

**Tracing Ancient Threads in the Book of Moses
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**“Strong Like Unto Moses”: The Case for Ancient Roots in the Book of Moses
Based on Book of Mormon Usage of Related Content Apparently from the Brass
Plates**

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Abstract: Over 30 years ago, Noel Reynolds analyzed matching phrases in the Book of Moses and Book of Mormon that are not directly found in the Bible, and proposed a possible connection between the Book of Moses and material on the brass plates that may have influenced some Book of Mormon authors. Reynolds’s work, “The Brass Plates Version of the Book of Moses,” helped explain further recent discoveries of relationships between the Book of Moses and Book of Mormon that arose in Jeff Lindsay’s study of the Book of Mormon regarding its account of Lehi’s Trail, and then again in Lindsay’s exploration of the Book of Mormon’s intriguing use of the ancient theme of rising from the dust. Those additional finds and further connections presented here strengthen the original case Reynolds made for ancient roots in the Book of Moses, roots that may extend to the brass plates and then on to the Book of Mormon. Such connections might be dismissed by asserting that Joseph merely drew upon the Book of Mormon when drafting the Book of Moses, but that view overlooks the significant evidence that the direction of dependence is the other way around. In light of the combined evidence now available, it is time to reconsider Reynolds’s original proposal and recognize the possibility that the Book of Moses is more deeply rooted in antiquity than many have recognized in the past.

Introduction: The Strength of Moses

Many advances have been made in recent decades toward better appreciating the nature of the Book of Moses as more than just Joseph Smith’s reworking of Genesis based upon his personal views, his nineteenth-century environment, and “prophetic imagination.” These advances include:

- glimpses into apparent ancient wordplays that are still detectable behind the English translation,¹ including a wordplay on the name of Moses that could not have been fabricated based on scholarship in Joseph’s day²;

¹ Matthew L. Bowen, “‘And They Shall Be Had Again’: Onomastic Allusions to Joseph in Moses 1:41 in View of the So-called Canon Formula,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 32 (2019): 297–304; <https://www.mormoninterpreter.com/and-they-shall-be-had-again-onomastic-allusions-to-joseph-in-moses-141-in-view-of-the-so-called-canon-formula/>.

² Nathan J. Arp, “Joseph Knew First: Moses, the Egyptian Son,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 32 (2019): 189–90; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/joseph-knew-first-moses-the-egyptian-son/>.

- surprising parallels to ancient records associated with Enoch, even including specific names such as Mahujah, that Joseph clearly could not have had access to or, in some cases, most likely did not have access to;³ and
- evidence from the tools of biblical and literary criticism that the text of Moses 1 has the characteristics and content of an ancient religious document, including artfully crafted chiasmus and other ancient Near Eastern literary tools such as a Prophetic Lawsuit.⁴

Nevertheless, a naturalistic view of the Book of Moses as well as the Book of Abraham is often touted, even by some faithful members of the Church, without adequate attention to the possibility of other explanations for the text. Here we propose that an additional witness for the origins of the Book of Moses may be found in an unexpected source, the Book of Mormon.

Several years ago, while preparing a rebuttal to an LDS scholar who claimed that the Book of Mormon account of Lehi's trail was implausible and even impossible,⁵ Jeff Lindsay noted a curious reference to Moses in 1 Nephi 4:2, which was cited by the complaining scholar as evidence that the Book of Mormon is anachronistic for speaking of Moses and the Exodus as if the Exodus account were known in Nephi's day.⁶ While there is excellent evidence for

³ Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle, "Could Joseph Smith Have Drawn on Ancient Manuscripts When He Translated the Story of Enoch?: Recent Updates on a Persistent Question," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 33 (2019): 305–374; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/could-joseph-smith-have-drawn-on-ancient-manuscripts-when-he-translated-the-story-of-enoch-recent-updates-on-a-persistent-question/>.

⁴ Mark J. Johnson, "The Lost Prologue: Reading Moses Chapter One as an Ancient Text," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 36 (2020): 145–186; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/the-lost-prologue-reading-moses-chapter-one-as-an-ancient-text/>. For further literary tools in Moses, see Mark J. Johnson, "Scriptures Through the Jeweler's Lens," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 36 (2020): 85–108; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/scriptures-through-the-jewelers-lens/>.

⁵ The rebuttal was published in Jeff Lindsay, "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Map: Part 1 of 2," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 19 (2016): 153–239; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/joseph-and-the-amazing-technicolor-dream-map-part-1-of-2/>.

⁶ Jeff Lindsay, "'Arise from the Dust': Insights from Dust-Related Themes in the Book of Mormon (Part 1: Tracks from the Book of Moses)," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 22 (2016): 179–232; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/arise-from-the-dust-insights-from-dust-related-themes-in-the-book-of-mormon-part-1-tracks-from-the-book-of-moses/>.

ancient roots of the Exodus account, a significant puzzle remained after dealing with the objection: what was Nephi referring to when he described Moses as strong?

Therefore let us go up. **Let us be strong like unto Moses**, for he truly spake unto the waters of the Red Sea and they divided hither and thither, and our fathers came through out of captivity on dry ground, and the armies of Pharaoh did follow and were drowned in the waters of the Red Sea. (1 Nephi 4:2; emphasis added).⁷

Nephi seems to be making an allusion to a text or tradition about the strength of Moses that would be readily recognized by his brethren, but nothing from the Old Testament directly supported the use of that specific term for Moses. A search in the KJV for the words *strength* or *strong* associated with Moses shows that the Pharaoh was strong (would use a “strong hand” in Exodus 6:1), that Joshua was commissioned to be strong (Deuteronomy 31:7, 23; Joshua 1:6–7), that the sea was strong (Exodus 14:27) as well as the wind (Exodus 10:19), and that the Lord would lead Moses “with a strong hand” (Exodus 13:9, cf. Deuteronomy 7:18–19) — but nothing about Moses being strong.

In fact, Moses was getting on in years, and in Exodus 17 the aging man needed the physical support of two other men to hold his staff up in the air during a battle. It is difficult to picture him as physically strong as the Exodus begins, so where did Nephi come up with the concept of Moses being strong? Further searching at this point serendipitously led to Noel Reynolds’s 1990 article, “The Brass Plates of Genesis,”⁸ recently reprinted in *The Interpreter*,⁹ which outlined results from an initial study on the intertextuality between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses that defied what one might expect. Since the Book of Mormon came first, if there is a relationship in the language or themes of the two books, it would be most natural to expect the Book of Mormon to have served as a source of language and themes that the Book of Moses draws upon. However, Reynolds found surprising evidence that the opposite has occurred: the Book of Mormon in many cases appears to draw upon language and themes in the Book of Moses, and sometimes with indications that the flow is one way, from the Book of Moses to the Book of Mormon, and not the other way around. Reynolds proposed that some ancient text with some similarities to our modern Book of Moses may have been on the brass plates and that the brass plates version of

⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations from the Book of Mormon are taken from the Yale critical text, including punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. See Royal Skousen (editor), *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, Yale University Press, 2009. Key terminology is occasionally emphasized with italics.

⁸ Noel B. Reynolds, “The Brass Plates Version of Genesis,” in *By Study and Also by Faith: Essays in Honor of Hugh W. Nibley on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday, 27 March 1990*, eds. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Provo, UT and Salt Lake City: FARMS and Deseret Book, 1990), II: 136–73.

⁹ Noel B. Reynolds, “The Brass Plates Version of Genesis,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 34 (2020): 63–96; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/the-brass-plates-version-of-genesis/>.

Genesis or something like the Book of Moses may have extensively influenced the Book of Mormon.

Reynolds's proposal appears to offer some promising ore to mine, but seems to have received inadequate attention. Recently and apparently independently, David Calabro in a discussion of the Garden of Eden themes in the Lehi's dream observed that Lehi in 2 Nephi 2:17–18 may have been drawing upon language from Moses 4:4 where the works of Satan are described, consistent with Reynolds's earlier proposal.¹⁰ But in general, few seem to have recognized that a text related to the Book of Moses may have been on the brass plates, influencing numerous Book of Mormon passages.

Discovering Reynolds's original study motivated a further look at the Book of Mormon in light of the possibility that the Book of Moses or something like it may have been a possible source available on the brass plates, though the specific topics of interest were not discussed in Reynolds's original work.

Two references to Moses receiving *strength* from the Lord were found in Moses 1:20–21. Then came a surprise in Moses 1:25: “And calling upon the name of God, he beheld his glory again, for it was upon him; and he heard a voice, saying: Blessed art thou, Moses, for I, the Almighty, have chosen thee, and *thou shalt be made stronger than many waters*; for they shall obey thy command as if thou wert God” (emphasis added).

Moses, who had received strength from the Lord, would later be made even stronger than the many waters that he would cross. Nephi had been making an allusion to another source that taught something about the strength of Moses.

In a recent paper, Mark V. Johnson observed that the three references in Moses 1 to strength involving Moses describe a three-tiered structure “for personal strength and spirituality” in which strength is described in patterns reminiscent of sacred geography, each tier bringing Moses closer to God.¹¹ The first instance depicts Moses having “natural strength like unto man,” which was inadequate to cope with Satan's fury. In fear, Moses called upon God for added strength, allowing him to gain victory over Satan. Next, Moses is promised additional strength which would be greater than many waters. “This would endow Moses with powers to be in similitude of YHWH, to divide the waters from the waters (similar to Genesis 1:6) at the shores of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21).” Johnson sees the treatment of the strength of Moses as one of many evidences of ancient perspectives woven into the text of Moses 1. In light of Johnson's analysis, if something like Moses 1 was on the brass plates as a prologue to Genesis, to Nephite students of the brass plates, the reference to the strength of Moses might be seen as more than just a random tidbit but as part of a carefully developed

¹⁰ David Calabro, “Lehi's Dream and the Garden of Eden,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 26 (2017): 269–296; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/lehis-dream-and-the-garden-of-eden/>.

¹¹ Mark J. Johnson, “The Lost Prologue,” 179–180.

literary tool related to important themes such as the commissioning of prophets and becoming more like God through serving Him. If so, the concept of the strength of Moses may easily have been prominent enough to require no explanation when Nephi made an allusion to it. If something like the Book of Moses were on the brass plates, it could provide a source for Nephi's allusion. That source explains the concept of the strength of Moses, while the Book of Mormon merely and briefly refers to it. The direction of transmission most logically would be from that hypothetical source to the Book of Mormon.

If the strength of Moses serves as another example of connections between the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon beyond those already recognized by Reynolds, might there be more? Through collaboration that began after that tentative discovery, we now offer an update that may help encourage others to reconsider how they approach the Book of Moses.

In exploring intertextuality between two revealed texts, there is certainly the possibility that some parallels may simply reflect Joseph's preference for wording in describing common themes and concepts. Indeed, it is possible that some of the parallels discussed below, especially when dealing with relatively common concepts, may be a reflection of Joseph's choice in wording, particularly if the method of receiving revelation about a text involved using his own words to express revealed impressions or ideas, as has often been proposed. However, there is increasing evidence that at least for the Book of Mormon, his translation method involved a good deal of "tight control" in which specific wording may have been provided through revelation, as opposed to general ideas being given that Joseph then expressed with his own words.¹² In light of that evidence, we will favor the hypothesis that the wording of the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses may frequently transcend Joseph's vernacular. It is possible, of course, that tight control occurred for the dictation of the Book of Mormon but not for the Book of Moses, allowing Joseph to use his own words and perhaps to draw upon language he had picked up from the Book of Mormon translation. For relatively general concepts, that possibility may be considered, but may not account for the many unique or unusual elements considered below.

A Note on the Documents of the Book of Moses

The Book of Moses passages discussed herein come from the current LDS printing of the Pearl of Great Price. The Book of Moses has a complex history with multiple documents involved, some of which had multiple corrections made at various times, as discussed by Kent P. Jackson in *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*.¹³ Jackson notes that Joseph Smith's

¹² Royal Skousen, "How Joseph Smith Translated the Book of Mormon," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 7/1 (1998): 22–31;

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1186&context=jbm> and Stanford Carmack, "Joseph Smith Read the Words," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 18 (2016): 41–64;

<https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/joseph-smith-read-the-words/>.

¹³ Kent P. Jackson, "History of the Book of Moses," in *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center,

Genesis translation began on a manuscript known as Old Testament Manuscript 1 (OT1), in which the Book of Moses is found on the first twenty-one pages written by four different scribes from Joseph's dictation. This was later copied by John Whitmer into a new document, now known as Old Testament Manuscript 2 (OT2), with many changes in wording, including many simple errors, introduced by Whitmer. This document is available as "Old Testament Revision 2" T the Joseph Smith Papers Website, the first 27 pages of which contain the what is the Book of Moses.¹⁴ Joseph would later come back to the previously dictated text of the Book of Moses and make further changes and corrections, working with OT2 rather than OT1. It is likely that the changes to OT2 were made by the fall of 1833.¹⁵ However, what we have today as the canonized Book of Moses is largely based on the 1867 Committee Manuscript (CM) prepared by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, which employed both OT1 and OT2. However, its editor, Joseph Smith III, removed many of the corrections and additions made by Joseph Smith to OT1. "The consequence was that his editing reverted many OT2 readings back to those found in OT1, thereby overruling much of his father's work on the text," especially in chapters 1 and 7.¹⁶ This issue in general does not appear to significantly affect the examples discussed in this paper. Relevant verses with noteworthy differences relative to OT2 will be noted below. A third manuscript, OT3, was a copy of OT1 made by John Whitmer that became his private possession, not a text used in any Church publications.¹⁷

A Review of Key Findings from Reynolds's Original Work

Reynolds's original paper explored relationships between key phrases and concepts occurring in the Book of Moses with both the Book of Mormon and the King James Bible. He found dramatic evidence that multiple elements in the Book of Moses showed up prominently in the Nephite record while being absent from the Bible. Further, he found evidence on multiple fronts indicating the direction

Brigham Young University, 2005), 1–52; <https://rsc.byu.edu/archived/book-moses-and-joseph-smith-translation-manuscripts/history-book-moses>.

¹⁴ "Old Testament Revision 2," Joseph Smith Papers Project, JosephSmithPapers.org, <https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/old-testament-revision-2/>. The document was originally published in Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 2004), 583–851; with chapter 1 online at <https://rsc.byu.edu/book-moses-joseph-smith-translation-manuscripts/moses-1> and other chapters at the same URL but differing in the final digit, such as .../moses-2 for chapter 2, etc.

¹⁵ Jackson, "History of the Book of Moses," section "Old Testament Manuscript 2."

¹⁶ Jackson, "History of the Book of Moses," section "The 1866–67 RLDS Committee Manuscript."

¹⁷ Kent P. Jackson and Scott H. Faulring, "Old Testament Manuscript 3: An Early Transcript of the Book of Moses," *Mormon Historical Studies*, 5/2 (Fall 2004): 113–144; http://mormonhistoricsites.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/MHS_FALL-2004_08-OT_Manuscript3.pdf.

of dependency was not from the Book of Mormon to the Book of Moses, but vice versa.

Criteria for dependency included:

1. The greater the number of significant terms repeated in parallel phrasings in two texts, the less likely they are to be independent.
2. The more precise the similarities between parallel phrasings in two texts, the less likely they are to be independent.
3. The more deliberately shaped the repetition in parallel phrasings in two texts, the less likely they are to be independent.
4. The more similar the contexts in which parallel phrasings occur, the less likely they are to be independent.
5. Author awareness of a brass plates source reduces the likelihood of independence.
6. The more distinctive the terminology repeated in parallel phrasings in two texts, the less likely they are to be independent.
7. Presence of weak or strong versions of the parallel terminology in the New Testament, and even more so, in the Old Testament, increases the possibility that the book of Moses and Book of Mormon passages are independent. Although clear Old Testament parallels do not prove independence, their existence was considered sufficient reason to drop the occurrence altogether as evidence of dependence.

By selecting the highest scores for dependence, Reynolds identified a group of parallels between the two texts, that are highly persuasive on the basis of criteria ordinarily used by scholars evaluating possible sources of texts.

A first group of eleven Book of Mormon passages (Group 1 in Table 1 below) provided strong parallels with the Book of Moses materials (the Book of Moses itself and the related material in the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible). This first group is distinguished from a second group (Group 2 in Table 1) in that none of these parallels finds expression in the Bible (with the noted exception of Moses 6:52 being found in Acts 4:12).

Table 1. Summary of Reynolds’s Concepts in the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon

Group 1: Concepts not directly found together in the KJV Bible			
No.	Concept	Book of Moses	Book of Mormon
1	transgression-fall, fall-death	Moses 6:59	2 Nephi 9:6
2	order-days-years-eternity	Moses 6:67	Alma 13:7
3	Lord-from all eternity-to	Moses 7:29	Mosiah 3:5; Mosiah 8:18
4	God-gave-man-agency	Moses 7:32	2 Nephi 2:16
5	Lord’s Spirit-withdraws-from-man	Moses 1:15	Alma 34:35; Helaman 4:24, 6:35, 13:8, Mosiah 2:36

6	children-whole-from foundation	Moses 6:54	Moroni 8:8, 12
7	only name-given-salvation*	Moses 6:52	Mosiah 3:17
8	devil-father-of all lies	Moses 4:4	2 Nephi 2:18; Ether 8:25; 2 Nephi 9:9
9	devil-lead-captive-his will	Moses 4:4	2 Nephi 2:27; Alma 12:11, 40:13;
10	devil-deceive-blind-lead	Moses 4:4	3 Nephi 2:2
11	lies-lead-will-deceive-eyes	Moses 4:4	1 Nephi 16:38
Group 2: : Concepts that also have KJV connections			
	Concept	Book of Moses	Book of Mormon
12	earth-groans; rocks-rend	Moses 7:56	1 Nephi 12:4, 19:12; 3 Nephi 10:9
13	plan of salvation	Moses 6:62	Jarom 1:2; Alma 24:14, 34:16, 42:5;
14	eternal life	Moses 1:39	2 Nephi 2:27,28, 10:23, 31:18,20; Jacob 6:11; Enos 1:3; Mosiah 5:15,23-25, 18:9,13, 26:20, 28:7; Alma 1:4, 5:28, 7:16, 11:40, 13:29, 22:15; Helaman 5:8; 3 Nephi 9:14, 15:9; Moroni 9:25
15	unclean-dwell-presence-God	Moses 6:57	1 Nephi 10:21, 15:34; Alma 7:21
16	call on-all men-to repent	Moses 6:23	2 Nephi 2:21; Alma 12:33; 3 Nephi 11:32; Moroni 7:31
17	nowise-inherit-kingdom of God	Moses 6:57	Mosiah 27:26; Alma 5:51, 9:12, 39:9; 3 Nephi 11:38
18	things-temporal-spiritual	Moses 6:63	1 Nephi 15:32, 22:3; 2 Nephi 9:11-12; Mosiah 2:41; Alma 7:23, 12:16, 37:43; Helaman 14:16
19	people-dwell-in righteousness	Moses 7:16	1 Nephi 22:26
20	mine Only Begotten Son	Moses 6:52 (cf. Moses 1:33)	Jacob 4:5, 11; Alma 12:33
21	works of darkness	Moses 5:55	2 Nephi 25:2, 26:10,22, 9:9, 10:15; Alma 37:21,23, 45:12; Helaman 6:28,30, 8:4, 10:3; Mormon 8:27
22	secret combination(s)	Moses 5:51	2 Nephi 26:22; Alma 37:30,31; Helaman

			2:8, 3:23, 6:38; 3 Nephi 4:29, 5:6, 7:6,9, 9:9; 4 Nephi 1:42; Mormon 8:27, Ether 8:18,19,22,24,27, 9:1, 11:15, 13:18, 14:8,10
23	wars and bloodshed	Moses 6:15	Jacob 7:24; Omni 1:3,24; Alma 35:15, 62:35,39; Mosiah 29:36, Alma 45:11, Alma 60:16, Helaman 6:17, Mormon 8:8, Ether 14:21
24	shut out-from presence-God	Moses 6:49	2 Nephi 9:9
25	murder-get gain	Moses 5:31	Helaman 2:8, 7:21; Ether 8:16
26	seeking for power	Moses 6:15	Alma 46:4
27	carnal, sensual, devilish	Moses 5:13	Mosiah 16:3; Alma 41:13, 42:10
28	hearts-wax-hard	Moses 6:27	Alma 35:15
29	lifted up-imagination-his heart	Moses 8:22	Alma 1:6
30	natural man	Moses 1:14	Mosiah 3:19; Alma 26:21
31	Omner	Moses 7:9	Mosiah 27:34
32	Shum	Moses 7:5	Alma 11:5
33	and thus-it was (is)-Amen	Moses 5:59	1 Nephi 9:6, 14:30, 22:31; Alma 13:9; Helaman 12:26

*This Group 2 item is listed here because it is linked to the preceding item in the text.

While these concepts are explained in detail in Reynolds’s original publication, we’ll note a few highlights here. Moses 4:4 appears to be an especially important connection, where multiple details in the description of Satan and his *modus operandi* appear to have influenced the Book of Mormon:

One sentence from Moses seems to have spawned a whole family of formulaic references in the Book of Mormon: “And he became Satan, yea, even *the devil, the father of all lies*, to deceive and to blind men, and to *lead them captive at his will*, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice” (Moses 4:4). This language is echoed precisely by both Lehi and Moroni, who, when mentioning the devil, add the stock qualification: “which is *the father of all lies*” (cf. 2 Nephi 2:18; Ether 8:25), while Jacob says the same thing in similar terms (2 Nephi 9:9). Incidentally, the descriptive term *devil*, which is used frequently to refer to Satan in both Moses and the Book of Mormon, does not occur at all in the Old Testament. New Testament occurrences do not reflect this context.

The Book of Mormon sometimes separates and sometimes combines the elements of this description of the devil from Moses and portrays Satan as one deliberately [seeking to “*deceive* the hearts of the people” and to “*blind their eyes*”] that he might “*lead them away*” (3 Nephi 2:2). Particularly striking is the repeated statement that the devil *will lead* those who do not hearken to the Lord’s voice “*captive at his will*” (Moses 4:4). In Alma we find that those who harden their hearts will receive “the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are *taken captive by the devil*, and *led by his will* down to destruction” (Alma 12:11). Much later, Alma invokes the same phrasing to warn his son Corianton of the plight of the wicked who, “because of their own iniquity,” are “*led captive by the will of the devil*” (Alma 40:13). In the passage discussed above, Lehi taught his son Jacob that men “are free to choose liberty and eternal life . . . or to choose *captivity* and death according to the *captivity and power of the devil*, for he seeketh that all men might be miserable” (2 Nephi 2:27).

A remarkable passage in the first part of the Book of Mormon pulls all these book of Moses themes about Satan together — to describe someone else. The implication is unmistakable when Laman characterizes his brother Nephi as one who *lies* and who *deceives our eyes*, thinking to *lead us away* for the purpose of making himself “*a king and a ruler over us*, that he may do with us *according to his will and pleasure*” (1 Nephi 16:38). Laman insinuates that Nephi, who chastises his wayward brothers, is himself like the devil. And resistance against him is not only righteous, but required. This account has the added complexity that it is a speech of Laman, who is quoted here in a record written by the very brother he attacks. If we accept the possibility that this text is dependent on a passage from an ancient source related to the Book of Moses, we then recognize a major new dimension of meaning, not only in Laman’s speech, but in Nephi’s decision to preserve the speech, thus showing his descendants, and any other readers familiar with the Moses text, the full nature of the confrontation between the brothers, as well as the injustice of the attacks he suffered. The full irony is revealed when we reflect on the facts reported in Nephi’s record and realize that Laman’s false accusation against Nephi is an accurate self-description.¹⁸

Laman’s complaint about Nephi becomes meaningful and ironic when one realizes that he may be referring to a specific scriptural depiction of Satan that is not found in the Old Testament, but in the Book of Moses, as if that description were in the brass plates. In this instance, the relationship between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses shows a one-way nature.

¹⁸ Reynolds, “The Brass Plates Version of Genesis,” 142.

The speech from Laman illustrates some of the reasons Reynolds gives for the one-way relationship between the two books:

[I]t is clearly Moses that provides the unity and coherence to a host of scattered Book of Mormon references. It is the story of creation and subsequent events that supplies meaning to Book of Mormon language connecting (1) the transgression, fall, and death; (2) explaining the origins of human agency; (3) describing the character and *modus operandi* of Satan; (4) explaining the origins and character of secret combinations and the works of darkness — to mention only a few of the most obvious examples. The Book of Mormon is the derivative document. It shows a number of different authors borrowing from a common source as suited their particular needs — Lehi, Nephi, Benjamin, and Alma all used it frequently, drawing on its context to give added meaning to their own writings.

Perhaps most significantly, we have at hand a control document against which to check this hypothesis. A few years after receiving Moses, Joseph Smith translated an Abrahamic text. In spite of the fact that this new document contained versions of some of the same chapters of Genesis that are paralleled in the book of Moses, and in spite of the fact that the Book of Mormon has a large number of direct references to the Abraham, the person, detailed textual comparison demonstrates that this second document does not feature any of the phrases and concepts that have been reported above linking Moses to the Book of Mormon textual tradition. Nor does the distinctive, non-Old Testament phraseology of the book of Abraham show up in the Book of Mormon. The logic that would lead skeptics to conclude that these common concepts and expressions provide evidence that Joseph Smith wrote the Book of Mormon and the book of Moses runs aground on Abraham, as the skeptical hypothesis would seem to require a similar pattern there. But such a pattern is not even faintly detectable.

It is also impressive that most of the influence from the book of Moses in the Book of Mormon shows up early in the small plates and the writings of the first generation of Book of Mormon prophets — significantly, those who had custody and long-term, firsthand access to the brass plates. Many of the later passages that use book of Moses terminology and concepts tend to repeat earlier Nephite adaptations of the original materials.¹⁹

While Group 2 has connections to the KJV that sometimes could account for the intertextuality, in many cases what the KJV offers is less complete than the Book of Moses. For example, Moses 6:49 tells us that Satan came among the children of men, tempting them to worship him, and thus men became “**carnal, sensual, and devilish**, and are shut out from the presence of God.” Moses 5:13 has Satan

¹⁹ Ibid., 146.

deceiving the children of men, with the result that “men began from that time forth to be **carnal, sensual, and devilish.**” Those three adjectives in the same order are found in Mosiah 16:3 and 42:10 (cf. Alma 41:13 with “carnal” and “devilish”). The Book of Mormon use of that phrase points to the same context as in the Book of Moses. The closest language in the KJV Bible has “earthly, sensual, devilish” in James 3:15.

Especially interesting are the related terms “works of darkness” (Moses 5:55) and “secret combinations” (Moses 5:51) used in the Book of Moses in the context of secret Satanic covenants. The term “works of darkness” has a much more generic flavor in Romans 13:12 and Ephesians 5:11, while the Book of Mormon is much more aligned with the sense in the Book of Mormon. Nephi¹, for example, warns in 2 Nephi 9:9 that Satan “stirreth up the children of men unto secret combinations of murder and all manner of secret **works of darkness.**” The term “secret combination” or even “combination” itself is not found in the KJV Bible, and perhaps could have been listed as a Group 1 entry. The Bible does use the term “conspiracy” many times, and while evil or murderous, those cases lack the overtly Satanic sense found in the Book of Mormon and Book of Moses. In fact, some of the Book of Mormon uses of these terms are compounded with additional phrases that further point to the Book of Moses as a possible source, further strengthening the case for a relationship.

The listing of “nowise-inherit-kingdom of God” involves Moses 6:57, which teaches “that all men, everywhere, must repent, or **they can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God,**” has close Biblical parallels in which we read that the wicked “shall not” or will not “inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10, 15: 50; Galatians 5:21; cf. Ephesians 5:5), but the full phrase “they can in no wise inherit the kingdom of God” occurs in Mosiah 27:26, while “can in no wise inherit the kingdom of God/heaven” is found in Alma 5:51, 9:12, 39:9; and 3 Nephi 11:38. The use of “no wise” may be a minor element, but it still suggests a closer affinity for the Book of Moses as a potential source.

The listing for “things-temporal-spiritual” refers to Moses 6:63, where the Lord draws a distinction between “*things which are temporal* and *things which are spiritual.*” Nephi¹ makes the same distinction in 1 Nephi 15:32 and 22:3 using the phrase “things both temporal and spiritual.” King Benjamin later says that those who keep the commandments “are blessed in all things, *both* temporal and spiritual” (Mosiah 2:41). Alma² encouraged people to pray for what they needed, “things ... both spiritual and temporal” (Alma 7:23). He also distinguished between spiritual and temporal death (Alma 12:16), and between the temporal and spiritual things the Lord provides (Alma 37:43). The two classes of things and the two classes of death are both combined by Samuel the Lamanite in Helaman 14:16, which also invokes “cut off from the presence of the Lord” as found in Moses 6:49. The concept of spiritual things occurs in the New Testament, but is not paired with references to temporal things (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:10–14).

In reviewing the parallels listed above and others to be discussed, an interesting feature is the tendency for a few Book of Moses passages to be used in multiple

ways in the Book of Mormon, and for some Book of Mormon passages to cite multiple phrases from the Book of Moses. The multiple phrases of Moses 4:4 were mentioned above. As just discussed, Moses 6:49 not only has “carnal, sensual, and devilish,” but also has the phrase “shut out from the presence of God” that is found in 2 Nephi 9:9 (“shut out from the presence of our God”) in the related context of becoming subject to Satan. That verse also refers to “secret combinations” and “secret works of darkness” related to other Book of Moses phrases, as well as the Book of Mormon teaching about the misery of Satan, to be discussed below.

Reynolds discusses many more parallels. However, based on further exploration, it appears that his case may be stronger than initially realized.

Further Potential Relationships Between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses

Table 2 lists a variety of additional concepts found in the Book of Mormon that show relationships with the Book of Moses that are either not found in the KJV Bible or may be significantly stronger than possible KJV relationships.

Table 2. Additional Concepts in the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon

No.	Concept	Book of Moses	Book of Mormon
34	The strength of Moses	Moses 1:20–21,25	1 Nephi 4:2
35	Chains of darkness, chains of hell, chains of the devil	Moses 7:26,57	1 Nephi 1:13,23; 2 Nephi 9:45, 28:19,22, Alma 5:7,9,10, 12:6,11,17, 13:30, 26:14–15, 36:18
36	Veil of darkness	Moses 7:26,61	Alma 19:6 (cf. Ether 4:13)
37	Song of redeeming love/ everlasting joy, contrasted with chains of darkness/hell	Moses 7:53–57	Alma 5:7,9,26, 26:13–15, 36:18,22
38	The use of Satanic oaths and covenants in forming secret combinations	Moses 5:29, 49–52; 6:28–29	Alma 37:27,29; Helaman 6:21,25,26; 4 Nephi 1:42; Ether 8: 15, 16,20
39	The great antiquity of secret combinations and Satanic covenants	Moses 5:28–31, 49; 6:15	2 Nephi 26:22; Helaman 6:27; Ether 8:9, 9:26, 10:33
40	Cain’s involvement in a secret combination to keep Abel’s murder secret	Moses 5:29	Helaman 6:27
41	The persistence of Satan’s secret combination not only with Cain, but with other followers (with mechanisms for enforcement)	Moses 5:29, 49–52, 55; 6:16	Helaman 6: 27; Ether 8:20–26 (on the enforcement system, see Helaman 6:24)
42	Knowing/distinguishing brothers in secret Satanic covenants/combinations	Moses 5:51	Helaman 6:22
43	Shaking, trembling of heavens, earth, Satan, and the wicked /	Moses 1:21, 6:47–49, 7:41, 61	2 Nephi 1:13,23, 9:44–45, 28:19

	shaking off of Satan's chains, bands, and sin		
44	Misery (either for Satan or his followers)	Moses 7:37,41	2 Nephi 2:5,11,13,18,23, 27, 9:9,46; Mosiah 3:25; Alma 3:26, 9:11, 26:20, 40:15,17,21, 41:4, 42:1,26; Helaman 3:29, 5:12, 7:16, 12:26; Mormon 8:38
45	Misery and woe	Moses 6:48	2 Nephi 1:13; Alma 9:11; Helaman 5:12, 7:16
46	The infinite nature of God's love and the Atonement (Enoch's "heart swelled wide as eternity" and his "bowels yearned" in tasting the grief of human wickedness / Christ's "bowels of mercy" and infinite atonement)	Moses 7:28-41, particularly 41	Bowels of mercy: Mosiah 15:9; Alma 26: 37, 34:15 Infinite atonement: 2 Nephi 9:7; Alma 34:10,14
47	Rage and Satan's dominion over the hearts of men	Moses 6:15	1 Nephi 12:17, 13: 27,29, 14:7, 22:15,26, 30:18; Mosiah 3:6, Alma 8:9, 10:24,25, 12:11, 27:12; Helaman 6:21, 16:22,23; 3 Nephi 1:22, 2:2-3, 6:15-16, 11:29; 4 Nephi 28,31; Ether 8:15-26, 15:19; Moroni 9:3-4
48	Administering death	Moses 6:15	Alma 57:19; cf. Alma 47:18, 55:30,32
49	Word returning "void," in context of the Garden of Eden and the Fall	Moses 4:30	Alma 12:22-23,26, 42:2-5
50	"Esteeming" scripture as a thing of "naught"	Moses 1:40-41	1 Nephi 19:6-9; 2 Nephi 3:2-3
51	"Raising up" a prophet to restore ancient scripture	Moses 1:41	2 Nephi 3: 6,7,12, 24
52	The workmanship of God's hands	Moses 1:4; 7: 32, 36, 37, 40	Jacob 4:9
53	(Men) ordained ... after the order (of the Son of God or of God)	Moses 8:19 (cf. 6:67-68)	2 Nephi 6:2; Alma 13:1,2 (cf. Alma 4:20, 5:44, 6:1, 13: 6-10,14, 43:2, 49:30; Helaman 8:18)
54	Natural (man, eye, frame) vs. spiritual/spirit/spirits	Moses 1:10,11 (cf. v. 14), 3:5,9, 6:36	Mosiah 3:19; Alma 19:6, 26:21, 41:4 (cf. 42:9-10)
55	The roles of a seer	Moses 6:35-36; also Moses 6 and 7 generally	Mosiah 8:13-17, 28:10-16; Alma 37:22-26
56	Perished in their sins	Moses 7:1	Mosiah 15:26 (cf. Mosiah 13:28)
57	Sins/cursing answered upon	Moses 6:54, 7:37	2 Nephi 4:6; Jacob 1:19,

	the heads of parents/children		3:10; Mosiah 29:30-31 (cf. 1 Nephi 22:13, Alma 60:10; Mormon 8:40)
58	The glory of God and its relationship to eternal life	Moses 1:39; Moses 6:59, 61	2 Nephi 1:25; Jacob 4:4,11, 5:54; Alma 14:11, 22:14, 29:9, 36:28; Helaman 5:44; Mormon 9:25
59	Weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth (all 3)	Moses 1:22	Mosiah 16:2; Alma 40:13
60	Satan laughs & his angels rejoice	Moses 7:26	3 Nephi 9:2
61	The God/Lord who weeps/grieves for those who are lost	Moses 7:28-37	Jacob 5:7,11,13,32,46,47,51,66
62	"All things" bear witness of the Creator	Moses 6:63	Alma 30:41,44; Helaman 8:23-24;
63	Power, wisdom, mercy, and justice	Moses 6:61-62	2 Nephi 2:12, 11:5; Mosiah 5:15; Jacob 4:10
64	Commanding the Earth and the power of the word	Moses 7:13	1 Nephi 17:29; 2 Nephi 1:26; Jacob 4:6,9; Mosiah 1:17; Alma 17:4, 17, 26:13, 31:5, 53:10
65	Spreading abominations and works (of darkness)	Moses 5:52	Helaman 6:28 (cf. Ether 8:19-22)
66	"Powers of heaven" and heavenly ascent and descent	Moses 7:27	3 Nephi 20:22, 28:7-8
67	Salvation or damnation by "a firm decree"	Moses 5:15 (cf. 6:29-30)	Alma 9:24, 29:4
68	Angels bearing testimony	Moses 7:27	Moroni 7:31
69	Residue of men/the people + angels bearing testimony	Moses 7:27-28 (cf. vv. 20, 22)	Moroni 7:31-32
70	Prepared from the foundation of the world	Moses 5:57	1 Nephi 10:18; Mosiah 4:6-7, 15:19, 18:13; Alma 12:30, 18:39, 22:13, 42:26; Ether 3:14
71	Gathered from the four quarters of the earth	Moses 7:62	1 Nephi 19:16, 22:25; 3 Nephi 5:24, 26, 16:5; Ether 13:11
72	Counsel + "ye yourselves"	Moses 6:43	Jacob 4:10
73	Fearful looking for the fiery indignation of the wrath of god upon them	Moses 7:1 (cf. 7:34)	Alma 40:14
74	Numerous upon ... the face of the land	6:15	Jarom 6, Mosiah 27:6, Ether 7:11 (cf. Jarom 8; Alma 16:16; Helaman 6:28, 11:32, 16:22-23)
75	Record + baptism by fire and the Holy Ghost	Moses 6:66	3 Nephi 11:35, 19:14
76	Caught up/away to an exceedingly high mountain	Moses 1:1	1 Nephi 11:1
77	Compound parallel 1: (A) the captivity of Satan, (B) the	(A) Moses 4:4, (B) Moses 1:39, (C)	1 Nephi 14:7

	concept of “eternal life,” (C) the combination of “temporal” and “spiritual,” describing God’s creation, (D) hardness of hearts, and (E) blindness	Moses 6:63, (D) Moses 6:15, 27, (E) Moses 4:4, 6:27	
78	Compound parallel 2: (A) Devil as father of lies, (B) shut out from the presence of God, and (C) secret combinations, (D) works of darkness, and (E) misery for the wicked	(A) Moses 4:4, (B) Moses 5:4, 41, 6:49, (C) Moses 5:51, (D) Moses 5:51, 55, and (E) Moses 7:37,41	2 Nephi 9:9
79	Compound parallel 3: (A) Satan’s fall and his angels, (B) plan of salvation / merciful plan of God, (C) temporal vs. spiritual, (D) clothed with glory/purity/robe of righteousness	(A) Moses 4:3–4, 7:26, (B) Moses 6:62, (C) Moses 6:63, (D) Moses 7:3	2 Nephi 9:6–14 (A) vv. 8–9, (B) vv. 6, 13, cf. v. 28, (C) vv. 10–12, (D) v. 14
80	Compound parallel 4: (A) Satan will “rage in the hearts” of men, (B) chains of hell/destruction, (C) Satan leading men into captivity	(A) Moses 6:15, (B) Moses 7:26,57, (C) Moses 4:4	2 Nephi 28:18–23
81	Compound parallel 5: (A) the workmanship of God’s hands and (B) counsel	(A)+(B): Moses 1:4, 7:32–40	Jacob 4:9–10
82	Compound parallel 6: (A) Creation of “all things” and (B) wisdom, power, justice, mercy	Moses 6:61	Mosiah 5:15 (cf. 4:9)
83	Compound parallel 7: (A) after the order (of the Son), (B) without beginning of days or end of years, (C) Only Begotten of the Father, (D) full of grace and truth, and (E) “thus it is. Amen.”	(A)+(B): Moses 6:67, (C)+(D): Moses 5:6 (cf. Moses 1:6, 32, 5:6 6:52, 7:11), (E): Moses 5:59	Alma 13:9
84	Compound parallel 8: (A) New Jerusalem, (B) gathered from four quarters of the earth, (C) cleansed through blood of the Lamb, and (D) fulfilled covenants	(A)+(B): Moses 7:62, (C): Moses 6:59, (D): Moses 8:2	Ether 13:10–11
85	Compound parallel 9: (A) call men to repentance, (B) fulfill covenants, (C) angels declare, (D) bear testimony	(A): Moses 6:23, (B) Moses 8:2, (C) Moses 5:58, (D) Moses 7:27, 62	Moroni 7:31
86	Compound parallel 10, Enoch and Samuel the Lamanite	Moses 6	Helaman 13–16
87–97	Weaker parallels to consider		

In exploring the Book of Mormon’s fascinating and frequent use of the ancient theme of “arising from the dust” and associated motifs, several further potential parallels to the Book of Moses were identified and are discussed below, except

for the previously considered “strength of Moses.” Building on the 33 parallels originally identified by Reynolds, the numbering of the additional parallels now being proposed begins with #34 for the “strength of Moses,” and the other cases considered below will be sequentially numbered.

#35, Satan’s Chains of Darkness

In Moses 7:26 Enoch sees Satan with “a great chain”: “And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.” A little later in Moses 7:57, we read of spirits in prison, held captive in “chains of darkness” until the judgment day (this follows the heavens being “veiled” in v. 56). Chains of darkness and Satan veiling the earth (perhaps with the chain of darkness) are striking images in Moses 7. In light of Reynolds’s original work, one might hope to find the imagery of chains of darkness and Satan’s veiling of the earth in darkness to be present in the Book of Mormon. Exploring that possibility initially led to disappointment as the term “chains of darkness” is not found in the Book of Mormon, but related references were uncovered that may be meaningful.

Of course, if there were a connection to chains of darkness, it might be helpful in exploring influences on Nephite writers but need not be significant in terms of evaluating possible origins of the Book of Moses, for the New Testament also mentions chains and the obvious link to captivity. Revelation 20:1 mentions a “great chain” associated with the bottomless pit, and “chains of darkness” are mentioned in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6, though possibly connected back to the Book of Enoch cited in Jude 14. *First Enoch*, published in 1912 from a text in the Ge’ez language, often called “Ethiopic,”²⁰ mentions great iron chains²¹ and has been supposed to be tied to the source of the passages from Peter and Jude,²² especially since Jude explicitly refers to an ancient Book of Enoch. Both Peter and Jude write of angels who sinned and are held in chains of darkness until the judgment day, aligning well with the discussion of Satan’s rebellion in heaven in the Book of Moses and also with Moses 7:57 and the spirits in prison in “chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day.”

In the KJV Old Testament, the connection between chains and darkness does not seem present, so if Nephi or others used a similar term, perhaps it was from a

²⁰ “1 (Ethiopic Apocalypse of) Enoch,” trans. E. Isaac, in James H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Apocalyptic Literature & Testaments* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1983) 1:5–90;

https://books.google.com/books?id=Z8cyt_SM7voC&pg=PA5. Also see *The Book of Enoch or First Enoch*, transl. by R.H. Charles (Escondido, CA: The Book Tree, 2000); <https://books.google.com/books?id=wQpjqn26o60C&pg=PA106>.

²¹ 1 Enoch, 53:4, 54:3–4, 69:28 in E. Isaac’s translation in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 1:37–38, 49. Further, 1 Enoch 56:1 at 39 speaks of iron nets in E. Isaac’s translation but “iron chains” in that of Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, 108 (see other mentions of chains at 105–106, 141).

²² Frederic Huidekoper, *Judaism at Rome: B.C. 76 to A.D. 140*, in *The Works of Frederic Huidekoper*, vol. 1, 7th ed. (New York: D. G. Francis, 1887), 483–484; <https://books.google.com/books?id=tFcJAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA484&lpg=PA483>.

source on the brass plates other than our current Old Testament. However, Psalm 107:10 could be relevant, considering the context of vv. 10–11. In the KJV this speaks of rebellious souls who “sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron.” But several other translations use “chains,” such as the NIV:

Some sat in darkness, in utter darkness, prisoners suffering in iron chains, because they rebelled against God’s commands and despised the plans of the Most High. (Psalm 107:9–10, NIV)

While the phrase *chains of darkness* does not occur in any single verse of the Book of Mormon, Lehi’s speech to his sons in 2 Nephi 1 may be relevant. In vs. 23, Lehi says, “Awake, my sons, put on the armor of righteousness, shake off the *chains* with which ye are bound, and come forth out of *obscurity* and arise from the dust. Here chains are associated with obscurity, a word that can mean darkness. The entry for obscurity in the 1828 dictionary of Noah Webster, for example, gives the first definition for obscurity as “Darkness; want of light.”²³

2 Nephi 1:23 ends an apparent chiasmus, as outlined in Donald R. Parry’s valuable *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon*.²⁴ Parry identifies a seven-step chiasmus covering vv. 13–23, with the outer verses strongly connected by the themes of arising and shaking off chains. Significantly, the obscurity or darkness linked to dust and chains in v. 23 is also parallel to “a deep sleep” in v. 13. There Lehi urges his sons to “awake, awake from a deep sleep—yea, even from the sleep of hell—and shake off the awful chains by which ye are bound.” “Sleep” and “hell” here are related to darkness and juxtaposed with chains.

Other sections of the Book of Mormon display related concepts. Further, based on Parry’s identification of poetic structures in the Book of Mormon, it appears that a majority of the references to chains occur in the form of chiasmus, with examples in 2 Nephi 1:13–23, 2 Nephi 9:44–46, 2 Nephi 28:16–20, Alma 5:7–9 and Alma 36. Metal chains, while apparently not part of life in the New World for Book of Mormon peoples, long remained a part of Book of Mormon poetry.

Alma 5:7–9, for example, is shown by Parry to be a five-step chiasmus, shown following Parry’s formatting but with the punctuation and wording from Skousen’s Yale edition (*The Earliest Text*)²⁵:

²³ Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, 2 vols. (New York: S. Converse, 1828), vol. 2 (unpaged); available at *Archive.org*, <https://archive.org/stream/americandictionary02websrich#page/196/mode/2up>. For the same results from an online search engine, see “1828 Edition of Webster’s *American Dictionary of the English Language*,” *Mschaffer.com*; <http://1828.mschaffer.com/d/search/word,obscurity>.

²⁴ Donald W. Parry, *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon: The Complete Text Reformatted* (Provo, UT: Neal A. Maxwell Institute, Brigham Young University, 2007), 59–60; <http://publications.mi.byu.edu/book/poetic-parallelisms-in-the-book-of-mormon-the-complete-text-reformatted/>.

²⁵ Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, 2009, p. 292.

7 Behold, he changed their hearts; yea, he awakened them out of a deep sleep, and they awoke unto God.

A Behold, they were in the midst of darkness; nevertheless

B their souls were illuminated by the light of the everlasting word.

C Yea, they were encircled about

D by the bands of death and the chains of hell,
and an everlasting destruction did await them.

8 E And now I ask of you my brethren: Were they destroyed?

E' Behold, I say unto you: Nay, they were not.

9 D' And again I ask: Was the bands of death broken? And the chains of hell

C' which encircled them about, were they loosed? I say unto you:

B' Yea, they were loosed. And their souls did expand, and they did sing redeeming love.

A' And I say unto you that they are saved.²⁶

The chiasmus begins with the phrase “they were in the midst of darkness” in Element A and then has both the “bands of death” and “chains of hell” in Elements D and D'. It is through loosing them that the contrast to being in darkness is obtained, namely, being saved in Element A'. Immediately prior to the reference to darkness, Alma² discusses the Nephites in the city of Nephi and says that they were in a “deep sleep,” so both sleep and darkness are associated with the “chains of hell.”

In considering the possible relationship between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses and disregarding the chronology of the two (i.e., being open to the possibility of a related ancient text on the brass plates predating the Book of Mormon), the vivid imagery of Satan with his terrible chains of darkness could be the logical source for the poetical uses of chains in the Book of Mormon, where the concept of Satan’s “chains of darkness” is more subtly present. This seems to be the case with many of the further examples considered below.

#36, The Veil of Darkness

As noted above, Moses 7:26 tells us that Satan’s great chain “veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness” and Moses 7:61 speaks of the “veil of darkness” that will cover the earth. A related concept occurs in Isaiah 25:7, which refers to the “veil that is spread over all nations” that, like the “covering cast over all people” in that verse, is a hindrance to the spiritual progress of humanity and will be destroyed by the Lord in the end. The veil may implicitly be a veil of darkness or bring darkness. 2 Corinthians 3:13–16 refers to the veil Moses put over his face and how the children of Israel were blinded and under the same veil that is now done away with Christ. Spiritual darkness can be said to be the implicit effect of that metaphorical veil.

²⁶ Parry, *Poetic Parallelisms in the Book of Mormon*, 233. Here the punctuation and several words have been adjusted to follow Skousen, *The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text*, 2009.

The concept of veiling with darkness or a dark veil is more explicit in Alma 19:6, where we read of the “**dark veil of unbelief** being cast away from [King Lamoni’s] mind.” Also related is Ether 4:13–15, where Moroni tells the House of Israel that when they rend “that **veil** of unbelief which doth cause you to remain in your awful state of wickedness and hardness of heart and **blindness** of mind,” then we will know that the Father has remembered to the covenant he made with their fathers. Here the veil directly causes blindness of mind.

#37, The Song of Redeeming Love Contrasted with the Chains of Hell

In the chiasmus of Alma 5:7–9 above, in Element B’, when the chains of hell are loosed, “their souls did expand, and they did sing redeeming love.”

The contrast between the chains of hell or darkness and singing songs of redeeming love or joy is found in Moses 7:53–57. In v. 53, the Lord tells Enoch that “whoso cometh in at the gate and climbeth up by me” (the arise/ascend theme²⁷) “shall come forth with **songs of everlasting joy**.” Enoch then asks when the Son of Man will come, and in vision is then shown the crucifixion of Christ (vv. 54–55), and the “heavens were veiled,” the earth groaned the rocks were rent²⁸ and then follows v. 57 which mentions spirits in prison “reserved in chains of darkness” until the judgment day. Shortly afterward, v. 61 describes the “veil of darkness” that will cover the earth.

Singing is a common occurrence in the Bible, of course, but perhaps not with this particular contrast. In Isaiah 51, following the call for the Lord’s arm to “awake, awake, put on strength” (v. 9), the redeemed of the Lord “come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head” (v.11). See also Isaiah 35:10.

An objection may be made to differences in wording between “sing redeeming love” in the Book of Mormon and “songs of everlasting joy” in the Book of Moses. Are these really related? In response, note that both expressions refer to singing as a result of the redemptive work of the Savior, in contrast to Satan’s captivity with the chains of hell. As for “song” vs. “sing,” one is of course a noun while the other is a verb, but as in many languages, the words for *sing* and *song* are closely related in Hebrew (שׁוּר is the root for the verb, Strong’s H7891, and for the noun, Strong’s H7892, typically used for “sing” and “song,” respectively, in the KJV²⁹).

²⁷ Lindsay, “Arise from the Dust,” Part 1 (2016).

²⁸ The rending of rocks and the groaning of earth in Moses 7:56 are themes also found in the Book of Mormon that are explored by Reynolds, “The Brass Plates Version of Genesis,” 149–150.

²⁹ See “Strong’s H7981, שׁוּר,” *Blue Letter Bible*, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=H7891&t=KJV> and “Strong’s H7982, שׁוּר,” *Blue Letter Bible*, <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=H7892&t=KJV>.

#38–42, Multiple Connections on the Existence, Nature, and History of Satanic Oaths and Covenants

The existence of secret Satanic covenants and their ancient history, including the involvement of Cain in one such murderous secret combination, is given in significant detail in Moses 5:28–32, 49–56 and also in Moses 6:15. Some of these concepts and details appear to be familiar to Book of Mormon writers, who not only use similar language such as “works of darkness” and “secret combinations,” as Reynolds has noted (see items 21 and 22 in Table 1), but also allude to their ancient history several times, and in so doing, share several details found in the Book of Moses account.

Helaman 6:21–31 for example, describes the operations of the secret combinations in Nephite society. Among the highlights, this passage:

- describes the existence and nature of the “secret oaths and covenants” (vv. 25, 26; cf. vs. 21) of the secret combination known as the Gaddianton³⁰ robbers;
- explains that their covenants and oaths were used to protect members in their murders and theft, allowing members to distinguish “brothers” within their murderous band (vv. 21–2);
- states that secret signs and words were used by those who had taken such covenants (vs. 22);
- reveals the existence of their own system justice based on “laws of their wickedness” to punish those who improperly revealed their secrets and crimes (vs. 24);
- indicates that they were “put into the heart of Gaddianton” by Satan (vs. 26),
- relates that it was Satan who plotted with Cain to encourage him to murder Abel (vs. 27); and
- observes that Satan continues carrying on such “works of darkness and secret murder” (vv. 29, 30) and hands down the plots, oaths, covenants, and “plans of awful wickedness” from generation to generation as he gets “hold upon the hearts of the children of men” (vs. 30).

This passage, along with others mentioned below, shows multiple unique connections with the Book of Moses that are not found in the Bible and go beyond the connections previously noted by Reynolds. These additional connections between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses include:

³⁰ “Gaddianton” follows the spelling used in the original manuscript of the Book of Mormon, as used and discussed in Skousen, *The Earliest Text*, p. 778, whereas the current printing of the Book of Mormon still has “Gadianton.” The double *d* is particularly interesting in light of the Hebrew word *gedud* (Strong’s 1416) meaning “band, bandit.” See “Gadianton”, *Book of Mormon Onomasticon*, last modified on 14 November 2015, <https://onoma.lib.byu.edu/index.php/GADIANTON>; citing John W. Welch and Kelly Ward, “Thieves and Robbers,” in John W. Welch, ed., *Reexploring the Book of Mormon: A Decade of New Research* (Provo, UT: FARMS; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1992), 248-49; <https://archive.bookofmormoncentral.org/node/219>.

#38, The use of Satanic oaths and covenants in forming secret combinations

Both the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses are explicit about the use of oaths and covenants to form the Satanic conspiracies described as “secret combinations” and “works of darkness.” Moses 5 describes the oath that Satan has Cain make (vs. 29), swearing by Cain’s throat and having others also swear by their lives to keep their murderous plot secret. His descendant, Lamech, likewise “entered into a *covenant with Satan*” (vs. 49) and later slays Irad, his great grandfather (vv. 49–50) “for the *oath’s sake*” (vs. 50). Not only Lamech, but also “all them that had *covenanted* with Satan” were cursed by the Lord (vs. 52). Later, when the Lord speaks to Enoch, He condemns the dark works of that era in which men “devised murder” (Moses 6:28) and ironically states that these wicked ones “by their *oaths* have brought upon themselves death” (Moses 6:29).

As noted above, Helaman 6:25 and 26 use the phrase “secret oaths and covenants” and Helaman 6:21 also mentions “their oaths and their covenants” as instrumental in the secret combination of the Gaddianton robbers.

That *oaths and covenants* were used in secret combinations is also made clear in Alma’s statement in Alma 37 to his son, Helaman, as he transfers stewardship of sacred records, including the account from the Jaredites with extensive details on their secret combinations. He warns Helaman to not to share those details, but to “retain all their *oaths* and their *covenants* and their agreements in their secret abominations; yea, and all their signs and their wonders ye shall retain from this people, that they know them not, lest peradventure they should fall into darkness also and be destroyed” (Alma 37:27.) “These secret plans of their *oaths* and their *covenants*” are again mentioned in vs. 29.

As the Nephites descend into wickedness, 4 Nephi 1:42 relates that “the wicked part of the people began again to build up the *secret oaths* and combinations of Gaddianton.” Finally, in describing the establishment of a deadly secret combination among the Jaredites, Mormon uses the term “oaths” in Ether 8: 15, 16, and 20.

Both the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses clearly teach that Satanic *oaths and covenants* are used to establish and maintain the murderous secret combinations that book texts warn against.

#39, The great antiquity of secret combinations and Satanic covenants

The Book of Moses teaches that Satan’s murderous secret combinations date back to Cain, and continued to be present at least into Enoch’s day. Cain, after being chastised by the Lord for his improper sacrifice, “loved Satan more than God” (Moses 5:28) and was approached by Satan with an offer to form a secret combination with others with a Satanic oath in order to be able to kill Abel without fear of being caught and to have Satan’s assistance (Moses 5:29–31). This combination is later continued by Lamech, who, like Cain, becomes “the mater of that great secret” that Satan had administered to Cain (Moses 5:49). Such murderous secret works would become widespread as Satan continued to have dominion over the hearts of men (Moses 6:15).

These ancient origins are consistent with Helaman 6:27, which dates secret combinations back to Cain.

2 Nephi 26:22 also refers to works of darkness and secret combinations founded by Satan and states that they were known “in times of old”:

And there are also **secret combinations, even as in times of old**, according to the combinations of the devil, for he is the founder of all these things—yea, the founder of murder and works of darkness—yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever.

Being known “in times of old” suggests these secret combinations were mentioned on the brass plates, though details of their covenants and signs may not have been recorded there or on Nephite records, according to Helaman 6:26, to reduce the risk of others using that information to seek for power.

Records brought by the Jaredites also gave information about the secret covenants of ancient people. As the daughter of Jared works to establish a secret combination to murder her father, she speaks of “the record which our fathers brought across the great deep” and the “account concerning them of old” who “by their secret plans did obtain kingdoms and great glory” (Ether 8:9, see also vs. 17). Ether 9:26 mentions a later king man, Heth, embracing the “secret plans of old” to gain the throne. Ether 10:33 also speaks of wicked Jaredites who “adopted *the old plans* and administered oaths *after the manner of the ancients* and sought again to destroy the kingdom.” Such knowledge from the Jaredites may have also adversely affected later Nephite society.³¹

#40, Cain’s involvement in a secret combination to keep Abel’s murder secret

Though there is overlap with the previous point on the antiquity of secret combinations, the specific identification of Cain as the first man to enter into a secret combination is still a noteworthy connection to the Book of Moses. Helaman 6:27 specifically notes that it was Satan “who did *plot with Cain* that if he would murder his brother Abel, *it should not be known unto the world.*” This fits Moses 5:29 well:

And Satan said unto Cain: Swear unto me by thy throat, and if thou tell it thou shalt die; and swear thy brethren by their heads, and by the living God, that they tell it not; for if they tell it, they shall surely die; and *this*

³¹ Matthew Bowen, “Coming Down and Bringing Down: Pejorative Onomastic Allusions to the Jaredites in Helaman 6:25, 6:38, and Ether 2:11,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* (forthcoming), and Brant A. Gardner, “Mormon the Writer: Turning History into Story,” in *Give Ear to My Words: Text and Context of Alma 36–42 (48th Annual Brigham Young University Sidney B. Sperry Symposium)*, ed. Kerry M. Hull, Nicholas J. Frederick, and Hank R. Smith (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2019), 480-481, as cited by Bowen, “Coming Down and Bringing Down.”

that thy father may not know it; and this day I will deliver thy brother Abel into thine hands.

#41, The persistence of Satan’s secret combination not only with Cain, but with other followers.

Moses 5:29 indicates that Satan’s plot with Cain involved Cain’s brethren, while later we read that it continued through his descendent Lamech (Moses 5:49–51), “and began to spread among all the sons of men. And it was among the sons of men” (Moses 5:52), until “the works of darkness began to prevail among all the sons of men” (Moses 5:55). Moses 6:15 also tells us that secret works of darkness eventually became widespread and highly destructive.

Likewise, Helaman 6:27 not only tells us that Satan plotted with Cain for the murder of Abel, but then “he did plot with Cain and his followers from that time forth.” These Satanic conspiracies also became widespread in their destructive influence among both the Jaredites and Nephites. Mormon wrote that “they are had among all people” (Ether 8:20) and he prophesied that they would be among our societies today (Ether 8:20–26). Widespread indeed!

The oaths of Satanic secret combinations involve death for violating the oath, and to persist, would logically would have mechanisms to enforce the oath (Moses 5:29). We see the oath being enforced when Lamech, Cain’s descendant and later leader of what is presumably the successor of Cain’s band, slays Irad, his great grandfather, for revealing the secret to others (Moses 5:49–51).

Likewise, Helaman 6:24 states that the Gaddianton robbers had their own system justice based on “laws of wickedness” to punish those who improperly revealed their secrets and crimes (vs. 24). The structure of the system, including the oaths, the opportunities for gain and power, and means for enforcing secrecy helped these combinations not only spread widely in the very ancient societies described in the Book of Moses, but also in two great civilization in the Book of Mormon.

#42, Knowing/distinguishing “brothers” in secret combinations

Moses 5:51 states that “from the days of Cain, there was a secret combination, and their works were in the dark, and **they knew every man his brother.**” This seems related to Helaman 6:22 regarding the brotherhood within secret combinations in which signs and oaths were used to distinguish or recognize one’s brothers in the combination:

And it came to pass that they did have their signs, yea, their secret signs and their secret words—and this that they might **distinguish a brother** who had entered into the covenant, that whatsoever wickedness his brother should do, he should not be injured by his brother, nor by those who did belong to his band who had taken this covenant.

#43, Shaking and Trembling

Many Book of Mormon passages involving dust, chains, and related motifs seem to invoke shaking and trembling.³² Chains and the captivity of Satan are sometimes directly associated with shaking and trembling, as in 2 Nephi 1:13 (“shake off the awful chains,” spoken by Lehi the “trembling parent” in v. 14 who also urges his sons to “arise from the dust”); 2 Nephi 1:23 (“shake off the chains”); 2 Nephi 9:44–45 (“shake off the chains” in parallel to shaking of garments and shaking off iniquities in v. 44); 2 Nephi 28:18–19 (the great and abominable church “must tumble to the earth” in v. 18, and then in v. 19 “the kingdom of the devil must shake ... the devil will grasp them with his everlasting chains”). The Book of Mormon blends dust and chains as symbols of captivity and death and refers to “shaking” in describing liberation from both. Isaiah 14 is also quoted in 2 Nephi 24, where Lucifer/the King of Babylon, now overthrown and brought to down to the pit, in v. 16 is identified as the one who “made the earth to tremble” and “did shake kingdoms.”

In the Book of Moses, shaking also plays a role, as in some references involving dust or chains mentioned above (2 Nephi 1:13,23; 2 Nephi 9:44–45; and 2 Nephi 28:19). Other connections may be weaker than in other cases explored here and may not have been the likely source for Nephite expressions, although the relationship may still be considered. In the last days, the “heavens shall shake, and also the earth” as the heavens are “darkened, and a veil of darkness” covers the earth (Moses 7:61). “Satan began to tremble, and the earth shook” as Moses withstood him (Moses 1:21).³³ When Enoch gets a taste of the Lord’s perspective and understands the misery that wicked humans face, “his heart swelled wide as eternity [or “he beheld eternity,” per the OT³⁴], and his bowels yearned, and all eternity shook” (Moses 7:41). The people also tremble as Enoch teaches them, warning of Satan’s temptations and explaining that through the fall, we are made “partakers of misery and woe” (Moses 6:47–49). This, however, does not directly involve the liberating motifs of shaking off dust or chains found in some Book of Mormon passages (which are more aligned with Isaiah 52:2) but have some commonality with passages describing the fall of Satan’s dominion and the Lord’s power.

#44, Misery (either for Satan or His Followers)

Another possible link to consider is the *misery* which Satan brings upon his followers and which Satan himself faces. *Misery* or *miserable* occurs several times

³² Lindsay, “Arise from the Dust.”

³³ Jeffrey M. Bradshaw proposes that the shaking caused by Satan may be relevant to the meaning of “moved” in the Lord’s statement in Doctrine and Covenants 45:32 that His “disciples shall stand in holy places, and shall not be moved.” Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, “Standing in the Holy Place: Ancient and Modern Reverberations of an Enigmatic New Testament Prophecy,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 37 (2020): 163–236; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/standing-in-the-holy-place-ancient-and-modern-reverberations-of-an-enigmatic-new-testament-prophecy/>.

³⁴ Jackson, “Moses 7.”

in the KJV but not in the context of the fate of the wicked who yield to Satan, as is taught in ominous language in Moses 7:37:

But behold, their sins shall be upon the heads of their fathers; Satan shall be their father, and misery shall be their doom; and the whole heavens shall weep over them, even all the workmanship of mine hands; wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer?

This passage strongly implies that not only do mortals suffer misery for their rebellion, but also Satan. If the sins of wicked children are upon the heads of their wicked parents, are not all those sins upon the head of Satan, who “shall be their father”? Is not “their doom” collectively the doom of the wicked and of Satan? But Satan’s misery is also more graphically depicted in the opening chapter of the Book of Moses as Moses in his encounter with Satan begins to see “the bitterness of hell” (vs. 20) and when Moses resists Satan, “Satan cried with a loud voice, with weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth” (vs. 22).

“Satan shall be their father, and misery shall be their doom” (Moses 7:37) is a perfect anti-parallel to the Gospel message for those who follow Jesus Christ.

The occurrences of the term “misery” or “miserable” are much more common in the Book of Mormon than in the Bible and much more consistent with the Book of Moses’s usage. The number of occurrences in the Book of Mormon is not necessarily significant, since later writers may have been drawing upon Lehi’s heavy use of that term, but the usage by Lehi and others is generally quite consistent with teachings in the Book of Moses.

Heavy use of *misery* is found in Lehi’s speech in the portion given in 2 Nephi 2, where misery is involved in several contrasts (vv. 11, 13, 23) and being miserable is part of the punishment of the wicked (v. 5). Misery is also presented as a goal of Satan for all mankind, for because “he had fallen from heaven” and had become “miserable forever, he sought also the misery of all mankind,” (v. 18), a goal reiterated in v. 27. Second Nephi 9, discussed below, also twice associates Satan with misery (vv. 9, 46). King Benjamin warns the wicked that they face a “state of misery” (Mosiah 3:25). Many references to misery come from the words of Alma, a man who was a student of the brass plates, and his references include the misery of those who inherit the kingdom of the devil (Alma 41:4), building on the principle of opposition that Lehi introduced. Alma 3:26 speaks of those fallen in war going to “eternal happiness or eternal misery, according to the spirit which he listed to obey.” Other relevant examples include Alma 9:11, 26:20, 40:15, 17, 21; 42:1,26; Helaman 3:29, 5:12, 7:16, 12:26, and Mormon 8:38. Moses 7:41 also mentions the misery of the wicked.

In the KJV, “misery” is usually used to describe an afflicted state in mortality and is not explicitly associated with following Satan. True, the basic idea of the wicked being damned naturally suggests that they will be miserable after this life, but the use of related language in the KJV does not seem as clearly related to the Book of Mormon as is the Book of Moses. For example, Romans 3:16 speaks of the wicked and states that “Destruction and misery are in their ways.” But in

context, this appears to be saying that the wicked spread destruction and misery in their mortal lives by hurting others, rather than facing misery and doom with Satan. Or, as the International Standard Version puts it, “Ruin and misery characterize their lives.”³⁵ James 5:1 warns rich men about the “miseries” that shall come upon them, without clearly stating when or noting an association with Satan. Also relevant is Revelation 3:17, where the Lord speaks against the complacent church in Laodiceans and warns that while they may feel rich and secure, in reality it is “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” But again, this is not directly describing the post-mortal state of the wicked and is not explicitly connected with Satan. Thus, while it is certainly possible that the concept of the wicked being miserable or unhappy could be based upon general concepts from the Bible, the specific language in the Book of Mormon does not appear to be drawing directly from the use of “misery” or “miserable” in the Bible, but seems to be more closely to the teachings of the Book of Moses.

#45, Misery and Woe

When Enoch undertook to teach the people why “all men must repent,” he explained that as a consequence of the fall of Adam, “we are made partakers of *misery and woe*” (Moses 6:50 and 48). Nephite prophets borrowed that same language four times in calling their people to repentance. Lehi called upon his rebellious sons to awake from “the sleep of hell” and to “shake off the awful chains” by which the devil carries the children of men “away captive down to the eternal gulf of *misery and woe*” (2 Nephi 1:13). Before commanding the apostate Nephites at Ammonihah to repent, Alma told them that had it not been for God’s matchless power, mercy, and long-suffering towards them, they should long since have been “cut off from the face of the earth” and “been consigned to a state of endless *misery and woe*” (Alma 9:11). After reminding his sons about Amulek’s teachings about repentance, he urged them to remember to build their foundations on “the rock of our Redeemer” so that “when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, . . . when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power to drag you down to the gulf of *misery and endless woe*” (Helaman 5:12). Nephi told the curious crowd around his garden tower that the devil had gained “great hold upon [their] hearts” and that he was “seeking to hurl away [their] souls down to *everlasting misery and endless woe*” (Helaman 7:15–16). Like the previous examples, he then called on them to repent: “O repent ye, repent ye! Why will ye die? Turn ye, turn ye unto the Lord your God” (v. 17)!

There are several things to notice here. As with all the other phrasings featured in this paper, non-biblical wording found in the Book of Moses is featured repeatedly in the writings of the Nephite prophets. Not only are the same words invoked four times in Nephite teaching, each occurrence is placed in the same immediate context as the Book of Moses example—the teaching of repentance as essential for human salvation. These clearly demonstrate the likelihood that the phrase *misery and woe* is a Book of Mormon borrowing from the Book of Moses. But there is more.

³⁵ Romans 3:16, International Standard Version, *Biblegateway.com*, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+3&version=ISV>.

While using the same basic phrase, the Nephites had apparently enriched and developed its meaning in three ways that show up in all four examples. The first is the way each of the four Nephite prophets linked the *misery and woe* resulting from wickedness to the influence of the devil. That linkage is immediate and explicit in three of the Book of Mormon examples and is only brought in by Alma near the end of his speech when he clarifies that all men can be delivered by Jesus Christ, but “if they have been evil they shall reap the damnation of their souls, according to the power and captivation of the devil” (Alma 9:28). Secondly, all four Nephite examples use *endless, eternal, or everlasting* to describe this *misery and woe*, and Nephi even calls it “everlasting misery and endless woe” (Helaman 7:16).

Finally, the recurring phrase *misery and woe* would appear to be a promising example of the frequent Old Testament figure of speech *hendiadys*. In its simplest form, a hendiadys is a conjunction of two nouns which take on a combined meaning and cannot be translated accurately with equivalent terms for each noun in the pair. Such hendiadyses could be seen as their own terms with recognized usage and as accompanied by their own descriptors. It has already been demonstrated that the language of repentance in the Book of Mormon has almost a dozen widely repeated *hendiadyses* that greatly enrich the concept in the Nephite gospel.³⁶ We don’t know what original language terms lie behind *misery and woe* in the Nephite text. But if we assume a Hebrew background, some obvious candidates suggest themselves.

The Old Testament actually has three different words that are usually translated as *woe*, and all have about the same general meaning, announcing lamentation for one’s fate—often the consequences of one’s own sins. The obvious candidate for *misery* would be *ra’ or rā’â* usually meaning evil, misery, or distress. Interpreting *misery and woe* as a hendiadys with these Hebrew terms in mind, the phrase could mean lamentation for one’s own evil or wickedness. Add to that one of the apparently stock Nephite adjectives eternal, everlasting, or endless and we get a very rich set of meanings for Nephite prophets to invoke when calling people to repentance by using the phrase *misery and woe*.

#46, The Infinite Nature of God’s Love and the Atonement

In Moses 7, the misery of the wicked not only caused God to weep (vv. 28–31), but as we see in vs. 41, caused Enoch to experience a transcendent taste of God’s compassion for mankind. Enoch sees the wicked with a touch of God’s perspective as he “looked upon their wickedness, and their misery, and wept and stretched forth his arms as wide as eternity, and his heart swelled wide as eternity; and his bowels yearned, and all eternity shook.”³⁷

³⁶ For a detailed explanation of biblical hendiadyses and an extended documentation of Book of Mormon examples, see the last half of Noel B. Reynolds, “The Language of Repentance in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 29, 2020, pp. 196–213.

³⁷ In OT2, Joseph had changed the original “his heart swelled wide as eternity” to “he beheld eternity” (Jackson, “Moses 7”), a change that was dropped in the 1867

Powerfully expressing God's love and perhaps pointing to His Son's offering on the cross, Enoch stretches out his arms as body and soul yearn for the welfare of others. Terryl and Fiona Givens describe this scene as "plumb[ing] the mystery of the weeping God" in which Enoch "is raised to a perspective from which he sees the world through God's eyes."³⁸ His heart swells and his bowels yearn, again pointing to Christ's suffering that gave Him the "bowels of mercy" mentioned several times in the Book of Mormon (Mosiah 15:9; Alma 26:37; and Alma 34:15; cf. Alma 7:12 and 3 Nephi 17:6–7).

If something similar to this passage were present on the brass plates, it could have served as a basis for a few parts of the Book of Mormon that are linked to the brass plates. The Book of Mormon's first reference to an "infinite atonement" occurs in 2 Nephi 9:7, a passage surrounded by other material that appears to be rich in Book of Moses themes. Those connections include Reynolds's concept of "transgression-fall, fall-death" in Moses 6:59 reflected in 2 Nephi 9:6 (see Table 1) and multiple concepts in 2 Nephi 9:9 (see Table 2, discussed further below). There are also references to the plan of salvation (Moses 6:62) in 2 Nephi 9:6, 13; the fall of Satan and his angels (Moses 4:3–4, 7:26) in 2 Nephi 9:8–9; "temporal" versus "spiritual" death (related to Moses 6:63) in 2 Nephi 9:11–12; and the chains of Satan (Moses 7:26, 57) in 2 Nephi 9:45. Enoch was "clothed upon with glory" in Moses 7:3 as he saw the Lord in a theophany on a mountain, and in 2 Nephi 9:14, the righteous who enter the Lord's presence will be "clothed with purity, yea, even with the robe of righteousness," also suggestive of Isaiah's beautiful garments in a highly influential passage in Isaiah (Isaiah 52:1–2), a passage of foundational importance in the Book of Mormon's brilliant usage of the ancient theme of rising from the dust.³⁹ (A possible connection involving 2 Nephi 9:44 will be discussed later.) Given the abundance of possible links to Book of Moses material in 2 Nephi 9, is it possible that the concept of an infinite atonement was on the brass plates, and possibly tied to Enoch's vision? This connection is admittedly relatively speculative, but may still have value.

#47, Rage and Satan's Dominion Over the Hearts of Men

Reynolds points to Moses 6:15 as a possible source for three important Book of Mormon concepts: Satanic *secret works* (related to "secret combinations" in Moses 5:51), *seeking for power*, and *wars and bloodshed*, a phrase frequently used in the Book of Mormon, though sometimes with slight variations. Two more concepts in this verse may merit consideration: Satan's "dominion" over men and his ability to "rage in their hearts": "And the children of men were numerous upon all the face of the land. And in those days Satan had great *dominion* among

Committee Manuscript that would be the basis for the current LDS version of the Book of Moses (Jackson, "History of the Book of Moses," in *The Book of Moses and the Joseph Smith Translation Manuscripts*). Whether Enoch's heart swelled wide as eternity or he otherwise beheld eternity, he appears to obtain a view or taste of eternity in this experience.

³⁸ Terryl L. Givens and Fiona Givens, *The God Who Weeps: How Mormonism Makes Sense of Life* (Salt Lake City: Ensign Peak, 2012), 105.

³⁹ Lindsay, "Arise from the Dust."

men, and *raged in their hearts*; and from thenceforth came wars and bloodshed; and a man's hand was against his own brother, in administering death, because of secret works, seeking for power" (Moses 6:15).

The theme of dominion over men is akin to Satan's quest for power over men, which Reynolds views as a theme from Moses 4:3, where Satan "sought to destroy the agency of man" and sought God's own power. Satan's "dominion" over man may be equally relevant, and that word may be used to reflect Satan's corruption of the dominion that God has, a tiny portion of which God delegated to Adam and Eve (Moses 2:26, 28). Moses 6:15 adds a dimension to Satan's power over men by showing that his dominion has a relationship to anger, for his dominion is manifest as he "rage[s] in their hearts," leading to wars, bloodshed, etc.

In light of Moses 6:15 and the link between Satan's dominion/power/hold over men and his anger-inducing influence over the hearts of men, a persistent pattern in the Book of Mormon becomes interesting, for most Book of Mormon references to Satan's power over men also mention their hearts. Indeed, one of the first examples of this is 1 Nephi 14:7 which relates the "hardness of [men's] hearts" to "the captivity of the devil" — Satan's influence over the hearts of men again being a key tool toward achieving his aim of gaining dominion and making us his captives.

Many further examples are listed above in Table 2 and are discussed in more detail Lindsay's publication on the theme of rising from the dust in the Book of Mormon.⁴⁰

#48, Administering Death

Yet another term of interest in Moses 6:15 may strike modern readers as almost humorous: "a man's hand was against his own brother, in **administering death**, because of secret works, seeking for power." This unusual term, not found in the KJV Bible, occurs in Alma 57:19 where Helaman reports a battle in which his band of 2060 stripling warriors "did **administer death** unto all those who opposed them."

The word "administer" is not common in the KJV, occurring only in 2 Corinthians 8:19–20, where it is used in a positive sense (administering grace). The word occurs many times in the Book of Mormon, typically often for positive concepts such as administering grace or justice. In addition to the combination of "administer" with "death" in Alma 57:19, a murder is committed in Alma 47:18 as Amalickiah has a servant "**administer** poison by degrees" to Lehonti, while Alma 55: 30, 32 describes attempts by the Lamanites to "administer" poison (poisonous wine) to Nephite guards.

The account of Amalickiah's murder of Lehonti is an excellent example of the murderous "secret works" of the wicked described in the Book of Moses, and even begins with Amalickiah sending a "secret embassy" in order to lure Lehonti

⁴⁰ Lindsay, "Arise from the Dust," 216–218.

into a secret deal with Amalickiah in which Lehonti would appoint him as second in command, thereby allowing him to be first in command upon Lehonti's death. Lehonti's murder through "administering" poison closely fits what Moses 6:15 laments, for Amalickiah's "hand was against his own brother [a fellow military officer in the Lamanite army], in administering death, because of secret works, seeking for power." The lethal "administering" of poison in Alma 47:18 in the same context found in the Book of Moses's use of "administering death" increases the odds that the relationship may not be merely fortuitous, but reflects influence from the Book of Moses in the wording of the Book of Mormon. It is also a good example of a relationship that makes much more sense when viewed as a relationship of the wording in the Book of Moses on the Book of Mormon rather than the other way around.

#49, God's Word Returning "Void"

The Book of Moses, Isaiah, and the Book of Mormon all use the concept of God's "word" returning (or becoming) "void," a concept not found elsewhere in the scriptures. The context of use in the Book of Mormon corresponds most closely to that of the Book of Moses. First consider Moses 4:30: "For as I, the Lord God, liveth, even so *my words cannot return void*, for as they go forth out of my mouth they must be fulfilled."

Similar language involving "void" is in Isaiah 55:11: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: *it shall not return unto me void*, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Now compare the use of "void" in Alma 12:22–23, 26:

22 Now Alma saith unto him: This is the thing which I was about to explain. Now we see that Adam did fall by partaking of the forbidden fruit, according to *the word of God*. And thus we see that by his fall that all mankind became a lost and a fallen people.

23 And now behold, I say unto you that if it had been possible for Adam for to have partaken of the fruit of the tree of life at that time that there would have been no death and *the word would have been void*, making God a liar, for he said: If thou eat, thou shalt surely die....

26 And now behold, if it were possible that our first parents could have went forth and partaken of the tree of life, they would have been forever miserable, having no preparatory state. And thus the plan of redemption would have been frustrated, and *the word of God would have been void*, taking none effect.

It is possible that Isaiah was the source behind the use of *void* in Alma 12 or may have provided the language for Joseph's choice of wording in both Alma 12 and Moses 4:30. What is interesting, though, is that the concept God's word being *voided* in Moses 4 is in the specific context of the Garden of Eden and the fall of Adam, just as it is in Alma 12.

The only other use of the word *void* in the Book of Mormon occurs later in the Book of Alma, chapter 42, and in a context even more closely aligned with the Book of Moses, specifically referring to the expulsion from the Garden of Eden:

2 Now behold, my son, I will explain this thing unto thee. For behold, after the Lord God sent our first parents forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken—yea, he drove out the man—and he placed at the east end of the garden of Eden cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the tree of life—

3 now we see that the man had become as God, knowing good and evil, and lest he should put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat and live forever, that the Lord God placed cherubims and the flaming sword that he should not partake of the fruit.

4 And thus we see that there was a time granted unto man to repent, yea, a probationary time, a time to repent and serve God.

5 For behold, if Adam had put forth his hand immediately and partook of the tree of life, he would have lived forever, according to the word of God, having no space for repentance. Yea, and also *the word of God would have been void*, and the great plan of salvation would have been frustrated.

All three occurrences of *void* with respect to the word of God in the Book of Mormon involve the precise scene where it is present in the Book of Moses, and come from Alma², a keeper and careful student of the brass plates who discusses them explicitly (Alma 37) and quotes from them several times (e.g., Alma 33).

#50, Esteeming as Naught, Setting at Naught

Another potential connection between the brass plates and the Book of Moses involves the concept of “esteeming” scripture as a thing of “naught.” *Naught* and *nought* both occur in the King James Bible but not in the context given in Moses 1:40–41:

40 And now, Moses, my son, I will speak unto thee concerning this earth upon which thou standest; and thou shalt write the things which I shall speak.

41 And in a day when the children of men shall *esteem my words as naught* and take many of them from the book which thou shalt write, behold, I will raise up another like unto thee; and they shall be had again among the children of men—among as many as shall believe.

Now consider 1 Nephi 19:6–9 which mentions things which some men esteem of great worth that others set at naught and trample under their feet:

6 Nevertheless I do not write any thing upon plates save it be that I think it be sacred....

7 For the things which some men *esteem* to be of great worth, both to the body and soul, others set at *naught* and trample under their feet, yea, even the very God of Israel do men trample under their feet. I say trample under their feet, but I would speak in other words: they do set him at *naught* and hearken not to the voice of his counsels....

9 And the world because of their iniquity shall judge him to be a thing of *naught*.

This passage begins with a reference to writing upon plates, then follows in v. 10 with a reference to other prophets on the brass plates, specifically citing Zenoch, Zenos, and Neum who made prophecies of the ministry and sufferings of Christ. Thus, it is interesting that as Nephi was thinking about the word of God as recorded in plates, right before quoting from the brass plates, that he would use language similar to what is found in the Book of Moses and in the same context, esteeming the word of God as *naught*.

Strikingly similar to the predicted taking away of scripture in Moses 1:41, 2 Nephi 33:2–3 also uses “esteem” and “naught” in the context of taking away sacred writings:

But behold, there are many that harden their hearts against the Holy Spirit, that it hath no place in them. Wherefore, *they cast many things away which are written and esteem them as things of naught*.

But I Nephi have written what I have written, and I *esteem* it as of great worth and especially unto my people.

Once again, the connections to the Book of Moses come from one of the writers most reliant on the brass plates.

#51, Raising Up a Prophet to Restore Ancient Scripture

Moses 1:41, discussed immediately above, also relates to 2 Nephi 3 and prophecies of Joseph and the Restoration, where we read of the work of a latter-day seer who will bring forth God’s word and restore a knowledge of God’s ancient covenants (2 Nephi 3: 6, 7, 12, 24). In that chapter, the Lord says He will “raise up” a seer to do this work of restoration, language also found in Moses 1:41. This seems to draw upon Deuteronomy 18:15–18, where God tells Moses that He will “raise up” a prophet “like unto thee.” But the concept of “raising up” a prophet like Moses *for the work of restoring scriptures* is not found in the Bible but is common to the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses.

#52, The Workmanship of God’s Hands

Five times in the Book of Moses, the Lord mentions “the workmanship of mine hands” or “the workmanship of mine own hands” which refers to human beings (Moses 1:4; Moses 7: 32, 36, 37, 40). “Workmanship” occurs several times in the KJV Bible, but almost always referring to human craftsmanship. The closest

parallel to the phrase in the Book of Moses is Paul's statement that "we are his [God's] workmanship," but without speaking of hands. However, in Jacob 4:9, Jacob speaks of humans as the "workmanship of his [God's] hands," consistent with the Book of Moses, and again coming from a writer known to have thoroughly studied the brass plates.

"For we are his workmanship" occurs in Ephesians 2:10, but without a reference to God's hands.

#53, (Men) Ordained ... After the Order

Psalms 110:4, in a scene apparently involving God the Father speaking to Jehovah, we read, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." Paul cites this passage several times as he described the divine calling and role of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 5:6, 10, 6:20, 7:11, 17, 21). The Book of Moses, like the Book of Mormon, does not speak of anyone being after the order of Melchizedek, but the order of God or His Son, and adds an expansive twist by showing that mortal men can likewise be called and ordained after this holy order:

And the Lord ordained Noah after his own order, and commanded him that he should go forth and declare his Gospel unto the children of men, even as it was given unto Enoch. (Moses 8:18)

Moses 6:67-68 is also relevant, where Adam after being baptized is also told that he is also "after the order" of the Son of God, and that through this means all men may become sons of God:

And thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity.

Behold, thou art one in me, a son of God; and thus may all become my sons. Amen.

These concepts are strongly present in the Book of Mormon. First consider 2 Nephi 6:2, where Jacob declares that he has been "ordained after the manner of his holy order." When Alma² steps down as chief judge, Mormon writes that he "confined himself wholly to the high priesthood of the holy order of God" (Alma 4:20). Alma² uses such language several times, most completely in Alma 13:1-2: "the Lord God ordained priests after his holy order, which was after the order of his Son.... And those priests were ordained after the order of his Son." Related references are found in Alma 5:44, 6:1, 13: 6-10, 14, 43:2, 49:30; and Helaman 8:18.

Interestingly, the wicked followers of Nehor stand in contrast to the true priesthood as they are said to be "after the order of the Nehors" (twice in Alma 21:4 and once in Alma 24:28) or "after the order of Nehor" (Alma 24:29). That the order was a faith, or counter-faith, is suggested in Alma 14:16, which states that a wicked judge in Ammonihah "was after the order and faith of Nehor."

#54, Natural (Man, Eyes, Frame) vs. the Spiritual/the Spirit/Spirits

Reynolds's original list of correlations included the contrast between temporal and spiritual that is found in both the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon, and also noted that both texts discuss the "natural man." A related contrast may also merit attention, that of nature and the natural man (or natural eyes or the natural frame) in contrast to the spiritual, including the Spirit or spirits.

After the encounter Moses has with the Lord in Moses 1, it took "many hours before Moses did again receive his *natural* strength like unto man" (vs. 10). He then observed that it was his "*spiritual eyes*" and not his "*natural eyes*" that beheld God, for "my *natural eyes* could not have beheld; for I should have withered and died in his presence; but his glory was upon me; and I beheld his face, for I was transfigured before him." Shortly thereafter, vs. 14 tells us that Moses could look upon Satan "in the natural man" since Satan lacked the intense glory that God bears. Here there are physical limits to what one can behold with the natural eyes.

Natural eyes are mentioned again in Moses 6:36, where we learn that they cannot see spirits, but Enoch as a seer could behold such spiritual things.

Another aspect of the contrast between the natural and the spiritual involves the Creation account in Moses 3, where the Lord declares that He "created all things *spiritually*, before they were *naturally* upon the face of the earth" (vs. 5), and again that "all things were before created; but *spiritually* were they created" (vs. 7). The distinction between spiritual and natural in the Creation is also made specifically regarding trees in Moses 3:9:

And out of the ground made I, the Lord God, to grow every tree, *naturally*, that is pleasant to the sight of man; and man could behold it. And it became also a living soul. For it was *spiritual* in the day that I created it...

This distinction between the natural and the spiritual may be reflected in King Benjamin's speech when he contrasts the "natural man" with the spiritual "saint":

For the *natural man* is an enemy to God and has been from the fall of Adam and will be forever and ever but if⁴¹ he yieldeth to the enticings of the *Holy Spirit* and putteth off the natural man and becometh a *saint* through the atonement of Christ the Lord.... (Mosiah 3:19)

The opposite of the natural man is one who yields to the Holy Spirit, and thus becomes a saint.

Turning again to the eyes, seeing sacred, spiritual things such when Moses saw the Lord Himself, is an experience beyond the limitations of our natural eyes that also occurs in the Book of Mormon. When the Brother of Jared has a divine

⁴¹ Here "but if" has a meaning of "unless, except" as Skousen notes in *The Earliest Text*, p. xxxviii; cf. p. 757.

encounter in Ether 3, “the veil was taken from off [his] eyes” (vs. 6) and he was able to see the finger of the Lord appearing in His spirit body. This majestic but fearful experience caused the Brother of Jared to fall down, struck in fear (vv. 6, 19), fearing that he should be smitten. But the Lord comforts Him and shows Himself more fully, telling the Brother of Jared that because of his faith, he was redeemed from the Fall, brought back into the Lord’s presence, and that through Him, those who believe on Him shall become His sons and daughters (vs. 14).

A related example occurs in the Book of Mormon when King Lamoni, after being taught the Gospel by Ammon, turns to the Lord and has a spiritual encounter that overwhelms him physically, as the encounter of Moses that left him unconscious for many hours. As Lamoni was spiritually “carried away in God,” we read that his “natural frame” was overcome:

Now this was what Ammon desired, for he knew that king Lamoni was under the power of God. He knew that the dark veil of unbelief being cast away from his mind, and the light which did light up his mind, which was the light of the glory of God, which was a marvelous light of his goodness—yea, this light had infused such joy into his soul, the cloud of darkness having been dispelled, and that the light of everlasting life was lit up in his soul—yea, he knew that this had *overcame* [sic] *his natural frame* and he was carried away in God. (Alma 19:6)

Being overcome by the encounter with the glory and light of God not only caused Lamoni to be physically overcome, but also caused fatigue or apparent unconsciousness in others in the Book of Mormon. Lehi after his first-mentioned encounter went home and “cast himself upon his bed, being overcome with the Spirit” in 1 Nephi 1:7; Alma spent 3 days in unconsciousness after his encounter with an angel in Alma 36; and several others also fell to the ground or became unconscious.

There is also a reference to the limited knowledge of heavenly things in the “natural man” in Alma 26:21 and a mention of the “natural frame” in Alma 41:4, in the context of the resurrection of the soul (Alma 41:2). Also compare Alma 42:9–10, where a discussion contrasting the spiritual and temporal is followed by a statement that men are carnal, sensual and devilish “by nature,” a phrase also used by King Benjamin in Mosiah 3:16 in discussing the fall, shortly before he discusses the natural man in vs. 19.

Natural and spiritual bodies are contrasted in Paul’s discussion of the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:44, 46. Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:14 also mentions the “natural man” and states that he “receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God ... neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” The gap between spiritual knowledge and the abilities of the natural man is not unique to the Latter-day Saint scriptures, of course, but what seems to be unique is the contrast between seeing with the spiritual and natural eyes, including not just the physical limitations of the natural eyes, but also the overwhelming physical impact on the natural frame of an encounter with Deity. These themes and related language are shared in the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon.

#55, The Roles of a Seer

Building on the theme of natural vs. spiritual eyes, the role of a seer in the Book of Moses resonates with teachings in the Book of Mormon. In an act symbolic of washing or purifying the natural eyes to see that which is spiritual, the Lord instructs Enoch to anoint his eyes with clay and wash them, “thou shalt see” (Moses 6:35). As a result, he became a seer:

And he beheld the spirits that God had created; and he beheld also things which were not visible to the natural eye; and from thenceforth came the saying abroad in the land: A *seer* hath the Lord raised up unto his people. (Moses 6:36)

In the Bible, the role and abilities of a seer are not easily distinguished from those of a prophet. In the Book of Moses, we gain additional perspective as we see Enoch as a seer able to see spirits and invisible things, as well as many future events and great revelations (Moses 6 and 7), and then after receiving this gift, also worked as a prophet in declaring the need for repentance, baptism, and faith in the Lord (Moses 6:35–7:19) as well as a leader who guided and gathered his people and establish Zion (Moses 7:13–19).

In the Book of Mormon, seers play similar roles. Mosiah 8:13-17 tells us that whoever is commanded to look into the divine “interpreters” (tools presumably like the Urim and Thummim or seer stones) is called a seer (vs. 13), and that seers are revelators who can know of things to come and “secret things” and “hidden things” (vs. 17) that they can bring to light that otherwise would never be known (vv. 16–18). See also Mosiah 28:10–16, which speaks of King Mosiah’s role as a seer in translating the ancient Jaredite record. But the “secret things” and “hidden things” revealed by seers in the Book of Mormon are not limited to the things of heaven and the translation of once hidden records, but also opposing the “secret works” and “secret combinations” of the wicked.

Regarding the interpreters, the key tools of a seer in the Book of Mormon, in Alma 37 the Lord explains:

22 For behold, the Lord saw that his people began to work in darkness—yea, work secret murders and abominations—therefore the Lord said if they did not repent they should be destroyed from off the face of the earth.

23 And the Lord said: I will prepare unto my servant Gazelem a stone which shall shine forth in darkness unto light, that I may discover unto my people which serve me—that I may discover unto them the works of their brethren, yea, their secret works, their works of darkness, their wickedness and abominations.

24 And now, my son, these directors were prepared that the word of God might be fulfilled which he spake, saying:

25 I will bring forth out of darkness unto light all their secret works and their abominations; and except they repent I will destroy them from off the face of the earth. And I will bring to light all their secrets and abominations, unto every nation that shall hereafter possess the land.

26 And now, my son, we see that they did not repent; therefore they have been destroyed. And thus far the word of God has been fulfilled; yea, their secret abominations have been brought out of darkness and made known unto us.

Thus, the role of seers can involve seeing “secret things” and “hidden things” to oppose the secret works of darkness and secret combinations that are condemned in the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon, and clearly includes using such vision to preach repentance, baptism, and faith in Christ. In both texts, the role of a seer is far greater than seeing the future alone.

#56, Perished in Their Sins

In Moses 7:1, Enoch states that while many believed what Adam taught and became sons of God, many others “have believed not, and *have perished in their sins.*” Abinadi, a student of the brass plates, speaks of “those that have *perished in their sins*” in Mosiah 15:26 (cf. Mosiah 13:28). The combination of perishing with “in their sins” is not found in the KJV Bible, though those who sin shall perish according to Romans 2:12, the closest but still distant KJV parallel.”

#57, Sins/Cursing Answered Upon the Heads of Parents/Children

Moses 6:54 provides another possible link to the Book of Mormon regarding the responsibility for sin:

Hence came the saying abroad among the people, that the Son of God hath atoned for original guilt, wherein the **sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads** of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world.

Moses 7:37 has a similar concept, along with other phrases connected to the Book of Mormon:

But behold, **their sins shall be upon the heads of their fathers**; Satan shall be their father, and misery shall be their doom; and the whole heavens shall weep over them, even all the workmanship of mine hands; wherefore should not the heavens weep, seeing these shall suffer?

Related passages from the Book of Mormon follow:

Wherefore, if ye are cursed, behold, I leave my blessing upon you, that the **cursing** may be taken from you and be **answered upon the heads of your parents.** (2 Nephi 4:6)

And we did magnify our office unto the Lord, taking upon us the responsibility, **answering the sins of the people upon our own heads** if we did not teach them the word of God with all diligence; wherefore by laboring with our mights, their blood might not come upon our garments;

otherwise their blood would come upon our garments and we would not be found spotless at the last day. (Jacob 1:19)

Wherefore ye shall remember your children, how that ye have grieved their hearts because of the example that ye have sat before them; and also remember that ye may because of your filthiness bring your children unto destruction and their **sins** be heaped **upon your heads** at the last day. (Jacob 3:10)

And I commanded you to do these things in the fear of the Lord; and I commanded you to do these things and that ye have no king, that if these people commit **sins and iniquities, they shall be answered upon their own heads.**

For behold, I say unto you: The sins of many people have been caused by the iniquities of their kings; therefore **their iniquities are answered upon the heads** of their kings. (Mosiah 29:30–31)

Also possibly relevant, blood coming upon the heads of the wicked occurs in 1 Nephi 22:13, Alma 60:10, and Mormon 8:40.

The closest concept in the KJV Bible may be that of the scapegoat in Leviticus 16:21–22:

21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and **all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat**, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness:

22 And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness. (Leviticus 16:21–22)

Also relevant is 1 Kings 2:33:

Their **blood** shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and **upon the head of his seed** for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD.

The use of the verb “answer” in this context adds a unique element common to the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses.

#58, The Glory of God (and Its Relationship to Eternal Life)

In his discussion of the ancient literary elements in Moses 1, Mark J. Johnson sees the many references to glory in that chapter to be consistent with ancient authorship, and states that “the predominance and preeminence of the word *glory* reveals Moses 1 to be doxological, that is, being a witness and praise to

God's glory."⁴² Moses uses the contrast between the glory of God that Moses experiences and Satan's lack of glory to judge between God and Satan in a literary technique known as the "Rîb disputation pattern" or covenant (or prophetic) lawsuit in Moses 1.⁴³ Indeed, the glory of God is an important theme in several chapters of the Book of Moses.

In the Bible as in the Book of Moses, the glory of God can also temporarily come upon individuals such as Moses, but in the Book of Moses it also comes upon God's covenant people in the City of Enoch and causes their enemies to fear (Moses 7:17). Even more unlike the Old Testament, the glory of God is also described as something that the faithful may receive after this life:

That by reason of transgression cometh the fall, which fall bringeth death, and inasmuch as ye were born into the world by water, and blood, and the spirit, which I have made, and so became of dust a living soul, even so ye must be born again into the kingdom of heaven, of water, and of the Spirit, and be cleansed by blood, even the blood of mine Only Begotten; that ye might be sanctified from all sin, and enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and **eternal life** in the world to come, even **immortal glory**;

Therefore it is given to abide in you; the record of heaven; the Comforter; **the peaceable things of immortal glory**.... (Moses 6:59, 61)

A famous Book of Moses verse related to the glory of God is among those seen by Reynolds as possibly having an influence on the Book of Mormon:

For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. (Moses 1:39)

In this case, Reynolds considered the phrase "eternal life," which is also found in the New Testament, but showed that relationship between the Book of Moses' usage of that phrase may be more relevant as a potential influence on the Book of Mormon. However, the use of the term *glory* in this context as well as in the above-mentioned context of humans entering into the glory of God in the next life may both serve as additional influences on the Book of Mormon.

A few verses seem to reflect the message if not some of the phrasing of Moses 1:39, such as Alma's exultation in Alma 29:9:

I know that which the Lord hath commanded me, and I glory in it. I do not glory of myself, but I glory in that which the Lord hath commanded me. Yea, and **this is my glory**, that perhaps I may be an instrument in the hands of God to bring some soul to repentance; and this is my joy.

Likewise in 2 Nephi 1:25, Lehi tells his rebellious sons that Nephi "hath not sought for power nor authority over you, but he hath sought the glory of God and

⁴² Mark J. Johnson, "The Lost Prologue," 171–176.

⁴³ Mark J. Johnson, "The Lost Prologue," 176–178.

your own eternal welfare.” Here seeking the glory of God is linked to seeking the eternal welfare (eternal life) of others.

Further, in the allegory of the olive tree, the Lord of the vineyard explains that he wishes for his olive trees to “be sufficiently strong that perhaps they may bring forth good fruit unto me, and I may yet have glory in the fruit of my vineyard” (Jacob 5:54). In other words, the work that represents the gathering Israel and the saving of souls gives God glory. The work of redeeming mankind is His work and His glory. Jacob 5:72 reminds us that the work of the gathering in the Lord’s vineyard is indeed *His* work and *His* labor: “And it came to pass that the servants did go to it and labor with their mights, and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them.”

The concept of humans having a hope of the glory of God after this life is found in several Book of Mormon passages with various levels of affinity for the Book of Moses. Such passages often reflect entering into or receiving glory as a consequence of being redeemed by the Savior:

For for this intent have we written these things that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming. And not only **we ourselves had a hope of his glory**, but also all the holy prophets which were before us. (Jacob 4:4)

Wherefore, beloved, be reconciled unto him through the atonement of Christ his Only Begotten Son, that ye may obtain a resurrection according to the power of the resurrection which is in Christ and be presented as the firstfruits of Christ unto God, having faith and **having obtained a good hope of glory in him** before he manifesteth himself in the flesh. (Jacob 4:11)

Teachings about the basics of the Atonement, the resurrection, repentance and faith in Christ are linked to the “hopes of glory” also in Alma 22:14, where the teaching of Nephite missionaries to a Lamanite king are summarized:

And since man had fallen, he could not merit any thing of himself; but the sufferings and death of Christ atoneth for their sins through faith and repentance—etc.—and that he breaketh the bands of death, that the grave shall have no victory and that the sting of death should be **swallowed up in the hopes of glory**. And Aaron did expound all these things unto the king.

Alma² looks forward to his future resurrection, knowing that “he will raise me up at the last day **to dwell with him in glory**” (Alma 36:28). Regarding believers who were martyred in Ammonihah, Alma² said “the Lord receiveth them up unto himself in glory” (Alma 14:11). This glory of God shared with His children is associated with joy in Helaman 5:44 when Nephi² and Lehi², while in a Lamanite prison, had a miraculous experience that converted the surrounded Lamanites and filled them “with that joy which is unspeakable and full of glory.”

Finally, in a time of destruction and sorrow, Mormon comforts his son Moroni by telling him in Moroni 9:25 to “be faithful in Christ. And may not the things which I have written grieve thee, to weigh thee down unto death; but may Christ lift thee up. And may his sufferings and death and the shewing his body unto our fathers and his mercy and long-suffering and **the hope of his glory and of eternal life** rest in your mind forever.” The hope of God’s glory is linked to the gift of eternal life, bringing together two concepts also found in Moses 1:39.

The promise of entering into or partaking of God’s glory is a doctrine found to some degree in the New Testament, though often underplayed or overlooked by those Christians who, in my view, may fail to understand the real relationship between God and man and the magnitude of the gifts that God through His grace and love wishes to give to His children. Thus Peter writes of God giving us “all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that had called us to **glory** and virtue,” that we might be “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:3,4). Paul speaks of the “hope of the **glory** of God” that believers have due to the grace of Christ through “access by faith” (Romans 5:2; cf. Colossians 1:27), and also of “hope of his calling, and ... the riches of the **glory** of his inheritance in the saints” (Ephesians 1:18). But the Book of Mormon’s expansive teachings on the glory of God and eternal life for man would seem more closely aligned with the Book of Moses than with what is in the KJV Bible.

#59, Weeping, Wailing, and Gnashing of teeth

Moses 1:22 reports that “Satan cried with a loud voice, with **weeping, and wailing, and gnashing** of teeth.” The Bible has a number of verses combining “weeping” with either “wailing” (Esther 4:3, Jeremiah 9:10, Ezekiel 27:31) or “gnashing” (Luke 13:28, Matthew 8:12, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30) or a combination of “wailing” and “gnashing” (Matthew 13:42, 50), but not all three as in Moses 1:22. In the Book of Mormon, Mosiah 16:2 has all three verbs:

And then shall the wicked be cast out, and they shall have cause to howl and **weep and wail and gnash their teeth**—and this because they would not hearken unto the voice of the Lord. Therefore the Lord redeemeth them not.

Interestingly, the verse that follows (Mosiah 16:3) has further Book of Moses connections, employing the phrase “carnal, sensual, and devilish” discussed above, and references to the actions of Satan.

Alma 40:13 also has all three verbs:

And then shall it come to pass, that the spirits of the wicked, yea, who are evil—for behold, they have no part nor portion of the Spirit of the Lord; for behold, they chose evil works rather than good; therefore the spirit of the devil did enter into them, and take possession of their house—and these shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be **weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth**, and this because of their own iniquity, being led captive by the will of the devil.

Note that this verse also contains a previously discussed potential connection to the Book of Moses, the concept of being led captive by the will of the devil (Moses 4:4).

On the other hand, the phrase “weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth” derived from the related New Testament phrases has long been in use in English, arguably because of its pleasant meter,⁴⁴ and thus its presence in the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon could have been the result of translation into English of a phrase akin to “weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

#60, Satan Laughs and His Angels Rejoice

Turning to one of the verses that motivated the current study, Moses 7:26 gives us a chilling glimpse into Satan’s power and attitude as seen by Enoch in a vision:

And he beheld Satan; and he had a great chain in his hand, and it veiled the whole face of the earth with darkness; and **he looked up and laughed, and his angels rejoiced.**

Another grim scene in the Book of Mormon, following the destruction of many cities among the Nephites near the time of the Crucifixion, is followed with the voice of the Lord exclaiming in 3 Nephi 9:2, “Woe woe woe unto this people! Woe unto the inhabitants of the whole earth except they shall repent, **for the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice** because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people.” This pairing of verbs does not appear to be in the Bible.

The existence of angels among Satan’s forces is found in many other Book of Mormon verses (2 Nephi 9:9,16; Jacob 2:65, 3:11; Mosiah 26:27; 3 Nephi 9:2; and Moroni 7:16), but is also evident in the New Testament (Matthew 25:41 and Revelation 12:9).

#61, The Lord Who Weeps and Grieves for Lost Souls

One of the most beloved and poignant passages in the Book of Moses involves Enoch’s surprise when he sees that God weeps over the wicked in Moses 7:28-40.⁴⁵ It is a brilliant and inspiring passage that is widely viewed as one of the most profound portions of our scriptures.

⁴⁴ “Weeping and Wailing and Gnashing of Teeth,” *The King’s English: Through the King James Bible, phrase by phrase* (blog), Aug. 12, 2011; <https://kingsenglish.info/2011/08/12/weeping-and-wailing-and-gnashing-of-teeth/>.

⁴⁵ On the relationship between the Book of Moses account and other ancient sources on this topic, see Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Jacob A. Rennaker and David J. Larsen, “Revisiting the Forgotten Voices of Weeping in Moses 7: A Comparison with Ancient Texts,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 2 (2012): 41-71; <https://interpreterfoundation.org/revisiting-the-forgotten-voices-of-weeping-in-moses-7-a-comparison-with-ancient-texts/>. On the improbability that Joseph could have accessed related material from the ancient text known as *1 Enoch*, see Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and Ryan Dahle, “Could Joseph Smith Have Drawn on Ancient Manuscripts When He Translated the Story

The concept of the God who weeps for sinful mortals may be reflected in the allegory of the tame and wild olive trees taken from the brass plates. While the allegory is not from Moses but rather Zenos, the Lord's feelings for humanity show an intriguing relationship with the account about Enoch's experience.

In the allegory in Jacob 5, the work of the Lord in redeeming man is related to a vineyard featuring olive trees. The Lord seeks to help his trees bring forth good fruit. Eight times in this chapter, the Lord states that "it grieveth me" as He considers the future loss of the tree or trees He is nourishing (Jacob 5: 11, 13, 17, 32, 46, 47, 51, 66). The loss of human souls brings God grief. While the time of Zenos's ministry is not known (likely to be between 1600 and 600 B.C.⁴⁶), it is possible that his writings preserved on the brass plates may have been informed in part by knowledge of something related to our Book of Moses or other related sources dealing with Enoch. Elements apparently common to Zenos and the Book of Moses may reflect a common genre or common concepts from an era well before Nephi, or may be due to chance, as is always a possibility.

The account of Noah in Genesis 6 also shows the Lord grieving over his creation, but not necessarily because men will suffer for their sins:

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. (Genesis 6:5-6)

In this account Lord grieved that men had become wicked, but the text does not provide the insight of God's love for His rebellious children and His pain at the misery sin will bring the wicked.

More relevant may be Luke 19:41, where Jesus wept over Jerusalem because of its impending destruction. The New Testament like the Book of Moses both bear witness of the compassionate nature of God, and it is possible that related material in the Book of Mormon could simply be expressions of God's well-known compassion, though the repeated expression of God's grief for losses in Israel from Jacob 5 resonates nicely with the weeping God of the Book of Moses who sorrows over the loss of human souls.

of Enoch?: Recent Updates on a Persistent Question," *Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* 33 (2019): 305-374; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/could-joseph-smith-have-drawn-on-ancient-manuscripts-when-he-translated-the-story-of-enoch-recent-updates-on-a-persistent-question/>.

⁴⁶ Daniel H. Ludlow, "Zenos," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* (New York : Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), 1623-24; digital version at <https://eom.byu.edu/index.php/Zenos>, original printed version digitized at <https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/EoM/id/5938>.

#62, All Things Witness of the Creation

As Enoch taught the Gospel, he testified of the Creation:

And behold, all things have their likeness, and **all things are created and made to bear record of me**, both things which are temporal, and things which are spiritual; things which are **in the heavens** above, and things which are **on the earth**, and things which are **in the earth**, and things which are under the earth, both above and beneath: **all things bear record of me.** (Moses 6:63)

The concept Enoch taught is similar to Alma's teaching in responding to Corihor in Alma 30:

41 But behold, I **have all things as a testimony** that these things are true. And ye also have **all things as a testimony** unto you that they are true. And will ye deny them? Believest thou that these things are true? ...

44 But Alma said unto him: Thou hast had signs enough. Will ye tempt your God? Will ye say, shew unto me a sign, when ye have the testimony of all these thy brethren and also all the holy prophets? The scriptures are laid before thee. Yea, and **all things denote there is a God; yea, even the earth, and all things that is upon the face of it, yea, and its motion, yea, and also all the planets, which move in their regular form, doth witness that there is a Supreme Creator.**

A Messianic discourse by Nephiz in Helaman 8 also invokes a related argument. Interestingly, he begins by citing the miracles, power, and prophecies of Moses (Helaman 8:11–17), and then mentions the witness of other prophets from records likely on the brass plates (Abraham, Zenock, Ezias, Isaiah, and Jeremiah). Then in vv. 23 and 24, he refers to the witness of the Creation:

And behold, he is God....

And now, seeing ye know these things and cannot deny them except ye shall lie, therefore in this ye have sinned, for ye have rejected all these things, notwithstanding so many evidences which ye have received. Yea, even ye have received **all things—both things in heaven and all things which are in the earth—as a witness that they are true.**

The KJV Bible uses “all things” many times, sometimes touching upon the Creation, as when Nehemiah spoke of God having made the heavens and “the earth, and all things that are therein” (Nehemiah 9:6), or John declaring that “all things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). But nothing in the Bible seems to directly offer the particular and beautiful teaching of “all things” in the Creation bearing witness of God.

#63, Power, Wisdom, Mercy, and Justice

In describing the “plan of salvation,” one of the key phrases originally noted by Reynolds, several significant nouns including *power*, *wisdom*, *mercy*, and *justice* occur together in Moses 6:61–62:

Therefore it is given to abide in you; the record of heaven; the Comforter; the peaceable things of immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things, and hath all **power** according to **wisdom**, **mercy**, truth, **justice**, and judgment.

And now, behold, I say unto you: This is the **plan of salvation** unto all men, through the blood of mine Only Begotten, who shall come in the meridian of time.

Several Book of Mormon verses use portions of this grouping that are not also found together in the KJV Bible. 2 Nephi 2:12 speaks of “the **wisdom** of God and his eternal purposes, and also the **power** and the **mercy** and the **justice** of God.” 2 Nephi 11:5 has “my soul delighteth in his grace and his **justice** and **power** and **mercy**, in the great and eternal **plan of deliverance** from death.” In Mosiah 5:15, King Benjamin prays that his people “may have everlasting salvation and eternal life through the **wisdom** and **power** and **justice** and **mercy** of him who created all things in heaven and in earth.” Note that King Benjamin also refers to God’s creation of “all things,” a phrase that is used four times in Moses 6:61 right before the recitation of the *power*, *wisdom*, *mercy*, and *justice*.

These Book of Mormon passages on salvation and their similar vocabulary to Moses 6:61–62 suggest a possible relationship between the two books, and further favor the Book of Moses as the tentative source since it offers the more complete, extensive language from which slightly different portions may have been drawn by Book of Mormon authors.

Another relevant passage is Jacob 4:10, which tells us that God “counseleth in **wisdom**, and in **justice**, and in great **mercy**, over all his works.” God’s role in counseling is also a Book of Moses theme (Moses 7:35, cf. Moses 5:25 and 6:28).

#64, Commanding the Earth and the Power of the Word

Jacob 4:10 in the previous section is part of a longer but still brief passage, Jacob 4:6–10, with several possible connections to the Book of Moses. Like the Book of Moses, it declares that the Nephites and earlier prophets “had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming” (vs. 4). There is a reference in the law of Moses and to Abraham in vs. 5, and then vs. 6 speaks of “commanding” mountains, trees, or the waves after mentioning the writings of the prophets:

Wherefore we search the prophets, and we have many revelations and the spirit of prophecy. And having all these witnesses, we obtain a hope and our **faith** becometh unshaken, insomuch that we truly can **command** in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us or the **mountains** or the **waves of the sea**.

This thought resumes in vs. 9:

For behold, by the **power of his word** man came upon the face of the earth, which earth was created by the **power of his word**. Wherefore if God being able to speak and the world was and to speak and man was created, O then why not able to **command the earth**, or the workmanship of his hands upon the face of it, according to his will and pleasure?

The “workmanship of [God’s] hands” is a Book of Moses parallel discussed above that strengthens the case that Jacob may have been influenced by something like the Book of Moses in this discourse.

This theme of commanding the earth through faith and the power of God’s word may relate to the account of Enoch, one of the ancient writings Jacob may have searched. According to Moses 7:13:

And so great was the **faith** of Enoch that he led the people of God, and their enemies came to battle against them; and he spake the **word** of the Lord, and the **earth** trembled, and the **mountains** fled, even according to his **command**; and the rivers of **water** were turned out of their course; and the roar of the lions was heard out of the wilderness; and all nations feared greatly, so powerful was the word of Enoch, and so great was the **power** of the language which God had given him.

Through *faith*, God’s *word* can be spoken with miraculous *power* to *command* the *earth*, including *mountains* and *rivers of water/waves of the sea*. Thus, Jacob 4:6, 9 on the theme of commanding the earth seems to have strong connections with the account of Enoch in Moses 7:13. It is also significant in both Jacob 4 and Moses 7 that the commanding of the earth is done by servants of God.

Jacob continues with vs. 10, which uses the Book of Moses concepts of God’s *counsel* plus the previously discussed elements of *wisdom*, *justice*, and *mercy*, again suggesting that Jacob has been influenced heavily by Book of Moses-related material in the brass plates in this discourse.

Commanding the earth can be viewed more broadly as an expression of the power of the word when spoken by servants of God. In Moses 7:13, it was Enoch speaking “the word of the Lord” that caused the earth to tremble, “and all nations feared greatly, so powerful was the word of Enoch, and so great was the power of the language which God had given him.”

The Book of Mormon cites several examples of mortals having divine power in the words that they spoke. Sometimes this is power to convert others, but other times more physically obvious miracles are indicated. The first Book of Mormon example of a physical miracle by the power of the word in a prophet is cited in a discussion of Moses:

Yea, and ye also know that Moses **by his word** according to the **power** of God which was in him smote the rock and there came forth water. (1 Nephi 17:29)

Jacob 4:6–9, as mentioned above, shows how powerful the word of God’s servants was, and reminds us that the Creation came by “the power of his [God’s] word” of God, so naturally God (or implicitly, God’s servants) should be able to “command the earth” according to God’s will. Further, Ether 12:30 mentions a mountain that was moved by the faith of the Brother of Jared in response to his verbal command, “Remove!”

Other forms of power in the word of God from humans include the power to shake the wicked or to convert the penitent. Lehi, for example, explains that Nephi’s alleged anger toward his wicked brothers was actually “the sharpness of the power of the word of God, which was in him” (2 Nephi 1:26). Sharpness and power in the word are mentioned in Words of Mormon 1:17, which states that King Benjamin and other “holy men in the land ... **did speak the word of God with power** and with authority, and they did use much sharpness because of the stiffneckedness of the people.” Accounts of preaching and missionary efforts often mention the power of the words from humans, such as the sons of Mosiah in their mission to the Lamanites: “**by the power of their words** many were brought before the altar of God to call on his name and confess their sins before him” (Alma 17:4). See also Alma 17:17, 26:13, 31:5, and 53:10.

In contrast, the examples of divinely powerful words or language are typically attributed to the Lord in the Bible. For example, speaking of Christ, Luke 4:32 says, “they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.” Hebrews 1:3 speaks of Christ in mentioning “the word of his power.” It is the word of God, not any mortal, that is “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword” in Hebrews 4:12. Moses, Elijah, and other prophets and apostles certainly performed miracles, as directed by the Lord, with a relevant example being 1 Kings 17:16: “And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.” Christ also told his disciples that with sufficient faith they can speak and cause miracles such as moving a mountain (Matthew 17:20, 21:21), but this is done without using the wording in the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon. The Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon are more explicit in referring to great power of the word or the language of mortal men, though that power, as indicated in Moses 7:13 and 1 Kings 17:16, of course is given by the Lord.

#65, Spreading Abominations and Works of Darkness

Moses 5:52 speaks of the Lord cursing Lamech and his followers who had covenant with Satan, stating that “their **works** were **abominations**, and began to **spread** among all the sons of men.” This combination of *abominations*, *works* (of darkness), and the verb *spread* is also found in Helaman 6:28, which declares that it was Satan “which led on the people which came from that tower into this land which **spread** the **works** of darkness and **abominations** over all the face of the land until he dragged the people down to an entire destruction and to an everlasting hell.”

Ether 8:19–22 employs related words in a similar context, but spread over five verses.

#66, The “Powers of Heaven” and Heavenly Ascent and Descent

The term “powers of heaven” occurs in the New Testament, but only in the context of the troubles and fearsome signs of the last days. The stars will fall heaven and “the powers of the heavens shall be shaken” in Matthew 24:29 and Mark 13:25, while Luke 21:26 has, “Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.”

In contrast, Moses 7:27 refers to the powers of heaven in the context of joyous interaction between heaven, earth, and Zion with glorious angelic descent and the ascent of Saints into the heavenly Zion:

And Enoch beheld angels descending out of heaven, bearing testimony of the Father and Son; and the Holy Ghost fell on many, and they were caught up by **the powers of heaven** into **Zion**.

The Book of Mormon captures some of this context in describing the future New Jerusalem and presence of divine power in the midst of gathered Israel, with Christ “in the midst” of the Saints on earth:

And behold, this people will I establish in this land unto the fulfilling of the covenant which I made with your father Jacob; and it shall be a **New Jerusalem**. And **the powers of heaven** shall be in the midst of this people; yea, even I will be in the midst of you. (3 Nephi 20:22)

In the next chapter, similar language involving the “powers of heaven” and divine descent is used in a prophecy indicating that the Gentiles who repent will be able to assist gathered Israel in building the New Jerusalem:

And they shall assist my people, the remnant of Jacob, and also as many of the house of Israel as shall come, that they may build a city which shall be called the New Jerusalem.

And then shall they assist my people that they may be gathered in which are scattered upon all the face of the land, in unto the New Jerusalem.

And then shall **the powers of heaven**⁴⁷ **come down** among them; **and I also will be in the midst**. (3 Nephi 21:23–25)

⁴⁷ The current printing of the Book of Mormon has “power of heaven,” but “powers of heaven” should be the correct wording according to Skousen, *The Earliest Text*, 625, and is a better fit to the Book of Moses.

A related prophecy of a glorious descent (of the Lord) and glorious ascent (of Saints) involves the Three Nephites with their access to the “powers of heaven” and the promise of future assumption into the kingdom of God:

Therefore more blessed are ye; for ye shall never taste of death, but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled according to the will of the Father when I shall come in my glory with **the powers of heaven**.

And ye shall never endure the pains of death. But when I shall come in my glory, ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye from mortality to immortality. And then shall ye be blessed in the kingdom of my Father. (3 Nephi 28:7–8)

The unshaken powers of heaven here bless humans and are associated with both heavenly descent and ascent. Zion is not explicitly present here, but “the kingdom of my Father” is given as the destination for the ascent.

#67, Salvation or Damnation by “a Firm Decree”

In Moses 5, we learn that the Lord was working to teach the Gospel to man from the days of Adam and Eve, calling upon all men to repent. Vs. 15 outlines the choice of salvation or damnation given to mankind and the need for repentance:

15 And as many as believed in the Son, and repented of their sins, should be saved; and as many as believed not and repented not, should be damned; and the words went forth out of the mouth of God in **a firm decree**; wherefore they must be fulfilled.

Alma 9:24–25 employs similar language in a similar context:

24 For behold, the promises of the Lord are extended to the Lamanites, but they are not unto you if ye transgress. For hath not the Lord expressly promised and **firmly decreed**, that if ye will rebel against him that ye shall utterly be destroyed from off the face of the earth?

25 And now for this cause that ye may not be destroyed, the Lord has sent his angel to visit many of his people, declaring unto them that they must go forth and cry mightily unto this people, saying: Repent ye, repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is nigh at hand.

Alma² again uses similar language in a similar context in his famous “O that I were an angel” speech of Alma 29:

I had not ought to harrow up in my desires the **firm decree** of a just God, for I know that he granteth unto men according to their desires, whether it be unto death or unto life. Yea, I know that he allotteth unto man, yea, decreeth unto them decrees which are unalterable according to their wills, whether they be unto salvation or unto destruction. (Alma 29:4)

Alma² uses both “firm” and “unalterable” to describe God’s decrees. Later in Alma 41:7–8, Alma² again uses “unalterable” instead of “firm” to describe God’s decrees related to our salvation or damnation.

A “firm decree” does occur in the KJV Bible in Daniel 6:7 when leaders under King Darius set a trap to ensnare Daniel by convincing the king to issue a “firm decree” that “whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.” This is a decree of mortals, though, not a divine decree related to our eternal salvation or damnation.

#68, Angels Bearing Testimony

Enoch’s vision in Moses 7:27 teaches us about the role of angels:

And Enoch beheld **angels** descending out of heaven, **bearing testimony** of the Father and Son; and the Holy Ghost fell on many, and they were caught up by the powers of heaven into Zion.

In the previous section, Moroni 7:29–31 was cited for its discussion of the role of angels. The role of “declaring” glad tidings in vs. 31 is also associated with *bearing testimony*:

And the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance, and to fulfill and to do the work of the covenants of the Father, which he hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among the children of men, by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may **bear testimony** of him.

The bearing of testimony mentioned is done by humans, but is the result of the work of angels. This language is not found in the KJV Bible.

#69, Residue of Men/the People + Angels Bearing Testimony

In the Book of Moses, the phrase “residue of the people” occurs three times in the same chapter, not far from the above-mentioned Moses 7:27 with angels bearing testimony (#68). Two occurrences are shortly before (vv. 20, 22) and one occurs immediately after vs. 27 in vs. 28, part of the famous passage where Enoch sees God weeping for the wicked (#61):

And it came to pass that the God of heaven looked upon the **residue** of the people, and he wept; and Enoch bore record of it, saying: How is it that the heavens weep, and shed forth their tears as the rain upon the mountains?

The word “residue” in the context of the angels and the bearing of testimony also occurs in Moroni 7:31–32. Moroni 7:31 (see #68 above) describes the role of angels in helping mortals “bear testimony” of Christ. Then in vs. 32, the result of this work is described:

And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that **the residue of men** may have faith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in their

hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto the children of men.

#70, Prepared from the Foundation of the World

Moses 5:57–58 explains the Savior was “prepared from before the foundation of the world”:

For they would not hearken unto his voice, nor believe on his Only Begotten Son, even him whom he declared should come in the meridian of time, who was **prepared from before the foundation of the world**.

And thus the Gospel began to be preached.

These sentences bring closure to the story of how men were first taught about the plan of redemption, the atonement of Christ, and the gospel that would teach the descendants of Adam and Eve that they could return to the presence of God by repenting, being baptized, and faithfully obeying his commandments. They refer back to the more expansive presentation of these teachings in verses 4–15. As the account of Adam’s immediate descendants next unfolds, we read of Enoch who undertakes to teach the same plan of salvation through the atonement of the Son of God, which was in effect “from the foundation of the world,” and the gospel of repentance as the only way they can return to dwell with God (Moses 6:48–68)

Matthew 25:34 speaks of “the kingdom *prepared* for you from *the foundation of the world*,” but not specifically of Christ or the Atonement. Revelation 13:8 speaks of “the Lamb slain *from the foundation of the world*,” and *the foundation of the world* occurs in a total of 12 verses, but not with the specific language of Christ and His Atonement being *prepared* from the foundation of the world. Meanwhile, Isaiah 40:21 has “from the foundations of the earth,” which is relevant, but still different and lacking words related to “prepared.” But the Book of Mormon abounds in this language.

Most of the Book of Mormon usages of this phrase refer explicitly to the atonement of Jesus Christ as prepared from the foundation of the world in the plan of salvation/redemption and to the gospel it provides for the salvation of all humankind. The way of salvation is “prepared for all men from the foundation of the world” (1 Nephi 10:18). The Atonement of Christ was “**prepared from the foundation of the world**” in Mosiah 4:6–7. Redemption was “**prepared from the foundation of the world**” in Mosiah 15:19 and 18:13, Alma 12:30, as was “the plan of redemption” in Alma 18:39 and 22:13. In Alma 42:26, God’s “great and eternal purposes” were “**prepared from the foundation of the world**,” bringing about “the salvation and the redemption of men, and also their destruction and misery.” In Ether 3:14, Christ declares that “I am he which was **prepared from the foundation of the world** to redeem my people.”

The excerpt from King Benjamin’s teachings (Mosiah 4:6–8) is beautifully structured according to the principles now known as Hebrew rhetoric and

exemplifies the pattern used in another nine passages in the Book of Mormon that present the plan of salvation, including the atonement of Jesus Christ and his gospel as the way to salvation for all peoples that were prepared or in place “from the foundation of the world.”⁴⁸ As displayed here, Benjamin presents a six-line chiasm beginning and ending with reference to the atonement “**prepared from the foundation of the world**” with a preface focused on “the goodness of God” and a double conclusion stating the universality and uniqueness of the salvation it makes available in a pair of two-line chiasms:

I say unto you that

if ye have come to a knowledge of the goodness of God
 and his matchless power
 and his wisdom
 and his patience
 and his long-suffering towards the children of men,
 a and also the atonement which hath been prepared from the
 foundation of the world,
 b that thereby salvation might come to him
 c that should put his trust in the Lord
 d and should be diligent in keeping his
 commandments
 c* and continue in the faith, even unto the end of his life
 —I mean the life of the mortal body—

I say that

b* this is the man that receiveth salvation
 a* through the atonement which was prepared from the foundation of
 the world
 i for all mankind which ever was, ever since the fall of Adam,
 ii or which is
 ii* or which ever shall be,
 i* even unto the end of the world.
 a And this is the means whereby salvation cometh.
 b And there is none other salvation save this which hath been
 spoken of;
 b* neither is there any conditions whereby man can be saved
 a* except the conditions which I have told you. (Mosiah 4:6–8)

Alma 13:3 speaks of priesthood holders being “called and prepared from the foundation of the world” with a holy calling and “prepared with and according to a preparatory redemption for such.” That result is only made possible by the preparation of Christ: “this holy calling being **prepared from the foundation of the world** for such as would not harden their hearts, being in and **through the atonement of the Only Begotten Son which was prepared**” (Alma 13:5). Then Alma 13:7 speaks of “the order of his Son, which order was **from the foundation of the world**, or in other words, being without beginning of days or end of years,

⁴⁸ Compare 2 Nephi 9:17–18, Alma 12:27–32, 13:5, 18:39, 22:13, 42:26, Ether 3:13–14, 4:12–15, and 4:18–19.

being prepared from eternity to all eternity, according to his foreknowledge of all things.”

Since several different Gospel-related things such as Christ Himself, redemption or salvation, and priesthood callings are “prepared from the foundation of the world” in the Book of Mormon, one could argue that the intertextuality explored here may simply be a cultural-linguistic artifact in which Joseph favored an expression that means little more than “from the beginning” or “from time immemorial.” However, the different things connected with “prepared from the foundation of the world” remain based in the Savior and His work of Atonement, even priesthood callings which Alma 13:5 indicates were “in and through the atonement of the Only Begotten Son which was prepared,” making it logical that the basket of Book of Mormon concepts said to be “prepared from the foundation of the world” could plausibly be related to the teachings of Moses 5:57–58.

#71, Gathering from the Four Quarters of the Earth

Moses 7:62 has prophecy given to Enoch about the future gathering of the elect:

And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten; his resurrection from the dead; yea, and also the resurrection of all men; and righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, **to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth**, unto a place which I shall prepare, an Holy City, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.

This verse resonates in several previously discussed ways with the Book of Mormon, and also has affinity in its use of “bear testimony” (2 Nephi 27:13, Moroni 7:31) and the reference to future revelation, scripture, and the Restoration implied in “righteousness ... out of heaven and truth ... out of the earth” (see Mormon 8:16, 26). Further, the phrase “gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth” has strong parallels to the Book of Mormon.

The first occurrence of related language is attributed to the brass plates, but from the prophet Zenos: “all the people who are of the house of Israel, will I gather in, saith the Lord, according to the words of the prophet Zenos, from the four quarters of the earth” (1 Nephi 19:16). “He gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth” (1 Nephi 22:25); He will “gather in from the four quarters of the earth all the remnant of the seed of Jacob” (3 Nephi 5:24); “then shall they be gathered in from the four quarters of the earth unto their own lands” (3 Nephi 5:26); “then will I gather them in from the four quarters of the earth” (3 Nephi 16:5); and finally, immediately following a prophecy about the future New Jerusalem in Ether 13:10, Moroni turns to the Jerusalem of old and the gathering from the four quarters of the earth:

And then also cometh the Jerusalem of old; and the inhabitants thereof, blessed are they, for they have been washed in the blood of the Lamb; and they are they who were scattered and **gathered in from the four**

quarters of the earth and from the north countries and are partakers of the fulfilling of the covenant which God made with their father Abraham. (Ether 13:11)

In the KJV Bible, “the four quarters of the earth” is not a common term, occurring only in Revelation 20:8 regarding the scope of Satan’s final deceptions before the battle of Gog and Magog. Isaiah 11:12, however, speaks of the gathering of Israel from the “four corners” of the earth, probably the closest KJV relationship to the gathering from the four quarters of the earth in Moses 7:62.

#72, Counsel + “Ye Yourselves”

Moses 6:43 has the phrase, “why counsel ye yourselves, and deny the God of heaven?” “Ye yourselves” occurs 10 times in the Bible and 8 times in the Book of Mormon, but in Jacob 4:10, it also occurs with three instances of “counsel”:

Wherefore, brethren, seek not to **counsel** the Lord, but to take **counsel** from his hand. For behold, **ye yourselves** know that he **counseleth** in wisdom, and in justice, and in great mercy, over all his works.

The inclusion of wisdom, justice, mercy, another previously discussed collocation from the Book of Moses, would seem to increase the probability that Jacob is being influenced by something related to the Book of Moses in this passage.

#73, Fearful Looking for the Fiery Indignation of the Wrath of God Upon Them

In the KJV Bible, “fiery indignation” occurs in Hebrews 10:26–27:

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and *fiery indignation*, which shall devour the adversaries.

The Book of Moses uses this language as well and also uses a phrase similar to Paul’s “fearful looking”:

And it came to pass that Enoch continued his speech, saying: Behold, our father Adam taught these things, and many have believed and become the sons of God, and many have believed not, and have perished in their sins, and are *looking forth with fear*, in torment, for the *fiery indignation* of the wrath of God to be poured out upon them. (Moses 7:1; cf. “fire of mine indignation” in Moses 7:34).

Hebrews seems to be a plausible source for some of the language in this passage. However, its relationship to Alma 40:14 may raise other possibilities. That verse is shown below with the preceding verse which contains previously discussed language also related to Book of Moses material:

13 And then shall it come to pass that the spirits of the wicked, yea, which are evil—for behold, they have no part nor portion of the Spirit of the Lord, for behold, they chose evil works rather than good; therefore the

spirit of the devil did enter into them and take possession of their house—and these shall be cast out into outer darkness. There shall be **weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth**—and this because of their own iniquity, being **led captive by the will of the devil**.

14 Now this is the state of the souls of the wicked—yea, in darkness, and a state of awful **fearful looking** for of **the fiery indignation of the wrath of God upon them**. Thus they remain in this state, as well as the righteous in paradise, until the time of their resurrection.

The common elements of “fearful looking”/“looking forth in fear” + “the fiery indignation of the wrath of God ... upon them” would seem to make the relationship of the wording in Moses 7:1 to the Book of Mormon stronger than it is to Hebrews 10:27. Could a common ancient source also have influenced Paul’s choice of words?

The possibility of Alma² drawing upon something related to the Book of Moses is amplified by the use of other shared concepts such as “weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth” (#59) and also “being led captive by the will of the devil” (#9). The concept of the misery that Satan brings (#44) also occurs in the following verse, Alma 40:15.

#74, Numerous Upon ... the Face of the Land

“The children of men were **numerous upon all the face of the land**” in Moses 6:15. This is a verse that Lindsay previously identified as a possible source of influence in the Book of Mormon for the concept of Satan “raging” in the hearts of men. A possible relationship may be seen in Jarom 1:6 which speaks of the “numerous” Lamanites who “were scattered upon much of **the face of the land**” (cf. Jarom 1:8). Mormon 1:7 has “whole **face of the land** had become covered with buildings, and the people were as **numerous** almost, as it were the sand of the sea.” Likewise, Mosiah 27:6 tells us “the people began to be very **numerous** and began to scatter abroad **upon the face of the earth**.” Ether 7:11 also relates how the Jaredite king Shule “did spread his kingdom **upon all the face of the land**, for the people had become exceedingly **numerous**.” “On/upon all the face of the land” also occurs in Alma 16:16; Helaman 11:32, and 16:22–23 (vs. 23 is also a source of the relevant phrase, “Satan did get great hold upon the hearts of the people,” previously discussed). 1 Nephi 22:3, a verse already noted by Reynolds for a possible relationship to the Book of Moses based on its discussion of “things both temporal and spiritual,” also has the phrase “scattered upon all the face of the earth,” as does 1 Nephi 10:12 and 13:39, and several other verses also speak of “all the face of the earth” or “all the face of the land.”

“Numerous” and “face” do not occur together in any verses of the KJV Bible. On the other hand, the idea of people being numerous is simple and common, as is the concept of things being upon the “face” of the earth, so it is possible that “numerous upon ... the face of the land” is simply Joseph’s translation of content expressing something about population density. Nevertheless, the precise language used could also point to a connection between the Book of Mormon and the brass plates.

The KJV Bible does not have “face of the land” but does have “scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth” in Genesis 11:4 involving the story of the scattering at the time of the tower of Babel (cf. Ezekiel 34:6). This is similar to many verses in the Book of Mormon with “scattered” combined with “upon the face of the earth/land.” “Upon the face of the earth” (not land) occurs in several other KJV verses (Exodus 33:16; Numbers 11:31, 12:3; Deuteronomy 7:6; Isaiah 23:17; Jeremiah 8:2, 16:4, 25:26; Ezekiel 34:6, 38:20, 39:14; Amos 5:8, 9:6, 8; Acts 17:26; with similar wording but using “whole earth” in Daniel 8:5; Zechariah 5:3; and Luke 21:35). Also illustrating the use of “the land” in the context of rising population is Exodus 1:7: “And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and **the land** was filled with them.”

On the other hand, “be numerous upon the face of the land” is close semantically to “multiply on the face of the earth” in Genesis 6:1. The intertextual connection between Moses and the Book of Mormon here could merely be on the level of the English wording, and not necessarily clearly connected in the original languages. Indeed, the concept of numerous people in or on the land is rather mundane, and the wording could be the result of Joseph Smith translating instances of a common concept in similar ways. However, as noted above, in light of the growing evidence of tight translation for the Book of Mormon, we will entertain the hypothesis of significant tight control.

If one accepts the suggestion that the specific language of “numerous + face” or “face of the land” in the Book of Mormon could derive from Book of Moses influence, then, in light of the multiple parallels Reynolds has found for Moses 6:15 and the additional ones discussed herein, it would seem that Moses 6:15 is composed almost entirely of phrases that appear to have influenced the Book of Mormon. Here is Moses 6:15, where terms noted in Reynolds’s original work are in bold, and further discoveries reported above are in italics:

And the children of men were *numerous upon all the face of the land*. And in those days *Satan had great dominion among men, and raged in their hearts*; and from thenceforth came **wars and bloodshed**; and a man’s hand was against his own brother, in *administering death*, because of **secret works, seeking for power**.

It could be that this verse or something similar was a well-known, influential passage on the brass plates. Such a cluster of Book of Mormon terms brought together into one verse may suggest that the Book of Moses verse was a source mined in multiple contexts in the Book of Mormon rather than disparate Book of Mormon phrases being suddenly brought together in high density.

Of itself, the evidence that “numerous upon all the face of the land” has influenced the Book of Mormon should be considered weak given the relatively non-unique simplicity of the phrases involved, but in light of the additional parallels apparent for other phrases in Moses 6:15, there may be a reasonable case that this verse and its wording has had significant impact on Book of

Mormon writers, adding to the probability that apparent relationships to “numerous upon all the face of the land” may not be accidental.

#75, Record + (Baptism of) Fire and the Holy Ghost

Moses 6:66 describes Adam’s baptism and his receipt of the Holy Ghost, or baptism by fire, and then makes an intriguing statement about the “record” of the Father and the Son:

And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art **baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost**. This is the **record** of the Father, and the Son, from henceforth and forever.

Baptism with fire and the Holy Ghost also occurs with “record” in 3 Nephi 11:35 as the Lord teaches the Nephites about baptism:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my doctrine, and I bear **record** of it from the Father; and whoso believeth in me believeth in the Father also; and unto him will the Father bear **record** of me, for he will visit him with **fire and with the Holy Ghost**.

3 Nephi 19:14 also seems relevant:

And behold, they were **encircled about as if it were by fire**; and it came down from heaven, and the multitude did witness it, and did bear **record**; and angels did come down out of heaven and did minister unto them.

Here the fire that encircles the crowd is similar to the fire that encircled a group of Lamanites in a miraculous prison scene in Helaman 5, which the Lord later explains was a baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost (3 Nephi 9:20). An additional common element in 3 Nephi 19:14 is the fire coming “down from heaven,” somewhat parallel to the “voice out of heaven” from Moses 6:66.

The KJV Bible lacks this parallel, though of course, baptism by fire and the Holy Ghost is mentioned in the Gospels (Matthew 3:11 and Luke 3:16).

#76, Caught Up/Away Into an Exceedingly High Mountain

Our list of simple parallels concludes with a look at the very beginning of the Book of Moses, “at a time when Moses was **caught up into an exceedingly high mountain**” and had an encounter with the Lord (Moses 1:1). Similar language is used in Nephi’s account to describe his extensive vision related to the Lehi’s dream and the tree of life:

For it came to pass after I had desired to know the things that my father had seen, and believing that the Lord was able to make them known unto me, as I sat pondering in mine heart I was **caught away** in the Spirit of the Lord, yea, **into an exceedingly high mountain**, which I never had before seen, and upon which I never had before set my foot. (2 Nephi 11:1)

In Matthew 4:8, Satan “taketh” Christ “into an exceeding high mountain” and tempts Him, but the KJV Bible does not speak of anyone being *caught* up/away into a mountain or mount.

Compound Parallels (#77–86)

In several cases shown at the end of Table 2, there are compounded elements in which multiple elements in the Book of Moses are grouped together. For example, the first such “compound parallel” (#77) in 1 Nephi 14:7. This verse contains at least three of the parallels from Reynolds’s original list: (1) the description of Satan, (2) the concept of “eternal life” in Moses 1:39 (though found frequently in the New Testament and the Book of Mormon, it is not used in the Old Testament), and (3) the combination of “temporal” and “spiritual,” describing God’s creation (Moses 6:63; cf. 1 Nephi 15:32; 22:3; Mosiah 2:41; Alma 7:23; Alma 12:16; and Alma 37:43):

For the time cometh, saith the Lamb of God, that I will work a great and a marvelous work among the children of men, a work which shall be everlasting, either on the one hand or on the other, either to the convincing of them unto peace and *life eternal* or unto the deliverance of them to the hardness of their hearts and the *blindness of their minds*, unto their being brought down into captivity, and also unto destruction both *temporally and spiritually*, according to the *captivity of the devil* of which I have spoken (1 Nephi 14:7).

Recall the key elements of Moses 4:4: “And he became Satan, yea, even the *devil, the father of all lies*, to *deceive* and to *blind* men, and to *lead* them *captive at his will*, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice.”

In 1 Nephi 14:7, the devil and related concepts of deception (hardness of hearts, perhaps, as treated above in discussing Satan’s dominion), blindness, and being delivered from (vs. being brought into) captivity are included, as is the pairing of “temporally and spiritually,” and the concept of “life eternal,” all with connections to the Book of Moses. Reynolds wrote that the first occurrence of “eternal life” (a Book of Moses concept not found in the Old Testament) was in 2 Nephi 2:27, “life eternal” is essentially equivalent.

This clustering of concepts in the writings of Nephi¹ is characteristic of his approach to Isaiah also, where he pulls together verses from different portions of the text to bring out new meaning.⁴⁹ While Isaiah 29:14 with its “marvelous work among this people” is tied to the opening phrases of 1 Nephi 14:7, references to “work” and “life eternal” could be building upon the concepts in

⁴⁹ See, for example, the technique of “Gezera Shawa” as discussed in Matthew L. Bowen, “Onomastic Wordplay on *Joseph* and *Benjamin* and *Gezera Shawa* in the Book of Mormon,” *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* 18 (2016): 255–273; <https://journal.interpreterfoundation.org/onomastic-wordplay-on-joseph-and-benjamin-and-gezera-shawa-in-the-book-of-mormon/>.

Moses 1:39 (“my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man”).

In addition to the other Book of Moses concepts noted in this passage, the “hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds” might have some relationship. Satan’s blinding of men has been noted in Moses 4:4, and Satan’s influence on the hearts of men in Moses 6:15 was discussed above. Moses 6:27 also has Enoch speaking for the Lord in telling the people that their “hearts have waxed hard” and “their eyes cannot see afar off,” suggestive of blindness.

The pairing of “hardness of their hearts and the blindness of their minds” may be a formulaic construction based on how Nephi uses it elsewhere (1 Nephi 7:8, and 13:27; cf. Mosiah 11:29; Jarom 3; Alma 13:4, 48:3; 3 Nephi 2:1–2, 7:16; Ether 4:15 and 15:19). However, related terms occur in John 12:40 (“he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart”) which is quoting Isaiah 6:10, though the KJV of Isaiah 6:10 has “make the heart of this people fat” instead of hard.

Similar observations can be made for the remaining compound groupings in parallels #78–85. The final compound parallel, #86, merits more detailed explanation.

#86, Enoch and Samuel the Lamanite

One further potential compound parallel to consider involves Samuel the Lamanite and Enoch. This, like some other parallels that could be proposed, involves themes and concepts in addition to a few parallels in language.

In Moses 6, Enoch is moved by the Spirit while journeying and is commanded to preach repentance (vv. 26–30). Indeed, “a voice from heaven” (the voice of the Lord) speaks to him with a call to prophesy and preach repentance (vs. 27) with the promise that “no man shall pierce thee” for he was preaching to a violent people guilty of devising murder and other sins (v. 28). He is told to “open thy mouth, and it shall be filled, and I will give thee utterance” (vs. 32). Enoch went forth to fulfill this commission, crying “with a loud voice” while “standing upon the hills and the high places” as he testified against the people, “and all men were offended because of him” (v. 37). Though they were angry, we was protected, for “no man laid hands on him” out of fear (vs. 39).

A similar pattern occurs with Samuel the Lamanite in the Book of Mormon in Helaman 13. Samuel had come among the Nephites, but had been rejected, and was “about to return to his own land” (vs. 2). His homeward journey was curtailed when “the voice of the Lord came unto him, that he should return again, and prophesy unto the people whatsoever things should come into his heart” (vs. 3). Because he was not allowed to enter the city, he “got upon the wall thereof, and stretched forth his hand and cried with a loud voice, and prophesied unto the people whatsoever things the Lord put into his heart” (vs. 4). His preaching and prophesying continues in Helaman 14 and 15, and then in Helaman 16:2 we learn that the people were angry at him and sought to kill him: “they cast stones at him upon the wall, and also many shot arrows at him as he stood upon the

wall; but the Spirit of the Lord was with him, insomuch that they could not hit him with their stones neither with their arrows.” In other words, no man could pierce him with arrows as he preached and prophesied while standing upon a high place.

Common elements in these accounts include:

- A prophetic charge given while journeying or about to journey.
- Hearing the voice of the Lord.
- Being called to both preach *and* prophesy to a wicked people.
- Being promised that the Lord would give utterance to the prophet.
- Standing upon high places while preaching “with a loud voice” to the people.
- Offending the crowd and stirring them to anger, but being protected from piercing by the power of God.

The parallel of standing upon high places in fulfilling their prophetic commission may also be considered in light of Jeffrey M. Bradshaw’s scriptural exploration of what it means to “stand in holy places.”⁵⁰

There are other candidates for compound parallels that can be proposed; those listed here are given as examples for consideration.

Weaker Parallels to Consider, #87–97

Several weaker parallels may also be considered. These are typically considered weaker because the parallels may involve wording that could simply reflect Joseph’s preferences rather than an underlying connection in the original languages or involve minor mundane details, though the evidence for tight translation in the Book of Mormon may enhance the plausibility of some of these weaker proposed parallels. Some are considered weaker because similar but not exact Biblical parallels may exist.

#87, Declared by Angels

Here we explore the particular wording associated with angels that “declare” the Gospel. Here we must particularly consider the warning expressed in the introductory remarks about the possibility of parallels relying on Joseph’s word choice in some cases. The act of “declaring” is similar to many other verbs expressing what is spoken, told, or said, and thus could be translated in a variety of ways.

Moses 5:58 describes how the Lord worked to preach the Gospel among the children of Adam:

And thus the Gospel began to be preached, from the beginning, being **declared by holy angels** sent forth from the presence of God, and by his own voice, and by the gift of the Holy Ghost.

⁵⁰ Bradshaw, “Standing in the Holy Place,” 2020.

For angels to “declare” Gospel news may seem like a natural expression, but this language is not found in the KJV Bible. *Decree* and the related *declaration* occur many times (55 and 4 times, respectively), but apparently not from the mouth of angels. The closest parallel may be Revelation 10:7, which mentions *angels* and also mentions what God has declared to his prophets. In the Book of Mormon, however, the verb *declare* is frequently used to describe what angels do. In Mosiah 3:2–4, an angel awakes King Benjamin and tell him that he has “come to **declare** glad tidings of great joy” regarding the birth of Christ (vs. 3), using *declare* twice more in vs. 4. According to Alma 9:25, “the Lord sent his angel to visit many of his people, **declaring** unto them” that they must preach repentance in preparing for the coming of Christ. In Alma 13:21–15, *declare* is used 5 times to describe angels in proclaiming the Gospel and the coming of Christ:

21 And now it came to pass that when Alma had said these words unto them, he stretched forth his hand unto them and cried with a mighty voice, saying: Now is the time to repent, for the day of salvation draweth nigh.

22 Yea, and the voice of the Lord **by the mouth of angels doth declare it** unto all nations, yea, doth **declare it** that they may have glad tidings of great joy. Yea, and he doth sound these glad tidings among all his people, yea, even to them that are scattered abroad upon the face of the earth; wherefore they have come unto us.

23 And they are made known unto us in plain terms, that we may understand, that we cannot err—and this because of our being wanderers in a strange land. Therefore we are thus highly favored, for we have these glad tidings **declared** unto us in all parts of our vineyard.

24 For behold, **angels are declaring it** unto many at this time in our land; and this is for the purpose of preparing the hearts of the children of men for to receive his word at the time of his coming in his glory.

25 And now we only wait to hear the joyful news, **declared unto us by the mouth of angels**, of his coming; for the time cometh, we know not how soon. Would to God that it might be in my day; but let it be sooner or later, in it I will rejoice.

In recounting his dramatic conversion story, Alma² told his son Shiblon that the Lord “sent his angel to **declare** unto me” that he must stop his efforts to destroy the faith of God’s people (Alma 38:7). To his son Corianton, he asked, “Is it not as easy at this time for the Lord to send his **angel to declare** those glad tidings unto us as unto our children or as after the time of his coming?” (Alma 39:19).

In Helaman 5:11, Helaman is quoted in his word to his sons Nephi² and Lehi²: “he hath sent his angels to **declare** the tidings of the conditions of repentance, which bringeth unto the power of the Redeemer, unto the salvation of their souls.” Angels also *declare* glad tidings in Helaman 13:7 and 16:14. Moroni, in discussing

the role and ministry of angels in Moroni 7:29–31, lists one role in vs. 31 as “*declaring* the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord.”

Not surprisingly, others prior to Joseph Smith used the verb *declare* to describe what angels may do. For example, the minister George Whitefield (1714–1770) once opined that “perhaps, part of our entertainment in heaven will be, to hear the angels declare how many millions of times they have assisted and helped us.”⁵¹ But the concept of angels declaring the Gospel message centuries or millennia *before* the coming of Christ is unlikely to be found in Joseph Smith’s environment, but does occur with similar language in both the Book of Moses and the Book of Mormon. But again, giving the relatively non-unique nature of “declaring” itself, this parallel may be relatively weak.

#88, “For Mine Own Purpose”

The phrase “for mine own purpose” occurs twice in the Book of Moses. Speaking of the scope of God’s Creation, the Lord tells Moses “For mine own purpose have I made these things” in Moses 1:31, and then uses that phrase again in Moses 1:33, which also contains the Book of Mormon parallel involving “mine Only Begotten [Son]” (#20):

And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them **for mine own purpose**; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten.

The word *purpose* occurs regularly in the Bible, and *own purpose* occurs in 2 Timothy 1:9: “according to his *own purpose* and grace.” Ephesians 1:11 n has “according to the *purpose* of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (Ephesians 1:11). However, “mine own purpose” does not occur. But the entire phrase “for mine own purpose” occurs three times in Jacob 5:

Nevertheless I know that the roots are good, and for mine own purpose I have preserved them. And because of their much strength they have hitherto brought forth from the wild branches good fruit. (Jacob 5:36)

And this will I do that the tree may not perish, that perhaps I may preserve unto myself the roots thereof for mine own purpose. (Jacob 5:53)

And, behold, the roots of the natural branches of the tree, which I planted whithersoever I would are yet alive; wherefore that I may preserve them also for mine own purpose, I will take of the branches of this tree and I will graft them in unto them. (Jacob 5:54)

⁵¹ George Whitefield, “Jacobs Ladder–A Farewell Sermon,” in Samuel Drew and Josiah Smith, *Sermons on Important Subjects by the Reverend George Whitefield*, (London: Henry Fisher, Son, and P. Jackson, 1828), p. 773; https://www.google.com/books/edition/Sermons_on_important_subjects_With_a_mem/dXqihZfmjtoC?hl=en&gbpv=&dq='angels+declare&pg=PA773.

As mentioned above, Jacob 5 quotes from a brass plates account by a prophet named Zenos. Two other parallels to verses in Jacob 5 were previously discussed (#58 and #61). As previously noted, common elements from Zenos and a text related to the Book of Moses could be due to Zenos having access to something like the Book of Moses, or both texts being influenced by earlier texts or cultural elements. Further, since “mine own purpose” is not a unique concept but a common one that can be expressed in many ways, it could be an artifact or translation rather than an indication of ancient connections in the original texts, although the evidence for tight translation of at least the Book of Mormon may be helpful in evaluating this proposed parallel.

#89, Fulfilling Covenants

Moses 8:2 speaks of covenants being fulfilled:

And it came to pass that Methuselah, the son of Enoch, was not taken, **that the covenants of the Lord might be fulfilled**, which he made to Enoch; for he truly covenanted with Enoch that Noah should be of the fruit of his loins.

In the KJV Bible, oaths, scriptures, statutes, judgments, counsel, petitions, desires, lusts, ministries, righteousness, the law, one’s will, periods of time, and the word of the Lord can be “fulfilled,” but that verb is apparently not associated with the word “covenants.” However, “fulfilled” is used to describe the Lord’s keeping of what He “promised” David (1 Chronicles 6: 15, 1 Kings 8:24). But in the Book of Mormon, we frequently find an express association of “covenants” with “fulfill.” Examples include “preparing the way for the fulfilling of his [the Father’s] covenants” (1 Nephi 14:17); “the covenant [made with Abraham] which should be fulfilled in the latter days” (1 Nephi 15:18); “the Lord God will fulfill his covenants” (2 Nephi 6:12); “that my covenants may be fulfilled which I have made unto the children of men” (2 Nephi 10:15); and many more (3 Nephi 5:25, 10:7, 15:8, 20:12, 22, 27, 46, 21:4, 7, 29:1, 9; Mormon 5:14; Ether 13:11, and Moroni 7:31. The Book of Mormon clearly prefers the verb “fulfill” in its covenant-rich language.

#90, Peaceable Things of Immortal Glory / Heaven

The KJV Bible uses the word “peaceable” or “peaceably” a number of times, but not with the direct connection to eternal life found in Moses 6. In vs. 59, we read of being born again and enjoying “eternal life in the world to come, even immortal glory,” and then vs. 61 refers to “the peaceable things of immortal glory.” A related application of the word *peaceable* is found in Moroni 7:3:

Wherefore I would speak unto you that are of the church, that are the **peaceable followers of Christ**, and that have obtained a **sufficient hope by which ye can enter into the rest of the Lord**, from this time henceforth until ye shall **rest with him in heaven**.

Here the followers of Christ are “peaceable” and able to enter into the rest of the Lord in heaven, which, of course, is eternal life and immortal glory. Perhaps this represents a connection to the Book of Moses.

#91, For the Space of Many Hours

Moses 1:10 describes the time that Moses was overcome after his vision as lasting for “for the space of many hours,” the same cluster of six found three times in the Book of Mormon in 1 Nephi 8:8 and Helaman 14:21, 26. The New Testament has “the space of” plus a specific number of hours (Acts 5:7 and 19:34; Revelation 8:1), but lacks the initial “for” and the use of “many” in this phrase. The differences are minor and the phrase is not doctrinally meaningful, but is still consistent with a possible relationship between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses.

#92, Joy Through the Fall of Man

A passage that may have connections to the writings of Nephi is Moses 5:10:

And in that day Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have **joy**, and again in the flesh I shall see God.”

The potential for joy that came because of the Fall is reflected in 2 Nephi 2:22-25:

22 And now behold, if Adam had not transgressed, he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden; and all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created. And they must have remained forever and had no end,

23 and they would have had no children. Wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no **joy**, for they knew no misery, doing no good, for they knew no sin.

24 But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things.

25 Adam fell that men might be, and men are that they might have **joy**.

The phrase “in the flesh I shall see God” is also similar to 2 Nephi 9:4, “in our bodies we shall see God.” A related KJV passage is in Job 19:26: “in my flesh shall I see God.”

#93, Dwell in Safety Forever

In Moses 7:20, Enoch declares, “Surely Zion shall **dwell in safety forever**.” This is similar to “dwell safely forever” in 2 Nephi 1:9, mentioned shortly before references to shaking off the chains of Satan, another Book of Moses element.

#94, Visions on the Mount + “Look”

Some language from Moses 7 may be employed in Nephi’s description of his visions. Moses 7 has the following:

3 And it came to pass that I turned and **went up on the mount**; and as I stood upon the mount, I beheld the heavens open, and I was clothed upon with glory;

4 And I saw the Lord; and he stood before my face, and he talked with me, even as a man talketh one with another, face to face; and **he said unto me: Look**, and I will show unto thee the world for the space of many generations.

In 1 Nephi 18:3, we read that Nephi “did go into the mount oft” while at Bountiful and saw great things. In his earlier Tree of Life vision, in 1 Nephi 11:1, Nephi is caught away into a high mountain, and an angel shows him a vision, frequently using the command “Look!” For example, in 1 Nephi 11:8, “**the Spirit said unto me: Look!**” Also see 1 Nephi 11:12, 19, 24, 26, 30, 31, 32, 12:1, 11, 13:1, 14:9, 18.

The Bible, of course, also provides the concept of prophets or Christ going upon a mountain to commune with God (e.g., Moses at Sinai, Elijah in 1 Kings 19, and Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew 17).

#95, Pierced by God’s Eye

God’s ability to “pierce” with his eye is another apparent commonality. Jacob 2:15 has “O that he would show you that he can **pierce** you and with one glance of his eye he can smite you to the dust!” similar to Moses 7:36, “Wherefore, I can stretch forth mine hands and hold all the creations which I have made; and mine eye can **pierce** them also.”

The word “pierce” occurs a few times in the Bible, but not in this context.

#96, Combinations with “Full of Grace and Truth”

The phrase “full of grace and truth” in Moses 7:11, while found prominently in John 1, is also found in 2 Nephi 2:6 (among other verses), immediately after a verse with multiple connections to the Book of Moses. Vs. 5 refers to the *misery* of wickedness (Moses 7:37, 41), the contrast of *temporal* vs. *spiritual* things (Moses 7:42), *perishing* in sin (Moses 7:1), etc. It could be that an ancient version of the Book of Moses had the concept of the Messiah being “full of grace and truth,” which theoretically could have also directly or indirectly influenced John.

#97, The Lord Preserving His People (Particularly During Final Tribulations)

Moses 7:61 warns of great tribulations to come upon the earth in the last days, but also states that the Lord will preserve his people:

And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, **but my people will I preserve**;

A similar scenario with related language is given in a prophecy of Nephi₁ in 1 Nephi 22:

16 For the time soon cometh that the fullness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men, for he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous.

17 Wherefore, he will **preserve** the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fullness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore the righteous need not fear, for thus, saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire.

18 Behold, my brethren, I say unto you that these things must shortly come; yea, even blood and fire and vapor of smoke must come, and it must needs be upon the face of this earth. And it cometh unto men according to the flesh if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel.

“Preserve” is a key verb used 20 times in Jacob 5, describing the Lord’s efforts to preserve the House of Israel and gather His people, and is used in each of the three verses in Jacob 5 that also use the parallel term “for mine own purpose” (see #88). In the latter verses, it is used in the context of the last days and the destruction of the wicked, particularly in vs. 77: “And when the time cometh that evil fruit shall again come into my vineyard, then will I cause the good and the bad to be gathered; and the good will I preserve unto myself, and the bad will I cast away into its own place. And then cometh the season and the end; and my vineyard will I cause to be burned with fire.”

The Bible also uses “preserve” to describe God’s protections of individuals, families, and others, but here the context of the preservation during final tribulations before the Millennium suggests a possible connection between the Book of Mormon and the Book of Moses on this point.

The Density of Book of Moses Allusions in Nephi’s Writings

Reynolds has noted that most of the connections to the Book of Moses come from Book of Mormon authors who were obviously familiar with the brass plates, including writers of the small plates of Nephi and Alma², who spoke of and cited from the brass plates, as did Nephi¹. A high proportion of the examples of language considered above are found in the writings of Nephi¹ in particular. In Group 1 of Table 1 above, 5 of the 11 examples involve Nephi’s writings (including times when he quotes Lehi or Jacob). In Group 2 of Table 1, 10 of the 22 examples are from 1 and 2 Nephi. In the further cases listed in Table 2, 13 of the 22 examples are from 1 and 2 Nephi. 2 Nephi 2, for example, has multiple phrases and concepts showing apparent connections to the Book of Moses, including the agency of man (vv. 4–5, 16, 26–29; cf. Moses 7:32), the multiple concepts in vs. 5 discussed in the previous section, the rebellion of Satan (vs. 17–19), etc.

Passages dense with connections to the Book of Moses are not unique to Nephi. For example, the short passage of Alma 12:16-18 includes references to several concepts in the Book of Moses, including the contrast between temporal and

spiritual things, the torment of the wicked, being chained, the captivity of Satan, being subjected according to Satan's will, and redemption.

Conclusion

In considering what we have learned from Reynolds's initial study and from further finds reported here, it is appropriate to re-evaluate the original proposal of Reynolds that the brass plates may have contained a text similar to what Joseph Smith dictated as part of his work to develop an inspired "translation" of the Bible. Joseph did not indicate that the translation was based upon any kind of ancient text but simply given through revelation. For decades some Latter-day Saints have assumed that the Book of Moses reflects Joseph's prophetic imagination as he reworked some Bible stories from Genesis to add inspiring or inspired concepts to flesh out his growing views on theology. Others point to other modern sources to attempt to explain the Book of Moses through naturalistic influences. Without any claims from Joseph about the existence of an ancient *Urtext* that he was restoring or translating, it is natural that many Latter-day Saints may have a casual attitude about the Book of Moses, viewing it as "good enough for modern scripture, but not really an ancient text restored." But we may need to reconsider that attitude if the Book of Moses, created well after the Book of Mormon was completed, has significant connections to the Book of Mormon that go beyond merely citing the Book of Mormon, but show signs of a one-way relationship in which the Book of Mormon appears to be drawing on the Book of Moses and not the other way around.

In fact, the strongest case for so-called "plagiarism" in the Book of Mormon, apart from the obvious and expected borrowing from the Bible, may be that of borrowing from the Book of Moses on the brass plates.