

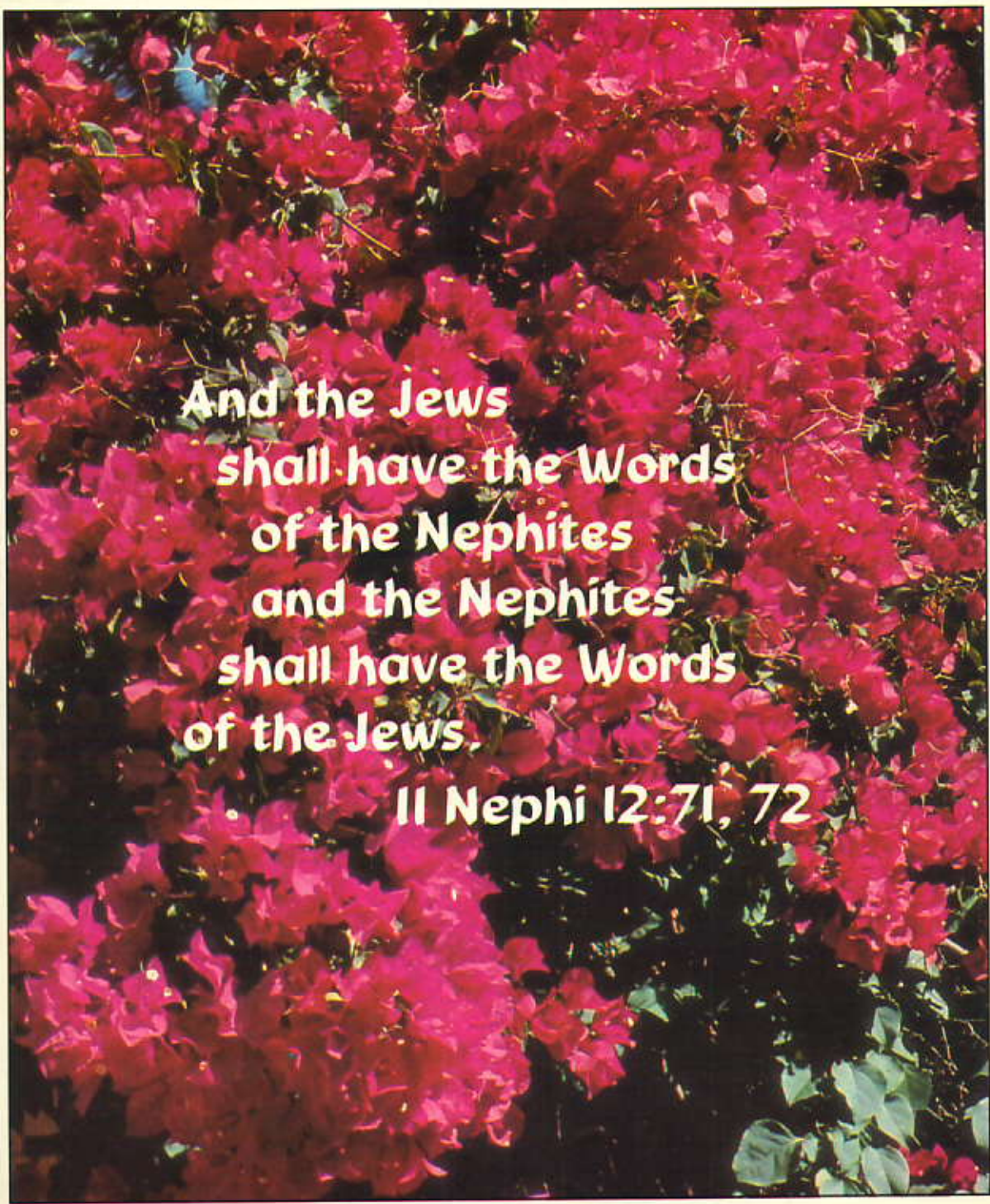
The Witness

The Foundation For Research On Ancient America



MAY 1989

NO.65



**And the Jews
shall have the Words
of the Nephites
and the Nephites
shall have the Words
of the Jews.**

• II Nephi 12:71, 72

CHIASMUS

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The Witness is published quarterly by the Foundation for Research on Ancient America, 410 N. Pleasant, Independence, Missouri 64050.

The Foundation for Research on Ancient America is a nonprofit corporation comprised of individuals who desire to advance the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon. Through instructional materials, archaeological research, testimonies and related projects, members of FRAA seek to assist in bringing forth the light that is contained in the ancient scriptures of the Book of Mormon. A contribution to the Foundation for Research on Ancient America results in membership.

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Cover....

Designed by Craig Warner of DataVision, this computer graphics rendering of II Nephi 12:71-72 illustrates the concept of chiasmus found throughout the Book of Mormon. The articles "Chiasmus," "Christ's Life on Earth Was One Eternal Round," and in the *Junior Witness*, "Discover the Chi in Chiasmus" all deal with this exciting concept.

The Lord Blesses Again!

We've always found the Lord to be faithful, and such is the case again. Through what we believe to be the Lord's blessing, we have discovered that *The Witness* can be published using four pages of color for the same price as the former non-color issues. It's with joy that we share this good news with you. It's our hope and belief that by the use of color the message of the Book of Mormon and Jesus Christ will be more widely spread.

The Witness exists to help you learn more about the Book of Mormon and to strengthen your faith. Please write us with your comments and suggestions for improvements or for articles you would like to see included.

The Editorial Committee

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Foundation News

FRAA Annual Meeting

FRAA's Annual Meeting was held on April 2, 1989 at the Stone Church. Guest speaker, Seventy Vivian Sorensen, bore testimony of the impact of the Book of Mormon in his life and of the record's truthfulness.

Officers elected for the coming year are: President, Thelona D. Stevens; First Vice President, Roy E. Weldon; Second Vice President, Michael A. Gatrost; Secretary, Bea Luther; and Treasurer, Carol Sue Martin.

Donna Weddle, who has been the Foundation's treasurer and editor of *The Witness* for the last six years, felt it was time to turn over these duties to others. Her efficient organization, enthusiastic, untiring devotion in helping FRAA promote the Book of Mormon enabled the Foundation to greatly expand during this period.

Her responsibilities were so great that two people will take over her responsibilities. Carol Sue Martin will assume the treasurer's job, and Sherrie Smith will edit *The Witness*. Donna will continue, however, to be instrumental in the work of the Foundation.

With the beginning of our new year, it is also time to renew your membership if you have not yet done so. Please fill and send in the card inserted in this issue. Your support allows us to sponsor many projects and programs promoting the Book of Mormon and to send *The Witness* to over 15,000 homes. Our goal for 1989 is to increase this to 20,000. Become a part of this exciting and adventurous organization today!

Spring Children's Book of Mormon Day

Lamanites and Nephites will be in abundance at the Foundation's first outdoor Book of Mormon Day for children. It will be held June 24, 1989 on the Campus in Independence, Missouri.

Activities for children between the ages of 7 and 14 will begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue through 2:30 p.m. Children under age six should be accompanied by

an adult.

Children will hear Nephi tell of his broken bow and shoot arrows at outlines of wild animals against hay bundles. They will see and hear Indian legends and dances in the midst of tepees. Handicrafts, campfire songs, and Indian games will add realism to dramatic interpretations from the Book of Mormon.

Lunch will be served free to the children. Plan on your children or grandchildren attending. Preregistration is essential to help us plan this event. Contact FRAA's chairman of the event, Theo Boyd, 257-5292 for details and to **preregister**.

Helaman's Two Thousand

To date, 626 members have responded to be part of our latter day Helaman's Two Thousand. This group of faithful supporters reflects the unwavering belief and direction that was evidenced by God's protection over Helaman's two thousand sons in the Book of Mormon record.

Opportunities to serve and to open new avenues of outreach for the Book of Mormon are offered to each person who gives a monthly financial contribution. To become a member of this group, use the card inserted in this issue and send in today. Twelve envelopes will then be forwarded to you for fulfilling your commitment.

Why not join Helaman's Two Thousand now and watch exciting things happen as we move out in faith?

Regional Book of Mormon Days

Support from FRAA's Helaman's Two Thousand, those who provide monthly contributions for promoting the

Book of Mormon, already confirms that great strides can be taken when members join together in faithful commitment.

This support allows FRAA to begin regional Book of Mormon Days across the country for branches or groups who desire to learn more about the Book of Mormon and be more prepared to promote it among friends and acquaintances. Recent archaeological discoveries pertinent to the Book of Mormon, slides, drama, and instruction will highlight the day's activities.

Preliminary plans include Arizona, Kentucky, Maine, Oklahoma and other locales whose members may not be able to come to the Foundation's fall meeting at the Auditorium. If your group is interested in hosting a Book of Mormon Day, please contact Michael A. Gatrost, 9203 Cyclone School Road, Lee's Summit, MO 64063, (816) 525-6391.

FRAA Sponsors Tour

FRAA's Archaeological Research Committee joins with FRAA's Development Committee to sponsor another tour of exploration of the ruins in Mesoamerica. (See page 13 in this issue about last year's tour.) Tentative sites include Tikal, Copan, Quirigua, and Kaminaljuyu (Guatemala City) - the heart of Book of Mormon lands.

Approximate cost is \$1200 to \$1400. Dates for the tour are December 24, 1989 through January 3, 1990. If interested, contact SOON Lyle L. Smith, Chairman Archaeological Research Committee, 32701 E. Pink Hill Rd., Grain Valley, MO 64029 (816) 229-5192.

MG 

Calendar

June 24, 1989 9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.	Children's Book of Mormon Day RLDS Campus, Independence, Missouri Preregistration is encouraged.
September 30, 1989 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.	Fifth Annual Spend A Day with The Book of Mormon Conference - RLDS Auditorium
December 24, 1989- January 3, 1990	Tour of Ruins in Guatemala
Throughout the Year	Regional Book of Mormon Day Conferences

Chiasmus

Lyle Smith

Chiastic style and structure inherent in the Book of Mormon witness that the book contains authentic Hebrew language patterns. This witness goes beyond faith and has become knowledge for those who understand its significance. As Joseph Smith dictated the manuscript of the Book of Mormon, he quite likely did not recognize the chiastic form. Even if he did, however, we applaud him for using an extremely authentic literary art style prevalent in ancient Middle Eastern languages, especially Hebrew.

Chiasmus in Antiquity, a book edited by John Welch, defines and describes chiastic style and usage. It includes a chapter about chiasmus in the Book of Mormon. Many will remember Dr. Welch who was a speaker at the 1987 Book of Mormon Day activities presented by FRAA. Many will also remember articles on chiasmus by Dr. Richard DeLong in FRAA Newsletters (37&40) and by Raymond Treat in the *Zaramemla Record* (17&18, 32&33).

What then is chiasmus and what does it witness to us about Hebraic literary style in the Book of Mormon?

Chiasmus is an intentional rendering of words, phrases, or ideas in a certain order and then their repetition immediately following in reverse order. The second part is a mirror image of the first. See Figure 1. Or, a very simple one is:

A Behold, they were made manifest unto the **PROPHET**,
 B by the voice of the **SPIRIT**;
 B' For by the **SPIRIT**
 A' are all things made known unto the **PROPHETS**...
 —I Nephi 7:3,4

Figure 1.

A Having had a great **KNOWLEDGE** of the goodness and the mysteries of God,
 B therefore I make a **RECORD** of my proceedings in my days;
 C yea, I make a record in the **LANGUAGE**
 D of my **FATHER**,
 D' which consists of the learning of the **JEWS**
 C' and the **LANGUAGE** of the Egyptians.
 B' And I know that the **RECORD** which I make is true; and I make it with mine own hand;
 A' and I make it according to my **KNOWLEDGE**.
 —I Nephi 1:1,2

Figure 2.

A Therefore speak I to them in **PARABLES**;
 B Because they, seeing, **SEE** not; and hearing, they **HEAR** not; neither do they understand.
 C And in them is fulfilled the **PROPHECY** of Esaias concerning them, which saith,
 D By hearing, ye shall **HEAR** and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall **SEE** and shall not perceive.
 E For this people's **HEART** is waxed gross,
 F and their **EARS** are dull of **HEARING**,
 G and their **EYES** they have closed,
 E lest at any time they should **SEE**
 G' with their **EYES**
 F' and **HEAR** with their **EARS**,
 E' and should understand with their **HEARTS**, and should be converted, and I should heal them.
 D' But blessed are your eyes, for they **SEE**; and your ears, for they **HEAR**...
 C' Many righteous **PROPHETS**
 B' have desired to **SEE** these days which you see, and have not seen them; and to **HEAR** that which you hear, and have not heard.
 A' Hear ye therefore the **PARABLE** of the sower.
 —Matthew 13:12-17

A third example seems to speak to our day.

A And others will he pacify, and lull them **AWAY** into carnal security,
 B that they will say, All is **WELL**
 C in **ZION**;
 C' yea, **ZION** prospereth,
 B' all is **WELL**;
 A' And thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them **AWAY** carefully down to hell.
 —II Nephi 12:25, 26

Since chiasmus is an ancient literary device used by the Hebrews, examples also should be evident in the Bible. Welch (1969) identifies Matthew 13:12-17 as one instance (Figure 2).

Illustrated thus far are chiasms that exhibit poetry and/or rhythm. While they are excellent examples, it is important to recognize that chiastic style in the Book of Mormon goes beyond word repetitions and encompasses

Figure 4.

- A Men drink damnation to their own souls, except
 B they HUMBLE themselves,
 C and become as little CHILDREN,
 D and believe that salvation . . . is . . . the ATONING BLOOD OF
 CHRIST, THE LORD omnipotent:
 E For the NATURAL MAN
 F is an enemy to GOD,
 G and HAS BEEN, from the fall of Adam,
 G' and WILL BE, for ever and ever;
 F' [unless] he yields to the . . . HOLY SPIRIT,
 E' and putteth off the NATURAL MAN,
 D' and becometh a saint, through the ATONEMENT OF
 CHRIST, THE LORD,
 C' and becometh as a CHILD,
 B' submissive, meek, HUMBLE. . . .
 —Mosiah 1:118-120

Figure 5.



concepts. *Whole portions of the Book of Mormon are written in a chiastic pattern.* For instance, Welch (1969) identifies the entire Book of Mosiah as chiastic (Figure 3 on page 6).

As one considers the depth of chiastic structure in the Book of Mormon, one also begins to recognize the depth of scholarship of the original authors who wrote it. To those who study chiastic

structure in the Book of Mormon, it is evident that chiastic elements are not there by accident; rather, they are an integral part due to deliberate and masterful purpose.

I call another way of envisioning this literary art form “one eternal round.” While reading 1 Nephi 3:32, I realized that chiastic style can be diagrammed using a circle as well as the traditional

format. The same scripture is shown both ways in Figures 4 and 5.

A further example from Mosiah 3:13-16 is illustrated in Figure 6.

Alma 17:42 says, “His paths are straight and his course is *one eternal round*” (emphasis added). Alma 5:35 testifies:

Neither doth he vary from that which he hath said, neither hath he a shadow of turning from the right to the left, nor from that which is right to that which is wrong; therefore, his course is *one eternal round* (emphasis added).

1 Nephi 3:27-32 tells us,

He is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. And the way is prepared from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him; For he that diligently seeketh shall find; And the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in this time as in times of old; And as well in times of old as in times to come; Wherefore, the course of the Lord is *one eternal round* (emphasis added).

An indepth study of chiasmus in the Book of Mormon increases and expands my understanding that the course of the Lord is one eternal round. As mankind is made in the image of God, should our lives reflect the image of one eternal round? What does this really mean to us as individuals as well as to the body of Christ? Does one eternal round say anything about scripture?

Yes, these are thought-provoking questions. I feel that once again the Book of Mormon invites our careful and prayerful consideration.

Figure 3. Book of Mosiah

- A King Benjamin exhorts his sons (1:1-13)
- B Mosiah chosen to succeed his father (1:15,16)
- C Mosiah receives the records (1:23)
- D Benjamin's speech and the words of the ANGEL (1:36-2:50)
- E People enter into a covenant (3:6)
- F Priests consecrated (4:4)
- G Ammon leaves ZARAHÉMLA for the land of LEHI-NEPHI (5:4-8)
- H People in bondage; Ammon put in prison (5:9)
- I The 24 GOLD PLATES (5:64)
- J The record of Zeniff begins as he leaves Zarahemla (6:1)
- K Defense against the Lamanites (6:14-57)
- L Noah and his priests (7:1-15)
- M Abinadi persecuted and thrown into prison (7:69)
- N ABINADI reads old law to priests (7:70-99)
- N' ABINADI makes his own prophecies (7:106-8:91)
- M' Abinadi persecuted and killed (9:1-27)
- L' Noah and his priests (9:100-112)
- K' Lamanites threaten the people of Limhi (9:113-139)
- J' Record of Zeniff ends as he leaves the land of Lehi-Nephi (10:19)
- I' The 24 GOLD PLATES (9:169)
- H' People of Alma in bondage (11:54-64)
- G' Alma leaves the land of LEHI-NEPHI for ZARAHÉMLA (11:65)
- F' The church organized by Alma (11:97-104)
- E' Unbelievers refuse to enter covenant (11:105-120)
- D' The words of Alma and the words of the ANGEL of the lord (11:116-176)
- C' Alma the Younger receives the records (13:1-2)
- B' Judges chosen instead of a king (13:7-62)
- A' Mosiah exhorts his people (13:7-62)

Figure 6.



Chiastic style spills over from literature into other areas. In the next issue of *The Witness*, evidence of the chiastic concept in Mesoamerican archaeology will be addressed.

Chiasms in the Book of Mormon*

Statement/Word Chiasms

- I Nephi 1:1-2
- I Nephi 2:49-53
- I Nephi 2:14
- I Nephi 7:3-4
- II Nephi 12:25-26
- II Nephi 12:71-72
- Jacob 5:48
- Mosiah 1:118-120
- Mosiah 3:13-16
- Mosiah 11:139-140
- III Nephi 5:57-59

Conceptual Chiasms

(Treat 1982; DeLong 1981)

- Book of I Nephi
- Book of II Nephi
- Book of Mosiah
- Mosiah 1:38-3:21
- Alma 17:1-30
- III Nephi 7:40-10:1
- Book of III Nephi
- Book of Ether

*This list is not all-inclusive.

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Thelona D. Stevens

The principle of the gathering, and also the scattering, is as old as our first parents. Obviously, there had to be a scattering before there could be a gathering. When God placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, they were innocent, free from sin. Until they were disobedient, God could associate with them. After their transgression, they were shut out from his presence. They had to leave their original home, thereby employing the principle of the "scattering." God offered them the plan of eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, by which they could repent and return to his presence. When they accepted this plan, they put into operation the first step toward the "gathering."

The pattern of man's existence on earth has been:

The knowledge of God;
Disobedience;
The invitation to repent and return to God;
Refusal; defiance; scattering; destruction, OR
Acceptance; gathering for unified development in righteousness preparatory to living in God's presence.

Even repentant, God-fearing individuals cannot do alone what groups working together can ac-

Gleanings from God's Great Gathering

complish. A gathered, obedient people, working in unity can achieve what no scattered people can do. For this reason, God has urged that his people gather together and live in places of his choosing, under conditions conducive to righteousness, in order that Zion's principles can be gained.

Sacred history records how God has led those faithful to him to places of his choosing, while the wicked suffered death, captivity, scattering. The first account of God leading the faithful to a special place is recorded in Genesis 6:15. "Enos, and the residue of the people of God" were led to "a land of promise." Before God scattered the wicked at the time of the great tower, he led the Jaredites away (Ether 1:7-29). When Jerusalem was about to be destroyed and the Jews taken into captivity, God led away the Nephites and the Mulekites (1 Nephi 1:3-4, 26; 5:213; Omni 1:26-28).

God warned that those who went "from evil to evil," forsaking his law, would be slain, scattered (Jer. 9:13, 16). Judah was warned:

If ye shall at all turn from following me, ye or your children, and will not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods, and worship them. . . this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and . . . every one that passeth by it

shall be astonished, and... they shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land, and to this house? And they shall answer, Because they forsook the Lord their God.

—1 Kings 9:6-9

Jerusalem Destroyed; the Jews Scattered

The Jews became grossly wicked and refused to repent. God sent many prophets to warn them, but they rejected them. Then he sent his Son Jesus Christ, whom they also rejected. Being given their choice on a feast day as to which prisoner they wished released, they chose Barabbas, a robber and a murderer (John 18:40; Luke 23:18-19). They demanded that Jesus be crucified (Mark 15:15). When Pilate sought to save Jesus, the Jews shouted, "His blood come upon us and our children" (Matt. 27:26-27).

Having spurned God and his Son Jesus Christ, there was nothing left for them but to suffer for their sins. The great city Jerusalem with its beautiful temple was destroyed in A.D. 70 by Titus and his Roman soldiers. A great multitude had assembled in Jerusalem from all over the nation for the Feast of the Passover. Historians estimate well over two million were in Jerusalem at the time. The temple was burned; the city completely destroyed. There was death by fire, sword, and starvation. *The Works of Flavius Josephus* gives many details of the horrible destruction that took place.

Persecution

Those who were not slain at Jerusalem were scattered among all nations. They were to know persecution in nearly every coun-

try where they took refuge. Persecution continues today in many areas, and is even increasing in some parts of the world. The Jews have no promise this will cease until the "times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (D&C 45:3f). God still remembers his covenant with ancient Israel and awaits the time when Judah will accept Jesus Christ, so that the terms of the covenant can be fulfilled.

Although the Jewish state was established in 1948, freedom of immigration was not allowed until after the 1967 war. The returning Jews began transforming the barren land with phenomenal success. They had to make the land productive or perish.

There can be no doubt that God has commenced his great work in behalf of the Jews, but until they accept Christ and his teachings, God's promises to them cannot be realized. When they accept Christ as their Messiah, they will become a righteous, "delightful people" (II Nephi 12:85-86).

The Gentiles

After the Jews rejected Christ, the fullness of the gospel was to go to the Gentiles. Since the Gentiles occupy such a prominent place in the Scriptures, it is logical to identify them. One obvious definition is: Those of non-Jewish origin. Jesus' definition was: "This he spake, signifying the scattering of Israel, and the desolation of the heathen, or in other words, the Gentiles" (Luke 23:32).

Jesus urged the Gentiles to repent and come unto him:

And he inviteth them all to come unto him, and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond

and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen, and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile.

—II Nephi 11:113-115

As many of the Gentiles as will repent, are the covenant people of the Lord.

—II Nephi 12:77

All who come unto Christ on his terms are of the seed of Abraham, either by lineage or by "adoption" (Gal. 3:29; 4:1-5).

For clarity and emphasis, this classification of the Gentiles is presented:

1. Unconverted Gentiles (heathens);
2. Converted to Christ, who are then no longer Gentiles (heathens), counted with the house of Israel;
3. Converted Gentiles who are Christ's but the Scriptures call them Gentiles in order to identify them as of non-Jewish origin.

The Gentiles—Blessings, Warnings

After the fall of the Nephites, the Lord decreed that the blessings they might have received were to go to the Gentiles (Mormon 2:48). After being so greatly blessed, the Lord warned:

At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel . . . and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations. . . and shall be filled with all manner of lyings, and of deceits, and of mischiefs, and all manner of hypocrisy, and murders, and priestcrafts, and whoredoms, and of secret abominations; and if they shall do all these things, and shall reject the fullness of my gospel, behold, saith the Father, I will

bring the fullness of my gospel from among them.

—III Nephi 7:34-35

The converted Gentiles also need to heed the warnings to repent. God did not spare the sinful Jaredites, Jews, Nephites, or any disobedient peoples in the past. God is merciful and long-suffering, but he has warned all peoples from the beginning, "My Spirit will not always strive with man" (Genesis 8:5; Ether 1:41; II Nephi 11:76; D&C 1:5g). He also warned, "And when the Spirit ceaseth to strive with man, then cometh speedy destruction" (II Nephi 11:77). (See pages 23-26 of *God's Great Gathering* for warnings which God has given for our day.)

The Gathering of the Righteous

God determined that *his people* in the last days *should gather, where they should gather, and for what purpose*. He said,

Righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out my own elect from the four quarters of the earth unto a place which I shall prepare; a holy city, that my people may. . . be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem.
—D&C 36:12f-g

The Lord has said that he has only one place for the gathering of his people for the building of Zion, which place is Independence, Missouri (D&C 98:4g-h; 57:1a-g). See *God's Great Gathering* for a number of references and comments relative to the many commandments of the Lord regarding the gathering of his people (pages 29-34) and the gathering of the wicked (pages 35-39).

All the righteous heirs of Jacob



The Junior Witness

The Foundation For Research On Ancient America

MAY 1989 • NO. 10

The Turning

(A Story Based on 1 Nephi 1-13)

Viola Velt Presler

Nephi's radiant smile matched the sunlight streaming through the leaves. Slipping his palette from his shoulder, he carefully placed the cakes of red and

black ink on the wooden table beside the water jar. Spreading the papyrus scrolls in front of the clay shards, Nephi licked his lower lip in anticipation. At last he would write on papyrus!

Today Father had told him to put all last month's clay receipts on permanent records. Father had gone forth with his great merchant caravan loaded with oil for Egypt. He'd taken Laman and Lemuel with him too, so there would be glorious weeks at home of uninterrupted writing practice! If

he did this work well before Father came home, Father would teach him how

to hammer and engrave metal plates that last forever.

Maybe, just maybe, he could become a scribe and record Father's prophecies!

Nephi loved painting these bright black and red glyphs upon the clean whitened page. Ten strokes and dip. Ten strokes and dip. Today he would make perfect pages and never miss a stroke!

"Ayeeee!" A sharp shriek shattered the tranquil hills. Nephi's hand jerked.

Oh, no! He'd spoiled the glyph. He'd have to do the whole page again.

Yet Mother's voice was urgent. What could be wrong?

Nephi jumped up, knocking the water jar flying, and dashed down the path toward the white stone house. Running, he nearly bumped into Sam. Out of breath, the brothers reached the doorway together.

"Run ahead! Be quick!" said their mother Sariah. "Go see, go see. Maybe your father has been bitten by a snake or attacked by raiders!"

Nephi and Sam were already running down the trail. The din of shouting men, tinkling bells, and groaning camels said for sure that Father's caravan had returned. Ah, there was Father's camel in the lead.

Drawing closer, Nephi saw that Father Lehi's eyes were closed, his face uplifted. He gripped the saddle, trembling as one with fever.

"Father, why have you returned?" Nephi yelled above the noise.

Lehi only shook his head, and waving hands feebly, motioned Nephi away.

Puzzled, Nephi and Sam ran up to the next camels, calling their elder brothers. "Laman, Lemuel, what is the trouble?"

"We found him alone in the desert talking to a rock!" roared Laman, rolling his eyes upward. "He thinks he is Moses."

Nephi and Sam exchanged quick, guarded glances. Perhaps it was not so bad then. Perhaps it was only another of Father's visions.

Laman spat contemptuously upon the sun-bleached ground. The dark scowl covering his face told Nephi at once that the trip to Egypt had been postponed, and with it all Nephi's own hopes for writing practice.

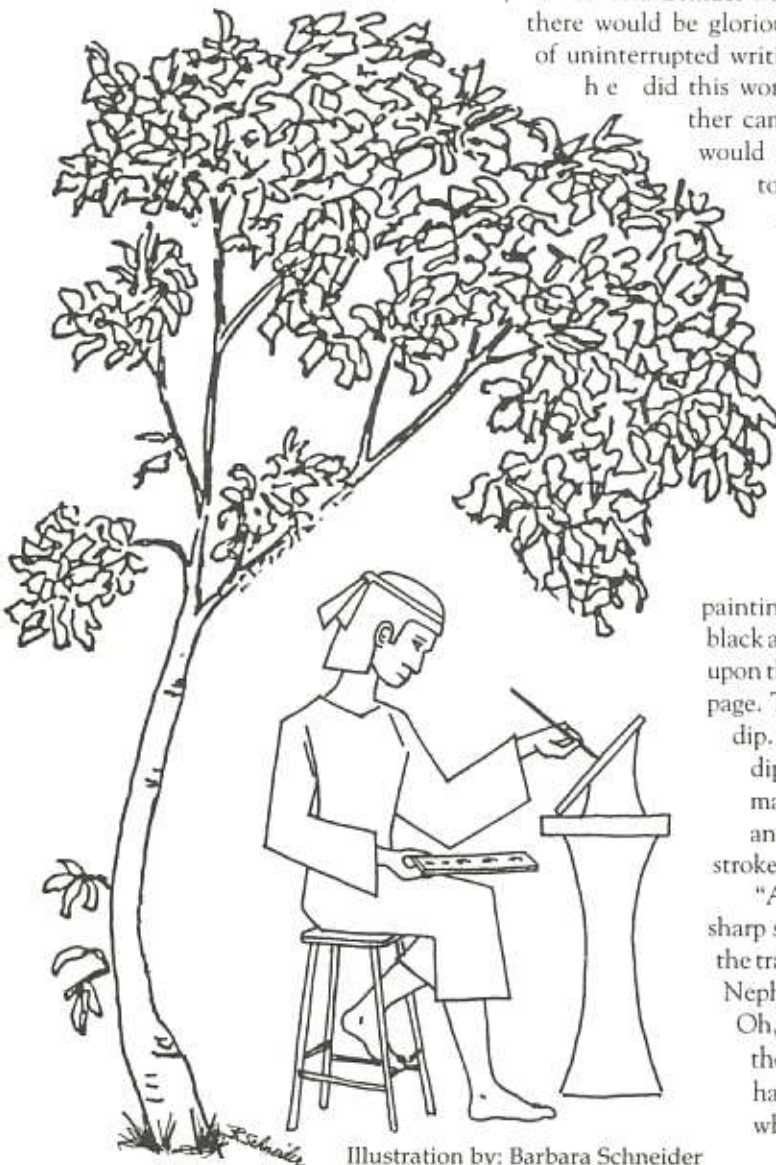


Illustration by: Barbara Schneider

"Well, don't just stand there!" ordered Laman. "Sam, get Father to bed. Nephi, ride Father's camel. We've only got a thousand camels to water and unload, as well as five hundred hungry, thirsty, unpaid men!"

Nephi knew by Laman's blazing eyes that this was going to be a miserable afternoon.

It was long past lunch when they had at last watered the camels and dragged the skins of oil to the cool underground pits.

Poor Laman, thought Nephi. It wasn't easy being a grown man only to have your plans constantly changed by a father who had visions. On the other hand, it wasn't easy to give up his own scribe's work to help Laman also, as well as live with Laman's bad moods. I will never become a scribe, thought Nephi.

"What are you staring at, boy?" snapped Laman. "Get back to work, you lazy good for nothing! I should..."

"Should what?" boomed a great voice. Father loomed large as a mountain in the stable doorway.

"Laman," said Father, "come into the house, all of you. I would hold council with my sons."

No use to protest. Dusty and sweaty, they followed Father to the house. Entering the great room, Lehi motioned for them to sit down. The room, dark and cool, was welcome.

"My sons," began Lehi, "as I went forth this morning I stopped to pray for Jerusalem, for my heart is sore pained to see the wickedness of our people."

Tears flowed from Lehi's eyes, as he spoke in a trembling voice.

"As I prayed unto the Lord, there came a pillar of fire and dwelt upon a rock* before me. I saw and heard much. Oh, my sons, if you could only see what I have seen, hear what I have heard, there would be no room for doubt within you. I saw the heavens open, and I thought I saw God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels in the attitude of singing and praising their God. I saw one descending..." His voice broke then. He stopped for a moment.

"I saw one descending," Lehi went

on, "whose luster was above that of the sun at noon-day; I saw twelve others following him, and their brightness did exceed that of the stars in the firmament." His voice caught and held the wonder.

Nephi slipped a glance at Laman. What was he thinking? Quickly he looked back at Father. What was Father saying?

"I saw a personage who gave unto me a book, and told me that I should read... Wo, wo unto Jerusalem! For I have seen thine abominations. Unless its people should repent and turn to the Lord, Jerusalem should be destroyed... and many should perish by the sword... and be carried captive into Babylon."

Here Lehi stopped again, so great was the burden of the message surging through him. Nephi noticed that Mother, listening in the doorway, had sunk to her knees.

Was it true, wondered Nephi. Could that great holy city, even Jerusalem, be utterly cut down? Would God allow Solomon's temple to be demolished? Yet as his father's words thundered forth as a waterfall, Nephi knew this was the power of the Great One, even God himself. Did God know Nephi's desire to become a scribe?



A Mayan scribe with writing desk and tool, engraved in stone at Palenque, a site in Mexico.

Did it matter to God? Would he and his family be destroyed also?

"Great and marvelous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty!" Tears rolled down Lehi's face. "Thy throne is high in the heavens, and thy power and goodness and mercy are over all the inhabitants of the earth; and because thou art merciful, thou wilt not suffer those who come unto thee that they shall perish!"

So God did care. Tears filled Nephi's eyes. It was terrible to think of Jerusalem being destroyed, but maybe God was trying to save them. It was not sweet to think such trouble would come in his day, just when he was about to be apprenticed for his longed-for career — that of a scribe. Yet this wonderful warm love was filling his heart. Maybe there was hope.

Glancing again at Laman and Lemuel, Nephi wondered if they had felt the power of the Holy Spirit. Were they aware that God himself had just now spoken through their father?

Heads propped on chins, they stared down at the carpet.

"And now, my sons," said Lehi. "The trip to Egypt is cancelled. We will never go to Egypt again. We must spend all our energies in warning the people of Jerusalem to repent. As we go forth to sell oil in Jerusalem, we go forth to save. If even one soul turns to God, it will be worth all."

"Worth more than the loss of our trade route, Father? How can we earn a living



An artist's drawing of a scribe from a picture in an Egyptian tomb dating 2400 B.C.

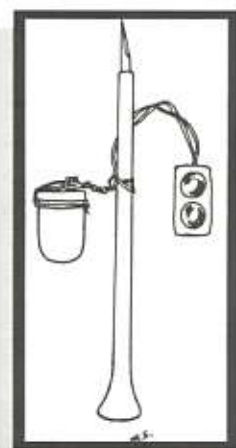
Papyrus (We get our word *paper* from this Egyptian word.) was harder to get and more costly. It looked like woven yellow wallpaper because it was made of crisscrossed sections of inner layers of papyrus reed. Papyrus was plentiful in the swamps along the Nile River in Egypt, but it took time to cut the layers in strips, wet them down, and pound the pieces together into single sheets. These twelve-inch strips could be pasted together into sheets to form scrolls. The Mayans and Aztecs of Central America also made a "paper" in like manner from the inner bark of fig trees.

Nephi might have written on *parchment* (untan-

ned, stretched animal skins), and *stelae*. (*Stelae* is plural for *stela*, a stone monument carved with glyphs to commemorate a famous person or event.) Ancient Egyptians believed that *glyphs* (writings) and faces carved on *stelae* could make the person's spirit live forever. To destroy a person's carved name or nose (source of breath) was to destroy the spirit of the person.

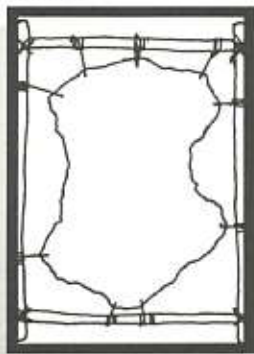
Of course, the most permanent records were made not only on stone monuments with hammer and chisel, but engraved on metal plates or scrolls. Nephi, one of the Book of Mormon writers, used metal plates for recording the religious history of his people. We are sure Nephi appreciated the value of permanent records.

Nephi's Tools



Scribe's kit used during Nephi's time. The kit had a water jar, pen in a container, and ink palette.

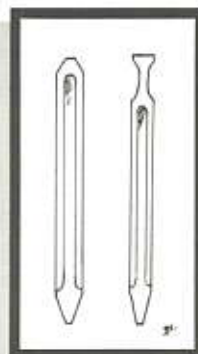
Palette with holes for ink and a place for reed pens or brushes.



Parchment made from stretched, untanned skins of sheep or goats.



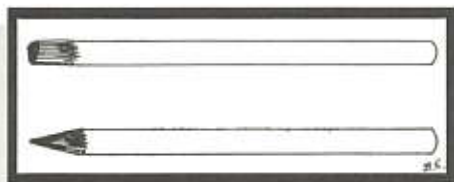
Papyrus strips laid crosswise were wet down, pounded flat, then polished with pumice to make a light-colored writing surface.



Chisels used for stone carving.



Stone stela from Monte Alban in Mexico.



Reed pens and brushes for papyrus and parchment.



Copper scroll like those found at Qumran near the Dead Sea in Israel.



Scroll made from sheets of papyrus glued end to end, about 20 sheets per scroll.

Illustrations by Barbara Schneider

Discovering the Chi in Chiasmus

Viola Velt Presler

Can you solve this riddle? Something old as 2,000 B.C.; something whose discovery is very new; something rare and lovely found in the Bible and Book of Mormon too. What is it?

Give up? If you didn't guess *chiasmus*, don't feel bad. Almost nobody has known about it since A.D. 76, until recently. Yet, it has been hiding in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, as well as in Nephi, Alma, and Mosiah in the Book of Mormon, like a lovely treasure awaiting discovery.

Would you like to be a detective so you would know how to spot *chiasmus*?

First, let us see what *chiasmus* is. *Chi* is the Greek name for the letter X. *Chiasmus* is from the Greek word *chiazein* which means to mark with an X. Can you find the X's in the following verses?

Step 1. Example

Let's draw a line connecting the first word on line one which is the same as the last word on line two. Then connect the second word in line one with the first in line two. The ideas cross, being in opposite order.

Step 2. Your Chi (X)

Now you try one. Draw a line connecting the word *open* on line one with *open* on line two. Then draw a line connecting the word *shut* on line one with *shut* on line two. Did you find the X pattern?

Step 3. Mirror Image

By now you have noticed that *chiasmus* is a writing pattern that can have at least two parts, with the second in reverse order. Sometimes the opposite ideas may not be written on the first line, like in this little Zapotec Indian child's song. The X is still there, only in a different form. We find it by marking the first idea A and the second idea B. Draw a line from A on line one to B' on line three. Draw a line from B on line two to A' on line four.

When *chiasmus* is written like this little song, it shows a *mirror image*. The last two lines are a mirror image of the first two. Notice the important idea — the child wishes her doll could dance (be alive) — is in the center of the chiasm.

Step 4. Pyramid

If ABBA are written on two lines they can also be written like ABBA in four lines. We see there are two ways of writing lines to discover the X in a chiasm. In Figure 2, the top of pyramid (on its side) is the center of the X in Figure 1.

Step 1

But many of the FIRST shall be LAST,

And the LAST shall be FIRST.

—Matthew 19:30

Step 2

So he shall OPEN, and none shall SHUT;

And he shall SHUT, and none shall OPEN.

—Isaiah 22:22

Step 3

Tanguyú (My Clay Doll)

- A My clay doll, my clay doll,
B What wouldn't I give if you could dance,
B' What wouldn't I give if you could dance,
A' My clay doll. . . .

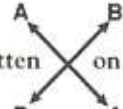
—Covarrubias 1946:376

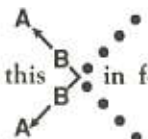
Photo Credit: Don Beebe



Clay dolls from the Mexican state Veracruz. They are 1,000 to 1,400 years old. Will our dolls last that long?

Step 4

If written  on two lines they can also be (Figure 1)

written like this  in four lines. (Figure 2)

without it? We've invested our lifetimes on that route to Egypt!" Laman had found his voice.

"Laman," replied Lehi, "the *only* way to live at all is to depend upon the Lord!"

Abruptly Laman excused himself, with Lemuel tagging behind, blinking.

Nephi also rose. He felt caught between terrible forces. He gripped Sam's shoulder, then turned to walk to the door alone. He grasped his bow and arrow hanging on the ivory rack.

"Tell Mother I will return soon after sundown," he told Sam.

His father stared out over the open courtyard. His face still held the rapture of one who had just seen glory.

I'm too young to perish, thought Nephi. Just when all my hopes were about

to come to pass, this. I might never become a scribe. I might never live to become sixteen, for all I know. Yet what did Father say? "O Lord God Almighty...because thou art merciful, thou wilt not suffer those who come unto thee that they shall perish!"

Oh, the love and mercy in those words! Laman, Nephi knew, would not believe this vision. Was Laman right? Could Father be a victim of his own imagination? If I must die soon, thought Nephi, I would rather not die with a bitter heart like Laman's.

Nephi's head was beginning to clear in the cool evening air.

I would rather be filled with the love of God, like Father, Nephi thought. Had not Father said if only we knew what he knew, had seen what he had

seen, there would be no room for doubt?

"Lord," prayed Nephi, "it is hard to give up my dream to become a scribe, but I don't want Jerusalem to perish. I want to work for you, but I need to see for myself. I need to know. Please show me. If thou wilt speak to my father, wilt thou not also speak to me? I will come unto thee, Lord. I will come unto thee and not perish."

Shifting his bow and arrow onto his shoulder, Nephi turned howeward, a light on his face, ready for the next turn on the path God had set for him.

*The different type style indicates words quoted from the Book of Mormon.

What Writing Tools Did Nephi Use?

Viola Velt Presler

In Nephi's day most Hebrew children probably practiced their lessons on *ostraca* (broken pieces of pottery also called *shards* or *potsherds*.) This was scrap paper they could throw away. Many of these shards, however, still exist. Imagine throwing your scrap paper into the school wastebasket, only to have an archaeologist dig it up thousands of years later!

Nephi probably used a pen or brush carved from a hollow reed to write on *ostraca*. Ink cakes were made by mixing sooty lampblack with sticky sap or vegetable oil with dye. Picture him dipping his brush into water and little cakes of ink on a palette as we use watercolors.

His writing kit of water jar, ink *palette* (board with holes for inks), and reed brushes tied together, was often carried over the shoulder. Many boys stuck their pens over their ears while working.

Drawing of Hesire, an Egyptian royal scribe in 2700 B.C., showing the writing kit worn over the shoulder with water jug and reed brush case tied together.



Illustration by: Barbara Schneider

Step 5. Marking Reverse Order

As you see, chiasmus has been discovered not only in ancient Hebrew, but also in Mesoamerican sources like "My Clay Doll." Here is another. "The Turtles" is a Zapotec nursery rhyme from Juchitán. The first five lines form a complete seven-line chiasm. For each new idea, write a new letter of the alphabet. For the same idea, match it with the same letter given before. Can you see the reverse order, like steps down a pyramid? Now connect the dotted lines to form the X.

Step 6. Discover the Main Idea

Now let's look at the whole song. Draw a line connecting the phrase *big turtles* with all other *big turtles* on the opposite side of the line. Using a different colored pencil, connect every phrase *little turtles* with every other *little turtles* on the opposite side of the line. Where the lines cross to form the center of the X, you will discover the *main point* of the song.

Step 7. Finding Chiasmus in the Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon has many examples of chiasmus. Here is one.

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.
 —II Nephi 12:71-72

Step 8. New Discoveries on Your Own

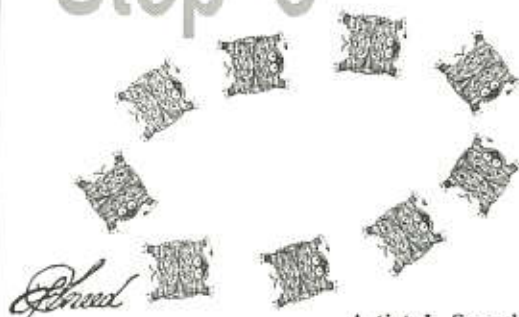
Now see if you can find other chiasms in the Book of Mormon. Not all chiasms are easy to discover. Chiasms can be very complex, hiding inside one another like Chinese boxes, blossoming into chiasmic paragraphs, chapters, even books! You know they are there awaiting discovery.

You have now learned how to spot simple chiasmus. You have learned that it must have at least two parts; that it repeats ideas in reverse order; it can be bigger than two lines; and that the main idea is in the center. Perhaps you have sensed the beauty and balance that chiasmus creates—typical of God's word. You have found the *chi* in chiasmus.

Reference

Covarrubias, Miguel. *Mexico South*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946. "My Clay Doll" and "The Turtles" are used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Step 5



Artist: L. Sneed

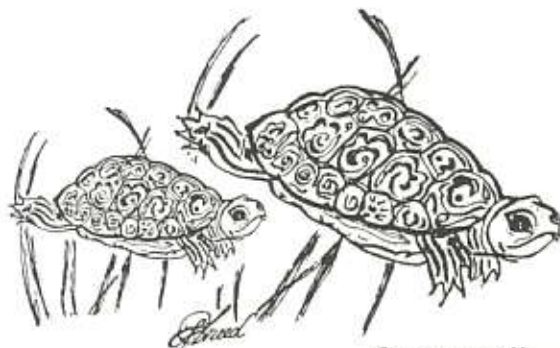
The Turtles

- Δ A PARADE of turtles like a NECKLACE
 — of BIG turtles
 — and LITTLE turtles
 — on the SEASHORE.
 — LITTLE turtles,
 — BIG turtles,
- Δ BIG and LITTLE turtles.
 —Covarrubias 1946:312-313.

Step 6

The Turtles

- A PARADE of turtles like a NECKLACE
 of BIG TURTLES and LITTLE TURTLES
 ON THE SEASHORE.
 LITTLE TURTLES, BIG TURTLES,
 BIG [turtles] and LITTLE TURTLES.
 Oh! WHERE IS THY SON?
 WHERE IS THY SON?
 OCEAN? OCEAN! OCEAN!
 Look at the LITTLE TURTLES!
 Look at the BIG TURTLES!
 WHERE IS THY SON?
 WHERE IS THY SON?
 BIG TURTLES, LITTLE TURTLES.
 —Covarrubias 1946:312-313.



ANSWER Step 6. What did you find? The center of the X is opposite in meaning. Oh, where is thy son, ocean? Ocean! Ocean! It matches the phrase on the seashore in the middle of the first five lines because it is

A gathered, obedient people, working in unity can achieve what no scattered people can do.

(later called Israel) are to be gathered in from all over the world. Joseph's seed (Manasseh and Ephraim) were given inheritances upon this land. Many in the church today in this area are descended from Ephraim. Ephraim inherited the birthright (Jer. 31:9) and was given the special responsibility of Zion's leadership.

Israel includes all other portions of the ten "lost" tribes. Judah, of course, is part of Israel. Judah includes Benjamin and others who affiliated with Judah. They are to be gathered in from among all nations to their inheritances, in the area of the Old Jerusalem, as originally given to Abraham (Genesis 12:6; 13:13-15).

The Gathering of the Church of the Firstborn

God said the gathering of "the general assembly of the church of the first-born" (Genesis 9:23) will take place when men keep all his commandments. Then Zion, the city of Enoch, will come again on the earth (Genesis 9:22-23). Hebrews 12:22-24 describes "the church of the first-born" as "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," "an innumerable company of angels," and "the spirits of just men made perfect," who are to associate with "God the Judge of all. . . and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." The most comprehensive description of the church of the Firstborn is given in D&C 76:5. (See pages 41-43 of *God's Great Gathering* for special thoughts regarding those eligible to be in God's presence.)

Earning Admission to the Celestial Kingdom Is Not Easy

To qualify for a place in the church of the Firstborn in the celestial kingdom requires a lifetime struggle to overcome self and the temptations of the world. The world may offer God-forbidden "pleasures," or, perhaps escape from persecution and death upon denial of Christ. Throughout sacred history, many have been martyred rather than deny their testimony of Christ.

We know that there were many martyrs for Christ in the Jerusalem area. We have no means of knowing how many martyrs there may have been in Enoch's time or among the Jaredites, but there is a record that many suffered martyrdom among the Nephites. The church set up in 1830 has recorded many martyrs for Christ, and so will it be until the time when Christ comes and brings with him those who preferred death to betrayal of him.

Eternal Joy

Mortal man can only glimpse the joys that await those who faithfully withstand the onslaught of the powers of evil and the ushering in of the great gathering of the faithful of all ages, the elect.

What a time of rejoicing that will be! Can we fathom even faintly, the joy of meeting in person and conversing with the saints of all ages? Imagine the thrill of being able to talk with Adam, Enoch, Abraham, Moses, and all the other stalwarts of Bible times! What questions will we

want to have answered? What will we want to learn first? Equally joyous will be our association with all the Book of Mormon characters whom we have admired so deeply—Jared and his brother, Lehi and Nephi, King Benjamin, Alma, and perhaps especially Mormon and Moroni, and many others.

The stalwarts of the latter days, likewise, bring to mind a list which would undoubtedly include Joseph Smith, Jr. and his staunch wife Emma, along with his outspoken mother Lucy, and the beloved Joseph Smith III. The list goes on and on. Each will want to make up his own, including of course, precious members of his own family.

When God holds forth such glorious promises to the faithful, what more is there to say? We appreciate the more, as we think on these things, the appeal of Peter.

**Brethren, give diligence to
make your calling
and election sure.**

—Peter 1:10



References

- Josephus, Flavius. *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, standard ed. Translated by William Winston, A.M. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, n.d.
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- Scriptural References
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God's Great Gathering can be purchased for \$2 from School Of Saints, 520 W. Maple, Independence, MO 64050.

One Eternal Round

Rae Simmons

About three years ago I was offered a challenge. A friend told me he believed there was something to be found in *The Reese Chronological Bible* if he just had the time to search. Then he suggested I might like to read and study it to see if anything came to light. Hesitantly, I took the book and agreed to try. I had no idea what I was looking for.

The Reese Chronological Bible arranges biblical events in interesting outline form and includes dates for major events.¹ Edward Reese, Professor of Bible and History at Hyles-Anderson College, spent over 20 years preparing this useful study Bible. The dating system used by Reese was developed by Frank Klassen presented in his *The Chronology of the Bible*.²

I was drawn to reading "The Life of Our Lord," or New Testament section. There is an orderly flow to the works of Jesus and his travels that I had not noticed before when moving from Gospel to Gospel. I read about the calling of the disciples, and early ministry and miracles of Jesus. Then something caught my attention. Much is heard about the feeding of the 5,000, but shortly after reading the account of this miracle, I came across the feeding of the 4,000 (Matthew 15:30-37 and Mark 8:1-8).³

Having recently spent considerable time studying chiasmus in the Book of Mormon and having this style of writing so fresh in my mind, this second miracle brought me up short. Could this be the reverse cycle of a chiasm? If so, what happened between the two

miracles would have to be the center point. The center point of a chiasm is the most important idea an author is trying to make in the context of that particular chiastic structure. Because this is Christ's life, the center point should be the reason for his having been born in the flesh.

My excitement soared when I realized the major event between the feeding of the 5,000 and the feeding of the 4,000 was our Lord's discourse on the bread of life. Here he tells the people, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). In John 6:51 he says,

I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

With this discovery made, I began to work backward and forward until I had mapped out what I felt were the major points of the chiastic structure of Christ's life. There were five in each direction, beginning with the temple cleansing in the first Passover of his ministry (John 2:13-16) and ending with the second cleansing of the temple during the last Passover of his life, recorded in Matthew 21, Mark 11, and Luke 19.

Other major points before the miracle of the 5,000 include Jesus casting out a devil and being accused of using Satan's power (Matt. 12:18-20), and giving in-

structions to the Twelve (Matt. 10:3-38). Also, he is told Jairus' daughter is sick. He tarries to heal an afflicted woman, then raises the daughter from the dead (Matt. 9:24-31). After feeding the 4,000, Jesus gives instructions to the Seventy (Luke 10:2-12), again casts out a devil, and is accused of using Satan's power (Luke 11:15-16). Then he is told Lazarus is sick. He tarries two days before going and raising him from the dead (John 11:1-44). Jesus was blessed in the temple by Simeon shortly after his birth, and anointed by the woman in the house of Simon, the leper, just before his death.

I spent many hours each day, for several weeks, searching out this pattern and discovered it a fascinating and exciting study. Many other mirror points and interesting repetitions surfaced. They all lead, however, to one conclusion. Our Lord lived his life on earth in a chiastic cycle. This understanding gives new meaning to the Scripture which says, "Neither doth he vary from that which he hath said; therefore his paths are straight and his course is one eternal round" (D&C 2:1c).

¹ Edward Reese, *The Reese Chronological Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1980). For another chronological list of events from Christ's ministry see William Smith, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, revised and edited by Rev. F.N. and M.A. Peloubet (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1884), pp. 802-803. The dates used in Peloubet's dictionary were based on the now discredited Ussher's system. Also see Josiah Blake Tidwell, *The Bible Period by Period* (Nashville, Tenn: Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, 1923), pp. 248-323.

² For an alternative dating interpretation see Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of The Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1977).

³ All Scripture references are to the Inspired Version.

Outline of the Chiastic Structure of Christ's Life on Earth

Jesus blessed in temple by Simeon at 40 days old (Luke 2:25-32)

A First cleansing of the temple - first Passover (John 2:13-17)

B Jesus anointed with ointment by woman who is a sinner
(Luke 7:36-50)

C Jesus casts out a devil from one blind and dumb; is accused
of using Satan's power (Mark 3:17-20; Matt. 12:18-25)

a He is told Jairus' daughter is sick; tarries to heal
afflicted woman; raises daughter from the dead
(Matt. 9:24-32; Mark 5:18-35; Luke 8:41-55)

D Gives instructions to Twelve - take "neither purse, nor scrip"
(Matt. 10:3-12; Mark 6:9-10; Luke 9:3-5)

E Feeding of 5,000 with five loaves (Matt. 14:13-18;
Mark 6:31-46; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-13)

F DISCOURSE ON BREAD OF LIFE (John 6)

E' Feeding of 4,000 with seven loaves (Matt. 15:30-36;
Mark 8:1-8)

D' Gives instructions to Seventy - take "neither purse, nor scrip"
(Luke 10:1-25)

C' Jesus casts out a devil from one dumb; is accused of using
Satan's power (Luke 11:15-24)

a' He is told Lazarus is sick; tarries two days before going;
raises Lazarus from the dead (John 11:1-46)

B' Jesus anointed by Mary with ointment (John 12:2-8)

A' Second cleansing of the temple - last Passover (Matt. 21:10-15;
Mark 11:17-21; Luke 19:44-47)

Jesus anointed by woman in house of Simon the leper (Matt. 26:5-10;
Mark 14:4-9)



I FOUND JESUS IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

Virginia L. Bozarth

When I first read the Book of Mormon, I was surprised to find words and testimonies of Jesus Christ. How could I have lived thirty years without knowing the book existed? I never heard of it until my early twenties, and a friend casually mentioned that the people who attended the church that met in the large domed building in Independence had their own Bible. They called it the Book of Mormon. For a moment I wondered if they believed in God, and if they did, why did they need a Bible other than the King James version?

From my childhood up, I've studied and memorized the Bible. I believe that Jesus Christ is my friend and always near enough to respond to my outstretched hand. My father, mother, and Sunday School teachers helped me develop this faith.

In answer to my prayers, the Lord sent me a young man who believed in God and his Son, Jesus Christ. He was a Saint—a member of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. In my limited understanding, Saints were of another unseen world—they lived and talked with God.

I married this Saint. Several years after our sons were born, the RLDS built a new church building in our town. My husband announced one Sunday morning that he was going to attend this new congregation. He told me I was welcome to come along, or continue going to the church I was then attending. I took our sons, as usual, to the church where they were familiar with teachers and minister.

After a few weeks, I decided this was not good family practice. I would go with my husband the next Sunday and see how Saints looked and worshiped.

Many young families were in attendance, everyone was friendly, and the pastor gracious. I thought their service procedures rather peculiar, especially having three or more up front, instead of only the pastor. Their songs had the old familiar tunes, but the words were different. I had some resentment because they had changed the words.

The Book of Mormon was quoted and mentioned often. This aroused my curiosity. I decided to read it and see, if like the hymns, the Scriptures had been changed. If I found conflict between the Book of Mormon and the King James Bible, then I would never accept the Book of Mormon as Scripture.

I read the Book of Mormon in one sitting. Many passages seemed familiar; some more clearly explained those I had found puzzling in the Bible.

Throughout the book, Jesus and his teachings were apparent. Nephi wrote of Christ saying,

Ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ. . . . Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. . . . Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do.

—II Nephi 13:29; 14:3-4

I think now as I thought then that these words are beautiful. Into my mind came the hymn "Beautiful words, wonderful words, wonderful words of life." We sang this many times while I grew up in the Baptist church. "Feast upon the words of Christ" are words of life.

As I read further, other portions were inspiring and continued to talk of Jesus. Alma's teachings were the words of God and his instructions to his sons are as valid today as when they were first spoken. To one of his

three sons he said,

There is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only in and through Christ. Behold, he is the life and the light of the world. Behold, he is the word of truth and righteousness.

—Alma 18:11-12

Jesus's appearance on this continent was thought-provoking. His teachings to the people of the Book of Mormon were consistent with those in Matthew. The description of the communion service was in accordance with what I had been practicing; taking communion only after baptism.

I read the Book of Mormon three times in one week. The first time to find out if it contradicted the Bible; the second time to be sure I read what I thought I had read; and the third time because I was making many of the passages part of my life.

After reading and studying the Book of Mormon, I proceeded to obtain everything I could on the Book of Mormon: tracts, books, papers, maps, etc. I checked out all the books in the library on Mormonism, both pro and con. After reading for several months, I began studying ALL religions and their origins.

Three years after I first read the Book of Mormon, I was baptized. Since that time I have taught Book of Mormon truths in many classes of both youth and adults in our congregation and other congregations. When the situation is favorable, I bear witness of the book's truthfulness to nonmembers and give missionary copies of the Book of Mormon to those who are interested.

The Spirit confirms to me Book of Mormon truths, and my belief has not changed. The Book of Mormon is a "marvelous work and a wonder." No man can ever make it otherwise. In my estimation, it is the most remarkable book ever printed.

When friends and acquaintances ask me why I joined the RLDS church, I share my testimony — that I found Jesus in the Book of Mormon.





Photographers Barbara and Barent Eliason pose for a picture on the pinnacle of the largest pyramid in the world, Cholula.

Lyle Smith

God Answers Prayers

Barbara Eliason

I was raised with the Book of Mormon, and have always loved its stories since my childhood. My desire grew, after teaching several Book of Mormon classes, to visit the land myself. I never dreamed it would become a reality, especially after I married a dairy farmer, Barent Eliason, in 1976.

Brother Charles Hield came to Sandusky, Michigan in 1980 to give a week of beautiful slides about the Book of Mormon. Again, I wished I could see for myself. In the meantime, we started receiving *The Witness*, which only added further to my desire.

Some of our closest friends went on a Book of Mormon trip to see the ruins in Mexico. Then, Don Beebe, who is like a brother to me, went on a tour of the ruins in 1987. At that time I asked, "Lord, when is it my turn?"

Don made a video of slides taken from his trip to Mexico. When I saw them, I cried. Don asked me, "Why don't you go on the next tour?" One was scheduled in November — harvesttime. We are farmers, and it is not possible to leave while harvesting crops. My heart sank, and I said, "Don, there's just no way I can go!"

I returned home and had a little talk with the Lord. "It's up to you God. You know how I feel, and I'm giving the situation to you. If you want me to go, it will work out."

One Wednesday in October, for some unknown reason, a brochure came in the mail from FRAA telling about a Book of Mormon tour. My heart was pounding when I read it. I asked God what I should do. That night, He guided me to give the brochure to Barent. I said, "Don't say no; read it and ask God what we should do."

Sunday night, Barent completely surprised me by saying, "I feel the time is right for us to see the Book of Mormon lands." Later I discovered that he, too, had wanted to make the trip for years!

I'll never forget the fullness of my heart as I cried and thanked God at the same time. I immediately called the Beebe family and found out that not only Don was going on this same trip, but also his wife Pat, and daughters Jill and Lynne.

From the time we started until the day we said goodbye, I could feel God's Spirit. At our communion service in Veracruz, I felt we had a mountaintop experience of

oneness with God. We could feel God's love flowing through all seventeen of us as we sang, shared prayers and testimonies, and partook of the communion. Tears fell as I heard Sherrie bear testimony that she had asked God to choose those he wanted to go on the tour to see the Book of Mormon ruins.

As I visited with our group throughout the eight days, I learned each could bear the same testimony that Barent and I have. We were privileged to visit the Land of Promise, and God blessed us abundantly with his Spirit. He answered all our prayers.

I came home more excited and eager to learn. I realized I've only scratched the surface of study about the Book of Mormon. My desire is to gain a deeper understanding of the Scriptures so I can help others who seek to follow the straight and narrow path, clinging to the "rod of iron" trying to reach the "tree of life."



Led by Lyle and Sherrie Smith, the Mexico Mysteries tour group gathers for a photo on the rooftop of Hotel Puerto Bello in Veracruz following a prayer, testimony, and communion service on New Year's morning.

Lyle Smith

Emergence of the Nephite Record

Roy Weldon

In the last issue of *The Witness*, biblical hints and whispers were explored about two holy cities and their locations. This study continues.

Having noted glimpses, whispers, and clues in the Bible pointing westward to an ensign and standard in the New World, we are now ready for the count-down. Whisperings from the Bible westward would be of little consequence unless there were whisperings in New World writings and traditions pointing eastward across the sea to the Old World.

The first documentation comes from the *Popul Vuh* (Recinos 1950:79-80), a sacred book written by an unknown but highly educated Quiché in the sixteenth century from oral traditions among the Quiché.

This we shall write. . . we shall bring it to light because now the *Popul Vuh*, as it is called, cannot be seen any more, in which was clearly seen the coming from the other side of the sea. . . . The original book, written long ago, existed, but its sight is hidden to the searcher and to the thinker (emphasis added).

(Hidden in Hill Cumorah? A faint whisper?)

They pulled up stakes there and left the East. . . . When they came from the East, and with the same hope they left there, from that great distance, according to what their songs now say (emphasis added).

—Recinos 1950:181

The East is mentioned 24 times in the *Popul Vuh* in relation to the origins of the Quiché. We come now to a most tantalizing glimpse and faint whispering of a holy city.

There in Tulán-Zuiva, whence they had come they were accustomed to fast . . . when they were there in the place called Tulán-Zuiva, whence came their God.

—Recinos 1950:180

Tulán, used 15 times in the *Popul Vuh*, relates to where the forefathers came from across the sea. An indepth, scholarly study of Tulán and a holy city in the New World is addressed in *The Toltecs Until the Fall of Tula* by Nigel Davies. A blend of documentary sources and archaeological records, this book gives a history of the Toltecs.

Davies (1977) comments:

Last but not least comes the greatest enigma, the four Tuláns of the *Annals of the Cakchiquels*. The *Annals* tell in general terms of the arrival of the ancestors of the tribe at Tulán, on the other side of the sea (i.e. going from west to east). It then mentions the existence of four Tuláns, "one in the east, one in the west, one in Xibalbay, and one where god resides," that is to say the sky (38).

The *Anales de los Cakchiqueles* frequently refer to Tulán Zuiva as lying in the east, across the sea, and the *Popul Vuh* also implies that it lay toward the east (192-193).

Leaving aside the heavenly Tulán (where the god resides) and the Tulán of the nether regions, there still remains the two Tuláns "across the sea," one lying east and the other in the west (39).

Daniel G. Brinton (1882:145-

146), a noted University of Pennsylvania authority on Indian traditions, writes:

[The Mayas] claimed their ancestors came from distant regions in two bands. The largest migration. . . was from the East, across, or rather through, the ocean. . . . The second band . . . came from the West. . . . The former was called the Great Arrival; the latter, the Less Arrival.

Archaeologists have difficulty with several Tuláns, and Davies tries to identify both Tuláns in different places in Mesoamerica. The Nephite record, however, clears this up with a history of two colonies of Hebrews coming to the New World - one crossing the Pacific (Nephites) and a second colony (Mulekites) crossing the Atlantic. The two Tuláns tradition imply one from the East (Mulekites) and one from the West (Nephites). Both suggest reference to biblical Jerusalem in Israel.

Book of Mormon Witnesses a New Jerusalem in the New World

So far we have looked at whisperings from the Bible and writings from Mesoamerica about holy cities. It's now time to turn to the Nephite record as written by Moroni (Ether 6:2-6).

After the waters had receded from off the face of this land, it became a choice land above all other lands, a chosen land of the Lord. . . it was the place of the New Jerusalem, which should come down out of heaven, and the holy sanctuary of the Lord. Behold, Ether. . . spake concerning a New Jerusalem upon this land; and he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come; after it should be

destroyed, it should be built up again a holy city unto the Lord; wherefore it could not be a New Jerusalem, for it had been in a time of old, but it should be built up again, and become a holy city of the Lord; and it should be built up unto the house of Israel; and that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph.

Moroni writes of three holy cities: one in Israel, one in the New World, and the heavenly Jerusalem. The Bible names two Jerusalems: the modern one in present as well as ancient Israel and the one in heaven recorded in Revelations 21:2.

Truth Shall Spring out of the Earth

(Psalm 85:11)

Robert Silverberg (1962: 132,133)
says:

We know less about the Mayas than we do about the Aztecs and the Incas—and we know far less about all three peoples than we do about the Babylonians and the Assyrians. Yet work is continuing, and there is always the hope that a new Mayan book of chronicles will come to light . . . This is the dream of every archaeologist who ventures into Central America—that he will discover a scrap of ancient paper with the annals of Mayadom on it. . . . The key to the Mayan riddle may turn up next week, next month, next year—or 20 years from now (emphasis added).

Could the hope of a new Mayan book of chronicles eventuate in a glorious fifth gospel bringing to the fore the Prince of Peace—with whom is endless hope and without whom is only hopeless end?

Could the dream of every archaeolo-

gist who ventures into Central America end up with an unearthing that will launch the Nephite record into the full limelight of world recognition?

Could the key to the Mayan riddle be the key that along with the Bible opens the gate to the biblical highway to the grand finale of the ages described in Isaiah 11:9? "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

Growing Together to Confound

The Nephite record in II Nephi 2:20-21 contains a potent proph-

ecy: And that which shall be written by the fruit of thy loins [Book of Mormon], and also that which shall be written by the fruit of the loins of Judah [Bible], shall grow together, unto the confounding of false doctrines, and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace among the fruit of thy loins.

Emergence of the authenticity and historicity of the Nephite record will have a staggering impact on the entire structure of modern civilization. Emergence of the Nephite record from tantalizing glimpses and faint whispers into the full limelight of authentic history would forever be a final, unimpeachable second witness to the resurrection and divinity of our blessed Savior.

For centuries the Bible has had to stand alone as the sacred, holy book of the Old World (the book of Judah). My consultation with an attorney indicates that emergence of the testimony of the Nephite record into the court of world opinion would multiply, fortify, and substantiate the testimony of

the Bible as scarcely anything has done since Golgotha. The coming forth of a sacred, holy book, the book of Joseph, from the New World would astound theologians, silence agnostics and atheists, and bring to naught the wisdom of the wise (Isaiah 29:26) on a scale scarcely known in all history; thus, fulfilling Nephi's prophecy about the records of Joseph growing together with the record of Judah "unto the confounding of false doctrines, and laying down of contentions, and establishing peace" (II Nephi 2:21).

Again, Isaiah 2:2-4 zeroes in our wild, mad twentieth century and gives hope.

For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.... Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Fulfillment of this prophecy will be the most precious, most priceless, most blessed event in modern history! The accumulated golden treasures of Atahualpa, and Moctezuma (Montezuma) and the Spanish Main pale into utter insignificance before the golden spiritual, financial and economic treasures of a world free of war.

This series will conclude in the next issue.

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FRAA's first sponsored tour (See page 13 inside.) included a visit to the magnificent museum—Museo de Antropología—at Jalapa, Veracruz, Mexico. Jalapa, known as the "Athens" of Mexico, is a beautiful flower-filled cultural center with friendly, gracious people. The museum has many Olmec artifacts creatively exhibited, especially the larger monuments which sit in sumptuous gardens surrounded with indigenous flora.

This pottery figurine was discovered at a site in central Veracruz called Nopiloa, Nahuatl for "Place of Prince." The intricate details of its garment can be seen in the mold which stands next to it. The arms and earrings are movable. According to the former museum director, Fernando Winfield Capitaine, who is now the dean of the Universidad Veracruzana, this piece dates from A.D. 500-800. A photo in the Junior Witness shows other figures from the same place and time.

Anyone planning a trip to Mexico should include a visit to this splendid museum.



Photo Credit: Don Beebe

The Witness

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