

# INTERPRETER

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A JOURNAL OF MORMON SCRIPTURE

Volume 15 · 2015 · Pages 33-63

## Say Now Shibboleth, or Maybe Cumorah

Loren Blake Spendlove

Offprint Series

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ISSN 2372-1227 (print)

ISSN 2372-126X (online)

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# SAY NOW SHIBBOLETH, OR MAYBE CUMORAH

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**Loren Blake Spendlove**

*Abstract: The Deseret Alphabet represents a bold but failed attempt by 19th century LDS Church leaders to revolutionize English language orthography. As 21st century members of the LDS Church, we can benefit from this less than successful experiment by studying the 1869 Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon and learning how early church members most likely pronounced Book of Mormon names.*

Geographic regions, cultural influences, family associations, and the passage of time are some of the many factors that affect our way of speaking, including the way we pronounce specific words and phrases. An outstanding example of differences in pronunciation, owing to its harsh conclusion, is found in the book of Judges. After Jephthah and the men of Gilead fought with and defeated the Ammonites, “the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto Jephthah, wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? We will burn thine house upon thee with fire” (Judges 12:1). This insolent behavior by the men of Ephraim led to a war with the men of Gilead and resulted in heavy losses among the Ephraimites. After the battle, as the Ephraimite survivors tried to escape back to their own lands,

the Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over; that the men of Gilead said unto him, Art thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay; Then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan:

and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand (Judges 12:5–6).

The Ephraimites were unable to say the word shibboleth (שבולת) correctly, pronouncing it without the *sh* sound (stemming from the letter shin, ש) at the beginning of the word.<sup>1</sup> This peculiarity of speech among the Ephraimites led to many of them being slaughtered while trying to cross the Jordan River.

We do not know how Nephi, Alma, Mormon or other historical characters from the Book of Mormon pronounced names of people and places during their time, but we do have an achievable way of knowing how early members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints likely pronounced them. However, for most contemporary readers of the Book of Mormon, this knowledge has been essentially locked away in an obscure, mid-nineteenth century script known as the Deseret Alphabet (DA). The objective of this article is to provide the reader with the key to unlock this heretofore ciphered knowledge.

### Brief History of the Deseret Alphabet

The Deseret Alphabet (DA) was championed by Brigham Young as a way of helping immigrants learn how to read and properly pronounce words in the English language. Speaking of the DA, President Young boldly declared:

The advantages of this alphabet will soon be realized, especially by foreigners. Brethren who come here knowing nothing of the English language will find its acquisition greatly facilitated by means of this alphabet, by which all the sounds of the language can be represented and expressed with the greatest ease. As this is the grand difficulty foreigners experience in learning the English language, they will find a knowledge of this alphabet will greatly facilitate their efforts in acquiring at least a partial English education. It will also be very advantageous to our children. It will be the means of introducing uniformity in our orthography, and the years that are now required to learn to read and spell can be devoted to other studies.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Stephen D. Ricks, “Lehi and Local Color,” *FARMS Review of Books* 21/2 (2009): 174.

2 Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 12:298 (8 October 1868).

Unfortunately, Brigham Young's hopes for the DA would not be realized, as its use died out with the passing of the prophet himself. Hubert H. Bancroft observed that "within a few years [of its introduction to the public] the alphabet fell into disuse, and is now remembered only as a curiosity."<sup>3</sup> Larry Wintersteen wrote that:

This new alphabet appears not to have met the needs of the people nor did it interest them. Its use and development was hindered by temple building, farming, settling, new doctrine, and possibly little faith in following their prophet, president and leader. The Deseret Alphabet died with Brigham Young in 1877, yet it appears to have been a noble experiment towards a spelling reform. Perhaps it would have worked under different situations and different environment.<sup>4</sup>

Although the idea of the DA was the brainchild of Brigham Young, its primary creator appears to have been George Darling Watt, an early convert to the Church in the British Isles. In October 1853, the Board of Regents of the Deseret University, now the University of Utah, appointed Parley P. Pratt, Heber C. Kimball, and George D. Watt to "a committee to prepare a small school-book in characters founded on some new system of orthography, whereby the spelling and pronunciation of the English language might be made uniform and easily acquired."<sup>5</sup> Fifteen months after the committee was formed, the *Deseret News* heralded the creation of the DA by announcing that "after many fruitless attempts to render the common alphabet of the day subservient to their purpose, they found it expedient to invent an entirely new and original set of characters."<sup>6</sup> This pronouncement marked the birth of the DA.

While not a language in itself, the Deseret Alphabet was created as an alternative method of phonetically spelling English words using a unique set of characters. Stanley B. Kimball, a descendent of Heber C. Kimball, observed that "no one knows the origin of [the Deseret Alphabet's] strange characters, but certainly Watt's knowledge of phonography was

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3 Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Utah, 1540–1886* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1889), 714.

4 Larry Ray Wintersteen, "A History of the Deseret Alphabet" (Master's Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1970), abstract.

5 Bancroft, *History of Utah, 1540–1886*, 712.

6 "The New Alphabet," *Deseret News*, 19 January 1854, 2.

DESERET ALPHABET.									
Long	Short								
ə	o	+	U	woo	q	g	6	z	
3	a	↓	Y	ye	Q	k	D	esh	
ə	ah	↓	Y	h	Q	ga	s	zhe	
Q	au	w	7	p	f	f	4	ur	
Q	o	r	B	b	e	v	U	l	
Q	oo	q	7	i	L	eth	7	m	
A	i	B	d	8	the	4	n		
ə	ow	c	che	s	s	U	eng		

Figure 1. Deseret News Deseret Alphabet Pronunciation Guide

fundamental.”<sup>7</sup> The first public appearance of the DA was on the front page of the *Deseret News* on Wednesday, February 16, 1859. Along with a brief introduction to the alphabet, the newspaper printed the first fifteen verses of the fifth chapter of Matthew in the DA, along with a pronunciation guide (Figure 1) that went through only minor modifications in later years. The opening paragraph in the 1859 *Deseret News* article gave a less than glowing endorsement of the new alphabet:

We present to the people the Deseret Alphabet, but have not adopted any rules to bind the taste, judgment or preference of any. Such as it is you have it, and we are sanguine that the more it is practised and the more intimately the people become acquainted with it, the more useful and beneficial it will appear.”<sup>8</sup>

According to Wintersteen, “the *Deseret News* carried brief articles in the Deseret Alphabet until May, 1860. At that time they were discontinued without comment. Four years later, May, 1864, they reappeared running for only six months.”<sup>9</sup> Shortly after the 1859 introductory article appeared in the *Deseret News*, the *New York Herald* newspaper published an editorial entitled “The New Mormon Alphabet.” The article expressed that “the Mormons are a ‘very peculiar people’” and that the Deseret Alphabet “is calculated to make the faithful still more peculiar than anything that distinguishes them from other mortals.”<sup>10</sup> The *Quincy Daily Whig* was even more disparaging of the new alphabet when it printed the following:

7 Stanley B. Kimball, *Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1981), 203.

8 No title, *Deseret News*, 16 February 1859, 1.

9 Wintersteen, “A History of the Deseret Alphabet,” 33.

10 “The New Mormon Alphabet,” *New York Herald*, 6 April 1859.

It seems to be the determination of the Mormons to alienate and, as far as possible, disconnect themselves from American language as well as society. Their social system is now the abhorrence of every civilized nation on the face of the globe, and unless the strongest measures are used, they will entirely divorce themselves from our laws, and their present intention is, to forget, if possible, the English language itself.<sup>11</sup>

It was not until 1868 that any books were printed in the DA. The first of these books was called *The Deseret First Book by the Regents of the Deseret University* (ሃ ልጽፅዋላገ ሆቀጽገ ዩግወ ዩጌ ሃ ቀፅፎላገጽ ጎፊ ሃ ልጽፅዋላገ ሃተፀካፎሆቀጽተገተ). This was a brief, 36-page elementary school primer with forty-nine short “lessons” and some multiplication tables at the back. This was followed in the same year by *The Deseret Second Book* – a longer, seventy-two page primer with fifty-three lessons and additional multiplication tables at the back of the book. Ten thousand copies of each of these books were printed.<sup>12</sup>

### The Deseret Alphabet and the Book of Mormon

During 1869, 8,000 copies of Part 1 (ገፅቀገ I) of the Book of Mormon in the DA were printed.<sup>13</sup> Part 1 was composed of the books of 1 Nephi through the Words of Mormon — what we would call the small plates of Nephi today. In late 1869, 500 copies of the complete Book of Mormon were printed, making it one of the rarest editions ever published.<sup>14</sup> Both Part 1 and the complete Book of Mormon were set from the 1852 Liverpool edition (the Third European Edition) and were published in New York by Russell Brothers for the Deseret University. As such, the DA Book of Mormon was one of three editions published in New York during the nineteenth century, including the 1830 Palmyra and 1858 Wright editions.

Although only four books in the DA were ever printed during the nineteenth century, it appears that the intent was to print additional books. *The Improvement Era* reported that:

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11 “Mormon Alphabet,” *The Quincy Daily Whig*, 25 August 1857, 2.

12 Kimball, *Heber C. Kimball: Mormon Patriarch and Pioneer*, 203.

13 Kenneth R. Beesley, “Typesetting the Deseret Alphabet with LATEX and METAFONT,” *TeX, XML, and Digital Typography: International Conference on TEX, XML, and Digital Typography, Held Jointly with the 25th Annual Meeting of the TEX Users Group, TUG 2004* (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 2004), 109.

14 Beesley, “Typesetting the Deseret Alphabet,” 109.



Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

From a storage area of the Church Historian's Office in May 1967, a package of papers was unwrapped and found to be manuscript copies in the Deseret Alphabet of the Bible, the Doctrine and Covenants, *Deseret Phonetic Speller*, and the *Catechism* by John Jaques. The papers, ready for the printer, had lain undisturbed for so long that their very existence had been forgotten.<sup>15</sup>

Interestingly, with the completion of the Salt Lake Temple still more than two decades away, all four books published in the DA showed an etching of the temple with a weather vane rather than the iconic upright Angel Moroni, which was placed on the temple spire in 1892 (see Figures 2 and 3). The weather vane in the drawings appears to be visually similar to the one placed on top of the clock tower of the original Nauvoo temple (see Figure 4).<sup>16</sup>

### Modifications to the Deseret Alphabet

By the late 1860s, the shape of the DA characters had gone through some minor modifications. The most significant change was that the character for the *long a*<sup>17</sup> sound (3 in 1859) was flipped horizontally to be  $\epsilon$  in 1868. More than likely this change was made so that the *long a* character would not be confused with the number 3. All four published books displayed

<sup>15</sup> Albert L. Zobell, Jr., "Deseret Alphabet Manuscript Found," *Improvement Era*, July 1967, 11.

<sup>16</sup> Figure 2 is from the cover of Part 1 of the DA Book of Mormon. Figure 3 is from the spine of the complete DA Book of Mormon. Figure 4 was taken from James E. Talmage, *The House of the Lord: A Study of Holy Sanctuaries Ancient and Modern* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1912), Plate 2.

<sup>17</sup> As identified by the Deseret News in Figure 1.





Figure 5. Top of *Deseret Alphabet Pronunciation Guide*

the same pronunciation guide, with one exception — the spelling, and thus pronunciation, of the word *alphabet* in the title. In the two 1858 primers the word was spelled 𐒗𐒗𐒗𐒗𐒗 (äl-fā-bēt<sup>18</sup> or /ælfæbet/ in International Phonetic Alphabet [IPA]), while in the two books printed in 1869 (Part 1 and the complete Book of Mormon) the spelling was 𐒗𐒗𐒗𐒗𐒗 (äl-fā-bēt or /ælfæbet/ in IPA). Interestingly, in John Walker’s *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary*, the pronunciation of *alphabet* is also rendered ä-l-fā-bēt, in line with the 1869 DA method.<sup>19</sup>

### A Modern Revival

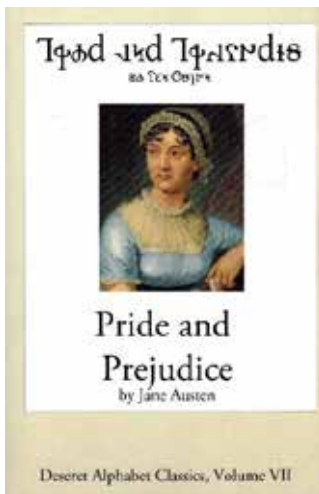


Figure 6

In the last two decades, there has been a modest resurgence of interest in the DA. A new collection of books (*Deseret Alphabet Classics*) has been published. With nearly thirty books in the collection, including Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*, H. G. Wells’ *The Time Machine*, and Arthur Conan Doyle’s *A Study in Scarlet*, readers can enjoy many classic works in the DA script. Numerous blogs and discussion forums have also sprung up on the Internet for those interested in learning and discussing the Deseret Alphabet. In addition, a very useful website has been created that allows users to translate normal Latin text into the DA.<sup>20</sup> Multiple free DA fonts can be

downloaded from the Internet and used in Microsoft Word and Excel, including the DeseretBee, HoneyBee and ZarahemlaBee fonts.<sup>21</sup> I have

18 I show the pronunciation using the current Book of Mormon Pronunciation Guide method and IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet).

19 John Walker, *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary and Expositor of the English Language* (New York: Alsop, Brannan and Alsop, 1808), s.v. “alphabet.”

20 Deseret Alphabet Translator, <http://www.2deseret.com/>

21 Sans Serif Bee font Page, [http://copper.chem.ucla.edu/~jericks/Sans\\_Serif.html](http://copper.chem.ucla.edu/~jericks/Sans_Serif.html)

used the HoneyBee font to present DA characters in this article. The fictitious Republic of Molossia, “a sovereign, independent nation, located in and completely surrounded by territory of the United States,” has adopted “the Deseret Alphabet as an alternate English writing method” for its people.<sup>22</sup> The website’s non-LDS creators present information in both Latin and DA script. John H. Jenkins, the publisher of the Deseret Alphabet Classics, has even published the LDS triple combination (Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price) in the DA and has made it freely available for download as a PDF file.<sup>23</sup>

With this renewed interest in the DA, changes have been made to the DA characters to make them somewhat easier to read and write. Below is a chart of DA characters from 1859 to the present. In the column labeled 2015 in Figure 7, five of the sounds are shown with two distinct characters, separated by a forward slash (/). The first character is the modern uppercase preference, while the second character is preferred for lowercase use. For lowercase use, the loop has been replaced by a dot above the character for the sounds *au*, *ow* and *g*. The use of the dot above the character makes it easier to read, especially when the font size is small.

### The Deseret Alphabet and the Pronunciation Guide

Mary Jane Woodger, in the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies*, wrote an informative article on how the Book of Mormon Pronunciation Guide (PG) was developed over the last century. Concerning the involvement of the DA in this process, she wrote:

One early attempt at harmonizing pronunciation may have taken place during the publication of the Book of Mormon in the Deseret Alphabet (1852–1869). When Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, and other pioneers developed the phonetic Deseret Alphabet they had the means available to represent how they were pronouncing the Nephite names. Their pronunciation would surely have differed little from that of Joseph Smith. This major undertaking of examining Book of Mormon proper names in mid-nineteenth-century pronunciation as recorded in the Deseret Alphabet has yet to be done. Though there is nothing concrete in this speculation,

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22 Republic of Molossia, <http://www.molossia.org/>

23 <http://www.deseretalphabet.org/Files?action=AttachFile&do=view&target=Triple.pdf>

1859	1869	2015	Sound	1859	1869	2015	Sound	1859	1869	2015	Sound
ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	<u>ea</u> t	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ/ⓐ	<u>ow</u> l	Ɔ	Ɔ	Ɔ	f
ⓑ	ⓑ	ⓑ	<u>a</u> te	ⓑ	ⓑ	ⓑ	<u>wo</u> o	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	v
ⓓ	ⓓ	ⓓ	<u>a</u> rt	ⓓ	ⓓ	ⓓ	<u>ye</u>	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	<u>thi</u> gh
ⓔ	ⓔ	ⓔ/ⓔ	<u>au</u> ght	ⓔ	ⓔ	ⓔ	h	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	<u>th</u> y
ⓖ	ⓖ	ⓖ	<u>oa</u> t	ⓖ	ⓖ	ⓖ	p	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	s
ⓗ	ⓗ	ⓗ	<u>oo</u> ze	ⓗ	ⓗ	ⓗ	b	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	z
ⓙ	ⓙ	ⓙ	<u>i</u> t	ⓙ	ⓙ	ⓙ	t	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ/b	<u>flesh</u>
ⓓ	ⓓ	ⓓ	<u>se</u> t	ⓓ	ⓓ	ⓓ/ⓓ	d	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	<u>visi</u> on
ⓔ	ⓔ	ⓔ	<u>a</u> t	ⓔ	ⓔ	ⓔ	ch	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	r
ⓖ	ⓖ	ⓖ	<u>no</u> t	ⓖ	ⓖ	ⓖ	j	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	l
ⓗ	ⓗ	ⓗ	<u>cu</u> t	ⓗ	ⓗ	ⓗ	k	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	m
ⓙ	ⓙ	ⓙ	<u>bo</u> ok	ⓙ	ⓙ	ⓙ/ⓙ	g	ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	n
ⓓ	ⓓ	ⓓ	<u>ic</u> e					ⓐ	ⓐ	ⓐ	<u>sing</u>

Figure 7. A comparison of font styles for DA characters

such an unfulfilled possibility is worthy of mention because the *Deseret Alphabet edition of the Book of Mormon* represents the only attempt made by church leaders in the 1800s at setting a consistent pronunciation for Nephite proper names. (emphasis added)<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, the first published guide to pronunciation of Book of Mormon names, the *Pronouncing Vocabulary*, was not accomplished until the 1920 LDS edition of the Book of Mormon. This *Pronouncing Vocabulary* contained 284 names, as compared to the 343 found in the current PG. This difference is due to the *Pronouncing Vocabulary* containing “mostly proper names of Book of Mormon origin, with [only] some Biblical names included.”<sup>25</sup>

While several histories of the DA have been written over the years, surprisingly little research has been conducted into the relationship between the DA and the pronunciation of Book of Mormon names, perhaps because of the difficulty in learning the DA script. In 2000,

24 Mary Jane Woodger, “How the Guide to English Pronunciation of Book of Mormon Names Came About,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9/1 (2000), 54.

25 The Book of Mormon, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (1920), 531.

Frederick M. Huchel published a short article in the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* in which eighteen names from the DA Book of Mormon were compared to PG names from the LDS edition of the Book of Mormon.<sup>26</sup> While the effort was commendable, the article was riddled with errors, most likely because neither the author nor the editors fully understood the DA script. The Journal reissued a corrected version of the article, but even then, errors persisted. For example, the word Deseret was correctly written ᐃᐱᓃᓃᓃᓃᓃ in the DA script, but the pronunciation was incorrectly rendered as dēs-ē-rēt (/disrēt/ in IPA) by the author in both the original and corrected versions of the article. The correct pronunciation should have been written dēs-ē-rēt (/dēsirēt/ in IPA) based on the DA spelling. Even the pronunciation from the Book of Mormon PG was incorrectly written by the author as dēz'-a-rēt (/dizərēt/ in IPA) rather than dēz-a-rēt' (/dēzərēt/ in IPA) as rendered in the PG. This article by Huchel was the only attempt at serious academic research that I was able to locate.

I compared the PG found in the current (2013) LDS edition of the Book of Mormon to the names in the 1869 DA version. During this process, I was able to identify and record the DA spelling, and thus the pronunciation of each proper noun. In addition, I found nineteen Book of Mormon names that are absent from the current PG. Most of these are biblical names, but some are unique Book of Mormon words. For example, among the many names that the Nephites used for their monetary values, as identified in Alma Chapter 11, the *senine* and *limnah* are both found in the PG, but the *seon* and *leah* are not. *Egyptian* is listed, but not *Arabian*. And strangely, *Gomorrah* is present, but not *Sodom*. A complete list of these missing names is given at the end of the Appendix.

I do not propose that the DA pronunciation is the ultimate standard by which Book of Mormon names should be judged. In fact, it is almost certain that those pronunciations do not accurately reflect how the names were originally spoken in their native dialects. As Woodger reasoned about the 1981 PG, the same can be said for the DA pronunciation:

We can concur with Daniel Ludlow, who served as the secretary to the Scripture Publication Committee, that we are “ninety-nine percent sure that we do not pronounce such names as Lehi and Nephi correctly” (that is, as they themselves did). . . . In following the [pronunciation] guide we can be assured that

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<sup>26</sup> Fredrick M. Huchel, “The Deseret Alphabet as an Aid in Pronouncing Book of Mormon Names,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 9/1 (2000), 58–59, 79.

if we are wrong in pronouncing Book of Mormon names, we will at least all be wrong together.<sup>27</sup>

Woodger added that the committee that developed the 1981 PG was given four general guidelines to follow, with uniformity among the members as the principal objective:

1. Do not try to relate Book of Mormon names with Hebrew or Egyptian names.
2. Do not try to think of how the Nephites might have pronounced their own names.
3. Simplify where possible.
4. The main objective should be uniformity.<sup>28</sup>

### Limitations and Peculiarities of the Deseret Alphabet

Although the creators of the DA dreamed of it as a perfect overhaul of the English spelling system, it was not without its flaws and peculiar aspects. One of these flaws is the absence of the mid-central vowel sound, or *schwa*, written as /ə/ in IPA. Although the *short u* sound (u in the PG, ʌ in IPA, and identified as a *short o* in Figure 1) was available in the DA (ʻ), it was not the same as, and could not adequately replace the schwa sound. The second vowel in the word *alphabet* (/ælfəbet/ in IPA) is a schwa sound. As noted earlier, in the two 1868 DA primers the second vowel of the word *alphabet* was written as a *long a* (ā in the PG, /e/ in IPA, and E in the DA), while in 1869 it was changed and written as a *short ah* (ă in the PG, /æ/ in IPA, and ʌ in the DA), possibly to agree with Walker or other pronouncing dictionaries of the time. This highlights the confusion caused by not having a character for the schwa sound in the DA.

The omission of the schwa character also poses problems for modern readers when trying to pronounce DA Book of Mormon words. The name Alma, for instance, is /ælmə/ in IPA and ăl'ma in the PG. Both methods display the word with an unstressed final schwa sound. However, the DA spelling of the word is ʌLʌʌ, which when spelled phonetically would be /æɫ-mæ/ in IPA or ăl-mă using the PG method. Not only is this spelling

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<sup>27</sup> Woodger, “How the Guide to English Pronunciation of Book of Mormon Names Came About,” 57.

<sup>28</sup> Woodger, “How the Guide to English Pronunciation of Book of Mormon Names Came About,” 56.

awkward, but it is also probably not how the early members of the Church pronounced the name. More than likely they pronounced Alma the same way that we do today, with a schwa sound at the end of the word.

The absence of the schwa character in the DA script is understandable because it was not an officially recognized vowel sound in the English language at the time, and the word itself did not enter the English lexicon until 1895, well after the development of the DA.<sup>29</sup> The word *schwa* came into the English language from German, but its root is “from Hebrew šəwā’, probably from Syriac (nuqzē) šwayyā.”<sup>30</sup> Even though the word is a recent addition to the English language, the schwa sound itself has been a part of the spoken language for close to a thousand years:

Towards the end of the Old English period, i.e., after the beginning of the eleventh century, more and more graphemic differences begin to disappear, a fact suggesting progressive neutralization of phonemes occurring in this position. . . . Thus English sees the advent of the schwa, the reduced, mid, central, murmured, mixed, indeterminate, colorless vowel, whose “neutrality” has been branded, by one school of language historians, as a defect responsible for some of the most drastic grammatical changes in the history of the language, the decrease of the number of distinctive inflexions in Middle English.<sup>31</sup>

Another apparent oddity of the DA, at least for modern American English speakers, is the presence of these three separate DA characters:  $\eth$  as in art,  $\theta$  as in aught, and  $\not\downarrow$  as in not . Today, many Americans would pronounce the vowels in all three of the words — *art*, *aught* and *not* — the same way. Of the 363 names that appear in the DA Book of Mormon, ninety-one, or twenty-five percent of them, contain one of these three DA characters ( $\eth$ ,  $\theta$  and  $\not\downarrow$ ). Of those ninety-one occurrences, the DA character  $\eth$  is used sixty-nine percent of the time,  $\not\downarrow$  is used twenty percent of the time, and  $\theta$  is only used eleven percent of the time. Interestingly, though,  $\eth$  was used almost exclusively as the final sound in a word. Of its sixty-three occurrences, sixty-one of those are final sounds. For

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29 *Oxford English Dictionary*, retrieved from: [www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com). s.v. “schwa.”

30 *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006), 1560, s.v. “schwa.”

31 Donka Minkova, *The History of Final Vowels in English: The Sound of Muting* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1991), 89.

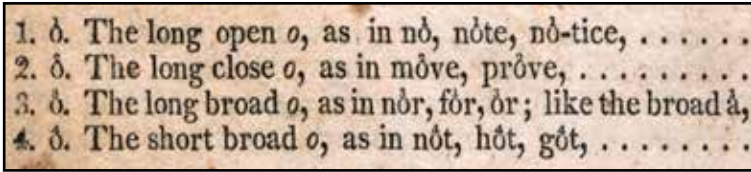


Figure 8

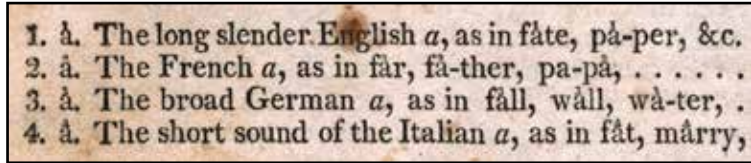


Figure 9

example, *Aha*, *Elijah*, *Isaiah*, *Nephihah*, *Zarahemla* and *Zemnah* are all words that end with  $\vartheta$  in the DA. Today, most Americans would end three of those names (*Aha*, *Nephihah* and *Zemnah*) with an *ah* sound (ä in the PG, /a/ in IPA, and described as a *short au* sound in the DA). The other three names (*Elijah*, *Isaiah* and *Zarahemla*) are usually pronounced with a schwa sound at the end of the word. So, did the early Church members say those words in the same way as we do today, or is the DA an accurate representation of how they actually spoke?

Unlike the character  $\vartheta$ , with only one exception  $\var�$  and  $\vartheta$  are never used as final sounds in DA Book of Mormon names. The use of the character  $\var�$  in DA names appears to be very straightforward. It is used in names such as *Agosh*, *Com*, *John*, *Josh*, *Nimrod* and *Omni* — all names that we would expect to have the DA *short au* sound.

$\vartheta$ , on the other hand is more complicated. Although rarely used in DA names, it is found in the names *Calno*, *Cohor* (second o), *Jordan*, *Korihor* (second o), *Mormon* (first o) and *Nehor*. For convention, I will refer to the character  $\vartheta$  as an *open o* sound. In Tables 1 and 2 it is represented by the symbol  $\dot{O}$  (an O with a dot above it), which is the same symbol that is often used in the modern DA script. Very often this character appears together with the letter *r*, although not always. The pronunciation was neither a DA *long o* (as in *open*), nor a DA *short au* (as in *not*). The DA Pronunciation Guide (Figure 1) identifies it as a *long au* (as in *aught*).

John Walker, in his *Critical Pronouncing Dictionary*, identified four distinct sounds for the letter *a* (see Figure 8), and four for the letter *o* (see figure 9). Interestingly, Walker observed that “the long broad *o*, as in *nor*, *for*, *or*” was “like the broad *a*,” that is, “the broad German *a*, as in

fall, wall, wa-ter.”<sup>32</sup> This suggests that the *o* in *nor*, *for* and *or* would have been pronounced much like the *a* in *fall*, *wall* and *water*, which appears to agree with the DA pronunciation.

Kenneth R. Beesley explained that because many of the early members of the Church spoke British or New England dialects of English, these three sounds in the DA (∅, ʌ and ɒ) would have been pronounced distinctly from each other. Beesley wrote:

The original name for the Deseret ∅ letter, which is /ɑ/ in IPA, was “ah”, using a common convention in English romanization whereby “ah” represents an unrounded low-back vowel. Most English speakers use this vowel in the words *father*, *bah* and *hah*. In England, and in much of New England, this vowel is distinct from the first vowel in *bother*, represented in Deseret Alphabet as ʌ or in IPA as /ɒ/, which is a rounded low-back vowel; thus for these speakers the words *father* and *bother* do not rhyme. But the rounded /ɒ/ has collapsed into unrounded /ɑ/ in General American English, so the words do rhyme for most Americans. Similarly, the Deseret ɒ letter, IPA /ɔ/, represents a mid-low back rounded vowel that has also collapsed into /ɑ/ for many American speakers. It can still be heard quite distinctly in the speech of many New Yorkers, Philadelphians, and New Englanders in general.<sup>33</sup>

An interesting discussion among experts in the field of linguistics has been occurring for at least the last eighty years regarding a so-called “card-cord merger” in Utah. As linguist David Bowie explained it,

English speakers along the Wasatch Front of Utah exhibit a variable linguistic feature that can at least loosely be described as /ɔɪ/ merging into /ɑɪ/, so that the word *cord* is produced as *card*—thus, what is referred to as Utah’s CARD-CORD merger. It was first mentioned in any sort of scholarly writing by Pardoe (1935) and has been the subject of a slow but steady stream of study ever since. Even though there is evidence that the feature was extant in the mid- to late-nineteenth century [at the time that the DA was developed] among the initial generations of English-speaking natives of the region, it does

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32 Walker, *A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary*, from an unnumbered introductory page entitled “A Table.”

33 Beesley, “Typesetting the Deseret Alphabet,” 98.



not seem to have become a socially salient feature until the 1950s, possibly the 1940s, with stigmatization of the feature by locals following quickly after that.<sup>34</sup>

“Utah’s card-cord merger” helps explain why selected words — *Mormon* and *ward*, for example — spoken by some members of the LDS Church in Utah are pronounced differently than by members of the LDS Church in other areas of the United States. It might also explain how some words were assigned their phonetic spellings in the DA Book of Mormon.

Table 1<sup>35</sup>

Current Book of Mormon PG		DA Book of Mormon	
<i>Spelling</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Spelling</i>
Chemish	kēm'ish	shēm-īsh	ᑕᑲᑲᑲᑲ
Com	kōm	kām	ᑕᑕᑕ
Corihor/Korihor	kōr'ī-hōr	kōr-ī-hōr	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ
Cumeni	kū'ma-nī	kīū-mē-nī	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ
Cumorah	ka-mōr'a	kīū-mōr-ä	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ
Deseret	děz-a-rět'	dēs-ē-rět	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ
Hearthom	hē-ār'thum	her-thum	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ
Liahona	lē'a-hō'na	lī-ä-hō-nä	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ
Melchizedek	měl-kīz'a-dīk	měl-chīz-ē-dēk	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ
Mormon	mōr'mun	mōr-mun	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ
Muloki	myū'la-kī	mul-ō-kī	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ
Zedekiah	zēd'a-kī'a	zēd-ē-kī-ä	ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ

### Book of Mormon Names

Table 1 contains a selection of twelve DA Book of Mormon names taken from the complete list of names found in the Appendix. The

34 David Bowie, “Acoustic characteristics of Utah’s card-cord merger,” *American Speech* 83/1 (2008), 35.

35 I show the pronunciation using only the current Book of Mormon Pronunciation Guide method.

names in Table 1 were selected because their DA pronunciation differs markedly from the modern pronunciation as presented in the current Book of Mormon PG. The pronunciation key for these names in Table 1 is found in Table 2. I will discuss here only a few of the differences in pronunciation, but the reader is invited to study the names more thoroughly.

As noted in Table 1, the *Cu* in *Cumorah* in the DA script is pronounced like the first *cu* in *cucumber*. The same is true for the *Cu* in *Cumeni*. In contrast, in the current Book of Mormon PG, the *Mu* in *Muloki* is pronounced *myū* (as in *music*), while in the DA it is pronounced *mu* (as in *mud*). The PG pronunciation of *Deseret* is *děz-a-rět*, with a *z* sound in the first syllable, and a schwa sound in the middle syllable. In the DA it is *dēs-ē-rět*, with an *s* sound in the first syllable, and a *long e* in the middle syllable. Finally, the first syllable in *Mormon* in the PG is *mōr* (as in *more*), while in the DA it is *mōr*. In the prior section, we saw that this *open o* sound (ō) was pronounced like “the broad German *a*, as in *fall*, *wall*, *wa-ter*.” Pronounced this way, the phonetic spelling of the first syllable of *Mormon* could be written as *mār* rather than *mōr* (using the PG method).

Table 2<sup>36</sup>

a	about (schwa)	ē	eat, mete, me	ou	about
ă	ask, pat, map	er	permit	u	jump
ā	able, bake, way	ĭ	it, him, mirror	ū	rule, boot, two
ä	alms, father, call	ī	idle, fine, deny	ù	book, look, put
ě	ebb, met, second	ō	over, bone, know	ò	open o (unused)

On a final note, the DA script does not provide any hints on how to separate words into syllables. Therefore, to separate the DA names into syllables in Tables 1 and the table in the Appendix, I followed a set of standard syllabication rules.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>36</sup> This is the same key provided with the current Book of Mormon PG, with the addition of the symbols *ù* and *ò*.

<sup>37</sup> “Pasco County Schools Syllabication Rules,” Last Modified March 14, 2015, <https://pasco.instructure.com/courses/846/files/690596/>

## Summary

Although not successful as a revolution in English language orthography, the DA was a brave attempt to simplify our often-complicated English writing system. However, as modern readers of the Book of Mormon, we can benefit from the pronunciation information coded into DA script by its creators. Indeed, the DA Book of Mormon can help us open a window into how the early members of the Church most likely pronounced Book of Mormon names. This is, perhaps, the greatest benefit that can come from studying Brigham Young's less than successful writing experiment.

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## Appendix

The table below contains a complete list of Book of Mormon names. A pronunciation guide follows. The # column indicates the number of variances between standard English and Deseret Alphabet Pronunciation.

Book of Mormon Pronunciation Guide		Deseret Alphabet Book of Mormon		
<i>Spelling</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	#	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Spelling</i>
Aaron	ēr'an	1	ār-un	ⒺⓂⓂⓂ
Abel	ā'bul	1	ā-bēl	ⒺⓂⓂ
Abinadi	a-bīn'a-dī	2	āb-īn-ād-ī	ⓂⓂⓂⓂⓂⓂ
Abinadom	a-bīn'a-dum	2	ā-bīn-ād-um	ⒺⓂⓂⓂⓂⓂⓂ
Abish	ā'bīsh	0	ā-bīsh	ⒺⓂⓂ
Ablom	āb'lum	1	āb-lun	ⓂⓂⓂⓂ <sup>!</sup>
Abraham	ā'bra-hām	1	ā-brā-hām	ⒺⓂⓂⓂⓂⓂⓂ
Adam	ād'um	0	ād-um	ⓂⓂⓂⓂ
Agosh	ā'gāsh	0	ā-gāsh	ⒺⓂⓂⓂ
Aha	ā'hā	0	ā-hā	ⒺⓂⓂ

Ahah	ā'hā	0	ā-hā	ḂḂḂ
Ahaz	ā'hāz	0	ā-hāz	ḂḂḂḂ
Aiath	ī'uth	1	ā-ī-uth	ḂḂḂḂ
Akish	ā'kīsh	0	ā-kīsh	ḂḂḂḂ
Alma	āl'ma	1	āl-mā	ḂḂḂḂ
Alpha	āl'fa	1	āl-fā	ḂḂḂḂ
Amaleki	a-māl'a-kī	2	ām-āl-ē-kī	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amalekite	a-māl'a-kīt	2	ām-āl-ē-kīt	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amalickiah	a-māl'a-kī'a	2	ām-āl-ī-kī-ā	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amalickiahite	a-māl'a-kī'a-īt	2	ām-āl-ī-kī-ā-īt	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amaron	a-mā'rān	2	ām-ā-run	ḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amgid	ām'gīd	0	ām-gīd	ḂḂḂḂḂ
Aminadab	a-mīn'a-dāb	2	ā-mīn-ā-dāb	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Aminadi	a-mīn'a-dī	2	ām-īn-ā-dī	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amlici	ām'lī-sī	0	ām-lī-sī	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amlicite	ām'lī-sīt	0	ām-lī-sīt	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Ammah	ām'mā	0	ām-ā	ḂḂḂ
Ammaron	ām'a-rān	2	ām-ā-run	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Ammon	ām'un	0	ām-un	ḂḂḂḂḂ
Ammonihah	ām-a-nī'hā	0	ām-un-ī-hā	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Ammonihahite	ām-a-nī'hā-īt	0	ām-un-ī-hā-īt	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Ammonite	ām'a-nīt	0	ām-un-īt	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Ammoron	ām'ōr-ān	1	ām-ōr-un	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amnigaddah	ām-nī-gād'ā	0	ām-nī-gād-ā	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amnihu	ām-nī'hū	1	ām-nī-hīū	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amnor	ām'nōr	1	ām-nur	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amoron	a-mōr'ān	2	ām-ō-run	ḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂḂ
Amos	ā'mus	0	ā-mus	ḂḂḂḂḂ

Amoz	ā'muz	1	ā-mus	ḲṶṢ
Amulek	ām'yū-lĕk	1	ām-yū-lĕk	ḶṶṦṢṢṢṢ
Amulon	ām'yū-lān	2	ām-yū-lun	ḶṶṦṢṢṢṢ
Amulonites	ām'ya-lān'īts	2	ām-yū-lun-īts	ḶṶṦṢṢṢṢ ṢṢṢ
Anathoth	ān'a-tōth	2	ān-ā-thāth	ḶḶḶḶ
Angola	ān-gō'la	1	ān-gō-lā	ḶḶḶḶḶ
Ani-Anti	ān-ī-ān'tī	0	ān-ī-ān-tī	ḶḶḶ-ḶḶḶḶ
Anti-Nephi-Lehi	ān'tī-nē'fī-lē'hī	0	ān-tī-nē-fī-lē-hī	ḶḶḶḶ-ḶḶḶḶ- ḶḶḶḶḶ
Anti-Nephi-Lehies	ān'tī-nē'fī-lē'hīz	0	ān-tī-nē-fī-lē-hīz	ḶḶḶḶ-ḶḶḶḶ- ḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Antiomno	ān-tē-ām'nō	1	ān-tī-ām-nō	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Antion	ān'tē-ān	2	ān-tī-un	ḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Antionah	ān-tē-ān'a	2	ān-tī-ō-nā	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Antionum	ān-tē-ō'num	1	ān-tī-ō-num	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Antiparah	ān-tī-pār'a	2	ān-tī-pā-rā	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Antipas	ān'tī-pās	1	ān-tī-pus	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Antipus	ān'tī-pus	0	ān-tī-pus	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Antum	ān'tum	0	ān-tum	ḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Archeantus	ār-kē-ān'tus	0	ār-kē-ān-tus	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Arpad	ār'pād	0	ār-pād	ḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Assyria	a-sīr'ē-a	2	ā-sīr-ī-ā	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Babylon	bāb'ī-lān	1	bāb-ī-lun	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Bashan	bā'shān	1	bā-shun	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Benjamin	bēn'ja-mīn	1	bēn-jā-mīn	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Bethabara	bēth-āb'a-ra	2	bēth-āb-ā-rā	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Boaz	bō'āz	0	bō-āz	ḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Bountiful	boun'tī-ful	1	boun-tī-fūl	ḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶḶ
Cain	kān	0	kān	ḶḶḶḶ

Calno	kāl'nō	1	kāl-nō	𐤒𐤆𐤊𐤏
Carchemish	kār-kēm'ish	1	kār-shē-mīsh	𐤒𐤀𐤕𐤕𐤍𐤏𐤍𐤏
Cezoram	sē-zōr'um	0	sē-zōr-um	𐤏𐤆𐤆𐤐𐤕𐤏𐤐
Chaldeans	kāl-dē'unz	0	kāl-dē-unz	𐤒𐤆𐤊𐤀𐤈𐤏𐤏
Chaldees	kāl-dēz'	0	kāl-dēz	𐤒𐤆𐤊𐤀𐤈
Chemish	kēm'ish	2	shēm-īsh	𐤏𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤍
Cherubim	chēr'a-bīm	1	chēr-ū-bīm	𐤒𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤍
Cohor	kō'hōr	1	kō-hōr	𐤒𐤐𐤕𐤏𐤕
Com	kōm	1	kām	𐤒𐤐𐤍
Comnor	kōm'nōr	2	kām-nur	𐤒𐤐𐤍𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Corianton	kōr-ē-ān'tun	1	kōr-ī-ān-tun	𐤒𐤐𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Coriantor	kōr-ē-ān'tōr	2	kōr-ī-ān-tur	𐤒𐤐𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Coriantum	kōr-ē-ān'tum	1	kōr-ī-ān-tum	𐤒𐤐𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Coriantumr	kōr-ē-ān'ta-mer	1	kōr-ī-ān-tum-er	𐤒𐤐𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Corihor	kōr'ī-hōr	2	kōr-ī-hōr	𐤒𐤐𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Corom	kōr'um	0	kōr-um	𐤒𐤐𐤕𐤏𐤕
Cumeni	kū'ma-nī	2	kīū-mē-nī	𐤒𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Cumenihah	kū-ma-nī'hā	2	kām-ē-nī-hā	𐤒𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕 <sup>2</sup>
Cumom	kū'mum	2	kum-ām	𐤒𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Cumorah	ka-mōr'a	2	kīū-mōr-ā	𐤒𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Curelom	kū-rē'lum	2	kīūr-lām	𐤒𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Deseret	dēs-a-rēt'	2	dēs-ē-rēt	𐤒𐤀𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Desolation	dēs-ō-lā'shun	0	dēs-ō-lā-shun	𐤒𐤀𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Edom	ē'dum	0	ē-dum	𐤀𐤕𐤏𐤕
Egypt	ē'jīpt	0	ē-jīpt	𐤀𐤕𐤏𐤕
Egyptian	ē-jīp'shun	0	ē-jīp-shun	𐤀𐤕𐤏𐤕𐤏𐤕
Elam	ē'lum	0	ē-lum	𐤀𐤕𐤏𐤕
Elijah	ē-lī'ja	1	ē-lī-jā	𐤀𐤕𐤏𐤕

Emer	ē´mer	1	ē-mēr	၁၅၂၄
Emron	ēm´rān	1	ēm-run	၂၅၃၃
Enos	ē´nus	0	ē-nus	၁၅၃၆
Ephah	ē´fā	1	ēf-ā	၂၃၁
Ephraim	ē´frēm or ē´frum	2	ē-frā-īm	၁၃၃၅၅၅
Esrom	ēz´rum	1	ēs-rum	၂၆၃၃၅
Ethem	ē´thum	1	ē-thēm	၁၂၂၅
Ether	ē´ther	1	ē-thēr	၁၂၂၄
Eve	ēv	0	ēv	၁၆
Ezias	ē-zī´us	0	ē-zī-us	၁၆၂၆၆
Ezrom	ēz´rum	0	ēz-rum	၂၆၃၃၅
Gad	gād	0	gād	၁၅၂
Gadiandi	gād-ē-ān´dī	1	gād-ī-ān-dī	၁၅၂၅၂၅၂
Gadanton	gād-ē-ān´tun	1	gād-ī-ān-tun	၁၅၂၅၂၅၂၅
Gadiomnah	gād-ē-ām´na	2	gād-ī-ām-nā	၁၅၂၅၂၅၂၅
Gallim	gāl´īm	0	gāl-īm	၁၅၂၅၅
Gazelem	ga-zā´līm	2	gāz-ē-lēm	၁၅၆၀၂၅၅
Geba	gē´ba	1	gē-bā	၁၅၂၅
Gebim	gē´bīm	0	gē-bīm	၁၅၂၅၅
Gibeah	gīb´ē-a	1	gīb-ē-ā	၁၅၂၅၅
Gid	gīd	0	gīd	၁၅၂
Giddianhi	gīd-ē-ān´hī	1	gīd-ī-ān-hī	၁၅၂၅၂၅၂
Giddonah	gīd-dō´nā	0	gīd-ō-nā	၁၅၂၅၅
Gideon	gīd´ē-un	0	gīd-ē-un	၁၅၂၅၂
Gidgiddonah	gīd-gīd-dō´nā	1	gīd-gīd-ō-nā	၁၅၂၅၂၅၅
Gidgiddoni	gīd-gīd-dō´nī	0	gīd-gīd-ō-nī	၁၅၂၅၂၅၅
Gilead	gīl´ē-ud	0	gīl-ē-ud	၁၅၂၅၂

Gilgah	gīl'gā	0	gīl-gā	᠒ᠠᠯᠭᠠ
Gilgal	gīl'gāl	1	gīl-gul and gīl-gāl	᠒ᠠᠯᠭᠠᠯ and ᠒ᠠᠯᠭᠠᠯ <sup>3</sup>
Gim gimno	gīm-gīm'nō	2	jīm-jīm-nō	ᠭᠢᠮᠭᠢᠮᠨᠤ
Gomorrah	ga-mōr'a	2	gō-mār-ä	ᠭᠣᠮᠣᠷᠠᠬᠤ
Hagoth	hā'gāth	0	hā-gāth	ᠬᠠᠭᠣᠲᠠ
Hamath	hā'muth	1, 0	hā-māth and hā-muth	ᠬᠠᠮᠠᠲᠠ and ᠬᠠᠮᠤᠲᠠ <sup>4</sup>
Hearthom	hē-ār'thum	2	her-thum	ᠬᠡᠷᠲᠠᠮ
Helam	hē'lum	0	hē-lum	ᠬᠡᠯᠠᠮ
Helaman	hē'la-mun	1	hē-lā-mun	ᠬᠡᠯᠠᠮᠠᠨ
Helem	hē'lēm	0	hē-lēm	ᠬᠡᠯᠢᠮ
Helorum	hē-lōr'um	1	hē-lōr-um	ᠬᠡᠯᠣᠷᠤᠮ
Hem	hēm	0	hēm	ᠬᠡᠮ
Hermounts	her'mounts	0	her-mounts	ᠬᠡᠷᠮᠠᠭᠤᠨᠲᠤ
Heshlon	hēsh'lān	1	hēsh-lun	ᠬᠡᠰᠬᠤᠯᠠᠨ
Heth	hēth	0	hēth	ᠬᠡᠲᠠ
Himni	hīm'nī	0	hīm-nī	ᠬᠢᠮᠨᠢ
Horeb	hōr'ēb	0	hōr-ēb	ᠬᠣᠷᠢᠪ
Immanuel	īm-mān'yū-ēl	1	īm-ān-yū-ēl	ᠶᠢᠮᠠᠨᠶᠠᠭᠤᠡᠯ
Irreantum	ī-rē-ān'tum	0	īr-ē-ān-tum	ᠶᠢᠷᠡᠠᠨᠲᠠᠮ
Isaac	ī'zīk	1	ī-zuk	ᠶᠢᠰᠠᠴ
Isabel	īz'a-bēl	2	īs-ā-bēl	ᠶᠢᠰᠠᠪᠢᠯ
Isaiah	ī-zā'a	2	ī-zā-yä	ᠶᠢᠰᠠᠶᠠᠬᠤ
Ishmael	īsh'mul or īsh'mēl	2	īsh-mā-ēl	ᠶᠢᠰᠠᠮᠠᠡᠯ
Ishmaelite	īsh'mul-īt or īsh'mēl-īt	2	īsh-mā-ēl-īt	ᠶᠢᠰᠠᠮᠠᠡᠯᠢᠲᠤ
Israel	īz'rēl or īz'rul	2	īz-rā-ēl	ᠶᠢᠰᠤᠷᠠᠡᠯ



Israelite	ĩz' rĕl-ĩt or ĩz' rul-ĩt	2	ĩz-ră-ĕl-ĩt	†6+JLJLJ
Jacob	jă' kub	0	jă-kub	9EĐRĐ
Jacobite	jă' kub-ĩt	0	jă-kub-ĩt	9EĐRĐJL
Jacobugath	jă' ka-bũ' găth	1	jă-kub-ĩũ-găth	9EĐRĐ†ĐĐJL
Jacom	jă' kum	0	jă-kum	9EĐRĐ
Jared	jĕr' ud	2	jăr-ĕd	9E†JLĐ
Jaredite	jĕr' a-dĩt	2	jăr-ĕd-ĩt	9E†JLĐJL
Jarom	jĕr' um	1	jăr-um	9E†RĐ
Jashon	jă' shăn	1	jă-shun	9EĐRĐ
Jeberechiah	jĕb-a-ra-kĩ' a	2	jĕ-bĕr-ĕ-kĩ-ă	9ĐĐJL†ĐĐĐĐ
Jehovah	jĕ-hō' va	1	jĕ-hō-vă	9Đ†ĐĐĐĐ
Jeneum	jĕn' ĕ-um	1	jo-nĕ-um	9ĐĐĐRĐ <sup>5</sup>
Jeremiah	jĕr-a-mĩ' a	2	jĕr-ĕ-mĩ-ă	9JL†ĐĐĐĐ
Jershon	jĕr' shăn	2	jer-shun	9R†ĐRĐ
Jerusalem	ja-rũ' sa-lĕm	2	jĕ-rũ-să-lĕm	9Đ†ĐĐJLJLĐ
Jesse	jĕs' ĕ	1	jĕ-sĩ	9JL†
Jew	jũ	1	jĩũ	9†Đ
John	jăn	0	jăn	9JLĐ
Jonas	jō' nus	0	jō-nus	9ĐĐRĐĐ
Jordan	jōr' dun	1	jōr-dun	9Đ†ĐRĐ
Joseph	jō' zĕf	0	jō-zĕf	9ĐĐJL†
Josephite	jō' zĕf-ĩt	0	jō-zĕf-ĩt	9ĐĐJL†JL
Josh	jăsh	0	jăsh	9JLĐ
Joshua	jăsh' ũ-wa	2	jăsh-ĩũ-ă	9JLĐ†ĐĐĐ
Jotham	jō' thum	0	jō-thum	9ĐLJLĐ
Judah	jũ' da	2	jĩũ-dă	9†ĐĐĐĐ
Judea	jũ-dĕ' a	2	jĩũ-dĕ-ă	9†ĐĐĐĐĐ

Kib	kīb	0	kīb	𐎧𐎠𐎢
Kim	kīm	0	kīm	𐎧𐎠𐎣
Kimnor	kīm' nōr	1	kīm-nōr	𐎧𐎠𐎣𐎠𐎢
Kish	kīsh	0	kīsh	𐎧𐎠𐎠
Kishkumen	kīsh-kū'mun	2	kīsh-kū-mēn	𐎧𐎠𐎠𐎠𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Korihor	kō'rī-hōr	2	kōr-ī-hōr	𐎧𐎠𐎠𐎠𐎢
Kumen	kū'mun	2	kū-mēn	𐎧𐎠𐎠𐎢
Kumenonhi	kū'ma-nān'hī	2	kū-mēn-ān-hī	𐎧𐎠𐎠𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢 𐎠𐎢
Laban	lā'bun	0	lā-bun	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Lachoneus	la-kō'nē-us	1	lā-kō-nē-us	𐎧𐎠𐎠𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Laish	lā'īsh	0	lā-īsh	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠
Lamah	lā'mā	0	lā-mā	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠
Laman	lā'mun	0	lā-mun	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Lamanite	lā'mun-īt	0	lā-mun-īt	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Lamoni	la-mō'nī	1	lā-mō-nī	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Lebanon	lēb'a-nān	2	lēb-ā-nun	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Lehi	lē'hī	0	lē-hī	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠
Lehi-Nephi	lē'hī-nē'fī	0	lē-hī-nē-fī	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Lehonti	lē'hān'tī	0	lē-hān-tī	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Lemuel	lēm'yūl	2	lēm-yīū-ēl	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Lemuelite	lēm'yūl-īt	2	lēm-yīū-ēl-īt	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Levi	lē'vī	0	lē-vī	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠
Liahona	lē'a-hō'na	2	lī-ā-hō-nā	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Lib	līb	0	līb	𐎧𐎠𐎢
Limhah	līm'hā	0	līm-hā	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠
Limher	līm'her	1	līm-hēr	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Limhi	līm'hī	0	līm-hī	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠𐎢
Limnah	līm'nā	0	līm-nā	𐎧𐎠𐎢𐎠

Luram	lūr'um	1	lū-rum	ԼԻՐԱՐՉ
Madmenah	mād-mēn'a	2	mād-mē-nā	ՉԱՅՉՁԻՑ
Mahah	mā'hā	0	mā-hā	ՉԵԳՑ
Maher–shalal– hash–baz	mā'her–shāl- āl–hāsh'bāz	2	mā-hēr–shāl-ul- hāsh–bāz	ՉԵԳԻԳ–ՉԱԼ ԻԼ–ԻՆՉ–ՑԱԵ
Malachi	māl'a-kī	1	māl-ā-kī	ՉԱԼԱԿ
Manasseh	ma-nās'a	2	mān-ās-sē	ՉԱՆԱՏԻ
Manti	mān'tī	0	mān-tī	ՉԱՆԻ
Mary	mē'rē	2	mār-ī	ՉԵԳԻ
Mathoni	ma-thō'nī	1	mā-thō-nī	ՉԱԼՈՆԻ
Mathonihah	māth-ō-nī'hā	0	mā-thō-nī-hā	ՉԱԼՈՆԻԿԻ
Medes	mēdz	0	mēdz	ՉՁՑԵ
Melchizedek	mēl-kīz'a-dīk	2	mēl-chīz-ē-dēk	ՉԱԼԿԻՅԵՁԵԿ
Melek	mē'lēk	0	mē-lēk	ՉՁԼԿ
Michmash	mīk'māsh	0	mīk-māsh	ՉԻԿՉԱՑ
Middoni	mīd-dō'nī	0	mīd-ō-nī	ՉԻԿՈՆԻ
Midian	mīd'ē-un	1	mīd-ī-un	ՉԻԿԻԱՆ
Migran	mī'grān	2	mīg-run	ՉԻԿԻԱՆ
Minon	mī'nān	1	mī-nun	ՉԻԿԻԱՆ
Moab	mō'āb	0	mō-āb	ՉՈՎԵ
Mocum	mō'kum	0	mō-kum	ՉՈՎԻՉ
Moriancumer	mōr-ē-ān'ka- mer	2	mōr-ī-ān-kīū- mēr	ՉՈՎԻԱՆԿԱՐ ՉԱՐ
Morianton	mōr-ē-ān'tun	1	mōr-ī-ān-tun	ՉՈՎԻԱՆԻՐԱՆ
Moriantum	mōr-ē-ān'tum	1	mōr-ī-ān-tum	ՉՈՎԻԱՆԻՐՉ
Mormon	mōr'mun	1	mōr-mun	ՉՈՎՐԱՆ
Moron	mōr'un	0	mōr-un	ՉՈՎԱՆ
Moroni	mō-rō'nī	0	mōr-ō-nī	ՉՈՎՈՆԻ
Moronihah	mō-rō-nī'hā	0	mōr-ō-nī-hā	ՉՈՎՈՆԻԿԻ

Moses	mō'zus	2	mō-zēz	ጋፀጸጸ
Mosiah	mō-sī'a or mō-zī'a	1, 2	mō-sī-ä	ጋፀጸጸፀ
Mulek	myū'lēk	2, 1	mīū-luk and mīū-lēk	ጋፀጸጸጸ and ጋፀጸጸጸ <sup>6</sup>
Muloki	myū'la-kī	2	mul-ō-kī	ጋፀጸጸጸጸ
Nahom	nā'hum	0	nā-hum	ዛፀፀፀፀ
Naphtali	nāf'ta-lī	1	nāf-tā-lī	ዛፀፀፀጸጸጸ
Nazareth	nāz'a-rēth	1	nāz-ä-rēth	ዛፀፀፀፀጸጸ
Neas	nē'ās	2	nē-āz	ዛፀፀጸጸ
Nehor	nē'hōr	1	nē-hōr	ዛፀፀፀፀፀ
Nephi	nē'fi	0	nē-fi	ዛፀፀጸጸ
Nephihah	nē-fi'hā	0	nē-fi-hā	ዛፀፀጸፀፀፀ
Nephite	nē'fit	0	nē-fit	ዛፀፀጸጸጸ
Neum	nē'um	0	nē-um	ዛፀፀፀፀ
Nimrah	nīm'rā	0	nīm-rā	ዛፀፀፀፀፀ
Nimrod	nīm'rād	0	nīm-rād	ዛፀፀፀፀፀፀ
Noah	nō'a	1	nō-ä	ዛፀፀፀ
Ogath	ō'gāth	0	ō-gāth	ፀፀፀጸጸ
Omega	ō-mā'ga	1	ō-mā-gä	ፀፀፀፀፀፀ
Omer	ō'mer	1	ō-mēr	ፀፀፀጸፀ
Omner	ām'ner	1	ām-nēr	ፀፀፀፀጸፀፀ
Omni	ām'nī	0	ām-nī	ፀፀፀፀጸጸ
Onidah	ō-nī'da	1	ō-nī-dä	ፀፀፀፀፀፀፀ
Onihah	ō-nī'hā	0	ō-nī-hā	ፀፀፀፀፀፀፀፀ
Onti	än'tī	0	än-tī	ፀፀፀፀጸጸጸ
Ophir	ō'fer	0	ō-fer	ፀፀፀፀፀፀፀ
Oreb	ōr'ēb	0	ōr-ēb	ፀፀፀፀፀፀ
Orihah	ō-rī'hā	0	ō-rī-hā	ፀፀፀፀፀፀፀፀ

Paanchi	pā-ān'kī	0	pā-ān-kī	Ἰεῖνῆς
Pachus	pā'kus	1	pāk-us	Ἰῶρς
Pacumeni	pā-kyū'mēn-ī	2	pāk-yū-mē-nī	Ἰῶνθῶων
Pagag	pā'gäg	1	pā-gäg	Ἰεῖν
Pahoran	pa-hōr'un	1	pā-hōr-un	Ἰεφὸρῆν
Palestina	pāl-a-stī'na	2	pāl-ē-stī-nā	Ἰουδαία
Pathros	pā'thrōs	1	pā-thrus	Ἰούρς
Pekah	pē'kā	0	pē-kā	Ἰαῶ
Pharaoh	fā'rō or-fē'rō	0, 1	fā-rō	Ρεφὸ
Philistine	fil'a-stēn	2	fil-ī-stīn	Ῥιλιστῆν
Rabbanah	ra-bān'a	2	rāb-ā-nā	Ῥαββῆ
Rahab	rā'hāb	0	rā-hāb	Ῥεῖβ
Ramah	rā'mā	1	rā-mā	Ῥεῶ
Ramath	rā'muth	0	rā-muth	Ῥεῶθ
Rameumptom	rām-ē-ump'tum	0	rām-ē-ump-tum	Ῥαμὲθμ
Remaliah	rēm-a-lī'a	2	rēm-ā-lī-ā	Ῥεμῆ
Rezin	rē'zīn	0	rē-zīn	Ῥεῖν
Riplah	rīp'lā	0	rīp-lā	Ῥιπλῶ
Riplakish	rīp-lā'kīsh	1	rīp-lā-kīsh	Ῥιπλῶθ
Ripliancum	rīp-lē-ān'kum	1	rīp-lī-ān-kum	Ῥιπλῆν
Salem	sā'lēm	0	sā-lēm	Σαλῆμ
Sam	sām	0	sām	Σαμ
Samaria	sa-mēr'ē-a	2	sām-ā-rī-ā	Σαμάρια
Samuel	sām'yū-ēl	1	sām-yū-ēl	Σαμὺὲλ
Sarah	sēr'a	2	sār-ā	Σαρά
Sariah	sa-rī'a	2	sā-rī-ā	Σαρά
Saul	sāl	1	sól	Σαὺλ
Seantum	sē-ān'tum	0	sē-ān-tum	Σεάνθμ

Sebus	sē'bus	0	sē-bus	𐤱𐤁𐤅𐤄
Seezoram	sē-zōr'um	0	sē-zōr-um	𐤱𐤁𐤆𐤍𐤀𐤄
Senine	sē'nīn	0	sē-nīn	𐤱𐤁𐤍
Senum	sē'num	0	sē-num	𐤱𐤁𐤍𐤀
Seraphim	sēr'a-fīm	1	sēr-ā-fīm	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁𐤍
Seth	sēth	0	sēth	𐤱𐤀𐤴
Shared	shā'rud	1	shār-ēd	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁
Shazer	shā'zer	1	shā-zēr	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱
Shearjashub	shīr-jā'shub	2	shē-er-jā-shub	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁𐤱𐤁𐤄
Shelem	shē'lēm	0	shē-lēm	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱
Shem	shēm	0	shēm	𐤱𐤀𐤴
Shemlon	shēm'lān	1	shēm-lun	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁𐤍
Shemnon	shēm'nān	1	shēm-nun	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁𐤍
Sherem	shēr'um	2	shēr-ēm	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱
Sherrizah	shēr-ī'za	2	sher-ī-zā	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁𐤄
Sheum	shē'um	0	shē-um	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱
Shez	shēz	0	shēz	𐤱𐤀𐤴
Shiblom	shīb'lum	0	shīb-lum	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁𐤄
Shiblon	shīb'lun	0	shīb-lun	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁𐤍
Shiblum	shīb'lum	0	shīb-lum	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁𐤄
Shiloah	shī-lō'a	1	shī-lō-ā	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁
Shilom	shī'lum	0	shī-lum	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁
Shim	shīm	0	shīm	𐤱𐤀𐤴
Shimnilom	shīm-nī'lām	2	shīm-nī-lun	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱𐤁𐤱𐤁𐤍 <sup>7</sup>
Shinar	shī'nār	1	shī-nēr	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱
Shiz	shīz	0	shīz	𐤱𐤀𐤴
Shule	shūl	1	shūl	𐤱𐤀𐤴𐤱
Shum	shum	0	shum	𐤱𐤀𐤴

Shurr	sher	0	sher	ՏԻԳ
Sidom	sī'dum	0	sī-dum	ՏԻԺԻԾ
Sidon	sī'dun	0	sī-dun	ՏԻԺԻԿ
Sinai	sī'nī	2	sī-nā-ī	ՏԻԿԵԻ
Sinim	sī'nīm	0	sī-nīm	ՏԻԿԻԾ
Siron	sī'run	0	sī-run	ՏԻՐԻԿ
Syria	sīr'ē-a	2	sīr-ī-ä	ՏԻՐԻԺ
Tarshish	tār'shīsh	0	tār-shīsh	ԴԺԺԻԺ
Teancum	tē-ān'kum	0	tē-ān-kum	ԴԺԿԺԾ
Teomner	tē-ām'ner	1	tē-ām-nēr	ԴԺԿԿԻԳ
Thummim	thum'īm		Word not used in the body of the Book of Mormon	
Timothy	tīm'a-thē	2	tīm-ō-thī	ԴԻՇՕԼԻ
Tubaloth	tū'ba-lāth	2	tū-bā-luth	ԴԻՇԺԵԼԼ
Uriah	yū-rī'a	2	yū-rī-ä	ՎԻՇԻԺ
Urim	yūr'īm		Word not used in the body of the Book of Mormon	
Uzziah	yū-zī'a	2	u-zī-ä	ԻՇԺ
Zarahemla	zēr-a-hēm'la	2	zār-ä-hēm-lä	ԵԶԻԿԵԼԿ
Zebulun	zēb'yū-lun	1	zēb-yū-lun	ԵԶԻԿԵԼԿ
Zechariah	zēk'a-rī'a	2	zēk-ä-rī-ä	ԵԶԻԿԵԼԺ
Zedekiah	zēd'a-kī'a	2	zēd-ē-kī-ä	ԵԶԵԺԺԺ
Zeezrom	zē-ēz'rum	0	zē-ēz-rum	ԵԶԵՐԻԾ
Zemnariyah	zēm-na-rī'hä	1	zēm-nā-rī-hä	ԵԶԵԿԵԼԺԺ
Zenephi	zēn'a-fī	1	zē-nē-fī	ԵԶԵՐԻ
Zeniff	zē'nīf	0	zē-nīf	ԵԶԻՐ
Zenock	zē'nuk	0	zē-nuk	ԵԶԻՐԺ
Zenos	zē'nus	0	zē-nus	ԵԶԻՐՅ
Zerahemnah	zēr-a-hēm'nä	2	zēr-ä-hēm-nä	ԵԶԻԿԵԼԿԺ

Zeram	zē´rum	0	zē-rum	ᠪ᠎ᠠᠷᠠᠮ
Zerin	zē´rĭn	0	zē-rĭn	ᠪ᠎ᠠᠷᠢᠨ
Ziff	zĭf	0	zĭf	ᠵᠢᠹ
Zion	zī´un	0	zī-un	ᠪ᠎ᠠᠵᠢᠨ
Zoram	zō´rum	0	zōr-um	ᠪ᠎ᠠᠵᠠᠷᠠᠮ
Zoramite	zōr´um-īt	0	zōr-um-īt	ᠪ᠎ᠠᠵᠠᠷᠠᠮᠢᠲᠢ

**Names and terms in the Book of Mormon, but not in the current  
Pronunciation Guide:**

Arabian			ā-rā-bī-un	ᠠᠷᠠᠪᠢᠨ
Assyrian			ā-sīr-ī-un	ᠠᠰᠢᠷᠢᠨ
Cush			kush	ᠴᠢᠰ
Damascus			dā-mā-skus	ᠳᠠᠮᠠᠰᠴᠤᠰ
David			dā-vīd	ᠳᠡᠪᠢᠳ
Eden			ē-dēn	ᠡᠳᠡᠨ
Galilee			gāl-ī-lē	ᠭᠠᠯᠢᠯᠡ
Gentile			jēn-tīl	ᠵᠡᠨᠲᠢᠯ
Hebrew			hē-brū	ᠬᠡᠪᠷᠠ
Jesus			jē-zus	ᠵᠡᠰᠤᠰ
Leah			lē-ā	ᠯᠡᠶᠠ
Lucifer			līū-sī-fēr	ᠯᠤᠴᠢᠹᠢᠷ
Mammon			mām-un	ᠮᠠᠮᠮᠤᠨ
Nob			nāb	ᠨᠠᠪ
Seon			sē-un	ᠰᠡᠨ
Shublons			shub-lunz	ᠰᠢᠬᠤᠯᠠᠨᠵᠢᠨ <sup>8</sup>
Sion <sup>9</sup>			zī-un	ᠵᠢᠨ
Sodom			sād-um	ᠰᠠᠳᠤᠮ
Solomon			sāl-ō-mun	ᠰᠠᠯᠠᠮᠤᠨ
Tabeal			tā-bē-ul	ᠲᠠᠪᠡᠠᠯ



Pronunciation Guide Key:				
a	about		ī	idle, fine, deny
ǎ	ask, pat, map		ō	over, bone, know
ā	able, bake, way		ou	about
ä	alms, father, call		u	jump
ě	ebb, met, second		ū	rule, boot, two
ē	eat, mete, me		ù	book, look, put
er	permit		ò	<i>open O - little used today</i>
ĩ	it, him, mirror		<i>ü and ó are not in the current PG</i>	

### Appendix Notes

1. Ablom in the 1852 Book of Mormon. DA spelling is an apparent error.
2. Camenihah in the 1852 Book of Mormon. This spelling was replicated in the DA Book of Mormon.
3. Two variant spellings in the DA Book of Mormon.
4. Two variant spellings in the DA Book of Mormon.
5. Joneam in the 1852 Book of Mormon. Skousen (*The Earliest Text*) indicates that Joneum, rather than Jeneum, is the earliest spelling, agreeing with the DA pronunciation, but differing from the 1852 spelling.
6. Two variant spellings in the DA BoM.
7. Shimnilon in the 1852 Book of Mormon. This spelling was replicated in the DA Book of Mormon.
8. A variant spelling of shiblons in the 1830 and 1852 Book of Mormon “Now an antion of gold is equal to three shublons.” Alma 11:18 (Alma 8:8 in 1952 and DA Book of Mormon). This spelling was replicated in the DA Book of Mormon.
9. Sion is an error that first appeared in the 1852 Book of Mormon. It is Zion in all prior editions. This error was not corrected until the 1920 edition. I have included this word in the list since the DA Book of Mormon was set from the 1852 edition.





