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Nibley as an Apologist

Daniel C. Peterson

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Nibley as an Apologist

Daniel C. Peterson

Listening to that very generous introduction, I'm reminded of a time when I was asked to chair or moderate a session in which Professor Nibley was speaking. I was sitting next to him when someone gave a prayer, and the prayer went on and on and on and on about what a great privilege it was to sit in the presence of this great man, and so on and so forth. And very audibly, about three minutes into the prayer, sitting next to me, I heard him say, "Aw, shucks."

Well, being a missionary companion with Stephen Ricks was a remarkable experience. I sometimes thought it cut into our effectiveness as tracters in Switzerland—which is a pointless exercise anyway, since nobody ever let us in. But we would get involved in Nibley stories and things like that. And we would just slow down to a crawl between apartment buildings, and we had a lot of fun with that. And of course, Professor Ricks's wife, Shirley, who is here in the audience somewhere—there she is—is the absolutely most indispensable person in the creation of the Nibley collected works, as she was indispensable for almost all of its history in the production of the *FARMS Review*, which we like to see as carrying on the Nibley tradition, at least one part of it, in a little way.

FARMS and the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship are, in many ways, simply the lengthened shadow of Hugh Nibley. I doubt that there is any author formally affiliated with the institute who was not decisively influenced by him. Certainly I was. I came to the university as a mathematics major, determined to be a cosmologist and with a life-size poster of Albert Einstein on my wall. But I had already come under Hugh Nibley's spell, and it was not long before I had changed my major

Figure 1. Debbie and Dan Peterson with friends at a "wake" at the home of Michael and Phillip Lyon on March 26, 2005, after the passing of Hugh Nibley.[52]

to—of all things—Greek. And then, when, in a lecture given during one of his many but relatively brief Arabic phases, he advised us to drop whatever we were doing in order to study Arabic, I effectively did. (It wasn't quite that simple, of course, and I did complete a major in Greek, but his was a pivotal influence on me.) Moreover, he had an enormous impact on my family as well. I was able to baptize my father on the night that I was set apart as a missionary to Switzerland (partially Hugh Nibley's own old mission; in the mission home in Zürich, we still had a book that he had annotated), and my father later told me that it was while reading something by Hugh Nibley that, after years of associating more or less with the Church because of his Latter-day Saint wife, my mother, the question had occurred to him, "Is it possible that this could actually be true?" It is a pleasure and an honor to participate in this lecture series commemorating the centennial of his birth.

I've often compared Hugh Nibley to a man who discovers an isolated and deserted house. Flashlight in hand, all alone, and with limited time, he explores it room by room, making preliminary

notes as to their contents and the general floor plan. Later, a larger group comes along to do a systematic survey and inventory of the house. With far better light, more hands and eyes, and more time, their work will sometimes correct that of the first discoverer and occasionally even supersede it in certain respects. But it turns out that he's really been quite good, and, without him, they might never have known that there was a house at all. He has given a good account of its basic layout and identified where the most interesting and useful things are likely to be located. We owe an enormous debt to Hugh Nibley.

Figure 2. "Flashlight in hand, all alone, . . . [Nibley] explores . . . room by room."[53]

What Is Apologetics?

I've been asked tonight to discuss "Nibley and Apologetics." What is apologetics?

From time to time, the question is asked why some of us "apologize" for our religion. Some members of the Church even express discomfort at the thought of "apologetics." But such questions and such discomfort, I think, reflect a misunderstanding of the word. Apologetics is simply "systematic argumentative tactics or discourse in defense (as of a doctrine, a historical character, or particular actions)."[1]

In a very real sense, anyone arguing in a more or less sustained way for or against any position—whether it be the truth of the Latter-day Saint religion or the superiority of atheism, the legitimacy of the United States' intervention in Iraq or the immorality of American foreign policy, the virtues of embryonic stem-cell research or the abhorrent character of euthanasia, the historicity of the Book of Mormon or its authorship by Solomon Spalding, inflationary or noninflationary models of the Big Bang—is engaged in apologetics.

Figure 3. Jacques-Louis David (1748–1825): The Death of Socrates, 1787.[54]

And that is particularly and most obviously so when such a person is *defending* an already-advanced thesis *against* criticisms.

With the exception of such specialized enterprises as editing texts, producing catalogs and bibliographies, and creating lexicons, scholarship typically entails setting out and arguing for positions. Moreover, anybody who seriously holds an opinion must necessarily, when the circumstances require it, *defend* that position. Evolutionists defend their theories against creationists; liberals defend their positions against conservatives; vegetarians defend their views against carnivores; atheists defend their atheism against the arguments of theists. Whether or not arguments are scholarly depends upon the quality and character of the evidence and analysis that they adduce but not upon whether they are or aren't apologetic.

But the term *apologetics* is most often reserved particularly for religious issues, where it is defined as "that branch of theology devoted to the defense of a religious faith and addressed primarily to criticism originating from outside the religious faith; *esp:* such defense of the Christian faith,"[2] or as "that branch of theology in which a body of doctrine is defended against criticism."[3]

According to the standard dictionary of classical Greek, the term *apologia* (ἀπολογία) denoted a «defence," or "a speech in defence." In a Greek courtroom, the plea entered on behalf of a defendant (an *apologoumenos* [ἀπολογούμενος]) was known as an *apologema* (ἀπολόγημα). All of these nouns are derived from the verb *apologeomai* (ἀπολογέομαι), «to speak in defence."[4] Probably the most notable ancient occurrence of the word is to be found in the title of Plato's *Apology*, a famous account of Socrates's defense of his behavior as a philosopher before a jury of 501 Athenian men in the spring of 399 BCE. A related use occurs in the Latin title of John Henry Newman's—later, *Cardinal* Newman's—classic 1864 autobiography and "defense of his life," the *Apologia pro Vita Sua*.

In modern Greek, *apologia* retains the meanings of "defense," "plea," and "pleading" but has also come to include "apology" and "excuse" in much the same way that the term *apology* includes those senses in English.[5] But the primary and original sense of *apologia* remains. In German, for instance, an *Apologet* is the "defender of a creed, a viewpoint, or doctrine (especially of the Christian faith)." An *Apologie* is "(particularly in religious discussions) a speech or writing in defense or justification, a defense or justification."[6] Saying "I'm sorry" is done in German by means of completely unrelated words—e.g., *Es tut mir Leid*—and falls under totally distinct dictionary entries.

Under its entry for *apology*, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) lists the following as the first definition: "The pleading off from a charge or imputation, whether expressed, implied, or only conceived as possible; defense of a person, or vindication of an institution, etc., from accusation or aspersion." The *OED*'s first sample sentence for this sense of the term *apology* dates to 1533. The earliest specimen for the second sense—a passage from Shakespeare—comes from the year 1588 and attests to the following definition: "Less formally: Justification, explanation, or excuse, of an incident or course of action."

It's only with the third definition that we come to the sense of the word *apology* that is familiar to most English speakers today: "An explanation offered to a person affected by one's action that no offence was intended, coupled with the expression of regret for

any that may have been given; or, a frank acknowledgement of the offence with expression of regret for it, by way of reparation."

Christian apologetics has a long, complex, and fascinating history. A number of Christian writers in the second century, for example, are often grouped together as "the Apologists." These include Aristides and Athenagoras of Athens, Theophilus of Antioch, and Minucius Felix. But the most famous of them, surely, is St. Justin Martyr (ca. 100–ca. 165 CE). He was born to Greek parents in the region known biblically as Samaria and was educated in Stoic, Peripatetic, Pythagorean, and finally Platonic philosophy at Ephesus before he converted to Christianity at about the age of thirty. His overarching theme was that Christianity, which looked pretty unsophisticated by the standards of his elite, educated contemporaries, and which was criticized by them on that basis as well as others, was in fact the true *sophia* or wisdom that the "sophisticated" philosophies of his day reflected only in partial or even garbled form.

Unfortunately, in my judgment, the Apologists, attempting with the best of intentions to make Christianity "respectable," subtly distorted it by assimilating it to the reigning ideologies of the day—just as Philo of Alexandria had done earlier with respect to Judaism, and just as Clement and Origen and others would continue to do. This is a temptation to which modern-day apologists must be very careful not to succumb. In fact, more than a few critics claim that Latter-day Saint apologists have succumbed and are gradually giving away the store. I don't believe this to be the case, but that's a subject for discussion elsewhere.

St. Augustine's famous early fifth-century treatise *The City of God* was written soon after Rome was sacked by the Visigoths in 410 CE. This event left Romans in a deep state of shock, and many saw it as punishment for having abandoned the original pagan Roman religion. Part of Augustine's purpose in writing the book was to argue that, in fact, Christianity was not responsible for the fall of Rome. *The City of God* is, in other words, an apologetic work.

So too are the *Summa theologica* and the *Summa contra gentiles* of the great thirteenth-century Dominican theologian and philosopher St. Thomas Aquinas. And, closer to our own time, we have such prominent English advocates of Christianity as G. K. Chesterton and C. S. Lewis.

The Latter-day Saint Apologetics Tradition

There is, likewise, a robust Latter-day Saint tradition of apologetics, beginning at least with the brother-apostles Parley and Orson Pratt. Orson wrote sixteen pamphlets in defense of Latter-day Saint doctrines, drawing on the works of Joseph Smith Jr. and his brother. These include *Divine Authority, or the Question, Was Joseph Smith Sent of God?* in 1848 and *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon* in 1850 and 1851. These materials were primarily used in the mission field, and many of the scriptural interpretations and arguments that are now as natural to Latter-day Saints as the air they breathe were first developed and deployed by Parley and Orson. More controversially still, Orson Pratt was also a Church spokesman on the topic of plural marriage. In fact, it was at a special missionary conference in Salt Lake City in August 1852 that he publicly announced the doctrine of plural marriage, and he later published an essay in defense of the practice in twelve monthly installments in the Church periodical *The Seer*, which provides the most complete defense of the Latter-day Saint doctrine during this period.

The Seer, which Orson Pratt founded and edited in Washington, DC, in 1853 and 1854, wasn't published for the Saints but to give the Saints a voice in a population center of the United States where they were unable to break into the gentile press, and where the gentile press delighted in publishing rumors and accusations against them. Other such publications include the *Prophet/Messenger* and the *Mormon* in New York City, the *St. Louis Luminary*, and the *Western Standard* in San Francisco.

John Taylor was another notable defender of the faith, always willing to debate the critics, and, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we had the great B. H. Roberts, one of the most brilliant intellectuals the Church has ever produced. And Elder Roberts was succeeded, in part at least, by the superbly educated and cosmopolitan Apostle John A. Widtsoe, which brings us up pretty much to the period of Hugh Nibley.

Today's Latter-day Saint "apologists" can, if they will, legitimately view themselves as, however ineptly, endeavoring to continue an honorable tradition among the Latter-day Saints that extends back far beyond B. H. Roberts's aptly named 1907 apologetic work *Defense*

of the Faith and the Saints to the very origins of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the early nineteenth century. "It is the duty of the Saints," Joseph Smith wrote from Liberty Jail in March 1839,

> to gather up the libelous publications that are afloat; and all that are in the magazines, and in the encyclopedias, and all the libelous histories that are published, and are writing, and by whom, and present the whole concatenation of diabolical rascality and nefarious and murderous impositions that have been practiced upon this people.[7]

It is the scriptural duty of Christians, according to the New Testament, to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" and to "be ready always to give an answer [*apologian*] to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."[8]

Hugh Nibley and Apologetics

No, Ma'am, That's Not History

In 1946, Hugh Nibley published *No, Ma'am, That's Not History: A Brief Review of Mrs. Brodie's Reluctant Vindication of a Prophet She Seeks to Expose*.[9] This was his first apologetic publication—he had already published two professional articles in the *Classical Journal*—and it focused not on ancient history and languages but on nineteenth-century American Latter-day Saints. It was also a work of what might be called negative or genuinely defensive apologetics because it was responding to, and attempting to negate or neutralize, a challenge. The challenge came in the form of Fawn Brodie's still-fashionable secularizing 1945 biography of Joseph Smith, *No Man Knows My History*—hence the punning title of Nibley's response.

Nibley had moved to Salt Lake City in 1946 and was working as an editor for the *Improvement Era* (hired, as he remembered, via an informal conversation with future Apostle Richard L. Evans). "Also doing quite a bit of hack-writing," he wrote to Paul Springer. He may have been referring to his reply to Brodie, "a volunteer project," his biographer Boyd Petersen says, "that he did without assignment

or supervision."[10] He worked on his reply through much of the spring of 1946, and then sent the sixty-two-page manuscript to Bookcraft while he took an excursion into the wilderness of southern Utah. Bookcraft printed it without letting him proof or finalize it; there were a number of mistakes, and the editors toned it down quite a bit.

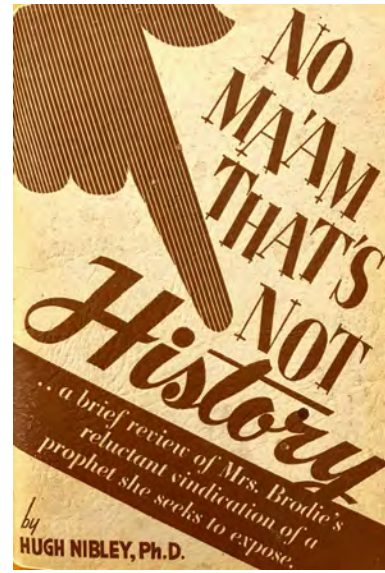

Figure 4. Nibley's critique of Brodie's biography of Joseph Smith.[55]

Nibley criticized Brodie's methodology, argued that her interpretation "takes an awful beating from the law of parsimony," and summarized her position as "Joseph Smith was a complete imposter . . . but he *meant well*."[11] He made his case with devastating humor, even scorn:

> For evolution had made him drunk with pride: "Almost never in these days did Joseph step outside himself and look with surprise and humility upon what he had become." How *does* she know? How can she check up on such a deeply subjective matter? By pure intuition, to be sure. Thus she and she alone can tell us that Joseph's remark, "No man knows my history," was delivered "in a wanton moment of self-searching said with a kind of wonder." Who said so? The reader who has plunked down four dollars has a right to expect something better than proof that is always found to rest on nothing but the woman's instincts. . . .
>
> The culmination of Joseph's megalomania finds him without courage, "empty of conviction when he needed it most." Again we search for the little birdie that tells little Brodie these things. "He stood proudly before his men, betraying nothing of the tumult and anxiety racking him within." Since he betrayed nothing by look, word, or gesture of his inner feelings, we take the liberty to report that he was really thinking of a fishing trip made on his seventh birthday; there is no evidence for

> this, but of course his thoughts were *perfectly* concealed, you know. Is this history? To present as facts what a man might have or could have or even possibly would have been thinking on an occasion when, far from revealing his thoughts, he covers them up, is a good game; but a book built up of alternate layers of psychological speculation and haphazard sources that only support them if accepted with a certain peculiar interpretation—such a book is not history.[12]

And again:

> Mrs. Brodie applauds the honesty of Josiah Quincy's conclusion: "If the reader does not know just what to make of Joseph Smith, I cannot help him out of the difficulty. I myself stand helpless before the puzzle." But not Brodie! On no other evidence than Quincy's own, she tells us what he should have seen but failed to. When Quincy reports that Joseph Smith joked with him about the ridiculous figure he must sometimes cut in the eyes of unbelievers, he simply notes that the Prophet has the sense to acknowledge the humor of the situation (a risk no false prophet would take). This interpretation will never do for Brodie; let Josiah look again: is it not plain that Joseph is expressing a "[mood] of uncertainty and doubt?" Likewise when he says, "I do not think there have been many good men on the earth since the days of Adam. . . . I do not want you to think I am very righteous, for I am not," he is not just speaking plain truths, he is confessing that he has grave doubts as to his calling.
>
> In dealing with Emma, our author allows free rein to her woman's intuition. . . .
>
> When Joseph Smith faced Emma for the last time, "he knew that she thought him a coward." So Brodie knows that Emma knew that Joseph knew what Emma thought! Is this *history*? There might be some merit in this sort of thing if, like the invented speeches of the Greek historian, it took some skill to produce. But, if anything, it is hard for the historian to avoid the pitfalls of such cheap and easy psychology. The business of the historian is to tell what happened, not what someone might have been thinking about what was happening. Does it take any skill or knowledge at all to write that "the Book of Mormon must have been a source of secret worry"?[13]

Brodie was not amused. Nibley's response to her was, she said, "a flippant and shallow piece." And she wasn't alone in her disdain. "Cultural Mormons," observed Louis Midgley,

> who celebrated a new enlightenment with the appearance of Brodie's treatment of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon were often troubled by what they considered Nibley's flippant response to Brodie. Opposition to his views has also been a common feature of the secular, revisionist element in the so-called New Mormon History, which has tended to see in Brodie's account of Joseph Smith the beginning or basic outline of an acceptable naturalistic account of Mormon things.[14]

Thomas Alexander contrasted "the scholarly Marvin Hill's" two reviews of Brodie's book (in *Dialogue and Church History*) with "the rather outrageous Hugh Nibley's *No, Ma'am, That's Not History*."[15] It was, said the atheistic writer Dale Morgan, "something of a slapstick performance."[16] But Nibley's critique of Brodie was, in my view, right on target.

The leaders of the Church clearly approved of, and appreciated, *No, Ma'am, That's Not History*. They supported the sale of Nibley's response to Brodie at the Church's bookstore; President David O. McKay thanked him for it. John A. Widtsoe had already decided that Nibley belonged at BYU: "He would not be an expensive man," Widtsoe wrote to the university's president, "but might become a useful one. . . . I believe we must keep this man for our use." Nibley was hired on May 23, 1946.

The Myth Makers and *Sounding Brass*

He returned to nineteenth-century issues in 1961, with *The Myth Makers*,[17] and in 1963, with *Sounding Brass*.[18] The first was a satirical examination of the critics of Joseph Smith, while the second, subtitled "Informal Studies in the Lucrative Art of Telling Stories about Brigham Young and the Mormons," focused on Irving Wallace's historical potboiler *The Twenty-Seventh Wife* and on the credibility of its heroine, the more or less nonfictional Ann Eliza Webb Dee Young Denning.[19]

I still remember my first readings of *The Myth Makers* and *Sounding Brass*. I laughed until the tears ran down my face. "How

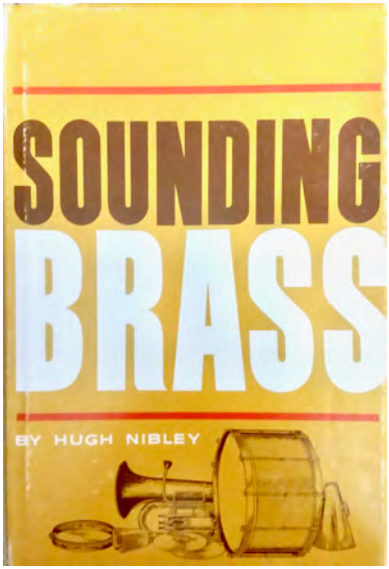

Figure 5. Nibley "tells us how 'the Big White House' of Brigham Young's senior wife became a real barn, with a cow in it."[56]

to Write an Anti-Mormon Book (A Handbook for Beginners)" is not only absolutely wonderful technical advice for the aspiring religious bigot, but wickedly, wickedly funny. Rule 33, for example—"Uphold the tradition! Correct and improve the legends!"—tells us how "the Big White House" of Brigham Young's senior wife became a real barn, with a cow in it:

> But in so doing seek not to scale the heights that Wallace ascends in his story of the cow! Here surely is a rewriting feat of heroic proportions. In 1876 Ann Eliza told how Mary Angell, Brigham Young's first wife, lives in "the old school house behind the Bee-Hive, a dilapidated, cheerless place, not nearly so good as the house she has left." Using the commonest of all expressions to describe big houses, the fastidious Ann Eliza continues, "It is indeed, little better than a barn, and is furnished very scantily." With those key words, barn and old school-house, Wallace performs a minor miracle:
>
> > Mary Ann Angell . . . had the right to claim one-third of his enormous estate under the law. Instead, a constant invalid, she kept to the privacy of her own quarters, the abandoned school-house behind the Lion House, which she shared with a cow who lived in a partitioned stall. On June 27, 1882, at the age of seventy-nine, she died.
>
> Could anything be more withering than that ominous procession of loaded words—right, enormous estate, law, invalid, abandoned schoolhouse, cow, stall, died? Is there a word in the grim passage that is not loaded? It is all there, the dirt, the cold (for cow stalls were unheated in those days), the smells, the loneliness, and the sad patient animal, old age, cruel poverty,

sickness and pain, rights meanly denied by a cynical libertine, property basely stolen, and then finally death and merciful deliverance! And all that, apparently, out of Ann Eliza's gossipy "school-house" and "big-as-a-barn." Who is going to remember amidst choking indignation at such injustice that Mr. Wallace has noted that "Actually Mary Ann Angell, widely respected in Utah, had become a recluse in The White House on the hill."

And what was "The White House on the hill"? One of the finest mansions in the Territory, which Brigham Young had built just for Mary Ann Angell. It served many years as a headquarters of the Elks Lodge, and was not torn down (for the inevitable parking lot) until 1958. While it was being built, Mrs. Young shared the even more magnificent Gardo House with Amelia. Actually there was a large barn right behind the Lion House. It was never used as a school, Preston Nibley informs me, and nobody ever lived in it. Directly across the street to the east of the Lion House and the barn was Brigham Young's schoolhouse, now immortalized by a bronze plaque, an elegant little building which never served as anything but a schoolhouse. A block further east stood the splendid "White House on the hill," where Mrs. Young spent the last years of her life, known to "all as 'Mother Young,' and was much esteemed as the 'Mother' of the family," and there she died. A member of the First Presidency "had visited the deceased during her illness," and spoke at her funeral, which was attended by a large body of mourners." Her two eldest sons were Joseph A. and Brigham Jr., the very Brigham Jr. who, according to Wallace, took his father to task more than once for his neglect of Ann Eliza. And these, Brigham Young's most influential offspring, would allow their adored mother to suffer the refined tortures of Brigham's criminal neglect?

Slips and oversights are inevitable in any historical writing and cannot be held as major crimes. But since Mr. Wallace has found in the last years of Mrs. Young a demonstration of the depths of depravity to which Brigham Young descends, one wonders if he has not gone a bit too far.[20]

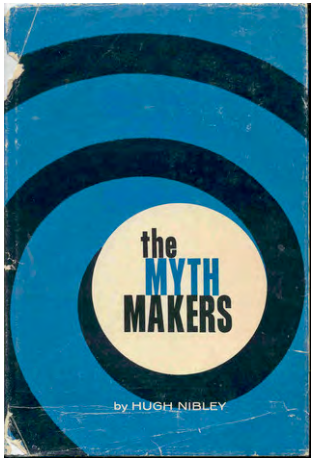

Figure 6. "Have you got that material for a portrait of Smith?"[57]

Or consider this, from *The Myth Makers*:

Chairman: By the way, have you got that material for a portrait of Smith?

Clerk: You mean all those intimate descriptions of what he looked like? Yes sir, I collected them as you asked. Here they are.

Chairman: Do they present a uniform picture of the man? I mean, did Smith make a consistent impression on people?

Clerk: If you mean, do they all think he is a scoundrel, the answer is yes; otherwise, their books would not be classified as anti-Mormon. His friends praise him, his enemies hate him, but aside from hating him they don't seem to be able to agree on a thing. Here is one, for example, who writes: "I can see him now in my mind's eye, with his torn and patched trousers held to his form by a pair of suspenders made out of sheeting, with his calico shirt as dirty and black as the earth, and his uncombed hair sticking through the holes in his old battered hat."

Chairman: Very picturesque. The "mind's eye," indeed. Is this the child Joseph Smith?

Clerk: By no means, sir. This is supposed to describe the man when "he was about twenty-five years old"—that would be after the publication of the Book of Mormon and the founding of the Church.

Chairman: But does anybody take this seriously?

Clerk: Mr. Linn accepts it as an accurate portrait. Here is a homey touch that gives it an air of simple honesty: "Joe had a jovial, easy, don't-care way about him that made him warm friends. He was a good talker, and would have made a fine stump-speaker with training."

Chairman: A sloppy tramp with the gift of gab.

Clerk: So it seems, sir. But here is another eyewitness description from the same period: "He was always well dressed, generally in black with a white necktie. He looked like a Reverend. . . . Joseph was no orator. He said what he wanted to say in a very blundering sort of way." So now he's a

well-dressed gent who can't talk at all. And that is typical. Mr. Tucker said taciturnity was one of Smith's most conspicuous characteristics, and here another witness says, "Joseph did not talk much in society, his talk was not very fluent, . . . he was by no means interesting in company." Stephen S. Harding, one-time governor of Utah Territory, who claims to have known Smith personally in Palmyra, says, "Young Joe was hard to be approached. He was very taciturn, and sat most of the time as silent as the Sphinx."

Chairman: Silent Smith, eh?

Clerk: That is what some say, but others say the opposite: "very voluble in speech, having great self-confidence," "endowed with the requisite cunning and volubility."

Chairman: But isn't that the later Smith?

Clerk: No, sir, this is the boy of Palmyra, who used to attend "revival meetings praying and exhorting with great exuberance of words," "used to help us solve some portentous question of moral or political ethics in our juvenile debating club . . . and subsequently . . . was a very passable exhorter in evening meetings." Here is another: "At times he would be very active in a religious revival, praying and exhorting with unusual fervor, in that exuberance of words which he had wonderfully at his command." It is rather puzzling—blundering, stammering, taciturn Sphinx with a wonderful exuberance of words. "His address is easy," wrote Mr. Howe himself of this stammerer, "rather fascinating and winning, of a mild and sober deportment," though at times inclined to jest and be exceedingly merry. This is the boy whom Mr. Tucker says "was never known to laugh." And while Mr. Tucker also assures us from the most intimate experience that everything Joe and his family did proclaimed their sordid atheism, the other neighbors report him as zealously active in religious circles.

Chairman: So somebody is lying.

Clerk: At least they can't all be right. You remember Mr. Tucker said Joseph Smith was of a "plodding, evil-brewing mental composition," that "he seldom spoke to anyone outside of his intimate associates," and above all, that he "was never known to laugh." And Mrs. Eaton, taking the cue, says "he rarely smiled or laughed. 'His looks and thoughts were always downward bent.'" Yet one high authority says he had "a deep vein of humor that ran through all he said and did," and Charles

Dickens declares that "the exact adjective for Joe's religion is—jolly!" The poet Whittier speaks of Smith's "rude, bold, good-humoured face," and even some of the most damning witnesses tell us "Joe had a jovial, easy, don't-care way about him," and that "he used to laugh from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, it shook every bit of flesh in him." Also, while Mr. Hendrix assures us that he made "warm friends," other neighbors say "he was shunned by the boys of his own age" and that he was "an awkward [and] unpopular lad." Here is a nice impasse: Chase, Ingersoll, and Stafford, who knew him so well, describe him as a brawler, who frequently got drunk, and "when intoxicated was very quarrelsome," while Tucker and Harding, who knew him just as well, assure us that Smith "was noted as never having had a fight or quarrel with any other person." Whom are we to believe?

Chairman: It might be easier to check up on his physical appearance. What do they say to that?

Clerk: He is described by eyewitnesses in 1830 as being "tall and slender—*thin favored*." Mr. Dogberry calls him "spindle shanked"; here is a remarkable description by Harding, who "describes him as having been a tall, long-legged and tow-headed youth, who seldom smiled, hardly ever worked and never fought, but who was hard on truth and bird's nests."

Chairman: At least we know that Smith was tall and skinny.

Clerk: But do we? Thurlow Weed's description of Smith from that time is of "a stout, round, smooth-faced young man." Tall he may have been, but how he could have been "thin-favored" and stout and round at the same time is not so obvious. And just two years later another eyewitness who claims to have known Smith very well says he is "a man of mean and insignificant appearance, between forty and fifty years of age." Later on we are told that "the gait of this person was heavy and slouching, his hands were large and thick, his eyes grey and unsteady in their gaze." A year after this was published, another opus describes the prophet as "a tall, elegant-looking man with dark piercing eyes, and features, which if not handsome, were imposing." Another calls him "a man of commanding appearance, tall and well-proportioned." "A noble-looking fellow," says another, "a Mahomet every inch of him." Josiah Quincy says "he was a hearty, athletic fellow, with blue eyes standing prominently out upon his light complexion. . . . '*A fine-looking man*' is what the passer-by would instinctively

have murmured." Another visitor says Smith had dark hair and eyes and a "strong rugged outline of face" with features exactly like those of Oliver Cromwell. Charles Francis Adams described him as "a middle-aged man with a shrewd but rather ordinary expression of countenance."

Chairman: So far we have shifty grey eyes, prominent blue eyes, and dark piercing eyes.

Clerk: Yes, and while one illustrious visitor says he could not see Smith's eyes since the man refused to look people in the face, others speak of his "penetrating eagle eyes." Some think Smith's huge, fat, enormous awkward hands worthy of special mention, while others comment on the remarkably *small* size of his hands. One says that he had "a Herculean frame and a commanding appearance," another that he was sloppy and slouching, "very lank and loose in his appearance and movements."

Chairman: A portrait artist would have a wonderful time depicting him from these honest firsthand descriptions. How do you account for the discrepancies?

Clerk: I think the report of the celebrated Mr. Conybeare, the foremost literary critic of the midnineteenth century, can help us out there. His classical description of Joseph Smith's appearance is warranted solely by the contemplation of a small wood engraving of the prophet, the work of neither a sympathetic nor a skillful hand. This has been reproduced in numerous anti-Mormon books as the official non-Mormon portrait of Smith. As he views the small and clumsy drawing, Mr. Conybeare gives forth:

> It is inexplicable how anyone who had ever looked at Joseph's portrait [it was not really a portrait, of course, since Smith did not pose for it], could imagine him to have been by possibility an honest man. Never did we see a face on which the hand of heaven had more legibly written rascal. That self-complacent simper, that sensual mouth, that leer of vulgar cunning, tell us at one glance the character of their owner.
>
> *Chairman:* Dear me, all this from a crude woodcut the size of a postage-stamp![21]

"Hugh Nibley's *Sounding Brass*," wrote Thomas Alexander,

> is a meticulous critique of two anti-Mormon writings. Nibley's book is most useful for the poorly informed who do not have the background to critique sensationalistic or popular works of questionable validity, like those of Ann Eliza Young and Irving Wallace. But it is a pointed and often sarcastic essay that emphasizes in great detail flaws already evident to the knowledgeable reader. The generally uninformed but orthodox Latter-day Saint will find this type of work supportive of his beliefs, but the Mormon who is familiar with critical methodology and with history will prefer a synthesis of the events critiqued. Many scholars find this style of writing to be a sort of intellectual overkill, and it has not been particularly influential among historians.[22]

But it was very much within the Latter-day Saint tradition. Satirical responses to critics have had a place among Latter-day Saints since at least the time of Parley Pratt's "A Dialogue between Joseph Smith and the Devil," published in the *New York Herald* on January 1, 1844. *Keepapitchinin*, for instance, was a comic newspaper published sporadically at Salt Lake City from 1867 to 1871, essentially dedicated to ridiculing the pretensions of the Godbeite schism. Its chief editors were the talented second-generation Latter-day Saints George J. Taylor (son of Elder John Taylor), Joseph C. Rich (son of Apostle Charles C. Rich), and Heber John Richards (son of apostle Willard Richards), with occasional help from Apostle Orson Pratt and the prominent artists Charles R. Savage and George M. Ottinger.[23] Moreover, as distinct from the sometimes rather arid tomes that pure historians write for an audience of pure historians, it was probably useful to a great many ordinary Latter-day Saints. And it doesn't seem to me a matter of indifference whether "the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died."[24]

One day in the early 1950s, Nibley's teaching assistant, Curtis Wright, saw Nibley laughing as he read the Book of Mormon. Puzzled, he asked Nibley what was so funny, and Nibley replied that he had found a mistake in the Book of Mormon. He handed the book to Wright and pointed to Alma 42:10, which says that humankind is "carnal, sensual, and devilish, by nature." What's

wrong with *that?* Curtis demanded. Nibley answered that Alma should have said humans "were carnal, sensual, devilish, and *stupid*."[25]

"Humor is not light-minded," Nibley said, responding to a criticism rooted in a reading of certain passages in the Doctrine and Covenants.[26] "There is nothing light-minded about the incisive use of satire often delivered with an undertone of sorrow for the foolishness of men and the absurdity of their pretenses. Such was the cutting humor of Abinadi addressing the priests of King Noah. There was nothing light-minded about it, though it might raise a chuckle." What really *is* light-minded, he said, is "kitsch, delight in shallow trivia, and the viewing of serious or tragic events with complacency or indifference." To be obsessed with styles, fashions, and fads is, he said, the true light-mindedness.[27] In *The Myth Makers* and *Sounding Brass*, Nibley was simply employing "the critics' own rhetorical standbys, such as ridicule and caricature," in response to anti–Latter-day Saint attacks.[28]

In 1948, Nibley published a series in the *Improvement Era* entitled "The Book of Mormon as a Mirror of the East." Louis Midgley's invaluable "Bibliography and Register" of Nibley's works describes it as "the earliest version of Nibley's theory that a portion of the meaning and the historical authenticity of the Book of Mormon can be uncovered and tested by drawing upon the literary remains of the Near East." It also "contains Nibley's initial speculation on possible links between Book of Mormon names and Egyptian etymologies."[29] Such work on the onomasticon of the Book of Mormon would remain an interest of Nibley's throughout his career and continues to be a focus among Latter-day Saint scholarship on the book. The point was to show that 1 Nephi was consistent, that its setting in ancient Arabia was plausible.

Plainly, this was a venture in more positive or affirmative apologetics, and it was, by all accounts, much more to Professor Nibley's liking. (Reading all of the trash that *The Myth Makers* and *Sounding Brass* had required him to wade through had gotten him down.) In any event, it's generally true that the best defense is a good offense, and he had a great deal to say.

Figure 7. "A waterproofed jeep moves through the water toward Utah Beach."[58]

Lehi in the Desert and *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*

Nibley had been interested in Arabic and the Near East for many years by this point, and, precisely in 1948, had befriended the Palestinian-immigrant Kader family, with whom he practiced his Arabic. It was virtually inevitable that his Arabic interest would intersect with his deep fascination with the Book of Mormon, and it did: In a letter to his mother on April 8, 1944, just two months before D-Day, Nibley had written,

> Of course, there is little time to relax in the Airborne at a time like this, but when I can snatch a moment or two off it is devoted to a single engrossing item: at this late date I have discovered the Book of Mormon, and live in a state of perpetual excitement—that marvelous production throws everything done in our age completely into the shadows.[30]

And then, during the Normandy invasion itself, as Boyd Petersen describes it,

> [Heading] toward the beach with his hands gripping his jeep wheel and his foot on the accelerator, a couple of feet underwater, he remembered that "it really hit me how astonishing the Book of Mormon truly is. It had never occurred to me before, but all I could think of all that day was how wonderful this

> Book of Mormon was." Like an obsessive strain of music throughout the fighting of the next few days, Hugh was "constantly preoccupied with the Book of Ether."[31]

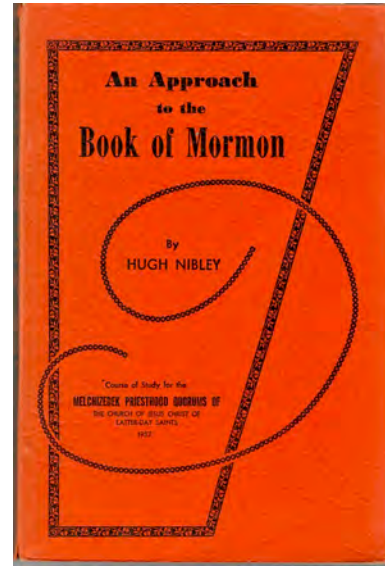

Figure 8. "If you think it's over their heads, let them reach for it."[59]

Nibley returned to this subject in 1950, with another series of *Improvement Era* articles, entitled "Lehi in the Desert," and in 1951, with yet another series, "The World of the Jaredites." (The two series were issued in book form in 1952.[32]) He took the same approach in 1957, with *An Approach to the Book of Mormon*—the lesson manual for Melchizedek Priesthood quorums of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for that year[33]—and in 1967, with *Since Cumorah*,[34] largely but not entirely based upon a series of *Improvement Era* articles that ran from 1964 to 1966. The year 1967 also saw the publication, in the Catholic journal *Concilium: An International Review of Theology*, of "The Mormon View of the Book of Mormon," which remains perhaps the best brief academic statement on the matter.

"It has been a steady diet of Book of Mormon," he wrote in a letter written to his mother while he was working on the priesthood manual, "and no other food is so invigorating. It is the bread of life in the most digestible form."[35] But when the manuscript of *An Approach to the Book of Mormon* was finished, the reviewers found it too demanding for the general Church audience and rejected it. "Then," as Nibley tells the story in a 1956 letter to his non–Latter-day Saint friend Paul Springer,

> one night a Very Important Person could not sleep and decided in sheer desperation to look at the mountain of type that had been so long and so gingerly bandied about. After an hour he was having fits, calling me up long distance from the end of the world at an unearthly time to shout hosanna over the wire.[36]

It was President David O. McKay. "Well," he told the book's critics, in Nibley's later summary, "if you think it's over their heads, let them reach for it. We have to give them something more than pat answers."[37]

Writing the next year to Elder Spencer W. Kimball, Nibley remarked that

> the main purpose of the Manual is to show what anybody is up against who undertakes a serious questioning of the Book of Mormon. . . . Moreover, we have merely scratched the surface, and anyone who wants to is welcome to dig further. . . . This is the very beginning of Book of Mormon research, not the end: it would be a paralyzing and a foolish thing to start making pontifical pronouncements at this early date. On to the fray![38]

In 1958, Elder Ezra Taft Benson sent Nibley a letter of thanks for the priesthood manual. "Wishing to be fair in the matter," Nibley wrote in his reply, "I have just compiled what I believe to be a complete list of all important arguments AGAINST the Book of Mormon. Not one new argument has been added since 1840! This shrinking list makes a significant contrast to the growing list of arguments in the book's favor."[39]

The World and the Prophets and Related Efforts

In the same year that he began his two decades of publication on the Book of Mormon and the ancient Near East, 1948, Nibley also launched a series of *Improvement Era* articles under the title of "Baptism for the Dead in Ancient Times." With these articles, Nibley was closer to his formal professional training in classics, focusing on the patristic literature of the first centuries of Christianity, and he used his formidable command of Greek and Latin to argue that the Latter-day Saint practice of vicarious baptism for the dead reflected authentic ancient Christian practice. He continued to work in patristics and along analogous lines with his brilliant 1954 Sunday night lecture series on KSL Radio in Salt Lake City, "Time Vindicates the Prophets," which, later that year, became one of his most profound and accessible books, *The World and the Prophets*.[40] In both the lecture series and the book, he illustrated the loss of authority and the corruption of doctrine in early Christianity,

demonstrating that, when the prophets and the apostles had departed, the philosophers and the mystics—clearly inadequate substitutes—had taken over. This particular focus also led to his controversial article in the non–Latter-day Saint academic journal *Church History*, "The Passing of the Church: Forty Variations on an Unpopular Theme," in 1961, as well as to his study of the teachings of Jesus during the so-called "forty-day ministry" after the Resurrection, in *Vigiliae Christianae*, entitled "Evangelium Quadraginta Dierum," in 1966.[41] And, in the mid-1990s, Jack Welch located a set of unpublished lecture notes from Professor Nibley that has since appeared as a book on *Apostles and Bishops in Early Christianity*,[42] which demonstrates that bishops could not replace the Apostles when the Apostles were gone.

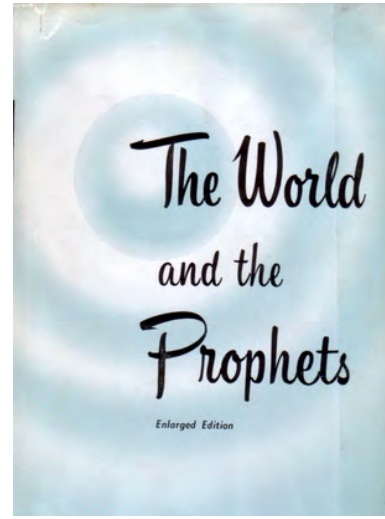

Figure 9. This volume became one of Nibley's "most profound and accessible books."[60]

In 1958, the first public indication of another of Hugh Nibley's consuming interests appeared, with the printing, in the British Latter-day Saint periodical *Millennial Star*, of "The Idea of the Temple in History." It was followed in 1959 by a two-part series in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* entitled "Christian Envy of the Temple." Nibley had always been fascinated with ancient ritual—his 1939 doctoral dissertation at Berkeley, "The Roman Games as a Survival of an Archaic Year-Cult," plainly influenced by the so-called "myth and ritual school" based mainly at Cambridge University, illustrates this, as does his 1945 article "Sparsiones," in the *Classical Journal*. His love for the temple was a constant theme of lectures and writing for the rest of his life.

The Book of Abraham

Finally, in 1968, Nibley returned to negative or truly defensive apologetics with "Prolegomena to Any Study of the Book of Abraham,"

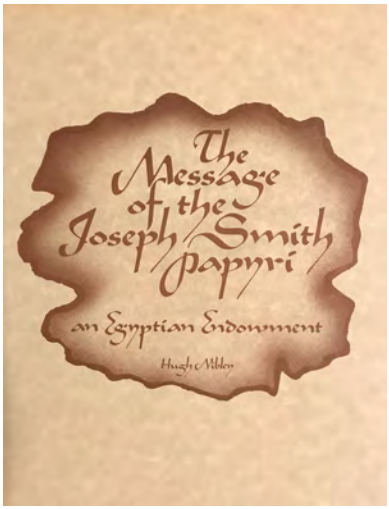

Figure 10. "A book that . . . expressed [Nibley's] fascination with the temple."[61]

in *BYU Studies*. In late November 1967, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City made certain papyri available to the Church that had once belonged to Joseph Smith. These documents generated both enormous interest and controversy, and Hugh Nibley was obliged to respond. The Book of Abraham would remain a major focus of the later Nibley, with his massive *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri: An Egyptian Endowment* in 1975[43]—a book that obviously also expressed his fascination with the temple—and *Abraham in Egypt* in 1981.[44] The latter book also illustrated his fascination with the figure of Abraham, attempting to show, by means of data collected from ritual and philology and from Jewish literature, how persistent traditions about Abraham could shed light on him as a pivotal figure in world history.

What Attracted Nibley to Apologetics?

Why was Hugh Nibley so committed to defending the claims of the Latter-day Saint faith and so energetic in advocating them?

It has sometimes been suggested that he was desperately attempting to shore up his own perpetually troubled faith. But this does not seem to me to be even remotely true. I cannot claim to have been his intimate friend, but I knew him, and I spent some very special times with him, particularly toward the end of his life. I was struck by what I saw in him as a genuinely childlike faith. He was not in need of reassurance from scholarly opinion. He had, once, had a crisis of confidence in the gospel. But its resolution, I think, fortified him against serious doubt for the rest of his life.

One Sunday afternoon at Christmastime in 1936, back down in Southern California on a break from his graduate studies in Berkeley, he went up to Mount Wilson, near Los Angeles—the mountain

that I myself looked up at every day of my youth and childhood. There, as his biographer puts it, he "slogged around in the heavy snow, brooding about theology."

"I was terribly bothered about this afterlife business and that sort of thing," he later recalled. "I had no evidence for that whatsoever." That evening, he attended sacrament meeting at the Hollywood Ward with his family. The main speaker was Matthias F. Cowley, a former member of the Council of the Twelve who had been removed from the quorum in 1905 because of insubordination over post-Manifesto plural marriage but who had been restored to full (nonapostolic) fellowship just the previous April.

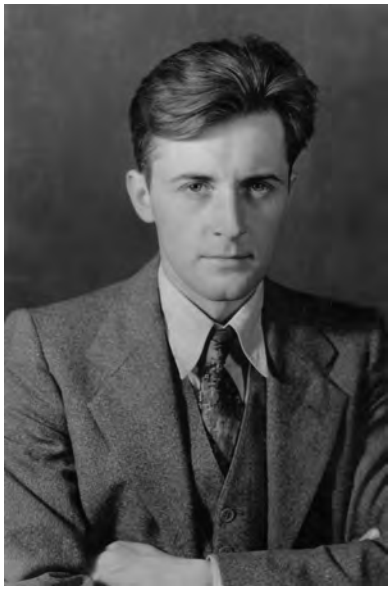

Figure 11. Hugh in 1933. "I was terribly bothered about this afterlife business."[62]

After the meeting, Nibley's mother took him up to the stand to meet Brother Cowley. "As soon as he took my hand," Nibley remembered, "he said, 'Come with me.' He took me into the back room there and he said 'I want to give you a blessing.'" In the blessing, Cowley told Nibley that the Lord was aware of his questions and "would give me an answer immediately."[45]

Within a week, Nibley was stricken with appendicitis. He was taken to the Seventh-day Adventist Hospital in Loma Linda, near San Bernardino. But when the doctor turned on the ether, Nibley swallowed his tongue and ceased to breathe. The medical staff panicked when they were unable to find the resuscitator. In the meantime, Nibley was listening to everything and was aware of increasing coldness. "I remembered Socrates," he later said,

> the turning cold of the feet, icy, incredibly cold, and it got higher, higher, higher, and (pause) I couldn't believe anything could get that cold. Absolute numbness, absolute nothing, but curiosity all the time. Something big's going to happen,

> and sure enough. Then, pop! Then it happened. Then all of a sudden, down this thing like a tube . . . and you come out . . . Boy, I know everything, everything is there and this is what I wanted to know, three cheers, and all this sort of thing, and I started solving problems. . . . But all I wanted to know was whether there was anything on the other side; and when I came out there, I didn't meet anything or anybody else, but I looked around, and not only was I in possession of all my faculties, but they were tremendous. I was light as a feather and ready to go, you see, and above all I was interested in problems. I had missed out on a lot of math and stuff like that. . . . Well, five minutes and I can make up for that.[46]

This was, Boyd Petersen says, "a pivotal experience that . . . served as a balance wheel for his entire life."[47] He didn't need to prove to himself that there was more to this life than atoms and the void. He *knew* that there was.

But there were and are other people without such knowledge, or wavering in their convictions. In a passage regarding C. S. Lewis that has become a sort of unofficial mantra for, first, the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies and then, subsequently, the Maxwell Institute, Austin Farrer wrote,

> Though argument does not create conviction, lack of it destroys belief. What seems to be proved may not be embraced; but what no one shows that ability to defend is quickly abandoned. Rational argument does not create belief, but it maintains a climate in which belief may flourish.[48]

Nibley did not, and Latter-day Saint scholars should not, leave ordinary members of the Church undefended against even bad books and sensationalistic claims. C. S. Lewis, speaking during the Second World War, once argued that Christian intellectuals should value scholarship, among other things, for the ability it gives them to protect their less learned brothers and sisters against bad but dangerous attacks on their faith:

> To be ignorant and simple now—not to be able to meet the enemies on their own ground—would be to throw down our weapons, and to betray our uneducated brethren who have, under God, no defense but us against the intellectual attacks of the heathen.[49]

But it will do little good, in this sense, to be a scholar if one's scholarship is not used to help the Saints. "To be learned is good." But not merely for its own sake. Not merely to gain entrance to a guild, to be accepted as one of the elite. Hugh Nibley placed his learning on the Lord's altar as an offering. He understood what it meant to consecrate what he possessed to sustain and defend the kingdom of God.

Discomfort of Some Church Members with Apologetics

I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks that some members of the Church express discomfort at the very thought of "apologetics." I think, and I know that Hugh Nibley agreed, that they are wrong to do so.

Some think apologetics is too contentious. And, surely, it can be—but defending the faith is a scriptural mandate. The duty to defend the kingdom cannot legitimately be forsworn by a disciple. Some think that apologetics cannot, by its nature, be legitimate scholarship. But, as I've suggested, virtually *all* scholarship is, in a sense, apologetic. Some say that it cannot be real scholarship because it assumes what it sets out to prove and is thus viciously circular. This, however, is not true—certainly no more than it is in the case of any other scholarly enterprise that presumes a paradigm or sets out to argue for a hypothesis. Nibley himself was aware of the danger, as shown in his wonderful parody "Bird Island."

I want to read just a portion of it to you, to give you a sense of it. (I'm almost done; don't worry, there's light at the end of this tunnel, too!) "Bird Island" was read to a small group of BYU religion faculty in a tone of exquisitely droning pomposity and later published in *Dialogue*. In it, he argued that, based on archaeological and philological evidence, the Hill Cumorah's location had been definitely proved to be the north end of Bird Island in Utah Lake:

> It will come as news to all Latter-day Saints that after many years of deep scholarly research, the Hill Cumorah has finally been located: at the north end of Bird Island in Utah Lake. Those familiar with the area may wonder why such a flat place should be called a hill. Ah! You forget, this was the hill Ramah before the great destruction: "And then the whole face of the land was changed" (3 Nephi 8:12), "and the high places

> became low." Moreover, as a scholar, whose name you all would recognize, points out, since it would have to be a big hill many records were buried in there. He believed Popocataptl was big enough, but if *everything* was changed, a big hill would have to become a small island. More important, the very name of the island proves its identity.
>
> The name Bird Island is indeed a modern name, as we have learned after exhaustive investigation, and probably refers to the presence on the island of birds or of creatures sufficiently like birds to suggest to the ingenuous observer's mind the actual presence on the island (and this assumes also the presence of an island—another control) of bird-like objects. But though this is the modern name of the island, to be sure, there is no good reason for doubting that birds were on the island for a long time, perhaps even before the island received its name. The Egyptian word for bird is *apid***.** If we drop the vowel, which is expendable, and change the consonants only slightly—such as to be hardly perceptible to the Egyptian ear—we get the Hebrew word *zippur, zippor,* which by a remarkable coincidence means "bird." The feminine form is of course *Zipporah***,** but the Hebrews wrote from right to left, as we learn in our third-year Hebrew class. Read *Zipporah* from right to left and what do you get? *Haroppist*. The "o" can be conveniently dropped since Hebrew doesn't write the vowels. This then is an unmistakable allusion to the psalms of David. But since the Hebrews wrote from right to left, and David himself was a Hebrew, we must read his name too in the correct direction. The result is the word *Divad***,** or *Divot***.** This can only refer to the violent removal of the hill by the forces of nature.[50]

And on from there. The talk is a wonderfully humorous parody of his own, as well as other Latter-day Saint thinkers', potentially unbalanced zeal in seeking linguistic and archaeological evidences for Latter-day Saint scripture. So he knew the possible dangers in this sort of scholarship. Nevertheless, I don't think he fell into them very often.

Conclusion

In concluding, I'll say this: to do apologetics is a covenant responsibility for those who are in a position to do it. To do it well is a scholarly obligation. To do it with charity is a Christian ideal.

Hugh Nibley did it, and he did it well. He did it with a humorous alertness to human foibles that he was also entirely willing to direct at himself. He judged the work of others as he judged his own.

Of course, one thing that makes our situation different now is that we have a lot more people with varied expertise. Hugh Nibley had to do it all. In his day, there was only one Hugh Nibley, and he didn't have a lot of support. Nowadays, for example, when I thought it was a time to respond to the DNA question, I didn't have to do it on my own. We have half a dozen first-rate geneticists out there who are professing, believing, committed, active Latter-day Saints. And so, you can go to them and recruit them to contribute, and, in many cases, they're more than willing. I asked one geneticist here on campus to write something for me. He said, "I have always dreamed of writing something for FARMS. But I thought, with my training, what on earth would I ever write? Now I have a chance. This is great!" So he wrote a sixty- or seventy-page primer on genetics in the Book of Mormon, over a weekend. He just sat down and did it. We can call on people like that, so Nibley wouldn't have to do everything anymore.

Although, it would go against his grain. He was not really an *impresario*. He didn't necessarily like working with other people on committees. But sometimes that's what's required today to bring together the various kinds of skills that are required to respond to anti-Mormon attacks because they come from all over the place, aimed at different aspects of the faith. And so we call on people with different skills.

People sometimes ask me, "So who is the successor of Hugh Nibley today?" And my answer is that there *is* no successor to Hugh Nibley today; there will not be a single person who succeeds Hugh Nibley.

He'll be replaced by a committee, though he might have hated that. Hence the image that I used in the beginning of my remarks about that house, with Hugh Nibley being the first person in the house, armed with a flashlight, taking the preliminary inventory and setting out the floor plan. He's now replaced by a larger group of people, more plodding, maybe in some ways a little more systematic, each one specializing in one particular room or a corner of one particular room, or something like that.

In his day he had to do it all. You can see that in the range of things that I outlined here, where he was working in patristics, early Church history, ancient Arabia, central Asian history with the Jaredites, and in nineteenth-century Church history. All those areas.

Now we have a whole cadre of Latter-day Saint historians (who unfortunately will not often write on the subjects I would like them to write on). We have people who are working in ancient history and so on who can respond to questions, biblical scholars with specific training.

But Hugh will not be forgotten.

This will sound very self-advertising. I think the story may have already been told here: Louis Midgley tells the story[51] of being in Professor Nibley's home when he was bedridden, and he was complaining that he'd been forgotten by FARMS, that we hadn't sent him anything and that he had been just forgotten. "I'm out to pasture and nobody cares about me anymore." And the thing that was really bothering him was that the *FARMS Review* had not arrived. And while Professor Midgley was there, the new *FARMS Review* arrived. And he was just ecstatic because he thought that was evidence that what he'd done was still going to be carried on, that this willingness to engage the critics would continue.

In my judgment, Hugh Nibley was a master, a model, and a pioneer. May his work continue to bless the Saints for generations to come.

Daniel C. Peterson (PhD, UCLA) is a professor of Islamic studies and Arabic at Brigham Young University and founder of the university's Middle Eastern Texts Initiative. He has published and spoken extensively on both Islamic and Latter-day Saint subjects. Formerly chairman of the board of the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) and an officer, editor, and author for its successor organization, the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship, his professional work as an Arabist focuses on the Qur'an and on Islamic philosophical theology. He is the author, among other things, of a biography entitled Muhammad: Prophet of God *(Eerdmans, 2007). Peterson is the founder and president of the Interpreter Foundation.*

Notes

1. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Unabridged)*, s.v. "apologetics."
2. *Webster's International Dictionary,* s.v. "apologetics."
3. Jonathan Z. Smith et al., eds., *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Religion* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1995), 64.
4. H. G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 102.
5. See George C. Divry, gen. ed., *Divry's Modern English-Greek and Greek-English Desk Dictionary* (New York: Divry, 1961), 432.
6. "Verteidiger eines Bekenntnisses, einer Anschauung od. Lehre (bes. des. christl. Glaubens)"; "(bes. in religiösen Auseinandersetzungen), Verteidigungs-, Rechtfertigungsrede, -schrift, Verteidigung, Rechtfertigung." These definitions are taken from the relevant entries in Gerhard Wahrig, ed., *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Lexikon-Verlag, 1974), 423.
7. Doctrine and Covenants 123:4–5.
8. Jude 1:3 and 1 Peter 3:15 (KJV).
9. Hugh W. Nibley, *No, Ma'am, That's Not History: A Brief Review of Mrs. Brodie's Reluctant Vindication of a Prophet She Seeks to Expose* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1946); reprinted in Hugh Nibley, *Tinkling Cymbals and Sounding Brass: The Art of Telling Tales about Joseph Smith and Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1991), 1–45.
10. Boyd Jay Petersen, *Hugh Nibley: A Consecrated Life* (Salt Lake City: Greg Kofford Books, 2002), 225. My treatment of the response to Brodie relies heavily upon Petersen, 225–28.
11. Hugh Nibley, *Tinkling Cymbals and Sound Brass* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book; Provo, UT: FARMS, 1991), 4.
12. Nibley, *Tinkling Cymbals and Sounding Brass*, 26–27.
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52. Courtesy of Shirley S. Ricks. Photo ID: ShirleySRicks-20050326 Jo Ann Seely Debbie and Dan Peterson Nibley wake.jpeg.
53. Petersen Collection, box 10, folder 1. Photo ID: HBLL-BoydP-_STW8589-EC-Box10Folder1.jpeg.
54. Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:David_-_The_Death_of_Socrates.jpg. Photo ID: David_-_The_Death_of_Socrates.jpeg.
55. Photo by Jeffrey M. Bradshaw of a personal copy of the book. Photo ID: IMG_9985-EC.jpg.
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58. Photo from the National Photo #SC 190438 Weapons carrier goes ashore on Utah Beach, 6 June 1944. Description: "A U.S. Army weapons carrier moves through the surf toward "Utah" Beach, after being launched from its landing craft on 6 June 1944. Note .50 caliber machine gun on the vehicle, pointed skyward for anti-aircraft defense. Photograph from the Army Signal Corps Collection in the U.S. National Archives." Caption from Hugh Nibley and Alex Nibley, *Sergeant Nibley PhD: Memories of an Unlikely Screaming Eagle* (Salt Lake City: Shadow Mountain, 2006, 112. Photo ID: s190438-C.jpeg.
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