

■ 1 Nephi 8:31

*and he also saw other multitudes
[prfsing 0 | feeling 1ABCDEFGHIJKLMNQRST] their way
towards that great and spacious building*

There are no scriptural uses of “feeling one’s way”. Here scribe 3 of \mathcal{C} wrote *prfsing* (where *f* stands for an elongated *s*). Scribe 3’s initial *p* looks like an *f*, so when Oliver Cowdery copied the text, he misread *pressing* as *feeling*.

Similar descriptions in Lehi’s dream always use *press* rather than *feel* when referring to the movement of people:

- 1 Nephi 8:21
and I saw numberless concourses of people
many of whom were **pressing** forward
- 1 Nephi 8:24 (two times)
I beheld others **pressing** forward . . .
and they did **press** forward through the mists of darkness
- 1 Nephi 8:30 (two times)
behold he saw other multitudes **pressing** forwards . . .
and they did **press** their way forward

Other examples of “pressing forward” are found in 2 Nephi 31:20 (two times) and Ether 14:12.

Summary: Restore *pressing* in 1 Nephi 8:31 since this is what scribe 3 of \mathcal{C} intended to write down; the text consistently uses the verb *press* rather than *feel* in this semantic context.

■ 1 Nephi 8:32

*and it came to pass that many were drowned
in the [deph 0 | debths 1 | depths ABCDEFGHIJKLMNQRST] of the fountain*

When copying from \mathcal{C} to \mathcal{P} , Oliver Cowdery interpreted the original manuscript’s *deph* (in the hand of scribe 3) as the plural *depths*, although one could also interpret *deph* as representing the singular *depth*. Thus the question is whether *deph* stands for *depth* or *depths*.

Possible evidence that *deph* stands for *depths* can be found in Nephi’s version of Lehi’s dream, where the plural is used to refer to this same fountain of water:

- 1 Nephi 12:16
behold the **fountain** of filthy water which thy father saw
yea even the river of which he spake
and the **depths** thereof are the **depths** of hell

Generally speaking, we have the plural *depths* in the Book of Mormon text: “depths of the sea” (14 times), “depths of the earth” (4 times), “depths of sorrow” (1 Nephi 16:25), and “depths of the mysteries of him” (Jacob 4:8). When actually measuring physical depth, the singular is of course used (“the depth of the ditch” in Alma 49:18).

Summary: Maintain the reading of the original manuscript in 1 Nephi 12:17 (“that they perish and are lost”); the 1852 edition restored the original reading, probably because the editors noticed the inconsistency of “they may perish and are lost”.

■ 1 Nephi 12:18

and a great and [a 01ABCDEFGHIJLMOPQRST | GHKN] terrible gulf divideth them

There has been a strong tendency in the history of the text to accidentally omit a repeated indefinite article when conjoining adjectives. As noted under 1 Nephi 11:35, many conjoined adjectives in the Book of Mormon text have a repeated indefinite article. Here in 1 Nephi 12:18, the original text read “a great and a terrible gulf”. The 1858 Wright edition accidentally dropped the repeated *a*, as did the 1906 LDS large-print edition. (The 1874 and 1892 RLDS editions followed the 1858 Wright text.) We shall see many examples of this tendency to lose the repeated *a* in the history of the text, mainly because speakers of modern English do not expect such repetition. For a list of examples, see CONJUNCTIVE REPETITION in volume 3.

The original text, however, is not particularly systematic about whether the *a* should be repeated or not, even for specific adjectives. For instance, when *great* and *terrible* are combined, the *a* is not repeated except in 1 Nephi 12:18:

1 Nephi 12:18	a great and a terrible gulf
1 Nephi 18:13	a great and terrible tempest
3 Nephi 8:6	a great and terrible tempest
3 Nephi 8:11	a great and terrible destruction
3 Nephi 8:12	a more great and terrible destruction

In each case, we follow the earliest textual sources, which means that in 1 Nephi 12:18, the *a* is repeated.

Summary: Maintain the repeated *a* in 1 Nephi 12:18 since this is the reading in \mathcal{O} ; such repetition occurs fairly often in the text.

■ 1 Nephi 12:18

and a great and a terrible gulf divideth them
yea even the [sword 0 | word 1ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRST]
of [NULL >+ the 0 | the 1ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRST] justice of the eternal God

Scribe 2’s initial *s* in the original manuscript looks like an undotted *i*, so that *sword* looks like it begins with a four-stroke *w* (rather than the expected three-stroke *w*). Yet nearby examples of *s*-initial words clearly show that we have *sword* in the original manuscript and not *word*. (See, for instance, *saw* and *seed* on line 38 of page 19 in \mathcal{O} , five lines below *sword*.) When Oliver Cowdery copied from \mathcal{O} into \mathcal{P} , he misread the strange looking *sw* as simply a *w*, thus leading to the current reading, *word*.

There are no other examples of “the word of justice” in the Book of Mormon text, but there are seven other examples of “the sword of justice”:

Alma 26:19	the sword of his justice
Alma 60:29	the sword of justice
Helaman 13:5	the sword of justice (two times)
3 Nephi 20:20	the sword of my justice
3 Nephi 29:4	the sword of his justice
Ether 8:23	the sword of the justice of the eternal God

The last example has precisely the same phraseology as the original reading in 1 Nephi 12:18 (“yea even the sword of the justice of the eternal God”).

This parallel from Ether also supports the definite article *the* before *justice*. Originally in \mathcal{O} , scribe 2 wrote “the sword of justice”, but then he supralinearly inserted the *the*. The level of ink flow for the *the* is somewhat heavier, but it is the same as the ink flow for the following phrase (“of the Eternal God”), which means that scribe 2 dipped his quill after writing the word *justice*, then inserted the *the* and continued writing the text.

Summary: Replace *word* with *sword* in 1 Nephi 12:18; \mathcal{O} actually reads this way, and elsewhere the text refers to “the sword of justice”, never to “the word of justice”.

■ 1 Nephi 12:18

and a great and a terrible gulf divideth them
yea even the sword of the justice of the eternal God
and [Jesus Christ 0A | Jesus Christ >js Mosiah 1 | the Messiah BCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRST]
which is the Lamb of God

This passage contains the first occurrence of the name *Jesus Christ* in the Book of Mormon text (excluding the title page, which was written by Moroni about a thousand years later). This entire passage from verses 16–18 in 1 Nephi 12 is a direct quote of the angel’s words to Nephi (verse 16 begins “and the angel spake unto me saying”, and verse 19 follows the quote with “and while the angel spake these words”). The next time the text uses the name *Jesus Christ* is much later, after Nephi has finished quoting Isaiah 2–14 in 2 Nephi 12–24:

2 Nephi 25:19
 for according to the words of the prophets
 the Messiah cometh in six hundred years
 from the time that my father left Jerusalem
 and according to the words of the prophets
 and also the word of the angel of God
 his name should be **Jesus Christ** the son of God

Here Nephi specifically refers to the fact that the angel of God revealed the name of the Messiah and that his name would be “Jesus Christ the Son of God”. And *Jesus Christ* is precisely what the

■ 1 Nephi 15:36

wherefore the wicked are
 [seperated 0 | rejected 1ABCDEF GHIJKLMNOPQRST] from the righteous
 and also from that tree of life

The reading *seperated* (spelled as *seperated*) is found on a small extant fragment that originally came from the bottom of page 29 of \mathcal{O} . This fragment can be seen still barely attached at the bottom of a gathering of sheets in the ultraviolet photographs at the LDS Church Historical Department. A legible ultraviolet photograph of this now-separated fragment (along with other fragments from the original manuscript) can be found in folder 80, box 2.

When he copied from \mathcal{O} into \mathcal{P} , Oliver Cowdery misread the word *seperated* as *rejected*. Not only do these two words have the same visual contour, but *seperated* is the next-to-last word on page 29 of \mathcal{O} . As he flipped the leaf of \mathcal{O} over to page 30, Oliver may have read the last part of the line too quickly.

Elsewhere in the Book of Mormon, people are separated as a result of sin and judgment. There are no other textual examples where the verb *reject* is used to describe the rejection of one group of people by another group. And although the wicked can be “rejected from” the righteous (even though the pronoun *from* instead of *by* seems very strange here), it is very difficult to conceive of how the wicked can be “rejected from . . . that tree of life”. Such an expression just doesn’t make sense: the tree is not an animate being that rejects unacceptable recipients. In fact, an earlier verse expresses the same idea that the wicked are separated, not rejected, from the tree of life:

1 Nephi 15:28
 and I said unto them that it was an awful gulf
 which **separateth** the wicked from the tree of life
 and also from the saints of God

Thus the original reading in 1 Nephi 15:36 is consistent with usage elsewhere in the text.

Summary: Restore the reading of the original manuscript in 1 Nephi 15:36 (“the wicked are **separated** from the righteous and also from that tree of life”); the parallel passage in 1 Nephi 15:28 supports this reading.

■ 1 Nephi 15:36

and also from that tree of life
 whose fruit is most precious and most desirable
 [of 0 | above 1ABCDEF GHIJKLMNOPQRST] all other fruits

As discussed under 1 Nephi 13:26, the original preposition *of* should be restored here in 1 Nephi 15:36. Even though the result is not fully logical, the use of *of* seems intended.