

Biblical Texts introduced into the Book of Mormon

One thing is clear in reading the Book of Mormon. It reads like the Bible. Why this is so has been discussed since 1830. This chapter will cite the opinions of individuals who have studied the use of the Old Testament and New Testament in the composition of the Book of Mormon. Paul Gutjahr wrote concerning the Antebellum print culture:

"The absolute dominance of the King James Version in early American culture allowed its language and style to establish itself in a unique linguistic role. Because Elizabethan English was no longer the common idiom among antebellum Americans, Americans associated the style of language found in the King James Version with the sacred. Thus, the King James Version not only contained holy words, but its massive presence and linguistic influence in American culture fostered the impression that all holy words must sound like the language found on its pages.

"Joseph Smith had intentionally tried to emulate the biblical style of the King James in his volume. Far from attempting to make his book fit in with the contemporary idiom, Smith wanted his book to stand out and give the impression that it was holy scripture. While various translators of the Bible in English were beginning to take the 'eth' endings off words in this period, Smith was putting them on..."¹

When a person examines the Book of Mormon it becomes evident that large portions were supplied from biblical texts and used during the dictation of the book. It is apparent that Joseph Smith Jr., the revelator/editor of the Book of Mormon, worked from an already present text of the King James Version of the Bible. Both Old Testament and New Testament portions were used in the narrative of the Book of Mormon.

Some writers compared, for example, the Isaiah and Matthew chapters and concluded that the textual source for the familiar wording was from the Bible rather than from a separate American Indian record. The Book of Mormon claims that its Isaiah passages came from a separate set of brass plates made in the Holy Land.

Through the years there have been different editions of the Book of Mormon with various page numbers. The first edition (1830) of the Book of Mormon contained poor English grammar that was later corrected.

The following contain extracts from readers who from the time of the printing of the Book of Mormon in 1829-30 until 2011 have recognized that the Bible was used when the Book of Mormon text was dictated by Joseph Smith to his scribes. A few comments have been made about the Bible not being used. Though this is a minority view these statements are included.

The first reviews and comments are from persons who were outside the Mormon community but as time passed Mormon writers have also realized that Joseph Smith used the King James Version of the Bible (1769 revision) as he prepared the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon.

Dates have been added prior to the extract for easy reference. It is hoped that by putting this compilation together it will show the strong position concerning the Bible was used in the preparation, dictation, composition and production of the text of the Book of Mormon.

¹ "The Golden Bible in the Bible's Golden Age: *The Book of Mormon* and Antebellum Print Culture," *ATQ* [American Transcendental Quarterly] 12 (Dec. 1998): 279.

Printing of the Book of Mormon, 1829-30:

John H. Gilbert:

"The copy was brought to the office by Hiram Smith. . . . Maj. [John] Gilbert, perceiving that large portions were stolen verbatim from the Bible, used to have a copy of that book on his [type] case to aid him in deciphering the manuscript and putting in the proper punctuation marks."²

1830

Review:

"It is written, frequently, with bad grammar, in a repetitious and affectedly ancient style and in some places sounds considerably like the Scriptures. It has large portions of both old and new testament, but derives them from other sources than our Bible."³

1831

Reviews:

"It is a most bungling attempt to imitate the ancient English and Bible phraseology. Much of the language is borrowed from the Bible and inserted in the book ..."⁴

"If the critical reader will examine the 'Book of Mormon,' he will directly perceive, that in many instances, the style of the Bible, from which it is chiefly copied, has been entirely altered for the worse. In many instances it has been copied *upwards*, without reference to chapter or verse, (taking Jeremiah for an example) and that the old and new Testament, have been promiscuously intermingled, with the simple alteration of names, &c. with some interpolations, which may easily be discovered, by the want of grammatical arrangement."⁵

"It contains nothing but what might have been, and evidently was borrowed from the sacred writings and from the history of the world."⁶

Letter from ten individuals (names not included in publication), dated Palmyra, [N.Y.], 12 March 1831. -

"The book is chiefly garbled from the Old and New Testaments, the Apocraphy having contributed its share: names and phrases have been altered, and in many instances copied upwards. - A quarto Bible now in this village was borrowed and nearly worn out

² *The Post & Tribune*, December 3, 1877, Detroit, Michigan, as cited in Francis W. Kirkham, *A New Witness for Christ in America* (Salt Lake City: Utah Printing Co., rev. ed. 1963), 2:369; see also "The Book of Mormon. Story of the Man Who First Printed It," *The American Bookseller* 4 (December 15, 1877):617-18. See also Larry C. Porter, "The Book of Mormon: Historical Setting for Its Translation and Publication," in *Joseph Smith: The Prophet, The Man* (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1993), 55-56. Royal Skousen wrote, "Since these pages of the manuscript involve quotations from Isaiah, Gilbert apparently consulted a King James Bible to help him decide how to mark up text," *The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, Part One, 1 Nephi 1-Alma 17 (Provo, Utah: FARMS, BYU, 2001), 16.

³ *Brattleboro' Messenger* 9 (October 30, 1830), Brattleboro, Vt., typed copy.

⁴ *Evangelical Magazine and Gospel Advocate*, 2 [new series] (February 5, 1831):47, Utica, N.Y.

⁵ *The Reflector* 2 [Series I] (February 28, 1831):109, Palmyra, New York, emphasis retained.

⁶ *The Telegraph*, February 15, 1831, edited by E. D. Howe, Painesville, Ohio, as cited in *A New Witness for Christ in America* 2:85-86.

and defaced by their dirty handling." ⁷

James Gordon Bennett:

"It is full of strange narratives - in the style of the scriptures, and bearing on its face the marks of some ingenuity, and familiar acquaintance with the Bible." ⁸

"... written in imitation of the style of the Scriptures, and contains frequent allusions to scripture[,] history and doctrines." ⁹

David Marks wrote:

"It contained several extracts from the Scriptures; and, with a little variation, Christ's sermon on the mount." ¹⁰

1832

Alexander Campbell wrote about Jesus' reported visit as recorded in the book of [Third] Nephi:

"He delivers [to] them the sermon upon the mount, and some other sayings recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John . . . It admits the Old and New Testaments to contain the revelations, Institutions and commandments of God to Patriarchs, Jews, and Gentiles, down to the year 1830, and always, as such, speaks of them and quotes them." ¹¹

1834

Jason Whitman wrote:

"After the ascension of our Saviour, as recorded in the New Testament, he is represented to have appeared to the Nephites. While among them, he healed the diseased, and gave religious instruction. The religious instruction, which he gave, accords well with what is recorded of his discourses in the New Testament, since it is but a copy, almost word for word, from those discourses." ¹²

E. D. Howe commented:

"After every thing is organized the beatitudes are repeated to them in a translation corresponding with that found in the 5th Chap. of St. Matthew's Gospel, together with the sermon on the mount, somewhat transposed, but the variations are inconsiderable. The Savior is represented as continuing to address the multitude with almost precisely the same sentences which are recorded by the evangelists, somewhat picked up, and not very judiciously arranged." ¹³

⁷ *The Telegraph*, March 22, 1831.

⁸ *Morning Courier and Enquirer*, September 1, 1831, New York, New York; as cited in *Brigham Young University Studies* 10 (Spring 1970):362, cited hereafter as *BYU Studies*.

⁹ *The Farmer's Herald* 4 (October 26, 1831), St. Johnsbury, Vt.' from the *Cincinnati Gazette*.

¹⁰ *The Life of David Marks* (Limerick, ME: Printed at the Office of the Morning Star, 1831), 341.

¹¹ *Delusions. An Analysis of the Book of Mormon; with an Examination of its Internal and External Evidences, and a Refutation of its Pretences to Divine Authority* (Boston: Benjamin H. Greene, 1832), 9, 11. This review by Alexander Campbell was first published in the *Millennial Harbinger* 2 (February 1831), Bethany, Virginia.

¹² *The Unitarian* (January 1, 1834), 42, Boston, MA.

¹³ *Mormonism Unveiled* (Painesville [Ohio]: Printed and Published by the Author, 1834), 86.

1838

Origen Bachelier:

"In the book under consideration, there are numerous plagiarisms from the Old and New Testaments, and from various other sources, put forth as the words of the prophets and prominent characters of ancient America." ¹⁴

1842

Jonathan B. Turner wrote:

"They were an attempted imitation of the Scripture style of composition, containing some plagiarisms from the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, drawing largely upon Isaiah and Jeremiah, and taking from Matthew nearly the whole of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, with some alterations." ¹⁵

S. Williams:

"With a view to assist the affair of the return of the ten tribes to the New Jerusalem *of the West*, the 50th and 51st chapters of Isaiah are inserted on the 76th and 77th pages of the Mormon Bible [1830 edition]. A perfect contrast is exhibited between the genuine and the apocryphal scriptures. Frequent quotations are made of small portions of both the Old Testament and the New, although the writers *pretend* to have lived above 500 years before the Christian era! Who *can* believe them?" ¹⁶

1857

Mark Twain [Samuel L. Clemens]:

"It is chloroform in print. . . . The book seems to be merely a prosy detail of imaginary history, with the Old Testament for a model; followed by a tedious plagiarism of the New Testament. The author labored to give his words and phrases the quaint, old-fashioned sound and structure of our King James's translation of the Scriptures; and the result is a mongrel - half modern glibness, and half ancient simplicity and gravity." ¹⁷

John Hyde commented, using the third European edition of the Book of Mormon:

"From page 2 to page 428, pretending to embrace a period from 600 B.C. to A.D., I have counted no less than 298 direct quotations from the New Testament; some of them, paragraphs of verses; some of them, sentences from verses." ¹⁸

1873

Stenhouse wrote as follows:

"... exhibiting how singularly the people in the New World were familiar with, and used the same religious sentiments as, the people of the Old World! For convenience of comparison the following extracts from the Book of Mormon are placed side by side with similar passages from the Old and New Testaments." ¹⁹

¹⁴ *Mormonism Exposed, Internally and Externally* (New York, 1838), 31.

¹⁵ *Mormonism in All Ages: Or The Rise, Progress, and Causes of Mormonism* (New York: Published by Platt and Peters, 1842), 35-36.

¹⁶ *Mormonism Exposed* [Pittsburgh, 1842], 8, emphasis retained.

¹⁷ *Roughing It* (1857), 110; 1872 ed., 127.

¹⁸ *Mormonism: Its Leaders and Designs* (New York: W. P. Fetridge & Company, 1857), 233.

¹⁹ *The Rocky Mountain Saints* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1873), 538. Republished in the years 1874 (London), 1878 (London), 1900 (New York), and 1904 (Salt Lake City).

1880

Frederic G. Mather:

"In the absence of Cowdery the proof-readers often resorted to the orthodox Bible to verify some foggy passage."²⁰

1887

Rev. M. T. Lamb related the following concerning his study of the Book of Mormon:

"Where then is the boasted superiority of the Book of Mormon upon this subject, if its most pointed statements are stolen from the Bible?"²¹

1889

"The condemnation of the Book of Mormon as a work of divine authority may be found in the abundant evidence which itself furnishes. It abounds in anachronisms, and in quotations from the Old and New Testaments, many of the latter being put into the mouth of alleged American prophets five hundred years before they were uttered by Christ or his apostles. Many of its statements of fact, such as the killing of two millions of combatants in one battle, are wholly incredible. It contains also many revival and camp-meeting expressions current at the period of its publication, a circumstance which very clearly indicates its modern paternity."²²

1903

Letter of H. Chamberlain to Joseph F. Smith, dated 22 October 1903 and a reply letter to H. Chamberlain, dated November 7, 1903 and further response of H. Chamberlain to B. H. Roberts, dated November 13, 1903.²³

"M" [an unknown writer]:

"These hundred of passages, and these whole chapters in II Nephi and elsewhere, from our English Bible, be it observed, are quoted not from the original, which would not help the matter, for the original of the New Testament did not exist; but they are quoted from the English translation of 1611, mistakes and all, even to the filling in of the peculiar gaps in the way suggested by the English translators."²⁴

B. H. Roberts wrote:

"Now when the Prophet perceived from the Nephite records that Isaiah was being quoted; or when the Savior was represented as giving instructions in doctrine and moral precepts of the same general character as those given in Judea, Joseph Smith undoubtedly turned to those parts of the Bible where he found a translation substantially correct, of those things which were referred to in the Nephite records, and adopted so

²⁰ "The Early Days of Mormonism," *Lippincott's Magazine of Popular Literature and Science* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1880) 26:204.

²¹ *The Golden Bible; or, the Book of Mormon. Is It from God?* (New York: Published by Ward & Drummond, 1887), 200.

²² Joseph Moses, *Illinois, Historical and Statistical* (Chicago: Fergus Printing Co., 1889), 476-77.

²³ *Improvement Era* 7 (Jan. 1904):179-196; reprinted in B. H. Roberts, *New Witnesses for God* (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1909) 3:426-440.

²⁴ Salt Lake Tribune, November 22, 1903, as quoted in *Defense of the Faith and of Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1907) 1:321.

much of that translation as expressed the truths common to both records ..."25

"M" [an unknown writer]:

"The above defense seems to me fatal to Elder Roberts' position, because if Joseph Smith turned aside to quote from our English Bible, as Elder Roberts admits that he did, then what was to prevent him from putting into the Book of Mormon, when it suited him, quotations from other English books ...? ... The statement and admission of Elder Roberts give us all the light we need as to its modern origin and spurious character."26

B. H. Roberts:

"... hence his [Joseph Smith's] own honesty and integrity prevented his putting in quotations from the Bible or any other book except just what the facts and statements in the Nephite records justified him in adopting."27

1926

Sidney B. Sperry:

"... about 50% of the verses of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon are word for word the same as those of the corresponding King James' version. Taking into account this fact it would certainly seem that Joseph Smith was dependent to a considerable degree on the King James' version."28

1930

E. Cecil McGavin put the remarks which follow in the words of another:

"To this the President replied: ... I agree with the scholars who have said that the Prophet likely kept an open Bible before him and copied from it instead of translating word for word from the Nephite scriptures, unless there was a very important correction to be made."29

1938

H. Grant Vest wrote:

"Any consideration of these facts admit of but one conclusion, namely, that the quotations of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon which are identical, or nearly so, with their parallels in the Authorized Version of the Bible were copied from that text."30

"It is universally agreed that in so far as the two documents are identical, the Book of Mormon must have copied the Authorized Version."31

1945

Fawn M. Brodie:

"Many stories he borrowed from the Bible. The daughter of Jared, like Salome, danced before a king and a decapitation followed. Aminadi, like Daniel, deciphered handwriting

²⁵ *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 29, 1903, as cited in *Defense of the Faith and the Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Deseret News, 1907), 334.

²⁶ *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 6, 1903, as cited in *Defense of the Faith and the Saints* 1:351.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 360.

²⁸ "The Text of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon," M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1926, p. 80.

²⁹ *Cumorah's Gold Bible* (1930), 131.

³⁰ "The Problem of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon," thesis, Brigham Young University, 1938, p. 3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 237, emphasis retained.

on a wall, and Alma was converted after the exact fashion of St. Paul. The daughters of the Lamanites were abducted like the dancing daughters of Shiloh; and Ammon, the American counterpart of David, for want of a Goliath slew six sheep-rustlers with his sling."³²

Dale L. Morgan wrote:

"I think what is called the 'Isaiah problem' of the Book of Mormon admirably illustrates the issues. Either, as the Mormons claim, the Isaiah text is integral to the Book of Mormon as well as to the Bible, or one must conceive that Joseph had an open Bible before him while he was dictating the Book of Mormon behind his curtain."³³

"This is the matter contained in the Book of Mormon and constituting what is called the Isaiah problem. I cannot find it logical that Joseph committed these thousands of words from Isaiah to memory. I find it a good deal more reasonable to conjecture that he had an opened Bible with him on the other side of his curtain. And that idea seems to me to enforce a conception that conscious deception entered into the writing of the Book of Mormon ..."³⁴

"From the very beginning, however, Joseph wedded his book firmly to the Bible, which became the inexhaustible well from which he drew ideas, incidents, material, culture, and even language. ... Although his adoption of the idiom of the King James Bible for his narrative, which lent itself readily to wholesale borrowings from the King James text, has become one of the major embarrassments of the Book of Mormon, contributing to a revision of Mormon critical thinking about it, it is quite certain that Joseph could neither have written nor won acceptance for the divinity of a book phrased in any other idiom."³⁵

1947

Sidney B. Sperry:

"We therefore freely admit that Joseph Smith may have used the King James version when he came to the text of Isaiah on the gold plates."³⁶

"That Joseph Smith used the King James version when he came to familiar scripture on the Gold Plates we shall not deny."³⁷

"Here the author frankly admits the possibility that Joseph Smith used the familiar version as he translated Mormon's words; whenever the two versions differed substantially he inserted the Nephite reading."³⁸

1954

J. N. Washburn wrote:

"One thing appears to be beyond doubt: Joseph knew his Bible. All the way through the

³² *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), 63.

³³ Letter of Dale Morgan to Juanita Brooks, December 15, 1945, in *Dale Morgan on Early Mormonism: Correspondence and a New History* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1986), 89.

³⁴ Letter of Dale Morgan to Bernard DeVoto, 20 December 1945, quoted in *Ibid.*, 96.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 314-15.

³⁶ *Our Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Stevens & Wallis, 1947), 172.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 190, emphasis retained.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 195.

Book of Mormon (true seemingly less in the Book of Ether than elsewhere) are words and expressions that could hardly have come from any other source. (This has no reference at all to the hundreds of quotations from Isaiah, Malachi, Matthew, and other writers of Holy Writ. It means rather that the language of the *Book of Mormon* is frequently Bible language, sometimes almost word for word, and often exactly the same.)"³⁹

"The question as to whether Joseph Smith actually had the King James Bible before him during the translation and used it whenever it became possible to do so perhaps cannot be satisfactorily answered at this time. I confess myself, however, in thorough accord with those who believe that he probably did, that he used the Bible text when it was in sufficient agreement with the meaning on the plates.

"One good reason for this can be given. There are too many technical and unusual words in the body of the material for one to think that Joseph Smith made the translation without the Bible before him. Such words as *teil-tree*, *conduit*, *peep* and *mutter*, *caule*, *crisping pins*, and *mufflers* are too specialized for the average man's vocabulary, not to mention such names as *Shearjashub*, *Tabaal*, *Calno*, *Carchemish*, *Arpad*, *Ophir*, and *Maher-shalal-hashbaz*, all of which are correctly spelled."⁴⁰

1957

Thomas F. O'Dea wrote:

"For quotations and paraphrases of the Scriptures, the *Book of Mormon* relies mostly upon Isaiah, and quite explicitly so. The forty-eighth and forty-ninth chapters of Isaiah are to be found in 1 Nephi, chapters 20 and 21; and the second to the fourteenth chapters of Isaiah, inclusive, are in II Nephi, chapters 12-24. Also in II Nephi, chapters 7 and 8, are the words of Isaiah, chapters 50 and 51. In all these cases prophecies are being read to the people. To describe the presence of Christ on the American continent, St. Matthew is used, and the Sermon on the Mount is given. In III Nephi, chapters 12-14, are found the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew. Also in this book, Christ, in teaching the people of the New World, quotes from the Old Testament and incorporates the fifty-second and fifty-fourth chapters of Isaiah in chapters 20 and 22 and the third and fourth chapters of Malachi in chapters 24 and 25. In Moroni, chapter 7, where the teachings of Mormon on charity are given, there is a strong resemblance to St. Paul (I Cor., chap. 13) ..."⁴¹

1959

Hugh Nibley:

"Yet there is not *one single thing* in common between *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon that is not also found in the Bible. . . . In every case where the Book of Mormon *might* have borrowed from him, it might much more easily have borrowed from the Bible or prevailing popular beliefs."⁴²

1960

Leslie Rumble wrote:

"That Joseph was thoroughly familiar with the King James' Bible is admitted by

³⁹ *The Contents, Structure and Authorship of Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954), 4.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 187-88, emphasis retained.

⁴¹ *The Mormons* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 38, emphasis retained.

⁴² *Improvement Era* 62 (November 1959):848, emphasis retained.

Mormons themselves."⁴³

"It follows that if erroneous translations in the King James' Bible did correspond with what was on the plates, then the plates themselves were in error."⁴⁴

Wesley P. Walters:

"... the book was an odd blending of the contemporary scene and the fictitious past, generously sprinkled with passages lifted bodily from the King James Version."⁴⁵

1961

Hugh Nibley:

"... (a) that the Book of Mormon contains, to quote another writer in *Christianity Today*, 'passages lifted bodily from the King James Version,' and (b) that it quotes not only from the Old Testament but from the New Testament as well."⁴⁶

William E. Berrett wrote:

"It is also evident that the Prophet had his Bible by his side during the translation."⁴⁷

1963

Hugh Nibley:

"But what about 'passages lifted bodily from the King James Version' about which the critics are clamouring?"⁴⁸

1964

Wesley M. Jones:

"Joseph's chief source of material by all odds, was the Bible, in which he was exceptionally versed (as were many people of his day)."⁴⁹

"The New Testament was one of Joseph Smith's most important sources."⁵⁰

Sidney B. Sperry:

"Of about 433 verses of Isaiah quoted in the Book of Mormon, the prophet Joseph Smith changed or modified about 234 of these in the course of his translation, leaving about 199 verses the same as in the King James Version. In the course of our researches on the Book of Mormon we have never been able to prove historically, that is, with adequate documentation, that Joseph Smith or his scribe had at their sides copies of the King James Version of the Bible to which they made reference as the translation of the Nephite record proceeded. We shall not claim another miracle, however, in the translation, but will simply assume, as most translators would, that the prophet realized the greatness of

⁴³ *The Homiletic and Pastoral Review* 60 (January 1960):339.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 342.

⁴⁵ "Mormonism," *Christianity Today* 5 (December 19, 1960), 228.

⁴⁶ *Church News*, July 29, 1961, letter dated July 12, 1961; reprinted in *Saints' Herald* 108 (October 9, 1961):9, emphasis retained.

⁴⁷ *The Restored Church* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1961, Tenth Edition, revised and enlarged), 38.

⁴⁸ "'Howlers' in Book of Mormon," *Millennial Star* 125 (February 1963):33.

⁴⁹ Wesley M. Jones, *A Critical Study of Book of Mormon Sources* (Detroit, Mich.: Harlo Press, 1964), 14.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 65.

the King James Version and used it to help him in his work of translation when he came upon familiar scriptures. It is true that the Book of Mormon does contain many verses of scriptures, other than those in Isaiah, which agree verbatim with their parallels in the King James Version."⁵¹

1967

Hugh Nibley:

"Not long ago an eminent Protestant journal noted that the Book of Mormon was 'generously sprinkled with passages lifted bodily from the King James Version.'"⁵²

1968

Jerald and Sandra Tanner:

"The King James Version of the Bible probably had more influence on the Book of Mormon than any other book."⁵³

1969

Richard P. Howard:

"An example of Joseph Smith's reliance on the specific wording of the King James Version is in the 'sermon on the mount,' beginning in the fifth chapter of Matthew. The Bible appears to have been used at this point as an authoritative text for the purpose of documenting the ministry of Christ in ancient America, as found in [RLDS] III Nephi 5-13."⁵⁴

"The King James Version was a significant source for parts of the Book of Mormon quoting Isaiah, Matthew, 1 Corinthians, etc. Joseph Smith felt free to quote King James Version passages verbatim at points and to revise them stylistically and theologically at other points in preparing the Book of Mormon text."⁵⁵

1970

Wayne Ham wrote:

"Several sizable sections of the King James Version of the Bible are found in the *Book of Mormon*, including twenty-one chapters of Isaiah, the Sermon on the Mount, the Ten Commandments, Malachi 3 and 4, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11 and Acts 3:22-26."⁵⁶

Richard B. Lancaster:

"The hard fact is that the *Book of Mormon* is loaded with verbatim quotes from the Old and New Testament put in the mouths of men of different centuries, language and culture."⁵⁷

⁵¹ *The Problems of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964), 206; retitled *Answers to Book of Mormon Questions* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1967).

⁵² *Since Cumorah: The Book of Mormon in the Modern World* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1967), 128.

⁵³ *The Case Against Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: Modern Microfilm Company, 1968) 2:76.

⁵⁴ *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* (Independence, MO: Herald House, 1969), 98.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 121.

⁵⁶ *Courage: A Journal of History, Thought and Action* 1 (September 1970):19, emphasis retained.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 1 (March 1971):193, emphasis retained.

1971

William L. Riley:

"Those facts in common by the *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon were also held by other authors of the period or could be researched from the Bible."⁵⁸

1973

A. Chris Eccel:

"... the biblical passages were lifted from the King James text, modified to disguise their origin, and inserted into the Book of Mormon text."⁵⁹

1974

Stan Larson wrote:

"The King James Version seems to have been used by Joseph Smith to assist him in translating those parts of the plates that contained quotations from the Bible."⁶⁰

1976

Bruce D. Blumell:

"Everything that is common or even vaguely similar between the Book of Mormon and the *View of the Hebrews* could have been borrowed more easily from the Bible or from prevailing beliefs at that time. In fact, this could have been much more likely, since Joseph Smith and his family were avid readers of the Bible."⁶¹

Daniel H. Ludlow:

"There appears to be only one answer to explain the word-for-word similarities between the verses of Isaiah in the Bible and the same verses in the Book of Mormon. When Joseph Smith translated the Isaiah references from the small plates of Nephi, he evidently opened his King James Version of the Bible and compared the impression he had received in translating with the words of the King James scholars. If his translation was essentially the same as that of the King James Version, he apparently quoted the verse from the Bible; then his scribe, Oliver Cowdery, copied it down. However, if Joseph Smith's translation did not agree precisely with that of the King James scholars, he would dictate his own translation to the scribe."⁶²

1977

Stan Larson wrote:

"Joseph Smith apparently used the King James Version in translating the plates that contained quotations from the Bible. The only Biblical passages in the surviving parts of

⁵⁸ "A Comparison of Passages from Isaiah and Other Old Testament Prophets in Ethan Smith's *View of the Hebrews* and the Book of Mormon," (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, May 1971), 4, emphasis retained.

⁵⁹ "An Analysis of the BM Variants," unpublished manuscript, (1973), 28.

⁶⁰ "A Study of Some Textual Variations in the Book of Mormon Comparing the Original and the Printer's Manuscripts and the 1830, the 1837, and the 1840 Editions," (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, April 1974), 246-47.

⁶¹ *Ensign* 6 (September 1976):86, emphasis retained.

⁶² *A Companion To Your Study of the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 141.

the Original MS are chapters twenty and twenty-one of 1 Nephi."⁶³

"Also in support of the view that the King James Version was utilized is the tendency for Book of Mormon revisions of Biblical material to cluster around words that are printed in italics by the King James translators."⁶⁴

Richard L. Anderson wrote:

"In fact, the language in the sections of the Book of Mormon that correspond to parts of the Bible is quite regularly *selected* by Joseph Smith, rather than obtained through independent translation. For instance, there are over 400 verses in which the Nephite prophets quote from Isaiah, and half of these appear precisely as the King James version renders them. Summarizing the view taken by Latter-day Saint scholars on this point, Daniel H. Ludlow emphasizes the inherent variety of independent translation and concludes: 'There appears to be only one answer to explain the word-for-word similarities between the verses of Isaiah in the Bible and the same verses in the Book of Mormon.' That is simply that Joseph Smith must have opened Isaiah and tested each mentioned verse by the Spirit: 'If his translation was essentially the same as that of the King James version, he apparently quoted the verse from the Bible.'"⁶⁵

Mark E. Petersen said:

"Are we to say that the unlearned Joseph Smith had the audacity or the skill to rewrite the Savior's sermons and insert King James Version passages in them, thinking to improve on what Jesus said?"⁶⁶

1979

1979 LDS edition of the King James Version of the Bible, Isaiah 2:1, page 863:

"Isaiah chapters 2-14 are quoted from the brass plates by Nephi in 2 Ne. 12-24; there are some differences in wording which should be noted."

1981

1981 LDS edition of the Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 12:1, page 81:

"Comparison with the King James Bible in English shows that there are differences in more than half of the 433 verses of Isaiah quoted in the Book of Mormon, while about 200 verses have the same wording as KJV."

Wesley P. Walters wrote:

"It would appear to be a solid conclusion that Joseph Smith, Jr. had his Bible open before him at least during the composition of those parts of the Book of Mormon where extended quotations were made from the KJV."⁶⁷

"The King James Version provided the basis for Joseph Smith's quotations of the Old

⁶³ "Textual Variants in Book of Mormon Manuscripts," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 10 (Autumn 1977):10-11, cited hereafter as *Dialogue*.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 28, fn 9.

⁶⁵ "'By the Gift and Power of God': What so we know about how Joseph Smith translated the Book of Mormon?," *Ensign* 7 (September 1977):84, emphasis retained.

⁶⁶ "It Was a Miracle!" *Ensign* 7 (November 1977):12-13; also in *Those Gold Plates!* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1979), 50, see also 52-56.

⁶⁷ "The Use of the Old Testament in the Book of Mormon," (thesis, 1981), 91-92; published by Utah Lighthouse Ministry in 1990.

Testament in the Book of Mormon."⁶⁸

"In summary then, the Bible, especially the Old Testament, has provided much framework and content for the Book of Mormon, but, ironically, that same Book of Mormon, in order to promote its own importance, ended discrediting the very book, the Bible, upon which it had so heavily drawn."⁶⁹

Robert F. Smith:

"Stanley Larson, has shown that, when Joseph Smith encountered such parallels, he certainly opened his KJV Bible and dictated directly from it -- though with changes in places (master thesis, pp. 246-7)."⁷⁰

1982

William D. Russell wrote:

"Another improbability is the fact that the Book of Mormon literally follows the King James Version of the Sermon on the Mount, just as it does with Isaiah and other biblical sources."⁷¹

1983

Arthur Glenn Foster, Jr.:

"It may be reasonably asked, what was Smith's motive for including large sections of Isaiah in his work. First, we cannot dismiss Smith's general interest in Isaiah -- a significant facet of his theology is the extension of Zionism to America. ... But much of the Isaiah text quoted in later chapters are irrelevant to this subject, or to the modern world in general, and should be accounted for by a different motive. That motive was simply to lengthen the text."⁷²

1984

[Robert F. Smith, ed.], *Critical Text of the Book of Mormon*, vol. 1, 1 Nephi - Words of Mormon, (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Provo, Utah), introduction, vii.

1985

Stan Larson:

"... At this point Joseph Smith, reading directly from a copy of the KJV, dictated to his scribe ..."⁷³

⁶⁸ Ibid., 164.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 169.

⁷⁰ Letter of Robert F. Smith to Peggy Fletcher, September 30, 1981, p. 2.

⁷¹ "The Historicity of the Book of Mormon and the Use of the Sermon on the Mount in III Nephi," *Restoration Studies II* (1983), 196; reprinted from "A Further Inquiry into the Historicity of the Book of Mormon," *Sunstone* 7 (September-October 1982).

⁷² "The Plates of Jacob: An Analysis of the Replacement to the Lost Manuscript of the Book of Mormon," (unpublished manuscript, 1983), 135.

⁷³ "Scribal Scars in Sacred Scriptures," (unpublished manuscript, ca. 1985).

Larry W. Conrad and Paul Shupe have written:

"The fine historical work of William D. Russell exhibits this same quandary. For example, his essay, "A Further Inquiry into the Historicity of the Book of Mormon," *Sunstone*, Sept.-Oct. 1982, pp. 20-27, casts doubt on the traditional church belief about the historicity of the book, yet he concludes the essay with the claim that the book can still be regarded and used as scripture. We find his conclusion interesting and perhaps somewhat surprising, but it cannot fully address the theological issues at stake. For example, if Russell's account is correct, and we think it is, then what ought the church to do about its claim to have a prophet who claimed to possess gold plates which he translated with the Urim and Thummim?"⁷⁴

Scott C. Dunn:

"Some Mormons have attempted to resolve this problem by speculating that when Joseph Smith came to a passage in the ancient record which paralleled biblical ideas, he would use the King James Bible to assist him in the translation. Unfortunately, this explanation is not supported by the known accounts of the translation process, none of which mention Joseph using a Bible or, for that matter, even having one present."⁷⁵

Commenting on Stan Larson's research paper on the Sermon on the Mount a newspaper article stated:

"George A. Horton, Jr., chairman of Ancient Scripture at BYU said he is surprised Stan Larson is raising this issue now. 'It is as old as the Book of Mormon,' he said. ... Most BYU ancient scripture professors assume Joseph Smith 2, much of the text of the Sermon on the Mount from the King James Version of the Bible to the degree that it suited his purpose, Horton said."⁷⁶

1986

Stan Larson:

"The fact that about half of the Isaiah verses that are quoted in the Book of Mormon are exactly the same as the KJV, and that many of the others are the same except at the very point where the KJV has italics, and finally that the Original MS of 1 Nephi 20:11 shows the KJV text before being changed into the Book of Mormon revision, all tend to make this admission of possible use into a certainty. ...' These points evidently demonstrated too clearly that Joseph Smith plagiarized from the KJV when dictating the Biblical quotations in the BOM [Book of Mormon]."⁷⁷

"At these various points the earlier and better text of the gospel of Matthew take us back to the earlier form of the sermon on the mount, but the BOM [Book of Mormon] never takes us to a verifiable text in antiquity."⁷⁸

⁷⁴ "An RLDS Reformation? Construing the Task of RLDS Theology," *Dialogue* 18 (Summer 1985):98, fn 2, emphasis retained; reprinted nearly the same in *Restoration Studies II* (1986), 219, fn 22.

⁷⁵ "Spirit Writing: Another Look at the Book of Mormon," *Sunstone* 10 (June 1985):25.

⁷⁶ *The Daily Universe*, October 2, 1985, Provo, Utah.

⁷⁷ "The Sermon on the Mount: What Its Textual Transformation Discloses Concerning the Historicity of the Book of Mormon," *Trinity Journal* 7 (Spring 1986):42, fn 37. Also in Brent Lee Metcalfe, ed., *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 130, fn 7.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 43.

1987

Anthony Hutchinson:

"Furthermore, when Joseph's active role in producing the English text of the Book of Mormon is examined, the relationship of the text to that of the King James version of the Bible becomes apparent. ... but developed textual matters that only exist in the King James version, where the King James version mistranslated something or where they used an absolutely screwed-up version of the Bible, that turns up in the late Renaissance, some Greek manuscript in late Renaissance, just happens to be, some scribe put a footnote in and it occurs in one text and someone copied it and it is inserted into the text by accident and that happens to be the one (the) King James Bible translates."⁷⁹

Blake T. Ostler wrote in a lengthy article published in *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* the following regarding the Book of Mormon text and the King James Bible:

"No clearly identifiable ancient sources appear in the Book of Mormon except as might derive from the King James version of the Bible."⁸⁰

"At least one modern source was undisputably used in the Book of Mormon - the King James Version of the Bible - in three primary ways. First, the Book of Mormon adapts many phrases, particularly from the New Testament, to a new context. A single passage from 2 Nephi 9:12-28 attributed to the prophet Jacob about 560 B.C. demonstrates this method ..."⁸¹

"Those who have seen only the modern aspects of the book have overlooked its detailed and precise reflection of Israelite literature, culture, and social structure. Yet some doctrines in the book's pre-Christian sections are simply too developed and too characteristic of the nineteenth century to explain as pre-exilic ideas. The presence of the KJV in the book is, it seems to me, indisputable."⁸²

"The visit of Christ to America is the central historical event to which the entire book is oriented. The historicity of this event can hardly be doubted if one accepts, as I do, that there is anything ancient about the book at all."⁸³

Robert F. Smith:

"In the course of this basic research project, we have made a number of text critical discoveries—several of which buttress what Roberts, Sperry, Vest, and Larson (and others) have noted about the strong likelihood that Joseph Smith (and Oliver Cowdery together?) utilized a King James Bible for comparison when translating clearly parallel sections of text. From our notes in III Nephi, for example, we can select words which are located in the midst of parallels to Matthew 5 & 6, Isaiah 52 & 54, Micah 5, and Malachi 3, which read in accordance with the 1828 H. & E. Phinney edition of the King James Bible against both the 1611 and current KJV. This not only demonstrates Joseph's strong

⁷⁹ "The Word of God is Enough: The Book of Mormon as 19th Century Fiction," (typed copy from tape of paper given at the Washington Sunstone Symposium, May 15, 1987, p. 9. See Hutchinson in Brent Lee Metcalfe, ed., *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 12-14.

⁸⁰ "The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source," *Dialogue* 20 (Spring 1987):68.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 102.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 114.

bond with the KJV, but even tells us which possible edition, or editorial family, he (or Oliver) had in front of him on those rare occasions when it became useful or efficient. Thus far, we have isolated a whole series of Book of Mormon parallel readings which can be found in the Phinney Bible (copies of which were available in the E. B. Grandin Bookstore in Palmyra), e.g., the text reads 'my' rather than 'mine,' 'thy' rather than 'thine,' etc."⁸⁴

1990

Jerald and Sandra Tanner:

"As one studies the text of the Book of Mormon, it becomes clear that Joseph Smith had a very difficult time accurately quoting brief portions of the Bible. He would often make a number of mistakes within just a small portion of one verse. On the other hand, as we have already shown, when he quoted a number of verses, the text is often identical to the King James Version. We believe that the reason for this seeming discrepancy is that when he used short quotations he depended upon his memory and did not bother to look them up in the Bible. When he desired to use larger quotations he realized that he needed help and, therefore, read the longer portions directly from the Bible."⁸⁵

Royal Skousen wrote that it may have been the Lord who used the King James Version for the Book of Mormon:

"Related to this interpretation is the belief that Joseph Smith used his King James Bible to help him translate biblical passages. Yet there is no evidence for this proposal; in fact, it is contradicted by Emma Smith's statement that Joseph "had neither manuscript nor book to read from." Given the statements of those who observed the translation, it seems more reasonable that it was the Lord himself who chose to quote from the King James Version when it agreed with the Book of Mormon."⁸⁶

John W. Welch wrote:

"While Roberts, Sperry, and others have conjectured that Joseph made direct use of his King James Bible in order to make the difficult translation job easier, they advance this theory as an assumption. While the idea has some attractiveness and convenience, I am less inclined toward it today than they were, or than I was ten years ago. ... for one who believes that Joseph Smith received any part of the book through the gift and power of God, it is a relatively small step from there to believe that the Sermon at the Temple was similarly and dictated under the direction of divine inspiration; that is, that God projected a text similar to the biblical text through Joseph Smith, or the power of God brought that text especially to his memory as those words were appropriate and helpful."⁸⁷

Ed Ashment has written:

"Such examples as these, as well as those presented by Larson, are additional evidence that the Book of Mormon was originally composed in the nineteenth century,

⁸⁴ Robert F. Smith, ed., *Book of Mormon Critical Text* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1987), 3:iv.

⁸⁵ *Covering Up the Black Hole in the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1990), 73.

⁸⁶ "Towards a Critical Edition of the Book of Mormon," *BYU Studies* 30 (Winter 1990):55.

⁸⁷ *Sermon at the Temple and the Sermon on the Mount: A Latter-day Saint Approach* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990), 135-36, see also 131-40.

the most ancient text upon which any of its contents were based being the KJV."⁸⁸

1991

Philip L. Barlow:

"The most obvious biblical connection is the inclusion in the Book of Mormon of whole blocks of material common to the Bible: twenty-one chapters from Isaiah, three from Matthew, and smaller portions from elsewhere. There are many differences in these passages as they are presented in the Bible and the Book of Mormon. For example, of the 433 verses of Isaiah appearing in the Book of Mormon, 199 are identical to the KJV and 234 have been altered. Many of the changes seem slight, others more significant."⁸⁹

1992

Victor L. Ludlow:

"Fully one-third of the writings of Isaiah are found in the Book of Mormon, making Isaiah the most frequently quoted biblical book there. Twenty-two of the sixty-six chapters of Isaiah are quoted in whole or in part in the Book of Mormon (a total of 433 of Isaiah's 1,292 verses)."⁹⁰

Royal Skousen:

"In copying this part of the text Oliver Cowdery made six changes ... This passage is quoted from chapter 50 of the Book of Isaiah and in the language, of course, of the King James Version. Interestingly, each of the six original readings in this passage is identical with its corresponding reading in the King James Version. In other words, these six changes in the printer's manuscript move the Book of Mormon text further away from the King James text."⁹¹

Stephen D. Ricks:

"I have not made up my mind whether Joseph had the King James Version to hand when he was translating the Book of Mormon. Some Latter-day Saint scholars assume that he did have one. However, the witnesses to the translation process never mention anything about an English translation being present while the book was being translated. Indeed, Emma [Smith], when specifically asked by her interviewers (including her son, Joseph III, and her second husband, Major Bidamon) whether Joseph might have had 'a book or manuscript from which he read, or dictated' to her, replied, 'He had neither manuscript or book to read from,' and 'if he had anything of the kind he could not have concealed it from me.'"⁹²

⁸⁸ "Making the Scriptures 'Indeed One in Our Hands'," in Dan Vogel, ed., *The Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scriptures* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990), 261, fn 55.

⁸⁹ *Mormons and the Bible: The Place of the Latter-day Saints in American Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 30.

⁹⁰ *Encyclopedia of Mormonism: The History, Scripture, Doctrine, and Procedure of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), 1:106.

⁹¹ "Piecing Together the Original Manuscript," *BYU Today* 46 (May 1992):22.

⁹² *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies [cited hereafter as FARMS], 1992), 4:238 note 4.

1993

Daniel C. Peterson:

"Let me clearly say, first, what no thinking Latter-day Saint has ever dreamed of denying: There is some sort of close relationship between the King James translation of Isaiah and the version that appears in the English translation of the Book of Mormon. The precise nature of this relationship is not altogether clear, despite what critics of Joseph Smith are wont to allege. (Eyewitnesses to the translation process, for example, insist that Joseph had no books or written materials with him when translating, other than the plates themselves.)"⁹³

Stan Larson writing about the Sermon on the Mount in 3 Nephi states:

"... so an exhaustive examination reveals that this Book of Mormon sermon depends on the 1550 Textus Receptus, as relied on by the English text of the KJV."

"Though many Latter-day Saint scholars now admit that the KJV was used in the production of the Book of Mormon, there are still a few who prefer the position that Joseph Smith did not use the KJV or that God chose to quote from the KJV ... The issue then becomes to what extent does a direct connection exist between the Book of Mormon and the KJV. Precise parallelism challenges the claim that the Book of Mormon is an independent translation of the biblical passages."⁹⁴

"These considerations prompt one to date the origin of the Book of Mormon account of Jesus' sermon after 1769 and before 1830 when the Book of Mormon was published. This analysis based on textual criticism confirms that of Krister Stendahl, former dean of the Harvard divinity school, that the Book of Mormon text of the sermon is not a genuine translation from an ancient language but Smith's nineteenth-century targumic expansion of the English KJV. ... The presence of relatively late Johannine elements in the Book of Mormon account in 3 Nephi also is telling evidence of its own dependence on the KJV. ... In terms of attempting to pinpoint the origin of the Book of Mormon, even more significant than Book of Mormon revisions are places where it follows the KJV into error, echoing mistranslations or including translations of late and derivative Greek texts. ... The Book of Mormon account of Jesus' sermon in 3 Nephi 12-14 originated in the nineteenth century, derived from unacknowledged plagiarism of the KJV."⁹⁵

David P. Wright:

"The Book of Mormon is a new narrative, not a reworking of biblical stories, but it uses the KJV in various ways: in extensive explicit quoting, as in the citation of several chapters from Isaiah; or in a looser reworking of the biblical text, such as in the case examined in Alma 12-13. Through this use of the Bible in the Book of Mormon Smith developed his method of revising the biblical text. By the time he completed the Book of Mormon, he was fully prepared and enabled to move to the task of revising the KJV. Indeed using the Bible in composing the Book of Mormon might have brought the project of revising the Bible to mind."⁹⁶

⁹³ *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1993), 5:51.

⁹⁴ "The Historicity of the Matthean Sermon on the Mount in 3 Nephi," in Brent Lee Metcalfe, ed., *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1993), 129.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 131-32.

⁹⁶ "'In Plain Terms that We May Understand': Joseph Smith's Transformation of Hebrews in Alma 12-13," in *Ibid.*, 211.

Ed Ashment:

"At the other end of the spectrum are those who propose a literal, word-for-word rendering of a proposed original text written in Egyptian (in a few scenarios) or in Hebrew with Egyptian characters. These explanations can be termed liberal because they ignore methodological evidence and concentrate instead on claims of literalness. These writers assume that the English text must reflect a linguistically realistic system. As a result, the text is scoured for 'evidence' of their assumption, and anything that appears to match is offered as a witness for the historicity of the Book of Mormon. For their explanatory schemes to work, it must be assumed that the King James Version of the Bible (KJV) was not a source for the English Book of Mormon text."⁹⁷

Brent Lee Metcalfe:

"This evidence leaves no doubt that Smith assimilated portions of the KJV into the Book of Mormon ... Weighing the Book of Mormon's indebtedness to the KJV indicates that Smith probably did not substantially depend on other nineteenth-century literary sources."⁹⁸

1994

Davis Bitton:

"As for the use of Bible passages and phrases throughout the Book of Mormon—beyond the obvious extensive quotations that have long been recognized—we do, as Sperry and others would say, have a problem."⁹⁹

John Gee:

"The eyewitnesses to the translation process deny that a Bible was used, and there is circumstantial evidence that Joseph may not have owned a Bible at that time."¹⁰⁰

William J. Hamblin:

"Few, if any, even deal with the most basic issue of whether they believe Joseph was *consciously* or *subconsciously* creating his piece of pious frontier fantasy. For example, did Joseph have the actual text of the King James Version Isaiah or Matthew in front of him as he wrote the Book of Mormon, *consciously* copying it word for word? Or had he memorized the entire book of Isaiah, thereby enabling him to produce it *subconsciously*?"¹⁰¹

Royal Skousen:

"Yet despite the textual complexity of the Book of Mormon, the historical evidence strongly suggests that, as a young man, Joseph Smith was not a student of the Bible. ... Besides the actual text of the Book of Mormon, there is not much evidence that knew the Bible at the time of the translation. Moreover, witnesses of the translation process consistently claim that Joseph Smith translated by placing either the Urim and Thummim

⁹⁷ Ibid., 338.

⁹⁸ Metcalfe, "The Priority of Mosiah: A Prelude to Book of Mormon Exegesis," in Ibid., 412.

⁹⁹ *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1994), 6/1:4.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 102.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 519.

or the seer stone in a hat (to obscure the light in the room) and that he did not actually translate from the physical plates. In answer to a direct question about the use of other materials, Emma Smith specifically avowed that Joseph never had any manuscripts or books to assist him in the translation. All the witnesses, directly or indirectly, provide strong evidence that Joseph Smith did not use a King James Bible."¹⁰²

James E. Smith:

"... finally translated by study and revelation by Joseph Smith (who apparently used the King James Bible for stylistic guidance and for some sections of parallel text), the Book of Mormon has the earmarks of an ancient scriptural record that is both humanly authored and divinely inspired."¹⁰³

John A. Tvedtnes:

"For my part, I have no problem with Joseph Smith using the Bible directly and making changes only when there were serious differences. Not having been present at the time, I do not know if he had a Bible with him when he dictated the Book of Mormon to his scribes. The fact that he usually eliminated words that, in the KJV of Isaiah, are italicized, hints that he may have used the Bible itself. But it is not impossible that the Lord had him eliminate these words, which, after all, represent English words added to the text to make more sense out of the underlying Hebrew."¹⁰⁴

H. Clay Gorton:

"Although no firsthand account exists of Joseph Smith's employment of the King James text in translating the Isaiah chapters, it is obvious he used the King James Bible as the basis for his terminology in translating the Isaiah chapters."¹⁰⁵

1995

Richard P. Howard:

"In preparing the Book of Mormon manuscripts in 1829 Joseph Smith used the King James version of the Bible as a supplementary source at a number of points. This would have been natural for him to do because in 1829 the KJV was the most widely used and authoritative biblical text in existence. An example of Joseph Smith's reliance on the specific the KJV is in the 'Sermon on the Mount' (Matthew 5-7). The Bible appears to have been used at this point as an authoritative text for the purpose of documenting the ministry of Christ in ancient America, as found in [RLDS] III Nephi 5-13."¹⁰⁶

Robert L. Millet:

"I do not know whether the Prophet and his scribe utilized a King James Bible when they translated the Book of Mormon and am not aware of anyone now living who knows for sure. If in fact they did use the Bible, and if and when the Prophet sensed by revelation that the message on the golden or brass plates was sufficiently close to what was had in

¹⁰² Ibid., 129-30.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 257.

¹⁰⁴ Offset paper, 1994, p. 40; printed in *FARMS Review of Books* 6, no. 2 (1994).

¹⁰⁵ H. Clay Gorton, *The Legacy of the Brass Plates of Laban: A Comparison of Biblical and Book of Mormon Isaiah Texts* (Bountiful, Utah: Horizon, 1994), 31.

¹⁰⁶ Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* (Independence, MO: Herald Publishing House, 1995, revised and enlarged), 84.

the KJV, he may have decided to simply go with the translation language most familiar to the people."¹⁰⁷

1996

Todd Compton:

"Stan Larson and David Wright contribute solid, useful studies of Joseph Smith's use of the King James Bible in his translation (or, to them, authorial) process. Such studies virtually prove that Joseph used the King James extensively in his translation process."¹⁰⁸

John A. Tvedtnes and Matthew Roper:

"Although the Smith family apparently had a Bible at the time that Joseph Smith had his First Vision (Joseph Smith-History 1:11-12), it is not clear whether Joseph Smith used a Bible while translating the Book of Mormon."¹⁰⁹

1998

Thomas J. Finley:

"No good reason has been given to abandon the rather reasonable assumption that the Book of Mormon derives from the time of Joseph Smith and drew heavily on the King James Bible as a literary source."¹¹⁰

Royal Skousen:

"Although the base text for the Isaiah quotations in the Book of Mormon is the King James Version, the original Book of Mormon chapter divisions ignore the chapter system found in the King James Bible."¹¹¹

David P. Wright:

"The text of Isaiah in the BM for the most part follows the King James Version (hereafter KJV)."¹¹²

"The BM Isaiah text derives directly and without mediation from the KJV. . . . A basic fact that cannot be overlooked is that the BM Isaiah reproduces the KJV of the text literally except for a few words or phrases here and there. . . . There is a focus on changing words which are italicized in the KJV, which shows direct working with that text. . . . The BM Isaiah preserves numerous obscure, problematic, and erroneous translations of the KJV."¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ Robert L. Millet "Hard Questions About the Joseph Smith Translation," in *Plain and Precious Truths Restored: The Doctrinal and Historical Significance of the Joseph Smith Translation*, edited by Robert L. Millet and Robert J. Matthews (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995), 152.

¹⁰⁸ Todd Compton, *Sunstone* 19 (Sept. 1996):76.

¹⁰⁹ *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 8/2: 330 (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1996).

¹¹⁰ Thomas J. Finley, "A Review of Hugh Nibley's *Comparisons Between the Book of Mormon and the Lachish Letters*," available at <http://www.irr.org/mit/nibley1.HTML>.

¹¹¹ Royal Skousen, "Textual Variants in the Isaiah Quotations in the Book of Mormon," in Donald W. Parry and John W. Welch, eds., *Isaiah in the Book of Mormon* (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, 1998), 378.

¹¹² David P. Wright, "Joseph Smith's Interpretation of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon," *Dialogue* 31 (Winter 1998):181.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 182.

When examined in its full extent (see note 2), it shows clearly that the BM Isaiah text depends directly on the KJV. The alternative claim that the BM is a translation but follows the KJV when the KJV is correct cannot be maintained . . . The proper place to start in understanding Isaiah in the BM is, therefore, to see the KJV as its source and, with this, to see Joseph Smith as the one who introduced the variants that do exist . . .¹¹⁴

"A question of Book of Mormon scholarship is whether the several chapters or passages of Isaiah cited or paraphrased in the book derive from an ancient text or whether they have been copied with some revision from the King James Version. The BM narrative would have us believe the former, that its citations of Isaiah come directly or ultimately from the Brass Plates of Laban or from Jesus' recitation when, according to the BM story, he visited the New World peoples shortly after his death. Closer study shows, however, that, despite the intent of the story, the BM Isaiah is a revision of KJV and not a translation of an ancient document."¹¹⁵

"Close analysis makes it abundantly clear that the italics were an object of special concern and demonstrates in large measure that the BM Isaiah derives from the KJV."¹¹⁶

"It is patent from the preceding analysis that many variants in the BM Isaiah came about as a revision of italicized words and their contexts in the KJV text. Again, note that in the vast majority of the cases, adduced above, the wording of the BM is the same as the KJV and that variants are found just at the or around words italicized in the KJV. This is a sure sign that the BM Isaiah derives from the KJV."¹¹⁷

"Many maintaining the antiquity of the BM have tried to make sense of KJV language in the BM by saying that Joseph Smith used it when the content of the plates agreed with the KJV. Hugh Nibley says, for example, that 'the Book of Mormon follows the language of the King James Bible only as far as the latter conveys the correct meaning of the original.' The KJV language comes specifically, according to different versions of this theory, either from Joseph Smith's using an English Bible in the translation situation or from revelation without use of the Bible. This theory and its versions are completely untenable in view of the complexity and nature of the evidence presented above. They cannot explain the preoccupation with the italics, variants based on English polysemy, and disturbances of Hebrew style. And they are chiefly rebutted by the maintenance of KJV translation errors in the BM as well as by the incomplete and incomprehensible texts in some variants."¹¹⁸

Jerald and Sandra Tanner wrote:

"As one studies the text of the Book of Mormon, it becomes clear that while Joseph Smith was familiar with the Bible, he had a difficult time accurately quoting brief portions of the text. He would often make a number of mistakes. On the other hand, when he quoted from longer text found in the Bible, they were often nearly identical to the King James Version. We believe that the reason for this seeming discrepancy is that when Smith used short quotations he depended upon his memory and did not bother to look them up in the Bible. On the other hand, when he desired to use extensive quotations, he realized that he needed help. Consequently, Joseph Smith lifted many of

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 185.

¹¹⁵ David P. Wright, "*Isaiah in the Book of Mormon ... and Joseph Smith in Isaiah*," available at <http://user.xmission.com/~research/central/isabm1.html>.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

his longer quotations directly from the Bible."¹¹⁹

2002

Grant H. Palmer mentioned:

“Oliver [Cowdery] was Joseph’s main scribe day after day and perhaps the only one who really knew if a Bible was consulted. Oliver is silent on the matter. In fact, a Bible would have been needed only when quoting long passages; so again, Cowdery may be the only witness who knew about this, and he neglected to mention it.”¹²⁰

“In other words, the textual evidence shows that the Bible was a primary source for the miracles, quotations, stories, names, and prophecies in the Book of Mormon, all of which provided a basis for Joseph’s interpreting and targumizing. It is reasonable to conclude that Joseph knew the Bible text intimately and used it extensively. LDS members have been slow to recognize this, while critics have recognized it from the beginning.”¹²¹

2004

Dan Vogel wrote:

"In crafting this new scripture, Smith naturally drew upon the language of the Bible, which for him was the authorized or King James Version. His use of the Bible went beyond language and included direct borrowing of entire chapters with only slight variation. In many instances, he created anachronisms by quoting biblical passages his New World prophets could not have known about."¹²²

2009

G. St. John Stott wrote:

"Whatever we might suppose to have been the case with the Nephite original, time and again in the English text Book of Mormon authors quote, paraphrase, or allude to Old and New Testament texts, and as a result we cannot help but find the work's 'primary context of meaning' in the dialogue between its words and those of the Bible, whereby we have a restatement of Biblical doctrine in the details of the Nephite record."¹²³

2010

Grant Hardy included the following in his study:

“Clearly the Book of Mormon Isaiah chapters, as we have them today, are based on the King James Bible, and as David Wright notes, ‘The alternative claim that the BM [Book of Mormon] is a translation but follows the KJV [King James Version] when the KJV is

¹¹⁹ Jerald and Sandra Tanner, *Joseph Smith's Plagiarism of the Bible* (Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministry, 1998), xxvii, emphasis omitted.

¹²⁰ Grant H. Palmer, *An Insider's View of Mormon Origins* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2002), 82-83.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 84-85.

¹²² Dan Vogel, *Joseph Smith: The Making of a Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 2004), 119-20.

¹²³ G. St. John Stott, "The Martyrdoms at Ammonihah and the Foreknowledge of God," *International Journal of Mormon Studies* 2 (Spring 2009):177.

correct cannot be maintained since this cannot explain the preoccupation with italicized words, variants based on English polysemy, inconsistencies with Hebrew language and style and the persistence of KJV errors in the BM text.”¹²⁴

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Brant A. Gardner stated:

“To summarize, the evidence is strong that, when Joseph translated the Isaiah passages, he was reading from the King James Bible. In the overwhelming majority of the time, the two texts are identical. When they differ, a statistically significant number of the changes involved words italicized in the KJV. Joseph removed those words, then dictated the changes that became necessary to maintain grammatical sentences, a process he could accomplish if he could see which words were in italics. Unfortunately, the evidence also suggests that Joseph *didn't* read from the Bible.”¹²⁵

What is clear is that the majority of those individuals, who examined the Book of Mormon, conclude that the Bible was used in its composition. The longer passages, that contain similar or exact wording in the King James Bible, come from that available printed text.

¹²⁴ Grant Hardy, *Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 68.

¹²⁵ Brant A. Gardner, *The Gift and Power: Translating the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2011). 304.