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Isaiah and the Latter-day Saints: A Bibliographic Survey

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Isaiah and the Latter-day Saints

A Bibliographic Survey

John S. Thompson and Eric Smith

This annotated bibliography introduces to general readers the many books and articles by modern LDS scholars about Isaiah, with emphasis on Isaiah in the Book of Mormon.



One of the great challenges of both the Bible and the Book of Mormon is understanding the writings of Isaiah. The archaic idioms and symbolic language that Isaiah employs, the historical figures and events that provide the background to his writings, and the poetic forms that structure his words are formidable barriers that can discourage and bewilder the reader. To help overcome these barriers, many LDS authors have come forward offering notes and commentary. Some of these authors have degrees in such fields as ancient Near Eastern studies, biblical studies, and history, and they use tools such as philology, historical criticism, and literary criticism to help the reader uncover the meaning of Isaiah's words. Others rely exclusively on a deep, abiding love for Isaiah's message, uncovering the meaning of his words through concentrated study of the English scriptures. However, all approach Isaiah's writings with a testimony of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and the added insight that modern revelation provides.

This bibliographic survey's primary purpose is to inform readers about many of the LDS articles and books on Isaiah—particularly on some of the more famous Isaiah passages (e.g., the mountain of the Lord's house [Isaiah 2:2–3], the Immanuel prophecy [Isaiah 7:10–16], the rod and stem of Jesse [Isaiah 11:1, 10], and the sealed book [Isaiah 29])—that are available for study. The survey will give the reference and a

summary of the work, focusing on each author's interpretations of Isaiah and often noting similarities and differences between writers' interpretations, so that readers can be aware of the various schools of thought surrounding Isaiah's writings.

Because so many LDS authors have written about Isaiah or have included references to his writings in their works, this survey is limited to published books or articles that deal extensively with Isaiah. The works included are arranged in a general chronological order from earliest to most recent so that the reader can see the influences that earlier writers may have had on later writers and discern the development of various schools of thought. An addendum at the end of this survey focuses on LDS writings about the suffering servant song in Isaiah 53.

Pratt, Orson. "The Ancient Prophecies." *Journal of Discourses* (7 January 1855), 2:284.¹

Some of the earliest published works in the LDS corpus of literature that deal extensively with Isaiah address the famous "sealed book" prophecy in Isaiah 29. Orson Pratt, in a discourse given on 7 January 1855, is one of the first on record to comment on Isaiah 29 and the role of the Book of Mormon in fulfilling that prophecy.² Though his discourse was intended to treat the subject of the fulfillment of ancient prophecies in general, Pratt chooses to narrow his topic to those prophecies dealing with the Book of Mormon, with the bulk of his message dealing with Isaiah 29. Pratt discusses the careful phraseology given in this chapter, noting, for example, that Isaiah mentions that "the 'words of the book,' not the book itself, were sent to the learned" (p. 288). Pratt comments that if Martin Harris had taken the actual gold plates to Charles Anthon, then this prophecy would not have been fulfilled to the letter.

Given the literalness of Pratt's interpretation of Isaiah 29, it is clear that he feels the Book of Mormon is indeed the book mentioned in this chapter. There is no mention of the prophecy being allegorical for the people of Isaiah's day or for the state of apostasy in general, thus making the Book of Mormon only one of many ways to apply or "liken" the prophecy. Further, it is uncertain whether Pratt simply saw the correlation between the events surrounding the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and Isaiah 29 and thus interpreted the prophecy accordingly, or whether he was influenced by Nephi's use of Isaiah 29 in 2 Nephi 27. In either case, Pratt certainly felt that Isaiah wrote directly concerning the Book of Mormon and those events surrounding its coming forth.

Smith, John Henry. "A Marvelous Work and a Wonder." *Millennial Star* 45 (8 October 1883): 648–52.

This editorial provides another early commentary on Isaiah 29. This commentary focuses on the Great Apostasy (the "deep sleep" of Isaiah 29:10) and the restoration as a whole (the "marvelous work and a wonder" of Isaiah 29:14) being the fulfillment of Isaiah's words. In the tradition of Orson Pratt, the role of the Book of Mormon in fulfilling this prophecy is also briefly mentioned; however, the bulk of Smith's work is a review of Church history, emphasizing that the enemies to the work of God constantly find that the "wisdom of their wise men shall perish" (Isaiah 29:14). Again it is assumed that Isaiah wrote pointedly concerning the Book of Mormon and the last days; there is no mention of Isaiah possibly giving this prophecy for his own day or for the condition of apostasy in general.

Roberts, B. H. "The Difficulty of Passages from Isaiah Being Quoted by Nephite Writers, that Modern Bible Criticism (Higher Criticism) Holds Were Not Written until the Time of the Babylonian Captivity—586–538 B.C., and Not Written by Isaiah at All." In *New Witnesses for God*. Vol. 3. Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1909. Reprinted as "An Objection to the Book of Mormon Answered." *Improvement Era* (July 1909): 681–9.

———. "Higher Criticism and the Book of Mormon." *Improvement Era* (June 1911): 665–77; (July 1911): 774–86.

Some of the other earlier works concerning Isaiah were prompted by the higher critics' claims that Isaiah did not author much of the Old Testament book attributed to him.³ In one chapter of his book *New Witnesses for God*, Vol. 3 and two years later in a published speech, B. H. Roberts sought to familiarize his audience with the higher critics' claims about Isaiah and to discuss the relationship between those claims and the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. If the critics are right and chapters 40–66 of Isaiah were written during or after the period of Babylonian captivity (beginning ca. 587 B.C.), then the Book of Mormon may be in error in attributing texts to Isaiah that were written not by him but by one or more authors living over twenty years after Lehi and his family left Jerusalem with the brass plates. In both his works, Roberts suggests many arguments to counter the higher critics' claims about Isaiah:

- Isaiah 40 does not begin with a separate heading, and it is thematically connected with Isaiah 39.
- According to Jewish historian Josephus, Cyrus King of Persia was influenced by Isaiah's prophecy that God would choose Cyrus to allow Israel to return to their own land and build the temple.

- Luke records that Christ read Isaiah 61:1–2 and claimed that he was its fulfillment without any mention of Isaiah 61 being authored by someone else.
 - Much of the difference in literary style between different sections of Isaiah can be attributed to Isaiah’s poetical genius, the grandeur of Isaiah’s message, and the passage of time between Isaiah’s early and late writings.
 - A testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon is itself proof that Isaiah was the sole author of the book attributed to him.
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Jenson, Nephi. “Isaiah 29.” *Improvement Era* (April 1910): 512–5.

Another treatise on Isaiah 29 comes from a small article written by Nephi Jenson in the *Improvement Era*. Like Orson Pratt and John H. Smith, Jenson argues that the Book of Mormon is indeed the “book” to which Isaiah refers. He shows that the character of the book Isaiah describes matches the characteristics of the Book of Mormon—i.e., the Book of Mormon contains a “vision” of a nation that is “brought down” and will “speak out of the ground,” and it contains material about Christ’s ministry, since the book Isaiah describes will make the “meek rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”

Further, Jenson interprets the “marvelous work and a wonder” that shall make the “wisdom of their wise men [to] perish” as being fulfilled in the lives of young missionaries who take the message of the Book of Mormon and the restored gospel into the world and “without difficulty” are able to “defend this restored gospel against the most skillful attacks of the most scholarly theologians” (p. 514).

Isaiah’s book is also described by Jenson as having an affect on people such that “the meek should increase their joy in the Lord.” Jenson feels that the testimony and devotion

of those saints who suffered for the gospel is answer enough to point to the Book of Mormon as the book spoken of in Isaiah 29.

Talmage, James E. *Conference Report* (April 1929): 44–9.

In April general conference 1929, James E. Talmage gave an address on the need for a testimony born of the Spirit rather than being influenced by technicalities such as geography and higher criticism, which, if overstated, can cause some to be “led away into the jungle of error” (p. 45). For example, Isaiah’s authorship problem and its relation to the Book of Mormon should not be an issue if one is first grounded in a testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. The need to put the Lord’s revelations (including the Book of Mormon) above the theories of men is emphasized. Since the Book of Mormon quotes from all parts of Isaiah, as far as Talmage is concerned, the issue is settled. Talmage concludes his speech by addressing the ways scholars divide the book of Isaiah into various sections, including by prophecy and literary style. Concerning this latter point, Talmage refers to Milton’s poems “L’Allegro” and “Il Penseroso,” showing that these two poems support the idea that an author can adapt style to theme; and therefore Isaiah’s supposed dual authorship can also be explained as differences in style based on theme.

Sperry, Sidney B. “The ‘Isaiah Problem’ in the Book of Mormon.” *Improvement Era* (September 1939): 524–5, 564–9; (October 1939): 594, 634, 636–7. Reprinted in *Our Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Stevens and Wallis, 1947, 155–77. Reprinted again in *The Problems of the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1964, 73–97 (this book was published later under the title *Answers to the Book of Mormon*, 1967). Reprinted again in *Book of Mormon Compendium*. Salt Lake City:

Bookcraft, 1968, 493–512. Reprinted once more in *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4/1 (1995): 129–52.

Like B. H. Roberts and James Talmage, Sidney B. Sperry, in this *Improvement Era* article, addresses the scholarly claim that the book of Isaiah was written by more than one author. He addresses the relationship between those claims and the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. Sperry first responds to this problem by demonstrating that although many scholars doubt that Isaiah actually wrote much of the work attributed to him, many other scholars support the unity of Isaiah's writings. Higher critics have not proven beyond reasonable doubt that Isaiah did not author the book of Isaiah. Sperry outlines several factors that have influenced scholars to support the unity of Isaiah, including:

- The Septuagint and other ancient versions of Isaiah do not hint at multiple authorship of Isaiah.
- Christ and many of his apostles quote extensively from all parts of Isaiah's writings and often attribute these passages to Isaiah.
- Expressions peculiar to Isaiah, such as "the Holy One of Israel," are found in all the sections disputed by the scholars.

Sperry finishes his article by comparing the Isaiah texts in the 1920 edition of the Book of Mormon with the Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, and Latin versions of Isaiah. He argues that in some instances when the Book of Mormon departs from the Hebrew reading of Isaiah (as reflected in the King James Version), those variants agree with one of the other ancient versions of Isaiah, giving validity to some of the Book of Mormon's variant Isaiah quotations as being ancient in origin and not Joseph Smith's own inspired revisions.

Sperry, Sidney B. *The Spirit of the Old Testament*. Salt Lake City: LDS Department of Education, 1940.

One of the earliest general treatments of Isaiah is found in Sidney Sperry's book *The Spirit of the Old Testament*. Containing two chapters on Isaiah (pp. 156–78), this book introduces the reader to the ancient prophet by giving overviews of his personal history, the time period of his ministry, and his prophecies. It also provides a verse-by-verse commentary on Isaiah 1, which "forms an excellent preface to the book because it contains a summary of certain characteristic and essential teachings of Isaiah" (p. 161).

The second Isaiah chapter of Sperry's book focuses on various topics that Isaiah addresses, including the "mountain of the Lord's house" (Isaiah 2:2), which he avoids relating to any specific modern LDS temples, but rather associates it to the general gathering of latter-day Zion. Sperry also discusses the recovery of Israel's remnant, the redemption of Israel, and predictions of the Messiah's coming. While commenting on these Messianic predictions, Sperry points out several Isaiah passages that are traditionally associated with Christ but notes that in some cases, the context of the quoted verse suggests an alternative fulfillment. For example, he explains that while most Christians associate the Immanuel prophecy in Isaiah 7:14 with Christ, some scholars suggest that the context of that verse is not so easily interpreted. Sperry makes no attempt to solve this dilemma; he merely introduces the problem, leaving the reader to wonder at his viewpoint and interpretive approach to some of Isaiah's more difficult passages.

Sperry, Sidney B. "The Eleventh Chapter of Isaiah." *Instructor* 79 (July 1944): 332–4.

Four years after publishing his book *The Spirit of the Old Testament*, Sperry published an article in the *Instructor*

interpreting the meaning of some of the more famous verses in Isaiah 11. His remarks in this article reveal a little more about the approach Sperry takes in interpreting Isaiah. Using Doctrine and Covenants 113, Sperry indicates that the “stem of Jesse” (v. 1) is Christ, and based on the Doctrine and Covenant’s description concerning the “rod” (v. 1) and “root of Jesse” (v. 10), Sperry concludes that these both refer to the Prophet Joseph Smith. According to Sperry, this is one reason Moroni quoted this chapter to Joseph Smith, saying it was about to be fulfilled. Sperry believes that the prophecies in this chapter deal exclusively with the last days. For example, he reasons that the mention of nations by their names known in Isaiah’s day were simply there because his people would not recognize the names of modern nations from whence parts of scattered Israel would be gathered. Sperry does not entertain the notion that this prophecy may indeed have a fulfillment in Isaiah’s own day. In other words, rather than allowing for the possibility of interpreting these verses in the context of Isaiah’s day, Sperry interprets the prophecies all within the context of the last days. Hence, he seems to reject the idea of dual fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecies.

Sperry, Sidney B. *The Voice of Israel’s Prophets: A Latter-day Saint Interpretation of the Major and Minor Prophets of the Old Testament*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1952. Republished as *The Old Testament Prophets*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Sunday School Union, 1965.

In chapters 2–10 of his book *The Voice of Israel’s Prophets*, Sperry expands on his earlier works “The ‘Isaiah Problem’ in the Book of Mormon” and *The Spirit of the Old Testament*, providing more background detail on Isaiah and his world, discussing the Isaiah authorship problem, and systematically dividing the entire Isaiah text into various topical sections with commentaries.

Because this work treats Isaiah in far more depth than do his earlier works, the reader gets a clearer view of Sperry's approach to interpreting Isaiah. As mentioned earlier, when faced with possibilities of multiple fulfillment in an Isaiah passage, Sperry chooses rather to interpret the utterance within a single historical context. For example, he asks, "Is it [the Immanuel prophecy] to be taken as representing an event of the immediate future[?] . . . Or, on the other hand, is the sign the prophet's way of telling a truth about an event in the distant future which the unspiritual Ahaz would not fully understand?" (pp. 29–30). He then quotes Matthew 1:23, which identifies Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the sign, stating, "I believe that Matthew's interpretation is the correct one" (p. 30). He does not explain why. Unlike other scholars, he does not feel that Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled in Isaiah's own day.

Taking the approach that each prophecy has only one fulfillment allows Sperry to explain each section of Isaiah in a single chronological context. He seems to choose the traditional LDS interpretation of Isaiah's prophecies: he, like Orson Pratt and others, views the prophecy of Isaiah 29 as being fulfilled in the restoration and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, not as an allegory for the people of Isaiah's own day.

Reynolds, George, and Janne M. Sjodahl. *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*. Vol. 1. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1955.

Reynolds and Sjodahl's book provides a verse by verse commentary of the entire Book of Mormon text, including the Isaiah quotations. The remarks provided give insight into the authors' approach to interpreting the Isaiah passages. Like Sperry, the authors' views are basically conservative. For example, the authors interpret the prophecy of the "mountain of the Lord's house" (2 Nephi 12:2, parallel to

Isaiah 2:2) as referring to the “Church of God” that will grow until it becomes as a mountain, filling the whole earth. There is no mention of this prophecy being fulfilled in specific LDS temples of the last days. Unlike Sperry, however, the authors are more willing to accept the idea of multiple fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecies. For instance, when interpreting the Immanuel prophecy, the authors declare that this prophecy was fulfilled in Ahaz’s day but quickly add that it had another fulfillment in Christ as well. However, they do not specify if any other elements in the prophecy beyond the virgin and child have a correspondence with Christ’s day (e.g., they don’t address whether the Ephraim and Syria of Ahaz’s day mentioned in the Immanuel prophecy have a prophetic parallel in Christ’s day).

In contrast to Sperry, Reynolds and Sjodahl simply state in their comments on 2 Nephi 21 (parallel to Isaiah 11) that “rod out of the stem of Jesse” is the Messiah. It appears that no use of Doctrine and Covenants 113 is made to interpret the text, for it identifies the Messiah as the “stem of Jesse,” leaving out the question of who the “rod” may represent.

Reynolds and Sjodahl’s comments on 2 Nephi 27 (parallel to Isaiah 29) are interesting in light of the traditional views espoused by earlier writers. Breaking away from traditional interpretations of Isaiah 29, Reynolds and Sjodahl are careful to emphasize that it was Nephi, not Isaiah, who saw in vision the Book of Mormon coming forth in the last days. Indeed they assert, “Nephi, in these paragraphs, describes the Book of Mormon and its coming forth in the latter days *in the language of the Prophet Isaiah*” (p. 396, emphasis added). The authors depart from the traditional view that Isaiah himself was speaking of the Book of Mormon and suggest that Nephi borrowed from the words of Isaiah and likened them to the vision of the Book of Mormon which he, Nephi, had

seen. Note also Reynolds and Sjodahl's interpretation of the "marvelous work and wonder":

Isaiah says that the Lord, because of the emptiness of the worship, would perform a "marvelous work and wonder," by means of which the wisdom of their wise and the understanding of their prudent would perish and be hid; and *Nephi applies this language* to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, as the beginning of a [not "the"] marvelous work and wonder. (399)

Again the authors stress that Nephi likened the words of Isaiah to his own prophetic view of the future; however, since they do not interpret Isaiah's writings directly, Reynolds and Sjodahl's views on Isaiah's original message are unknown.

Rasmussen, Ellis T. "Isaiah: A Messenger of God." *Instructor* (February 1962): center insert.

———. "How Isaiah Warned His People . . . and Us." *Instructor* (February 1964): 64–5.

From 1955 to 1966, little published material was devoted specifically to Isaiah. Ellis Rasmussen published two short devotional-type articles that discuss some of the major teachings of Isaiah and explain how they are relevant to modern-day readers.

Palmer, Spencer J., and William L. Knecht. "View of the Hebrews: Substitute for Inspiration?" *BYU Studies* 5/2 (1964): 105–13.

Spencer J. Palmer and William L. Knecht's article carefully compares the Book of Mormon Isaiah text with that in Protestant clergyman Ethan Smith's 1823 *View of the Hebrews*, showing that most of the Isaiah passages in the Book of Mormon are different from those used by Ethan Smith. This point lends credence to the view that Joseph Smith did not

draw on *View of the Hebrews* for the story of the Book of Mormon, as some critics have claimed.

Crowther, Duane S. *Prophets and Prophecies of the Old Testament*. Bountiful, Utah: Horizon, 1966.

Duane S. Crowther wrote this book in 1966 to facilitate the study of scripture by outlining and analyzing each of the prophetic books in the Old Testament and also providing charts and historical timelines. When discussing Isaiah, Crowther systematically assigns each chapter of Isaiah to one of four periods of prophetic fulfillment: (1) the days of Israel, Judah, and Assyria; (2) the days of Judah, Babylon, and the captivity; (3) the days of Christ's ministry; and (4) the last days. This systematic approach lends itself to interpretation similar to that of Sperry, for Crowther assigns each prophecy a single fulfillment in time. However, unlike Sperry, Crowther does not mention the other interpretations that scholars have suggested. For example, when he states that the Isaiah's Immanuel prophecy in chapter seven "concerned an event [i.e., the birth of Jesus Christ] which was to take place more than seven centuries later," (p. 337) he does not mention that other scholars have interpreted this prophecy differently.

When interpreting chapters of Isaiah that he believes pertain to the last days, Crowther often refers to the Book of Mormon's usage of Isaiah. For example, he uses 2 Nephi 26 and 27 extensively to interpret Isaiah 29, concluding in agreement with the traditional interpretation that Isaiah was himself writing about the Book of Mormon. Isaiah 29 is a chapter that Crowther believes "would be one of the most difficult of all the prophecies of the Bible, if it were not for the aid of a passage from the Book of Mormon which clarifies it and gives it the necessary interpretation" (p. 348). Crowther also discusses the Book of Mormon in his short discussion of the Isaiah authorship problem (see pp. 377–80).

Skousen, W. Cleon. *The Fourth Thousand Years*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966.

Also in 1966 W. Cleon Skousen devoted a significant number of pages in his *The Fourth Thousand Years* to Isaiah. After discussing some reasons Isaiah is difficult to read—for example, Isaiah’s writings are poetic, he uses complex literary expressions, and he deliberately wrote in obscurity to veil his words from the faithless—Skousen focuses mainly on the Book of Mormon’s relationship to Isaiah’s writings. He emphatically states that the Book of Mormon settles the question of the Isaiah authorship problem because it quotes from the Isaiah sections that scholars have attributed to later dates. He also draws parallels between the writings of Nephi and Isaiah, concluding that both prophets foretell the same events after experiencing nearly identical visions.

This conclusion leads him to interpret Isaiah primarily through the eyes of Nephi—that is, Skousen uses Nephi’s writings to discuss the meaning of Isaiah’s prophecies that pertain to the ministry of Christ, the latter-day restoration (including the coming forth of the Book of Mormon), and the second coming. He uses 1 Nephi 11:13 to make a straightforward association of the Immanuel prophecy with Christ and refers frequently to the later chapters of 2 Nephi to identify twenty prophecies in Isaiah 29 that he believes were fulfilled by the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. Like Sperry, Skousen interprets Isaiah’s prophecies as having a single fulfillment, and judging from the numerous references to Sperry’s works, Skousen was heavily influenced by Sperry. However, like Crowther, Skousen is quick to reach conclusions without addressing or even mentioning the questions and conflicts surrounding the interpretations he uses.

Sperry, Sidney B. "How to Read Isaiah." *Instructor* 101 (March 1966): 96–7, 99.

Also in 1966 Sidney B. Sperry published two small articles. The first, "How to Read Isaiah," is a general help for understanding Isaiah. Sperry suggests dividing Isaiah's book into seven topical divisions with outlines, and concludes his article with a detailed analysis of Isaiah 2. Consistent with his earlier interpretations of the phrase "mountain of the Lord's house," Sperry suggests that the phrase "seems to be a place where God may be at home with his people" (p. 97) but quickly adds in the next paragraph that in light of Isaiah 11:9, which suggests that the whole world will be the holy mountain during the millennium, and Doctrine and Covenants 133:13, the phrase apparently "has a more extended application than we have been accustomed to give it" (Ibid.)

Sperry's approach to interpreting Isaiah's prophecies as having a single fulfillment is furthered by a comment he gives on Isaiah 11:11–22. Rather than viewing the judgments of Israel mentioned in these verses as occurring at other times in Israel's history, Sperry states that "this day of judgment will be at or about the time of our Lord's Second Advent" (ibid.). He supports this idea through a clause that appears in verses 11 and 17 stating that the "Lord alone" will be exalted at that day. Sperry feels that the only time in history that the Lord alone will be exalted is at his second coming.

Sperry, Sidney B. "The Problem of the 'Rod' and 'the Root of Jesse' in Isaiah 11." *Improvement Era* 69 (October 1966): 868–9, 914–7. Reprinted in *Answers to Book of Mormon Questions*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1967, 247–53.

The second article Sperry published in 1966, "The Problem of the 'Rod' and 'Root of Jesse' in Isaiah 11," gives more

detail concerning Sperry's views on Joseph Smith being the fulfillment of this prophecy. He responds to concerns that Joseph Smith is described by Brigham Young as being a "pure Ephraimite" but Doctrine and Covenants 113:4 describes the "rod" as partly a descendent of Jesse and partly Ephraim. He also responds to the notion that the context of this prophecy is millennial, suggesting that the "root of Jesse" should be a leader of that future day.

Matthews, Robert J. "The Message of Isaiah." *Instructor* (October 1968): 410–1.

In 1968 Robert J. Matthews published a short article entitled "The Message of Isaiah" that contained a potpourri of items concerning Isaiah. Matthews lists numerous well-known phrases in society that come from the writings of Isaiah. He notes that the "Holy One of Israel" is a phrase used almost exclusively by Isaiah; hence, Book of Mormon authors may have become familiar with this phrase through him. Matthews also argues that the Messiah prophecies are the central message of Isaiah, pointing out that Isaiah is the Old Testament prophet quoted most frequently in the New Testament. He also suggests that a familiarity with modern scripture can aid in understanding Isaiah, since sections of the Doctrine and Covenants have close linguistic and subject matter parallels to Isaiah (e.g., D&C 133 and Isaiah 63–4; D&C 113 and Isaiah 11, 52).

Sperry, Sidney B. *Book of Mormon Compendium*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968.

Sperry's *Book of Mormon Compendium*, like Reynolds and Sjodahl's *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, provides Book of Mormon commentary that includes remarks on the Isaiah quotations. In fact, Sperry states in the preface of his work that "the greatest contribution of this volume is probably to

be found in my explanations of the meaning of the Isaiah chapters in the Book of Mormon.”⁴ As seen in his earlier works, Sperry’s approach to the Isaiah passages in this volume is conservative. For Sperry, a major aspect of understanding the Isaiah texts comes from knowing what time period Isaiah is considering in each passage. Assuming that each verse or group of verses addresses a single time period in history allows Sperry to avoid speculating about multiple fulfillments of Isaiah’s prophecies. For example, his comments on 2 Nephi 23 (parallel to Isaiah 13) do not allow verses 1–13 to be applied to ancient Babylon and the modern figurative Babylon; instead, he applies these verses only to modern times, and he applies verses 14–22 only to ancient times, giving no rationale for the shift in interpretation.

Sperry’s avoidance of dual-fulfillment ideology can again be seen in his discussion of the Immanuel prophecy. Rather than entertain the idea that Isaiah’s prophecy has more than one fulfillment, Sperry agrees with Matthews’s interpretation of the prophecy in spite of the difficulties in dating that Isaiah 7:15–16 introduces. However, unlike his earlier comments, or lack thereof, in *The Voice of Israel’s Prophets*, Sperry offers a solution to the difficulties:

Offhand, they [the verses in question] seem to demand an interpretation of the sign which looks to the near future for its fulfillment rather than to the time of Christ. . . . Personally, I am inclined to accept Immanuel as a reference to the Savior, and especially in the light of [Isaiah 8:8], where Judah is referred to as Immanuel’s land. The allusion to Immanuel suggests that the land of Judah (about which Ahaz was concerned) had a great destiny to fulfill, and hence that it was not about to be destroyed by Syria and Ephraim. Verses 15 and 16 of [Isaiah 7] simply make our Lord’s infancy a *symbolic representation of the short-lived nature of the threat to Judah*. (p. 199, emphasis added)

Sperry offers a viable solution to this problem, but he does not seem altogether convinced by his own argument, as evidenced by the question mark he places next to the word *Immanuel* when he associates the name with the Lord in the paragraph following this quotation (see p. 200).

McConkie, Bruce R. "Ten Keys to Understanding Isaiah." *Ensign* (October 1973): 78–83.

In this article Bruce R. McConkie uses Book of Mormon passages that refer to Isaiah to teach his readers that a personal understanding of Isaiah's teachings is essential to salvation and that God will reveal the meaning of those teachings to the diligent and receptive, just as he revealed it to Nephi. McConkie then gives his readers ten guidelines for enhancing their understanding of Isaiah. One of the most important guidelines, according to McConkie, is to study the Book of Mormon version of Isaiah and the interpretations of Isaiah given by Book of Mormon prophets. He declares that no one can understand Isaiah's teachings without first acquiring a testimony of the Book of Mormon and that "the Book of Mormon is the world's greatest commentary on the book of Isaiah" (p. 81). He closes by giving a brief chapter-by-chapter outline of Isaiah.

Adams, L. LaMar, and Alvin C. Rencher. "A Computer Analysis of the Isaiah Authorship Problem." *BYU Studies* 15/1 (1974): 95–102.⁵

Based on a computer-aided statistical analysis of various stylistic features of the book of Isaiah and 11 other Old Testament books, L. LaMar Adams and Alvin C. Rencher address the authorship problem of the book of Isaiah. The authors pinpoint a number of stylistic elements of Hebrew that, much like a fingerprint, normally vary from author to author but remain consistent within the works of one author.

Using the Hebrew text, they determine the frequency of these elements in Isaiah and other Old Testament books. They analyze these frequencies and conclude that “the statistical results in this study do not support the divisionist claim that little or no evidence exists for unity of the book of Isaiah. . . . The two parts of Isaiah most often claimed to have been written by different authors, chapters 1–39 and 40–66, were found to be more similar to each other in style than to any of the control group of eleven other Old Testament books. The book of Isaiah also exhibits greater internal consistency than any of the other eleven books” (p. 102).

Ludlow, Daniel H. *A Companion to Your Study of the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976.

Ludlow’s book is a collection of verse-by-verse commentaries and various quotes and insights concerning selected verses in the Book of Mormon. Ludlow presents a wide variety of other interpretations, generally without any personal remarks (for example, see his reporting of D&C 113). Ludlow’s preference, when he offers his opinions, seems to be for the traditional views.

Nibley, Hugh W. “Great Are the Words of Isaiah.” In *The Sixth Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, 1978. Reprinted in *Old Testament and Related Studies*, ed. John W. Welch, Gary P. Gillum, and Don E. Norton. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1985, 215–37.

In this address Hugh Nibley discusses the various methods people use to dilute the prophet’s message. For instance, some claim that Isaiah moralizes rather than preaches doctrine. Others try to show that Isaiah’s God is vengeful and savage. Still others affirm that there were several Isaiahs who all said different things. Following these remarks, Nibley

summarizes the first chapter of the book of Isaiah in layman's terms. His comments at this point are interesting in light of the many arguments put forth by previous LDS scholars concerning the Isaiah authorship problem and its relation to the Book of Mormon (see, for example, the writings of B. H. Roberts, James E. Talmage, and Sidney B. Sperry). Nibley notes that most secular scholars believe that chapter one is a summary of Isaiah's writings written by a later disciple, and he remarks that the Book of Mormon never quotes from Isaiah 1, inferring that perhaps the scholars are right concerning the later dating of this chapter. For Nibley, there may still be unanswered questions concerning the authorship of Isaiah and what was actually recorded on the brass plates. Nibley finishes his speech by focusing on the human qualities Isaiah describes as either favored or despised by God.

Nyman, Monte S. *Great Are the Words of Isaiah: An Understandable Guide to Isaiah's Monumental Message*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1980.

Nyman's work is the first LDS verse-by-verse commentary devoted specifically to Isaiah. Because it emphasizes how modern prophets and the Book of Mormon interpret the words of Isaiah, this book is a great resource for LDS interpretations of each verse in the book of Isaiah. This approach is also evident in appendices B–F, in which Nyman identifies specific chapters and verses in Isaiah that are quoted or alluded to in other scriptures and in comments made by general authorities of the LDS Church, including all references found in *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*.⁶

Nyman structures his book on the assumption that Isaiah 1–35 is a compilation of Isaiah's revelations, chapters 40–66 compose the "vision of Isaiah" mentioned in 2 Chronicles 32:32, and chapters 36–39 constitute a historical account that

was inserted between these two separate sections when the whole was compiled (see pp. 16–7). He breaks each of these three major sections into chapter groupings that are related in content and form. He then summarizes each grouping and gives notes and comments on each verse, relying heavily on scripture and the interpretations of modern prophets.

Nyman avoids tying Isaiah's prophecies to more than one time period. His intent is to elucidate the original meaning of the text as it applies to a single time period, but some of his comments within the first few chapters indicate that he recognizes that "some prophecies were *originally intended* to apply to two or more different times, places, or situations" (p. 12, emphasis added). Although he professes belief in the dual fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies, Nyman does not point out which prophecies are subject to dual fulfillment. For instance, one expects Isaiah's Immanuel prophecy to appear in this category, but Nyman simply suggests that the child mentioned in verses 14 and 15 of chapter 7 is Jesus Christ, while the child in verse 16 could be any child. In other words, when Isaiah tells Ahaz of the sign, he shifts his prophetic vision from the distant future to the immediate future, giving two different prophecies consecutively rather than a single prophecy with dual fulfillment.

Nyman, while commenting on Nephi's use of the word *liken*, cautions to his readers that "to 'liken' a scripture to a different situation than that in which it originated is not always to learn the original message of that scripture. To correctly interpret a scriptural passage is to learn its original meaning" (p. 12). In other words, he suggests that to liken a scripture is to take it out of context—separate it from its original meaning—and apply it to another situation or time period. Nyman seeks to interpret Isaiah by instead focusing on the original meaning of Isaiah's words. However, in this

regard, it is interesting that Nyman does not view Isaiah 29 as being “likened” by Nephi while Isaiah himself had a different “original meaning,” as others (such as Reynolds and Sjordahl) have suggested. Rather, Nyman interprets Isaiah 29 as being a direct reference to the Book of Mormon.

Matthews, Robert J. ““Why do the Book of Mormon selections from Isaiah sometimes parallel the King James Version and not the older—and thus presumably more accurate—Dead Sea Scrolls text.” I Have a Question. *Ensign* (March 1980): 40.

In this article Robert J. Matthews addresses the question, “Why do the Book of Mormon selections from Isaiah sometimes parallel the King James Version and not the older—and thus presumably more accurate—Dead Sea Scrolls text of why the Book of Mormon Isaiah passages are generally more like the Isaiah passages in the King James Version than those in the Dead Sea Scrolls text?” He argues that the Dead Sea Scrolls show evidence of poor transcription (differing considerably from the Greek Septuagint text), and that even though they are older than the King James Version, they are not necessarily more accurate. He also argues that the Book of Mormon may not always reflect a detailed analysis of every word on the gold plates. Therefore, Joseph Smith may have used the King James Version in the translation process not to copy from, but as a “vehicle to express the general sense of what was on the Gold Plates.”

Adams, L. LaMar. *The Living Message of Isaiah*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981.

A year after Nyman published “*Great Are the Words of Isaiah*,” L. LaMar Adams published his book, which is intended to inspire LDS readers to study the words of Isaiah

for modern application. The bulk of the book provides spiritual and academic keys to help the reader understand Isaiah's message, especially focusing on the Book of Mormon versions and interpretations of Isaiah. Several chapters focus on topics in the book of Isaiah that deal primarily with the last days, but these are written mainly to inspire the reader to follow what Adams feels is Isaiah's main directive to the Latter-day Saints: "to come unto Christ in a more determined manner" (p. 86).

Adams adopts the perspective that Isaiah's prophecies may find fulfillment in more than one time period, concluding that because Isaiah was addressing a stubborn people, his prophecies are more for Latter-day Saints than for the people of Isaiah's own day. "Thus," explains Adams, "Isaiah's prophecies are either of the last days or can usually be applied to *both Isaiah's days and the last days*" (p. 30, emphasis added). Appendix A demonstrates this assertion by outlining the major prophecies of Isaiah and pointing out that the prophecies first fulfilled in Isaiah's day are often paralleled by latter-day events.

The final section of Adams's book, appendix B, is a revised translation of the apocryphal *Ascension of Isaiah*. Basing his revised translation on work done by R. H. Charles,⁷ Adams "reverse translates" passages where he believes Charles was confused or had mistranslated. He first translates Charles's English version into Hebrew, and then he translates it back into English.

Petersen, Mark E. *Isaiah for Today*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981.

Each chapter of this book is devoted to a specific historical or doctrinal topic: "Predictions of Christ," "The Marvelous Work," "The Unlearned Man," "One That Is Learned,"

and “The Old Jerusalem.” Petersen discusses topics that he feels specifically address the last days or are relevant to the last days, such as the prophecies concerning Christ. Petersen sees no value in the historical events mentioned in Isaiah except as the history helps us understand our times: “Isaiah is definitely for today. His dealings with the ancient kings of Judah and his confrontations with them over the attacks of the Assyrians and the Babylonians are all in the past. Reference to them is strictly historical and has little relevance for us” (p. 8).

Petersen unhesitatingly claims that Isaiah saw the events of the last days and identifies specific instances of fulfillment. For example, he believes that the “mountain of the Lord’s house” in Isaiah 2:2 refers specifically to the Salt Lake Temple. In analyzing the prophecies of Isaiah 29, Petersen quotes and discusses almost every verse in 2 Nephi 27 (see pp. 77–97). He interprets the “sealed book” in the traditional manner—that is, as the Book of Mormon—and like McConkie in “Ten Keys,” Petersen feels that a testimony of the Book of Mormon and a familiarity with its treatment of Isaiah are essential to understanding Isaiah: “To understand Isaiah, people need to understand the Latter-day Saint point of view. They cannot and never will understand him otherwise” (p. 6).

Ludlow, Daniel H. *A Companion to Your Study of the Old Testament*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981.

Like his earlier work, Daniel H. Ludlow provides little direct personal commentary on Isaiah in this book but offers quotes and cross-references to aid in scripture study. He also often mentions the various interpretations put forth by other scholars but leaves it to the reader to decide their plausibility. For example, in his discussion on Isaiah 2:1–3,

which contains the phrase “mountain of the Lord’s house,” Ludlow remarks that “some LDS students of the scriptures have noted the possibility of dual fulfillment” (i.e., the Salt Lake Temple and future Jerusalem temple. p. 283).

Gileadi, Avraham. *Apocalyptic Book of Isaiah: A New Translation with Interpretative Key*. Provo, Utah: Hebraeus Press, 1982.⁸

Avraham Gileadi was one of the first LDS scholars to adopt fully the idea of dual or multiple fulfillment as a method for interpreting Isaiah’s words. Taking an extreme approach, Gileadi assumes that every event and entity in the writings of Isaiah provides a typological pattern for the last days. In his *Apocalyptic Book of Isaiah*, Gileadi gives his own new translation of the book of Isaiah, and he concludes with various approaches that can be used to study and understand Isaiah. The first approach, which forms the foundation for his other methods, is to analyze the structure of Isaiah. Gileadi identifies several types of structures that span the whole book of Isaiah, including some that are found in other ancient Near Eastern literature. For instance, the three-fold narrative plot—(1) trouble at home, (2) exile abroad, and (3) happy homecoming—found in Egyptian literature, such as in the story of *Sinuhe*, is also found in the book of Isaiah: chapters 1–39 portray the trouble at home, chapters 40–54 describe exile, and chapters 55–66 predict a happy homecoming.

Another structure, which Gileadi calls the “Bifid” structure (see p. 172), breaks the book of Isaiah into two halves, chapters 1–33 and 34–66, which parallel each other in theme and word usage and are ordered chiastically. According to Gileadi, this literary structure conveys to Isaiah’s readers the message that events and entities in history are types for the

future. Based on these and other structures, Gileadi argues for the unity of Isaiah because if any part of Isaiah was missing from the whole, the structures could not exist.

Gileadi's structures form the basis for two other methodologies that he calls "Synthesis of Events" and "Entity Synthesis" (see pp. 189–205), in which various events or figures throughout Isaiah's text are synthesized into one archetype that becomes the basis for interpreting the future. For example, Gileadi feels that all covenants that God made with individuals and with Israel as a whole are synthesized into one "New Covenant" (see pp. 205–6). Synthesizing parallel past events and looking at the combination of traits and events thus becomes the interpretive key to understanding Isaiah's message about the last days, teaches Gileadi.

One of the more interesting interpretations that Gileadi provides concerns the identity of the "rod" and "root of Jesse" in Isaiah 11. Based on word studies and parallel structures, Gileadi concludes that the person spoken of in these verses is a latter-day Davidic king, not Joseph Smith and not the Messiah (for he is the "*stem* of Jesse"). This king will be instrumental in the salvation of Israel and in the events surrounding the ushering in of the millennium.

Ludlow, Victor L. *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982.⁹

This book remains one of the most comprehensive LDS commentaries on Isaiah. Ludlow provides the reader with a verse-by-verse commentary of Isaiah that includes structural analysis, a comparison of textual versions, clarifications of word meanings, cultural and historical background, and references to modern interpretations given by various biblical scholars and LDS general authorities. He also includes the Book of Mormon's variant Isaiah texts in his analysis

and provides a short section explaining how and why Isaiah was used in the Book of Mormon (see pp. 93–8).

Ludlow does not shy away from difficult passages and provides the reader with the various scholarly opinions about the text in question. The balanced nature of his work (he gives many interpretations and viewpoints in addition to his own) allows for such speculation without affecting the quality of his work.

Ludlow does not hesitate to speculate on how certain of Isaiah's prophecies have been fulfilled. For example, he interprets Isaiah 19:5–10 as possibly being fulfilled by the Aswan Dam (see pp. 212–6). Ludlow embraces the idea of more than one fulfillment of various prophecies, and he lists and explores many possible fulfillments of Isaiah's prophecies. For example, his commentary gives his own interpretations and the interpretations of scholars concerning the Immanuel prophecy and how it might have been fulfilled in Ahaz's day (though he never suggests the precise identity of the virgin). Ludlow then states that "given this brief background, it seems that this sign, or prophecy, can find fulfillment *as a call to faith* on three levels": (1) in Ahaz's day "a son was to be born and named Immanuel as a sign of the Lord's power of deliverance"; (2) "to the people at the time of the birth of Christ, it was as a sign to know that Jesus Christ . . . was to come"; and (3) in the last days, the "memorial" of Christ's birth is a sign of God's promise that in the end of the world, against all odds, the Lord will bring about Zion (see pp. 144–5; emphases added).

In his comments on Isaiah 29, Ludlow again provides multiple explanations for the "sealed book" prophecy rather than stating emphatically that it refers to the Book of Mormon. His various interpretations are as follows:

- Isaiah was only talking to the Jews of Jerusalem about the Bible and other records.
- Isaiah was talking to the Nephites. Nephi recognized this and expanded or restored parts of Isaiah 29.
- Isaiah was addressing the Jews, but Nephi used this as a transition point to talk about his own record (i.e., he “likened” Isaiah’s words to his own circumstances).
- Isaiah was talking to the last days about any number of records.

Having given the above possible interpretations, Ludlow does seem to favor the idea that Isaiah was speaking specifically about the Book of Mormon. He bases this preference on the fact that the Joseph Smith Translation seems to correspond more closely with the Book of Mormon version of Isaiah 29 than with the King James Version.

Ludlow’s views on Isaiah 11 is another point of interest, especially in light of other authors views on the “rod” and “root of Jesse.” Ludlow, like Gileadi, breaks with traditional views that the person(s) in these verses represent Joseph Smith and through a simple concordance word study analysis, puts forth the idea that the “rod” and “branch” of the first verse refers to a great Jewish leader of the last days who will be called David. This cannot be Christ, Ludlow affirms, since Doctrine and Covenants 113 identifies the “stem of Jesse,” not the “rod,” as Christ.¹⁰

Martin, Loren D. *Isaiah: An Ensign to the Nations*. Salt Lake City: Valiant, 1982.

The main purpose of Martin’s book is to analyze and provide a verse-by-verse commentary of the first five chapters of Isaiah. He provides in-depth studies of these selected chapters, relying heavily on Near Eastern culture and variant meanings of the Hebrew to illuminate textual inferences

and to define certain terms. Martin speculates on specific instances in history that might fulfill certain prophecies (for example, he interprets Isaiah 2:21 as referring to the mass suicide at Masada [see pp. 69–71]), and he feels that Isaiah's words often have a double meaning, "intentionally leaving major portions of a complete picture unclear or entirely missing. Such gaps and ambiguities were left to be filled in by modern scripture, revelation, prophetic interpretation and historical events" (p. 2).

Smith, George D., Jr. "Isaiah Updated." *Dialogue* 16/2 (1983): 37–51. Reprinted in *The Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scripture*, ed. Dan Vogel. Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1990.¹¹

In response to the traditional Christian and Mormon interpretations applied to Isaiah, George D. Smith "examines Isaiah's prophecies in their historical context and compares their meaning as a message for his time with the expanded meaning that Christians and specifically Mormons have since applied to them thousands of years later" (p. 37). Relying heavily on modern biblical scholarship and the interpretations of non-LDS scholars, Smith declares that the events of Isaiah 7:14 and Isaiah 29 are contemporary to Isaiah himself—single prophecies of single events fulfilled in Isaiah's day.

Smith argues that Christians (specifically Matthew) apply the Immanuel prophecy to Christ when in fact Isaiah did not have Christ in mind when he gave it. He believes that a similar mistake is present in interpretations of Isaiah 29, contending that Isaiah wrote this chapter only to the people of his day. He describes the "unwillingness of the people and their leaders . . . to understand the word of Yahweh. The leaders read, but do not understand. . . . The masses, on the other hand, cannot even read the law, for they do not know

how” (p. 45). He asserts that Latter-day Saint tradition, which is based on Nephi’s likening the text to his own people’s future, changes or “updates” the interpretation of the verses in this chapter to refer to the restoration and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, with the Charles Anthon story playing a significant role in the fulfillment of Isaiah’s words. On the basis of these conclusions, Smith rhetorically argues, “Can the substitution of new meaning be justified as a dual message hidden in Isaiah’s original words?” (p. 51). He believes that many people force dual or multiple fulfillment on Isaiah’s prophecies by reinterpreting the original message of Isaiah—which was actually intended only for Isaiah’s contemporaries—in the context of other historical time periods and then applying these new interpretations to the original text.

Lundquist, John M. “Temple Symbolism in Isaiah.” *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*. Ed. Monte S. Nyman. Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984, 33–55.

Lundquist focuses on the central role of the temple in Isaiah’s writings. Lundquist outlines a comparative study in ancient Near Eastern temple typology and discusses many verses in the writings of Isaiah that reflect this same typology, specifically those dealing with the cosmic mountain, communal meals, covenant making, and the waters of life.

Gileadi, Avraham. “Isaiah: Four Latter-day Keys to an Ancient Book.” *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*. Ed. Monte S. Nyman. Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984, 119–37.

In this article Avraham Gileadi identifies four Book of Mormon keys that enable the reader to understand Isaiah better. The first two keys, found in 2 Nephi 25:4–5, are identified as the spirit and the letter of prophecy: reading under

the influence of the Holy Ghost and with a testimony that Jesus is the Christ provides the spirit key, and understanding the literary methods the Jews used to convey the word of the Lord provides the letter key. Gileadi elaborates on this second key, giving examples of literary methods (such as parallelisms and metaphors) and cultural elements (such as Near Eastern suzerain-vassal relationships). He then gives the implications of these elements and methods on understanding covenant theology in Isaiah. The third and fourth keys Gileadi identifies are the Savior's command in 3 Nephi 23:1 to "search" Isaiah's words and the Savior's statement in 3 Nephi 23:3 that all of Isaiah's words "have been and shall be." Gileadi interprets this last phrase literally, arguing that every prophecy of Isaiah is a type of things to come and thus can have dual purpose and fulfillment.

Adams, L. LaMar. "A Scientific Analysis of Isaiah Authorship." *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*. Ed. Monte S. Nyman. Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984, 151–63.

LaMar Adams's piece is essentially the same article he coauthored with Rencher in 1974 for *BYU Studies* but directed more toward the lay reader.

Tvedtnes, John A. "Isaiah Variants in the Book of Mormon." *Isaiah and the Prophets: Inspired Voices from the Old Testament*. Ed. Monte S. Nyman. Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1984, 165–77.

Tvedtnes discusses many of the Isaiah verses in the Book of Mormon that vary from their corresponding verses in the King James Version of the Bible.¹² Tvedtnes shows numerous examples of how the variants in the Book of Mormon are supported by other ancient texts, such as the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and 1QIsa (the Isaiah Scroll from Cave 1 at

Qumran), and how the variants enhance or complete the poetic structure of the verses in question.

Skousen, W. Cleon. *Isaiah Speaks to Modern Times*. Salt Lake City: Ensign, 1984.

This book gives a verse-by-verse commentary of the entire book of Isaiah and also presents Isaiah and his world by topic. The topical chapters generally expand on information in Skousen's *The Fourth Thousand Years*, but the verse-by-verse commentary makes up the bulk of the book. As a whole, the comments are Skousen's own thoughts and interpretations. Occasionally he refers to other scripture, particularly the Book of Mormon, which he uses primarily to identify the "correct" reading of various passages of Isaiah. He seldom refers to the works of others, although he claims in the preface that an "attempt has been made to bring together some of the finest work of many scholars both past and present" (p. iv). As in his earlier works, he tends to smooth over difficult verses, providing his own interpretation and avoiding any mention of conflict surrounding the text. Again, he interprets Isaiah's prophecies as each having only one fulfillment, relying on traditional interpretations rather than considering the possibility of variant interpretations or multiple fulfillment.

Adams, L. LaMar. "Jesus' Commandment to Search the Words of Isaiah." *The Old Testament and the Latter-day Saints: Sperry Symposium 1986*. Orem, Utah: Randall Book, 1986, 177–92.

In this address LaMar Adams discusses the need to study and apply the words of Isaiah. He focuses more on inspiring his readers than on providing commentary and draws on Isaiah's words to urge readers to prepare spiritually for the second coming through repentance and endurance.

Taking the traditional approach, Adams emphasizes that Isaiah prophesied the restoration. He uses Isaiah 29 and the coming forth of the Book of Mormon as an example of how prophecies have been fulfilled in the last days.

Hoskisson, Paul Y. "A Latter-day Saint Reading of Isaiah in the Twentieth Century: The Example of Isaiah 6." *The Old Testament and the Latter-day Saints: Sperry Symposium 1986*. Orem, Utah: Randall Book, 1986, 193–210.

In this chapter, Paul Y. Hoskisson identifies six reasons that Isaiah may be difficult to read: (1) Isaiah wrote in poetry, (2) he wrote in an elevated Hebrew literary style, (3) he is culturally removed from today, (4) he is chronologically removed from today, (5) he draws heavily on scripture and doctrine outside his own time and place, and (6) he spoke prophetically. Hoskisson then shows that these potential obstacles can actually be used as tools for understanding Isaiah by analyzing Isaiah 6 using his knowledge of Isaiah's style and cultural milieu.

Jackson, Kent P. "Nephi and Isaiah." In *1 Nephi to Alma 29*. Vol. 7 of *Studies in Scripture*. Ed. Kent P. Jackson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1987.

The main purpose of Kent P. Jackson's article is to introduce the reader to the major Isaiah section in the Book of Mormon (2 Nephi 12–24) and to comment on the nature of Isaiah's writings and Nephi's stated purpose for quoting Isaiah. Jackson provides no commentary on the Isaiah section itself, but gives an outline that divides each chapter into groups of related verses, briefly summarizing each group. Jackson cautions, "Readers should not assume that every statement of an ancient prophet must have a specific meaning in the latter-day setting" (p. 132). In other words, readers should not think that every utterance was originally intended to be fulfilled twice. Rather, like Nephi and Jacob,

they should focus on applying the “*principles* contained in Isaiah’s words to their own circumstances” (p. 132). This seems to be more a statement on avoiding extremism than denying the possibility of dual fulfillment.

Ludlow, Victor L. “Isaiah as Taught by the New Testament Apostles.” In *The New Testament and the Latter-day Saints*, ed. H. Dean Garrett. Orem, Utah: Randall Book, 1987.

Victor Ludlow here provides a literary analysis of the Isaiah passages quoted in the New Testament. Rather than providing his own interpretation of Isaiah, the main purpose of Ludlow’s article is to focus on how each New Testament writer used and interpreted Isaiah. Ludlow notes parallel Isaiah passages in the four Gospels and comments on the distinct ways in which the various writers use the Isaiah passages; however, he does not interpret the reasons for the differences or similarities between the gospel accounts. In other words, he does not discuss *why* Isaiah’s writings were used the way they were but simply discusses *how* they were used.

McConkie, Joseph Fielding, and Robert L. Millet. *First and Second Nephi*. Vol. 1 of *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987.¹³

McConkie and Millet’s book paraphrases and comments lightly on each chapter of the Isaiah block in 2 Nephi. It also includes a short introduction to the Isaiah section, explaining why the Nephites quoted Isaiah and giving tips to understand his words better (see pp. 273–7).

McConkie and Millet state that Isaiah’s prophecies have “multiple fulfillments and repeated applications” (p. 282). For example, they interpret Isaiah 13–14 as referring to both the conquest of the historical Babylon and the future destruction of the wicked at the second coming (see p. 282). Further,

they find fulfillment of the Immanuel prophecy both in Isaiah's day and in the birth of Christ—though as is frequently the case in this book, they do not explain how they reached their conclusion (see p. 280). In spite of these two examples, the authors generally do not explore all possible fulfillments of Isaiah's words; rather, they focus on those fulfillments that pertain to the restoration. For example, the authors suggest that Isaiah 49 (parallel to 1 Nephi 21) may be applied either to Isaiah himself or to ancient Israel but that such applications should not "obscure [the chapter's] greater meaning as it applies to Christ and Joseph Smith" (p. 157). The authors then go on to interpret the chapter as referring to Joseph Smith and Christ without discussing in any detail the other possible fulfillments. For example, when discussing the "rod" and "root of Jesse," the authors simply adopt the traditional view espoused by Sperry that this is Joseph Smith without mention of a possible latter-day Davidic king interpretation, as Ludlow and Gileadi have suggested.

Their discussion of 2 Nephi 27 (parallel to Isaiah 29) is similar to Reynolds and Sjodahl's, emphasizing that Nephi, not Isaiah, saw in vision the Book of Mormon. McConkie and Millet avoid any reference to what they feel Isaiah's perspective was. Commenting on Nephi's use of Isaiah, McConkie and Millet state, "Nephi expands to all the nations of the earth Isaiah's prophecy relative to the plight of Judah. His [Nephi's] is a vision of universal apostasy" (p. 313).

Gileadi, Avraham. *The Book of Isaiah: A New Translation with Interpretive Keys from the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988.¹⁴

Gileadi's second book is largely a revision of his first book, now aimed at an LDS audience. Gileadi integrates into the introduction his article from *Isaiah and the Prophets*

concerning the four latter-day keys for understanding Isaiah. He also discusses general structural patterns in Isaiah's work. However, Gileadi's interpretations of Isaiah prophecies seem to focus on the topic of the mortal latter-day Davidic king. Gileadi is sure that the main thrust and message of Isaiah is to prophecy of the role of this Davidic king in the temporal salvation of Israel, as opposed to the spiritual salvation made possible by Christ. Hence, most of Isaiah's prophecies that have been typically attributed to Christ are seen by Gileadi as referring to this Davidic king, including the Immanuel prophecy and the prophecy in Isaiah 9 that inspired Handel's "For Unto Us a Child is Born."

Because this book addresses an LDS audience, Gileadi freely uses Doctrine and Covenants 113 in his interpretation of the "rod," "stem of Jesse," "branch," and "root of Jesse" in Isaiah 11. His interpretation again focuses on the role of this latter-day Davidic king. Gileadi interprets the "stem of Jesse" as Christ, that is, the trunk of the tree. The "rod," or "watersprout," as Gileadi calls it, represents Joseph Smith or the Latter-day Saints in general (i.e., comparable to the wild branches, the gentile nations, in Jacob's olive tree allegory). Gileadi emphasizes that this "rod" will not of itself bear fruit, but that a "branch" or "root [Gileadi translates this as "sprig"] of Jesse" will be grafted into it, and it (the branch) will bring forth fruit. The branch, according to Gileadi, represents the Davidic king and the natural branches of Israel, which will bear fruit in the day of judgment when they are redeemed through the ministry of this mortal Davidic king. The role of this Davidic king, according to Gileadi, was fulfilled by Hezekiah in Isaiah's day, but as a dual fulfillment another would rise primarily from the house of Judah in the last days.

Ludlow, Victor L. *Jesus' "Covenant People Discourse" in 3 Nephi: With Old Testament Background and Modern Application*. Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1988.

Victor Ludlow's address explains that a major purpose of the Book of Mormon is to teach Israel about its covenant relationship with God. Many references to covenant relationships appear in the Isaiah quotations in 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, and 3 Nephi. Nephi quotes Isaiah because, as Christ taught, Isaiah's writings contain the full covenant relationship between God and the house of Israel. In 3 Nephi 20–25, Jesus delivers what Ludlow calls the "Covenant People Discourse," teaching the people to read the words of Isaiah, which include a checklist of items that point to the fulfillment of the covenant between God and the house of Israel. The Savior quotes Isaiah 52 and 54 and concludes his discourse by admonishing the people to search the words of Isaiah, which contain the important promises given to Israel.

Parsons, Robert E. "The Prophecies of the Prophets." *First Nephi: The Doctrinal Foundation*, ed. by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1988): 271–81.

This article discusses various prophecies concerning Jesus Christ that Nephi quotes from the lost Old Testament prophets Neum, Zenock, and Zenos. The majority of the article, however, focuses on the prophecies of Isaiah in 1 Nephi 20–21 (parallel Isaiah 48–49). In considering that Nephi states that he quotes Isaiah in order to more fully persuade his brethren to believe in Christ (see 1 Nephi 19:23), Parsons notes that most of Isaiah 48–49 does not deal with Christ directly, so he concludes that perhaps "a belief in Christ

comes not only through what the scriptures say of him per se, but also by understanding the covenants he has made with Israel and how they will be fulfilled" (p. 275).

Focusing on 1 Nephi 21 (parallel Isaiah 49), Parsons notes that verses 1–3 deal with a "servant" of God and that this servant is typically argued by scholars to be either the Messiah or Isaiah himself. Parsons solves the problem by adopting the multiple fulfillment approach to Isaiah's prophecies, saying, "I believe *servant* has a dual meaning, namely Christ and Israel" (p. 276). He then outlines how both Christ and Israel (particularly Ephraim) fulfill the prophecies in verses 5–9.

Farley, Brent. "Nephi, Isaiah, and the Latter-Day Restoration." *The Book of Mormon: Second Nephi, the Doctrinal Structure*. Ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1989, 227–39.

Farley's piece primarily identifies and explores the Isaiah sections in Nephi's writings that point specifically to the restoration. Farley follows traditional LDS views but allows for both specific and general interpretations. For example, drawing chiefly on the writings and sermons of Church leaders, he interprets the prophecy in 2 Nephi 12:2–3 (parallel to Isaiah 2:2–3) as referring specifically to the Salt Lake Temple and generally to temples around the world. He interprets the phrase "out of Zion shall go forth the law" (2 Nephi 12:3, parallel to Isaiah 2:3) as being specifically fulfilled by LDS Church general conferences and generally fulfilled by the establishment of America. Farley views 2 Nephi 27 (parallel to Isaiah 29) as referring to the Book of Mormon, a book of scripture that aids in the missionary labors that Isaiah alludes to in 2 Nephi 15:26–30 (parallel to Isaiah 5:26–30). The tone of his article implies that he thinks Isaiah originally intended the same interpretations as those Nephi gives to Isaiah's words.

Gentry, Leland. "God Will Fulfill His Covenants with the House of Israel." *The Book of Mormon: Second Nephi, the Doctrinal Structure*. Ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1989, 159–76.

This article interprets the sections of Isaiah quoted by Jacob in 2 Nephi 6–8 (parallel to Isaiah 49:22–52:2), relying heavily on Jacob's Isaiah commentary in 2 Nephi 6, 9, and 10. Gentry gives his view on Isaiah's prophecies by stating that "Isaiah uses events of his own day to transport us far into the prophetic future" (p. 159).

Gentry interprets Isaiah's words in this section of the Book of Mormon by applying the prophecies in the larger history of Israel but offers striking possible fulfillments for many of the prophecies. For example, Gentry suggests that Egypt "licked the dust of the feet of God's chosen people" (p. 165) when the Egyptians fled from Sinai during the Six-day War (see Isaiah 49:23). He also notes that 2 Nephi 6:6–7 (parallel Isaiah 49:22–23) could be seen fulfilled in the Indian Placement Program and the missionary labors among the Lamanites. He doesn't mention of how the aforementioned prophecies might have been fulfilled in Isaiah's day; however, when commenting on 2 Nephi 7:11 (parallel Isaiah 50:11), he notes that "such was the folly of ancient Israel! Such is the folly of many today as we prepare for his Second Coming" (p. 168).

Adams, LaMar. "Isaiah: Disciple and Witness of Christ." *A Witness of Jesus Christ: The 1989 Sperry Symposium on the Old Testament*. Ed. Richard D. Draper. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990, 1–17.

In this piece Adams discusses why Christ turned to Isaiah for a witness of his own ministry. He suggests that Isaiah wrote more concerning Christ's first coming, atonement, second coming, and millennial reign than did any other

prophet. He also suggests that Isaiah wrote more majestically, poetically, and melodically than other prophets and that Isaiah's prophecies treated such broad subjects as pre-mortal councils, the creation, the history of the world, Christ's ministry, the last days, and the millennium. Adams also believes that because Isaiah is esoteric, he is understood by those who are spiritually prepared. Isaiah's own life is a witness of Christ.

Meservy, Keith. "Isaiah 53: The Richest Prophecy on Christ's Atonement in the Old Testament." *A Witness of Jesus Christ: The 1989 Sperry Symposium on the Old Testament*. Ed. Richard D. Draper. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990, 155–77.

In this piece Meservy argues that the modern biblical scholars' rejection of the idea of prophecy limits their ability to interpret Isaiah because they must identify someone else as the subject of the passages that Christians interpret as prophecies about Christ. Using Isaiah 53 as a model, Meservy shows numerous specific parallels between this prophecy and the life of Christ. He rhetorically asks, "How many specific details in Isaiah's prophecy have to be consistent with Jesus' life before we conclude that it is statistically impossible for Isaiah to have known such details without having had any foreknowledge of Christ?" (p. 156). His arguments seem to imply that Isaiah's words are fulfilled only in Christ. He argues against the possibility of fulfillment in other entities.

Gileadi, Avraham. "Isaiah—Key to the Book of Mormon." In *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, ed. John L. Sorenson and Melvin J. Thorne. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1991.

Since Isaiah is so often quoted and alluded to in the Book of Mormon, Gileadi suggests using Isaiah to interpret the

Book of Mormon. In accordance with his approach to interpreting Isaiah seen in his earlier works, Gileadi notes that Isaiah's prophecies are based on Old Testament archetypes—specifically the Passover, the Exodus, wandering in the wilderness, and conquest of the promised land—and that these patterns also provide a key to the prophetic future as well. Gileadi suggests that since Book of Mormon authors relied so much on Isaiah's words, they also chose events in their lives that typified these patterns. Hence, there are many allusions to the Exodus motif in the Lehite exodus from Jerusalem, Alma's exodus from King Noah, and the Jaredite exodus from the tower of Babel. Gileadi suggests that Nephi quoted so often from Isaiah to make sure his readers would pick up on the pattern in the latter days so they would make a latter-day exodus out of Babylon.

Nyman, Monte S. "Abinadi's Commentary on Isaiah." In *The Book of Mormon: Mosiah, Salvation Only through Christ*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1991.¹⁵

In the tradition of the various scholarly suggestions concerning the identity of the "suffering servant" in many of Isaiah's chapters, Nyman suggests that Abinadi's commentary in Mosiah 15 on the words of Isaiah in Mosiah 14 (parallel Isaiah 53) proves that Jesus is the sufferer referred to in Isaiah's writings. Little of Nyman's own interpretations of Isaiah are explored in this article, since the main purpose is to identify what Abinadi did with Isaiah's writings.

Ridges, David J. *Isaiah Made Easier*. Springville, Utah: Copies Plus, 1991.¹⁶

For each verse of Isaiah, this book gives parenthetical inserts and explanations taken from elsewhere in the scriptures and from other Isaiah commentaries. Because Ridges's

interpretation comes from a variety of sources, it is difficult to identify exactly how Ridges interprets Isaiah. In any case, according to his foreword, he is more interested in suggesting possible fulfillments of Isaiah and in showing Church members that Isaiah's prophecies can be understood and enjoyed more than he is in providing a definitive analysis and interpretation of Isaiah's prophecies.

Jackson, Kent P. "Authorship of the Book of Isaiah." *1 Kings to Malachi*. Vol. 4 of *Studies in Scripture*. Ed. Kent P. Jackson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993, 80–5.

Jackson's article describes reasons that some biblical scholars attribute the book of Isaiah to multiple authors. Jackson sees the denial of prophetic foresight as the fundamental supposition guiding these scholars. Although he admits there are many differences between the various sections of Isaiah, he feels that these differences can be ascribed to, among other causes, differences in emphasis. Isaiah 1–39, for example, emphasizes judgment, whereas chapters 40–66 emphasize reconciliation. Jackson also argues that the most important piece of evidence for Isaiah's authorship of the later chapters is the inclusion of many of the later chapters in the Book of Mormon (see p. 84).

Meservy, Keith. "God Is with Us (Isaiah 1–17)." *1 Kings to Malachi*. Vol. 4 of *Studies in Scripture*. Ed. Kent P. Jackson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993, 86–107.

Meservy's article gives a chapter-by-chapter commentary on Isaiah 1–17. Although he makes no attempt to show any common theme in these chapters, his introductory statement hints that what he believes to be the overarching messages of these chapters are that rising generations would know from reading Isaiah's prophecies the reason they had been separated from their land, and why the rising genera-

tions must not stop hoping for the blessings that God promised their forefathers. Meservy generally does not give a specific time for the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies, preferring instead to interpret Isaiah in the larger context of the plan of salvation. For instance, his comments on Isaiah 2:1–3 simply suggest that the Lord will again "sanctify [Jerusalem] and establish his residence once more in his holy mountain" (p. 91). He does not try to tie these verses to any specific temple in the last days.

Meservy views the Immanuel prophecy as being fulfilled in Isaiah's own time by the birth of Isaiah's son, an event described in Isaiah 8:3–4. He reasons that God often uses deliverance from specific earthly threats to signify the ultimate deliverance of humankind through his Son; thus "there should be no problem in seeing how God used the birth of a baby in Isaiah's time to foretell deliverance for that generation, while focusing attention on the birth of another baby, through whom all the world will be delivered" (p. 97). In other words, Isaiah's son is a type for Christ. Meservy accepts the idea of dual fulfillment on a typological basis but focuses on the broader situational parallels rather than finding parallels with every entity in the prophecy.

Seely, David Rolph. "The Lord is Our Judge and Our King (Isaiah 18–33)." *1 Kings to Malachi*. Vol. 4 of *Studies in Scripture*. Ed. Kent P. Jackson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993, 108–27.

Seely also provides a chapter-by-chapter commentary on Isaiah, dividing chapters 18–33 into three distinct units: chapters 18–23 are part of Isaiah's Oracles against Foreign Nations (found in chapters 13–23), chapters 24–27 make up a last-days vision that is commonly called the Apocalypse of Isaiah, and chapters 28–33 are a collection of loosely connected prophecies of the judgment and the restoration. Seely feels

that what unifies chapters 18–33 is the image of the Lord as lawgiver and judge who sends judgments on disobedient Israel and other nations.

Seely assigns single fulfillments to many of Isaiah's prophecies but seems willing to embrace the possibility of multiple fulfillments. For instance, he indicates that the destruction spoken of in Isaiah 29:1–14 occurred when Jerusalem was destroyed in 587 B.C. and A.D. 70, but he also notes that Nephi applied the same prophecy of destruction to his own people; however, Seely does not state whether he believes that Isaiah originally intended the prophecy to apply to Nephi's people.

Jackson, Kent P. "Comfort My People (Isaiah 34–50)." *1 Kings to Malachi*. Vol. 4 of *Studies in Scripture*. Ed. Kent P. Jackson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993, 128–45.

Jackson comments on virtually every verse in chapters 34–50 and outlines some of the significant features of this section: Israel's unity as a single nation no longer divided into two separate kingdoms (Judah and Ephraim); God's reconciliation with his people, emphasized by prophecies of millennial conditions; God's power to foretell the future (Jackson points out that, ironically, this is the very point that causes many to say that Isaiah did not author the book attributed to him); and the work of God's servant. This last feature reveals Jackson's views about dual fulfillment. He states that "the servant's identity is not made clear. Perhaps more than one interpretation is valid" (p. 136), an assertion that seems to indicate that Jackson accepts the possibility of multiple fulfillments. He contends that the servant can be interpreted to be Israel as a people, the prophets, or Jesus Christ, explaining that "because all good things and all good people are types of Christ and reflect his nature, perhaps we

can identify the servant of whom Isaiah wrote on different levels, depending on the information provided" (p. 137).

Seely, David Rolph. "The Lord Will Bring Salvation (Isaiah 51–66)." *1 Kings to Malachi*. Vol. 4 of *Studies in Scripture*. Ed. Kent P. Jackson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993, 146–64.

Seely provides a chapter-by-chapter commentary on Isaiah. Seely maintains that the main theme of Isaiah 51–66 is salvation, a concept that includes the first coming of the Messiah, the gathering of Israel, and the second coming with its accompanying establishment of the millennial kingdom. He remarks that Isaiah's prophecies "do not always delineate precisely between what was to be fulfilled in Christ's first coming and what would be fulfilled by his second coming. Hence we speak of the 'dual nature' of prophecy, meaning that a prophecy will be partially fulfilled in the meridian of time but not completely until the Messiah returns in glory" (p. 159). This is a slightly different definition of *dual fulfillment* than those given by other authors surveyed in this bibliography. Seely teaches that the first part of Isaiah 9:6 ("unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given") was fulfilled at the birth of Christ, but the rest of the verse ("and the government will be upon his shoulder") will be fulfilled at his second coming. This interpretation views Isaiah as giving two different consecutive prophecies rather than a single prophecy that could be fulfilled in various ways.

The only indication that Seely entertains the idea that one prophecy might be fulfilled in several ways is found in his commentary on the servant image in Isaiah. In addition to identifying the servant as Christ, he remarks, "Servant imagery is developed throughout Isaiah in many passages where the servant is a type that can be variously applied to Israel, Cyrus, Isaiah, and all of the servants of the Lord as

they participate in bringing salvation” (p. 151). It is unclear whether he views all these applications of the servant type as part of the original meaning of Isaiah’s prophecies or whether he thinks we can simply liken the fulfillment of these prophecies to various individuals.

Rasmussen, Ellis T. *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993.

In this single-volume Old Testament commentary, Rasmussen divides the verses up into small blocks on which he then comments. Rasmussen, like other conservative scholars, tends to view Isaiah’s prophecies as having a singular fulfillment; however, he feels that Isaiah “integrated” past, present, and future prophecies in the same block of scripture and that Isaiah’s prophecies of immediate situations often had future “applications” (see p. 503).

Rasmussen remarks that the passages in Isaiah 2 concerning the “mountain of the Lord’s house” were fulfilled when the true religion and church was restored as a gathering place in Zion, taking a conservative approach like Sperry’s in this regard. Further, Rasmussen emphasizes, like Reynolds and Sjodahl, that it was Nephi who saw that the elements of Isaiah 29 would be fulfilled in the lives of his own people.

Gileadi, Avraham. *The Literary Message of Isaiah*. New York: Hebraeus Press, 1994.¹⁷

Avraham Gileadi’s most recent book is mostly a collection, revision, and expansion of all his previous works, including his doctoral dissertation.¹⁸ This book contains the new translation of Isaiah and the discussion of the four keys to understanding Isaiah that is included in Gileadi’s earlier works. It also adds a comprehensive concordance to his

translation and a lengthy and meticulous analysis of the Bifid structure of Isaiah (the structure is introduced in far less detail in Gileadi's earlier work *The Apocalyptic Book of Isaiah*). Because the work is directed toward a non-LDS audience, it cites the Book of Mormon only once (see p. 2, n. 3), but LDS readers will discern restoration influences throughout the work.

Gileadi identifies his approach to analyzing Isaiah in three ways: "first, structural analysis, which examines prophetic meanings embedded in the manner of organizing the material; second, rhetorical analysis, which examines the meanings of individual terms and expressions, particularly as they connect different parts of the text; and third, typological analysis, which examines events out of the past that may foreshadow the future" (p. 10). As is seen in his earlier works, typology is particularly important to Gileadi's interpretation of Isaiah. In summarizing his understanding of prophecy in Isaiah, he says:

Isaiah consistently uses episodes out of Israel's past as types on which to frame prophecies of the future. Having seen the end from the beginning in a great cosmic vision, he was able to view both Israel's ancient history (particularly his own day) and also the last days, the time of the end. He thus carefully frames his words in such a way as to capture both time periods in a single prophecy. (p. 27)

Again, multiple fulfillment is the approach that Gileadi takes in interpreting Isaiah.

One of the major scholarly positions defended by Gileadi in this work is the unity of Isaiah. His detailed analysis of the Bifid structure of Isaiah suggests that the whole book was one literary masterpiece rather than a collection of documents from various authors throughout various periods of history.

Ball, Terry. "Isaiah's Imagery of Plants and Planting." In *Thy People Shall Be My People and Thy God My God: The 22nd Annual Sidney B. Sperry Symposium*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1994.

Terry Ball's article discusses the imagery of plants and planting in the prophetic message of Isaiah. Ball explains that the book of Isaiah refers to plants or their parts more than three hundred times. Isaiah used plants as metaphors to teach his people about "their relationship to God, their need for repentance, their future according to His plan, and the ministry of their Messiah" (pp. 17–8).

Gorton, H. Clay. *The Legacy of the Brass Plates of Laban: A Comparison of Biblical and Book of Mormon Isaiah Texts*. Bountiful, Utah: Horizon, 1994.¹⁹

This book compares the Isaiah texts of the Book of Mormon with those in the King James Version, the Douay-Rheims (an English version of the Latin Vulgate), an unidentified English version of the Septuagint, and the Pontifical University of Salamanca's 1947 translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. The last publication is included because the author states that "in all probability [it is] a translation of the Masoretic Hebrew dating from the ninth century" (p. 13). Gorton notes how the various biblical versions differ from the 1981 Book of Mormon version and discusses how the changes in the text reveal that "plain and precious" truths were being removed or altered in order to cast apostate Israel in a more favorable light and to lessen the judgments of God that Isaiah made known to them.

Brewster, Hoyt W., Jr. *Isaiah, Plain and Simple: The Message of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995.

Hoyt Brewster's book is the most recent LDS work that concentrates exclusively on Isaiah. It reproduces all the

significant Isaiah quotations in the Book of Mormon—including the Isaiah portions quoted in 1 Nephi 20 and 21, 2 Nephi 6–8, Mosiah 14 and 15, and 3 Nephi 20 and 22—along side of the parallel verses from the Bible. Verse-by-verse commentary is also provided. The comments clarify or paraphrase difficult wording, identify and explain differences between Book of Mormon and biblical Isaiah versions, give historical or cultural context to the passages, sometimes explore the Hebrew or Greek meanings of certain terms, suggest interpretations for prophecies, and often include statements from other scriptures or from LDS Church leaders about topics suggested by the verse in question. In addition to the verse-by-verse commentary, Brewster provides a brief introduction to the study of Isaiah and gives overviews for each chapter and group of verses he analyzes.

For some of the more difficult Isaiah passages, Brewster does not shy away from mentioning alternative arguments but typically will defend the traditional LDS viewpoint. Some of the arguments for a particular interpretation originate in Brewster himself, while many come from the host of other LDS commentators—particularly Nyman, Ludlow, and Sperry—whom Brewster catalogs in his work. In interpreting the Immanuel prophecy, Brewster makes clear his belief that Immanuel is Jesus Christ by citing biblical and Book of Mormon passages about the birth of Christ and by quoting a portion of Sperry’s interpretation of the prophecy. However, Brewster also mentions that biblical scholars typically assign the fulfillment of this prophecy to Isaiah’s day (see pp. 69–70). Brewster’s discussion of the “rod” and “root of Jesse” in Isaiah 11 also favors the traditional LDS view that these prophecies refer to Joseph Smith. He mentions Ludlow’s interpretation of this as a latter-day Davidic king but states that “this interpretation is not consistent with the view generally held by Latter-day Saints” (p.109). Brewster often

mentions opposing views to typical LDS interpretations but rarely takes issue with the arguments for those opposing views.

Conclusions

As can be seen in the above survey, many different interpretations of Isaiah's prophecies exist among LDS scholars. Some simply tackle each prophecy in a single historical context, while others see prophetic fulfillment on many levels and in multiple time periods. Some maintain traditional interpretations—especially those dealing with Christ, the Book of Mormon, and the restoration—while others propose that Isaiah's prophecies have much to do with his own day, viewing people of latter ages as simply likening these prophecies to their own events and circumstances.

Who is right? Can any one method of interpretation be applied to all of Isaiah's prophecies? Perhaps the best answer is that prophecy and its interpretation are the domain of prophets, and as Latter-day Saints believe, when God needs to clarify a matter, he will do so through his living oracles. The question of who is ultimately correct may never be settled until the mouthpiece of the Lord speaks. In the meantime, however, we can examine differing viewpoints and try to determine the meaning behind Isaiah's words. By using the new insights gained in study and in the spirit of prayer, reverence, and the pursuit of knowledge, we can be inspired to a greater determination to live the principles, doctrines, and commandments that God has given us through his prophet Isaiah.

Modern LDS Comments on Isaiah 53

Not only was Isaiah 53 understood messianically by Abinadi and Nephite prophets before him, but also it has been similarly read and expounded by latter-day prophets and scholars. In his personal exposition on this chapter, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland emphasizes the events and feelings in the mortal experience of Jesus Christ that fulfilled both the exquisite letter and the empasioned spirit of Isaiah's prophecy.²⁰ Elder Holland, along with several other LDS commentators, interprets various phrases in Isaiah 53 as they refer to events in the passion of the Savior or to attributes of his divine character. The following survey of LDS literature on Isaiah 53, which supplements the annotated bibliography at the end of this volume, shows the frequency with which this text has been cited by LDS commentators. Although a few differences of opinion exist in these explications, they all operate within a general framework that is consistent with the definitive interpretation offered by Abinadi.

Isaiah 53:1

Most LDS scholars interpret the two questions in this verse, in some way, to refer to how the messages of the prophets concerning Christ are ignored or misunderstood. Meservy, however, interprets the first question to mean that Christ's words themselves will be rejected: "When Christ comes to earth, who will believe His words (report)?" and Meservy cites New Testament references in which Christ himself raises these same questions with the Jews (for

example, John 8:43: “Why do ye not understand my speech? even because he cannot hear my word”).²¹ Reynolds and Sjordahl would translate this verse, “Who hath believed our words of Him in whom the power and authority of God is made known?,” saying that the verse is better translated as containing only one query, not two, focusing more directly on Christ as the subject of this chapter. The answer to this question is “no one.”²²

The second question is often interpreted to mean that the arm of the Lord is revealed in the being of the mortal Messiah,²³ and Ludlow cites numerous ancient and modern prophets who have identified the “arm of the Lord” as Christ.²⁴ Other LDS scholars believe the second question asks, “To whom has God revealed his priesthood, his gospel?” and also affirm that all knowledge of God must come from revelation,²⁵ whereas Ridges and Sperry understand this question to read, “Who sees God’s hand in things?” or “To whom is the power or might of the Lord revealed?”²⁶

Isaiah 53:2

Verse two reveals details of Christ’s mortal life—despite predominantly unrighteous surroundings, he will be nurtured by the Lord.²⁷ Nearly every LDS writer agrees that Christ’s divine knowledge and character did not manifest itself in such a way as to draw attention to himself.²⁸

Isaiah 53:3

Speaking of the rejection of Christ, Brewster and Seely point out that he was rejected by those of his own country (see Matthew 13:57; Luke 4:24; Mark 6:1–6),²⁹ and Meservy and McConkie and Millet understand this to refer to Christ’s popularity with the masses, who followed him for healing and teaching, but when initial needs were satisfied, they left

him, particularly after his “bread of life” sermon in John 6.³⁰ Millet feels that no one can understand the sorrow and loneliness of Christ, and, according to Reynolds and Sjudahl, people looked the other way when they saw Christ, just as two of the three men in the Good Samaritan story turned from the injured man.³¹ Seely compares John 1:5 (the light shines in darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not) and John 1:11 (he came to his own, but they received him not), and Sperry interprets “grief” as “sickness.”³²

The phrase “and we esteemed him not” is commonly understood to mean that people generally, either living at Christ’s time or in the present day, are preoccupied by wickedness and adultery, and resent and despise Christ for intruding into their selfish, lustful way of living.³³ McConkie and Millet add that “our esteem of Christ is measured by our obedience to his commandments.”³⁴

Isaiah 53:4

Speaking of the lines beginning in verse four, Ludlow finds Isaiah’s most important concepts about Christ’s role.³⁵ Ludlow expounds on the laws of mercy and justice, explaining why there must be an opposition in all things, and applies these laws to Christ’s atonement, adding that justice made the atonement “necessary” and mercy made the atonement “possible,” and that Christ had to be both capable and willing to perform the atonement.³⁶ Some scholars emphasize the irony,³⁷ the gravity, and the reality of the weight of the sins of the world that Christ bore,³⁸ while others, such as Ludlow and Millet emphasize the understanding and forgiving nature of Christ.³⁹

The phrase, “we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted,” refers to the mistaken idea that the suffering of the servant was a punishment from God. But the reality

is, as is explained in verse five, “he was wounded for our transgressions.” Meservy observes that Isaiah emphasizes eleven times in this chapter the vicarious nature of Christ’s atonement.⁴⁰

Isaiah 53:5

The concept of peace sustains many interpretations. Brewster sees in this verse the idea that peace of mind is available after repentance, which has been made possible by the Savior’s suffering (chastisement).⁴¹ Meservy elaborates that we deserve chastisement because of our guilt, which is suffered by Christ, bringing us peace. *Shalom*, meaning “peace,” derives from the Hebrew verb *shillem*, meaning “to reconcile.” Thus, Christ’s peace is not a friendly greeting, but a gift of the Spirit, a wholeness of being, a oneness with God.⁴² Ridges and Reynolds and Sjodahl agree that Christ was punished so that we could have peace, and “chastisement” here may be interpreted as “burden” or “burden of establishing”; all peace must come from righteousness, and the burden of Christ was to once again bring peace to Judah, which had wandered in sin.⁴³ Sperry interprets “chastisement of our peace” as “chastisement that led to our salvation.”⁴⁴ Many LDS commentators point out that, although everyone makes mistakes, we often turn from Christ, thinking that we know how to find true happiness better than he does, and that because we are more interested in our own fancies and whims, we indulge in our own appetites and desires.⁴⁵

Isaiah 53:6

In the phrase, “and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all,” Meservy and Ridges interpret “LORD” (“Jehovah” in Hebrew), as referring to the Father (the Father laid on Christ our iniquity), whereas Rasmussen and Skousen interpret

“LORD” here, and in verse ten, to refer to Jehovah himself, since the Lord is the Savior—Christ let himself be persecuted.⁴⁶

Isaiah 53:7

The description of Christ’s sufferings continues in verse seven, and though most interpret “oppressed” and “afflicted” in a general sense of persecution, Reynolds and Sjordahl specify that “oppressed” means he was trampled down by the abuse of power and authority vested in the Jewish hierarchy, and “afflicted” refers to his physical sufferings at trial.⁴⁷ They continue, saying that “he opened not his mouth,” not only in his trial, but also during his entire ministry, where he offered no excuses or apologies for his teachings.⁴⁸

Isaiah 53:8

Scholars have offered many interpretations of “who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living.” Most believe Isaiah is saying that Christ was “cut off from land of living” because he died without offspring; nevertheless, the righteous are Christ’s seed (Mosiah 15:10–13).⁴⁹ Elder McConkie says that the question, “Who shall declare his generation?” means “Who shall give the genealogy of the Messiah? Who shall tell the Source whence he sprang? Who can name his ancestors and tell the progenitors who preceded him? What of his Father and mother, his grandparents? Who shall declare his beginning, his genesis, his generation?” and points out that both Luke and Matthew give the genealogy of Christ at the beginning of their records.⁵⁰ McConkie and Millet state that “declare his generation” means, “Who shall declare his genesis, his roots, his origin?” believing that the only ones who

can testify today about Christ's true origin are those who have an understanding of his mortal and immortal attributes, derived from his mortal mother and immortal Father.⁵¹ Sperry recognizes that "Who shall declare his generation?" is often taken to mean "Among his contemporaries who was concerned?" but he thinks "generation" means the same thing as "seed" (spirit posterity or believers), and thus renders this verse, "And who will be concerned with his true believers?"⁵²

Isaiah 53:8

Meservy, Reynolds and Sjodahl, Skousen, and Sperry all note that "stricken" in the Greek Septuagint reads "smitten to death," and according to Skousen, this helps us understand that this chapter refers to a single person, not to the nation of Israel, as some have insisted.⁵³

Isaiah 53:9

For most scholars, making "his grave with the wicked" refers to Christ's crucifixion between two thieves, and "with the rich in his death" was directly fulfilled when Christ was buried in the tomb of the wealthy Joseph of Arimathea. Brewster continues, saying that the word "because" should read "although" (Christ was put to death, *although* he had done no violence), and cites 1 Peter 2:22 ("Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth").⁵⁴ Ridges adds that in the German version "violence" reads "wrong"—Christ was perfect.⁵⁵

Isaiah 53:10

How should we understand the idea that "it pleased the Lord to bruise him"? Elder Melvin J. Ballard has been influential for many, whose words express thanks that the Father did not intervene and spare the Son, and who says

that the Father hid in a distant corner of the universe during the Gethsemane ordeal.⁵⁶ Sperry and Brewster suggest that the word *Lord* was improperly copied onto the brass plates and into other Bible sources, for it should read “Elohim bruised Jehovah.”⁵⁷ Others say that “Lord” may validly refer to either Elohim or Jehovah: Elohim was pleased to bruise Christ, as verified in John 3:16 (“For God so loved the world”), but one could also say that Jehovah was pleased to bruise himself.⁵⁸ Sperry discusses at length the apparent difficulty here, and says that Abinadi seems to think that the “Lord” was Elohim (Mosiah 15:7–8); in any case, he adds, Christ is the Father in a special sense, and he also discusses this Father-Son status.⁵⁹ Most other scholars simply interpret verse ten to read that since the atonement was absolutely essential to the plan of salvation, it pleased the Father that Christ would volunteer for this assignment, and the Father was pleased with Christ’s suffering for others and his obedience, but not for the wickedness of mortals.⁶⁰

“Seed,” in verse ten, also has a range of interpretations. Several quote Elder McConkie, saying that the word “seed” includes the righteous that Christ visited in the spirit world during the three days of entombment, and also those who are adopted into Christ’s family by obedience.⁶¹ Others agree, saying “seed” are those who become spiritually adopted children of Christ by taking his name and living his commandments;⁶² “loyal followers,”⁶³ or “seed” are those who accept the gospel, and by accepting it, become Christ’s children, and thereby he is not cut off from land of living.⁶⁴

Verse ten continues, “he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.” Elder McConkie writes that if this prophecy were meant to be fulfilled in Christ’s day, it failed, but in the resurrection, the pleasure of the Lord is perfected, for when spirit and element are inseparably connected, God and man can receive

fullness of joy (see D&C 93:33).⁶⁵ Brewster similarly explains that only in the resurrection of Christ was this prophecy fulfilled, because in mortality his days were shortened and in death he could not enjoy a fullness of joy.⁶⁶ Sperry seems to understand that “the seed shall have length of days (unending life),” and that “the pleasure of the Lord” refers to “the will of the Lord” which shall be accomplished through Christ.⁶⁷

Isaiah 53:11

Christ and the Father will both be satisfied with results of the atonement (see Matthew 3:17, “in whom I am well pleased”).⁶⁸ In the next phrase, scholars have interpreted “knowledge” to be the Father’s knowledge that “It is finished,”⁶⁹ or “the knowledge he brings,”⁷⁰ or knowledge Jesus had of how to save.⁷¹ With this knowledge and through the atonement, we will be justified, or declared righteous and pronounced innocent before God.⁷² Meservy adds that the phrase “justify many” describes the exact nature of Christ’s atonement, for though the atonement is available to all, many, but not all, will choose to accept it.⁷³ Nyman agrees that even though Christ suffered the pains of all humanity, only those who follow him will receive the full benefit (see 2 Nephi 9:21).⁷⁴

Isaiah 53:12

The last verse deals with how Christ, because he willingly laid down his life, will share the victory with the Father. It refers to Christ’s death among transgressors, and reveals that Christ knows by his experience what it is like to suffer pain and affliction (see Alma 7:11).⁷⁵

Notes

1. See also *Orson Pratt's Works*, 23–9.
2. It is interesting to note here that Orson Pratt mentions that “Mr. [Joseph] Smith did not know anything about this prophecy at that time, for he was unacquainted with the contents of the Bible; he was brought up to work” (288). Hence, there appears to be no record of the Prophet ever equating the “sealed book” of Isaiah 29 with the Book of Mormon.
3. For a more recent synopsis of the Isaiah problem, see the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, s.v. “Isaiah, Book of (Second Isaiah).”
4. Sperry’s explanations of the meanings of Isaiah 2–14 (parallel to 2 Nephi 12–24) can also be found in his *The Isaiah Quotation: 2 Nephi 12–24* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1984); reprinted in *The Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 4/1 (1995): 192–208. Sperry’s analysis is consistent with his analysis in *Book of Mormon Compendium*, which is to focus more on clarifying or restating Isaiah than on scrupulously interpreting him.
5. The findings presented in this article are discussed more generally in “I Have a Question,” *Ensign* (October 1984): 29, and are more specifically described in L. LaMar Adams, *The Living Message of Isaiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 22–6, which is discussed in this bibliography (see p. 23).
6. Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976).
7. R. H. Charles, trans., *Ascension of Isaiah* (London: Black, 1900).
8. *Apocalyptic Book* is briefly and favorably reviewed in *Dialogue* 17/4 (1984): 144 by Gene Sessions, who calls the work a “masterpiece of scholarship.”
9. Ludlow’s work is reviewed by Paul Y. Hoskisson in *BYU Studies* 23/4 (1983): 503–8. Hoskisson calls the work an “important achievement” (p. 508) and a source of “reputable scholarship” and “informed discussion” (p. 503). He praises the work more

specifically for its “happy balance” (p. 504) of various source materials and for providing alternative interpretations (instead of dogmatic ones) for numerous passages. However, Hoskisson disapproves of certain features of the work, including Ludlow’s infrequent references to the Dead Sea Scrolls, his belief that the Hebrew *elohim* always refers to God the Father, and his use of the word *irreligious* to refer to Palestinian Jews.

10. Brief summaries of Ludlow’s interpretations on Isaiah 11 and 29 can also be seen in his *Unlocking the Old Testament* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 145–76.

11. See William Hamblin’s response to this article, entitled “‘Isaiah Updated’ Challenged,” *Dialogue* 17/1 (1984): 4–7.

12. This article is an abridgment of an article of the same name, which Tvedtnes published through FARMS in 1981. The full 140-page article examines and classifies every Isaiah passage in the Book of Mormon that differs from the King James Version.

13. The first and second volumes of *Doctrinal Commentary* are reviewed by Louis Midgley in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 1 (1989): 92–113, and by J. Frederic Voros Jr. in *BYU Studies* 29/2 (1989): 121–5. Midgley vigorously attacks the very plan or structure of the books, arguing that to McConkie and Millet, the Book of Mormon text “merely becomes the occasion for moralizing, platitudes, admonitions, while the actual meaning of the text may be ignored” (p. 105). Voros identifies numerous passages in the work that he finds “puzzling” (p. 124), “troubling” (p. 125), and even “uncharitable” (p. 125).

14. Gileadi’s *New Translation* is reviewed by Alfred E. Krause in *Sunstone* 12/5 (1988): 44–5, Donald W. Parry in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 4 (1992): 52–62, Bruce D. Porter in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 4 (1992): 40–51, and Royal Skousen in *BYU Studies* 28/3 (1988): 124–7. Krause and Skousen are generally positive in their reviews, praising Gileadi’s translation and introduction for making Isaiah comprehensible to a lay Latter-day Saint audience while at the same time appealing to biblical scholars from various other faiths. Although Porter is favorable in his assessment of Gileadi’s translation, he heavily criticizes Gileadi’s introduction for its “insistence on the dominance

within Isaiah of prophecies pertaining to the mission of the latter-day Davidic king" (p. 43). Parry also disapproves of Gileadi's introduction and extends it to Gileadi's translation, finally concluding that students of Isaiah would be better off not reading Gileadi's book (p. 62).

15. Though Nyman has not published a major article or book on Isaiah since 1991, he remains one of the most prolific Latter-day Saint Isaiah scholars. His most recent contribution appears to be his brief discussion of the possible fulfillments of the "kings" and "queens" language of Isaiah 49:23 in "What is the meaning or known fulfillment of the prophecy 'Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers'? (1 Ne. 21:23)," I Have a Question, *Ensign* (August 1994): 61. Nyman maintains a conservative approach to Isaiah, suggesting that the "kings" and "queens" are either (1) LDS missionaries who take the gospel to the Lamanite people or (2) the gentile nations—especially Great Britain and the United States—that have helped found the modern state of Israel.

16. Ridges is reviewed briefly by Terrence L. Szink in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 4 (1992): 164–5, who finds minor deficiencies in the work. For example, the notes sometimes attempt to clarify terms that need no clarification. Szink states, however, that the work fulfills its goal of showing that Isaiah is comprehensible.

17. David Rolph Seely partly evaluates but mostly summarizes *Literary Message* in *Review of Books* 8/1 (1996): 69–79.

18. See Avraham Gileadi, "A Holistic Structure of the Book of Isaiah," (Ph.D. Diss. Brigham Young University, 1981).

19. Gorton's work is reviewed by Garold N. Davis and Mark J. Johnson in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon* 7/1 (1995): 123–9, 130–8. Davis and Johnson both find the book a valuable tool for scholarship because it lays out several Isaiah texts side by side for easy comparison. The reviewers also find valuable Gorton's discussion of the "spiritual nature of the losses of the Isaiah texts" (p. 138), but they also point out deficiencies in the work. For example, Gorton ignores some significant Book of Mormon Isaiah passages, including the Isaiah chapters found in 2 Nephi 21 and 22.

20. See Elder Holland's chapter on this subject earlier in this volume. This addendum, prepared by Eric Smith and John W. Welch, augments the chapter on Isaiah 53 and Mosiah 14 in this volume.

21. Keith H. Meservy, "Isaiah 53: The Richest Prophecy on Christ's Atonement in the Old Testament" in *A Witness of Jesus Christ: The 1989 Sperry Symposium on the Old Testament*, ed. Richard D. Draper (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1990), 156–7. In this volume, Jeffrey Holland discusses Isaiah as a witness for Christ.

22. George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1956), 2:154–5.

23. Hoyt W. Brewster Jr., *Isaiah, Plain and Simple: The Message of Isaiah in the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 247.

24. Victor L. Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 447.

25. Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon: Jacob through Mosiah* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 2:221.

26. David J. Ridges, *Isaiah Made Easier* (Springville, Utah: Copies Plus Printing, 1991), 47; Sidney B. Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968), 301–2.

27. See Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 248; Avraham Gileadi, *The Apocalyptic Book of Isaiah: A New Translation with Interpretative Key* (Provo, Utah: Hebraeus Press, 1982), 136; Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet*, 447; Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1978), 277–8; McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary*, 2:222; Meservy, "Isaiah 53," 158; Robert L. Millet, "Abinadi's Messianic Sermon (Mosiah 12–16)," in *A Symposium on the Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1986), 99; Monte S. Nyman, "Abinadi's Commentary on Isaiah," in *The Book of Mormon: Mosiah, Salvation Only Through Christ*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, Utah: BYU Religious Studies Center, 1991), 165; Monte S. Nyman, *Great Are the Words of Isaiah* (Salt Lake City:

Bookcraft, 1980), 207; Reynolds and Sjordahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 2:156; Ridges, *Isaiah Made Easier*, 47; Cleon W. Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks to Modern Times* (Salt Lake City: Ensign Publishing, 1984), 657; Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 302.

28. For further similes involving young plants, compare Psalm 1:3; Jeremiah 17:5–8; and tender branches, see Jacob 5:4, 6.

29. Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 248–9; David Rolph Seely, “The Lord Will Bring Salvation (Isaiah 51–66),” in *Studies in Scripture*, ed. Kent P. Jackson, 8 vols., 1 *Kings to Malachi* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993), 4:152.

30. Meservy, “Isaiah 53,” 159; McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary*, 2:222.

31. Millet, “Abinadi’s Messianic Sermon,” 99; Reynolds and Sjordahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 2:157. See also Ridges, *Isaiah Made Easier*, 47.

32. Seely, “The Lord will Bring Salvation,” 152; Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 302.

33. See Meservy, “Isaiah 53,” 159–60.

34. McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary*, 2:222–3.

35. Victor L. Ludlow, *Unlocking the Old Testament* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1981), 169–70.

36. Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet*, 449–52.

37. Meservy, “Isaiah 53,” 160.

38. Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 250; Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks*, 658–9; Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 302–3; see also Mosiah 14:4.

39. Ludlow, *Isaiah: Prophet, Seer, and Poet*, 452; Millet, “Abinadi’s Messianic Sermon,” 99.

40. Meservy, “Isaiah 53,” 160–2.

41. Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 252.

42. Meservy, “Isaiah 53,” 162.

43. Ridges, *Isaiah Made Easier*, 48; Reynolds and Sjordahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 159.

44. Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 303.

45. See Meservy, “Isaiah 53,” 162–3; Reynolds and Sjordahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 2:160; Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks*, 660–1; Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 303.

46. Meservy, "Isaiah 53," 163 (and endnote 9); Ridges, *Isaiah Made Easier*, 48; Ellis T. Rasmussen, *A Latter-day Saint Commentary on the Old Testament* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1993), 532; Cleon W. Skousen, *The Fourth Thousand Years* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 533.

47. Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 2:160–2.

48. Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 2:161.

49. See Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 255; Meservy, "Isaiah 53," 165 (and endnote 10); Nyman, "Abinadi's Messianic Commentary," 174–5; Nyman, *Great Are the Words of Isaiah*, 209; Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 2:162; Skousen, *The Fourth Thousand Years*, 533 n. 92.

50. McConkie, *Promised Messiah*, 471; Bruce R. McConkie, "Who Shall Declare His Generation?" *BYU Studies* 16/4 (1976): 553–5.

51. McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary*, 2:224.

52. Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 304.

53. Meservy, "Isaiah 53," 165; Reynolds and Sjodahl, *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 2:162; Skousen, *The Fourth Thousand Years*, 533 n. 93; Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks*, 661–2; Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 304.

54. Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 256.

55. Ridges, *Isaiah Made Easier*, 48.

56. See Church Educational System, *Old Testament: 1 Kings-Malachi*. 2d ed. (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981), 198; Philip J. Schlesinger, *Isaiah and the Book of Mormon* (n.p., 1990), 97; and Millet, "Abinadi's Messianic Sermon," 100.

57. Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 305–6; Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 257.

58. Nyman, "Abinadi's Commentary," 182–3.

59. Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 305–9.

60. Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks*, 663; Ludlow, *Prophet, Seer, and Poet*, 456; Meservy, "Isaiah 53," 166.

61. Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 257; CES, *Old Testament*, 198; McConkie, *Promised Messiah*, 362; McConkie and Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary*, 2:225; Millet, "Abinadi's Messianic Commentary," 100.

62. Ludlow, *Prophet, Seer, and Poet*, 456; see also Nyman, *Great Are the Words of Isaiah*, 210; Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 306;

63. Ridges, *Isaiah Made Easier*, 48.

64. Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks*, 663.

65. McConkie, *Promised Messiah*, 362; see also Millet, "Abinadi's Messianic Commentary," 100–1

66. Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 258.

67. Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 306.

68. See Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 258; Gileadi, *Apocalyptic Book*, 137; Meservy, "Isaiah 53," 167; Nyman, "Abinadi's Commentary," 184; Ridges, *Isaiah Made Easier*, 48; Schlesinger, *Isaiah and the Book of Mormon*, 94; Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks*, 663; Sperry, *Book of Mormon Compendium*, 306.

69. Meservy, "Isaiah 53," 168–9 (and endnotes 12–4).

70. Ridges, *Isaiah Made Easier*, 48.

71. Skousen, *Isaiah Speaks*, 663–4.

72. Brewster, *Isaiah, Plain and Simple*, 258.

73. Meservy, "Isaiah 53," 168.

74. Nyman, *Great Are the Words of Isaiah*, 184–5.

75. *Ibid.*, 210–1.