

The New Publications of the Standard Works—1979, 1981

Robert J. Matthews

INTRODUCTION

In August 1979 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints published a new edition of the King James Version of the Bible, its ancient standard work. In August 1981 the Church then published new editions of the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price, its three latter-day standard works. This 1981 edition marked the first change in format since 1920 for the Book of Mormon and since 1921 for both the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. It also marked the first major addition to the Doctrine and Covenants since 1876 (except the Manifesto, added in 1908) and since 1902 to the Pearl of Great Price (except for two temporary additions in 1976). Several features make the publication of these new editions of the standard works a monumental event in the onward progress of the Church.

In order to view these new editions in their proper setting, we need to review briefly the reasons that first prompted publication of this LDS edition of the Bible and then led to the decision to improve and update the other standard works.

For many years throughout the Church, students of the scriptures have wished for a Bible that was cross-referenced to the other standard works. For the past forty years or so, many Church members have used a Bible published by Cambridge University, which was known as the “missionary edition,” because it contained a separate ready-reference and other notes supplied by the Church as special helps to missionaries. However, the footnotes, cross-references, and dictionary, designed for the Bible only, were prepared by Cambridge Press and were often found inadequate for LDS use. The Bible dictionary was informative in many instances; but having been prepared

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without the advantage of latter-day revelation, it lacked discussion of many topics significant to Latter-day Saints and also contained a number of viewpoints that believers in the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price would recognize as incorrect. Latter-day Saints have a basic tenet that the Bible, as great and venerable as it is (whether it be the King James Version or any other version), is not now as it originally was, neither in completeness nor clarity. Consequently, Church members have often desired a Bible that would bring together under one cover cross-references to other standard works, explanatory footnotes, excerpts from the Joseph Smith Translation, and any other features that would aid the Latter-day Saint reader.

An initial step by President Harold B. Lee in October 1972 established a committee consisting of Elders Thomas S. Monson and Boyd K. Packer of the Quorum of the Twelve. Soon Elder Bruce R. McConkie was appointed by the First Presidency to the committee. Elders Marvin J. Ashton and Howard W. Hunter also served for a time. This committee, acting under the immediate direction of President Spencer W. Kimball (who at the time was President of the Quorum of the Twelve), was given a charge to prepare Bible study aids that would assist members of the Church in increasing their scriptural knowledge and improving their gospel scholarship. The committee's official name is the Scriptures Publications Committee, and the First Presidency has charged it with the responsibility of overseeing the editing and publication of all the standard works of the Church.

When the committee began its work, it was given no detailed list of plans except a stipulation that the text of the King James Bible was to be used without alteration. The committee called on others for technical assistance¹ and worked to identify ways to produce an edition of the Bible that Latter-day Saints could use to maximum advantage. William James Mortimer, then manager of Deseret Book in Salt Lake City and now director of Printing Services for the Church, was appointed committee secretary. In this capacity he also served as the Church business agent in the actual work of publishing the scriptures. Subcommittees were formed, assignments were made, and the work

¹Many were engaged in the production of these new editions of the standard works. At one time at least one hundred faculty and students at Brigham Young University were assigned various tasks. Many faculty throughout the seminary and institute of religion systems were also involved. It would be impossible to list all who contributed, and a partial list would be inadequate. The principal laborers besides those mentioned in the text of this article were Ellis T. Rasmussen and Robert C. Patch of the BYU religious instruction faculty. They were assisted by Robert J. Matthews. Mention must be made also of the exceptional computer work of Steve Howes and Vicki Barney Hovik of BYU and of the excellent work of secretaries and typists without which the project could not have been done.

commenced. As materials were produced, they were submitted to the Scriptures Publications Committee for review and periodically cleared by the First Presidency and the Twelve.

Because Cambridge University in Great Britain had the necessary equipment and experienced personnel, the page layout, typesetting, proofreading, and making of printing plates were done there. The Cambridge technicians also developed a special, easy-to-read type style with short extenders, which made it pleasing to the eye yet permitted the lines to be placed quite close together, thus saving space. Since most of the books would be marketed in the U.S., the majority of the printing and binding was done in Boston to save shipping expense.

In August 1979, seven years after the work commenced, the LDS edition of the King James Version came from the press with the following: (1) new explanatory chapter headings, (2) an extensive 598-page topical guide (abbreviated TG in the new editions) or subject-matter index with 3495 entries, (3) over 600 excerpts from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible (abbreviated JST) that greatly illuminate passages of the King James Version (abbreviated KJV), (4) cross-references to all of the standard works, (5) a 195-page Bible dictionary (referenced BD) with 1285 entries especially written for Latter-day Saint use, (6) a simplified footnote system and (7) 24 easy-to-read maps with a gazetteer. The topical guide, Bible dictionary, a section of Joseph Smith Translation passages, gazetteer, and maps form an 826-page appendix.

The new footnoting, based upon verses rather than on chapters, employs a simplified numbering system, beginning with "a" in each verse. Former systems based on chapters (rather than on verses) often extended to a long series of footnotes going all the way through the alphabet and having to double the reference symbol as in "aa," "bb," etc. The former system offered a chain-reference which the new format does not, but the simplicity of use when coupled with the topical guide makes the new system preferable and the chain system unnecessary.

During the preparation of the Bible study helps, it became apparent that ideally there should be new editions of the other standard works, since the improved chapter headings and the footnote and cross-referencing systems developed for the Bible would also benefit the other scriptures. Furthermore, there were several typographical errors and omissions in the latter-day scriptures that needed correction. Other clarifications and additions, including new

introductory material for each of the books of the triple combination, two new sections having to do with salvation for the dead, maps for the Doctrine and Covenants, President Wilford Woodruff's views concerning the Manifesto, and a statement about the 1978 priesthood revelation, would likewise be beneficial for the best use of these scriptures.

The new editions virtually offer a comprehensive course of study in the gospel of Jesus Christ and were designed for use by seminary and institute students, missionaries, and the general membership of the Church. However, even an advanced scholar can benefit from the chapter headings, Joseph Smith Translation entries, alternate readings from Hebrew and Greek, easy-to-read reference system, and other such features.²

THE BIBLE

The text of the new edition is the King James Version (in Britain, known as the "Authorized Version"), which is the official English-language Bible of the Church. No modifications of any kind were made in the text itself, the additions being limited to extensive study aids. The cross-references, chapter headings, footnotes, topical guide, and Bible dictionary are not official pronouncements of Church doctrine although the committees who prepared them endeavored to be accurate.

Chapter Headings

Every chapter in the Bible has an explanatory, descriptive heading written especially for this new edition to give the reader a preview of the chapter, usually with a doctrinal emphasis. The headings are interpretive and actually serve as a commentary to each chapter. The following example from Genesis chapter 3 will illustrate this point. Other editions of the Bible have depicted the events of this chapter as "Man's shameful fall" and "The serpent cursed" (headnotes in the missionary edition). The new LDS edition reads,

The Serpent (Lucifer) deceives Eve—She and then Adam partake of the forbidden fruit—Her Seed (Christ) shall bruise the Serpent's head—Role of woman, and of man—Adam and Eve cast out of the Garden of Eden—Adam presides—Eve becomes the mother of all living.

²Lavina Fielding Anderson, "Church Publishes First LDS Edition of the Bible," *Ensign* 9 (October 1979): 8-18.

Topical Guide and Concordance

The topical guide and concordance is a major segment of the new material, consisting of 3495 entries, at least 750 of which are extensive collections of scriptural statements, with references from all of the standard works. This topical guide, which is really a subject-matter index, is a most useful instrument and in a unique way shows that the four standard works teach the same doctrine, thus effectively demonstrating that they are witnesses for each other. The alphabetical entries are so constructed that in a matter of minutes any reader can locate a number of passages from the standard works on almost any gospel topic. Passages are given first from the Old Testament, then the New Testament, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and then the Pearl of Great Price.

A committee of six persons prepared these materials, which were first published in 1977 as *A Topical Guide to the Scriptures of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. This publication field-tested the materials and also allowed its many users to note errors and omissions and thus improve its contents. Every copy contained a detachable form which asked for readers' suggestions to be sent to the committee. That volume was subsequently revised and published in the new edition of the Bible in 1979, as "Topical Guide with Selected Concordance and Index."

This guide is at once extensive yet simple in its construction. For example, under the general topic of "Jesus Christ," there are nearly 1600 scriptures. This large number of references would be unwieldy were it not for the alphabetical arrangement of fifty-eight subtopics that provide a very definite selection of information from each of the standard works.

The Joseph Smith Translation

The new LDS edition of the Bible retains the text of the King James Version throughout, but augments it with more than 600 footnote passages from the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible. These footnotes cite the reference to and reprint the text of the Joseph Smith Translation if it is not more than eight lines long. Excerpts longer than eight lines are included in a seventeen-page collection, beginning on page 797 of the appendix under the title "Joseph Smith Translation: Excerpts Too Lengthy for Inclusion in Footnotes." The Book of Moses and "Joseph Smith-Matthew" (formerly "Joseph Smith 1") in the Pearl of Great Price are also excerpts from the Joseph Smith Translation, but since most users of the new LDS

edition of the Bible will also have a copy of the Pearl of Great Price, footnotes to “Moses” and “Joseph Smith–Matthew” are designated by citation only.

The Joseph Smith Translation provides many items of clarification as well as additional information, and its contributions are usually doctrinal in nature. Entries range from short items consisting of the correction of one word to long passages of hundreds of words.

An example of a Joseph Smith Translation entry is found in connection with John 4:1–3. The subject is baptism and the King James Version reads:

When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples), He left Judea.

The foregoing passage leads one to conclude that Jesus did not personally perform water baptisms. The corresponding passage from the Joseph Smith Translation John 4:1–5 clearly affirms that he did:

When therefore the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, they sought more diligently some means that they might put him to death; for many received John as a prophet, but they believed not on Jesus. Now the Lord knew this, though he himself baptized not so many as his disciples; For he suffered them for an example, preferring one another. And he left Judea.

Other passages remove contradictions, clarify obscure or vague statements, correct erroneous conclusions, and offer much information not available from any other source. The Joseph Smith Translation is one of the major contributions of the Prophet Joseph Smith toward understanding the Bible, and it is an excellent study guide to help readers obtain the true meaning and intention of many passages.

The Bible Dictionary

The new dictionary is based upon the Cambridge dictionary that appeared for many years in the missionary edition of the Bible used in the Church, but this dictionary has been improved in three major ways: (1) Items considered by the committee either to be in error or of insufficient value to be given space in the new dictionary were omitted. (2) Items that were incomplete, because they were based on the Bible alone, were strengthened and complemented by latter-day revelation and also the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith contained in the *History of the Church* (abbreviated HC in the new editions). This includes entries on the Fall, Zion, Urim and Thummim,

Adam, sacrifice, and hundreds of others. (3) New entries were added that were basic to the gospel, including discussions on such matters as dispensation of the fulness of times, Aaronic priesthood, Melchizedek priesthood, the family, and many others. The changes in the new dictionary are doctrinal rather than cultural or geographical. It contains a total of 1285 entries.

Alternate Readings from Hebrew and Greek

Even though the King James Version is unchanged in the new edition, additional help is often needed because some of its passages do not adequately reflect the Hebrew and Greek texts. Therefore, alternate readings, developed by scholars at Brigham Young University, are provided in the footnotes to clarify obscure and obsolete terms and to explain idiomatic phrases. For example, *created* (Gen. 1:1) is shown in the footnote to have the meaning in Hebrew of “shaped” or “fashioned.” The phrase “multiply thy sorrow and thy conception” (Gen. 3:16) is shown to mean in Hebrew “increase thy discomfort and thy size (i.e., in the condition and process of pregnancy).” The phrase “seek judgment” (Isa. 1:17) is shown to mean “seek justice”; and “They judge not the fatherless” (Isa. 1:23) means “they do not do justice to” the fatherless. The phrase “searcheth the reins” (Rev. 2:23) is shown in the Greek text to mean searcheth the “desires and thoughts.” The “noisome . . . sore” (Rev. 16:2) in the Greek is really a “bad” or “evil” sore. Instead of John’s looking upon the scarlet woman with “great admiration” (Rev. 17:6), the footnote shows the meaning to be great “astonishment.” Although such helps are found throughout the entire Bible, LDS readers will probably most appreciate those in Genesis, Isaiah, and Revelation because the subject matter of these books has such a direct bearing on the latter-days.

THE BOOK OF MORMON

Preliminary Pages

One of the significant additions of the 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon is a one-page introduction that briefly explains what the Book of Mormon is. This introduction declares that “the crowning event recorded in the Book of Mormon is the personal ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ among the Nephites soon after his resurrection.” Also included is the Prophet Joseph Smith’s declaration that the Book of Mormon is “the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.”

Earlier editions of the Book of Mormon contained “The Testimony of Three Witnesses,” “The Testimony of Eight Witnesses,” and an article bearing the caption “Origin of the Book of Mormon.” These are also included in the new edition, but the latter article has a new title, “Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith.” One of the effects of this new caption is to create an impressive crescendo in the testimonies of these special witnesses, culminating in the testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who is the greatest witness.

Chapter Headings

Every chapter in the 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon has been given a new descriptive, interpretive, and explanatory heading. For example, the former heading to 2 Nephi 3 read:

Lehi to his son Joseph—A prophecy by Joseph in Egypt—A choice seer foretold—The mission of Moses—Hebrew and Nephite scriptures.

The new heading is more specific:

Joseph in Egypt saw the Nephites in vision—He prophesied of Joseph Smith, the latter-day seer; of Moses, who would deliver Israel; and of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

Another example showing the increase of detail in the new headings is seen in 3 Nephi 15. Former heading:

The Law of Moses superceded—The Giver of the Law fulfills the Law—The sheep of another fold.

New heading:

Jesus announces that the law of Moses is fulfilled in him—The Nephites are the other sheep of whom he spake in Jerusalem—Because of iniquity the Lord's people in Jerusalem do not know of the scattered sheep of Israel.

The hundreds of new chapter headings constitute a kind of commentary to the Book of Mormon.

Text Corrections

Throughout the various printings and editions of the Book of Mormon, beginning with the first English edition in 1830, there have occurred some variations in the text. Most of these have been slight and often have not seriously affected the meaning of the passage; however, some have been significant enough to warrant correction.

A researcher seeking to determine the original and/or correct text of the Book of Mormon has several advantages and source materials of a kind that are not available to those seeking the original texts

my record neither at any time shall I give it after upon these plates
 which I am writing for it is given in the record which has been kept by
 my father wherefore I do not write it in this work for it suplieth me
 to say that we are a descendant ^{of Joseph} & it mattereth not to me that I am put in
 here to give ~~to~~ a full account of all the things of my father for they can
 not be written upon these plates for I desire the room that I may write
 of the things of God for the fullness of mine intent is that I may persuade
 men to come unto the God of Abraham & the God of Isaac & the God of Jacob
 & be saved wherefore the things which are pleasing unto the world I do not write
 & the things which are pleasing unto God & unto ^{those who} ~~them~~ are not of the wor-
 ld wherefore I shall give commandment unto my seed that they shall not oc-
 cupy these plates with things which are not of worth unto the Children of man
 & now I would that ye might know that after my father Lehi had made
 an end of prophesying concerning his seed it came to pass that the Lord spake
 unto him again saying that it was not meet for him Lehi that he should
 take his family into the wilderness alone but that his sons should be
 the daughters to rise that they might raise up seed unto the Lord in the land
 of promise & it came to pass that the Lord commanded him that I, Nephi &
 my brethren should again return unto the land of Jerusalem & bring down
 Ishmael & his family into the wilderness & it came to pass that I, Nephi did
 say with my brethren go forth into the wilderness to go up to Jerusalem & it came
 to pass that we went up unto the house of Ishmael & we did gain favor in the sight
 of Ishmael inasmuch that we did speak unto him the words of the Lord & it came to
 pass that the Lord did soften the heart of Ishmael & also his household inasmuch
 that they took their journey with us down into the wilderness to the tent of our
 father & it came to pass that as we journeyed in the wilderness behold Laman
 & Lemuel & two of the daughters of Ishmael & the true sons of Ishmael &
 their families did rebel against us even against I, Nephi & Lam & their father
 Ishmael & his wife & his three ^{other} daughters & it came to pass in the which
 rebellion they were desirous to return unto the land of Jerusalem & now I, Nephi, be-
 ing grieved for the hardness of their hearts therefore I spake unto them saying
 ye even unto Laman & ^{unto} Lemuel behold these are mine elder brethren & how is
 it that ye are so hard in your hearts & so blinding your minds that ye have need to
 that your younger brethren should speak unto you ye & set an example for you so
 is it that ye have not hearkened unto the word of the Lord how is it that ye have for-
 gotten that ye have seen an angel of the Lord? ye & how is it that ye have for-
 gotten ^{the} ~~the~~ things the Lord hath done for us in delivering us out of the

Courtesy of Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ
 of Latter Day Saints

Printer's Copy of the Book of Mormon
 1 Nephi 2:1-17

of the Bible. For one thing, a sizeable portion of the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon, which Joseph Smith dictated to Oliver Cowdery and other scribes, is extant and is housed in the archives of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City. It consists of 144 hand-written pages covering material roughly from 1 Nephi 2 to 2 Nephi 1, Alma 22 through 46, and also parts of the book of Helaman. A complete copy of the original, which is principally but not entirely in the handwriting of Oliver Cowdery, is also extant and is generally referred to as "the printer's copy" because it was made to be used in setting the type for the first edition of the Book of Mormon. This manuscript is owned by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (RLDS) and is housed in Missouri. It consists of 466 pages and contains some slight variations from the original dictated manuscript. Both of these documents have been used for research by members of the LDS and RLDS churches.

In addition to the original prepublication handwritten documents, copies are also available of every printed edition of the Book of Mormon. Those most notable for comparison of the text are the 1830, 1837, 1840, 1852, 1876, and 1920 editions. The first three are particularly valuable because they were printed during the lifetime of the Prophet Joseph Smith and some copies contain editorial notes by him. The title page to the third edition (1840) contains the statement that it has been "Carefully Revised by the Translator."

Many of the variations in the text of the Book of Mormon consist of unintentional departures by the typesetter of the first edition from the handwritten manuscript, while others are transcription errors by Oliver Cowdery as he made the printer's copy. Furthermore, studies show that some typographical errors have persisted in every edition of the Book of Mormon, and other variations have occurred in some, but not all, of the many printed editions. Fortunately there have been scholars who, being aware of these variations, have commented on them in their formal papers and other publications.³ The 1981 edition has benefited from such research and has at least 265 corrections of which about 100 are substantial enough to affect the meaning. A few significant items are as follows:

1 Nephi 13:24. Instead of "plainness of the gospel," the new edition uses "fulness of the gospel." The original dictated manuscript

³Among these are Jeffrey R. Holland, "An Analysis of Selected Changes in Major Editions of the Book of Mormon—1830–1920" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1966); Stanley R. Larson, "A Study of Some Textual Variations in the Book of Mormon Comparing the Original and the Printer's Manuscripts and the 1830, the 1837, and the 1840 Editions" (Master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1974); and Richard P. Howard, *Restoration Scriptures: A Study of Their Textual Development* (Independence, Mo.: Herald Publishing House, 1969).

and it came to Battle & I & Nephi Behele that
the gentiles which had gone out of captivity
were delivered of the power of God out of the
hands of all other nations & it came to pass
that Nephi Behele that they did prosper in the
land & I Behele & Book & it was carried forth
among them & the angel said unto me know
not the meaning of the Book & I said I
know not & he said Behele it proceedeth
of the mouth of a Jew & I & Nephi Behele it & he
said unto me the Book which thou beholdest
is a record of the Jews which contain the covenan-
ts of the Lord which he hath made unto the House
of Israel & it also containeth many of the Prophecies
of the Holy Prophets & it is a record like unto the
engraving which are upon the plates of Brass
save there are not so many where the life they
contain the covenants of Love which he hath
made unto the House of Israel wherefore they
are of great worth unto the gentiles & the angel
of the Lord said unto me thou hast Behele
that the Book proceedeth forth from the mouth
of a Jew & where it proceeded forth from the
mouth of a Jew it containeth the fulness of the
Word of the Lord of whom twelve Apostles
have been & they have records according to the
truth which is in the Law of God wherefore
these things go forth from the Jew in part
to unto the gentiles according to the truth
which is in God & after that they go forth by
the hand of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb
and give unto the gentiles Behele after
that have seen the foundation of that great
incomprehensible church which is the most

Courtesy of the LDS Church Historical Department

says “fulness.” The printer’s copy says “plainness,” which was an understandable human error because “plain” and “plainness” occur several times in the same chapter and “plainness” is the topic of the passage. All subsequent editions have used “plainness” because of the influence of the first printing. The 1981 edition returned to the original text because “fulness” seems to be consistent with the intended meaning of the passage, which is a declaration that many plain and precious things have been taken out of the Bible; therefore it no longer contains the fulness of the gospel message.

1 Nephi 19:2. Instead of “engraven upon those plates,” “engraven upon those first plates” is used. The history of this passage is the same as that of the previous entry; that is, the word in the original text was dropped in the printer’s copy, and all subsequent printings have omitted it. The passage is more precise with the word *first* included. On the basis of the original manuscript the word *first* has been restored to the 1981 text.

1 Nephi 19:23. “The book of Moses” becomes “the books of Moses.” The justification for this correction is that the original manuscript uses the plural “books”; the printer’s copy uses “book.” The correction is also reasonable and necessary since Moses wrote more than one book, and the Book of Mormon itself speaks of the “five books of Moses” (1 Nephi 5:11).

2 Nephi 2:27. Instead of “the great mediation,” the 1981 edition uses “the great Mediator.” This passage was obviously a reading error by the typesetter. The original manuscript is not extant. The printer’s manuscript reads “Mediator,” but the first and all subsequent editions have read “mediation.” The sentence is grammatically more correct with Mediator because it retains the parallel structure that the choice for mankind is between Christ (the great Mediator) and the devil. This parallelism is weakened by the uses of the word “mediation.” Correcting this passage is therefore of significance for grammatical accuracy as well as doctrinal emphasis.

2 Nephi 30:6. Instead of “white and delightsome,” as in most earlier editions, the 1981 edition uses “pure and delightsome,” in reference to future Lamanite generations. The printer’s copy says “white.” Unfortunately, the remaining portion of the original dictated manuscript does not include this scripture. The 1830 and 1837 editions of the Book of Mormon, based on the printer’s copy, also say “white.” However, the 1840 edition, which was “carefully” revised by the Prophet Joseph Smith, uses “pure” in

place of “white.” All subsequent editions have reverted to “white,” probably because the 1852 edition (the next after the 1840) was based on the 1837 edition rather than on the 1840. In the process of arranging the 1981 edition the committee presented all of the textual corrections along with the reason for each proposed correction to the First Presidency and the Twelve for approval. The decision to use “pure” in this passage was made not on the basis of the original manuscripts (as were most other cases) but on the 1840 revision by the Prophet Joseph Smith and the judgment of the living prophets. This correction does not negate the concept that future generations of Lamanites will become white, but it removes the concept that one has to be white to be delightful to the Lord.

Mosiah 29:15. “Him have I punished according to the law which has been given” is corrected to “him have I punished according to the crime which he has committed, according to the law which has been given.” Although the original manuscript is not extant, the printer’s copy contains the whole passage, as did the 1830 printing. However, the 1837 and all subsequent printings have omitted “according to the crime which he has committed.” An omission of this kind seems to have occurred because of the repetition of the words “according to the,” the typesetter’s eye easily passing to the last instance and not seeing the intervening words. This phenomenon happens often enough that textual critics have given it a name: *homoeoarchton* (meaning “same beginnings”) or *homoeoteleuton* (same endings). It is a problem to anyone copying extensive amounts of material or to a printer setting type. In this case (Mosiah 29:15) material was omitted from the text by the typesetter. Although the incomplete passage still makes sense, the important detail, that punishment was measured according to the crime, was lost. In other instances the same process was responsible for the loss of material that was more vital to the meaning, as the next example illustrates.

Alma 32:30. Chapter 32 contains Alma’s discourse comparing faith in God to the sprouting of a seed and growth of a plant. Both the original manuscript and the printer’s copy show that the printed editions have omitted thirty-five words from the latter part of verse 30. In the original, the phrase “sprouteth and beginneth to grow” occurs three times in close proximity. However, the first printed edition (1830) retained only two of these phrases, thus losing the rest of the material. All subsequent editions of the Book of Mormon have reflected the 1830 loss, which is clearly the result of the typesetter’s

mistaking the last phrase of the copy as the one he had just set. The thirty-five words have now been restored to the 1981 text: "And now, behold, will not this strengthen your faith? Yea, it will strengthen your faith: for ye will say I know that this is a good seed; for behold it sprouteth and beginneth to grow."

The foregoing example is the most extensive restoration in any portion of the Book of Mormon and is necessary not only for textual accuracy but also because the words are needed to complete the thought expressed by Alma, that one's experience in the initial growth of faith is a strengthening process toward even greater faith.

Alma 16:5. Instead of *whether*, the 1981 text uses *whither*. The situation described in this passage is a time of war in which some Nephites have been taken captive by the Lamanites. In the earlier editions the chief captain over the Nephite armies goes to Alma the high priest (because Alma has the spirit of prophecy) and asks *whether* the Lord would that they should go in search of their captive brethren. Use of the word *whether* means to ask *if* they should go or not. The original manuscript is not extant for this passage, but the printer's copy uses the word *whether*, as have all editions of the printed Book of Mormon. However, the printer's copy also contains a correction that was made during work for the 1837 edition, indicating the word should be *whither*. Why this correction was not incorporated into the 1837 edition is not known. It has now been included in the 1981 edition. The word *whither* of course means "where," not "if." The proper sense of the passage therefore is *where* "shall we go to find our brethren?" That *whither* is the proper word is further verified in the next verse in which Alma tells them where to go to rescue the prisoners.

Explanatory Footnotes

In addition to cross-references to all LDS scriptures, the 1981 edition contains a number of explanatory or content footnotes. These occur occasionally to explain terms that seem to have a Hebrew connection, such as in 1 Nephi 2:10, in which Lehi wishes his son Lemuel could be like a "valley, firm and steadfast, and immovable in keeping the commandments of the Lord!" The footnote reads, "IE like Ezion-geber, the Hebrew roots of which denote firmness and strength, or might of a man."

When Ishmael died, he "was buried in the place which was called Nahom" and his daughters "did mourn exceedingly" (1 Nephi 16:34-35). The footnote for the word *Nahom* reads: "HEB probably 'consolation,' from verb *naham*, 'be sorry, console one-self.'"

The quotations from Isaiah contain many footnotes explaining Hebrew terms and comparative information with the Joseph Smith Translation and the Book of Mormon. For example, at 2 Nephi 12:2 the following footnote occurs: "Comparison with the King James Bible in English shows that there are differences in more than half of the 433 verses of Isaiah quoted in the Book of Mormon, while about 200 verses have the same wording as KJV." Another footnote (for 2 Nephi 11:8) reads, "See the Latter-day Saint edition of the King James Version of the Bible for other notes and cross-references on these chapters from Isaiah."

Pronouncing Guide

At the conclusion of the 1981 edition of the Book of Mormon is a new version of the Pronouncing Guide that suggests probable sounds of the words from the Book of Mormon.

Index

An extensive index of 416 pages and nearly 2500 topics is placed in the back portion of the Triple Combination for all three standard works. The headings are followed by separate paragraphs for references from the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price. When any of the three books is published separately, it will contain its portion of the index. One of the features of this index is that it frequently refers the readers to the topical guide and/or the Bible dictionary for additional information.

THE DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS

The new "Explanatory Introduction" to the Doctrine and Covenants is designed (1) to inform the reader as to why a collection of revelations like those contained in the Doctrine and Covenants exists, (2) to present a short history of various printings, (3) to present the "Testimony of the Twelve Apostles [of 1835] to the Truth of the Book of Doctrine and Covenants," and (4) to explain how this new edition is different from earlier ones. It closes with the explanation that various errors have occurred and been perpetuated in previous editions, especially in dates and geographic place-names given in the historical portions of the headnotes; therefore, some minor corrections were in order in this 1981 edition.

Other special features of this edition include two new sections (137 and 138), material by President Wilford Woodruff about the Manifesto of 1890, and the First Presidency statement about the

priesthood revelation of 1978. There are also improved cross-references, improved section headings, new subject-matter summaries for each section, and four maps showing major geographical locations—all of which help readers understand and rejoice in the message the Lord has given in the Doctrine and Covenants.

Corrections and additions were made when error had occurred or when it seemed that fuller explanation was needed in the headnotes than had been given in previous editions. Considerable care was given to assure accuracy. Most of the alterations were made in the headnotes. Changes in the text were basically limited to punctuation (see D&C 76:16–17) and a few deletions of unnecessary words (see D&C 78). It would not be feasible in a summary article such as this to include every variant, but we will present a few to show what has been done. We will also attempt to give the rationale behind the corrections in the new edition.⁴

Section Headnotes

In the earlier editions of the Doctrine and Covenants, the headnotes contained two types of material—historical background and a content summary. These were printed all the way across the page, covering the space of two columns. In the new edition, the headnotes contain historical and background information only and still reach across the entire page. The content summaries are separated from the history and placed at the top of the left-hand column, consistent with the format used in the chapter summaries of both the Bible and the Book of Mormon. It thus places the content summary, which is generally doctrinal in nature, in a paragraph by itself in a more conspicuous position than formerly used.

Many of the historical background portions are significantly different from earlier headings. A discussion of some of the headnotes and the reasons why they are different follows in the numerical order of the sections:

Section 1. Beginning with the 1921 edition, the heading read: “REVELATION *given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, during a special conference of Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, held at Hiram, Ohio, November 1, 1831.*” The 1981 edition omits the phrase “*of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.*”

⁴Information for corrections and additions was drawn from many sources, the most significant of which are Robert J. Woodford, “The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants” (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1974); and Lyndon W. Cook, prepublication manuscript for his book *The Revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Provo, Utah: Seventy’s Mission Bookstore, 1981). In addition, many of the faculty of religious instruction at BYU contributed individual items and made helpful suggestions.

When the Church was organized on 6 April 1830, it was called the Church of Christ (see D&C 20:1), as is evident from many early documents, including the title page of the Book of Commandments printed in 1833. The complete title of the Church as we know it today was not revealed until 1838 (see D&C 115:3–4). Therefore, it would be anachronistic to refer to the Church in 1831 by a title it did not receive until 1838. This minor but historically accurate adjustment was also made in the headings of sections 21, 22, and 102.

Section 2. Former editions have read, “WORDS SPOKEN BY MORONI, *the Angel, to Joseph Smith the Prophet.*” The new edition reads, “*An extract from the words of the angel Moroni to Joseph Smith the Prophet.*” Since Moroni spoke many more words than those presented in section 2, this clarification seems appropriate.

Section 3. The former heading “REVELATION *given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Harmony, Pennsylvania, July, 1828, relating to the loss of certain manuscripts of the first part of the Book of Mormon . . .*” is enlarged to read: “. . . *relating to the loss of 116 pages of manuscript translated from the first part of the Book of Mormon, which was called the ‘Book of Lehi.’*”

A similar clarification occurs in the heading to section 10. A footnote to D&C 10:42 explains the reason for the change: “In the Preface to the first edition of the Book of Mormon, the Prophet explained that the material in the 116 pages had been translated from a portion of the plates called the ‘Book of Lehi.’”

Section 11. This revelation was given through Joseph Smith the Prophet to his brother Hyrum and carries a date of May 1829. Its placement in the Doctrine and Covenants tends to suggest a time prior to the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood on 15 May 1829 (section 13). However, in the *History of the Church*, compiled from data dictated or approved by the Prophet, the revelation to Hyrum is placed after the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood.⁵ Consequently, an explanatory note in the new edition indicates that section 11 possibly was received “after the restoration of the Aaronic Priesthood.”

Section 30. This is a revelation to David Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, Jr., and John Whitmer. The heading is essentially the same in both the former and new editions for the date, place, and recipients. However, the new edition adds the following historical comment: “*Originally this material was published as three*

⁵Joseph Smith, Jr., *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 2d ed. rev., 7 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1932–51), 1:39–46; hereafter cited as *History of the Church*.

revelations; it was combined into one section by the Prophet for the 1835 edition of the *Doctrine and Covenants*.” In the Book of Commandments (1833) this material appears separately as chapters 31, 32, and 33.

Section 34. The forepart of the heading is essentially unchanged except for a comment that Parley P. Pratt is an “*older brother*” to Orson Pratt. However, at the end of the heading the new edition adds: “*This revelation was received in the Peter Whitmer, Sen., home.*”⁶

Section 35. The former editions read,

REVELATION given to Joseph Smith the Prophet, and Sidney Rigdon, December 1830. As a preface to his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: “In December, Sidney Rigdon came to inquire of the Lord, and with him came Edward Partridge; the latter was a pattern of piety and one of the Lord’s great men.”

The new edition alters this considerably:

Revelation given to Joseph Smith the Prophet and Sidney Rigdon, at or near Fayette, New York, December 1830. . . . At this time the Prophet was engaged almost daily in making a translation of the Bible. The translation was begun as early as June 1830, and both Oliver Cowdery and John Whitmer had served as scribes. Since they had now been called to other duties, Sidney Rigdon was called by divine appointment to serve as the Prophet’s scribe in this work (verse 20). As a preface to his record of this revelation the Prophet wrote: “In December Sidney Rigdon came [from Ohio] to inquire of the Lord, and with him came Edward Partridge. . . . Shortly after the arrival of these two brethren, thus spake the Lord.”

In order to show the context of this revelation, it seems necessary to provide information about the work of translating the Bible in which the Prophet was engaged. Furthermore, since the revelation was to Sidney Rigdon, it seems appropriate to delete from the former heading the reference to the character of Edward Partridge and include it in the heading to section 36, which is a revelation to him.

Section 43. The former heading declared that the first part of the revelation was addressed to the elders of the Church and the latter part to the nations of the earth. However, a close reading of the revelation suggests that the entire revelation is to the elders. This is handled accordingly in the 1981 edition: “*The first part deals with*

⁶Discourse by Orson Pratt, 18 September 1859, *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1854–86; reprint ed., 1967), 7:311.

matters of Church polity; the latter part contains a warning that the elders are to give to the nations of the earth.”

Section 49. This revelation was given to Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt, and Leman Copley about the religious group known as the Shaking Quakers. The new edition explains that the correct name of the Shakers was “United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing.”⁷ It also adds useful information about some of the major doctrinal concepts held by the Shakers, enabling the reader to better understand certain statements in the revelation. The new edition thus adds the following to the heading:

Some of the beliefs of the Shakers were that Christ’s second coming had already occurred and he had appeared in the form of a woman, Ann Lee; baptism by water was not considered essential; the eating of pork was specifically forbidden, and many did not eat any meat; and a celibate life was considered higher than marriage. In prefacing this revelation, the Prophet wrote: “In order to have a more perfect understanding on the subject, I inquired of the Lord, and received the following.”

When the reader has some idea of the beliefs of the Shakers, he can see the intent of the revelation more clearly. For instance, verses 5–10 have a strong emphasis on the facts that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior of all the world and that he will come again to earth. Verses 22–23 declare that when the Savior comes he will not come “in the form of a woman, neither of a man traveling on the earth.” This precise information has direct bearing upon the Shakers’ doctrine, for they believed Jesus had already come—as a woman. Likewise, verses 11–14 emphasize the ordinances of the gospel, including the necessity of baptism. Verses 15–17 speak against willful celibacy; verses 18–19 declare that the eating of meat is not forbidden by the Lord. Each of these declarations is directed at some aspect of the Shakers’ belief. Without a knowledge of those beliefs, the reader of this revelation might not see the significance of what the Lord is saying and the revelation would appear to be of general application. The background shows the revelation has specific intent.

The new heading closes with this statement: “*The revelation refuted some of the basic concepts of the Shaker group. The aforementioned brethren took a copy of the revelation to the Shaker community (near Cleveland, Ohio) and read it to them in its entirety, but it was rejected.*”

⁷The material concerning the Shakers’ beliefs was obtained from Milton V. Backman, Jr., of the BYU religious instruction faculty; and several written sources, notably Frederick William Evans, *Compendium of the Origin, History, Principles, Rules and Regulations, Government, and Doctrines of the United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1859).

Two other items that clarify this revelation should also be noted. Verse 18 reads, “and whoso forbiddeth to abstain from meats, that man should not eat the same, is not ordained of God.” The awkward wording—“forbiddeth to abstain”—has the same effect as a double negative and could cause misunderstanding by seemingly saying that the eating of meat *is* forbidden. The obvious meaning of the passage, however, is clear in verse 19, which states that “the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air” are “ordained for the use of man for food and for raiment.” As an added clarification, the new edition contains a footnote for verse 18 as follows: “IE biddeth to abstain; see v. 19 and Gen. 9:3–4.”

In verse 21 we find the statement: “And wo be unto man that sheddeth blood or that wasteth flesh and hath no need.” To this is appended the corollary footnote that reads: “TG Life, Sanctity of. JST Gen. 9:11 And surely, blood shall not be shed, only for meat, to save your lives; and the blood of every beast will I require at your hands.”

Section 61. This revelation was given on the bank of the Missouri River at a place called McIlwaine’s Bend. The new heading offers several clarifications, one of which corrects the earlier statement that placed the revelation on the “*first day of a journey*” on the Missouri River. Based on a study of the historical records,⁸ the new heading states that the event took place on the “*third day of the journey.*” Another helpful feature connected with this revelation is that the map on page 297 of the new edition, showing “The Missouri–Illinois Area,” locates McIlwaine’s Bend. The location of this site has been generally unknown, but through calculations made by modern scholars from information in journals and diaries it has been located.⁹

Section 72. This revelation has to do with the appointment of the second bishop in the Church. The new edition explains that “*this section is a compilation of two revelations received on the same day. Verses 1–8 make known the calling of Newel K. Whitney as a bishop. He was then called and ordained, after which verses 9–26 were received giving additional information as to a bishop’s duties.*”¹⁰

Section 78. Most students of Church history are aware that sections 78, 82, 92, 96, 103, 104, and 105 carried a number of code names and words used to disguise the identity of the persons, places,

⁸A. Sidney Gilbert, “Book of Commandments, Laws and Covenants,” Book B, Library–Archives, Historical Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Church Archives), as cited in Cook, *Revelations of Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 143.

⁹Max Parkin and Lyndon Cook, as cited in Cook, *Revelations of Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 143.

¹⁰The clarification for this division comes from the “Kirtland Revelation Book,” Church Archives, pp. 13–15.



“Kirtland Revelation Book”

and concepts referred to. The original drafts of these revelations did not contain these code words but used rather the real names of the persons and places. These code words began with the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. However, many readers have not understood why these unusual names were used. Some have supposed they represented a divine or revealed name of the persons and perhaps pertained to a past or future existence. This evidently was not the case. The code names were used in 1835 so as not to expose to the enemies of the Church the identity of the persons, places, or concepts. The 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants printed the real names in brackets after the code words. This practice was continued until the 1981 edition. Since there exists no present need to have the code names, the 1981 edition uses only the names in the original manuscript. This procedure is explained in the new head-note to sections 78 and 82.

Section 82 has some additional interesting factors requiring further discussion. Prepublication handwritten manuscripts are available for all of the revelations containing code words except for section 82. Since the printed editions of section 82 have four code names not found in the other sections, the people to whom they refer remained unidentified, even in the new 1981 edition. This is explained in a footnote to verse 11: "Alam was probably Edward Partridge. See HC 1:363. The other unusual names in this verse are not identifiable at this time." Although some current scholars attempted to identify the three remaining persons referred to in the unusual names (Mahalaleel, Harah and Shalemanasseh), there was not a consensus, and it seemed best therefore not to identify these code words in the new edition.

Much of what we know about the origin of the unusual names was given in an article by Elder Orson Pratt, longtime Church Historian and a member of the Twelve. He explained the circumstances that gave rise to the names, and he also identified some of the persons. But he was writing from memory and made some errors.¹¹ Some of the words such as *Baurak Ale* (formerly in D&C 105:16) and *Baneemy* (in 105:27) have Hebrew origins.

Section 86. This revelation clarifies some aspects of the parable of the wheat and the tares contained in Matthew 13. The former heading read, "REVELATION *given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio; December 6, 1832.*" The new heading adds

¹¹Discourse by Orson Pratt, 16 August 1873, *Journal of Discourses*, 16:156; see also Orson Pratt, *The Seer* (1853-54; reprint ed., Salt Lake City: Eugene Wagner, n.d.), pp. 227-29.

the firm or in other words that my servant
sheweth that my servant Joseph is worthy
and my servant Sidney Rigdon set in counsel
with the church who are in Zion otherwise Satan
seeketh to ~~destroy~~ turn their hearts away from the
truth that they become deceived and understand
not the things which are prepared for them.

Courtesy of LDS Church Historical Department

Portions of Section 78
from the "Kirtland Revelation Book"
showing that the actual names were used in the original manuscript

by way of explanation, “*This revelation was received while the Prophet was reviewing and editing the manuscript of the translation of the Bible.*”

There are interesting historical items that contribute to the foregoing statement. The Prophet had already completed the translation of the New Testament by March 1832, eight months before he received the revelation recorded as section 86. In his initial translation, the Prophet did not alter Matthew 13:30, which in the King James Version places the gathering of the tares *before* the gathering of the wheat. However, the Joseph Smith Translation manuscript has a note pinned over the passage, making the proper correction that the wheat is gathered first. This corresponds with the sequence given in D&C 86:7. This correction apparently was added on 6 December 1832, while the Prophet was reviewing the manuscript for publication. Although this entire “review” was not completed until July 1833,¹² in December the Prophet was working with Matthew 13.

A note in the Prophet’s journal for 6 December 1832 reads, “December 6 translating and received a revelation explaining the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares etc.”¹³ The activity referred to by the Prophet apparently has reference to his review of the Bible manuscript. This example is an illustration that during the process of the Bible translation the Prophet received light and inspiration, not only correcting errors that had crept into the Bible but also providing additional information. In this case, section 86 not only corrects a biblical error but also interprets the parable in terms of latter-day fulfillment. This revelation also demonstrates the close relationship that existed between the translation of the Bible and the reception of many revelations now contained in the Doctrine and Covenants.

Section 87. The former editions have the following headnote: “REVELATION AND PROPHECY ON WAR, *given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, December 25, 1832.*” The new edition adds the following: “*This section was received at a time when the brethren were reflecting and reasoning upon African slavery on the American continent and the slavery of the children of men throughout the world.*” This information is attributed to President Brigham Young.¹⁴

Section 88. The earlier heading read, “REVELATION *given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, December 27, 1832. Designated by the Prophet, the Olive Leaf.*” It has been

¹²*History of the Church*, 1:324.

¹³Joseph Smith Journal, 6 December 1832, Church Archives. We are indebted to Stephen Knecht for insight on the situation.

¹⁴Discourse by Brigham Young, 20 May 1860, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:58.

enlarged in the 1981 edition to read, “*It was designated by the Prophet as the ‘olive leaf . . . plucked from the Tree of Paradise, the Lord’s message of peace to us.’ It appears from the historical records that portions of this revelation were received on December 27 and 28, 1832, and January 3, 1833.*”¹⁵

Section 89. The heading in former editions read, “*REVELATION given through Joseph Smith the Prophet, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 27, 1833, known as the Word of Wisdom.*” The 1981 edition adds the following background information: “*As a consequence of the early brethren using tobacco in their meetings, the Prophet was led to ponder upon the matter; consequently he inquired of the Lord concerning it. This revelation, known as the Word of Wisdom, was the result. The first three verses were originally written as an inspired introduction and description by the Prophet.*”

When the Word of Wisdom was first printed, originally as a separate tract and later in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, the material now contained in verses 1–3 consisted of a paragraph that was not part of the text. It became a regular part of the text in the 1921 edition.

Section 99. This revelation to John Murdock was placed in its present sequence in the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. At that time, and in subsequent editions, the heading has listed the date as August 1833. However, there is considerable evidence that this date is incorrect. Brother Murdock’s own journal, the “*Kirtland Revelation Book,*” and the editions of the Doctrine and Covenants previous to 1876 all give the date as August 1832.¹⁶ The earlier date is certainly correct, especially as determined from the journal and its sequence of events; therefore, the new edition gives the proper date and adds this explanation: “*Although editions of the Doctrine and Covenants beginning with 1876 have listed this revelation as Kirtland, August 1833, earlier editions and other historical records certify to the proper information.*” The error of dating in the 1876 edition has caused this section to be placed out of proper chronological order; it should properly be between sections 83 and 84.

Section 102. The headings in the former editions of this section have read, “*MINUTES of the organization of the first High Council of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, at Kirtland, Ohio, February 17, 1834.*” The 1981 edition contains several significant differences. To avoid an anachronistic reference to the present name

¹⁵Woodford, “Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants,” pp. 1127–28.

¹⁶Cook, *Revelations of Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 201.

of the Church, the words *the Church* are used instead of the complete title (see discussion of section 1).

Other additions in the headnote include the following: “*The original minutes were recorded by Elders Oliver Cowdery and Orson Hyde. Two days later, the minutes were corrected by the Prophet, read to the high council, and accepted by the council. Verses 30–32, having to do with the Council of the Twelve Apostles, were added by the Prophet Joseph Smith in 1835 when he prepared this section for publication in the Doctrine and Covenants.*” This addition was appropriate and necessary since the Council of the Twelve was organized in March 1835, a year after the Kirtland high council came into being, and a clarification between the two was needed.

Section 107. This extensive revelation on priesthood is dated in the 1921 edition as 28 March 1835. However, it is clear that not all of the section was received on that day. The 1981 edition adds this explanation: “*Although portions of this section were received on the date named, the historical records affirm that various parts were received at sundry times, some as early as November 1831.*”

The records referred to tell us that when first published in the 1835 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants, this revelation was section III and captioned “On Priesthood” with no date given. Later, the 1876 edition was prepared by Elder Orson Pratt, and he placed this revelation as section CVII with the explanation “*the fore part, or first fifty-eight verses, being given March 28th, 1835; the other items were revealed at sundry times.*” Since the entire document appeared in the 1835 edition, the “*sundry times*” spoken of by Elder Pratt had to have been earlier than 28 March 1835.

The material now in verses 59–100 is in the “Kirtland Revelation Book,” which states that this material was revealed in November 1831. This information clarifies D&C 107:58, which refers to an earlier but unspecified revelation on Church government. Likewise, verse 93, which speaks of a “vision showing the order of the seventy,” also seems to refer to an earlier revelation. There are other evidences that parts of section 107 were received earlier than the traditional date. For example, verses 53–55 occur verbatim in a blessing given by the Prophet to his father on 18 December 1833, sixteen months before the popular date given for section 107.

The realization that section 107 is a compilation of revelations rather than a single one received on 28 March 1835 is historically quite helpful to understanding the Doctrine and Covenants. It says

something about how revelation comes and how it is used and indicates that the Prophet received some revelations earlier than the date under which they appear formally in the Doctrine and Covenants.

Section 108. This revelation is directed through the Prophet Joseph Smith to Lyman Sherman. The former editions of the Doctrine and Covenants have not presented enough background material in the heading to enable the reader to understand the content of the revelation correctly; consequently, there has been some misunderstanding concerning it. Former editions have interpreted the revelation as a promise to Brother Sherman that he would be ordained to the office of elder (see the heading to the 1921 and subsequent printings). However, since Brother Sherman was already a seventy and a high priest at the time of the revelation, some additional background is needed.

On 26 December 1835, Lyman Sherman came to the Prophet and said he was “wrought upon” and troubled and desired a revelation through the Prophet as to his (Sherman’s) duties.¹⁷ Just what was bothering him is not specified.

The direction in D&C 108:2–4 (26 December 1835) is that Brother Sherman should let his “soul be at rest concerning your spiritual standing” and that he would be “remembered with the first of mine elders, whom I have chosen.” This is not intended to mean an ordination to the office of elder in the Melchizedek Priesthood (as the 1921 edition states), since he was already a high priest, but seems to mean something like, “You shall be one of the first [leading] elders in the Church, etc.” In 1837 he was released from the office of seventy (since at that time high priests could not be seventies) and was subsequently called as a member of the Twelve (16 January 1839) but died (February 1839) before he was ordained. The headnote and content summary to this section in the new edition of the Doctrine and Covenants are worded in a manner to guide the reader toward a proper context and interpretation. This section is a clear example of the need for adequate background information if we are to understand correctly.

Section 119. This section presents a revelation that was given to the Prophet Joseph Smith at Far West, Missouri, on 8 July 1839. Earlier in the Church, the United Order had been practiced wherein those who belonged to the Order deeded their entire property to the

¹⁷*History of the Church*, 2:345.

Church. Due to severe persecution and the failure of many to comply with the requirements of the Order, this procedure was changed by revelation and a system of tithing instituted. The revelation known as section 119 was given in response to the Prophet's supplication: "*O Lord, show unto thy servants how much thou requirest of the properties of thy people for a tithing.*" Without knowing this background, one could easily misunderstand the revelation. The word *tithing* itself means "a tenth"; however, the Prophet was not asking the Lord simply to show him how much a tenth was. In the transition from the United Order there needed to be some guidelines. Furthermore, it is evident that the word *tithing* as used in the earlier revelations and as commonly spoken of by the Brethren was not limited to a tenth, but it was a more inclusive term covering all contributions and consecrations of property. Thus, in the 1981 edition the following is added to the headnote:

The law of tithing, as understood today, had not been given to the Church previous to this revelation. The term "tithing" in the prayer just quoted and in previous revelations (64:23; 85:3; 97:11) had meant not just one-tenth, but all freewill offerings, or contributions, to the Church funds. The Lord had previously given to the Church the law of consecration and stewardship of property, which members (chiefly the leading elders) entered into by a covenant that was to be everlasting. Because of failure on the part of many to abide by this covenant, the Lord withdrew it for a time, and gave instead the law of tithing to the whole Church. The Prophet asked the Lord how much of their property he required for sacred purposes. The answer was this revelation.

Not only is the clarification valuable to understanding this section, but it also enables us to get the proper insight to a previous revelation known as section 64 in which is found the statement "he that is tithed shall not be burned" at the Lord's coming (D&C 64:23). When we understand what *tithing* meant in that day (1831), we can appreciate that it is not a mere ten percent that guarantees protection against the fire. The true sense of the revelation is that he who is wholly consecrated and dedicated shall not be burned. As a footnote to 64:23, the new edition tells the reader to "see note on tithing in heading to Section 119." Having this background information is essential to gaining a correct understanding of both section 64 and section 119.

Section 120. Since the 1921 edition, the date of this section has been unintentionally given the incorrect date of 18 July. It has now been corrected to read 8 July, which the prepublication records show to be the correct date, it being the same day as for section 119.

Section 129. This section presents “*three grand keys by which the correct nature of ministering angels and spirits may be distinguished.*” In earlier editions of the Doctrine and Covenants, this section was described as a revelation “*given to Joseph Smith the Prophet [on] February 9, 1843,*” conveying the impression that it was on this date the Prophet himself learned of these keys. However, there is documentary evidence he had given a similar explanation to the First Presidency and the Twelve on 27 June 1839.¹⁸ The written source used for the Doctrine and Covenants was from a later occasion (1843) on which the Prophet explained the same concepts, and on which his scribe William Clayton recorded it. Thus the material now identified as section 129, although the product of revelation, was not a new revelation received in 1843. We do not know when the Prophet first received this knowledge, but we know that it was at least by 27 June 1839. Accordingly, the headnote to the 1981 edition reads: “*Instructions given by Joseph Smith . . . February 9, 1843,*” rather than “*REVELATION given to Joseph Smith . . . February 9, 1843.*” This is an important matter, for it contributes to the accuracy of the new edition and relieves the awkward inference that the Prophet himself did not receive the keys to angelic identification until late in his ministry after most of the heavenly ministrants had already appeared to him.

Section 132. The information contained in D&C 132 was recorded on 12 July 1843 to meet a specific need. But the principle of plurality of wives, which constitutes a major portion of the section, was known to the Prophet long before this date. Therefore, the new edition adds the following explanation: “*Although the revelation was recorded in 1843, it is evident from the historical records that the doctrine and principles involved in this revelation had been known by the Prophet since 1831.*” This is an important clarification relative to the time period in which the laws governing the plurality of wives were revealed to the Prophet. Among the historical evidence for the earlier time period is a signed report written by Elder Orson Pratt in 1878 and published in the *Millennial Star*. In it he affirms his personal knowledge that the Prophet received a revelation on the matter in the fall of 1831.¹⁹ A second piece of evidence comes from an address by Elder Joseph F. Smith, delivered in Salt Lake City on 7 July 1878, in which he gives 1832 as the time of the revelation.²⁰

¹⁸Cook, *Revelations of Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 286–87.

¹⁹“Report of Elders Orson Pratt and Joseph F. Smith,” *Millennial Star* 40 (9 December 1878): 788.

²⁰Discourse by Joseph F. Smith, 7 July 1878, *Journal of Discourses*, 20:29.

Sections 137, 138. These two sections are new to the Doctrine and Covenants with the 1981 edition. Both documents are known to Church historians and members and have been published in Church literature. They were first made part of the standard works by the sustaining action of the general conference of 3 April 1976 and were published as an insert to the Pearl of Great Price. They were then transferred to the Doctrine and Covenants in the 1981 edition. Section 137 is a record of a vision of the celestial kingdom given to the Prophet Joseph Smith at Kirtland, Ohio, 21 January 1836; section 138 is an account of a vision of the Savior's ministry in the world of spirits given to President Joseph F. Smith, 3 October 1918. Both of these documents are fundamental to the doctrine of salvation for the dead and are therefore invaluable additions to the Doctrine and Covenants, especially at this time when genealogical research, temple building, and ordinance work for the living and the dead are reaching unprecedented activity.

Supplement to Official Declaration—1. Official Declaration—1, the Manifesto, has been published as part of the Doctrine and Covenants since 1908 and remains unchanged in the new edition. However, there have now been added "Excerpts from Three Addresses by President Wilford Woodruff Regarding the Manifesto," which give detailed explanation as to why the Manifesto was issued. President Woodruff tells of the role of the President of the Church and of the revelations which he himself had received leading to the discontinuance of plural marriage. This material from President Woodruff has been published previously, but this is the first time it has appeared in a standard work.

Official Declaration—2. In June 1978, the First Presidency announced that a revelation had been received by President Spencer W. Kimball extending priesthood and temple blessings to all worthy male members of the Church. The First Presidency subsequently sent a letter to the leaders of the Church throughout the world, informing them of this revelation. Official Declaration—2 consists of (1) an introductory statement, (2) the letter, and (3) a concluding note to the effect that the letter was unanimously sustained by the vote of the general conference on 30 September 1978 as the "word and will of the Lord."

Maps. The 1981 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants is the first to contain maps showing significant locations having to do with the rise of the Church in this dispensation. Not every place mentioned in the Doctrine and Covenants is shown, but the four maps make it possible to locate the most significant cities, rivers, and other

sites having to do with the contents of the Doctrine and Covenants. These maps were specially prepared by the Department of Geography at BYU for publication in the new edition.

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

The "Introductory Note" provided in the new edition of the Pearl of Great Price gives a short background of the various editions of that book since the first collection was published in Liverpool, England, in 1851, by Elder Franklin D. Richards. The introduction also provides a brief statement about the present contents. Each of the various portions of the Pearl of Great Price (except the Articles of Faith) has been given subject-matter chapter headings, whereas earlier editions had only headings with limited content. Only thirteen changes were made in the text of the Pearl of Great Price. About twenty-five corrections and additions were made for clarity in the former headings.

Selections from the Book of Moses. The Moses material has had various titles since it was first printed in the Pearl Great Price in 1851. At that time the Moses material was fragmentary and contained no unifying title or identification as to source. In the 1878 second edition of the Pearl of Great Price, Elder Orson Pratt enlarged the content of Moses and added the title "Visions of Moses" to the introductory part and "Writings of Moses" to the remaining part. The 1902 edition arranged the materials in eight chapters and labeled it "Book of Moses." Dr. James E. Talmage, later to become a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, prepared this edition on assignment from the First Presidency. The new 1981 edition designates the Moses material as "Selections from the Book of Moses," with the subheading "*An extract from the translation of the Bible as revealed to Joseph Smith the Prophet, June 1830—February 1831.*" This is an appropriate heading because it identifies the source and the date, as well as indicating that this is not all of Moses' writing.

Another feature of note is the correction of the dates at the beginning of each of the chapters of Moses. The dates when the materials were revealed to the Prophet Joseph recently became available when the RLDS History Commission kindly made the original manuscript of Joseph Smith's translation of the Bible available for research. Since the Book of Moses is an excerpt from the Prophet's translation of the Bible, the availability of the manuscript is very helpful for many reasons, one being that it contains several dates, which, when placed with known dates and events in Church history, add to our

knowledge of the time frame when the Moses material was revealed to the Prophet Joseph Smith. The new edition states that chapter 1 was received in June 1830, which was correctly given in earlier editions; however, chapters 2–5 were received by Joseph Smith from June to October 1830, several months earlier than former editions had indicated. Part of chapter 6 was revealed in November 1830 rather than in December as was formerly thought. The date of chapter 7 was unchanged, since December 1830 is correct. The date of chapter 8, which was given as December 1830 in previous editions, is now known to have been February 1831. Having the correct dates permits students to obtain a historical insight as to when the various portions of the Moses material were revealed to Joseph Smith. It also helps to establish a doctrinal relationship between the Book of Moses and the revelations published in the Doctrine and Covenants which were received during the same period of time (June 1830–February 1831).

The Book of Abraham. Through the various printings and editions of the Book of Abraham, the clarity of the facsimilies has deteriorated, becoming less distinct and consequently less accurate. The new edition uses photoprints of the facsimilies as they occurred in the first printing of the Abraham material in the *Times and Seasons* in 1842.²¹

A significant textual correction was made in Abraham 1:3, which formerly read, “the first man, who is Adam, our first father.” The 1981 edition reads, “the first man, who is Adam, or first father.” This change was made on the basis of a manuscript in the LDS Church Historical Archives which records Abraham 1 clearly with the word *or* rather than *our* for this passage. The printing history of this verse is as follows. It was first printed in the *Times and Seasons* of 1 March 1842 where it reads the same as the manuscript, “or first father.”²² This same text was continued in the first edition of the Pearl of Great Price, July 1851, and also in the 1878 and 1888 editions. In the 1902 edition, the text was changed to read “our first father.” All subsequent editions of the Pearl of Great Price have followed the text of the 1902 edition. The 1981 edition restores the earlier reading.

“*Writings of Joseph Smith.*” Another significant format change in the 1981 edition was to remove the caption “Writings of Joseph Smith” from Matthew 24 and the Joseph Smith History (formerly Joseph Smith 1 and 2). This caption was a little misleading, for these items are not substantially different from other “writings” of Joseph

²¹*Times and Seasons* 3 (1 and 15 March and 16 May 1842): 703, 720–21, 783.

²²*Ibid.*, 3 (1 March 1842): 704.

1st Revelation given to Joseph the Revelator June 1830
The words of God which he spake unto Moses at a time
when Moses was caught up into an exceeding high Mountain & he saw
God face to face & he talked with him & the glory of God was upon Mo-
ses. Therefore Moses could endure his presence & God spake unto Mo-
ses saying Behold I am the Lord God Almighty & endless is
my name for I am without beginning of days or end of years & it is not
endless & behold thou art my Son & thou shalt not see the work
manhood of mine hands but not all for my works are without end & also my re-
deemings for they never cease wherefore no man can behold all my works except he
behold my glory & no man can behold all my glory & afterwards remain in me
I look & I have a work for thee Moses my Son & thou art in similitude to me
only begotten & mine only begotten & shall be for he is full of grace & truth
there is none other God beside me & all things are present with me for I know
them all & now behold this one thing I show unto thee Moses my
son for thou art in the world & now I show it thee And it came to
pass that Moses looked & beheld the world upon which he was created &
Moses beheld the world to the ends thereof & all the children of men which
was & which was created of the same He greatly marvelled & wondered &
the presence of God with him from Moses that his glory was not upon
Moses & Moses was left unto himself & as he was looking
he fell down to the earth & it came to pass that it was for the space
of many hours before Moses did again receive his natural strength
& he said unto himself no law for this one I know that
is nothing which thing I never had supposed but now mine eyes
are open & mine eyes for mine eyes could not have been held for I have
seen him & died in his presence but his glory was upon me & I
held his face for I was transfigured before him And now it came to
pass that when Moses had said these words behold Satan came tempting
him saying Moses Son of man worship me And it came to pass that
Moses looked upon Satan & said What art thou for behold I am a
Son of God in the similitude of his only begotten & where is thy glory that
thou should worship me for behold I could not look upon God except his
glory should come upon me & I was transfigured before him but I can
look upon thee in the natural man if not so sure to be blessed be the name
of our God for his Spirit hath not ~~been~~ withdrawn from me
in all where is thy glory for it is blackness unto me & I can but do to
thee that & God for God said unto me Worship God for him only shalt
thou serve At that time Satan declined me not for God said unto me
Thou art after the similitude of mine only begotten & he also gave unto
me commandment when he called unto me out of the burning bush saying
Call upon God in the name of mine only begotten & worship me And again
Moses said I will not cease to call upon God I have other things to
inquire of him for his glory has been upon me & it is glory unto me wherefore
I can judge he is not him & thou depart hence Satan And now when Moses
had said these words Satan bowed with a loud voice & went upon the Earth

Courtesy of RLDS Church, the Auditorium, Independence, Mo.

Joseph Smith Translation

O.T. MS, no. 2, p. 1

Moses 1:1-19

showing dates of the Book of Moses revelations

October 21st 1830 1830
 & Mahyuel begat Mathusaleh & other sons & daughters & Mathusaleh begat Lamech
 & Lamech took unto himself two wives the name of one was ^{Adah} & the name of the other Zillah & Adah bore Jubal he was the father of such as dwell in tents & they were keepers of cattle & his brother's name was Tubal who was the father of all such as handle the harp & Organ & Zillah she also bore Tubal
 Cain an instructor of every artificer in brass & iron & the sister of Tubal
 born was called Harnah & Lamech said unto his wives Adah & Zillah hear my voice ye wives of Lamech hearken unto my speech for I have slain a man to my wounding & a young man to my hurt if Cain shall be avenged seven fold truly Lamech shall be seventy & seven fold for Lamech having entered into a covenant with Satan after the manner of Cain wherein he became Master. Methan Master of that great secret which was administered unto Cain by Satan & kept the son of Tubal ~~in~~ Ench having known their secret began to reveal it unto the sons of Adam whereupon Lamech being angry slew him not like unto Cain his brother Abel for the sake of getting gain but he slew him for the sakes sake for from the days of Cain there was a secret combination & their works were in the dark & they knew every man his brother.

November 30th 1830
Therefore the Lord cursed Samuek & his house & all they that his
covenant with Satan for they kept not the commandments of God
& it displeased God & he ministered not unto them & their works
were shaming & began to spread among all the sons of men
& it was among the sons of men & among the daughters of men
these things were ~~not~~ spoken because that Samuek had spoken the
secret unto his wives & they rebelled against him & declared these
things abroad & had not compunction. Therefore Samuek was despised
& cast out & came not among the sons of men lest he should
do & thus the works of darkness began to prevail among all
the sons of men & God covered the Earth with a rose curse &
was angry with the wicked with all the sons of men whom
he had made for they would not hearken unto his voice nor
believe in his only begotten Son even him which he declared
should come in the meridian of time which was prepared from
before the foundation of the world & thus the Gospel began to be
preached from the beginning being declared by Holy Angels
unt forth from the presence of God & by his own voice &
by the gift of the Holy Ghost & thus all things were confir-
med & the Gospel preached & a decree went forth that it should
be in the world until the end thereof & thus it was amen —
& Adam hearkened unto the voice of God & called upon his name
to repent & Adam knew his wife again & she bore him a

Joseph Smith Translation

O.T. MS, no. 2, p. 10

Moses 5:41 and 6:2

showing dates of the Book of Moses revelations

Smith. The Matthew material is now appropriately labeled “Joseph Smith—Matthew” with the subheading “*An extract from the translation of the Bible as revealed to Joseph Smith the Prophet in 1831: Matthew 23:39 and Chapter 24.*” (It is abbreviated in the footnotes of the new editions as JS-M.)

A correction of verse 8 was made by adding the words “and shall hate one another” to the end of the verse. This phrase has been missing in publications of the Pearl of Great Price since 1851. The corrections were made on the basis of the original manuscript of the Joseph Smith Translation.²³

A correction of verse 30 was made so it reads, “the love of men” in place of “the love of many.” This correction was also made on the basis of the original manuscript of the Joseph Smith Translation²⁴ and is consistent with a parallel passage in D&C 45:27.

The material formerly identified as Joseph Smith 2 is now captioned “Joseph Smith—History” (abbreviated as JS-H). A correction was made in verse 4 and 56 concerning the date of Alvin Smith’s death.²⁵ The proper date is November 1823, not November 1824 as has been erroneously printed in editions of the Pearl of Great Price since 1851. The year error apparently crept into the text because the history was written several years after the event and was given erroneously in the *Times and Seasons* account from which the history was extracted.²⁶ However, the proper year is easily ascertained from an article in the *Wayne County* [New York] *Sentinel* under the date of 25 September 1824, which mentions the fact of Alvin’s earlier death and burial. This of course could not have been discussed in September 1824 if the death did not occur until November of that year, some two months after the newspaper article was published. The newspaper article written by Joseph Smith, Sr., leaves no doubt that Alvin had passed away at the earlier date.

The Articles of Faith. Three editorial corrections occur in the 1981 edition of the Articles of Faith. In the fifth article of faith, the punctuation was altered to emphasize the need for divine authority in the ministry by removing the comma after the word *hands* and placing it after the word *authority*, thus: “and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in

²³New Testament Manuscript 1, p. 57, line 4, Library-Archives, The Auditorium, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Independence, Mo.

²⁴Ibid., p. 56-A, line 8.

²⁵Verse 56 was in error in all these printings. Verse 4 did not offer a specific date until the 1902 edition, which then gave the year 1824, which of course was an error.

²⁶*Times and Seasons* 3 (2 May 1842): 772.

the ordinances thereof.” This correction emphasizes the obvious intent of the passage.

In the sixth article of faith, the abbreviation *viz* was replaced by the word *namely*.

In the tenth article, the former wording “that Zion will be built upon this [the American] continent” now reads “Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent.” This improvement in the sentence structure allows a freer flow of words. It also specifies that the part of Zion known as the New Jerusalem will be established in America; whereas, Zion in the larger sense, meaning the stakes, is not limited to America.

CONCLUSION

This article has been only a brief survey of the reasons for, the procedures followed in, and the unique features of the new 1979 and 1981 editions of the standard works published by the Church. These new editions officially manifest the intention of the Church to promulgate the sacred word of the Lord given in every age, and to do it as correctly as possible. They have come forth at a time when study of the scriptures is receiving increased emphasis in the Church curriculum.

The uniform reference system developed in these four standard works reminds us of Ezekiel’s prophecy that the books will be “one” in the hand of the Lord’s people (Ezek. 37:15–19). This concept is even more graphically described by Lehi when he says that the writings of Joseph’s seed and of Judah’s seed “shall grow together” unto the confounding of false doctrines and bringing people to a knowledge of the covenants of the Lord (2 Nephi 3:12). The new study aids—the topical guide, Bible dictionary, and maps—bound within the covers of the new editions, and the improved footnotes and cross-references to the standard works on the very pages of the sacred books are a step toward a fulfillment of these ancient prophecies. And yet these new editions are not perfect. There will no doubt be further corrections and additions in the years ahead. But as they now stand, the 1979 and 1981 editions constitute the most comprehensive scripture study-aid program ever made by the Church.

In general conference 1 April 1979, President Spencer W. Kimball spoke of the progress the Church had recently made and, even more, of the progress it was destined to make in the years ahead:

The Church is at a point in its growth and maturity when we are at last ready to move forward in a major way. . . . But the basic decisions

needed for us to move forward, as a people, must be made by the individual members of the Church. . . . We have paused on some plateaus long enough. . . . The Church is ready to accomplish . . . things now which it could not have done just a few years ago.²⁷

Some of the things being accomplished within recent years are increased missionary activity, improved genealogical research techniques, increased temple building, and an increased emphasis on the scriptures in the correlated curriculum of the Church.

At a time when the Church of Jesus Christ is rapidly extending its message of salvation to all the world, there is a greater need for these new editions of the scriptures than ever before because the teachings contained within them are fundamental to all the activities of the Church. These scriptures are now ready for use as we stand at the threshold of the greatest worldwide expansion of the kingdom of God in the history of mankind.

²⁷Spencer W. Kimball, "Let Us Move Forward and Upward," *Ensign* 9 (May 1979): 82.

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