The Doctrine and Covenants Is Reformatted into a Helpful Reader’s Edition

The second edition of The Doctrine and Covenants by Themes is an excellent aid to scripture study that may enliven your reading of the Doctrine and Covenants in support of the 1997 Sunday School curriculum. John W. and Jeannie Welch have formatted a reader’s edition that is both informative and easy to read—ideal for families and young readers.

The second edition, like the first, organizes all the verses of the Doctrine and Covenants according to seven major themes: a voice of warning, the plan and way of salvation, revelations about scripture, the priesthood of God, church practices and commandments to members, missionary work and instructions to missionaries, statements to individuals, and the martyrdom and testimony of Joseph Smith.

Each of these themes is subdivided with helpful headings. The passages are arranged in paragraphs rather than verses, allowing readers to focus their attention and read thematically. Such an approach to the Doctrine and Covenants helps the reader see the unity of this book of scripture and understand the messages of the revelations.

The Doctrine and Covenants by Themes includes every verse in the Doctrine and Covenants, simply reorganizing the text to make it easier to read and understand. When Joseph Smith received the revelations found in the Doctrine and Covenants, all the information on a given topic did not come all at once; rather, it came as it was needed. By reorganizing the revelations into thematic groupings, The Doctrine and Covenants by Themes presents the same information found in the scriptures in a reader-friendly format.

The new reader’s edition includes two indexes: scriptural and thematic. These two tools make finding scriptures on a specific topic or theme simple, and can be helpful to students as they prepare talks or organize their personal notes.

Every member of the church can learn about the principles and doctrines of the gospel from the Doctrine and Covenants. The Doctrine and Covenants by Themes makes gaining this knowledge easier.

Copies of this revised scripture study tool can be obtained using the enclosed order form.

Journal Releases a Highly Substantive Issue

Once again the Journal of Book of Mormon Studies provides access to the most recent research on the Book of Mormon. The current issue covers a wide variety of topics, including the doctrinal messages of salvation in the Book of Mormon, a non-Mormon perspective on the Book of Mormon wars, the rod and sword as representations of the word of God, and a discussion of seemingly awkward sentence structures in the Book of Mormon.

Noel B. Reynolds’s “The True Points of My Doctrine” discusses a six-point formula of what men must do to inherit eternal life. Faith in Jesus Christ leads to the covenant of baptism. The Father blesses his repentant children with the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost, a process that brings cleansing and a remission of sins. Those who receive these blessings and endure to the end gain salvation. Reynolds shows how

FARMS Sponsors Symposium on Church History
See page 3 for details

continued on page 6
New Technology and Ancient Questions (part 2)

The FARMS Update in the previous issue of Insights discussed DNA studies of the ancestry of cotton species as an example of how new technologies can produce both answers and interesting new questions about the ancient world. DNA comparison also serves to identify ancestral relationships among human groups. For example, Douglas C. Wallace of Emory University has concluded from studies of mitochondrial DNA that “prehistoric, intrepid mariners” came “out of Southeast Asia across the Pacific into the Americas 6,000 to 12,000 years ago.” They could have come across the central Pacific or coasting along northeast Asia, Alaska, and Canada, he guesses. Direct voyaging must have been involved since “native Siberians lack one peculiar mutation that appeared in the Amerinds 6,000 to 10,000 years ago.” Specifically, the DNA signature of many American Indians of the Amazon basin is surprisingly tied to that of early Pacific islanders.1

Some ethnologists have long seen striking cultural parallels between Amazonian peoples and Oceanic groups, but until the DNA findings, the general expert verdict was, “coincidence.” Now the DNA findings make it impossible to escape the conclusion that indeed people crossed the Pacific thousands of years ago by boat or raft bringing both genes and customs that are still identifiable in South America.

Advanced technology has revealed another mystery involving Egypt. Proponents of the idea that Egyptian travelers voyaged to the New World noted a few years ago that tobacco seeds, and even a parasite of the tobacco plant, had been found inside the abdominal cavity of the mummy of pharaoh Rameses II when it was examined about ten years ago. The national museum in Cairo considered this to be evidence of some connection with ancient America, but a French expert (M. Bucaille) involved in the studies responded that this was “impossible”; he said the mummy had been in various exhibitions over the years and a modern smoker must have dropped tobacco into it accidentally.

But a more advanced study has now exploded that explanation. German scientists have examined nine Egyptian mummies by radioimmunoassay and gas chromatography/mass spectrometry. Cocaine and hashish were found in all nine and nicotine in eight in the hair, soft tissue, and bones. The specimens dated from approximately 1070 B.C. to A.D. 395.2 The presence of those substances in the tissues of the mummies can only mean that the Egyptian royalty were active drug-users. Since coca and tobacco plants are American, the question has now become not just of an Egyptian voyage to America but surely of at least one ship returning, with coca and tobacco seeds aboard, and those plants must have been grown where the pharaohs could utilize them over many centuries. Why those plants have not previously been identified by botanists studying Egyptian crops is a good question in itself.

Of one thing we may be sure: the development of new tools gives us no magic powers for answering all the questions we now think significant about ancient times. We can be grateful for the new light they shed, but in turn the “answers” they give raise new issues. As with the newest equipment to aid diagnosis in modern medicine, the devices help considerably, but finally the most significant questions yield, if at all, only to investigators who possess the wisdom and experience to interpret technological and other evidence together and to draw out of such results not only the right answers but also the right questions.

Notes

Based on research by John L. Sorenson.
Publicly speaking

FARMS and BYU Religious Education Sponsor Symposium on Early Church History

On Saturday, 8 March, a dozen LDS scholars will gather in the auditorium of the Joseph Smith Building at BYU to present papers on “Pioneers of the Restoration.” The public is invited to attend free of charge to hear these presentations, which promise to enlighten and inform. The papers to be presented were originally prepared for inclusion in a volume of essays in honor of Richard Lloyd Anderson, professor emeritus of Ancient Scripture at BYU.

Sessions will begin at 8:30 A.M. and continue to approximately 1:30 P.M. Parking is limited immediately surrounding the Joseph Smith Building, but there are large lots just down the hill at the corner of 800 North and 200 East, as well as surrounding the BYU Law School, just west of 900 East.

The event will be chaired by Richard O. Cowan and Andrew Hedges, both from the Department of Ancient Scripture at BYU, and by M. Gerald Bradford, Director of Research at FARMS. The following presentations are planned:

- Robert J. Matthews, “The Role of the Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible in the Restoration of Doctrine”
- John W. Welch, “Oliver Cowdery’s Response to Alexander Campbell”
- Scott H. Faulring, “The Return of Oliver Cowdery”
- Royal Skousen, “John Gilbert’s 1892 Account of the 1830 Printing of the Book of Mormon”
- Andrew Hedges, “Pleasing the Eye and Gladdening the Heart: Joseph Smith and the Fullness of the Earth”
- Susan Easton Black, “The Tomb of Joseph”
- Donald Q. Cannon, “Words of Comfort: Funeral Sermons of the Prophet Joseph Smith”
- Davis Bitton, “The Ram and the Lion: Lyman Wight and Brigham Young”

President Bateman Speaks at FARMS Banquet on the Holy Ghost’s Mission

On 20 November, approximately 300 attendees at the 1996 Annual FARMS Banquet enjoyed a delicious meal, an evening of spirited conversation with friends old and new, stirring musical entertainment by the Utah Chamber Artists, and engaging addresses by FARMS President Noel B. Reynolds and the guest speaker, BYU President Merrill J. Bateman.

Anyone who has attended a FARMS function such as the annual banquet knows of the exciting spirit and energy that fills the room and propels the conversations. One senses how much people care about the work in which FARMS is engaged. People travel from near and far to attend this special function. Guests learned of FARMS projects past and future, and they also received facsimiles of two early church history documents, courtesy of FARMS.

This year’s guest speaker, President Merrill J. Bateman of the Quorum of the Seventy, expressed his continued support of FARMS, affirming, “I’m grateful for the work that’s been done over the years by this organization in terms of developing an intellectual base for understanding the Book of Mormon, for understanding how it relates to other documents and other scriptures.”

President Bateman’s talk, entitled “Aspects of the Holy Ghost’s Mission as Taught in the Book of Mormon,” examined the insights we gain from the Book of Mormon about the important role of the third member of the Godhead in carrying out God’s work and glory of bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man (see Moses 1:39). The Holy Ghost “speaks not of or for himself,” said Elder Bateman; he teaches Christ’s words and carries out God’s work of gathering and perfecting the Saints. To accomplish this work, the Holy Spirit directs heavenly messengers who teach mortal prophets to spread the glorious message of the gospel and to call people to repentance.

continued on page 5
President’s Message: Board Members Complete Service

With the growth of FARMS over the last two years, it has seemed less appropriate to have FARMS employees serving on the board of trustees. Consequently, the three members of the board who are also full-time employees of FARMS have stepped down from board membership. This action has been discussed by the board and by the staff for the last year, and we finally decided that it would be a wise move to prevent any appearance of a conflict of interest that could stem from having employees serve on the board. Speaking for the board of trustees, I express appreciation for their years of devoted service as members of the board. All three will continue in their full-time positions with FARMS.

Melvin J. Thorne, Executive Editor, has served on the board since he was hired (as the only full-time employee of the Foundation) in October 1989. Brent Hall joined FARMS full time as Director of Development in November 1990 and was elected a member of the board in November 1991. M. Gerald Bradford became the Director of Research and a member of the board in May 1995. All three will continue to advise and report to the board on the areas of their responsibility, but they will no longer be voting members of the board.

A few weeks earlier Professor William J. Hamblin of the BYU History Department stepped down from the board in order to devote more time to his own research and writing. We thank Professor Hamblin for his five years of service on the board of trustees and most recently his service as chair of the board’s subcommittee on electronic publishing. He continues to be actively involved in FARMS in other ways, such as submitting and reviewing FARMS papers. His clear thinking and quick wit will be missed in board deliberations. We wish him well in his own research.

Noel B. Reynolds

New FARMS publications

Papers from July Conference Provide Sample of Current Research on the Dead Sea Scrolls

In July 1996, FARMS and BYU sponsored an International Conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Members of the international team of scholars working on the scrolls shared their discoveries and insights and discussed new technologies that may assist them in their research. A sample of preliminary papers from that conference (available on the order form) offers fascinating and current insights into the Qumran community and the texts they produced. The full proceedings of the conference will be published later by E. J. Brill (Netherlands).

In “How Did the Qumranites Live?” Dr. Magen Broshi, of the Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum, proposes that the Qumran community was the first monastic community in the Western world. He argues that even without evidence from the scrolls, archaeological findings and recorded testimony support this claim. Broshi applies archaeological findings from excavations of the Qumran living quarters to show that members of the community most likely dwelt together in caves and tents. Their ritual baths and common dining areas point to their communal religious life.

James A. Sanders, of the Ancient Biblical Manuscript Center, presented a paper on “The Impact of the Scrolls on Biblical Studies.” Sanders lists five areas of biblical study that he believes have benefitted significantly from Dead Sea Scrolls research, then he concentrates on two of these areas: the history of early Judaism and the first-century origins of Christianity and of Rabbinic Judaism. Scrolls scholarship has allowed for the concept of wide diversity in early Judaism, which has in turn created a greater appreciation for the role of Judaism in the birth and development of Christianity. Sanders urged that biblical scholars still need to dispel old anti-Jewish viewpoints and begin applying the findings of Dead Sea Scrolls studies to New Testament studies.

Stephen Pfann’s paper, “The Early History of Baptism,” discusses the stages through which a person was accepted into the Qumran community, one of which is baptism. Pfann, of the Center for the Study of Early Christianity (Jerusalem), gives many references to baptism from ancient writings to show the history of this ordinance.
New FARMS publications

Research on Joseph Smith Refutes the Claims of Critics

In response to a number of requests for information related to criticisms of the Prophet Joseph Smith, FARMS offers the following reprints (see the order form). We are encouraged by the apparent interest in this topic and hope these reprints will help answer questions about Joseph Smith’s first vision accounts, his character and reputation, his 1826 trial, and the issue of prophecy.

Richard L. Bushman, “The First Vision Story Revived” (reprinted from Dialogue)
A leading LDS historian responds to criticisms of Joseph Smith’s account of his first vision.

Recent historical research provides the basis for this significant evaluation of Joseph Smith’s account of his first vision.

Richard Lloyd Anderson, “Circumstantial Confirmation of the First Vision through Reminiscences” (BYU Studies)
The writings of several early critics of Joseph Smith lend support to the Prophet’s first vision account.

These three articles evaluate claims that Joseph Smith and his family were untrustworthy.

Gordon A. Madsen, “Joseph Smith’s 1826 Trial: The Legal Setting” (BYU Studies)
Historical evidence suggests that Joseph Smith was charged with being a “disorderly person” in 1826. The author shows that, contrary to the claims of critics, the Prophet was acquitted in that proceeding.

Richard Lloyd Anderson, “The Mature Joseph Smith and Treasure Searching” (BYU Studies)
A detailed analysis of several issues relating to the claim that Joseph Smith was a money-digger.

Robert L. Millet, “Joseph Smith and Modern Mormonism: Orthodoxy, Neoorthodoxy, Tension, and Tradition” (BYU Studies)
A response to the claim that Joseph Smith’s teachings contradict those found in the Book of Mormon.

Richard Lloyd Anderson, “Joseph Smith and the Millenarian Time Table” (BYU Studies)
A response to the claim that Joseph Smith made false predictions regarding the second coming of Christ.

Holy Ghost (continued from page 3)
The Nephite prophets in the Book of Mormon teach and clarify the role of the Holy Ghost. They teach that the Holy Ghost “leads those with humble hearts and contrite spirits to truth”; plants the “seeds of the gospel”; cleanses and sanctifies; directs heavenly messengers; transmits the priesthood keys and authority in new dispensations; administers spiritual gifts made possible by the atonement; protects, prepares, and comforts God’s children; and testifies of Christ.

President Bateman pointed out how fortunate Latter-day Saints are to have access to scriptures that restore plain and precious truths and testify that Christ is the Savior. Truly the Book of Mormon assists in fulfilling the promises the Lord made to Abraham and his seed.

Above all, the Book of Mormon teaches us that “spiritual rebirth is a process, not an event,” says President Bateman. The Nephite prophets demonstrate a lifetime of willingness to submit to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. This rebirth should be the goal of every child of God.
Upcoming events

8 March: Symposium on Early Church History. 8:00 A.M.—
1:00 P.M., Joseph Smith Building auditorium at BYU. (See
story on page 3.)

13 March–18 September: Two exhibits on Masada and on the
Dead Sea Scrolls at the Museum of Art at BYU. (See the back
of the order form for details.)

May/June: Symposium on Ancient Scriptures in the Restoration,
sponsored by FARMS and the BYU Joseph Fielding Smith
Institute for Church History. Watch upcoming issues of
Insights for more details.

Journal (continued from page 1)

and where this formula is developed in the Book of Mormon.

Massimo Introvigne provides a non-Mormon view of recent
conflicts over the truth of the Book of Mormon. He sheds light on
the conflicts by comparing them with the fundamentalist/modernist
controversy surrounding the Bible.

Throughout the Book of Mormon, the rod and the sword sym-
bolically represent the word of God. John A. Tvedtines, in "Rod and
Sword as the Word of God," explains that the rod symbolizes the
word of God: it is both punitive and directive—a double role that
comes from a shepherd’s being both pastor and defender of his
flock. The sword also represents the word of God: it has two edges,
showing that the word of God brings either destruction or salva-
tion. Both the rod and the sword show that the word of God com-
bines strength and love.

Some critics of the Book of Mormon consider the lengthy and
sometimes awkward Book of Mormon language as evidence of
poor grammar and weak writing. Brian D. Stubble, however, in "A
Lengthier Treatment of Length," argues that these structures actu-
ally support the Book of Mormon’s own assertion that it is a trans-
lation of a Near Eastern language in an ancient American setting.
These structures that translate awkwardly into English are similar
to structures found in the Semitic and Egyptian languages.

Other articles and notes include:

David E. Sloan, "The Anthon Transcripts and the Translation
of the Book of Mormon: Studying It Out in the Mind of Joseph
Smith."

Robert F. Smith, "Book of Mormon Event Structure: The An-
cient Near East."

John A. Tvedtines and Stephen D. Ricks, "Jewish and Other
Semitic Texts Written in Egyptian Characters."

Ken Haubrock, "Sam: A Just and Holy Man."

John A. Tvedtines, "His Stewardship Was Fulfilled."

With such a variety of topics addressed in this issue of the Jour-
nal, there is something of interest for everyone.
Masada and Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibits Open Soon at BYU

A once-in-a-lifetime opportunity is coming to BYU—the Masada exhibition from the Hebrew University, plus rare Dead Sea Scrolls artifacts. Masada is best known as the mountain-top fortress near the Dead Sea where Jewish defenders, who had rebelled against Roman rule, fought for their beliefs and for their lives. In the end, they chose to take their own lives rather than to become enslaved or killed by the Romans. Their valiant stand has inspired enslaved and fascinated students of history for generations.

The artifacts excavated in the 1960s by Yigael Yadin from the fortress at Masada, along with a special exhibit on the Dead Sea Scrolls, opens at the BYU Museum of Art on 13 March 1997 and will run through 18 September 1997. The Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit is sponsored by FARMS, and FARMS supporters receive a discount ticket price.

Among the items displayed in the Masada exhibit are some of the weapons, cloth material, pots, coins, sandals, cooking and eating utensils, and many other remains left by Herod the Great, the Romans, and the Jewish warriors and their families at Masada, as well as ostraca (clay fragments) bearing Hebrew names—including the name of the Jewish leader “Ben-Yair.” Yadin viewed these fragments as the lots drawn by the final Masada defenders to determine the order in which they would commit suicide. Also found at Masada and included in the exhibition are fragments of scrolls of Deuteronomy, the Psalms, and Ezekiel 37.

The exhibit is largely made up of fascinating bits and pieces that combine to create a compelling story and setting, but visitors shouldn’t expect to be overwhelmed by gold mummies or beautiful jewelry. Instead, the lives and experiences of some of history’s most interesting people echo out of these fragments of everyday life.

The FARMS exhibit will feature full-size replicas of several of the major Dead Sea Scrolls and some originals as well. Discovered fifty years ago, the Dead Sea Scrolls are leather and papyrus Hebrew manuscripts from as early as 200 B.C. Many of the scrolls contain books of the Old Testament and other religious writings. This part of the exhibit also includes a model incense altar and actual scrolls or full size replicas of the Isaiah scroll, the Manual of Discipline, and other texts.

In addition, the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit includes an original document that is of special interest to Latter-day Saint scholars because it contains the Hebrew name Alma. Visitors will also have the opportunity to browse the BYU–FARMS Dead Sea Scrolls database on interactive computer monitors.

The Masada exhibit is under the auspices of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in collaboration with the Israel Antiquities Authority. It is sponsored by the Israel Ministry of Tourism, the Schussheim Foundation, and the Israel Exploration Society. Ms. Gila Hurvitz is the curator of the exhibition and of the Hebrew University’s Institute of Archaeology.

BYU Studies is publishing the English catalog for the exhibition and a special issue on Masada and the world of the New Testament. Both books will be available in March.

Tickets are $6.00 for adults, $5.00 for seniors over 62 and civic or church groups of 10 or more, $4.00 for BYU students or employees, MOA members, or paid FARMS subscribers, and $2.50 for college student groups of 10 or more and youth (K–12 grades). Hurry and reserve your tickets in advance by calling 378-BYU1 (378–2981) or 1-800-322-2981. You won’t want to miss it.

Summer Fellowships in Church History Announced

The Joseph Fielding Smith Institute for Church History at BYU will offer several eight-week fellowships (June 2–July 25, 1997) for advanced undergraduate and graduate students to do research on the cultural context of the restoration during the lifetime of Joseph Smith. Recipients will work in Provo, Utah, under the direction of Professor Richard Bushman of Columbia University. The fellowship carries a stipend of $2000 and free housing for those who require it.

Applications should be submitted to the Smith Institute by 1 March 1997. For an application and for details on the nature of the work that will be performed and the qualifications required, contact the Joseph Fielding Smith Institute, 127 KMB, BYU, Provo, UT 84602, phone (801) 378-4023, fax (801) 378-4049, e-mail: jfsi@byu.edu
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