
THE

WITNESS

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*For there is a God, and he hath
created all things,
both the heavens and the earth,
and all things that in them is;*

ISSUE 163 / WINTER 2017-SPRING 2018

THE
WITNESS

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Cover Photo Courtesy of Dale Godfrey
(2 Nephi 1:95 RLDS) [2 Nephi 2:14 LDS]

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FOUNDATION

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Through research, publications, seminars and related projects, members of The Book of Mormon Foundation seek to assist in bringing forth the light contained in the Book of Mormon.

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~ Laura Clute ~

My heart is heavy as I announce that Laura Clute has resigned as the graphic designer of *The Witness*. I want to take this opportunity to thank Laura for working with The Book of Mormon Foundation for the past seven years. She began with the Fall 2010 and ended with the Fall 2017 issues. I have deep appreciation and respect for Laura's creative and innovative skills. From the very beginning, Laura and I were creatively connected. I would explain how I would like an article illustrated and she would take my vision from conception to design and make it better than I could ever imagine. I have been particularly impressed with how Laura achieves the highest quality product with diligence and dedication. Her approach, using multicolored visuals, was not only used in the design of *The Witness*, but also on numerous other projects for the Foundation. Most impressively, was the design of the Book of Mormon Overview.

During the seven years we have worked together, it's been my pleasure to watch Laura's family grow. She has given birth to her two daughters, Anna and Raelynn, who are the greatest joy in her life.

Laura, you will be missed, but The Book of Mormon Foundation wishes you and your family the best as you continue in service to the Lord. Well done Laura!

Linda Guin, Editor
The Witness

Please join The Book of Mormon Foundation in welcoming Lora Cox as the new designer of *The Witness*! She brings years of experience to the job, as well as, a positive, willing attitude. I'm looking forward to a long and productive relationship.

Welcome aboard Lora!

NEW ASTOUNDING DISCOVERIES VERIFY INFORMATION IN THE BOOK OF MORMON

by Sherrie Kline Smith and Lyle Leon Smith

In the early days of February 2018, the media exploded with startling news about discoveries hidden beneath the thick rainforest canopy in northern Guatemala.

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The findings  
of this first  
phase of  
Pacunam's  
LiDAR  
Initiative  
appears to  
confirm, in a  
marvelous way,  
information  
found in  
The Book of  
Mormon.  
~~~~~

According to archaeologist Stephen Houston, the results were “breath-taking” and “one of the greatest advances in over 150 years of Maya archaeology” (BBC News). Other Maya scholars say the new data is a game-changer; it’s beyond stupendous; this is really big news; the discipline [Maya archaeology] is turned on its head; it’s revolutionizing Maya archaeology.

In a nutshell, the “breath-taking” results include the discovery of over 60,000 new structures as well as other aspects about the ancient Maya, including a much higher population than previously estimated, vast agricultural acres with industrialized water management systems, raised roads and causeways interconnecting virtually all the Maya cities, and massive defensive fortifications and interconnected watchtowers indicating large-scale warfare throughout the area. Much of the ideas mentioned here were already known among archaeologists, but a new aerial survey revealed the scale to be three or four times larger than before.

Aerial Surveying and Mapping with LiDAR

How were these discoveries made? By LiDAR, Light Detection and Ranging, a combination of light and radar. Aircraft, equipped with a LiDAR scanner that uses lasers linked to a GPS system, flies over the rainforest to carry out the mapping. The results provide a 3D image with a detailed survey of what lies beneath the jungle canopy.



Sitting on top of a massive man-made platform, Tikal's Temple IV rises another 212 ft., making it one of the tallest structure of any ancient civilization in the Americas.

The first part of the Pacunam LiDAR Initiative consisted of about 810 sq. miles of the Maya Biosphere Reserve in northern Guatemala, part of a larger area known archaeologically as the Maya Lowlands. The Pacunam Foundation is a Guatemalan nonprofit that fosters scientific research, sustainable development, and cultural heritage preservation. The National Center for Airborne Laser Mapping, based at the University of Houston, did the survey.

Archaeologist Francisco Estrada-Belli, a co-director of the Initiative, told CBS News that LiDAR is revolutionizing archaeology the way the Hubble Space Telescope revolutionized astronomy with its discovery of thousands of unknown galaxies. “Part of the jungle we thought was empty is full of cities and small towns and amazing things that we didn’t suspect were there” (CBS News).

For years Maya archaeologists have hacked their way through the dense rainforest jungle to locate ruins. Thomas Garrison, co-director of the project, said his team took eight years to map less than a square mile at El Zotz. “The plane using LiDAR took data for 67 square miles in a matter of hours” (NPR).

This first phase mapped only a tenth of the projected 5,000 square miles (National Geographic). The ten targeted areas of phase one included the sites of Tikal, Uaxactun, Naachtun, Holmul, Xultun, San Bartolo, El Peru-Waka, El Tintal, El Zotz, and La Corona. This survey occurred in 2016, but it took months of computer modeling to put together the data and get results.

The Initiative is one of the largest-scale archaeological LiDAR surveys to date, but not the first in the Maya region. Husband and wife team Arlen and Diane Chase pioneered the LiDAR technique in Belize in 2009 and 2010. About the same time, archaeologist Anabel Ford used LiDAR at El Pilar, a

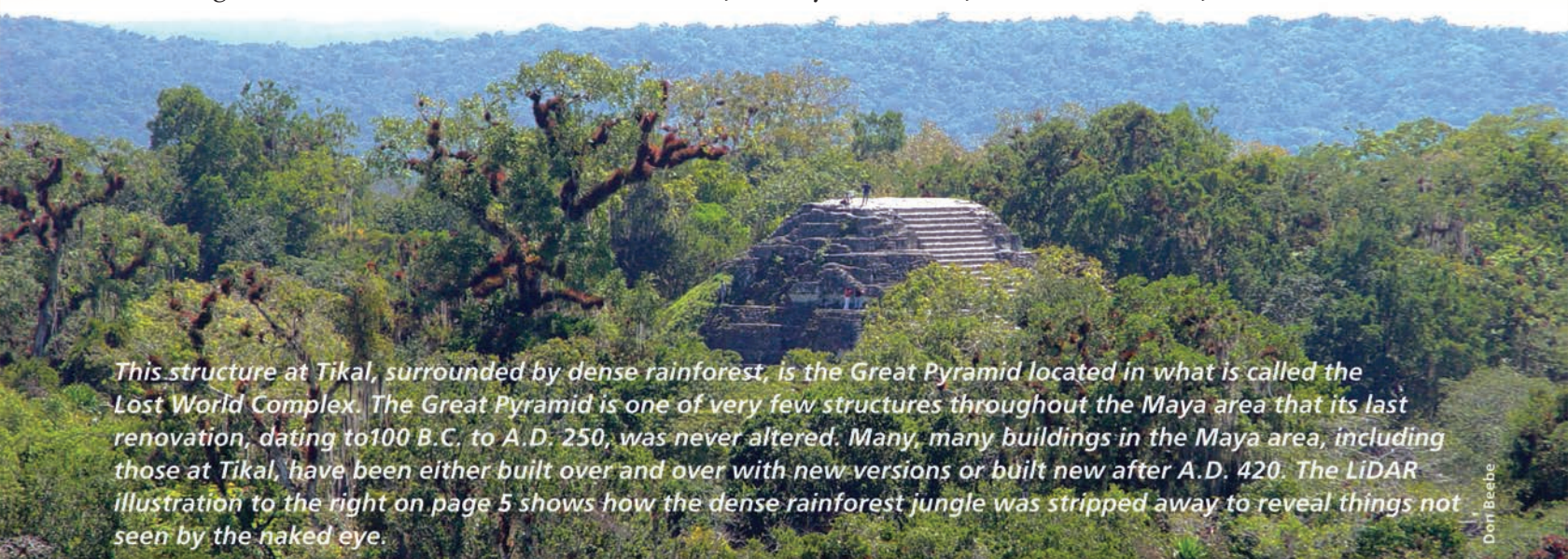


site that straddles the Belize and Guatemala border and is adjacent to one of the areas just surveyed (*Popular Archaeology*). Richard Hansen, director of the Mirador Basin Project, and his colleagues also mapped around 500 square miles in the Mirador Basin with the cities of El Mirador and Calakmul (in Mexico). They plan to continue surveying there in March 2018. (*ARS Technica*)

Since a mountain of evidences exist that indicates the ancient Maya were the Nephite/Lamanite/Mulekite people, these exciting discoveries add to that large body of evidences.

Population

Around A.D.320, Mormon relates that when he was 11 years old, his father “carried” him from the Land Northward to the Land of Zarahemla, which was in the Land Southward; which we believe, on the basis of considerable evidence, was in the area now called the Maya Lowlands. At that time, “the whole face of the land [was] covered with buildings, and the people were as numerous almost, as . . . the sand of the sea” (Mormon 1:7). Almost four hundred years earlier, ca. 120-100 B.C., it was recorded that



This structure at Tikal, surrounded by dense rainforest, is the Great Pyramid located in what is called the Lost World Complex. The Great Pyramid is one of very few structures throughout the Maya area that its last renovation, dating to 100 B.C. to A.D. 250, was never altered. Many, many buildings in the Maya area, including those at Tikal, have been either built over and over with new versions or built new after A.D. 420. The LiDAR illustration to the right on page 5 shows how the dense rainforest jungle was stripped away to reveal things not seen by the naked eye.

The people began to be very numerous . . . on the north and on the south, on the east and on the west, building large cities and villages in all quarters of the land” (Mosiah 11:156-157 RLDS) [Mosiah 27:6 LDS]

The results of the recent survey leave no doubt about the truth of these statements.

The LiDAR study revealed more than 60,000 previously unknown man-made structures, including pyramids, palaces, houses, stone quarries, fortresses with towers, and raised causeways that were part of a vast network of cities. “The LiDAR images make it clear that this entire region was a settlement system whose **scale and population density had been grossly underestimated**” (National Geographic News). Estrada-Belli observed, “With the new data it’s no longer unreasonable to think that there were 10 to 15 million people there, including many living in low-lying, swampy areas that many of us had thought uninhabitable” (National Geographic News).

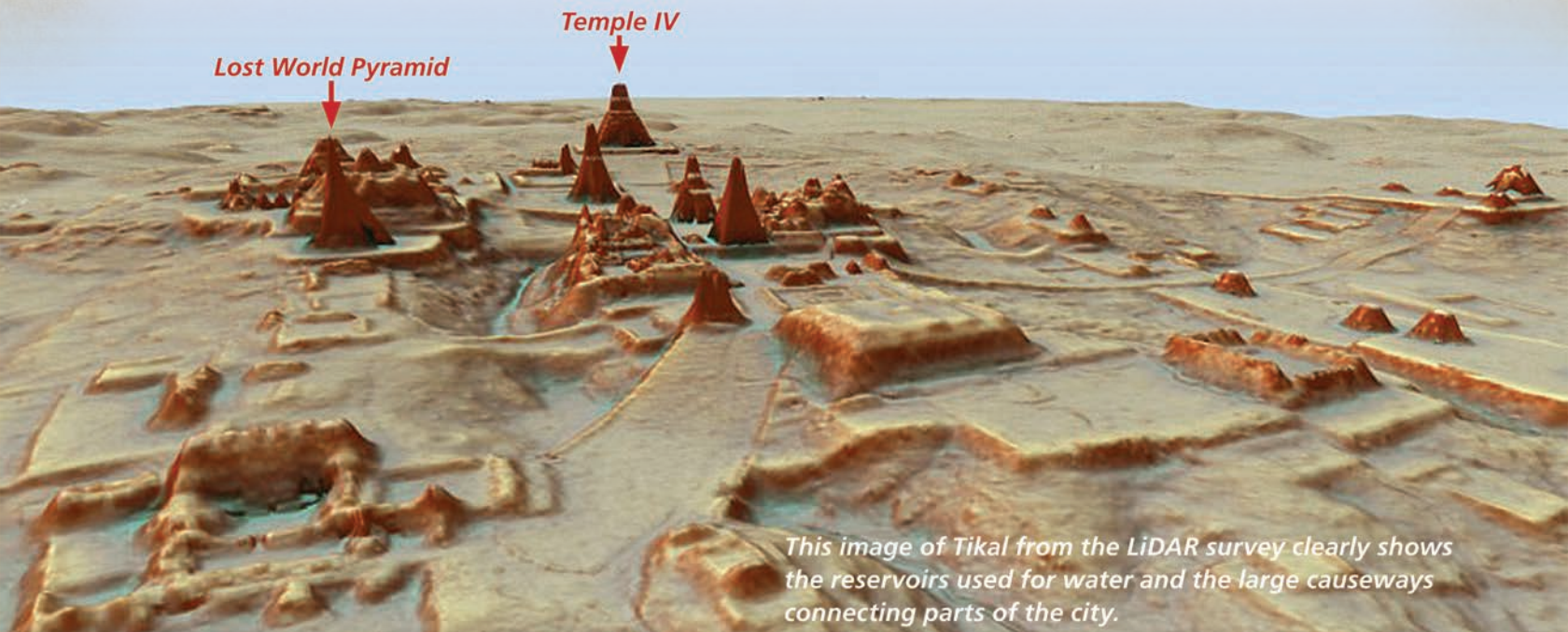
Fifteen years earlier, in 2003, archaeologist Patrick Culbert wrote “by ca. A.D. 500, Maya population had reached a density of 600 people per square mile across a 36,000-square mile area [approximately 20 million] in the forested lowlands of northern Guatemala and adjacent parts of Mexico and Belize. *This is a staggering figure*, comparable to the most heavily populated parts of rural China” (Culbert 2003:6; emphasis added). Culbert’s numbers were an estimate based on ground surveys and didn’t



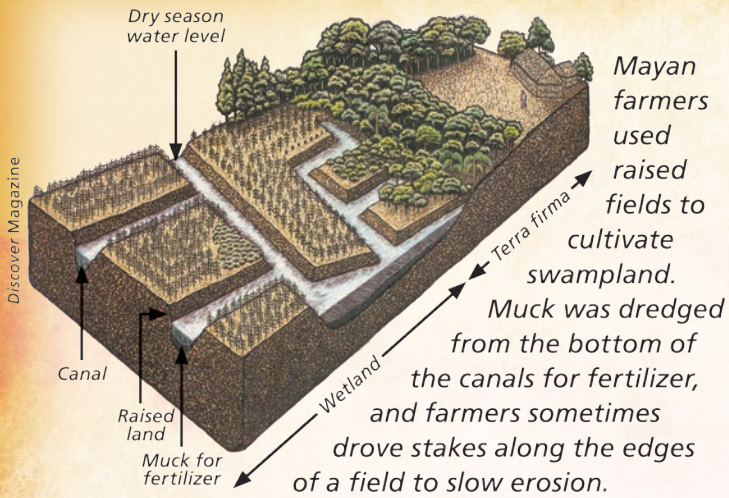
Mapping Tikal took four years, 1957-1960. The resulting map, part shown here, has been the definitive map since then. Structures, reservoirs, and causeways are clearly noted. Temple IV (pictured on p.3 in this issue) is on the far left.

appear to be widely accepted by archaeologists. The LiDAR survey, however, gives evidence that his estimate was accurate.

The ancient city of Tikal, a major tourist attraction in the Guatemala Peten, is one of the most studied Maya sites. Controlled excavations began in the 1950s and since then, many structures have been uncovered and restored, including six, very tall pyramids. Almost from the beginning Tikal has been known as one of the larger Maya settlements. So, archaeologists were not expecting anything new. Much to their astonishment what was



This image of Tikal from the LiDAR survey clearly shows the reservoirs used for water and the large causeways connecting parts of the city.



always believed to be simply a hill in the center of the excavated area was in reality a 100-ft. pyramid! Furthermore, Tikal is three or four times larger than previously thought (NPR). What was believed to be the “city” of Tikal was “just a fraction of an immense hidden metropolis” (*Daily Mail*). Prior population estimates of Tikal had been around 60,000; now, possibly a quarter of a million.

Agriculture and Water Management

During a short period around 29-25 B.C., the Nephites and Lamanites enjoyed a time of peace.

They did **raise grain in abundance**, both in the north [Maya Lowlands] and in the south [Maya Highlands]. And they did **flourish exceedingly**, both in the north and in the south. And they **did multiply** and wax exceeding strong in the land. And they did **raise many flocks and herds, yea, many fatlings** (Helaman 2:131-132 RLDS) [Helaman 6:12 LDS]

About 100 years earlier, King Mosiah noted that he had his people till the earth and he, himself, the king(!) tilled the earth so he would not become a burden to his people (Mosiah 4:9-10 RLDS) [Mosiah 6:7 LDS]. Zeniff’s record relates, “And we began to till the ground, yea, even with all manner of seeds, with seeds of **corn**, and of **wheat**, and of **barley**, and with **neas**, and with **sheum**, and with seeds of **all manner of fruits**; and we did **begin to multiply** and prosper in the land” (Mosiah 6:12; see also verse 31 RLDS) [Mosiah 9:9, 10:4 LDS]. They raised **flocks** and had **corn fields** (Mosiah 6:17

RLDS) [Mosiah 9:14 LDS]. Nephi in 23 B.C. had a **garden** (Helaman 3:10 RLDS) [Helaman 7:10 LDS] and most likely so did many others.

Large populations need food and water. Earlier, archaeologists believed that the ancient Maya subsisted on a slash and burn farming method, a method that doesn’t support high population. A number of years ago, archaeologists began to know that the Maya had agricultural fields. “But [Garrison] says this data shows **huge, huge expanses** of these irrigated field systems in these low lying swamps” (NPR). The LiDAR survey showed that the swampy valleys around the ancient city of Holmul had thousands of acres of grid-like canal systems outlining raised blocks of land (*ARS Technica*). National Geographic News put it this way:

Complex irrigation and terracing systems supported intensive agriculture capable of feeding masses of workers who dramatically reshaped the landscape.... In a part of the world where there is usually too much or too little precipitation, the flow of water was meticulously planned and controlled via canals, dikes, and reservoirs.

Roads and Causeways and Trade

We find in The Book of Mormon mention of roads and merchants ca. A.D. 25-29. Nephi wrote that

there were many cities built anew, and there were many old cities repaired, and there were **many highways** cast up, and **many roads** made, which led **from city to city, and from land to land, and from place to place....** There were **many merchants** in the land, and also many lawyers, and many officers (3 Nephi 3:8; 12 RLDS) [3 Nephi 6:7, 11 LDS]

And remember—Nephi’s garden, mentioned above, “was by the **highway** which led to the **chief market**” and it had a **tower** in the garden near “the garden gate which led by the highway” (Helaman 3:10-11 RLDS) [Helaman 7:10 LDS]. Jacey Fortin, in a *New York Times* article, describes the Maya roads system as if she were writing about the roads and markets in The Book of Mormon! “Among the structures uncovered were roads, built wide



What looks like simply a pile of stones in the Usumacinta River near the landing for the ancient ruin Yaxchilan is in reality the remains of one of the piers for a suspension bridge. The one at Yaxchilan was an engineering marvel. A rendering of the bridge can be seen on O’Kon’s website under the Maya Technology link and then Maya Bridges. theoldexplorer.com

and raised high above the wetlands to connect fields to farmers and markets to metropolises.”

In the last issue of *glyph notes*, Lyle Smith reported about investigative research on Maya roads by James O’Kon, an “engineer with a life-long passion for the Maya civilization.” O’Kon’s conclusion was that the roads crisscrossed the whole Maya area (Smith 2017:3-4). Curiously, while working on that article and searching other Maya archaeology sources, nowhere did we find acknowledgement of such a bold claim that the roads crisscrossed the whole Maya area.

Archaeologists have long known about Maya roads, called *sacbe* (white road), but only for a few selected sites. The new LiDAR study confirms O’Kon’s research that the roads **crisscrossed the whole Maya area**. Archaeologists were surprised by the complex network of causeways **linking all the Maya cities in the area** (BBC News). The raised highways, allowing easy passage even during rainy seasons, were wide enough to suggest they were heavily trafficked and used for trade.

Defensive Fortifications and Warfare

Warfare was almost constant in The Book of Mormon, from the beginning of their settling in the land of promise until the sad end of the Nephites in A.D. 420. The wars continued, however, for years after the close of The Book of Mormon as prophesied

by Nephi (1 Nephi 3:130-132RLDS) [1 Nephi 12:20-21 LDS] and verified by the archaeological record in the Maya area.

Around 73 B.C., Captain Moroni raised his title of liberty upon every **tower** and he had **forts of security** built with high banks “thrown up” surrounded by a **deep ditch (moats)** for every city (Alma 21:71, 164, 170 RLDS)[Alma 46:36; 49:13, 18 LDS]. **Heaps of earth** were piled high around all the cities with tall pickets on top and **towers** (Alma 22:1-4 RLDS) [Alma 50:1-4 LDS]. See also Alma 24:6-7 (RLDS [Alma 52:6 LDS]).

After the peaceful and prosperous period following Christ’s visit, war began again, which became the downfall of the Nephites. Mormon writes to his son Moroni about the **tower** of Sherrizah (Moroni 9:8 RLDS) [Moroni 9:7 LDS], and Moroni sadly states that “the Lamanites are **at war one with another**; and the whole face of this land is one continual round of murder and bloodshed; and no one **knoweth the end of the war**” (Mormon 4:10 RLDS) [Mormon 8:8 LDS].

What about the Maya? Archaeologists knew of warfare among the Maya because defensive walls had been discovered at several sites (as well as from inscriptions and ceramics with scenes of warfare). “But this new information reveals ‘Maya **fortresses and systems of interconnected watchtowers**,’ raising the possibility of more sophisticated and large-scale warfare” (NPR). Garrison noted that “warfare wasn’t only happening toward the end of the civilization [ca. A.D. 800-900]; it was **large-scale and systematic, and it endured over many years**” (National Geographic).

There were not only defensive walls, but **ramparts and moats** (or deep ditches). Archaeologists “were struck by the ‘incredible defensive features’, which included walls, fortresses and moats” (BBC News). At El Zotz, archaeologists have worked years mapping the landscape, but the LiDAR revealed miles of a **fortification wall and moat** that had never been noticed before. Garrison remarked, “Maybe, eventually, we would have gotten to this hilltop where this fortress is, but I was within about 150 feet of it in 2010 and didn’t see anything,” (BBC News). He also observed that the Maya were channeling water for hundreds of meters or modifying hilltops so they become these impregnable areas (NPR).

Summary

The following quotes indicate the magnitude of the results of the 810 sq. miles surveyed by LiDAR which comprises only a small portion of the total Maya area.

“The lidar [sic] completely changes the way we see the Maya. For the first time I have seen unsuspected fortresses, entire cities, settlements that are now doubled or tripled in size” (Houston, Channel 4).

“The idea of seeing a continuous landscape, but understanding everything is connected [by roads] across many square miles is amazing. We can expect many further surprises” (Houston, BBC News).

“The fortified structures and large causeways reveal modifications to the natural landscape made by the Maya on a previously unimaginable scale” (Estrada-Belli, *Daily Mail*).

“The findings have been astounding archaeologists, and are putting the Maya on the very top table of ancient civilisations [sic], not only in the Americas, but the world, alongside China and Egypt. New research suggests that the Maya not only created spectacular cities, but managed and manipulated their landscape on an almost industrial scale to supply food and water for urban populations far bigger than anyone had ever imagined” (*Daily Mail*).

“We’ll need 100 years to go through all [the data] and really understand what we’re seeing” (Estrada-Belli, BBC News).

Conclusion

There is no doubt that LiDAR has revolutionized archaeological exploration by seeing deep below the forest canopy that archaeologists confront on the ground. LiDAR mapping takes a fraction of the time as ground surveying or exploration take. To determine timeframes, or dates of the constructions, actual on-the-ground excavations are needed. This requires more time.

The findings of this first phase of Pacunam’s LiDAR Initiative appear to confirm, in a marvelous way, information found in The Book of Mormon. Nowhere else in the Americas is there so much precise evidence that matches requirements of The Book of Mormon. As anthropologist Shirley Heater explained:

The fact remains—no civilization in the U.S./Canada region can compare as even a dim bulb to a million watt flood light on Mesoamerican evidences that fit Book of Mormon requirements! Only Mesoamerica has a multitude of parallel

evidences, filled in over the years as new details have come forth (Heater 2012:7).

These discoveries also help us to flesh out the bare bones of the temporal aspects of the account—the culture, economy, and much more—and the people of The Book of Mormon become real people, living in a real society, interacting and doing all the things a sophisticated society would do with population as the “sand of the sea,” intensive agriculture, and an extensive system of roads “leading from city to city, land to land, and place to place.”

What more lies hidden in the jungle?

Reprinted with permission. This article was first published in glyph notes (Jan/Feb/March 2018), quarterly publication of Pre-Columbian Studies Institute (PSI), precolumbiansi@gmail.com; Lyle L. Smith, president, (816.838.5192).

Annotated List of News Sources

- *ARS Technica* (blog)
Smith, Kiona N. Fortresses, Farmlands of the Maya Emerge from Massive LiDAR Survey. February 1, 2018. tinyurl.com/y7z4zscw
Recommend this article for a less sensational tone.
- BBC News
Sprawling Maya Network Discovered under Guatemala Jungle. February 2, 2018. tinyurl.com/ybrw8ap6
- *Book of Mormon Resources* (blog)
Magleby, Kirk. LiDAR. February 2, 2018. tinyurl.com/ycqkvlub
Provides correlations to The Book of Mormon of the new LiDAR survey. It has links to some of the articles in this list, making them quicker to access.
- CBS News
Archaeologists Uncover Massive Network of Mayan Ruins with Laser Technology. February 5, 2018. tinyurl.com/y923yybs
CBS has an illustration that illustrates the working of LiDAR from a plane.
- Channel 4
Lost Cities of the Maya: Revealed. February 11, 2018, and was available online until March 12. tinyurl.com/ydbf7nd5
- *Daily Mail* [London]
Weston, Phoebe. Maya 'Megalopolis' Featuring Thousands of Ancient Pyramids, Palaces and Causeways Is Found Hidden under Thick Jungle Foliage in Guatemala. February 2, 2018. tinyurl.com/y8me7ma4

The webpage has outstanding photographs as well as a short video. The explanation of LiDAR is clear and understandable.

- Motherboard

Ferreira, Becky. The Ruins of a Massive Ancient City Have Been Discovered in Guatemala. February 2, 2018. tinyurl.com/yawd4n5x

- National Geographic

Lost Treasures of the Maya Snake Kingdom, documentary. February 10, 2018. tinyurl.com/yak2fl2h

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Clynes, Tom. Exclusive: Laser Scans Reveal Maya ‘Megalopolis’ below Guatemalan Jungle. February 1, 2018. tinyurl.com/ycp82mnr

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- *New York Times*

Fortin, Jacey. Lasers Reveal a Maya Civilization So Dense It Blew Experts’ Minds. February 3, 2018. tinyurl.com/yagffo9u

- *Popular Archaeology*

Ford, Anabel. Seeing Through the Canopy. August 21, 2013. tinyurl.com/yaltab42

This article has a good explanation of the LiDAR process.

- tDAR (The Digital Archaeological Record)

LiDAR in the Maya Heartland: Results of the 2016 LiDAR Survey in Guatemala’s Maya Biosphere Reserve (Part of the Society of American Archaeology (SAA) 82nd Annual Meeting, Vancouver, BC, 2017). tinyurl.com/ycce9dgb

Provides an abstract of the LiDAR project and abstracts of eight papers presented by archaeologists at the SAA meeting about the LiDAR study done in 2016. To read the full abstracts, one must sign up for this free resource.

- *Washington Post*

Wootson, Cleve R., Jr. Maya Civilization Was Much Vaster than Known: Thousands Of Newly Discovered Structures. February 3, 2018. tinyurl.com/y96p6hl3

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2012 A Response to the Heartland Book of Mormon Geography Theory. *glyph notes* vol.19 (2):1-8.

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- Smith, Lyle L.

2017 Where Did the People of The Book of Mormon Live? Archaeological and Linguistic Evidences Provide a Key. *glyph notes* vol.24 (4):1-7.

Further Reading

Many articles in past issues of *glyph notes* address the topics and some of the ancient cities mentioned in this article. **All references below are from *glyph notes*.**

LiDAR was first incorporated into research of Mesoamerican ruins in May 2010 at the sites of El Tajin in Mexico and Caracol in Belize.

“glyph clips.” (May/June 2010:11-12 and Jul/Aug 2010:7).

- **Population**

Smith, Lyle L. Sand of the Sea and Rising Suns (Mar/Apr 2009:1-3).

- **Water management**

Smith, Lyle L. Water, Without It Nothing Lives (May/June 2010:1-5).

“glyph clips.” Palenque: Maya Engineered Water Pressure (Jul/Aug 2010:8).

- **Roads**

Scott, Eric. The Wheel and Maya Innovation (Nov/Dec 2013:6, 8).

Scott, Terry. Maya Technology: The Maya Road System (Mar/Apr 2014:7-9).

Some of the Sites Mentioned

- El Zotz

New Tomb Discovered at El Zotz (Jul/Aug 2010:6).

Scott, Glenn. El Zotz (ca. A.D. 250)—Temple of the Night Sun (Jan/Feb 2013:1-2).

Smith, Sherrie Kline. More on El Zotz (Jan/Feb 2013:2-3).

- La Corona

Smith, Sherrie Kline. Highlights from the Maya at the Playa Conference (Jan/Feb 2013:4).

- Holmul and El Peru-Waka

Smith, Sherrie Kline. More Evidence for the Truth of The Book of Mormon (Mar/Apr 2014:1-4).

“Some gave all...”

Ray Treat, 1934-2017



Raymond Treat, 83, passed away October 29, 2017. Ray had an unwavering belief in the Book of Mormon. He dedicated his life to serving the Lord and the people of the Restoration. His story is one of dedication and faithfulness. In memory of his life, we present it to you.

From an unfinished testimony Ray wrote in 1980 titled: “My Testimony—The Message of Archaeology 1830-1980” (edited from an unfinished and unpublished manuscript on file), we would like to share Ray’s story in his own words.

I was born and raised in Wisconsin on the family cranberry marsh. After graduation I attended the University of Wisconsin, Madison, receiving a BS in Naval Science in 1956. For the next three years I served in the US Marine Corps as an officer and then returned to my family’s cranberry marsh as Manager of R C Treat Cranberry, Inc. This is where my Book of Mormon testimony begins.

January is the ideal month for sanding, a process of preparing for the growth of cranberries. We have to first encase the cranberries in ice. During a cold spell in December, the marshes are flooded so that the water covers the tops of the vines. The water is then shut off and the process stops until the water freezes solid to the top of the soil in the bed. Outlet gates are then opened and the water is drawn off into the ditches surrounding the beds. The ice protects the cranberries from the minus-twenty degree temperatures by acting as a warm blanket.

My job was working on the sand spreader. This is a two-man job so my father hired Jim Schorr, a local farm boy to help. We did not know that he was a priest in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Sparta, the county seat for Monroe County. To accomplish the sanding we had a half-yard shovel and four dump trucks. The sand pit was a mile from the marsh. After the fourth truck finished unloading, there would be a ten-minute wait before the next load. After a few

days, Jim told me that he had a book he wanted me to read. The next day, he brought the book and gave it to me. It was The Book of Mormon. He said it was the story of the Indians. I had never seen The Book of Mormon before. All I knew was that Mormons lived in Utah, were connected with polygamy and had The Book of Mormon.

I ran my car out on the ice so that I could read the book whenever a ten-minute wait came. I also took the book home and read it every spare minute I had. I even took it to bed and read myself to sleep. In four days I read two-thirds of the book. I think the sanding job ended about this time and I stopped reading the book for two or three months. Then I started again and finished it. Elder Victor Lakowaska showed me the “Go Ye and Teach” slide series in May of 1960 at the home of Jim Schorr. I was baptized on May 25, 1960 at the age of 26 and ordained an elder in 1963. Subsequently, I served as a pastor and held several district offices.

At church I met my future wife, Mary Lee Brockman, who was a music teacher, and we were married the following year in June 1961. A short time later, my wife expressed an interest in seeing the ruins in Mexico. My response was that it did not do any good to see the ruins if you did not know what you were looking at. However, I was only partly right. To actually see these ancient sites strengthens one’s desire to find out about them and

their significance to The Book of Mormon. As a result, Mary Lee and I began to read every book we could get our hands on dealing with Mexico, past and present, in preparation for a trip early in 1963. We did not tell anyone what we were doing. Then in December 1962, we attended a prayer service in which we were spoken to by the Spirit and told to continue in what we were doing. We were the only ones who knew what this meant, so it was a testimony to us that we were on the right track and were not wasting our time.

Our trip to Mexico was very enlightening. For the first time we were challenged to study The Book of Mormon for the archaeology in it in addition to its spiritual teachings. There is a saying that once you get the dust of Mexico in your sandals, you can never remove it. This was true of us. Even though our budget was tight, we always found a way to make it back to Mexico, if only for a short time each winter.

Then in 1965, I decided to study for a degree in Spanish in order to get a job as a teacher in case the bottom ever fell out of the cranberry market. I was all set to enroll at Graceland when I found out one of the requirements for this degree was at least six weeks of school in a Spanish-speaking country. I decided to satisfy this requirement first in order to get a head start on my Spanish degree.

In January 1966, I enrolled at the University of the Americas, then located in Mexico City. This school was on the quarter system and the ten-week winter quarter was quickly over. I found out that archaeologists could also earn a living as teachers. I realized then that I was really interested in archaeology but did not think it was possible to obtain a job in the field. My view of archaeology was that there was room in the world for only a handful of archaeologists to make a living and that most of them were Englishmen in pith helmets trudging through the sands of Egypt! With the help of Wayne Simmons, who was under church appointment in Mexico City at that time, we decided to stay an extra quarter and change my major from Spanish to archaeology.

During the 1966 season, I participated in excavations at Pueblo Perdido in the Valley of Mexico. We returned in the fall of 1967 for two full years of schooling. As part of one of our classes in archaeology, we conducted an archaeological survey of the campus area before any construction

began. In 1968 this included excavations at Mirador, Chiapas, Mexico, and an ethnographic study of the Ocuiltec Indians in the State of Mexico. I completed my Master's Degree (Cum Laude) in Anthropology in 1969 with my Master's Thesis Excavations at Vistahermosa, Chiapas, Mexico. This was the last class to graduate from the Mexico City campus of the University of the Americas. The University is now located on part of the famous archaeological site of Cholula, near the colonial city of Puebla.

One of our most rewarding testimonies in Mexico occurred during this time. In March 1968, we were returning to Mexico City from archaeological fieldwork in Chiapas when we had two flat tires, about fifteen minutes apart. This occurred about fifty miles south of the city of Oaxaca. As a result of this delay, we had the opportunity to become acquainted with one of the men operating the "green jeep" in the area. The green jeeps are provided by the government to help stranded motorists. To make a long story short, this far-from-chance meeting eventually led to the baptism of this man and his family. He is now an elder residing in Oaxaca. He made the statement from the beginning of this experience that the two flat tires were not a coincidence. We know that they were not, for they turned out to be the Lord's way of reaching this good brother. We also know that there are many others that the Lord wants to reach in the "Lamanite lands" in preparation for the time when the fullness of the gospel will sweep throughout the lands.

Following another period on the cranberry marsh, I returned to school and completed class work for a PhD at Arizona State University. Mary Lee also completed nearly all the class work for a degree in Anthropology. During that time I had the opportunity to conduct excavations at Vistahermosa, Chiapas, Mexico, as principle investigator for the New World Archaeology Foundation (NWAf). In 1974, I presented a professional paper "Sub-Refuse Deposits at Vistahermosa" at the International Congress of Americanists in Mexico City. During the next three years, I spent two seasons conducting an archaeological survey in Maricopa County, Arizona, followed by classification of Preclassic ceramics at a laboratory in San Cristobal (Chiapas) for NWAf; the report on the work at Vistahermosa was published in 1986.

Exposure to the archaeological literature has been very rewarding. As I have continued to study, it becomes more and more clear that the pattern set

forth in The Book of Mormon is being duplicated by the findings of Mesoamerican archaeology.

—Ray

When Ray inherited the family cranberry marsh, it was sold to Ocean Spray and his inheritance dedicated to promote The Book of Mormon. Ray and Mary Lee, along with the help and encouragement of Wayne and Verneil Simmons, organized Zarahemla Research Foundation in 1975. In March 2012, after thirty-seven years, Zarahemla Research Foundation merged with Quetzal Archaeology under the leadership of Shirley Heater. Both organization officially merged with The Book of Mormon Foundation January 1, 2015.

We, at the Book of Mormon Foundation, are grateful for the relationship we shared with Ray over the years. Ray devoted his life to Book of Mormon work and sharing his knowledge of its covenant message. “Some gave all”

Book of Mormon Translation Sequence

by Paul Williams

September 22
1827

Angel Moroni gave Joseph the “Golden” plates

April
June
1828

600 B.C

1

130 B.C

Joseph completed the translation of
116 pages from the Book of Lehi.

Plates of Mormon

Abridged from Large Plates of Nephi

June
1828

Martin Harris lost the manuscript.

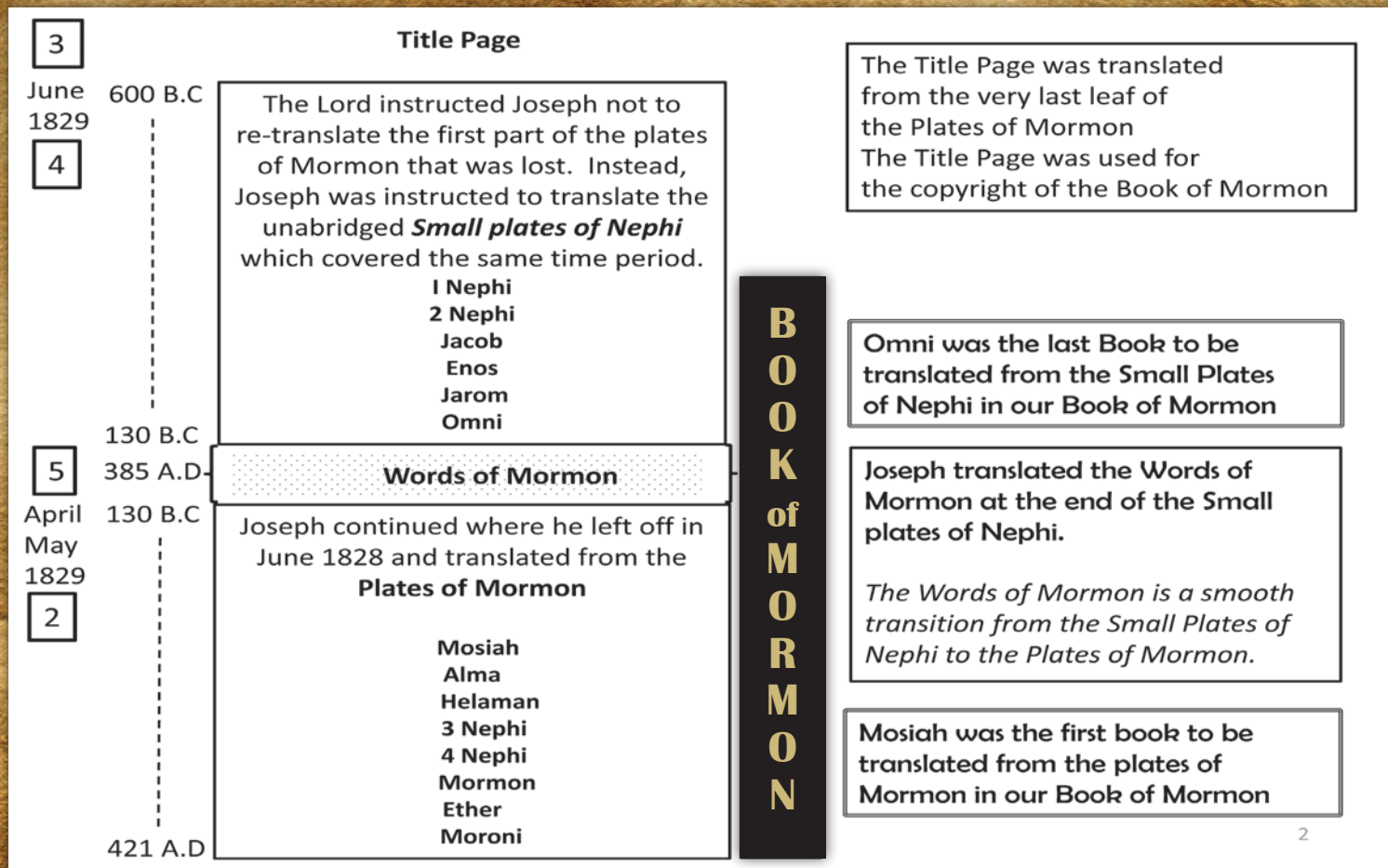
Book of Lehi
600 B.C – King Benjamin Reign

July
September
1828

The plates and Urim and Thummim
were taken away from Joseph

September, 1828
March 1829

Little Translation effort occurred



~ Announcement From The Board ~ Internship 2018

The Book of Mormon Foundation (BMF) Internship Program functions under the guidelines of the Internship Committee. One of the guidelines is the requirement for a minimum number of applications to be received for each year. This guideline exists to ensure the quality, costs, staffing and effectiveness of the program are maintained at the highest level. For 2018, we did not receive the minimum number of applications and will not staff the program. We look forward to next year's program and encourage those between the ages of 19-24 to consider applying.

2018 Book of Mormon Retreat

Have ye received His image in your countenances?



Brian and Monica Twombly

Do your actions reflect your Savior? At the 2018 Book of Mormon Retreat, we delved into Alma 3:27-31 RLDS [Alma 5:14 LDS]. Throughout the weekend we were blessed in fellowship with each other and worship of our Heavenly Father.

On Friday night, we played some games that were centered around recognizing images. Pictures were taken of each person at the camp and then the pictures were blurred; the campers had to work together to figure out who was in the blurred image. The lesson was: we can work together to recognize people we know. We need to know Christ to recognize Him working in our lives. We also divided into three teams where each team had a 100-piece puzzle to put together. The campers did not know the pieces of a fourth puzzle had been divided up and mixed into their puzzle pieces to represent a cloudy image we sometimes get. They quickly realized the puzzle pieces were not all from the same puzzle so they began to pass the pieces from one team to another, which resulted in all four puzzles getting further mixed! All four puzzles eventually got completed and we had some discussion on how the image of a puzzle can relate to our faith and the testimony we share through our countenances.

On Saturday, Elder Robert Gillam taught our first class on knowing Christ. If we are to bear Christ's image in our lives, we must know him. Robert shared several scriptures giving insight into who Christ is. Our second class was taught by Elder Aaron Smith on habits leading to a Christ-like life. We discussed our current habits and how to let our habits change into the image of Christ. It only happens through letting Christ

change our heart and shine through us. Aaron shared an object lesson of an apple and an orange. Both are similar but an apple cannot become an orange. It was a powerful lesson that we need to let Christ change us from the inside. Elder David Gilmore taught our third class on repentance leading to Christ-likeness. David led us in a discussion of fear versus fantasy in our lives. We spend a lot of time in fear of things, but Christ brings us to a beautiful reality. He left us with a challenge: what are we going to do Monday? How should our lives be changing to show Christ's countenance? Each class built upon the other and it was evident to see the Spirit was working through the class material.

On Saturday evening, Amy Jo Gillam led a craft where we etched mirrors with the words "Do you see Jesus?" These mirrors are intended to remind us to live for Jesus as we see ourselves in the mirror. An extra mirror was left at the campground, so you may see it in the dining hall as you go for camps and reunions.

Our Sunday worship was led by our retreat pastor, Elder Robert Gillam. We had a special time of prayer and worship of our Heavenly Father.

Robert Gillam

Retreat Pastor

Our weekend began Friday night with the usual excitement of seeing friends and getting settled in at the retreat. Our mixer was breaking into three groups, with each group having a bag of puzzle pieces to put together. The goal was to put the puzzle pieces together as a team, but without the help of an image for guidance. It was soon discovered the puzzle pieces were spread across all three groups, so they began working together to complete the puzzles. There was discussion afterwards regarding the challenge of not having an image to guide us



putting the puzzle together.

Our classes on Saturday focused on the weekend theme: “Is His image in your countenance?” We had three classes, each focusing on a different aspect. Classes were taught by Robert Gillam, David Gilmore and Aaron Smith.

The classes were filled with the Spirit and everyone was very engaged and attentive. Saturday evening’s activity focused on a time of worship and commitment, in preparation for worship Sunday morning. The commitment and prayer service Saturday night was Spirit-filled and very uplifting to all.

Sunday gave us the opportunity to worship together in a hymn sing and a sweet time of worship. We concluded our worship service by singing “Ancient Words,” which is still a beautiful and uplifting song.

The weekend was a success and I am thankful for the opportunity to have served as pastor.

Brianna Cappo

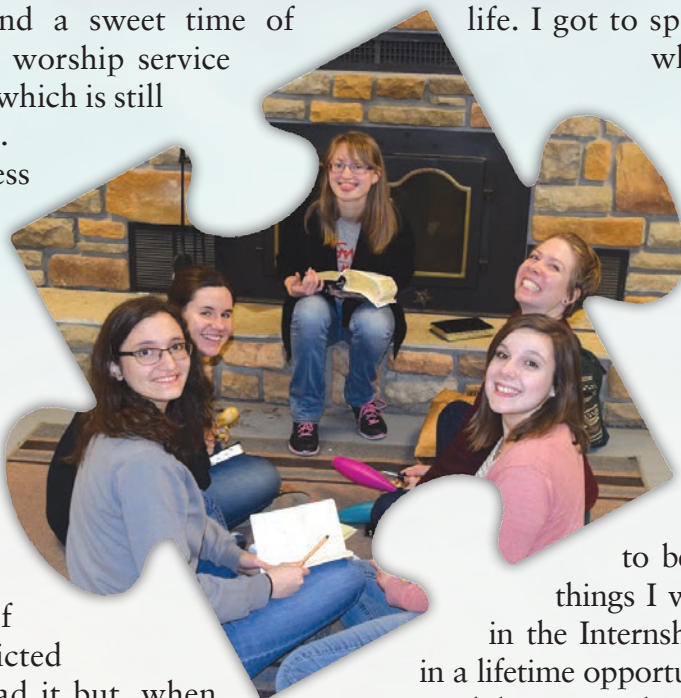
Before I applied for the Internship, I had barely touched the Book of Mormon. I knew nothing of its contents, and all I knew was that it was a huge part of my church. I was very conflicted when I was told I had to read it but, when I did, my life was changed. The Internship helped me grow in so many ways. Spiritually, I came the closest to God that I ever had been, and I could see my peers around me experiencing the same feelings I had. It was weird how complete strangers could become a close family within just a few weeks. Mentally, I learned to be up for any challenge. Throughout the Internship, you learn so much that it is almost mind-blowing but, at the same time, it’s super-amazing, and you are constantly wanting to learn more. Physically, you are dead tired the entire time of the Internship. You are up early, up late, doing community service here, some there, and you have only a few days



to catch your breath. They keep you quite busy, but the outcome is totally worth missing some extra naps. All throughout the Internship I was the happiest I have EVER been in my entire life. I got to spend every day with people

who I learned to adore so much, I got to travel to beautiful places and go on amazing adventures, I got to learn things I never thought I would learn about the Book of Mormon and the Scriptures, and I got to really figure out who I am and who I want to be as a child of God. You will never have a chance

to be involved in the wonderful things I went through unless you are in the Internship. This is literally “a once in a lifetime opportunity.” I highly encourage all young adults to spend just one summer experiencing the time of their lives by not only having fun, but by also gaining a better relationship with God, like I did.



Jared Rowlett

Before the Internship started, I believed I had a strong faith in God and Jesus Christ. Growing up in the church, being the pastor's son and coming from a long bloodline of family in the church, it was instilled in me that I needed to have a strong faith. I had many testimonies of the Lord working in my life, and they all strengthened my faith and belief in Jesus Christ. Having a daily walk with Him through prayer, studying, and sometimes fasting would always keep me close to Him.

Once the Internship started, I was placed with six other interns and the two staff members that were all between the ages of 19-24. Just in that, being surrounded by young adults my age and of the same faith, granted a firmer hold on the faith I had with God. Each day, we would all spend time in classes and different group activities that would bring us closer. There were classes that help expound on different aspects of our true gospel with the Book of Mormon.

During the Internship, we spend about nine days in Belize. A few of those days were designated for service projects at the school there. One day, we had a Book of Mormon day for children at the church in town. We taught classes, sang songs and had a great sermon message brought that day.

This Internship has done so much for me in my life. It has humbled me and filled my heart with love for others I don't even know. I have created lifelong friendships and my relationship with God has become very close. After the Internship was over, I realized my faith was strengthened to an unbreakable level, because of all I had done in those six weeks.



Caitlin Dillon

What the Internship Did for Me

A little over a year ago, I had no desire to join the Book of Mormon Internship. Both of my siblings were interns and insisted it would be the best experience of my life, yet I was still reluctant. I didn't want to give up my summer for something I considered "boring," and I told myself I wouldn't have fun being in a "six-week church service." But, when I attended the Book of Mormon Retreat (thanks to the peer pressure of my brother and his fiancé), God changed my entire perspective. While listening to the Book of Mormon Internship presentation, God softened my heart in the blink of an eye; suddenly, I wanted nothing more than to be a Book of Mormon intern, and I couldn't wait to apply. I will always be amazed at how God could change my heart that quickly, especially since I'm so headstrong. It was a strong testimony for me, since I had been praying for guidance.

I cannot say the Internship changed my entire life or made me a completely new person, but it did give me the foundation and confirmation I needed. Before the Internship, I knew what the Book of Mormon was, and I vaguely understood



my church's beliefs; however, I didn't have my own testimony. The Internship gave me the push to read the Book of Mormon cover to cover, then spend several intense classes learning more about it. My favorite part of the classes was the archeological evidence we learned, since my logical brain likes to have hard evidence that I can tell my friends about. Being in college made me question all my core beliefs and the church I grew up in. When my friends asked about my church, I rarely knew how to respond, so the Internship answered questions and helped me build a stronger personal relationship with God. It gave me the push to pray more and spend more time with Him, and it payed off! God has blessed me with guidance and opportunities since the Internship, and I now have several personal testimonies, big and small, that are proof to me that God listens and answers prayers. Additionally, I now have several strong friendships and hundreds of memories from last summer! I can honestly say that the trip to Belize was one of the best weeks of my life, and I'm beyond thankful that God led me to the Internship last year.

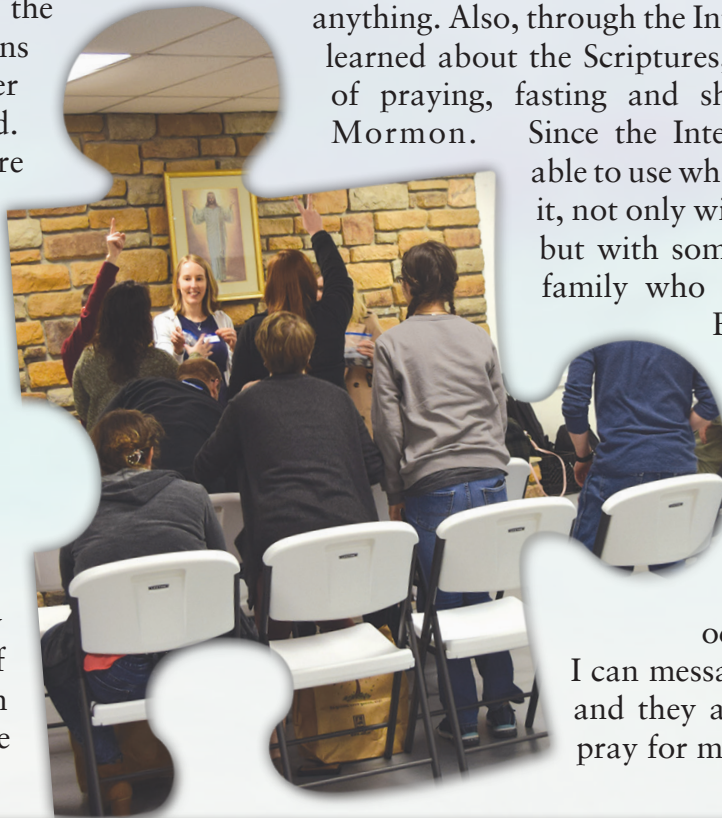
Brandon Groseth

Going into the Internship, my thought was that I would learn about the Scriptures and meet other people my age, and that was it. But, as the first week was coming to an end, and we had all spent a lot of time together already, I realized these eight people were already becoming some of my best friends. Throughout the remaining six weeks, all of us became really close, and I now consider them my family. We can talk to each other about anything. Also, through the Internship, we not only learned about the Scriptures, but the importance of praying, fasting and sharing the Book of Mormon.

Since the Internship, I have been able to use what I learned and share it, not only with my church family, but with some of my friends and family who don't believe in the

Book of Mormon. I can truly say, like many interns before me, that the Internship truly changed my life for the better.

I still struggle on occasion, but I know I can message my intern family, and they are always willing to pray for me and me for them!



Jared Ellis

I'd like to begin by saying if it's God's will, it will be done. My testimony starts with me being reluctant to attend the Book of Mormon Retreat, I didn't want to go because I didn't want to see the friends I'd gotten to know for six weeks during the summer. I didn't want to see them because I knew I wouldn't see many of them after the weekend was over. I didn't want to see them and just say goodbye for the last time. As I was fighting going, I had this feeling that if I didn't go, I would be letting everyone down. That was the moment I knew I had to go. By the time I arrived, it was already after the evening devotions. People were heading to their cabins for the night, so I just said my greetings to a few people, then went to bed. Saturday, I had kind of distanced myself from my friends. I knew the outcome, and I didn't like it. During a class by Aaron Smith, he said something that hit me hard.

“God doesn't limit His relationship with us, we limit our relationship with Him.” I then realized that's what I was doing wrong, I was putting myself above God limiting my interaction with people I cared about because of my own selfish reasons. That's when I said a prayer in my head, asking for help to change my way of thinking. Almost instantly, my thoughts changed. I started realizing that I enjoyed being there, and I missed my friends. Saturday night, I needed some air, so I stood out by the pond at Odessa Hills, and I prayed. I prayed over every person who was there and everyone who wasn't. I felt something that I hadn't felt in a long time that night. I felt the love of God, and the love He has for His children. That night gave me clarity, and I praise God that I went that weekend. Even if I don't see my fellow interns, I know they will always be praying for me and me for them. I know we will all see each other again sooner or later.



Book of Mormon National Park

by Sue Manning

On April 28, the Book of Mormon National Park was opened at Living Hope for kids from kindergarten through fourth grades. The kids entered the wildlife sanctuary, were given backpacks and nametags, and readied themselves for a day of hiking through the Book of Mormon. Each had a scripture log to hold the scripture verses they'd collect at each station.

First, everyone gathered at the ranger station to sing and hear the pastor lay out the day. They hiked until they reached the 2000 Stripling Warriors station. While they made headbands, they learned about the bravery of the warriors, their success in battle and the teachings of their mothers.

The trail led them onto Samuel the Lamanite standing on the wall, prophesying about the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ. They even tried their hand at throwing stones (which looked amazingly like cotton balls) at Samuel, but Samuel was able to escape unscathed.

At the campground area, where the tents were pitched, there were lessons on Lehi's vision, and trees of life were made. They had to be careful there, because there was only one strait and narrow pathway. Following the other trails would send them in a wrong direction.



*And behold,
I tell you these
things that ye may
learn wisdom; that
ye may learn that when
ye are in the service of your
fellow beings, ye are only
in the service of your God.*

(Mosiah 1:49 RLDS)

[Mosiah 2:17 LDS]

By lunchtime, the kids picked up their sack lunch of sandwiches, chips and fruit and headed to the picnic area. Everyone was careful not to feed the bears.

Jesus spent the day with us, walking the trails and sharing the same things he shared with those who lived here many years ago.

Meeting back in the tent, King Benjamin's speech was discussed and ways we could be of service to others. Sitting in the tent and hearing King Benjamin's words came alive to the kids.

Down by the lake, there were barges to be made and tested to make sure they floated, so the journey to the new land could be studied. Stones were





touched by glow-in-the-dark paint, and the Brother of Jared story was shared and no one had to sit in the dark!

Other short stories from the Book of Mormon were heard at the campfire; while munching on s'more snacks. Walking sticks were made to assist on the hike, and a scavenger hunt was going on to find items from the Book of Mormon stories.

After a long day of hiking, camping and picnicking, everyone gathered back at the ranger station to watch a movie about Alma the Younger and have popcorn. The Book of Mormon National Park was a great place to spend the day and learn more about the ones who hiked the Promised Land before us!

And behold there shall be a new star arise, such an one as ye never have beheld; and this also shall be a sign unto you.
(Helaman 5:59 RLDS)
[Helaman 14:5 LDS]



*And it came to pass
that when the
Brother of Jared
had said these words,
behold, the Lord
stretched forth his
hand and touched the
stones, one by one,
with his finger;
(Ether 1:68 RLDS)
[Ether 3:6 LDS]*



PROPHECY WATCH

Samuel, a Lamanite, came from a distant land and stood on the wall of the great city, Zarahemla. He came to prophesy about the things God put upon his heart. He spoke of the blessings that would come, if they would repent and turn their hearts to the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ. He also spoke of the judgements that would come, if they refused and continued in their rebellion toward God. Specific prophecies concerning signs and wonders of Christ's birth and death were declared, so people would know the time was short. These prophecies described what they would see when they were fulfilled. After declaring the word of God, Samuel simply climbed off the wall and returned to his own land to minister among his own people. The record says he never returned to Zarahemla again.

The people were left to decide whether they believed the words of Samuel. For those who believed, they recognized the signs and wonders when they came to pass. However, as always, an immediate opposition came forth causing some to begin questioning what they had actually seen and heard. This journey from belief to unbelief can be described as the "road to unbelief." Since it's included in the Book of Mormon record, it becomes an admonition for us today as we behold the signs and wonders of the latter day dispensation. To more fully understand this road from belief to unbelief, the scriptural sequence below sheds light on this journey.

And it came to pass that in the commencement of the ninety and second year, behold the prophecies of the prophets began to be fulfilled more fully; for there began to be greater signs and greater miracles wrought among the people. (3 Nephi 1:4 RLDS) [3 Nephi 1:4 LDS]

And it came to pass that from this time forth, there began to be lyings sent forth among the people by Satan, to harden their hearts, to the intent that they might not believe in those signs and wonders which they had seen; (3 Nephi 1:25 RLDS) [3 Nephi 1:22 LDS]

And it came to pass that thus passed away the ninety and fifth year also, and the people began to forget those signs and wonders which they had heard, and began to be less and less astonished at a sign or a wonder from heaven, (3 Nephi 1:38 RLDS) [3 Nephi 2:1 LDS]

Insomuch that they began to be hard in their hearts, and blind in their minds, and began to disbelieve all which they had heard and seen, imagining up some vain thing in their hearts, that it was wrought by men, and by the power of the devil, to lead away and deceive the hearts of the people; (3 Nephi 1:39 RLDS) [3 Nephi 2:2 LDS]

And thus did Satan get possession of the hearts of the people again, insomuch that he did blind their eyes, and lead them away to believe that the doctrine of Christ was a foolish and a vain thing. (3 Nephi 1:40 RLDS) [3 Nephi 2:2 LDS]

And it came to pass that the people began to wax strong in wickedness and abominations; and they did not believe that there should be any more signs or wonders given; (3 Nephi 1:41 RLDS) [3 Nephi 2:3 LDS]

And there began to be great doubtings and disputations among the people, notwithstanding so many signs had been given (3 Nephi 4:5 RLDS) [3 Nephi 8:4 LDS]

To more readily see the steps along the "road to unbelief," some key points, along with emphasis, are outlined below. Notice how the sequence becomes more severe as time progresses. Similar to the "flaxen cord" mentioned by Nephi. *Yea, and he leadeth them by the neck with a flaxen cord, until he bindeth them with his strong cords forever.* (2 Nephi 11:94 RLDS) [2 Nephi 26:22 LDS]

- Greater signs and wonders fulfilled (miracles from God)
- Lyings sent forth by Satan with intent to cause unbelief (father of lies)
- People first begin to forget the signs and wonders (status quo and cares of the world)
- People become less and less astonished when a sign or wonder is given (ho- hum, just another miracle)
- People begin to have hard hearts and blind eyes (pride, unteachable and already think they know everything)
- People attribute signs and wonders of God to works of men or the Devil (rationalize the miracles with the wisdom and precepts of men)
- People are led away to believe the gospel of Christ is a vain and foolish thing (reject even greater things such as salvation through Christ)
- People have doubtings and contentions with one another (fighting and separation)
- People believe no more signs and wonders of God will be given (deny any future miracles)

It's easy to see the progressive nature of the "road to unbelief." It was only three years after the signs and wonders began to be fulfilled more fully (ninety and second year) that people began to forget and become less and less astonished at more signs and wonders (ninety and fifth year). The "road to unbelief" can occur quickly.

How does this journey from belief to unbelief occur so quickly? One answer is found in 3 Nephi 1:25 RLDS [3 Nephi 1:22 LDS] mentioned above. When God reveals signs and wonders, Satan quickly provides opposition, using lying and deception to minimize or remove their testimony. How then is lying and deception successfully sent among a believing people who have seen, heard and know the truth? One way, is the use of unbelievers sent forth to lie, deceive, change, embellish, falsely accuse, gossip, back-bite, spread rumors, ridicule and use any means necessary to convince believers their testimony is false. Here are a few scriptures warning us of this tactic.

And I beheld that they were in a large and spacious building, like unto the building which my father saw. And the angel of the Lord spake unto me again, saying, Behold the world and the wisdom thereof; And it came to pass that I saw and bear record, that the great and spacious

building was the pride of the world; (1 Nephi 3:90-93 RLDS) [1 Nephi 11:35, 36 LDS]

And they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who had come at, and were partaking of the fruit. And after they had tasted of the fruit they were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost. And now I, Nephi, do not speak all the words of my father. But, to be short in writing, behold, he saw other multitudes pressing forward; and they came and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press their way forward, continually holding fast to the rod of iron, until they came forth and fell down and partook of the fruit of the tree. And he also saw other multitudes feeling their way towards that great and spacious building. And it came to pass that many were drowned in the depths of the fountain; And many were lost from his view, wandering in strange roads. And great was the multitude that did enter into that strange building. And after they did enter into that building they did point the finger of scorn at me, and those that were partaking of the fruit also; but we heeded them not. These are the words of my father: For as many as heeded them, had fallen away.

(1 Nephi 2:75-84 RLDS) [1 Nephi 8:27-34 LDS]

Knowing this first, that in the last days there shall come scoffers, walking after their own lusts.

(2 Peter 3:3 IV/KJV)

What is the warning for us today? We live in a time when the signs and wonders are beginning to be fulfilled more fully. This is becoming more obvious every day and will continue to increase in miraculous ways.

and the time speedily cometh that great things are to be shown forth unto the children of men; but without faith shall not anything be shown forth... (D&C 34:3d RLDS) [D&C 35:10-11 LDS]

If we believe the miracles we see are from God, then we must be ever diligent in our testimony concerning them. We must remain steadfast, immoveable, with unwavering faith, even in the face of every type of opposition imaginable. When

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there are questions, the zealous opinions and perspectives of others will always abound, but we are admonished to seek answers from Jesus Christ, the only source of truth. Ask, seek and knock for your own personal testimony. It certainly worked well for a young, uneducated New York farm boy in 1820 and beyond.

An excerpt from Joseph Smith's testimony:

I was one day reading the epistle of James, first chapter and fifth verse, which reads, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth unto all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." Never did any passage of Scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart.

I reflected on it again and again, knowing that if any person needed wisdom from God I did, for how to act I did not know, and unless I could get more wisdom than I then had would never know; for the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passage so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question by an appeal to the Bible.

At length I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs, that is, ask of God. I at length came to the determination to "ask of God," concluding that if He gave wisdom to them that lacked wisdom and would give liberally, and not upbraid, I might venture. So in accordance with this my determination, to ask of God, I retired to the woods to make the attempt.

We can also include some frequently quoted scriptures from the Book of Mormon.

And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; And if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost; and by the power of the Holy Ghost, ye may know the truth of all things.

(Moroni 10:4-5 RLDS) [Moroni 10:4 LDS]

The signs of the times are among us! Watch, therefore, and pray always!

The purpose of Prophecy Watch is to assist in looking for and knowing the signs of the times and the signs of the coming of the Son of Man. The perspectives it contains are not presented as the "only, best or final answer" to their meaning but rather "to the intent that ye might believe on his name" and more fully participate in their fulfillment. We hope Prophecy Watch will provide a brief glimpse into specific prophetic subjects that will encourage each person to diligently pray, study, fast and seek the will of God concerning them.
