

Elder P. B. Thompson

Why "Mormonism"?

—By—

ELDER B. H. ROBERTS

Of the First Council of Seventy in the Church of
Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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"Mormonism" is here to be, through the Book of Mormon, a Witness to the Deity of JESUS CHRIST: "To the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting HIMSELF to all nations."

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“Why Mormonism” Series

NUMBER ONE:

“Mormonism” is here to bring in and establish a New Dispensation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ subsequent to the Apostolic Age, and promised of God.

NUMBER TWO:

“Mormonism” is here to proclaim through a New Dispensation of the Gospel, a true knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent.

NUMBER THREE:

“Mormonism” is here to teach the purpose of God in the Earth-life of Man; and how man may fulfill that divine purpose.

NUMBER FOUR:

“Mormonism” is here to be, through the Book of Mormon, a witness to the DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST: “to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God; manifesting himself to all nations.”

Why “Mormonism”?

The New Witness to the Deity of Jesus—The Book of Mormon

The New Witness to the Deity of Jesus Christ is the Book of Mormon. The existence of this American Volume of Scripture was revealed to Joseph Smith in the month of September, 1823, near Palmyra, in the State of New York. Joseph Smith's own account of this book, how he came in possession of it—translated it—and what it is, must always be of first importance with reference to its origin and character; and hence that account is here given:

The Appearing of Moroni

“On the evening of the 21st of September, A. D. 1823, while I was praying unto God and endeavoring to exercise faith in the precious promises of Scripture, on a sudden a light like that of day, only a far purer and more glorious appearance and brightness, burst into the room—indeed the first sight was as though the house was filled with consuming fire: the appearance producing a shock that affected the whole body; in a moment a personage stood before me surrounded with a glory yet greater than that with which I was already surrounded. This messenger proclaimed himself to be an angel of God, sent to bring the joyful tidings that the covenant which God made with ancient Israel was at hand to be fulfilled; that the preparatory work for the second coming of the Messiah was speedily to commence; that

the time was at hand for the Gospel in all its fulness to be preached in power unto all nations, that a people might be prepared for the Millennial reign. I was informed that I was chosen to be an instrument in the hands of God to bring about some of His purposes in this glorious dispensation."

The Book of Mormon Revealed

"I was also informed concerning the aboriginal inhabitants of this country and shown who they were, and whence they came; a brief sketch of their origin, progress, civilization, laws, government; of their righteousness and iniquity, and the blessings of God being finally withdrawn from them as a people, was made known to me; I was also told where were deposited some plates on which were engraven an abridgment of the records of the ancient prophets that had existed on this continent (America). The Angel appeared to me three times the same night and unfolded the same things. After having received many visits from the angel of God, unfolding the majesty and glory of the events that should transpire in the last days, on the morning of the 22nd of September, A. D. 1827, the angel of the Lord delivered the records into my hands."

Dimensions and Appearance of the Gold Plates

"These records were engraven on plates which had the appearance of gold; each plate was six inches wide and eight inches long, and not quite so thick as common tin. They were filled with engravings, in Egyptian characters, and bound together in a volume as the leaves of a book, with three rings running through the whole. The volume was something near six inches in thickness, a part of which was sealed. The characters on the unsealed part were small, and beautifully engraved. The whole book exhibited many marks of antiquity in its construction and much skill in the art of

engraving. With the records was found a curious instrument, which the ancients called 'Urim and Thummim,' which consisted of two transparent stones set in the rim of a bow fastened to a breast-plate. Through the medium of the Urim and Thummim I translated the record by the gift and power of God."

Contents of the Book

"In this important and interesting book the history of ancient America is unfolded, from its first settlement by a colony that came from the Tower of Babel, at the confusion of languages, to the beginning of the fifth century of the Christian Era. We are informed by these records that America in ancient times had been inhabited by two distinct races of people. The first was called Jaredites and came directly from the Tower of Babel. The second race came, directly from the City of Jerusalem, about six hundred years before Christ. They were principally Israelites, of the descendants of Joseph. The Jaredites were destroyed about the time that the Israelites came from Jerusalem, who succeeded them in the inheritance of the country. The principal nation of the second race fell in battle towards the close of the fourth century (A. D.) The remnant are the Indians that now inhabit this country." (Letter of Joseph Smith to Mr. John Wentworth, Proprietor of the Chicago Democrat, 1842.)

The Purpose of the Book

The purpose for which the Book of Mormon was compiled by its Nephite Prophet-author is stated in its own ancient Preface, now printed on the title page of all editions; but on the gold plates, from which the title of the Book was taken, it was found on, to us, the last plate of the collection. The language in which the record was written, running like the Hebrew, from right to left.

In that Ancient Preface the purpose of the Book is declared to be:—

"To show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers;

"That they may know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever:

"AND ALSO TO THE CONVINCING OF THE JEW AND GENTILE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE ETERNAL GOD, MANIFESTING HIMSELF UNTO ALL NATIONS:"

With the purposes of this book respecting the remnants of the House of Israel, mentioned above, we have nothing to do at present—this may be subject matter for other numbers of this series; but what concerns us here is that the Book of Mormon has for its primary purpose the important matter of convincing "the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, THE ETERNAL GOD."

Need of a New Witness to the Deity of the Christ

The surprising thing in connection with the subject of the Deity of Christ is the fact that there is need of a New Witness, and especially such a need among supposedly Christian people! That there is such need, however, is quite obvious.

First, from the fact that after two thousand years from the birth of the Christ there is found to be no more than one-third of the world's inhabitants that are even nominally Christian.

Second, that among the peoples accounted Christians, fifty per cent may not be rated as more than Christians in name; that among so-called Christians very many have no faith in Christ as God at all!

Third, the Jews are not converted to Jesus Christ as

God manifested in the flesh; or to the acceptance of JESUS CHRIST as the ETERNAL GOD—their JEHOVAH.

The Recent Controversy Among Christians About the Deity of Jesus

From the first century of the Christian Era until now there have been those who have doubted the Deity of Jesus Christ, but they were generally accounted schismatics. It has been reserved for our own age to witness the larger fulfillment of St. Peter's prophecy, that false teachers would arise among the Christians, who would "bring in damnable heresies, EVEN DENYING THE LORD WHO BOUGHT THEM, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. (II Peter 2:1.)

The acute stage of the present agitation over the Deity of the Christ started August 14, 1921, in England, when the Reverend Hastings Rashdall, the distinguished Dean of Carlisle, at the Modern Churchmen's Congress held in Cambridge, declared that "Jesus Christ never claimed divinity for Himself, and was in the fullest sense a man; with not merely a human body, but with human soul, intellect and will."

Again he said, "Jesus may have allowed Himself to be called the Messiah, but never in any of His critically well attested sayings is there anything which suggests that His conscious relation to God was other than that of any man toward God."

Then in respect of the Fourth Gospel, as being outside of his "critically, well attested sayings," the Dean remarked that the speeches attributed to Christ in the Fourth Gospel (St. John), where they go beyond the character of Jesus as portrayed in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke), "cannot be regarded as authentic history." (Reported for Universal Service, a news gathering agency, by Forbes W. Fairbairn, Aug. 14, 1921.)

Development of the Same Controversy in America

A year later the controversy reached America, and was taken up among nearly all Protestant Sects—especially throughout the Eastern States of the American Union—with great zest, and in many cases also with manifest bitterness. That controversy still rages, and is the thing which mainly divides Protestant Christendom into Fundamentalists and Modernists; the former in some fashion striving to uphold the Deity of Christ: the latter more vigorously denying that He is Deity.

One would think with the weight of evidence from the Scriptures on their side, the Fundamentalists would win an easy victory, but they do not; for so-called modern scholarship sets aside much of the Scripture bearing upon the subject as not part of the "critically well attested" parts of the Scripture, and thus the Modernists escape the force of the testimony the said Scriptures bear to the Deity of Jesus. The Modernists seem to be winning both in numbers and in influence, until, should they continue to gain ground, the question of our Lord saying: "When the Son of Man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?"—(Luke 18:8)—might well again be asked.

This consideration of the widespread unbelief among professing Christians in the Deity of Christ, added to the fact of such slow progress in the conquest of the world to the doctrine of God in Christ—the conquest not amounting to one third of the world's population, after two thousand years of effort; the non-conversion of the Jews to the recognition of Jesus Christ as the ETERNAL GOD—their JEHOVAH—manifested in the flesh—all this cries aloud for some New Witness which will carry this truth of the Deity of the Christ to the conviction of humanity, if we are to have in things the harmonizing and up-building influence that a true knowledge of the living God would bring.

The Knowledge of God the Solvent of All Truth

That a knowledge of God is essential to a right understanding of all things else; to a right apprehension of human existence and the purpose of human life, is not a matter of argument, but of statement. Until the central truth of all truth is determined upon, nothing can be determined in respect of life and its relationships; its duties, its hopes and possible realizations. Hence the importance of knowing God. In the Christ's teachings it is set down as of utmost importance: "This is life eternal that they (the disciples) might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." (John 17:3.) That is to say, knowledge of God and the Christ—knowledge of God in Christ—is the way to the understanding of all things else as to men—all relationships, all duties, all possible achievements. Knowledge of God is the light by which all truth may be discerned and correlated. In vain Alexander Pope cries:

" * * * Seek not thy God to scan!
The proper study for mankind is man."

Man's proper study includes a seeking after and a finding of God also; for God may be found; and men are commanded to seek for Him. "Your heart shall live that seek God," said the Psalmist—(Psa. 69:32). "The Lord is * * * good to the soul that seeketh him." (Lamentations 3:23.) To the contemptuous inquiry of Job's friend, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" (Job. 11:7.) The answer is yes, if the searching is done in the right way. Jeremiah, the Prophet of Jehovah, answers Zophar, Job's "friend," by saying to Israel—"Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with your whole heart. And I will be found of you saith the Lord." (Jer. 29:13, 14.) "If any man will do His Will," said the Christ to the Jews marveling at His teachings, "he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself;" And that declaration included his

doctrine of God, with the rest. Paul reproaching some of the Saints for that they lacked the knowledge of God, said: "Some of you have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame." (I Cor. 15:34.) Paul also reproved the Athenians for the worship of "The Unknown God," him declared he unto them, "Jesus of Nazareth;" of whom God had given assurance unto all men in that he had raised him up from the dead. (Acts 17.)

So much to fix in the mind the importance of the knowledge of God—the true solvent of all truth—the key to the knowledge of the universe. The importance of the subject will increase the importance of all that contributes to knowledge of it. Hence these reflections as an introduction to the Book of Mormon as God's witness that JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE ETERNAL GOD.

Where Are God's Witnesses from the Western Hemisphere

"God left not himself without witnesses," says Paul of the antique world (Acts 14:17 & Rom. 1:20): "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if happily they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far removed from every one of us, for in Him we live and move and have our being." Is this not just as true of the inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere as of the Eastern Hemisphere? But where is God's Witness then from the Western Hemisphere? What voice speaks from the mouldering ruins of its ancient civilizations? True there are the monuments in stone monoliths, richly carved; stone built temples, crowning stone-cased hills, in great numbers, and adorning many valleys; cement built cities, rivaling in extent and grandeur ruined cities of the valley of Old Nile and the Euphrates. But these, so far, are silent. They have found no tongue with which to bear witness for God and Christ.

And the present native inhabitants of the New World, descendants of the builders of these monuments, temples and cities of the valleys and of the seashores, are as dumb as the monuments. Their legends and their songs make no intelligible connection with these ruins of past glories. There is but one Voice that breaks this silence; but one clear, strong, authoritative Voice that speaks for God and for God in Christ from ancient America, and that is the Book of Mormon!

The Book of Mormon bears dual testimony for Jesus Christ: the testimony of Prophecy, and the testimony of History. Here we consider both, but each briefly.

The Testimony of the Brother of Jared— Moriancumer

The earliest testimony of the Book of Mormon prophets comes from that very ancient people, the Jaredites, who came from the Tower of Babel to the promised land of America. Details aside, the Lord revealed himself unto their chief Prophet, Moriancumer, "the Lord shewed himself unto him," and he beheld him as in the form of a man, and said: "I knew not that the Lord had flesh and blood." And the Lord said unto him—both correcting yet confirming his vision: "Because of thy faith thou hast seen that I shall take upon me flesh and blood: * * * * Behold I am he who was prepared to redeem my people. Behold I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son. In me shall all mankind have light, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and my daughters. And never (before) have I showed myself unto man whom I have created, for never has man believed in me as thou hast. Seest thou that ye are created after mine own image? Yea, even all men are created in the beginning after my own image.

"The Body of My Spirit"

"Behold this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit, will I appear unto my people in the flesh." (Ether 3:6-16.)

This revealed knowledge of God, however, the Jaredite Prophet was commanded to keep locked in his own breast. It appears that it was according to the divine purpose that this truth was not to be known generally among men until "the Christ should be glorified in the flesh." (Id. as above.)

Such the clear vision of the pre-existent spirit of the Christ, given to this man, and the prophecy of his advent among men—the coming of the ETERNAL GOD to earth—God to be revealed in Christ.

The Testimony of the Nephite Prophets—Lehi

The testimony of the Nephite Prophets concerning the Christ as the ETERNAL GOD, begins with Lehi, who led a small colony of people to America from Jerusalem, about six hundred years B. C. While yet in Jerusalem, by searching the Scriptures and by revelations from God, Lehi had plainly manifested to him "the coming of a Messiah and the redemption of the World." (1st Nephi 1:19.)

Lehi's recital of his visions to his family inspired one of his sons, Nephi, with a desire to obtain "like precious knowledge," and so he sought for God and found Him, and learned the truth of God to be revealed in Christ. It was shown to him in vision, interpreted to him by an angel of God.

The Testimony of the First Nephi

"And the angel said unto me, Nephi, what beholdest thou? And I said unto him, a Virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other Virgins.

And he said unto me, Knowest thou the condescension of God?

And I said unto him, I know that he loveth his children, nevertheless, I do not know the meaning of all things.

And he said unto me, Behold the Virgin whom thou seest is the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh."

The Virgin next appeared in Nephi's vision bearing a Child in her arms and the vision narrative continues:

"And the angel said unto me, Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!" (1st Nephi 11.)

The vision of this Prophet included the subsequent ministry of the Church up to the crucifixion, and to the resurrection; and also His appearing to the people of America after the resurrection.

The Testimony of Sundry Prophets

This knowledge of Christ and his mission through the spirit of prophecy previous to the coming of the Christ in the flesh, characterized nearly all the prophets from six hundred years B. C. to the happening of that event: the birth of the Savior; and always their references were of a nature to establish His Deity. To one he was: "The Lord Omnipotent, who reigneth, who was, and is, from all Eternity to all Eternity." And there is to be "no other name, nor any other way, nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. * * * * Salvation was and is to come in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent." (Mosiah 3:5-17, 18.)

Another testified (the Prophet Abinadi) that the burden of the Prophets since the world began was that "God himself should come down among the children of men, and take upon him the form of man—that he should bring to pass the resurrection of the dead." (Mosiah 3:24.)

One Nephite Prophet (Amulek) is asked: "Is the Son of God"—(whom he had been proclaiming)—"Is the Son of God the very Eternal Father?" And the Prophet answered. "Yea, he is the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth, and all things which in them are; he is the Beginning and the End, the first and the last." (Alma 11:8, 39.)

Signs of Messiah's Birth Given in the Western Hemisphere

Another Book of Mormon Prophet—this time a Lamanite—not only referred to Jesus Christ as "the Son of God, the Father (i. e. Creator) of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning"—but also fixed the time of his coming in the flesh—his birth, and predicted certain signs that would herald that event to the inhabitants of the western continents—America.

The Day and the Night and the Day that was One Day

The time of the Messiah's birth was to be in five years from the time of Samuel's prophecy; and the signs were to be worthy of the event. The prophet said:

"Behold I give unto you a sign, for five years more cometh, and behold, then cometh the Son of God to redeem all those who shall believe on His name; and behold this will I give unto you for a sign at the time of His coming; for behold there shall be great lights in heaven, insomuch that the night before he cometh there shall be no darkness; insomuch that it shall appear unto man as if it was day. Therefore there shall be one day and a night and a day, as if it were one day, and there were no night (a day of "three suns," as it were): and this shall be unto you for a sign; for ye shall know of the rising of the sun and also of its setting, therefore, they shall know of a surety that there shall be two days

and a night: nevertheless the night shall not be darkened; and it shall be the night before he is born. And behold, there shall a new star arise, such an one as ye never have beheld; and this also shall be a sign unto you." (Helaman 14:1-5.)

Sign Also of Messiah's Death Given the Inhabitants of the American Continents

This Lamanite Prophet also predicted these signs of Messiah's death:

"Behold in that day that he shall suffer death, the sun shall be darkened and refuse to give his light unto you; and also the moon and the stars; and there shall be no light upon the face of this land, even from the time that he shall suffer death, for the space of three days, to the time that he shall rise again from the dead. Yea, at the time that he shall yield up the ghost there shall be thunderings and lightnings for the space of many hours, and the earth shall shake and tremble. * * * * And behold there shall be great tempests, and there shall be many mountains laid low, like unto a valley, and there shall be many places which are now called valleys which shall become mountains, whose height is great. And many highways shall be broken up, and many cities shall become desolate. And many graves shall be opened, and shall yield up many of their dead; and many Saints shall appear unto many. And behold, thus hath the angel spoken unto me; for he said unto me that there should be thunderings and lightnings for the space of many hours. And he said unto me that while the thunder and lightning lasted, and the tempest, that these things should be, and that darkness should cover the face of the whole earth for the space of three days. (Helaman 14.)

Doubtings: Fulfillment of the Prophecies

These prophecies, so terrible in their character, were all fulfilled five years later, and the description of their ful-

fillment is one of the strongest bits of dramatic writing in holy writ.

Remembering that the sign of Messiah's birth had already been given—The day and the night and the day that were as one day, continuous light; and the new star also that was to herald Messiah's birth—then, when "the thirty and third year had passed away—" (Since the sign of Messiah's birth had been given)—"The people began to look with great earnestness for the sign which had been given by the Prophet Samuel the Lamanite, yea, for the time that there should be darkness for the space of three days over the face of the land. And there began to be great doubtings and disputations among the people, notwithstanding so many signs had been given. And it came to pass in the thirty and fourth year in the first month, on the fourth day of the month, there arose a great storm, such an one as never had been known in all the land. And there was also a great and terrible tempest; and there was terrible thunder, insomuch that it did shake the whole earth as if it was about to divide asunder."

Tempest and Earthquake, Flood and Fire

"And there were exceeding sharp lightnings, such as never had been known in all the land. And the city of Zarahemla did take fire. And the city of Moroni did sink into the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof were drowned. And the earth was carried up upon the city of Moronihah, that in the place of the city there became a great mountain.

"And there was a great and terrible destruction in the land southward. But behold, there was a more great and terrible destruction in the land northward; for behold, the whole face of the land was changed, because of the tempest and the whirlwinds, and the thunderings and the lightnings, and the exceeding great quaking of the whole earth; and the highways were broken up, and the level roads were spoiled, and many smooth places became rough. And many great and

noble cities were sunk and many were burned, and many were shaken till the buildings thereof had fallen to the earth; and the inhabitants thereof were slain, and the places were left desolate. And there were some cities which remained; but the damage thereof was exceeding great, and there were many in them who were slain. And there were some who were carried away in the whirlwind; and whither they went no man knoweth, save they know that they were carried away. And thus the face of the whole earth became deformed, because of the tempest and the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the quaking of the earth. And behold, the rocks were rent in twain; they were broken up upon the face of the whole earth, insomuch that they were found in broken fragments, and in seams and in cracks, upon the face of all the land."

Three Days of Darkness

"And it came to pass that when the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the storm, and the tempest, and the quakings of the earth did cease—for behold, they did last for about the space of three hours; and it was said by some that the time was greater; nevertheless, all these great and terrible things were done in about the space of three hours—and then behold, there was **darkness upon the face of the land**. And it came to pass that there was thick darkness upon all the face of the land, insomuch that the inhabitants thereof who had not fallen could feel the vapor of darkness; and there could be no light, because of the darkness, neither candles, neither torches; neither could there be fire kindled with their fine and exceedingly dry wood, so that there could not be any light at all; and there was not any light seen, neither fire, nor glimmer, neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars, for so great were the mists of darkness which were upon the face of the land. And it came to pass that it did last for the space of three days, and there was no light seen; and there was great mourning and howling and weeping among all the people continually, yea, great were the groanings of

the people, because of the darkness and the great destruction which had come upon them."

**A Mysterious Voice Heard During the Darkness:
The Cause of the Destruction Proclaimed**

Then from the midst of these calamitous conditions arose a Voice that was heard throughout the land—in every part of it—saying:

"WO, WO, WO, unto this people! Wo unto the inhabitants of the whole earth except they shall repent; for the devil laugheth, and his angels rejoice, because of the slain of the fair sons and daughters of my people; and it is because of their iniquity and abominations that they are fallen! Behold, the great city Zarahemla have I burned with fire, and the inhabitants thereof. And behold, the great city Moroni have I caused to be sunk in the depths of the sea, and the inhabitants thereof to be drowned. And behold, that great city Moronihah have I covered with earth, and the inhabitants thereof, to hide their iniquities and their abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come any more unto me against them. * * * * Yea, and the city of Onihah and the inhabitants thereof, and the city of Mocum and the inhabitants thereof. * * * * And waters have I caused to come up in the stead thereof, to hide their wickedness and abominations from before my face, that the blood of the prophets and the saints shall not come up any more unto me against them. * * * * O all ye that are spared because ye were more righteous than they, will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you? Yea, verily I say unto you, if ye will come unto me ye shall have eternal life. Behold mine arm of mercy is extended towards you, and whosoever will come him will I receive; and blessed are those who come unto me."

**The Mysterious Voice is the Voice of Jesus Christ:
The Deity of the Christ Proclaimed**

After proclaiming the dire destruction which had befallen the land and the inhabitants thereof, then the announcement is made declaring the Deity of the Christ. The above Voice continued.

"Behold I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified His name. I came unto my own, and my own received me not. And the Scriptures concerning my coming are fulfilled. And as many as have received me, to them have I given to become the sons of God; and even so will I to as many as shall believe on my name, for behold, by me redemption cometh, and in me is the law of Moses fulfilled. I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings. And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost. * * * * For behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.

Silence! Light Restored

" * * * * And now behold it came to pass that all the people of the land did hear these sayings, and did witness of it. And after these sayings was silence in the land for the space of many hours: * * * * And it came to pass that thus did the three days pass away. And it was in the morn-

ing, and the darkness dispersed from off the face of the land, and the earth did cease to tremble, and the rocks did cease to rend, and the dreadful groanings did cease, and all the tumultuous noises did pass away. And the earth did cleave together again, that it stood; and the mourning, and the weeping, and the wailing of the people who were spared alive did cease; and their mourning was turned into joy, and their lamentations into the praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord Jesus Christ, their Redeemer. And thus far were the Scriptures fulfilled which had been spoken by the prophets. And it was the more righteous part of the people who were saved, and it was they who received the prophets and stoned them not; and it was they who had not shed the blood of the Saints, who were spared."

The Resurrected Christ Appears to the People of America

How much time elapsed after the storms, and the tempests, and the earthquakes subsided, and the darkness lifted, and the reproving Voice of God was no longer heard in the land, before the next great event to be considered happened, may not be learned from the Book of Mormon; but certainly it could have been no great length of time. This event is the greatest recorded in the American volume of Scripture—the most important—namely: the appearing of the Lord Jesus, to that remnant of the ancient inhabitants of America who survived the judgments of God that swept over the western world during the crucifixion, and the entombment of the Christ, the Son of God. It happened in this manner:

The Glorious Appearing of the Christ

"It came to pass that there were a great multitude gathered together, of the people of Nephi, round about the temple which was in the land Bountiful; and they were marveling and wondering one with another, and were showing one to an-

other the great and marvelous change which had taken place. And they were also conversing about this Jesus Christ, of whom the sign had been given concerning his death. And it came to pass that while they were thus conversing one with another, they heard a voice as if it came out of heaven; and they cast their eyes round about, for they understood not the voice which they heard; and it was not a harsh voice, neither was it a loud voice; nevertheless and notwithstanding it being a small voice it did pierce them that did hear to the center, insomuch that there was no part of their frame that it did not cause to quake; yea, it did pierce them to the very soul, and did cause their hearts to burn. And it came to pass that again they heard the voice, and they understood it not. And again the third time they did hear the voice, and did open their ears to hear it; and their eyes were towards the sound thereof; and they did look steadfastly towards heaven from whence the sound came. And behold, the third time they did understand the voice which they heard; and it said unto them: Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him. And it came to pass, as they understood they cast their eyes up again towards heaven; and behold, they saw a Man descending out of heaven: and he was clothed in a white robe; and he came down and stood in the midst of them; and the eyes of the whole multitude were turned upon him, and they durst not open their mouths, even one to another, and wist not what it meant, for they thought it was an angel that had appeared unto them. And it came to pass that he stretched forth his hand and spake unto the people saying:

The Words of Jesus in America

“Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified should come into the world. And behold, I am the light and the life of the world and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which

I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning."

The Verification by Sight and Touch and Worship

Afterwards the people were permitted, Thomas like, to verify by touch and sight the Christ by his wounded hands and feet and side.

"And when they had all gone forth and witnessed for themselves, they did cry out with one accord, saying: Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus and did worship him."

"Blessed be the name of the Most High God!" This shouted in All Hail to the resurrected Christ, followed by worship of Him! "And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus and did worship Him!" Could Deity be more perfectly proclaimed, or more completely accepted? Equal this to all that has gone before in our Book of Mormon survey of the theme. "JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE ETERNAL GOD!" And what is given in the Book of Mormon on this theme is not surpassed in any other Scripture!

Comparisons

No, not in Isaiah's:—

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL." Which is (St. Matthew's interpretation added)—"God with us!" (Isaiah 7:14—Matt. 1:23);

Nor by Isaiah's:—

"Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, **THE MIGHTY GOD,**

THE EVERLASTING FATHER, The Prince of Peace"
(Isaiah 9:6);

Nor by St. John's:—

"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, the Word was God, the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made; In him was life; and the life was the light of men: and the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. * * * * That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. * * * * And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among men, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (St. John 1:1-14);

Nor by St. Matthew's:—

"And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him (i. e. unto John), and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying—This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!" (Matt. 3:16-17.)

Nor by Hebrew's:—

"God, who at sundry times and divers manner spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds! who, being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Hebrews 1:1-3);

Nor by Paul's:—

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus;

who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." (Philip 2:6);

Nor by Paul's—(Speaking of the Christ):—

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist (subsist). And he is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell. * * * * For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 1:15-19 and 2:9.)

Nor are the Book of Mormon testimonies to the Deity of Christ surpassed by all these combined.

If All This Be True!

How splendid all this, IF TRUE! What a WITNESS that Jesus is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, if the Book of Mormon testimony is TRUE! But is it true? That gives rise to a question too large to be discussed at length here—including, as it would, the whole question of the authenticity and credibility of the Book of Mormon. It is a subject for a volume—for more than a volume. The present Writer has two volumes upon the subject in volumes II and III of his three volumed work on "New Witnesses for God!" Volumes II and III being a treatise on the Book of Mormon as such a Witness for God, and Volume I, a treatise on Joseph Smith as such a Witness for God." * All that can be done here is to set forth the tremendous truth in statement form, and leave the Reader to pursue his inquiry through our larger

works on the authenticity and credibility of the Book of Mormon. * *

"The above-named books were published in 1909, and are to be had at Deseret Book Store, Salt Lake City, or at the address of any of the L. D. S. Mission Headquarters in the United States. (See 2nd page, this tract).

"Notwithstanding what is said in the text, I think I may add at least the following notes on the matter of the two days and the night of continuous light—"as light as though it was mid-day;" and also as to "the three days of darkness" that may be traced to native American legends.

I—"THE DAY OF THREE SUNS"

That such events as are here set forth as matters of prophecy and history in the Book of Mormon would make a deep impression upon the traditions of a people, and in some way would get themselves expressed in some form of legend or mythology, can be well expected, and they have been expressed. The three days of light, the "one day and a night and a day, as if it were one day, and there were no night" makes its appearance in native American legend as the remarkable day "when three suns were seen," which event some of the early native Mexican writers, after the Spanish Conquest, and consequently after their contact with Christianity,—think that it took place on the day of the birth of our Redeemer (Fuentes Y. Guzman). Another native writer (Veytia) speaks of "the stopping of the sun for a whole day in his course, as at the command of Joshua." And this event was preceded by terrible tempests and a period of darkness.

II—"THREE DAYS OF DARKNESS"

References to the period of terrible storms and tempests and darkness and earthquakes, and "immense catastrophe," which changed the face of nature, are frequent and constant in the native traditions and writings of Central America, which clearly correspond to such events as are set forth in the Book of Mormon as signs of Messiah's birth and death. But, as already stated, it is not my intention to attempt a consideration of these matters here, where the limits are too narrow, and I have already referred the reader to my larger treatment of these things in "New Witnesses for God." And especially would I refer you to Volume III, chapter XXX, where consideration in particular is given to the native American traditions respecting the events which make up the signs of Messiah's birth, and resurrection from the dead. Commenting on the dread of the native Americans in Mexico about the recurrence of such another period of darkness, I said, in closing that chapter: "Whence this terror of the darkness? Whence this rejoicing at the assurance of continued light, unless back of both terror and rejoicing, somewhere in the history of the people, there was some such circumstance as that described in the Book of Mormon which gave cause for this terror of darkness on the one hand, and rejoicing at the assurance of a continuation of light on the other?"

The Testimony Inherent in Truth

All the more cheerfully do I refuse to attempt the consideration of these matters within the narrow limits of this Tract, because I am convinced that there are briefer and surer ways for the Reader to attain to a realization of the truth of these things than is offered by a disquisition upon native American traditions, legends, and mythologies, however exhaustive such a treatise might be. These ways are, first, the appeal that the truth itself makes to the human understanding upon the simple statement of it without other proofs. That proof which resides within truth itself—the self evidence of truth—its Spirit;—for that power is in the statement of a truth, and I rely on that power as proof of the things herein set forth.

The second way is through the testimony of the Holy Ghost to the truth of the Book of Mormon, promised in the book itself.

The Testimony of the Holy Ghost Promised

This promised testimony of the Holy Ghost to the truth of the Book of Mormon is the most remarkable thing about the book. If the Book of Mormon for a moment should be considered as untrue—a created fiction of Joseph Smith's mind, then he has unconsciously provided in the Book itself a means, absolutely infallible, for detecting the fraud: The last of the Nephite Prophets, one Moroni, son of Mormon, when closing his Father's record, furnished this text to which reference is here made. He said, addressing himself to possible Readers of his record:—

“And I seal up these records, after I have spoken a few words by way of exhortation unto you. Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder them in your hearts. And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye

would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, He will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost! And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things." (Moroni 10:2-5.)

Has such a witness of the truth of the Book of Mormon been given—the testimony of the Holy Ghost? Hundreds of thousands are ready to answer in the affirmative: "Scores of thousands who have died in the faith have left on record their testimony that the prophecy has been fulfilled in their experience; and back of the testimony of these thousands is their life of sacrifice, toil, suffering, together with the contumely and persecution which they have endured for that testimony. Some of the witnesses to the fulfillment of this prophecy have even sealed their testimony with their blood. Can evidence of a higher or more solemn character be pointed to in attestation of any truth?"

The Promise Extends To You, O Reader!

This promise is given to you, O Reader, no less than to these who have already sought by this means the Truth and found it. The Book of Mormon proclaims that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD; and you, Reader, may know by the power of the Holy Ghost that this Witness to the Deity of the Christ is true, if you will seek that testimony in the way prescribed above: Ask of God in faith, with real intent, with a sincere heart, and the truth of it shall be made known unto you.

What Comes with Christ as the Eternal God

With the assurance that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, what comes of it? Everything comes of it. All possibility of this present world being a world of questionable

good disappears. Doubts are dissolved. Fears are banished. Certainty is enthroned. Confidence in the good outcome of all things is made certain. We are assured of a reign of moral and spiritual law, as we are assured of a reign of physical law, bringing harmony out of our present world of broken harmonies; a reign of justice, of mercy, and above all, a reign of truth and of love. A reign of good will, and of peace. It must be so when Christ, the Eternal God, reigns; for such a reign is in harmony with his attributes, and those attributes constitute the eternal verities.

With Christ as the Eternal God, man is assured of a provided means of justification before God, reconciliation with God, through a forgiveness of sin, by acceptance of the Gospel of Christ.

With the Christ as the Eternal God, man is assured of oneness with God, such the whole aim and purpose of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—its climax and its glory.

With Christ as the Eternal God, personal and literal resurrection from the dead is assured; personal immortality, with all that is possible to grow out of such immortality; eternal progression in endless duration, which conception of that "Eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2), may well lead one to believe truly that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him;" for the height and the depth of those things, and the eternal weight and glory of them, is now beyond human comprehension.

With Christ as the Eternal God, the relationships human and divine, become clarified. "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God, and your God." (St. John 20:17.) Thus spoke the resurrected Christ to Mary of Magdala, on the resurrection morning. In which message to the apostles is set forth the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of man, through the Christ. Christ's Father, in some way, is man's Father; and the Christ's God, in some way, is man's God;

all men Brothers to the Christ, and, of course, brothers to each other. "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of One, for which cause he (the Christ) is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2:11.) "We have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?" (Heb. 12:9.) Man the offspring of God—hence divine in his spirit-nature; God so close of kin to man that we may not doubt of God's humanity. From these relationships what hopes and assurances are born! What strength! What aspirations may legitimately arise! "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; * * * * Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he (the Christ) shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3:1-3); a consummation devoutly to be wished, as marking the highest development man can hope to attain; and constituting the mightiest incentive to best human endeavor in moral and spiritual attainment.

The End

THE BOOK OF MORMON AS A WITNESS FOR
THE TRUTH OF THE BIBLE; AND ESPE-
CIALLY OF THE RECORD "OF THE
TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE
LAMB." [I. E. THE NEW
TESTAMENT]

"And it came to pass that I beheld the remnant of the seed of my brethren, [The American Indians] and also the Book of the Lamb of God, which had proceeded forth from the mouth of the Jew, [The Bible] that it came forth from the Gentiles unto the remnant of the seed of my brethren [The American Indians]. And after it had come forth unto them I beheld *other books*, which came forth by the power of the Lamb, from the Gentiles unto them, [The Book of Mormon, and other books of revelations through Joseph Smith], unto the convincing of the Gentiles and the remnant of the seed of my brethren, and also the Jews who were scattered upon all the face of the earth, *that the Records of the Prophets* [The Old Testament], *and of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb* [The New Testament], *are true.*

"And the angel spake unto me saying: These last Records, which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them, and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the World; and that all men must come unto Him, or they cannot be saved." I Nephi 13:38-40.

**CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER DAY SAINTS**

213 Macon Ave.

Canon City, Colorado