

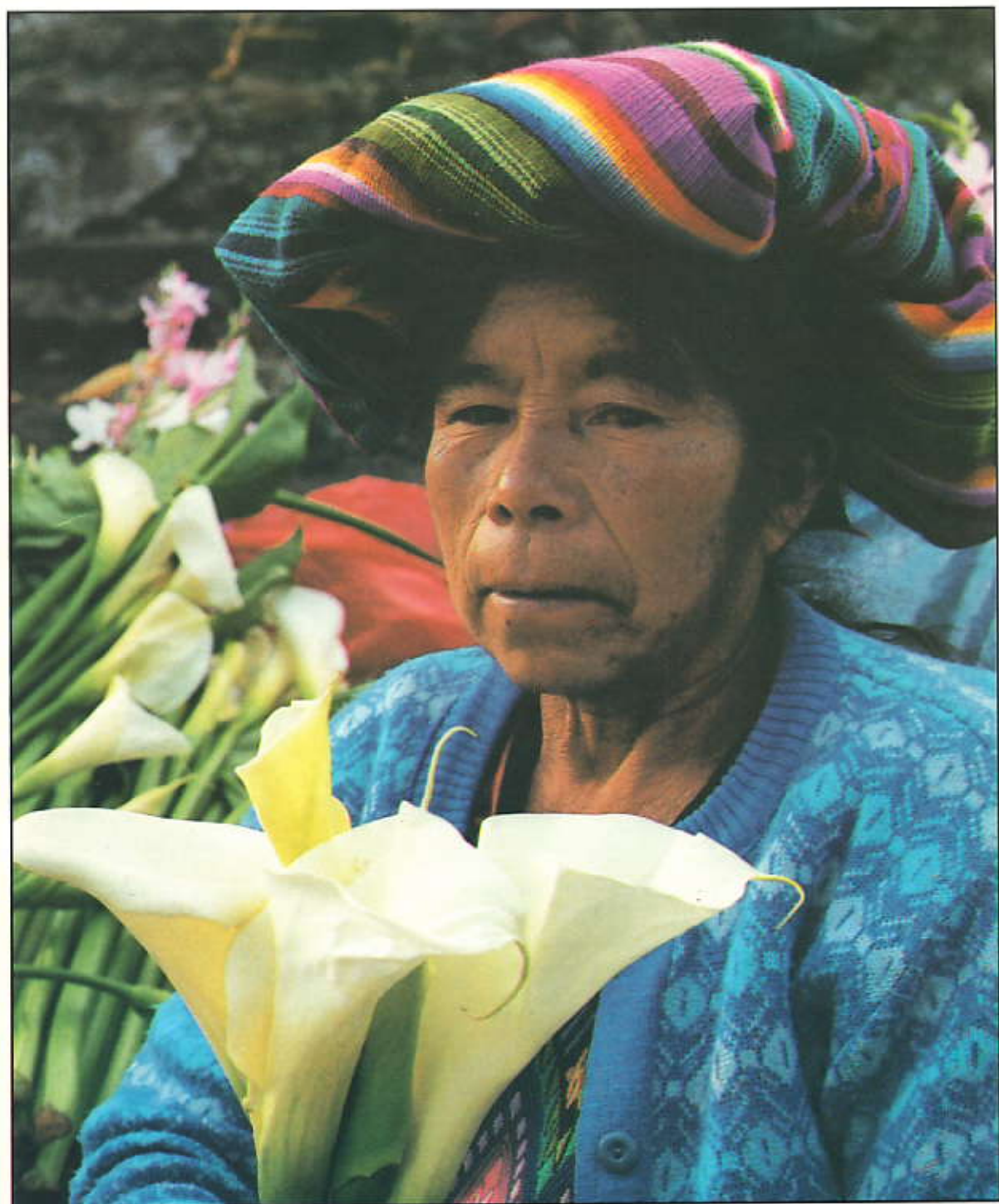
# The Witness

The Foundation For Research On Ancient America



Summer 1992

Number 77



Travel in Mesoamerica

Summer 1992

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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 . . .**

On market day in Chichicasteñango, Maya women sell flowers on the steps of the church of Santo Tomas. Diane Strampe, a young Milwaukee artist on the 1991 FRAA tour, photographed this woman with calla lilies. She used the photo for a painting with was accepted—along with three of her photographs—for a special show at a reputable art gallery in Milwaukee.

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# Foundation News

## New Building Dedicated

On April 6, 1992, a special service was held to dedicate FRAA's new headquarters. See page 13 for more details.

## Summer Internships for Students

This summer FRAA hopes to employ students to work on special projects related to The Book of Mormon. These will include activities such as research, preservation of library materials, and interaction in the activities and conferences of FRAA.

Students between the ages of 16 and 23 will be expected to work on Book of Mormon projects for 20 hours a week for six weeks. A full scholarship is \$600. Why not sponsor a student for a Book of Mormon internship? Contact FRAA at (816) 461-FRAA (3722).

## Maya Meetings in Texas

Several members of FRAA attended the annual Maya Meetings at the University of Texas-Austin, March 12-15. Along with Glenn Scott, Lyle Smith, Sherrie Smith, Brenda Trimble, and Linda Trimble of the archaeology committee were Shirley Heater (Zarahemla Research Foundation), Richard De Long (former FRAA board member now living in California), as well as Faye Shaw and Mary Jo Jackel from Lamoni, Iowa.

The two-day symposium held Thursday and Friday dealt with "Origins"—myths of creation, which Linda Schele focused on during the 16th annual hieroglyphic workshop on Saturday and Sunday. The most astounding fact to come from the meetings is that the tenaciously long-held view of no oceanic contact between the Old and

New Worlds and various Pacific islands is beginning to crumble. Linda Schele stated that the creation myths among the Maya of Mesoamerica, Chauvin of Peru, Anasazi of the Southwest, Creeks of the southeast U.S., and the people of the South Pacific are all the same.

This is truly a milestone in archaeological thought.

## Member of FRAA Board Receives Award



Audrey Stubbart, a member of the FRAA board almost since its beginning in the 1960s, has been named "Missouri's Older Worker of the Year." The story appeared in *The Independence Examiner*, March 9, 1992. Audrey works for *The Examiner* as a proofreader. She formerly worked at Herald Publishing House.

Congratulations Audrey! May we all show as much enthusiasm and enjoyment for work as Audrey!

## Congregational Book of Mormon Days

Beginning in March, FRAA changed its regional all-day Saturday conferences to a new format. The new focus is on Sunday mornings, sometimes also into the afternoons, sharing with congregations and branches about The Book of Mormon. Activities for both adults and children include animated stories from The Book of Mormon projected on a large screen, insightful research on Book of Mormon topics, songs, drama, and testimonies. To date, one such event has been held each month.

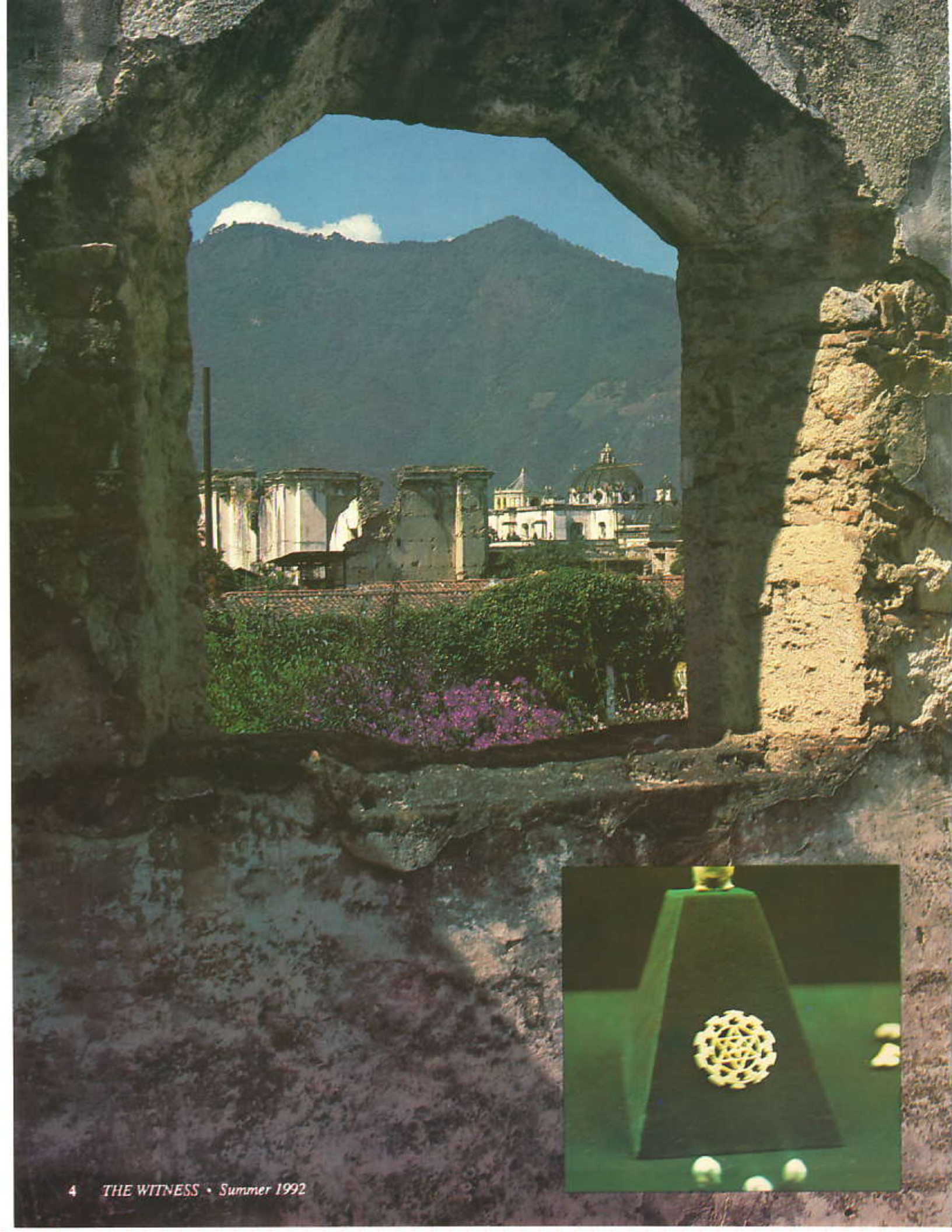
If you would like your branch to host "A Day with The Book of Mormon," contact Don Beebe, chairman of this activity, at (816) 461-FRAA (3722) or (816) 696-4094.

### Funds Needed For:

- Summer Student Internships
- Full scholarship \$600
- Half scholarship \$300
- Building Mortgage \$60,000

## Calendar

May 17 9:00 A.M.- 2:00 P.M.	Book of Mormon Day Zion's Outpost, Wichita, Kansas
June 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 July 6 7:30 P.M.	Book of Mormon/Archaeology Lectures FRAA, 210 W. White Oak, Independence, Missouri
June 14, 1992 7:30 P.M.	FRAA Board of Directors Meeting 210 W. White Oak
June 28 9:00 A.M.- 12:00 P.M.	Book of Mormon Day Atherton Restoration Branch, Missouri
December 26- January 6, 1993	Annual FRAA Archaeology Tour The Yucatan and Belize



# A Traveler in Mesoamerica

Brad Hampton

*Excerpt from a slide presentation given November 9, 1991 at the Texas Regional Spend a Day with The Book of Mormon.*

Travel in Mesoamerica is, above all, an adventure. It is adventure in the purest sense of the word—with elements of danger and excitement. Even more, it is an adventure of the heart, mind, and soul.

I was fortunate to join the tour sponsored by FRAA to Guatemala in 1989. When we landed in Guatemala City—which, by the way, many people believe to be in the Land of Nephi—my heart rejoiced. I was filled with the Spirit of the Lord. I knew we were on holy ground and were going to walk on sites and see things that perhaps the Lord Jesus Christ himself viewed as he visited the people.

Traveling through the country, the feeling remained just as strong. This was the land described in The Book of Mormon as the promised land, a choice land. Considered by many to be the most beautiful country in the world, Guatemala has more varieties of plants, birds, and animals than the entire United States. Almost anything will grow. More than a hundred species of orchids

*Antigua, Guatemala*

Inset:

*The National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Guatemala City exhibits this exquisite Star of David. Made of shell, its provenance is unknown, but the museum displays it with items from Tikal. Other examples of the Star of David are found throughout Mesoamerica. Photo by Brad Hampton.*

flourish in the forests. This verdant country was once home to Lehi and his family.

The insights we gained on our tour interwove with the very purposes of The Book of Mormon—purposes which came alive for us among the descendants of Book of Mormon peoples. We experienced a conversion of our intellects as well as an increased desire to witness of Jesus Christ through the added testimony of The Book of Mormon.

Usually the term conversion refers to a change of heart. We Christians spend much time and energy in the conversion of hearts—the softening of hearts—that we might bring broken hearts and contrite spirits to the Lord. But the Scriptures say the Lord desires us to serve him with all our “heart, might, *mind*, and strength” (D&C 4:1b). My experience in Guatemala, seeing real, historical places, led me to a conversion of the mind.

Let me explain. When The Book of Mormon came forth, the ruins we see today in Mesoamerica were virtually unknown. The book’s claim that great and advanced civilizations existed there more than two thousand years ago seemed improbable and unbelievable. Yet today, walking among the remnants of vast cities such as Tikal and Copan—ruins of great civilizations—it seems undeniably true that an advanced people such as described in The Book of Mormon once lived there.

While the reality of these ancient sites brought the conversion of my mind, the real impact came from meeting the modern day people of Guatemala. Pover-

ty casts a shadow over this beautiful country. Its indigenous peoples, most of whom are Mayan, suffer hardship. As I saw the way they lived, my heart ached to share with them the knowledge of their forefathers.

This was forcefully brought home when we witnessed pagan worship at a site in southern Guatemala near the Pacific Coast. A local Mayan, lighting candles at the base of an idol, petitioned his god on behalf of his crops and family. Many of us felt uneasy in the presence of this ritual and were relieved when we finally left.

The Doctrine and Covenants tells us that The Book of Mormon was preserved so that the Lamanites might come to the knowledge of their fathers and that they might know the promises of the Lord to them (D&C 2:6). This was the call given to the church at the time of the Restoration—and that calling still rests on the church.

Although The Book of Mormon is very dear to us and brings us joy in having the additional testimony of Jesus, the book is really for them. When I saw the way the people lived, the lack of the presence of



Brad Hampton

Christ in their lives, I understood the burden of that calling.

Another experience that affected me deeply was meeting Fidel, one of the local guides. He led us through the ruins of Copan. He told us that he had spent his life studying the Mayans, trying to understand the people who lived at Copan, which was also his home. He had had many spiritual dreams about them, their history and how they lived. The city had come alive for him as he took visitors through the ruins.

At Copan is a staircase covered with hieroglyphs describing a two-hundred year period in its history. In the middle of the staircase is a carving of the Star of David. Fidel explained that archaeologists and scholars say this representation of the Star of David (as we call it) was of an astronomical nature, not the Jewish symbol. He said, though, that he had wondered many times if the original people had, in fact, come from Jerusalem. You can imagine my joy and delight for him to express that thought.

Although he had been in con-



David Macomber

*Fidel has spent his life studying the Mayans of Copan. He said he has had many spiritual dreams about them and has wondered if the Maya people originally came from Jerusalem.*

*Below: "Travel in Mesoamerica is, above all, an adventure." The muddy trail into Seibal provided some of that adventure!*

*Lower Left: Once a year, on New Year's Day, the modern day Maya come to El Baul and petition this idol on behalf of their crops and family.*


tact with people before who believed The Book of Mormon, he was thrilled because I could speak to him in Spanish. I shared with him some of our ideas about Christ, his visit to the Americas, and the history of this people who truly had come from Jerusalem. We talked with him for almost two hours before we left, promising to mail him a Spanish copy of The Book of Mormon.



LaDon Pierpergeries



Don Beebe

We are all familiar with the picture of Jesus standing outside the house knocking on the door. It reminds us that Jesus knocks every day at the door of our lives and hearts. Perhaps one of the doors Jesus is knocking on in your life is the door to adventure, to opening yourself to a journey to Book of Mormon lands. If you open that door, I hope you, too, experience the excitement and joy I felt. May your heart be enriched, your mind converted, and your desire to witness strengthened. 

# The Hebrew Background of The Book of Mormon

John A. Tvedtnes

## Introduction

As members of FRAA have traveled around the country presenting all-day seminars about The Book of Mormon, a frequently asked question is how does the 1966 edition, commonly called the reader's edition, differ from the 1908 edition? Quite simply, the 1966 edition seeks to improve the English. Improving the English, however, diminishes the Hebraic elements.

Hebrew and English function quite differently. Thus the corrected English in the 1966 edition eliminates many of the Hebrew characteristics and obliterates evidence of the

authenticity of The Book of Mormon—that it is an ancient record written by prophets who wrote and spoke Hebrew (Mormon 4:99); a record translated by Joseph Smith, Jr., with the gift and power of God, not authored by him.

Nephi wrote that he made a record in the language of his father. This consisted of two things: "the learning of the Jews and the language of the Egyptians" (1 Nephi 1:1). Moroni clarifies this by saying that the "characters"—or script—was reformed Egyptian (Mormon 4:98). While the authors of The Book of Mormon tell us they wrote in reformed Egyptian, the many Hebrew lan-

guage patterns indicate the language was Hebrew. (See The Witness, Spring 1991, #72, p. 9-10; INSIGHTS, March 1992, No. 2.)

The Editorial Committee found the article presented here by John A. Tvedtnes clearly defines some of these Hebraisms—distinct characteristics of the Hebrew language as preserved in the English translation. Lack of room prevented the printing of the complete article. The following excerpts are reprinted with permission from The Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies. All scripture references have been changed to reflect the RLDS 1908 edition.

The Hebraisms in The Book of Mormon help persuade us that it is authentic. The following story will illustrate. During the years 1968-71, I taught Hebrew at the University of Utah. My practice was to ask new students to respond to a questionnaire, giving some idea of their interests and linguistic background. One student wrote that she wanted to study Hebrew in order to prove The Book of Mormon was a fraud. She approached me after class to explain.

When I inquired why she felt The Book of Mormon was fraudulent, she stated that it was full of errors. I asked for an example. She drew my attention to Alma 21:48, where we read, "When Moroni had said these words, he went forth among the people, waving the rent part of his garment in the air."

She noted that in the 1830 edition (p. 351), this read simply "waving the rent of his garment." In English, the *rent* is the hole in the garment, not the piece torn out of the garment. Therefore, Moroni could not have waved it. This was an error, she contended, and adding the word *part* later was mere deception. {The word *part* was not added to the 1908 or 1966 RLDS editions.}

Without a Hebrew background, I might have been bothered by it. But the explanation was clear when I considered how Moroni would have written that sentence. Hebrew does not have to add the word *part* to a verbal substantive like *rent* as English requires. Thus, *broken* in Hebrew can refer to a *broken thing* or a *broken part*, while *new* can refer to a *new thing*. In the verse the student cited, *rent*

would mean *rent thing* or *rent part*. Thus, the "error" she saw as evidence of fraud was really a Hebraism that was evidence for the authenticity of The Book of Mormon.

Significantly, the first (1830) edition of The Book of Mormon contains many more Hebraisms than later editions. Later editions, especially in 1837, 1840, and 1876, were edited to improve the English in areas where the text appeared to be awkward. Unfortunately, this destroyed some of the evidence for a Hebrew original. Therefore, I will occasionally refer to the reading of the 1830 edition to illustrate Hebraisms in The Book of Mormon.

## Construct State

When English shows a possessive or descriptive relationship

"*Nachala!*" (winter torrent) Nephi shouted. His cry went down the line of men and camels. "The big water comes! Up, up to the hills. Quick! Up to higher ground!"

Dory looked about, confused.

"Just do it!" Nephi urged.

"Go!" He helped her to mount her camel, slapping the beast on the rump to send it flying up the hill. He leaped onto his own camel, galloping down the line — warning, urging, prodding lazy camels toward the limestone slopes.

All were safe! Nephi sighed with relief. Everyone had been properly moved to higher ground.

But Dorcas was not with them. She was dashing back to the center of the wadi!

"What are you doing?" he screamed, wrenching his camel rein and thundering back toward her. "Kneel!" he ordered his camel. Roughly he yanked Dorcas onto his saddle behind him, prodding his camel up and onward.

She fought him, protesting, sobbing all the way. "My bag! I left my box! The embroidery for my wedding dress!" she cried.

"Hang on!" Nephi shouted over his shoulder. He had no time to argue. The wadi, once their broad, safe highway, now had become a death trap! Already he could hear the wall of water, roaring like an angry lion. They still had yards to go to reach higher ground.

"Help, Lord!" Nephi cried. "It comes. It comes!"

Then the flood was upon them, swirling around his camel, causing her to stumble. She regained her balance, complaining in loud, grievous moans. She struggled to walk, while the surging current tugged at her, trying to pull her under. The upward slope became slippery. In one desperate effort the camel lunged forward, pitching Nephi and Dorcas into the filthy broil.

"Help!" Dorcas yelled. "I can't swim!"

Nephi barely heard her over the rush of water. Above them a shadow sped across the sun and a chill wind blew. Black clouds with ragged tails hanging low raced across the sky. Large rain drops began to plop. Soon rain poured down in torrents. Nephi and Dorcas were kneedeep in the frothing, churning mud, struggling for a footing.

A rope flew out on to the water. Nephi missed it. The current was pulling them under. As they fought to breathe, Nephi grabbed Dorcas's waist.

Lightening flashed. Thunder rolled. They must get out! The next time the rope slapped the water, Nephi caught it.

He clung to the rope, but the slick mud loosened his grasp on Dorcas.

"I can't hang on," she cried, grabbing, clutching Nephi's coat.

"Try!" Nephi shouted. Every muscle was straining, yet he managed to grasp her hand.

Slowly, very slowly, someone pulled them upward.

Hail beat down upon them, like pellets of rock. They couldn't see. Slipping and falling, they strained to hang on.

At last they were in the arms of Mother Anna, Father Ishmael, and rejoicing brothers and sisters. Someone quickly threw a cloak around Dorcas. Although soaked and shivering, the two were safe.

From above they watched the roiling tide. Like a carob-colored sea, it churned forward, sweeping away whole trees. Here and there a badger clung to a limb. A bloated leopard floated by.

For awhile, the family just stared, trying to protect their heads from the icy pellets of hail. Water streamed everywhere, as the roar began to slacken.

"Nephi," Dorcas said between chattering teeth, "you saved my life just now."

"Remember the lifeline? Give God the glory," Nephi answered.

A sun ray shot through blue sky, now innocent of speeding destruction. The carpet of hail gleamed silver on the ground. The storm was over.

"I am so sorry, so sorry for not obeying you," Dory continued.

"And I am sorry for so roughly yanking you onto the saddle," Nephi answered.

"I gave you little choice," she said. "You might have died too."

Nephi wrestled with a tumult of feelings. Why had she not stayed on her camel? Why had she not obeyed him? He wanted to shake her and yell, "*How can I protect you when you disobey?*"

But when he looked upon her, rain still dripping down her nose, she looked so small, so helpless. What if he had lost her? She whom he had pledged to care for! She was alive and safe. He wanted to crush her to him and never let go.

She burst into tears. "Nephi, I didn't mean to . . . I didn't know the *nachala* comes so suddenly in the desert! With such force!"

"Ah," Nephi replied. "Rain blesses soft ground, but on hard earth, it can only rush on, carrying all with it to destruction. I am sorry you lost your embroidery. We can get another dress, but not another Dorcas. You will learn, my little gazelle,\* that only life is important in the wilderness."

Tenderly, with his forefinger, he blotted the tears running down her face. "No more tears, please, Dory," Nephi said. He cupped her chin in his hand and looked gently upon her. "Please, we have more than enough water already."

Her smile was as bright as the sun warming their chilled bodies.

"Trouble comes suddenly in the wilderness. Help me to listen to the Lord, Dory," Nephi said softly. "Our very lives depend on obedience to him."

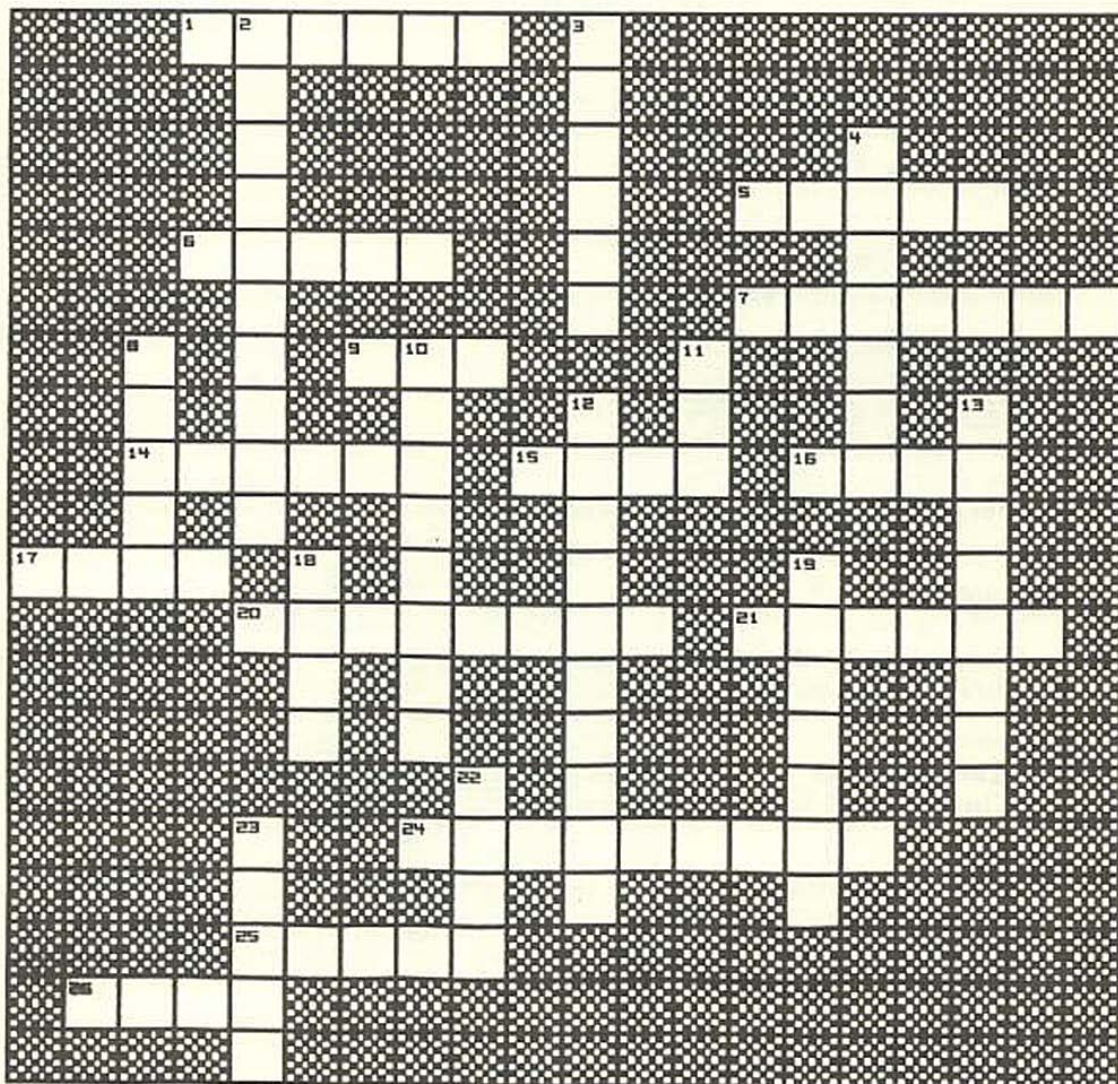
\**Dorcas means gazelle — a swift, beautiful, graceful desert animal.*



# CROSSWORD STORM

## WORD LIST:

ABA  
 ANNA  
 BOX  
 CAMELS  
 DATES  
 DESERT  
 DOVES  
 DORCAS  
 EMBROIDERY  
 GAZELLE  
 GRASS  
 HAIL  
 HAWK  
 ISHMAEL  
 KINDLING  
 LAVENDER  
 NACHALA  
 NEPHI  
 OBEDIENT  
 PURPLE  
 ROPE  
 SAGE  
 THYME  
 UNLEAVENED  
 WADI  
 WATERFALL



## ACROSS CLUES

1. Sandy, barren wilderness
5. Camel food
6. Cooing birds
7. Name of the father of Dorcas
9. What Dorcas left behind
14. The color of the hills
15. Name of the mother of Dorcas
16. A dry river bed
17. Small balls or pellets of ice
20. Fragrant pale purple mint
21. Desert beasts of burden
24. What Dory thought caused the sound of rushing waters
25. Seasoning herb
26. Used to pull Nephi and Dorcas from the water

## DOWN CLUES

2. Needlework designs
3. Girl's name that means gazelle
4. Winter torrent or flood
8. Son of Lehi
10. Doing what the Lord commands
11. Sleeveless overcoat
12. Bread made with salt and water without yeast
13. Used to start fires
18. Bird of prey that circled lazily overhead
19. Swift, small, graceful antelope with soft shining eyes
22. Grey-green herb
23. Sweet oval fruit from the date palm



# PROMISES TO LIVE BY



After you fill in the blank with the correct word, memorize the suggested Book of Mormon scripture for each Sunday of the

month. The missing words are listed below. If you are not sure of the word, look it up in your Book of Mormon.

June 7

Awake, my sons: Put on the \_\_\_\_\_ of righteousness (2 Nephi 1:38).

June 14

Rejoice, O my heart, and cry unto the Lord, and say, O Lord, I will praise thee for ever; yea, my soul will rejoice in thee, my God, and the rock of my \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Nephi 3:50).

June 21

O the greatness of the \_\_\_\_\_ of our God, the Holy One of Israel [Jesus Christ]! (2 Nephi 6:43).

June 28

"And they that \_\_\_\_\_ in him [Christ], shall be saved (2 Nephi 1:77).

July 5

Behold, all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, shall dwell safely in the Holy One of Israel, if it so be that they will \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Nephi 7:64).

July 12

And if there be no righteousness, there be no \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Nephi 1:90).

July 19

Wherefore let us be faithful in keeping the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord (1 Nephi 1:76).

July 26

The Lord knoweth all things from the \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Nephi 2:100).

August 2

For [God] is the same \_\_\_\_\_, to-day, and for ever (1 Nephi 3:27).

August 9

For he that diligently seeketh shall find; and the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them by the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Ghost, as well in this time as in times of old (1 Nephi 3:29-30).

August 16

Therefore remember, O man, for all thy doings thou shalt be brought into \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Nephi 3:33).

August 23

He that is \_\_\_\_\_, is favored of God (1 Nephi 5:122).

August 30

Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the \_\_\_\_\_, They shall be saved (1 Nephi 7:37).

The missing words are in alphabetical order.

- |              |           |           |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| armor        | happiness | repent    |
| beginning    | judgment  | righteous |
| believe      | mercy     | salvation |
| commandments | power     | yesterday |
|              | prophet   |           |

## ANSWERS: CROSSWORD STORM



Nephi was protected from terrible danger because he obeyed the Lord. Can you think of a time in your family when obedience to God protected you from sudden danger?

Please send your testimony to *The Junior Witness*  
Editor, 210 W. White Oak, Independence, Missouri 64050.



also. In Hebrew, it is used to emphasize the close links between two things, as in this biblical passage: "**Both** drink thou, **and** I will **also** draw for thy camels" (Genesis 24:45). Here are some examples from The Book of Mormon that seem to reflect the Hebrew usage.

They . . . worshiped the Father in his name; **and also**, we worship the Father in his name (Jacob 3:5).

The Lord hath heard the prayers of his people, **and also** the prayers of his servant Alma (Mosiah 11:167).

**Now** the sons of Mosiah were numbered among the unbelievers; **and also** one of the sons of Alma was numbered among them (Mosiah 11:159).

### Subordinate Clauses

Biblical Hebrew begins subordinate clauses with prepositions plus a word that translates as **that**, such as in Ezekiel 40:1: "**after that** the city was smitten." Such a use of **that** in English is awkward and therefore rare. Yet it appears frequently in The Book of Mormon, another evidence of Hebrew influence. It was even more frequent in the 1830 editions, but many of the **thats** were dropped from later editions to read more smoothly (noted in the following examples by brackets).

**And because that** they are redeemed from the fall (2 Nephi 1:117)

**because that** my heart is broken (2 Nephi 3:54)

**because [that]** they had hardened their hearts (1 Nephi 5:27)

**before [that]** they were slain (1 Nephi 3:151)

**before [that]** he shall manifest himself in the flesh (Enos 1:11)

**and after that** I had been lifted up upon the cross (3 Nephi 12:26)

**after that** I am gone to the Father (3 Nephi 13:12)

### The Relative Clause

In Hebrew, the word that marks the beginning of a relative clause (generally translated **which** or **who** in English) does not always closely follow the word it refers back to, as it usually does in English. Some Book of Mormon passages give the impression of having been translated from such Hebrew sentences:

Our brother Nephi . . . has taken it upon him to be our ruler and our teacher, **who** are his elder brethren (1 Nephi 5:48) instead of **to be a ruler and teacher to us, who are his elder brethren.**

The Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea, **who** were the armies of Pharaoh (1 Nephi 5:109) instead of **the Egyptians, who were the armies of Pharaoh, were drowned in the Red Sea.**

Then shall they confess, **who** live without God in the world (Mosiah 11:198) instead of **then shall they who live without God in the world confess.**

### Extrapositional Nouns and Pronouns

Hebrew often uses a noun or pronoun as the direct object of the verb in one clause and a pronoun referring to the same person or thing in the following clause in a way that seems unnecessary or redundant in English. For example in Genesis 1:4 we read, "God saw the light, that it was good." In this case, the King James Bible reflects the Hebrew wording, despite the fact that in English the normal way of saying this

would be "God saw that the light was good." This Hebraic usage is also found in The Book of Mormon.

I beheld **the wrath of God**, that **it** was upon the seed of my brethren (1 Nephi 3:150)

And I beheld **the Spirit of the Lord**, that **it** was upon the Gentiles (1 Nephi 3:151)

I . . . beheld **the power of the Lamb of God**, that **it** descended (1 Nephi 3:230)

### Naming Conventions

When a child is born, we say in English that his father and mother "called him X" or "named him X." The same is true in naming places, for example, "He called his ranch Pleasant Valley." But Hebrew expresses it quite differently. "He called the name of his son X." In Hebrew, it is the **name** that is "called," not the child or the place.

Perhaps the best-known example from the Bible is the one found in Isaiah 7:14: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and shall bear a son, and shall **call his name** Immanuel." This idiom is found in a number of places in The Book of Mormon.

we did call the **name** of the place Shazer (1 Nephi 5:16)

and they called the **name** of the city Moroni (Alma 22:14-15)

He had three sons; and he called their **names** Mosiah, and Helorum, and Helaman (Mosiah 1:2)

### Possessive Pronouns

In Hebrew, a possessive pronoun is added to the end of the noun. Thus **my book** would be **the book of me**. This Hebraic usage is reflected in several examples from The Book of Mormon.

hear the words of me (Jacob 3:30)

the Gentiles shall be great in the eyes of me (2 Nephi 7:14)

For they are delivered by the power of him (2 Nephi 6:54)

setteth at naught the atonement of him and the power of his redemption (Moroni 8:21)

### Words Used in Unusual Ways

At several points in The Book of Mormon, we encounter English words used in ways that are unknown or unexpected in our language. King Mosiah said, "I shall give this people a name, that thereby they may be distinguished above all the people" (Mosiah 1:17). In English we would expect distinguished from. But The Book of Mormon passage reflects the normal Hebrew expression, which uses the compound preposition that means from above.

Jacob wrote that Nephi instructed him regarding Nephite sacred preaching, revelations, and prophecies that "I should engrave the heads of them upon these plates" (Jacob 1:4). The



Guest speaker John Tvedtnes gave two talks October 6, 1990, at the sixth annual Spend a Day with The Book of Mormon: "A Response to Some Criticisms of The Book of Mormon" and "The Nephite Purification Ceremony." These presentations are available on one videotape for \$15. To order: write Penny Dunning, FRAA, 210 W. White Oak, Independence, Missouri 64050.

term head seems out of place. We would expect something like most important to be used. But the expression is readily explainable in terms of Hebrew. The Hebrew word for the head of the body is sometimes used to describe things as chief (see Deuteronomy 33:15; Psalm 137:6; and Proverbs 1:21) or precious (see Amos 6:1; Ezekiel 27:22). This is probably

the sense in which Jacob used the word.

Nephi wrote, "We are upon an isle of the sea" (2 Nephi 7:35). It seems strange to have Nephi call the American continent an island. But the Hebrew word generally translated isle in the Bible has a wider range of meaning than just island. It most often refers to coastal lands.

### Conclusion

*These few examples of Hebraisms by Tvedtnes help to demonstrate that The Book of Mormon is an authentic ancient Hebrew text. The complete version of the above article appeared in Rediscovering The Book of Mormon, published by Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies, Deseret Book, 1991. The book may be ordered for \$8.95 from F.A.R.M.S., P.O. Box 7113, University Station, Provo, Utah 84602.*

*Much more linguistic evidence for the influence of Hebrew on The Book of Mormon exists. See these sources for further study.*

*"Hebrew Poetry in The Book of Mormon" Parts 1 & 2 by Angela Crowell in Zarahemla Record No. 32, 33, & 34, 1986.*

*The Contents, Structure and Authorship of the Book of Mormon by J. N. Washburn, 1954.*

*"A New Day Dawns for the Book of Mormon," by Roy Weldon in The Saints' Herald, April 8, 1957.*

*"Hebraisms in the Nephite Record" by Roy Weldon in Volume III of Book of Mormon Deeps, 1979.*

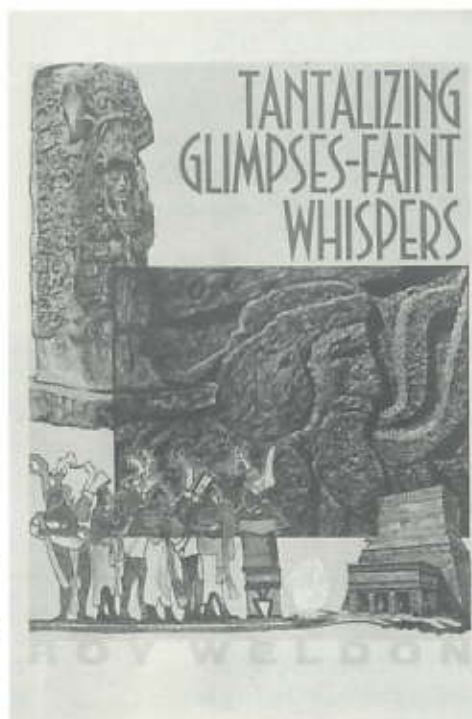
*Read more about the different editions of The Book of Mormon in a series of articles by Shirley Heater in Zarahemla Record Nos. 35-38, 48, and 51-55.*

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# Can Forgiven Sins Be Returned?

Dale Godfrey

**F**orgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us" (Matthew 6:13).

These well-known words from the Lord's Prayer are often repeated by Christians. Few, however, can quote the verse immediately following in which Christ explains to his disciples the meaning of this portion of the Lord's Prayer.

**For if ye forgive men their trespasses, who trespass against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses.**

—Matthew 6:16

The Lord's Prayer in The Book of Mormon has slightly different words but makes the same point. "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (3 Nephi 5:104).

We often pray these words of forgiveness, but do we fully appreciate what they mean? Some of us would say forgiveness of sins means those sins are gone forever, and we will never have to worry or be accountable for them again.

But what do the Scriptures say? The Bible, Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants all seem to advocate the proposition that a sin, once forgiven, may indeed not be gone forever.

Enos 1:3,7 makes it clear that *forgiveness* of sins and *remission* of sins are one and the same.

**And I will tell you of the wrestle which I had before God, before I received a remission of my sins. . .**

**And there came a voice unto me saying, Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed (emphasis added).**

Mosiah 8:42,44 likewise supports this position.

**I say unto you, that all those who have hearkened unto their words, and believed that the Lord would redeem his people, and have looked forward to that day for a remission of their sins. . . .**

**For these are they whose sins he has borne; these are they for whom he has died, to redeem them from their transgressions.**

Although forgiveness of sins and remission of sins seem to be synonymous, use of the term "remission" appears to cast removal of sin in a different light.

A simple analogy might be between sin and cancer. A person with cancer may suffer from the illness for an extended period of time. Then, due to treatment or some other reason, the disease becomes inactive. As long as the cancer lies dormant or is in remission, the person is in no danger of dying from the disease. If the cancer comes out of remission, however, and once again attacks the body, that person is again at risk.

The Scriptures seem to indi-

cate that remission of sin is similar. As long as sin is in remission (forgiven), it has no effect upon us, and we stand in no danger of suffering the consequences.

But can a sin, once forgiven, reassert itself and again make us accountable in eternity for its accompanying penalty? The parable Christ gave his disciples in Matthew 18:23-34 illustrates this point.

Christ said the king of heaven was "likened unto a certain king, who would take account of his servants." When the king began the reckoning, "one was brought unto him who owed him ten thousand talents."

The man "had not to pay," however, and he begged the king, saying, "Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." The plea of the servant moved the king with compassion, and he forgave the servant the debt.

This same servant, though,

**went out, and found one of his fellow servants which owed him a hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.**

**And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.**

The unmerciful servant, though, cast his fellow servant into prison until the debt was

paid. This displeased the servant's friends, who came to the king and told him what had happened. The king in turn called the servant and said,

O thou wicked servant! I forgave thee all that debt; because thou desiredst me; shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?

And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

This parable of the unmerciful servant clearly parallels what happens to us when we refuse forgiveness to those against whom we may have aught. In the case of the unmerciful servant, his former debts (sins) which had been *forgiven* were *returned* to him and he again became accountable for the payment of those debts.

Christ's statement to the Nephites further emphasizes the fact that our sins may be returned to us.

Nevertheless, when they shall have received the fullness of my gospel, then if they shall harden their hearts against me, I will return their iniquities upon their own heads, saith the Father.

—3 Nephi 9:66

The Doctrine and Covenants likewise contains this principle of forgiveness.

And now, verily I say unto you, I, the Lord, will not lay any sin to your charge; go your ways and sin no more; but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God.

—D&C 81:2

This concept is consistent with another principle found in the Doctrine and Covenants: "I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say, but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise" (81:3b).

King Benjamin in The Book of Mormon wisely counsels us on how to retain a remission of

sins. First, remember the greatness of God and our own nothingness; second, humble ourselves "even in the depths of humility;" third, call on the name of the Lord daily, and fourth, stand steadfastly in the faith.

And behold, I say unto you, that if ye do this, ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins.

—Mosiah 2:22

The implication of this scripture is that if we do not do those things referred to, we will *not retain* a remission of sins. King Benjamin points out that retaining a remission of our sins is a day-to-day process.

For the sake of these things which I have spoken unto you; that is, for the sake of *retaining a remission of your sins from day to day*, that ye may walk guiltless before God.

—Mosiah 2:42

Alma 2:20 also suggests that remission of sins is an active procedure.

While others were abasing themselves, succoring those who stood in need of their succor, such as imparting their substance to the poor and the needy; feeding the hungry; and suffering all manner of afflictions, for Christ's sake . . . thus *retaining a remission of their sins*.

This understanding of forgiveness and the remission of sins casts new light on the necessity to comply with Lehi's admonition to his sons shortly before his death: "Wherefore if ye shall be obedient to the commandments, and *endure to the end*, ye shall be saved at the last day" (1 Nephi 7:69).

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# FRAA DEDICATES BUILDING

Patricia Beebe

"And it came to pass" that the Lord provided a place for FRAA. The Foundation recently purchased a building at 210 W. White Oak, just two blocks from the Independence square. After many hours of work and much renovation, FRAA took the opportunity to say thank you to those who made it possible.

More than 125 members of Helaman's Two Thousand, FRAA's faithful contributors, attended the dedication service Monday evening, April 6, 1992. Guests came from all across the

United States, Canada and Nigeria, filling the conference room and library to overflowing.

Michael Gatrost, president of FRAA, welcomed the guests and presided over the service. A special tribute was given to Thelona Stevens who longed for the time when FRAA would have its own building. Roy Weldon shared special insights, and Vivian Sorensen petitioned the Lord in a heartfelt prayer of dedication and blessing. Special music was brought by Karl and

Kevin Anderson. The building truly filled to overflowing, both physically and spiritually.

Immediately following the dedication service, guests sampled delicious food from a beautifully decorated buffet table. Julie Gatrost, Linda Trimble, and Brenda Trimble served those who stayed to visit and explore the building.

Many viewed, and some purchased, the paintings by Thelona Stevens that hang from the walls throughout the building. Thelona donated the paintings to the Foundation to sell as a means of raising funds to help defray expenses. Sixteen remain for sale.

Throughout the week, more than 500 people came to see the building and hear the lecture/testimony classes each evening. Greeting so many who love The Book of Mormon blessed and uplifted the staff.

Why don't you become a member of Helaman's Two Thousand and join others in promoting Jesus Christ and the light found in The Book of Mormon.



# Gustav and the Golden Plates

Dan Hight

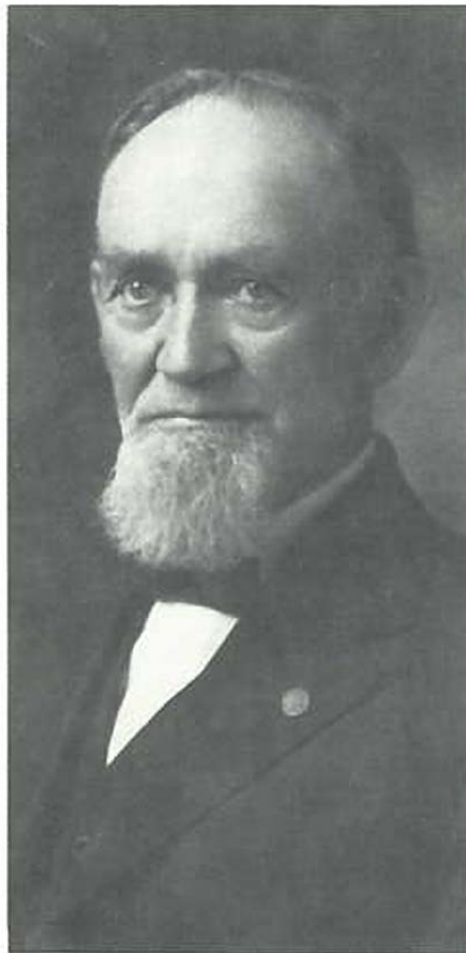
**M**y great grandfather, Gustav Koehn, was born in Hamburg, Germany. At the age of 15, he emigrated to the United States by stowing away on a freighter. After landing in the New World, he traveled to Pennsylvania and settled with a large colony of German people.

There he met and married a young lady by the name of Matilda Fritzsinger. Their youngest child, Tillie, was my grandmother. Since Matilda could speak only German, Tillie became her English translator.

Gustav, keenly interested in religion, studied and became a minister in the Evangelical Church. At the time, that church was moving west with the German population. One area, southwest Iowa, not only had a large number of Germans, but, according to Evangelicals, needed help because of a particular problem—the Mormons (RLDS). So, Gustav and Matilda moved to Magnolia, Iowa. Magnolia, along with the towns of Woodbine and Mondamin, were strongholds of the early Reorganization. The church's first reunions were held at Woodbine.

While living there, Tillie fell in love with a young man named Edward Hight, one of the "Mormons." Their marriage was a scandal in the eyes of the Evangelicals and a tragedy for Gustav and Matilda. They had been called to fight the Mormon blight, and then their daughter married one of them!

The marriage distressed the Koehns to the point that they actually disowned my grandmother, and for a period of six



Courtesy of the Roy Hight Family

## Gustav Koehn

years she was not allowed into their home. Then Matilda fell and broke her hip. Her health failed. She and Gustav needed help.

Tillie and Edward came and ministered to their needs, in spite of the fact that they were not welcome in the home. Not only did they minister, but, as has been related to me by my father, the saints in southwest Iowa also came, those from Woodbine, Magnolia, and Mondamin.

They brought necessary supplies into the home, helped prepare food, and cut firewood. As a result, the heart of Gustav Koehn, the German Evangelical minister, was softened. He decided "Mormons" weren't so bad after all—except for their accursed Book of Mormon.

Time went by and Matilda

passed away. Gustav, who was getting old by then, said although he had a good feeling towards the saints because of what they had done, he still could not accept The Book of Mormon.

One night, though, Gustav had a dream. In the dream, he saw an angel. The angel showed him the golden plates of The Book of Mormon and turned the plates leaf by leaf. He told Gustav, "*This book is true.*"

Just that simple! (An angel of few words.) Gustav was convinced and at age 71 was baptized into the church.

Immediately the Evangelical hierarchy came to him and demanded, "Gustav, you have taken leave of your senses. You must go before your church and tell them that you made a mistake!"

He took the opportunity to appear before his former parishioners where he declared, "I have preached the gospel for 47 years as I knew it, but I have found a greater light, and I cannot deny it." As a result, a few in the congregation, whose hearts were softened because of the ministry they had received from Gustav through the years, also came into the church.

The Evangelical Church cut off Gustav's pension even though he had been a minister for them all his adult life. This didn't bother him, however, because he felt that The Book of Mormon and the testimony he had were precious and beautiful. He was ordained a priest and ministered until his death at 92.

Gustav Koehn gave up the monetary security he had earned for his old age because he "found a greater light" and could not deny it. He knew firsthand an eternal truth: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).





## Notes and News from the FRAA Research Library

Sherrie Kline Smith

During the week of April 6, many people stopped in to see and use FRAA's new information center/library. As more of our members become aware of the center and what it can do for them, we receive more requests for information.

Several other exciting events have happened since the library began formal operations the beginning of this year. A recent survey of 265 randomly selected members of Helaman's Two Thousand provided helpful comments and suggestions for the development of the information center. As a result, the information center/library will now be open on Saturdays from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. as well as Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays (10 A.M. to 4 P.M.).

Funds, about \$3,000, were received and used to purchase the computer and software for the information center. The next few months will see the implementation of the new program—creating a catalog of books, manuscripts and nonprint materials—into an easily searched database. This will help immensely in finding requested information.

### Recent Donations

Garth McKeage responded to a request on the Wish List in the last issue and provided the funds to purchase the *International Encyclopedia of Linguistics*. This brand new publication should help in the study of linguistics, an anthropological area now experiencing great breakthroughs.

Louise Gregson donated volumes IV and V of *Times and Seasons*, published in 1844 at Nauvoo by John Taylor, and a 1949 edition of *The Book of Mormon*.

Scottie Wilcox, of Maine, who

contributes books regularly to the library, again in April gave FRAA several, including, among others, *Young People's History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, Vol. 2, 1918, and *Roots of the Reorganized Latter Day Saints in Southern Iowa* by Pearl Wilcox.

We still would like to have all issues from 1991 of *Natural History*. One of our readers brought in the March and April issues. If any of you subscribe to this magazine and would like to donate the remaining copies, please call (816) 461-FRAA.

### Recent Article Worth Reading

"Paper Route" in *Natural History*, 6/91, provides a good example of the break beginning to occur among archaeologists in the Bering Strait theory. More and more reputable and well-respected archaeologists, such as Michael Coe, are venturing to admit contact occurred between the Old and New Worlds other than across the Bering Strait. (See April, 1992, MIGHTY SUMMONS, "Archaeology News.")

### Latest Additions to the Collections:

(not a complete list)

*International Encyclopedia of Linguistics*, 4 volumes, Oxford University Press, 1992.

*New Theories on the Ancient Maya*, Elin C. Danien and Robert J. Sharer, editors, The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 1992.

*Yaxchilan: The Design of a Maya Ceremonial City*, Carolyn E. Tate, University of Texas Press, 1992.

*Ancient Maya Civilization*, Norman Hammond, updated, 1990.

*Traditional Papermaking and Paper Cult Figures of Mexico*, Alan R. Sandstrom and Pamela Effrcin, 1986.

*Ancient Chalcatzingo*, David C. Grove, editor, 1987.

*Illustrated Dictionary and Concordance of the Bible*, Reader's Digest Association, 1986.

### Needed: Researchers

Discoveries and events in the fields of archaeology and linguistics are happening so quickly it is difficult to keep up. We need people to do specific research in selected subjects.

We also would like someone to research and prepare resources to help artists and writers portray Book of Mormon people as historically accurately as possible. This would include areas such as clothing, hairstyles, architecture, etc.

If you would like to help, please contact FRAA, 210 W. White Oak, Independence, Missouri 64050, or call (816) 461-FRAA (3722).

### Wish List

- \* Acid-free File Cases for Periodicals, including the *Saints Herald* \$250
- \* Insertable Light Viewer for Slides in Binders \$ 80
- \* Photograph Preservation Supplies \$300
- \* Publications (Books, etc.) \$1000

Call FRAA Information Center/Library if you can help with any of these projects. Thanks! (816) 461-FRAA (3722)

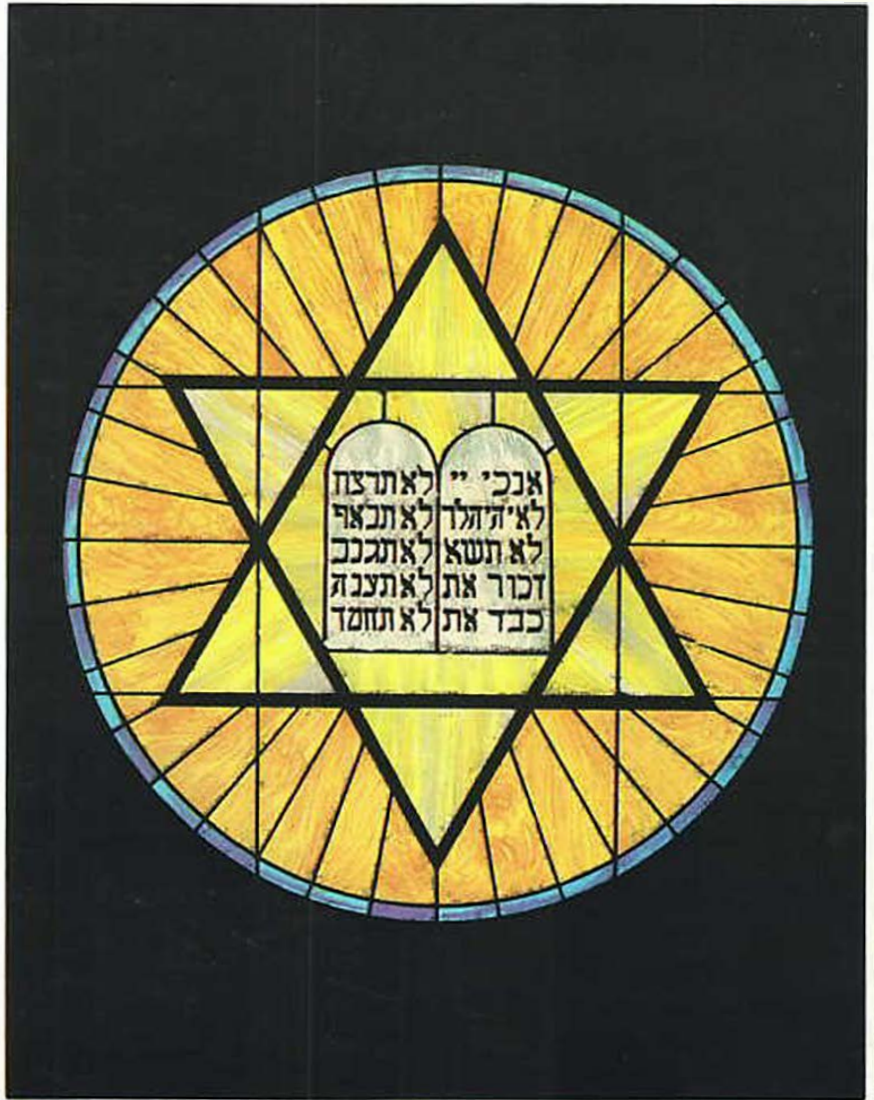
For the people who worship in Congregation Anshei Israel at Tucson, Arizona, the design and color of the stained glass window—the Ten Commandments written in Hebrew script and set within the yellow Star of David—symbolize their Hebraic, or Jewish, roots.

The six-pointed star, or hexagram, originated in antiquity. Many ancient civilizations besides the Israelites—Mesopotamia, Great Britain, and India, for example—used it. The star only became an official symbol of the Jews in the 17th century in Prague.

Later, in the 19th century, Jews universally adopted the emblem in imitation of the cross of Christianity. During the Nazi occupation of Europe, Jews were forced to wear the yellow star badge, thus investing the image with a symbolism of martyrdom and heroism.

Examples of the Star of David appear throughout Mesoamerica (see pp. 4 & 5). These may indicate the presence of Israelites, but since several ancient civilizations also used the Star of David, one should use caution in citing it as "evidence" for people with an ancient Hebraic background.

The language of *The Book of Mormon*, however, provides a strong witness that the people of the record were Hebrews. John Tvednes addresses this in his article "Hebrew Language Structure in *The Book of Mormon*" (p. 7).



Drawing by Glenn Scott

**The Witness**

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