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## Bible Quotations in the Book of Mormon

Author(s): E. Cecil McGavin

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**Abstract:** This series deals with a wide variety of aspects of the Book of Mormon including Joseph Smith, Obadiah Dogberry, ancient fortifications, metal plates, Spaulding theory, clarifications of biblical doctrine, the abridging work of Mormon, record of the Jaredites, differences between the Bible and the Book of Mormon, witnesses of the Book of Mormon, history, literary qualities, Hebrew traits in the book, its relation to the Bible, and evidence of its antiquity. The twelfth part discusses Biblical quotations in the Book of Mormon.

# Bible Quotations In The Book Of Mormon

By ELDER E. CECIL MCGAVIN

Author of "Mormonism and Masonry" and "Cumorah's Gold Bible."

ONE of the problems that all critics have called to our attention is the practice of the Nephite prophets quoting from the Bible. It has been said by certain opponents that these quotations were taken word for word from the Bible. We must correct this false impression.

Certain scholars have suggested the probability that while translating the Book of Mormon, Joseph Smith kept the open Bible beside him and copied from the corresponding text in the King James Version unless there was to be a definite and drastic change to be made in the sacred text. This would explain the presence in the Book of Mormon of the vocabulary of the scholars of 1611.

The Nephite Record quotes 433 verses from Isaiah, yet 234 of these are changed in some noticeable respect. In other words, 54 per cent of the quotations from Isaiah are not in the "exact language of the Bible." In these verses 48 per cent of the italicized words are changed, thus proving that Joseph Smith did not incorporate the full text from the Bible and that he was guided by a more ancient text.

PART XII OF  
"A MARVELLOUS WORK  
AND A WONDER"

Let us consider a few of the many changes in these sections which are said to be verbatim quotations:

In Isaiah 2:9 we read: "And the mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself: therefore forgive them not."

This philosophy contradicts the whole spirit of the Christian religion. The Book of Mormon gives meaning and logic to this verse in this manner: "And the mean man boweth not down, and the great man humbleth not himself, therefore forgive him not."

The next verse in Isaiah reads: "Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty." The Book of Mormon gives this clear meaning to the mysterious text: "O ye wicked ones, enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for the fear of the Lord and the glory of his majesty shall smite thee."

It is a serious misrepresentation to say that the New Testament quotations in the book were taken verbatim from the text without attempting to change them to meet the special conditions and customs of the Nephites. No imposter would have been shrewd enough to have done this as it is so appropriately done in the Book of Mormon. At this point the hand of the deceiver would have been manifested, perhaps more than any other place in the volume.

The Book of Mormon quotes lengthy sections from the Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, or to be more truthful, the resurrected Lord gave to the Nephites the same sermon He

had given on the mount to the Jews. This masterful oration has become the bulwark of Christianity. Surely no deceiver would attempt to improve upon it, yet the Book of Mormon makes many changes in this great classic, every one of which is in the interest of the provincial and local customs of the Nephites.

In speaking to the Nephites the Saviour used the same text that is found in the fifth chapter of Matthew, comprising forty-five verses, thirty of which are different from the text of the King James Version. Thirty-four verses are quoted from the sixth chapter of Matthew, 44 per cent of them being different, while 37 per cent of the material comparable to the seventh chapter of Matthew is changed. These changes are so striking that one is obliged to agree that this material was translated from an ancient text.

The Revised Version which issued from the press in 1885, though based upon a different text entirely to that which the scholars in the time of King James I used, does not make nearly as many alterations in the text as does the Book of Mormon. In the New Testament alone the version of 1885 differs from that of 1611 in 36,191 instances, yet the Book of Mormon introduces more changes than the version of 1885 does in the material it is said to quote from the Bible.

Furthermore, the nature of the changes is more significant than their number. The New Testament mentions many practices, institutions and rituals that were not in existence at the time the Nephites left Jerusalem, about 600 years before the birth of Christ. Since these were not later developed by the Nephites it would have been sheer folly to have repeated the Sermon on the Mount exactly as it was given to the Jews. Let us be specific:

To the Jews the Lord said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

The Nephites did not have a cult of scribes nor a religious party comparable to the Pharisees. If these names had appeared in the records of the Nephites it would certainly have aroused suspicion. The corresponding verse in the Master's discourse to the Nephites simply said, "Except ye shall keep my commandments, which I have commanded you at this time, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Matthew 5: 20; III Nephi 12: 20.

The next verse in Matthew's text bears sufficient evidence to convince any unprejudiced mind that the Book of Mormon is a divine book. To the Jews the Lord is represented as saying:

"But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; . . ."—Matthew 5: 22.

In the Book of Mormon the words "without a cause" are absent from the text. The value of this omission is enhanced when we learn that these two words are absent from all the earliest manuscripts of the New Testament. Scholars are agreed that these three words take away the spirit of Christ from the text. He made no apologies, no allowances.



It seems more like the spirit of the Master to emphasize the fact that he who "is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment."

Authorities are convinced that since these words were not a part of the original sermon, they were added by a person, years later, in an effort to soften this harsh, severe statement. Such conservative translations as the Revised Version in 1885 and the Douay Version omit these words because they were not a part of the original text.

If Joseph Smith had been merely copying from the Bible he surely would have copied these words also. Their absence from the Book of Mormon is strong evidence that it is based upon a text more ancient than the Greek text of Erasmus from which the King James Version was translated.

The words, "the uttermost farthing," become "uttermost senine" in the Book of Mormon. The command to pluck out the sinful eye and cut off the offending hand was not repeated to the Nephites. No people have developed such an exaggerated manner of speech as the Jews had done at the time of Christ. Though this Hebrew trait is present in the early part of the Book of Mormon, it was so uncommon with the Nephites that they could not have caught the full significance of these words. It was not in keeping with Nephite practices to make such exaggerated statements, though to the Jews it became a dynamic and easily-understood figure of speech.

When the early translations of the Bible began to appear in England, the friar Buckingham objected to them on the grounds that when the peasants read this text they would accept it literally and half the people in the realm would be without one eye or one hand, and that the health of all the people would be injured because the bakers would use only a little leaven in the bread.

The Nephites, unaccustomed to Jewish customs in the days of Jesus, might have raised similar objections to this statement.

The command not to swear by Jerusalem is omitted from the Nephite scriptures. They took solemn oaths and the biblical practice of swearing was popular with them, but a command not to swear by Jerusalem was certainly unnecessary since such a thing was more foreign to their minds than it was distant by space.

In addition to such omissions as the ones mentioned, there are many improvements in this famous sermon, such as the following: The Bible extends a promise to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, that they shall be filled. The Book of Mormon declares that they shall be filled "with the Holy Ghost." In the Bible the kingdom of heaven is promised to the poor in spirit, whereas the Book of Mormon restricts it to the "poor in spirit who come unto me."

It must be remembered that the unschooled translator, Joseph Smith, spent only about 90 days in the laborious task of translating this extensive record. In that length of time he could not have thought out the well planned changes that

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Leicester and Loughborough Branch Sunday Schools again took part in the performance, which was beautiful and inspiring. District President George E. Gent and Elder George W. Winfield were speakers. The children were trained under the di-

rection of Sister Eveline Gent, and 57 attended the service.

Leicester Branch Sunday School outing took place at "Braunstone Park," where 26 adults and children had a very pleasant time.



### DEATHS.

**TOMLINSON** — Sister Tryphena Harriet Racy Tomlinson, of record in the Norwich Branch, died on March 24th, 1942, at the age of 80, and was buried at Emneth, nr. Wisbech, where she has resided with her husband for a number of years.

**WHITE** — On Wednesday, 12th August, whilst on holiday in Inverness, Sister Mary Ann Grant White, for 31 years a member of the Glasgow Branch, passed away very suddenly. She was buried in the Tamnahourich Cemetery on Saturday, 15th August.

A memorial service was held in the Glasgow Branch on Sunday, 30th August. Elder Robert McQueen conducted. Speakers were Elder Albert H. Willmott, travelling Mis-

sionary, and Sister Hilda Woodford of the Genealogical Board. Elders Reginald Brown and Alvin L. Gittins, also on holiday in Scotland, sang a duet, "The Lord is my Shepherd." President A. B. McGowan of the Scottish District paid tribute to the late Sister White.

**SCHOFIELD** — Elizabeth Jane Schofield died at the age of 64 on the 17th September, 1942. The funeral service was held under the direction of President Herbert Walker of Leeds, who also dedicated the grave, on Monday, 27th September, 1942. Sister Schofield was baptized 46 years ago in the "Withen River." Lincoln and has been a faithful member.



### PERSONALS.

**JOHNSON**—Elder Alvin I. Holton blessed and named the infant daughter of Sister and Mr. James Johnson of Doncaster Branch on August 23rd, 1942.

**FARMER - MAGUIRE** — District

President Norman Dunn performed the ceremony of marriage of Sister Gwendoline C. Farmer to Mr. Eddie Maguire at Handsworth Chapel, Birmingham, recently. A reception was held in the home of the bride's parents.



### BIBLE QUOTATIONS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

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occur in the Lord's Sermon on the Mount, if unaided by divine inspiration.

The translator of this golden treasure-house of literature met a martyr's doom when but a young man. He could have avoided years of persecution and have escaped the assassins' bullets if he had but said there were no gold plates, no angels, no Urim and Thummim, no revelation. But he was as true to his divine mission as other martyrs have been, and when he sealed his testimony with a crimson seal he left as one of the greatest monuments to his divine inspiration this marvellous book, which is not unworthy of the title "The Gold Bible."