



# BOOK OF MORMON CENTRAL

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## Insights, Vol. 4, No. 2 (June 1984)

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FOUNDATION FOR  
ANCIENT RESEARCH &  
MORMON STUDIES

# INSIGHTS

## AN ANCIENT WINDOW

"...by study and also by faith." D&C 88:118

### IS MULEK MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE?

Helaman 6:10 records that Zedekiah, King of Judah in Lehi's day, had a son named Mulek who escaped execution by the Babylonians, despite the statement in 2 Kings 25:4-7 that the king's sons were slain. While the name *Mulek* is not mentioned directly in the Bible, scholars have recently drawn some interesting conclusions about a person named Malchiah, mentioned in Jer. 38:6. Could he have been Mulek?

Malchiah (or better, MalkiYahu) was "the son of Hammelech" according to the King James translation of Jeremiah. But clearly this should have been translated "the son of the king" since *-melech* in Hebrew means the same as *melek*, king. Several factors now indicate that Malchiah was in fact not just the son of an anonymous king but the son of Zedekiah. Thus concluded Yohanan Aharoni, the late head of the Department of Archaeology at Tel Aviv University.

Furthermore, it is known that names like Malchiah (BerekYahu for example) took a shortened form in the 6th century B.C. The short name for BerekYahu was Baruch, the familiar name of Jeremiah's scribe. A similar abbreviation would reduce Malchiah (MalkiYahu) to something very much like "Mulek" as in the Book of Mormon.

A prominent Old Testament scholar visiting in Provo during March was impressed to learn that the Book of Mormon names Mulek as a son of Zedekiah. He remarked, "If Joseph Smith came up with that one, he did pretty well!"

### Metonymy in the Book of Mormon

A suggestion by Gordon Thomasson led to a May 3 seminar where 11 F.A.R.M.S. collaborators examined another subtle stylistic feature in the Book of Mormon. Metonymy is the practice of giving a person or place a name whose meaning reflects an event or trait associated with that person or place. A closely related practice sees a person's name become symbolic of some phenomenon. An example of metonymy is in 1 Sam. 25 where a man is said to have been named Nabal, "fool," because he refused to aid David and his supporters. The second pattern is shown in the statement "to be a Judas" and in the common reference to New York as "Babylon on the Hudson."

Thomasson noted particularly that the name *Zeezrom*, given to one who tried to bribe Alma and Amulek with silver money (Alma 11:22), can be read in Hebrew as "the ezrom (money)" or perhaps "the one with money," since an *ezrom* was a Nephite measure of silver (Alma 11:12). In another example, Isabel, the harlot of Siron visited by Corianton (Alma 39:3), may be related in moral concept to Jezebel of the Old Testament (2 Kings 9:22), because of the essentially similar names they bore.

The group's discussion both questioned and supported a wide range of detail about several suggested metonymic name associations in the Book of Mormon. Other aspects of naming were spun off, so the end result was an array of challenging possibilities for further research. John Tvednes, Benjamin Urrutia, Robert Smith, Blake Ostler, John Robertson, and others brought varied language and linguistic resources to the discussion, which ranged into topics such as nicknaming, taboo names, punning, and the significance of writing systems for the reading of names.

*continued on page 2*

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies is a non-profit research and educational organization dedicated to the study of ancient Scripture. Your tax deductible contributions enable F.A.R.M.S. to sponsor and coordinate a wide range of research projects that enhance our understanding of these sacred writings.

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METONYMY continued from page 1

A strong consensus emerged that a concerted research thrust should be mounted to explore the topic further. Moreover, the vigor of this seminar workshop suggested that other promising subjects deserve treatment in similar format.

## President's Message

In 1832, Section 84 of the Doctrine and Covenants was revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith. In this great section, the Lord explained one of the reasons why the people of the Church languished in spiritual darkness: "And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received . . ." Members of the Church were told that they would remain under condemnation until "they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments" which had been given to them (D & C 84:54,57)

It is equally important today to take the Book of Mormon seriously. One way is to heed its message spiritually; another is to study it carefully. Both are reflected in the subscript at the top of this Newsletter: ". . . by study and also by faith." This passage challenges us to cultivate balance in our lives between these two dimensions.

F.A.R.M.S. hopes you will use the materials it makes available to enhance your appreciation of the subtlety, precision and beauty of many Book of Mormon texts — that you will approach the book seriously "by study." That will not prove the Book of Mormon, but it will elevate its stature, neutralize some people's doubts, and allay superficial criticisms. At the same time, we urge F.A.R.M.S. participants not to substitute study of the technical materials for faith or for the vital understanding of gospel principles which this divine book can provide.

John W. Welch

## Pamphlets available

Mormon Miscellaneous (P.O. Box 388, Salt Lake City, UT 84110) has published a number of pamphlets that support various aspects of the Book of Mormon and respond to attacks by critics. These pieces are generally well-written and reflect careful scholarship. F.A.R.M.S. participants not acquainted with these publications may wish to write for a listing.

## F.A.R.M.S. NEWS

### New Offices

F.A.R.M.S. moved this spring up from our basement quarters into three rooms on the third floor of Amanda Knight Hall, at the corner of 800 North and University Avenue in Provo. Room 315 serves as the main office; another room is a distribution center and the third houses our archive and research library. The gable-roofed architecture of the building preserves a distinctive atmosphere of quiet age.

The office is not generally open to the public. **Special visits can be accommodated by appointment.** Our telephone number is (801) 378-3295, although the office is not always staffed and it may be unattended when you call. Open hours will be held during busy periods such as the CES Symposium and BYU Campus Education Week in August. Please come by and see us then.

We are grateful to Ed Haines and his staff, and to Noel Reynolds, Robert Matthews, and many others at BYU who made this welcomed move possible.

### Exhibit Schedule

The Foundation has prepared a very professional table-top display outlining F.A.R.M.S.' purposes and projects. Exhibits were held recently at April General Conference, at the Society of Biblical Literature regional meetings in Denver, and at the Mormon History Association convention in Provo. Exhibits are planned at BYU during August for Commencement, the CES Symposium and Campus Education Week. We welcome your suggestions of other public gatherings where a F.A.R.M.S. exhibit might be appropriate.

### Media Updates

The media production "Lands of the Book of Mormon" is now in its second edition in both slide/cassette and video formats. Over 350 copies of this stimulating and popular show are in use around the Church. Viewer response has been quite favorable.

F.A.R.M.S.' other video presentation, "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon," is a 45 minute illustrated discussion of the striking ancient literary art form that some LDS scholars consider the most exciting Book of Mormon discovery of our generation. It is pertinent to the study of Mosiah and Alma — particularly Alma's masterful chapter 36.

## Book of Mormon Critical Text

Critical texts of the Bible have been available for many years, showing variant readings from early Greek or Hebrew manuscripts accompanying the familiar phrasing of the standard Bible. Heavily footnoted, these volumes show how words and structures of the text have appeared in different editions over time and in different languages. They have become an essential tool for scholarly research on the scripture. They also aid serious readers by clarifying how the text may be interpreted.

By the time you receive this Newsletter, the first of a three-volume Critical Text (CT) of the Book of Mormon will be completed. **This monumental work has been many years in preparation and will be indispensable to all future text-related scholarly study and translation of the Book of Mormon.** It is not for the casual reader, but it is invaluable to anyone who wants to thoroughly understand the present text.

The CT shows each noteworthy change which has occurred in the Book of Mormon from the Original Manuscript, through the Printer's Manuscript and the First Edition, on down to the most recent LDS and RLDS editions. Minor changes are not treated individually but are only described in general terms. (Nor would one list the thousands of purely stylistic changes in phrasing that have been made in the King James Version of the Bible since it first appeared in Elizabethan English in 1611.) Book of Mormon words and phrases that parallel Biblical expressions and passages are noted. Each Book of Mormon passage has its point of view or form of composition indicated, and its author identified where possible. The CT also contains a valuable explanatory Introduction. We believe this is the first comprehensive, computerized critical text project ever completed on the Book of Mormon.

The three volumes (I. 1 Nephi to words of Mormon; II. Mosiah to Alma; III. Helaman to Moroni) are available only as a set and will be offered for a limited time. The entire set will be approximately 1100 pages and will cost \$55. We will be glad to send you some sample pages for examination upon request. The remaining two volumes should appear by the end of this year. **Order now to obtain your copy of this superb tool.**

## Reprints and Preliminary Reports

### The Survivor Syndrome

Certain well known patterns of human behavior are accurately depicted in the Book of Mormon. For example, Hugh Nibley has explored the pattern of the flight of the righteous into the wilderness. A striking new study now describes another pattern for our consideration.

Terrence Des Pres' article, "Survivors and the Will to Bear Witness," *Social Research*, 40 (1973), 668-690, points out that survivors of Hitler's and Stalin's death camps reacted in markedly similar ways. He says this is a "specific kind of experience. It has a definite structure." The survivor responds with determination to live on, not for himself, but to bear witness to the world in a poignant kind of testament indicting man's inhumanity to his fellows. The victims make a special promise among themselves that whoever comes through the ordeal will "take with him the burden of speaking for the others." An elaborate profile of survivor behavior results from Des Pres' research. **Mormon and Moroni could hardly fit that profile more precisely.** Thus the Book of Mormon is shown once more to be a profound human document of deep import, rather than a shallow composition dashed off by a rural New Yorker. A valuable discussion of this pattern in light of Des Pres' work is now available in Lisa Hawkins' and Gordon Thomasson's "I Only Am Escaped Alone to Tell Thee: Survivor-Witnesses in the Book of Mormon." (See attached order form.)

### Books in Print

Gary Gillum has met a practical need by compiling a list of books currently in print about the Book of Mormon, together with reprinted reviews of a number of them. F.A.R.M.S. does not hereby undertake to endorse or recommend these books, but the material in the Report will assist our participants who inquire about books currently available. The reviews will help you understand some of the books better, although useful reviews of books of this type rarely appear anywhere. Note too that the F.A.R.M.S. Comprehensive Book of Mormon Bibliography, still available as a Preliminary Report, lists over 2,000 books, articles and papers on the scripture. (See attached order form.)

### Kinderhook Plates

A new Reprint is Stanley B. Kimball's "Kinderhook Plates...Appear to Be a Nineteenth-Century Hoax," from the August, 1982 *Ensign*. This LDS Historian reports on the historical background of these metal plates, discovered in Illinois

in 1843, and summarizes the documentary and technical evidence which leads to the conclusion that the plates were probably a planted hoax. It is interesting that Joseph Smith apparently did not fall for the scheme, even though some of his associates may have done so. (See attached order form.)

### Native American Origins

Franklin S. Harris III completed an M.A. thesis at the University of Texas, Arlington, in 1973 on evidence supporting the Book of Mormon. In a style reminiscent of his father, who produced the notable Messages and Evidences of the Book of Mormon (1953), young Harris has compiled interesting chapters on ocean voyages in ancient times, racial characteristics of some American Indians, and other provocative topics. His chapter 2 is offered by F.A.R.M.S. as a Reprint entitled "Ancient America: Native Accounts of Origins." It serves as a concise orientation to the major sources recorded in Spanish colonial times which provide information on native traditions and beliefs similar to the Book of Mormon account of Nephite, Mulekite, or Jaredite origins. Ixtlilxochitl, Sahagun, Torquemada, the *Popol Vuh*, and other ethnohistorical sources are discussed. (See attached order form.)

### Isaiah Variants

Another Preliminary Report has been available for some time as one of the 83 papers in the 1984 Book of Mormon Study Catalog, but it deserves special notice. In his "The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," John A. Tvedtnes presents an exhaustive listing and analysis of the use of Isaiah's words (including paraphrases) in the American scripture. He not only lists these occurrences but also comments on their significance and compares them with the texts of Isaiah as phrased in the major Bible translations and in the Dead Sea Scrolls. Seventeen categories are then used to classify the variations between the Isaiah texts in the Book of Mormon and in the King James Version. For example, Tvedtnes' categories A and C are "Book of Mormon superior to KJV as a translation from Masoretic Text Hebrew" and "Evidence of scribal error in ancient times, with evidence favoring Book of Mormon." Category K is "Book of Mormon variations from KJV with no explanation." Certain of the categories (such as A and C) are clearly supportive of the ancient authenticity of the Book of Mormon, while category K is considered unfavorable to authenticity. Of the 265 KJV variants rated, 89 favor the Book of Mormon, 129 are judged neutral or equal, and 47 are unfavorable to the Book of Mormon, given the current state of our knowledge of the various Isaiah texts. One of the author's

conclusions is that "It is inconceivable that Joseph Smith could have made so many correct changes in the Isaiah text and placed them in a fraudulent book," particularly when "he was not schooled in such matters..." Tvedtnes' piece is not the last word on the subject, but surely no one, critic or apologist, deserves attention hereafter until he has fully considered this Preliminary Report.

## F.A.R.M.S. Monthly Updates

Some Newsletter readers may be unaware that since December, 1983, monthly one-page information memos have been produced by the Foundation and distributed to Cornerstone Club contributors. **These releases are short, specific reports on late-breaking news about pertinent discoveries or research findings.** Some of this information later appears in abbreviated form in the Newsletter or other public sources, but those contributors who read the Monthly Update receive the news first from this unique information service. Recent issues have discussed the discovery of pre-columbian barley in Arizona, two Egyptian-like figurines uncovered many years ago in El Salvador, the possible occurrence of Mulek's name in the Bible, and other fascinating topics. Contributors to the Cornerstone Club automatically receive this Monthly Update. Those who have recently joined the Cornerstone Club are invited to request all the back issues for the current year. At the end of each year, F.A.R.M.S. will bind the 12 Monthly Updates together and make them available as a Preliminary Report on the regular order form. To join the Cornerstone Club, send in your contribution with the order form attached to this Newsletter.

## Help Wanted: Participate in Research

Dr. Stanley B. Kimball (Department of History, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, IL 62026) is researching what might have happened to some of the Egyptian mummies and papyri owned by the Saints at Kirtland, Ohio, in the 1830's. His aim is to examine all local newspapers in the United States during the period May-December, 1856, in hopes of finding a reference to where those artifacts were sent at that time. Anyone with library access to any local newspaper of the period indicated, who is willing to scan the relevant issues in aid of this project, should write to Dr. Kimball.



# ORDER FORM

## REPRINTS

Franklin S. Harris III, "Ancient America: Native Accounts of Their Origins" (Chapter 2, M.A. Thesis, University of Texas at Arlington, 1973) 10 pp. \$7.50

Stanley B. Kimball, "Kinderhook Plates" (*Ensign*, August 1981) 5 pp. \$5.00

## PRELIMINARY REPORTS

Gary Gillum, "Book of Mormon Books in Print, April 1984, with Published Book Reviews," 25 pp. \$1.50

Lisa B. Hawkins and Gordon Thomasson, "I Only Am Escaped Alone to Tell Thee: Survivor-Witnesses in the Book of Mormon," 14 pp. \$1.00

John A. Tvedtnes, "The Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon," 120 pp. (included in Gospel Doctrine Set) \$3.50

## BOOKS

James H. Charlesworth, ed., *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, Volume 1 (Doubleday) \$23.00

John W. Welch, ed., *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, (Gerstenberg) \$35.00

## RESEARCH TOOLS

Critical Text of the Book of Mormon, 3 volumes looseleaf format, approximately 1100 pages. Volume I (1 Nephi to Words of Mormon) will be shipped during July, 1984. Volumes 2 and 3 will appear later in the year. Available only as a set. Sample pages available on request. Will also be available on magnetic media. Subscription now is important. Prompt action will guarantee your copy of this monumental study aid. \$55.00

Index to the Doctrinal Statements of Joseph Smith, approximately 1,000 pages. Compiled by Truman G. Madsen. We are accepting pre-publication reservations only. Send no money yet. Anticipated price will be \$30 to \$35. One-time, limited offering. **CHECK FOR RESERVATION**

## MONTHLY UPDATES

Sign me up to receive the F.A.R.M.S. Monthly Updates of late-breaking research news. I pledge to contribute at least \$10 per month to support scripture-related studies. **PLEDGE** \_\_\_\_\_

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Janet Twigg F.A.R.M.S. Office (801) 378-3295

### Items for the Newsletter

Shannon Magleby, American Fork, UT, (801) 756-4763  
Lavina Fielding Anderson, Salt Lake City, UT, (801) 467-1617

### Research Proposals and Papers

Stephen Ricks, 449 CB, BYU (801) 378-5428  
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Jack Welch, 522 JRCB, BYU (801) 378-3168

### Nibley Archive

Gary Gillum, 6210 HBLL, BYU (801) 378-6118

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Lands of the Book of Mormon (113 slides, 22 minute cassette sound track) \$35.00

Lands of the Book of Mormon 34 minute video

Check one:  VHS  Beta \$30.00

Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. Teachers may want to use this especially in discussing Alma 36. Chiasmus is a beautiful ancient literary art form which appears in ancient writings, including the Old Testament and the Book of Mormon. 45 minute video. Check one:  VHS  Beta \$30.00

## GOSPEL DOCTRINE

Full set of 83 articles complementing the 1984 Gospel Doctrine Lessons 1700 pp. \$75.00

## CATALOGS

1984 Nibley Archive Catalog (lists articles and cassette tapes) \$25

Book of Mormon Study Catalog complementing the 1984 Gospel Doctrine Lessons (free if you send a stamped, self-addressed envelope) \$25

Complete F.A.R.M.S. Catalog \$25

## PRIOR NEWSLETTERS

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## FIRESIDES

Call Shannon Magleby (801) 756-4763 to schedule a date. Topics available include "Lands of the Book of Mormon" and "Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon." The charge is \$25 along the Wasatch Front. \$25 plus travel expense in other areas.

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# Get Your Friends On The Mailing List

F.A.R.M.S.' membership philosophy is really quite simple. F.A.R.M.S. will mail The Insights Newsletter to anyone who maintains an active interest in scripture studies, so long as they contribute time, money or talent to the research effort. By making the request, you or anyone you designate will be added to the mailing list and automatically receive four issues of the Newsletter.

We call our affiliates **participants** because the substantial research job that needs to be done will require the dedicated participation of large numbers of individuals from all walks of life.

We earnestly encourage voluntary contributions of time and money and urge all to share their research, questions and ideas. Whether you are a scholar, philanthropist, Sunday School teacher or whatever, we simply ask that you participate in an appropriate manner to help promote scripture-related research.

**Let us hear from you!**

# F.A.R.M.S.

The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (F.A.R.M.S.) is a non-profit charitable corporation organized to promote, coordinate, and finance research on Mormon scriptures, particularly the Book of Mormon. Your contributions are tax-deductible. F.A.R.M.S.' purposes are (1) to identify, sponsor, and coordinate **research** on Mormon scriptures by qualified scholars both in and out of the Church; (2) to make valuable materials available to researchers and the general Church membership that might not otherwise find **publication** in existing outlets or that may be in periodicals not readily available; (3) to eliminate duplication by **communicating** as widely as possible reports on research in progress and by encouraging interdisciplinary efforts; (4) to **raise money** to promote and finance these purposes; and (5) ultimately to use tapes, films, magazines, documentaries, and other presentations to communicate the results of careful scholarship in a way that a **mass audience** can understand. F.A.R.M.S. does not intend to minimize the need for **faith** in the Book of Mormon but wishes to increase the **understanding** of the Book of Mormon to help it come truly to life.

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## Additional Study Aids

### Ancient Israel

F.A.R.M.S. has frequently been asked to recommend books that people might read to learn more about the world of Lehi, the ancient source of much of the Book of Mormon. Beside the classic works by Hugh Nibley, *Lehi in the Desert, An Approach to the Book of Mormon*, and *Since Cumorah*, a very valuable book is by Father Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, in two volumes (McGraw Hill). Although slightly dated, the book remains extremely insightful, generally readable and reliable, and conveniently available in paperback.

An alert reader will detect many anticipations of Nephite practices in de Vaux's analysis and reconstruction of pre-Exilic Israelite culture and beliefs. For example, Part III of Volume I deals with military practices; many of his points are accurately reflected in the chapters on war in the book of Alma. For example, the way Israelite kings might consult a **prophet** before undertaking war (p. 263) recalls Alma 43:23. The rigorous need for **purity** in the camp (p. 258) reminds us of the emphatic righteousness of the sons of Helaman in Alma 57:21.

One other military point is especially striking. De Vaux describes the important role of the **nes** in mustering the popular militia for war: "The *nes*, often translated 'banner,' is not really an ensign, but a pole or mast, which was raised on a hill to give the signal to take up arms or to rally together." (p. 227) Since the word *nes* is not translated as "pole" in the King James Bible, it is interesting that Alma 46:13 makes particular reference to the "pole" which Moroni used as he rallied his troops, in agreement with de Vaux's point.

### Doctrinal Index

Under the direction of Truman G. Madsen, a computerized index listing every keyword in all the known doctrinal writings or sermons of Joseph Smith is nearing completion. "This tool will save hundreds of hours of frustrating and often fruitless searching," reports Dr. Madsen. Only a one-time limited edition of this 1,000 page work is planned. Those desiring a copy should send no money yet, but must make advance reservations. The cost will likely be between \$30 and \$35. Address Dr. Madsen in care of F.A.R.M.S. or contact him directly at 165 JSB, BYU, Provo, UT 84602.

### Rhetorical Terms

Now published is a looseleaf collection entitled "A Glossary of Rhetorical Terms." It defines rhetorical devices and figures of speech used in all four LDS scriptures, giving examples of several of them. This research tool is available from Joe Stringham, LDS Church Office Building, Suite 2100, 50 East North Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84150.

### Stela 5, Izapa

F.A.R.M.S. will soon make available a compilation of material on Stela 5, Izapa, called by many the "Lehi Tree-of-Life Stone." This material will help the reader appreciate the various informed opinions that differ on the meaning of this sculpture. Meanwhile, the Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology 156 (March 1984) devotes some ten pages to articles by Ross T. Christensen and V. Garth Norman on Stela 5. You can contact S.E.H.A. at SALH, BYU, Provo, UT 84602.

### Movie on Metal Plates

A new 16mm, 20 minute movie entitled "So Let It Be Written" can now be ordered by wards, stakes, seminaries,

and interested individuals. Produced by Paul R. Cheesman of the BYU religion faculty, the work is available for \$95 from the Religious Studies Center, 156 JSB, BYU, Provo, UT 84602. This documentary film graphically demonstrates that writing on metal plates was a relatively common practice in Book of Mormon times. Illustrations are presented from many parts of the ancient world. Although it was known in Joseph Smith's day that ancient peoples wrote on metal tablets, it appears that golden plates were never mentioned. This interesting detail has come to light primarily through archaeological finds in the last 120 years.

### Seafaring Arabs

The July, 1982 *National Geographic* magazine describes a recent expedition that built and sailed a replica of an early Arabian ship from Oman to China. The voyage was undertaken to test the historical accuracy of the tales of Sindbad, which speak of Arab sailors trading with China over 1000 years ago. The expedition used only primitive technology and materials reconstructed on the basis of careful research in medieval manuscripts and charts. Readers of 1 Nephi 17 and 18 will benefit from this article, since both Nephi's ship and the Arab replica sailed from the same area. The materials and techniques could have been somewhat similar as well. Indeed, like the early Arab shipbuilders, Nephi worked without plans (1 Nephi 18:1). The *National Geographic* reports that "Arab shipwrights do not use drawings or plans when they build a ship. They work entirely by eye, and probably have always done so." Perhaps Nephi's own "figure-it-out-as-you-go" technique was one of the things that made his brothers skeptical of his enterprise (1 Nephi 17:18).



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