

The Witness

The Foundation For Research On Ancient America



Summer 1990

Number 69



Maya Buds of Promise

The Witness

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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.

Articles and the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the view of the Editorial Committee. Unsigned articles are attributable to the editor.

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Cover...

These irresistible Maya twins sell handwoven textile bracelets at the Guatemala City airport. With a sweetness of spirit and countenance, they quickly endeared themselves to the FRAA tour group. Delores Wieners holds one of these buds of promise. "Before the great day of the Lord shall come... the Lamanites shall blossom as the rose" (D&C 49:5a).

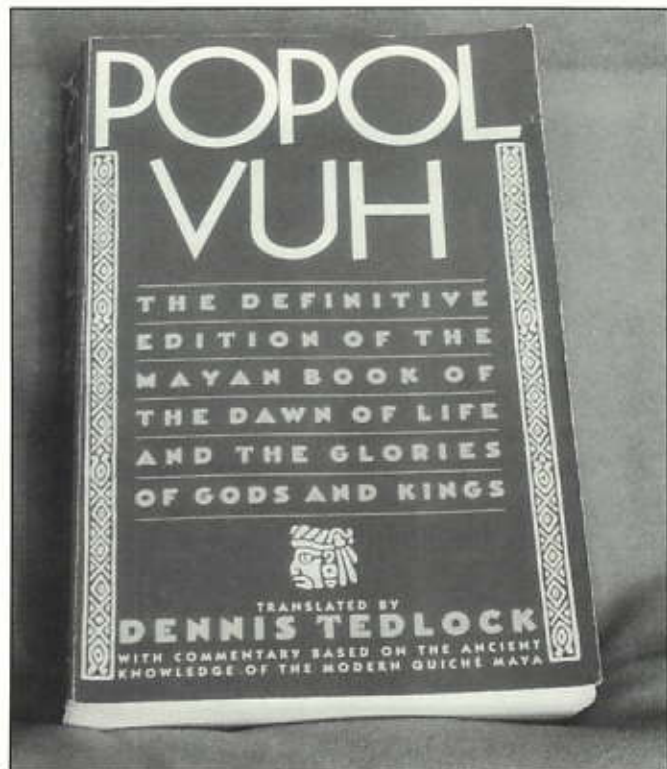
Photo by Lynne Beebe.

Popol Vuh

A recent acquisition for the FRAA Research Library is the Dennis Tedlock translation (1985) of the *Popol Vuh*, the "Mayan Bible." This sensitive and precise translation is considered superior to the well-known one by Recinos, Goetz, and Morley. Michael Coe, Professor of Anthropology at Yale University, comments, "There

have been many translations of the *Popol Vuh*; this is not only the best and most authoritative, it is also the most readable."

Hebraic literary patterns similar to those in the Book of Mormon appear most apparent in this version. For example, a look at the "Contents" clearly shows the repetitive use of "and" as a standard opening for new sections.



Contents...

Ministry Among the Navajo "Whoso Desireth to Reap" <i>Vernes Collins</i>	4
Scripture Study Times of the Gentiles <i>Vivian Sorensen</i>	8
Testimonies Translated by the Power of God <i>Manuel Castillo</i>	11
Copan Carvings Depict Nephite/Lamanite Warfare Methods <i>Sherrie Kline Smith</i>	12
Archaeology Royal Fifth <i>Lyle L. Smith</i>	14

Foundation News

Annual Meeting

"This testimony is true," Heather Smith declared decisively in her role as Katherine Smith, sister of Joseph the Martyr. A good spirit accompanied her presentation and ministered to those attending the FRAA annual meeting on March 25.

Doug Smith brought Oliver Cowdery alive in an outstanding monologue performance, and Lyle Smith and Don Beebe showed slides from the FRAA sponsored tour to Guatemala producing poignant moments and laughter.



Michael Gatrost presided at the meeting which opened with an invocation by Fred Weddle and the singing of "The Old, Old Path" in memory of Thelona Stevens. Items of business included a report to the membership about the preceding year's activities and the election of Sherrie Smith to fill a board vacancy. A special board meeting will convene soon to elect officers for the coming year. A report of those chosen will appear in the next issue of *The Witness*.

Search Continues for Headquarters Building

The need for a headquarters building concerned past president Thelona Stevens to the very end. In the previous issue of *The*

Witness, in the article "Tributes to Thelona," Michael Gatrost related how one of her last requests regarded progress being made in finding a place for FRAA.

Over the past couple years, board members have searched for a suitable facility for offices, the library, video production, and storage. Many possible locations have been examined, but nothing matching the Foundation's financial capabilities with the type of needed space has materialized.

The FRAA board beseeches concerned members to pray that the Foundation may acquire an appropriate place. Also, those wishing to make a specific donation to the Foundation's building fund may do so by sending to FRAA Building Fund, 410 N. Pleasant, Independence, MO 64050.

Regional Conference at Texas

Make plans to attend the Texas Regional Spend a Day With The Book of Mormon conference on July 14. Registration begins at 9:00 A.M. at the Roadway Inn, Arlington, Texas, midway between Dallas and Fort Worth. For more information, contact Michael Gatrost at 9201 Cyclone School Rd., Lee's Summit, MO 64064 (816) 525-6391.

Research Library/Archives

The FRAA library continues to receive gifts. In the past year, the library received approximately 500 books, periodicals, and pamphlets. Major contributors included Lee W. Updike, Scottie Wilcox, Leon and Lillian Black, Linda Trimble,

and Pearl Pement. In addition to gifts, acquisitions of over 60 to 70 titles of recent publications augmented the collection.

One of the main purposes of the library is to provide answers whenever possible to questions relating to the Book of Mormon in any situation. For instance, a recent caller was searching for a particular book mentioned by Roy Weldon in one of his articles. Another asked where he could find information about the legendary land of FuSang.

The library exists to help track down elusive facts and guide inquirers to the right sources. The next time you have a question about any area of the Book of Mormon, call Sherrie Smith, (816) 229-5192.

Helaman's Two Thousand

Close to 900 people have chosen to become a part of the latter day Helaman's Two Thousand. We recognize, though, that not everyone can contribute financially on a regular basis. We ask your prayers for the witness of Christ through the Book of Mormon done by the Foundation. Pray that our latter day army grows stronger in the service to the Lord.

For those who can, we invite you to join Helaman's Two Thousand and contribute on a regular basis. Please indicate if it is to be monthly or one time. If monthly, you will receive 12 envelopes for the year. Your contributions, and God's blessings, make this witness go forward. Send your gift to FRAA, 410 N. Pleasant, Independence, MO 64050 TODAY!

Calendar

July 14, 1990
9:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.

Texas Regional Spend A Day With
The Book of Mormon
Roadway Inn, Arlington, Texas

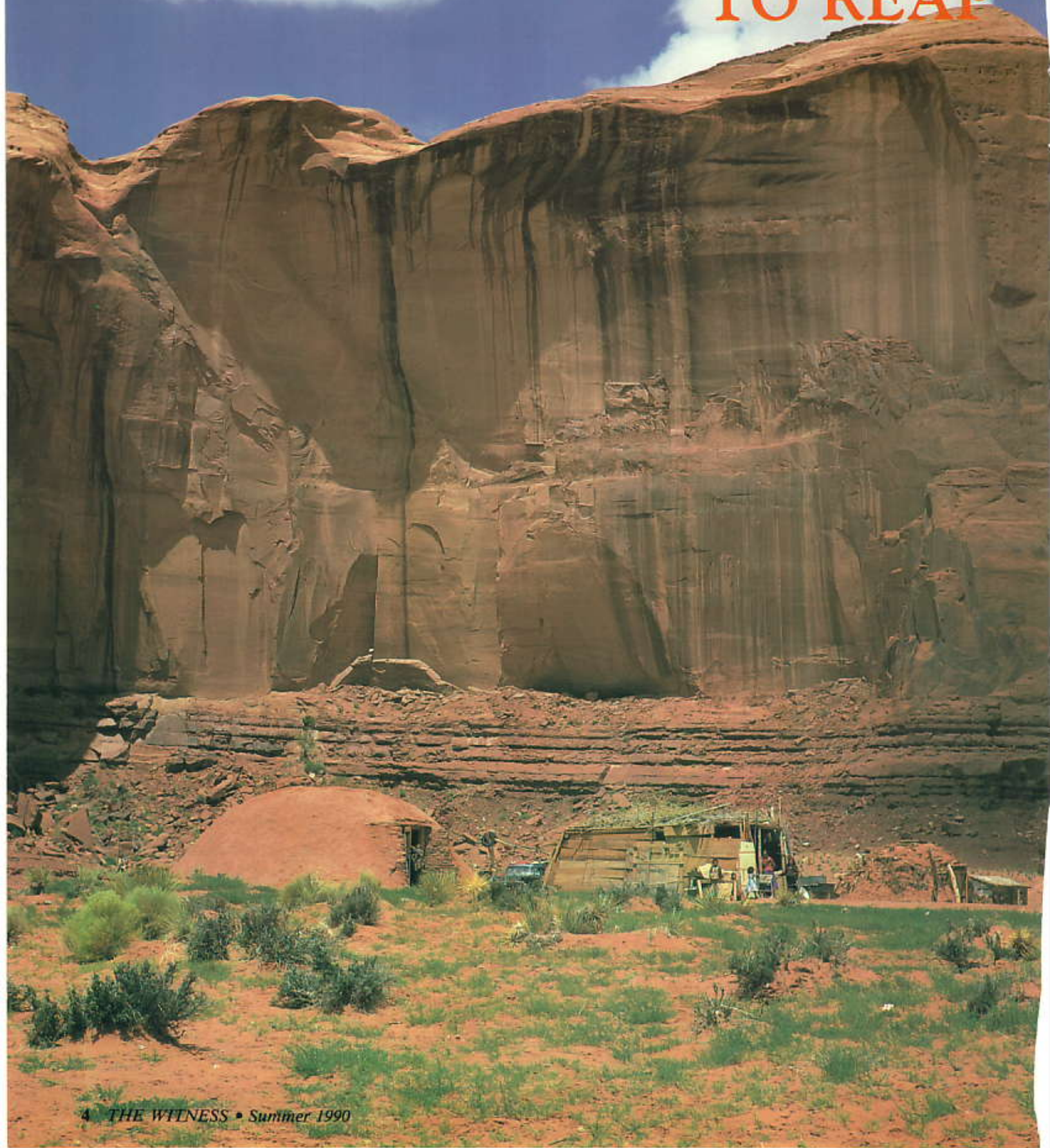
August 10-19, 1990

Guatemala Tour II

December 22-
January 1, 1991

Gulf Coast Tour

WHOSO DESIRETH TO REAP



Vernes Collins

Excerpts from talk at the fifth Spend a Day with the Book of Mormon conference, September 30, 1989.

Greetings from Pinon, Arizona. It's a joy to be here with you to share these few moments together as we talk about techniques of ministry among native Americans, especially the Navajo peoples; and specifically about the use of the Book of Mormon in mission work with the American Indian.

How shall we minister to native Americans? How shall we minister to *anybody*?

In many of the early revelations to the church, we were given such counsel as this:

Behold, the field is white already to harvest, therefore, whoso desireth to reap, let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation (emphasis added).

—D&C 6:2a

The Lord also said, "Whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is *called of God*" (emphasis added) (D&C 6:2b). A *desire* and a *thrusting* is related to salvation.

And then Section 11:4 tells us we must be *humble* and *full of love* to qualify to assist the Lord in this work.

Let's reflect a moment to the year 1830 and the establishment of the Restoration. Only five months after its organization, the church was called to minister to the Lamanites. Addressed to Oliver Cowdery, the Book of Mormon scribe, Section 27:3a and b says:

I say unto thee that thou shalt go unto the

Lamanites, and preach my gospel unto them; and inasmuch as they receive thy teachings, thou shalt cause my church to be established among them.

Later, in Sections 29 and 31, Peter Whitmer, Parley P. Pratt, and Ziba Peterson are called to join Oliver on his missionary journey.

Paul records in Romans 10:15, "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" I think from the five-month old church until now, and on into the future, those who would minister must be sent. A calling and a desire, though, precedes the sending—"I want to go. I want to serve. I want to do what the Lord wants done. Use me Lord. All credit, all values ascribe to thy holy name."

I believe one does best when he has a burden for the Lamanites. Then he won't teach just as the scribes, but will teach as one having authority.

There is something about this business of being sent, and there is something about the sense of urgency that the Lord placed in the founders of the church to take the gospel to the Lamanites.

An account of the first missionary effort to the Lamanites can be read in *RLDS Church History*.^{*} Oliver concludes by saying,

Thus ended our first Indian Mission, in which we had preached the gospel in its fullness, and distributed the record of their forefathers among three tribes. . . . We trust that at some future day, when the servants of God go forth in power to the remnant of Joseph, some precious seed will be found growing in their hearts, which was sown by us in that early day (emphasis added).

Think about that!

As we turn our attention to techniques of ministry among native Americans, let's look at what Oliver did. First, he went to the Indian leaders. Second, he gave them a synopsis of the emergence of the Book of Mormon: the miraculous history of its coming forth, the buried plates, and the translation.

He referred to God as the Great Spirit, which, of course, the Book of Mormon does in several places. He stressed that the Great Spirit was the author of the book.

Oliver used the Book of Mormon in contradistinction to the Bible. His technique was to employ the Book of Mormon as an instrument in missionary work. Is there any merit in this kind of approach to native Americans?

Paraphrasing Section 2, the Lord tells us that as the knowledge of a Savior has come unto the world through the testimony of the Jews—the Bible, even so shall the knowledge of a Savior *come* unto the Lamanites *through* the testimony of their fathers—the Book of Mormon.

The Lord tells us the Lamanites are to receive their testimony of the Savior from the Book of Mormon, in contradistinction to the Bible. I'm not taking anything away from the Bible, but the Lord says *this is their* message. Let them get their knowledge of Jesus from this book,

that they may believe the gospel and rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ, and be glorified through faith in his name, and that through their repentance they might be saved.

—D&C 2:6e

^{*}*The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 8 vols. (Independence, Missouri: Herald House, 1967). 1:180-183 (hereafter cited as *RLDS Church History*).

The Book of Mormon is an *instrument of salvation* to the Lamanites.

Section 3:10c continues with **this work, does contain all those parts of my gospel which my holy prophets [ancient American prophets], yea, and also my disciples [ancient American disciples], desired in their prayers, should come forth unto this people.**

Thus, the Lord tells us that the Book of Mormon is an instrument for ministry among the Lamanites in this age because the prophets and disciples of antiquity asked God for that kind of blessing. Mormon wrote:

My prayer to God, is concerning my brethren, that they may once again come to the knowledge of God; yea, the redemption of Christ; that they may once again be a delightful people.

—Words of Mormon 1:12

This—a prayer of blessing pronounced on that record from the mouth of the prophet Mormon.

Then, the title page of the Book of Mormon gives the purpose of the book as being an abridgment written to the Lamanites, Jews, and Gentiles, but especially to the Lamanites to show them, as a remnant of the house of Israel, what great things the Lord has done for their fathers. That they may know the covenants of the Lord. That they may not be cast off forever. That they may be convinced of the divinity of Jesus the Christ, the eternal God, manifesting himself unto all people. Our real purpose is not just to present a book, but to present the Savior found in the book.

When we first went to the mission in Pinon in 1964, I think I had the attitude, I'm going among people who don't know the name

of Jesus Christ. I'm here to tell them. It was a bad attitude, and took me a long while to realize it. I came to learn that although we went there to introduce Jesus Christ, Jesus was way ahead of us. He'd already made marks there. It took awhile to see that, but those marks were there.

To share this testimony of Jesus Christ as found in the Book of Mormon with the Lamanites, we need to know more about them. What kind of people are the native Americans? Over the 25



years Lola, my wife, and I have served with the Navajos, I've made some observations.

Indians glory in the past: ancestors, culture, customs, traditions. Legends mean a great deal to all of them, even the young. They are a proud yet earthy people. They talk a great deal about respect and want you to respect them. They are survivors, a hardy people acquainted with hardship. They are religious about the land and very territorial—this is *my* land. But they don't own it, because how can anybody own their mother? They talk about Mother Earth.

How do we, then, approach these people with the gospel? When we go to the reservation, we're viewed with suspicion and some hostility. What do we do to overcome this?

First, we need to look at ourselves. Much of what I have

learned while working with the Indians came by doing the wrong thing. One of the lessons I learned is not to be abrupt. We used to rush into the hogan, say, "How are you brother and sister," and start the service. I didn't realize how rude I was being. I thought I was just making good use of my time.

Indians view time differently than we do. They don't worry about watches and clocks or calendars. It's cycles: sunup, sundown, seasons. For example, I've taken Navajo kids home after being away for a semester. It's intriguing to see this child approach mom and dad, whom they haven't seen for three or four months. They don't speak, they don't wave. They just kind of mingle, and then, after maybe five or ten minutes, may shake hands.

You can imagine my reception as I used to rush in among these people saying, "Could you sit down, please. Let's have an invocation. I want to read you a scripture. I want to tell you the gospel." Now, we never hurry our approach, but enter the hogan, sit down, maybe smile; we might look around.

We can't impose our time orientation on them. They resist it. We learned to wait, to listen, to be humble, to be respectful, to be patient, even to be long-suffering. I think Paul sums it up well in Galatians 5:22 when he writes about the fruits of the Spirit: love, patience, joy, long-suffering. These qualities do well in ministry among the native Americans and bring acceptance. When you're accepted, you'll know it. They will call you by your first name and will be happy to see you.

They expect you to be open, honest, and up front. They won't be open or up front, but they want you to be. They want to see the real you. Then suspicion melts

away, and they'll love you. And when you win their love, you have won something precious.

At one point in our ministry, I felt particularly depressed. Brother Tripp from Nauvoo was with me. We had been ministering all Sunday afternoon, going from hogan to hogan, without any noticeable results. As we drove to the edge of the mesa to descend on our way home, I said, "Lloyd, let's get out of the car, sit here, and think a little bit and pray."

While meditating, I had an inspiring experience. I was asking myself, "What in the world, Vernes, are you doing out here? Go back to Indiana. This is a waste of time."

In this time of soul-searching, welling up deep inside me came these words—I'll never forget them! "These are my people. I love them. These are my people. I love them."

I thought, well, it would take God to love them, and if he loves them and wants me here, I must learn to love them also. It has been a growing experience. At times I wonder what have we been doing for 25 years? In many ways it's hard to see where we have made a dent. Yet, an experience or a blessing comes that will make us rejoice, and we say, "Gosh, it's been worth it!"

An apostle once said, "Indian mission work is hard work." I found out it is true. If you care, if you work hard at it, if you're result oriented—brothers and sisters hear this: the native Americans will break your heart. I promise you. They'll disappoint you. Again and again, I've wanted to wash my hands and leave. But, again and again, I come back to an awareness that God cares about these people, that I have a mission among them, and I want to share that burden.

On the other hand, your heart will be filled with joy as you see

their response in humility. I have seen their childlike humility and responsiveness to the Spirit of God that has been uplifting, and that makes all of it worthwhile.

So, where do we go from here? What have we learned?

That a desire linked with humility, long-suffering, patience, and love, and a thrusting combined with a calling qualifies one for the work. That the Book of Mormon is probably the best, most effective missionary tool we have in laboring with the

Lamanites; that it was blessed for that purpose by the Lord in response to the petition of the ancient prophets and disciples; and that Oliver Cowdery and his brothers used it in their first missionary endeavor.

I pray God that we can use the Book of Mormon as intended and share it effectively; not only with native Americans but with all people. It is a tool unto salvation.

God help us do a better job!



Vernes Collins and his family first settled in Chinle, Arizona, 40 miles east of Pinon, in 1965. Hired by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Vernes taught school at Low Mountain, adjacent to Pinon.

The Lloyd Tripp family from Nauvoo soon joined the Collins family. Both labored faithfully during the formative years of the mission, sharing a witness and ministering with the Pinon Navajos.

In the succeeding years, both schoolteachers and ministers have spent months to years working in the mission with Vernes. In 1987, Vernes was appointed mission pastor, and presently, only he and his wife Lola live on the reservation.

The mission currently has a Navajo membership of 84 and three Navajo priests.

Vernes and Lola encourage professional schoolteachers who feel they would enjoy teaching in a reservation setting and sharing in the mission's ministry to contact Vernes Collins, Box 1174, Keams Canyon, AZ 86034.

Vivian Sorensen

Events happening at an astonishing rate in the Communist countries and elsewhere indicate the times of the Gentiles are almost fulfilled. The way is being prepared and opened for the great missionary effort yet to be among the Gentiles in all nations (see D&C 87:3-4).

Who are the Gentiles? Who are the Jews? What difference exists between them?

Who are the Gentiles can be answered easily. They are not Jews. The Jews used the term Gentile as one of derision for people not of their particular race and religious belief. Gentile also refers to other tribes of the House of Israel in the sense that they are not Jews.

In Romans 9:6ff we find an intriguing statement. "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not *all* Israel which are *of* Israel." That sounds redundant. What does Paul mean here? Reading further,

Neither, because they are all children of Abraham, are they the seed; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise. At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

—Romans 9:7-9

Descendants from Abraham, are not all Israelites in the sense that God uses the term "Israelite." When the Lord speaks of Israel, he refers to his ancient covenant people and also those who become Israel by adoption, even in these latter days.

The Apostle Paul makes this most plain. He said when we are

born again and take upon us Christ—no matter who we are—we become members of the commonwealth of Israel and the seed of promise. Many descendants of Abraham are not Israel, that is, spiritual Israel. The Arab

The most popular theory is that people of the Lost Tribes of Israel are scattered through the northern European nations including Great Britain, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. I believe the tribe of Dan can be found in

TIMES OF THE GENTILES

nations and numerous others living in the Middle East descend from Abraham, but are not of Israel, the covenant people. And those of the covenant who do not accept the gospel become rejected Israel.

The Scriptures say there were twelve tribes of Israel. Ten of the tribes were led away captive into Assyria, northward from Palestine, leaving two. Some people argue two and a half tribes, but for our purpose, ten tribes were led away and two tribes—Judah and Benjamin—remained.

These have been known as Jews. They are Israelites but also Jews, the covenant people of God. Those led away, however, were also Israel and are lost to the historian, being called the Lost Tribes of Israel.

Conjecture abounds about the whereabouts of these lost tribes. Some say they are in Siberia; others proclaim the hollow earth hypothesis, that the lost tribes live there and will ultimately come forth.

Denmark. The Danish people spell it Danmark. The River Danube means the river of Dan, and descendants of Dan probably went into that area as well as in Denmark.

Those who study this question of the Lost Tribes, seem to agree that America and England, or Britain, are mainly composed of Ephraimites.

Joseph, one of the twelve sons, had two boys, Ephraim and Manasseh. These boys were chosen by God for specific purposes. Through Ephraim the gospel would be restored in the latter days and his descendants would be largely responsible for establishing the kingdom. Manasseh's purpose was preserving another witness of the Lord as recorded in the ancient records found in the Book of Mormon.

Ephraim, the younger, received the right hand blessing or richer blessing (see Genesis 48) when Jacob, the blind patriarch, crossed his hands. Joseph thought his father was mistaken and tried to



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LITTLE GREY SQUIRREL

George C. Knotts

Little Grey Squirrel was an Indian boy eight winters old. He and his people lived in the woods in tepees, and depended upon nature for all their food and clothing. If food was hard to find, they would need to move their tepees. It had been many, many years since the tribe had moved, because when the braves would go on a hunt, they always brought back game.

The braves were going on a hunt that very day. Little Grey Squirrel wanted to go with them. His father had shown him how to shoot with the bow and arrows and how to stalk game by walking through the woods without making any noise. His father was a brave. They called him Grey Wolf.

Little Grey Squirrel asked Grey Wolf, "Father, may I go on the hunt with you?"

"No, Little Grey Squirrel," said his father. "You are still too young. Stay home and help your mother."

It was hard to keep his chin from falling on his chest, but Little Grey Squirrel walked over to his mother who was tanning deer hide. He stood quietly watching.

"Little Grey Squirrel," said his mother, looking down at him out of the corner of her eye, "I'm making moccasins for your father. If there is enough buckskin left, I will make a pair for you just like your father's."

A smile lit up Little Grey Squirrel's face. His eyes shone.

"I don't need any help tanning this hide," said his mother, "but here is a basket. Go and gather

some berries for you and your little sister to eat until the hunters return."

His little sister was named Song Bird. Sometimes when she cried, Little Grey Squirrel called her "Crow" because she made a loud noise. He did love his little sister, so he picked up the basket to gather berries to share with her. He knew where the best berries were. I wish I could be with my father on the hunt, he thought. He picked up his bow and arrows, along with the basket.

He had no sooner reached the berry patch on the hill when he heard his mother and the other squaws of the camp yelling. Something bad was in the air!



The Junior Witness Editor Venna Johnson The Witness Editor Sherrie Kline Smith Copyright © 1990 by The Foundation for Research on Ancient America, 410 N. Pleasant, Independence, MO 64050. The Junior Witness is the children's portion of The Witness, a quarterly magazine published by FRAA, a nonprofit corporation comprised of individuals who desire to advance the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon.



What was it? Dropping his basket, he ran to see. When Little Grey Squirrel looked down upon the camp, he saw a big bear carrying something in its mouth. The squaws of the camp went after him, but the bear was too fast for them. As the bear ran along, he came closer to the hill.

Little Grey Squirrel saw that the bear had a young child. The child was crying. Little Grey Squirrel had to do something, fast. He knew the child was in danger, so he started after the bear.

He knew the country because he had played over these same hills many times. When he reached the other side of the hill, he was very careful not to make any noise. If a stick would snap or a leaf should crackle and startle the bear it might hurt the child. Little Grey Squirrel stopped to listen. He could hear the child's cry more loudly now. He knew he was close. The bear had stopped. This was his chance!

Little Grey Squirrel put an arrow in his bow. Before he stood up to shoot the bear, he asked

the Great Spirit to guide his arrow that the child might be saved. Carefully, he aimed the arrow. Pulling the bow back with all of his strength so the arrow might go hard and straight, he shot. Swish! The arrow went flying through the air.

The bear let out a roar, terrible and loud. He tried to run, but fell. The arrow had been well guided. The Great Spirit had helped Little Grey Squirrel to save the child.

Little Grey Squirrel ran down to see if the screaming child was all right. Oh! It was Little Song Bird, his own sister. He was so thankful she was safe, he knelt right there and thanked the Great Spirit for helping him to save her.

Picking her up, he carried her back to the tribe. His mother and all of the squaws of the tribe came to meet him. They were so happy. Some of the squaws even cried. He knew this was very rare among his people.

His mother took Song Bird, gave her a bath, and put her back into her cradle to rest. She didn't leave the cradle unguarded anymore. She carried it with her.

The next morning when Little Grey Squirrel awoke, he found new buckskin clothes near his bed. They were made just like the clothes of a brave. Some of the squaws had made them to show thanks. On the clothes, he found the moccasins his mother had made from the same deerskin as his father's. Little Grey Squirrel put on his new clothes and hurried to express thanks.

The hunters, since they had come in during the night with their game, were preparing a council fire. Little Grey Squirrel couldn't understand why, because they had council fires only when something important was going to happen, like before a big hunt.

Where was his father? He wanted to show him his new clothes. There he was! He started toward him, but two braves stopped Little Grey Squirrel and said, "Come with us."

Little Grey Squirrel's eyes got big and his mouth fell open. He had never even been noticed before, especially by two braves. They took him to the council fire where his father and all the braves were sitting in a circle



Key to Indian Signs on Page 5:

Strength (power)	↖	Swiftness	←	Camp (village)	⊙	Bird	☪	Hunt	⊕	Plenty food	⊕
Good	☺	Alertness	⚡	Man	♂	Chief	☪	Council fire	☀		
Great Spirit	☉	Day	☺	Life	☉						

About the Artist and Author

George C. Knotts knows the Cherokee Indians well because he has a heritage in the tribe. His mother Lola was born (1888) in Indian territory before the land became the state of Oklahoma. An original enrollee of the Cherokee tribe, she attended an Indian female seminary or school. Through his mother, George has voting rights among the Cherokees. His chosen Indian name is Straight Arrow.



Little Grey Squirrel learned that with God's help he could do something he could never do by himself, just like Nephi who, with God's help,

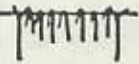


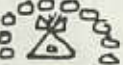










finally obtained the plates from Laban (1 Nephi 1:65-174).

Do you have a testimony of how God helped you overcome your fears in order to accomplish something he wanted you to do?

Please send your testimony to *The Junior Witness* Editor, 410 N. Pleasant, Indep., MO 64050.

Learning Some Indian Signs

Now that you have read the story, "Little Grey Squirrel," you may be able to guess the meaning of fifteen Indian signs which have been used in place of words. Check your answers with the key on page 2.

Little Grey Squirrel and his people lived in the woods in tepees and depended upon nature for all of their . The braves were going on a  that very day. Little Grey Squirrel's sister was named Song . The squaws of the  ran after the bear, but he was too  for them. Little Grey Squirrel pulled the arrow back with all his  so that it would go hard and straight. The hunters, who had come in during the night with their game, were preparing a . All the braves were sitting in a circle with the  at their head. The  that Little Grey Squirrel became Big Bear, he was honored at the  because his  and courage had saved the  for the baby. That day Little Grey Squirrel was honored as a . Only strength and guidance from the  he prayed to gave the young boy power to kill a bear.

PROMISES TO THE INDIAN

THEN SHALL THE FULLNESS OF THE GOSPEL OF THE MESSIAH COME UNTO THE GENTILES, AND FROM THE GENTILES UNTO THE REMNANT OF OUR SEED.

1 AND AT THAT DAY SHALL THE REMNANT OF OUR SEED KNOW THAT THEY ARE OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL,

2 AND THAT THEY ARE THE COVENANT PEOPLE OF THE LORD;

3 AND THEN SHALL THEY KNOW AND COME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR FOREFATHERS,

4 AND ALSO TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOSPEL OF THEIR REDEEMER, WHICH WAS MINISTERED UNTO THEIR FATHERS BY HIM;

5 WHEREFORE, THEY SHALL COME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR REDEEMER,

6 AND THE VERY POINTS OF HIS DOCTRINE, THAT THEY MAY KNOW HOW TO COME UNTO HIM AND BE SAUED,

7 AND THEN AT THAT DAY, WILL THEY NOT REJOICE AND GIVE PRAISE UNTO THEIR EVERLASTING GOD, THEIR ROCK AND THEIR SALVATION?

8 YEA, AT THAT DAY, WILL THEY NOT RECEIVE THE STRENGTH AND NOURISHMENT FROM THE TRUE VINE?

9 YEA, WILL THEY NOT COME UNTO THE TRUE FOLD OF GOD? BEHOLD, I SAY UNTO YOU, YEA: THEY SHALL BE REMEMBERED AGAIN AMONG THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.

©Kurtis



I NEPHI 4:16-23

get him to change his hands, to give the right hand blessing, which is the more important one, to Manasseh the firstborn. But the old gentleman wouldn't budge. He said,

I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

—Genesis 48:25

The Lord called the Americas Joseph's land, and gave it to Joseph's descendants as an everlasting inheritance. This means it includes both Ephraim and Manasseh, because they both descend from Joseph. And that is exactly the situation we find.

Lehi was of the tribe of Manasseh. He and his family were brought by the hand of the Lord to the Americas. Numerous native Americans living today descend from Lehi or the tribe of Manasseh.

Most of the early immigrants of this land were Ephraimites from the British Isles. Although some of the other tribes, not necessarily descendants of Ephraim or Manasseh, also have come to this land. Most, though, descend from Ephraim. That is why, in the great and important work which yet lies ahead of the Church of Jesus Christ, a tremendous missionary call and drive to minister to these people of the House of Israel who live upon this land shall be set in motion.

When Jesus came, he brought the gospel primarily to the Jews. He didn't travel the world to many different nations. Born as a babe, he lived for about 34 years among the Jews, mainly people of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

Some of the Jews accepted Christ. After Christ's crucifixion,

the Apostles went preaching among the Jews in Palestine first, and had phenomenal success for a short time. On the day of Pentecost 3,000 people joined the church. What a day!

But, Acts 13:46 tells us:

Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you [Jews]; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

What a terrible indictment! You have put it from you and you have judged yourselves to be unworthy of everlasting life. I hope you catch the meaning of this. They, by rejecting the counsel of Christ and the gospel of Christ, had judged themselves unworthy to receive everlasting life. So what was the use of going to them anymore and wasting time?

The day of the Jewish Israelite was over. So Paul turned to the Gentiles and became a powerful missionary among them.

And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit and testified to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and he said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads. I am clean; from henceforth I will go to the Gentiles.

—Acts 18:5-6

Paul had much success among the Gentiles. Christianity blossomed, flourished, and continued until about A.D. 570 when the Roman government took over the church. At the time (A.D. 324) of

Constantine, an emperor of Rome, a decree went forth that all of his soldiers had to be baptized whether they were converted or not. Mass baptisms occurred. Without conversion, seeds for apostasy were sown, and heathen rites and rituals began to creep into the church. The church sunk into apostasy and the Dark Ages came over the world.

Following the Reformation movement, the next significant intervention of God toward Israel was in the Restoration. Joseph Smith the Martyr referred to himself as a Gentile, because he was not a Jew. But, he was, I believe, an Ephraimite—an Ephraimite Gentile.

When the Lord speaks of Israel, he refers to his ancient covenant people and also those who become Israel by adoption, even in these latter days.

Joseph made a remarkable statement that in the Kirtland Temple he received a vision of the Christ and then Moses. Moses gave to him and Oliver Cowdery the keys of the gathering of Israel. The remarkable work of the establishment of God's purposes in the last days among the House of Israel began to blossom forth. Missionaries were sent overseas. One, Orson Hyde, was even sent to Palestine. He went upon the Mount of Olives and prayed that the Lord would remove the drought conditions and all privations from the land that it would be fruitful again. And because those keys had been given to Joseph by Moses, and Joseph had

commissioned Orson Hyde, the former and latter rains began to return to the land of Palestine.

When Joseph received his ordination, commission, and the keys, the latter-day work got underway in no uncertain terms. By 1840, ten years later, at least 140,000 to 150,000 people had been baptized! Some estimate at the time of Joseph Smith's death and martyrdom the church had 200,000 members. What *tremendous* spiritual power must have accompanied the preaching of those men.

The people who accepted at this time were Israelites, mainly of the lineage of Ephraim and the chosen seed of Abraham. They were not Arabs. Very few Arabs have ever accepted the gospel because they are the children of the flesh and not the children of the Spirit. The promise is to the descendants of Isaac, the legal and legitimate son.

Today the way is miraculously being prepared for the last enormous missionary effort to take place among the Gentiles; to bind up the law and seal up the testimony against those who will not believe. After this work is accomplished, the Lord will turn to the Jews and the remainder of the House of Israel.

Third Nephi 7:34-36 says:

And thus commandeth the Father that I should say unto you, At that day when the Gentiles shall sin against my gospel, and shall reject the fullness of my gospel, and shall be lifted up in the pride of their hearts above all nations, and above all the people of the whole earth, 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 secret abominations; And if they

shall do all of 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; and then will I remember my covenant which I have made unto thee, my people, O house of Israel, and I will bring my gospel unto them.

This time the Lord talks specifically about the Jews and other members of the House of Israel. In Volume 1, page 549 in *RLDS Church History*, Joseph said the Twelve Apostles were to minister to the Gentiles until the Lord should command them to go to the Jews and the remainder of the House of Israel. I believe this includes the Indians, who are members of the House of Israel. When the Apostles are sent to the Jews, that also will be the great day of the gospel being preached among the remnant of Israel who dwell in this land, who are of the tribe of Manasseh, the native Americans.

This doesn't mean that we shouldn't work among them beforehand. I see, however, the momentous day of ministry to native Americans coming when the Gentiles reject the gospel. Then the Lord shall take it to the Jews and native Americans.

Ephraim has equal claim with Manasseh on Joseph's land.

Then, behold, and lo, they [Apostles] shall turn unto the Jews; and then cometh the day when the arm of the Lord shall be revealed in power in convincing the nations, the heathen nations, the *house of Joseph*, of the gospel of their salvation (emphasis added).

—D&C 87:3c-d

Whenever God has some special new and worthy work, he raises up special men to do it. He raised Lehi for the considerable task of peopling this nation. He raised up Moses, Enoch, Joseph the Martyr, and many others.

Doctrine and Covenants 100:3 has not yet been fulfilled. Some are of the opinion that the one mighty and strong mentioned there was Joseph III. Although Joseph III was a fine man and did a very fine work, I can't see he ever did the work foretold in that scripture.

The one mighty and strong has still to arise. The people of God will know beyond a shadow of doubt by the spiritual power emanating from him and from his words of wisdom and direction which will be in harmony with all Scriptures given before. We shall not have any doubts.

In addition, one is to be raised up among the Lamanites. Some interpret the scripture 2 Nephi 2:45-47 to say this man will lead the saints to redeem Zion. It doesn't say that at all. It says he will do a great work particularly among the Lamanites and lead many of them to the Lord.

Ephraim has equal claim with Manasseh on Joseph's land. Ephraim, the nonrebellious son, received the greater blessing. God chose Ephraim to perform the labor of seeking to bring forth and establish the cause of the kingdom. God will use mainly the descendants of Ephraim, while the Lamanites and others of the tribes of Israel who gather, shall assist the people of Ephraim in the establishment of the city of Zion.

Editor's Note: For further consideration of this topic see "Study Along with Thelona Stevens—A Study in Lineage and Leadership" in *The Witness*, No. 56, January 1987, pages 10-13.



Manuel Castillo



I was born and raised in a remote area of Honduras, Central America far from cities or highways. Through the Lord's intervention, though, I became acquainted with the gospel through the John Blumenschein family. Dr. Blumenschein and his family came to bring not only medical and educational help, but the gospel to our community in the late 1950s.

Dr. Blumenschein died only a year after coming to Honduras and beginning what was later called the La Buena Fe mission. My baptism took place soon after his death, for the Lord prepared the way by giving me experiences which helped me to turn to him. Before I had always been self-sufficient.

In a year's time from my baptism, I was given the opportunity to come to the place of Zion and have lived in Independence thirty years. Many times over those years, I was encouraged to return to my people, but the Lord knew, and I knew, that I was not ready.

I have learned much from the Saints, but learning the English language led me to my sure testimony that the Book of Mormon is divine.

TRANSLATED BY THE POWER OF GOD



Manuel, the first Honduran baptized, willingly helped the Blumenscheins when they first arrived in Honduras.

I have six standard books, three in English and three in Spanish. Over the years, I studied in both languages to learn better the gospel. Gradually, something began to happen that I wasn't aware of at first. I kept being drawn to the English translation even though it was difficult for me to understand and read.

When I realized this, I began to pray for weeks and months to know why. The Lord let me know that because the English Book of Mormon was directly translated by the divine power of God through Joseph Smith, I felt that power when reading it. The Spanish version, although translated to the best of man's abilities, was a translation of men. I am eternally grateful, however, for the brethren who translated the Book of Mormon into Spanish so the work could go forth among my people. For God wills that this record be taken to the remnant of the House of Israel. But the Lord made it so

plain to me that the power lies within the first translation.

Through these blessings of coming to the place of Zion and learning this language, I will be better prepared to help my people understand the fullness of the gospel—and share my testimony of God's power in the Book of Mormon in both languages.

Editor's Note: Manuel Castillo lived in the village of Mogote near the 440 acres purchased by Dr. Blumenschein in Honduras. He became the first Honduran to lend a helping hand to the Blumenscheins by assisting in the construction of a bridge across a stream to allow access to the doctor's newly acquired property. He also was the first Honduran baptized. Read more about the work in Honduras in Marian Blumenschein's *At Home in Honduras* and *Light from the Valley* by Naomi Russell.



Copan Carvings Depict Nephite/Lamanite Warfare Methods



Sherrie Kline Smith

The Chinese called 1989 the Year of the Snake. I called it the Year of Sorrow. Events affecting me and my family filled my soul with grief.

Not all, though, was sadness. Being a part of the FRAA sponsored tour to Guatemala and Honduras in December 1989 brought "oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness" (Isaiah 61:3). Our loving group shared more than just a joyous time. Our spirits and hearts blended in one.

Basically, I am a practical person. When I visit the ruins, that's what I see—ruins; old stones piled on one another. I have little imagination and rarely receive inspired insight about the significance of what I see—but, I love to go anyway. My husband Lyle, on the other hand, can visualize the people who once lived there, hear their laughter, smell the aromas, and see the cities as they once were. On this tour, though, the Lord touched me in an unexpected way.

Copan, a ruin in Honduras, is a paradox. Considered the most architecturally beautiful of the Maya sites, Copan's remaining buildings and stelae, however, testify of bloody warfare, cruelty, sacrifices, and depraved civilization.

This was the only site where we had a local guide who hurried along at a pace faster than we liked. Some of the group got separated as they stopped to take photos. Others wandered on their own. Consequently, only a few of us approached what is called Temple 18 which sits above the "King's Tomb" at the south end of the site.

As I climbed the last few stairs, I heard the guide and several of our group discussing one of the four standing pillars embellished with engravings. The carved warrior's trophies of women's heads hung down his chest. The guide explained that the women lost the battle. Someone asked if he didn't mean the men lost the battle. He said, yes, the men fought the wars, but the women became the victims.

How riveting! As he turned to move on, I pointed out to those in the group that this practice agreed with the Book of Mormon record especially at the end of the Nephite/Lamanite period. Time didn't permit stopping to look this up as we hustled to catch up with the guide, so I promised myself I would reread those passages in the Book of Mormon later.

It wasn't until the next day, while on the highway going to Quiriqua, that the opportunity came to search for those portions. Here's what I read.

And it is impossible for the tongue to describe, or for man to write a perfect description of the horrible scene of the blood and carnage which was among the people; both of the Nephites and of the Lamanites; and every heart was hardened, so that they delighted in the shedding of blood continually. . . . And it came to pass that the Lamanites. . . did take many prisoners, both women and children, and did offer them up as sacrifices unto their idol gods.

—Mormon 2:13-16

I knew another, similar passage existed and at first couldn't find it. Then, I remembered Mormon wrote letters to his son Moroni. Moroni nine, the whole chapter, describes the end events. I quote here only portions.

And notwithstanding this great abomination of the Lamanites, it doth not exceed that of our people in Moriantum. For behold, many of the daughters of the Lamanites have they taken prisoners: and after depriving them of that which was most dear and precious above all things, which is chastity and virtue; and after they had done this thing, they did murder them in a most cruel manner, torturing their bodies even unto death; and after they have done this, they devour their flesh like unto wild beasts, because of the hardness of their hearts; and they do it for a token of bravery (10-11).

And the sufferings of our women and our children upon all the face of this land, doth exceed everything; yea, tongue can not tell, neither can it be written (19).

Sadly, the ways of warfare in the Book of Mormon appear to have continued among the Maya. The ruins of Copan bear mute witness to the brutal savagery of a once enlightened people.

As I read chapters two and three of Mormon and Moroni nine, the words unexpectedly and distressingly came alive for me. Tears streamed down my cheeks, and I was made to cry with Mormon

O the depravity of my people! They are without order and without mercy.

—Moroni 9:17

And

*My soul was rent with anguish,
because of the slain of my
people,
And I cried,
O ye fair ones,
How could ye have departed
from the ways of the Lord!
O ye fair ones,
How could ye have rejected that
Jesus, who stood with open
arms to receive you!
Behold, if ye had not done this,
ye would not have fallen.
But behold, ye are fallen,
And I mourn your loss. . . .
Behold, ye are gone,
And my sorrows can not bring
your return (emphasis added).*
—Mormon 3:18-21

This time in the land of the Nephite/Lamanites, my vision and feelings opened. I felt Mormon's anguish. I felt the Lord's anguish as he cried

*O Jerusalem! Jerusalem!
. . . How often would I
have gathered your children
together, even as a hen
gathers her chickens under
her wings, and ye would
not.*

—Matthew 23:37

The Lord wept over Jerusalem, and he wept over the fallen Nephite nation (3 Nephi 4:55-59), as he weeps over all who turn from him.

In that, my Year of Sorrow, the Lord allowed me to keenly suffer sorrow for the destruction of the Nephite nation. I knew the story and facts before. We all are aware of the happenings at the end of the Book of Mormon. But now, I was no longer a concerned bystander. I actively and empathetically comprehended.

A couple days later, several of us met in one of the hotel rooms for administration. Following the laying on of hands, we sang several hymns, one of which was "Unto God Who Knows Our Every Weakness." In the glow of the Holy Spirit that abundantly filled the room, I shared my ex-



Pat Beche



Don Beche

Close-up of the northwest pillar exhibits the trophies of war. Several women's heads, hanging upside down, adorn this carved warrior and witness to Nephite/Lamanite warfare ways of sacrificing women. The most discernible head can be seen in the middle. The one slightly above is half missing.


Temple 18 at Copan, Honduras situated at the south end of the site.

perience. When I finished—and with the words *Though the task be great that lies before us. . . Till the word is preached in every nation. . . and We all must help to spread the gospel story fresh in my mind—I said, "We have a lot of work to do to once again bring these people back to a knowledge of the Lord."*

I related this experience on our last night together as we all met to tell what each considered a high-

light of the tour. After I told my testimony, Tyler Crowell spoke up and reminded us that when the angel came to Joseph Smith he told him the Book of Mormon was a record of a fallen people.

The promises to the remnant of this people, however, are great, and I pray that fulfillment comes soon.

For myself, hope is found in the promise "your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16:20). 

ROYAL FIFTH

Lyle Smith

I make a record in the language of my father, which consists of the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians.

—1 Nephi 1:1

Nephi in the first statement of the Book of Mormon, and incidentally the first chiasm in the book, lays down the gauntlet—the language of the record was Egyptian.

A thousand years later, Moroni identifies the writing on the plates as reformed Egyptian. Reformed because it had undoubtedly been changed and altered over the thousand years.

Our own English language while similar is not identical to the Old English of several centuries ago. English too has been reformed or altered and changed not only in appearance but in spelling and vocabulary. See figure 1.

If the Book of Mormon is true, then evidences indicating the use of Hebrew or Egyptian at the required time (through A.D. 400) here in the promised land should be found. Our search primarily focuses on that portion of Central America called Mesoamerica, the area most likely to be the setting of the Book of Mormon.

A recent research report by archaeologist Michael Coe issued by the Center for Maya Research contains information that may support the claims of Nephi and Mormon that the language employed by their people was a type of Egyptian. Coe, of Yale University, gives a fascinating report of events which took place in 1519. It was the time of the conquest. Cortes had landed in what is now known as Veracruz, Mexico. In July of that year, a ship was readied to return to Spain loaded with gifts and plunder from the ongoing conquest. One fifth of these riches would go to King Charles of Spain.

When this Royal Fifth arrived at court, Francisco Lopez de Gomara, the personal secretary to Hernan Cortes in Spain, recorded lists of all the booty. Needless to say, the description of gold, silver, and other riches amazed and astounded those who read of it.

To us, however, four books which were among the gifts may be the real jewels. These books have since been lost, although Coe points out that one possibly could be the now famous Dresden Codex.

Also, in his article "The Royal Fifth: Earliest



From an engraving by Ferdin Selma after the painting by Titian in the frontispiece of Fernando Cortes: His Five Letters of Relation to the Emperor Charles V translated and edited by Francis Augustus MacNutt, Volume I. This two-volume work, printed in 1908 by the Arthur H. Clark Company of Cleveland, was a gift to Charles Hield from Melville Magargee in 1966. The FRAA Research Library/Archives received these valuable books among the collection donated by Charles Hield.

MacNutt also translated Peter Martyr's work mentioned in this article. Published in 1912 in two volumes by G. P. Putnam's Sons, it was called De Orbe Novo: The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr D'Anghera. If any of our readers have these two volumes and would consider donating them to the FRAA library,

Notices of Maya Writing," Coe suggests the books included with the Royal Fifth most likely were acquired on the east coast of Yucatan and therefore written in the Maya language, not the Mexican language of west Mexico. If so, they were the first, and if still in existence, the oldest examples of Maya hieroglyphs in book form.

What hasn't been lost, however, are the accounts detailing these books, what they were made of, and descriptions of their letters and characters. Gomara recorded in his inventory of the Royal Fifth,

They also put with these things some books of figures, which the Mexicans use for letters, folded like cloths, [and] written all over. Some were of cotton and paste, and others of agave leaves which serve as paper, something worth seeing.

—Gomara quoted in Coe 1989:1

Another member of the court, Giovanni Ruffo de Forli, Archbishop of Cosebza, wrote a personal letter in 1520 which gives more details about the appearance of the writing in the books.

I had forgotten to say that there were some paintings of less than a hand-span all together, that were folded and joined in the form of a book, [that being] unfolded, stretched out. In these little paintings there were figures and signs in the form of Arabic or Egyptian letters which over here they have interpreted as their letters.

—Ruffo quoted in Coe 1989:4

Peter Martyr, who was like a tutor in the court of Isabel and Ferdinand and had interviewed Columbus after his voyage of 1492, was another important eyewitness. His keen interest in the new and amazing discoveries of Columbus, Cortes, and others,

prompted him to write extensively about the New World.

His description in 1521 of the books with the Royal Fifth is important because during one period in his career Martyr went on a special mission to Egypt for the Spanish court. There, he probably became acquainted with Egyptian writing. In his *Decades of the New World or West India*, he tells about these books.

The characters are very different from ours: dice, hooks, loops, strips, and other figures, written in a line as we do; they greatly resemble Egyptian forms. Between the lines are marked out figures of men and animals, principally of kings and magnates, by which one can believe that there are there written the deeds of each king's ancestors, as we see is done in our own time, that often in general histories and in fabulous codices, the printers insert figures of those who did what is being recounted, to stimulate those who might want to buy them (emphasis added).

They also agreeably arrange the outer boards of wood; when these books are closed, it appears that they are no different from ours. Also, it is believed

that they write in their books the laws, sacrifices, ceremonies, rites, astronomical annotations, and certain computations, and manners and times of planting (Coe's translation of Martyr).

—Coe 1989:6

Figure 1 shows part of the above passage as it appears on page 162 of Richard Eden's translation of Martyr's work into English in 1555. See how well you can read the old English.

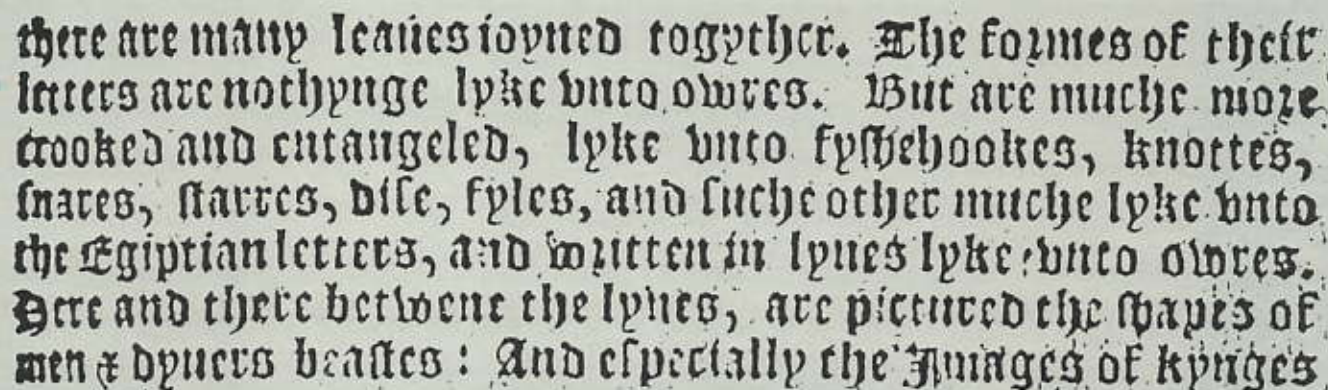
When looking for evidences of Hebrew and Egyptian in Mesoamerica, we only hope to catch a glimpse of what once was. These witnesses share with us such a glimpse from a thousand years after the Book of Mormon. Gomara listed and described the books; Ruffo said the script greatly resembled Arabic and Egyptian; and Peter Martyr, who had been to Egypt and therefore likely well-acquainted with Egyptian hieroglyphics, identified the characters in the books from the New World as similar to Egyptian forms.

Time, once again, vindicates the prophet.

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there are many leaues ioyned togyther. The formes of their letters are nothyng lyke vnto owres. But are muche more crooked and entangeled, lyke vnto fyshehookes, knottes, snares, starres, disc, fyles, and suche other muche lyke vnto the Egyptian letters, and written in lynes lyke vnto owres. Here and there betwene the lynes, are pictured the shayes of men & dyuers beastes: And especially the Imagines of kyniges,

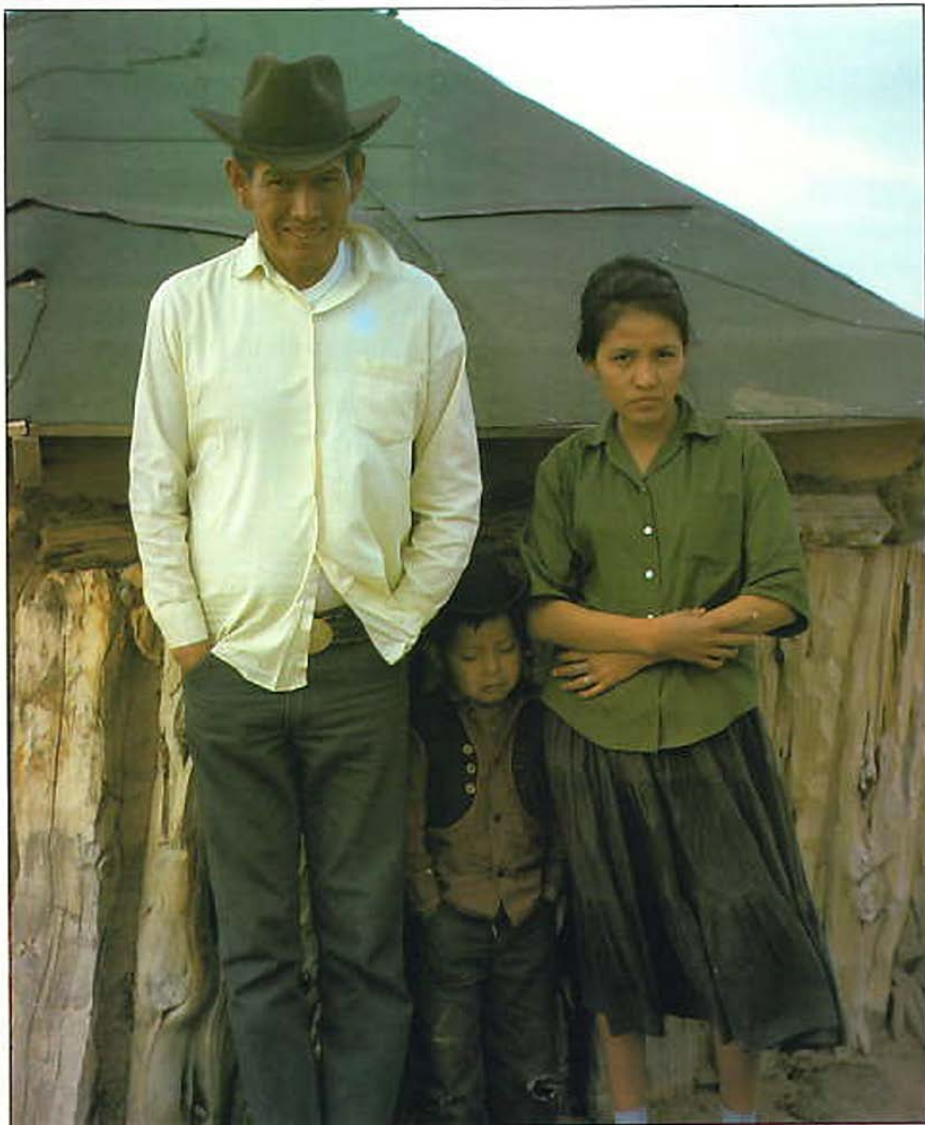
Figure 1. Photocopy of part of page 162 from the original Richard Eden translation of Martyr's *Decades of the New World* done in 1555. Courtesy of the William L. Clements Library of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.



From the Bering Strait to Cape Horn live numerous tribes of indigenous peoples; those who, at some time or another, came to the Land Shadowing with Wings, brought by the hand of the Lord. Descendants of Lehi, generally called Lamanites, comprise an unknown number of these tribes.

The Book of Mormon was preserved "that the Lamanites might . . . believe the gospel and rely upon the merits of Jesus Christ . . . that through their repentance they might be saved" (D&C 2:6d-e).

This issue presents several articles about ministry among the Lamanites. The Navajo family pictured here, from the Pinon Mission in Arizona, has been fortunate to learn the gospel story.



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