

2E. Thematic Literary Forms

In the Book of Mormon, the multiple parallelistic line forms and Hebrew-like word forms become a part of larger thematic literary forms. In his 1947 *Our Book of Mormon*, Sidney B. Sperry would introduce the Book of Mormon reader to these multiple thematic literary forms. These forms would be addressed individually in various articles and books in the decades that followed. Indeed, the pertinent chapters from Sperry's 1947 book would also be reprinted in 1995 (*Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, 4/1). In 1997 Richard Dilworth Rust would bring forth his book: *Feasting on the Word: The Literary Testimony of the Book of Mormon*. In 2004, James T. Duke (*The Literary Masterpiece Called the Book of Mormon*) would also review these thematic literary forms. Among the thematic forms that I will address are the following:

(1) Historical Narrative	HN
(2) Genealogies	G
(3) Prophetic Dialogue	PD
(4) Poetic language (memorable phrases)	PL
(5) Epistles (formal directed messages)	E
(6) Scriptural Commentary & Sermons	SC
(7) Prayers	P
(8) Sacred songs (Psalms)	SS
(9) Reasoning	R
(10) Typology	T
(11) The Law	L
(12) Editorial Promises	EP
(13) Prophetic Promises	PP

- (1) **Historical Narrative:** According to the Title Page, the historical narrative in the Book Mormon is structured around covenant themes and Christ, with parallels to sacred history. But how does one go about analyzing this narrative? Can we correlate the narrative with covenant themes? Can we see Christ woven into the narrative? Can we correlate the narrative with “real” history and geography? And finally, does the narrative withstand modern-day literary scrutiny in the general manner of presentation? In other words, are the writings of Volume 4a (Alma 1—16) not only put together with high literary standards, but more importantly, are they true? From reading a vast number of volumes and articles that have been published over literally centuries, I would have to answer: “Much more than you would ever suspect!” The narrative testifies of itself in an astoundingly complex manner.

A most detailed literary analysis of the Book of Mormon, at least by modern-day academia perspectives regarding general literature, has been authored by Grant Hardy (*Understanding the Book of Mormon: A Reader's Guide*, Oxford University Press, 2010.) His 273 pages of analysis and over 52 pages of notes amounts to what I consider a “must-read” for anyone interested in literary narrative analysis.

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In saying this, I acknowledge that I don't have the space here to adequately review his findings, other than to say that he has written to reach that middle-ground between believer and non-believer. What I can say is that in my "Sources" section of this Introduction, I have tried to list a vast amount of excellent material on the literary aspects of the Book of Mormon that, to my knowledge, have come forth, especially in the last few decades.

Grant Hardy has acknowledged that the effort to understand the Book of Mormon is continuous. He writes:

There is much more to discover in terms of narrative techniques, connections between various people and events, thematic development, and the specific language employed by different speakers. . . . Understanding the book on its own terms, recognizing its structure and form, and identifying the means by which it conveys its message are the first steps to any further inquiries, whether they be historical, literary, or religious. (p. 268-269)

Yet to be precise, Grant Hardy was only attempting to put forward a literary narrative analysis of the Book of Mormon without attempting to address the idea of whether it was historical fact or fiction. Perhaps he considered the search for "truth" as it relates to history to be elusive.

Again, from a somewhat different perspective, noted historian Terryl L. Givens has made an outstanding historical narrative analysis of the Book of Mormon. (*By the Hand of Mormon: The American Scripture that Launched a New World Religion*, Oxford University Press, 2002) In his "Editor's Note" he writes:

My focus in any case has not been on whether the Book of Mormon or the account of it given by Joseph Smith is true. Rather, I have tried to examine why the Book of Mormon has been taken seriously—for very different reasons—by generations of devoted believers and confirmed skeptics . . . as the resources of archaeology, literary analysis, evangelical polemics, and varieties of textual and cultural studies are increasingly brought to bear on this historically contentious and influential document . . .

As in the case of Grant Hardy, Terryl Givens seems to find "historical truth," to be an elusive goal. Indeed, in trying to understand the "real" history and culture of the Book of Mormon, hundreds of books and articles have been published. However, towards the goal of understanding the "true" historical narrative, I have recorded many of the more pertinent ideas in my cultural and geographical commentary posted on my website (alancminer.com or search "Step-by-Step through the Book of Mormon"). For Volume 4a and for a Mesoamerican setting, perhaps some "must reads" in this "historical and cultural" category are: John L. Sorenson, *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*; and Joseph L. Allen and Blake J. Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon, both of which focus on the Grijalva River as the Sidon River. Another recent book, A Compelling Geographic Model of the Book of Mormon has the Usumacinta as the River Sidon. It is authored by Joe V. Andersen, F. Richard Hauck, Stanford Stoddard Smith, Ted Dee Stoddard, and Lenard C. Brunsdale. V. Garth Norman* (vgarthnorman.com) and Kirk Magleby (bookofmormonresources.blogspot.com) also focus on the Usumacinta River while adding significant insights on related issues.

Also recently, *The Interpreter: A Journal of Latter-day Saint Faith and Scholarship* has published a study by Bruce E. Dale and Brian Dale ("Joseph Smith: The World's Greatest Guesser (A Bayesian Statistical Analysis of Positive and Negative Correspondences Between the Book of Mormon and the Maya,")). By comparing the Book of Mormon with 137 statements of renown Mesoamerican archaeologists Michael D. Coe and Stephen D. Houston on ancient Mesoamerica in *The Maya*, they established astronomical odds of shared cultural characteristics.

Yet the Book of Mormon is not a history book. History and culture are but a backdrop to a covenant people and Christ. In this regard, some "must-reads" are the writings of Steven L. Olsen (see my "Sources" section). Steven and I have been corresponding on this theme from shortly after I was first introduced to it by Raymond Treat (Ray and Mary Lee Treat, "Survey of the Covenants and Principles of the Book of Mormon," *Zarahemla Research Foundation*, 1991). From the last chapter of a lengthy 1994 unpublished manuscript titled, "Covenants in the Book of Mormon," Steven Olsen writes the following (p. 245-254) (Used by permission of the author):

This study has demonstrated how most if not all of the contents and structure of the Book of Mormon text can be explained in terms of a system of covenants, whose central symbols are the promised land, the chosen people, and Christ's gospel. (p. 245) . . .

Chapters four through six illustrate the extent to which historical, geographical, ecclesiastical, doctrinal, social, military, biographical, and other details of the abridgments of Mormon and Moroni can be explained in terms of these covenants. (p. 246) . . .

As I proceeded with this study, I was frankly surprised to discover how thoroughly Nephi, Mormon, and Moroni used repetition to drive home their central messages in a variety of powerful and unmistakable ways. It is not accidental, therefore, that the four most frequently used nouns in the Book of Mormon are land(s), people(s), God, and Lord. Each appears in the text well over one thousand times—respectively 1444, 1774, 1681, and 1578 times, not including their various synonyms. (p. 247) . . .

From this perspective, the central, unifying message of the Book of Mormon seems to be that salvation is available to all who will make and keep the divine covenants of establishing Zion (Promised land), gathering Israel (Chosen people), and building up Christ's church (Christ's gospel). (p. 247) . . .

In short, the covenants of the promised land, the chosen people, and Christ's gospel receive systematic and complementary treatment throughout the Book of Mormon along a series of significant dimensions, at once temporal and eternal, material and spiritual. The extent to which and the complexity with which they are developed systematically within the text strongly suggests that the contents and organization of the text are neither accidental nor incidental. (p. 250) . . .

What is surprising is not that the authors of the Book of Mormon were conscious of the book's spiritual purpose and capable of achieving it through their literary skills, but rather that this intent, clearly stated and faithfully fulfilled, should have remained hidden from systematic analysis for so long. (p. 254)

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In the years since 1994, Steven Olsen has continued his study of the covenant-related structure of the Book of Mormon, and refined the ideas and concepts of these early writings to produce multiple published articles. (Again, see the “Sources” Volume)

As for my efforts in the matter of covenant themes, the reader will notice that most all of my headings in my 9-volume text of the Book of Mormon are covenant-oriented.

- (2) **Genealogies:** Genealogies establish legitimacy. While the most prominent genealogy in the Book of Mormon is found in the book of Ether (Ether 1:6-32), there are other entries that establish the right to kingship or the right to keep the Nephite records. In Alma chapters 1-16 there are two references to genealogy. The first is found in the preface to the book of Alma. IT reads: “The account of Alma, who was the son of Alma the first, and Chief Judge over the people of Nephi, and also the High Priest over the Church.”

The second genealogy is that of Amulek, and is found in Alma 10:1-4:

1. Now these are the words which Amulek preached unto the people who were in the land of Ammonihah, saying:
2. I am Amulek; I am the son of Giddonah, who was the son of Ishmael, who was a descendant of Aminadi; and it was the same Aminadi who interpreted the writing which was upon the wall of the temple, which was written by the finger of God.
3. And Aminadi was a descendant of Nephi, who was the son of Lehi, who came out of the land of Jerusalem, who was a descendant of Manasseh, who was the son of Joseph who was sold into Egypt by the hands of his brethren.
4. And behold, I am also a man of no small reputation among all those who know me; yea, and behold, I have many kindreds and friends, and I have also acquired much riches by the hand of my industry.

- (3) **Prophetic Dialogue:** There are passages in the Book of Mormon that appear to quote dialogue between individuals, usually associated with a prophet.

Examples:

Alma 8:18-26 Alma’s dialogue with Amulek

Alma 9:1- 7 Alma’s contention with the people of Ammonihah

Alma 10:12-29 Amulek’s discussion with the people and lawyers in Ammonihah

Alma 11:21-46 Zeezrom’s questioning of Amulek and Amulek’s response

Alma 12:8- 18 Zeezrom inquires of Alma about the kingdom of God.

Alma 12:19- 37 The chief ruler, Antionah, questions Alma and Alma’s response.

Alma 14:9-13 Alma’s dialogue with Amulek at the place of martyrdom

Alma 14 18-27 The lawyer’s question Alma and Amulek in prison.

Alma 15:4-11 Zeezrom’s communication with Alma and Amulek

- (4) **Poetic language (memorable phrases):** While there is continued debate on what constitutes “poetry,” or the length of that “poetry,” there are some memorable poetic phrases that exemplify principle and imagery. James T. Duke (*The Literary Masterpiece Called the Book of Mormon*, 2004, p. 192-204) lists the following memorable phrases: :

Examples (Principle):

- Alma 3:27 For every man receiveth wages of him whom he listeth to obey, and this according to the words of the spirit of prophecy; therefore let it be according to the truth
- Alma 5:26 if ye have experienced a change of heart, and if ye have felt to sing the song of redeeming love, I would ask, can ye feel so now?
- Alma 5:28 Behold, are ye stripped of pride? I say unto you, if ye are not ye are not prepared to meet God
- Alma 5:57 come ye out from the wicked, and be ye separate, and touch not their unclean things
- Alma 12:9 It is given unto many to know the mysteries of God; nevertheless they are laid under a strict command that they shall not impart only according to the portion of his word which he doth grant unto the children of men, according to the heed and diligence which they give unto him.

Examples (Imagery):

- Alma 1:15 an ignominious death
- Alma 4:19 bearing down in pure testimony
- Alma 5:15 view this mortal body raised in immortality, and this corruption raised in Incorruption
- Alma 5:26 sing the song of redeeming love
- Alma 5:43 the energy of my soul
- Alma 7:10 she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel
- Alma 9:24 expressly promised and firmly decreed
- Alma 11:21 expert in the devices of the devil
- Alma 12:1 tremble under a consciousness of his guilt
- Alma 13:27 I wish from the inmost part of my heart, yea, with great anxiety even unto pain
- Alma 15:3 scorched with a burning heat

- (5) **Epistles (formal directed messages):** The Book of Mormon contains the contents of a number of formal letters or epistles. These epistles can be classified by their setting (i.e., “pastoral,” “prophetic,” “war,” etc.)

Sometimes, despite not being in the form of a formal epistle, prophets are inspired to direct comments to a particular group as if they were present.

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Possible Example: Alma 5:37

O ye workers of iniquity

- (6) **Scriptural Commentary and Sermons:** A prophet who is writing or giving a sermon explains covenant aspects or doctrinal ideas by using and interpreting scripture. In his book, *The Literary Masterpiece called the Book of Mormon* (2004, p. 20-30), James T. Duke lists and categorizes the sermons and doctrinal teachings found in the Book of Mormon. A few examples are as follows:

<u>Verses</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Audience</u>	<u>Subject</u>
Alma 5: 1-62	Sermon	Alma Younger	Multitude in Zarahemla	Reform of church, history of his people, exhortation to righteousness, judgment, his own revelation
Alma 7:1-27	Sermon	Alma Younger	City of Gideon	Testimony of Christ's coming and atonement, exhorts to righteousness
Alma 9:7-30	Sermon	Alma Younger	City of Ammonihah	God's goodness, Lamanites and Nephites, traditions, exhorts to righteousness
Alma 10:1-25	Sermon	Amulek	City of Ammonihah	Amulek's conversion and testimony, call to repentance
Alma 11:26-45	Debate	Amulek	Zeezrom	Christ's coming, temporal death, resurrection
Alma 12:20-13:31	Sermon	Alma Younger	Antionah, people of Ammonihah	Plan of adversary, judged by works, spiritual death, fall of Adam, plan of redemption, priesthood, angels, call to repentance

Duke writes: "Using such a list will help the gospel student gain an understanding of the complete and comprehensive nature of the doctrines taught in the book."

- (7) **Prayers:** Although short prayers can be classified as word forms, extended prayers can be classified as thematic literary forms. Some of the more prominent prayers in the Book of Mormon are:

The apostate prayer of the Zoramites (Alma 31:15-18).

The Lord's Prayer (3 Ne. 13:9-13).

Jesus's prayers to the Father (3 Ne. 19:20-23).

The brother of Jared's prayers concerning their journey (Ether 2:18-29; 3:2-5).

The sacramental prayers (Moroni 4, 5).

Example: Alma 2:28

28 **Nevertheless**
the **Nephites**

being strengthened
by the hand
of the Lord
having prayed mightily
to Him
that He [the Lord] would deliver them
out of the hands
of their enemies
therefore [He] the Lord did hear their cries

The following are references to prayer in Volume 4a, many of which proclaim that the Lord heard the prayers that were offered.

Alma had prayed to know things (Alma 5:46)

God's commandment to pray (Alma 6:6)

Alma wrestled with God in mighty prayer (Alma 8:10)

Things are known according to prayer (Alma 9:20)

When the Son of God comes He will be quick to answer prayers (Alma 9:26)

There would be destruction were it not for the prayers of the righteous (Alma 10:22)

Alma wishes that they would pray continually to not be tempted above that which they could bear (Alma 13:28)

Pray continually to be delivered from Satan, death and destruction (Alma 15:17)

- (8) **Sacred songs (Psalms):** A Psalm is a passage of scripture that contains expressions that could be recited, much like the lyrics of a song. Perhaps the most famous, and most lengthy is the "Psalm of Nephi (2 Nephi 4:16-35). Another example is "The Song of the Vineyard" from Isaiah that is quoted by Nephi (2 Ne. 15:1-7).

Example: I have yet to find a psalm in Alma chapters 1—16 (Volume 4a)

- (9) **Reasoning:** These are usually associated with a series of "wherefore" beginnings, a series of "if/then" statements, or a series of hypothetical questions followed by a "thus we see" or a "therefore" initiated statement. There are many examples in Volume 4a, but I will cite just a few.

Example: Alma 2:4

4 Therefore

if it were possible
that [he] Amlici should gain the voice

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[then] he [Amlici] being a wicked man of the people
would deprive them
[the people]
of their rights
and [of their] privileges
of the church

for it was his intent to destroy the church
of God

Examples: Alma 5:22
Alma 5:26-31
Alma 5:40-42
Alma 5:58-60
Alma 7:14
Alma 9:11

(10) **Typology:** “Typology . . . is the assumption that there is some meaning and point to history, and that sooner or later some event or events will occur which will indicate what that meaning or point is.” “All intensified language sooner or later turns metaphorical,” thus “literature is not only the obvious but the inescapable guide to higher journeys of consciousness.” (Northrup Frye, *Words with Power: Being a Second Study of the Bible and Literature*, 1990, p 28, 80)

The following series of lengthy quotes come from Richard Dilworth Rust in his book, *Feasting on the Word*, and are being used here with his permission. I would recommend the book to every reader. He writes:

Erich Auerbach in his *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (1953: 73-74) sees a conception of history such as this as being structured vertically rather than horizontally. Two events are horizontal to each other if they are linked by time or causality. A vertical connection, however, “can be established only if both occurrences are vertically linked to divine Providence.” God alone “is able to devise such a plan of history and supply the key to its understanding.” . . . With typology, “the here and now is no longer a mere link in an earthly chain of events, it is simultaneously something which has always been, and which will be fulfilled in the future; and strictly, in the eyes of God it is something eternal.

Essentially every event or person in the Book of Mormon may well remind us of another event or person; the book is like a beautifully composed symphony with repeated themes and motifs. . . . Most significantly, all God-given events or God-directed persons in the Book of Mormon are reminders of Jesus Christ or his gospel.

Book of Mormon judges are in a likeness of Christ, the “Eternal Judge of both quick and dead” (Moroni 10:34), whose role is affirmed by both Nephi and Moroni in their parting testimonies. Such high priests as Alma and his posterity prefigure Christ, the great high priest, as clarified by Alma in his discourse on the Melchizedek Priesthood (Alma 13). [p. 205]

Warfare is a scriptural metaphor for Christian action. . . . An exemplary Christian leader, King Mosiah “warred a good warfare, walking uprightly before God” (Alma 1:1). [p. 215]

(11) The Law

Note* This literary theme was not discussed by either Sidney Sperry or James Duke. While the study of the Law in the scriptures is ancient, the association of legal issues in the scriptures with literary criticism is relatively modern. In view of the legal studies that have been made in the last number of decades with the text of the Book of Mormon, I have chosen to add “The Law” to my list of literary forms.

Perhaps the foremost LDS scholar with respect to legal issues and the Book of Mormon is John W. Welch. In the Foreword to his book, *The Legal Cases in the Book of Mormon* (2008: xi-xxv), he gives a detailed chronological review of the progression he has made in his understanding, in his education, and in his writings on this theme. I would refer all readers to that Foreword and that book for a much greater perspective of this literary theme.

In that Foreword John Welch writes:

The legal cases reported in the Book of Mormon, as in the Bible, are not just about crime and punishment in a secular sense. To the men and women who experienced those legal confrontations, those cases are all about the ultimate definitions of righteousness and wickedness, the open differentiation of truth from falsity, and the firm recognition of righteous authority as opposed to unjust imposition. Reading the scriptures in light of ancient laws, principles, practicalities, purposes, and sympathies enriches appreciation for issues and contexts out of which many of the plain messages of the prophetic Book of Mormon arose. [xii]

The following is a sampling of articles by John Welch that pertain to the narrative in the various Volumes of my text:

<u>Volume</u>		<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>
Volume 1	1 Ne. 3—4	“Legal Perspectives on the Slaying of Laban”	1992
Volume 2	2 Ne. 9:27-38	“Jacob’s Ten Commandments”	1992
	Jac. 7	“The Case of Sherem against Jacob”	2008
Volume 3	Mos. 3—5	“Benjamin’s Speech as a Prophetic Lawsuit”	1998
	Mos. 12—17	“Judicial Process in the Trial of Abinadi”	1983
	Mos. 29	“The Law of Mosiah”	1992

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Volume 4a	Alma 1	The Trial of Nehor	2008
	Alma 8—14	The Trial of Alma and Amulek	2008
	Alma 11: 3, 7	“The Laws of Eshnunna and Nephite economics”	1999
	Alma 16	“The Destruction of Ammonihah and the Law of Apostate Cities”	1992
Volume 4b	Alma 24, 27	“Exemption from Military Duty”	1992
	Alma 30:6-60	“The Trial of Korihor”	2008
Volume 4c	Alma 51:19	“The Imprisonment of King-Men”	2008
	Alma 62:9-10	“The Trial of Pachus’s Men and the King-Men”	2008
Volume 5	Hel. 1:1-10	“The Case of Paanchi”	2008
	Hel. 5:21-22	“The Imprisonment of Lehi and Nephi”	2008
	Hel. 7—9	“The Case of an Unobserved Murder”	1992
	3 Ne. 3:12	“Thieves and Robbers”	1992
	3 Ne. 4	“The Execution of Zemnariyah”	1992
	3 Ne. 6:20-24	“Corrupt Execution of Inspired Prophets”	2008
	3 Ne. 6:25-30	“Complaint against the Corrupt Judges”	2008
Volume 6	3 Ne. 12—	<i>The Sermon at the Temple</i> <i>And the Sermon on the Mount</i>	1990
	3 Ne. 12—	<i>Illuminating the Sermon at the Temple . . .</i>	1999
Volume 7	Mor. 9:11-20	“Law and War in the Book of Mormon”	1990

In regard to Alma 1—16 (Volume 4a), there are a couple of legal cases worthy of our attention. John Welch writes:

The trial of Nehor occurred in the very first year of the new regime in Zarahemla with Alma, the new head of state, sitting as a sole judge. The trial of Nehor is a classic case of a newly installed judge having to make a decision that, either way, was certain to offend and be unpopular with one group or another within his community. Courageously, Alma issued a verdict that took a strong stand against any personal use of violence in trying to engineer social change or resolve intersectional differences within the Nephite capital. [p. 211]

In his 24-page chapter seven (“The Trial of Nehor”), John Welch sheds some interesting light on the Nephite legal system.

Over the next 34 pages in his chapter eight (“The Trial of Alma and Amulek”), Welch provides a number of insights. He writes:

Alma [chapters] 8—14 gives a jarring account of Ammonihah’s perversion of justice. In this case, Alma and Amulek were wickedly imprisoned and the women and children of their followers were viciously executed. These manifold miscarriages of justice and administrative abuse, coupled with conclusive denomination of the city of Ammonihah as an apostate city, provided irrefutable evidence that divine justice was properly swerved when that city was reduced to a putrid heap shortly afterward by an invading Lamanite army.

Alma and Amulek’s experiences in Ammonihah also reveal much of the Hebraic legal traditions inherited by the Nephites. While only a few elements of these proceedings are mentioned expressly in Alma 9—16, they provide interesting insights about the legal system in Ammonihah during the early years of the Nephite reign of judges. [p. 237-238]

Near the end of his 2008 book (*The Legal Cases in the Book of Mormon*), John Welch provides a lengthy 34-page Bibliography of related non-LDS and LDS sources. From this Bibliography I have attempted to provide a chronological list of those LDS-related written works, which can be found in my “Sources” Volume: Part D: “A Chronological List of Pertinent Writings on Ancient Hebrew Law That Are Part of the Book of Mormon.

(12) Editorial Promises

One step in the Methods that I have chosen to illustrate the text of the Book of Mormon in an artistic manner involves marking original editorial commentary. One major purpose of these commentaries was to inform the reader about what was to come. I have chosen to call these “editorial promises” following John A. Tvedtnes’ 1991 article, “Mormon’s Editorial Promises” in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*.

These Editorial Promises can further be classified under Thematic literary forms. These editorial promises are found at the beginnings of books and chapters in the Book of Mormon. For example, the original Preface to the book of First Nephi is an indicator or “editorial promise” of what is to come. Editorial promises are also found at points of change in the narrative in order to alert the reader as to what is to come. While most of the “editorial promises” are fulfilled in what immediately follows in the Book of Mormon text, many are separated from their fulfillment by large amounts of text (even chapters and books). At times in the text I will alert the reader to either the making or fulfillment of an editorial promise by placing a blue “EP” at the far right margin. This process will be selective rather than comprehensive. In summary, the many editorial promises that are made and fulfilled in the Book of Mormon provide just one more perspective into the complexity and the superlative literary composition of this “marvelous work and a wonder.”

The editorial promises that are either made or fulfilled in Volume 4a (Alma 1—16) are charted below. This charting is a result of extensive research by Ryan Dahle, and is used with permission from Book of Mormon Central.

Editorial Promises (Volume 4a)

* Promises separated from their fulfillment by more than five verses

** Promises separated from their fulfillment by large amounts of text (typically a chapter or more)

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Promise</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
An Account of Alma, the Son of Alma Will Be Given	Alma 1:1 Introd.	Alma 1–4
Alma Is the Chief Judge ²⁶	Alma 1:1 Introd.	Alma 1–4

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<u>Topic</u>	<u>Promise</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
An Account of the Reign of the Judges Will Be Given	Alma 1:1 Introd.	Alma 1–63
**An Account of Contention and Wars among the People (Nephites) Will Be Given	Alma 1:1 Introd.	Alma 2
**An Account of War between the Nephites and Lamanites Will Be Given	Alma 1:1 Introd.	Alma 2:24–38 Alma 3:20–23
Return to Account of Amlicites	Alma 3:13	Alma 3:13–23
An Account Will Be Given of Alma’s Words Delivered in Cities and Villages	Alma 5 Introd.	Alma 5–8
Alma’s Words to the People in Gideon Will Be Given	Alma 7 Introd.	Alma 6:8 Alma 8:1
**Alma and Amulek Will Be Given Special Divine Power	Alma 8:31	Alma 14:10 Alma 14:28
**Alma and Amulek Will Not Be Confined in Dungeons	Alma 8:31	Alma 14:28
**It Won’t Be Possible for Men to Slay Alma and Amulek	Alma 8:31	Alma 14:13 Alma 14:28
**Alma and Amulek Won’t Exercise Power until Bound and Cast into Prison	Alma 8:31	Alma 14:26
The Words of Alma Will Be Given	Alma 9 Introd.	Alma 9:1–33 Alma 12–13
*The Words of Amulek Will Also Be Given	Alma 9 Introd.	Alma 9:34 Alma 10:1–27 Alma 11:22–46
**Alma and Amulek Will Be Cast into Prison	Alma 9 Introd.	Alma 14:18
**Alma and Amulek Will Be Delivered by Divine Power	Alma 9 Introd.	Alma 14:28
**Lawyers Plan to Remember Alma and Amulek’s Words Against Them	Alma 10:30	Alma 12:3–4, 7
Alma Will Explain the Fall	Alma 12:22	Alma 12:22–37

Sources: John A. Tvedtnes, "Mormon's Editorial Promises" in *Rediscovering the Book of Mormon*, 1991, p. 29-31. Thomas W. Mackay, "Mormon as Editor: A Study in Colophons, Headers, and Source Indicators," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* vol 2 no. 2 (1993): 90-109. Anita Wells, "Bare Record: The Nephite Archivist, The Record of Records, and the Book of Mormon Provenance," *Interpreter: A Journal of Mormon Scriptures* 24 (2017): 99-122. Book of Mormon Central [Ryan Dahle], "Why Should Readers Pay Attention to the Book of Mormon's Editorial Promises?" KnoWhy #510, April 11, 2019.

(13) Prophetic Promises:

One of the basic thematic elements in the Book of Mormon is found in prophetic promises, many of which are based on the Lord's original covenant with Nephi in which the Lord declares: "Inasmuch as thou shalt keep my commandments, ye shall prosper, and shall be led to a land of promise; yea even a land which I have prepared for you; yea, a land which is choice above all other lands. And inasmuch as thy brethren shall rebel against thee, they shall be cut off from the presence of the Lord (1 Nephi 2:20-21). Nephi structured his narrative around the fulfillment of these covenant promises, and also the coming of Christ, the Lamb of God, which makes these covenant promises valid (see 1 Nephi 12—14). Nephi's recorded prophetic promises not only included those by the Lord and by himself, but also the words of his father Lehi and his brother Jacob, and also many of the words spoken by past prophets as recorded on the Brass Plates. According to Steven L. Olsen, "Nephi's [recorded] prophecies became so crucial to [Mormon's] literary purpose that he [Mormon] consciously structured a major portion of his narrative in order to document their literal and complete fulfillment." Mormon boldly declares to all those that his record might go to: "I . . . know that as many things as have been prophesied concerning us down to this day have been fulfilled, and as many as go beyond this day must surely come to pass." (Words of Mormon 1:4)

The editorial promises that are either made or fulfilled in Volume 4a (Alma 1—16) are charted below. This charting is a result of extensive research by Ryan Dahle, and is used with permission from Book of Mormon Central.

Volume 4a

Prophecies and Their Fulfillment in the Book of Mormon

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
Lehi's Posterity Will Prosper or Be Cursed	1 Nephi 2:20	2 Nephi 5:13
	1 Nephi 4:14	Omni 1:6
	2 Nephi 1:9, 20	Mosiah 9:9
	2 Nephi 4:4	Mosiah 10:5
	Jarom 1:9	Mosiah 21:16
	Mosiah 1:7	Mosiah 23:19–20
	Mosiah 2:22, 31	Mosiah 25:24
	Alma 9:13	Alma 50:18–22
	Alma 36:1, 30	Alma 59:3
	Alma 37:13	Alma 62:48, 51
	Alma 38:1	Helaman 3:20
	Alma 45:8	Helaman 4:13

(Literary Forms)

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
Lamanites Will Be a Scourge	1 Nephi 2:24 2 Nephi 5:25 Jacob 3:3	Jacob 1:10, 14 Enos–Omni Omni 1:24 WofM 1:13–14 Mosiah 9–10 Alma 2–3 Alma 16:1–11 Alma 24:1–25:14 Alma 28 Alma 43–44 Alma 46:1–50:11 Alma 51–62 Helaman 1:1–13 Helaman 1:14–34 Helaman 4 Helaman 6:15–11:20 3 Nephi 2:11–4:28 3 Nephi 6:14–7:14 Mormon 1:6–2:9 Mormon 2:16–3:1 Mormon 3:4–6:15
Lamb of God Will Show Himself	1 Nephi 12:6 1 Nephi 13:35 2 Nephi 26:1 2 Nephi 26:9 Alma 16:20	3 Nephi 10:18–19 3 Nephi 11:8–14
Lamanites Won't Be Utterly Destroyed	1 Nephi 13:31 2 Nephi 4:9 Alma 9:16, 24 Alma 46:24–27 Helaman 7:24 Helaman 15:12,16	Mormon 8:7–9
Curse upon Lamanites Will Be Removed	2 Nephi 4:6 2 Nephi 5:22 Alma 3:14	Alma 23:18 3 Nephi 2:15
God Will Mark Lamanites to Make Them Unenticing	2 Nephi 5:21–22	Alma 3:14
Nephites Who Mix with Lamanites Will Be Cursed	2 Nephi 5:22	Alma 3:15

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Prophecy</u>	<u>Fulfillment</u>
Only the Lord Will Deliver the Nephites from Bondage	Mosiah 11:23	Mosiah 21:5 Mosiah 23:13, 23–24, 27 Mosiah 24:17, 21 Mosiah 25:16 Mosiah 27:16 Mosiah 29:20 Alma 5:5 Alma 29:11–12 Alma 36:2
Beasts Will Devour Flesh	Mosiah 12:2 Mosiah 17:17	Alma 2:38 Alma 16:10
Nephites Will Be Smitten with Famine and Pestilence	Mosiah 12:4, 7 Alma 10:22-23 Alma 45:11 Helaman 10:6 Helaman 13:9	Alma 62:35, 39 Helaman 11:5 Helaman 12:3
Nephites Will Be Utterly Destroyed	Mosiah 12:8 Alma 9:12 Alma 9:24 Alma 46:24–27 Helaman 7:24 Helaman 13:10 Helaman 15:17	Mormon 6:8–20
Lord Will Utterly Destroy Ammonihah	Alma 8:16 Alma 9:12 Alma 10:18	Alma 16:9–11 Alma 25:2
Ammonihah Will Be Destroyed in One Day	Alma 9:4–5	Alma 16:10

(Sources: Steven L. Olsen, “Prophecy and History: Structuring the Abridgment of the Nephite Records,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 15, no. 1 (2006): 28. Book of Mormon Central [Ryan Dahle], “How Does Prophecy Shape the Book of Mormon’s Content and Structure?” KnoWhy #498, January 15, 2019)

(Literary Forms)