Type: Newsletter

Insights, Vol. 25, No. 5 (2005)

Editor(s): FARMS Staff
Published by: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies

The Newsletter of the Foundation for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies (FARMS) at Brigham Young University

Insights

A WINDOW ON THE ANCIENT WORLD VOLUME 25 | 2005

Number 5 http://farms.byu.edu

New Directors Appointed for ISPART and FARMS

In June Brigham Young University announced the appointment of Andrew C. Skinner as the new executive director of the Institute for the Study and Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts. Skinner, a professor of ancient scripture at BYU who has served as dean of Religious Education since 2000, replaces Noel B. Reynolds, who was called to preside over the Florida Fort Lauderdale Mission of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Skinner's academic accomplishments and administrative experience uniquely qualify him to direct the work of ISPART. His principal research languages are Hebrew and Aramaic. He has expertise in ancient Near Eastern history, the Hebrew Bible, and the Dead Sea Scrolls—areas of study that align nicely with the research interests of ISPART and FARMS. He is the author or coauthor of more than 100 publications and has filled three teaching assignments at the BYU Jerusalem Center. Prior to his appointment as dean of Religious Education, he served as chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture.

Andrew C. Skinner

S. Kent Brown

Born and raised in Colorado, Skinner earned a BA in history from the University of Colorado. He went on to earn an MA in Jewish studies from the Iliff School of Theology and a ThM (master of theology) from Harvard, where he specialized in Biblical Hebrew. He did graduate work at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and received his PhD from the University of Denver, where he studied Near Eastern and European history and specialized in Judaism. He has been a bishop in Colorado and Utah, and he is a member of the Correlation Evaluation Committee of the Church.

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New Volume Explores Themes, Background of Book of Abraham

Astronomy, Papyrus, and Covenant, the third volume in FARMS's Studies in the Book of Abraham, was recently published and is now available. This book deals with three broad themes: astronomy in the Book of Abraham, the background of the Joseph Smith Papyri, and the nature of the Abrahamic covenant. In the course of treating these subjects, various papers discuss Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt, commonalities between the Book of Abraham and ancient Islamic texts, accounts of Abraham in 19th-century America, and a number of other interesting issues. All but 3 of the 12 articles were initially presented as papers at a BYU conference on the Book of Abraham.

The book was edited by John Gee and Brian M. Hauglid, both of whom also contributed articles. Additional authors include William J. Hamblin, J. Ward Moody, Daniel C. Peterson, and Michael D. Rhodes.

One of the major features of the Book of Abraham is its treatment of ancient astronomy, an aspect of Abraham's teachings not recounted in the biblical narrative but one that does appear in noncanonical

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The Archaic Vocabulary of the Book of Mormon

In my work as editor of the Book of Mormon Critical Text Project (which began in 1988), I was initially interested in discovering the original English-language text of the book. But I soon came to the conclusion that it would be impossible to fully recover the original text by scholarly means, in large part because only 28 percent of the original manuscript is extant. In addition, there are obvious errors in the original manuscript itself that require conjectural emendation. As I have worked on the text of the Book of Mormon, I have come to some surprising conclusions regarding the nature of the original text itself, conclusions that I had not at all expected when I started my work transcribing the original and printer's manuscripts of the Book of Mormon:

(1) The original manuscript supports the hypothesis that the text was given to Joseph Smith word for word and that he could see the spelling of at least the Book of Mormon names (in support of what witnesses of the translation process claimed about Joseph's translation).

(2) The original text is much more consistent and systematic in expression than has ever been realized.

(3) The original text includes unique kinds of expression that appear to be uncharacteristic of English in any time and place; some of these expressions are Hebraistic in nature.

For some discussion of these findings, see the following two articles of mine: "Translating the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins,* edited by Noel B. Reynolds, pages 61–93 (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1997); and "The Systematic Text of the Book of Mormon," in *Uncovering the Original Text of the Book of Mormon: History and Findings of the Critical Text Project*, edited by M. Gerald Bradford and Alison V. P. Coutts, pages 45–66 (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2002).

Over the past two years, I have discovered evidence for a fourth significant conclusion about the original text:

(4) The original vocabulary of the Book of Mormon appears to derive from the 1500s and 1600s, not from the 1800s.

This last finding is quite remarkable. Lexical evidence suggests that the original text contained a number of expressions and words with meanings that were lost from the English language by 1700. On the other hand, I have not been able thus far to find word meanings and expressions in the text that are known to have entered the English language after the early 1700s.

In the following sampling, I list some of the clearest examples in the Book of Mormon of this archaic vocabulary from the 1500s and 1600s. (In this discussion, I exclude, of course, archaic words such as *besom* 'broom' that are found in direct quotations from the King James Bible.) For each word and its meaning, I provide citations from the original text of the Book of Mormon, corresponding citations from the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), and a range of dates for citations in the OED with that same meaning (except for citations from the King James Bible, original spellings are provided). In some instances, the word can be found with that meaning in the 1611 King James Bible. But some of these words predate 1611 by a few decades at least. The difficulty of these archaic words has sometimes resulted in accidental changes during the early transmission of the Book of Mormon text. At other times, editors and typesetters have replaced such words with more recognizable alternatives.

Some Examples Found in the King James Bible

To require, meaning 'to request'

> Enos 1:18 reads "and the Lord said unto me: thy fathers have also **required** of me this thing." It may seem unusual that Enos's ancestral fathers (Lehi, Nephi, and Jacob) required the Lord to preserve their records. Notice that the word *also* in verse 18 implies that Enos too is "requiring" the Lord to preserve these records, yet previously (in verses 15–17) Enos simply asks the Lord to do so. But the passage makes perfectly good sense when we observe that earlier in English the verb *require* had the meaning 'to ask, request, or desire someone to do something' (see definition 3 for this verb

in the OED). The OED provides citations of *require* with the meaning of 'to request' dating from 1375 to 1665, including this example from William Shakespeare's *Henry VIII* (1613): "In humblest manner I **require** your Highnes, That it shall please you." We have a similar example in the King James Bible: "For I was ashamed to **require** of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way" (Ezra 8:22).

To cast arrows, meaning 'to shoot arrows'

Alma 49:4 reads "the Lamanites could not **cast** their stones and their arrows at them." Similarly, verse 19 reads "and thus were the Nephites prepared to destroy all such as should attempt to climb up to enter the fort by any other way by **casting** over stones and arrows at them." For us today, it seems strange to cast arrows. Yet the OED gives the following comment for definition 2 under the verb *cast:* "Formerly said also of military engines, bows, and the like, which throw or shoot projectiles." OED citations date from about 1300 to 1609, including the following biblical one in John Wycliffe's 1382 translation of 2 Kings 13:17: "Helise seyde, kast an arowe; and he kest." The King James Bible uses the verb *shoot* in translating this same passage: "Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot." But there is one place in the King James Bible where the verb *cast* does occur with *arrows:* "As a mad *man* who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death" (Proverbs 26:18).

For examples like these, one could claim that Joseph Smith picked up such vocabulary usage from intensive Bible reading. But there are words and expressions in the original Book of Mormon text that never appear, at least with their archaic meanings, in the King James Bible yet were common in Early Modern English.

Some Examples Not Found in the King James Bible

To counsel, meaning 'to counsel with'

In the original text of the Book of Mormon we have two cases where the verb *counsel* is used without the expected preposition *with:* "**counsel** the Lord in all thy doings" (Alma 37:37) and "take it upon you to **counsel** your elder brothers in your undertakings" (Alma 39:10). In the first case, Alma is speaking to Helaman; in the second, to Corianton, the wayward missionary son. In no way is Alma advocating that Helaman counsel the Lord or that Corianton counsel his two righteous brothers. The editors for the 1920 LDS edition recognized that the preposition *with* was necessary in those two passages so that readers would not misinterpret the language; thus in both cases *counsel* was emended to *counsel with.* One could assume that somehow the preposition *with* was accidentally lost during the early transmission of these two passages. Yet the OED, under definition 4, lists the now obsolete meaning 'to ask counsel of; to consult' for the verb *counsel.* Citations date from 1382 to 1547, the last one coming from John Hooper: "Moses . . . **counselled** the Lord and thereupon advised his subjects what was to be done." Clearly, Moses is counseling **with** the Lord, not giving counsel **to** the Lord.

But if, meaning 'unless'

In the original text, Mosiah 3:19 reads "for the natural man is an enemy to God and has been from the fall of Adam and will be forever and ever **but if** he yieldeth to the enticings of the Holy Spirit." This strange use of *but if* was replaced in the 1920 LDS edition with *unless* since the latter seems to be the appropriate meaning. And indeed it is: the OED gives the following definition for the now obsolete *but if* (under definition 10b for the conjunction *but*): 'if not, unless, except.' Citations of this usage in the OED date from about 1200 to 1596, including this one from Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1580): "He did not like that maides should once stir out of their fathers houses, **but if** it were to milke a cow." The OED also states that this meaning of *but if* was "very common" from the 1300s through the 1500s.

To depart, meaning 'to part, divide, separate'

In the printer's manuscript for Helaman 8:11, the text reads "God gave power unto one man even

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Archaic Vocabulary cont. from page 3

Moses to smite upon the waters of the Red Sea and they **departed** hither and thither." The 1830 typesetter thought *departed* must be an error, so he replaced it with the expected *parted*. Yet the OED explains that the verb *depart* once had the now obsolete meaning of 'to put asunder, sunder, separate, part' (see definitions 3a–3d), with citations from 1297 through 1677. Many of the citations in the OED for this meaning are religious ones. For instance, John Wycliffe's 1388 translation of Isaiah 59:2 reads "ȝoure wickednesses han **departid** bitwixe ȝou and ȝoure God" (which the King James Bible translates as "But your iniquities have **separated** between you and your God"). There is John Maundeville's reference (about 1400) to Moses's rod: "þe ȝerde of Moyses, with þe whilk he **departid** þe Reed See," meaning 'the rod [yard] of Moses with which he parted the Red Sea.' When the King James Bible refers to Moses using his rod to part the Red Sea, the verb is *divide:* "But lift thou up thy rod and stretch out thine hand over the sea and **divide** it" (Exodus 14:16). William Tyndale, in his 1526 translation of Romans 8:39, uses *depart:* "To **departe** us from Goddes love." The King James Bible, on the other hand, uses the verb *separate:* "to **separate** us from the love of God." The 1557 Geneva Bible translates John 19:24 as "They **departed** my rayment among them." But the King James Bible once more circumvents this use of *depart*, in this instance by selecting the verb *part:* "They **parted** my raiment among them." Finally, there is this example from the 1548–49 Book of Common Prayer: "Till death vs **departe**." In 1662 this reading was changed to "Till death us **do part**" because by then the meaning of 'to part' for *depart* was obsolete. Note, however, that the change in the very familiar phraseology was minimal: the *de-* was replaced with the helping verb *do*, thus maintaining the cadence and sound of the original language.

Extinct, referring to an individual's death

Alma 44:7 reads "and I will command my men that they shall fall upon you and inflict the wounds of death in your bodies that ye may become **extinct**." Such usage seems very odd today since, as the OED explains under definition 4 for this past participial adjective, we now use *extinct* to refer to a family, race, or species as having died out or come to an end. But in Early Modern English, *extinct* could refer to a person's death. The OED, under definition 3, lists citations from 1483 through 1675, the last one from an English translation of Machiavelli's *The Prince:* "The Pope being dead and Valentine **extinct**."

We should note that the text does not consistently use the archaic meaning for every instance of these words. For example, the verb *require* has its expected meaning in Alma 34:12: "but the law **requireth** the life of him who hath murdered." One can shoot as well as cast arrows: "and they cast stones at him upon the wall and also many **shot arrows** at him" (Helaman 16:2). There is also one case of "to counsel **with** someone" in the earliest text, in Mosiah 17:6: "having counseled **with** his priests"; and there are two instances that refer to counseling the Lord: "seek not to counsel the Lord" (Jacob 4:10) and "counsel me not" (Jacob 5:22). The conjunctive *but if* occurs only once in the text with the meaning 'unless.' In seven other places, the text uses *unless*, as in Mosiah 17:8: "for this cause thou shalt be put to death **unless** thou wilt recall all the words which thou hast spoken evil concerning me and my people." Similarly, *depart* otherwise means 'to leave' in the Book of Mormon rather than 'to part.' There are two other references to Moses's parting of the Red Sea (1 Nephi 4:2 and 1 Nephi 17:26), and they have the verb *divide*, just as the King James Bible does. Four instances of *extinct* refer to the death of individuals in a single military engagement (Alma 45:14, Helaman 11:10, and 3 Nephi 3:8 as well as Alma 44:7), but there is one that refers to the permanent extinction of an entire race of people: "even until the people of Nephi shall become extinct" (Alma 45:11). Yet even with all these examples where the words take on their more familiar uses, we find that those meanings are also found in Early Modern English. In any event, examples of variant meaning are not unexpected in a text of this size since language itself

is inherently variant. We cannot expect the text to have no variation at all. The critical text will accept these earliest readings as the original text, despite their archaic meanings and their inconsistent usage.

One could argue that all these examples are actually errors that entered the Book of Mormon text in the early transmission of the text: for example, *require* looks like *request*, the preposition *with* after *counsel* could have been accidentally omitted, and *part* could have been miswritten as *depart*. But the other examples seem fully intended: arrows are cast along with stones, the highly unusual *but if* cannot be an error for *unless*, and the word *extinct* refers to the death of individuals in four out of five cases in the Book of Mormon.

Another argument against this analysis would be that all these archaic meanings might have still existed in Joseph Smith's upstate New York dialect. Thus far there is no evidence to support such a hypothesis. Lexical studies consistently show that the archaic meanings for these words did indeed become obsolete in England prior to 1700. Nor have any vestiges of their use in the American colonies been found as of yet.

Conjectural Emendations

If the original vocabulary of the Book of Mormon text dates from Early Modern English, one might wonder if there are any archaic words or expressions that were unrecognizable to Joseph Smith and his scribes, thus leading them to misinterpret and change the language during the early transmission of the text. Two possibilities have arisen thus far. The first one deals with the word *ceremony* in Mosiah 19:24: "and it came to pass that **after they had ended the ceremony** that they returned to the land of Nephi." The problem with this passage is that the word *ceremony* seems out of place. The larger context implies that their discourse was simply over:

> and it came to pass that they were about to return to the land of Nephi and they met the men of Gideon and the men of Gideon told them of all that had happened to their wives and their children and that the Lamanites had granted unto them that they might possess the land by paying a tribute to the Lamanites of one half of all they possessed and the people told the men of Gideon that they had slain the king and his priests had fled from them farther into the wilderness and it came to pass that **after they had ended the ceremony** that they returned to the land of Nephi rejoicing because their wives and their children were not slain and they told Gideon what they had done to the king (Mosiah 19:22–24)

The OED lists no meaning for *ceremony* that would work reasonably well for this passage except to assume that the conversation itself is a ceremony or that it involved some kind of ceremonial aspect in recounting the execution of King Noah.

I have had a number of my students and research assistants try to find another word that might work better in Mosiah 19:22–24, one that would perhaps sound or look like *ceremony*. The idea behind this approach is that such a word might have been miscopied or misheard as *ceremony*. The only plausible suggestion proposed thus far comes from Renee Bangerter in her 1998 BYU master's thesis ("Since Joseph Smith's Time: Lexical Semantic Shifts in the Book of Mormon," pp. 16–18), where she proposes that the original word in Mosiah 19:24 might have been *sermon*. Although the current meanings for this word will not work in this passage, Bangerter notes that the OED gives the earliest meaning for *sermon* as 'something that is said; talk, discourse,' which would exactly fit the context described in Mosiah 19:22–24. This meaning is, however, obsolete; the last citation in the OED with this meaning dates from 1594: "Desiring Don Infeligo with very mild sermon to be friends with Medesimo again." The last citation found on *Literature Online* <lion.chadwyck.com> with this meaning comes from Giles Fletcher and dates from 1593: "Out of my braine I made his Sermon flow."

In part 3 of volume 4 of the critical text, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon* (this part will be published in the summer of 2006), I discuss under Mosiah 19:24 how *sermon* could have accidentally been replaced by *ceremony*. Basically, I propose the following: the scribe for the original manuscript (which is unfortunately not

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extant here) spelled *sermon* as *cermon*, which was then misread as *ceremony* (and spelled as *cerimony*) when Oliver Cowdery copied the word from the original manuscript into the printer's manuscript. Such a conjectural emendation is possible once we recognize that the vocabulary for the original Book of Mormon text dates from the 1500s and 1600s.

A second possible misinterpretation deals with the expression "the pleasing bar of God," as found in Jacob 6:13 (and similarly in Moroni 10:34 as "the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah"). In part 2 of volume 4 of the critical text (this part was published in August of this year), under Jacob 6:13, I argue that *the pleasing bar* is actually a mistake for *the pleading bar*. An abbreviated description of the evidence for emending the text to *the pleading bar* was initially presented in 2004 and can be found in a previous issue of the FARMS publication *Insights* (vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 2–3). This conjectural emendation was first proposed by Christian Gellinek in 2003. There are no uses of the term *pleasing bar* anywhere on the Internet except in reference to the Book of Mormon, yet there is clear evidence that the legal term *pleading bar* was used in the 1600s. And as might be expected, no instances of *pleading bar* have thus far been found during the 1800s, in either England or the United States. But such a conjectural emendation is consistent with the hypothesis that the vocabulary of the Book of Mormon dates from Early Modern English.

These new findings argue that Joseph Smith was not the author of the English-language translation of the Book of Mormon. Not only was the text revealed to him word for word, but the words themselves sometimes had meanings that he and his scribes would not have known, which occasionally led to misinterpretation. The Book of Mormon is not a 19th-century text, nor is it Joseph Smith's. The English-language text was revealed through him, but it was not precisely in his language or ours.

In this article, I have briefly listed some of the examples of the original archaic language in the Book of Mormon. A complete discussion of this issue will eventually appear in volume 3 of the critical text, *The History of the Text of the Book of Mormon*. Many of these examples, especially those that involve textual variation, are discussed in volume 4, *Analysis of Textual Variants of the Book of Mormon*, now in the process of being published.

By Royal Skousen

Professor of Linguistics and English Language, Brigham Young University

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traditions about the patriarch. One paper situates the astronomical accounts in the Book of Abraham among ancient geocentric astronomies, while another argues heliocentric conceptions from contemporary physics to elucidate the same subject. Other papers deal with such subjects as the metaphors of stars and cedars in ancient accounts about Abraham and the question of whether certain scriptural creation stories are allegorical.

The nature of the connection between the Joseph Smith Papyri and the Book of Abraham continues to be a matter of interest and discussion, and several articles in the volume address issues associated with the papyri and their background. One paper, for example, discusses ancient Semitic adaptations of Egyptian iconography and raises the issue of whether an Egyptological interpretation of the facsimiles from the Book of Abraham is relevant.

The Abrahamic covenant, of course, is one of the most important themes dealt with in the Book of Abraham. Various articles treat such topics as the role of women in the Abrahamic covenant and Abraham's redemption in light of the covenant.

Fifteen different scholars—including astronomers, Egyptologists, and historians—contributed to this volume. The two previous titles in this series are *Traditions about the Early Life of Abraham* and *The Hor Book of Breathings: A Translation and Commentary*. To order the book online, visit the FARMS Web site (farms.byu.edu) and click on the link for the book.

New Directors cont. from page 1

"I look forward to working more closely with the fine scholars and other valued personnel at ISPART, who all have done so much through the years to establish the high reputation of solid, rigorous scholarship and quality publication that the organization enjoys," Skinner said.

Working alongside Skinner in his new role as executive director of ISPART are M. Gerald Bradford, associate executive director, and Alison V. P. Coutts, assistant executive director. Established in 2001, ISPART is the administrative organization that oversees the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) and its sister organizations, the Center for the Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts (CPART) and the Middle Eastern Texts Initiative (METI).

Noel Reynolds served as president of FARMS from 1991 to 1998, succeeding Stephen D. Ricks (1988–1991) and John W. Welch (1979–1988). When Reynolds was appointed associate academic vice president for undergraduate studies at BYU in 1998, Daniel Oswald succeeded him as president/director of FARMS. In 2003 Reynolds returned to function as both director of FARMS and executive director of ISPART.

A Harvard-educated professor of political science with a keen interest in Book of Mormon studies, Reynolds will be remembered for many signal achievements during his years at FARMS. Besides his scholarly essays and his editor- and coathorship of *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited* (1997) and *Early Christians in Disarray: Contemporary LDS Perspectives on the Christian Apostasy* (2005), he played key roles in organizing scholarly conferences, directing and funding research projects, and guiding FARMS as it faced significant opportunities and challenges owing to its rapid growth in resources, projects, and staff and its changing relationship with BYU, culminating in the invitation for FARMS to become part of the university.

With Reynolds's departure, the BYU administration decided to appoint a separate director of FARMS: S. Kent Brown, a professor of ancient scripture at BYU and current director of Ancient Studies on campus. Brown is the editor of FARMS's *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* and has been a member of the FARMS Board of Directors since 2003.

Brown earned a BA in Classical Greek, with a minor in Near Eastern languages, from the University of California at Berkeley in 1967. In 1972 he received his PhD from Brown University, with an emphasis in New Testament and Early Christian studies. He has taught at BYU since 1971. In 1978 and 1979 he and his family lived in Cairo, where, as a fellow of the American Research Center in Egypt, he worked on the collection of ostraca at the Coptic Museum. From 1982 to 1985 he served as chair of the Department of Ancient Scripture and then worked two years as director of publications for the Religious Studies Center.

From 1984 to 1990 Brown led a project sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Mormon Archaeology and Research Foundation to microfilm more than 1,500 ancient Christian manuscripts in Cairo and Jerusalem. He has also been a fellow of both the BYU Jerusalem Center in Israel and the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies in Provo. Brown was the director of the BYU Jerusalem Center from 1993 to 1996.

His most recent project was the production of the groundbreaking 90-minute documentary *Journey of Faith*, which traces the probable route of Lehi's family through Arabia and on to the promised land.

"In the future, I can see FARMS becoming involved with the production of documentary films that review in a positive light our scriptural heritage, particularly the Book of Mormon," Brown said. "The release of the film *Journey of Faith* stands as a bold first step onto this stage."

Brown fully expects FARMS's long-standing research focus on the Book of Mormon to continue. "I live with a sense that we have penetrated only a small portion of the living world of the Book of Mormon," he said. "Occasionally I read an expression that leaves me wondering what it represents in the life experiences of its author. In my opinion, we shall yet see many thoughtful, careful studies on fresh topics as well as reassessments and refinements of previously published conclusions."

We wish our esteemed directors continued success as they settle into their new responsibilities of directing the research and publication interests of ISPART and FARMS.

From FARMS

Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri, edited by John Gee and Michael Rhodes, is a second edition of Hugh Nibley's 1975 book of the same title on the Egyptian endowment. It is still the only book-length treatment of the important Egyptian text now known as the "Document of Breathings Made by Isis," a copy of which was found among the Joseph Smith Papyri. The new edition features previously excised material, corrections of numerous typographical errors, improved illustrations, and accurate placement of illustrations in the text. This book, published jointly with Deseret Book, is now at press after years of intense effort. Because of a recent concerted push to finish this project, the *FARMS Review* and *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* are running late.

From METI

Theodore Abū Qurrah, translated and introduced by John C. Lamoreaux of Southern Methodist University, includes first-ever English translations of a substantial portion of Theodore Abū Qurrah's writings, which treat such issues as the characteristics of true religion and the nature of free will. Abū Qurrah (fl. AD 810), the bishop of Haran (in modern-day southern Turkey), was one of the first Christians to write in Arabic and to mount a sustained theological defense of Christianity against Islam. This book is now at press and will be distributed by the University of Chicago Press and made available through the BYU Bookstore.

By ISPART Scholars with Other Publishers

Joseph: Exploring the Life and Ministry of the Prophet, edited by Susan Easton Black and Andrew C. Skinner (Deseret Book, 2005), features studies by 33 Latter-day Saint scholars on an array of topics, including Joseph Smith's mission foretold by ancient prophets, Moroni's visits, the book of Lehi, the Three Witnesses, the mission to the Lamanites, Zion's Camp, the Kirtland Temple, the gatherings, the Nauvoo Legion, and the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum.

The Pearl of Great Price: A Verse-by-Verse Commentary, by Richard D. Draper, S. Kent Brown, and Michael D. Rhodes (Deseret Book, 2005), offers detailed analyses of the Book of Moses and the Book of Abraham (including the facsimiles) in light of ancient and modern sources. It likewise provides insights into the background and doctrinal content of Joseph Smith—History, Joseph Smith—Matthew, and the Articles of Faith.

Insights

A Window on the Ancient World

Volume 25 | Number 5 | 2005

A Publication of the

Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS)

FARMS is part of Brigham Young University's Institute for the Study and Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts (ISPART). As such, it encourages and supports research on the Book of Mormon, the Book of Abraham, the Bible, other ancient scripture, and related subjects. Under the FARMS imprint, the Institute publishes and distributes titles in these areas for the benefit of scholars and interested Latter-day Saint readers.

Primary research interests at FARMS include the history, language, literature, culture, geography, politics, and law relevant to ancient scripture. Although such subjects are of secondary importance when compared with the spiritual and eternal messages of scripture, solid research and academic perspectives can supply certain kinds of useful information, even if only tentatively, concerning many significant and interesting questions about scripture.

FARMS makes interim and final reports about this research available widely, promptly, and economically. These publications are peer reviewed to ensure that scholarly standards are met. The proceeds from the sale of these materials are used to support further research and publications. As a service to teachers and students of the scriptures, research results are distributed in both scholarly and popular formats.

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