

# The Witness

The Book of Mormon Foundation  
Number 100

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## Cover to Cover Challenge

The Liahona gave direction to Lehi's family on their journey to the New World. They were blessed according to their faith and diligence in the Lord's work. So it is with God's word contained in The Book of Mormon. It gives us direction for our personal lives.

Six years ago, we presented a challenge to join together to read The Book of Mormon within a six-month period. The response was tremendous, and the testimonies we received were inspiring. Some wrote to share how their families had been richly blessed from reading together every day. Others sent us a more individual testimony. One person wrote, "Many things I had forgotten or failed to glean from The Book of Mormon

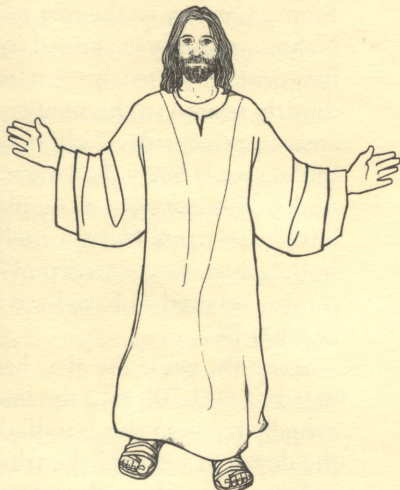
were vividly brought to my mind again. Thank you for this challenge."

We are now in a new millennium, and the Foundation believes it is time to again extend this challenge to the saints. We are asking everyone to read The Book of Mormon as a unified effort and to make its principles a part of our lives. Let us be creative as we contemplate how we might participate. We can read cover to cover individually or as a family. We can use this challenge as a formal curriculum for church school classes. We can implement the challenge into our reunions, camps and retreats. We can read together in study groups. All it takes is about four pages (plus four lines) a day to complete in six months. Perhaps you will be like Parley Pratt

and will not be able to stop reading once you begin. If so, it only takes about 24 hours to finish and you can be one of the first to write us.

The program will begin July 1, 2001 and will conclude December 31, 2001. The first 2002 issue of The Witness will contain the names of all who have completed the challenge. Once completed, be sure to write or e-mail us with your name to be published in the newsletter.

We believe this will be a witness to the Lord that the people are united in a common purpose. We invite you to participate and trust the Lord to bless you in your reading. If you have questions about the Cover to Cover Challenge, write or call the Foundation.†



### **Book of Mormon Day for Kids**

### **"American Voyagers"**

**August 11, 2001**

**South Chrysler Restoration Branch**

**9am - 3pm**

**\$5/Child with \$10/Family max.**

**816-461-3722**

**Grades 1-6/Lunch provided**

# A New Family Tradition

by Darcy Brotherton

A couple of years ago, BMF challenged us as a people to read The Book of Mormon in six months. At first I was a little reluctant and wondered how our family would be able to finish by the allotted time. I wanted our boys, not even two years old yet, to be a part of this marvelous opportunity.

Thus began our daily readings of the Book of Mormon at naptime and at bedtime. We were surprised when Jared and Jordan began to remind us to read the Book of Mormon to them. Sometimes they would cry if

we had to skip a reading.

Not long after we began this project, the boys would calm down fairly quickly, occasionally falling asleep during the readings. We finished the Book of Mormon in only four months, after starting two months late!

Jared and Jordan are now three and a half years old. We've continued with our daily scripture reading and have completed the New Testament and are up to Psalms in the Old Testament. When we're finished with the Old Testament, we will begin the

Doctrine and Covenants.

Since The Book of Mormon challenge, our little guys have had several testimonies. Both of them have seen angels, and one of them has seen Jesus. It thrills my husband and me when our children turn to us during a scripture reading at church and excitedly tell us what the minister just read about.

We are grateful to BMF for reaching out and motivating us to read God's word. Our home is blessed because of this new "family tradition." We hope it will be passed on to our grandchildren and great grandchildren, from generation to generation. We pray it will never end. †

Reprinted from *THE WITNESS*, 1997

## Altar Find Linked to Nephi's Nahom

The recent discovery by a German archaeological team of a stone altar in Yemen referring to the tribal name NIHM was announced in the *Journal of Book of Mormon Studies* in 1999. The discovery of these altars may be the first archaeological evidence ever produced to corroborate a Book of Mormon place called Nahom. Nephi's account indicates that Ishmael was "buried in the place which was called Nahom."

Perfectly preserved under centuries of sand, the altar had been dated by its excavators to about 600-700 BC, thus placing it squarely in the time frame of The Book of Mormon "Nahom" (1 Nephi 5:44 RLDS) where Ishmael was buried. Unlike most places mentioned in the account of the journey from Jerusalem, Nephi's wording makes it clear that Nahom was already called such by the local population. Nahom is also significant in that it marks the easterly turning point of the Lehite journey to "Bountiful" (1 Nephi 5:55 RLDS).

Previously, the earliest known reference to NHM (usually give as NiHM, NeHeM, NaHaM etc) dated to about the First Century AD. Although the location of the Bar'an temple complex near Marib where the find was made lies outside the present-day tribal area of Nihm, the team felt confident that it referred to the same tribal area, now centered in the Wadi Jauf, northeast of the nation's capital Sana'a.

Until now researchers have had to rely on a published translation of the inscription as the altar forms part of a traveling exhibit of Yemen antiquities now touring Europe. On September 12, 2000, however, a second and apparently identical altar was located in the same temple complex, bearing an inscription referring to NHM.

Measuring 26 inches high, 21.5 inches long and 14 inches wide with 3-inch-tall lettering, this structure, together with a third altar carrying a different inscription, was examined and photographed by a small team of researchers. The same inscription appears on both of the identical altars, and is in the South Arabian script used during the period. The script is one of the oldest writing systems on earth and was developed about 1000 BC in alphabetic form to record the indigenous language.

Two aspects of this find deserve mention. Firstly, it seems increasingly likely that the tribal area of Nahom may have anciently extended over a much larger area than it now does, a concept first theorized in a 1995 paper delivered by



Warren Aston at the Seminar for Arabian Studies at Cambridge. This in turn means that the huge burial complexes at the Ruwayk, Alam and Jidran ridges on the edge of the Empty Quarter to the east of modern Nahom, recently examined for the first time by a French team, may be directly related to the smaller burial areas in present-day Nahom. This burial area is likely the largest in Arabia. Since *nahom* was a place of burial, the name Nahom itself may well date to the construction of these tombs, believed to have been as early as 4000 BC.

Secondly, while the altar has been dated to 600-700 BC, the inscription actually refers to the grandfather of the donor as being of the tribe of Nihm, thus making the reference to NHM three generations — conservatively another century — older.

Furthermore, construction of this temple is now believed to have taken place in two stages, firstly from about 2000-1000 BC, then a second phase beginning about 850 BC. It remains possible that the altar could date to one of these periods. As research continues, carbon dating of minute traces of red paint on the altars may enable a more precise dating.

In any event, it is clear that this find predates The Book of Mormon reference to Nahom, effectively linking the name back over 2600 years and enabling us to understand why Nephi wrote as if the name itself already existed. †

*Reprinted from LEHI'S TRAIL, 3755 LittleRock Dr., Provo, UT 84604.*

# They Did Build Houses

*(Helaman 2:7)*

This summer promises to be an exciting experience for The Book of Mormon Foundation interns. For the first time as a group, they will travel to visit the saints in Belize. Fifteen current and former interns and six staff will focus on three major goals:

- To acquire and/or enhance a living testimony of The Book of Mormon by traveling among its peoples and places.
- To learn about culture, archaeology and theology by participating in classes, visiting with the people, and participating in organized tours.
- To provide service by helping build two homes on the church land project. The project is sponsored by the Restoration Church in Belize.

The third goal is one that is particularly important for us to consider as a body of saints. Last February, the planning committee had an opportunity to have dinner with Arturo Gomez from Belize. Arturo helped us plan the trip and understand the most pressing needs in Belize. We also discussed what service projects the interns could focus on during our visit. In the course of our fellowship, Arturo mentioned that some of our church families in Belize are in desperate need of adequate housing. The Spirit of the Lord immediately bonded us into a oneness that this was the project that should get our attention.

It quickly became apparent that there was a challenge that needed to be overcome to complete this project. We knew that help for this challenge would have to come from our larger

church family. The challenge is money. It will cost about \$6,000 to build a home that is 20 feet by 24 feet. It will be constructed with a concrete floor, cinder block walls and a thatch roof. One home will house a family of about six people. The plan is to build two this year and more in the years ahead. All of them will be located on the land project.

As we discussed this monetary challenge, we were reminded of God's blessings that had already been poured out upon us. We remembered how generous the Saints have been in times past. We were also made aware of how the Lord has already prepared the way for this project. He had provided, many months before, a professional brick layer/stone mason to be on staff and an intern with related construction experience. These brethren were brought to us before the housing project was even identified. The Lord has known all along what He wants to be accomplished and has brought us the people with the construction skills.

To respond to this challenge, we have been communicating the need for funding at our congregational Book of Mormon Days for the past several weeks. So far, we have received about \$2,000 and need about \$10,000 more before the end of June. We hope and pray the Lord will touch your heart with a desire to help. May we all be found actively engaged in the work to ensure that there are no poor among us. †

*Please mark your contributions "Belize Housing Project" and send them to The Book of Mormon Foundation, 210 West White Oak, Independence, Missouri 64050.*

## BMF Wish List

- Audio Cassette
- Duplicator . . . . . \$995
- Heating/Air
- Conditioner Unit . . . . \$15,000
- Padded/Folding
- Chairs . . . . . \$28 each
- Public Address System . . \$300
- Seven Foot
- Projector Screen . . . . . \$695
- Wireless Microphone . . \$100

*If you would like to assist in the purchase of any of these items, please contact the Foundation.*

## 2001 BMF Interns

**Libby Angell**  
**Deborah Bird**  
**Nathan Fieth**  
**Emily Griffin**  
**Roger Gumerman**  
**Chris Morris**  
**Nathan Sherer**  
**Rebecca Twombly**  
**Jerrad Urdike**

**Coal City, IL**  
**Higginsville, MO**  
**Odessa, MO**  
**Oak Grove, MO**  
**Lee's Summit, MO**  
**Independence, MO**  
**Independence, MO**  
**Troy, KS**  
**Buckner, MO**

*Even though our goal is to publish a newsletter of the highest quality, it has come to our attention that the last issue of THE WITNESS contained some inadvertent typographical errors. We apologize and will continue to strive to improve our publication.*

# The Witness

Number 100

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## Board of Directors

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The Book of Mormon Foundation is a nonprofit corporation composed of individuals who desire to promote The Book of Mormon and its witness of Jesus Christ.

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

A contribution to The Book of Mormon Foundation is tax deductible. Financials are available upon request.

## From the President

Dear Saints;

What a year this has been at the Foundation! You remember, about a year ago, we began again with a new name: The Book of Mormon Foundation. The direction of ministry and our future existence were totally placed in God's hands.

As a result, the blessings of the Lord have poured out upon us. Many of those blessings have come through you, our supporters, as God has touched your hearts. Others have come in many other ways — financially, spiritually and in service. We are so grateful for these blessings and give praise to the Lord.

We are encouraged with hope as we greet you again in the name of Jesus Christ. Our intent is to bring current information to you and communicate the ongoing opportunities that lie before us. We are excited to announce that the building loan is down to approximately \$15,000. In just one year, you have made it possible for the Foundation to be debt-free this next year. We thank you for your support and prayers.

We are excited to report that our prayers on behalf of the Foundation to become a Learning Center for Book of Mormon subjects has flourished. The many classes offered this year are finding interest among the saints. The small classes that require enrollment have been filling immediately and require more follow-up classes to meet the need. The general classes on Thursday evenings have now reached an attendance up to about 73 people. The Book of Mormon Days offered in the congregations are being well-attended, and the admonition of the Lord to remember the new covenant, even The Book of Mormon, is beginning to bear fruit among the people by the power of the Holy Spirit. We have conducted eleven Book of Mormon Days this past year in various states. Twenty former interns and two of this year's interns have assisted with teaching, music and testimony.

We also need to tell you of a staffing change at the Foundation. Kathy Anderson has assumed the responsibilities of office manager. Linda Guin will remain an active board member and focus much of her time on *The Witness* newsletter. We are grateful to them both for their continued support.

There is more to report for this past year and much more to communicate for next year. Some of the information can be found in other articles in this newsletter. Much more will be coming in our future newsletters. We also encourage you to e-mail us, call us or visit our Web site. We thank you again and encourage you to be found diligent in your stewardship of The Book of Mormon. Much of our participation as a people in these last days will depend on that response. What an exciting day to be alive! May the Lord bless you in your service is our prayer. †

The Witness

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