto you, because ye are of the house of Israel.

6. And now these are the words: *"Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders."*

7. *And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their faces towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.*

8. And now I, Jacob, would speak somewhat concerning these words. For behold, the Lord has ^ashown me that those who were at Jerusalem, from whence we came, have been slain and carried away captive.

CHAPTER 8.

Jacob's teachings continued—Compare Isaiah 51.

1. Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness. Look unto the rock from whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence ye are digged.

51: 3

2. Look unto Abraham, your father, and unto Sarah, she that bare you; for I called him alone, and blessed him.

3. For the Lord ^ashall comfort Zion, he will comfort all ^bher waste places; and he will *make her wilderness like Eden, and ^dher desert like the garden of the Lord.* Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

4. Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation; for a ^alaw shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light for the people.

almost like the conversion of dragons and owls of the desert. Rivers of knowledge and grace shall in such wilds be opened for God's chosen. It will then truly be fulfilled, that God in comforting Zion, will *"make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord,"* Isai. li. 3. Such passages will have a degree of both literal and mystical fulfillment.

A signal beauty will then be discovered in such passages as the following; Isai. xli. 14. "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord God, thy Redeem-

The same thing is noted in Isaiah lx. The Jewish church is called upon; "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. The gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. 8. Who are these that fly as clouds, and as doves to their windows? 9. *Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee."* Here are ships conveying

60: 9

20. And now, my beloved brethren, seeing that our merciful God has given us so great knowledge concerning these things, let us remember him, and lay aside our sins, and not hang down our heads, for we are not cast off; nevertheless, we have been driven out of the land of our inheritance; but we have been led to a better land, for the Lord has made the sea our path, and we are upon an isle of the sea.

21. But great are the promises of the Lord unto them who are upon the *isles of the sea*; wherefore as it says isles, there must needs be more than this, and they are inhabited also by our brethren.

22. For behold, the Lord God has ^oled away from time to time from the house of Israel, according to his will and pleasure. And now behold, the Lord remembereth all them who have been broken off, wherefore he remembereth us also.