



The Witness

Newsletter Of The Foundation For Research On Ancient America

DECEMBER, 1984

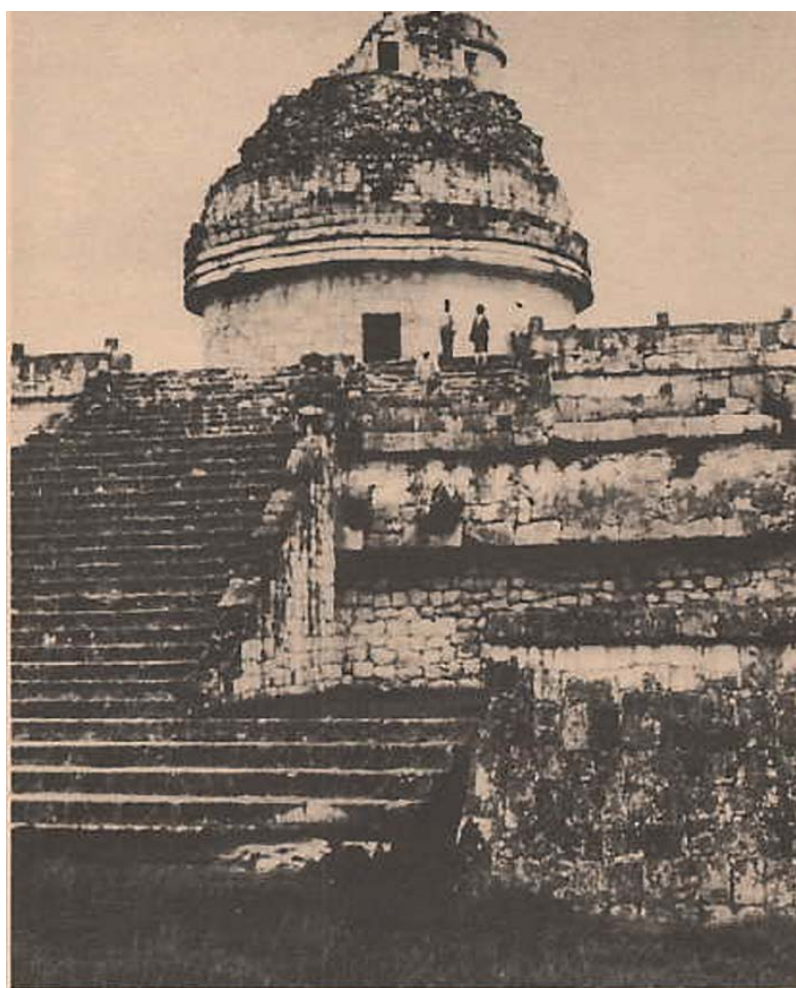
NEWSLETTER NO. 48

ANCIENT LUNAR OBSERVATORY DISCOVERED IN MEXICO

Possibly the oldest lunar observatory in the western Hemisphere has been found in Edzna, a Mayan city thirty miles east of Campeche, in the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico. Professor Vincent Malmstrom, a Dartmouth College geographer, has revealed that the studies from this observatory may have instigated the modification of the Mayan calendar in the first century A.D. At this time the Mayan New Year's Day was changed from August 13 to July 26. "But we didn't know where or why," Malmstrom stated.

With the aid of computers it was calculated that Edzna is the only place in the Yucatan peninsula where the sun travels directly overhead on July 26. Malmstrom also discovered that a 125 foot stone shaft near the central pyramid is entirely in shadow only one day a year — July 26.

It was also ascertained that a nearby 90 foot pyramid as viewed from the larger structure marked the northernmost point on the horizon where the moon could set. This would occur only once every 18.61 years. This,



This ancient Mayan observatory at Chicken Itza', Mexico contains a round spiral staircase and windows from which the rising sun could be observed on equinoxes. Seasons could be foretold, and other astronomical phenomenon observed.

Malmstrom said, made it a lunar observatory which would enable the scientists to even predict eclipses.

The city of Edzna, previously thought to have flourished in the 7th century A.D. is now believed to have been built as early as the 2nd century B.C. According to Malmstrom's findings, it may be the oldest Mayan city yet uncovered.

The studies of archaeologist Ray Matheny, of Brigham Young University, also indicate that Edzna was built in the second century B.C., had a vast system of canals, and a population of approximately 20,000.

Previous archaeological evidence has shown that pyramids were located according to astronomical lines of sight. Book of Mormon students are aware that

the Nephites were knowledgeable in astronomy. Centuries before the modern world accepted that the earth was not the center of the universe with the sun circling it, Helaman wrote, "For sure it is the earth that moveth, and not the sun."—Helaman 4:62.

—Adapted from a UPI release, September 17, 1984



BLACKFOOT HOST FIRST OFFICIAL RLDS CAMP

A Testimony by Louise Gregson

Gerald Sitting Eagle, a Blackfoot Indian who is a world champion hoop dancer.

Photo by permission of RLDS Indian Ministries



A year ago, Gerald Sitting Eagle who is Blackfoot and Cree, requested that the first official RLDS Church Camp be held at their Reserve in August of 1984. The church supported this endeavor, thus establishing some credibility with the Blackfoot. Although none of the tribe belongs to the church, they have had contact with the Saints in Calgary, especially with Wilburt Hayden, a patriarch, who is employed at Old Sun College located on the Reserve. The Siksika'i, as the Blackfoot are called, hold Wilburt in high esteem because of his righteous dealings with them. By his actions, they know that he is interested and cares for them deeply. He has conducted several camps for their benefit. These the Indians identify as "Wilburt's Camp."

Gerald Sitting Eagle has attended many of the Indian Conferences and Indian Council meetings in Independence and has been a guest in our home. He is the Champion Hoop Dancer of the world and has performed for the Queen of England and other dignitaries. Gerald serves as the Cultural Director of Old Sun College and is vitally concerned about the welfare of his people. Most of the youth suffer deprivations because of alcoholic parents.

It was my responsibility to prepare and serve nutritious, appealing meals for the camp. With my family I left Independence, Missouri and traveled to Lamoni, Iowa to pick up others who would accompany us. After reaching Alberta, Canada we still had to go to the Blackfoot Reservation. Soon after arriving at camp, I learned that it was necessary to travel at least twenty miles further to purchase the supplies for the evening meal. Going to the small and very expensive store became a daily routine.

Needless to say, there was no electricity, refrigeration, running water or indoor plumbing. It was a primitive camp

situated on the open prairie! Three large tepees adorned the field and served as meeting places as well as sleeping quarters for those who did not have pup tents. Water for drinking was hauled several times a day from a well a mile away. The water was cold, sweet and pure.

The kitchen was a simple affair. It was constructed of six upright poles braced with three horizontal piles around the middle with three more on top. The roof was covered with boughs whose leaves were still intact and the branches were secured to the frame. It offered ample shade from the 90 degree temperatures since there were no trees in the immediate vicinity. On seeing the structure, I thought, These people must be from the house of Israel because the Israelites put up similar booths when celebrating the feast of harvest.

A grate over a perforated tub from a discarded washing machine made a perfectly efficient wood stove. A ten gallon kettle and a six quart kettle sufficed for cooking. I was grateful for two eight foot long tables and a few chairs. The water jugs sat at one end of a table and children were there constantly. Of course, they were very curious as to what they were going to eat at the next meal. A fourteen year old girl had never eaten celery in her life. What a delight it was to see some of the children's eyes grow large when they were served apples, bananas and peaches! In the morning, many of them said, "We love porridge (oatmeal) for breakfast!"



Portion of Blackfoot Camp.

God blessed us continually. One early dawn a handsome herd of more than fifty wild horses with several colts approached the slumbering camp. The horses carefully picked their way, hugging the edge of the ravine intuitively. Several pup-tents stood close to the path which the horses trod to reach the river. Almost as quickly as they had come, they disappeared out of sight down the embankment.

— Continued on Page 4 —

FRAA TO MEET

The annual meeting of the Foundation for Research on Ancient America will be held in the Stone Church sanctuary at 2:30 P.M., January 20 T. Evan (Tommy) Thomas, a member of the FRAA Board of Directors, will be the speaker. His subject will be "The Testimony of The Book of Mormon."

There will be a short business meeting including the election of officers. This is an opportunity to meet together and to acquaint others with our work in furthering the Book of Mormon. It is hoped that each member in the Independence area will attend and bring a friend.

T. Evan
(Tommy)
Thomas



COMALCALCO SITE RECEIVES WORLD HEADLINES



Foundation For Research on Ancient America sponsored project is published in newspapers from Italy to New Zealand.

Newspapers in countries around the world have reported news accounts regarding Comalcalco, a Mayan site being studied by FRAA Vice President Neil Steede. Publications in countries as widely spread as Italy and New Zealand, along with major Mexican newspapers, have printed preliminary findings of Steede purporting to show that Arabic, Libyan, and Egyptian languages are inscribed on bricks at the Mesoamerican site. Other languages are still to be confirmed.

The site is significant, says Steede, as it may refute the time-honored belief that no transatlantic contact was made

between the older established cultures and the new world.

With assistance from the Foundation for Research on Ancient America (FRAA), 4,000 inscribed bricks were photographed by Stele Bryant and Fred Weddle of Independence, Missouri early in 1983. It is believed this represents only 1% of the inscribed bricks at the one-time coastal port. Steede suggests the site may have been a major learning center or university, but why the ancient inhabitants studied various languages remains a mystery.



Ancient Languages Out Of The Dust

By Donna Weddle



A small section of the huge archaeological site at Comalcalco, Mexico.

Neil Steede, a graduate of the University of the Americas, has had a leading role in a research project growing out of the excavating in 1977-1978 of 4612 bricks from what once formed the walls of structures at Comalcalco, State of Tabasco. The excavating was done by the National Institute of Anthropology and History of Mexico, INAH (which corresponds to our federal government).

Early in 1983 Neil alerted FRAA and enlisted our assistance in advancing research on this project. We immediately responded by sending our photographer Fred Weddle to the scene. Stele Bryant volunteered to accompany and assist him. The bricks are stored in thatched roofed warehouses. Six individuals were hired to transport the bricks to where the photographs were being taken. Each brick was examined by Neil for pre-classification, after which he banded it to the photographers. There was a continual process of bringing bricks, examining them, taking the pictures, and returning the bricks to the warehouses. The men worked ten hour days for two weeks.

After the photographers returned home, the film had to be developed and prints made. Neil needed three prints of each picture, as well as enlargements of many of them. Approximately 15,000 pictures were returned to Mexico. One set was arranged chronologically in nine volumes for purposes of copyrighting. All the bricks have been copyrightfed.

Following are the major classes into which the 4612 bricks were divided:

Class I	(Unidentifiable Fragments)	941
Class II	(Maya Hieroglyphs)	2149
Class III	(Old World Inscriptions)	499
Class IV	(Drawings)	735
Class V	(Mixed or Unknown)	308
		Total 4612

On October 20, 1983 a meeting was held at Cardenas, Neil's home town adjacent to Comalcalco. Approximately four hundred were in attendance. Thirty archaeologists who are accepted by INAH voiced their approval and support of FRAA and what we have done in advancing this project at Comalcalco.

The mayor of Cardenas is anxious to expedite the further study of the bricks. In a letter written to Neil and translated for our benefit, he says:

What you have done for us cannot be by accident.

Thank you very much for the insight you have given us for better understanding our history, our ancestors, and our inheritance. We invite you (FRAA) to continue to join us in our investigation and evaluation, continuing to give us financial assistance and additional incentive in our study through this project.

Signed by the County Representative,
Mayor of Cardenas



Photographers Stele Bryant (far left) and Fred Weddle (far right) with workers hired to transport the inscribed bricks from the Comalcalco warehouses.

Since the first digs at Comalcalco, archaeologists have considered the area pure Mayan. Neil, however, says, "Three percent of the bricks at that site have inscriptions on them. Not all of the drawings are Mayan. We've found bricks that are written in Arabic, Libyan and Chinese."

In discussing Comalcalco, Neil says, "We can tell from the drawings that the people arrived at the site by boat. We have several drawings of men in boats who are dropping anchors.

"On many of the bricks we've found repetition of different inscriptions. This apparently was some kind of homework. That makes us think the site was a linguistics college.

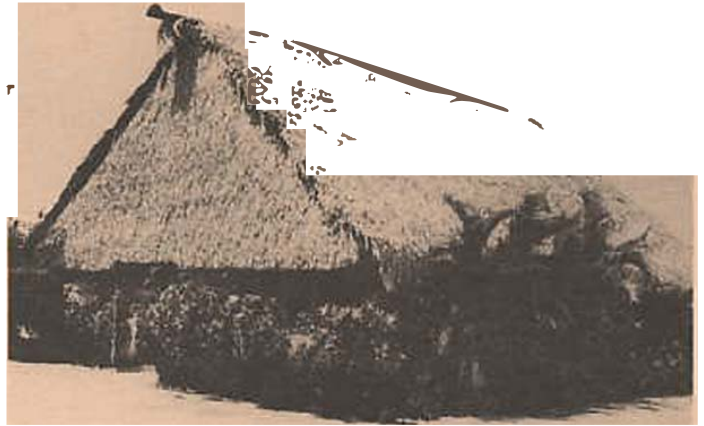
"We found all kinds of strange monuments at the site, too. So we had an expert from Switzerland come and analyze them. He said the monuments were used to teach

the people hydraulics and engineering. So, based on his findings we are tentatively concluding this site was a Mayan University."

Neil is very enthusiastic about his work in Comalcalco but realizes it may be years before final conclusions can be drawn. However, He is going to continue to study the bricks and investigate five other sites where similar bricks have been discovered.

Catalogs containing many drawings of the bricks, as well as other pertinent information, are being sent to hundreds of educational institutions to solicit linguistic opinions of what has been found at the Comalcalco site.

Neil challenges us to continue research on the ruins of Mexico, especially those at Comalcalco. He says, "There is a giant linguistic library down there. The people who wrote on those bricks are reaching out and trying to talk to us."



One of several thatched roofed warehouses in which the Comalcalco bricks are stored by the Mexican government.



BLACKFOOT HOST FIRST OFFICIAL RLDS CAMP *(continued)*

I thought I was dreaming when I heard their whinnying. Gently, my husband Albert awakened me saying that he had seen the herd come and go. I thanked God for His loving protection and watchcare over the sleeping Blackfoot children.

One night the Lord favored us with a spectacular display of aurora borealis. The luminous phenomenon consisted of numberless streamers of light leaping and darting across the sky. As we gazed heavenward for hours, we marveled at the greatness and goodness of God.

Lost crafts such as pottery-making, beading and making moccasins were taught, and the campers were eager learners. Campfire was a happy time for everyone as they enjoyed one another's talents. They looked forward eagerly to the evening when we would all gather around the fire and I would share stories from the Book of Mormon.

One of the Blackfoot spiritual leaders told my son, Mel Clark, that they possess sacred records that would throw much light on the Book of Mormon. He also knows that it is the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints that should receive this information, but he added, "Your church is not ready to receive these things yet."

Many churches and organizations bring various types of programs to the Reserve, but Gerald Sitting Eagle said, "If I were to join any church, it would be the RLDS Church because you people have the most to offer my people and your people are the only ones who make my people feel of worth."

At previous camps, Gerald's wife Laura stayed about an hour or so each day. However, at this camp she arrived early in the morning and stayed late each night. Her comments were that they had learned much in food buying and preparation. "Now we know how to help our people and also how to stay within our budget," she said.

Comments from the campers were that they all had a wonderful time, and that they enjoyed the good food and the stories. Many of the boys and girls kissed me goodbye. It was rather unusual for them to display their affections so freely. Julia Wright said, "You don't have to tell us that you love us; we can just feel it." As matriarch of the group, she counseled the young people to put their trust in Jesus Christ.

Surely, the Indian peoples are waiting to be freed from the bondage of sin. Will you pray diligently for the dawning of a new day for them?



GRACE AND SANCTIFICATION

*Study
Along
With:*
Thelona Stevens



GRACE

"By grace are ye saved and this not of yourselves; but it is a gift of God."—Ephesians 2:8

*"It is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do."
—II Nephi 11:44*

Grace is God-given. But for the grace of our merciful God, we could never rise above our sins, death, and the grave. We never would have known anything but eternal death and destruction under the power of Satan.

All three of the Standard Books of the Church are strong and positive regarding the saving grace of Jesus Christ. There is no power within us by which we can save ourselves. The only power we have is that of agency — to choose (or reject) God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Jesus left the courts of glory and came to earth to break the bands of sin and death and the grave. Without Jesus Christ no man can be saved. Only in and through Jesus Christ comes salvation. Peoples of all ages have been told this.

God said to Adam:

*If thou wilt, turn unto me and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, . . . the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men.
—Gen. 6:53*

God said to the Apostle Paul:

*There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.
—Acts 4:12*

God said to Nephi:

*As the Lord liveth, there is none other name given under heaven, save it be this Jesus Christ . . . whereby man can be saved.
—II Nephi 11:39*

God said in Latter Day revelation:

*Behold, Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father, and there is none other name given whereby man can be saved.
—D&C 16:4f*

Thus from the days of Adam throughout the ages even to our day, there has been only one plan of salvation — God's great, merciful plan, and one name through which the plan is effective, Jesus Christ.

We exclaim with Nephi,

*O the wisdom of God! his mercy and grace! . . .
O how great the goodness of our God, who prepareth a way of escape from the grasp of . . . death and hell.
—II Nephi 6:19,24,25*

We are touched by the words of the hymn,

*Upon the cross of Jesus mine eye at times can see
The very dying form of One who suffered there for me;
And from my stricken heart with tears two wonders
I confess —
The wonders of redeeming love, and my unworthiness.*

What of Those Who Died Before Christ Came?

A natural question arises: What of those who lived before Christ's earth ministry? The Book of Mormon deals with this question plainly. Alma's son queried about this and Alma answered:

*And now I will ease your mind somewhat on this subject. Behold you marvel why these things should be known so long beforehand. Behold, I say unto you, Is not a soul at this time as precious unto God, as a soul will be at the time of his coming?
—Alma 19:24,25*

Jacob (2:27) made similar comment: "One being is as precious in his sight as the other."

An explanation of immense value is made in II Nephi 6:51-55, a part of which says: "Where there is no law given there is no punishment; . . . no condemnation," because "the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon those who have no law given to them." (Also see Rom. 4:15).

This problem weighed upon the mind of Joseph Smith because his brother Alvin had died before the Church had come forth. He took the matter to God in prayer. God's answer was:

*All those who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God; also all who shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of the kingdom, for I, the Lord, will judge all men according to the desires of their hearts,
—RLDS History 2:16*

In this same reference the Lord said that "all children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability, are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven."

God promises that all will be given the privilege of knowing Christ, for we are told, "every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess" (D&C 85:31; Isa. 45:23).

He paid Our Debt

Evan Fry in a sermon told a story of a very wealthy man who looked upon a wretchedly poor man who could never, never pay off the great debt under which he labored. No matter how hard he worked, he never could pay the debt he owed. The wealthy man took pity on the poor man and paid his huge debt.

Evan Fry likened this to the situation of all mankind. We are hopelessly in debt (sin). Even if we worked faithfully all our lives, we never could hope to be free from our burden of sin. God, in his great compassion, through Jesus Christ, offers us freedom from that debt.

SANCTIFICATION

The atonement of Jesus Christ paid the debt of those who are willing to accept the gift. If we repent and are baptized, we are free of the sin from which we never could free ourselves, but having been saved by the grace of Jesus Christ, we have nothing to our credit. Evan Fry, in his story, likened the man whose debt was paid by the wealthy man to us who have been newly baptized and stand clean before God, but Evan pointed out that the man newly free from debt had nothing in the bank. It is the "credit" which we built up (what we do with our lives for God) after baptism which determines if we will be with Him eternally. After the cleansing by the power of the blood of the Lamb, there follows, by the laying on of hands, the gift of the Holy Ghost. If we will listen to the promptings of this Holy Spirit, we can "overcome the world" and "earn" our place in celestial glory with the sanctified of all ages.

Sanctification means complete dedication and faithfulness to the end of life on earth. This means being true to our covenant in big decisions for righteousness, and in small decisions, even the very smallest. It means that we must learn to be completely free from sin every day — repenting when we know we have done wrong, and asking for his grace (mercy) until we can overcome fully and not sin.

Grace for Grace

Jesus, we are told (D&C 90:3), did not receive the fullness of the Father at first, but he received "grace for grace." and the promise is that each individual who really seeks to overcome will also receive "grace for grace."

Jesus left the heavenly realm and came to earth for our sakes. He came representing the Father to us, but he did not come with a cloak of protection surrounding him so that he could not sin. He was tempted of the devil, but he withstood those temptations (Mat. 4:1-10). On one occasion, Jesus said:

The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

—John 8:29

He said to His enemies, "Which of you convinceth me of

sin" (John 8:46). (This is an obsolete term meaning "which of you is convinced that I have sinned?")

Thus, because of His sinless life, Jesus was able to say to His disciples just before His departure in death, Satan, "hath no power over me, but he hath power over you" (John 14:30). In His prayer to the Father before His crucifixion, Jesus said,

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

—John 17:19

Just as Christ sanctified Himself for the sake of those whom He came to teach the ways of His Father, even so He requires sanctification on the part of those who go forth to represent Him and His Father. Sanctification does not come easily. It requires constant vigil against sin, constant awareness of the covenant made with God in baptism and what it means to renew that covenant every time we accept the Lord's Supper — when we promise to "always remember Him and keep His commandments."

Thus it is possible to keep the commandment, "Beye perfect even as my Father who is in heaven is perfect" (Mat. 5:50, "that ye might escape the power of the enemy, and be gathered unto me a righteous people, without spot and blameless" (II Pet. 3:4). Christ's words to the Nephites carry the same message, "Repent. . . be sanctified . . . to stand spotless before me at the last day" (III Nephi 12:33). The Doctrine and Covenants (119:3a) stipulates that the priesthood of the church "in their intercourse with their neighbors and men of the world, . . . must be without spot and blameless in word and in deed."

New Creatures In Christ

A testimony of an elder during a sermon told of his deep depression because of his family background. He said his soul cried out to God in discouragement, "My grandfather was hung as a horsethief and my father was a drunkard. What chance have I?" The still small voice answered, "By my Spirit you can become what you really want to become. The power of the gospel is stronger than the power of heredity or environment."

Romans 6:3,4 supports this testimony, that we who are baptized "into Christ" are buried with him by baptism unto death" (death to sin) "that like Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life." (Italics are mine.)

Therefore if any man live in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

—II Cor. 6:17

He can "speak with new tongues" (Mark 16:17). The Book of Mormon says with "the tongue of angels" (II Nephi 13:17,18), "the words of Christ" (II Nephi 14:23). The Doctrine and Covenants (119:2,3) warns against "lightness of speech."

Ephesians 4:21-32 names some specific ways of working toward sanctification. Paul wrote,

(Continued on page 8)

If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use.
—II Tim. 2:21.

Steady growth is not easy but it is wholly possible by daily, even hourly repentance, so that one can come to look upon sin as did the Nephites when they wrote of themselves,

The Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, . . . has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually.

—Mosiah 3:3

to which Alma added,

Now they, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, having their garments made white, being pure and spotless before God, could not look upon sin, save it were with abhorrence.

—Alma 10:4

How sad is the contrasting record of the Israelites:

Moses sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God, but they hardened their hearts, and could not endure his presence.

—D&C 83:4

The choice is ours. By working faithfully, it is possible to overcome temptation and be sanctified while yet in the flesh.

In Short

Grace is what God gives the repentant: who come to him and accept his gift through Jesus Christ.

Sanctification is what we do for ourselves with God's gift — living in constant repentance until sin is overcome completely and we are at oneness with God.

QUESTIONS

(To help you evaluate your grasp of this lesson.)

1. Give a comprehensive definition of "saved by grace."
2. Since being "saved by grace" is a gift of God, why is salvation not an automatic process? Who is saved and who is not saved by grace? (II Nephi 6:41-49).
3. The promise is that salvation comes by repenting and taking the name of Jesus Christ in baptism. If one making this covenant does not develop fine Christian attributes in his life is he still "saved"?
Note: Since all are to be redeemed in the "due time of the Lord," though it may not be to the greatest glory, they are not eternally lost, except those who deny the Christ after the Father has revealed him (sons of perdition).
4. Will only Latter Day Saints be saved? What of the honorable people who never heard the fullness of the gospel? What of those who lived before Christ's earth mission? Discuss God's answer to Joseph Smith on this subject (Ch. H. 2:16; also D&C 76:6; II Nephi 6:51-56).
5. Explain sanctification. How is sanctification while "in the flesh" possible?



To The Remnant Of The House Of Israel

From information contributed by Mel Clark

The Book of Mormon is "to shew 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 for ever; and also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations."—Book of Mormon, Preface, p. iii

The elders of the restored church as early as 1830 were eager to take the gospel and the Book of Mormon to the Lamanites, or Indians. It was firmly believed that these were of the remnant of the House of Joseph and that the purposes of God were great to this people. (Church History, Vol. I, p. 125.)

Through the years there have been surges of activity which focused on the Indians, but no continuing church program has endured. In the recent years the church and NACAT (Native American Cultural Appreciation Team) have worked with many Indian tribes in limited areas. The Blackfoot of Alberta, Canada has been one of these groups.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS, LOUISE GREGSON AND MEL CLARK

Louise Gregson and Mel Clark are mother and son, Hawaiians. Both are well known in their own right — Louise as an author of children's Book of Mormon stories and Mel as an artist. Mel is assistant professor of art at Park College, after twelve years of similar work at Graceland College.

Mel Clark, art teacher at Park College and a member of NACAT, has summarized the achievements among the Blackfoot in the past twelve years. During this time, the NACAT Family Camp became the largest camping program on the Blackfoot Reserve. Out of this activity there evolved the Blackfoot Culture Camp organized and led by their own people. As an outcome of his work with these camps, Gerald Sitting Eagle has become involved in the culture program of Old Sun College.

A much needed Drug and Alcohol Abuse Agency has been established on the Reserve and is directed by Agar Wolf Leg. The youth are also learning to interact positively with white people.

The Blackfoot are becoming aware of the similarities in many of their beliefs and those of Christians. Wilburt Hayden, an RLDS Patriarch, has been instrumental in teaching these people and is an accepted participant in religious ceremonies. Gradually the Blackfoot are growing in knowledge and understanding of the Restored Gospel.



YOU ASKED US

Q. Was the covenant the Israelites made with Moses (Exodus 24:3-8) the same as the covenant the Nephites made with King Benjamin (Mosiah 3:6-8)?

A. No. The covenant with the Israelites made with God through Moses was under the Melchisedec priesthood, the fullness of the gospel. They solemnly promised to keep the laws of God, bound by the blood of the Lamb (Ex. 24:7,8). Earlier God had commanded that there be an offering of the firstlings of the flock brought to the altar of sacrifice (Gen. 4:5-8), "in similitude of the offerings of the Son of God, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Gen. 7:54).

It was after the Israelites had made this covenant that Moses went up into Mount Sinai and

received the plates from God. Returning to his people, he found that they had reverted to idolatry, having broken their covenant. Moses threw down the plates, breaking them. God did not reprimand Moses, but commanded him to make other plates like the ones he had broken and return to the Mount, where God wrote on them, only it was not the same as He had written on the plates which Moses broke. The message was not the same. God had taken the fullness of the priesthood from them and had left them only the lesser, or Aaronic priesthood (Ex. 34:1-3; Deut. 10:2). This became known as the law of Moses.

The covenant the Nephites made with God through King Benjamin was under the law of Moses, the authority of the Aaronic priesthood.



HAVE YOU A QUESTION?

WRITE THE EDITORS. We cannot answer each question personally, but will print those which we think would be of most interest to THE WITNESS readers.

LETTERS

I have written a note thanking Heather Cutler for the membership in FRAA. I have read THE WITNESS from cover to cover. It is excellent. I am happy to be receiving it.

—Kansas

Thanks for THE WITNESS which comes to me as a member of FRAA. We are very grateful for this publication. Neil Steede's testimony should be and will be a blessing to all Book of Mormon lovers.

I have given THE WITNESS to friends in Zuni. The Zuni Indians are very interested in the study of the Book of Mormon, feeling they are Josephites.

—New Mexico

I am enclosing my contribution in support of FRAA and the publication of THE WITNESS. Ever since I attended one day at the last World Conference and had the privilege of attending your meeting at the Stone Church, I've intended to write you an expression of my appreciation. It was wonderful. It stimulated my desire to help promote the Book of Mormon.

In our home the Book of Mormon is constantly read and discussed. Its value is becoming more evident to those who will study it. ... I am more convinced than ever

that the Book of Mormon must be "lifted up" and proclaimed more than it ever has been.

—Missouri

I really appreciate the study material in THE WITNESS. I liked this issue's lesson especially.

—Nebraska

A fellow member of the RLDS Church recently shared with us a copy of THE WITNESS. We were thrilled. We had wished for this, but had no idea it existed. Please accept our contribution of twenty-five dollars. We desire to be placed on your mailing list.

—Missouri

This week I received my current 1984 issue of THE WITNESS. Thank you. I read it all with interest, and as I can find time, I shall "Study Along With Thelona Stevens."

—Texas

I loaned my copy of THE WITNESS to our presiding elder and had a hard time getting it back! I am pleased to note that we can "Study Along With Thelona Stevens." and will look forward to doing that.

—Ohio



SAGA AMERICA*

by
BARRY FELL



"This boundary marker, written in the Celtiberian dialect of Gadelic (ancient Gaelic) and using an alphabet similar to Irish, but related also to Phoenician, was found by Barbara Jean Woodward in the woods at Ardmore, Oklahoma. Gloria Farley, president of the Eastern Oklahoma Historical Society, immediately secured a latex impression for the Epigraphic Society, permitting this plaster replica to be made and studied. The three lines of text read, from above down, and left to right,

AOS NOUG
FIRID
AILG

which may be translated as "Tribal land as far as this Boundary Stone." Similar words still occur in modern Irish Gaelic to this day. The inscription is believed to date to about the time of Christ," says Dr. Barry Fell in *Saga America*. "The frequency of finds and their range in time for ancient coins in America is a direct reflection of the rise and fall of naval power in the Mediterranean.

"The substance of this book about America revolves largely upon the discovery and interpretations of that long lost coinage now being brought to light by the electronic metal detectors.

"If you want to know what an ancient American text is saying, take it to an Old World land where similar texts are still to be seen engraved on bedrock, on headstones, and temple lintels," Dr. Fell says. "I first began to report the inscriptions with an explanation of how the individual signs were to be identified as letters of alphabets already known from Europe and North Africa, and how the letters spelled words recognizable in known ancient languages of those regions."

In his research for facts for this book, Dr. Fell says: "Our trails have led us into regions of America where North African pioneers have engraved their names and deeds

during the passage of many centuries long past.

"The ruins of Carthage, historic mother city of the African Phoenicians, whose coins American farmers are now plowing from the soil of Kansas and Connecticut, Arkansas and Alabama, . . . it was in Libya that we would find the answers to the archaeological enigmas of the New World."

Dr Fell said that Thomas Jefferson "believed that a study of the Indian languages of America would disclose their places of origin. Over the span of fifteen centuries, from 400 B.C. to A.D. 1100 the Western World was dominated by six maritime powers . . . six waves of visitors to the Americas left inscriptions and artifacts, and in some cases colonists as well. . . .

"These early Americans . . . have left behind a fragmentary record of their skills in the sciences. Ancient America, two thousand years ago, became a haven of refuge where learned men from Mediterranean lands imparted their knowledge to the young and engaged in friendly relations with the Amerindian peoples who saw no grounds for hostility. . . . Then, about a thousand years ago, that civilization began to crumble. By the time the Spanish conquistadores arrived, little remained of its former brilliance."

This book recounts some part of these events.

According to Dr. Fell, "The old language of the religious charts of tribes such as the Pima in Arizona is so rich in Arabic vocabulary that the charts can be translated in the same way as a correspondingly ancient language in North America."

At Dr. Fell's request, Dr. Sentiel Rommel at the University of Maine has programmed a computer to plot the relative frequencies of sound in sample languages.

Published in 1980, *Saga America* is not a new book but it follows his *America B.C.*, published in 1977. It deserves the attention of all students of America's beginning. The translation of languages is fascinating.

Other books relative to the subject under consideration are *Forgotten Script* and *Before Columbus*, both by Cyrus Gordon, 1971, Crown Publishers, New York.

Norman Trotten, History Department, Bentley College, Waltham, Massachusetts, in his foreword to *Saga America* gives Dr. Fell's credits: "Growing up in New Zealand, Barry studied Greek, Latin, German, French, and later Danish. He holds Ph.D. and D.Sc degrees from the University of Edinburgh. He read Gaelic for two years with Mairi nic Asgail. He has acquired a working knowledge of Sanskrit, Egyptian hieroglyphics, Kufic Arabic, and other ancient writing systems of Africa, Asia, and America. "Decipherment is a special form of linguistics and requires statistical talents and ways of thinking which few linguists possess."

1985 A Year Of Meaningful Witness

1985, a new year, a new start for thoughtful, sharing and witnessing. The Foundation for Research on Ancient America has just finished a year when thousands of individuals shared THE WITNESS for the first time, and 1985 promises to be an even greater year of witnessing and sharing the Book of Mormon.

This year members will

- Travel through the pages of THE WITNESS to vast cities being unearthed in Mesoamerica
- Share the experiences and testimonies of others
- Study Along with Thelona Stevens
- Read of new discoveries bringing the Book of Mormon to greater life
- And much more in the months ahead.

New projects include an upcoming annual study calendar with a program for daily Book of Mormon reading; teaching slides on the Book of Mormon for children and young adults; archaeological projects with Neil Steede in Comalcalco, Mexico, and new Book of Mormon publications.

Much of what has been planned is being made possible by the volunteer contributions of members from all over the country. But much more needs to be done. This year FRAA is enabling members to contribute in several categories reflecting their desires to help share the Book of Mormon. These are:

MEMBER — Basic membership in FRAA includes subscription to FRAA's newsletter, THE WITNESS.
Contribution..... \$10.00

SHARING MEMBER — Membership and subscription to THE WITNESS, but assists in sending THE WITNESS to others.
Contribution..... \$25.00

SUPPORTING MEMBER — Membership and subscription, but supports FRAA in witnessing to new members with educational types of materials, archaeological projects, and new publications.
Contribution..... \$100.00

PROVIDER MEMBER — Member receives all mailings and subscriptions but desires to provide additional support to FRAA in promoting the Book of Mormon with *Outreach* in mind.

Provider members will receive periodic reports and letters from FRAA president.
Contribution..... \$250.00

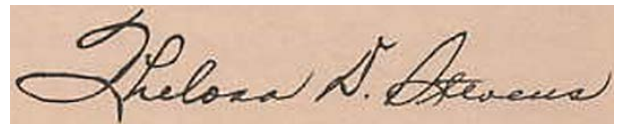
TRUSTEE MEMBER — Receives all membership subscriptions, but desires to be a *cornerstone of support* for FRAA, it's goals and its purposes in seeking greater understanding and sharing of the Book of Mormon.

Trustees will receive periodic reports from the president, and may submit recommendations to FRAA's executive committee for consideration and discussion.

Trustees will receive all publications, tapes, and materials produced by FRAA as desired without charge.
Contribution..... \$500.00

Should members desire to support FRAA by volunteer work, articles or testimonies, or in other ways, do let us hear from you.

Let's all work together to make 1985 a year of meaningful witnessing.



Thelona D. Stevens
President



FRAA 1985 Membership Registration

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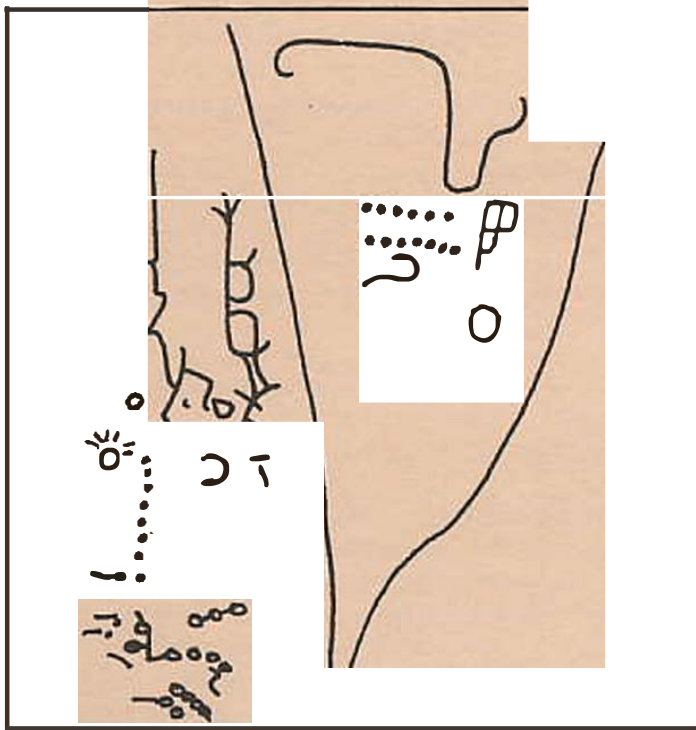
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This map, found in Nevada, is, according to the author, an Arabic copy inscribed by trans-Pacific settlers on a rock ca. 800 A.D., copied from a Libyan original drawn ca. the first century B.C. The map is marked partly in ancient Libyan script, and partly in Arabic. The Libyan script indicates the island of "Hawa" ("Hawa" is the Arabic for "wind"), the fact that in the northwest there is no passage, and in the center of the continent is the word MR, the Libyan word meaning "land on the other side of the sea" — and possibly the origin of the word "America." The later Arabic script in the Pacific area (the map as inscribed is turned horizontally) says, "Ocean of storms — May God preserve us."



ABOUT THE FOUNDATION...

HISTORY

THE FOUNDATION for Research on Ancient America (FRAA) was begun in 1952, as a research committee on the Book of Mormon, approved by the First Presidency of the RLDS Church. Roy Weldon, of Warrensburg, Missouri, was its first chairman.

Organized in 1966, as a not-for-profit corporation, the Foundation and its members continue to seek to serve the Church by advancing the use of the Book of Mormon through archaeological research, testimonies, articles, and related projects.

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