

n May 2004 my wife, Linda, and I had the opportunity to travel with some friends to Boston, Massachusetts. This trip was greatly anticipated because of our interest in history. After all, the Boston area, in one sense, is the cradle of American history. Many of the early events surrounding the founding of our nation originated from the busy Boston harbor and beyond. We have all studied or heard the stories of the midnight ride of Paul Revere, the Boston Tea Party, the Declaration of Independence and the Battle of Bunker Hill, to name a few. It is a part of the fabric that makes up our American heritage.

As we reviewed what seemed to be limitless choices of historical tours, we finally decided to travel the

America is the only nation within this choice land that fits the description of this prophecy. For me, it stirs deep emotion when I read this scripture and realize that I have been given the privilege of living in this place. Some other relevant scriptures concerning America are found in the prophetic sequence of 1 Nephi 3. They are:

"And I looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles, who was separated from the seed of my brethren by the many waters; and I beheld the Spirit of God, that it came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even unto the seed of my brethren, who were in the promised land. And it came to pass that I beheld the Spirit of God, that it wrought upon other

Gentiles; and they went forth out of captivity, upon the many waters. And it came to pass that I beheld many multitudes of the Gentiles upon the land of promise; And I beheld the wrath of God that it was upon the

AMERICA: A Mighty Nation Marlin Guin

"Freedom Trail" on a trolley tour and get a good overview of what was available for further visits. In so doing, I began to reflect back to my college days as a history major where intense study was given to this period of our national history. The people, places and events that once existed only in my term papers and test preparations began to come to life, which brought me to remember some significant prophetic scriptures in The Book of Mormon concerning America.

"And it meaneth that the time cometh that after all the house of Israel have been scattered and confounded, that the Lord God will raise up a mighty nation among the Gentiles, yea, even upon the face of this land;" (1 Nephi 7:15 RLDS), (1 Nephi 22:7 LDS) seed of my brethren; and they were scattered before the Gentiles, and were smitten. And I beheld the Spirit of the Lord, that it was upon the Gentiles; that they did prosper, and obtain the land for their inheritance; and I beheld that they were white, and exceeding fair and beautiful, like unto my people before they were slain. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles who had gone forth out of captivity did humble themselves before the Lord, and the power of the Lord was with them; And I beheld that their mother Gentiles were gathered together upon the waters, and upon the land also, to battle against them; And I beheld that the power of God was with them; and also that the wrath of God was upon all those that were

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gathered together against them to battle. And I, Nephi, beheld that the Gentiles that had gone out of captivity were delivered by the power of God out of the hands of all other nations. And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld that they did prosper in the land;"

(1 Nephi 3:147-156 RLDS), (1 Nephi 13:12-20 LDS)

To actually stand at the location where the Declaration of Independence was read for the first time to the public is awesome and yet humbling. It seemed as if I could see the faces of those anxious patriots who were yearning for the basic freedoms of God. Even though the Old State House is in one of the busiest sections of downtown Boston, I could still imagine the quietness and attentiveness of the people as they struggled to hear every word. Echoing across the silence, they would hear inspired words such as:



Old State House

"When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and

equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them...We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness... And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." (italics added)

The Lord blessed them with the courage to declare, form and maintain our republic and also in the battles to uphold its principles. It is a government founded upon the voice of the people, one nation under God.

Several of the events in Boston reminded me again of how God has established and protected this mighty nation. He brought it forth as a Christian nation and insured its continued existence for the purposes to which He intended. Among other things, this would be the place of the coming forth of The Book of Mormon and the gathering of latter day Israel.

He has taken care of the smallest details to accomplish His will concerning our country. One such example was brought to light in our tour of the U.S.S. Constitution, a great warship built in 1797 that is now the oldest active commissioned ship in the U.S. Navy. It has served with distinction in the War of 1812 and beyond and has never lost a battle. The battles to which it claimed victory were instrumental in continuing our independence as a free land from Great Britain and the world. The detail that caught my attention was when the tour guide told us its sides were constructed from a wood called "live oak." This



U.S.S. Constitution

wood is different than most in that the grain intermingles in a sporadic pattern to make it extremely difficult to penetrate. During the War of 1812, the U.S.S. Constitution was in a battle with the British frigate Guerriere as salvos of cannon fire were directed at its sides. The cannon balls simply hit the sides and bounced into the water. The British sailors said that it must be made out of iron and thus its nickname "Old Ironsides" came into existence. I was amazed as I stood in front of the display of the original sides of the ship. You could visibly see dents in the sides from cannon balls, but none penetrated or did any significant damage because of the material used in its construction. My heart rejoiced as I heard the tour guide say that the wood, "live oak," was found in the Coastal Georgia Islands: Blackbeard Island, Blythe Island, Grover Island, Sea Island, and St. Simons Island. The Lord made sure this special wood was created and known to grow within this mighty nation called America. His attention to every detail brought to pass the fulfillment of His word.

Another interesting experience was to walk through the museum at the Old State House. In so doing, we came upon a glass case with a document from the governor of Massachusetts, Samuel Adams. On March 20, 1797, he issued "A Proclamation For A Day of Solemn FASTING and PRAYER" to seek the will of the Lord and the blessings of His divine providence for his state and country. I rejoiced as I read:

"And as it is our duty to extend our wishes to the happiness of the great family of man, I conceive that we cannot better express ourselves than by humbly supplicating

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"A Proclamation For A Day of Solemn FASTING and PRAYER"

the Supreme Ruler of the world that the rod of tyrants may be broken to pieces, and the oppressed made free again; that wars may cease in all the earth, and that the confusions that are and have been among nations may be overruled by promoting and speedily bringing on that holy and happy period when the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ may be everywhere established, and all people everywhere willingly bow to the sceptre of Him who is Prince of Peace."

This trip helped me see more clearly the validity of The Book of Mormon and the truth it brings concerning this choice land, especially this mighty nation founded upon it. I am reminded of the great prophetic events that have and will unfold here as its purpose is fulfilled. It is a place of freedom and liberty for us to serve or reject the God who established it.

This is a mighty nation only because God has blessed it and allowed it to be so. In our proud moments, we may think our military might, economy or work ethic has caused us to be a self-made nation. This is not so. With this understanding comes a special accountability for all who dwell here, which was prophesied by the prophet Ether. He clearly gave us the conditions of our continued freedoms for our day when he said:

"And this cometh unto you, O ye Gentiles, that ye may know the decrees of God, that ye may repent, and not continue in your iniquities until the fullness come, that ye may not bring down the fullness of the wrath of God upon you, as the inhabitants of the land have hitherto done. Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land,

who is Jesus Christ who hath been manifested by the things which we have written." (Ether 1:34-35 Italics added)

Today, those who believe The Book of Mormon to be the word of God also make a declaration to the world. I yearn for the time when each one of us in this great and marvelous work will proclaim: "And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." From this conviction will be born the covenant people of the Lord for our time. May the Lord bestow upon us an appreciation of His blessings and nurture our desire to respond to the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ our Lord.

2005 Geneseo Restoration ReunionJuly 16-23

"Zion, Behold, Thou Art My People"
Il Nephi 5:99

The Book of Mormon Foundation will be teaching classes at the Geneseo Restoration Reunion in Illinois.

Please contact Mark Deitrick at (309) 737-5800 or 18203 50th Avenue Court North, East Moline, Illinois 61244 for information.

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The Postman Didn't Ring Twice:

Pending Delivery of The Book of Mormon

Pat Baggette

ecently, while in the initial stage of preparing for a sermon, a very dear friend delivered some interesting documents to me. These documents related experiences of two Indian tribes (the Nez Perces and the Flatheads, both from the state of Washington) with their attempt to obtain "The Book of Heaven," assumed herein to be a reference to The Book of Mormon. It seems that the Lewis and Clark expedition in the early 1800s had some kind of an effect on the religious practices of these two tribes; however, for many years afterwards, especially after the Hudson Bay Company began exploration of the area, the tribes were troubled that they were not worshiping their God in a correct manner. For many years thereafter, the annual council meetings were closed with the lamentation that "[i]f we could only find the trail of Lewis and Clark, and follow it up, we would come to the light or truth about what we have heard." (McBeth, Kate C. The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark, page 29, Fleming H. Revel Company.) After 25 years of enduring this nagging doubt, they were moved upon to send a delegation to go in search of The Book of Heaven. Five tribal leaders were initially sent out on the missions. One turned back after two days' journey due to his advanced age. The remaining members of the delegation finally made it to St. Louis, Missouri, in 1831. There, they met with Governor William Clark and sought to find the white man's Book of Heaven. At about the same time, in October 1830, the early Restored Church received Doctrine and Covenants sections 27 and 31 directing certain persons "to go unto the Lamanites, and preach my gospel unto them..." and that Parley P. Pratt, Oliver Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, Jr. and Ziba Peterson were revealed to be those certain persons to take up this effort. Procrastination and our penchant for doing the Lord's will in our own way seems to have doomed this effort from the start. On departing from Fayette, New York, Parley P. Pratt led the group of four to Kirtland,

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Ohio, where he converted his former mentor, Sydney Rigdon, and baptized 127 people at the cost of eight weeks' travel time. Next, Pratt led the group of four to Cleveland, Ohio, in an attempt to evangelize more people at an indirect cost of three weeks (a snow storm caused a majority of this lost segment). Due to the delays referenced above, they arrived too late to obtain

permits from the Indian agent that would have allowed them to travel and remain in Indian Territory. We can only speculate as to where on the Missouri River the group of four evangelists and the Indian delegation may have met and what the outcome of the meeting would

have produced.

As with the early church's command to build the Kirtland Temple (a commandment and then a scathing reminder was given some six months later) and, elsewhere, to send 500 choice servants to redeem Zion (and the subsequent "Fishing River" Revelation, found in Doctrine and Covenants Section 102, wherein the Saints are again admonished for their transgressions), the members of the early Restored Church sought to complete the Lord's commandments in their own way and in their own time. The consequences of this method of performance have far-reaching effects that are still being felt.

With regard to the Indian Delegation that made its way to St. Louis, Missouri in 1831, two of these men died during their visit. One of the remaining members was to die a broken man during the return to his home. Cecil Abbott, in his work entitled "In Search Of: The Book From Heaven," records that prior to their leaving to return to their homes, the Nez Perce chief delivered the following words to Governor William Clark during a gala gathering in the American Fur Company's rooms in St. Louis:

I came over the trail of many moons from the setting sun. You were the friend of my fathers who have all gone the long way. I come with one eye partly open, for more light for my people who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind to my blind people? I made my way to you with strong arms through many enemies and strange lands that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. Two fathers came with us. They were braves of many winters and wars. We leave them to sleep by your water and wigwams. They were tired of many moons and their

My people sent me to get the white man's Book of moccasins wore out. Heaven. You took me to where you allow your women to dance, as we do ours, and the Book was not there. You took me where they worship the Great Spirit with candles and the Book was not there. You showed me the images of the good spirit and the pictures of the good lands beyond (heaven), but the Book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back to the long sad trail to my people in the dark land. You make my feet heavy with gifts and my moccasins will grow old carrying them, yet the Book is not among them. When I tell my poor blind people, after one more snow, in the Big Council, that I did not bring the Book, no words will be spoken by our old men or our young braves. One by one, they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go on the long path to the hunting grounds. No white man will go with them and no white man's book will make the way plain.

It is my earnest hope and prayer that we learn the lessons of our predecessors so that we, as Book of Mormon believers, are not doomed to repeat these tragic events.

For additional information about the Nez Perce Indians visit:

www.nezperce.org http://www.infowest.com/business/g/gentle/bookof.html http://www.lib.uidaho.edu/mcbeth/governdoc.htm

From Texas

Dallas/Ft. Worth

April 26, 2005

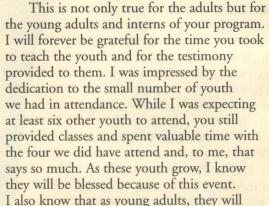
The Book of Mormon Foundation 210 W. White Oak Independence, Missouri 64063

To The Book of Mormon Foundation,

I cannot begin to tell you what this past weekend meant for me and the saints who came out to be a part of the classes and services. Sometimes it is so easy to say thanks and move on without fully relating the appreciation for what someone has done for you. Not only did we get to be part of some great classes and discussions, we were able to fellowship with saints holding a common belief in The Book of Mormon and a strong desire to share its message with others.

When I think of testimonies that can be offered about the weekend, your commitment to the Lord comes to mind. What a blessing for people to see a group of saints dedicated and committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When we think about all the distractions the world has to offer, it is a marvelous thing to see the plain and precious truths of the Lord being taught and with such an

enthusiasm that cannot be denied.



understand that all youth are important, even when you don't have a large group to teach, that even one or two are still important. I pray that both of my grandchildren will desire to serve the Lord with a vigor and excitement as your young adults displayed.

I have heard only good things about this past weekend. I have heard some say that they were reminded of forgotten

scriptures and others say that they learned something new. Both of these statements are true for me. I have a greater sense of commitment toward The Book of Mormon that I know will allow me to minister to those that the Lord will place in my path. For me personally, I will take the things from this past weekend and always treasure them. On behalf of the Ft. Worth Restoration Branch and myself, I offer a sincere thank you to all of you who were a part of this Book of Mormon Day.

Thank you, and may God continue to bless the Foundation and each of you.

David Norcross



Book of Mormon Classes

he Book of Mormon Foundation has been heavily engaged in preaching and teaching ministry to various groups this past year. We have enjoyed the opportunity to go near and far with weekend retreats, Sunday morning presentations and individual ministry in such places as Arizona, Florida, Iowa, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Texas, Missouri and locally in the Center Place. In an effort to enhance this ministry, we are offering the following subjects for both teaching and preaching ministry to the saints. We can provide this ministry for the traditional one-hour class or preaching service. We can also expand it into Sunday morning Book of Mormon Days or weekend Book of Mormon Retreats. Please contact us if you have a desire for us to visit you. Our contact information is on the back page of this newsletter.

Subject	Teacher								
Effectual Fervent Prayer of the Righteous Stewardship Pride Prophecies of the Latter Days Archeological Evidences	Eldon Anderson Dale Godfrey Marlin Guin								
History of the House of Israel Parable of the Olive Tree Finding Christ in The Book of Mormon Gospel of Christ Signs Along the Way The Promised Land/Land of Promise	Dale GodfreyAaron Evans/Marlin GuinDavid Gilmore Aaron Evans Rich RowlandDale Godfrey								
We are also excited to announce the following classes are being developed and reviewed for future assignments. Please watch upcoming newsletters for their availability.									
Subject	Teacher								
Modern-Day Terrorism and the Gadiantons The Antichrists (Nehor, Sherem, Korihor) Parable of the Seed – Alma 16 Ministry in Mesoamerica Today The Book of Mormon Apologetics Visions of Lehi and Nephi	Rich RowlandJeff BallantyneNathan ShererDavid Gilmore								

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I WITNESS Kids

Parable Tree

Peggy Feagins

Hey, kids, we hope you enjoy this story written just for you!

With this story by Peggy Feagins, you can fill in the blanks by looking up the scriptures shown in the story.

With a final burst of energy, I reached the summit of the hill, stopped to catch my breath, let my heart slow a little, and enjoy the view. Hiking had become a passion with me, and I spent a lot of time at it and enjoyed the challenge of matching my strength against the climb, my endurance against the long haul. But even with the thrill of meeting the challenges, of reaching the summits, I felt there should be something more—completeness I was lacking, a destination I had missed.



The breeze on the hilltop cooled my face and soothed my mind. I turned slowly, looking out over other hilltops and valleys—it was so vast, so beautiful. Then I stopped short. In the far distance I could see a beautiful valley; there was a river running through it and a single large tree beside the river. I was drawn to it. Taking out my pocket binoculars, I focused on that tree. Its form was of unusual grace and symmetry, and despite its size, the branches were laden with fruit of some kind. It seemed so wonderful to me; I longed to reach it, to know about it, perhaps to taste its fruit.

The next day was Sunday, and I hunted up my youth leader at the church I had started attending.

He worked with the Forest Service and was familiar with the area; maybe he would know about the tree. I described it to him the best I could and, to my delight, he knew just what I was talking about.

"What's it called?" I quizzed him, feeling excitement growing within me. He looked squarely at me as he replied, "It is the ______ (1 Nephi 3:69 RLDS), (1 Nephi 11:25 LDS), and it will bring you greater joy than anything else you could want."

My thoughts were tumbling over each other—was this the goal, the destination I had been looking for? It looked like a long journey. Could I make it? I knew I had to try.

"How do I get there?" I asked urgently.

So he pointed out to me a straight and narrow path of gospel living and told me if I would stay on that path, it would lead me to the tree.

"That sounds simple enough," I enthused.

"It is simple," he said earnestly, "but it will not always be easy."

"Thanks," I answered, anxious to get started. "I think I can handle it."

"Thanks," I called again as I hurried away. I didn't want to waste any time getting to the tree.

It was pleasant walking on the path. The weather was beautiful; other people on the path were friendly. It was great! I was visiting with a couple of friends when suddenly I exclaimed, "Hey! We've taken a wrong turn. There's no rod of iron by this path!"

"Well," said one, "There is a wooden railing. That's just as good."

"I don't know," I argued. We might get lost going this way."

"Get lost?" they hooted. "What are you-chicken?"

I knew it wasn't the right path, but I didn't want to look like a wimp. I hesitated a moment undecided; then I heard someone calling my name. It was my youth leader. "I'm going back," I said firmly. "You guys coming?"

"Naw," was their response. "Not yet anyway. We wanna have some fun."

I turned and hurried toward the voice. Nothing was as important to me now as getting back to the path. I was so glad to see his outstretched hand and smiling face. "I'm glad you're here," I said, catching my breath, "but why'd you come?"

"Well, sometimes folks new to the path need a little watching after," he grinned. "Just thought I'd

check on you."

I told him I wished there was something I could do to show him how much I appreciated his time and effort on my behalf and, most of all, his caring about me. "Just pass it on," he smiled, "just pass it on."

It was then I decided I had better get a good hold on that rod of iron and not lose sight of it again. It was much farther to the tree than I had supposed. Time passed, and I learned a lot as I walked down the path. There were so many things going on that if I wasn't careful, I found myself distracted from my goal. Sometimes I stumbled, and sometimes I got discouraged. But I prayed to the Lord for strength and kept hold on the rod of iron. A few times, I felt I was really able to help someone else along the way, or bring back to the path someone who had started to stray. These were my times of greatest joy.

There were times when great mists of darkness obscured the path. These mists were the ______ of the _____ (1 Nephi 3:125 RLDS), (1 Nephi 12:17 LDS). Sometimes it seemed more than I could bear; and I clung desperately to the rod of iron to keep from being swept away and lost in the filthy river, which is the depths of ______ (1 Nephi 3:124 RLDS), (1 Nephi 12:16 LDS). When I made it safely through the mists of darkness, the sunshine was brighter, the birds' songs sweeter than I ever remembered before. Then I could sing praises as I walked along, realizing only afterward that I had been strengthened and blessed by my trial.

Once as I was swinging along, I saw a large and spacious building. There were more people in it than I had ever imagined. There was something very intriguing about it. As I watched the goings on in that building, I forgot to watch where I was going. I tripped over a root and fell in a mud puddle. I heard a loud guffaw. There was one of my friends from early on the path among those in the building, and I recognized some kids from my school. They were laughing, and they were pointing at me.

I picked myself up. I felt shame coloring my face. They were all dressed in the latest style and seemed very wise. I was disheveled, had mud on my clothes, and felt rather foolish. I hated them for laughing at me, yet ironically I wanted to be one of them. I wanted to be cool and sophisticated and worldly. The vision of the tree seemed very dim compared with the glitter of this classy crowd in the great and spacious building.

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"It will fall," said a voice at my elbow. It was an old lady I had seen at church. "That great and spacious building is the ______ of the _____ (1 Nephi 3:93 RLDS), (1 Nephi 11:36 LDS). It is not built on a good foundation. It will fall, and the fall thereof will be great. Why don't you take hold of the rod again?" With that she continued on the path, and I was left very alone in the presence of that mocking crowd.

I felt tired and rebellious. Why should I go on? Would I really ever get anywhere? I've come a long way. Isn't that enough? From out of the past a scripture came to me we had learned once in Sunday school. "But behold, for none of these can I hope, except they shall be reconciled unto Christ, and enter into the narrow gate, and walk in the ______ which leads to life, and _____ of the day of probation." (2 Nephi 15:10 RLDS), (2 Nephi 33:9 LDS).

I hate quitters, I mumbled. I reached out and took hold of the rod of iron. Suddenly, all around me were people I knew had walked this path before me—Abraham, Nephi, Queen Esther, Apostle Peter, Mormon, Joseph and Emma... They had no doubt been discouraged, been tempted, and gone astray, repented and pressed on. I could tell by just looking at them they felt the effort was more than worthwhile. I had never felt more humble. I knelt there in the path and asked my Lord's forgiveness. And that sweet, sweet Spirit came into my heart and crowded out all the wrong feelings. I felt wrapped in His love.

Ref. 1 Nephi, chapters 2 & 3 2 Nephi, chapter 15

I Haven't Been Talking to Jesus

I haven't been talking to Jesus today.
I got out of bed, but forgot to pray.
I haven't been asking Him to bless my food.
I hope that He doesn't think I'm being rude.

The scriptures say that I must pray day and night.

If I do not talk to Him it's just not right.

There are many times that I know I should pray.

But though I forget, He loves me anyway.

My prayers I'll start sending to Jesus right now.
I'll pray that He'll help me remember somehow.
God's gonna rejoice when my prayers are not missin'.
He may choose to speak, but He always will listen.

Steve Rideout

Tree of Life

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ANGEL BOOK BUILDING CHRIST CROWD DARKNESS FRUIT GATE GOD HOPE LEHI LOVE MIST NEPHI PATH PRIDE PROBATION REBELLIOUS RIGHTEOUS

TEMPTATION TREE

*Answers on back cover

Convince Who?

Directions: Complete the word code below to find a purpose for The Book of Mormon.

WE MY WE BO DO AND A DO WE MAD A DO WE MAD A DO WE WAS A DO WE WAS

From The Board...

In the last issue of The Witness, we promised to keep you informed of changes at BMF as they occur. Therefore, we are pleased to announce that Linda Guin has returned to BMF as our office manager. We extend our deep appreciation to Kathy Berry, who has fulfilled these responsibilities on a temporary basis. Kathy will continue to assist us with various projects. Her faithful service and enthusiasm has been and will continue to be a blessing to us.

Effective immediately, our office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Wish List

Roof Repair/ Replacement Bids being solicited											
Sponsor An Intern Any amount appreciated\$2,000											
Office Printer (Black/Color)\$ 450											
Label Maker\$ 200											
Scanner											



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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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PUZZLE ANSWERS

Tree of Life

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Convince Who?

THE BOOK OF MORMON IS WRITTEN FOR THE CONVINCING OF THE JEW AND GENTILE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST



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