

Appendix 4

Just a couple more internal evidences of the Book of Mormon

A significant battle scene (one in which the long-term survival of the Nephite nation might have been at stake) is described in Alma 51 at the end of their year, (March to them). After heavy fighting and major marches, both sides were very tired because of their "labors and heat of the day." This takes place on the east coast (of Mexico), "in the borders on the beach by the seashore" (Alma 51:32). At this season, the rain-swollen rivers have just begun, but the east region (Monterrey, Mexico) is still rather wet, low, and hot. The hottest weather was still months away, but down on the coast it was hot and muggy enough to contribute to the fatigue of the troops.

Alma 51 shows that the land of the Book of Mormon peoples was not a cold, snow-covered place in winter, as upstate New York is from where young Joseph Smith was. If he made up the book based on what he knew, he would have had fighting occur in the summer, not during winter. The internal consistency of many passages dealing with war during the proper season of war for Mexico and southern America is also remarkable--and has not been noted or recognized until the last decade or so. Though it is a minor point in the text, the geographical and climatic information provided fits and makes sense. It must be considered as one of many powerful internal evidences for authenticity.

Almost all wars occur between the 11th and 3rd months, (April is the first month in the ancient Hebrew times and still is today – these are Hebrew descendants), with a small number reported in the 4th, 5th, and 10th months, and none mentioned in the 6th through 9th months. Why this pattern? Well, the text also makes reference to cultivation of food a number of times in the 4th through 9th months. The problem of getting food to the troops is mentioned as a concern mainly in the 11th through 2nd months, February through May. Thus, it seems that the harvest may have been in months 10 through 12, January through March. This would not occur in the northern states. Therefore, to summarize: Nephite cultivation of fields: months 4-9; main harvest: months 10-12; time of warfare: mainly months 11-3 when they are not planting or harvesting). Could Joseph have known this or is this a true record?

Detractors of the church and book make a point of the many grammatical changes made in the text from the first publication. There certainly were many strange and awkward structures in the original manuscript, as partially enumerated above, for the English of Joseph's Day and his educational background. For example, instead of the normal "if ... then ..." construction, the Book of Mormon had a multiple phrase with "if ... and" such as "if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, **and** he shall manifest the truth of it unto you" (Moroni 10:4, 1830 edition). That is completely unacceptable English, but it's very good Hebrew, known as the Hebraic conditional (see "Hebraic Conditionals in the Book of Mormon," in *Pressing Forward with the Book of Mormon*, edited by John W. Welch and Melvin J. Thorne (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1999), pp. 201-203). Another example is 1 Nephi 17:50, which Joseph initially translated as "if he should command me that I should say unto this water be thou earth, *and* it shall be earth." When Oliver Cowdery prepared the printer's manuscript from the original manuscript, he deleted the word *and* to improve the English. Thirteen other examples printed in the 1830 edition were later changed by Joseph Smith for the 1837 edition, including Moroni 10:4 (ibid., p. 202). Examination of the text and the original and printer's manuscripts suggests that this was no simple scribal error, and Joseph's own dialect of English did not include this awkward construction, nor does the King James Bible provide language that would have motivated a forger to include Hebraic conditionals. So why do they occur in the original Book of Mormon? Is any explanation more plausible than the claim, it was a literal translation of the Hebraic conditional from the original Semitic text? Joseph said he translated the record. He did not write it and he could not have known what had not yet been discovered or analyzed. Has any other sect ever done this?

There are dozens of other examples of expressions and grammatical structures in the 1830 Book of Mormon, many of which survive in the current printing, that are unusual or awkward in English yet are

natural and proper in Hebrew as demonstrated above. The simplest explanation is that the text was dictated as a translation from an ancient Semitic document. Critics have been unable to explain away these and many other signs of authenticity (Edward Ashment tried, as discussed by John Gee in *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 51-120, esp. pp. 88-91.) It's much easier to just mock the poor grammar and punctuation, or scream about the many minor changes that were needed to make the Book of Mormon text more properly comply with basic standards of spelling, punctuation, and grammar in modern day English rather than do a critical analysis. Compared to the numerous textual, grammatical and conflicting doctrinal statements in the Bible, the Book of Mormon has very few changes. In the process of making the Book of Mormon conform to our English, not one doctrinal point has been altered and there has never been found one contradiction, (unless you miss interpret what you are reading). However, the Bible as it is today, compared to the surviving original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts (The King James version as it is known), has been rewritten by almost every Christian church and not just from old English to our English but doctrinal changes, grammar, (some even just cut out verses) to fit what their leaders determined should be the doctrine according to them, but no one every says their churches are false because they have changed the text. Why has no one criticized those churches for changing numerous things, or is the Bible false because of its inconsistencies and all the grammatical, doctrinal, and conflictual changes man has made from addition and deletion? You cannot say the Book of Mormon is false for these grammar changes and not say the same for the Bible. So, the argument of grammatical changes does not stand up to reality.

If the book is true, Joseph Smith was a prophet of God. If Joseph Smith was a prophet the book is true and therefore the church, he established under the Lord's direction is true. If this book has additional teachings of Jesus Christ and He actually did restore the true church, would you not want to know? Shouldn't you investigate the Book and the man and pray about them?