

The Witness

The Foundation For Research On Ancient America



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The Study of Archaeology

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The Foundation for Research on Ancient America is a nonprofit corporation composed 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...

The Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (INAH) of Mexico excavates and restores pre-Columbian ruins. This graduate student washes potsherds at Tonina located near Palenque.

Photo by Don Beebe.

T-shirts with FRAA Logo



Don Beebe

A sure way to witness about the Book of Mormon comes when wearing this bright aqua T-shirt.

You may order these top-quality T-shirts in sizes small, medium, large, and extra large for \$18 each by writing FRAA T-Shirts, 210 White Oak, Independence, MO 64050. Hooded sweatshirts with the same logo are also available for \$30.

Jaime Unda and Beto wore the T-shirts on the 1990 Mexico Gulf Coast tour sponsored by FRAA. David Macomber, FRAA member from the Boston area, initiated the idea and created the design in hopes of raising funds to support the Foundation's numerous projects. Many thanks, David!

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Foundation News

New Building Completed

Renovation on the new headquarters for FRAA was completed the end of May. It will require some months to move existing operations into the new building, but it is hoped to have the building fully operational by the beginning of September.

Don Cutshall, who coordinated the renovation, kept costs for improvements as low as possible. He saved the Foundation several thousands of dollars by purchasing supplies wholesale and passing on the savings to FRAA.

We are very thankful that the Lord has blessed us with this new facility. It will be a joy to have the research library, editorial staff, video production, and business office together. We pray this will allow us to be more effective in advancing the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon.

Each one who reads *The Witness*, and especially those who contribute to the Foundation, have been made instruments in this great work. Your continued PRAYERS and FINANCIAL SUPPORT will be deeply appreciated.

Building Fund	
Income to date	\$38,563
Remaining Balance	\$61,000

Lecture/Class Series

With the availability of a facility of its own, FRAA sponsored a weekly lecture/class series on the Book of Mormon and archaeology. It ran from July 8 through August 12. Lyle Smith, chairman of the FRAA archaeology committee, was the principal lecturer. The lecture series included the following topics.

Murals of Mesoamerica
Palenque

Geography
Tikal
Maya Hieroglyphs
Mirror Images

Because seating is limited, FRAA plans to hold this type of series regularly to allow a greater number of people to attend.

Book of Mormon Conferences Orem, Utah and Aurora, Illinois

All-day seminars with lectures and drama were held at Orem, Utah (April 13) and Aurora, Illinois (May 18). Les Campbell, a full-time seminary teacher for the LDS church who attended the Orem conference, wrote

Let me compliment you and the other lecturers on the excellent presentations I witnessed at your Regional Book of Mormon Day in Orem, Utah. It was exciting and refreshing to hear of the research FRAA is doing. SIGN ME UP!!!

Check the calendar below for other scheduled conferences in your area.

Richard De Long Quoted

Former board director and contributing author for *The Witness*, Richard De Long, was quoted by Kathryn Josserand in "The Narrative Structure of Hieroglyphic Texts at Palenque" in *Sixth Palenque Round Table, 1986*. Published this year, 1991, the volume is a compilation of some papers presented at the Sixth Palenque Round Table held in 1986. De Long presented a paper called "Chiasmus in Mesoamerican Writing" at the roundtable. Although his paper was not among those published, Josserand credits him. She wrote, "The formal structure of this last sentence is chiasmic, producing a "mirror image" of parallel constructions, of the A-B-B'-A' pattern (De Long 1986)" (1991:27).

In FRAA's newsletter #37, Sept. 1981, De Long's article "Chiasmus, Internal Evidence of Book of Mormon Authorship" acquainted members of FRAA with the concept of chiasmus.



Frank Fyfe

William and June Settles (left) of the Aurora branch hosted the FRAA Spend A Day With The Book of Mormon Conference. Michael and Julie Gatrost (right) of FRAA, along with several others, made presentations at the day-long conference.

Calendar

July 8-August 12, 1991
7:30 P.M.

Monday Night Book of Mormon/Archaeology
Lecture/Class Series Held at 210 W.
White Oak, Independence, Missouri

August 10, 1991

Second Annual Michigan Region Spend A Day
With The Book of Mormon—McMorran Place
(Conference Center), Port Huron

October 25-27, 1991

FRAA Book of Mormon Conference at Graceland
College

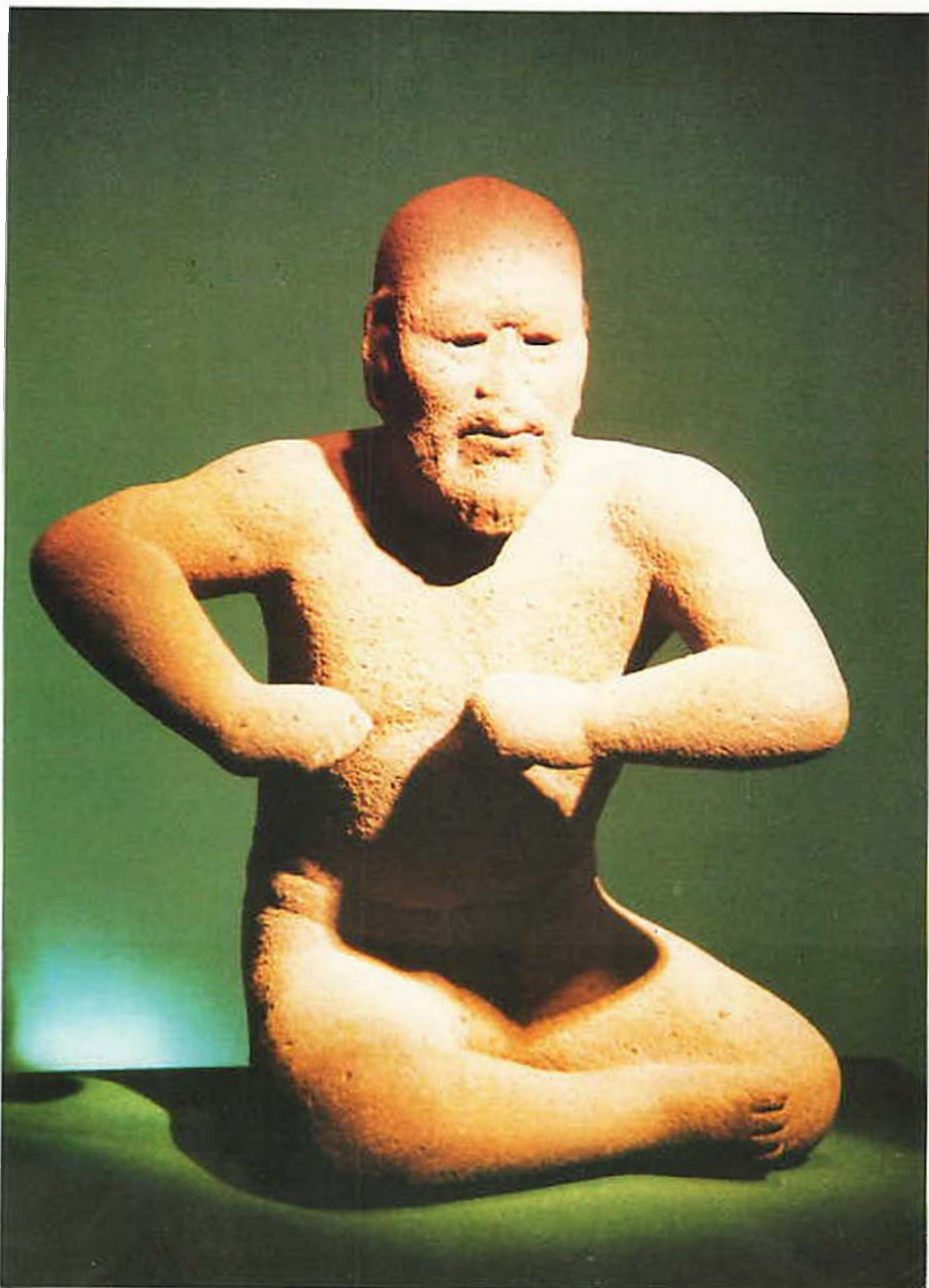
November 9, 1991

Second Annual Dallas/Fort Worth Region Spend
A Day With The Book of Mormon

November 22-
December 1, 1991

Guatemala Archaeology Tour

The "Wrestler," one of the greatest pieces of Olmec art, sits on display at the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City. The beauty and symmetry of this sculpture, as well as the marvelous depiction of the human form in three-dimension, reveals the Olmec as a people of great artistic and cultural achievement. Ether 4:70-78 tells of such a civilization among the Jaredites at the same time period, "They did work all manner of work of exceeding curious workmanship."



Don Beebe



The clay pipe of the city's water drainage system excavated at Dainzu near Monte Alban testifies of the technological knowledge of the people who once lived here. The dates for this site encompass 700 B.C. to A.D. 1000.

MY TESTIMONY: Converting My Mind Too

Lyle L. Smith

O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind, and strength . . . Knock and it shall be opened unto you (emphasis added).

—D&C 4:1a; 2b

If I were to ask you, a reader of *The Witness*, do you believe the Book of Mormon is true, most would answer “yes.” If I went a step further and asked why you believe it true, many might reply, “The spirit has borne witness of its truthfulness.” Then, if I went another step and asked is your MIND converted as well as your heart, what would be your answer?

A tremendous battle rages today to capture our minds as well as our hearts. We believe in Jesus, yet television and newspapers present to us a world without Christ. We believe in the Book of Mormon, yet magazines like *National Geographic*, with their beautiful pictures, seek to convert our minds to believe evolution provides the answers to the origin and reasons of life. We believe Nephi when he tells us this life is a probationary time to prepare to meet God, yet our minds have been converted to spending most of our time keeping up with the Joneses who live next door. Do our unconverted minds war against our faith trying to lead us another way?

Like most of you, my parents taught me the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon. Later, I had spiritual experiences confirming

that teaching. It was not, however, until I lived in Asia and Latin America, visiting many ruins, that I began to intellectually examine my belief. Was my mind as well as my heart converted?

Archaeology, especially Mesoamerican, intrigued me. It caused me to ask, “Will current archaeology understanding support Book of Mormon claims? Is the Book of Mormon true in a historical sense? If so, where did the history of the Book of Mormon take place? Do the languages of the New World before Columbus correlate with Egyptian and Hebrew?”

My quest started in earnest ten years ago with a study of *Peoples, Places, and Prophecies* by Verneil Simmons. This book blends the disciplines of archaeology and related fields with the Book of Mormon. To me, it remains one of the best tools available to begin converting our minds that the Book of Mormon is true.

As I studied, though, I discovered I could not examine the Book of Mormon against the light of intellectual learning unless I truly *knew* the Book of Mormon itself, and that this knowledge only came through consistent, long-term study. I learned to give equal attention to the study of the Book of Mormon along with the study of archaeology. Without a sure knowledge of the Book of Mormon, I could not recognize if archaeological thought presented the same story as found in the Book of Mormon.

Knowing what the Book of Mormon says was also necessary because many criticisms of the

book fall into two categories. One, those by authors who never read the book themselves and only copy the work of someone else; and second, deliberate misquotes. Knowing what is in the Book of Mormon provided the only way to recognize these misleading criticisms.

My intellectual scrutiny in the sphere of archaeology opened up a whole new way of looking at the Book of Mormon. At times doubts and confusion enter in, but under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, my mind as well as my heart has come to believe in the Book of Mormon. This process of converting my mind has been a rich blessing to me, and I would like to share this blessing by witnessing of some of the archaeological areas that helped convert my mind.

Research into the timeline of the civilizations of Mesoamerica revealed that the major rise and fall of nations matched Book of Mormon history. Current archaeology identifies pottery first appearing in Mesoamerica about 2500 B.C. (approximate time of the great tower and arrival of the Jaredites in the promised land). The first recognized urban culture, called Olmec, took place about 1500 B.C. (Jaredite civilization highpoint), and regional cultures developed in the Maya area between 600-300 B.C. (arrival and development of the Mulekites, Nephites, and Lamanites). Forty years ago, the timeline of Mesoamerican civilizations disagreed with Book of Mormon requirements. Advances made in Mesoamerican archaeology, how-

(Continued on page 7)

Comparisons

Archaeological Understanding of Maya Hieroglyphs in the 1950s and 1990s	Book of Mormon Language Requirements 1830	
Not historical	Historical real people and places	Historical record
Picture writing only	Phonetic	Reformed Egyptian phonetic
Maya became literate about A.D. 300	Fully literate 400 B.C. onward and maybe earlier	Fully literate 600 B.C. onward
	Maya hieroglyph <i>uti</i> has been translated in 1985 as "it came to pass." Used frequently in the glyphs	"It came to pass" used throughout
Maya glyphs largely untranslated	Translation of the glyphs show strong usage of "couplets" and "mirror imaging"	Written in Hebrew style called chiasitic
Maya glyphs have no relation to Old World languages such as Egyptian and Hebrew	Maya glyphs have same internal structure as Old World systems, such as Egyptian and Hebrew	Records kept in Egyptian and Hebrew
Emblem Glyphs not yet recognized	Emblem Glyphs indicate names of individual rulers or kings, lineage designations, and place names	Named cities after first ruler

Documentation available at FRAA library, (816) 461-FRAA or (816) 229-5192.

ever, caused revision and brought it more into alignment with Book of Mormon history.

Another area, one presently receiving a great deal of attention by archaeologists, is warfare. Book of Mormon peoples had many wars, except for the few years of the Golden Age. Previously, scholars believed that the Maya were a peaceful people. Ongoing excavations of the ruins and decipherment of the glyphs, though, show warfare dominated Maya society. What's more, some scholars claim *conquest* warfare began among the Maya in the fourth century A.D.—the same time period the final conquest wars began in the Book of Mormon.

In addition, Maya warfare patterns match those established by Chief Captain Moroni. For example, high walls and large moats surround the sites of Becan, Tikal, El Mirador, Dos Pilas, and other cities.

A baseline question for Book of Mormon believers concerns languages. Do New World scripts evidence correlation to Old World scripts, especially Egyptian and Hebrew? Recent decipherment of the Maya glyphs reveal not only their similarities to Egyptian, but that they correspond to ancient Hebrew linguistic principles. The chart on page 6 provides an historical overview of a comparison of the Book of Mormon with the knowledge understood about the Maya hieroglyphs forty years ago and today.

Delving into the history of the decipherment of Mesoamerican languages, particularly Maya hieroglyphs, provides fast-paced adventure. It takes consistent research to keep up with the advancements being made in this area. For Book of Mormon believers, the most exciting chapter being written now explains how a knowledge of the internal structure of Old World writing systems unlocked the door to the



Chairman of the Archaeology Committee for FRAA, Lyle Smith leads tours to Mesoamerica and gives Book of Mormon and archaeology lectures.

decipherment of the Maya script, and that internally, Egyptian and Maya function alike.

These few examples exemplify how the study of archaeology and the Book of Mormon contributed to helping convert my mind. Many more exist.

I also found that the study of Mesoamerican archaeology furnished excellent background material for the history found in the Book of Mormon. The people of the book became alive and real, cities took on organization and bustle, and lands vied with one another for political and religious power. Large areas of the Book of Mormon have been so greatly illuminated by my study of archaeology that it is not easy for me to remember how I used to ignore the questions of history and culture found in the book.

Because the Book of Mormon is a very abbreviated, and primarily a religious account, it is difficult to merely read the Book of Mormon and appreciate the significance of its narratives. We gain a better understanding of the culture and the people when we examine the Book of Mormon record in light of intellectual learning. In this issue, the article by John Welch on King Benjamin's speech is a good example. Welch expands our appreciation of the Hebraic setting of Benjamin's proclamation.

One of the most valuable

benefits from my study was the ability to answer attacks on the Book of Mormon. A few months ago I had the opportunity to respond to 25 criticisms of the Book of Mormon in an open lecture format. I did so gladly because it appears that more anti-Book of Mormon literature has been published in the last ten years than in the previous forty, and I wanted to respond to that challenge. Reading and hearing these criticisms would have created doubt in my mind, even though my heart remained convinced, if I had not been aware intellectually that open, intelligent answers exist; answers that come from current understanding of the anthropology/archaeology/linguistics studies of Mesoamerica and Bible lands.

As I began my quest of examining archaeological findings with the Book of Mormon, I thought of it more as an academic study and was unaware how it would not only convert my mind but also enrich my faith. I desire to serve the Lord with all my "heart, might, *mind*, and strength." The scripture which says, "knock and it shall be opened unto you" is true.

Editor's Note:

Archaeological research can be done at the new FRAA Research Library, 210 W. White Oak, Independence.

*See also "A Testimony of the Book of Mormon" by Charles A. Davies, *Saints' Herald*, March 1, 1963, 8-10.*





Donna Wedditt

John W. Welch

(Abridged from Welch's presentation at the FRAA Utah Region Spend A Day With The Book of Mormon Conference, April 13, 1991.)

King Benjamin's speech, a key text in the history of the Nephite people, has a timely and vital message for us in the modern world. This profound and stunning oration is one of the most powerful and ennobling religious documents of all time. It is a masterpiece.

Benjamin addresses numerous religious themes in his speech: the importance of service; humility; the nature of sin; charity; and others. The main, and perhaps most distinctive religious theme, occurs exactly at the center. From beginning to end, this speech contains 4,810 words. The center point, the chiasm in Mosiah 1:118-20, falls virtually dead center. Some 2,460 words come before that chiasm and 2,350 words after it. The point that a person must apply the atoning blood of Christ in order to become a saint is the central message.

Benjamin emphasizes that salvation was, is, and will come only in and through the atoning blood of Christ. The blood of

BENJAMIN'S SPEECH: A Classic Nephite Text

Christ atones for sins. No other writer in the Book of Mormon gives such urgent reference to the blood of Christ shed for mankind.

Religiously, this emphasis on the atoning blood stands midway, historically, between the law of Moses and the fulfillment of that law in Jesus Christ. The Nephites still lived the law of Moses and did so strictly, even though they knew the emptiness of the law and that it would be eventually fulfilled by the coming Messiah. Nevertheless, as the people gathered for Benjamin's speech, they gave thank offerings and sacrifices according to the law of

We see here a community in transition between the law of Moses and the understanding that comes in Jesus Christ.

Moses.

We see here a community in transition between the law of Moses and the understanding that comes in Jesus Christ. For example, Mosiah 1:107 assures the people that the atoning blood of Jesus Christ will atone for those who have *ignorantly* sinned. This is an odd concept to us. We do not think of sin as a matter of ignorance. We think of sin as a conscious decision. To people living under the law of Moses though, Numbers 15:27 requires

if any soul sin through ig-

norance, then he shall bring a she goat. . . . And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly (emphasis added).

Given those concerns and circumstances, we understand why Benjamin assures his people that the atonement of Christ extends even to sins of ignorance.

Another essential under the law of Moses pertains to the observance of festivals. Jewish feasts were not optional; the law required certain rituals on holy days. In particular, Deuteronomy 31:10-12 commands,

At the end of every seven years. . . in the feast of tabernacles, when Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law (emphasis added).

On the feast of tabernacles, even today, Jews construct booths, types of temporary shelters, pitched with the door toward the temple city of Jerusalem. From the Talmudic period, records indicate that on this day the king would deliver a speech from a tower or a platform in front of the temple.

One can readily identify a number of places where King Benjamin's speech appears to be in the spirit of the feast of taber-



The Junior Witness

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The ROBBER

(A might-have-been-story based upon 1 Nephi 1:48-52 and 2 Nephi 3:44-50)

by Viola Velt Presler

Illustrated by Aaron Presler

SYNOPSIS:

Lehi's family has fled Jerusalem, marching along the shores of the Dead Sea from En Gedi to the vast, broad plain called the Arabah. They have been granted protection by the sheykh to pass through the land of Edom to the Red Sea.

Nephi could still see the tall figure of Sheykh Esau ben Araish waving in the distance.

"May God guard you on your journey," he called. "The trackless wastes are filled with bones. Beware the East Wind that blots out the sun and blinds the eyes. Follow the waymarks of the main wadi (riverbed). And watch out for robbers!"

So this is the Arabah! Nephi thought, feeling smaller than an ant. I did not know the wilderness was so big. One could be lost here. If robbers do come, where will we hide?

"We will follow the low road cut by the main wadi flowing south," Lehi said. "The waymarks are clear." Along with many other caravans, they pressed forward.

Nephi turned toward his right hand. In the blue distance behind mountains and craters, lay the great Negev wilderness, the "parched land" where Moses had led the Children of Israel out of Egypt. Far away, on his left hand, Mt. Seir and its ranges lay like

giant elephants crouching under folds of cloth. In the light yellowed by sunrise, Edom was an antique land, older than time.

It was the ninth day when the hot dry East Wind began to moan. Tiny pellets of sandy soil tinkled like glass, cutting their faces, stinging their cheeks. Whipping up the ground in whirlwinds, the wind turned the world into a yellow haze.

Nephi pulled his *kaffiyeh* (head cloth) over his eyes. Still, the merciless wind bit and tore. Sand was everywhere—in his garments, his sandals, his hair, and gritty between his teeth.

"Can you still see the waymarks?" Father yelled above the storm.

"No!" Nephi answered. The roar of the wind all but drowned out his voice.

"Stop and stand still!" Father ordered. He turned his own camel around, quickly forming the camel train into a circle around the huddled sheep and goats. "Stand still or be lost!"

It seemed to Nephi hours became days of endless waiting. The blinding sandstorm was enough to endure, but within Nephi a worse storm was raging. At first, he had been only irritated when at the tent of ben Araish Laman had spoken with assumed authority about God. Like someone who knew God. He who did not recognize the Holy Spirit! He who had carried an idol in his pocket and tried to get his own brother to hold it. He who had made eyes at Edomite women during ben Araish's camel race when he had confessed to Nephi his love for the second daughter of Uncle Ishmael. Not for the love of God! But for praise for himself!

Nephi wished he might never see the face of Laman again. That face, so like his own, yet filled with pride, had become ugly to him.

"Why, Lord, oh why? Why could I not have been given an older brother who would be an example unto me, who would love thee with his whole heart, who would lead me unto thee? When I long to hear thy voice, I hear instead his boasting. When I

desire to see thy love shine from his eyes, his hypocrisy leers back at me. Lord, he is a stumbling block upon my path!"

The irritations had grown each day into resentment. Now they were hardening into anger. Though Nephi might try to avoid Laman, he could not. Laman controlled his every thought.

"I hate him," Nephi realized. "I wish he had never been born my brother!"

Hate. Hate? Had not Moses taught, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart" (Leviticus 19:17).

What is happening to me? Nephi wondered. Where is the love of God that filled my heart? Where is the light that thrilled my mind? Where is the joy that set me singing? I cannot have the Spirit of God dwelling in me where hatred lives. I am miserable. And misery does not come from God, but from the enemy of my soul! I have been robbed!

And there, right there, though his breath was all but suffocated, and his voice all but swallowed up by the roar of the wind, Nephi cried out to God. It wasn't any timid whisper. It wasn't any soft murmur. It was a cry against the raging of the storm.

"Oh Lord," Nephi prayed, "you have delivered me from capture and death and sorrow. Deliver me now from the robber of my soul. Take the hatred from my heart; deliver me from anger. There is no good feeling in me, save you change my heart. Cleanse me now and give me thy Holy Spirit once again."

A quiet voice not his own spoke to his mind: "Nephi, my son, I have seen your love for righteousness and your hatred of evil. I have heard your every cry and seen the struggles of your soul. It is I who have delivered you and will deliver you again this day.

"Look not unto your elder brothers for an example. Remember the words of my prophet, Jeremiah, 'Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm' (Jeremiah 17:5). Lean on me. It is I who

inspired your father, and I will be with you. And ye shall be blessed."

As suddenly as it had begun, the sandstorm ceased. At the same time Nephi's anger was gone. He had not known how hard his own heart had been until the Lord touched it. Right there, sitting on his camel, Nephi wept unashamedly. God had heard his prayers! He understood his problems. Nephi was not to expect from his brother but from the Lord! And God had spoken to him. God had spoken to *him!*

"Oh, Lord," Nephi prayed, "thou hast delivered me again. O Lord, I will praise thee for ever; yea, my soul will rejoice in thee, my God, and the rock of my salvation" (2 Nephi 3:50).

As new hope broke over him, the sun burst through the clouds above.

"Look Father, we can see again! The waymark is over there! We're on the path. We're not lost after all!"

To Nephi's surprise, his father burst into song: "*Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls*" (Jeremiah 6:16).

"We are not lost! We are free!" Lehi cried out for all to hear.

Then turning his camel around, he made her walk beside the camel of Nephi. "It is well with you now, my son, but I was concerned for you back there in the storm. I thought you might have been lost. Or attacked by a robber."

"There was one robber, Father," Nephi replied. "The one who would steal my peace. I cried out against him unto the Lord. Against the robber of my soul. I have peace now, and my joy is full, for the Lord hath restored my soul (Psalm 23).

As Nephi and his father wept and laughed together, they beheld a wonderful sight—an oasis of date palms beside a tropical sea. Vibrant in color, the waters of the Red Sea, clear as glass, were joyous with coral, sea flowers, and fish of every hue.

Exultant, Nephi jumped off his camel and ran, leaping and jumping, down to the sea. He plunged into the water. Dripping and laughing, he ran back to Sam.

Sam laughed. "I am glad that the sight of the sea makes my brother so happy," he said.

"Oh, Sam, it is more than the sea. The Lord spoke to me back there in the storm. 'Lean on me. Believe in the words of your Father,' he said, 'and I will be with you, and you will be blessed.'"

Sam stopped trudging beside his camel and hugged his brother. The smile on his lips matched the

glow in his eyes. "I believe you, brother," he whispered.

Sam may have a quiet tongue, Nephi thought, but his eyes tell all.

Joyful, encouraged, Nephi ran with new hope to help Laman water his camels.

"Laman, Laman, when you and I spoke before by the Salt Sea, I only believed that the Lord is guiding Father. Now I *know!* The Lord spoke to me back there in the storm. He said, 'Lean on me. Believe in the words of your father, and I will be with you, and you will be blessed.' He will bless you too, Laman. We will all be blessed!"

The radiance in Nephi's face found no reflection in Laman's eyes. His face, as blank as any new sheet of papyrus, was empty of all feeling. Saying nothing, he turned aside. Lemuel followed.

Their good feelings are gone, Nephi realized. Laman and Lemuel have been robbed!

Nephi knelt in the sand, beside the murmuring waves lapping at the shore. He was grieving again for them, but this time his grief was mixed with hope and joy. And on Laman and Lemuel's behalf he did cry unto the Lord.



PROMISES TO LIVE BY

There is a memory verse for each Sunday in September, October, and November 1991. Look up the verse you will memorize in your Book of Mormon. Fill in the missing words so you can share the complete verse with your family and friends.

SEPTEMBER 1

And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my _____ at that _____, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost.

—1 Nephi 3:187

SEPTEMBER 8

Come unto that God who is the _____ of your salvation.

—2 Nephi 6:90

SEPTEMBER 15

Wherefore, do not spend _____ for that which is of no _____, nor your labor for that which can not satisfy.

—2 Nephi 6:100

SEPTEMBER 22

Therefore cheer up your _____, and remember that ye are _____ to act for yourselves; to choose the way of everlasting death, or the _____ of eternal life.

—2 Nephi 7:40

SEPTEMBER 29

Remember the words of your God; pray unto him continually by _____, and give thanks unto his holy name by _____.

—2 Nephi 6:103

OCTOBER 6

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his _____.

—2 Nephi 9:3

OCTOBER 13

Hearken diligently unto me, and remember the _____ which I have spoken; and come unto the Holy One of _____.

—2 Nephi 6:101

OCTOBER 20

Behold, God is my salvation; I will _____, and not be afraid: for the Lord, Jehovah is my strength and my _____; he also is become my salvation.

—2 Nephi 9:133

OCTOBER 27

Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done _____ things: this is known in all the _____.

—2 Nephi 9:136

NOVEMBER 3

And as many as shall believe in Christ, shall also become a delightful _____.

—2 Nephi 12:86

NOVEMBER 10

Feast upon the words of _____; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all _____ what ye should do.

—2 Nephi 14:4

NOVEMBER 17

For there is nothing which is good, save it comes from the _____; and that which is _____, cometh from the devil.

—Omni 1:45

NOVEMBER 24

I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the _____ of God.

—Mosiah 1:88



In the summer issue of *The Junior Witness* we invited readers to share a time when you trusted in the Lord, and He did not fail you, just as Pagag did in the story "Journey in Faith."

Thanks to fourteen-year-old Heather Scharff of Sibley, Missouri who shared her testimony.

My brother Andy and I were riding on a bike when I was nine years old. My foot got caught in the spokes and we wrecked. I was rushed to the emergency room at the hospital where an X ray was taken. The doctor reported that my foot was broken.

All of my family was concerned because I was in terrible pain. We prayed. I had faith in Jesus Christ and I knew He would help me. Our doctor ordered another X ray. He discovered (after prayers of faith!) that my foot was not broken but badly twisted. I could walk on it the next day. There were no broken bones because I trusted the Lord and He blessed me.

When Nephi asked for help, God reached down and changed his heart. God took away Nephi's anger and

gave him peace and joy in the story "The Robber." Can you think of a time when God changed your heart?

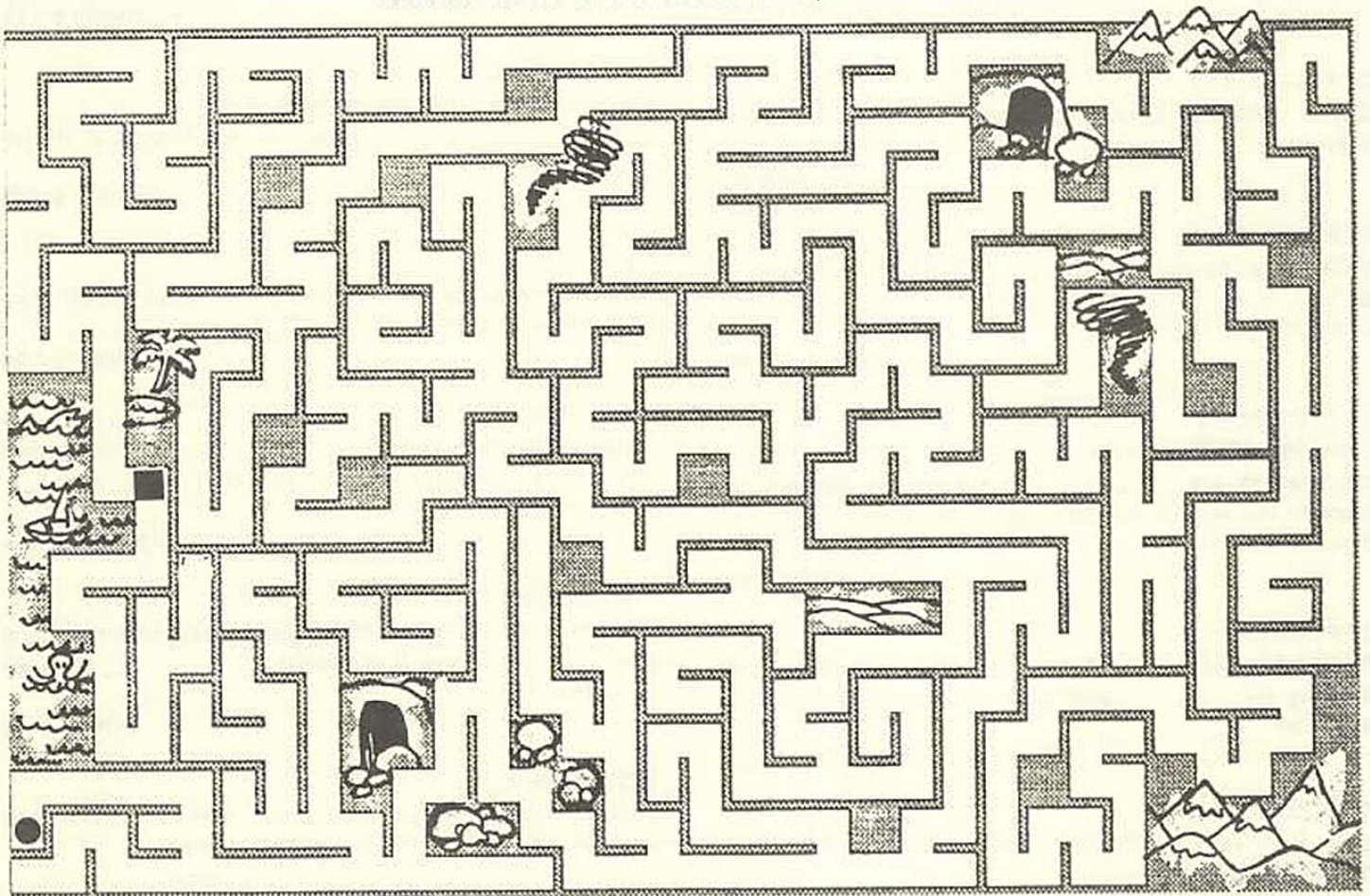
Please send to the editor of *The Junior Witness*, 210 White Oak, Independence, Missouri 64050.

WILDERNESS MAZE

Help Nephi and his family safely reach the tropical oasis by the sea. They must cross the desert,

pass robbers' caves, avoid whirlwinds, and survive sandstorms.

Start at the circle and end at the square oasis.



nacles. All of the people—men, women, and children of the Mulekites and Nephites—were brought together. They pitched their tents around the temple. King Benjamin makes similar confessions as those in Deuteronomy 17:14-20, a text read by the king traditionally at the feast of tabernacles, according to the Mishna.

The feast of tabernacles was often known as the day of kings, and therefore a perfect day for Benjamin to crown his son. He could have chosen any other day. Benjamin was not on his deathbed; he lived three more years. As he planned and organized this occasion, he evidently picked a religiously and culturally significant day.

Now let us consider the importance of Benjamin's speech in Nephite history, in which it was a major reflective and formative document. His speech ranks in the same class as the Gettysburg Address, Pericles's funeral oration in Athens, or the inaugural addresses of George Washington and John F. Kennedy. As great speeches typically do, Benjamin's words not only focused on old traditional values, but also formulated an authoritative statement addressing the main issues confronting his society in a way that shaped the collective awareness of the Nephites for subsequent generations.

What evidence supports such an assessment?

1. Consider the prominence Mormon gives to the speech. He accords it pride of place at the beginning of the book of Mosiah where it appears out of chronological sequence. In his editing, Mormon breaks right to King Benjamin as he makes his transition from the small plates to his abridgment of the large plates.

2. Consider the completeness of the speech. Unlike many other sections of the Book of Mormon, there is little evidence that Mor-

mon edited or abridged King Benjamin's words. It was the kind of document even Mormon did not feel inclined to change. Would you edit the Gettysburg Address? As odd as some of its phrases might sound today, we would not dare tamper with those words.

3. Since Benjamin wrote and handed out copies of the speech,

His speech ranks in the same class as the Gettysburg Address.

we know that it was not extemporaneous. Everyone went home, if you will, with a souvenir program of the speech, allowing it to be used in the subsequent history of the Nephites. They remembered these words.

4. Indeed, Benjamin's concepts and phrases show up again and again for the next several Nephite generations. For example, in Helaman 2:71 when the younger Nephi and Lehi leave to preach to the Lamanites, their father, Helaman, reminds them of the words of Benjamin: "Remember, remember, my sons, the words which King Benjamin spake unto his people." Helaman quotes a number of passages, especially the one at the very center of the speech.

Also, in Helaman 5:66, when Samuel the Lamanite preaches on the walls of the city Zarahemla, he, too, apparently knows King Benjamin's speech. He exhorts them to repent and believe in "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven, and of earth, the Creator of all things, from the beginning." Those 20 words are precisely the words given to King Benjamin as the name by which Jesus should be called.

How would Samuel have

known the speech of Benjamin? The missionaries who converted the Lamanites at this time were none other than Nephi and Lehi who had been urged by their father to remember and use the words of Benjamin. Thus we see that the speech of Benjamin became something of a tract, a basic text these people used and followed.

(See also the use of Benjamin's words by the four sons of Mosiah, Benjamin's grandsons, in Alma 14:6, where the king sends out a proclamation declaring five laws that came from Benjamin. Those five points of law are repeated several times in the Book of Mormon from the time of Benjamin to the time of Christ, when the Savior's new law finally took precedence.)

5. Benjamin concludes his speech with a moving and historically accurate use of covenant ritual, where the people enter into a covenant to obey God and to obey the newly installed king. In that covenant, the people witness their willingness to keep the commandments of God, to take his name upon them, and to remember him always. Do those three points sound familiar? They should. They are the promises and commitments made in the Sacrament prayers found in the book of Moroni, and similar words in 3 Nephi.

6. Foundational documents like the Gettysburg Address or John F. Kennedy's inaugural address usually respond to a current crisis in the community or nation. Was a crisis facing the Nephites at the time Benjamin spoke? Problems of disunity and contention existed. For example, Zeniff and his group had returned to the land of Nephi, and the thrust of Benjamin's speech was to reunify his people. He made sure all Nephites and Mulekites were present. They all entered into the covenant to follow the new king, being united

under him.

In hindsight, the lack of unity persisted as a problem among the Nephite population. Groups tended to wander off and dissent away from the main group of people. Sectional groups arose under Alma, Limhi, and Nehor, as the Ammonites, Zoramites, and kingmen. Dissidence continued through the years, foremost with the Gadianton robbers, until the time of Christ.

Benjamin's speech served an important purpose as Nephite leaders worked to bring the Nephites back into harmony with each other. As Nephite society became more pluralistic, the principles and ideologies given by Benjamin's speech provided the glue to hold this people together.

Besides disunity, Benjamin had other difficulties during his administration. False prophets, teachers, and preachers arose, and he punished them. Contention among his people was removed only by the great efforts of the prophets and Benjamin's own inspiration.

Within Benjamin's speech we find a number of warnings against contentiousness—warnings that people should not contend one with another, and that contention is of the devil. He says as a result of true conversion, "ye will not have a mind to injure one another, but to live peaceably" one with another (Mosiah 2:24). He admonishes the people to be submissive and obedient to the king.

We also sense in the economic problems Benjamin addresses that class differences had developed among his people, and he sought to establish good relationships among them all.

The very first thing said about Benjamin in the Words of Mormon is "he had somewhat contentions among his own people" (1:18). The very last thing said about him is that as a result of

this speech, "there was no contention among all his people, for the space of three years" (Mosiah 4:11). These bracketing statements show the problem and its solution were crucial to Benjamin's covenantal speech.

7. The object of great speeches is to persuade by speaking to the heart. Benjamin's speech held the Nephites together because of many rhetorical features. It gave every person an equal chance. The rich and the poor were put on an equal footing. Even the king was like everyone else. The speech put all people under a personal covenant; it made all people accountable. It made them realize that only one Christ would come, who was the one and only through whom salvation would come, the

We may view Benjamin like an Abraham Lincoln, a towering figure in the history of Book of Mormon peoples.

only source of goodness and blessing and reward for any service, namely God.

8. Benjamin's speech had a lasting impact because of the conversion of hearts it brought about. The centrality of the temple, the magnitude of the political occasion, and the sacredness of the context in which the speech was given contributed to its long-term effect.

9. It was a popular speech. Benjamin was not hesitant to allow all people to know about the revelation he had received. He brought the revelation of God into the midst of all the people, making this a popular experience.

10. It was also a farewell

speech. It can be compared favorably with the farewell speeches of Moses, Socrates, and other great leaders who also left a lasting legacy for their people.

11. Literarily, the speech was memorable. Chiasitic structures are easy to memorize, and when people hear and recognize them, they do not easily forget the words given in chiasitic structures. The words Benjamin wanted the people to remember most were their covenantal promises. In Mosiah 3:13-16 is another chiasm (the first I found in 1967 in the Book of Mormon). It emphasizes the importance of the sacred covenant being made. Benjamin says,

- 1 Whosoever shall not take upon the *name* of Christ, must be
- 2 *called* by some other name; therefore, he findeth himself on
- 3 the *left hand* of God. And I would that ye should
- 4 *remember* also, that this is the name that I said I should give unto you, that never should be
- 5 *blotted out*, except it be
- 6 through *transgression*; therefore take heed that ye do not
- 6 *transgress*, that the name be not
- 5 *blotted out* of your hearts. I say unto you, I would that ye should
- 4 *remember* to retain the name written always in your hearts, that ye are not found on
- 3 the *left hand* of God, but that ye hear and know the voice by which ye shall be
- 2 *called*, and also,
- 1 the *name* by which he shall call you.

These six ideas, presented in one order and then exactly in the opposite order, would not have been easily or lightly forgotten. The

speech was crafted with great skill throughout.

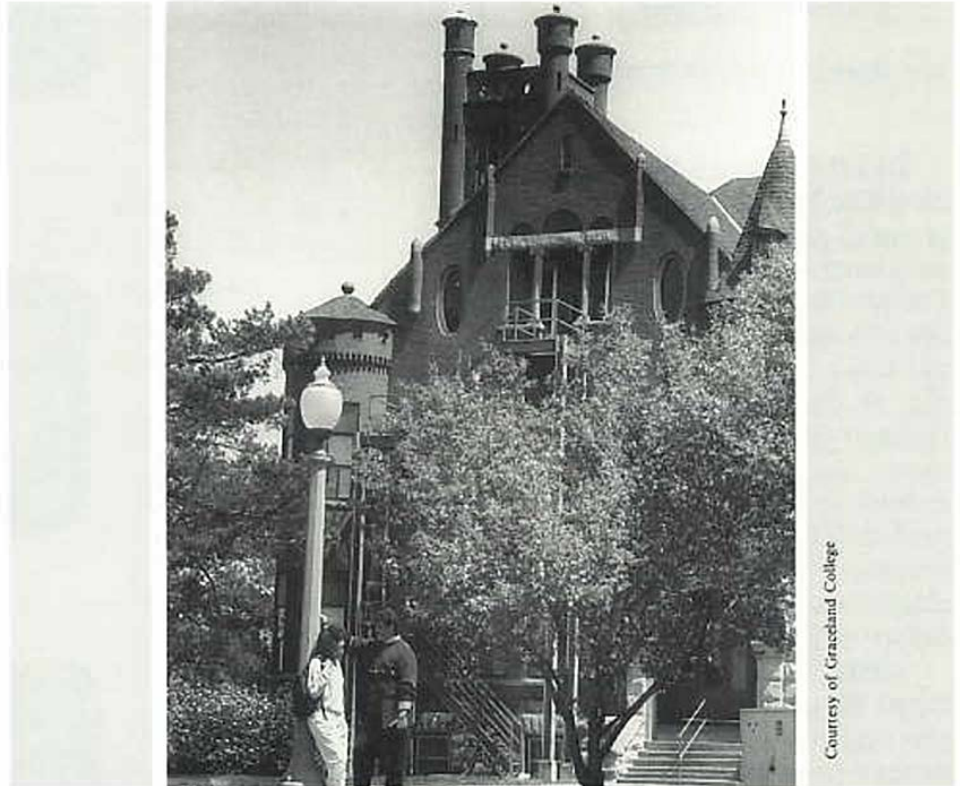
12. It was probably given on a very high and holy day. Earlier the feast of tabernacles was mentioned. Some scholars believe that in ancient Israel the feast of tabernacles and the day of atonement, Yom Kippur, were one festival. On the day of atonement people offered the scapegoat offering and the blood offerings, and the high priest went into the temple to purify the temple. There is evidence that Benjamin's speech, with its emphasis on the atonement of Jesus Christ, was held similarly in connection with an observance of Yom Kippur.

One piece of evidence corroborating that idea is that according to Jewish literature, the day of atonement was the only day on which the holy name of God could be spoken. And the holy name, when it was uttered, had to be uttered a perfect number of times, which is ten. Interestingly, in King Benjamin's speech, the phrase "Lord God" or "God Omnipotent" occurs ten times.

Thus, in many ways, we may indeed view Benjamin's speech as a founding document, and we may view Benjamin like an Abraham Lincoln, a towering figure in the history of Book of Mormon peoples. His impact was to set aside human contention and differences and unite them under the one and only true and living God. He united two peoples, the Mulekites and Nephites, who had common historical roots and origins, but who had grown apart over the years. Benjamin showed those two people the way—in Christ, in covenant, in renewed conversion, under revelation and priesthood temple sacrifice, and with rejoicing and a mighty change—to reunification, applying the atoning blood of Christ and sealing them up unto everlasting salvation and eternal life.

This text has ancient and

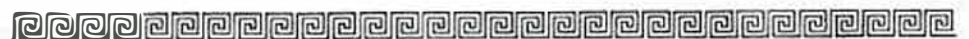
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historical perspectives but it also has poignant modern applications to us. It is as new today as the day it was first given from that tower near the temple in Zarahemla. Without such perspectives, we tend to misunderstand and fail to see, but with these perspectives

I pray that we may, as Benjamin hoped, open our eyes that we may see, our ears that we may hear, our hearts that we may understand, and our minds that the mysteries of God may be unfolded to us.



EMBLEM GLYPHS

Archaeology Committee*

Line drawings by Brenda Trimble

In 1958 Heinrich Berlin first identified Emblem Glyphs, a group of glyphs primarily associated with specific sites. Emblem Glyph components consist of a main sign unique to each site and a common set of affixes (fig. 1). Berlin suggested these Emblem Glyphs could be place names, the name of a ruling dynasty or lineage, or names of local divinities. He favored dynasty or lineage names. Archaeologists and epigraphers still debate which is meant.

Linda Schele, art historian and expert Maya epigrapher, believes new evidence appears to support Berlin's choice that these glyphs designate lineage. Going one step further, she suggests that perhaps the Emblem Glyphs as lineage designations were used to name the places where a lineage was centered.

The Book of Mormon sheds light on this debate. The record says the people practiced calling their lands and cities after those who first possessed them, i.e. City of Nephi, Land of Mulek, etc.

Now it was the custom of the people of Nephi, to call their lands, and their cities, and their villages, yea even all their small villages, after the name of him who first possessed them (emphasis added).

—Alma 6:8

Thus Emblem Glyphs are both city or site names *and* names of

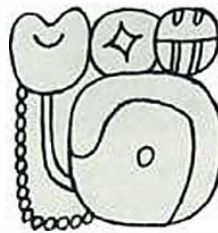
*Ted Nelson, Glenn Scott, Lyle Smith, Brenda Trimble, and Linda Trimble



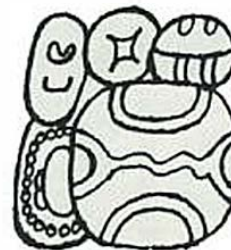
TIKAL



COPAN



YAXCHILAN



PALENQUE

Fig. 1

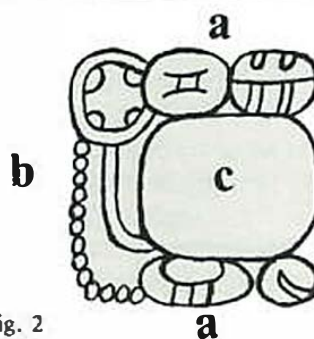


Fig. 2

people or a lineage.

Components

The main sign of the Emblem Glyphs varies from site to site (fig. 2c). According to Schele, this component names the place or local lineage.

In addition to the main vari-



See if you can find the two emblem glyphs for Yaxchilan on this stela. They are together in the bottom middle. The one on the left translates as *Muluc*.

able sign, Emblem Glyphs have two sets of constants; the first set (fig. 2a) records a title, usually read *ahau*, meaning Lord or ruler (Schele 1991:50). In *The Proceedings of the Maya Hieroglyphic Workshop* for 1990, Schele suggests *ahau* has a phonetic reading of *ahau wa* and *yahaw*. (These call to mind the Hebrew YHWH [Yahweh], also meaning Lord.)

The second constant, which precedes the *ahau* title and main sign, has been called the “water group” (fig. 2b). This generally consists of a series of circles or beads, though other symbols have occasionally been used. Previously, this portion of the Emblem Glyphs has been translated as “precious” or “in the line of descent” (Morley 1983:94), and “precious offspring” (Jones 1984:20).

Schele believes this component



Members of the FRAA sponsored tour to Mesoamerica in December 1990 begin their exploration of Yaxchilan.

Don Beebe

signifies blood.

The “water-group” affix is a liquid, but the liquid is blood, not water. The initial sign in the Emblem Glyph records “blood,” an identification that reinforces the possibility of EGs designate lineages, rather than or in addition to place names.

—1991:51

She says the Maya equated (as we do) lineage with blood (1986:3). This does not conflict with the translation of “in the line of descent.”

William M. Ringle suggests another interpretation.

When prefixed to names and Emblem Glyphs it designates a person or place as “revered,” “holy,” or “sacred”... obviously an appropriate title for the leaders of Classic Maya cities such as Patenque, who explicitly claimed divine descent.

—1988:11

Significance

To summarize, Emblem Glyphs combine three elements: the *ahau* or *yahaw* sign meaning Lord or ruler; the “water group” signifying “in the line of descent” and/or sacred or holy; and the variable main sign referring to a place and/or lineage. Taken together, these components seem to imply the ruler descended from one family and had spiritual as well as political power.

The ruler of each Maya center seems to have served as principal priest, responsible for certain rituals and divinations held to ensure the success and well-being of the state. Because of the functions of political and religious leadership seem to have been fused, the Maya order is usually termed a theocracy.

—Morley 1983:461

During certain periods of history in the Book of Mormon, it was common practice to have a leader who was both the political ruler and religious ruler. For instance, Alma, the son of Alma, was the First and Chief Judge over the people of Nephi, and also the High Priest over the church.

This responsibility passed on through family lineage whenever possible.

And it came to pass that . . . King Benjamin thought it expedient that he should confer the kingdom upon one of his sons.

—Mosiah 1:14

He gave him charge concerning all the affairs of the kingdom.

—Mosiah 1:22

Glyphs from the Classic Maya inscriptions support this dynastic patrilineage (Morley 1983:94). Usually rulership passed to the eldest male son, although other relatives could be chosen if necessary.

Phonetic Reading

Emblem Glyph translations are not *readings* of Mayan words, but an interpretation of the glyphs without postulating the actual phonetic identity or particular word involved. The archaeology committee is aware of one exception. Yaxchilan has two Emblem Glyphs. The main sign (fig. 3) of one of these reads “Muluc.”

Mosiah, of Nephite lineage, came down to Mulekite territory to the city of Zarahemla at the time Zarahemla, a descendant of Mulek, reigned. The Nephite

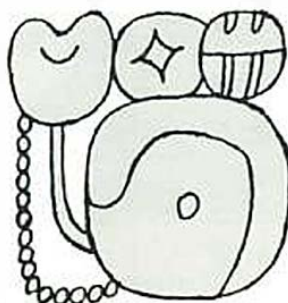


Fig. 3

writers in the Book of Mormon call it the city of Zarahemla because Zarahemla was ruling when they joined the Mulekites. What the Mulekites called their city is unknown.

Soon after arriving in Zarahemla, however, Mosiah became king. Thus the city of Zarahemla had a history of two ruling lineages, one descended from Mulek and one from Nephi.

With the understanding that Emblem Glyphs designate lineages of the ruling family of a particular site, and because Yaxchilan has two Emblem Glyphs and one translates Muluc, some Book of Mormon scholars feel Yaxchilan may be the city of Zarahemla.

By using the Book of Mormon in conjunction with current archaeological knowledge, greater understanding of Maya society and the Emblem Glyphs comes to light.

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The end of May saw the completion of the new headquarters for FRAA. Over the next few months, different departments and offices moved into the new building.

The research center/library target date for opening is September 3, 1991. Anyone may use the center. It will operate like other research libraries in that it will not be a lending facility. Research must be done at the library.

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Recent Additions to the Collections (not a complete list)

Maya: The Complete Catalogue of Glyph Readings, Kornelia Kurbjuhn, Schneider & Weber, 1989.

Sixth Palenque Round Table 1986, Merle Greene Robertson, general editor, University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

Sumer and the Sumerians, Harriet Crawford, Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Vision & Revision in Maya Studies, edited by Flora S. Clancy and Peter D. Harrison, University of New Mexico Press, 1990.

A Forest of Kings: The Untold Story of the Ancient Maya, Linda Schele and David Freidel, William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1990.

The Origins of Writing, edited by Wayne Senner, University of Nebraska Press, 1989.

Pre-Columbian Contact with the Americas across the Oceans: An Annotated Bibliography, volumes 1 & 2, John L. Sorenson and Martin H. Raish, Research Press, 1990.

Wish List of Books:

The Blood of Kings, Linda Schele and Mary Ellen Miller, Kimbell Art Museum, 1986, cloth (not paperback).

Deciphering the Maya Script, David Kelley, University of Texas Press, 1976.

The Alphabet, volumes 1 & 2, David Diringer, Funk & Wagnells, 1968.

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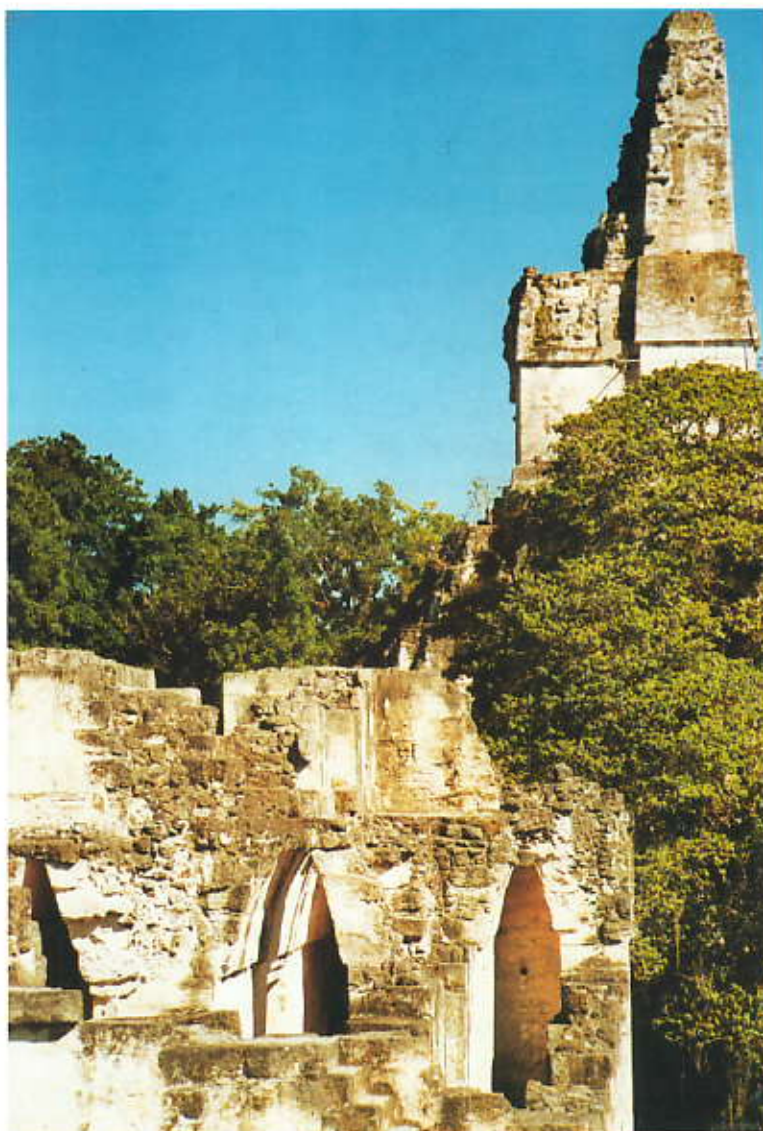
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The Maya developed a distinctive architectural style called the corbeled vault, a "false" arch made by laying a stone slab across the top of two walls built to slant toward each other. Corbel vaulting became a hallmark of the Classic period and can be found at most Maya sites. At Tikal, Temple I (commonly called Temple of the Giant Jaguar) towers 145 feet, overshadowing these triple arches of the Central Acropolis.

Radiocarbon dating of artifacts found in the North Acropolis place the beginning of Tikal between 550 and 600 B.C. While Temple I and the Central Acropolis pictured here date after the end of Book of Mormon history, other parts of the city, such as what is called today the Lost World Pyramid and Complex, were built in the two or three centuries surrounding the time of Christ.

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