NEAL A. MAXWELL INSTITUTE
FOR RELIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY • PROVO, UTAH

Title Toward the Ultimate Book of Mormon Time Line

Author(s) Don L. Brugger

Reference *FARMS Review* 20/1 (2008): 1–13.

ISSN 1550-3194 (print), 2156-8049 (online)

Abstract Review of *The Timechart History of Mormonism: From Premortality to the Present* (2006), by Christopher Kimball Bigelow.

Toward the Ultimate Book of Mormon Time Line

Don L. Brugger

Review of Christopher Kimball Bigelow. *The Timechart History of Mormonism: From Premortality to the Present,* ed. Jana Riess. Herfordshire, UK: Worth Press, 2006. $17.99. 31 pp. (timechart), 31 pp. (booklet).

More than a mere time line, this eye-catching digest of scriptural history and Mormon cultural trivia features a large-format, concertina-style "timechart" supplemented with an attached booklet, both richly illustrated with superior artwork and historical photographs. Unfolding to an impressive eleven feet, the timechart traces events in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and Latter-day Saint church history alongside an external chronology in one grand panoramic sweep from 4000 BC to AD 2005.[1] The reverse side is packed with maps and other visual aids, a glossary, and substantive sidebars on beliefs, ordinances, temples, prophets, historical sites, and notable theologians, writers, and historians. A near-perfect counterweight to the timechart is the booklet *Highlights of Mormon History and Culture*, offering a potpourri of historical and scriptural overviews, time lines,

1. The book's subtitle extends that range back into premortality since the timechart notes the grand council in heaven, but the chronology itself begins at 4000 BC, which seems to follow the calculations of the Irish Protestant bishop James Ussher (1581–1656), who believed that the creation of the earth took place on October 23, 4004 BC. This has been the accepted date of creation partly because it appeared in annotated editions of the King James translation of the Bible. The Church of Jesus Christ does not, of course, take a position on chronological issues such as the date of creation.

who's who listings, membership data, distinctive Mormon beliefs, offshoot groups, Mormon Web sites, and books for further reading.[2]

As a whole, the book reflects the marvel of modern document design and printing technology—so much data tidily compressed and arranged and illustrated. The pictorial approach is striking and effective, making for delightful browsing while not crowding or overpowering the text. Worth Press, a British publisher specializing in timecharts, is to be commended for a tasteful job of making the factoids and raw data visually appealing. The use of color and ghosted images is restrained enough so that the text can be read without difficulty.[3] And *Timechart*'s overall attractiveness makes it something of an *objet d'art* itself.

Author Christopher Bigelow and editor Jana Riess have teamed up before. Their coauthored *Mormonism for Dummies*[4] has garnered high marks for coverage, accuracy, and readability despite the challenges of satisfying curious outsiders and knowledgeable insiders alike and capturing the attention of serious-minded reviewers when the frivolous title and popular appeal of this flourishing cult-genre do not exactly inspire confidence in quality. One simply cannot judge this surprisingly informative book by its cover; nothing else is quite like this one-stop primer on all things Mormon for casual readers. Fastidious insiders may squirm or bristle at the occasional patches of irreverent humor and dalliance with controversial and delicate subjects, yet they too would likely admit that, for the most part, *Mormonism for Dummies* is well informed and even engaging.

As a quick-reference tool designed for "teachers, students, history buffs, and readers of all ages and faiths,"[5] *Timechart* likewise assem-

2. It is puzzling that the suggested reading list includes a few books by prominent detractors of Mormonism when *Timechart* otherwise presents an altogether positive image of the faith. Because the *FARMS Review* often includes scholarly essays that refute the work of such critics, it is unfortunate that the sidebar "Mormon Periodicals" (p. 31 of the booklet) omits the *Review* from the list while including two periodicals of mixed reputation.

3. One exception is the map "Modern-Day Membership and Temples" (pp. 26–27 of the booklet), which employs hard-to-see black type on a dark blue background.

4. Jana Riess and Christopher Kimball Bigelow, *Mormonism for Dummies* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2005).

5. http://www.worthpress.co.uk (accessed April 2008).

bles a variety of information calculated to appeal to motivated readers. As one would expect, its approach is factual and concise, with nothing of the humor, whimsy, and informal character of its cousin, *Mormonism for Dummies*. Overall, *Timechart* does a respectable job of distilling fundamentals of Latter-day Saint history, scripture, belief, and culture in a fair-minded and accurate manner.

This is not to say that *Timechart* does not have its flaws, most of them quite minor—virtually any publication of length has its share, especially design-intensive projects like this one where text is manipulated for fit in the design shop. Because *Timechart* presents aspects of their faith, beliefs, and culture to the wider community, Latter-day Saints may feel something of a proprietary interest in expecting any oversights to be rectified in a future printing or edition. In that spirit I exercise a reviewer's prerogative to point out a few lapses, trusting that the publisher will make good on its commitment to consider *all* comments and corrections for future editions (p. i).

Catching the eye on page viii is the orphaned *a* at the end of the caption for the painting of Christ among the Nephites. This and the nearby typo *murdvernment* under the time point "ca. AD 32" admit the likelihood of other design slips. Looking further we find a whopper: a duplicated contents page for the attached booklet. A surprising lapse, given the *Timechart* series' emphasis on history, is the "year" 0 in place of 1 BC in the time line and corresponding text, ignoring a firm convention among historians. A rather significant error occurs on page ix, where the Book of Mormon time line abruptly ends at AD 363, when the Nephites initiated war with the Lamanites—as if the Nephite record ends at the start of Mormon 4. Some sixty years and fifteen chapters (excluding the book of Ether, which figures at the beginning of this time line) are unaccounted for. What of Mormon's return as military commander? The penultimate time point marks his refusal to lead the armies, yet his resumption of leadership goes unmarked. What of hiding the plates? If we search beyond the main time line and then squint, we discover a separate, miniature time line running along the bottom of the page. Entitled "Handing Down the Plates," it begins a few pages earlier and ends here with "Records hidden

421–1827." It seems doubtful that this secondary time line is intended to take up where the main time line prematurely ends, for other significant events are omitted as well: the final battles at Cumorah, the demise of the Nephite civilization, Mormon's death, and Moroni's parting prophecies and exhortations. Since the rest of the timechart is so flush with time points, this abrupt truncation is rather glaring, perhaps another casualty of the design shop.

The section of the timechart entitled "The Restoration" could be fleshed out to more adequately cover the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. For example, one can easily get the impression that the Book of Mormon was translated in about a year (July 1828–June 1829, a period beginning after the loss of the 116 pages of transcribed manuscript), rather than in just under three months. This is because the timechart neglects to note the momentous arrival of Oliver Cowdery in Harmony, Pennsylvania, on 5 April 1829 or his assumption of scribal labors two days later, at which point Joseph's work of translation proceeded in earnest until its completion around 1 July.[6] What's more, this part of the timechart omits any mention of scribal help, though it does track Oliver's and Martin Harris's other activities.

Although the timechart notes that the plates were temporarily taken from Joseph Smith after the incident of the lost manuscript, it does not provide a date for their return nor mention that the interpreters were taken away as well. The date typically assigned to the return of the plates and interpreters is 22 September 1828,[7] but Joseph's own account and other evidence suggest a date in early July of that year.[8] Furthermore, in 1885 David Whitmer recollected that the angel reclaimed from Joseph Smith both the plates and the "spectacles" but returned only "a Urim

6. *BYU Studies* 46/4 (2007): 12, 16. This issue is devoted to a chronology of the life of Joseph Smith, with pp. 10–18 covering the coming forth of the Book of Mormon.

7. *History of the Church*, 1:21–23. This date also appears in Lucy Mack Smith's 1845 history, the relevant portion of which is reproduced in John W. Welch, ed., *Opening the Heavens: Accounts of Divine Manifestations, 1820–1844* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 162.

8. See Larry E. Morris, "The Conversion of Oliver Cowdery," *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 16/1 (2007): 81 n. 7.

and Thummim of another pattern."[9] On the other hand, Lucy Mack Smith's 1844–45 and 1853 histories differ on whether it was the plates or interpreters that were taken by the angel for a season.[10]

Given the discrepancies in the historical record, it would be understandable that *Timechart* avoids these issues if not for two things: (1) the publisher's note on the inside front cover avers that "this timeline suggests approximate years . . . [whenever] actual dates are not known . . . [or] different historical sources give conflicting dates"; (2) two time lines in the attached booklet address these matters but muddle the picture. Reassurances aside, the timechart neglects to approximate a date for when Joseph resumed his translation work—certainly not an egregious oversight, just disappointing for a mega time line, especially since the Book of Mormon time line on page 4 of the booklet does provide a date for this event: 22 September 1828.[11] Similarly frustrating is the Joseph Smith time line on page 3. It notes that in July 1828 "the Urim and Thummim device [was] taken for a short time" and that in the summer of 1828 "the Urim and Thummim *and plates [were] again taken* for a short time" (emphasis added), with no mention of when the plates were first taken.

To be sure, many readers will not notice these lapses, but those keenly interested in the Book of Mormon translation will quickly notice deficiencies. Discrepancies in the historical record could be effectively addressed in the time lines with appropriate hedge words that would confer on *Timechart* a level of rigor that readers would appreciate. And the lack of coordination between the restoration section of the timechart and the shorter time lines in the booklet bearing on the same topic are easily rectified by beefing up the timechart in a few spots, even if it means dropping or resizing an image or two. This is well worth doing because the timechart is the book's prize feature, the master time

9. Quoted in John W. Welch, "The Miraculous Translation of the Book of Mormon," in Welch, *Opening the Heavens*, 88, 154.

10. Welch, *Opening the Heavens*, 88, 108 n. 44.

11. This time line mentions only that Joseph resumed his translation on 22 September 1828, not that the plates and interpreters were reportedly returned to him on this date—perhaps an attempt to obfuscate the question of precisely when the power and means to translate were restored to Joseph.

line that readers will naturally turn to for information (rather than to the easily overlooked, topic-specific time lines buried in the booklet). Indeed, the timechart's very length implies thorough coverage.

The captions for the more than two dozen paintings (not counting several duplications) could be improved since in most cases they merely restate the titles of the works when these titles already appear in the adjacent credit lines. This banal practice is aesthetically displeasing and can even create confusion. For example, readers unfamiliar with the Mormon story will be nonplussed by the page xi caption "Let Him Ask in Faith," which accompanies an identically titled painting of Joseph Smith's first vision. There is no obvious clue that it is Joseph being depicted, let alone his momentous vision. Since a painting of Joseph translating the plates carries a helpful descriptive caption (p. xii), one wonders why the same was not done elsewhere.[12] Other photo captions will baffle non–Latter-day Saint readers too: "Endowment House" (p. xiii; its purpose and location are not discoverable in the text), "Dedication of South America" (p. xiv; the nature of this dedication is unspecified, and the dignitaries in the photo are not identified), "The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve" (p. xvi; the awe-inspiring *Christus* statue behind them goes unnamed and unlocated), to name a few. In many cases, readers will have to search hard (sometimes on different pages) for the information that will put illustrations in context; in other cases, they will search in vain. Why would a relatively large photo like the one of Carthage Jail on page 13 of the booklet carry that name only as its caption (in

12. Perhaps it was judged that the title of Simon Dewey's painting of Joseph translating the plates, *By the Gift and Power of God*, would puzzle readers unfamiliar with the scriptural quotation. Yet it is unfortunate that the caption used, "Joseph Smith Translates the Book of Mormon by Inspiration," though ultimately true and suited to the artist's interpretation, gives the impression that Joseph did not use an interpreting device (either the Urim and Thummim or the seer stone) while translating, a view that contradicts the historical and scriptural record (e.g., *History of the Church*, 1:19; Doctrine and Covenants 10:1; 20:8; Joseph Smith—History 1:62, 71n), including several eyewitness accounts. For a study that draws on these accounts and on textual evidence to illuminate the mechanics of the translation process, see Royal Skousen, "Translating the Book of Mormon: Evidence from the Original Manuscript," in *Book of Mormon Authorship Revisited: The Evidence for Ancient Origins*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1997), especially pp. 61–66 and the conclusion and bibliography on pp. 90–91.

small point size) when five unbroken inches of caption space remain? Expand the caption by adding "where the Prophet Joseph Smith was martyred in June 1844" and interested readers can locate that date among the descriptive entries on that page and learn more.

A few picayune editorial matters concern stylistic inconsistencies for like items: the time points and accompanying text in the timechart are randomly left-justified, centered, or right-justified, creating a jumbled look that impedes easy scanning; some of the four-digit dates on page iv have commas while others do not; illustration captions throughout the book variously employ headline-style capitalization (e.g., "Brigham Young's Nauvoo Home") and sentence-style capitalization (e.g., "Sagwitch and his wife").

Such oversights can plague any publication project that is not thoroughly and competently proofread.[13] Yet *Timechart* readers hunting for specific information will not notice many of the technical blemishes pointed out here—or at least the aggregate effect will certainly not be enough to impugn the whole book. Indeed, editing and proofreading lapses are not necessarily indicative of poor content, though a lack of professional care in those areas may reflect similar haste and sloppiness in conception. Though many readers are oblivious to such seeming trifles or are forgiving when they do spot them, a publisher and author would be ethically remiss to engage in such Newtonian rationalization and do nothing.[14] Accuracy and reliability are the *raison d'être* of any reference work; and the presence of even small lapses—be they factual errors or stylistic or artistic infelicities—can mar credibility and distract

13. The average comparison proofreader (one who compares clean copy with edited copy in order to catch discrepancies) misses about one error in ten. Industry standards range from allowing one miss per typeset page (a low standard) to allowing one miss every hour (a high standard). Peggy Smith, *Mark My Words: Instruction and Practice in Proofreading*, 3rd ed. (Alexandria, VA: EEI, 1997), 137–38. While occasional proofreading errors are inevitable, multiple read-throughs, each with a different focus (typography, typos, inconsistencies, etc.) can considerably reduce error frequency.

14. The story is told that Sir Isaac Newton "prevented a misprint from being corrected in his *Principia*, saying that competent readers would automatically correct it for themselves." Jacques Barzun, "Behind the Blue Pencil: Censorship or Creeping Creativity?" in *On Writing, Editing, and Publishing: Essays Explicative and Hortatory*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 105.

readers. Naturally this is a concern for Latter-day Saints wanting to see their history and belief portrayed in the best possible light (i.e., depicted fairly, accurately, and in accordance with the highest professional standards), though it applies equally to any consumer seeking clear and trustworthy information and a product worth its price.

This discussion calls attention to the quality-control challenges endemic in projects like this one for which the collaborating author, editor, designer, publisher, and printer live far apart (in this case across the world)[15] and work for different interests. Although today's advanced communications technologies make distance nearly irrelevant and publishers often outsource work to book packagers—who offer not just printing and binding but an increasingly ambitious array of "value-added" editing, typesetting, design, proofreading, and distribution services as well (in turn often outsourced)—these developments can actually create more room for error as publications projects are routed through disparate shops and countless hands, diffusing responsibility for the inevitable errors introduced along the line.[16]

Nearly three decades ago, editing—and its cousin proofreading, it is fair to say—was said to be in decline partly because corporate takeovers of major publishing houses made "return on investment" the watchword and editors now were pressured to hunt down the next bestseller rather than take time to edit to high literary standards that had become passé amid the frenzied atmosphere of mass consumerism.[17] One observer laments that

15. *Timechart*'s author notes this global effort in a report for *Meridian Magazine*, an online publication: "This Mormon timechart project was truly global in scope, with the writer and image researcher located in Utah, the editor in Ohio, the design team in Connecticut, the publisher in England, the map illustrators in India, and the printer in China" (Christopher Kimball Bigelow, "Introducing *The Timechart History of Mormonism*," http://www.ldsmag.com/books/070504timechart.html [accessed 8 October 2008]). No proofreader is mentioned here or in *Timechart*'s colophon, perhaps because the role is often an anonymous one in the industry or because, given the kinds of errors that slipped through, a dedicated proofreader was not employed in this project.

16. The *For Dummies* books alluded to earlier use book packagers to good effect, but those books are not pictorial presentations that require the kind of intensive, multilevel proofreading at issue here.

17. See R. Z. Sheppard, "The Decline of Editing," *Time*, 1 September 1980, 70–72; also http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,922149,00.html (accessed 26 May 2008).

> editors then [about 1970] . . . were a breed of compulsively orderly and fanatically precise individuals who ruthlessly stalked and destroyed typos, solecisms, and factual inaccuracies. . . . They placed literature high above crass commerce. . . . The new breed of editorial animal . . . looks down his or her nose at line editing and production details. The time and money pressures of today's monolithic and highly competitive publishing business have devalued good bookmaking. The result is books that fall apart, prematurely yellow with age, and are scandalously rife with typos.[18]

Certainly *Timechart* is not "scandalously" inferior in any way, but the highly collaborative process that apparently contributed to diminished quality control on the production end furnishes a cautionary tale about modern bookmaking. In small degree it also reflects the somewhat parlous state of editing and proofreading, once-discrete tasks that now are often absorbed into other functions,[19] relegated to untrained or unseasoned personnel, or dispensed with in the push to save money and the rush to get into print.

The timechart aside, the other sections in the book are well conceived and make for interesting browsing. Attention to current scholarship in a few areas would enhance the book's value as a reliable reference tool. Two items have to do with Book of Mormon–related maps. The map of Book of Mormon geography (p. C, on the reverse side of the timechart) ignores the best model to date—John L. Sorenson's theoretical reconstitution of Mormon's "mental map."[20] Like Sorenson's, *Timechart*'s map is a theoretical model based, it would seem, on internal evidence from the Book of Mormon rather

18. Richard Curtis, "Are Editors Necessary?" in Gerald Gross, ed., *Editors on Editing: What Writers Need to Know about What Editors Do*, 3rd ed. (New York: Grove, 1993), 31–32.

19. For example, writers or editors doubling as proofreaders of their own work—once a firm taboo in publishing (since protracted closeness to a text blinds one to its flaws) but now, with the proliferation of desktop publishers and book packagers seeking a share of Big Publishing's profits by utilizing small staffs and a lean business model, increasingly an unfortunate necessity.

20. See generally John L. Sorenson, *Mormon's Map* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2000).

than force-fitted through selective proof-texting to a predetermined real-world location. While it is true that numerous geographical correlations have been proposed and the issue of fixing Book of Mormon events in a real-world setting is far from settled, the majority of Latter-day Saint scholars accept Sorenson's limited-geography model situated in Mesoamerica as the best to date. A pioneer in this field, Sorenson, an anthropologist who has pursued the puzzle of Book of Mormon geography for over fifty years, has published widely on the topic and is known for his command of the literature, prodigious research, and keen synthesis of complicated research data. Thus it is unfortunate that the *Timechart* map of unspecified authorship is second-rate. Whereas Sorenson's map meticulously takes into account textual clues such as geographical features, population sizes, distances, ecology, directions, and climate, *Timechart*'s map appears to be a poor imitation (indeed, at first glance the two maps look alike) whose hasty construction muddles several firm spatial relationships. It is frustrating that the map's provenance is unspecified, since curious readers cannot examine the interpretive bases behind the proposed identifications.

Immediately suspect are several cities located far inland when textual clues indicate they are by or somewhat near the seashore.[21] Directly left of the "East Wilderness" label is the counterintuitive "South Wilderness" label. Since there is in fact a west wilderness (Alma 8:3; 22:28), the obvious adjustments should be made. The map also has two cities named Mulek, when that city should be located south of Bountiful near the sea and the other site is the city of Melek. Moreover, the hourglass-shaped map should be tilted 45 degrees for a plausible directional orientation that makes sense of the east, west, and north seas, which are incongruous in the *Timechart* map.[22] In sum, to the

21. These cities include Moroni, Nephihah, Lehi, Morianton, Omner, Gid, and Mulek. See Alma 50:13; 51:26.

22. A south sea is not identified on the *Timechart* map. Though presumed external correlations should not guide the directionality of a theoretical map, in this case the map, which needs to be rotated either right or left to account for the north and south seas (see Helaman 3:8), could reasonably be rotated to the left à la Sorenson's model since a geographical correlation with any of the possible narrow necks of land in the Americas virtually demands that orientation.

trained eye, this map reflects the kind of haphazard, "ad hoc modeling" that Sorenson laments in his compendious *Geography of Book of Mormon Events*,[23] which meticulously evaluates dozens of such maps and establishes criteria for pursuing this study responsibly.[24]

The other Book of Mormon–related map, which traces Lehi and Sariah's journey through Arabia, is titled "Possible Route of Lehi's Journey" yet actually plots multiple routes. Without attribution, it appears to show S. Kent Brown's proposed northerly arc that, after Nahom, skirts the fractured terrain of the al-Mahrah plateau. But at the same time it charts a more direct easterly route that has been proposed, with slight variations, by other researchers.[25] Readers unfamiliar with the journey of Lehi's group through the Arabian wilderness are left to assume that, on the eastern leg of the journey, the group became lost and trekked in two vast "circles" of several hundred miles each—certainly not what any map on the subject intends to show. This may be a quibble since the map will work if *Route* in the title is corrected to *Routes*, though the absence of appropriate credit and source documentation here and elsewhere in the book remains a concern.

Of course, even the best-intentioned nonspecialist author cannot cover the waterfront of potential error in a commercial venture of this kind. Budget and time constraints being what they are, it is hardly feasible to engage a crew of subject-matter specialists to verify every date, fact, and assertion. And the narrow specialization in academia today makes it difficult to find one content specialist to do the job of many specialists with equal aplomb when it comes to content review. Even scholars who manage to indulge catholic interests cannot keep up on all the latest thinking and findings arising in complementary fields of academic endeavor. And while reputable publishing houses

23. John L. Sorenson, *The Geography of Book of Mormon Events: A Source Book* (Provo, UT: FARMS, 1992), 209.

24. In May 2008 John Sorenson examined said map in *Timechart* and rated it inferior.

25. See the routes that S. Kent Brown proposes in his study "New Light from Arabia on Lehi's Trail," in *Echoes and Evidences of the Book of Mormon*, ed. Donald W. Parry, Daniel C. Peterson, and John W. Welch (Provo, UT: FARMS, 2002), 58. For a handy comparison of those routes with others, see the map in *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 15/2 (2006): 77 (compare p. 53).

ensure that nonfiction works pass a technical review before they are accepted for publication, independent authors and small publishers, even if convinced of the need for such quality control, typically cannot afford this added cost. Complicating this picture is the fact that even significant scholarly findings—if reported by the media—tend to have a short shelf life in the public mind and may take years to gain acceptance in the academy.[26] This being the case, an apparent plus is that *Timechart* editor Jana Riess, a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, holds a PhD in American religious history from Columbia University and is the religion book review editor for *Publisher's Weekly*, credentials that engender confidence in the book's overall accuracy and quality.

Anyone with a mind avid for Mormon trivia and neatly packaged information-bites will enjoy perusing this book. It could make a nice gift for those who would use it as a study aid or as a tantalizing missionary tool to display in the home for guests. It would seem that many readers, Latter-day Saints or not, will find the external correlations with secular history, as well as some of the cultural trivia, of at least passing interest.

The publisher's vision for the *Timechart* series is admirable if not exaggerated. This series is designed, the claim goes, so that "various elements interact and spark off other events," making "the forces that create history . . . tangible as the streams flow across the pages."[27] This calls to mind the supernova of time lines—science historian James Burke's "Knowledge Web," an interactive online resource that maps connections between people, places, events, things, and ideas that have led to technical innovations and, in many cases, to social change. Like *Timechart*, the ever-evolving "K-Web" aims to "put learning into

26. That is, if they gain acceptance at all, since old, cherished theories die hard in academia. A case in point is the longstanding debate over cultural contact between the hemispheres in ancient times. Despite a veritable boatload of hard evidence supporting the "diffusion hypothesis," this view struggles to find legitimacy within the academic mainstream. See John L. Sorenson, "Ancient Voyages Across the Ocean to America: From 'Impossible' to 'Certain,'" *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 14/1 (2005): 5–17; also Don L. Brugger, "Making the Case for Cultural Diffusion in Ancient Times," *Insights* 26/4 (2006): 1, 6.

27. http://www.worthpress.co.uk (accessed 26 March 2008).

a context that makes it easier to see the greater relevance" of synchronicities throughout history.[28] With constellations of navigable "knowledge nodes," Burke's K-Web promises to deliver where *Timechart* cannot—by showing more convincingly in an immersive 3-D learning environment how certain ideas and events actually did interrelate and "spark off" each other to shape history. Of course, *Timechart*'s chronology of scriptural personalities and events randomly aligned with secular milestones wisely avoids any such correlations, though the series' promotional plugs would lead one to believe otherwise.

But *Timechart*'s status as the preeminent Book of Mormon time line seems secure for quite some time. Only a clairvoyant K-Web programmer could top it by expanding the K-Web to include evidences of divine providence in human affairs, in which case the Book of Mormon (let alone the restoration of the gospel) might get a little more of the attention it deserves. In the meantime, *Timechart* serves ably enough as a comprehensive time line and historical and cultural overview of Mormonism.

28. http://www.k-web.org (accessed 30 March 2008).