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## Notes on Striking Passages in the Book of Mormon

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“Many shall be purified, and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.”—Dan. 12:10.

“Who is wise? And he shall understand these things; prudent? And he shall know them.—Hosea, 14:9.

## CHAPTER NINE

### NOTES ON STRIKING PASSAGES IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians.—1 Nephi 1:12.

**L**ANGUAGE of my father. Nephi here tells us that his father was well versed in the Hebrew literature, and understood the Egyptian mode of writing, probably both the hieroglyphic and the hieratic. The expression, "language of my father," should be noted. Why did not Nephi say "the Hebrew language?" Because that term was not, in his day, applied to the language spoken by the Hebrews. The Assyrians called it "The Tongue of the West Country." In 2 Kings 18:26 it is called "The Jews' Language." Isaiah calls it "The Language of Canaan." The name "HEBREW" was not applied to the language until the days of the Son of Sirach, about 130, B. C., and then it did not mean the Hebrew but the Syro-Aramean. Josephus, it is thought, was the first to apply the name Hebrew to the *old* language of the Jews. In the targums it is called "The Holy Tongue." Christian writers soon adopted the name.<sup>1</sup> The prophet Moroni, in the 4th century of our era, applied the term to the Hebrew alphabet, as Josephus had applied it to the old Hebrew writings, both language and characters.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Joseph Angus, *Bible Handbook*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>Mormon 9:33.

It is certain that, if this verse had been penned by a modern impostor, he would have written, not "the language of my father," but "Hebrew," because that is the term now always used to denote the language spoken and recorded by the Jews at the time of Lehi. But Nephi did not know it under that name. The expression used is, therefore, unmistakable evidence of the genuineness of the book.

#### THE FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES

And he beheld that they did contain the five books of Moses, which gave an account of the creation of the world, and also of Adam and Eve, who were our first parents.—1 Nephi 5:11.

Nephi is speaking of his father Lehi and the brass plates of Laban.

This is an unequivocal testimony to the Mosaic authorship of the books known as the Pentateuch. It shows us that the books mentioned were in existence before the Babylonian exile, and that they were accepted as the work of Moses before the days of Ezra.

The Mosaic authorship of those books was accepted by the translators of the Septuagint (completed probably about 285, B. C.); also by Jewish and Christian early writers, such as Josephus, the authors of the Talmud, Jerome, Origen, etc. It was, above all, accepted by our Lord, who always refers to the Law (the *Torah*) as written by Moses. (Comp. Matt. 8:4; 19:18; Mark 7:10; Luke 16:31; 24:27 and 44; John 5:45-47; 7:19, 22, and 23.) The first doubt expressed of the Mosaic authorship, in England, was by Hobbes, a philosopher, in the year 1650, at least three thousand years after Moses, and he may

have taken his clue from an obscure writer of the 13th century, who is said to have been the first in this field of skepticism.<sup>3</sup>

In 1670, Spinoza, the Dutch philosopher, suggested that the Pentateuch may have been compiled by Ezra. Simon, a French priest, argued that what he regarded as variety of style indicated so many different authors. Astruc started the theories known as Jehovistic and Elohist, claiming that the two divine names proved that there once existed two original, independent documents.

Later, German scholarship took the matter up. Eichhorn, whose *Old Testament Introduction* was published in 1780, moulded Astruc's conjectures into some sort of scientific shape and paved the way for what has become known as "higher criticism." He was followed by De Wette, Ewald, Graf, and many others. Kuenen, the Leyden, Holland, professor, discovered that the book of Joshua belongs to the Mosaic collection, which, therefore, really is a *Hexateuch* and not a *Pentateuch*, he alleged.

Then came the British-American scholars, who modified the German radicalism, to make it acceptable to Anglo-Saxon reverence for the Word of God. Among these Dr. Samuel Davidson, Dr. S. R. Driver, and Dr. C. A. Briggs, at one time connected with Union Theological seminary, New York, should be mentioned.

The present position of "higher critics" is, that the Hexateuch, as they call it, is composed of, at least, four independent documents: The Yahwist, the Elo-

<sup>3</sup>Joseph Angus, *Bible Handbook*, p. 380.

hist, the Deuteronomist, and the Priestly Code, which, for the sake of brevity, they call J, E, D, and P, respectively. The Yahwist and the Elohist documents may, they think, have been written some time between 800 and 700 B. C. The Deuteronomist they assign to some year between 650 and 625 B. C. The date of the Priestly Code they give as any time between 525 and 425 B. C. Some of the critics hold, however, that the entire Pentateuch belongs to some time after the Babylonian exile. The five Books of Moses were, accordingly, not written by Moses, but by authors who lived much later, and by editors who pieced their work together the best they could. There were a number of such editors. Wellhausen found traces of 22, but Kuenen thought 16 would answer the purpose.

Nephi refers to the five books in question as "the Books of Moses." That is his testimony to a skeptical world. Thus, the Book of Mormon confirms the Bible "at a time when so-called higher critics are doing all in their power to destroy the belief in the divine authority of the Scriptures. It is a 'new witness' as Pres. B. H. Roberts so aptly has called it, for the authenticity of the Bible. It claims no other position in sacred literature. It is the 'stick of Ephraim,' joined to the 'stick of Judah,' according to the word of the Lord. (Ezek. 37:15-19.)"<sup>4</sup>

#### THE FOUNTAIN OF FILTH

Behold the fountain of filthy water which thy father saw; yea, even the river of which he spake; and the depths thereof are the depths of hell.—1 Nephi 12:16.

<sup>4</sup>Doc. and Cov. 10:52; *Commeneary*, p. 88.

Lehi had a remarkable vision.<sup>5</sup> He saw a large field. In this field was a tree, the fruit of which was delicious. There was also a river running by the tree and dividing his family. Sariah, Sam, and Nephi stood by the head thereof, and they came to Lehi, as soon as he beckoned to them. Laman and Lemuel were by themselves, and they refused to come to their father. Lehi also saw a rod of iron extending along the bank of the river and leading to the tree. Along the iron rod there was a straight and narrow path which led to the tree, but which branched off into a large field. Multitudes were walking along this path, to reach the tree. But a thick mist arose, and in the darkness many lost their way. Others reached the tree by clinging to the iron rod, but when they saw people on the other side of the river, occupying a large building, mocking them, they were ashamed and wandered away and were lost. Others who tried to reach the tree were drowned in the river.

The explanation of this vision is given.<sup>6</sup> The tree is the tree of life, from which we may conclude that the fruit is the legitimate enjoyments of life, which always are sweet and delicious. The rod of iron is the word of God, and in this connection it may be recalled that the *Koran* is called "The sure *cord* of God," which seems to convey an idea similar to this of the iron rod.<sup>7</sup> The mist is temptation. The large, magnificent building is the vanity of the world, and the river is a representation of hell itself.

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<sup>5</sup>1 Ne. 8:9-33.

<sup>6</sup>1 Ne. 12:15-18; 15:21-28.

<sup>7</sup>*Koran*, *chapt.* 3, p. 48, transl. by George Sale, London, 1865.

Special attention should be given to the river in the vision. Nephi beheld his descendants and those of his brethren arrayed against each other in deadly battle, and as he gazed upon this scene of carnage, the angel said to him: "Behold the fountain of filthy water which thy father saw; yea, even the river of which he spake." War and its concomitants can best be likened to a filthy river having its source in hell. Has not even a modern warrior been credited with just such a remark about war? Yes, "war is hell." That is what the angel tells Nephi. War originated with the rebellion of Lucifer in heaven, but he was cast out from there. When will his policy and methods be driven off the earth? The angel told Nephi that the Lamanites would dwindle in unbelief and then become "a dark and loathsome and a filthy people, full of idleness and all manner of abominations." This has been literally fulfilled. Those are always the awful results of protracted wars.

#### OUT OF THE MOUTH OF A JEW

And he said, Behold it proceedeth out of the mouth of a Jew: and I, Nephi, beheld it.—1 Nephi 13:23.

The prophet is here speaking of the Old Testament, as it was to appear through the labors of Ezra and his associates and successors.

When Lehi left Jerusalem, the so-called canon of the Old Testament, as we know it, was not yet completed. The five books of Moses, undoubtedly, had been collected and written on one roll, numerous copies of which must have been in existence. The



writings of the prophets, such as Joshua, the Judges, Samuel, Kings down to the reign of Zedekiah, and the prophecies of Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Micah, and parts of Jeremiah, and their contemporaries, Joel, Amos and Jonah, must have existed in separate volumes, and individual collectors may have owned more or less complete sets. The Book of Job, some of the Psalms, the Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes were also known, even if not generally accepted as sacred scripture. There were also books by authors whose names are mentioned in the Bible, but whose writings have not come down to us. The collection of Laban, known in the Book of Mormon as the Brass Plates, must have been unusually complete, judging from the contents. It must have been a very valuable library.<sup>8</sup> Such libraries must have been owned by prominent individuals.

Ezra undertook the work of collecting all the sacred writings that existed at his time. This work included not only the discovery of copies in various places, the rejection of those that were not authentic and the copying of manuscripts the contents of which could not otherwise be secured, but also the correction of the text, after careful examination of the variations that must have been found.<sup>9</sup> It was this work that was shown to Nephi in his vision of the

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<sup>8</sup>Laban's collection contained The Five Books of Moses; Testimonies concerning a Remnant of the Seed of Joseph; Genealogies from the Beginning, possibly documents from which the Chronicles were compiled; and, finally prophecies by all the prophets down to Jeremiah. (Omni. 14; 1 Ne. 5:11-13; 2 Ne. 4:2; Alma 37:3; 3 Ne. 10:17.)

<sup>9</sup>In Hebrew manuscripts examined by modern scholars some 80,000 various readings, not including vowel points occur. (See Stuart, *Crit. Hist. and Defense Old Test. Canon*, p. 192.)

Old Testament, and therefore, he, very properly, says he beheld it coming "out of the mouth of a Jew."

This expression appears still more significant when we recall the fact that Ezra, after the completion of the Pentateuch, gathered the people and read it to them and expounded it for seven days, and submitted it to them for their acceptance. (Nehemiah 8:1-18; 9:3.) Then it, literally, proceeded out of the mouth of a Jew. This took place about 445, B. C., about 150 years after the exodus of Lehi.

The canon was gradually completed by the addition of the writings of Ezra, Nehemiah, and the prophets who lived during and after the exile, Ezekiel, Daniel, Obadiah, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The canon as thus completed was accepted by our Lord himself, and it is, in this remarkable vision, called, on that account, "The Book of the Lamb of God." (1 Ne. 13:38.)

In this vision, "they bear record" refers to the New Testament (v. 24); "these things" (v. 25) means The Old and The New Testament;<sup>10</sup> in verses 34-42 a prophecy is given concerning the Book of Mormon, and in the next chapter, vv. 18-27, further particulars are found regarding the Bible, and particularly the writings of John.

<sup>10</sup>According to Jewish tradition, Moses wrote his book, the Baalam section, and Job. Joshua wrote his book and eight verses of the law. (Deut. 34:5-12.) Samuel wrote his book, Judges and Ruth. David wrote Psalms for the elders. Jeremiah wrote his books, Kings, and Lamentations. Hezekiah and his company wrote Isaiah, Proverbs, the Song, and Ecclesiastes. The men of the Great synagogue wrote Ezekiel, the Twelve, Daniel, and Esther. Ezra wrote his book and the genealogies of the Chronicles up to his time. But "wrote" in this tradition must be understood to mean *copied* and *edited* and not composed.

## THE WORLD WAR PREDICTED

And when the day cometh that the wrath of God is poured out upon the mother of harlots \* \* \* then, at that day, the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way for the fulfilling of his covenants, which he hath made to his people who are of the house of Israel.—1 Ne. 14:15-17.

The prediction is here made that the time would come, when the whole world would be involved in war, and that the countries identified with "the great and abominable church" would be particularly affected; and that, when that war came, then, "the work of the Father shall commence, in preparing the way" for the fulfilling of his covenants with Israel.

We have lived to see that war. On July 28, 1914, the Austrian archduke, Ferdinand, and his morganatic wife were killed by a Serbian student, at Sarajevo, Bosnia, where the archduke had gone to attend military maneuvers, and a month later Austria declared war on Serbia. That was the beginning. Then, as impelled by an invisible power, Germany, Aug. 3, invaded French territory and, the next day, hurled defiance at Russia. Then Great Britain declared war on Germany. Soon war raged in Europe in all its fury, and every nation on earth was affected by it.

This war was poured out upon the great church of the world, for Austria was the main political support of that church. Its effects were felt most heavily there, since Austria was entirely broken up by it. Russia, too, the nearest relative of Rome, from an ecclesiastical point of view, suffered total collapse. The mighty German empire, more than half Catholic, suffered and was shaken on its foundations. It cer-

tainly was a war in which the so-called Christian world was involved.

But at that time, as stated by the angel, the Father began preparations for the gathering of the children of Israel. On Dec. 9, 1917, General Allenby took possession of Jerusalem, and on Nov. 2, the same year, Balfour issued his famous letter to Baron Rothschild, in which he stated that, "His Majesty's government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." Ten nations, including the United States, gave official endorsement to that policy. And from that day earnest efforts have been made, with great success, to build up Palestine. The barren soil has been covered with trees, and herds and flocks have found feed on the hill sides. (Isa. 41:18-20.)

So this prophecy in the Book of Mormon has been literally fulfilled in our day and generation.

#### THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD

For I spake unto him as a man speaketh; for I beheld that he was in the form of a man; yet, nevertheless, I knew that it was the Spirit of the Lord.—1 Nephi 11:11.

How can the Spirit of the Lord be in the form of a man and yet be imparted by the laying on of hands? The late President Joseph F. Smith says:

"The terms [The Holy Ghost and The Spirit of God] are frequently used synonymously. We often say The Spirit of God when we mean The Holy Ghost; we likewise say The Holy Ghost when we mean The Spirit of God. The Holy Ghost is a personage in the Godhead, and is not that which lighteth every man that comes into the world."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup>*Doctrine and Covenants, Commentary, p. 240.*

It is not the third person of the Godhead that is imparted by the laying on of hands, but the Spirit that fills the universe. Speaking of The Holy Ghost, the divine person, President Heber C. Kimball says:

“Let me tell you, The Holy Ghost is a man; he is one of the sons of our Father and our God; and he is that man that stood next to Jesus Christ, just as I stand by Brother Brigham.”<sup>12</sup>

### FIERY-FLYING SERPENTS

He sent fiery-flying serpents among them and after they were bitten, he prepared a way that they might be healed.—1 Nephi 17:41.

“In Numbers 21:6, where the incident referred to is related, Moses says the Lord sent “fiery serpents”—not “fiery-flying”—among the people. The same expression occurs in Deut. 8:15. It is clear, therefore, that Nephi did not copy this from Moses.

Isaiah (14:29) likens King Hezekiah to (comp. 2 Kings 18:8) a “fiery-flying serpent,” and Nephi was familiar with this portion of the Old Testament. (See 2 Ne. 24.) The inference is that he followed Isaiah, in his version of the occurrence, adopting the term used by the prophet as the one that furnishes the more detailed explanation.

Moses was commanded to make a “fiery serpent” and so he made a “serpent of brass” and raised it upon a pole. (Num. 21:8, 9.) This brass serpent was preserved for perhaps seven centuries and was finally broken up by King Hezekiah, because the people burnt incense to it. Isaiah had seen that brazen ser-

<sup>12</sup>*Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 5, p. 179. Comp. Alma 7:10 and 9:44.

pent before it was destroyed, and he must have had some reason for using the term "flying" in addition to "fiery" or "brazen," in comparing Hezekiah to it. Is it not probable that it was the image of a serpent with wings, such as the Egyptians made?

In Egypt, where the Israelites as a nation were cradled and where Moses had received his first education, the sacred serpent was the symbol of divine power and wisdom. When Egyptians would express the conception that Egypt was "God's country" enjoying his special care and protection, they drew a picture of two flying serpents of the *uræus* species, one wearing the crown of upper, and the other that of lower Egypt. In this picture divine power, wisdom, and protection were visualized, very much as we symbolize national power and other admirable characteristics, as we perceive them with the eye of patriotism, by an Eagle or a Lion, or a Dragon, etc. What has been called the Egyptian national emblem was the solar disc between two serpents, the latter probably representing the eastern and western horizon of the sky, where the sun apparently rises and sets. Wings are extending on either side.

The image of the sacred serpent occurs as one of the ornaments of most of the Egyptian divine personages. It is part of the crowns of Osiris, Isis, and Horus. When Moses, therefore, was commanded to make a *seraph*,<sup>13</sup> he was, in all probability, instructed to make not an imitation of the venomous reptile crawling in the dust, but of the glorious personages serving before the thrones of God—the seraphs which

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<sup>13</sup>"Fiery serpent."

Isaiah and other prophets saw in visions; the same personages which were represented in golden statues upon the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenants, and embroidered upon the curtains in the most holy place,<sup>14</sup> also called *cherubim*.

This view is supported by strong considerations.

Just what kind of reptiles the serpents that the Lord sent among the Israelites were is not known. Moses calls them "seraphim serpents" (*hanechashim baseraphim*), either because their poison was very deadly, or because they were God's messengers of death.<sup>15</sup> But it is certain that the brazen serpent, which Isaiah seems to have referred to as a "flying" serpent, was a type of our Lord who is the source and giver of life; for so we read in John 3:14-15, where our Lord himself says:

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."

That was the great lesson of the serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness. Made of brass, the image must have appeared as fire in the rays of the desert sun, and suspended from a pole it was properly likened to a flying animal.

The prophecy in Isaiah 14:29 helps us to understand the symbolism of the winged serpent. "Him that smote thee" is understood to refer to Uzziah, king

<sup>14</sup>Ex. 25:18; 26:1.

<sup>15</sup>For a description of seraphim see Ezekiel 1:5-21, where the prophet relates his vision of "four living creatures." Also Isaiah 6:2-8 and Rev. 4:6-11. In the Book of Enoch, 61:10 and 70:7 the "wheels" (*ophannim*) stand next to the cherubim and seraphim in the presence of God.

of Judah, who "smote" the Philistines (2 Chron. 26: 6, 7.) That "rod" was broken by his death, and during the reign of Ahaz, the Philistines invaded Judah and took possession of some of the southern cities. Isaiah, therefore, tells them that they had better not rejoice, because of this success. It was only temporary, for out of the "broken rod," should come forth a "cockatrice" or "adder," referring to Hezekiah, the son of Ahaz, and great grandson of Uzziah, a more terrible enemy than Uzziah. (2 Kings 18:8.)

But Dr. Clarke informs us (*Com.* on Isa. 14:29) that the *Targum* renders the 29th and 30th verse thus: "For, from the sons of Jesse shall come forth the Messiah; and his works among you shall be as the flying serpent. And the poor of the people shall he feed, and the humble shall dwell securely in his days: and he shall kill thy children with famine, and the remnant of thy people shall he slay."

This may be, as Dr. Clarke remarks, a "singular" interpretation, but it shows that the Hebrew conception of the reign of the Messiah is expressed by the image of a "flying" or "winged" serpent. The word used by Isa. 14:29 is *seraph* which may be familiar to us in its plural form *seraphim* which we read "seraphs," and understand to mean a high order of angels attending the Lord (Isa. 6:2, 6.) They are represented as having six wings; such is the swiftness of their service. Winds are angels (Heb. 1:7.) They are princes, nobles, in heaven. But, says Gesenius, "If any one chooses to follow the Hebrew *usus loquendi*, in which *seraph* is *serpent*, he may indeed here render it [seraphim] by *winged serpents*; since the serpent



both among the ancient Hebrews and Egyptians was the symbol of wisdom and of the healing art. See Num. 21:8; 2 Kings 18:4.

The serpent appears in every conceivable form in ancient Egyptian theology. Sometimes it has a human body. It is a symbol of majesty, and as such has wings and a crown. Winged serpents represented the divine protectors of upper and lower Egypt. (*Light on the Land of the Sphinx*, Chapt. 9, by H. Forbes Witherby, London, 1896.)

Now, the strange fact is that the winged serpent, or the feathered serpent, plays a prominent part also in the religious concepts of the American Indians, and in their traditions. Among the ancient Mexicans, one of the divinities was known as "the feathered" or "plumed serpent," *Quetzalcoatl*, which name corresponds to the "flying serpent" of the Hebrews. *Quetzalcoatl* among the Mexicans was what the brazen serpent was to the Hebrews—the representative of the healing, life-giving power, as *Esculapius* was among the Phönicians.

Among the Nahuas *Quetzalcoatl* was revered as a god. At Cholula he was considered the chief God, somewhat like *Jehovah* among the Hebrews. He was regarded as the son of *Camaxtli*, the protector of hunters and fishers, but probably the same as the *Pachacamac*, the Creator, of the Peruvians.

But *Quetzalcoatl* also became a man. As such he was born of *Chimalma*, the wife of *Camaxtli*, who conceived him miraculously. He taught men the arts of civilization, and preached morality, penitence, and peace.

As a man he visited Cholula, remaining there for twenty years. He taught the people to work in silver, prohibited blood sacrifices, and showed them the way to happiness through virtue and peace. After his mission was finished, he left for the sea shore, where he bid his companions farewell and promised that, some time, in the future he would return.

One of the opponents of Quetzalcoatl was Tezcatlipoca, a personage of divine origin and great power, but evil, bent upon bringing calamities and misfortunes upon the people.

The ecclesiastical officer next in rank to the pontiff, or high priest, was called Quetzalcoatl, in honor of the great national hero, and there was, therefore a great many quetzalcoatls, and the probability is that the traditions relating to the divine reformer and his successors have been so mixed as to preclude the possibility of a clear and perfect understanding of what the ancient Mexicans really did believe, but what is here stated seems to be the essence of it.

The Mexicans kept a sacred fire burning perpetually, as did the Hebrews, and by that fire they waited patiently for the return of Quetzalcoatl. It is claimed that the Pueblo Indians had a similar custom in their kivas, for a similar reason.<sup>16</sup>

“Amongst the semi-civilized nations of America, from Mexico southward, as also amongst many nations of the Old World, the serpent was a prominent religious symbol, beneath

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<sup>16</sup>“On a dit que la coutume singulière de conserver perpétuellement un feu sacré près duquel les anciens Mexicains attendaient le retour du dieu Quetzalcoatl, existe aussi chez les Pueblos.” For an extensive presentation of the subject see Bancroft, *Native Races*, Vol. 1, p. 554; and Vol. 3, pp. 248-87, 449-56, and other places in the same work.

which was concealed the profoundest significance. Under many of its aspects it coincided with the sun, or was the symbol of the Supreme Divinity of the heathens, of which the sun was one of the most obvious emblems. In the instance before us, the plumed, sacred serpent of the aborigines was artfully depicted so as to combine both symbols in one." (E. G. Squire, *Nicaragua*, Vol. 1, p. 406.

Whence could these Indians have their concept of a divine-human savior symbolized by a feathered or flying serpent, if not through traditions from ancestors to whom the contents of the Book of Mormon were known?

#### NO KING AGAINST THE LORD

For he that raiseth up a king against me shall perish, for I, the Lord, the king of heaven, will be their king.—2 Nephi 10:14.

These are given us as the words of the Lord through Jacob, the son of Lehi. The prophet tells us, that the Jews will be restored to the land of their fathers, while his descendants and those of his brethren will inherit America. And then he says that this land shall be a land of liberty to the gentiles as well, and that he that fighteth against this land—Zion—shall perish; also that he who raiseth up a king here against the Lord, shall perish, for the Lord himself will be the "king" of this country.

When reading this really remarkable prediction, one cannot but remember Montezuma II, the head of the Aztec confederacy at the time of the arrival of Cortez in the Valley of Mexico. True, he was not a "king" in name, but he was a despot of the worst kind. His predecessors had succeeded in form-

ing an alliance with Tezcucó and Tlacopan, for the purpose of plundering and killing the neighbors who refused to pay tribute. Like the Lamanites of old, his forces sallied forth from their strongholds, the chief of which was Tenochtitlan, and carried off whatever they could lay their hands on, and especially human beings needed for sacrifices. Montezuma was the head of this plunderbund. When the Spaniards came, it had extended its sway over thirty or more cities and was threatening the outlying settlements in every direction. But the time had come for the fulfilment of this prophecy. Montezuma was captured by the Spaniards, deposed by his own people, and then killed in a battle, probably by being struck down by a stone thrown by an Aztec soldier. In 1520 his rule of blood came to an ignoble end.

The Aztec version of the death of this unfortunate ruler is somewhat different. According to this source of information. Montezuma was a prisoner. He had trusted in the good faith of the Spaniards. But when the final trial of strength came between the Indians and the Spaniards, Montezuma was true to his blood. He refused to bend to the Spaniard's demand. So they killed him. They killed him by a sword thrust that was so directed as to render his death agonizing beyond comprehension and degrading to a man of royal blood, and when the king at last was dead the conqueror threw his naked body into the street.

"There is your king," they cried to his royal subjects.

It was then that the fifty Spanish captives were sacrificed. Their furious comrades saw them led

to the summit of the pyramid that then occupied the center of what is now the plaza in front of the national palace. On its summit was the altar to the Sun god. The Spaniards, from the buildings they used as a fort, could see their friends led up the steps of the pyramid. They saw their naked bodies flash white in the sun. One after another they were thrust down upon the stone of sacrifice, and the priests made the ritual slashes in their breast and held the palpitating hearts up toward the sun.

But even according to this version, the word of the Lord was wonderfully fulfilled in the tragic end of Montezuma.

The Incas of Peru were less brutal in their military operations, than the Aztecs. They made war, not to obtain human victims for their altars; nor, even, for the sake of plunder. Like the followers of Mohammed, or the soldiers of the medieval "defenders of the faith," they went out to fight in the interest of a more humane religion and a farther advanced civilization than their neighbors had. But they were, nevertheless, despots, and their government soon developed into absolute despotism. It, naturally, created class distinction of the worst kind, a condition against which the history of the ancient Americans contains a solemn warning.<sup>17</sup> For themselves, the Incas claimed divinity, as *the* sons of the sun—that is, as they understood it, of God; and they exacted submission to their word as if it had been a divine decree. They had not learned—or, if they had, they had put aside and forgotten—the fundamental prin-

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<sup>17</sup>Alma 32:2; 4 Ne. 25, 26.

ciple of true religion which our Lord stated in these words:

“The kings of the gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.” (Luke 22:25, 26.)

Having no regard for this great law, the Incas created a wide gulf between themselves and the people, no less impassable because it was imaginary. For themselves they claimed every privilege that almost unlimited wealth and power could procure; to produce this wealth was the chief end and purpose for which the people existed. They were part of the assets of the Incas, just as were the beasts on the hill sides, and fishes in the brooks, the trees in the valleys, the grain in the fields and the store houses, and the metals in the mountains. To be sure, under good and wise rulers, the subjects were well cared for; and so were the beasts of burden and the birds and other animals; but, though human beings, they were, strictly speaking, nothing but “property.” This was the condition of about eight million human beings under the Incas in this “land of liberty,” at the time of the arrival of the Spaniards. It was put to an end with the assassination of Inca Huascar at Cuzco and the pretender Atahualpa at Caxamarca, in 1533.

Atahualpa, as is well known, was promised his liberty, if he would pay a large ransom. He did pay, but the Spaniards, fearing to set him free, decided to take his life as well as the ransom. They proposed

to strangle him instead of burning him to death, if he would let them baptize him first. Having obtained his consent to this, they "baptized" him and then choked him to death.

"The treatment of Atahualpa," says Prescott, "forms undoubtedly one of the darkest chapters in Spanish colonial history. There may have been massacres on a more extended scale, and executions accompanied with greater refinement of cruelty. But the blood-stained annals of the Conquest afford us no such example of cold-hearted and systematic presentation, not of an enemy, but of one whose whole deportment had been that of a friend and a benefactor."

For the murderous, perfidious conduct of the Spaniards both in Mexico and in Peru, there can be nothing but condemnation. At the same time, the history of their exploits is the record of the fulfilment of a remarkable prophetic utterance in the Book of Mormon.

This prediction has also been verified in later times.

In May, 1822, Augustus Iturbide proclaimed himself emperor of Mexico, and was crowned the following July under the name of Augustin I. His empire included, in addition to the Mexico of today, large portions of the United States and the Central American countries. But the Mexicans soon drove him from the throne into exile. The country treated him liberally, in recognition of former patriotic services. An allowance of \$25,000 a year was voted for

him, provided he would remain abroad. But some power seemed to prompt him to return. He arrived in Mexico in 1824, and was killed as an enemy of the country on July 19, that year.

Those who were engaged in the efforts to establish Archduke Maximilian, of Hapsburg, a brother of the late Emperor Francis Joseph, of Austria-Hungary, on a Mexican imperial throne, fared no better. The proposition, in all probability, came, with the consent of the pope, from Napoleon III, who, at any rate, furnished the military force for the enterprise. Marshal Bazaine was the commander of those troops. The outcome of it was one of the great tragedies of history. Maximilian, abandoned by Napoleon and betrayed by some of his generals, was captured and shot to death, June 18, 1867. His wife, Princess Carlote, a sister of King Leopold, of Belgium, became insane. Napoleon early in the war with Germany, 1870-1, was captured at Sedan and died in exile. Bazaine was captured with a force of 173,000 men, and he was, subsequently, tried by a court martial and condemned to degradation and death, although the death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Verily, "he that raiseth up a king against me"—in this land of liberty—"shall perish."

There is, perhaps, no more tragic experience in all history than that of Maximilian and Carlote. When Louis Napoleon III of France in 1863, decided to step into the imbroglio in Mexico, a committee of Mexican nobles went to Miramir and asked Maximilian to become their emperor. He hesitated, and Carlote is



said to have made the decision for him. They entered Vera Cruz harbor in 1864 on a French cruiser and were well received. The United States, having emerged from its Civil war troubles, made a vigorous re-statement of the Monroe doctrine, and Louis Napoleon hurriedly withdrew his troops. Bereft of his patron's support, Maximilian saw the scattered bands of guerillas become a united army, directed against his throne. Carlote, foreseeing doom, fled to France to plead with Napoleon to return his troops and support her husband.

How she humbled her pride before the French sovereign and subsequently pleaded in vain for aid from the Vatican form the most dramatic episodes of her long life. Her interview with Napoleon was held secret, but at its close an attendant heard her shriek: "I ought never to have forgotten what I am and what you are! I ought not to have forgotten that there is Bourbon blood in my veins! I should not have disgraced my descent by lowering myself before a Bonaparte and being led away by an adventurer!"

Louis Napoleon left in the midst of her tirade, and attendants found her swooning on the floor. Some accounts have it that her mind failed her then, but the fact remains that her will drove her to the Vatican, where she also created a scene.

After this fruitless appeal in her husband's behalf, she is said to have been found wandering the streets of Rome, washing her hands in the fountains and babbling incoherently. Accounts differ as to whether Carlote ever knew that Maximilian was betrayed and captured, or that he died with her name

on his lips before a firing squad at Queretaro, on June 19, 1867.

Such is some of the testimony of secular history to the truth of the Book of Mormon.

### GOLD AND SILVER

And we \* \* \* became exceedingly rich in gold, and in silver \* \* \* and also in iron and copper. (Jarom 8.)

That some of the Indians knew both gold and silver, iron and copper, is clear from this statement of Dr. Brinton, referring to the culture of the Cakchiquels:

"Gold and silver were classed under the general name *puvak*, and distinguished as white and yellow (*puvak*); iron and copper were both known as *chich*,<sup>18</sup> and distinguished also by their color. The metals formed an important element of their riches, and are constantly referred to as part of the tribute paid to the rulers."<sup>19</sup>

This is really a notable gloss on the passage quoted from Jarom, although, of course, the learned and gifted author, to whom students of the pre-historic races of America owe so much, never intended it as such. Dr. Brinton practically says of the Cakchiquels what Jarom tells us regarding the Nephites.

The Hebrews, too, classed copper, brass, and bronze as one metal, *nechosbeth*,<sup>20</sup> a word that has also

<sup>18</sup>As near as the word can be rendered in English letters. The "ch" is described as a sound between hard "c" and "k," combined with a hard aspirant.

<sup>19</sup>Brinton, *Libr. of Abor. Amer. Liter.*, Vol. 6, p. 19.

<sup>20</sup>From *nachash*, "to be hard," or "firm," said of metals.

been translated "steel."<sup>21</sup> In all probability the Chakchiquel "chic" or "khikh" is a close relative of the Hebrew "ne-*chosh*-eth."

### HONEY

And they did also carry with them deseret, which, by interpretation, is a honey bee. (Ether 2:3.)

In Guatemala, as in Yucatan, bees were domesticated for the wax as well as the honey.<sup>22</sup> That would seem to indicate the influence of Jaredite civilization.

### ISLE OF THE SEA

"And we are upon an isle of the sea. (2 Nephi 10:20.)

Elder George Reynolds remarks:

"How could Jacob have known, except by revelation, that the vast continent which the Nephites inhabited was entirely surrounded by the waters of the great oceans? \* \* \* \*  
And by the way, this simple statement is strong testimony of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. At the time that this portion of the sacred plates was translated \* \* \* it was not known to modern science that the American continent was indeed an island. Joseph Smith could not have received knowledge of this fact, so unhesitatingly affirmed, from any learned geographer or practical navigator. \* \* \*  
It was not, until repeated expeditions, that in May, 1847, the truth of the statement of Jacob could be affirmed from actual knowledge of the geographical features of the country, as at that date the explorations and surveys by land and sea, from east to west, were brought sufficiently near to leave the matter without a doubt. It was not until 1854 that the

<sup>21</sup>*Nechushah*; 2 Sam. 22:35; Job. 20:24; Ps. 18:34.

<sup>22</sup>See Brinton, *Libr. of Abor. Amer. Literature.*, Vol. 6, p. 15.

first ship's crew (that of Captain McClure), which ever sailed across the Arctic Ocean from the Pacific to the Atlantic, along the northern coast of America, returned from their perilous voyage. We thus find that human geographical knowledge could not have aided the prophet Joseph Smith in making this statement, had it originated with him and not with the son of Lehi."<sup>23</sup>

Dr. Brinton has this to say:

"The Indians almost universally believed the dry land they knew, to be part of a great island, everywhere surrounded by wide waters whose limits were unknown. Many tribes had vague myths of a journey from beyond this sea; many placed beyond it the home of the sun and of light, and the happy hunting grounds of the departed souls."<sup>24</sup>

Where, may we ask, could the Indians have received their information, if not from the same source from which Jacob, the brother of Nephi, derived his knowledge?

#### WHITE AND DELIGHTSOME

And many generations shall not pass away among them save they shall be a white and delightsome people.—2 Nephi, 30:6.

This remarkable prophecy was literally fulfilled when the Lamanites in the Land of Nephi were converted through the instrumentality of Aaron and his brethren; for then the curse was removed (Alma 23: 18.) The same happened twenty or thirty years later, when some Lamanites joined the Nephites. "Their curse was taken from them and their skin

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<sup>23</sup>*Story of the Book of Mormon*, p. 253, fifth edition.

<sup>24</sup>*Library of Abor. Amer. Literature*, Vol. 5, p. 134.

became white like unto the Nephites." (3 Ne. 2:15.)

The prophecy in 2 Ne. 30:6 should be compared with Words of Mormon, v. 8, where the inspired author says he prays that his brethren may again "be a delightful people;" also with Mormon 5:17, where it is said that the Lamanites "were once a delightful people," and with Moroni 9:12, where the prophet says they had once been a "civil and a delightful people." For these passages, by not mentioning the color of the skin, prove that the principal thought in the expression "white and delightful" is centered in the change of disposition, as well as in the complexion.

There is abundant evidence that the Indians have the race characteristics necessary to make them, under proper conditions, a "white and delightful people." The weaving art of the Navajos has become famous, and American girls have not disdained to wear "sweaters" blazing in Navajo colors, red, green, yellow, white and black, with typical Indian designs. In the *Literary Digest* for May 6, 1922, there are reproductions of water colors, the originals being drawn by Ta-e, a Pueblo Indian, showing the spontaneous budding of a new art among the Indians. According to Leopold Godowsky, the pianist, as reported in the press, Oct. 14, 1921, many of the Mexican Indians are excellent musicians. The conductor of the symphony orchestra in the City of Mexico was at that time a full-blood Indian, and M. Godowsky said he was "a man of high musical attainments and broad education, who had studied

much in the musical centers of Europe.” The war record of the American Indians is simply wonderful. Of 17,313 registered by the draft boards only 228 asked for deferred classification or exemption. Eight thousand entered the military service, and 6,000 of these were volunteers. The following from a report by Brigadier General Enoch H. Crowder to the President speaks volumes for the Indians:<sup>25</sup>

“It was the Prussian Guard against the American Indian on the morning of October 8 in the hills of Champagne. When it was all over, the Prussian Guards were farther on their way back toward the Aisne, and warriors of thirteen Indian tribes looked down on the town of St. Etienne. The Indians—one company of them—were fighting with the Thirty-sixth division, made up of Texas and Oklahoma rangers and oil men, for the most part.”

In 1922, according to reliable statistics, there were about 350,000 Indians in the United States, scattered over 48 states. They belonged to 189 tribes. On October 18, 1922, representatives of the Society of Indians, in session at Kansas City, Mo., passed a resolution demanding the right of franchise and all the other privileges that belong to American citizenship. Students of the American aborigines place them very high in the scale of intelligence.<sup>26</sup> They have every characteristic necessary to enable them to become a “white and delightful people,” and this fact, now generally recognized, was first pointed out in the Book of Mormon.

According to figures presented to congress during the

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<sup>25</sup>*Salt Lake Tribune*, Feb. 16, 1922.

<sup>26</sup>See Dr. Brinton's *The American Race*, pp. 41-3.

1922-3 session, by Commissioner of Indian Affairs Charles H. Burke, the Indians are rapidly becoming independent. One-third are no longer under the supervision of the Indian Bureau. Nearly one million acres of land are being farmed by about 43,000 Indians, and 50,000 families are living in permanent houses. The total wealth of the Indians in the United States is estimated at one billion dollars, which would be almost \$3,000 per capita. The Osages are the wealthiest, because of the value of their oil land in Oklahoma. Mr. Philip Howell, editor of *The American Indian Weekly*, himself an educated Indian, is of the opinion that the destiny of his people is to be assimilated with the white race. Government figures, he points out, show there are only 9,000 full blooded Indians left in the country, while the mixed Indian and white population totals 350,000. He also gives the information that the Indians have found tremendous interest in the Latter-day Saints' beliefs concerning their origin because of their numerous traditions which coincide with the Bible. This is especially true of Indian traditions of the flood, of which all Indians have vivid tales, says Mr. Howell.—(*Deseret News*, July 28, 1927.)

#### “NEPHI” AS A TITLE

And whoso should reign in his stead were called by the people, second Nephi, third Nephi, and so forth, according to the reigns of the kings.—Jacob 1:11.

The word *nephi* is the Hebrew *nevi* (or, perhaps, more correctly, *nebhi*), which means, *prophet*. But “prophet” is the official title of one who is authorized to “speak for,” or instead of, God. As a “seer” his mind is opened to see visions and to receive revelations; as a prophet he communicates to the people that which he has thus received.

The “kings” in this choice land of promise were not to be kings in the sense of the Greek *basilevs* or the Roman *rex*; still less in the sense of the despots of the middle ages. They were to be the representa-

tives of God, and exercise the functions of their office as his stewarts. David was such a king. He was also a prophet (Acts 2:30), and as such a "man after God's own heart," although that can not be said of him in his private life, or conduct, at all times. The rulers in this country were to hold a position similar to that of Samuel in Israel, anciently, or of Moses, the greatest of all the prophets (*nebhiim*) of old.<sup>27</sup>

### DAVID AND SOLOMON

Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord; \* \* \* wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord for there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; for I, the Lord God, delighteth in the chastity of women. And whoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts.—Jacob 2:24-8.

Different opinions concerning the true meaning of this text have been expressed by readers of the Book of Mormon. The reference to David and Solomon shows clearly *what* the Lord censured, and *why*.

In the case of David, the Lord said through the prophet Nathan:

"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto

<sup>27</sup>"Nephis" in 1 Esdras 5:21 is the "children of Nebo" in Ezra 2:29. Nebo is reasonably conjectured to be connected with the Hebrew *nebhi*, "prophet," for Nebo was the god of letters.—Smith's *Bible Dictionary*. Isa. 46:1; Jer. 48:1.



thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.”<sup>28</sup>

That was David’s awful sin. He had not only taken a wife without divine sanction—another man’s wife at that—but he had committed foul murder, in order to get possession of her. I fancy his sin would have been as great, had he committed murder, to come in possession of houses or land, or even, as Nathan expressed it, “one little ewe lamb.” Ahab and Jezebel were both sentenced to death, through the mouth of the prophet Elijah, for the murder of Naboth for the sake of his vineyard.<sup>29</sup>

In the case of Solomon we read:

“But King Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; of the nations concerning which the Lord said to the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in to you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. \* \* \* For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.”<sup>30</sup>

Solomon, as is here shown, sinned in making social alliances with idolaters, contrary to the commandment of God, and in adopting features of their

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<sup>28</sup>2 Sam. 12:7-9.

<sup>29</sup>1 Kings 21:17-24.

<sup>30</sup>1 Kings 11:1-4.

worship. It was this that kindled the anger of the Lord against him.<sup>31</sup>

Now it appears that the Nephites, shortly after the death of Nephi, began to yield to the desires of their depraved hearts, and sought to justify their carnal practices by what is recorded of David and Solomon. The prophet Jacob, who had succeeded Nephi, was, therefore, directed by the Lord to explain to them the awful consequences of sexual indulgences outside the sacred precincts of divine sanction, as exemplified in the experiences of those two kings of the Jews, and to command them to have only one wife and no concubines, unless the Lord for some special purpose, should give them a different law. See Jacob 2:30.

The American Indians, at the time of the conquest, were quite generally practicing plural marriage.

Among the Apaches, he who could support a number of wives was greatly honored, and the Apache women are said to have been remarkably chaste. A Pericui was permitted to take as many wives as he desired. The Mexicans practiced plurality of wives, and some had concubines as part of the family circle. The Chichimecs, however, had only one wife at a time, but frequent divorces. Prostitution was tolerated and regulated. The Mayas generally acknowledged only one woman as wife, but the lords and chiefs had concubines. The Lacandones practiced polygamy, each wife having her own house. In Honduras the women had a reputation for chastity, but plurality of wives was the rule. The

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<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, vv. 5-11.

Carib who had several wives provided a home for each. On the Isthmus the caciques married as many women as they could support, but only the first was *the* wife. Some of the natives were notorious for licentiousness. The Moquis, it is said, had periodical festivals which ended in drunkenness and promiscuous indulgence.<sup>32</sup> The Peruvians, according to all accounts, practiced polygamy on a large scale. The ruling Inca had thousands of "virgins of the sun" at his disposal, though he had only one Coya, or queen, and she was always his sister. The great lords and nobles were also permitted a plurality of wives, but the common mortals had only one wife, possibly for economic reasons.<sup>33</sup>

As is clear from the text at the head of this note, the moral status of the Nephites began to decline, shortly after the death of Nephi, and it became necessary to abolish an institution which they abused to their own injury and condemnation. It is equally clear, from secular history, that the descendants of Nephi did not generally keep the law as given through Jacob, though it must be admitted that among many of the Indians chastity was a precious and highly valued jewel.

#### THE CHOIRS ABOVE

And my immortal spirit may join the choirs above in singing the praises of a just God.—Mosiah 2:28.

This is an extract from the farewell address of

<sup>32</sup>Bancroft, *Native Races*, Vol. 1, pp. 512-14, 551, 633, 703, 729, 731, 772; Vol. 2, pp. 266, 671.

<sup>33</sup>Prescott, *Conquest of Peru*, Vol. 1, pp. 98-100.

King Benjamin to his people.<sup>34</sup> He expresses the desire to be fully prepared to "join the choirs above." Compare Mormon 7:7, where we are told that those who are found guiltless will have the privilege of dwelling in the presence of God and singing "ceaseless praises with the choirs above."

Does it seem improbable that there are "choirs" in the realms inhabited by the redeemed? The ability to sing and to compose and play music is a divine gift, if there ever was one. The very purpose of it is to enable us to praise the Lord and to glorify his name. There is no music so inspiring, so elevating, so refining as religious music, and it is a great question whether any other kind, especially so-called martial music, is not best characterized as a poor imitation, absolutely worthless.

We know that John, the beloved, on several occasions, in his Apocalyptic visions became aware of singing and music of heavenly origin. (Rev. 5:9; 14:3; 15:3.) We also know that, at the time of the birth of our Lord, a heavenly host sang praise to God, audibly to mortal ear. (Luke 2:13, 14.)

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<sup>34</sup>This address of King Benjamin might well be compared with an address which the Nahua high priest delivered when their kings were anointed.

The High Priest:

"Consider well, sire, the great honor which your subjects have conferred upon you, and remember, now that you are king, that it is your duty to watch over your people with great care, to look upon them as your children, to preserve them from suffering, and to protect the weak from the oppression of the strong," etc.—Bancroft, *Native Races*, Vol. 2, p. 146.

King Benjamin:

"I have not sought gold nor silver; neither have I suffered that ye should be confined in dungeons, nor that ye should make slaves of one another \* \* \* and even I, myself, have labored with my own hands, that I might serve you, and that ye should not be laden with taxes, and that there should nothing come upon you which was grievous to be born, etc."

And here, let me, in all humility, place on record that to my own personal knowledge singing and music were heard in the Manti temple at the time of the dedication of that sacred building. On two separate occasions I had the privilege of hearing the super-earthly harmonies. The first was just before the beginning of the services on the day I attended. It sounded as a very distant organ music, for a brief moment, as if a door had been opened, through which the harmony reached us, and then almost immediately closed. The second occasion was a few days later, when I was preparing for work for some of my friends on the other side. It sounded as the singing of male voices, also for a brief moment, and came as from a distance. There were other manifestations during those days, never to be forgotten. During the services I noticed that some of the Twelve, notably Elder Heber J. Grant, now the President of the Church, and the late John W. Taylor, were surrounded by rays of light, resembling the colors of the rainbow but softer. These manifestations were recorded at the time by the press.

Yes, there are choirs on the other side, and bands, and John describes their performances as "the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder:  
\* \* \* and the voice of harpers harping with their harps." (Rev. 14:2.)

#### THE EAST WIND

If my people shall sow filthiness, they shall reap the east wind, which bringeth immediate destruction.—Mosiah 7:31; 12:6.

The reference to the "east wind" as an agent of destruction shows that the author of these texts was influenced by a mode of thinking that obtained in Palestine, anciently. In that country the east wind is very hurtful to vegetation. In the winter it is dry and cold, and in the summer dry and hot. It carries off the moisture of the leaves rapidly, and withers them. On the Mediterranean it is known as a "levanter" and is dangerous to the sailors. It was in such a storm that Paul was shipwrecked and, with all the crew and passengers, stranded on the island of Malta. See Acts 27:14-44.

#### DEATH BY FIRE

And now, when Abinadi had said these words, he fell, having suffered death by fire.—Mosiah 17:20.

Abinadi was consigned to the flames for his testimony of Jesus, among the people of Lehi-Nephi, under the reign of the wicked King Noah. King Noah, himself, suffered a similar fate, when he fell into the hands of his enemies. (Mos. 19:20.) Later on, many of the Lamanites were put to death by fire. (25:5.) Some of the disciples of our Lord were cast into furnaces of fire, although they were miraculously rescued, as were the three Hebrew children in Babylon. (4 Ne. 32.) From all of which it appears that the people in this western world, at the time covered by the Book of Mormon history, were in the habit of consigning captives to the flames.

Burning of prisoners was extensively practiced by natives at the time of the arrival in this country by the Spaniards. The Apaches used to put prisoners

to death by fire.<sup>35</sup> In Tezcucó, the punishment for certain unnatural crimes was torture and burning at the stake.<sup>36</sup> At the festival in honor of *Xiuhhtecutli*, the god of fire, the people raised a "May pole," elaborately decorated. At the appointed time, the officiating priests hurled a number of prisoners, stripped of clothing and bound hand and foot, upon a great heap of smouldering coals, where they suffered untold agony, until raked out and slaughtered on the altar, whereupon the people enjoyed themselves singing and dancing around the pole.<sup>37</sup> At the termination of an age—a cycle of 52 years was so called—the sacred fires were permitted to go out, and a new fire was kindled by friction of sticks placed on the wounded breast of a captive provided for that purpose. The flame was soon communicated to a funeral pyre on which the victim was consumed.<sup>38</sup> Is there no historical connection between the flames of persecution of which we read in the Book of Mormon and the cruelties practiced, sometimes in behalf of "justice" and sometimes as religion, by the later occupants of American soil?

That the Jews in Palestine burned human victims in honor of Moloch is clear from Isaiah 30:33 and Ezek. 20:26, and other passages.

#### THE FATHER AND THE SON

The Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the Son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and the son.—Mosiah 15:2.

<sup>35</sup>Bancroft, *Native Races*, Vol. 1, p. 498.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 467.

<sup>37</sup>Bancroft, *Native Races*, Vol. 2, p. 329.

<sup>38</sup>Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*, Vol. 3, p. 129.

Abinadi here teaches us that our Redeemer is a divine person who came among the children of men, and that he is called "the Son of God," because he dwelt in a tabernacle of flesh, although, as conceived by the power of God, he is called "the Father." This is a very clear statement of the doctrine of the two-fold nature of Christ. He is not only a teacher, a prophet, a reformer; he is God and man. He is both the Father and the Son.

"Jesus Christ is the Son of Elohim, both as spiritual and bodily offspring; that is to say, Elohim is literally the Father of the spirit of Jesus Christ, and also of the body in which Jesus Christ performed his mission in the flesh, and which body died on the cross, and was afterwards taken up by the process of resurrection, and is now the immortalized tabernacle of the eternal spirit of our Lord and Savior."—From *The Father and the Son*, a doctrinal exposition by the First Presidency and the Twelve; *Mill. Star*, Vol. 78, pp. 482-500; *Doctr. and Cov., Commentary*, p. 556.

#### THE WRITING ON THE WALL

Abinadi who interpreted the writing which was upon the wall of the temple, which was written by the finger of God.—Alma 10:2.

We know no more about this writing than what is stated here. But the fact to note is that the ancient Americans, as the ancient Egyptians, recorded important historical events on the walls of their public buildings. At some time the Lord himself had written something on a temple wall erected by Nephites, presumably, and Abinadi had been given the gift of interpretation. Is it impossible that this miraculous writing was the starting point of the strange Amer-



ican hieroglyphs, which were developed gradually and which survived after the records of the Nephites had been hidden and their alphabet and speech forgotten?

### GOLD, SILVER, AND BARLEY

A senum of silver was equal to a senine of gold; and either for a measure of barley, and also for a measure of every kind of grain.—Alma 11:7.

In this verse and the context (vv. 4-19) information is given regarding the currency and standard of value as established by Mosiah II, who became ruler in Zarahemla about 125, B. C.

#### GOLD

Senine is the Unit.

- 2 Senines equal 1 Seon
- 4 Senines equal 1 Shum
- 7 Senines equal 1 Limnah

#### SILVER

Senum is the Unit.

- 2 Senums equal 1 Amnor
- 4 Senums equal 1 Ezrom
- 7 Senums equal 1 Onti

A gold senine was equal in value to a silver senum, and a certain measure of barley or any other grain was equal in value to either.

The smaller pieces were:

- 1 Shiblun was equal to half a Senum or a Senine.
- 1 Shiblum was equal to a quarter of a Senum or a Senine.
- 1 Leah was equal to one eighth of a Senum or a Senine.

These were, probably, silver pieces. An *antion* was a gold piece equal in value to 3 Shiblons or one senine and a half.

It is not to be supposed that these metal pieces were stamped coins, such as we have. Coins were used in Greece perhaps as early as the 8th century,

B. C., but in the Old Testament there is no mention of coins until after the Babylonian captivity. According to 1 Macc., Simon Maccabæus received permission to coin money, from Antiochus II, about 140, B. C. Previous to that time, silver was the main currency, and it was generally weighed. *Shekel* means a "weight." The "pieces of money" Jacob paid for a parcel of land are called *kesitab*, "lambs." It is possible that they were so called because the weights used to determine their value were formed in imitation of a lamb's head.<sup>39</sup> Such weights were used in Egypt very early, as well as imitations of ox heads, birds, etc. Gold was used very early as currency, generally in the shape of rings. The "gold out of the bag" mentioned by Isaiah (46:6) was probably rings. Lehi was familiar with this kind of currency.

Elder George Reynolds, in his *Story of the Book of Mormon*, calls attention to the fact that the Nephite names for their money were either identical with, or derived from, names of places or persons, analogous with our "Napoleons," "Louis d'ors," "sovereigns," etc. *Limnab*, however, may be related to the Hebrew *maneh*, "number," "portion," "weight," with a preformative "l," "for." *Maneh* is the *mina* of the ancient Greeks, and our "money," "mint," and their derivatives. *Seon* may be from the Hebrew *seah*, a corn measure. (Gen. 18:6.) *Shum* seems to be the Hebrew *shum*, to "value." *Shiblon* and *shiblum* may be related to the Hebrew *shibolim*, "ears of corn," since grain, among the Nephites, was the standard of value.

<sup>39</sup>Or the picture of a lamb may have been scratched on them.

Among the Mexican and Central American Indians, at the time of the conquest, cacao beans were extensively used as a medium of exchange, as grain was among the Nephites. The Nahuas kept beans in sacks, 24,000 to a sack, for larger transactions. In addition, they used gold dust in quills, and copper pieces in the form of a T. Among the Mayas, beans were valuable. A hundred of them would pay for a slave. The Mayas also had copper bells, precious stones, and copper hatches as circulating media. The Peruvians, it has been asserted, had no currency, but Mr. Sqier, in his Peru,<sup>40</sup> says that small, thin pieces of gold, silver, and copper, round and square, each pierced with a small hole as if intended to be strung like a coin of the Chinese, have been found at Chimu. Rafinesque in *The American Nations*,<sup>41</sup> says, "Metallic coins were little known except in Central America; but bits of silver, gold, tin, iron, were used as such. The other mediums of exchange were skins, mats, nuts, cacao, shells, beads, etc." Garcia, quoted by Mrs. Simon,<sup>42</sup> declares that iron money in the shape of the skull of a tortoise was in use in Paragua. In mounds in the Mississippi valley bits of metal have been found, which, it has been thought, the Mound Builders used as money.<sup>43</sup>

Special interest attaches to the statement that the Nahuas used copper pieces in the form of a T. The Hebrew "T" (tav) means a "mark," and especially a "signature." It was the "brand" that mark-

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<sup>40</sup>Page 172.

<sup>41</sup>Page 55.

<sup>42</sup>*The Ten Tribes*, p. 13.

<sup>43</sup>See Bancroft, *Native Races*, Vol. 2, pp. 382 and 737.

ed a human being as somebody's property. In the early Hebrew the *tav* was written as a cross, and a metal piece in the same form would be a particularly appropriate representation of property value. But where did the Nahuas get that idea, if not from a Nephite ancestry?

In the *Deseret News* for Dec. 12 and 19, 1860, and the *Millennial Star*, Vol. 23, p. 93, there is an account of an old copper coin, which was exhibited at the *News*' office by Hon. George Peacock, of Manti, Utah, and which had been found by an explorer along the Colorado river. The coin was shown to Prof. W. W. Phelps, who gave the following interpretation of the characters on it:

On the obverse: "*The king Hagagadonihab over the kingdom near the sea sends to all greeting: One senine.*"

On the reverse: "In the 95th year of the Kingdom of Christ, 9th year of my reign: Peace and life."

Motto: "Weapon to Weapon; Life for Life."

The opinion is expressed that the coin is 1,765 years old, and that it is a Nephite senine, or farthing, as mentioned in 3 Nephi, chapt. 12:26.

The item is mentioned here for what it is worth. The senine of the Book of Mormon is a gold coin, equal in value to a certain measure of grain, and also one day's wages of a judge. (Alma 11:3-7.) From this passage it will be seen that a senine, in the days of Alma was a gold piece, but it is not impossible that later a small copper coin may have been in use and been known as a "senine." Of that there is no strong evidence, so far.

## RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body; that is from death; even from the first death unto life, that they can die no more.—Alma 11:45.

The following comments on this all-important subject will be read with interest:

“We understand that when we are unclothed in the present state, then we are prepared to be clothed upon with immortality. These bodies will return to dust, but our hope and faith are that we will receive these bodies again from the elements—that we will receive the very organization that we have here, and that if we are faithful to the principles of freedom, we shall then be prepared to endure eternally. Can the wicked be brought forth to endure? No, they will be destroyed.”—Brigham Young, July 19, 1857; *Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 5, p. 53.

“I expect, by the power of the resurrection and the quickening power of the celestial glory, that my memory will be perfected, and that I will be able to remember all the acts, duties, and doings of my own life. I will also remember, most correctly and perfectly, every act of benevolence that has ever been done to me in the name of the Lord and because of my calling.”—Parley P. Pratt, Sept. 7, 1856; *Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 5, p. 196.

“So far as we are concerned, we were taken from the earth, and we may expect to return to it again; and that portion of me which is pure, after the dross of this mortality is separated from it, I expect will be Brother Heber. It is that which will be resurrected; but all that is not pure will remain; that is, it will not go back into any body again; and if there are ten parts out of the hundred which are dross and corruption, they will remain in the earth. I do not expect to take that up again, but I expect to take up the purified element that will endure for ever.”—Heber C. Kimball, *Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 5, p. 107.

“The old Book talks about a city called the New Jerusalem. The passage I refer to is in the Revelations by John, 21:8-11: ‘But the fearful and unbelieving and the abominable and murderers and whoremongers and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.’ ”—Geo. A. Smith, July 26, 1857; *Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 5, p. 61.

“The resurrection of mortal bodies, on earth, began with Jesus, who on the third day rose from the grave, and after his sojourn among the children of men, took his body with him into heaven. This was the first fruit of the resurrection. Since that time, the resurrection of man may have continued, and no doubt will continue, in the future; for many spirits have laid down their earthly bodies, and all must be raised from the grave. In the resurrection, order and law will prevail, and the just deserts of men will be kept in mind.” (*Rational Theology*, Dr. John A. Widtsoe.)

### AMERICA THE LAND OF LIBERTY

When he had poured out his soul to God, he named all the land which was south of the land Desolation, yea, and in fine, all the land, both on the north and on the south—a chosen land, and the land of liberty.—Alma 46:17.

Lehi prophesied (2 Ne. 1:7) that America would be “a land of liberty” to all whom God should bring here, provided they would keep the commandments of God; otherwise they would be “scattered and smitten” (v. 11.) Moroni again dedicated the country to the cause of liberty. He tore his coat, or cloak, selected a suitable piece on which he wrote an impressive “slogan,” and made this his standard. The coat was torn in remembrance of the rent coat of Joseph, and round this standard the friends of liberty gathered themselves. (Alma 46:12-27.)

The Indians, as found by the Europeans, were great on carrying flags, or standards. They carried them in processions at religious festivals, at funerals, in war, etc. The Nahuas had flags of paper, or cloth, on which black bars were printed, which must have given them the appearance of having been torn. Others were decorated with feathers.<sup>44</sup>

These men dedicated the entire American continents to the cause of liberty, and not for their own benefit alone, but for all men, whom the Lord should lead to come here, and who would serve him under the ensign of liberty.

"It is true, this is Zion—North and South America are Zion, and the land where the Lord commenced his work, and where he commenced he will finish. This is the land of Zion; but we are not yet prepared to go and establish the Center stake of Zion. The Lord tried that in the first place \* \* \* now it is for you and me to prepare to return back."—Brigham Young, *Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 11, p. 324.

"When we contemplate the designs of the country, and its influence, we contemplate not merely our own liberty, happiness, and progress, nationally and individually, but we contemplate the emancipation of the world, the flowing of the nations to this fountain, and to the occupation of these elements, blending together in one common brotherhood. They will thus seek deliverance from oppression, not in the style of revolution, but by voluntarily emerging into freedom and the free occupation of the elements of life."—Parley P. Pratt, Oration, July 4th, 1853; *Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 1, p. 141.

Garcilasso de la Vega tells us that the Peruvians had no word for "king," but that their equivalent for that title was *Hatun Apu*, "great lord." The

<sup>44</sup>Bancroft, *Native Races*, Vol. 2, pp. 323, 405; Vol. 3, p. 405.

same remark, probably, applies to all the prehistoric Indians. They had "chiefs" and "great lords" and "melechs" in the ancient, Semitic meaning of that word, "providers." But they had no "kings" in the modern sense of the title. However, the Incas in Peru and the "Chief-of-men" of the Aztecs had become veritable despots before they were destroyed.

"These Colonies (Jaredites, Lehites, Mulekites) were located in the southern part of North America, in Central America, and in the northern part of South America. And all this land, as well as that into which they migrated to the north and the south, was designated by the Lord as the Land of Promise." —George F. Richards, October 7, 1922; *Conference Report*, p. 81.

#### IN THE MORNING

And it was in the morning, and the darkness dispersed from off the face of the land.—3 Nephi 10:9.

Orson Pratt calls attention to the fact that, making an allowance of 7½ hours for the difference in longitude between Palestine and the land Bountiful, the three days of darkness at the latter place must have begun and ended at 7:30 a. m., and that the time of the death of our Savior must have been that hour in Bountiful. He comments as follows:

"This book, the Book of Mormon, informs us that the time of day at which Jesus was crucified, I mean the time of day in America, was in the morning; the New Testament tells us that Jesus was crucified in the afternoon, between the 6th and 9th hour according to the Jews' reckoning. They commenced their reckoning at six o'clock in the morning, and consequently, the sixth hour would be 12 o'clock at noon, and the ninth hour 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Jesus, from the sixth to the ninth



hour, or in other words, from 12 o'clock to 3, was hanging on the cross. Now, the Book of Mormon, or the historians whose records it contains, when relating the incidents that transpired at the time of the crucifixion—the darkness that was spread over the face of the land, the earthquakes, the rending of rocks, the sinking of the cities, and the whirlwinds—say these events occurred in the morning; they also say that darkness was spread over the face of the land for the space of three days. In Jerusalem it was only three hours. But the Lord gave them a special sign in this country, and the darkness lasted three days, and at the expiration of three days and three nights of darkness it cleared off, and it was in the morning. That shows that, according to the time in this country, the crucifixion must have taken place in the morning.

“Says one, ‘Is not this a contradiction between the Book of Mormon and the New Testament?’ To an unlearned person it would really be a contradiction. \* \* \* ‘But,’ says one, ‘how do you account for it?’ \* \* \* Simply by the difference in longitude. This would make a difference of time of several hours; for when it would be 12 at noon in Jerusalem it would only be half past four in the morning \* \* \* where the Book of Mormon was then being written. \* \* \* If the Book of Mormon had said that the crucifixion took place in the afternoon we should have known at once that it could not be true.”<sup>45</sup>

This is evidence that can not be refuted. If the Book of Mormon had been fiction, written by an unlearned author, the difference in time would not have been even thought of.

#### OUR LORD APPEARS IN BOUNTIFUL

Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.—3 Ne. 11:10.

The portion of the Book of Mormon from which

<sup>45</sup>*Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 13, p. 128.

this text is taken contains the account of the appearance of the resurrected Savior in the land of Bountiful, and his teachings and instructions. See 3 Nephi 11-26.

Is there, outside the Book of Mormon, any evidence whatever of the truth of this wonderful story?

Perhaps this question is best answered by a brief statement of what Father Remesel relates in his History. He affirms that when Bishop B. Las Casas came to his bishopric in 1545, he instructed an ecclesiastic in Campeche, whose name was Francisco Hernandez, to visit the Indians and inform them of the principal doctrines of the faith of the Spaniards. Some time afterwards this ecclesiastic informed Las Casas that he had met a chief who had explained the religious beliefs of the Indians to him. The Indians, he said, believed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They called the Father, *Yezona*; the Son, *Babab*; and the Holy Spirit, *Ec-Ruach*. The Son was born of a virgin called, *Chiribrias*, whose mother was *Yxchel*. The Son, they said, was crowned with thorns and put to death by being placed on a beam of wood. On the third day he rose, and immediately afterwards the Holy Spirit came and filled the earth with whatsoever it stood in need of. Being questioned about how the Indians had obtained this information, he answered that the lords had instructed their sons, and that these instructions had come down from generation to generation.<sup>46</sup>

I am, of course, aware of the existing disposi-

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<sup>46</sup>Cogullodo, *Historia de Yutican* (sic!), Lib. IV, Chap. VI; in Kingsborough's *Antiq. Mex.*, quoted by Mrs. Simon, *The Ten Tribes*, p. 219.

tion to discredit the early historians, whenever they relate something for which modern research can, as yet, offer no acceptable explanation. But, is it fair to stamp them all as falsifiers or dupes because they tell us what seems marvelous?

I can understand that the early explorers and missionaries might sometimes have been misled, and that they read into the stories related to them a meaning which was not there. But, after every reasonable allowance for misunderstandings, the fact remains that there must have been some solid, tangible basis for a report like that of Father Hernandez to Las Casas, and many similar accounts.

Whence, then, did the Indians get that basis on which their marvelous traditions rested? Whence came to them the fundamental principles of their religion, so nearly like those proclaimed by our Lord, that many held, as some yet claim, that the gospel had been preached here by one of the first Apostles of our Lord?

Is there any satisfactory answer to that question except that given in the Book of Mormon?

#### IF THE GOSPEL IS REJECTED

When the gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all those things, and shall reject the fulness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will bring the fulness of my gospel from among them.—3 Nephi 16:10.

Elder Orson Pratt<sup>47</sup> considers that this prediction, was fulfilled, when, beginning with the year 1847, the Lord removed the Church to the so-called American Desert, a thousand miles from the boundaries of civilization. The gospel was rejected and the prophet slain, and the Church was brought "from among" the gentiles as predicted by Nephi. "God," says Orson Pratt, "who can foresee all events among the children of men, had his eye fixed on the gathering of his children before the Church was organized, and he predicted that they should come out of every nation under heaven; not only from the settled portions of the gentile nation, but they should be brought forth out of the midst of that gentile nation, just as we have been."

#### SHINE FORTH IN DARKNESS

Touch these stones, O Lord, with thy finger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness—Ether 3:4; 6:3.

Noah, it will be remembered, was according to the English Bible translation, commanded to make a "window" to the ark. But it is pretty well agreed that the translation of the word rendered "window" is not good. The word means literally a shining object, and rabbinical tradition has it that the shining object was really a stone which the Patriarch had found in the river Pison and which was made luminous.<sup>48</sup> If this tradition is based on fact, the Brother of Jared must have known it, and that would account

<sup>47</sup>*Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 13, p. 133.

<sup>48</sup>See Dr. Clark's *Commentary*.

for his prayer and the miraculous answer that he obtained.

That precious stones can be made to shine seems to have been demonstrated by scientific experiments. In June, 1920, Dr. T. Coke Squance, of Sunderland, England, was reported to have succeeded in changing a sapphire of faint pink hue into a beautiful ruby, by means of the action of radium. "During the process," the report said, "the lustre was increased to such an extent that the stone had almost the brilliance of a diamond." Later reports had it that experiments conducted at the United States bureau of mines, at Reno, Nev., had given equally startling results. "Colorless Colorado topazes," it was reported, "have been given a rich yellow tinting." It seems, then, that the Brother of Jared, when praying the Lord to touch the stones and make them luminant, was in possession, by some means, of a knowledge that scientists of today are just beginning to dip into.

A scientific invention was announced in Philadelphia on Oct. 20, 1926, by Dr. W. D. Coolidge before the Franklin institute. It consisted of a new cathode ray tube. According to the accounts, cathode rays in a darkened room became visible as a purple glow, and a crystal of calcite placed in these rays became glowing, as if red hot, although it was perfectly cold, and continued to glow for some time. Granite also became luminous.<sup>49</sup> It might, therefore, not be unreasonable to suppose that God could make the stones in the barges luminous.

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<sup>49</sup>*Juvenile Instructor*, Dec. 1926, p. 691.

## THE BODY OF MY SPIRIT

This body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit.—Ether 3:16.

This is given to us as the word of the Lord to the brother of Jared, explaining to him what the meaning is of the expression, "Men were created, in the beginning, after mine own image." Orson Pratt, in a sermon, April 13, 1856, observes:

"This is the only place in the Book of Mormon where the pre-existence of man is clearly spoken of, and this was revealed before the organization of the Church, and is a doctrine which was not in possession of the Christian world; hence, it shows that it was dictated by a Spirit capable of revealing a doctrine unknown to the Christian World—the pre-existence of man."<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>*Jour. of Dis.*, Vol. 3, p. 352.