

Brief Notices

From Jerusalem to Zarahemla: Literary and Historical Studies of the Book of Mormon, by S. Kent Brown (Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1999)

The ten scholarly studies collected in this volume represent a harvest of almost two decades of close and careful reading of the Book of Mormon. In these studies, Kent Brown draws on his training and experience in biblical studies, applying methodologies long used in the reading of biblical texts to the texts of the Book of Mormon with surprising and satisfying results. He asks questions of the Book of Mormon and finds that the text often contains much evidence that has previously been overlooked. The answers Brown finds are always insightful.

Six of the studies were previously published in various places and appear here significantly revised with updated bibliographies. These include a discussion of Lehi's record; the now-classic study of the Exodus pattern in the Book of Mormon; a study of six elements of Alma's conversion story, traceable throughout his sermons; the identification and analysis of prophetic lament forms in the words of Samuel the Lamanite; an article on Jesus' visit to the Americas; and a comparison of Moses and Jesus. Readers will appreciate having these articles together in one volume.

The four new studies will undoubtedly lead to further discussion. Readers of the Book of Mormon will find here new and sometimes unexpected insights about important issues: the nature of the sacrifices offered by Lehi in the wilderness, why Nephi chose to include Isaiah in his writings, the possible legal aspects of the abducted Lamanite daughters in Mosiah 20, and the meaning of the terms "sojourn," "dwell," and "stay" in relation

to Lehi's journey in the wilderness. For example, through a detailed word study of the pertinent terms used in 1 Nephi, Brown comes to the surprising conclusion that Lehi and his family experienced a "period of servility" (59) in their experience in the wilderness. Such studies raise a very important issue regarding the proper usage of Hebrew word studies in Book of Mormon scholarship. Some readers may disagree with Brown's conclusions in this study, but then again, they might not ever read this section in the same way again.

This collection deserves careful attention. As described by the author, these studies "set out the dimensions and complexities of the Book of Mormon record" without being "attempts to finalize what can or cannot be known about a subject" (x). They invite us to read the Book of Mormon more closely, and they provide useful models for future scholarly work in Book of Mormon studies.

—David R. Seely

A Lively Hope: The Suffering, Death, Resurrection, and Exaltation of Jesus Christ, by Richard Neitzel Holzapfel (Bookcraft, 1999)

A Lively Hope might be called a meditation on the death and resurrection of Christ based on the text of the four Gospels. Though not exactly a commentary, the volume nevertheless follows the commentary format: the work is divided neatly in two—the first half considers the Passion narratives, the second, the Resurrection narratives. Holzapfel discusses each Gospel separately but avoids repetition by treating major subjects only once, referring from the other narratives to the main discussion. In addition, after an

introductory summary of the development of Gospel harmonization and canonization, Holzapfel, a member of the Brigham Young University religion faculty, makes an eloquent argument for studying and evaluating each Gospel on its own merit rather than attempting to harmonize or build a parallel structure; therefore, the structure of his book is neither a harmony nor a parallel (4–6).

A notable strength of this book is its treatment of the original Greek of the Gospels. The original language of the text often has bearing on Holzapfel's understanding of the scripture. He is also often sympathetic with modern biblical textual criticism (rather than suspicious of it as is sometimes the case with LDS biblical scholarship), and he frequently shows how LDS belief and non-LDS biblical criticism may be compatible or at least not mutually exclusive. For example, he notes that the most reliable early manuscripts of Mark do not include 16:9–20, and therefore current scholarship generally does not accept these verses as part of the text. However, he points out that such a conclusion should not *per se* cause difficulties with Latter-day Saints, who believe the Bible to be the word of God only as far as it is translated correctly, leaving open the possibility of incorrect transmission of the text (170). He is also not afraid to challenge accepted beliefs, as when he debates the claim that the trial of Jesus was illegal (44–45).

Holzapfel is known for his books of photographs of Church history sites. While *A Lively Hope* has only one illustration, the text itself contains wonderfully visual descriptions of the geography of the Holy Land. Particularly noteworthy is the description of Christ's route to Gethsemane (133–34).

The discussion of the Resurrection narratives is the weakest section, with only a few pages devoted to each Gospel. The work is also somewhat marred by typographical errors and the repetition of phrases, which may be attributed to

an apparent lack of copyediting. Nevertheless, Holzapfel has written an enjoyable and thought-provoking book—one that is to be recommended.

—Robert L. Maxwell

New Genesis, a Mormon Reader on Land and Community, edited by Terry Tempest Williams, William B. Smart, and Gibbs Smith (Gibbs Smith, 1998)

Perhaps no political issue is more divisive in the Mountain West Mormon community than environmental conservation. *New Genesis, a Mormon Reader on Land and Community* is a collection of essays that represent a wide spectrum of Mormon views on conservation, excluding only the advocates of unrestrained development. This collection may help to ease tensions among disparate stakeholders in Utah's open spaces.

The predominant nature of the essays is autobiographical: in most, the author sets out to tell or illustrate the roots and meaning of his or her conservation ethic. Many of the stories are grounded in family history and experience, making the collection a valuable contribution to Utah history as well. Some of the essayists address certain aspects of the Utah Mormon paranoia about federal intervention and control that manifests itself in an unwillingness to control growth even when its destructiveness is apparent. Other authors recount the gradual loss of the farms, streams, or wild spots of their youth.

The Mormon tent shelters both those who love the land for itself and those who view development as the prime good. However, advocates of conservation have often felt excluded from the dialogue on resource use. Many of the essays probe the pain of authors who unravel the tightly woven fabric of Mormon history and culture, separating the threads of stewardship and conservation from those of economic growth and development.