

CHAPTER 16

WHAT THE BOOK OF MORMON REALLY IS

According to Bible chronology, which is the best we have, it was in the year 2218 B. C. that Nimrod, the son of Cush, who was the son of Ham, the son of Noah, established Babel, or Babylon.

It was at that time and place that the language of the people was confounded and because of the attempt of the people of the city to build a tower, "whose top may reach unto heaven, did the Lord scatter them abroad upon all the face of the earth." (Gen. 11:1-9.)

The city was later destroyed by Sennacherib, king of the Assyrian Empire. After the downfall of Assyria Babylon became the capital city of the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar, who greatly enlarged and beautified it.

The Babylonian Kingdom later fell to King Cyrus of Persia, and was occupied as the capital of the Medo-Persian Kingdom until its abandonment, when it fell into decay, and "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency," became as Sodom and Gomorrah. It has never again been inhabited, but wild beasts of the desert and the bittern have made it their habitation, as the prophet Isaiah declared that they should do more than two hundred years before its fall. (Isaiah 13:19-22 and 14:23.)

It was from Babylon, at the time of the confusion

of tongues, and scattering of the people upon all the face of the earth that one of the colonies referred to in the Book of Mormon left Asia and under the leadership of inspired prophets found its way to America.

While Judea was tributary to Babylon, B. C. 610, Neubachadnezzar made Zedekiah king of Judea. He was the son of Hamutal, who was the daughter of Jeremiah, the prophet. He reigned eleven years, when he rebelled against the government of Nebuchadnezzar, whose armies besieged and took Jerusalem and made the king a prisoner, and after he had witnessed the execution of his sons the eyes of Zedekiah were put out, and in this condition he was held in captivity during the remainder of his life.

Zedekiah, like others of his immediate predecessors, was a wicked and idolatrous king. He refused to give heed to the words of the prophets who were raised up to warn the people of the destruction which threatened them, and the downfall of their kingdom, unless they turned from their idolatry to worship the living God.

It was at this time that two small colonies of people, the first under the leadership of the prophet Lehi and the second under the leadership of Mulek, one of the sons of Zedekiah, who escaped the vengeance of the Babylonians, left Jerusalem and reached the New World, America, which to them was a land of promise. After reaching America these latter two colonies were amalgamated in one, and were after known as Nephites.

The Book of Mormon is a brief abridgment of the history of these three peoples, as it was kept by the Nephite historians during a period of more than one thousand years.

The record kept by the Nephite people covers a period from 600 B. C. to A. D. 421. From that date to the discovery of America by Columbus, A. D. 1492, a period of more than one thousand years, we have no definite information regarding America. Whether other people found their way to this continent and intermingled their blood with that of the Nephite people we do not know.

We do know, however, that when Lewis and Clark reached the mouth of the Columbia River in 1804 they found the decayed remains of either Chinese or Japanese ships on the shores of the Pacific, which the Indians told them landed there with strange men on board, many years before.

It is a well established fact that in 983 A. D., Eric the Red and other northmen sailed away from Norway, discovered Greenland and established settlements on both the eastern and western sides of the southern extremity of that great island. They explored the eastern coast of what is now the northern part of the United States, and established temporary settlements. Because of political disturbances in Scandinavia communication with these people, which had been continuous for a long period of time, was discontinued and after many years when people from Norway went to Greenland to make inquiry regarding their relatives

who had gone there they found the towns which had been established deserted. The ruins are still to be seen, the disappearance of the people remains a mystery.

From the old Welsh annals we learn that in the latter part of the twelfth century, at the death of Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, his sons contended violently for sovereignty. His son Madoc, rather than engage in the conflict, procured a number of ships and sailed away determined to find a land where he could live in peace. After many months Madoc returned with a part of his company, fitted out ten ships, and with a large number of his countrymen sailed away, and was never again heard from.

Baldwin says that Madoc probably settled in America in the vicinity of the Carolinas. Caradoc, in his history of Wales, says his colony was established in Mexico. Peter Martyr affirms that he probably established his people in Virginia. Other writers place the point of his arrival in Florida. (Prescott, "The Native Races of the Pacific States," vol. 5, pp. 116-120.)

The purpose in referring to these pre-Columbian voyages to America is to show to the reader that the Book of Mormon does not claim that all of the native races of America are descendants of the Nephite people, but that the Book of Mormon is the history of the three colonies to which reference is made in the beginning of this chapter.

It will be impossible in this brief review to refer

to more than a few of the outstanding statements made in the Book of Mormon and their relationship to modern investigation and scientific discovery which has been made since the publication of the book.

As heretofore stated, the first people referred to in the Book of Mormon came from Babylon about B. C. 2218. They were destroyed as a nation 1800 years later, near the time of the arrival of the Nephite people. The history of the Jaredites is briefly told in the abridgment made by Moroni, the last of the Nephite historians, and the personage who delivered to Joseph Smith the plates from which the contents of the Book of Mormon were translated, and to whom the plates were returned after the translation had been completed.

The brief history of this people is told in the Book of Mormon upon thirty-one small pages. Sufficient is related, however, to indicate that after their arrival on this continent and before their final destruction as a nation, they became a numerous and highly civilized people, favored of the Lord until they ceased to worship him and turned to the worship of idols, when their decadence began, as it has come and will continue to come to all nations, who turn from God and deny him and Christ his Son, the Redeemer of the world.

Lehi and those who came with him to America brought with them certain records, engraven upon plates of brass, which contained the five books of Moses, as they are contained in the Bible, many of the prophecies of the ancient prophets, and a record of the

Jews, down to the reign of King Zedekiah. This record is referred to by the Nephite historians as the Brass Plates.

Nephi, the son of Lehi, says that upon arrival in the Promised Land, America, his people found all manner of ore, both of gold and silver and of copper, and that he made plates from ore and engraved upon them the genealogy of his father and the history of his people.

These plates were handed down from generation to generation, some of the historians through whose hands they passed writing at length, while others wrote but briefly as the following quotations will show.

"Behold, it came to pass that I, Omni, being commanded by my father, Jarom, that I should write somewhat upon these plates, to preserve our genealogy—

"Wherefore, in my days, I would that ye should know that I fought much with the sword to preserve my people, the Nephites, from falling into the hands of their enemies, the Lamanites. But behold, I of myself am a wicked man, and I have not kept the statutes and the commandments of the Lord as I ought to have done.

"And it came to pass that two hundred and seventy and six years had passed away, and we had many seasons of peace; and we had many seasons of serious war and bloodshed. Yea, and in fine, two hundred and eighty and two years had passed away, and I had kept these plates according to the commandments of my fathers; and I conferred them upon my son Amaron. And I make an end."

"And now I, Amaron, write the things whatsoever I write, which are few, in the book of my father.

"Behold, it came to pass that three hundred and twenty years had passed away, and the more wicked part of the Nephites were destroyed.

"For the Lord would not suffer, after he had led them out of the land of Jerusalem and kept and preserved them from fall-

ing into the hands of their enemies, yea, he would not suffer that the words should not be verified, which he spake unto our fathers, saying that: Inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall not prosper in the land.

"Wherefore, the Lord did visit them in great judgment; nevertheless, he did spare the righteous that they should not perish, but did deliver them out of the hands of their enemies.

"And it came to pass that I did deliver the plates unto my brother Chemish.

"Now I, Chemish, write what few things I write, in the same book with my brother, for behold, I saw the last which he wrote, that he wrote it with his own hand; and he wrote it in the day that he delivered them unto me. And after this manner we keep the records, for it is according to the commandments of our fathers. And I make an end.

"Behold, I, Abinadom, am the son of Chemish. Behold, it came to pass that I saw much war and contention between my people, the Nephites, and the Lamanites; and I, with my own sword, have taken the lives of many of the Lamanites in the defence of my brethren.

"And behold, the record of this people is engraven upon plates which is had by the kings, according to the generations; and I know of no revelation save that which has been written, neither prophecy; wherefore, that which is sufficient is written. And I make an end".

The above quotations illustrate the manner in which the Nephite record was handed down and kept.

I

THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE BOOK OF MORMON TO THE BIBLE

That the relationship of the Book of Mormon to the Bible may be properly understood, it is necessary to go back to the period immediately following the deluge.

According to Bible chronology, it was about one

hundred years after the deluge, that the people who before that time had spoken one language, were scattered abroad from Babylon, upon all the earth, and their language confounded. (Gen. 11:8, 9.)

Notwithstanding the fact that the inhabitants of the earth had been swept off by the flood because of their idolatry and wickedness, the descendants of Noah had again fallen into the same condition that had brought destruction to their progenitors.

In order that another opportunity might be given to mankind to redeem himself from idolatry, the Lord at this time called Abraham from his home at Ur of Chaldea, and entered into a new covenant with him, different from any which had been before made; a covenant which the Lord declared should be eternal, and everlasting.

Notwithstanding the fact that Abraham was ninety and nine years of age at the time and his wife Sarah was ninety years old, and they were childless, the Lord said unto them:

"I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

"And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

"And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

"As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

"Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

"And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

"And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

"And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." (Gen. 17:1-8.)

"And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

"And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her. . . . And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." (Gen. 17:15-19.)

The fulfilment of this promise or covenant had its beginning with the birth of Isaac. (Gen. 21:1-3.)

II

ABRAHAM MANIFESTS SUPREME FAITH IN GOD AND OBEEDIENCE TO HIS WILL

The Lord had said to Abraham, "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."

The fulfilment of this covenant and realization by Abraham of the promise made by the Lord depended entirely upon the future of this promised son, Isaac.

"And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

"For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

"And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac." (Gen. 21:1-3.)

The boy had grown to be a man, probably twen-

ty-five years of age, when the Lord again spoke to his father saying:

"Take thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." (Gen. 22:2.)

The law of sacrifice had been observed since the creation of Adam. After Adam and Eve had been cast out from the garden of Eden the Lord commanded them to take of the firstlings of their flocks and offer them unto him as burnt offerings. Cain and Abel offered sacrifice to the Lord and the rite was to be continued by the Israelitish people until the coming of Shilo, their Lord.

The penalty of the fall was death. The law of sacrifice was symbolical of the redemption from that penalty which was to be wrought out by Christ our Lord through the resurrection from the grave and the restoration of the bodies and spirits of mankind to everlasting life, and eternal glory, the degree of which is to be governed by our lives and conduct while here in this mortal probation. (Rev. 20:12-15.)

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.)

The Lord had declared that through Abraham and his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed. Would this man to whom the Lord had made promises and with whom he had entered into covenant the like of which had never before been made, have faith

sufficient to offer the son upon whom the fulfilment of all of these promises depended to the God who had made the covenant? Had he faith sufficient to lay upon the altar his only begotten son, of promise, as God would give his Only Begotten Son for the redemption of his children?

It was a supreme test of faith and Abraham did not falter. The Lord knew then that the man chosen through whose posterity he would bring to fruition his purposes regarding the ultimate redemption of his children was worthy of the great blessing which had been promised, and which was renewed and extended when he said:

"In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.

"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. 22:17, 18.)

The care with which the woman who was to be the wife of Isaac was selected is evidence of the determination of the Lord to preserve the seed of Abraham distinct from that of the idolatrous nations with which he was surrounded. Rebecca was the cousin of Isaac. She became the mother of Jacob who was the first to be called Israel, and the father of twelve sons, who were the progenitors of the twelve tribes which bore his name.

The Lord renewed the promise made to Abraham when he said to Isaac:

"Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless

thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father:

"And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 26:3, 4.)

To Jacob, the son of Isaac, the Lord renewed the covenant made with Abraham and Isaac, as the following shows:

"And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him.

"And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.

"And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;

"And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land." (Gen. 35:9-12.)

III

THE SONS OF JACOB

Reuben	Zebulon	Asher
Simeon	Issachar	Naphtali
Levi	Dan	Joseph
Judah	Gad	Benjamin

All Bible students are familiar with the story of Joseph, the son of Jacob, who was sold by his brothers to passing Ishmaelites, and carried into Egypt where, by appointment of the ruling Pharaoh, he became ruler of the entire kingdom. How his father Jacob, who had believed his son dead, went with his

entire family into Egypt after it was made known to him that Joseph still lived, and governed the land, where they abode for a period of three hundred years more or less.

The total of souls who entered Egypt with Jacob is said to have numbered not more than one hundred.

Three hundred years later, when Moses led them out from the Egyptian captivity into which they had fallen, the Israelitish people numbered six hundred thousand men and many more in number, consisting of women and children. (Nu. 1.)

About forty years after the exodus, under the leadership of Joshua, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, the armies of Israel crossed the Jordan, subdued the people of Jericho, and began the conquest of Palestine, which was finally accomplished by King David, when he wrested the city of Jerusalem from the Jebusites, and made it the capital city of all Israel, four hundred years later.

It was during the reign of King Solomon, the son of David, that Israel realized her golden age.

The wisdom and power of Solomon attracted the attention of all surrounding nations. He erected the temple which his father David had planned, adorned it with gold and silver as no building before or since has been adorned.

For the first time since Joshua led the armies of Israel across the Jordan it appeared that the promise of the Lord which had been made to Abraham had been fulfilled.

The Covenant people of the Lord had possession of the Promised Land, from the holdings of the tribe of Dan, on the extreme north, to Beersheba on the south.

The period of peace which was enjoyed during the reign of Solomon ceased with the accession of his son Rehoboam to the throne.

During the reign of Solomon heavy burdens of taxation had been imposed upon his subjects and when the son succeeded to the throne of his father the people appealed to him to make their burdens lighter. Instead of granting their petition he said, as many rulers to their sorrow had said before, and have repeated since: "My father made your yoke heavy, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions . . ."

"So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents." (1 Kings 12:11-16.)

It was at this time that the Ten Tribes broke away from Judah and Benjamin, and selecting Jeroboam, the son of Nebat of the tribe of Ephraim, to be their king, established an independent kingdom with Samaria in northern Palestine as their capital city.

For a period of two hundred years after the separation of the ten tribes from Judah and Benjamin two separate kingdoms were maintained. During this in-

terval a fratricidal war was carried on until B. C. 740, when Shalmanezzer, King of Assyria, effected the conquest of northern Palestine, and after a three years' siege took the City of Samaria, carried the Ten Tribes captive into Assyria and brought people from his own country who were established in the cities which had been occupied by the Israelitish people.

IV

JUDAH AFTER THE REVOLT OF ISRAEL

The captivity of the Ten Tribes left Judah more than ever before a prey to the warring armies of Egypt, Assyria, Chaldea, Babylon and Persia, as each of these nations strove for world supremacy.

The portion of Palestine (the Promised Land) which was occupied by Judah and Benjamin, and undoubtedly other individual representatives of the various tribes of Israel, was a very small portion of Asia. It consists of a narrow strip of territory extending along the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea, from the River of Egypt on the south, to a point southeast of the island of Cyprus on the north. It was bounded on the east by the Syrian Desert, over which armies could not be marched. This left Jerusalem in the direct route of travel between Egypt and the nations which occupied the valley of Mesopotamia and the country along the upper reaches of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

Twenty-four years after the revolt of the Ten

Tribes, Shishak, king of Egypt, took possession of Jerusalem, despoiled the temple, carried away its treasures as well as the treasures of the king's house, and all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. (1 Kings 14:25, 26.) Judah remained tributary to Egypt about three hundred years, when Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, having driven the Egyptians back to their own country on the Nile, invaded Palestine, besieged Jerusalem, and took the city.

"And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king, of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.

"And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said." (2 Kings 24: 12, 13.)

Jehoiachin the king and all of his household, the prince of royal blood, the soldiers, artisans, and all men capable of bearing arms were carried captive.

The king of Babylon made Mattaniah king of Judea, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

After he had reigned for a period of nine years Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar again came up against Jerusalem with his army, and after a protracted siege took the city, made Zedekiah prisoner, and carried him to Babylon where he was required to witness the execution of his sons, after which his eyes were put out, leaving him to pass the remaining years of his life in darkness. The temple of Solomon, the king's house, all of the principal

houses, were burned with fire, and the walls of the city were torn down.

The people, with the exception of a few of the poor who were left to serve their masters, were carried captive to Babylon, where they remained in captivity until the Babylonian kingdom was overthrown by the Medo-Persian armies during the reign of Belshazzar, B. C. 538.

It was during the reign of Zedekiah that the two colonies of people, whose brief history is told in the Book of Mormon, left Jerusalem. One of these colonies came to America under the leadership of Lehi, who was of the tribe of Manasseh, and the other under the leadership of Mulek, a son of Zedekiah. (Book of Mormon, p. 219:3; p. 373:10.)

From Saul to Zedekiah, who was the last Israelitish king to reign over Judah, 470 years had elapsed, four centuries of almost continuous warfare.

The Babylonian captivity of the Jews continued from 599 B. C. until the fall of Babylonia, seventy years later.

During the reign of Cyrus of Persia, 536 B. C. a proclamation was sent throughout all of his kingdom, giving permission to any of his subjects who might wish to do so, to return to Jerusalem, and rebuild the temple and city which had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Many of the Jews responded, returned to Jerusalem and under the leadership of Zerubbabel and other leaders restored the city and temple as far as it was possible to do so, but the temple was never restored

to the beauty and grandeur of the original erected by Solomon.

To use his own language Cyrus of Persia had now become, by the grace of God, king of all the earth, and Judah, Benjamin and those who remained with them when the ten tribes were carried away into the Assyrian captivity were his vassals. In this condition they continued for about 200 years, until the overthrow of the Persian Empire by Alexander of Macedon, B. C. 333.

V

JUDEA UNDER THE GREEKS

Alexander of Macedon, known in history as Alexander the Great, was born at Pella, in Greece, B. C. 356. His father Philip had effected the conquest and unification of Greece prior to his death. He was assassinated B. C. 339, when Alexander was fifteen years of age.

Philip had contemplated a campaign against the Persian Empire, and made plans for its execution before his death. Alexander immediately declared it to be his intention to carry this plan into effect. When twenty-five years of age, with a comparatively small army, he crossed the Hellespont (Dardanelles), where he met and defeated the Persians at Granicus. He went on, and after a long and bitter siege subjugated and destroyed the city of Tyre, and marched on to Jerusalem where he was received without resistance,

and where many Jewish auxiliaries joined his army. The oppression of the Persians had become so intolerable to the Jewish people that they were glad to welcome a new master, one who certainly could make their burdens no heavier, but gave promise of relief.

Leaving Jerusalem, Alexander went on until he met the tremendous army Darius had collected, which he completely defeated and scattered at Issus and Arbela, made Darius and his family prisoners and wrested from the Persian empire the last vestige of power which it had exercised over the Israelitish people since the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, two centuries before.

Continuing his conquests Alexander made himself master of Egypt, where he established the city of Alexandria.

With Egypt and Asia at his feet, Alexander died at Babylon, B. C. 325. In the space of six years Asia and Egypt which constituted the greater portion of the known world, were made tributary to Greece.

At the time of his departure from Greece Alexander had designated Antipater Governor of that portion of his kingdom, with the title of Regent.

Upon the death of Alexander, Asia was divided into a number of petty kingdoms, over which his generals reigned, principal among whom were Seleucus, Antigonus, and Ptolemy. It was but a short time until rivalry among these small divisions resulted in civil war, which continued until the final intervention of Rome ended Greek domination of Asia.

In B. C. 330, Ptolemy, to whom Egypt had been assigned, came up against Jerusalem, captured the city, and reduced the Jews to a condition making them tributary to Egypt.

Fifteen years later Antigonus wrested the city from Ptolemy, but the latter recovered it fifteen years after and Egypt held it for about a century. Antigonus finally became the dominant factor in the control of Asia, and during his reign and that of his successors, heavy burdens were placed upon the Jewish people which resulted in open rebellion against Grecian control.

VI

THE WAR OF THE MACCABEES

About B. C. 165 Mattathias and his sons, Joanan, Simon, Judas Maccabeus, Eleazar and Jonathan, gathered together an army and declared open war against Antiochus the reigning king at the time.

It was an unequal and hopeless struggle. Greatly outnumbered, poorly equipped, and without intensive military training, notwithstanding the many brilliant victories gained by Judas, who was the commander of the forces in the field, the Jewish people realized that they were fighting a losing battle, and when he fell at the battle of Eleasa, B. C. 160, hope of final triumph, unless they might be able to call others to their aid, was abandoned.

Before his death Judas had sent Eupolemus, the

son of John, the son of Accos, and Jason, the son of Eleazar, to Rome, as ambassadors to solicit the aid of the Romans in their war against the Greeks: "For he saw that the kingdom of the Grecians did oppress Israel with servitude." These commissioners appeared before the Roman senate, and pleaded the cause of their people with such eloquence that an offensive and defensive treaty was entered into, the terms of which were as follows:

"And this is the copy of the epistle which the senate wrote back again in tables of brass, and sent it to Jerusalem, that there they might have by them a memorial of peace and confederacy."

VII

THE TREATY WITH ROME

"Good success be to the Romans, and to the people of the Jews, by sea and by land forever; the sword also and enemy be far from them.

"If there come first any war upon the Romans or any of their confederates throughout all their dominion, the people of the Jews shall help them, as the time shall be appointed, with all their heart: Neither shall they give anything unto them that make war upon them, or aid them with victuals, weapons, money, or ships, as it hath seemed good unto the Romans; but they shall keep their covenants without taking anything therefor.

"In the same manner also, if war come first upon the nation of the Jews, the Romans shall help them with all their heart, according as the time shall be appointed them: neither shall victuals be given them that take part against them, or weapons, or money or ships, as it hath seemed good to the Romans; but they shall keep their covenants, without deceit. According to these articles did the Romans make covenant with the people of the Jews.

"Howbeit, if hereafter the one party or the other shall think meet to add to or diminish anything, they may do it at their pleasures, and whatsoever they shall add to or take away shall be ratified. As touching the evils that Demetrius doeth to the Jews,

we have written him saying, Wherefore hast thou made thy yoke heavy upon our friends and confederates the Jews?

"If therefore they complain any more against thee, we will do them justice, and fight with thee by sea and by land."

This treaty made Judea tributary to Rome, in which condition the Jewish people continued until the birth and ministry of Christ.

With the death of Judas Maccabeus his brother, Jonathan, by virtue of his priestly calling, assumed the leadership of the Jewish nation. He was murdered B. C. 144, and was succeeded by his brother Simon, who was also murdered B. C. 135.

From the death of Judas Maccabeus until the death of his brother Simon, a period of twenty-six years, Judea enjoyed a period of peace, and comparative prosperity. The Punic wars were being fought, Carthage and Corinth fell, Greece became a Roman province.

Before his death we are told that Simon sent Numius to Rome with a great shield of gold, of a thousand pounds weight, which so pleased the people that they said:

"What thanks shall we give to Simon and his sons? For he and his brethren and the house of his father have established Israel, and chased away in flight their enemies from them, and confirmed their liberty."

"So they wrote it in tables of brass, which they set upon pillars on Mount Zion: and this is the copy of the writing:"

Here follows a long review of the accomplishments of the Maccabeus brothers from Judas to Simon.

"So they commanded that this writing should be put in

tables of brass, and that they should be set up in the compass of the sanctuary in a conspicuous place."

Simon Maccabeus was succeeded by John Hyrcanus, under whose government war and confusion again prevailed in Judea. B. C. 63 Pompey subjugated Judea. Fifteen years later Crassus entered Jerusalem and defiled and plundered the temple. B. C. 47, Rome appointed Antipater, an Idumian, Procurator of Judea, and Herod governor of Galilee. Seven years later, after the death of Antipater, Herod was appointed king of Judea, and reigned until after the nativity of our Lord.

The appointment of Herod to be King of Judea brought the Herodian family into prominence. Herod, known as Herod the Great, was the second son of Antipater, who was a descendant of Esau, the son of Isaac, who was the twin brother of Jacob, to whom he sold his birthright. Now, after more than fifteen centuries, the scepter which the descendants of Jacob had wielded returned to the house of his brother, from whom Jacob had obtained it by deceit.

It was Herod the Great who, fearing that the birth of Christ might remove from his house the heirship to the throne of Judea, and return it to the house of David, ordered the slaughter of the innocents at Bethlehem.

Herod the Great was succeeded by Herod Agrippa I, after Herod Antipas had been deposed as Tetrarch of Galilee, A. D. 40. Agrippa was the second son of Herod the Great. He was succeeded by Agrippa II,

who died A. D. 99. It was before this king that St. Paul appeared and made his eloquent defense of Christianity.

VIII

JEWISH SECTS AND PARTIES

During the period A. D. 30 to the death of Herod II the Hebrew people were in a state of disorderly confusion and contention, brought about by the dissension which existed among different religious and political factions. The Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes kept the people hopelessly divided because of their different interpretation of the scriptures, and religious practises, while the Herodians, Zealots, Galileans and Assassins kept Judea in constant political turmoil.

THE PHARISEES

The Pharisees adhered strictly to the Mosaic law, and the Israelitish traditions. They believed in the doctrine of rewards and punishment after death, to be governed by the deeds done while in mortality, in the eternal existence of the soul of man, and the resurrection from death of the body. They may be referred to as the Fundamentalists of their time.

THE SADDUCEES

The Sadducees assumed what appeared to them to be a more rational and liberal view of the application of the scripture, denied the doctrine of rewards

and punishments in future life based upon faith or conduct while in mortality, and opposed the doctrine of the resurrection. They were the Modernists of the period in which they lived.

THE ESSENES

The Essenes were a semi-religious organization or brotherhood which existed among the Jews, who are referred to by some writers as the original founders of the Masonic Fraternity. Mackey, in his "Encyclopedia of Freemasonry" does not agree with Lawrie and others who endeavor to show that Freemasonry is derived from this ancient order, but admits that there are many similarities to some of which he calls attention. He quotes Lawrie as saying: "They were, an order of the Knights of the Temple at Jerusalem, the guardians of King Solomon's Temple."

The first requirement of an applicant for admission to the fraternity was to cast all of his possessions into the common treasury. He then received a copy of the regulations of the brotherhood, and was presented with a spade, an apron and a white robe.

Three stages or degrees, which required three years to complete, were required of the candidate before he could become a disciple or companion of the highest degree in the order. A solemn oath was then administered to him, that he would never divulge the mysteries of the order, and that he would make no innovations on the doctrines of the society.

No women were admitted to membership.

Lawrie says that the Essenes were an association of Architects who were connected with the building of the temple of Solomon.

From the self-pronouncing Oxford edition of the Bible we quote as follows: "All members of the Order passed through a novitiate of three successive grades, each lasting a year. Admission to full membership involved the taking of a terrible oath, binding to separation, a severe asceticism, and the most absolute secrecy.

IX

POLITICAL DIVISIONS

THE HERODIANS

The Herodians, heretofore referred to, were partisans of the Idumean dynasty established by Antipater, the descendant of Esau, the son of Jacob. Without the sympathy or confidence of the Jewish people they were supported solely by the power of the Roman Empire, and were never willingly recognized by the people of Judea.

THE ZEALOTS

The Zealots are referred to by Josephus as a fourth party, supplementary to the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. They were a party politically opposed to the Herodians, and the Romans.

THE GALILEANS

The natives of Galilee were a passionate and ex-

citable people, affiliated with the Zealots, the enemies of Rome and the Herodian dynasty.

THE ASSASSINS

The Assassians, so called because of their use of a short sword or dagger, which they carried concealed beneath the cloak, and with which they struck down their personal enemies or the enemies of their order, appear to have been a disorganized band of desperadoes, who engaged in secret and single-handed warfare against all who opposed them.

THE CHRISTIANS

Added to these contending sects and parties were those who accepted the teachings of the Savior, in derision referred to as Christians, against whom all other sects and parties united in hatred and persecution.

It was during this period of political and religious confusion that Christ began and terminated his personal ministry.

With the opening of the Christian era Judea, or Palestine, was a single united kingdom, ruled over by Herod the great.

Upon the death of Herod his kingdom was divided into a number of petty principalities, governed by representatives of the Herodian family.

Again, with the accession of Herod Agrippa the old united Kingdom of Palestine was for a short period restored. After Agrippa the country was reduced to

the condition of a Roman province governed by Roman procurators.

During the period of fifty years Palestine passed through five distinct changes in government.

Just before his crucifixion, as Jesus went out from the temple, his disciples came to him and said: "Master, see, what manner of stones, and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

More than one thousand years before Jesus made this declaration King David had subjugated the Jebusites, and made Jerusalem the capital city of the Israelitish people.

Five different times the city had been over-run by enemies. The temple, built by Solomon, and the city had been destroyed by the Babylonians, but had been rebuilt by the Jews while they were subject to Cyrus, and again by Herod the Great, by the latter on a far greater scale than ever before. Herod declared he would build the temple so strong that it never again would be destroyed. The stones used were of tremendous size, and so laid that it was thought to be impregnable.

After the death of Agrippa II, Judea was ruled by governors sent from Rome. Cuspus Tadius, Ventidius, Cumais, Felix and Tiberius Alexander, the latter an apostate Jew, exercised extreme tyranny and cruelty during their administrations.

Portius Festus was sent by Nero, and after him

Albinus and Gessius Florus. Under these dictators the condition of the people grew gradually worse. Heavier taxes were imposed, towns and villages plundered.

The fires of hatred which had long smoldered burst into flame when Nero declared the Jews no longer entitled to the protection guaranteed to Roman citizens, which made them the prey of the heathen. Finally, when the heathen population of Caesarea drove out the Jews, inflicting inhuman atrocities upon them, the latter arose in open revolt against Rome.

Cestius Gallus, who with ten thousand Roman soldiers and thirteen thousand allies, marched against Jerusalem, suffered a disastrous defeat. Nero then sent Vespasian and his son Titus, with instruction to subdue the Jews, regardless of cost. While engaged in his campaign against the Jews Vespasian was declared emperor of Rome and Titus was left to continue the war, with instruction to suppress the insurrection.

Titus, with four Roman legions and a large army of auxiliary soldiers, appeared before Jerusalem a few days prior to the date when the feast of the Passover was to be observed, A. D. 70. Vast multitudes of Jews were assembled within the walls of the city. Josephus estimates the number to have been two millions, seven hundred thousand, two hundred souls.

Enclosed within the city walls without adequate supply of food or water, with famine and pestilence within the city, and a relentless enemy outside the walls, words fail to express the horrors of the siege.

History tells us that hundreds of thousands of dead bodies were thrown over the walls.

After the outer defences had been penetrated, and the fall of the city assured, Titus, addressing his soldiers, commanded them to spare the temple, but the legionnaires, maddened by the long resistance of the Jews, as they rushed through the breach to the slaughter, threw their torches as they passed and the magnificent building was soon in flames, which spread until the entire city was on fire.

The work of slaughter and carnage was terrible. Josephus says a million Jews were put to death, while one hundred thousand were sold into slavery, or reserved for gladiatorial exhibitions in the theaters. "The whole city," he says, "ran down with blood, to such a degree indeed that the fire in many of the houses was quenched with these men's blood." He tells us further, that the walls of the city were leveled to the ground, and the very foundations of the temple dug up.

The words of their Messiah, whom they had rejected, were fulfilled. The last remnant of the House of Israel were without a country they could call their own, and were scattered among the unbelieving nations of the world, as Christ and the Prophets said they should be.

The foregoing brief review of the history of the Israelitish people from Abraham to the separation of the Ten Tribes from Judah and Benjamin, and the final dispersion of the latter tribes by Rome may be

of assistance to the reader in connecting the Bible and Book of Mormon. The promises made by the Lord in the covenant with Abraham have not been entirely fulfilled. In fact, the greater promises are still in the future.

When the gathering and union of the House of Israel is effected and Judah and Ephraim unite, and are restored to their promised heritage it will be shown that both books deal with the Israelitish people, the Book of Mormon being the history of a branch of the family which was severed from the root tree and planted by the Lord in America for the accomplishment of a purpose yet to be revealed.