

QUETZALCODEX

QUETZAL ARCHAEOLOGY CENTER FOR MESOAMERICAN RESEARCH

REMEMBERING ISRAEL


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May 14, 2011 marks the 63rd year of Israel as a nation. When God made covenant with Abraham, it included the land of Israel (Genesis 17:8), which was extended to his future descendants through Isaac (Genesis 26:2-5) and Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel (Genesis 28:1-4, 13-14). This covenant was reiterated to Moses (Deuteronomy 19:1-30:20) as distinct and unconditional, not dependant on faithfulness or obedience. There was also a second “land” covenant with Moses that was conditional, related to obedience to the Mosaic Law. The Book of Mormon reveals that the purpose of the Law of Moses was to point to the Messiah (Jacob 3:6 [4:5 LDS]). Their rejection as a nation of Jesus Christ, the Holy One of Israel, resulted in the loss of their land, and their scattering and dispersion (2 Nephi 1:22-25 [1:10-12]). However, prophecies of a future restoration reveal that Israel will return to its land as God remembers the covenant of her youth (Ezekiel 16:60).

Historically, Israel experienced two events—first, Lehi and Jeremiah prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and the captivity of her people. This occurred in 586 BC. After their return, the Temple was rebuilt. The prophecy of Jesus, that “there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down” (Matthew 24:1-2), was fulfilled in AD 70 when Rome burned and destroyed this second temple. This event occurred on the 9th of Av in the Hebrew calendar (August 10th in 70 AD), stunningly the exact same day the Babylonians had burned down Solomon's temple 657 years earlier!

Book of Mormon prophets describe the scattering of Israel as they are smitten, despised, afflicted and hated (1 Nephi 5:252 [19:14]; 3 Nephi 7:33 [16:9]) but also foretells of their return and salvation for those who accept the true Messiah (1 Nephi 3:19 [10:14]; 4:33 [15:20]; 2 Nephi 7:12 [10:7]; 11:20, 31 [25:11, 18]). In 1841, Orson Hyde, an Apostle in the Restoration, embarked on a journey to Jerusalem. His mission was to dedicate the land and pray for the ingathering of the Jews. On October 24th he ascended the Mount of Olives where he built a small altar of stones. Orson Hyde Park marks the site today. Jews began to return to their homeland in 1882. On May 14, 1948, at midnight, Israel was declared a State; a few minutes later US President Harry S Truman was the first to recognize the nation of Israel.

At the end of 2010, Israel's population stood at nearly eight million, six million Jews and 1.6 million Arabs. Israel stands as a beacon of democracy surrounded by enemies whose mission is to destroy all Jews and take over Israel. The unconditional “land covenant” has yet to be fulfilled in its fullness. Nephi sets the example for us to have charity for the Jews (2 Nephi 15:9 [33:9])—charity is the pure love of Christ (Moroni 7:52 [46]). Pray for the true restoration of the Jews, or house of Israel (2 Nephi 11:78 [26:12]; Mormon 2:41-43 [5:14-15])—their salvation or grafting in by receiving the true Messiah and full restoration to their lands as we approach the end of days. 



Orson Hyde monument in Israel



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QUETZALARCHAEOLOGY.ORG

POST OFFICE BOX 266

OAK GROVE MO 64075

(816) 690-7507

QUETZAL-ARCHAEOLOGY@EARTHLINK.NET

EDITOR: SHIRLEY R HEATER

DESIGNER: LAURA CLUTE

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Note from Editor: Portions of two previously published articles now out of print are incorporated into this "Update." The full articles can be found at the Quetzal website.

ANCIENT *Linguistics*

"NO ERASERS" UPDATE 2011

Dennis Heater

Mary Lee Treat's Discovery

Mary Lee Treat's article "No Erasers" was published in *The Zarahemla Record* in 1981—now thirty years ago. She had noticed the frequent phrase "or rather" which was used in clarifying a preceding thought. She recognized in these first two examples that in the middle of a verse a correction (or clarification) made the verse more understandable:

Now if a man desired to serve God, it was his privilege,
or rather, if he believed in God, it was his privilege to
serve him, ... (emphasis added throughout)
Alma 16:10 [30:9 LDS]

And they stood before the king, and were permitted, *or
rather* commanded, that they should answer the ques-
tions which he should ask them.
Mosiah 5:11 [7:8]

Mary Lee related that Mormon said they engraved upon plates in a form of Egyptian because it took less space than Hebrew, their spoken language (Mormon 4:98-99 [9:32-33]). And Jacob also commented:

And I cannot write but a little of my words because of
the difficulty of engraving our words upon plates, ...
And we labor diligently to engrave these words upon
plates, ...
Jacob 3:1, 3 [3:1, 3]

Jacob also tells us that their records must be written on metal plates, otherwise they would perish and vanish away and their children would have no record (Jacob 3:2 [3:2]).

This led her to ask, "What happens when an engraver makes a mistake? Did he have a means to erase? Did he throw away the entire plate and start over?" She concluded that because engraving on metal was labor intensive and metal was precious, this was a way to correct a mistake or clarify something unclear.

Her search for examples "where errors were corrected by a connecting phrase in direct opposition to the preceding thought" was rewarded with two of the clearest examples as follows:

And thus we see that they buried the weapons of peace,
or they buried the weapons of war for peace.
Alma 14:47 [24:19]

"Weapons of peace" should be replaced by "weapons of *war*
for peace."

Now behold the people which were in the Land Bountiful—
Or rather, Moroni feared they would hearken to the words
of Moriantum...
Alma 22:33 [50:32]

"People which were in the Land Bountiful" should have been erased and replaced by "Moroni."

She ended her article by listing 33 verses which were no erasers, but also said these were not all the references, that many more could be found.

My Challenge

This to me was a challenge when I first read the article in 1984. That February I was transferred with my job while working for Sears in Columbia, Missouri, to Independence. My family stayed behind while the kids finished the school year and until our house sold. I was invited to stay with Gerald and Doris Gabriel in Blue Springs while looking for a place to live. We had become acquainted with the Gabriels at church while they were in charge of the Liahona House in Columbia. They had recently left the Liahona House and moved to Blue Springs. While staying with them, when I got off work, I would have some idle time in the evenings. That was when I read Mary Lee Treat's 1981 article on no erasers. It was then that I knew what I wanted to do. I was going digging for the many more erasers she mentioned. But because of the demands on my job, house hunting, then moving, etc., I could not spend the time I would have liked to then, and so finally I laid the project aside.

In 1987 I was once again prompted to continue to look for the many more no erasers and did I ever get my eyes opened up! I had previously concluded that 1) the use of "or" or "or rather" supported the writers' statements that they wrote on metal plates, which meant they could not erase, and 2) finding these "no erasers" in our English translation of The Book of Mormon suggests the idea that The Book of Mormon was translated literally from the reformed Egyptian. This time I began to notice additional words and phrases that served as "no erasers" besides "or" and "or rather" that Mary Lee had mentioned. As I discovered each new example, I used a colored marker to highlight the words or phrases and then in the margin I wrote "eraser" so that they were easy to find again. In some cases, the clarification or correction was obvious. In other instances, to decide whether the reference could be a valid "no eraser," I first read the sentence leaving out the clarified or corrected part which followed the "no eraser." Then I read it a second time leaving out the portion preceding the "no eraser" and including the clarified or corrected part. This helped me to see the different shades of meaning.

To my amazement, I found a total of eighteen different words and phrases, including "or" and "or rather." The additional examples seemed to fit the same pattern as "or" and "or rather." Some were used to correct an actual mistake, and others were used for clarification—to bring a better

understanding to the reader. Some were obvious, and others could go either way. Also, I wondered if some could simply reflect a writing style. Including the “or” and “or rather” I found 190 places which seemed to contain clarifications or mistakes, with 75% of them “or.”

The results of my study were published in 1988 in *The Zarahemla Record*. After it was published, I continued to find different ones going through The Book of Mormon that I added to my list.

“or,” “or rather” as Hebraisms

In *Qumran Quest*, August 2000, Angela M Crowell presented an article relating to “or” and “or rather” as a newly recognized Hebraism. She says,

In biblical Hebrew, the word וְ (vav) is the coordinating conjunction translated into English as “or” and is used to connect alternatives without giving preference to either (Clines 1993:147). ...Waltke and O’Conner...state that “As a coordinator וְ works by reducing identical material associated with conjoined clauses, leaving only what is different...” (Waltke and O’Conner 1990:654).

The biblical example given from Genesis 24:55 reads:

Let the girl stay with us a few days
Or let the stay with us ten days.

while the English translation is rendered:

Let the girl stay with us a few days *or* ten.

In English this terminology actually expresses the recognized use of a general term (a few days), followed by the specific (ten days). This usage would not relate to our subject of “no erasers.”

Angela continued by stating that “(w)hen the word ‘or’ expresses a preference, it is translated ‘or rather.’” Her example from 1 Samuel 29:3 contains the contrast: “who has been with me these days, *or rather* these years.” Perhaps this may be another way of describing the “preference,” but from my observation of the “no eraser” pattern in The Book of Mormon, “days” vs. “years” appears to be a correction. Although “days” can sometimes be used as an unspecified time and is also a Hebraism for “life,” in the example above, it seems to be relating to time. While it’s beyond the subject of my studies, we know that some Old Testament writings were on metal (i.e., plates of brass brought from the Old World, as well as records brought by the Jaredites at the time of the confusion of language).

Two Book of Mormon examples included as “preference” Hebraisms in Angela’s article appear on both Mary Lee’s and my “no eraser” lists as mistakes:

And they stood before the king and were permitted,
or rather commanded, that they should answer the
questions...
Mosiah 5:11 [7:8]

But by Ammon and his brethren—*or rather*, by the
power and word of God—they had been converted
unto the Lord;
Alma 24:63 [53:10]

In the Mosiah 5:11 [7:8] example, the word “permitted” is not correct and should be replaced with “commanded”—two different and opposite meanings. This example is included in the first section of this article above as one of Mary Lee Treat’s key “no eraser” examples. The Alma reference also makes clear that it is by the “power and word of God” that the Lamanites were converted.

The other items covered in Angela’s article do not appear to relate specifically to our subject of “no erasers.”

Quoted Speech

As I continued reviewing all previously identified “no erasers,” I noticed several were actually in quotes, from conversations, sermons, prophecies, etc. They are readily noticed in the Restored Covenant Edition since quotation marks are in the text. I would also include the words of Alma to his sons in Alma 17 [36-37], 18 [38] and 19 [39-42] which are written in the first person. This means they were what I would call “speech clarifications or corrections.” We do that ourselves when we are talking and start to say something, stop, correct ourselves or restate in another way, then continue on. So it became obvious to me that the source of speech clarifications or corrections was not the same as something that occurs during the process of engraving on metal plates. There were a number of places previously identified as “no erasers” by both Mary Lee and myself that are in quotes and so I removed them my list.

Metal Plates Clarifications

Consider that you were writing someone a letter telling him how to get to your home, and you wrote, “Take the first street north of the post office, *or rather* Jackson street; turn left and go four blocks.” You would be making your house easier to find by mentioning Jackson Street. This is a clarification.

In the examples of clarifications which follow, the “no eraser” is placed in italics. Additional references with the same word or phrase, if any, are listed following that verse.

I MEAN

And it came to pass that whomsoever did belong to the
church that did not repent of their wickedness and
humble themselves before God—
I mean those which were lifted up in the pride of their hearts—
The same were rejected and their names were blotted out...
Alma 4:3-4 [6:3]

BUT/BUT

Therefore, he took Ammon and Aaron and Omner—
and Himni he did leave in the church in Zarahemla,
but the former three he took with him— ...
Now the eldest of his sons he took not with him—and
his name was Helaman—*but* the names of those which
he took with him were Shiblón and Coreanton; ...
Alma 16:83-84 [31:6-7]

NOT/BUT

... there was peace also, save it were the pride which
began to enter the church—
Not the church of God, *but* into the hearts of the people
who professed to belong to the church of God—
Helaman 2:29 [3:33]



I DO NOT MEAN/BUT I MEAN

... in the end of this book ye shall see....
Behold, *I do not mean* the end of the book of Helaman,
But I mean the end of the book of Nephi from which I
have taken all the account which I have written.
Helaman 1:51-52 [2:13-14]

YEA, EVEN

And we began to build buildings and to repair the walls
of the city,
Yea, even the City of Lehi-Nephi, and the City of Shilom;
(not a singular city, but two) Mosiah 6:11 [9:8]

OR IN FINE/OR

And after that the house of Israel should be scattered,
they should be gathered together again;
Or, in fine, that after the Gentiles had received the full-
ness of the gospel, the natural branches of the olive
tree—*or* the remnants of the house of Israel—should
be grafted in, or come to the knowledge of the true
Messiah, their Lord and their Redeemer.
1 Nephi 3:18-19 [10:14]

OR THAT

And that they had altered and trampled under their feet
the laws of Moses—*or that* which the Lord command-
ed him to give unto the people. Helaman 2:56 [4:22]

OR

Now there were not so many of the children of Nephi,
or so many of those which were descendants of
Nephi, as there were of the people of Zarahemla, ...
Mosiah 11:78 [25:2]

And notwithstanding, I, being young, was large in stature,
Therefore, the people of Nephi appointed me that I
should be their leader, *or* the leader of their armies.
Mormon 1:22 [2:1]

Mos 11:149 [26:39] Mos 13:62 [29:41] Alma 9:1 [12:1]
Alma 20:18 [43:16] Alma 20:98 [44:23] Alma 25:3 [54:3]
Hel 3:130 [10:17]

Metal Plates Mistakes Corrected

Remember the example of the letter giving directions to your
home? If you wrote, "Take the first street south, *I mean* north,
of the post office, turn left and go four blocks," it would be
an example of a definite mistake. A wrong direction was given
and then corrected.

Let's look at some verses that contain mistakes which were
corrected by a qualifying phrase:

OR RATHER

And there he caused, *or rather*, did acknowledge be-
tween the heavens and the earth... Alma 1:23 [1:15]

And thus he cleared the ground, *or rather* the bank,
which was on the west of the River Sidon,
Alma 1:92 [2:34]

Mos 5:11 [7:8] Alma 16:10 [30:9] Alma 22:33 [50:32]
Alma 24:63 [53:10]

OR

And at the time they proceeded out of the mouth
of the Jew, *or* at the time the book proceeded out
of the mouth of the Jew, 1 Nephi 3:245 [14:23]

"They" refers back to things written by one of the twelve
apostles (vv. 239-244 [14:20-23]); corrected to read "the
book" or Bible specifically.

She was angry with them and commanded that her
servants, *or* the servants of the king should take them
and slay them. Alma 13:56 [22:19]

They being shielded from the more vital parts of the
body—*or* the more vital parts of the body being
shielded from the strokes of the Lamanites...
Alma 20:41 [43:38]

And it came to pass that the Lamanites, *or* the Amale-
kites, were exceedingly astonished at their manner of
preparation for war. Alma 21:159 [49:9]

Mos 5:1 [7:1] Alma 11:26 [16:16] Alma 13:21 [21:16]
Alma 14:47 [24:19] Alma 20:21 [43:19] Alma 22:15 [50:14]
Alma 24:54 [53:3] Alma 27:3 [59:3] Alma 30:19 [63:15]
Ether 4:2 RCE only [9:2]

Mistakes and Clarifications Combined

The following examples have both a mistake and clarification:

OR/OR

Now, it was those men which sought to destroy them which
were lawyers which were hired, *or* appointed by the
people to administer the law at their times of trials, *or* at
the trials of the crimes of the people before the judges.
Alma 8:21 [10:14]

The first *or* corrects a mistake—research of the word
"lawyers" shows that they were appointed, not hired. The
second *or* is a clarification.

OR RATHER/OR

Now Ammon being chief among them, *or rather* he did
minister to them,
And he departed from them after having blessed them
according to their several stations, having imparted
the word of God unto them, *or* administered unto
them before his departure;
And thus they took their several journeys throughout
the land. Alma 12:28 [17:18]

The first phrase *or rather* corrects a mistake. The words
preceding this conveys that Ammon is chief among them,
while the words following change the focus to his ministry.
The *or* is a clarification.

OR/OR IN OTHER WORDS

... rending their garments in token, *or* as a covenant,
that they would not forsake the Lord their God—
Or, in other words, if they should transgress the com-
mandments of God,


Or fall into transgression and be ashamed to take upon them the name of Christ,
The Lord should rend them even as they had rent their garments.

Alma 21:50-51 [46-21]

The first *or* corrects a mistake—the first word “token” should be replaced by “covenant,” two words with distinctly different meanings. The second phrase *or in other words* clarifies the Lord’s part of the covenant if the people were to transgress.

Conclusion

While my list of “no erasers” was getting smaller, I realized that the examples that remained were clearly related to being written on metal plates. This even more strongly supports that this was the means used to make corrections by the engraver on metal. There are more words and phrases which serve as “no erasers” in addition to “or” and “or rather.” Some of these words and phrases are for clarifying an unclear statement, and some are for correcting a mistake. All of these “no erasers” bear witness to the fact that The Book of Mormon writers did indeed write on metal plates. Also, the fact that these words and phrases are retained in

our English translation suggests the idea of a literal instead of a conceptual translation of The Book of Mormon. 

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SURVEY Question

Who is your favorite Book of Mormon figure (other than Jesus Christ) and why?

My favorite Book of Mormon person is Moroni, chief commander of the Nephite Army, for his stand for liberty and freedom and his “Title of Liberty.”

Yvonne Severyn, Missouri

I wanted to respond to your survey question in this outstanding new adventure you have under taken. My favorite Book of Mormon figure is [chief captain] Moroni. The reason I have chosen him is because of the scriptures found in Alma 21:140-142. I wrote a book which is available at Restoration Bookstore titled *The Chosen Nine* which is a study of Alma 21:140-142 and why I feel God is telling us that Moroni is perhaps the most important figure in The Book of Mormon in the Latter Days!

Dennis Moe, Missouri

I’m actually naming a group, Aaron, Muloki and Ammah, whose account of their mission to the Lamanites is listed together. After all manner of abuse and sufferings, when released from prison, they showed one of the strongest examples of Christ-like love by going out amongst their very abusers. With great love they selflessly taught the gospel, to bring the sweetness of repentance, forgiveness and redemption to those who treated them so wrongly. What faith, what love, what strength of testimony they had!

Thomas Meier, Missouri

My favorite is Abinadi. He was put to death for his testimony that Christ is God, in the flesh. He stated, among others, “...God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people: and because he dwelleth in flesh, he shall be called the Son of God:” (Mosiah 8:28-29). He goes on in much more detail. Teaching this is the purpose for The Book of Mormon coming forth.

Alice Bronson, Missouri

It would be hard to pick one—Nephi, Moroni, King Benjamin, Alma II, Nephi at time of Christ, three Nephites. If I had to pick one, then I would choose original Nephi who asked and received the vision of his father, Lehi—a vision of all to come like Apostle John and book of Revelation.

Randall Lawrence, Missouri

There’s such a group of wonderful figures in The Book of Mormon—each unique in their own ministry and characteristics. Overall, two come readily to mind—first is Mormon who abridged the Large Plates of Nephi (my regard for what he did increased tremendously as I prepared the poetic alignments and timeline correlations while working on the RCE, as well as his testimony that he was led by God what to put in and what to leave out). A second person I must include is Nephi, the son of Helaman. His example of pouring out his soul to God while on the tower in the garden in the City of Zarahemla is one that resonates deeply of the sorrow he felt for his wicked brethren.

Shirley Heater, Missouri

My favorite figure is Chief Captain Moroni because of his attributes, as well as the sons of Mosiah and sons of Alma (the nine holy men of Alma 21:140-141). They serve as examples for my own sons in their daily lives and my prayer is that they will be blessed by the account of these men of God.

Tom Shomerzion, Missouri

How would you answer this question?

Email or send in your answer!

Question for next issue:

What is your favorite Book of Mormon “memory verse”?

Email or send in your answer!

Note: Selected responses will be printed in *Quetzal Codex*; all responses will be posted to our website.



Gaylord & Faye Shaw founded the Christian Center for Book of Mormon Study and Research (www.jesusisthechrist.net) in Lamoni, Iowa, in the mid '90s. Their primary desire was to provide a strong witness for The Book of Mormon as well as a resource library. Our thanks to Faye for sharing this with us and also to Wade Brown for permission to use his research and illustrations.

CHIASMUS IN THE “CARACTORS”

Faye Shaw

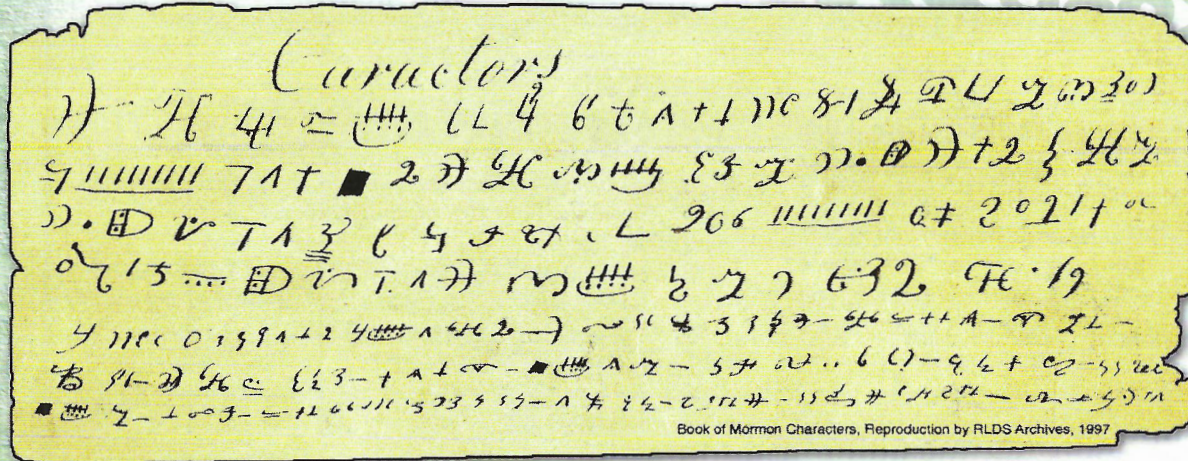


Figure 1. “Caractors” is the only known document that was copied from the original golden plates of The Book of Mormon. The yellowed paper measures 3¼” x 8” and is owned by the Community of Christ, headquartered in Independence, Missouri.

Introduction

I was in our Christian Center for Book of Mormon Study and Research swiftly organizing more than 2,000 books that had belonged Angela Crowell. Our son was to be married there a week later, and I wanted that Biblical influence to be very evident. Even in that hurried process, one book, *The First Page of the Golden Plates* by Wade Brown, caught my eye.

The author’s sensitive Dedication drew me further into the book, and the more I read, the more excited I got. I kept thinking, “I can’t wait to show this to Mary Jo [Jackel]!” She is a dedicated Book of Mormon researcher and has studied how to interpret unknown languages. Also, she will not support something unless she is 100% sure about it. I wanted her reaction, so I quickly finished the book and dashed it over to her house.

A few days later she threaded her way to me at a Graceland University event. She was so delighted about the content that she had written to the author, asking his permission to use his information in her research. Some of her first words were, “I knew there was something more there!” Wow, I was thrilled!

Discovery

Wade Brown had been studying the Anthon Transcript for years (see Figure 1). He reports he would spend many hours staring at the script, wondering what it meant. He also photographed the document and projected it on a wall or screen in order to see it greatly enlarged, then posted the transcript on large sheets of paper that were extended across the walls of his office. Over time he came to some preliminary conclusions—that these characters are a direct copy of one passage from the plates, the characters should be read from right to left, that the text does not represent any portion of the translated Book of Mormon and were most likely from the first page of the plates translated on the 116 lost pages.

Then one evening he noticed that

...the repetition at the bottom of the page came into full focus and finally made sense....I finally saw that the last line reflected part of what appeared to be a perfect inverted parallel....After all these years of staring at the characters or symbols without really seeing anything, there was finally something really worth seeing (pp. (73-74).

Wade discovered that the bottom lines of smaller “caractors” (beginning in the middle of the second line) were chiasmic, with the center

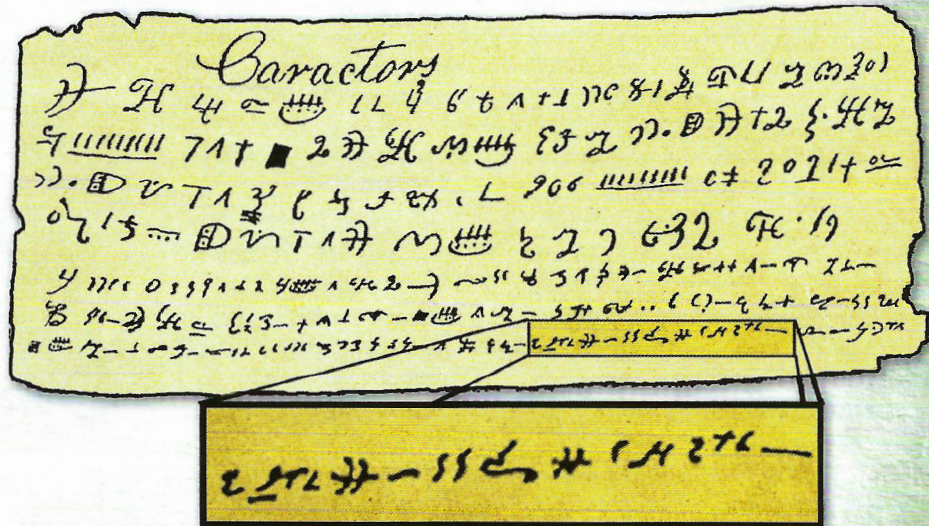


Figure 2. “Caractors” document with phrase containing repeated symbols enlarged (p. 73).

point being in the last line (see Figure 2). The complete chiasm is shown in Figure 3.

Turning his attention to the top four lines of the transcript, Brown observed that these symbols seemed to be consistently large for a purpose. The common view has been that Joseph Smith had either become tired and his handwriting became weaker and smaller, or that he was running out of space and began making the characters smaller. But the distinct sizes may well service a purpose—the upper an “overall introduction to a book and the bottom lines a sub-introduction” (p. 86). In the large upper characters of the transcript he noticed that “... the second symbol from the beginning is repeated as the second from the last symbol of the structure. The same symbol is also repeated in the center...” (p. 78). See Figure 4.

In this upper section he saw a complete, perfect chiasm “very much like Mormon’s use of the name Helaman in the introduction to the Book of Helaman” (p. 78). I include only the pertinent words here as an *example* of the type of repetition in the transcript (the outer points being repeated in the center; p. 52):

- A The Book of Helaman
- B an account
- C and also...of many...
- D ...according to the record
- E the coming of Christ
- F according to the record
- G of Helaman
- G' of Helaman
- F' according to the records
- E' the coming of Christ
- D' ...according to the record
- C' and also many of
- B' an account
- A' the book of Helaman

After discovering a complete inverted parallelism in the upper four lines, he looked again at the bottom three lines of smaller characters. Viewing the small characters in the lower part as a distinct second half, he began his second chiastic diagram with the first of the smaller characters. (See lower half of Figure 5.) This places the chiasm he first discovered in the last line-and-a-half of the lower section at the center of what may reflect a larger incomplete pattern with the center lines numbered 10 (lines 5 in Figure 3). Thus, from this illustration it appears that Joseph Smith did not continue copying to the end, which would amount to the final five lines of the larger chiasm. This is also evidence that Joseph was unaware of the chiastic structure, or he would not have cut it off short. Also, he could not have arranged these characters in an ancient Hebrew poetry style unknown in the Americas 1829-30. Figure 5 shows the complete “caractors” transcript with the two consecutive chiastic structures.

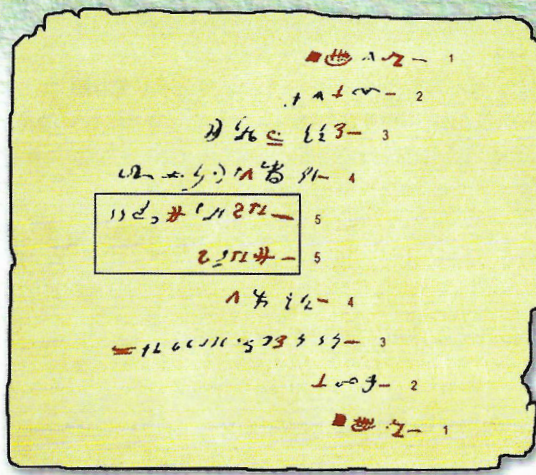


Figure 3. Lines 5 of the diagrammed symbols are shown in a box (added); compare to Figure 2. Note that the dash and symbols resembling an “L,” a “T,” a backward “S” and two backward “Cs” with a line through them are each repeated in lines 5. The diagram highlights a total of 10 parallel segments of which lines 5 are at the center. Repeated symbols are shown in red (dust jacket back).

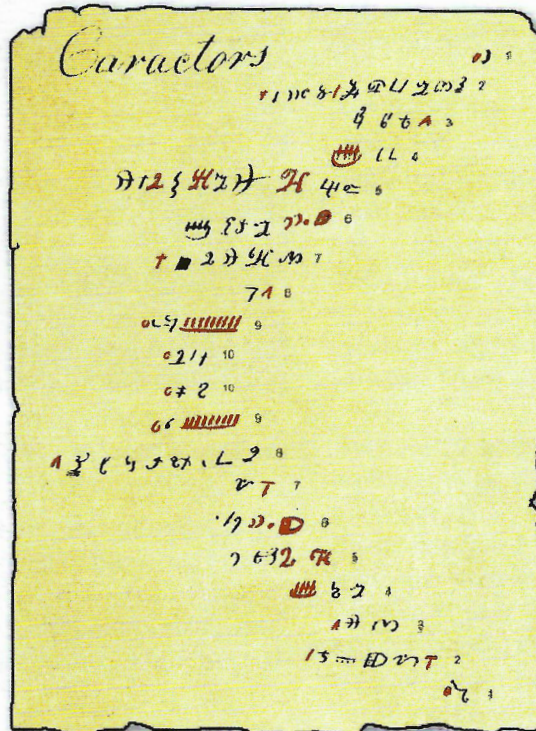


Figure 4. TOP CHIASM. The top four lines of the transcript are diagrammed to show the parallel symbols (red added for emphasis). Most do not appear any other place on the document (p. 77).

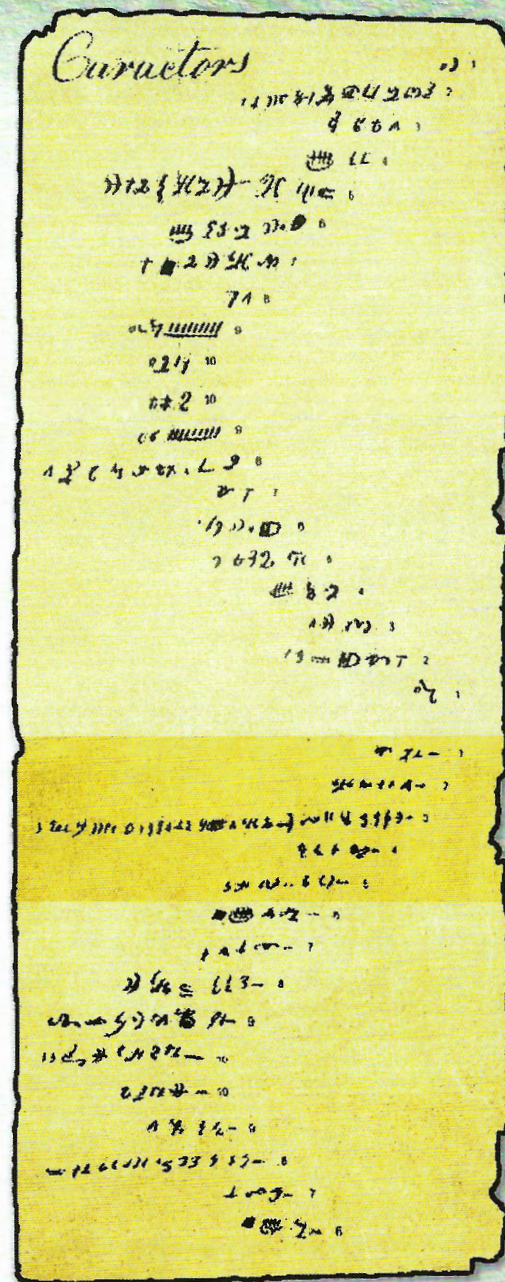



Figure 5. TWO CHIASMS. The top four lines (which were copied in larger symbols) are one complete chiasm, followed by a second incomplete chiasm in the bottom section (p. 78). BOTTOM CHIASM. The shaded upper part introduces the first half of the bottom chiasm. The inverted second half of this beginning portion is missing from the bottom of the “caractors” transcript and may indicate that Joseph stopped copying before the conclusion of the chiasm (p. 82).



Brown includes a lot of his other research in the book, and believes that the “caractor” passage is from the 116 lost pages, and asks, “If parallels can be found on the transcript, what else can be found?” (p. 80). This is a valid question to ponder.

Line and upon line and precept upon precept we are gaining more insights into the truth of The Book of Mormon. Believers do not need tangible evidence to prove the book authentic, but for those who do not accept that the book is historical, they can find there is plenty of evidence to support it. We’re living in exciting times when people who dedicate their time and effort are greatly rewarded! This is one instance! 

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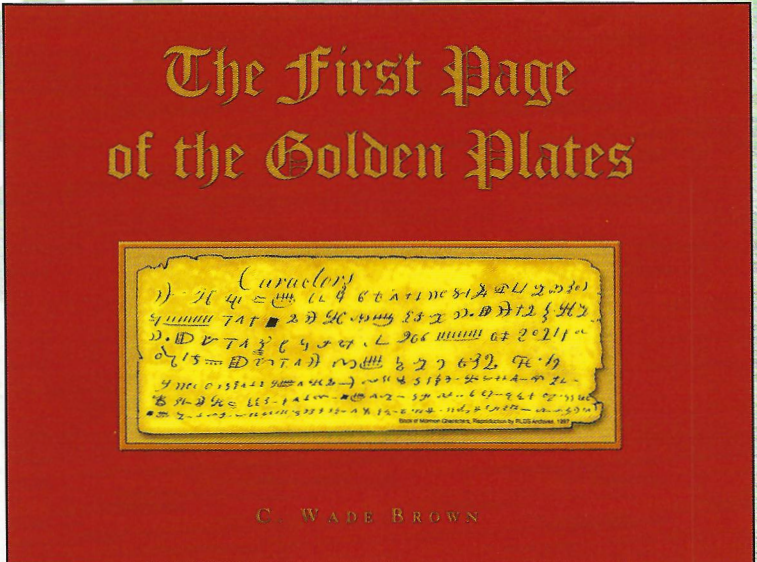
THE FIRST PAGE OF THE GOLDEN PLATES

Shirley Heater


The *First Page of the Golden Plates* (2001) by Wade Brown is the result of years of study of The Book of Mormon. After studying Biblical languages and history at both Protestant and Catholic institutions, Wade Brown was intrigued by the potential for understanding its true authors and not someone in the nineteenth century.

The first chapters of this book focus on Brown’s analysis of word frequencies¹. He next presents an overview of the poetic form chiasmus in a chapter titled “A Divine Poetry.” Chiasmus is a type of Hebrew parallelism where two or more lines, phrases or words are repeated in reverse or inverted order, also described as mirror image (see Welch 1981). Wade Brown formatted “the entire Book of Mormon in such a way as to reveal as many parallelisms as possible” (Brown 2001:46) which was published in 1988 as *The God-Inspired Language of the Book of Mormon*.

The First Page of the Golden Plates culminates by focusing on the handwritten transcript known variously as the Anthon Transcript, the Harris-Anthon Transcript, or “Caractors” as written above the transcript figures. I reported that this document was among David Whitmer’s papers which were conveyed to the RLDS Church in 1903 by his grandson after Whitmer’s death. It “is the only known copy of characters from the plates used to translate the Book of Mormon.” I also noted that “its appearance does not fit Professor Anthon’s description of the document he examined in which the characters were ‘arranged and placed in perpendicular columns; and the whole ended in a rude delineation of a circle, divided into various compartments, decked with various strange marks’ (Church History 1:21-22)” (Heater 1992:67). It is believed by some that the “Caractors” transcript is the original taken by Martin Harris to Charles Anthon, and that when Anthon was approached after the fact to describe what he had seen, either the paper he examined was different, or his memory was fuzzy, or he described something entirely different in order to “muddy the waters.” Whatever the



The First Page of the Golden Plates, Wade Brown, 2001, Granite Publishing and Distribution, LLC, Orem, Utah.

truth regarding this mystery, “Caractors” is the only copy that exists that could only have been copied from the original plates. Brown’s analysis presented in Faye Shaw’s article contributes previously unknown and exciting new information from this fascinating document! 

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¹See also “Wordprints: Further Evidence for Book of Mormon Authorship” about an early analysis by Wayne A Larsen and Alvin Rencher reported by Raymond C Treat in *The Zarahemla Record*, Fall 1983/Winter 1984, pp. 4-5, 15, reprinted in *Recent Book of Mormon Developments* Vol 1.

STAR OF BETHLEHEM

One night in the first part of the 1930s our family retired early, after a long hard day of working on our small farm. Along towards midnight a beautiful miracle happened.

I was awakened by my oldest brother's feet hitting the floor. Our room was as bright as day. I jumped out of bed and went to join him at the east window. We saw the most beautiful bright light about fifty feet above the ground. It was just outside of our window and it lit up everything around us.

I have no idea how long the bright light was there, being a small child at the time.

Quickly, it suddenly backed off into the east sky and disappeared, leaving us in a dark room once more. I didn't see it appear, but together we saw it leave.

We never talked about it much only to our family. Years later after studying the scriptures and thinking about it a lot, I said to myself, that it must have been the Bethlehem Star that appeared to us.

In the 1960s, I asked my brother if he remembered it.

He said, "Oh yes, I remember it very well."

After I married my husband we lived in several states including California, Texas and Mississippi. In December of 1990 we moved to Bates City, Missouri. Brother Don Montel became the pastor of our little Restoration Branch in the fall of 1991.

I called Brother Don Montel to ask him a question and he began to tell me about when he was a young boy around eight or nine years of age. He was living in a small town in Indiana

in the beginning of the 1930s. He saw what he called the Bethlehem Star shining in the east. It sounded like to us that we were seeing the same star at the same time.

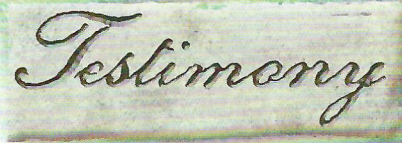
He said, "I would tell people about it and they wouldn't believe me. After a while I just quit talking about it."

I was thrilled beyond belief that our Lord had shown that beautiful star to someone else. It took sixty years before our Lord permitted us to meet and to tell our wonderful testimony to others. We were both sure that what he saw in Indiana was what we saw in Mississippi.

I thank my Heavenly Father that I have met another witness that can testify of the Bethlehem Star along with me. Maybe there are others out there that were witnesses of the same miracle many years ago. We would love hearing from you.

In the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

M Selena Kucifer



Ed. Note: Margaret Selena Kucifer, 88, has shared her testimony of the Star of Bethlehem on only a few occasions over the years with individuals. We are honored that, after reading the article "Stars and Wonders of His Birth," she generously offered to share it for the first time in print through Quetzal Codex. Brother Don Montel passed away without recording his testimony so we are fortunate to have his account that he shared with Sister Kucifer. Sister Kucifer's heritage is part Native American of the Choctaw tribe.

BOOK OF MORMON BELIEVERS OUTSIDE THE RESTORATION!

Two men who have never met share two things in common. First, both believe The Book of Mormon is the word of God, alongside the Bible—one, for over fifty years; the other, as recent as last year. Secondly, both are dedicated Christian ministers outside the Restoration. One is a Pentecostal Bible teacher, church planter and Bible college administrator who invites other Bible believing Christians to read the Nephite record, sending out free copies; the other, a Native American with forty years as a Christian evangelist whose heart is to minister among his brethren.

Dr Paul Richardson of Richmond, Virginia, publishes a newsletter, *Sword of the Spirit*, and will send it to anyone requesting it free of charge. It is a blessing to share this testimony with you and acknowledge his generosity in listing information about *Quetzal Codex* in his newsletter.

Evangelist David Beaver, of the Cherokee Tribe, will spend several months this summer and fall, along with Michael Walker of Restoration of the Covenant Ministries, sharing the message of The Book of Mormon with his Native American brethren. His testimony is that, as far as he knows, "this will be the first time the two books, the Bible and The Book of Mormon, will go together," the theme of a new witnessing booklet, *Inherited Covenant Promises from The Book of Mormon for Native Americans*.

Information to receive these materials is given below.

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

8 page tabloid promoting the Nephite Record without sectarian trappings

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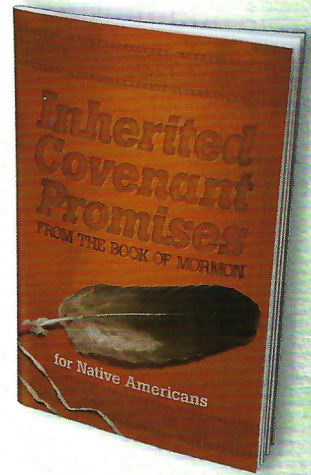
e-mail: drpaulrich@juno.com

INHERITED COVENANT PROMISES FROM THE BOOK OF MORMON FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

\$5.00 each + \$2.50 S&H

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Quetzal Archaeology Center
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Oak Grove MO 64075



DISCOVERING THE LOST WORLDS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON: SIXTY YEARS OF PROGRESS! PART 2

Shirley R Heater

The first part of this article reviewed the discovery of the New World eleven hundred years after the close of The Book of Mormon and the barriers to understanding ancient civilizations caused by the Spanish Conquest, the earlier Maya Collapse and even earlier, the destruction of the Nephite nation. We also saw that old archaeology views created a conflict with The Book of Mormon account. Here we will begin a review of revolutionary evidences of the last sixty years, leading to many new understandings and interpretations that mirror The Book of Mormon requisites.

SIXTY YEARS OF INCREASING LIGHT

A Revolution

In the last sixty years, archaeology (and science) “has experienced a revolution in outlook and technique,” moving forward from the era of “only rudimentary methods... form(ing) their theories largely by unconsciously projecting romantic notions onto past cultures” (Sabloff 1990:dust jacket). This new era is marked by new views, new technology, new methods and the overturning of previously-held but soon outdated ideas. The new archaeology impacted cultural interpretation, population estimates, subsistence, civilization, cities, religion, historical records and political ideas. Adams states that “(a)s much work has been done in the past fifty years as was done in the preceding one hundred and fifty” (2005:11). Pivotal events in 1948 set the stage for the next six decades of many profound discoveries—on May 14, 1948, Israel became a nation. And also that year, radiocarbon dating was “discovered”¹—the first, fulfillment of ancient prophecies; the last, a scientific breakthrough. While these are seemingly unrelated events, the impact of each comes together in one sacred book, The Book of Mormon. Let’s take a look at what has happened.

Table 1 presents a comparison of the old views versus the new views and Book of Mormon details. Old views are intertwined and their reversals are also linked. The overall changes across the vast field of archaeological research, as well as each

Table 1. Old & new archaeological views compared with The Book of Mormon

Archaeology Old View	Book of Mormon Since 1830	Archaeology New View
Mesoamerica one of six areas civilization arose without outside contact	Three groups migrated from the OW to NW, c. 3000 BC & 600 BC	Transoceanic evidences accumulated, many (but not all) archaeologists accept
Maya civilization rose c. AD 300 with Olmec contemporary; Pre-Classic primitive	Jaredites from Great Tower c. 3114 BC; Nephites / Lamanites & Mulekites from Jerusalem c. 600 BC	Olmec 1800 BC; early pottery c. 2900 BC; Maya Pre-Classic origin c. 600 BC
Low population, rural peasants	High population, complex cities	High population, complex cities
Slash & burn swidden agriculture/low pop	High population requires intense agriculture	Intensive agriculture, canals, raised fields
“Vacant” ceremonial centers for priests	Large & small cities/city-states	Large & small cities/city-states
Peaceful	Warfare & fortifications	Warfare & fortifications
Hieroglyphs calendric & religious, not historical or phonetic	Complex writing system, historical events, poetic parallelisms	Hieroglyphs historical, phonetic, poetic parallelisms
No barley (OW grain)	Barley (OW grain)	Barley found (OW grain)
Astronomer priest leadership	Kings	Kings

¹“(T)he origin of ¹⁴C could be set as early as 1946—

the date of the first paper on ‘radiocarbon’...or as late as 1951—the first published ¹⁴C list....If an actual ‘birthday’ for ¹⁴C is desired, it might be identified as the day on which the first ¹⁴C ‘date’—an Egyptian archaeological sample—was actually calculated. This was July 12, 1948” (Taylor 2000:2).



specific item in Table 1, can be explored in-depth, but highlights will suffice for our purposes here. Most significantly for us, new discoveries and new views have consistently confirmed the unchanging Book of Mormon account. Many criticisms of The Book of Mormon were/are based on outdated information!

Let's begin with the first item in Table 1—the fundamental view of the spread of civilization. Anthropologists proposed that civilization arose in six areas of the world by “independent invention.” These six areas are: Sumer/Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, Indus Valley, Mesoamerica and Peru. Any principles of diffusion (the spreading of civilization from one culture to another) at work have been disputed because of uneven distribution of certain civilization markers. Diffusionists believe that all cultural development can be traced to a few ancient cultural centers or civilizations by the spreading of culture traits from one civilization to another. The rise of globalization in the twenty-first century has influenced anthropologists and ethnohistorians toward exploring “how the objects of material culture change as they migrate, lending subtlety to the treatment of an unspoken diffusionism” (Mair 2005:597). Mair continues by pointing out “that none of the anthropologists who are fascinated with such global phenomena claim any influence from the older schools of diffusionist thought and would probably disown it.”

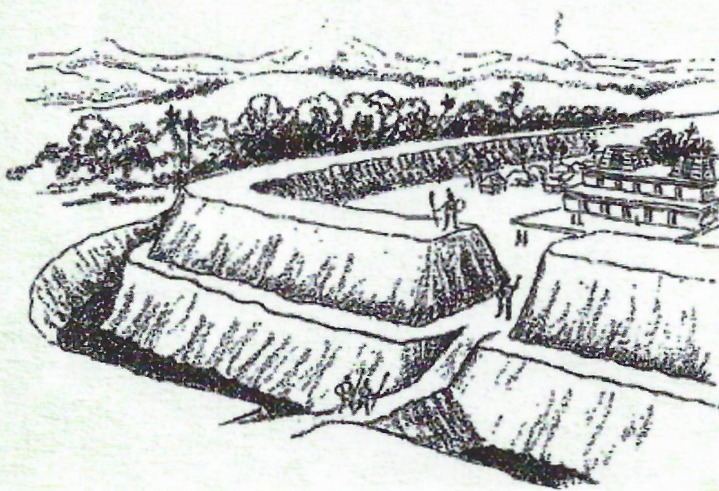
The subject of migrations across the oceans is called transoceanic contact. Since the time Columbus first made contact with the New World, followed by the Spanish Conquest, various theories have been proposed to explain the occupied lands, including “the lost tribes [of Israel] theory, ... the lost worlds of Atlantis and Mu, as well as Scandinavia, Central Asia, China, Korea and India as possible sources for the American Indians” (Treat 1984:19). In direct conflict with the “independent invention” position, The Book of Mormon account portrays the history of three groups who left the Old World and “brought with them their culture, religion and records. They built buildings, temples and cities, grew crops, waged wars, migrated from place to place and generally left a mark in this new land” (Heater 2006:1). A limited or reserved acceptance by anthropologists of migrations to the New

World maintains there is no significant influence. The body of evidence continues to mount to the point that a number of authorities now accept the position of admitting some contact occurred. Evidences can be organized into three categories:

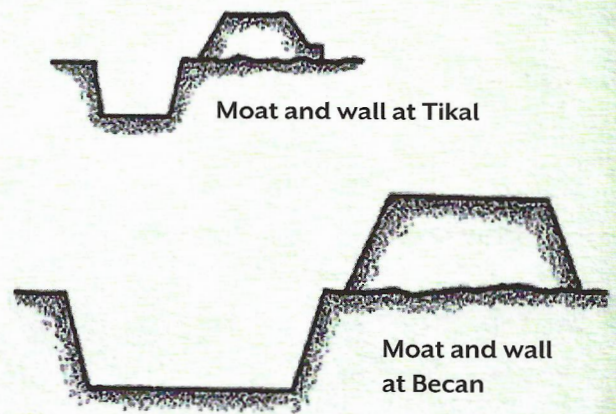
- ♦ *ethnic similarities* – figures depicted with Asian, Phoenician and African features, as well as bearded figures
- ♦ *cultural traits or knowledge* – Chinese designs, Asian games, Phoenician purple dye process, linguistics related to Egyptian & Hebrew, artifacts, Royal Babylonia Cubit, Royal Egyptian Cubit, and more; Japanese ceramics in Ecuador; Chinese stone anchors off California coast
- ♦ *biological* – plants, organisms/parasites and genetic/diseases links

The second major change from the old view to the new was brought about by radiocarbon dating which revealed that the earlier “primitive” Pre-Classic culture is actually the period of origination for the civilizations. This will be covered in more detail in the next installment. This major shift was a harbinger of things to come—a cascading of new views converging closer to The Book of Mormon—and an overturning of long-held, but incorrect interpretations from archaeology.

Additional comparative items in Table 1 reflect work in the ‘60s and ‘70s which produced population estimates at Maya centers and surrounding “rural” areas much higher than expected. Subsequent evidences highlighted “intensive” agricultural methods which would support a higher population, such as irrigation canals and raised fields. A paper presented at the 2010 SAA Annual Meeting revealed new evidence of a greater contribution of slash and burn gardens through a management system, in combination with more intensive agriculture (Ford 2010). In addition, the discovery of barley (an Old World food product) in the New World was groundbreaking verification of The Book of Mormon record. The image of “the peaceful Maya” quickly evaporated with evidences of ditch and bank fortifications at such sites at Tikal and Becan (see cross-section drawings in Figure 1), as well as murals at Bonampak and Cacaxtla depicting warfare. With



Reconstruction of fortifications



Comparative cross-sections of fortifications

Figure 1. Fortifications at Tikal and Becan compared in cross-section (Scott 2002:168)

*The Book of Mormon, an account...
written by way of commandment,
and also by the spirit of prophecy
and of revelation.*

Title Page.3


investigations at the northern Guatemala site of El Mirador, not only is the old “low population” view demolished by its vast size, its extensive fortifications also add to the overall warfare image. But that’s not all! The dating of the site in the Late and Terminal Pre-Classic (c. 350 BC to AD 250) falls right in the midst of The Book of Mormon era, revealing earlier origins of the Classic culture. The discovery of a nearby site of Nakbe, dated possibly as early as 600 BC, further pushed the recognition of complex civilization indisputably in the right time frame (and place), matching Book of Mormon history. The Classic Maya are no longer the star of the show—the Pre-Classic is taking center stage—just the exact time period of The Book of Mormon! Groundbreaking work at San Bartolo, also in the Pre-Classic period, is also part of the picture.

And in the midst of all these major new revelations was the breakthrough of hieroglyphic decipherment. This significant subject also warrants more attention in a future installment.

Part 3 continues with “Radiocarbon Dating—
an archaeological ‘atomic bomb’”

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In our first issue, you were introduced to our new Quetzal logo designed by the late J Robert Farley. With a little tweaking, David Farley brings us the second generation design which highlights the Quetzal bird in silhouette and the tail of the Q artistically similar to the new fonts.



It was an exciting moment for Dennis & Shirley Heater to hold the first issue of Quetzal Codex – hot off the press at Summit Litho!



This archaeology case with artifacts from both the Olmec and Maya civilizations was installed at Ancient Images Gallery in Independence. From Zarahemla Research Foundation Collection.