



Type: Book Chapter

Hiding Sacred Relics

Author(s): John A. Tvedtnes

Source: *The Book of Mormon and Other Hidden Records: "Out of Darkness unto Light"*

Published: Provo, UT: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Brigham Young University, 2000

Page(s): 109–126



The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) existed as a California non-profit corporation from 1979 until about 2006, when it was allowed to go into involuntary liquidation, at which time copyrights held by FARMS and its authors and/or editors reverted or may have reverted back to their original author and/or editors. This chapter is archived by permission of author John A. Tvedtnes.

Hiding Sacred Relics

And ye shall prepare for yourselves a place for a treasury, and consecrate it unto my name. . . . And there shall be a seal upon the treasury, and all the sacred things shall be delivered into the treasury . . . And the avails of the sacred things shall be had in the treasury, and a seal shall be upon it; and it shall not be used or taken out of the treasury by any one, neither shall the seal be loosed which shall be placed upon it, only by the voice of the order, or by commandment. And thus shall ye preserve the avails of the sacred things in the treasury, for sacred and holy purposes. And this shall be called the sacred treasury of the Lord; and a seal shall be kept upon it that it may be holy and consecrated unto the Lord. (D&C 104:60, 62, 64–66)

One of the striking things about the Book of Mormon record is that Moroni hid the plates in a stone box along with other sacred Nephite relics, including the breastplate and the interpreters, or urim and thummim (see JS—H 1:34–35, 52, 59). The fact that the resurrected Moroni showed all these, along with the sword of Laban, to the three witnesses implies that the sword was also part of the sacred cache (see D&C 17:1).

Indeed, the sword of Laban and the large plates of Nephi were passed down in the line of Nephite kings and may have been emblems of royal and priestly power.¹ King Benjamin turned over the records, the sword of Laban, and the liahona to his son Mosiah when he became king (see Mosiah 1:10, 15–16), and when Nephite kingship was abolished in favor of a system of judges, Mosiah gave the records and the interpreters (and presumably the other artifacts) to Alma, the high priest and first chief judge. Before his death, Alma committed the plates, the interpreters, and the liahona to his son Helaman (see Alma 37).

Like other aspects of the Book of Mormon story, the hiding of sacred relics is an ancient practice, attested in early documents as well as by archaeological discoveries.

Hidden Treasures

The hiding of treasures in the ground seems to have been a common practice among the Nephites (see Helaman 12:18; 13:18–20). The burying of weapons of war by converted Lamanites, to preserve them as a testimony of their repentance, may come from the same tradition (see Alma 24:12–17; 25:14; 26:32; Helaman 15:9). Burying treasures is also known from the Bible. For example, Jacob hid the teraphim beneath a tree, perhaps to make it easier to identify the burial spot for future recovery (see Genesis 35:4). Similarly, in the parable of the talents, one of the servants dug a hole and hid the money in the ground (see Matthew 25:18, 25). Jesus said that “the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field” (Matthew 13:44). Other hidden treasures—perhaps also concealed in the ground—are mentioned in various Bible passages (see 2 Kings

7:8; Job 3:21; Psalm 17:14; Proverbs 2:4; Isaiah 45:3; compare Colossians 2:3).

A Jewish tradition recounts that the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar ordered the construction of large copper ships that were then filled with money and hidden beneath the mud of the Euphrates River. On the day that Cyrus, king of Persia, decreed that the Jews could rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, God revealed this hidden treasure to reward him.² According to *Targum Rishon* on Esther 1:4, Cyrus dug in the bank of the river and found 680 copper vessels filled with gold and jewels.³

A hoard of variously sized silver ingots from the eighth to seventh centuries B.C. was found in a clay pot at En-Gedi. During excavations at es-Samu^c (biblical Eshtemoa), archaeologists uncovered five clay jugs from the ninth to eighth centuries B.C., filled with twenty-six kilos of silver in various forms (crescents, rings, circlets, bracelets, silver leaves, silver thread, and jewelry in filigree, and molten silver). Some have related the cache to David's sending some of the plunder of the Amalekites to Eshtemoa (see 1 Samuel 30:28).

Caches of coins have been found at several archaeological sites in Israel. One of the largest, a trove of 2,920 coins, was found beneath the floor of the fifth-century synagogue at Capernaum. Another 67 coins were found beneath the foundation of the synagogue's benches. In October 1998 a cache of up to 400 coins was uncovered at Beth-Shean in Israel. They had been hidden in the sixth or seventh century A.D. in a large ceramic jug buried beneath the floor of a house. Archaeologist Ofer Sion suggested that the owner had secreted the coins, hoping to return for them at a later time.

Also in 1998, archaeologists working at Tiberias, on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee, uncovered a treasure

concealed in three large clay jars in an eleventh-century shop. Each jar had been sealed with a stone and two of them had been hidden beneath the floor. The third jar, the largest, was evidently used as a safe: it was hidden from view but accessible through a hole in the wall. Altogether, these jars contained five to six hundred bronze and brass objects, including various medallions, a glass jar, a large candelabrum, and numerous figurines. Of the eighty-two coins found in the jars, fifty-eight bore the likeness of Jesus with inscriptions identifying him as the Messiah. Yizhar Hirschfield, who conducted the excavation, suggested that the hoard may have been hidden before the Crusaders invaded the city in 1099. The owner, who may have been a dealer or a collector, likely intended to return for his property but was unable to do so.⁴

Among the Dead Sea Scrolls was a record written on a piece of copper eight feet in length. This record is known as the *Copper Scroll* (3Q15). It lists the burial site of treasures, thought by some to have come from the Jerusalem temple, hidden up for future discovery and use. Most of the treasures were buried beneath walls or hidden in tunnels, cisterns, water channels, and even in tombs and burial mounds. The list includes various pots, jugs, and vases, along with “sacred vestments” (I, 9; see also III, 9). The document also mentions caches of gold and silver, including “a chest of money” (I, 3), “containers with seventy talents of silver” (II, 6), “two jugs filled with silver” (IV, 8), “a chest and all its contents and sixty talents of silver” (XII, 5), and a cache of silver hidden “bene[ath the] large [stone]” (V, 2–4). The first six lines in column VI note the burial place of an amphora containing a book or scroll and, beneath the amphora, forty-two silver talents. The beginning of column VIII states that books and ritual vessels were hidden in an aqueduct.⁵

The *Copper Scroll* describes events that took place about the time of the Roman siege of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, but it seems to have a precedent. The medieval Jewish text *Massekhet Kelim* (Tractate of the Vessels) describes how the vessels of the Jerusalem temple were hidden away when the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem in 587 B.C. In connection with this action, “Shimmur the Levite and his associates listed *on a copper tablet* the sacred vessels and the vessels of the Temple which were in Jerusalem and in every place.” The vessels were to remain hidden “until the advent of a legitimate king for Israel.”⁶ Similarly, in the *Apocalypse of Enosh*, cited in the *Cologne Mani Codex*, an angel instructed Enosh (Enos in the King James Bible), son of Adam, to write “hidden things upon bronze tablets and deposit (them) in the wilderness.” Enosh “left [the records] behind for the subsequent generations.”⁷

It is particularly noteworthy that the *Copper Scroll* indicates that books and other relics were hidden in jars and under stones and were sometimes accompanied by other treasures. This parallels Moroni’s hiding the plates with other sacred relics beneath a stone and lends authenticity to Joseph Smith’s story of the Book of Mormon.⁸

Sacred Stones

Among the relics concealed with the Book of Mormon plates were “two stones in silver bows . . . that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book” (JS—H 1:35). Concealing sacred stones, sometimes with records, is known from several ancient texts.

An early Jewish account tells how Kenaz, father of the Israelite judge Othniel,⁹ placed books and sacred glowing stones engraved with the names of the twelve tribes on the mountain beside the altar, as God commanded him (see *Pseudo-Philo* 26:5–15; *Chronicles of Jerahmeel* 57:11–21).¹⁰

Some stones are said to have writing on them. Chapter 2, “Hidden Records,” noted the Hermetic tradition of the emerald tablets on which Hermes is said to have written arcane lore, which he hid up. In Jewish tradition, the tablets on which the Ten Commandments were engraved were large sapphires (see *Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer* 46; *Zohar* Exodus 84a–b). Similarly, according to the third recension of the *Book of Noah*, the heavenly book given to Adam by the angel Raziel was written on a sapphire stone.¹¹

In the Samaritan *Asatir* (Secrets) of Moses (2.7), we read that Enoch “learned the Book of Signs which was given to Adam. And these are the twenty-four precious stones, twelve for the time of Divine Favour and twelve for the chosen heads of the sons of Jacob and to the descendants of the servants of the high God.”¹² According to the *Pitaron* (Explanation) to the *Asatir*, Adam was given a Book of Signs that was copied on twenty-four precious stones, twelve of which were “hidden away as a secret for the last generation.” The other twelve were for “the families of the children of Jacob,” and the text suggests they may have been the twelve stones of the high priest’s breastplate and hence the stones buried on the mountain by Kenaz.¹³

Other Hidden Relics

The discovery of hidden relics is known from both tradition and archaeology. In a story attributed to Lucian, Rabbi Gamaliel appeared in vision to Lucian about A.D. 415 to reveal the location of the body of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, which became a sacred relic to early Christians. The story is known from Augustine (see *On the Gospel According to St. John* 120.4), from a Slavonic version of Lucian,¹⁴ and from the tenth-century Syriac *Book of the Bee* 47. According to the *Book of the*

Bee, Gamaliel, his two sons, and his brother Nicodemus all became Christians and were buried alongside Stephen.

The Mandaeans placed amulets in the form of terra-cotta bowls, which they inscribed with magical texts, by or under the foundations of their houses.¹⁵ One of the earliest caches of objects, from about 3000 B.C., consisted of some 429 metal objects (including 240 copper mace heads) found in a cave in Nahal Mishmar, Israel.¹⁶

Iraq, where a number of ancient documents were found in stone boxes (see chapter 3, “Hiding Records in Boxes”), is also known for the discovery of other relics hidden in boxes. George Smith wrote about finding a brick box below a pavement. The box, whose contents are housed in the British Museum, contained six terra-cotta figures with human bodies, heads of lions, and large wings, as well as five small terra-cotta dogs.¹⁷ Dr. Robert Koldewey found similar statuettes in small brick boxes beneath pavements of buildings in Babylon.¹⁸

Excavators at the Ishtar temple of the Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I (1244–1208 B.C.) uncovered various buried relics, including inscribed tablets, glass beads, and bits of ivory, all laid out on a stone slab placed atop the mud-brick foundation.¹⁹

From 1924 to 1926, in his excavations of the ruins of a building from the mid-seventh century B.C. at Ur, C. Leonard Wooley found a series of boxes, each box made with three plano-convex bricks. One side of each square was open, and the cover of each box was a pavement brick. Inside each box was usually a single figure or statuette. These boxes were lined up all around rooms against the walls, with the open end toward the center of the room.²⁰

Europe is also known for hidden relics. A sixteenth-century writer indicated that in 1530 a “demon” used a crystal to

show a priest in the city of Nuremberg a vision of buried treasure. The priest went to the place and found an excavated cavern in which he saw a chest and a black dog lying alongside it. When he entered the cavern, the roof collapsed and crushed him to death.²¹

Near the end of the sixteenth century, the canons of San Giovanni in Laterano, Rome, wanted to repair a house they owned. They sent workmen to remove two large superimposed stones that were in the way. When the workmen broke the upper stone, they found embedded inside it a covered alabaster funerary urn hidden in a space hollowed out between the upper and lower stones. Inside the urn they found ashes, twenty crystal balls, and other small artifacts.²²

George Kunz noted that small crystal balls have been found in medieval French and English tombs.²³ He further noted that a crystal ball was found in a funerary urn at Hinsbury Hill, Northamptonshire,²⁴ and that Cardinal Farnese once possessed an urn that included various gems, carved stones, a crystal ball, and six “nuts of crystal.”²⁵

The Cave of Treasures

A number of ancient texts speak of a cave in which Adam and Eve lived after they were expelled from the Garden of Eden. According to these accounts, the first couple were later interred in the same cave, alongside sacred relics that God had given them. This “Cave of Treasures” was highly revered by Adam’s descendants, who came there to pray.

The sacred artifacts are mentioned by tenth-century Arab chronographer al-Kisa’i. He wrote that “God had given Adam a white cloth from Paradise and placed it in the coffer, which He now commanded Adam to open. Adam took out the cloth and spread it out.” It contained the forms of all Adam’s pos-

terity, which he showed to Seth. “Having seen all this, he was commanded to fold the cloth and put it back into the coffer. Then he took a handful of hair from his beard, placed it in the coffer,” and turned over to Seth both the coffer and his ring.²⁶

A Christian tradition recorded in *Book of the Rolls* f.96b and f.101b indicates that after God expelled Adam and Eve from the garden, he made them dwell in a cave in the holy mountain that was the foundation of paradise. There Adam found gold, myrrh, and incense—symbols of the Son of God. Adam kept these treasures in the cave, which he had dedicated as a house of prayer. A variant story found in the *Conflict of Adam and Eve* I, 31:9–10 indicates that angels delivered to Adam the gold, incense, and myrrh, which he kept in the Cave of Treasures, also called a place “of concealment.”²⁷

According to *Testament of Adam* 3:6, Seth wrote the testament, including the history of Adam. He hid it with the body of his father, along with the sacred artifacts later retrieved by the Magi and taken to Bethlehem. According to *Book of the Rolls* f.102b, the *Testament of Adam* was on a scroll possessed by the Magi that “was put by for safe keeping.”²⁸ The tenth-century Syriac *Book of the Bee* 39 mentions this story but gives it no credence.

Cave of Treasures 20b.1 notes that each of the patriarchs from Adam to Noah knew of the coming flood and instructed that after the flood the body of Adam was to be buried in a secret location. Jared, one of Seth’s descendants, is said to have told Noah to take the body of Adam, the gold, the incense, and the myrrh on the ark and bury them in a place to be shown him (see *Conflict of Adam and Eve* II, 21:7–11). Methuselah repeated these instructions, according to *Cave of Treasures* 15b.1, *Book of the Rolls* f.109b, and *Conflict of Adam and Eve* III, 5:9–10, 14–18. Accordingly, Noah took the body of Adam,

along with the gold, myrrh, and frankincense, with him on the ark (see *Cave of Treasures* 16b.2–17a.1; *Book of the Rolls* f.106a–b, f.110b; *Conflict of Adam and Eve* III, 6.3–5; 7.14–17). According to one account, after the flood Noah and his son Shem took the books of the testaments, along with the gifts of gold, myrrh, and frankincense later used by the magi, and Shem buried them with the body of Adam. They were sealed inside the ark with the seal of Noah (see *Book of the Rolls* f.106b, 109b, 110b, 115a–b). A variant story indicates that Shem and Melchizedek hid these sacred artifacts in what later became Jerusalem (see *Conflict of Adam and Eve* III, 17–19) and were commanded by God to keep the information secret and reveal it to no one (see *Conflict of Adam and Eve* III, 16.10; 18:2). The place where they deposited Adam’s body was Golgotha, where Christ later died on the cross (see *Cave of Treasures* 21a.1–2).²⁹

A related document, *Book of the Bee* 30, says that the rod of Adam, passed down through the patriarchal line, came to Judah, who gave it in pledge to Tamar (see Genesis 38:18, 25). Because of the wars in which Judah became involved, “an angel took the rod, and laid it in the Cave of Treasures in the mount of Moab, until Midian was built. There was in Midian a man upright and righteous before God, whose name was Yathrô (Jethro). When he was feeding his flock on the mountain, he found the cave and took the rod by divine agency; and with it he fed his sheep until his old age. When he gave his daughter to Moses, he said to him, ‘Go in, my son, take the rod, and go forth to thy flock.’ When Moses had set his foot upon the threshold of the door, an angel moved the rod, and it came out of its own free will towards Moses.”³⁰ After Moses, Phineas brought the rod into the land of Canaan and “hid the rod in the desert, in the dust at the gate of Jerusalem, where it remained until our Lord Christ was born. And He, by the will of

His divinity, shewed the rod to Joseph the husband of Mary, and it was in his hand when he fled to Egypt with our Lord and Mary, until he returned to Nazareth.”³¹

This Christian tale probably derives from the Jewish tradition about the rod. According to *Pirqe Rabbi Eliezer* 40 and *Jasher* 77:38–51, Adam passed his staff to Enoch, from whom it descended to Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, eventually coming into the possession of Jethro, who planted it in his garden. When Moses discovered it there, it was covered with written characters.

Sacred Relics and Writings from the Temple

According to Jewish tradition, five things were hidden away when the first temple was destroyed, to be restored when the Lord would rebuild the temple: the sacred fire, the ark, the menorah, the Spirit, and the cherubim (*Midrash Rabbah* Numbers 15.10).³² The idea of the temple implements, including the two tables of the law, being hidden in the earth before the destruction of Jerusalem—later to be restored—is also found in *2 Baruch* 6:7–9. Where the Midrash and *2 Baruch* differ is in who hid them.

In one account, King Josiah, in preparation for the exile prophesied in Deuteronomy 28:36, hid away the ark, the anointing oil, the jar of manna, Aaron’s rod, and the coffer sent as a gift by the Philistines when returning the ark (see TB *Horayot* 12a; TB *Kerithot* 5b). *Midrash Rabbah* Numbers 18:23 indicates that the rod of Aaron was “held in the hand of every king until the Temple was destroyed, and then it was [divinely] hidden away. That same staff also is destined to be held in the hand of the King Messiah.”³³

According to *4 Baruch* 3:7–19, it was Jeremiah who hid the temple vessels in the earth. A similar story in *Lives of the Prophets* 2:11–19 indicates that Jeremiah caused the ark of the

covenant and its contents to be swallowed up in a rock. The tablets of the law will remain there, inaccessible until the day of resurrection, when they will be placed on Mount Sinai.

In 2 Maccabees 2:1–8, we read that Jeremiah took the tabernacle, the ark, and the incense altar and hid them in a cave in Nebo, the mountain Moses ascended, to be brought forth after the gathering of Israel from its captivity. According to *ʿAbot de Rabbi Nathan* 41, eight things were made during the creation and later hidden away: the tent of meeting and its furnishings, the ark and the broken tables of the commandments in it, the jar of manna, the cruse of anointing oil, the rod (of Moses), Aaron’s staff (with its almond blossoms and flowers), the priestly vestments, and the vestments of the anointed priest.

According to Rabbi Nahman, the ark was hidden away in the chamber of the temple’s wood shed: “It happened to a certain priest who was whiling away his time that he saw a block of pavement that was different from the others. He came and informed his fellow, but before he could complete his account his soul departed. Thus they knew definitely that the ark was hidden there” (TB *Yoma* 54a).

In another account, Nabuzaradan, captain of Nebuchadnezzar’s army, granted the high priest Simeon’s request to give him the ark containing the records. Simeon gathered the ashes of the books, laid them in a pot in a vault, put fire in a censer of brass, threw incense on it, and hung it in the vault over the place where the ashes of the books lay (see *Conflict of Adam and Eve* IV, 10.16–17). A similar story is found in *Book of the Rolls* f.137a, where we read that at the time Nebuchadnezzar took Jerusalem, Simeon asked permission to take “the old writings,” which he carried into captivity with him. En route “he saw a well in his way among the borders of the West; and he laid the writings in it, and put with them a bronze vase, filled with glowing coals, and in it sweet smelling

incense; he covered up this well, and went to Babylon.”³⁴ Later, according to *Book of the Rolls* f.138a, Ezra recovered the vase full of fire, incense, and writings but found the writings faded and had to restore them by revelation.

Other accounts also credit Ezra with recovery of the temple treasures. According to *Chronicles of Jerahmeel* 77:4–9, an old man led Ezra, Nehemiah, and the elders to a large stone sunk into the Mount of Olives. They rolled the stone away, and some young priests descended into the pit. The priests found something like the lees of oil, like mud and honey, which they placed on the altar, whereupon fire burst out. But the ark was not there; it had been hidden by Jeremiah in a cave on Mount Nebo, along with other items, including tables of stone.

In Jewish tradition, the prophet Elijah will in the last days reveal to Israel the hiding place of the ark of the covenant, the vial of manna, the seven-branched menorah, and the vial of anointing oil.³⁵

The Samaritans also have traditions about the hiding of the temple relics. When the Taheb (Messiah) comes, he will re-discover the tabernacle and its furnishings, including the staff of Moses, the pot of manna, and the ark, which were hidden up anciently.³⁶ In the time of Christ, a man led a Samaritan group up Mount Gerizim, promising to discover the tabernacle vessels. Pilate, recognizing this as a messianic claim (with political implications), intervened (see Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 18.4.1). Interestingly, the Taheb, according to the poem attributed to the fourteenth-century-A.D. Samaritan scholar Abisha ben Pinhas, will be given new scripture.³⁷

A Samaritan document in the British Museum concerning the death of Moses declares “that the Favour will become hidden, and the sanctuary of the Lord will be hidden away, and Mount Garizim will be defiled.”³⁸

The hiding of sacred implements is reflected in the Jewish story of Jacob hiding the garments of Adam and Eve in a hole in the ground to keep them from the unworthy Esau (see *Pirque Rabbi Eliezer* 24). Similarly, the Bible indicates that the sword David took from Goliath was evidently hidden behind the ephod in the tabernacle, whence David later retrieved it when fleeing from Saul (see 1 Samuel 21:9).

Among the sacred relics that have been concealed are disused portions of temples. The earliest textual reference is from the Apocrypha, where we read of the events that followed the Seleucids' desecration of the altar in the Jerusalem temple: "And when as they consulted what to do with the altar of burnt offerings, which was profaned; They thought it best to pull it down, lest it should be a reproach to them, because the heathen had defiled it: wherefore they pulled it down, And laid up the stones in the mountain of the temple in a convenient place, until there should come a prophet to shew what should be done with them. Then they took whole stones according to the law, and built a new altar according to the former" (1 Maccabees 4:44–47 KJV).

There is also archaeological evidence for the practice of pulling down altars. During excavations at ancient Beer-Sheba, Yohanan Aharoni's team found neatly carved stones from a dismantled altar built into the wall of a storeroom. All the stones were recovered and the altar was reconstructed on the site. Of the four horned altars in the corner, only one was damaged—its horned projection had been broken off.

Aharoni also uncovered a similar situation at the site of Arad, where two worn-out *maṣṣebot*, or covenant altars, that once stood in the holy of holies of the Israelite temple built on the site had been built into the back wall of the room and concealed with plaster. A third *massebah*, obviously newer and in

virtually pristine condition, was found in situ in the holy of holies itself.

Summary

This chapter has shown that the ancients commonly concealed sacred relics. Of particular significance for the story of the Book of Mormon is that these relics were sometimes deposited with books and that, like the interpreters Moroni placed with the plates, these relics are sometimes said to have been stones.

Notes

1. That the sword of Laban was a symbol of royalty among the Nephites has been discussed by several scholars. See Todd R. Kerr, “Ancient Aspects of Nephite Kingship in the Book of Mormon,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 1/1 (1992): 85–118; Brett L. Holbrook, “The Sword of Laban as a Symbol of Divine Authority and Kingship,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 2/1 (1993): 39–72; Daniel N. Rolph, “Prophets, Kings, and Swords: The Sword of Laban and Its Possible Pre-Laban Origin,” *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* 2/1 (1993): 73–79.
2. See Esther Rabbai 2:1, in Raphael Patai, *The Children of Noah: Jewish Seafaring in Ancient Times* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), 117.
3. See Bernard Grossfeld, *The Two Targums of Esther*, vol. 18 of *The Aramaic Bible* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1991), 30–31. The Aramaic *targumim* (translations) are translations of the books of the Bible with additional material added as an explanation.
4. See “Heavy Metal: Tiberias Yields Islamic Treasure,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* (January/February 1999): 18.
5. The English translation used here is taken from Florentino García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 461–63.

6. John C. Reeves, *Heralds of That Good Realm: Syro-Mesopotamian Gnosis and Jewish Traditions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996), 152–53.

7. *Ibid.*, 142.

8. See the discussion in chapter 3 of this volume, “Hiding Records in Boxes.”

9. He is mentioned in Joshua 15:17; Judges 1:13; 3:9, 11; 1 Chronicles 4:13.

10. For more on glowing stones, see the appendix to this volume, “Glowing Stones in Ancient and Medieval Lore.”

11. Sapphires and emeralds are both forms of corundum.

12. Moses Gaster, *The Asatir: The Samaritan Book of the “Secrets of Moses”* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1927), 198.

13. *Ibid.*, 193–94.

14. See Montague Rhodes James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 565.

15. See Ernest A. Wallis Budge, *Amulets and Superstitions* (London: Oxford University Press, 1930), 247.

16. See Yigael Yadin, *Bar Kochba* (London: Widenfeld, 1971), 217–21.

17. See Budge, *Amulets and Superstitions*, 98, citing George Smith, *Assyrian Discoveries: An Account of Explorations and Discoveries on the Site of Nineveh, during 1873 and 1874* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong, 1875), 78.

18. See *ibid.*, 99.

19. See H. Curtis Wright, “Metal Documents in Stone Boxes,” in *By Study and Also By Faith*, ed. John M. Lundquist and Stephen D. Ricks (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book and FARMS, 1990), 288–89, and his notes.

20. See C. Leonard Woolley, “Babylonian Prophylactic Figures,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (October 1926): 689f.

21. See George Frederick Kunz, *The Curious Lore of Precious Stones* (New York: Halcyon House, 1913), 189, citing Wieri, *De Prestigiis Demonum* (Basileae, 1563), 121.

22. See *ibid.*, 220, citing Bernard de Montfaucon, *Les monumens de la monarchie Française qui Comprennent L’histoire de France* (Paris, J. M. Gandouin: 1729), 15.

23. See Kunz, *Curious Lore of Precious Stones*, 221–22.

24. See *ibid.*, 222, citing Akerman, 10.

25. *Ibid.*, citing Sir Thomas Browne, *Hydrotaphia, or Urn Burial*, ed. F. L. Huntley (New York: Meredith, 1966). Originally published in 1658. The Browne piece was an addition to John Aubrey, *Miscellanies upon Various Subjects* (London: Reeves and Turner, 1890), 244.

26. W. M. Thackston Jr., trans., *The Tales of the Prophets of al-Kisa'i* (Boston: Twayne, 1978), 81–82. Seth's possession of the coffer passed to him by Adam is also noted on page 85, in connection with the fact that "the guardianship passed to Seth, and the sons of his father obeyed him."

27. S. C. Malan, *The Book of Adam and Eve, also called The Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1882), 33.

28. Margaret Dunlop Wilson, *Apocrypha Arabica* (London: C. J. Clay, 1901), 18.

29. In a variant tradition, found in the Armenian Christian *Penitence of Adam*, God himself sealed Adam's tomb with a three-fold seal at the time of the patriarch's death. See Michael E. Stone, *The Penitence of Adam* (Louvain: Peeters, 1981), 20.

30. Ernest A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Bee* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1886), 50.

31. *Ibid.*, 51. The text further notes that the rod subsequently served as one of the pieces of wood used in the construction of the cross on which Christ was crucified.

32. This tradition is the basis of Revelation 11:15–19.

33. H. Freedman and Maurice Simon, eds., *Midrash Rabbah* (London: Soncino Press, 1961), 6:743. Originally published in 1939.

34. Wilson, *Apocrypha Arabica*, 53.

35. See Perek Rabbi Yoshiyahu, in Adolph Jellinek, *Bet ha Midrasch*, 3rd ed. (Jerusalem: Wahrman, 1967), 6:115; Meir Friedmann, *Mekhilta deRabbi Yishmael* (Vinah: Meir Ish Shalom, 1870), 80.

36. See John Bowman, "Early Samaritan Eschatology," *The Journal of Jewish Studies* 6/2 (1955): 63, 70; John Bowman, *Samaritan Documents Relating to Their History, Religion and Life* (Pittsburgh:

Pickwick Press, 1977), 42, 89–90, 264, 267, 271 n. 10; Alan D. Crown, *The Samaritans* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1989), 272, 273–74; James Alan Montgomery, *The Samaritans: The Earliest Jewish Sect* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1968), 248 (originally published in 1907).

37. See Matthew Black, *The Scrolls and Christian Origins* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961), 159.

38. From BM 1732A. See Gaster, *The Asatir*, 309.