Editor's Introduction

Stephen D. Ricks


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Introduction to current issue.
Editor’s (Final) Introduction

Nearly six years ago, the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* began with a dream. That dream was the creation of a journal focusing on the Book of Mormon that was open to all interested individuals, academics and nonacademics, high school graduates, college undergraduates, seasoned university professors, and all those in between, who were persuaded of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon as an ancient document and were interested in exploring the literary, theological, cultural, and historical aspects of the book. In this I hope we have succeeded. Subjects of our articles have ranged from Aaron and Abinadi to Zeniff and the Zoramites, from chiasmus to near-death experiences in Alma, from opponents to defenders of the Book of Mormon (with their attacks and defenses), from angels to devils, from God to Satan, from temple typology to sacred ceremonies, and from faith and hope to charity. The current issue is, I trust, no exception to this rule. Some of the articles include “*Something to Move Mountains*: The Book of Mormon in Hugh Nibley’s Correspondence,” by his son-in-law, Boyd Petersen, in which Petersen discusses Nibley’s ongoing fascination with the Book of Mormon because of its astonishing similarities with other ancient Near Eastern literature, because it provides evidence of Joseph Smith’s divine calling as prophet and seer, and on account of its prophetic warnings; an examination by S. Kent Brown of Lehi’s sojourn in the wilderness in “A Case for Lehi’s Bondage in Arabia,” where Brown argues that their tribulations in the wilderness were exacerbated by Lehi’s family selling itself into servitude in return for food or protection; “Girded about with a Lambskin,” in which the ritual setting and connections of the lambskin garment mentioned in the Book of Mormon are discussed by Matthew Brown,
an undergraduate student at Brigham Young University; "Nephi's Psalm: 2 Nephi 4:16-35 in the Light of Form-Critical Analysis" by Matthew Nickerson, in which Nickerson outlines—as many of the rest of us may have wished to—the form and setting of this psalm as an individual lament; and David Sloan's "Nephi's Convincing of Christ through Chiasmus: A Plain and Precious Persuading from a Prophet of God," where he examines Nephi's use of chiasmus to witness that Jesus is the Christ. Beyond the regular articles, we have maintained at the end of the Journal a section for brief exploratory communications and notes about ideas still in process of development. I trust that we have also succeeded in this task.

This is my final opportunity to write this introduction as editor of the Journal of Book of Mormon Studies. In the forthcoming issue I will be succeeded by John L. Sorenson, with M. Gerald Bradford and S. Kent Brown as associate editors. They have envisioned an enlarged, popularized format that is intended to expand the readership.

Finally, I wish to thank those who have helped to make the production and publication of the Journal successful: Shirley S. Ricks, production editor, whose painstaking care and dedication have made the Journal an ongoing success, and Alison V. P. Coutts, assistant editor. I wish my successors, along with their associates and assistants, well and encourage all who take seriously, study carefully, and write insightfully about the Book of Mormon.

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