



Traditions of the Fathers: The Book of Mormon as History (Part 2)

Brant A. Gardner

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This is Part 2 of 2. Part 2 includes chapters 11-20.

The focus of the Book of Mormon is unquestionably on the things of God. Similar to the Bible, its sermons and explications of religious principles are presented against the framework of the story of a people. It is a story that covers a thousand years. In this book Brant Gardner looks around and behind the religious purposes of the book and teases out how those thousand years of Book of Mormon history correspond to those same years in the geographic and cultural context where they most plausibly took place.

Gardner works through the Book of Mormon chronologically, examining how events in the Book of Mormon reflect the greater historical and cultural developments happening around them at the same time. Gardner asks and answers questions against particular historical backdrops. Why does Nephi appear to be so Christian so long before Christ, and why does his particular time period in Jerusalem help answer that question? Why do Nephi apostate groups from different times appear to adopt the same religion? Why does the Book of Mormon end around A.D. 400? Why not earlier or later? The answers are developed by looking at the Book of Mormon as history in the context of what has become known of Mesoamerican history. Along the way, Gardner also looks at the problem of anachronisms, DNA, and some popular “proofs” of the Book of Mormon that need to be abandoned.

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