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Preface to the First Edition

Author(s): Joseph Fielding Smith

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The Book of Mormon is one of the most marvelous records ever revealed to the world. Many members of the Church do not seem to realize that when this record was revealed to Joseph Smith he was but a lad in his teens, and that when it was translated and the Church organized he was but twenty-four years of age. Because of family circumstances his privilege to attend school was extremely limited, and it is absolutely beyond comprehension how any youth, by his own initiative and ability, could have produced such a record. In fact, we may defy all the learned men in the world to produce such a work and present it to the world as an authentic document giving the history of an ancient but lost people. Should they attempt it, their effort would be filled with glaring errors and their work could not endure.

No book ever published has passed through the intense criticism and the most bitter opposition of the learned as well as the ignorant, yet it has triumphed over them all. Had it been a work of fiction it would have been forgotten, notwithstanding the divine claims which it contains. The truth has met with severe opposition all through the ages; yet it goes on. The thousands who have come into the Church can testify that the words of Moroni are true. Every man who seeks to know the truth will come to the light if there has been a sincere and prayerful desire to know the truth. It is only natural that a record of this kind, which is true, would have to face the most intense and bitter opposition.

In these chapters Dr. Nibley has approached the study of the Book of Mormon from a rather unique, but very interesting point of view. It will appeal to every sincere student and should be studied by every member of the Church. It is to be hoped that all the brethren holding the Melchizedek Priesthood will show their gratitude to Dr. Nibley by taking a deep interest in these lessons, which sustain the record of the Book of Mormon from this new and interesting approach.

JOSEPH FIELDING SMITH