

Book of Mormon Outline – Mike Baird

Angel Moroni Visits	1
Joseph Smith obtaining the plates	1
Perspective on Translation	1
"Sight and Power to Translate"	2
Lost 116 pages	3
A Marvelous Feat of Inspiration	3
Rapidity of translation	3
Joseph did not go back and revise	3
Joseph was unschooled in things ancient	4
Joseph worked without referring to other sources	4
Publishing the Book of Mormon	4
Purpose of the Book of Mormon	4

Angel Moroni Visits

- Joseph Smith 1:29-43
- Joseph Smith 1:44-45
- Joseph Smith 1:46-47
- Joseph Smith 1:48-49

Joseph Smith obtaining the plates

- 1st Attempt was 22nd Sept 1823
 - Moroni told of plates in hill (later named Cumorah after a name in the Book of Mormon)
 - Received shock and was rebuked by Moroni because of focus on \$ not proper
 - Come every year for instruction
- Received plates 22nd Sept 1827
 - Early in Morning (just after midnight)
 - Hid them in an old birch log
 - Had to hide them as others tried to take them
 - Eventually had to move to Emma's parents house

Perspective on Translation

- Done by the gift and power of God
- Neal Maxwell
" His was not the tranquil life of a detached scholar in some sheltered

sanctuary where he could work at his uninterrupted leisure. Chores had to be done. His family had to be cared for. " ("By the Gift and Power of God," Ensign, Jan. 1997, 36)

- Neal Maxwell

"Upon inquiring, Hyrum was told by the Prophet Joseph that "it was not intended to tell the world all the particulars of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon" and that "it was not expedient for him to relate these things" (History of the Church, 1:220). Thus what we do know about the actual coming forth of the Book of Mormon is adequate, but it is not comprehensive." ("By the Gift and Power of God," Ensign, Jan. 1997, 36)

"Sight and Power to Translate"

- Joseph Smith alone knows how it was done but he did not describe details
- Several observers (Martin Harris, David Whitmer, Joseph Knight) noted that by use of the interpreters the words would appear in English to be read by Joseph and written by the scribe
 - Apparently did not the usual process of going back and forth between the original text and providing a translation
 - Joseph apparently did not need to become expert in the ancient language
 - Apparently the plates would not even be open in front of him but rather would be closed under a piece of cloth
- Process not easy
 - Oliver Cowdery failed (D&C 7-9)
 - David Whitmer tells of times when Joseph could not translate
 - Rough Stone Rolling Pg 76-77
 - Neal Maxwell

"Whatever the details of the process, it required Joseph's intense, personal efforts along with the aid of the revelatory instruments. The process may have varied as Joseph's capabilities grew, involving the Urim and Thummim but perhaps with less reliance upon such instrumentalities in the Prophet's later work of translation. Elder Orson Pratt of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said Joseph Smith told him that he used the Urim and Thummim when he was inexperienced at translation but that later he did not need it" ("By the Gift and Power of God," Ensign, Jan. 1997, 36)

Lost 116 pages

- April – June 1828 book of Lehi translated
- To placate Martin Harris' wife
- Joseph asked multiple times – was told no at first
- Martin broke the covenant and began showing it to whomever
- Plates and power to translate were taken away
- D&C 3: Should have feared God more than man
- D&C 10: Power to translate restored

A Marvelous Feat of Inspiration

Neal Maxwell lays out four marvels of the Book of Mormon translation

Rapidity of translation

- 65 working days
 - ~10 pages per day
 - 1 page per day is considered very good today for translation (with computers, references etc.)
 - Most done in May – June 1829 with Oliver Cowdery as scribe

Joseph did not go back and revise

- Emma Smith
"“After meals, or after interruptions, [Joseph] would at once begin where he had left off, without either seeing the manuscript or having any portion of it read to him”” (“Last Testimony of Sister Emma,” Saints’ Herald, 1 Oct. 1879, 290)
- No need to go back and revise divinely supplied text
- Spelled out difficult names
 - Neal Maxwell
" Emma does mention, however, and so does David Whitmer, the Prophet’s spelling out of unfamiliar names, letter by letter, especially if asked by the scribe. For instance, Oliver Cowdery first wrote the name Coriantumr phonetically. He then immediately crossed out his phonetic spelling and spelled the name as we now have it in the Book of Mormon. Coriantumr with its “-mr” ending clearly would have required a letter-by-letter spelling out by the Prophet." (“By the Gift and Power of God,” Ensign, Jan. 1997, 36)

Joseph was unschooled in things ancient

- Example: Early in the work he came across words concerning a wall around Jerusalem and asked Emma if the city indeed had walls. She affirmed what Joseph simply hadn't known. (See E. C. Briggs, "Interview with David Whitmer," Saints' Herald, 21 June 1884, 396.)

Joseph worked without referring to other sources

- Neal Maxwell
"None of the 12 people who either participated or merely observed mentioned Joseph's having any reference materials present. (The 12 people were Emma Smith, Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery, Elizabeth Ann Whitmer Cowdery, David Whitmer, William Smith, Lucy Mack Smith, Michael Morse, Sarah Hellor Conrad, Isaac Hale, Reuben Hale, and Joseph Knight Sr.) Since the Prophet dictated openly, these individuals would have been aware of any suspicious behavior or procedures. Emma was emphatic on this very point: "He had neither manuscript nor book to read from, [and] if he had anything of the kind he could not have concealed it from me" ("Last Testimony of Sister Emma," 289, 290)." ("By the Gift and Power of God," Ensign, Jan. 1997, 36)

Publishing the Book of Mormon

- March 26, 1830

Purpose of the Book of Mormon

- Joseph Smith
"the title page of the Book of Mormon is a literal translation, taken from the very last leaf, on the left hand side of the collection or book of plates, which contained the record which has been translated; the language of the whole running the same as all Hebrew writing in general; and that, said title page is not by any means a modern composition either of mine or of any other man's who has lived or does live in this generation" (Times and Seasons, 15 Oct. 1842, 943)