

THE BOOK OF MORMON

An Account of Its Origin, With Evidences
of Its Genuineness and Authenticity



TWO LECTURES

By

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PREFATORY

The matter presented in the following pages is published as Chapters 14 and 15, in the series entitled "The Articles of Faith," dealing with the principal doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, prepared and delivered by Dr. James E. Talmage. The two lectures are presented in this separate form for the use and benefit of investigators and students who desire to learn something of the most noted and characteristic volume among the standard works of the Church.

**From the Articles of Faith of the Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-day Saints**

Article 8—"We believe the Bible to be the word of God, as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God."

THE BOOK OF MORMON

LECTURE 1

Description and Origin

What is the Book of Mormon?—The Book of Mormon is a divinely inspired record, made by the prophets of the ancient peoples who inhabited the American continent for centuries before and after the time of Christ, which record has been translated in the present generation through the gift of God and by His special appointment. The authorized and inspired translator of these sacred scriptures, through whose instrumentality they have been given to the world in modern language, is Joseph Smith, whose first acquaintance with the plates was mentioned in a preceding lecture. As stated, during the night of September 21-22, 1823, Joseph Smith received, in answer to fervent prayer, a visitation from a resurrected personage* who gave his name as Moroni. Subsequent revelations showed him to be the last of a long line of prophets whose translated writings constitute the Book of Mormon; by him the ancient records had been closed; by him the engraved plates had been deposited in the earth; and through his ministration they were brought into the possession of the latter-day prophet and seer whose work of translation is before us.

On the occasion of his first visit to Joseph Smith, Moroni told of the existence of the record, which, he said, was engraved on plates of gold, at that time lying buried in the side of a hill near Joseph's home. The hill, which was known by one division of the ancient peoples as Cumorah, by another as Ramah, is situated near Palmyra in the State of New York. The precise spot where the plates lay was shown

*See statement of Joseph Smith, *Hist. of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 28.

to Joseph in vision; and he had no difficulty in finding it on the day following the visitation referred to. Joseph Smith's statement of Moroni's declaration concerning the plates is as follows: "He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent, and the source from which they sprang. He also said that the fulness of the everlasting Gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants; also that there were two stones in silver bows—and these stones, fastened to a breastplate, constituted what is called the Urim and Thummim—deposited with the plates; and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted 'seers' in ancient or former times; and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book"^b

Joseph found a large stone at the indicated spot on the Hill Cumorah; beneath the stone was a box, also of stone; the lid of this he raised by means of a lever; then he saw within the box the plates and the breastplate with the Urim and Thummim, as described by the angel. As he was about to remove the contents of the box, Moroni again appeared before him and forbade him taking the sacred things at that time, saying that four years must pass before they would be committed to his personal care; and that, in the meantime, Joseph would be required to visit the place at yearly intervals. This the youthful revelator did, receiving on each occasion additional instruction concerning the record and God's purposes with regard to it. On September 22, 1827, Joseph received from the angel Moroni the plates and the Urim and Thummim with the breastplate. He was instructed to guard them with strict care, and was promised that if he used his best efforts to protect them they would be preserved inviolate in his hands, and that on the completion of the labor of translation Moroni would visit him again and receive the plates.

The reason prompting the caution regarding Joseph's care of the plates and the other objects soon appeared, for in the course of his short journey homeward with the sacred relics he was attacked; but by divine aid he was enabled to

^bP. of G. P., pp. 50-56; see also *Hist. of Church*, vol. 1, chap. 2. See further chaps. 8-11 of *Essentials in Church History*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, Church Historian, Salt Lake City, 1922.

withstand his assailants and finally reached his home with the plates and other articles unharmed. These assaults were but the beginning of a siege of persecution which was relentlessly waged against him as long as the plates remained in his custody. News that he had the plates in his possession soon spread; and numerous attempts, many of them violent, were made to wrest them from his hands. But they were preserved; and, slowly, with many hindrances incident to persecution by the wicked, and to the conditions of his own poverty, which made it necessary for him to toil and left little leisure for the appointed labor, Joseph proceeded with the translation; and in 1830 the Book of Mormon was first published to the world.

The Title Page of the Book of Mormon — Our best answer to the question — What is the Book of Mormon? — is found on the title page of the volume. Thereon we read:

**THE
BOOK OF MORMON**

An Account Written by

**THE HAND OF MORMON
UPON PLATES**

Taken from the Plates of Nephi

Wherefore, it is an abridgment of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites—Written to the Lamanites, who are a remnant of the house of Israel; and also to Jew and Gentile—Written by way of commandment, and also by the spirit of prophecy and of revelation—Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord, that they might not be destroyed—To come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof—Sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by way of the Gentile—The interpretation thereof by the gift of God.

An abridgment taken from the Book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, when they were building a tower to get to heaven—Which is to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord hath done for their fathers; and 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—And now, if there are faults they are the mistakes of men; wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment-seat of Christ.

This combined title and preface is a translation from the last page of the plates, and was presumably written by Moroni, who, as before stated, sealed and hid up the record in former days.^c

Main Divisions of the Book—From the title page, we learn that in the Book of Mormon we have to deal with the histories of two nations, who flourished in America as the descendants of small colonies brought hither from the eastern continent by divine direction. Of these we may conveniently speak as the Nephites and the Jaredites.

The Nephite Nation was the later, and in point of the fulness of the records, the more important. The progenitors of this people were led from Jerusalem in the year 600 B.C., by Lehi, a Jewish prophet of the tribe of Manasseh. His immediate family, at the time of their departure from Jerusalem, comprised his wife, Sariah, and their sons Laman, Lemuel, Sam, and Nephi; at a later stage of the history daughters are mentioned, but whether any of these were born before the family exodus we are not told. Beside his own household, the colony of Lehi included Zoram and Ishmael, the latter an Israelite of the tribe of Ephraim.^d Ishmael, with his family, joined Lehi's company in the wilderness, and his descendants were numbered with the nation of whom we are speaking. It appears that the company journeyed somewhat east of south, keeping near the borders

^cSee Appendix 1:1. ^dSee Appendix 2:1.

of the Red Sea; then, changing their course to the eastward, crossed the peninsula of Arabia; and there, on the shores of the Arabian Sea, built and provisioned a vessel in which they committed themselves to divine care upon the waters. It is believed that their voyage must have carried them eastward across the Indian Ocean, then over the Pacific to the Western coast of America, whereon they landed about 590 B.C. The landing place is not described in the book itself with such detail as to warrant definite conclusions.

The people established themselves on what to them was the land of promise; many children were born, and in the course of a few generations a numerous posterity held possession of the land. After the death of Lehi a division occurred, some of the people accepting as their leader, Nephi, who had been duly appointed to the prophetic office; while the rest proclaimed Laman, the eldest of Lehi's sons, as their chief. Thenceforth the divided people were known as Nephites and Lamanites respectively. At times they observed toward each other a semblance of friendly relations; but generally they were opposed, the Lamanites manifesting implacable hatred and hostility toward their Nephite kindred. The Nephites advanced in the arts of civilization, built large cities, and established prosperous commonwealths; yet they often fell into transgression, and the Lord chastened them by permitting their hereditary enemies to be victorious. It is traditionally believed that they spread northward, occupying a considerable area in Central America, and then expanded eastward and northward over part of what is now the United States of America. The Lamanites, while increasing in numbers, fell under the curse of divine displeasure; they became dark in skin and benighted in spirit, forgot the God of their fathers, lived a wild nomadic life, and degenerated into the fallen state in which the American Indians—their lineal descendants—were found by those who rediscovered the western continent in later times.

The final struggles between Nephites and Lamanites were waged in the vicinity of the Hill Cumorah, in what is now the State of New York, resulting in the destruction of the Nephites as a nation, about 400 A.D. The last Nephite representative was Moroni, who, wandering for safety

from place to place, daily expecting death from the victorious Lamanites, wrote the concluding parts of the Book of Mormon, and hid the record in Cumorah. It was this same Moroni who, as a resurrected being, gave the records into the hands of Joseph Smith in the present dispensation.

The Jaredite Nation—Of the two nations whose histories constitute the Book of Mormon, the first in order of time consisted of the people of Jared, who followed their leader from the Tower of Babel at the time of the confusion of tongues. Their history was written on twenty-four plates of gold by Ether, the last of their prophets, who, foreseeing the destruction of his people because of their wickedness, hid away the historic plates. They were afterward found, about B. C. 122, by an expedition sent out by King Limhi, a Nephite ruler. The record engraved on these plates was subsequently abridged by Moroni, and the condensed account was attached by him to the Book of Mormon record; it appears in the modern translation under the name of the Book of Ether.

The first and chief prophet of the Jaredites is not specified by name in the record as we have it; he is known only as the brother of Jared. Of this people we learn that, amidst the confusion of Babel, Jared and his brother importuned the Lord that they and their associates be spared from the impending disruption. Their prayer was heard, and the Lord led them with a considerable company, who, like themselves, were free from the taint of idolatry, away from their homes, promising to conduct them to a land choice above all other lands. Their course of travel is not given with exactness; we learn only that they reached the ocean and there constructed eight vessels, called barges, in which they set out upon the waters. These vessels were small and dark within; but the Lord made certain stones luminous, and these gave light to the imprisoned voyagers. After a passage of three hundred and forty-four days, the colony landed on the American shores.

Here they became a flourishing nation; but, giving way in time to internal dissensions, they divided into factions, which warred with one another until the people were totally destroyed. This destruction, which occurred near the

Hill Ramah, afterward known among the Nephites as Cumorah, probably took place at about the time of Lehi's landing, near 590 B.C. The last representative of the ill-fated race was Coriantumr, the king, concerning whom Ether had prophesied that he should survive all his subjects and live to see another people in possession of the land. This prediction was fulfilled in that the king, whose people had been exterminated, came, in the course of his solitary wanderings, to a region occupied by the people of Mulek, who are to be mentioned here as the third ancient colony of emigrants from the eastern continent.

Mulek was the son of Zedekiah, king of Judah, an infant at the time of his brothers' violent deaths and his father's cruel torture at the hands of the king of Babylon.⁶ Eleven years after Lehi's departure from Jerusalem, another colony was led from the city, amongst whom was Mulek. The colony took his name, probably on account of his recognized rights of leadership by virtue of lineage. The Book of Mormon record concerning Mulek and his people is scant; we learn, however, that the colony was brought across the waters to a landing, probably on the northern part of the American continent. The descendants of this colony were discovered by the Nephites under Mosiah; they had grown numerous, but, having had no scriptures for their guidance had fallen into a condition of spiritual darkness. They joined the Nephites and their history is merged into that of the greater nation.⁷ The Nephites gave to a part of North America the name Land of Mulek.

THE ANCIENT PLATES AND THE TRANSLATION

The Plates of the Book of Mormon as delivered by the angel Moroni to Joseph Smith, according to the description given by the latter-day prophet, were, as far as he knew, of gold, of uniform size, each about seven inches wide by eight inches long, and in thickness a little less than that of ordinary sheet tin. They were fastened together by three rings running through the plates near one edge; together they formed a book nearly six inches in thickness, but not all has

⁶See 2 Kings 25:7.

⁷See Omni 12-19

been translated, a part having been sealed. Both sides of the plates were engraved with small characters, described by those who examined them as of curious workmanship, with the appearance of ancient origin.

Three classes of plates are mentioned on the title page of the Book of Mormon:

1. **The Plates of Nephi**, which, as will be shown, were of two kinds: (a) the larger plates; (b) the smaller plates.
2. **The Plates of Mormon**, containing an abridgment from the plates of Nephi, with additions made by Mormon and his son Moroni.
3. **The Plates of Ether**, containing the history of the Jaredites.

To these may be added another set of plates, as being mentioned in the Book of Mormon, and in point of time the oldest of all:

4. **The Brass Plates of Laban**, brought by Lehi's people from Jerusalem, and containing Jewish scriptures and genealogies, many extracts from which appear in the Nephite records. We have now to consider more particularly the plates of Nephi and Mormon's abridgment thereof.

The Plates of Nephi are so named from the fact that they were prepared and their record was begun by Nephi, son of Lehi. These plates were of two kinds,⁸ which may be distinguished as the larger plates and the smaller plates. Nephi began his labors as a recorder by engraving on his plates a historical account of his people from the time his father left Jerusalem. This account recited the story of their wanderings, their prosperity and distress, the reigns of their kings and the wars and contentions of the people; the record was in the nature of a secular history. These plates were handed from one recorder to another throughout the generations of the Nephite people, so that, at the time of their abridgment by Mormon, the record covered a period of about a thousand years, dating from 600 B. C., the time of Lehi's

⁸See 1 Nephi, chap. 9; 19:1-5; 2 Nephi 5:30; Jacob 1:1-4; Words of Mormon 3-7.

exodus from Jerusalem. Although these plates bore the name of the first of the writers thereon, the separate work of each recorder is known in general by his specific name, so that the record is made up of several distinct books.

By command of the Lord, Nephi made other plates, upon which he recorded particularly what may be called in a broad sense the ecclesiastical history of his people, citing only such instances of other events as seemed necessary to the proper sequence of the narrative. "I have received a commandment of the Lord," says Nephi, "that I should make these plates, for the special purpose that there should be an account engraven of the ministry of my people."^h The object of this double line of history was unknown to Nephi; it was enough for him that the Lord required the labor; that it was for a wise purpose will be shown.

Mormon's Abridgement—In the course of time the records that had accumulated passed into the hands of Mormon, who undertook to make an abridgment of these extensive works upon plates made with his own hands.^j By such a course a record was prepared more concise and more nearly uniform in style, language, and treatment than could possibly have been the case with the varied writings of so many authors as had contributed to the great history during the many centuries of its growth. Mormon recognizes and testifies to the inspiration of God by which he was moved to undertake the great labor.^k In preparing this shorter history, Mormon preserved the division of the record into books according to the arrangement of the originals and thus, though the language may be that of Mormon, except in cases of quotations from the plates of Nephi, which are indeed numerous, we find the Books of Nephi, the Book of Alma, the Book of Helaman, etc., the form of speech known as the first person being generally preserved.

When Mormon, in the course of his work of abridging the voluminous records, had reached the time of King Benjamin's reign, he was deeply impressed with the account engraved on the smaller plates of Nephi—the history of God's

^h1 Nephi 9:3.

ⁱSee Words of Mormon 11; 1:1-4; 4-23. ^jSee 3 Nephi 5:8-11. ^kSee 5:14-19.

dealings with the people during the period of about four centuries extending from the time of Lehi's exodus from Jerusalem down to the time of King Benjamin. This record, comprising so much of prophecy concerning the mission of the Savior, was regarded by Mormon with great reverence. Of these plates he attempted no transcript, but included the originals with his own abridgment of the larger plates, making of the two one book. The record as compiled by Mormon contained, therefore, a double account of the descendants of Lehi for the first four hundred years of their history—the brief secular history condensed from the larger plates, and the full text on the smaller plates. In solemn language, and with an emphasis that subsequent events have shown to be significant, Mormon declares the hidden wisdom of the Lord's purpose in this duplication: "And I do this for a wise purpose; for thus it whispereth me, according to the workings of the Spirit of the Lord which is in me. And now, I do not know all things; but the Lord knoweth all things which are to come; wherefore, he worketh in me to do according to his will."¹

The Lord's Purpose in the matter of preparing and preserving the smaller plates as testified of by Mormon and also by Nephi,^m is rendered plain from certain circumstances in this latter-day dispensation attending the translation of the records by Joseph Smith. After the prophet had prepared a translation of the first part of the writings of Mormon, the manuscript was won from his custody through the unrighteous solicitations of Martin Harris, to whom he considered himself indebted for material assistance while he was devoting his time to the work. This manuscript, in all one hundred and sixteen pages, was never returned to Joseph; but, through the dark schemes of evil powers, it fell into the hands of enemies, who straightway laid a wicked plan to ridicule the translator and thwart the purposes of God. This design was that the conspirators wait until Joseph had retranslated the missing matter, then the stolen manuscript, which in the meantime had been altered so that the words were made to express the contrary of the true record, would be set forth as a proof that the prophet was unable to trans-

¹ Words of Mormon 7.

^m See 1 Nephi 9:5.

late the same passages twice alike. But the Lord's wisdom interposed to bring to naught these dark designs.

Having chastened the prophet by depriving him for a season of his gift to translate, as also of the custody of the sacred records, and this for his dereliction in permitting the writings to pass into unappointed hands, the Lord graciously restored His penitent servant to favor, and revealed to him the designs of his enemies," at the same time showing how these evil machinations should be made to fail. Joseph was instructed not to attempt a retranslation of that part of Mormon's abridgment, the first translation of which had been stolen; but instead to translate from the plates of Nephi the record of the same period—the set of smaller plates which Mormon had incorporated with his own writings. The translation so made was therefore published as the record of Nephi, and not as the writing of Mormon; and thus no second translation was made of the parts from which the stolen manuscript had been prepared.

The Translation of the Book of Mormon was effected through the power of God manifested in the bestowal of the gift of revelation. The book professes not to be dependent upon the wisdom or learning of man; its translator was not versed in linguistics; his qualifications were of a different and of a more efficient order. With the plates, Joseph Smith received from the angel other sacred treasures, including a breastplate, to which was attached the Urim and Thummim,^o called by the Nephites **Interpreters**; and by the use of these he was enabled to translate the ancient records into our modern tongue. The details of the work of translation have not been recorded, beyond the statement that the translator examined the engraved characters by means of the sacred instruments, and then dictated to the scribe the English sentences.

Joseph began his work with the plates by patiently copying a number of characters, adding his translation to some of the pages thus prepared. The prophet's first assistant in the labor, Martin Harris, obtained permission to take

^oSee D. & C., sec. 10; also Hist. of Church, vol. 1, chap. 3.

^oSee D. & C., 10:1; 17:1; 130:8, 9; Mos. 9:18-19; Ether 3:23-28.

away some of these transcripts, with the purpose of submitting them to the examination of men learned in ancient languages. He placed some of the sheets before Professor Charles Anthon, of Columbia College, who, after examination, certified that the characters were in general of the ancient Egyptian order, and that the accompanying translations appeared to be correct. Hearing how this ancient record came into Joseph's hands, Professor Anthon requested Mr. Harris to bring the original book for examination, stating that he would undertake the translation of the work; then, learning that a part of the book was sealed, he remarked, "I cannot read a sealed book"; and thus unwittingly did this man fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the coming forth of the volume: "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men delivered to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed."^p Another linguist, a Doctor Mitchell, of New York, having examined the characters, gave concerning them a testimony in all important respects corresponding to that of Professor Anthon.

Arrangement of the Book of Mormon—The Book of Mormon comprises fifteen separate parts, which with a single exception are called books, and are distinguished by the names of their principal authors. Of these, the first six books, viz., First and Second Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, and Omni, are literal translations from corresponding portions of the smaller plates of Nephi. The body of the volume, from the book of Mosiah to Mormon, chapter 7, inclusive, is the translation of Mormon's abridgment of the larger plates of Nephi. Between the books of Omni and Mosiah, the "Words of Mormon" occur, connecting the record of Nephi, as engraved on the smaller plates, with Mormon's abridgment of the larger plates for the periods following. The Words of Mormon may be regarded as a brief explanation of the preceding portions of the work and a preface of the parts then to follow. The last part of the Book of Mormon, from the beginning of Mormon, chapter 8, to the end of the volume, is in the language of Moroni, son of Mormon, who first proceeds to finish the record of his father, and

^pIsa. 29:11.

then adds an abridgment of a set of plates which contained an account of the Jaredites; this appears as the book of Ether.

At the time of Moroni's writing he stood alone—the sole surviving representative of his people, excepting the many who had identified themselves with the Lamanites. The last of the fratricidal wars between Nephites and Lamanites had resulted in the annihilation of the former as a people; and Moroni supposed that his abridgment of the book of Ether would be his last literary work; but, finding himself miraculously preserved at the conclusion of that undertaking, he added the part known to us as the book of Moroni, containing accounts of procedure in ordination, baptism, and administration of the sacrament, and a record of certain utterances and writings of his father Mormon.

The Genuineness of the Book of Mormon will appear as a result of impartial investigation into the circumstances attending its coming forth. The fanciful theories of its origin, advanced by prejudiced opponents, are in general too inconsistent, and in most instances too thoroughly puerile, to merit serious consideration. Assumptions that the Book of Mormon is the production of a single author or of men working in collusion, a work of fiction, or in any manner a modern composition, are their own refutation.⁹ The sacred character of the plates forbade their display as a means of gratifying personal curiosity; nevertheless a number of reputable witnesses examined them, and these men have given to the world their solemn testimony of the facts. In June, 1829, the prophecies respecting the witnesses by whose testimony the word of God as set forth in the Book of Mormon was to be established,^r saw its fulfillment in a manifestation of divine power, demonstrating the genuineness of the record to three men, whose affirmations accompany all editions of the book.

THE TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES

BE IT KNOWN unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That we, through

⁹Sec Appendix 1:2.

^rSec 2 Nephi 11:3, 27:12, 13; Ether 5:3, 4; see also D. & C. 5:11-15; sec. 17.

the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken. And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvelous in our eyes. Nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.

Oliver Cowdery
David Whitmer
Martin Harris

The testimony so declared was never revoked, nor even modified by any one of the witnesses whose names are subscribed to the foregoing,^s though all of them withdrew from the Church, and developed feelings amounting almost to hatred toward Joseph Smith. To the last of their lives they maintained the same solemn declaration of the angelic visit, and of the testimony that had been implanted in their hearts. Shortly after the witnessing of the plates by the three, other eight persons were permitted to see and handle the ancient records; and in this also was prophecy fulfilled, in that it was of old declared, that beside the three, "God sendeth more

^sSee Appendix 1:3.

witnesses,"^t whose testimony would be added to that of the three. Joseph Smith showed the plates to the eight whose names are attached to the following certificate, presumably in July, 1829.

THE TESTIMONY OF EIGHT WITNESSES

BE IT KNOWN unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That Joseph Smith, Jun., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen. And we lie not, God bearing witness of it.

Christian Whitmer
Jacob Whitmer
Peter Whitmer, Jun.
John Whitmer

Hiram Page
Joseph Smith, Sen.
Hyrum Smith
Samuel H. Smith

Three of the eight witnesses died out of the Church, yet not one of the whole number ever was known to deny his testimony concerning the Book of Mormon."^u

Here, then, are proofs of varied kinds regarding the reliability of this volume. The translator gives simple and circumstantial account of the bringing forth of the ancient plates, and avers that the translation was effected by the power of God; learned linguists pronounce the engraved characters genuine; eleven men of honest report, beside the translator, make solemn affirmation as to the appearance of the plates; and the nature of the book^v itself sustains the claim that it is nothing other than a translation of ancient records.^w

^t2 Nephi 11:3; also Appendix 1:4. ^uSee Appendix 1:4. ^vSee Appendix 1:5. ^wSee Vitality of "Mormonism," articles "A Messenger from the Presence of God" and "Scriptures of the American Continent," pp. 128-187.

LECTURE II

THE BOOK OF MORMON—Continued

ITS AUTHENTICITY

The Authenticity of the Book of Mormon constitutes our most important consideration of the work. This subject is one of vital interest to every earnest investigator of the word of God, to every sincere searcher after truth. Claiming to be, as far as the present dispensation is concerned, a new scripture, presenting prophecies and revelations not heretofore recognized in modern theology, announcing to the world the message of a departed people, written by way of commandment, and by the spirit of prophecy and revelation—this book is entitled to the most thorough and impartial examination. Not only does the Book of Mormon merit such consideration, it claims, even demands the same; for no one professing belief in the power and authority of God can receive with unconcern the announcement of a new revelation, professedly bearing the seal of divine authority. The question of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon is therefore one in which the world is concerned.

The Latter-day Saints base their belief in the authenticity of the book on the following proofs:

1. The general agreement of the Book of Mormon with the Bible in all related matters.
2. The fulfillment of ancient prophecies accomplished by the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon.
3. The strict agreement and consistency of the Book of Mormon with itself.
4. The evident truth of its contained prophecies.

To these may be added certain external, or extra-scriptural evidences, amongst which are:

5. Corroborative testimony furnished by archeology and ethnology.

1. THE BOOK OF MORMON AND THE BIBLE

The **Nepkite and the Jewish Scriptures** are found to agree in matters of tradition, history, doctrine, and prophecy which the separate records treat. These two volumes of scripture were prepared on opposite hemispheres, under widely diverse conditions; yet between them there exists surprising harmony, confirmatory of divine inspiration in both. The Book of Mormon contains a number of quotations from the ancient Jewish scriptures, a copy of which, as far as they had been compiled at the time of Lehi's exodus from Jerusalem, was brought to the western continent as part of the record engraved on the plates of Laban. In the case of such passages there is no essential difference between Biblical and Book of Mormon versions, except in instances of probable error in translation—usually apparent through inconsistency or lack of clearness in the Biblical reading. There are, however, numerous minor variations in corresponding parts of the two volumes; and between such, examination usually demonstrates the superior clearness of the Nepkite scripture.

In a careful comparison of the prophecies of the Bible with corresponding predictions contained in the Book of Mormon, e. g., those relating to the birth, earthly ministry, sacrificial death, and second coming of Christ Jesus; with others referring to the scattering and subsequent gathering of Israel; and with such as relate to the establishment of Zion and the rebuilding of Jerusalem in the last days, each of the records is corroborative of the other. True, there are many predictions in one that are not found in both, but in no instance has contradiction or inconsistency been pointed out. Between the doctrinal parts of the two volumes of scripture the same perfect harmony is found to prevail.^a

2. PROPHECIES REGARDING THE BOOK OF MORMON

Ancient Prophecy has been literally fulfilled in the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. One of the earliest utterances directly bearing upon this subject is that of Enoch,

^aSee Appendix 1:5.

an antediluvian prophet unto whom the Lord revealed His purposes for all time. Witnessing in vision the corruption of mankind, after the ascension of the Son of Man, Enoch cried unto his God: "Wilt thou not come again upon the earth? * * * And the Lord said unto Enoch: As I live, even so will I come in the last days. * * * And the day shall come that the earth shall rest, but before that day the heavens shall be darkened, and a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth; and great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve; And righteousness will I send down out of heaven; and truth will I send forth out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten. * * * And righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare."^b The Latter-day Saints regard the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, together with the restoration of the Priesthood by the direct ministration of heavenly messengers, as a fulfillment of this prophecy, and of similar predictions contained in the Bible.

David, who sang his psalms over a thousand years before the "meridian of time," predicted: "Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven."^c And so also declared Isaiah.^d Ezekiel saw in vision^e the coming together of the stick of Judah, and the stick of Joseph, signifying the Bible and the Book of Mormon. The passage last referred to reads, in the words of Ezekiel: "The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand."

When we call to mind the ancient custom in the making of books—that of writing on long strips of parchment, and rolling the same on rods or sticks, the use of the word "stick"

^bP. of G. P., Moses 7:59-62. ^cPs. 85:11. ^dSee Isa. 45:8. ^eSee Ezek., chap. 37, particularly verses 15-20.

as equivalent to "book" in the passage becomes apparent.^f At the time of this utterance, the Israelites had divided into two nations known as the kingdom of Judah and that of Israel, or Ephraim. Plainly the separate records of Judah and Joseph are here referred to.^g Now, as we have seen, the Nephite nation comprised the descendants of Lehi who belonged to the tribe of Manasseh, or Ishmael who was an Ephraimite,^h and of Zoram whose tribal relation is not definitely stated. The Nephites were then of the tribes of Joseph; and their record or "stick" is as truly represented by the Book of Mormon as in the "stick" of Judah by the Bible.

That the bringing forth of the record of Joseph or Ephraim was to be accomplished through the direct power of God is evident from the Lord's exposition of the vision of Ezekiel, wherein He says: "Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph * * * and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah."ⁱ That this union of the two records was to be a characteristic of the latter days, is evident from the prediction of an event which was to follow immediately, viz., the gathering of the tribes from the nations among which they had been dispersed.^j Comparison with other prophecies relating to the gathering will conclusively prove that the great event was predicted to take place in the latter times, preparatory to the second coming of Christ.^k

Reverting to the writings of Isaiah we find that prophet voicing the Lord's threatenings against Ariel, or Jerusalem, "the city where David dwelt." Ariel was to be distressed, burdened with heaviness and sorrow; then the prophet refers to some people, other than Judah who occupied Jerusalem, for he makes comparison with the latter, saying: "And it shall be unto me as Ariel." Concerning the fate decreed against this other people we read: "And thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voice shall be, as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust."^l

^fSee a corresponding use of the word "roll" in Jeremiah 36:1, 2; and its synonym "book" in verses 8, 10, 11, and 13. ^gCompare with Lehi's prediction made to his son Joseph, 2 Nephi 3:12. ^hSee Appendix 2:1.

ⁱEzek. 37:19. ^jSame, verse 21. ^kSee chap. 18 herein. ^lIsa. 29:4—read verses 1-6.

Of the fulfillment of these and associated prophecies, a latter-day apostle has written: "These predictions of Isaiah could not refer to Ariel, or Jerusalem, because their speech has not been 'out of the ground,' or 'low out of the dust'; but it refers to the remnant of Joseph who were destroyed in America upwards of fourteen hundred years ago. The Book of Mormon describes their downfall, and truly it was great and terrible. At the crucifixion of Christ, 'the multitude of their terrible ones,' as Isaiah predicted, 'became as chaff that passeth away,' and it took place as he further predicts, 'at an instant suddenly.' * * * This remnant of Joseph in their distress and destruction became as Ariel. As the Roman army lay siege to Ariel, and brought upon her great distress and sorrow so did the contending nations of ancient America bring upon each other the most direful scenes of blood and carnage. Therefore the Lord could, with the greatest propriety, when speaking in reference to this event, declare that, 'It shall be unto me as Ariel.'"^m

Isaiah's striking prediction that the nation thus brought down should "speak out of the ground," with speech "low out of the dust" was literally fulfilled in the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon, the original of which was taken out of the ground, and the voice of the record is as that of one speaking from the dust. In continuation of the same prophecy we read: "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed: And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned."ⁿ The fulfillment of this prediction is claimed in the presentation of the transcript from the plates—"the words of a book," not the book itself—to the learned Professor Charles Anthon, whose reply, almost in the words of the text, has been cited in the last chapter; and in the delivery of the book itself to the unlettered youth, Joseph Smith.

^mOrson Pratt, *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, pp. 293, 294 (Utah ed., 1891). For details of fulfillment of part of the prophecy, see 3 Nephi, chaps. 8, 9.

ⁿIsa. 29:11, 12.

3. CONSISTENCY OF THE BOOK OF MORMON

The **Internal Consistency of the Book of Mormon** sustains belief in its divine origin. The parts bear evidence of having been written at different times and under widely varying conditions. The style of the component books is in harmony with the times and circumstances of their production. The portions that were transcribed from the plates bearing Mormon's abridgment contain numerous interpolations as comments and explanations of the transcriber; but in the first six books, which, as already explained, are the verbatim record of the smaller plates of Nephi, no such interpolations occur. The book maintains consistency throughout; no contradiction, no disagreements have been pointed out.

Diversity of Style characterizes the different books.⁹ From what has been said regarding the several sets of plates that constitute the original accumulation of records from which the Book of Mormon was translated, it is evident that the volume contains the compiled writings of a long line of inspired scribes extending through a thousand years, this time-range being exclusive of the earlier years of Jaredite history. Unity of style is not to be expected under such conditions.

4. THE BOOK OF MORMON SUSTAINED BY THE FULFILLMENT OF ITS CONTAINED PROPHECIES

Book of Mormon Predictions are numerous and important. Amongst the most conclusive proofs of the authenticity of the book is that furnished by the demonstrated truth of its contained prophecies. Prophecy is best proved in the light of its own fulfillment. The predictions contained within the Book of Mormon may be classed as (1) Prophecies relating to the time covered by the book itself, the fulfillment of which is recorded therein; and (2) Prophecies relating to times beyond the limits of the history chronicled in the book.

Prophecies of the First Class named, the fulfillment of which is attested by the Book of Mormon record, are of minor

⁹See Appendix 2:2. See especially four articles by Elder J. M. Sjodahl, entitled "Authenticity of the Book of Mormon," in *Millennial Star*, Liverpool, vol. 77 (1915), beginning on pages 465, 481, 497, and 513.

value as proof of the authenticity of the work; for, had the book been written by human design as fiction, both prediction and fulfillment would have been provided for with equal care and ingenuity. Nevertheless, to the studious and conscientious reader the genuineness of the book will be apparent; and the literal realization of the numerous and varied predictions relating to the fate, then future, of the people whose history is given in the record, as also of prophecies concerning details of the birth and death of the Savior, and of His appearing to that people in a resurrected state, must, by their accuracy and consistency, appeal with force as evidence of inspiration and authority in the record.

Prophecies of the Second Class, relating to a time which to the writers was far future, are numerous and explicit. Many of them have special reference to the last days—the dispensation of the fulness of times—and of these, some have been already literally accomplished, others are now in process of actual realization, while yet others are awaiting fulfillment under specified conditions that seem now to be rapidly approaching. Among the most remarkable of the Book of Mormon predictions incident to the last dispensation are those that relate to its own coming forth and the effect of its publication amongst mankind. Ezekiel's prophecy concerning the coming together of the "sticks," or records, of Judah and of Ephraim has received attention. Consider the promise made to Joseph who was sold into Egypt, repeated by Lehi to his son Joseph—a prediction that couples the prophecy concerning the book with that of the seer through whose instrumentality the miracle was to be accomplished: "But a seer will I raise up out of the fruit of thy loins; and unto him will I give power to bring forth my word unto the seed of thy loins—and not to the bringing forth my word only, saith the Lord, but to the convincing them of my word, which shall have already gone forth among them. Wherefore, the fruit of thy loins shall write; and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write; and that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins, and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah, shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins, and bringing them to the knowledge of

their fathers in the latter days, and also to the knowledge of my covenants, saith the Lord. And out of weakness he shall be made strong, in that day when my work shall commence among all my people, unto the restoring thee, O house of Israel, saith the Lord."^p The literal fulfillment of these utterances in the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon through Joseph Smith is apparent.

Unto Nephi the Lord showed what would be an effect of the new publication, declaring that in the day of Israel's gathering—plainly then the day of the fulness of times, as attested by the Jewish scriptures—the words of the Nephites should be given to the world, and should "hiss forth unto the ends of the earth, for a standard" unto the house of Israel; and that then the Gentiles, forgetting even their debt to the Jews from whom they had received the Bible in which they profess such faith, would revile and curse that branch of the covenant people, and would reject the new scriptures, exclaiming: "A Bible! a Bible! we have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible,"^q Is this not the burden of the frenzied objections raised by the Gentile world against the Book of Mormon—that it is of necessity void because new revelation is not to be expected?

Now, in olden times, two witnesses were required to establish the truth of an allegation; and, said the Lord concerning the dual records witnessing of Himself: "Wherefore murmur ye, because that ye shall receive more of my word? Know ye not that the testimony of two nations is a witness unto you that I am God, that I remember one nation like unto another? Wherefore, I speak the same words unto one nation like unto another. And when the two nations shall run together the testimony of the two nations shall run together also."^r

Associated with these predictions of the joint testimony of Jewish and Nephite scriptures is another prophecy, the consummation of which is now expectantly yet patiently awaited by the faithful. Additional scriptures are promised, specifically the records of the Lost Tribes. Note this word of promise: "Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need

^p2 Nephi 3:11-13. ^q2 Nephi 29:3; read the chapter. ^r2 Nephi 29:8.

ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written. * * * For behold, I shall speak unto the Jews and they shall write it; and I shall speak unto the Nephites and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto the other tribes of the house of Israel, which I have led away, and they shall write it; and I shall also speak unto all nations of the earth and they shall write it. And it shall come to pass that the Jews shall have the words of the Nephites, and the Nephites shall have the words of the Jews; and the Nephites and the Jews shall have the words of the lost tribes of Israel; and the lost tribes of Israel shall have the words of the Nephites and the Jews."^s

5. CORROBORATIVE EVIDENCE FURNISHED BY MODERN DISCOVERIES

The Archeology and Ethnology of the western continent contribute some corroborative evidence in support of the Book of Mormon. These sciences are confessedly unable to explain in any decisive manner the origin of the native American races; nevertheless, investigation in this field has yielded results that are fairly definite, and with the most important of these the Book of Mormon account is in general accord. No exhaustive treatment will be attempted here, as such would require space far beyond present limitations. For detailed consideration of the subject the student should consult works especially devoted thereto.⁴ Among the most significant of the discoveries respecting the aboriginal inhabitants, are the following:

1. That America was peopled in very ancient times, probably soon after the building of the Tower of Babel.
2. That the continent has been successively occupied by different peoples, at least by two classes, or so-called races, at widely separated periods.
3. That the aboriginal inhabitants came from the East, probably from Asia, and that the latter occupants, or those

^s2 Nephi 29:10, 12. ⁴The student is especially referred to the comprehensive work by Elder B. H. Roberts, *New Witnesses for God*; vol. 2, chaps. 24 to 29 inclusive; and vol. 3, chap. 20 to 34 inclusive.

of the second period, were closely allied to, if not identical with, the Israelites.

4. That the existing native races of America form a common stock.

From the outline already given of the historical part of the Book of Mormon, it is seen that each of these discoveries is fully sustained by that record. Thus it is stated therein:

1. That America was settled by the Jaredites, who came direct from the scenes of Babel.

2. That the Jaredites occupied the land for about eighteen hundred and fifty years, and that at about the time of their extinction, near 590 B. C., Lehi and his company came to this continent, where they developed into the segregated nations Nephites and Lamanites. The former becoming extinct near 385 A. D.—about a thousand years after Lehi's arrival on these shores—the latter continuing in a degenerate condition until the present, and being represented by the Indian tribes.

3. That Lehi, Ishmael, and Zoram, the progenitors of both Nephites and Lamanites, were undoubtedly Israelites, Lehi being of the tribe of Manasseh while Ishmael was an Ephraimite, and that the colony came direct from Jerusalem, in Asia.

4. That the existing Indian tribes are descendants of the immigrants whose history is contained in the Book of Mormon, and that therefore they have sprung from progenitors who were of the house of Israel.

Now let us examine some of the evidence bearing on these points presented by investigators, most of whom knew nothing of the Book of Mormon, and none of whom accept the book as authentic."

^uMany of the citations which follow, used in connection with the extrascriptural evidence supporting the Book of Mormon, have been brought together by writers among our people, particularly by Elder George Reynolds; see also series of articles entitled "American Antiquities," in *Millennial Star*, Liverpool, vol. 21; a series of articles on "The Divine Origin of the Book of Mormon," in *Contributor*, Salt Lake City, vol. 2, by Moses Thatcher; and a tract, *A Prophet of Latter Days*, Liverpool, 1898, by Edwin F. Parry.

1. Concerning the Ancient Colonization of America—

A recognized authority on American antiquities gives the following evidence and inference: "One of the arts known to the builders of Babel was that of brick-making. This art was also known to the people who built the works in the west. The knowledge of copper was known to the people of the plains of Shinar; for Noah must have communicated it, as he lived three hundred and fifty (350) years among them after the flood. Also copper was known to the antediluvians. Copper was also known to the authors of the western monuments. Iron was known to the antediluvians. It was also known to the ancients of the west. However, it is evident that very little iron was among them, as very few instances of its discovery in their works have occurred; and for this very reason we draw a conclusion that they came to this country soon after the dispersion."^v

Lowry, in his "Reply to official inquiries respecting the Aborigines of America," concludes concerning the peopling of the western continent, "that the first settlement was made shortly after the confusion of tongues at the building of the Tower of Babel."^w

Professor Waterman of Boston says of the progenitors of the American Indians: "When and whence did they come? Albert Galatin, one of the profoundest philologists of the age, concluded that, so far as language afforded any clues, the time of their arrival could not have been long after the dispersion of the human family."^x

Pritchard writes of America's ancient inhabitants, that "the era of their existence as a distinct and isolated race must probably be dated as far back as that time which separated into nations the inhabitants of the old world, and gave to each branch of the human family its primitive language and individuality."^y

A native Mexican author, Ixtlilxochitl, "fixes the date of the first peopling of America about the year 2000 B. C.; this

^vPriest, *American Antiquities*, 1934, p. 219. ^wSchoolcraft's *Ethnological Researches*, vol. 3 (1853). ^xExtracts from lecture by Prof. Waterman, delivered in Bristol, England, 1849; quoted in pamphlet by Edwin F. Farry, *A Prophet of Latter Days* (Liverpool, 1898). ^yPritchard, *National History of Man* (London, 1845).

closely accords with that given by the Book of Mormon, which positively declares that it occurred at the time of the dispersion, when God in His anger scattered the people upon the face of the whole earth."² "Referring to the quotations from Ixtilxochitl, seventeen hundred and sixteen years are said to have elapsed from the creation to the flood. Moses places it sixteen hundred and fifty-six, a difference of only sixty years."³ They agree exactly as to the number of cubits, fifteen, which the waters prevailed over the highest mountains. Such a coincidence can lead to but one conclusion, the identity of origin of the two accounts."⁴

John T. Short, quoting from Clavigero, says: "The Chiapanese have been the first peoplers of the New World, if we give credit to their traditions. They say that Votan, the grandson of that respectable old man who built the great ark to save himself and family from the deluge, and one of those who undertook the building of that lofty edifice, which was to reach up to heaven, went by express command to the Lord to people that land. They say also that the first people came from the quarter of the north, and that when they arrived at Soconusco, they separated, some going to inhabit the country of Nicaragua, and others remaining at Chiapas."⁵

2. **Concerning the Successive Occupation of America by Different Peoples in Ancient Times**—It has been stated by eminent students of American archeology that two distinct classes, by some designated as separate races of mankind, inhabited this continent in early times. Professor F. W. Putnam^d is even more definite in his assertion that one of these ancient races spread from the north, the other from the south. Henry C. Walsh, in an article entitled "Copan, a City of the Dead,"^e gives many interesting details of excavation and other work prosecuted by Gordon under the auspices of the Peabody expedition; and adds, "All this points to successive periods of occupation, of which there are other evidences."^f

²Moses Thatcher, Contributor, vol. 2, p. 227, Salt Lake City, 1881.

³See Appendix 2:3.

⁴Moses Thatcher, Contributor, vol. 2, p. 228.

⁵John T. Short, *North Americans of Antiquity*, p. 204; Harper Bros., New York, 2nd ed. 1888. See also Contributor, Salt Lake City, vol. 2, p. 259.

⁶See Putnam, "Pre-historic Remains in the Ohio Valley," *Century Magazine*, March, 1890.

⁷See Harper's Weekly (New York), September, 1897, p. 879; article by Henry C. Walsh. ^fSee Appendix 2:4.

3. Concerning the Advent of at Least One Division of the Ancient Americans from the East, Probably from Asia, and Their Israelitish Origin—Confirmatory evidence of the belief that the aboriginal Americans sprang from the peoples of the eastern hemisphere is found in the similarity of record and tradition on the two continents, regarding the creation, the deluge, and other great events of history. Boturini,^g who is quoted by writers on American archeology, says: "There is no Gentile nation that refers to primitive events with such certainty as the Indians do. They give us an account of the creation of the world, of the deluge,^h of the confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel, and of all other periods and ages of the world, and of the long peregrinations which their people had in Asia representing the specific years by their characters; and in the seven Conejos (rabbits) they tell us of the great eclipse that occurred at the death of Christ, our Lord.

Similar evidence of the common source of eastern and western traditions of great events in primitive times is furnished in the writings of Short, already quoted, and by Baldwin,ⁱ Clavigero,^j Kingsborough,^k Sahagun,^l Prescott,^m Schoolcraft,ⁿ Squiers,^o and others.^p

John T. Short adds his testimony to the evidence of the aboriginal inhabitants of America being of "Old World origin," but admits his inability to determine when or whence they came to this continent.^q Waterman, before cited, says: "This people could not have been created in Africa, for its

^gChevalier Boturini; he spent several years investigating the antiquities of Mexico and Central America, and collected many valuable records of most of which he was despoiled by the Spanish; he published a work on the subject of his studies in 1746. His mention of a "great eclipse" at the time of the crucifixion has reference to the "darkness over all the land" (Matt. 27:45), which could not have been due to a solar eclipse, as this phenomenon is possible only at new moon, and the Jewish Passover, in the time of which the crucifixion occurred, came at full moon.

^hSee Appendix 2:5. ⁱBaldwin, *Ancient America*, Harper Bros., New York, 1871. ^jClavigero, quoted by Prof. Short in *North Americans of Antiquity*, p. 140. ^kLord Kingsborough, *Mexican Antiquities of the State of New York*, 1851. ^lSee Bancroft's *Native versal de Nueva Espana*. ^mW. H. Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*. ⁿSchoolcraft, *Ethnological Researches* (1851), see vol. 1. ^oSquiers, *Antiquities of the State of New York*, 1851. ^pSee Bancroft's *Native Races*, etc., vols. 3 and 5; Donnelly's *Atlantis*, p. 391, 1882; see also Appendix 2:7. ^qJohn T. Short, *North Americans of Antiquity*, p. 517 (1879).

inhabitants were widely dissimilar from those of America; nor in Europe, which was without a native people agreeing at all with American races; then to Asia alone could they look for the origin of the Americans."^r

Lord Kingsborough, in his comprehensive and standard work, refers to a manuscript by Las Casas, the Spanish Bishop of Chiapa, which writing is preserved in the convent of St. Dominic, Mexico; in this the bishop states that a knowledge of the Godhead was found to exist among the natives of Yucatan. One of the bishop's emissaries wrote: "He had met with a principal lord who, on his questioning him respecting the faith and ancient religion which prevailed in that country, informed him that they know and believed in God who resided in heaven; and that this God was the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and that the Father was named Ycona, who had created men and all things, and that the Son was called Bacab, who was born of a virgin named Chilirias, who was in heaven with God; and that the name of the mother of Chibirias was Ischel; and that the Holy Ghost was called Echuah. Bacab, the Son, they said, was put to death by Eopuco, who scourged him and put a crown of thorns upon his head, and placed him with his arms stretched out upon a beam of wood, to which they believed that he had not been nailed but tied, and that he died there, and remained during three days dead; and that on the third day he came to life and ascended into heaven, where he is with his Father; and immediately afterwards Echuah came, who is the Holy Ghost, and filled the earth with whatever it stood in need of."^s

Rosales affirms a tradition among the Chileans to the effect that their forefathers were visited by a wonderful personage, full of grace and power, who wrought many miracles among them, and taught them of the Creator who dwelt in heaven in the midst of glorified hosts.^t Prescott refers to the symbol of the cross, which was found by the followers of Cortez to be common among the natives of Mexico and Central America. In addition to this sign of a belief in

^rExtract from lecture by Prof. Waterman, delivered in Bristol, England, 1849; quoted by Edwin F. Parry in pamphlet, *A Prophet of Latter Days*, Liverpool, 1898.

^sKingsborough's *Antiquities of Mexico*, vol. 6, pp. 160, 161. ^t*Rosales History of Chile*; see Pres. Taylor's *Mediation and Atonement*, pp. 200-202.

Christ, a ceremony suggestive of analogy to the sacrament of the communion was witnessed with astonishment by the invaders. Aztec priests were seen to prepare a cake of flour, mixed with blood, which they consecrated and gave to the people, who, as they ate, "showed signs of humiliation and sorrow, declaring it was the flesh of Deity."^u

The Mexicans recognize a Deity in Quetzalcoatl, the traditional account of whose life and death is closely akin to our history of the Christ, so that, says President John Taylor, "we can come to no other conclusion than that Quetzalcoatl and Christ are the same being."^v Lord Kingsborough speaks of a painting of Quetzalcoatl, "in the attitude of a person crucified, with the impression of nails in his hands and feet, but not actually upon the cross." The same authority further says, "The seventy-third plate of the Borgian MS. is the most remarkable of all, of Quetzalcoatl is not only represented there as crucified upon a cross of Greek form, but his burial and descent into hell are also depicted in a very curious manner." And again: "The Mexicans believe that Quetzalcoatl took human nature upon him, partaking of all the infirmities of man, and was not exempt from sorrow, pain, or death, which he suffered voluntarily to atone for the sins of man."^w

The source of this knowledge of Christ and the Godhead is apparent to the student of the Book of Mormon. We learn from that scripture that the progenitors of the native American races, for centuries prior to the time of Christ's birth, lived in the light of direct revelation, which, coming to them through their authorized prophets, showed the purposes of God respecting the redemption of mankind; and, moreover, that the risen Redeemer ministered unto them in person, and established His Church among them with all its essential ordinances. The people have fallen into a state of spiritual degeneracy; many of their traditions are sadly distorted and disfigured by a mixture of superstition and human invention; yet the origin of their knowledge is plainly authentic.

^uPresscott, *Conquest of Mexico*, vol. 2; Appendix, part 1, page 389.

^vMediation and Atonement, p. 201.

^wLord Kingsborough, *Antiquities of Mexico*; see quotations by Pres. John Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement*, p. 202.

4. Concerning a Common Origin of Native American Races—That the many tribes and nations among the Indians are of common parentage is generally admitted; the conclusion is based on the evident close relationship in their languages, traditions and customs. "Mr. Lewis H. Morgan finds evidence that the American aborigines had a common origin in what he calls 'their system of consanguinity and affinity.' He says, 'The Indian nations from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains, and from the Arctic Sea to the Gulf of Mexico, with the exception of the Eskimo, have the same system. It is elaborate and complicated in its general form and details; and, while deviations from uniformity occur in the systems of different stocks, the radical features are in the main constant. This identity in the essential characteristics of a system so remarkable tends to show that it must have been transmitted with the blood to each stock from a common original source. It affords the strongest evidence yet obtained of unity in origin of the Indian nations within the regions defined.'"^x

Bradford's summary of conclusions regarding the origin and characteristics of the ancient Americans sets forth: "That they were all of the same origin, branches of the same race, and possessed of similar customs and institutions."^y

Written Language of the Ancient Americans—To these secular, or extra-scriptural, evidences of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon may be added the agreement of the record with discoveries regarding the written language of these ancient peoples. The prophet Nephi states that he made his record on the plates in "the language of the Egyptians,"^z and we are further told that the brazen plates of Laban were inscribed in the same.^a Mormon, who abridged the voluminous writings of his predecessors, and prepared the plates from which the modern translation was made, also employed Egyptian characters. His son Moroni, who completed the record, declares this fact; but, recognizing a difference between the writing of his day and that on the

^xBaldwin's *Ancient America*, p. 66. ^yBradford's *American Antiquities* under title "Conclusions," p. 431, 1841.

^z1 Nephi 1:2. ^aSee *Mosiah* 1:4.

earlier plates, he attributed the change to the natural mutation through time, and speaks of his own record and that of his father, Mormon, as being written in the "reformed Egyptian."^b

But the Egyptian is not the only eastern language found to be represented in the relics of American antiquities; the Hebrew occurs in this connection with at least equal significance. That the Hebrew tongue should have been used by Lehi's descendants is most natural, inasmuch as they were of the House of Israel, transferred to the western continent directly from Jerusalem. That the ability to read and write in that language continued with the Nephites until the time of their extinction is evident from Moroni's statement regarding the language used on the plates of Mormon: "And now, behold, we have written this record according to our knowledge, in the characters which are called among us the reformed Egyptian, being handed down and altered by us, according to our manner of speech. And if our plates had been sufficiently large we should have written in Hebrew; but the Hebrew hath been altered by us also."^c

The following instances are taken from an instructive array brought together by Elder George Reynolds.^d Several of the early Spanish writers claim that the natives of some portions of the land were found speaking a corrupt Hebrew. "Las Casas so affirms with regard to the inhabitants of the island of Hayti. Lafitu wrote a history wherein he maintained that the Caribee language was radically Hebrew. Isaac Nasci, a learned Jew of Surinam, says of the language of the people of Guiana, that all their substantives are Hebrew." Spanish historians record the early discovery of Hebrew characters on the western continent. "Malvenda says that the natives of St. Michael had tombstones, which the Spaniards digged up, with several ancient Hebrew inscriptions upon them."

^bMormon 9:32.

^cMormon 9:32, 33. See especially articles entitled "Egyptology and the Book of Mormon," by Robert C. Webb, in *Improvement Era*, vol. 26, Salt Lake City, February, March, April, 1923; also article "The Book of Mormon Plates," by J. M. Sjodahl in the April issue same volume; and Appendix 2:6. ^dReynolds, "The Language of the Book of Mormon," in *The Contributor*, Salt Lake City, vol. 17, p. 236.

In all such writings, the characters and the language are allied to the most ancient form of Hebrew, and show none of the vowel signs and terminal letters which were introduced into the Hebrew of the eastern continent after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity. This is consistent with the fact that Lehi and his people left Jerusalem shortly before the captivity, and therefore prior to the introduction of the changes in the written language.^e

Another Test—Let not the reader of the Book of Mormon content himself with such evidences as have been cited concerning the authenticity of this reputed scripture. There is promised a surer and more effectual means of ascertaining the truth or falsity of this volume. Like other scriptures, the Book of Mormon is to be comprehended through the spirit of scripture, and this is obtainable only as a gift from God. But this gift is promised unto all who shall seek for it. Then to all let us commend the counsel of the last writer in the volume, Moroni, the solitary scribe who sealed the book, afterward the angel of the record who brought it forth: "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."^f

^eSee an instructive series of articles in *Improvement Era*, Salt Lake City, vol. 17, by Thomas W. Brookbank, entitled "Hebrew Idioms and Analogies in the Book of Mormon."

^fMoroni 10:4, 5.

REFERENCES

BIBLICAL ALLUSIONS TO THE BOOK OF MORMON

For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall do this—2 Kings 19:31.

The vision of all is become as the words of a book that is sealed; this is delivered to the learned and the unlearned—Isa. 29:11, 12.

Note that at the foretold time of the coming forth of this book people would be led away from the doctrines of God by the precepts of men—Isa. 29:13; compare the words of the Lord Jesus Christ to Joseph Smith: They teach for doctrines the commandments of men.—P. of G. P., p. 48.

The people spoken of in the book were to be brought down and their speech was to be low out of the dust—Isa. 39:4. Compare: Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven—Ps. 85:11.

The stick or record of Judah and the children of Israel his companions; also the stick of Joseph, called also the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions, these to be one in the Lord's hands—Ezek. 37:16-19.

And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: they shall hear my voice—John 10:16. Compare the words of the resurrected Lord to the Nephites that they were the other sheep of another fold—3 Nephi 15:17-24.

BOOK OF MORMON TESTIMONY RELATING TO ITSELF

The words of the Lord to Nephi, son of Lehi, relating to the bringing forth of scriptures other than the Holy Bible; Unto the Gentiles in this day, much of the gospel, plain and precious, to be given: the Nephites to write many things, which, after the destruction of the people as a nation, were to be hidden up, later to come forth unto the Gentiles; these writings to contain the record of the gospel—1 Nephi 13:34-37.

Nephi, who had kept the records of his people, was commanded by the Lord to make other plates and to engrave upon them as directed—2 Nephi 5:29-33.

The word of the Lord through Nephi, son of Lehi, that those who are to be destroyed shall yet speak out of the ground, with speech low out of the dust; their book to be brought forth in a day when the Gentiles had built up many churches—2 Nephi 29:16-22.

Compare Ps. 85:10-13 cited above.

The prayer of Enos that the Lord would prepare a record of his people and bring it forth in due time—Enos 13-18.

Mormon, who abridged and compiled the ancient records, predicts their coming forth—Mormon 5:12-15.

Moroni, son of Mormon, completes his father's record, and testifies to its coming forth—Mormon 8:13-17, 25-32.

Nephi, son of Lehi, predicts the bringing forth of a book which contains the words of them that have slumbered; the one appointed to bring it forth is to deliver the words of the book, but not the book, to another—2 Nephi 27:6-11.

The book itself to be hid from the world, but to be shown to three witnesses, and afterward to a few according to the will of God. The unsealed part to be translated, the sealed part to remain for a reason—2 Nephi 27:12-25.

The book to come forth among the Gentiles shall establish the truth of the first, or the Holy Bible; and both shall be established in one—1 Nephi 13:39-42.

Concerning him who was appointed to bring forth the book in the last days—2 Nephi 3:6-16; 27:9-12; 15, 19; Mormon 8:14-16.

Many of the Gentiles reject the book, saying: A Bible! A Bible! We have got a Bible, and there cannot be any more Bible—2 Nephi, chap. 29. Note that the Gentile world has derisively called the Book of Mormon the "Mormon Bible."

The resurrected Christ commanded the Nephites to write the words he had given unto them—3 Nephi 16:4; read the entire chapter.

LATTER-DAY REVELATION CONCERNING THE BOOK OF MORMON

To Joseph Smith was given the power to translate the ancient records constituting the Book of Mormon—D. & C. 1:29; see also 20:8-12; 135-3.

Concerning the loss of certain manuscripts containing the translation of parts of the writings of Mormon—D. & C., sec. 3. Compare 2 Nephi 5:30; 1 Nephi, chap. 9; Words of Mormon 7.

Concerning the testimony of the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon—D. & C. 5:1-18.

Joseph Smith called and chosen to bring forth the Book of Mormon—D. & C. 24:1.

And with Moroni, whom I have sent unto you to reveal the Book of Mormon—D. & C. 27:5.

Elders of the Church to teach the principles of the gospel contained in the Bible and the Book of Mormon—D. & C. 42:12.

Account of the revelation to Joseph Smith concerning the existence of the ancient records, and incidents relating to its translation—P. of G. P. pp. 50-56.

And he has translated the book, even that part which I have commanded him, and as your Lord and your God liveth it is true—D. & C. 17:6; read the entire section, which is directed to the three witnesses prior to their reviewing the plates.

A knowledge of the Savior attested by both the Bible and the Book of Mormon—D. & C. 3:16-20.

APPENDIX 1 — Notes Relating to Lecture 1.

1. **BOOK OF MORMON TITLE PAGE**—"I wish to mention here that the title page of the Book of Mormon is a literal translation, taken from the very last leaf on the left hand side of the collection or book of plates, which contained the record which has been translated, the language of the whole running the same as all Hebrew writing in general: and that said title page is not by any means a modern composition, either of mine or any other man who has lived or does live in this generation."—Joseph Smith, *Hist. of the Church*, vol 1, p. 71.

2. **THEORIES CONCERNING THE ORIGIN OF THE BOOK OF MORMON. THE SPAULDING STORY**—The true account of the origin of the Book of Mormon was rejected by the public in general, who thus assumed the responsibility of explaining in some plausible way the source of the record. Many vague theories, based on the incredible assumption that the book was the work of a single author, were put forward: of these the most famous, and indeed, the only one that lived long enough in public favor to be discussed, is the so-called "Spaulding story." Solomon Spaulding, a clergyman of Amity, Pa., wrote a romance to which no title other than *Manuscript Story* was prefixed. Twenty years after the author's death, a Mr. Hurlburt, an apostate from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, announced a resemblance between the story and the Book of Mormon, and expressed as his opinion that the work presented to the world by Joseph Smith was nothing but Spaulding's romance revised and amplified. The manuscript was lost for a time, and, in the absence of proof to the contrary, stories of the parallelism between the two works multiplied. But, in 1884, President James H. Fairchild of Oberlin College, Ohio, and a literary friend, a Mr. Rice, in examining a heterogeneous collection of old papers that had been purchased by the latter, found the original story. The gentlemen made a careful comparison of the manuscript and the Book of Mormon, and, with the sole desire of subserving the purposes of truth, made public their results. President Fairchild published an article in the *New York Observer*, Feb. 5, 1885, in which he said: "The theory of the origin of the Book of Mormon in the traditional manuscript of Solomon Spaulding will probably have to be relinquished. * * * Mr. Rice, myself and others compared it (the Spaulding manuscript) with the Book of Mormon and could detect no resemblance between the two. * * * Some other explanation of the Book of Mormon must be found, if any explanation is required."

The manuscript was deposited in the library of Oberlin College, Ohio, where it now reposes. Still, the theory of the *Manuscript Found*, as Spaulding's story has come to be known, is occasionally pressed into service in the cause of anti-"Mormon" zeal by some whom we will charitably believe to be ignorant of the facts set forth by President Fairchild. A letter of more recent date, written by that gentleman in reply to an inquiring correspondent, was published in the *Millennial Star*, Liverpool, Nov. 3, 1898, and is as follows:

OBERLIN COLLEGE, OHIO
October 17, 1895

J. R. HINDLEY, Esq.,

Dear Sir:—We have in our College Library an original manuscript of Solomon Spaulding unquestionably genuine.

I found it in 1884 in the hands of Hon. L. L. Rice of Honolulu, Hawaiian Islands. He was formerly State Printer at Columbus, Ohio, and before that, publisher of a paper in Painesville, whose preceding publisher had visited Mr. Spaulding and obtained the manuscript from her. It had lain among his old papers forty years or more, and was brought out by my asking him to look up anti-slavery documents among his papers.

The manuscript has upon it the signatures of several men of Conneaut, Ohio, who had heard Spaulding read it and knew it to be his. No one can see it and question its genuineness. The manuscript has been printed twice at least—once by the Mormons of Salt Lake City, and once by the Josephite Mormons of Iowa. The Utah Mormons obtained the copy of Mr. Rice at Honolulu, and the Josephites got it of me after it came into my possession.

This manuscript is not the original of the Book of Mormon.

Yours very truly,

JAS. H. FAIRCHILD

Printed copies of the Manuscript Found are obtainable, and any inquirer may examine for himself. For further information see *The Myth of the Manuscript Found*, by Elder George Reynolds, Salt Lake City; *Whitney's History of Utah*, vol. 1, pp. 46-56; Elder George Reynolds, preface to the story as issued by the Deseret News Company, Salt Lake City, 1886; and the story itself. See also three articles by President Joseph F. Smith in *Improvement Era*, vol. 3, pp. 241, 377, 451. See critical treatment in *The Real Mormonism*, chap. 3, by Robert C. Webb, New York, 1916.

3. THE THREE WITNESSES -- Oliver Cowdery -- born at Wells, Rutland County, Vt., October, 1805; baptized May 15, 1829; died at Richmond, Mo., March 3, 1850.

David Whitmer—Born near Harrisburg, Pa., January 7, 1805; baptized June, 1829; excommunicated from the Church, April 13, 1838; died at Richmond, Mo., January 25, 1888.

Martin Harris—Born at Easttown, Saratoga County, N. Y., May 18, 1783; baptized, 1830; removed to Utah, August, 1870, and died at Clarkston, Cache County, Utah, July 10, 1875.

4. THE EIGHT WITNESSES -- Christian Whitmer -- Born January 18, 1798; baptized April 11, 1830; died in full fellowship in the Church, Clay County, Mo., November 27, 1835. He was the eldest son of Peter Whitmer.

Jacob Whitmer—Second son of Peter Whitmer; born in Pennsylvania, January 27, 1800; baptized April 11, 1830; died April 21, 1856, having previously withdrawn from the Church.

Peter Whitmer, Jr.—Born September 27, 1809; fifth son of Peter Whitmer; baptized June, 1829; died a faithful member of the Church, at or near Liberty, Clay County, Mo., September 22, 1836.

John Whitmer—Third son of Peter Whitmer; born August 27, 1802; baptized June, 1829; excommunicated from the Church March 10, 1838; died at Far West, Mo., July 11, 1878.

Hiram Page—Born in Vermont, 1800; baptized April 11, 1830; withdrew from the Church, 1838; died in Ray County, Mo., August 12, 1852.

Joseph Smith, Sr.—The Prophet Joseph's father, born at Topsfield, Essex Co., Mass., July 12, 1771; baptized April 6, 1830; ordained Patriarch to the Church December 18, 1833; died in full fellowship in the Church at Nauvoo, Ill., Sept. 14, 1840.

Hyrum Smith—Second son of Joseph Smith, Sr., born at Tunbridge, Vt., February 9, 1800; baptized June, 1829; appointed one of the First Presidency of the Church November 7, 1837; Patriarch to the Church January 19, 1841; martyred with his brother the Prophet, at Carthage, Ill., June 27, 1844.

Samuel Harrison Smith—Born Tunbridge, Vt., March 13, 1808; fourth son of Joseph Smith, Sr., baptized May 25, 1829; died July 30, 1844.

5. CONSISTENCY OF THE BOOK OF MORMON—"If the historical parts of the Book of Mormon be compared with what little is known from other sources, concerning the history of ancient America, there will be found much evidence to substantiate its truth; but there cannot be found one truth among all the gleanings of antiquity that clashes with the historical truths of the Book of Mormon. If the prophetic part of this wonderful book be compared with the prophetic declarations of the Bible, there will be found much evidence in the latter to establish the truth of the former. But though there are many predictions in the Book of Mormon, relating to the great events of the last days, which the Bible gives us no information about, yet there is nothing in the predictions of the Bible that contradicts in the least the predictions of the Book of Mormon. If the doctrinal part of the Book of Mormon be compared with the doctrines of the Bible, there will be found the same perfect harmony which we find on the comparison of the prophetic parts of the two books. Although there are many points of the doctrine of Christ that are far more plain and definite in the Book of Mormon than in the Bible, and many things revealed in relation to doctrine that never could be fully learned from the Bible, yet there are not any items of doctrine in the two sacred books that contradict each other or clash in the least. If the various books which enter into the collection called the Book of Mormon be carefully compared with each other, there will be found nothing contradictory in history, in prophecy, or in doctrine. * * * If we compare the historical, prophetic and doctrinal parts of the Book of Mormon with the great truths of science and nature, we find no contradictions—no absurdities — nothing unreasonable. The most perfect harmony therefore exists between the great truths revealed in the Book of Mormon and all other known truths, whether religious, historical or scientific."—Apostle Orson Pratt in *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, p. 56.

APPENDIX 2 — Notes Relating to Lecture 2.

1. ISHMAEL AN EPHRAIMITE—"The Prophet Joseph informed us that the record of Lehi was contained on the one hundred sixteen pages that were first translated and subsequently stolen, and of which an abridgment is given us in the First Book of Nephi, which is the record of Nephi individually, he himself being of the lineage of Manasseh; but that Ishmael was of the lineage of Ephraim, and that his sons married into Lehi's family, and Lehi's sons married Ishmael's daughters, thus fulfilling the words of Jacob upon Ephraim and Manasseh in the 48th chapter of Genesis (verse 16) which says: 'And let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.' Thus these descendants of Manasseh and Ephraim grew together upon this American continent, with a sprinkling from the house of Judah, from whom Mulek descended, who left Jerusalem eleven years after Lehi, and founded the colony afterwards known as Zarahemla and found by Mosiah—thus making a combination, an intermixture of Ephraim and Manasseh with the remnants of Judah, and for aught we know, the remnants of some other tribes that might have accompanied Mulek. And such have grown up upon the American continent."—From "Discourse by Apostle Erastus Snow," at Logan, Utah, May 6, 1882; see Journal of Discourses, vol. 23, pp. 184, 185.

2. DIVERSITY OF LITERARY STYLE IN THE BOOK OF MORMON—"There is a marked difference in the literary style of Nephi and some of the other earlier prophets from that of Mormon and Moroni. Mormon and his son are more direct and take fewer words to express their ideas than did the earlier writers; at least their manner is, to most readers, the more pleasing. Amos, the son of Jacob, has also a style peculiar to himself. There is another noticeable fact that when original records or discourses, such as the record of Limhi, the sermons of Alma, Amulek, etc., the epistles of Helaman, and others, are introduced into Mormon's abridgment, words and expressions are used that appear nowhere else in the Book of Mormon. This diversity of style, expression, and wording is a very pleasing incidental testimony to the truth of the claim made for the Book of Mormon—that it is a compilation of the work of many writers."—From Lectures on the Book of Mormon by Elder George Reynolds.

3. MEXICAN DATE OF THE DELUGE—In speaking of the time of the Deluge as given by the Mexican author, Ixtlixochitl, Elder George Reynolds says: "There is a remarkable agreement between this writer's statements and the Book of Genesis. The time from the fall to the flood only differs sixty, possibly only five years, if the following statement in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants (107:49) regarding Enoch lengthens the chronology: 'And he saw the Lord and he walked with him, and was before his face continually; and he walked with God three hundred and sixty-five years, making him four hundred and thirty years old when he was translated.'" The same statement is made in the Pearl of Great Price (Moses 7:68).—"External Evidences of the Book of Mormon," by Elder George Reynolds in Contributor, vol. 17, p. 274.

4. ANCIENT CIVILIZATION IN AMERICA—"That a civilization once flourished in these regions (Central America and Mexico, much higher than any the Spanish conquerors found upon their arrival, there

can be no doubt. By far the most important work that has been done among the remains of the old Maya civilization has been carried on by the Peabody Museum of Harvard College, through a series of expeditions it has sent to the buried city now called Copan, in Spanish Honduras. In a beautiful valley near the borderland of Guatemala, surrounded by steep mountains and watered by a winding river, the hoary city lies wrapped in the sleep of ages. The ruins of Copan, although in a more advanced state of destruction than those of the Maya cities of Yucatan, have a general similarity to the latter in the design of the buildings, and in the sculptures, while the characters in the inscriptions are essentially the same. It would seem, therefore, that Copan was a city of the Mayas; but if so it must have been one of their most ancient settlements, fallen into decay long before the cities of Yucatan reached their prime. The Maya civilization was totally distinct from the Aztec or Mexican; it was an older and also a much higher civilization." Henry C. Walsh, in article, "Copan—a City of the Dead." Harper's Weekly, September, 1897.

The following statements are derived from Bradford's "Conclusions," p. 431, in his American Antiquities, published in 1841, relating to the ancient inhabitants of America:

"That they were all of the same origin, branches of the same race, and possessed of similar customs and institutions.

"That they were populous, and occupied a great extent of territory.

"That they had arrived at a considerable degree of civilization, were associated in large communities, and lived in extensive cities.

"That they possessed the use of many of the metals, such as lead, copper, gold and silver, and probably the art of working in them.

"That they sculptured in stone, and sometimes used that material in the construction of their edifices.

"That they had the knowledge of the arch of receding steps; of the art of pottery producing urns and utensils formed with taste and constructed upon the principles of chemical composition; and the art of brickmaking.

"That they worked the salt springs and manufactured salt.

"That they were an agricultural people, living under the influence and protection of regular forms of governments.

"That they possessed a decided system of religion, and a mythology connected with astronomy, which, with its sister science, geometry was in the hands of the priesthood.

"That they were skilled in the art of fortification.

"That the epoch of their original settlement in the United States is of great antiquity; and that the only indications of their origin to be gathered from the locality of their ruined monuments, point toward Mexico."

5. AMERICAN TRADITIONS CONCERNING THE DELUGE—
"Don Francisco Munoz de la Vega, the Bishop of that diocese (Chiapas), certifies in the prologue to his Diocesan Constitutions, declaring that an ancient manuscript of the primitive Indians of that province, who had learned the art of writing, was in his record office, who retained the constant tradition that the father and founder of their nation was

named Teponahuale, which signifies lord of the hollow piece of wood; and that he was present at the building of the Great Wall, for so they named the Tower of Babel; and beheld with his own eyes the confusion of language; after which event, God, the Creator, commanded him to come to these extensive regions, and to divide them amongst mankind."—Lord Kingsborough, *Mexican Antiquities*, vol. 8, p. 25.

"It is found in the histories of the Toltecs that this age and first world as they call it, lasted 1,716 years; that men were destroyed by tremendous rains and lightnings from the sky, and even all the land, without the exception of anything, and the highest mountains were covered up and submerged in water fifteen cubits (*caxtolmolatli*); and here they added other fables of how men came to multiply from the few who escaped from this destruction in a 'toptlipetlocali'; that this word nearly signifies a closed chest; and how, after men had multiplied, they erected a very high 'zacuali,' which is today a tower of great height, in order to take refuge in it should the second world (age) be destroyed. Presently their languages were confused, and not being able to understand each other, they went to different parts of the earth."—The same, vol. 9, p. 321.

"The most important among the American traditions are the Mexican, for they appear to have been definitely fixed by symbolic and mnemonic paintings before any contact with Europeans. According to these documents, the Noah of the Mexican cataclysm was Coxcox, called by certain people Teocipactli or Tezpi. He had saved himself, together with his wife Xochiquetzal, in a bark, or, according to other traditions, on a raft made of cypress wood (*Cyprinus disticha*). Paintings retracing the deluge of Coxcox had been discovered among the Aztecs, Mixtecs, Zapotecs, Tlascaltecs, and Mechoacanese. The tradition of the latter is still more strikingly in conformity with the story as we have it in Genesis, and in Chaldean sources. It tells how Tezpi embarked in a spacious vessel with his wife, his children, and several animals and grain, whose preservation was essential to the subsistence of the human race. When the great god Tezcatlipoca decreed the waters should retire; Tezpi sent a vulture from the bark. The bird, feeding on the carcasses with which the earth was laden, did not return. Tezpi sent out other birds, of which the humming bird only came back, with a leafy branch in its beak. Then Tezpi, seeing that the country began to vegetate, left his bark on the mountain of Colhuacan."—Donnelley's *Atlantis*, p. 99.

The tradition of a Deluge "was the received notion, under some form or other, of the most civilized people in the Old World, and of the barbarians of the New. The Aztecs combined with this some particular circumstances of a more arbitrary character, resembling the accounts of the east. They believed that two persons survived the deluge, a man named Coxcox and his wife. Their heads are represented in ancient painting, together with a boat floating on the waters at the foot of a mountain. A dove is also depicted, with a hieroglyphical emblem of language in his mouth, which he is distributing to the children of Coxcox, who were born dumb. The neighboring people of Michoacan, inhabiting the same high plains of the Andes had a still further tradition, that the boat in which Tezpi, their Noah, escaped, was filled with various kinds of animals and birds. After some time a vulture was sent out from it, but remained feeding on the dead bodies of the giants which had been left on the earth as the waters subsided. The little humming bird, *huitzitzilin*, was then sent forth, and returned with a twig in his mouth. The coincidence of both these accounts with the Hebrew and Chaldean narratives is obvious."—Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*, Appendix, part 1, p. 836.

6. SURVIVAL OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE AMONG AMERICAN TRIBES—"It is claimed that such survivals are numerous in the religious songs and ceremonies of many of the tribes. A number of writers who visited or resided among the tribes of the northern continent, assert that the words, Yehovah, Yah, Ale, and Hallelujah, could be distinctly heard in these exercises. Laet and Escarbotus assure us that they often hear the South American Indians repeat the sacred word Hallelujah."—Elder George Reynolds, "The Language of the Book of Mormon," Contributor, Salt Lake City, vol. 17, p. 236.

7. "THE ORIGIN OF THE PRE-COLUMBIAN CIVILIZATION OF AMERICA"—Under this title an instructive article by G. Elliot Smith appeared in *Science*, vol. 44, pp. 190-195 (August 11, 1916). As to the interest accorded to the subject, the author says: "In the whole range of ethnological discussion perhaps no theme has evoked livelier controversies and excited more widespread interest than the problems involved in the mysteries of the wonderful civilization that revealed itself to the astonished Spaniards on their first arrival in America.

"During the last century, which can be regarded as covering the whole period of scientific investigation in anthropology, the opinions of those who have devoted attention to such inquiries have undergone the strangest fluctuations. If one delves into the anthropological journals of forty or fifty years ago they will be found to abound in careful studies on the part of many of the leading ethnologists of the time, demonstrating, apparently in a convincing and unquestionable manner, the spread of curious customs or beliefs from the Old World to the New." The writer decries the fallacy of assuming that similarities in customs and culture of widely separated peoples can be explained on any other basis than that of a common origin, and proceeds as follows: "Why, then, it will be asked, in the face of the overwhelming mass of definite and well authenticated evidence clearly pointing to the sources of the Old World from which American civilization sprung, do so many ethnologists refuse to accept the clear and obvious meaning of the facts and resort to such childish subterfuges as I have mentioned? Putting aside the influence of Darwin's work, the misunderstanding of which, as Huxley remarked, 'led shallow persons to talk nonsense in the name of anthropological science,' the main factor in binding so many investigators to appreciate the significance of the data they themselves so laboriously collect results from a defect incidental to the nature of their researches. * * * The failure to recognize the fact, recently demonstrated so convincingly by Dr. Rivers, that useful arts are often lost is another, and perhaps the chief difficulty that has stood in the way of an adequate appreciation of the history of the spread of civilization." Dr. Smith presents an impressive array of evidence pointing to the Old World and specifically to Egypt, as the source of many of the customs by which the American aborigines are distinguished. The article is accompanied by a map showing probable routes of travel from the Old World to the New and two landing places on the west coast, one in Mexico and another near the boundary common to Peru and Chile, from which places the immigrants spread.

ARTICLES OF FAITH
OF THE
CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

1. We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.

2. We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgression.

3. We believe that through the atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.

4. We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are:—(1) Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; (2) Repentance; (3) Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; (4) Laying on of Hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

5. We believe that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands, by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof.

6. We believe in the same organization that existed in the Primitive Church, viz: Apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.

7. We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, etc.

8. We believe the Bible to be the word of God, as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.

9. We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

10. We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion will be built upon this (the American) continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth; and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory.

11. We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.

12. We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law.

13. We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul. We believe all things; we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.—JOSEPH SMITH.

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The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Missionary Department
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