

# The Coming Forth of the Book of Mormon

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Institute Fall 2015

# Bro Daniel Peterson

- Today, Mormonism and Western society seem to be parting ways in crucial respects. They're no longer aligned...In an era when such things aren't appreciated, Mormonism seems socially retrograde and corporate to many outside observers. Mormonism's patriarchal orientation, for example, is, to put it mildly, out of fashion in fashionable circles. Its emphasis on heterosexual marriage is often seen as hateful, its insistence on fidelity within marriage as somewhat quaint, and its requirement of chastity outside of marriage as transparently ridiculous.
- Young minds are particularly sensitive to peer pressure and fashions, and, consequently, it's unsurprising that the relatively sudden collapse of external social support for core Mormon values seems disproportionately to affect the younger generation. *That generation is also exceptionally "wired," and has therefore been hit with an onslaught of attacks based on Mormon history for which traditional Church instruction has left them woefully unprepared.*
- I'm convinced that those attacks can be met, but the fact remains that, because the details of its history aren't safely lost in, say, the distant biblical past, Mormonism is more open to such attacks, in a very real sense, than are most other, older, religious traditions.







# Ensign, Oct 2015

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On October 25, 1831, Joseph Smith attended a conference in Orange, Ohio. During the conference, his brother Hyrum said he “thought best that the information of the coming forth of the book of Mormon be related by Joseph himself to the Elders present that all might know for themselves.”

According to the minutes of the meeting, Joseph “said 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.”<sup>23</sup>

Having matured in his role as seer and coming to believe that seer stones were not essential to revelation, perhaps he worried that people might focus too much on how the book came forth and too little on the book itself.

# Training of a Prophet

**“And the Lord said: I will prepare unto my servant Gazelem, a stone, which shall shine forth in darkness unto light”**

(Alma 37:21, 23)

**1822 Seer Stone**



# Parley Pratt

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- At a meeting on June 28, 1874...Elder Pratt told his audience about being “present many times” when Joseph Smith “was translating the New Testament.” Seeing no interpretive instruments in use during the translation process, he wondered why Joseph “did not use the Urim and Thummim, as in translating the Book of Mormon.”
- As Elder Pratt watched the Prophet translate, “Joseph, as if he read his thoughts, looked up and explained that the Lord gave him the Urim and Thummim when he was inexperienced in the Spirit of inspiration. But now he had advanced so far that he understood the operations of that Spirit, and did not need the assistance of that instrument.”<sup>21</sup>



# Notable Background

## Keeping the Plates Safe

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Palmyra locals Samuel Lawrence and Willard Chase

Joseph directed his father to: “stay until dark and if he saw any signs of his (Lawrence) going [to the hill] you [tell] him if I find him there I will trash the stumps with him!”

Mrs. Wells in Macedon



# Notable Background

## Martin Harris and the Three Wisemen

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“...there was a book deposited written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent and the source from whence they sprang.”

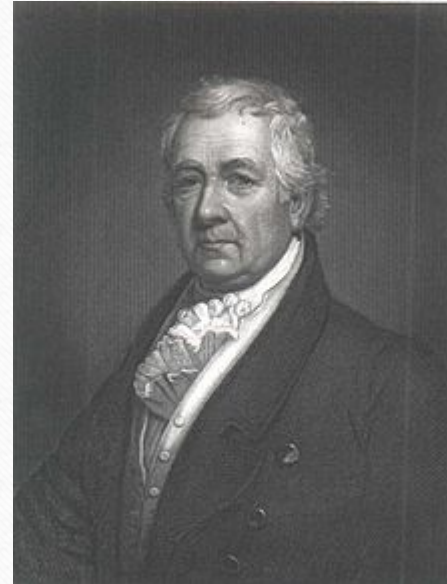
Martin Harris vision

Luther Bradish

Samuel L. Mitchill

- Knew the Mohawk language

Charles Anthon



# Caractors

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The Book  
 Generator  
 Spain

# New Church Paradigms

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It used to be “not all history is helpful”.

Now we are seeing: “Our history, warts and all, needs to be told by us.

And, seeing very human people and organizations mature, is faith enhancing.”



# Bro. Terryl Givens

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Joseph Smith provides an example of doubt honestly acknowledged, honestly engaged, and powerfully profitable. He tells us that even after a heavenly vision, even after being told by Jesus Christ that his sins were forgiven, he again fell into doubt about his spiritual standing before the Lord.

He sought assurance and clarity, and the result was an angelic visitation, a divine commission, and the start of his prophetic career (which he dated to Moroni, not the First Vision).

Imagine the trajectory of the restoration, if someone had told young Joseph—stop worrying and asking questions.

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**EVIDENCE**

## THE TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES

BE IT KNOWN UNTO ALL NATIONS,  
KINDREDS, TONGUES, AND PEOPLE, UNTO  
WHOM THIS WORK SHALL COME, THAT WE,  
THROUGH THE GRACE OF GOD THE FATHER,  
AND OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, HAVE SEEN  
THE PLATES WHICH CONTAIN THIS RECORD,  
WHICH IS A RECORD OF THE PEOPLE OF  
NEPHI, AND ALSO OF THE LAMANITES, THEIR  
BRETHREN, AND ALSO OF THE PEOPLE OF  
JARED, WHO CAME FROM THE TOWER, OF  
WHICH HATH BEEN SPOKEN; AND WE ALSO  
KNOW THAT THEY HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED  
BY THE GIFT AND POWER OF GOD, FOR HIS VOICE  
HATH DECLARED IT UNTO US: WHEREFORE  
WE KNOW OF A SURETY, THAT THE WORK IS  
TRUE. AND WE ALSO TESTIFY THAT WE  
HAVE SEEN THE ENGRAVINGS WHICH ARE  
UPON THE PLATES: AND THEY HAVE BEEN  
SHOWN UNTO US BY THE POWER OF GOD, AND  
NOT OF MAN.

DAVID WHITMER

# Truth....

A deep, questioning study of the Book of Mormon will reveal to even the most skeptical, that it is a deeply complex document. It not only teaches powerful doctrines, it reveals the authors themselves.

And it reveals that it is exactly what Joseph says it was: an ancient record, not a product of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

