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## A Sacred History: External Evidences of the Truth of the Book of Mormon, Chapter XV

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**Abstract:** Uses historical, linguistic, and archaeological evidence to prove the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. Basing his facts on research done by noted linguists and archaeologists of the time, the author writes concerning the god Quetzalcoatl, religious customs and ruins of advanced civilizations, comparisons between the Hebrew and Mayan languages, and the Egyptian hieroglyphic writings. Shreeve also tells of similarities in biblical beliefs between early people of both the western and eastern hemispheres and explains why Joseph Smith was incapable of writing the Book of Mormon without divine aid.

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## A SACRED HISTORY.

## External Evidences of the Truth of the Book of Mormon.

BY THOMAS A. SHREEVE.

## Chapter XV.

CHAPTER VIII of Third Nephi, in the Book of Mormon, details the appalling manifestations immediately following the time of the crucifixion of Christ. In one brief chapter there is detailed a history of physical disaster unparalleled since the flood. The description is sublime. None but a professional scoffer can read it without being deeply impressed.

But this is an age of professional scoffers. It is a time when men who have failed in every other vocation seek to make capital out of skepticism. Some of such fellows out-scoff every honest infidel—if any infidel can be honest—while all the time professing a complete belief in the Bible, in Christ, and all the miracles recorded of the ancient prophets and of our Savior. One of them, who makes his work an abject appeal for charity, has recently sought to deride the record given in the Book of Mormon of the manifestations upon the face of the earth at the time of the crucifixion. With neither wit nor wisdom he seeks to be funny and profound. He succeeds only in being absurd and false. A denial that any such phenomena were manifested as recorded in the Book of Mormon, at the time following the crucifixion, is against all the facts of history and tradition on this continent. There is not one atom of direct evidence against the statement of the Book of Mormon, while I have been able, even with an examination necessarily brief and cursory, to secure several references in direct support of the sacred history. I quote from Foster's prehistoric races of the United States, giving his exact words, without any attempt to wrest them in support of my theory, and leaving every candid mind to judge whether or not such a tradition could exist without the previous fact having existed:

These passages from the ancient classics as to the existence of a western continent, coupled with certain traditions to be found in the ancient Mexican records of a great catastrophe, the combined result of earthquakes and inundations, by which a large area in Central America became submerged and a greater portion of the population destroyed, have reopened the discussion whether Plato's "Story of Atlantis" does not belong to the sobrieties of truth. Among the most zealous of these advocates is the Abbe Brasseur De Bourbourg, who has brought out these traditions in his translation of the "Teo Amoxthi," which is the Toltecian mythological history of the cataclasm of the Antilles; and the late George Catlin published a little work "The Lifted and Subsided Rocks of America," in which this theory is vigorously maintained. Among the Indian tribes of North America, Catlin found the tradition of such a cataclasm. The tribes further south relate that the waters were seen coming in waves like mountains from the east, and of the tens of thousands who ran for the high grounds to the west, according to some traditions one man only, and according to others, two, and still according to others, seven, succeeded in reaching places of safety, and from these have descended the present races of Indians.

The tribes in Central America and Mexico, in Venezuela, and in British and Dutch Guiana, distinctly describe these cataclasmic,—one by water, one by fire, and the third by the winds. The tribes nearer the vicinity of the terrible convulsions were cognizant of the whole effects of fire and winds, when the remote tribes were sensible only of the flood of waters which went to the base of the mountains.

From amidst "the thunder of flames that came out of the sea," whilst "mountains were sinking and rising," the terror-stricken inhabitants sought every expedient of safety. Some

fled to the mountains, and some lunched their rafts and canoes upon the turbulent waters, trusting that a favorable current would land them upon a hospitable shore, and thus in this elemental strife this ancient civilized people became widely dispersed.

The festival of "Izealli" was instituted to commemorate this terrible calamity, in which "princes and people humbled themselves before the Divinity and besought him not to renew the frightful convulsions."

It is claimed that by this catastrophe, an area larger than that of the kingdom of France became engulfed, including the lesser Antilles, the extensive banks at their eastern base, which at that date were vast and fertile plains, the peninsulas of Yucatan, Honduras, and Guatemala, and the great estuaries of the Caribbean sea and the Gulf of Mexico. With the peninsulas of Yucatan and Guatemala, went down the splendid cities of Palenque and Uxmal, and others whose sites are now in the ocean bed, with most of their living inhabitants; and the continent has since risen sufficiently to restore many of these ancient sites.

Donnelly says:

The fact that this tradition existed among the inhabitants of America is proven by the existence of festivals, "especially one in the month of 'Izealli' which were instituted to commemorate this frightful destruction of land and people, and in which, say the sacred books, 'princes and people humbled themselves before the Divinity, and besought him to withhold a return of such terrible calamities.'"

The Central American books, translated by De Bourbourg, state that originally a part of the American continent extended far into the Atlantic ocean. This tradition is strikingly confirmed by the explorations of the ship *Challenger*, which show that the "Dolphin's Ridge" was connected with the shore of South America north of the mouth of the Amazon. The Central American books tell us that this region of the continent was destroyed by a succession of frightful convulsions, probably at long intervals apart; three of these catastrophes are constantly mentioned, and sometimes there is reference to one or two more.

Baldwin in his ancient America, says:

The land was shaken by frightful earthquakes, and the waves of the sea combined with volcanic fires to overwhelm and engulf it. . . . Each convulsion swept away portions of the land until the whole disappeared, leaving the line of coast as it now is. Most of the inhabitants, overtaken amid their regular employments, were destroyed; but some escaped in ships, and some fled for safety to the summits of high mountains, or to portions of the land which for a time escaped immediate destruction.

In the *Scientific American* of February 23, 1881, on page 133, is a reprinted article, entitled, "Ancient Works in the New Mexico;" from which I quote the following sentences:

New Mexico is perhaps the most noted country in the world for research. The historian, the wealth seeker and the curious can here find a rich field and reward for their labor. The Abo and Gran Quivira mountains are perhaps the most renowned in the territory for research. In the former there are evidences of great volcanic eruptions, which overwhelm cities and buried the inhabitants in ashes and lava, long ages ago. It is evident that these people, who are perhaps older than the Aztecs, were a prosperous race, with not a little advance in civilization, as the Abo ruins, in the Manzana mountains indicate; also some indications of fine art; rude figures, and the images of animals, being found on the interior of the walls in the structure beneath the debris.

It is evident that this ancient historic race were seekers after mineral, and evidences also exist that mineral was obtained by them in paying quantities, there being the ruins of many old smelters and acres of slag found near Abo.

\* \* \* \* \*

Surely our bright sunny land has been enjoyed long before the Anglo-Saxon made his appearance upon the scene.

In Volume V. of Bancroft's "Native Races," we find:

At the end of the first age of the world or the "Sun of Waters," as we are told by Ixtlilxochimil, the earth was visited by a flood which covered even the most lofty mountains. After the re-peopling of the earth by the descendants of a few families who escaped destruction, the building of a tower as a protection against a possible future catastrophe of similar nature, and the confusion of tongues and consequent scattering of the population—for all these things were found in the native traditions, as we are informed—seven families speaking the same language kept together in their wanderings for many years; and after crossing broad lands and seas, enduring great hardships, they reached the country of Huehuc Tapallan, or "old Tapallan," which they found to be fertile and desirable to dwell in. The second age, the "Sun of Air," terminated with a great hurricane which swept away trees, rocks, houses and people, although many men and women escaped, chiefly such as took refuge in caves which the hurricane could not reach. After several days the survivors came out to find a multitude of apes living in the land; and all this time they were in darkness, seeing neither the sun nor moon. The next event recorded, although Veytia makes it precede the hurricane, is the stopping of the sun for a whole day in his course, as at the command of Joshua as recorded in the old Testament. \* \* \* \* \*

One hundred and sixteen years after this regulation or invention of the Toltec calendar, "the sun and moon were eclipsed, the earth shook, and the rocks were rent asunder, and many other things and signs happened, though there was no loss of life. This was in the year Ce Calli, which, the chronology being reduced to our systems, proves to be the same date when Christ our Lord suffered. [33 A. D.]"

With this last quotation I will close this chapter, merely referring my readers to the Book of Mormon, eighth chapter of Third Nephi, fifth verse; and ask them to compare the date given by Bancroft with that given in the sacred history. Bancroft says that "the sun and moon were eclipsed, the earth shook," etc., the same date when Christ our Lord suffered—33 A. D.

The Book of Mormon says:

The thirty and third year had passed away. \* \* \* And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year, in the first month, in the fourth day of the month, etc.

No event in the Bible is more closely proven, chronologically, from external evidences than is this.

### A HAPPY COUPLE.

A MAN should always be a little older, a little braver and a little stronger, a little wiser, and a little more in love with her than she is with him.

A woman should always be a little younger, and a little prettier, and a little more considerate than her husband. He should bestow upon her his worldly goods, and she should take good care of them. He may owe her every care and tenderness that affection can prompt; but penniary indebtedness to her will become a burden. Better live on a crust that he earns than on a fortune that she has brought him.

Neither must be jealous, nor give the other cause for jealousy. Neither must encourage sentimental friendship with the opposite sex. Perfect confidence in each other, and reticence concerning their mutual affairs, even to members of their own families, is a first necessity.

Fault-finding, long arguments, or scoldings, ends the happiness that begins in kisses and lovemaking. Sisters and brothers may quarrel and "make up." Lovers are lovers no longer after such disturbances occur, and married people who are not lovers are bound by red-hot chains. If a man admires his wife most in striped calico, she is silly not to wear it.

### TO-MORROW.

BY F. M.

A GOLDEN prize lies just within my grasp;  
A little labor and a little care,  
And it is mine for aye, to keep and clasp.—  
The garnered fruit of years, perfected, rare.  
But ah, the sun lies level on the hills,  
I'm weary; just a few hours let me borrow  
From restful Ease; what need of thankful thrills?  
The treasure's surely mine upon the morrow.

The day-god smiled his flask of rare red wine  
Atween the drowsy morning's pallid lips;  
"Alas! the glowing treasure that was mine  
With the uplifting of my finger tips  
Has taken wings. Ah me, why *did* I pause  
Until I held it safe. Fool! that I was."  
And ceaselessly she moaned, but all her sorrow  
Brought never back the glory of that morrow.

I hurt my friend to-day with careless words,  
I saw the foolish arrow rankle sore;  
I did not heed to soothe the pain away,  
But laughed, and sang, and jested yet the more.  
To-morrow I will sue with humble mien  
Her pardon. I will bring, at early dawning,  
Pale, dew-drenched roses from the hedges green,  
And she will smile upon me in the morning.

The morning came in robes of shivering grey;  
Fell from her heavy eyelids teardrops cold  
Upon the dead, white roses as they lay  
Upon a dead, white face and hair of gold.  
A sound of bitter anguish filled the air;  
An anguish hopeless in its great despair;  
"Too late! Too late! All life I'd give to borrow  
The hours from *Then* until this fatal morrow."

"Why stand you idle in this shaded way?  
Wide is the field and many they that sow,  
Oh, haste to scatter seed while yet 'tis day,  
That white and heavy shall your harvest grow."  
Hot lies the barren earth on every side,  
Why dim my happy hours with toil and sorrow?  
To-day's the realm where love and joy abide,  
Seed-time and harvest wait within the morrow.

To-morrow and a prison-door ajar,  
To-morrow and an empty, gilded cage,  
To-morrow and a broken bolt and bar,  
To-morrow and a blank on life's great page.  
Poor, folded useless hands! poor, wasted years!  
No time for right or wrong, for toil or tears;  
No time for love or strife, for joy or sorrow;  
No time for seed or harvest on the morrow.

CULTIVATE a good memory, if you do not possess one. Train it to habits of method if it does not turn to them naturally, but be careful not to overload it. Charge it with matters of importance and utility, and try to retain all that it absorbs. Your memory may be made as valuable a capital for you as money would be if you only use it with intelligence and justice.