

From the Editor



TTrue to the long-standing character of *BYU Studies*, this issue contains something exciting and enriching for just about everyone. Looking over this latest issue, I am grateful for the academic quality and faithful integrity of its contents and for the authors who have worked hard to bring this information to you.

Twenty-five years ago, as *BYU Studies* looked toward the 1990s, the three previous editors reflected on their founding visions and guiding principles to appreciate how far *BYU Studies* had come since 1959. At the same time, I looked ahead, as the newly installed editor. Our four editorials were published in 1991.¹

On that occasion, I laid out the aims of *BYU Studies*. You can still find this vision statement in the *BYU Studies* guidelines for authors, conveniently also included in our mission statement on our newly revamped website at <http://byustudies.byu.edu/mission>.

As stated there, at its core *BYU Studies Quarterly* remains dedicated to the correlation of revealed and discovered truth and to the conviction that the spiritual and the intellectual can be complementary and fundamentally harmonious avenues of knowledge, together with the following six precepts:

Unity. The Lord has clearly stated: “If ye are not one ye are not mine” (D&C 38:27). In a shifting world that necessarily and fortunately features diversity, individuality, heterodoxy, and change, the goal of unity

1. *BYU Studies* 31, no. 4 (1991): 5–28.

with God and our fellow beings must be continually cultivated and nourished.

Harmony. For *BYU Studies Quarterly*, traditional dichotomies such as mind and body, God and man, spirit and matter, and time and eternity are not viewed as competing opposites. In the gospel of Jesus Christ, the objective is to embrace both: ancient and modern, word and deed, reason and revelation, the “ought” and the “is,” community and individuality, male and female, nature and custom, induction and deduction, analysis and synthesis, rights and duties, theory and practice, and even mortality and godhood.

Honesty. As a primary trait of character, “we believe in being honest” (A of F 13). Accuracy and reliability are of the essence in scholarship. All serious scholars acknowledge and evaluate data both for and against their ideas and theories. They eschew plagiarism. They guard against covert influences of unstated biases.

Thoroughness. *BYU Studies Quarterly* welcomes thoroughly researched contributions from all disciplines, addressing “all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God, that are expedient for you to understand; of things both in heaven and in the earth, and under the earth” (D&C 88:78).

Humility. Pride has been identified as the pervading sin of our day. As scholars, we have more than our share of exposure to this problem. Arrogance, disdain, overconfidence, and dogmatism may well be the main occupational hazards of academia. Humble awareness that scholarship is not an end in itself can set the stage for greater light and knowledge.

Charity. In order for communication to occur, there must be charity, for no statement exists (including this one) that cannot be misconstrued. If fellowship and goodwill do not exist, especially in an academic setting, we are “nothing” (1 Cor. 13:2). Charity is necessary to avoid offending even the weakest of the saints. Jesus pronounced a woe on anyone who “should offend one of these little ones” (Luke 17:2).

Still today, we continually strive to achieve these purposes at *BYU Studies*. As you read the pages in this current issue, I hope you will find these characteristics amply represented on the pages of this issue, harmoniously bringing together the spiritual and the intellectual. The book reviews are, at the same time, respectful and rigorous. The essay and the poems are both introspective and outreaching. The articles are rigorous and balanced, humble and persuasive, corrective and considerate, technical and approachable, wide-ranging and consolidating. All this brings academic perspectives to bear on topics of interest to Latter-day Saints.

Joseph I. Bentley has spent much of his life studying the events that led up to the martyrdom of Joseph Smith as well as its legal aftermaths. His exhaustively thorough treatise on this issue sheds new light on the barrage of litigations launched against Joseph Smith in the last few weeks of his life. Bentley's expert legal analysis of rarely seen documents allows readers to retrace, as never before, the steps that led to Carthage and at least to begin to comprehend these almost unimaginable developments.

Extraordinary devotion to Karl G. Maeser has enabled Roger P. Minert and M. Ralf Bartsch to track down several important details in the true story of Maeser's early career as a fledgling educator in Dresden, Germany. Setting the record straight on the path of learning, pedagogy, and integrity that eventually brought Maeser to Provo, Utah, this article adds numerous critical details to the history of Maeser's life before his departure from Germany in 1856. This article speaks with a clear and honest voice that would surely make this *Lehrmeister*, the first president of Brigham Young University, very proud.

Matthew Scott Stenson's methodical exegesis unpacks the rhetorical consistency of Alma's clash with the followers of Nehor in Alma 9–14. Employing philosophical and literary tools, Stenson draws attention to the causes of tension between the main factions in the early years of the Nephite reign of judges. Recognizing how Alma expounds the subject of authority in his three speeches in Ammonihah opens our eyes to Alma's model efforts to persuade these dissenters. Though largely futile, his coherent declamations warn all to eschew pride and to embrace unity and authority.

Making use of infographics, Meilan Jin, Iliesa Delai, and Geoffrey Draper innovatively employ color, text, and images to allow users of their new app to discover for themselves interesting information about the succession of the Apostles and the Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Using computer technology to navigate time-series data turns static images into living information.

Walker A. Wright takes an interdisciplinary approach toward a Mormon theology of the concept of work. Knowing that faith without works is dead, Latter-day Saints have long seen that daily work has eternal consequences and that even God continues to work.² Wright digs deeply into the practical roles of work in the theoretical domains of eschatology, progression, metaphysics, and sociology.

2. See David J. Cherrington, "Work, Role of," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, ed. Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 4:1585–87.

Finally, concerning charity, I am reminded of a statement by Elder Marvin J. Ashton in April conference in 1992. His statement also bears remembering as we look back a quarter century but at the same time look forward to all that lies ahead: “Perhaps the greatest charity comes when we are kind to each other, when we don’t judge or categorize someone else, when we simply give each other the benefit of the doubt or remain quiet. Charity is accepting someone’s differences, weaknesses, and shortcomings; having patience with someone who has let us down; or resisting the impulse to become offended when someone doesn’t handle something the way we might have hoped. Charity is refusing to take advantage of another’s weakness and being willing to forgive someone who has hurt us. Charity is expecting the best of each other.”³

3. Marvin J. Ashton, “The Tongue Can Be a Sharp Sword,” *Ensign* 32 (May 1992): 18.