

BYU Religious Publications

From BYU Studies, the Maxwell Institute, and the Religious Studies Center

Fall 2025

BYU Studies

BYU Studies is an interdisciplinary academic publisher that combines spiritual depth with scholarly rigor. Its mission is to offer gospel-centered perspectives across a wide range of academic disciplines. BYU Studies publishes thoughtful and compelling content on Church history and doctrine, scripture, poetry and personal essays rooted in faith, and gospel insights that enrich understanding in any academic field.

Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship

The Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship gathers and nurtures disciple-scholars whose work inspires and builds faith in Jesus Christ while engaging the broader world of religious ideas. Through faith-centered books, a podcast, ongoing research, and other

thoughtful resources, the Institute supports scholarship that strengthens testimonies and fosters deeper spiritual understanding.

Religious Studies Center

The Religious Studies Center was established in 1975 under then-dean Jeffrey R. Holland. Its mission is to encourage, sponsor, and publish serious, faithful, gospel-related materials. The RSC produces and markets high-quality religious books and periodicals that are both academic and devotional in nature, promoting a greater understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ and its relevance in the lives of Latter-day Saints. Its publications include groundbreaking works on Latter-day Saint doctrine, culture, history, and scripture.

On May 14, 2025, the Religious Studies Center commemorated its fiftieth

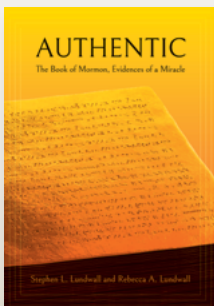
anniversary with a gala held at the Hinckley Center, where more than 150 guests gathered to enjoy dinner, mingle, and hear talks on the Center's history. President Jeffrey R. Holland, founder of the RSC, expressed gratitude to all who support its mission of advancing gospel scholarship.

Reflecting on his eighty-five years of life—including the profound influence of the other members of the Quorum of the Twelve and First Presidency, as well as a life-threatening illness that “took me to the edge of eternity”—President Holland said, “If I could have you feel what I feel about those years, these experiences, and that association, you would run from tonight and you’d grab your pen and pencil and iPad and laptop, and you’d teach and testify and testify and teach [the gospel]—and you’d do it on the run.”

Books

Authentic: The Book of Mormon, Evidences of a Miracle (Religious Studies Center)

Stephen L. Lundwall and Rebecca A. Lundwall



As the last custodian of a record spanning over two millennia, Moroni invited modern readers to do what he himself had done: reflect on God's mercy “from

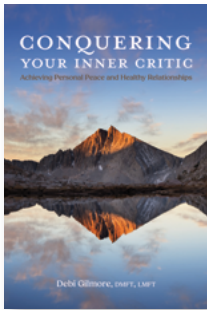
the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things” (Moroni 10:3). That mercy is evident not only in the profound teachings contained in the Book of Mormon but also in the miraculous journey of the record itself—a sacred text that was meticulously preserved and passed down through generations by prophetic guardians. *Authentic* explores the provenance of this ancient book of scripture: how it was safeguarded against destruction, delivered by an angel, and ultimately translated and published in our time. Examining the text's history

reveals an unbroken chain of inspired recordkeepers who intentionally structured the text for future investigation. The Book of Mormon is a rare book whose creation and transmission seem designed to withstand the test of time, a remarkable record of ancient provenance made possible only by divine providence.



**Conquering Your Inner Critic:
Achieving Personal Peace and Healthy
Relationships** (Religious Studies Center)

Debi Gilmore



Our inner critical voice can block our ability to recognize and use our unique gifts and talents that are essential in our quest to learn, progress, and become better people despite the challenges of life. Written with members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in mind, this book follows proven clinical methodologies and offers helpful faith-based principles and perspectives that also can be effective for anyone struggling with self-defeating tendencies. Readers will explore key steps to identify, reject, and rise above their inner critical voice to discover, cultivate, and preserve their deeper, wiser, and authentic self. The goal is unlocking hope, long-term healing, and personal, social, and spiritual empowerment.



**Doctrine and Covenants Insights:
Capstone of Doctrinal Understanding** (Religious Studies Center)

Edited by Kenneth L. Alford, Mary Jane Woodger, and Mark A. Mathews



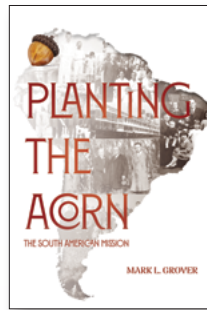
This book is designed to supplement the 2025 Doctrine and Covenants *Come, Follow Me* Church curriculum year. The Doctrine and Covenants beautifully illustrates that the Lord Jesus Christ lives and speaks today. By integrating both spiritual and secular understanding and insights, this volume explores how the Doctrine and

Covenants teaches doctrine, principles, laws, prophecies, typologies, and gospel applications.



**Planting the Acorn: The South
American Mission** (Religious Studies Center)

Mark L. Grover



On a hot, humid Christmas Day in Argentina, Elders Melvin J. Ballard, Rulon S. Wells, and Rey L. Pratt prayed to dedicate South America for the preaching of the restored gospel.

They organized the South American Mission, and Elder Ballard later predicted, “The work of the Lord will grow slowly for a time here just as an oak grows slowly from an acorn. . . . The South American Mission will be a power in the Church.” The choice they made to expand missionary work outside traditional European converts in South America marked an important turning point. The result was the permanent establishment of the Church in Argentina and the opening of the Church in Brazil. Further, the South American Mission was the foundation for the impressive hundred-year growth and expansion of the Church in South America.



**Prepare Me for Thy Use: Lessons from
Wilford Woodruff’s Mission Years** (Religious Studies Center)

Kristy Wheelwright Taylor



This book explores Wilford Woodruff’s early discipleship during his missionary service in the United States and

Great Britain. Drawing from his letters and personal journals, this book takes a thematic look at Wilford’s unwavering dedication to hard work, obedience, meticulous recordkeeping, gratitude, and consecration. Kristy Wheelwright Taylor weaves together his personal anecdotes and spiritual insights in a historical context to make his story both relatable and inspiring for modern readers. The themes provide rich material for personal study or in Church settings, seminary, institute, or mission preparation. Readers will find valuable insights from the story of one man’s spiritual progression that can be applied to their own path of discipleship.



**Seventy Times Seven: Jesus’s Path to
Conflict Transformation** (Maxwell Institute)

Chad Ford



What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ when we feel stirred up with anger in our families, neighborhoods, wards, workplaces, online communities, and public forums? It is challenging to heed

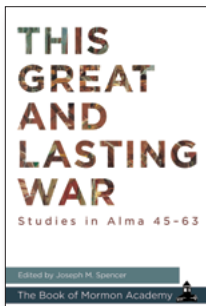
prophetic invitations to take more seriously the Savior’s call to “love your enemies” and to be peacemakers while maintaining integrity.

As a professor of peacebuilding, a conflict mediator, and a follower of Jesus, Chad Ford offers valuable perspectives on how to avoid or reconcile contention when life’s inevitable disagreements arise. Step by step, he shows how Jesus’s path of practicing forgiveness and reconciliation 70 × 7 has the power to repair relationships by transforming destructive conflict into constructive peace.



This Great and Lasting War: Studies in Alma 45–63 (Religious Studies Center)

Edited by Joseph M. Spencer



The latter part of the Book of Mormon's book of Alma is sometimes referred to as "the war chapters."

However, the relevant chapters are much more complex than often assumed, focusing on the nature of covenant, the love of God, and the way human beings establish their identities. The record alerts readers to challenges uniquely faced by women, the difficulty of handling complicated relationships, and the need to make good choices. The text enlightens its adherents about the meaning of scripture in different contexts, how prophets intervene on behalf

of the downtrodden and look to God's future interventions in the world, and what it means to see God in the concrete details of life. As we strive to build peace in response to President Russell M. Nelson's recent prophetic cry, we find in the words of his ancient prophetic predecessors inspiration to go on in the cause of Christ.



Journal Issues (selected articles)

BYU Studies
vol. 64, no. 1

"Brigham Young Unfiltered: His Life, Conversion, and Faith in His Own Words," LaJean Purcell Carruth



"'Struck with Wonder and Amazement': On Reading the Book of Mosiah," Joseph M. Spencer



"'Not Only Men but Women Also': An Argument for Alma's Intentional Inclusion of Women," Cassidy Nichole Pyper

"This Branch of the Church: The Early Development of Local Administration in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Part 1, The Emergent Church, 1830–1845," Brandon Plewe

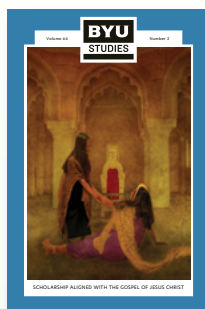
"The Wonder *Is* Scripture," Jared Halverson

"The Seven Seals, the Age of the Earth, and Ongoing Revelation," Nicholas J. Frederick

"What Are We to Make of the Gold Plates?," Richard Lyman Bushman

BYU Studies
vol. 64, no. 2

"Practical Faith for the Real World: Reading *As If*, Believing *As If*," Kylie N. Turley



"The Heyday of the MIA: Latter-day Saint Youth Programs in the Postwar Era," Lisa Olsen Tait and Amber Taylor

"Where Risk and Reward Meet: Interfaith Engagement and Learning," Andrew C. Reed

"Words Never to Be Forgotten: The Thoughtful Legacy of Neal A. Maxwell," John W. Welch

"Using a Reconciliation Approach to Teach Evolution May Help Religious Students Remain Faithful," Danny Ferguson, Ethan Tolman, Spencer Shumway, and Cassidy Shively

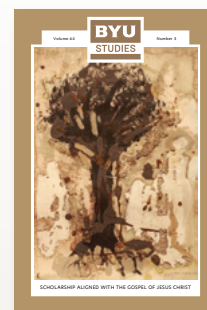
"'There Is Law': Joseph Smith's Use of Arbitration to Protect the Book of Mormon," Jeffrey N. Walker, Andrew H. Hedges, and Gerrit J. Dirkmaat

"This Branch of the Church: The Early Development of Local Administration in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Part 2, The Church in Flux, 1846–1851," Brandon Plewe



BYU Studies
vol. 64, no. 3

"'The Youth of Zion,' 'A Word for the Wayward,' and 'A Precious Promise': Elder Orson F. Whitney's April 1929 General Conference Sermon on Righteous Parents, Wayward Children, and Priesthood Sealings," Reid L. Neilson



"Getting to Know Brother Joseph: Resources from the Joseph Smith Papers for Latter-day Saints," Matthew C. Godfrey

“The Joseph Smith Papers and My Christian Discipleship,” Spencer W. McBride

“The Genesis of the Joseph Smith Papers Project,” Richard Lyman Bushman, Ronald K. Esplin, Dean C. Jessee, and Richard E. Turley Jr.; moderated by Matthew C. Godfrey

“Behind the Scenes of the Joseph Smith Papers Project: A Conversation with the Editors,” Mark Ashurst-McGee, Robin Scott Jensen, Elizabeth Kuehn, Jeffrey Mahas, and Jessica M. Nelson; moderated by Nathan Waite

“How the Joseph Smith Papers Became a Project of Consequence,” Ronald O. Barney, Ronald K. Esplin, Elder Marlin K. Jensen, and Gail Miller; moderated by Brent Rogers

“The Genesis Creation Account in Its Ancient Context,” Avram R. Shannon

“Kanesville Memorial: A Fitting Companion to the Winter Quarters Memorial,” Jacob W. Olmstead

“This Branch of the Church: The Early Development of Local Administration in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Part 3, Administering an Expanding Territory, 1852–1859,” Brandon Plewe



Religious Educator
vol. 26, no. 1

“The Atonement of Jesus Christ, Judgment Day, and You,” Elder Jörg Klebingat

“Nurturing Religious Education Using Artificial Intelligence,” Matt Gardner

“Mosiah 18:21 and Prophetic Help with the Messiness of Unity,” Nicholas W. Gentile

“A Prophetic Priority: A Vital Voice,” Shauna Seamons

“‘I Have Learned for Myself’: Teaching the First Vision to the Rising Generation,” Jess Jones

“Religious Reenactment as a Framework for the Camp of Israel,” Thomas Kendall Buchmiller

“Key Direction in Seminary That Shaped Life Preparation Lessons,” Jonathan E. Thomas

“Innovating Institute: Modeling Empathy with Challenging Passages of Scripture,” Luke Drake and Ryan Webb

“Come, Follow Me and Life Preparation,” Denise McCubbins



Religious Educator
vol. 26, no. 2

“Finding Peace Amidst Uncertainty,” J. Anette Dennis

“The Chosen: Insights for Latter-day Saints,” John Hilton III and Julie Hollenbaugh

“Five Loaves and Two Fishes,” Dallas Jenkins

“‘Being Therefore Perfect’: Matthew 5:48 in Modern Restoration and Ancient Jewish Contexts,” Trevan Hatch and Gerrit van Dyk

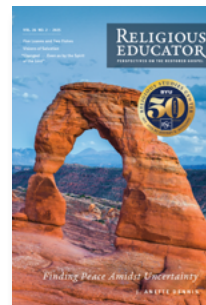
“David W. Patten: Faithful Friend or Heel Lifter?,” Mark Lewis

“Visions of Salvation: What the Visions of Joseph Smith Reveal to Us About How to Inherit Heaven,” Mark A. Mathews

“For the Strength of Youth: Teaching Strategies, Challenges, and Recommendations for the Program,” Traci Garff Longmore

“‘Changed . . . Even as by the Spirit of the Lord,’” Robert Erickson

“Interview with President John Kauwe III,” Fred E. Woods



Events

BYU Religious Education Symposium in Honor of Sidney B. Sperry (with Religious Education)

January 24–25

Discovering the Doctrine and Covenants with the Maxwell Institute (Maxwell Institute)

February 26, Terryl Givens, Amy Harris, and Philip Barlow, with Jennifer Champoux

BYU Religious Education Student Symposium (with Religious Education)

March 14

Scripture Study with a Scholar (Maxwell Institute)

March 18, Rosalynde Welch

70×7 Seventy Times Seven book launch (Maxwell Institute)

April 9, Chad Ford

BYU Easter Conference (with Religious Education)

April 11



Close Scripture Reading (Maxwell Institute)

April 15, Kimberly Matheson

Book of Mormon Art Contest (Maxwell Institute)

June 24, winners announced



Faith and Cookies lecture series (BYU Studies)

- ♦ January 9, Justin Dyer
- ♦ February 6, Steven C. Harper
- ♦ March 13, Jenet Jacob Erickson
- ♦ April 3, Adam Miller
- ♦ September 18, Justin Dyer

Wonder of Scripture lecture series (Maxwell Institute)



- ♦ January 17, Jared Halverson
- ♦ January 24, Rabbi Sam Spector
- ♦ January 31, Philip Barlow
- ♦ February 7, Amy Harris
- ♦ February 14, Patrick Mason
- ♦ February 21, Morgan Davis
- ♦ February 28, Mason Allred
- ♦ March 7, Ben Lomu
- ♦ March 14, Kristian Heal
- ♦ March 28, Rachael Givens Johnson
- ♦ April 4, Adam Miller
- ♦ April 11, Rosalynde Welch
- ♦ September 12, Robbie Taggart
- ♦ September 19, Katie Paxman
- ♦ September 26, Joseph M. Spencer

Podcasts and Media

Elder Maxwell Addresses (Maxwell Institute)



“Why Not Now,”
January 13

“Notwithstanding My Weakness,”
January 27

“Insights from My Life,” February 10

“Meeting the Challenges of Today,”
February 24

“Patience,” March 10

“For the Commandment Is a Lamp;
and the Law Is Light,” March 24

“O, Divine Redeemer,” April 7

“Try the Virtue of the Word of God,”
April 21

“Joseph Smith: A Choice Seer,” May 5

“Great Answers to the Great
Question,” May 19

“Meek and Lowly,” June 2

“The Constitution: The Wisest Ever
Yet Delivered to Men,” June 16

“Murmur Not,” June 30

“Become Like God and Jesus Christ,”
July 14

“In Him All Things Hold Together,”
July 28

“Teaching by the Spirit: The Language
of Revelation,” August 11

“Repentance,” August 26

Maxwell Institute Blog (Maxwell Institute)



“Seeing with Our Whole
Bodies (Adapted from
Seeing, by Mason Kamana Allred),”
February 3

“A Radical Sabbath (Adapted from Time, by Philip L. Barlow),” February 17

“The Lord’s Invitation: You Are Capable and Needed (Adapted from Divine Aid, by Amy Easton),” March 3

“Agency: A Power Grounded in Relationality (Adapted from Agency, by Terryl Givens),” March 17

“Holy Records, Unholy Record-Keeping (Adapted from Redeeming the Dead, by Amy Harris),” March 31

“Divine Silence and Indirection (Adapted from Revelation, by Janiece Johnson),” April 14

“To Climb the Ladder of the Law (Adapted from Divine Law, by Justin Collings),” April 28

“Seeing through Sticks, Stones, and Screens (Adapted from Seeing, by Mason Kamana Allred),” May 12

“Prisoners of Time (Adapted from Time by Philip L. Barlow),” May 26

“The Lord’s Grace: Inexhaustible Opportunities and Love Irrespective (Adapted from Divine Aid by Amy Easton),” June 9

“Agency and the Hope of Futurity (Adapted from Agency by Terryl Givens),” June 23

“What Family History Is—and Is Not (Adapted from Redeeming the Dead by Amy Harris),” July 7

“The Tyranny of a Burning Bosom (Adapted from Revelation by Janiece Johnson),” July 21

MIPodcast: Questions We Should Be Asking (Maxwell Institute)



“#174: Agency (Themes in the Doctrine and Covenants),” Terryl Givens, January 17

“#175: Agency (Divine Law in the Doctrine and Covenants),” Justin Collings, February 25

“#176: Redeeming the Dead (Themes in the Doctrine and Covenants),” Amy Harris, March 17

“#177: Seeing (Themes in the Doctrine and Covenants),” Mason Kamana Allred, April 1

“#178: Divine Aid (Themes in the Doctrine and Covenants),” Amy Easton, May 12

“#179: Time (Themes in the Doctrine and Covenants),” Philip Barlow, June 1

“#180: Revelation (Themes in the Doctrine and Covenants),” Janiece Johnson, June 12

“#181: Seventy Times Seven: Jesus’s Path to Conflict Transformation,” Chad Ford, July 9

Y Religion Podcast (with Religious Education)



“Episode 118: The Doctrine and Covenants as Living Scripture,” Casey Griffiths, December 2024

“Episode 119: Hear Him! The Restored Voice of the Lord,” Anthony Sweat January

“Episode 120: The True Identity of Christ,” Krystal V. L. Pierce, January

“Episode 121: The Family Proclamation in Context,” Michael A. Goodman, February

“Episode 122: Connections between the Book of Revelation and the Book of Mormon,” Nicholas J. Frederick, February

“Episode 123: The Sail before the Trail—the 19th Century Latter-day Saint Gathering to America,” Fred E. Woods, March

“Episode 124: Sacramental Connections,” Matthew O. Richardson, March

“Episode 125: Envisioning the Last Supper,” Matthew Grey, April

“Episode 126: Women Witnesses of the Easter Events,” Gaye Strathearn, April

“Episode 127: Understanding Our Jewish Neighbors,” Shon Hopkin, May

“Episode 128: Following Prophets When We Have Questions,” Travis Searle, May

“Episode 129: Bonus Episode—Introducing ‘Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching,’” John Hilton III and Casey Griffiths, June

“Episode 1: The Power of Teaching (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Clark Gilbert and Chad Webb, June

“Episode 2: Knowing Your Audience (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Emily Belle Freeman and Brad Wilcox, June

“Episode 3: Preparing a Lesson (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Mark L. Pace and Ken Alford, June

“Episode 4: Teaching by the Spirit (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Hank Smith and Ryan Sharp, June

“Episode 5: Teaching with the Scriptures (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Gaye Strathearn and Joe Spencer, July

“Episode 6: Amplifying Prophetic Voices (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Barbara Morgan Gardner and Matt Richardson, July

“Episode 7: Asking Good Questions (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Jan Martin and Jared Halverson, July

“Episode 8: Actively Engaging Learners (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Tyler Griffin and Anthony Sweat, July

“Episode 9: Answering Difficult Questions (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Jenet Erickson and Brian Mead, August

“Episode 10: Teaching the One (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Phil Allred and Camey Andersen, August

“Episode 11: Creating Relevance and Application (Y Religion Presents: Gospel Teaching),” Susan Porter and Scott Esplin, August

“Episode 129: Justification by Faith (Stephan Taeger),” Stephan Taeger September

Dear Friends of BYU Religious Publications,

Over the past six months, remarkable things continue to happen within our three organizations devoted to producing outstanding scholarship on the gospel of Jesus Christ. I have been uplifted as I have read the books produced by the Religious Studies Center, reviewed the articles published in the pages of *BYU Studies* and the *Religious Educator*, and attended the events of the Maxwell Institute. Our hope and promise is that everything we produce is aligned with the mission of the Church and University. We want truth seeking souls to search out our offerings and be edified by what they find within our pages and programming.

Increasingly, we are making our content available through digital offerings. Since the beginning of this year, the Maxwell Institute, for example, has been featuring classic addresses by their namesake, Elder Neal A. Maxwell, on a bimonthly basis on their website. Click on the QR code in this newsletter to listen to the late Apostle’s landmark addresses, including “Notwithstanding My Weakness,” “Joseph Smith: A Choice Seer,” and “Meek and Lowly.” The Maxwell Institute’s blog is another source of thoughtful and faithful musings by scholars committed to bringing together the mind and the heart, as encouraged in the revelations of the Restoration.

BYU Studies, the university’s premier interdisciplinary journal, has contributed three issues so far this year. Working with their academic authors, the editorial team has address timely topics, including the wonder of scripture, the early development of Church administration, interfaith engagement, the Joseph Smith Papers project, faith and science, and the Book of Mormon. After seven years of wonderful service as editor in chief of *BYU Studies*, Steve Harper completed his leadership term this summer. His successor, Justin Dyer, is a respected sociologist and faculty member in Church history and doctrine. The *BYU New Testament Commentary* also released *Paul’s Epistles to the Thesalonians* earlier this year.

The Religious Studies Center continues to help produce and make available the *Y Religion* podcast with our partners in Religious Education here at BYU. Over the past year, inspiring religious educators like Anthony Sweat, Matthew Richardson, Gaye Strathearn, Jan Martin, and Tyler Griffin have reflected on their own published gospel scholarship and shared their witnesses of the Savior and His gospel. Listeners are encouraged to hear these faith-promoting voices as they commute, hike, cook, and relax in their daily lives. Each time I finish listening to one of these podcasts, I feel

edified and more committed to consecrating my own scholarship to the Kingdom.

Lastly, I want to highlight the outstanding scholarship printed within the pages of the *Religious Educator*, which is published by the amazing team at the Religious Studies Center. Each year they produce three issues, including the proceedings of the annual Church Educational System Religious Educators Conference held each June at BYU. Two issues have already been published this year, which feature articles on the atonement of Jesus Christ, teaching and artificial intelligence, Seminary life preparation lessons, innovating Institute, finding peace, Apostle David W. Patten, visions of salvation, and so much more.

All of this content can be accessed through the QR codes sprinkled throughout this newsletter. I invite you to take some time and browse the multitude of books, articles, blogs, podcasts, event recordings, and addresses featured above. You too will be educated and enlightened by the scholarly contributions of these contributors from across the Church and the Church Educational System.

Reid L. Neilson
Assistant Academic Vice President
BYU Religious Publications