Jehoiakim Was Not Nephi's Zedekiah

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This part 3 of the appendix examines Nephi's use of the name Zedekiah (1 Nephi 1:4; 5:12-13), together with John P. Pratt's claim that Nephi was not referring to Judah's king Zedekiah, but "must have been" describing a prior king of Judah named Jehoiakim.[1] Pratt expressly relied on an earlier proposal made by Joseph L. Allen;[2] so, this part also will study the justifications advanced by Allen in support of the claim. First, however, rational principles of interpretation require an examination of the contexts in which the name Zedekiah was used by Nephi.

Nephi's Use of Zedekiah. The word *Zedekiah* appears three times in Nephi's writings, twice within the phrase "the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah" (1 Nephi 1:4; 5:12) and once within the phrase "the reign of Zedekiah*"* (1 Nephi 5:13). The earliest extant form[3] of the text for 1 Nephi 1:4 appears in the printer's manuscript[4] as a series of seven words written without punctuation, "the reig{n} of Zedekiah King of Judah", into which the phrase "f{e/i}rst year of the" was inserted above the line and after the word *the.*[5] In the first (1830) edition of the Book of Mormon, the phrase occurs in the same form as in the current (1981) edition, "the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah."[6] The other two phrases (1 Nephi 5:12-13) are available in an extant portion of the original manuscript and read as "the Rein of Zedeciah {k}ing of juda" and "the rein of Zedekiah."[7] In the printer's manuscript, these phrases appear as "the reign of Zede{k}iah K{e/i}ng of Judah" and "the

1   John P. Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," *Meridian Magazine*, an online publication accessed at www.meridianmagazine.com/sci_rel/000331sixhundred.html, sections entitled "Nephi's Account" and "Jehoiakim as Nephi's 'Zedekiah'."

2   Joseph L. Allen, Ph.D., *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon* (Orem, Utah: S.A. Publishers, 1989), 22-25.

3   Of the original Book of Mormon manuscript, "about 25 percent of the current text" exists today. The remainder was destroyed by water and mold, between 1841 and 1882, while the manuscript was held in the cornerstone of the Nauvoo House, a hotel in Nauvoo, Illinois. Royal Skousen, ed., *The Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Extant Text* (Provo, Utah: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies ["FARMS"], 2001), 6-7. A list of extant text of the original manuscript appears on page 37 and begins with 1 Nephi 2:2.

4   The printer's manuscript is a copy of the original manuscript, prepared for use by the typesetter of the first edition of the Book of Mormon. Royal Skousen, ed., *The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon: Typographical Facsimile of the Entire Text in Two Parts, Part One: 1 Nephi 1–Alma 17* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 2001), 3-4.

5   Skousen, ed., *The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon, Part One*: 53. The manuscript text has three legibility issues and emendations: (1) Oliver Cowdery's insertion of *first year of the* occurs above the line and before the word *reign*; (2) in the supralinear *first*, the letter *e* has been overwritten with the letter *i*; and (3) in the word *reign*, the letter *n* has been partially overwritten by another *n*. See also part 1 of this chapter, where this text is discussed in connection with Mormon's use of a similar phrase in his preface to the book of Third Nephi.

6   Joseph Smith, Jr., author and proprietor, *The Book of Mormon* (Palmyra, New York: E.B. Grandin, 1830; Independence, Missouri: Herald Heritage Reprint, 1970), 5; or Wilford C. Wood, *Joseph Smith Begins His Work: Book of Mormon 1830 First Edition Reproduced from Uncut Sheets* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Publisher's Press, 1958), 5.

7   Skousen, ed., *The Original Manuscript of the Book of Mormon*, 78-79. In the first of these phrases, the *k* in the word *king* has been partially overwritten by another *k*.

reign of Zedek{e/i}ah."[8] The 1830 Book of Mormon reproduced these phrases as "the reign of Zedekiah, King of Judah" and "the reign of Zedekiah"[9] and the 1981 edition duplicated them, except for a lower case *k* on the word *king*. Thus, no material issue exists concerning textual transmission and the task of interpretation can focus on the meaning of the phrases.

The infinitive *to reign* generally means "[t]o hold or exercise the sovereign power or authority in a state; to rule or govern as king or queen" and, as a noun, *reign* usually means "[r]oyal power or rule."[10] Hence, the phrase "the reign" means "the royal power or rule" and the following adjectival phrase "of Zedekiah" specifies that such royal power or rule was that of a person, group or institution identified by the word *Zedekiah*. In two instances (1 Nephi 1:4; 5:12), "the reign of Zedekiah" is further modified by specifying a title (*king*) and state or place of rulership (*Judah*). In the third instance (1 Nephi 5:13), the title and state are not mentioned, most likely because they were specified just a few words earlier. Hence, in a broad sense, Nephi's phrase "the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah" would mean something like "the royal power or rule of a person, group or institution identified by the word *Zedekiah* and bearing the title of king in the state of Judah."

The Kings of Judah. Additional clarification can be obtained by looking at kings in the Hebrew scriptures. That topic is relevant because the brass plates obtained by Nephi contained both "the five books of Moses" and "a record of the Jews from the beginning, even down to the commencement of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah" (1 Nephi 5:11-12). "The Hebrew word for 'king' (*melekh*) is derived from a root which in Assyrian and Aramaic implies the giving of counsel or advice, so that in origin it appears to have signified 'counsellor' and so 'ruler.'"[11] The families of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were aware of, and sometimes dealt with, kings who appear to have been the individual rulers of small city states in Canaan (e.g., Genesis 14:2, 8-24; 20:1-18; 26:1, 8-11; 35:31-38), but the title of king also appears to have been applied to individual rulers of large territories, such as Egypt (Genesis 40:1, 5) and Elam (Genesis14:1). The migrant descendants of Jacob (renamed Israel; Genesis 35:10) dealt with kings of Egypt, Edom, Arad, Moab, Heshbon, Bashan and the Amorites (e.g., Exodus 1:8, 15, 18; Numbers 20:14, 18; 21:1, 21, 29, 34; 22:4, 10; 23:7; 32:33; Deuteronomy 1:4; 2:24, 26, 30; 3:1-2, 6, 11). Long after Israel settled in the land of Canaan, Saul was anointed secretly by Samuel to be a captain (*nagid* or ruler)[12] (1 Samuel 9:1-10:16) "and appointed by popular acclamation" at Mizpah to be their *melekh* or king (1 Samuel 10:17-27),[13] an action that was later renewed at Gilgal (1 Samuel 11:14-15).

After the death of Saul and his sons, David, the outlaw king of Judah, was anointed king of Israel by the elders of Israel (2 Samuel 2-5). David's son, Solomon, succeeded him as king of Israel and Judah (1 Kings 1-2), but Israel rebelled against Solomon's son, Rehoboam (1 Kings 11:43-12:24) and the kingdoms were divided again. Thereafter, other direct descendants of David

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8   Skousen, ed., *The Printer's Manuscript of the Book of Mormon, Part One*: 68. In the first phrase, the *k* in *Zedekiah* has been partially overwritten by another *k* and the original *e* in *King* has been overwritten by an *i*; and in the second phrase, an *e* in *Zedekiah* has been overwritten by an *i*.

9   Smith, *The Book of Mormon* (1830), 15.

10   *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary,* two vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), II: 2474 ("Reign").

11   James Hastings, ed., *Dictionary of the Bible*, Rev. ed., Frederick C. Grant and H. H. Rowley, eds. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963), 551 ("King (in the OT)").

12   James Strong, "A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Hebrew Bible," in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1979), 76.

13   Hastings, ed., *Dictionary of the Bible*, Rev. ed., 551 ("King (in the OT)") and 889-90 ("Saul").

ruled in Judah, with the title being bestowed on a son of the prior king: Abijam, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram and Ahaziah (1 Kings 14:31; 15:8, 24; 22:50; 2 Kings 9:27-29).

Upon the death of king Ahaziah, his mother, Athalia, attempted to kill his descendants and then presumed to rule over Judah. However, one of the sons of Ahaziah (Jehoash) and his nurse were hidden in the temple. About seven years later, Jehoash was enthroned at the temple as the successor to his father and Athalia was executed (2 Kings 11:1-16). Her name does not appear in the list of royalty in 1 Chronicles 3:10-16.

Jehoash, the son of Ahaziah, was succeeded by his son, Amaziah, and the father-to-son succession continued: Azariah (also called Uzziah), Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah and Jehoahaz (2 Kings 12:17-21; 15:1-13, 32, 38; 16:20; 20:21; 21:18, 23-26; 23:29-30; 2 Chronicles 26; Isaiah 1:1; Hosea 1:1; Amos 1:1). After the battle between Egypt and Judah that resulted in the death of king Josiah, "the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead" (2 Kings 23:29-30; see also 2 Chronicles 35:20-36:2). However, after a reign of only three months, Jehoahaz was summoned by pharaoh Necho to the Egyptian headquarters at Riblah in the land of Hamath; there the young king was taken into captivity and deported to Egypt, where he later died (2 Kings 23:31-34; see also 2 Chronicles 36:3-4). Jeremiah's lament for "Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah" (Jeremiah 22:10-12) used a different name for Jehoahaz, but also noted that Shallum "reigned instead of Josiah his father" and was taken captive and deported. In 1 Chronicles 3:15, Shallum was listed as Josiah's fourth son, but he was more than a dozen years older than his full-brother Mattaniah (who became known by his throne name Zedekiah; compare 2 Kings 23:31-36; 24:8, 17-18; 2 Chronicles 36:2, 5, 9, 11).

Necho replaced Shallum-Jehoahaz with his elder brother, Eliakim, who became "king in the room of Josiah his father" (rather than successor to Shallum-Jehoahaz), and Necho's appointment of Eliakim was accompanied by the prince receiving the throne name Jehoiakim (2 Kings 23:34; see also 2 Chronicles 36:4). First Chronicles 3:15 listed Josiah's second son by his throne name Jehoiakim. There is no further information in 1 Chronicles 3:15 or elsewhere in the Hebrew scriptures about Johanan, Josiah's firstborn son. The third listed son in 1 Chronicles 3:15 appears under his throne name Zedekiah.

According to 1 Chronicles 3:16, Jehoiakim had two sons, Jeconiah and Zedekiah. Upon Jehoiakim's death, "Jehoiachin his son [also known as Jeconiah and Coniah; see 1 Chronicles 3:16; Jeremiah 22:24, 28; 37:1] reigned in his stead" (2 Kings 24:6; see also 2 Chronicles 36:8). According to 2 Chronicles 36:9-10, when Jehoiachin had reigned three months and ten days, Nebuchadrezzar deported him to Babylon and placed "his brother" Zedekiah on the throne of Judah. However, as stated in 2 Kings 24:8, 10-17, Jehoiachin reigned three months before Nebuchadrezzar deported him and "made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah." Since king Zedekiah was noted elsewhere to be a "son of Josiah" (Jeremiah 1:3 and 37:1), it seems unlikely that 2 Chronicles 36:9-10 is accurate about Jehoiachin's "brother" receiving the throne. More likely, Jehoiakim's brother, Mattaniah, obtained the throne from Nebuchadrezzar and, at the coronation, received the throne name Zedekiah. Were there two Zedekiahs in the royal family? Apparently, yes. Moreover, other persons with the name Zedekiah appear in the Hebrew scriptures before, during and after the time of Mattaniah-Zedekiah: one of Ahab's court prophets (1 Kings 22:11, 24; 2 Chronicles 18:10, 23); a prophet deported to Babylonia (Jeremiah 29:21-23); a son of Hananiah (Jeremiah 36:12); and a signatory to the covenant (Nehemiah 10:1, translated Zidkijah in the King James version).

Finally, in numerous instances throughout the book of Jeremiah, the phrases "Zedekiah king of Judah," "Zedekiah the king, " "Zedekiah the king of Judah" and "king Zedekiah" appear

within contexts indicating that Zedekiah was an individual, rather than some sort of group or institution (e.g., Jeremiah 21:1, 7; 24:8; 27:3, 12; 29:3; 32:1, 3-4; 34:2, 4, 6, 8, 21; 37:3, 17-18, 21; 38:5, 14, 16, 19; 39:1, 4; 44:30; 51:59). In two instances, Jeremiah used the same phrase that Nephi used, "the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah" (Jeremiah 28:1; 49:34). This may have been a formulaic phrase used by Hebrew record keepers; see, e.g., "the reign of David" (1 Chronicles 4:31; 26:31), "the reign of Asa" (2 Chronicles 15:10, 19; 16:1), "the reign of Josiah" (2 Chronicles 35:19), "the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah" (Jeremiah 26:1), "the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah" (Daniel 1:1) and "the reign of Nebuchadnezzar" (Daniel 2:1). While all of these examples would not have been available to Nephi in the brass plates, the imitative nature of the phrases "the reign of _____" and "the reign of _____ king of _____" indicates that Nephi's phrases were not unique.

To conclude this very brief review of Judah's kings, it is important to return to a more specific definition of Nephi's longer phrase, "the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah." Within the context described above, the most likely definition would seem to be "the royal rule of Mattaniah, a son of Josiah who served as king of Judah under the throne name Zedekiah."[14]

Other Book of Mormon Texts. That definition is consistent with other Book of Mormon authors' use of the name Zedekiah to refer to a king.[15] Amaleki, a descendant of Nephi's brother, Jacob, wrote that "the people of Zarahemla came out from Jerusalem at the time that Zedekiah, king of Judah, was carried away captive into Babylon" (Omni 1:15; compare 2 Kings 24:17-25:7). Mormon, a descendant of Nephi, wrote that "the land south was called Lehi, and the land north was called Mulek, which was after the son of Zedekiah; for the Lord did bring Mulek into the land north, and Lehi into the land south" (Helaman 6:10). Mormon also noted that "the sons of Zedekiah were … slain, all except it were Mulek" and that "the seed of Zedekiah are with us, and they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem" (Helaman 8:21; compare 2 Kings 25:7). Moreover, in the preface to the book now known as Third Nephi, Mormon noted that Lehi "came out of Jerusalem" in "the reign of Zedekiah, the king of Judah," thereby connecting Lehi with a ruler named Zedekiah at Jerusalem. Note the consistent and parallel concepts in these descriptions:

Land south	Land north
Lehi [Nephites and Lamanites]	Mulek (people of Zarahemla)
Came out of Jerusalem	Came out of Jerusalem
	Driven out of the land of Jerusalem
When Zedekiah reigned in Judah	When the king of Judah was taken captive to Babylon
	When the sons of Zedekiah (except Mulek) were slain.

Unquestionably, there is a uniform practice within the Book of Mormon of using the name Zedekiah to describe the last of the Davidic line of kings in Judah prior to the destruction of the kingdom of Judah and the city of Jerusalem.

Nonetheless, Allen preferred, and Pratt was required by his chronological assumptions to argue for, internal chronologies of the Book of Mormon that required Lehi and Nephi to escape from Jerusalem in the spring of 601 B.C. (Pratt) or early in 600 B.C. (Allen),[16] several years prior to the reign of Judah's king Zedekiah. For Allen and Pratt, Nephi's Zedekiah "may have been" (Allen)

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14   See also parts 1 and 2 of this chapter and part 2 of this appendix.

15   One of the Nephite twelve disciples also bore the name Zedekiah (3 Nephi 19:4).

16   Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 22-25; Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," sections entitled "The 600-Year Prophecy," "Few Taken Captive" and "The Duration of Lehi's Ministry."

or "must have been" (Pratt's miscommunication of Allen's proposal) Judah's king Jehoiakim.[17] The justifications advanced for these proposals are instructive for the practice of rational interpretation.

"Zedekiah" as a Babylonian Title for a Hebrew King.   Most of the errors in Allen's chronological discussion about the time when Lehi departed from Jerusalem have been addressed, indirectly, in other parts of this chapter and its appendix. Relying on his previous, inaccurate, historical assumptions, Allen asked, "[W]hy then did Nephi call [600 B.C., according to Allen's preferred chronology] … the first year of the reign of Zedekiah/Mattaniah?"[18]

Nephi did not do that,[19] but that's beside the point in this part of the analysis. The real issue is how could Allen read Nephi's mind to determine "why" he wrote something? "Why" questions that deal with human behavior are particularly difficult to answer without speculation. How could anyone support his or her answer to that "why" question, unless Nephi (in the small plates) or another Book of Mormon author (who had access to Nephi's other writings) actually stated that Zedekiah was some sort of royal title imposed by Nebuchadrezzar? The texts in the Book of Mormon that use the name Zedekiah provide no such evidence. Thus, Allen's "why" question took his interpretation into the realm of speculation.   Rather than providing textual evidence for his question's implicit historical proposal, Allen then explicitly asked:

> Is it possible that, when Nebuchadnezzar changed the name of the 597 BC king Mattaniah to Zedekiah, the pattern had already been established when Nebuchadnezzar entered into Jerusalem in the year 601 BC [the year claimed by Allen for the capitulation of Jerusalem to Nebuchadrezzar]? Is it possible that the name "Zedekiah" became a title and that Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin may also have been given the name or title of Zedekiah?[20]

The rational answer to those questions is no, as will be shown below. To his credit, Allen did not expressly answer yes. He apparently was content to create the rhetorical possibility that Zedekiah (a Hebrew name) was imposed as a royal title by the Babylonian emperor on Jehoiakim and his son Jehoiachin, and on Jehoiakim's half-brother, Mattaniah. "Hence," Allen concluded, "when Nephi wrote 'For it came to pass in the commencement of the first year of the reign of Zedekiah, king of Judah,' he may have been talking about the first year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar over Jerusalem, at 601 BC, when he made a treaty with Jehoiakim and established a kingship title called Zedekiah."[21]

Allen's proposal, if accepted, carries with it the inaccurate chronological and historical assumptions that led Allen to prefer Lehi's departure from Jerusalem before 597 B.C., when prince Mattaniah was enthroned as king of Judah by Nebuchadrezzar.[22] Allen also assumed that Nephi was not describing the prince (Mattaniah) who became "Zedekiah, king of Judah" (Jeremiah 28:1;

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[17]   Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 24; Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," section entitled "Nephi's Account."

[18]   Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 24.

[19]   Allen agreed with my answer. Allen preferred to place the enthronement of Zedekiah-Mattaniah in 597 B.C. Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 21-22, 25.

[20]   Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 24.

[21]   Ibid. In fact, Jehoiakim appears to have submitted to Nebuchadrezzar's rule in 604 B.C. or in the first half of 603 B.C. See part 2 of this appendix.

[22]   See parts 1 and 2 of this chapter and part 2 of this appendix.

49:34) when Nephi engraved the text translated by Joseph Smith as "Zedekiah, king of Judah" (1 Nephi 1:4; 5:12). Since that assumption was unsupported by, and conflicts with, any text in the Book of Mormon that mentioned king Zedekiah, Allen then speculated that Mattaniah received a royal title that his predecessors on the throne also had received from Nebuchadrezzar. However, no passage in the Book of Mormon or the Hebrew scriptures refers to Jehoiakim or Jehoiachin receiving Zedekiah as a royal title imposed by Babylonia.

The Hebrew scriptures state that prince Eliakim was elevated to kingship and received the throne name Jehoiakim under the command of the pharaoh of Egypt (2 Kings 23:34; 2 Chronicles 36:4). There is, of course, no mention of a Babylonian-imposed royal title at that point. When Babylonia defeated Egypt at Carchemish, Jehoiakim had been serving as king of Judah and using his throne name for several years (Jeremiah 46:2). As an Egyptian appointee, Jehoiakim appears to have resisted Babylonian servitude until he and his kingdom were threatened with destruction (Jeremiah 36:5-32).[23] He was fortunate that he was not executed or deported (he was threatened with deportation, according to 2 Chronicles 36:6). Nebuchadrezzar did not replace Jehoiakim as king, but his loyalty and tribute were required. Jehoiakim paid the tribute for three years and then rebelled (2 Kings 24:1) when Babylonia's army retreated after its terrible battle with Egypt in late 601 or early 600 B.C.[24] There is no mention of Nebuchadrezzar bestowing any new title on Jehoiakim.

Nonetheless, Allen argued, "After all, Zedekiah means 'the Lord is righteousness.' This title may have been a political move to allow the Babylonians to control Judah peacefully."[25] The connection is not readily apparent. Whatever the meaning of the name, it is unquestionable that Zedekiah was a personal name (as reviewed above), rather than a title (as Allen speculated). In what way would the Babylonian imposition of another Hebrew name on a reigning king of Judah have influenced the king or his people to behave peacefully? Would not the rebellious leaders in Judah and their insurgent followers have remained just as committed to throwing off the Babylonian yoke? Did Nebuchadrezzar impose a Hebrew name on Jehoiakim in the ineffectual hope that peace would magically ensue? If Nebuchadrezzar did impose such a title on Jehoiakim in order "to control Judah peacefully," the ceremony failed in its purpose. Jehoiakim rebelled.

As for the next king of Judah, Nebuchadrezzar did not appoint Jehoiachin. Jehoiakim's son, Coniah (Jeremiah 22:24, 28; 37:1) or Jeconiah (1 Chronicles 3:16; Jeremiah 24:1; 27:20; 28:4; 29:2) appears to have been given the throne name Jehoiachin when he was made king of Judah. Nebuchadrezzar was far from Judah at the time and probably did not learn of Jehoiakim's death and Coniah's appointment until after the Babylonian army set out to punish Jehoiakim's rebellion.[26] When Jehoiachin surrendered for deportation to Babylonia, it seems unlikely that Nebuchadrezzar would have ceremoniously imposed a failed magical title on the captive youth and even more unlikely that Nebuchadrezzar stuck prince Mattaniah with what then would have been the same insulting title.

If (an extremely unlikely circumstance) prince Mattaniah's two predecessors received the personal name Zedekiah as a Babylonian royal title, then one would have to assume that the

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[23]   See part 2 of this appendix for my discussion of Babylonia's invasion of Syria and Palestine, including the kingdom of Judah.

[24]   Ibid.

[25]   Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 24.

[26]   See part 2 of this chapter and part 2 of this appendix for historical discussions about the history of Judah associated with king Jehoiachin.

record keepers of Judah chose not to use that title until Mattaniah was elevated to the throne. Only then did the record keepers switch their previous practice of identifying their kings by throne names and use the Babylonian title. In addition, one must assume that the record keepers did not record Mattaniah's throne name, but only his Babylonian-imposed title. There appears to be no evidence in the Book of Mormon or the Hebrew scriptures for these assumptions that must accompany Allen's proposal.

As a last attempt to muster some scriptural support for his speculations, Allen referred to a passage describing the time when Nephi had become aged and expected to die.[27] Nephi then:

> anointed a man to be a king and a ruler over his people…. The people having loved Nephi exceedingly, he having been a great protector for them … and having labored in all his days for their welfare—Wherefore, the people were desirous to retain in remembrance his name. And whoso should reign in his stead were called by the people, second Nephi, third Nephi, and so forth … let them be of whatever name they would (Jacob 1:9-11)."

Thus, the people of Nephi chose to number and name their kings after Nephi—whatever the actual name of the king—because of their love for Nephi and his protection and labor on their behalf. Somehow, Allen thought that this practice was similar to his proposal that a conquering Babylonian emperor imposed a previously unknown royal title on three wicked kings who presided over the desecration of the temple and the destruction of the kingdom of Judah. Allen even misread the practice adopted by the people of Nephi to be one imposed by Nephi in "setting up a kingdom in the New World patterned after what he saw in Jerusalem."[28] Except for the repeated use of a name for a king, the Nephite situation was completely different from the unsubstantiated practice proposed by Allen.

To summarize, Allen's proposal appears to have been pure speculation, created to fill an unnecessary requirement of an inaccurate chronological proposal that was inconsistent with the text of the Book of Mormon, the Hebrew scriptures and other ancient records. Allen's proposal purported to be a possible answer to the question of "why" Nephi did something, when there appears to be no evidence that Nephi ever did it. Indeed, all of the evidence gathered in other parts of this chapter and its appendix indicate that Nephi did something quite different. Nephi described Lehi's escape from Jerusalem as occurring sometime in the reign of Zedekiah, the successor to Jehoiachin on the throne of Judah, and thus, after the spring of 597 B.C.

Jehoiakim and the Title "Zedekiah" Used Interchangeably. Even so, Pratt took up Allen's approach to the matter of a title and asked, "Why would Nephi have called Jehoiakim 'Zedekiah'? There are several plausible explanations"—one of which was the "possibility" that Zedekiah "might have been a title used interchangeably with the name Jehoiakim."[29] As discussed above, the Hebrew scriptures and Book of Mormon treat the name Zedekiah in a manner that is not consistent with the proposal that it was a royal title. There appears to be no scriptural basis for that speculation.

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[27] Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 24.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," section entitled "Jehoiakim as Nephi's 'Zedekiah'."

Nonetheless, Pratt cited Jeremiah 27:1 as evidence that Zedekiah was "sometimes referred to" as Jehoiakim. That seems to be the logical equivalent of the English title "Queen" sometimes being referred to as "Elizabeth." Would not the opposite be expected in normal communication? Furthermore, Pratt cited only one example; so, his use of the word "sometimes" should have been "once" to be accurate. Pratt continued, "That Zedekiah is indicated [in Jeremiah 27:1] is made clear from the context in the next two chapters. Other translations simply translate the name as 'Zedekiah.' Even if this is simply a copyist's mistake, it seems easier to explain if Jehoiakim had also been called Zedekiah."[30]

Jeremiah 27:1 appears only in the Masoretic text; the entire verse is missing in the Septuagint text. John Bright concluded that the verse was "certainly not original; without it, the chapter begins exactly as do the similar passages in [Jeremiah 13 and 19].... Some evidence (three manuscripts …) supports the reading, 'In the accession year of Zedekiah …' but this is likewise inaccurate and is probably a correction of [the Masoretic text].... In [Jeremiah 28:1] the attempt is made to harmonize this (corrected) reading with the actual date of [chapter 28] … (the fourth year of Zedekiah) by pointing out (correctly) that [chapters 27 and 28] … refer to the 'same year.'" Bright's translation omitted Jeremiah 27:1 altogether, seeing it as "apparently an erroneous recopying of [Jeremiah 26:1]."[31]

Pratt seemed to accept the possibility that his invented evidence was "a copyist's mistake," but then he claimed that "it seems easier to explain if Jehoiakim had also been called Zedekiah." Consistent with the principle of simplicity, it seems more likely that Jeremiah 27:1 was just a mistaken recopying of Jeremiah 26:1. Unfortunately, having begun with a mind-reading question, Pratt concluded with a subjective generalization that his unsubstantiated claim "seems easier to explain" the copyist's mistake. No one's subjective "ease" is a rational basis for interpretation; that violates the principle of rational reserve. In fact, what is *simpler* to explain (that is, with fewer required assumptions) is that Jehoiakim did not receive the title Zedekiah from Nebuchadrezzar and, thus, the two titles were never "used interchangeably."

"Zedekiah" as a Personal Name for Jehoiakim. Another of Pratt's "plausible explanations" was that "Zedekiah might have simply been another name for Jehoiakim."[32] Pratt's only evidence for this proposal was that "Jehoiakim had a son named Zedekiah" (citing 1 Chronicles 3:16). Is it reasonable to assume that a Jewish father in the seventh century B.C. normally gave his own name to his son? Six centuries later, the cultural practice of giving a first son his father's or some other relative's name was mentioned in Luke 1:59-63, "but there are probably no cases where this is recorded for the pre-exilic period, except in the Chronicler's lists."[33] Even there, a name appears

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[30]   Ibid., including footnote 23.

[31]   John Bright, *The Anchor Bible: Jeremiah* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1965), 195, 199. See also William L. Holladay, *Jeremiah 2: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah Chapters 26-52* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 115 ("these words must have been copied erroneously from 26:1"); J. Arthur Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, R.K. Harrison, ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1980), 529 (Jeremiah 27:1 "may be a recopying of 26:1").

[32]   Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," section entitled "Jehoiakim as Nephi's 'Zedekiah'."

[33]   "No doubt the injunctions of [Deuteronomy 23:3] and the arrangements for a census [2 Samuel 24] imply that there was some sort of registration of families before [the exile to Babylonia] … and the stage of civilization reached under the monarchy makes it probable that records were kept of royal and important houses. But the genealogical notes which really date from the earlier period rarely go further back than two

to be repeated after two or more generations (e.g., 1 Chronicles 6:9-10, 13 (Azariah); 6:8,12 (Zadok); 6:25, 27, 34-35 (Elkanah). The practice of calling children "after their relatives" has been dated to "about the close of the 4th cent. B.C." and "we get the impression that the grandfather's name was more often adopted than the father's."[34] Thus, another of Pratt's "plausible explanations" turns out to be, more likely than not, just another wishful speculation with no reliable historical or scriptural basis.

"Zedekiah" as a Mark of Subservience. Pratt also proposed "that Nebuchadnezzar might have changed Jehoiakim's name to Zedekiah."[35] This appears to be a variant of Allen's speculation, except that this time, Zedekiah was not a royal title, but an imposed mark of vassalage. As evidence for this proposal, Pratt stated, "At that time, every king of Judah had his name changed by the dominating nation, as a mark of subservience." Pratt's evidence for the notion of a name being a foreign imposition a mark of subservience was a single sentence drawn from *New Bible Dictionary.* "His [Jehoiakim's] name was changed from Eliakim as a mark of vassalage."[36] Thus, Pratt's claim about "every king of Judah" "at that time" was supported by a secondary source assuming something about one king of Judah.

Pratt then attempted to present a listing of some the kings "at that time" who had borne this foreign imposition. "For example, Pharaoh Necho changed Shallum's name to Jehoahaz."[37] Only 2 Kings 23:34 is cited at the end of the sentence in which this claim appears, but that scripture refers to Eliakim's receipt of a throne name. No scripture supports Pratt's claim. To the contrary, Necho appears to have been in Syria with his army when Shallum received the throne name Jehoahaz (2 Kings 23:29-34; 2 Chronicles 35:20-36:4; Jeremiah 22:10-12). So, Shallum apparently did not receive his throne name as a mark of subservience to Egypt. Indeed, the enthronement of Jehoahaz by "the people of the land" (2 Kings 23:30) may have signaled further defiance of Egypt. When Necho returned from battling the Babylonians, he immediately deposed Jehoahaz and deported him to Egypt (2 Kings 23:33-34).

Pratt also claimed that, "After Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar changed Jeconiah's name to Jehoiachin," without any attempt to provide scriptural support for the claim. Nebuchadrezzar was in Babylonia or marching toward Judah when Coniah was enthroned and received his new name;[38] so, Coniah also did not receive his throne name as a mark of subservience to a foreign nation. In both of these instances, a prince appears to have received a throne name when he was elevated to be the king. In neither case is there evidence that the prince was given a new name by a foreigner.

Two other princes of Judah listed by Pratt did receive throne names when they became kings upon their appointment by a foreign ruler. For the first, "Pharaoh-nechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and turned his name to Jehoiakim" (2 Kings 23:34; see also 2 Chronicles 36:4). For the second prince, "the king of Babylon made Mattaniah …

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or three generations, and the later genealogies bear many traces of their artificiality." Hastings, ed., *Dictionary of the Bible*, Rev. ed., 320 ("Genealogy").

[34] Hastings, ed., *Dictionary of the Bible*, Rev. ed., 688 ("Name, Names").

[35] Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," section entitled "Jehoiakim as Nephi's 'Zedekiah'."

[36] Ibid., footnote 24.

[37] Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," section entitled "Jehoiakim as Nephi's 'Zedekiah'."

[38] See part 2 of this appendix.

king in [Jehoiachin's] … stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah" (2 Kings 24:17; see also Jeremiah 37:1). In both of these instances, a prince was chosen by a foreign ruler, was elevated to be a king and, as part of that appointment, received a throne name *perhaps* chosen or approved by the foreign ruler.

Stephen D. Ricks and John J. Sroka identified 27 features of coronation ceremonies in eight cultures (including ancient Israel and Egypt), such as: a sacred setting (in some coronations, a temple); privacy or secrecy for those involved; creation symbolism; rebirth rituals; ceremonial washings; anointing with oil; clothing with special garments; the use of a crown; the procession of the new king; and—pertinent to this study—the bestowal of a new name.[39] "Perhaps no element of coronation rites is more widely known (and taken for granted) than the monarch's receipt of a new name or throne name at the time of his (or her) accession to the throne."[40]

Thus, from the coronation experience of the four princes listed by Pratt (Shallum, Eliakim, Coniah and Mattaniah) and from ancient practices associated with coronations, it would appear that the receipt of a throne name had to do with the appointment to kingship itself, rather than to Pratt's assumed "name changing practice" of a "dominating nation."[41] The proposed "name changing practice" appears to be another wishful speculation. Pratt did acknowledge that in Jehoiakim's case "no name change is recorded when a new world power took command," but he thought it sufficient to rely on a speculative "established precedence," "at that time" for "every king of Judah" that simply cannot be found in the Hebrew scriptures.[42]

Response to Prophecy. Pratt's final historical argument relied on his superficial comparison of 1 Nephi 1:19-20 and Jeremiah 26. Because the response of the people of Jerusalem to Lehi's prophecy of the impending destruction of Jerusalem (anger, mockery and a threat of death; 1 Nephi 1:19-20) was somewhat similar to the responses described in Jeremiah 26 to Jeremiah's prophecy of destruction (a threat of death) and Urijah's similar prophecy (execution), Pratt proposed that "both the timing of the prophecies near the beginning of [Jehoiakim's] … reign, as well as the response of the people, are in perfect agreement."[43]

In addition, Pratt referred to Nephi's observation in 1 Nephi 1:4 that in the first year of Zedekiah, "there came many prophets, prophesying unto the people that they must repent, or the great city Jerusalem must be destroyed." Pratt then claimed "we can simply ask if Nephi's

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[39] Stephen D. Ricks and John J. Sroka, "King, Coronation, and Temple: Enthronement Ceremonies in History," in Donald W. Parry, ed., *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co. and Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1994), 236-71.

[40] Ibid., 244.

[41] Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," section entitled "Jehoiakim as Nephi's 'Zedekiah'." Pratt also listed the instance when Daniel's name was changed to Belteshazzar (Daniel 1:7) as an example of that "name changing practice." Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," section entitled "Jehoiakim as Nephi's 'Zedekiah'." Daniel was a captive in Babylon and he was not necessarily a prince. He and his fellow captives had been chosen to serve in the palace, if they could be taught "the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans." The eunuch in charge of these young captives gave them names appropriate for Nebuchadrezzar's palace servants (Daniel 1:3-7). This example provides no evidence that is relevant to the throne names received by kings of Judah at the time of coronation.

[42] Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," section entitled "Jehoiakim as Nephi's 'Zedekiah'."

[43] Ibid., section entitled "Lehi Prophesies with Jeremiah."

observation is confirmed in the Bible. As far as I can tell, the answer is no." Pratt then referred to Jeremiah 26 as "instant evidence that Nephi's Zedekiah might be the Bible's Jehoiakim."[44]

To answer his question (which is a rational one), Pratt might have looked at 2 Chronicles 36:10-21, which is the chronicler's account of Zedekiah's reign.[45] In fact, 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 is the text that is "in perfect agreement" with Nephi's observations (1 Nephi 1:4, 19-20) and that provides "instant evidence" of Nephi's reliability regarding conditions in Zedekiah's reign. After describing the wickedness of Zedekiah and "all the chief of the priests, and the people" (2 Chronicles 36:11-14), the chronicler recorded, "And the LORD God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place: But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy" (2 Chronicles 36:15-16). Only then, in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, was Jerusalem destroyed in fulfillment of prophecy (2 Chronicles 36:11, 17-21). This evidence cannot be overlooked or ignored in any rational interpretation of 1 Nephi 1:4, 19-20.

In conclusion, Allen preferred[46] and Pratt required[47] that the internal chronology of the Book of Mormon be based on two *a priori* assumptions. First, the birth of the Messiah occurred in the spring of 1 B.C.[48] and, second, the Nephite calendar used for measuring Lehi's 600-year prophecy was a 365-day calendar (Pratt)[49] or a 365.25-day calendar (Allen).[50] Having adopted those positions, their respective chronologies then had to attempt to explain away 1 Nephi 1:4; 5:12-13, together with the history of the period that can be found elsewhere in the Book of Mormon, Hebrew scriptures, Babylonian chronicle and other ancient sources. Allen and Pratt failed at that attempt. However, their work has value because their alternative perspectives enabled them to identify and emphasize texts in the Book of Mormon that, when understood in terms of rational principles of interpretation, help clarify the internal chronology presented in the Book of Mormon.

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[44]   John P. Pratt, "The Nephite Calendar," *Meridian Magazine*, accessed at www.meridianmagazine.com/ sci_rel/040114nephite.html, section entitled "Proposed Solution."

[45]   See also Randall P. Spackman, "Introduction to Book of Mormon Chronology: The Principal Prophecies, Calendars, and Dates," *FARMS Preliminary Report SPA-93* (Provo, Utah: FARMS, 1993), 7 (where this issue was discussed and portions of 2 Chronicles 36:14-16 were quoted).

[46]   Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 23-25.

[47]   Pratt, "Lehi's 600-year Prophecy of the Birth of Christ," sections entitled "The 600-Year Prophecy" and "The Duration of Lehi's Ministry;" idem, "The Nephite Calendar," sections entitled "Birth of Jesus Christ" and "Perfect Fit."

[48]   On this issue, both Allen and Pratt expressly relied on John C. Lefgren, *April Sixth* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1980). See also the generally unfavorable review of *April Sixth* by S. Kent Brown, C. Wilfred Griggs and H. Kimball Hansen, "Review of *April Sixth* by John C. Lefgren." *BYU Studies* 22 (Summer 1982):375-83 and Pratt's rebuttal and response in *BYU Studies* 23 (Spring 1983):252-55. See also James E. Talmage, *Jesus The Christ,* 32nd ed. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1962), 103-4.

[49]   Pratt's assumption relied on "[t]he latter-day [19th century] apostle Orson Pratt." Pratt, "The Nephite Calendar," section entitled "365-day Year."

[50]   Allen, *Exploring the Lands of the Book of Mormon*, 23, referred to no source as a basis for his assumption.