

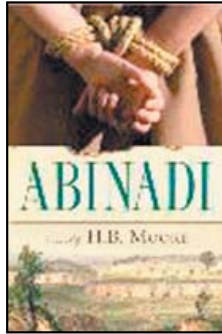
# Lending fresh ideas to a scriptural account

“Abinadi” by H. B. Moore (2008, Covenant Communications, \$26.95)

**O**N SATURDAY, Nov. 1, Covenant will release possibly the most important series of LDS fiction since Gerald Lund’s “Work and the Glory” — H. B. (Heather) Moore follows up her successful “Out of Jerusalem” project with the “Prophets of the Promised Land” series. Every Primary child is familiar with the Arnold Friberg rendition of an elderly Abinadi appearing in King Noah’s court bound in shackles. That picture has been so embedded in our minds that up to this time no author has ever considered Abinadi might have been a young man with a family.

But that is exactly how Moore has imagined him.

After her painstaking research, she discovered there was nothing in the scriptures to indicate his age: “Wouldn’t a young Abinadi with a wife and family have more to lose than a white-haired prophet who had lived out his life?” she asked herself. “I have chosen to portray Abinadi as a young man in his 20s when he receives the first call from the Lord. ... I decided



to place Abinadi at the age of 27 ... with a specific purpose. I wanted to expound on a story — a story that has been passed down from generation to generation — of a man who sacrificed everything for what he believed in. I didn’t want Abinadi to be at the end of his natural life or a man who’d lived a life full of happiness with children and grandchildren. I saw Abinadi as a man who still had many years ahead of him — one who stood to lose a lot more than just his life.”

In July, Moore sent the advance manuscript to me. I immediately started to read and couldn’t put the book down until I’d read every word. Her concept of the young Abinadi is a stroke of genius and just one more

## Regional Reads

By Charlene Hirschi



example of how this author’s imagination and fresh ideas enrich the scriptural account and make the events and people come alive.

As with the “Work and the Glory,” the reader must continually remind herself these are real people mixed with fiction where some of the events have been added to make a better and more complete story. This said, however, I learned so much about Abinadi and my admiration for his courage in the face of certain death increased with every page. This is a

book that will live up to the expectations of the scriptorian while satisfying the fiction aficionado who craves romance and adventure.

Based on the events of six chapters in Mosiah, Moore remains true to the story found there but, folded sweetly among the Book of Mormon events, is a love story. King Noah has set his eyes on the beautiful, young daughter of one of the priests in his court. Raquel, “a young woman whose beauty exceeded most,” had also caught the eye of a young Abinadi, but his chances seemed remote at best, since “a Nephite girl born beautiful and noble had little choice in her destiny” — no doubt her fate was to be yet another wife in the harem of the king. Her “class and her family would never take an offer of marriage seriously” from one so far below her station in life.

However, as all true romances would have it, Abinadi had also captured the eye of the young Raquel. She knew her parents would choose her husband — no doubt someone old, short or widowed with a brood of children for her to look after. The thought repulsed her, and she dreamed of the young

Abinadi with “the deep, sorrowful eyes, amber-colored complexion, heavy eyebrows and angular chin. He was tall ... and he was younger, probably in his mid-20s, than those men who continually cajoled her as she explored the herbs at the market.”

As the exciting story of espionage, rebellion and courage unfolds, the reader is caught up in the tale, even though the ending is inevitable. Hoping against hope, the reader yearns for Abinadi’s survival but knows the mantle must pass from him to Alma as both fates are sealed. Moore is currently researching and writing the second book of the series, “Alma the Elder,” in hopes of a fall 2009 release. After reading “Abinadi,” a year will seem too long to wait.

Book critic Charlene Hirschi holds her master’s in English from Utah State University. She is among a number of freelance writers whose columns appear in The Herald Journal as part of an effort to expose readers to a variety of community voices. She is not an employee of the newspaper. Authors, readers and editors can e-mail charlene.hirschi@yahoo.com about books they would like reviewed, or visit [www.charlenehirschi.com](http://www.charlenehirschi.com).

## \* This week’s New York Times Bestseller List \*

### HARDCOVER FICTION

1. “The Brass Verdict” by Michael Connelly
2. “The Lucky One” by Nicholas Sparks
3. “The Story of Edgar Sawtelle” by David Wroblewski
4. “A Lion Among Men” by Gregory Maguire
5. “A Most Wanted Man” by John le Carré

### HARDCOVER NONFICTION

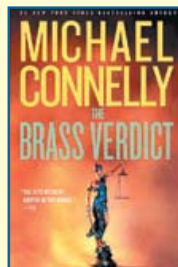
1. “The Snowball” by Alice Schroeder
2. “A Bold Fresh Piece of Humanity” by Bill O’Reilly
3. “Dewey” by Vicki Myron w/Bret Witter
4. “Here’s the Story” by Maureen McCormick
5. “Multiple Blessings” by Jon & Kate Gosselin & Beth Carson

### PAPERBACK (MASS-MARKET) FICTION

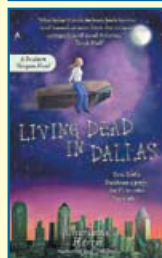
1. “Double Cross” by James Patterson
2. “Dead Until Dark” by Charlaine Harris
3. “Dark of the Moon” by John Sanford
4. “Living Dead in Dallas” by Charlaine Harris
5. “First Impressions” by Nora Roberts

### PAPERBACK (TRADE) FICTION

1. “ABC3D” by Marion Bataille
2. “Big Words for Little People” by Jamie Lee Curtis
3. “Hip Hop Speaks to Children” edited by Nikki Giovanni
4. “Gallop!” by Rufus Butler Seder
5. “Swing!” by Rufus Butler Seder



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## Muller’s ‘Burn Out’ shows a few signs of fatigue

By The Associated Press

### PRIVATE EYE SHARON

McCone is feeling burned out after narrowly escaping the bombing of her safe house during a high-profile investigation. She retires to her husband’s ranch to recover from depression and figure out whether a career change is in order.

But McCone is quickly sucked into a new case that starts with a young girl being tossed out of a truck by a small-town, small-time drug dealer shortly before the girl’s sister is shot and killed in the man’s rundown mobile home.

The sisters and their troubled mother are Native American, forcing McCone to confront her still unsettled feelings about her own Native American heritage and adoption by a white family.

“Burn Out” is Marcia Muller’s

26th McCone mystery in a little more than 30 years. During that time, McCone has gone from a one-person operation sharing low-rent space with a group of lawyers to the owner of an investigative firm with enough employees to confuse a new reader.

In previous novels, Muller has excelled at making McCone’s inner turmoil as gripping as the crimes she solves. But in this story, her description of McCone’s depression falls a bit flat, and the speed and ease of the private eye’s recovery ring hollow.

Muller also relies on plot techniques she has used before: Characters have multiple identities, and the key to the present crime lies in the victims’ past. The solution is apparent too early, and when the loose ends are tied up, there are few surprises.