

IS THE BOOK OF MORMON AN ABRIDGMENT?

The Book of Mormon claims to be an abridgment of records made by the Nephites. Mormon and later his son Moroni abridged the records. Moroni wrote in Mormon 9:33 that that they had to make the abridgment on small plates and write in Egyptian and not Hebrew for Hebrew would take up more room though it would be better than Egyptian for expression. Mormon said that he wanted to make a small record (3 Nephi 5:15). Jarom also complained about the small size of the plates and not being able to write more (Jarom 1:14). There are other indications that there was no space on the plates for writing much (Jarom 1:14; Ether 3:17; Mormon 9:33). This is an indication of forgery by Smith. None of it holds water for these men could have made more plates.

But there are several indications that the book was not written on plates that were too small for much space is wasted and the book frequently fails to live up to being an abridgment.

First, there is the nauseous repetition of the phrase, "And it came to pass". There is no need for it at all.

Secondly, several places contain unnecessary detail and elaboration and take too long to say what could be said in four or five words.

Helaman 2:13,14, "And behold, in the end of this book ye shall see that this Gadianton did prove the overthrow, yea, almost the entire destruction of the people of Nephi. Behold I do not mean the end of the Book of Helaman but the end of the book of Nephi, from which I have taken all the account which I have written."

There was no need for any of this at all. And why didn't he make the first sentence, "in the end of this book of Nephi ye shall see" etc? That would have been shorter and the clumsiness of the passage looks like Joseph Smith made a mistake and said the latter stuff as an afterthought. Mormons blame Mormon for this mistake but he would have been undoubtedly extremely careful for engraving on the plates was a laborious task. The mistake is more probably one of Joseph Smith's and it shows that the passage was written in a hurry. Since God allegedly wrote the Book of Mormon God forgot then what he was writing about!

Mosiah 12:18,19 could have been condensed into: "They asked the king to bring him before them for questioning and this was done and he was able to defend himself and they were astonished." The original takes 82 words to say this! What do you make of this: "but he answered them boldly, and withstood all their questions, yea, to their astonishment; for he did withstand them in all their questions, and did confound them in all their words"?

3 Nephi 4:28 says that Zemnariah was hanged on a tree until he was dead and when he was hanged until he was dead the tree was cut down. Why not just say that Zemnariah was hanged on a tree and it was felled after he died?

Alma 24:15 is so similar to Alma 24:14 that the two could have been truncated into one verse. It is about burying swords so that they will be a testimony at the last day.

And why does the Book of Mormon have large portions of the Old Testament from the King James Bible in it when God knew these portions would not be lost to the future generations? There is no evidence that these texts have much relevance to the Nephites in America so there was no point to all that quoting.

1 Nephi has Nephi saying that he makes an abridgment of the record of Lehi. The needless detail surrounding Lehi seeing a pillar of fire and having visions that were not disclosed appears in 1:6,7. That could have been left out.

After 116 of the Book of Mormon were translated from a part known as the Book of Lehi they were lost forever and it is believed that an enemy of Smith burned them.

What was the point of Nephi explaining why he never gave the genealogy of Lehi in 1 Nephi 6:8 because it was on the record made by Lehi? Nephi must have thought the Book of Lehi, which comprised the 116 missing pages of the Book of Mormon, would be translated or be found again if it was lost so this is a false prophecy. After all this Nephi writes that a full account of Lehi "cannot be written upon these plates, for I desire the room that I may write of the things of God" (6:3). His assertion then about the book of Lehi must have been a thing of God.

Ether 8:20. Moroni says he will not describe the oaths of the secret societies of the Jaredites for the Lamanites have the same oaths. Smith forgot here that Moroni was supposed to be writing for us and not for his own people as he was the last

of God's people. But here Moroni writes as though we could go the Indians who are the Lamanites of today to see what the oaths entailed.

Close to the liquidation of the Nephite people, Mormon declared that he gave his son a few plates to write on (Mormon 6:6). But Moroni got more than a few because he wrote the rest of the Book of Mormon and then the Book of Ether and then Moroni making about fifty-two pages in the Book of Mormon.

Ether 1 contains a genealogy. What need was there for it when the names appeared in the story anyway? And who cares who was who's father?

There is another problem too. The Book of Mormon makes 522-531 pages and it is made up of only one third of the golden plates which were eight by six and six inches thick. Mormons believe that the translated portion had about 45 plates in it. That would mean 135 plates altogether. Smith said the plates were less thick than common tin (History of the Church, Vol 4). Whitmer said they were as thick as common tin. This would imply that one side of the plates was used for engraving for the engraving had to be deep and gold was a soft metal and bumps would appear on the other side to destroy the writing. Yet the Mormons need both sides to be engraved and in the tiniest characters to get the whole Book of Mormon on them (The Restored Church, page 41, Salt Lake City, 1956). The tiny characters would be too hard to engrave. The Book of Mormon is just too long. Charles Anthon wrote that what he saw on the sheet copied from the plates that Martin Harris showed him was in perpendicular columns which ended in a rough drawing of a circle with divisions inside it. There were drawings on a forged version that the Church recognised as the real version showing that the real version would probably be something the same. This drawing and stuff would take up even more space on the plates so we conclude that the Book of Mormon is just too long.