

have ample bibliographies for readers wanting to know more. While future work will continue to enhance our reading of the Book of Mormon, it seems likely that the *Book of Mormon Reference Companion* will become a regular first stop for reference information on many topics related to the Book of Mormon.

—Eric A. Eliason

Voices from the Dust: Book of Mormon Insights, by S. Kent Brown (Covenant, 2004)

Listening carefully to the fine points of every text, Kent Brown ruminates over the real life settings and personal qualities of several personalities who left their lasting imprints on the pages of the Book of Mormon. Few know the trail from Jerusalem to Arabia better than Professor Brown, who has studied, traveled, and filmed that region extensively. The first two of six chapters in this book vividly walk the reader alongside Lehi's caravan. The remaining chapters bring to life the main experiences and legacies of King Benjamin (Mosiah 1–6), the four missionary sons of Mosiah (Alma 17–26), the resurrected Christ (3 Ne. 11–26), and Moroni (Morm. 8–Moro. 10). In every case, insights are drawn out of the text as readers strive to hear the voices of these towering figures.

Brown brings years of experience to bear on his task. He is always attentive to the literary feel of each text, and he is keenly in tune with relevant cultural practices from antiquity. Whereas his previous *From Jerusalem to Zarahemla* (BYU Religious Studies Center, 1998) included several previously published pieces, this volume offers entirely new material. It continues very con-

structively in the style and trajectory of Brown's many previous Book of Mormon projects.

Readers are repeatedly rewarded by clear and engaging descriptions. Details are plentiful, such as information on the three votive altars from around 600 BC south of Wadi Jawf that attest to the use of the name Nahom (Nihn or Nehem), where Ishmael was buried. People come to life, especially with the human dimensions of women, children, and family. Themes reverberate, especially those of revelation, deliverance, ordinances, and redemption. But most of all, through these insights, readers become hearers of voices that speak throughout the pages of the Book of Mormon.

—John W. Welch

On Human Nature: The Jerusalem Center Symposium, edited by Truman G. Madsen, David Noel Freedman, and Pam Fox Kuhlken (Pryor Petten-gill, 2004)

This modestly packaged book delivers a royal banquet of human understanding. In 1993 the BYU Jerusalem Center hosted a conference on human nature. Speakers from major religious traditions around the world were invited to address the question "In the approaches to human nature throughout world faiths, is there any common ground?" Very engaging answers then were offered by nine prominent articulators of views found in Asian religions, the Hebrew Bible and Jewish rabbinics, as well as among the Greek Orthodox, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, and Latter-day Saints.

Each essay is quite distinctive, not only in content but also in approach. Altogether, the topic of human

nature is approached theologically, ontologically, psychologically, metaphysically, historically, literarily, and ethically. Thematic areas encompass the transcendental substantive self, innate inclinations toward goodness or depravity, detachment or connectedness, the creation of humanity, the concept of the human family, individuality, freedom, power, hope, love, and eternal potentials.

Anyone interested in comparative religions, interfaith dialogue, missionary work, or the philosophy of religion will find these one hundred pages filled with insight. Anyone focusing on the Golden Rule, on being created in the image of God, or on the joys and challenges of the human condition around the world will see human nature more clearly in light of these enduring perspectives.

—John W. Welch

THE KEY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF *BYU STUDIES*

The mission of this publication is to be faithful and scholarly throughout, harmonizing wherever possible the intellectual and the spiritual on subjects of interest to Latter-day Saints and to scholars studying the Latter-day Saint experience. To achieve this goal, *BYU Studies* strives to be

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Interesting	To present new discoveries and insights
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