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## Jaredites

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*The contemporary nations on the eastern continent—Egypt, Chaldea, and Babylonia — were insignificant when compared with the vast extent of territory held and filled by the Jaredites; they were the sole rulers of the whole western hemisphere, and possibly the originals, whence arose the stories of the greatness and grandeur of the fabled Atlantis; for we have no account in the sacred records that God shut them off from the knowledge of the rest of mankind when he planted them in America, as he afterwards did the Nephites; and later research has shown that geographical knowledge of the ancients was much greater in the earlier ages than at the time of the Savior.—George Reynolds.*

## CHAPTER FOUR

### JAREDITES

**A**CCORDING to the Book of Mormon, a colony, now known as Jaredites (Moroni 9:23), some time shortly after the attempt to build the famous Tower of Babel, came to America from the region occupied by the tower builders.

Very little is known about these colonists and their descendants, but we may suppose that their migration was part of a general movement in all directions, which took place at that time, from the land of Shinar, afterwards called Chaldea.

*A General Migration from Babylon.* That such a general migratory movement actually took place can hardly be doubted. Josephus, who drew information from both Hebrew and Greek sources, says:

“After this they were dispersed abroad, on account of their languages, and went out by colonies everywhere, and each colony took possession of that land which they lit upon and unto which God led them; so that the whole continent was filled with them, both the inland and the maritime countries. There were some, also, who passed over the sea in ships and inhabited the islands.”<sup>1</sup>

In a much more recent work we read:<sup>2</sup>

“All history demonstrates that from that central focus (Babylon) nations were propelled over the globe with an extraordinary degree of energy and geographical enterprise.”

<sup>1</sup>Antiquities of the Jews, Book 1, Chapt. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Schoolcraft *Hist. and Statist. Information*, Vol. 1, p. 14; Philadelphia, 1852.

A Chinese tradition is mentioned by Dr. Fisher, of Yale, thus:

"The nucleus of the Chinese nation is thought to have been a band of immigrants, who are supposed by some to have started from the region southeast of the Caspian Sea, and to have crossed the headwaters of the Oxus. They followed the course of the Hoang Ho, or Yellow, river, having entered the country of their adoption from the northwest, and they planted themselves in the present province of Shan-se." (*Improvement Era*, Feb., 1927, p. 314.)

It is not impossible that others of the Jaredite race followed the pioneers of the Book of Ether, and remained at the sea shore, laying the foundation of the Chinese empire. The annual pilgrimage of Chinese to the top of their sacred mount just at the point of the peninsula of Shantung confirms this supposition.

*Date of the Jaredite Migration.* According to the chronology of Bishop Usher, which appears in English versions of the Bible, the building of the Tower was undertaken about 2,200 B. C. Dr. Joseph Angus, in his *Bible Handbook*, suggests 2,247. According to Babylonian tradition the City of Babel was founded about the year 2,230 B. C. But as early as 2,000 B. C., there were in the Babylonian library clay tablets, now preserved in the British Museum, containing the story of the Tower-building. It must have been ancient history already at that time. Everything considered, the great dispersion can hardly have taken place much later than 2,500 B. C.

*Location of the Tower.* Near a place called Hillah on the east bank of the Euphrates, there is a

splendid ruin, known as *Birs Nimrud*, standing like a watch-tower on a vast plain. It is in the shape of a pyramid and is 150 feet high. On its top there is a solid mass of vitrified bricks. From inscriptions Sir Henry Rawlinson found its name to be, *The Temple of the Seven Planets*.<sup>3</sup> This ruin has been supposed to be what is left of the Tower of Babel.

*The Jaredites at Moriancumer.* According to the Book of Ether<sup>4</sup> the Jaredites began their journey by going northward into the Valley of Nimrod. In the course of their journey from this valley, they crossed many waters,—lakes and rivers—and eventually they came to “that great sea which divideth the lands,” and there they pitched their tents and called the place Moriancumer (Ether 2:13)—probably after the brother of Jared, who was the head of the little colony. Here they remained for four years.

*Jaredite Civilization.* The Jaredites were far from being savages, or even barbarians, as those terms are used by modern writers. They were agriculturists familiar with “seeds of every kind” (Ether 2:3), and they also had “flocks of every kind” (Ether 2:1.) They were hunters and trappers and bee-keepers,<sup>5</sup> and they understood how to utilize the food supply in the rivers and lakes, for, as part of their equipment for the journey into the wilderness “where there never had man been,” they made a vessel “in which they did carry with them the fish of the waters.” (Ether 2:2.) All this indicates a civilization farther advanced than

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<sup>3</sup>*Assyrian Discoveries*, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup>Ether 1:42; 2:1.

<sup>5</sup>Their name for honey bee was *deseret*, a word which seems to have survived to our day in the Arabian *aseleth*, which also means “honey.”

we generally give the people of the so-called stone age credit for. A people cultivating the soil, taking care of flocks, keeping bees, hunting and fishing and constructing boats (Ether 2:6) must have known a great variety of industries.<sup>6</sup>

But, as a further evidence of the high intellectual and spiritual level attained by the Jaredites, their records tell us that they had revelations of the most exalting truths concerning God and man (Ether 3:15-20) which presupposes a high degree of intellectual and spiritual advancement.

*Building Barges.* At Moriancumer the Jaredites constructed eight barges, or vessels, in which they crossed the ocean. (Ether 2:16-21.)

Let us note one remarkable circumstance connected with the building of these vessels. When they were completed, the question of illumination presented itself. The barges had no windows, and the travelers were not permitted to make a fire. The brother of Jared, consequently, prompted by the most sublime, childlike faith, presented the difficulty before the Lord. But, the divine Architect, instead of giving his faithful servant direct instructions on the matter, referred the question back to him: "What will ye that I shall do?" The ingenuity of the brother of Jared thus being put to the test, this great leader of men went up on a mountain, and there he did "molten" out of a rock sixteen small stones, clear

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<sup>6</sup>According to Berosus it was the "fish god" Oannes, who brought civilization to the Chaldeans out of the sea; which in modern language simply means that the discovery of the vast food resources of the sea was a long step forward on the high road of progress. Fish, and especially shell fish, was very abundant in the early ages, which is evident in the numerous shell heaps that are found both in the Old and the New world.

and transparent. These he presented before the Lord, and asked him to make them luminous. God did so. He touched them with his finger, and they became light-bearers.<sup>7</sup>

*Settlements in the Land of Promise.* The first country settled in the Land of Promise was called Moron.<sup>8</sup> Where that country was, we know not, except that it was near the land which was called *Desolation*, by the Nephites. (Ether 7:6.) From this center the Jaredites spread out in different directions, and became so numerous that there was no greater nation "upon all the face of the earth," according to the word of the Lord. (Ether 8:2.)

Orson Pratt was of the opinion that "the [Jaredite] colony, \* \* \* landed on the western coast of Mexico, and extended their settlements over all the North American portion of the continent, where they dwelt until about six centuries before Christ, when, because of wickedness they were all destroyed." (*Mill. Star*, Vol. 38, p. 693.)

Very early in their history, the people made Orihah, the youngest son of Jared, their "king." He

<sup>7</sup>It should be noted here, that some scholars are of the opinion that the "window" which God commanded Noah to make for the ark, was just such a luminous stone. The word in the original is *tsohar*, which is said to mean something "bright," or "clear," and Jonathan Ben Uzziel understands it to mean a precious luminous stone, which Noah, by divine command, took from a certain river and carried into the ark. If this is correct, the brother of Jared merely asked that the Lord would do for him what he had done for that famous ancestor of the race.

<sup>8</sup>This name is in all probability akin to the name *Meron* (Josh. 12:20), now known as *Marun*. It may also be akin to *Maran* (Cor. 16:22), where it means "Our Lord." In passing it may be observed that "Maranatha," should be written "Marana tha," and be rendered, "Come, O our Lord." For it is, no doubt, the same expression which we find in the Rev. 22:20: "Come, Lord."

walked humbly before the Lord, exercised his judicial functions in righteousness, and lived a happy domestic life, being the father of thirty-one children, twenty-three of whom were sons.

Omer, the fourth successor of Jared, had a rebellious son, whom he had named Jared, and who left the country of Moron and established himself in the land of *Heth*. (Ether 8:2.)

Omer, being warned in a dream to leave his country because of the secret combinations, "traveled many days and came over and passed by the hill of Shim, and came over by the place where the Nephites were destroyed, and from thence eastward, and came to a place which was called *Ablom*" (Ether 9:3), possibly after Abel. Here, Omer was joined, later, by Nimrah and his followers.

During a season of drought and famine, in the days of Heth, the eighth from Jared, many of the Jaredites fled "towards the land southward, which was called by the Nephites Zarahemlah," and many perished, being attacked by poisonous serpents; nevertheless, "there were some who fled into the land southward." (Ether 9:30-33.) These were separated from the rest of the people, for the "Lord caused the serpents \* \* \* that they should hedge the way that the people could not pass." (Ether 9:33.)

Although the history of the Jaredites in the Book of Ether is merely a faint outline, it makes it clear that, while Moron was the center of interest to the historian, the people had spread from there in various directions. (Ether 6:18.)



The first king of Moron was Orihah, the son of Jared.<sup>9</sup>

Shule was one of the great rulers of the Jaredites. His reign was exceedingly stormy, with wars and rebellions, and he fought with varying success, until he had overcome his enemies and given his people peace. He was a righteous judge and a wise law-giver, as well as a mighty warrior. But the spirit of prophecy had departed from the high office he held, and, consequently, when the Lord had a message to be delivered, he raised up somebody from the people to deliver it. (Eth. 7:23.)

The success of Shule as a warrior is attributed to his superior arms. The historian notes: "Wherefore, he came to the hill Ephraim, and he did molten out of the hill, and made swords out of steel for those whom he had drawn with him." (Eth. 7:9.)

*Steel!* The Jaredites, in all probability, did not know iron in the particular form which we call "steel," but from the earliest days of history the people had a metal which in the Old Testament Hebrew

<sup>9</sup>The following list of rulers is given in the Book of Ether:

Orihah	Morianton	Coriantum
Kib	Kim	Com
Shule	Levi	Shiblon
Omer	Corom	Seth
Emer	Kish	Ahah
Coriantum	Lib	Ethem
Com	Hearthom	Moron
Heth	Heth	Coriantor
Shez	Aaron	Ether, the prophet
Riplakish	Amnigaddah	

The last ruler, the contemporary of Ether, the prophet, was Coriantumr. (Ether 12:1.)

is called *nechushah* and *nechusket*, and which our Bible translators have rendered "steel" in four places, and "brass" twice. In Gen. 4:22 we read that Tubalcain, a descendant of Cain, was an expert in "brass" (*nechushah*), and Job says of this metal that it is "molten" out of the stone, using an expression almost identical with that of Ether. In 2 Sam. 32:35, Job 20:24, Ps. 18:34 and Jer. 15:12 the same word has been rendered "steel." It means, in fact, neither. According to Gesenius it means copper, "mostly as hardened and tempered in the manner of steel and used for arms and other cutting instruments." That was the kind of "steel" that Tubalcain converted into implements, and may also have been the kind that Shule used in making swords.<sup>10</sup>

The question of as to what extent hardened metal tools were used among the ancient Americans is not settled by scientists. Mr. Earl H. Morris, who has spent many years in archaeological research in New Mexico and Southern Colorado, in a letter to the author, dated Aztec, N. M., Dec. 27, 1920, kindly answers an inquiry thus:

"I have found but three examples of worked metal. These were small sub-spherical copper hawk bells such as were in common use among certain Old Mexican tribes in pre-Columbian periods. These bells undoubtedly were brought by trade together with parrot and macaw feathers from the distant south. Objects of iron, hammered or cast, have not been found in

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<sup>10</sup>This narrative takes us back to the beginning of the bronze age. How far back the use of iron can be traced in this country is another question. J. W. Foster says that in shell heaps at Grand Lake on the Teche have been found "unique specimens of axes of hematite iron ore," and that they were found in mounds covered with soil in which large oaks were growing and had been growing for centuries.—*Prehist. Races of the United States*, p. 159.

any ruins upon our continent. The aborigines of the area in which I have worked used hematite and similar oxides of iron for ornaments and for pigments. In the manufacture of the former, the natural pebble was reduced to the desired form by abrasion, a gritty sandstone being the usual abrading implement employed.

"I recall that two or three copper beads were also found in the great ruin at this place—Axtec, N. Mex."

On the other hand, Mr. A. Hyatt Verrill, who is connected with the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York, and who has discovered remarkable ruins in Panama, reports in an article in *World's Work* for January, 1927, that he is convinced that the people who built there, as well as many other prehistoric races, possessed iron or steel tools. How, he asks, can one explain the evidence of tool marks on much of the stone work? Not the irregular indentations which have been, and very likely were, made by pecking with a stone hammer, but clearly cut, delicate lines and chisel marks?

He further says:

"Indeed, less than two years ago, I was scoffed at for suggesting that an entirely new and unknown culture of great antiquity had existed in Panama, but we now have undeniable proofs of the fact. Moreover, at a depth of five and one-half feet below the surface, at the temple site, among broken pottery and embedded in charcoal, I found a steel or hardened iron implement. The greater portion is almost completely destroyed by corrosion, but the chisel-shaped end is in good condition. It is so hard that it is scarcely touched by a file and will scratch glass, and with such an implement it would be a simple matter to cut and carve the hardest stone."

We can, it seems to me, safely accept the state-

ments in the Book of Mormon on this subject and wait for further scientific discoveries.

*Coriantumr.* The last king of Moron was Coriantumr. In his day the country was the scene of incessant warfare. It was invaded by Shared, by Gilead, a brother of Shared; by Lib, and by Shiz, his brother, in succession, and so fierce were the conflicts during these invasions that two million men and many women and children perished. (Eth. 15:2.) Coriantumr, appalled at the loss of life, made overtures for peace, but in vain. The opposing armies then took up strong positions near the hill Ramah. For four years Coriantumr and Shiz prepared themselves for a decisive battle. Each gathered together his followers, "that they might get all who were upon the face of the land, and that they might receive all the strength which it was possible that they could receive." (Eth. 15:14.) Even women and children were conscripted (v. 15), as in our world war (1914-19.) The outcome of that battle was that both armies were annihilated. (Eth. 15:15-32.) Shiz was slain. Coriantumr escaped and eventually reached the country of Zarahemla. (Omni 21.)

*All Jaredites not Slain.* The general understanding, I believe, is that the entire Jaredite race was exterminated in this sanguinary battle, with the exception of Coriantumr. It is, of course, possible that the narrative is to be so understood, but the probability is that the prophet only refers to the annihilation of the two armies and the end of the monarchical form of government.

At the time of the battle of Ramah there must

have been probably millions of Jaredites in this hemisphere; that is evident from the fact that two million souls had perished four years before that battle. But it would be absurd to suppose that every Jaredite, man, woman, and child, old and young, sick, and cripples, as well as strong and well-formed individuals, were enlisted in the armies and encamped around the hill. It would, furthermore, be contrary to human experience to suppose that there were no desertions from the armies during the long and deadly encounters. It is much more probable that some escaped and, when missing, were counted as dead. Again, is it improbable that some of the wounded recovered and survived, without any record being made of their recovery? We know, from Ether 9:32, that some Jaredites escaped into the "Land Southward," during the famine in the days of King Heth, and they must also have become numerous, and, possibly, were not directly interested in the war between Shiz and Coriantumr.

It is very customary to speak of an entire nation when we mean only the more important part of it. We say, for instance, that the kingdom of Judah was carried away into captivity, when, as a matter of fact, only a small portion, though an important one, was transported to Babylon. Thus, in the first captivity, 598 B. C., the Babylonians carried away 3,023 souls, leaving the common people in their homes. Ten years later 832 captives, and in 584 B. C., 745 more were expatriated—4,600 in all;<sup>11</sup> or, if these figures give only the number of men, say 15,000, including

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<sup>11</sup>Flinders Petri, *Egypt and Israel*, p. 81.

women and children. In the same way we speak of the return of the captives, when, as a matter of fact, only half of them, 31,629, according to one estimate, and 42,360, according to another, left the land of captivity.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, it seems to me that some Indian traditions regarding the migration of their forefathers, some of their religious ideas, especially the place of the heavenly bodies and the serpents in their symbolism, and many linguistic peculiarities point to a Jaredite origin, which cannot be explained on the supposition that the entire race perished.

Destruction does not always mean extermination. We speak of the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jews (1 Ne. 10:3), but they still exist. Compare 2 Ne. 25:9 where the Jews are said to have been destroyed "from generation to generation."

If we set Bishop Usher's chronology aside as too short,<sup>13</sup> and assume that the building of the Tower and the dispersion took place about 2,500 B. C., and if the battle of Ramah took place not long after the arrival of the Mulekites in America, the history of the Jaredites in the book of Ether covers a period of about nineteen centuries. During all that time the people built cities, cultivated the ground, engaged in arts, in-

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<sup>12</sup>Ezra 2:6-65; Nehemiah 7:6-67.

<sup>13</sup>Short correctly observes that the authors of the Bible do not profess to give a complete chronology or even to furnish data for an infallible system. Their accounts are condensed. In their genealogies they leave out several generations, which can be seen if we compare the genealogy of our Lord as given in the Gospels with those of the Old Testament. Their purpose was not to give a complete list of descendants, but to prove descent through a certain line, and their condensed lists served that purpose only.—See Short's *North Americans of Antiquity*, p. 199.

dustries, and trade; they lived, loved, and died, until, because of moral degeneration, their governments were broken up and their countries made desolate, through famine, pestilence, and war.

*Jaredites Had Time to Increase.* Nineteen centuries may not be a long period in the history of the earth, but what a multitude of events are not crowded into 1900 years of human records! Or even much less time than that! Here is an illustration.

In 1865 one of the famous big trees in Calaveras county, Cal., was cut down. Edgar de la Rue calculated that it began to grow about 620 A. D. Then he went over history to see what had happened during the life time of that venerable tree. His article found its way into print, in the form of a dispatch dated Red Bluff, Cal., Feb. 4, 1922.

The tree was born about the time Mohammedanism began to take root, and, we may add, when papacy was established by the imperial decree of Emperor Phocas,<sup>14</sup> in A. D. 607. It was 110 years old when the battle of Tours was fought. Figuratively speaking, the tree saw the introduction of Christianity in Scandinavia in 830; the beginning of the reign of Alfred the Great in England; the crusades; the signing of the Magna Charta in 1220; and the conquest of Wales in 1280. The tree was growing and developing

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<sup>14</sup>Boniface III was a deacon of the Roman church, who in 603 was sent to Constantinople by Gregory the Great as a legate (*apocrissarius*.) There he supported Phocas, a usurper of the throne of the vilest character, and in return, when Boniface had been elected pope, in 607, Phocas issued, at his request, a decree against Cyriacus, bishop of Constantinople, in which it was ordained that "the see of blessed Peter, the apostle, should be the head of all the churches," and that the title of "universal bishop" belonged exclusively to the bishop of Rome. And this was, evidently, the keystone in the arch of apostasy.

when Columbus discovered America, in 1492, and when Balboa, in 1520, first viewed the Pacific ocean. The tree was 1030 years old when Oliver Cromwell was made Protector, and had reached the age of 1,156 years when America's Declaration of Independence was signed, in 1776. It was, finally, 1,244 years old at the close of the Civil War, in 1865, when it was cut down. If to this age of a tree we add six or seven centuries for the history of the Jaredites, we can form an idea of the immensity and infinite diversity of the contents of that history, of which only a fraction, and that in mere outline, has been handed down to us.