

THE
INTERPRETER
FOUNDATION

Dear Friends:

We're approaching Christmas and the end of 2014. It seems appropriate, therefore, to thank all those whose generous donations of time, energy, and money have made the accomplishments of The Interpreter Foundation possible. We're deeply and humbly grateful. We know that you owe us and the Foundation nothing whatever, and we're genuinely moved by the support that our work has received.

I also wish to report on the current status of The Interpreter Foundation, and, candidly, to encourage further support, in whatever form, from those able to give it. Some of you, I expect, will be thinking about year-end charitable deductions this month. There are many extremely worthy causes for you to support; we hope that you'll keep Interpreter in mind.

Interpreter was founded in order to continue the mission originally associated with the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, or FARMS, to publish solid, peer-reviewed scholarly materials pertaining to Mormon scripture and related topics in ways that are accessible and relevant to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as well as to scholars.

A word about what The Interpreter Foundation has accomplished thus far:

Since its launch at the beginning of August 2012, Interpreter has sponsored three conferences, including two on ancient temples and one on Mormonism and science. There was no admission charge to any of them. All are or will be available online and in published form. The Foundation has also published four books, distributing them at or near cost:

Jeffrey M. Bradshaw and David J. Larsen, *In God's Image and Likeness 2: Enoch, Noah, and the Tower of Babel*

Matthew B. Brown, Jeffrey M. Bradshaw, Stephen D. Ricks, and John S. Thompson, eds., *Ancient Temple Worship: Proceedings of the Expound Symposium, 11 May 2011*

William J. Hamblin and David Rolph Seely, eds., *Temple Insights: Proceedings of the Interpreter Matthew B. Brown Memorial Conference, "The Temple on Mount Zion," 22 September 2012*

Samuel Zinner, *Textual and Comparative Explorations in 1 & 2 Enoch*

As I write, the Foundation has posted an even hundred video-recorded scripture roundtable discussions keyed to the 2013 and 2014 Gospel Doctrine curriculum years, and, now, to the 2015

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New Testament year. They're designed to help Sunday School students and teachers, and to contribute to scriptural understanding among the Saints.

In October 2014, at his initiative and with his kind cooperation, Interpreter made the six massive books of Volume 4 of Royal Skousen's magisterial Book of Mormon Critical Text Project easily accessible online, at no charge. (See <http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/books/volume-4-of-the-critical-text-of-the-book-of-mormon-analysis-of-textual-variants-of-the-book-of-mormon/>.)

Crucially, too, we did it in a way that respects his copyright and intellectual property rights to the greatest extent possible. This represented an unparalleled opportunity for us; his project, perhaps the most impressive and sustained single scholarly effort of an individual Latter-day Saint since the original publication of the Book of Mormon, represents nearly thirty years of devoted, faithful, painstaking, and meticulous work.

Perhaps most visibly, the Foundation's flagship, peer-reviewed online periodical, *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture*, has just logged its 122nd consecutive Friday of publishing at least one article.

And the productivity shows no signs of flagging. Our blog will continue to feature timely articles. We anticipate posting a series of useful tools for reading the scriptures, as well as holding one or two conferences and publishing four to six books in 2015. Moreover, yet another conference on Mormonism and science is already being planned for 12 March 2016, with a confirmed keynote address from the official Vatican astronomer. And *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scripture* will continue to publish fresh scholarship every week.

We do this on a very modest budget. In fact, I think we can fairly say that the Foundation is far more productive than much larger organizations that enjoy far greater funding.

The vast bulk of our work is done by volunteers. We have no full-time employees, and our senior officers are actually barred from receiving salaries from the Foundation. We track donated volunteer service but, if anything, our accounting of donated time skews low, because not all of our volunteers report their hours—we have no salary check to hold over them, forcing them to report!—but, crude though our accounting of volunteered hours may be, it reveals a substantial investment of time and effort by many people.

We're also trying to be responsible stewards. In a bid to be transparent, a volunteer bookkeeper keeps detailed track of our expenditures and we publish them online: <http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/expenses/>.

Our needs have been relatively modest, so that even small gifts have made and continue to make a difference to us. But our list of projects designed to provide quality scholarship and study aids for the Saints is expanding, and our expenses are, consequently, increasing—and substantially so. Our long-term need is to create an endowment and, thus, a stable and permanent financial base for the Foundation. So larger gifts, too, are very welcome.

Moreover, owing to unwelcome external circumstances, Professor Skousen's landmark Critical Text Project suddenly needs to find a new home and (certainly by our standards) substantial

funding. He has just approached The Interpreter Foundation for help. The amount required—approximately \$40,000 for a year—dwarfs anything we've heretofore done. But this is an opportunity for Interpreter to participate in an undertaking that will benefit the Saints and the Church for generations to come. If you would like to help with this effort, donations will need to be sent to The Interpreter Foundation by check, annotated to indicate that they are earmarked for the Critical Text Project, Volume 3. Anybody who might be interested in speaking with Professor Skousen and/or with me about the current situation and the needs of the project should contact us via dspegypt@gmail.com.

We are, of necessity, but also out of our deep belief in and commitment to the goals of The Interpreter Foundation, moving seriously into fundraising. We invite you to join us in the work of Interpreter, in whatever way you can and to whatever degree you choose. We cannot accomplish the work on our own, without your help. Please visit our "Donation" page, at <http://www.mormoninterpreter.com/donations/>. In some cases—be warned!—we'll be contacting you directly.

In the meantime, we wish you a blessed Christmas season and a wonderful, fulfilling, and prosperous 2015.

Sincerely,

Daniel C. Peterson
President and Chairman of the Board
The Interpreter Foundation