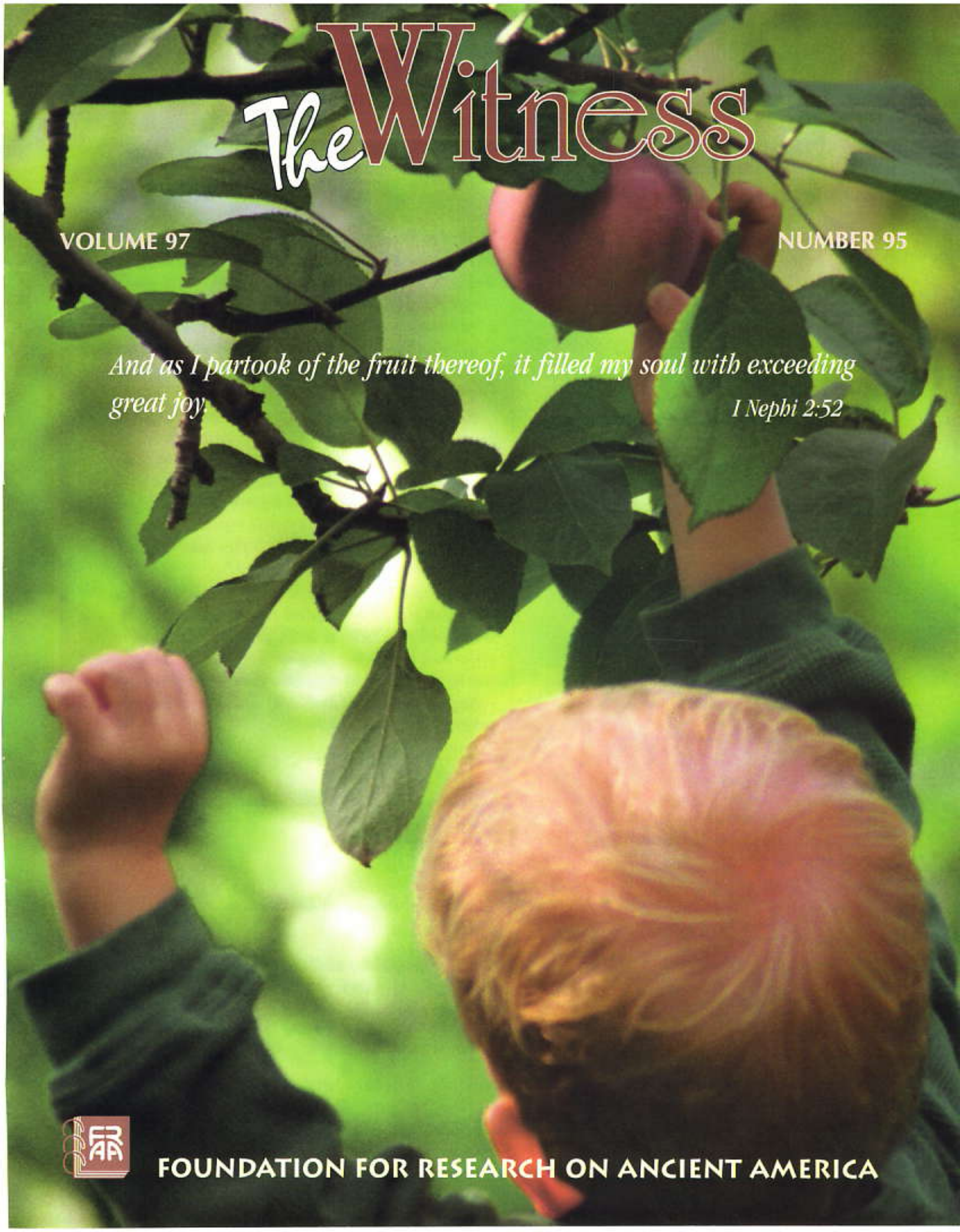


The Witness

VOLUME 97 NUMBER 95

And as I partook of the fruit thereof, it filled my soul with exceeding great joy.

I Nephi 2:52

FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

The Witness

VOLUME 97 NUMBER 95

Editorial Committee
Bonnie Anderson
Dale Godfrey–Chairman
Linda Guin
Marlin Guin
Tom Mitchell
Tish Troutman
Renee Wersching

Officers
Dale Godfrey, President
Linda Trimble, Secretary-Treasurer

The Witness is published quarterly by the Foundation for Research on Ancient America, 210 West White Oak, Independence, Missouri 64050. Tel: (816) 461-FRAA (3722) FAX: (816) 461-5850. Office contact: Linda Guin, Manager

The Foundation for Research on Ancient America 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 FRAA seek to assist in bringing forth the light contained in the ancient scriptures of the Book of Mormon. A contribution to the Foundation for Research on Ancient America is tax deductible.

Articles and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of FRAA or the editorial committee. Unsigned articles are attributable to the committee.

© 1998 by the Foundation for Research on Ancient America.

Front Cover: Colin Patrick Nelson-Peck, son of Rick Nelson and Theresa Peck, North Woodstock, New Hampshire.
Photo: Courtesy of Rick Nelson

Back Cover: "Joseph Receives the Gold Plates" by Kenneth Riley

© The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Used by Permission.

Correction: Volume 97-Number 94. Credit for artwork on back cover was omitted.
"Moroni Burying the Plates" by Tom Lovell

© The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
Used by Permission.



Message from FRAA

As the old year closes and a new year begins, most of us will spend at least a few moments in reflection on the blessings, successes and failures of the past year, as well as our hopes and desires for the new year. As we at FRAA reflect upon 1997, we are most thankful for God's abundant blessings and for the prayers and support of each of you. With God's blessings and your help, FRAA has been able to reach thousands with the message of hope and salvation. Hearts have been touched, and lives have been changed.

As we consider the future, it would be good for each of us to pause to remember the words of Alma to the church in Zarahemla. Alma had just resigned from the position of chief judge so he could spend full time in ministry. Alma's message challenged the church members to examine and improve upon their relationship with God. After inquiring of the people regarding a number of the requisite steps, he tells them that if they have not done these things "ye are not prepared to meet God."

As we enter the new year, it is our hope that each of us will make that preparation required to meet God. Ultimately, this is our goal at FRAA; to assist all who desire to make that preparation in their lives. It is our prayer, as it was Paul's hope, that we may each press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. May God bless you in your efforts to serve Him in 1998.

Contents ...

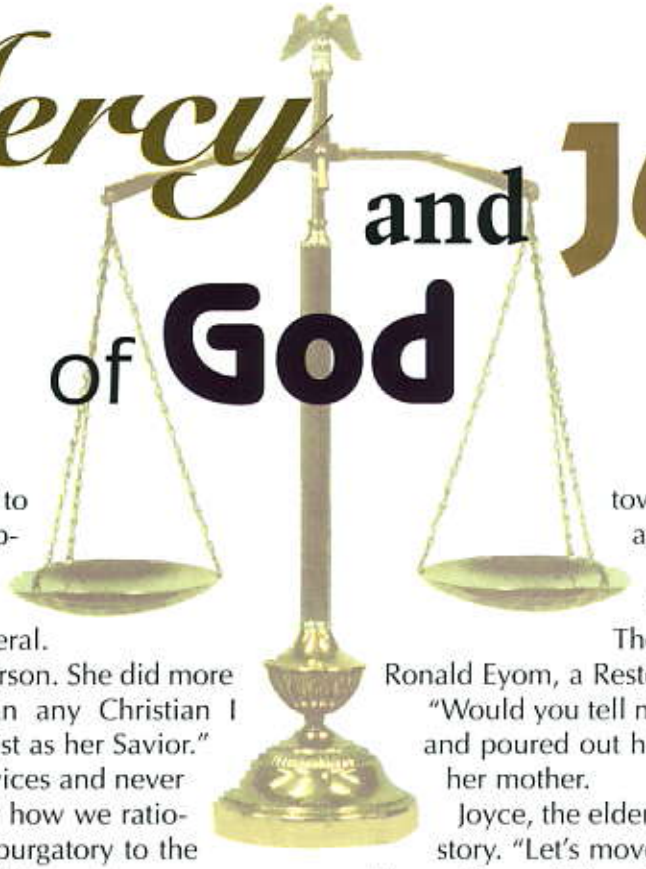
Mercy and Justice of God 3
by John Henderson

Providence, Time and Prophecy 6
by John H. Wolf

Sanctifying The Church 12
by Roland L. Sarratt

Divinity of Jesus Christ 14
by Pat Chadwick

The *Mercy* and Justice of God



by John Henderson

"Your mother went straight to hell because she was never baptized," the Catholic priest told Susan when she sought comfort following her mother's funeral.

"But she was a wonderful person. She did more kindness to other people than any Christian I know, and she believed in Christ as her Savior."

"She never attended our services and never received baptism, so no matter how we rationalize it, she has gone below purgatory to the burning hell," the priest affirmed.

Refusing to believe anyone as kind as her mother would be consigned to such an awful end, Susan sought comfort from a Protestant minister who responded by turning to (Mark 16:16 KJ) Mark 16:15 IV. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Laying his Bible down the minister added, "I'm sorry Susan, but other scriptures say the same thing. You must be baptized."

As she drove home, Susan questioned the fairness of God: *These ministers insist that anyone who is baptized will go to heaven even though he or she may never have done a worthy thing, but they condemn Mother who believed in Christ but spent her life in China working in a relief organization ministering to the sick and feeding the destitute.*

In deep, troubled thought, Susan crossed a bridge almost oblivious to a gathering of people at the stream. Seeing a small child near the road cautioned her, and aware that a baptismal service was in progress, she parked and sat in her car, a feeling of anger toward God filling her mind. *But for a simple ceremony like this, mother could be enjoying the wonders of heaven instead of the burning of hell. God can't be just.*

The gathering dispersed. A woman and a man who was carrying three leather-bound books walked toward her. "Hello," the man said as they passed.

"Wait!" Susan called after them. "Are you a minister?"

The man turned. "Yes, I am Elder Ronald Eyom, a Restoration gospel minister."

"Would you tell me about baptism?" Susan asked and poured out her heart about her concerns for her mother.

Joyce, the elder's wife, was touched by Susan's story. "Let's move over to that park picnic table. I know Ron will be glad to answer your questions."

At the table Ron began. "I know your concerns and I know the Lord also understands. He is just and he has provided for people like your mother. The Bible tells us we must believe and be baptized to be saved. That is true for every person who has the opportunity to hear of Christ and be baptized. But literally millions of people have never heard the name of Christ. Others have never had the opportunity to be baptized because no one has had the authority to perform that ordinance." Ron turned in his Bible to Revelation 12 and read about the woman who represents Christ's church. When he had finished, he said, "According to this, she was caught up to a place prepared for her by God. We believe the church was taken from the earth for 1260 years. During that period no one on earth had authority to baptize."

"What happened to all the people who lived during the 1260 years?" Susan asked. "Did they all go to hell without a chance for eternal life?"

Ron answered, "No, Susan. Many scriptures were left out of the Bible or later taken out. In fact, that was one of the major reasons for the apostasy that drove the church into the wilderness. Those scriptures that were taken out revealed the mercy and justice of God."

Joyce said, "But when the church was restored in 1830, the Lord restored those scriptures. He also gave us the Book of Mormon and modern-day revelations



God is just. Even though he has commanded all to be baptized, he does not hold anyone accountable to his commands who never heard the commands.

that are recorded in a book entitled Doctrine and Covenants."

"That's right," Ron said. "I'll read a couple of scriptures." Ron opened the Book of Mormon to II Nephi 6:41-56 RLDS (II Nephi 9:17-27LDS) and read:

> O the greatness and the justice of our God! For he executeth all his words, and they have gone forth out of his mouth, and his law must be fulfilled. But, behold, the righteous, the saints of the Holy One of Israel, they who have believed in the Holy One of Israel; they who have endured the crosses of the world, and despised the shame of it; they shall inherit the kingdom of God, which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world: and their joy shall be full for ever. O the greatness of the mercy of our God, the Holy One of Israel!...

Susan interrupted. "What about the 1260 years? There must have been good people living during that time. Were they condemned to endless torment?"

Ron continued, "Listen to this as I read on in the same scripture:"

> O how great the holiness of our God! For he knoweth all things, and there is not anything save he knows it. And he cometh into the world that he may save all men, if they will hearken unto his voice; for behold, he

suffereth the pains of all men:... And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they can not be saved in the kingdom of God. And if they will not repent and believe in his name, and be baptized in his name, and endure to the end, they must be damned; for the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, hath spoken it; wherefore he hath given a law; and where there is no law given there is no punishment; and where there is no punishment, there is no condemnation; and where there is no condemnation, the mercies of the Holy One of Israel have claim upon them, because of the atonement: for they are delivered by the power of him: for the atonement satisfieth the demands of his justice upon all those who have not the law given to them, that they are delivered from that awful monster, death and hell, and the devil, and the lake of fire and brimstone, which is endless torment; and they are restored to that God who gave them breath, which is the Holy One of Israel. But wo unto him that has the law given; yea, that has all the commandments of God, like unto us, and that transgresseth them, and that wasteth the days of his probation; for awful is his state!

Then Ron turned to Romans 2:11-13:

> For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without the law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (for not all hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law are justified...).

"You see," Ron said, "God is just. Even though he has commanded all to be baptized, he does not hold anyone accountable to his commands who never heard the commands. Now let's turn to Mosiah 9:176 RLDS (Mosiah 21:33 LDS) in the Book of Mormon:"

> And it came to pass that King Limhi (a Nephite king, who with his people was held in bondage by the army of a Lamanite king) and many of his people were desirous to be baptized; but there was none in the land that had authority from God.

"Finally," Ron said, "let's read the words of Jesus when he came to the people on this continent:"

> And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost, *even as the Lamanites, because of their faith in me, at the time of their conversion, were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost and they knew it not.* Behold, I have come into the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin; therefore whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive; for of such is the kingdom of God. (III Nephi 4:50-51 RLDS, III Nephi 9:20-21 LDS).

"These Lamanites had no opportunity to be baptized," Ron continued, "so Jesus sent fire and the Holy Ghost to them for a baptism. They were converted, but they didn't even know they had been baptized. Immediately after his appearance to the people on this continent, Christ ordained men with the authority to baptize and instructed them in performing the ordinance. The answer to your question, then, is that those who have been given the law and have the opportunity to be baptized will be judged by the law and rewarded or condemned by the law. They will be required to be baptized. However, when this knowledge or opportunity is not given, Christ as lawgiver and savior will send fire and the Holy Ghost to baptize those whose lives and dedication make them acceptable in his kingdom. That must include your mother. Christ is the judge."



John and his wife, Lillie, live in Albany, Oregon. John and Lillie have co-authored a number of books including Secrets of the Last Sunrise, Keys to the Hidden Mysteries *and* Discovery of the Last Chapters Volumes One and Two. *They attend the Salem Restoration Branch.*



Providence, Time and Prophecy

by John H. Wolf

Considerable media attention and individual speculation is being given to the approaching end of the second millennium and the arrival of the third. In our culture, we sometimes admire and honor mystic knowledge, but we usually regard it as irrational until we come to a time like this. Then we're afraid to ignore the mystic. In addition, the western mind since the Enlightenment, has seen time almost exclusively as linear. Most ancient cultures, however, thought of time as cyclical.[1] Nevertheless, we are so stuck on our own system that we have a hard time entertaining an alternate possibility. We act as though God surely sees time as we do. But we know that can't be true. We have been assured that God's scheme of time is high above ours.[2]

The Maya/Nephite civilization developed a grand, sophisticated time scheme that was in some ways superior to ours. It combined the best of both these schools of thought into a vast, prophetic time design. Whereas we operate on decimals, factors of 10, they operated on a vigesimal system, with factors of 20. We have only seven days in a week, however, rather than 10 and vary the length of our months from 28 to 31 days. The Maya used 20 days in something like a long week or a short month. This was called a "uinal." Eighteen uinal made a year with five left over "bad days."[3] The year was called a "tun." Twenty tuns made a "katun." Then 20 katuns made a "baktun." A baktun was 400 years, an important prophetic time span for the Maya/Nephites.[4]

When Nephi says "600 years," that is one and one-half baktun and would have been an awesome and impressive prophetic date to the Maya/Nephites.[5] Unlike ourselves, they were exact in calculating dates and gave them spiritual significance. They calculated prophetic events both forward and backward in time and fully expected those events to happen on certain specific dates. Therefore, in our English translation when Samuel says, "five years more cometh," he no doubt gave an exact date.[6] When he goes further to predict that on that date "there shall be a new star arise,"[7] he would have greatly impressed his Maya/Nephite listeners. Five years later when "there was a day set apart by unbelievers,"[8] it was not just a random, final "due date." They were terrified because a baktun and a half was up.[9] They expected horrible things to happen. They were right, but the upheaval happened at Christ's death, not at his birth. They were 34 years off. In III Nephi 4:6 RLDS (III Nephi 8:5 LDS) we get the exact Maya date of Christ's death.[10]

Critics of the Book of Mormon point out that from the fall of King Zedekiah to the birth of Jesus was not exactly 600 years. Not in our system, but it comes out precisely in the sophisticated Maya/Nephite scheme.[11] The Nephites had always looked forward to the coming of the Messiah, the Christ, throughout their history. Later they were no doubt frightened and mystified when Samuel the Lamanite prophesied that in exactly one baktun—400 years—after the coming of Christ, their civilization would end in cataclysmic self-destruction.[12] After that, only the Lamanites would be left. Three baktun later, in 1600 AD, the Spanish conquest then fell on the Lamanites.[13] The Toltec/Maya of the Yucatan peninsula fell to the Spaniards in forlorn resignation as though they knew that an age of affliction and calamity had arrived. In another half baktun, the Book of Mormon would come forth. Today, a full baktun, 400 years from the dissolution of the Maya civilization, brings us to what the Nephites calculated was the absolute end of the age. They

The glyphs bordering this article appear on the Mayan calendar.

computed the end to be December 23, 2012 AD.[14] We probably should not take that date too seriously. However, it can be taken at least as seriously as we are taking January I, 2000 AD.

There are rationales for power that differ from those of the late 20th century. Many decry all the wars described in the Book of Mormon. Yet our 20th century has been the most brutal hundred years in human history. Nor have we accepted the prophetic warnings of the Book of Mormon prophets regarding our time. Our rationales have honored power over people rather than power between people and power indwelling time and the cosmos.[15] The Maya/Nephites saw time cycles overlap in a matrix of complex rhythms of village life, elite politics, international warfare and deep spirituality. Both Mormon and his son Moroni looked down the ages to the coming forth of the Book of Mormon. They trusted divine sovereignty and saw this event in a prophetic time frame.

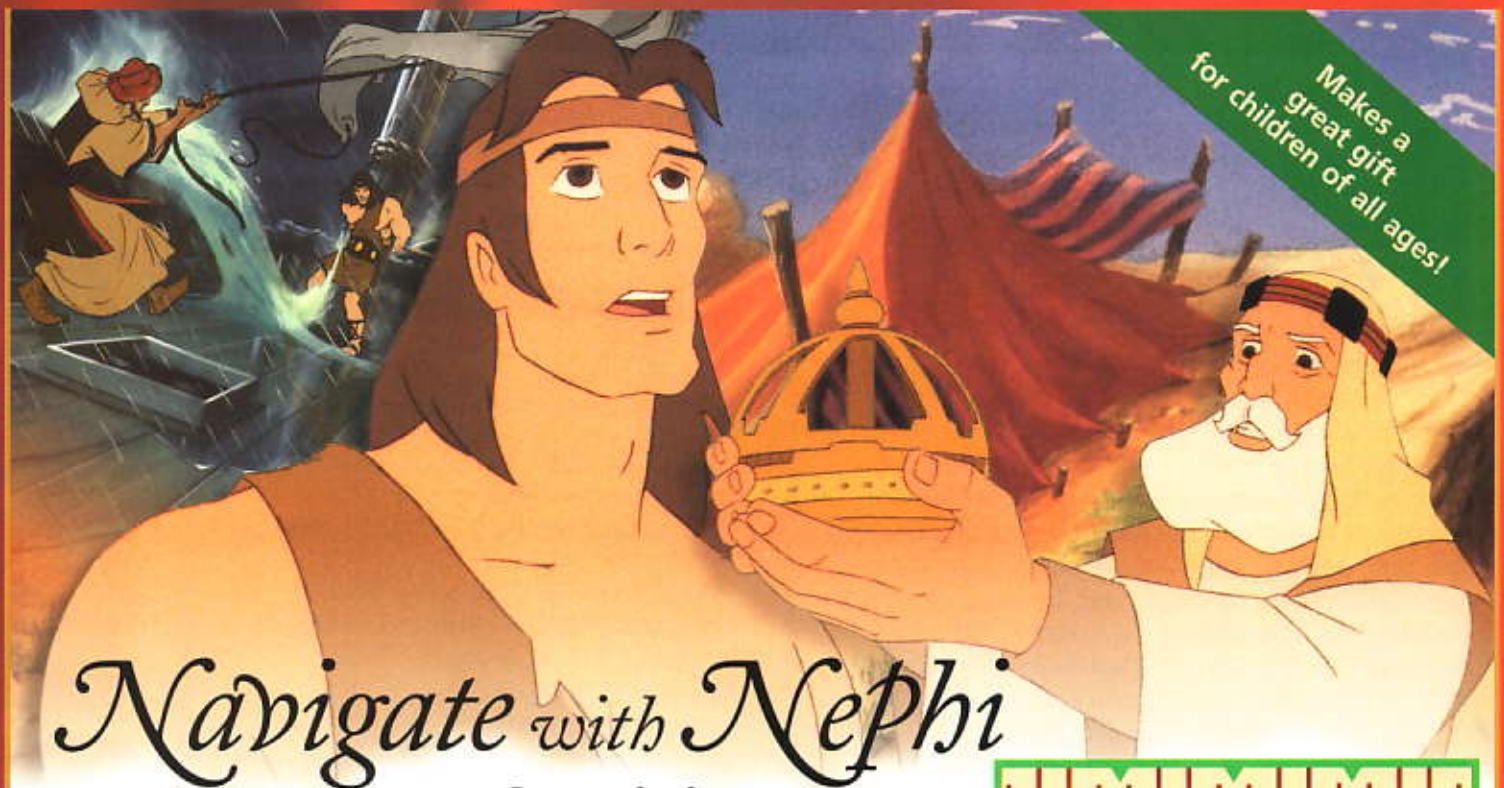
Whether from the jungle rain forests of Mesoamerica or from the Isle of Patmos, the prophets agree that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."[16] While it would be a prize understatement to say of our time that humanity's plans have been confounded, Book of Mormon prophets and timekeepers assumed history and time were God's creation. We agree. God invaded history in the person of Christ Jesus and even though history and time may always be punctuated by apparent forsakenness, they are yet the place of God's self-disclosure, and therefore, prophetic.[17]

John Wolf is an Evangelist with the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in the Michigan region. John and his wife, Jann, reside in Clare, Michigan.

1 Eliade, Mircea, *Cosmos and History*; Hambdon Conn.: Garland Publishing, 1985.
2 D & C 85:11 RLDS, D & C 88:42-44 LDS
3 Hammond, Norman, *Ancient Mayan Civilization*; New Brunswick N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1982, pp. 108-09.
4 Schele and Freidel, *A Forest of Kings*; New York: William Morrow, 1990, pp. 80-83.
5 I Nephi 3:4 I Nephi 5:236 RLDS, I Nephi 11:4 I Nephi 19:8 LDS
6 Helaman 5:55 RLDS, Helaman 14:2 LDS
7 Helaman 5:59 RLDS, Helaman 14:5 LDS
8 III Nephi 1:9 RLDS, III Nephi 1:9 LDS
9 III Nephi 1:1 RLDS, III Nephi 1:1 LDS
10 III Nephi 4:6-23 RLDS, III Nephi 8:5-24 LDS
11 Sorenson, John L., *An Ancient American Setting for the Book of Mormon*; Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1985, pp. 270-275.
12 Helaman 5:6-11 RLDS, Helaman 13:5-9 LDS
13 Freidel, Schele and Parker, *Maya Cosmos*; New York: William Morrow and Company 1993, pp. 37-39.
14 Schele and Freidel, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 82.
15 Freidel, Schele and Parker, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 37.
16 Revelations 19:10
17 Buttrick, George, *Christ and History*; New York: Abingdon Press, 1963, pp. 101.



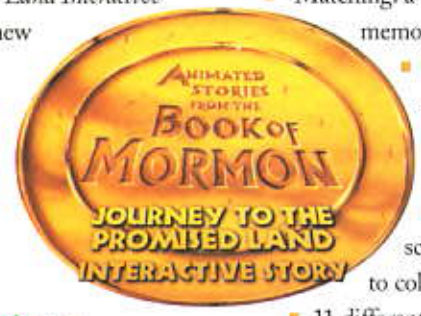
Observatory at Chichen Itza.



Navigate with Nephi on an Exciting, New CD-ROM!

New from Living Scriptures

Imagine your children's excitement as Nephi guides them through the fun-filled activities in *Journey to the Promised Land Interactive Storybook*. This exciting new CD-ROM is packed with a variety of features that will provide hours of entertainment as the whole family increases their knowledge of The Book of Mormon.



Many exciting features

- Six interactive storybook pages
- Six video clips from the popular animated video *Journey to the Promised Land*.
- Sing Along with the song "Step by Step."
- Quick Click: a matching game to test your reflexes on two challenging levels.
- Matching: a concentration-type memory game with three levels.
- Cargo Catch tests your ability to move the ship to catch the cargo as it falls faster and faster.
- Paint eight pages on screen, or print them out to color by hand.
- 11 different Puzzles on two levels.
- Trivia: answer the questions right and add a piece to the ship until it sails away to the promised land!
- Fully narrated, read-along Storybook.
- Scripture menu: six pages of actual scripture passages from The Book of Mormon to read—all linked to the interactive pages!

System Requirements

WINDOWS PC

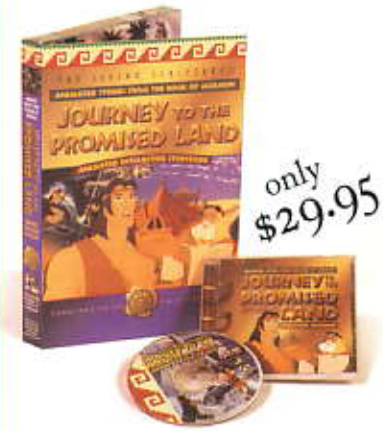
- IBM 486(66) or higher processor
- 8MB RAM
- Windows 3.1 or higher
- 15MB hard disk space
- Double-speed CD-ROM drive (quad speed or higher recommended)
- 256 color video display
- Sound card recommended
- Mouse

System Requirements

MACINTOSH

- 68040 or higher processor (Power PC recommended)
- 5MB free, available RAM
- 15MB hard disk space
- Double-speed CD-ROM drive (quad speed or higher recommended)
- 256 color video display

The Living Scriptures®



only $29.95

Order Yours Today!

from

Tree of Life Bookstore



HIS NAME IS JESUS

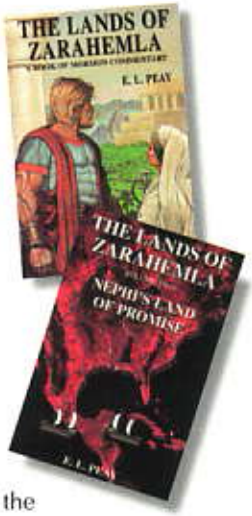
by Yacov Rambsel.....**$12.99**

Yacov Rambsel has astonished biblical scholars and students with his interesting discovery that God had encoded the Hebrew name of Jesus (Yeshua) in almost every messianic prophecy in the Old Testament. The book illustrates new evidence that only God could have inspired the writers of the Bible to record the Word of God.

LANDS OF ZARAHEMLA VOL. I

by E.L. Peay.....**$9.95**

This is a Book of Mormon commentary using cross-referencing between the Book of Mormon and work done by anthropologists and archeologists in Central America. The author concludes that the people of the Book of Mormon were probably the ancient Maya.



LANDS OF ZARAHEMLA VOL. II

by E.L. Peay.....**$9.95**

In his second volume, Nephi's Promised Land in Central America, also a Book of Mormon commentary, E.L. Peay confirms the authenticity of the Book of Mormon.



FAIR GODS AND FEATHERED SERPENTS

by T.J. O'Brien.....**$22.98**

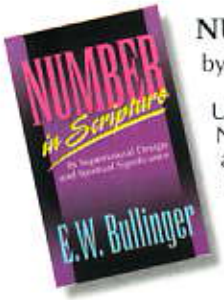
Many missionaries, trappers and colonizers heard strange stories of a bearded, white visitor who came in ancient times, long before Columbus, bringing a higher civilization with him. His symbol, the feathered serpent, was used in many ceremonies, paintings and architecture. Fair Gods and Feathered Serpents has intriguing legends and archaeological evidence from myriad American cultures discovering the identity of this mysterious fair god.

BOOK OF MORMON PAINTINGS OF MINERVA TEICHERT

by John Welch and Doris Dant...**$39.95**



In this book you will find the complete collection of Minerva Teichert's Book of Mormon murals in full color. These murals tell stories of faith and endurance from the Book of Mormon. More important, the collection displays the truths that she so strongly believed: that Jesus is the Christ and the Book of Mormon is the word of God.



NUMBER IN SCRIPTURE

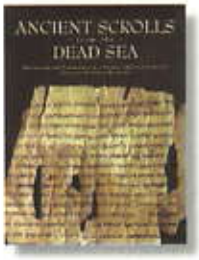
by E.W. Bullinger.....**$12.99**

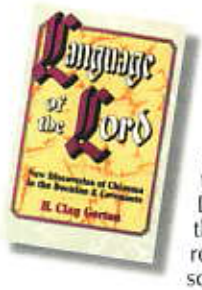
Use this book as a guide in studying Bible Numerics. The author takes a two-fold approach in examining the supernatural design of the bible. First, the amazing patterns of numbers and numerical features of the scriptures giving evidence of their Designer, and secondly the spiritual significance of numbers.

ANCIENT SCROLLS FROM THE DEAD SEA

edited by M. Gerald Bradford.....**$7.95**

This is a publication containing photographs and commentary on a unique collection of scrolls. These scrolls and artifacts have been found in Qumran.





LANGUAGE OF THE LORD

by H. Clay Gorton.....**$19.98**

In Language of the Lord, the author makes a powerful case that chiasma are a characteristic of the speech pattern of the Lord, and that their existence in the Doctrine and Covenants is strong evidence that those scriptures constitute divine revelation. This book is an essential tool for scripture study.

ORDER FORM

#95

Name:_____ Address:_____ Form of Payment: Check #_____

City:_____ State:_____ Zip:_____ Phone: (_____) _____ Credit Card #:_____

Circle One: MasterCard / Visa / Discover

Signature:_____ Exp. Date:_____

PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

QTY.	ITEM	TITLE (Description)	SIZE	COST

SUB TOTAL:

SHIPPING & HANDLING 10% ($2.00 minimum):

TOTAL

Tree of Life Bookstore

210 West White Oak • Independence, MO 64050-2749 • (816) 252-0300 • Fax (816) 461-5850

Thank You

Tantalizing Glimpses

Possible Weight of the Plates of the Book of Mormon

by Mildred Nelson Smith

It is being said by some that the plates of the Book of Mormon, as Joseph Smith described them, would have weighed more than 600 pounds. Therefore, they say, there were no plates.

This information is erroneous and is based on a common error in mathematics. A cubic foot of gold weighs 1,200 pounds. It might seem logical that a six-inch cube would be half the weight of a 12-inch cube. Actually, it requires eight six-inch cubes to equal one 12-inch cube in volume. A six-inch cube weighs 150 pounds, not 600!

Joseph estimated the plates to be about 6"x6"x8", or 1/3 larger than a six-inch cube, for a total weight of 200 pounds for a solid block of gold of that size.

But the plates were not a solid block of metal, and no one who saw and handled them described them as "gold." Joseph described them in a letter as having the "appearance of gold." The eight witnesses whose testimony is in the Book of Mormon described them the same way. Nephi said that he had gold, silver and copper available in abundance when he made the plates of "ore."

The *Scientific American* of June 1984 describes the metallurgy of the artifacts of the Pre-Columbian era in Central and South America as having the appearance of gold when they were actually "tumbaga gold," and made of gold, silver and copper or only gold and copper. Some of the artifacts described contained as little as 12% gold and 88% copper. Others contained as much as 40% gold, 48% silver and 12% copper. This "tumbaga gold" appeared to be solid gold. Even the edges of very thin sheets were covered with gold.

By calculating the weights of the metals possibly used to make the plates, we discover that a solid block of metal 6"x6"x8" would weigh between 98.9 and 129.8 pounds. Since they were engraved sheets, however, their weight would have been much less. We can only estimate how much less. Joseph's brother, William, who hefted the plates but did not see them, estimated that they weighed about 60 pounds. Certainly they were not too heavy for a strong young man to handle!

Mildred Nelson Smith's complete testimony regarding her research on the weight of the plates is found in her book The Master's Touch, *page 306 entitled, "A Colossal Error in Mathematics."*

References:

Wentworth Letter–*Time and Seasons,* Vol 3, Page 707, quoted in Davis, *The Story of the Church,* Page 55.

Scientific American, June 1984, Pages 56-63. (Pre-Columbian metallurgy)

I Nephi 5:217-218, RLDS (I Nephi 18:25, 19:1, LDS). (Plates made of ore)

Saint's Herald, Vol 31, Pages 643-644. (William Smith's sermon)

From Our Readers ...

Best wishes to all of you. God bless all of you in your work to bring people to Christ through the assisted help of the Book of Mormon.

Independence, Missouri

My wife and I enjoy your magazine immensely and will be sending you a sign of our support in the mail. Our prayer is that the Lord will bless and prosper all the true believers in the Book of Mormon.

Miami, Florida

I am unable to send money for a new subscription right now but when I can, I certainly will. I really enjoy *The Witness,* and I have loaned it out to different friends. I read them over and over. Thank you.

I not only enjoy the reading of the articles—but the artwork is excellent.

Milton, Florida

Enclosed is a check for $nnn to help in the Lord's work. It is not convenient for me to send a monthly donation. May you be richly blessed as you strive to promote the Book of Mormon.

Guyahoga Falls, Ohio

Please find enclosed our contribution to help cover expenses incurred as you do the Lord's work. Our congregation of 15-20 felt lead to give of our surplus to different organizations that were helping others hold fast to the rod of iron.

We pray the Lord finds us all faithful until he comes again!

Floyds Knob, Indiana

TESTIMONY

by Mike Barrett

It was the Wednesday before Easter, 1997. I was driving to prayer service, scheduled to be up front and to share a lead testimony. My mind was wandering here and there as I drove when suddenly the Spirit spoke to me. It said, "At this point in time you have everything taken care of that you need. You should slow down and enjoy the small moments in life. Enjoy the fact that you rest in the shelter of a great God and that there is nothing this world can do to you that can take you from him even if you were to lose your life." I thought this was interesting and shared it in my testimony that night.



Four hours later I was at home when the most excruciating pain started in my head. It was so strong that it made me sick to my stomach. I didn't sleep that night but simply lay on my bed and cried. The next morning Lana Elliot took me to the hospital. I was expecting to be told I had a migraine headache, but when the doctor came into the room, I was surprised at the news. He said I was suffering from a brain hemorrhage and would have to be transferred to a bigger hospital. At once Lana called the elders and they were waiting to administer to me as I arrived at the other hospital. I went into the operating room, and they shot dye into my brain so they could check all the vessels. Finally the doctor said to me, "I've turned you every which way and looked over and over, but I can't find anything wrong." The bleeding had stopped and all of my vessels were fine. (Sometime later my mom pointed out a woman who had had the same problem but she had to have brain surgery to stop the bleeding. I felt so blessed.)

For the next seven days I don't remember much as the headache was still there from the blood on the brain. What I do remember is the very humbling love of the saints. I had saints staying with me night and day when Mom and Dad couldn't. I was continually told about all the prayers being offered.

One night Dan Elliot came. It was a real bad night and I couldn't find any relief. He told me that although my body was in bondage, my mind could still be free and that I should ask the Lord to take my mind where it should go. I fell asleep as he left. The next day I was lying in bed thinking of this when I saw a very vivid picture. I was in a South American country with dark-skinned people. There was a man surrounded by a group of people speaking in a language I couldn't understand. He held a book in his hand and raised it high. The people all let out a loud cheer and started going northward together. I knew the book was the Book of Mormon and the people were rejoicing in the Lord's promises to them. They were marching to Zion. I saw people coming from the north, south, east and west to the center place. The last thing I saw was priesthood preaching the gospel. I was drawn to their faces. I knew some of them, but what really stood out was their countenances. I have never seen such earnest looks. They spoke from their hearts, and their words carried the power of the Holy Spirit. They knew the gospel because it was written on their hearts.

This experience left a number of impressions on me. First, the Lord's work really does go forward and is much bigger than I realized. It truly is the rock cut from the mountain without hands and will roll forward and destroy all the works of Satan. I felt such a desire to be on the winning team. All other works paled in comparison to building the kingdom. Second, the Lord will use other people besides the few in the center place, and as we struggle to unify and spend our energy in endless discussions, we had better learn to come to Christ or we will be left behind. Third, the kingdom won't be a reality until the priesthood have a first-hand testimony of Christ and can preach Christ from their hearts. I will never forget that earnest look on their faces.

I could not discuss this experience for several days because whenever I thought of it, I would weep. Finally, as I was administered to, the elders asked me what my desire was. My first thought was to be healed, but as I thought about the possibility of shortly standing before my God, it was impressed on me that there was only one thing that was important. I asked for a broken heart and for charity, for without these I will not be fit for the kingdom and will not be able to be with Jesus. I believe that what happened to me is to be shared with the body of Christ, for it is not just to strengthen my faith but our faith as a people. Christ knows each of us personally. He is alive and he still watches over his creation.

SANCTIFYING THE CHURCH

by Roland L. Sarratt

Prophecy tells us that knowledge will be increased at the time of the end (Daniel 12:4). Surely there is evidence of this in the last century and a half. The signs given in the scriptures indicate that we are living in the last days and in the time of the return of Christ to the earth. It would be well for us to prepare ourselves to meet the Lord.

Speaking of the great sacrifice that was to be made by our Savior, Jesus Christ, the prophet Isaiah said, "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed" (Isaiah 53:10). Abinadi referred to this statement and revealed who should be Christ's seed: all those who have heard and hearkened unto the words of the prophets (Mosiah 8:40-42 RLDS, Mosiah 15:10,11 LDS). This most certainly applies to us today for we have many prophecies directly referring to our time in the scriptures.

The most important concern that we ought to have as we approach the day of Christ's return is whether or not he will recognize us as his people. Jesus told the Pharisees that he knows his sheep and that they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger. He says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10:27,28).

In referring to the day of his return, Jesus gives us this warning: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36). The two things required of us are to watch and pray always. We should be sufficiently acquainted with the prophecies that we recognize the signs of our time and give appropriate warnings. We should also pray continually that we might have the Spirit of Christ to give us discernment. The point of Jesus' warning is for us to be worthy to escape destruction and deception and be able to stand in his presence when he comes to his people. This thought should stir the hearts of all people who have come to know the fullness of the gospel of Christ. We cannot expect to be among those who stand in his presence unless we have faith and hope in the promises that Jesus has given.

The prophet Nahum gave a sign to which we can easily relate:

> The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall justle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings. He shall recount his worthies; they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the defense shall be prepared. Nahum 2:4,5

Although this prophecy was given in an ancient time, the description of our common means of transportation today is quite accurate. We might also consider that the Lord will "recount his worthies" at this time. Why should he need to recount his worthies except that there might be those who are not prepared to meet him. The prophet further indicates that there will be a need for a defense and that there will be a



My sheep hear my voice.



The preparation of the people is of great significance.

wall to which his people will hasten. Could that be Zion, the place of protection for his people?

Jesus likened the kingdom of heaven to a wedding feast given by a certain king. Those who were invited not only declined the invitation but also reacted rudely and violently to the king's servants who bore the cordial message. To this the king said, "The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy" (Matthew 22:8). The king then sent his servants into the highways to bid all to the marriage who would come. However, when the guests were greeted by the king, he noted that one man did not have on a wedding garment. This lack of preparation was offensive to the king and resulted in dire consequence for the man. The king's closing statement was "For many are called, but few are chosen."

Another scripture that describes the Lord's selectiveness is found in Isaiah 1:27,28: "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness. And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed." The Lord's favor or disfavor of the people at that time undoubtedly brought about a much greater respect toward the Lord and his will than that which is generally shown today.

The preparation of the people is of great significance, but it also includes the preparation of the church. This is stated by Paul in his admonition to husbands:

> Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Ephesians 5:25-27

The Lord's mission was to sanctify and cleanse the church, figuratively described as the bride of Christ. Such sanctification and cleansing is appropriate for the church today. The washing process is by the word that Christ has spoken, either of himself or through his servants and prophets. The desired result would be to make the church worthy to be presented to himself, holy and without blemish.

We turn to Revelations 19:7,8 to confirm our hope in the preparedness of the seed of Christ in these last days: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

Roland Sarratt is a member of the Council of Apostles with the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) in Independence, Missouri.

Divinity of Jesus Christ

by Pat Chadwick

Recently, I read an article which stated a high percentage of our modern theologians and ministers do not believe in the divinity of Jesus. It caused me to wonder how so many men who call themselves ministers of Christ can drift so far from the truth. The thought came to me that it is because they have rejected the Book of Mormon.

I am so thankful for the Book of Mormon and its testimony of Jesus Christ. It is because of the Book of Mormon that I can declare that I have assurance that Jesus was divine.

The first time I read the Book of Mormon, it was in preparation for my patriarchal blessing. It seemed a difficult book to read, but I struggled through it. I was happy when I finally finished it. I did not doubt the book was true, but I didn't have a testimony of its truthfulness, nor did I understand its great worth. In my patriarchal blessing, I was told that my preparation had been pleasing to God. Even though it was pleasing, I believe that I read the book more out of a sense of duty than a real desire to know if it was true.

A year or so later, I decided to once again read the Book of Mormon. This time the book came alive for me. Every page was exciting. I was a busy, young mother, but every chance I got, I read my Book of Mormon.



Pat and Hal Chadwick

One cold winter afternoon, I was reading in my bedroom while the children were napping, and I had an experience I will never forget. Even after all these years, it has not dimmed in my memory. I was almost finished with the book and was reading Moroni's exhortation when a sudden warmth came into the bedroom. (*"Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam, even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts. 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 10:3-5) I held the Book of Mormon in my hands and I knew without a shadow of a doubt that it was true.

During this experience, my heart burned within me and my mind was enlightened by the Spirit of God. I not only knew the Book of Mormon was true, but I was given an understanding of its great value. It came to my mind that if I had a great treasure chest overflowing with precious metals and gems, it would all be as sawdust compared to the treasure I held in my hands. Yes, I knew the Book of Mormon was of far greater value than silver, gold, rubies, diamonds, emeralds or pearls. They were of no value at all compared to it. I held the book and wept for joy that I had been given the opportunity to read this wonderful, priceless record of God. No earthly treasure can compare to it.

Not long after this experience, I had an opportunity to read a testimony written by my great-aunt. In this testimony, she described having a similar experience to mine regarding the Book of Mormon. She went on to say that after having this experience, she was asked to give a testimony at church on the divinity of Jesus Christ. Thinking she did not have that type of testimony she told the man, "All I have is a testimonyof the truth of the Book of Mormon." He said, "That's great, just give that." On the appointed Sunday, she gave her testimony of the truth of the Book of Mormon. The man in charge stood and said, "You have just heard a vibrant testimony of the divinity of Jesus Christ, for if you know the Book of Mormon is true, you know Jesus is the Son of God. The Book of Mormon stands as a witness to the divine nature of Christ."

When I read my aunt's testimony, my heart once again burned within me. My mind seemed filled with the wonder of it all. Like my aunt, I had never thought of my testimony in that expansive way. My mind seemed to just cry out, "Yes, Jesus lives! I know that my redeemer lives, and all the prophecies and promises we find in the scriptures are true." I thought, "Oh the Bible is true and the Doctrine and Covenants. The church is truly Christ's restored church, and Joseph Smith was a prophet of God." It all just seemed to come together in my mind like when a puzzle is completed and you see the finished picture.

The knowledge that the Book of Mormon is true, and Jesus is all that the Holy Scriptures claim him to be, has sustained me from day to day. It has strengthened my faith and helped me endure a number of difficult trials.

I look forward to Christ's return upon this earth to reign as King of Kings; but many trials lay ahead of us before he returns. Each one of us will need a strong testimony of Jesus Christ to endure the days ahead. If you do not have such a testimony, but desire it, I urge you to read the Book of Mormon with full intent and sincerity of heart according to Moroni's exhortation.

Would You Like to Write for *The Witness*?

The Witness editorial committee invites readers and interested persons to submit articles for publication within the following guidelines:

- Articles may address archaeology, theology or personal experience.
- Length of articles should be 1,200 words or less.
- Short contributions of 300 words or less are also welcome.
- Send a hardcopy of your manuscript and a 3.5 diskette (PC) if available. These will not be returned.
- Illustrations and photos with appropriate identification should also accompany your manuscript and will be returned only if requested. Please inform us if your material is under copyright.

1998 Annual Theme
Spiritual Treasures in the Book of Mormon

Secondary Annual Theme
(To Be Used for Theological Articles)
Great Sermons From the Book of Mormon

Other Book of Mormon-related articles will also be considered for publication in *The Witness* as well as other FRAA publications. The editorial committee reviews submissions for relevance, style and content. If approved for publication, the committee reserves the right to make changes that are consistent with accepted editorial standards. Articles should be written from a positive viewpoint. *The Witness* is not only directed toward Book of Mormon believers but also serves as a witness to those being introduced to the Book of Mormon for the first time. Send manuscripts to the Foundation for Research on Ancient America, 210 West White Oak, Independence, MO 64050. Tel: (816) 461-FRAA (3722) Fax: (816) 461-5850.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

FRAA's commitment is to provide our readers with the finest Book of Mormon magazine possible. However, fewer than eight percent of those who receive *The Witness* have actually paid for their subscription. If FRAA is to continue to provide this ministry, it is essential that we have your financial support. If you have not subscribed to *The Witness*, please do so today. A subscription envelope is included with the magazine. We appreciate the support of those who have paid their subscriptions and who have written to share with us how important the magazine is in their lives.

God brought it forth.



Will you give it to the world?

FRAA needs the contributions of every man, woman and child to send forth the message of Jesus Christ found in the Book of Mormon. Please give generously.

Send Your Gift Today in the Enclosed Envelope

FRAA

The Witness

FOUNDATION FOR **R**ESEARCH ON **A**NCIENT **A**MERICA
210 W. WHITE OAK, INDEPENDENCE MO 64050

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Independence, MO
Permit No. 123