

The Original Stories of the Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon consists of chapters of moving storyline and chapters of sermons delivered by the characters in the story. The original stories and ideas that inspired these chapters of the Book of Mormon are found in this document in bold writing and in the paragraphs labeled moving storyline. There are two sections to the Book of Mormon. These two sections are called the small plates and the large plates.

Small Plates

1 Nephi

The story begins in 600 BC in Jerusalem and contains the travels of a family from the Middle East to the Americas by ship. The Book of Mormon is said to be written in reformed Egyptian on golden plates.¹

Chapters 1 - 7 – (Moving Storyline – Stories of David in 1 Samuel in the Old Testament)

Nephi and David are both called of God at a young age and both are the youngest sons in their families when they are introduced in their stories (1 Nephi 1, **1 Samuel 16**).² Nephi and his three older brothers go to retrieve the brass plates and David goes to the battle where his three older brothers are in the army. While at the scene of conflict, both Nephi and David have older brothers angry with them. Nephi's brothers fear Laban³ could kill them and David's brothers fear Goliath. Both Nephi and David believe God will protect them (1 Nephi 3, **1 Samuel 17**). Nephi retrieves the brass plates by killing and cutting off the head of Laban and David kills and cuts off the head of Goliath who is wearing brass plated armor. Both David and Nephi take their victim's armor and sword (1 Nephi 4, **1 Samuel 17**). In both stories the people rejoice in the victory. After celebrating, both Nephi and David get married (1 Nephi 5-7 and 16, **1 Samuel 18**).⁴

Ch. 8 – Lehi's Dream (**Joseph Smith Sr.'s Dream**⁵)

Ch. 9 – Nephi's explanation of the two sets of plates.

¹The golden plates are not available to test the ability of Joseph Smith to translate Egyptian. However, Joseph Smith also claimed to translate another Egyptian writing he called the Book of Abraham from papyrus. This document is available to see his skills in translation. The LDS Church admits on its website that Joseph Smith did not translate the material accurately. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics-essays/translation-and-historicity-of-the-book-of-abraham?lang=eng>

For a detailed breakdown of the actual translation of the papyrus by an expert Egyptologist, see the following: <https://www.mormonstories.org/podcast/robert-ritner/>

² After the initial heroic stories of Nephi in 1 Nephi, Nephi's father has other children.

³ In Genesis 29, there is a character named Laban. Jacob struggles with Laban to marry a specific one of his daughters. Laban tricks him into marrying his oldest daughter and then working for many years for him. Nephi also struggles with his Laban making several attempts at getting what he desired and was tricked out of his wealth.

⁴ Through all of David's stories he is battling the Philistines who believe in Baal. After being led by the compass he destroys the sacred groves of Baal. This becomes a theme throughout the parallels of the Book of Mormon and Bible.

⁵ <https://www.ldsliving.com/Joseph-Smith-s-Father-Saw-the-Tree-of-Life-19-Years-Before-the-Book-of-Mormon-Was-Published/s/80997>

Ch. 10 – Prediction of the destruction and scattering of Israel, John the Baptist, and Jesus. (**The characters in the Book of Mormon are discussing future New Testament people 600 hundred years before the New Testament period. They know their exact names and details about their future lives. This is not the case in the Old Testament.**)

Ch. 11 – Nephi’s interpretation of his father’s dream (**Fertility cult symbols of the Old Testament**)⁶

Ch. 12 – Prediction that there will be a Jesus and 12 apostles. (**Bible**)

Ch. 13 - Prediction of the Catholic Church, Bible, Columbus, and American Revolution (**Common History**)

Ch. 14 – Prediction of the Book of Revelation and its contents. (**New Testament**)

Ch. 15 – More interpretation of Lehi’s Dream and that Lehi’s seed (Native Americans) are a branch of lost Israel that will be grafted back into the tree (will accept Christianity). (**View of the Hebrews, which is a book written a few years before the Book of Mormon in the same town Oliver Cowdery lived, taught a similar idea.**⁷ **However, the commonly held belief at this time was that the Native Americans were the lost tribes of Israel.**)

Chapters 16 – 18 (**Moving Storyline – Stories of David**) David is skilled with a harp/lyre (looks like a bow and was developed from the bow) and Nephi is skilled with his bow. They both kill wild beasts, David to protect his flock and Nephi for his family (**David and the harp 1 Samuel 16:23 and killing beasts 1 Samuel 17:34-37**). They both are destined to be rulers and others want to kill them out of jealousy (Laman and Lemuel, and **Saul in 1 Samuel 19-23**). David promises Saul that his children would not be destroyed from the land, just like the children of Laman and Lemuel were promised throughout the Book of Mormon that they would not be destroyed from the land (**1 Samuel 24**). David and Nephi both have journeys guided by compasses. David retrieves the ark of the covenant which shocks and kills a servant. Nephi builds an ark/boat and shocks his brothers with the power of God. After retrieving the ark of the

⁶ The vision of Lehi/Joseph Smith Sr. has many ties to Asherah/fertility cult symbols of sacred trees or pillars in the sacred groves that were associated with Baal in the Old Testament. For an apologetic view of this see: Daniel Peterson’s article “Nephi and his Asherah”: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jbms/vol9/iss2/4/> Peterson and others tie Asherah to Heavenly Mother: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OzftTZLQyM> However, they fail to acknowledge that Old Testament writers condemned Baal and the grove worship tied to Asherah due to idolatry, ritual orgies, and child sacrifices. It ultimately is described in the Old Testament as the reason for the destruction of Israel. They also claim that it is new research that finds Old Testament people were worshipping Asherah and that Joseph Smith could not have known this information. Regardless of whether or not he knew Asherah by name is irrelevant because her symbols are denounced throughout the Old Testament (Judges 3:7, 2 Chron. 31:1, Isaiah 27:9, 1 Kings 18, Exodus 34:13, Deuteronomy 12:3, and many more). It is not necessary to be an archaeologist or a scholar to know this information, only to be able to read the Bible.

⁷ Historian and LDS General Authority B.H. Roberts did important research in Book of Mormon studies such as Bible parallels, archaeological problems, and possible plot ideas including the influence of View of the Hebrews. His work was presented to the Church’s 1st Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve in 1922. For more information: <https://www.mormonstories.org/podcast/shannon-caldwell-montez-the-secret-mormon-meetings-of-1922/> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Studies_of_the_Book_of_Mormon#Lost_books

covenant David dances in celebration and some of his body is uncovered. David's wife thinks this is inappropriate and there is contention over this issue. After sailing on the ark/boat, the brothers of Nephi and their wives begin to celebrate and dance. Nephi finds this inappropriate and a conflict takes place between him and his brothers (**2 Samuel 5-6**).⁸

Ch. 19 – Nephi describes how he makes the plates and their intended purpose. He prophesies the year Christ will be born and events of his life (**New Testament**).

Chapters 20 and 21 – (**Isaiah 48 - 49 in the Old Testament**)

Ch. 22 – Prediction of the United States becoming a great nation that scatters the Native peoples and then gathers them into becoming Christians because of the great and marvelous Book of Mormon. (**Common history and Joseph Smith's desire to convert Native Americans with the Book of Mormon**)

2 Nephi

Ch. 1 – America is special, a land for Christians and Liberty, if people stop believing in these things they will be scattered. (**Common beliefs held during Joseph Smith's time**)

Ch. 2 – Speech about Christ's Atonement and Adam and Eve. (**Bible**)

Ch. 3 – Lehi predicts Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon (**Joseph Smith predicts himself and the Book of Mormon**)

Ch. 4 – 5 (**Moving Storyline - Continuing the stories of David**)

Lehi dies, a great seer, who guided Nephi in his path to leading the people. David also was guided by a seer, Samuel,⁹ who worked as a temple worker in the "tent" of the Tabernacle and offered sacrifices for his people. Lehi dwelt in a tent and offered sacrifices for his people. Samuel's two oldest sons were wicked. Lehi's two oldest sons were wicked. Samuel was buried in a hill at Ramah. The plates of all of Lehi's children are buried in the hill Ramah (Jaredites name for the hill, Cumorah for the Nephites)¹⁰ (**Life events of Samuel in 1 Samuel 8-16, and 25**). David is crowned King at age 30 and Nephi becomes the first Nephite Ruler 30 years after they left Jerusalem (**2 Samuel 5**). David's son Solomon builds the temple and Nephi builds a temple like Solomon's (**1 Kings 5-6**).

⁸ LDS apologists are aware of the Nephi and David parallel and have written about the comparison. However, they do not reveal the extent of how much the two stories are the same. See the following:

McGuire, Ben (2009) "Nephi and Goliath: A Case Study of Literary Allusion in the Book of Mormon," Journal of Book of Mormon Studies: Vol. 18 : No. 1 , Article 12. Available at:

<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/jbms/vol18/iss1/12>

⁹ Samuel was not David's father like Lehi was to Nephi, but besides this point, the stories match closely. Samuel was made famous in the Kingdom for finding the King's lost donkeys through his power as a seer. Another story in chapter 15 of the book of Judges ties the name Lehi to donkeys and may have connected Lehi and Samuel in Joseph Smith's mind. In this story, Samson kills a thousand people with the jawbone of a donkey at Lehi. On another note, at Lehi, Samson broke free from being bound with cords through the power of God. Nephi also breaks free from being bound by the power of God in 1 Nephi 7.

¹⁰ <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/triple-index/ramah-hill?lang=eng>

These chapters also contain Joseph Smith's 1800s racist worldview for why Indians are dark skinned.

Ch. 6 – Prediction that there will be a first coming and second coming of Jesus. **(Bible)**

Chapters 7 and 8 – **(Isaiah 50 – 51 in the Old Testament)**

Ch. 9 – 1800s style “Fire and Brimstone” Sermon, the 10 woes compared to the 10 commandments. **(Joseph Smith's environment, and the Bible)**

Ch. 10 – Prediction the Jews will reject Jesus and be scattered **(Bible)** and that the United States would be a great country with no kings. **(Joseph Smith's environment)**

Ch. 11 – Another prediction Jesus will come and an introduction to Isaiah.

Chapters 12 – 24 **(Isaiah 2 – 14) (View of the Hebrews also uses Isaiah frequently)**

Ch. 25 - Commentary on Isaiah.

Ch. 26 – Prediction there will be false churches only interested in making money, and then the Book of Mormon will come. **(Joseph Smith predicts his own life events.)**

Ch. 27 – excerpts of Isaiah 29 reinterpreted to predict the Book of Mormon and the three witnesses. **(More self-fulfilling prophecies)**¹¹

Ch. 28 – Nephi's argument that all the other churches will be false and lead people to hell when the Book of Mormon is published. **(Joseph Smith's argument)**

Ch. 29 – Nephi's argument to people that say that they do not need another Bible. **(Joseph Smith's argument for the Book of Mormon)**

Ch. 30 – Prediction that many people from different groups will accept the Book of Mormon, and that Indians who accept it will become “white and delightsome.” Later editions of the Book of Mormon removed the word “white.” **(Racist worldview of the 1800s that thought Native people could become whiter if they were “civilized.” This idea was taught by LDS Church leaders until recent years, and the belief is still found amongst the membership.)**¹²

Chapters 31 and 32 - Nephi's argument for being baptized and receiving the Holy Ghost. **(For a history of baptism and why it does not belong many hundreds of years before John the Baptist see below.)**¹³

Ch. 33 – Nephi's final argument that the Book of Mormon is true. **(Joseph Smith's argument for the Book of Mormon)**

¹¹ There is doubt that the three witnesses physically saw and felt the plates. See the following:

<http://www.mormonthink.com/witnessesweb.htm>

¹² <https://www.mrm.org/white-and-delightsome>

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_baptism#:~:text=John%20the%20Baptist%2C%20who%20is,such%20as%20pouring%2C%20were%20used.

Jacob

Chapters 1 and 2 – Nephi dies, and an unnamed Second King begins in “somewhat wicked practices” like David and Solomon. Polygamy of the Old Testament is condemned, and the Nephites are told not to practice it. However, it is added that sometimes God may command it. **(Joseph Smith began the institution of polygamy a few years after the Book of Mormon was published and taught the exact opposite of this Book of Mormon chapter in his revelation in Doctrine and Covenants 132: 38-39. It says that David and Solomon’s polygamy was ordained of God.)**¹⁴

Ch. 3 – Nephites are warned their skins will be darker than Lamanites if they do not repent. **(1800s racist worldview in a curse of dark skin because of sin.)**¹⁵

Ch. 4 – Jacob argues that all prophets of old believed in a future Christ. **(Modern Christian View of the Old Testament - Old Testament prophets did believe in a future Messiah, but this level of Christian theology contained in this chapter did not exist in this era.)**¹⁶

Ch. 5 – A story about an olive tree. **(A shorter version of this story is found in the New Testament in Romans 11:17-24)**

Ch. 6 – Commentary on the olive tree story.

Ch. 7 – An argument with a man that does not believe in Christ who is struck down and then admits he was wrong. **(New Testament similarities to Paul in Acts right after using Paul’s writings for the olive tree story in Romans 11)**

¹⁴ Although Doctrine and Covenants 132 lays out rules for polygamy, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young did not follow those rules and often would marry women who were married to other men at the same time (polyandry). For more information:

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/plural-marriage-in-kirtland-and-nauvoo?lang=eng>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zina_D._H._Young

¹⁵ Until recent years, a curse of dark skin was also taught by Church leaders to be the explanation of the origin of Blacks. Unlike the curse on Native Americans, their “curse” denied them the Priesthood and Temple Ordinances. For more information:

https://www.fairmormon.org/answers/Mormonism_and_racial_issues/Blacks_and_the_priesthood/Statements

For a current perspective from the LDS Church’s website see the following essay:

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics-essays/race-and-the-priesthood?lang=eng>

Unfortunately, many in the general membership are unaware of this essay and still embrace these racist views.

¹⁶ “Modern Christian View of the Old Testament” will appear again throughout this document. Throughout the Old Testament period of the Book of Mormon, the characters have a fully developed Christian theology that would not exist yet for many hundreds of years. They are disconnected from Old Testament practices such as the Law of Moses and polygamy. They fully embrace faith in Jesus and baptism, they know the future New Testament characters, and even use the same language style and have borrowed words from people who will not be born for many years into the future. A “Modern Christian View” is problematic if a “translator” is placing these ideas in a pre-Christian age.

Enos

One chapter with a story. Enos goes to the woods to pray for forgiveness and has a revelation. **(It has similarities to Joseph Smith going to the woods to ask for forgiveness in early accounts of the First Vision)¹⁷**

Jarom

Short chapter that says, “what could I write more than my fathers have written?” Then offers a quick review of what has led to that point.

Omni

This short chapter covers two hundred years and reveals very little. Joseph Smith needed to move the story along in years quickly. It ends with a King Mosiah who like **Moses** leads his people through the wilderness many years. He translates writings of God on a large stone, like Moses and the tablets with the 10 commandments. **(Exodus)** There is another group from Israel there who lost their religion and language. The plates are passed to King Benjamin.

Words of Mormon

This is the transition to the next set of plates. Mormon does not know why, only God knows, but there are two sets of large plates with the same stories. One set is just a more condensed version of the other set. **(Joseph Smith first wrote 116 pages of the Book of Mormon but lost them due to a confrontation with the wife of Martin Harris who believed that he was being deceived by Joseph Smith for his money.¹⁸ Joseph Smith needed an explanation for this problem within the text of the Book of Mormon. In this way Joseph Smith could retell the stories from before, and if they did not perfectly match, it would still be acceptable to Martin Harris who was financing the publication of the Book of Mormon. The contribution of Martin Harris got Joseph Smith and his family out of debt.)**

Large Plates

Mosiah

Ch. 1 - Explains that they kept their religion because of the plates, not like the group in Omni. This is a justification of Nephi killing Laban for the brass plates.

Chapters 2 – 6 - The people gather in tents to hear King Benjamin’s “fire and brimstone” sermon. The people fall to the ground filled with the Spirit. **(Modern Christian Views: An 1800s styled tent revival meeting common to Joseph Smith’s environment.)**

Ch. 7 – Another group of Nephites merge back in with this group, and they are introduced.

Ch. 8 - More plates are discovered with another earlier group of people called Jaredites.

¹⁷ <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/first-vision-accounts/1832-account?lang=eng>

¹⁸ <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/history/topics/lost-manuscript-of-the-book-of-mormon?lang=eng>
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Harris_\(Latter_Day_Saints\)#Book_of_Mormon_financier](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Harris_(Latter_Day_Saints)#Book_of_Mormon_financier)

Chapters 9 – 13 (**Moving Storyline**) In the Reign of the Kings in the Book of Mormon there is a wicked King named Noah who is led into false beliefs by his priests. A prophet appears in the land named Abinadi who calls the people to repent or a famine will come in the land. He says that King Noah¹⁹ and his priests will be killed and eaten by dogs. In the Reign of the Kings in the Old Testament there is a wicked King named Ahab, who marries Jezebel, a believer in Baal. She leads him to follow the prophets of this religion. Elijah the prophet declares that they must repent or a famine will come. He says that King Ahab and his court will be killed and eaten by dogs. **(1 Kings 16-17, 21)**

Ch. 14 - Isaiah 53 (**Old Testament**)

Ch. 15 – “God himself shall come down” and will be the Son of God because of the flesh but His Spirit will be the Father. He is “the very Eternal Father of heaven and earth”. “They are one God.” **(Joseph Smith’s early teachings embraced trinitarian language that evolved over time. Joseph Smith even changed the Book of Mormon in many passages to get rid of trinitarian language.²⁰ The different First Vision accounts show this evolution.²¹)**

Ch. 16 – Argument that the Law of Moses is just a preparation for Jesus. **(Modern Christian view of the Old Testament: Before Christ’s coming, people in the Book of Mormon are Christians and the Law of Moses is downplayed.)**

Chapters 17 – 18 (**Moving Storyline**) Abinadi’s message convinces a Priest of Noah named Alma to repent and he gathers a group of followers at a fountain of water called Mormon. Elijah meets a servant of King Ahab named Obadiah at a fountain of water where they come up with a plan. Elijah gathers the 450 prophets of Baal for a challenge to light a sacrifice on fire. The prophets of Baal fail to call down fire. Elijah buries the alter with water then calls down fire from heaven. In the Book of Mormon, Alma buries his people in water through baptism and they receive the Holy Ghost (baptism of fire). The number gathered at Mormon was 450 (1 King 18).²²

Chapters 19 – 23 (**Moving Storyline**) In the Reign of the Judges in the Bible, a warrior named Gideon cuts down with the sword the symbols of the Baal worshippers who were their enemies. He and his army were vastly outnumbered, so they attacked at night and were victorious. The

¹⁹ King Noah is described in the Book of Mormon as a “winebibber” or drunk. In the Bible in Genesis 9, Noah gets drunk with wine.

²⁰ This entry shows a detailed chart of the trinitarian language Joseph Smith removed from the Book of Mormon in later editions. <http://mit.irr.org/joseph-smiths-changing-doctrine-of-deity>

²¹ <https://josephsmithfoundation.org/docs/comparison-of-9-first-vision-accounts/>

²² Joseph Smith chose the foundation of the Church of Christ in the Book of Mormon to begin with 450 when his Bible parallel labeled the 450 as the prophets of Baal. The name Baal does not appear in the text of the Book of Mormon, however, every major story in the Old Testament about Baal appears recreated in the Book of Mormon. Baal is associated with the planet Jupiter and through Michael Quinn’s research it is known that Joseph Smith was obsessed with the occult, astrology, and Jupiter. For more on the connection of Baal to Jupiter and Joseph Smith’s connection to Baal/Jupiter see the following:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Marduk>

Quinn, D. Michael. Early Mormonism and the Magic World View. Signature Books, Salt Lake City, 1998. Ch. 3

people wanted Gideon to be King, but he said it was better to have Judges. There was also a warrior named Gideon in the Book of Mormon that went to cut King Noah down with the sword. King Noah escapes because Gideon and his men are surrounded by the invading enemies, the Lamanites. Then, Gideon at night, sneaks his people and all their possessions away from the sleeping army of Lamanites. Gideon is a hero. The people then want Alma to be King, but he says it is better to have Judges (**Judges 6-9**).

Ch. 24 – People are ordered to stop praying or they will be put to death. The righteous escape at night. (**Old Testament Story - Daniel and the Lion's Den in the book of Daniel, Ch. 6 - People were ordered to stop praying or they would be put to death. Daniel prayed and was sentenced to death by being thrown in the Lion's Den but survived the night and escaped.**)

Ch. 25 – Another group joins with the Nephites and is baptized.

Ch. 26 – The King gives the right to judge the people to Alma who is the leader of the church.

Chapters 27 – 28 (**Moving Storyline**) Alma the Younger and the Sons of Mosiah (**Paul in Acts**)

Alma the Younger with the Sons of Mosiah in the Book of Mormon and Paul in the Bible, all persecuted the church. Paul had a visitation from Jesus who asked why he was persecuting him and the church. Alma had a visitation from an angel of the Lord who asked why he was persecuting the church. Paul and Alma both had men with them who experienced only part of the vision by hearing the voice but not seeing the vision (unnamed men in the Bible, Sons of Mosiah in the Book of Mormon). Paul and Alma were helped by those men to get home because of being incapacitated. Paul was blind for three days and Alma the Younger could not move or talk for three days. A disciple healed Paul and he immediately began to preach. The priests all gathered to fast and pray that Alma the Younger would be healed and then he immediately began to preach. Paul became a great leader in the church and traveled throughout the Middle East and Europe preaching to the different branches of the church. Alma the Younger became a great leader in the church and had many travels in the land preaching to the different branches of the church in the Americas. The sons of Mosiah also preached throughout the land (**New Testament book of Acts Ch. 8-9**).

Ch. 29 – The nation changes from Kings to Judges. (**The Bible has a Reign of Kings and Judges**)

Alma

Ch. 1 – Gideon is killed by Nehor, a false priest, and priestcraft begins in the land. (**As soon as Gideon in the Bible dies, worship of Baal enters the land**)

Ch. 2 – Amlici a follower of Nehor, gains a following, and becomes King of those people that follow his priestcraft. (**Gideon in the Bible wanted Judges, but his son followed Baal and became King in the book of Judges 8-9**)

Ch. 3 – Amlicites mark their faces red. Lamanites are dark skinned so that there is not race mixing. **(Red Man stereotype of Native Americans²³, inter-racial marriage ideas of the 1800s)²⁴**

Ch. 4 – **(Moving Storyline Above)**

Ch. 5 – Alma gives a message to the church. He reminds them about Abinadi, and that they should look to “the good shepherd” **(St. John 10)**.

Ch. 6 – **(Moving Storyline Above)**

Ch. 7 – A prophecy about the life of Christ. **(The Gospels in the New Testament and some verses of the writings of Paul in 1 Corinthians 13)**

Chapters 8 – 14 **(Moving Storyline Continued)** - Alma is rejected and then goes back where he has success after partnering with Amulek. They teach in this area for many days. They initially have success, but ultimately are thrown in prison. The lawyers question Alma, but he does not speak. They suffer much, but eventually they are miraculously saved without doing anything. The prison walls collapse as well as the people who accused them. **(In the 18th Chapter of Acts, Paul is rejected but goes back where he has success after partnering with Crispus. Paul stays and teaches for a while. Then the people get angry with Paul, they arrest him and bring him before the judgement seat. They argue their case against Paul. However, Paul never speaks in his own defense. He does not have to do anything and miraculously the Judge permits him to leave unharmed. The Judge drove his accusers away.)**

Ch. 15 – Alma and Amulek travel to a new place. Zeezrom, a believer there, is sick with a fever. Alma heals him and then establishes a church in this area. **(Acts 28:7-10 Paul is received by a man sick with a fever. He heals him. Others come to be healed. Paul is honored in this land.)**

Ch. 16 – Alma continues preaching, the followers of Nehor are destroyed and eaten by dogs. **(Completion of the story in Mosiah, see Bible parallel in that section above)**

Missions of the Sons of Mosiah with the same experience as Alma (Paul)

Chapters 17 – 25 **(Moving Storyline)** Ammon (a son of Mosiah) travels on a mission to the Lamanites and is brought before King Lamoni of the Lamanites to be killed. He wins over the king by taking care of his horses **(No horses have been found in the archaeological record²⁵)**

²³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Redskin>

²⁴The LDS Church has a long history of opposing interracial marriage and support for segregation. It has begun to denounce some of those things in recent years. However, no public apology has ever been offered to the members of the Church for the damage done to minorities.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interracial_marriage_and_The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_people_and_Mormonism

²⁵The apologetic response here is that some prehistoric horse bones have been found. However, they are dated thousands of years before the Book of Mormon begins. They also propose the possibility of the horses of the Book of Mormon being tapirs or deer:

<https://www.ldsliving.com/Why-Are-Horses-Mentioned-in-the-Book-of-Mormon/s/87074>

and then saving his flock of sheep with a heroic battle against a large group of men with a sling in stones. He only kills the leader with the sword. **(David and Goliath again)** The king listens to him explain the Holy Spirit, and the king falls down and is asleep for three days like Alma **(Paul),²⁶** filled with the Spirit. The other sons of Mosiah come, and many join the church in this area. However, most of the Lamanites do not believe and there is contention and war. After the conflict, the sons of Mosiah finish their mission. **(Acts 18-19 Apollo, a mighty preacher, teaches in Ephesus. Paul then arrives and teaches them about the Holy Spirit. They had been baptized but did not know about the gift of the Holy Spirit. He baptizes them again and gives them the gift of the Holy Spirit. Many miracles take place. However, there are divisions amongst the people, the majority does not believe, and Paul leaves.)**

Ch. 26 – Summary of the missions. An argument occurs about boasting. It is approved to boast if it is about God. **(Writings of Paul in 2 Corinthians 10-12)**

Ch. 27 – Ammon’s converted Lamanites come and become the people of Ammon.

Ch. 28 – A battle takes place between Nephites and Lamanites.

Ch. 29 – Alma wishes he could teach the whole world. **(Paul was the most well-known missionary and attempted to teach as much of the world as he could.)**

Ch. 30 – Korihor wants a sign that there is a Christ. Alma gives him a sign. Korihor is cursed to be dumb and eventually is trodden down. **(Follows the same pattern as many times before in the Book of Mormon, people who do not believe in Christ are struck down. Also, in 1 Corinthians Ch. 1, Paul says the Jews want a sign to believe and that this is foolishness.)**

Ch. 31 – Alma goes to the Zoramites who have many idols of gold and silver. They have in a synagogue a holy stand high above the head where they go to worship called the Rameumptom. They go up on the stand where they repeat the same words each time. They declare on the stand that there is no Christ. They reject Alma. **(In Acts 17, Paul goes to Athens. They do not believe in Jesus. They have gold and silver idols. They have an altar on a hill with the statement “To the Unknown God.” They worship there. They reject Paul.)**

Ch. 32 – Sermon by Alma on faith. Faith is like a seed. **(Matthew 13 parable of the good seed)**

Chapters 33 – 34 Unknown prophets Zenos and Zenock’s teachings. Zenock was stoned for belief in Christ. Moses believed in Christ. **(In Acts 6, Stephen is stoned to death for belief in Christ. The claim was that he blasphemed Moses.)**

Ch. 35 – Preparations for war.

²⁶ Outside of the stories connected to Baal, stories about Paul are the most prominent in the Book of Mormon. Joseph Smith said that he viewed his life to be like Paul’s in Joseph Smith History 1:24.
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/pgp/js-h/1?lang=eng>

Ch. 36 – Alma retells his story to his son Helaman. (**Previous ideas, this chapter contains a “chiasmus,” see below for more information**)²⁷

Ch. 37 – Alma gives the history of the Book of Mormon. (**previous ideas**)

Ch. 38 – Alma retells his story to his son Shiblon. (**previous ideas**)

Ch. 39 - Alma tells Coriantum to repent of sexual sin and believe in Jesus. (**Similar to Paul’s writings in 1 Corinthians 5 and 6**)

Chapters 40 and 41 – Alma continues writing to Coriantum about the Resurrection. (**Similar to Paul’s writings in 1 Corinthians 15**)

Ch. 42 - Alma continues his speech to his son on justice and mercy. (**Similar to Paul’s writings in Roman’s 5**)

Ch. 43 – Captain Moroni prepares the Nephites for battle. They are fighting for liberty and freedom from a monarchy. They want rights such as freedom of religion. (**American Revolution Theme/ Joseph Smith enjoyed stories as a child of Captain Kidd and his pirate adventures on the islands of Comoros, capital city Moroni.**)^{28 29}

The Final Years Leading up to the Coming of Christ

Joseph Smith relied heavily on the Bible for parallels. The King James Version of the Bible has a gap of several hundred years between the Old Testament and New Testament.³⁰ Joseph Smith had no material there to do a parallel in the New World. However, he had plenty of material in the New Testament about the years leading up to the Second Coming of Christ. The coming of Christ in the Book of Mormon is a parallel to the Second Coming of Christ as prophesied in the New Testament.

Moving Storyline- There are many “wars and rumors of wars” from Alma to 3 Nephi 7. There are antichrists. There are storms, earthquakes, and fires. (**Matthew 24: 3-8**) Darkness covers the land and a great earthquake happens. Christ comes in the clouds. (**Matthew 24:29-30**) The

²⁷ The LDS Church uses the chiasmus as evidence of the historical authenticity of the Book of Mormon. It is a form of writing where the ideas are presented forward and then in reverse. The following is an article of its importance to the Church’s view:

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/new-era/1972/02/chiasmus-in-the-book-of-mormon?lang=eng>

Although Joseph Smith certainly did not know what a chiasmus was, he and everyone uses this style of speech within English quite frequently. One of the most famous speeches in U.S. history by President John F. Kennedy contains a chiasmus: “Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.” For a detailed argument against the chiasmus as proof of authenticity see the following:

<http://www.utlm.org/onlineresources/chiasmusandthebom.htm>

²⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moroni,_Comoros

²⁹ Palmer, Grant H. "Joseph Smith, Captain Kidd, Cumorah, and Moroni." The John Whitmer Historical Association Journal 34, no. 1 (2014): 50-57. Accessed November 3, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43200576>.

³⁰https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intertestamental_period#:~:text=Traditionally%2C%20it%20is%20considered%20t%20o,530%20BC%20to%2070%20AD).

wicked are destroyed, and only the righteous remain. Peace lasts for hundreds of years after Christ's coming. (**Revelation 20:1-5**)

Ch. 44 – Battles begin. Moroni “scalps” the leader of the Lamanites. (**Joseph Smith’s origin of “scalping” amongst Native Americans**³¹)

Ch. 45 - Alma repeats the prediction that the Nephites will be destroyed and then dies or is carried up by the spirit.

Ch. 46 – Moroni makes a flag to represent liberty to lead them. (**American Revolution**)

Ch. 47 – Nephite dissenters join with the Lamanites and become their leaders. (**Many Americans wanted to retain Kings during the American Revolution and fought or aided the British.**)

Ch. 48 – A description of the greatness of Captain Moroni.

Ch. 49 - The Nephites made big mounds of dirt to protect themselves. (**Mound Builder Myth**³², **Joseph Smith explaining the origin of the mounds in his surroundings built by Native Peoples.**)

Ch. 50 – More mound building. Nephites possess the land near large bodies of water in the North. (**Joseph Smith taught the geography of the Book of Mormon to be all of North and South America. It appears the events here are occurring near the Great Lakes Region where Joseph Smith lived.**)³³

Ch. 51 – The Nephites are split between kingmen and freemen. (**In the American Revolution, Americans were divided into King’s Men and Free Men**)

Ch. 52 – More “wars and rumors of wars.”

Chapters 53 - 58 – More war. There are many battles fought by Helaman and the 2000 “stripling” warriors and none of them die because of their faith. (**Again, parallels David, a young man with faith miraculously saved in battle, who was referred to as a “stripling” by Saul after defeating Goliath in 1 Samuel 17:56**)

Chapters 59 - 62 – Moroni gets angry with the government because they are not aiding his army with supplies and do not seem to care about the war effort. He finds out that there is a group that supports having a king. Moroni calls them traitors to the country and fights them. (**Both of Joseph Smith’s Grandfathers served in the American Revolution under George Washington.**³⁴ **One of the most well-known stories about George Washington was the time**

³¹ There is debate on the origin of scalping amongst historians. Some claim it was introduced to the Native Americans from Europeans, while others claim that Native Americans were already practicing it prior to the European arrival.

³² <https://www.ohiohistory.org/learn/collections/archaeology/archaeology-blog/2011/june-2011/the-moundbuilder-myth>

³³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Proposed_Book_of_Mormon_geographical_setting#Joseph_Smith's_statements_regarding_Book_of_Mormon_geography

³⁴ <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/ensign/1971/02/heritage-of-a-prophet?lang=eng>

that his army was not getting supplies for their war effort. He was angry because his men were suffering. The Continental Congress struggled with many issues in providing help. Also, many merchants and landowners were more concerned with their profits than the war, and Washington thought of them as traitors to the country.)^{35 36}

Ch. 63 – The story of Hagoth sailing away with his people. **(This story is the origin of the idea amongst Mormons that Pacific Islanders are also Lamanites.)³⁷**

Helaman

Ch. 1 – More war.

Ch. 2 – The beginning of the Gadianton Robbers with their secret combinations and oaths. **(Anti-Masonry sentiment at the time of Joseph Smith.)³⁸**

Ch. 3 – Summary of past events.

Ch. 4 – Nephites are defeated in war because of unrighteousness. **(In the wars in the Bible, if the people are righteous, they succeed in battle. If they are wicked, they struggle in battle. The Book of Mormon parallels this idea.)**

Ch. 5 – Helaman’s sons named Nephi and Lehi are taught by him and then go preach in the land to the Lamanites. Nephi and Lehi convert thousands of Lamanites by appearing to be two heavenly beings in a “pillar of fire.” **(Joseph Smith claimed to have seen two heavenly beings in a pillar of fire, and desired to use the Book of Mormon to convert Native Americans/Lamanites.)**

Chapters 6 - 9 - These converted Lamanites became more righteous than the Nephites. **(Joseph Smith taught early church members that before the Second Coming the Lamanites would be the most righteous and lead the church.)**

Ch. 10 – Nephi receives the sealing power **(Joseph Smith claimed to receive the sealing power.)**

Ch. 11 – The wickedness in the land gets worse.

Ch. 12 – Speech on repentance.

Chapters 13 – 15 Samuel the Lamanite is visited by an angel and receives “glad tidings” about the coming of Christ. He prophesies about the sign of a new star when Christ is born and the signs of destruction at his death. He warns the people to repent or they will be destroyed at

³⁵ <https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/the-revolutionary-war/ten-facts-about-the-revolutionary-war/>

³⁶ <https://washingtonpapers.org/resources/articles/supply-problems-plagued-the-continental-army-from-the-start/>

³⁷ <https://rsc.byu.edu/book-mormon-alma-testimony-word/hagoth-polynesians>

³⁸ Vogel, Dan. "Mormonism's "Anti-Masonick Bible"." The John Whitmer Historical Association Journal 9 (1989): 17-30. Accessed November 3, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43200831>.

Christ's coming. (**Shepherds in the Nativity story/ Second Coming Narrative in the Gospels of the New Testament**. Joseph Smith also taught that before the Second Coming a great Lamanite prophet would lead the church in preparation for the Second Coming. A detailed account of this belief in a Lamanite prophet is found in the "Proclamation to the Kings" sent by Brigham Young and the Quorum of the Twelve to the rulers of the world.)³⁹

Ch. 16 – Those who believe Samuel the Lamanite are baptized by Nephi.

3 Nephi

Ch. 1 – The new star appears, and many are converted. (**Gospels of the New Testament**)

Chapters 2 – 7 Many forget the sign within a few years and most of the people become more wicked. There becomes more of a separation between the righteous and wicked. There are more "wars and rumors of wars." (**Second Coming Narrative in the New Testament**)

Chapters 8 – 11 There are fires, storms, whirlwinds, earthquakes, and darkness for three days. The wicked mourn, wishing they had repented before the "great and terrible day." Many cities are destroyed. The wicked are destroyed, and the only survivors are the most righteous people. Jesus speaks from the skies and then descends in the clouds to those gathered at the temple. (**Second Coming Narrative in the New Testament**)

Chapters 12 - 14 - Jesus calls 12 disciples and then gives the Sermon on the Mount. (**Mat. 5 – 7**)

Chapters 15 - 16 - Jesus says that they are the "other sheep" he spoke of in the Bible. (**John 10**)

Ch. 17 – Jesus performs miracles like healing the blind and lepers. (**Miracles in the Gospels**)

Ch. 18 - Jesus teaches the sacrament and the gospel of faith, repentance, baptism in the church. Jesus leaves. (**The Gospels**)

Ch. 19 – The twelve disciples begin baptizing the people. Jesus reappears amongst them. Jesus is exceedingly white and the twelve become as white as Jesus. (**Race theme: God, Jesus, and the righteous are white.**)

Ch. 20 – Jesus miraculously provides bread for the sacrament. (**The miracle of the loaves and the fishes in Matthew 14**)

Ch. 21 - Jesus prophesies about the discovery of America, the Book of Mormon, and that their descendants will accept the book and will build the New Jerusalem with the Gentiles. (**All predictions found throughout the Book of Mormon**)

Ch. 22 – (**Isaiah 54**)

Ch. 23 – Jesus approves of the words of Isaiah and Samuel the Lamanite.

Chapters 24 and 25 – (**Malachi 3 and 4 of the Old Testament**)

³⁹ <https://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/digital/collection/NCMP1820-1846/id/2818/>

Ch. 26 – Jesus taught the church to gather often. They had all things in common, meaning they shared their wealth where there was no rich or poor. (**Law of Consecration plan**)⁴⁰

Ch. 27 – The church should be called by the name of Jesus Christ. (**Joseph Smith follows this pattern**)

Ch. 28 – Three Nephites live forever on the Earth (**John 21 parallel**)

Ch. 29 – The Book of Mormon will come in a time when people will deny the gifts of God. (**Joseph Smith’s experience, Joseph Smith History in the Pearl of Great Price**)

Ch. 30 – The readers of the Book of Mormon are commanded to repent.

4 Nephi

After a while they divide back into Nephites and Lamanites. The Gadianton Robbers return. There is peace for hundreds of years without rich or poor people. (**Millennium parallel from the Second Coming Narrative**)

Final Chapters

Mormon

Ch. 1 – Mormon provides a detailed biography about his life. (**Mormon’s biography is identical to Joseph Smith’s biography (see Joseph Smith History in the Pearl of Great Price.)**⁴¹ They both shared the same names as their fathers. Both had fathers who moved them to a new land around the age of 11. Both had visions of the Lord around age 15. Both were rejected for their beliefs in gifts of the spirit. Both were in the middle of warring opinions. Both were concerned with “slippery treasure” or treasure digging. Mormon started work on the plates at age 24. Joseph Smith wrote the current Book of Mormon at age 24. **This is the only detailed biography with age descriptions in the entire Book of Mormon and it happens to match the biography of Joseph Smith exactly. Other characters have some descriptions but not to this level.**)⁴²

Chapters 2 – 4 Final battles of the Book of Mormon are waged. Mormon and his son are the only believers.

Ch. 5 – Mormon prophesies the Nephites will be destroyed and that the Lamanites would survive and that their descendants would read the Book of Mormon and come to the truth. (**Repeated prediction**)

⁴⁰ A common theme in the Book of Mormon is the argument when the people share their wealth with their church leaders they prosper, and when they do not share their wealth they are destroyed. This argument was made by Joseph Smith for the law of consecration. This system financially sustained him and his family the rest of his life and made his successor Brigham Young one of the wealthiest men in the West.

⁴¹ <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/pgp/js-h/1?lang=eng>

⁴² By making Mormon’s character identical to himself, Joseph Smith is blatantly signaling to the reader that he is Mormon, the writer of the book. Since Mormon is the title of the book and he is the compiler of the Book of Mormon history, Joseph Smith is telling the reader that it is the Book of Joseph Smith.

Ch. 6 – Nephites are down to only 24 men. Mormon and his son Moroni are among them.

Ch. 7 – Mormon pleads with Lamanite readers to believe the Book of Mormon. (**Joseph Smith’s plan to convert the Native Americans/Lamanites**)

Ch. 8 – Moroni takes over the plates. Writes all the churches will be wrong and just want money when the Book of Mormon comes forth. (**Joseph Smith’s argument against joining other churches**)

Ch. 9 – Moroni asks the readers of the Book of Mormon to repent and believe in miracles. (**Joseph Smith’s argument to believe in the Book of Mormon**)

Ether: Short Stories From **Genesis/Exodus** and Moroni’s Argument for Belief in the Book of Mormon

Ch. 1 – Ether is the writer of the Jaredite Plates. Ether provides a long genealogy of himself all the way back to the Tower of Babel to a character named Jared and his brother. (**Genesis has long texts of genealogy and the Tower of Babel story.**)⁴³

Ch. 2 – The brother of Jared and his people are guided through the wilderness by the Lord in a cloud. They are going to travel to the promised land in barges where they will thrive if they are righteous or destroyed because it is a “land choice above all other lands.” They will be carried to the promised land by “rains and floods”(**The children of Israel and Moses are led by the Lord in a cloud in Exodus, and they build arks like Noah’s for the “rains and floods.” American pride explains the “land choice above all other lands.”**)

Ch. 3 – The brother of Jared sees the finger of the Lord as it touches the stones. The Lord then shows the brother of Jared his entire body. (**Moses sees the finger of the Lord write the 10 Commandments on the stone tablets and then God shows his whole body to Moses. Exodus 31-33**)⁴⁴

Ch. 4 – There are more plates to be revealed in the future once people accept these writings. (**Possible Future book plans by Joseph Smith**)

Ch. 5 – There will be three witnesses to the Book of Mormon. (**Self-fulfilling prophecy**)

Ch. 6 - They travel in barges with their animals. The barges were like the “ark of Noah.” (**Genesis**) Kingdoms begin in the promised land even though they were taught there should not be kings in the land. (**Reoccurring theme**)

⁴³ The Old Testament stories such as Adam and Eve, the flood, Tower of Babel, etc. are viewed as literal history in the Book of Mormon with no room to view any of these stories symbolically. For a believer that all things in the Bible are a literal history, this is not problematic. However, for many Christians or Jews who interpret some Old Testament stories as symbolic, the Book of Mormon texts do not support their views.

⁴⁴ Moses was the spiritual leader of Israel and his brother Aaron was the spokesman or the face of the brother leadership combination. Jared was the face of the brother leadership combination in Ether. The brother of Jared is the spiritual leader.

Chapters 7 and 8 – The kingdoms begin righteous, but over time become wicked. They start having secret combinations. Readers are warned not to participate in secret combinations. **(Reoccurring theme)**

Ch. 9 – 11 Wickedness increases in the land. They have wars and problems. **(Reoccurring theme)** The land has pigs, horses, and elephants. **(Not in the archaeological record)**⁴⁵

Ch. 12 – Moroni lists some important events in the Book of Mormon past. **(Reoccurring theme)**

Ch. 13 – Ether prophesies of a New Jerusalem that will have the believers in the Book of Mormon. **(The idea that New Jerusalem was America was a commonly held belief in early America)**⁴⁶

Ch. 14 – Ether, the last man of the Jaredites, watches millions kill each other in battle. Even when only two men are left, they battle and kill each other. Ether records this story. (Moroni is also the last man standing of the Book of Mormon Nephites writing the final pieces to finish his father's work.)

Moroni: (Instructions for the establishment of the Church)

At this point, Joseph Smith is almost finished with the text and is thinking about what he needs to start a church such as ordinations, rules on baptism, sacrament prayers, etc.

Ch. 1 – Moroni says that he thought he was done writing but thought he would add a few more things.

Chapters 2 and 3 – Instructions on the laying on of hands. The priesthood offices are elders, priests, and teachers. How to ordain them.

Chapters 4 – 6 - The Sacrament Prayers and instructions. Rules on who can take the Sacrament.

Ch. 7 – Faith, hope, and charity sermon. **(Writings of Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 and Hebrews 11)**

Ch. 8 – Infant baptism is wrong.

Ch. 9 – A final letter from Mormon about the final destruction of the Nephites. They are so wicked that there are blood sacrifices and they are eating people. They all are destroyed. **(A similar description is found amongst the Israelites worshipping Baal right before Jerusalem is destroyed and the House of Israel is scattered in Jeremiah 19)**

Ch. 10 – Moroni asks the reader to ask God if the Book of Mormon is true. There are different gifts of God. Remember faith, hope, and charity. Be perfected in Christ. Farewell. **(This chapter uses many verses from the Bible. A few are Isaiah 52: 1, 1 Corinthians 12, and Matthew 21:21-22)**

⁴⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anachronisms_in_the_Book_of_Mormon

⁴⁶ <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/apocalypse/explanation/puritans.html>

Summary of the Storyline

1 Nephi and 2 Nephi – 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel – Stories of David

Jacob – Acts 9 and Romans 11 - Writings and Experience of Paul

Enos, Jarom, Omni, Words of Mormon – Transition to the Next Plates – Explaining 116 lost pages

Mosiah - Book of Judges and 1 and 2 Kings – Stories of Gideon, Stories of King Ahab and Elijah

Alma – Book of Acts and Epistles of Paul – Stories of Paul and his missions

War Chapters at the end of Alma through Helaman – American Revolution/Mound Builder Myth

Helaman, 3 Nephi, and 4 Nephi – The Gospels and the Second Coming Narrative

Mormon, Ether, Moroni – Final Chapters – Mormon/Joseph Smith History, Final Destruction, a short story from Genesis/Exodus, Final Argument for the Book of Mormon, and a Guide for Starting a Church.

Conclusion

Joseph Smith did not need special knowledge or learning to produce the text of the Book of Mormon. The text relies almost entirely on the King James Version of the Bible for its storyline and content. There are a few cultural, religious, historical, and political ideas from his environment that are found within the text, but this also does not require any special knowledge from the writer. Joseph Smith did not need co-conspirators, secret stolen manuscripts, or other hidden source material. All that was required to accomplish the task was the ability to read the Bible and to then change the characters' names and put the Bible stories in his own words.⁴⁷

The purpose of this document is to provide the research needed to assess the validity of the Book of Mormon as a translated document of ancient America. This document does not deal with the value of the book for spiritual teachings, moral principles, or theological views. Although the Book of Mormon has been demonstrated to be plagiarized, the content is overwhelmingly Biblical. For this reason, a believer in the Book of Mormon does not have to abandon faith in the Bible after understanding this material.

⁴⁷ Many studies have been done using computer programs to identify the number of different writers in the Book of Mormon by following language patterns to prove that Joseph Smith could not have written the text. These studies demonstrate that there are many different writing styles found within the Book of Mormon. This is taken as evidence that Joseph Smith was not the writer of the Book of Mormon. However, it does not rule out an individual who plagiarizes from multiple writers. This evidence can also support the argument that he plagiarized from the Bible, because the Bible was written by many different writers. Joseph Smith took from a variety of books throughout the Old Testament and New Testament. If Joseph Smith plagiarized from the Bible there should be many different writing styles in the Book of Mormon as these studies demonstrate. The following link shows some of these studies:

<https://knowhy.bookofmormoncentral.org/knowhy/what-can-stylometry-tell-us-about-book-of-mormon-authorship>